

# A journey in Ziogasland

By *Joanna Papadopoulos*

**TO FIND** this wonderland, you must venture far down Pireos Street, past the New Benaki Museum, and on and on until, eventually, on your right you see an orange banner marking this relatively new gallery. Stepping into this art installation by Ziogas is reminiscent of how it felt as a child to enter a haunted Halloween House - you become disorientated and spellbound. This is indeed an art installation to "step into". The viewer isn't

outside of the artwork looking at it, but instead the viewer moves through it and all the while must avoid collision with the many pieces moving and dangling from the ceiling. Ziogas creates something unusual and exciting here. The space is rigged up as if a super MacGyver type came in and installed it. In fact Ziogas did mention that it took an entire team nine days with hardly any sleep to set this up. The ceiling was fit with mechanical tracks that manoeuvred suspended objects on various mini-journeys across the room.

Trailing from the tracks were weird bubble-shaped things, shapes like pretzels painted in primary colours, mini ladders, tiny toy figures and objects, bent wires and various captivating materials. One piece looked like off white bubbles that had clustered together and then were pierced by a giant bronze straw.

Yannis Ziogas is an

established artist who has worked both in Greece and in the United States and who has held many individual and group shows over the years. This solo exhibition also includes some of his recent paintings; some are minimalist canvases of solid colour that when closely examined reveal subtle, delicate patterns. Others incorporate gold leaf and are like serene lyrical poems with a minimalist Japanese quality. In other paintings, he uses small multiple panels that refer to the Greek alphabet and allude to the power of language related to identity.

The concepts behind Ziogas' work are identity and travel. The artist tells us about odysseys, about travelling through various cultures and being in a certain sense lost, and how one tries to venture across boundaries only to arrive and depart again. His work is bittersweet as behind the impish playfulness he conveys a message about the vastness of our world and its ability to provoke in us an anguish over place and fate. Ziogas tells us through his art about life's wanderings, becoming our own modern day Clotho - the Greek Fate who spun the thread of life.

✓ *Yannis Ziogas' show is on at P 37 Gallery (37 Pireos St, Moschato, tel 210-481-8386) till December 18. Open: Tuesday-Friday 6-10pm, Saturday noon-4pm*



**Ziogas' installation 'The Land of the impossible passage' (2001)**