

# HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARD 2022



ILLUSTRATOR NOMINEE

**Dora Oronti**

**Cyprus**

## **Dora Oronti (Biographical note)**

Dora Oronti was born in Limassol-Cyprus.

As soon as she finished the Lycium she worked for a short time as an airhostess for BA.

Soon after she went to Athens for studies.

She studied Interior Design, (ITES Dipl., Distinction, 1970-72)

In 1974 she went to England where she studied Graphic Design (BA Honours, 1974-77) on a scholarship at the Exeter College of Art and Design, Exeter, England.

She is a member of the Society of Authors in London, a member of the Cypriot Society of Children's and Young People Literature, a member of the Women's Writers and Journalists, England, a member of INSEA (International Association for Education through Art) and a member of the F.A.M., an International Association by Unesco, for Peace, Art, Education and Child.

She worked as a teacher of Art and organiser of the Royal Academy of Dance for Cyprus for many years.

She founded two Art Workshops for children and adults, one in Episkopi village, 1980-82 and the other in Limassol 1998. Both the workshops were sponsored by the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education.

The work that was done in Episkopi village was shown in 'The House of Cyprus' in New York.

For the three years work done in Limassol Art workshop, a colourful book, titled 'Games and Art' was published in 2003 by the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education.

'The Creation of Experience and the Experience of Creation Sound and Colour, first published by the Paedagogical Institute Nicosia 1988, followed by 'En Typois' Publications 2000.

In 1987, after an invitation by Madema Gallery she showed her work in Hague, Holland. The whole work, 15 paintings, were bought by Madema Gallery.

In 1990-91 after winning a Fulbright scholarship in the framework of Teachers Exchange Programmes, she worked as a teacher of Art in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

She worked for RIK TV programmes for children (The Red Bus) for many years, and presented the work, 'Art and Child', a series of programmes about Art and Artists.

In 1995 Nicosia was the Cultural Capital of Europe. She took part with a project which was inspired by 'Ledra.' That was the name of Nicosia at that time. (c.1800) The project was sponsored by Nicosia Municipality. It was a procession from Ledra street to Faneromeni Church, including Music, Dance, Poetry and Visual Art.

In 2003 at a competition from the Writers Workshop for the Writers' Forum, she got Highly Commended for her story 'The Echo of the Words'

On the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual British IBBY/NCRCL MA Children's Literature Conference, What Do You See? International Perspectives on Illustration, 2007, she presented her work, 'Discipline-Freedom, Tradition and Contemporary Creative Expression in Cypriot Picture Books: Can They Coexist?'

Her work and some children's illustrations, is among others in the 2008 book, 'What Do You See? International Perspectives on Children's Book Illustration', edited by Jennifer Harding and Pat Pinsent.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual British IBBY/NCRCL MA Conference Comics and Graphic Novels for Young People, she presented her work 'Richard Felton Outcault and The Yellow Kid'.

As an Art teacher her love for children and the contact with them for many years was the spark for her to start writing and illustrating children's books.

In 1991 she started writing and illustrating children's books. This series of books includes 13 titles, covering the first post Byzantine Cypriot Artists. The series is titled: 'Games in the Gardens of our Artists.'

The two first Artists, are, A. Diamantis, 'The Trip of Little Rozou' and Chr. Savva, 'The Trip of the Pin with the Red Little Head,' were published by the Ministry of Education.

Following that, Gudenbergh Publications in Athens, published the next four books. T. Kanthos, 'The Trip of the Leaf with the Green Shades,' Y. Tsarouxis, 'The Trip of the Butterfly with the Blue Spots,' I Kissonergis, 'The Trip of the Red Thread,' and Mpost, 'The Trip of the Little Flag with the White and Blue Stripes.'

The next seven books were published by Parga Publications, Nicosia.

They are the following:

Pol.Georgiou, 'The Trip of the Prickly Pear with the Pink and Yellow Petals,' Loukia Nikolaidou, 'The trip of the Hat with the Yellow Ribbons,' Vincent Van Gogh, 'The Trip of the Sunflower with the Green Seeds,' K |Parthenis, 'The Trip of the Little Harp,' G. Mpouzianis, 'The Trip of the Little Umbrella,' S. Fragoulides, 'The Trip of the Blue Ribbon,' B. Ioannides, 'The Trip of the Little Boat with the Red Keel.'

**Books in English for Young People:**

'Jake and the Ladder and other Blue-Knotty Tales.' Pen Press Publishers LTD, London, 2003.

'Beatrice and Benedict' 1st edition, Chr. Georgiou and Sons Ltd., Limassol, 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Chr. Georgiou and Sons Ltd., 2011. The book was edited by Pat Pinsent and presented by Pat Pinsent in the House of the Society of Authors, London, 2011.

Book in Greek for Young People: AFI Publications, 2012.

'The Golden Magical Balloon.' The book was highly commended from the Ministry of Education, for the Awards for Young People.

1<sup>st</sup> edition 2012, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2016.

Books for children: 'The Famous Mouse and her

Funny Blunders. Couarteb? What Is It?' Power Publishing, Nicosia, 1917.

Creative Play. Lellos Bookbinding Limasool, 2020.

Translated in English by Greta Holman and edited by Pat Pinsent. 2020.

Ready to be published in English by Chr. Georgiou and Sons Ltd.

As a visual artist her work was shown in solo and group exhibitions. In Cyprus, Greece, New York, Mexico City, Oaxaca, Morocco and Holland.

In 1983 she showed her work in Mexico City and Oaxaca in the frame work of Artists Exchange Programme of the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education.

In Mexico city, La Casa de la Cultura offered a studio to her where she worked for three months.

In 1987 she was invited to take part at a plenair where she worked for a month with artists from other countries at a place called Kazanlouk. All the work was shown in the garden of the House that the artists were hospitalized.

In 2000 Dora Oronti did the stage design for THOK with the play:

'The Cat who always went where ever she wanted.'

In 2019 the University of Neapolis in Paphos, held an honorary exhibition for Oronti's work, as a sign of appreciation for her work in Art and Writing.

In 2002 Exposition by Women Artists in Rodus island,

organized by F.A.M. An International Association by UNESCO for Peace, Art, Education and Child.

In 2005 Exposition by Women Artists organized by F.A.M.

Since 1975 she has presented her work in England, Cyprus, Greece, USA, Mexico, India, Egypt, Morocco in solo and group exhibitions.



### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1979 Polytopo Gallery, Limassol, Cyprus.
- 1981 Zygos Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1982 The House of Cyprus, New York, U.S.A.
- 1982 Argo Gallery, Athens, Greece.
- 1983 Foro Coyoacanence, Mexico City, Mexico.
- 1983 Oaxaca, Mexico.
- 1984 Gloria Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1984 Westbroadway Gallery, Manhattan, New York.
- 1985 Themelio Gallery, Limassol, Cyprus.
- 1986 ORA Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1987 Madema Gallery, Hague, Holland.
- 1989 Gloria Gallery Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1990 Morfi Gallery, Limassol, Cyprus.
- 1994 Gloria Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1995 European Cultural Month, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1996 Peiades Gallery, Athens, Greece.
- 1997 Morfi Gallery, Limassol, Cyprus.
- 2000 Rouan Galley, Limasso, Cyprus.
- 2003 Cyprus Corner Gallery, Larnaca Cyprus.
- 2007 Technis Dromena Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 2008 Silks Gallery, Limassol, Cyprus.
- 2015 Is not Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus.

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1975 Exe Gallery, Exeter, England.
- 1976 Victoria and Albert Museum.
- 1978 Cypriot Artists Show, Hilton, Nicosia, Cyprus.
- 1979 Polytopo Gallery, Limassol, Cyprus, Titled 'Limassol that is lost.
- 1982 Kochlias Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus. Two Cypriot Artists. Andreas Chrysochos-Dora Oronti.
- 1983 Paris, France 'Exposition de Peinture, Chypriote Contemporain.'
- 1983 Contemporary Cypriot Artists, Athens, Greece.
- 1983 Rembrant Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus. '17 Cypriot Artists.'
- 1984 Renbrant Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus, 'Cypriot Women Artists.' 1987 Athens, Greece, 'Cypriot Artists.'
- 1987 Gloria Gallery, Nicosia, Cyprus, 'Ten Years Anniversary.'
- 1988 Kuwait Biennale.
- 1989 Soviet Union, 'Contemporary Cypriot Art.'
- 1989 Belgrade, 'Contemporary Cypriot Art.'
- 1990 New Delhi 'Contemporary Cypriot Art.'
- 1992 'Cairo Biennale.'
- 1995 National Gallery 'Visual Retrospective.'
- 1995 European Cultural Month, Nicosia, Cyprus,

'Procession Eos tis Komis Ledron.' Street Theatre, Stage Design, Installation, Costumes, Production, Dora Oronti.

1996 Municipality Arts Centre, Nicosia, Cyprus, ΙΧΘΥΣ.'

2002 Cypriot Artists of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium. Zampelas Art Ltd., Nicosia, Cyprus.

2002 Rhodes, Greece, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum for a Culture of Peace by Mediterranean Women Creators.

2005 Morocco Exposition by Women Artists organized by F.A.M.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

A series of books that includes 13 titles, covering the first post Byzantine Cypriot Artists: 'Games in the Gardens of Our Artists.'

- A. Diamantis, 'The Trip of Little Rozou.'
- Chr. Savva, 'The Trip of the Pin with the Red Little Head.'

(published by the Ministry of Education)

Following that, Goutenbergh Publications in Athens, published the next four books:

- T. Kanthos, 'The Trip of the Leaf with the Green Shades.'
- Y. Tsarouxis, 'The Trip of the Butterfly with the Blue Spots.'
- Kissonergis, 'The Trip of the Red Thread.'
- Mpostanzoglou, 'The Trip of the Little Flag with the

White and Blue Stripes.'

The next seven books were published by PARGA Publications:

- Pol. Georgiou, 'The trip of the Prickly Pear with the Pink and Yellow Petals.'
- Loukia Nicolaidou, 'The Trip of the Hat with the Yellow Ribbons.'
- Vincent Van Gogh, 'The Trip of the Sunflower with the Green Seeds.'
- K. Parthenis, 'The Trip of the Little Harp.'
- G. Mpouzianis, 'The trip of the Little Umbrella.'
- S. Fragoulides, 'The Trip of the Blue Ribbons.'
- B. Ioannides, 'The Trip of the Little Boat with the Red Keel.'

Other Books for Children in Greek:

- 'Games and Art.' Published by the Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus, 2003.
- 'The Famous Mouse and her Funny Blunders. Couartable? What is it?' Power Publishing, Nicosia, 2017.
- 'Creative Play.' Typography, Lellos Bookbinding Ltd. Limassol, Cyprus, 2020.

Books for Young People in English:

- 'Jake and the Ladder and other Blu- Knotty Tales.'

Pen Press Publishers LTD, London 2003.

- 'Beatrice and Benedict' 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, Chr. Georgiou and Sons Ltd., Limassol, 2010, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Chr. Georgiou and Sons, Ltd., 2011, Limassol, Cyprus.
- The book was Edited by Pat Pinsent and presented by Pat Pinsent in the House of the Society of Authors, London, 2011.

Book for Young People in Greek:

- 'The Golden Magical Balloon.' AFI Publications 2012, Limassol, Cyprus. 2<sup>nd</sup> Publication, Chr. Georgiou and Sons Ltd., Limassol, Cyprus, 2016.

Academic book for teachers:

- 'The Creation of Experience and the Experience of Creation, Sound and Colour.' First published by the Paedagogical Institute, Nicosia, 1988, followed by 'En Typois' Publications. 2000.

Two books for children, not yet published:

- 'The Echo of the Words,' in English.
- 'The Echo of Yiagovitsa,' in Greek.

***A statement describing the candidate's contribution to literature for young people (by Dr. Costas Katsonis, philologist-author, Honorary President of IBBY Cyprus)***

***The artist and illustrator Dora Oronti***

Dora Oronti is a well-known and prominent painter, who is one of the most distinguished and remarkable artists of contemporary Cypriot artistic creation. At the same time, Oronti is an important illustrator and author of our children's and youth literature. For her literary work and for her contribution in the field of children's-youth books she was honored by the Cyprus Association of Children and Youth Books (IBBY Cyprus) on March 14, 2013. Speaking about the work of Dora Oronti, in this honorary event, the well-known writer and former Minister of Education and Culture of Cyprus, Claire Angelidou (1) characteristically stated the following: *I met Dora in Limassol, after my uprooting from Famagusta. We worked together in the E' Gymnasium and later in Laniteio Lyceum B'... I went to her laboratory many times. I was enchanted by her art, the colours bright, cheerful, without shadows. A human being with many existential concerns and dreams. Multi-talented. She uses the paint and the pen in the same creative way.*

The above crucial and apt remarks of Claire Angelidou can be easily distinguished in her illustrated children's books, where the brightness and brilliance of the colors impress and sensitize the readers, young and old, causing feelings of joy and optimism. In her most recent, for example, children's book-with her own illustration, entitled *Creative Playing: 10 Stories for Children* (2), it is no coincidence that the basic and brighter colors, such as red, blue, green and yellow, dominate, in imaginative color combinations, overlapping all the pages of the book. Even the texts of the book, which make up the ten stories, are arranged and color-inspired in such a way that they are an integral part of this beautiful creative game of colors-a true color festival, that travels the souls of children to worlds; beautiful and magical. And all this lightness of colors that distinguishes her works, is an expression, a reflection, and a visual representation of her rich inner world, which is flooded by the light of joy, love, serenity, and the optimistic contemplation of life.

The creative relationship between discipline and freedom, which characterizes her artistic creation, highlights through the pages of her book *Game and Art* (3), which is the result of the Children's Art Workshop, which opened its gates in Limassol since 1999 onwards -after her own suggestion and with the support of Cultural Services of her country, aiming at the aesthetic education of children. The contribution of her book *The creation of experience and the experience of creation: Sound and colour* (4) is also similar, while her artistic skill as a children's book illustrator is also highlighted in her book *The Famous Mouse and her funny blunders*, a tale in seven stories for elementary school children (5), as well as in her teenage novel *The Golden Magic Balloon* (6).

Significant, in her creative career is the emblematic work *"Playtime in the courtyards of our Artists"*, which includes thirteen children's books, elaborately illustrated with selected works by great artists. And in these books, which are an important moment for the Cypriot children's literature and illustration, in her color choices the bright colors are again dominant, with the short texts that adorn the books being tied in an elaborate marriage and bond with illustration. As stated in the preface of the 1st book of the series (7), which is dedicated to Giannis Tsarouchis: *"the children's series "Playtime in the courtyards of our Artists" is an attempt to approach the subject through an "internal necessity" for the work and the surrounding space of each artist. It is a suggestion to remember or re-remember, touch or re-touch, study or re-study our artistic tradition, a tradition that continues to influence our contemporary artistic perception."*

This aesthetic result, that comes from Oronti's illustrated books, gives the opportunity to the child's eye to be *"lost"* in the atmosphere that the image can emit, with the complexity or austerity of her writing. In both cases, the unusual writing, the imagination, the freshness in the color, the economy in the space so that the child can *"breathe"*, create, spoil or re-compose, constitute the image of modern illustration in the Children's Literary Book.

Notes See.

1. Claire Angelidou: "The Writer-Artist Dora Oronti", Journal of Wind-Inspection of Cypriot Children's Literature, No. p. 21 (p. 190), CSNB Edition, Nicosia 2013.
2. Dora Oronti, Creative Playing: 10 stories for children, Limassol 2021.
3. Dora Oronti, Game and Art, Creative Relationship of Discipline - Freedom, Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Nicosia 2003.
4. Oronti Dora, The Creation of Experience and the Experience of Creation-Sound and Color, Nicosia 2000.
5. Dora Oronti, The Famous Mouse and her funny blunders-A tale in seven stories for elementary school children, Power Publishing Publications, Nicosia 2017.
6. Dora Oronti, The Golden Magic Balloon, Touch Editions, Nicosia 2012
7. Dora Oronti, Giannis Tsarouchis-The journey of the butterfly with the blue dots, Series, "Playtime in the Countryyards of our Artists ", No. 1, SOTI Publications, Athens 1999.

## **Dora Oronti: *Playtime in the Courtyards of our Artists***

By Maria Michaelidou, Educator-Writer

“Artist and educator Dora Oronti gave us a pleasant surprise with her book *A. Diamantis – the Journey of little Rosoū* and the announcement that she intends to bring out similar art editions within the series she has aptly named “Playtime in the Courtyards of our Artists”.

This was my introduction to the presentation of Dora Oronti’s first book, published in the “Anemi” periodical (Issue 10). It was truly a pleasant surprise, to hold the published token of her first writing venture, that effortlessly combined a wealth of select gifts for our children.

Oronti did make good on her promise to carry on the adventure initiated by little Rosoū with new books intended to acquaint children with art. In the same year, namely 1996, Dora Oronti brought out her second book, this time dedicated to our groundbreaking artist, the untimely lost Christoforos Savva. These two books that launched the series were self-published in Cyprus by the artist-writer herself.

Last year, the series was enriched with the addition of four fine books, each dedicated to a visual artist, published by “Spoudi” Publications in Athens. Dora Oronti has initiated a praiseworthy endeavour, appreciated by all of us who love art, especially the art of speech, and even more so, by all of us who appreciate playtime!

The four books of the series that will be presented tonight have the following titles:

- a) Yiannis Tsarouchis
- b) Bost
- 3) Telemachos Kanthos
- 4) Ioannis Kissonerghis

Each of the titles are supplemented by a qualifying surtitle, respectively:

- a) The journey of the blue-dotted butterfly
- b) The journey of the flag with the white and blue stripes
- c) The journey of the green-hued leaf
- d) The journey of the little red thread

Were I to conclude this presentation here, you would already be well-placed to discern the two elements that are very important for reading and enjoying the books. Two concepts are four times repeated on the book covers, namely: **play** and **journey**.

Through the books, the reader will enjoy a comfortable play in the courtyards and the personal space of each featured artist; and yes, the reader will journey into the world of colour and shape, the space of the dream and the intangible, courtesy of the *methexis* of art, the reciprocity between art and the beholder.

In her recent book, *The Creation of Experience and the Experience of Creation*, the writer-artist exposes the mechanics of her own perspective on a lesson in Art, her own point of view, through which she would like to teach art and engage children with art courses. In her introduction to the book, she has this to say:

“In Art classes we are always faced with the question whether we are trying to teach future artists or shape future art-lovers. I personally believe that these two views are not mutually exclusive; in fact, they may be combined and function harmoniously in the direction of the students’ all-encompassing education and development. This would enable the gifted ones to develop their creativity, whilst providing the less gifted ones with those skills as to expand the horizons of their artistic sensibility and judging ability and be able to “see” beauty, whichever the term’s philosophical significance may be”.

In the faith that by interweaving several manners of expression we can expand the children’s artistic horizons and enable them to see, discern and love beauty, Dora Oronti has set out, successfully, I am sure, to offer her young readers books on art that combine artwork by the featured artists together with her own contributions and pictures, and an accompanying text that works as though to hold the different parts together in a simple, dreamy, symbolic and on occasion poetic manner.

At this point, I will borrow the words of art historian Athena Schinas, who has talked about the artist Dora Oronti: “For many years now, through the products of her creative expression, Dora Oronti has treaded a path of expansion, of probing and “conversation” between the senses vis-à-vis the qualities, hues and particularities of the materials she applies to her visual art compositions. The way she teaches children is considered model practice in terms of the methods she follows, as she cultivates the children’s perceived images of their surrounding world”.

The books in the series *Playtime in the Courtyards of our Artists* brings children of primary and pre-primary schools into contact with art, and this endeavour is made with images and the written word alike, rendered in language and style that can be easily assimilated by children of that tender age. The writer-artist has opted for a very succinct text, structured along the fairy-tale narrative, with an exceptionally beautiful depiction of the artistic output of the featured artists, in order to break new ground in the teaching of and aesthetic approach to Art.

Little Rosoū, a wooden pencil, figures prominently in her first book; in her second book, on Christoforos Savva, the protagonist is a red-headed pin. In the same vein, she goes on to employ simple, everyday objects as binding joints between text and images in the four new additions to the series: a blue-dotted butterfly for *Yiannis Tsarouchis*;



a flag with white and blue stripes for *Bost*; a leaf with green hues for *Telemachos Kanthos*; and a red thread for *Ioannis Kissonerghis*.

And so with these simple protagonists/symbols she spins the thread of her text into a fabric wherein children can play “in the courtyards of our artists” and enjoy the play revealed to them through the art of the visual artists and the art of speech celebrated by the books.

The writer chooses the featured artists both from the Cypriot and the Greek art scene. I imagine she will carry on this wonderful endeavour, as she picks her favourite artists, whose artworks have moved her, to introduce to her young readers.

Oronti provides a short biographical note for each featured artist. She focuses on specific artworks that she connects, as mentioned above, to props such as a pencil, a pin, a flag, a leaf, a butterfly and a little thread. Small and humble objects, rendered in colour and in her own design, with emotion and vibrancy, resonate across a short dreamy text within an artful orchard that is a joy to look at and to read.

Colours, hues, drawings, images, patterns, prose, children’s rhymes and tunes that take us back to our first childhood memories, verses by well-known poets, cleverly arranged to complement the meaning of the text or the depiction of a drawing or a painting: all this blends into a beautiful whole that is a triumph of colours, lines, speech and composition – everything that makes up the books.

Within all this, the artist engages in conversation with the children, explaining and touring them around the space of the artists, a space that eventually becomes familiar and loved. Each book closes with an unanswered question to the children as though urging them to consider and perhaps reconsider what they had first thought; maybe, by answering the question, they might want to know more about the artist introduced to them with just a few words – but words that can serve as solid foundation for a more comprehensive rapport with art.

Allow me to present three short excerpts from the books. This is from *Yiannis Tsarouchis*:

“The butterfly with the small dots seemed to hesitate, to waver. She preferred flying low over the ground, close to the little chamomile, the wild rosemary, the sage. These scents exhilarated her. But at the last minute she turned around and surrendered herself to the embrace of the kind wind, that led her beyond... to the sea”.

From *Telemachos Kanthos*:

“Far, far away he travelled and travelled, over immense fields of yellow and red. His siblings now resembled small colourful dots. Yellow, rose, cyan and red, all of them scattered in the air within a crazy magical dance. “Like colourful confetti!...” he exclaimed whilst trying to stay in the air like a glider. The dance of the small leaves carried on. A beautiful melody resonated across the surrounding area. You could barely hear it. It was Tchaikovsky.”

Finally, from *Ioannis Kissonerghis*:

“The kite on the ceiling, the merry dance in the *grande salle*, music from the bells that reached a crescendo... The window swayed in the rhythm of the music. And it was so, but so close to him! *Oh, how I wish I were a breeze...* the teacher’s favourite tune resounded again. At some point, the window opened wide. The kite didn’t miss a beat. With a long jump it suddenly found itself in mid-air. The line kept unravelling... and the kite kept rising... rising... high up in the sky. The little red thread, eyes glowing, watched it in awe. She wanted so much to fly away with it. Did she follow it? Or did she stay hooked to the hemline of the beautiful ‘*saya*’ robe? What do you think, children?”

The books under the general title “Playtime in the Courtyards of our Artists” have truly offered us a play! Through this play they afforded us knowledge of their topic whilst enriching our emotional world. They have given us the joy of art and the enjoyment of speech. These pulchritudinous books, artfully arranged, easy to use, useful and brimming with colour, have definitely enriched and renewed editing efforts towards the cultivation of Aesthetic Education.

Anyone who knows the vivid, loving personality of Dora Oronti, anyone who has felt the warm, noble sentiments of her young heart, anyone who has known her blue eyes and brilliant smile will certainly understand how much love she has put into these books; how she has drawn them with passion and devotion to her initial idea; and how masterfully she has combined prose, poetry, painting and music within these artful walks she invites us to take.

Dora Oronti’s books do not lend themselves to verbal descriptions; their presentation can never be exhausted philologically, by words alone. To enjoy these books, one must hold them in their hands, take in their visual beauty, read them and delight in them with their eyes and mind, and all the senses combined. Those who will hold them with love and the yearning for a quest, determined to acquaint themselves with the artists, will definitely travel into the enchanting world of Art. Dora Oronti, thank you for this journey!

Translated from the Greek original by Despina Pirketti

2021

## List with ten of the most important titles by the candidate

### A. Books are from the series: "Playtime in the Courtyards of our Artists"

1. Oronti, Dora (1996), *Adamantios Diamantis: The trip of Little Rozou*, Nicosia: Ministry of Education, Cyprus.  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1996), Αδαμάντιος Διαμαντής: Το ταξίδι της μικρής Ροζούς, Λευκωσία: Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού, Κύπρος]
2. Oronti, Dora (1996), *Christoforos Savva: The trip of the Pin with the Red Head*, Nicosia: Ministry of Education, Cyprus.  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1996), Χριστόφορος Σάββα, Το ταξίδι της Καρφίτσας με το Κόκκινο Κεφάλι, Λευκωσία: Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Πολιτισμού, Κύπρος]
3. Oronti, Dora (1999), *John Tsarouchis: The Journey of the Butterfly with the Blue Dots*, Athens: Publications Spoudi  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1999), Γιάννης Τσαρούχης: Το Ταξίδι της Πεταλούδας με τις Μπλε Βούλες, Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Σπουδή]
4. Oronti, Dora (1999), *Vincent van Gogh: The Journey of the Sunflower with the green seeds*, Nicosia: Parga Publications  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1999), Βίνσεντ Βαν Κογκ: Το Ταξίδι του Ηλιοτρόπιου με τα Πράσινα Σποράκια, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις Πάργα]
5. Oronti, Dora (1999), *Ioannis Kissonergis: The trip of the Red Ribbon*, Athens: Spoudi Publications.  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1999), Ιωάννης Κισσονέργης: Το ταξίδι της κόκκινης κλωστούλας, Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Σπουδή]
6. Oronti, Dora (1999), *Telemachos Kanthos: The Trip of the Leaf with Green Shades*, Athens: Spoudi Publications.  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1999), Τηλέμαχος Κάνθος: Το Ταξίδι του Φύλλου με τις Πράσινες Αποχρώσεις, Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Σπουδή]
7. Oronti, Dora (2006), *George Bouzianis: The Journey of the Small Umbrella*, Dora Nicosia: MAM Publications  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (2006), Γιώργος Μπουζιάνης: Το ταξίδι της μικρής ομπρέλας, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις MAM]
8. Oronti, Dora (2006), *Paul Georgiou: The Journey of the Prickly Pear with the Roses and Yellow Petals*, Nicosia: MAM Publications

[Ορόντη, Δώρα (2006), Πολ Γεωργίου: Το ταξίδι του Φραγκόσουκου με τα Τριανταφυλλιά και Κίτρινα Πέταλα, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις MAM]

9. Oronti, Dora (2006), *Lucia Nicolaidou: The Journey of the Hat with the Yellow Ribbons*, Nicosia: MAM Publications [Ορόντη, Δώρα (2006), Λουκία Νικολαΐδου: Το Ταξίδι του Καπέλου με τις Κίτρινες Κορδέλες, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις MAM]

B.

10. Oronti, Dora (2021), *Creative Playing: 10 Stories for Children, Stories and Illustrations* by Dora Oronti, Translation in English by Greta Holman, Edited by Pat Pinsent, Limassol, Chr. Georgiou & Sons Ltd [ Ορόντη Δώρα, 2021, Δημιουργικό Παιχνίδι: 10 Ιστορίες για παιδιά, Λεμεσός, Χρ. Γεωργίου & Υιός Λτδ]

List of the five representative books sent to the jurors

Books 1-4 are from the series : “Playtime in the Courtyards of our Artists”

1. Oronti, Dora (1999), *Vincent van Gogh: The Journey of the Sunflower with the green seeds*, Nicosia: Parga Publications  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (1999), Βίνσεντ Βαν Κογκ: Το Ταξίδι του Ηλιοτρόπιου με τα Πράσινα Σποράκια, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις Πάργα]
2. Oronti, Dora (2006), *George Bouzianis: The Journey of the Small Umbrella*, Dora Nicosia: MAM Publications  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (2006), Γιώργος Μπουζιάνης: Το ταξίδι της μικρής ομπρέλας, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις MAM]
3. Oronti, Dora (2006), *Paul Georgiou: The Journey of the Prickly Pear with the Roses and Yellow Petals*, Nicosia: MAM Publications  
[Ορόντη, Δώρα (2006), Πολ Γεωργίου: Το ταξίδι του Φραγκόσουκου με τα Τριανταφυλλιά και Κίτρινα Πέταλα, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις MAM]
4. Oronti, Dora (2006), *Lucia Nicolaidou: The Journey of the Hat with the Yellow Ribbons*, Nicosia: MAM Publications [Ορόντη, Δώρα (2006), Λουκία Νικολαΐδου: Το Ταξίδι του Καπέλου με τις Κίτρινες Κορδέλες, Λευκωσία: Εκδόσεις MAM]
5. Oronti, Dora (2021), *Creative Playing: 10 Stories for Children*, Stories and Illustrations by Dora Oronti, Translation in English by Greta Holman, Edited by Pat Pinsent, Limassol, Chr. Georgiou & Sons Ltd [ Ορόντη Δώρα, 2021, Δημιουργικό Παιχνίδι: 10 Ιστορίες για παιδιά, Λεμεσός, Χρ. Γεωργίου & Υιος Λτδ]



# THE CYPRUS WEEKLY

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## Arts



"Dimensions VI", mixed media by Dora Orontidou.

## Cyprus' bravest painter

Dora is the most completely non-figurative painter in Cyprus, which makes her the bravest. A vague image of a man or woman has been known to appear amongst the succulent paint on one or two of her positive canvasses, but this is becoming rarer and rarer. Her art is extremely difficult.

The hard-edge abstract artists can, if not in the depths of inspiration, turn with gratitude to the straight forward pattern.

But the abstract expressionist can only turn inwards and even then every brushstroke can dangerously veer towards a well-known symbol.

Taking a brush for a walk can lead up the garden path, yet Dora succeeds with all her canvasses to a remarkable degree. Her natural

buoyancy keeps her afloat in a sea of pigment resulting in some quite spectacular works.

Her light palette evokes a sensitive yet tough southern sensibility, where even whites can speak volumes of colours.

It is easier to darken a picture than to whiten it, yet Dora succeeds. This can only be because each work is a true experience and that behind the intuitive feelings there is a high flying mind as well, for how else could all the pictures be so intellectually whole? And, intellectual wholeness is what painting cannot do without. Dora is now exhibiting at Gloria Gallery, Nicosia.



~~680868E~~ NEWSPAPER "EXCELSIOR", MEXICO CITY, 29th JULY, 1983.

FROM THE NEWSPAPER "EXCELSIOR", MEXICO CITY, 29th JULY, 1983.

DORA ORONTI-SHANTOU: FIRST CYPRIOT PAINTER TO EXHIBIT IN  
OUR COUNTRY

by NOEMI ATAMOROS

"..... Dora Oronti-Shantou is the first ever artist from Cyprus to present her work - in a one-woman show - to the Mexican public and the Latin-American world in general. Her show was opened officially at the Foro Coyoacanense in Mexico City by Coyoacan Mayor Senor Jorge Flores Vizcarra.....

" ..... In her work, the talented artist expresses her rich emotional experiences, through a variety of techniques and materials, in a way that compels the viewer into an atmosphere of magic. The painter hears mystical voices, which she translates on canvas into artistic creation, always luminous and translucent. It is evident that her works are products of a continuous dialogue between artist and painting. In an atmosphere of tension the artist's novel messages interweave in explosive compositions that urge the viewer into a similar discharge, just because of their sincerity and authenticity.....

" ..... The dynamic interactions, so characteristic throughout her work, with its sparkling Mediterranean colours, are reflected in the personality of the painter, who, as she told me, believes that "it is the journey that counts".....



LEONARDO NIERMAN ON DORA ORONTI-SHANTOU'S WORK

During Dora's stay in Mexico, when her work was being shown in the cities of Mexico, Leon, Guanajuato and Oaxaca under the auspices of the Mexican Institute of Fine Arts, she was invited to a radio interview by the famous art critic Salomon for his programme on art and cultural affairs. The interview was recorded at the studio of Maestro Leonardo Nierman, the great painter, who introduced Dora:

"I consider it a privilege, Salomon, to appear on your programme to introduce the talented Cypriot painter Dora Oronti-Shantou to the Mexican public. Her outstanding works are resplendent with the colours of the Mediterranean and they evoke the joy of the sun of Greece. It is difficult to try to verbalise her art. It is as though you are trying to discuss a symphony or put into words different kinds of emotions and sentiments. Dora's painting is abstract and non-figurative. I believe in the interrelationship of art and music; thus her every colour expresses and translates into a musical sound and the organisation of these sounds communicates her powerful emotions. I wish I could give the listeners even an approximate description of Dora's paintings as I see them hear them, sense them while I drift in her whites and sparkling colours that evoke memories of the Greek Islands. The music I hear when I look at her paintings reminds me of the symphony I heard when, as a child, I explored the prismatic reflections of light in a drop of rainwater or when I held up against the sun the translucent marbles to admire the strange shapes and the glass bubbles inside them...."



## Review by Athena Skina (Art Historian) for Dora Oronti

### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SENSES

**Athena Skina**

*Art Historian*

For many years Dora Oronti has followed a course - through her works of creative expression - which is exploratory, probing, one that involves a conversation between the senses. It is one that relates to qualities, tones and the special qualities of her materials, and is mediated through her visual compositions. Through painting and installations, as creative artist, she shapes surfaces and space, aiming at stimulating the viewers so that they engage their reason and imagination, actively participating from their point of view in the semiology of her every finished work of art. For Dora Oronti the process itself of moulding is brought into sharp relief in the result. The subtractive manner of treating the image, beginning with observation but including it without exhausting it in the constituent parts which define it. Visual gesture and writing, materials and printing, and individuality of style are all hallmarks of her work, as are the balance between volume and space, light and colour tones. She composes the structure of each of her works with selected, familiar elements drawn from the real, observed world and combines them with the feelings left by impressions.

For Dora Oronti the role of a work of art is a charting of feelings for the viewer; henceforward, there is as a result the mechanism of the image's appearance: a whole picture is captured simultaneously as the prerequisite for tracing the omissions which lie behind the field of vision. Her works combine elements of action-painting and conceptual art, as well as of minimalism. The idea becomes a way of expression, while meanings retain their mystery, in the moment when the viewer is involved in the ritual of revelation of a wider and multifaceted truth; a moment when the subjective, the subconscious and a deposit of cultural markers reveal its boundaries, while at the same time calling them into question.

The works of Dora Oronti remind one of "fingerprints" left by a cooperation between the senses, perceived through a remodelling of the materials. In the methods she uses in the teaching of children, she is considered to be original, cultivating their ability to extract sense from the world that surrounds them.

The connections between colour and sound through a free negotiation of subjects, stimuli, procedures

and materials that Dora Oronti allows the children to employ, involve them not only in a way of communicating and structuring in a language that expresses their personalities, but also teaches them, through the experience of creating, the creation of new experiences.

Through the "Swan Lake" of Tchaikovsky, "Romeo & Juliet" of Prokofiev, the "Cypriot Eleftheria" of Solon Michaelides and the "Rendezvous" of Jean Michel Jarre, the children come into contact with different periods and musical idioms. Afterwards, their emotions are stimulated so that they form their own initiatives and choose not only their materials but the methods they will use to "respond" to audiovisual stimuli, giving expression to their own inner world. Dora Oronti's method, and the phases the students' stimulation goes through, have produced excellent results, opening up for the new citizens of the 21st century wide horizons of culture and understanding, meaningful contacts and a re-appraisal of the tradition of a cultural past, but also a vision of a life that constantly demonstrates its need for sensitive cultivation and responsiveness to its enduring new demands.



The picture-book series by **Dora Oronti** devoted to the work of famous artists, many of them Cypriot, contains the following titles:

Artist	Title	Publication details
A Diamantis	<i>The Trip of Little Rosa</i>	1996 Cyprus
Chr Savva	<i>The Trip of the Red-Headed Pin</i>	1996 Cyprus
Y Tsavouchis	<i>The Trip of the Butterfly with the Blue Spots</i>	1999 Spoudi Publications Athens
M Bostozoglou	<i>The Trip of the Little Flag with the White and Blue Stripes</i>	1999 Spoudi Publications Athens
T Kanthos	<i>The Trip of the Leaf with the Green Shade</i>	1999 Spoudi Publications Athens
I Kissonergis	<i>The Trip of the Little Red Thread</i>	1999 Spoudi Publications Athens
K Parthenis	<i>The Trip of the Little Harp</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia
Vincent Ván Gogh	<i>The Trip of the Sunflower with the Green Seeds</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia
Pol Georgiou	<i>The Trip of the Prickly Pear with the Purple-Yellow Flowers</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia
S Fragoulides	<i>The Trip of the Blue Ribbon</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia
V Ioannides	<i>The Trip of the Little Boat with the Red Keel</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia
L Nikolaidou	<i>The Trip of the Hat with the Yellow Ribbons</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia
G Bouzianis	<i>The Trip of the Little Umbrella</i>	2006 Parga Publications Nicosia

Pat Pinsent says of the books about Van Gogh (ISBN 9963-618-17-0), Georgiou (ISBN 9963-618-14-6) and Bouzianis (ISBN 9963-618-18-9):

*Each of these beautifully illustrated books provides an easy introduction for children to the artists concerned. Dora Oronti leads the reader in by means of small objects appropriate to each book in turn.*

*It is scarcely surprising that in the case of Van Gogh the text is spoken by a sunflower, which finds itself the subject in several of his paintings. The books combine reproductions of well-known paintings with bright compositions by Oronti herself, and in addition to their didactic intent are certainly objects of beauty.*

We hope to make these books available in English-language versions in due course, and to add the artists El Greco and Rembrandt to the list above. In the interim, we plan to launch the series in the UK shortly.

Further information from **Dora Oronti** ([oronti@hotmail.com](mailto:oronti@hotmail.com) or [info@pargapublication.com](mailto:info@pargapublication.com)).