

Cherish the Past, Embrace the Future



Dimitris Caramitsos-Tziras Ambassador of Greece with Elena Kountoura, Minister of Tourism, at the WTM London 2017 Greek Stand
Photo credit: GNTO

WTM London 2017

Greek sun shines bright in London sky!

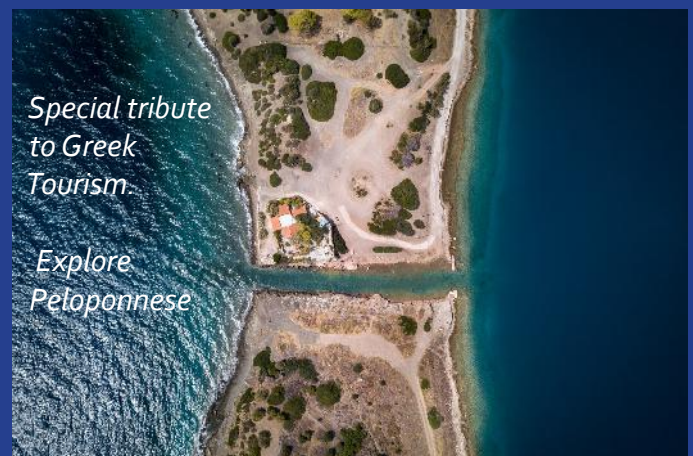
Greece's presence in WTM London 2017, the leading global event for the travel industry, marked a strong showing and the country's soaring popularity. Some 51,500 senior travel industry professionals, government ministers and international media attended WTM this year, held November 6-8 on the fairgrounds of ExCeL in London.

The event saw Greece's remodeled Stand win this year's "Best for Business" Award. As every year, the GNTO Stand, staffed by the Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO), hosted a number of exhibitors including representatives of hotels, regions and travel

companies from across the country and its islands that networked, negotiated and conducted deals. This year the GNTO hosted 70 Greek coexhibitors.

On the opening day, Tourism Minister Elena Kountoura addressed a packed press conference underlining that "2017 is a spectacular year". The Minister presented the most recent developments in travel and tourism from Greece as well as an update on the Ministry's planning for the years ahead. Afterwards, TV presenter, actress and activist Joanna Lumley took the stage and gave a snapshot into the diversity of the country that is Greece.

■ WTM London 2017 - Special Tribute	4-11
■ Tsipras and Pappas receive international awards	2-3
■ Greek Tourism Magical Peloponnese	12-13
■ Polytechnio - 17th November 1973	14-17
■ 10 Q&A for the new initiative "Knowledge and Partnership Bridges"	18-20
■ Greek economy gaining momentum	21-22
■ Media Section	23-27
■ A unique monument unearthed	28
■ "Antigoni" Ancient Drama in London	29-31
■ Kostis Georgiou - Interview	32-34
■ Secrets and Flavours from Ancient Crece	35
■ Agenda	36





Tsipras receives award from Politique Internationale in Paris

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras visited Paris on Thursday 23 Nov, to receive an award from the French magazine *Politique Internationale* and the city's Bar Association, which has also been given to French President Emmanuel Macron, IMF chief Christine Lagarde, former President Nicholas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The Prime Minister, awarded for his courage to keep

Greece in the euro, Patrick Wajzman, the founder and director of the quarterly French political affairs magazine *Politique Internationale*, told the Athens-Macedonian News Agency (ANA) on Wednesday.

Wajzman said that the main reason for the jury's decision to honor the Greek prime minister this year was the fact that "despite the different orientation that Tsipras' political family originally had, he found



the courage to keep Greece in the euro and Europe, avoiding consequences that would have been disastrous for everyone."

"He had the courage to make decisions in favour of Greece and Europe, he is a man of convictions and bravery," he told ANA. "Real leaders are people who are capable of understanding the meaning of history and putting their personal inclinations in second place when needed, as did Alexis Tsipras," he added.

The award that I receive today belongs to the Greek people and I accept it on their behalf," Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said in Paris on Thursday, while receiving the "Prix du Courage politique" (Political Courage Prize) from the founder of the magazine "Politique Internationale" Patrick Wasjman.

"Our courage is the courage of the Greek people," added Tsipras, underlining that "From them (Greek people) and their historical experience and maturity we draw courage and strength to stand on our feet in the twilight of the great ordeal of the last seven years".

Digital Policy Min Pappas receives European Broadband Award

Nikos Pappas, Minister for Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Information, has received the European Broadband Award 2017, in an event organised by the European Commission (DG CNECT) in Brussels.

"The fact that Greece receives this award today shows that we all recognise that the development of new technologies must act as a tool for the convergence of countries and an improvement of living standards. It should not constitute a source of inequality and, therefore, a reason for future economic and political crises. Together, we can bring the future to all European citizens," Pappas said.

The European Broadband Awards are an annual event where the European Commission recognises outstanding broadband deployment projects in Europe. It highlights the successful establishment of broadband infrastructure through these awards



photos: amna.gr



GNTO Secretary General Tsegas and GNTO London Office Emy Anagnostopoulou receive "Best for Business" Stand Award.

GREECE EXCELS AT ExCel London

Greece's remodeled Stand stole the show and won this year's "Best for Business" Award, at the WTM London 2017 Exhibition.

Intuitive Design Director Russell Smith said of the Greek Stand: "It is modern, with a good mix of networking and meeting spaces where you can sit and have a one-to-one», adding: "There is a good layout with space to mingle and have drinks and also booths with dividers that still feel approachable".



Greece

365-Day destination



Photo credit: GNT0

Joanna Lumley with Elena Kountoura, Minister of Tourism, at the WTM London 2017 Greek Stand

Joanna Lumley's star power matches that of Greece at WTM London 2017

Joanna appeared on stage during the press conference to give an emotional, uplifting account of her personal experience from Greece and the Greeks. Speaking from the bottom of her heart, Joanna gave vivid snapshots of her extensive travelling across the country and filming a captivating four-episode documentary series called "Greek Odyssey". Through her travels in Greece's seas and rugged mainland - literally from corner to corner - Joanna hosted a programme that truly showcased a country as diverse and, in part, still undiscovered as no one.

Through Joanna Lumley's Greek Odyssey, the British and international public were introduced to images, sounds and people from almost every

*Joanna Lumley:
«Greece is a country
as different and surprising
as any I've ever visited»*

corner of Greece. Joanna, mentions at some point "...if you're like me, you probably know something or nothing about Greece. Some names were incredibly familiar, the Parthenon, Zeus, Mt Olympus... But beyond this patchwork knowledge is a country as different and surprising as any I've ever visited.."

UK: A steadily growing market for Greek Tourism

"We are very pleased to see a continuous growth from the UK, one of our two main traditional markets, and in 2017 arrivals continued to grow strongly," stressed Minister Elena Kountoura.

According to data provided by the Greek National Tourism Organization (GNTO), the UK remained in the first position in terms of international passenger arrivals at Greek airports during the first nine months in 2017, with an increase of 5.4 percent compared to the same period last year and approximately 2.79 million passengers. The Ministry estimates that by the end of the year, the number will surpass three million.

Meanwhile, up until October 2017, bookings by UK travelers for holiday packages in 2018 demonstrate an increase of 19 percent.

The positive signs in any case are of particular importance, as the UK market is the second largest inbound tourism market for Greece.

A poll conducted among UK holidaymakers found that almost half (48%) were interested in visiting Greece. The country went third on the wish list, behind Italy(60%) and the US(54%).

Tourism Industry Report cites positive outlook for 2018

According to the Forecast Forum Industry Report released on the first day of WTM London, Greece's tourism has seen a bumper year in 2017 and the prospects for 2018 are even more positive. "It is encouraging to see Greece rated so highly by the travel trade when it comes to plans for business conversations and deals," WTM London's Paul Nelson, said while presenting the report. Research among the travel trade found that 35 percent of respondents are looking to have business conversations with Greece – with 83 percent of those expecting to sign contracts with Greek exhibitors at WTM London. Furthermore, 38 percent predict their company will do more business with Greece in the coming year. "The positive sentiments for 2018 follow robust growth in 2017 and demonstrate the value of investing in tourism products and marketing," Nelson added. Greece was also popular among members of the trade when it came to their own holidays this year, as it was in the top three destinations for breaks of five nights or more, alongside Italy and Spain.

✓ UK passenger arrivals to surpass three million by end of year

✓ Bookings by UK travelers for 2018 up by 19 percent

✓ 48 percent of UK holidaymakers interested in visiting Greece

Greece: a safe and stable land in a turbulent world

A report by Euromonitor International presented at WTM London, said that tourism to Greece has performed strongly this year, thanks to a shift away from less stable destinations. "A familiar picture is forming, where the substitution effect means that cities in relatively quiet and stable countries are profiting from unrest in other countries," the report says. "Spain, Greece and Italy are performing strongly, as they offer a similar climate to affected countries such as Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia."

The Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO) expects a record-breaking 30 million international visitors to Greece for 2017 – up 7 percent year-on-year.



Minister Elena Kountoura at the opening day press conference



I am very happy to be joining you for the third year at the World Travel Market, as the meeting place of the global travel industry. Our goal is to provide a better understanding of this incredible destination we represent. Greece with its unique brand-name and its long standing tradition in hospitality is a global attractive 365-Day destination.

We now promote all the authentic, one-of-a-kind travel experiences that Greece offers year-round, and at the same time we shape our future for sustainable tourism growth for all, in all coming years. Tourism is a top priority for the Greek government.

In the last years it has emerged as the engine for growth, the driving force for the economy and for society. Tourism represents directly and indirectly more than 20% of our national GDP and almost 1 million jobs.

It supports all other productive sectors, such as primary production, manufacturing, trade and exports. At the same time is it the bridge for projects in energy, infrastructure, transport, new technologies. Our national tourism policy that we began implementing in 2015 focused on five strategic pillars and bore results.

- We extended the official summer season from end of March to November in several destinations.
- We enforced our presence in our traditional markets and increased overall tourism packages and connectivity, but we also opened new source-markets, including Middle East, China, South Korea, India and several emerging European markets.
- We promoted new Greek destinations, and
- along with developing thematic tourism products and new travel experiences,
- We have attracted new investments of high added value.

We achieved record-breaking results in all tourism figures for three consecutive years. In 2015 international arrivals, including cruises, exceeded 26 million. In 2016 they reached a new high of 28 million, with annual rates of growth over 7%, almost double the average growth of global tourism.

2017 is a spectacular year

"2017, a spectacular year, arrivals to reach 30 million!"

- International arrivals, are projected to reach 30 million. Until October, we had an increase of about 9 to 10 per cent in air arrivals and road arrivals and
- more than one million-two- hundred- thousand additional seats in scheduled flights.

We are very pleased to see a continuous growth from the UK, one of our two main traditional markets, and in 2017 arrivals continued to grow strongly.

"Arrivals from UK grow strongly!"

Greek tourism's growth was reflected in increase in other sectors including retail and exports.

Increasing tourist flows and a new lower limit for tax free purchases boosted tax free shopping in Greece by 20 per cent.

Tourism is also the champion sector in new business creation in Greece, as well as employment. The 16-year record of more than 265 thousand new jobs created in 2017 until September, is largely related to tourism.

The outlook is very positive for 2018. From our meetings and negotiations with tour operators and airlines,

- Pre-bookings started with double-digit growth
- tourism packages are increasing to popular but also new Greek destinations ,
- New flights are being added and new routes are launched

Greece A Global Tourism Player

The Ministry of Tourism has focused on strengthening Greece's prominent role in tourism globally and has enhanced cooperation with international institutions and bodies.

Greece for the first time submitted candidacy and was elected as a member of the UNWTO's Executive Council for the period 2018-2021.

In October 2017, Greece also assumed Chairmanship of the OECD High Level Meeting on Tourism, marking the occasion of the 100th meeting of OECD's Tourism Committee.

Under the Greek chairmanship, an OECD Policy Statement was adopted to encourage broad dialogue and cooperation between governments, institutions, organizations, the private sector and society in developing long-term national strategies, with a focus on sustainable and inclusive tourism development.

We co-organized with the UNWTO and the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, the first of the two international Western Silk Road workshops, in the wonderful city of Alexandroupoli last April.

And in October 2018, Greece and the city of Thessaloniki were selected by the UNWTO through a tender procedure to host the 8th International Forum for Silk Road Tourism.

In March of 2018 we will also be hosting the 6th World Tourism Forum of Lucerne in Costa Navarino in Peloponnese.

We are actively supporting the One Belt One Road initiative, the 2018 European Union- China Year of Tourism, and new initiatives to boost tourism with China. Since September, Greece is connected directly with China through the new direct flights Beijing- Athens.

In September also we launched the Year of Tourism Greece – Russia 2017-2018. Several celebrations, events and common initiatives will take place, aiming to increase tourism over the next years.

We also pursue to host large venues and international tourism conferences. The American Society of Travel Agents will organize their 2018 Destination Expo in Athens, next April. More than 500 travel agents and specialists will attend.

With the goal for tourism 365 days a year, the Ministry for Tourism is implementing its national and regional tourism policy in close cooperation with the competent ministries, all 13 Regions of Greece, local authorities, chambers, hotel associations, tourism representatives, and the private sector.

The aim is to turn Greece into an exemplary year-round destination focusing on preserving the rich natural and cultural heritage, while engaging actively the local communities, creating new jobs and new tourism activity, promoting sustainability and prosperity for all.

We aimed to establish a friendly and attractive environment for new business that will foster high quality and high added value investments in the growing tourism sector.

Through reforms, we made licensing procedures for tourism businesses faster and easier. We set up-to-date standards for all particular sectors of tourism activity that comply with international standards and trends. We also are forming the framework that will encourage new high quality investments and new thematic infrastructure across Greece.

To this end, we codified our tourism legislation. All

Greece's prominent role in global Tourism industry

- ✓ Member of the UNWTO's Executive Council for the period 2018-2021
- ✓ Chairmanship of the OECD High Level Meeting on Tourism
- ✓ An OECD Policy Statement with a focus on sustainable and inclusive tourism development

Greece, a host to major international events

- ✓ 8th International Forum for Silk Road Tourism, Thessaloniki, October 2018
- ✓ 6th World Tourism Forum of Lucerne in Costa Navarino in Peloponnese, March 2018
- ✓ American Society of Travel Agents Destination Expo 2018, Athens, April 2018

laws and rules involving the Greek tourism sector, dating back to over 100 years, have been brought together and codified. They are now available on an online platform, making it easy for all tourism businesses and investors to have access to up-to-date information on the current framework.

We also set in motion our pilot program for the Tourism Satellite Account, starting from 2015 figures, so that we have reliable statistics of the overall value of tourism, in forming our long-term strategy for tourism growth.

And we are about to introduce a new digital ecosystem for Greek tourism, as part of our strategic plan to advance the role of new technologies in how the Greek tourism market works and grows, including digitalization of our tourism education, the information provided to tourists and tourism businesses, and the international promotion of Greece abroad.

Greece is attracting interest from leading hospitality groups and major tour operators that strengthen their hotel portfolio in Greece. More international





Photo credit: GNTO

hotel brands now enter the Greek market, focusing on different kinds of products, such as city hotels, resorts, all-inclusive and luxury.

Investors from Europe, USA, Middle East, Russia and China, whom we have invited, have either launched specific projects or explore new opportunities in tourism and real estate.

- More than three-hundred new investment proposals, the majority of them 4 and 5 star hotel projects, have been submitted to the Ministry's one-stop-shop department in the past two years.
- Two hundred and fifty one tourism investment proposals were submitted in the new investment law. High quality and sustainability are at the core of our efforts to support small and medium tourist enterprises, which are the backbone of our tourism sector.

Last year we launched a program through the National Strategic Reference Framework for the period 2014-2020, co-funded by the EU, for upgrading and modernizing small and medium size tourist businesses up to 50 per cent of their investment plans. We are just about to launch another program, that will fund up to 50% the creation of new businesses, including new projects for thematic tourism.

Greece. Sixteen thousand kilometers of coastline.

More than one hundred islands, each with its own identity and beauty, offer so much more beyond sea and sun. We are the most diverse complex of islands in the Med and Europe with world-famous destinations but also hidden gems that we now promote.

Being the third leading European cruise destination, our crystal-clear blue waters are among the safest in the world, and are also ideal for yachting, sailing, and diving.

*"Go skiing and then take a 20 min drive and swim in crystal clear sea!
Where else can you get this?"*

There are few places in the world, like Greece where one can ski and within a 20 minutes' drive be by the seaside and enjoy.

Our mainland is ideal for travelling year round. More than 3000 villages with their own history, tradition and authenticity, several winter resorts and ski centers across the mainland.

Travelers from around the world come to climb

Olympus and other mythical mountains and explore the diverse landscape of forests, rivers, lakes, waterfalls.

Greece allows visitors to discover multiple destinations in one trip.

Many plan their wedding and honeymoon in Greece, as the perfect place for lifetime memories

Greece tops Europe in terms of the quality and uniqueness of thermal natural resources, active mineral water springs, several registered as medicinal.

In the land that gave birth to modern medicine, the homeland of Hippocrates, medical services meet modern expertise and Greek hospitality, creating a unique mixture that welcomes medical tourists year-round.

And of course Greece is widely known as the birthplace of democracy and the Olympic Games, of arts and sciences, and is home to 18 world heritage sites included in the UNESCO List.

We offer highly-personalized thematic experiences linked to

- our enormous history and culture,
- religious and pilgrimage tours,
- cruises, yachting and diving,
- luxury vacation

✓ *Health and Wellness, MICE, city-trips*
 ✓ *outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain-climbing, rock-climbing, biking*
 ✓ *gastronomy based on the healthy, tasty and nutritious Greek diet with locally grown products*
 ✓ *extra virgin olive oil, pure honey, herbs and spices, great cheese, fresh organic fruits and vegetables, and delicious fish*

We promote

- health and wellness, MICE, city-trips,
- outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain-climbing, rock-climbing, biking and so many more,
- the famous Greek gastronomy based on the healthy, tasty and nutritious Greek diet and locally grown products that are part of the unique identity of each destination.
- We have the unique Greek extra virgin olive oil, pure honey, herbs and spices, great cheese, fresh organic fruits and vegetables, and

delicious fish. Everything in Greece is tasty and healthy at the same time.

Everything in Greece is tasty and healthy at the same time. Our priority is to support sustainable tourism development. And to this end, we are linking our tourism sector with the primary production, the agrifood sector, and manufacturing, that gives new opportunities for growth to all areas and businesses across Greece, while adding value to our tourism product.

- We have established the Agri-Food and Tourism Forum. The Forum aims to propose and process the necessary policies and encourage the creation of value chains, networking and other clusters between tourism sector, the primary production and manufacturing enterprises.

- We are cooperating with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to set the specifications and standards for agrotourism activities, and introduce a special label for agrotourism in the near future.

- We support the Greek Breakfast, an initiative by the Greek Chamber of Hotels and marketing initiatives promoting Greek gastronomy abroad. We are also cooperating closely with Enterprise Greece, to promote the excellent Greek products worldwide.

- A Greek Cuisine Label is already being granted to restaurants for the high quality of products and services, as well as a winery label for wineries across Greece that are open and welcome visitors.

- A recent initiative we supported, was the joint project of TUI CARE Foundation and Futouris to promote Crete as a sustainable food destination, where more than 200 local producers companies, olive-growers and winemakers joined.

The GNTO, our national body for the international promotion of Greece, has a very dynamic plan of mixed media advertisement, co-ops, stronger presence in International exhibitions, in the biggest online platforms, on satellite tv networks, in traditional media, on social media and online, and also by organizing the largest number of fam trips and press trips, to promote destinations and experiences 365 days a year in Greece.

On the occasion of the World Travel Market, I invite you to discover all of Greece's exciting aspects, as a top-of-the-mind destination that can satisfy even its most demanding visitors beyond any expectation throughout the year.

Mythical Peloponnese

The Peloponnese peninsula is a popular travel destination, marked by its natural beauty and rich history, a birthplace of ancient Greek heroes and myths. The beauty and variety of the area was showcased at an exhibition of aerial photographs titled "As Seen by the Gods", which was organised by the Peloponnese Prefecture and hosted by the Hellenic Centre from 6-8 November in London. The pictures captured the diverse natural landscape - deep blue sea, hidden coves and tucked-away inlets, steep slopes- as well as the effects of human intervention through the ages – historical monuments, picturesque villages and cultivated land.

Speaking at the launch Giorgos Petritsis, Tourism Counsellor for the Peloponnese Prefecture, noted the growing number of British tourists visiting the area, adding that Peloponnese was chosen in 2015 for the annual Travel Convention of the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA). Mr Petritsis highlighted the various opportunities that Peloponnese offers for quality tourism development, stressing the easy access to the area via Kalamata's airport, its rich cultural heritage and healthy diet.





photo: Panayis Chrysovergis

Photo: From left to right: Apostolos Ladas (Member of Ermionida Municipality), Antonia Bouza Konstantelou (Tourism & Culture Counsellor of the Peloponnese Prefecture), Giorgos Petritsis (Tourism Counsellor of the Peloponnese Prefecture)

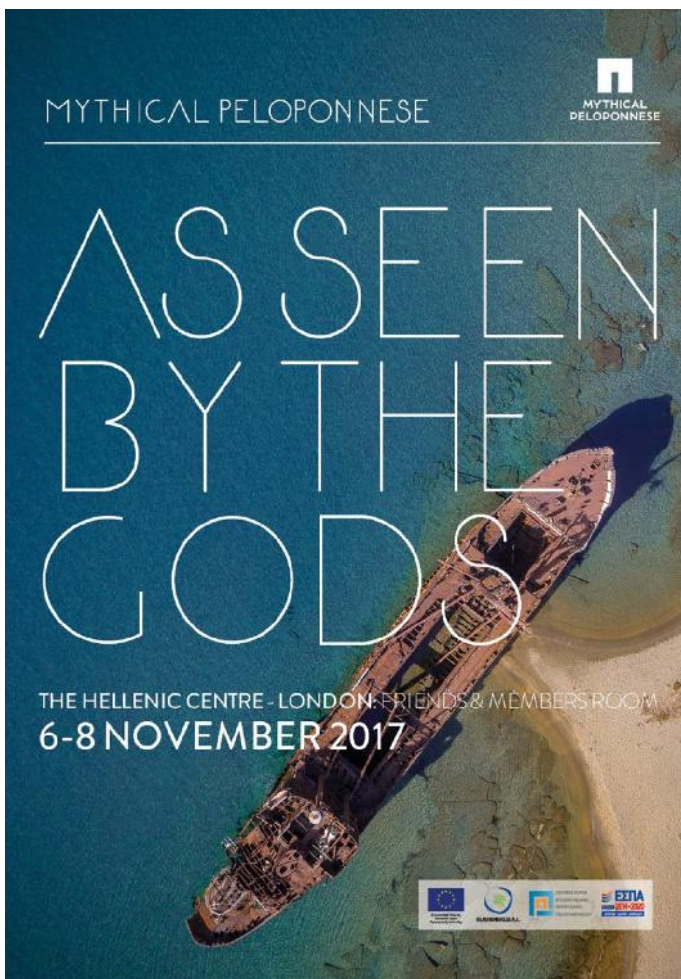


Photo credits: Peloponnese Prefecture

The Polytechnic Uprising celebrated at the Greek Parliament

*Aristides Baltas is a philosopher of science and physicist who was appointed as Minister of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs and as Minister of Culture and Sports of Greece in the cabinet of Alexis Tsipras (from January 2015 to November 2016). He is also a founding member of the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA). He is currently Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Science at the National Technical University of Athens and an elected MP for the Attica. In 2002, he was awarded the National Prize for Nonfiction for his book *Objects and Aspects of Self* (Αντικείμενα και όψεις εαυτού). In December 2010, he received the Xanthopoulos–Pneumatikos Award for Excellence in Academic Teaching. He has written many articles and books in Greek and English. His latest book in English is: *Peeling Potatoes or Grinding Lenses: Spinoza and Young Wittgenstein Converse on Immanence and Its Logic*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012 (ISBN 0822944162).*

Following is the speech he delivered at the Greek Parliament on the occasion of the 44th Anniversary of the Polytechnic Uprising.



Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me to begin by stressing that these days are days of national mourning, paying respect to the victims of the disastrous floods having hit Western Attica. The thoughts of all of us are concentrated on the families of those victims as well as on the efforts of the rescuing teams to preserve life and turn things back to normal.

For this reason –but not only for this reason- what I want to say today has to avoid stereotypes and big words and focus on the very event we are commemorating while trying at the same time- which is not always easy- to connect this event with issues which are of present day concern.

Time is short. Five minutes. Therefore only five points.

Point one: November 17, as the date commemorating the brutal termination of the students' occupying the downtown campus of the National Technical University ("Polytechnio") in November 17, 1973, presents an unusual, not to say paradoxical, character. It is a commemorative date which, so to speak, has imposed itself, as well as the form it takes (ceremony on campus, march to the U.S.A. Embassy) from below. Despite the problems, it encounters almost every year, despite the continuing criticisms from many quarters as to the form the ceremony takes, despite all attempts at appropriating the content as well as the form of the commemoration

and coloring it one way on another, content and form have resisted for 44 years. People of all ages and of all categories have been continuing to visit the site and participate at the march, schools with their teachers, unions, political parties, organizations of all kinds have been always there. And this phenomenon obliges us to conclude that something important has happened in November 17, 1973. It is this we have to locate.

Point two. The occupation of Polytechnio has been the culmination point of an authentic student movement. I stress "authentic" to note that this movement had not been organized from "above" by the political decision of some party or organization. It was a movement that organized itself. It created its own leadership, its internal structure and its form of organization, while it was itself that formulated its aims and its demands. It was itself that assumed its own political responsibilities and which protected itself from outside interference. In one word, this student movement invented itself and preserved its autonomy to the end.

Point three. How did this movement start? By an initiative which appeared as practically insignificant to the authorities: ask for elections in the student associations which were already in place and whose boards had been appointed by the military. The junta –trying then to somehow legitimize itself– allowed this to happen. But for elections to be held, a petition signed by 21 certified members of the corresponding student association had to be presented at the relevant court. And the question was: would there be 21 students brave enough to sign the petition? On the other hand, from politically seasoned people, the question was: what difference does it make to the enormous problems the country is facing to have student elections? Is it worth the trouble to have 21 students per student association uncover publicly their democratic orientation?

However the staggering result silenced all such reasonable objections. Literally hundreds of students per student association signed the petition, general assemblies were convened, and new forms of student associations emerged, democratic elections were held in all of them. People met, all kinds of discussions ensued a whole movement created itself out of scratch.

Point four. The culmination of the movement was, of course, the occupation of Polytechnio. There, in hour-to-hour discussions and in quasi-formal assemblies, the students found and formulated their political voice, broadcasted it from the studio they

had themselves created, elected their coordination committee, organized their daily life in the premises and protected themselves by expelling those who created trouble of one or the other kind.

The culmination of the three day occupation, the culmination of the culmination so to speak, came in the night of Friday 16 to Saturday 17 of November 1973. Late that night, the students received an ultimatum: either evacuate the premises immediately or the Army enters. Either decision was fraught with very real dangers: the campus was surrounded not only by Army but also by police forces whose brutality had been exceeding all measure; snipers were still around; there were people lying wounded, or perhaps dead, within the buildings; no guarantees for safety were offered.

Under these conditions, the coordinating committee assumed unanimously the great decision: "NO, we don't evacuate". And, in deciding this, the broadcasting studio within Polytechnio was asked to play the National Anthem. The Greek Army was invading a Greek University campus while the Greek students in the campus were singing the Greek National Anthem. This was the culmination point that turned the student occupation of Polytechnio into an event of truly national, if not international, proportions. This was the moment in time which gave that event its historical dimension and which continues to preserve its significance for all these years.

Fifth and last point. Without the support of the Greek people during the three days of occupation and immediately after, perhaps nothing that important would have occurred. "Our children have shown us the way; they have given us the example, and, to our shame, they have acted in our place; we bow our heads to them". This is what many people have thought at the time, this is what made the military dictatorship lose every shred of popular tolerance it might have still been enjoying. Its overthrow, one way or another, had entered massively in the agenda.

And finally, the lesson for today. We live in democratic times. It is our duty to reinforce democracy. We have to be open to different points of view and try to make a synthesis of different views. We have to achieve in as many cases as possible what we can call a "democratic surplus": the view that emerges out of a democratic process is better on all counts of every position that was initially proposed at the beginning of the corresponding debate.

Thank you.

Should we go, should we go, no one knows ...

Vouvoula Skoura was born in Thessaloniki, Greece. Her works in film and video have been presented at international festivals and universities in over fifty cities. Her films Inner Migration (1984) and Skoria Fotos (1989) were both commended at the Drama Short Film Festival, Greece. Her video Black Moon took First Prize in the Athens Video Art Competition, 1998. ETEL ADNAN: Words in exile (2008) won the Greek Film Centre Award at the 10th Thessaloniki Documentary Festival.

During the dictatorship, one of the most traumatic periods of Greek history, Vouvoula Skoura lived and worked in London in self-imposed exile. She soon became part of the resistance movement against the Junta.

@GreeceInUK asked her to look back to those years! Here is her account:

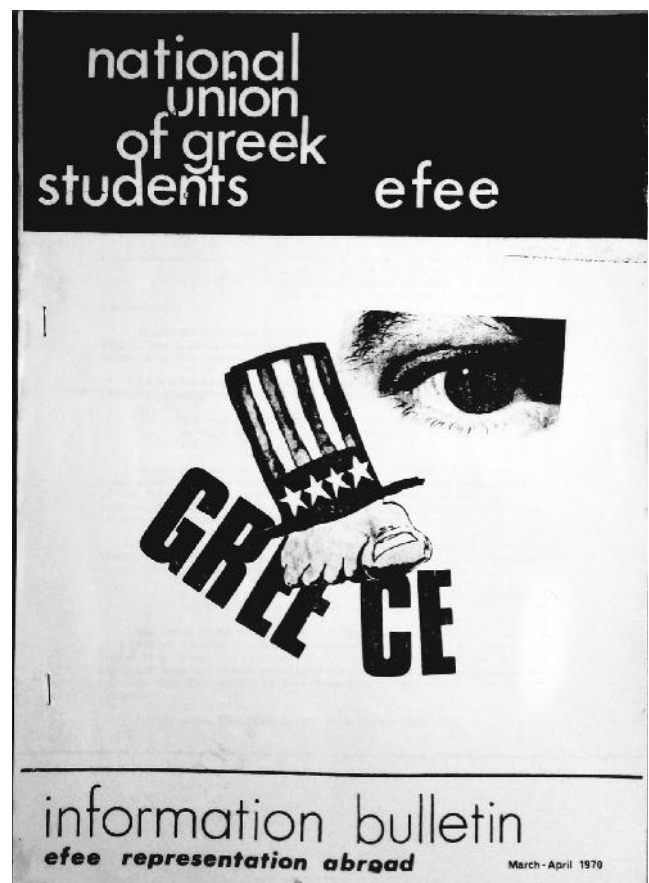


1974 The soundtrack of a return.

The track of a journey: From Pink Floyd and the forbidden, political songs that I used to listen to while in London, to the arrival in Athens, and those seemingly cheerful songs played on state radio stations. The ban that had made us exiles focus on lyrics, the related emotionally charged nature of the music, had all turned to nothing. There was hardly anything I could listen to. Moreover, I could now see just how conspicuous the cultural imprint of the 7-year period had been, as I could sense the presence of a deep cultural hiatus.



Poster



Leaflet

1967 *The Get (away)*

Should we go, should we go, no one knows ...
 And there, far away, the night. A candlelight
 guides the passion for our very steps
 should we go, should we stay. Our heart
 fails as laughter in that black sky .
 Thoughtless, harsh, we unpin a bull
 We borrow his voice, our voice a bell.
 Should we go - her eyes - should we stay - her eyes
 Oh, Mother

Alexis Drimaris, 1950-1954

Alongside my husband, Michos Costopoulos, we decided to leave Greece. We felt that our self-exile was a political act, as we knew that an unfree régime would make any attempt at a creative act simply futile. On the evening of our first day in London, we found ourselves in Queen Elizabeth Hall watching Mikis Theodorakis's concert.

Having left behind an attempt to open up to contemporary art tendencies -an attempt cut short by the emergence of the Junta- I found myself at the heart of a multitude of political movements, developing hand in hand with those of female emancipation, whilst also relating to a variety of aesthetic issues and pursuits.

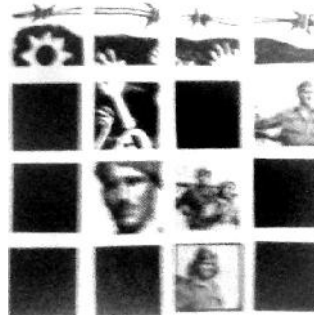
The images

From those very first days of our self-exile in London we became part of Greek Committee against dictatorship I became part of it, accompanied by my pictures created through a fusion of two currents of emotional flow. On the one hand, the anger generated by the existence of an oppressive régime, and on the other a kind of euphoric creativity relating to the enrichment of pop culture. I felt that while the subject matter of my images ought to be firmly engaged to a political cause, featuring a distinctly realist clarity, I also wanted to pursue alternative routes, becoming a part of artistic movements active at the time in Britain.

Through my work for Greek Committee against dictatorship and the Patriotic Front, I created a personal post-realist style. Thus, the image of A. Minis merges with a depiction of various symbolic objects, so as to convey as well as condemn the fact of prisoners' torture.



The trial of
the Patriotic Front



Leaflets: Campaign for
the release of all political
prisoners in Greece



On another occasion, for the cover of Perikles Korovesis's *The Method: A Personal Account of the Tortures in Greece*, I used an image of Melina Merkouri's hand grasping the mike, while speaking in front of a dense crowd in Trafalgar Sq. I turned it round and made it look like the image of a hand clutching the railings of a prison, as well as that of a fist.

Everyday life

Such were my everyday life experiences during my London years. They frequently provided a link between the freedom felt via being a part of the feminist movement, and that relating to political action against the war in Vietnam.

Cinema also had a deep effect; it constantly played a significant part in. (Decades later, during one of our many discussions, Maria Andronikou, my art historian friend, remarked, quoting Walter Benjamin, her own *Man of the 20th Century: the camera goes deeper; it allows us to experience an optical unconscious, much like psychoanalysis offers a chance to get in touch with an instinctual unconscious.*)

Despite financial difficulties, the then cultural and political milieu clearly, and very creatively, determined our lives, so much so that the traces are still felt until today. They form a trail that I continuously follow: via my exiled words, through images constantly seeking an exchange between East and West.

Vouvoula Skoura
Athens, 2017

Photo credits: Vouvoula Skoura

New national initiative: “Knowledge and Partnership Bridges”

The Ministry of Economy and Development through its General Secretariat for Strategy and Private Investment, launches a new initiative, with a view to engaging Greeks living abroad in the development of the Greek economy.

10 Q&A for the new initiative

1) What is “Knowledge and Partnership Bridges”?

It is a new national initiative which aims at aiding the country’s progress by systematically enlisting the support of Greeks who live and work abroad. The primary objective of the initiative is the contribution of specialised Greek personnel abroad to the national effort to steer the country towards a ‘knowledge based society’. Encouraging the creation of entrepreneurial networks and synergies between Greeks living and working abroad is among the key goals of the initiative.



2) Why is the initiative “Knowledge and Partnership Bridges” launched?

During the 1990’s but mainly after crisis broke out in Greece, thousands of young highly qualified people have moved to Northern and Western Europe seeking better employment opportunities. Today 250,000 Greek professionals are estimated to live and work abroad. The phenomenon of this huge scale emigration of high qualified people is known as “Brain Drain”.

As the crisis gradually recedes and better economic prospects are visible, Greek state has elaborated a series of ambitious development-oriented initiatives. The National Development Strategy 2021 of Greece recommends a change in production models, advocates the need for a paradigm shift and more specifically it argues that the country should develop towards the ‘knowledge economy’, which means that human capital and even more skilled human capital is a crucial factor. The importance of

human capital for a country’s development strategy is undeniable. Extensive interaction and networking, both business and scientific, between Greeks abroad and those within Greece is seen as a crucial tool in finding a way out of the crisis, while contributing to long term productive restructuring of the country.

Moreover, the documentation of the Brain Drain phenomenon along with the mobility of specialised human resources – Brain Circulation – is crucial in an objective analysis of the problems and opportunities, while keeping Greek society informed with real data.

3) What are the aims of the initiative “Knowledge and Partnership Bridges”?

The initiative is designed to promote available opportunities and actively support them with network services, so as to achieve partnerships between Greek professionals abroad and those in Greece, and to create entrepreneurial networks and

research links of a developmental nature, for the benefit of the individuals themselves and the Greek economy.

It aims to inform Greek professionals who live and work abroad about the opportunities for and the conditions of gaining access to financial resources, initiatives and institutions (eg incubators) which facilitate this co-operation.

It will be used to collect data on Greek scientists living and working abroad. Using this data on their exact number, their needs and their profiles will enable the further development of targeted policies.

‘Knowledge bridges’ is intended for specialised personnel who live and work abroad and who can introduce and exploit ideas, knowledge and expertise via effective partnerships with individual scientists, private businesses, universities or research centres in Greece. These partnerships will build the ‘bridges’, which, in future could help in creating the right conditions for the temporary and/or permanent



return of a portion of this specialised personnel to Greece, with undeniably positive results not only for the individuals themselves but also Greek society as a whole and the economy.

4) What specific forms could cooperation between Greeks living abroad and those living in Greece take?

The cooperation between Greek professionals and scientists living abroad and those living in Greece can take various forms. Any scientist residing abroad could therefore (a) subcontract to a person or undertaking in Greece, (b) assist a company in Greece to sell its products in the country where it lives and operates, (c) help friends who are either self-employed or employed in a business in Greece in order to get in touch and cooperate with foreign companies, d) establish a business in Greece alone or in cooperation with others, e) act as a mentor/"business angel" to help and / or guide the development of a new business in Greece.

5) Does the initiative "Knowledge and Partnership Bridges" aim at convincing Greek professionals living and working abroad to return to Greece?

No, equal consideration needs to be given to the freedom of mobility that individual professionals are entitled to in their careers and the flow of specialised human resources out of the country. But policies which are designed to encourage scientists to remain in Greece, are already in operation. Their objectives are to improve the skills and qualifications of scientists so that they can better engage with the Greek economy.

Greeks who live and work abroad will, through this initiative, once again connect with the country, by transferring their knowledge and experiences whether they choose to continue working abroad or are interested in returning to or investing in Greece. What is important is that Greeks everywhere will choose Greece for the common good and growth of the country.

In terms of entrepreneurship, there is great potential for building bridges between Greece and Greeks who live and work abroad. Whether they remain abroad or return to Greece, this synergy can significantly help both those Greeks living in Greece and those living abroad who wish to be a part of Greece's progress.

6) What is the Initiative Implementation Team?

The Initiative Implementation Team consists of the:

- Policy makers: The policy makers will plan and carry out the strategy for the initiative 'Knowledge Bridges and Partnerships'. The group will be headed by the Minister of Economy & Development and have the participation of: the Minister of Education, Research & Religion, the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Economy & Development, the Deputy Minister of Research & Innovation, the Deputy Foreign Minister or Greeks abroad, the Secretary General for International Economic Relations, and the Chairman of the Standing Committee on National Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee.

- Advisory team: The advisory team will be comprised of eminent Greek scientists who work either in Greece or abroad as entrepreneurs, professionals, academics, researchers and artists.

- Co-ordination team: The Ministry of Economy & Development, through the General Secretariat for Strategy & Private Investment – the General Directorate for Strategy Investment- will undertake the co-ordination of the ministries involved.

- Management Team: The National Documentation Centre (EKT), the institutional body central to the National System for Research, Technology, Development and Innovation (RTDI), will provide the necessary infrastructure, expertise, Greek researchers database, human resources and communication networks to facilitate the success of the initiative Knowledge Bridges and Partnerships will provide the electronic platform through which the initiative will be implemented, while being responsible for the setting up of the advisory team.

7) How will the initiative be implemented?

The General Secretariat for Strategic and Private Investments in co-operation with the National Documentation Centre, as the main national institution for Research, Innovation and Development, will seek the best ways to maintain a platform with services to meet the initiative's objectives. This platform will enable the recording, mapping and constant monitoring of details pertinent to the position and profiles of specialised human resources that have left Greece.

The 'Partnerships' section aims to act as a 'bridge' between young acclaimed Greek professionals abroad and in Greece (that is permanent scientists, Greek Enterprises / Universities / Research Centres within the country). By registering their details on this platform, (discipline, professional or business background and work needs) an online community



of Greek scientists, whether abroad or in Greece will be created. Participation in networking activities will enable them to develop synergies with the country or other young professionals.

Greek Organisations will register on the platform by providing details about job positions or their needs for partnerships and networking with Greeks abroad. The key objective is to interconnect the valuable Greek human capital around the world with Greece which will ultimately create new opportunities for all.

8) Where has the initiative already been presented?

The General Secretary for Strategy and Private Investment, Professor Lois Lamprianidis presented the initiative at the two-day conference, "New Greek Immigration", held by the Hellenic Scientists Association Berlin/Brandenburg on 14-15th October in Berlin.

The highly successful tour to spread word of the 'Knowledge & Partnership Bridges' initiative continued with its second stop in Stockholm. Greeks from the Swedish capital were at the Hellenic Cultural Home on 21 October attending an event

organised by the Federation of Greek Associations and Communities of Sweden, the General Secretariat for Strategy and Private Investment – Ministry of Economy & Development and the National Documentation Centre.

Amsterdam was chosen as the next stop of 'Knowledge & Partnership Bridges' on the tour of towns abroad that have large concentrations of Greeks. The event on Sunday 26 November included discussions on the networking of Greeks abroad with those who live in Greece, the means of achieving this and the benefits arising from it.

9) Has the 'Knowledge & Partnership Bridges' been presented in Greece?

Through its participation in the 2nd EU Jobs & Mobility Roadshow held in towns of Northern Greece 20- 25 November 2017, 'Knowledge & Partnership Bridges' has had the chance to update

young people, students, researchers, graduates and entrepreneurs as to how they can benefit from any interconnectivity between them. On 23, 24 and 25 November the Roadshow was held in Drama, Serres and Thessaloniki at a series of events organised by the four Europe Direct Centres in Northern Greece, ie Komotini, Xanthi, the Municipality of Thessaloniki and the American Agricultural School Thessaloniki!

10) Where could one find more information about the initiative?

<https://www.knowledgebridges.gr/en>

<http://www.greeknewsagenda.gr/index.php/interviews/government-policy/6553-lois-labrianidis>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=OGqo_rx14vo



Greek economy gaining momentum

After an eight-year crisis Greece's economy is growing again and unemployment is declining. Having undertaken significant reforms, Greece is on track to exit its bailout plan in August 2018.

In its [review of the Greek bailout progress](#), published on 13 November, the European Commission, notes that "the recovery of the Greek economy is expected to gather momentum in 2017 and growth is projected to reach 2,5% in 2018", driven by private consumption and investment. "Labor

With the annual primary surplus set to beat the target of 1.75% of GDP by a large margin, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras announced a €1.4bn "social dividend" to be paid in December to more than 3m Greeks who have been hit hardest by the recession. The handout will include €720m in one-off payments for low-income Greeks and €315m in rebates for earlier cuts in healthcare payments, Mr Tsipras said. €315m will be given to Greece's state energy company as subsidy for impoverished households. Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos said another €800m from the surplus will be set aside as a cash buffer and noted that efforts to reduce tax evasion contributed to the additional surplus.



market conditions are improving. Employment grew by 1,5% in the first half of 2017, while unemployment dropped to 21% in July 2017", marking a five-year low. "Thanks to a successful recapitalization in late 2015, Greek banks are now well capitalized", while "significant efforts are being undertaken to establish a framework for the resolution of significant non-performing exposures (NPEs)". During the first two-thirds of the ESM program, "Greece has undertaken significant reform efforts across all policy areas", fiscal targets have been widely outperformed and game-changing structural reforms in areas such as tax administration, the business environment, energy, privatization and public administration have been launched," the review notes and stresses the need for the continued implementation of the program.

Amid this positive climate, on November 15, Greece launched a €30bn debt swap in a bid to boost market liquidity. "The swap marks another step towards resuming normal financing operations on international debt markets after Greece emerges from the bailout, a finance ministry official told the Financial Times. A further successful bond swap followed on November 29.

The Greek 2018 state budget, tabled on 21 November in Parliament, envisages a new series of bond issues and foresees that the country will return to capital markets next year. For 2018 the budget expects a primary surplus of 3.82% of GDP and an economic growth rate of 2.5% - in line with the [European Commission autumn forecast](#) for Greece. The primary surplus this year will reach 2.44% of GDP, and the economic growth rate is

expected to be 1.6%. In 2018 private consumption is projected to grow by 1.2% and private investments are expected to grow by 11.4%. The unemployment rate is projected to fall further to 18.4 % in 2018. The 2018 budget is expected to be voted at the plenum on 22 December.

(Sources: European Commission, ANA-MPA, Kathimerini, Reuters, Financial Times, Guardian, Handelsblatt, Le Figaro)

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras: "Greece paid a high cost during the European financial crisis. Greece's 'adventure' will be over by the end of August 2018. This is our aim and perhaps for the first time this is not an elusive dream, but a reality." (23/11, interview with Le Figaro)



ESM Managing Director Klaus Regling: "We are pleased that the amount of the loan for Greece may remain significantly below the ESM program's limit of 86 billion euros. If the government in Athens continues to work as well, the review of this third program can be concluded quickly." (27/11, interview with Handelsblatt)

European Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis: "The Greek economy is rebounding. It is more than feasible to conclude the ongoing compliance review by the end of the year or early 2018." (21/11, speaking to the European Parliament)

Greece's economy – main indicators			
	2016	2017	2018
GDP	-0.2	1.6	2.5
Private Consumption	0.0	0.9	1.2
Public Consumption	-1.5	0.9	0.2
Exports (goods and services)	-1.8	6.9	4.6
Imports (goods and services)	0.3	6.0	3.8
GDP deflator	-1.0	0.9	0.9
Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices	0.0	1.2	0.8
Employment	0.5	1.9	1.7
Unemployment rate	21.7	19.9	18.4

(Source: Greece's Ministry of Finance – 2018 Budget, annual % change, constant prices)

Greece supports the European Animation Awards



Peter Lord, President of the EAA Association with Lefteris Kretsos, Secretary General for Media & Communication

The European Animation Awards (EAA) is a new initiative that aims to celebrate and recognize the excellence and diversity of the European animation industry. The Emile Awards, the first ceremony of the EAA, will be held on 8 December 2017 in Lille, France, to reward the skills of creative individuals and teams who have contributed to the blooming of the fine craft of European Animation. The ceremony will bring together more than 1500 artists and professionals from 40 European countries, working in the animation industry.

On 6 November the European Animation Association presented the three nominees for each

of the 16 categories (best animated short film, best TV/broadcast production, best feature film etc.) that will be awarded. The nominees were selected among 500 submissions from various countries including Greece. Speaking at the Press Conference for the presentation of the nominees in London, Peter Lord, president of the EAA Association, stressed his ambition to make the European Animation Awards a landmark event for animation in Europe. Lefteris Kretsos, General Secretary for Media and Communication, was invited and attended the press conference in support of this new initiative.

Ethnophobia: Greek animation earns international acclaim

Giannis Ziogkas is an animation director specialising in stop motion animation with puppets and plasticine. He's a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Tirana and has more than 35 years of experience in animation. During his career he's directed 13 animation films that have been screened and awarded in many international film festivals such as Annecy, Hiroshima, Giffonni and Fantoche. In 2006 he collaborated with the master of children's books, Eugenios Trivizas, in the film «The two waves», produced by ERT. His latest film, Ethnophobia, has been so far screened in 130 festivals, including the Manchester Kinofilm Festival (18-26 November), and won 23 awards.

How did you start doing animation? Why did you choose to use plasticine in your films?

I have to admit I've been very blessed in my life. In August of 1981 I had just graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and was offered a job at the animation department of the Film Studios of Tirana. My first day at the studio, they gave me a script and told me I had to make a short animation film. You can imagine my surprise as I've never made an animation film before! Things were much different back, you had to discover on your own how animation worked and it took a lot of effort, time and patience to make a film. It took me a year to complete my first project and I haven't stopped ever since.

Throughout my 36 years of experience I've used various animation techniques in my films, paper cut-outs, puppets as well as 2D and 3D animation. When I came to Greece in 1990, nobody was making films using plasticine. So I thought it was a good way to make something different and distinguish myself from other animators. Since then I've stuck with plasticine and clay as it's cost effective and a material which allows you to change the shapes of objects on the spot. The animator has a unique relationship with plasticine, you can see your fingerprints on the characters and it has a more real feel to it. You can also be very creative with it and it's a material children recognize and can connect to.

What is the public's response to animation compared to live action films? Do you feel that animation enables an artist to reach younger audiences?

I believe the public can connect to animation more easily than live action films. It doesn't matter how old you are, you could be 5 years old or 60, it still has the same magic to it. Let's not forget it's the only medium where real life objects come to life and where animals can speak! Whether you are creating an experimental animation or a film with



a narrative, it has a universal appeal and people from around the world will have the same response to it no matter what language they speak. That's why animation is so popular with kids and younger audiences in general. It's also a great way for artists to communicate important messages in a more simplistic way.

What is Ethnophobia about? What were the origins of this film?

For me Ethnophobia is a voice against racism. It's a film about human relations and how survival, clash and symbiosis go side by side and how people focus more on their differences than what connects them. It explains, in a very easy way, xenophobia and the phenomenon of exclusion in modern society.

ERT (HELLENIC BROADCASTING CORPORATION) & QKK (ALBANIAN FILM CENTRE)
present a film by JOAN ZHONGA

ETHNOPHOBIA

a MAGIKON and MAKU PRODUCTION production "ETHNOPHOBIA"
production designer JOAN ZHONGA edited by IRIDA ZHONGA composer VANIAS APERGIS
sound designer/mixing PANOS ASIMENIOS & THEOLOGOS LINAKIS
vfx CHRISTOS ZOOMIS, ANTONIS NTELIS & GIANNIS AGELADOPOULOS colourist PAT WINTERSGILL
written by PETROS KOSKINAS produced by IRIDA ZHONGA, MANOLIS SAKKADAKIS & ARTAN MAKU
voices THANASIS TSALTABASIS, GIORGOS FRANTZASKAKIS, AFRODITI GEORGOUSI, STEPHANIE FILIADI
Directed & Animated by **JOAN ZHONGA**





The idea was developed 10 years ago with the help of the scriptwriter, Petros Koskinas. We wanted to make a film that was a criticism on racism and the constant struggle of people nowadays where everybody is trying to overpower each other. We saw how man is constantly trying to show his superiority against other people by making them feel small and by making this film was our way of doing something about it. You can see in the end of the film that we are the ones creating the differences, in reality we are all the same.

You have lived both in Albania and Greece. How has your personal experience of migration influenced your perspective on life and your art?

Anyone that has been an immigrant knows that life in a new place isn't easy. I left the place where I was born and lived for over 30 years to come to my mother country and it was definitely a big and difficult transition. As you would expect, I experienced some incidents of racism and I had to work twice as hard to prove my worth but I never let anything put me down. I think the most important thing in life is to learn from every experience and to see things in a positive way. Being an immigrant gives you a different perspective in life and makes you see past the surface. And that's what I try to do through my art and especially with my latest

film, *Ethnophobia*. I want to make people think on a deeper level and inspire them to open their minds and be more accepting and welcoming with the people around them. As an artist, it's important to affect people's life with your work because each of us needs to play their part to make the world a better place.

Ethnophobia has already been selected by various international film festivals and received many awards. What do you think is the "secret" of its success?

Ethnophobia has had a fantastic festival run, it's won 23 awards and has been selected to over 130 international film festivals. As an artist you always hope for your project to be well received by the audience but to be honest, it has exceeded my expectations. I had an amazing team that worked tirelessly for more than 2 years and the success of the project is as much theirs as mine.

I also think the timing when the film was released was right. The theme of *Ethnophobia* is very current and topical since immigration, war and racism have now become part of our everyday life. We are constantly bombarded by news of terror and fear but I feel that people slowly understand that things aren't just black and white. People have to focus on our similarities and what connects us and not on our

differences. We all share the same DNA, no matter of our skin colour. So what Ethnophobia does is to pinpoint all those facts in a funny, lighthearted way, so that it can have a unique appeal not only to children but adults too.

In recent years there has been a revival in animation in Greece with Anima Syros and the Athens Animfest. How do you see the potential of animation development in Greece? How could it be supported and promoted?

There's been a rise in the production of animation films in Greece in the past few years which is very positive for the industry. The festivals have helped enormously by promoting Greek animators around the world and the Greek animation association ASIFA Hellas has also played a huge part in supporting the works of Greek artists.

There are 2 major organisations, ERT and the Greek Film Centre, that give funds for the production of animation films but the truth is that even with their support, it's very difficult because animation is very expensive and it could take months or years to complete a film. That's why many filmmakers give up after their first or second film. I often say that animation is a very expensive hobby and you need to be a little bit crazy to be an animator in Greece nowadays!

I think the government should make an effort to provide more funds for the development of short films and create a separate fund solely for animation films, something that doesn't so far exist. Only by supporting Greek animators in every possible way, can the name of our country be heard around the world.

Photos: Ethnophobia press kit



6th of November: a unique monument unearthed

Archeologists unearth an astonishing 3,500 year old carving of an ancient Greek battle and the history of art is being rewritten! @GreeceInUK asked Dr Constantinos Paschalidis* to comment.



The seal was originally covered in limestone and has taken a year to clean and restore, Credit: University of Cincinnati

On November 6th 2017, the whole archaeological world witnessed a true revelation! Professor Jack L. Davis and Dr Sharon Stocker, Directors of the Pylos Archaeological Project of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, gave to the NY Times an interview on the famous Griffin Warrior's grave, during which they presented for the first time in public the so-called Pylos Combat Agate. A tiny work of art, namely a seal-stone made of agate, presenting a combat scene between a naked youth with Minoan features against an armed soldier of the enemy, appearing in the fashion of what would become a Mycenaean warrior. A third soldier lies breathless on the ground, probably wounded by the Minoan hero.

On November 6th 2017 the whole archaeological world received a tangible proof, that the late Minoan palatial art was able - through the skills of an exquisite artist - to attribute on a canvas measuring 3.4cm long, a composition of passion, in the way that

nobody had seen before. The details of the bodies, the waves of the movements, the faces of the protagonists, the tense and the breathless muscles, the rhythm of the action, even the gasps of the fight are there. In the fashion that one would expect from a master of the late Classical or Hellenistic art, from Michelangelo or Rubens.

In my opinion, the battle scene, dated to the 16th c. BCE, should not be connected to Homer's verses of the Iliad, composed 7 or 8 centuries later. It is already a complete world of its own, that needs no link to anything else. It stands on its own as a monument of uniqueness. What links the Pylos Combat Agate with Homer, Skopas and the Renaissance masters is the brilliant inspiration and the rare sunshine of its creator's mind and hands.

*A detail of the seal, which cannot be seen with the naked eye
Credit: University of Cincinnati*

"The details of the bodies, the waves of the movements, the faces of the protagonists, the tense and the breathless muscles, the rhythm of the action, even the gasps of the fight are there"



**Dr Constantinos Paschalidis is Curator of Antiquities at the National Archaeological Museum, Department of Collections of Prehistoric, Egyptian, Cypriot and Oriental Antiquities.*

“Antigoni” Ancient drama as modern as it gets

aod (Actors of Dionysus) are a Brighton based theatre company with a vigorous passion to make magic from myth. They create fresh, bold and urgent interpretations of Classical Greek plays and develop new plays inspired by Greek mythology. They have created a unique educational programme, which they deliver to schools and colleges across Britain.



Antigone adapted by Christopher Adams and directed by Tamsin Shasha was presented at theatres across London and the UK.

Tamsin Shasha spoke @GreeceInUK

1. Why have you chosen to direct only ancient drama in a country with long theater tradition and hence many staging alternatives ?

We are fascinated by this rich canon of work, with its universal themes of love, war, revenge, human suffering and redemption. We explore both extant ancient Greek drama and new writing inspired by myth. We have even recreated Euripides' Trojan Trilogy from remaining fragments (David Stuttard).

2. What is the response of British public to ancient Greek drama ?

Generally very good, although there is an often held, but unjustified, perception that it is 'difficult' and that ancient Greek drama is the preserve of an academic elite.

3. Do they consider it old-fashioned and boring?

As above. In some respects I think this perception still lingers, but I think that it is our job as theatre makers to dispel that myth and make work that is exciting, inspiring and accessible.

4. How difficult is it to transform an ancient drama into a contemporary show and how difficult is it to maintain and convey the messages of these old works of art to contemporary audiences?

I don't actually believe they are any harder than any other re-working or re-imagining because they explore such epic, archetypal and resonant themes.

However I do think that sometimes the chorus and the Classical references need additional time and consideration for a modern audience to relate to them. In many ways the chorus represents the conscience/thought beliefs of the audience, so it is doubly important to get that voice right.

5. Which of all ancient dramas do you believe is more relevant nowadays?

Trojan Women unfortunately because the destructive cycle of war never seems to abate and women and children are often on the receiving end of the most tragic abuse.

6. Which was your favorite drama of all those that you have directed/performed in?

Medea

7. Why?

Having played Medea several times I believe Euripides has created one of the most powerfully sympathetic, yet vengeful and destructive icons ever written. It's a tremendous challenge and honour for an actor to play that role, in whatever way it is interpreted and the themes of sexual jealousy and revenge remain as resonant today as in ancient times. I have never actually directed it but's on my list. In terms of favourite plays I've directed I would have to say Oedipus, because it's like an infernal machine of a whodunit and extremely dynamic and exciting for that very reason. We all know who the killer is but the journey of how he himself finds out is compelling.

8. What other Greek dramas would you like to direct?

I'm not quite sure at this precise moment but I think Ajax might be on the list. I'd quite like to explore the psychology of this hero and what compels him to act in the way that he does.

9. Your productions show that to a great extent you prefer tragedies to comedies. Why?

It's harder to make people cry than laugh! I really loved the challenge of directing *Lysistrata* and pure farce I think is brilliant when executed well, but it's all to do with comic timing and delivery and you need a very skilled ensemble to pull that off successfully - excuse the unintended pun - but Aristophanes has had his wicked way with me!

Antigone was a lovely contrasting challenge and coming from a physical theatre background I



particularly enjoyed working with a moving set and looking at how to incorporate the chorus successfully. This was the main challenge in our recent production.

10. How have you come up with the idea of incorporating sci-fi elements into an ancient tragedy?

This version of the play arose from a vital period of Arts Council funded research and development, whereby my then Associate Director, Justin Murray worked with our commissioned writer Christopher Adams to help create the latter's dystopian vision of the world. We were very much influenced by episodes

of *Black Mirror* and wanted to create a recognizable technological world with a low budget staging. We also re-acquainted ourselves with films like *Minority Report* and *Blade Runner* to help get a sense of the world we wanted to create. For the second stage of development we worked more closely with our set designer Helen Coyston to help create a dynamic and moveable set that suggested quite a stark, futuristic setting, especially in terms of supporting the chorus of AI's (Artificial Intelligence). We then shared this vision with our sound designer, Matt Eaton and lighting designer, Charlotte McClelland to support the technology and sparseness of our sci-fi setting. Our outside eye, Ally Cologna, helped develop the movement of our chorus of robotic City Archivists and this helped shape our vision of them as a sort of unified futuristic motherboard.



of unified futuristic motherboard.

11. You have placed your heroes into a sci-fi environment. How challenging is it to convey messages about ethos, morality, divine laws and personal responsibility, when heroes are individually coded and seem to obey to a pre-programmed behavior?



Very challenging, but the research and development period helped explore and unpack potential problem areas and concepts and shape the interpretation and Chris's first draft to final script. It was important for both of us that the question of releasing a person's spirit or laying a soul to rest was explored as fully as possible and that this concept carried through from Sophocles. At one point Chris wanted the main characters to be cyber generated (initially they were had wiring rather than blood) but I was adamant that I wanted them to remain human. It was important to me that we could relate to them as human beings in a futuristic setting, so that we as an audience could empathise with them, so when we decided to make the chorus AIs that was a happy compromise. I wouldn't say that the characters are pre programmed but their behaviour and actions are monitored and all of this information is stored on their individual micro-chip (represented by the LED light in the production).

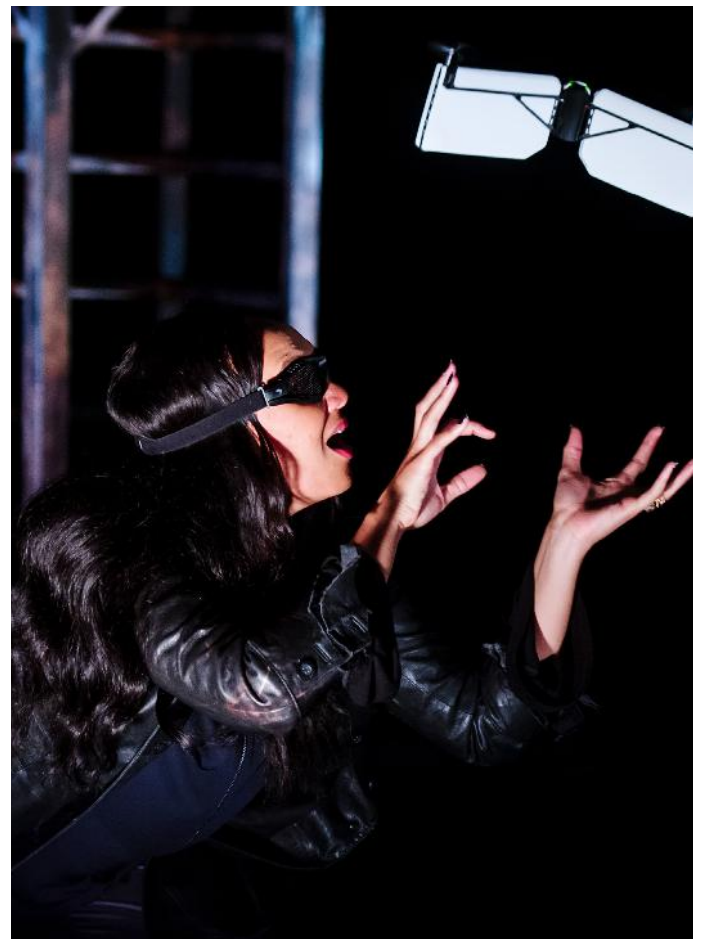
Chris was keen to make it a non-secular world hence no reference to either God or Zeus and this worked for me too. The fact that Teiresias dissected 'drone birds' rather than real ones made a lot more sense in this non-religious world. The inclusion of drones on stage, an all too pervasive symbol of surveillance in today's world, suddenly took on a prophetic power and resonance, which was exciting.

In the end this turned out to be a very collaborative

process as we re-scripted ongoing drafts, with Chris's approval, throughout the main period of rehearsals. I think he found the most complicated thing to unpack was the chorus, so the idea of them as City Archivists was a real step forward. The series Humans influenced our decision to make them AI and this married nicely with Chris's archivist concept and the futuristic settling and so we ran with it.

There is one line in the play that Antigone says to Creon after he's made his edict punishing the corpse of Polyneices "you are interfering with the natural order – souls must be put to rest". Even in this high tech world burial is of fundamental significance, as much for the living as for the dead.

Photo credits: Alex Brenner



Kostis Georgiou - Interview

Kostis Georgiou, born in Thessaloniki in 1956, is an internationally acclaimed painter and sculptor. He studied under Dimitris Mytaras and Dimosthenis Kokkinides at the Fine Art School of Athens, as well as Peter de Francia at London's Royal College of Fine Arts.

He has presented his art in more than 90 solo exhibitions in some of the most prominent galleries and museums around the world and has also taken part in over 300 group exhibitions. In October 2017 he exhibited 7 sculptures and 15 paintings in London (Mayfair).



Photo: Kostis Georgiou

1. You have exhibited your work in Europe (recently in the UK), Asia, America and of course Greece. How does the public's reception of your work compare in all these places?

Roughly speaking, the public does not differ substantially from country to country. People respond to artistic events driven by a universal sense directly linked to globalisation and to the new order of things. As a result, public reactions differ only slightly from country to country, especially in the Western world. I am not convinced of the correctness of this rational, but it is certain that it exists and determines the response of the art-lovers.

2. Do you think that the Greek public lacks artistic education compared to other peoples? If it is so, could this possibly be offset by the natural intuition for beauty and harmony inherent to Greeks?

Of course, education plays a key role in the approach of an artwork. But I personally prefer that sensitive viewer who may not have a specific knowledge on visual arts but lets the doors of their soul open to the refreshing breeze of art. They are probably those who will let themselves be seduced into the magical world that opens in front of them, without speculation or logical reasoning. Artwork is not a mathematical equation that needs a solution. It's just a key that opens personal paradises. The possible lack of education may be offset by the strong adaptation potential of Greeks. They are by nature unconventional and different in their reactions, which accounts for an acute receptiveness to the environment.

3. I always wonder, what is foremost in an artist's mind; are they primarily interested in expressing their urgent feelings or must they take into



consideration the tastes of the public as a potential customer?

Once the creator counts on what the public desires, this is their first contract with the "devil". Automatically, such an approach also marks a decisive degradation of their creative identity. Any such reaction influences the final shaping of a true work of art in a completely negative way. The challenge is for the creator to be able to create a new world, not just regurgitate the old one.

4. Where do you draw inspiration from?

From life itself. From everything that surrounds me. The creator is "trained" to observe and record what is not easily visible. Artists enter it as a code into the hard disk of their mind, and then process it in their own way, in order to share it as a new proposition.

5. Are your sources of inspiration for sculpture, painting and music different?

As I mentioned in your previous question, inspiration is nothing but a collection of images and experiences! The question for the artist is how to evaluate all the data in order to create a genuine work of art! How all these harmonies will be orchestrated. How, all separate pieces unrelated to each other will be re-arranged into a dynamic and complete symphonic feast!

6. Could you say that sculpture, because of its particular nature (size of artworks, material and

artwork cost, etc.) has been hit by the crisis more heavily than other arts?

Art cannot be defeated by any crisis. Art is always there. It may experience internal turbulence and challenges, but it will always find again its way back!

7. Do you think that the public is positive about large-scale projects or treats them as oppressive and difficult to handle mentally because of their size?

Size does not play as important a role as the quality and the reason / message/logic of the project. The work of any size may attract or repel depending on the viewer!

8. Given that you have built an international career, what piece of advice would you give to a talented young artist who would like to make a career "out of borders,"

I would advise them to respect themselves, to work endlessly, and to avoid the sirens of mainstream lifestyle and trends. Be consistent, with an active mind, with both feet on the ground and at the same time nonconformist whenever you consider it necessary. Keep your eyes alert and sharp, keep your ears open, stay always vigilant. And most importantly, seek substance and avoid like hell the easy and convenient way and the "wannabe style".

photos: Panayis Chrysovergis





Secrets and Flavours from Ancient Greece

In an attempt to introduce Londoners to the authentic Greek Cuisine Chef Louis Chrysostomou is offering a series of themed Greek dinners at the "Life Goddess" restaurant in London – starting with Ancient Greek Cuisine.

How can we revive an Ancient Greek meal and taste the Ancient Greek flavours? After years of research in Ancient Greek texts, Louis Chrysostomou is using the same ingredients that were used in Ancient Greece, but with a modern twist, admitting that one cannot be sure about the combinations and the mixture of flavours. He uses lamb, legumes, greens, garlic, olive oil, honey, nuts, herbs and accompanies the dinner with Greek wine.

Ancient Greeks placed high value on dinner and insisted on sharing dinner with family and friends, as they thought that only wild animals eat on their own, Mr Chrysostomou notes. There were different types of Ancient Greek cuisine, such as the Pythagorean diet – the first vegetarian diet – and the Hippocrates diet, used to assist the patients' healing process.

Louis Chrysostomou also plans to present Byzantine cuisine and Modern Greek cuisine from various regions such as Crete, Macedonia and Thrace, celebrating the diversity of Greece's tastes and local ingredients.



Photo: Louis Chrysostomou



An Ancient Greek Dinner

Melanas Zomos: The ancient Spartan Melas Zomos or black soup was a staple soup made of boiled pigs' legs, blood, salt and vinegar. The armies of Sparta ate this for sustenance and strength.

Mitotos: An ancient Greek pie made with greens and garlic. Pies were a very common dish in Ancient Greece and this tradition continues till today, with each region having its own delicious pies.

Lamp and legumes: In ancient Greece, legumes would have been important crops, as their ability to replenish exhausted soil was known at least by the time of Xenophon. Greeks ate meat but probably not more than 2 to 5 pounds a year.

Melikraton: A drink of wine, honey and herbs that helped Greeks feel invigorated after a long day of hard work. It is also a great aperitif after a nice meal.

December events

Dimitris Dimopoulos – "Stand Up Comedy"

When: Sunday, 3 December 2017, 7:30-9:30pm
Where: Bar Rumba (36 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1D 7EP)

Associative Iconography in Byzantine Art: two for the space of one?

When: Tuesday, 5 December 2017, 5:30pm
Where: King's College - Centre for Hellenic Studies (Small Committee room Strand Campus, London, WC2R2LS)

Performing Greece III": Conference on Contemporary Greek Theatre

When: Saturday, 9 December 2017, 9:00am – 4:30pm
Where: University of London (Bo4 43 Gordon Square, Birkbeck, London, WC1HoPD)

Greek International Women Awards

When: Saturday, 9 December 2017, 7:00pm
Where: The British Museum (Great Russell Street, London, WC1B3DG)

Tribute to Pavlos Sidiropoulos – Live Concert

When : Tuesday, 12 December 2017, 7:30pm
Where : Zigfrid von Underbelly (11 Hoxton Square, London N1 6NU)

Book launch: Greek laughter and tears: Antiquity and After, ed. Margaret Alexiou & Douglas Cairns

When: Monday, 11 December 2017, 6:30pm
Where: Anatomy Museum (6th floor, King's Building, Strand Campus, London, WC2R)

Whatever happened at (and to) Delphi?

When: Tuesday, 12 December 2017, 7:00 – 9:00pm
Where: King Solomon Academy (Penfold Street, London, NW1 6RX)

Christmas Ball 2017 by Macedonian Society

When: Saturday, 16 December 2017
Where: Royal Garden Hotel, (High Street Kensington, London, W84PT)

@GreeceInUK is a newsletter with a monthly roundup of news related to Greece, Greek Politics, Economy, Culture, Civil Society, the Arts as well as Greece's distinctive vibrant presence in the UK. Our ambition is to offer an accurate and rich source of information to those interested in Greece and her people.

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