



ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THESSALONIKI

My own Iliad

George Koumouros

Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki

May 9th – September 30th, 2014

Thessaloniki Book Fair 2014

May 9th & 10th, 2014

PRESS RELEASE

The Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki will launch the **exhibition of sketches** by the Cypriot painter **George Koumouros** titled “**My own Iliad**” on **Friday, May 9th, 2014**, at **19.30** hours. The project is being implemented **under the auspices of the Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO**.

The exhibition will be hosted **till September 30th, 2014**; it presents the **35 original sketches**, pencil on paper, created by the artist during the year 2008 in **Cyprus and the United Kingdom**, and corresponding to an equal number of episodes in **Homer’s Iliad**.

The exhibition album (a bilingual publication in Greek and English) includes **George Koumouros’** drawings accompanied by his own explicative captions, translated from Greek into English by **Angela Lyras**; literary notes, with reference to the protagonists and events of the Homeric *Iliad* depicted in the artist’s works, written by **Michael Alexandris**, philologist and associate of the Society of Euboean Studies, edited and translated by **Dr Antony Makrinos**, teaching fellow at the Department of Greek & Latin at UCL. The album will be available at the **Friends Association of the Archaeological Museum** of Thessaloniki sales point (next to the reception desk).

A **video presentation** of details of the original sketches created by the scene directors **Christos and Alice Yeorghiou** will accompany the exhibition; furthermore, a **thematic educational program for primary and secondary school children** has been co-designed with the **32nd Ephorate of Antiquities**. Pupils who will attend the program will have the opportunity to *reach* the messages of the Homeric epic via G. Koumouros’ paintings.

The following extract comes from the critical appraisal of the artist’s oeuvre and more especially of the drawings, written by Professor Emeritus of Art History and Academician, **Dr Chrysanthos Christou**:

“... In the themes of his, (George Koumouros), painting one may note that he prefers to present compositions in which the human figure plays a crucial role; he often uses bold expressionist colours, and often experiments with symbolic tendencies and the limited delineation of forms. Some of his typical painting efforts reveal a certain shift towards the elliptical morphoplastic vocabulary as well as known and established features, styles and types of surrealism. And his drawings tend wholly in this direction, pencils on forms, subjects and figures of Homeric *Iliad*. ...”. **Dr Chrysanthos Christou**, Professor Emeritus of Art History and Academician

What the artist has said about his work:

“ ... Recently, I had to draw strength from the myths. Or, rather, to hide inside mythical forms in order to continue to exist and endure. I had to dig deep within me to find the ideas beneath the words. Curiously, I re-encountered Homer, my “own” *Iliad* at its roots. That is, the *Iliad* of my childhood, which extrapolated over time into contemporary situations. Individual or collective.

In difficult times, where I could have only a piece of paper and a pencil in my hands, I created sketches. Black and white. Lights and shadows only. A long and lonely route through Homer’s passageways. I followed it, as I did when I was a child, without prejudice, without commitments, without conventions and handed-down morals. So, I wove the myth from the beginning, encountering my “own” *Iliad*; yet, with Homer always present to judge me and offer me counsel.”

Biographical Note of the Artist

George Koumouros was born in Yialousa of Cyprus in 1955. He studied mathematics at the National & Kapodestrian University of Athens and painting at the Pythagorean Academy of Fine Arts of Samos under professor Aristotelis Solounias, through the partnership of the Academy with the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

In 1993 Koumouros resettled in Cyprus and was appointed professor in secondary education. Since 1995 he is posted at the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus in the Department of Educational Technology & Generation of Educational Material. He has directed short films and documentaries. In 2005, he earned a Master of Arts degree in creative education film from Middlesex University in London.

He’s realized numerous individual exhibitions in Cyprus, Greece and abroad. Works of his are kept in public and private collections. He maintains a painting studio in Cyprus since 1982.

Educational activities of the AMTh relating to the exhibition titled “My own Iliad”:

- Educational guides / programs for families in the frame of the summer project “Exploring the AMTh” which will be implemented in August 2014.

- Free access to the AMTh's website menu presenting the digital educational leaflet created by the 32nd Ephorate of Prehistoric & Classical Antiquities. Visitors will be able to download the document throughout the exhibition's duration.

Further detailed information will be publicized in the Museum's website (www.amth.gr) shortly.

Parallel to the exhibition, the following events will take place **in the frame of the Thessaloniki Book Fair 2014:**

Friday, May 9th, 11.00-12.00 hours

Presentation of the album "My own Iliad" - "Kostas Mondis" hall, Kiosk no 15

Lecturers

Mr Apostolos Charalambides, Philologist - Representative of the non profit Association of Alumni of the Aristotle University Faculty of Philosophy

Mrs Christina Andreou, Journalist - Director of Communications & Public Relations of "Stochastis" Publishing house

Mr Yorghos Koumouros, painter

Coordinator

Ms Chaido Skandyla, Journalist - "Aggelioforos" newspaper

Saturday, May 10th, 19.00-20.00 hours

The perennial messages of Homer's *Iliad*: a world heritage dedicated to Europe

Thematic exhibition hall: "Europe; Identity and Diversity" - Kiosk no 13

Lecturers

Dr Christodoulos Yiallourides, President of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture - Professor of International Politics at the Athens Panteion University

Lectern; excerpts of the Homeric epic of "Iliad" in modern Greek, English and French:

Ms Magdalene Bekri, Philologist - Actress

Dr Luke Prodromou, English teacher - Writer - Actor

Dr. Phil. Patrick Jouin, Directeur adjoint de l'Institut français de Thessalonique

Coordinator

Dr Kyriakos Katsaros, Researcher of Social & Political Sciences

The implementation of the exhibition, the educational programs and the lectures is due to the contribution of numerous friends and the development of fruitful collaboration with the following entities:

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Information:

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Thessaloniki Book Fair 2014

www.tbf.gr

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www.amth.gr

Exhibition duration:

May 9th – September 30th 2014

Opening hours: 8.00 – 20.00 daily