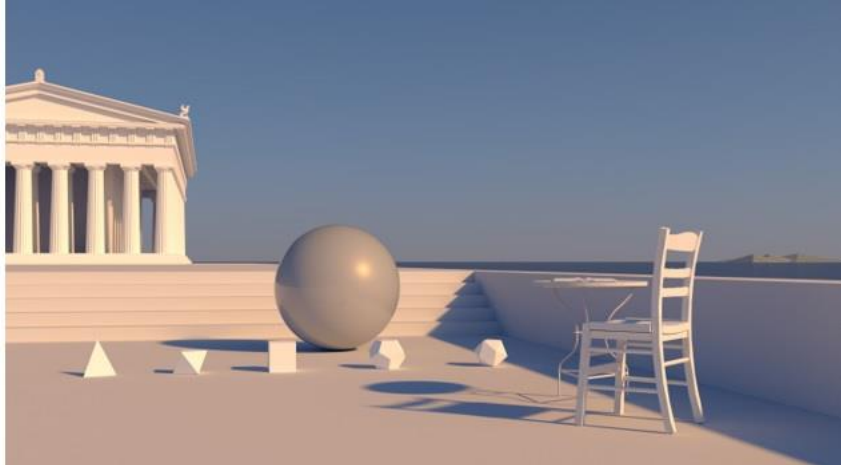




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National Hellenic Museum presents new exhibition
***Beyond Antiquity* by architect and artist John “Yanni” Fotiadis**
May 12–September 30, 2023

CHICAGO (April 20, 2023)—The [National Hellenic Museum](#) (NHM) in Chicago is proud to present ***Beyond Antiquity***, a new exhibition from Greek American architect and artist **John “Yanni” Fotiadis**, from May 12 to September 30, 2023.

In a series of nearly 40 drawings, paintings and digital artworks, Fotiadis explores classical antiquity in Greece and takes us into the present and future via the same subjects: architecture, myth and landscape. Classical antiquity is omnipresent in Greece, where you can glance up from a cosmopolitan street in Athens and see the 2500-year-old Parthenon. The ancient past is woven into the cultural legacy of the country physically, psychologically, intellectually and emotionally. It is an immense, epic and unavoidable presence that inspires all of Fotiadis’ art. The ancient Greek world also looms large outside of Greece: from London to Shanghai to Chicago, Greek antiquity lingers in our buildings, our books and our language. The works in *Beyond Antiquity*—whether depicting classical architectural forms or imagining new metaphysical environments—ask the viewer fundamental questions about our relationship to the past and the future, the everlasting and the ephemeral.

The **National Hellenic Museum** (333 S. Halsted Street, Chicago) is open Thursday through Sunday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and include admission to all exhibits, with special discounts available for seniors, students and children. Admission to the museum is always free for NHM Members. For more information on current exhibitions, events and memberships, visit nationalhellenicmuseum.org or call 312-655-1234.

***Beyond Antiquity* is generously sponsored by The John S. Koudounis Family.**

Most of the works in *Beyond Antiquity* were inspired by Fotiadis’ trips to Greece in 2019 and 2021, during which he searched for meaning encoded in the architecture of antiquity and its relationship to nature. As Joan Breton Connelly says in *The Parthenon Enigma*, “myth, landscape, and the ‘sacred’ were inseparable within the Athenian consciousness.” The art Fotiadis is presently creating attempts to capture the essence of this idea.

"It is no coincidence philosophy was born in this part of the world. The natural environment of Greece is an environment ripe for expanded thinking," says **John "Yanni" Fotiadis**. "Creating these artworks has taught me that one can find the 'divine' in anything, even the most banal object, under the right conditions and if one looks hard enough. I find myself returning again and again to the bottomless well that is ancient Greece. Now more than ever, as we face a rapidly changing and virtually unrecognizable, technologically driven world, I find it a source of comfort, reassurance, guidance and most of all, knowledge and wisdom. To look ahead, to survive, I believe we must examine and learn from the past. I feel that is the only way we will move beyond antiquity, and beyond our present state, towards a better future."

Fotiadis has also begun exploring 3D design software such as Rhino, which he previously used for his architectural work, to create "Metaphysical Landscapes" – a collection of digital images that show imaginary environments inhabited by Platonic solids and classical architectural forms, arranged in such a way as to capture or speak to the transcendence that is evoked when Greek architecture, deliberately placed in the landscape, begins to resonate with its surroundings. The hyper-realistic results from rendering software such as Rhino and Vray allow Fotiadis to visualize these ideas in an unprecedented way.

The **National Hellenic Museum** (NHM) is the premier US museum dedicated to sharing Greek history, art and culture, from ancient times to the present day, including the modern Greek American experience. NHM preserves the Hellenic legacy and makes this rich heritage relevant today through its extensive collection of more than 10,000 physical artifacts, hundreds of oral histories, exhibitions, educational programs and special events. Originally founded in 1983 and located in Chicago's historic Greektown neighborhood since 2011, the museum provides lifelong learning for the community and sparks inquiry and discussion about the broader issues in our lives and society. Regular museum hours are Thursday through Sunday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information, visit nationalhellenicmuseum.org or call 312-655-1234.

Bio for John "Yanni" Fotiadis

John "Yanni" Fotiadis is a visual artist and licensed architect in the United States. He studied architecture at Temple University and Columbia University, where he earned his Master's degree. In his 30-year architectural career, Yanni has designed projects for clients in Doha, Seoul, Dhaka, San Francisco, Cairo, Moscow, Panama, Kyiv, Tbilisi, Athens, Dubai, and Istanbul. He says, "I've been fortunate that my work as an architect has given me a unique education afforded only through travel. As Socrates, my intellectual hero, said via Plutarch, 'I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world.'"

Yanni started drawing and developed a love of visual art from an early age. As an architect, he used his formidable drawing skills as a design tool, in essence as a means to an end. As a visual artist, he sees drawing as an end in itself. His artwork has explored various themes and techniques but has always been primarily inspired by the imagery of his early childhood summers in Greece. Recently, Yanni's trips to Greece have focused on an immersion in classical antiquity. What has resulted is his ongoing drawing series started in 2019, called "The Solace of Antiquity." The drawings, done in graphite, colored pencil and charcoal, document the ruins of ancient sites, and explore the effects of the luminous Aegean light on the architectural remnants there. Equally informed by the philosophical schools of antiquity and traditional academic drawing techniques rooted in optical theory, Yanni's drawings reveal the unique and visceral metaphysical character of these ancient places that transcend space and time.

Yanni's first solo art exhibit, "Metaphysical Greece," was held at The College of Southern Nevada, Dept of Fine Arts, in the fall of 2022. He was also exhibited at The Hellenic American Project at Queens College, City University of New York in 2021. In addition to being an architect and visual artist, Yanni is an accomplished songwriter and performing musician, and he also provides design consulting services. He recently taught a series of Architectural Design studios as an adjunct professor at the Westphal College of Media Arts and Design at Drexel University in Philadelphia. He also teaches drawing classes at the Montclair Art Museum in Montclair, New Jersey.

Please visit fotiadis.net to learn more about Yanni's creative work.

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