

A' BIENNALE AWARD OF PRIZES TO STUDENTS OF THE GREEK SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

On Saturday May 13th 2000, a ceremony for the award of prizes to students of the Greek School of Fine Arts who participated in the First Biennale Competition was held at the [Creta maris Hotel](#), Hersonissos, Crete. This competition was organized and instituted by the newspaper "Art News" and [Maris Hotels](#).

This year the ceremony for the awards coincided with the celebration of Maris Hotels' 25 years of operation.

The First Biennale which is under the auspices of the Greek Schools of Fine Arts, was instituted, as a follow-up to the Annual Competition for the students of the Athens School of Fine Arts first held in 1997. Such was the success of the first competition that the organizers decided to expand the competition to a Biennale and include students of the department of Fine & Applied Arts of the Aristotelio University of Salonika, thus giving the event a national character. This is the first time that both Schools have participated and collaborated together in Greece.

Out of the 100 works of art which participated in the competition, 6 of these were chosen for awards. Three received prizes and the other three commendations.

1st prize: Olympia Koukofiki, Student of the Athens School of Fine Arts

Ms. Koukofiki received her prize of 600.000 Drs from the General Secretary of Crete Vasilis Valasopoulos.

2nd prize: Dimitra Gousi, Student of the Salonika School of Fine Arts

Ms. Gousi received her prize of 400.000 Drs from Ms. Theano Metaxas, Owner of Maris Hotels.

3rd prize: Alexandra Lagoudi, Student of the Salonika School of Fine Arts

Ms. Lagoudi received her prize of 300.000 Drs from Ms. Marina Lambraki Plaki, Director of the National Art Gallery.

The three commendations of 150.000 Drs., each were awarded to:

Irini Grigoriadou, student of the Salonika School of Fine Arts received her commendation from the President of the Department of Fine & Applied Arts of Aristotelio University of Salonika Manolis Mavromatis.

Dimitris Daniilidis, student of the Salonika School of Fine Arts received his commendation from the Ministry of Culture's Director of the Department of Fine Arts Polychronis Polychronopoulos.

Theodosia Michail, student of the Salonika School of Fine Arts received his commendation from the publisher of the newspaper "Art News" Artemis Kardoulaki.

The panel of judges for the Biennale were: Zacharis Portalakis, Art Collector – Member of the Board of Directors of the National Art Gallery, Nikos Kessanlis, former Head at the Athens School of Fine Arts, Manolis Mavromatis, Giorgos Golfinos, professor at the Salonika School of Fine Arts, Vangelis Dimitreas, Professor at the Salonika School of Fine Arts, Giorgos Milios, Professor at Athens School of Fine Arts, Rena Papaspyrou, Professor at Athens School of Fine Arts, Triantafyllos Patraskidis, Professor at the Athens School of Fine Arts, Giannis Fokas, Professor at Salonika School of Fine Arts, Panagiotis Gravalos, Painter-Engraver, Artemis Angeli Kardoulaki.

The exhibition with the works of the students which will be on show for one month, was declared open by the General Secretary of Crete V. Valasopoulos.

In a brief salutation at the beginning of the ceremony Mr. Andreas Metaxas said that from the beginning of their 25 years of operation, maris hotels have adopted as a business philosophy the philosophy of the family which is “not many years of life, but a good quality of life”, and that is why the development progress was based on the materialization of pioneer ideas, which open up new horizons in the field of quality. Our belief is that the bond between tourism and culture is unbreakable. That is why when in 1997 the maris hotels in cooperation with “Art News” decided to establish the Fine Arts Competition, they had in mind three main targets. The linking of tourism and culture, the promotion of young artists and the creation of a cultural Panhellenic event in Crete, which as a developed tourism area is an ideal place to make known and announce our modern cultural front. “We hope”, emphasized Mr. Metaxas, “that our intervention in the cultural events of our country, will contribute to closely binding tourism and contemporary Greek art and we promise to continue and redouble our efforts each and every year”.

The General Secretary of Crete Vasilis Valassopoulos, congratulated the organizers and expressed his joy that this event is taking place in Crete. He emphasized that events such as this Biennale are a necessity for the role culture should play on a national and even international level.

Ms. Lambraki Plaka, after congratulating the organizers, emphasized the importance of this initiative with which the contemporary face of art is projected in Greece.

Mr. Giannis Angelis of the “Art News”, mentioned that the objective of this competition was not for the students to compete against each other but to give them the freedom to express themselves through their work.

Following the award of prizes and commendations, Mr. Zacharias Portalakis, President of the Biennale Panel of Judges, collector and member of the Board of Director of the National Art Gallery honored the ladies of the Metaxas family, the mother Theano and the two daughters, Rodanthi and Marina, by offering them jewellery, special pieces made for the National Art Gallery by the well-known painter Christos Karras.

Finally, the writer Antonis Samarakis, in a brief salutation, stated that he was very touched as the Biennale is dedicated to young people.

Later on a reception was held at the central swimming-pool area where the Metaxas family honored clients who have consistently visited the hotels for the last 25 years.

Present at the ceremony were: The Vice-Prefect of Heraklion Nontas Marnelos, the Mayor of Archanes Stavros Arnaoutakis, the Mayor of Hersonissos Zacharias Doxastakis, Professors of the Fine Arts Schools, Art critics, Museum representatives, art lovers, news reporters etc.

The insurance coverage of works was a sponsorship of Lloyd’s of London – G. Karavias & Associates Ltd., and the transport a sponsorship of A.S. Bergeles Ltd.

Central Sales & Reservation Office,
Dimokratias 15, 71306, Heraklion, Crete, Greece
Tel. +30 2810 343110, Fax+30 2810 346088,
E-mail: maris@maris.gr,
<http://www.maris.gr>