

George Varlamos

1922 - 2013

Giorgis Varlamos was born in 1922 in Paros. He studied painting at the School of Fine Arts under O. Argyros and K. Parthenis and engraving (1942-1947) under G. Kefalinos. He continued his studies with a scholarship in Paris, studying painting at Ecole de Beaux-Arts, with R. Cami, J.-E. Bersier and H. G. Adam (1951-1952) and engraving at College Technique Estienne, with G. L. Prost and R. Cottet (1958-1961), where he specialized in bookart and especially in postage stamp engraving.

During the Occupation, while being a student at the School of Fine Arts, he joined the Communist Party of Greece and was active in the Resistance.

He had lifelong ties with the KKE and never ceased his struggle. He was one of Yianis Kefallinos' most chosen students. Kefallinos with his "students" (Louisa Montesantou, Giorgis Varlamos and Nikos Damianakis) collectively worked for three years and created the album "Ten

White Attic Lecithons" (printed by Giannis Kefalinos, a limited edition of 400 numbered copies).

Giorgis Varlamos loved and studied the laws of typography and book like no one else before him. He was internationally acclaimed for editing books and albums. He was awarded at the "Leipzig International Competition" for editing a poetry book by Neruda. The publication of three luxurious volumes of Sophocles' tragedies (Paris, 1973), illustrated by himself with 48 watercolors, was a major publishing event.

He edited, illustrated and designed a plethora of covers and books with his engravings.

He collaborated with leading artists and intellectuals.



He illustrated works of great poets and writers with his engravings. He took part and was awarded at international exhibitions (Moscow, Belgrade, Leipzig, Paris, Lugano, etc.) and he was honored for his entire work by the Academy of Athens in 1995. He loved and praised beauty in a unique and insurmountable way which was expressed in his works "Wild Flowers" and "Metora".

He passionately served the art of engraving because he considered it as a "democratic art", as the work of art that could be accessible to workers, that could be inventive and original, but not unique.

Communist ideology inspired in G. Varlamos the love for man and nature.

His consistent political stance and attitude cost him three times the rejection of his applications to become an Engraving Professor at the School of Fine Arts.

Giorgis Varlamos devoted all his life and art to the struggle for a better world. Through his work, he found himself by the side of the deprived and oppressed people in every crucial moment of class struggle: He was by the side of our people during their sufferings, but also during their struggle, for the high ideals of righteousness and beauty, with his works against fascism, against war, for peace.

He worked for the expansion of art beyond the elite and the high society salons. He tirelessly struggled in order for Art to go along with the needs, the rights and the social and liberation struggles of the people.

Together with other artists he participated in the struggles for the professional recognition of artists, he took part in collective struggles for the strengthening of the mass cultural movement.

In 1973, the Dictatorship decided to fund 100 artists with a monthly salary to build a cultural profile. Giorgis Varlamos was one of those who refused this funding.

He was nominated a candidate for the national list of the KKE in many election battles. His posters, whenever the movement was calling for them, are an important legacy. The most eminent of these posters is that of the KKE in 1981 against the accession of our country to the EEC, a poster which revealed in the simplest and most imaginative way that "EEC and NATO are on the same side".

For many years, since 1991 until the end of his life, he was responsible for the aesthetic editing of the books of the KKE's publications "Syghroni Epohi".

He passed away on 13 September 2013.



The exhibition takes place in the framework of celebrations for the 100 years since the foundation of the Communist Party of Greece