

# THE SOLACE OF ANTIQUITY

SKETCHES AND DRAWINGS BY JOHN "YANNI" FOTIADIS

AN EXHIBIT AT THE HELLENIC AMERICAN PROJECT  
QUEENS COLLEGE, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

COMMEMORATING THE 200 YEAR ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

**JUNE 2021**

CURATED BY PROFESSOR NICHOLAS ALEXIOU  
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR



PARATHENON FROM TEMPLE OF OLYMPIA

7.7.2019.



## CURATORIAL STATEMENT

The Hellenic American Project (HAP) at Queens College presents the virtual exhibition The Solace of Antiquity: Sketches and Drawings by John “Yanni” Fotiadis. Fotiadis was invited to present the 21 works featured in the exhibition to commemorate 200 years since the start of the Greek War of Independence in 1821.

Fotiadis started creating his sketches in 2019, while visiting Greece, and completed them in 2020, in New York, during the lockdown due to the pandemic. He uses black and white charcoal, graphite, and Prismacolor pencils to create the sketches and drawings on paper. Fotiadis’ sketches transport us through time and space. Written passages and spoken words from seminal figures of the Greek War of Independence and poems by various poets are presented alongside the works. This approach pairs landscape with language to present the influence of classical antiquity in the Greek War of Independence.

Any serious discourse about classical antiquity must be treated with care for, at least, two reasons. The first reason is the value of historic context. Historic context is information about the period, the place, the people, the events that created or influenced the specific event or idea. The goal is discovering how the past can inform the present, and imagine the future, not making the past conform to the present. The second reason is the relevance it bears to present-day populations.

Diachronically, the relationship of the Greeks and the “West” with ancient Greece is a problematic one. In addition to the damages sustained in the four hundred years of Ottoman occupation, Christianity too, was against the so-called pagans, destroying statues, and building churches on top of ancient temples. The Greek freedom fighters of 1821, in a way, restored the relationship with antiquity by realizing themselves as direct descendants of the ancients. The great General Kolokotronis, in a speech addressing the youth said “This place where we live was inhabited by the ancient Greeks, from whom we also come and receive this name”. Many battle ships were named in honor of the ancients, such as “Themistocles”, “Aris”, “Aphrodite”, “Miltiades”. Most of the Greek warriors did not have a formal education, however, they had a deep respect and honor for classical antiquity. From the beginning of the Revolution, the resurged Greeks established laws prohibiting the removal of antiquities from the country. The self-identification of the Greeks as continuity of the ancient world contributed to reinforcing the existing philhellenic movement and gaining the support of more people around world, at a time of anti-democratic governments and elites. In this sense, “the ruins” or what it is called classical antiquities have contributed significantly to the establishment and production of the modern Greek state and its national imagination. At the same time, the ideological uses and narratives of national imagination affect and shape our views regarding classical antiquities. In the case of Greece, there are the appalling examples of the two more recent dictatorial regimes: the Dictatorship of August 4th, 1936, and the Junta of 1967. The former equated the Acropolis with detention camps and torture, and the latter, by enforcing a mechanical and rigid ideological policy, which led to a far-right ethnocentrism. On the other hand, Western idealization of classical Greece and its cultural appropriation, have led to a racial superiority syndrome and Eurocentrism, with the obscure denial of the stolen Parthenon Marbles to Greece, as an unfortunate example.

In creating the sketches presented in this exhibition, John “Yanni” Fotiadis, a Greek from the American diaspora, an architect by training and profession, reminds us about the necessary and fundamental principles of equilibrium among developments in scientific, economic, or artistic fields, and respect for nature and democracy. He is continuing a long line of preservation that has proven invaluable in the past. From the fifteenth century onwards, when Western travelers rediscovered Athens, there was an international fascination with Greek antiquity, the ruins of Athens, and an increasing interest in ancient literature.



## **CURATORIAL STATEMENT (cont.)**

The numerous manuscripts, journals, sketches and paintings by the travelers visiting Athens, preserved valuable and crucial documentation for the city, its topography, and its temples, especially the Parthenon, which otherwise would have been lost over time. To a large extent, it was due to the precise documentation in the sketches and paintings by the travelers that assisted in the restoration of the Parthenon, which was extensively damaged in 1687 by the Venetians during the Morean War against the Ottoman Turks.

This art exhibition is the fourth such presentation by HAP. It seeks to continue commemorating the bicentennial anniversary of the Greek War of Independence, and reveal to the community, locally and internationally, the significance of the arts, and the creative imagination of the Hellenic Diaspora. The long occupied Hellenes took solace in antiquity. When they started fighting for their liberation, they cultivated a national consciousness. Fotiadis’ “Solace of Antiquity” reminds us that Greek antiquity is revolutionary art, as long as we keep discovering a meaning, which always awaits us. In our present liquid modernity, the solace of antiquity can help us as individuals and as a collective consciousness, to resolve the conflicting demands of our historical circumstances.

The exhibition was first made publicly available on the HAP site on June 13, 2021. It is curated by Nicholas Alexiou, poet and Founder/Director of the Hellenic American Project.

- N.A.



## ABOUT THE ARTIST, JOHN “YANNI” FOTIADIS and “THE SOLACE OF ANTIQUITY”



*John “Yanni” Fotiadis at the Parthenon, July 2019*

While Yanni is an Architect by training and profession, he has always thought of himself as an artist. In addition to designing buildings, he draws, paints, and writes and records music. He has dabbled in film and comedy, and has a deep interest in history and philosophy. His architectural career has afforded him the opportunity to have travel widely. He has spent time in cities as varied as Doha, Seoul, Rome, San Francisco, Cairo, Moscow, Panama, Kyiv, Dubai, and Istanbul. Travel has been his greatest teacher, informing and shaping his view of the world, and making him, as Socrates said via Plutarch “Not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world.” Despite it all, Yanni finds that he is always drawn back to Greece, the place he will always consider his spiritual home.

Yanni started drawing and developed a love of visual art at an early age. He has had spurts of intense drawing and painting throughout his adult life exploring a number of themes and techniques, but always being primarily inspired by, and recalling, the imagery of his early childhood when he spent what seemed like many endless and wonderful summers in Greece.

In July of 2019, Yanni returned to Greece once more, but with the specific intent of immersing himself in classical antiquity for a few weeks in and around Athens – having read the histories of Herodotus, and selected writings of Plato, Pausanias and Plutarch the winter before - he was ready to see Greece with new “old” eyes. What resulted was a series of drawings “The Solace of Antiquity”.

Classical antiquity is omnipresent in Greece, woven into the cultural legacy of the country physically, psychologically, intellectually, and emotionally. It is an immense, epic, unavoidable, and at times, mysterious and overwhelming presence, mostly surviving today through architectural fragments.

Yanni shares, “The sites I visited and the images I sketched and photographed in 2019 took me into a metaphysical world of paradoxes - the permanent and the ephemeral, the living and the dead, the present and the distant past, and all of it illuminated by an otherworldly light that one only sees and experiences in the Aegean. The year that followed in a which a global pandemic brought the world to a halt, gave me the unexpected opportunity to take those quickly made images on site, and develop them into clearer and more refined visions. I’m hopeful this will become an open ended project as I have much more to see, to document, and to learn. I am planning a return to Greece in July of 2021.”



## METAPHYSICAL ATHENS

Athens, like all great cities that date back to antiquity, is a city of layers and a city of infinite memory.

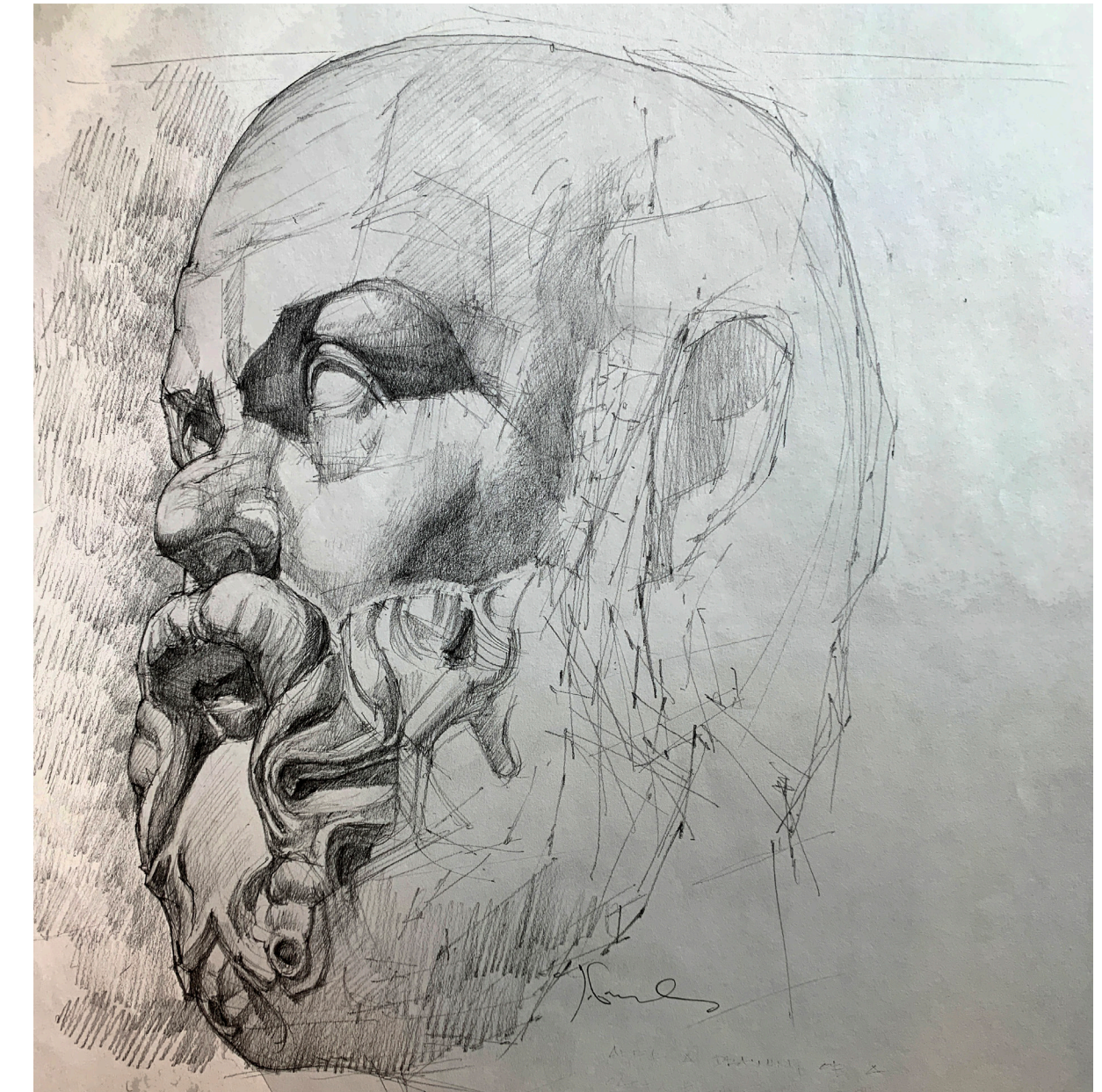
For me, Athens has always been my spiritual home. It is where my soul resides. The earliest memories I have of the city revolve around visits to my grandmother's house on Akadimou street. Leaving what I can only describe as a plastic, processed, sanitized and prefabricated American existence in the late 60s and early 70s behind – primarily due to the fact that my father was a doctor, and the environments we inhabited including the house I grew up in were beyond pristine, the annual summer trek to Greece, and Athens in particular, was an explosion of the earthy senses. Visceral odors, sounds, tastes, and a visual cacophony of images – beautiful, jarring, tragic and sublime.

As a child I still remember waking up from afternoon naps in my mother's childhood bedroom, as I would look at slices of sharp light penetrate between the heavy wooden slats of the shutters on enormous windows built in the previous century, and hear the sounds of the waking streets below - from the endless whining of motorbikes, to the bellowing sing-song sales pitches of merchant's selling everything from watermelons to lottery tickets, to the muffled church bells and conversations between neighbors down the street that would echo in the canyons of stucco. I knew I was in a very old place, filled with traditions and a way of life that despite telephone wires and electric lights and combustion engines, had remained largely unchanged for centuries.

The city seemed like an endless pathway of compacting and expanding spaces which had incredible plasticity. Off of a large defined square, one might find a narrow street filled with small shops and staircases leading to tiny cellars all cooled by being in constant shade and below ground level, which emitted smells of spices, soaps, human sweat, cigarettes, and roasting meat.

Punctuated throughout were the ancient and mysterious structures that felt as a much a part of the landscape as the mountains that surround the city like the sides of a cauldron. On daily walks with my grandparents around the city as they did their errands, I would see objects – a worn column in the middle of a street, cracked pediments at the Roman Agora, pieces of porticos, and countless other fragments of what I later learned were architecture, all illuminated by a blazing sun. There was sharp light everywhere, and it revealed and created unique shadows which seemed to be luminous in the stone. The great hills of the Acropolis and Lycabettus punctuated and anchored the cityscape. Two great markers that are also seared into my memory.

In the years that followed I returned to Athens again and again languishing in that bath of the senses that is the city through time. Despite my best efforts, I feel the drawings I've created are nothing more than crude facsimiles of what I experienced. At best fragments themselves of something much greater. Such is the nature of Athens and of Greece, a metaphysical place of subliminal experience impossible to capture on paper, but unforgettable nevertheless.

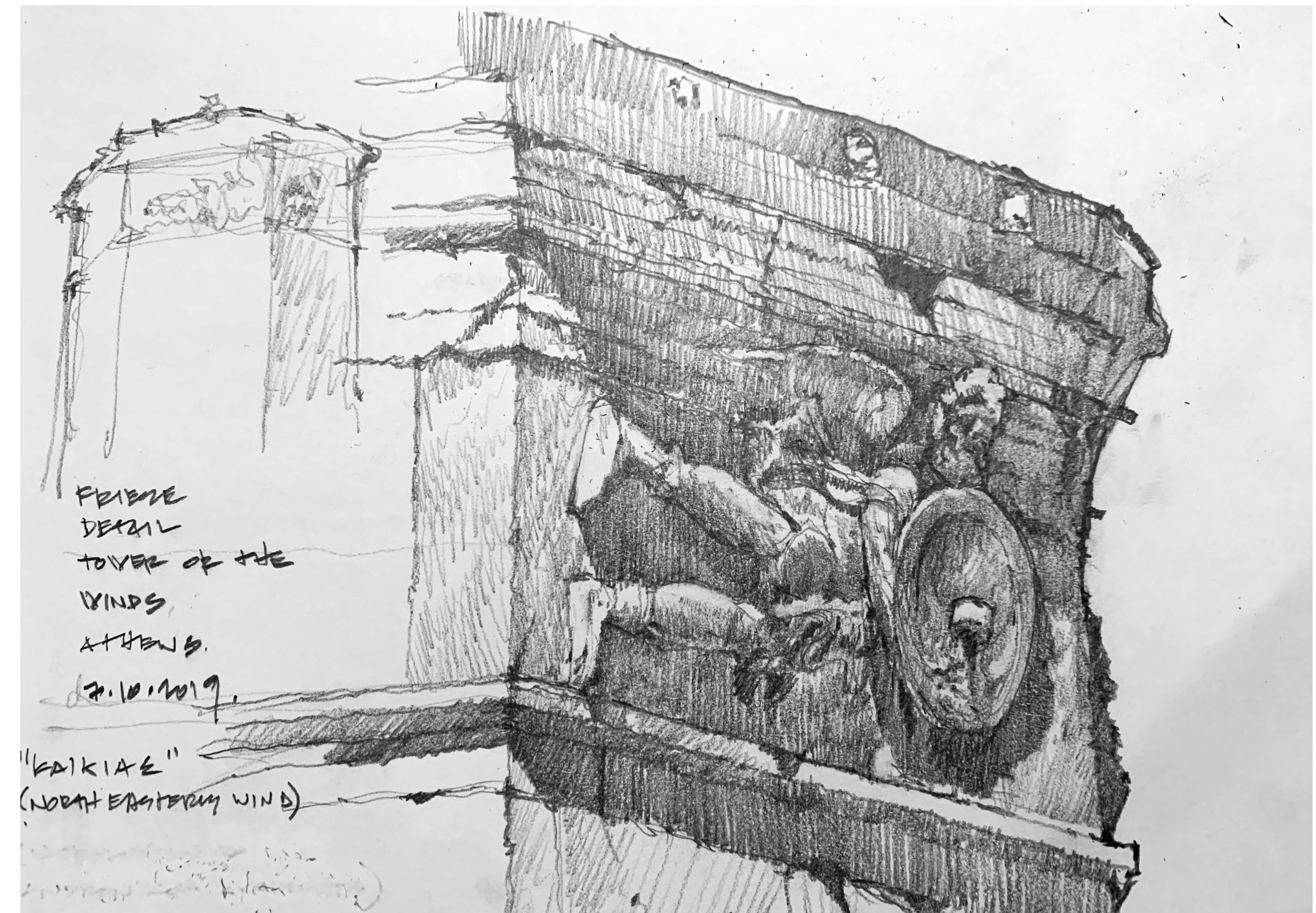


**Head of Socrates, Drawing study, 2019**  
**Graphite on paper**





**The Gate of Athena Archegetis, Roman Agora, Athens**



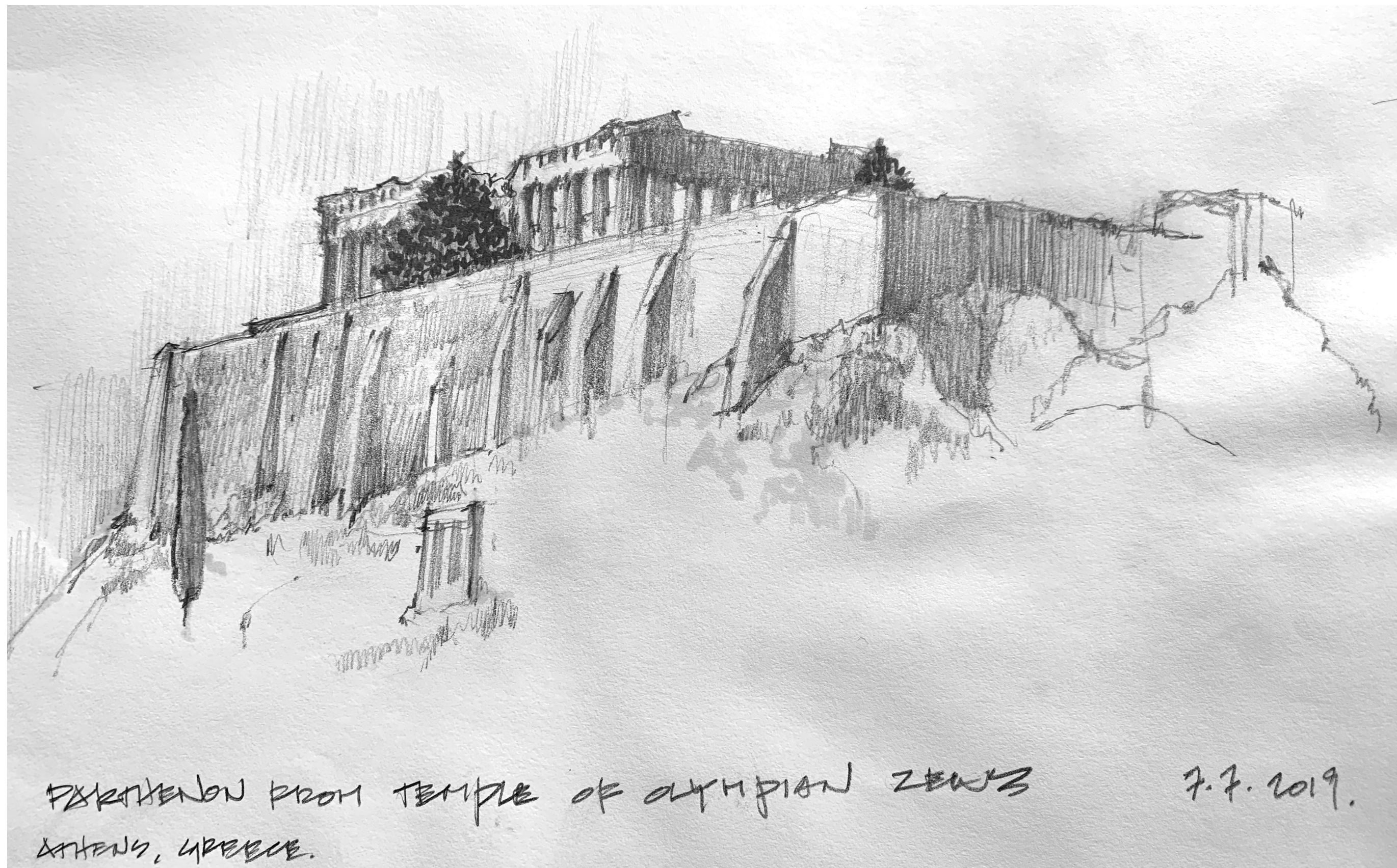
**Detail of the “Tower of the Winds” (The Horologion of Andronikos Kyrrhestes) Roman Agora, Athens**

### **FIELD SKETCHES FROM THE ROMAN AGORA IN ATHENS - July 2019 Sketchbook, 7”x10” sheets**

The “Roman Agora” in Athens is an architectural complex consisting of a vast rectangular court, surrounded by colonnades. Built during the Roman period it is a testament to Horace’s famous quote: “Captive Greece took captive her savage conquerer and brought the arts to rustic Latium”, as infamous names such as Julius Caesar, Augustus and Hadrian are all connected with its construction and upkeep.

The courtyard was surrounded by stoas, shops and storerooms. It had two main entrances, on the East an Ionic propylon and on the west, a Doric propylon known as the Gate of Athena Archegetis which linked it to the Greek Agora. It was built between 19 and 11 BCE. During Hadrian’s reign the court was paved with slabs, and the famous library, one of his gifts to the city, was constructed.





**View of the Parthenon from the Temple of Olympian Zeus, Athens**



**A column along the southern face of the Temple of Poseidon, Cape Sounion**

## **FIELD SKETCHES FROM ATHENS AND CAPE SOUNION - July 2019 Sketchbook**

The Acropolis of Athens is the epicenter of the city architecturally and spiritually. It is visible from almost every corner of the city and serves as a landmark and orientation point. The view of the sketch shown is from the Temple of Olympian Zeus, located about 200 meters, to the southeast of the hill. The siting of most ancient temples in Greece is oriented towards broader geographic characteristics - the temples acting as physical embodiments of the gods carefully placed in landscapes that had divine attributes and sacred connotations.

The Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion is no different. Situated on a promontory overlooking the Saronic Gulf, it is oriented towards the numerous geographic features near and far making it seem like a metaphysical anchor in the wild landscape that is the Attic peninsula.



## METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE ARCH OF HADRIAN

Of the many wonderful structures from antiquity which are located in the city of Athens, the Arch of Hadrian has had a particularly visceral effect on me since I was a child. Years before I knew who built it and why, it would serve as a marker and milestone for me, acting as one more visual affirmation, among the many, that I wasn't dreaming, but that I was indeed in the city of Athens once again, and on the way to my grandmother's house.

It would appear to me suddenly, as I strained to look, bleary eyed from the hours long plane ride, out of the dusty rear window of a taxi or my uncle's large Volvo that I was riding in, as we would turn onto Amalias street, and enter the city from the south heading towards Omonia Square and away from the old Hellenikon Airport where we had arrived a few hours before.

Even then, as a child, I knew it was old. Covered in the soot and blackened by the turbulence of the countless centuries it had witnessed, it seemed dark and mysterious to me. Its original function or purpose lost and as unclear as the worn marble that it was made of. Yet there it stood as we whipped by it, almost looking out of place on the bank of a bustling, boiling river of motorcycles and taxis in a searingly hot summer afternoon in Athens in the late 60s or early 70s. I would think about it hours later in the cool silence of my mother's childhood bedroom, as I would be made to lie down for an afternoon nap, wondering about it as I stared at the cracks in the ceiling of the room my mother had been born in.

Decades later, I would return to Athens many times. Now armed with the knowledge that comes from studying architecture and reading history, I knew its story quite well. Built in the early 130s AD, by the Athenians who raised it to commemorate the arrival of the famed Philhellene Roman Emperor Hadrian, who had come to Athens to bestow yet more gifts to this city he clearly loved. Hadrian had given Athens a new agora, a new library, and had completed the construction of the massive Temple of Olympian Zeus, a colossal building whose construction had been started 600 years earlier. He had even made himself a ceremonial citizen of the city.

The Arch was a double sided gateway, not just an entrance to the new temple precinct of Olympian Zeus, but as some scholars suggest, a doorway and demising line between the new city of Athens expanded by Hadrian, and the old the city founded by Theseus. Both of their names are on inscribed on the Arch.

Today it still serves as a gate, albeit a symbolic one. It welcomes the visitor, and no doubt has welcomed millions of visitors to Athens since it was built, the way it welcomed Hadrian all those centuries ago. But to me at least, it is a gateway not only to the city and to the "present", but also to my childhood, and to a distant glorious and mysterious past. In my mind it metaphysically fuses and connects the essences of all three.



## GREEK ARCHITECTURE

Not magnitude, not lavishness,  
But Form—the Site;  
Not innovating willfulness,  
But reverence for the Archetype.

**Herman Melville**

## THE ARCH OF HADRIAN, 2019

Graphite on Paper

11" X 14"





## **METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS**

Of the many ancient Temples that existed in Greece, the Temple of Olympian Zeus was the largest.

Construction of the building began in the 6th century BC during the rule of the Athenian tyrants, who envisaged building the greatest temple in the ancient world, but was not completed until the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian in the 2nd century AD, some 638 years after the project had begun.

During the Roman period, the temple, which included 104 colossal columns, was renowned as the largest temple in Greece and housed one of the largest cult statues in the ancient world.

In 124–125 AD, when the Philhellene Hadrian visited Athens, a massive building programme was begun that included the completion of the Temple of Olympian Zeus.

The temple and the surrounding precinct were adorned with numerous statues depicting Hadrian, the gods, and personifications of the Roman provinces. A colossal statue of Hadrian was raised behind the building by the people of Athens in honor of the emperor's generosity. An equally colossal chryselephantine statue of Zeus occupied the cella of the temple.

Today little remains of this magnificent structure except for fifteen standing columns and a sixteenth column which lies on the ground broken into pieces where it fell during a storm in 1852. Nothing remains of the cella or the great statue that it once housed.

The site today, an archaeological park, is eerily empty, except for the tightly grouped fifteen colossal columns. They bare witness and are a mute testament to a past of former glory. One cannot help but feel a sense of melancholy that is pervasive on the large open plane of the site.





*“Let’s go to see the Greeks where they live to find the old Socrates, Plato, Themistocles, the Levantine Leonidas and to tell them the good news that their descendants have been resurrected.”*

**General Makriyannis**

**THE TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS, ATHENS, 2020**

Prismacolor pencil on gray tone paper  
12” X 16”



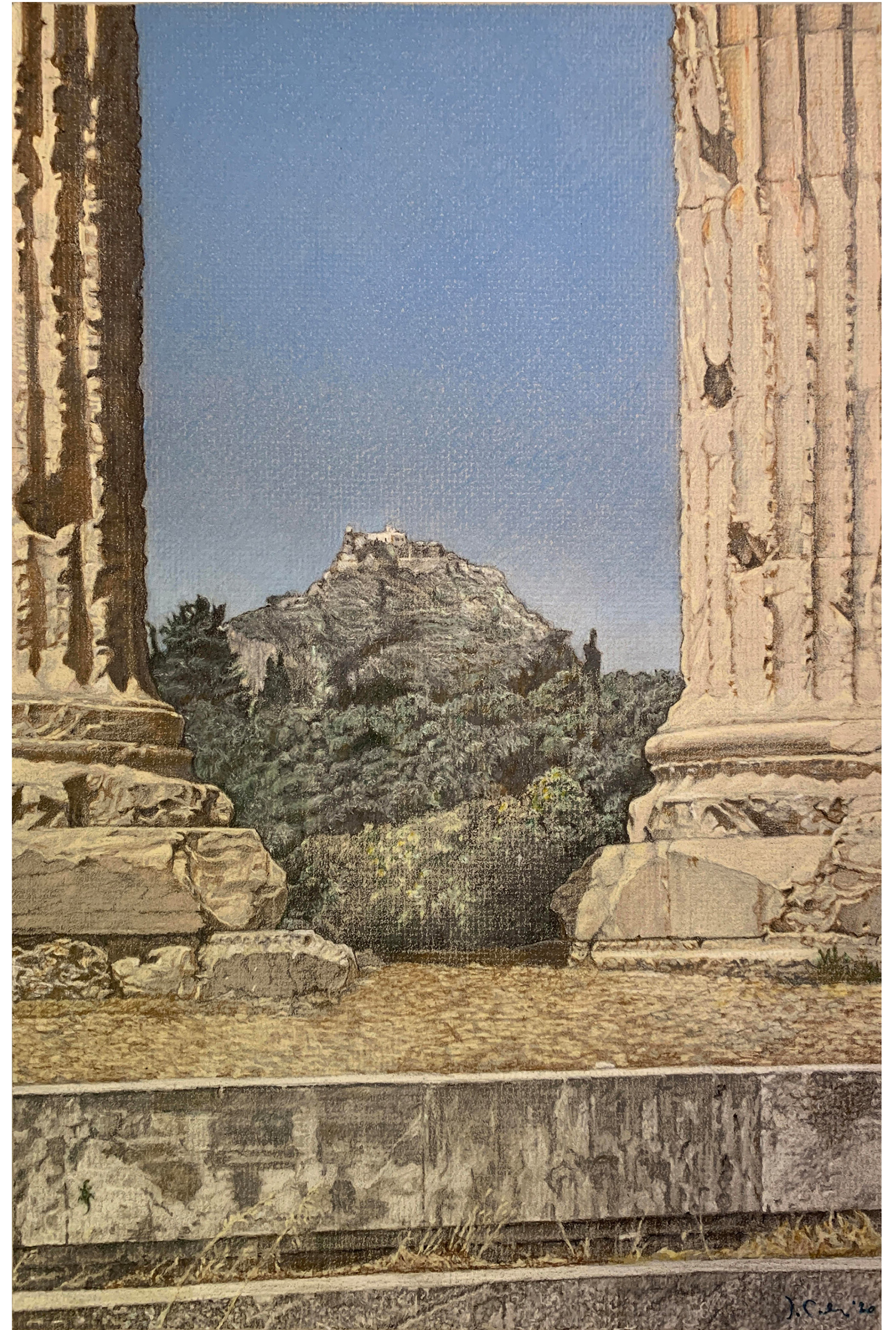
*“If I am a poet, the air of Greece has made me one.”*

**Lord Byron**

**LYCABETTUS HILL FROM BETWEEN THE COLUMNS OF THE TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS, ATHENS, 2020**

Prismacolor pencil on graytone paper

13” X 19”





## METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE PARTHENON

One of the earliest memories I have from when I was a little boy was stepping outside of the front door of my grandmother’s house on Akadimou Street in Athens and turning to see a sliver of the Parthenon up on the hill of the Acropolis peaking between the buildings of a modern Athenian streetscape. She lived near Omonia Square.

I couldn’t have been more than 5 or 6. But the way the sharp light was hitting that fragment, I had what I can only describe as a transcendent moment. Like Saul on the way to Tarsus, I was knocked off of my tiny horse and saw a form of “beauty” and “truth” revealed to me for one brief fleeting moment. It was revelatory.

In the years that followed I visited the Acropolis of Athens countless times. First as a student and then as a grown man and Architect. One of the most recognizable and important buildings in human history, I came to learn of the Parthenon’s significance as a cultural milestone in the development of western civilization. I still make a pilgrimage every year that I go to Greece. Every time I pass through the Propylaea (which I have also drawn) and see the building from the North-west, in the now iconic view. It is as if I am seeing it for the first time. It still strikes me as a miracle in stone. It is ethereal and otherworldly in its beauty.

This particular drawing is a detail of the Northeast corner of the Parthenon, but I’ve realized recently that it is also recalling what I saw as a child. Seeing a fragment of beauty. The architecture of antiquity is a language, and when one learns to read such a language, one can learn to discern the whole from the part. Aristotle discusses this concept of the part and the whole in his “Poetics”.



*“Here’s the bullets, don’t touch the columns.”*

**Kyriakos Pittakis, alleged offer to the Ottoman Army during the Siege of the Acropolis in 1822, to save the Parthenon.**

**THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE PARTHEON, 2019**

Graphite on Paper

11” X 14”





## METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE PROPYLAEA

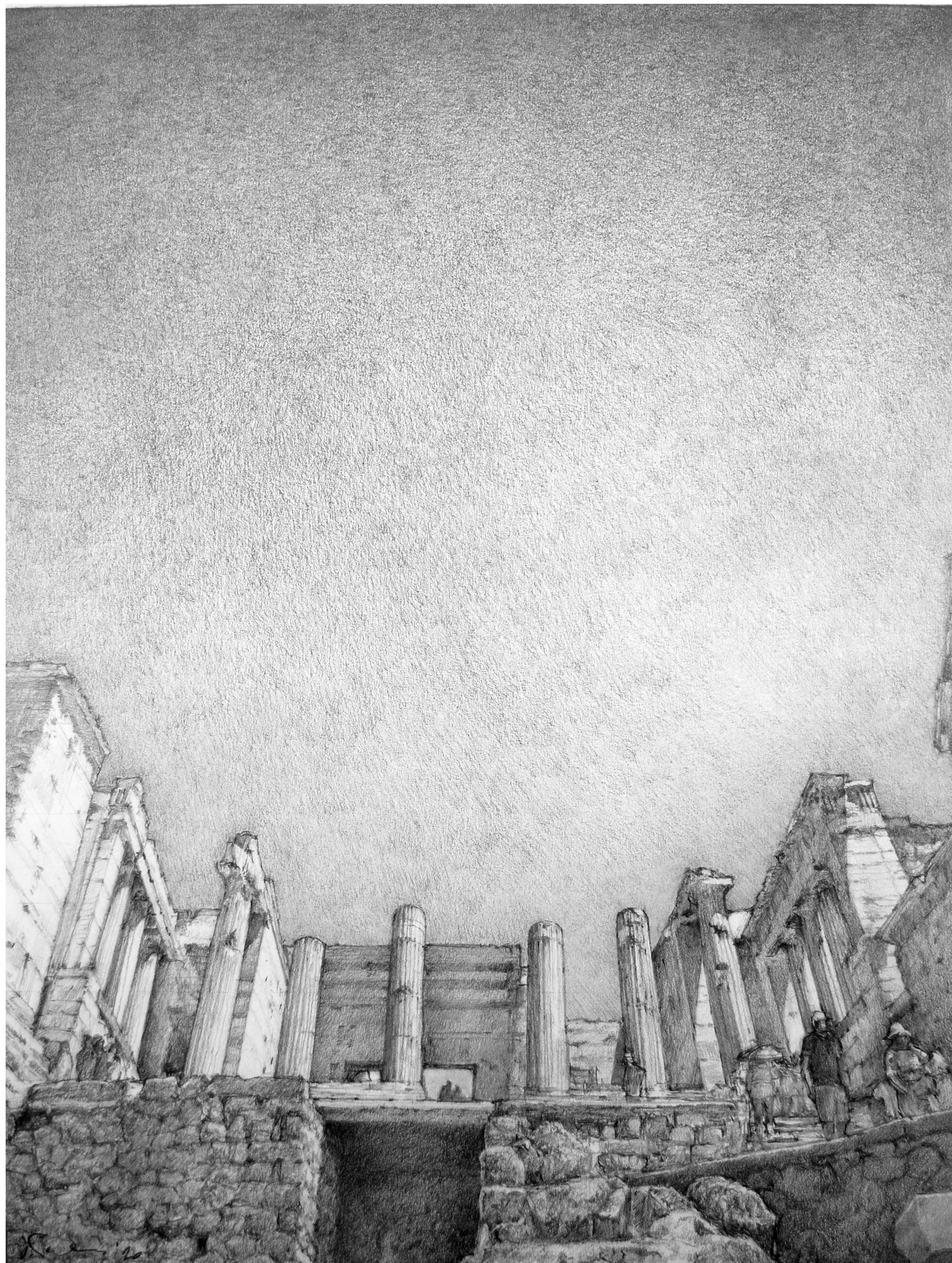
There are few architectural experiences greater than the slow and winding path that takes one from the bottom of the Acropolis hill to the top and to the threshold that is the gateway of the holy temple precinct - the “temenos” - dedicated to Athena, protectress of the Polis and goddess of wisdom. In antiquity it was the culmination of the Sacred Way, a path that connected the Acropolis to Eleusis, the setting of the great and profound mysteries and the terminus of the Panathenaic procession.

The view here is taken just before one begins the final climb to the gate. We are still in the realm of man, but we can see the realm of the gods. The sky behind which is so dominant in the view, shows us what true transcendence can lead to. But to do that, we must apply the Delphic maxim «ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ», among others.

Even in its ruined and decayed state, the Propylaea is imbued with a beauty and majesty that is rarely seen in contemporary structures. It’s architectural merits would justify a whole study dedicated to its design and construction.

Suffice it to say that there is no doubt in my mind, having visited these sites of classical antiquity again and again, that my ancestors had an understanding of the cosmos and their place in it, that we fundamentally lack, despite all of the technology, empirical scientific knowledge and advancements of our age. We are left with more questions than answers.





**THE PROPYLAEA, 2019**  
Graphite on Paper  
12" X 16"

*"I had two famous staues, a woman and a prince,  
intact, the veins were visible, they were so perfect.  
When they destroyed Poros, the soldiers took them, and in  
Argos they would sell them to some Europeans,  
a thousand thalers were sought.  
I also resisted there, I took the soldiers, I spoke to them:  
These, and ten thousand thalers to give you, do not accept it to  
leave our country. That's what we fought for."*

**General Makriyannis**



## **METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE “THESION” or TEMPLE OF HEPHAESTUS in THE ANCIENT AGORA**

Sitting along the western edge of the ancient Athenian Agora, The Thesion is one of the best preserved Doric temples in the Mediterranean from antiquity. It is a magnificent structure imbued with a rational beauty and harmony in its proportions which is unparalleled. It inhabits three dimensional space in a way that modern buildings can only aspire to. And in its design, it reflects a cosmology or order which found its roots in the philosophy of Pythagoras and was later embraced by Plato. One looks at this temple and one imagines looking at one of Plato’s archetypal and ethereal forms.

The architect of this building is unknown which makes it all the more enigmatic.

Archeaologists and architectural historians alike, posit that the architect of The Temple of Hephaestus is the same architect of the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion, and the temple of Nemesis in Rhamnous. The three Temples seem to have been built within the same time span of the late fifth century BC during Pericles’ ambitious building program for Athens and its environs, and share very similar proportions and details.

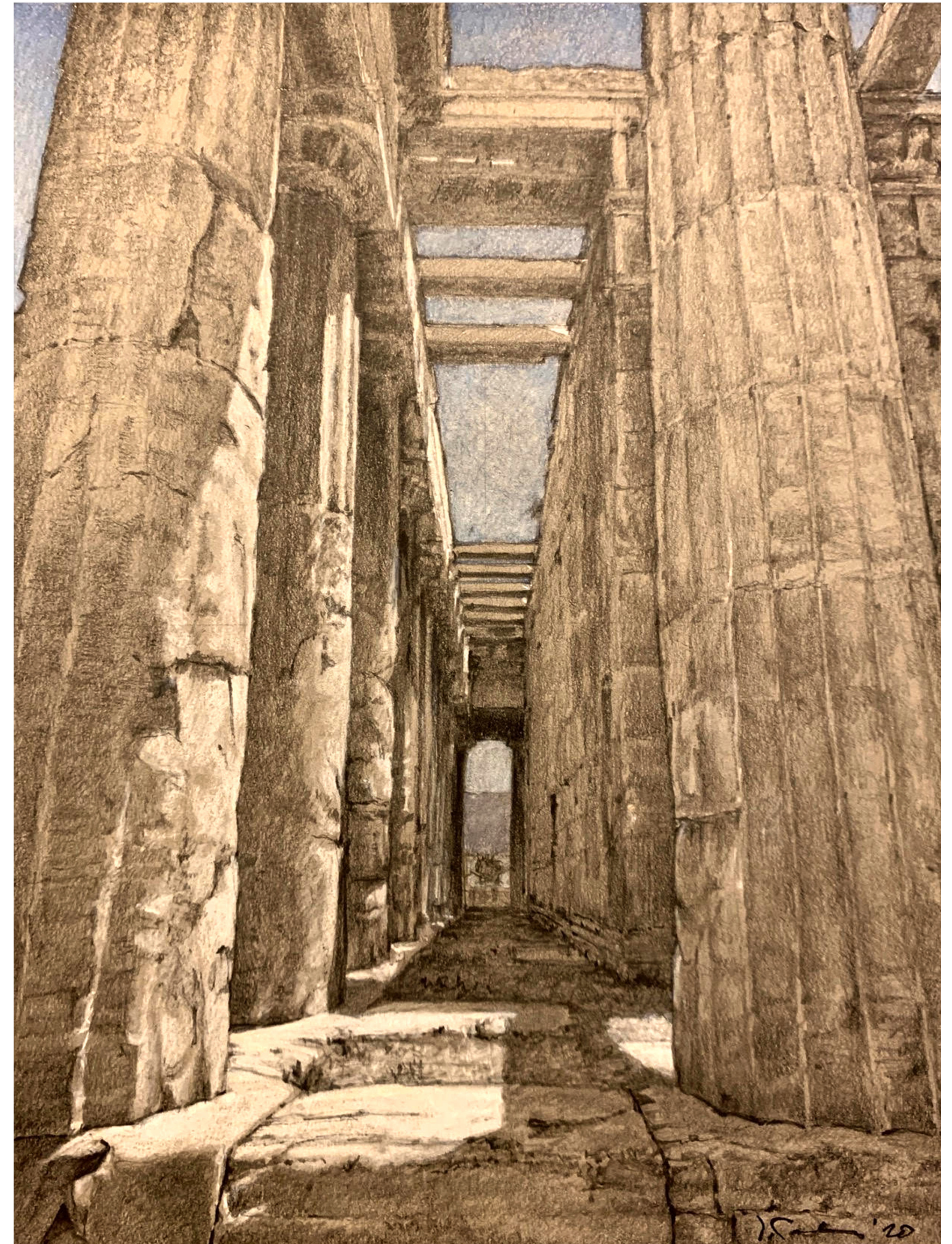
As with every great story this one is also paradox. The reason the temple is so well preserved is because it was converted into a church in the 7th century. As one religion and world order usurped another, a building which had come to be associated with both, survived.



*“This place where we live was inhabited by the ancient Greeks,  
from whom we also come and receive this name.  
In this place where I step today, wise men used to create and  
create in the old days, and men with whom I am not worthy to  
be compared or to reach their traces. I wished to see you, my  
children, in the great glory of our ancestors...”*

**Theodoros Kolokotronis, in a speech addressing students in  
Pnyka, 1838**

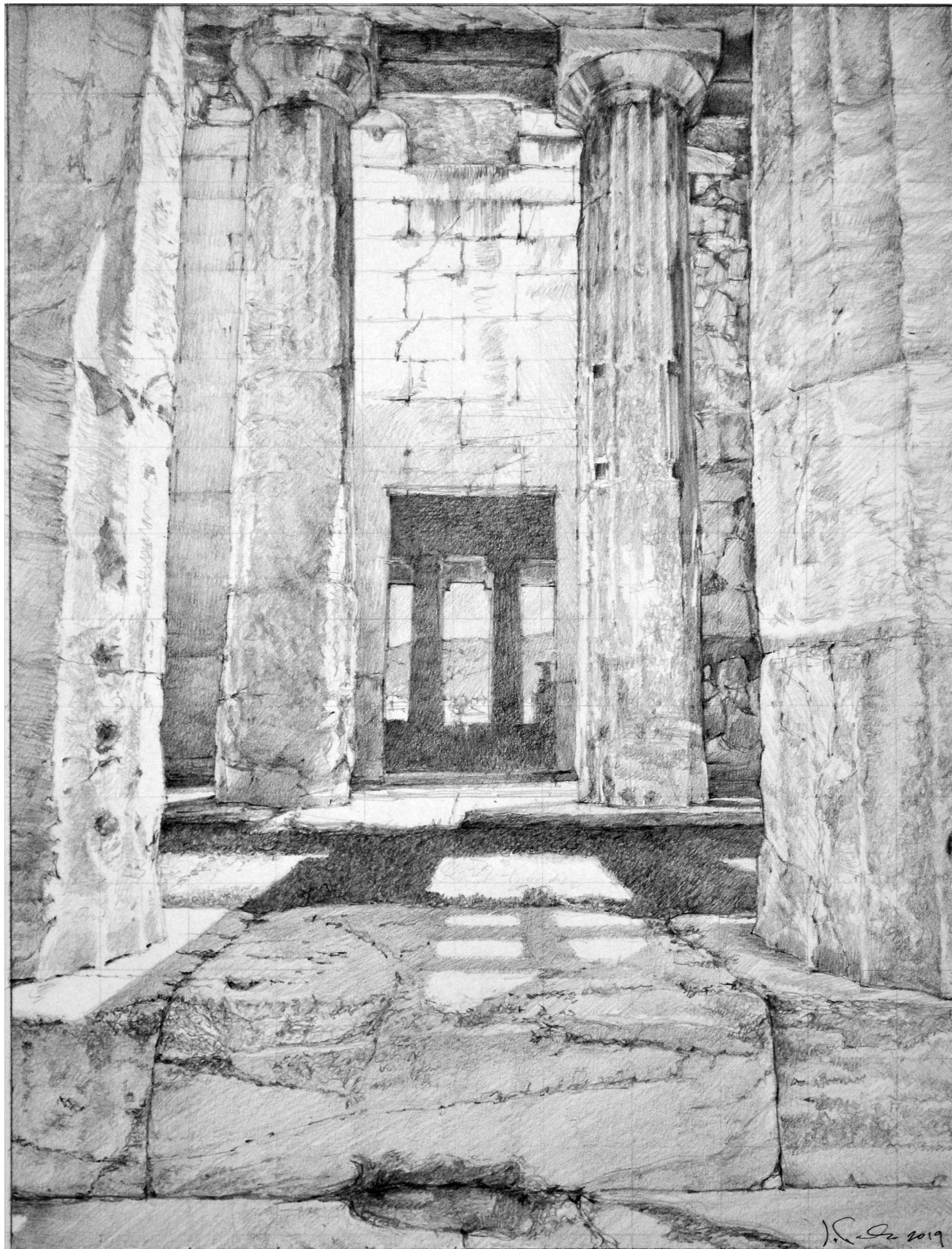
**THE NORTH COLLONADE OF TEMPLE OF HEPHAESTUS, 2019**  
Black and white chacoal, prismacolor pencil on gray tone paper  
8” X 10”





*“Stand up Persians to fight!”*

**Nikitaras, addressing the Ottoman Army in  
the Battle of Doliana, 1821**



**THE THE TEMPLE OF HEPHAESTUS - VIEW THROUGH THE OPISTHODOMOS FACING EAST**

Graphite on Paper

12" X 16"



“Because we do not sing to seperate ourselves from people,  
my brother, we sing to bring people together.”

**Yiannis Ritsos, *Kapnismeno Tsoukali***

**THE OPISTHODOMOS OF TEMPLE OF HEPHAESTUS, ANCIENT AGORA, ATHENS, 2019**

Black and white chacoal, prismacolor pencil on gray tone paper

12” X 16”





## METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE ANCIENT AGORA

### Herodotus in The Stoa of Attalos

The city's first great open meeting space, the ancient Agora, like everything else in Athens, has a storied history, growing and changing over time, and serving today as an urban oasis and green zone of quiet and solitude in an otherwise dense and bustling city.

A walk through what remains of the Agora feels like a passage through time. The remains of Greek and Roman buildings abound, including an Odeon gifted to Athens by the Roman statesman and general, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, yet another visitor to the city. The western edge of the site is dominated by the great reconstructed Stoa of Attalos, built by and named after King Attalos II of Pergamon, who ruled between 159 BC and 138 BC. He gifted the building to the city as a show of thanks for the philosophical education he received there. The present building was rebuilt in the 1950s by American School of Classical Studies at Athens and currently serves the Museum of the Ancient Agora.

It was here where I encountered a compelling statue, in the cool shade of the stoa's colonnade. I had been reading Herodotus' "Histories" the winter before – his incredibly colorful account of the war with Persian Empire, so imagine my surprise when I encountered him in the Agora, staring right at me.



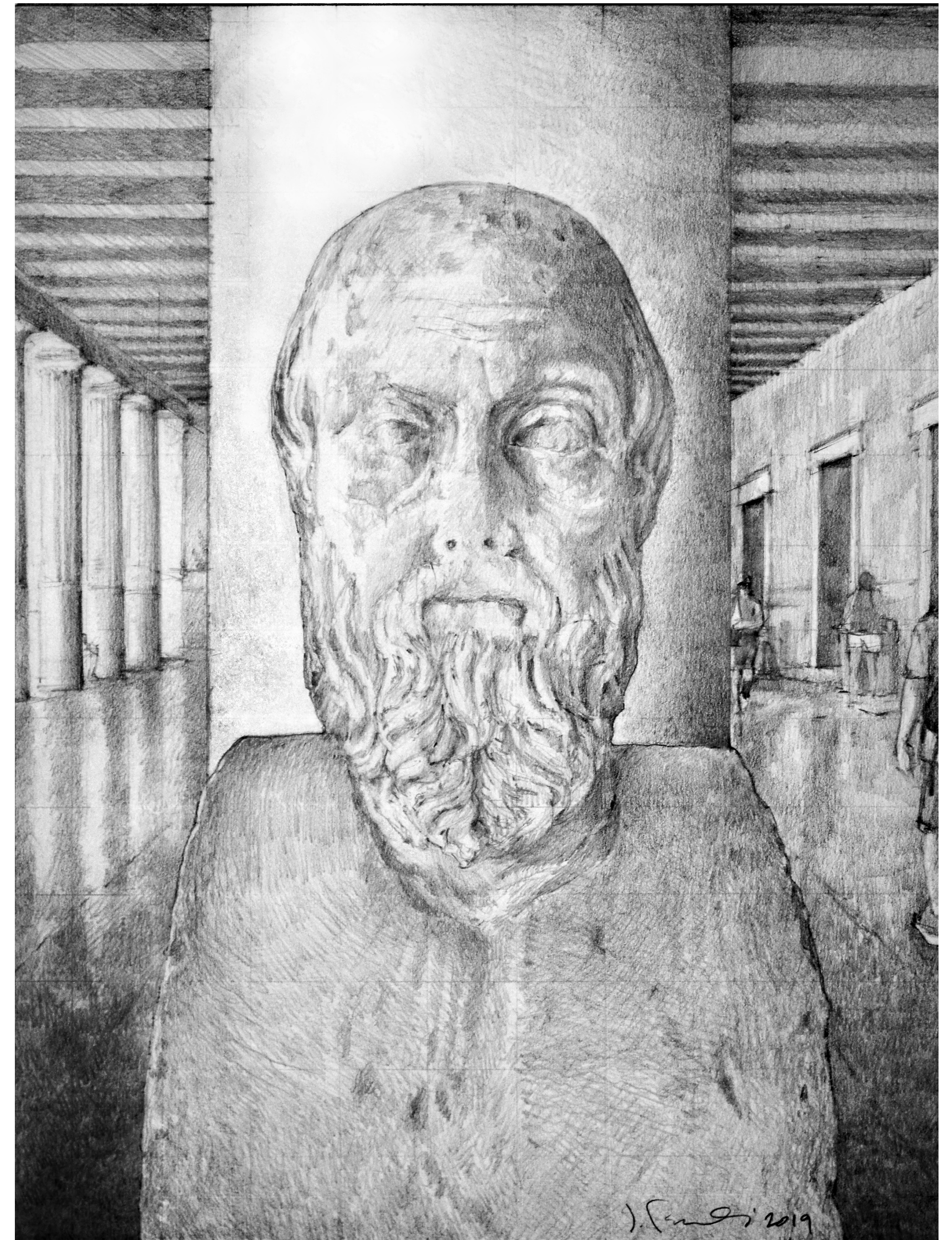
I woke with this marble head in my hands;  
it exhausts my elbow and I don't know where to put it down.  
It was falling into the dream as I was coming out of the dream  
so our life became one and it will be very difficult for it to separate again.

**Giorgios Seferis, *Mythistorema***

**HERM STATUE OF HERODOTUS, STOA OF ATTALOS, ANCIENT AGORA, ATHENS, 2019**

Graphite on paper

12" X 16"





## METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE ROMAN AGORA

### Hadrian

The Roman Agora, in essence an extension of the Ancient Agora, was comprised of a series of buildings built during the Roman period, and sponsored by Roman Emperors and statesman. Arguably the greatest Roman Philhellene of antiquity was the Emperor Hadrian (Caesar Traianus Hadrianus) who was to become one of Athens' great benefactors and advocates, giving the city a library, an aqueduct, the completion of The Temple of Olympian Zeus and other structures within the Agora. His feelings for Athens were so strong he made himself a ceremonial citizen of the city.

### The Anthemion

In Greece one finds that light changes over the course of the day, changing the colors the characteristics of the landscape, as well the shadows that it casts. I am completely transfixed and fascinated by how shadows and the way they move and change can elicit an emotional response. This idea is something I believe the Italian painter Giorgio DeChirico (who actually had a connection with Greece early in his life), understood very well. The shadows in his paintings almost seem pregnant with meaning, In some cases foreboding, in other cases melancholy.

I don't draw or paint the way DeChirico did, but I am trying to capture a similar essence in my work. An essence that is clearly Mediterranean in character. Recently I drew an Anthemion I found in the Roman Agora. An Anthemion is a decorative architectural element, usually a floral motif, which in this case sat atop a grave stele. I remember standing there looking at it against a wall, and being struck by way the shadow of an ivy plant - something living and vibrant - gently traversed and changed its shape as it passed over the carved surface of this ancient stone - something timeless but also lifeless.

The coexistence of these two very different objects occupying the same space was poetic. They created a singular emotional moment, together - the old and the young, the dead and the living, the timeless and the ephemeral.

### The Tower of The Winds

There is a charming little building in the Roman Agora called "The Tower of the Winds" or the Horologion of Andronikos Kyrrhestes. It is an octagonal Pentelic marble clocktower that functioned as a horologion or "timepiece". It is considered the world's first meteorological station. Each of the 8 friezes on the 8 faces of this building depict a wind. In this case, I focused on KAIKIAS, the North-East wind. He is depicted as an old man with a shield full of hailstones.



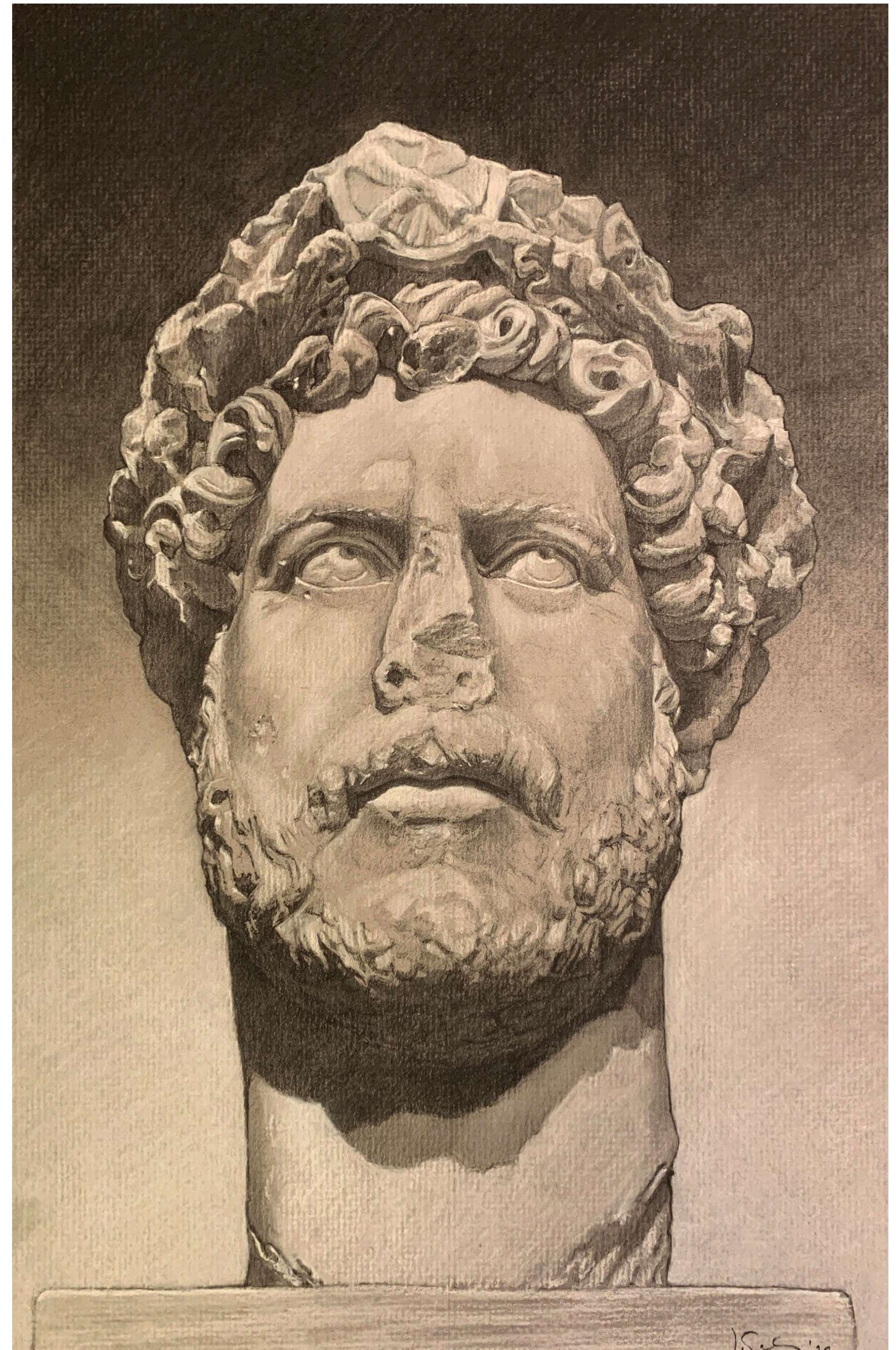
“When I consider Greece, Atticus, your Athens occurs to me especially and shines out like a lighthouse. It is here that an orator first showed himself and here that oratory began to be entrusted to monuments and writings.”

**Cicero, *Brutus* [26]**

**FRAGMENT OF STATUE OF THE EMPEROR HADRIAN, NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, ATHENS, 2020**

White and black charcoal on graytone paper

12" X 16"







**GREEK**

Be in me as the eternal moods  
of the bleak wind, and not  
As transient things are -  
gaiety of flowers.  
Have me in the strong loneliness  
of sunless cliffs  
And gray waters.  
Let the gods speak softly of us  
In days hereafter,  
the shadowy flowers of Orcus  
Remember thee.

**Ezra Pound**

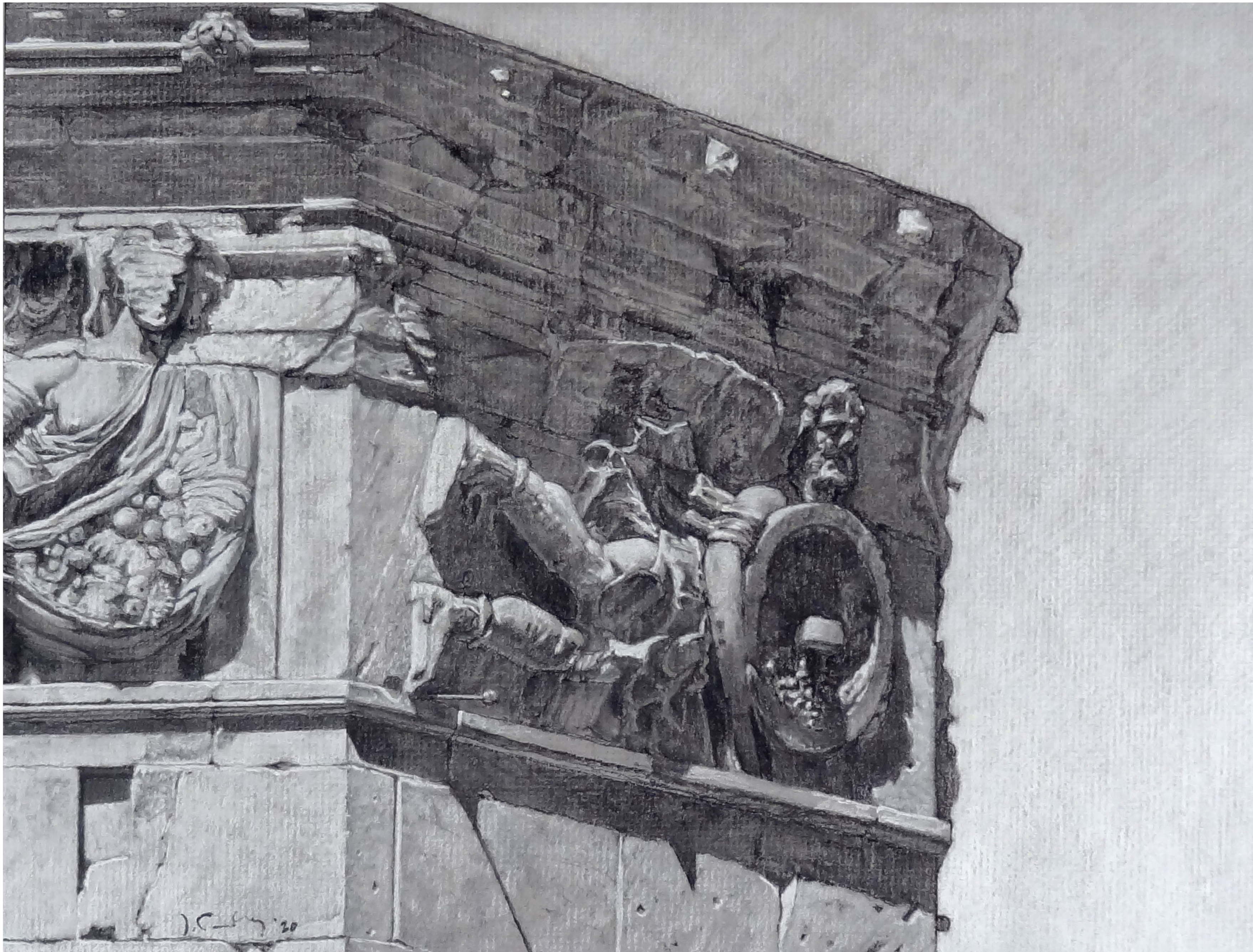
**AN ATHEMION IN THE ROMAN AGORA, ATHENS, 2020**

Prismacolor pencil on graytone paper  
12" X 16"



“Better one hour of free life than  
forty years of slavery and prison.”

**Rigas Feraios, *Thourios***



**THE TOWER OF THE WINDS or  
HOROLOGION OF ANDRONIKOS  
KYRRHESTES. 2020**

Black and white charcoal on gray tone paper  
13" X 16"



# METAPHYSICAL ATHENS / THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON AT CAPE SOUNION

Cape Sounion, the southernmost point of the Attic Peninsula and some 60 Kilometers from the center of Athens, is an area which has been considered sacred since the Bronze Age. The promontory on which the Temple of Poseidon is situated dominates the surrounding landscape. Of all of the temples I have been to in Greece, I have seen none that match the sublime beauty of this temple’s orientation and siting.

When one is at the temple, one senses, without knowing the underlying geometry and mathematics, that the temple complex is oriented in such a way as to connect to the broader landscape in a metaphysical way. While the entrance faces 1 degree of declination off of true East, the temple is placed such that it orients towards unique geographic characteristics such as the horned mountains and conical hills, which are believed to have held religious significance in antiquity.

The Temple of Poseidon, an embodiment of the god, not only dominates the sea before it, but also locks into the sacred landscape by which it is surrounded.

## STUDY OF THE SOUTH COLLONADE OF THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON

Graphite on paper  
10” X 12”







*An excerpt from* **THE ISLES OF GREECE**

The mountains look on Marathon -  
And Marathon looks on the sea;  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dream'd that Greece might still be free;  
For standing on the Persians' grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave.

**Lord Byron**

**THE SOUTH COLLONADE OF THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON, CAPE SOUNION, 2020**

Prismacolor pencil on graytone paper

11" X 14"



*An excerpt from* **THE ISLES OF GREECE**

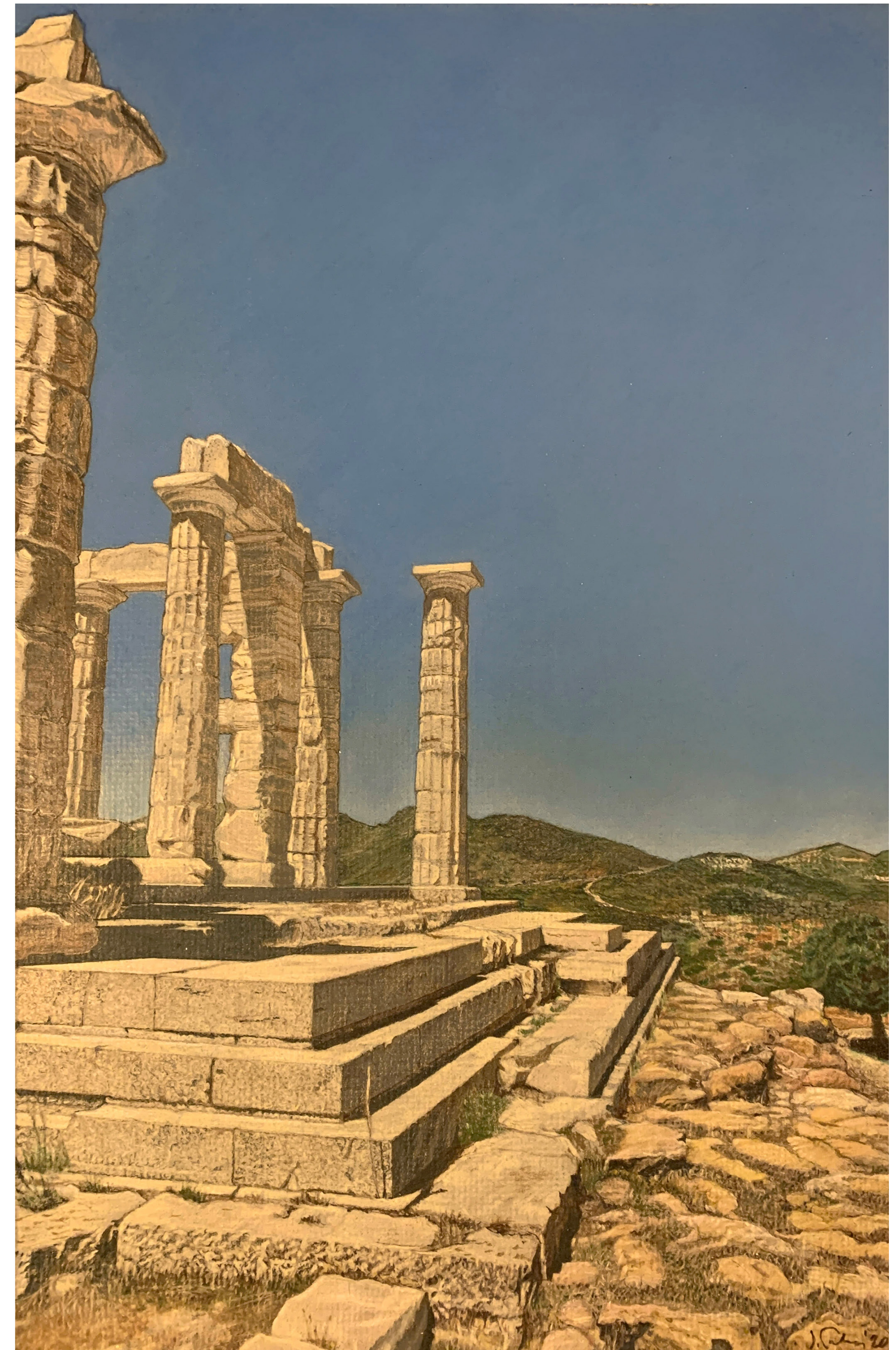
Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,  
Where nothing, save the waves and I,  
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;  
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:  
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine -  
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

**Lord Byron**

**THE EAST FACE OF THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON FACING NORTH, CAPE SOUNION, 2020**

Prismacolor pencil on graytone paper

12" X 18"







**THE SOUTH COLLONADE OF THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON, CAPE SOUNION, 2020**

Graphite on paper

13" X 19"