

TINOS OF ART EVERYWHERE!

On Safia Zaglul Street [Sofia Zaglul, the Greek wife of Saad Zaglul Pasha (1857-1957), Prime Minister of Egypt during the reign of Fuat I (1922-1936), father of the last king of the Nile, Farouk I (1936- 1951)], in the historic center of Alexandria, there is a modern shop that sells shoes.

Since I first settled in the Great City in 2006, every time I pass by this store, I feel a tug in my heart looking at a wonderful relief work of art, carved in white Tinian marble, which depicts a magnificent female figure in a seated position.

Due to the details of the work and the location, I believe it probably depicts the renowned Hypatia (Alexandria, 370 – March 8, 415 AD), Greek Neoplatonic philosopher, astronomer and mathematician, director of the Neoplatonic School in Alexandria. She taught philosophy and astronomy and was murdered by a mob of fanatical Christians.

But the most important and most touching thing, the one that causes a surge of admiration and pride in my Tinian soul looking at this wonderful work, is the identity of the artist who created this masterpiece, which is revealed in a timeless way in the lower right corner of it: "G. VITALIS EPOII".

GEORGE VITALIS, TINIAN SCULPTOR (1838-1901)

"Vitalis was born in the village of Ysternia in Tinos in 1838 and was the son of an experimental architect. As a teenager, he followed his father to Smyrna, whom he helped, as a construction contractor, in the construction of neoclassical houses. He then came to Athens, where he attended sculpture lessons (1857 – 1861) in the workshop of the professor of sculpture at the School of Arts, Georgios Phytalis, graduating as an apprentice sculptor.

Later, at the urging of Queen Amalia and a scholarship from King Louis I of Bavaria, he continued his studies at the Academy of Munich, with professor Max von Windmann [1]. During his studies, he was repeatedly rewarded, while he was also honored with the Bavarian King's Medal of Merit. He died in Alexandria in 1901.

Artistic activity

Georgios Vitalis is considered one of the main representatives of neoclassicism in Greece and one of the most important Greek sculptors of the 19th century, who was distinguished for his emphasis on detail.

His works were rewarded with gold and silver medals at the exhibitions of Olympia, Rome and Paris. They are life-size works representing Orpheus, Paris, Theseus, Bacchida, Oedipus, Hector, Hermoupoli, Canaris and adorned the halls in the palaces of Queen Olga, Sofia Trikoupi and Stefanos Skouloudis.

In 1881 he won the competition for the monument to Lord Byron in Messolonghi and in a corresponding competition in 1883 for the statue of the English politician and ardent supporter of the Greek struggle William Gladstone. Vitalis had visited Gladstone in England, in order to study his form up close. The construction of the statue was completed in 1886 and the unveiling took place on June 24, 1900. It has been placed on a stepped pedestal in the courtyard of the University of Athens.

Towards the end of his life he traveled to Alexandria, where he sculpted the statue of George Averof and died there" (Source: el.wikipedia.org).

Tinos guarded by the All Holy Virgin...Tinos of the Arts...Tinos the Blessed!

†Panteleimon of Naucratis, the Tinian