

Greek émigré Filippos: A sculptor of souls

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Contributor/Jakarta



Courtesy Noreen M. Flores

Filippos works on what critics consider his masterpiece: *Journey of the Human Soul*

It has been said: "East is East and West is West — and never the twain shall meet." But they do. They have, for instance, met in the person and in the art of Filippos, and lived there in perfect harmony.

Filippos is a sculptor born, raised and educated in Greece, who has chosen to live his life and pursue his art in Bali. That he is at home in Bali is not difficult to understand: Like Greece, Bali is the abode of a complex system of mythology, except that the Hindu influence on Balinese mythology emphasizes harmony and submission to the gods, while in Greek mythology, mortals, out of pride, or hubris, were always getting into trouble with their divine overlords.

Born in Volos, central Greece, which boasts the marble quarries used in building ancient architectural masterpieces like the

Parthenon in Athens, Filippos took it upon himself to achieve an understanding and balance between East and West.

After studying art at the Pythagoras Art Institute in Thessaloniki, he traveled far and wide in search of what he calls "The One."

As sculptor, Filippos is eclectic in technique and themes, most likely a result of his quest to create a form neither Western nor Eastern — which represents "eternal truth" and "eternal wisdom". He has flair for drama, a natural for a Greek, yet at the same time his works brings a sense of peace and introspection that the East evokes.

The Journey of the Soul (mahogany wood, silver), his biggest piece of work, is a dramatic portrayal of the dynamics of the human soul. "The true quality of the soul is that of space, by which it is at rest everywhere," he says. The piece, one of his early works and most celebrated one, is a compelling study in vision and spirit.



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Filippos speaks of love, compassion, forgiveness, and balance, harmony and beauty as muses of his art works.

Pursuing themes of love and what is beyond love, he believes he can contribute to the process of healing and positive evolution of the human being by simply carving out his convictions into form through the medium he knows best.

He practices his art with a clear vision: to help heal a divided world, a divided man. His message is: Life is about love, the reason for being and the reason for all. His *Angel of Change* (bas-relief sandstone) and *The Watchful Angel of Compassion* (mahogany) speak of a faith that is universal, a faith that spurns claims of exclusivity by some religions.

Armed with skills in sculpting, Filippos embarked on a life's journey, visiting other centers of world civilizations to find traces of universal language, ancient wisdom, in short, the blueprint of the human soul on earth.

He believes one must be conscious of his or her own progress of evolution. In Mexico, he became a student of the ancient art of healing among the Huichol Indians.

It is a tradition among Huichol Indians to train their hearts to open to the healing

Angel of Forgiveness is one of sculptor Filippos' own favorite pieces.

power of love and to the celebration of life through the senses.

Going deeper into the art of healing, Filippos moved to the central Asian plains of Siberia to study Buryat-Mongol shamanism, which

teaches three basic principles in life: sustaining balance in the world, reverence for the earth and living things, and personal responsibility.

Having lived in Spain, England, India, Egypt and Cambodia, he decided to make Bali his home in mid 1990s. His journeys and studies make him view man's life as being in perpetual motion, following a circular pattern that was already formed long ago and laid out with the center holding the eternal truth — the truth of perfection and happiness.

That vision is expressed in his *Alchemical Sun*, *The Disc of Being*, and several that are basically in round, spherical or in circles that are highly charged with energy and discipline.

On the whole, the works of Filippos are strikingly poignant, each piece an essay on the limitations of man and, paradoxically, on the infinite possibilities of the human spirit. He often declares "like sculpting human souls."

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Love and Beyond solo exhibition
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