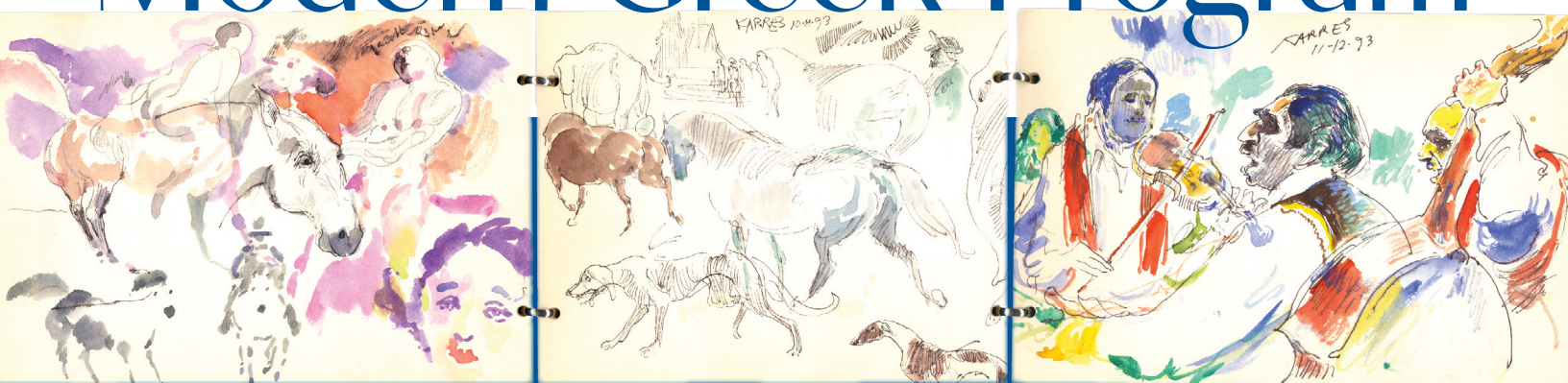


Modern Greek Program



Libraries, Artists, and Engaged Learning: Two Undergraduates Celebrate Sam Karres

by Zachary Quint

The University of Michigan Library's Special Collection Research Center is home to many unique collections, and the Sam Karres Archive is no exception. This collection contains 86 sketchbooks, ranging in size from 3.5 by 4.75 inches to 14 by 17 inches, by Greek-American artist Sam Karres and provides a unique perspective of life in Detroit's Greektown from 1955 to 2012. "Sketchbooks are an artist's laboratory, where the artist gathers his ingredients: his eyes' and hands' quick view of life as it unfolds," as Prof. Leontis wrote when she announced the library's acquisition (Newsletter Fall 2012). The sketches and watercolors capture a range of intimate moments, public life, and community celebrations.

As the Librarian for Classical Studies and Modern Greek, I strive to highlight library collections, teach research skills, and provide opportunities for U-M students to develop public-facing projects. Past exhibits have focused on historical events, such as the Greek War of Independence (2021) and the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922 (2022), and were entirely digital. During the 2026-2027 academic year, with the support of the library's Engagement Fellows program, I hired two exceptional undergraduates, **Annelie Zissis** (BFA Fine Arts, Japanese Studies dual major) and **Arthur Pfeifer-Rubey** (BA Classical Civilizations with a minor in Latin), to comb through Sam's sketchbooks and create a physical art exhibit. In addition to exploring Sam's artistic style and the history of Greektown, we discussed the role of academic librarianship in preserving and providing access to special materials and how different cultural institutions exhibit their materials to the public.

The result of the students' research and discussions was a physical exhibit called "Echoes of the Past: Greektown as Seen by Sam Karres." Located in the Hatcher Graduate Library from April 3-August 21, 2026, the exhibit highlighted Detroit's Greek-American community and urban



Sam Karres, Sketchbook 38, 1993
(U-M Special Collections)

Note from the Director

by Artemis Leontis

This issue of the U-M Modern Greek Program newsletter celebrates the many ways our students, faculty, librarians, artists, and community partners bring Greek studies into public life. It arrives at a moment when Greece is everywhere in public culture. This summer's *Odyssey* furor, responding to the popularity of Christopher Nolan's new movie, is a reminder that ancient Greek culture continues to provoke passionate responses—about who gets to tell old Greek stories, how they are translated into new media, and what they mean now. At Michigan, we ask these questions not only about antiquity but also about the life of Greek language, culture, and memory in the vibrant present.

One of the year's happiest pieces of news is Will Stroebel's tenure and promotion to associate professor. Will's teaching and scholarship have helped expand the reach of Modern Greek Studies at U-M, including through a popular course on Greek myth and film, which invites students to think across ancient texts, movie adaptations, and contemporary debates about culture. His book *Literature's Refuge* has already received major recognition, and his new work continues to build bridges across Greek, Turkish, Mediterranean, and diaspora studies.

This issue highlights the remarkable work of our students. In "My Greece," Priam Alataris reflects on "walking the hyphen" as a twenty-first-century Greek American and on how Modern Greek connects language, identity, family history, and intellectual inquiry for a Michigan engineer. Librarian Zachary Quint describes how Library Engagement Fellows Annelie Zissis and Arthur Pfeifer-Rubey brought the Sam Karres Archive to life in "Echoes of the Past: Greektown as Seen by Sam Karres." My interview with Annelie offers an artist-researcher's perspective on this Greek American Detroit archive.

The student awards pages recognize graduating majors and minors, prizewinners, a dissertation award, graduate fellows, study abroad, and student researchers. Their projects show the range of Modern Greek Studies: language learning, literature and arts, field research, public history, preservation and digitization, ecology, migration studies, translation, and community building.



Artemis Leontis rides in the 2026 Detroit Greek Independence Day Parade as Grand Marshal.

Our faculty news reflects this breadth, from Jim Cogswell's visual engagement with Euripides and Michael Cacoyannis to Vassilios Lambropoulos's work on today's poetry in Greece; from Despina Margomenou's teaching initiatives to ongoing research and speaking engagements by Will Stroebel and my editorial, archival, and public-facing work, including events planned for 2026–2027.

This commitment is also reflected in an important addition to the program: the annual "[Vassilis Lambropoulos Essays on New Directions in Modern Greek Studies](#)." Introduced in 2024, the series commissions two essays each year providing new perspectives on the most promising innovations in the field. The 2025 essays were "[The Rethinking of Secularization and Modern Greek Literary Studies](#)" by Nektaria Klapaki, University of Washington, and "[What Is Mediterranean Humanities?](#)" by Konstantina Zanou, Columbia University.

Our engagement extended across and beyond campus, from the Sam Karres exhibit in Hatcher Library to participation in the 2026 Detroit Greek Independence Day Parade, where I was honored to serve as Grand Marshal. Modern Greek Studies at U-M lives not only in our teaching and research but also in the communities whose histories and futures we study.

Thank you to the friends whose ongoing support sustains the Modern Greek Program and helps us imagine what Greek studies can be.



MY GREECE Walking the Hyphen

by Priam Alataris

Priam in the U-M Law Quad during spring commencement, 2026.

I am a proud Michigan Engineer. In this spirit, I want to start with an analogy.

Suppose you are standing on a line. With each step forward, you choose to take an additional step left or right. As you walk randomly, you veer from the center, return, drift away again, and remain at some distance before moving on. Fun fact: a random walk's distribution variance scales linearly with time at a rate $n\sigma^2$. (You see, my Greek language studies were relevant even to my engineering major!) In other words, the walk does not progress only forward; its sideways drift becomes more variable over time, making it increasingly likely that you will end up far from where you began.

Last semester, in my Modern Greek course "Introduction to Greek American Culture," I began thinking about identity in a similar way: not as a fixed point, but as a movement of languages, cultures, histories, and communities. Much of the familiar Greek American narrative—immigration, discrimination, hard work, struggle, assimilation, success, and ethnic revival—spans the late 1890s through the 1980s. However, as the end of the semester approached and my graduation felt increasingly real, the story seemed to stop short and leave me out. I was born in the twenty-first century. I never danced in Greek festivals, went to Greek school, or worked in my uncle's diner. Moreover, in my childhood, language had divided my life: the Greeks spoke Greek, and the Americans English. The two languages and identities did not cross paths in America.

Yet I am a Greek American, so how does my story fit in? This became the elephant in the classroom: the question I could not ignore. Children of more recent immigrants like me were born halfway along the random walk of life. Our experience differs sharply from those whose roots date back to the early twentieth century, and we do not fit into the Greek American story as it has been written.

My final project worked to reverse-engineer this gap. To better understand my own disconnect, I decided to look closely at the communication networks of immigrants who arrived from roughly the 1990s through the 2010s. With my technical background, I recognized immediately that this range coincided with the launch of second-generation cellular technology—digital calls and SMS messaging—and the birth of social media (i.e. Myspace, Facebook). Surely tools that powerful must have had an influence, right? So, I interviewed Ann Arbor locals who immigrated during this period to learn about their transitions, how they fit into Greek/American/Greek American labels, and how—if at all—these technologies shaped their experiences.

I found that newer immigrants have almost zero incentive to let go of the places and people they left behind, since they can now remain connected instantly at practically no cost. Unlike first- and second-wave Greek immigrants, recent arrivals also do not need to turn to the Orthodox Church in the same way to make Greek connections. More often, they take comfort in a simple FaceTime call home or find sanctuary in a small group of friends who speak their native tongue (shout-out to the Hidden King *parea*). Finally, technology and a more inclusive, postethnic atmosphere—one that supports fluid, hybrid forms of identity instead of past assimilationist views—make it easier for immigrants to connect and integrate into American society. In short, today you don't have to choose a side; you can be both! Unfortunately, this shift also comes at the cost of older Greek Americans seeming stuck in the past, while their new immigrant counterparts come off as "detached" and uninterested.

Taken together, technological advancements and their democratization have transformed the immigrant experience into one of superimposed cultures: Greek and American, layered together rather than arranged in sequence, producing a hybrid identity with multiple ways

of belonging. These tools have greatly reduced the guilt and cultural bereavement associated with immigration and allowed individuals to maintain their lives, jobs, and connections to their homeland while simultaneously carving out their own spaces in America.

I used to experience my position as a gap between Greece, America, and inherited Greek American narratives. Now I understand that in-between position as a hybrid form of belonging—not a deficiency, but a new perspective. To be a “hyphenated American,” as Greek immigrants and their descendants were once classified, automatically placed people between two countries. However, listening to newer voices and comparing them with older narratives and my own experiences has helped me understand the difficult history of Greek America, where I fit into this cultural jigsaw, and how we got here. Most importantly, I have learned that being in between is not a weakness but an opportunity. Only by embracing this hybrid identity and engaging in



Priam poses before the Temple of Poseidon in Sounion, Greece, 2024.

discussion can we continue to build upon a heritage we, as Greeks, Americans, and Greek Americans, are so proud to share. Thanks to the U-M Modern Greek Program for helping me find My Greece.

Priam Alataris (2026 BSE in Electrical Engineering, minor in Modern Greek Language & Culture) is currently a PhD student of electrical and computer engineering in the Cockrell School of Engineering, University of Texas at Austin.

Sam Karres *continued*

scenery during the late 20th century. Incorporating almost 50 images from the sketchbooks, the exhibit not only invited the viewer to experience Greektown through Sam’s eyes but also prompted them to analyze Sam’s art from their own perspective. The exhibit was well received by the U-M community and the public, with many visitors making repeat visits to view and appreciate the art.

Working with Annelie and Arthur was a wonderful experience. Both brought unique perspectives and energy to the project and a strong dedication to making the materials accessible to all. As Annelie said, “Being Greek myself, and having heard stories about Detroit’s Greektown from family and friends really brings Sam’s work to life for me—through his artworks, I feel like I’m stepping back into a familiar place and finally seeing the faces of the characters oftentimes mentioned in those stories. Sam’s work has a comforting, nostalgic feeling to it that is irreplaceable, and it is valuable in showing the



Sam Karres, Sketchbook 44, 1980 (U-M Special Collections)

historic evolution of modern-day Greektown.”

Arthur also reported, “Working on this project was wonderful, especially as someone interested in becoming a librarian. Spending time in the archive looking at Sam’s sketchbooks and getting to put on an exhibit showing all of our research is the exact kind of work I am excited to continue as a librarian. I am not Greek, nor from Michigan, and I found learning about the community of Greektown and diving into Sam’s life to be incredibly meaningful. I am so happy that we were able to share Sam’s life and work with those who did not know the Greektown community, as well as community members!”

Although the exhibit is no longer on display, visitors and researchers are welcome to view Sam’s archive in the Special Collection Research Center by appointment.

Zachary Quint is Modern Greek and Classics Librarian at the University of Michigan Library.

Two Student Curators and My Interview With Artist-Researcher Annelie Zissis

by Artemis Leontis

In October 2025, **Annelie Zissis** dropped by my office in search of sources for an exhibit she was preparing on the sketchbooks of Detroit Greek-American artist Sam Karres—part of the [Sam Karres Archive](#), held in the Special Collections Research Center at U-M's Hatcher Graduate Library's (see the cover article).



Annelie Zissis

A double-degree student in Art & Design and Japanese, fluent in Greek, Annelie held a competitive paid student internship that culminated in the exhibit “Echoes of the Past: Greektown as Seen

by Sam Karres,” in Hatcher’s Clark Library (April to August 2026). The exhibit highlights Detroit’s urban scenery through the eyes of Karres, who spent his life in Detroit. The acquisition of the Sam Karres Archive by U-M was facilitated by **Dr. Denny Stavros**, a friend of Karres and of the U-M’s

Modern Greek Program and Hatcher Library.

I sat down again with Annelie a few weeks ago to discuss her work curating the exhibit with **Arthur Pfeifer-Rubey** (BA in Classical Civilization, minor in Latin). The interview appears below.

I also reached out to Arthur to let him know how much my students in my “Greek American Culture” course enjoyed visiting the exhibit. He responded, “It was an honor to work on it and share Sam’s drawings. I would also love to add that Sam’s portraits of regular people in Greektown—especially regular working-class people, who are not always depicted in ‘high art’ or portraiture—were very moving to look at and I loved the reverence with which he drew these people.”



Arthur Pfeifer-Rubey

AL: Annalie, tell us about yourself.

AZ: I study Fine Arts and Japanese. My interest is in intercultural communication. I used to attend an international school in Greece. My friends came from different parts of the world, and this sparked my interest very early on. I always loved to draw, so I work in an artistic form, sharing culture and giving it historical depth through art.

AL: How exciting: telling stories through art. Tell me about the project in the library and why you were attracted to it.

AZ: At the time, I was looking for any student job. When I found the project inviting students to create an exhibit presenting the Greek American artist Sam Karres through his archive, I thought, this is a perfect opportunity to promote a Greek American mindset. A lot of Americans relate to the really old myths, like Odysseus, and aren’t used to the modern Greek perspective, especially of immigrants. It’s a new perspective: to help Americans view Greece through contemporary art. The exhibit was an opportunity

to show that Greek culture is not confined to antiquity or Greece.

AL: And how exactly do you think Americans see Greeks?

AZ: As a toga-wearing group! Honestly, I came to America in high school, and one of the questions people asked me was, “Do you guys still wear togas?” Jokes aside, I like presenting Greek culture *now* rather than its historical roots.

AL: What drew you to Karres as a Detroit artist?

AZ: I moved here because my family has roots in metro Detroit. My family used to own a restaurant on Nine Mile Road, and they used to cater all over Detroit. Any older person from Ferndale or the Eight Mile area I meet will tell me about it. Detroit is a great city that is often ignored. I’ve learned that the Greek diasporic community has had a bigger role in its history than a lot of people know. It’s a vibrant city now, and it was vibrant in the past. Greeks played a big role in that.

AL: You were supervised by Zachary Quint, our Classical Studies and Modern Greek librarian? How was it working with him, and what was the goal of the project?

AZ: I really liked the collaboration. He gave us freedom to choose our own path while making himself available throughout the process. His goal was clear: to create an exhibit that would promote the collection and encourage students to visit Special Collections.

AL: Tell me about working with Arthur Peifer-Rubey.

AZ: He's a classicist and very qualified to talk about Greek roots. He also has a librarian's perspective, while I have an artist's perspective. So when we were creating posters for the exhibit, mine read like art exhibit labels, his provided historical and archival context. The exhibit labels combined our work. I want to credit him for doing a lot of the writing.

AL: Can you step back and talk about the collection? I remember a lot of sketchbooks in bug tubs.

AZ: Yes, they are still in tubs. There are 15. The sketches are exceptional.

AL: 15 tubs full of sketchbooks. And you went through them. How many drawings would you say there are? 2,000?

AZ: Over 2,000! Some of the boxes have handwritten notes by Dr. Denny Stavros about Sam's awards and characters in the sketches. Stories about the restaurants, about the police: a lot of important stories. There is so much material that Arthur and I had to split up the archive. I didn't even get to see everything!

AL: So much material. How did you make your selections within a short timeframe?

AZ: During the first semester, we developed a context and made our way through the sketchbooks, taking pictures of what interested us.

We organized the exhibit around three themes. One was music. Sam was a musical man, and Detroit is a music town. He drew Greektown's bouzoukia and Motown nightclubs, performers, and audiences—all expressive of Detroit. They capture the spirit of the city.

The second theme is characters: people who keep showing up in his sketchbooks—like Stella, the homeless Greek woman well-known in Greektown.

The last theme was his personal life: his parents, family, work, sketching—his daily life. He had a fixation on horses. He drew them a lot, and also mythological creatures like centaurs. There used

to be a racetrack in Hazel Park, where Greek men would gather, gamble, drink coffee, and talk. Because of Sam's many drawings of horses and the park, I wonder if he was part of that Greek *parea*.

AL: As a visitor, I felt that your presentation matched the material very directly: what Sam Karres saw, what his hand drew, the connection between his eye and hand. How did you work with the sketches in the exhibit space to capture this quality?

AZ: I insisted, for example, on the horse-board. On Photoshop, I placed sketches of horses and increased the contrast to make the background white negative space. We kept the negative space plain to give attention to the sketches. I also liked the sketches of dancers.

AL: What do you like about them? As an artist, what are you seeing?

AZ: I'm personally not a fan of hyperrealism. People tend to see it for its technical skill. Something that is underappreciated is the artistic eye, which Sam has. His linework makes it appear as if you are seeing his subjects move, kind of like a smear frame in animation, which is a deliberately distorted in-between frame that "smears" a figure across space to create the feeling of quick movement.

In his dance sketches, I felt like I was looking at a smear frame. You can see the movement, hear the music, feel the atmosphere; the colors are less literal and more expressive of passion. He's warming up; he's doing gesture drawings, 20 seconds, 30 seconds. In his paintings you see that same sketchy element, and it's so well done. The emotion is there. He's drawing, painting a moment in time not to freeze it but to keep it moving.

AL: What stood out from your research on Detroit?

AZ: Obviously I learned about the people and places in the artwork. I also learned more about my immediate family. For example I pointed out a place represented in the art to my parents, and they told me, "We went there, and Stella cussed us out." They knew she was mentally ill and lived on the street. Then I told them what I had read and seen of her portraiture—about her interactions with people in Greektown, how she found food and a place to sleep there. They were happy to know she had been cared for. The sketchbooks and notes present character studies that bring people to life.

AL: Why does it matter to you that this collection exists?

AZ: On one level, it's nice to have this artist's work preserved and to know he will be remembered for his talent but for the historical record he produced. On the personal, artistic side, I felt intimidated opening his work but also a little embarrassed, like I was opening someone's personal diary. I want to honor him. Every artist wants people to remember them and look at their work with care and admiration.

STUDENT AWARDS

Calliopi Papala Politou Senior Prize in Modern Greek

Congratulations to two outstanding 2026 graduating seniors who received the Calliopi Papala Politou Senior Prize. Awarded annually to a senior who excels in Modern Greek Language & Culture, the prize memorializes Calliopi Evangelinos, an immigrant from Chios who loved reading and learning. It is the gift of Angeliki Evangelinos, Professor Emerita, Monroe Community College.

Vasiliki Anna Amourgianos, 2026 BS: majors in Modern Greek Language & Culture, and Biopsychology, Cognition, & Neuroscience; minor in Writing; Modern Greek II Advanced Intermediate Translation Award (2024); Panhellenic Scholarship (2025); Nick Smyrnis Memorial Scholarship of the AHEPA 232 Foundation (2025). As a Sweetland Minor in Writing, Vasiliki completed a sophomore gateway project, *in solitude*, and senior capstone project, *i'll be the same me, just different*. As a Sweetland Peer Writing Consultant, she supported undergraduate writers across genres. She was also an undergraduate research assistant at U-M's Chronic Pain and Fatigue Research Center, studying the neuroscience of nociplastic pain. She was active in the Hellenic Student Association and Michigan International Student Society and served as an Opinion columnist for The Michigan Daily. A first-generation college student and second-generation Greek American, Vasiliki grew up in Queens, New York, and northern New Jersey. She is now working as a medical assistant in dermatology and skin cancer surgery while volunteering at Rutgers Cancer Institute as she prepares to apply to medical school. She looks forward to returning to Greece and deepening her connection to her family history, drawing on the tools she developed as a Modern Greek major. She is deeply grateful to Professors Artemis Leontis, Despina Margomenou, and Will Stroebel for their guidance and mentorship.

Jay Tycner, 2026 BS: majors in Modern Greek Language & Culture, and Biochemistry with Highest Honors. While pursuing her studies in Modern Greek and Biochemistry, she conducted research at the College of Pharmacy in the lab of Professor Emily Scott and simultaneously worked as an ambulance EMT. During her senior year, she researched and wrote a Modern Greek capstone project, "The Stigma of Disease and the Silenced History of the Sanitation Camps of Kalamaria." This extensive research paper examines the experiences of Pontic Greek refugees during the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange, focusing on the sanitation camps of Kalamaria near Thessaloniki, Greece. Drawing on witness



Department of Classical Studies graduation, 1 May 2026. **Top:** Students line up for the ceremony in the Rackham auditorium. **Bottom left:** Vasiliki Amourgianos with Dr. Netta Berlin, Director of Undergraduate Studies. **Bottom right:** Jay Tycner with Professor Celia Schultz, Chair of the Department of Classical Studies.

accounts, archival materials, newspapers, official documents, and medical evidence, the project explores how refugees were stigmatized as "dirty" and diseased, as well as how public health discourse contributed to their segregation, confinement, and dehumanization. Her hard work as an undergraduate paid off: she has been admitted to and begun studies at Wayne State University School of Medicine to earn her M.D. Congratulations, Jay!

Graduate Student Dissertation Award

Amanda Kubic, 2025 PhD: Comparative Literature, has been awarded the John O. Iatrides Best English-Language Dissertation Prize in the U.S. and Canada by the Modern Greek Studies Association. Her dissertation, *Animating Antiquity: Classical Disembodiments by Modern Women*, earned distinction, in the committee's words, "through its originality, intellectual ambition, elegant prose, and sophisticated interdisciplinary approach." The committee praised its reimagining of classical reception through gender, embodiment, disability, and cultural inheritance, and its account of how contemporary artists produce forms of "classical disembodiment" that challenge traditional ideals of the classical body while opening space for queer, racialized, disabled, and other non-normative identities. Εύγε, Αμάντα!

Modern Greek Translation Awards

The following students won the 2026 Phillips/Modern Greek Translation Awards for superior work on a sight translation exam. The award recognizes achievement in Modern Greek translation at the intermediate and advanced intermediate levels.

Henry James Anastasiou, 2026 BA: major in Political Science; student of Modern Greek language - Modern Greek I Intermediate Translation Prize, 2026.

Christina Huerta-Stylianou, major in Molecular Biology; minor in Modern Greek - Modern Greek II Advanced Intermediate Translation Prize, 2026.



2026 Phillips/Modern Greek Translation Prizewinners include Christina Huerta-Stylianou and Henry Anastasiou, third and fourth from the left.

Joana Hila, 2026 BS: majors in Psychology & Molecular Biology; minor in Modern Greek Language & Culture.. Joana won the Advanced Intermediate Modern Greek Translation Prize (2023) and Contexts for Classics Translation Award in 2024 for her literary translation “Biography of an Unimportant Relative” from Katerina Iliopoulou’s *Μια φορά κάθε τοπίο και ολότελα*. She will apply to medical schools next year.

Paul Gregory Przeslawski, 2026 BA: major in Psychology; minors in Modern Greek Language & Culture and History. During his studies, Paul was an active U.S. Army Cadet and student leader in the Army ROTC Wolverine Battalion. He was recognized repeatedly for elite academic performance, physical training, and leadership achievements. In 2026, he received the Leonardo DRS Award for Senior Outstanding Experience and was selected as the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Military Endowment recipient, receiving a commissioned officer’s sword from veterans of the Gun Lake Ogitchedaa. He serves in the U.S. Army.

Aristidis Nikolas-Moschouris Thomas, 2026 BA: major in Modern Greek Language & Culture; minor in Business Administration. This fall, he is entering the Master of Accounting program at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business.

Jennifer “Jay” Anne Tycner, 2026 BS: majors in Modern Greek Language & Culture, and Biochemistry with Highest Honors. See more about Jay under the Calliopi Papala Politou Senior Prize.

STUDENT DEGREES AND HONORS

Priam Evan Alataris, 2026 BSE: major in Electrical Engineering; minor in Modern Greek Language & Culture. An Electrical Engineering student with a strong interest in entrepreneurship, Priam participated in the Center for Entrepreneurship’s ENTR Abroad program in Copenhagen, Denmark, where he explored innovation, consumer validation, and the role of empathy in engineering problem-solving. His studies in Modern Greek helped him achieve advanced proficiency in Greek and reflect on his identity as a Greek American. He is currently a PhD student of Electrical and Computer Engineering in the Cockrell School of Engineering, The University of Texas at Austin. See his “My Greece” article in this issue.

Vasiliki Anna Amourgianos, 2026 BS: majors in Modern Greek Language & Culture, and Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience; minor in Writing. See more about Vasiliki under the Calliopi Papala Politou Senior Prize.

Clinton Bergmann, 2026 BA: major in Modern Greek Language & Culture. He participated in data collection for the “Exotic Species in the Mediterranean” research project headed by Despina Margomenou and Johannes Foufopoulos.

STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

Constantine A. Tsangadas Trust PhD Fellowships

The Constantine A. Tsangadas Trust is a philanthropic fund at U-M administered in conjunction with the Rackham Graduate School. It supports post-Classical and Modern Greek studies at the graduate student level. Two students received fellowships supporting a semester’s tuition and stipend for advanced graduate work: **Lena Grimm**, May 2026 PhD in Comparative Literature, and **Spencer Cook**, PhD candidate in Anthropology.

Lena Grimm used the fellowship to complete and defend her dissertation, “Si(gh)ting Language: Anne Carson and Barbara Köhler’s Translational Poetics,” which traces the modern afterlives of ancient Greek lyric poetry in work by Anne Carson and Barbara Köhler. The dissertation’s coda extends beyond Carson and Köhler to anticipate incorporating Modern Greek poetry—specifically the work of Phoebe Giannisi—in an innovative way.

Spencer Cook used the fellowship to support advanced dissertation field research. His anthropological research examines cross-border trade and the permeability of borders in Cyprus and the surrounding regions. The project brings a carefully defined ethnographic method and remarkable linguistic breadth to questions at the center of contemporary border studies, while contributing to new, decolonial approaches to the study of post-Classical Greece.

GRANTS FOR STUDY ABROAD, INTERNSHIPS, AND RESEARCH

Spencer Cook, PhD candidate in Anthropology, received a Constantine A. Tsangadas Trust grant for dissertation research expenses, including intermittent travel to the TRNC State Archives in Kyrenia and to the remote Maronite village of Kormakitis for archival and ethnographic research respectively, as well as attendance at the Cyprus Diaspora Forum in Limassol to learn more about diaspora entrepreneurship and bicomunal start-up initiatives.

Eleftheria Fassman, PhD student in Theory of Computation, Computer Science, studied intermediate Modern Greek in the fall semester and received a Constantine A. Tsangadas Trust grant for private tutoring of Greek in the winter semester.

Students in Professor Johannes Foufopoulos's lab at the School for Environment and Sustainability received support from the Constantine A. Tsangadas Trust and from the Modern Greek Fund for research in Greece: **Kieran Ball**, **Cole Bennett**, **Quinn Christian**, **Theron Harris**, **Madeleine Kokot**, **Collin Richter**, **Victoria Stec**, and **Katherine Taylor**. Their projects examined Aegean island biodiversity and the effects of climate change, land use, livestock grazing, and habitat structure on reptile, arthropod, plant, and animal communities. **Richter's** PhD research on Naxos examines how climate change and land-use change affect Aegean reptile communities, with attention to thermal ecology, water loss, habitat degradation, and the role of vegetation, grazing, and dry-stone landscapes in shaping reptile distribution and persistence. **Harris** and **Taylor** contributed to this Naxos fieldwork through projects on reptile ecology and microhabitat use. **Ball**, whose master's thesis is on grazing impacts on Cycladic island arthropods, used vegetation surveys and arthropod sampling to assess species diversity and related factors. **Bennett**, **Christian**, **Kokot**, and **Stec** contributed to "Safeguarding the Ark: Documenting and Restoring the Endangered Biodiversity of Mediterranean Islands," a survey used to identify restoration priorities and support conservation planning.

Isavella Kahremanis, rising senior majoring in Modern Greek, received support from the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies and from the Department of Classical Studies Carrie Arbor Fund for summer study at the American College of Thessaloniki (Anatolia American University).

Amanda Kubic, PhD in Comparative Literature, served as researcher overseeing the legal survey of the "Greek Anti-Junta Struggle Collection (1949-1995)" in the Special Collections Research Center at Hatcher Graduate Library. The collection, a gift of James G. Pyrros, covers the 1967-1974 Greek military dictatorship and U.S. government and Greek diaspora responses. The survey of the collection's 14 archival boxes is being undertaken in preparation for the collection's digitization. Amanda's work was supported by the Constantine A. Tsangadas Trust and a grant from the Greek Consulate of Chicago.

Isabella Marks, rising senior in Public Policy pursuing a minor in Modern Greek, received support from the Modern Greek Fund and the Kontou-Fili and Matthews Travel Grant for study abroad at College Year in Athens during the winter semester of 2026.



Clockwise from top left: Theron Harris at Routouna waterfall, Naxos, summer 2026; Kate Taylor captures an agama in the field, Naxos, summer 2026; Collin Richter captures an oscillated skink on Naxos, summer 2026; Isavella Kahremanis at Anatolia American University in Summer 2026; Isabella Marks participated in the Delphi Economic Forum while attending College Year in Athens in Winter 2026.

STUDENT AWARDS, DEGREES, AND GRANTS

Eleni Medero, rising senior in Modern Greek and Political Science, received support from the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies and the AHEPA Automotive District 10 student support fund to study advanced Greek at the Athens Center in summer 2026.

Arthur Pfeifer-Rubey, a rising senior in Classical Civilization and Latin, and **Annelie Zissis**, undergraduate student in Art & Design and Japanese, were selected as Library Engagement Fellows working with **Zachary Quint** to curate the exhibit “Echoes of the Past: Greektown as Seen by Sam Karres,” on view in the Clark Library Exhibit Space, Hatcher Library South, 3 April–21 August 2026. and presented “Detroit, a City of Neighborhoods,” a talk on their exhibit in the Clark Library Instruction Space. See the cover article and interview with Annelie Zissis in this newsletter.

Nicholas Teknos, rising senior in the School of Business Administration and pursuing a minor in Modern Greek, received support from the Modern Greek Fund and the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies for study abroad at College Year in Athens during the winter semester of 2026.

Ava Thomas, double major in Modern Greek Literature and Culture and International Studies, received support from the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies and the Modern Greek Fund for study abroad at the American College of Thessaloniki during the winter semester of 2026. Thomas’s studies at ACT deepened her knowledge of Greek language, life, history, and culture while she pursued coursework connected to her International Studies focus on Greece.

FACULTY NEWS

Jim Cogswell (Arthur F. Thurnau Professor and Professor of Art & Design, Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design; affiliated faculty in Modern Greek, Affiliated faculty) will have an exhibition of mixed media drawings from August 31 to October 9, 2026 at the U-M Residential College Gallery (East Quadrangle, 701 E. University Ave., Ann Arbor). Titled *Hands on Fire*, the exhibition features work in response to Greek Cypriot filmmaker Michael Cacoyannis’ cinematic adaptations of three tragedies by Euripides dealing with the Trojan War and its aftermath. There will be a public reception on

Friday, September 18, 5:00 to 8:00 pm. All are welcome. In January 2026 Jim traveled to Athens to exhibit a portion of this work at the Michael Cacoyannis Foundation, surrounded by his 2022 installation *Vinyl Euripides*. In fall 2025, Jim spent ten weeks in Japan doing research for four 2027 exhibitions/installations further adapting these stories for a Japanese context, at the Shiga Museum of Art and Shiga Prefectural Library in Seta, Japan Center for Michigan Universities in Hikone, and Kyushu Sangyo University in Fukuoka.



Jim Cogswell, *Hands on Fire*, 2026, 9" x 12"

Vassilios Lambropoulos (C.P. Cavafy Professor Emeritus) co-edited, with Laura Jansen (University of Bristol), *Chimeric Ecologies: The Poetry of Phoebe Giannisi*, a collection of fourteen original essays that is currently under submission. His essay “The Tragedy of Autonomy in the Modern Theatre of Liberation” appeared in Rosa Vasilaki and George Souvlis, eds., *Politics of Liberation: Conversations with Theory and History* (Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2025). He also co-curated with historian and critic Athina Rossoglou “How Do We Converge with the Interwar Era?,” a Greek-language series of original essays published in the electronic cultural journal *Thraca* (December 2025–July 2026), in which 42 Greek scholars, thinkers, writers, and artists reflect on possible connections between the interwar period and the present. On 26 September 2025, Lambropoulos delivered the keynote address, “The Crisis of Criticism,” at “Views of Contemporary Poetry: Institutions, Voices, Networks,” a two-day conference based on “Poetry Crisis,” his Greek-language website publishing original essays on twenty-first-century Greek poetry. He received the 2024 Kostis Palamas Award, given annually by the literary organization Poetry Desk in Patras, Greece, in recognition of his contribution to the international cultivation and promotion of Greek letters.

Artemis Leontis (C.P. Cavafy Professor of Modern Greek and Comparative Literature) published “[The Greek Table](#)” (2 January) in the essay series “Voices of the Other Greek America” and “[Diasporic Piecework: Migration, Labor, and Inheritance in George Kouvaros’s Patrimonies: A Review Essay](#)” (7 July)—both in *Ergon: Greek American Arts & Letters*. She served as Grand Marshal at the 24th Detroit Greek Independence Day Parade on 3 May. She delivered invited lectures at Cornell University, the University of Washington, and the Hellenic Centre in London on Eva Sikelianos’s collections, gendered archive trouble, and women’s archival labor in the making of modern Hellenism. As editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, she published two more semiannual issues and led a discussion on journal publishing at

a graduate student workshop organized by the Centre for Greek Diaspora Studies at Royal Holloway, University of London. On 3 June 2026, she accepted, on behalf of JMGS the 2025 Greek State Literary Prize of Honorary Distinction, awarded by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture for its “contribution to the dissemination of Modern Greek studies internationally.”

Despina Margomenou (Lecturer IV in Modern Greek) continued teaching the regular Modern Greek language sequence, including Beginner and Intermediate Modern Greek, as well as required courses in Modern Greek history, culture, and heritage. She was also pleased to continue the peer virtual exchange Conversations on Culture, her twelve-year collaboration with the Center for Foreign Languages at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Despina also taught Seeds of Peace for the second time, a course developed in collaboration with U-M Middle East Studies. The course brings together language learning, peace education, and intercultural understanding, encouraging students to think critically and empathetically across linguistic, cultural, and political differences. She presented the team’s first observations from teaching this course at the U-M LSA Grant Showcase in a presentation titled “Seeds of Peace: Language Learning, Peace Education, and Intercultural Understanding.” The Seeds of Peace team has received a U-M Life-Changing Education Grant (Way 1: Open Inquiry and Productive Disagreement), which will support the continued development of the project.

Will Stroebel (Associate Professor of Classical Studies and Comparative Literature) was awarded tenure and promotion at the University of Michigan. His book, *Literature’s Refuge* (Princeton University Press, 2025) was co-winner of the Best Book in Mediterranean Studies (Mediterranean Seminar) and received a High Commendation in Book History from the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP). He was invited to lecture on his book at a number of institutions, ranging from Palo Alto to New York to the Netherlands and Greece. Moving onto new projects, Will also published an article on the figuration of Greek ruins in Turkish literature (*Diacritics*) and a book chapter on the reception history of Cavafy in Turkey. In his service to the Modern Greek Studies Association, he helped organize the [2025 Modern Greek Pedagogy Workshop](#), alongside Frank Hess and Kelly Polychroniou, and hosted a webinar on [Decolonizing Greek Diasporas](#) as part of the mission of the MGSA Transnational Studies Committee. In reflecting on his successful tenure review, he acknowledges the steadfast support from his two departments, his colleagues, and his wife, Giota Tachtara, whose new short-story collection (*Γάλα Εβαπορέ*) will be coming out by year’s end with the Greek publisher Ψυχογιός.



On behalf of the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Artemis Leontis accepts the Greek State Literary Prize of Honorary Distinction awarded by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture in a ceremony at the National Gallery–Alexandros Soutsos Museum in Athens. 3 June, 2026

2026-2027 EVENTS

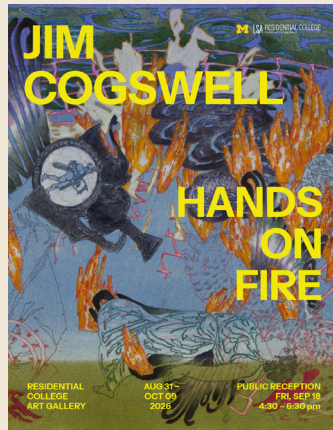
All events take place on the University of Michigan campus, Ann Arbor.

31 AUG.–9 OCT. 2026

“Hands on Fire”: an exhibit of work by Jim Cogswell

Residential College Gallery, East Quadrangle, 701 E. University Avenue

“Hands on Fire” presents the mixed-media drawings of Jim Cogswell responding to Greek Cypriot filmmaker Michael Cacoyannis’s cinematic adaptations of three tragedies by Euripides dealing with the Trojan War and its aftermath, and Cogswell’s continuing engagement with Greek tragedy, visual storytelling, and cross-cultural adaptation.



FRIDAY, 18 SEPT. 2026, 5:00–8:00 P.M.

Public Reception for “Hands on Fire”: an exhibit of work by Jim Cogswell

Residential College Gallery, East Quadrangle, 701 E. University Avenue

MONDAY, 28 SEPT. 2026,
4:00 P.M.

Public Lecture: “Ottoman Greek Settlement in the Mitten State”

Yiorgos Topalidis (*Flagler College*)

Classical Studies Library, 2175 Angell Hall, 435 S. State Street



MONDAY, 12 OCT. 2026,
4:00 P.M.

Vakalo Family Visiting Scholar Lecture: “The Poet of the 21st Century between Melancholic Rupture and Insurgent Utopia”

Athina Rossoglou (*Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs*)

Michigan Room, Michigan League, 911 N. University Avenue



WEDNESDAY, 20 JAN. 2027, 4:00 P.M.

Calliope Papala Politou Lecture: *Title forthcoming; talk on learning Greek across the centuries, from ancient to modern, and vice versa*

Brian D. Joseph, Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Linguistics and Kenneth E. Naylor Professor Emeritus of South Slavic Linguistics (*The Ohio State University*)

Classical Studies Library, 2172 Angell Hall, 435 S. State Street



lsa.umich.edu/modgreek

Artemis Leontis

C.P. Cavafy Professor of Modern Greek & Comparative Literature
Director of the Modern Greek Program
Newsletter Editor

Vassilios Lambropoulos

C.P. Cavafy Professor Emeritus

Despina Margomenou

Lecturer IV in Modern Greek

Zachary Quint

Classics and Modern Greek Librarian
Hatcher Graduate Library

Will Stroebel

Associate Professor of Classical Studies & Comparative Literature

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