Marble carving began on the Cycladic islands more than five thousand years ago. Since then, marble and the story of Tinos have been closely entwined, and the island remains to this day the most famous center for marble work in Greece.

Tinos itself is a dramatic island of rugged and mountainous beauty. The villages, many clinging to the marble cliffs, mostly remain as they were centuries ago. The marble portals, window fanlights, bell towers, and church interiors, all of local marble, can be seen everywhere.

From the ruins of the Venetian castle atop the mountain Exobourgo, there is a breathtaking view of endless terraces and stone walls and of villages and dove-cotes dotting the hills. On the horizon are the neighbouring islands of the Aegean.

The most famous of these nearby islands is Delos. There you can explore the best preserved ancient city in Greece, the birthplace of Apollon and Artemis.

Marble Sculpture Studio
Islands of Marble and History

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The Marble We Carve

Tinos has numerous quarries throughout the island, which provide the studio with its marble. There are subtle differences among the marbles quarried, but all have fine crystals, are easy to work, and polish to a warm, luminous finish.

The marble varies from a milky white color with soft blue-gray veins to a creamy white that is rich in ocher and earth tones.

Included in the studio fee is the first moderately sized piece of marble from our inventory selected by each carver.

Additional marble from Tinos, or white Pentelli marble, can be ordered with sufficient notice to the studio. Sculptors who do not use the method of direct carving are encouraged to bring a small maquette or drawings of the piece they intend to work so we are able to provide assistance if necessary.
BEGINNER and professional carvers receive individual assistance according to their interests and level of experience, in an informal studio atmosphere. We value the interaction of artists who share our love of marble carving and we work without a structured teacher/student format. Regardless of the level of proficiency artists currently possess, they will find the facilities and the artistic and technical assistance to help them realize their goals.

The completion of a piece may not be the sole aim of every carver. Focus on specific interests such as relief carving, pointing and scaling methods, polishing, or perfecting the use of hand and power tools is possible for all our carvers. Individuals carving for the first time receive a deep understanding of marble through learning the correct use of basic hand and compressed air tools, which gives the beginner an efficiency of time and energy and a control of the medium.

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Continuing a long tradition of marble carving, Petros Dellatolas works, as did his father, in the sculptural tradition of his island. Born and raised on Tinos and a graduate of the School of Fine Arts, Panormos, Tinos, he has been working in his studio since 1969. In addition to his own body of work, Dellatolas has done major architectural work throughout Greece, as well as restoration of ancient sites under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Ephorate of Antiquities for the Cyclades. He is acknowledged as one of Greece’s finest marble sculptors.

Coming from a radically different background, sculptor Annette Fougnies was born and raised in the Chicago area and joined the studio in 1984.

Her art education includes studies at Iowa State University, and at The Ealing School of Art and The Slade School of Art, London, England, with a B.F.A. in Sculpture from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

What Awaits You in the Studio

For your use, the studio provides all hand tools forged on the island by the same artisans who are making the tools for the restoration of the Acropolis in Athens.

For those carvers who are interested, a morning excursion can be planned to visit the forge and buy tools.

Carvers using compressed air must bring their own air hammers and basic chisels, which are easily adapted to the studio’s air hoses. Small power tools such as sanders and grinders are available to sculptors with experience or can be used with assistance by the studio’s staff. Electricity in Greece is 220 volts.

The studio provides basic protective gear but carvers working with large sanders and saws should bring specialized hand, eye, ear and respiratory protection.
Workspace and Hours

Located within easy walking distance of the harbor of Tinos, the studio is part of a well-equipped marble factory that has produced major architectural work for sites throughout Greece. The factory’s equipment is used to assist sculptors whenever necessary. Air hoses and electricity are available in all work areas, so artists may choose to sculpt either indoors or out under a shaded canopy with a view of the sea. Adjacent to the work areas is a lush walled-in garden for mid-morning coffee breaks and relaxation. A five-minute walk down the road takes you to the old Venetian harbor of Stavros for a swim, lunch in the churchyard, or ouzo at sunset. The studio works from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Sculptors may return in the evenings for two additional hours of unassisted work from 5:30 to 7:30, Monday through Friday.

Accommodation

Accommodation on the island is abundant and is available in all categories from beach resorts to charming village houses, or simple rooms just minutes from the studio. The cost of the studio does not include accommodation, but by contacting our travel agent on the island, Sharon Turner at Windmills Travel, you will be provided with complete accommodation and travel information. E-mail her at: sharon@thn.forthnet.gr

Registration and Cost

The studio welcomes artists from May through October and encourages them to work for no less than two weeks. There are no set sessions, which allows flexibility in scheduling vacation time, and there are always carvers working at the studio during these months.

For exact dates and cost for this season, please see the attachment to this brochure. To find out about availability of space for the dates that you would like to attend the studio, please write, fax, or e-mail us, using the contact information on the back of this brochure.
Taking a piece of sculpture home is not difficult if one anticipates doing so.

Packing lightly and having a carry-on with handle and wheels is a very good way to take a piece with you, using a beach towel or work clothes as protection.

If you decide to use this method of transport, we will be certain that your piece will fit into the specified luggage before you begin work and will prepare it for packing before you leave.

For those not wishing to take their sculpture with them, the studio is prepared to crate and ship. Since we ship many pieces each year, we begin the shipping at the end of each season, around the first of November, and prepare all pieces at the same time.

The Ministry of Culture and Antiquities may require that certain marble leaving the country be approved for export.

The cost of a crate, packing and truck to customs in Athens is $225 USD, payable at the end of your session. Details about shipping will be provided with registration.

Marble from the islands of Tinos, Paros and Naxos was used from the Archaic period through the end of the Roman period to build temples, theatres and public edifices throughout the Mediterranean.

Following the Byzantine period, Tinos and other Cycladic islands came under Venetian control for five centuries, from 1207 to 1715.

During the 18th century, Greece experienced its “Golden Age” of painting and sculpture.

When Tinos was finally taken by the Ottoman Empire in 1715, a disproportionate number of its population were superior marble sculptors, painters and artists. These Tiniot artists and artisans were in demand throughout the Balkans, southern Russia and Asia Minor.

Upon gaining its independence in 1821, Greece began to rebuild itself with the help of its Tiniot marble workers.

Today Tinos remains the most famous center for marble work in Greece. Most of the master marble carvers presently working on the restoration of the Parthenon and other Acropolis buildings come from Tinos.