



Kostas Grammatopoulos was born on 4 September 1916 in Athens. In 1934 he enrolled at the School of Fine Art at the painting studio of Umberto Argyros and the graphics studio of Yiannis Kefallinos. In 1940 Grammatopoulos was awarded the Chrysovergeion Prize. From 1942 onwards he engraved in wood portraits of contemporary Greek novelists and poets for the Nea Estia magazine. He also illustrated more than one hundred books, many of which received an award. In 1949 he won a commission to illustrate in lithograph *The Alphabet* of the AEDB (Organization of School Books Publication), which was distinguished at the International Exhibition in Belgium at that time. In 1954 Grammatopoulos continued his studies in Paris under the auspices of State Funds Institute - IKY. Grammatopoulos studied painting, engraving, etching at the Fine Art School in Paris under the supervision of Camu and Gerg, at École Estienne, and at École Métiers d'Art. In 1957 he launched his first exhibition in Paris at Galerie Saint-Germain des Prés. In 1959 he was elected regular (taktikos) professor and succeeded Yiannis Kefallinos as head of the school of engraving that was vacant since 1957. He taught until 1985, promoting young artists to exhibitions abroad, and by offering summer course at Mythymna. In 1968 Grammatopoulos represented Greece at the 34th Venice Biennial. In 1972 he earned the Golden Medal of Engraving at Florence. In 1974 he created the national emblem of the Hellenic Republic.

In her essay titled *From Landscape to Abstract Wood Engraving*, Dr. Kassimati suggests that "Grammatopoulos is a master of the art of engraving, while retaining an awareness of the spirit of his time" [1995 p.7]. He knows how to update age-old values like beauty, balance, harmony and simplicity. The engravings of authors are characterized by an 'abstracted naturalism'. At that time Grammatopoulos was still under the influence of Yiannis Kefallinos.

In 1985 Grammatopoulos was given his first retrospective exhibition. The National Gallery of Athens launched a monographic exhibition on Grammatopoulos in 1995. Grammatopoulos participated in most international biennials of engraving (Lugano, Sao Paulo, Tokyo, Lubljana, New Delhi), as well as in numerous exhibitions of painting and engraving in Greece and abroad. Works of his are kept in museums and private collections in the US, Europe, at the National Gallery of Athens, the Pieridis Collection.

Kostas Grammatopoulos died on 1 October 2003 in Athens at the age of 87.

[12/2005]

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

CASSIMATI, MARILENA Z. *Dr. K. Grammatopoulos* 1995 National Gallery, Athens