GETTY VILLA LECTURE EXAMINES THE MEANING OF GREEK ANTIQUITIES PRESENTED AS DIPLOMATIC GIFTS DURING THE COLD WAR

Our Presidents' Gifts:
The Role of Greek Antiquities in Greek-U.S. Political Relationships after World War II

The J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Villa
Saturday, February 27, 2016, at 2:00 p.m.

LOS ANGELES – On February 27, art historian Nassos Papalexandrou of the University of Texas at Austin will discuss the meaning of Greek antiquities within Greek-U.S. political relations during the latter half of the 20th century.

In the late 1940s, the United States' involvement in Greece ushered in a new, unprecedented role for Greek antiquities presented as state gifts to American presidents and other high-ranking officials. Carefully selected by the Greek government during the Cold War, these gifts epitomized a conception of ancient Greece as the political and cultural paragon of Western civilization. This message was communicated in well-staged ceremonies that resonated with...
political figures, the press, and diverse publics such as the Greek-American community.

After joining the University of Texas at Austin’s art history faculty, Papalexandrou began researching the under-studied tradition of antiquities as diplomatic gifts. During his lecture, he will present his unfolding research that takes a closer look at the character of these antiquities, their qualities as ancient artifacts, the symbolism behind their selection, and the reception by those who accepted them.

The lecture will take place on Saturday, February 27 at 2:00 p.m. in the Villa Auditorium. Admission is free but a reservation is required. Tickets are available by calling 310-440-7300 or online at http://www.getty.edu/museum/programs/lectures/papalexandrou_lecture.html

About Nassos Papalexandrou
Athanasio "Nassos" Papalexandrou is associate professor of art history at the University of Texas at Austin. He attend the University of Athens and earned his doctoral degree at Princeton University. His research specialties are the ritual dimensions of early Greek figurative art and archaeology, Orientalizing phenomena, and the archaeology of Cyprus, and he has conducted field work in Athens, Crete, Naxos, and multiple sites on Cyprus. He has published widely in scholarly journals and in 2005 released his first book called The Visual Poetics of Power: Warriors, Youths, and Tripods in Early Greece. His current projects include a new book exploring the role of monsters in the arts and rituals of early Greece and an exhibition showcasing antiquities exchanged as diplomatic gifts between Greece and the United States after World War II.

# # #

The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades.

The J. Paul Getty Museum collects Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts to 1900, as well as photographs from around the world to the present day. The Museum’s mission is to display and interpret its collections, and present important loan exhibitions and publications for the enjoyment and education of visitors locally and internationally. This is supported by an active program of research, conservation, and public programs that seek to deepen our knowledge of and connection to works of art.

Visiting the Getty Villa
The Getty Villa is open Wednesday through Monday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed Tuesday and most major holidays, open on July 4. Admission to the Getty Villa is always free, but a ticket is required for admission. Tickets can be ordered in advance, or on the day of your visit, at www.getty.edu/visit or at (310) 440-7300. Parking is $15 per car, but reduced to $10 after 4 p.m. Groups of 15 or more must make reservations by phone. For more information, call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish); (310) 440-7305 (TTY line for the deaf or hearing impaired). The Getty Villa is at 17985 Pacific Coast Highway, Pacific Palisades, California.

Additional information is available at www.getty.edu.
Sign up for e-Getty at www.getty.edu/subscribe to receive free monthly highlights of events at the Getty Center and the Getty Villa via e-mail, or visit www.getty.edu for a complete calendar of public programs.