



## **Fact Sheet**

### **The U.S. Embassy Annex Athens Greece**

Project Scope: 1.3 hectares and 5 buildings

Architect: Kallmann McKinnell & Wood Architects, Inc., Boston, Mass.

Structural: Weidlinger Associates, Cambridge, Mass.

Mechanical/Electrical: Cosentini Associates, Cambridge, Mass.

Contractor: J.A. Jones International, Charlotte, N. Carolina

Subcontractor: Pantechniki, Athens, Greece

Construction Award: September 30, 2004

Groundbreaking Ceremony: November 4, 2004

Ground Preparation Start: February 2005

Construction Start: June 2005

Move-in: April 2007

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony: May 9, 2007

Cost of all Buildings: \$43 million

Total Project Costs: \$78 million, from land to light fixtures to landscaping

Estimated Impact on Local Economy: \$50 million

Facilities Constructed: An office building, parking garage, compound entrances, fuel station, Marine quarters, swimming pool, and basketball court. The new office building will enable us to bring onto the compound employees who have been working in leased space for many years.

Workforce: Over 25 local sub-contractors and 1000 workers, mostly Greeks, participated in the construction. Ground preparation and construction took place over 26 months and over 900,000 person-hours were worked without any major accidents or delays.

### The Grounds

✿ Over 85 trees of 5 main varieties have been planted, including 28 cypress and 20 olive trees. This is 70% more than the zoning code requires. According to the United States Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, the value of a tree is approximately \$3,140 per year in benefits to the environment (oxygen production, soil erosion control, water recycling, and air pollution control) for a total of nearly \$300,000 per year from new trees planted during the construction.

✿ With over 22 species of trees, bushes, vines, flowers, grass, and other plants, the compound includes over 16,000 total new plantings, in addition to 3,200 square meters of new sod. The majority are drought-resistant, native, and adapted plants.

✿ The total green space is 5,613 square meters, roughly the size of a soccer field.

✿ The irrigation system is a sub-surface, low-flow, drip system, which incorporates soil moisture sensors, a clock timer, and a rain controller monitor.

### The Buildings:

- The **office building** is 5,026 square meters and includes office space for over 150 people. The offices that are housed here include the Consular Section (Visas, American Citizen Services, and Federal Benefits), the Foreign Commercial Service, Drug Enforcement Agency, Transportation Security Administration, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, and Citizenship and Immigrations Services.

- Its inner and outer finishes are of white Pentelic marble, grey Aliveri marble from Evia, and green marble from Tinos. The window sills and perimeter wall caps are of Kavala marble.

✿ The two terraces are green roofs, planted with sedum.

✿ The climate control system uses premium efficiency motors with an outdoor and recirculated air filtration system. The entire building is pressurized to prevent infiltration of outdoor air. The lighting system is also high efficiency. The two dual fuel (natural gas/fuel oil) boilers are state of the art.

- The Information Resource Center houses a current reference collection of 2,000 volumes, subscribes to 25 periodicals, and has access to 10 on-line databases. The IRC provides research and reference services on U.S. policy, with an emphasis on foreign relations, media, social, economic and political issues, the rule of law, legislative developments, and current affairs.

- The Agora multi-purpose room is a full-service conference space, capable of seating up to 55 people. It is equipped with a sound and projection system, digital video conferencing equipment, a podcast studio, and connections for press feeds. The satellite television reception for both old and new Embassy buildings will be controlled through this room.

- The office building is completely accessible to people with disabilities.

✿ Each floor of the office building contains a recycling closet.

- In addition to the entry garden sculpture by Michael Singer, over 20 pieces of artwork by Greek and Greek American artists are hung throughout the office building. (Please see attached sheets.)

- The **parking garage** has room for about 200 cars. There are designated spaces for carpools and people with special needs. The Embassy's maintenance shops are also in the garage.

✿ The bicycle racks in the garage can accommodate 14 bikes.

✿ The reduction of parking spaces from over 300 before construction to 200 now reflects increased use by employees of carpools, public transportation, and other eco-friendly means of commuting.

✿ The top level of the garage is shaded by cedar wood trellises.

- The **Marine quarters** include bedrooms for the Marine detachment and recreational facilities.

✿ The Marine quarters are topped by a green roof terrace, planted with sedum.

- The **compound entrance** on Petrou Kokkali Street will welcome 200 visitors a day to the Consular Section.

- Additional facilities for Embassy employees throughout the new area include a shop, cafeteria, mailroom, swimming pool and changing rooms, a travel office, a secondary telephone unit, sections of our General Services Office, a basketball court, a gym, and outdoor exercise terraces.
- All buildings meet current seismic standards as well as zoning regulations.
- ✿ While the building permit and zoning law allow for approximately 33,000 square meters of structures, the Embassy has constructed about 8,600 square meters of buildings, leaving plenty of open areas and green space around them.
- ✿ The compound has a new trash/recycling room.
- All buildings are smoke-free.
- ✿ Sinks are low-flow with battery-operated sensor-type faucets. Showers and water closets are also low-flow. Urinals are waterless.
- ✿ Low-emitting construction materials, such as paints, carpets, and vinyl tiles, were used to reduce volatile organic compound levels.

### A Little History

The American Embassy Chancery building in Athens was designed by famed Bauhaus School architect Walter Gropius. It was constructed between 1959 and 1961 and is a protected architectural landmark. Gropius' famous design was in the characteristic simple Bauhaus form, and, as the architect said, it was inspired by the architecture of the Parthenon. The design of the new office building is intended to integrate well with the Chancery, as well as with the Megaron Mousikis next door.

In 2003, the U.S. Embassy and the Athens Municipality celebrated the addition of a welcoming green space - the Makedonon Street Park - in the city of Athens. The landscaping of this pedestrian walkway, prompted by our heightened security requirements, was an opportunity for us to give something back to the neighborhood and be sensitive to our neighbors. In a similar way, the new office building improves the neighborhood aesthetically by replacing unsightly temporary structures that occupied the land behind the Chancery.

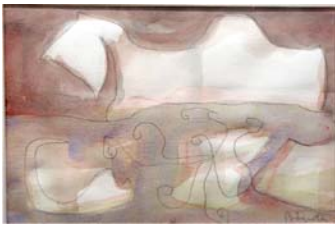
✿ *N.B. Green trees throughout this fact sheet indicate environmentally-friendly elements of the Embassy's design and construction.*

## The Annex Art Collection

Focusing on contemporary art from the United States and Greece, we have included 15 artists of Greek-American and Greek heritage in the Annex's new permanent art collection. The art spans a broad spectrum of styles, content, and media. Stylistically, the collection includes both representational pieces and abstract works with various geometric and biomorphic forms. Frequently presenting Grecian themes, the works explore architecture, landscapes, famed actors, Greek mythology, and migration and immigration. The media of the collection is equally diverse, consisting of paintings, drawings, photographs and other works on paper, neon, mixed media, and installations. With its artistic diversity, the group represents the universality of contemporary art as seen through the eyes of two curators, one in the United States and one in Greece.

A highlight of the collection is a work on paper by William Baziotes (1912-1963). One of the foremost Abstract Expressionist Painters, Baziotes was born in Pennsylvania to Greek immigrants. The collection includes work by seven other American artists including Stephen Antonakos, Mary Grigoriadis, Zoe Keremea, Nefeli Massaia, George Negroponte, Tomas Rivas, and Eve Sussman. The seven Greek artists included in the collection are Niki Kanagini, Harris Kondosphyris, Grigoris Lagos, Despina Meimaroglou, Nina Pappa, Danae Stratou, and Dimitris Tsoublekas.

A few images of work from the collection:



William Baziotes, Greek American  
Reclining Form in Autumn, 1959  
Watercolor and graphite on paper



Stephen Antonakos, Greek  
Untitled (for Jo Harvey Allen), 1987  
Neon and acrylic on canvas



George Negroponte, Greek American  
Migrate, 1995  
Oil on canvas



Niki Kanagini, Greek  
Hydran sunset en rapport with a grey landscape  
1972-2002, edition 1/5, 2002  
Digital photography, high-resolution print  
laminated

## **Michael Singer's Garden Sculpture**

US Embassy, Athens, Greece, 2007

The Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies (FAPE) is a private, non-profit organization established in 1986 to assist the U.S. Department of State in its efforts to provide fine American art for display in U.S. embassies. In 2005, FAPE selected Michael Singer to provide an entry garden sculpture for the American Embassy Annex Building in Athens. The entry garden can be seen from both buildings, the annex's terrace, and from the pedestrian bridge, which brings visitors to the annex building. The sculpture is a 70' long marble and pre-cast concrete and metal platform structure emerging from below grade at one end and rising three-feet from the ground level at the other end. This sloping platform is planted, has water slowly coursing over its surfaces, and provides seating. The sculpture's materials and textures reference archeological discoveries related to Greek culture. The sculpture is placed in a grid of olive trees and lavender hedges.

Artist/Designer: Michael Singer

Engineering: Calen Colby, Daniel J. O'Wril, H. Todd Lackey, and Mercer Bonney at Oest Associates Inc.

FAPE Director: Jennifer Duncan

Design and Drafting: John Guminak and Jason Bregman

Fabrication and Installation: Robert Hannum- Project Manager, Al Chapman, Daniel J. O'Wril, Todd Lackey, John Guminak, Paul Eliot, and Sean Springer

Foundation Fabrication: Thomas A. Weber OBO Athens Project Director and J.A. Jones International

Landscape Architect: Carol Johnson and Associates

For more information about FAPE, see <http://www.fapeglobal.org>.

## **Michael Singer Biography**

Michael Singer has received numerous awards, including fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. His works are part of public collections in the United States and abroad, including the Australian National Gallery, Canberra; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark; Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. He has had several one-person shows, most notably at the Guggenheim Museum.

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, Michael Singer's work opened new possibilities for outdoor and indoor sculpture and contributed to the definition of site specific art and the development of public places. His most recent work has been instrumental in transforming public art, architecture, landscape and planning projects into successful models for urban and ecological renewal. In 1993, *The New York Times* chose Singer's design of a massive waste recycling and transfer station in Phoenix as one of the top eight design events of the year.

In recent years, Singer has been involved in a variety of landscape and outdoor environment, planning and infrastructure projects in the United States and Europe. He has completed a woodland garden and sculpture for a two-acre site on the Wellesley College campus, Wellesley, Massachusetts. In Stuttgart, Singer completed a one-acre sculptural garden commemorating "Those Who Survived" as part of a new public park. In 1994, a sculptural floodwall and walkway that serves as a model riverine reclamation project designed by Singer for the Grand River East Bank in Grand Rapids, Michigan was completed. For the Denver International Airport, Singer completed a large interior sculpture garden design and an installation. At the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Singer developed a master plan for the use and redesign of the outdoor gardens as part of a two-year residency. Singer's design of air and water purification gardens for the Institute for Forestry and Nature (Alterra, IBN) Holland, has been featured in many journals as one of the leading examples of aesthetically outstanding green sustainable design. The Canal Corridor Association and Chicago Parks Department selected Singer to design a new urban park on the Chicago River that interprets the history and impact of canals on the city, as well as reclaims wildlife habitat and restores a wetland ecosystem. With support from the Rockefeller Foundation he led a multidisciplinary team with the environmental group River Watch Network on the master plan for Troja Island Basin in Prague, Czech Republic.

The recently opened AES Londonderry, New Hampshire Cogeneration Facility buildings, site and surrounding land holdings (\$400 million) was designed by a team led by Michael Singer. The Singer Team design identified many strategies by which the facility will set a new standard for the power industry, making this power facility an asset to its surroundings; demonstrating how essential services

like power generation can become integral parts of a community's social fabric. As a result of Singer's work for AES, several companies in the electric power industry have engaged him to work on new facility design. The Singer Team developed the design for Trans Gas Energy's Greenpoint, Brooklyn site. The design reveals many exciting possibilities for integrating the facility water and waste heat systems into design and programs that are amenities to the community. The design defines an "Urban Eco-Sustainable Network", including habitat creation, education, recreation, water preservation, and urban agriculture as part of the electric generation facility building and site.

The EcoTarium in Worcester Mass. recently completed two phases (\$16 million) of a Singer-led master plan and design for the institution's 60 acre site. The design includes extensive renovation, new buildings, a museum store, a telecommunications center, exhibitions, major site and landscape improvements and animal habitats. The project and Singer's work were a feature in *The New York Times* Sunday Arts and Leisure Section. Singer completed an artist-in-residence grant at the Armory Art Center in West Palm Beach as the leader of "Imagining Howard Park", a creative urban planning exercise. For this residency, Singer led a "think tank" of community participants, regional artists, design and planning professionals, students and members of the general public. The Plan identifies design and program opportunities that inform the City about revitalizing and interconnecting the park to the residential, commercial, cultural, environmental, and civic interests encompassing it, and to bring attention to the special qualities of the indigenous South Florida landscape. Singer is currently the Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar Chair at Florida Atlantic University. His work with Ph.D students resulted in proposals for a new retention pond policy at the University, and an innovative visitor center for the South Florida Water Management District.

The Jewish Community Center on the Upper West Side of Manhattan commissioned Michael Singer to propose a public work of art for the new Samuel Priest Rose Building on 76th St and Amsterdam Ave. Singer designed and fabricated "Welcoming Garden", a vertical forty-foot narrow sculptural garden positioned, like a crevice, into the stone wall. "Welcoming Garden" is set into a "field" of Jerusalem Stone. The vertical garden is a series of textured cliff-like shelf forms made of copper and bronze castings. The garden's channel extends behind the plane of Jerusalem stone, revealing deeper layers. Vine plants are distributed within the 16-inch-wide inner chamber. Water flows very slowly within the crevice, dripping from level to level before collecting in a small reservoir. The project was completed in April 2002.

In 2003, Michael Singer completed the Palm Beach County Courthouse Security Barrier in West Palm Beach, Florida. Singer was selected through a competition to design and fabricate a \$350,000 security barrier for two plazas of the County Courthouse. This project uses public art as way to aesthetically enhance a functional security need.



In January 2003, the New York City Economic Development Corporation hired Michael Singer to form a core team with Margie Ruddick Landscape and Michael Sorkin Urban Planning to provide planning, streetscape and landscape design for the public spaces in Queens Plaza near the Queensboro Bridge in Long Island City, New York. The focus of the design is a sustainable urban environment using storm water runoff from the Queensboro Bridge to implement systems including plantings and streetscapes that filter and cleanse a portion of this water. Public art will be designed to enhance the functional elements needed at the site, providing amenities for solar collection, wind abatement and sound attenuation, as well as the armature for information and interpretation of the environmental and cultural history of the site.

In October 2004 Michael Singer completed a sculpture garden commission by Middlebury College in Vermont. "Garden of the Seasons" is located adjacent to the new Middlebury College Library. The sculpture garden functions as a filtration system for storm water runoff on the upper campus as well as an outdoor seating and gathering space. Native plantings are set around a granite seating, sunken gardens and a water wall that becomes a winter ice wall.

The city of West Palm Beach, Florida hired Michael Singer with TDG Planners and CH2MHILL Engineering to design a new central waterfront park, City Commons, on one mile of the Intercoastal Waterway in the downtown area. Environmental enhancement is an important theme, along with floating islands that help purify the Intercoastal water and are connected to land by a series of piers and water surface walkways. A planted and stepped transitional edge was installed as the sea wall. Interpretive programs help people of all ages understand the environmental, cultural, social, and historical layers of the site.

In 2005, Whole Foods Market engaged Michael Singer to develop alternatives to the types of shopping centers the store is proposing to anchor. In June 2005, Singer completed "Outside the Box", a visual and written report on the potential for Whole Foods Market and their host shopping centers to address aesthetic, cultural and environmental issues that would distinguish these "big box" places from what is the norm. Singer completed design concepts for a new Whole Foods Market store in Orlando and continues to work with Whole Foods Market on the stores they are opening in the Florida region.

Back to <http://www.usembassy.gr>

Greek text at: [http://www.usembassy.gr/about\\_us/annex\\_gr.pdf](http://www.usembassy.gr/about_us/annex_gr.pdf)