

UNITED STATES SPORTS ACADEMY

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7 June 2012

Indy 500 Art Show Leads to Donation of Painting to Academy's Museum by Greek Artist
DAPHNE, Ala.— Following an exhibit honoring the Indianapolis 500, Greek artist Mina Papatheodorou-Valyraki recently donated a painting of a blue and yellow Formula 1 race car to the American Sport Art Museum and Archives (ASAMA).

It is the sixth auto racing piece in ASAMA's collection of nearly 20 pieces by Valyraki, who was named the museum's 2002 Sport Artist of the Year.

The colorful and large 6-foot by 5-foot painting will go on display temporarily in the sport art museum's lobby. A bulk of her dynamic abstract expressionist works currently can be found in the Main Gallery at ASAMA, which is a division of the United States Sports Academy and has arguably the largest collection of sport art in the world.

Valyraki, who is the official artist for Lamborghini, Ferrari and F1, says she wanted ASAMA to have a new racing piece to display, while 13 other paintings of hers are featured at the National Art Museum of Sport exhibit "Speed and Motion: Racing to the Finish Line" in Indianapolis. The show opened during the week of the running of the Indy 500 in May and concludes in September.

"I think it's good to exhibit a painting like this at the Academy's museum," Valyraki says. "It's an opportunity to increase exposure to my art in the United States. I greatly appreciate the support of both ASAMA and NAMOS during this period."

The NAMOS exhibit features more than 30 artworks by seven different artists. Valyraki's exciting works that exude speed, energy and light are highlighted in the exhibit with a whole gallery at the museum dedicated to her Formula 1 and motocross paintings.

Jack Scharr, President, Fine Art Limited and an Academy Board of Trustees member, attended the opening night of the "Speed and Motion" exhibit at NAMOS.

"I thought the show was very well done and Valyraki's artwork was indeed the stand out of the show," Scharr says.

NAMOS Executive Director Elizabeth Varner adds that the bright colors and energy in Valyraki's work evoke her passion for auto racing.

"Her works embody raw speed," Varner says. "They are energetic and dizzying. We were very pleased with the artwork for this exhibit."

Valyraki is working to have the pieces go on display at other museums in the United States after the NAMOS show ends in September. Her works have garnered much public acclaim and been selected for many exhibitions, museums, and private collections around the world, including such venues as the Third Art Biennial of Beijing; the National Gallery in Athens; the Olympic Museum of Lausanne, Switzerland; the Lamborghini Museum in Santa Agata Bolognese, Italy; the UNESCO collection in Paris; and the Frascione Art Gallery in Florence, Italy.

Founded in 1984, ASAMA is dedicated to the preservation of sports art, history, and literature. The ASAMA collection is composed of nearly 1,700 works of sport art across a variety of media, including paintings, sculptures, assemblages, prints and photographs. The museum is open free to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays.

The United States Sports Academy is an independent, non-profit, accredited, special mission sports university created to serve the nation and world with programs in instruction, research, and service. The role of the Academy is to prepare men and women for careers in the profession of sports. For more information about the Academy, call 251-626-3303 or visit www.ussa.edu.

