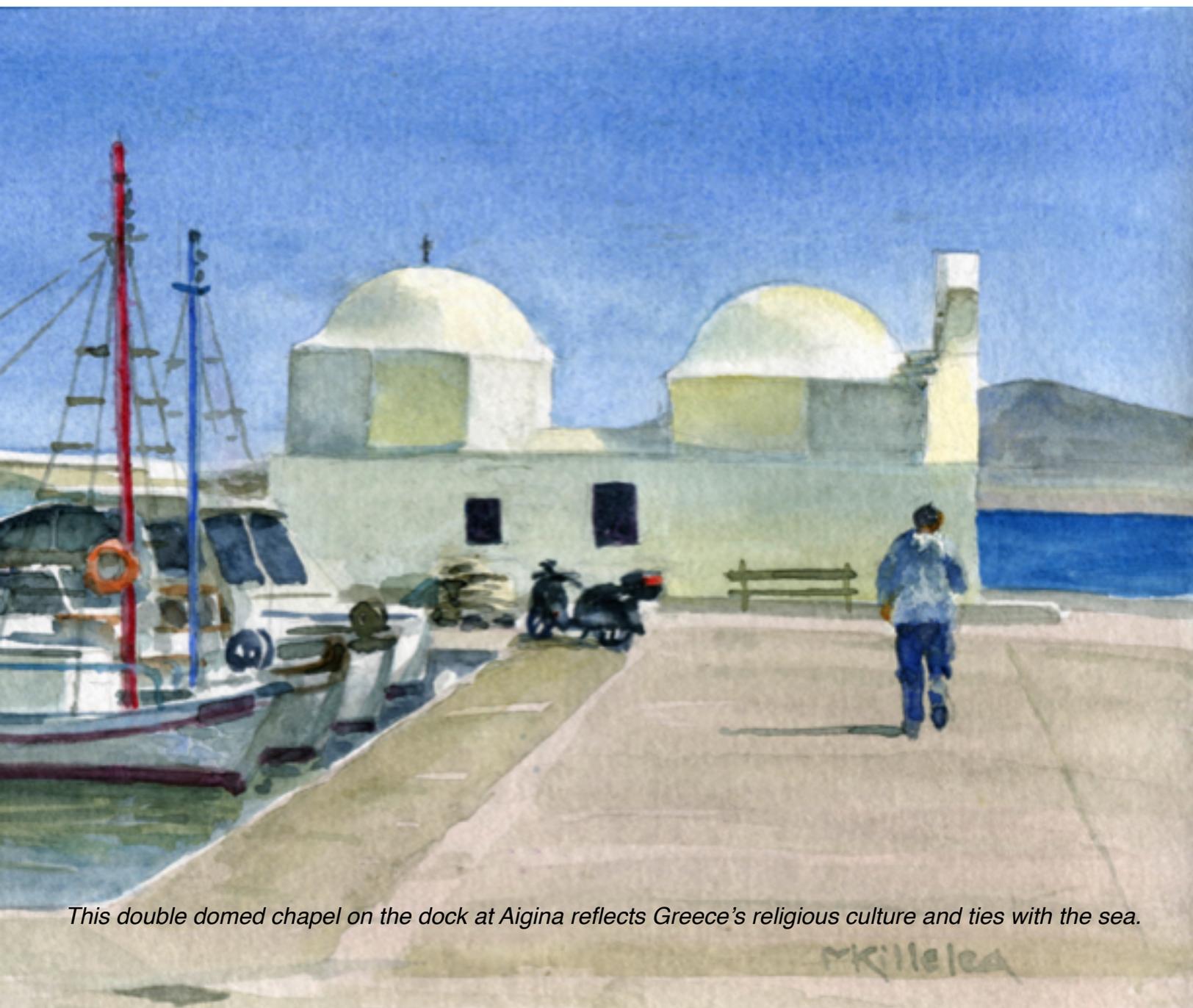


Sailing on sapphire seas through the realm of Zeus and Apollo,  
one is enveloped in the mythology of the

# GREEK ISLANDS

Local impressions painted among the sights and storied lands of Greece

by Michael Killelea © 2019



*This double domed chapel on the dock at Aigina reflects Greece's religious culture and ties with the sea.*

MKillelea



The **Evzones** (above) are ceremonial guards at Greece's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Athens. Their unique uniforms are based on historic light infantry troops.

A clock tower in **Nafplion** rises above the massive walls of a Bronze Age fortress. This city in the Peloponnese was the first capital of the country.

**G**reek history is long and incredibly rich. From the Cyclades Islands occupied before the bronze age, through the frenzied metropolis that is Athens today, the art, culture, architecture and vibrancy of the country is alive and visible in its people.

The world is richer for their cultural heritage, and when they finally resolve their financial crisis, they will once again be too.





**Nafplion's** azure waters surround the former prison island of Bouzi (above).

Hilly islands in Greece are pretty standard. The Church of the Holy Mother sits on a height above the harbor town of Adamoantas on **Milos** (right).



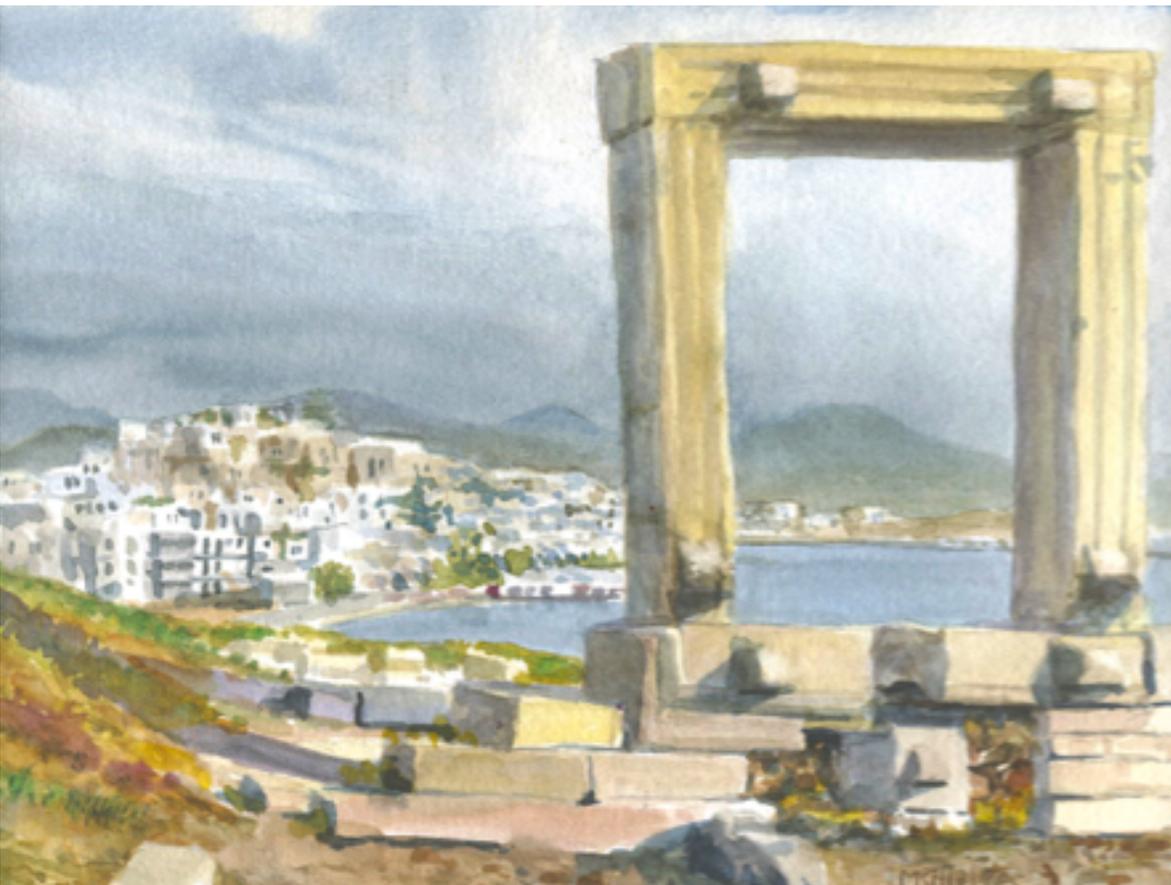


The whitewashed village of Oia on [Santorini](#) may be the most photographed location in all the Greek Islands. Village buildings on the island sprawl right to the edge of the surrounding cliffs, like foam left in the wake of retreating waves at the shore.

For all its beauty, the island has become a victim of “gentrification,” pricing many local residents out of a place to live. Upwards of 2 million visitors show up every year, not including thousands of tour ship passengers.



A short visit to **Paros** on a gray day was enough to capture local fishermen covering their equipment in the face of advancing rain. Fishing is second only to tourism among Greek island occupations.



Portara is the gateway to a 2,500 year old unfinished temple on **Naxos**. It was probably dedicated to Apollo whose birthplace on nearby Delos is framed by the arch. The twenty-ton pieces of the arch were simply too heavy to be reused when the temple was dismantled.

**Mykonos**, sometimes referred to as “The Island of the Winds” has developed a reputation for its somewhat hedonistic style. It is certainly jammed at all hours but comes even more alive at night. Its iconic windmills no longer capture the wind’s energy but instead collect income from tourists for housing. The main city, usually called Mykonos Town is loaded with trendy shops, restaurants, and an assortment of chapels.





Except for caretakers and archeologists, the sacred island of **Delos** (above) is inhabited only by the spirits of ancient Greek gods. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is covered with pieces of former temples, forums and statues.

**Syros** is a quiet, attractive, well-healed island. While it is no tourist magnet, the marble pavements in Ermoupoli (right) point to the town's position as capital of the island and of all the Cyclades.

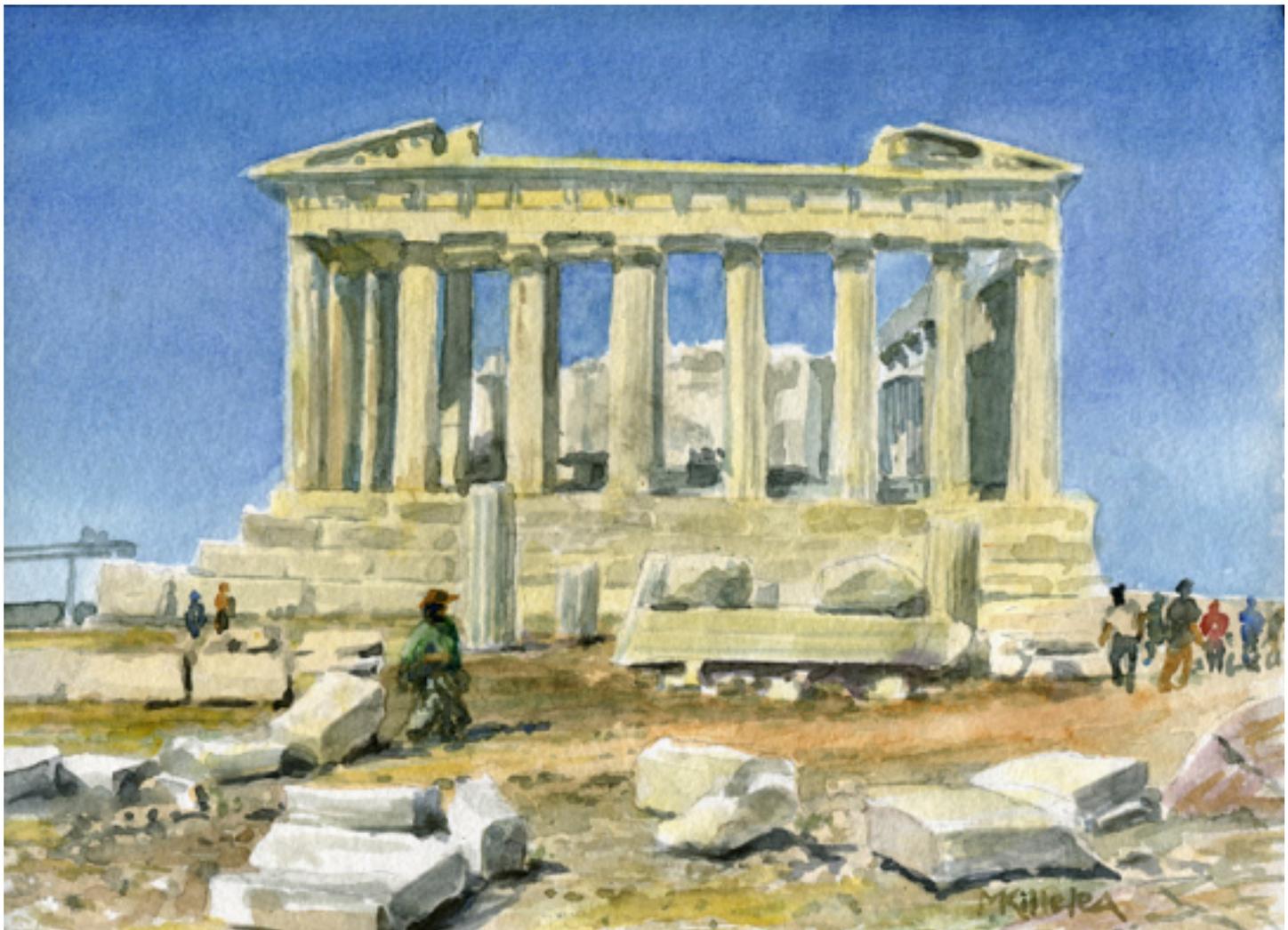




Beautiful **Aigina**, an important member of the Saronic Islands, is home to several ancient ruins including the Temple of Apollo (above). Only 17 miles by sea from Athens, the island was a major rival to Athens in ancient times. Aigina has become known for its extensive cultivation of **Pistachio** nuts (left) which are said to be the best in the country.

The **Parthenon**, atop the Acropolis in Athens (below) /S Greece. As a temple it was named for the goddess Athena. Constructed 2,500 years ago, it has been destroyed and rebuilt many times, and today hosts multitudes of international visitors.

The rocky hilltop that is the Acropolis stands almost 500 feet above the sea and overlooks all of Athens. Below it, the district of **Monastiraki** (right) is filled with shops and restaurants, the shadows of Plato and Socrates, and the origins of Athenian democracy.





The Temple of *Poseidon* was erected to honor the god of the sea. It sits on a promontory of Cape Sounion at the southern approach to Athens. Sighting it was a happy sign to seafarers that their voyage was almost over.



**Mike Killelea** is an avid watercolor painter who is most at home painting just about anywhere on location, in plein air. His work can be seen on his website if you click on:

<http://www.killeleart.com>

or visit him on Facebook at **Killeleart**, where he shares new art weekly. “Like” his page to follow his global adventures.

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*Thanks to Jill Drummond for taking this photo in Aigina.*