

KEVIN CASSIDY PHOTO COMPOSITIONS

GREECE

TEMPLE OF APOLLO AT DELPHI.
THE DELPHI MUSEUM. CLEOVIS AND BITON.
THE OMPHALOS STONE AND THE SPHINX.
THE DELPHI CHARIOTEER.
TEMPLE OF POSIEDON AT CAPE SOUNION.

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TEMPLE OF APOLLO AT DELPHI

This first series of photo compositions includes views of the landscape around Delphi. Nestled on the southern slopes of Mount Parnassus is the temple of Apollo. It is an imposing temple of the Doric order. Delphi was inhabited since Mycenaean times and sanctuaries were established dedicated to the Earth goddess. The worship of Apollo as the god of light, harmony, and order was established between the 11th and 9th centuries. During the 8th c. BCE. Delphi became internationally known for the oracular powers of Pythia--the priestess who sat on a tripod, uttered oracular chants that gave advice and foretold the future.

















CLEOVIS AND BITON AND THE OMPHALOS STONE

We will now move inside the Delphi Archaeology Museum. This next series inside the Delphi Museum includes: The Kouroi *Cleovis and Biton*, sculpted in the Archaic style, who would have stood at the entrance to the Temple of Apollo. The ancient rap on these two dudes is that they pulled the chariot of their mother, who was intent on worshipping the goddess Hera. As a reward, Hera allowed them to die peacefully in their sleep that same night. Go figure! Next we see the *Omphalos Stone*, which, for many in the ancient and classical world, marked the center of the earth. Hence name *omphalos* meaning “navel”. This sacred object was located in the innermost sanctuary, or Holy of Holies, of the Temple of Apollo, and was viewed only by the temple personnel who had access to the chamber.







THE DELPHI CHARIOTEER AND THE SPHINX OF NAXOS

We then see The *Delphi Charioteer*, one of the most important sculptures of ancient Greece as it signals the passage from the Archaic to the Classical style. It exemplifies the balance between stylized geometric representation and idealized realism. I see him taking victory lap while the expression on his face says “Call me”. We now see two views of the *The Sphinx of Naxos* who is sitting on an Ionic column c. 560 B.C. It was a gift from the people of the Aegean island of Naxos who gave it to the oracle of Delphi in the sixth century BCE.















CAPE SOUNION AND THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON

This next series includes: The Mediterranean Sea at Cape Sounion. Cape Sounion is noted as the site of ruins of the ancient Greek temple of Poseidon, the god of the sea in classical mythology. The remains command the prominence on the headland, surrounded on three sides by the sea. The ruins bear the engraved name of English Romantic poet Lord Byron (1788 – 1824), a passionate supporter of Greek Independence. A column close-up shows the fluting of the column drums.

















THE RUINS AROUND THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON

As I moved down to the sea, I came across the marvelous grove with a single column drum. In a romantic reverie, I thought of Nicolas Poussin's painting *Et in Arcadia Ego* (I, too, once dwelt in Arcadia). The scene is one of Sheppard's standing around a tomb in a bucolic grove. Those familiar with the *Da Vinci Code* and related motifs may know this painting and its hidden meanings. This was my Arcadian grove. Maybe an ancient Stargate was once here! I plunged down the cliff and into the sea.











THE SEA NEAR CAPE SOUNION

The final two photos are of the sun and the sea. I attended a poetry reading at the Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas, several years ago. One of the Readers was an Iraqi poet named _____. In the shortest poem I think I have ever heard . He read “The Sea is a lexicon of blue; read by the Sun” In these last two photos the sun is seen “reading the lexicon of blue.” The dew drop sinks back into the shining sea!





FIN

Enjoyed sharing with you these brief selections of two wonderful archaeological and temple sites – Delphi and Cape Sounion in Greece, as well as the several sculptures in the Delphi Museum. All are well worth the visit if you are ever over there.

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