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For more information, contact:

Sommer Toffle, SAMA-Ligonier Valley Coordinator
(724) 238-6015

Travis Mearns, Public Relations Coordinator
(724) 238-6015

SAMA-LIGONIER VALLEY EXHIBITION TO SHOWCASE FAMILY OF SCULPTORS

Ligonier – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley is pleased to announce the opening of its latest exhibition, *Frudakis: Two Generations of Sculpture*. The exhibition, on view August 16 through November 10, features fifteen sculptures by three members of the Frudakis family: EvAngelos, Jennifer and Zenos.

For the Greek-American Frudakis family, sculpture is visual poetry aspiring to beauty. A master of American sculpture, EvAngelos Frudakis taught the principals of good craft to hundreds of students, including his daughter Jennifer and his brother Zenos. Together, this talented family has amassed an incredible body of work. Despite their own separate approaches to their medium, each Frudakis sculptor has in common the desire to respect their legacy by creating art that is timeless in its quality and form.

EvAngelos Frudakis, 92, is the family patriarch. The son of Greek immigrants, he was born in Utah yet moved often throughout his youth, including a couple of lengthy stays in Greece. He began his pursuit of a career in the arts as a teen in New York. There he took night classes at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design before moving on to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, where he studied with Walker Hancock and Paul Manship, two of the country's foremost practitioners of modern classical sculpture.

EvAngelos's art career was put on hold during World War II, when he participated in the invasion of Normandy. Injured in the war, EvAngelos spent a year in a military hospital before he could resume his artistic endeavors upon his return home. Soon after, his sculptural work began to win prizes at major exhibitions in Philadelphia and New York, setting the course for a long and productive career. Throughout his work, from portrait commissions and medallion art to public monuments such as the *John F. Kennedy Memorial* (Atlantic City, NJ; Nashua, NH; and Guaymas, Mexico) and *The Signer* (Philadelphia), EvAngelos has striven to express his own poetic humanism through the discipline and beauty of the ancient Greek ideal.

Zenos Frudakis, born some thirty years after his brother EvAngelos, grew up in West Virginia and Indiana. Zenos was interested in art at an early age, inspired in part

by his older brother's success as well as the icon paintings at the Greek Orthodox church he attended in his youth. In 1973, he enrolled in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts as a scholarship student. He also spent time at EvAngelos's studio, where he learned the ins and outs of a career in sculpture. Focused intently on his craft, Zenos eventually earned election to the National Academy of Design and the National Sculpture Society.

By the early 1980s, he had completed his first major public monument. He would go on to create many over life-sized multi-figure bronze compositions, including *Freedom* at GlaxoSmithKline Corporate Headquarters in Philadelphia and *The National Air Force Memorial Honor Guard* in Arlington, VA. His work is characterized by a central theme of action or the potential for action, as well as his reverence for the complex mechanism of the human form.

Jennifer Frudakis represents the second generation of Frudakis sculptors. Like her father and uncle, she also is inspired by classical Greek sculpture. Her work, however, abounds with her concerns as an environmentalist as well as her personal inclination toward the lyrical and fantastic.

By the age of 12, Jennifer was already taking adult art courses. After graduating high school, she attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and followed that with four more years of advanced classes with her father at his school in Philadelphia. By 34, she had received her first significant public commission, a twelve-foot-high stainless steel piece to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Atlantic City *Press*. Other notable works include a six-by-eight-foot bronze bas relief of the *History of the Negro Baseball League*, currently installed at Richard Stockton College in Absecon, NJ, bronze portrait and figure sculptures of Ron Hextall, Dave Poulin, and Dave Schultz for the Philadelphia Flyers Hall of Fame, and a life-sized bronze bust of Father Sean M. Sullivan, T.O.R., founder and Trustee Emeritus of the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, on permanent display at SAMA's Loretto museum.

To celebrate the exhibition, the Museum will host an opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, August 17. Members of the Frudakis family will be in attendance. The reception is open to the public free of charge, though reservations are requested and can be made by calling the Museum at (724) 238-6015.

Additionally, the Museum will host a Lunch a l'Art with Jennifer Frudakis on September 19. The program, which includes lunch and a lecture by the artist, begins at noon. Cost is \$13 per person or \$12 for SAMA members. Reservations for the lunch must be made by September 13.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley is located at One Boucher Lane and Route 711 South in Ligonier. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. weekends. The Museum is a handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.