

Opening Talk for the TEKTON Exhibition

Mayor of Limassol – Mr Yiannis Armeftis

Honoring the Visionary Work of Andreas Papadopoulos and Phoebus Polydorides - 4 April 2025 – Time 6.00 a.m.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed guests, artists, architects,

Thank you for the invitation to speak at this remarkable event. As the Mayor of Limassol and an architect, it is a great honor to welcome you all to *Tekton*, an exhibition that celebrates not just buildings, but visions—the creative force of architecture that shapes the very identity of a city.

It is a profound honor to stand before you in Limassol, a city that has long been a canvas for innovation, to introduce an exhibition that pays tribute to two pioneers: Andreas Papadopoulos and Phoebus Polydorides.

Their work stands as a testament to the transformative power of modernism, a movement that redefined architecture in the 20th century and continues to inspire us today.

Papadopoulos and Polydorides were not just architects and engineers; they were sculptors of space, engineers of light, and visionaries who wove function and form into the fabric of Limassol's evolving landscape.

Their work was not confined to mere structures; it embodied ideals—of progress, of purpose, of a dialogue between tradition and the future.

One of the most emblematic examples of their work is the building hosting this event, known as the PSI Foundation, formerly the Carob Warehouse, which originally served as a key storage facility for Cyprus' significant carob export industry in 1946-1947.

Andreas Papadopoulos, as the engineer, and Phoebus Polydorides, as the architect, designed this remarkable structure with its distinctive 16 load-bearing reinforced concrete arches, a bold statement of modernist principles in the heart of Limassol.

Their ability to blend industrial functionality with architectural elegance made this building an enduring landmark.

Their technical office was aptly named 'Tekton,' a term that conveys the craftsmanship and precision of their work. This exhibition draws its name from that legacy, honoring not just their architectural contributions, but their pioneering spirit in shaping Limassol's modernist identity.

The work of Papadopoulos and Polydorides created a new architectural heritage for Limassol—one that continues to define the city's character and influence contemporary architects today.

Their pioneering efforts transformed Limassol into a modernist hub, where innovation and practicality met to forge a new urban identity. Today, as we walk through this exhibition, we

will explore how their ideas reshaped the architectural language of Cyprus, influencing not just skylines but also the way we inhabit and experience space.

Beyond honoring the legacy of these pioneers, *Tekton* also opens a dialogue with the present and future.

The exhibition will host the work of contemporary artists, including *Matt Collishaw: Aftermath* and *Stelarc: The Body in Excess, Zombies, Cyborgs & Chimeras*.

These visionary artists challenge the boundaries of human experience, technology, and space, resonating with the spirit of innovation that Papadopoulos and Polydorides championed.

Their works remind us that architecture, like art, is ever-evolving—continuing to shape and redefine our world.

During my tenure as a Municipal Councilor, under the leadership of then-Mayor Andreas Christou, we took the initiative to preserve Limassol's industrial heritage, of which this building is a significant part of.

Today, as Mayor of Limassol, along with the Municipal Council, we have submitted a proposal to the Conservation Department, requesting the designation of 16 additional buildings to be listed as preserved buildings.

Looking ahead, we are considering the publication of a book dedicated to the heritage of the modern movement in Limassol, further documenting our city's architectural legacy.

This exhibition is not only a retrospective but an invitation—an invitation to reflect on how architecture impacts our lives, to celebrate the spirit of innovation, and to recognize the courage it takes to push boundaries.

It is our hope that *Tekton* will serve as a beacon for future generations of architects, engineers, and dreamers who will continue to mold the world around us with vision and purpose.

I extend my deepest gratitude to all those who have made this exhibition possible—the curators, the researchers, the families of Papadopoulos and Polydorides, my friend Danila Parniouk, the art director of PSI foundation and, of course each of you here today, whose presence reaffirms the enduring relevance of their work.

With that, I invite you to step into the world of *Tekton*, to immerse yourselves in the genius of Andreas Papadopoulos and Phoebus Polydorides, and to witness the legacy of modernism and architecture in Limassol.

Thank you.