

Incredible Hulk Writer Sets Sail With Argonauts

X-Men scribe Zak Penn is jumping on the ancient action bandwagon as writer-producer of The Argonauts.

The movie will revisit the oft-told Greek myth about heroic sailors who encounter one insane monster after another en route to helping Jason find the elusive Golden Fleece, Variety reports.

Penn, who co-wrote The Incredible Hulk, will offer his take on the story, also covered in a 1963 movie (pictured) and a 2000 NBC miniseries, after writing a film adaptation of Marvel comic The Avengers.

Besides the new Argonauts project, Hollywood is moving ahead on a chariot full of toga epics, including three Hercules pictures; War of Gods, about Greek warrior Theseus; Brett Ratner's adaptation of the God of War videogame; a 300 spinoff to be written by Frank Miller; a Clash of the Titans remake from Incredible Hulk director Louis Leterrier; and Vin Diesel's labor of love Hannibal the Conqueror.



Officer faces sack over death

A GREEK port police officer in Mykonos has been suspended and faces dismissal after allegedly witnessing and failing to report the fatal bashing of the Australian tourist Doujon Zammit. Just over a fortnight ago Mr Zammit, 20, and his cousin Cameron Tabone, also 20, were severely beaten by four employees of a bar on the Greek island of Mykonos.

Mr Zammit was left in a coma and died later in an Athens hospital after his life support was switched off. Mr Tabone was left with a broken nose and wrist.

A Greek Government ministry said the 30-year-old port police officer was suspended on August 7, pending an investigation into his actions.

"He was a member of the port police and understood what was happening and didn't alert the relevant authorities," a spokesman, Andreas Theofilou, told the Herald.

"We have suspended him from duties because we believe he should have done that. "He was scared for some reason but we don't know why he didn't report [the incident]."

A 25-year-old nightclub bouncer who admitted bashing Mr Zammit with a metal baton after he left the bar, at Paradise beach, has been charged over the death. The Greek TV company Alpha has said he has threatened to kill himself.

Playing outdoors protects eyes: study

Children who spend more time outdoors are less likely to develop short-sightedness, Australian eye researchers have discovered.

New research by the University of Sydney has revealed that environmental factors like close-reading and intensive study can lead to short-sightedness, or myopia, but playing outdoors can help protect children from this effect.

The sunlight is believed to cut myopia by encouraging the release of a brain chemical which stops excessive eye growth.

Dr Kathryn Rose, from the university's faculty of health sciences, said the results were in line with an American study which found that outdoor sport was protective.

"However, our study shows that the crucial feature is being outdoors irrespective of the activity you are doing," Dr Rose said.

The team gave comprehensive eye examination to 4,000 Year 1 and 7 Sydney students from 55 schools.

"Our results show that the protective effect of time spent outdoors per-

sists even if a child is doing a lot of near work such as reading and studying," Dr Rose said.

Interestingly, the researchers found that television watching and using computers appeared to have little effect on the development of short-sightedness.

Researchers are still unclear exactly how the outdoors protects the eyes but they believe exposure to sunlight fosters the release of dopamine which is known to slow eye growth. Myopia is caused by excessive eye growth.

Rates of the condition have increased from 15 per cent to 20 to 25 per cent in the past 30 years.

Professor Paul Mitchell of the Centre for Vision Research and Westmead Millennium Institute, who was also involved in the study, said the results should be used to inform public health policy.

"Promoting outdoor activity to parents and families, and including more outdoor pursuits in school curricula, could be an important public health measure to avoid the development of myopia," Prof Mitchell said.

"This public health message would be particularly relevant in those countries where the rates of myopia in children are very high, such as in Singapore and Taiwan."

Marathon Man

Ten year old Stephen Auslander (Hopkinton, MA USA) has reason to be proud - his submission to the 2008



Boston Marathon Art and Design Competition has earned his artwork permanent display in the Marathon Run Museum in Marathon, Greece.

Stephen's winning entry was a drawing of a sculpture of Stylianos Kyriakides - Greek winner of the 1946 Boston Marathon, whose victory brought attention to horrific post-World War II conditions in Greece.

PS: Amazong story. More on Mr. Kyriakides below:

A sculpture was unveiled in Boston in 2004, commemorating him: "The winner of the 50th Boston Marathon, Kyriakides used his victory as a call to action to aid his war and famine-ravaged homeland. Kyriakides, who narrowly escaped execution during World War II during the Nazi occupation of Greece, hadn't run in six years when he came to Boston in 1946, with the help of Greek-American benefactors. He was emaciated from the lack of food in war-ravaged Greece, and at one point was told by doctors in Boston he wouldn't be allowed to run because they were afraid he would die in the streets. That backdrop only added to the almost mythic race performance, in which Kyriakides came on at the end to defeat the defending champion and set the best time in the world for 1946. Nearly a million people greeted him on his return to Athens in May of 1946, when he came back with boat loads of food, medicine, clothing and other essentials donated by Americans who read of his victory." - Sculpture's Official Press Release.

Pindos on Intangible Cultural Heritage List

Deputy Economy and Finance Minister Nikos Lengas and Greek UNESCO Committee President Maria-Ekaterini Papachristopoulou-Tzitzikosta discussed the proposal to have the part of Pindos Mountain Range, located in the prefecture of Trikala, central Greece, included on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) monuments list. The rock towers of Meteora are a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1998.

The discussion was held within the framework of the 1st Green Festival events in Aspropotamos.

The ICH is manifested, among others, in the following domains: oral traditions and expressions including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; performing arts (such as traditional music, dance and theatre); social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship.