



Olympia Café, Bigga, NSW, 2009. Photo by Effy Alexakis, from the 'In Their Own Image: Greek-Australians' National Project Archives

AUSTRALIA'S GREEK CAFÉ Selling an American Dream

Every time you drink a Coke, enjoy a milk shake, ice-cream or milk chocolate treat, or go to the cinema, or listen to the latest popular music hit, you can thank Australia's Greek settlers.

This major touring photography exhibition explores an important chapter in the development of Australian culture. Critically applauded since its initial launch at the National Museum of Australia in 2008, Alexakis and Janiszewski have cleverly utilised a revealing interplay of historical and contemporary photographs, married to extended oral history captions, and overlaid by a dramatic multimedia presentation created by film-maker Michael Karris, to present a social history exhibition that has powerfully resonated with audiences across the country.

Australia's Greek café is presented as a global phenomenon in the modern era. Food-catering enterprises run by Greek migrants/settlers successfully married Hellenic and cross-cultural influences with local needs. Greek-run cafés populated Australian country towns and cities, merging local fare with new American food-catering ideas. Prior to the explosion of American fast-food franchises, Greek cafés contributed to a

INFO

WHERE: Macquarie University Art Gallery
Building E11A, North Ryde NSW 2109
WHEN: 20 March to 1 May 2013
TIME: Mon to Fri 10am–5pm Open on select Saturdays
ENTRY: Free
info: t: 02 9850 7437 - www.artgallery.mq.edu.au

major change in Australian eating habits. While a traditional mixed grill remained a favourite, Greek cafés were known for their introduction of American sodas, ice-cream sundaes, milk shakes, hamburgers, milk chocolate and hard sugar candies, into communities right across Australia.

Alexakis' stunning photographs capture the decor of the cafés, their customers and the owners who worked hard to make their businesses successful. Memorabilia from several Australian Greek cafés including classic Art Deco furnishings and tableware, and café signs designed and made for the Legend Café, Melbourne, by Leonard French and Clement Meadmore (advertising delicacies such as ice-cream sodas and Peach Melba), succeed in bring the era of Australia's Greek cafés to



Throughout most of the twentieth century, Australia's Greek cafés were powerhouses generating unprecedented social and cultural change. life. Research undertaken throughout Peter (Beneto) and Jack (Ioannis) Veneris, Blue Bird Café, Lockhart, NSW, 2002, Photo by Effy Alexakis, from the 'In Their Own Image: Greek-Australians' National Project Archives

Australia and internationally highlights these cafés as a 'Trojan Horse' for the Americanisation of Australian popular culture – not only affecting eating habits but also cinema, music and architecture.

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