



## Melissa Henry



Melissa Henry at the Acropolis in Athens

- Program: Aegan Center for Fine Arts
- College: Brown University
- Major: History of Art and Architecture and Visual Art
- Country: Italy & Greece, Fall 2008

Greetings from Paros!

I am now settling into life on the island of Paros in Greece. It is amazingly beautiful here, I never get tired of looking around me. The lights and colors of nature are an inspiration to paint and draw, which I am doing every day.

The Aegean Center for Fine Arts is a wonderful program. The professors are genuine individuals in every respect. My peers consist of about 20 unique individuals from around the world (US, Australia, India, Greece, Canada, China) and ranging in age (18-40). The philosophy of the school and the way we live and travel together makes it feel like a family. I am learning about Greek art history, the Greek language, Greek dancing, figure drawing, basic drawing, and the traditional methods of Renaissance painting. In just a few weeks, I have learned so much. I constantly feel so lucky to be here experiencing it! But what is more, I have learned countless life lessons. I am exploring not only my surroundings but also myself. Living in a new and unique culture is such an amazing experience. Adapting to the change of a new environment has helped me understand a lot about my own values, as well as the importance of respecting other cultures and their traditions.

Before coming to Greece, we spent a month in Italy. It was a whirlwind of sightseeing and learning about art history. We lived in a 15th century villa in Pistoia but went on daily excursions to other towns and cities. Just to scratch the surface, we went to Venice, Lucca, Siena, Florence Pisa, and Rome. We saw the leaning tower of Pisa, the Uffizi museum, countless baptisteries, the Florence Duomo, the Vatican, St. Peter's church, the Sistine chapel, the Roman forum, the Coliseum, sculpture by Michelangelo, Bernini, and paintings by DaVinci, Caravaggio, Boticelli, Raphael, and more! It is wonderful to be able to apply the concepts I saw and learned in Italy to my own study in Greece.

Now I am in Paros, and enjoying my time. I am so lucky to be here, partly owed to the generosity of the Ashley Soule Conroy Foundation. I am constantly conscious of how I must make the most of my time here, to work hard, experience local life, and soak in as much as I can. Every day I learn new things that will stay with me for years. Thank you so much again for your support, it certainly will not be forgotten.



Melissa Henry in Pisa, Italy