



THOMAKAKIS MANOLIS
GAIOCARDIUM



Life flows
through the
tree—let us
embrace it!



A child embraces a tree trunk: an invitation to love and protect trees

A child embraces a tree trunk, holding a large red heart. The wooden sculpture by Manolis Thomakakis portrays a gesture rich in meaning: we should protect everything that sustains us, the vitality and sacredness of the plant world. Life-giving sap flows through the trunk; between human beings and the surrounding nature there exists a bond that must be continually reaffirmed.

After many years of creative silence, the Greek-born sculptor Manolis Thomakakis returns to creation with an invitation to care for the forests and for Mother Earth. Let us save the trees, let us love them—the parched and scorched world needs them. To purify the Earth’s atmosphere and restore lost natural and human balances, scientists say we should plant at least two billion trees across the globe. Trees live, breathe, and purify.

The statue and its multiples, the latter made of solid non-degradable material, are designed to be placed outdoors, on the trunk of a tree, in public or private gardens, in small orchards or shared spaces. Those who look up and encounter them should rediscover their ancestral bond with nature, feeling a loving impulse toward the forest that nourishes and protects all living creatures.

This brochure includes a selection of images showing how the artwork was completed on the occasion of the 6th Greek National Wood Sculpture Symposium, organized by the Municipality of Hersonissos, in the small woodland next to the Town Hall, from September 19–25, 2025, and up to its final placement on the tree.

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Interpretation of the wooden sculpture of the child tying a heart to the tree trunk

A barefoot child, climbing a lush tree, ties a large red wooden heart to its trunk: the small wooden statue evokes the deep and harmonious bond of peace and interdependence that connects human beings to the animal and plant world.

The child represents purity, simplicity, and the capacity to believe and act without selfishness. The bare feet symbolize the gratifying contact with Mother Earth, a trust in the natural world, a vulnerability that becomes strength. The living tree—rooted, open to the sky—is an ancient symbol of life, prosperity, and the connection between humanity and Nature.

The gesture of the child is not accidental: he ties a heart to the trunk, offering love to the tree in an image that expresses both affection and protection. It is an act of care, a gift freely given. He does not take, he does not break: he offers, and the vivid red of the heart hanging there shines like a signal of hope.

In a world often wounded by indifference and destruction, this sculpture reminds us that true revolution begins with tenderness. Peace cannot be imposed: it must be cultivated. Perhaps, as this child teaches, we can still learn to make many hearts beat again.

The child as a symbol of humanity

The child represents humanity in its purest and most innocent form. Curious, courageous, and full of hope, yet fragile and in need of protection. The fact that he is climbing a tree suggests a deep connection with nature, as though he were trying to reach something greater than himself.

Ecological interpretation

The child holding the heart symbolizes love for nature. That large heart urges us to care for the planet with the same affection and dedication with which the child offers the heart. It is an invitation to protect and preserve the beauty around us.



The phases
of the sculpture's
creation

The tree as a symbol of life and Earth

The tree is a symbol of life and of our connection to the Earth. It is a powerful icon in ecological storytelling. It represents life, growth, resilience, and the interconnectedness of all living beings. Its deep roots symbolize our origins, while its branches reaching toward the sky represent the future and infinite possibilities.

Balance between emotion and rationality

The child on a branch represents the rationality and stability of the tree, while the large heart symbolizes the emotional world. The image suggests the need to find balance between heart and mind in life.

The elevated position

The child is high up on the tree trunk: he offers a wider vision, a perspective that goes beyond the immediate. From up there, he can see the world as a whole, understanding the importance of every element: trees, rivers, animals, air.

Philosophical interpretation

The child on the tree with the heart in his hands is an allegory of the search for the essence of love. The large, heavy heart represents the weight of responsibility that comes with loving, but also the joy that follows. The tree, with its roots in the earth and its branches brushing the





sky, symbolizes the duality of existence: love is both earthly and transcendent.

The large heart as a symbol of love for Nature

The heart the child holds is the core of the scene. It represents the love, compassion, and responsibility we must have toward the planet. It is large because our love for nature should be immense, capable of embracing every form of life.

Love as the only true certainty

The child stands on a branch, an unstable position, yet he holds tightly to a large heart. This placement suggests that even in uncertain or difficult situations, love is what gives us strength and stability.

A bridge between past and future

The tree can be seen as something ancient and rooted, while the child represents the future. The heart is the emotional thread connecting generations, the love that travels through time.

A symbol of rebirth and transformation

The child is tying the heart to the tree trunk like a seed that will grow into something greater. Love never ends; it transforms and continues to live.

MANOLIS THOMAKAKIS

Born in Heraklion, Crete (Greece) in 1958. He moved to Venice in 1977, where he attended the Academy of Fine Arts, graduating in painting and specializing in engraving techniques. In 1985 he created for the Municipality of Heraklion a reinforced-concrete sculpture that was placed in Panagoulis Square. The work portrayed a burned tree trunk from which emerged "the figurative cry of the forest's soul." In this way, he raised public awareness of the catastrophes caused by fires in the forests of Crete and contributed to the defense of the remaining greenery.


After various vicissitudes, the work was destroyed; forty years later, in September 2025, he rebuilt it and donated it to the Municipality of Hersonissos, adding, with his own style, the hope that forests may flourish again, thus contributing to the protection of what remains of nature.

A member of the Chamber of Greek Artists, he is co-founder of the multidimensional research movement La Cosmostruttura.

From 1988 to 2025 he worked at the Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice.

He lives and works in Spinea (VE-I).

He deepened his research through travels in the East, realizing that art is a way to express the Inexpressible: he thus re-evaluated all his artistic steps, which he now sees as a search for himself in relation to the phenomenological and natural world.



**This sculpture,
in various forms,
will be proposed in areas
where nature is suffering.
I wish to create it
and offer it free of charge.**

