



VASILIS TSARTSANIS BIO

DATE OF BIRTH	11/02/1972
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	GREECE
PLACE OF RESIDENCE	POLYKASTRO, KILKIS COUNTY
PROFESSION	HAIRDRESSER, CINEMATOGRAPHER

Vasilis Tsartsanis is a professional hairdresser working in Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia - Greece since 1996 where he is running his own hair dressing salon business. In his free time he is also practicing as a photographer and cinematographer in projects focused on the culture and the attributes of people in the wider Balkan and Anatolian region. He is the instigator of the Asklepeion culture team which started in 2006, while he has been widely known from his activism in Idomeni, Kilkis County.

2014 - 2017	1.Activism in Idomeni
Sept. 2014	On September 2014 Vasilis Tsartsanis became, without actually realizing it himself, an activist. While filming near the Greek- F.Y.R.O.M borders, he came across the first groups of Syrian refugees trying to cross the borders. He got in touch with them, learned about their effort to find shelter in Greece and the situation in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan as well as the rest of the ethnic groups who were taking with them the Balkan route to Europe. At that point of time, Idomeni , a small border village of 150 elder residents, was about to become a point of reference in the global map and one of the most dangerous passages for the refugees coming to Europe, the biggest flow since the Second World War.
Oct. 2014	Starting from October 2014 and in the months to follow, the refugee flows were growing larger and larger every day. The view of these people, living in the forest, exposed to harsh weather conditions just 300 meters from the Greek borders was a shock for Vasilis Tsartsanis. Moreover the uncontrolled action of the human traffickers, the cruelty of the neighboring country’s police agency according to the refugees, supported by recorded incidents beyond doubt, forced Vasilis Tsartsanis to take action. Motivating a network of friends and locals initially, he starts providing humanitarian aid to the refugees trapped between the Greek – F.Y.R.O.M borderline. His first moves are: - Provision of Medical care / First aids - Confrontation of the nutrition problem / Preparation of meals - Organizing and briefing of the local community regarding the situation All of these efforts were planned and executed without any funding. The total of the expenditure was covered by Vasilis Tsartsanis and his team all by themselves. During all this time Vasilis Tsartsanis was daily present at Idomeni, stepping aside his own job for 18 consecutive months in his effort to coordinate and help those in need.
Nov. 2014 -Jan. 2015	Dealing with the trafficking network From November 2014, hardly any Greek or International journalists have arrived at Idomeni. In the meantime, the place has been a central passage through the Balkan route and the trafficking networks have started to gain ground as well. These groups of smugglers were connecting a wide network of human trafficking from Turkey to the Balkan countries. Having gained the trust of the refugees, Vasilis Tsartsanis began to investigate the criminals’ network activity around Idomeni as well as in neighboring countries.
Feb. 2015	Calling for the International Community Despite his monthly updates towards the authorities from November 2014, with letters to the vice president of the European Parliament and his constant efforts to inform members of the Greek parliament as well as local authorities, none of them, neither any NGO had arrived to Idomeni until 2015. Without any respond from Greek , European or International officials and while the situation was beginning to exceed his own as well as his team’s capabilities, Vasilis Tsartsanis decides to send urgent call to every direction (International and Greek Media networks, Greek State, European Union and German Authorities).
Apr. 2015	The speech at the European Parliament On April 2015, Vasilis Tsartsanis was invited from the European Parliament to deliver a speech before the Parliament members, in which he presented the gravity of the matter in Idomeni, including all the evidence he had been gathering until then.
Apr. 2015 -May 2015	International Media in Idomeni As both Greek and European authorities are still absent from Idomeni, Vasilis Tsartsanis Is addressing to the big media networks sending them the evidence that prove the conditions in Idomeni. BBC, Le Monde, Washington Post, Al Jazeera, Channel4 and ORF respond to his call and the first correspondents arrive at Idomeni. In May 2015, Vasilis Tsartsanis decides to guide the above mentioned Media Networks through the two points where the refugees are held as captives by the smugglers in modern Auschwitz scenery, most of the times with the tolerance of the Balkan authorities.
June 2015 -Nov. 2015	The first diplomatic missions at Idomeni Between June and November 2015 and while the humanitarian crisis at Idomeni has become an international broadcasting object, the first officials start to arrive. During this period Vasilis Tsartsanis remains the only informal coordinator at Idomeni and his main objectives are: - Escorting the officials and presenting them the conditions in the area - Participating in the institutional councils of the Greek authorities for the confrontation of the humanitarian crisis at Idomeni - Briefing of the European authorities and media Until February 2015 only one NGO has established presence at the area and others take sporadic actions of aid but only until mid-day hours, while the biggest problems occur during the night with incidents of violence against the refugees. On the contrary, Vasilis Tsartsanis continues to provide aid even at these hours until August 2015. During all these months Vasilis Tsartsanis has spent tens of thousands euros from own resources and has repeatedly denied any job in International institutions, NGO’s or the Greek Authorities, in an attempt to maintain his independence in his selfless contribution
Jan.2016 -May 2017	Traveling to inform Europe From January until September 2016, Vasilis Tsartsanis participates in various conferences and lectures in E.U in order to highlight the refugee crisis in Idomeni as a global issue. In the meantime, Vasilis Tsartsanis sets off a big-scale investigation in Europe with interviews from his now refugee friends who have settled in various European countries. His object is to record their long trip form war zones to refugee camps and to realize their integration in local communities so that he can begin to form the small room project. In every speech of his, he underlines the important fact that not even one racist incident occurred in Idomeni, in comparison to other similar camps in Greece.
June 2016 -May 2017	2. The path after Idomeni The small room project – Pilot presentation in Thessaloniki On September 2016, Vasilis Tsartsanis and his Asklepeion team, make the first presentation of the Small room Project in Thessaloniki, using the vast amount of material that Vasilis Tsartsanis had gathered during his two-year presence at Idomeni. - Objective: To highlight the universality of the refugee crisis throughout an exhibition based on thematic parts from works of art. - Planning for corresponding presentations in countries beyond E.U. (U.S.A- South America)
2011-2013	3. The Professional Career Balkan Express (Greek National TV) – Production Manager Object : Presentation and promotion of the common cultural bonds among the people of the Balkan region - TV show of the 3rd television channel of the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation with the highest ratings - Duties of contacting with officials in the countries visited
2013	Co – Existence Project A personal project from Vasilis Tsartsanis, in parallel with Balkan Express TV show in the Balkan countries. Objective : To conduct a study for the linguistic studies of young students in Institutions of the Balkan counties and its effect on the interaction of the people in the area.
2010	TRT (Τουρκική Κρατική Τηλεόραση) -- Local Advisor Production Advisor in the TV show
2006	Asklepeion – An idea that came into existence In 2006 Vasilis Tsartsanis decides to start the concept of Asklepeion. His attempt is to collect memories and highlight historic facts, cultural and social aspects and call for participation and interaction with the local communities with the eyes on an international horizon. Asklepeion begins as an experiment which grows throughout the years. Today is the main core of Vasilis Tsartsanis’ activities and the entity under which he and his team undertake their voluntary projects.
2004	Olympic Games Athens 2004 – Klepsidra(Hourglass) Supervisor Opening Ceremony – An approach of the Greek History through the hairstyles of the Opening Ceremony show.
2003	Diplomatic Consignment in Libya – Interview Coordinator In 2003 Vasilis Tsartsanis travels to Libya as the coordinator of the interview delivered by the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi to the Greek’s prime minister wife.
2002	Revlon Professional – Technical Advisor - Training in Barcelona – Llongueras - Event planning for cosmetics products
2000-2002	Zotos by Shiseido – Technical Advisor (Duties of Art Director) - Training in U.S.A, Mexico, Saint-Domingue - Coordinating international exhibitions
1996-Today	Professional Hairdresser