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NEO

FROM THE EDITOR

Freedom through the ages

The great Greek actor Yannis Simonides read to me some passages of Makriyannis' *Memoirs* in the original Greek, and even over the phone - *anatrihiasa*. Not just because Simonides made Makriyannis come alive—the wheeze of the old man, the burr of his country accent, the fire in his voice confronting a lifetime of challenges—but because the old general typifies so much of the history of modern Greece and modern Greeks everywhere.

Makriyannis came from nowhere, he made himself a rich man, he gave it all to the Revolution, and then he fought in it. After the war, he endured, dutifully, the boredom of administration, wanted to speak out, and taught himself to read and write just to write his memoirs. (Published only in 1907, they became one of the cornerstones of modern Greek prose and literature.) After tumultuous years in politics speaking his mind and fighting for a constitutional Greece (he was imprisoned by the king and later freed when the king was ousted) he was at work on a second volume that meditated on God, the Virgin and the saints when his fighting spirit finally gave out.

Simonides has been performing from the *Memoirs* for years in several continents and says he never fails to stir an audience with Makriyannis' plainspoken eloquence and typical Greek fire and brimstone. And that's not just because a great actor makes a great man come alive. It's also because I think we all share (or would like to) something of the spirit of the old *klepht*: We'd all like to be originals, and speak our minds, and dedicate ourselves to an ideal and a greater cause, whether God or country or even the spirit of human culture.

How many of us have the courage to do it? I think we all try, in our way, in the everyday daydreams of our lives, and its larger gestures. That's why, perhaps, the old general, who fought nearly two hundred years ago, and wrote about events we only hear about now during the typical March 25 program at Greek school, still speaks to us. He was not only human, and a man we can all understand, he was also a genuine ideal for all our own aspirations.

Maybe that's why modern audiences react to him (and why Simonides keeps bringing him back by popular demand). In fact, his other longstanding portrayal is of another plainspoken Greek (with all the subtlety in the world) who spoke his mind and speaks to us still across the ages: Socrates.

They couldn't keep him quiet until they put him to death, and they couldn't silence Makriyannis, and modern Greeks are their fitting heirs.



Dimitri C. Michalakis

*Happy Easter and
Hristos Anesti
to all!*

NEO

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Breakthrough building materials now available in US

By Dimitri C. Michalakis



Manny Michelakis

Can you imagine a door or window in your house designed by Porsche? That dream is now a reality and was on display recently at the opening of the new showroom of building material products in Astoria, New York.

A major line of aluminum windows, doors, curtain walls, storefronts, skylights, aluminum composite panels “are much better and much less expensive than anything else on the market,” said Manny Michelakis, president of Alumil Corp.

And the technology comes from Greece—which is a leader in the field. “Greece is in the forefront, and now we’re bringing this technology to America,” said Kyprianos Bazenikas, Alumil vice president. He mentions the company is building two manufacturing plants in the U.S.: one to build aluminum doors, windows, curtains and storefronts, and the other for the high technology powder coating painting of the aluminum.

“This is the first time that a Greek company, in collaboration with local business people, is making such a big investment in importing technology,” said Bazenikas. “In other words, for the first time a Greek company is opening its doors in the U.S. and is bringing state-of-the-art products, money into the economy, and the creation of over 300 jobs in the first three years.”

Besides Michelakis and Bazenikas, the third partner in the new venture is Stelios Kochylas, CEO of Analko, one of the biggest aluminum painting factories in Europe.

And recently Michelakis and Bazenikas gave a preview of the company’s new showroom.

“Look at this door,” said Michelakis, walking back to the door of the showroom we had just entered. “Here’s a door. American. Okay? Front and back—same thing. Retailers here sell them by the thousands.”

Then he walked to one of the new aluminum doors on display and excitedly yanked the handle that opens and seals it shut tighter than a bank vault. “Same door, except this one is aluminum. Try it out and let me know,” he said, and then walked away, confident in the results.

Sure enough, the door (with the wood grain finish—yes, aluminum now comes available with a wood-grain look, among others, and in assorted colors) felt like it could repel a tank. And yet it slipped effortlessly on soundproof rollers and opened and closed without effort.

“It feels like a safe,” I told Michelakis.

“Thank you for saying that,” he said, and walked back satisfied. “And it’s more energy efficient than any American doors.”

He went on to show the display of equally energy-efficient aluminum windows in all colors and patterns, and the corner joint of a structure that had the joint magically disappear when the aluminum door panels were slid aside to reveal—nothing but an obstructed view—because there was no joint necessary to hold the structure up.

“Aluminum,” said Michelakis, “is a revolutionary material that is as strong as metal—but is simultaneously light and malleable. That’s why you see it now in everything—from doors and windows and all of this,” he said, indicating the products on display in the showroom, “to airplanes and cars and most of the skyscrapers you see.”

While Greece is one of the leaders in the development of aluminum, Alumil, a 20-year-old Greek company, is one of the innovators in the industry and a powerhouse worldwide. At the 2004 Athens Olympic Games Alumil furnished the material for several venues, including the Rowing Center, Riding Center, Olympic Village and the Karaiskaki Stadium. It has built structures all over Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and it has even worked with Ferdinand Porsche to design several of its systems.



The company has several branches worldwide and now for the first time it is coming to America.

"Alumil is the absolute summit in terms of aluminum in Greece," said Michelakis. "It's a top company with top products. In fact, the products it offers are better than any made here in America."

The company Michelakis heads will also distribute products made by Aluminco Corp, a leader in the manufacture of aluminum railings, fences and gates. The company makes breakthrough cast-aluminum products and has a distribution network that serves the key markets of Europe, Africa and Asia, distributing products in more than 60 countries.

The company's products also include aluminum railings designed to meet all architectural applications such as balconies, fences, staircases and gates, aluminum security doors in many designs, trellises, lighting posts and light garden furniture. The company's motto is: "At Aluminco we turn your requests, needs and wants into reality."

The third firm in the consortium is Everlast Companies, which represents two established manufacturers of quality tiles and brick: Pica and Marmoleria Gallos. Pica is one of the oldest Italian companies in the field and produces roof tiles, facing bricks, terracotta flooring and pavers. Gallos has over 140 years of experience in manufacturing stone products, including marble, travertine, granite, tiles, slabs, countertops, columns, fireplaces, sinks and decorative mosaics.

Everlast also carries wood doors and hardware, and kitchen cabinets and closets. The company has been in business three years and is expanding its operations into a new 70,000-square-foot warehouse in Pennsylvania.

"With Alumil, and with Aluminco and Everlast, we are bringing something new to the market and I'm not ashamed to sell any of them," said Michelakis, roaming through the showroom and picking up aluminum joints and stone tile and terracotta brick. "I'm telling you to buy them because I believe in them. And I offer them with all my heart because I honestly believe that they're the best in the world."

He said as a Greek he also offers Alumil and Aluminco products with a sense of pride because they are homegrown in Greece.

"We want to leave something to our kids that also has its roots in Greece," he said. "A Greek will be proud to buy any of our products because they are the best and they were made in Greece. Why buy anything else, when this is the best product in the world and at a reasonable price? And now, for the very first time, it's available in America."

The showroom is located at 19-41 46th Street in Astoria, NY. Phone: (347) 537-3636. Fax: (347) 537-3637.



Kyprianos Bazanikas



Stelios Kochylas

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Celebrating the centenary of the birth of

Konstantinos G. Karamanlis

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Konstantinos G. Karamanlis, one of Europe's greatest leaders, and the man John F. Kennedy called perhaps "the most eminent of all." Karamanlis successfully undertook and accomplished the task of literally dragging Greece into the European Community, "for better or for worse," as he himself commented on the significance of the effort.

So far it has been for the better, and recently Greek leaders and personalities from a wide political spectrum gathered at Athens' lavish Concert Hall, better known as "Megaron," at an event organized by the Konstantinos G. Karamanlis Foundation, to pay tribute to the man who had connected his political career with some of Greece's greatest achievements during the second half of the 20th century. Karolos Papoulias was at the event, the current president of the Republic, that itself was established by Karamanlis by a referendum that he sponsored on returning to Greece in 1974.

His nephew Kostas Karamanlis, Greece's prime minister and head of the New Democracy party that his uncle founded in 1975 was also there, as well. Orestes Kolozov, a member of Parliament from the Greek Communist Party, and Alekos Alavanos, head of the Coalition of the Left and Progress, also were there to pay respects to the leader who had legalized the main and the alternative communist parties. Evangelos Venizelos, a former minister and a leading figure from the opposition PASOK party, with his staple eloquence was no less generous in recognizing Karamanlis' contribution to Hellenic democracy and the fulfilment of the country's European aspirations.

A more personal tribute was offered by Karamanlis' brother Achilles, who is also the Foundation's vice president. He opened the event, followed by Ambassador Petros Molyviatis, for decades Karamanlis' close associate, who until a year ago served as Greece's foreign minister in the government of Kostas Karamanlis and now chairs the Foundation's board. A documentary and a live concert were also presented, contributing to an environment of solemnity and dignity that had always characterized the honoree himself.

Konstantinos Karamanlis was born in the market town of Prorfi near Serres on March 8, 1907. After finishing his secondary school studies, he enrolled at the Law School of the University of Athens, where he obtained his degree in 1929. He worked as a lawyer in his native homeland until he was first elected Member of Parliament in 1935.

The course he followed in government from 1946 to 1955 shaped his style and beliefs as a politician. During his terms as Minister, of Labour initially - of short duration - Transportation and, subsequently until 1950, of Social Welfare, he demonstrated that he was resolute, determined,

hard-working, capable of conceiving and applying daring to any, and, at the same time, insisting on placing the national interests first and foremost. These characteristics became more evident when he served as Public Works Minister in the Papagos administration. In the three years between 1952-1955 what he achieved was of crucial importance to Greece's economic development and modernization.

His efforts made the most favorable impression on public opinion and earned him popular support for his accession to the office of prime minister upon the death of Alexandros Papagos. The initiative on the part of King Paul on October 5, 1955 to ask Konstantinos Karamanlis to form a government, met with the positive response of the group of parliamentarians and the majority of the supporters of the Hellenikos Synagermos party. Nevertheless, wishing to introduce fresh life into politics, Karamanlis founded a new party, the Ethniki Rizospastiki Enosi (National Radical Union) and early elections were held in February 1956. His victory in these elections, as well as two further electoral contests in 1958 and 1961, enabled him to remain in office for eight consecutive years, a time span without precedent in Greece's political history.

In the course of his first term as prime minister, Karamanlis' primary achievement was the steady upward trend of the economy, resulting in doubling the GNP, at an average



From right, the President of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Papoulias with Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis at the event.

annual rate of 6.25% and the redistribution and increase of per capita income from \$305 to \$565, with a rate of inflation of just 2% among others. The public works plan continued at the same time and was extended by completing construction of a modern highway network.

At the same time, he confronted the Cyprus national issue with the outcome of its declaration of independence in 1960, after five years of armed conflict on the part of the Cypriot people and the hard -- and disadvantaged -- diplomatic endeavours of the Greek governments.

However, the most crucial issue in Karamanlis' mapping of foreign policy was the adherence to the European Common Market which, from then on, remained in his philosophy as "not merely an economic joint-venture, but an entity with a broader political mission and significance." Following two years of intensive negotiations, Greece was admitted into the initial group of six member states as its first additional member, on July 9, 1961.

Karamanlis' first term of office was unexpectedly cut short by his resignation, in June 1963, following a disagreement with King Paul which, without being due to any specific reason, led to a profound breach in his relations with the Palace. However, the crisis was not unconnected to the general climate of political

tension reigning in the aftermath of copious complaints on the part of the Opposition, denouncing Karamanlis' alleged involvement in acts to which he was demonstratively a stranger, such as the conduct of the 1961 elections under a caretaker government selected by the Palace, or, the assassination of Grigoris Lambrakis.

In conclusion, the equivocal outcome of the new electoral contest in November and the assignment of the formation of a minority government, allowing a broad field of initiative to the leader of the Opposition, armed Karamanlis with the irrevocable conviction that the political conditions were unsuitable for the fulfilment of his goals. A month later he went abroad, forewarning of the danger of a gradual degradation of the democratic system of government and the lapse toward anomalous solutions.

From Paris, where he remained for eleven years, Karamanlis never ceased to follow closely and in anguish the events unfolding in Greece, and after the coup of April 21, 1967 he undertook a series of initiatives for the overthrow of the dictatorship and the restoration of a functioning democratic government on a new basis. Ever the constant point of reference in any attempt made to revert to a democratic regime, at midnight of 23/24 July 1974, the military leadership and the representatives of the political world asked Konstantinos Karamanlis to take into his hands the reins of power.

This was the date on which the "reckless" coup engineered by the Junta in Cyprus provoked the invasion of Turkish troops and threatened to involve Greece – which was in no state of readiness for war - in a military conflict of incalculably grave consequences. The circumstances of his arrival in Athens, to be greeted by a populace incandescent with joy at the restoration of liberty, are scenes that will forever be indelibly imprinted in historical memory. At the head of a government of National Union, Karamanlis was able to effect the complete restoration of a properly functioning democracy.

In the first subsequent free elections of November 17, 1974, Konstantinos Karamanlis won a resounding 54% of votes. His repeated victory in the next elections of November 1977, allowed his remaining in power for six years, at the head of the New Democracy party, a newly established formation based on ideology of radical liberalism. The referendum conducted on December 8, 1974 finally put an end to the controversy of long date surrounding the issue of the country's polity, by definitively establishing the Republic. The elaboration and enactment of a new Constitution in June 1975 brought about the necessary conditions for establishing and consolidating firm



Achilles Karamanlis with Vardis and Marianna Vardinoyannis were among the attendees.

fundaments of democracy at all levels. The predominance thenceforth of a calm political climate, the enhancement of political ethics and parliamentary practices and, generally, the strengthening of democratic dialogue and of individual liberties are credited to Karamanlis.

However, his greatest accomplishment in the international field was to secure the incorporation of Greece in the European Common Market after three years of intensive negotiations, in line with the policy he had inaugurated twenty years earlier, of the timely connection of Greece to the European Community.

On May 5, 1980, he was elected President of the Republic. An undeviating dedication to strict adherence to constitutional rules and to the conscientious maintenance of an objective stance over and above political conflicts; ensuring the regular succession of parties acceding to power; contributing to the soothing of political fanaticism as well as the consolidation of the spirit of national unity are the elements constituting the principal parameters in the land's highest office. He was once again elected President for a second five-year term for the years 1990–95.

Konstantinos Karamanlis passed away April 23, 1998, three years after his definitive exit from active political life. According to his own wish, he was interred in the grounds of the Foundation that bears his name on April 24. The inscription chosen by him to be engraved on his stone reads: "To justify my passage to this world, I have devoted my life to the service of the Greek people."

For sixty years he had been present on the political stage, eight years as minister, 14 as prime minister and ten as president of the Hellenic Republic.

The "Konstantinos G. Karamanlis" Foundation was established in 1983. Three eminent personalities of the world of letters, Konstantinos Tsatsos, Konstantinos Trypanis and Konstantinos Svolopoulos, ten

incited by the establishment of such foundations in the broader international sphere, addressed a letter to Karamanlis on May 14, 1983, in which among others, the following was stressed: "Every citizen, and the prominent especially, have the duty to care for preserving in the memory of those to come after them, the political events constituting the history of their era... Motivated by the above sentiments, we have decided on an initiative with the objective of conservation of written texts and oral testimonies of the historical period of our lifetime, which coincides with the period during which you yourself played a leading role in Greece's political life..."

Konstantinos Karamanlis responded positively to the proposal. His example was subsequently followed by other Greek politicians. The Foundation is a legal entity under private law subject to the legislation regarding non-profitable foundations. Its establishment and operation is exclusively dependent on the financial support of private individuals, Karamanlis' close relatives and friends. The first chairman was Konstantinos Tsatsos. Currently, Chairman of the Board is Ambassador Petros Molyviatis, Deputy Chairman Achilleas Karamanlis and General Manager the academician Konstantinos Svolopoulos. The building housing the Foundation in Philothei, designed by the architect Iason Rizos, stands on wholly privately owned land, donated by Konstantinos Karamanlis himself at the same time with his personal archive. Building work was completed in October 1987 and there ensued the installation, equipment, the supplementation and systematic organization of the archive and the library, with the contribution and precious assistance of close friends of the President - primarily of his brother Grammenos G. Karamanlis.

Introduction – compilation – editing by Demetrios Rhompotis. NEO wishes to thank Ms. Minoton from the "Konstantinos G. Karamanlis Foundation," Mr. George Chatzipapas and the Society of Proteans in Athens "St. George."



2007 Greek Independence Day Parade

Sunday, April 15 at 1:00pm Fifth Ave. (60th-79th St.), NYC
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Wednesday, April 11
5:30-8:30pm

City Council Greek Independence
Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn,
Council Member Peter Vallone, Jr. and
Members of the City Council
Council Chambers at City Hall
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Thursday, April 12
7:00 pm

Greek Independence Day Concert
Greek-Canadian Composer-Baritone and Artistic
Director Panayoti Karoussos
Stathakion Center, 22-51 29th St., Astoria, NY

Friday, April 13
12:00 noon

Greek Flag Raising Ceremony
Bowling Green Park
26 Broadway and Whitehall Street, NYC
Open to the public, outdoor event

Friday, April 13
7:30pm (Donation \$75)

Greek Culture Community Celebration
Terrace on the Park
52-11 111th St., Flushing Meadows Park, NY

Saturday, April 14
8:00 pm (Donation \$150)

Greek Independence Liberty Award Gala
Hilton Hotel
1335 Avenue of the Americas, NYC

Sunday, April 15
10:30am

Divine Liturgy and Doxology Service
Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity
319 East 74th St., NYC
Led by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios
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Sunday, April 15
12:00 noon

Pre-Parade Reception
(By Invitation Only)
The Pierre Hotel
2 East 61st Street at 5th Avenue, NYC

Sunday, April 15
7:00pm

Cultural Celebration in honor of
Greek Independence
Federation of Hellenic Societies
Stathakion Center, 22-51 29th St., Astoria, NY
Open to the public

Friday, April 20
8:00 pm

Official Parade Raffle Drawing
Federation of Hellenic Societies
Stathakion Center, 22-51 29th St., Astoria, NY



Sunday, April 15
1:00pm

76th ANNUAL GREEK INDEPENDENCE PARADE
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MAN FOR THE AGES

A GREAT ACTOR PORTRAYS A GREAT MAN

by Dimitri C. Michalakis



About ten years ago, the distinguished Yale-trained actor and director Yannis Simonides was reminded by a friend about the *Memoirs* of the Greek revolutionary hero Ioannis Makriyannis - one of the glories of modern Greek literature.

"I had read them when I was young in Greece," says the veteran actor, "and I read them again and I fell in love with them all over again."

So much so, that he began to perform dramatized public readings all over the country from the 900 pages or so of the general's *Memoirs* published posthumously - and he's been doing them ever since in countless performances.

"I don't see myself as an actor," says Simonides (who's also doing dramatized readings from Plato's *The Apology*). "When I do these things, I employ my skills and what I've learned all these years. I feel like a privileged vessel to be able to bring to some kind of immediacy and life to these fantastic texts that are alive, have been alive, and will be alive."

"If you read Makriyannis, he makes perfect sense about today's world. You want

to run out in the street and run for office on his simple and eternal truths."

The *Memoirs* mostly recount Makriyannis' war years in the Greek Revolution. "Makriyannis was a brilliant fellow," says Simonides. He was made a general while still in his early 20s, he had made himself a millionaire before that (and given it all to the cause), and he was beloved by his men in part because he was as legendary a singer of *klepht* songs improvised on the spot as he was a general.

And, of course, he was one of the founders of modern Greek prose. "It's not just what he says, it's the language," says Simonides. "And this is from a man who didn't know how to read and write! He taught himself to read and write in three months. And then he sat down and wrote the *Memoirs* - which is massive - in the most wonderful language. It's so fantastic. I can only describe it as Seferis has described it - as poetry. Imagine this fellow, illiterate, wrote just one thing, and it's considered a masterpiece?"

Simonides' dramatization is so hair-raising because he seems to channel the authentic voice of Makriyannis (who was

from Roumelis), but also the storied cast of other characters that Makriyannis mentions, from Kolokotronis to Capodistrias.

"It was fun when I read it recently," Simonides says, "and I had a distinct voice for Capodistria, high-toned and aristocratic, and another for Makriyannis, *Roumeliotiki*, and another for Kolokotronis, *choriatiki*. And people rushed up to me and said, how did you manage to have a *Moriatiki* voice for Kolokotronis and *Roumeliotiki* for Makriyannis - and I hadn't! There was no difference - but they thought so."

What he hopes shines through the reading is the authentic voice of Makriyannis himself, who, he says, was "legendary for his purity, integrity, and extraordinary leadership and concern for the people of Greece."

So much so that Makriyannis stayed active 40 years after the revolution, stayed a democrat to the end, and was even imprisoned as an old man by King Otto for his outspoken views on the autocratic ways of the monarchy.

"He became a main proponent for the constitution and over the course of his life he became one of the major reasons for the downfall of Otto and adoption of a constitutional monarchy," says Simonides. (In the end, Makriyannis won and Otto was shipped back to Bavaria.)

The reaction to the readings has been heartening (see accompanying story about "A born-again Greek"), and though Simonides says he doesn't promote them, they always seem to find an audience. "People approach me, and I do it once or twice a year," says the actor, who has traveled the country with them.

What attracts him is what also attracted Seferis, who famously said, "No month has passed without my reading some of its pages." And Simonides adds, "There is nothing plain about Makriyannis: he was a poet and his language is that of the Homeric *palikari*."

Also, after portraying Socrates, he sees parallels between the two great men and, in fact, finds the plainspoken general "very Socratic. Both men were plain, but actually very complex. Makriyannis was one of those fantastically simple souls who had a lot in common with Socrates. They were beloved by the younger generation, and they had an extraordinary amount of integrity. Also, their lives were ruled by an unconditional acceptance and love of the country and its laws and its people."

So how long does he see himself performing the readings?

"The pleasure is in the process," replies the actor archly, and then asks with evident pleasure: "Do you want to hear a passage? In Greek or English? Let's do it in Greek, since it is the original."

And he launches into Makriyannis - and the old general suddenly comes alive.

Makriyannis the Man

Here is an excerpt from the Introduction:

Argos, February 26, 1829

I have been appointed by the government of Governor Capodistrias as General Commander of the Executive Force in the Peloponnese and Sparta. I am stationed here in Argos. I sit and communicate with the Government and with the officials and officers in all the districts and, when it is needed, I make my rounds in all these parts to keep the general peace. But most of the time I attend to my duties while sitting around here. And to keep from running off to the coffee houses and such, which I am not accustomed to -(I was able to write only a little, since I had never gone to a teacher for reasons I will explain, not having the means)- I asked one friend and another and they taught me some more here in Argos, where I sit idle. And so, after spending a couple of months learning these letters you see here, I imagined writing the story of my life: everything I did in my childhood and in the community after coming of age, and everything I did for my country when I joined the Secret Society for the struggle for our freedom, and everything I saw and know that happened in the Struggle, and everything I personally participated in to the best of my ability and did my duty as I was able. It wasn't proper that I, an illiterate, set out in this task and burden the honest readers and great and wise men in this society, putting them to the tedious task of wasting their precious moments after I had piqued their curiosity. But since I too, being only human, have succumbed to this temptation, I beg your pardon for the burden I am about to impose on you. If I am an honest man, I will write the truth about how the events I will mention, actually took place. Therefore, all you readers are first obligated to investigate my behavior and see how I conducted myself in society and the Struggle; and if I behaved honorably, you can accept my writings as true; if my behavior was dishonorable, don't believe anything. And you will learn that I conducted myself honorably, and you will see documented evidence and proofs from beginning to end from various sources - governments, officials, and many others



General Ioannis Makriyannis (1797-1864) was a Greek merchant who made himself wealthy before the Greek Revolution, then invested it all in the struggle and joined it himself as a fighter, rising to the rank of general. He served in public office after the Revolution, but was as outspoken as the Memoirs he wrote after teaching himself to read and write, and he was briefly imprisoned by the king for his views. For these memoirs, however, one of the enduring works of modern Greek literature, George Seferis has called Makriyannis one of the greatest masters of modern Greek prose.

wherever I served with my brother-comrades whom God deemed me worthy of leading, ever my superiors in the Struggle and in whatever services were assigned me. I had 18 men when I first set out in the Struggle; eventually, God has deemed me worthy of having up to 1,400 in my command. Never have we brought a blot on the pages of my country's history: nowhere is there the slightest accusation against us, not in the government, nor in the districts, nor among the individuals wherever we fought in Roumeli, the Peloponnese, the islands, and Sparta. In these pages you will see ample proof of the gratitude of those in all these places, and these can be seen everywhere in the state and government archives. And while I was in charge of so many men whom God entrusted to me, various forms of destruction and pillaging took place in our country; but, glory be to God's all-holy name, He never allowed us to disgrace ourselves. The country owes a debt of gratitude for all this to the good, noble, and distinguished patriots, my fellow comrades under my command: we too contributed whatever was in our power in our country's hour of need. The virtue and patriotism which these fine patriots displayed belongs to them, not me. For such virtue was never mine, nor is it even to this day: both in battle and now in this present service, these men are my betters. Even now in the service under my command are the brave and noble officers from Missolonghi, with their brave and noble leader Mitros Deligiorgis, who was garrison commander in the siege of Missolonghi. There are several brave and distinguished islanders and Peloponnesians, fine fighters; there are men from Roumeli. There are brave lovers of their country, the landowners and officers from Athens, along with whom we fought at the Athens Acropolis and elsewhere in our country's battles. And it was the virtue of all these fine patriots -thanks, first, to the kindness of God-that saved us from doing anything that would harm our country. As for you, dear readers, if you wish to learn the truth, I beg you to investigate everything in these pages and find out whether they are true or false. I have one request to make of all you distinguished readers: you do not have the right to make any judgment either for or against if you do not read the entire work: Only then do you

have the right to render whatever verdict you like, either for or against. After reading it all, from beginning to end, then you can judge all those who brought misfortunes on our country and caused civil wars through their personal interests and selfishness: these are the ones responsible for the past and present sufferings of our unfortunate country and our honest fighters. I will write down the bare truth and do so with dispassion. But the truth is bitter and unwelcome to the ears of those of us who have done wrong: for we want what is wrong and we pursue our self-interests, and we still want others to call us "fine patriots." And that is impossible. Neither will I conceal the truth nor will I allow it to remain hidden

that our country has suffered harm and dishonor and is ever degenerating to this end: we have all been found to be wild beasts. History books will tell of the causes of this evil, and newspapers recount them every day. And my own words carry no weight: educated people, not simple

our shoulders into it. Our rulers and leaders, both native and foreign-born, have become "Most Illustrious" and "Most Brave": nothing stops them. We were poor and became rich. Here in the Peloponnese Kiamil Bey and the other Turks were extremely wealthy. Kolokotronis, his relatives, and friends have grown rich on the lands, factories, mills, houses, vineyards, and other wealth that belonged to the Turks. When Kolokotronis and his companions came from Zakynthos, they didn't own even a square foot of land. Now all can see what they possess. The same thing happened in Roumeli: Gouras and Mamouris, Kritzotis, the Grivas clan, Staikos, the Tzavelas family and many others. And what are they asking of the nation? Millions more for their great services rendered. And they never let up in this. They are always at work trying to come up with laws and parties for the good of the country. Our country has endured more sufferings and lost more brave young men to their "laws" and "good" than it did in our struggle against the Turks. We have forced our people to live in caves with wild animals. We have desolated the countryside and become the scourge of the earth.

All this has given me cause to learn how to write in my old age so that I could write it all down. I too was one of them. Let someone else write whatever he knows about me. As for myself, I will tell the bare truth. For I have a share in this country where I and my children will live. For I was young and grew old before my time from these horrors brought on my country. I have five wounds on my body from various battles for my country, and I have come out of it only half a man. Most of the time I am bedridden, debilitated by it all. I glorify God for not depriving me of my life, and I am grateful to my country for honoring me with promotions in keeping with my position and circumstances up to the rank of General. I live like a human being with the blessings God has bestowed upon me, without ever feeling a pang of conscience and without ever having deprived anyone of even a foot of land.



Greek Revolution fighter

by Dimitri C. Michalakis

A born-again Greek



Left to right: James J. Cocolis - Chapter Treasurer, Yannis Simonides, Actor/Writer; Nicholas Nikas - Chapter President, James W. Cocolis - Chapter Secretary, Phil Vogis - District 5 Treasurer.

"I'm a prime example of what I call a born-again Greek," says Nicholas Nikas, president of AHEPA Chapter 99 in Stamford, Connecticut, which had Yannis Simonides perform the Memoirs of Makriyannis not once, but twice.

Nikas was born in Thessaloniki, but came to America to study at Yale and, he admits, "my primary concern at the time was to learn to speak English without an accent so people couldn't tell that I was Greek."

He later married a non-Greek, had kids, "never went to church," but in 1999 he was watching television and the bombing of Serbia by America got him incensed.

"It reminded me that the US government had also been against Greece for as long back as I can remember, at least starting with the Cyprus crisis," says the 63-year-old Nikas, who works in global financing for IBM. "So I thought as a Greek I just couldn't sit back and take it. I should do something."

What he calls his "ah-ha" moment led to an effort to "try and educate the American population about what Greece had done: the contributions of Greece—not just ancient—but modern Greece to western civilization. And if we do a good job, we should have at least most Greek Americans on our side, and hopefully non-Greek Americans. And this is not propaganda. This is education. We don't make things up."

In 2000 he became president of the AHEPA chapter, and from its home base at the Church of the Archangels on Bedford Street, the

chapter launched a remarkable series of educational and cultural programs highlighted by what Nikas calls "multimedia presentations on history" held by Dr. Angelos Athanasopoulos, who got his doctorate from Boston University in using the electronic media in education.

"And because of his background he knew how to use computers to educate people," says Nikas. "He had this computer full of slides, video clips, audio clips, and he also is very lively, and when he got on the stage and talked about things like the history of the junta, or the Metaxas dictatorship, people got very drawn into it."

Soon the chapter had a full house learning about the lesser-known facts of modern Greek history, which is the focus of the groups efforts. "It's very easy to learn about ancient Greece, but very difficult to get facts about modern Greece, starting with the Byzantines onwards," says Nikas.

In that effort, one of the chapter members had seen a performance of The Apologia of Plato by Yannis Simonides and he suggested it to Nikas.

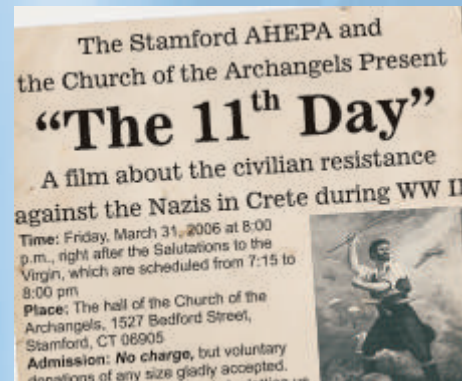
"I said we have a very small community, this is highfalutin stuff, we'll probably lose our shirt," said Nikas (the chapter pays for the performers and the food and drink for the evening). "But the member insisted, and I finally said, okay, let's do this. And, amazingly, we got a fairly large number of people, more than 100, and it was just a knockout presentation. Everybody loved it. We got the most positive feedback of any of our events during that time. That was my

occasion to meet and be aware of Yannis Simonides."

He asked Simonides what else he had lined up, Simonides told him about Makriyannis, and they booked him twice this past month ("One of the members said to me," says Nikas, "I didn't realize it was going to be so good and so accessible to children, and I didn't bring my children here, can we bring him back?"). "I really feel strong emotions about Greek and its future now," says the born-again Greek. "And I'm always thinking about what else we can do to gain a bigger audience for our issues."

And perhaps Nikas wasn't such an apostate himself, after all, because he brought his three kids to Greece often and when his grandparents asked his son Alexander what he wanted as a gift one summer, he asked them for a Greek flag. "So I can put it on my college dorm door to let everybody know that I'm Greek," he told them.

In many ways, like father, like son.



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Cyprus aiming high in the US

By Demetrios Rhompotis

PHOTOS: GEORGE LOUIS



Aristos Constantine, Trade Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus in New York (covering U.S.A., Canada, and Latin America,) since assuming his duties about a year ago, has developed a flying schedule that can be compared to that of a presidential candidate. Even some details for this interview had to be dealt with on the phone from three different airports on the same day!

“We’ve been organizing a series of seminars all over the country, in order to inform people about the investment opportunities that Cyprus has to offer,” says Constantine, a young and dynamic individual who already has served as Financial Advisor – Gulf Group of Companies based in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, (2002-2003) and Business Development Specialist, United Nations Development Program (2003-2005,) among others, before accepting his current post.

“On top of that, we have developed a marketing campaign plan for Spring 2007 focusing on the North East and the States of New Jersey and New York,” he says. “The campaign seeks to develop further the ‘country branding’ of Cyprus wines, raise awareness of the industry’s professionals about the wines and consequently, help importers expand their distribution lines and increase sales and imports of the labels already available in the US.”

The Cyprus Trade Center after careful consideration has decided upon a series of programs to achieve the goals of the campaign. In brief these include in-store wine tastings, special promotions in restaurants, media wine tasting event, sophisticated communication/media campaign, and the production of a totally new brochure for the wines from Cyprus.

N: For the past year, your office has organized a number of seminars across the US promoting Cyprus’ investment

opportunities. What were the most common questions participants had?

C: For the Cyprus Government attracting and fostering foreign investment is amongst the primary objectives of its ongoing development policy. Cyprus has always enjoyed a reputation as an established International Financial Center, but since its accession to the European Union, it has become in many ways the ideal gateway for foreign investment between the European Union and non-EU countries around the world. The key reasons for this include:

a) As a member of the EU, Cyprus has legal framework in line with EU law and OECD requirements and as such is not identified with countries associated with harmful tax practices or with non-cooperative countries.

b) At the same time, Cyprus has retained its attractiveness offering the lowest corporate tax rate in the EU at a flat rate of just 10%, no withholding tax, and low set up and operating costs.

c) Further, the fact that Cyprus has bilateral trade agreements with over 90 countries and favorable tax treaties with over 40 countries - ranging from Russia, the Balkans, the Middle East, India, as well as the U.S and Canada among others - coupled with its ideal geographic position at the crossroads of three continents bridging Europe, Asia and Africa. This combination makes it an ideal corporate holding jurisdiction.

The challenge is, however, to educate interested parties on the benefits that they can derive from Cyprus. You can have the best product on the market but if none knows about it what difference does it make? In fact a very often remark that is made by people attending our various conferences and seminars is that people in the financial industry, like any other industry, rarely make the effort to investigate anything new if the products they already have and are familiar with “do the job.”

N: You assumed your duties about a year ago, enough time to get immersed in the American scene. To what extent have your priorities changed and what are they?

C: Of course whenever one undertakes a new post there is a period that is necessary to evaluate the situation and to formulate a plan as to how to best approach the various opportunities and obstacles that exist. However having said that, it is important to note that many of the changes I have begun to make are rooted as much in the changes that have occurred in Cyprus as they have in the markets of the U.S., Canada and Latin America. In consequence to that, both the what we have to offer foreign markets as well as the way we approach those, have changed. As such we have been giving far more emphasis on the services section in our effort to attract foreign investment to the island.

N: What has consumer reaction been so far?

C: Cyprus exports a wide variety of goods both agricultural and manufactured. Our most famous export product Halloumi, previously enjoyed mostly by ethnic consumers, is now available in large supermarkets, chains and retail stores across the nation. It is unique to Cyprus and has a U.S. registered trademark. In addition to Halloumi, other available cheeses in the American Market, such as Kashkaval, Kefalotyri, Feta, Anari and Kefalograviera, made their debut several years ago.

Wines from Cyprus are also an industry that has undergone a change in recent years and I feel has a great deal of potential. Commandaria of course is the most well known and appreciated Cyprus wine. However, particularly in recent years, there has been a shift toward wine production from Cyprus indigenous grape varieties. That is to say grapes of Cypriot origin and unique to Cyprus matter how good, amongst the thousands already on the shelves, but a wine from indigenous grapes offers a unique and differentiated experience.

This type of positioning and differentiation applies to many other specialty food products from Cyprus ranging from natural spreadable flavored honey, hand-harvested natural Cyprus sea salt flakes, delights in a variety of flavours (loukoumia), tahini, olive oil and olives just to mention a few products.

The initial response has been phenomenal. People love the high quality and uniqueness of our products.

PHOTOS: GEORGE LOUIS



Aristos Constantine

Trade Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus in New York

N: When your time in New York is up, what would you like your legacy to be here—what would you like people to remember you for?

C: For all that I endeavor to accomplish in my current position. But I hope to, at the very least, start the wheels turning in the right direction.

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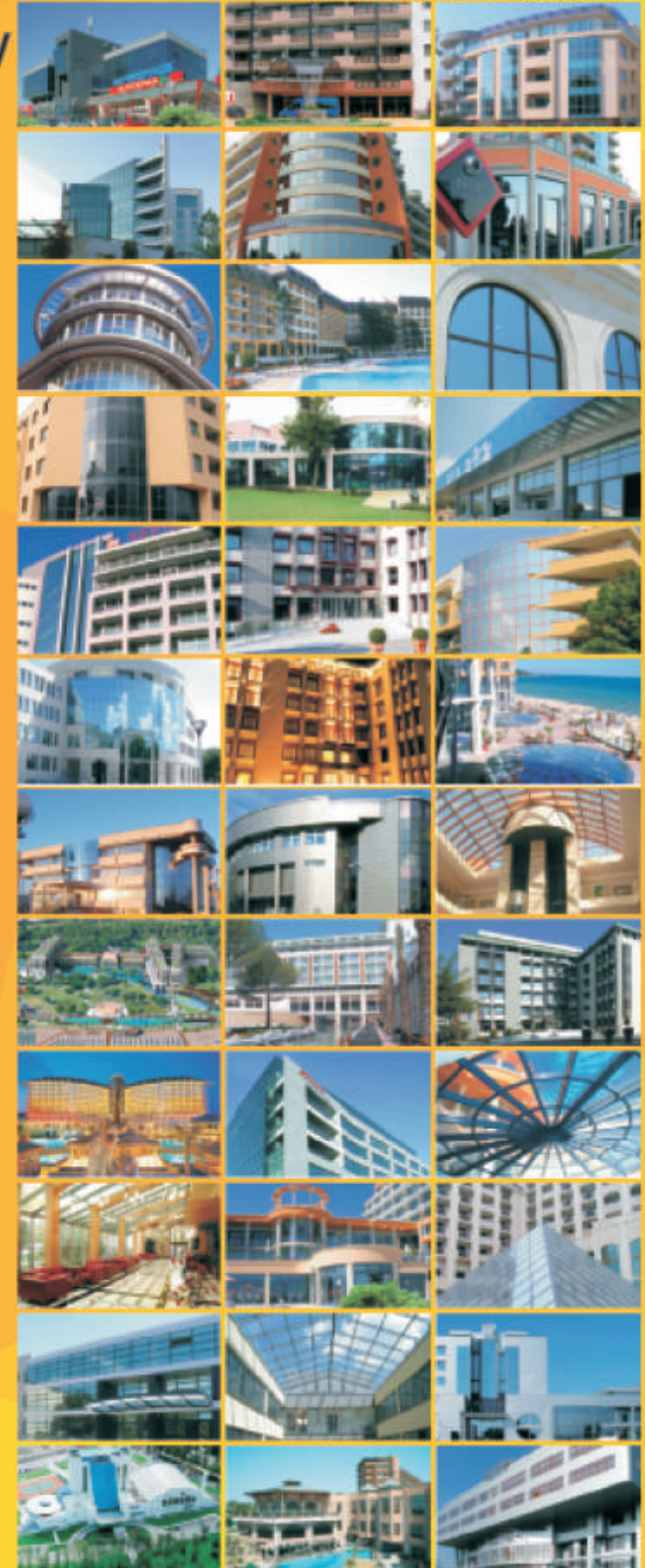
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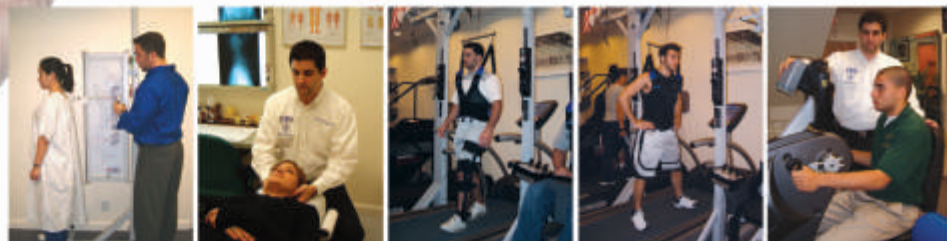
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Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis and Nick Davatzes serve as Grand Marshals and Anna Vissi Honorary Marshal of 76th Annual Greek Independence Parade Dedicated to Religious Freedom



Celebrities, U.S. and Greek Government officials at first-ever live televised parade (FOX TV My9), hosted by FOX News Anchors Ernie Anastos, Rosanna Scotto, and weatherman Nick Gregory



Parade chairman John Catsimatidis

The distinguished Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, represented by Archon National Commander Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, and Nick Davatzes, CEO Emeritus of A&E Television Networks, are the Grand Marshals for the 186th anniversary of Greek Independence at New York's annual Greek American Independence Parade, April 15, which is dedicated to religious freedom.

Greece's top singer and performing artist, Anna Vissi, will serve as Honorary Marshal. Parade Chairman John Catsimatidis, CEO and President, Red Apple Group, himself an

Archon and Chairman of the Archon's Religious Freedom Committee, led the parade's organizing efforts, which marked the first-ever televised live broadcast in the Parade's history. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of America, will serve as the Parade's Honorary Chairman.

Parade Co-chairpersons include leading community leaders Philip Christopher, president, International Coordinating Committee "Justice for Cyprus" (PSEKA); Tasso Manassis, restaurateur and former president of Pan Gregorian Enterprises, and

Dino Rallis, chairman, Federation public relations.

"I look forward to this being the most spectacular parade in the history of the Greek-American Parade," Catsimatidis said. "Grand Marshals are people in the community that have shown leadership as well having served as role models for our youth. And Religious Freedom, the theme of this year's parade, reflects also on Democracy, which both Greece and the United States were founded on." Catsimatidis' intent was to raise the recognition of the Greek-American story to an unprecedented large audience in the U.S. and abroad, and raise awareness to the religious freedom crisis.

"It is a great honor for the Archons to be named Grand Marshals of this year's historic 76th annual Greek Independence parade whose theme echoes the core of our mission," National Commander Dr. Anthony Limberakis said, who will represent the Order of St. Andrew at the parade.

"This gives the Archons of America the opportunity to convey the message of religious freedom on behalf of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It is our hope and dream that one day we will march up Fifth Avenue not

only celebrating Greek Independence but the independence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate from the shackles of religious oppression perpetrated by the government of Turkey."

"I am deeply honored to be named Grand Marshal by my fellow Greek Americans and to participate in this year's first televised parade. I applaud the Greek Federation's efforts to promote the ideals of Hellenism, which have always been an important part of my life," Davatzes said.

"On behalf of the Federation, I am very proud and grateful to be working John Catsimatidis, a compelling leader who loves and honors his Hellenic heritage and advocates for religious freedom. We also congratulate this year's Grand Marshals and Honorary Grand Marshal and applaud their contributions to the world of religion, arts and entertainment," said Nick Diamantidis, president of the Federation of Hellenic Societies of Greater NY.



Nick Gregory and Ernie Anastos

More than 200,000 participants and spectators from the New York and tri-state area were expected to attend the Greek parade that this year marked the first-ever televised broadcast on Fox TV Network (My9) with news anchors Ernie Anastos, Rosanna Scotto and weatherman Nick Gregory.

"This is a first to get TV coverage from one of the major channels in America that broadcast it live to several states," said Diamantidis. And he said the parade was very popular this year because of its theme. "We're very proud of what we have achieved," he said. "We were a nation under the Ottoman yoke for 400 years and yet we kept our religion and our culture and our history alive."

Rallis said this year the parade had more participants than it could accommodate (over 95 schools, societies and organizations alone). "They all wanted to participate and make their voices heard on this," he said, "and nobody wanted to be left out. Religious freedom and human rights is something that

we demand." He also praised the Federation for running the parade with the "dignity and respect it deserved."

The Federation of Hellenic Societies of Greater New York, the organizers of the annual Greek American Independence Parade, is a not-for-profit organization comprised of over 200 civic, cultural and regional organizations in the New York City area. Its mission is to preserve and promote Hellenic culture and heritage throughout the five boroughs of New York through cultural events and programs throughout the year.

New York's Greek parade is the largest in the country.





Federation of Hellenic Societies crowns Miss Greek Independence 2007

Fordham University junior **Lina (Eleni) Paxos**, 20, of Westchester County was crowned **Miss Greek Independence 2007** at the pageant competition held March 11 by the **Federation of Hellenic Societies** at the Stathakion Center in Astoria, where more than 200 people attended--the largest number ever.

"I was shocked, but at the same time extremely happy," said Paxos (representing the island of Chios). "Every girl deserved to win as much as me. It's a great opportunity for me to spread Greek culture as best I can."

At Fordham, Paxos majors in Business Administration with a double minor in Legal and Ethical Studies, and Economics. She teaches Greek dance, plays soccer, and serves as vice president of Fordham University's Hellenic Society Bronx campus.

Federation President **Nick Diamantidis** greeted the guests and contestants, and expressed a special message to their families: "Your children are the pride and beauty of our Greek community, and your presence here today honors the Federation and the Greek community of New York and the tri-state area."

The event included a musical interlude, food and refreshments.

The 2006 winner, **Georgia Lilikas** of New Jersey, was all too familiar with the anxiety and anticipation that comes with the competition. "I might say goodbye to you today as Miss Greek Independence, but not as a Greek-American who loves Greece, and will always help to preserve Greek culture in America," she told the audience.

The second and third runner-ups chosen were **Evangeline Podara**, 19, of Astoria (**Miss Peloponnese**), a political science student at Yale University; and **Stavroula Kavalieratos**, 20, of Bayside (**Miss Cephalonia**) an education student at Queens College. Paxos and all the thirteen contestants will lead New York's 76th annual Greek Independence parade on Sunday, April 15, and will represent the Federation throughout the year.

A panel of nine judges based their votes on the contestants' knowledge of Greek history, religion, opinion and appearance. Since the late 1950's, the event is organized annually by the Federation's Cultural Committee, and is part of the cultural events leading up to the Greek Parade. Committee chairman is **Panagiotis Pavlou**, co-organizer of the event.

Participating contestants include **Eftihia Argyrou** (**Miss Mathraki**); **Agatha Catechis** (**Miss Othoni**); **Dimitra Malamateniou** (**Miss Paros**); **Maria Sorvani** (**Miss Peloponnese**); **Stamatia Theotokatou** (**Miss Cephalonia**); **Rachel Verdina** (**Miss Crete**); **Natasha Xenou** (**Miss Zakynthos**); **Avyerini Catechis** (**Miss Ionian**); **Maria Catechis** (**Miss Erikoussa**); **Lara Haschek** (**Miss Corfu**) and **Christine Polios** (**Miss Laconia**).



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Educators honor Greek Independence

by Ivonne Montesantos

Biska provided the framework of the event's theme with her inspirational speech, "The Power of the Hellenic Language." "We all speak the same language that is the Hellenic language," she said, and she mentioned that approximately one third of the English and European languages find their direct roots in the Greek tongue. More than two-thirds of the technical vocabulary of these languages is derived from the Greek. She described the Greek origin and the derivatives of words such as anatomy, anthropology, astronomy, biotechnology, economics, mythology, metaphysics, and hundreds of scientific terms directly received from the Greek language.

Mentioned was that Hellenism addresses the necessity of human beings for knowledge, and as American classicists John Heath and Victor Hansen have declared, "Hellenism will never die." "Bring back the Greeks!" said scholar Bruce Thornton.

A delicious buffet of traditional Greek cuisine was provided for all to enjoy, and the Greek-American Folklore Society danced spiritedly to the soulful Greek music.



From left: Nancy Biska, Vassiliki Forini, Andriana Filiotis, Demi Savopolis and Stella Kokolis.

Journalist extraordinaire Nancy Biska delivered a powerful speech during the Hellenic American Educators Association of the United Federation of Teachers annual Hellenic Heritage Event, held recently at their Manhattan headquarters.

Biska's presentation was preceded by the opening remarks of the Hellenic American Educators Association President Demi Savopolis, who warmly greeted those in attendance. Among the notables present was Stella Kokkolis, who is the President of the Federation of Greek-American Educators; also the Board of Director for the Federation of Greek-American Educators, Adriana Filiotis.

"The lecture by Nancy Biska was not only very informative but also very documentary and scientific" said Kokolis. "Bravo to H.A.E.A. for the entire program. Our Federation is very pleased to see celebrations that try to perpetuate the Hellenic language and our heritage. We wish to our colleagues health and success in their endeavors."



Keynote speaker Nancy Biska

Phoenix Reigns with Destination Unknown



from their demos, like fan favorites 'Another Night Alone' and 'Open Your Eyes' as well as new material, including the epic "Constantinople 1453 (On the Eve of the Fall)." This track epitomizes what Phoenix Reign is capable of

as musicians, by blending traditional Mediterranean instruments such as the *kanonaki* and *tzoura* with metal, simultaneously creating an otherworldly sonic atmosphere.

The album's artwork is also notable, as it features the work of Iannis Nikou, the acclaimed Greek artist whose style is reflective of Delacroix and even Boris Vallejo. "We now have a look to match the sound and attitude of the music!" says Billy.

Phoenix Reign will be promoting *Destination Unknown* heavily in the upcoming months with radio appearances, newspaper interviews and show dates. As Theresa predicts: "This CD is going to take a lot of people by surprise...it's the culmination of years of blood, sweat and tears and the music definitely shows that dedication."

They will be performing in New York City next on May 4th at Ace of Clubs, 9 Great Jones Street.

For more information on Phoenix Reign and to order *Destination Unknown* visit the band's website at www.phoenixreign.com. Direct correspondence can be mailed to 38-11 Ditmars Blvd. Suite 394, Astoria, NY 11105, or sent via email to info@phoenixreign.com.

Queens, New York-based metal act Phoenix Reign has just released their debut album, *Destination Unknown*. The CD features 11 original and dynamic tracks from this fiercely independent band, made up of singer Theresa Gaffney, guitarists Billy Chrissochos and Kostas Psarros, bassist Chris Pollatos and drummer Wayne Noon. Formed in late 1998, Phoenix Reign has since epitomized the "do it your own way" attitude, backing trends and crafting a unique musical blend of metal, hard rock and ethnic Mediterranean styles. The band came together during a summer expedition to Greece, where Billy and Chris started to write many of the songs they would perform back in the United States. They solidified their current lineup in 2002 with the addition of Theresa.

Reviews and praise of their subsequent demos spread over the Internet and created enough buzz to push the band to self-produce a full length album. Vinaya from MaximumMetal.com said of Phoenix Reign that their music is a "...driving sound that [fuses] Priest, Maiden and other classic metal sounds into a surprisingly fresh brew." In addition, Matt Bankes of Rising Forces USA praised Theresa's "powerful vocal style that can be sultry and seductive one minute and smash you in the jaw the next." The Queens Times Ledger newspaper even ran a full-length article on the band and their upcoming album in their December 14th issue.

Destination Unknown is a labor of love for Phoenix Reign. It brings to life several songs

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Byzantine Chant

in English

By Benjamin Williams

This is undoubtedly the finest Holy Week recording of the last decade, and is so because of its many stellar attributes.

First, the performance is based on extensive manuscript scholarship of never-before recorded arrangements by masters of Byzantine chant composition. Second, the performance is absolutely superb: the sound is rich and full; the feeling is reverential and spiritual; the singing and recording quality are top notch. Third, the choice of antiphonally performing the hymnology in both Greek and English not only makes it attractive to a larger audience, but is so well executed that often the listener isn't consciously aware of which language is being sung. Finally, the liner notes booklet is stunning in terms of content about the service and its themes, and beautiful with its icon illustrations.

This is a superlative recording that will become a reference piece. Fr. Apostolos Hill had this to say: "The Bridegroom Services of

the first part of Holy Week contain some of the most beautiful and spiritually poignant hymnology in the Orthodox liturgical tradition. And the souls of the pious cannot help but be moved to consider the joy that awaits those who have prepared themselves to meet the Bridegroom of the Church at His appearing."

In 'He Cometh At Midnight,' the Romeiko Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. Yorgios Bilalis, perfectly captures the haunting beauty of the Byzantine melodies and the sobering texts of such hymns as 'Behold the Bridegroom comes in the midst of the night,' and 'I see Thy Bridal Chamber adorned, O my Savior.' Rendered in Greek and English, this recording, like all of those produced by this splendidly talented ensemble, adheres strictly to the musical legacy of the Orthodox Church yet does so in a way that is fresh and captivating, imparting not just the form of the music but the essence as well, thus uniting the heart and mind of the listener to a deeper contemplation of Him who is the subject of all our hymns.

Having been by God, yet not exempt in bearing sorrow as fruit, you first...
...the enjoyment of earthly affairs by taking away with the...
...of life. "Dust thou art and unto dust shall thou return", this...
...perish thou shalt inherit death. Hence, he was covered up...
...with the cloth of sleep, for having been originally created in between life...
...and mortality according to the body and dwelling in the garden of Delight...
...Gen. 2: 15 Septuagint) and within the royal courts, afterward he obtained...
...a mortal and tough body capable of enduring toil. Course indeed ate the...
...leaves of that fig tree which is our human nature."

To this fig tree, namely humanity, the Son of man came, hungry and seeking...
...after its sweetest fruit, the most pleasing to God, that is to say, virtue, which...
...culminates in salvation, yet He found no fruit, only thorns, leaves, the...
...roughest and most excruciating failure, which is sin and all bones which spring...
...from it. That is why He declares to all His vessels: "No fruit shall you of these...
...bushes bear, for salvation springs not of thorns, although virtue is within...
...humanity's capacity. I myself bring about salvation by granting Resurrection...
...through my Passion, I am also causing the leaves to wither away and am...
...decussing this rough and thorny nature of life." Both of which He has uttered."

Translated: Maximus Lavrenko
Peterhouse, Cambridge - U.K.



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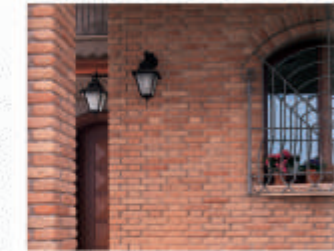
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Stefani Charitou and Antonis Armeftis on stage

Cypriot theater in New York

It is really extraordinary to experience the Cypriot village life in the heart of New York City. That is what happened recently at the premiere of the *I Agapi tis Marikous* (Marikou's Love) another production of The Cypriot Theater Group "I Kypros Mas," founded by Petros Petrides, a veteran theater producer within the Cypriot American community, who was also the play's director.

The lucky audience could feast the eyes and ears with a performance in the authentic Cypriot language (which is closer to the Ancient Greek than Modern Greek,) music, clothes and dance. The Cypriot-born author Kyriakos Akathiotis wrote a traditional story of forbidden love, tradition, and acceptance. The whole performance was made possible by an excellent cast who managed to conjure the ethos and pathos of the pastoral living in the early 20th century Cyprus. Two of the play's central characters were exceptionally portrayed by Stefanos Stefanou and Ismini Michailidou, who were the parents of the young girl that wants to marry her true love.

However, among the younger cast, Antonis Armeftis distinguished himself as the brother of the heroine. Torn between tradition and the love of his sister played by Stefani Charitou, Mr. Armeftis' performance was really capturing the spirit of the character who manages to negotiate the clashes of tradition and modernity. The interaction between the siblings with Stefani Charitou and Antonis Armeftis really made this play alive with its spirit and universality of the human condition.

Laced with dance and drama, the play *I Agapi Tis Marikous* truly brought the New York audience closer to the tiny island of Cyprus and also made us aware that we are not all different from each other culturally and spiritually.

Philip Christopher, a distinguished entrepreneur, a long time activist for Hellenic causes and president of PSEKA (International Coordinating Committee for Justice in Cyprus,) was honored at the end of the performance for his support in promoting Cypriot theater in the US.



From left, activist and publisher Fanny Holiday, Consul General of Cyprus Martha Mavromati, the honoree Philip Christopher and producer Petros Petrides



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