

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation, a not-for-profit organization, was established to organize and promote high quality and relevant educational and cultural programs, concerts, lectures, exhibits, and similar events for all persons interested in the history, culture and affairs of Greece and its people and the people of Greek ancestry outside of Greece.

2023

Roderick Beaton on Writing the History of The Greeks

Thursday, November 2, 2023 at The Rubin Museum of Art

The **Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation** held an evening presentation by **Professor Roderick Beaton**, *Emeritus Professor at King's College London* and *Commander of the Order of Honor of the Hellenic Republic*. Professor Beaton addressed how he and others approached writing the history of Greece and the Greek people, weaving together themes on language, ethnic identity, and the modern nation-state.

Drawing upon his two most recent books, *Greece: Biography of a Modern Nation* (2019) and *The Greeks: A Global History* (2021), Professor Beaton took us behind the scenes to explore some of the underlying questions about how Greece and Greeks have defined their position in the modern world, while coming to terms with a recorded history that dates back 3,500 years.

Professor Beaton studied English Literature at the University of Cambridge, before turning to Modern Greek as the subject of his doctorate. He embarked on a long career at King's College London (University of London), culminating with serving as *Koraes Professor of Modern Greek and Byzantine History, Language and Literature*. His many books and articles on the Greek-speaking world are much acclaimed, and he is a four-time winner of the prestigious Runciman Award. Professor Beaton is a *Fellow of the British Academy*, a *Fellow of King's College (FKC, 2018)*, *Commander of the Order of Honour of the Hellenic Republic* (2019), and *Chair of Council at the British School of Athens*. In early 2023 he was granted honorary Greek citizenship.

Professor Beaton's books were available for purchase and signature at the reception that followed the presentation.

Maria Callas: A Tribute to Her Life and Music

Wednesday, Sept 27, 2023, at the Kaufman Music Center

As we approached the 100th anniversary of Maria Callas' birthday, we celebrated her extraordinary contributions to the world of opera as a singer and actress through a narrative of her remarkable career, a series of archival film clips and live performances of the arias she made famous.

Nicholas Gage, who wrote the internationally acclaimed biography of Maria Callas “*Greek Fire*,” introduced the evening’s event and provided a background of Callas’ career. **Maria Asteriadou** put together a trio of extremely talented young Greek artists consisting of mezzo-soprano **Sophia Pelekasis**, pianist **Georgia Lazaridou**, and violinist **Christoforos Petridis**, who presented Callas’ most famous works. Currently a student at The Juilliard School in New York, Ms. Pelekasis has performed at the Greek embassy in Washington, DC, and has appeared in several operatic productions at The Catholic University of America. Ms. Lazaridou has given acclaimed performances worldwide, including those at the Athens Megaron Concert Hall, the Chetham International Festival, and the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Petridis graduated from the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki. He has won numerous awards in national and international competitions, and has performed at the Athens Megaron, Vienna Musikverein, and Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall. He is currently pursuing his bachelor’s degree at Kutztown University under the tutelage of Kurt Nikkanen.

As one music historian wrote, in her brief lifetime Maria Callas “bestowed upon the world more music, more art, and more humanity than any other individual in the 20th century.” Through the young musicians of today, her influence continues and inspires future generations. We had a spectacular evening celebrating the life and career of Maria Callas. A reception followed the event.

Colonel Bogdanos: *One Marine’s Passion to Recover the World’s Stolen Treasures*

Thursday, June 22, 2023, LIVE at the Kaufman Music Center

The world watched in horror as ISIS and al-Qaeda destroyed the fabled cities of Hatra, Khorsabad, Nimrud, and Nineveh. For every masterpiece that was destroyed, thousands of others lined terrorists’ coffers through international trafficking. In a series of photographs, Colonel Bogdanos traced the development of the global black market from al-Qaeda’s looting of the Iraq Museum to ISIS’s current, systemized pillaging, demonstrating how a million-dollar antiquity can travel from a war-torn country to a Madison Avenue dealer.

Matthew Bogdanos, as an assistant District Attorney, created the first-of-its-kind Antiquities Trafficking Unit. Raised waiting tables in his family’s Greek restaurant, he is a former amateur middleweight boxer who joined the U.S. Marine Corps at 19. Leaving active duty in 1988 to join the Manhattan DA’s Office, he returned to active duty on 9/11 and deployed to Afghanistan where he received a Bronze Star for actions against al-Qaeda. He then deployed to Iraq where he was awarded a National Humanities Medal from President Bush for helping recover more than 6,000 of Iraq’s treasures. Since 2010, he has led the recovery of over 4,500 priceless antiquities stolen from more than a dozen countries, including tens of millions of dollars of extraordinary antiquities that have been repatriated to Greece. From Columbia University, Bogdanos has received a law degree, a master’s degree in Classics, and a Recognition of Achievement in International Law, as well as a master’s degree in strategic studies from the Army War College. He has also received numerous awards and written a book, *Thieves of Baghdad*, whose royalties are donated to the Iraq National Museum. *A small reception was held after the event.*

When will machines truly be intelligent?

October 12, 2022, LIVE at the Kaufman Music Center

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation welcomed award-winning MIT professor and computer scientist, **Constantinos Daskalakis**, to discuss the state of Artificial Intelligence (AI). While AI has made great advances in changing many facets of our lives, it is also becoming increasingly clear that AI poses significant challenges. AI often fails to work well in novel environments and has the potential to amplify stereotypes and biases that exist in the data used to “train” it. Dr. Daskalakis critically examined the developments in AI from a combined scientific and applied perspective, revealing intimate connections to mathematics and social sciences as avenues to overcome these challenges. He also highlighted the new Archimedes Center for Research in Artificial Intelligence in Greece and how it plans to advance AI research.

Following in the tradition of Archimedes, Daskalakis’ accomplishments in mathematics and science are well established. He has worked on Computation Theory and its interface with Game Theory, Economics, Probability Theory, Machine Learning and Statistics and has resolved long-standing problems about the computational complexity of Nash equilibrium, and multi-item auctions. Constantinos now focuses on high-dimensional statistics and machine learning. In 2018 he won the prestigious Nevanlinna Prize and has been honored with a number of other significant awards. *A small reception was held after the event.*

The New York premiere of George Tsontakis’ Portraits by El Greco – Book II

September 14, 2022, LIVE at the Kaufman Music Center

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation, in celebration of its 10th anniversary, commissioned for the first time a new work by a major composer of Greek descent. The New York premiere of **George Tsontakis’ Portraits by El Greco – Book II**, along with other selections from Beethoven, Brahms and Bartók, was performed by five world renowned musicians. George Tsontakis, the 2005 recipient of the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition, was called by Gramophone magazine “a giant of the American music scene.” In his new work, Mr. Tsontakis combined projected images of the great painter’s work with a contemporary music setting.

The quintet of performers included: **Maria Asteriadou** – an acclaimed soloist and chamber musician, and heralded as “an artist with intense personality, virtuosic flair, unusual poise and intimate contact with style” by The New York Times; Grammy Award-winning **Zuill Bailey** – widely considered one of the premier cellists in the world; Greek clarinetist **Spyros Mourikis** – winner of the 1997 Carl Nielsen International Clarinet Competition, has played extensively throughout Greece and Europe; violinist **Kurt Nikkanen** – considered a soloist of the highest order, a graduate of Juilliard and, presently, the Concertmaster of the New York City Ballet Orchestra; and **Rita Porfiris** – an American violinist and arranger of Greek and Chinese descent, who has performed across the globe as a chamber musician, orchestral musician and soloist. *A small reception was held after the event.*

When The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe

A Virtual Seminar | Zoom: November 4, 2021

In the year of the bicentennial of the Greek Revolution, it is important to reconsider the importance of the Greek Revolution and the enduring reasons of what it changed in world history. **Mark Mazower**, the Ira D. Wallach Professor of History at Columbia University, discussed his forthcoming book on the Greek War of Independence. He covered the challenges and complexities of writing about the subject, the current state of research, and why the events of 1821 need to be understood in both their Ottoman and international contexts.

Mark Mazower is the author of over a dozen works on modern Greek history, twentieth century Europe, and international organization. He has a BA and doctorate in Classics and Philosophy from the University of Oxford, as well as an MA in International Affairs from Johns Hopkins University. He lives in New York City and contributes regularly for the Financial Times and other newspapers and journals. He is the founding director of the Columbia Institute for Ideas and Imagination in Paris and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Public Humanities Initiative.

Justinian's Hagia Sophia

A Virtual Seminar | Zoom: May 13, 2021

We were pleased to have **Professor Robert G. Ousterhout** join us to discuss Emperor Justinian's Hagia Sophia. Completed nearly 1,500 years ago, the Hagia Sophia is both an architectural masterpiece and a cultural icon of Byzantine and Eastern Orthodox civilization. At the time of its construction, it was the world's largest interior space and among the first to build a fully pendentive dome. Professor Ousterhout addressed the transformation of the basilica as an architectural form and its subsequent impact on architecture in the eastern Mediterranean. Justinian's Hagia Sophia represents a critical point in architectural history in terms of form, meaning, and aesthetics.

Nestor the Chronicler reported that travelers to the Hagia Sophia in 987 AD were awestruck with the structure remarking, *"we knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth...for on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it. We only know that God dwells there among men..."*

Professor Emeritus in the History of Art at the University of Pennsylvania, Ousterhout is the author or co-author of over 20 books on the art and architecture of the Byzantine world and has contributed to over 70 more. His extensive fieldwork has concentrated on Byzantine architecture, monumental art, and urbanism in Constantinople, Thrace, Cappadocia, and Jerusalem. This year he was awarded the prestigious Haskins Medal by the Medieval Academy of America for his distinguished book on eastern medieval architecture. .

Beethoven and his Legacy: Schubert, Kuhlau and Tsontakis

A Virtual Concert | YouTube: October 29, 2020

We estimate more than 700 people, and counting, have viewed this mesmerizing performance.

The event was reviewed by *The National Herald*.

Pianist **Maria Asteriadou** and violinist **Kurt Nikkanen** returned to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. Accompanied by Grammy-nominated flutist, **Carol Wincenc**, the concert live-streamed chamber music works by Beethoven, Schubert, Kuhlau, and Tsontakis from Schaeffer Auditorium at Kutztown University.

The program explored the profound influence Beethoven's work has had on subsequent generations of composers. Franz Schubert was a passionate devotee of Beethoven, Friedrich Kuhlau was known as the "Beethoven of the Flute," and *Musical America* has described Greek-American composer George Tsontakis' String Quartet No. 4 as "containing a reflective emotional power reminiscent of Beethoven's late quartets."

Heralded by *The New York Times* as "an artist with intense personality, virtuosic flair, unusual poise and intimate contact with style," Greek pianist Maria Asteriadou is an acclaimed soloist and chamber musician. Kurt Nikkanen made his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of twelve, and is Concertmaster of the New York City Ballet Orchestra and an international soloist of the highest order. Hailed "Queen of the flute" by *New York Magazine*, Carol Wincenc has performed in countless venues worldwide and won numerous awards.

The Battle of Salamis: The Naval Encounter that Saved Greece and Western Civilization

A Virtual Seminar | Zoom: September 16, 2020

We were pleased to have over 200 participants join us for this stimulating discussion.

Professor Barry Strauss told the gripping story of when, in September 480 BC, Greek warships faced an invading Persian armada in the narrow Salamis Straits in one of history's most important naval battles. Outnumbered, the Greeks triumphed through a combination of stratagem and courage. The Greek victory at Salamis remains one of the most tactically brilliant battles ever fought – halting the advance of the Persian Empire and setting the stage for the Golden Age of Athens by saving the first democracy in history. Named one of the best books of 2004 by the *Washington Post*, his book, *The Battle of Salamis*, is "a military epic of the first order" (*Boston Globe*).

Dr. Barry Strauss, Bryce & Edith M. Bowmar Professor in Humanistic Studies at Cornell University, is a military historian with a focus on ancient Greece and Rome. His books have been translated into sixteen languages. *Masters of Command*, was named one of the best books of 2012 by *Bloomberg*, and his latest book, *Ten Caesars: Roman Emperors from Augustus to Constantine* (Simon & Schuster, 2019) has been hailed as "superb summation of four centuries of Roman history, a masterpiece of compression," (*The Wall*

Street Journal). His podcast, *Antiquitas: Leaders and Legends of the Ancient World*, is available on iTunes, Google Play, and other platforms.

In 2019-20 he was Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School. He holds the Clark Award for Distinguished Teaching from Cornell University, and has been awarded numerous fellowships and residencies. In recognition of his scholarship, he was named an Honorary Citizen of Salamis, Greece.

How Byzantine Civilization Influenced Modern-day Culture

A Virtual Seminar | Zoom: June 18, 2020

We were pleased to have **Professor Maria Mavroudi** join us for our first virtual event. We had over 200 participants in what we anticipate will be the first in a series of virtual events. The event was reviewed by *The National Herald*.

Scholars from the 19th and 20th centuries assigned Byzantium a marginal role in the development of world civilization, one limited to the preservation of “classical” Greek texts. However, during the last two or three decades, new interpretations of Byzantine civilization have begun to challenge this view. Professor Mavroudi’s presentation focused on Byzantium’s economy and monetary system, its art and its literature, in order to explain the global importance of Byzantine civilization.

Professor Mavroudi was born in Thessaloniki, Greece and studied Philology before earning a Ph.D. in Byzantine studies at Harvard. Professor Mavroudi’s work was recognized with a MacArthur fellowship in 2002. She is a Professor of Byzantine History and Classics at the University of California, Berkeley.

2019

Stephen Antonakos: A Modernist’s Byzantium – Concert and Panel Discussion

November 20, 2019, at The Morgan Library & Museum, Gilder Lehrman Hall

Dr. Helen C. Evans, Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator of Byzantine Art at the Metropolitan Museum, and **Robert Storr**, artist, curator, and critic, discussed the Byzantine manifestations found throughout six decades of Greek-American artist Stephen Antonakos’s work. The audience saw images illustrating both the Modernist and the Byzantine aspects of his art.

Stephen Antonakos (Greece, November 1, 1926 – New York, August 17, 2013) started using neon around 1960, always in abstract forms, at vastly different scales and with various material combinations. His practice has lent the medium new perceptual and formal meanings in hundreds of gallery and museum shows in New York and internationally. His use of spare, complete and incomplete geometric neon forms has ranged from linear and 3-D indoor installations to painted Neon Canvases, Walls, Panels with painted or gold surfaces, Rooms, and Chapels. Drawing and collage also were constant practices. His work is included in major international collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of

Modern Art, and The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC; and the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens.

The evening commenced with a piano concert by modernist musician **Idith Meshulam Korman**. She performed Piano Pieces by the Greek composer Nikos Skalkottas, as an introduction to the conceptual connections between Skalkottas's compositions and Antonakos's work. *A reception followed.*

Socrates Now

October 23, 2019, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

Socrates Now, a 90-minute solo performance-discourse, was led by award-winning actor, director, and producer, **Yannis Simonides**, which captured the essence of Socratic ethics while engaging the audience to think, question, and, perhaps, reconsider.

First presented by Elliniko Theatro in New York in 2004, *Socrates Now* has since been performed to great acclaim at the United Nations, the Athens Agora, the NBC Today Show, and in over 475 venues in 22 countries, and 10 languages. Leading world universities have combined the performance with interactive seminars on Socratic ethics and how they apply to our society today.

The audience sat in the court of ancient Athens as Socrates went on trial for his life. They heard the philosopher face his accusers with his trademark wit, cutting logic, and the courage of his convictions. They considered his arguments on virtue, justice, politics, corruption, civic duty, love of life and hope in death, and, finally, each reached their own judgment.

After touring the world for 15 years, *Socrates Now* came home to its city of origin. Post-performance there was an opportunity to discuss with Mr. Simonides himself the ramifications of the verdict, and its present day implications. *A reception followed the event.*

Dangerous Beauty: Medusa in Classical Art

February 21, 2019, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

Kiki Karoglou, Associate Curator in the Department of Greek and Roman Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, presented the exhibit she curated, *Dangerous Beauty: Medusa in Classical Art*. The exhibit, was on view at The Met until February 24, 2019.

Beginning in the fifth century B.C., Medusa – the serpentine-haired Gorgon whose gaze turned men to stone – became increasingly anthropomorphic and feminine, undergoing a visual transformation from grotesque to beautiful. A similar shift in representations of other mythical female half-human beings, such as sphinxes, sirens, and the sea monster Scylla – took place at the same time. Featuring sixty artworks, primarily from The Met collection, this exhibition explored for the first time how the beautification of these terrifying figures manifested the idealizing humanism of Classical Greek art, and traces their enduring appeal in both Roman and later Western art. The winter 2018 issue of the *Met Bulletin* was devoted entirely to this exhibit. A reception with Kiki Karoglou followed the program.

Marios Papadopoulos, Music Director of the Oxford Philharmonic, and Friends

October 30, 2018, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

The concert focused on the work of the Greek conductor and pianist, **Dr. Marios Papadopoulos MBE**, founder and music director of the Oxford Philharmonic, resident orchestra at the University of Oxford in England. In 2014, he was named a Member of the British Empire in the Queen's New Year's Honours list for his services to music.

The evening, divided into two parts, started with an introduction to the new production of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which Maestro Papadopoulos will be conducting in Athens in March 2019 at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (SNFCC) in collaboration with the Greek National Opera. The director **Alexandros Efklidis** briefly spoke about his ground-breaking production with visuals depicting the design and sets, followed by a performance of arias and duets from the opera performed by the Greek National Opera's coloratura-soprano **Vassiliki Karayanni** and baritone **Dionysios Sourbis**, who came from Athens.

In the second portion of the evening, Maestro Papadopoulos was joined by two principals from the Oxford Philharmonic, concertmaster **Natalia Lomeiko**, who played the famous Ida Haendel Stradivarius violin, and solo cello **Mats Lidström**, in a performance of Tchaikovsky's epic *Piano Trio in A minor*.

A reception with Dr. Papadopoulos and the performers followed the concert. The magnificent concert was reviewed in *The National Herald*.

Twelfth Annual New York City Greek Film Festival

October 18 – 23 2018, at Florence Gould Hall

Presented in cooperation with The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation, the festival aspires to bring the best work of Greek filmmakers, past and present, to New York City and its environs

Reenvisioned: The Color and Design of the Parthenon Frieze

June 14, 2018, at the Rubin Museum of Art

Pavlos Samios, renowned Greek artist and professor at the Athens School of Fine Arts, presented a short film and discussed the composition, scale, colors, and techniques used in the frieze of the Parthenon. Having studied the frieze for many years, Samios suggested how it would have been in ancient times and how the Greeks envisioned and created the decorative tableaux of the magnificent temple built in honor of the city's patron deity Athena.

Pavlos, after graduating from the Athens School of Fine Arts and starting his career in Athens, moved to Paris where he received international acclaim. Upon his return he explored how to combine traditional

techniques with contemporary concepts. In 2000, he was offered academic tenure at the Athens School of Fine Arts to lead the lab of Byzantine Art and Traditional Techniques.

Samios' work has been shown in over 75 solo exhibitions internationally, including Athens, London, Paris, New York, Boston, Hanoi, Beirut and Nicosia. His work can be found in several museums and private collections around the world, and he has painted numerous chapels using the fresco technique. He is also a well-known portraitist and his portrait of Maria Callas is displayed at the Metropolitan Opera House here in New York. *A reception with Pavlos Samios followed the program.*

Charmed Lives in Greece: Ghika, Craxton and Leigh Fermor

April 25, 2018, at The University Club

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation, with the support of the Benaki Museum, welcomed a presentation by renowned art historian **Evita Arapoglou** on the exhibition currently at The British Museum "Charmed Lives in Greece: Ghika, Craxton, Leigh Fermor." Ms. Arapoglou helped create, and served as co-curator for, the exhibition, which was previously shown at the Benaki Museum in Athens and the A. G. Leventis Gallery in Nicosia.

The Greek painter Nikos Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas, the British painter John Craxton and the British writer Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor first met at the end of World War II. Their close friendship endured for more than fifty years, and their shared love of the Greek world deeply influenced their respective works. Images of Ghikas' glorious landscape paintings and of Craxton's vividly evocative scenes from everyday life, and excerpts from Leigh Fermor's eloquent texts, are combined in a narrative of this trio's remarkable friendship and of the unforgettable charm of life in Greece. The presentation was a vivid stroll through these artists' intertwined lives in Mani, Crete, Hydra and Corfu. *A reception with Evita Arapoglou followed the program.*

2017

Pianist Vassilis Varvaresos in Concert

November 16, 2017, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation, with the support of the Onassis Foundation USA, presented at Merkin Hall one of the most promising musicians of his generation, Greek pianist **Vassilis Varvaresos**. He has appeared on major stages in Europe and the US, and is regularly invited to festivals all over the world. Following his recital at Carnegie Zankel Hall, he was invited to perform at the White House for President Barack Obama.

He is a laureate of many international competitions, such as Young Concert Artists, New York when he was 14 years old. Most recent prizes were those of the George Enescu International Competition 2014 in Bucharest and the Piano Masters Competition 2015 in Monte Carlo.

He has recorded three CD's. His 4th (solo) album, containing various 'Valses', will be released in 2017. *A reception with the artist followed the performance.*

Eleventh Annual New York City Greek Film Festival

Sept 28 – October 15, 2017, at various locations

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation is a sponsor of the New York City Greek Film Festival. The festival aspires to bring the best work of Greek filmmakers, past and present, to New York City and its environs.

Greece, Byzantium and Post-Byzantium at The Met

May 31, 2017, at the offices of Debevoise & Plimpton

Dr. Helen C. Evans, the Mary and Michael Jaharis Curator for Byzantine Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, discussed how the Byzantine and post-Byzantine centuries maintained many aspects of classical Greek culture and traditions, even as Christianity replaced the gods of Greek antiquity and ultimately the Ottoman Empire. Dr. Evans oversees the Byzantine, Early Christian and Early Jewish collections at The Met.

The Mary and Michael Jaharis Galleries highlight the importance of the Byzantine Empire, ruled from Constantinople as a major world power for centuries, and of the role that Greece played in developing many images used by Christians around the globe. Four exceptional Cretan icons, acquired by The Met through the generosity of the Jaharis family in 2013, were the primary focus of Dr. Evans's talk.

This was the third spring event with curators from The Met addressing Greek heritage. *A reception with Dr. Evans followed the program.*

Jews of Greece: 25 Centuries of Continuous Presence

April 19, 2017, at the offices of Norton Rose Fulbright

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation presented, along with The Hellenic-American Chamber of Commerce and American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece, a lecture on the historical presence of Jews in Greece.

Dr. Mimis Cohen, MD, FACS, FAAP, is a founding member of the American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece and a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He gave a presentation on the early interaction of the Greek and "Romaniote" Jewish communities around the Eastern Mediterranean, including the cross-fertilization of ideas which has had a significant and long-lasting impact on Western civilization and became the basis of Judeo-Christian culture. The history of Romaniote communities and their traditions and customs was discussed as well as the influence from their non-Jewish neighbors in the development of a unique culture. Tragically 86% of the pre-war Jewish population of Greece perished during the Holocaust, including the Jews from the Romaniote communities.

Dr. Cohen was born and raised in Athens after the Second World War. His parents survived the Holocaust in Athens thanks to the courage of Greek Orthodox friends. *A reception with Dr. Cohen followed the program.*

2016

Olympic Games 1896: The Photographic Album of Albert Meyer

December 7, 2016, at The Consulate General of Greece

The Benaki Museum of Greece made available to the members of the Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation a preview of its exhibition “Olympic Games 1896”. Albert Meyer, one of the best-known German art photographers, accompanied his country’s delegation to Athens to photograph the first modern Olympic Games. His purpose was to document the event and put together a commemorative album intended for the German Royal Court and the International Olympic Committee.

The photographic archive was destroyed in 1945 when bombardments flattened Dresden, turning the original photographs into rare and priceless artifacts. Marinos Yeroulanos, president of the Board of Trustees of the Benaki Museum for many years and grandson of George Streit, a member of the 1896 International Olympic Committee, donated the album to the Historical Archives of the Museum. Since then, this unique Album is safeguarded with care as imposed by rarity, being a unique token to both history and art.

Screening of “Techniques of the Body”

November 3, 2016, at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation co-sponsored with the Carnegie Council “Techniques of the Body” – a film made from the stories of historian **Mark Mazower** (Professor of History at Columbia University) and from the artistic perspective of filmmaker **Constantine Giannaris**. The film explored the memory of war, exile, and massive population movements and asked how we might respond to their impact in the present. Both Mr. Mazower, a member of HACF’s Advisory Council, and Mr. Giannaris commented on aspects of the film.

Tenth Annual New York City Greek Film Festival

September 29 - October 19, 2016, at various locations

Jerusalem 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven

March 2, 2016, at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

Barbara Drake Boehm and **Melanie Holcomb** previewed *Jerusalem 1000-1400: Every People Under Heaven*, an international exhibition opening at The Metropolitan Museum of Art this fall, for which they are co-curators.

In words and images, they brought the city of Jerusalem to life – giving voice to the accounts of medieval visitors and introduced some of the great works of art that will travel to New York from more than 60 institutions worldwide for the exhibition. Special focus was given to works of art testifying to the role of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate as protector of Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. *A reception followed the presentation.*

2015

The Olympus Piano Trio

November 5, 2015, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation presented in concert The Olympus Piano Trio – Pianist **Konstantine Valianatos**, Violinist **Regi Papa**, and Cellist **Benjamin Capps**. The program featured music from four different countries – an international sampling of works for piano trio: Russian, French, Greek and German. In addition to pieces by Mendelssohn, Rachmaninoff and Ravel, the program included the New York premier of Christos Hatzis' Odd World, a contemporary work with traditional Greek dance rhythms. *A reception followed the performance.*

Ninth Annual New York City Greek Film Festival

October 2-25, 2015, at various locations

Joan R. Mertens on the Art of Interpreting Greek Vase

June 10, 2015, at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation presented **Dr. Joan R. Mertens** of the Greek and Roman Department of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, who discussed the extraordinary interrelation of subject matter, shape, and execution that distinguishes Greek vases as works of art. Dr. Mertens has been a member of the Met's curatorial staff since 1972, becoming curator in 1981 and is the author or co-author of over 60 publications, including her book, "How to Read Greek Vases" (2011). *A reception with Dr. Mertens followed the discussion.*

George Tenet on Life in Public Service: The Peter T. Kourides Lecture Series

April 29, 2015, at The University Club

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation presented **George Tenet** who delivered the third lecture in the Peter T. Kourides Lecture Series on public service. Mr. Tenet served as the 18th Director of Central Intelligence from 1997 to 2004. In this position, he led the U.S. Intelligence Community and presided over the daily activities of the Central Intelligence Agency. In December of 2004, President George W. Bush awarded Mr. Tenet the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the U.S.'s highest civilian honor. The lecture was

held in the format of a “fireside chat”, led by **Mike Emanuel**, Chief Congressional Correspondent and Senior Political Correspondent for FOX News Channel. *A reception with George Tenet followed the discussion.*

Margalit Fox on The Riddle of the Labyrinth
February 12, 2015, at the Rubin Museum

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation hosted a discussion on *The Riddle of the Labyrinth* by **Margalit Fox**, a journalist at *The New York Times*. Ms. Fox is the author of the acclaimed book *The Riddle of the Labyrinth*, which recounts the history and individuals behind the deciphering of Linear B script, the earliest known form of writing of the Greek language, dating from as early as 1400 BC. *A reception with Ms. Fox followed the discussion.*

Yannis Palaiologos on the Implications of the Rise of the Extreme Right in Greece
January 15, 2015, at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation, in conjunction with the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, hosted a talk at the Council’s lecture theatre on the cultural implications of the rise of the extreme right in Greece. The speaker was **Yannis Palaiologos**, a leading Greek journalist, commentator and author who writes for Kathimerini newspaper. *A reception with Mr. Palaiologos followed the talk.*

2014

Pianist Maria Asteriadou and Violinist Kurt Nikkanen: In Concert
November 6, 2014, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation hosted an enchanting concert by Pianist **Maria Asteriadou** and Violinist **Kurt Nikkanen**. Heralded as “an artist with intense personality, virtuosic flair, unusual poise and intimate contact with style,” Greek pianist Maria Asteriadou is an acclaimed soloist and chamber musician. Ms. Asteriadou’s love for her native Greece and her enthusiasm for contemporary music have lead to prestigious premieres by many of Greece’s most prominent composers. American violinist Kurt Nikkanen is an international soloist of the highest order. After making his Carnegie Hall debut at the age of twelve, he has performed to great acclaim at many international venues and worked with many of the world’s most renowned conductors. An enthusiastic advocate of contemporary music, he has performed premieres and recorded many significant composers. *A reception with the artists followed the performance.*

The event was co-sponsored with The Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA).

Eighth Annual New York City Greek Film Festival

October 18-30, 2014, at various locations

Professor Ioli Kalavrezou:

The Motherhood of the Virgin Mary: Its Iconography and Development

May 8, 2014, at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

Professor Ioli Kalavrezou of Harvard University presented her analysis on the place and role of the Virgin Mary in the Orthodox Church. Based on surviving visual and textual evidence, she discussed the changes that can be observed in the cult of the Virgin Mary through the centuries beginning with some of the earliest depictions and the development of her images as late as the 15th and 16th century. Professor Kalavrezou's lecture especially focused on the centuries when the Virgin Mary officially became the Mother of God, as she is known today. *A reception with Professor Kalavrezou followed the program.*

The Parthenon Enigma: A Lecture and Conversation with Joan Breton Connelly

April 7, 2014, at the Rubin Museum of Art

The Parthenon is revered as the symbol of Western culture, the pinnacle of excellence in art and architecture, and an icon of democracy itself. But how much do we know about what it meant to those who built it? A fascinating presentation and discussion with archaeologist **Joan Breton Connelly** revealed a deeper, more profound meaning for the temple than ever realized before. Ms. Connelly recently published a book on this subject. *A reception with Professor Connelly followed the program.*

A Life in Dance: A Conversation with Hélène Alexopoulos, Former Principal Dancer with the New York City Ballet, and Celia Ipiotis

March 4, 2014, at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral Center

A fascinating program of film clips and conversation on the life of a ballet dancer, **Celia Ipiotis**, the creator of the nationally acclaimed cultural television series "Eye on Dance," had a conversation with Hélène Alexopoulos, former Principal Dancer with the New York City Ballet. *A reception with Ms. Alexopoulos and Ms. Ipiotis followed the program.*

2013

Looking Through The Prism: Greek Culture in a Time of Austerity and Innovation

November 5, 2013, at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation hosted a fascinating multimedia presentation and discussion about Greek identity, introducing a new generation's innovative perspective on what it means to be Greek in

a time of austerity and crisis. Three short films from the critically acclaimed cross-platform documentary by filmmakers Nikos Katsaounis and Nina Paschalidou, "The Prism," framed this unique conversation.

Ambassador Loucas Tsilas, presently Executive Director of The Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA), **Yannis Palaiologos**, a renowned journalist, and **Nikos Katsaounis**, a groundbreaking documentary filmmaker tackled the burning questions raised in the headlines of international media over the past three years. **Ioannis Vrailas**, the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, served as the panel moderator. *All audience members were invited to a reception with the panelists and panel moderator following the presentation.*

New York City Greek Film Festival

October 3-16, 2013, at various locations

The Hellenic-American Chamber of Commerce, the Onassis Foundation (USA), the Agnes Varis Charitable Trust and the HACF presented the *Seventh Annual New York City Greek Film Festival*. The following films were screened: *A.C.A.B. All Cats Are Brilliant (Synharitiria Stous Aisiodoxous)*, *Black Box*, *Boy Eating The Bird's Food (To Agori Troei To Fagito Toy Pouliou)*, *Greek American Radicals: The Untold Story (Taxisyneidisia)*, *Hello Anatolia*, *Joy (Hara)*, *Kisses To The Children (Filia Eis Ta Paidia)*, *Magic Hour*, *Marjoram (Matzourana)*, *Naked Hands (Gymna Heria)*, *One Step Ahead (Ena Vima Brosta)*, *Papadopoulos & Sons*, *The Tree And The Swing (To Dentro Kai I Kounia)*, *What If (An)*, *A Bright Shining Sun and Archive*. For further information go to New York City Greek Film Festival.

Pianist George-Emmanuel Lazaridis: In Concert

October 1, 2013, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation and The Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA) presented in concert pianist **George-Emmanuel Lazaridis**. Mr. Lazaridis' performances have been characterized as "special enough to be beyond comparison" (BBC Music Magazine, Adrian Jack). The program consisted of Schubert's Wanderer Fantasy in C Major, D760, Op. 15 and Liszt's Sonata in B minor, S. 178, along with excerpts from Mr. Lazaridis' own composition "The Trojan Cycle", including "Achilles Mourning", "Andromache" and "The Battlefield Toccata". *All audience members were invited to a reception with Mr. Lazaridis following the performance.*

Ambassador John Negroponte: The Peter T. Kourides Lecture Series

June 18, 2013, at The University Club

Ambassador John Negroponte delivered a lecture on life in public service, which was the second annual lecture in the Peter T. Kourides Series. Ambassador Negroponte has been the quintessential public servant for over four decades, serving at eight different Foreign Service posts, and as an ambassador to five countries. Ambassador Negroponte has also held important positions at the U.S. Department of State and the White House. Reflections on the evening can be read in *The National Herald*.

Mr. Peter T. Kourides was a dedicated and long-time supporter of educational, professional and cultural excellence in the Greek American community. *A reception followed the lecture.*

Nicholas Gage: A Writer's Odyssey

March 21, 2013, at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral Center

Mr. Gage discussed how his experiences in two worlds, Greece and the United States, moved him to pursue a career as an award winning investigative reporter and foreign correspondent for The New York Times and to become the author of seven acclaimed books including *Eleni*, *A Place for Us* and *Greek Fire*.

Pontian Odyssey: The Endurance and Renewal of an Ancient Culture

February 19, 2013, at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral Center

An evening of presentations on a fascinating and enduring culture from **Thomas de Waal**, Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, D.C., **Nikos Michailidis**, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Anthropology, Princeton University, and **Eleftherios (Ted) Kostans**, award winning photographer and co-founder of Cosmos-Philly.

2012

Panel Discussion: Greek-American Artist William Baziotes

December 11, 2012, at the National Academy Museum

The great Greek American painter's centennial was honored at a panel on December 11th at the National Academy Museum. Eminent contemporary art historians **Dr. Mona Hadler** and **Dr. Karen Wilkin** and director of the Baziotes catalogue raisonne Mr. Michael Preble discussed Baziotes's work in the context of his generation and its relevance today. The discussion included a rich survey of images and was followed by a reception in the Academy's Stone Room.

Greek Connection: Pianist John Kamfonas In Concert

November 13, 2012, at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center

Greek-American pianist **John Kamfonas** performed an electrifying evening of solo and small ensemble works. Described as "mesmerizing... inspirational... and eccentric" (Deccan Herald, Bangalore), Mr. Kamfonas opened the program with solo piano pieces by Manos Hadjidakis and Samuel Barber, both inspired by dance music, as well as works by Franz Liszt. The second half featured solo music by Busoni and ensemble works by Victor Kioulaphides, both his dynamic and highly virtuosic Rhapsody for mandolin

and piano and the world premiere of his Piano Trio. For these works, Mr. Kamfonas was joined by cellist Caleb van der Swaagh, violinist Sharon Park, and mandolinist Sebastiaan de Grebber.

All audience members were invited to a reception with the performers following the concert.

New York City Greek Film Festival

October 6-17, 2012, at various locations

The Hellenic-American Cultural Foundation in conjunction with The Hellenic-American Chamber of Commerce and with support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, organized and helped sponsor the 2012 Greek Film Festival.

The following films were screened: *Alps, Burning Heads (To Gala), Christmas Tango (To Tango Ton Christougennon), City of Children (I Poli Ton Paidion), The Fiend of Athens (O Drakos), Fred Won't Move Out, God Loves Caviar (O Theos Agapai To Haviari), Magic Hour, Smyrna: The Destruction of a Cosmopolitan City, 1900–1922, Two Men and a Baby (Mia For A Kai Ena Moro), Unfair World (Adikos Kosmos), Wasted Youth, 100*. In addition, there was a Manhattan Gala event Wednesday, October 10th, Screening of *Smyrna: The Destruction of a Cosmopolitan City, 1900–1922* followed by a reception. *For further information go to New York City Greek Film Festival.*

Senator Paul S. Sarbanes Lecture: The Peter T. Kourides Lecture Series

May 3, 2012, at The University Club

On May 3, 2012, the Foundation in cooperation with The Hellenic-American Chamber of Commerce organized an inaugural lecture at The University Club in Manhattan, established in memory of the late Peter Kourides by members of his family. **Senator Paul Sarbanes** of Maryland gave the inaugural lecture reflecting on his childhood and youth in a Greek American family and on significant events of his illustrious career in Congress. *A reception followed the lecture.*

Mr. Peter T. Kourides was a dedicated and long-time supporter of educational, professional and cultural excellence in the Greek American community.