

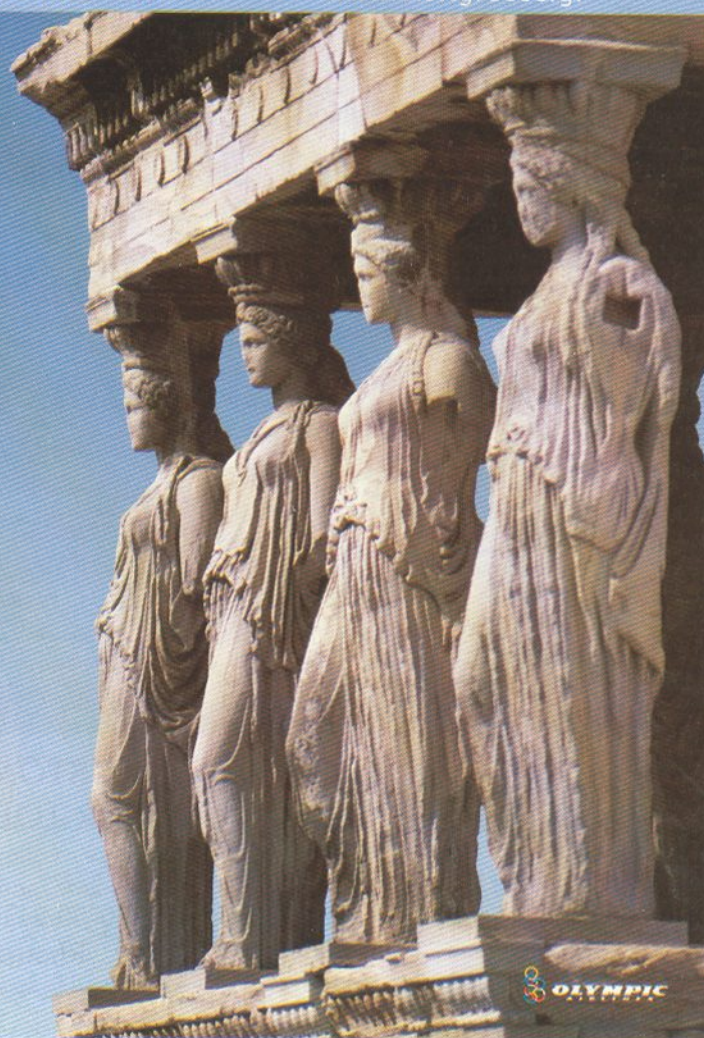
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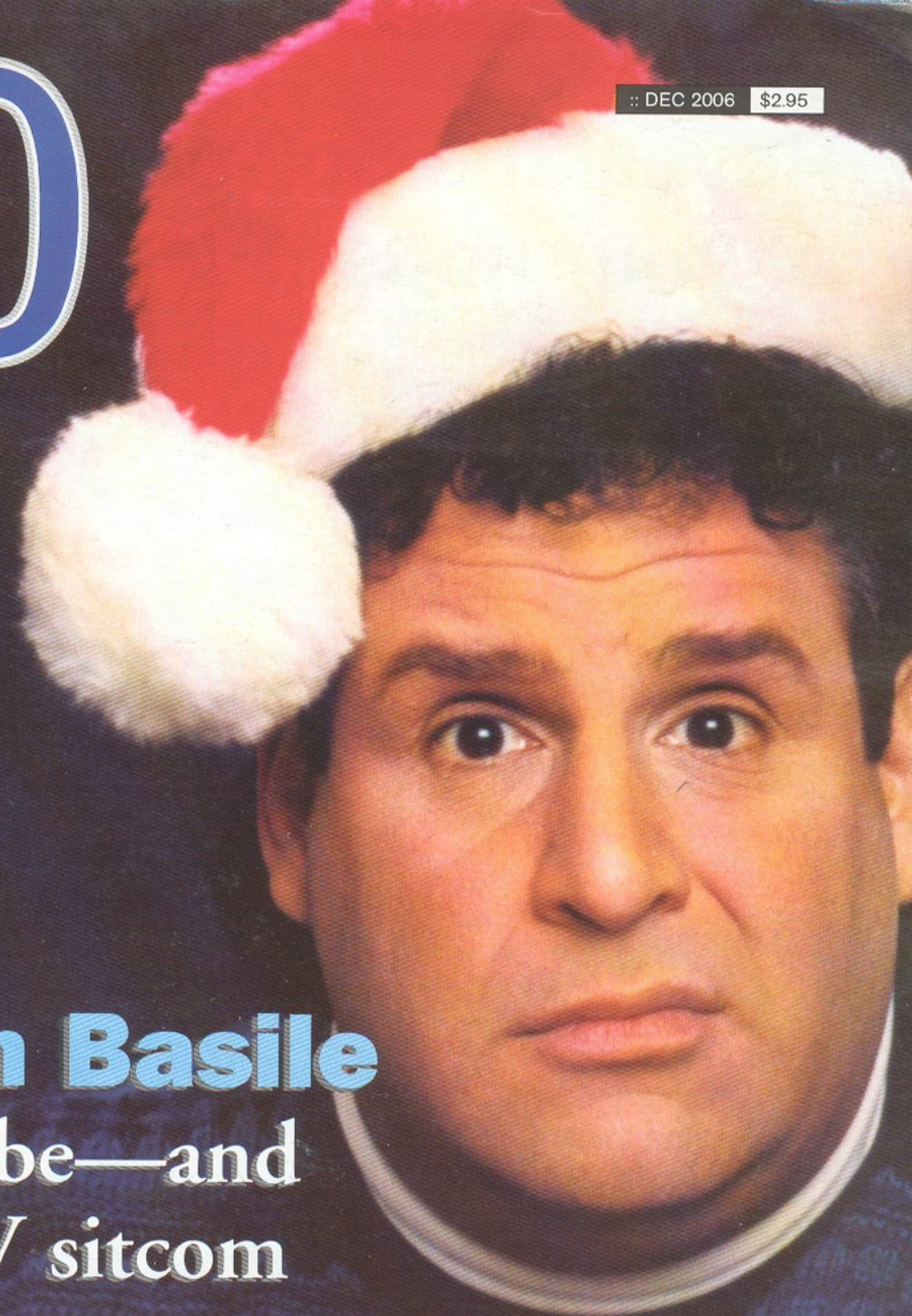
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**George and Alexandra**  
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Lina Orfanos continues to delight her New York City audiences with vocals of enormous artistry and soul.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

### THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

I went to a Christmas office party this year where the owners of the firm were an immigrant family and of another faith, but had gone all out to celebrate the holiday for the sake of their American employees.

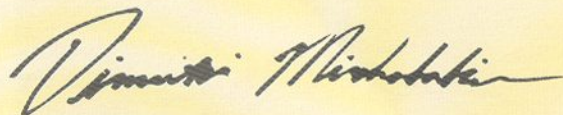
The family, after hours, had wrapped the railing leading down to the firm's basement office in red and green ivy, and had taped a red-cheeked Santa over the bump from the upstairs staircase. In the office itself, there was a Santa who glowed a greeting at the first cubby next to the fax machine (the family had been discouraged from buying the laughing Santa). There was also an artificial Christmas tree that had displaced the reception area and had taken hours out of the business day to assemble and decorate ("Does anybody know how do this?" a family member asked politely), and they had strung garland and lights all over the office—the bells hung over the door knob jingled every time somebody used the bathroom. And the family had enthusiastically taken up the idea of a secret Santa for their employees—though I secretly wondered if they really knew what a secret Santa was.

Then, of course, they threw the Christmas party, and bought some booze (though their religion forbade drinking) and they topped the drinks of all their guests like good hosts, and then stood around grinning and looking very merry because their guests were very merry. The matriarch of the clan had also come to the party, and she looked a little wistful, because she had lost her husband only a few years after they had come to America, and now she was sick herself. She may have been a little wistful, too, because the son who had founded the company, a brilliant young man, had thrown off the turban prescribed by his religion and cut off his beard ("Man, people looked at me like I was crazy"), and now rarely attended temple.

"It's very nice," she shrugged and smiled at everyone and everything, though she wouldn't drink the champagne that was raised in a toast. "Against my religion," she whispered to me, though she did raise her glass with everyone else. The employees of the firm, aside from the family, were all American kids and seemed to be having a good time—they got into every picture with the family and smiled broadly. But the biggest smiles of all were reserved for the family itself, because it had realized a measure of the American dream and was now a real American family, too.

I don't remember Christmas in Greece; I suppose we celebrated it. I do remember it in America becoming a dream come true for every kid, and perhaps, a part of the American dream for every immigrant, as well.

Thank you.



Dimitri C. Michalakakis

# NEO

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## Season's Greetings from Greece to NEO

Message by Prime Minister Dr. Kostas Karamanlis

Recently, at the 6th World SAE Convention in Thessaloniki, Greeks from all over the world have had the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment in promoting the vision of global Hellenism; the vision of a dense network uniting Diaspora and homeland Hellenes and ever strengthening our common links of heritage and culture.

For years, Diaspora has been a vibrant and flourishing second Greece. We at home have been proud hearing of all the great achievements Greeks abroad accomplished in finance, politics and culture. We have been thankful for all the support we have been receiving from our fellow Greeks. All these years, in Greece and all over the world, we all have been looking forward to the day when geographical distance would no longer be a hindrance to our communication and working together.

That day is now. New political conditions, new communication technology and, most of all, our shared determination to build new bridges and reinforce those that already exist among us, help to make the dream feasible. Our challenge for the 21st century will be to make the best of all these; to reach out and help creating a new and inspiring definition of being Greek in our time.

We have every reason to be optimistic about the future. Greece today is at the core of the great European family; a factor of peace, stability and cooperation in the broader area of SE Europe and Eastern Mediterranean; a safe and prospering nation and a hub of institutional economic reform and sustainable growth. A nation that cherishes its past and, at the same time, boldly creates the future.

We share our future, as well as our past. This is why we are committed to enable Greeks abroad to vote for the Hellenic Parliament, as it is provided by our Constitution. That will be a symbolic as well as substantial step towards global Hellenism.

On behalf of homeland Greeks and the Greek government, I wish you all Best Wishes and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Dr. Kostas Karamanlis  
Prime Minister, Greece

I wish you all fellow countrymen a very happy new year. May all of you enjoy good health, happiness and prosperity. I am sure that your presence and your achievements in the United States of America, as well as your unconditional love for Greece and your struggles for its interests will continue to make us proud.

Anna Psarouda-Benaki  
President, Hellenic Parliament



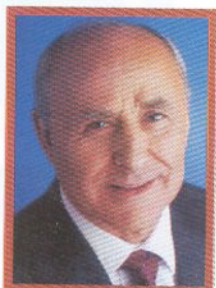
I wish all Greek Americans Merry Christmas and a Happy 2007 full of health, love and prosperity.

Lefteris Zagoritis  
Secretary General of the governing  
New Democracy Party



I extend to all Greek Americans my warmest wishes for a Happy Holiday Season and a beautiful and prosperous New Year—may all your dreams come true. Also, I would like to give my warmest regards to those of you who come from the island of Lefkas, which I have the honor of representing in the Hellenic Parliament. Greece, every Hellene's original fatherland, thinks of you with pride and looks forward to embracing you and the generations to come.

All the best,  
Xenophon Verginis  
Member of the Hellenic Parliament, Prefecture of Lefkas





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# Brademas Honored By Common Cause

*Excerpts of remarks by Dr. John Brademas, president emeritus New York University, on receiving the John W. Gardner Spirit Award from Common Cause at the Harvard Club in New York City*

It is for several reasons that I count it a particular honor to receive the John Gardner Spirit Award from Common Cause/New York.

In the first place, I admire the dedication of Common Cause to its "struggle for honest and accountable government" over the last generation, and I voice my thanks to Rachel Leon for her work in organizing this reception. Second, I feel privileged to be receiving the award on the same occasion that Gregory Long, leader of The New York Botanical Garden, and Kent Yalowitz, a distinguished lawyer, are also honored. And I am well aware that earlier recipients of The John Gardner Spirit Award were Andrew Heiskell and President William Clinton.

Moreover, as you are saluting Derek Bok as the outgoing chairman of the National Governing Board of Common Cause, I observe that not only am I a Harvard graduate but I was a member of the Harvard Board of Overseers when many years ago we confirmed Derek Bok as president of Harvard and I wish him well as he returns to this responsibility.

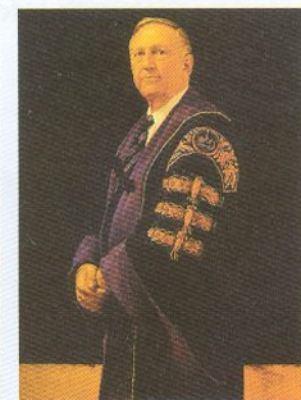
I'm also glad to see so many friends and colleagues, including, of course, my wife, Mary Ellen, the beautiful and brilliant physician, and members of my dedicated staff. I want especially to acknowledge one of my distinguished successors as President of New York University, John Sexton; and his able Senior Vice President, who served with me in Washington, Lynne Brown.

We meet, of course, only days after the Congressional elections, the results of which afford important offerings for Common Cause and those who champion reform in the way government at every level performs. Charlie Rangel, as Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, will, I know, do his part!

Here I note that I served as a Member of

Congress for 22 years, with, accordingly, six Presidents—three Republicans: Eisenhower, Nixon and Ford; and three Democrats: Kennedy, Johnson and Carter.

Most of you will, I hope, agree that the results of the elections on November 7 give Congress and the American people an opportunity greatly to improve the operation of our national government.



Dr. John Brademas

In this respect, I note that CED, the Committee for Economic Development, the organization, as you know, composed of some 200 corporate executives and a few university presidents, of whom I am one, has embarked on a project called "Making Washington Work." These business and university leaders are deeply concerned about the breakdown of the policy-making and political process in Washington. Accordingly, we are drafting a report with several recommendations we hope will be taken seriously in the new Congress, with respect to transparency, accountability and effective enforcement of the rules of legislative procedure, all values associated with the mission of Common Cause.

Now I served eleven terms, for twenty-two years, in the House of Representatives, my last four years as House Majority Whip, I was defeated in Ronald Reagan's 1980 landslide victory over President Carter and shortly thereafter invited to become President of New York University. Having served on the then House Committee on Education and Labor, I took part in writing all the measures enacted during those years in support of schools, colleges and universities; the arts and the humanities; libraries and museums; and measures to assist children, the elderly, the disabled.

These observations bring me, of course, to the final reason I count receiving an award in the name of John W. Gardner particularly meaningful.

John Gardner was a most remarkable person, I need not tell all of you. Without my here rehearsing his biography, let me recall that as he was Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and I was on the House Committee with responsibility for education legislation, we had the opportunity on more than one occasion to work together.

In preparing for this evening's event, I recalled how John Gardner, now as founder of the Urban Coalition, came to South Bend, Indiana in 1968 to kick-off my campaign for reelection that year. Fortunately, I have been able to find clippings from the South Bend Tribune about his speech.

One of the statements John Gardner made in endorsing my reelection to a sixth term was the following; "John is a Democrat, and I'm a Republican. But we stand together on every significant issue affecting the life and the future of this nation."

Emulating Mr. Gardner's commitment to bipartisanship, I must confess that I married a Republican!

I came to regard John Gardner, the founder of Common Cause, as a mentor, and when I lost my bid for reelection to a twelfth term, he counseled me to be sure to engage in significant pro bono activities and, beyond my responsibilities at New York University, I have sought to do so.

As I close, I shall recall what I said nearly 40 years ago in introducing John Gardner to my Indiana constituents on June 12, 1968.

I said of Mr. Gardner then, "I know of few figures in American life whose words and thoughts on the great questions before us command such widespread respect, from both Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives."

So for all the reasons I have suggested—and I could add still more but I'm a child of the House of Representatives and not the Senate—I voice my deep appreciation to Common Cause/New York for the great honor you have done me.





# George and Alexandra Stephanopoulos

## Honored at the Cathedral Chrysanthemum Ball

**H**undreds of well-wishers from the United States and Greece gathered recently at the Metropolitan Club of New York in a warm and enthusiastic celebration of George Stephanopoulos and Alexandra Wentworth, honorees of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chrysanthemum Ball of the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity Philoptochos Society.

George Robert Stephanopoulos, 45, the son, grandson, nephew and godson of Greek Orthodox priests was born in Fall River, MA, the son of Father Robert and Presvytera Nikki. He was named ABC News Chief Washington Correspondent in December 2005, and began anchoring *This Week with George Stephanopoulos* in September 2002. Prior to joining ABC News in 1997, he served in the Clinton administration as the senior advisor to the president for policy and strategy.

Alexandra Elliott Wentworth is an accomplished actress, comedienne and author who has appeared in the theater and on movies and television. In 2003 she co-hosted *Living It Up With Ali and Jack* with Jack Ford on CBS television. Her movie and television appearances have included *Jerry Maguire*, *Trial and Error* and *Office Space* and on television, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *In Living Color* and *Seinfeld*. The author of *The Wasp Cookbook*, this month Ali began a monthly column on *The DC Scenester* for Marie Claire magazine.

George and Ali are residents of Washington, DC. and were married in Holy Trinity Cathedral on November 20, 2001. They are the parents of two lovely daughters, Elliott Anastasia, 4, and Harper Andrea, 17 months. At the event, both George and Ali spoke of the importance of Greek Orthodoxy and Hellenic culture, family and community, not only in their own lives but also in the lives of their two daughters. George noted what a significant role growing up in the Greek American community played in his



Froso Beys, Ball Chairman and Minna Colakis, Philoptochos President present a gift to George and Alexandra, as Bishop Andonios, Father Robert and Presvytera Nikki look on.



Master of Ceremonies Michael Beys



Leadership 100 Executive Director Paulette Poulos and her brother Peter Poulos with George and Ali.



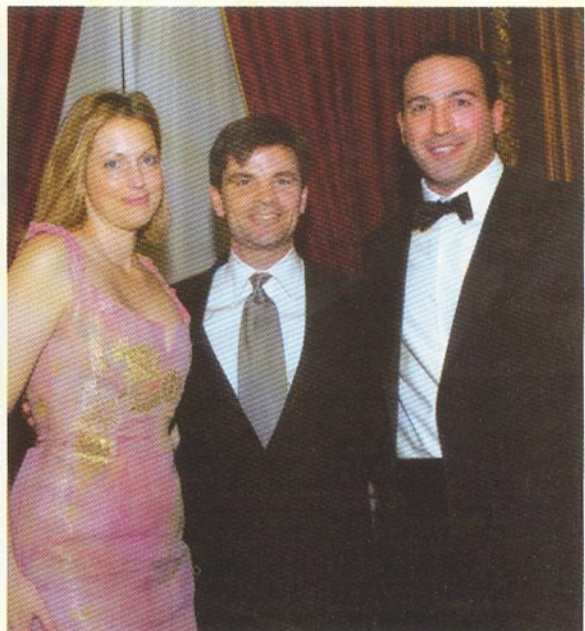
National Philoptochos President Georgia Skeadas with George and Ali.



George and Archdiocesan Council Vice Chairman Michael Jaharis.



Joining George and Alexandra and their parents on stage were Margarite and Andrew Stephanopoulos.



George and Alexandra with Kyriakos Tsakopoulos



Honored guests and committee members at the Chrysanthemum Ball.

life and in his public service.

Echoing these sentiments were two young Greek Americans and Columbia graduates who participated in the evening's program: Michael Beys of New York expertly and with humor moved the program along as Master of Ceremonies; Kyriakos Tsakopoulos of Sacramento, CA, newly elected as the youngest member of the Columbia University Board of Trustees, introduced the honorees with warm words of praise and personal recollections of George's early beginnings at

Columbia University, Oxford and ultimately the presidential campaign and history.

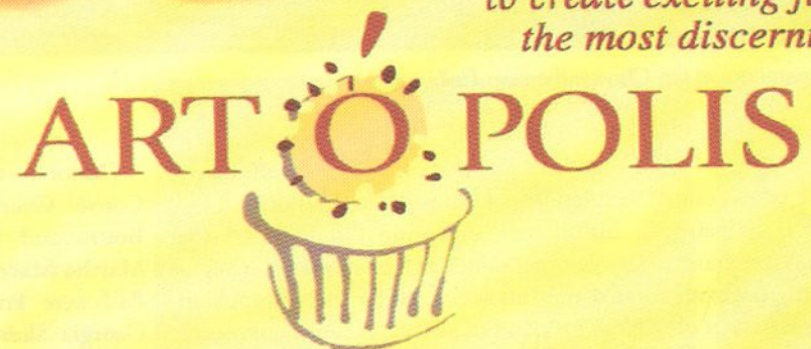
Since its inception in 1953, the Chrysanthemum Ball has not only inaugurated the Fall social season in Metropolitan New York, but its success as the major source of income for the Cathedral Philoptochos has ensured the distribution of thousands of dollars to several local, national and international philanthropies. This year more than \$150,000 was raised in support of philanthropies.

Honorary Chairpersons of the Ball were Consul General of Greece, Dr. Catherine Boura and Consul General of Cyprus, Martha Mavrommatis. Co-chairmen of the Ball were Froso Beys and Maria Spears. Georgia Skeadas is Philoptochos' National President, Minna Colakis is President of the Cathedral Philoptochos and the Rev. Dr. Robert G. Stephanopoulos is Dean of the Cathedral.



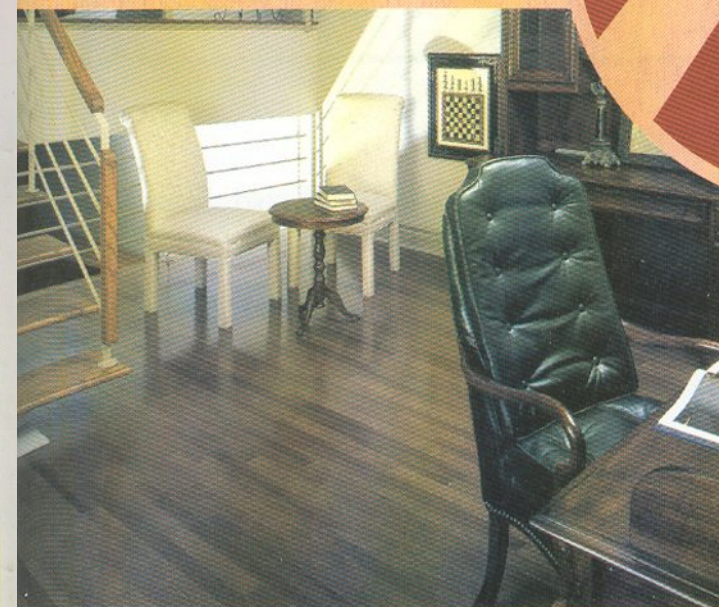
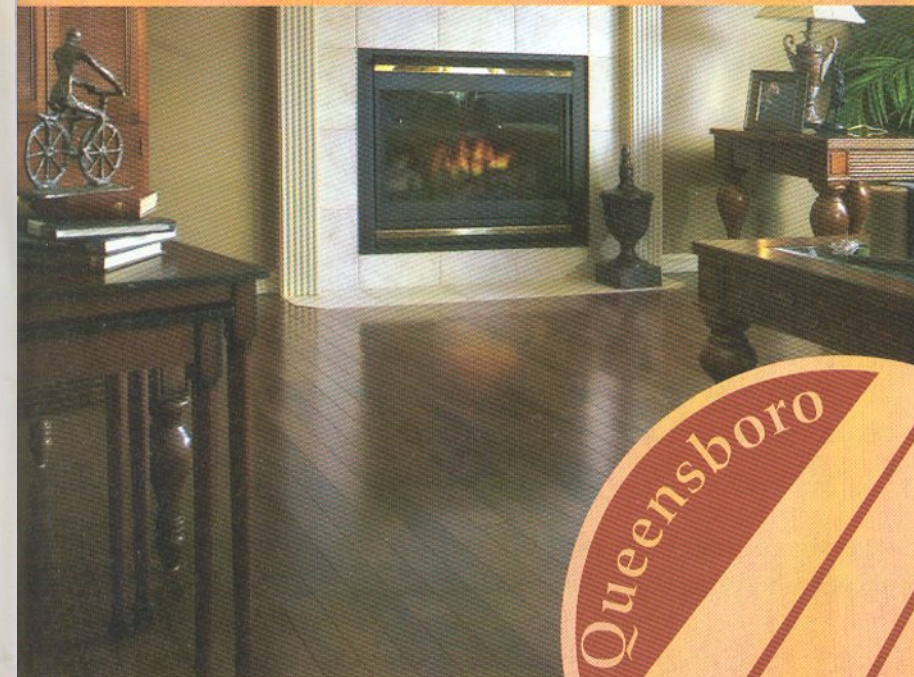


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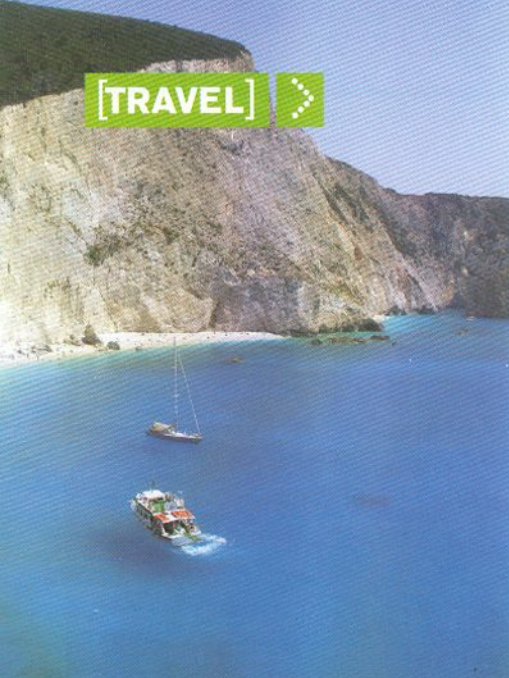
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# Greece:

## An ideal destination for all seasons

BY DEMETRIOS RHOMPOTIS

**A**fter this year's record of more than 16 million visitors to Greece, an 11% increase, Minister of Tourism Development Fanny Palli-Petralia is already planning for 2007 to be "not just a better year, but the best in Greek tourism history!"

In an interview with **NEO**, the first after her recent visit to Washington, where she met with an array of key people from the tourism industry, as well as politicians, President Bush's advisor on counter-terrorism policies, Greek American Francis Fragos-Townsend, and a cordial meeting with First Lady Laura Bush at the White House, she expressed a well founded optimism: "It is a totally new tourism policy (we now have) based on long term strategy, while in the meantime, we have embarked on an ambitious effort to modernize further the sector."

Her efforts include the development of new tourism patterns for Greece, so that the season is extended throughout the year instead of the few summer months – a longed-for goal by most of her predecessors – and the promotion of numerous less-known, off-the-beaten-path

destinations. For Americans, she says, "Greece is a safe haven; they can feel they are among friends and live an experience which only Greece has to offer."

Fanny Palli-Petralia was first elected to Hellenic Parliament in 1985 representing Athens' Second Electoral District. In 1999 she was voted President of the European Union of Women (E.U.W.), Europe's largest organization in its kind, whose members represent 22 EU states. When New Democracy came to power in 2004 she was appointed Alternate Minister of Culture and two years later Minister of Tourism Development. Fluent in English and French, she is the author of two books "A Modern Woman in a Modern Family in a Modern Democracy" and "The Childless Country: Demographic Developments and Possibilities." Married to Nikos Pallis, she is the mother of four, Alexandra, Helena, Dora, and Jacob.

**NEO:** This is the season that millions of Americans are booking their next year's vacation, especially cruises. Why should they prefer Greece, among so many other destinations?

**Fanny Palli-Petralia:** No other country combines 3,000 islands, more than 5,000 years of history, advanced and high quality services and a location at the heart of modern Europe. During the past two years, Greece has enjoyed an impressive increase in arrivals from the US, a fact that shows confidence in our country and high popularity among the American people. Greece is a safe haven for our American visitors; they can feel they are among friends and live an experience which only Greece has to offer.

**N:** What's the feedback for this past tourist season? Did Greece do well and were your expectations fulfilled?

**FP:** We expect 2006 to become a record-breaking year for Greek tourism. We estimate an increase in tourist arrivals by at least 10%, which means that we will have close to 16 million visitors and anticipate surpassing 12 billion euros in receipts—an amount which represents an increase of over 11%. We believe that 2007 will prove to be not just a better year, but the best in Greek

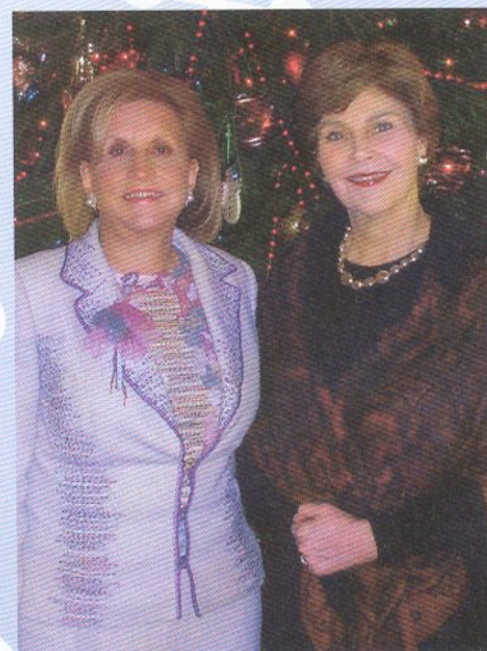
tourism's history! Generally speaking, our aim is to sustain a steady growth which, over the next few years, will bring Greece to the top places of global tourism ranking.

**N:** Is tourism still Greece's number one industry?

**FP:** Tourism is one of Greece's most valuable assets; the most dynamic and promising sector of the economy, an activity which creates needed jobs, generates income and helps people prosper and have better living standards, mainly in provincial areas. It is the first time in recent history that tourism has enjoyed such attention and interest from a

the-art skiing facilities and incomparably beautiful mountains and villages, such as Metsovo, Samarina, Parnassos. Yet very little is known in the US about this side of Greece. Are you planning to do something in that direction?

**FP:** You are absolutely right. There is a vast array of tourist services that meet every need and preference. Greece is an ideal destination for all seasons and not only for the summer. And we give much attention to promoting this other face of our country, which is really fascinating—I would dare to say even breathtaking! Visitors to Greece can enjoy winter sports, mountain tourism, golf and



Fanny Pali-Petralia, left, with Laura Bush at the White House



Easter in a Greek village package?

**FP:** All these you mentioned have already become main goals in our policy. Firstly, I would like to underline the fact that for the first time our promotion campaign includes destinations and areas and focuses for related activities. This is what we have in mind when we talk about the unique experience Greece has to offer. I know that more and more tour operators and travel agents include such destinations and tours in their packages. After all, this is the authentic, traditional face of Greece, bonded to its people, the plain and beautiful way of life.



Greek government and ranks so high in national planning and provisions. This is the main reason why the Tourism Development Ministry was reestablished. We consider tourism our economy's most promising and fastest-growing sector. Presently, it contributes about 18% in GDP and provides more than 800,000 jobs, about 22% of total employment. We planned and we are implementing a totally new tourism policy, based on long term strategy, while in the meantime, we have embarked on an ambitious effort to modernize further the sector by enforcing new laws, resolving current or older issues alongside attracting massive new investment. The truth is that Greek tourism is undergoing an impressive transformation which began in 2004.

**N:** We are in the heart of winter, and although many Americans don't know it, Greece has much to offer now in state-of-

spa tourism, sea tourism, all popular forms of tourism. Our luxury resorts are among the best in the world. Our major cities, especially Athens and Thessalonica, are ideal for city breaks. There is a unique variety of destinations for organizations and conventions, most of them available any time of the year. We are organizing and promoting our unique traditional cuisine and we have launched an ambitious program concerning regional tourism or agro-tourism, as it is best known.

**N:** Even as a summer destination, Greece has a lot more to offer, besides the stereotyped, albeit breathtaking, Aegean Sea islands. Is your ministry going to promote the more off-the-beaten-path islands and areas, as in the Ionian Sea, for example; Gavdos, the southern part of Crete in general; or the countryside with its unique, ever unfolding character? What about an

**N:** After your tenure as minister of Tourist Development, what would you like your most important accomplishments to have been, something that you'd wish to be remembered for?

**FP:** The fact is that never before there were so many things being done for tourism, at the same time and at this extent, as nowadays. But I believe that one person, one politician alone, cannot achieve the goals pursued if there is no teamwork; a collective effort by people who share the same vision and inspiration. For me, personally, when things get done, when problems are solved, when the future looks promising, then you can talk about success. "Offering" is the keyword, and when people refer to you or remember you for what you really have offered, this can be the best reward.



# BASILE:

## Growing up Greek—and funny—in America

BY DIMITRI MICHALAKIS

**Y**ou think you had it rough? We had it very rough. All of our friends down the street had lemonade stands and Kool Aid stands—I was seven years old and had a diner. We did a late breakfast and early lunch—but I had to close early because I had a curfew—and second grade was a bitch.

“Everyone thinks my grandmother always beat the hell out of me and she was probably the kindest person in the world,” says soft-spoken Basile Katsikis, 45, known worldwide as the blustery Basile in his wildly-popular comedy act *Growing Up Greek in America* (on DVD and CD as *Growing up Greek in America, Comedy Greek Style; Growing up Greek in America II, Live from Boston; Growing up Greek in America III, Greeks Gone Wild*—he’s even posed with a foustanela and namesake Billy goat.) “I create these various characters of my mother, my father, my grandmother and people identify with them and it doesn’t seem slapsticky because it’s something we’ve all gone through and we can all identify with.”

*How many times was I left in the back of the car in the middle of July with the windows shut while my grandmother and mother were out on the side of the highway picking horta? How many times my mother almost beat the hell out of me because I threw away the Wonder Bread bag, because this was the 70’s and no plastic bags were available and my mother and yiaxia used the bags for their horta. My mother saw me throw away a Wonder Bread bag once and that was the end of me.*

He tours year-round (he’s been doing standup for close to 20 years and has been on Leno), sells out Montreal’s international “Just For Laughs” comedy special every year, sells out in London where Greeks cross from Scotland to hear him (and the Greeks in his act suddenly speak with brogues) and last year did a month in Australia, where he



packed Sydney’s Darling Harbor with 17,000 screaming fans. “I never felt like a rock star before,” he says. “These people were just clamoring to get closer to the stage and the laughter that came was like a tidal wave. *Whoosh!* I got very excited, man, I think my nipples were hard for about a week.”

His *Greeks Gone Wild* DVD was filmed in Montreal and like most of his standup performances around the world, picked up on the flavor of the Greeks in that country. “It’s so cool because they speak French and Greek—*mazi*,” says Basile. “I call it *Freak*. They can tell you to go to hell in French and it sounds so good!” He now sees people watching his DVDs everywhere he goes, including Greece, where he says he’s known as the *hazo Amerikanaki*. “It’s so cool to see people all over the world getting into it,” he says. “The DVDs are all over—in Australia, the UK, Germany, South Africa, I mean everyone has them. It’s the neatest things in the world.”

**“There is no such thing as a Greek terrorist. If there was, the worse thing he could do is maybe close down a diner for an hour.”**

- Basile

*I went on Olympic Airlines. Oh, my God. I think I know their new motto: You Never Have to Wait in Line—because there is no line! You run to the counter, you kick and slap, you give them a nah, you give them another nah, you pull their hair, they pull yours, and that’s how you get serviced first.*

Making a career out of comedy was a gamble for a kid from Long Island who thought he was going to be a lawyer. “Can you see me as an attorney?” he says. “If you’re confusing legal torts with French pastry, you’ve got to get out of the business.” While working as an administrator at a Cleveland law firm he began to moonlight doing open mikes and knew he loved it—though he used only his first name to disguise himself. “Until a



bunch of girls that I worked with all came to a male review show and I was the MC, and that was the end of that,” he says. He soon quit his job and hit the road.

*Oh, my God, I love my faith. Because everything we celebrate, we celebrate late. We’re the only people who can make Jesus come back twice in the same year. We celebrate Easter five weeks after everybody else, which is great, because our candy is so much cheaper. Course they’re broken by then. It took me twenty years to realize that chocolate bunnies do have ears.*

He’s now taking his act to television (he’s developing a sitcom called *Basile*, which takes place in a restaurant, of course). “I think the sitcom is a unique show,” he says. “We put together a combination that Greeks and non-Greeks can identify with. I’m very, very proud of our heritage. I always want to pay respect to that.” The show is being developed with Harry Pappas of *Pappas Telecasting Companies*. “He has been extremely instrumental in helping us develop the show a little bit further than we had before,” says Basile. “The man has tremendous insight, and I really look forward to working with him.”

He’s also marketing his own line of *Basile’s Greek Style Seasonings and Marinades* with the Rose Hill Food Company. “My name is George Sarbanes and I love your show,” he was told one day by a fan. “I own a food company and I would really like you to try my spices.” He did, they were “wonderful, but they needed a little of Basilizing,” he says. “Because I want you and your wife and your *pethera*, they’re the ones who will do all the business when it comes to food, to try these out. So we did a little bit here, a little bit there, and about three months later I say, ‘George, I think we did it here.’ He goes, ‘Good. I want you to put your name on it.’” Most recently, the spices were picked up by food retail giant Costco in America.



*There is no such thing as a Greek terrorist. If there was, the worse thing he could do is maybe close down a diner for an hour.*

Basile is an all-around entertainer (he’s voiced Bullwinkle in the cartoon and after the producers of Broadway’s *Hairspray* caught him belting tunes in his non-Greek Atlantic City act they asked him to audition for the role of the well-padded, leather-lunged matriarch Edna), but he admits standup is his first love. “That is the one great joy—if you’ve never been onstage as a standup, it’s a wonderful feeling. It’s almost like when you’re acting, or whatever, you have that tremendous feeling of going out there and killing an audience. Not just claps, Oh, that was witty. It’s when you have an audience you can just kill for and they love you.”

Which is not the same as going home again.

*One time I flew home from Vegas. The first time I was ever at Vegas, and I’m saying, this is pretty cool. Next thing you know, I’m back home and my wife meets me at the gate—and she never meets me at the gate. I’m wearing leather pants, a gold lame shirt, my leather bomber jacket that has fox fur around the collar, and I walk off the plane and think, God, bless her, my agent must have called her and told her what a wonderful job I did in Vegas. And she runs up to me, kisses me on the cheek, and goes, ‘Listen, great, we gotta go! The dishwasher isn’t here today and you gotta wash dishes.’ And my heart, which was just jumping with joy, just dropped. Here I was in leather pants, a gold lame shirt, with all my jewelry on, and I’m over at my in-laws café with my sleeves rolled up, my jewelry on the top of the counter, and I’m serving mashed potatoes with gravy and meatloaf to the customers. And this guy looks at me. ‘I just saw you on Showtime,’ he says. ‘That’s my hobby,’ I say, ‘this is my real job.’* ■■



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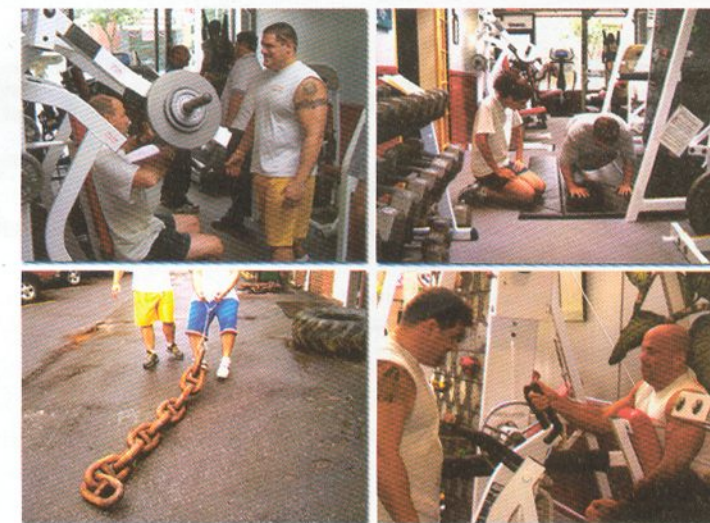


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# Athens-Sparta Artifacts At The Onassis Cultural Center

**A**thens-Sparta, an exhibition of rare archaeological artifacts and works of art from Athens and Sparta, Greece, was inaugurated earlier this month by Greek Minister of Culture George Voulgarakis at the Onassis Cultural Center in New York City. Archbishop of America Demetrios, Anna Diamandopoulos, member of the Hellenic Parliament and former EU commissioner, Anthony Papademetriou, Onassis Foundation president, and Ambassador Loukas Tsilas, director of the Onassis Cultural Center in New York, highlighted the dignitaries at the inauguration and a special reception that followed. Dr. Nikos Kaltsas, Director of the National Archaeological Museum of Greece and the exhibition's curator, guided the guests through the exhibit of artifacts.

Athens-Sparta balances our contemporary perspective on the uneven cultural relationship between the two ancient city-states--in which Attic art was traditionally recognized as the more culturally advanced of the two. By bringing together such a vast selection of important artifacts from each city-state, the exhibition challenges these perceptions, bringing to light the refinements of Laconic art and culture.

Highlights include treasures such as a marble statue of a hoplite, known as "Leonidas", from the end of the 5th century B.C.; a marble statue of an Athenian Kore from the Acropolis Museum, from the 5th Century B.C.; bronze figurines of hoplites from Sparta, from the 8th to the 6th Centuries B.C.; a ceramic kylix by the Arkesilas Painter from the 6th Century B.C.; a marble statuette of Athena from the mid-4th Century B.C.; Attic marble reliefs and grave stele from the late 5th Century B.C.; and arrowheads and spearheads from Thermopylae, the famous 5th century battlefield.

The 289 exquisite artifacts in the exhibition, many of which are traveling abroad for the first time, will be on view at the Onassis Cultural Center in New York through May 12, 2007.

This exhibition includes loans from the Acropolis Museum, Epigraphical Museum, Kerameikos Archaeological Museum, National Archaeological Museum, the Numismatic Museum, 3rd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, the Archaeological Museum in Marathon, the Archaeological Museum in Olympia, the Archaeological Museum in Rhodes, and the Archaeological Museum in Sparta, all located in Greece. Athens-Sparta will also include pieces from the Vatican Museums, Vatican City; the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; and the American Numismatic Society in New York.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Onassis Cultural Center will organize an international scholarly conference, a lecture program in New York, as well as dramatic readings of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* and Aeschylus' *The Persians* in various venues.



Ambassador Loukas Tsilas, director of the Onassis Cultural Center in New York, addressing dignitaries and guests at the reception.



Dignitaries and guests observing the exhibit.



Archbishop of America Demetrios, Greek Minister of Culture George Voulgarakis, Member of Hellenic Parliament and former EU Commissioner Anna Diamandopoulou, New York University Honorary President John Brademas, the Onassis Foundation President Anthony Papademetriou and various guests are listening to Dr. Nikos Kaltsas, the exhibition's curator.

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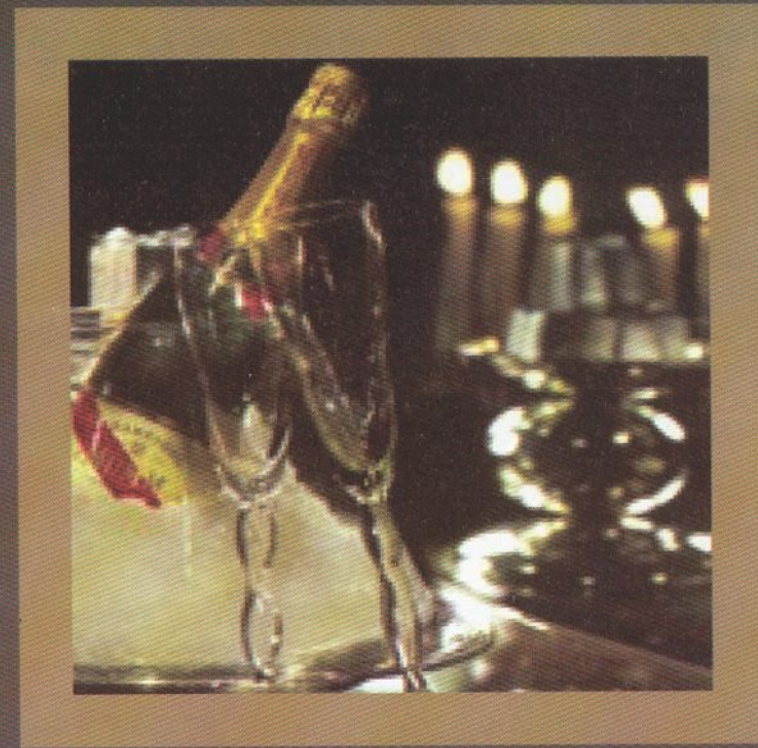
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For Further Information, please contact Jeannie Kouros, Program Director,  
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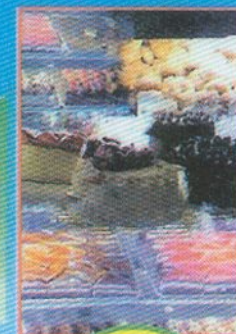
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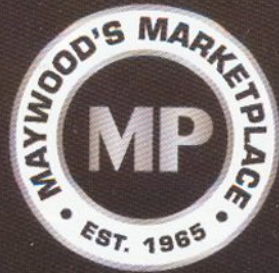
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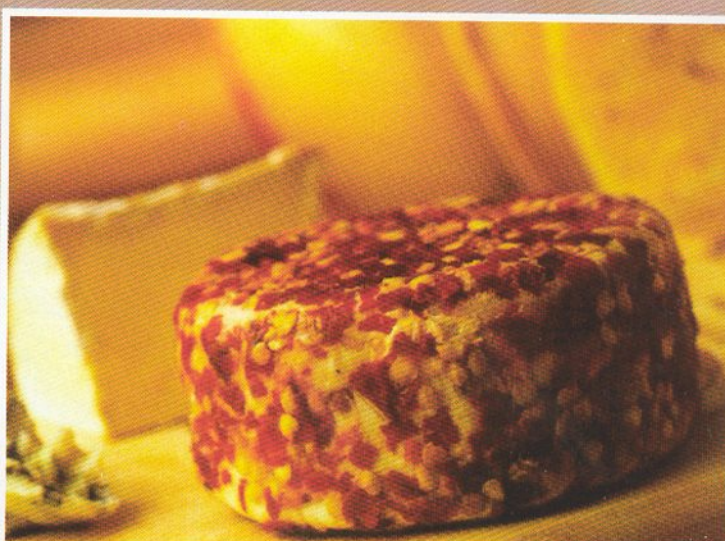
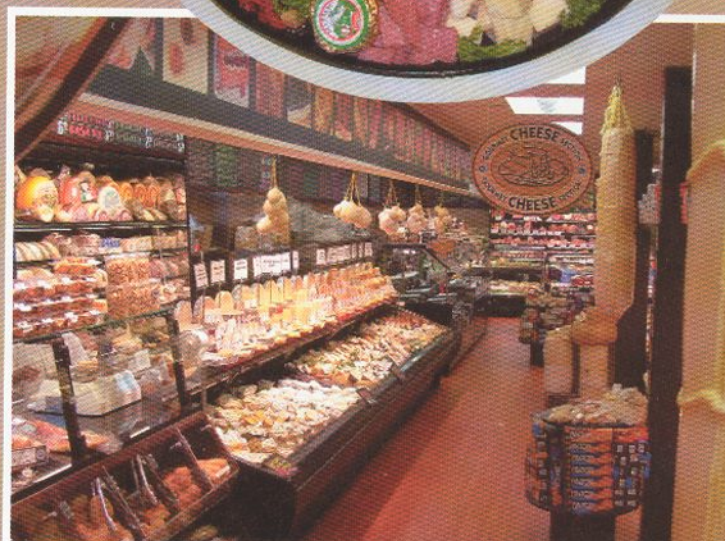
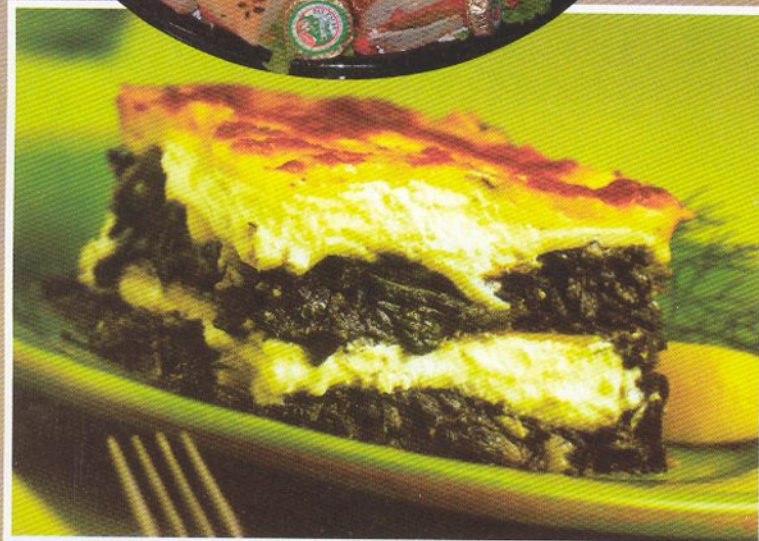


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**LEFT:** Reverend Fathers Emmanuel Gratsias and Evan Evangelides with the AHEPA Gold Coast Chapter 456 Board, John Levas (President), Stanley Neamonitis (Vice President), Peter Mesologitis (Treasurer), George Condjal (Secretary) and Andy Cyprus. **RIGHT:** Stan and Lisa Neamonitis, Tom and Maria Zoitas, George and Angela Maragos, Steve and Connie Sistasis and Xanthippe Moshopoulos.

# A MODEL AHEPA CHAPTER

BY DEMETRIOS RHOMPOTIS

It was a few years ago that a Greek American friend of mine went looking for a house in the greater Manhasset, Long Island area and the real estate agent showing him one house, not knowing his ethnic background, complained that "those (a word you don't want to read) Greeks have invaded the area and they are about to buy the whole of it." I assume he wasn't thrilled to discover his buyer was also Greek, and that a few years after that incident his "fears" would indeed come true. (Even worse, he didn't sell that house to my friend!)

"This area, Manhasset, Roslyn, North Shore has become very Greek," says Peter Mesologites, one of the main real estate brokers in the extended North Shore, during an interview with **NEO** at AHEPA's Gold Coast Chapter 456 annual Christmas Party, of which he was the chairman and also the organization's treasurer.

The "Greek" invasion the real estate agent was afraid of is clearly reflected in the Gold Coast Chapter's 25 years history as well. "We started with about 30 members and how

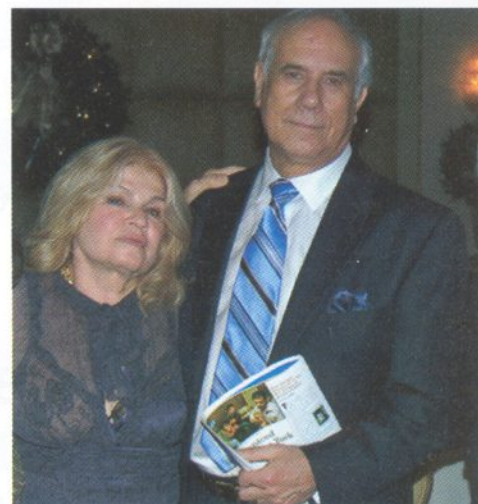
we've been up to 90," Stanley Neamonitis, the chapter's vice president and one of the founding fathers, explains. Mesologites adds: "We also started these Christmas parties for just the members with about 40 people coming. We've now gone to a point where we have 140 people."

A process that, interestingly enough, goes against a national shrinking that characterizes the majority of the AHEPA chapters throughout the country. As various leaders, among them Supreme President Gus James, have indicated during interviews with **NEO**, a major effort is under way to reverse the trend and to attract new members. "With us the opposite is happening," says Mesologites. "We are picking up the younger people. And they are very active."

According to the chapter president John Levas, the success in attracting new people is also due to the welcoming climate that prevails among the membership: "It's a very nice chapter, it's a good gathering place to come together once a month... We have meetings, the last Wednesday of every month in Port Washington. Our meetings are very interesting and not only because we serve dinner,

but we also have our own bartender and everybody has a really good time," he joked.

A sentiment echoed by Nick Katopodis,



James and Zeneuvieve Stefatos.

one of the relatively new members who settled in the area a few years ago and now owns a business there as well: "I am grateful for the way they immediately embraced me. In a very little while I felt as if I'd been always a member. For a newcomer in the area, this



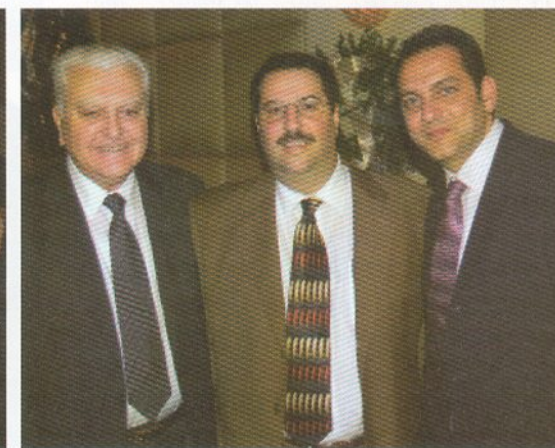
**From left,** Fofo Loannides, Mike Angeliades, Deidi Browne, Marian Cardasis and Elpis Chandris. Sitting are Steve and Anna Michaelides, Libby Angeliades.



**From left,** Peter Mesologitis, Irene Kusulus, Penny Zangas, Jim Stefatos and Leonard Zangas.



**LEFT:** From right, Peter and Maria Mamais, Nick and Marilena Katopodis, Spyros and Callie Palliouras, Mrs and Mr. Harry Zervos and Mrs. Zozo. **RIGHT:** From left, Stanley Neamonitis, John Levas and Nick Katopodis.



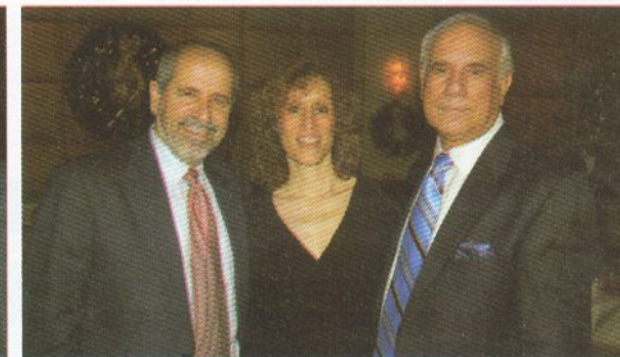
group of people has been like a second, an extended family!"

"Our chapter is very different for another important reason," Neamonitis adds. "We don't get involved in political issues. That's what really keeps our chapter together. The youth will follow. They'll come in when they find out about the different chapters that are worthwhile and don't have any binding. All of our members work together and not against each other."

According to John Levas, the chapter's activities are dedicated to preserve the Hellenic heritage in general, to promote education and to do charitable work. They also support two Greek Orthodox parishes, Resurrection in Brookville and Archangel Michael in Roselyn. "We also give scholarship grants to some of the students at the Archangel Michael Church Afternoon School," says Levas. "They write essays on their Hellenic heritage, where their parents or grandparents came from, and what they did when they arrived to this country. The idea is to encourage these children to look back to their past, to their heritage."



**From left,** Dimitris Malakides, Mike Angeliades, George Brown, Tony Harovas, Dean Papas, James Stefatos and Aristides Yannou.



**LEFT:** Peter Mesologitis with wife Kathy. **RIGHT:** From left Dimitri Malakides, wife, Marilyn and James Stefatos



# EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN HELLENISM

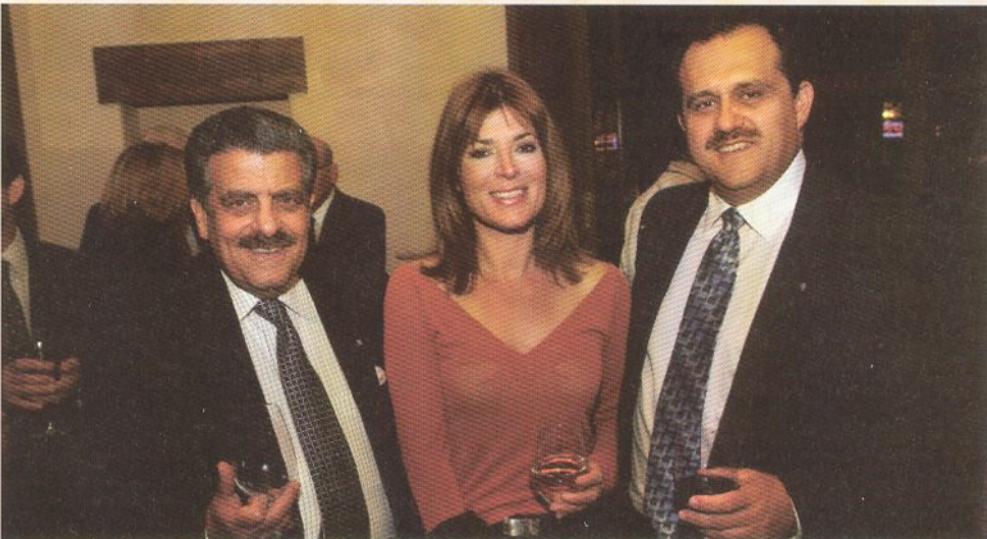
**"T**he Future of Hellenism in America," was thoroughly explored during the AHIF's (American Hellenic Institute Foundation) successful 5th Annual Conference on the subject, held recently at The Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, California. This impressive symposium, organized in cooperation with the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, featured prominent speakers from the fields of education, law and the private sector, who identified key challenges facing the Greek American community today.

Conference Chairman **George Marcus** - Chairman of Marcus & Millichap - opened the day-long symposium by stating among else: "... it is very probable that we could be one generation away from disappearing as an ethnic group in the United States. And there are two thoughts about that. There is one that says we are a melting pot and we will sort of melt away. The other one is that America is a stew of people who can stick together for the benefit of America and for the benefit of Greek Americans, for the benefit of our relationships with one another, and the benefit of Greece. We have something you can't buy, you can't join - we were born into a special club. Our heritage is something that was granted to us by God and our parents ... And the real question is, can we create institutions today that will maintain a reason for our children and their children to maintain roots within our society?"

**Professor Dan Georgakas**, Director of the Greek American Studies Project at the Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at Queens College-CUNY, was the keynote speaker. "I think we have to revive the language. We really have to understand modern Greek culture, modern Greek history as well," he pointed out. "We have to be connected to that, we have to understand our own culture and then we have to embrace these new technologies and move forward. And I think if we do that, that maybe 50 years from now people will gather in a room like this and they will say, gee we've got some problems today,



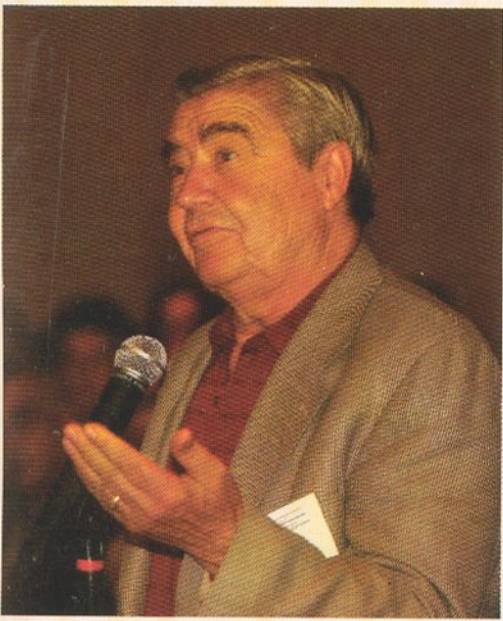
Dan Georgakas, left, Marilyn Rouvelas, James Lagos and Nick Karambelas at the Kokkari Restaurant.



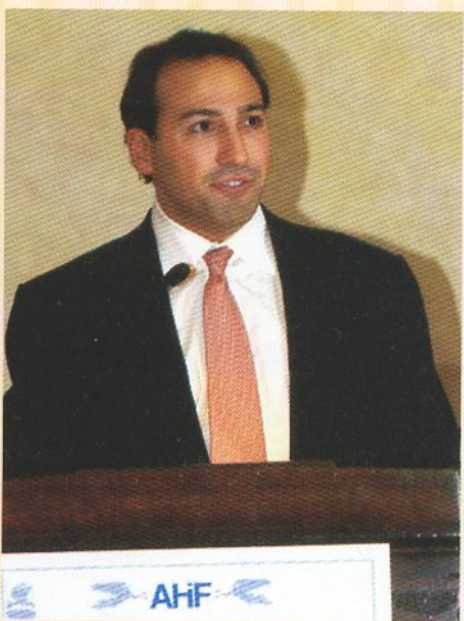
Kenny Frangadakis, left, Vicki Liviakis and Nick Larigakis at the Kokkari Restaurant.



Martha Klironomos, left, James Dimitriou, Kostas Alexakis, Van Coufoudakis, Dan Georgakas and Gene Rossides at the round table discussion panel.



Alex Rigopoulos, left, from San Diego asking a question. Kyriakos Tsakopoulos.



George Marcus was presented with the AHI Hellenic Heritage Award for his support of Hellenism.

but thank goodness for those people fifty years ago, they passed us the torch."

The moderator for the morning session panel "A" was **Nick Larigakis**, AHI (American Hellenic Institute) Executive Director. The panel "A" speakers included: **James Dimitriou, Ph.D.**, Past Supreme President of the Order of AHEPA and **Emmanuel E. Velivasakis**, President of the Pan Cretan Association.

The moderator for the morning session panel "B" was **Ted Laliotis**, president of the Hellenic Federation of Northern California. The panel "B" speakers included: **Professor Martha Klironomos**, Professor & Director at the Center for Modern Greek Studies at San Francisco State University, **Eva Prionas, Ph.D.**, Chair of the Special Language Program at Stanford University and **Professor George Kafkoulis** Chairman, Co-Founder &

President of the Archimedean Academy in Miami, Florida.

The luncheon chairman was **Dr. Kenny Frangadakis** and the luncheon speaker was **Alexandros Mallias**, ambassador of Greece to the United States.

Following lunch, the moderator for the afternoon session panel "C" was **Fanis Economidis**, Vice President of Metropolis Council, Metropolis of San Francisco. The panel "C" speakers included: the **Reverend Stephen Kyriacou**, Annunciation Cathedral in San Francisco, **Vicki Liviakis**, Anchor of KRON TV News, **Marilyn Rouvelas**, author and **Ambassador Loucas Tsilas**, Executive Director of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA), Inc.

The moderator for the afternoon session panel "D" was **Professor Van Coufoudakis**, Dean Emeritus, School of Arts and Sciences,

Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, IN. The panel "D" speakers included: **Kyriakos Tsakopoulos**, President & CEO of KT Communities, **Nick Karambelas, Esq.**, Partner at Sfikas & Karambelas, LLP, **George Marcus**, Chairman of Marcus and Millichap and **Gene Rossides**, President of the American Hellenic Institute Foundation.

Following the panels, a round table discussion took place with the audience. **Professor Van Coufoudakis** was the moderator. The participants included AHI Board Member **Kostas Alexakis**, **James Dimitriou, Ph.D.**, **Professor Martha Klironomos**, and **Gene Rossides**.

**Gene Rossides**, AHI's director, spoke on "The Role of the Greek American Community in Support for U.S. Relations with Greece and Cyprus and Why this is important to the Future of Hellenism in America." He said, "Unless we become involved as a community in these issues, we risk losing our identity...To become part of the mainstream of American foreign policy development process, we must build a public policy base in each of the four hundred and thirty five congressional districts in this country and with the one hundred senators in the fifty states. If we don't we will be considered a weak, ineffectual, ethnic community of little consequence and the result will be a weakened Hellenism in America."

The conference organizer **Nick Larigakis** stated, "We are extremely pleased with this conference. It is one of the finest we have had in the five years that we been hosting this themed conference. San Francisco proved to be a very good choice this year. The participation was very good and the audience came well prepared and very eager to engage the speakers in constructive dialogue. We look forward to continuing to take this conference to cities around the U.S. I want to also thank all our sponsors and benefactors who made this possible, and especially Mr. and Mrs. George Marcus and the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation. Without their support, this would not have been possible."

The weekend conference began with a Friday night dinner for the speakers and other invited guests hosted by George and Judy Marcus and Dr. Kenny and Angie Frangadakis at the critically acclaimed Kokkari Restaurant in San Francisco.

The co-sponsors of this event included the ELIOS Society, the Foundation for Hellenic Studies, the Hellenic American National Council, the Hellenic Federation of Northern California and the American Hellenic Council of California.

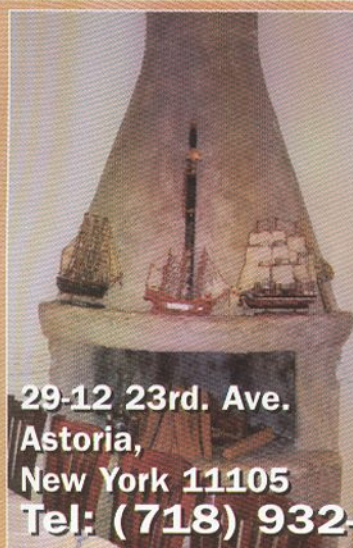


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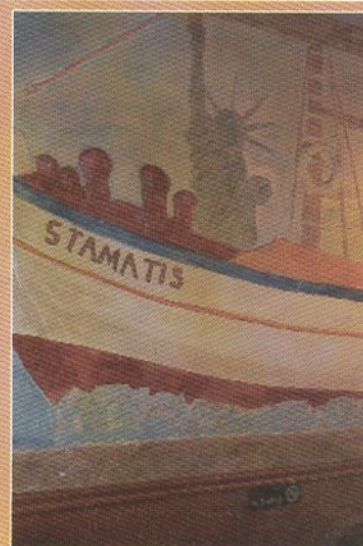
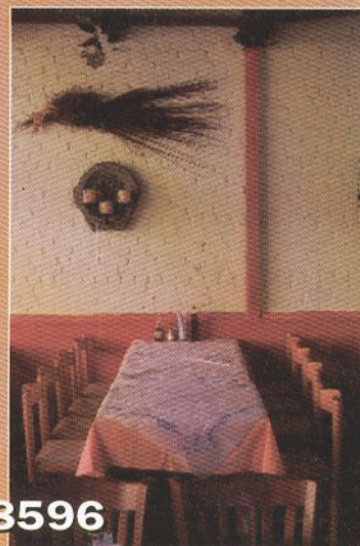
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# Homeric Award Given To Ambassador Vassilakis

**A**mbassador Adamantios Vassilakis, Greece's Permanent Representative at the UN, who is about to retire after almost four decades in service, was this year's (29th) recipient of the prestigious Homeric Award granted to him during a lavish gala at the Chian Cultural Center in Astoria, New York. The award, established by The Chian Federation in 1977, is presented to individuals who have demonstrated an advocacy for human rights, the rule of law and democratic ideals, and have worked to strengthen relations between the United States and Greece.

George Almyroudīs, the federation's president, upon conferring on Ambassador Vassilakis the Homeric Award, praised his service as a diplomat and expressed his gratitude and pride on behalf of the rest of the Chian people as well, that one of their own had excelled while performing his duty to Greece.

Diplomats from Greece, Cyprus, Austria and other countries were also present and were especially generous in their accolades towards Ambassador Vassilakis, as were Greek American leaders from various key organizations, among them NYU President John Brademas.

The late Archbishop Iakovos, the late Constantinos Karamanlis, president of the Hellenic Republic, Senators D'Amato, Snowe, Kennedy and Schumer, Congressman John Brademas among others, have been former recipients of this most important distinction.

Adamantios Vassilakis was born in Chios and he grew up in a typical "island" family, where money was not in abundance. Luckily, after graduating from the Commercial High School of Chios, an uncle sponsored him to study Political Sciences and Diplomacy in



PHOTOS BY ETA PRESS

**TOP:** Ambassador Vassilakis (center) with NYU President John Brademas, the Rev. Bob Stephanopoulos, Chian Federation President George Almyroudīs, former President and Gala Chairman Alex Doulis and members of the board during a press conference before the main event. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Cyprus Federation of America President Peter Papanicolaou addresses the event. **BOTTOM LEFT:** George Almyroudīs (right) and Alex Doulis (left) upon conferring on Ambassador Vassilakis the Homeric Award.

Brussels, Belgium, at the city's Free University.

His first appointment as member of the Greek Diplomatic Corps was Belgrade, Yugoslavia, where he served for two years as commercial attaché. In 1985 he was appointed Consul General of Greece in San Francisco. In 1991 he returned to the US as Deputy Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations. From 2002 onwards, he assumed the post of Permanent Representative and his time in that position coincided with two very important developments: Greece's European Union Presidency in the first half of 2003 and the country's tenure as a non permanent Security Council member.

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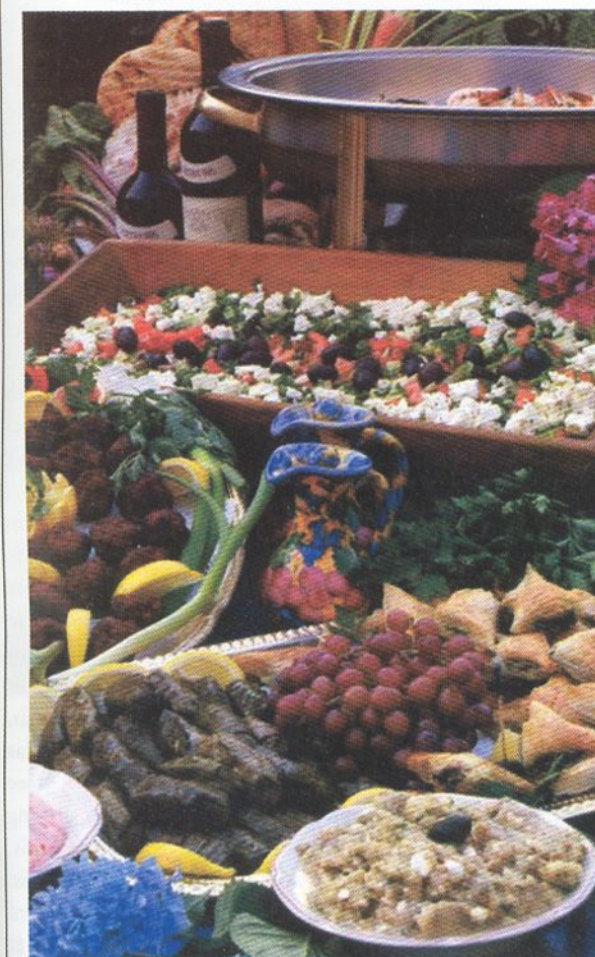
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# New Voice On The Block



Mikis Theodorakis, left, and Lina Orfanos

Today's generation of Greek Americans in New York City has been fortunate in hearing the voices of such wonderful vocal artists as Aphrodite Daniel, Grigoris Maninakis, Anna Paidousi, and Julie Zivras quickly come to mind. But there are many others. These singers follow in the footsteps of song-birds like Marika Papagika who sang Greek, Turkish, Jewish and Armenian songs in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in dives on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue in mid-Manhattan and under the Manhattan Bridge around Delancy and Cherry Streets.

Now enters the youthful Lina Orfanos with vocal chords of enormous artistry and soul. With a trained voice and a background in opera and symphonic music, Orfanos grew up harmonizing with the Greek songs she heard at home, at weddings, and at long gone venues such as *Acroama* in Astoria and *Thiassos* in Chelsea. And then there was her experience attending a concert by Mikis Theodorakis and Maria Farantouri at Carnegie Hall in 1994.

"I think my singing future was sealed then even though I was a young adolescent," says

Orfanos. "I learned that the same Greek song could be performed in an intimate setting like a club and in a grand setting like a concert stage. That was the beauty of songs written by composers like Theodorakis. Of course, they had to be sung differently and that took skill on the part of the vocalist but that's made me stand up and take notice. The melodic depth was amazing."

Orfanos made her solo debut in 2001 at the Donnell Library Center in Manhattan performing selections from the Theodorakis song cycles *Epiphania*, *The Mauthausen Cantata*, and the *Ballad of the Dead Brother*. Her debut CD, a live recording, *Greek Songs of Romantics and Realists: The Songs of Manos Hadzidakis and Mikis Theodorakis* was released in 2004 by One Soul Records and has received critical acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic. Since then she has made numerous appearances in various New York City concert, civic, and cabaret venues including the famed Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

Orfanos has been responsible for the North American debut of Theodorakis'

French songs and several arias from his operas *Electra* and *Antigone*. In June of 2006 she was invited to perform at the Cultural Center in Ioannina and Anagostiki Recital Hall in Kerkyra. By special invitation, she was coached by Mikis Theodorakis at his home in Athens. He has followed her progress right from the start of her career and says that Orfanos has "a beautiful voice with lyricism, sensitivity, and interpretive perfection." He finds her talents to be especially well-suited for his lyrical song cycles.

Orfanos' next appearances will be on January 13, 2007 at the Middle Eastern taverna Maia (212.358.1166) in the East Village and on January 20, 2007 at the Cornelia Street Café (212.989.9319) in Greenwich Village. Her show *From Athens with Love* features Spiros Exaras on guitar, Mathis Kunzli on percussion, and Kostas Psarros on bouzouki (see [www.linaorfanos.com](http://www.linaorfanos.com)). She'll be singing some of the great songs of Manolis Hiotis, Manos Hadzidakis, Thanos, Mikroutsikos, Vasilis Tsitsanis, Stavros Xarchakos, and of course Mikis Theodorakis. ■



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