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# NEO

:: magazine

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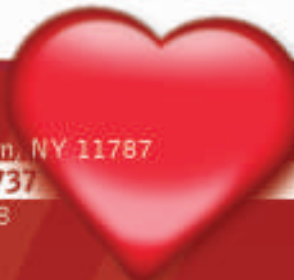


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Welcome to the Ahepa Family of District 6 Gold Coast Chapter No. 456!

Membership is open to everyone who believes in the mission of the organization

# A Milestone

This issue marks the fourth anniversary of NEO, and while it is no longer "neo," it is now established as a vital milepost of the Greek American media landscape and we have striven every year to improve it (Dimitri Rhompotis has worn the big hat in these efforts, as he often does in life).



FROM THE EDITOR

Most of our past issues from the past four years are now available online and our website has become a familiar place to "hit" when catching up on the Greek American scene. Books and music and civic endeavors are prominently featured, as are interviews with newsmakers and celebrities, both here and across the ocean (NEO is also distributed to the Parliament in Greece).

Did we expect NEO to become so familiar and visible a part of Greek America when we started it four years ago? We hoped so, because both Dimitri and I and Kyprianos Bazanikas were all veterans of the Greek American media and knew both its potential and its shortcomings. We wanted NEO both to address those shortcomings and blaze new trails of its own, and over the four years of its existence, I think the magazine has made a splash and people have acknowledged both its presence and its influence—which is not easy to do in the backwater where the ethnic press is often relegated.

We have established our Person of the Year, with some of the biggest names on the Greek American scene awarded, we have interviewed the movers and shakers both in public and private life both here and abroad, we have provided a visible forum for all types of culture, and we have tried to do in every issue what we set out to do from the very beginning of this venture: to spotlight the people of all generations who contributed and contribute still to our way of life and get them, if possible, at least to acknowledge each other.

We set out to bridge the generation gap four years ago, which every immigrant group inevitably has, as does every succession of generations, and though we've scratched the surface of the people who have contributed to our heritage and culture and our prestige as Greeks in America, we have a lot more who we need to acknowledge and deserve mention in the future issues of NEO.

We hope you will be there with us; our journey has only begun and the gallery of portraits of worthy Greeks, young and old, renowned and forgotten, has a long way to go before it's fully-stocked. Greeks have made a contribution to every walk of life for most generations since Socrates, and we're not through yet.

Hopefully, NEO will be a small part of it.

Thanks for the journey.

Dimitri C. Michalakis

# NEO

:: magazine  
FOUNDED IN 2005

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**NEO Magazine** is published monthly by Neocorp Media Inc. P.O. Box 560105 College Point, NY 11356 Phone: (718) 554-0308 e-Fax: (718) 878-4448 [info@neomagazine.com](mailto:info@neomagazine.com)



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# CALAMOS

**We are the largest Chapter** on Long Island and in the 5 Boroughs. Our meetings are held at the Elks Lodge located at 30 Haven Avenue Port Washington, NY the last Wednesday of the month.

Our annual Christmas gala dinner dance to be held at Milleridge Inn on December, 16 2009, 7:00 PM.

Please visit our website for more info:  
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**We have a new Sons of Pericles Chapter.** Contact George Pappas at [gepappas@gmail.com](mailto:gepappas@gmail.com) for more information.

Sons are encouraged to join this new chapter. The Gold Coast Chapter is conducting a membership drive.

Please, contact our chapter's President or Secretary if you want to join our wonderful group. We have more than 120 members to date.





## ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW TO VISIT THE US

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew will arrive in New Orleans, on October 20th to begin his Apostolic and Patriarchal Visit to the United States. The purpose of this, his sixth visit to our nation, is twofold: to convene and preside over the Eighth Religion, Science and the Environment (RSE) Symposium, and to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the enthronement of Archbishop Demetrios of America as the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

His All Holiness, under whose high patronage the Religion, Science and the Environment Symposia take place, will lead a large and diverse group of theologians, scientists, policy makers, environmentalists, representatives of business and NGOs, and media for a five day Environmental Symposium entitled; "Restoring Balance: The Great Mississippi River."

Since 1995, RSE has convened seven symposia to study the fate of the world's waters, which cover seven-tenths of our planet's surface. These assemblies of scientists, environmentalists, policy-makers and representatives of the world's main religious faiths have established a vibrant environmental ethics movement. Underlying RSE's strategies is a core belief that the analytical tools of science and the spiritual messages of religion must work in harmony if the earth's environment is to be safeguarded. The symposia take place afloat, bringing participants - international and regional religious leaders, scientists, environmentalists, policy makers, media representatives and other prominent figures in politics and business - directly to endangered bodies of water. Previous symposia have been attended by heads of state, environmental ministers, ministers of economic affairs and prominent intellectual figures. (More information on the Mississippi symposium: [www.rsesymposia.org](http://www.rsesymposia.org))

Following the Symposium, His All Holiness will travel to New York City for a week-long celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Enthronement of Archbishop Demetrios. It will commence on Oct. 25, with the Feast day Great Vespers of St. Demetrios the Myrrh-streamer at

the Parish dedicated to the Great-Martyr in Merrick, NY. The next day, the His All Holiness will preside at the Feast day Divine Liturgy at St. Demetrios Cathedral in Astoria, NY. On the evening of the 26th, His All Holiness will preside at the 9th Annual Prayer service for the United Nations at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. The service is sponsored jointly by the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOOC). On Tuesday, October 27th, His All Holiness will meet with the Primates of SCOBA.

Later in the evening of the 27th, Fordham University will bestow an honorary doctorate in law to His All Holiness. In recognition of the Ecumenical Patriarch's leadership in the fields of environmental responsibility, and interfaith and inter-cultural dialogue, Fordham is also presenting the initial volume of a three-part series of the major speeches of His All Holiness. Among all the festivities organized by Fordham, there will be a special opportunity for the students of the local Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) to meet with and receive the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

On Wednesday, Oct. 28th, His All Holiness will have meetings with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations, as well as with Jewish religious and lay leaders hosted by Rabbi Arthur Schneier, President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation.

His All Holiness will also travel briefly to Atlanta, and celebrate an Ecumenical Doxology in the Annunciation Cathedral of the Metropolis. Following his return to New York City on Friday, Oct. 30th, he will attend a reception at the Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA), which will be presenting a month-long (mid-October to mid-November) exhibition in honor of His All Holiness and his environmental initiatives.

That evening, His All Holiness will attend a gala musical celebration at the famed Alice Tully Hall in New York both in honor of his presence in the United States and in tribute to the decade of

service of Archbishop Demetrios. Maestro Peter Tiboris will lead the Manhattan Philharmonic in a program and a special appearance by the Archdiocesan Metropolitan Youth Choir.

On Saturday, Oct. 31st, His All Holiness will address the Archdiocesan Council and meet with the National Board of Philoptochos. In the evening of the 31st, the Order of Saint Andrew, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will present their annual banquet in honor of the Ecumenical Patriarch. A special speaker for the evening will be the newly enthroned Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, His Excellency Timothy Dolan.

On Sunday, November 1st, His All Holiness will preside at a Patriarchal Divine Liturgy with Archbishop Demetrios and all the Members of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New York City. In a rarely seen occasion, he will personally conduct the investiture of the new Archons of the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle.

In the evening of November 1st, the Patriarchal Delegation leaves for Washington DC. While in the DC Metro Area, His All Holiness will mark his 18th year as Ecumenical Patriarch in a Doxology service at the Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Annapolis, MD.

Throughout the first week of November, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew will meet with the highest leaders of our Nation: the President, the Vice President, the Speaker of the House, the Secretary of State, and the Majority Leader of the Senate. Both Vice President Biden and Secretary of State Clinton will host dinners in honor of His All Holiness.

Additionally, the Ecumenical Patriarch is scheduled to speak at the Brookings Institute ([www.brookings.edu](http://www.brookings.edu)) and at Georgetown University in a joint event sponsored by Georgetown and the Center for American Progress ([www.americanprogressaction.org](http://www.americanprogressaction.org)). For more information on the Ecumenical Patriarch and his visit to the U.S. can be found online at: [www.usvisit2009.org](http://www.usvisit2009.org).



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Georgia S. Mouzakis Tavlarios, managing director and private banker at Citi Private Bank, was recently elected president of HABA (Hellenic American Bankers Association), only the second woman elected since the organization was founded in the early '80s.

Eager to start the new season with a full slate of activities, Ms. Mouzakis Tavlarios is well aware that many members have been affected by last year's financial melt down. "Clearly a variety of challenges have emerged among HABA members and their families by the nature of their careers in financial services," she told NEO. "To address this, HABA hosted its first 'networking' breakfast last spring. . . . It was so successful that we're planning another event this fall which we will co-sponsor with the Hellenic Lawyers Association." Her priorities will also include boosting membership and cooperation with other major Greek American entities. She is optimistic that as things get better, a year from now HABA will have more members and an expanded scope.

Ms. Mouzakis Tavlarios joined Citi Private Bank in 1996 and is a member of Citi Private Bank's Art Advisory Investment Review Committee and Citi Alternative Investments Advisory Council. She was awarded Citi Private Bank Chairman's Council membership in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. She has been with Citi since 1984 when she began her career at the firm as a management associate and held a variety of positions in the New York marketplace including branch manager, service director, and Citigold sales director prior to joining the Private Bank.

In addition to HABA, Ms. Mouzakis Tavlarios is a member of The Michael Bolton Charities Women's Advisory Council. She has also volunteered with the New York City Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence on a special committee for a Family Justice Center. She is also interested in helping to raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's research.

The Hellenic American Bankers Association, Inc. is one of the premier Greek-American organizations in the New York metropolitan area. A not-for-profit organization, it was established in 1982 to promote the professional and educational interest of Greek-Americans in the banking and finance industries. Over the past years, HABA has organized a variety of events and had many distinguished speakers and lecturers. It also sponsors an annual charity event for the Cyprus Children's Fund. Its current active membership consists of over 200 professionals representing more than 50 institutions across the financial spectrum.



Georgia S. Mouzakis Tavlarios, President of HABA and managing director and private banker at Citi Private

## The new face of HABA: Georgia S. Mouzakis Tavlarios

By Demetrios Rhompotis

**Upon assuming your duties as president of HABA, what will your priorities be? Where do you want to see the organization going a year from now?**

My priority as President of Hellenic American Bankers Association (HABA) is our members. To expand on that point, one key reason HABA was formed in 1982 was to gather and disseminate useful information of professional interest for Greek Americans working in the financial services industry. HABA has had the honor of many notable speakers including and not limited to, Peter G. Peterson, Dr. P. Roy Vagelos, John P. Calamos, Michael Dukakis, Dr. John Brademas, the late Paul Tsongas, Nassos Michas and many more. My predecessors have done an excellent job and now it will be my honor to carry-on.

My hope is that this time next year we increase active membership in HABA. We invite all professionals of the financial services sector, Hellenes and Phil-hellenes to apply for membership in HABA by visiting [www.haba.org](http://www.haba.org).

**The financial collapse of last year had a heavy toll on HABA members as well. How are you planning to address that? Is there an unofficial HABA network that helps members who lost their jobs to find a new one or assist them in other ways?**

Clearly a variety of challenges have emerged among HABA members and their families by the nature of their careers in financial services. To address this, HABA hosted its first "networking" breakfast last spring where, for the first time, we had no speakers. Instead, we brought together HABA members and friends of HABA to meet, exchange information and establish new relationships. It was so successful that we're planning another event this fall which we



Honoring James Orphanides earlier this year: From left, HABA Secretary Emmanuel Caravanos, Arab Bank Plc, Mistress of Ceremonies Dorie Klissas, NYU Langone Medical Center, HABA Treasurer Nicholas Agrotis, CPA Transfirst, HABA President James Hansel, Eight Winds Capital, Costas Kellas, Objective, Inc., Mr. & Mrs. Orphanides, then HABA Vice President Georgia Mouzakis, Citi Private Bank, John Giapoutzis, Merrill Lynch Global Wealth Management, Peggy Delfinopoulos, Prudential Financial, Inc, and Emmanuel Argerakis, Tri-State Capital.

will co-sponsor with the Hellenic Lawyers Association. It is face-to-face interaction that aids the exchange of not only information, but also connections that can be very personal in nature.

**As a banking business professional, what is your take on the situation in your sector right now? Are things looking better or more promising?**

In the past eighteen months, we witnessed an unprecedented time in financial markets, the global economy and our industry. Given the unpredictability of events over that period, it's impossible to know exactly how things will unfold from here. However, many of us hope and believe that the worst days of the financial crisis are behind us. That's not to say the road to recovery will be quick or easy--because it won't. Many challenges still lie ahead. But in speaking with clients and fellow bankers, I get the sense that things are now at least moving in the right direction.



Georgia Mouzakis-Tavlarios and her fiancé Michael Wise with Archbishop Demetrios.

**One of the victims in last year's collapse was the integrity of many financial institutions in particular and of the industry in general. Are you planning to address that through HABA events or other kind of public activities?**

Our upcoming events in the fall include an economic panel discussion on currency and the effects of recent government intervention in October, a networking event mentioned earlier in November, and a macroeconomic forecast discussion on December 17th. I hope to see many of our HABA members there.

**Would you be open for closer cooperation with other major Greek-American organizations such as L100 or AHEPA? Also, would you as president seek closer ties with counterpart institutions from Greece and Cyprus with which as American Hellenes you share a special affinity?**

Of course we keep an open dialogue with many other Hellenic organizations and will continue to do so. My mission is to identify and bring to bear information and organizational relationships that add value. Further, our by-laws state as part of HABA's objectives, to promote and strengthen the economic, cultural and intellectual ties between the US, Greece and Cyprus.

**I believe you are the first woman to lead HABA. Are you thinking of using this very encouraging fact as a way to attract more women to the organization from the banking and finance sectors?**

Actually, I am the second. The first woman President was Eftihia Pylarinou-Piper formerly of First NY Bank for Business who served during 1989-1990 before relocating to Greece when she was invited by the Greek government to become President and CEO of the largest investment bank in Greece and the first woman in that type of position. She's made us very proud.

At present, our membership is broken down as 24% Women and 76%

Men. I look forward to a membership which is more reflective of our financial sector meaning an increase in our membership or professional women.

**Why should a successful, or on his or her way, to success American of Hellenic descent join HABA, especially as he or she is able to join countless other non-ethnic groups from the industry?**

HABA is one of few professional Hellenic organizations focused on a specific industry. In conjunction with other "non ethnic groups" as you describe, HABA offers the added value by bringing together people of like cultural backgrounds. HABA offers the opportunity for younger people to meet senior and seasoned professionals in the industry that they would otherwise not have access to via our events and our organization. A perfect way to "test drive" HABA is to attend one of our upcoming events in the fall. If we deliver, I am certain our 2010 membership applications submitted in December will increase.

**A message to your members and the American Hellenic community in general.**

This is a key time to for our community to come together and leverage on our empowerment to assist and enhance the opportunities of our members.



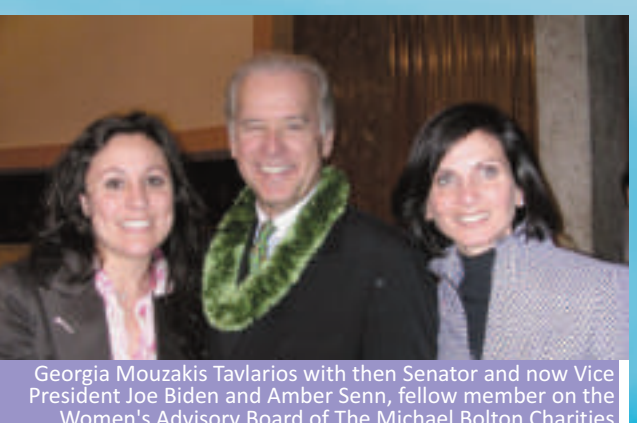
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<b>Friday, October 30, 2009</b>	
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Registration and Welcome - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
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<b>Saturday, October 31, 2009</b>	
9:30AM	Delegate Registration - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	CSA&C Delegate Meetings - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
	Luncheon for the Delegates - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
8:45 AM - 4:00 PM	Bayou Swamp Country Tour for non-delegates
<b>Grand Banquet</b>	
6:00-7:00 PM	Cocktail Hour - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
7:00 PM - 9:30 PM	Official Program, Presentations - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
9:30 PM - 2:00AM	Dance - Marriott New Orleans Hotel
<b>Sunday, November 1, 2009</b>	
11:00AM	Excursion to Biloxi, Mississippi - Beau Rivage Hotel/Casino
	Bus departs Marriott New Orleans at 10:45AM

PHOTO: DIMITRIOS PANAGOS



Georgia Mouzakis Tavlarios with then Senator and now Vice President Joe Biden and Amber Senn, fellow member on the Women's Advisory Board of The Michael Bolton Charities



## Exhibition at Columbia explores

As the world celebrates the recent opening of the new Acropolis Museum in Athens, Columbia University's Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery is preparing to open an exhibition on the building itself — its innovative architecture and the major role it plays at the nexus of Greco-Roman cultural and archeological history.

The exhibition, *The New Acropolis Museum*, is open to the public from Wednesday, October 21, through Saturday, December 19. Two public lectures, made possible by the Onassis Foundation, are scheduled. Admission to the exhibition and the related programming is free of charge.

The new Acropolis Museum, which opened in June, is architecturally stunning, strategically sited to be in visual dialogue with the Sacred Rock of the Athenian Acropolis. For the first time, all significant archaeological finds from the area are consolidated into one, state-of-the-art museum, highlighting the importance of the site in shaping artistic expression in Greco-Roman antiquity and its continuing influence on perceptions of Greek art.

Introducing the Columbia exhibition are planning documents from Bernard Tschumi Architects, the firm that designed the museum. Tschumi, a New York-based Swiss architect, is a member of the faculty of Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, where he served as dean from 1988 to 2003.

## the New Acropolis Museum

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Wallach Art Gallery is issuing an illustrated publication with essays by the curator, by Angelos Chaniotis, a noted authority in classical studies, and by Dimitrios Pandermalis, director of the Acropolis Museum, as well as a statement by Tschumi. Ioannis Mylonopoulos, professor of Ancient Greek architecture and iconography in Columbia's department of art history and archaeology, is serving as curator of this exhibition.

Wallach Art Gallery is located on the eighth floor of Schermerhorn Hall on Columbia's Morningside Heights campus, 116th Street and Broadway in Manhattan. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. To learn more, call 212-854-2877.

### The two public lectures are:

- The Parthenon and the Decline of Greek Architecture by Lothar Haselberger, the Morris Russell and Josephine Chidsey Williams Professor of Art History at the University of Pennsylvania. Tuesday, October 13, 6:30 p.m., Room 612 Schermerhorn Hall.
- The Parthenon Sculptures and Perikleian Policies by Jenifer Neils, the Ruth Coulter Heede Professor of Art History at Case Western Reserve University. Wednesday, November 11, 6:30 p.m., Room 612 Schermerhorn Hall.

## Cretans host Giannoulis in New York

PHOTOS:  
NICK KATSANEVAKIS



From left, Illinois Treasurer Alexi Giannoulis, President of Pancretan Association of America Theodore Manousakis, President of Cretan Society "Omonoia" Charles Marangoudakis and Nikos Kastrinakis.



Members of the "Omonoia" Youth with Alexi Giannoulis and PAA President Theodore Manousakis.



Alexi Giannoulis addressing "Omonoia" members at the Cretan House.

Since last March, when Alexi Giannoulis, Illinois State Treasurer, formed an exploratory committee in order to run for the US Senate, Greek-Americans from all over the country have rallied in his support, holding fundraisers and other events to help his candidacy. Cretans could not be an exception for the additional reason that his mother Anna, hails from the beautiful island of Crete.

Recently, the Cretan Society "Omonoia" of New York invited Alexis Giannoulis at the Cretan House for an informal dinner where members and friends could meet and talk to him. "Omonoia" President Charles Marangoudakis, speaking from his long experience as a political activist, stressed

how important is for people to get involved in the political process by voting, supporting candidates and inspiring the younger generation to take the obligations of real citizenship very seriously. Along the same lines, Pancretan Association of America President Theodore Manousakis, President of the Federation of Hellenic Societies of Greater New York, Dimitris Kalamaras, and State Assemblyman Mike Gianaris asked the people to actively participate in politics and support Greek Americans running for office or reelection.

Alexi Giannoulis, in his brief remarks spoke about his beginnings in politics, after he met a young community organizer named Barack Obama whom he befriended and became

basketball buddies. It was Obama who encouraged him to run for office, despite his young age, and like him, he won. Now, it's Alexi's turn to inspire younger Greek Americans who have come to consider him a role model. On November 7 2006, running against all odds Alexi became the youngest State Treasurer in the nation, at the age of 30! Giannoulis grew up in Chicago, graduated cum laude from Boston University and earned a law degree from Tulane University's School of Law in New Orleans. He founded and chairs the AG Foundation, a not-for-profit charity that donates money to treat child-related illnesses, curb poverty and assist disaster relief organizations.

## The American Hellenic Council co-hosts event for Gus Bilirakis

By Alexandros Mizan

The American Hellenic Council (AHC) co-hosted an event and fundraiser for visiting Greek-American Republican Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-FL09) at the Capri Laguna Inn Hotel in Laguna Beach, CA, courtesy of George and Bettina Kallins, active members and supporters of the AHC and Greek-American politicians.

Mr. Bilirakis was touring Southern California as part of a campaign trip to inform and hear from the local Greek-American community. It was not the first visit by Mr. Bilirakis who has been a vocal supporter of Greek-American issues in the past in the House of Representatives.

It was a beautiful day for the event at the renovated patio of the Capri Laguna Inn Hotel overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The event lasted for most of the afternoon and it was well attended by members of the community. Aside from AHC President and SAE member Mike Galanakis, long-time political activists Eleftheria and Ted Polychronis were at the event. Kathy Tavoularis, an active member of the Republican Party of Orange County who worked on both, Arnold Schwarzenegger's gubernatorial campaign and on John McCain's Presidential Campaign and who recently joined the Board of the American Hellenic Council, was there as well.

Deputy District Attorney Nick Dourbetas who is running for Superior Court Judge in Orange County, was also present to support Mr. Bilirakis. Mr. Dourbetas's election is coming up in June of 2010 and he is currently the only Greek-American running for local office in Orange County.

Attendees came literally from all over the country. Paul Sogotis, an active member of the Greek-American community of Northern California, drove down from San Francisco. Andrea Catsimatidis and Chris Cox of New York, who earlier in the day had given a tour of the Nixon Presidential Library to Mr. Bilirakis, were in attendance as well.

Congressman Bilirakis was introduced to the attendees by a fellow member of Congress and local Congressman Mr. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA46). Both Congressmen spoke of the need for protection of American national security interests at home and abroad.

Mr. Bilirakis, who is also serving in the Veteran Affairs and Homeland Security Committees spoke of his recent visit to Afghanistan and expressed how difficult, yet how critical the American military engagement is in that part of the world. The Congressman also spoke of how US Interests are served by promoting democracy and peace and how important Greece is as an ally to the promotion of those very principles in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Mr. Bilirakis vowed for continued efforts on his behalf in Congress for promoting a peaceful solution for Cyprus by calling for the removal of the occupying Turkish military a reunification of the island. He also referred to his recent visit to Turkey and how he asked for the re-opening of the Halki Seminary in Istanbul from Turkish authorities as part of their commitment to honor religious freedoms.

Later on in the day, the guests at the event had the opportunity to speak extensively with the Congressman on a one-to-one basis and express their opinions. Mr. Bilirakis as always was genuinely friendly and open to discussion about several issues even though he was far away from his electoral base. He extended an open invitation to anyone attending to visit his office on their next visit to the nation's capital.

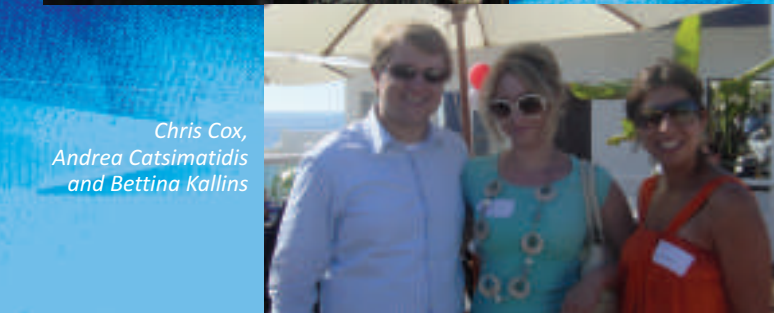
From left Ted Polychronis, Eleftheria Polychronis, Gus Bilirakis, Mike Galanakis and Alexander Mizan.



Kathy Tavoularis, Nick Dourbetas and Effie Galanakis.



Paul Sogotis and James Kallins



Chris Cox, Andrea Catsimatidis and Bettina Kallins



## NATIONAL HELLENIC MUSEUM FALL GALA: BUILDING A LEGACY

The NationalHellenicMuseum hosts its annual black tie gala at the Ritz Carlton Hotel on Sunday, October 18, 2009, at 5:30 pm. This year's theme, "Building a Legacy," reflects the long held ideals of the museum as it continues to offer the best in exhibitions, programs and events. The museum is pleased to announce that along with the new name, website, and mission, connecting generations through Greek history, culture, and art, it moves closer to the construction of our permanent home. The evening honors two notable Greek Americans: Andrew A. Athens, National Chairman of the United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC), and Frank Kamberos, one of the Founding Directors of the NationalHellenicMuseum. Allison Rosati, anchor of NBC 5 News, serves as the Mistress of Ceremonies. Entertainment includes a humorous presentation by the SecondCity comedy troupe, and Robin Davis sings with the John Linardakis Orchestra. This special night includes a raffle and silent auction. Tickets are \$250. For more information, visit [www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org](http://www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org). For reservations, contact the NationalHellenicMuseum at 312-655-1234, ext. 28.





By Katerina Georgiou

For his latest dazzling collection that debuted in New York during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week this past September, Athens-born designer Vassilios Kostetsos didn't have to look far for inspiration. The muse for his Spring/Summer 2010 collection was the ancient Greek sculptor, painter and architect, Phidias. Often considered Greece's greatest sculptor, Phidias is cited along with Michelangelo as one of the world's most influential artists.

Kostetsos' distinctive line entitled "Phidias-Kalos Pantarkes," draws inspiration from the relationship between the sculptor and Pantarkes, a young Olympic wrestler. A muscular and bare-chested Pantarkes was the reputed model for Phidias' famous statue of Zeus at Olympia—one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. As a tribute to his adolescent lover, Phidias carved the words "Kalos Pantarkes" (Pantarkes is handsome) on one of the god's fingers.

"I had the idea to dedicate the collection to Phidias because the whole collection has, at its base, an elastic fabric in a natural color," said Kostetsos. One look at the body-hugging fabrics and dominant skin-colored tones and it's easy to see what he's talking about it.

But Phidias is also best known for his statues of Athena at the Parthenon, and it's here that the sculptor's influence on Kostetsos is most obvious.

The ultra feminine collection featured an array of form-fitting fashions that accentuated the entire body's natural silhouette. Hemlines were, for the most part, short. Sexy mini-bustier dresses emphasized the legs, waist and bust. Some featured plunging necklines and rounded sleeves that drew attention to the shoulders—a key trend for spring.

Longer evening dresses were sheer bottomed, exposing the legs while highlighting the upper body with dramatic one-shouldered cuts or slightly padded sleeves. Light and airy, the floor-sweeping gowns moved seductively with the models' every step.

One standout was a beige single-shouldered dress that epitomized the collection's sleek and sexy elegance. Another outstanding gown was all black with a bejeweled low-cut short-sleeved top and sheer skirt with strategically placed fluffy ruffles that rippled with the slightest movement like ocean waves. Both numbers showcased the artistic craftsmanship and powerful details that make many of Kostetsos' designs unforgettable.

Kostetsos relied on geometric lines to translate the precision and classicism of the sculpted form into well-cut fashions that were both modern and functional. The dominant beige scheme was paired with basic white and black to represent the color of statues and marble. Swarovski crystals were used to evoke the Greek-themed mosaics of the country's ancient history. Sequins and semi-precious stones rounded off the collection's romantic effect and gave it a modern feel.



# VASSILIOS KOSTETSOS

*Debuts at NY's Fashion Week*





Vassilios Kostetsos with Greek American singing sensation Kalomoira



Kalomoira with Consul General of Greece in New York Aghi Balta and Commerce Attache Nick Belias



Nicole Petalides, FOX Business News Anchor (fourth from right) with friends



Vassilios Kostetsos with his models

The models strutted down the runway in gladiator-style footwear designed by Haris Kazakos. The shoes and boots came in beige and black with wooden soles instead of heels. Make-up was by Mehron, the theatrical company favored by Broadway. Faces were painted with brown and gold eyeshadow, bronzer, clear lip gloss and a touch of pink on the cheeks. Side parted buns, slicked back and with a slight pouf in the front completed the impeccably stylized look. The sleek men's collection was dominated by semi-transparent beige colored shirts to give the illusion of nudity. Well-constructed suits, metallic trousers and light jackets were all featured in the upbeat presentation. Silver and bronze accents lent a splash of color to the clean and crisp silhouettes. The versatile look included loose and strait-lined couture jeans mixed with satin jackets for the evening. Long beige scarves added a hint of sophistication to both the day and evening wear, while simple Grecian-style sandals characterized the casual chic world of vacation glamour.

As one of the twelve top designers invited to participate in the show and the only one of Greek decent, Kostetsos wanted to give his New York audience a taste of what he calls "the Greek-European profile"—a modern look that derives sophistication from classical influences.

Though it was his first time showing at New York's Fashion Week, Kostetsos has been one of Greece's leading designers since the early 1990's. He has worked with many of the world's top models, including Linda Evangelista, Cindy Crawford, Kate Moss and Carla Bruni.

An established presence on the international fashion scene, he shows two collections a year at the industry's major events.

Yet for all his travels, his homeland remains the greatest inspiration for his work. Past collections were inspired by Greek symbols, words and colors. He credits Jella Apostolopoulou, his now departed grade school Greek history teacher, for encouraging his lifelong passion for the subject and fostering a strong tie to his Hellenic roots.

But it was his mother, Anna, a leading clothing importer and boutique owner who had the largest impact on his career. She was already a prominent figure on Greece's fashion scene by his childhood.

"In the 1970's she was the first Greek woman to open a clothing boutique in downtown Athens at a time when the neighborhood was dominated by large shops," he said.

As a boy, he recalls visiting her studio and being enthralled by the "magical" world of fashion and the European designers that frequented her store. Starting at the age of ten, he traveled around the world with her, learning the basics of the trade from selecting fabrics to pairing colors. By fifteen, he presented his first collection at his family's home and his career began to take shape.

He studied in Paris and Milan, and later worked for a few years as an apprentice

before returning to Athens to open his own atelier. He launched his own label at the tender age of nineteen and opened his first studio in Athens' fashionable neighborhood of Kolonaki in 1990. That same year, his haute couture collection debuted, setting him firmly on the course for stardom.

His fashion lines include: Vassilios Kostetsos-Haute Couture, Polyxeni by Kostetsos, Noetis Collection, Vassilios Kostetsos Made in Hellas and Vassilios Art Collection.

Kostetsos' impressive showing at Fashion Week has generated much excitement and the designer is currently in discussions to open a showroom in New York or Los Angeles. As his designs are tailor-made for evening and red carpet events, he sees either coast as a natural fit.

When he returns to New York in February for the next round of Fashion Week shows, Kostetsos will unveil a dynamic collection that was influenced by the streets and nightlife of New York City. New Yorkers' savvy fashion sense, he said, was evident from Cipriani to McDonald's.

**"Fashion is not only aesthetics—it's tied to our personality," he said. "It makes our lives better...and happier."**

He's right about that. I know plenty of women who would be happy to own one of his breathtaking designs.



The fall season is quickly coming upon us and with it the first annual NYC Real Estate Expo is to arrive, on Friday, October 30th at The Roosevelt Hotel, from 10am-5pm. "We are excited about showcasing our exhibitors, vendors and speakers as we are certain they will make our inaugural year the preeminent real estate event in New York City," Executive Director Anthony Kazazis stated. The NYC Real Estate Expo is the only real estate show in the city geared exclusively towards the real estate and real estate related professional. "We are dedicated to bringing in the highest quality real estate suppliers and service providers to meet and talk one-on-one with. Our exhibitors, all experts in their fields include: bankers, attorneys, real estate brokers, developers, mortgage companies, title insurance companies, accountants and financial planners, to name a few. We have over 100 exhibitors participating and are expecting thousands of professional consumers from a vibrant cross section of the industry."

This year, most of the city's real estate events were cancelled due to the industry downturn. But according to Kazazis, this event couldn't come at a better time. "With the continuing changes and uncertainties in the real estate market it is imperative for real estate professionals to keep abreast of the latest trends and stay on top of the best products and services that our area businesses have to offer."

In addition to the exhibitors there will be free Educational Seminars going on over the course of the day. "This is a great opportunity to learn from the stories and tested methods of our hugely successful speakers as they cover the most relevant topics affecting the real estate market today. Some of our speakers are: Steven Spinola / REBNY, Tom Anderson / Pensco Trust Company, Robert Knakal / Massey Knakal Realty Services, Jorge J Lopez / Con Edison Solutions, Staff of StreetEasy / StreetEasy, John Kazazis / ARS Abstract Ltd., Raymond Villani / Bid on the City, Ryan Slack / Greepearl.com, Marilyn S. Kane / Sperry Van Ness- Butler Kane Commercial Real Estate, Steve Acevedo III / HSBC Mortgage Corporation USA, Fred Swint / Wells Fargo SBA Lending, Todd R. Pajonas, Esq. / Legal 1031 Exchange Services Inc., Edward E. Neiger, Esq. / Neiger LLP, Michael J Romer, Esq. / Becker & Poliakoff LLP, Neil R. Weinstein, Esq. / Ingram Yuzek Gainen Carroll & Bertolotti LLP and George Eliopoulos / MW Commercial Capital Corp."

As Anthony Kazazis pointed out, "there is still time to sign up for those interested. This event is an effective and affordable way to maximize your exposure and visibility to highly motivated professional consumers. Meet and connect with fellow real estate professionals, investors and small business owners looking to invest in the real estate industry and in their lives. This is an exclusive opportunity to share contacts, exchange business leads and network with targeted exhibitors and high quality real estate-minded professionals."

For more information on exhibiting or attending the NYC Real Estate Expo or for the seminar schedule, the website is [www.nycrealestateexpo.com](http://www.nycrealestateexpo.com)

Admission to the Expo is free although online registration is necessary.

**"We are excited about showcasing our exhibitors, vendors and speakers as we are certain they will make our inaugural year the preeminent real estate event in New York City," Executive Director Anthony Kazazis stated.**

By Kyprianos Bazanikas

# Welcome to The NYC Real Estate Expo



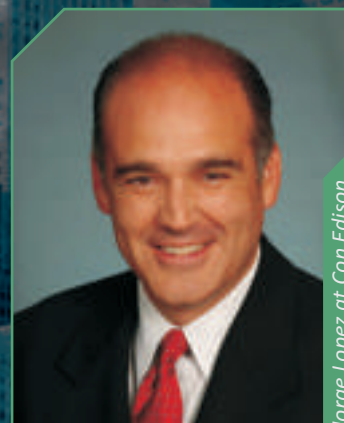
Robert Knakal, Massey Knakal Realty Services Chairman and Founding Partner



Steven Spinola, President Real Estate Board of New York



Anthony Kazazis, Executive Director NYC Real Estate Expo



Jorge Lopez at Con Edison



John Kazazis from ARS Abstract, LTD



Guest Speaker Tom Anderson, President & CEO of PENSCO Trust Company





From right, Aristos Constantine, Marios Klitou, Christis Christoforou, Mr. Tsiallis, Michael Mavrides and George Pelagias.



Cyprus President Demetris Christofias (second from left) addressed the event.

# US business leaders rethink Cyprus as a business destination



More than 150 people attended this year's private forum hosted by the Cyprus Embassy Trade Center in New York in cooperation with the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) at the Harvard Club, to learn why a growing number of US executives should consider Cyprus an indispensable gateway to lucrative emerging markets in the Eastern EU and Middle East.

Leading executives interacted with the Cypriot delegation and panel of expert panelists, discussing a country that a recent UN report calls "the forerunner model for the future of corporate holding jurisdictions and international business centers."

According to Cyprus Trade Commissioner in New York Aristos Constantine, "the event was very well attended in part due to the fact that it is becoming increasingly apparent that financial markets are gravitating away from the UK, while Brussels is saturated and Cyprus—with its broad

bilateral tax and trade agreements, favorable tax structure and amicable relationships to key eastern EU and middle eastern markets—holds the key to their growth."

In the midst of a sluggish economy, intense competition for capital, need for enhanced due diligence, limited investment/alpha generation opportunities, limited access to leverage and difficulty generating higher returns are the issues business is concerned with. "Business leaders heard the message that Cyprus offers a viable and compelling solution as both an EU member and gateway to neighboring regions," said Constantine.

The event was addressed by H.E. Demetris Christofias, The President of The Republic of Cyprus, who spoke about the heart of the country, a nation built upon tradition, values and ethics. He urged the audience to experience Cyprus within the context of a

growing global economy, inviting the distinguished guests to explore the opportunities that Cyprus offers first hand. In his closing remarks President Christofias stated that the Cyprus government enjoys excellent relations with the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Association of Employers in Cyprus and extended his congratulations and gratitude for their support.

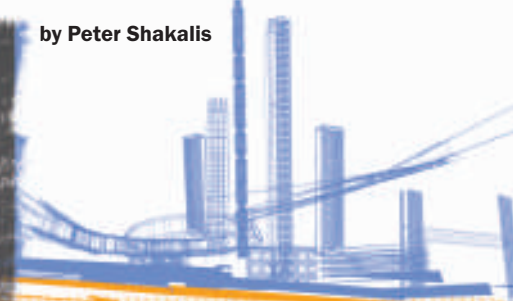
Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism Antonis Paschalides in his address eloquently delivered a compelling case for doing business in Cyprus. "Our policy is to create a stimulating environment and the necessary conditions to foster the continued attraction of foreign investors and the creation of successful business ventures."

The opening remarks at the commencement of the event were delivered by Trade Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus Mr. Aristos Constantine who stressing that "within the context of the prevailing bleak global economic climate, the need to better function within the context of an ever increasing global environment has never been more profound." He continued by stating that Cyprus, as a dynamic, flexible and adaptive economy, has seriously taken up this challenge and offers investors the added value they need to meet the shifting trends in the international marketplace while affording them the protections and security that has come to be expected"

Introductory addresses were also given on behalf of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry by President of The Nicosia Chamber Of Commerce & Industry Mr Christodoulos Angastiniotis, and by Mr. Chris Christodoulou, President of The Cyprus American Business Association

There followed a detailed and insightful series of presentations regarding the benefits and methods of doing business through Cyprus for foreign investors given by Mr. Marios Klitou, Treasurer of the Board of Directors of Cyprus Investment Promotion Agency (CIPA), Mr. Christis M. Christoforou, Chief Executive Officer of Deloitte Ltd Cyprus, Mr. George C. Pelagias, Junior Partner of Pelagias & Co. Cyprus and Mr. Mikael F. Mavrides, Partner Bingham McCutchen LLP, New York. "Executives who control in excess of \$2 billion in assets from commercial bankers and real estate investors to hedge fund leaders, commodities firms and holding companies who attended the event came away with a new perspective on Cyprus," Aristos Constantine pointed out.

by Peter Shakalis



## LEASE AUDITS RESULT IN COST SAVINGS FOR MANY OFFICE TENANTS

It is incumbent upon all office tenants to ensure that they are not paying excess rent to their landlord - especially during these fickle economic times. More often than one thinks, many tenants are unwittingly paying more than their original leasing contract requires them.

Called an 'office lease audit', this is an analysis of the rental and various escalation charges billed to the tenant to determine if they are correct and in accordance with the lease.

While some office leases call for an annual percentage increase in the tenant's base rent in order to cover the cost of operating expenses for the landlord's building, many leases allow for increases in building operating expenses over a predetermined base year to be passed on to the tenant. The costs are allocated based on the percentage of the space a tenant occupies in the building and include: the landlords cost of cleaning and janitorial services; common area electricity charges; insurance; repairs and maintenance; management & administrative fees; and other operating type expenses associated with running the property.

Over the course of a year a tenant will pay 'estimated' yearly building operating expenses as stipulated in the lease agreement. This 'estimated' cost is then reconciled with the actual operating expenses at the end of each year, and then adjusted accordingly.

Errors in landlord billing can arise from a number of reasons not the least of which is that office leases today are complex documents often running over a hundred pages, with each page and word in the escalation, electricity, real estate tax and other clauses carefully negotiated by seasoned attorneys on both sides of the table. Hence lease clauses can vary substantially from one tenant to another in the same building since each is a function of the initial landlord/tenant negotiation. Most incorrect charges are due to the complexity of these lease documents and nature of the transaction rather than deliberate actions of a landlord. Small mistakes in the understanding of these clauses or when they take effect by the landlord's accounting department can result in substantial billing errors.

Commercial tenants therefore should audit their leases on a periodic basis. Events may also dictate the need for a lease audit, such as when buildings are sold and new management and administrative people are brought in; if a building has had new construction and capital projects during the year; if tenants have expanded in the past and taken additional space with revised real estate tax and operating base years; if buildings are located in areas eligible for various governmental incentives; if tenants sublet from other tenants; or tenants that are approaching their lease termination date. This latter point is an important one since a refund due from the landlord can be used as negotiating leverage in renewal negotiations.

Tenants who sublease their space from other tenants should be careful that their sublessor is billing them correctly. Tenants that take on the unfamiliar role as sub-landlords are not acquainted with billing procedures in real estate, which can result in erroneous charges or the pass-through of incorrect expenses to their sub-tenants.

While it is the tenant's obligation to identify billing expenses that they believe are incorrect, the lease will state a time period within which the tenant must act. In New York City, for example, it is not unusual for a tenant to have just 90 days to review and inform the landlord of a disputed bill. If more than 90 days elapses, the tenant may waive its right to the claim and forfeit any monies that it might have over paid.

Most major real estate companies including First Service Williams will offer this service to office tenants, usually on a contingency fee basis so that the tenant has no out of pocket cost.

Peter Shakalis is a Director at FirstService Williams Real Estate pshakalis@fswre.com



# Genocide Awareness: Taking our Efforts to the Next Level

By Karine Birazian-Shnorhokian



Left to Right: Ron Levitsky, Karine Birazian-Shnorhokian and Anastasia Skoupas from the Pontian Greek community at the 87th Annual NCSS Conference in San Diego, CA.

In 1999, with the tragic and unimaginable acts of genocide that occurred in Rwanda and Bosnia, my journey to educate others on the genocides of the past began. As a 15 year-old high school student at the time, the passion to tell my story of the Armenian people gave me ammunition, and prepared me to be the soldier I am today fighting for this important cause. The genocide in Darfur, conflicts in Burma, Congo, and Uganda, were unknown to the world and “never again” was being said without much action and education on this issue was not a priority.

Efforts to educate others on genocide are challenging. First, you have those that may have never heard of the victims’ story—whether it be an Armenian, Pontian Greek, or even a Darfurian. Second, you have ignorance from the opposition who continue their plight of ongoing denial to hear this history. Third, you have the lack of empathy “well this occurred almost 100 years ago, why should I care,” and lastly, you are competing for attention with our troubling economy and fighting terrorism. But these obstacles should not keep us from our ultimate goal of recognition and reparations of our lost territories and homelands.

My own personal voyage began as a shy and timid junior at Glenbrook North High School in Northbrook, Illinois, where several staff in the Social Studies department, including teachers like Mr. James McPherrin and Ms. Sue Corfield encouraged me to present to the Freshman class the history of the Armenian genocide. Lecturing to my own

peers gave me an opportunity to connect with them on another level. For an hour, I had them listen to my story, the history, and the need to take action. Until my high school graduation, I continued to lecture to students, even visiting other schools presenting the facts.

Before I knew it, four years had passed, and I was finishing up college. I had spoken to over 2,000 students, participated as a Leo Sarkisian Intern for the Armenian National Committee of America, obtained a grant from the Armenian Youth Foundation to man a booth at the 87th Annual National Social Studies Conference (NCSS) and opened up the world to building coalitions with other organization and educators on the importance of this topic.

However, my career path at that time had taken a different route. I was working towards a degree in nursing, but, still continuing efforts to focus on my passion, which was genocide education. Finding every opportunity to lecture, attend human rights related events, and meet with Members of Congress, I realized all too soon that genocide education was a full time hobby.

The implementation of this topic within the Illinois school system did not entirely take effect until 2005. With leading efforts from the Ukrainian Genocide Famine Foundation in Chicago, legislation to mandate the teaching of genocide was underway. Quickly mobilizing and working to attain coalition partners as well as pressure Assembly Members to support this bill led to an overwhelming vote in favor of the

legislation and the mandate was signed into law by the Governor of Illinois in August 2005.

With the need to further these efforts, the Armenian community worked to establish the Genocide Education Network of Illinois (GENI). With GENI in place, our dedicated and motivated neighbors, the Pontian Greeks joined our forces. Since 2006, we have successfully executed a number of teacher’s workshop and conferences throughout the Midwest and even California and New Jersey to educate others on our untold stories. Most of this could not be possible without retired school teacher Ron Levitsky. George Mavropoulos, President of the Pontian Society of Chicago “Xeniteas” Chapter, paved the way for Pontian Greek legislation to be developed and continues to educate teachers and students on the history of the forgotten genocides.

After two years of working as an Intensive Care Nurse (ICU), I then left my home in Illinois and moved out to New Jersey to work for the Armenian National Committee of America, Eastern Region. For three years, I traveled throughout the region meeting Armenians and non-Armenians. It has especially been rewarding to continue to team up with other groups, including the Pontian Greeks, especially during their commemoration events in May, as well as various events throughout the year. Earlier this year, I was selected as a 2009 Carl Wilkens Fellow with the Genocide Intervention Network. Efforts to create an “anti genocide constituency” within our communities is the underlying goal within the fellowship, and it has been very rewarding to take part in such an effort.

For Greeks and Armenians however, our



Karine Birazian-Shnorhokian and Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) at the Democratic National Convention.

collective voice to mobilize for the rightful truth is much larger than we think. Uniting Armenians and Greeks throughout the nation to fight off our opposition and Turkish denial of the Armenian and Pontian genocide will have cataclysmal effects to ensure recognition. Though we may come together a few times a year to honor and remember the victims of our genocides, joining forces and truly make a difference.

# THE NEW GENERATION of LEADERS

## Leadership 100 NEO

Neo Magazine and Leadership 100 have partnered to present a monthly profile of the New Generation of Leaders who belong to the Leadership 100 Partners Program which recruits young Greek American professionals on the rise in their careers, making membership affordable and providing a network for meeting their peers.

Leadership100 was founded 25 years ago by the visionary Archbishop Iakovos and a small band of outstanding Greek American businessmen who wished to support the Greek Orthodox Church and perpetuate their faith and Hellenic heritage in America, passing it on to future generations.

### Name: Michael Plakogiannis

Position: Obstetrician/Gynecologist at Manhattan Physician’s Group and Lenox Hill Hospital  
Education: B.S from Sophie Davis School of Medicine, M.D. from NYU School of Medicine

#### Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Manhattan and grew up in Whitestone, Queens.

#### Who or what were the main influences in your life?

I can imagine that most Greek Americans, who answer this question, will tell you that family is their main influence. Family is such an integral part of our life and this applies to me as well. My family has always been there for me. If it wasn’t for my parents, Fotis and Iro and my sister Rodoula, their support and love, I would not be where I am today. I know that this may sound like a cliché, but if it’s a cliché to have a loving family, so be it. I just wish that it was true for all people. I truly believe that a lot of the ills in our society are occurring because of the loss of families and family values. As a medical student at the Veteran Affairs Hospital in New York City, I would round on the medical wards and care for chronically ill patients. Some of these patients would be hospitalized, for long periods of time, and would never receive one visitor. When I would inquire about their families, they would explain, that their one son doesn’t speak to them, their daughter is in another state, their other son is too busy, you get the idea. It just astounded and saddened me, that these people were alone. At the same time, it made me realize how fortunate I am. On the contrary, when a Greek patient is admitted, their family takes up the entire waiting area and will not leave.

#### How did you get into your present work?

I had always thought about being a doctor since I was very young, but really considered it in high school. While in high school I applied and was accepted to a seven year combined B.S./M.D program, ultimately receiving my medical degree from NYU Medical School. I had a difficult time trying to decide which field of medicine to pursue. While performing my obstetrics rotation, I witnessed my first childbirth. I still remember the amazement and awe that I felt. You never forget your first experience in a delivery. That was the moment when I decided to become an obstetrician.

#### As a successful American you could and perhaps have joined major organizations that are focused more on mainstream society. Why L100?

I truly believe in the causes that L100 is trying to advance and spread. Its promotion of our Orthodox faith and Hellenic ideals, are of significant value to me. It’s amazing how little Americans know and understand of our Orthodox faith. I have been asked numerous times, if it is a part of Orthodox Judaism, or if it is a Protestant denomination, or why we don’t celebrate real Easter. Once I explain, the interest that they demonstrate when they realize that our Patriarch is the successor of St. Andrew the Apostle and that our religion has stayed true throughout time, their outlook changes. Through a national and well financed organization like L100, our faith and culture can be spread and maintained. The

amount of immigrants coming from Greece is at a minimal. This means it is up to us to become active and keep Orthodoxy growing, by teaching and exposing the next generation of Greek Americans and even getting new converts into our faith. In fact, I regard Greek Americans as being very blessed people. We have the fortune to possess the great qualities of both, being a Greek and being an American. L100 is an organization that can promote our great qualities to the rest of our community and youth.

#### How would you evaluate so far your experience in the organization?

It has been an enlightening and actually fun experience. I went to the conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico and had a great time. I met some great and successful people, who share the same values and concerns for our Orthodox faith. It is interesting to meet Greek Americans from different parts of the country and hear about some of their local community issues. What I have also been impressed with, is the number of younger people involved in the organization. In the past I had the impression of L100, being for more established individuals. It’s great to see Greek Americans of all ages being active in support of our church and heritage.

#### As a new generation leader, what are some ideas of yours on the future of Leadership 100?

One idea would be to spread the word about L100 at the local level. What I mean, is that as I mentioned in the previous question, I had a false impression of L100 and didn’t understand its scope. I feel that we should promote L100 to the individual parishes throughout the country. I know of Greek Americans who attend church regularly, and yet have never heard of L100. When people become enlightened to the goals and works of our organization they will respond positively. Another idea is to support and finance more Greek Orthodox education. As a whole community we need to heavily support our Greek American schools. If our youth isn’t exposed to our religion and culture, then our future as a community will be bleak. Too many young Greek Americans are sent to public schools. If we expand and improve our schools, more Greek Americans will send their children to our private Greek schools, to be educated about our heritage and Orthodox faith. At the same time, making friends with other Greek Americans is invaluable. I am still life long friends, with the friends I made from St. Demetrios Greek American School in Astoria.

#### How has your involvement in Leadership 100 proved valuable in other activities of your life?

Throughout my life, I have heard people complain, including me, about the issues affecting them and yet doing nothing to resolve them. I think it’s a Greek trait to grumble and yet remain passive or expect someone else to improve your situation.

Continues on page 36



# Inaugural Foreign Policy Study Trip to Greece and Cyprus by US College Students



The students with (center-left) Mr. Aristotelis Papageorgiou, Embassy of Greece Press Attaché and (center-right) Mr. Constantinos G. Alexandris, Embassy of Greece Consul.



The students with Ambassador Andreas Kakouris, Ambassador of Cyprus to the U.S.



The students with (center-left) Mr. A. Goodman, U.S. Department of State Greece Desk Officer and (center-right) Mr. Terry Netos, U.S. Department of State Cyprus Desk Officer.



The students with Ambassador Thomas J. Miller, former Ambassador to Greece and former State Department Cyprus Special Coordinator.



The students with Brigadier General Ilias Leontaris, Defense Attaché of the Embassy of Greece in Washington, D.C.

While in Athens, the students met with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives from the ministry's departments of European External Relations, NATO and the EU and were briefed by a representative of the North America department. Next they met with a representative from Greece's main opposition party, PASOK. The representative, Dimitris Droutsos, serves as director of the Diplomatic Cabinet of PASOK and advisor to the PASOK leader George Papandreou on Foreign Policy and International Relations. That day came to a close with a reception at the Grand Bretagne Hotel hosted by the hotel's General Manager Timothy Ananiadis.

An audience with Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and all Greece, was also included in the program and on their final day the students returned to the Greek Parliament where they exchanged dialogue with the members of the Committee on Defense and Foreign Affairs, chaired by Krinio Kanellopulu. Following the visit to Parliament, the students met with Marios L. Evriviades, Assistant Professor of International Politics at Panteion University, Athens, and then with Evripidis Stylianidis, Greek Minister of Transport and Communications.

For their final briefing, they met with U.S. Ambassador Daniel V. Speckhard and other officials at the U.S. Embassy.

Cemetery) and Colocassides guard post (viewpoint of Nicosia buffer zone).

Also, a meeting took place with Archbishop Chrysostomos II, followed by a visit inside the United Nations controlled buffer zone where they visited the old Nicosia airport, an area that remains mostly unchanged since Turkish military forces invaded Cyprus in 1974.

On the students' first full day in Athens, they visited the American College of Greece, DERE to meet with Dr. Todd G. Fritch, Vice President for Academic Development and Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies and Nick Jiavaras, Executive Vice President, Office of Institutional Advancement and Administration. The visit to the college included a briefing by two professors and a

tour of the campus. A lunch briefing was hosted later that day by Dennys Plessas, Vice President of Business Development Initiatives for Europe, Middle East and Africa for Lockheed Martin at the Aigli Restaurant at Zappeion, followed by a meeting with Professor Theodore Couloumbis, Director General of ELIAMEP (Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy) to discuss Greek foreign policy.

The group had plenty of time to tour the Acropolis and the new Acropolis Museum and towards the end of the trip to unwind and relax while on a very enjoyable private cruise to the island of Aegina on board the Eleutheria. This cruise was hosted by long-time AHI member Aris Drivas and Drivas Yachting.

This past summer, the American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF) sponsored a group of nine Greek American college students for the inaugural AHIF College Student Foreign Policy Study Trip to Greece and Cyprus. This new program aims to introducing future Greek American leaders to the core foreign policy issues important to the community and their impact on U.S. interests in the Southeastern Mediterranean region. It is open to Greek American and Cypriot American college students in good academic standing who are studying political science, international relations, history, and/or foreign affairs.

The nine students selected to participate were: Lia Seremetis, University of Cincinnati, OH; Lydia Pappas, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA; Irene Venetia Ginakakis, New York University, NY; Jason Demetrios Vergados, Merrimack College, Massachusetts; George Balafoutis, University of Chicago, IL; John Tyler Gazetos, University of Wisconsin at Madison; George Papadopoulos, DePaul University, Chicago, IL; Vangelis Katsikiotis, Catholic University, Washington, D.C.; and Nicholas Papacostas, American University, Washington, D.C.

The group was led on the trip by AHI Executive Director Nick Larigakis and Director of Media Relations C. Franciscos Economides. "I was honored to have had this wonderful opportunity to lead such an exceptional group of Greek American

students to Greece and Cyprus for a hands-on experience to introduce them to the foreign policy issues concerning the U.S. relations with Greece and Cyprus," said Larigakis regarding the successful outcome of the inaugural student foreign policy trip. "The AHIF looks forward to continuing to offer this program as long as there is continued interest and support. And I feel certain there will be both," he concluded.

The program began at the AHI headquarters in Washington, D.C. with a briefing from Ambassador Thomas J. Miller, president and CEO of the United Nations Association of the United States of America. Miller previously served as Ambassador to Greece and State Department Special Coordinator for Cyprus. The students were also briefed by AHI Legal Council Nick Karambelas Esq.

and Nick Larigakis.

After their arrival in Cyprus, the students went on a guided day trip to the ancient site of Kourion and archaeological excavations at Paphos. Then meetings were held with Marios Garoyian, President of the House of Representatives; Ambassador Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Head of the Technical Committee on Property Issues; George Iacovou, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and current Presidential Commissioner; Androula Lanitis, Director of the Press and Information Division; and Yiorgos Christofides, Director of the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The group also visited the Filakismena Mnimata (Incarcerated Graves) at the Central Prison, the Tymvos (War

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# Lina Orfanos & Dimitris Basis at Lincoln Center



The "Mikis Theodorakis" Orchestra, featuring Dimitris Basis & Lina Orfanos, will present a program with the songs of Mikis Theodorakis, one of the most eminent composers of Modern Greece, on Sunday, November 1, 2009, 7:30 PM, at the Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. His songs bridge the gap between concert music and popular music, art and activism. Starting in 1960 and continuing to the present, Theodorakis' haunting melodies wedded to poetry, have

revolutionized the cultural and political landscape of Greece. The "Mikis Theodorakis" Orchestra, first formed in 1997 by musicians who performed under the baton of the composer, is an eleven member ensemble that has toured Asia, Europe and South America to critical acclaim. This is their debut in the United States. Leading the "Mikis Theodorakis" Orchestra in song, are two of its young, but seasoned vocalists - Dimitris Basis and Lina

Orfanos. The singers reflect the influence of the composer. Dimitris Basis' sound is deeply rooted in the Byzantine and Doric styles. Lina Orfanos' lyrical voice led Theodorakis to remark, "with Lina my songs have a new beginning."

More info on the concert can be obtained at [www.linaorfanos.com](http://www.linaorfanos.com).

By Katerina Georgiou

When most people think of Nikos Kazantzakis, "The Last Temptation of Christ" comes to mind. Not so for those who've read his powerful novel "Christ Recrucified" and seen the equally potent film adaptation "He Who Must Die" ("Celui qui doit mourir.")

The story takes place in a small Cretan village under Turkish occupation at the end of World War I. The locals are preparing to stage their annual Passion play and the roles of Christ, Mary and the Apostles have been doled out by the village priest. The entire community is drawn into the excitement. Until one day, a procession of another sort takes hold of the village: a weary group of cross-carrying refugees—destitute and starving—arrive seeking help from their fellow Greeks. And that's when a real life passion play ensues.

Never before have I come across a movie more deserving of attention that has received so little of it. "He Who Must Die" has all the criteria for greatness: a big name director (Jules Dassin), a well-known star (Melina Mercouri) and a flawless screenplay. So why, I've often wondered, has this film all but disappeared? Even by today's standards, Dassin's film is a brave contribution to cinema. The film's extraordinary power lies in the deft handling of its premise: "love thy neighbor." Often complicated in daily life, this basic tenet is illustrated with breathtaking simplicity.

Yet for all its brilliance, it's impossible to see "He Who Must Die" unless you catch it at the occasional film festival. Originally released in 1957, it hasn't been made available on DVD (though a devoted following of fans, including myself, have contacted The Criterion Collection to change this.)

Fortunately, moviegoers will have a rare opportunity to see this remarkable film when it screens at Cinema Village on Sunday, November 8 at 7pm. It's being shown as part of the third annual New York City Greek Film Festival taking place from November 5-19.

For more information please visit the Festival's website:  
[www.nycgreekfilmfestival.com](http://www.nycgreekfilmfestival.com)



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# New book

by Greek Author on Turkey



Prof. Ioannis Grigoriadis

"Trials of Europeanization – Turkish Political Culture and the European Union" is the theme of the new book by Prof. Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, published recently by Palgrave/Macmillan Press. Far from what one would expect from a Greek writer dealing with Turkey, this uncompromisingly scientific – at the expense of the reading experience sometimes - examines the impact of improving EU-Turkey relations on Turkish political culture since Turkey became a candidate for EU membership in 1999.

While a multi-party political system was introduced in Turkey in 1946, political liberalism was the missing part of Turkey's democratic consolidation. Turkish political culture valued submissiveness toward state authority and did not favour citizen participation. This study evaluates the impact that Turkey's EU-motivated political reform had on civil society, state-society relations, the role of religion in politics and national identity. This leads to an assessment of whether Turkish political culture has become more participant and democratic.

According to Cem Özdemir, Member of European Parliament (The Greens/EFA), "the author gives an admirable, comprehensive and highly illuminative insight into the historical development of Turkish political culture with a focus on the impacts of EU-Turkey relations. This book is key to understand today's Turkish political and societal structures."

"In the debate on whether Islam is soluble in the liberal democratic tradition of the West there is often too much rhetoric and too little substance," says Kalypto Nicolaïdis, Director of the European Studies Centre, St Antony's College, University of Oxford, and University Lecturer in International Relations. "This timely and important book remedies this state of affairs and more through a thorough investigation of Turkey's political culture focusing on its state, tradition and transformation and their gradual adaptation to EU norms. It is a must read for anyone interested in EU-Turkey affairs, be they advocates or critics of Turkish accession."

Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, fluent in several languages, among them Turkish, and a Columbia University graduate, is a lecturer at the Department of Turkish and Modern Asian Studies, University of Athens, and a Research Fellow at the Hellenic Foundation of European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP).

Prof. and author Artemis Leontis



## Finally, a Book on Culture and Customs of Modern Greece

Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle. Homer's epic poems. Gods and goddesses lounging around, indulging in pleasures on Mount Olympus. All of these images bring to mind the traditional icons of Greece, the cradle of Western Civilization. But what do we know of modern Greece? The answer to that question and more can be found in Culture and Customs of Greece, a new book by Prof. Artemis Leontis, published recently by Greenwood Press. This extensive volume examines topics such as religion, social customs, leisure life, festivals, language, literature, performing arts, media, and modern art and architecture, among many other topics. Woven into the text are beautiful and accurate vignettes of Greek life, helping to illustrate how it is people live. A

crossroads between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, Greece is fighting to hold on to the culture of yesterday, while still looking toward modernity. According to Dr. Leontis, a third generation American Greek and an Associate Professor of Modern Greek at the University of Michigan, "this is a book for a general educated readership, from the high school student and college undergraduate to the Greek American or non Greek for whom Greece's present-day reality holds many unanswered mysteries, for example: how does Athens manage to clear its congested streets in its many neighborhoods for weekly farmers' markets, why do so many Greeks write poetry, what are rebetika, why do newspapers hang like

laundry on "periptera" (kiosks), why do Greeks seem to argue all the time, how religious are Greeks, and what is holding Greek society together in the present world, when so many forces are conspiring to pull people apart?" Besides, there is a very practical aspect from an educator's point of view. "There is no current book in English exploring contemporary Greek culture in its many dimensions," notes Leontis. "For years I have had not textbook for my course on modern Greek culture, and I have not had a book to recommend for the educated reader."

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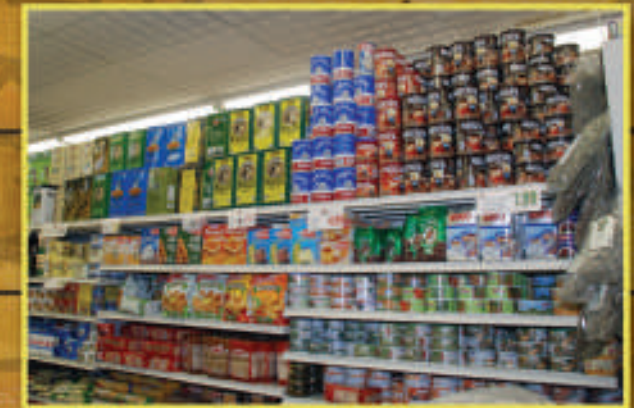
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The contribution of the Greek Cultural Center (KEP from its initials in Greek) in Astoria, New York, to the artistic enrichment of the local Greek community has for decades been a work in progress. This season could not be an exception as the Center's "acolytes" have prepared a full circle of activities, starting with the play «Mammy, mother, mom» by Giorgos Dialekmenos that is scheduled to premiere at the Center's Theater (2718 Hoyt Ave S Astoria, NY 11102-1960) November 7th. Dialekmenos is considered one of the most well-known modern theatrical writers in Greece and recently has been awarded the prestigious Karolos Koun Prize for his play "Bella Venezia" (2006).

Ioanna Katsarou, the play's director, is also an actress who lives and works in Thessaloniki. She graduated from The National Drama School of Northern Greece and she is a founding member of Aktis Aeliou Theater in Thessaloniki.

Regarding "Mammy, mother, mom", "the action takes place in a Greek middle class home," Katsarou explained. "The old mother (Foteini) is ill and stuck in a wheel chair but that does not stop her from dominating the lives of her sons and daughters-in-law, who try secretly to shut her away in an elderly care institution."

The conflicts, emotional tensions, and a string of ludicrous events combined with the fact that all the characters are saturated by a vitriolic humour gives to the play the style of an original Greek tragicomedy.

At the end of the play all the characters will collapse in a domino like effect. First the old mother, because she prefers a glorious death than to be separated from her sons. Then, her son Memas who falls at his mother's feet screaming "mother, mammy, mama... I won't leave you." Finally his wife Varvara, who gets to realize

the weakness of her husband, and her fate as her mother's-in-law nurse and keeper.

"The play is about human relationships that lead to a morass of confusion, but in my opinion, the play has more perspectives," Katsarou points out. "The mother is a symbol of the dark past of Greek history, synonymous with conservatism and regression. The sons are symbols of the new Greek middle class that tries to find its identity. The result is a bad imitation of the western style of life that makes them look ridiculous. The New Greeks are confused in front of this passage to Time and to Space. To Time, because of their relationship with their history. To Space, because of their geographical position in the edge of Europe and their contradictory relationship with the West and East. At the end of the play the son collapses into his mother's feet acting as a small boy. This act symbolizes the disability of the Greek nation to ablate from the past and move forward."

It sounds very dramatic, but "these aspects of the play are emphasized through the filter of humour. During the performance, the viewers will laugh a lot, but also turn a critical eye within themselves and that is the most important function of the play."

Cast: Christos Alexandridis, Giannis Amouris, Louiza Papazaxarias, Christina Siapkara, Christina Stefanidis.

For more info and tickets the Greek Cultural Center's phone number is (718) 726-7329

Director and actress Ioanna Katsarou

## THE "MAMMY, MOTHER, MOM" OF ALL PLAYS AT KEP



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A COLUMN DEVOTED TO MAKING GREEK FOOD EASY

By Maria Athanasopoulos

### Tarta Milou

Fall foliage has graced us with its presence early this year as leaf-bearing trees are rapidly transforming into vibrant red and bright yellow hues throughout the east coast. I absolutely adore everything about autumn, from the aroma of warm mulled apple cider lingering in the crisp cool air to hiking and visiting pumpkin farms. As an extreme foodie, it's no surprise that apple picking is by far my most beloved part of the fall season. Over 100 varieties of apples are grown commercially in the U.S. and the culinary possibilities are endless.

Growing up, my mother always made a scrumptious country like upside down apple cake with some of the apples we brought home from the farm. Big cinnamon-y chunks of apples nestled with walnuts over a light and moist vanilla cake easily make this an all time favorite dessert of mine. Naturally, I modified my mom's "Tarta Milou" recipe with a couple healthy substitutions knowing no one would notice and tested it out on my family who happily devoured the entire cake.

Everyone must admit that there is simply nothing like the smell of fresh baked apples coming out the oven on a cool fall day. This healthy mouthwatering dessert is ideal for making ahead since it actually tastes better the second day, when the juices from the apples seep deep into the cake. For such an easy recipe, the presentation is really stunning and impressive!

Your favorite variety of apple can be used in this heart-friendly cake, however Braeburn and Granny Smith work exceptionally well.

Did you know...  
apples contain no fat, no sodium, no cholesterol and are a member of the rose family?



Prep time: 35 minutes

Cook time: 45 minutes

Serves 8 to 10

### Ingredients:

#### Apple topping

- 5 large apples (cored, peeled and sliced into quarters)
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/5 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 tablespoon sugar, plus a little extra to coat the cake pan
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter, softened

#### Cake

- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup applesauce
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup warmed low fat milk
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat a 14 inch round baking pan with butter or olive oil and sprinkle the bottom evenly with 1 to 2 tablespoons of sugar. In a medium sized bowl, thoroughly mix the ingredients for the apple topping together.
2. Starting at the outside edge of the pan, arrange apple quarters tightly in a circular pattern over the sugar. Make more than one layer if needed and top the apples with the remaining topping mixture. Place pan into oven for 15 to 20 minutes and begin working on the cake. Don't forget to remove the pan from the oven after 20 minutes, leaving it in any longer will cause your apple topping to burn!
3. For the cake: in a medium sized bowl, beat sugar and egg yolks together until fully creamed and smooth, about 10 minutes.
4. In a separate mixing bowl, whip egg whites to form stiff peaks then immediately fold into your previous egg mixture. While continually mixing, add: warm milk, vanilla, butter, applesauce, baking powder, salt and slowly add the flour a 1/4 cup at a time.
5. Pour the cake mixture over apple topping in pan and place back into oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.
6. Allow to cool in pan for 10 minutes then loosen the sides of the pan with a knife. Carefully invert tart onto a heatproof dish. Slowly remove the pan and voila a beautiful tarta milou!

Serve warm with a generous scoop of vanilla ice cream and a strong cup of Greek coffee. Kali Orexi!!



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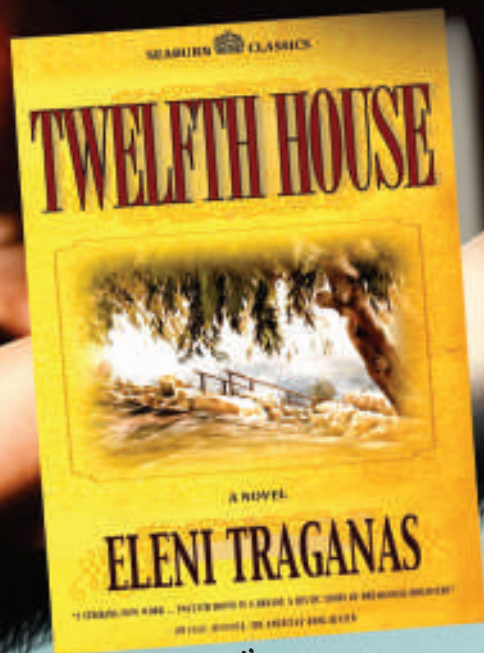
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# Twelfth House: The Journey of an Artist

By Katerina Georgiou

Eleni Traganas



*"I am the center of my world;  
there is a flame of light within me..."*

In Eleni Traganas' debut novel, "Twelfth House," this mantra lingers in the mind of protagonist Lara Sarrafi. A Greek-American concert pianist, she has relocated to Greece to perform and teach music only to find her good intentions thwarted by an unholy cast of characters.

Though the novel is a work of fiction, it isn't hard to imagine this mantra being uttered by the author herself. Like Lara, Traganas discovered she was blessed with a musical gift around the age of three when she sat in front of the piano and discovered she could play.

For the child prodigy, the connection to a higher awareness is self-evident. And so it was with Traganas, who recalls looking out of her crib and being mesmerized by the warm light of the iconostasis, illuminating her bedroom with a distinct reddish glow.

"I remember staring at the light for hours on end and just being fascinated by it," she said. "I would feel it expanding—just drawing me in."

It was a pull so strong that just before entering New York's legendary School of Performing Arts at the age of thirteen, she had her piano positioned directly beneath the beaming stand of icons. Later, as a student at Juilliard, she spent countless hours with her head bowed in reverent study. Her fingers gliding along the black and white keys, as she played in a "trance-like" state—filling the walls of her modest home with the ethereal music of another era.

Born in New York City to Greek immigrant parents, Traganas and her elder brother learned to speak Greek before English, and symbols of their Orthodox heritage decorated their home. But of all the reminders of her Faith, it was the ever-present light of the iconostasis that beckoned her with its luminous aura—anchoring her thoughts and igniting her heart.

"I feel that throughout my life I have been guided by that light—that it has illuminated me internally," she said.

In Traganas' case the inner light blazes brightly. She's not only an accomplished

pianist and composer, but an exhibited painter, published poet, and as of a few months ago, a novelist.

Set in Greece, "Twelfth House" tells the story of a young musician's quest for self-awareness. The unseen and hidden forces of life are at the heart of the novel—a point emphasized by the title—an astrological reference that symbolizes the subconscious mind, karma and secret enemies. All of which are deftly woven into the plot.

"In Greece, you experience the full gamut of emotions—comedy, tragedy, serenity, hysteria," said Traganas. "It's enough to fill your life with memories that are going to be hard to forget."

For Traganas, surrendering to the flow of inspiration is more than a way of life; it's an obligation. Once she picked up her pen, she felt compelled to follow the muse without ever questioning where it was taking her. Her process was simple: observe, feel and write.

"There are instances when you know that there is no logical way to explain certain imagery that you had internally," she says. "It leaps out at you and is so intense...you smell the fragrances, you see the colors—they're so vibrant; the emotions so overpowering. You wonder: Where did this come from?"

In the novel, Lara explores similar metaphysical questions. Unusual dreams,



"Towards The Flame" painted by Traganas and inspired by the visionary work of Russian composer Alexander Scriabin (Photo courtesy the artist, All rights reserved)

challenging associations and not so random encounters all have her asking: Who am I? And why am I here?

What makes Lara so intriguing is that she struggles to cultivate the one quality common to all truth-seekers: a pure, child-like heart. But, in the material world, that's also her greatest vulnerability. As a result, she's repeatedly confronted with the dark side of humanity—jealous colleagues, spiteful neighbors, a dangerous landlord—until she starts to see the light behind the shadowy figures.

"Forgive everyone and shut your eyes to their petty transgressions," Lara reminds herself. "Unfasten yourself from their grip. Rise above them all."

But Lara's story is most fascinating when she faces the personal demons that stand in the

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## Byzantine Crown Productions' first music video



Byzantine Crown Productions (BCP) is a non for profit organization founded by a team of experts in history with an extensive background in independent film making. The team is comprised of Peter Giakoumis, Billy Chrissochos, Chris Pollatos and George Giakoumis. Their exciting, flagship project called "Constantinople 1453 - On the Eve of the Fall" is a 15 minute short film/music video shot on HDV of the world of the "immortal" last emperor of Byzantium, Constantine Palaiologos XI, and his final transpiring days.

This project was inspired by Billy Chrissochos' New York rock group "Phoenix Reign", whose hit song "Constantinople 1453 - On the Eve of the Fall" incorporates an innovating story telling approach by using traditional Greek instruments and Greek melodic nuances throughout their album "Destination Unknown". The band features Billy Chrissochos and Kostas Psarros on guitars, Chris Pollatos on bass, Wayne Noon on drums and Theresa Gaffney on vocals.

BCP founder and historical consultant, Peter Giakoumis' extensive knowledge and love for everything Byzantine, is almost infectious.

When not creating or researching Byzantine armor and clothing he co-commands along with George Marchinek the "Greek Warriors", a popular ancient living history organization. Mr. Giakoumis has been on the History Channel and featured in "Skirmish" (the premiere living history magazine) and BCP co-founder Mr. Chrissochos has been interviewed in various Greek History magazines such as War and History (Polemos and Historia) and Patria.

Within the next month the video "Constantinople 1453 - On the Eve of the Fall" will air in Greece's MTV Headbanger's Ball channel and Mad TV, which is another huge music channel.

On January 29, 2010 Phoenix Reign will open for the popular European symphonic metal band Epica, at the Gramercy Theater.

To support and learn more about Byzantine Crown Productions and their activities you can visit the following sites: [www.blacktuesday1453.com](http://www.blacktuesday1453.com), [www.phoenixreign.com](http://www.phoenixreign.com) and [www.thegreekwarriors.com](http://www.thegreekwarriors.com).

### How do you spend your time outside of work?

As most people do, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. Whether it's just a quick visit, delicious meal, family event or social event, spending time with family and great friends is always a pleasure. Living in New York City, gives me easy access, to immeasurable restaurants, museums, shows, events, etc. I love going to Greece during the summer and haven't missed a summer in Greece since 1990. I feel like it rejuvenates me for the rest of the year. I also enjoy exercising and have to confess, I have an affinity for video games.

### What are your thoughts on the current economic crisis?

It is remarkable how most physicians know little about business. We spend our lives reading and training in the sciences, and our knowledge in business and economics is sacrificed. From my understanding, it appears as if there is no single etiology for our crisis. Everyone is to blame. Unfortunately, I think that greed may have blinded a lot of people. In the end, the lawyers are to blame for everything (I am kidding, physicians love to disparage lawyers). How long it will take to get out of this crisis, I am not sure, but hopefully we will come out of it a lot wiser.

### Where would you like to be in your professional and personal life 20 years from now?

I am not married, so 20 years from now, I hope to be married, with two or three children. My parents are going to kill me otherwise. I would like to have my own practice, with a few other partners, to share the work burden, giving me more time to spend with my family.

### What is your idea of happiness?

Happiness is living every moment to the fullest potential with grace and gratitude. My idea of happiness is two fold. First and most important, is the health and safety of my family and friends. Second, is enjoying a late outdoor dinner, under a magnificent Greek summer night, surrounded by the laughter of my family and friends, while listening to the ocean nearby.

What impressed me with many of the L100 members, is that they are busy professionals, heads of corporations, operating nationwide companies, with families, and yet make time to support their church and heritage. It's made me realize that I have made the excuse that "I am too busy", once too many times. My goal is to strive to be more involved in my church and other Hellenic causes. We are a small minority in a country of 300 plus million people. If we, as Greek Americans, don't actively participate in our causes, then no one else will.

### What qualities do you most admire or value in others?

I value loyalty, respect and traditionalism. I feel that these are valuable qualities to have..

### What do you consider your greatest achievement?

At this time, my greatest achievement has to do with my profession. Being an obstetrician and bringing life to the world, is an incredible feeling

### Who are your heroes in real life?

My parents are my heroes. My father, speaking a limited amount of English, immigrated to this country, having no family or friends to support him here. He received his Masters from Ohio State University and later his PhD from the University of Southern California in pharmaceuticals. My father is still working full time and retirement is farthest from his mind. At the same time, he has been heavily involved in the church, as he is currently the president of our church and one of the main spear headers in the construction of our new church. All while being active in other aspects of the Greek community and keeping a very active social calendar with my mother. I will never understand how Greek mothers seem to be able to accomplish everything. My mother worked full time, all while taking care of the family, serving a home cooked meal every night, keeping our clothes neat and clean, maintaining the house, and performing the other million obligations required of her. Teasingly I think that Greek mothers know of a secret magic potion that bestows them the power to accomplish all that they need to do and to grudgingly be right all the time.

PERISCOPE

## It's hip to be ...green!

For Greeks and Greek Americans alike it's Octoberfest time, albeit of a different kind! This month has already brought a "green" Prime Minister to Greece and is about to bring "the green Patriarch"--as the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew is known, due to his manifold initiatives for the protection of the environment--right here to the US. His All-Holiness will be in the country from October 20th to November 6th, and he will preside over a major environmental symposium in New Orleans. Then, he will visit various parishes and institutions, and finally he will go to Washington for a series of high level meetings, including with President Obama (more info on page 8). This official visit is also celebrate Archbishop Demetrios' ten fruitful years as primate of the Greek Orthodox Catholic Church in America. The Patriarch's decision to appoint (actually propose to the Patriarchal Synod) Demetrios as Archbishop is considered by many one of his wisest if not the wisest move.

Ecology and protection of the Environment has been a priority for this Patriarch from the very beginning. It's not a coincidence that his historical (from the 4th century AD) title "Ecumenical" (of all inhabited universe) and "ecology" (study, care of the inhabited universe) have the same root ("oikos"- residence). It's not a coincidence either that in the Bible and the liturgical texts, the environment and our relationship with it, provide some of the most fundamental metaphors: Christ, "the sacrificial lamb", is the good shepherd, His people the flock. His church is compared to the vine that grows and gives fruits, while in the Eucharist His body and blood are represented by wine, water and bread (grains). And I'm sure there are many more that I either can't recall right now or I'm not familiar with. Between man and the universe or oekoumene, there has to be a relationship not just of respect or respectful exploitation but of love and care. Environment is a precious gift given to us by our ancestors which we have to pass to our descendants intact.

Most of us living in major urban centers lack the kind of sensitivity towards nature that people living closer to it have (I'm not referring to Qaddafi and his tent). For us, it is something that we can just use and abuse to our benefit, without any qualms whatsoever (same way Dick Cheney understands the Constitution). It is thus of great symbolic importance, that the primus inter pares (first among equals) bishop of the historical Christendom has

officially proclaimed the environmental abuse a sin, something against God's will. And a sin can only be redeemed through repentance, "metanoia" in Greek, that -- contrary to what most of us think -- means "change of mind, attitude". Taking into consideration the legalistically-driven mentality of our western societies, the Patriarch has masterfully pointed to us the need to change course.

The recent election in Greece was in many ways a green one, not just because the color of PASOK, the winning party, is green, but because the issue on the environment played higher in comparison to previous ballots. George Papandreou, the American-born son and grandson of Greek prime ministers, had an easy ride, managing to surprise even his most optimistic friends, actually even himself, by winning over his opponent and now former Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis (himself a nephew and spiritual son of a former prime minister and head of state) by a margin of 10 percentage points! Just two years ago, Papandreou had suffered a humiliating defeat, seeing his party's percentage going lower and himself seriously challenged within his own party. He managed however to overcome, to boost his image and political speech, and thanks to his opponent's unwillingness to govern or take any kind of risk other than supporting his failed ministerial choices even when it was clear to everybody that they were guilty of a number of ethical -- to say the least -- wrongdoings, Papandreou took the lead in the polls last year and the rest is history, as history is Karamanlis at this point, since he announced his decision to step down as New Democracy Party chief.

There is however, a serious discussion under way within his party of ...canonizing him! Not only is he, like Jesus, the son of god (his uncle and spiritual father Konstantinos Karamanlis is publicly referred to as "god") but he performed a necessary (to canonization) miracle of resurrecting a man (Papandreou) from the (political) dead!

Seriously now, this 180-degree change in fortunes, proves again that in politics nothing should be taken for granted. Despite the image-making schemes and devices, the multi-faceted propaganda, people can still see through and, if not reward, at least punish those who are perceived as violators of the public trust. President Obama, the first foreign leader who called to congratulate Papandreou, should draw at least one lesson from this



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew with his ...ecological flock.

Greek election: Karamanlis lost mainly because he failed in doing what people elected him to do: govern and implement his promises. Obama, trapped in his own popularity and stardom, too seems slow in acting, in taking the country by storm as he did as party and later presidential candidate. In the name of his noble, some would say, effort to continually build consensus in everything, he has fallen back to a very slow pace which doesn't take long before it's perceived as weakness or even incompetence. Unless his intention is ...sainthood by resurrecting the now defunct Republican Party...he needs to move forward faster and to do it now! The opportunity for a good start might be the Patriarchal visit. Obama must speak in unequivocal terms when it comes to the fundamental obligation of Turkey to allow the Ecumenical Patriarchate to freely exercise its duties.

When the president visited Turkey, earlier this year, he only saw the Patriarch in his hotel for a few minutes, while his staff tried to play down the meeting, delaying even to release photos, so that his hosts, the Turkish government, would not be ...offended! That incidence served as a clear example of the damage the previous administration has done to the country on the international level. Because of a series of failed decisions, Turks have suddenly become so important, that the visiting American president must have their approval whom to meet and for how long! Now that the Patriarch is here, President Obama has the opportunity to speak clearly and demonstrate that the new, gentler image in the American foreign policy should not be misconstrued as weakness.

In closing, and going back to Papandreou's victory, I think he got the mandate he wanted -- actually it went beyond his wildest expectations -- in order to make some of the long overdue changes Greece is in need for. People are so fed up and disappointed by the previous administration that I think they will be willing to let him try and even fail here and there. Let us hope that Papandreou will learn at least one lesson from his predecessor: in government, not doing is not an option.



Newly elected Prime Minister of Greece George Papandreou greets supporters minutes after his landslide victory was proclaimed.

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It was a hot afternoon in the city of Garden Grove in Orange County when we arrived at the recently renovated manufacturing facility of Earth Friendly Products. The American Hellenic Council (AHC) and the company were hosting an event featuring Congressman Ed Royce (R-CA40) who is representing the district in the US House of Representatives.

The Greek-American-owned company, which specializes in making environmentally-friendly cleaning products, opened its doors for the first time to the public since the renovation with the goal to show the Congressman and the world how sustainable manufacturing can create a thriving business even in the midst of the great recession.

By Alexandros Mizan

## Earth Friendly Products of California An example setter



Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks showing Congressman Ed Royce the Solar Panel Installation



From left, AHC members Alexander Mizan, Aris Anagnos, Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, Van Vlahakis, Earth Friendly Products founder, and Jim Pilafas

**Van Vlahakis father, founded the parent Company, Venus Laboratories, in 1967 in Chicago. In 1993 the company went entirely green with Earth Friendly Products. Vlahakis, an immigrant from Greece and chemist by profession, had a vision of manufacturing detergent and other cleaning products that are made out of renewable resources, are not harmful to the environment and its users and are less expensive to manufacture and sell than conventional products made by industry giants such as Procter & Gamble or Unilever.**

In the company of Congressman Ed Royce, members of the American Hellenic Council were given a complete tour of the facility. Mr. Vlahakis, who is in charge of developing the products and his daughter Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, who is the Director of Marketing and Communications at the company, as well as other employees were eager to show us every step of production, from research and quality control testing to packaging and shipping.

The facility was recently retrofitted for being LEED-compliant and certified. Most, if not all, of the power used by the facility is being generated by the massive solar array that was recently installed on the roof of the building by Progressive Power Group. Chris Staskewicz, who is one of the principals of the company, was on site to show us the system that Mr. Vlahakis calls one of the best investments he has made.

Mr. Vlahakis stressed that he is planning to harness the solar power for the company's other manufacturing and distribution facilities across the country. After all, who could argue with an investment providing a solid return that also makes one feel good about slowing down global warming?

What followed was an impressive lunch hosted by Ms. Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks. The food, which was prepared by Maria Foskari of Anaheim-based Foskari Cuisine & Catering was organically made and delicious. After lunch, Representative Ed Royce addressed all of the attendees, members of the American Hellenic Council as well as all the employees Earth Friendly Products and stressed the importance of protecting the environment while at the same time enhancing economic activity and generating quality jobs in the area. Mr.

Royce, who is member of the International Conservation Caucus, applauded Earth Friendly Products employees for their work and Mr. Vlahakis for being able to develop and bring to market products that are free of formaldehyde, phosphates and chorine at a competitive price point. Congressman Royce also mentioned the importance of these products in maintaining our clean water supply which is increasingly important in light of the recent water-related tensions in many parts of California and draughts that are affecting the country.

The day concluded with a private meeting of AHC Board members with Congressman Royce and a brief discussion of issues that concern the Greek-American community. Mr. Royce expressed his continued support for the peaceful and fair reunification of Cyprus and agreed to co-sponsor H.R. 486 urging the F.Y.R.O.M. to negotiate with Greece on arriving to a permanent and just solution to the name dispute. Mr. Royce did co-sign the resolution a few days later.

Overall, it was a very impressive event. Van and the Vlahakis family made us proud for showing that Greek-Americans can lead the way in protecting the planet and building successful businesses at the same time. The most impressive of all however was the fact that during our tour all the employees greeted us with a smile. They were genuinely happy and eager to host us and talk to us. Having worked in manufacturing management at a time where the US manufacturing base is shrinking, I can testify that it's hard to find a company like this one. If one can look at Earth Friendly Products' practices, one will be able to see solid wages, benefits and four bonuses a year. Truly an example-setter.

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