



# HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST Newsletter

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC LINK WITH GREECE

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## Upcoming Events

### The Apology Project

On Sunday, October 16, at 3:30 PM, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents the *The Apology of Socrates* a presentation by the performing arts organizations *Theatro* and *Mythic Media* based on Plato's *The Apology of Socrates*. The event will take place at the Community Hall of the St. John Greek Orthodox Church in Des Plaines, Illinois.

The creative forces behind the presentation are actor Yannis Simonides, director Loukas Skipitaris, costume designer Theoni Aldredge, and percussionist Caryn Heilman. *Yannis Simonides* is a Yale Drama School trained actor/writer and Emmy-winning documentary producer. He has served as chairman of the NYU Tisch Drama Department and as executive producer of GOTELECOM Media. He is the founding director of the Greek Theater of New York and the executive director of Hellenic Public Radio–COSMOS FM in New York. Mr. Simonides' work includes plays by Euripides, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Brecht, Korres and Pontikas, along with solo and ensemble pieces culled from the writings of C.P. Cavafy, General Makriyannis and Nikolai Gogol. He has received the support of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Greek Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs, the A. Onassis, I. Kostopoulos, and Levendis Foundations, Time Warner and the Mobil Foundation. He coproduced Mikis Theodorakis' 75th Birthday Celebration at Lincoln Center with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and he is associated with the Annual Festival of Greek Music and Dance at Symphony Space in New York City, presented by the World Music Institute and AD&M Productions. Mr. Simonides narrated the PBS specials *Axion Esti* and *Visions of Greece*, and the upcoming PBS documentary *Return to the Homeland*. He is the founder and president of Mythic Media International, a communications and entertainment company developing theatrical and television projects worldwide.

Director *Loukas N. Skipitaris* came to the United States after brief careers in medicine and political science at Thessaloniki's Aristotelian University. He studied acting with some of New York's finest teachers and completed his Master's Degree in theater direction in 1976. Mr. Skipitaris made his Broadway acting debut in *Ilya Darling*, with Melina Merkouri, and subsequently appeared in the original Broadway production of *Zorba*. He has acted Off-Broadway, in National Tours, and in addition to his featured role in the prime-time TV series *The Andros Targets*, has had running roles in *As the World Turns*, *The Guiding Light*, and *One life to live*. He recently appeared on *The Late Show* with David Letterman.

Mr. Skipitaris began directing in 1971, at the Off-Broadway Gate Theater in NYC. His credits include productions of Greek classics and plays by Anton Chekhov, Tennessee Williams, George Bernard Shaw, Neil Simon, Ira Levin, and others. At Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall he directed the World Premiere of the oratorio *Erotocritos*, and has staged, among others, the musicals *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, *Of Thee I Sing*, and *West Side Story*. Mr. Skipitaris' latest directorial assignment, the comedy *Smile Please!*, was recently performed at the Hellenic Cultural Center theatre in Long Island City. He is the founder and director of *The Acting Place*, an on-going professional acting workshop as well as the founding and artistic director of *Theatron, Inc* a non profit Greek American performing arts center in NYC.

With over 150 stage productions, numerous ballets and several films to her credit, Theoni V. Aldredge ranks as one of the most prolific and successful costume designers of the late 20th Century. Born and raised in Greece, Aldredge was inspired to become a costumer after seeing the film version of *Caesar and Cleopatra* in 1946. She trained at the Goodman Theatre School where she made her debut with 1950's *The Distaff Side*. After debuting in films with *Girl of the Night*, Aldredge began her long association as one of the resident designers at Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival with the 1961 production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Over the next three decades at the NYSF she crafted clothing for many Shakespearean productions, as well as the landmark musicals *Hair* and *A Chorus Line*. With over 100 Broadway shows to her credit, Ms. Aldredge was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in 1986. Her credits include *Sweet Bird of Youth*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf*, *Anyone Can Whistle*, *A Chorus Line*, *Three Penny Opera*, *Annie* (Tony Award), *Barnum* (Tony Award), *42nd Street*, *Dream Girl*, *La Cage Aux Folles* (Tony Award), and *Gypsy*. Ms. Aldredge's film credits include *The First Wives Club*, *Addams Family Values*, *Moonstruck*, *Network*, *The Rose* and *The Great Gatsby*, for which she received The Academy Award and the British Society of Film and Television Arts Award. She is the recipient of the New York City Liberty Medal and was honored with the Costume Guild Career Achievement Award. In addition, the Theatre Development Fund has presented her with the Irene Sharaff Lifetime Achievement Award for her work in Theatre, Film and Television.

*Caryn Heilman*, is a percussionist, vocalist, and dancer with the World Music of Nana ensemble, which blends musical elements from around the world. Specializing in frame drums, she plays the daf a Sufi drum from Kurdistan, and the tar. Her rhythmic roots began with tap dancing at age 5. She had a ten year career as a modern dancer with the Paul Taylor Dance

Company. Meredith Monk invited her to join her vocal ensemble the same year that she joined Taylor. She can be heard on Nana Simopoulos' CD *Daughter of the Sun* which was number one on NAV world and new age radio charts. She has also recorded for Navras record's tribute to Nusrat Fateh Au Khan. Film and television credits include work for *Toby Twining* and Score Productions.

### **MGSA Symposium Returns to Chicago in 2005**

Palmer House Hilton Hotel (877-865-5321 or 312-726-7500)

The MGSA's nineteenth international Symposium will be held in Chicago, Illinois from 3–5 November 2005. In addition to offering a wide variety of papers on multiple aspects of contemporary Hellenic culture, literature, language, history, society, politics, economics and the arts, the Symposium's featured topics include Greece, Greeks, and Hellenism in the age of transnationalism (borders, migrations and minorities); Greek-Ottoman history; new developments with respect to Cyprus; and an assessment of the MGSA and the field of Modern Greek Studies.

#### **Symposium Highlights:**

Highly acclaimed author Olga Broumas will deliver Thursday night's Keynote Address. She will be reading her own poetry as well as from her translations of Modern Greek poetry. The poetry reading will be followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience.

The Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center—the nation's only museum of its kind—will present an exhibit that takes a historical look at the lives of Chicago's early Greek immigrants, their relations with other immigrant groups, and the community's close association with Jane Addams' famed Hull-House.

Guided tours of the Classical Greek collection at the renowned Chicago Art Institute will be led by Dr. Jennifer Tobin, University of Illinois–Chicago.

In collaboration with the Chicago Greek Film Festival, the Gene Siskel Film Center and The Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center, Kyriakos Katzourakis' docudrama, *The Way to the West* (*O Dromos pros tin Dysi*), will be screened. Winner of the coveted FIPRESCI award, this innovative docudrama documents the life of Irina, a woman from the former Soviet Union, who comes to Greece in search of a better life and falls victim to sex slave trafficking. Through a series of personal confessions, her story unfolds, implicating and critiquing the current immigrant and refugee situation in a country that plays a strategic role in migration as a "waiting room" on "the way to the West." Director Kyriakos Katzourakis will attend the screening and will participate in a question-and-answer session with the audience. A reception will follow the event.

Hellenic Link–Midwest is a cosponsor of the Symposium and its members can attend the Symposium for free.

### **"Painting as a Cinema"**

On Sunday, November 6, at 3pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents film director Kyriakos Katzourakis in a lecture titled *Painting as a Cinema*. The event will be held at the Four Points Sheraton hotel, 10249 West Irving Park Road at Schiller Park. The lecture will discuss the influences of painting and cinema on the director's work.

*Kyriakos Katzourakis* was born in Athens in 1944. He studied painting at the School of Fine Arts with G. Moralis and at the St. Martins School of Art in England. He also studied set design at the School of Fine Arts with B. Vassiliadis. In 1968 he received the "Parthenis" award. He lived in England from 1972 to 1985 where with the help of E. Paolozzi and the Arts Council, he organized in 1976 an exhibition of his work at the Serpentine Gallery. He designed the sets for Pantelis Voulgaris' film *The Engagement of Anna* and he did the costumes for the film *Days of '36* by Theo Angelopoulos. Since 1988, he has collaborated with the Art Theater on many plays directed by G. Lazanis. He collaborated on the first production of the *Oktana* dance group in 1993 and in V. Arditis' directorial debut. Since 1991 he has been working systematically with the ART GROUP on the relationship of drawing with theater, music, photography and cinema. *The Way to the West* is Mr. Katzourakis' first directorial effort.

### ***From Our History***

#### **Plato's The Apology of Socrates**

*The Apology of Socrates is a reconstruction of the defense speeches in Socrates' trial in 399 B.C. on charges of 'corrupting the youth' and 'believing in gods which the State does not recognize'. The word Apology in this context does not mean "a statement of regret requesting pardon", but "a formal statement of justification or defense".*

I will begin at the beginning, and ask what the accusation is which has given rise to this slander of me, and which has encouraged Meletus to proceed against me. What do the slanderers say? "Socrates is an evil-doer, and a curious person, who searches into things under the earth and in heaven, and he makes the worse appear the better cause; and he teaches the aforesaid doctrines to others." That is the nature of the accusation, and that is what you have seen yourselves in the comedy of Aristophanes; who has introduced a man whom he calls Socrates, going about and saying that he can walk in the air, and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little—not that I mean to say anything disparaging of anyone who is a student of natural philosophy. I should be very sorry if Meletus could lay that to my charge. But the simple truth is, O Athenians, that I have nothing to do with these studies. Very many of those here present are witnesses to the truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have heard me, and tell your neighbors whether any of you have ever known me hold forth in few words or in many upon matters of this sort... You hear their answer. And from what they say of this you will be able to

judge of the truth of the rest...

This investigation has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many calumnies, and I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and in this oracle he means to say that the wisdom of men is little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name as an illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. And so I go my way, obedient to the god, and make inquisition into the wisdom of anyone, whether citizen or stranger, who appears to be wise; and if he is not wise, then in vindication of the oracle I show him that he is not wise; and this occupation quite absorbs me, and I have no time to give either to any public matter of interest or to any concern of my own, but I am in utter poverty by reason of my devotion to the god.

I have said enough in my defense against the first class of my accusers; I turn to the second class... What do they say? Something of this sort: That Socrates is a doer of evil, and corrupter of the youth, and he does not believe in the gods of the State, and has other new divinities of his own. That is the sort of charge; and now let us examine the particular counts.

...you swear in the indictment that I teach and believe in divine or spiritual agencies (new or old, no matter for that); at any rate, I believe in spiritual agencies, as you say and swear in the affidavit; but if I believe in divine beings, I must believe in spirits or demigods; is not that true? Yes, that is true, for I may assume that your silence gives assent to that. Now what are spirits or demigods? Are they not either gods or the sons of gods? Is that true?

-Yes, that is true.

But this is just the ingenious riddle of which I was speaking: the demigods or spirits are gods, and you say first that I do not believe in gods, and then again that I do believe in gods; that is, if I believe in demigods. For if the demigods are the illegitimate sons of gods, whether by the Nymphs or by any other mothers, as is thought, that, as all men will allow, necessarily implies the existence of their parents. You might as well affirm the existence of mules, and deny that of horses and asses. Such nonsense, Meletus, could only have been intended by you as a trial of me. You have put this into the indictment because you had nothing real of which to accuse me. But no one who has a particle of understanding will ever be convinced by you that the same man can believe in divine and superhuman things, and yet not believe that there are gods and demigods and heroes.

Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if now, when as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfill the philosopher's mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I

disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death: then I should be fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For this fear of death is indeed the pretence of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being the appearance of knowing the unknown; since no one knows whether death, which they in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is there not here conceit of knowledge, which is a disgraceful sort of ignorance? And this is the point in which, as I think, I am superior to men in general, and in which I might perhaps fancy myself wiser than other men—that whereas I know but little of the world below, I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonorable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And therefore if you let me go now, and reject the counsels of Anytus, who said that if I were not put to death I ought not to have been prosecuted, and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words—if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and will let you off, but upon one condition, that you are not to inquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing this again you shall die—if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting anyone whom I meet after my manner, and convincing him, saying: O my friend, why do you who are a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens, care so much about laying up the greatest amount of money and honor and reputation, and so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard or heed at all? Are you not ashamed of this? And if the person with whom I am arguing says: Yes, but I do care; I do not depart or let him go at once; I interrogate and examine and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater, and overvaluing the less. And this I should say to everyone whom I meet, young and old, citizen and alien, but especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For this is the command of God, as I would have you know; and I believe that to this day no greater good has ever happened in the State than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons and your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue come money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, my influence is ruinous indeed. But if anyone says that this is not my teaching, he is speaking an untruth. Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not; but whatever you do, know that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times. *(to be continued)*

## *From The Riches Of Our Cultural Heritage*

### **Poetry by Manolis Anagnostakis**

Manolis Anagnostakis was born in Thessalonica in 1925 and died in 2005 in Athens. He studied medicine and practiced radiology. Anagnostakis is considered to be one of the most important poets to have emerged in Greece after World War II – that is, after the ‘famous’ modernist generation of Seferis, Elytis and Ritsos. Also a writer of prose and essays, Anagnostakis has won many awards for his poetry, which has been translated into numerous European languages.

#### **ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ, ΜΕΡΕΣ ΤΟΥ 1969 Μ.Χ.**

Στην οδό Αιγύπτου—πρώτη πάροδος δεξιά—  
Τώρα υψώνεται το μέγαρο της Τράπεζας Συναλλαγών  
Τουριστικά γραφεία και πρακτορεία μεταναστεύσεως  
Και τα παιδάκια δε μπορούνε πια να παίζουνε από τα  
τόσα τροχοφόρα που περνούνε  
Άλλωστε τα παιδιά μεγάλωσαν, ο καιρός εκείνος πέρασε  
που ξέρατε  
Τώρα πια δε γελούν, δεν ψιθυρίζουν μυστικά, δεν  
εμπιστεύονται,  
Όσα επιζήσαν, εννοείται, γιατί ήρθανε βαριές αρρώστιες  
από τότε  
Πλημμύρες, καταποντισμοί, σεισμοί, θωρακισμένοι  
στρατιώτες  
Θυμούνται τα λόγια του πατέρα: εσύ θα γνωρίσεις  
καλύτερες μέρες  
Δεν έχει σημασία τελικά αν δεν τις γνώρισαν, λένε το  
μάθημα οι ίδιοι στα παιδιά τους  
Ελπίζοντας πάντοτε πως κάποτε θα σταματήσει η  
αλυσίδα  
Ίσως στα παιδιά των παιδιών τους ή στα παιδιά των  
παιδιών των παιδιών τους.  
Προς το παρόν, στον παλιό δρόμο που λέγαμε,  
υψώνεται η Τράπεζα Συναλλαγών  
—εγώ συναλλάσσομαι, εσύ συναλλάσσεσαι, αυτός  
συναλλάσσεται—  
Τουριστικά γραφεία και πρακτορεία μεταναστεύσεως  
—εμείς μεταναστεύουμε, εσείς μεταναστεύετε, αυτοί  
μεταναστεύουν—  
Όπου και να ταξιδέψω η Ελλάδα με πληγώνει, έλεγε ο  
Ποιητής  
Η Ελλάδα με τα ωραία νησιά, τα ωραία γραφεία, τις  
ωραίες εκκλησιές

Η Ελλάς των Ελλήνων

#### **THESSALONIKI, DAYS OF A.D. 1969**

On Egypt Street — first side-street on the right —  
the Exchange Bank Building rises now,  
tourist offices and emigration agencies.  
And the kids can't play there any longer  
so much traffic goes by.  
Besides, the kids have grown up, the days you knew are  
gone.  
Now they don't laugh any more, don't whisper secrets,  
don't confide in each other,  
those who have survived, I mean, because serious illness  
has taken its toll since then,  
floods, ships sinking, earthquakes, armored soldiers,  
they remember their fathers' words: you'll know better  
days.  
It doesn't matter in the end if they never knew better days,  
they'll repeat the same lesson to their own children,  
hoping always that the chain will break some day,  
maybe with their children's children or their children's  
children's children.  
For the time being, on the old street we mentioned, the  
Exchange Bank rises  
— I exchange, you exchange, he exchanges —  
tourist offices and emigration agencies  
— we emigrate, you emigrate, they emigrate —  
wherever I travel, Greece wounds me, said the Poet:  
Greece of the beautiful islands, beautiful offices, beautiful  
churches,  
Greece of the Greeks.