



# THE HELLENIC CENTRE NEWS

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THE HELLENIC COMMUNITY TRUST

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## Overview of the Year 2013

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2013 was a year of Anniversaries for the Centre: We celebrated the lives and works of two of our greatest literary figures Nikos Kazantzakis and C. P. Cavafy; we commemorated the ninetieth anniversary of the destruction of Smyrna; and, at the end of the year, we paid tribute to the life and times of Archbishop Makarios III.

Each of these events was spellbinding in a different way. The Symposium in February marking the birth of Kazantzakis 130 years ago, looked at the impact of Kazantzakian thought on all art forms and comprised of a number of speeches by current experts in the field, a theatrical performance, and the screening of the iconic film 'Zorba the Greek'. The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cavafy's birth, as befitting a poet whose work has always inspired musical interpretations, was marked in October with a musical event; a unique presentation that had already successfully toured in the US and Greece. Our biggest exhibition 'Smyrna The Destruction of a Cosmopolitan City 1900-1922,' a photographic show with an accompanying documentary film and lecture series gave an insight into how a thriving, diverse city could rise, and then fall. Finally, our celebration of the birth of Makarios 100 years ago, brought together historians and other experts as well as people who had known Makarios personally and professionally to evaluate his work both as a religious and as a political leader.

A fruitful collaboration that has been developing over the years with universities and other academic institutions resulted in a rich programme of lectures in 2013. Through this collaboration and the high quality of lectures we were able to attract many young academics and university students to the Centre.

We are now looking forward to celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hellenic Centre. None of the successes of the Centre would have been possible without your presence at our events and we look forward in welcoming you in the coming years.



## Conferences

In 2013 we had the pleasure of hosting a number of colloquia/symposia in collaboration with UK Universities and other related organisations. Some of the events are mentioned below.

**Greece/Precarious/Europe**, an one-day colloquium brought together academics, artists and writers who discussed how contemporary Greek culture is transformed in the current economic and socio-political crisis. Participants included Angela Dimitrakaki, Maria Margaronis, Eleftheria Ioannidou, Sozita Goudouna, Costas Douzinas, Dimitris Plantzos, Thodoris Chiotis. The event was convened by Dimitris Papanikolaou (Oxford), Effie Spentzou and Richard Alston (Royal Holloway) and was organised by the Hellenic Centre, the Sub faculty of Modern Greek, Oxford University and the Centre for the Reception of Greece and Rome with the support of the Humanities and Arts Research Centre, Royal Holloway, University of London.

An International Symposium entitled **Nikos Kazantzakis (1883-1957): The Luminous Interval** took place on the occasion of the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the world renowned author and highlighted the scope and impact of Kazantzakian thought on contemporary Literature, Art, and Society. It featured speeches by the foremost Kazantzakian scholars of our time and was concluded by a performance with actor Georges Corraface and a special screening of the three-time Academy Award winning film, *Zorba the Greek*. This event, under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Sports and Culture, was organised by the Kazantzakis Publications, the Press Office and the Education Office of the Embassy of Greece in the United Kingdom.

**What Can We Learn from the Ancient Greeks Today** illustrated lectures by Professors Richard Seaford and Christopher Gill from Exeter University followed by discussion brought out key insights from ancient Greece for modern society and illuminated the background of the current financial crisis and the contemporary usefulness of ancient Greek healthcare methods. The event was part of the Initiative on the Impact of Greek Culture in the Ancient and Modern World, which is sponsored by the A G Leventis Foundation and was organised by the University of Exeter and the Hellenic Centre.

**From Antiphon to Autocue: Speechwriting Ancient and Modern** an international conference organised by the Classics Department, Centre for Oratory and Rhetoric, Royal Holloway, University of London, took place. It examined the practice of employing speechwriters in political and forensic contexts from Classical antiquity to the 21st Century.

**Member Societies**

Anglo-Hellenic League  
Cypriot Estia of London  
Episteme – The Association of British  
Cypriot Professionals  
Eteria Ellinon Epistimonon  
Greek Archaeological  
Committee (UK)  
Greek Cypriot Brotherhood  
Hellenic Bankers  
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Hellenic Engineers Society  
Hellenic Foundation  
Hellenic Medical Society  
Ionian Society  
Lobby for Cyprus  
London Hellenic Society  
Lykion ton Hellinidon  
Macedonian Society  
of Great Britain  
Oinoussai Benevolent Fund  
Peloponnesian Association  
of Great Britain  
Society for Modern Greek Studies  
Society for the Promotion  
of Hellenic Studies

**A Byzantine Chant Symposium** with leading scholars illustrated in a short series of papers and a panel discussion *The Musical Form of the Divine Liturgy*. This was followed by a *Byzantine Chant Recital* with Cappella Romana and the Choir of the School of Byzantine Music, Archdiocese of Thyateira. The event was organised by City University London and Cappella Romana and was supported by the Higher Education Innovation Fund through City University London, BBC Radio 3, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain and the Hellenic Centre.

**Contemporary Greek Film Cultures 2013 Conference** was dedicated to Greek cinema; organised by the University of Glasgow and University of Reading and supported by the Hellenic Centre it promoted a more concerted study and theorisation of Contemporary Greek Cinema.

**Energy Developments in South East Mediterranean** a conference organised under the initiative of Prof C. Arcoumanis of City University London and the Research Centre for Energy Management at ESCP Europe Business School and supported by the Hellenic Centre. Government representatives, international organisations, financial institutions, energy corporations, law firms and top energy experts discussed the current challenges and opportunities of the Energy Industry in South-East Europe.

**Archbishop Makarios III -100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his Birth** examined his life and legacy as a religious and political leader of Cyprus, from a purely academic and historical view. Prominent experts from Cyprus, Greece and the UK were invited to speak. The Bishop of Paphos Georgios, Dr Klearchos Kyriakides senior lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire, Dr Diana Markides from the University of Cyprus, Mr Michael Colocassides a close associate of the Archbishop and Prof Van Coufoudakis specialist in International Relations covered his role as head of the Church, his response to British colonialism and the struggle for liberation, his views on economic and social issues at that time and the crucial years in the 1960s, and his relationship with the Superpowers. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion chaired by the Chairman of the Hellenic Community Trust Mr Costas Kleanthous. The event was organised by the Hellenic Centre and sponsored by the A.G.Leventis Foundation and Katsouris Brothers Ltd.

## Lectures/Presentations

The rich and varied programme of lectures/presentations/debates organised by the Hellenic Centre and/or Member Societies are too numerous for all to be mentioned. Some of the events are listed below.

**January : The Crisis in the Euro-Zone** a debate between Michalis Sarris and Yiannis Kitromilides about the effects of this crisis on the economies of Cyprus and Greece. **The Last Banana** a book presentation by Shelby Tucker about the leading members of the Greek community in East Africa. **Can Bizonality Work in a Multi-ethnic Unitary State in Cyprus** a presentation by Lobby for Cyprus dealt with the issues of equality, diversity and non-discrimination. **Education and Globalisation** a lecture in Greek by Prof Marios Pericleous Begzos, University of Athens organised by the Archdiocese of Thyateira and supported by the Hellenic Centre as part of the celebrations for Christian and Greek Letters.

**February: An Evening in Memory of Nicholas J Hadjipateras** was organised by the Greek Archaeological Committee. **The Maeander Valley: A Historical Geography from Antiquity to Byzantium** talk by Dr Peter Thonemann, Oxford, at the invitation of the Anglo-Hellenic League.

**March: Shakespeare/Verdi** an illustrated lecture by Helena Matheopoulos on the occasion of Verdi's 200<sup>th</sup> Bicentenary, showed how some of Verdi's operas were inspired by Shakespeare's plays.

**April: Enterprise in Education and Education in Enterprise** a presentation by Dr Panikkos Poutziouris (Business School at UCLan Cyprus) at the invitation of EPISTEME. **Preventive Conservation: Safeguarding the Value of Works of Art.** a talk by Minas Chatzichristou, Art Advisor and Fine Art Conservator.

**May: Colonel Leake in the Mani** a presentation of Martin Jones's book organised by Eteria Ellinon Epistimonon.

**June: The Greek Crisis: when the Segmentary Community Meets with Populism** a lecture by Prof Thanos Veremis, University of Athens organised by the Society for Modern Greek Studies and the Hellenic Centre. **The Annual Runciman Award Ceremony**-organised by the Anglo-Hellenic League saw Simon Goldhill win with his book 'Sophocles and the Language of Tragedy'. **A Princess, Two Books and an Icon: Another Byzantine Puzzle** a lecture by Prof Elizabeth Jeffreys organised by the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies and the Hellenic Centre. **The Amorgos Conspiracy** an illustrated talk by Elias Kulukundis about the rescue of a political prisoner based on his book.

**September: The Walls of Byzantium** a historical novel set in the mid -15<sup>th</sup> century was presented by the author James Heneage.

**October: Greeks of Alexandria** an illustrated talk and a film by Eirini Chrysocheri on the reminiscences of Greeks who had to leave Alexandria in the 1950s. **Michael Ventris, Linear B and the Triumph of the Architect's Thought**, a talk by E. Stavrakakis on the fact that an architect, rather than an archaeologist, solved the puzzle of an early form of ancient Greek language. **British Colonial Architecture in Cyprus 1878-1960** book presentation by the author Prof Costas Georghiou.

## Exhibitions

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### Great Hall

**Nature in Cyprus** an exhibition of photographs by Anastasios P Leventis and other members of BirdLife Cyprus was on display in the Great Hall in January. The exhibition was inspired by the island's nature and the sheer wealth of its fauna and flora and illustrated the animal and bird life of Cyprus. At the opening of the exhibition, a fascinating documentary on Cyprus' biodiversity **Important Areas for Birds and Other Wildlife in Cyprus**, produced by BirdLife Cyprus and created by Loucas Christoforou, was projected. The documentary revealed to the audience unique images of Cyprus wildlife and natural landscapes, reminded us of the island's natural heritage and highlighted the need to protect the natural environment.

The Hellenic Centre commemorated the ninetieth anniversary of the destruction of Smyrna with the photographic exhibition **Smyrna the Destruction of a Cosmopolitan City 1900-1922**. A documentary film and a series of lectures complemented the exhibition. The **exhibition** and related events highlighted the multicultural nature of Smyrna and explored also the wider issue of the history and nature of such cities, focusing on the conditions that make them possible and the threats to their existence. The exhibition contained ninety-two photographs arranged chronologically to show, first, Smyrna at the turn of the twentieth century, a thriving city with Ottoman subjects of every faith interacting and doing business with Levantines and other minorities. During this period newspapers were published in seven languages, there was a vigorous cultural life and great wealth was created. The next set of photographs focused on the growing threat to intercommunal stability with the persecution of the minorities, and finally the Greek landing in May 1919. This led to a section of the war years between 1919 and 1922 ending with the harrowing images of the city's destruction in September 1922. The exhibition concluded with photographs of Smyrniots in the new homes they had to make in other lands. The **documentary** addressed the same themes by showing archival stills and moving images from the period and also footage of living witnesses and leading experts thus placing the material in its historical context. Maria Iliou an award-winning film director from Greece curated the exhibition and directed the film. The historical consultant for both projects was Alexander Kitroeff, Associate Professor at Haverford College, USA. The series of **lectures** by experts and writers in the field gave an extra dimension to this anniversary and allowed for extensive discussion on events which are still controversial. The lecturers included Giles Milton, Victoria Solomonidis, Renee Hirschon, Philip Mansel, George Vassiadis, George Galdies and George Poulimenos. The exhibition and related programme from 29 January to 10 February were well-attended and widely praised.

The exhibition **Orthodoxy—three artists, three techniques, one subject** marked the Greek Orthodox Easter with photographic images by Doros Partasides, icons on broken glass by George Papadopoulos and icons on canvas by Eleftherios Foulides. The event was under the auspices of HE the Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, Gregorios and was supported by the Hellenic Centre and the Greek Orthodox Communities of Great Britain.

### Friends Room

On the walls of the Friends Room we exhibited the work of eight artists. George Leventis presented **Leda's Drawings** a suite of drawings inspired by the Leda theme in mythology; George-Omiros Christakos with his photographs **Αειζώνων Πυρ-Everlasting Fire** showed us how to capture the very moment that the movement of the human body projects its energy throughout space and time; **Walking in Exarchia**, a photographic project by Katerina Botsari demonstrated the interaction of outdoor space and paint; **New Paintings of Greek Revival in London**, a series of paintings by Barry Andrews was a celebration of Greek civilisation; Kalli Kastori through a series of paintings entitled **Freeze** depicted realistic images of people in public places and highlighted the contrast between the individual and the crowd; John Heywood's paintings **Nisia, A Celebration of the Beauty of the Greek Islands** took us to the islands of Chios, Samos, Icaria, Fournoi and Crete; **Co-existence**, the colourful paintings by Artemis Tsitouris, with a tendency towards abstraction showed that colour and form co-exist by complimenting each other and Mina Kordali's **Ποές Φωτός-Streams of Light**, constructions made of canvas, paper, wood and illuminating neon tubes demonstrated how light, as a dominant element of creation and communication, has the power to transform.





## Theatre/Film/Music

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A brilliant abridged version of Greek myths was presented in February at the Hellenic Centre; **Unmythable** showed us what happened to Midas after the gold ran out, the Odyssey from a foot-soldier's perspective, and what *really* happened in that wooden horse. In April Dimitra Kreps devised and performed in Greek and English **Moonlight Sonata** by Yannis Ritsos.

In April a short 25 minute film about the 'making' of **Papadopoulos & Sons** was projected followed by a Question and Answer session about the film with lead actor Georges Corraface (*Πολιτική Κουζίνα – A Touch of Spice*), the writer/director Marcus Markou and other members of the film's cast and crew. In November we had the screening **A Basket of Food: Greece in the 1940s**, a dramatic and moving documentary about Greece in World War II together with a brief talk by Dr Sheila Lecoer.

Music, as always, featured prominently in the programme of 2013. In March we had a **Jazz** concert with the group Diminuita. Later in the year we also had a Jazz recital with guitarist Giorgos Paphitis who presented his new jazz trio-sextet project and alto saxophonist Jermaine Dantzie performed groove-based jazz with an urban edge. In April Costas Fotopoulos gave a **piano recital** with works by Brahms and Liszt. In May we hosted a recital of popular **Tango music** with a short lecture by Dr Angeliki Koufou on 'European Tango vs. Argentinean Tango in Greece during the Interwar Period (1922-1940)' organised by the Hellenic Centre and the Education Office, Embassy of Greece.

**A Celebration of Greek and Ukrainian Musical Culture Through Songs and Poetry** took place in June; Julietta Demetriades (soprano) and Alla Sirenko (composer, pianist) performed Greek and Cypriot art songs, as well as works by the romantic Ukrainian composer M V Lysenko and by P I Tchaikovsky, who geographically originates from Ukraine. The highlight of the concert was the world premiere of songs by Alla Sirenko, specially written for this occasion on selected poetry by the contemporary Cypriot poet Yiorgos Moleskis and of the 19th Century Ukrainian classic poet, Taras Shevchenko. The recital was organised by the Hellenic Centre with the support of the Embassy of Ukraine in London. A recital of **classical music** in October and a Cyprus European sing along in November were organised by the Cultural Department of the Cyprus High Commission. **The Eight Moments of Freedom-Οι Οκτώ Στιγμές της Ελευθερίας**, a music event to celebrate the 100 years from the union of Crete with Greece was organised by the Region of Crete, Hellenic Republic.

2013 was the year which marked the 150 years from C P Cavafy's birth. The Hellenic Centre honoured the great poet with a musical event entitled **C. P. Cavafy in Music, A Recital of Songs and Reflections**. This unique presentation came to the Hellenic Centre after a most successful tour in the USA and at the European Cultural Centre of Delphi. The event with Alexandra Gravas, mezzo soprano, Dr Pantelis Polychronidis, piano, Assistant Professor, University of Nevada and Professor Vassilis Lambropoulos, C P Cavafy Chair of Modern Greek Studies, University of Michigan combined poetry and music and focused on the internationally best known Greek poet. It incorporated a scholarly approach and examined the diverse musical idioms that have been used to turn Cavafy's poetry into art song. It included Cavafy poems set to music by Greek, American, German and French composers such as Mitropoulos, Hadjidakis, Theodorakis, Papademetriou, Boissel, Rorem, Bolcom, Rekleitis, Stephanidis, Tsoupaki, Plessas and Gompper. The event was organised by the Hellenic Centre with the support of the Hellenic Foundation for Culture UK.

## Fundraising/Traditional/Social Events

The Fundraising Committee of the Hellenic Centre under its Chairman Mrs Sophie Kydoniefs organised two events, a trip to a place of interest and the Family Christmas Lunch. **Around the Village of Chelsea** included visits to Chelsea Old Church, Thomas Carlyle's House, and a tour to the Physic Garden. In December the Committee organised the traditional annual **Family Christmas Lunch** an enjoyable event with Greek live music and bingo. The proceeds from both events, £3,200, were donated to the Archbishop Makarios III Hospital for Children, Nicosia. In June the Hellenic Centre and Cypriot Estia of London organised **A Taste of Cyprus**, a fundraising event the proceeds of which were donated to Volunteer Doctors Cyprus. The event featured wine tasting, a talk on Cypriot wines by Prof Kate Phylaktis and a talk on Cypriot cheese by Dr Phrosso Hadjiluca.

Every year the Hellenic Centre celebrates Greek and Cypriot customs and traditions with its members and friends. We welcomed the new year with the cutting of the **Vasilopitta** cake and with Greek food and dancing. A number of Member Societies of the Hellenic Centre, such as Lykion ton Hellinidon, Hellenic Medical Society, Eteria Ellinon Epistimonon celebrated also their Vasilopitta evenings at the Centre.

Carnival was celebrated in March by adults and children alike. A memorable **Carnival Greek Evening** with live music was organised by the Hellenic Centre, Eteria Ellinon Epistimonon and the Hellenic Foundation and a **Children's Carnival Party** was organised by the Hellenic Centre and Lykion ton Hellinidon; children participated in arts and crafts activities, learnt Greek songs and danced the traditional carnival pole dance. The carnival celebrations finished with the traditional **Kathara Deftera** Lunch marking the beginning of Lent. **Greek Easter** was celebrated in May with live music and cracking of the traditional red eggs.

The Peloponnesian Association of GB celebrated the **Greek National** day with a talk by the Greek Ambassador and dancing by the Lykion ton Hellinidon dancers. The Macedonian Society of GB celebrated **St Demetrios** day the patron Saint of Thessaloniki with a lecture and with a performance by the Vlasti Dancing Group from Western Macedonia.

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