September 1, marking both the Byzantine and ecclesiastical New Year, seems like an appropriate moment to think backwards and forwards—to give gratitude that we have survived a challenging time and to look forward with great anticipation to the gifts before us. Throughout 2020-2021, we have had a very busy year at the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center, hosting an ambitious program of events that was both local and international, establishing strong partnerships with educational and cultural institutions in the Northern Hemisphere and Europe, and renovating a beautiful suite of offices in Rolfe Hall. We also celebrated the success of our undergraduates, three of whom were awarded scholarships by the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation. And yet, it is hard not to think of what we have lost in this period—the opportunity...
to gather together to listen closely to lectures, music, and performances and to savor moments of conversation over mezedes or glyka. We are celebrating important anniversaries in 2021 and 2022—the bicentennial celebration of the Greek Revolution and the one-hundredth anniversary of the Asia Minor Disaster. Looking ahead, I am very excited about a number of events that commemorate these historical moments, which are critical to the understanding of modern Hellenism and underscore the resilience of the Greek people. Out of an abundance of caution, and to keep our local and international community together, we will continue to offer most of our lectures through Zoom this year. This decision also recognizes how important our Center has become for many people who cannot leave the house or for those who simply enjoy spending a casual Saturday morning with us with their coffee in hand.

This fall brings new and renewed collaborations with the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University, Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC, the Embassy of Greece in the United States, the U.S. Embassy in Athens, and the Gennadius Library in Athens. Several of these partnerships are supporting a new production, *Makriyannis Unplugged*, written and performed by the acclaimed actor Yorgos Karamihos (*The Durrells in Corfu; Fugitive Pieces; Like Chef, Like God*). This work opens at UCLA and then travels to Vancouver and Athens, with additional venues in the works. We will also be continuing, in the fall, our archaeology series led by Professor John Papadopoulos, focusing on new materials from Thessaloniki, Epidauros, and Amykles near Sparta. These lectures present the most recent archaeological finds and provide a behind-the-scenes view of current excavations. Two additional lectures by stellar speakers on “Byron’s Romantic Philhellenism” and “Slaying the Dragon: Byzantine Survivals in the Greek War of Independence” help us to consider the complexities of the Greek Revolution. In late November, a HUC@UCLA lecture (the title under which we offer lectures linked to the Hellenic University Club), will feature a discussion of the efforts of Americans to support the Greek Revolution. Our monthly Greek Book Club also continues its engagement with Modern Greek books and conversations with important Greek authors.

On a personal note, I want to say how honored I am to have been made a Greek citizen and to have been recognized as a Commander of the Order of the Phoenix. Many of you will know that my heart lies in Greece, where I have lived and researched for many years, first in Thessaloniki and now in Mani. To have the Greek State recognize my contributions to the Hellenic cause is a tremendous honor and one for which I will be eternally grateful.

I hope to see you at some of our exciting programs this year.

Sharon Gerstel, Director
News from the Center

A Family’s Gift of Education:
The George and Barbara Olympios Family Endowed Graduate Research Fellowship

In memory of his parents, Stavros Olympios has established the George and Barbara Olympios Family Endowed Graduate Research Fellowship to support students in Hellenic Studies. The fellowship will help deepen the connection of emerging scholars to Greece through research and study. “My father was a determined and hard-working individual who was a strong believer in education,” said Mr. Olympios. “He gave me the opportunity to gain a broad education including and even beyond a typical Greek education. My mother strongly felt that her faith contributed to our family’s survival. I am grateful to them, and plan to continue their legacy at UCLA.”

“We thank Stavros Olympios for the generous donation to support our students,” said Sharon Gerstel, Director of the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center. “The gift aligns with his father’s resolve to promote those seeking higher education and his mother’s role in nurturing her family through difficult times. The gift speaks volumes about Mr. Olympios’ respect and love for his parents.” Mr. Olympios added, “My own family—my wife and my daughter Alexandra—played a key role in inspiring me to establish this fellowship. I hope this award will encourage future generations to engage with Hellenism, just as I hope to instill in my own grandson, Jack Alexander, pride in his Greek roots and culture.”

George Olympios (1907-1984) was born in the village of Palaiohorion, Parnassidos, near Gravia. He attended technical college to study Marine Engineering and then joined Greece’s Royal Navy to become a merchant marine. During World War II, Mr. Olympios was drafted into the Greek Navy. Throughout the war, the family struggled to survive. After the war, Mr. Olympios returned to the Merchant Marine as Chief Engineer. For four years, he travelled between the United States, Japan, and Germany. Throughout his career, he worked for major shipowners including Stavros Livanos, father-in-law to both Aristotle Onassis and Stavros Niarchos. Mr. and Mrs. Olympios had two children: Stavros and a daughter who died in 2018.

Stavros Olympios was born in Piraeus, Greece in 1937. He received his B.Sc. degree in Mechanical Engineering with Honors from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland, and his M.Sc. degree in Thermodynamics and Gas Dynamics from the University of Birmingham, England. He attended a one-year program at the NATO Postgraduate School in Experimental Aerodynamics representing Greece at the von Karman Institute for Fluid Dynamics. After graduation, he pursued research in the area of propulsion funded by the United States Air Force through the European Office of Aerospace Research. Interrupting his project to return to Greece for his National Service, he was selected to attend officers schools in Patras and graduated first in his class as a Second Lieutenant. During his service he worked with the Greek Air Force to develop Aerodynamic Facilities in Greece. He married Anne-Marie, his neighbor in Brussels whom he met in London Victoria Station. The couple moved to Dayton, Ohio, where Mr. Olympios accepted a position at Wright Patterson Air Force Base at the Aerospace Research Lab. After two years, they settled in Los Angeles where his aerospace career included positions at Hughes Helicopters (Apache Helicopter) and Northrop Grumman from which he eventually retired. While at Hughes Helicopters, Mr. Olympios obtained an M.B.A. so that he could continue a second career in financial planning following his retirement.
While the Center has had a full schedule of program offerings via Zoom over the past year, we have also been active behind the scenes meticulously preparing to welcome students and the community to our new space. Located in 2117 Rolfe Hall (see map), the Center will open its doors this month for classes in Introductory and Advanced Modern Greek, as well as a seminar on Byzantine Sound/Spaces.

“From ideation and demolition to renovation and interior design, the process has been a labor of love,” said Sharon Gerstel, Director of the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center. “Every detail—color swatch selection, lighting, photo display—was carefully factored into the Center’s aesthetic. We have created a space for teaching and events, but also one that is a home to the community. We are very grateful to the Dean of Humanities, who generously supported the renovations and furnishing of our beautiful space.”

The suite includes a fully-equipped conference room as well as administrative offices for two staff members. The conference room features large screen projection via an ultra-high-definition screen and camera for video conferencing. In addition, the multi-purpose conference room includes a gallery space for photo exhibitions. Through a collaboration with the Benaki Museum in Athens, our first exhibition features works by the legendary Greek photographer Nelly’s (Elli Sougioultzoglou-Seraidari). Rotating photo exhibitions will feature works related to Hellenic culture.
Thanks to the generosity of the Center’s donors, the room houses a library with two impressive book collections: the Charlie and Maria Kyriacou Collection and the Constantine and Koren Christofides Collection of Modern Greek Poetry. The collections are available for teaching and research.

For community organizations that would like to meet in our space, please contact us at: hellenic@humnet.ucla.edu.
News from the Center

A Rare Gift of Modern Greek Poetry Collection Finds a New Home

Koren Christofides has gifted our Center with a substantial collection of extraordinary books that her husband, the scholar Constantine Christofides, assembled over decades, featuring Modern Greek authors including Cavafy, Seferis, and Ritsos. “On behalf of the Center, we warmly thank Koren Christofides for the generous donation of an outstanding collection of Greek poetry books that represent the broad intellectual interests of her husband,” said Sharon Gerstel, Director of the Center. “It is an honor to house Dr. Christofides’ collection in our Center’s library. Scholars, students, and the Southern California community will have the opportunity to use these exceptional books.”

Koren Christofides commented, “As an Alexandrian Greek, it was natural that Constantine’s passion for modern Greek Poetry would begin with Cavafy. Over many years, as we spent more and more time in Greece, his love for this poetry extended to Seferis and Ritsos, from Elytis to Sikelianos. He often remarked that the highest contributions to humanism and humanity, from the tragedians of antiquity to modern poetry, came from the Greeks. I know that my husband would have found the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center to be the perfect home for his library. The brilliance found in these collected works will now live on in the hearts and minds of so many others in all the years to come.”

Dr. Constantine Christofides (1928-2020) was born in Alexandria, Egypt. At a young age he started his long journey as an intellectual, educator, photographer, and committed humanist. The fertile international milieu of pre-war Alexandria nurtured his love of languages, beginning with Greek, and progressing to Arabic, French, and finally English. Emigrating as a young man to the United States, he completed graduate studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor with an M.A. in French, M.A. in History, and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature in 1956. He taught at the Universities of Iowa and Syracuse before becoming Chair of Romance Languages at the University of Washington in 1965. He later served as acting Chair of the Department of Comparative Literature and as Associate Dean in the College of Arts & Sciences. Adding to his skills as a scholar of literature, he became an art historian with a focus on Romanesque Art. Following his retirement in 1992, he was named Distinguished Professor of the Humanities at the Institute for American Universities in Aix-en-Provence where he lived with his wife, Koren, until 2009. His principal publications include *Medieval Art: A Commentary* (2007) and *Fables of La Fontaine Illustrated* (2006), written in collaboration with Koren and poet Christopher Carsten. In 2011, he published his auto-fictional memoir, *Alexandrine Reverberations*. Christofides was honored as a Chevalier in the Order of the Palmes Académiques by the French Republic in 1972 for his contributions to French culture.
A Virtual Tour of the Bouboulina Museum, Spetses

On March 13, 2021, the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center launched its 2021 events by hosting Pavlos Demertzis-Bouboulis, Director of the Bouboulina Museum on Spetses, for the first virtual tour of the museum and presentation of the life of Greek heroine Laskarina Bouboulina. A sixth-generation descendant of Bouboulina, Demertzis-Bouboulis took on the role of Director of the museum in 2018 following the death of his father, Philip. With the unstinting support and assistance of his family, he continues to work towards the museum’s founding principle to restore and preserve Bouboulina’s mansion as the national monument it is today, while at the same time guiding the museum firmly into the 21st century. Demertzis-Bouboulis is one of a handful of young, innovative museum directors charting the future of Greece’s cultural landscape.

Hundreds of listeners were treated to the tale of Bouboulina. “According to family history,” Demertzis-Bouboulis noted, “from a young age she had a passionate love for the sea and travelled with her stepfather on the family’s ships.” Tracing her heroic life, we learned of her daring naval attacks, her support of the revolutionary cause, and her strong friendship with General Theodoros Kolokotronis. The fearless heroine was killed on May 22, 1825 in the home she had shared with her first husband Dimitrios Yannouzas. Her memory was honored by the Greek State in 2018 through awarding her the honorary title of Rear Admiral, along with the Military Cross First Class and the Medal of Distinguished Actions.

The museum was founded in 1991 by Philip Demertzis-Bouboulis, in an effort to save the 350-year-old mansion from certain collapse. It is a private non-profit organization, and its main objectives, apart from the restoration and maintenance of the building and grounds, are its function as a cultural center and national monument, ensuring that Bouboulina’s story is known to the world. The virtual tour introduced listeners to the museum’s collections, the story of the house, and also works of art representing the kapetanissa. Demertzis-Bouboulis remarked, “2021 is not only a landmark for Greece and Spetses, but additionally a year of historical importance to my family and the island, as it marks 30 years since the founding of the Museum in 1991 and 250 years since the birth of Bouboulina in 1771.” The date of the lecture was also significant: “On the 13th of March 1821, Bouboulina hoisted her very own revolutionary flag on the main mast of her ship, the Agamemnon, and saluted it with cannon fire in front of the harbor of Spetses.”

Demertzis-Bouboulis concluded his lecture with a personal observation about the impact of his ancestor’s story. He added, “She was a woman, twice widowed and a mother of ten children. An accomplished businesswoman, an entrepreneur who managed her own wealth and shipping enterprises. A born leader, who commanded her own fleet and her own private army. An honorary Admiral. All of this in early-19th-century Greece, a land dominated by men and patriarchal tradition. To me she was a phenomenon in her own right, a pioneer of her time, whose story inspired writers, poets, and artists throughout Europe. Furthermore, if you are willing to accompany me and move past the Greek Revolution and also consider modern-day civil and equal rights movements and the struggle for the emancipation of women throughout the world, I believe Bouboulina’s story could not be more relevant.”

The lecture is available on our Center’s YouTube channel (https://bit.ly/3767IBR).
News from the Center

National Poetry Month Event on Odysseus Elytis

Last April, on the occasion of National Poetry Month, our Center partnered with the Embassy of Greece in co-hosting a multi-faceted event in honor of Odysseus Elytis. Participants at the event had the opportunity to listen to a lecture by Professor Marinos Pourgouris (University of Cyprus), author of Mediterranean Modernisms: The Poetic Metaphysics of Odysseus Elytis (Ashgate Publishing, 2011) and a leading expert on the work of the 1979 Nobel Prize winner in Literature. Professor Pourgouris discussed Elytis’ strategies of elusiveness, shedding light on his techniques and formal choices as well as on the major topics of solitude, privacy, and marginality that populate his poetry. The lecture was complemented by a captivating reading of Elytis’ poetry by renowned Greek actor, Stelios Mainas. In her opening statements, Her Excellency, Ambassador of Greece to the United States Alexandra Papadopoulou conveyed her admiration for Elytis’ poetry, calling it “a testament to the 3,000-year history of Greek poetry.”

Our Center is excited to continue this collaboration with the Embassy of Greece in 2022, when we will have the opportunity to hear Professor Roderick Beaton lecture on George Seferis. Professor Pourgouris’ lecture, together with a recording of Mainas’ poetry reading filmed by the acclaimed director Tassos Boulmetis, is available on the Center’s YouTube channel (https://bit.ly/3j5mM82).

Introducing Greek Authors to Los Angeles

Taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by virtual-meeting technologies, our Center’s Greek Book Club began, in 2021, a new series of meetings: A Conversation with the Author. In addition to the regular meetings that bring together our members to discuss classic and modern works of Greek literature, the series offers the opportunity to directly engage with the authors and learn about their approach to writing and their craft. In the first meeting, we discussed with Rika Benveniste, Professor of History at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, her prize-winning Λούνα: Δοκίμιο ιστορικής βιογραφίας. Participants in the discussion learned how the author was able to chronicle a singular life story, that of Luna Gateño, and at the same time to narrate the history of the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. In the second, Yorgos Kyriakopoulos, author of the prize-winning collection of short stories Η πρωτεγγονή της Αρατίνας και άλλες ιστορίες, reflected on his craft and on what distinguishes the fictional worlds created by contemporary literature, in comparison to other narrative artforms. The Conversation with the Author series continues in 2021-22, hosting via Zoom some of the most talented and widely-read authors writing in Greek today, including Alexandra Katsarou, Dimosthenis Papamarkos, and Fotini Tsalikoglou.
Sharon Gerstel Reflects on *The Archaeology of Yesterday*

The recent past lies between the gentle waves of nostalgia and the wrenching pain of loss. Sights, scents, and sounds conjure powerful memories of those who endure only in the mind, of the constructed places that shaped us, and of the innocence of childhood.

It is this place of longing—a liminal space between our contemporary lives and our personal histories—that the recently published *The Archaeology of Yesterday: Ruined Houses and Farmsteads in the Aegean*, addresses. The author Yorgos Kyriakopoulos, who visited the Center last year to present his book, *Η τρισέγγονη της Αραπίνας και άλλες ιστορίες*, a beautifully-crafted set of short stories, writes lyrically about the past while, at the same time, carefully documenting houses that have been left to the ravages of time.

Buried in memory, many of the houses contain the belongings of those who once lived within their walls—metal bedframes, family photographs, wooden furnishings, cooking utensils, storage vessels and ovens. These items of everyday use, captured in hundreds of stunning photographs, reveal the stories of those whose lives unfolded within abandoned houses that erode before our eyes. The belongings tell stories of love and loss, challenging us as we turn the pages to delve ever more deeply into lives uncovered by the author’s discriminating lens. Approaching from the exterior, we cross thresholds to glimpse forgotten spaces.

The image of a decaying house on Amorgos, still containing its elaborately carved couch, side cabinet, table and chair, prompts us to ask about the identity and story of an enigmatic woman represented in a photograph still suspended from a nail in the wall (see photograph). Who is she? What was her fate and that of her family? The photographs, thematically arranged, are introduced by short, powerfully written texts, creating a volume that is both literature and art. The lush illustrations map a landscape that will be foreign to many, but supremely comforting to some. For, in viewing the abandoned Amorgos house and others, we connect with our own roots and our own people. The house is repopulated. We are welcomed into a formal *saloni* for coffee and a spoon sweet.

Paradoxically, in presenting such stark images of oblivion and sorrow, Kyriakopoulos pushes the beholder to overcome entrenched fears of decay and death and, instead, embrace beauty and hope. *The Archaeology of Yesterday* becomes more than a study of ruined houses; rather, it is an archaeology of memory and an exploration of self. This exceptional volume, published in both Greek and English, can be ordered through Potamos Publishers (https://bit.ly/3faL2oc).
Bringing a Hero to Life

On the occasion of the bicentennial of the Greek Revolution, our Center is sponsoring the production of Makriyannis Unplugged, a theatrical work based on the Memoirs of General Ioannis Makriyannis, directed and performed by Yorgos Karamihos. Dr. Simos Zenios had the opportunity to chat with the renowned Greek artist and member of our Community Advisory Board about the performance, his acting career, the challenges of adapting to different audiences and formats, and his work as a teacher.

Yorgo, you are one of the most widely recognized Greek actors of the last two decades and you’ve had a decorated career in Greece. What drove you to move to Los Angeles and pursue a career here?

I received a Fulbright scholarship in 2012 to attend the full-time program at the Stella Adler Academy for Theatre and Acting in Los Angeles. Within a short amount of time, six months since the beginning of my studies at the Academy, I was offered the position of professor, which I very gratefully accepted. I then signed with an agent, later with a manager, and one thing led to the other and here we are almost a decade later. I still teach my own acting technique—which I developed and I apply to ancient Greek Drama and to the works of Anton Chekhov—as well as theater history at the Stella Adler Academy. And at the same time, I have been auditioning for projects.
Can you tell us a bit about the transition to a new country and work environment? How easy was the relocation, as a young artist? How would you compare the Greek and the American theater worlds and audiences?

There are many differences between the Greek and the American theater world. Many of them have to do with the logistics-aspect of the field and they resonate with the aesthetics and production value of the shows. The American film market is the largest in the world. The demands from actors in regard to skills, preparation, auditions are higher than those of the smaller Greek market. The filming and rehearsing conditions are also different. The core of our job, however, is the same. All actors and directors try to find the most truthful way to approach the various human stories we aim to bring on stage or in front of the camera. The transition to the American way of living though becomes harder because it includes all the practical aspects apart from our craft’s demands. A simple visit to DMV for example to get a California driver’s license is a unique experience that terrifies you until you get used to it and realize how simple life in America is. Life in America is very simple in practical things, especially in services and shopping habits. In Greece, common sense isn’t always that common.

“Avoiding the political and personal point of view, Makriyannis offers us a raw material with soul and actual concern about both the new Greek nation and humanity in general. He showed respect to people and cultures of the entire world.”

Do you feel that you are representing Greek theater and culture through your work?

That would be a great honor, but history will show how much impact we create through our work. For me, the world of arts is an international landscape that goes beyond linguistic, cultural, and national borders. If the material we offer to the audience is authentic, it becomes relatable to everyone and the message is delivered. That is definitely my goal, but our job requires taking risks and exploring the unknown so there can be no predictions whatsoever. Failure and success are only a blink of an eye apart.
What drew you to Makriyannis’ Memoirs?

When Sharon Gerstel asked me to think of a project that channels the spirit of Greek independence, Makriyannis’ Memoirs was the first idea that came to my mind. Makriyannis gives us a first-hand insight as he was present at all the crucial events and battles before and after 1821. Also, the fact that he learned how to read and write, driven by his profound need to put on paper the true incidents as he saw them, is extremely inspiring. Avoiding the political and personal point of view that unfortunately most of the historians, politicians, and even fighters of that era adopted based on their own interest, Makriyannis offers us a raw material with soul and actual concern about both the new Greek nation and humanity in general. He showed respect to people and cultures of the entire world.

What were some creative decisions that went into making this performance? What were some of the text’s biggest challenges?

First of all, I decided to create a raw performance that resonates Makriyannis’ spirit and experience.

“I plan to use as little as possible the technological advances of our time, including electrical power and ‘modern devices.’ I want everything on stage to appear handmade and fresh. I want the sounds, the images and even the smells of the show to feel organic and natural."

That is why I called the project Unplugged. I plan to use as little as possible the technological advances of our time, including electrical power and “modern devices.” I want everything on stage to appear handmade and fresh. I want the sounds, the images and even the smells of the show to feel organic and natural. Costumes and actions will “happen” during the performance, avoiding the traditional old school choices that could make the story look old and dated. One of the biggest challenges so far was to trim the script from 570 pages down to 85, in order to arrive at a reasonable duration for a show, and, at same time, preserve the quality and consistency of the Memoirs.
Your play is addressed to multiple audiences and will be performed at different locations. How challenging is it to create a work crossing such boundaries?

Yes, the show will be performed both in Greek and in English, and I want to make sure that the adaptation will transcend any language impediments. Having the different locations and audiences in mind from the beginning, I am planning to create a flexible show that could easily be adjusted to a big open-air theater as well as to the smallest venue. Hopefully my ideas will be successfully applied on stage.

In addition to directing and performing, you also teach acting at the Stella Adler Academy. Could you tell us a few words about this and how important it is to you to mentor younger artists?

Teaching happened to me. I never thought I would do it professionally and to such an extent. I was asked to teach some odd 20 years ago at an acting school in Greece and I thought it would be a nice experience for a little while. In the course of all these years, the technique I developed evolved gradually, without a specific plan apart from becoming more mature as an artist. I am still surprised, to be honest, by the fact that teaching helps me improve my skills every day. I think I have become a better student and actor because I experience first-hand how hard it is to communicate ideas and feelings on stage or in front of the camera. All humans need one thing, to love and be loved, and so far, I think acting and teaching create a field that helps me define and improve love.

What are some of your future projects?

I am currently filming a Greek TV series called Helios (Sun) in Athens. In August I will act in David Cronenberg’s new film called Crimes of the Future with Viggo Mortensen, Lea Seydoux, and Kristen Stewart. I am still teaching at the Stella Adler Academy and giving workshops here and there when time permits. And before the end of September I will focus entirely on the world of our friend Makriyannis.

“All humans need one thing, to love and be loved, and so far, I think acting and teaching create a field that helps me define and improve love.”
“Everything I write is because I cannot suffer to see what is unjust strangle what is just. That is why I learned how to write in my old age.” *Memoirs*, Vol. 2, p. 463

The *Memoirs* of General Ioannis Makriyannis constitute one of the most unique texts in the history of Greek letters. They were composed by Makriyannis, who learned how to write specifically for this purpose, in the last half of his life in order to offer an account of his deeds and actions during the revolutionary war, the civil conflicts, and the post-revolution political life of the new state. Stashed away in a bin in the basement of the family house and forgotten for half a century, they remained unpublished until the scholar Ioannis Vlahogiannis managed to locate them with the help of Kitsos Makriyannis, the General’s son. The transcription and the editing of the manuscript was a long and arduous process, and it took several months before it was finally published in 1907. The publication did not mark the end of the adventures for the manuscript, however. After Kitsos Makriyannis bequeathed it to the Historical and Ethnological Society of Greece, it disappeared. Its location is still unknown. Other than three pages that Vlahogiannis had reproduced when he announced his discovery, we have no other samples of the original manuscript.

The publication of the *Memoirs*, however, ensured them a lasting place in Greek literature. Their unique style, which captures much of the power of oral discourse together with the power of the subject matter, made them models for many authors and artists who found in them—and still do so—something essential for the expression of Hellenism. George Seferis, a fervent admirer of Makriyannis’ language and style, offered a talk titled *A Greek—Makriyannis* in 1943, amidst the trials of World War II. There he remarked: “The content of Makriyannis’ writing is the never-ending and tragic struggle of a human being who—carrying deep within him all the instincts of his nation—seeks liberty, justice, humanity.” Seferis went on to observe about the literary qualities of the text: “Style is the difficulties one encounters when trying to express something, style is human effort, ‘style is man himself,’ as a wise saying has it. That is why Makriyannis’ style is so genuine. And unique, in the same way that the difficulties he encountered were unique. Talking about the material aspect of Makriyannis’ manuscript, I said that it looks like a construction site where one observes the passage of a human effort. His writing is the same: a handmade construction. In every detail, in its intensity, in its ease, in its stumbling, one looks the passage of a human being full of life.”
The Four Larks Teach the Homeric Hymns

In spring 2021, Mat Diafos Sweeney and Sebastian Peters-Lazaro, the creative forces behind the Four Larks, the award-winning Los Angeles-based performance group, offered an innovative seminar in the Department of Classics for a select group of undergraduates. Sponsored by the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center and the Dean of Humanities, the course offered students an unprecedented opportunity to study the adaptation of the Homeric Hymns, the oldest surviving Greek poetry, for modern audiences.

According to Sweeney, “The ancient Homeric Hymns are a collection of poems, among the oldest surviving Greek literature. They are a transitive testament of the leap from an oral to a written storytelling tradition. Each hymn is addressed to a specific deity—some chronicle an important narrative episode in the life of that god or goddess while others simply extol their defining virtues. These beautiful poems offer a dreamlike trail of clues to the ancient Greek's relationship to time, space, and one another. The hymns have been passed down in fragments, in an infinite web of translations, offering a time-bending telescope to a world where poetry, belief, and daily practice are impossibly intertwined.”

Students were challenged to read the hymns closely and make their own adaptations. According to Katherine Clark, a sophomore art major, “Through textual analysis, discussion and historical context, this course made the Homeric Hymns relevant and a new source of inspiration for me. My final project adapted the Hymn to Dionysus to my own environment and context. Through reflecting on both contemporary modes of photography and collage while drawing on ancient Dionysus's cult traditions and ritual practices, I used this project to explore self-truths and my own surroundings in relation to the major beats of the hymn. This work helped me realize the relevance the Homeric Hymns still have today.”

Sebastian Peters-Lazaro offered, “We were so excited by the depth of insight and creativity each student brought to the study of the Homeric Hymns. The course drew students from across departments, which allowed for a truly interdisciplinary exploration of the many ways these archaic poems and performance traditions resonate today. Working alongside these young scholars and artists at UCLA invigorated our practice as contemporary theatre makers and enlivened our dramaturgical study of the Homeric Hymns in ways that we couldn’t even have imagined.”
Commander of the Order of the Phoenix Awarded to Sharon Gerstel

On June 24, in Washington, DC, Her Excellency Alexandra Papadopoulou, Ambassador of Greece to the United States, presented UCLA SNF Hellenic Center Director Sharon Gerstel and Dr. Donald Kagan, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Classics and History, Yale University with the Commander of the Order of the Phoenix medal, one of highest honors of the Greek state. The Ambassador generously hosted the ceremony and dinner at her residence. Other dignitaries in attendance included the Consul General of Greece in Los Angeles, Evgenia Beniatoglou, and Ambassador John D. Negroponte.

“It is an honor for me to bestow upon these two scholars the Commander of the Order of the Phoenix medal, which is conferred upon individuals who excel in the arts and literature, science, and other fields, and as a result, help us better understand the world and Greece’s message to the world,” said Her Excellency Alexandra Papadopoulou. “Through Dr. Gerstel’s leadership in founding the UCLA Stavros Niarchos Foundation Center for the Study of Hellenic Culture, she has brought together the diverse Hellenic communities of Southern California in the greater appreciation of Greek language and culture. We are grateful and very appreciative of the work that helps us understand better our country, our history, and our culture.”

Established in 1926, the Order of the Phoenix is awarded to Greeks who have distinguished themselves in the fields of public administration, science, commerce, industry and shipping, and the arts and letters. It is also conferred on non-Greek citizens who have contributed to enhancing Greece’s stature abroad in the aforementioned fields.

“On behalf of everyone at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF), we are delighted to express our warmest congratulations to Dr. Gerstel on this extraordinary and well-earned honor,” said Stelios Vassilakis, Chief Programs and Strategic Initiatives Officer at SNF. “Over the years and throughout her academic career, she has demonstrated a deep commitment towards engaging and promoting Hellenism that goes far beyond the boundaries of the classroom and academia. As Director of the UCLA SNF Hellenic Center, Sharon has succeeded not only in bringing together UCLA’s previously disparate Greek-related academic pieces, but also in successfully engaging and energizing the local community and building bridges with Greece—creating in this way a paradigmatic hub of scholarship and public engagement.”
John K. Papadopoulos to Direct Excavations of the Athenian Agora

John Papadopoulos, Distinguished Professor of Classics at UCLA, has been named the next Director of the Excavations of the Athenian Agora, at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, starting July 1, 2022. He will continue to teach at UCLA in the first half of the academic year, resuming his duties in Athens every spring and summer.

The excavations in the Athenian Agora were initiated by the American School in 1931, and they uncovered not only the ancient commercial center of the city but also the very heart of the world’s first democracy. The student volunteers at the excavations over the past 40 seasons have included undergraduates and graduate students from UCLA.

Professor Papadopoulos is a prolific scholar with vast experience in archaeological fieldwork. He received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of Sydney. After four years as the Deputy Director of the Australian Archaeological Institute and then teaching in Australia, he was hired as an Associate Curator of Antiquities at the Getty Museum in 1994. In 2002, he moved to his current position at UCLA. He is the author or editor of 13 books, more than 105 articles, and some 50 book reviews. He has been an integral part of the team of scholars working on publication projects at the Agora since 1994, in particular on the Early Iron Age, for which two volumes have already appeared (Ceramicus Redivivus, 2003, and Agora XXXVI, 2017).

Professor Papadopoulos gained excavation experience in Australia before joining the Torone excavations in 1979. As deputy director (1986-1995) he added geophysical and underwater survey components to the Torone excavations. From 1995 to 2001 he worked with a multinational team to repatriate and recontextualize artifacts looted from Francavilla Marittima, and from 2004-2008 he co-directed the excavation of a prehistoric tumulus at Lofkënd in Albania. Most recently, since 2012, he has co-directed excavations at ancient Methone in Pieria, northern Greece.

Looking forward to his role as Director of Excavations at the Athenian Agora, Professor Papadopoulos stated, “My vision and goals revolve around the challenge of storing 80 years of finds from the urban heart of ancient Athenian democracy, ensuring the conservation and preservation of exposed monuments, and making the site and museum a pedagogic center for the study of democracy for students and adults of all ages. Finally, in addition to continuing the high quality of digital recording of the excavated remains with iDig (a program developed at the Athenian Agora), I would like to utilize geophysical and geomorphological techniques to understand the topography of the area over its long history, as well as to initiate LiDAR (light detection and ranging) technology for accurate recording of standing monuments, including temples, stoas, altars, and other monuments. I would also like to initiate more systematic retrieval through water and dry sieving of faunal and floral material, to reveal the natural history of the area and its environment. Finally, I hope to share more widely the long-term history of the Agora, from Neolithic occupation to modern Greek neighborhood, beyond its Classical history as the seat of Athenian democracy.”
Faculty News

Professor David Blank Promoted to Distinguished Professor

Professor David Blank (Classics) was recently promoted to the rank of Distinguished Professor. He thereby joins a group of distinguished colleagues in the Department of Classics: Giulia Sissa, Brent Vine, Amy Richlin, and John K. Papadopoulos. Professor Blank is an internationally renowned scholar of ancient philosophy and particularly of the Herculaneum papyri and the philosophical study of language in ancient Greece and Rome. His prolific and important scholarship has revealed the influence of ancient philosophical schools on ancient linguistic theory. Much of his recent work has focused on the carbonized fragments of papyrus rolls found in the remains of an aristocratic library in Herculaneum and buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE. These fragments preserve previously unknown works of the 1st century BCE Epicurean philosopher Philodemus as well as parts of the magnum opus of his school’s founder, Epicurus. Professor Blank is (among other projects) working to reconstruct and publish Book 8 of Philodemus On Rhetoric. Other recent work has made new contributions to our understanding of the Roman polymath Varro, particularly his great work on the history of the Latin language (de lingua latina). Professor Blank has just created an entirely new lower-division course on Ancient Medicine (taught in the Department of Classics for the first time in 2020).

Welcome to Dr. Jesse Lundquist!

In April 2021, Dr. Jesse Lundquist joined the Program in Indo-European Studies as a lecturer. Dr. Lundquist started his career of teaching and researching Ancient Greek by reading Homer. Inspired by James Joyce’s Ulysses, he turned his mind to the originals, learning to read the Iliad and Odyssey as his first Greek texts. He continued his studies at UCLA, where he earned his Ph.D. in the Program in Indo-European Studies (2017), writing a dissertation on “Archaisms and Innovations in the Songs of Homer.” Since graduating, he has taught Classics at the University of Vermont, lived in his native Cape Cod, and has been a Newton International Fellow of the British Academy (2018-2020), as well as Junior Research Fellow at Wolfson College, University of Oxford. Most recently, he taught Ancient Greek philology at Oxford, where he also researched the history of the Ancient Greek language, with a special focus on morphology.
Recently Professor S. Peter Cowe (Near East Languages and Cultures) recently published a series of brief studies in the volume *Textual History of the Bible*, vol. 2B (Deutero-Canonical Scriptures), edited by Frank Feder and Matthias Henze, and published by Brill. The studies examine the Armenian version of books of the Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha where the Greek text, whether original or a translation, represents the primary form in which this literature was disseminated. Results indicate the degree to which the Armenian interpretation of Scripture reflects the exegetical approach of the contemporary ‘School’ of Antioch and the effects of the rhetorical training they had received in Roman Mesopotamia and Constantinople. Professor Cowe also published “The Inception of Armenian Grammatical Thought out of the Matrix of Hellenic Paideia” in the journal *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*. There, he treats the Armenian engagement with the Hellenic paideia in the 6th-8th centuries predominantly aligned with Alexandria and its Neoplatonic school of philosophy. He argues for a bifurcation of activities between clerical and lay students, by which the latter translated the core textbooks of the *trivium*—grammar, rhetoric, and logic—together with elements of the *quadrivium* in order to replicate that educational project in Armenia. Significantly, this endeavor presupposes a bilingual environment in which savants perceived themselves as expanding on the Greek tradition, initially holding various Aristotelian positions condemned by the Church (e.g. the eternity of the universe). However, by the 8th century we observe the advance of a movement associated with Constantinople to Christianize those disciplines, as a result of which they entered into the curriculum of medieval Armenian monastic academies.

Dr. Richard Ellis (Classics) published "Touched by the Past: Trauma, Testament, and Post-Memory in Aeschylus' *Suppliants*," in *Classical Antiquity*. This article examines Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* in light of recent work on trauma. The eponymous suppliant women of the play recount tales of their ancestor Io, an Argive priestess who made the journey from Greece to Egypt generations earlier after Zeus’ desire for her had backfired, resulting in Io being turned into a cow as a wrathful Hera and her gadfly harried her all the way from Argos to the banks of the Nile, whereupon Zeus turned her back into a human and she gave birth to a son called Epaphos (“Touch”). In this play, the Danaid maidens’ turn to the past explores the agency of an ancestral trauma that reaches into their present, while also destabilizing their sense of identity. The play's focus upon a series of real and hypothesized touches, from the traumatic to the salvific, frames the act of supplication, which is defined in part by the importance of physical contact. Aeschylus' play proposes an enlarged understanding of touch—across cognitive, affective, and physical registers—for the ritual of supplication itself, and explores how tragedy probes the question of how one reconciles the traumatic events of the past with the demands of the present.
Faculty News

**Professor Sharon Gerstel** (Art History) published a number of articles in 2021, including “Holy, Holy, Holy: Hearing the Voices of Angels” with C. Kyriakakis, S. Antonopoulos, K. Raptis, and J. Donahue in the medieval art journal *Gesta*. On June 5, she took part in a special radio program sponsored by the Axion Estin Foundation about the subject of her research. The recorded conversation between Gerstel and the musicologist Susan Boynton (Columbia University) can be found at the Foundation’s SoundCloud page (https://bit.ly/3xdpAFh). In connection with the exhibition “Yannis Tsarouchis: Dancing in Real Life,” held at Wrightwood 659, a non-commercial exhibition space in Chicago, Gerstel took place in a conversation with the scholars Artemis Liontis (University of Michigan) and George Syrimis (Yale University). The discussion was co-hosted by Wrightwood 659 and the National Hellenic Museum. Gerstel spoke about the Generation of the 1930s, a group of Greek writers, poets, artists, intellectuals, critics, and scholars who introduced modernism in Greek art and literature. She also discussed the artist’s connections to Byzantine art and art historians. For a recording of this conversation, visit the National Hellenic Museum’s YouTube channel (https://bit.ly/3j6qSgx).

**Professor David Goldstein** (Linguistics; Indo-European Studies) was awarded, in April, a Guggenheim Fellowship to study the interrelationships among linguistic changes. When a language changes, it has an effect on how the language will later develop. For instance, within Indo-European, once a language acquired a definite article (such as *the*), it became more likely to also acquire an indefinite article (such as *a*). Correlated changes such as these will be the focus of Professor Goldstein’s Guggenheim research, which he will carry out during a year-long sabbatical in 2022-2023. Furthermore, a new article of his is about to be published in the *Journal of Greek Linguistics* that examines a phenomenon known as differential agent marking in the 5th-century Greek author Herodotus. In English, passive agents are predominantly marked with *by* (e.g., The book was read to the student *by* the teacher). In ancient Greek, however, passive agents such as this can be marked with a preposition (such as ὑπὸ) but they need not be. It has long been debated what factors influence the presence or absence of the preposition. This study uses Bayesian statistical methods to shed new light on this debate.
Camille Acosta (Ph.D. candidate, Archaeology) received the Mary Isabel Sibley Fellowship for Greek studies from Phi Beta Kappa and the Jacob Hirsch Fellowship for archaeology from the American School of Classical Studies at Athens to spend 2021-22 conducting research in Athens. Her dissertation focuses on the burial practices of migrants who came from a range of Greek and non-Greek areas and died in Athens during the Classical period. Using archaeological evidence, her work aims to reconstruct the funerals that took place for these individuals and families in order to identify any unusual practices which may have been brought from their homes. She is looking forward to spending time in the libraries and museums of Athens and continuing to learn Modern Greek after two years of language study at UCLA.

In spring 2021, Nicolyna Enriquez (Ph.D. candidate, Art History) presented her research on the connections between the sea and rural island life in Late Byzantium at three conferences: Nature and the Environment: The 53rd Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (March 27-29, 2021), The Sea: Mobility, Ingenuity, and Ecology in the Early Modern World (May 1, 2021), and From Sea to Sky: Early Modern Horizons (May 5, 2021). The presentations focused on Cretan churches in which images of ships have been inscribed as graffiti. The images attest to how the sea, for those living on an island, provided beauty, sustenance, and abundance while simultaneously yielding destruction and uncertainty. By combining art history, phenomenology, and environmental history, the presentations explored the relationship between the proliferation of maritime imagery and the lives of rural villagers whose livelihoods depended on the sea. Enriquez’s dissertation research is situated at the intersection of island studies and environmental history and brings together visual imagery, architectural studies, archaeological research, and topographical analysis to explore how rural Cretan villagers in Late Byzantium experienced and interacted with the maritime world around them.

Sofia Pitouli (Ph.D. student, Art History) has been awarded the first Peter and Vivi Demopoulos Endowed Graduate Research Fellowship to support her research on the destroyed 13th-century monastery of Lykousada in Thessaly, built by Hypomone, the Vlach wife of the ruler of Thessaly who later became a nun. Pitouli’s research places the monastery within a network of interconnected villages, estates, and religious foundations in 13th- and 14th-century Thessaly. Analyzing material and textual sources related to the landholdings of the monastery, Pitouli investigates the landscape of the Thessalian plateau, maps the medieval roads that once connected the nun’s estates, charts the boundaries of Hypomone’s influence and power, and traces the movements of her powerful Vlach family. Her research is further supported by the Department of Art History’s Ruth Nagle Watkins Fellowship.
Three UCLA Students Receive 2021 PanHellenic Scholarships

Congratulations to Sofia Foondos, Alina Giapis, and Dimitri Speron, recent recipients of prestigious awards from the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation! Our Center is particularly proud of their accomplishments, as all three students have taken Modern Greek language classes and have shown keen interest in Hellenic studies and in events and activities that promote Hellenic culture on campus.

The PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation is a non-profit organization that promotes education by providing scholarships and programs to students of Hellenic descent who, guided by the values of their upbringing and cultural heritage, have the potential to distinguish themselves in their chosen fields and contribute meaningfully to society. To watch the 2021 Virtual Awards Gala, visit the Foundation’s YouTube channel (https://bit.ly/3j0HK87). For more information about the PanHellenic Scholarship awards, visit the Foundation’s website (www.panhellenicsf.org/apply).

Sofia Foondos is majoring in Biology and she is on the pre-medical track. She is a board member of the American Medical Student Association, the Student Leader Advocates for Music Organization, and the Hellenic Student Association at UCLA. She works as an undergraduate researcher in Shah Labs, investigating the mechanisms that shape neuronal circuits during brain development. Sofia is also the recipient of the 2021 Gus and Judie Christopoulos Award for Modern Greek.

Alina Giapis is majoring in Human Biology and Society and minoring in Anthropology. She was the co-recipient of the 2020 Gus and Judie Christopoulos Award for Modern Greek. Alina is a member of Camp Kesem, the UCLA Student Committee for the Arts, and Eurobruins, an organization dedicated to promoting European culture at UCLA. Last winter, she joined her professor’s laboratory team and looks forward to conducting anthropological research about evolutionary human behavior in a post-pandemic world.

Dimitri Speron is majoring in Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology, with a minor in the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine. He participates in many activities on campus, including teaching high school students science through Citylab and engaging in professional development activities through PULSE. Dimitri is currently finishing his last courses at UCLA and applying to medical school to pursue a career as a physician.
Athens ANIMFEST Award for Demetrios Tzamaras’ Bucket Hat!

Bucket Hat!, an animated short film by Demetrios Tzamaras, received the 2nd Prize at the student competition of the 2021 Athens ANIMFEST. Balancing slice-of-life realism with cartoony slapstick, Bucket Hat! tells a heart-warming and humorous story of two little Greek boys trying to convince their jokester pappou to buy them some ice cream while on a trip to the beach. Demetrios stated that the film was inspired by trips he and his brother used to take to Ocean City, MD, with his grandfather, Stavros. Demetrios is a director, animator, and story artist, and he is pursuing an M.F.A. in the Animation Workshop at UCLA’s School of Theatre, Film & Television. He was previously a coordinator on the Academy Award Winning film Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse, among others. In 2014, he graduated from Drexel University with a B.S. in Film Production. As a filmmaker, Demetrios believes in telling stories with heart, humor, and visual spectacle, drawing from classic American filmmaking as inspiration.

New Board for the Hellenic Student Association

This past spring quarter, the Hellenic Student Association (HSA) at UCLA held several virtual gatherings for its members, including joint events with the Hellenic Student Association at Chapman University. UCLA and Chapman students became acquainted with each other through artistic activities and board games focusing on Hellenic-related topics. At the end of the academic year, the HSA installed a new executive board for 2021-2022: Andreas Papoutsis (President), Barbra Lyons (Vice President), Irene Varsou (Finance Director), and Nayia Politis (Communications Director). As students return to campus, the HSA will continue to foster camaraderie among the Hellenic students at UCLA, and offer numerous events for students to reconnect and celebrate their heritage.
Fall 2021 Programming

September
9/18 A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR / ZOOM: Chris Jaymes, Sons of Chaos
9/18 BOOK CLUB / ZOOM: Ευτυχία Γιαννάκη, Η νόσος του μικρού θεού
9/25 LECTURE / ZOOM: Maria Schoina, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, “Byron’s Romantic Philhellenism;” co-sponsored by the Embassy of Greece and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Centre for Hellenic Studies, Simon Fraser University

10/16 LECTURE / ZOOM: Vasilis Lambrinoudakis, University of Athens, “The Sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidauros: New Finds Rewrite the Function and History of the Most Important Sanatorium in Antiquity”
10/23 LECTURE / ZOOM: Stavros Vlizos, Ionian University, and Vicky Vlachou, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, “New Evidence on a Spartan Religious Center: The Sanctuary of Apollo Amyklaios at Sparta and the Current Research Project;” co-sponsored by the Pan-Laconian Federation of United States and Canada

October
10/2 LECTURE / ZOOM: Nikos Panou, Stony Brook University, “Slaying the Dragon: Byzantine Survivals in the Greek War of Independence;” co-sponsored by Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC; introduced by Her Excellency Alexandra Papadopoulou, Ambassador of Greece to the United States
10/4-7 ELLINOMATHEIA PROFICIENCY EXAMS / IN-PERSON

November
11/7 PERFORMANCE / IN-PERSON: Premiere performance of Makriyannis Unplugged, written and directed by Yorgos Karamihos
11/20 HUC@UCLA LECTURE / ZOOM: Maureen Connors Santelli, Northern Virginia Community College, “American Support for the Greek Revolution;” co-sponsored by the Embassy of Greece

December
12/11 BOOK CLUB, A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR / ZOOM: Αλεξάνδρα Κατσαρού, Πώς φιλούνται οι αχινοί

Stay tuned!
In case of rescheduling, additional details, or to register, please visit: Hellenic.UCLA.edu/Events