



HELLENIC SOCIETY NEWS

Newsletter of the Hellenic Society of Maine

Vol. VIII
Fall 2014

Website: www.hellenicsocietyofmaine.org Facebook: www.facebook.com/

An Evening of Rebetiko plus dinner!

“Rebetoparea” is a group of musicians from the Boston area with a passion for *rebetiko* (or *rembetiko*), a style of music enjoying a big revival now. Although they try to preserve this music’s original character, the band also takes a few liberties by injecting their own elements into it.

HSOM will present Rebetoparea in a special evening from **4:30-8 p.m. Sunday, September 28**, at **Bruno’s Restaurant**, 33 Allen Ave., Morrill’s Corner in Portland. An Italian **buffet dinner** is included in the ticket price. Cash bar. **Reservations required.** Call Chris Ziagos at 775-3607.



Pictured, left to right: Sandra Theodorou (accordion), John Bogis (bass), Annemoon van Erp (violin), Makis Emmanouilidis (guitar), Kosmas Vrovlianis (bouzouki / baglama), Peter Vorvis (baglama), John Mitaras (bouzouki).

society. The main instrument was the bouzouki combined with vocals, the baglama, oud, violin, santouri, guitar, and/or laouto.

The roots of *rembetika* probably originated in the music of the larger Greek cities, most of them coastal, in today’s Greece and in Asia Minor (now part of Turkey) during the Ottoman era. The music found fertile ground in the *ouzeri*, the hashish dens (*tekedes*), the coffee shops, and even the prisons. This music was in

Rembetiko, an infectious genre, is often compared to American blues. Though there is no consensus on a definition, one may describe a *rembetiko* song as one that expresses sorrow of loss, lovesickness, and the tough life of the underworld. It is a musical folklore of the urban centers at the turn of the last century and, in particular, of the urban population that lived in the margins of

Con’t. on p.4

Day Bus Trip with OLLI

Exploring the Greek Side of Boston

Wednesday, September 10

The Hellenic Society of Maine has joined with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at USM (OLLI) to offer a special day trip to Boston, focusing on its Hellenic/Greek aspects. Boston is the site of one of Greece’s few consulates in the USA, and it was the first American city to be named “The Athens of America” by the Greek government.

On this trip on Sept. 10 we’ll have the chance to see contemporary church icons, ancient artifacts, and contemporary Greek art.

On the way to Boston, the first stop will be at **St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church** in Saco where we will be greeted by Fr. Basil Arabatzis. His introduction to Orthodox iconography will be enhanced by examining the icon-covered walls of this Byzantine-style church, painted by iconographers from Greece.

Once outside of Boston we will stop for an early lunch at **Brothers Kuisina**. Lunch,

Con’t. on p.3

Fall 2014 Lecture - Greek Asia Minor Disaster

October 16 — “The Politics of Tragedy: Greece’s Asia Minor Disaster” by S. Victor Papacosma

This lecture will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday October 16 in Room 207 Payson Smith Hall at the University of Southern Maine, Portland campus. Free and open to the public.

This lecture ties in nicely with the *rembetika* concert in September, since that music developed partly in response to the Disaster. This presentation by Dr. Papacosma will offer an account of Greece’s fateful campaign against the Turks following the close of World War I. It will emphasize the critical role of Eleftherios Venizelos, the debilitating impact of political divisions within Greek society, and the shifting policies of the great powers.

S. Victor Papacosma is Professor Emeritus of History and Director Emeritus of the Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Union Studies at Kent State University, where he taught for 42 years. He received his A.B. from Bowdoin College and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Indiana University. He has published extensively on Balkan issues, particularly on twentieth-century and contemporary Greek politics and security issues. Among his publications are *The Military in Greek Politics: The 1909 Coup d’État*, which also appeared in Greek translation, and ten coedited volumes of Lemnitzer Center conference proceedings. He served as an officer of the Modern Greek Studies Association and as its Executive Director for ten years until 2014.

Tenth Annual – Fall 2014

Contemporary & Classic Films about Greece

“Papadopoulos and Sons” Director: Marcus Markou, UK, (2012)

Sunday, October 5, 3 PM, Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland Campus



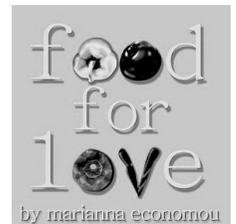
Self-made London businessman Harry Papadopoulos has got it all: a mansion house, awards, and a super-rich lifestyle. However, on the eve of a property deal of a lifetime, a financial crisis hits and the banks call in their huge loans. Harry and his family lose everything in an instant. Everything, except the dormant and forgotten Three Brothers Fish & Chips Shop he co-owns with his larger-than-life brother, Spiro, who's been estranged from the family for years. Harry and his family (plant enthusiast son James; fashion victim daughter Katie; nerdy youngest son Theo; and their loyal nanny Mrs. Parrington) are forced to decide if they will leave their millionaire lifestyle and join Spiros to live above the neglected Three Brothers, and to bring the chip shop back to life under the suspicious gaze of the their old rival, Hassan, from the neighboring Turkish kebab shop.
109 mins. In English.

Two Documentaries by Director: Marianna Economou, Greece

Sunday, November 2, 3 PM, Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland campus

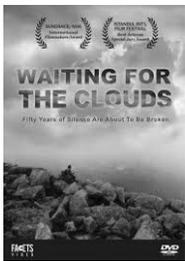
“My Place in the Dance” (2006) After a lifetime of working in the factories of Germany, three Greek women return to their dying village in northern Greece to enjoy relative prosperity, but endure acute loneliness. The film focuses on how these retired workers try to readjust as pensioners to a new/old life in their small community. A young dance instructor decides to organize a traditional village festival in order to put meaning into their stagnant lives, and has the older women teach the younger ones the old songs and dances. However, the rehearsals turn the women and the village upside down.
52 minutes. In Greek with English sub-titles.

“Food for Love” (2011) The all-embracing love of the Greek mother stretches around the globe! However far away her child may be, she will always make sure that he or she has a good supply of their mother’s food. In the hands and hearts of Greek mothers, food is a powerful, practical, and symbolic tool that bridges any geographic and emotional distance and keeps the family bonds tight forever. By focusing on three Greek mothers and their attitudes toward food, the documentary opens a window into the particularity of the Greek family, with a powerful mother figure at the center and the children as kings and queens!
52 minutes. In Greek with English sub-titles.



“Waiting for the Clouds” Director: Yesim Ustaoglu, Turkey, (2003)

Sunday, December 7, 3 PM, Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland Campus



It is 1975. In Tirebolu, Turkey (a backward village on the Black Sea), elderly Ayshe (superb Rüçhan Caliskur -- Best Actress, Istanbul International Film Festival), lovingly cares for her older sister, who has long been ill. She is often helped by a neighbor boy with whom she has developed a special bond. The autocratic regime keeps a tight hold on its citizens, enforcing strict rules and curfews, and takes a census every five years. When Turkish census takers arrive one day to interview Ayshe, it re-awakens in her long concealed memories about her identity – which she avoids revealing because her sister suddenly collapses and needs to go to hospital. But the ghost is out of the box ... memories of nearly 60 years ago, when the Ottoman army enforced deadly deportations, driving whole Greek Orthodox Christian families out into the cold winter – each one to discover their fate. *Not Rated. 90 minutes. In Turkish and Greek with English sub-titles.*

Greek Sister City Case in Portland City Hall

Have you visited the Hellenic Society of Maine-sponsored display case in Portland City Hall? Two years ago HSoM received enough donations to have an oak and glass display case constructed to honor and promote the Sister City relationship between Mytilene, Lesvos, Greece / Portland, Maine. It was dedicated on April 3, 2013. The names of the donors are engraved on brass plates that rim the top edge of this lovely case. The Society changes the display twice a year to keep it interesting and educational. The case joined three others located in the Second floor rotunda area, just outside the City Manager’s office, that promote Portland’s Sister City relationships — with Japan, Russia, and Haiti. Please make it a point to stop by and check out our case.



Quick Calendar Summary

Sept. 10 - Bus Trip to Boston:

“Exploring the Greek Side of Boston” with OLLI. \$60. Reservations required. Call 780-4406.

Sept. 28 – Rebetiko Music and Dinner: *Rebetoparea* at Bruno’s, 33 Allen Ave., Portland. 4:30 to 8 p.m.

\$50. Reservations required. Call 775-3607.

Oct. 5 – Film: “*Papadopoulos & Sons*,” 3 p.m. Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland.

Oct. 16 – Lecture: “The Politics of Tragedy: Greece’s Asia Minor Disaster” by S. Victor Papacosma. 7 p.m. Room 207 Payson Smith Hall, USM Portland.

Nov. 2 – Films: Two Documentaries “*My Place in the Dance*” and “*Food for Love*,” 3 p.m. Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland.

Dec. 7 – Film: “*Waiting for the Clouds*,” 3 p.m. Talbot Auditorium, Luther Bonney Hall, USM Portland

How to check on event storm cancellations

In the case of bad weather, call the USM Storm Line at 780-4800 at any time. If the USM campus is closed, HSoM events there are cancelled too.

✂ *Clip and Save!* ✂

Bus Trip con’t. from p.1

chosen from an extensive Greek menu, will be the responsibility of the travelers.

When we arrive at the **Museum of Fine Arts** in Boston, we will make a targeted visit to the several galleries that house the Classical Greek collections of sculpture, vases, coins, and jewelry, including a wonderful selection from the ancient city of Assos, just north of Lesvos, now in Turkey.

Just across the street from the main museum is the MFA's **Museum School**. In its **Grossman Gallery** will be a traveling exhibition of contemporary Greek art, which will have celebrated its gala opening the night before our visit. We will be privileged to have one of the curators, Eirene Foteini of Athens, speak to us about the exhibition and how young Greek artists are affected by the current situation in Greece.

Our Greek immersion day concludes with a very special highlight – a rare opportunity to visit the **Greek Consulate** on the Boston Common, where we will be welcomed by the Consul General, Iphigenia Kanara. It’s as close to an actual visit to Greece as we can get!

The bus will leave from USM’s Wishcamper Center in Portland at 8:45 a.m., and will return about 6 pm. The cost is \$60 and includes transportation, driver's tip, and entrance to the MFA. For this (and any OLLI Excursion) you must be able to walk a quarter of a mile unassisted. **You must be a member of OLLI, or a current or recent member of HSoM, to participate. Don't procrastinate as seats are filling.**

To reserve, mail your check to OLLI, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104, call 780-4406 to pay with a card, or register in person at the office. There will be no refunds after September 3. For further information contact trip leaders Mary Snell (892-9831 or msnell@maine.edu) or Gael McKibben (774-7177).

New Dues Structure

Due to increased printing and mailing costs, and other on-going expenses, the board of the Hellenic Society of Maine approved a modest dues increase beginning 2014-2015. We decided to have fun and be educational too. Our dues are now \$12.50 (1250 BC is considered the beginning of the Trojan War) for an Associate Member; and \$19.75 (1975 is the year the current Greek Constitution was adopted) for a Full Member.

DUES - Our dues cover the period of July 1 to June 30, each year, NOT a calendar year. If you want to join please fill out the form and send it, and a check, (made out to: Hellenic Society of Maine) to HSoM, c/o Taxia Paras, P.O. Box 598, Scarborough, ME 04070-0598

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

For 2014-2015: Renewal / New (circle one)

____ (\$19.75) (date of constitution) Annual Full Member (grants the right to vote on policy issues)

____ (\$12.50) (BC—Trojan War) Annual Associate Member

____ Please put me on your mailing list. I can't join now, but enclosed is my check for _____ in support of your efforts.

Make check or money order payable to:
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Send to: Taxia Paras, Treasurer
P.O. Box 598
Scarborough, ME 04070-0598

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We rely on email to send quick reminders and updates to members and friends. PLEASE send us your EMAIL address. With rising costs, we are not sure how long we can afford to print and mail this newsletter twice a year.

Rembetiko (Con't from p.1) contrast to the sophisticated café music of the time, particularly associated with Smyrna/Izmir which was the most cosmopolitan of Greek cities before WWI.

In the wake of the Asia Minor Disaster and population exchange of 1923 – when ethnic Greeks were deported from the coastal cities of Asia Minor -- huge numbers of refugees settled in Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Volos and other harbor cities. Many being highly competent musicians, they brought with them both European and Anatolian musical instruments and musical elements, including Ottoman café music.

During the 1930s, the relatively sophisticated musical styles met with, and cross-fertilized, the more heavy-hitting local urban styles exemplified by the earliest recordings of Markos Vamvakaris and Batis. This historical process has led to a currently used terminology intended to distinguish between the clearly Asia Minor oriental style, often called *Smyrneika*," and the bouzouki-based style of the 1930s, often called Piraeus style. Examples of Piraeus-style *rembetika* was first recorded in 1931.

By the end of the 1930s *rembetika* had reached what can reasonably be called its classic phase, in which elements of the early Piraeus style, elements of the Asia Minor style, clearly European and Greek folk music elements, had fused to generate a genuine musical form.

Simultaneously, with the onset of censorship, a process began in which *rembetiko* lyrics slowly began to lose what had been their defining underworld character. In 1936, during the fascist regime of Ioannis Metaxas, the subject matter of *rembetika* songs was now considered disreputable and unacceptable, particularly those which contained *amanedes* or the Anatolian improvised lament, which was clearly not European. *Rembetika* endured defamation, persecution and censorship, but up to mid 1950's it was able to evolve from a marginal music to a popular Greek music embraced by generations, and now has become the source of inspiration for contemporary composers.

Hellenic Initiatives
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