

Maria Tzobanaki and the New York City Greek Film Festival (NYCGFF)



Photos: GANP/Dimitrios Panagos



New York.- Vicki James Yiannias

“This festival will bring out the quality of our art and culture and provide Greek filmmakers with opportunities for global collaborations,” Maria Tzobanaki, new director of the New York City Greek Film Festival (NYCGFF) told the GN about the 15th edition of the festival to be held from October 17-23 at Florence Gould Hall in cooperation with the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce (HACC).

The noted actor and Cultural Ambassador of Crete took some questions about the festival.

GN: What do you consider to be a successful film festival?

MT: One that fulfills its goals!

GN: As the new director of a Greek film festival much-loved by the Greek American public do you think you have fulfilled its goals?

MT: When the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce (HACC) suggested that I take up this position, the first thing I said was that this is not a position but a responsibility!

GN: Why do you consider it a responsibility?

MT: It is a great responsibility to the Greek filmmakers who, with much struggle, much effort and a lot of hard work, create their films. I am a child of this profession and I know well what that means! A movie festival, based on their movies... it is they who are the protagonists of a film festival, not the one who organizes it.

GN: Clearly, you love Greek cinema.

MT: In another era, Greek cinema was the most popular form of entertainment for Greeks. Having just come out of a world war that had ravaged humanity and a civil war that had rav-

aged the Greek soul...people wanted to smile; to rest their hearts.

Greek cinema blossomed amidst the poverty of Greece in the 1950s and developing Greece in the 1960s. Great artists in all the arts gave the best of themselves: Painters-set-actors-composers-screenwriters all, for just a nickel's pay, gave the smile our Greece needed then!

I, as an actor, belong to the generation of private television. Only as a viewer did I partake of the magic of that era. Today, it is infinitely more difficult for a producer and a director to make a film. The public sees everything on the Internet and the competition worldwide is huge. That's why it's so important to «make» a movie today. Even the shortest movie conceals great sacrifices and expectations which perhaps may never be fulfilled.

GN: You and I have talk about cinema and Greece. Generally, you avoid talking about yourself.

MT: I believe that one's actions speak much better than his words, so unless there is a serious reason to speak of oneself... We Greeks in this great country that offers many opportunities for professional and financial success, do not forget where we came from. Some of us came many years ago and others, like me, have just arrived, but most of us nostalgic for the tradition and culture of Greece, our sweet and human homeland.

GN: Just so you know, here in America people who don't talk about their accomplishments are in danger of falling into obscurity! You received an international award last year for organizing an excellent film festival in just three months. Was that difficult?

MT: When I took over as director of the NYCGFF I found no team to follow me, no mechanism to step into and drive. All I had was au-

thority. So, I decided to work hard to create something beyond a beautiful celebration: an institution that can continue after me. This is the work I want to leave to my Greek compatriots here and to Greek filmmakers: a hospitable place called the New York City Greek Film Festival, which every one of them will feel is theirs to defend and protect. That is my goal. Because I respect Greek cinema and the public, I do not want to leave «burnt ground» when I retire eventually.

Last year's audiences--a stream of viewers of all ages and including foreign cinephiles, together with our guest artists' joy, made a “successful” festival, and were the greatest gift for me. What gives me this strength is my great love for culture, for Greece, and its people. If our vision is not greater than our personal interests, nothing truly great can be achieved.

GN: Is it getting easier or more difficult to get new films of quality in Greece? Let's talk about the upcoming festival.

MT: I easily closed on 47 beautiful, high-quality films, holding to a high-quality standard. This is a record number for the NYCGFF [20 films were shown in 2018]. All kinds! Movies for the whole world. It was simple and easy when the Greek creators themselves would decide, as they knew where they wanted to go and why. When foreign-language distributors mediated they may have delayed me a bit, but they also contributed to this being the first showing of the films in New York City.

GN: I read that you expanded the festival in a major way this year, founding an international section, in which films containing a Greek element will be shown.

MT: Yes, apart from the Greek features, documentaries and shorts, this festival launches a new section for international productions hav-



ing Greek elements, no matter their country of origin. Choices were made from 200 submissions. As well, a purely international section of short films from all over the world will be introduced on the online edition of NYCGFF. To unite cultures under the roof of Greek culture and spread Greek culture around the world! Which Greek does not want this?

Additionally, in collaboration with notable Greek archaeologists and in world premiere, will be a digital exhibition of listings from the sublime history of world's greatest Greek of all times: Alexander the Great, an expo from the Greek Institute of Venice.

I am proud as the director and as a visionary of this festival to see my very difficult goals achieved one by one, and exceeding, by more than double, the expectations I set at the beginning of this endeavor. This is a precious reward for me.

Go to: www.nycgreekfilmfestival.com

The Pancyprrian Association of America presents Michalis Violaris



New York.- Honoring the legacy of popular Cypriot singer Michalis Violaris, The Pancyprrian Association of America presents a special concert at Queens Theatre on Sunday, October 13, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

Michalis Violaris was born in Agia Varvara, Nicosia on January 9, 1944. His real name is Michalis Kyriakou. He is a popular contemporary Cypriot singer of light folk music, Cypriot songs and the New Wave. He first appeared in Athens in 1966, in the boulevard «Paranga» where he played the piano. He has appeared in many concerts and tours while singing in various night-clubs. He also sang art songs, mainly by Yannis Spanos and Linos Kokotos.

His collection of Cypriot songs, “Ta Kyrioti-

ka tou Violari”/“Violaris’s Cypriot Songs” is loved by generations of Greeks worldwide. Michalis Violaris studied at the Larnaca National Conservatory, and graduated from the School of Philosophy of the University of Athens.

Mr. Violaris will be accompanied by popular singer Andriana Kollia; George Salvanos, piano; George Politis, Guitar; Michalis Giatrakis, Bouzouki; Maria Giatrakis, Bouzouki. With the participation of the Pancyprrian Choir, Phytos Stratis, artistic director.

Tickets and information:

Queens Theatre, Flushing Meadow, Corona Park.

www.queentheatre.org
718-760-0064

Michalis Violaris
The Voice of Cypriot Music and the Father of the New Wave
Andriana Kollia, Vocalist

Accompanied by
George Salvanos, Piano
George Politis, Guitar
Michalis Giatrakis, Bouzouki
Maria Giatrakis, Bouzouki

with the participation of
The Pancyprrian Choir
Phytos Stratis, Director

**Sunday
October 13
6:00 pm**

Queens Theatre
Flushing Meadow
Corona Park

www.queentheatre.org
Box office:
718-760-0064
Dionysos Restaurant
718-932-3231

Tickets: \$52.50

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AMBASSADOR PYATT



Mitsotakis presents 'Revival and Progress Pact' for Greece at TIF

The time to invest in Greece is now

Athens.- ANA-MPA

«I can say with great confidence that, from an American perspective, the time to invest in Greece is now.» U.S. Ambassador in Athens Geoffrey Pyatt said on Friday at the Southeast Europe Energy Forum 2019 taking place in Thessaloniki.

Pyatt welcomed the new Greek government's «ambitious programme» for cutting through red tape and attracting direct foreign investments to boost the Greek economy.

«I know that the government is fully committed to working with the private sector and moving forward with reforms, and their intention is to exceed expectations and to demonstrate results as rapidly as possible,» he added.

Pyatt went on to commend the new government's enthusiasm for the offshore exploration permit by ExxonMobil, Total, and Hellenic Petroleum: «we look forward to the permit's final ratification in Parliament. We believe that offshore exploration here in Greece holds great potential, and what better partner to help grow Greece's economy than ExxonMobil, the largest publicly traded petroleum and petrochemical enterprise in the world?»

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Photo: EPA/KOSTAS TSIRONIS
Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis addresses the inaugural ceremony of the 84th Thessaloniki International Fair in Thessaloniki, Greece, 07 September 2019.



Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis laid out his economic program for the coming year during a speech at the Thessaloniki International Fair on Saturday

Thessaloniki.- ANA-MPA

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on Saturday urged the Greek people to join him in a «pact of creativity, a pact of action and results, a pact of revival and progress» in his speech at the Thessaloniki International Fair (TIF) 2019.

Delivering the customary Prime Minister's speech on the government's economic policy at the

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ANASTASIADES HONORS OVERSEAS CYPRIOTS

Nicosia.- (GreekNewsOnline, CNA)

The President of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades honored on Wednesday, August 28, four members of the Diaspora for their important service to their country, during a reception held at the garden of the Presidential Palace, in Nicosia. Moreover, he assured those present about the willingness of the government to further strengthen the mutually beneficial cooperation between the Diaspora and Cyprus.

The reception was hosted by President Anastasiades and his wife, Andri, honoring the participants of the 20th World Conference of Overseas Cypriots POMAK-PSEKA-NEPOMAK. The four recipients are the former Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain Gregorios, the Metropolitan of Kenya Makarios, the past President of the Women's division of the Pancyprian Association, Doctor Florentia Christodoulidou and the former President of the Cyprus Community of South Australia Christos Ioannou.

In his speech, the President praised their internationally recognised and outstanding con-

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CYPRUS TALKS

Next steps to be defined during Guterres' meetings with leaders in NY

Nicosia.- (GreekNewsOnline, CNA)

The next steps in the dialogue to solve the Cyprus problem are expected to be defined during the meetings the UNSG Antonio Guterres will have with the community leaders in New York at the end of the month. Guterres will have separate meetings with President Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci and he will decide if he will call a tripartite meeting to take place most probably beginning of October.

His envoy Jane Hall Lute concluded her one week mission on the island on Friday with an informal meeting with the leaders, one which was described as a social one but took place in order to send messages of hope for a dialogue that needs to stay alive. All sides reconfirmed their determination to continue the efforts.

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