

HPST NEWSLETTER

December 2011

HPST NEWS
2011-2012
Issue 1

P.O. Box 66616
Houston, TX
77266-6616

www.hpst.org

Season's
Greetings



President's Message

It is my honor to serve as the next president of the Hellenic Professional Society of Texas. I thank my predecessor George Zombakis, who served faithfully for two consecutive years, and revived the Society to its present stature. Also, I must thank our talented 2010 – 2011 board:

Vassilios Tzouanas	Vice president,
Maro Yuanidis	Treasurer,
Julietta Zombakis	Corresponding Secretary,
Gina Katsaros	Counselor, and
George Kalfoglou	Counselor.

Vassilios, Julietta and Gina have stepped down from the board, for this session, but we all know that they will continue to be active participants in the Society.

Let us extend a warm welcome to our new board members:

Lena Patsidou	Vice-President,
Tatiana Zakollikou	Recording Secretary,
Katerina Kontogeorgaki	Counselor.

During the past year, we welcomed three new members: Ioannis Papadopoulos, George Ikonoumou and Tatiana Zakollikou.

Also we welcome returning member: Thanassis Tjavaras, who moved back to Houston from Chicago. Many of you will recall that he was a member from 1996-2004.

One of the major successes of this year has been the stage play produced and presented by our members: **Η ΘΕΜΙΣ ΕΧΕΙ ΚΕΦΙΑ**. This play was so successful, it sold out on the first performance at the Barnevelder

Theater on May 8, and it deserved an encore, at the Playhouse Theater, on October 16. The second performance was as successful and memorable as the first one and a rare treat for all those who attended. The HPST Theater Group wishes to thank all those who supported the event.



(L-R): Michael Nikolaou, Maro Yuanidis, Dimitra Georgiou, Panagiotis Katsonis, Dimitri Varvarezos, Tatiana Zakollikou (director), Katerina Kontogeorgaki, Petro Yuanidis, Valerie Minetos, Theodore Snyder, Gina Katsaros, Daphne Yuanidis

On August 23rd, the Hellenic Professional Society of Texas, together with the Order of AHEPA, the Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest, the Daughters of Penelope, the Marathon Exchange, the Cretans of Houston, the Pan Macedonians and the Pan Cyprians helped to coordinate a **farewell reception for our Honorable Consul, Alexandra Theodoropoulou**, whose term of office was ending. She was appointed in September of 2007 as Houston's first female Consul of Greece. We greatly appreciate her friendship and all

that she has done for the Greek community during her time of service here. We wish Alexandra, Kostas and their son, Jason all the best in their future endeavors. Similarly, we welcome the new Consul, the **Honorable George Papanikolaou** and his wife Afsana Danishani. We look forward to working with him in the future.

On Tuesday, September 27th, the mayor of Houston issued a **Proclamation for Hellenic Cultural Month**. Among the delegation at City Hall were HPST members, Maro Yuanidis and Tatiana Zakolikou, being recognized for the encore performance of their play.



Hellenic Cultural Month also included the Greek Food Festival, OXI Day, and the classic Greek stage play "**Iphigenia**" at Houston Baptist University. Congratulations to all members of the cast, and their supporting hands, and please support all of these worthwhile cultural events projecting the Hellenic Spirit into this increasingly cosmopolitan city.

After many years of maintaining the HPST website, Anna Mavromatis has transferred her responsibilities to the capable hands of Andreas Matzakos, in order to pursue her duties as a new grandmother. During the past year, Anna's artwork was also featured in numerous gallery shows and we are all very proud of her accomplishments. We are greatly indebted to Anna for the countless hours she spent keeping our website up-to-date and polished.

Preparations are underway to finalize arrangements for our **Christmas Party** on Sunday, December 18th at the residence of Christine & Michael Economides. Mark your calendar as invitations will go out soon.

Our next annual **Scholarship Dinner** is scheduled for Sunday, February 19, 2012, at the Junior League of Houston. We are honored that Gina Katsaros has agreed to chair the scholarship committee. Ted Snyder will be the Master of Ceremonies, and Consul George Papanikolaou will be our guest speaker.

We hope that everyone will attend, and indeed enjoy, all of our forthcoming events that have been planned for 2011-2012. We will keep you posted as other details are finalized. Remember that the society's website and [facebook](#) page are updated on a regular basis.

We welcome your suggestions and feedback.

George Argyros, President

Hellenic Society Drama Team Seeking Participants for its Next Production

The Hellenic Professionals Society of Texas Drama team invites you to be a part of another wonderful, fun and memorable theatrical experience. After our successful production of the comedy of D.Psathas 'H Themis Exei Kefia' we are returning with a new Greek play, a historical allegory, written by Iakovos Kambanellis. The show is set for October of 2012.

We are currently looking for Greek speaking adults (both male & female) that would like to act, love the idea of participating in a theater production, and can dedicate a few hours per week for rehearsals. Singing skills are most welcome!

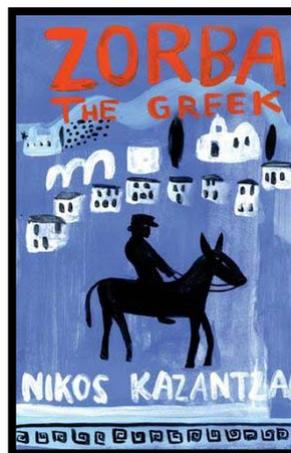
The meetings will start in the upper Kirby building this month, 7pm -9 pm, with a couple of preparatory acting workshops (14,21,28 /11). A read-through of the play will happen on **December 5th**; regular weekly rehearsals will start after the holidays.

For the production we will also need : Two or three musicians to perform live--including a pianist, a guitarist , and a flutist (or any wind instrument player) to accompany actors - singers in Manos Hatzidakis Songs; a set designer / costume adviser, and a stage manager to attend most rehearsals closer to the event.

For expression of interest, details and schedule, please contact Tatiana Zakolikou through email. Here's to a great , new beginning

Tatiana Zakolikou, Artistic Director of HPST Drama project

Greek Book Club



The next selections for the HPST Book Club are the celebrated novels "Zorba the Greek" and the "Last Temptation of Christ" by Nikos Kazantzakis, one of the most influential Greek writers and philosophers of the 20th century. Join us on Saturday, December 3rd, 2011 at 11:30 a.m. at the Hellenic Cultural Center. Upper Kirby Bldg., 3015 Richmond (at Eastside) Downstairs Conference

Room, Houston, 77098.

"Zorba the Greek" is the tale of a young Greek intellectual who ventures to escape his bookish life with the aid of the boisterous and mysterious Alexis Zorba. The controversial "The Last Temptation of Christ" has

as its central thesis that Jesus, while free from sin, was still subject to every form of temptation that humans face, including fear, doubt, depression, reluctance, and lust.

Bring your questions, read your favorite passage. Also, if you got interested in some element of the book, would anybody like to present something in 2-3 minutes? The list can be endless: the author, the language, religion or anything else that may have impressed you. We look forward to some spirited discussions. Cake & coffee will be served.

Our Book Club contact is **Karolina Ioannou**
karolina.ioannou@gmail.com.

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GreekinHouston.com was created one night in late February of 2011. Just through casual conversation we realized that with such a large Greek community here in Houston, there needed to be something to bring us all together. Along with that, we wanted a forum that anyone could go to in order to see what events are going on and hopefully, when planning an event, to avoid any overlap so that each event can be as successful as possible. And so, GreekinHouston.com was born and launched on March 21, 2011!

Part of our plan is to keep things light and fun and most importantly, free! So to that end, we are using free services, like Google calendar and Blogger that everyone has access to. We are also going to have continuously changing articles and musings on our

einaiCool page from anyone who would like to share!



Anastasia & Kosta
 Co-Founders, GreekinHouston.com

We hope you all enjoy the site as much as we enjoyed putting it together! Don't forget to follow us on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com)



Member's Holiday Party

One of the highlights of each year is our annual Christmas party. Hope to see everyone there to sing Greek Christmas carols and mingle with old & new friends. Please note that this is an adult only event.

The Hellenic Professional Society of Texas
 cordially invites members and their guests to the
Christmas Party

Christine & Michael Economides Residence

Sunday, December 18, 2011 - 6:30 p.m.

\$30.00 per person

RSVP by December 5

paloma@hal-pc.org

Please make your check payable to HPST

P.O. Box 66616, Houston, Texas 77266-6616



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Η Θέμις Έχει Κέφια

Review by Electra Elliot

Last May I needed only a theater ticket to travel back to 1940s Greece, via the recent Houston performance of the comedy "H Themis Ehei Kefia." Though my Greek skills lagged during the fluent and fast-paced delivery, I found myself thoroughly engaged in each of the eight

witty vignettes, along with an appreciative audience. We chuckled at an array of courtroom scenes, disgruntled spouses, coffee cup fortune telling, the valuation of an oil painting, and a penniless youth treating ladies at a café. My favorite part was the assortment of slapstick characters involved in the scenes, including the deaf man who continually misinterprets a conversation through his ear trumpet and the villagers who repeatedly cry out at various goings-on. The final scene depicted a group of friends in pantomime, silently toasting and enjoying each other's company around a taverna table. This scene nostalgically portrayed a gathering from a time past, a perfect end to a lighthearted evening. Congratulations to the cast for its talented delivery of Psathas's lines, and thank you for bringing his work to Houston.

My Experience as an Actress – Katerina Kontogeorgaki



I grew up in Greece where theatre is everywhere. Almost every city, big or small, has at least one theatre, and in Athens there are more than two hundred theatres or theatrical schemes. As a college student in Thessaloniki, I did not miss a single performance. However, I never had performed in a play, not even in one of

those holiday sketches in elementary school. When, last fall, I became a member of our theatrical group and started practicing our comedy "H Themis Exei Kefia", I felt like a child who after years of watching the Disney movies finally visits the Disney World. Dear friends, welcome to the magical world of theatre. Practicing and acting my roles had the thrill and excitement of taking a bunch of written lines and creating a live person full of emotions. In the process I had to look deep into myself, explore and adapt different traits, work closely with friends, and finally reveal this knowledge to our audience.

Even when I was at home, the role stayed with me. My mind always worked with it trying to feel closer and closer to the character. In one of the play's vignettes I had the role of the gossiping lady who troubled the lives of the villagers with her gossip. I was mean, bitter and cunning, and at the same time pretending to be totally innocent. Our director suggested that we think of an animal that could represent the character, and I thought of myself as a mean chicken that tries to bite everybody who comes close. I was yelling and jumping in front of the mirror and other times I was bitterly screaming to my astonished husband for no reason.

I know something similar happened to my fellow actors and I really learned a lot from their journey to their roles. The day of our first performance was full of excitement, but also stress. Right from the beginning we felt the appreciation and participation of the audience and we took off.

Although I had an amazing experience performing at our little play, I have also realized that theatre is much more. It is not only exaggeration, or pretending, or memorizing, or communicating. I felt like I have been only to one ride out of many in the amusement park, and I cannot wait to see more. Dear friends, stay with us as we are going to reveal to you with our future performances the Magic World of Theatre.

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Save These Dates!

Saturday, January 14, 2012, 6 p.m.
General Assembly Mtg
 Upper Kirby Building

HPST 35th Annual Scholarship Dinner
 Sunday, February 19, 2012
 Junior League of Houston
 1811 Briar Oaks Ln, Houston, Texas 77027

Sunday, March 4, 2012 @ 6 p.m.
Karyotakis: Poetry as Music Inspiration in Greece Today
 Location to be finalized

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The Hellenic Professional Society of Texas is a non-profit organization that was established in 1975 by people wishing to preserve the rich culture and heritage of Greece. Among its goals are:

- To organize and sponsor activities which promote Greek language, culture and the spirit of Hellenism to the Houston community.*
- To facilitate fellowship and cooperation between professionals of Greek heritage.*
- To encourage the pursuit of higher education among people of Greek descent.*

