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Summer 2018

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LSE - The impact of Brexit on Greece

On Tuesday 19th June 2018, the Hellenic Observatory and the LSE Generation Brexit Project hosted an event labelled 'The impact of Brexit on Greece and Cyprus' held at the Hong Kong theatre at Clement House, London.

The Ambassador of Greece, Mr Dimitris Caramitsos-Tziras, gave a speech about the impact of Brexit on Greece, while a panel of experts including James Ker-Lindsay (LSE European Institute), Vicky Price (Centre for Economics and Business Research) and Effie Kyrtata (Reload Greece) examined various aspects of Brexit in a discussion chaired by the head of the LSE European Institute, Professor Kevin Featherstone.

In his opening speech, Mr Tziras stressed that Brexit is a legally unprecedented development, one which is "truly overwhelming and also difficult", emphasising that different scenarios being envisaged about its impact are more of a theoretical exercise rather than reality. Discussions on Brexit have mostly focused on the economy whilst equally important topics such as security, social change, mobility, education and cultural relations are being undermined in public discussions. He noted that the relations between UK and the EU countries in the post-Brexit era will depend, on the one hand, on the extent to which the

UK will remain linked to Europe and, on the other hand, on the UK's bilateral relations with the 27 EU member states. The latter is especially important for Greece, since it enjoys a deep and historic relationship with the UK.

In an attempt to specify the impact of Brexit on Greece Mr Tziras focused on the effects on the economy, the citizens' rights and security and defence. He made a distinction between a 'soft' and a 'hard' Brexit. According to studies conducted by the Greek government, a soft Brexit is predicted to reduce the Greek GDP by 0.44%, while a hard Brexit is expected to have nearly double the effect. Moreover, a soft Brexit would negatively affect the Greek tourist sector by 2.29%, while this percentage is expected to climb up to 5% in the case of a hard Brexit. This remains a critical issue for Greece whose economy relies heavily on the tourist sector as one of its main sources of income.

On the topic of Brexit's impact on citizens' rights, Mr Tziras noted that whatever is agreed will be reciprocal. The British Government has announced the implementation of a "settled status" for EU citizens already residing in the UK, however, details have not yet been finalised. Finally, Mr Tziras highlighted the importance of Brexit negotiations on European security and defence. For a long time,

Lord Callanan, Minister of State at DExEU:

*"UK and Greece are close partners and friends
and will be for generations to come"*



whilst being a member of the EU, the UK has strived to reach a consensus in security and defence issues. In the post-Brexit era, when the UK will no longer be obliged to adhere to EU security policies, it is feared by many that the two sides may gradually diverge.

Hellenic Centre- Greek Community Outreach Event

Later in July, an outreach event for the Greek community in London was organised to provide information on the future of Greek citizens and their rights in the UK in the post-Brexit era. The Department for Exiting the European Union, supported by the Greek Embassy, hosted a public panel for questions on the 17th July in the building of the Hellenic Centre.

The Ambassador of Greece, Mr Tziras, gave the opening remarks stressing the need to secure the rights of EU citizens in the UK and expressed his hope for further enhancement of the good relations between the Greek nation and the United Kingdom after the exit agreement is finalized, while emphasising that Greece has approached the exit negotiations with positive spirit.

Addressing the audience, the Minister of State at the Department for Exiting the European Union, Lord Callanan, acknowledged the value of the Greeks



*Ambassador of Greece in the UK
Mr Dimitris Caramitsos-Tziras*

living in the UK and their contribution. "You are all part of our community", he stressed, noting the close bonds between Greece and the UK, referring to the thousands of Greeks who live in the UK and the British who live in Greece, the high number of British tourists who visit Greece every year and the Greek students attending British universities. "UK and Greece are close partners and friends and will be for generations to come", Lord Callanan said, reiterating the UK's desire to maintain close bonds with Greece after its exit from the EU.

At the end of Lord Callanan's speech, a panel of British government officials replied to questions from the audience on how to acquire a "settled status" as an EU citizen in the UK and gave other relevant information.

The Greek Diaspora takes centre stage at Oxford

An informative conference on Greece and Greeks abroad organised by Seesox

The Greek Diaspora Conference was organised by the Greek Diaspora Project at SEESOX (South East European Studies at Oxford) and took place on the 22nd and 23rd of June, at St Antony's College, University of Oxford. Academics and professionals from all over the world participated actively in the conference and had the opportunity to discuss the issue of the relationship between homeland and diaspora.

The Greek Diaspora Project

The SEESOX Greek Diaspora Project started three years ago with the aim to explore the relationship between Greece and its diaspora in the current context of economic crisis and beyond. The project in general investigates how the Greek diaspora can affect Greece's political and economic transformation and explores ways for the Greek state, economy and society to interact with its diaspora, by adopting historical, multidisciplinary and comparative approaches.

The overall question of the project is what the Greek Diaspora Conference aimed to tackle more specifically. Due to the economic crisis, which has become a pivotal event in the country's history, the nature and role of Greece's diaspora has been redefined. The Greek diaspora has historically demonstrated high levels of homeland orientation, and has had a big input in Greece's economic, political and social evolution. So when linking this conception to the economic crisis which has plagued Greece, the Conference aimed to tackle questions such as "how is the interrelationship between Greece and its diasporic communities shaping up in the current context and conjunction of the crisis?" but also investigative questions such as "To what extent are Greeks abroad willing and able to contribute to the crisis resolution and, more importantly, to Greece's long term transformation?".

And so in summary, it could be said that the overall aim of the conference was to explore the impact of Greek diaspora communities on the trajectory of their homeland through interactions in the domains of the economy, politics, philanthropy and in the sociocultural field.



Diaspora and party politics

One key topic which was addressed and analysed during the conference was the way that political elites in Greece approached the Greek diaspora in the post-2009 crisis period. This presentation was led by Othon Anastasakis (SEESOX, University of Oxford) and Foteini Kalantzi (SEESOX, University of Oxford), and focused on the positioning of political parties on the issue of diaspora within the period of 2009-2017. As a general comment, it was showcased that homeland political parties utilise diaspora members not only as voters but also "as activists, fundraisers, lobbyists, candidates, influencers from afar, and symbols in party campaign message," while special focus was given to the comparison of the engagement of political parties with Greeks abroad prior to and during the crisis. Although the findings are not definitive, the presentation did come up with some tentative conclusions.

Contrary to the original hypothesis, the frequency of the debates on further engagement with diaspora was not increased during the crisis years. However, the issues which were discussed surrounding the



theme of the diaspora became more expansive after 2009, with emphasis being given by parties on the ways that the diaspora could enhance the positive profile of Greece abroad, at a time of very negative publicity throughout. Another recurring and divisive issue in the Greek parliament concerning diaspora is the right of the Greeks abroad to vote: New Democracy is the party with the biggest push to allow Greeks abroad to be able to vote. At the same time, Syriza is not opposed to giving the right to vote to Greeks abroad, but has stressed the need of a fair procedure and of equal representation of all the parties that will contest for the vote of the Greeks abroad.

Other diaspora issues that are of concern for political parties and are often in discussion in the Greek Parliament, are the cultural ties between homeland and diaspora, with the discussion of the Greek language in the epicentre. Within the conference, this included a talk about the schools of the Greek homogenia and the resources needed to keep them operating.

Furthermore, the presentation showed that there are not major ideological divisions between parties when regarding the diaspora. However, despite the pro-diaspora rhetoric by parties, actual law making was non-existent.

“Overall, we observe a more utilitarian, transactional approach towards diasporic communities on an ad hoc basis, lacking a more comprehensive institutional context”, Anastasakis and Kalantzi stated.

Diaspora and brain-drain

Another issue of importance which was discussed within the conference was the issue of brain drain. This refers to the emigration of promising young people from Greece to other countries, in search of better opportunities to apply their talent to. The conference covered themes such as the student migration from Greece to the UK, in order to understand their aspirations and decision making factors. The conference discussed that due to the crises, there has been a lack of work positions, which have career potential which in turn has made Greece a non-attractive destination for people looking to apply their talent within the workplace.

Anastasia Kafe (SEESOX, University of Oxford) and Manolis Pratsinakis (SEESOX, University of Oxford) showcased some tentative conclusions of an original piece of research titled “Surveying the Greek Diaspora”. In this research project, one of the main points presented was that most young Greek emigrants came to London with big expectations looking for better job prospects and in most cases they were able to achieve that. In this research

piece, it was found that only 5.3% of the Greeks in London are planning a return to Greece within the next three years and that 17% would wish to do so but feel they won't be able to pursue their wish. The majority (66%) aims to remain in the UK in the short-term. Concerning their longer-term plans, the majority of the respondents (70%) noted that they would wish to return to Greece at some point in the future. Finally 81% of those asked said they would like the right to vote whilst staying outside of Greece.

The full programme and podcasts of the conference are available through the website of St Antony College: <https://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/events/greek-diaspora-conference-homeland%E2%80%92diaspora-relations-flux> and <http://seesoxdiaspora.org/>

(photos courtesy of SEESOX)



Othon Anastasakis, Director of SEESOX at St Antony's College

(from left to right) Platon Tinios (Piraeus University), David Madden (SEESOX, University of Oxford), Sokratis Koniordos (University of Crete) and Aymeric Faure (London School of Economics)



Kalypso Nicolaidis, Professor of International Relations and director of the Center for International Studies at the University of Oxford



Foteini Kalantzi, Researcher at the Greek Diaspora Project in SEESOX



Nikos Stamboulopoulos, founder and creative director of New Diaspora Project

Vicky Pryce: "Greece has achieved a remarkable turnaround."

Vicky Pryce is a Greek born economist. She is currently Chief Economic Adviser and a board member at the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR). She was previously Senior Managing Director at FTI Consulting, Director General for Economics at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Joint Head of the UK Government Economic Service. Before that she was Partner at the accounting and consulting firm KPMG after senior economic positions in banking and the oil sector. She holds a number of academic posts and is a Fellow of the UK Academy for Social Sciences and of the Society of Professional Economists. She sits on the Council of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, on the Advisory Board of the central banking think-tank OMFIF and on the Economic Advisory Group of the British Chambers of Commerce. Her books include: "Greeconomics: The Euro crisis and Why Politicians Don't Get It"; "It's the Economy, Stupid- Economics for Voters", with Ross and Urwin; "Redesigning Manufacturing", with Nielsen and Beverland; and "Why Women Need Quotas", with Stefan Stern. She is also co-founder of GoodCorporation, a company set up to promote Corporate Social Responsibility "

On 20 August Greece exited its final three-year bailout program. In an interview with @GreeceInUK, Vicky Pryce, Chief Economic Adviser at CEBR, former joint head of the UK Government Economic Service and author of 'Greeconomics', speaks about the challenges that Greece and Europe face in the post-bailout era, the potential impact of Brexit and the opportunities presented to Greece, after the deal with FYROM on the name issue.

1. On 20th August Greece exited its final three-year bailout program. Greek economy is returning to growth and Greek unemployment has dropped below 20% for the first time in the last seven years. In your opinion what are the prospects of Greece's economy and the challenges that the country faces in the post-bailout era? How can Greece secure a sustainable recovery?

The exit from the bail-out has to be celebrated and was long overdue. Greece has achieved a remarkable turnaround in its public finances achieving a budget surplus on its normal revenue and spending transactions and also a primary surplus when debt servicing is excluded. All other countries that had bailouts such as Ireland, Portugal, Ireland and Cyprus had exited some time ago. The situation in Greece had been more extreme. However while other countries' debt burden remains significant their return to 'normality' was helped by them being able to participate in the ECB's vast Quantitative Easing operations since 2015, which have kept the rates at which they can borrow in the capital markets low and the debt manageable. This was not the case for Greece. The credit rating for Greek bonds has been improving in anticipation of the end of the bail-out. But, despite the lengthening of maturities, interest

rate reductions and payment holidays Greece has managed to negotiate for part of its debt, the 180% debt to GDP is likely to remain a constraint on growth.

In addition, the requirement to continue to produce substantial primary surpluses for decades to come will mean that it will be difficult to see how Greece can escape further austerity and low growth. Growth has been picking up mainly as a result of improved tourism receipts and higher exports generally, but it will take decades at current rates for the lost output to be made up. Further debt relief measures will have to be negotiated at some point to consolidate the foundations for future growth and prosperity. What Greece also needs is considerably more investment and infrastructure funding from the EU, more help to tackle the migrant crisis, a lessening in bureaucracy and a lowering of the tax burden on businesses and individuals to encourage spending and investment. It also needs to produce a properly, evidence - based industrial strategy. A proper partnership needs to develop between the public and private sectors on the back of a well thought-out and evaluated industrial strategy to ensure that Greece can exploit its strengths - such as in agriculture, energy and high tech- as well as consolidate its geographical position as a major trading and tourist centre with attractive offerings for visitors throughout the year and not just in the summer months.

2. During the crisis many young professionals and academics left Greece trying to build their lives abroad. How could this 'brain drain' be reversed? How could the experience of young Greek academics abroad be used to benefit Greece?



true”, adding that “Greece’s salvation is also a sign of European solidarity.” Has Europe emerged stronger from the crisis? What are the lessons to be learnt from the crisis for both Greece and the EU?

It is true that the need to save the Euro as Mario Draghi, the head of the European Central Bank (ECB), had promised he would in 2015 also meant keeping Greece in the Euro and the EU. But the single currency had problems from the very beginning in that it had not built the proper institutions to deal with a crisis of the type we saw in the late 2000s. Greece suffered from that lack of institutional framework. When the crisis hit, countries found themselves in difficulty and unable to borrow in the capital markets and their banks teetering on the brink of insolvency with no proper funds transfer mechanism, no immediate risk sharing and the ECB not a lender of last resort which the markets had assumed (wrongly) that was the case. The burden was therefore borne by the taxpayer in each country which has left a legacy of debt burdens and a period of severe austerity, none of course as severe as in Greece. Greece like other crisis-hit eurozone countries was unable to lower its own interest rates or depreciate its currency as a way to improve competitiveness and its finances. Instead it was left with no option but to cut salaries and pensions, reduce public spending and increase taxes in exchange for a series of bail-outs. As a result the severity and duration of the Greek depression was unparalleled in any European country since the war. But fear of the domino effect of a possible 'Grexit' on the rest of the eurozone finally led to decisive action to deal with it in a more sustainable way. There has been an increasing acceptance of risk sharing. In addition to QE there is now a European Support Mechanism, a move to a banking union with a new bank resolution fund, a reinforced regulatory role for the European

Outfits like 'Reload Greece' which, backed by Greek academics at the LBS and elsewhere are trying to encourage young Greek entrepreneurs through training grants and other inducements to engage in new activities and link up with the Greeks of the diaspora are beginning to make a difference. But this is still a relatively small endeavour compared with the challenge of engaging the large number of young and qualified individuals who have left. There needs to be an active policy of re-engaging young professionals, possibly with a system of preferential funding arrangements to encourage investments in innovative ideas, supported by some of the international institutions. But again, reducing bureaucracy and allowing new start ups to flourish without crippling tax burdens is a must. Greece rates particularly poorly globally in relation to the ease of starting and doing business. A way of getting that talent to return must be found urgently.

3. Eurozone leaders hailed Greece’s exit from the bailout as the end of the eurozone crisis. In an interview for the *Handelsblatt* newspaper, Olaf Scholz, Germany’s finance minister, noted that “The bleak predictions of the prophets of doom have not come

Central Bank, which is now also effectively finally a lender of last resort, a move towards a capital markets union and talk of a eurozone budget, eurozone finance Ministry and possibly turning the ESM into a European IMF. I think that indeed we could see the crisis in Greece and the eventual more positive response of the Europeans as demonstrating the commitment to keep the EU together.

4. The UK is heading for an exit from the EU. In a recent event at LSE you spoke of a possible positive impact of Brexit on Greece. How is Brexit expected to affect the UK, Greece and the EU?

Much of what I said in response to the previous question also applies here. But Brexit has certainly had an impact. The EU has been at pains to ensure that advantages of being in the EU are clear during the Brexit negotiations. The example of the way Greece seems to have fared in the eurozone was and is still being used by pro-Brexit campaigners as a reason for not wanting to be in the EU. In a way I do think that the need to keep the EU against the threat that Brexit presents to the integrity of the EU has led to a greater show of solidarity towards Greece and a greater willingness by other eurozone countries to help broker a solution.

5. Having reached a deal with FYROM on the name issue, Greece has drawn praise abroad and aspires to play a leading role in the stabilization and regional cooperation in the Balkans. What potential for economic growth does this deal offer to Greece and South Eastern Europe?

It's good news that the name deal has gone forward. Assuming agreement by parliaments and a referendum, this opens the door to the Western Balkan nations to join the EU and its single market. Open frontiers from the Aegean to the Alps can only be good for Greek businesses who know how to do business in the region.

6. Turkey's economy has recently presented signs of volatility, with the Turkish lira losing value and the country's inflation and debt causing concern. What could the implications of a potential Turkish financial crisis be for the economies of Greece and the EU?

There are increasing concerns about any domino effect from the Turkish financial crisis. With a number of banks in the eurozone already having to cope with a high level of non-performing loans, the fall in the lira is adding to problems given the very large percentage of foreign currency denominated loans

in Turkey. Moreover it could sour investors' views of highly indebted countries and therefore make it more difficult for Greece to borrow in international markets.

"Further debt relief measures will have to be negotiated at some point to consolidate the foundations for future growth and prosperity. What Greece also needs is considerably more investment and infrastructure funding from the EU, more help to tackle the migrant crisis, a lessening in bureaucracy and a lowering of the tax burden on businesses and individuals to encourage spending and investment"

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Greek Energy Forum Awards 2018



What is the Greek Energy Forum (GEF)?

The Greek Energy Forum (GEF) is an international energy think tank consisting of energy professionals holding international corporate posts and sharing a common interest in the broader energy industry in South-eastern Europe. The Forum was founded in 2013 and is headquartered in London, whilst it features branch offices in Athens, Brussels, Dubai, Nicosia and Washington DC. The expertise of the members of the GEF spans across the energy industry spectrum benefiting the Forum with a multi-disciplinary skill-set and a holistic approach to its field.

The main objectives of the GEF are:

- To establish an international platform of ideas and dialogue amongst energy professionals to enable change in the energy setting of SE Europe/East Med.
- To inform investors and public opinion on latest energy developments and “best practice” examples, successfully applied abroad
- To propose and communicate energy policy proposals and reforms to governments and decision makers

In an era of rapid developments in the sectors of energy and hydrocarbons in Greece and SE Europe, the GEF aims at utilizing the know-how and invaluable expertise of its members to contribute with innovative proposals and hence catalyse the growth of the energy industry in the region

The Greek Energy Forum Awards 2018

Since its establishment in 2013, the Greek Energy Forum (GEF) has provided a dynamic platform upon which energy professionals have the ability to network, share ideas and best practices on current industry developments and market trends in Greece and SE Europe, as well as propose and communicate energy policies and reforms to governments and decision makers.

Underpinned by this aspiration and the ideal of "Aien Aristeuein" the Forum established its first GEF Awards Ceremony in 2016, envisioning to acknowledge organisations and individuals who excelled and inspired through their vision, work and contribution in the sectors of energy and hydrocarbons in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

Following the successful completion and continuing the legacy of the first GEF Awards, the Forum is aspiring to make it a tradition. The GEF Awards 2018 marked another milestone in bestowing those companies and individuals that have become benchmark of excellence, competence and innovation in the energy and hydrocarbons sector in the region.

This year, we made a few small, but highly significant adjustments in the way that the Awards are organised. First, the structure of the Awards Board was introduced. This was a Committee of distinguished professionals from our industry, selected through our Steering Committee, but also through an Open Call process, and it was tasked with the independent and unbiased selection of the nominees for our seven Award categories.

We were truly humbled by the calibre of the candidates who expressed their interest through this Open Call, and we are honoured by the fact that the impartiality and robustness of our awards process was endorsed by such an esteemed assembly.

Second, the selection of the winners this year took place through a public vote, where we managed to reach unprecedented levels of participation, having in excess of three and a half thousand votes from across all geographic our regions of activity.

Finally, by introducing the notion of the nominees and reducing the number of award categories down to 7, we narrowed the focus to what we believe are the core value points of the industry in our region. But also, we highlighted the fact that there are numerous best practice stories in each category. Stories of hard work, dedication and commitment, that deserve and must be promoted on an international level.

To this extent, we believe that it is a responsibility of the Forum to act as envoy of Greece and the wider region in the international energy and hydrocarbons industry, by promoting its numerous best practices and success stories in this field, and thus highlighting this way its creative, innovative and forward-looking side.





The 7 Awards presented in the GEF Awards 2018 were the following:

1. Energy Influencer: Mathios Rigas – CEO, Energean Oil & Gas
2. Energy Innovator: Smart Islands Initiative
3. Energy/Hydrocarbons Company of the Year: Mytilineos Group
4. Energy Consultancy/Services of the Year: Kantor Management Consultants
5. Maritime Services of the Year: Gaslog
6. Social Responsibility: Hellenic Petroleum
7. Green Energy: Eunice Energy Group

“Active Youths of Florina” at the “Future Europe, Future You” Youth Conference in London

Iason and Nikoleta are the two Greek students who took part in the Youth Conference “Future Europe, Future You” at Europe House in London. The two youths talked to @GreeceInUK about the conference, their thoughts and feelings on the European integration project as Greek and European citizens, their own and their generation’s dreams, concerns and hopes for the future.

1. Would you like to introduce yourselves to our readers talking about your backgrounds and current activities?

Iason: My name is Iason Tachou, currently at the age of 25 years old with a mixed background of being born and raised in Thessaloniki and Florina, studied both in Athens and abroad. Holder of a BA in English Language and Literature from the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (EKPA), equivalent to BA studies title on Social Sciences by the Ritsumeikan University and currently completing the last semester of my MA studies on Applied Social Sciences at the Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) in Ireland which is being funded by Erasmus+. Working part-time as a youth worker, project manager and mentor at Active Youths of Florina (OENEF). In my free time, you may find me exploring different parts of our astonishing world, mostly focusing around the Balkans, Central, Northern, East and Far-East Asia or focusing on language studies due to keen interest towards not so widely spoken languages - speaker of nine languages up to today and having just started my studies in Russian as the upcoming tenth.

Nikoleta: My name is Nikoleta Theodoridou, I am 19 years old and I am from a small city named Naousa in Greece. Last year I finished the high school and gave the Greek national exams and now I am studying agricultural technology in Florina, Greece. I am passionate with the nature because of my parents who are farmers so I have a special connection with nature.

2. You took part in the Youth Conference “Future Europe, Future You” representing Greece. Did the conference live up to your expectations? What are, according to you, the key takeaways of the conference?

Iason: The conference indeed lived up to my personal expectations and from what I learned from my peers, it did so for them too. Having participated into

conferences with similar topics before might have been of assistance but nonetheless, you can never be truly prepared as to what the outcomes or gains may be until the end. One of the key takeaways of the conference was the fact that today’s youth has so many things to say. Countless ideas, opinions and suggestions were voiced that a lot of the current politicians may not come up with due to the generation gap and the loss of touch with the modern era’s needs. As the title itself explains, it was a conference not solely for the purpose of listening to speeches of politicians and representatives of different EU bodies and institutions but to have an open dialogue between them and young representatives from across Europe. Learning how each country’s youth feels about Europe and the European dream, the political, economic and security risks that are being faced with have been a true eye-opener for the attendants of the conference.

“Countless ideas, opinions and suggestions were voiced that a lot of the current politicians may not come up with due to the generation gap and the loss of touch with the modern era’s needs”

Nikoleta: In my opinion the youth conference “Future Europe Future You” was much better than I was expecting. When the organization that I represent (OENEF) gave me the opportunity to participate in this project which was based on the relationship between Europe and Greece, I was super excited and super nervous at the same time. All I wanted was to talk about my country and share experiences and thoughts with other European countries, but I didn’t know what I would encounter and how hard it would be to express freely. In the end I realised that all of the participants and the trainers were so nice and friendly so they made me feel like home. In conclusion, the key was to feel free because the main reason was to express your thoughts, opinions, and experiences that will be useful to make the future Europe.



3. *You are members of the Association of Active Youths of Florina (OENEF). Would you like to share with us your thoughts, feelings and experiences from your involvement with the group?*

Iason: Have been a member of the Association of Active Youths of Florina (OENEF) for the past three years (since late 2015). Being a member, volunteer and currently a youth worker and project manager has been immensely beneficial to my development both on personal and professional level. OENEF is currently the only fully operational NGO in the region of Western Macedonia that operates on the sector of youth work, offering to its members the possibility of developing their capabilities through EU funded programmes such as Erasmus+ that this youth

conference is part of. The extended network offers a variety in collaboration and gives more opportunities to young people to be benefited from the participation in the different projects that are being included into different fields in relation to youth work by enriching their capabilities and raising the capacities as active European citizens of both the NGO members and local youth in general. By participating at training seminars, courses and youth exchanges, I have had the chance to meet people of different socioeconomic backgrounds from both across Europe and partner countries but also from other parts of the world like Latin America and Africa, learn about different cultures, develop further my skills of living in an intercultural environment and being more adaptable to today's multicultural society.

Nikoleta: I have been a member of Active Youths of Florina (OENEF) for 4 months. I know it's a little while but I'm ready and willing to travel and meet new people and new cultures, since one of my dreams is traveling. This organization helped me do that. I have already participated in two programs and this is the third in the series.

4. *From a cultural perspective, how do you perceive the interaction between the European and the Greek identity? Do you see any conflicts or points of friction?*

Iason: A lot of today's European values that encompass the European Identity can find themselves originating back to Greece so it is impossible to say that there are no similarities. The issue of Greek versus European Identity is an intriguing topic which would require a lot of debating. My personal opinion is that there have been points of friction and shall continue to be due to the current social and economic issues that the country has been facing. Greece has a proud history and cultural background with its citizens initially placing within their hearts the national identity and then the European. A lot of today's European values can find themselves originating back to Greece so it is impossible to say that there is no relations.



Nikoleta: The interaction between Europe and Greece is at a good level. As Greece is known to face many problems in recent years, either economically or socially, there are conflicts with other countries, but always through dialogue and reason, problems are solved or diminished.

5. Based on your knowledge and information so far, what is your opinion on the European integration project?

"My idealistic dream is the creation of a unified Europe, a Union of true equality without any physical or otherwise borders, freedom of speech, expression of opinions without condemnation, respect of values and human rights and no forms of discrimination whatsoever"

Nikoleta: Me, as a Greek and a European citizen over the past few years I've seen many things change. Things related to education, politics, social rights, the emergence of my country, etc. All these have benefited from the European integration program, which has brought development to my country. I believe It is right for all European countries to move forward and develop through European integration.

Iason: Being first a Greek and secondary a European citizen, I have witnessed throughout the past years many things to either having shifted or fully changed. Funding in education, protection and implementation of human rights, the economic support of the Greek economy and more have been part of the European Integration project. A social and cultural integration may take a lot of years and also never fully succeed due to the difference in the mentality of the societies at Southern European countries. Nonetheless, that does not imply that

there is no will of forging a more unified European Union. Today's Greek youth, despite its hesitant attitude towards the EU due to socio-economic situation as a consequence of the crisis, knows very well about the achievements and believes in the values that define the EU.

"Today's Greek youth, despite its hesitant attitude towards the EU due to socio-economic situation as a consequence of the crisis, knows very well about the achievements and believes in the values that define the EU"

6. How do you envisage your generation's future in this world? What are your dreams, your fears, your concerns and your hopes?

Nikoleta: In my mind I think of a Europe united without frontiers, without controversy. A Europe that will have peace and its citizens will enjoy all the rights and the freedom to express their opinion without being condemned. I still live with the hope that there will be a world without war, separating bickering, and discrimination.

"In my mind I think of a Europe united without frontiers, without controversy. I still live with the hope that there will be a world without war, separating bickering and discrimination"

Iason: My idealistic dream is the creation of a unified Europe, a Union of true equality without any physical or otherwise borders, freedom of speech, expression of opinions without condemnation, respect of values and human rights and no forms of discrimination whatsoever. The economic development of my country and its geopolitical issues together with the addition of the EU's have always been part of my concerns.



Andrew Hadley is CEO of Momentum World (www.momentumworld.org), an education and training organisation which develops young people's leadership and employability through international projects and networks.

Andrew began his career as an English language teacher in Istanbul, Turkey. He then joined the British Council, and worked for 20 years in a variety of management and policy jobs in different parts of the world, including Ethiopia, China, Greece and Skopje, where he started working with young people. This work became the basis of his current career, specialising in intercultural and education projects, events and networks for young people.

Andrew studied Classics at Christ Church, Oxford, during which time he also learned modern Greek with the renowned literary scholar Peter Levi. His interests include travel, languages, music, and the arts. He is married with three children, and lives in London.

1. Andrew, you are leading a group of people who founded Momentum World. Would you like to introduce your organization to our readers?

I had spent 5 years as director of the British Council in Skopje, where we did some fantastic work running large scale summer schools and developing youth networks across the Balkans. I saw the incredible impact that this international experience could have on young people's lives and education. When I returned to the UK in 2006, I saw that there was so little opportunity of this kind for young people in my own country. So my colleagues and I decided to do something about that. We set up Momentum World in 2008 and we are now in our 10th year. Although we are a small organization, I do believe we have got a good reputation for the way we work and the

impact we have had on hundreds of young people. We work with some great partners around Europe, including Greece of course.

2. Along with Erasmus+ and the European Commission in the UK you organized the Youth Conference «Future Europe, Future You» held in London on June 18. What were the aims of this event and what is your assessment now that the event came to an end?

Europe is going through a difficult time politically, socially and economically. I don't need to tell Greeks anything about that. Maybe it is a temporary situation; but there's a danger that we could be facing something much more serious and long term, with the rise of a new populism and a number of extremist tendencies in many countries. All this affects young



people more than the rest of us, and the decisions of today's politicians in every country will have a greater impact on the lives and welfare of future generations than at any time in the last 25-30 years: young people will have to live with, and manage, the consequences. So it is more important than ever to give young people opportunities for serious discussion about the future of Europe, dialogue with policy-makers and building intercultural relations for the future. "Future Europe Future You" was really a first step in trying to get a new generation involved in intercultural relations.

We've had some very positive comments from the young people and professionals who attended the conference. I think the thing which made it unique was that it was totally organized and presented by a group of young people from 16 different countries, who had only met each other for the first time 48

hours before. That's how we like to work – give real responsibility to young people and trust them to do a good job, and they will.

3. You are a British national who has traveled widely and much of his efforts and work so far have focused on intercultural exchange. Do you identify more as a European or a British? Speaking of identities, how compatible do you think national identities are with co-existing in a supranational organization?

Everyone has a complex mix of identities. It is part of being human. The more you travel, the more you realise this. I feel 100% English, 100% British, and 100% European. I feel a little bit Greek too, having spent many years in your country. And I'm sure there are many more too. These identities are not all the same however: for example, English is

my ethnicity, while British is my citizenship. The European identity is one I am very proud of too, because it is the one I can share with 500 million other people. We need to celebrate the identities that unite us, more than those which maybe divide us. I am totally opposed to political nationalism, but I love national cultural diversity. I don't see any contradiction between national and supranational. In the 21st century these are both desirable realities.

4. What is Brexit to you, on a cultural/existentialist level? A return to genuine British values and disengagement from the UK's European fate to reinvent and reinvigorate a modern country in close connection with its past and traditions or a phobic escape from the contemporary realities of intercultural cooperation that will shrink and weaken the UK's cultural standing in the world? What are the prospects and potential risks – if any – involved in Brexit?

I am totally opposed to Brexit and I haven't heard of one single benefit that it might bring to me personally, my business, my community, or my country. It's all about vacuous phrases like "taking back control" or "sovereignty" which have no meaning for ordinary people. I also think it is perfectly reasonable and democratic to fight against it, and for "the people" to be allowed to change their minds. Anyone who has read Thucydides will remember the Mytilenean Debates in Athens in 427 BC: one decision one day, and completely the opposite the next day, when the people realized what was really in their national interest. That's democracy.

I'm sorry that people are only talking about the economic issues though. I do think that it is also a cultural and educational disaster. I am sure it already has weakened our cultural standing in the world in some ways; although I am also sure that Britain is and will remain a centre of cultural innovation and creativity, whatever happens. And above all, I am certain that ultimately it will be cultural relations, especially led by young people, that will save us. I believe our European friends understand this and will help.

5. What's your perception of contemporary British youth in terms of their beliefs, values, aspirations and dreams?

I'm 58 years old so I am very hesitant to have too strong an opinion about young people. But what I see is a mixed picture. The picture painted by the media is completely wrong because they focus only on a minority of problem cases, which you can find in any age group. Young people in general are extremely moral, creative and social. They think quite differently from my generation and while it is true that all generations are different, in this case technology has a huge part to play. Instant access to information and the ability to live and communicate simultaneously online and in the real world may mean that the young generation is the most intelligent there has ever been. The problem we older ones have is that we can't understand this new kind of intelligence, and we are still trying to force it into out of date social and educational frameworks, which is a big mistake.

On the other hand, this is the "selfie generation". Many young people are quite self-centred and lack social and professional skills. They sometimes feel a sense of entitlement which means they expect everything to come to them, instead of being hungry to go out and find opportunities. But of course, that

is a generalization and it is certainly very different from country to country. As for their dreams – I expect they are the same as every generation's, only more colourful.

6. You have spent five years of your career as Assistant Director of the British Council in Athens and then Director in Thessaloniki, and you keep traveling to Greece often. How would you compare today's Greece with the country you were introduced to back in the nineties?

I actually first visited Greece with my parents in 1974, again in 1979 and then every year from 1980 to 1983 while I was a student (studying Classics - what you would call *archaia Elliniki filologia*). I regard Greece as my second home. When I was travelling around in the early eighties it was the era of Andreas Papandreou and "allagi", with the EU as the eventual destination of that process under Konstantinos Karamanlis senior. And for sure there have been some huge changes since then, mostly for the better (until of course the recent economic crises which have been devastating and should never have happened). I suppose overall, Greece feels much more European than it did back then. Infrastructure has improved, cultural life is richer and there's a bit more standardization and regulation. I once slept under the stars in the Temple of Apollo at Vassai in the Peloponnese: you wouldn't be allowed to do that any more (and in any case, they've put a roof over it!) But the fundamental things haven't changed – the philosophy of life, the everyday culture, the poetry in everything. An old fisherman in Patmos once told me: "Andrea, God has given us Greeks so much difficulty, hardship and pain. But he's also given us laughter!" What a wonderful outlook on life.



Dimitris Maragopulos:

~A composer depends on a good performance. The performer, the soloist, the orchestra consist the other half of the work that could either undermine it or elevate it~

The composer Dimitris Maragopulos was born in Athens where he started his first studies in theory and composition which he completed with F.M. Beyer at the Music Academy of Berlin (Universität der Künste).

His compositions have been performed in many countries such as USA, Canada, Turkey, Hungary, Sweden, Russia, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, and UK etc. His symphonic compositions have been performed by such orchestras as the B.B.C. Orchestra, the Moscow Philharmonic, Sofia Philharmonic, Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra, Athens State Orchestra, Camerata etc, with Operas staged by the National Opera of Greece and special commissions for the opening ceremony of the new Planetarium in Athens together with a special music theatre piece for the opening ceremony of the 2004 Olympics which has been in repertoire at the Laterna Magica Theatre (National Theatre of Prague) in Prague. The composer has also written for film and stage, with productions of the Greek Classics for the Arts Theatre, Athens, under the direction of Karolos Coun together with collaborations with directors Spyros Evangelatos, Iakovos Kampanelis, Andreas Voutsinas and Sotiris Chatzakis. His church music has included performances at the Cathedral of Santa Margarita in Venice, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, Canterbury Cathedral, Munich and Linz –Austria (European Capital of Culture).

In 1993 he became artistic director of the musical cycle "Bridges" at the Athens Concert Hall. He became also artistic director the period 1996 – 2010 of the International Festival of Music and Performing Arts in Volos (Thessalia).

Professor of Composition at the Department of Musical Studies of the Ionian University who has also lectured at Royal Academy of Music, Royal College, King's College London and University of Music in Vienna.

1) You are a Greek composer with extremely rich and diverse musical work, having composed music for symphonic repertoire, orchestra, chamber music, opera, theatre, cinema, songs and of course for the popular children's radio program "Lilipoupolis". What inspires you and prompts you each time to choose what to compose in a specific music form and genre?

All the above genres are just an external stimulation for a composer to express his inner world. The composer is like a kind of a music transformer whose thoughts and feelings born through his contact with external world, are transformed into structured sounds -that is how Stravinsky defines music - that make up this wonderful, non-verbal communication and expression that is music.

External occasions such as commissions specific events and collaborations have driven me to all these different genres while I was often pushing myself towards a specific direction that I felt that it fitted to my musical DNA.

2) How much has Hatzidakis, with whom you have

worked closely for a long time in the 70s, influenced your musical work? Are there any other Greek or foreign composers whom you admire and you would have liked to have composed yourself some of their works?

Hatzidakis has hardly influenced my musical work in and of itself. However, I was lucky to have met him and worked with him during the unique period that he was heading the Third Radio Program of State Radio (ERT) and as a result I was influenced by his absolute authenticity and unique personality and by his holistic approach of music. He was one of the most important melody composers of Greek music while at the same time he was well-versed and he promoted deeply the whole of European artistic music, from Mozart to Mahler, including jazz, original traditional music and contemporary avant-garde music.

I admire works of composers like Riades, Skalkottas, Christou, the extraordinary symphonic works of Mikis Theodorakis, works of great Ionian composers such as Rodotheatos, and all this only about artistic



Dimitris Maragopoulos

symphonic music. Besides, how can I not admire the power of a song of Attik, of Giannidis, of Tsitsanis, of Theodorakis, of Chatzidakis and of Vamvakaris.?

3) *Regarding your multifarious orchestra musical work and your international career as a composer of classical music, do you think you are best known in Greece or abroad? How does the Greek audience differ from the audience in other countries when it comes to watching classical music concerts?*

I was lucky to have my works performed both abroad and in Greece. The truth is that when you listened to your work being performed by an orchestra like the one of BBC or of Moscow, when you hear it performed in sacred and historical places like the Westminster Abbey and when it is presented for the first time and is supported by foreign schemes like Laterna Magic of the National Theater in Prague, that is the point when you understand how much a composer depends on a good performance. The performer, the soloist, the orchestra consist the other half of the work that could either undermine it or elevate it.

4) *You are a composer, a university professor and the main agent in important cultural initiatives (Volos Symphony Orchestra, Volos International Festival, GEFYRES Program (BRIDGES), Open Platforms, Cinema Music Competition, etc.). How difficult is it to combine the introversion required by the composition of musical artworks with the extroversion required by academic and cultural activity? Which of these activities is at the top of your preferences?*

The above activities originate naturally from my personality. It is not my livelihood needs that primarily contributed to this, without underestimating them. It is the love of teaching, and the fulfillment you get when you see joy and knowledge exaltation on the faces of the university students as well as the feeling of completeness that you experience when you contribute to an important artistic performances especially in places like the Megaron Concert Hall and in different regions of Greece where I headed important international cultural institutions. You get an underlying feeling of deep satisfaction when you see the audience feel and participate emotionally and mentally and change even slightly its view of the world.

All the above have not been obstacles to my composing work. I have always been offering composition my whole time and energy, and this helps me eliminate all fatigue either mental or physical.

5) *You have recently collaborated with EOS Trio, a music ensemble composed of three talented musicians, the clarinet player of Greek origin Paul Evernden, the violinist Angela Najaryan and the pianist Jelena Makarova, who premiered in the UK your work "On the Crest of the Sea". Would you please tell us more about this collaboration and about this great orchestra?*

I was really impressed by the dynamism and the high performance quality of this ensemble and especially by its attitude towards music. It is open to all contemporary musical expression but moving with the same ease within the repertoire of older times. I was really glad when I was informed that the creative core of Paul Evernden and Angela Najaryan envision the scheme as a more versatile music ensemble that could be expanded embracing more musicians or operate in some cases as a duo. I believe that they

have excellent prospects and they have already had a remarkable demand.

6) *LILIPOUPOLI* was one of the most successful children's programs of Greek radio in the 1970s. What do you think was the secret of its success? In your opinion, apart from its undeniable quality, how much did the social and cultural conditions of the '70s contribute to the success of *LILIPOUPOLIS*?

Lilipoupoli was the fruit of the unique creative freedom concept that characterized the period of the Third Radio Program of State Radio (ERT) under the direction of Manos Hatzidakis. Certainly, the refreshing post-dictatorial wind that blew at that time played an important role. The creative team of Lilipoupoli worked with imagination, spontaneity and without treating children like underdeveloped adults. Of course, we couldn't predict back then that the radio show's songs would travel through three generations and would reach fresh and alive our time through recordings, publications and concerts. Despite the reactions we worked uncensored in a state media by following Hatzadaki's wise instruction. "You are in a public media. You will put yourselves the limits with responsibility and a sense of freedom".

Lilipoupoli was the fruit of the unique creative freedom concept that characterized the period of the Third Radio Program of Public Radio (ERT) under the direction of Manos Hatzidakis.

7) *In 2015 there was a come-back of LILIPOUPOLIS, under the form of a spectacular show at the National Theater. Had it have the appeal and response you expected from children and audience or was this time addressed to a minor and adult audience over-satiated with spectacles, technological and artistic experiences and therefore harder to satisfy?*

Indeed, the National Theater proposed to Regina Kapetanaki, who together with Eleni Vlachou had conceived the initial idea of Lillipoupolis to write and direct a new Lillipepolis which I would compose the music for. The decision to transfer a particular radio world to the stage with a challenging, multidimensional performance for which even the songs were newly recorded was a subtle issue, a sensitive initiative. It was a great pleasure to us when we saw tens of thousands of children attend the STAR OF LILIPOUPLE show, actively participate and enjoy the new messages of the ever-young Lillipoupolis that sensitized them on Environment and Nature issues.



8) *The cultural project GEFYRES (BRIDGES CYCLE) completed 20 years of life in 2017. What was the purpose of its creation? How has it evolved as concerns its content over the years? To what extent did it achieve its goals?*

BRIDGES that run this year their 21st year of life have highlighted the Megaron Music Hall's pluralistic and integrated approach to Music. The so-called "classical" music of course has a major and particular weight, but BRIDGES along with other similar projects such as the Megaron

Paul Evernden, Angela Najaryan, EOS Ensemble



Angela Najaryan,
EOS Ensemble

BRIDGES along with other similar projects such as the Megaron Underground have shown that the Megaron Concert Hall can be both classical and also pioneering and it can approach fearlessly all the quality music genres but also the relations of Music with other Arts.

10) What are your vision and your expectations for BRIDGES in the future? What else would you like for this program to offer? How, would you think, have BRIDGES contributed over the years to changing the character/style of the ATHENS CONCERT HALL (MEGARON) and the public's view of it?

Great tributes with the participation of Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Dee Dee Bridgewater. Musical tributes to the music of Greece from Crete and the Ionian Islands. Live music and cinema with the Munich Symphony Orchestra, Athens State and Radio Symphony Orchestras. Special tributes to Beatles, Led Zeppelin and Queen. Music and Science in special programs in collaboration with the Planetarium.

These are just a handful of the previous BRIDGES programs that contributed to shaping the image of the Megaron along with all other initiatives. They have proved that Megaron is not just a luxurious building of exquisite aesthetic, which is often unfairly identified as an elitist venue, but a familiar, hospitable, warm venue, with many hidden and unexploited spaces apart from the renowned excellent auditoriums. Megaron is a place offering quality performances for a public without age, social or cultural restrictions.

11) Part of the project BRIDGES is also the "Audiovisual Arts Festival" that is hosted by the ATHENS CONCERT HALL (MEGARON). In addition, the "Open Platforms" and the "Cinema Music Competition" continue to take place in MEGARON, giving step to young artists and enhancing modern creative initiatives. Please tell us a few words about each of these projects.

Underground have shown that the Megaron –The Athens Concert Hall can be both classical and also pioneering and it can approach fearlessly all the quality music genres but also the relationship of Music with other Arts

BRIDGES CYCLE has managed to contribute in each way to the renewal and expansion of the Megaron's audience and especially to the attraction of young people

9) More than 20 years later, how does the audience - especially the youth - respond to the multifarious musical landscape unfolding through the BRIDGES?

One of the most important contributions of BRIDGES project was the attraction of a young audience to which a wide range of events, jazz, ethnic, electronic, house, rock, multiartistic performances and special projects were offered that connect the symphonic orchestra music with quality projects very popular and appealing to young people.

Paul Evernden, EOS Ensemble



We launched a project last year in collaboration with the Ionian University in the Audiovisual Arts area bringing the cutting edge of Audio and Video technology to the Megaron Concert Hall. Three-dimensional projections, projection mapping, installations, lectures, workshops, mixed multi-artistic performances. Last year's success led us to collaborate with the highly successful Athens Digital Arts Festival, which is inspired and coordinated by Elias Hadjichristodoulou. Within the context of the project a vast array of modern audiovisual technology, with live satellite links, applications, performances, lectures was implemented in many Megaron venues, during a four-day event attended by more than 15,000 people.

OPEN PLATFORMS is a successful project including live auditions of classical music, jazz, ethnic and rock bands from all over Greece. The conductor Miltos Logiadis as the Artistic Director of Megaron, pianist

Thanasis Apostolopoulos as the Deputy Artistic Director and myself as a composer and head of the BRIDGES CYCLE, we form a committee that has the chance to come into contact with an exceptional and unknown musical potential and integrate several of these groups into the official annual program.

Finally, the International Film Music Competition that was launched last year has attracted the interest of more than 130 participants from all over the world. It will continue in the future and it will be enriched with an international music contest for video games.

12) How much has the financial crisis affected music industry and especially classical music sector in Greece, both with respect to professional musicians and those who want to pursue studies in classical music? Is there a migration wave of Greek musicians looking for a career abroad (musical brain drain)?

The economic crisis has mainly affected as expected, the funding of institutions that used to be supported mainly by the state and sponsors. At this point it is worth noting that the Megaron Concert Hall tries to do its best by hiring its excellent venues for international conferences and, of course, relies on revenue from tickets and sponsorships. In an interesting way though the crisis has not affected the public. In my opinion the crisis has stimulated a reaction of rediscovering the arts which thanks also to the reductions of the tickets prices has increased sales.

Regarding the wave of "immigration" at the level of studies, I would say that it has not increased. The musical departments of the Universities at undergraduate and postgraduate level have provided a reliable and cost-effective solution to many students

13) In times of economic scarcity, culture is the first to be hit, as it is considered to be a luxury for many people. On the other hand, we observe in Greece a spectacular increase of cultural institutions (Onassis Cultural Centre, Theocharakis Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation). Would you think that the audience's interest in art and music has increased, or does art still remain an affair for the affluent, while the general public still sees art as a luxury?



The existence of so many entities can be viewed positively. Here the law of the market dominates. Competition, mobility, high standards have incited a public and have created an unexpected public's closeness to culture.

I wouldn't say that the general public sees art as a luxury. Our task is to enrich this audience's life with arts of the highest possible quality by abolishing different kinds of economic, cultural, age and social barriers that have prevented it from acquainting them and enjoying them.

14) Do you believe that currently classical music in Greece can ensure a financially satisfying profession or is it better to remain just a hobby? Which are the relevant conditions abroad?

At a professional level, even though there are career opportunities in Greece, many young people pursue professional opportunities abroad. But this is not to be considered as negative. In modern globalized society's mobility is a two-way procedure and gives prospects to worthy musicians.

Classical music is always an excellent choice. But a young person needs to know that apart from talent, it requires devotion, study and perseverance reaching the limits of passion, imagination and extroversion

15) Through your experience over the years as a professor and artistic manager of the BRIDGES project, how would you assess our country's musical potential and what are your views on music education in Greece?

Our country's musical potential has improved considerably. That is why we have an obligation to open up areas for action and development for them.

16) What are your next cultural plans at home and abroad?

I am currently working on composing an opera for the Greek National Opera (Alternative Stage Theatre) and composing a chamber music work and on designing a musical project to be presented in New York.

Our country's musical potential has improved considerably. That is why we have an obligation to open up areas for action and development for them.

Pavlo Carvalho:

~I have never ever, in 30 odd years of playing met a good musician who does not admire and feel they can learn from a music or approach of another genre. Good musicians generally envy and appreciate when they see others doing something they don't, and wish they could learn from it~



Pavlos Carvalho has been working in London and abroad as both a classical cellist and a bouzouki player for the last fifteen years. As a classical musician he has been a prizewinner in International competitions in Britain, Italy, Russia and Germany as well as working with orchestras including the London Philharmonic and Northern Sinfonia. He has been invited to play for Prince Charles at Kensington Palace and for the 70th birthday celebrations of Rostropovitch. He regularly performs as a concerto soloist. Future performances include the Elgar cello concerto with the Royal Philharmonic in June 2018. He is also one of the founding members of chamber music group, Ensemble Reza. As a bouzouki player he has been involved in many performances of Greek and Turkish music and was the founder of the Rebet Asker Series at the Green Note. Together with the dedicated musicians of Plastikes Karekles and the Rebetiko Carnival, they have brought over great artists from Greece, including Manolis Pappos and Kyriakos Gouventas, Marios Papadeas, Antonis Ainitis and the group Pliri Ntaxei. Pavlos is currently the Artistic director of the UK Rebetiko Carnival, a festival not only dedicated bringing the music of Greece and Asia minor to audiences in UK, but also to education and outreach work within the UK. In the UK Pavlos has worked with singers such as Marina Deligianni, Katerina Clambaneva, Dunja Botic, Vicky Anasatsiou and Cigdem Aslan. He is also involved in other world music groups such as Tango 44, with the Argentine singer Corina Piatti and works with the Fado singer and composer, Claudia Aurora. He has regularly performed in a variety of venues from smaller, intimate venues such as the Green Note and Vortex to venues such as the Purcell room, Royal Albert Hall, Cadogan Hall, Teatro dal Verme, and recorded for the BBC. A big part of Pavlos' musical life also involves outreach and education work. He has worked for groups such as Live Music Now, Pied Piper, In Harmony, Music for Life and the Trinity's Laban's Animate Orchestra. He gives masterclasses and workshops for the London cello society and in October 2018 will be a course director for the National Chamber music courses, Pro Corda.



1. Could you tell us a few words about you, so that our audience gets to know you? You were born in Great Britain, your father is not a Greek, but you speak Greek; you play the bouzouki, a typical Greek instrument and you promote Greek music in Great Britain. What does Greece mean to you?

My mother is the one who first and foremost rooted Greece and all things Greek in me. She was a loving and inspirational teacher and taught me to love Greece beyond the food, beautiful weather, summer holidays and the things we often associate with this country from broad. She sat me and my sister down and taught us grammar, the beauty, discipline and value of how language works...the history, mythology...stories of my grandparents and their ancestors, Greece's contributions in the great wars and so many things that went beneath the surface of a country that is a summer escape for so many. It was this love of Greece that grew in me that made me choose to study Classical history at university, before I decided to continue with and make music my life. This was a daily part of my upbringing and Greece was in pretty much every breath we spoke at home. However, my actual, physical experience of Greece was the summer months where I spent all my childhood years between Milos, Crete and Peiraias. Greece for me during these years was the openness of the neighbourhoods...freely playing outdoors without fear or suspicion, with the perpetual enticing aromas of home cooking drifting through the streets. This is something I do miss here, although now people do seem more conscious of the importance of food. However, it still seems to be something you take care of if time and work allows for it...where as in Greece the hours around the dinner table are ritual and something one makes time for. The importance of gathering around the

dinner table bringing everyone together away from the chaos of every day life to catch up and be interested in each other is something that I always associate with Greece.

I could go on all day saying what Greece means to me...it is also a set of values. I was brought up on the stories of the Greek heroes and the values of sacrifice, putting others before yourself, helping those who are less lucky than yourself. All these ideals that one strives to live by, but often falls short, are something that came to me through these stories. I grew up believing that with any kind of reading or intellectual practise there was no value in it if one did not at least try to apply it to practical every day living.

Among the many things that Greece means to me is also the sound of its music. To be honest, although I did grow up with some Greek music it was not until later that I became really involved. As with so many people, the less opportunity I had to be in Greece the more important the music became as a connection...a bridge...to the country and culture. I am not alone in this. I have found that with many Greek friends, Portuguese, Italians...not only do we turn to music as our arm to reach and touch our roots, but we turn to the traditional, older music...rebetiko, fado...this music is what has the true substance of what Greece means to us, not so much the modern pop culture.

2. You play the bouzouki and you are a key member of a rebetiko band but at the same time you play the cello and you are a well recognized performer of classical music and chamber music participating in many classical music shows. How can you combine your love for two musical instruments that serve completely different musical genres? Which one is your favorite instrument and why?

It is impossible to say which instrument I love more...that would be like asking me to choose between my two children. I find that whichever I am playing that is the one that feels right at the time. I have grown up more with the cello and professionally this is what I do more as well, so I suppose this is what comes more naturally to me, but I am obsessed with both. We talk of different musical genres but no music is so disconnected. There are fundamental principles that are common to all music and so one can not but help and improve the other. Creating beautiful music requires similar principles to having an open and interesting conversation. Listening, adapting, making room for others to express what they want, having the technical skill to be able to express what



Ensemble Reza, Photo by Alison Willows

you want in the way that you want and not to be limited by lack of technique...learning and having the confidence to adapt to how other people play things and embrace change in melody, harmony rather than feel put off or threatened by it....playing something with the freshness and enthusiasm and creativity like it is the first time it has ever been played, never getting bored by the repetition of the same tune, making it your responsibility to play it in an interesting way no matter how many times you have played it, or those around you or before you have played it. These are all threads that tie all types of music together. However, there are different aspects of different genres that can also serve to improve the other....the importance and necessity of technical excellence in classical music is something that can only make anyone a better player in whatever genre they apply it to...the freedom and awareness of harmony and improvisation in jazz that can only give more breath and freshness to the classical or folk player if they apply this to their genre. The importance of understanding dance in Greek music and Latin music is something that we in the classical world could apply much more when we are playing pieces influenced by dance. For me all these categorisation do not exist. They are set up against each other usually by those who do not have the openness and appreciation of a wide range of music. I have never ever, in 30 odd years of playing met a good musician who does not admire and feel they can learn from a music or approach of another genre. Good musicians generally envy and appreciate when they see others doing something they don't, and wish they could learn from it. It is those who let their insecurities (which we all have) get in the way who fall into the cliché judgements and criticisms of the music and musicians they do not understand. I have often heard about other musical genres in such clichés that bare absolutely no resemblance to the reality of the musicians I have worked with. The most common one is the "rigidity of classical music and musicians..."which is so ludicrous. This rigidity

exists in all music if the mentality is not right. I have played with classical musicians who are the freest, most flexible musicians one could ever hope to work with and have worked with Greek folk musicians and jazz musicians who have been disappointingly rigid, which one would not normally expect. It is all about the way one chooses to think and nothing to do with the musical genre itself.

I find that whichever I am playing that is the one that feels right at the time.

3. *Could the bouzouki be used in classical music concerts or chamber music string ensembles?*

Any instrument can be used in any context, but with the bouzouki I personally do not feel it needs to be. It has such a glorious and beautiful life and role in its own cultural heritage that one does not need to impose other types of music that have not been written for it...but it could always work. What I do think would be interesting is not necessarily to try and play Bach or Beethoven on the bouzouki, (although this music, especially Bach is so universal it works beyond the instrument it was written for) but to create original compositions that combine the classical use of instruments and the bouzouki...or Kanun, santur. This is something I think has a long term life. It is like bringing people from different cultures together and exploring the beautiful sounds and colours that each one can bring to create something new and unified. It is something that we do with the group Plastikes Karekles in our arrangements, and we do have some new original material that we are working on.

What I do think would be interesting is not necessarily to try and play Bach or Beethoven on the bouzouki, but to create original compositions that combine the classical use of instruments and the bouzouki.

4. *You are actively involved in the Rebetiko Carnival. What exactly is the Rebetiko Carnival? What prompted you to create it? How did it start and how did it evolve? What are its goals? What is your vision for the future of the Rebetiko Carnival?*

The Rebetiko Carnival is a project of love that was started in 2014 and has now evolved into something bigger and more wide reaching than we could ever have expected. There are many things before 2014 that led up to the decision to start this charity/festival, though. Our group has always been involved in outreach and education work and in fact Plastikes Karekles only came together in a more organised form because of outreach work. We applied for a

wonderful initiative called "Live Music Now" in about 2005 or so which sent musicians on tours around the UK combining outreach projects with more formal performances in concerts and festivals. After our contract expired it had become such an important part of our lives that we wanted to continue and spread the value of combining a performing career with therapy through outreach and education as well. So this was the real seed of the idea for the Rebetiko Carnival. The ultimate goal is that every musician who works with us will not only perform in gig or concert venues, but will also take this music to people who, for whatever reason, do not have the possibility of going to live concerts themselves.

Another catalyst for the festival itself, which is part of the RC charity, was the fact that London, over the last 20 years, has had a blossoming Rebetiko community. In 2014 we were looking around us seeing what was being performed and the interest in it by Greeks and non Greeks and it just felt that the natural next step in London's Rebetiko scene was to create a festival celebrating this community. The goal was to support UK based bands by creating paid professional performance opportunities for them, as well bringing great musicians and bands in this genre over from Greece. We wanted to start creating a bridge between London and Greece, and we want to continue doing so with other countries in the future.

However, in practical terms it is thanks to the Green Note venue in Camden Town that we went down the road of a bigger scale festival. My relationship with them started when they agreed in 2011 to host a monthly Rebetiko session. It went really well and they supported us with every idea we had by giving us more and more dates for performances. When I approached them about putting on a weekend festival Risa and Immy, the two quite remarkable young ladies who run the Green Note, immediately suggested making it a month long festival. So we just went for it having no idea what putting on a festival like that entailed.

This Rebetiko Carnival is really a huge collaborative effort with at its core a small group of musicians from the group Plastikes Karekles. Myself, Marina Deligianni, Manolis Taouxis, Maria Tsirodimitri, Sarah Carvalho-Dubost, Alexandros Koustas and the one non musician, Elena Yohala, who is our event manager and keeps us firmly grounded. We each have different and important roles and each and every one of the group has made it possible to breathe life into what seemed an almost impossible idea. These

are the friends and musicians who were there at the very beginning, but we have seen how such a project becomes a magnet for people's enthusiasm. Since it started we have been joined on this adventure by more people who have become crucial to running it, none more so than Noonie Minogue who houses and accommodates all musicians from Greece as well as giving informed talks about the music before concerts, and also Savvia Kozakou from Kite music, who has become our main education and outreach collaborator and organiser. There are so many people who help and support in so many ways that I could not possibly go through them all here. However, a great example of how the whole musical community chips in is with our annual Big Band fundraiser. Every year we send out an SOS to all our fellow musicians to help raise funds. We put together a band of usually over 20 musicians made up of different bands... Plastikes Karekles, Moosootoo, Kourelou, Megla, Peran, Amalgama, Pakaw...and basically have a big, glorified jam session of our favourite rebetika songs. All fees are waved and put into the charities' funds.

*Pavlos Carvalho. photo by
Alison Willows*





The events we put on are rich and varied. There are the more prestigious concerts with more well known artists at venues such as King's Place, The Vortex, the Green Note and the Hellenic Centre. However we also take care to pay homage to where this music came from and the humble venues it would have been performed in, so we also arrange free acoustic sessions in smaller venues such as Music and Beans, as well jam sessions open to anyone. We have put on Karagiozis productions with live music, a narrated history of Rebetiko written by Christos Spourdalakis with live music. We also have had exhibitions of instruments brought over from Greece and made by Christos Spourdalakis. Then there are the workshops and seminars given by visiting musicians from Greece. In the future we would also like to start incorporating other art forms in go the festival, such as photography, dance, theatre.

5. The Rebetiko Carnival has also charity purposes and it is also developing educational programs. Would you please talk to us about these aspects of Rebetiko Carnival activities?

The festival became a charity in 2016. It is this charitable work that for me us the most important. If I had to sum up the point of the Rebetiko Carnival it would always be as a way of bringing people together through our one common love for music. Bringing together people from different nationalities,

through the musicians who perform that card not just Greek, through those that come to concerts that are from all nationalities as are those who support us. Bringing together different generations, especially through our community work. We run workshops and concerts where we create orchestras and choirs of people between the age of 5 and 100 years old. Seeing stropky teenagers laugh and joke whilst playing or singing next to an 80 year old they have never met before, or helping a beginner 5 year old thoughts music is a small glimpse of the kind of community and society

we would all like to live in. Bringing together people with special needs communities and other people who have different disabilities. We go to special needs schools, hospitals, prisons, dementia care homes. We run a project whereby we send musicians to give personal concerts to individual elderly people who are unable to leave home.

Another big part of our community work is our Big Sing choir which started in December 2017 and is developing in to one of the most rewarding and enjoyable things we do. Again this one to anyone of of any nationality.

All this work is what makes our festival and charity so special. The big struggle is always to raise funds so that we can continue with this invaluable work. We have one or two individual donors, but basically the money is raised by the musicians themselves.

Our goal is simple. We just want to continue sharing our music with as many people as possible, in the most imaginative and creative way we can, whether it is for entertainment, therapy or education.

6. You participate in classical music schemes such as *Ensemble Reza*, which is an orchestra of remarkable artists. Would you please tell us a few words about this ensemble? Do you include in your repertoire works of classical music Greek composers?

Ensemble Reza again is a very personal project that started small and has developed into the main part of my musical life. It is a string sextet at its core formed of musicians who have had careers as performers or working with international orchestras such as the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Philharmonia, St. Martin in the fields. We all live in the South of England and travelling with these orchestras, or even rehearsing with them takes us away from our families and can be tiring. We decided to play a local concert in a beautiful Church whereby we would rehearse in our homes with our children nearby and not have the stress of trains and journeys. The experience was so much fun. The rehearsals were much more of a social occasion...eating, drinking, catching up...so relaxed, and then we played a concert in front of a packed audience of people we actually recognised. It was both thrilling and moving. We decided we wanted to spend more time doing this. We were very lucky

in that we had invited a super dynamic young lady, Hannah Carter, who is a cellist, organiser and mother of three, to hear us. She loved what we did and agreed to become our manager. Thanks to her we are now in a position where we are playing many concerts with this small group, do lots of education work and are also involved in wonderful outreach work. She is the most amazing manager because she genuinely loves music, loves the community and loves us. We have all become such close friends and when this strong feeling of trust develops between people in a working environment then anything is possible. Risks are taken, some things work, others don't but we all know that we are trying the best for each other and we know we will support each other no matter what. Everyone in this group has lived... careers, suffered personal loss and Ensemble Reza is a breath of fresh air and a comfort for all of us. Referring back to what I mentioned about flexible musicians...The musicians in this group are some of the most talented, generous and open minded I have ever known. Every rehearsal I come away wanting to be better for them, having learnt something new. They are stunning players who, if time allowed would spend much more time rehearsing but equally



Plastikes Karekles with Friends from Kourelou, Moosootoo, Pakaw, photo by David Chater



Bouzouki swing and all that Jazz project. With Spiros Bolovinis Marina Deligianni and Giorgos Alevizakis

have the ability to get together the most challenging music in the minimal time. This sometimes is the challenge and the fun, but when there is that trust it makes it possible.

7. You are a key member of the rebetiko band Plastikes Karekles playing a Greek repertoire. Please tell us a few words about this band. What kind of Greek songs do you play? How would you describe the reaction of the British audience to Greek music? What would you say distinguishes Greek music from the music of other nations in Great Britain?

As I mentioned, the musicians of Plastikes Karekles are the founders of the Rebetiko Carnival. It is more a collective of musicians and although you might see two or three of us regularly, we compose the band according to the type of Greek music needed for a concert. The easiest way to explain what we do is to give examples of our typical performances and current projects. We have our regular spot at the Green Note dedicated to Rebetiko, usually with a quartet of singer, bouzouki, baglama and guitar.

One of our main projects is Theodorakis'/Ritsos' Epitaphios. We present a first half of rebetika then a second part of our own arrangement of this legendary album. Our arrangement is with singer, bouzouki, guitar, double Bass and cello. The cello is very important in this group and specifically for this project. In between each song we recite an English translation of the poetry, but supported by solo cello playing our own solo arrangement quoting from the song, but in a baroque/classical style.

We have our "Once Upon a Time in Greece", project whereby we present a set of songs from Smyrneiko

(Toundas, Skarvelis) Rebetiko, (Hadjichristis, Vamvakari Tsitsani and others), Arhondobebetiko/retro (Sougioul, Attic), then Zabetas, Theodorakis, Xarhakos, Hadjidakis, Loizos, Kraounakis, Spanos.... the list goes on. Here we try to take people through a map or history of Greek popular song. Again the cello and classical violin feature a lot in this and we make beautiful arrangements combined with the sound of the more traditional Greek band.

We the have done tributes to singers such as Poly Panou, Vicky Mosholiou, Sotiria Bellou, as well as dedications to specific composers, Vamvakaris, Tsitsanis, Mitsakis, Chiotis, Theodorakis, Xarhakos, Loizos, Sougioul and others.

There is also our "Bouzouki, swing and all that jazz" project where we take songs which were more influenced by swing, Latin and jazz and have fun with it, doing something a bit freer and more improvised.

8. Plastikes Karekles band has recently performed at the Hellenic Center due to a tribute to Sugul's songs. At this amazing show Anna Cooper, a British musician, member of the classic Ensemble Reza, participated in the band playing accordion, violin and piano. How did the public welcome a British musician to participate in a performance with timeless, well-known and beloved Greek melodies, closely linked to the history of Greek society?

I think when the public hears someone play so beautifully, who clearly takes the music seriously but has so much fun with it, they forget where they are from and just hear the music. Anna is a stunning musician with a limitless creativity and imagination.

People are going to enjoy this whatever context she plays in. She will be playing with us again for sure. She is not the only non Greek to be playing Greek music, though. My own wife Sarah is a founding member of our Greek group and she is French...we recently played an Argentinian Tango concert at the Hellenic with an English pianist and violinist, who then as an encore played Sougioul's "As erhosoun yia ligo " with our wonderful singer Marina Deligianni, and they were really fantastic. Then all over t

In London there are people of all different nationalities involved in Greek music.

I think if one is dedicated and shows passion for the music the public picks up on that and appreciates it.

9. Have you ever performed in Greece? Would it be something that you would be interested in or you would go after?

I have played on Greek radio before but never in a live concert. It would be a dream of mine to play in Greece. To play in the Megaron would just be something so special, but may never happen. It is such a beautiful venue how could one not want to play There! Whether it is cello or bouzouki I would love to play anywhere in Greece. It is not something I have chased, though.

10. How challenging is it for a Greek musician (composer or performer) to succeed professionally, to distinguish and develop a remarkable career in the UK? Does UK offer professional opportunities to young foreigner musicians?

I think the UK is one of the few countries that offers opportunities in many different aspects of music making. Concerts, festivals, teaching, outreach, education. There are all sorts of initiatives that offer a greater chance of making it work here than anywhere else in the world. A Greek musician has as much chance of succeeding as anyone else coming from abroad...French, Italian, Japanese, Spanish. However, one has to be realistic about how to go about it. The one certainty is that there are so many musicians coming into the country, (which is a great thing) that if one expects to be handed opportunities on a plate it will never happen. It is

not enough to play or sing well. People have to see that you are flexible. That you are willing to rehearse and work hard for a project. Sometimes there is a sense of entitlement in a musician, that the boring admin or chasing concerts is not for them. This is just a recipe for failure. Ultimately we would all love to have someone else do that for us...a manager, agent, but first you have to do it yourself however boring or time consuming. Too often this does not happen and I hear people complain about how things are unfair, or other people who are not as good musicians as them are getting the opportunities. In my experience, if someone does not give you the opportunities then it is up to you to get your hands dirty, put your artistry and pride aside and just make it happen. I am not saying it is not hard. It can be soul destroyingly hard, making you question yourself, everything you do, whether it is worth it or not...the admin can be painstakingly boring...but if you do it, then that is the only chance of having one thing lead to another and, with a bit of lady luck on your side, you create at least a hope of realising dreams one little step at a time.

11. Please, tell us a few words about your future plans

I am 42 now and I honestly have no big future plans beyond doing what I can to survive as a musician enjoy my friends and family. Even with the Rebetiko Carnival, which is something that does need big forward planning. I am looking forward to our final concert on the 30th June, but not beyond that for now. I used to try and hope for each concert to build up a career, but that is too tiring. In chasing what will happen in the future too often we forget to enjoy what is happening right now, in this isolated moment. For me every concert or performance I do I approach like it is my first or last. I treat them completely as isolated occasions without thinking about how it might affect the future. In the past I have sometimes been complacent, bordering on arrogant with regards to the opportunities that were offered to me and that I did not make the most of. Right now everything seems like a bonus and that I am on borrowed musical time. I am very aware that tomorrow I may not be as lucky as today and it may all stop. My only plan music wise is to keep trying to have exciting and creative projects that are challenging and sometimes take me out of my comfort zone. For me if there's no risk of failure there's no point in doing it. Without these challenges we never evolve and everything becomes stagnant in its security.

September events

A Skein of People and Colours Unravels in India

When: 18 Sept – 30 Oct

Where: The Hellenic Centre (16-18 Paddington Street, Marylebone, London W1U 5AS)

Six Nights on the Acropolis

When: 29 Sept 7:30 pm, 30 Sept 3:30 pm and 7:30 pm

Where: The Hellenic Centre (16-18 Paddington Street, Marylebone, London W1U 5AS)

A performance with Stamatis Kraounakis, directed by Anastasia Revi.

Frequencies Awakening

When: 22 Sept – 23 Sept

Where: The Hellenic Centre (16-18 Paddington Street, Marylebone, London W1U 5AS)

The Passion Crossroad

When: 22 Sept 7:00 pm

Where: The Hellenic Centre (16-18 Paddington Street, Marylebone, London W1U 5AS)

Greek Comedy Show «Κάψε το σενάριο Reloaded»

When: 27 Sept 8:00 pm

Where: Venue 229 (229 Great Portland Street, Marylebone, London W1W 5PN)

Ancient Greek Drama in Latin 1506-1590.

Readership, Translation, Circulation.

When: 3 Sept 9:30 – 4 Sept 16:30

Where: King's College London (Strand, WC2R 2LS)

Liberating Classics: Teaching Innovation and Creativity in the 21st century

When: 21 Sept 9:00 am

Where: UCL Department of Greek and Latin, Gordon House (29 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0PP)

Odyssey by Eve Shepherd

When: 20 Sept

Where: 508 Gallery (508 King's Road, London, SW10 0LD)

Reload Greece: RG Connect 18 Conference

When: 6 October, 10.00 - 20.00

Where: Prince Philip House, London (3 Carlton House Terrace, St. James's, London SW1Y 5DG)

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