



الجمعية الخيرية اليونانية في بيروت
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΣ ΒΗΡΥΤΟΥ
GREEK COMMUNITY OF BEIRUT

Ta Nea

And the wheels on the bus go round and round...

Volume 3
July 2020

Dear Member,

Lebanon takes up the torch of culture and tries to keep its role of guide, in a surge of survival towards a better future. Despite all the difficulties the Lebanese are experiencing these days, they are not lacking in creativity and initiative, such as the extraordinary concert performed in Baalbeck, but also more than 25 outdoor activities that are planned for July to discover new villages or hidden places presented on social media.

In this issue you can find all you need to know about the legalization of documents offered at the consulate, information's related to the Greek Language center, a wink from the past bringing back memories alive and news from our dear homeland Greece.

Enjoy your reading and stay safe!

BAALBECK 2020 BREAKS "THE SOUND OF RESILIENCE" IMPOSED BY THE CURRENT SITUATION

Since 1955, people from around the world have gone to the city of Baalbeck to attend the annual festival. Classical music, dance, theater, opera, and jazz as well as modern world music were performed each July and August in the ancient archeological Roman site. In 1956, President Chamoun named it the **Baalbeck International Festival**, which became a governmental institution whose goal was to promote tourism and Lebanese culture. In 1966, it established a drama school for the promotion of works done by Lebanese authors.

Baalbeck International Festival has broke the silence imposed by the current situation, while sending a formidable message of cultural resilience, unity and hope. This concert, envisioned by maestro Harout Fazlian was held on the evening of July 5th, at the temple of Bacchus to commemorate the centenary of the proclamation of Greater Lebanon. Set to take place without audience,



it was broadcasted live on various local television channels, the festival's social networks and other digital platforms, in addition to other international channels. **"The Sound of Resilience"** is a non-profit event, featuring the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra and the choirs of the Antonine University, Notre Dame University and La Voix D'Antan, along with other young musicians, led by maestro Fazlian, with the participation of actor Rafic Ali Ahmad and dancers from the Makriss Dance Ministry troupe. The scenography, which includes archive photos and visual creations, is by Jean-Louis Mainguy. *"Solidarity is the main beauty of this project which has a one of the kind mission and collaboration between various artists, partners and providers who are offering their services for free. The Baalbeck Festival, a cultural flagship event in Lebanon, seeks to instill a clear message: culture must survive. It is an engine of creativity, solidarity, resilience, and life."* said festival president Nayla de Freige, who is also CEO of "L'Orient-Le Jour" the local French newspaper.



Official formalities at the Greek Consular Office

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This section has been specially created by the Greek Community of Beirut with the kind collaboration of the consulate of Greece in order to better serve Greek citizens who wish to have information on all administrative formalities before presenting their requests.

This month attention is focused on all you need to know on the **LEGALISATION** of official documents.

Consular Office can be reached by email at grcon.bei@mfa.gr

LEGALISATION

Legalisation services are offered from Monday to Friday, 09:30-13:30.

No appointment is needed. However, it is advisable to book a spot by sending us an email at grcon.bei@mfa.gr in order to avoid unnecessary waiting times and to make social distancing easier at the consulate premises, in these particular times we are all experiencing.

1. LEGALISATION OF SIGNATURE:

The physical presence of the signee is required. The applicant must sign in front of the consular clerk and present a valid passport or EU ID card.

2. LEGALISATION OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY LEBANESE AUTHORITIES:

Official documents issued by Lebanese Authorities have to be first stamped by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Once the said documents are stamped, they can be presented at the Embassy for legalisation.

Collection of legalised documents takes place the same day.

Legalisation fees apply.



News from our Greek Language Center

Greek language courses are starting on the 1st of October and finish by the end of May, being equivalent to one teaching school year. Registrations start on July 1st until the end of September 2020.

For registrations please contact us by Email: vasiliky@greekcommunity.org.lb or by phone on 961 1 493467/8 , Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:00pm to 6:00pm and Tuesday , Thursday from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

Adults’ classes:

- Level A1(2 years)
- Level A2 (1 year)
- Level B1 (2 years)

Kids’ classes (7-12 years old)

- Level A1(4 years): Basic user
- Saturdays from 9:00am to 10:30am



Greek Language Official exams

The official exams of May have been postponed to the following dates:

- Level A1: 13th of October 2020 (morning)
- Level A2: 14th of October 2020 (morning)
- Level B1: 15th of October 2020 (morning)

Kindly note that the exact time will be announced a month before the exams.



Please note that the schedule might be subject to change due to the COVID—19 developments and possible measurements

Memories, memories...

A wink from the past, bringing back memories alive!

Some of us might have lived those moments, some others may be too young. This section dedicated to the past helps the new generation discover how their parents or grand parents used to live.

In this issue, we selected from our archive a picture of the Greek school taken after the war.

We would highly appreciate your contribution helping us keep those memories alive by sending us documents, photos or articles from your personal archive.

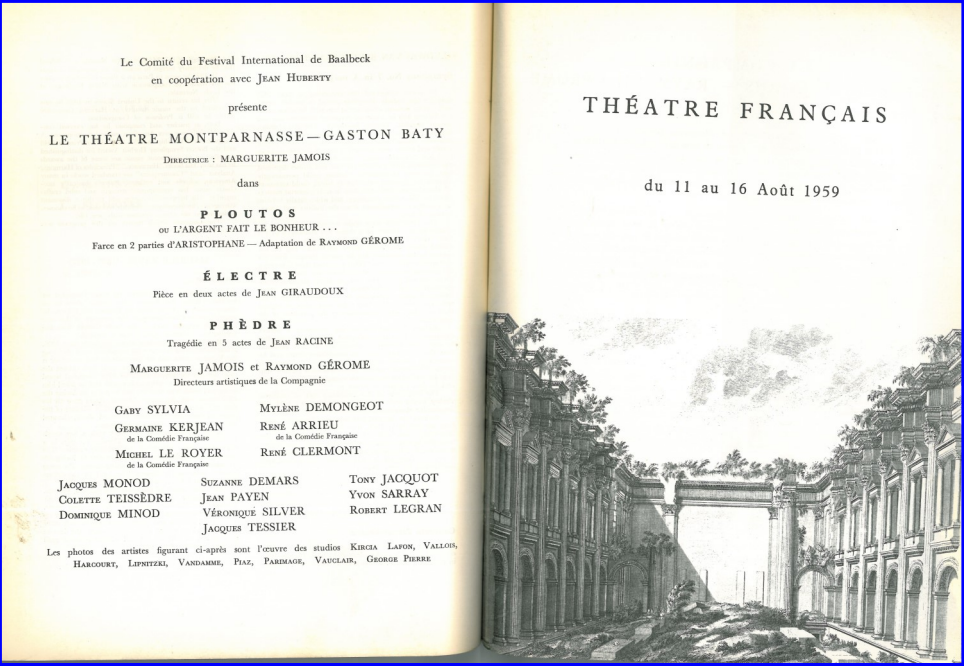
You may also follow us on Instagram [greek_community_beirut](https://www.instagram.com/greek_community_beirut)



1959, the play by Aristophanes, Ploutos, at the Baalbeck Festival

The Ancient Greek comedy by the playwright Aristophanes, produced in 408 B.C, was performed at the 4th Baalbeck Festival, in August 1959, by le “THEATRE MONTPARNASSE-GASTON BATY”. A political satire on contemporary Athens, it features the personified god of wealth Ploutos. Reflecting the development of Old Comedy towards New Comedy, it uses such familiar character types as the stupid master and the insubordinate slave to attack the morals of the time.

After a year of interruption due to the crisis of July 1958, the Baalbeck Festival reopens its doors and settles in Lebanese life offering high-level shows with eminent artists. Ploutos was a great success and received the best reviews in Lebanon and abroad.



Aghia Sophia icons to be preserved!

The six Byzantine religious iconography in Aghia Sophia, would remain “untouched” for the viewing of people of all faiths, a senior Turkish official said on July 11 about the conversion of the sixth-century church into a mosque. Used as a church for centuries under the rule of the Byzantine Empire, it was turned into a mosque following the conquest of Istanbul in 1453. In 1935, Aghia Sophia was converted into a museum after Turkey was founded as a secular state. According to the press, curtains and folding screens will likely be used to cover the site’s many Christian mosaics, icons and symbols during Muslim prayers, and that Turkish officials had pledged not to remove or permanently cover them up.

In separate interviews with TRT World and the BBC, Presidential Spokesperson İbrahim Kalin underlined that the move to turn Aghia Sophia, which had served as a mosque in the past, back into a Muslim place of worship had the support of all parties in Turkey. Dismissing claims as untrue that the world historical heritage would be “shadowed or destroyed” by the decision, Kalin said: *“In regards to the arguments of secularism, religious tolerance and coexistence, there are more than 400 churches and synagogues open in Turkey today.”* He stressed that all visitors would have access to the religious and cultural heritage including its icons and mosaics. *“Any claim to the contrary is simply false.”* On July 10, a Turkish court annulled a 1934 cabinet decree, which had turned Aghia Sophia into a museum. This recent verdict by the court paved the way for its use again as a mosque after 85 years.



The project, on the site of Athens’ former international airport, undertaken by Lamda Development, will turn the 620-hectare piece of real estate into a complex of public parks, luxury residences, hotels, sporting facilities, exclusive shops, a yachting marina and a casino.

The former Hellinikon Airport project

In the presence of the Prime Minister **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** , the opening ceremony of the preliminary works in **Helliniko** took place early July 2020.

"We are laying the foundations for the new Greek, the largest coastal park in the Mediterranean," said Kyriakos Mitsotakis, adding that it is a modern and environmentally friendly project that will symbolize modern Greece, creating more than 80,000 jobs while stressing that *"it was not easy to get to where we are today, we have overcome bureaucratic entanglements of the past"*.

The project will include a residential building in the marina area, another residential tower along the promenade road, an office building, a hotel, and a casino with an integrated resort tower.

The total cost of this gigantic project is slated to be approximately 8 billion euros. The inspiration for the architectural design comes from the architectural past of Greece, and in particular from Athenian statues and buildings, mainly the Parthenon and the Caryatids on the Erechtheion building. The Hellenic Gaming Commission has awarded the casino operating license to the Mohegan Gaming and Entertainment – GEK Terna SA consortium. Once the company is given final approval, construction of the integrated resort casino will commence. The company presented the design of the resort-casino building complex, created by the international architectural firm Steelman Partners. The construction of the six skyscrapers resort-casino has generated reactions from citizen groups, since the tall buildings will change Athens’ skyline forever. Since Acropolis Hill is 150 meters tall, there should not be any structures higher than that in the area. However, The Council of State granted

permission for the six buildings up to 200 meters tall. According to the master plan executed by Lamda Development, the first phase of the project is the demolition of 950 buildings while the second phase is the construction of the project. Works are expected to last about three to five years.

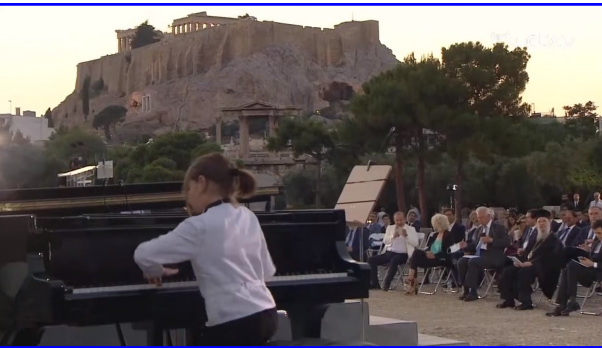
Greece’s presidency of the Council of Europe

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Greek Chairmanship of the Council of Europe, the President of the Hellenic Republic Katerina Sakellaropoulou gave a speech at the Temple of Olympian Zeus, hailing a "special opportunity" for a country that suffered during the economic crisis and came through due to the sacrifices of its people as well as its membership of the European Union. *“It is a unique opportunity for the country to highlight its European identity and progress and to contribute to forging our joint European progress. A new Europe will rise through the pandemic crisis,”* the Greek president declared, and despite pessimism about Europe’s future *“we all know that Europe remains a privileged place and way of life on our planet.”*

The Council of Europe is an international organization whose aim is to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. Founded in 1949, it has 47 member states, with a population of approximately 820 million, and operates with an annual budget of approximately 500 million euros.

The place was chosen for this event, as it symbolizes the timeless sacred locus of all human societies to preserve human dignity and human freedoms, even in times of environmental challenges. The ceremony was opened by Alternate Foreign Minister Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, who is the chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. This event is part of the rich cultural activities scheduled in the framework of the six-month long Greek Chairmanship, due to take place in Greece and abroad, with the aim to highlight the cultural dimension of the Greek Chairmanship.

The artistic part of the event included a classical music program with distinguished Greek performers. Stelios Kerasidis, the seven-year-old pianist and composer who has stunned the globe with his talent, dazzled the crowd with his performance and was congratulated by Prime Minister Mitsotakis.

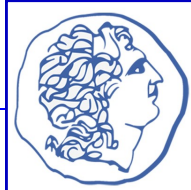


David Gilmour pays homage to Hydra

Legendary Pink Floyd guitarist and vocalist David Gilmour showcased the beautiful Greek island of Hydra and its stunning scenery in his recently released song “Yes, I Have Ghosts.” The song, which premiered on Gilmour’s YouTube channel early July is the first musical piece he has sung after five years of silence.

Gilmour had chosen to shoot the music video in Hydra featuring the natural beauty of Greece, the waters of the Aegean Sea, which mingle as one with the warm colors of the sunset, creating an ethereal atmosphere. Walking through the narrow alleyways of Hydra’s iconic white and blue colored buildings, at one point passing by the historic tavern called “Dry Olive” the video showcases the island to viewers who are unfortunately unable to visit the paradise destination at the present time due to Covid-19 protocols. The inspiration behind the song “Yes, I Have Ghosts,” was Polly Samson’s (Gilmour’s wife) new book, “A Theatre for Dreamers,” which was released in April of this year. The novel takes place on Hydra in 1960, and captures the lives of the poets, painters and musicians who were present during the island’s bohemian heyday. Both the song “Yes, I Have Ghost,” and the novel “Theatre for Dreamers,” are sincere heartfelt expressions of the couple’s deep love for Hydra, and Greece as a whole.





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Applications are Now Open!

Resumption of Greek language courses

Year 2020-2021

The Greek Community of Beirut announces the resumption of Greek language courses at its premises, Dekwaneh, "Parallel Towers", Block A, 3rd floor, on Thursday October 1st

Registrations will take place until Wednesday September 30, 2020

For any additional info, you can reach us by phone 01-493467/8 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:00 pm to 6:00 pm or Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

E-mail: vasiliky@greekcommunity.org.lb

Website: greekcommunityofbeirut.org

Facebook: Greek Community of Beirut (Official Group)

Questions or comments? Kindly use the following: Email : info@greekcommunity.org.lb

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