

**HUMANITIES WEST'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON CONTINUES WITH
Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium (330-1453)
Friday & Saturday, February 28 & March 1, 2014
Marines' Memorial Theatre, San Francisco**

Humanities West continues its 30th Anniversary Season with ***Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium (330-1453)***, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and musical performances that crisscross the cultural bridges of East and West in Constantinople, the seat of the Eastern Roman Byzantine Empire. The program takes place on Friday, February 28, from 7:30 pm to 9:45 pm and Saturday, March 1, from 10 am to 4 pm, at the Marines' Memorial Theatre, 609 Sutter Street, in San Francisco.

Tickets for ***Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium (330-1453)*** are priced as follows: Single tickets for individual Friday programs are \$55 orchestra and \$45 balcony and individual Saturday programs are \$80 orchestra and \$55 balcony, single tickets for both days of each program are \$120 orchestra and \$75 balcony. Special Student/Teacher tickets are available at \$20 balcony for single day admission. Order direct from City Box Office at 415/392-4400 or www.cityboxoffice.com. For more information call Humanities West at 415/391-9700 or check the website for complete program descriptions and related programs at: www.humanitieswest.org.

Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium (330-1453) is part of Humanities West's 2013-2014 diverse lecture/performance series illuminating people and places at the intersections of history, fine art, the performing arts, social history, politics, and the philosophy of the arts. This two-day program brings together a panel of scholars and artists to present lectures and performances exploring the fascinating cultural and political power of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, which thrived from 330 to 1453. The fall of the Roman Empire is often seen as a major dividing line in European history, but its offshoot, the Byzantine Empire, provided a complex cultural continuity. In fact, the Byzantines thought of themselves as Romans, while imposing a predominantly Greek culture and Eastern Orthodox religion over their multiethnic territories, dominating the eastern Mediterranean, Southern Italy, the Balkans, and North Africa. Discover how the Byzantine Empire bridged east and west, ancient and modern, until overwhelmed by the rising power of the Ottoman Turks.

This program is presented in collaboration with the Consul General of Greece in San Francisco and the Center for Modern Greek Studies at San Francisco State University.

The Friday evening program begins with a brief performance by **Peter Kalafatis** and the Belmont dancing group **Enomenoi**, and is followed with the opening lecture by **Maria Mavroudi** (UC Berkeley) on ***Byzantium as a World Civilization***. This introductory lecture examines the Byzantium role in the development of world civilization by looking to the ancient texts translated by Byzantine scholars, suggesting that the Greek, Latin, and Arabic Middle Ages were all interested in the same larger philosophical and scientific questions and occasionally exchanged ideas on them.

The evening culminates with a musical performance. Reverends Apostolos Koufallakis, Nikos Bekris, John Kololas, Dimosthenis Paraskevaïdis, Nebojsa Pantic, Michael Prevas, Alex Leong, Peter Salmas, Jon Magoulias, and Aris Metrakos; and George Haris and Basil Crow perform ***Anthology of Byzantine Melodies***, under the direction of Costas Haralambopoulos, Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco.

On Saturday, **Susanna K. Elm** (UC Berkeley) presents a lecture on ***Constantinople - the New Rome in Late Antiquity***. This lecture considers the grand city of Constantinople, then called the *New Rome*, and how it replaced the original Rome as the greatest city of the Mediterranean. [Sponsored by Scholars Circle Patron Roberta Mundie.] **Dimiter Angelov** (University of Birmingham, UK and Harvard) follows with a presentation on ***The Many Faces of Byzantium: Ideologies of Power from Constantine to Mehmed the Conqueror***. This talk will explore the political ideology of Byzantium throughout its millennial existence, providing insight on how it was constructed, communicated, and questioned throughout the centuries. The voices of Byzantine thinkers and the powerful images produced by Byzantine artists help bring to life a rich world of politics, imagination, and continual change.

There will be special performance by the **Holy Trinity Youth Choir, led by Anysia Dumont**.

Bissera Pentcheva (Stanford) continues the lectures with ***Hagia Sophia and Multi-Sensory Aesthetics***. Focusing on the sixth-century interior of the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, Professor Pentcheva explores the optical shimmer of marble and gold and its psychological effect on the spectator as recorded in Byzantine ekphrasis and liturgical texts. The final talk, ***Constantinople and the Generation of Orthodox Painting***, by **Sharon E. J. Gerstel** (UCLA), examines the legacy of Byzantium as traced in the remains of thousands of painted churches that still stand and serve for common worship. Professor Gerstel focuses her talk on the last and most famous phase of ecclesiastical decoration in the Byzantine capital (1261-1453) and its echoes in other regions of the empire.

A panel discussion with all the presenters will follow, addressing questions from the audience.

*Ancillary programs providing opportunities to learn more about the featured topic and related issues complement this two-day event. For a complete program schedule and additional information about the presenters please visit www.humanitieswest.org.

Humanities West, a non-profit serving the Bay Area since 1983, is devoted to exploring history to celebrate the mind and the arts. The only independent non-profit offering humanities and arts programs of this scale, Humanities West presents a diverse series of lectures and performances encompassing fine and performing arts, social history, music, politics, and philosophy of the arts. These multidisciplinary programs are designed to entertain and educate audiences and to illuminate and elevate the human spirit through exploration of the many sources of modern culture.

CALENDAR LISTING: EVENTS/LECTURES/ARTS & CULTURE

WHAT: Humanities West presents *Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium (330-1453)*, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and musical performances that crisscross the cultural bridges of East and West in Constantinople, the seat of the Eastern Roman Byzantine Empire. Speakers include Maria Mavroudi (UC Berkeley), Susanna K. Elm (UC Berkeley), Dimiter Angelov (University of Birmingham, UK and Harvard), Bissera Pentcheva (Stanford), and Sharon E. J. Gerstel (UCLA). Musical performances include *Anthology of Byzantine Melodies*, under the direction of Costas Haralambopoulos, Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco, and Holy Trinity Youth Choir, with Anysia Dumont. Dance performance by Peter Kalafatis and the Belmont dancing group Enomenoi.

Presented in collaboration with the Consul General of Greece in San Francisco and the Center for Modern Greek Studies at SFSU

WHEN: 7:30pm to 9:30pm, Friday, February 28, 2014
10am to 4pm, Saturday, March 1, 2014

WHERE: Marines' Memorial Theatre
609 Sutter Street, San Francisco

TICKETS: \$20 - \$80
Tickets are available through City Box Office at 415-392-4400 or online at www.cityboxoffice.com
Group tickets: info@humanitieswest.org

PUBLIC INFO: 415/391-9700 or www.humanitieswest.org

***RELATED EVENTS for Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium (330-1453)**

Humanities West Book Discussion with Lynn Harris

***The Alexiad* by Anna Komnene**

Written between 1143 and 1153 by the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos, *The Alexiad* is one of the most popular and revealing primary sources in the vast canon of medieval literature. Princess Anna Komnene, eldest child of the imperial couple, reveals the inner workings of the court, profiles its many extraordinary personages, and offers a firsthand account of significant events, such as the First Crusade, including its impact on the relationship between eastern and western Christianity. A celebrated triumph of Byzantine letters, this is an unparalleled view of the glories of Constantinople.

When: 5:30pm, Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Where: Board Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco
595 Market Street, SF, CA

Cost: \$5

RSVP: commonwealthclub.org

Co-Sponsored by the Humanities Member-Led Forum

Fireside Chat with George Hammond – Constantinople and the Byzantine Millennium Preview

When: 6:30pm, Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Where: Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA

Cost: Free

Lecture: *The Anatomy of a Byzantine Illustrated Gospel Book* with Kathleen Maxwell

Paris gr. 54 is one of the most ambitious and complex manuscripts produced during the late Byzantine Empire. Its full-page evangelist portraits, extensive narrative cycle, and unique polychromatic Greek and Latin texts have garnered scholarly attention since Henri Omont first published its illustrations in 1929. Professor Maxwell addresses the following questions: Who commissioned it and for what purpose? What does it reveal about the production of luxury manuscripts and why was it left unfinished? She demonstrates that it was designed to eclipse its contemporaries and to physically embody a new relationship between Constantinople and the Latin West, as envisioned by its patron.

When: 6pm, Thursday, February 27, 2014

Where: Commonwealth Club of San Francisco

595 Market Street, SF, CA

Cost: \$20

RSVP: commonwealthclub.org

Humanities West Book Discussion with Lynn Harris

***Count Belisarius* by Robert Graves**

When: 5:30pm, Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Where: Board Room, Commonwealth Club of San Francisco

595 Market Street, SF, CA

Cost: \$5

RSVP: commonwealthclub.org

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