

**CONTINUING THE HELLENIC CELEBRATIONS WITH  
ALEXANDER THE GREAT OPERA composed by Panayoti Karousos**

Written By: George L. Chiagouris, *Enosis Board Member*

On Saturday, May 17, 2008, ENOSIS the Federation of Hellenic American Organizations of Illinois will present the Opera Production of Alexander the Great.

This production which was composed by Canadian Panayoti Karousos, will be presented at 8:00 PM in the St. Martha's Auditorium located at 8535 North Georgiana Avenue, Morton Grove, Illinois. The Opera will be performed by The American Symphony Orchestra of Chicago, conducted by Mr. David Stetch and the singers will be:

Alexander the Great: Ryan Gintoft –tenor; Olympias: Francesca Lunghi – mezzo; King Philip: Michael Brown – baritone; Aristotle: Benjamin Leclair – bass; Hephaestion: Kevin Siembor – tenor; Sisygambis: Kristina Pappademos – alto; Cleopatra, Roxane: Greer Brown – soprano.

To date numerous essays, books and movies have been written and presented about the various accomplishments of this ancient Greek and how he greatly influenced the development of Western Civilization. Military historians regard Alexander as the Greatest military general that has ever lived on this earth, from ancient to modern times. His military genius has never been surpassed by anyone else, as he is credited for not losing a single battle, in the 13 years that he led his troops over 20,000 miles and conquered not only the Persian Empire, but also most of the known world around 330 BC.

The one area for which he has not been given adequate credit or recognition is how he helped spread Hellenic culture and language in the lands that he conquered. In his speech, which is called 'The Oath at Opis' and was taken by 9,000 officers comprised of Persians, Indians, Egyptians and others, is a classic demonstration of the vision that Alexander possessed about cooperation and self governance during his reign.

It was in the year 324 BC when he uttered the following message to his troops (paraphrased): “. . . I do not care what is the color of your skin nor where you came from, as my only criteria being what is the virtue in your heart. . .”

Over 2,300 years ago, Alexander realized that if humanity is to survive and prosper, we must live like brothers under God and we should govern ourselves by laws that are administered by the best and the brightest. Space does not allow the printing of the entire speech, but it will be included in future articles and will also be available to patrons that will attend the Opera Presentation on May 17<sup>th</sup>, along with other pertinent facts about Alexander's contributions.

Over a month ago, the Hellenic Community in Chicago, as well as a number of other large cities in America, celebrated Greek Independence and our Hellenic Heritage with lectures, receptions, parades and other events. During these celebrations we memorialized the heroes of 1821 for their various sacrifices during that revolution. At the same time, we also paid tribute to some of the ancient Hellenes who gave so much to the development of Western Civilization by their contributions in democracy, philosophy, freedom, liberty and numerous other intellectual ideas.

The Alexander the Great Opera has been organized much the same way that the Parade events were done to educate the public about the contributions of some of our ancestors and pay tribute to them. We believe that the music and the words, as composed by Mr. Panayoti Karousos, will help transform our thoughts and emotions into the so called 'Hellenistic Period', whereby we will be mesmerized by the life and accomplishments of one of our greatest Greeks. To us Christians, Alexander should be considered a forerunner since he introduced the Greek language in the Holy Land which was very timely in recording and promoting Christ's messages.

Everyone is welcomed to participate in this memorable presentation not only to pay tribute to Alexander the Great but also to help in our quest to Preserve and Promote Hellenism, by reminding people that this Great Macedonian Greek lived indeed 2,350 years ago and left us a glorious and inspirational legacy.

After the performance, there will be a “coffee and sweets reception”, provided by the Chicago Chapter of the Macedonian Federation and ENOSIS.

The proceeds from the performance will be donated to philanthropic and social projects. For further information and tickets, call ENOSIS at 773-775-4949, or via email at [enosis325@yahoo.com](mailto:enosis325@yahoo.com). Donations for adults: \$20.00, and students: \$10.00.