

inside

this issue...

Festival of Greek Music & Dance 2003	1-3
FDF 2003	4-5
Spotlight	4-5
Photo Gallery	6-7
Youth Group Updates	7
Future Performances	8



606 Greendale Rd.
Glenview, IL 60025
847.657.0958
e-mail: orpheus@ohfs.org
<http://www.ohfs.org>

Tax-exempt
Not-for-profit
Organization

Yannis Economou
847.657.0958
Director/President

Kostas Economou
847.729.3406
Instructor

Marianna Gudmundsson
847.967.5103
Artistic Director/Vice President

Bessie Kouchoukos-Grosso
773.286.5132
Youth Group Coordinator

The Newsletter for friends and members of OHFS
Vol. 9, Issue No. 2, Spring 2003

Easter Traditions Come Alive During the Festival of Greek Music and Dance 2003

Over 800 guests filled the auditorium of the Christian Heritage Academy to attend the Festival of Greek Music and Dance 2003: Easter Traditions and Customs. Based on the comments received at the conclusion of the concert the consensus was clear: the final result had exceeded many expectations!

The concert, organized by the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society in conjunction with SAE of America, featured a group of folk musicians from Greece led by Christos Tsiamoulis as well as songs and dances performed by the Orpheus Dance Troupe. This is the third consecutive year that these

organizations have collaborated to present this Festival, which is booked through the World Music Institute of New York.

One of the greatest challenges facing the directors of the Orpheus Dance Troupe was to determine the theme, content, and artistic arrangements for this year's concert. Among the new elements introduced this year were the use of multiple sets of costumes, props, stage settings, varying lighting sequences, slides and sound effects. Over 160 costumes passed across the stage worn by the 90 participating members of the Orpheus youth and adult groups!

Continued on page 2



Girls, wearing the costume from the village of Gida in Macedonia, perform the song "Tsak-Tsak tin Porta". This song is performed during Easter in the village of Sarakina in the area of Grevena, Macedonia.

Continued from page 1



Men perform the dance Pousnitsa from Macedonia during the Festival of Greek Music and Dance 2003.

A great deal of research went into presenting the appropriate sequence and content of the material, which had a seasonal as well as regional character. Other than the Troupe's own resources a significant contribution was made by instructors from Greece. Our thanks and gratitude goes out to Hara Deligiannis, Giorgos Kotsos and Nancy Harmanta. Giorgos and Nancy's visit to Chicago, following the dance conference in Atlanta, was instrumental as

they guided us through every step of the program through countless hours of meetings and instruction! We are fortunate to enjoy the assistance and friendship of instructors of this caliber!

Both His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos and Chris Tomaras, vice president of SAE-American Region, congratulated the Orpheus Dance Troupe for a remarkable presentation and were touched by the enthusiastic participation of so many young children and adults. Among the audience members were many that traveled from afar including: Kiki Papadimitriou of the Troupe Hellas of Atlanta, Georgia; Irene Savvas of the Lykeion Chapter in Boston; Dora Zafiroopoulos with other fellow instructors from the group Paradosi of Toronto, Canada; Dean Bellos and fellow members from the group Kyklos of St. Louis. Their presence not only honored this event but also signifies the close ties that the Orpheus Dance Troupe has established with groups throughout North America. Locally, there was, again, a strong contingency from the Apollo Dance Troupe of Aurora. The support of the group's directors, Dr. Michael Kontos and Eva Kontos, has been instrumental in all three concerts that OHFS has hosted.



Mrs. Dina Sianis tells the story and custom of "Sarakosti" to members of the Orpheus Youth Group. The "Sarakosti" is a man-made, solemn figure drawn in prayer that symbolizes the 40 days of lent. The figure had seven legs that would be removed, one by one, at the passing of each of the seven weeks of lent.

Many individuals dedicated a portion of their busy lives to the success of this unique event. The dedication and love for Hellenic Culture have been the foundation of the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society. Equipped with the lessons learned from this experience we look forward into the future with encouragement and excitement, representing the Greek American community with a sense of responsibility and pride. ☐



Members of the Orpheus Dance Troupe perform the dance "Pyrgousikos" from the village of Pyrgi located on the island of Chios.



The visiting folk musicians from Greece take a bow at the conclusion of the concert. Their talent brought the audience to its feet many times. Despite arriving in Chicago only a couple of hours before the concert, their interpretation of the dance material was a rare gift for the Orpheus Dance Troupe.



Members of the Orpheus Dance Troupe perform the song "Helidonismata". The song represents the coming of the spring season and it is sung on March 1. They hold a wooden prop that imitates the movement and sounds of swallows as they fly to warmer destinations.



Members of the Orpheus Youth Group perform the dance "Dontia Pykna" from the region of Epiros.



Members of the Orpheus Adult and Youth Groups at the conclusion of the concert. Along with His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos (center right) and Mr. Christos Tomaras (center left), Vice President of SAE.

West Coast Folk Dance Festival Features Over 105 Dance Groups!

By Yannis Economou

Anyone who has been involved with a Greek folk dance group can attest to all the hard work that goes into running it. Watching 105 dance groups perform competitively in the course of just three days can be an overwhelming experience! It can also be a frightening one if your job is to judge their performing ability for the first time.

That was the scene of the 27th annual Folk Dance Festival (FDF) that took place last February at the Hilton Hotel in Anaheim, California. FDF is organized by the Greek Orthodox Diocese of San Francisco and involves the participation of dance groups from the Diocese's parishes and beyond. The competition involves two divisions with separate categories that are divided based on age and ability.

This year's participation at FDF exceeded 1,700 performers. Among them were three groups that represented Greek communities from Argentina, Chile and Brazil. Last year, a similar festival was established in South America under the auspices of the regional Diocese.



Orpheus instructor Yannis Economou with the panel of judges at the 2003 Folk Dance Festival in California.



During Cultural Night, the Olympian dancers of Assumption Church in Long Beach, CA perform dances and customs during the carnival season from the island of Naxos.

spotlight

on Orpheus
Youth Group
dancer...



Dimítra Bounas

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

Parents/Family From: My father was born in the region of Tessalia. When he was 18, he and his parents moved to Athens. My mother grew up in Chicago and is of Polish descent.

Occupation: 8th grade student at Socrates Greek American School.

Time Dancing with Orpheus Group: I am completing my second year.

The level of quality demonstrated by many of the participating groups, of all ages, was impressive. Some of the material that was presented required extensive preparation and research for an authentic presentation.

Interacting around the clock with fellow judges, directors, organizers, musicians, and participants was an exciting experience. Their apparent degree of dedication and pride in the promotion and preservation of Greek folk traditions was inspiring. There is no doubt that, after 27 years, FDF continues to evolve in order to ensure a strong future. Differences concerning factors inherent in competition and judging criteria or various organizational and procedural matters will always exist. But this event is by far the largest annual gathering of Greek folk dance enthusiasts not only in North America but even in Greece. It is up to all participants to make the most of the experience.

It was an honor to serve as a judge and doing so reflects positively on the Orpheus Dance Troupe as a whole. Since the Troupe's participation in the Seattle conference last year, interaction with directors of dance groups from the west coast has intensified and has fostered the sharing of resources and exchange of ideas. ☐



Many participating dance groups at FDF incorporated village scenes into their dance presentations.



A participating dance group at FDF presents a suite of dances from the region of Thrace.

Thoughts on Dancing: Greek dancing allows me to express my Greek heritage and gives me the opportunity to learn dances from all parts of Greece. This is very special because I don't think there are many people in Greece who have this experience. (Greek) dancing makes me feel happy, energetic, and proud to be Greek. And most importantly it frees the spirit, which is very important to a Gemini.

Favorite Dance: Although I may not have mastered it yet, at the moment my favorite dance is *Koutsos*. It's hard to believe that I didn't like it in the beginning but now, the opposite is true. I especially like the arm movements and my favorite thing is the music. It is so lively. I also love just listening to it!

Most Vivid OHFS Memory: My most vivid memory would have to be all the preparation for the Festival of Greek Music and Dance 2003. It was nerve-wracking, but the performance was fun and exciting all at the same time!

Favorite Greek Dish: My favorite Greek dish would have to be *giouvetsi*; and my mom's *spanakopita*.

Favorite Place in Greece: Athens.

Hobbies/Sports/Other Interests: Singing, acting, (Greek) theater, reading, and dancing.

Where I heard about Orpheus Dance Troupe: I heard about the Orpheus Dance Troupe from my close friend and classmate, Maria Karras.

photo gallery



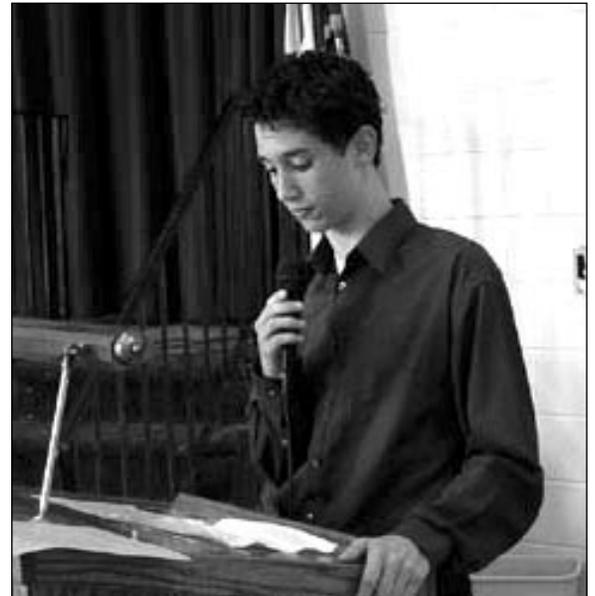
Orpheus members with artists at the "New 2003 Corporate Gallery Artists" exhibit organized by the Northwest Cultural Council in Rolling Meadows.



Members of the Orpheus Dance Troupe at the conclusion of their performance at Concordia University. The presentation is part of the "World Music and Cultures" course taught by music department Professor Jean Harrison (center).



The Orpheus Dance Troupe poses for a picture prior to its performance at the annual Kavrytinon Society Dinner Dance. The event was part of the community activities commemorating Greek Independence Day in Chicago.



Orpheus Youth Group member Peter Papageorgiou during the "End of the Year Event" for the Youth Group. Peter, along with other youth members, offered a brief description of their experiences which included learning and performing Greek dances, making many friendships and looking forward to their participation to the adult group!



Mitso Dallas performs "tsalimia" during the dance Pentozalis from the island of Crete. The dance was performed at the Skokie Festival of Cultures.



Performing the dance "Issios" from the island of Kalymnos.



Girls perform the dance "Bella Olympio" at the Greek Festival hosted by the Assumption Church in St. Louis.



Orpheus members parading during the Greek American parade. The Orpheus Dance Troupe participated with floats sponsored by SAE and the Parthenon Restaurant.



Orpheus members at the top of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis during a break from performances.

Orpheus Youth Group Summer Session 2003

Register now!

Dates: Tuesday, July 15 5:30 - 7:00 pm
 Wednesday, July 16 5:30 - 7:00 pm
 Thursday, July 17 5:30 - 6:30 pm

Tuesday, July 22 5:30 - 7:00 pm
 Wednesday, July 23 5:30 - 7:00 pm
 Thursday, July 24 5:30 - 6:30 pm

Location: New Church
 Multipurpose Gym
 74 Park Drive, Glenview, Illinois

Performance: Greek Festival
 Sts. Peter & Paul Greek Orthodox Church
 Friday, July 25

Registration: \$60

For more information, contact Kostas Economou: 847-729-3406



Members of the Orpheus Youth Group perform at the Festival of Greek Music & Dance 2003.

performance schedule

St. Demetrios Greek Church Festival
Saginaw, Michigan
June 13-15, 2003
6:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m.

Holy Cross Greek Church Festival
Justice, IL
Sunday, June 29, 2003
8:00 p.m.

St. Nicholas Greek Church Festival
Oak Lawn, IL
Sunday, July 20, 2003,
6:00, 8:00 p.m.

SS. Peter and Paul Greek Festival
Glenview, IL
Friday, July 25, 2003
8:00 p.m.

"Yasoo! Dance 2003" Dance Conference
Seattle, Washington
October 10-12, 2003

"Christmas Around The World"
Museum of Science and Industry
Chicago, IL
Saturday, December 13, 2003
4:00 p.m.

Winter Dance Conference 2004
New York, New York
January 30- February 1, 2004

Performance schedule and times are subject to change. For the latest information visit <http://www.ohfs.org>.

practice schedule

Orpheus Adult Group

Beginner/Intermediate:
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Intermediate/Advanced:
7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Every Thursday at:
St. John Lutheran Church
3020 Milwaukee Ave.
Northbrook, IL
(one mile north from the
intersection of Lake/Euclid
and Milwaukee Ave.)

Orpheus Youth Group:

Every Thursday at:
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
St. John Lutheran Church
3020 Milwaukee Ave.
Northbrook, IL

Every Saturday at:
1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
New Church
Multipurpose Room
74 Park Dr., Glenview, IL
(one block west of Shermer/Glenview Rds)

Youth Group: Members ages 10-14 (Northbrook and Glenview locations).

Beginners: Members with little or no previous dance experience.

Intermediate: Dancers who have shown progress in the beginners' class attend the last hour of practice. At the discretion of the instructors, the intermediate level dancers will be practicing in a separate line.

All dancers, especially beginners, are encouraged to obtain a personal tape of the music used for performances, in order to practice on one's own and become accustomed to the music. Please provide Yannis or Kostas Economou with a blank cassette tape.

Submissions for the Fall issue of *Lyra* will be accepted until September 15, 2003. We are always interested in educational essays/articles dealing with the subjects of Greek folk dance, folk music, and folk traditions. We continue to accept personal announcements and all other submissions pertinent to the dance troupe and its membership. If an individual wishes to contribute material on a continuous basis, please inform the Editor.

606 Greendale Rd.
Glenview, IL 60025

