

Cultural Program

Introduction

As a part of the ongoing outreach and engagement initiatives of The Cretans' Association of Hamilton "Arkadi", the board of directors has discussed the development and institution of a Cultural program in keeping with the objectives and mandate of the Association, which is to foster the spread and celebration of Cretan heritage and cultural traditions.

To this end, the board of directors will create a committee overseeing Cultural Issues and Events, which will consist of directors from the board and members of the association.

Scope of Program

Crete is located geographically at the crossroads of several cultures; there is a large and diverse artistic and literary component, as well as a socio-historical component with the many events that mark the Cretan legacy and experience, influencing arts and crafts as well as cuisine. Additionally, a large part of the Cretan cultural experience lies within the varied dances and musical traditions of the island, and so any program designed to immerse the membership and other stakeholders in the "Cretan Experience" must by necessity include these aspects.

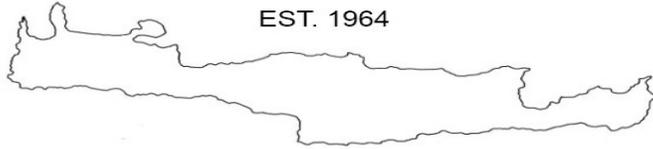
Given the above considerations, the board of directors of the Cretans' Association of Hamilton "Arkadi" has decided to offer the following as an immersive and engaging Cultural Program for the membership and other stakeholders in the community to promote and sustain Cretan culture:

Dance Workshops

Designed and implemented by instructors from the community, the association will offer Cretan Dance workshops, which will be geared to both youth and adult learners, from beginners (no experience) to advanced experience levels. There will be 3 workshops, with target dates of individual events to be February 2017, March 2017, and April 2017. Dates and venue, as well as program, to be communicated by mid-January 2017.

Music

A large part of the cultural tradition of Crete is the music of the island. Shaped by centuries of cultural and socio-historical influences, the music of the island echoes the distinct regions to be found there; from the highlands of the Lefka Ori or White Mountains, to the Lasithi plateau, each region offers its own unique character. Our proposed Cultural Program will explore these



Cultural Program

via various methods, as outlined below.

Instrumental Music

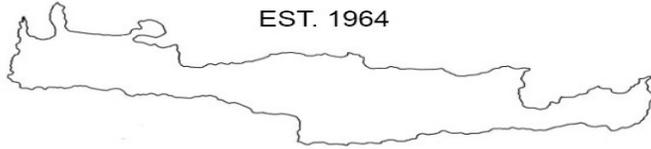
The association aims to establish a regular monthly workshop, offered once to twice per month, wherein interested individuals may participate in learning traditional Cretan musical instruments such as Cretan Lyra, Laouto, Mandolino, Violi, Sfiroxambioli, Askompantoura, etc. To this end, the association will endeavour to source out appropriate instructors and facilitate, either by way of in-person instruction, or virtual instruction. This offering will of course be subject to the availability of instructors and proposed venues. Details for this initiative will be communicated by the end of January with an initial implementation date of February 2017. This initiative will be subject to interest and participation.

Vocal Music

The musical traditions of Crete are the product of centuries of conflict and social change. Mantinades, or rhyming couplets are a facet of this tradition, as well as Rizitika songs, literally translated as “[songs of] roots” which tell the stories of days gone by. The “Cantada” is an experience which is still alive and well today and is another facet of the vocal musical tradition. This music is expressed both individually and chorally. The board of directors proposes to offer vocal music workshops in conjunction with the instrumental workshops, and details will be communicated by the end of January with a target implementation date of February 2017. This initiative will also be subject to interest and participation.

Creative and Artistic Tradition

From famed and influential literary works such as “Erotokritos” by Vintsentzos Kornaros, and “Zorba the Greek” by Nikos Kazantzakis, to the artistic talents of the Cretan School of Icon painting, and famed painter Domenikos Theotokopoulos (better known as El Greco), Crete enjoys a rich and vibrant tradition in artistic expression. The board of directors would like to implement workshops and seminars showcasing these facets of our culture, utilizing elements such as lecturers and guest speakers, and screening of various media such as documentaries and feature films, all of which highlight and explore Cretan culture. Events will be communicated, and in the interest of promoting our heritage and culture, will be open to our members and the public.



Cultural Program

Culinary and Craft Tradition

Crete enjoys a rich and diverse culinary tradition. Dishes such as *gamopilafo*, *ofto*, *xoxlious boubouristous*, *kalitsounia*, etc, as well as the Mediterranean Diet phenomenon which found its origins in Crete after the Second World War are important parts of our tradition. The board of directors would like to offer workshops in Cretan Cuisine, whereby members and friends can gather to learn and enjoy a tangible (and delicious!) legacy of our shared heritage. Workshops will be led by experienced members and guests, with engaging and inclusive content and opportunities to share best practices and socialize. Venues and events to be communicated, and will be subject to interest and participation.

In addition to cuisine, the traditional crafts of Crete including crochet and knitting, as well as Cretan Wedding Bread, are examples of the timeless legacy of the island. The board of directors would also like to offer workshops in this area. The Cretan Cuisine and Crafts workshops will be overseen by the Cultural and Heritage Committee, and will be subject to availability of scheduling, venues, etc. This will also constitute part of our outreach program, where perhaps workshops in these areas can be held in collaboration with local Greek schools and other Hellenic organizations, to engage our youth and pass along these traditions.

Conclusion

As our Association continues to grow in both size and scope, the Cultural Program outlined herein will serve to both promote and protect our culture and traditions, and share these rich facets of our heritage with our members, friends, and communities. Each part of the program will be communicated and implemented in accordance with the Association's Calendar of Events, and will be overseen by the Cultural and Events Committee, with implementation set for the 2017 membership year. The Association welcomes feedback and support from the community, and looks forward to providing the fulfilling and engaging content outlined here to our members and friends.