

MODERN GREEK Program

Summer 2012

A Run on Banks in Greece and...a New Modern Greek Endowment



Dr. Kalliopi Kontou Filis

During the run on Greek banks on Friday, June 15 – the eve of national elections, when depositors acted in a panic over fears that Sunday’s results would lead to Greece’s exit from the Eurozone – U-M Medical School alumna, Kalliopi Kontou-Filis ’69, battled frantic crowds in her effort to send funds to U-M. Neither grudging bank personnel nor the bank’s closing at 3pm could deter her.

Kontou-Filis was determined to send euros that very day to establish an endowment in honor of her mentor, U-M Professor of Internal Medicine Kenneth P. Mathews. But she did not intend her gift for the Medical School. She wanted to send the money to the Modern Greek Program.

The story began a few weeks earlier, when Kontou-Filis, M.D., Ph.D., eminent allergy specialist and the president of the Hellenic Society of Allergology and Clinical Immunology, looked around at the worn faces of her fellow citizens and decided she had to do something for Hellenism. For years she had been attending to immunological systems gone awry. She was accustomed to offering Greek patients her expertise to treat complex physical reactions. Now she wanted to do something to benefit their crushed spirits.

Kontou-Filis felt indebted to U-M for her education in medicine. In particular, her training as Fellow in Allergy

Studies under Dr. Mathews, Professor of Internal Medicine and Division Chief of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, had prepared her for a successful career. Could she find a way to support her country at a critical time of need and to give back to the University that trained her?

Through an internet search, Kontou-Filis discovered the U-M Modern Greek Program. That was when she sent an inquiry to Professor Vassilis Lambropoulos, asking if she might make a one-time gift. Imagine his surprise when he received this unexpected message: “The University of Michigan gave me my education in Medicine, and I want to give something back, to U-M’s Modern Greek Program”! Imagine her surprise when she received his immediate response, “With the amount of money you wish to donate, you can endow a gift to benefit U-M students – and Greek studies – in perpetuity”!

And so the scene unfolded as Dr. Kontou-Filis felt the uncertainty of Greece’s economic future pressing upon her. Once an agreement was reached and papers outlining the terms of agreement for her new endowment fund were drawn up, she ran to the bank. That was at noon on Friday, June 15. She waited patiently in the long lines of anxious depositors wishing to withdraw money. At the end of a crazy day, tellers puzzled over her intentions, running back and forth to consult one another. “I told them, ‘Once you conclude my transaction, THEN I’ll start worrying about the Greek economy.’” Then finally they informed her they had completed the transaction. “After three hours and 45 minutes ... all was completed while we are still in the Euro Zone,” she wrote in an email after she returned home.

On Monday, June 18, U-M recorded the establishment of the new Kalliopi Kontou-Filis and Kenneth P. Mathews Endowment Fund, honoring the memory of Kenneth P. Mathews, Professor of Medicine, U-M, and the donor’s mentor, to support student opportunities for study in Greece and Cyprus. The Endowment will inspire more students to enhance their studies with trips to these two countries, enabling them to take more time for Greek language acquisition in an immersion setting, broaden their experiential learning, and to be more adventurous in their efforts to conduct research. It will greatly enrich the culture of learning in the Modern Greek Program.

THE KALLIOPI KONTOU-FILIS AND KENNETH P. MATHEWS FUND WILL SUPPORT STUDENT INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN GREECE OR CYPRUS.



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 PROFESSORSHIP IN MODERN GREEK
 ENDOWED BY THE FOUNDATION FOR MODERN GREEK STUDIES

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GRAECA AND THE ROOTS OF THE MODERN GREEK PROGRAM

Modern Greek at U-M has roots that go before the establishment of the C. P. Cavafy Professorship, and we are always glad to acknowledge individuals and groups who prepared the ground for a full-fledged Modern Greek Program.

A key piece of the story of the Cavafy Professorship and the Modern Greek Program is GRAECA (Greek American Educational Cultural Association), a dynamic cultural organization that articulated the dream of endowing a Modern Greek chair at Michigan in 1990. GRAECA was a precursor to the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies.

Because I was not present at U-M during the years when Modern Greek was an unrealized idea, to develop a clearer picture of the history of GRAECA, I recently dug into the archives of the Greek community in southeastern Michigan. I found evidence of culturally enriching fundraising events organized by GRAECA from the late 1980s through the mid 1990s.

Possibly the first event was a concert of Traditional Greek Folk Songs by Krysa Koumparakis, cellist Edward Szabo, and pianist Christine Szabo in 1987. Koumparakis and Edward Szabo performed two more concerts at the Women's City Club and at Rackham Auditorium at a later time with another pianist. Then the two-act play "The Amber Beads" by Pearl Ahnen – an "alternately humorous and touching (real life with an ethnic twist)" story about a grieving mother" – played at the Trueblood Theatre, raising over \$10,000. There were also March 25th celebrations featuring Dr. David Weinberg and Dr. Harry Margoulis, an academic lecture by Professor Michael Herzfeld, two one-day bus trips to exhibits of ancient Greek and Byzantine art in museums in Toledo and Chicago, and several film festivals. Indeed an internet search led me to an announcement dating from 1995 inviting "all film lovers and hellenophiles" to attend a Greek Film Festival on the U-M campus. "Proceeds from the festival will benefit the Modern Greek Program," it added.

GRAECA was formed in 1988 as a non-profit corporation in Michigan by members of the Ann Arbor Greek-American community. Its mission was to promote Greek culture in the region and support the instruction of Modern Greek at U-M. The group worked tirelessly toward those ends. Beginning in 1990, when Professor Traianos Gagos, then Lecturer in Papyrology, launched the two-year language sequence, GRAECA collaborated with the Department of Classical Studies and Hellenic Student Association (HSA) as its cultural arm. It embraced the wishes of U-M students who wanted Modern Greek to have a permanent home. Over the years the funds GRAECA donated to the Department of Classical Studies made possible teaching initiatives in Modern Greek and faculty and student research activities on Cyprus, Greek-Americans, and Modern Greece.

When in 1997 U-M determined to raise enough funds to endow a Professorship in Modern Greek in Classical Studies and Comparative Literature, it turned to GRAECA for support. GRAECA's Managing Director, Panorea Katsikas, helped the University make the right contacts in the Greater Detroit Greek community, and the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies came into being.

During the tender years when instruction of Modern Greek at U-M was incipient, GRAECA led community support for its growth. It showed the necessary enthusiasm for University instruction of Modern Greek. It organized cultural events. It contributed money to the Department to enhance Modern Greek instruction.

At a critical time, GRAECA built a bridge between the University and Greek-American community leaders. On behalf of students and colleagues, χίλια ευχαριστώ!

MODERN GREEK PART OF GLOBAL TEACHING INITIATIVES

Dr. Despina Margomenou received a "Teaching with Videoconferencing Grant" for global teaching initiatives from U-M Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs, LSA Instructional Support Services, and LSA Language Resource Center. She will use the grant to enhance Intermediary and Advanced Intermediary Modern Greek Peer Teaching using Videoconferencing with Greek Universities, part of a teaching project she calls, "Conversations on Culture." This is a collaborative effort between U-M Modern Greek and the U-Thessaloniki Center for Foreign Language Teaching. Dr. Margomenou completed a pilot program in the Winter Term of 2012 and will put the project in full gear with support from the Grant this academic year. Look to the Winter 2013 Modern Greek Program Newsletter for a fuller account.

ΜΥΒΑΔΕΛΕ / Ανταλλαγή

by Recep Gul

The Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 ending the 1919-1922 Greco-Turkish War decreed the compulsory exchange of religious minority populations in Greece and Turkey. Almost 1.5 million Orthodox Christians residing in Turkey and half a million Muslims in Greece were uprooted from lands where they had lived for generations and sent to a foreign country. The agreement redistributed religious populations in the Near East and marked a milestone in nationalization and modernization processes, reshaping the cultural identities of Greeks and Turks.

My interest in the 1923 Greco-Turkish Population Exchange started in the summer of 2009 when, in a casual conversation with my family, I learned that my paternal grandparents were born in northern Greece and relocated to Turkey as a consequence of this mass transfer. I was intrigued, as this issue is rarely discussed in Turkey publicly. The more I discovered, the more I was drawn into the lives of both Greek and Turkish refugees. So I decided to write a musical composition on the subject as my doctoral dissertation: *Mübadele / Ανταλλαγή*, a chamber cantata remembering the population exchange through music.

The complex creation process for the libretto mirrored the complexity of the event. Approximately two million people were subjected to displacement. Among them about a million Orthodox Christians were war refugees who fled as the Greek army withdrew from Asia Minor before the Treaty of Lausanne. I chose not to depict that tragic event, known as the Asia Minor Catastrophe in Modern Greek history. I rather wanted to focus on the populations subjected to forced migration with the Treaty of Lausanne.

I concentrated on two regions, one in each country, where I found correlations between Muslims and Orthodox Christians: Kavala in northern Greece and Cappadocia in central Turkey. Both were on the periphery of the Greco-Turkish War zones, and testimonies manifest a rather harmonious relationship between the two communities. Many residents disfavored the population exchange. I do not draw generalizations from individual experiences. No single story gives the whole truth. For many years, nationalist discourses have related the exchange of populations as the only solution when the Ottoman Empire dissolved, stating that Muslims and Orthodox Christians could no longer live together. Indeed many people favored the separation of populations. But others objected, believing they could live together. These people were deported too, just because they did not belong to the right religion. My intention is not to imply a grand narrative applicable to everyone, but rather to contribute to the discussion.

The stories in my cantata revolve around two characters: Ayshe, a Muslim woman who was living in northern Greece with her three children after losing her husband in World War I. Her character and story are based on stories my great-grandmother transmitted to my family, supported by other testimonies given by refugees from the same region. Despina, an Orthodox Christian woman living in central



Anatolia with her husband, suddenly hears of the coming deportation and sorrowfully leaves the land where her family has lived for generations. Her story is supported by testimonies I found in the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens. Though the two characters do not meet in person, their stories parallel each other, particularly in the ways they react to the news of deportation, their anguish during the journey, and the difficulties they encounter adapting to their new countries.

My composition, the first to combine Greek and Turkish experiences of the 1923 population exchange in a Western musical domain, aims to construct a space where music mediates cultural and linguistic differences, thus transcending divergence and allowing a site of cultural convergence. In the last movement, Ayshe and Despina, the women who crossed historical paths and now live in the other's home, sing together. It is the first time two female voices sing a duet in different languages in a Western classical work.

U-M gave me the opportunity to carry out this ambitious project. Family testimonies made me personally invested. My graduate education at the School of Music, a year's residency at the Institute for the Humanities, and guidance and support I received in the Modern Greek Program gave me the tools I needed to complete the work.



Dr. Recep Gul earned his Doctorate in Composition from U-M Music School in Spring 2012. The world premiere of his cantata, "*Mübadele / Ανταλλαγή: Remembering a Human Catastrophe Through Music*," was performed in the U-M Museum of Art Apse on Friday, April 20 to an audience including children of refugees of the population exchange. It received a long, standing ovation.

STUDENT AWARDS, DEGREES, AND GRANTS



David Catalan, Recipient of the Modern Greek Senior Prize

David Catalan received the Modern Greek Senior Prize, awarded in memory of Calliopi Politou Evangelinos, recognizing the most outstanding undergraduate senior who excels in the study of Modern Greek.

David distinguished himself in Modern Greek, Sociology, Computer Science, and Health Advocacy. He won the national Student Mental Health Advocate Award recognizing outstanding student leadership in campus mental health. He competed with students nominated from across the country for their positive impact in their campus communities. David used his personal experience with mental illness as a springboard to make mental health awareness more pervasive on campus. He spearheaded mental health initiatives through the Health Issues Commission of the Central Student Government (CSG) and established partnerships to promote greater mental health advocacy and prevention. His honors thesis in Sociology studies mental health policy in the 1960s.

Reflecting on his journey in Modern Greek studies, David writes: "Modern Greek has meant a lot to me, so much so that it has become a formative component of my U-M experience. Studying abroad in Greece really opened my eyes. It was the first time I lived outside of the US, the first time I realized I have a hunger to be a citizen of the world. By that I mean I really do yearn to travel, get to know other cultures, and not just stay within the bounds of my home. I think sometimes we get too comfortable and take our language and customs for granted. But there's so much more than these! Besides the travel experience, it's been wonderful to connect my experience in Greece with my academics in Ann Arbor. Ultimately, this reinforced the idea that my memories of Greece don't have to stay in Greece. I can relive them every day in my own way."

AWARDS

David Catalan, Modern Greek Senior Prize

Phoebe Barghouty, Modern Greek I Translation Award

Maria Pliakas, Modern Greek II Translation Award

Penelope Filyo (U-M B.A. Modern Greek '11), Arthur and Mary Platsis Student Prize for Work in the Greek Legacy: for her Honors Thesis, "Greece's Symbolic Capital and the Media."

Alekos Syropoulos '13 and **Michael Malis '10** (Jazz and Improvisation Program, School of Music School and students of Modern Greek), Arthur and Mary Platsis Student Prize for Work in the Greek Legacy: for their original compositions, "Pathos and Ask the Sun Rays," and their collective arrangement of the song, "Gioconda's Smile by Manos Hadjidakis."

STUDENT GRANTS FOR SUMMER STUDY, RESEARCH, AND INTERNSHIPS

Aliya Donn, undergraduate studying Comparative Culture and Identity in the International Studies Program, received a grant from the Modern Greek Fund for summer study in the College Year in Athens (CYA).

Phoebe Barghouty, undergraduate studying Modern Greek, American Culture, and Communications, received a grant from the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies (FMGS) for a Summer 2012 Internship working for the newspaper embros.net.

Maria Pliakas, undergraduate studying Modern Greek, Evolutionary Biology and Anthropology, received grants from the FMGS and Hellenic Ministry of Culture to attend the Institute for Balkan Studies International

Summer School for Greek Language, History and Culture.

Clinton Bergmann, undergraduate studying Modern Greek and the Environment, received a FMGS grant to study Greek at U-Athens and conduct research on Naxos with a joint team of biologists led by Professors Johannes Foufopoulos (U-M Natural Resources) and Panagiotis Pafilis (U-Athens Biology).

GRADUATING SENIORS 2012

David Catalan, BA, Modern Greek; BA, Sociology; Honors in Sociology (December 2012). "I will graduate in December upon completion of my honors thesis. After graduation, I hope to be doing work in the public sector or at an NGO working for the public good."

Molly Clark, BA, Modern Greek. "This fall I will begin a ten month term of service with AmeriCorps working in 4H teaching an after school science program to at risk youth in Austin, Texas. The following year, I plan to attend Medical School."

Helen Ioannou, BS, Social Computing & Informatics; Minor, Modern Greek. "I am currently looking for positions in information technology ranging from design to user testing. After working in the field I will return to school to earn a Masters."

Christopher Walters, BS, Biochemistry; Minor, Modern Greek; Minor, Biophysics. "I will be attending the PhD program in Chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania with a concentration in organic chemistry."

GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Dr. Recep Gul earned his Doctorate in Composition from the Music School in Spring 2012 following world premiere of his dissertation project, *Mübadele/ Ανταλλαγή*: Remember-

ing a Human Catastrophe Through Music.

Maria Hadjipolycarpou (PhD candidate, Comparative Literature) studies life narrative accounts in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean. She began the Mediterranean Topographies study group in 2010 to create interdisciplinary dialogue on thematic and theoretical topics raised by study of the Mediterranean. The group brings together students and faculty through shared readings, discussions, and events. Her organizational work was instrumental in U-M's decision to make a cluster hire in Mediterranean Studies.

Etienne Charriere (PhD candidate, Comparative Literature) studies Greek and Armenian prose fiction in the late Ottoman Empire. He is a Manoogian Simone Foundation Graduate Student Fellow.

Leigh Sarris (PhD candidate, Cultural Anthropology) studies everyday transnational encounters between Greeks and Turks, family and village histories in the 1923 population exchange, and the Aegean as an alternative to a European regional framework. She begins fieldwork in Mustafapsa (Sinassos), Turkey this academic year, to be followed by fieldwork in Thessaloniki, Greece, in 2013-14.

William Stroebel (PhD student, Comparative Literature) studies literature and community formation in the Eastern Mediterranean. He won the Best Graduate Student Essay Prize for 2011 awarded by the Modern Greek Studies Association for his paper, "Narrating the Disaster: Trauma and National Discourses in Elias Venezis' *To Noumero 31328* and *Kosmas Politis' Stou Hadjifrangou*."

Dr. Yona Stamatis (PhD 2011, Ethnomusicology) is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Illinois, Springfield.

An Artist's Sketchbooks

Reception to Honor Artist Sam Karres and His Gift to Hatcher Graduate Library by Artemis Leontis

Sketchbooks are an artist's laboratory, where the artist gathers his ingredients: his eyes' and hands' quick view of life as it unfolds.

This at least is true of the sketchbooks of Sam Karres, an artist of miraculous dexterity. Born in Wyandotte, Michigan in 1929, Karres completed a degree in Art at Wayne University (now Wayne State University) in 1953, and worked as an illustrator for Ford Motor Co. from 1955 until his retirement in 1980. Whether a student, or fully employed, or a retiree with time to devote fully to his art, Karres was always sketching. The paintings he shows at Karres Gallery at the end of Sixth Street near the train tracks in Royal Oak draw their ideas from sketchbooks he began to fill from the time he was a young boy.

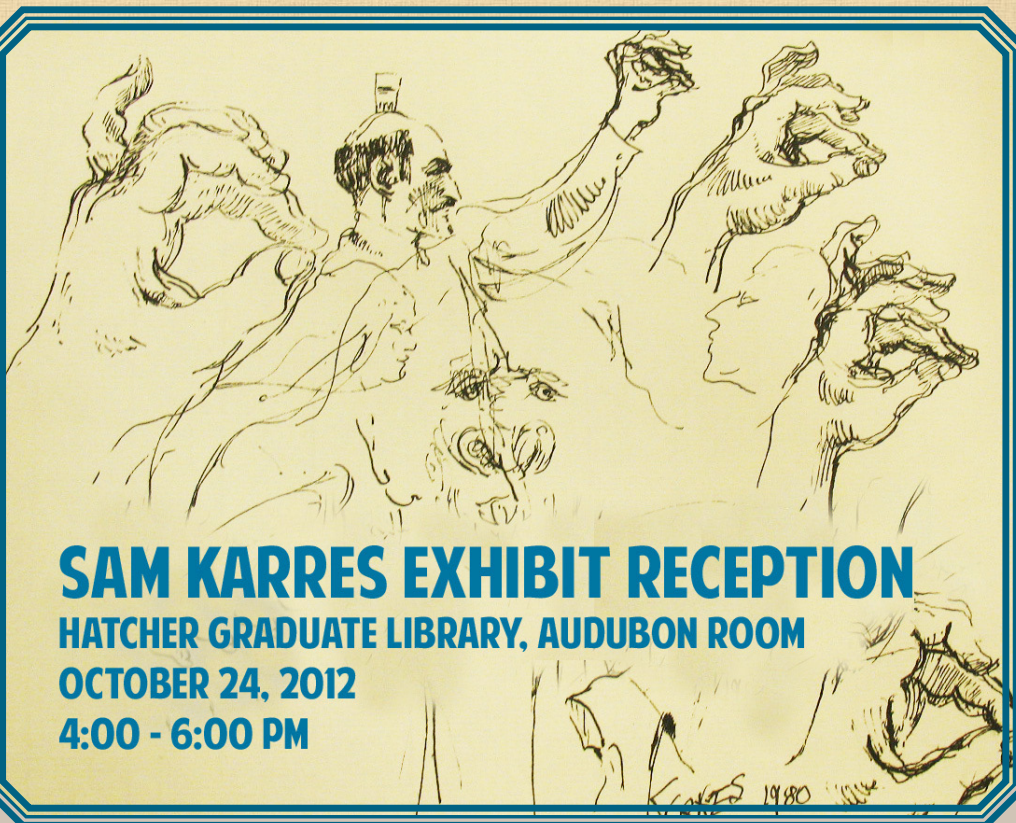


In a conversation with me this summer, the 83-year-old Karres talked about scenes that inspired him in Detroit over the course of a lifetime: the storefronts, music halls, cafes, restaurants, bars, public and private spots that lit up at night, became dreamlike in the day. A regular visitor to Greektown, always with sketchbook and pencil or pen and ink in hand, Karres made personal contact with its dramatis personae. Over the course of decades, the regulars in Greektown made cameo appearances in his notebooks, whether seated darkly in a corner with a demitasse of coffee or ecstatically dancing to the rhythms of a bouzouki band.

Sam Karres's dialogue with Detroit was intense. Whenever he sat drawing, things began to happen, as if the city's scenes in the second half of the twentieth century took shape for Karres's art: "I can sit down on a bench anywhere and start sketching and nothing's happening," he said. "Suddenly, an airplane, a bird, a guy on a bike and before you know it you got a terrific composition." His hand was both agile and incisive. According to Dan Georgakas, author of *My Detroit*, the artist's work is "both a familial photo album offering images to refresh our memories and a personal diary that probes emotions those images sometimes belie. Motor City is privileged to have such an impassioned testament to draw on, and Greek America is fortunate to have a large place within that saga."

This past year, Sam Karres donated thirty-seven sketchbooks to U-M Hatcher Graduate Library, with assistance from Dr. Denny Stavros, his lifelong friend and a steadfast supporter of Hatcher Library and the Modern Greek Program at U-M, who documented the gift. The sketchbooks date from 1975 to 1996, with a few drawings made during the first decade of the 21st century. They are mostly in pen and ink. They offer a witty, luminous point of entrance into Sam Karres's art. The sketchbooks will henceforth be part of Hatcher Library's collection of materials, supporting the study of both Greek America and Detroit.

A sample of Sam Karres's sketchbooks will be on display this fall in the Audubon Room in the Library Gallery, Room 100, Hatcher Graduate Library 913 S. University Avenue. To bring attention to this wonderful acquisition, the Modern Greek Program invites colleagues, students, and friends to a public reception in the Audubon Room on October 24 from 4 to 6pm. The artist will be present. Come meet Sam Karres and thank him for his tremendous gift!



SAM KARRES EXHIBIT RECEPTION
HATCHER GRADUATE LIBRARY, AUDUBON ROOM
OCTOBER 24, 2012
4:00 - 6:00 PM

MODERN GREEK PROGRAM • Upcoming Events

For more on these events, visit our web site: www.lsa.umich.edu/modgreek



ATHENS, NOTICE YOUR POET

4 PM, October 4, 2012

1636 International Institute, School of Social Work Building, 1080 S. University

This lecture is part of the Conversations on Europe series presented by the Center for European Studies and co-sponsored by the Modern Greek Program. The speaker will be Natalie Bakopoulos, novelist and lecturer in English and affiliated faculty in Modern Greek. Her writing has appeared in Tin House, Ninth Letter, and Granta Online, and received a 2010 O. Henry Award, a Hopwood Award, and Platsis Prize for Work in the Greek Legacy. She is a contributing editor for online journal Fiction Writers Review. Each summer she teaches creative writing at the Aegean Arts Circle in Andros, Greece.



SAM KARRES RECEPTION / EXHIBIT

4 PM, October 24, 2012

Audubon Room, Hatcher Graduate Library, 913 S. University Avenue

Urban Expressionist painter Sam Karres has spent his life deriving his inspiration from the city of Detroit. He captured Greektown before the casino, at a time when it was truly a Greek neighborhood and the known Greek hang out was the Macedonia Coffee House. This reception is to honor Sam Karres and his gift of sketchbooks dating from 1975-1996 to the Hatcher Graduate Library. The collection will support the study of both Greek America and Detroit.



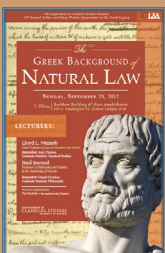
THE COLONIAL MEDITERRANEAN AND ITS PLACE IN EUROPEAN HISTORY

4 PM, November 1, 2012

1636 International Institute, School of Social Work Building, 1080 S. University

This lecture is part of the Conversations on Europe series presented by the Center for European Studies and co-sponsored by the Modern Greek Program. The speaker will be Sakis Gekas, Assistant Professor at York University and Hellenic Heritage Foundation Chair in Modern Greek History.

Other events you might be interested in...



THE 11TH ANNUAL PLATIS SYMPOSIUM

2 PM, September 23, 2012

Rackham Building, 4th Floor Amphitheater

This year's subject is the Greek Background of Natural Law. Lecturers include: Dane Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, Lloyd Weinreb and Professor of Philosophy and Classics at the University of Toronto, Brad Inwood.

INTERNATIONAL PLATO SOCIETY REGIONAL MEETING

October 4-7, 2012

Department of Classical Studies

You are invited to attend the first-ever U.S. regional meeting of the international Plato Society. The conference will feature seven plenary speakers with commentators and seventy-eight contributed papers in parallel sessions.

For more information visit www.platosociety.org.

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