

February 22, 2011
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Public Info: Humanities West www.humanitieswest.org
Tickets: City Box Office 415/392-4400, www.cityboxoffice.com

HUMANITIES WEST PRESENTS
Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization
Friday & Saturday, April 29 & 30, 2011
Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Humanities West continues its 2010-2011 season celebrating Mediterranean culture with ***Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization***, a two-day program of lectures, discussions, and music exploring the prosperous and powerful maritime society that flourished on Crete from ~2700 to ~1400 BCE. The program takes place on Friday, April 29, from 8 pm to 10:15 pm and Saturday, April 30, from 10 am to 4 pm, at Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

Tickets for ***Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization*** are priced as follows: Single tickets for the Friday program are \$45 orchestra/dress circle and \$30 balcony; single tickets for the Saturday program are \$65 orchestra/dress circle and \$40 balcony, combo tickets for both days are \$100 orchestra/dress circle and \$55 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. A limited number of free tickets for students age 25 and under are available; contact info@humanitieswest.org.

Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization brings together an extraordinary panel of historians, scholars, and performers to explore the magnificence of Minoan culture, its art and architecture, its economy and politics, and its influence on the European continent. A prosperous and powerful maritime society flourished on Crete from ~2700 to ~1400 BCE. Egyptian records, paintings of Cretans bearing gifts to the Pharaoh, and Minoan paintings found in Egypt testify to this brilliant culture. Archaeological finds in Crete and Santorini showcase Minoan Crete as a flourishing sea empire until a shift in power transmitted and transformed Minoan culture onto the European continent and into the palatial empire of the Mycenaeans. This two-day program of lectures and discussions is presented in collaboration with the Consul General of Greece; the Center for Modern Greek Studies and Classics Department at San Francisco State University; and UC Berkeley.

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On Friday evening, moderator **Kim Shelton** (Classics; Director, Nemea Center for Classical Archaeology, UC Berkeley) and **Hon. Ioannis Andreades** (Consul General of Greece in San Francisco) will provide opening remarks. **Hon. Xenia Stefanidou** (Ambassador of Greece to the Philippines) will reflect on her experience excavating ancient archeological sites on Santorini. Following, **Eleni Hatzaki** (Classics, University of Cincinnati) explores, critiques, and evaluates 100 years of Knossian and Minoan archaeology in the context of Bronze Age Crete, the Aegean, and the East Mediterranean. The evening program culminates with a performance by Mezzo-soprano **Lauren Groff**, introduced by **Clifford (Kip) Cranna** (SF Opera). Groff performs Monteverdi's "Lamento d'Arianna," the aria from the lost opera *Arianna*, and Haydn's solo cantata "Arianna a Naxos," with piano accompaniment by **Allen Perriello**.

On Saturday morning, **Ian Morris** (Classics and History, Stanford University) explores the *Minoan Miracle*. Minoan Crete was an amazing place: between 1800 and 1600 BCE its people ate better, lived longer, and inhabited bigger, more comfortable houses than Cretans ever had before or would have again for centuries. Morris points to geography as the major contributing factor to explain why. **Vance Watrous** (Art History, SUNY Buffalo) presents a lecture on the *World of Minoan Art*. Full of wonder and spirituality, Minoan art depicts landscapes and nature as well as gods and man, and epic themes of war and peace in which the very beginnings of Western art is detected.

Following the lunch break, **Andrew Jameson** (Emeritus, History, Harvard University and UC Berkeley) presents a talk on *Plato's Myth of Lost Atlantis*, one of the most exasperating mysteries of human history. Plato originated the idea, the legend, and the mystery of an advanced civilization "destroyed by a huge natural catastrophe." Jameson investigates the myth's possible connection to Minoan Crete and the devastating volcanic eruption at nearby Thera (Santorini) that triggered the gradual collapse of this Bronze Age empire. Could the ancient civilization of Minoan Crete be Plato's lost "cradle of human culture"?

Finally, program moderator **Kim Shelton** presents *The End of the Minoan Story and the Beginning of the Mycenaean*. This lecture examines the rise of power of the Mycenaean Greeks on the mainland and in the Aegean during and after the collapse of the Minoan civilization. Shelton cites the strong influence of Minoan culture on Mycenaean art and society while uncovering the fascinating story of the end of one great civilization and the beginning of yet another.

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

This program is presented in collaboration with the Consul General of Greece; the Center for Modern Greek Studies and Classics Department at San Francisco State University, and UC Berkeley, with additional support from the George and Judy Marcus Family Foundation, Grants for the Arts/SF Hotel Tax Fund, Bank of the West, Stanford Humanities Center, Institute of European Studies and the Office of Resources for International and Area Studies at UC Berkeley, and individual donors.

In cooperation with American Decorative Arts Forum Northern California; California Academy of Sciences; Commonwealth Club of San Francisco; Docents Council, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco; Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning; Hellenic-American Professional Society, Humanities Department, San Francisco State University; Mechanics' Institute; Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), UC Berkeley; San Francisco and Oakland Unified School Districts; San Francisco Modern Greek Film Festival; Stanford University Libraries; Summit Photographic Workshops; Townsend Center for the Humanities, UC Berkeley

CALENDAR LISTING: EVENT/LECTURES/ARTS & CULTURE

WHAT: *Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization*

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**WHEN: 8pm to 10:15pm, Friday, April 29, 2011
10am to 12noon and 1:30pm to 4pm, Saturday, April 30, 2011**

**WHERE: Herbst Theatre
401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco**

TICKETS: \$20 - \$100
Tickets are available through City Box Office at 415-392-4400 or online at www.cityboxoffice.com
Group tickets: info@humanitieswest.org
Free Tickets for students 25 years old and younger: info@humanitieswest.org

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

Related Events for *Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization*

Minoan Crete: Humanities West Book Discussion

5:30pm, Wednesday, April 6, 2011

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

cost: Free

rsvp: tickets.commonwealthclub.org

Humanities West presents a member-led book discussion on *The Bull of Minos: The Great Discoveries of Ancient Greece* by Leonard Cottrell.

Co-Sponsored by the Humanities Member-Led Forum.

Fireside Chat with George Hammond – Minoan Crete Preview

7pm, Tuesday, April 26, 2011

where: Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way, Orinda, CA

cost: Free

Join in a Fireside Chat previewing Humanities West's presentation of *Minoan Crete: Dawn of European Civilization*.

Lecture. Minoan Art: The Aesthetics of a Ritual Culture

8pm, Thursday, April 28, 2011

where: Seven Hills Conference Center
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue, SF, CA

cost: Free

Rsvp: www.sfsu.edu/~modgreek/ or modgreek@sfsu.edu.

Mary Louise Hart (Associate Curator of Antiquities, J. Paul Getty Museum) presents a preview lecture on Minoan Crete.

Co-sponsored by SFSU Center for Modern Greek Studies and Classics Department

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