

An impressive performance “Women of Byzantium” by the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney



An impressive musical theatre performance, dedicated to the “Women of Byzantium”, as it was titled, was presented by the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney on Sunday, 24 November, at the Hermes Lounge in Kogarah. The performance was organised in collaboration with the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, to celebrate the centenary of its foundation, and under the auspices of the General Secretariat for Hellenism Abroad and Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece and the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

Directed by the President of the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney, Mrs. Liana Vertzayias, and written by Mr. Costa Vertzayias, the performance explored the lives of nine iconic women who lived during the Byzantine era, and revived their efforts to change the course of history within male-dominated societies. It was an educational performance, which included theatrical acts, music and dance, which were performed flawlessly by the members of the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney.

Among the large audience, which warmly applauded the performers of the

performance, was His Grace Bishop Christodoulos of Magnesia, as a representative of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia. His Grace conveyed a warm message from the Archbishop, who introductorily noted that “women in Byzantium did not remain isolated behind the latticed railings of the Holy Palace, within the courtyard of a Monastery or a house, but often had a leading role in the political, social, cultural and, of course, religious events of the Empire. This had to do, on the one hand, with their dynamic character and the formation of their personality, and on the other hand with the particular cultural and social environment, in which, with the profound influence of the Christian Gospel, the position of women had improved significantly.”



“Saints and Empresses, stalwart patricians and philosophers, poets and writers, women in the more than thousand-year journey of the Empire profoundly influenced society and the course of history, inspired passions and hatreds, initiated developments and offered to humanity works of high spiritual, artistic and educational value”, His Eminence pointed out in his message. “Names such as Theodora, Kassiani, Anna Komnene and so many others”, he added, “they approached – if not exceed – the limits of myth and not unjustly, since within a male-dominated society they managed not only to make their presence distinct, but also to remain in history”.

The conclusion of the Archbishop’s message included praise and thanks to the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney branch, which attempted, through an inspired performance, to trace the footprints and steps of nine “Women of Byzantium,”

covering approximately a thousand years of history. “I express my warmest thanks to the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney for choosing in this way to participate in the centenary of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia, and I congratulate and paternally bless its members for this initiative,” His Eminence concluded.



Greetings were also delivered by the President of the Hellenic Lyceum of Sydney, Mrs. Liana Vertzayias, and Ms. Anastasia Christofilopoulou, from the Public Diplomacy Office of the Greek Consulate General in Sydney, while the performance was followed by a discussion, coordinated by Dr. Vassilios Adrahtas, Head of the Greek Studies Program at the University of New South Wales.





















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