



HERITAGE WEEKEND & CLASSIC  
*Nashville, Tennessee*  
OCTOBER 10-13, 2024

# SPEAKER'S GUIDE







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## BILL ANTHOLIS

Bill Antholis has served as Director and Chief Executive Officer of the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs strengthening the Center's position as a leading nonpartisan research institution focused on the American Presidency. Bill served as Emeritus Managing Director at the The Brookings Institution, on the White House National Security Council and National Economic Council, and at the State Department. He was Director of Studies and Senior Fellow at the German Marshall Fund, International Affairs Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, and visiting Scholar at Princeton.

He is the author of several books, articles, and major newspaper opinion editorials and considered one of Washington's leading foreign policy experts on several subjects. He received his BA with honors from the University of Virginia and PhD in politics from Yale University.



## NIKOLAOS BAKATSELOS

Nikolaos Bakatselos is a prominent figure in Greece's business and economic sectors. He serves as the President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, a role he has held since 2019, where he has been instrumental in fostering economic ties between Greece and the United States. Bakatselos is also the CEO of Pyramis Metallourgia A.E. and Pyramis Deutschland GmbH, where he leads a multinational company specializing in the production of kitchen and bathroom products. His leadership roles extend to the banking and academic sectors, having previously held board positions at Egnatia Bank Securities, Attica Bank, and the International Hellenic University.

Bakatselos has a strong commitment to public service and economic development. He is a Trustee at Anatolia College and a member of the Board of Directors of IOBE, a leading economic think tank. Additionally, he has served as Honorary Consul of Belgium in Northern Greece. Educated at the University of Reading with a B.A. in Sociology, and holding an MSc in Shipping, Trade, and Finance from City University Business School, Bakatselos has a well-rounded background that complements his leadership in various industries.



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## GEORGE A. BEHRAKIS

George A. Behrakis is a dynamic young leader with diverse experiences in environmental policy, politics, and the arts. He is co-founder and co-director of the AXIOS Project, a new initiative that aims to mobilize the Greek diaspora to tackle the threat of climate change.

He also serves as Chief Strategy Officer of the Climate Solutions Fund, where he works with conservative leaders across the United States to build and accelerate leadership on climate and energy issues. This work has been covered in media outlets across the country, including The Washington Post, NPR, Newsweek, Associated Press, The Hill, CNN, and Politico.

George has been recognized as an Aspen Institute Future Climate Leader, and is the youngest ever board member at Tufts University's Tisch College of Civic Life, the nation's premier educational institution focused on civic education and engagement of young people.

Born and raised in Massachusetts, George and his family are proud Greek-Americans, and are very active in a number of Greek organizations, including The Hellenic Initiative, Leadership 100 and the National Hellenic Society. He has an undergraduate degree in economics from Tufts University, and a masters degree in music composition from New England Conservatory.



## CLAY BRADLEY

Clay Bradley is a veteran music executive currently serving as the Vice President of Creative at BMI Nashville. In this role, he leads BMI's creative team, overseeing the discovery, signing, and development of songwriters and publishers, as well as managing various showcases and events. His deep connections to the Nashville music scene stem from a rich family legacy—his grandfather Owen Bradley, father Jerry Bradley, and uncle Harold Bradley are all inductees in the Country Music Hall of Fame.

Prior to rejoining BMI in 2020, Bradley founded and led Eclipse Music Group, an artist development and publishing company, where he helped launch the careers of artists like Katie Pruitt and Payton Smith. His previous roles include Vice President of A&R at Sony BMG/Nashville and MCA Records, as well as Creative Director at Acuff Rose Music Publishing. Throughout his career, Bradley has signed major artists like Toby Keith and Kenny Chesney and helped launch signature events like the Key West Songwriters Festival.



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## DESMOND CHILD

Desmond Child is a renowned songwriter and music producer whose career spans several decades, during which he has penned numerous iconic hits for some of the biggest names in the music industry. His collaborations include rock anthems for Aerosmith, Bon Jovi, Joan Jett, and Cher, among many others. Child's music, characterized by its emotional depth and catchy melodies, has sold over 500 million records worldwide, solidifying his reputation as one of the most successful songwriters of all time. Notable songs from his extensive catalog include "Livin' on a Prayer," "Dude Looks Like a Lady," and "Poison," showcasing his ability to craft hits across various genres.

In June 2022, Child headlined a significant concert titled "Desmond Child Rocks the Parthenon" in Athens, Greece. This event was not only a celebration of his illustrious career but also a platform to raise awareness for the return of the Parthenon Marbles, an issue of cultural importance to Greece. The concert featured performances from various artists he has worked with, including Alice Cooper and Bonnie Tyler, creating a memorable evening against the historic backdrop of the illuminated Parthenon. Child expressed his heartfelt connection to Greece and the significance of the Parthenon sculptures, using his musical talents to advocate for their rightful return.



## JOHN CHRYSOULAKIS

John Chrysoulakis is a former Secretary General for Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During his tenure, Chrysoulakis focused on strengthening ties between Greece and its global diaspora, ensuring the preservation of Greek culture, language, and identity for Greeks living abroad. He oversaw numerous initiatives, including cultural exchange programs, global celebrations such as the Bicentennial of the Greek Revolution, and efforts to expand Greece's public diplomacy presence in regions like Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

A civil engineer by training, Chrysoulakis earned a PhD and built an extensive career in both public administration and academia. His leadership in managing European projects and public institutions solidified his reputation as a key figure in Greece's efforts to promote its cultural diplomacy.





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## ZACHARY COTRONAKIS

Zachary Cotronakis serves as the Executive Director of the American Hellenic Institute, a non-profit Greek American public policy center and think tank that works to strengthen relations between the United States and Greece and Cyprus, and within the Greek American community.

Cotronakis is a second-generation American with an extensive history of contributing to efforts that benefit the Greek-American community and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Zac works very closely with the National Hellenic Society, an association of Greek-American leaders that works to perpetuate and preserve Hellenic culture in the United States. He serves as National Chairman of the National Hellenic Society's Young Professionals Network, carefully designed to connect the next generation of Greek-Americans with jobs, internships, and mentors across all professional fields. In this capacity, he is an active participant in NHS Board Meetings. Cotronakis is a graduate of The George Washington University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics and history.



## DR. MARIO ERASMO

Dr. Mario Erasmo is a distinguished scholar and educator, currently serving as the Head of the Classics Department at the University of Georgia (UGA). With a focus on the legacy of classical antiquity, cultural history, and the meta-theatrical aspects of ancient Rome, Erasmo has made significant contributions to the field through both teaching and research. Under his leadership, UGA's Classics Department has maintained its status as the largest Latin program in the United States, attracting students with its innovative and diverse offerings. He is particularly noted for overseeing study abroad programs that immerse students in the rich cultural and historical contexts of Italy and Greece, further enhancing their educational experience.

In addition to his administrative roles, Erasmo is deeply committed to student success, emphasizing the importance of mentorship and teacher training within the Classics curriculum. His approach has positioned UGA as a national leader in Latin education, fostering a vibrant community of learners and scholars. Through initiatives like faculty-led study abroad programs and rigorous training for graduate students, Erasmo continues to shape the future of classical studies, ensuring that the department remains a beacon of classical education in the modern academic landscape.



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## SETH FEMAN

Seth Feman is the Executive Director and CEO of the Frist Art Museum in Nashville, Tennessee. Appointed in 2022, Feman brings a wealth of experience from his decade-long tenure at the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Virginia, where he held roles such as Deputy Director for Art and Interpretation and Curator of Photography. His leadership at the Chrysler Museum was marked by innovative exhibitions, a revitalized photography collection, and the development of educational programs.

As a Nashville native, Feman has a deep connection to the local community, which he draws upon to lead the Frist into its next phase of growth. His academic background and curatorial expertise uniquely position him to enhance the museum's mission of fostering cultural understanding through diverse and dynamic exhibitions. His return to Nashville marks a new chapter for the Frist, where he aims to build on its established legacy while pushing for new, engaging experiences for visitors.



## DR. BOB HARIRI

Dr. Bob Hariri is an accomplished surgeon, biomedical scientist, and serial entrepreneur in two technology sectors, biomedicine and aerospace. He is the chairperson, founder, and chief executive officer of Celularity, Inc., one of the world's leading human cellular therapeutics companies. Dr. Hariri was the founder and CEO of Anthrogenesis Corporation, and after its acquisition by Celgene Corporation, served as CEO of Celgene Cellular Therapeutic. Dr. Hariri also co-founded the genomic-based health intelligence company, Human Longevity, Inc. Dr. Hariri has served on numerous public boards including Cryoport (NASDAQ:CYRX).

Dr. Hariri is a pioneer in stem cell research, particularly known for discovering pluripotent stem cells from the human placenta and making significant advancements in immunotherapy and regenerative medicine. He led the team that secured FDA approval for using Natural Killer (NK) cell therapy to treat COVID-19 and holds over 170 patents in biomedicine. Dr. Hariri has received numerous awards, including the Pontifical Medal for Innovation from Pope Francis and the Thomas Alva Edison Award. He is an Adjunct Professor of Neurosurgery at Weill Cornell Medical College and has served on various scientific and academic boards. Outside of medicine, Dr. Hariri is a jet-rated commercial pilot and film producer.





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## DR. ELISA E. KONOFAGOU

Sen. Elisa E. Konofagou designs and develops ultrasound-based technologies for automated estimation of tissue mechanics as well as drug delivery and therapeutics. Her group has worked on the design of algorithms that can estimate minute deformation as a result of physiological function, such as in the heart and vessels, and displacements induced by the ultrasound wave itself, such as in tumors and nerves, while she maintains several collaborations with physicians in order to translate these technologies to the clinical setting. She has also developed novel techniques in order to facilitate noninvasive brain drug delivery as well as modulation of both the central and peripheral nervous systems.

Dr. Konofagou received a B.S. in chemical physics from Université de Paris 6 in 1992, an M.S. in biomedical engineering from Imperial College (London, U.K.) in 1993 and a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering from the University of Houston in 1999. She is a fellow of the Acoustical Society of America and the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, and in 2007 she received the NSF CAREER Award. In 2021, Dr. Konofagou was elected to the National Academy of Medicine. On the University Senate, Dr. Konofagou serves on the Budget Committee.



## DR. STAMATIOS KRIMIGIS

Dr. Stamatios “Tom” Krimigis is a leading Greek-American space scientist known for his significant contributions to space exploration. He joined NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center before moving to the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) in 1968, eventually becoming the head of the Space Department.

Krimigis was a key figure in several groundbreaking space missions, including Voyager 1 and 2, Cassini-Huygens, and New Horizons. His work on the Voyager missions, particularly with the Low-Energy Charged Particle (LECP) instrument, which has allowed Voyager 1 to send data from interstellar space for over four decades. He played a central role in the New Horizons mission, which provided the first close-up images of Pluto, and the Cassini mission to Saturn.

Krimigis has been honored with NASA’s Distinguished Service Medal and the European Geosciences Union’s Hannes Alfvén Medal, among numerous other awards. Beyond his scientific achievements, Krimigis served as the chairman of Greece’s National Council for Research and Technology, advising on national science and technology policy.



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## MELISSA LEFAS

Melissa Lefas is a dynamic leader with a fervent commitment to social justice and cultural heritage, currently at the helm of the Parthenon Project, a position she has held since January 2022. With a clear vision for the reunification of the Parthenon sculptures housed in the British Museum and their counterparts in Athens, Melissa champions a collaborative approach between Greece and the UK. She emphasizes the mutual benefits of cultural exchange and the preservation of historical integrity, striving to create solutions that honor both nations' rich legacies. Her leadership reflects her belief that dialogue and cooperation can pave the way for positive outcomes in the complex realm of cultural diplomacy.

Before her impactful role with the Parthenon Project, Melissa dedicated over a decade to the Global Center on Cooperative Security in New York City, where she focused on addressing the multifaceted issues surrounding violent extremism. As Chief of Strategy, she shaped policies that prioritized human rights and inclusivity, leading initiatives that sought to balance security with civil liberties. Her early experiences as a Legal Intern, combined with her work in international development with organizations like Engineers Without Borders, laid the groundwork for her advocacy efforts. Throughout her diverse career, Melissa has skillfully bridged cultural and institutional divides, consistently fostering cooperation and understanding among varied groups. Her ongoing dedication to cultural heritage, human rights, and sustainable development continues to leave a profound impact on the communities she serves.



## ALAN LEQUIRE

Alan LeQuire is a renowned American sculptor best known for creating the iconic 42-foot statue of Athena, housed in Nashville's Parthenon. Born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee, LeQuire studied art at Vanderbilt University before earning his Master of Fine Arts from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. His passion for classical sculpture and large-scale works led him to take on the ambitious project of recreating Athena, the ancient Greek goddess, as part of the full-scale replica of the Parthenon in Nashville's Centennial Park. Completed in 1990, LeQuire's Athena Parthenos is the largest indoor statue in the Western Hemisphere and a key cultural landmark in the city.

Beyond the Athena statue, LeQuire has an extensive body of work that includes public monuments and portraits, many of which are on display across Tennessee and the broader U.S. He is also known for "The Tennessee Women Suffrage Monument" and "Musica," a 38-foot bronze sculpture located in Nashville. His sculptures often reflect themes of history, mythology, and the human experience. LeQuire continues to teach, exhibit, and create monumental works, leaving a lasting imprint on the art world and Nashville's cultural landscape.





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## GEORGE MANGINIS

George Manginis studied archaeology and history of art at the University of Athens and at SOAS / University of London, where he was awarded a PhD on the history of Mount Sinai, Egypt; he was supported in his studies by scholarships from the Greek Archaeological Committee UK, the A.G. Leventis Foundation and the Wingate Foundation. Since 2001 he has been teaching history of Byzantine art (SOAS), of Islamic art (SOAS, Courtauld Institute, University of Edinburgh, Institute of Ismaili Studies, The Aga Khan University, British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, Museum of Islamic Art in Qatar) and of Chinese art (Benaki Museum, SOAS).

He is an honorary fellow at the University of Edinburgh. He has participated in archaeological excavations in Greece, Cyprus and the Sinai peninsula in Egypt. He has worked in the Hellenic Children's Museum as collections manager and director of resource centre, in the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saint Sophia, London as archivist and curator, in the Archaeological Museum of Ioannina as exhibition text supervisor and in various United Kingdom museums as development consultant. In 2013, he was a Stanley J. Seeger Fellow at Princeton University. He has published scholarly articles on Cypriot prehistory, Islamic art and architecture, Sinai studies, Chinese ceramics, and the Greek and Armenian diasporas. In 2016 he published two books: *Mount Sinai: A History of Travellers and Pilgrims* (London) and *China Rediscovered: The Benaki Museum Collection of Chinese Ceramics* (Athens and London).



## AMBASSADOR EKATERINI NASSIKA

With a distinguished career in diplomacy, current Ambassador of Greece to the United States, Nassika previously held the position of Ambassador to Russia from 2019 to 2022. Nassika has a wealth of experience within the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where she began her career in 1985. Throughout her service, she has held various posts, including Deputy Permanent Representative of Greece to NATO and Permanent Representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Canada.

Nassika holds a law degree from the University of Athens and is fluent in Greek, English, and French. Her extensive diplomatic background, including positions in the United States, Albania, and Brussels, has equipped her with a deep understanding of international relations and strategic partnerships. As Ambassador to the U.S., she is focused on strengthening the longstanding ties between Greece and the U.S., particularly in areas of military and economic cooperation.



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## EMMANOUELA PETSOLARI

Emmanouela Petsolari (B.Sc., MSc., Ph.D.) is the Co-Founder and CEO of ACX a venture backed by Y Combinator and a Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Biophysics from the University of Cambridge. Previously she was Co-Founder and current advisor at CamGenetiX (exited through secondaries), WEF (World Economic Forum) Global Shaper, Venture Partner and Stakeholder at EWOR Venture Capital, Academic Partner at Plug and Play VC, and ex-Investment Analyst at StartCodon VC. She is also active in the Cambridge and London entrepreneurial ecosystems as Chair and previously President of CUTEC (Cambridge University Technology and Enterprise Club) - the biggest entrepreneurship club at the University of Cambridge (ca. 8.000 members worldwide), speaker and mentor. During her research trajectory she held several positions working in immunology and cancer research (Barts Cancer Institute CRUK, King's College London, and Institut Curie France), malaria vaccine development (Imperial College London) and drug discovery in SARS-CoV-2 as a frontline researcher at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (King's College London and University of Cambridge). She has also worked as an analyst in MedTech and held consultancy roles in business and enterprise (Prince's Trust).



## MELINA PETSOLARI

Melina Petsolari (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.) is the Co-Founder and CTO of ACX a venture backed by Y Combinator and a Ph.D. in Computer Science and Robotics from King's College London. She is also second-time exited founder (CamGenetiX) and advisor. Previously she held several research positions spanning digital health, robotics, technology-enabled interventions, AI and NLP building both software and hardware at institutions such as University of Cambridge, King's College London, the National Health Service (NHS) in England and the Francis Crick Institute.





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## AMB. THEODOROS SOTIROPOULOS

Ambassador Theodoros Sotiropoulos joined the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1977, serving in numerous key diplomatic posts throughout his career until his retirement in 2014. His international assignments included postings in Sofia, Toronto, Bonn, Vienna, and Brussels, where he represented Greece on important diplomatic fronts.

Sotiropoulos held prominent roles such as Diplomatic Advisor to the Prime Minister from 1997 to 2003 and Director General for E.U. Affairs from 2007 to 2009. His career culminated in his position as Greece's Permanent Representative to the European Union from 2009 to 2014, where he played a vital role in shaping Greece's foreign policy and E.U. relations during a critical period for both the country and the union.



## ELIAS SPIRTOUNIAS

Elias Spirtounias is the Executive Director of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce (AmCham Greece), a position he has held since 2009. With a background in mathematics from the University of Athens and advanced studies in electrical engineering at Boston University, Spirtounias has an extensive career that bridges technology and business. Before his current role, he worked as a research engineer in the U.S., collaborating with organizations like NASA and MIT, and later returned to Greece, where he contributed to the development of the Hellenic Cosmos Cultural Center, a technology-driven theme park.

At AmCham Greece, Spirtounias has played a pivotal role in strengthening the chamber's influence, especially during Greece's financial crisis. Under his leadership, the chamber has expanded its initiatives, fostered stronger ties with the U.S., and maintained a robust membership base, positioning it as one of Greece's most dynamic business organizations. He also serves as Treasurer of the American Chambers in Europe (ACE) Executive Committee.



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## CHIARA SULPRIZIO

Chiara Sulprizio is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Classical and Mediterranean Studies at Vanderbilt University. Her scholarly work examines ancient attitudes and ideas about gender and sexuality, especially as they are depicted in comedy and satire. These interests are explored extensively in her book, *Gender and Sexuality in Juvenal's Rome: Satire 2 and Satire 6* (2020). She is also interested in the reception of the Classical past in modern comics, graphic novels and animation, and she is the creator of the web archive "Animated Antiquity: Cartoon Representations of Ancient Greece and Rome" ([www.animatedantiquity.com](http://www.animatedantiquity.com)). She is currently preparing an edited volume on this topic entitled *Animation and the Ancient World*, which will be co-edited by C.W. Marshall and published by Oxford University Press in 2025.



## NIKOS TRIVOULIDIS

Nikos Trivoulidis joined the Benaki Museum in December 2013 in charge of the recently established Department of Fundraising and Development. In October 2018, he was appointed Director of Fundraising and Development. He studied Communication at Hunter College, City University of New York, and continued his graduate studies at the University of Oklahoma (1984-1994). Upon return to Greece he worked as Label Manager in the record companies 'LYRA- General Publishing Company', 'Musurgia Graeca' and Manos Hadjidakis's SIRIUS. He also served as Director of International Relations of the Hellenic Public Radio and as a music and radio producer. Between 2005 and 2013, he served in a number of managerial and directorial positions at SKAI Media Group, including Director of Publishing, Marketing, New Revenue Streams and Commercial Sponsorships. As Director of Development, he is responsible for the maintenance of existing and the creation of new revenue streams that are both vital for the sustainability and suited to the mission of the Institution.





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## AFRODITI XYDI

Afroditi Xydi serves as the Executive Director of the Deon Policy Institute, a non-partisan think tank that actively shapes Greek policy and contributes to public discourse. She has always been interested in policy making for Greece and has now found a way to create meaningful change. Xydi started her career as a management consultant with Strategy & in the Middle East. There she helped governments design and implement policies, identify opportunities for investments and improve government efficiency. She also has experience with investing, both in early stage and late stage companies. Xydi has a passion for climate, having worked for both deep-tech and software decarbonization startups.

She holds a BSc. from Johns Hopkins University and an M Eng. from MIT - both in Environmental Engineering, as well an MBA from Harvard Business School. She also served as Vice President of the Hellenic Student Association at MIT.



## MARINOS YANNOPOULOS

Marinos Yannopoulos is an accomplished executive with over 35 years of experience in the banking and financial services industry. His career includes leadership roles at some of the most prominent Greek and international institutions. He has served as the Vice Chairman and interim CEO of Hellenic Bank in Cyprus, where he played a crucial role in managing the bank's transition from 2014 to 2019. Additionally, Yannopoulos held several high-level positions at Alpha Bank in Greece, including Executive Director and CFO, where he was responsible for key areas like retail, commercial banking, asset management, private banking, and international business.

Beyond banking, Yannopoulos has also served on the boards of various companies, such as Chipita S.A., where he was the Deputy CEO, and Ionian Bank. His early career includes roles at Chase Manhattan Bank and Exxon, where he gained international experience across New York, Milan, Frankfurt, London, and Rome. He holds an MBA from Manchester Business School and an MA in Economics from the University of Sussex.





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