

## **Hellenic Film Society USA Celebrates 200 Years of Greek Independence With Eight Features Inspired by Greek History Through the Ages March 19-28, 2021**

Astoria, NY — March 15, 2021 —The Hellenic Film Society (HFS) is marking the bicentennial of Greek independence with a special program of eight features. Seven films and an original Netflix episode, all inspired by Greek history, from the Persian Wars to the present, will stream worldwide March 19-28. Each presentation will be accompanied by conversations with filmmakers to provide historical context and insights about the making of the film.

To celebrate this milestone in Greek history with its loyal audience, HFS is presenting two features free of charge: *Cliffs of Freedom*, set during the Greek War of Independence in 1821; and the pilot episode of the hit original Netflix series, *Blood of Zeus*, based on Greek mythology. Viewers may purchase tickets for the remaining six films individually or buy a pass to all for the special price of \$18.21.

The eclectic offerings include the work of distinguished Greek-American filmmakers, past and present, from Elia Kazan (*America America*) to Charley and Vlas Parlapanides (*Blood of Zeus* creators). Selections range from Hollywood epics to indie documentaries, an original Netflix episode, and two films that focus on the Greek Revolution of 1821.

“The Hellenic Film Society is committed to marking this important milestone in Greek history with a film celebration that honors the Greek struggle and the journey of the Greek people since gaining their independence from the Ottoman Turks,” says Jimmy DeMetro, Hellenic Film Society president. “Through the years, Greek history has captured the imagination of filmmakers, and we are happy to present this terrific lineup of eclectic selections.”

This special program is sponsored by The Greek Online School, which offers live Greek language courses online to children and adults. *Cliffs of Freedom* is made available, free of charge, courtesy of the National Hellenic Society. *Blood of Zeus* is made available, free of charge, courtesy of Netflix.

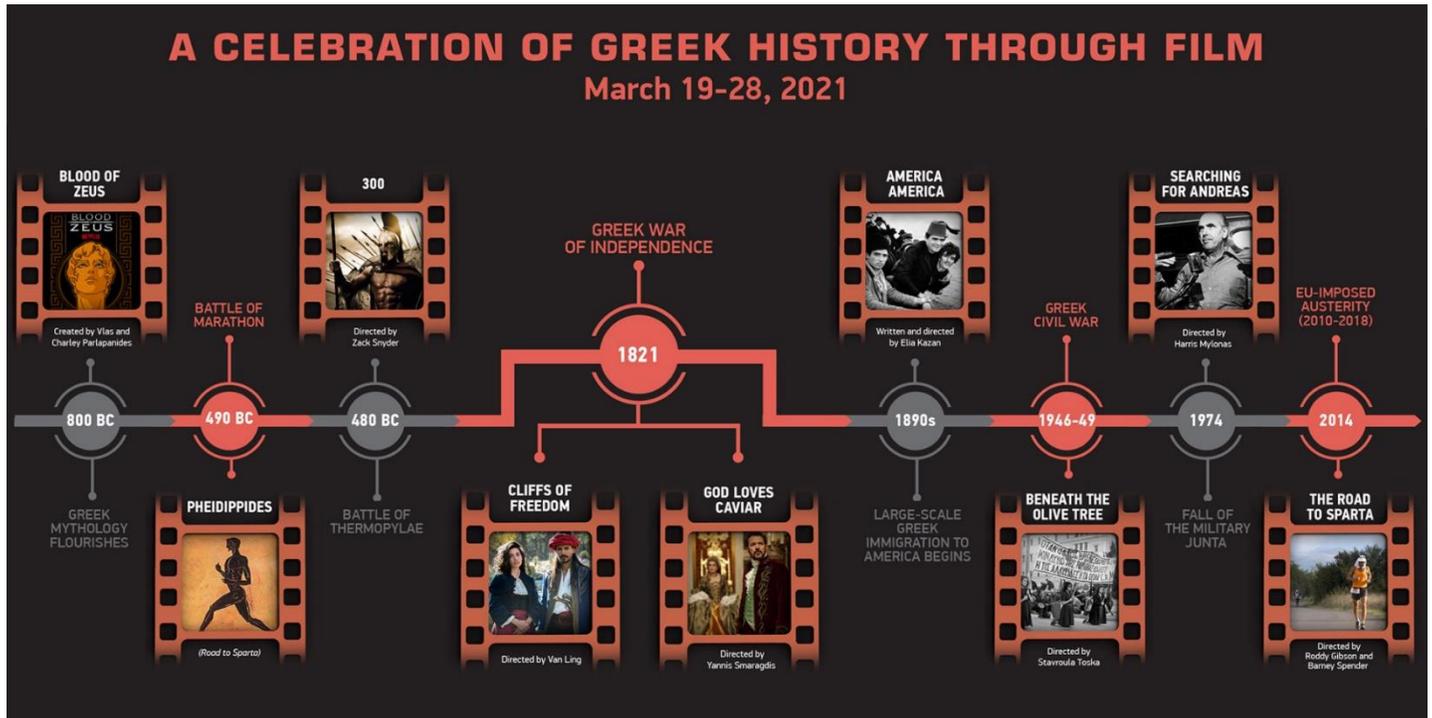
For further information or to purchase tickets to these films, please visit [www.hellenicfilmusa.org](http://www.hellenicfilmusa.org).

### **About the Hellenic Film Society USA**

The Hellenic Film Society USA (HFS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization rooted in the belief that Greek cinema can and should be part of the American cultural landscape. Based in Astoria, NY, the organization promotes feature films, documentaries, and film shorts made by Greek filmmakers and those of Greek descent, as well as films that promote the cultures of Greece and Cyprus.

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation is the lead supporter of the Hellenic Film Society. Additional support is provided by Onassis Foundation USA, the Kallinikeion Foundation, Queens Council on the Arts, and the New York City Council through the office of Council Member Costa Constantinides. For additional information or to purchase tickets, please visit [www.hellenicfilmusa.org](http://www.hellenicfilmusa.org) or call 646-844-1488.

Press Contact for information or photos: [Nancy Nicolelis /718-898-7002/ nancy.nicolelis.hfs@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.nicolelis.hfs@gmail.com)

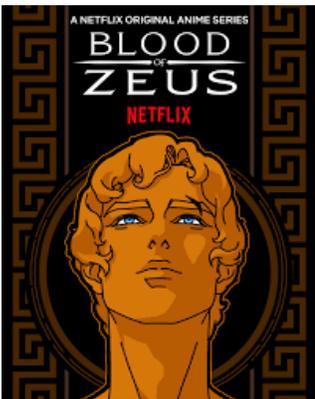


**AMERICA AMERICA**, written and directed by Elia Kazan | In English | 1963 | 174 minutes  
*Available for streaming March 19-21 only*  
 In the late 1890s, a young man leaves his impoverished village in Turkish Anatolia for Constantinople and eventually fulfills his dream of coming to America, but not before he faces cruelties and betrayals along the way. Based loosely on the life of his uncle, this was Kazan's favorite among his 19 feature films.



**BENEATH THE OLIVE TREE**, directed by Stavroula Toska | In Greek and English with English subtitles  
2020 | 76 minutes

This award-winning documentary unearths the story behind secret diaries found buried on the Greek island of Trikeri. Written by female political exiles during the Greek Civil War in the late 1940s, the journals reveal inspirational stories of thousands of women imprisoned in Greek concentration camps. Narrated by Oscar winner Olympia Dukakis. Awards include Best Documentary, Santa Fe Film Festival.



**A CALL TO ARMS (BLOOD OF ZEUS: Episode 1)**, created and written by Charley and Vlas Parlapanides | 2020 | 28 minutes

A commoner living in ancient Greece, Heron discovers his true heritage as a son of Zeus, and his purpose: to save the world from a demonic army. *Blood of Zeus*, shown free of charge, is made available courtesy of Netflix.



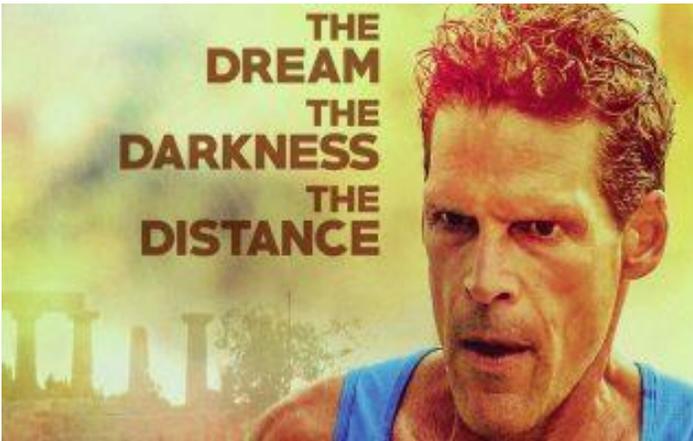
**CLIFFS OF FREEDOM**, directed by Van Ling | In English  
| 2019 | 137 minutes | Rated R

Story of an ill-fated romance between a young Greek village girl and a conflicted Turkish officer at the dawn of the Greek War of Independence against the Ottoman Empire in 1821. Cast includes Patti LuPone and the late, great Christopher Plummer. *Cliffs of Freedom* is made available courtesy of the National Hellenic Society.



**GOD LOVES CAVIAR**, directed by Yannis Smaragdis | In English and Greek with English subtitles | 2012 | 101 minutes

The epic story of Greek patriot Ioannis Varvakis (1745-1825) who became a confidante of Catherine the Great and an early benefactor of the new Greek nation. Cast includes Catherine Deneuve and John Cleese.



**THE ROAD TO SPARTA**, directed by Roddy Gibson and Barney Spender | In English | 2016 | 60 minutes  
Award-winning documentary about four runners, including ultramarathon runner Dean Karnazes, competing in the Spartathlon, the grueling 153-mile foot race between the Greek cities of Athens and Sparta.



**SEARCHING FOR ANDREAS: Political Leadership in Times of Crisis**

Directed by Harris Mylonas and Theo Prodromidis | In Greek with English subtitles | 2018 | 95 minutes  
Documentary exploring the legacy of Greek Prime Minister Andreas G. Papandreou, one of Europe's most controversial political leaders of the 20th century. A cautionary tale about the danger of overreliance on charismatic leaders and the challenges that democracies face in replacing them.



**300**, directed by Zack Snyder | In English | 2006  
| 117 minutes | Rated R

*Available for streaming March 26-28 only.*

In 480 BC at the Battle of Thermopylae, King Leonidas leads his 300 Spartans against the invading Persian army. Though certain death awaits them, their sacrifice inspires all of Greece to unite against their common enemy. Award-winning Hollywood spectacle.