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Dear Dr. Christos Yapijakis,

Many thanks for your kind note and the agreeable invitation (to address the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Garden of Athens”). I was thrilled to learn about the “Garden of Athens” and its extraordinary range of events. If I were anywhere in range, I would be there myself in person, and I am honored at least to send a message (below). I will conjure the Garden in my imagination.

I can testify personally that I have been the beneficiary, through the mediating eloquence of Lucretius, of the therapeutic power of Epicurus’ teaching. At a moment in my life in which I most needed to be assured that “Death is nothing to us,” I first encountered Epicurean wisdom, and the decades that have followed have only reinforced its hold upon me. Whenever I read the authors who are closest to my heart—Montaigne, Shakespeare, Spinoza, Hume – I hear in their voices powerful echoes of words spoken in the verdant Garden in Athens many centuries ago. I feel, as Lucretius urges us all to feel, immense gratitude that such a great thinker once existed and that he bequeathed to us his liberating vision.”

Best,  
Stephen Greenblat