



the
actors
centre

18-23

FEBRUARY 2019

PERSONA THEATER COMPANY PRESENTS

PHAEDRA I—

BY AVRA SIDIROPOULOU

TRISTAN BATES THEATRE

Phaedra I—, written and directed by Avra Sidiropoulou, is Athens-based Persona Theatre Company's new international project, which brings together artists from Greece and the U.K. The show opens at Tristan Bates Theatre in central London, playing for a limited run (18th - 23rd February 2019).

This is a solo multimedia portrayal of a modern-day Phaedra, the legendary wife of King Theseus, who falls hopelessly in love with her young son-in-law, Hippolytus. In this version, she bears all the ambiguities of a restless, contemporary woman, who oscillates between the desires of the flesh and the attraction to the void, as she suffocates

CAST Elena Pellone

CREATIVE TEAM

Avra Sidiropoulou (Text/Concept/Direction)

Mikaela Liakata (Set/Costume/Video Designer)

Miranda Manasiadis (Concept Dramaturg)

Eleni Gini (Dramaturg)

Vanias Apergis (Music/Composer)

in her socially imposed roles within the ruins of a decaying metropolis. The production's use of 3-D mapping, video projections and minimalist aesthetics yields a highly poetic visual trip through Phaedra's stations of personal and public history. The performer embodies all the characters of the ancient myth passed onto us by Euripides, Seneca and Racine. Taking on their speech, Phaedra is also in constant dialogue with her digital selves, becoming Aphrodite, Theseus, Hippolytus, the Chorus and the crisis-ridden City itself. Struggling to escape the existential fatigue that plagues her, she ultimately emerges as a palimpsest of voices, images and memories.

A haunting, multi-sensory rendering of the insatiable desire for motion and for love.

Anna Sbokou (Lighting Designer)

Maria Hadjistyli (Assistant Director)

Julia Kogou (Assistant Director)

Michael Demetrious (Director of Photography)

GUEST CONTRIBUTION TO THE VIDEO ART

Foteini Tsakiri, Angelos Andriopoulos,
Sofia Kitmiridou, Ileana Papagianni,
Tasos Theofilatos, Maria Xristou - Gege

GUEST CONTRIBUTION TO THE RECORDINGS

Richard Hall, Mary Davies, Kimberley Earle

WE WOULD LIKE, ALSO, TO THANK

Julian Deering, Ephimia Englezaki,
Stelios Giannakos, Charikleia Marini,
Yannis Tsoumarakis, Tassos Ziakkas,
David Schalkwyk, Anastasia Pehlivanidou,
Chryssi Sidiropoulou, Ismini Karayanni
Marios Psarras

The High Commission of Cyprus in London
The Embassy of Greece in London
E6 CreativeDigitalSpot



Persona Theater Company

Athens-based Persona Theatre Company has been committed to producing visceral, passionate work, revisiting classical texts from a contemporary perspective. Our life-long ambition is to bring artists from different parts of the world together to explore different themes, and innovative performance forms. We like to integrate technology and the visual arts into our projects to build stage environments that resonate with the audiences of our anxiety-driven, globalized world. Our work has an international scope and has been shown in Greece, Turkey, the United States and Iran. We've also run practical workshops in the UK, Estonia, Cyprus, Spain and Israel, among other places.

www.persona.gr
email: persona@persona.gr

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Avra Sidiropoulou (Text/Concept/Direction)

Avra Sidiropoulou is Assistant Professor at the M.A. program in Theatre Studies of the Open University of Cyprus. She is Artistic Director of Athens-based Persona Theatre Company. Select directing works include: *A Lover's Melancholy*. J. Ford. (A Work in Progress). Supported by the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Cyprus. Dancehouse Lefkosia (Nicosia, Cyprus, December 2014); *Someone's Going to Come*. J. Fosse. Versus Theatre. Theatre Ena. (Nicosia and Limassol, Cyprus, November 2013–January 2014), *Maria Borisova*. Based on F. Dostoyevsky's novella *A Meek Girl*. Produced by Persona Theatre Company. Supported by The Pushkin Institute of Athens. Studio Mavromihali. (Athens, Greece, September 2012).; *Tell-Tale Hearts: The (Un) Told Stories of Edgar Allan Poe*. Vafopouleio Cultural Center. (Thessaloniki, Greece, June 2010); Hellenic-American Union (Athens, Greece, October 2010), *And God Said. A Parable*. Co-produced by Persona Theatre Company and Garajistanbul. Garajistanbul Theatre. (Istanbul, Turkey, April 2009). Invited participation at the 28th Fajr International Theatre Festival. Sangelaj Hall. (Tehran, Iran, January 2010), *Clytemnestra's Tears*. Produced by Persona Theatre Company, supported by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, the Hellenic Culture Organisation, The Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Organisation and the Ioannis F. Costopoulos Foundation. Performed by Themis Bazaka. La MaMa ETC (New York, U.S.A., May–June 2007); Dipylon Theatre (Athens, Greece, April–May 2004); Trilingual production *Clytemnestra's Tears/Τα Δάκρυα της Κλυταιμνήστρας* funded by the European Union within the framework of the micro-project programme for the promotion of Greek-Turkish civic dialogue. Tiyatro Oyunevi ISM2. (Istanbul, Turkey, June 2004.) Official participation in the 40th International Arts Festival "Dimitria" of the Municipality of Thessaloniki. (Thessaloniki, Greece, September 2005). She has taught, directed and conducted theatre workshops in different parts of the world, as varied as Greece, Turkey, Japan, Iran, the UK, the US, Israel, Estonia, Cyprus and Bulgaria. She was a Japan Foundation fellow (Tokyo University), a Visiting Scholar at the Martin E. Segal Theatre Centre at CUNY, New York as well as at MIT, Surrey and Leeds Universities. Her monograph *Authoring Performance: The Director in Contemporary Theatre* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2011. Her new book, *Directions for Directing. Theatre and Method* was published in September 2018 by Routledge.

Elena Pellone (Actress)

Elena Pellone is an international actor working throughout Europe. She was born in Australia, to Greek-Egyptian and Italian parents, and lives in the UK. Elena is a graduate of Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, RADA (London), and the University of Melbourne. She has a Masters degree in Shakespeare and Creativity from The Shakespeare Institute, where she worked in collaboration with the Royal Shakespeare Company to produce and perform new work inspired by Shakespeare. She is currently completing her PhD in 'Directorless Shakespeare'. Elena has appeared in theatre, film and TV from a very early age – (she was in her mother's womb in a Greek production of *Napoleon was a Girl*.) Elena is an experienced actor of classical texts and Artistic Director of the Venice Shakespeare Company and Anòrkē Shakespeare. She acted Nerissa in New York Compagnia Colombari's historical *Merchant of Venice*, presented for the first time in the Venetian Jewish Ghetto in 2016. She performed as Richard II in an Italian/English production, as part of the "Kingship and Power" programme held by THESPIS at the University of Verona in 2017. Elena reprised Richard II in a directorless production at the Rose Theatre, Kingston upon Thames, with an accompanying colloquium, "'Let me Play the Lion Too': Casting Diversity in Shakespeare". The production toured to Würzburg, Germany. Elena first collaborated with Persona Theatre Company, performing King Lear, in Verona, 2018. She recently appeared as Beatrice and Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Venice, Italy.

Mikaela Liakata (Set/Costume/Video Designer)

Mikaela trained as an architect and received her MFA in Design for Stage and Film at New York University. Is a set, video and costume designer. As a Set designer, theatre includes: *The Dance of Death* (Emporikon, Greece –dir.: D. Katalifos); *Address Unknown*; (KET, Greece, dir.: Nadia Foskolou); *Freedom in Brehmen*; (Metaxourgeio, Greece, dir.: N. Foskolou); *Hôtel Méditerranée* (The Wild Project, NY, dir.: N. Foskolou); *Mandorla*; (La Mama, NY, choreog.: J. Rocha); *Camino Real* (NYU, NY, dir.: Shana Cooper). As a Video Designer, theatre includes: *Persona*, *Loula* (Neos Cosmos Theatre, Greece, dir.: D. Agartzidis-D. Anastasoglou); *Address Unknown* (KET, Greece); *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (Apollo, Greece, dir.: E. Georgopolou). As a Costume Designer, theatre includes: *The Glass Menagerie* (Emporikon, Greece–dir.: D. Katalifos–E. Scoti), *Beauty and the Beast* (Beton 7, Greece, choreog. Olga Spiraki). As an Associate/Assistant Video Designer, theatre includes: *Hamlet* (The Almeida); (Harold Pinter–West End, London, dir.: R. Icke); *Lazarus* (Kings Cross Theatre, dir.: I. Van Hove); *King Lear* (Shakespeare in the Park, NYC, dir.: D. Sullivan). As an Associate/Assistant Video Designer, opera includes: *The Snow Maiden* (Opera North, Leeds, dir.: J. Fulljames); *Der Schatzgräber* (De Nederlandse Opera, Amsterdam, dir.: I. Van Hove); *Macbeth* (Opéra de Lyon, dir.: I. Van Hove); *La Clemenza di Tito* (Opera Narodowa Warsaw, dir.: I. Van Hove); *Brokeback Mountain* (Teatro Real Madrid, dir.: I. Van Hove); *La Clemenza de Tito* (La Monnaie/De Munt, dir.: I. Van Hove).

Miranda Manasiadis (Concept Dramaturg)

Miranda has been living and working between Athens, New York and Wellington, New Zealand/Aotearoa for over a decade. After graduating in Theatre Studies, Classical Studies, and English Literature from Victoria University of Wellington in 2000, she has worked consistently in Theatre and Dance-Theatre. Initially working as a performer (dance, and later acting), the last 10 years has seen her focus her energies on direction, dramaturgy, and curation. Miranda's own performance company, There Should Have Been Roses, is known for staging contemporary performance installation works (NightRaids) in Wellington and New York. Miranda has been commissioned numerous times to create or curate works for various festivals and city councils. She has been awarded or nominated in all her chosen fields, namely Best Lead Actor for her role as Daisy in 'The Great Gatsby' –Dir: David O'Donell Wellington NZ, Best Writing for 'Flood' –Dir: Dr. Emma Willis, Wellington NZ, Best New Direction for 'The Singularity', Wellington NZ. Recently, her collaboration with Athens based Dance Company FingerSix and Sofia Mavragani, has seen their work programmed at The Athens Festival and at The Megaron Musikis. Miranda was invited to be on the board of directors for Circa Theatre, (Wellington's principal professional theatre). She was invited to be an advisor and accessor for Creative New Zealand (New Zealand's main arts funding organisation), and invited to be an accessor for post graduate work with Victoria University's Script Writing programme.

Play Synopsis

Phaedra I—tells the story of Phaedra, the wife of the King of Athens, Theseus, and her profound existential boredom, which makes her crave a life of constant fulfillment. The play starts with the spell that goddess Aphrodite casts on Phaedra, which both liberates her and traps her into seeking sensual pleasure in her son-in-law, Hippolytus, and so treads on slippery, treacherous territory. The play proceeds with descriptions of Phaedra's devastating paralysis within the confines of her palace and of her own cynicism. We are made witness to sequences of charged interactions with the Chorus of Athenian women, who are castigating her about but also acting envious of her existence at the threshold of transgression, outside the rules dictated by her societal role. Victim to an insatiable thirst for life, Phaedra looks for release within the ruins of a timeless metropolis, of which she is the sovereign. She finally confesses to Theseus, which leads up to the inexorable ending of the play. The triangle is momentarily dispelled, but Phaedra emerges stronger and even more capable of the violence and the hurt to which Aphrodite has condemned her.

Anna Sbokou (Lighting Designer)

Anna studied at the Bartlett UCL (MSc Light & Lighting) and at Goldsmiths (Theatre Production). She has been a theatre lighting designer since 2008 and works independently on various theatre, dance and arts productions across the UK, New York, Los Angeles, Mexico, India and Athens. In 2009 she was awarded Young Lighter of the Year by the Society of Light and Lighting and in 2016 she was included in the 40 under forty list of up-and-coming lighting designers worldwide at the Lighting Design Awards 2016 in London. Her work also includes architectural and museum lighting and she is also on the Board of Directors of the International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD) since 2014.

Julia Kogou (Assistant Director)

Julia Kogou was born in Athens, Greece. She studied economics, e-commerce, pedagogical studies and drama in Greece and U.K. Senior of the postgraduate program of the Department of Theater Studies in Open University of Cyprus, she researches in the complicity of the audience during performances. She has worked as a business analyst, project manager, professor in high schools, performer, director, animator and sometimes as a writer. Since 2008, she has focused her theatrical activity on the devised theater and since 2011 on the physical theater. She directed, among others, the performances *Tranquilla* (Epi Kolono, 2010), *Virginia* (Epi Kolono, 2011) and the work-in-progress performance *Project_Macbeth* (Booze Cooperativa, 2016). In 2015 she wrote and directed the play *# Waiting # GoDo # Still_a street performance* which is still performed in Athens in different places.

Eleni Gini (Dramaturg)

Is a Doctor of Philosophy, University of Athens, (Department of French Language & Literature) with a Ph.D. in French Theatre. She has taught: • "Analysis of literary texts" at the University of Athens in the Department of French Language & Literature • "Theatre", "History of European Theatre: 17th-18th century" & "Literary European Theatre: 20th century" at the University of Peloponnese, in the Department of Theatre Studies • "Civilization" & "Literature" of Latin America at the Hellenic Open University • "History of Theatre / Dramatology" & "Theory of Theatre" at the Open University of Cyprus in the Postgraduate Section of Theatre Studies • "Dramatology" at the Athens Conservatoire in the Theatre Graduate School. She also works as Dramatist with actor-Director Dimitris Lignadis (Shakespeare's "Romeo & Juliet" at Pantheon Theatre, 2016 & Ibsen's "Peer Gynt" at National Theatre of Greece, 2017) & with playwright-director Avra Sidiropoulou in her latest play "Phaedra I—". She has translated from French & Spanish, drama, prose & poetry & has been attended workshops, symposia & conferences of Theatreology. She is writing critics & articles for the theater in newspapers & journals. She is participating with scientific papers & speeches at the Center of Theatre Semiotics, (University of Athens) where she is a founding member.

Vanias Apergis (Music/Composer)

Born in Athens, Greece, Vanias Apergis started music lessons at the age of 8 and studied organ and jazz piano in his home city before going to Berklee College in Boston, USA, to study Film Scoring, and Newcastle, UK, to study Music Technology. Since 1998, Vanias has composed music for feature films, short films, video games, theater productions, TV series, games and shows. Vanias has also composed and produced music for other artists having credits on many records as a producer, composer, orchestrator, engineer and session musician. In 2004, Vanias began applying his film scoring techniques for TV and Radio commercials, and Idents, and has gradually incorporated Audio Branding theories and techniques. In 2016, he composed the music for Paul Mason's short film "Astoria", distributed by Facebook, which depicted parallels of the recent and WWII refugee crisis. Vanias has extensive experience in studio management and music publishing, co-owns the web radioclassicalradio.gr and has also worked as a radio producer and host.

Michael Demetrious (Director of Photography)

Michael Demetrious is a filmmaker, currently located in Athens, Greece. He received his 'Bachelor of Arts' from the University of Greenwich in 2012 and is currently a post-graduate student of 'Theatrical Studies' at the Open University of Cyprus. His filmography includes many films and documentaries that have participated in festivals around the globe. Michael developed a love for photography at the age of 9 and since then, he is rarely found without a camera. The post-production of his latest film "CLOUD" is about to take place the next months.

Maria Hadjistylli (Assistant Director)

Maria Hadjistylli was born in Nicosia, Cyprus. She studied Biomedical Sciences and Clinical Microbiology in London, UK. Since 2013 she participated as an actress and assistant director in various amateur theatrical performances (*Alithino Pascha, Mias Pentaras Niata, Don Kamilo, To moro, O Anayiotos, The Ceremony*). She has also worked with the theatre company Act Studio in Cyprus as a stage assistant in the performances *Molis Horisa, The Little Mermaid* and the musical *Mazi*. She worked on the Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie* under the guidance of director Andreas Araouzos and Antidrontes theatrical team. She is currently a member of Peristerona theatrical team participating in the Pancyprian Festival of Amateur Theatre organised by the Cyprus Theatre Organization (THOC). In the meantime she also attends seminars for theatre directing and is an assistant director of the international multimedia project *Phaedra I—* by playwright-director Avra Sidiropoulou (London 2019, Persona Theater Company).



CHORUS Queen Phaedra Remember/You lucky little bitch
PHAEDRA And never forget
CHORUS Your Theseus
PHAEDRA His son/Your Hippolytus
CHORUS Your fantasy lover
PHAEDRA Stop this
CHORUS Stop everything you're doing
PHAEDRA And listen to me
CHORUS Phaedra, you're gone now
PHAEDRA Somewhere better, I know
CHORUS if you can hear me from centuries on
PHAEDRA The city of Athens
CHORUS Its streets and its squares/Its squalor and its splendor
The ruin. The ruin. The ruin.
Phaedra, you betrayed us all
PHAEDRA But the memory of your hunger lives on



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