

ORF. FÜR ALLE

ORF RadioKulturhaus
Argentinierstraße 30
1040 Wien



EMBASSY AND PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
VIENNA



ENSEMBLE RETRO WIEN
MYTHS OF A WOMAN
A TRIBUTE TO MANOS HADJIDAKIS
ON THE CENTENARY OF HIS BIRTH

17. November 2025
ORF RadioKulturhaus
Großer Sendesaal
19:30 Uhr

PROGRAM:

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES I. EX OCCIDENTE

Darius Milhaud (1892–1974) – Jean Cocteau
Le Pauvre Matelot (The Poor Sailor) – Introduction

Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) – Friedrich Rückert
Kindertotenlieder (Songs on the Death of Children)
No. 1: Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgehen (Now the Sun Wants to Rise So Brightly)

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) – Friedrich Leopold zu Stolberg–Stolberg
Auf dem Wasser zu singen (To Sing on the Water)

Kurt Weill (1900–1950) – Roger Fernay
Youkali – Tango–habanera

Maurice Jaubert (1900–1940)
À Paris, dans chaque faubourg (In Paris, in every suburb)

Norbert Schultze (1911–2002)
Lili Marleen

Nino Rota (1911–1979) – based on the screenplay by Federico Fellini
Gelsomina – from La Strada

Enrique Granados (1867–1916)
Oriental – from Danzas españolas (Spanish Dances), Op. 37 No. 2

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES II. EX ORIENTE

Markos Vamvakaris (1905–1972)
Φραγκοσυριανή (The Girl from Syros)
Τα ματόκλαδά σου λάμπουν (Your Eyelashes Shine)

Vassilis Tsitsanis (1915–1984)
Αντιλαλούνε τα βουνά (The Mountains Echo)
Χωρίσαμε ένα δειλινό (We Parted One Evening)

Dimitris Gogos / known as Bagiaderas (1903–1985)
Χατζηκυριάκειο (Hadjikyriakion)

Ioannis Papaioannou (1913–1972)
'Ανοιξε, γιατί δεν αντέχω (Open the Window, I Can't Bear It Anymore)

» Interval «

Manos Hatzidakis (1925–1994) Texts: Nikos Gatsos, Agathi Dimitrouka (07)

MYTHS OF A WOMAN SONG CYCLE OP. 47 (1988)

- 01 Η Θυσία της Αντιγόνης (The Sacrifice of Antigone)
- 02 Είπα επί γής ειρήνην (I Said Peace on Earth)
- 03 Ταορμίνα (Taormina)
- 04 Με λένε Θεοδώρα (My Name is Theodora)
- 05 Πότε πεθαίνει ο έρωτας (When Does Love Die)
- 06 Ο Σταυρός (The Cross)
- 07 'Ηρωες και θύματα (Heroes and Victims)
- 08 Η Πόλκα των Εβραίων της Πράγας The Polka of the Jews of Prague

Τέσσερα Αφιερώματα (Four Tributes)

- 09 09 Μαύρος ταύρος μπήκε στο χορό
(μια χαμπανέρα για τον Φεντερίκο Γκαρθία Λόρκα)
A Black Bull Entered the Dance (A Habanera for Federico García Lorca)
- 10 Τα λόγια που περίμενα (Ένα τραγούδι για τον Μωρίς Ζωμπέρ)
The Words I Was Waiting For (A Song for Maurice Jaubert)
- 11 Στου Νείλου τ'αμμοχώραφα (Μια elegεία για την Ομ Καλσούμ)
In the Sandfields of the Nile (An Elegy for Umm Kulthum)
- 12 Κραυγές για ενός αγγέλου μνήμη (Ένα ταγκό για την Άλμα Μάλερ)
Cries in Memory of an Angel (A Tango for Alma Mahler)

THE ENSEMBLE RETRO VIENNA

Recorder	Birgitt Reithner
Harmonica	Isabella Krapf
Flute	Giorgos Tsiardakas
Oboe / Cor Anglais	Pablo Romanillos Corte
Clarinet	Christiana Thalassinou
Trumpet	Luis Abicht
French Horn	Melissa Danas
Mandolin	Erika Hörwertner
Guitar	Thomas Athanasselos
Guitar	Yorgos Nousis
Harp	Léa Guery–Odelin
Piano	Alexandra Gkasdrogka
Percussion	Bernold Wiesmayr
Violin I	Kanako Gergov
Violin II	Kai Gergov
Viola	Loredana Apetrei
Cello	Loukia Loulaki
Double Bass	Damian Posse

Conducted by Anastasios Strikos
Soloists: Anna Agathonos, Eleni Koutsoumbi, Maria Kostraki

Manos Hadjidakis

was born in Xanthi, Northern Greece, on October 23, 1925. At the age of four he started learning the piano, and during 1940-3 he studied theory and harmony under Menelaos Pallandios, an important composer of the Greek music school. At the same time, he studied philosophy at Athens University, while being nurtured in the company of artists and intellectuals of stature, such as Seferis, Elytis, Tsarouhis, Gatsos and Sikelianos.

From 1945 on, when he began his collaboration with the Greek National Theatre and the Art Theatre, he composed music for ancient Greek drama, as well as incidental music for the contemporary repertory: Agamemnon (1950), Choephoroe (1950), Medea (1956), Eccleziastusae (1956), Lysistrata (1957), Cyclops (1959), Birds (1959), Mourning Becomes Electra (1945), A Streetcar Named Desire (1948), Blood Wedding (1947), Hamlet (1955), The Caucasian Chalk Circle (1956), Othello (1958), Sweet Bird of Youth (1959), Eurydice (1960), Don Quixote (1972), The Sapling (1989), et al.

In 1948, he wrote what he considered as his favourite composition, For a Small White Seashell, Op. 1, for piano.

His famous lecture on the "rebetiko" (1949) (an underground type of song at the time which expressed the sentiments of the lower-classes) roused a storm of reaction from the conservative Greek society. And yet, it radically changed the nature and course of Greek song writing.

The year 1951 saw the founding of the Greek Chorodrama of Rallou Manou -with Hadjidakis as co-founder and artistic manager- which staged his four ballets: Marsyas (1950), Six Folklore Paintings (1951), The Accursed Serpent (1951) and Solitude (1958).

In 1953, in another series of lectures on the subject of contemporary american composers, he introduced the hitherto unknown Copland, Menotti, Bernstein and others to the Greek audience, the latter isolated from the rest of the world following the Second World War and the difficult postwar situation.

Along with his work for the theatre, from 1946 on, Hadjidakis composed music for a great number of Greek and foreign films, among which Stella (1955), The Rapist (1956), America America (1962), Blue (1967), Sweet Movie (1974), Honeymoon (1978), as well as music for two documentary films by Jacques Yves Cousteau (1977). In 1960 he was awarded an Oscar for his song for the film Never on Sunday by Jules Dassin.

Two years later, he staged Street of Dreams in Athens, a milestone in the history of Greek musicals, directed by Alexis Solomos, stage sets by Minos Argyrakis, and Dimitris Horn in the leading role.

His long and fruitful collaboration with Maurice Béjart and his 20th Century Ballets began in Brussels in 1965 with the performance of Birds of Aristophanes, and continued either conducting works of other composers (Jean Cocteau et la Dance 1972, Traviata 1973), or conducting his own works choreographed by Maurice Béjart (L'Ange Heurtebise 1972, Dionysos 1988, The Ballads of Athena Street 1993).

During the period 1966-72 he lived in New York, where he wrote some of his most important works: Rhythmology (for piano), Magnus Eroticus (a cycle of songs based on poems of ancient and modern Greek poets) and Reflections (a cycle of songs with the New York Rock & Roll Ensemble). He also recorded Gioconda's Smile, and began writing The Era of Melissanthi, an autobiographical musical story in a postwar setting.

Hadjidakis, a versatile, many-sided personality, used his talents in many more artistic activities: he founded and directed the Athens Experimental Orchestra (Symphony Orchestra, 1963-6), the café-théâtre Polytropon (1973), the Music Festivals at Anoyia, Crete to do with tradition (1979), the Musical August Festival at Herakleion, Crete (1980-1), the Musical Contests in Corfu (1981-2). He also founded and edited the cultural magazine Tetarto (1985-6), the record company Sirius (1985), the Symphony Orchestra of Colours (1989-93), and was head of the Third Programme of Greek National Radio (1975-81), which he revolutionized.

From the very start of his career, in tandem with his other activities, Hadjidakis had been active in producing dozens of records which have been acclaimed as classics of their kind in Greece: The C.N.S. Cycle (1954), Mythology (1965), Liturgical Songs (1971), Immortality (1975), Irrationals (1976), Dark Mother (1985), Songs of Sin (1992), et al. Most of his song cycles employ verses by Nikos Gatsos.

Hadjidakis published two books of poems, Mythology and Mythology II, and the volumes The Mirror and the Knife and Third Programme Commentaries.

On the afternoon of June 15, 1994, Manos Hadjidakis "began his journey to the stars".

Undoubtedly, Manos Hadjidakis is one of the most important Greeks of the twentieth century – and this would still be true even if he had never written a single note of music! His ethos, his courage, his actions, his words, his thought, his gaze – his very existence – would suffice.

He was a shaman, a gifted healer of the human soul. Unmistakable in his diagnosis, he sensed the symptoms of every moral illness with rare perception, read dreams with intuition, seared the wounds of society with his sharp word, and soothed them with the balm of his music.

And yet, it is utterly impossible to capture him in words or to measure his greatness by any standard. Any attempt at musicological analysis of his work is doomed to blatant failure. The more one tries to codify him, to explain him, the more he slips away. Hadjidakis shifts hues like an octopus, hides like an eel, hovers between definitions – and disappears. He leaves behind a faint, bittersweet aftertaste, as poems, miracles, dreams, and lovers' encounters do. And like the Pole Star, he hangs always high above, at the summit of the sky, waiting for us to lift our eyes toward him – to call upon him, so that we may find our way again.

He remains constant and indelible, precisely because he remains inexplicable.

He is the Lottery Seller of the Sky, the Magnus Eroticus.

AS

Anna Agathonos Mezzo-Soprano

Athens-born and Vienna-raised mezzo-soprano Anna Agathonos studied at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna under Kammersängerin Edith Mathis. From 2001-2010, she was a member of the Musiktheater im Revier Gelsenkirchen, distinguishing herself in both bel canto and later dramatic repertoire, with roles including Carmen, Azucena, Amneris, Ortrud, and Dalila. She has appeared at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, the Rossini Opera Festival, Opera Ireland, and the Greek National Opera, where she performed *Mistress Quickly* (Falstaff) and *Leokadja Begbick* (Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny). In concert, she has sung Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Verdi's Requiem, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and *Stabat Mater*, and Mahler's Third Symphony, and made her Cologne Philharmonie debut in 2022 as the Old Lady in Bernstein's *Candide*. Since 2020/21, she has been an ensemble member of the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz Munich, performing roles such as Madame Flora, Miss Todd, Filipjevna, Baba the Turk, Federica, Marcellina, and the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel*.

Eleni Koutsoumbi Soprano

A graduate of the Drama School Mary Voyiatzis-Tragas, she studied lyric singing with Kostas Paschalis and Fragkiskos Voutsinos (solo performance diploma with highest distinction, Kodály Conservatory). She continued her studies in Paris as a scholarship recipient of the École Normale (National School of Music) and the Hellenic Cultural Center, earning the First Prize of the City of Paris, a diploma in singing, and a diploma in lyrical art. She further refined her technique in master classes with Laura Sarti, Irma Kolassi, Christa Ludwig, François Le Roux, and Jean-Philippe Lafont. She has performed *Dido* (Dido and Aeneas) in Nanterre and at the Théâtre d'Étampes in France, and was a regular collaborator in all productions of the Théâtre du Châtelet (Paris) from 2003 to 2006. Since 2007, she has been a member of the Chorus of the Greek National Opera, participating in nearly all of its productions. She was also one of the singers selected to perform alongside José Cura in his concert in Athens, a major musical event that received wide acclaim from audiences and critics alike.

Maria Kostraki Soprano

Maria Kostraki is a distinguished soprano, winner of international competitions and scholarship holder of both the Athens and Thessaloniki Concert Halls. She made her debut at the age of 23 as Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* at the Munich Chamber Opera. Since then, she has performed leading roles in operas by Mozart (*Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, *La clemenza di Tito*, *Die Zauberflöte*), Donizetti (*L'elisir d'amore*), Rossini (*Il viaggio a Reims*, *La donna del lago*, *La Cenerentola*), Bizet (*Carmen*), Leoncavallo (*I Pagliacci*), Strauss (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Purcell (*Dido & Aeneas*), and Kálmán (*Die Csárdásfürstin*). She has appeared with the Greek National Opera, the Athens and Thessaloniki Concert Halls, the Eptapyrgio Festival, Staatsoper Nürnberg, Theater Dortmund, the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, and other European theaters and festivals. Deeply devoted to Greek art music, she has performed extensively in Greece, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Highlights include recitals of Manos Hadjidakis' song cycles at the Greek National Opera, Mikis Theodorakis' Third Symphony with the Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra at Munich's Herkulessaal, and Manos Hadjidakis' *Magnus Eroticus* at Vienna's Ehrbar Saal (2018) and the Odeon of Herodes Atticus (2025).

Ino Matsou Narrator

Ino Matsou lives and works in Vienna as a theater and film actress, performing in three languages: Greek, German, and English. She was born in Thessaloniki, where she studied Dentistry and completed her postgraduate studies in Fixed Prosthodontics at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. At the same time, she pursued her artistic path, studying acting at the theatrical workshop Parathlasi and dance at the Diagonal school. As the lead singer of the electro-pop band Lovelab, she performed live at major venues in the city. Since 2009, she has been permanently based in Vienna, and since 2014 she has been an active member of the Greek-Austrian theater group *Towards the Sun*. In 2017, she obtained her official acting diploma in Austria. She has starred in numerous theatrical productions, as well as in short films and Austrian television series. Recently, she lent her voice—representing Greece—to the European Parliament's virtual role-playing game. She has great love for her family and friends, and she misses her cat.

Anastasios Strikos Conductor & Pianist

Anastasios Strikos was born about half a century ago in the shadow of the Athenian Acropolis. He studied in Bavaria, but chose to live in Vienna—hoping that if he ever were to fall into the Danube, his body might eventually drift into the Mediterranean. He would, however, prefer to be cremated and scattered directly into the Aegean. Like Orpheus and Odysseus, he has visited the Underworld and returned. He remains a lifelong sorcerer's apprentice. He plays the piano, accompanies singers, conducts musical ensembles, teaches whatever he knows, paints watercolors, reads, writes, and cooks. All the while, he strives to preserve what little human dignity and freedom he still possesses. www.strikos.at

Ensemble Retro Wien

The Ensemble Retro Wien was founded in 2005 by Anastasios Strikos under the patronage of the Greek ambassador to Vienna, Theodoros Sotiropoulos. Its first productions, "*So ist eben das Leben - The Greek Chanson*" and "*Magnus Eroticus - Neighbourhoods of the Moon*" featuring music by Manos Hadjidakis, premiered at the ORF RadioKulturhaus to great acclaim and were broadcast on Ö1 radio. Subsequent productions included "*Axion Esti - Praised Be*" (Ehrbar Saal, 2007), "*The Greek Passion - A Musical Pilgrimage through the Holy Week*" (Ruprechtskirche, 2009). In 2010, the ensemble performed "*Ihr Mädchen von Mauthausen - Homage to Iakovos Kambanellis*", commissioned by Le Relais de la Mémoire. This began a collaboration with Greek diva Nena Venetsanou, who entrusted Ensemble Retro with the world premiere of her cycle "*Les Exotiques*", presented at the Odeon Theater alongside a tribute to poet Yannis Ritsos on his 101st birthday. For "*Jour de la Francophonie 2011*", the ensemble presented the children's project "*The Carnival of the Animals - Camille Saint-Saëns at the Zoo*" and a program of chansons by Jacques Prévert and Joseph Kosma in the French Institute of Vienna. Other highlights include "*Lux Aeterna In Memoriam Maria Mavromichali-Botz*", "*Many Voices - Common Quest*" for the Opening Ceremony of the Greek EU Presidency (2014) and an homage to Melina Merkouri for her 100th birthday, with Elpiniki Zervou (2020). Ensemble Retro presents original, thematic productions, exploring lesser-known 20th-century music, with a preference for song cycles. www.ensemblretrovienna.com