

2019/20  
GNO  
80  
YEARS

1

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## 2019/20 Introductory note

The programme of the 2019/20 season of the Greek National Opera, including the celebration of its 80th anniversary, marks a new era of dialogue and interaction with the global developments in the art of opera, while focusing on the support of the artistic creation of major Greek artists.

The programme designed by the Artistic Director **Giorgos Koumendakis** aims to increase the GNO's artistic outreach through strategic co-operations and co-productions with international partners, invests in new creations through commissions, takes decisive steps towards the expansion of the operatic repertoire, investigates the interaction of lyric theatre with performance and visual arts and brings on stage unique opera, operetta and ballet masterpieces in ambitious productions.

Four world premieres, one Greek premiere, seven new opera productions, two new ballet productions and three revivals of productions, as well as concerts, performances, projections accompanied by live music, shape the programme that will be presented at the Stavros Niarchos Hall and the Odeon of Herodes Atticus from autumn 2019 until summer 2020.

In the new programme, along with the great artistic staff of the GNO, we will have the chance to enjoy the fruits of our cooperation with major artists, such as, among others, **Yorgos Lanthimos, Olivier Py, Anita Rachvelishvili, Marina Abramović, Graham Vick, Dimitris Karantzas, Nikos Karathanos, Katerina Evangelatos, Marco Arturo Marelli, Benoît Jacquot**, etc.

The season's inaugural production is Bellini's *La sonnambula*, directed by Marco Arturo Marelli, an historic production of the Vienna State Opera that will be presented for the first time by the GNO in October 2019.

The great British director Graham Bick stamps his mark on the new production of the five-act version of Verdi's *Don Carlo* in December 2019, and, right after that, the Director of the Festival d'Avignon Olivier Py directs Alban Berg's 20th-century masterpiece *Wozzeck* in January 2020, for the first time in the GNO.

The first work commissioned by the GNO for the 2019/20 season on the occasion of its 80th anniversary comes in March 2020 and is Yiorgos Vassilandonakis' opera *Pope Joan* to a libretto by Vangelis Hatzilyannidis based on Emmanouel Rhoides' novel of the same title, and directed by Dimitris Karantzas.

In April 2020, Angelos Triantafyllou's new opera, *Inland*, commissioned by the GNO, to a libretto by Giannis Asteris and directed by Nikos Karathanos, raises questions about loneliness and old age and brings on stage performers aged 65 and older. These two Greek works inaugurate the Greek Music Cycle, which shall continue over the next years.

In May 2020, Jules Massenet's *Werther* brings to Greece the top opera artist Anita Rachvelishvili, who will make her role debut as Charlotte at the GNO in an Opéra National de Paris production of unique aesthetics directed by Benoît Jacquot.

In June 2020, the GNO invites Katerina Evangelatos to direct Verdi's *Rigoletto* at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in an ambitious production.

In celebration of its 80th anniversary, in February and March 2020 the GNO will present Johann Strauss junior's **Die Fledermaus** directed by Alexandros Efklidis. *Die Fledermaus* was the first work with which the National Opera (part of the National Theatre at the time) started its operation on 5 March 1940.

The GNO Ballet presents three productions at the Stavros Niarchos Hall. In November 2019, in the new ambitious production **Dance with my own shadow**, the Ballet's director Konstantinos Rigos choreographs four emblematic works of Manos Hadjidakis.

In December 2019, the highly successful **Swan Lake**, choreographed by Konstantinos Rigos, returns for a run of six unique performances, while in March 2020 **Don Quixote** in Petipa's classical choreography shall be the great creative challenge for the GNO Ballet dancers.

The GNO and NEON joint programme **The Artist on the Composer** brings top director Yorgos Lanthimos to Greece, on a break from his wild international career trajectory, while a big international co-production of the GNO brings on stage Marina Abramović in her new project titled **The Seven Deaths of Maria Callas**.

The children's opera production of the season is Lena Platonos' **The emperor's nightingale**, which will be presented for a run of ten morning performances at the Stavros Niarchos Hall, following last year's great success at the Alternative Stage.

The screening of an early Greek cinema "lost" film, accompanied by live music, will be held at the GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall in February, in collaboration with the Greek Film Archive Foundation. It is the **Apaches of Athens** by the Brothers Gaziadis, a film based on Nikos Hadjiapostolou's legendary operetta of the same title.

The season's programme also includes three major concerts: the **Tribute to Kostas Paskalis**, **Three concertos for piano and orchestra** and **The era of Melissanthi** as part of the Manos Hadjidakis Cycle.

**Six of the most ambitious productions of the 2019/20 season, which also have an international dimension, are supported by the new €20 million euro donation from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. The grant supports the implementation of a four-year programming and development plan that will enhance the artistic outreach of the GNO and the promotion of its work abroad. They include *La Sonnambula* a production that will be held in collaboration with the Vienna State Opera, *Don Carlo* directed by the outstanding British director and Artistic Director of the Birmingham Opera Company Graham Vick, *Wozzeck* directed by the Artistic Director of the Festival d' Avignon Olivier Py, *Werther* a production in collaboration with the Opéra National de Paris, the great co-production with Munich, Berlin, Florence and Paris on the *7 deaths of Maria Callas* by Marina Abramović and *The Artist on the Composer* with our international director Yorgos Lanthimos.**

Opera

**Vincenzo Bellini**

***La sonnambula***

Italian Opera Cycle

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 25, 27, 29 October 2019**

Starts at 20.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Philippe Auguin** (Artist in Residence 2019/20)

Director, set – lighting designer **Marco Arturo Marelli**

Costume designer **Dagmar Niefind**

A co-production of the Vienna State Opera and Royal Opera House, London (2000/01)

In the main roles **Christina Poulitsi** and **Vassiliki Karayanni** (Amina), **Yannis Christopoulos** and **Vassilis Kavayas** (Elvino)

With the **GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

One of Bellini's most popular operas, *La sonnambula*, returns to the Greek National Opera after 40 years. To the opera's storyline, which unfolds in the symbolic "snow white" innocence of the Alps and is inspired by the world of classical dance, Bellini responded with a music of exceptional poetry: especially the last scene of the protagonist ranks among the most tender and sensitive ones in the repertoire. The opera was written for one of the most famous singers of the time, Giuditta Pasta, for whom Bellini also composed his *Norma*. After the war, the work came once again to the foreground thanks to Maria Callas, who starred in 1955 in Lucino Visconti's fabulous production at La Scala, Milan.

*La sonnambula* opens the Greek National Opera's 2019/20 season with a legendary production of lofty aesthetics, directed by Marco Arturo Marelli, a co-production of the Vienna State Opera and the Royal Opera House, London, which is considered as one of the most interesting readings of Bellini's masterpiece and has been presented in Vienna, London, Paris and Barcelona.

As the director notes: *"Mad scenes are often included in the tragic works of the 19th-century Italian melodrama. Heroines are driven to the margin due to social restrictions; they are trapped in dead-end conflicts and end up in madness. However, at the very first sight, sleepwalker Amina doesn't seem to be one of them... The place where the plot is set –the Swiss Alps– was preserved, but the story unfolds in a kind of a hotel or, more precisely, a sanatorium. A place exactly as described by Thomas Mann in his Magic Mountain: there, the sense of time is different, 'the present expands'. This is what I also feel when I listen to Bellini's heavenly music"*.

Opera for children and youth

**Lena Platonos**

***The emperor's nightingale***

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**20, 23 October 2019**

**3, 19, 20 November 2019**

**11, 12 December 2019**

**22, 23, 26 January 2020**

Starts at 11.00

Orchestration **Lena Platonos, Stergios Tsirliagos**

Libretto **Giorgos Voloudakis**

Director **Katerina Petsatodi**

Animation **Eirini Vianelli**

Sets **Evangelia Therianou**

Costumes **Alexia Theodoraki**

Sound design **Stergios Tsirliagos**

In collaboration with the Animasyros International Animation Festival

After having impressed children and adults at the Alternative Stage, Lena Platonos' musical fairy tale *The emperor's nightingale* will be presented during the 2019/20 season on the big stage of the Stavros Niarchos Hall. It is an impressive production in which opera engages in a dialogue with animation.

Lena Platonos wrote *The emperor's nightingale*, a "musical fairy tale with operatic features and neo-impressionistic music", as she herself has described it, in 1989, to a libretto by Giorgos Voloudakis, based on Hans Christian Andersen's tale of the same title.

In one of the most beautiful palaces in the world, the emperor of China is moved by the singing of a nightingale with an enchanting voice. When the emperor receives as a gift an electronic nightingale that monotonously sings the same song, the real nightingale leaves the palace. Many years later, when the emperor is very sick and the electronic nightingale no longer works, the real nightingale's song manages to move even Death.

Andersen's tale is transformed into a parable about the relationship between art and technology, which nowadays is more topical than ever. The work's modern message, the co-existence of analog and electronic music, the irresistible melodic lines of Platonos and the masterly vocal writing render the *Emperor's nightingale* an ideal way to introduce children to the magical world of lyric art.

The direction bears the stamp of Katerina Petsatodi, the animation has been designed by Eirini Vianelli, the sets by Evangelia Therianou and costumes by Alexia Theodoraki.

Ballet

**Manos Hadjidakis**

***Dance with my own shadow***

Choreographer **Konstantinos Rigos**

Manos Hadjidakis Cycle

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**9, 10, 16, 17, 24 November 2019**

Starts at 20.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Lukas Karytinis**

Set **Konstantinos Rigos**

Costumes **Deux Hommes**

Lighting **Christos Tziogkas**

Associate architect **Mary Tsagari**

Manos Hadjidakis Cycle artistic curator **George Hadjidakis**

**With music ensembles, Principal Dancers, Soloists, Demi-Soloists and Corps de Ballet**

The first production of the Greek National Opera Ballet for 2019/20 signals one of the greatest challenges for Konstantinos Rigos. The GNO Ballet director realizes one of his greatest artistic dreams and choreographs four major works of Manos Hadjidakis –*The C.N.S. cycle*, *Captain Michalis*, *The accursed serpent*, *Gioconda's smile*– in one single performance, as part of the Manos Hadjidakis three-year cycle.

Few composers have defined the Greek musical landscape and modern Greek culture as much as Manos Hadjidakis. At the same time, his quests and influences have led him to many and diversified paths. It wouldn't be an overstatement to say that the fruits of his creative seed can be found in the four cardinal points of the horizon. This is the landscape that inspired Konstantinos Rigos' new choreography, through which he shall make a journey across the four cardinal points of Hadjidakis' work by incorporating an equal number of emblematic works into a single performance with interlocking parts. Four rooms, four directions. *The C.N.S. cycle* is the north, the abstract landscape of the "deserted beach", death's wasteland. *Captain Michalis* is the south, with the Mediterranean, dry landscape, the wind that romantically caresses people's bodies, and the unrealistically over-sized Kazantzakis-man figure. *The accursed serpent* is the east, a land of shadows and fairy tales, where the old and the new co-exist devouring one another. *Gioconda's smile* is the west, a study by the composer on the history of Western music, but also an exercise of personal compositional discipline.

Each point of the horizon is also a room, each cardinal direction is contained within an interior space, where dancing becomes one with the music.

6

Opera

**Giuseppe Verdi**

***Don Carlo***

Italian Opera Cycle

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**8, 13, 15, 19, 21, 28 December 2019**

**2, 5 January 2020**

Starts at 19.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Philippe Auguin** (Artist in Residence 2019/20)

Director **Graham Vick**

Sets, costumes **Richard Hudson**

In the main roles **Bryan Hymel** (Don Carlo), **Barbara Frittoli** and **Cellia Costea** (Elisabeth), **Tassis Christoyannis** and **Dimitri Platanias** (Rodrigo), **Alexander Vinogradov** (Filippo)

With the **GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

One of the most important operas of Verdi's mature period returns to the Greek National Opera: *Don Carlo*, based on Friedrich Schiller's play of the same title, shall be presented in its Italian five-act version (Modena, 1886) in a new production conducted by Philippe Auguin, directed by the great opera director Graham Vick, featuring an international cast.

It is a grandiose opera full of impressive arias, duets and compelling ensembles, but at the same time also a work with deeply human characters, who struggle to achieve a balance between their feelings and duty. Its multi-level political dimension, with the conflict between secular power and church, and, at the same time, between liberalism and absolutism, was of particular interest to Verdi, especially at a time when the modern Italian state was being formed.

Multi-awarded director Graham Vick is internationally acclaimed for his experimental and subversive productions of classical and modern opera works. He has served as director of the Glyndebourne Festival and in the last years he runs the Opera of Birmingham, which has a very cutting-edge and modern artistic mark. At the same time, he directs at the biggest opera houses worldwide, such as, among others, in London, Paris, Milan, Vienna, New York, Saint Petersburg, Madrid, Salzburg, Berlin, Zurich, Rome, Lisbon, Chicago, etc.

About his new direction for the GNO he notes: *"King Philip II of Spain, master of the universe but not of his own soul, is disappointed in his Queen, disappointed in his son, disappointed in himself. Disappointed too in the love his younger wife and the idealist Marchese di Posa share for his troubled son; a love they will never feel for him. Left out even from the love of a pitiless God, humiliated at the feet of a fundamentalist priest, Philip comes to understand what led his father Charles V to renounce a throne an empire and all worldly attachment. 'Vanity of vanities. All is vanity'".*

7



Ballet

**Konstantinos Rigos / Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

***Swan Lake***

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**22, 24, 26, 27, 29, 31 December 2019**

Starts at 20.00 (Sundays 18.30 / 31/12 at 19.00)

Conductor **Dimitris Botinis**

Choreographer, director, set designer **Konstantinos Rigos**

with references to Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov's choreographies

Original music composition **Ted Regklis**

Costumes **George Segredakis**

Lighting **Christos Tziogkas**

Associate architect **Mary Tsagari**

**With the GNO Orchestra, Principal Dancers, Soloists, Demi-Soloists and Corps de Ballet**

The great success of the Greek National Opera's Ballet, after the sold-out run of the previous season, returns for six more performances at Christmas time. Konstantinos Rigos, in his first choreography after assuming the directorship of the GNO Ballet, created a new reading of *Swan Lake*, in which excerpts from Petipa / Ivanov's classical choreography engage in a dialogue with his own new choreography which is based on a neoclassical concept.

Rigos transferred the work to the landscape of a dried lake with clear signs of environmental destruction, proposing a metaclassical reading. George Segredakis' impressive costumes and Christos Tziogkas' emotive lighting contribute to the creation of an otherworldly ambience.

Konstantinos Rigos notes: *"In Swan Lake I present a version which flirts with the enchantment of classical dance in a modern and neoclassically interesting way [...] Heroes preserve the characteristics of the classical version, but their roles are presented as projections of the prince himself. I see the roles of the white and black swan as the two sides of one and the same person. The innocence and the need for self-destruction hidden in every man. Human existence is attracted by both the good and the evil. I think this is an ingenious feature of this work and one of the elements I want to bring out. Namely, how the two aspects of the human existence, the good and the evil, are presented"*.



Opera

**Alban Berg**

**Wozzeck**

20th century Cycle

First presentation by the GNO

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**19, 23, 26, 31 January 2020 & 2 February 2020**

Starts at 20.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Vassilis Christopoulos**

Director **Olivier Py**

Sets, Costumes **Pierre-André Weitz**

In the leading roles **Tassis Christoyannis** (Wozzeck) and **Nadine Lehner** (Marie)

**With the GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

One of the 20th-century lyric theatre masterpieces, Alban Berg's **Wozzeck**, will be presented for the first time by the Greek National Opera in a new production conducted by the distinguished Greek conductor Vassilis Christopoulos and directed by the top French director Olivier Py.

In the title role, the internationally acclaimed Greek baritone of the GNO, Tassis Christoyannis, will sing for the first time one of the most taxing roles in the modern repertory.

The opera is based on Georg Buchner's play *Woyzeck*, which remained unfinished and was published in 1879, more than forty years after the writer's death. It recounts scenes from the miserable life of soldier Wozzeck in a village. When his wife cheats on him, Wozzeck kills her and after that, in his attempt to cover his tracks in a state of delirium, he drowns in a lake. *Wozzeck* is one of the first extensive operas of the 20th century written in an atonal idiom with the use of Sprechgesang – a type of vocalization between speech and song. Both due to its importance for the history of music modernism and for the quality of its music in itself, it has been a staple of the repertory of all major opera houses in the world.

Olivier Py, director of one of the world's most important festivals, the Festival d'Avignon, is considered one of the greatest figures of the modern French culture. In his threefold capacity as actor, author and director, he has worked in cinema, theatre and opera, driven always by his determination to engage through his art the concerns of our times in a poetic and at the same time political dialogue. Since 1999 when he directed his first opera in Nancy, until today he has presented highly successful opera productions in Geneva, Lausanne, Salzburg, Lyon, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Paris, Brussels, Vienna, Moscow, Munich, Berlin, etc. His artistic identity is clear, and the political aspect of his work is recognizable. Having as a steady collaborator scenographer-costume designer Pierre-André Weitz, his productions are marked by impressive settings in constant movement, plays of contrasts between the dark and neon lights, masks, naked bodies and a cabaret aesthetics. The director notes about the production: *"I visualize a political but also metaphysical Wozzeck. It is a work which - I'd dare say- looks like an ancient Greek tragedy, except it is not about a king, but speaks of a simple man who becomes an unhappy hero. Berg gave Buchner's play – a play most notably political- a metaphysical dimension – turning Wozzeck into a kind of modern Christ"*.

Operetta in Greek

**Johann Strauss II**

***Die Fledermaus***

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**7, 8, 9, 16, 19, 22, 23 February 2020**

**5 March 2020**

Starts at 20.00 (Sundays 18.30 / 05/03 at 19.00)

Conductor **Giorgos Ziavras**

Director **Alexandros Efklidis**

Associate director **Angela-Kleopatra Saroglou**

Libretto translation **Dimitris Dimopoulos**

Sets **Sotiris Stelios** / Costumes **Alexia Theodoraki**

Choreographer **Maria Kousouni** / Lighting **Melina Mascha**

**With the GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

Johann Strauss junior's *Die Fledermaus* is the work with which we will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Greek National Opera, since the famous operetta was the inaugural work of the Greek National Opera that premiered on the stage of the National Theatre on 5 March 1940.

It is a work inscribed in the Greek National Opera's DNA, which has been interpreted by some of its most important protagonists and has been timelessly loved by its audience. It is a work that has been "hellenified", as one would say, through its so tight identification with the musico-theatrical life of post-war Greece and of the National Opera in particular.

The production that was first presented in 2015 at the Olympia Theatre, directed by Alexandros Efklidis, transfers the action of the work to the bourgeois living rooms of Athens and the cabanas of the Asteras Vouliagmenis resort, during the '60s. In fact, the party of the Soviet ambassador Orlovsky takes place on 20 April 1967 in the evening, on the eve of the military coup. The dawn finds our heroes behind bars.

The director notes about *Die Fledermaus*: *"The transfer to 'our reality' is a process absolutely interweaved with light music theatre everywhere in the world. Before being considered as one of the masterpieces of serious music, Die Fledermaus was a very popular work, that has undergone many local adaptations in the various countries where it has been performed. The intention of our performance derives from this logic and attempts to achieve a balance between the respect due to such a work and the equally legitimate lack of respect required by the operetta genre. Besides, isn't this what operetta as genre systematically did? It played with limits, produced meaning through a constant coming in-and-out of the various contexts with which it engages: light theatre, and serious music, lofty and cheap, bourgeois and 'popular', international artistic currents and locality. The reframing we attempt in our version of Die Fledermaus is nothing more than a change of frame: what matters is the painting".*

The guests at prince Orlovsky's party on the celebratory performance of the 5th of March 2020 –the 80th anniversary of the GNO– will be a special surprise.

Filmed operetta

**Nikos Hadjiapostolou**

***The Apaches of Athens***

Directed & produced by the **Brothers Gaziadis** (1930)

In collaboration with the Greek Film Archive Foundation

**15 February 2020**

Starts at 20.00

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

With the participation of an instrumental ensemble and soloists of the GNO

A historic Greek film of 1930, deemed lost for many decades, was found in the *Cinémathèque Française* archives and returns to the Stavros Niarchos Hall's "big screen" on 15 February 2020, thanks to a donation from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and under the auspices of Costas Gavras, as result of the collaboration between the Greek Film Archive Foundation and the Greek National Opera. The film was restored at the L'Imagine Ritrovata Laboratory, from an original negative nitrate print with French intertitles.

The *Apaches of Athens* (premiere in Athens, 1930) by the Brothers Gaziadis is based on Nikos Hadjiapostolou and Giannis Prineas' legendary operetta of the same title (1921) and constitutes an attempt to create the first film with "sound and speech" produced in Greece.

The film, starring some legendary figures of the Greek music scene, such as Petros Kyriakos, Mary Sayanou, Petros Epitropakis, Giannis Prineas, e.t.c., has been an important and lost - until today- link in the history of early Greek cinema.

The film will be performed with live music, in an effort to restore the work's original – and for ever lost – soundtrack. However, the key power of this filmed operetta lies in the lofty aesthetics of its filming, which splendidly records some of the most significant landmarks of Athens and its surroundings, while capturing the 1930s everyday life in the areas of Plaka, Psyrri, Agora, Thiseio, Gazi, Haftia, Syntagma Square, Omonia, Stadiou and Panepistimiou streets, and even the Tatoi Palace. After its first presentation at the Greek National Opera, the restored copy of the film will travel to major film festivals of early cinema across the world.

Free admission upon priority vouchers

Opera

**Yiorgos Vassilandonakis**

***Pope Joan***

Greek Music Cycle

Libretto by **Vangelis Hadjiyannidis**, based on Emmanouel Rhoides' novel of the same title

Commissioned by the GNO for its 80th anniversary / World premiere

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**8, 15, 22 March 2020** / Starts at 18.30

Conductor **Stathis Soulis**

Director **Dimitris Karantzas**

Sets **Eva Manidaki** / Costumes **Ioanna Tsami**

Movement coach **Tasos Karahalios** / Lighting designer **Alekos Anastasiou**

In the leading roles **Chryssa Maliamani** and **Dionysios Sourbis**

**With the GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

The Greek National Opera commissioned composer Yiorgos Vassilandonakis to write a new opera on the occasion of the organization's 80th anniversary. *Pope Joan* comes to the Stavros Niarchos Hall 154 years after the release of the "antichristian and malevolent" novel of Emmanouel Rhoides. The libretto, which bears the stamp of writer Vangelis Hadjiyannidis, is based on Rhoides' notorious novel, which was severely criticized in its time due to the harsh criticism it unleashed against the representatives and practices of the church. The new opera, which Vassilandonakis composed within a two-year period, is two-act and divided in 15 scenes. The multi-awarded composer and university professor, who has written music for orchestra, chamber ensembles, voice and chorus, electronic and multimedia music, opera and many works for the cinema and theatre in the USA, notes: *"My goal was to portray a restless and unconventional spirit, a tragic and at the same time romantic figure, that is constantly transforming itself, destroying and reorienting itself against everything, to the very end. The heroine meanders in two music universes. The first tries to listen to the historical and geographical context of the work, acting in a descriptive capacity. The second intervenes in a psychological, emotional, spiritual, underground, abstract and transcendental manner, echoing from times to times Rhoides' voice. These two music worlds sometimes operate autonomously, and other times coexist or come into conflict. The compositional approach is modern, free and open to music elements, techniques and processes free from time or style limits. It starts with sounds which function in a narrative capacity and then acquire music substance as sources of harmonic and timbral material, building a parallel musical narrative which serves and develops along with the inner world of the characters and the dramatic structure"*.

The new opera's direction has been assigned to one of the most prestigious theatre directors of the young generation, Dimitris Karantzas. The director notes: *"The performance, based on Vangelis Hadjiyannidis' very condensed libretto which preserves Rhoides' style unaltered, follows the course of Pope Joan through very short fragmented poetic images. From ignorance to knowledge, from innocence to maturity and power. Everything underneath a sky that will trap and suck them up. Yiorgos Vassilandonakis' composition is an unexpected modern proposal"*.

Ballet

**Marius Petipa / Ludwig Minkus**

***Don Quixote***

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**20, 21, 26, 29 March 2020**

**5, 11, 26 April 2020**

Starts at 20.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Stathis Soulis**

Choreography **Marius Petipa**

Sets **George Souglides**

Costumes **Mary Katrantzou**

**With the GNO Orchestra, Principal Dancers, Soloists, Demi-Soloists and Corps de Ballet**

The Greek National Opera's Ballet presents Marius Petipa's classical choreography for *Don Quixote*, which was first presented in 1869 at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and its revised version in 1871 at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg.

The story of the ballet draws mainly upon the second volume of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and focuses on the love between Quiteria (Kitri in the ballet) and barber Basilio.

Ludwig Minkus studied music in Vienna and already at the age of twenty he played the violin, composed and conducted orchestras. A few years after immigrating to Russia, he was appointed supervisor of the orchestras of the Imperial theatres of Moscow. He composed music for many ballets, some of which to choreographies by Petipa.

Marius Petipa travelled at an early age to Spain, where he was especially drawn to traditional dances. In his *Don Quixote* Petipa tries to transfer the images and colours of Spain, offering an exceptional rendition of the Spanish music tradition through his choreography. The fruit of the collaboration between Minkus and Petipa was met from the very beginning with huge success, that resulted in establishing *Don Quixote* as a timeless masterpiece in the world ballet repertoire.

Even today *Don Quixote* is a great challenge for classical dancers, due to its high degree of technical difficulty, while the way in which it is rendered is decisive for the quality of a ballet ensemble. It is no coincidence that it in the world of classic dance it has become customary to say that "a team that can render *Don Quixote* correctly can dance everything".

13

Visual installations programme

***The Artist on the Composer***

Second commission **Yorgos Lanthimos**

Music and Visual Arts Cycle, in collaboration with the NEON organization

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**Spring 2020**

After Nikos Navridis' first and very successful installation, the programme *The Artist on the Composer*, a three-year collaboration between the Greek National Opera and the Organization for Culture and Development NEON ([www.neon.org.gr](http://www.neon.org.gr)) brings to Greece the great Greek internationally acclaimed director **Yorgos Lanthimos**.

As it had been announced all along by the GNO and NEON, the programme *The Artist on the Composer* connects cutting-edge contemporary visual artists, composers and/or film producers with "live" performances of orchestral music. Through the fruits of new commissions, each artist engages in a dialogue with works of classic composers, free from the usual operatic conventions and narratives, opening up to an audience that might have not been involved in opera before.

Yorgos Lanthimos enthusiastically accepted the proposal of Giorgos Koumendakis, Artistic Director of the GNO, and Elina Kountouri, Director of NEON, who will jointly curate the programme, to create a short film which will be projected at the Stavros Niarchos Hall accompanied by music ensembles.

The multi-awarded Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos is considered today as one of the most sought-after creators in the world cinema with a recognizable style and an absolutely personal writing. His first full-length film *Kineta* was presented at the Toronto and Berlin film festivals. With his *Dogtooth* he conquered Cannes, where he won the "Un certain regard" prize and received his first Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film. The *Alps* won the best screenplay award in Venice, and the *Lobster* was presented in Cannes and was nominated for an Academy award for best original screenplay. His next movie *The Killing of the Sacred Deer* won the best screenplay award at the Cannes Film Festival. His last film, *The Favourite*, brought him to the centre of global attention: it started its breathtaking course at the Venice Festival, received 10 Academy Award nominations, 12 BAFTA award nominations, won the Golden Globe and its box office revenues reached 100.000.000 dollars at a worldwide scale.

The precise dates of the programme presentation will be announced shortly, as well as the details related to the making of the film and the musicians accompanying it.



Opera

**Angelos Triantafyllou**

**Inland**

Greek Music Cycle

Libretto by **Giannis Asteris**

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**10, 12, 22, 23 April 2020** / Starts at: 20.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Elias Voudouris**

Director **Nikos Karathanos**

Sets, costumes **Elli Papageorgakopoulou** / Movement coach **Amalia Bennett**

Lighting design **Nikos Vlasopoulos**

With the **GNO Orchestra, Chorus and interpreters of 65+**

With the participation of the **Alternative Stage Intercultural Orchestra** and the **65+ Chorus** of the **GNO Learning & Participation**

A new opera commissioned by the GNO treating the subject of loneliness in old age comes to the Stavros Niarchos Hall in April 2020. Angelos Triantafyllou, one of the most important composers of the young generation in the sphere of theatre music, tries his hand at opera for the first time, with a libretto by Giannis Asteris.

The composer notes: *"Inland is an opera without acts and without scenes. It is a work consisting of interlocking isles born the one from the other, following all together the flow of a fast-flowing river. The core inspiration came first of all from the elderly people dying of loneliness, a phenomenon which in some countries such as Japan is far-reaching and massive. And from that point forward my motivation was my desire to pay tribute to the generation of our grandfathers and grandmothers, who raised us and whose decline we witnessed. Beautiful and painful. This opera raises questions about old age, loneliness, sickness, fragile family relationships and the perishability we all are confronted with. Inland will be mainly performed by soloists aged over 65, and some younger ones. Some with a long career, others who are amateurs, others who are clearly lyric singers, and others who are not. The chorus also consists of people aged 65+. The intercultural orchestra participates along with the GNO orchestra. In terms of music Inland is based upon a personal idiom which has been formed by my previous work in theatre, but also by the genres and styles in which I was raised by the generations for which I now write. There are soloist parts, duets, chorales, etc without however strictly following an operatic structure. I have no ambition to achieve a clear style or an absolute structure. I aim at coordinating myself with the vibration I feel by reliving all that I have in my memory and all that is awoken inside me by the poetry of Giannis Asteris, with whom we co-create the work".*

The direction bears the stamp of Nikos Karathanos, one of the most prestigious Greek theatre directors, with his absolutely recognizable style, characterized by sensitivity, musicality and the desire to bring out underground meanings and concepts. The director notes: *"Inland talks about those who in the twilight of their lives turned to themselves and died of loneliness. About those whose corpse was found after a long time. Those who saw in the sky only the constellation of Lupus. About our parents. About aunt Vangelio and Argyris. About the stranger who lives across the street. About all those who left like lonely stars when their loneliness exploded with a thundering roar".*



Opera

**Jules Massenet**

***Werther***

French Opera Cycle

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**10, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24 May 2020**

Starts at 19.00 (Sundays 18.30)

Conductor **Lukas Karytinis**

Director **Benoît Jacquot**

Sets **Charles Edwards**

Costumes **Christian Gask**

A production of the Opéra National de Paris

In the main roles **Massimo Giordano** (Werther) and **Anita Rachvelishvili** (Charlotte)

With the **GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

The Greek National Opera will present a great world-class artistic event in May 2020. Jules Massenet's *Werther* brings the top mezzo-soprano of our time, Anita Rachvelishvili, to the Greek National Opera. She will tackle for the first time in her career the role of Charlotte in an already legendary production directed by the great French film director Benoît Jacquot.

One of the most popular operas in the French repertoire, *Werther* was written about a century after Goethe's epistolary novel of the same title, upon which it is based, and it describes the dead-end love story between young Werther and Charlotte. The operatic *Werther*, which was met with huge success when it was written and has been translated in many languages and influenced the morals and fashion of the time, follows its own rules, keeping a distance from the original. It preserves the conflict with the social environment and social conventions, but sets aside the philosophical questions. The story of Goethe's hero inspired the French composer to write music of high lyricism and rare tenderness, with intense dramatic outbursts.

Jacquot's famous production first premiered in 2003 at the Royal Opera House, London, and then at the Opéra National de Paris. Critics and audience have repeatedly praised the suggestive scenic rendition of the dead-end love and the atmosphere created by each scene, following the mood shifts of Massenet's music.

Anita Rachvelishvili, a true opera star, carves out a spectacular trajectory at the world's top opera houses with huge success and triumphant reviews by the biggest media of the planet. After her first enthralling appearance in Greece last July in GNO's production as Carmen, the sought-after Rachvelishvili –whom Riccardo Muti characterized as the "best mezzo on the planet nowadays" in a *New York Times* article titled "A young singer enthralled the world of opera"– received a standing ovation at the Metropolitan Opera House in the productions *Aida* and *Adriana Lecouvreur*, where she co-starred with Anna Netrebko, and at the Opéra National de Paris as Carmen. She also gave concerts with Jonas Kaufman and Daniel Barenboim, while next July she will make her Salzburg debut.

Opera

**Giuseppe Verdi**

***Rigoletto***

Italian Opera Cycle

Odeon of Herodes Atticus

**4, 6, 9, 11 June 2020**

Starts at 21.00

As part of the Athens Festival

Conductor **Philippe Auguin** (Artist in Residence 2019/20)

Director **Katerina Evangelatos**

Sets **Eva Manidaki**

In the main roles **Dimitri Platanias** (Rigoletto), **Matthew Polenzani** (Duke), **Christina Poulitsi** (Gilda)

With the **GNO Orchestra, Chorus and Soloists**

The first big summer production of the Greek National Opera at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in summer 2020 will be Giuseppe Verdi's dark masterpiece *Rigoletto*.

Since 1851 when it was first presented in Venice until today *Rigoletto* has been applauded by thousands of spectators across the world and it has rightly been characterized as one of the most popular operas of all times. In *Rigoletto*, Verdi turns the page of his compositional trajectory and presents a work with a clear mark and an increased mood for experimentation, as the shifts between lyrical and dramatic scenes ensure the constant flow of the plot at a high speed.

It tells the story about the love of Gilda, daughter of the hunchback court jester Rigoletto, for the promiscuous Duke of Mantua, who presents himself to her as a poor student. In order to take revenge for his daughter's lost honour, Rigoletto plans the Duke's murder. When Gilda finds out her father's plans, she decides to save her beloved one and sacrifice herself by taking his place. The Greek National Opera assigned the direction of *Rigoletto* to the unique Katerina Evangelatos, theatre director and one of the most promising voices of the young generation. After her first and very successful collaboration with the GNO on the contemporary opera *Z*, Evangelatos will tackle this great work of the operatic repertoire and through her own recognizable director's identity she will attempt to shed light upon the controversial, dark personality of the character of Rigoletto.

After the two historic productions of *Rigoletto*, directed by the great Spyros Evangelatos (Olympia 1977 and Odeon of Herodes Atticus 2001), Katerina Evangelatos comes to put her own stamp on a work that has been linked with her family and not only with her father Spyros Evangelatos, but also with her grandfather, the top maestro Antiochos Evangelatos, who conducted *Rigoletto* for the GNO in 1956/57 and 1970/71.

Two celebrated protagonists of the GNO will star in the production. In the title role, the renowned Greek baritone with the great international career Dimitri Platanias and in the role of Gilda the celebrated Greek soprano Christina Poulitsi.

Performance

**Marina Abramović**

***The Seven Deaths of Maria Callas***

Music and Visual Arts Cycle

Composition Marko Nikodijević, Marina Abramović

Music by Marko Nikodijević and scenes from the operas of Bizet, Donizetti, Puccini and Verdi

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

**8, 9, 10 July 2020** / Starts at 20.00

Director, set designer **Marina Abramović**

Co-director **Lynsey Peisinger**

Conductor **Yoel Gamzou**

Music **Marko Nikodijević**

Video **Nabil Elderkin** / Screenplay **Petter Skavlan, Marina Abramović**

Visual effects **Marco Brambilla** / Costumes **Riccardo Tisci**

Lighting design **Urs Schönebaum** / Dramaturgy **Benedikt Stampfli**

Performance **Marina Abramović** / Actor **Willem Dafoe**

With the GNO Orchestra

The new ambitious operatic project of the priestess of performance art Marina Abramović for the absolute diva, Maria Callas, is an international co-production of the Greek National Opera and the Bavarian State Opera (Munich), the Berlin State Opera, the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Festival and the Opéra National de Paris.

“Vissi d’arte” – a love for her art. Shortly before the renowned singer Floria Tosca thrusts the knife into the chest of the beastly cynic Scarpia, she sings out her life in wistful retrospect. Although the aria marks the calm before the storm, the death of her adversary, this turning point in Giacomo Puccini’s opera also points to Tosca’s fate. Maria Callas, the primadonna assoluta of the 20th century, sang this aria many times. Marina Abramović has been fascinated by the life of the “Tigress”, as Callas was known, for decades. She has now developed the *Seven Deaths of Maria Callas* opera project, in which seven deaths on stage are recreated in exemplary form on the basis of the musical and scenic formative highlights of the respective operas – all arias that were immensely important for Maria Callas. In seven films and together with Willem Dafoe, Marina Abramović will die seven times and at the end of the performance, with the real death of Maria Callas in Paris in 1977, will be on the stage performing as herself.

In addition to the well-known arias from the 19th and 20th centuries, Serbian composer Marko Nikodijević will compose music for the opera’s musical arrangement, illustrating how Callas’ unconditioned love for her art never allowed a separation between the person on stage and the private person.

Abramović notes: *“For over 25 years I wanted to create a work dedicated to the life and art of Maria Callas. I was always enchanted by her personality, her life and even her death. Like many of the opera heroines she enacted on stage, so she herself died of love. She died of a broken heart”*.

## CONCERTS 2019/20

Saturday 24 October 2019 / Starts at 20.00

### ***Tribute to Kostas Paskalis***

**Conductor Lukas Karytinis**

With the **GNO Orchestra** and celebrated Soloists

Curator **Marina Krilovici**

The GNO honours *Kostas Paskalis*, one of the greatest Greek baritones. He set out on his path from the GNO chorus, and in 1951 he starred in *Rigoletto*. In 1958 he began his international career at the Vienna State Opera, where he continued to appear for 25 years. He also appeared at major theatres and festivals (Glyndebourne & Salzburg Festivals, Royal Opera House, London, La Scala, Milan, New York Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco, New Orleans and Houston operas, etc). He was admired for his dark, masculine voice, his beautiful singing diction, as well as his acting skills and stage presence. In the GNO he starred in productions at the Olympia Theatre and the Odeon of Herodes Atticus and he directed *Don Giovanni*, *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Simon Boccanegra*. In 1988/89 he served as General Director of the GNO.

14 November 2019 / Starts at 20.00

GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall – SNFCC

### ***Three concertos for piano and orchestra***

**Conductor Daniel Smith**

Piano: **George-Emmanuel Lazaridis, Stefanos Thomopoulos, Karolos Zouganelis**

GNO Orchestra

Three of the most popular concertos for piano and orchestra of the Romantic period shall be presented in a diversified programme at the GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall with the GNO Orchestra and the celebrated pianists Giorgos-Emmanouil Lazaridis, Stefanos Thomopoulos and Karolos Zouganelis, as part of the 2019 Piano Festival of the GNO Alternative Stage, which will be held in collaboration with the Thessaloniki Piano Festival. The works are Johannes Brahms' concerto No 1, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's concerto No 1 and Sergei Rachmaninov's concerto No 2.

13, 14 February 2020

Starts at 20.00

### ***The era of Melissanthi***

Manos Hadjidakis Cycle

**Conductor Lukas Karytinis**

Artistic curator **George Hadjidakis**

Visual installation **Jannis Kounelis (Sipario-Uscite)**

The Greek National Opera repeats the great work *The Era of Melissanthi* on 13 and 14 February 2020, as part of the Manos Hadjidakis Cycle. Manos Hadjidakis dedicated the *Era of Melissanthi* (opus 37) to the memory of his mother. It is a cantata for a mature female voice, two young male voices, a mixed children's choir, a chamber orchestra and military band, and with bouzouki as its core musical instrument.

## TICKETS 2019/20

Αίθουσα Σταύρος Νιάρχος / GNO Stavros Niarchos Hall SNFCC	VIP	Ζώνη 1 Zone 1	Ζώνη 2 Zone 2	Ζώνη 3 Zone 3	Ζώνη 4 Zone 4	Ζώνη 5 Zone 5	Ζώνη 6 Zone 6	Ζώνη 7 Zone 7	Περιορισμένη ορατότητα Limited visibility	Φοιτητικό - Παιδικό Reduced admission for students
Η ΥΠΝΟΒΑΤΙΣ / LA SONNAMBULA	90	60	55	50	40	35	20	15	10	15
ΤΟ ΑΗΔΟΝΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΑ / THE EMPEROR'S NIGHTINGALE (Κυριακή / Sunday)	20	20	20	15	15	15	15	15	5	12
ΤΟ ΑΗΔΟΝΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΑ / THE EMPEROR'S NIGHTINGALE (Δευτέρα - Παρασκευή / Monday - Friday)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	5	12
ΧΟΡΟΣ ΜΕ ΤΗ ΣΚΙΑ ΜΟΥ / DANCE WITH MY OWN SHADOW	70	50	45	40	35	30	20	15	10	12
ΝΤΟΝ ΚΑΡΛΟ / DON CARLO	90	60	55	50	40	35	20	15	10	15
Η ΛΙΜΝΗ ΤΩΝ ΚΥΚΝΩΝ / SWAN LAKE	70	50	45	40	35	30	20	15	10	12
ΒΟΤΣΕΚ / WOZZECK	70	55	50	42	35	30	20	15	10	15
Η ΝΥΧΤΕΡΙΔΑ / DIE FLEDERMAUS	70	50	45	40	35	30	20	15	10	12
ΠΑΠΙΣΣΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΑ / POPE JOAN	60	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	12
ΔΟΝ ΚΙΧΩΤΗΣ / DON QUIXOTE	70	50	45	40	35	30	20	15	10	12
THE ARTIST ON THE COMPOSER	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
ΜΕΣΑ ΧΩΡΑ / INLAND	60	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	12
ΒΕΡΘΕΡΟΣ / WERTHER	100	70	65	55	40	35	20	15	10	15
ΟΙ ΕΠΤΑ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΙ ΤΗΣ ΜΑΡΙΑ ΚΑΛΛΑΣ / THE SEVEN DEATHS OF MARIA CALLAS	70	55	50	42	35	30	20	15	10	15
Η ΕΠΟΧΗ ΤΗΣ ΜΕΛΙΣΣΑΝΘΗΣ / THE ERA OF MELISSANTHI	60	45	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	12
Οδείο Ηρώδου Αττικού / Odeon of Herodes Atticus	Διακεκριμένη Ζώνη VIP Zone C	Διακεκριμένη Ζώνη B & D VIP Zone B & D	Ζώνη Α Zone A	Ζώνη Β Zone B	Ζώνη Γ Zone C	Άνω δόξα Upper Tier	Φοιτητικό / Παιδικό Reduced admission for students			
ΡΙΓΟΛΕΤΤΟΣ / RIGOLETTO	100	85	60	55	45	25	15			

20