

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE GREEK NATIONAL OPERA AT THE STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION CULTURAL CENTER

Richard Strauss

Elektra

Opera

Greek National Opera Main Stage - The 'Stavros Niarchos' Hall - Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center

Premiere: October 15, 2017

First presentation by the Greek National Opera

Conductor: **Vassilis Christopoulos**

Director-sets: **Yannis Kokkos**

Artistic associate-dramaturgy: **Ann Blanchard**

Costumes: **Lily Kentaka**

Lighting: **Vinicio Cheli**

Acclaimed Greek mezzo-soprano Agnes Baltsa stars in the role of Clytemnestra in her first collaboration with the Greek National Opera

The Greek National Opera launches its new era at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center with an ambitious work, Richard Strauss' one-act opera *Elektra* [*Electra*]-based on Sophocles' the same name tragedy, and one of the most important and challenging operas of the 20th century- as its first production.

Staging the work is a major challenge for the GNO and its music ensembles because the particularly complex score, in which Strauss pushes expressionism to the limits, reaching the borders of tonality, requires around 110 musicians.

Strauss' *Elektra* has never before been performed by the GNO. The symbolism of the choice operates on many levels, since on the one hand it is an opera based on a Greek theme, inspired by one of the myths of the house of Atreus, which will play a major role in the GNO's overall programming for the next three seasons, and on the other hand it is a 20th century work, revealing that one of GNO's intentions is to demonstrate that opera and musical theater did not come to an end with the 19th century.

The production also marks the first collaboration between the GNO and world class Greek mezzo-soprano Agnes Baltsa, who will star as Clytemnestra in all performances, which will be directed by the international Greek director and set designer Giannis Kokkos, and conducted by the internationally acclaimed conductor Vasilis Christopoulos.

With the **GNO Orchestra** and **Chorus**.

Sponsor: **Mytilineos Group**