

**THEATHINAI WAS AT MORAITIS SCHOOL AND WATCHED 'EX LIBRIS' BY NOITI GRAMMI THEATRE GROUP, DIRECTED BY OLGA POZELI**

**by Niki Rapti**

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**“Ex Libris”**. Yesterday, at Moraitis School, we had the great pleasure of watching Noiti Grammi Theatre Group in an amazing, absolutely original performance which celebrates inspiration and imagination, conceived and directed by the exceptionally talented **Olga Pozeli** and to have an amazing experience through the writings of **Andreas Flourakis, Akis Dimou, Sophia Kapsourou, Glykeria Basdeki, Maria Gouli** and **Theoni Dede**.

The book, as the main protagonist, whispers its stories and invites each and every one of us to participate in them with all our senses. To listen attentively to the details and travel across a universe filled with ideas, beguiling realism and real magic. The senses of touch, smell, hearing and sight, the spirit and the soul of the spectator-reader, a physical and mental alertness, all stimulate a desire to discover those elements that can draw us in a book and captivate our thoughts and our hearts. It is then that we observe the moments of silence and the pauses, the fonts and the traces. Those left behind by time and oblivion. Gentle and ruthless. Inevitable and fatal. Through sound, horror, reflection and aside. The books and the outstanding actors look straight in our eyes and we sweetly immerse ourselves in their lives – the lives that are being woven in front of us as well as inside us.

The actors **Goni Louka, Isabella Kyriazi, Stevi Fortoma, Grigoris Poimenidis, Konstantis Mizaras and Marios Souyoutzoglou**, with sensitivity and passion, took us on a ride across a vibrant and fluid reality, the vehicle being their great talent, their voice, their naturalness and their expressiveness. It is a universe of precious words, affording various perspectives and pointing to multiple directions. There where each spectator will “read” behaviours and events differently and will entirely identify with the heroes and the heroines.

The poems of our beloved **Wislava Szymborska**, a major figure in Polish poetry and the **1996 Laureate of the Nobel Prize for Literature**, are filled with beauty and imagery. We had the opportunity to enjoy her deeply meaningful poetry, translated into Greek by **Giorgos Tzedopoulos**, with our eyes closed and under the sounds of live music performed by **Vicky Sahpazi**, a wonderful musician. The set design was magnificent – an atmosphere full of life and book pages, filled with the scent of the paper, awakening our hearing and our vision. Moments, roles, and souls are connected with different eras and different books and stories. They are waiting for the moment when they can breathe near us, next to us. The moment when they introduce the heroine of a novel, notes and traces of time and people on yellowed pages, precious, funny as well as dramatic moments which have left their mark on us and often determine our lives.

Two girls with phone addiction, Titi and Rena, introduce themselves through **Glykeria Basdeki’s** witty and subtly humorous piece, which draws inspiration from **Ersi Sotiropoulou’s** book **“The Farce”** and is brought to life by **Goni Louka**, who gives a gripping performance. **Sophia Kapsourou’s** text, inspired by **Emile Zola’s “Nana”**, is a nostalgic story about the unexpected encounter between past and present, which moves

us and carries us along with it through a mesmerizing interpretation by **Stevi Fortoma**. **Isabella Kyriazi** with her persistent words and pages, which speak and dance while swallows are being wrapped in them, takes us to a world of great sensitivity, poetry and imagery created by the unique **Theoni Dede**, a piece inspired **Pearl Buck's** novel 'East Wind: West Wind'. **Konstantis Mizaras** in **Andreas Flouraki's** masterful text, which is inspired by **Abdul Alhazred's** book "Necronomicon", literally enchants us and initiates us, right from the first moment, into a great story that remains really unforgettable as it reveals an extraordinary link between memory and loss, as well as an ongoing and vital connection between these, 'now' and 'forever'. **Marios Souyoutzoglou** in a piece by **Maria Gouli**, which draws on **Heinrich Böll's** book "The Clown", is tender and confessional, offering us a wealth of emotions with his outstanding rendition and stage presence. Finally, **Grigoris Poimenidis** in a piece written by **Akis Dimou** and inspired by **Christos Vakalopoulos'** book "The Line of the Horizon", invites us in the most direct manner to become acquainted with a heroine-muse and her journey.

In this poetic and extremely atmospheric journey across eras and words, the spectator explores, observes and participates. **Noiti Grammi Theatre Group**, with significant awards and accolades both in Greece and abroad and an admirable track record, offers the spectators the possibility to feel part of a theatrical language and a type of communication that are immensely interesting and cultivate the need for a more substantial contact with all kinds and forms of art. The place, the time, the details and the props acquire a special meaning as the spectators themselves often influence the energy and the sensation involved in every moment.

The subversion, the spontaneity, the route someone will choose to turn knowledge into experience through reading and coming into contact with any story that concerns them. The book seen as a medicine, as a way out, as a shelter, as the source of the ultimate inspiration, as food for thought and speculation, as an opportunity to set out on a profound quest for our 'self'. The uncanny that suddenly becomes familiar, the dream and the reminiscence of a personal voice that we often ignore in the course of the tough everydayness. The courage, the worry, our little and big secrets, the boldness, the questions, the fears and the invaluable words-entities that inhabit within us in deafening silence as well as in powerful speech.

All these were illuminated with dazzling virtuosity by **Olga Pozeli's** excellent direction, thus offering us, with ineffable kindness, a flawless performance, which reminded us of the freedom to think, the happiness one can find upon opening and after closing a book, the magic of participating in a theatrical act and actively engaging in it both emotionally and intellectually.