

Composition Competition 2009/2010

Opera

„HELIKE ATHANATOS“

„Helike – Immortal“

- Triumph of Archaeology -

"Hellenikon Idyllion" – the Greek musical and cultural centre at the north-western coast of the Peloponnes - organises in honour of an archaeological research project to locate and excavate the famous ancient city Helike, close to the nearby city Egion, a composition competition for an already written opera-libretto.

This competition intends to motivate those, who - like us - consider this project worth it to give their enthusiasm and passion to and who see it as a special challenge, as a present they will give to themselves. In the scope of our possibilities we try to support you to present your composition and to celebrate together. To every winner and participant an olive wreath should be motivation because first of all they loved their proper work.

The aim of the competition is to transform the libretto into fascinating music. The story is based on an idea of Andreas Drekis, founder of Hellenikon Idyllion, text and literature in ancient Greek by Franz Knappik, M. A. philosophy, ancient Greek and musicology (university Munich).

In 1990 the archaeological research project for the lost city "Helike" in surroundings of Egion began. The city was destroyed in 372 B.C., most certainly by an earthquake followed by a flooding. About 500 years later Pausanias mentioned in his book about travelling around Greece, that he had seen those ruins at a seabed and wrote a detailed description about the city and its citizens. The doom of Helike was mentioned by several authors in that time. For more information please click adequate part on our website <http://www.idyllion.eu/en/archaeologisches.html>

The expected discovery of the city, that has been looked for since about 20 years by now, and whose successful finding will hopefully be soon - as there were new evidences from last years' research results - gave the impulse for writing the opera-libretto. An impressive Poseidon temple with a bronze statue of Poseidon and an Agora are recorded since antiquity.

On the one hand **the story** of two lovers in ancient times is told, who survive the earthquake and the tragic destruction of their hometown including the extinction all citizens, on the other hand intellectual delight of an ancient symposium and love are subject of the opera. Dramaturgical turning point is the change to the "future" - our present - when 2.500 years later, an archaeological team searches for the lost city. Indeed the search is shaken by another not that strong earthquake, but at the same moment at the place where the archaeologists are searching, an earth-wall collapses and an impressive part of the ruins of the temple is revealed and finally also the bronze statue of Poseidon. The success of the yearlong archaeological excavation is coming: the whole place is excavated. The opera ends with a big, triumphal celebration at the long awaited find spot in honour of archaeology and ancient Greek culture, with choral singing and old and new Greek dances.

The contrast between the ancient, fictitious story on the one hand and the modern, scientific archaeological excavation on the other - Helike's excavation gives reason to praise archaeology - and also the personal fate of the lovers being integrated in the storyline - their love story survives time - characterizes the exciting libretto.

By songs and choirs in ancient Greek as well as by a philosophical symposium the beauty of the ancient language and the impressive force of free thinking are shown. In order to ease probably occurring language problems and to facilitate a performance in other languages, the libretto is also available in English, German, included a phonetic translation of the ancient Greek text into Latin characters. A **knowledge of ancient Greek is not needed**. On our website you will also find a file with acoustic data to give you an impression of parts of the libretto in ancient Greek. Whoever is interested

in participating our competition will receive the complete libretto in ancient Greek, a phonetic transcribed version in Latin characters (Erasmus-pronunciation) and several important voice recordings of some parts of the play.

An impressive implementation of the ancient Greek aesthetic and dynamic language and of Greek culture is expected. Only ancient Greek or modern (modern Greek?) sounds or a combination: To realize in a musical way the contrast between old and new and the harmonic joining of past and modern times in a composition should be seen as a very special artistic challenge. Both natural events – the two earthquakes in their different extent, being important for the storyline and the end - are appreciated to be represented by compositional marking points. Also the integration of non-musical special effects – e. g. electronic effects – would be possible.

In case you are seriously interested in participating, in transferring the libretto to an opera / Singspiel, we will send you the complete libretto on request.....