Athens Festival 2018

3+1 performances that are repeated this year
and are not to be missed

***Failing to Levitate in My Studio****Inspired by the Beckettian universe*Dimitris Kourtakis

***National Garden***

Thodoris Gonis

***20 + 1 Laika Postwar Songs with a Baroque Ensemble***Christina Maxouri

***The Persians*** by Aeschylus

Cyprus Theatre Organisation - Aris Biniaris

Four performances that made a sensation at Athens Festival 2017 return for this year's edition. Widely praised performances which became word-of-mouth successes and the talk of the town. These performances will be presented again this year by popular demand for all those who missed them and for all those who feel like watching them again. Hall D of Peiraios 260 will host an immense, two-storey stage construction, wherein actor Aris Servetalis will deliver a singular performance of Beckettian language; the courtyard of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation in Plaka will welcome Christina Maxouri's Baroque rembetiko; the Odeon of Herodes Atticus will move in time to the sounds of Aris Biniaris' riveting The Persians; the National Garden dresses up in poetic attire, inviting audiences to an afternoon stroll, as conceived by director Thodoris Gonis.

***Failing to Levitate in My Studio****A performance inspired by the Beckettian universe*Dimitris KourtakisPeiraios 260 - D
1, 3, 4 and 5 June, at 21:00
2 June, at 20:00

This year, Athens Festival and Peiraios 260 will kick off the 2018 programme with Dimitris Kourtakis' performance, which brought last year's Festival to a close. Inspired by Samuel Beckett's body of work, this performance is an original stage universe, wherein Aris Servetalis gives a shattering performace. The entire production unfolds inside a breathtaking stage consruction, an enormous two-storey building set up on Hall D of Peiraios 260.

The main hero is a performer who is shut up in his studio, as evidenced by the title. He moves in an impressive scenery, followed by a camera, handled by video artist Jérémie Bernaert, well-known through his collaboration with director Julien Gosselin. A multimedia performance, featuring a team of internationally acclaimed artists. Sitting on the two sides of the stage, the audience watches the action projected on the building walls. A harrowing performance of Beckettian language and one of the biggest hits of last year's Festival.

Watch the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIe98_DvE8Q>

**Concept - Direction - Set design:**Dimitris Kourtakis
**Dramaturgy:** Dimitris Kourtakis, Eleni Papazoglou, Anastasia Tzellou
**Video:**Jérémie Bernaert
**Lighting design:** Scott Bolman
**Artistic collaboration:**Efi Birba
**Assistant director:** Natasha Triantafylli
**Assistant design:**Vassia Liri
**Production manager:**Denia Safari
**Performance:** Aris Servetalis

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 ***National Garden***

Thororis GonisEvery Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 8 June to 1 July, at 19:00 (dates are subject to change)

Meeting-starting point: Central entrance of National Garden (Vasilissis Amalias Ave. 1) - Sundial

What secrets may be unearthed during a stroll through the National Garden of Athens? Is there something lurking behind the flowerbeds which most people pass by without as much as a second look, most of them momentarily pausing there to catch their breath in the heart of Athens? Inspired by the history of the National Garden and Queen Amalia, Thodoris Gonis re-imagined the National Garden through poetic and peripatetic/ambulatory lenses. The performance National Garden, this year part of the Opening to the City - Athens, won over Athenian audiences who came in droves to attend it last year; a smashing hit with huge waiting lists.

A poetic stroll using texts and documents about the marble statues and busts of the poets, politicians, agriculturists and engineers that visitors of the National Garden come across during their walks, with the charming story of the 20-year-old queen who dreamt up this garden in the background. Visitors will be guided by Christos Hatzipanagiotis, Eleni Kokkidou and other actors and musicians.

Watch the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=28&v=b2SeobWLPD8>

**Direction:** Thodoris Gonis
**Dramaturgy:** Thodoris Gonis - Eleni Stroulia
**Research:**Mara Psalti
**Costume design:** Matina Megla
**Set design:** Eleni Stroulia - Zaira Falirea
**Literature consultant:**Nasos Vagenas
**Assistant director:** Michalis Angelidis
**Cast:**Hristos Hatzipanagiotis, Eleni Kokkidou, Katerina Patsiani, Elena Megreli
**Musicians:** Michalis Kalogerakis, Pantelis Kalogerakis

**20 + 1 Laika Postwar Songs with a Baroque Ensemble**Christina Maxouri

Courtyard of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation
12-16 June, 21:00

Audiences were spellbound with Christina Maxouri's performance at Athens Festival 2018, held in the atmospheric St. Paul's Anglican Church. The vocally gifted actress conjured a dazzling performance, performing rembetika songs to the sounds of Baroque instruments such as viola da gamba, violone and violin. A musical performance wedding the aristocratic style of interwar rembetiko with the emotionally charged 17-century Baroque music. Also featuring Lena Kitsopoulou, performing a few of the 20+1 songs of the list.

This year, the popular performance will be held at the charming courtyard of the National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation in Plaka, in the shadow of the Acropolis. For three evenings, the audience will enjoy this unique performance in a venue of almost mystical quality.Watch the trailer: <http://greekfestival.gr/gr/events/view/xristina-maxouri-2017>

**Concept - Song selection - Performance:** Christina Maxouri
**Arrangement:** Michalis Papapetrou
**Direction:** Yannis Kalavrianos
**Set design:**Evangelia Therianou
**Sound design and engineering:**Giannis Paxevanis
**Lighting design:**Nikos Vlassopoulos
**Production assistant:**Nourmala Isty
**Musicians:**Charalambos Karassavvidis (Baroque violin), Angeliki Kasda (Baroque violin), Iason Ioannou (viola da gamba), Sofia Efkleidou (Baroque cello), Dimitris Tigas (violone)
**Special guest:** Lena Kitsopoulou
**Production manager:** Katerina Berdeka

***The Persians,*** by AeschylusCyprus Theatre Organisation - Aris Biniaris

Odeon of Herodes Atticus
1 July, at 21:00

A performance that truly won the audience's hearts; a watermark of contemporary Greek theatre. Aris Biniaris made his Epidaurus debut last year, introducing a fresh perspective on Aeschylus' iconic tragedy about defeat. Emphasizing musicality and re-imagining the Chorus as the protagonist, Biniaris' The Persians is at once a theatrical and a musical event; a live assemblage of poetic language, music, and stage action, featuring stellar performances.

Athens Festival, in collaboration with Cyprus Theatre Organisation, responded to the audiences' demand that the show be held again and, as such, The Persians will be held at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus. Many scenes have left their mark on the audience, such as the invocation of Darius' ghost and the brilliant choreography performed by the Chorus with a hip-hop vibe. A performance that has raised a new standard for ancient drama, consolidating Aris Biniaris' position as one of the most promising young directors.

Watch the trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZfFansekA4>

**Translation:** Panagiotis Moullas
**Direction - Musical dramaturgy:**Aris Biniaris
**Metrical coaching:**Theodoros Stefanopoulos
**Set design:**Constantinos Louca
**Costume design:** Eleni Tzirkalli
**Movement:**Lia Haraki
**Lighting design:**Georgios Koukoumas
**Assistant to the director:** Dimitris Himonas
**Cast:**Karyofyllia Karabeti (Atossa), Harry Charalambous (Messenger), Nikos Psarras (Darius), Antonis Miriagos (Xerxes)
**Chorus:**Elias Andreou, Petros Georgadjis, Giorgos Evagorou, Nektarios Theodorou, Marios Konstantinou, Panayiotis Larkou, David Malteze, Yiannis Minos, Aris Biniaris, Onisiforos Onisiforou, Manos Petrakis, Stefanos Pittas, Konstantinos Sevdalis

The performances *Failing to Levitate in My Studio*, *20+1 Laika Postwar Songs with a Baroque Ensemble* and *National Garden* are realized with the support of Athens Culture Net

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