

A Tryout Workshop: Evaluating a New Play as a Theatrical Text

The Analogio Festival, Greece, September 2018

Aims and Framework:

This tryout workshop in the context of the Analogio Festival in Athens 2018 is a new way of exposing an unknown dramatic text, not merely as literary drama, but as a live theatrical text, open to variable interpretations and conceptions, both on the verbal level – subject to various translations (in case of a foreign play) – and on the staging level – given to a several directing and acting approaches, including inter-cultural and multi-medial. In this manner, the merits of the play, not merely as reading material, but as a holistic actable piece that evokes interactive relations with a number of possibilities to interpret, direct, design and lighten it, to set music and sound to it, etc., will be explored. In a world in which not only material goods and information travel fast, but also cultural assets, it is important to test the universal value of a play, its capability to be adapted to differing cultural contexts of production and reception.

It is foreseen, at this stage, that the workshop will be conducted under the auspices of the Greek authorities, the Greek I.T.I., The Embassy of Israel, the Israeli I.T.I., and The Hanoch Levin Institute of Israeli Drama.

From the Israeli point of view the cooperation with Greece is a token of friendship between our both countries, and we regard it as part of the festive events to mark the 70th anniversary of the State of Israel. We would also appreciate the auspices of the I.T.I. that likewise celebrates its 70th anniversary.

The workshop in the 2018 Festival is a pilot workshop, and will be based exclusively on two plays: A Greek play to be announced; and the Israeli play **Shavua [A Week] – Seven Days, by Shlomi Moskowitz.**

The workshop will consist of 4 stages. A part of the work will have to be done in the pre-workshop phase.

1. Stage 1 (early pre-festival stage): The choice and translation of the plays

As mentioned above – the plays have already been chosen by the Director of the "Analogio Festival" and the new Directorate of Letters of Arts of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Ms. Sissy Papathanassiou, and by the President of the Israeli Centre of the I.T.I. and the International Playwrights Forum,

Prof. Gad Kaynar-Kissinger, the initiator and artistic director of the workshop (henceforth – the managers). The managers will deeply appreciate the close advisory collaboration of Ms. Ursula Werdenberg, the Secretary of the IPF.

Since the workshop will be conducted throughout in the English language, the plays will have to be translated. **Shavua** has already been translated by Anthony Berris. The Greek translator will be announced soon. *The deadline for submission of the translations' final draft is June 30, 2018.*

The translations will be given to the directors of the full reading. These directors (a Greek and an Israeli will be chosen respectively the playwrights).

At the same time (pre-festival phase) *one* major scene of each play will be translated by two additional translators (2 Israelis, 2 Greek), known to have different approaches. The managers will choose the translators. It is desirable that at least one of the translators on each side will be a young translator. Should a difficulty of finding three appropriate translators from Greek and from Hebrew into English, the default option would be to use as *one* of the scene translations the person engaged in translating one of the plays for the full-reading.

2. Stage 2 (festival phase): Reading the Full Plays

At this stage both plays will be read in their entirety (staged reading, text in hand). The choice of the actors will be done by the directors. Ideally the cast should consist of both Greek and Israeli actors. In any case, it is important that they will be versatile (in order to be capable of working on the same part in different interpretations), and that they will be fluent in English, capable of acting in this language.

3. Stage 3 (festival phase): Performing optional interpretations.

The reading of the entire texts will be followed by the performance of the chosen scenes, directed by two additional directors – *this time preferably from other European, Asian or African countries* – in order to examine the adaptability of the play to other personal, aesthetic and cultural visions. The choice of the directors will be done by the managers. It is important that these directors will collaborate with local costume, stage and lighting designers (and if the need arises – with musicians and/or sound/we/men), who will add their input even if, for practical reasons, the space will be merely described, illustrated (for instance, through PowerPoint, models, sketches etc.) and not realized. The directors might introduce the scenes by sharing their ideas of the plays with the audience, even though this explanation might be superfluous. The acting cast will remain the same as in stage 2. Improvised set pieces, requisites, costumes and accessories will be borrowed from Greek theatres and theatre inventories that will of course be credited for their generosity.

Rehearsals both for the stage 2 and 3 will be conducted at least 10 days before the workshop, so that the directors and actors will have to be in situ.

4. Stage 4 (conclusive discussions):

Following the full reading, and the mounting of the chosen scenes, the merits and the problems of each play, as well as the evaluation of the various interpretive approaches to each play, will be discussed by a panel of three "experts" (dramaturgs, directors, experienced actors, etc. The panel should include one Greek participant, one Israeli, and one from a third country). The discussion will involve the audience, and it is important that the event will take place on a day or days on which the professional guests of the festival will be able to attend! After all, the terminal purpose is to market the plays.

5. Budget items (a preliminary scrutiny of expenses items, without ground expenses – venue, lights, ushers, etc.):

Artistic Director and supervisor (flight and accommodation).

Producer – local (fee)

Staff – 2-3 producer assistants – local (fees)

Translations (1 royalties; 1 full play; 2 scene translations)

3 directors (1 director full reading; 2 directors – 2 scenes each. For each of the foreign directors – transportation and accommodation)

Actors (rehearsals, performance, accommodation. Number of actors still unknown, as well as how many Greek, how many Israelis).

Panelists (at least 1 foreigner – flight and accommodation)

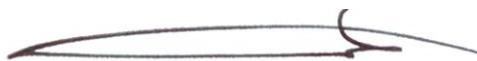
The venue of the workshop should be intimate, allowing close correspondence between actors and audience. An arena arrangement – the actors surrounded by audience (no more than 100 people) in the round – should be considered.

The workshop is designed to be a single day enterprise (it is important to ensure that the same spectators will attend the entire process), although it could be extended to two days. In the morning and early noon the full plays will be read, ensued by the performance of the chosen scenes in the afternoon. The critical panel will be held in the evening.

The workshop is an integral part of the Analogio Festival. All logistic problems related to the Workshop, as well as the PR work, the program booklets, the hosting and transportation matters, etc., will consequently fall under the responsibility of the Analogio Festival's administrative office.

Prof. Gad Kaynar-Kissinger

Initiator and Artistic Director of the Workshop



Tel Aviv, 27.3.2018