

CYPRUS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

THE GODSON (Ο ΒΑΦΤΙΣΤΙΚΟΣ)

TIME 20:30

**OPERETTA BY THEOFRASTOS
SAKELLARIDES ON A LIBRETTO
WRITTEN BY THE COMPOSER.**

Without doubt, "The Godson" has had more performances than any other Greek operetta and is considered to be one of the landmarks of the genre. It is an exquisite comedy-idyll, with entertaining elements of farce and with resourceful and natural melodic richness, which had sensational success in its time and continues to charm audiences today. It is a representative and at the same time excellent sample of the Greek operatic works.

It was first staged in 1918 by the "Ioannis Papaioannou Theatre Company" and in 1946 by the Greek National Opera, receiving enthusiastic reviews and praise. A characteristic part from these reviews is the following: "...The state musical theatre paid last night, an admittedly much delayed, albeit long-standing tribute to Greek operetta..."

The plot of this three-act operetta is

based on a French farce by Hennequin, Weber and de Gors, adapted in Greek. The work is placed chronologically during the Balkan wars (1912-1913) or a few years later (1918). Alexandros Evklides who directed and did the stage designs for this year's production of "The Godson" at the Thessaloniki Music Megaron, mentions some of the elements in the work: "...it is written in 1918, during a period of crisis for the Greeks, the causes of which can be observed in the work: boasting of influence in high places, being unworthy of one's office, fraud and exploiting one's homeland are some of the patterns of this comedy, hidden beneath the nostalgic sounds of the songs or the fanfares of national exaltation..."

The Cyprus Symphony Orchestra is giving these concert performances of "The Godson" for the first time. Some of the most beloved and unforgettable arias are the march "Up on the front line" ("Psila sto metopo") also sung by the soldiers in 1940, "Those old times" ("Ton kero ekino ton palio"), "My heart aches for you"

**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 14
STROVOLOS MUNICIPAL THEATRE**

**THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 15
RIALTO THEATRE
LIMASSOL**

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16
LARNACA MUNICIPAL THEATRE**

TICKETS: €12 / €7

("I kardia mu ponei gia sas") and others. The spirit of optimism and exaltation, the comic and romantic elements which characterize the music of "The Godson" promise to entertain and take the audience on a journey.



ARTISTS:

Soprano: **Katerina Mina**
Mezzo soprano: **Vivien Cooksley**
Tenor: **Nikos Stefanou**
Baritone: **Michalis Katsoulis**
Aris Choir of Limassol
Choir Master: **Marinos Mitellas**
Orchestration: **Samy Elgazzar**
Conductor: **Giorgos Aravidis**

Concert performance.



SYNOPSIS OF "THE GODSON"

The story takes place in 1912, during the Balkan wars. The charming Vivika is upset with her husband Zacharoulis due to a recent love adventure of his. During their party, Charmides appears claiming that he is the godson of Vivika. In reality though, he was writing letters to Vivika on behalf of her illiterate and not very well-bred godson. He has been charmed by her, although he is now married to an old classmate of Vivika, who also appears at the party! At the same time, there comes the uncle of Vivika who is a colonel and finds her in the arms of the supposed godson. From there onwards the situation gets complicated and everyone tries to untangle the mess.

THEOFRASTOS SAKELLARIDES (1883-1950)

Theofrastos Sakellarides was born in Athens in 1883. He studied music in Greece and thereafter in Munich and Italy and returned to Athens in 1904. Talented and with a huge output, he managed to create his own personal style by integrating influences and elements from Austrian or French operetta, as well as from Greek folk song, popular serenades (kantades), Italian opera, Neapolitan song, gypsy music, popular genres and at times jazz.

From 1909 until his death in 1950, Theofrastos Sakellarides composed around 80 operettas, such as the "Haunted Bridge" ("Stichiomeno gefyri", 1912) and "At the sheds" ("Sta parapigmata", 1914). "The Godson" ("O Vafistikos") is the most characteristic and most frequently performed of all his works. It is said that he completed it in just 40 days.

Sakellarides also composed operas such as "Imeneo" ("O Ymeneos", 1903), "The Pirate of the Aegean" ("O piratis tou Aigeou", 1907) and "Perouze" (1911). He extensively wrote music for "epitheorisis" (modern Greek popular revue satirizing current social and political issues), such as for "Panathenean" ("Ta Panathenea", 1907-1913), adapting the already known music from European works by Franz Lehar, Kalman or Richard Strauss to the texts of the Greek "epitheorisis". The 1940 folk-like patriotic song "Vazei o Ntoutsé ti stoli tou" sang by Sofia Vembo (new lyrics on the melody of the song "Vaso knits her dowry"- "Plekei i Vaso to priko tis") is his own composition. He died in poverty and he was buried at public expense.

Upon Sakellarides's death, the composer Manolis Kalomiris wrote in "Nea Estia" magazine (January 1950): "Another leading and founding figure of Greek music has departed... He sounds forever warmest and vivid in our souls and hearts and will always resound everywhere in Greece and the Hellenic world... and will give us rest from the fatigue of hard work and everyday hardships". The theatre historian Yiannis Sideris would write in the same magazine: "...As a composer he did for Operetta what Xenopoulos did for proze". Sakellarides himself in an interview for the newspaper "Embros" (9 August 1915), said the following: "I write with Athenian inspiration. When we listen to an operetta by Lehar we exclaim: "It has the scent of Vienna". If tomorrow it is said that my works have the scent of Athens, allow me to consider this as my artistic dream coming true".

MEDIA SPONSORS:



OFFICIAL CARRIER:

