



Plato's

THE APOLOGY OF SOCRATES

NOVEMBER 15, 2007 @ ARTS CENTER AT ACS

A Collaboration of Elliniko Theatro and Theatron Inc.

Translated by

Yannis Simonides and Loukas Skipitaris

Actor

Yannis Simonides

Director

Loukas Skipitaris

Costume Designer

Theoni V. Aldredge

Musician

Caryn Heilman

The Apology professes to be a record of the actual speech that Socrates delivered in his own defense at the trial (399 BC). This makes the question of its historicity more acute than in the dialogues in which the conversations themselves are mostly fictional and the question of historicity is concerned only with how far the theories that Socrates is represented as expressing were those of the historical Socrates. Here, however, we are dealing with a speech that Socrates made as a matter of history. How far is Plato's account accurate? We should always remember that the ancients did not expect historical accuracy in the way we do. On the other hand, Plato makes it clear that he was present at the trial. Moreover, if, as is generally believed, the Apology was written not long after the event, many Athenians would remember the actual speech, and it would be a poor way to vindicate the Master, which is the obvious intent, to put a completely different speech into his mouth. Some liberties could no doubt be allowed, but the main arguments and the general tone of the defense must surely be faithful to the original. The beauty of language and style is certainly Plato's, but the serene spiritual and moral beauty of character belongs to Socrates. It is a powerful combination.

Athenian juries were very large, in this case 501, and they combined the duties of jury and judge as we know them by both convicting and sentencing. Obviously, it would have been virtually impossible for so large a body to discuss various penalties and decide on one. The problem was resolved rather neatly, however, by having the prosecutor, after conviction, assess the penalty he thought appropriate, followed by a counter-assessment by the defendant. The jury would then decide between the two. This procedure generally made for moderation on both sides.

The word *apology* is a transliteration, not a translation, of the Greek *apologia* which means defense. There is certainly nothing apologetic about the speech.

Yannis Simonides, Actor

Born in Constantinople and raised in Athens, Yannis Simonides is a Yale Drama School trained actor/writer and Emmy-winning documentary producer. He has served as professor and chair of the NYU Tisch Drama Department, as executive producer of Greek Orthodox Telecommunications (GOTelecom) and as the executive director of Hellenic Public Radio - COSMOS FM in New York. He is the founder and director of Elliniko Theatro (Greek Theatre of New York) and of Mythic Media International, a performing arts lab. His performance work includes plays by Euripides, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Brecht, Korres, Kambanellis and others, along with solo and ensemble pieces culled from the writings of C.P. Cavafy, General Makriyannis, Nikolai Gogol and others. He has received the support of the National Endowment for the Arts, The Greek Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs, The A. S. Onassis, I. Kostopoulos, S. Niarchos, M. Tsakos and C. Levendis Foundations, Time Warner and the Mobil Foundation. He co-produced Mikis Theodorakis' 75th Birthday Celebration at Lincoln Center with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and has been associated with the Annual Festival of Greek Music and Dance at Symphony Space in New York City, presented by the World Music Institute and AD&M Productions. He narrated the PBS specials *Axion Esti*, *Visions of Greece* and *Return to the Homeland*. He recently composed and directed SMYRNE, a docudrama on the 1922 Asia Minor Catastrophe for the Maliotis Center in Boston. Since 2004 he has performed the *Apology*, in Greek and in English, at theatres, festivals, universities and communities in the USA, the UK, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, and is scheduled to take it on tour in Russia, Australia, Uruguay, Canada and Japan.

Loukas N. Skipitaris, Director

Loukas N. Skipitaris came to the United States after brief studies in medicine and political science at Thessaloniki's Aristotelian University. He studied acting with some of New York's leading teachers and earned a Masters in stage directing at Hunter University. He made his Broadway acting debut in *Ilya Darling* with Melina Merkouri, and subsequently appeared in the original Broadway production of *Zorba*, directed by Harold Prince. He has acted Off-Broadway, in national tours, and in addition to his featured role in the prime-time TV series *The Andros Targets* he has had running roles in *As the World Turns*, *The Guiding Light*, and *One Life to Live*. He recently appeared on *The Late Show* with David Letterman. His directing credits in the United States and Greece include productions of Greek classics and plays by Anton Chekhov, Tennessee Williams, George Bernard Shaw, Neil Simon, Ira Levin, and others. At Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall he directed the world premiere of the oratorio *Erotocritos*, and as the producer-director of the LA-MA Summer Musical Theater he staged the musicals *Oklahoma!*, *Carousel*, *Of Thee I Sing*, and *West Side Story*, among others. Mr. Skipitaris's latest directorial assignments, the comedies *Smile Please*, *O Mamakias* and *Gambros gia tin Vasoula*, were recently presented by Theatron in Long Island City, NY. He is the founder and director of The Acting Place, a professional acting workshop, as well as the founding and artistic director of Theatron, Inc., a non-profit Greek American performing arts center in NYC

Theoni Vahliotis Aldredge, Costume Design

With over 150 stage productions, numerous ballets and several films to her credit, Theoni Vahliotis Aldredge ranks as one of the most prolific and successful costume designers of the late 20th Century. Born and raised in Greece, Aldredge was inspired to become a costumer after seeing the film version of "Caesar and Cleopatra" in 1946. Moving to the USA, she trained at the Goodman Theatre School where she made her debut with 1950's *The Distaff Side*. In 1953, she married actor Tom Aldredge and the couple settled in NYC. After debuting in films with *Girl of the Night*, Aldredge began her long association as one of the resident designers at Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival with the 1961 production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Over the next three decades at the NYSF she crafted appropriate clothing for many Shakespearean productions, as well as the landmark musicals *Hair* and *A Chorus Line*. With over 100 Broadway shows to her credit, Ms. Aldredge was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in 1986. Her credits include *Sweet Bird of Youth*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *Anyone Can Whistle*, *A Chorus Line*, *Three Penny Opera*, *Annie* (Tony Award), *Barnum* (Tony Award), *42nd Street*, *Dream Girls*, *La Cage Aux Folles* (Tony Award), and *Gypsy*. Ms. Aldredge's film credits include *The First Wives Club*, *Addams Family Values*, *Moonstruck*, *Network*, *The Rose* and *The Great Gatsby*, for which she received The Academy Award and the British Society of Film and Television Arts Award. She is the recipient of the New York City Liberty Medal and was honored with the Costume Guild Career Achievement Award. In addition, the Theatre Development Fund has presented her with the Irene Sharaff Lifetime Achievement Award for her work in Theatre, Film and Television.

Caryn Heilman, Musician

Caryn Heilman is a percussionist, vocalist and dancer with the World Music of Nana ensemble, which blends musical elements from around the world. Specializing in frame drums, she plays the daf, a Sufi drum from Kurdistan, and the tar. Her rhythmic roots began with tap dancing at the of age 5. She had a ten year career as a modern dancer with the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Meredith Monk invited her to join her vocal ensemble the same year that she joined Taylor. She can be heard on Nana Simopoulos's CD *Daughter of the Sun* which was number one on NAV world and new age radio charts. She has also recorded for the Navras Records' tribute to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. Film and television credits include work for Toby Twining and Score Productions.

The performance is presented in English.

TICKETS: €20, €15 (student)

BOX OFFICE: 210 7234567, www.ticketservices.gr

Plato's "The Apology of Socrates"

NOVEMBER 15, 2007 @ 8.30. P.M.

**ARTS CENTER AT ACS, 53 GARITTOU STR.
HALANDRI, Tel. 210 63 93 341, www.artscenter.gr**

All proceeds will go to support the **American Community Schools Athens Village Project**, a school-wide project committed to helping restore and rebuild the fire-ravaged villages in the Peloponnesus by replenishing destroyed olive groves in the region. A benefit performance, part of ACS Athens' commitment to fostering civic responsibility.