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Biography of Theodoros TERZOPOULOS, Greece

Theatre Director, Educator, Author, Founder and Artistic Director of the Attis Theatre Company, Inspirator of Theatre Olympics and Chairman of the International Committee of Theatre Olympics

English (Translation)

Theodoros Terzopoulos, internationally acclaimed theatre director, was born in 1945, in Makrygialos village, in the Pieria area of Northern Greece. He was trained at Kostis Michailidis School of Dramatic Art (Athens, 1965-1967) and completed his studies at the Berliner Ensemble (Berlin, 1973-1976), while he worked as assistant director, close to Heiner Müller, who was his mentor, Manfred Wekwerth, Ruth Berghaus and Ekkehart Schall. He served as the Director of the Drama School of the National Theatre of Northern Greece (1981–1983) and as the Artistic Director of the International Meetings of Ancient Drama in Delphi (since 1985 for about 15 years), inviting many leading figures of the international theatre scene. He has been the founder and artistic director of the International Meetings of Ancient Drama in Sikyon (2005 – 2011) and a founding member of the International Institute of Mediterranean Theatre (comprising 18 Mediterranean countries) since 1990.

Since 1985, when Attis Theatre Group was founded, and with the trailblazing performance of Euripides' *Bacchae* in 1986, he has radically transformed the way ancient Greek tragedy has been presented, introducing elements of extreme physicality and ritual.

Theodoros Terzopoulos creates a theatre concept with techniques of Dionysian ecstasy to reveal the invisible and the unfathomable. His approach gives prominence to the tragic dimensions, giving voice to a theatre born from the depths. It is an unusual approach that, in defiance of any academic categorisation, maintains its self-existence. He applies his method to ancient Greek tragedy, but also to heterogeneous poetic texts. Travelling for over forty years around the world, he keeps searching for human visions and their history, being a humanist who focuses on the encounter with the Other, in whom he recognises himself.

Over the past 40 years, Terzopoulos and Attis Theatre have presented 2300 performances at some of the most prestigious international festivals and theatres abroad. He directed, both in Greece and abroad, tragedies by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, operas, as well as contemporary plays by leading European playwrights, such as B. Brecht, F. G. Lorca, H. Müller, S. Beckett, H. Ibsen, A. Strindberg and contemporary Greek writers.

His two latest productions stand out as highlights of his research and work: *Waiting for Godot* (production: Emilia Romagna Teatro/ Teatro Nazionale, Fondazione Teatro di Napoli Bellini, Italy, 2023) has been appreciated as a groundbreaking performance and at the same time

completely faithful to Beckett's philosophical reflection, while Aeschylus' *Oresteia* (production: National Theatre of Greece, 2024), is already considered historical, a point of reference for the performance of ancient tragedy, due to the exemplary restoration of the role and the function of the Chorus and for its relevancy to the present.

Terzopoulos has conceived and established a unique acting method that consists of a sequence of physical and vocal exercises aimed at cultivating the fundamentals of acting practice. His method and approach to ancient Greek tragedy are taught in more than thirty Drama Academies, Institutes and Departments of Classical Studies worldwide. The director leads many workshops and lectures worldwide, while he is an Emeritus Professor of international academies and universities. Since 2013 he has been leading the annual international summer workshop "The Method of Theodoros Terzopoulos – The Return of Dionysus" for young actors and directors from all over the world.

His method and work have been thoroughly studied by eminent theatre researchers, while books have been published in Greek, English, German, Chinese, Turkish, Russian, Polish, Korean, Mandarin, Italian, French, Hungarian, Georgian, Spanish and Arabic. The book of his method titled "The Return of Dionysus" was published in 2015 and ever since has been translated into 15 languages. Many conferences have been held worldwide as Honorary Tributes to Theodoros Terzopoulos in countries such as China, Poland, Italy, Russia, Colombia, Germany, Greece, Austria, Spain, the U.S.A. and Cyprus.

The Theatre Olympics were founded in 1994 in Delphi by an International Committee that was led by Theodoros Terzopoulos and included - as founding members - such luminaries as Tadashi Suzuki, Heiner Muller, Robert Wilson, Nuria Espert, Yuri Lyubimov and Tony Harrison. From 1993 to this date, he has served as the Chairman of the International Committee of Theatre Olympics. In 1995, as the Artistic Director of the 1st Theatre Olympics in Delphi (Greece), titled "Crossing Millennia", he invited significant international performances and artists. The following editions of Theatre Olympics were in Shizuoka, Japan (1999), Moscow, Russia (2001), Istanbul, Turkey (2006), Seoul, South Korea (2010), Beijing, China (2014), Wroclaw, Poland (2016), India (in 17 cities across India, 2018), Toga, Japan and Saint Petersburg, Russia (2019) and in Budapest, Hungary (2023).

As an outstanding theatre personality who has received local and international acclaim both for his inspiring artistic and constantly evolving educational work as well as for the promotion of interculturality, he has received a multitude of awards including the: Lorca Award (*Spain, 1986*), Stanislavski Award for Best Direction (*Russia, 1993*), Honorary Theatre Award (*Turkey, 2006*), Best Direction Award (*Festival of Nations, Seoul, 1994*), Best Assemble Acting (*Beijing, 2011*), Yuri Lyubimov International Theatre Award (*2020*), Sibiu Walk of Fame Star (*Sibiu, Romania, 2024*) and the Grand Theatre Award of the Hellenic Association of Theatre Critics and Performing Arts (*Greece, 2024*).

More info at <http://attistheatre.com/en/theodoros-terzopoulos/>