

Hemispheres at Sydney Opera House presents

Eleftheria Arvanitaki

23 & 25 May, Concert Hall

In association with The Greek Festival of Sydney
Greek pop goddess makes her Sydney Opera House debut



Paintings from the greek islands

Traditional landscape artist, John May, invites participants of the Greek Festival to an exhibition of paintings from his recent tour of the Dodecanese islands.

Using Myrties as a base, John and a group of other artists explored Kalymnos and then travelled to Symi, Nisyros and finally Kos, painting and enjoying the traditional Greek cuisine and hospitality. This was John's third trip to Greece. He also traveled extensively there in 1969 with his young wife, then in 1987 with his two children.

The paintings evoke the landscape, culture and history of Greece and are a reminder of this beautiful country. After Greece, John went onto Umbria in Italy to do some walking in the Sibillini National Park and a number of paintings from Umbria and some sculptures are also on sale at the exhibition.

The exhibition will be officially opened by Mr Nikolaos Oikonomidis, Counsellor for Communications, Press & Communication Office, Consulate General of Greece in Sydney, on Fri 27 March – 7pm.

Exhibition Date: Sat 28 March – Sun 29 March, 10am - 4pm Cost: Free Entry

Venue: Primrose Park Gallery, Matora Lane, Cremorne Contact: 02 9906 5106



22 of her albums have gone platinum.

Twice named Best Female Singer of the Year at the Greek Music Awards, Eleftheria performs more than 120 performances in her country a year, almost a third during her much-awaited summer tours. According to critics, her live concerts are legendary and a very important part of Greek music's history. But over the past 10 years Eleftheria's career has crossed the borders and has met worldwide recognition for her artistic achievements.

Eleftheria is the first Greek singer since 1998 to be signed by iconic jazz label Verve and in 2004 she was invited to perform the traditional song Tzivaeri as part of Philip Glass's Olympic project Orion.

She has also collaborated with world-renowned artists such as the Caboverdians, Cesaria Evora and Teofilo Chantre, the Portuguese Dulce Pontes, the Spanish group of Amaral and Carlos Nunez, the Armenian Ara Dinkjian and Arto Tunçboyacıyan and

the Senegalese Ismael Lo.

"Her voice has a clarity and emotional depth that registers whether or not you understand the words, and the music she sings has a lyricism and instrumental sophistication that sets it apart." World Music Rough Guide Distinguished by its high quality, Hemispheres 09 presents a collection of extraordinary artists who often verge on the legendary in their own cultures but may be revelations to Australian audiences.

The annual program at Sydney Opera House brims with virtuosity in styles and instruments that are not part of the mainstream. The world is full of fantastic music and Hemispheres will transport audiences to the most exotic sounds on the planet.

The Greek Festival of Sydney is one of Australia's largest and longest running annual cultural events with attendance growing yearly since 1983. The most attended Greek-Australian community event in NSW, the festival celebrates arts, food, theatre, music, sport, comedy and culture through a myriad of high calibre events.

*Rembetika is a music idiom that developed in Greece among the lower classes in the early part of the 20th century and was particularly indebted to the refugees from Asia Minor.

SEASON DETAILS: Eleftheria Arvanitaki

Dates/Times: Saturday 23 and Monday 25 May at 8pm

Venue: Concert Hall - Tickets: \$49 - \$120- Bookings: (02) 9250 7777 or online at sydneyoperahouse.com

Duration: 120 minutes

Information: Online at arvanitaki.gr

"She has a voice of extraordinary clarity and depth [and a] powerful stage presence." *The Times (UK)*

Eleftheria Arvanitaki is the shining star of Greek roots music. Blessed with a voice that transcends musical boundaries, she has developed her own inimitable style that combines tradition and innovation. Immersed in the rembetika custom of popular urban song infused with Spanish and Latin rhythms, Eleftheria will close the 2009 Greek Festival of Sydney with two shows in the Concert Hall on May 23 and 25.*

Not seen in Sydney for more than 10 years, Eleftheria will perform her greatest hits, including songs from her latest album *Mirame*, backed by an 8-piece band featuring some of Greece's finest musicians on bouzouki, clarinet, keyboards, and percussion.

Starting her career in the early 1980s as the lead singer of *Opisthodomiki Kompania*, a fashionable group of rembetika revivalists, Eleftheria went solo in 1985 and quickly established herself as one of Greece's most promising female voices for years to come.

Eleftheria's vocal qualities and her ability to combine the traditional and contemporary music of Greece have inspired distinguished composers, lyricists, and poets to write songs for her, epic songs that swell with emotion. Considered classics in Greek music, all

Kelvin Thompson's speech on the Parthenon Marbles

Following our meeting in Canberra last year with Kelvin Thompson – Federal Member for Wills, the Australian Hellenic Council welcomes the speech he made in Federal Parliament on 17/3/2009.

Kelvin Thomson (Wills) – I believe we as a parliament should recognise the just claim of the Greek government for the return of the Parthenon marbles from the British Museum. We should encourage the British Museum to accept and abide by the UN General Assembly, which at its 61st session debated the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin. Museums should be prepared to initiate dialogues for the return of important cultural property to its country or community of origin.

The Parthenon is a significant symbol of Greek cultural heritage and western culture in general, and the marbles form an integral part of this most important of buildings. The marbles are not freestanding works of art. They should not be exhibited 2,000 miles away, separate from

the actual monument for which they were specifically designed and carved. We should propose to the British government that they return the Parthenon marbles to the new Acropolis Museum, expressly built in order to house all the Parthenon sculptures.

The Parthenon marbles—or, more precisely, the Parthenon sculptures—are integral architectural members of one of the most magnificent and best-known monuments in the world, the Parthenon. The Parthenon is the celebration of the achievements of free, democratic people and for that reason it is an important symbol to the whole world. That is why it is inconceivable that over half of its celebrated sculptural elements should be exhibited 2,000 miles away from the rest. Furthermore, these architectural ads were removed from the monument—actually hacked off—without the consent of the Greek people, who at that time were under occupation.

The Parthenon is the most important symbol of Greek cultural heritage and, according to the declaration of universal human and cultural rights, the Greek state has a duty to preserve its cultural heritage in its totality, both for its citizens and for the international community. The

Parthenon sculptures are not properly displayed at the British Museum. Not only do they appear as if they form a whole—which they do not—and there is no indication of where the missing slabs should have been but they are also exhibited on the inside of a wall.

During the 61st session of the UN General Assembly held in November 2006, the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin was debated. This resulted in a new resolution reaffirming previous UN resolutions calling for the protection of cultural property; laws prohibiting illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property; and further acknowledgment and recognition of statutes based around cultural heritage.

As I said at the outset, museums should be prepared to initiate dialogues for the return of important cultural property to its country or community of origin. This should be undertaken on ethical, scientific and humanitarian principles. I believe that the cooperation, partnership, goodwill and mutual appreciation between the parties concerned could lead to joint research programs and the exchange of valuable technical expertise.