



Looming the memory

(A bittersweet story about home and place)

Thomas Papathanassiou is a theatre-maker with insatiable energy. Calling him an actor is insufficient when after one sees his one man show, *Looming the Memory*.

Papathanassiou plays over 18 characters in the play, "It's a one man show and I play over eighteen characters I play papou, yia yia, I play ghosts, and even a chicken."

He loves chickens, "I had an intense love of kotes and I used to play with chickens at home, I love them..." he thinks a little and adds, "It's kind of weird, isn't it?"

For all its comedy there is also seriousness, *Looming the Memory* is about Papathanassiou's memory as well as the memories we all share; it is immigrants' zeitgeist in looking for home and not finding it.

Papathanassiou won the Best Actor 2006 by the WA Equity Guild Awards, and the work received the 2007 Best Production Blue Room Awards.

Some of the better Greek Australian theatre does not come from Australia's Greek city, Melbourne, but

from cities such as, Perth, where Thomas works and lives. Maybe, it is because of the isolation, or the need to really define one's identity, that allows for creative freedom, unlike the comfort zone of Melbourne's overwhelming Hellenism.

Looming the Memory is set in the cellar of a house in a Greek village, an old woman whispers to herself as she weaves on her loom.

Back in Australia, her grandson endeavours to understand his life by unravelling his family's stories.

But, the memories don't make sense, so he journeys back to Greece to visit his family.

Along the way he uncovers dark truths about his family's past.

Papathanassiou says, "It is about a guy's search for home, it's about a guy going back to Greece to find home its not there."

He adds, "When I was in Greece, the locals make me feel that I don't belong there, and when I come here I sometimes feel I don't belong here."

Looming the Memory is about migration, but it is far

from typical, it is a funny, bittersweet, dark and overtly surreal.

Papathanassiou adds, "The stage has a loom and a rug on it, it is symbolic, memory is critical in defining who we are. I remember visiting my grandmother in Greece when I was young, and she had a rug, and in that rug I saw a button and various materials, weaved in it, they were so poor that they would use all sorts of materials, and now I think 'this button belonged to someone', it has a history, so in a sense the rug is symbolic of the looming of memories."

With all of its 18 characters, including grandmothers, ghosts, and a chicken are bought to life in a sensitive and comic 75 minutes.

This is a journey by Papathanassiou into myth, memory, and identity through powerful Homeric storytelling and highly physical theatre. It is a homage to our difficult, honest and largely comedic Hellenic narrative that frames us all. *Looming the Memory* is on between May 21 and 31 at LaMama, Carlton

Article from *Neos Kosmos*

WAGNER SPRAYTECH RECALLS SPRAY PAINT SYSTEMS

Fair Trading Minister Virginia Judge is warning consumers that Wagner Spraytech Australia is recalling two spray painting units because of an electrical fault. Ms Judge said consumers who have bought FineSpray paint jet products with the serial numbers 324791/2007 and 551781/2008 should cease using the products immediately. "These products are being voluntarily recalled after reports that a fault may cause the ON/OFF switch to fall out, exposing live parts and risking electric shock," Ms Judge said.

"Owners of the affected devices should return the device, suitably packaged (without the hose and gun) to Wagner Spraytech Australia Pty Ltd. Consumers can contact Wagner Spraytech Australia Pty Ltd on 1800 064 790 or visit www.wagner-group.com to obtain information on how to return the product free of charge." Ms Judge said 1650 FineSpray Systems have been sold nationally since 2007 at hardware and paint speciality stores.

Greece extends ban on genetically modified corn

Greece has extended a ban on a strain of genetically modified corn produced by U.S. agriculture biotechnology company Monsanto for another two years.

The ban on importing and cultivating MON 810 has also been expanded to include 100 types of the seed, up from 70 last year, the country's Agriculture Ministry said in a statement Wednesday.

MON 810 — also known as YieldGuard Corn Borer — is a strain of corn extremely resistant to European and southwestern corn borers. These caterpillars eat and damage corn plants before becoming adult moths.

The strain, which was authorized for use by the European Union, was



Greece has extended the ban on bio-engineered MON 810 corn, a cob of which is shown in this September 2007 file photo, for another two years. (Sven Kaestner/Associated Press)

banned in Greece in 2005. Greece claims the strain poses a potential threat to human health. The government also believes pollen from MON 810 maize could threaten its beekeeping industry. Greece produces about 16 per cent of Europe's honey.

Ban in Germany

Greece's move comes a month after Germany banned MON 810.

German Agriculture Minister Ilse Aigner said in April she believed the crop poses a danger to the environment.

Monsanto subsequently filed a lawsuit against the German government, calling Berlin's move a "capricious ban" that had no scientific basis.

The crop has been approved as safe by the European Food Safety Authority, and the commission is concerned about potential trade disputes

arising from the bans. Indeed, when Aigner visited the United States earlier this month, she said trade officials there interpreted Germany's move as a protectionist measure.

France, Austria, Hungary and Luxembourg are the other European countries to ban the strain, which is used in Canada, the United States, Japan and other European countries. The European Commission has tried to overturn those bans, but has so far been unsuccessful.

Opponents of genetically modified foods say their long-term effects on human health and the health of the environment have not been studied enough.

Producers of genetically modified crops, such as Monsanto, say the plants are as safe as traditional varieties and promise higher yields at a lower cost to farmers and consumers.

Eight new A/H1N1 flu cases confirmed in Europe

STOCKHOLM, -- A European health agency said on Wednesday that 8 new A/H1N1 flu cases were reported in European countries within the last 24 hours. Of the new cases, two were confirmed in Greece, and one each in Romania, Ireland, Finland, Belgium, France and Poland, the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said in its daily situation report. The total number of confirmed cases of the A/H1N1 flu virus in the EU (European Union) and EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries rose to 422, with 138 cases in Spain and 184 in Britain, 23 in Italy and 20 in France, the ECDC said. All cases confirmed in Ireland, Finland, Belgium, France and Poland were in travelers returning from the United States. Romania reported its first confirmed case in a returning traveler from New York, the ECDC added. The ECDC publishes a daily situation report about A/H1N1 flu cases in the EU and EFTA countries based on official information from these countries.