

Dalaras to tour Australia



George Dalaras

George Dalaras, Greece's quintessential musical troubadour with a social conscience, is heading to our shores this October. As part of his Encore world tour he is will come with his long-time musical friends Mihalis Tzouganakis and Melina Aslanidou, along with an ensemble of exceptional musicians. Having completed a European city tour of Zurich, Vienna, Stuttgart, Dusseldorf and for the first time Istanbul.

Dalaras will be presenting demotica, laika, rebetika - songs from his early years and memories of the great composers of Greece. Unlike previous concerts, the musicians play solo parts and improvise on their instruments.

Dalaras' exceptional voice and instrumental skills have placed him at the forefront of innovation in contemporary Greek music. Over the last three

decades he has renewed the genre of Greek laika by leading his mainly youthful public along neglected musical paths like the smirneika and the rebetika.

George Dalaras is simply a musical phenomenon. Yet, this soft spoken and modest man shuns the 'star system' and the banalities of commercial Greek music.

He has allowed his audiences to discover a range of new music. Dalaras' collaborations with international artists have demonstrated his ability to cross over into other styles. He has, recorded and appeared on stage with Sting, Paco de Lucia, Al di Meola, Goran Bregovic, Ian Anderson, Joan Faulkner, Jocelyn B. Smith, Emma Chapplin and produced albums such as the Misa Criolla of Ariel Ramirez and Latin. If Greece has a voice then it surely is Dalaras.

The Encore Tour
 Sydney 26 October Sydney Entertainment Centre
 Adelaide 28 October Adelaide Entertainment Centre
 Melbourne 30 October Hisence Arena

Tickets go on sale 14 July
 Sydney Ticketmaster:
www.ticketmaster.com.au
 Adelaide and Melbourne:
www.ticketek.com.au

Greek heritage architect wins 2010 industry award

Melbourne heritage architect Arthur Andronas has won a top architecture award for the second year running. Mr Andronas' firm Andronas Conservation Architecture took out the Australian Institute of Architects Victoria Heritage Architecture Award for their work on Newman College at the University of Melbourne. Ecstatic at the surprise win, Mr Andronas said he appreciated the recognition.

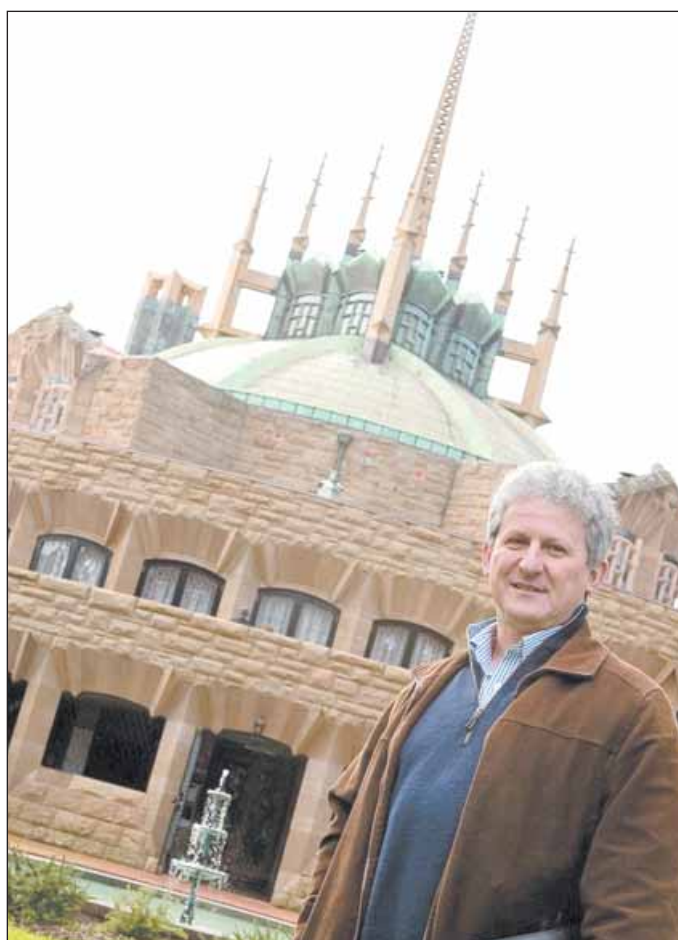
"It's acknowledgement that our pursuit of excellence, across everything we do, is recognized by our peers," he told. In their citation, the Institute's judges praised Mr Andronas' groundbreaking approach to the work.

"In developing their restoration program ... the architects have demonstrated admirable quality assurance practices» the judges said. «Their methodical approach provides innovation in conservation of Victoria's most important sandstone, which will be applicable to other buildings».

Newman College was designed and built in the early 1900s by Walter Burley Griffin, who also designed the layout of Canberra. As a result Newman has become one of the top ten most important 20th century buildings in Australia. Mr Andronas was tasked with restoring the facade of the building and says he drew inspiration from Burley Griffin's own controversial techniques, including the use of repair mortars, which had to be imported from Germany. «Because he was a fairly controversial architect in the methods he used, we were allowed to use this sort of approach, given the complexity and the delicacy of the stone» Mr Andronas said.

It's the second year straight that Andronas Conservation Architecture's work has been recognized among the best in the country, after they won both the AIA Victoria Heritage Architecture Award and the AIA Lachlan Macquarie National Award for Heritage in 2009, for their work on St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne.

Mr Andronas says that winning the awards has taken his four-person practice to a new level. «We've been invited and have been successful in getting a job with Port Arthur and the restoration of the ruins of the early penitentiary, so that's a real coup and a real honour» he said. «They only select people who have won national awards to do their work, and given that Port Arthur is about to go on the World Heritage list, the job has international ramifications as well».



Arthur Andronas takes out another award for his conservation work.



Greeks split over pension reform

Poll shows public has mixed feelings about harsh cuts as PM increases pressure on waverers before vote. As Prime Minister George Papandreou encourages ruling party cadres to rally behind painful pension and labor relations reforms ahead of a crucial vote in Parliament due on Thursday, a new opinion poll indicates that half of Greeks oppose the controversial changes while a third realize that the cuts are necessary.

Sources told over the weekend that dissent continued to simmer in the ranks of ruling PASOK, even between certain high-ranking ministers, ahead of Thursday's vote. But, in comments published in Sunday's Eleftherotypia, Papandreou made it clear that the pressure was on vacillators in the ruling party to back the austerity drive. "Voting in favor of the pension reform bill is a vote of responsibility by all lawmakers toward Greek society and the next generations," Papandreou was quoted as saying. "I will never get tired of repeating that the Greek people's sacrifices will pay off. They are already paying off. We are on the right path," he added.

Asked whether he would expel dissenters from the party, Papandreou - who last week hinted he would call snap elections if his cadres do not support him on reforms - was emphatically upbeat. "I trust PASOK's lawmakers, I believe that we will all live up to our responsibility to change the country," he said.

An opinion poll, carried out last week by polling firm Kappa Research on behalf of To Vima, which published the results on Monday, shows that the Greek public have mixed feelings about the reforms which would reduce monthly payments to pensioners, increase the retirement age to 65 and make it easier for employers to dismiss staff. A total of 19 percent of the 1,002 respondents said the reforms would be "catastrophic," with another 29.6 percent calling for their immediate withdrawal. Still 35.2 percent of the respondents said they believed the changes were "necessary despite being unjust" and 14.2 percent fully supported the reforms as necessary to get Greece back on track.

The same opinion poll indicated that 40 percent of Greeks were undecided about how to vote if elections were held now, with 23.4 percent saying they would back PASOK and 15.6 percent the main conservative opposition New Democracy.

Couple said to have made huge profits on World Cup

Police in Pieria, northern Greece, detained a 35-year-old woman and a 40-year-old man alleged to have made hundreds of thousands of euros by organizing illegal bets on World Cup soccer matches. A search of the couple's store turned up a computer containing the details of financial transactions worth 683,881 euros, according to police. Officers also confiscated about 5,000 euros in cash and dozens of coupons listing World Cup soccer matches. Over the past few weeks, police in Thessaloniki and Corinth have detained three people on charges of making thousands of euros in illicit profits by organizing illegal bets on soccer games.