

By **CHRYSA KAKIORI**
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What makes an actor's performance unforgettable? Technique, precision, intensity - or that rare moment when they stop "acting" and express something deeply their own? In acting, there can often be a distance filled with automatic habits, fears and ready-made ways of responding. It is precisely in this territory that Yorgos Karamalegos has been working for more than two decades, helping actors move towards a more authentic form of expression.

Karamalegos is not especially fond of the word "method". "I do not believe there is one method that suits everyone. Every actor is an autonomous creative ecosystem," he tells Realnews. "My work is not to fit them into a mould, but to help them discover how their own instrument works and develop their own technique."

Born in Athens, he studied theatre at the Nelli Karra Drama School and began his career as an actor in film and television, with a notable appearance in Pantelis Voulgaris' film The Last Note. Yet his direction was already becoming clear. In 2001 he moved to Britain and spent a decade working systematically on the relationship between body, movement and stage presence. In 2011 he founded **Physical Lab** in London, an international laboratory dedicated to presence and authenticity in performance. "For as long as I can remember, what interested me was the human being. Not as an idea, but as a living system trying to understand itself," he says. He has taught at leading London drama schools, including LAMDA (London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art), RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art), the Drama Centre at Central Saint Martins, and Williams College in the United States.

The 2020 lockdown was less a turning point than a moment of recognition. "I asked myself: What is it that you can do without thinking and, at the same time, have a real impact on others? From that moment on, my work became clearer."

His work begins with the body. Movement, breath, voice, sensation and instinct are not treated as separate tools. The aim is to make visible the habits that have become embedded over time - social, cultural and psychological - and that often come between a person and their true self.

"We do not begin with what you should do. We begin with how you function," he explains. "And when that becomes visible, there is choice." He does not position himself opposite the actor as an authority who holds all the answers, but as a fellow traveller in a process of investigation, seeking to ask the right questions and allow each person's own way of expressing themselves to emerge.

A GREEK BEHIND INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCES

Acting coach Yorgos Karamalegos, founder of an international acting laboratory, has worked with award-winning actors across Europe and the United States, helping each performer discover their own authentic form of expression.



Alongside award-winning actors

His international list of collaborators includes **Diane Venora**, known for the films Heat, The Cotton Club and Romeo + Juliet; **Simona Brown** of Behind Her Eyes; and **Jonathan Howard**, whose credits include Downton Abbey, Godzilla: King of the Monsters and Coronation Street. Among the actors he has worked with is Estonian performer **Doris Tislar**, who won the EFTA Best Actress award for the series My Dear Mother, a role she prepared with him. In Greece, he has collaborated, among others, with **Daphne Alexander**, **Stephanie Kapetanidis** and **Varvara Larmou**, while his working network stretches from London and Paris to New York, Los Angeles, Vienna and Tallinn.

In Crete, at Douliana in Apokoronas near Chania, where he spends a large part of his time, he runs acting retreats and individual programmes, as well as fitness retreats in collaboration with actor and fitness coach **Alex Crockford**. There, the work moves beyond the studio and acquires a different quality amid nature and the rhythm of the Cretan countryside.

In recent years, the same approach has also entered the business world. With CEOs, executives and entrepreneurs, he works on communication, leadership presence and group dynamics. The titles change, but not the essence. "Whether I work with actors, entrepreneurs or politicians, the process is the same: How do you function when you are not trying to function 'correctly'?"



A central aim of his approach is for the actor not to execute a movement or phrase mechanically, but to remain genuinely present: to listen to the body, sense the rhythm and leave room for the unexpected, so that the performance stays alive rather than predetermined. The role therefore ceases to be something constructed externally and becomes a field of investigation. "The role is not the goal. It is the tool. Through the role, the actor not only develops the performance, but also encounters themselves."

Perhaps this explains why actors return to him for years and seek him out before a demanding audition or role. He offers neither a "correct" reading nor a formula for success. He creates conditions in which the actor can take risks. "An actor once told me, 'I come to you because you work from the basis of I do not know.' For me, that describes exactly the field in which the work happens," he says. Awards are not the objective, but they sometimes come as a result of this preparation.

Heracles Furens becomes a rock opera

The acclaimed composer
Dimitris Maramis
presents his new work in
Thebes, birthplace of
the mythical hero



THE ACCLAIMED composer **Dimitris Maramis** presents the nationwide premiere of the rock opera Heracles Furens in Thebes, the birthplace of the mythical hero. The new work was commissioned by the Municipality of Thebes as part of its effort to highlight the city's cultural heritage, and will be presented on Monday 21 September at 20:30 at the open-air Moschopodi Theatre in Thebes by the ERT Choir and four acclaimed soloists: **Giorgos Papadimitriou** (Heracles), **Mela Gerofofi** (Megara), **Nikos Kyrtos** (Amphitryon) and **Melina Mavridou** (Hera). They will be joined by a six-member band and local artistic groups.



The work presents the hero as a tragic figure. Heracles is both god and man, perpetrator and victim, tyrant and slave, child-killer and redeemer. He is the only human being in Greek mythology to have been granted immortality. He is the divided figure who exists simultaneously on Olympus and in Tartarus: the mortal who descends into Hades and returns unharmed.

Maramis is responsible for the concept, music and libretto, which draws on Euripides' Heracles Furens and Sophocles' Women of Trachis, as well as Seneca's Hercules Furens and Hercules Oetaeus. The score combines electric textures, driving rhythms, lyrical vocal lines and choral climaxes, creating a contemporary work with a powerful dramatic and ritual character. It reflects timeless themes including violence, the division of values and fragility. **Admission is free.**