



Material for a Requiem

Phoebe Giannisi



Special Thanks to Laura Jansen.

Credits for the Performance

Performers: *Phoebe Giannisi, Brian Sneed*

Direction: *Isabella Martzopoulou*

All the poems have been translated in English by *Brian Sneed*

1. Videos:

“**Tettix**” (2012). Camera : *Phoebe Giannisi*, edited by *Danae Avaraki and Aggelina Dagka* for the Exhibition “**Tettix**”, National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens, (2012), curated by *Stamatis Schizakis*.

“**Nomos**” (2015). Kalamaki Larissis, Pen of *Yannis Mourtos*. Camera: *Chara Stergiou and Sevastiana Konstaki* (2013-2015), edited by *George Kalivis* for the exhibition by Phoebe Giannisi and Iris Lycourioti “**Aigai_O. The Songs**”, Aggeliki Chatzimichali Museum, Athens (2015).

2. Sounds:

“**Homerica**”, Pelion Mountain, various places, recorded in situ by *Phoebe Giannisi* and edited by *Nikolas Vamvakas*, University of Thessaly (2009).

Fragments: A document from the Merlier Archive, a present by *Leonidas Embeiricos*.

Bits from an Interview with the shepherd *Yannis Mourtos*, Kalamaki Larissis, March 2015, edited by *Chara Stergiou* for the performative lecture: “**Nomos_The Land Song**”, 15/10/2016, Onassis Festival NY 2016: *Antigone Now*, New York.

3. Polyphonic Assemblage and other poems:

From the book **Chimera**, (**Χίμαιρα**, Kastaniotis: Athens, 2019), to be published by *New Directions* in 2024, translated in English by *Brian Sneed*.

Props

Bell for sheep, Aromanian Apron and Vest from *Metsovo*, “**Insightful Blindfold**” : @2plus1equals2 and @studioasevia by *Sevastiana Konstaki*.

Design of the zine, final editing of the existing videos:
Ioannis Kounavis (@jeankounavis)

Center for Hellenic Studies, Washington DC.
10/31/2023

Sponsorship by CHS, the Michael Marks Trust, the Archive and Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (Oxford), the Bristol Poetry Institute (Bristol), *New Directions Publishing*

A. Weaving

The word by itself germinates
exists
beyond our decision for silence
every creature
on its path to the other
sings
but the threads of the planets
are distinct
no matter how closely they are woven
stutterings of half-raveled words
that though written
never mean what they say
or even what
you thought you meant to say

From Cicada (New Directions, 2022)

B. Whirring Cicada, I

Only the voice desires
sweet voice thin as honey thick
dribbles and spills onto the earth below
Tithonus in his cage
whirring cicada
as the milk thistle flowers
as the burning state within a state
of summer detains each of us
the blaring cicada spills onto the ground
the voice
of the one who ceaselessly desires
and recites
from his own cadence relentlessly dizzying
like sirens drawing us imperceptibly to sleep

From Cicada (New Directions, 2022)

C. (Penelope I-am addicted to you)

she has a passion for the pool
each day in the pool up and down
the same circuit again and again
the pool keeps her alive
swimming in it sustains her
the continuous back and forth
the rhythmic breathing
synchronicity of the hands and legs
with the head
in out in out
of the water
the head
repeatedly enters and leaves
blows inside sucks in air outside
pauses a bit each time in the lane
tiles underneath the surface under
the light
the bodies of strangers menacing
with caps and flippers
the water suffused with chlorine
the sky over cypress trees
the pool keeps me alive
the continual song
counting
one two three four five
six seven eight nine fifteen
nineteen blows rotations
the song of counting the repetition
turns you to stone
yet the song of the pool saves
saves me from the knowledge
he does not love me

From Homerica (World Poetry Books, 2017)



Parmenides frag. 4 Diels:

But see with your mind those who are missing
as if they were present