



Gardzienice

*METAMORPHOSIS
or The Golden Ass*

A Theatrical Essay

The cast:

Tomasz Rodowicz, Mariusz Golaj, Mariana Sadowska, Marcin Mrowca, Elzbieta Rojek, Joanna Holcgreber, Katrin Forsmo, Britta Forslund, Martin Essen-Müller

Music Adaptation:

Maciej Rychły

Director, text adaptation, and dramaturgy:
Włodzimierz Staniewski

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Director's Notes

It has been our custom for the past twenty years to present two performances in one evening: an older, departing one, and a new one which is arriving.

This evening we present only a "new, arriving one".

In this new work, for the first time we changed our philosophy, and we learned music not from living people, but from stones.

Living stones.

Traces of this ancient Greek music - from 5th cent. B.C. to 2nd cent. A.D. - can be found only written in stones. Singing from stone is like singing out the stone, to testify that it is at least as alive as nature.

What we invite you to hear is most of all contemporary voices singing ancient melodic lines in ancient keys.

Everything has been slightly adjusted, e.g. tempo, rhythm, dynamics. And perhaps "not adjusted", perhaps organically in agreement with The Spirit of Time, because no one can recreate the life-line of rhythm. One can only follow intuition.

Those songs remain in relation to a book, the philosophy of which we referred to in our work process. This great book Metamorphosis or The Golden Ass appeared at a critical time when The Old Gods Dionysus and Apollo were leaving and Christ, The New God, was coming. The book was written by Apuleius of Madaura, who used to say about himself and his friends: "We, the Platonic family, know only that which is festive, joyful, sacred, sublime, celestial..."

Living in 2nd cent. A.D., Apuleius was a Platonist. Therefore, our work refers to Platonic essences: the nature of the soul, the nature of love, and the mysteries of changes. It refers to

everything Apuleius the Platonist talked about allegorically in Metamorphosis.

What we will sing for you is - to use a painter's expression - the priming of a canvas. The form it has assumed now I call a "Theatrical Essay".

A few interesting details: In the past we approached Apuleius and the songs of stone several times and then we abandoned the subject. However, as if in passing, a few things came out of those attempts: strange fruit such as The Artistic Inn Golden Ass at Grodzka Street in Lublin, where our offices are located; and a scenario written by the well-known English dramatist Howard Brenton. The scenario was an outcome of our collaboration with The Royal Shakespeare Company. From that remained the song entitled You Are Broken, sung in English.

And one more thing. To our singing during deep night rehearsals in Gardzienice, in our barn, on the hill between the forests and the fields, in the "nowhere place" where the melancholy and the misery spin around; to this singing in Pythagorean scales and language; during autumn nights when it is difficult to rise the shoes from the mud, and the black sky cuts down the spirit; during winter nights when the snow and the cold winds from the steppes of Euro-Asia kill every joy of life - during such nights wild and hungry dogs arrived.

They were the first participants of our expeditions to the Ancient Times. Their trust and tameness is once again the victory of Pythagoras who wished to tune the spirits to lame and to heal with music.

Włodzimierz Staniewski

Centre for Theatre Practices „Gardzienice“

"Metamorphosis or The Golden Ass" according to Lucius Apuleius

Synopsis

INTRODUCTION

We, the members of Plato's family, know only that, which is solemn, joyful, holy, sublime, heavenly. We rise to regions situated above heaven itself and we take our places on the top of the world. Please read the following words in Faidros: "The place above the Heavens, the summit of Heaven". Please understand who is Basileus, dubbed so for the first time by Plato. Who is that Basileus? The cause, the brain and source of the beginning, the highest creator, the highest saviour. But a creator creating without effort, a saviour saving effortlessly. Who is the Basileus that you worship? Even, if the proconsul himself would ask who my God is, I shall not answer.

Song: „LYTANEO SIGATO“ - the earliest Christian hymn, still in the ancient Greek notation. The melodic patterns are Oriental, Syrian.

LYTANEO SIGATO MED ASTRA
PFAES PFORA LAMPESTHON AU
AINES THON DE PEGAI POTAMON
RHOTHION PASAI HYMNUTON
D'HEMON PATERA K'HYION K'HAGION
PNEUMA PASAI DYNAMEIS
EPIFONUNTON AMEN AMEN
KRATOS AINOS AEI KAI DOXA THEOI
DOTERI MONOI PANTON AGATHON
AMEN AMEN

Translation:

...Let it be silent, let the luminous stars not

shine, let the winds and all the noisy rivers die down; and as we hymn the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, let all the powers add "Amen, amen". Empire, praise always, and glory to God, the sole giver of all good things. Amen, amen.

- Should one extend friendship to the one who loves, or to the one who does not love? When speaking of love, what is it like? What power does it have? Does it bring benefit or harm?

- Everyone knows that love is a kind of desire. Still, everyone, desire things of beauty, even those who do not love. Therefore, what distinguishes the one who loves from the one who doesn't?

- The conviction that leads to the very best and is called restraint of desire irrationally struggling toward pleasure and called passion.

- Passion has many names, many kinds and varieties.

- For him who is ruled by passion it is necessary to draw for himself as much pleasure from the one he loves as possible. For him, who is sick, everything that does not create resistance is pleasant, whereas that, which is stronger, or equally strong, is hateful to him. He who loves cannot eagerly bear the loved one when he is stronger, or equal, and so he continuously tries to increase the loved one's worthlessness and inferiority.

- Therefore he schemes so that the loved one would be totally devoted to him and totally dependent on him.

- That's obvious - you blockheaded ass - and there is no need to fathom it. I shall leave it at that and move to something else.

- Just a moment. It is not true to claim that one should show favour to the one who does not love due to the fact that he who loves is off his head and the other one is in sound mind,

because, if it had been obvious that going crazy is absolutely wrong, then this would have been well declared, but it is the greatest good that we obtain through intoxication, if it is given as gods' gift.

– True, true... And that is why it is worth remembering that those among the ancient ones who had given names, believed that madness is neither bashful, nor disgraceful.

– Yes, the ancients believed that madness is more beautiful than sobriety, as the former comes from the gods and the latter from men. There have been frenzies foretelling liberation, when people turned to prayers and divine mysteries. Hence purifications and divine mysteries cure the one who has experienced them for the present and for the future, delivering the one who was truly mad and possessed from present ills.

– So there is possession by muses, and there is frenzy embracing pure and sensitive souls transporting them to inspiration, that expresses itself in songs?

– Yes, that's how it is...

He who would without inspiration... inspiration!... he who would without inspiration knock at the gates of singing poetry with the conviction that in order to be a singer all one needs is craft, will find out, that he himself does not have the divine spark and that the singing of a sober man, does not equal the singing of a man inspired... That much, and even more, I have to say about the beautiful works of inspiration. It's for the good that gods send Eros to the lover and the beloved one.

– To you, favorable Eros, we address this (propitiatory and laudatory) hymn.

– We exerted ourselves, oh Eros!, as much as we could.

– A hymn most beautiful and the best...

– We were forced to use certain bombastic phrases, oh Eros!

– Oh, Eros, do not reduce, in anger.

– Our ability, oh Eros, of loving!

– And make me enjoy among the beautiful people - oh, Eros!

– Even greater esteem than so far - oh, Eros!

– And if we have told to you something unpleasant - oh, Eros!

– Please stop us from giving these kinds of speeches - oh, Eros!

– And direct us toward the love of wisdom

– So that we would fully give ourselves to love, oh Eros!

– In accordance with the principles of philosophy, oh Eros!

3. Song: „HOSON ZES” - song from Seikilos' tomb, III c B.C

HO SONDZES PFAJNU MEDENN
HOLOS SYLYPU PROZ OLIGON
ESTITO DZEN TOTELOS HOKHRONOS
APAITEI

Translation:

While you're alive, shine, man, don't be the least bit blue. Life's for a little span; time demands its due.

4. Song: „ALL' "PHOIBE" - by Limenius, II c B.C.

Processional song, pæon.

ALLO PFOIBE SOIDZE THEOKTISTON
PALLADOS ASTYKAI LAON KLEINON
SYNTETHEA TOKSON DESPOTI
KRESION KYMNON TARTEMIS EDE
LATO KYDISTA KAINA ETAS DELFON

TEMELEJ THAMA TEKNOIS BIOISI
DOMASIN APTAISTUS BAKHU
THIERONIKASIN EUMENEIS MOLETE
PROSPO LOISI TANDE DORIS
TEPTON KARTEI RHOMAION ARHAN
AUKSET AGERATOI THALLUSAN
PFERENIKAN

Translation:

O Phoebus, preserve Pallas' divinely -
founded city and glorious people, and thou
too, goddess, mistress of Cretan archery and
hunting hound Artemis, and August leto. And
keep the Delphians secure in house, family,
and livelihood and come in favoring mood for
Bacchus' serving musicians; and increase the
Roman's spear - crowned rule with age long
power, so that it thrives victorious.

5. HYMN TO ASCLEPIUS - III c A.C.

Asklepion æisomen

Translation:

...Let us sing of Asklepius, (who protects) men
(from dire diseases together with the lord
paian) Apollo of the famous bow

6. Song: „O BACCHOU” by Limenius and
Ateneus, II c B.C, apostrophe of Attica's
inspired artists in honour of the god Dionysos

HO DE TEHNITON PROPAS HESMOS
ATTHIDA LAHON AGLAIDZEJ KLYTON
PAJDA MEGALUDIOS SOI GAR EPOR
AKRONIPFE TON DE PAGON
AMBROTHU PASI THNATOIS
PROFAINEIS LOGIA

Translation:

The whole company of Artists of Attica
glorifies you, the son of mighty Zeus, who
granted you this snow-capped crag, where
you show forth immortal oracles for all men.

O BAKHU MEGAS THYRSOPLEKS
HESMOS HIEROS TEHNITON

Translation:

Bacchus, great inspired company of Artists

7. Song: „ALL' "PHOIBE" - song by
Limenius, II c B.C

8. Song: „MET EMOISI” - I pray, from
Eurypides' „Iphigenia”, V c B.C,
mixolidian scale

MET E MOI MET E MOISI TEKNON
TEKNOIS ELPIS HADE POTELTHOI
HOJAN HAJ POLYCHRYSOI TIS ARA
MEUPLOKA MUKOMAS RHYMA DA
KRYOEN TANYAS GAS PATRIAS
OLOMENAS APOLLOTI EJ

Translation:

I pray neither I nor children of my stock may
ever have those prospects that the Lydian
woman rich in gold and the Phrygians' wives
will think on as they ply their looms: "which
man will pull my fine hair and ravish me amid
the ruin of my fatherland?"

9. Song: „AEIDE MOUSA” and
„KALLIOPEIA” - by Mesomedes, II c B.C,
invocation to the Muses - to Calliope and
Apollo, mixolidian scale

A(E) I DE MUZAMOI FILE MOLFES
DEMES KATARHU AURE DE SON
APALSEON EMAS PFRENAS DONEITO

Translation:

Sing for me, dear muse, begin my tuneful
strain; a breeze blow from your groves to stir
my listless brain.

KALIOPEIA SOFA MUZON PROKATHA
GETI TERPNON KAJSOFE
MYSTODOTA LATUS GONE DELIE
PAJAN EUMENEIS PARESTEMOI

Translation:

Skillful Calliope, leader of the delightful
muses and skillful instructor, son of Leto,

Delian paian, favour and be with me.

10. Song: „*MELIPNOON*” by Limenius II c B.C.

MELIPNOON DE LIBYS AUDAN
KHEON LOTOS AHMELPEN
HADEJAN OPA MEJGNMYENOS
AJJOLOIS KITHARIOS MELESIN HAMA
DIAHEN PETROKATOJ KETOS AKHO
IJE PAJAN

Translation:

Pouring forth its honey-breathed voice, the
Libyan pipe sang sweetly, blending with the
shimmering tunes of the kithara, while Echo
who lives among the rocks join in the holy
song.

11. Song: „*ATTHIS MEGALOPOLIS*” paeon
by Aleneus, II c B.C.

ENKLYTA MEGALOPOLIS ATTHIS
EUHAISI PFEROPLOIO NAJUSA
TRITONIDOS DAPEDON ATHRAUSTON
HAGJOIS DEBOMOISIN HAFAJSTOS
AJTHEI NEON MERATAURON HOMU
DENIN ARABS ATMOS ES OLUMPON
ANAKIDNATAJ LIGY DE LOTOS
BREMON AJLOIS MELESIN ON
DANKREKEJ CHRYS(Z)EA DHADYTRUS
KITHARIS HYMNOSIN ANAMELPETAI

Translation:

Lo, famous Attica of the great city is here at
prayer, whose home is Athena's invincible
ground; and on the sacred altars Hephaestus
is burning things of young bulls.

At the same time Arabian incense-smoke
spreads up to heaven, and the clear-braying
pipe weaves shimmering tunes into the
singing while the sweet-voiced golden kithara
takes its part in the same song of praise.

12. Song: „*PARNASIAN*” by Limenius II c
B.C.

PARNASIAN DEJ RADA PHILENTHEON
ALLA CHRESMOIDON HOS E CHEIS
TRIPODA HO ALLA CHRESMOIDON HO
BAIN EPITHEOS TIBEA TANDE

Translation:

So thou that possessed the oracular tripod,
come to this Parnasian ridge where gods
walk, where the inspired are favoured.

13. Song: „*YOU ARE BROKEN*” by Howard
Brenton

The long line of my life
that was tangled within
the chromosome code of being
you are broken

At last breath of my life
from the chrysalis corpse
spread the wings of a moth
Death has woken

14. „*EU O BAKHAJ*” - dithyramb in praise of
Dionysos, II c B.C, lidian scale

* I approached the very gates of death
and set one foot on Proserpine's threshold
yet was permitted to return
borne through the bottomless pit of all the
elements
At midnight I saw the sun
shining with blinding light
I entered the presence of the gods of the
underworld
and the gods of the celestial world
and I prostrated before their feet
touching the ground with my forehead

Now I have told you, and you have heard,
though you must pretend
not to know it

* O you, holy and eternal Protectress of mankind,
you, who always extend generous care over the
mortals and who possess sweet, motherly
compassion for the ill fates of the unfortunate.
Not a single day, or night, or even the shortest
moment is bereft of your care. You protect
people on land and sea, you appease the
storms of their lives, you extend a helping hand
to them, the hand with which you unravel the
threads tangled by Fate. You appease the
hurricanes set loose by Fortune and render
harmless the fatal courses of the stars. The
heavenly gods worship you, the denizens of the
netherworld prostrate before you. Your hand
orders the universe, your foot tramples upon the
powers of hell.

At your command the winds blow, clouds pour
wholesome rains, seeds sprout, grapevines
climb. Before your majesty trembles aerial birds,
beasts in the mountainous thickets, snakes that
crawl upon the earth and sea monsters.
My spirit is too mundane to praise you fully. I
don't own enough to honour you with the
sacrifices that you deserve, words fail me, to say
what I feel before your majesty, even a thousand
tongues in a thousand mouths and an endless
stream of speech would not suffice.
Nevertheless, I care about one thing only, which
suits a devoted, yet poor man, that I would keep
your divine countenance and supreme majesty
in my heart's most secret chamber, so that I
would constantly be aware of them.

15. Song: „*CHRYSEA PHORMINGS*” Hymn
by Pindar V c B.C.

CHRYS(Z)EA PFORMINGS APOLLONOS
KAJIOPLOKAMON SYNDIKON MOISAN
KTEANON TAS AKUEJ MEN BAZIS
AGLAIAS ARHA

Translation:

CHRYS(Z)EA PFORMINGS APOLLONOS
KAJIOPLOKAMON SYNDIKON MOISAN KTEANON
TAS AKUEJ MEN BAZIS AGLAIAS ARHA

Translation: O golden lyre of Apollo, whose hair
is dark like the violet flower, you belong to the
Muses. Rhythm, holiness, beginning, beauty, obey
you.

For Bennington College

Sue Rees	Design Liaison
Alan Del Vecchio	Technical Director
Steven Espach	House Manager
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Garin Marschall	Lighting Assistance
Michael Giannitti	Lighting Coordinator
Suzanne Caraman	Executive Assistant to the Dean
Pat Harrison	Special Projects Assistant
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Special Assistance

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Student Participants in Work Sessions

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The performances and residency of Gardzienice have been in collaboration with Kadmus Theatre Studio.

After the performance

please join us for a

GATHERING

Singular to Gardzienice is the **Gathering**, an extra-theatrical event which includes music, orations, samplings from the expeditions, and research of the company intimately woven in relation to the audience. **Video documentaries** from the twenty years of Gardzienice's work will accompany the **Gathering** which include materials from past performances and **Expeditions** the company has undertaken with the indigenous peoples of five continents.