

LI.202

Kyprianou

PRESENTATION OF THE WORK OF ELLI PEONIDOU IN THE CORNELIA STREET CAFÉ, NEW YORK. 1997. JOHN KALLAS MAKES THE INTRODUCTION. ARTHUR STRIMLING, TAMIAS BEN MAGID AND GIORGOS CHOULIARAS, AS WELL AS MELINA PEONIDOU CONTRIBUTE.

Elli Peonidou has completed 40 years of creative writing. Her first story for children was broadcasted on the Cyprus radio station when she was fifteen. Since then she has published more than 20 books, poetry, prose, and stories for children. Many of her books have been awarded various prizes. She writes in greek but some of her books have been translated in other european languages. Last year a volume of her poetry was published in french. This book is now translated in english by the poet and translator Tamias Ben Magid who will explain briefly how those poems were translated. You will hear some of those poems recited by Elli in greek and by Tamias in english.

Just a week ago two books by Elli Peonidou came out in Athens and both of them are inspired in some way by New York. The first book, *Diadromes*, is a collection of poems where one can feel the aroma of the big City. People that she met, places that she visited, the unique atmosphere of N.Y. where the poet lived for two years. The poems are not yet translated in english but you will get a taste of them in the greek language as Elli will read one or two. The poet George Houliaras will give you a brief description of the book.

The other book is a novel for young people. It is called "The Sirines of Manhattan". The main character of this book is Manoli, a greek cyriot boy who at the beginning of the fifties loses his father at a mine accident and has to support his family. He works as a sailor and when his ship reaches N.Y. Manoli escapes with a friend to the big Apple. They start right from the bottom like most of the immigrants, washing dishes etc. After many adventures and difficulties Manoli manages to graduate the gymnasium and to grant a scholarship for the Univercity. Eventually he becomes a famous film director. The reader follows also the dramatic events in Manoli's native country, Cyprus, the struggle against the british occupation and finally the establishment of the island's Independence.

I would like to add to this information a personal view on Elli's work because I happened to read in greek and translate part of one of her previous books for children, "The Feats of Kafedakis in seven cups" The actor and story teller Arthur Strimling will read for you part of this story.

Tamias Ben Magid will read some of his poems.

Finally I wish to mention Melina Peonidou, music director of the National Theatre in Athens who during the readings will play the piano and sing in greek and in english.

1. John says a few words.
2. Elli reads 1-2 poems from the Hours.
3. Melina accompanies with piano and then sings one song in Greek.
4. Tamias speaks about the Hours and then reads in english. Melina plays the piano. In the middle of the poem Elli reads another poem in greek.
5. Melina sings another song in greek.
6. Houliaras speaks about Diadromes.
7. Elli reads one poem in greek.
8. Melina sings a english song.
9. Elli reads another poem in greek.
10. Melina sings a greek song.
11. Arthur reads part of Kafedakis.
12. Melina sings another song.
13. Tamias reads his poem.
- 14 Melina sings.

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INTRODUCTION BY THE WRITER AND CRITIC JOHN CALLAS AT THE CORNELIA THEATRE
IN NEW YORK, AT THE PRESENTATION OF ELLI PEONIDOU'S WORK

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