

ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ

Πολλές φορές, αντικρίζοντας τις απέραντες χρυσές πεδιάδες, με τις μπάλες από το τυλιγμένο σανό μετά το θέρος να λάμπουν κάτω από τον καυτερό ήλιο σαν ατόφιο χρυσάφι, περπατώντας στην παραλία τον χειμώνα με τον αέρα από τα μανιασμένα κύματα της θάλασσας να με χτυπά στο πρόσωπο, σκέφτομαι πόσο θα ήθελα να μπορούσα να εκφράσω μέσω της ποίησης τα αισθήματα που με κυριεύουν. Δεν έχω όμως αυτό το ταλέντο.

Θαυμάζω, λοιπόν, όλους αυτούς που μπορούν! Απολαμβάνω την ποίησή τους. Είναι άμεσα συνδεδεμένη με τη ζωή τους, με τα αισθήματά τους, με το πώς βλέπουν τη ζωή – με όλες τις χαρές και τις λύπες της. Βρίσκουν στην ποίηση τον τρόπο να εκφράσουν τον εσωτερικό τους κόσμο και να επικοινωνήσουν με τους άλλους.

Με κυριεύσε, λοιπόν, μια μεγάλη χαρά όταν έμαθα ότι η αγαπημένη μας σοπράνο Κατερίνα Μηνά είναι ένα πολυτάλαντο άτομο που συγκινεί όχι μόνο με τη μουσική της αλλά και την ποίησή της. Γνωρίζοντας το πόσο πάλεψε η Κατερίνα για να υπερπηδήσει τις αντιξοότητες της ζωής και να βγει απ' όλα αυτά νικητής, διαβάζω μέσα από τους στίχους της όχι μόνο τις δυσκολίες στο δύσβατο μονοπάτι της ζωής αλλά και την αισιοδοξία, την ελπίδα και τη δύναμη που τη χαρακτηρίζουν. Εκφράζει την αποφασιστικότη-

τά της για ένα αύριο γαλάζιο της ευτυχίας και της αγάπης και προστάζει τη μελαγχολία της ψυχής να φύγει από μπροστά της... Από τώρα και στο εξής τα αστέρια λάμπουν...

Η αγάπη και ο έρωτας διάχυτα στην ποίηση της Κατερίνας και η αναζήτησή τους επιθυμία του καθενός. Πόση αγάπη έμεινε... και πού είναι; Η μοναξιά, η δοκιμασία, η έντονη προσμονή εξαφανίζονται μόλις νιώσω το αίσθημα της πραγματικής αγάπης.

Διαβάζοντας την ποίηση της Κατερίνας νιώθει κανείς ένα γλυκό συναίσθημα ευτυχίας και αισιοδοξίας. Το ίδιο συναίσθημα που νιώθεις όταν η Κατερίνα τραγουδά μια ωραία άρια από όπερα ή μια ρομαντική μπαλάντα. Το πάθος ίδιο· η αγάπη για τη ζωή και τον άνθρωπο διάχυτα και στα δύο. Η Κατερίνα δίνει τον εαυτό και το είναι της γι' αυτά που αγαπά.

Ο Stefan Anton George, γερμανός ποιητής του 19ου και 20ού αιώνα, μιλώντας για την αξία της ποίησης είπε μεταξύ άλλων: «Κάθε ποίημα που φέρει μαυρίλα χωρίς καμιά φωτεινή λάμψη, είναι πλαστό. Πιο πολύ συγκινεί εκείνη η τέχνη που μέσα της αισθάνεται κανείς την αναπνοή του καινούριου πνεύματος που κοιμάται». Η ποίηση της Κατερίνας περιέχει μαυρίλα. Ο πόνος και η θλίψη δεν κρύβονται πια από τα μάτια και το πρόσωπό μου. Φέρει όμως και άπειρες φωτεινές λάμψεις. Το κακό όνειρο έχει περάσει και τώρα γεύεται τα εδέσματα της ευτυχίας. Η δε αναπνοή του καινούριου πνεύματος είναι διάχυτη στην ποιητική συλλογή EROS.

Ανδρούλα Βασιλείου
Τέως Ευρωπαϊά Επίτροπος Πολιτισμού

PREFACE I

Many times, whilst watching the endless golden valleys with bales of rolled hay that shine like pure gold under the hot sun after the summer; whilst walking along the beach in the winter with the wind of the raging sea waves hitting my face, I often think how much I would like to be able to voice these overwhelming feelings through poetry. And yet, I don't have this charisma.

I therefore admire all those who can! I enjoy their poetry. It is closely linked to their lives, their emotions, to the way they witness life – with both its sorrows and joys. Poetry is their way to voice their inner world and communicate with others.

It was a great pleasure to find out that our beloved soprano Katerina Mina is a wonderfully talented person who not only moves others with her music, but also with her poetry. Knowing how much Katerina fought to overcome life's adversities and how she came out of them victorious, her lyrics reveal the difficulties through life's rocky path but also her incredible sense of optimism, hope and strength. Katerina expresses her determination for a future *colored with the light blue of happiness and love* and commands *soul's melancholy to leave her presence... Stars are shining from now on...*

Love and passion are all over Katerina's poetry and the search for true love becomes everyone's desire. *Is there any love left... and where?... Loneliness, ordeal and intense expectation vanish, once true love's feelings appear.*

In Katerina's poetry the reader feels a sweet sense of happiness and optimism. The same sense one feels when Katerina performs a beautiful operatic aria or a romantic ballad. It is the same passion; her love for life and humanity is spread out over both forms of art. Katerina gives her whole being when it comes to anything she loves.

Stefan Anton George, a German poet of the 19th and 20th century, talking about poetry's value, amongst other things, he said: "Every poem bearing darkness without a silver lining, is fake. The most moving of all art is the one that makes you sense the breathing of the newly born spirit that's been dormant". There is darkness in Katerina's poetry. *My eyes and face are filled with suffering and grief.* But there are also millions of silver linings in her poetry. *The bad dream is over and she is now able to taste the delights of happiness.* The breathing of the newly born spirit flows abundantly in Katerina Mina's poetic collection EROS.

Androulla Vassiliou
Former European Commissioner for Culture

Katerina's book of poems (English and Greek) covers the years from 2012 until July 2019. They are written in two of Katerina's languages. To write poems in one language is tough enough. Katerina is a true woman of substance. Also taking into account that she can sing like a well educated bird and wear clothes elegantly to enhance her glamour.

As far as the Greek poems are concerned I am not competent to make much sense out of them. I have a basic familiarity with the gloomy Sophocles and the witty Aristophanes but my knowledge of modern Greek begins and ends with Nana Mouskouri and Roussos pere et fils. I have not even hurled a plate onto a stone floor or got beyond humous on the menu of the café down the road.

Generally speaking Katerina Mina's poetry inhabits a solitary landscape but a closer look uncovers autumn leaves on the banks of the Elbe, and the abandoned lover becomes a partner in a great adventure:

*[...] we are the beings of light.
We honour each other
and celebrate life.
From now on
it's all about love,
it's all about truth,
it's all about us!*

David Benedictus, Writer and Theatre Director

ΒΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΟ ΣΗΜΕΙΩΜΑ

Singing from the pulpit, Katerina Mina's crystal clear voice exploited the acoustics of St. James's perfectly, soaring through the building, down the aisles and up to the high ceiling. The singing was heavenly.

The Daily Express

London-based opera singer Katerina Mina is a British spinto soprano of Greek-Cypriot origin. Katerina studied at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, having received full scholarships from the City of London Corporation and the A. G. Leventis Foundation.

She is a prize-winner in two International Singing Competitions, the recipient of the Russian Federation's Medal for 'Peace and Friendship', as well as the winner of the opera nominees on the 1st Edition of Future Classic Women Awards 2019 organised by Women's Radio Station in London. An experienced soloist, Katerina enjoys a very busy schedule on the concert and opera platforms in Europe, Russia, the Middle-East and Far-East, where she excels in the repertoire of the verismo composers. She has performed in recent years with

well-known orchestras at internationally renowned venues, including, amongst others, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Buxton Opera House, Hackney Empire, St John's Smith Square, Shrewsbury Abbey, Sheldonian Theatre, St Martin-in-the-Fields, as well as concert halls in Mexico City, Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, Paris, Athens and Tenerife. A versatile artist, Katerina appeared as a special guest in Rick Wakeman's symphonic concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. She was also the main soloist during the closing ceremony of the International Festival of Astronomy STARMUS 2014, performing alongside theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking and cosmonaut Alexey Leonov. Following an official invitation by UNESCO, Katerina has recently performed at the opening and closing sessions of the inauguration ceremony of the International Day of Light in Paris. Katerina's passion for singing has led her to record a new CD Album with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Grzegorz Nowak. The CD entitled *Angel of Fire*, has officially been released by the Orchestra's Record Label.