

Themos Mexis

Composer, Conductor, Arranger, Pianist, Teacher

BIOGRAPHY- AN OVERVIEW

An active performing composer since 1972, he has performed and conducted a variety of concerts, predominantly of his own music, in various concert halls in Australia, Cyprus, Trieste and Greece. His concerts, whether for symphony orchestras, various ensembles including big bands, choral or solo piano performances, have always drawn large audiences.

Themos Mexis was born in Rhodes, Greece. His family migrated to Australia when he was six years old. His musical studies started firstly with private piano and theory lessons, from age 13, then at the Conservatorium of New South Wales, Sydney, under the tutelage of Prof. Gordon Watson and Ms. Dorothy Sprigs. He continued his studies at the Academia Musicale di Santa Cecilia, Rome, with Prof. B. Giuranna in Composition, Prof. Ferdinandi in Score Reading and Orchestration, and Maestro Fernando Ferrara in Conducting. Further studies at the Hellenic Conservatorium in Athens, with Prof. Giorgo Georgiadi in Piano, Prof. Miltiadi Koutoungo and Maestro Antiocho Evangelato, in Advanced Theoretical Studies. He holds Diplomas with Honours in Piano, Theoretical Studies and Music Education. With a composer's grant, in 1976, from the Music Board of the Australia Council, he studied electronic music at the NSW Conservatorium, Sydney, with Martin Wesley-Smith.

He has been distinguished and awarded many times for his compositions both in Australia and overseas.

In Australia, as composer and arranger, he created a variety of works which included music for theatre, cinema and television. He was commissioned and invited by the Australian Government to perform in major events and festivals, usually conducting his own music, written and arranged for large orchestras. He has conducted seminars and workshops on his own music and on Greek music in general, in schools and universities. "Mexis in Concert" became a frequent fixture of the Australian cultural events calendar since 1976. He also formed light-music ensembles, such as The Mexis Show Band, backing many local and overseas artists. He conducted The Mexis Orchestra and Choir in many Carnivale and Sydney Cultural Olympiad events. He was amongst the Australian artists chosen by the Australian Olympic Arts Festival Committee to perform in their place of origin (Greece) as part of "Reaching the World" program. His composition 'Evening Song' was used for the national TV and radio advertisement of the 1998 Olympic Cultural Festival, "A Sea Change". (See Credits)

In Greece, he taught at the National Conservatorium (Halandri branch), Athens. He was guest conductor for the ERT (National Radio and Television) Orchestra in a special program on Mexis Music and worked in theatres and TV. In 1999 he was appointed by the Municipal Council of Rhodes, Greece, to the position of Musical Director of the Municipal Concert Band of Rhodes, which position he held till October 2013. He returned to Sydney in December, 2014 where he currently resides

He has been a fully represented composer of the Australian Music Centre since 1976 and of APRA (Australian Performing Rights Assoc.) since 1978. He served as president of the NSW branch of M.A.G.A (Music Arrangers Guild of Australia); member of the Screen Writers' Guild; and life honorary member of the Greek Writers and Artists Association of Australia.

Currently, he is Musical Director of the National Metropolitan Choir of Australia (NMCA), an initiative of His Eminence, Archbishop Makarios, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia and Oceania.

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AWARDS

- **Grants:** Composer's award, 1976 from the NSW Conservatorium of Music. **Composer's Grant** from the Community Arts Board, Australian Arts Council, 1977; **Composer's grant** from the Music Board of the Australian Arts Council, 1979; **Composer's grant** from the Music Board, Australian Arts Council, in association with OFSE (The Combined Greek Associations), 1984.
- **Euroaward**, presented in Trieste, Italy, in 1998 for "Artistic Creation and Performance and for Bridging many Cultures with his music".
- **The Song Expo**, in the Netherlands, 1998-2000: his compositions "The Sousta" won Best Instrumental, Classical; "The Bridge" won Best Entry from Greece; "On Dreamtime Wings" won Best Entry from Greece; two awards for "El Conflictio" as Best Instrumental, Classical and as Best entry from Greece; "Mothers Lament" also won Best Instrumental and "Ode to Freedom" won Best Song for a New Millennium.
- 1971- His composition "Autumn Times" finalist Thessaloniki song festival.

FILM AND TV

COMPOSER, ARRANGER AND CONDUCTOR.

- Art Mayer Productions and Comalco: Theatrical Short Features, Canoe; Dragon on the Roof.
- Art Mayer Productions and Qantas: Theatrical Short Feature, So What.
- Art Mayer Productions and SBS: Documentary, Mexis and Friends.
- SBS and H.M. Productions: Tele-variety series, A Greek Affair and Play Bouzouki.
- SBS and Ferryman Productions: Tele-drama series, City West.
- SBS, Barbara Chobocky and Witch Hunt Productions: Tele-documentary feature, Witch Hunt.
- SBS and John Martin: Topical Magazine, Line Up 28.
- Lex Marinos and SBS: Tele-Documentary, Rods, Strings, Shadows and Gloves.
- Lex Marinos and Brian Beaton Reel Images Productions: Documentary, To the Island.
- ERT3, Greek National TV, for variety show NOSTOS, conducting the Mexis Show Band.
- His composition 'Evening Song' was used for the National TV and radio advertisement of the 1998 Olympic Cultural Festival, "A Sea Change".

THEATRE:

COMPOSER, ARRANGER AND CONDUCTOR.

- For Carnivale'78 and The Caruana Dance Co, Ballet, Vania and the Water Sprite, Regent Theatre, Sydney. The Mexis Orchestra.
- Song of My Dead Brother (arranges the music of Mikis Theodorakis), Hellenic Drama Society; The Cobbler's Wife (Hellenic Theatrical Group); The Lyre of Old Man Nikolas (Theatro Technis). Electronic music production.
- Lex Marinos and Sidetrack Theatre, Sydney, The Wound. Co-composer.
- Kostas Prekas Theatre Co, Athens, Greece, as Musical Director.
- Aliki Vouyouklaki, The Merry Widow, Athens, Greece, (pianist).
- Theatre of the South Aegean, Greece, composer and musical director for Euripides' The Trojan Women
- Theatre of the South Aegean, composer and musical director for Ioannis Economides' To Magiko Filtro (The Magic Potion), children's theatre.

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CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS

- MEXIS IN CONCERT- a fixture in Sydney's concert calendar 1976 – 1999. All music composed, arranged and conducted by Themos Mexis, unless otherwise stated:
 - Sydney Town Hall, 1976, The Mexis Orchestra and Choir.
 - Elizabethan Theatre, Sydney, for Carnivale '77, The Mexis Orchestra and Choir.
 - Adelaide Town Hall for Adelaide Fringe Festival 1978 and Glendi, The Mexis orchestra. Repeat performance at The State Theatre, Sydney.
 - The Adelaide Festival Trust, 1979. Conducting The Adelaide Festival Orchestra.
 - Repeat performance at The Dallas Brookes Hall, Melbourne, conducting the Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra.
 - Athens, Greece, 1980, ERT studios, conducting the Greek Radio and Television Orchestra.
 - Dallas Brookes Hall, 1985, conducting The Melbourne Pops Orchestra, for Greek Festival Week.
 - Repeat performance, Sydney Town Hall with The Mexis Orchestra and Choir
 - The National Maritime Museum, for Thalassa – Sea the World, 1996, conducting The Mexis Choir.
 - Invited by The Secretariate of The Year of Tolerance 1997, and Foreign Affairs Minister, Nick Bolkus, at The Refectory Sydney University, conducting The Mexis Orchestra and Choir, to celebrate the music of visiting composer, Mikis Theodorakis. All music arranged by Mexis.
 - For Carnivale '97, Sydney Town Hall, conducting The SBS Youth Orchestra, The Mexis Choir and The Bankstown City Scottish Pipe Band.
 - TWANG, 1998, for A Sea Change, at The Australian Museum, Sydney.
 - Gracias a La Vida, for Carnivale '98 and A Sea Change, conducting The Mexis Choir.
 - The Five Rings Concert, Darling Harbour 1998, a Carnivale and A Sea Change event, conducting The Mexis Orchestra and Choir.
 - At Government House, Sydney, 1998, a Carnivale, A Sea Change and a Sydney Symphony Orchestra collaboration. 5 piece ensemble, including 3 guest musicians from the SSO.
 - Other: Guest Conductor with The Kuring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra: 1984 conducting Andre Previn's EGBDF, by Tom Stoppard, at The Auditorium, Macquarie University; 1981, in a program including, Dvorak, Greig, Massinet, Albinoni, Holst and Mexis.
 - In Greece, 1999 – 2013, resident artistic director and conductor of The, The Rhodes Municipal Concert Band (Filarmoniki Rodou), Rodos Island. Highlights include Concerts for Holy Week, an incentive created by Mexis, which has become an annual event and performed in large cathedrals around the island.
 - Greeting The Olympic Flame, concert, conducting an augmented Rhodes Municipal Concert Band and The Experimental Choir of G. Sakellariou. Rhodes, Greece, 2004.

OTHER LINKS:

Australian Music Centre: <https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/artist/mexis-themos>

YouTube : Themos Mexis.

The Municipal Concert Band of Rhodes, Greece: YouTube Themos Mexis and Filarmoniki Orchestra Rodou; Rodos Mixed Choir and Themos Mexis

The Australian Hellenic Choir.