



The major cultural events of 2008

The new year breaths new life into the domestic and foreign art scene.

Art fans anticipate that 2008 will be a "bumper" year. There are quite many shows and events of international appeal, which are expected to fascinate the show-going public. Write down the dates and book your seats now, because in many cases ticket presales have already started. One thing for sure, though: 2008 will not be a boring year!

By Maria Lemonia



February kicks in with an essence of children's stories. The kids' favourite writer, Eugene Trivizas, presents the children's musical **"The Sneezing Rooster"** on February 3rd. **Where will it take place? At the Booze Cooperativa multi-space (57 Kolokotroni Str., tel 211 4000863).**

From 6 to 10 February, mark this name: *Elemental*. At the Dais cultural, conference and sports center, a great spectacle is ready to fascinate all. A journey into the four elements of nature, with impressive acrobatics, huge puppets and magnificent costumes. For ticket bookings, please visit www.ticketnet.gr or call 210 88 40 600.

About the end of the same month, the Gyalino Music Theatre (143 Sigrou Ave. tel. 210 9316.101) presents an alternative show that will impress those who seek alternative experiences. The show is titled "Aluminium" and is about the different shapes aluminium can take. Music and dance for sophisticated fans

For the trendier, there is the *design walk!* on February 1, 2 and 3, the quirkiest stuff that Greece will present in 2008. Young art directors from the trendiest metropolises of the world will give us a knowing wink. Designers from all over the world: London, Paris, Madrid, Hamburg, Munich, even some US cities. The *design walk!* will be held at various advertising agencies (information at www.designwalk.gr) and will, definitely, be the talk of the town. Why? It is simple: Because it will present the new trends of modern art and advertising. This event had also been organized last year; its creations reached the first page of a well-known newspaper, and, as expected, reached out to inquisitive youths that are enthralled by everything new.

For older ages, there is an event on February 9th,

at 8.30 pm, in the Athens Concert Hall: Han Na Chang plays Vivaldi. Asia enchants us with notes mostly emanating from a cello.

If you wish to meet the new year in a beautiful environment, enjoying high quality art, don't forget the National Art Gallery (50 Vas. Constantinou, tel. 210. 7235.857). Apart from the permanent (and magnificent, for the information of those who are not acquainted with them) collections, you will have the opportunity to see works by Engonopoulos, Tsarouchis, Moralis, and Capralos until the 18th of February, at an exhibition titled "Classical Memories in Modern Greek Art".

Mid-February brings another reference to "rembetiko". Once again, at the Athens Concert Hall. The show (on the 14th of the month), featuring Yorgos Dalaras as the lead singer, is titled "Like an enchanted song", and is based on research made by Lefteris Papadopoulos, while the costumes have been designed by Yannis Medjikoff.

From February 19th and for ten days, i.e. till the 29th, the Greek National Opera invites us to a great spectacle titled "Le Comte Ory" and staged at the Olympia Theatre. The music is by Gioachino Rossini, and all participants are foreign. However, this is only the beginning for opera fans. Quality spectacle fans will have the opportunity to enjoy the famous **Tosca by Puccini from March 21st till March 30th**, at the Olympia Theatre. What's even more impressive? Following popular demand, Christine Opolais is ready to repeat last year's triumph.

If you are one of the romantics that love street art, your eyes will feast on colour and beauty.

For almost two months, every corner of Athens will be flooded by hearts. Remember what had





happened two years ago with the cows? Now the scenery is changing! Artists of various ages and styles will create hearts sponsored by large corporations and placed at central spots of Athens. The title of this live exhibition: **Hearts in Athens!** For those who prefer something more unconventional, there is an exhibition by the prematurely deceased painter Panos Fidakis. **It will last till March 9th, and most importantly: It is held in the imposing "Fryssira" museum (3 & 7 Monis Asteriou Str., Plaka, tel. 210. 3234.678).** For an extra walk around the town there is also the house of the famous painter **Spyros Vasileiou, which has been converted to a private museum, owned by his daughter, Drossoula. It is located in downtown Athens (Webster 5A, Acropolis, 210 9231.502)** and a visit there will enable you to enjoy a great many works left behind by this important artist.

On the corner of Merlin Street and 8 Vasilissis Sofias avenue (tel 210. 3611.206) the centre of Athens is adorned by a "jewel"-building. **This is an impressive neo-classical house, which has been housing for quite some time the B & M Theocharakis Foundation for the Fine Arts & Music. Until early April, its halls will be hosting a much-publicized exhibition:** The exhibition of paintings by the great artist Spyros Papaloukas, fifty years after his death.

For sea lovers there is something more specific. It is titled: "The Ionian Sea". It includes rich cartographic material covering a period from the 15th until the 18th century. At the Eynard Mansion of MIET (20 Aghiou Constantinou and Menandrou

streets, tel. 210. 3234.267) your interest will be monopolized for many hours by maps concerning the sea-battle of Nafpaktos (when the Christian fleet sunk the Ottoman fleet).

At a general admission price of €6 - €4 for students and senior citizens (over 65 years of age), you will spend some pleasant hours, viewing the works of Toulouse-Lautrec and the Belle Epoque in Paris. This pleasant note is offered by the Herakleidon museum (16 Herakleidon street, Thisseion, tel 2103461.981). The impressive works exhibited (publicity posters, prints, and drawings) draw their inspiration from French everyday life and entertainment. The works of Lautrec are shown next to portraits of famous actors and singers of the time, as well as sketches and caricatures. The exhibition will be open till spring. **The "Fracture Figure" exhibition by Dakis Ioannou will also be presented till spring (and more specifically until March 19th) at the DESTE Art Centre (11 Fillelinon and E. Pappas Streets, Nea Ionia, tel. 210 2758. 490).** It is a study on how modern art people deal with human form, through approximately 150 works. A modern perception of life, which excites all, from students to people in their forties, and helps us understand artistic trends. Clear lines, dense meanings, trendy creations. Recommended for forward thinking people who can easily grasp the messages of the future.

The Badminton theatre (210 8840 600), which has addicted us to high standards by "serving" unique shows, is featuring the ballets of St Petersburg on March 12th. The show, titled





"Swan Lake on Ice" is expected to stir the stagnant waters of the domestic artistic scene. Ballerinas and old champions of artistic ice-skating excel on stage, impressing youngsters and grownups alike; a refined show, ideal for lovers of great spectacle. Like the Irish Music show, stated at the Gyalino Music Theatre (210 9315.600) from March 13 until April 20. There will be a live orchestra, a unique dance experience, and the place is expected to be packed. It would be wise to make your bookings now, since these shows are considered highly successful throughout Europe. It is high time for those who do not know about Irish music, to listen to it ... and appreciate it!

Dance lovers, don't forget to book seats for the 12th and 13th of April show of "Dancing with the piano" at the Athens Concert Hall. The show includes the musical and dance interpretation of music by **Chopin, Rachmaninov and Tchaikovsky**. Pundits claim that it will, not doubt, be a feast to the senses. From now and until the middle of April, a visit to

the "Athinais" multi-space (210 3480000) will bring you face to face with 40 sculptures from the 20th century. Famous collector, Simon Spierer, is offering his collection (which includes works by Andy Warhol), to fascinate those who know how to appreciate "mineral magicians".

May brings world class spectacles.

For 24 shows, everyone in Greece will be shouting "Mamma Mia!" **Adam Productions (tel. 210 8840 600) proudly presents the original English production at the Badminton Theatre, bringing to Greece the most successful musical of the past decades. Thrills, follies, romance, and lots of pop music compose a fascinating story, which reminds of sweet summer vacations or the best parties of their lives, through 22 songs by the famous ABBA.** The show includes great hits, such as "Dancing Queen", "I have a dream" and "Voulez-vous". During the same period, and more specifically, on May 22nd, another star of the international music scene, comes for a sold-out concert at the Terra Vibe venue, in Malakasa. Australian superstar,





Kylie Minogue, radiant and healthy, makes a dynamic comeback, with a tour in many European countries. This is a rare opportunity to enjoy her, since it is widely known that she doesn't visit our country often. Reportedly, the show will be rather spectacular, as it will comprise an impressive stage, unique lightning, as well as Kylie's own dance figures that will raise many

comments. Some, indeed, say that Kylie's appearance in Greece will be the major musical event of 2008. Those who have seen her in Australia certainly agree.

On May 25th, the Greek National Opera will mark the end of the season with a classical dance performance: "La Sylphide", once again at the Olympia Theatre. The best option for a high quality finale, featuring great thrills. Book your seats now.

Bread, great spectacle, and soccer (which, as they say, is the opium of the people) have been scheduled for this summer.

From June 8th, the day of the kick-off, until June 21st, all activity will cease thanks to the Euro 2008. The European Soccer Championship will carry the Continent away, capturing everyone with great attackers, midfielders and goalkeepers, and fierce battles underneath the goalposts. Greece participates in the tournament that will be held in Austria and Switzerland, hoping for a new miracle under the instructions of Coach Otto Rehhagel. Will our national team manage to take on "Europe's mightiest" and fill the streets of downtown Athens with thousands of delirious fans? It remains to be seen.

After a long pause in July (time for a relaxed vacation, without socializing and rolodexes) interest is monopolized by August. **The entire universe will be tuned to the Beijing Olympics. Asia is ready to welcome the cream of international sports, hosting games that, according to rumour, will be unparalleled.** After Seoul, the global sportive community is looking forward to see the achievements of an Asian country with a population of one billion. The opening ceremony has been set for August 8, 2008, at 8 o'clock in the evening (a symbolic number! It will be an evening painted in the local colours; an evening that

you shouldn't miss). Moreover, you should not miss the ending ceremony, which is expected to be rather moving, as it will mean the closing of this major summer *raindez-vous*. It will be held in the central stadium of Beijing and it is set for August 24th.

This will be the end of the summer season. I am sure you will agree: Not bad at all! 🌍