

SINGING WORKSHOPS ON 'MAMA MIA!' ISLAND OF SKOPELOS, GREECE, JUNE 2014

....ΑΩ....

The **1st Skopelos Music Festival** took place in 2013 for one week from 27th May. The very successful week, with venues used throughout the town, culminated in a concert at **ORFEAS**, an outdoor venue in Skopelos town, previously a cinema, now being renovated as a performance space for music and theatre. The proposed week for this year's Festival is from **Monday 16th June 2014**. The slightly later date this year should allow easier transport to and from the island; allow older school children, who will by now have broken up, to take part rather than miss revision and exams, and, most importantly, ensure better weather!

Singing workshops to create the **Skopelos Festival Choir** were run last year over the weekend preceding the start of the Festival and are planned again for this year over the weekend of **14th and 15th June 2014**. These will again be conducted by **Rod Iliffe**, a well-known Musical Director, arranger, keyboard / piano player and chorus master in the Northampton/Leicestershire areas in the UK. He will be conducting both the workshops and performances at the Festival itself.

Last year, a choir of 17 were assembled, of all ages and experiences. These included seven Greek singers from the island as well as enthusiastic 'ex-pats', and the choir sang in four languages – English, Latin, German and Greek (not all at the same time!) and at four different venues, including the very beautiful **Liviadotissa Monastery** on the edge of the town, loaned to the choir and Festival by Vigilios Tsoulis. We hope this year to maintain, if not surpass, the amazing standard set by last year's attendees!



So we are again putting a **call out for singers** who wish to contribute to the Festival by inclusion in the **singing workshops**. The rehearsal venues will be both indoors and outdoors (as above) to prepare the choir for singing conditions in performance, both of which are easy walking distance from the town centre. There will be **two rehearsal sessions** (morning and afternoon) on both **Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th June**. On Saturday the rehearsals will take place indoors at **Orfeas** and on Sunday at **Sotos Pension** (also offering accommodation – see below). Although preferred, it is not essential for all sessions to be attended by those resident on the island.

Two main choir performances, will take place on **Tuesday 17th and Thursday 19th June**. At present these are booked in funky **BarDon** and at the **Laviodotissa Monastery**. There may also be the opportunity for a procession with singing and sight-seeing stops around the town as a prelude to the Festival itself.



Repertoire

Although the music eventually sung will inevitably depend upon the abilities of the singers who arrive to take part, the repertoire for the workshops and performances will be selected from the following:

- 'Ave Verum Corpus' - Mozart
- 'Ave Verum Corpus' - Elgar
- 'Liberate me' - Faure Requiem
- 'If ye love me' - Tallis
- 'Dirge for Fidele' - Vaughan-Williams (girls only)

- **'How lovely are Thy dwellings fair' - Brahms German Requiem**
- **'Il est bel et bon' - Passereau**
- **'Gaudete' - Traditional**
- **'Three Hungarian folksongs' - Matyas Seiber**
- **'Song of the Hired Man/Black rock/Fill it to the top' – from 'The Hired Man' by Howard Goodall**
- **'Jai Ho' - from 'Slumdog Millionaire' by AR Rahman**
- **'Elijah Rock' - Moses Hogan**
- **'Lean on me' - Bill Withers**
- **'Make you feel my love' - Bob Dylan**
- **'Let's face the music and dance' - Irving Berlin**
- **'Zoogie-Woogie' - J. Holdstock**

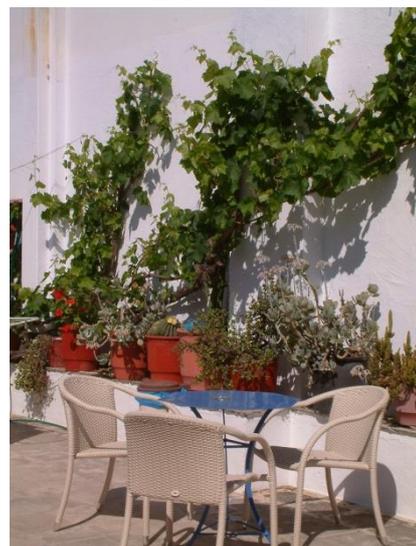
Some of these pieces will be downloadable from the Choral Public Domain Library (reference numbers to be advised), for the others copies will be made available at the workshops.

Accommodation

The following are examples of accommodation in varying price ranges for the time of the Festival. I have personally visited all the properties and can vouch for their quality as well as that the proprietors are all supportive of the festival and the benefits to the island. If you contact them, please mention that you are either a singer/musician or a friend/relative of mine!

Sotos Pension - a traditional town house located directly on the seafront with a wonderful atmosphere. Also the rehearsal venue for Sunday 15th June. Shared kitchen facilities, double and single rooms all with showers, rooms either looking onto interior pretty terraces or onto the port. 25 euros for two people in double room if booked for at least four days during the Festival period.

www.skopelos.net/sotos/pension.htm E-mail Alexandra Dimitriadou - sotosko@otonet.gr



Thea Home Hotel - high up on the town ring road, with truly amazing views. B & B for 35 euros per double room, 25 euros for single room. All rooms will have panoramic view to the sea and Skopelos town.



www.theahomehotel.com E-mail Giorgos Papadavid - theahomesk@gmail.com

Del Sol - a complex of studios and apartments within 15 minutes walking distance of town centre, along the sea front. Has a tennis court (the only one on the island!) and swimming pool for use of residents. 35 euros for two people per night in studio, 50 euros per night in apartment for four people.

www.delsol.gr E-mail Sophie Takis delsolskopelos@gmail.com



Rigas Hotel – on the edge of town, also within 15 minutes walking distance of the centre, built round a central courtyard. A variety of rooms and studios offered at discounted rates including **free transport from Skiathos airport to Skopelos**. Double room 28 euros per night up to suite with private pool for up to 4 people for 83 euros per night.



For further information and bookings, e-mail bookings@skopeloshotels.eu with reference to the Music Festival and singing workshops or call 0030 210 6919111

Alkistis Hotel - 1.5 kms out of town. Offering very similar prices but am awaiting further information for Festival attendees. Transport will be needed to attend rehearsals. Has a swimming pool for residents' (and visitors if drinking or eating) use with pool side bar.

www.skopelosweb.gr/alkistis



Travel and transport

For the geographical relationship between Athens, Volos, Thessaloniki, Skiathos and Skopelos, I suggest visiting www.esperospelion.gr for location and access, even though you might be tempted to consider a riding holiday instead of a musical one!

Easiest way to get to Skopelos

Skopelos does not have its own airport, hence its unspoilt nature. The nearest airport is on the neighbouring Sporadic island of **Skiathos**. Skiathos is served by internal Olympic Airways flights from Athens all year round, and by direct charter flights from the UK generally after Easter until October each year. Alternative airports, which can be reached both by direct and internal flights, are those of **Volos** and **Thessaloniki**. EasyJet have more or less daily flights all year round to **Athens** as well as to Thessaloniki. Volos is served by Ryanair via Frankfurt. Charter airlines / companies serving Skiathos include Thomsons and Monarch. These tend to arrive from several airports in the UK and depart on Tuesdays and Fridays of each week.

And other ways.....

From Athens

Travel from Athens airport to Skopelos is by:

- Onward internal flight to Skiathos;
- Bus X93 from airport into Central Athens (5 euro);
- Bus from Kanigios Square, Athens, to Aghios Constantinos (2½ hours north of Athens) and ferry or hydrofoil on to Skopelos, booked via Alkyon Travel (see below);
- Bus from central Liossion bus station to Volos (4½ hours north of Athens) and ferry or hydrofoil on to Skopelos.

An overnight stay in Athens or Volos may be necessary, depending on time of flight.

For up-to-date information regarding travel from Athens to the Sporades, please contact Joanna at Alkyon Travel - athens@alkyontravel.com - she will help you as much as she can. Generally, a bus departs from Kaningos Square, Athens, early in the morning in time to arrive at Agios Constantinos to catch a Dolphin or Flying Cat to Skopelos. This will require a flight the day before and an over-night stay in Athens.

From Volos

If arriving in Volos by plane, take a taxi to the main bus station. It is a short taxi ride (5 euro) from the bus station to the port. Ferries or hydrofoils run at least daily from Volos to

Skopelos via Skaithos but, as any sea travel in Greece, are weather, mainly wind, dependant. The chances of weather interference in the middle of June is minimal, but should a ferry or hydrofoil be deemed unsafe for travel owing to weather conditions, any booked tickets will be automatically transferred to the next available vessel. It is recommended that sea travel is booked in advance and tickets booked online can be picked up from the Hellenic Seaways agent on the seafront (www.hellenicseaways.gr).

From Thessaloniki

If arriving at Thessaloniki airport, either a bus (1 euro standard fare) or a taxi (25 euro) can be taken to the Macedonia bus central station from which buses to Volos depart every couple of hours.

From Skiathos

If arriving by plane in Skiathos, the port is a very short taxi ride from the airport, where sea transport to Skopelos by ferry, Flying Cat or Flying Dolphin is available. As from Volos, It is recommended that sea transport is booked in advance to coincide with the flight arrival. Tickets booked online can be collected from the Hellenic Seaways office at the harbour.

For help with local accommodation or travel arrangements, please contact Skopelos travel agent Machi Drossou, e-mail info@madrotravel.com or madrotravel@gmail.com, telephone 0030-24240 22300 (landline) or 0030-697444852, fax 0030-24240 22941.

Other websites for general information about Skopelos include:

- www.greeka.com/sporades/skopelos
- www.skopelosnews.wordpress.com
- www.skopelitissa.com
- www.skopelos.net
- www.skopelosweb.gr

For all enquiries, and to book a place for the workshops and choir, please e-mail kendal@kendalshepherd.com or call (+44) 1933-681393 / (+44) 7877-939605. Also visit www.kendalshepherd.com/music-1/singing-workshop to download a booking form.