AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIRECTING TECHNIQUES OF TAKIS MUZENIDIS AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE STAGING OF THE LIBATION BEARERS

THESIS

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By

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The purpose of this project was to observe and analyze Takis Muzenidis' methods of casting, rehearsal procedures and philosophy of directing as illustrated in his production of The Libation Bearers at North Texas State University. Chapter I is an introduction to Muzenidis' background, qualifications and purpose for being at North Texas. Chapter II is a subjective description of Muzenidis' methods of casting, style of directing and relationship with the cast and crew. Chapter III discusses problems that occurred in the production. Chapter IV examines the production results through an audience analysis and interviews with the cast and crew. Chapter V is a summary of the thesis with a personal evaluation of the production and the director.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Takis Muzenidis, past Director of the National Theatre of Greece, considers himself a missionary. "If you go into theatre for money or fame," Muzenidis explained, "you will not be successful or content. You must look upon theatre as a religion and your role in this religion as your mission in your life" (see Appendix A, p. 72). Truly, his life characterizes this statement.

As a child in Greece, Muzenidis was destined to follow in his father's footsteps as a member of Parliament. His first degree was in Law at Athens University. While he was working on his law degree, a friend offered him a position on his newspaper as a drama critic. Muzenidis had always been interested in the arts; so he thought this would give him an excellent opportunity to see the various kinds of theatre being produced in Athens. From these experiences, he soon formulated his own ideas about what constituted good play direction. Also from attending these theatrical productions, he discovered he was developing a great desire to learn more about the theatre.

Muzenidis' constant drive for knowledge directed him to the Universities of Hamburg and Berlin where he studied drama, history of art, history of the theatre, and psychology.
While studying in Germany, Muzenidis entered an international competition to work as assistant to the noted German director, Jurgen Fehling. Muzenidis explained,

Seventeen young artists from different countries took part in this competition. An Englishman, descendant of the well-known theatre family, Yeats, and myself were selected by the committee. The famous director, Fehling, had to decide who of both of us will be engaged. After some days of discussions with Fehling, he selected me for the position. I think it was because he could train me in his own style since I was without any experience.

During the three years that Muzenidis was in Germany, he became familiar with all aspects of expressionistic drama from the most notable directors of the time, including Vsevelod Meyerhold and Max Reinhardt. When the National Theatre of Greece contacted Muzenidis in 1938 to return to Athens and direct, he replied that he would only be interested if he were given the title of Director of the National Theatre. The National Theatre had never awarded anyone the exclusive title of Director before, but in order to attain Muzenidis' directing expertise, they granted him the title with the position. When Muzenidis retired in 1975 after serving as Director of the National Theatre of Greece for thirty-seven years, the government retired the title with him.

There was a time period, however, that Muzenidis was banned from the National Theatre of Greece because of his ties in Germany. In 1942, through an official legislative order, a proclamation was posted on the door of the National
Theatre forbidding him to enter into the theatre for any reason. After this incident, Muzenidis and three of the most acclaimed actors in the National Theatre contacted an independent theatre company and within a year had founded the experimental theatre company, "Curtain." "Starting with The Tempest by Shakespeare and Don Carlos by Schiller, we performed without set designs or costumes using only some symbolic elements. It was a kind of expressionism and constructivism" (see Appendix G, p. 114). Soon, the disagreement between the Greek government and Muzenidis was settled and he was reinstated as Director of the National Theatre of Greece.

Muzenidis also served as Professor of Acting at the State Academy of Theatre Arts in Athens uninterruptedly from 1938 until his retirement in 1975. Constantly searching for new missions in the theatre, he was the founding director for the first Greek school for musical theatre. Over a period of years, he has directed seven musical comedies and six reviews. He also has served as theatre expert for UNESCO, which involved such activities as supervising the establishment of the National Theatre of Cyprus.

His intense work is characteristic of a man who has traveled the world over many times directing both Greek and world drama. His credits reflect an expertise in such diversified works as those by Bertolt Brecht, Pedro
Calderon de la Barca, Albert Camus, Miguel de Cervantes, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Maxim Gorky, Henrik Ibsen, Franz Kafka, Lope de Vega, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin Moliere, Eugene O'Neill, Luigi Pirandello, Jean-Paul Sartre, Friedrich Schiller, Eugene Scribe, George Bernard Shaw, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, August Strindberg and many others. He has directed play productions for the National Theatre of Ankara, Turkey; the National Theatre of Sofia, Bulgaria; the National Theatre of Cairo, Egypt; and the National Theatre of Istanbul, Turkey. He has toured performances of the trilogy Orestia and Agamemnon by Aeschylus and Oedipus The King by Sophocles with his company from the National Theatre of Greece to Egypt, Cyprus, England, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Japan, and Turkey. In addition to these tours, he also has received official invitations to Paris, France, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; London, England, by the British Consul; and Warsaw, by the Polish Ministry of Culture to present productions by the National Theatre of Greece in their countries. He has presented lecture series on "Problems In Interpreting Ancient Drama" in France, Germany, Egypt, Canada and the United States.

With his busy schedule, Muzenidis still has found time to write seven books: The Art of Diction, Aeschylus and His Theatre, Stage Direction, The Stanislavsky Method, The Black Sea Theatre, The Chinese Theatre, and The Theatrical Stage. He is also editor of Thespis, the periodical of the Hellenic
Centre of the International Theatre Institute. He is currently involved in research on the psychology and ideological tendencies of the youth in the United States for a book to be published in 1978.

As Secretary General of the Hellenic Centre of the International Theatre Institute, an institute vitally concerned with the theatrical activities in Western and Eastern Europe, the United States and Asia, Muzenidis represented Greece in the International Cultural and Theatrical Congresses in France, Italy, West and East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, China, India, Egypt, Turkey, England, Japan, Canada and the United States.

Muzenidis first came to the United States to direct a theatrical production in 1965. He explains how this developed,

Professor Garff Wilson, at that time unknown to me, of the University of California has seen a production of mine at the Epidauros Festival. He recommended to the Department of Theatre Arts to invite me, and so I was, for the first time in the United States in 1965, directing the Antigone at the open-air Greek theatre of Berkley. After the considerable success of the production, the president of the University of California, Professor Kehr, has accepted my proposal to establish a campus in Delphi. The Study Center for Classical Drama of the University of California has been established by an agreement between the Greek Government (Minister of Education) and the regents of the University of California (see Appendix G, p. 114).

Muzenidis' last tour to the United States in March of 1976 had the following purposes: (1) To continue his teaching
activities in different universities in the United States by directing a ten day seminar at the Dallas Theater Center and lecture at the University of Texas at Arlington; (2) To complete his research for his book on the psychological and ideological tendencies of the youth in the United States; and (3) To produce The Libation Bearers at North Texas State University in Denton, Texas.

In order to come in closer contact with different American universities and because of a friend's recommendation, Muzenidis wrote to the Division of Drama at North Texas in November, 1974, stating that he would be visiting the United States from January through April of 1975 and during the same period in 1976. He expressed his desire to "a) give either a limited or extensive series of lectures at the department and b) perhaps, eventually, if you wish me to direct one tragedy or comedy in your University theatre" (see Appendix G, p. 87). Muzenidis explained,

Mr. Marder had the kindness to answer my letter on 25 November 1975 saying, among others; "As a former graduate of the Dallas Theater Center, I was 'out working' when you directed Lysistrata there, but I did have the opportunity to see that fine production and talk with Mr. Baker and the students involved. . . . They all spoke highly of you as a Director, an Artist, a Scholar and an Individual," and asked me to direct a Greek drama at Denton. This was the starting point (see Appendix G, p. 115).

What seemed to be the starting point to Muzenidis was the end of a long and tedious process by Dr. Marder. Aware that the production budget for the Division of Drama would
not be sufficient to pay production costs and Muzenidis' honorarium for directing the show, Dr. Marder contacted Dr. Dorothy Pijan, Director of the North Texas State University Union and Campus Activities and Chairman of the Fine Arts Committee. He proposed that Muzenidis "come as an Artist-in-Residence to North Texas State University to work with Drama, Dance, Music and Art students for one month preparing a dramatic production for the benefit of the total university community as a part of the 1975-76 Fine Arts Series (see Appendix G, p. 90 )." He requested the Muzenidis' fee of $1,500.00 and his on-campus housing and meals be paid for out of the funds of the Fine Arts Series. The Division of Drama, in turn, offered to absorb production costs, estimated to be no more than $1,500.00.

On April 30, 1975, the Fine Arts Committee, in cooperation with the academic disciplines of drama, dance, music and art, extended to Muzenidis a formal and official offer to come to North Texas, to reside on-campus and to direct a classical Greek play, working with North Texas students of dance, music, drama and art in production work and as performers (see Appendix G, pp. 95, 96 ).

Once the contract was finalized, a production staff was organized by the Drama Division to work with Muzenidis. The staff originally was to be composed of student representatives from the areas of drama, dance, music and art; however, the Art Department preferred to wait until Muzenidis arrived on campus before they selected a representative.
The production staff consisted of David Evans, Division of Drama, Faculty Advisor and Assistant to the Director; Danny Rogers, Division of Drama, Assistant Director, John Gibson, School of Music, Composer; David Newell and Brenda DeVore, Division of Drama, Costumer/Designers; Dr. Daryl M. Wedwick, Drama Faculty, Designer/Technical Director; Jean Cowsar, Area of Dance, Choreographer; and Mark Davis, Division of Drama, Stage Manager.

Physical arrangements had to be attended to prior to Muzenidis' arrival to provide for housing, meals, telephone service and transportation. Also, rehearsal space and time had to be scheduled for the forthcoming Muzenidis production. The plan was to complete these arrangements prior to the first production meeting with Muzenidis when he arrived in Denton on February 6, 1976.
CHAPTER II

MUZENIDIS AT WORK

Every work intended for performance on the stage involves directing. Just as there are various styles of drama, there are also various styles and methods of directing. Each director, through careful study and practice, chooses those methods which serve him best and those methods constitute his technique.

No matter which techniques the director uses, there are certain objectives every director works to accomplish in order that a production be successful. Monsier Porel, speaking at the International Theatre Congress of 1900, described the purpose of a director as

To grasp clearly the author's idea in a manuscript, to explain it patiently and accurately to hesitant actors, to see the play develop and take shape from minute to minute. To watch over the production down to its slightest details, its stage business, even its silences, which are sometimes as eloquent as the written script. To place the bewildered or awkward supernumeraries where they belong and to train them, to bring together in one cast obscure actors and stars. To harmonize all these voices, all these gestures, all these various movements, all these disimilar things—in order to achieve the right interpretation of the work entrusted to you.

Then, having accomplished this and having methodically done all your preliminary studying in the calm of your library, to take charge of the material side of production. To supervise patiently and accurately the carpenters, scene-painters, costumers, upholsterers, and electricians.
To listen to advice from interested parties, to weigh it in the mind, to decide when to follow and when to reject their advice. Finally, with a quickening of the heart, to open one's hand, give the signal, let the work appear before so many assembled people. It is an admirable profession, is it not? One of the most curious, one of the most fascinating, one of the most subtle in the world (2, pp. 89-90).

Working with Muzenidis proved to be a most curious and most fascinating experience. Never before had students at North Texas had the opportunity to observe a director work with such control and such authority in all areas of production. Those involved in the production were not only able to observe first-hand his style of directing and philosophy of theatre; but, at the same time, were able to examine the results of such a style and philosophy in an actual working environment.

At the first meeting with the assistant director, designer/technical director, stage manager, music composers, costumer/designer, and choreographer, Muzenidis outlined the four major areas of the production which would need special attention. These four areas were (1) music, (2) stage setting, (3) costumes and (4) choreography. He explained to the staff that the style of production would be expressionistic. Jurgen Fehling, Muzenidis' teacher during his years in Germany, had an obvious affect on Muzenidis' staging of *The Libation Bearers* at North Texas. Fehling, who "was catapulted to fame in 1921 as the director of Ernst Toller's *Man and the Masses,*" (1, p. 286) is most
noted for his expressionistic theatrical techniques which were considered revolutionary. Two major techniques found in Fehling's work were used by Muzenidis for his staging of *The Libation Bearers*. Virtually no scenery was used to indicate specific place and only essential properties and furniture were used in order to focus the major attention on mood and atmosphere created with shafts of light, music, and chorus-like masses.

In order to create a unified production, it would be imperative for everyone's individual personality to be in harmony with Muzenidis, as director, in total control. He warned the staff at the first production meeting that in order to achieve this unity, "My instructions, my every word, every sentence will be again, again, again." That is what occurred. So much so that "Is no good, do again" became his trademark. Once the general instructions were explained and discussed, Muzenidis scheduled separate meetings with respective production staff members to discuss specific details of the area they represented. In the true style of the European director, Muzenidis controlled all aspects of the production from the first meetings.

The morning after the production staff meeting, Muzenidis met with John Gibson and Ken Bales to discuss the music to be composed for *The Libation Bearers*. He explained that he had selected electronic music for this production because it more closely resembled the eerie, non-melodic music of the
ancient Greek period. Since the mood and style of the music had been discussed in correspondence with the composer prior to Muzenidis' arrival, the primary task now was to determine the meaning of the musical parts as they related to the structure of the script and how to best express that meaning through music. It was decided that several passages of the script would be sung by the chorus. These passages needed special attention since the music, when sung, would so greatly influence the expression and the mood of the passage. The mood Muzenidis desired to create was one of suspense and uneasiness. The composers found it difficult at first to avoid using melodic tones so indicative of the modern Western culture. Many times in the beginning Muzenidis would listen to the music segments the composers had completed and then preface his comments by saying, "Is good, but my impression is this. . . ." After discussing the primitive style of the ancient Greek music that he was looking for, he would send the composers away to rework the segment.

Muzenidis met with Dr. Wedwick on stage to discuss the design and construction of the stage setting and special technical effects that the show would require. Through earlier correspondence, Muzenidis had explained to Wedwick that the stage setting should represent the ancient Greek theatre, but in an abstract way. It was important that the setting be expressionistic in style (see Appendix G, p. 111).
The setting consisted of three six foot by eight foot sections of seats designed similar to stadium bleachers. They were placed stage left, up center and stage right to form a semicircle. There were two four foot openings between the sections which served as passageways for entrances and exits by the actors (see Appendix F). The grave of Agamemnon was to be placed down center stage. Three statues representing the gods Apollo, Hermes and Zeus were placed stage right, up left and down left. Muzenidis described the possible design of the statues as having a basic framework representing a human form with each statue having a distinctive symbol, such as the lightning rod for Zeus, to identify the particular god it represented.

The next meeting that Muzenidis scheduled was with Brenda DeVore and David Newell to discuss the costume designs. The costume designs for both shows had been mailed to Muzenidis before his arrival in Denton (see Appendix G, p. 111) but they did not reach him in Greece before his departure for the United States. When he did see the designs, he rejected them because they did not reflect the style that he was working toward in this particular production. Newell's original designs were very rich and elaborate. The material he had selected was light and delicate. Muzenidis wanted a very simple style in line and look for the costumes, all using the same basic pattern and adding accessories to those that needed to be more elaborate. He envisioned
them being made of heavy, durable material. Since the chorus represented an ensemble, the costumes played an important part in developing their anonymous personality. Also, the chorus' costumes had to be designed in such a way as to equalize the various shapes and sizes of the chorus members, thus unifying their visual image on stage.

For Director Muzenidis, the choreographer had two functions: (1) to work with the actors so that their movements would reflect the desired unity and style that he wanted and (2) to choreograph the dances in the production. Since the actors had little or no training in stylized stage movement, the choreographer's primary task was to help them express the proper emotions and images of their characters through stylized movement. Muzenidis explained to the choreographer in their first general meeting that the stage must always reflect movement, "the continuous unfolding of the story." The actors' movements needed to help each scene move progressively and with ease into the next scene, always reflecting the proper moods and emotions of the play.

In earlier correspondence with the assistant director, Muzenidis requested that the students prepare a three-minute prepared monologue from an ancient Greek play for their audition (see Appendix G, p. 112). Since the students had little or no training in performing ancient Greek drama, the monologues proved to be a very poor indicator of their acting ability. Muzenidis, realizing the problem, asked
the students to perform a scene from a play that they had been in previously. By presenting modern scenes that they had acted before, those auditioning felt free to use gestures and add movement which enabled Muzenidis to better analyze their capabilities. The students were also required to sing a song of their choice to help Muzenidis determine their vocal ability and range. Each student was then asked to perform some basic dance steps with the choreographer in order that their coordination could be observed. Muzenidis concluded the audition by asking each person a few general questions. He explained to the assistant director after the auditions that these general questions enabled him to study the sensibilities of the students (see Appendix A, p. 63).

If time had permitted, Muzenidis would have preferred to sit and get acquainted with the students and discuss the play with them. Also, he usually gives actors something to improvise during the audition to observe their creativity and their level of concentration. However, he felt that in an educational environment, the students' acting abilities and knowledge of theatre were so equal that his task as director was not to choose the most qualified actor for the job, but to eliminate those who had so little ability that he would have difficulty working with them in such a brief period of time (see Appendix A, p. 63).

After the auditions, Muzenidis met with his assistant director and the Director of the Division of Drama to ask
their help in casting the show. He described the physical characteristics of the major roles in the script and suggested special qualities that would be required of the actor to play the role. For example, he believed that the character of Clytemnestra must be able to express the feminine qualities of a stately queen, but possess the physical strength of a brutal man. The actress had to have a commanding stage presence. His Orestes was not a strong character; he was controlled by others. Electra needed to be physically the picture of purity and innocence, yet be strong enough to know what she wants and know how to use others to attain it. Celissa, the oldest of the characters, needed to be able to express tenderness and human emotions in order to arouse compassion within the audience. He wanted the servant to have a strong, dynamic voice since Muzenidis believed he had the most important line in the play. Aegisthus should be young and beautiful and express arrogance and pride through his actions.

As Muzenidis described each character, he offered two to five names of students who auditioned to be openly discussed in terms of how they fit the physical description of the character, their past experience on stage and their dependability. The actor's dependability was the most important quality to Muzenidis. He explained that if he could use actors with experience and who were dependable he would be happy to use them; but if he had to decide between experienced
actors who were not dependable or dependable actors with no experience, he would use the dependable actor. An experienced actor who was not dependable would be of no use to him.

Muzenidis announced that he had decided to double-cast each major speaking role in order to give more students an opportunity to work in the production. This meant that students would alternate playing a major speaking role one night and a member of the chorus or a minor role the next performance. Once the casting decisions were made, a list of the cast was posted and the time and location of the first rehearsal was announced.

The first rehearsal with the actors with speaking parts was more informal than the production staff meetings had been. Muzenidis wanted to get to know his cast and he wanted them to understand what would be expected of them. He explained to the assistant director before the meeting began, "Always when you direct, the people must not be bored. Also, you must win their respect. They must know you are thinking of their well-being."

Muzenidis' discussion with the cast concerning their individual characters was limited to family relationships in the trilogy. He asked the actors to tell him about the characters in order that he might realize what they already knew about the play and to start them thinking about character development. He warned against looking for psychological motivation behind the character's action since many
of the things that happened could not be justified psycho-
logically. He explained that unlike characters of modern
theatre, the characters of ancient Greek drama were forms
rather than types. He continued his explanation with the
actors during the rehearsal by discussing three character
levels:

    There are three levels: the type: the drunk;
    the character: so and so as a mother; and the form:
    the sense of the characters. Moliere's The Miser is
    a character, not a type. Type comes from modern
    comedy. In tragedy, we have only forms and not
    characters.

    Since we are working with forms, they can be
    played many ways. For instance, the servant can
    like Aegisthus and Clytemnestra or resent their
    authority. Both ways of playing the character are
    perfectly acceptable. We must decide which way
    the actor wants to play the character and agree.
    I should not tell the actor how to play the char-
    acter.

When Muzenidis directs a show in Greece, he schedules
approximately one month of time to discuss the play with
the actors and allow them to find their own character.
However, at North Texas, he had only one month to prepare
the entire production. This meant that character discus-
sion had to be limited to three days. Therefore, in order
for the actors to better understand their characters and
to counteract the brief time for open discussion and analysis,
he instructed them to write a character analysis describing
the character's physical characteristics, desires, motiva-
tions and relationships with other characters.

The action of the play was easily divided into ten
units similar to the way French-scenes are divided by the
entrance of a new character. From 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. each weekday, Muzenidis scheduled individual rehearsals with the leading actors. During these rehearsals, he and the actor would discuss characterization and line interpretation for separate units. From 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., all of the leading actors would assemble to read through the unit using the line interpretations they had learned in their individual rehearsals. He worked with the chorus and chorus leaders from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. on line interpretation, music and movement. At 7:00 p.m., the entire cast assembled for blocking rehearsals and a run-through of the play by units. Weekend rehearsals were from 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon for the chorus, at which time he conducted individual line interpretation rehearsals; and from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. when he worked with the entire cast.

In the first line rehearsal with the leading actors and with the chorus members, Muzenidis presented a list of what he called his "international symbols" for the actors to use when marking their script to denote pauses or special emphasis. He stressed the importance for the actors to understand these symbols and how to execute them:

- Breath
- Double breath
- Break, stop
- Pause
- Cresendo
- Diminish
- Stretch out
- Connect
- Piano
- Pianissimo
- Forte
- Fortissimo

Just as he had expressed to the production staff, in order to create a unified production, he would have to dominate
over everyone's individual personalities. He stressed to the leading actors that the double casting was not intended to cause competition; instead it should be looked on as a collective work with everyone giving and sharing to create an ensemble.

Muzenidis explained that all ancient Greek dramas were written to convey a message to the people of their day. In most cases, the messages were just as meaningful today as when the plays were written and originally being performed. During one of the rehearsals with the actors, Muzenidis explained that the establishment of justice was the central theme in the Orestian Trilogy:

Injustice and primitive blood-feuds must be eliminated in society if high social position and human justice is ever to be attained. There must be a compromise of the good of the old ideas and the good of the new ideas. Wisdom can be learned only through experience and suffering. One crime, if not punished, leads to another. Blood, once shed, can never be atoned for. Authority is the foundation for civilization.

This was later restated in a more dramatic form and then a tape recorded to be played for the audience prior to every performance (see Appendix E).

Muzenidis gave the same directions to the chorus members concerning vocal quality that he had given the music composers. Their individual and collective vocal quality must express an eerieness in mood to indicate that all is not right. To achieve this mood, he instructed the chorus members to speak with a low, deep voice. The chorus was
told not to speak in a "pretty" or high-pitched voice. The barbaric, savage effect Muzenidis was striving for vocally carried over into physical characterization as well. He described the chorus as "primitive, barbaric, they are not young, want vengeance, are bitter, are filled with hate and pain, they are slaves, captive women, they find no rest." He explained to the chorus that they must feel this hate inside them. To help them feel the hate, he instructed them to stand up and say the word "hate" over and over again. He also had them move to the sound of the word in order to express the emotion physically.

Some of the chorus verses in the script were too long to be recited in unison. Muzenidis assigned these verses to members of the chorus who served as chorus leaders. Each member of the chorus was allowed to audition for the solos of the chorus leader. A four-line stanza from the play was assigned to be memorized by those who wanted to audition. Each person that auditioned had to interpret the mood and emotion of the stanza and perform it for Muzenidis. Only one major chorus leader was selected, but Muzenidis gave each chorus member at least one solo line to speak.

Blocking rehearsals were directed by Muzenidis with such energy and emotion that it was like watching a performance in itself. He worked on the stage with the actors guiding them through each and every movement. Helen Krich Chinoy says of Goethe's style of directing in Directors On
Directing that "on the stage marked out in squares every single position and movement was determined beforehand with the aim of producing a harmonious and pleasing spectacle" (2, p. 20). Apart from the stage markings, Muzenidis worked with the same precision to achieve the same result.

Before the blocking could actually begin, a substitute setting had to be constructed until the actual setting was completed. Some directors choose merely to tape off the dimensions of the set for rehearsal purposes, but Muzenidis wanted more, primarily because the actors would have so little time to adjust to the actual stage setting. It was also necessary to have step units to indicate the three sections of seats so the actors could become accustomed to moving on them.

The actors were told not to worry about line memorization presently; that would come later. It was only important to memorize the patterns of physical movement. Muzenidis explained the significance of the movement by stating that every scene in a play has a movement all its own which, in turn, is dependent upon the general movement of the play. This movement is parallel to the mood, vocal tones, line interpretation and visual technical elements in the production; therefore, learning one helps in all areas which the actor will be involved.

Again, lack of acting experience for the actors was constantly evident and created problems for Muzenidis as
he directed. He had to explain everything from proper stage posture to how to move on stage. One of the most difficult techniques for the actors to master was that of speaking with their backs to the audience. Most young, inexperienced actors have been indoctrinated with a list of "do's and don'ts" known as "The Rules of Acting" (3, p. 114) at some time during their early experiences. These rules, used primarily by amateur directors working with inexperienced actors, are simply a set of blocking procedures that seem most effective on the stage. Although Muzenidis used many of these rules himself, his blocking techniques did not incorporate having the actors consistently turn downstage toward the audience or forbidding an actor to turn his back on the audience. He explained that he noticed many of the actors would hesitate when he blocked them into a position with their back to the audience. The actors tried so hard to follow Muzenidis' direction that when he blocked them with their back to the audience, and then instructed them to turn slightly toward the audience in order for their lines to be heard, the actors would turn their bodies but not their heads. To attain a more pleasing stage picture through the body positions of actors in these sequences, Muzenidis would first block the actors with their backs to the audience and then gradually change their position until they were at just enough of an angle for their lines to be heard. By making this adjustment gradually over a period of several rehearsals, oftentimes the actors were unaware that
their blocking had been changed or that they had mastered speaking without directly facing the audience.

Blocking a chorus of fifteen inexperienced actresses can be extremely hazardous; but Muzenidis approached the task with ease and confidence. He utilized their physical variations in height, size, and shape to form expressive stage pictures. He had the various chorus members stand on different levels as much as possible. If this was not possible, he would have some to kneel, a few to cluster, some to bend over and some stand upright. While helping to express the mood of the scene, this technique also created exciting stage pictures for the audience to view. At times the chorus covered the entire stage area and seemed to be twice the size in number and at other times they formed such a small, uniform group that it was almost impossible to distinguish one body from the other.

Since the music composers were involved in the rehearsals from the beginning, the majority of the music problems had been solved prior to technical rehearsals. The setting was near enough to completion by these rehearsals so as not to arouse any grave concern or threat of not being completed on time. Thus, Muzenidis was able to concentrate his attention on lighting and costumes as the week of technical rehearsals began.

At the first production meeting, Muzenidis requested a lighting plan of the theatre in order to know its
capacities and capabilities. From this, he was able to determine what was possible in stage lighting. Within the week, he had marked a script with all of the light cues that would be necessary for the production. This was given to the technical director. Together, they discussed the colors of gelatin to be used, the moods to be established and special lighting effects that would be necessary. With this information, the technical director was ready to design the light plot. Muzenidis requested a copy of the light plot which he took home and memorized.

One rehearsal during "tech week" was designated as a light rehearsal. The actors dreaded the rehearsal because they knew how hard it would be to concentrate with the performance being constantly stopped to correct and adjust the lights. No one was prepared for what took place that Sunday afternoon.

It took forty-five minutes to work out the first three light cues in the show and they were not as Muzenidis wanted them. His patience gave out, his shouting became louder and finally he said that he could not spend any more rehearsal time working with crews who had not rehearsed cues or were not experienced enough to take cues on call. The actors still needed work and, therefore, he would have to set up a special rehearsal alone with the light crew.

The next day, he met with the light crew and went through each light cue until the crew managed to overcome
their major difficulties in operating the light board and executing the cues. The light crew was still having trouble with the timing of the cues during the run-through with the cast the following evening; so Muzenidis continued to arrange special rehearsals with the light crew until they began to feel secure with the timing of the cues and their problems in operating the board were worked out. Even during the production, Muzenidis met with the light crew two hours before the production and had them run each light cue.

The lighting of the performance, once problems were solved, was one of the most exciting elements in the production. As David Belasco explained, "Lights are to drama what music is to the lyrics of a song. No other factor that enters into the production of a play is so effective in conveying its moods and feeling. They are as essential to every work of dramatic art as blood is to life" (2, p. 127). Lighting was used symbolically in the *Agamemnon* pantomime when the maidservants pantomimed rolling out the red carpet at Agamemnon's arrival. Red light flooded the center section of the center step unit to symbolize Agamemnon's forthcoming death. The low intensity of the lighting in several scenes throughout the production helped to express the gloom of the environment and the uneasy feeling that all was not right.

The first costume parade last approximately two hours. Each member of the cast, when his name was called, met
Muzenidis and the costumer center stage. In this first costume parade, Muzenidis concentrated on how the costume fit and any alterations in design that had to be made. Two days later, he checked the costumes again after all the alterations and changes were completed and discussed any accessories that now needed to be added. After two more days, he viewed the costumes under the lighting to see if any further change or addition needed to be made.

The lighting had a tremendous effect on the costumes, especially the chorus costumes. By separating the chorus leader from the chorus and focusing a colored follow spot on her, the color and fabric of her costume reflected special highlights from the lighting and her costume became distinctly different in look from the chorus members' costumes. When she moved back into the group and the follow spot was removed, her costume again took on the indistinct characteristics of the rest of the chorus.

With all the technical problems solved, the last directorial task for Muzenidis was to block the curtain call. The curtain call, which lasted seven minutes, took three rehearsals to block. A special song was composed and the audience was invited to sing along (see Appendix F, p. 86).

The play ended with a processional of the entire cast led by Athena. They marched onto the stage and the chorus
formed a basic position on the bleachers which had been established in blocking the play. The remainder of the cast stood on the proscenium line. Once these positions were established, everyone except the chorus and furies physically backed off the stage. These two groups left on stage moved forward to the proscenium line and took their curtain call after which they resumed their positions on the bleachers. Next, the cast of individual characters (beginning with the minor roles) took curtain calls in pairs. Once the entire company was on stage again, the speaking parts (beginning with the major roles and ending with the chorus) took individual curtain calls. In a blackout, the actors formed tableaux on the set and a follow spot spot-lighted these stage picturizations which illustrated various scenes from the production. Finally, the house lights were brought up and the actors moved down to the edge of the stage applauding the audience and encouraging them to sing along. The actors were told to sing and applaud as long as the audience remained in the theatre. It was an effective ending for such a theatrically artistic event.

Not all of Muzenidis' directorial techniques met with positive results; but, part of his technique as a director was being able to adjust to his surroundings and use what possibilities he had to the best of his ability. Also, not all of the directing techniques that have been discussed here are unique to Muzenidis, but most of them were new to the
actors at North Texas State University and therefore were instrumental in the learning process that occurred for them during this production.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

PROBLEMS OF PRODUCTION

It is just as impossible to stage a theatrical production without encountering problems as it is to stage a totally flawless production. One of the primary goals of any theatrical production is to present a performance which appears as if it were easily accomplished for an audience. As Muzenidis explained to the cast on opening night, "We ask of you things impossible to be done. The audience does not care how long you work. They say it is bad performance or it is good performance."

There were times during the course of The Libation Bearers that the production staff, the actors and even the director were confronted with technical, financial and manpower problems which seemed insurmountable. Some of the problems were discussed in the previous chapter because the solutions were so much a part of Muzenidis' style of directing. The problems to be discussed here represent adjustments that had to be made by a professional director working in an educational environment.

The first major problem encountered in preparing the production was that too few people auditioned to cast both The Libation Bearers and The Eumenides. It was suggested
that Muzenidis do both shows with one chorus instead of the
two choruses that he had requested; but he explained that
the demands were so great on each that there would not be
enough time for one chorus to learn both parts, particularly
students not trained and experienced in classical theatre.
A second audition period was planned in hopes that enough
people could be encouraged to audition in order that both
shows could be staged, but the second audition only produced
six more perspective actors; not enough to make up the
nineteen-member chorus for The Eumenides. After this second
disappointment, it was decided and mutually agreed on by
Muzenidis and the Division of Drama that only one play, The
Libation Bearers, would be presented.

Lack of preparation time and inexperienced actors and
technicians were two problems for which there was no solu-
tion that constantly plagued the production. These problems
were evident in every phase of preparation for the production
and served as the basis for many other problems that arose.

Since the production staff was comprised primarily of
students with little or no knowledge of Greek classical thea-
tre, Muzenidis immediately set up a mini-lecture/slide presen-
tation to acquaint the students with techniques and styles
associated with this form of theatre. This lecture consisted
of some two hundred slides of different Greek productions
staged and directed by Muzenidis. By discussing the slides
and the various theatrical styles used, the production staff
and actors were better able to understand what Muzenidis wanted in the forthcoming production at North Texas. His intention was not to have anyone copy any of the costumes or settings or styles of movement from the slides; but to give everyone a basis from which to begin their work.

Muzenidis realized that his original idea to make the seating sections have a stone-like quality would take far too long to build with the available staff. "For me, the problem is to finish the decoration as soon as possible; so I see that to make the decoration out of stone will take twenty days instead of ten days. We would have to use papier-mâché and it needs time. I have not time to lose" (see Appendix A, p. 64). Because of this problem, he chose to use a stylistic setting which would give the impression of a framework rather than solid construction. This would involve only half the amount of time and could be constructed more easily.

Since Muzenidis had been in correspondence with the composers before he arrived on campus, some of the decisions concerning the music were decided upon and some potential problems solved. The major decision left to resolve for the composer and Muzenidis was how to express the proper mood of the play through the music. Music submitted to Muzenidis from the composers in the beginning was too melodic. Muzenidis did not want the melodic tones because they created a mood of unity and harmony. The music in the play had to be non-melodic
to express the uneasy mood that all is not right. Muzenidis explained to the composers during one of their production meetings together that "low bass, low volume, barely audible undertones or constant repetition of a slow bass pattern induces uneasiness in an audience. We want to utilize that feeling to express the meaning of the play." Once this concept was clarified, the composers were able to create a sound in the music compositions acceptable to Muzenidis.

The chorus presented another problem related to the music. None of the chorus members were music majors and very few had any vocal training. Because of this, Muzenidis was unable to get the quality he wanted both vocally and musically in the selections to be sung by the chorus. After spending two days in rehearsal working with the chorus to teach them how to create the proper mood through the use of their voices, Muzenidis decided to cut the vocal selections for the chorus from the play.

There were two vocal selections, however, that could not be eliminated. These two, fortunately, were less difficult vocally than those which had been cut. Being songs of triumph and victory, the mood could be established with normal use of voice. Also, these selections were easier to compose than the songs of lamentation had been. To help all the chorus members sing the composition, the composers selected five chorus members with the best trained voices and had them record the song. The recording was then played during the
performances and the entire chorus sang live with it. This recording process gave the strength of 10 trained voices in the chorus.

Designing and making fifty-three costumes for a Greek production is a difficult task for any costume crew; but when the crew consists of only eight people, many of whom knew nothing about costume designing or had no sewing skills, the task is next to impossible. A small, inexperienced crew with a two and one-half week construction deadline and a $500.00 costume budget were the major problems facing Muzenidis in this area.

Muzenidis had told the Director of the Division of Drama that he did not think it was possible to provide new costumes for the leading parts, the chorus members and the attendants within the $500.00 costume budget allocated for the production. However, he explained that he was not familiar enough with American prices to know what it would cost. Also, he was not aware of what costume stock the Drama Division possessed which could be utilized (see Appendix A, p. 69). Unfortunately, there was very few costume pieces in stock that could be used. The costume budget eventually was increased $450.00 in order to resolve part of the problem.

When Muzenidis became aware that the costume crew was not large nor experienced enough to handle the task put before them in the amount of time allocated, he required the actors to be in charge of their own costumes. Completion of the
costume was the actor's responsibility. On weekends, he called a special two-hour rehearsal. The actors were required to spend these two hours in the costume shop building their costumes. Attendance was required as in regular rehearsals and if someone did not attend these costume work sessions, they were dismissed from the cast in the same manner as if they had failed to attend an acting rehearsal.

The costumes were not nearly close to completion by the Friday before the Sunday deadline; therefore, Muzenidis put into action a new plan. After acting rehearsals were concluded at 11:00 p.m. Friday night, the cast was given an hour break and told to report back to the costume shop at midnight. They worked until 4:00 a.m. Saturday morning—some even longer. Attendance was taken each hour. The same schedule was repeated Saturday night. Although the costumes were still not complete for the Sunday deadline, they were near enough toward completion to insure being finished by the final dress rehearsal.

Private rehearsals with actors are not entirely unique, but when they begin at 9:00 a.m., they do present a problem in a university environment. It was stated in Muzenidis' contract that rehearsals could be scheduled all day on weekends and after 4:00 p.m. on weekdays. Rehearsals could last from 4:00 p.m. to midnight when necessary (see Appendix G, p. 95). However, Muzenidis contended that in order for him to put a production together which would reach a level
of quality he expected as a director, the actor must devote all of their time to the production. The faculty advisor, in turn, attempted to convince Muzenidis that the students should not and could not be expected to miss their academic classes. A compromise of sorts was finally reached by suggesting to the faculty of the Division of Drama that those students associated with the production should be excused from drama classes when attendance interfered with rehearsals. Also, actors in the production should be allowed to make up any assignments in these classes after the production had closed. Muzenidis, in turn, was asked not to schedule rehearsals which interfered with the individual student's academic courses outside the Division of Drama.

Once it was decided to present only *The Libation Bearers*, Muzenidis was confronted with two more production problems. Approximately 200 lines had been cut from the original text in John Lewin's adaptation of the script which was being used for this production. Muzenidis explained that *The Libation Bearers* would run approximately one hour in length. He was concerned that the audience would feel that the production was not long enough. Also, he believed it was necessary for the audience to understand the entire story of the Orestian Trilogy to fully appreciate *The Libation Bearers*.

Muzenidis had already discussed using a short pantomime to depict the story of *Agamemnon* as a prologue of sorts. Now, he decided to lengthen this pantomime and project slides which
together would hopefully explain the first part of the trilogy. In place of the third part of the trilogy, *The Eumenides*, Muzenidis incorporated the dance of the furies and edited several of Athena's speeches making a monologue in which she establishes justice for the first time to the people. This monologue, an epilogue for the production, was to be followed by a triumphant processional proclaiming justice and authority was to reign to the end of all time. By using the pantomime for *Agamemnon* and the dance of the furies and the Athena monologue for *The Eumenides*, the essence of the entire Orestian Trilogy could be presented and the performance would play for an hour and a half.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Muzenidis chose to double-cast the major speaking roles in order to give more students an opportunity to work in the production. However, the double-casting also posed problems. It allowed the leading actors only half the rehearsal time that the chorus received. This, naturally prevented the actors in the major speaking parts from reaching their highest level of performance.

Double-casting also created another problem. The actors had a tendency to imitate the other actor playing the same role instead of finding their own way of interpreting the characters. Muzenidis explained that if time had permitted, he would have preferred to have even blocked each cast separately (see Appendix A, p. 44). He believed there were so many
different ways the characters could have been played. As mentioned earlier, the servant could either respect Clytemnestra and Aegisthus or despise them. Either way of playing the character is acceptable as long as the actor and director can agree. The same character variations could be found for all of the characters in the play. Had the actors had the time to develop their individual characters, the learning experience would have been even greater.

Of course, many other problems arose with performers throughout the production such as massive fainting episodes due to fatigue and pressures on exhausted actors after opening night created by such simple things as minor re-blocking of some entrances and exits. Bickerings and complaints about the production were most prevalent during the last two weeks when deadlines began to look impossible to meet. Had the pressure of time for preparing all elements of the production not been so brief and intense, many of the problems would not have seemed so overwhelming in this production.
CHAPTER IV

PRODUCTION RESULTS

In order to examine the effect of the production of The Libation Bearers, three questionnaires were prepared to evaluate the impact of the production both academically and theatrically on the audience, the cast and the production staff.

One hundred and five audience questionnaires were distributed to three English classes, a speech class, and a drama class for non-majors. These classes were chosen because it was known that attending the play was either part of the class requirements or strongly advised by the instructor. Of the 105 questionnaires distributed, fifty-four were returned. (For a tabulation of the results of the questionnaire, see Appendix B.)

Of the fifty-four returned audience questionnaires, forty people reported they were not familiar with the Orestian Trilogy before they came to the performance. Of these forty people, only three felt they did not understand the story after seeing the production. Of the fourteen people who were familiar with the Orestian Trilogy before the production, six stated that they could better understand the story after having seen the production. This would indicate, therefore, the play was presented in a manner that was enlightening.
both to those that were familiar with the story and those that were not.

Each audience member questioned was asked to explain the play in a brief paragraph as they understood it from seeing the production. The general reply was that it was a story of a son returning home to revenge the death of his father by killing his mother and her lover. Since no one mentioned the establishment of justice, Muzenidis' main idea of the play may not have been understood by the audience unless it could be assumed that the audience believed that within the son's revenge was an element of justice.

The questionnaire listed eight elements of the production: (1) setting, (2) costumes, (3) masks, (4) lighting, (5) music, (6) dance, (7) narration explaining the trilogy, and (8) slides explaining the pantomime of Agamemnon. The audience was asked to express their reaction to these elements with respect to the effect each had on the production and then to indicate whether each element helped or hindered the performance. The two elements which made the greatest impact on the performance were (1) lighting and (2) music. The other elements, in order of their rating as to their effect were (3) costumes, (4) narration explaining the trilogy, (5) dance, (6) setting, (7) masks and (8) slides explaining the pantomime of Agamemnon.

Since the entire trilogy was not presented, the questionnaire asked for the reaction to the Agamemnon pantomime
and the Athena monologue; particularly their theatrical entertainment value. One audience member stated that he could probably have followed the story more easily had both plays been presented; but, the narration and pantomime were unique and entertaining and helped to explain the entire trilogy. Fifty people reported that the two devices were theatrically entertaining, three indicated they were not. It is interesting to note that when asked to list the most pleasurable and the least pleasurable parts of the show, the pantomime was listed as most pleasurable and the monologue was rated as the least pleasurable part of the show.

Two questions in the questionnaire did not receive enough comments to give an indication of the audience's reaction. These two questions asked how the audience was enlightened (if at all) by seeing the production and if there was something the audience should have gained from the production but did not. Only six people answered the question asking how they were enlightened by the production. Four simply replied that they were enlightened and two stated that they were not. One person commented that the production made him realize that the ancient Greek drama is much more interesting and enjoyable when performed than it is when only read in English classes. Thirty-four of the people questioned reported that they did not think there was more to be gained from the production than they received.
When asked if they would go to see another Greek drama if the opportunity arose, only five people out of the fifty-four questioned responded negatively.

An informal meeting was scheduled on Monday, April 19, with members of the cast representing four areas: (1) major speaking parts, (2) chorus, (3) soldiers and servants, and (4) furies. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the effect of the production of *The Libation Bearers* with reference to Muzenidis' style of directing, his relationship to the cast and problems that occurred during the production. Those present were Dan Brantley, Larry Cook, Pam Evans, Barbara Fletcher, Karen Kalmbach, Richard Skiles, Cathy Smith and Debbie Taylor. The furies was the only group of performers not represented. Since the furies were all members of the area of dance in the Physical Education Department and were not involved in activities in the Drama Division after the production was over, dance commitments restricted a representative from attending this meeting.

The actors were asked seven questions which they openly discussed in the meeting. It was decided that an open discussion of the questions by actors collectively in a meeting would allow more insight into actual occurrences of the production. (For complete minutes of the recorded interview, see Appendix C.)

A general, overall attitude prevailed among all the actors. They felt that working with Director Muzenidis was
a most rewarding experience and that they had learned more and grown more as artists than they had anticipated.

The actors expressed that one of the most exciting directoral techniques used in this production was Muzenidis' technique of working on the stage at the side of the actors, almost physically touching them, instructing them in proper stage presence and perfecting their blocking at the same time they were working through the lines of the play. Dan Brantley, who played Orestes, said, "This directoral technique helped set the mood. It was like standing back watching myself" (see Appendix C, p. 78). Other actors mentioned that this technique of Muzenidis talking softly to them by their sides as they performed made them want to give more of themselves as performers and also made them feel guilty if they were not constantly working at their peak energy and concentration levels. This technique could have proven very disturbing to the actors but, instead, it motivated them enormously.

Richard Skiles mentioned that a drawback of being one of the "extras" was that Muzenidis told them only one time what to do. As director, he concentrated all of his time on the major speaking parts and the chorus. Although the amount of time was enough for the supernumeraries to get their blocking down, Skiles' concern was that, due to the small amount of personal contact the "extras" had with Muzenidis, they were not motivated by him as the major acting roles were and they therefore felt more like observers.
than members of the cast. This might indicate that often actors who are not qualified to play leading roles learn less from observing simply because they have not had the experience of the close working relationship and communication that occurs between a director and a leading actor.

Although the majority of the actors felt they had given the best performance they were capable of within the time limit, all did feel there was much more which could have been accomplished had there been a longer rehearsal period. Pam Evans, who played Celissa, discussed three types of actors she observed in the production:

The small parts didn't feel very important. It was hard for them to get up for the show. There were people with major speaking parts that did the best they could and, even though Takis wasn't satisfied, they did a good job. Then there were other parts that no matter how hard they tried, they could never reach an adequate level of achievement (see Appendix C, p. 78).

It became difficult at times for the actors to understand Muzenidis due to his limited command of the English language. Although he spoke Greek, German, French and Turkish fluently, his English was self-taught and limited to a basic vocabulary. Of course, at times the communication problem was due to the actor's lack of knowledge. Cathy Smith, who played Clytemnestra, explained that, although there was a language problem at times, Muzenidis compensated for this through his use of vivid physical expressions and demonstrations of specific examples.
When asked to compare Muzenidis' style of directing with that of other directors they had worked with, the actors cited, once again, his technique of on-stage directing as being one of the most unique differences in approach. The actor's experiences with educational and amateur directors did not prepare them for the rigorous rehearsal schedule that Muzenidis initiated. They found it hard to adjust to a professional whose only concern was for the production. Debbie Taylor, who played Electra, commented, "I was in rehearsal nearly ten hours a day plus I had classes and school work to do. I also had a part-time job. It was impossible to do it all. The play took all of my time" (see Appendix C, p. 76). It was also suggested that the all-night crew work, which had been mandatory for the actors to attend, caused the morale of the actors to decline, and in turn, the unity of the company to become temporarily broken.

When the actors were asked if they would like to have an opportunity to work with Muzenidis again, all agreed that they would. Cathy Smith said, "Knowing what I know now, perhaps I could better prepare myself for the task" (see Appendix C, p. 78).

On Tuesday, April 20, another informal meeting was held to discuss the results of the production with the production staff. It was hoped that all representatives from the four major areas of costume, dance, music and
setting would be present, however, the music composers and the choreographer were unable to attend due to personal commitments. It then became necessary to schedule individual meetings with these representatives.

The meeting with the production staff followed the same format as the meeting with the actors. The staff was asked to discuss a series of seven questions in reference to their particular area of the production and the production as a whole. (For complete minutes of the recorded interview, see Appendix D.)

The staff agreed that Muzenidis worked as they expected a European director to work in that he maintained complete control over all aspects of the production. Wedwick commented on the fact that Muzenidis started with a basic idea and did not commit himself to any specific way of doing the show until after he explored various ideas. The production grew from there through "sifting and refining."

All agreed that Muzenidis commanded an overwhelming knowledge and practical ability in all areas of theatre production. Brenda DeVore, Graduate Costumer, said, "He knew how to use costumes to work for his advantage as well as for the actors" (see Appendix D, p. 81). Danny Rogers, Assistant Director, found Muzenidis' ability to maintain such a high level of organization amazing. "He listed priorities and stayed with them. He kept control over all areas of the production even when everyone else was totally confused" (see Appendix D, p. 79).
It is surprising that so few people on the technical staff complained about lack of personal attention from Muzenidis since lack of communication proved to be such a major topic. Jean Cowsar, Choreographer, was the only one who felt neglected. She commented that Muzenidis did not allow her enough time to work with the actors on their movements; but she proved to be so undependable in her attendance that Muzenidis could not trust her and therefore took on the responsibility of correcting the movements himself. Barbara Fletcher, Property Mistress, stated that although Muzenidis spent very little actual time discussing properties with her, she felt that she was given as much time as needed to understand what Muzenidis wanted.

The production staff attributed the misunderstandings of Muzenidis' directoral philosophy to a lack of communication prior to his arrival. They thought that other problems of working with Muzenidis could have been alleviated had there been more communication with him to determine exactly what he expected from the various technicians and designers. However, just as Dr. Wedwick observed earlier, Muzenidis did not commit himself to any specific way of doing the show until after he explored various ideas and the various ideas could not be explored until after he arrived and had been given an opportunity to test the theatre facilities and meet the staff and actors personally.

It was the consensus of the production staff that although Muzenidis knew how much work it would take to accomplish a
particular task, he did not realize that the Division of Drama at North Texas did not have enough people trained in technical theatre to meet his demands. Muzenidis had directed at other universities, but they had large drama departments with fully developed graduate programs in design and technical theatre. Since he was working primarily with undergraduate students at North Texas, his demands at times were too extreme for their level of experience.

The music composers stated that working with Muzenidis was a valuable learning experience. Ken Bales and John Gibson praised Muzenidis for his knowledge of music and the sense of professionalism with which he worked. Gibson, a doctoral candidate in music composition, stated that working with Muzenidis was probably the most demanding task he had ever had but it was also the most rewarding. "It is insane to look back and think about the many times we stayed up all night working on a piece of music only to have Takis refuse it the next day. But I couldn't respect him if he hadn't demanded that quality. He's a genius" (see Appendix D, p. 81). Such a statement exemplifies the true nature of a highly trained artist.

A piece of art can never be evaluated in terms of the amount of time it took to produce it or the number of times the artist had to start over. A piece of art can only be evaluated by examining the end product. This was the philosophy of Muzenidis. Many criticized his
methods of working for they only were aware of the number of times they were required to start over on their particular contribution to the production or the amount of time spent. Muzenidis was probably never conscious that all theatre students both on stage and in technical areas did not share the philosophy that only the end product is what the artist seeks and evaluates.

Bob Dyer, Instructor of Theatre at Richland Community College in Dallas, after observing the first lighting rehearsal, was overwhelmed by Muzenidis' demanding and discriminatory style of directing. Having a Master's Degree from Yale University in Technical Theatre, Dyer was very much aware of the technical problems in producing a play of such scope. Dyer indicated that he would much rather work with someone as demanding as Muzenidis than work with a director who arbitrarily left the technical problems to be solved by the technical director and in turn accepted anything in design or production the technical director proposed. After seeing the production of *The Libation Bearers* at North Texas, Dyer approached Muzenidis and offered to serve, at his own expense, as his assistant director anytime convenient and acceptable for Muzenidis. The proposal was accepted by Muzenidis and a date is being scheduled for next year when Muzenidis will travel in the United States again.
CHAPTER V

PRODUCTION SUMMARY

Working as assistant to Takis Muzenidis on the production of The Libation Bearers proved to be an extremely educational and rewarding experience. At the first production meeting with the production staff, Muzenidis stated, "Now you think it is exciting. But we have much work to do and it will take much time. More time than we have. Then you will think it is not so exciting." However, it was exciting. It was also exasperating, edifying, exhausting, at times erratic, and very much a test of endurance. For the students involved in the production, it was an opportunity few will ever have again.

Opinions of the production ranged from total enthusiasm to disinterest to complete disgust. Many thought the experience they gained could never be equaled, others looked on it only as another play, and a few were only able to see the negative side of their participation in the production.

Any time a new person is brought into an established situation, differences in opinions are bound to arise. However, it is through these new ideas and individual techniques that a learning process is encouraged to develop. If Muzenidis had been restricted to work under the same production policies and procedures that the directors on the faculty of the Division
of Drama directed from, the students involved in the production would have received only the same value they are afforded when one of the regular faculty directors directs a show.

Many of the problems that arose were due to the fact that this was the first time the Division of Drama had used a guest director. This initiation of an outside director working in the Division created problems that could not have been anticipated. There were some problems which were unique to Muzenidis and his style of directing and there were still others which could have happened in any production under any director.

The most frequent problem encountered that was mentioned by the people involved in the production was the lack of communication with Muzenidis prior to his arrival on campus. A look at the correspondence prior to his arrival indicates that preparation for the production began immediately after the official contract was signed (see Appendix G); but conflicts arose that kept these early contacts from being productive.

Muzenidis received his official invitation to come to North Texas nine months before his proposed arrival. When he returned his signed contract on May 13, 1975 (see Appendix G, pp. 95-96) he included a list of items that he believed needed immediate attention. He stated that in order to do a double-bill of The Libation Bearers and The Eumenides, he would need two separate women-choruses totaling approximately thirty-five females plus two choreographers. Since the music
would play such an important part in the production and since there were approximately twenty musical parts in both plays, he felt that two composers should be selected and that they should begin work immediately in order for him to have the compositions for the first rehearsal. He requested a ground plan of the university stage with exact dimensions of width and depth of the stage and proscenium length and height so that he could prepare a floor plan for the technical designer (see Appendix G, p. 97). On June 26, 1975, Dr. Wedwick sent to Muzenidis the blueprints of the University Theatre and a diagram of the electrical circuits. It was explained to Muzenidis that as soon as the fall semester began, the appropriate personnel would be contacted concerning music, costumes and choreography.

Once the fall semester began, the areas of art, dance and music were contacted in reference to their contributions to the production. It was at this time that the Art Department expressed their desire to wait until Muzenidis arrived on campus before they selected a representative to work with the production. Sandy Combest of the Area of Dance explained that there would be dancers available but that she could not guarantee any of the dancers would be capable choreographers. Dean Myers of the School of Music said that he would have the composition faculty select the two composers who would serve as the representatives from the School of Music.

When Dr. Marder had not heard from the School of Music by October concerning the selection of the composers, he sent
a memo to Myers stating the necessity to begin composing the music at once. He explained that he had received instructions from Muzenidis about the music and a taped recording of the music used by the National Theatre of Greece when Muzenidis directed these productions there. Muzenidis thought that perhaps the taped recording would help the composers understand the mood of music he wanted them to compose for the production at North Texas. When there was still no response from the School of Music in November, a second memo was sent to Dean Myers. It was not until December that the composition faculty of the School of Music announced their decision concerning the composers. Once the composers were selected, they were given the tapes and scripts sent by Muzenidis to aid them in composing the music.

Muzenidis was constantly reminded that he would be dealing with students in all areas of production and that their knowledge and abilities were limited due to lack of experience. It was suggested that as much work on the production be done before his arrival in order to allow ample time to complete everything.

Muzenidis mailed his general set design ideas in sketch form to Wedwick in late November requesting that a color rendering of the setting be designed and mailed to him for his approval (see Appendix G, pp. 104-105). The color rendering and a floorplan was mailed immediately; but were lost in the mail (see Appendix G, pp. 107-108). Once the loss was realized,
additional copies were forwarded to Muzenidis; but he had already left Greece for Vienna and Paris en route to Denton and, therefore, was unable to view the color rendering and stage setting until he arrived in Denton.

Similarly, Newell was selected to design costumes for the production near the end of the fall semester. After viewing Wedwick's stage design and discussing possible fabric selections with DeVore, he designed costumes for the five leading characters in both plays, the chorus and the furies. Once these designs were approved by Marder and Wedwick, he mailed the design along with suggested samples of material to Muzenidis at his Paris address (see Appendix G, p. 111). Due to the slow process in overseas mail, Muzenidis had already left for New York before the designs reached him and just as Wedwick's color rendering, Muzenidis did not see the costume designs until he arrived in Denton.

Since The Libation Bearers was only one of six major productions presented by the Division of Drama during the 1975-76 season, time and planning had to be equally distributed among all six productions. Perhaps it would have helped if Muzenidis had been able to spend one week entirely with the production staff to organize them to his method of working before he began working with the cast. Muzenidis, himself, stated that he would have preferred to have been able to come earlier and conduct a workshop in ancient Greek drama to prepare the students for the production before he
began actual production. Perhaps this type of format would have solved some of the communication problems and allowed both the actors and the technical staff to work with Muzenidis in a less frantic environment.

The purpose of inviting Muzenidis to come to North Texas and direct a production using students in technical work and as performers was to give the students an opportunity to (1) work with a professional director and (2) work on an ancient Greek drama. In viewing the production from these two standpoints, it must be termed a success.

His style of directing was different from anything that the students had ever experienced. Some criticism has been directed at him for interpreting lines for the actors. He worked with the actors on the script line by line, word by word, noting breaths, pauses, intonation. He gave motivation and interpretation, described feelings and emotions. He said that if he had more time he would have let the actors find the meaning for themselves, but twenty-eight days was not enough time.

His on-stage directing could have been disastrous for students not able to adjust to this style of directing. To have someone follow an actor around on stage, telling him to place his hands at his side or to speak louder, turning him physically in a particular direction or positioning his head at an exact angle and all the time telling him to continue his dialogue could be most distracting. Fortunately, however,
this technique motivated the North Texas actors and heightened the intensity of their performance. But the actors began to rely on this technique and there was a noticeable drop in intensity when Muzenidis stopped this procedure and sat in the audience to observe the over-all production.

One of the major problems for the actors was the number of hours Muzenidis expected them to work each day. The actors in the major roles had individual rehearsals in the mornings, a group rehearsal in the afternoon and a run-through in the evening. The average daily rehearsal schedule for an actor in a major role was eight to ten hours. Since all of the actors were full-time students, they were in classes approximately four hours a day and some of the students even had part-time jobs.

All other universities that had invited Muzenidis to lecture or direct a production had large graduate programs which meant that the students involved the production were better trained and also not taking classes outside their major field. Muzenidis explained that most of the departments at the various colleges had also released both undergraduate and graduate students from class attendance while they were involved with the production. At North Texas, however, the majority of students involved in the production being undergraduates, were enrolled in academic courses in departments other than the Drama Division and therefore they could not be excused from class attendance.
Had Muzenidis realized this problem in the beginning, he may have decided against double-casting the major speaking roles. In discussing the results of the production with Muzenidis, he admitted that the double-casting limited the actors in the major speaking roles from meeting their full potential. Due to the double-casting, the actors were allowed only half as much time to rehearse as the chorus and minor roles were given on stage. The chorus, as a result of their added rehearsal time, was able to advance to a higher level of performance than the actors in the major speaking roles (see Appendix A, p. 67). Even when the actors in the major speaking roles performed in the chorus, they performed with more intensity and ability than they were able to achieve in their performance in major roles.

The final week of rehearsals prior to the run of the production demanded even more personal time and energy from the actors and technical staff than the previous weeks. New music was added, costumes, which were not yet complete, were changed and finishing touches were yet to be applied to the stage setting. Since the construction of the costumes was far behind schedule, the actors were responsible for seeing that their costume was completed. This meant that along with their three daily rehearsals and their classes, they had to find time to work on costumes as well. The long hours were beginning to show on their emotional stability and their health. It became harder and harder
for the actors to maintain their level of concentration during rehearsals.

As frustration mounted and tempers flared, Muzenidis became the scapegoat for all of the fatigue, the classes missed and the student examinations that were failed. No matter what problem arose, Muzenidis received the blame. This is a typical reaction for actors under pressure. The actors became so involved in the problems and the pressure was so great on them that they could not be objective. Muzenidis became aware of this situation, but he also knew that if he allowed the actors to rest at this point, it would destroy the rhythm and intensity levels that were imperative to the performance.

Once the actors had an opportunity to get some rest after the final dress rehearsal, they were able to put the weeks of work and Muzenidis' constant drive for perfection into proper perspective. By focusing on the performance rather than looking at rehearsals, they were able to recognize that their level of achievement in this production was primarily due to the drive and strict discipline with which Muzenidis had worked. Their character interpretation, their movement, the style of the production, even the very folds of their costumes were determined and examined by Muzenidis personally. They began to understand what it meant to work with a European director who not only had final approval in stage direction of the production, but also controlled every minute aspect of all areas of production.
Through this realization, the actors were able to understand that Muzenidis had driven them to extremes for their own benefit. He had forced them to reach higher levels of performance than they imagined they were capable of achieving.

In the opening night cast meeting before the show, Muzenidis was given a standing ovation by the production staff and performers when he entered the rehearsal room. When Muzenidis dismissed the cast to take their places on stage, they responded with another standing ovation for their director and one by one, as they left the room, they expressed their appreciation to him personally for his tremendous dedication to the production. This display of gratitude to a man that only one day earlier had been referred to as an unreasonable tyrant brought to mind a statement Muzenidis expressed prior to his first meeting with the cast: "Always when you direct, the actors must not be bored. You must win their respect. They must know you are thinking of their well-being."

Since *The Libation Bearers* was the first ancient Greek drama to be presented on the University Theatre stage at North Texas, Muzenidis not only had to train the actors and technical staff in the theory, style and technique of staging an ancient Greek drama, but he also had to transfer the meaning of the play, both intellectual and emotion, to an audience who was generally unfamiliar with his subject. More important than merely communicating meaning to an audience, the director sought to convey an appreciation and understanding of the subject
in a style that was entertaining as well as informative. Being able to observe Muzenidis' directorial techniques as he mastered this objective and the growth of the actors and technicians as they worked on the production made this thesis a personally and intellectually rewarding research experience.
APPENDIX
APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED INTERVIEW WITH TAKIS MUZENIDIS

Evans--When you came to audition, the students were supposed to be prepared in some way and I noticed that you immediately decided to have them do something that they have already done. Is there anything in particular you look for in auditions since you didn't know anything about the students?

Muzenidis--On those auditions so quick auditions and without preparations, the only thing is to prove and to see if people . . . I cannot say qualified; but they must have some possibilities. That means: they have a body possibility, they have a voice possibility. Here is the most interesting thing if you find it out: the sensibility. This is why to question them. They don't care to give me an answer; but according to the answer I can say that this lady or this gentleman has some sensibility or has not. But it is not always the way to make the auditions. Not the best way. It is one of the ways because we are in a hurry and have to start immediately. If that was not the case, then I have to sit down with them, discuss, more and more, give them something to do, and ask them to improvise or sing. The way I have need here is not a way with sure results. Always, because they are students, I realize that the difference between them are very small difference. Only sometime we discover someone who has a very good quality; but I think it is not everytime. Perhaps in 10 auditions you find one person with a possibility who did not know he had a possibility. So because the students are approximately all on the same level with small difference, if you make a mistake in choosing this one or the other is not a big mistake. It is a mistake if you have to choose between good, big actors and to pick the best; but not if they are common people with no background. They have always the sensibilities and body and voice all the same. Between them one has a very bad voice or one can't move. The way was not the best way, but a way for a quick result.

Evans--Before our first production meeting, Dr. Wedwick had thought about using a stone texture and you said, "No, let's go with wood." Was this a decision you made on the spur of the moment or had you decided this before hand?
Muzenidis--I have seen that he, with the staff he had, was not able to make the decorations for me. The problem is to finish the decoration as soon as possible; so I see that to make the decoration out of stone will take twenty days instead of ten. He would have to use papier-mâché and it needs time. I have not time to loose. I have to find the solutions very quick. One of the characteristics of a director with experience is to be able to adjust himself to the possibilities. If you try from one actor to bring something out that this man has not then you lose time. You have to know that this man can go to this point; or you say "I don't use the man," or "I don't do the play." Or you say "This is the man, these are the possibilities; I don't see farther than this." This is a strategy of our art. When I come to the rehearsal and I see that my actors are not able to do a very big thing, then I limited my conception because, if I tried to realize my conception with people that are not able to do that, then I am not a good guide. It is as a general who tries to capture a city without having guns. For me, as director, the problem is to make the performance. Of course a director can say, "I cannot do the performance or I don't do the performance." It is also a way. You come in an institution and you see that the people there are not able to do it and you say, "Good. Goodbye, I cannot do that." And you go home. But also, this way is not a professional way. It is more the amateur way. An amateur who has not his professional can say, "I cannot do that." But a professional who has to do something must find a way to do it.

Evans--This is something the students have observed and mentioned. You could easily have come in, done anything, taken your money and left. No one from Greece would have ever known. But instead, you have worked and driven the students to realms of excellence they didn't know was in them. In essence, you have competed with yourself. Do you think that this is important for a director to do?

Muzenidis--Of course. Every director or artist has two things to do. First of all, to be satisfied with himself. Then to satisfy the others. If you try only to satisfy the others, then you are not a good director or artist. If you try to satisfy only yourself, also you are not a good director. The artist has first, of course, to satisfy himself because his conscience has to work with this problem and secondly, to satisfy
also the others. Because if you do something only for yourself and you don't care about the others, then no one will be there. The theatre has a law. The theatre has to have success. You have to try to bring success. Not in a false way, but to have success in the best way possible.

Evans--Your set was stylistic, but costumes were very realistic. What was the reasoning behind these two differences in styles?

Muzenidis--In ancient time, they have never used such costumes. This is theatre that used such costumes. I mean, the costumes that the chorus wore here were not the costumes that a slave of this period (ancient) have. They are special costumes for the theatre. Of course, the shape is approximately the same; but it is only approximately, so it is not a realistic thing. It is a theatrical factor. You are right to say it is a difference between the set design and the costumes. But, of course, a production or a piece of art must have unity. It is the best way. But, as you know, we are now in the period of neo-expressionism. The neo-expressionist's beauty lies in both elements of stylization and reality together. It is the way that very big poets of our time use today. The real expressionists had always the costumes and all the things that were expressionistic. But the neo-expressionists, because of the intervention of realism, have combined the elements of the expressionists and the realists and has brought a combination of stylized acting and realism. But not naturalistic; realistic. If I can be much more clear, realistic concerning the theatre because the realism of the theatre has nothing to do with realism in life. In life, if you need to have a book, you must have a book with all the contents of a real book. In the theatre, a realistic book can be a book without having pages.

Evans--That's interesting, because someone said, "He is so precise with every detail on the costumes but he uses wooden swords." But to use real swords would be more naturalistic, wouldn't it?

Muzenidis--Of course. Always I will never use real swords or real axes; but things that are equal with the realistic thing without having the material of the realistic thing. You can have in your hand a piece of bread on the stage. This piece of bread can be done, say, from paper. If the shape and if the color and if the construction of this piece of bread has the same appearance as the real thing, then this is a realistic thing; but a realistic thing for the theatre.
The furniture in the naturalistic theatre was really furniture. They have to go all over the world in antique shops for the theatre. The people go to the theatre to see how big is the diamond the leading lady has and how much it cost. This is the bad thing the theatre of illusion has done. To convince the people that this is the reality. There we have not theatre. I mean, to make people believe that they live the same moment with the actors, it is something that is not theatre. The essential thing in theatre is not to hypnotize the people, but to make the people feel.

Evans--Empathize.

Muzenidis--Yes, to empathize. Meyerhold, in order to theatricalize the theatre, he has built around the stage the dressing rooms. And then you see the actors preparing themselves, or reading his role or reading a newspaper or writing a letter or drinking a cup of coffee. And then he comes from there and when he passes a certain limit he starts playing the role.

Evans--Do you think they tend to act this rather than being natural?

Muzenidis--Yes, they act also. This was the error of Meyerhold because he has done rehearsals for this. We ask, "Why? You make another theatre in the theatre. The idea is good but the way you do the idea is a theatre in the theatre. You make so many rehearsals for the people sitting in their dressing room as if they are on the stage." Then the problem is that if you want to demonstrate the life behind the stage, then take away the walls and let us see the people coming and making anything they do there. But not organized or rehearsed. He has done this only once in order to say to the public that you are in the theatre. You are not in a real world. You have to stay apart and see the things and think about the things.

Evans--Did you have in mind to double-cast before you came to North Texas? What was your reason for double-casting the show?

Muzenidis--It is only the case of a university because all the people must be involved. They must have a job to do. They must not think that only a few have a job to do and the others do not. Also, it is a security. If someone is ill, to take the other part. But in this case where we have to work very hard and very quickly, it is not clever to make double-cast because you lose time. Several times I say something to one
of the two and the other is not there or he has not heard and then I have to repeat. This is time you lose. I don't think that in a professional troupe it is a very good idea because there the public does not come only to see the play, but they also come to see the actor. If you have two actors of the same quality, yes, of course; but if you have a very good actor and then you give the part to a secondary actor then the public, they don't come because they say we like to see the best actor. But if the actors are in the same quality, of course. Sometime, you know, this way to double-cast has some privilege and some against. The one of both imitate the other. The worst of the both imitate the best. And it is not a good way to train the actors. It is good if you make different staging and different blocking. If you demonstrate different ways to play the same role, then it has meaning; but the same way with the same movement, with the same intonation has no meaning.

Evans--Did you find that to be a problem here?

Muzenidis--Yes. Only here, I have faced the problem as a problem of a university. The young people here must have the opportunity to play or to make a training, so I said, "perhaps we will lose time, perhaps we will not have different expressions and different ways to play a role; but those students will have an opportunity to learn.

Evans--As for our actors here, they had no background or anything. Can you look back to their auditions and then to where were are today and say that they have progressed satisfactorily?

Muzenidis--Oh, yes. I cannot say satisfactorily; but I can say they have done a very big progress. I have not thought that they can bring the thing in such a level. Not especially for the leading parts but for the chorus. The chorus has improved very much from the beginning until today. The actors have not done this improvement and one problem is because of the double-casting. The chorus has all of the rehearsals and they have only half of the rehearsals. And they have much more responsibility than the chorus because they are alone on the stage. The chorus has always the other to help him. Someone who is with him on stage. So, the double-casting was at the cost of the actors. They have lost rehearsals.

The best thing is that the chorus has started having the unity. It is a very good thing because the theatre
needs this unity. Not only when they act in a chorus, but to play in a whole play. The actors must have unity. Here they have a good experience. Art in the theatre is a collective art. Everybody has to do his best.

Evans--We had such a limited time to rehearse. You rehearsed with the speaking parts in the morning and then again in the afternoon. Did you have to make any adjustments in the rehearsals here that were different from the way you are used to rehearsing?

Muzenidis--Yes. I repeat, that the director must deal with his elements every time. I go in a theatre and this theatre has no lighting. So I have to work with this theatre. The director has to think about the possibilities he has.

As you said to me, when I come here and see the auditions, I have seen the possibility that you have and I work accordingly. When I saw that your technical staff is only one person and the other people don't know the work; I have stopped asking for details. I ask only for the essentials. Only Dr. Daryl is the designer. I see that he is not a designer. He has not many possibilities in designing. He has possibilities in construction, technical and other possibilities, but not in designing. Therefore, I must say, "not this, not this, but this."

The director must know the material he has in his hands--the human material and the real material. If he does not know, he cannot do anything.

Evans--In other words, a director has to be flexible and adjust to his surroundings.

Muzenidis--Of course. But it depends on the director. I mean, a professional director must not have this flexibility when he has a professional job to do. You must always make this difference between the professional theatre and the university theatre.

Evans--One of the greatest problems for us was the budget. When you direct in Greece, do you have a particular budget for each show that you do?

Muzenidis--Yes, the following is the problem. There are, as you know, private theatres and state theatres. The state theatre, of course, has a budget; but it is much bigger than the budget of the private theatre.
Sometime we spend a whole fortune for a decoration. The production that we have done for Japan was $150,000.00, but it is the state who pays.

As I wrote to Mr. Marder when he said to me that we have only $1,500.00; I said I cannot tell you anything. I don't know the prices. In Greece I can tell you exactly. If you show me a picture of a decoration, I can tell you in five minutes how much it is. Approximately, but I'm sure that I will not make a big mistake. And I don't know what you have in your storerooms. Perhaps you have some materials there. So I told Mr. Marder that I cannot tell you how much it will cost. I don't know if it was more than the budget. It could be, yes?

Evans--Yes, it was.

Muzenidis--But there was nothing I could do because I don't know the prices here.

Evans--Looking at the show going into our last night of performance and taking into consideration that this is a university production, how do you feel about the final product?

Muzenidis--You see, there are parts in each production that demand this possibility. Let me say, the part of Orestes is a very difficult part. It is a kind of Hamlet with this last scene. And it must be a young man. He must have a very big talent and a very big experience. The Electra is not so big, but she has also two or three scenes that are very important. The other actors have very small parts and are not very difficult. So, from the beginning, I thought that we would not reach something concerning the two leading parts. The other parts, they have tried to do their best. They have also not reached a very high level, but they have done something. The worst part was the two leading parts and, of course, at the end the Athena.

Evans--If you had it to do all over again, would you change anything?

Muzenidis--As I said to you, if the next day after the opening, I started once more I would never do the same thing. Not the decoration, the conception, anything. It is a personal thing. Some directors think that if they do something, they do their best and it cannot be changed. I am never satisfied with myself. I see
an idea that I like. After some time I have a better idea than this one and then I have another better idea again. It is the problem that the art has not an end. Let me say, tomorrow, if we had time, to start rehearsing the play in complete different way. In complete different setting, in complete different everything, but better than this one. Any way than this one. And you will see are many different possibilities. If the director has a fantasy. He has to think as I think. If he has not this fantasy, then he will say "I can do nothing else."

Evans--Do you find that in a production, you have to stop the ideas and stop where you are for the sake of the production?

Muzenidis--Yes, sometime. Because I see that if I go ahead ... You see, the ideas of a producer must be realized from the actors. If the actors have not the time or the possibilities to realize the ideas of the director and the director insists, then he is a bad director. He does not know the result. So, the director must think, "We have fifteen days before us. In those fifteen days, what can I reach?" Because if I try more to do, we will never be ready in the beginning.

You have seen in a sudden moment, I have stopped rehearsing in the afternoon with the actors. It was because I had new ideas and I said to myself, "If I say now the new ideas, it will be a catastrophe. So is better to stop." To hear them saying the lines in the way that they say, it was something that I don't like to hear. I have always the intention to change things; but to change things with people that have not this ability is also a problem. You are in a cast in a theatre and you have, let me say, fifteen actors. From those fifteen actors, the three, they are flexible and you can change them any time. You have to work with those three. If you try to reach something from those that have nothing to give, it is like trying to take water from a source that has no water inside. You bring again and again but is not water there. Why you try to bring from there the water if the water is not there?

Evans--So, you are saying that the director must not only know himself, but the abilities of his actors as well.

Muzenidis--Oh, yes. This is the main thing. And, because the director does not always work with the same actors,
he must be a good psychologist and a good man who can understand the possibility of the others. It is a kind of a teacher or a psychologist who has the possibilities to go inside of a man and take from his the possibilities that he has.

Evans--Why are you in theatre and what do you think theatre offers audiences of today or what should if offer?

Muzenidis--It is difficult to tell you in some words; but I feel that our art, I mean the theatrical art, is not a profession. It is a mission. It has nothing to do with the "In what way can I make my bread?" If someone thinks that through theatre he can win his bread, he will suffer very much because the theatre does not give bread. Very, very seldom the people are satisfied with their life in the theatre as a profession. It is special cases. These special cases sometimes has nothing to do with the abilities. One young girl is very handsome or she can move well. She has half the ability of another girl who has not this quality; I mean, these physical things. The other girl is hundred times better than the handsome girl but the handsome girl win ten times more than the other; so it depends on who likes you. It is not from your own abilities but from the resonance of the public. So, the theatre is a very bad work and it is not a good profession. But it is a mission. It is as the Christians believe to religion. It is a kind of religion. This is why Wilson tries to make religious theatre or Grotowski is one hundred per cent a theologian and is not an actor.

As I said to you, the theatre as a profession is a bad life. You will never be satisfied because if you are a good actor, you will always try to find something better and it will be agony. If you are not a good actor, you will stay always and wait to find a job. In both cases you will not be satisfied. It is only one in every hundred people who has the possibility to survive very well.

In the theatre, the people must be dedicated and they must believe to this job. In this job, they must find the ideology of this art. If you don't find the ideology, you have to every night make up and change your face in order to play this part and another. If you don't find inside this transformation what you offer and what you take, then is a very bad thing.
I repeat that the theatre is a religion. It is something that the people who are concerned must know that they have to suffer very much, to have a lot of pain and they have to be dedicated to this job. If you go into theatre for money or fame, you will not be successful or content. You must look upon theatre as a religion and your role in this religion is your mission in your life.

Evans--If theatre is a mission, then you are a missionary. At this point in your life, what do you see your mission to be?

Muzenidis--I think that my mission is to make the life of the people, in my own way--I have not political way--to make the people feel well and happy. To increase the sentiment of the people, to increase the thought of the people; this is my mission.
APPENDIX B

RESULTS OF AUDIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. AVERAGE AGE: 26

2. CLASSIFICATION: 18 Freshman 12 Senior
   10 Sophomore 2 Graduate
   14 Junior

3. MAJORS: 1 Biology 19 English 6 Recreation
   10 Drama 4 Music 8 Speech
   4 Education 1 Nursing 1 Undecided

4. HOW MANY LIVE DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS HAVE YOU SEEN IN THE PAST TWO YEARS?
   16 0-2 22 3-5 16 over 5

5. WERE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE LIBATION BEARERS OR THE ORESTIAN TRILOGY BEFORE YOU CAME TO THE PERFORMANCE?
   14 Yes 40 No

6. COULD YOU UNDERSTAND THE PLOT OF THE SHOW AS IT WAS PRESENTED?
   46 Yes 6 No

7. IN A BRIEF PARAGRAPH, EXPLAIN THE PLAY AS YOU SAW IT.
   The general explanation was that it was the story of a son returning home to revenge the death of his father by killing his mother and her lover.

8. DID THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS OF THE PRODUCTION HELP OR HINDER THE PRODUCTION FOR YOU?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Masks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narration of the trilogy</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slides explaining the pantomime</td>
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9. **DID YOU FIND THE PANTOMIME EXPLAINING THE STORY OF AGAMEMNON AND THE MONOLOGUE OF ATHENA THEATRICALLY ENTERTAINING?**

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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monologue</td>
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10. **WHAT PART OF THE SHOW DID YOU FIND MOST PLEASURABLE?**

The Pantomime of Agamemnon

11. **WHAT PART OF THE SHOW DID YOU FIND LEAST PLEASURABLE?**

The Monologue of Athena

12. **WERE YOU ENLIGHTENED BY SEEING THE PRODUCTION?**

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13. **WAS THERE SOMETHING YOU FEEL SHOULD HAVE GAINED, BUT DID NOT?**

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14. **IF YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE ANOTHER GREEK PRODUCTION, WILL YOU GO TO SEE IT?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</table>
APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPT OF ACTOR'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What did you think of Takis Muzenidis' directing techniques?

   Smith -- It was good in that he stripped us of all past experience and treated us as if we knew nothing. That way, he didn't take anything for granted.

   Skiles -- I thought he hurt the actor's growth by giving each actor every movement. He treated them like puppets.

   Taylor -- I disagree. He made me learn to do exactly what he wanted me to. It was great discipline.

   Cook -- I never understood what he meant by the character not being characters, but forms.

   Smith -- I understood what it meant, but it didn't work for me.

   Evans -- There was a lack of communication.

   Smith -- Yes, but he said so much physically. If I didn't understand what he was saying all I had to do was watch him.

   Taylor -- He was more of a conductor than a director.

   Brantley -- Something that helped me was that he told me exactly what he thought. If he didn't like it, he told me so. It was great feedback.

2. Did he give you enough attention as an actor?

   Kalmbach -- He gave the chorus more time than Orestes and Electra. He gave us as much as he could--more than I wanted.

   Smith -- Instead of working on the whole show, he would pick out certain scenes that needed work.

   Kalmbach -- He didn't work with me on my chorus part as much as he worked with the other chorus leaders.

   Taylor -- That was because we knew what he wanted from working with him on Electra's part.
Skiles-- As far as telling the extras what to do, he did it just once; but I guess that was enough for the amount we did.

Kalmbach-I never got down about the criticism he gave me.

Cook-- I learned more by listening to him talk to the other characters than his work with me. I don't think he gave enough time to people in the chorus.

Kalmbach-Oh, yes he did. He worked with the chorus individually on the weekends when we were here working on our costume.

Evans-- I thought I had a small part, but he spent a lot of time with me.

3. Did you have trouble understanding Muzenidis? Was this communication problem primarily: (a) language, (b) knowledge or (c) generation?

Smith-- Oh, I don't think it was generation at all. The trouble was that he had that show in his mind and no one could do it right.

Kalmbach-The way he said things and expressed were hard to understand a lot of the time.

Smith-- I think it was a lack of knowledge within myself; but he helped so much with his expressions.

4. Compare Muzenidis' style of directing with that of other directors you have worked with.

Smith-- I thought my high school teacher disciplined us, but I've never experienced this much discipline. I hated it while it was happening, but I can see it was important now.

Kalmbach-He gave me more motivation than I've ever had before.

Brantley-He worked through the show a step at a time. If there was a problem he would stop and discuss it with you and work it out.

Taylor-- His rehearsal schedule was too demanding. I was in rehearsal almost ten hours a day, plus I had classes and homework to do. I also had a part-time job. It was impossible to do it all. The play took all of my time.
Skiles-- Since my part was so small and I had such little contact with him, I wasn't motivated by him. I felt like an observer.

Evans -- He didn't give me definite blocking like most of the directors I've worked with. It was just general movement. But some of the actors, he told exactly where to stand. It was different for each character.

Smith -- He had more technical knowledge than anyone I've ever seen. He was so creative.

Skiles-- He envisioned in his mind and knew what he wanted. He had a tremendous knowledge of the play.

5. What did you think of the over-all production of The Libation Bearers?

Cook -- I questioned the music. I didn't think the last song had the same style that the rest of the songs had. It seemed too popular.

Smith -- No. I liked it because it was different. It let you know that there had been a change in society due to the establishment of justice.

Cook -- He really utilized the whole acting space. Even out into the audience. He kept the tempo at a constant rhythm. Not that the whole show stayed at the same rhythm, but once he found the rhythm for a particular scene, he made sure it stayed there. He didn't let the actors alter the rhythm.

Smith -- I thought the pantomime was an excellent way to relate to the Agamemnon story. It was so creative and interesting to watch.

Taylor-- The audience showed their ignorance of Greek drama when they laughed at the lamentation scene; but I can remember how crazy it seemed to us in the beginning.

Cook -- I don't know if everybody gave their all. I think the over-all attitude was pulled down due to the all-night crew work. The ensemble was broken.

Smith -- Performancewise, I think I did the best I could have done within the time limit. I was very displeased with the schedule.
Taylor-- I think I did the best I could also, but I still was not pleased with my performance.

Evans -- I think I did the best I could. I felt that there were three degrees of people in the show. The small parts didn't feel very important. It was hard for them to get up for the show. There were people with major speaking parts that did the best they could and, even though Takis wasn't pleased, they did a good job. Then there were other parts that, no matter how hard they tried, they could never reach an adequate level of achievement.

6. Discuss what you consider to be unique traits of Muzenidis as a director.

Smith -- I liked his directing on stage and side-coaching. It gave me momentum.

Brantley--This directorial technique helped set the mood. It was like standing back watching myself.

Evans -- It made me want to give more.

Cook -- It helped my concentration.

Smith -- I was always unsure of myself. He gave me criticism but I never really knew where I stood.

Cook -- Something that really threw me was that he changed my blocking after opening night. I've never had a director do that before.

Smith -- He expected us to be available twenty-four hours a day.

Cook -- Most directors tend to reach a certain level in production and then stop. He didn't. He just kept right on going.

7. If you had the opportunity to work with Muzenidis again, would you do it?

Smith -- Yes. Knowing what I know now, perhaps I could better prepare myself.

Evans -- Yes. The only bad part was his not working around our class schedules.

General--Yes.
Opinion
APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPT OF TECHNICAL CREW'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What did you think of the way Muzenidis worked as a director?

Wedwick--Onstage, he worked much like a choral director. He used gestures and facial expressions to highlight his emotions. I haven't seen too many directors work in this manner. Most directors I have seen want to get away from the stage.

Rogers--You always knew where you were. He listed his priorities and stayed with them.

Wedwick--I got the impression that he was used to working in a place where everyone was assigned jobs like making armor, costumes, etc.

He worked pretty much the way I expected a European director to work. He played with ideas for years before doing the show. Everybody was affiliated with the production from the very beginning. He started with a basic idea and the production grew from there through sifting and refining.

Rogers--At time, I thought he could have been a little more tactful.

DeVore--Yes, but when you tell someone how to do something and have to repeat it fifteen times, you can't help but get upset. Sometimes it was just a statement of fact. He wasn't necessarily being negative. Europeans are just more forward. He was a very human person.

2. Evaluate Muzenidis' knowledge of the particular area you worked and how much time he gave to your particular area.

DeVore--He knew what he wanted; there was just not enough time. That wasn't his fault. He knew what it took to get what he wanted, but he didn't realize that we didn't have the people to do it.

Gibson--He knew more about music composition than most of the teachers I've had. He was a genius.

Cowsar--He didn't need a choreographer. He knew enough without one. As it turned out, he ended up doing most of it anyway.
3. Compare the amount of time Muzenidis gave your particular area with the amount of time you think you needed.

Cowsar-- He didn't give me enough time to work on their movement. Every time I came ready to work, either the cast was too tired or he was too busy to stop what he was doing. I ended up working on the Furies' dance outside of rehearsals without any supervision from Takis at all. Then, the last week, we came in and showed him what we had worked up. He really didn't spend very much time with us at all.

Fletcher-He didn't give me much time on props, but he gave me enough to know what he wanted. That was all the time I needed.

4. Did you have trouble understanding Muzenidis? Was this lack of communication the result of: (a) language, (b) knowledge, or (c) a generation gap?

Wedwick--There was a communication problem, but it was due to postal mix-up and not communicating earlier than we did in order to know what to expect before he arrived. The open scaffolding of the set, for example, was never mentioned in his correspondence. Communication-wise, we muddled through it. There were times that I didn't want him to communicate with me. It always meant that there was something else to do.

DeVore-- There was no communication to me by anyone about anything before he arrived. If there had been more communication before he arrived a lot of the problems could have been avoided. I know, because I have worked with professional guest directors before. If they are handled properly, they can offer an excellent learning experience.

5. What did you think of the over-all production as a learning experience?

Wedwick--I wasn't in it for a learning experience.

DeVore-- I learned how to make pleats when I was seven years old. I wanted to be above to observe his directing techniques, too. I would have liked to have had an opportunity to have learned from him, but the opportunity was not there.
Newell-- We needed seminars to understand what he wanted. I was not pleased with what we ended up with.

Gibson-- It is insane to look back and think about the many times we stayed up all night working on a piece of music only to have Takis refuse it the next day. But I couldn't respect him if he hadn't demanded that quality.

6. Discuss what you consider to be unique traits of Muzenidis as a director.

DeVore-- He had a tremendous knowledge of all aspects of theatre. He knew how to use costumes to work for his advantage as well as the actors. He was very caring and understanding outside the theatre; but inside, he was only concerned with the final product and how to get it.

Wedwick-- He refused to realize that we are not full-time theatre people. We have personal obligations. We didn't have a paid costume staff of fifteen people. I guess the biggest problem was that he was used to another world.

7. If you had the opportunity to work with Muzenidis again, would you do it?

Wedwick-- No. Only in improved conditions. There would have to be a full-time staff and the students and faculty would have to give their support.

Gibson-- I think it would be an honor to have an opportunity to work with him again.
APPENDIX E

CONTEXT OF NARRATION EXPLAINING TRILOGY

THE ORESTIAN TRILOGY

by

AESCHYLUS

Written 2434 years ago

The Oresteia is the story of a royal family in the process of destroying itself due to a hereditary curse.

Thyestes, father of Aegisthus, who is not the lover of Queen Clytemnestra, mother of Orestes and Electra, had lain with the wife of his brother, Atreus, who is the father of the king of the city, Agamemnon. To avenge Thyestes' act, Atreus slew Thyestes' sons and served them to him at a feast. When Thyestes learned what had happened, he cursed his brother's race. This is the legend which Aeschylus used as raw material for his master work.

The Trilogy of Orestia is composed of three plays:

FIRST PLAY:

AGAMEMNON

In order for the Greek fleet to sail safely to Troy, their leader, Agamemnon, was forced to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia.
During Agamemnon's absence, Clytemnestra, his wife, plotted her revenge for this act. When Agamemnon returns victorious from the Trojan War accompanied by his slave, the prophetess Cassandra, daughter of the Trojan King, Clytemnestra pretends to greet him affectionately. Later, however, with the help of her lover, Aegisthus, she murders Agamemnon with an axe.

SECOND PLAY:
THE LIBATION BEARERS

The events in the play occur about seven years after those in Agamemnon.

Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, returns from exile to his home to avenge his father's death. Clytemnestra, Orestes' mother, is plagued by a terrifying nightmare of a coming disaster -- her death at the hands of her son.

THIRD PLAY:
THE EUMENIDES

These events take place a few days after the closing of The Libation Bearers.

With the Furies constantly tormenting him, Orestes seeks refuge at Delphi and later in Athens. The Furies insist that Orestes be punished for matricide.

A special court is convened by Athena to hear and judge Orestes' case. Orestes is acquitted. This decision transforms the Furies into benevolent spirits.

A triumphant procession closes the trilogy.
APPENDIX F

PROGRAM FOR THE LIBATION BEARERS

THE LIBATION BEARERS

North Texas State University Theatre

March 5, 6, 8, 9 at 8 p.m.
March 7 at 2 p.m.
1975-76 Fine Arts Series
and
North Texas State University
Division of Drama
presents
THE LIBATION BEARERS
by Aeschylus
(presented without intermission)
directed by
Takis Muzenidis
Director (retired), National Theatre of Greece

CAST
(in order of appearance)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Cast Member</th>
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<tr>
<td>Messenger</td>
<td>James Merrill Rollins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clytemnestra</td>
<td>Cathy Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendants of Clytemnestra</td>
<td>Beth Markowitz, Pat Young</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aegisthus</td>
<td>Bob Alexander, David Hansen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agamemnon</td>
<td>Pete Vansyckle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra</td>
<td>Velva Carter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soldiers of Agamemnon</td>
<td>Ross Brady, David Gutierrez, Skip Ruff, Richard Skiles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orestes/Pylades</td>
<td>Dan Brantley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td>Cranston Dodds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electra</td>
<td>Karen Page Kalmbach</td>
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<td>Servant</td>
<td>Larry Cook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celissa</td>
<td>Pam Evans</td>
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<td>Slaves</td>
<td>Tim Bennett, Russell Buonesera, Richard Duhon, James Merrill Rollins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furies</td>
<td>Cheryl Brown, Jean Cowsar, Becky Guy, Jean Hampleman, Brita Harringer, Shirley Hernandez, Silva Meiss</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athena</td>
<td>Joanna Odom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trumpeter</td>
<td>Clint Cox</td>
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APPENDIX F

PROGRAM FOR THE LIBATION BEARERS

TAKIS MUZENIDIS

Guest Director Takis Muzenidis draws from a rich background of theatre training and performance. His long career as Director of the National Theatre of Greece has earned him recognition throughout the world. A native of Trebizonde, Turkey, he first studied law at Athens University. He then studied drama, art history, history of theatre and psychology at the Universities of Hamburg and Berlin.

In addition to serving as Professor of Acting at the State Academy of Theatre Arts in Greece since 1938, Muzenidis also has founded and directed the Greek School for Musical Theatre. Recognized internationally as an authority on Greek theatre, he also has achieved a long list of credits from the works of such diverse dramatists as Brecht, Ibsen, O'Neill, Kafka, Shaw and Strinberg.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Designer/Technical Director Daryl M. Wedwick
Costume Designers Brenda DeVore, David Newell
Music Composers John Gibson, Ken Bales
Choreographer Jean Cowsar
Assistant Director/Faculty Advisor David L. Evans
Assistant Director Danny Rogers
Stage Manager Mark Davis
Assistant Stage Manager Michael Loggins

PRODUCTION CREWS

Costumes Robin Abb, Debi Anderson, Paula Gage, David Hansen, April Hendricks, Sabrina Johnson, Beth Markowitz, Glynn Ann Miller, David David Newell, Jan Parten, Jim Rollins, Skip Ruff, Barb Schulze, Debbie Jo Rollins, Bob Alexander, Brenda Devore, Costume Design Class, the Chorus.
Construction Mark Baltazar, Val Chisholm, Monty Bintliff, Patricia Tippery, Doug Walk, Kip Poarch, Steve Underwood, Mark Kennedy, Randy Fields, Jim Villarreal, George Danielson, John Maruca, Stagecraft Class
Lights John Bode, Rusty Hunt, Dan Macejak, Barb Shulze
Make-up Arlene Thompson, Diane Golihar, Roger Smith, Jada Scroggins, Glenn Warren
Properties Barbara Fletcher
Publicity Shelby Hager, Daniel Chisholm, Monty Goodson, Susan Read
House/Box Office Jo Hudson, Greg Farnsworth, Paul Moore, Rusty Hann, Byron Buchanan, Jennifer Lewis
Sound John Gibson, Ken Bales
The cast and crew of The Libation Bearers would like to invite you to share in the celebration of the establishment of justice by singing with us at the end of the show.

JUSTICE AND MERCY FOR ALL RULE THE EARTH,
JUSTICE AND MERCY FOR ALL,
AND PEACE REIGNS OVER MANKIND NOW,
AND PEACE REIGNS FOR US NOW.
APPENDIX G

CORRESPONDENCE WITH TAKIS MUZENIDIS
Dear Sir,

As you will observe from my enclosed biography, I have been working and studying for the past thirty years theoretically and practically in the theatre and I have specialized in the field of Ancient Drama. For the past fifteen years I have been consistently giving lectures and courses, as guest professor on the topic of the Ancient Greek Theatre at most of the intellectual centers of Europe.

In 1965 I was invited as guest professor to teach for three months at the Department of Dramatic Art at the University of California, Berkeley, where, in addition to having my program of classes and giving public lectures, I also directed the "Antigone" by Sophocles with the students of the Drama department and presented this tragedy in Berkeley's open Hearst Greek Theatre.

From that point I became professor at the Study Center of Classical Drama of the University of California at Delphi and Athens for two consecutive school years, and I directed with the American Students of the Study Center "Rhesus" by Euripides at the Ancient theatre of Delphi. Because of the political situation the Study Center has stopped functioning since 1968. In 1972 I directed the "Lysistrata" by Aristophanes at the Dallas Theatre Center.

I am intending to visit the United States from January through April of 1975 and during the same period in 1976, and I would very much like:

a) to give, either a limited or extensive series of lectures at your department, and
b) perhaps eventually if you wish me to direct one tragedy of comedy in your University Theatre.

I have at my disposal 8mm. color films from performances of ancient tragedies, under my direction, from the official Festival of Epidaurus, plus 150 slides from performances of ancient tragedy taken from various countries which clearly give the initiative of the endeavors put forth for the interpretation on ancient drama from various directors with different interpretations.

Please inform me if you are interested in my proposal in the time span that I have mentioned above, and please let me know the exact period that you prefer.

My honorarium for each lasting one and one-half hours with slides and film projections is 300 dollars.

The subjects of my lectures are the follows:

- a) Problems of the modern interpretation of Ancient Drama,
- b) The Chorus,
- c) The Music,
- d) The Acting,
- e) The Theatrical space,
- f) The Love in the Ancient Drama,
- g) The influence of Ancient Drama on modern theatre,
- h) The interpretation of Attic Comedy,
- i) The absurd in Ancient Drama.

Five Universities have already accepted my proposal and I am ready to arrange my program and my cycle of lectures, therefore, I would be very much obliged if you could answer me as soon as possible.

Respectfully and thankfully yours,

Takis Muzenidis
November 26, 1974

Mr. Takis Musinidri, Director
NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE
10, Marni Street
Athens 160, Greece

Dear Mr. Musinidri:

We received your letter of November 5, 1974 and are very interested in exploring the possibilities of your coming to North Texas State University in the Spring of 1976 to direct a production.

As a former graduate of the Dallas Theatre Center, I was "out working" when you directed Lysistrata there, but I did have the opportunity to see that fine production and talk with Mr. Behr and the students involved. They all spoke highly of you as a Director, an Artist, a Scholer, and an Individual.

North Texas State University is located in Denton, Texas, forty miles North of Dallas. We have 15,000 students on campus and a Division of Drama with 200 students in classes. Of course, all of these are not actors or technicians, some are teachers in training and/or students interested in playwriting or children's theatre, etc. We have a beautiful two million dollar theatre plant with continental-type seating and a proscenium opening of fifty feet, plus side stages much like the Dallas Theatre Center.

Our production budget is very limited but our students make up for this with their sincere desire to learn and to work. We have excellent shop, costume, and dressing facilities.

I do not know what specific financial and physical arrangements you are considering, but we could provide a room and meals in campus housings as well as play around with $1,500.00 salary for a month's stay on campus to direct a Greek play as a part of our regular Drama and Fine Arts Series.
I think you would find directing in Denton a rewarding experience. Our students are mostly undergraduates but are eager to learn and do need the exposure to a man of your talent and reputation.

Please let me hear from you if you are interested. I am enclosing brochures about North Texas State University and the Drama and Fine Arts Programs here.

Cordially,

Carl J. Harder III
Director of Division of Drama

Encl

CJM: tb

BCC: Dr. Dorothy Pijon
MEMORANDUM

TO:        DR. DOROTHY FJIAN, DIRECTOR
            PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

FROM:      DR. CARL J. MARSH III, DIRECTOR
            DIVISION OF DRAMA

RE:        REPORT ON MEETING WITH TAKIS MANOSIDIS, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL
            THEATRE OF GREECE

DATE:      FEBRUARY 13, 1975

I would like to set forth a definite proposal that Mr. Takis Manosidis be contracted to come as an "artist-in-residence" to North Texas State University to work with Drama, Dance, Music, and Art students for one month preparing a Dramatic Production for the benefit of the total university community as a part of the 1975-76 Fine Arts Series.

Mr. Manosidis is one of the leading directors of classical theatre in the world. His credentials (attached) obviously attest to his international reputation. To have an artist of his caliber and prestige living on campus, available to all students for four weeks would be an outstanding contribution of the Fine Arts Committee. Mr. Manosidis fee is normally out-of-reach for our financial needs, but as his U.S. visit is being somewhat underwritten, he is able to offer his services at a phenomenally low rate. His sincere interest in the American College Student, also leads him to agree to living in Crumley Hall and eating in campus cafeterias while here in order that he may have personal contact with many young people.

Mr. Manosidis proposes directing a classical Greek play which will by theme enhance the Bicentennial celebration of our nation next year. He wishes to use a choreographer and Dancers (Modern Dance) from the Division of Dance, composers and instrumentalists from the School of Music, artists (sculptors) from the Department of Art and actor technicians from the Division of Drama.

His fee is $1,500.00 (four weeks on campus) paid out of Fine Arts money. He requests campus (Crumley) housing and meals for himself and his 23 year old daughter who travels with him. She is a recognized actress in the Greek National Theatre (paid out of Fine Arts money). He is available to our campus between October 15-November 15, 1975. (The Division of Drama will absorb all production costs.)

As our university is striving for national recognition, this opportunity is certainly in line with this goal. For a minimal fee this
this type of personal contact over a period of four weeks will
certainly proportionally balance large cost programs brought to

campus for one performance.

Mr. Musonidis requests a contract agreement by March 1, 1975.

Carl J. Mordor III

Enc

CJMth
March 12, 1975

3/13/75
AIR MAIL
SPECIAL DELIVERY

Mr. Takis Muzenidis
c/o Mr. George Christoutoularis
115 E. 9th Street
Apt. #5
New York, N. Y. 10003

Dear Mr. Muzenidis:

In response to our telephone conversation March 11 I would
like to extend an offer which would bring you to North Texas State
University, Denton, Texas, in the spring of 1976. This is an
unofficial offer at this time but, if acceptable to you, we will
then put this into an official and formal contractual agreement.

We would like you to come to North Texas State University
in Denton and reside on campus and direct a classical Greek play in
our University Theatre, using our students from the areas of Drama,
Dance, Music and Art in production work and as performers.

We, because of our academic calendar, would like you to be
on campus February 8 through March 9 (31 calendar days). We will
pay you a resident artist fee of $1,500.00, plus provide housing and
meals on campus for you and your daughter.

The choice of the play will be decided on by mutual agreement,
and we will have available students of dance, a student composer and
instrumentalists, art students for costume and set design purposes, and
drama students to function in technical and acting capacities.

Casting can begin February 8 and rehearsals immediately
following. Rehearsal may be scheduled all day weekends and after
4:00 P.M. on week days. Rehearsals can last from 4 to midnight, if
necessary. Production dates would be scheduled March 5 (Friday)
through March 9 (Tuesday). Production costs are estimated at no
more than $1,500.00.

We need a concrete answer from you no later than April 15,
1975, in order to set up our Production Budget and Calendar.
I hope we can have a person of your talent and artistic ability with us next year. It would be a stimulating experience for our faculty and students.

I feel you would be happy with area, as you have many friends and fans in Dallas.

Cordially,

CARL J. MARDER III
Director
Division of Drama
Dear Mr. Marder,

In answering your letter of March 12, I am pleased to inform you that I accept all the terms mentioned in it. The only term which I cannot estimate is the production costs, mentioned in your letter, because I am not familiar with the costs of such a production in an University-Theatre. Anyway, I think that is not possible to provide new costumes for the leading parts, the Chorus-members and the attendents, that means for, approximately, 30 to 35 costumes, within the mentioned amount.

Please be so kind as to send me, as soon as possible, the official contractual agreement. My aforesaid mentioned acceptance of your unofficial offer would have its full value until the 15th of May 1975.

Hoping to hear from you soon,

Cordially

Takis Muzenidis
April 30, 1975

Mr. Takis Muzenidis, Director
NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE
10, Marni Street
Athens 103, Greece

Dear Mr. Muzenidis:

The Fine Arts Committee, in cooperation with the academic disciplines of Drama, Dance, Music and Art, would like to extend to you a formal and official offer to come to North Texas State University in Denton, Texas, to reside on campus and direct a classical Greek play in our University Theatre, working with N.T.S.U. students from the areas of Dance, Music, Drama, and Art in production work and as performers.

We invite you to arrive on campus Sunday, February 8, 1976, and remain through Tuesday, March 9, 1976 (31 calendar days). The Fine Arts Committee will pay you a resident artist fee of $1,500.00, and provide housing and meals in campus housing and cafeteria for you and your daughter, who we understand travels with you.

The choice of the play to be produced during your stay on campus will be selected by you from one of the three listed below:

1. Choephori and Eumenides (Aeschylus) (together on one bill)
2. The Birds (Aristophanes)
3. Peace (Aristophanes)

I remind you, our season's theme is concerned with the Bicentennial Celebration of the U.S.A. Also, we have more female performers in drama and dance than male.

Students will be available to dance, compose, serve as instrumentalists, design and construct scenery, costumes, properties and lighting, act and serve as technical and production crews, including special assistants to the director.

Casting can begin February 8, and rehearsal immediately following. Rehearsals may be scheduled all day weekends and after 4:00 P.M. on week days. Rehearsals can last from 4 to midnight, when necessary. Production dates will be Friday, March 5, through Tuesday, March 9 (5 performances).
Production costs, which includes all costs in constructing scenery, properties, costumes, lighting, programs and posters, and cost for reproducing musical scores, cannot exceed $1,500.00, which is to be paid out of the Division of Drama budget. (In lieu of explanation concerning production cost, all stock equipment and materials in the theatre are available for use at no charge--i.e., lighting instruments and gelatins, some sewing materials, some lumber and paint, etc.)

The designs and executions of the scenery, costumes, lights and musical scores are subject to your approval within the limitations of our university staff and students' abilities. Scenery and costume designs will be submitted to you by December 1, 1975, and must be approved by you by January 15, 1976, in order to be completed by first dress rehearsal on March 2. To meet these deadlines we must in turn have your basic ideas, thoughts, and production concepts about the play by October 1, 1975. It would be most helpful if you could give us an indication of musical style. Our Music School has an exciting electronic music area. We recognize costume fittings cannot be accomplished until after casting on February 8. Therefore, designs must be conceived with construction time and budget in mind.

We are pleased to invite a gentleman of your talents and reputation to our campus. With your many friends and fans in this geographical area we feel you will find added pleasure.

We are enclosing two copies of this letter which we consider an official contract. Please sign, date and return one copy to us by June 1, 1975. Also, if possible, at this same time we would like a decision on which play you will be directing so that we can have a Season Brochure printed.

Cordially,

CARL J. MARDER III
Director, Division of Drama

CJM:bas

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:

Takis Muzenidis

(dated)
Dear Mr. Marder,

Thank you for your letter of April 30.

I am sending you the signed copy and I would like to express my pleasure for this collaboration.

Play: I prefer the double-bill Choephoroi - Eumenides.

Casting: In order to reach a better result I must have two separate women-chorus, one for the Choephoroi consisting from 15 girls and one second for the Eumenides consisting from 19 girls (plus the second women chorus at the very end of the Eumenides, which can be formed by the members of the chorus of the Choephoroi). The Erinyes (Furies) chorus is very difficult and needs much more rehearsals. In the above proposed way, we will have two schedules of chorus-training, each one lasting 5 hours per day. But we need different rehearsal-rooms (2), and two choreographers.

Translations: I have already the following translations in my personal library:

a) Paul Roche, The Orestes Plays of Aeschylus, A Mentor Book, 1962
b) George Thomson, The Oresteia trilogy, The Laurel Classical Drama, 1965

(c) Philip Vellacott, The Oresteian trilogy, Penguin Books, 1956

(d) Richmond Lattimore, Aeschylus I., A modern library book, 1942

and now I will try to find other translations too, in order to make the best selection. If you have other translations please send it to me as soon as possible.

Music: Considering the chorus as the main element of the Greek Tragedy, I need to have the music of the lyrical parts (the odes) from the beginning of the rehearsals. I prefer the electronic music but we need several melodies for the singing parts. After the selection of the translation, I will be able to send to you my directorial notes in details for the composers. It is worthy to have two separate composers for the two plays. The first one must have more capacities in the lyrical (singing) parts and the second one more abilities for the dancing and rhythmic music.

Scenaries: In order to send you a detailed outline for the scenaries, (there will be three designs, one for the Choephoroi and two for the Eumenides), I need to have as soon as possible:

a) The ground plan of the main-stage and the side-stage. The exact dimensions (width, depth, proscenium, and height)

b) A plan of the stage and the auditorium in connection and relation.

c) A picture of the interior of the Theatre.

The designer will have full instructions from me.

On the 30th of May I will leave for Berlin for ten days (XVI Congress of the I.T.I.) and then for another 15 days for Warsaw (Poland) for the season of the Theatre of the Nations. The program of the performances in Warsaw is very exciting.

Please write me in my Athens address. The post will reach me abroad.

Cordially

Takis Muzenidis
Comments from Dr. Wedwick: (for Takis Muzenidis)

Enclosed are blueprints of our University Theatre. On the floor plan the stage area is indicated by the blue outline; the auditorium by the brown outline. Flanking the proscenium arch are areas labeled "upper level oper." on the floor plan. These areas consist of 3 decks, each 8'-0" in height and each level has four doors. Each of these doors can be opened parallel to the proscenium arch, as shown on the plan, or they can be opened completely covering the adjacent door. The section view gives another view of said areas. However, unless the doors are opened completely, anyone standing in such areas is not visible to most of the audience.

The removable apron consists of a number of platforms which can be adjusted to form a variety of configurations within the indicated space.

Our proscenium curtain operates either vertically or horizontally.

The proscenium arch is 45'-0" wide and 24'-0" high. From stage floor to grid is 65'-0". Due to the width of the auditorium, we are frequently confronted with masking problems on the sides of the stage. Other dimensions are indicated on the floor plan.

I have also enclosed a diagram of our electrical circuit locations, in case that may be of any help to you.
August 29, 1975

Mr. Takis Muzenidis, Director
NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE
10, Marni Street
Athens 103, Greece

Dear Mr. Muzenidis:

Thank you for your pictures for publicity purposes. As the semester gets underway at North Texas everyone concerned becomes more and more excited about your arrival and your directing.

You mentioned in your letter that I had not responded to all of the questions in your May 13 correspondence. Please let me pass on the following responses.

You say that you would like two separate women chorus, which would total 34 females. I assume at this point that we will have 34 females available. I cannot vouch for all of their dramatic ability. Two separate rehearsal periods and places for these chorus groups will be no problem for us.

You did say you would need two choreographers, and I am not sure exactly what would be expected of these two people. Our dance division tells me that dancers are available, but they cannot guarantee that any of the dancers are capable choreographers.

Next, any of the translations that you mentioned for the plays are acceptable. I have no other suggestions.

In consideration of your comments about the music, as soon as we receive your directorial notes for the composers I will make direct contact with the music department.

I have passed on your request concerning three separate set designs to our designer/technical director, and he is awaiting further instruction from you.

Thank you for your willingness to be in Denton on February 6 in order to speak to the Texas Educational Theatre Association in Dallas. I will contact you more specifically about this later this fall.

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you.

Cordially,

CARL J. MARDER III
Director, Division of Drama

CJM:bas
Dear Mr. Marder,

Thank you for your letter of August 29.

In order to be able to give the necessary instructions for the music, we have to choose definitely the translation. As I wrote you in my letter 13-5-45, I had in that time the following translations:

a) P. Roche: The Orestes plays of A., Mentor Book 1962
b) G. Thomson: The Oresteia trilogy, Laureal clas, drama 1965
c) F. Vellacott: The Oresteian Trilogy, Penguin 1956
d) R. Lattimore: Aeschylus I, Modern Library 1942

In the meantime I had the opportunity to examine the following translations too:

e) T. A. Buckley: The tragedies of Aeshylos, Belland and sons 1876 and the new edition-translation by G. Burges, American Book Comp.
f) L. Cambell: The seven plays in English, Oxford pr. 1923
g) S. Blackie: The lyrical dram. of A., Everyman Library 1936
h) W. Smyth: Agamemnon, Libation bearers and Eumenides, Loeb clas. 1957
i) A. Swanwick: The dramas of A., Bell and Dady 1873
j) G. Warr: The Oresteia of A., George Allan 1928
k) Gilbert Marrey: Aeslylos, G. Allen 1928
l) John Lewin: The house of Atreus, Minnesota Univ. 1966

From all those translations I prefer the last one done by John Lewin. This is a free adaptation rather than a true translation made for the well known production of Tyron Guthrie in Minnesota, who had taken care of the version for the stage.

Next to this, I prefer the translation by Prof. of Greek in the Univ. of Birmingham George Thomson, a very well known scholar, who has published the famous books Aeslylos and Athens and the Oresteia in two volumes with an introduction and commentary, edited first by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague and then by Adolf Hakkert in Amsterdam 1966.

This one is a true translation by a scholar but who is not a poet as well.

So finally, I propose the adaptation by John Lewis (Minnesota Drama Editio Nr. 2, Tyron Guthrie editor, Minneapolis – The University of Minnesota press in association with the Minesota Theatre Company).

This adaptation has well made cuts, is clear and intelligible, has a certain poetical value and the language is modern and theatrical.
Please check this last translation-adaptation and let me know your opinion, so that I may start working on it. I need a two weeks time to prepare my instructions for the composer. If you agree with me, please order the needed books.

As for the set-designs I will send you some sketches before I leave Athens, first for Sofia - Bulgarie, where I shall have a few rehearsals to refresh my production of Elektra by Euripides, produced three years ago at the National Theatre of Bulgaria and which is still on the program. They have performed the play 53 times in a full house of 1200 spectators.

I will leave Athens for Sofia on the 2 of October and I will be back on the 15 of October. Next to this trip and around the 15th of November I will have a cycle of six lectures at the University of Vienna (Theaterwissenschaftliches Institut).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Cordially

Takis Muzenidis
Mr. Carl J. Marder III  
Director, Division of Drama  
North Texas State University  
Denton, Texas  

Dear Mr. Marder,

This is to ask you kindly for the following subject:
In order to receive from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs a free air-plain ticket Athens-Dallas-Athens, I need to have a written invitation from your Department testifying that "I am invited to direct an ancient greek Drama (Libation Bearers and Eumenides by Aeskylos), to lecture on the same subject and to discuss with you on the coming publication of the periodical THESPIS, and that the University will cover all my living expenses during my stay in Texas".

The invitation-letter has to be send to me personally, without mentioning any honorarium.

On the 8th of October I will leave for Sofia in order to direct some refreshing rehearsals of my production of Elektra by Euripides which I have presented three years ago at the National Youth Theatre of Bulgaria and it is still on the schedule. On the 20th of October I have to go to Cyprus and then to Vienna for lectures.

Hoping to hear from you soon

Cordially

Takis Muzenidis  
Athens  
25-9-75
November 11, 1975

Mr. Takis Muzenidis, Director
NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE
10, Marni Street
Athens 103, Greece

Dear Mr. Muzenidis:

As the faculty designer at North Texas State University, I will be designing and building the sets for The Libation Bearers and Eumenides. We met only briefly during your visit last spring, and I have not yet had the opportunity to get the benefit of your thinking regarding the sets and lights for the two shows.

I would appreciate receiving any suggestions you may have regarding the sets and lights as soon as possible. In order for me to return designs to you by December 15, I would like to hear from you by December 1 regarding at least your general concepts of the two productions. Floor plans, some indications of acting areas or patterns of movement, or any sketches or indications of style of designs would also be welcome.

I am looking forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

DARYL M. WEDWICK, Ph.D.
Designer/Technical Director
Asst. Professor

DMW:bas
Dear Mr. Nedwick,

Thank you for your kind letter of November IIth.

I am sending you a handy plan of the synthetic set of both plays. The changes, if necessary, will be with some additional pieces. As you may imagine (due to my bad art of painting), I would like to have something alluding the ancient Theatre, but in an abstract way. The radius (the section of seats) are set as usual symmetric. There are more or less broken stones placed here and there, in various sizes and forms. I would like to have the disector and the irregularity into a regular shape.

The stage design must not give an impression; neither naturalistic nor realistic. Everything must be conventional and abstract. My plan is made according to the printed plan of the architects: Caudill Peixot Scott of Texas, and has the same dimensions.

The stage-area A has an inclination (escalivity) of 15 cm. a meter (see plan II).

The removable arrow B has also an inclination of 3 cm. a meter (see plan II a, b, c. three steps each 15 cm. Right D and E are two passages with inclinations leading to the back-stage (see plans II and III).

F is an opening, like door without shutter of door.

G are passages.

H is a very clear colored circle imitating the circular orchestra of the ancient theatre.

K is a circular horizon.

The height of the section of seats will be no more than 2 meters. And in the middle of the radius at the background, I would like to have the possibility to present the ghost of Clytemnestra in the second play, coming up by an elevator.

According to this primitive plan I would like to have, if it is possible, the stage-design in colour.
As you are familiar with the conditions of the stage in Denton, you may propose any necessary alteration. Having in mind that I will leave Athens first for Vienna and then for Paris on the 10th of January, please be so kind as to send me your proposal as soon as possible. I am extremely excited about my coming in Denton and work with you and I look forward to hearing about your design ideas.

Cordially

Takis Muzenidis
Athens 26-II-75

Dear Mr. Harder,

I sent yesterday a letter to Mr. Wedwick, concerning the sets. Enclosed you will find a copy of that letter and three copies of three outlines. I am anxious for the music. I must have it as soon as possible in order to be able to send new instructions.

My schedule has been changed because of some news obligations here in Athens. I will leave on the 10th of January for Vienna and Paris and I suppose to reach New York on the 1st of February 1976.

As every year I need a Visa for my coming in USA. In the past, the University in which I had to stay longer than in the other University in the same year, provided me this invitation-visa, through the authorities in your states. This visa has to be send from your authorities to the American embassy in Athens. Please be so kind as to come in contact with the authorities there, in order to arrange this theme and let me know the results as soon as possible.

According to my Passport of service: Theodore Mouzenidis, father's name Kyriakos, Netteure en scène, born 1911. Time span of my stay in USA: from the 1st of February to the 31 of March 1976. Number of Passport 5695-9-73, permanent address: Marni 10, Athens 103, Greece. Tel. 8231005

Cordially yours

Takis Mouzenidis
December 9, 1975

Mr. Takis Muzenidis, Director
NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE
10, Marni Street
Athens 103, Greece

Dear Mr. Muzenidis:

Enclosed is a floor plan and color rendering. The sketches you sent were extremely helpful to me and your concept of the set is an exciting one.

However, considering the factors of time and money (primarily the latter) I must strongly recommend two changes. First, using the flat stage floor, rather than an inclined floor. This would also apply to the apron area. My color rendering assumes a flat floor. We could possibly imply an incline by sloping ramps in all entrances--A and B on the floor plan. I am afraid the cost of an inclined floor is prohibitive, although I agree completely with the design concept. Second, there is not presently a curved sky cyclorama or horizon, nor the apparatus to hang one here at North Texas.

The color rendering shows the set in shades of brown. My reason for choosing browns is that the proscenium is wood and will tie in nicely with the browns. However, it may be that this may convey too "warm" an atmosphere for the two plays. The circular orchestra is delineated with the light brown and the remainder of the floor will be a darker color. Perhaps it would help to define the circular area on the apron by means of placing some broken segments along the edges, as shown on one side of the rendering.

I do have some questions regarding your use of the set. Will you be placing actors on the "seat" sections on the stage? Will Clytemnestra's ghost rise from within the upstage "seat" section or can we plan for her to rise from behind it? As these matters will have a bearing on my plans for the construction of the set, I would appreciate your answers by mid-January. Any other suggestions you may have will also be welcome.
If you would have no further use for my color rendering after the shows close in March, I would like to keep it for my portfolio.

It is my understanding that Dr. Marder will be in touch with you shortly concerning the music and costumes.

I am looking forward to meeting you in Denton.

Sincerely,

DARYL M. WEDWICK, Ph.D.
To: Mr. Carl J. Nader III

Subject: Visa Requirements and Travel Plans

Dear Mr. Nader,

Along with my greetings for the New Year, I would like to come back on the three points that I mentioned in my previous letters.

A - As you already know, I will leave Athens, definitely, on the 10th of January 1976 in order to visit first Vienna and then Paris. I plan to be in New York - not on the 1st of February, as I wrote you - but on the 5th of February in order to reach Denton on the 6th for the meeting of the 7th February. Accordingly, I must have the USA visa, as soon as possible, as I wrote you on the 26th of November. Attached you will find the copy of this my letter. The visa for my stay of 55 days (5 February to 31 of March 1976) must be sent to your Embassy here in Athens. Please let me know by cable the sending of the visa.

B - I have not yet the compositions for the musical parts. I sent my instructions two months ago.

C - On the 23-II-75 I sent you and to Mr. Wedwick instructions concerning the set. I have not yet any reply.

Please take under consideration that because of the holidays the Embassy will be closed and the post very busy.

Referring upon you for an immediate action on these three points,

I remain cordially yours,

[Signature]

Takis Muzenidis

Athens 14-12-75
January 14, 1976

Mr. Takis Muzenidis, Director
NATIONAL THEATRE OF GREECE
C/o De Wargny
3 Place Wagram
5 me etage
Paris 75017

Dear Mr. Muzenidis,

I have been asked by Dr. Marder to act as your faculty advisor and assistant director while you are here to direct for us. Preparations are underway, and excitement is growing with the nearness of your arrival.

In order to make things go more smoothly upon your arrival, perhaps we can set some audition procedures so that the students will know how to prepare. For instance, would you prefer cold readings or prepared auditions? Will the students need to make preparations for vocal or dance auditions? You may use a try-out form of your own, or we will supply our standard form. If there are any preparations I can make beforehand, I will be glad to oblige.

Concerning your letter of January 7, 1976, Dr. Wedwick mailed a floor plan and color rendering on December 9, 1975. Hopefully, it is just late getting there, but just in case you will find enclosed copies of both. John Gibson, in charge of music, said he mailed you the music yesterday. He mailed it to the Paris address.

Dr. Marder said to tell you that "actual producing problems with regard to the classical dramas" would be of greatest interest for the convention. He said that 30 minutes would be appropriate.

I am looking forward to meeting you personally and working with you on a very exciting production.

Sincerely,

DAVID L. EVANS

DLE:bas
Dear Mr. Muzenidis,

With this letter I am enclosing photo-copies of the original costume plates. All of these designs are based on how I have pictured the characters after reading the script and your correspondencies with the department. Of course, I welcome any comments, alterations, or changes to the designs from you. Connected to each plate are swatches of material that we are considering using. I have discussed the color scheme with both Dr. Marder and Dr. Wedwick, both seem to agree with a black and white color scheme played against a brown set.

In the photo-copy process the black was lost in the plates, so the areas with a hazy black line are areas that are solid black on the original plates. These areas are mostly confined to capes and patterns on the material.

Orestes: An ankle-length white skirt that is belted double at the waist. The skirt is cut full for easy movement and draping. Over this, a full black cape that possibly trails. The cape is caught at the front with a double clasp and yoke.

Electra: A full-length empire waisted gown with a train. The bodice may have bead work or a pattern. Over this she wears a knee length black cape and some type of jewel work.

Chorus: Both female chorus lines wear identical costumes. The black set will be those in mourning. They wear full-length skirts and a hip-length cape. So hair styles will match, I have pur all the chorus in braided turbans.

Clytemnestra: A very full and high-waisted gown with a standing ruff. The sleeves are very full and caught at the elbow with a ruffle. For her appearance as a ghost she may wear the same gown with a grey veil or the same gown in grey.

Furies: A simple dark grey bikini brief with a patterned grey overskirt. The curly waist and head pieces are of curled paper.

Apollo: A pleated multi-length skirt that repeats the yoke and shield pattern. Over this a full black cape with a train.

Athena: A very flowy white gown with a trailing white cape. Her helmet is topped with a feather that trails down her back and is the same length as the cape.

I am looking forward to meeting you and working under your direction.

Sincerely,

David Newell
Mr. David Evans  
Division of Drama  
North Texas State Univ.  
Denton - Texas

Dear Mr. Evans,
Thank you for your letter of January 14 which I received to-day.  
I am asking to

a-order enough books of the translation for the whole cast and  
the Chorus-leaders

b-make copies from all the chorus-songs for the Chorus-members

I prefer the prepared auditions
I have not received neither the original letter (9-12-75) of Dr. Wedwick, nor  
the colored rendering.
Please be so kind as to informe Dr. Wedwick on the following:
1-The flat floor will cause bad impressions of the setting and problems for the  
mise en place of the Chorus.
2- As I have not the colored rendering I prefer to discuse the colours in Dento  
3- I will like to have a plastic and colored Model of the setting
4- I will have actors and Chorus members in the seat sections
5- Clytemnestra's ghost rise from within the upstage "seat" section.

Please informe Mr. Marder that I will arrive in Dallas-airport on the  
6th of February by AA 249 at 17.42 -  

Looking forward to meeting you

Sincerely

Takis Muzenidis
Dear David:

Thank you for your Letter. I was for a while abroad. Unfortunately I have not anythink ready on my background. The only written material is my Biographical notes. I am sending you one. Please be so kind as to send me some photographes of our performance as many as possible. I asked Mr. Marder and Mrs. Felicitas but without success. It is necessary to have them because of various international publications. If it is a matter of expenses I am ready to cover them in my next visit in U.S.A.

As you know I will be in Virginia from the 10th of January 1977 until the end of February and perhaps after this period for a stay of five weeks in Texas. I have already an agreement for Texas too, but a new and extremely interesting proposal from Vienna could change this last stay in Texas.

I need also to have the criticisms in the newspaper if there are some, for my file.

I am remembering with pleasur my stay in your campus and our warm collaboration.

My friendly greetings to all of our collaborators, to Mr. Marder and specially to your wife

Cordially yours

Takis Muzenidis

I am veryly interested to read your writing your Master's Thesis.
Dear David,

I am sending you a very handy answer to your questions:

I- It was in 1935. The State Theater of this large city has proclaimed an international competition for one position of an assistant director. Seventeen young artists from different countries took part in this competition. An Englishman descendant of the well-known theatre family, Yeats and myself, were selected by the committee. The famous director, Fehling, had to decide who of both of us will be engaged. After some days of discussions with Fehling, he selected me for the position. And I think because I was without any protection, while my competitor had a lot of well-known personalities in Germany and abroad, who they have overflowed him with letters and telephone calls of recommendations of all kinds.

II- I have been for five years in that first period and later on, two more years.

III- The National Theatre of Greece invited me to come back as director in 1938.

IV- Because of my attitude during the German occupation the Greek quisling government has released me from this position in 1942 through an official legislative order. After that with three of the most well-known actors of the National Theatre, we created an independent company and we had big successes during the two last years of the occupation.

Some years after the deliberation I founded the experimental company "Curtain", starring with the Tempest by Shakespeare and 'Don Carlos' by Schiller. We performed without set-designs and costumes using only some symbolic elements. It was a kind of expressionism and constructivism.

V- Prof. Garff Wilson—at that time, not known to me—Prof. of the Univ. of California has seen a production of mine at the Epidaurus Festival. He recommended me to the Department of Theatre Arts to invite me, and so I was, for the first time in U.S.A. in 1965, directing the Antigone at the open air Greek Theatre of Bergley. After the considerable success of the production, the president of the Univ. of California Prof. Kehr, has accepted my proposal to establish a Campus in Delphi. The Study Center of Classical Drama of the Univ. of California, has been established by an agreement between the Greek Government (Minister of Education and the regents of the Univ. of California. First managing director was Prof. Travis Bogard and I was co-director.

Because of the colonels, the American students denied to continue their participation and so in 1968 we had to stop the operation of the Center.

Since this period I have visited five times the U.S.A. and I had the opportunity to lecture, to direct seminars and to direct plays in
I received: a - The Berkeley Citation. "The Univ. of California, Berkley honors Takis Mzenidis for distinguished achievement and for notable service to the Univ." This was the text of the award, signed by the president in the year of 1970.
b- An "award of excellence presented to T. M. for his direction of Lysistrata - March 1972 at the Dallas Theatre Center."
c- The recognition of the North Texas State Univ. at Denton for "his contribution to the education enrichment and appreciation of the art of Theatre through his production of the Libation Bearers - March 1976."

My last Tour in U.S.A. had the following purposes:
a) To continue my teaching activities in different Univ. in U.S.A., I directed a 10 days seminar at the Dallas Theatre Center and lectured at the Univ. of Texas at Arlington.
b) To produce the Libation Bearers at the North Texas State Univ. at Denton.
and c) To complete my researches concerning the Youth of U.S.A. Since more than four years I am trying to study the psychology and the ideological tendencies of the youth in U.S.A. hoping to be able to write a book on the problem.

In order to come in closer contact with the different Universities and after a recommendation of friends, I wrote to the Department of the MTSU. Mr. Marder had the kindness to answer me on 25 November 1974 saying, among others: "As a former graduate of the Dallas Theatre Center, I was "out working" when you directed Lysistrata there, but I did have the opportunity to see that fine production and talk with Mr. Baker and the students involved. They all spoke highly of you as a director, an Artist, a Scholar and an Individual", and asked me to direct a Greek Drama at Denton. This was the starting point. You know all the rest as close collaborator first of Mr. Marder and then of mine.

My next Tour will begin on October 1976 first by directing a three months seminar on different styles in the theatre at the Theaterwissenschaftlichen Institut of the University of Vienna. On January 10 I will start my rehearsals of Lysistrata at Richmond College - Virginia, and finally in the beginning of March I will direct an ancient Greek Drama at Richland College, Dallas - Texas.

In that period I will have the opportunity to meet you and our friends in Denton.

My warm regards to your wife and to Mr. Marder. I am waiting the photographs of the production.

Cordially yours,
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