PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies

Workshop

Was The Greek Symposion
A Performative Event?

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Respondent: Leonard Barkan, Comparative Literature

In the Greek symposion sociability, pleasure, and wine consumption coexisted with philosophical discourse. The addition of performances (dance, song, acrobatics) together with the symposiasts’ active participation (poetry reciting, game playing) stimulated the senses and accompanied the spiritual process achieved through conversing and drinking. This presentation will question whether the symposion may also be considered as an act of performance - a total performative event in its own right. By taking into consideration the aspects of ritual, representation, and the theatrical components of the symposion, we intend to locate and decipher its performative elements.

Athena Stournas was trained as Scenographer (B.A. Hons., Rose Bruford College) and holds a Maîtrise, D.E.A. and Doctorat in Theatre Studies (Université de Paris III) summa cum laude. She is the author of the monograph La Cuisine à la scène: boire et manger au théâtre du XXe siècle (2011). Since 2005 she teaches Scenography, Theatre History and Directing at various universities in Cyprus and in Greece. As the artistic director of the Okypus Theatre Company, she has directed and designed productions presented in theatres and non-theatrical spaces (museums, archaeological sites) in Greece, the Czech Republic, Wales and Argentina. Athena Stournas has been a research fellow at the Casa de Velázquez/Académie de France à Madrid and a participant in the Mellon School of Theatre and Performance at Harvard University.

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1:30 p.m.
Scheide Caldwell House, Room 103

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