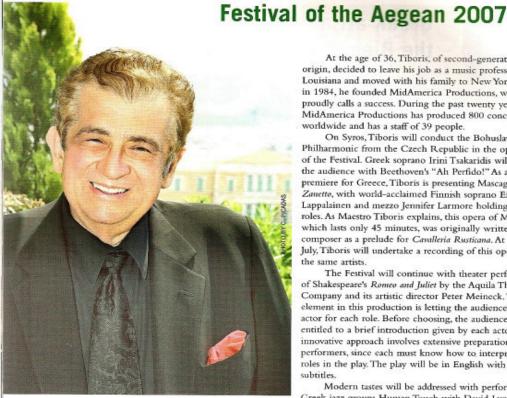
## THE CITY MAGAZINE OF **ATHENS**

## Fast Lane 興血過齡



This summer, Syros will host, for the third time, the Aegean Festival in the stunning Apollo Municipal Theater, also known as La Piccola Scala. Built in 1861, it was Greece's first opera house. However, during most of the past century, it was nothing more than a run-down movie theater. Finally, in the 1990's, the municipality of Syros gave it a much-needed face-lift, restoring it to its old splendor.

We met Peter Tiboris, founder and artistic director of the Aegean Festival, at the roof garden of the Grande Bretagne hotel. As soon as he greeted us, he expressed his enthusiasm for Insider magazine, but conversation quickly turned to the Festival.

Tiboris proudly declared that, with the first Aegean Festival he organized and directed in 2005, the sounds of opera once again pervaded the Piccola Scala with Barbiere de Siviglia.

This year's festival runs from July 11 to 22. It will include opera, jazz and rembetika. The program has been carefully prepared by its artistic director and the staff of his agency, MidAmerica Productions.

At the age of 36, Tiboris, of second-generation Greek origin, decided to leave his job as a music professor in Louisiana and moved with his family to New York. There, in 1984, he founded MidAmerica Productions, which he proudly calls a success. During the past twenty years, MidAmerica Productions has produced 800 concerts worldwide and has a staff of 39 people.

On Syros, Tiboris will conduct the Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic from the Czech Republic in the opening gala of the Festival. Greek soprano Irini Tsakaridis will enchant the audience with Beethoven's "Ah Perfido!" As an opera premiere for Greece, Tiboris is presenting Mascagni's, Zanetto, with world-acclaimed Finnish soprano Eilana Lappalainen and mezzo Jennifer Larmore holding the lead roles. As Maestro Tiboris explains, this opera of Mascagni, which lasts only 45 minutes, was originally written by its composer as a prelude for Cavalleria Rusticana. At the end of July, Tiboris will undertake a recording of this opera with the same artists.

The Festival will continue with theater performances of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet by the Aquila Theater Company and its artistic director Peter Meineck. The novel element in this production is letting the audience choose the actor for each role. Before choosing, the audience will be entitled to a brief introduction given by each actor. This innovative approach involves extensive preparations by the performers, since each must know how to interpret all the roles in the play. The play will be in English with Greek

Modern tastes will be addressed with performances by Greek jazz groups Human Touch with David Lynch, and the Stratos Vougas Jazz Quartet. As the director of the Festival reveals, these jazz performances will be given by musicians of a very high level. A Greek rembetika evening with free entrance will take place in the lovely Miaouli Square of Ermioupolis. And in another innovative move, the group, Taximi, four Greeks based in Sweden, will enchant audiences with Greek music played on ancient instruments.

The Aegean Festival is a big challenge for its founder. Tiboris has recently bought a house on Syros, which will permit him to spend more time there. He admits being extremely lucky and happy about the opportunity that was given to him to create this event. "Syros, for me, is the Salzberg of the Aegean," he says, "and I look forward to the Festival's future growth on this beautiful island."

For further information, consult www.festivaloftheaegean.com or contact Irini Vouzelakou at 210 7016413, vouzelakou@in.gr For ticket reservations, please contact Dimitra Garantzioti at +30.693.248.3079.

