

**INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE POETRY  
BIENNIAL SYMPOSIUM-FESTIVAL (PerPoSF) #1  
(December 6-8, 2024, Greece)**

**Introduction to the Pre-Master Class "Present Poetic Speech: A Method" presented by Yiannis Mitrou at the closing of PerPoSF #1, on Sunday 8 December 2024**

**Georgia Velivasaki**

Poet, Instructor of Performance Poetry, PhD Candidate (UOWM)

The method of "Present Poetic Speech," developed by Yannis Mitrou, draws (inspiration) from tragedy and ancient drama, whereby the body moved according to "strict rules," and the articulation of speech held meaning only within its live performance. The spoken word and the body (the "phonetic and physical structures") are treated as distinct "entities" which, while maintaining their uniqueness (interdisciplinarity), compose a new "unified structure", based on the relationship  $1 \otimes 1 = 1$ .

In live performance, the performer becomes aware of the very "resonance of their body." Thus, the positioning of the voice is in a "dialectical relationship" with the body and the "organic structure" that unfolds (body and voice as a unified whole). Everything occurs in the present space and time. Poetic speech, therefore, is "present" in the here and now. Words come to life not so much as carriers of meaning but as "distinct sound-signifiers, which, through their enunciation and rhythm [...] are re-signified within the performance itself" (Giannis Mitrou, *Επιστροφή στο Σώμα, Επιστροφή στην Αναγέννηση*, Thessaloniki 2015)

Yannis Mitrou combines the "Present Poetic Speech" method with the "Biodynamic Method," which focuses on managing and activating the performer's idiosyncratic body based on the "Principle of Least Action." This mechanism sometimes interacts with the realms of visual and plastic arts, resulting in "formative" artistic performances. Words then seem to "explode," undergoing deconstruction to such a degree that they resonate as meta-verbal leading to a new creative act (transdisciplinarity). "The cognitive value of words submerges in a tide of phatic expression, where sounds expand radically through "modifications of sharpness, volume, and duration", evoking the vocal acrobatics of pure music (Schechner R., *Performance Theory*, ed. Routledge, New York 2003).

The emphasis now lies less on poetic language—making it questionable whether we can still speak of poetry—and more on "the relationship that unfolds among situations within the framework of a structure" (Mitrou). In essence, the "Present Poetic Speech" method, when combined with the

"Biodynamic Method," extends into a broader domain of performance art while still serving as a specific *modus operandi* for the poet-performer.

[Excerpt from Georgia Velivasaki's book, *Performance Poetry. Επιτελεστική Ποίηση – Action Λόγου ως Άξιον Λόγου*, ed. Grafima, Thessaloniki 2022]