

A woman with curly hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a light green zip-up top and a necklace with a circular pendant. She is holding an open book. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with a tree on the right and many colorful birds flying around. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

# Angeliki Darlasi

GREEK CANDIDATE FOR  
THE HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARD 2024 FOR AUTHORS  
**NOMINATED BY GREEK IBBY**

# Contents

- Biographical information **3**
- Statement on the candidate's contribution to literature for young people **5**
- Interviews & Appreciative essays **11**
- List of awards and distinctions **16**
- Complete bibliography **19**
- Translated works **24**
- Ten of the most important titles **25**
- The five books sent to the jurors **30**
- Appendix **44**





Biographical information



“If I offer them something, it has to do with my beliefs and values, with who I am. I don't hide who I am, especially when I write for children; Children are harsh judges. You are not easily forgiven for mistakes and even less so for admonitions. Nor are they impressed by your name. If they don't like something, they will tell you without hesitation. So I try to be honest, I can't help but be honest and respectful when I write for children, hoping that my truths, my fears, my concerns, my dreams, my hopes, seen through their perspective in my writing might move them and connect with them even a little.”

Extract from an interview to Asimina Xiroyanni for “Fractal” online magazine

Angeliki Darlasi is an author, playwright, screen writer and creative writing tutor. She was born in Athens (1973). She wrote her first story at the age of seven. She studied Theatre at the University of Athens, and Performance at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. She worked as a theatre director and as a theatre and creative writing tutor in schools and universities.

Making her debut in 2000 as a playwright Angeliki was awarded the second prize in a national competition. Her debut in children's literature was in 2004 with her novel *Dream Guardians*, a modern allegorical fairy tale, which won the Greek State Prize for that year. Since then she has devoted herself to writing, fulfilling her childhood's dream to become an author. Her second novel *The time we hid an angel* (2009), a lyrical road trip adventure in a universal land, was awarded the Greek Section of IBBY Award and was selected for the International Youth Library's White Ravens catalogue. Her play based on that novel won the Greek State Prize for Children's Theatre.

Angeliki has written over thirty books in various literary genres: novels, short stories, picture books, audio theatre, libretti, lyrics, verses, graphic novels; many became best sellers as well as long sellers. Her style ranges from realism to fantasy, from magical realism to allegory and her themes from war to domestic violence, from diversity to poverty, from orphanhood to antiracism; all sharing the common features of lyrical language, charming characters, deep humanism and a sense of hope. Alki Zei, the grande dame of Greek Children's Literature has praised Angeliki saying: “She is not just any writer, rather a weaver of tales, stitch by masterful stitch”.

Several of her books have been adapted for theatre and puppet theatre and two of them are in the development stage for movies. Her novel *The boy in the loge* (2017), a story about loss and imagination, was awarded with the Greek Section of IBBY Award (2018) and was staged by the Greek National Theatre (2022). Her illustrated book *Bad boy* was also awarded by the Greek Section of IBBY (2015), was included in the IBBY Honor List and was adapted for a performance in a coproduction by the State Orchestra of Thessaloniki and the State Theatre of Northern Greece (2020). Several of her plays for adults and children have been performed in Greece and abroad.

Books and plays of hers have been or are being translated into Korean, Turkish, French, Macedonian, German and Italian.

She has been a member of committees of the State Prizes for Children's Books, a jury member of the 25th Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People (2022) and the president of the children's jury of Camera Zizanio-European meeting of young people's audiovisual creation (2012-2017). She is also a translator of children's literature, having translated into Greek authors such as Michael Morpurgo, Christopher Edge, Maggie Stiefvater, L.D. Lapinski. She participates in programs encouraging the love of reading and writing in children and teenagers, as well as the theatrical and cinematographic creation and education of children and young people.





Statement on the candidate's contribution  
to literature for young people

## Angeliki Darlasi: With local roots and universal wings

Angeliki Darlasi has steadily produced a rich, diverse and cross-medial body of work, especially in children's literature. She is broadly well known and loved in Greece and it's a great pleasure to examine her work for children and teenagers and offer an overview of her contribution.

Reviewing her literary works to date, we can distinguish four main features:

- Angeliki's ability to see, be inspired by and be an advocate for the "different", the "foreign", the "other" is the most important and distinctive characteristic of her work. Racism, bullying, disability, exile, even little-known aspects of history (since the past is terra incognita) are her common and recurring themes. It requires a special gaze to see all the ways in which we marginalize groups of people around us and, even more importantly, it requires sensitivity and talent to relay such messages to children.
- Notably, Angeliki's writing is distinguished by an unpretentious lyricism that highlights the richness of language and the power of meaning. Alki Zei, the grande dame of Greek literature, had remarked that: "Angeliki is not just any writer, rather a weaver of tales, stitch by masterful stitch". Her style and language constitute her own distinct identity, as it should be for any writer. Additionally, the combination of her sensitivity and imagination manages to draw readers in, even at the difficult teenager's age when young people begin to move away from reading literature.
- Respect for the child's perspective, without didacticism or patronizing. Moreover, respect for the child as a separate entity, as the embodiment of the future (and our hope for the future), who needs learning and teachings as support for autonomous development, not a Procrustean bed presented by older generations. She also shows deep respect for the child's ability to grasp difficult concepts, even when it comes to harsh truths.
- Pluralism in literary forms and wide range of readership is also her strength. From short stories to novels, from pure fiction to hybrid forms, Angeliki successfully experiments in many different genres, and this, in addition to her in-depth knowledge of the principles and rules of each one, testifies to her ability to adapt to her readers' different needs. With appeal spanning from first graders to teenagers and their parents, many of her books can be considered crossover stories, attesting that her work is transgenerational. The great impact on her readers, young and old, confirms this.

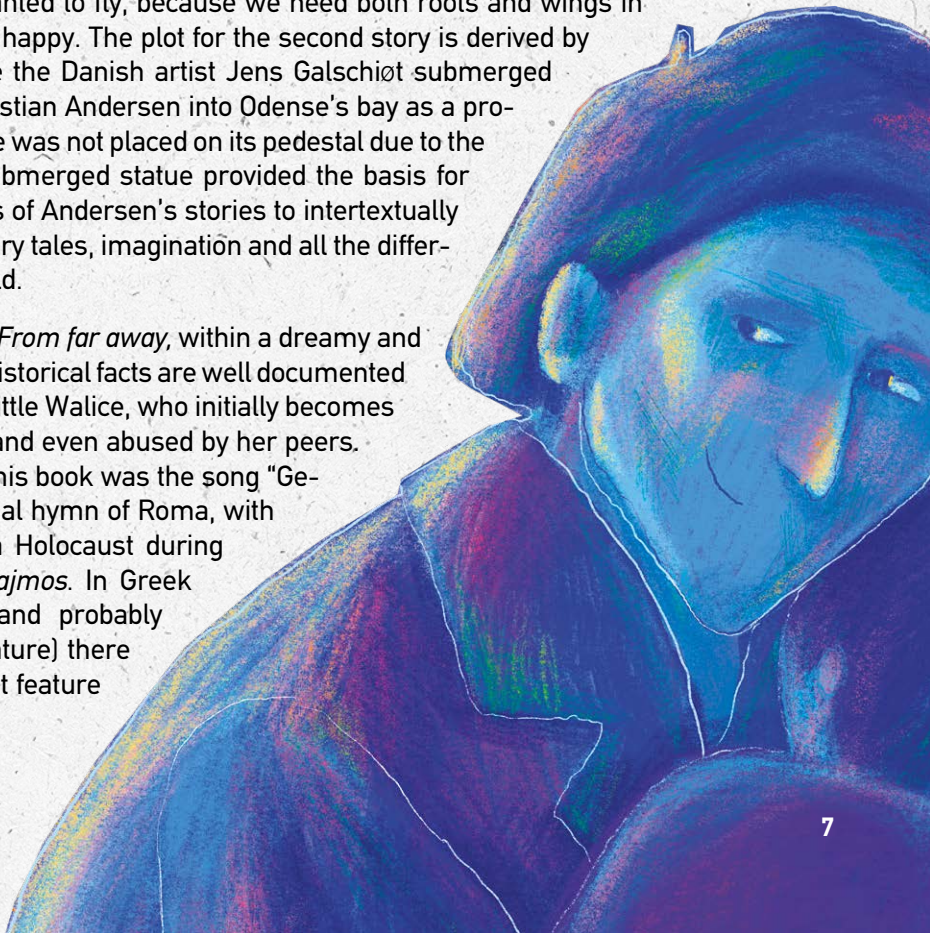


In support of the above, let's briefly examine some of her books. For example, her fairy tales for young children include her series "Myths and legends of modern Greece". For these books she draws inspiration from Greek oral folk literature and transforms them to be relatable to today's audience, while keeping the traditional iambic 15-syllable verse. Angeliki also writes contemporary fairy tales, such as *The mermaid who came ashore*, *The ugly duckling and the grumpy old man*, or *The wide-awake princess*. In the latter there is an intertextuality with Charles Perrault's *Sleeping Beauty*, except that the (modern) princess manages to stay awake thanks to reading books, which literally and figuratively open her eyes.

Angeliki experiments with literary genres in a very personal way: knowing the rules of the genre, she knows very well how to "twist" them, subvert them or operate on the borderline of two different literary categories. Her three books in the series "The Great... little ones" are hybrid educational books about prominent Greek figures of history, the arts and sciences, from a clever angle: each personality is presented as a child through fictional artful short stories, masterfully taking snippets of testimonies and anecdotes that survive from their childhood and connecting these to their achievements as adults. Thus, a very modern view of childhood is depicted and the question "what does it mean to be a child" finds its answer in today's perception of children and their rights, while also respecting the reality of childhood in past eras. Historical and moral lessons here are relayed through connection, empathy and highlighting the "different", a combination that proves to be extremely successful. It is no coincidence that her works are very popular in schools.

In two of her prose stories with strong fairy tale elements (*The tree that had wings* and *The child and the statue of Andersen*), besides the anthropomorphism and animism of the main characters and her well-known mixture of fantasy and reality, it's interesting to note how her narrative is inspired by real events. *The tree that had wings* contains autobiographical elements related to her personal journey, a memory from the age of seven, when she made her first attempt at writing her own stories. This was the seed that grew into a sprout, a message to her own children and later to the children of the world. It is the story of the tree in whose foliage a little bird nestled – a bird that wanted to take roots, in a tree that wanted to fly, because we need both roots and wings in order to evolve and be happy. The plot for the second story is derived by a 2011 incident, where the Danish artist Jens Galschiøt submerged his statue of Hans Christian Andersen into Odense's bay as a protest, because the statue was not placed on its pedestal due to the financial crisis. The submerged statue provided the basis for well-known characters of Andersen's stories to intertextually unfold into an ode to fairy tales, imagination and all the different children of the world.

In her illustrated book *From far away*, within a dreamy and dystopian setting, the historical facts are well documented in the story of "exotic" little Walice, who initially becomes the victim of curiosity and even abused by her peers. The spark for writing this book was the song "Gelem gelem", the national hymn of Roma, with lyrics about the Roma Holocaust during World War II, the *Porajmos*. In Greek children's literature (and probably also in European literature) there are very few books that feature





Roma children as their central characters. This book is an essential contribution in addressing this omission, and it is masterfully done, being narrated from the children's perspective. The book's impact is aided as well by its powerful illustrations.

The main literary genre that Angeliki Darlasi has been evolving and developing since the beginning of her writing journey is the novel. The novel requires from the author three basic virtues: to present an in-depth overview and coherence, to feature evolving characters and unfolding events that connect them, and to have narratives that are, as much as possible, original and authentic of the acting agents to whom they refer. In other words, a writer must have the skill and fortitude to achieve all three, and this is the case with Darlasi.

Three of her novels, *The Dream Guardians* (her very first book, that remarkably received the Greek State Prize), its sequel *The Dream Guardians and the lighthouse of dreams*, and *The time we hid an angel*, have strong elements of fantasy: the first two portray the wonder as it exists in speculative fiction, and the third portrays the blurring lines between reality and magic of magical realism. However, all three are dotted with realistic elements transported to an out-of-this-world, unreal and somewhat indeterminate dimension. The differences among the characters leading to rivalry and conflict –translating, in more modern terms, to the concepts of racism, violence, and bullying– run through all these books; and for the image of the angel, specifically, an essential conversion takes place: while in children's literature it is the protector or in more modern versions the imaginary friend, here protectors of the angel become the children themselves, who are "trained" to stand by all forms of "otherness" with sensitivity and empathy. The little angel is also a child, who was seen by his peers as he falls to earth, and so the story acquires a multiplicity of meaning, open to interpretation, for every reader.

Two of her novels have a solid historical background, but by the magic of the author's pen they hover between realism and magical realism. *When the statues went away* is based on the historical fact of the concealment of the ancient Greek statues at the Athens National Museum just before the German occupation. The Archaeological Service's task of securing the statues –a difficult and dangerous one, predictive of the threat of destruction or theft of antiquities by the Nazis–, is related through the story of Angelina, a lonely, disabled girl, and her only friend Tiko. The statues acquire human substance – or at least pass into a supernatural dimension with which our heroine communicates. Angelina loves the statues because, like her, they are also missing parts of their bodies; and Tiko, the bullied short-sighted boy, knows that they are no less beautiful for that.

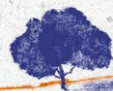
Her novel *The boy in the loge* also refers to the historical event of the 1922 uprooting of hundreds of thousands of Greeks from Asia Minor, and specifically the housing of 1.300 of them inside the Municipal Theatre of Athens. Their life, encompassing the pain of separation and loss of loved ones, is reflected in the traumatic internal journey of our little hero, Drosos. Here the elements of magical realism (namely the boy's belief that his dead sister is still somewhere near him) are a fabrication of the child's mind, but this false hope may be the beginning of healing his trauma. The book was reissued in an anniversary edition for the 100 years since the destruction of Smyrna and the annihilation of its Greek population, but it acquires an all too painful timely, international and timeless dimension, as it talks about the ever-present trauma of being removed from one's birthplace –the state of the world's refugees today–, their longing for their home and also their suffering, living between the past and the present.



Two shorter prose pieces are somewhat connected to each other by the emphasis placed on issues of social injustice and inequality: *My name is... Cloud* is a criticism of a dysfunctional Greek family which struggles seeking a superficial, unattainable lifestyle, as experienced through the –still– clear, unspoken gaze of a teenager who is physically abused by her own father. *Bad boy* focuses on a little boy who wears a huge, hand-me-down coat already worn by others. The boy is being targeted by society: poverty and social exclusion is what brutalizes him. That's why he is sad and that's why he is called a bad boy – or is it because he was called a bad boy, that's why he is sad? Perhaps if this bad boy, who has believed this label, were to experience an intervention, he would cease to be what has been ascribed to him? Such a miraculous intervention happens, inspired by the true story of musician José Antonio Abreu, who selected eleven children from the favelas of Venezuela and created the first children's orchestra. As it is rightfully noted in the story, music can be a weapon against youth crime and social exclusion.

And last but not least, we have her most recent book (November 2022), her novel *With eyes closed*. Here, her fourteen-year-old heroine, mysteriously blind after the accident of her best friend, manages to face the truth, something that she had been unable to face until then, thanks to the help of a quirky nine-year-old boy and with the help of adults and teenagers, many of whom are found in her previous books. It's very interesting that the girl "chooses" to keep her eyes closed, "disability" presented as a conscious choice, a defense mechanism. The dark sides of childhood and youth, domestic violence and bullying, gender identity, the right to diversity and "belonging"; all these are described, in a road story with strong elements of mystery and noir references, through an idiosyncratic realism, thanks to the lyricism of Darlasi's style. The elements that characterise her work are even more pronounced here and more mature than ever: the writing, both in what is clearly stated and the implied, is exemplary. The style and language of her text, the skill with which she touches the psyche of modern young people in combination with the themes she addresses (the distilment of various themes that had preoccupied her previously and underline her deep humanism) clearly reveal her unique authorial voice.

Although the dominant themes in Angeliki Darlasi's work have already become apparent, we could in summary argue that she always puts childhood in the spotlight: childhood is not surrounded by innocence. Her children move in a melancholic landscape that leaves space for rays of hope and optimism to come through. Her children may not smile, perhaps they have a sadness about them, an introversion or even loneliness, but next to them there are other children who will extend a helping hand, offer friendship and solidarity. It is this world of children in solidarity that, through trials, may open up a more promising future.



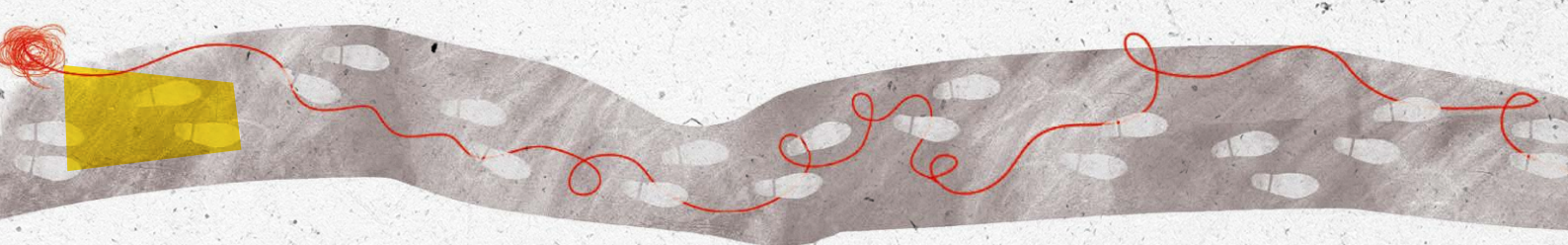
In this journey, angels, statues with human tongue, talking trees and birds, creatures left ambiguously vague as to whether they are supernatural – they will all stand by the children as guides and helpers and supplement all that the human soul thirsts for.

Children are at the centre of every narrative, but this does not mean that the social landscape is missing. Society is often threatening, and the issues that arise in modern societies are also present in Darlasi's books: racism towards all those who are somehow different, emotional and psychological abuse, the trauma of refugees and marginalized groups, social inequality and social injustice – nothing is kept hidden from the children, even if it is often covered under the mantle of a world that seems to be imaginary or at least distant from the real one. But this is also the magic of Angeliki's writing: choosing a language that has a symbolic, poetic substance, even when presenting harsh truths of modern life.

It is expected from an author to put themselves in the characters' shoes and convey to the reader different points of view. Angeliki has an innate ability to see the "different" in its various manifestations and to successfully relay that to young readers. By reading her books, children gain empathy and autonomy, they broaden their horizons and imagination, develop a connection to history and other cultures, as well as a love for language and reading; all building blocks for a better world.

Her insightful gaze filters local situations through a broad, multicultural and international prism (as well as the opposite), as the author delves into common and global issues with which we all struggle. With respect to her own culture and a deeply humanistic approach, she manages to express her cosmopolitan outlook and the timeless universality of her work.

MENI KANATSOULI  
Professor of Children's Literature,  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki





Interviews & Appreciative essays





Nothing compares to the delightful experience of reading Angeliki Darlasi's books, immersing yourself in the worlds she skillfully builds, admiring the ways in which she searches through her stories for the human, the child, the hope, the future, the new, the Other. Stories that are not superficial readthroughs; they carry pain, they are dragged through the battle with evil - that alienated part of us, that part of ourselves that was hurt, that lost but was not defeated.

Her new book titled *From far away* (published by Metaichmio Publications) is an intelligent de-symbolization of the lower instincts of (Greek) society. And at the same time the hope that there are many who are different than that and simply do not make noise.

For all these reasons and for the ray of light you always see in her books, we wanted to interview Angeliki Darlasi at Elniplex.

**With *From far away* you reminded me the atmosphere of the multi-award winning *Bad boy*. Do these two books actually communicate or did this just happen in my head?**

I think that all my books communicate with each other; in my mind Walice, in that parallel universe where the heroes and heroines of our books live, will probably be friends with Ersi and Sebastian from *Dream Guardians*, with Angelina from *When the statues went away*, Areti and Drosos from *The boy in the loge* and of course with Felix from *Bad boy*.

It is a common secret that authors follow somehow their own literary obsessions. And my own is probably to talk about the right to be yourself, about the need to accept diversity and inclusion, about the deep loneliness that we may experience not because of our differences per se but because of the societies we have created so far.

Societies that do not wish to understand and accept what does not fit in and deviates from the norms. Something so oxymoronic, since it's proven that our achievements over time owe a lot to the different people, those who dare to think and be different; while the blackest pages in the history of humanity were written by the hostility against those who we sometimes targeted as different.

On the other hand, I understand the correlation you make with the atmosphere of my book *Bad boy*. Perhaps because in both books the violence (verbal, psychological, physical) on the part of the children is very actively present. Except that in *From far away* it becomes "tangible" in a different way and therefore more sad and insidiously dangerous, since it is practiced, not by marginalized children as in *Bad boy*, but exactly the opposite, by... ordinary children; moreover, I tell the story through the latter's own eyes.

**Why did you choose to talk about loneliness, marginalization, diversity, stereotypes through a Rom girl?**

Strange as it may seem, I didn't choose from the beginning Walice to be Rom. In the first draft she was not. But I felt like there was something left unsaid, that this wasn't just... any different girl. I had the odd feeling that she carried a well-kept secret, like an archetypical collective grievance. When I concluded that Walice was Rom, I felt that only then did the girl's story acquire another depth, essence and meaning and only then was Walice's story the one I really wanted to tell and the one she deserved. It was only then, when I began to imagine her as Roma, that I began to understand her better. And when I started looking up what the lyrics of the song she was singing meant - "Gelem Gelem", a song I really loved and continue to love-, it was only then that I found out that it's the national anthem of the Roma, with lyrics referring the Holocaust. Only then Walice was fully revealed to me and was completed as a heroine. Because her melancholy, the secret she carried, namely the Roma genocide, the "forgotten Holocaust", was indeed something very heavy for a child's shoulders and it also referred to a collective trauma. I must admit that I was shocked when I discovered this. And I loved her even more.

You see, the Roma are a persecuted group of people who have been subjected to racism and targeted throughout history culminating in recent history with the Holocaust by the Nazis during World War II. The deafening proof of where prejudices can lead us, the recycled racism, the blindness from the hatred towards the Other who we consider different and therefore self-evidently... our enemy for some reason.

### What fascinates you in the culture and history of Roma?

First of all, there is something that scares me: the attitude of non-Roma towards them. Especially when you consider that we claim we are the "civilized", the "good" ones. What fascinates me is that despite all the persecutions, the hardships, the deprivations, they maintain a more unpretentious, lighter relationship with life; this is the impression they give me, or maybe this is my perception – a perception... from far away. And I am certainly fascinated by their centuries-long relationship with music, song and dance.

### Will we ever win the battle against fascism, prejudice, discrimination and the finger-pointing of the "other"?

I think we are winning battles all the time –and we should be thankful for that– but the fight is never over, because fascism is like the Lernaean Hydra.

We should always be ready and constantly alert, in our daily life, to fight new battles because I fear that otherwise humanity is doomed to experience perhaps new holocausts.

### How much fascism do you see around you today?

Hannah Arendt, the political scientist and philosopher, talked about the banality of evil. That its basis is not the fanatics, the ideologues exponents of totalitarian ideologies, but the small, ordinary people who thoughtlessly follow them and who, by refusing to think, in essence deny their humanity. I agree. That is why my story is not told by Walice, but by a non-Roma child, an "ordinary" child who initially becomes a bully, an evil person, but at the same time, as a child, is also a victim of an intolerant society. A child who, precisely because (s)he is a child, succeeds and rises above evil and finally tears it down.

Looking around, I see people willingly denying expanding their thought, reproducing uncritical stereotypes and ultimately intolerance. Perhaps, now that I think about it, that's probably another reason why I wrote *From far away*, to somehow exorcise some inner fears of mine: about that "banality of evil" and our duty not to perpetuate it. And because it is not the past that I feel is haunting me, it is the future, the future of our children. I feel that I owe to the future, to the children. And maybe that's how we should feel... all of us.

### What does Walice represent to you, as a creator? Does every neighborhood need a Walice that is an "Other"?

Walice is every person who breaks away from what we are used to. Walice is every child who blows us away, who invites us to approach them free of ideologies and prejudices, to get to know them by allowing them to teach us something we probably hadn't thought of until then; to take a step towards a better version of ourselves. I believe that in one way or another every neighborhood has its Walice, its Other. It can be a refugee or an immigrant, a child with a different sexual orientation than what we are used to accepting, or someone unconventional in terms of the neighborhood's lifestyle.

Each and every one of us can open our horizons a little. To see a different corner of the sky that we hadn't looked at until now; to see another star that until that moment we couldn't see – and yet it existed, it exists and it also lights up the sky.

### What is the power of children today?

What it has always been: to bring a shockingly familiar and simultaneously rebellious look at the world around us, to bring a more positive and humanistic view of our societies, a more unpretentious, but deeply meaningful, relationship with life in societies and with nature. Children may lack experience but they do not lack perception. And it is so sad that children and young people in our country have been and remain on the sidelines.

I feel that we don't love them deeply and sincerely, but rather in a pretentious and formal manner. Given the occasion, we constantly blame them for everything, forgetting that children are also our mirrors and that in their mistakes we finally see our own weaknesses, failures, omissions, mistakes.

We place our own sins on their shoulders and blame them and essentially scapegoat them, instead of bending down and really listening to them, caring about them and allowing them to be our guides in building more humane societies.

**How would you describe the literature you like to write for children?**

Deeply humanitarian but also political in the sense that "everything is political" as advocated by Esse or that "(hu)man is by nature a political animal" as Aristotle said, in the sense that children are members of the state, our societies (and the future active citizens) and thus they are already involved and are directly or indirectly affected by everything that happens around us. But I think it's also a magically realistic literature; Thanks to children's perspective, I always try to discover the magic that exists in everyday life in the seemingly small and insignificant. Maybe cruelly optimistic too, since I don't like to hide the truth from children, but at the same time I believe that by definition when you look at the world through the eyes of children you can't help but want to hope that our world can always get better or proved to be even a little better; all you have to do as a writer is to look at it from the right angle – that is, a child's angle. At least, that's what I like and what I'm trying to do when I write for children.

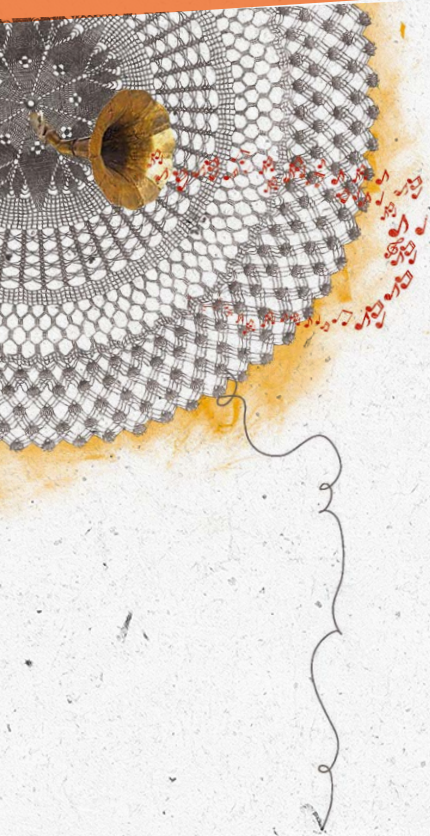
**What do you fear most about the future and what fills you with optimism if either happens?**

We, so easily, hand over a broken planet to our children. Every day we are destroying their future and we have not realized it.

I urge myself to be an optimist, I need to hope and I strongly believe that things will change, that we will stop being so selfish and blinded by our deeply individualistic, material culture. Thus, I can't but believe in the children, in the new generations, that they, unfortunately shouldering our sins, with clearer eyes and a stronger will, are the ones who will... open us up, save our societies and our planet. That's why I want to write for children, it's the only thing that ultimately... saves me; it's their own perspective that fascinates me and helps me become optimistic, necessarily because of them and for them – and how much I thank them for that!

TO APOSTOLOS PAPPAS  
AT ELNIPLEX ONLINE MAGAZINE  
30/07/2021





## Translating Angeliki Darlasi's work

Inspired by Paul Ricoeur and his essay "Translation as Challenge and Source of Happiness", I can tell for sure that translating Angeliki Darlasi is both a challenge and a source of happiness. I have been translating her work for nine years now, and I keep feeling we are having an insightful and passionate conversation with each other. She is not a "master" I have to serve, but a partner with whom I share a life of joyful and intellectual pursuits.

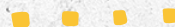
I always try to understand her characters and her style, the atmosphere she wishes to instill, the music and rhythm she wants to create with her words so that target-text readers may join in. I try to breathe when her characters breathe, and I listen carefully to their voice. I enter the worlds Angeliki Darlasi creates, I dive deeply into them, and then I escape them. However, I am not alone during this journey – Angeliki is always there willing to answer any question that I may have, patiently explaining what she means, and prompting me to take liberties so that readers feel the text was originally written in their language.

Translation requires freedom, imagination, and ingenuity. And Angeliki Darlasi provides her translator with the space necessary to explore the power and beauty of language. Her language is descriptive, yet clear and concise; it is engaging, vivid and rich with metaphors and analogies that enable her to knit her stories and offer well-developed and diverse characters. She skilfully paints the settings, plot, and characters in her work, and she is not afraid of dealing with subjects and emotions that can be disturbing in an honest way. Her texts remind us of how alive language itself can be. Her sentences seem simple even when they are complex. Their clarity and beauty is enough to entice readers into the story, to wake them up, making them unable to resist the temptation to immerse themselves in the maze she creates – a maze of endless possibilities and experiences.

As for her stories, though they may be inspired by the Greek culture and tradition to a great extent, they reflect a broader cultural and social context. Engaging as a translator with several transformations and interpretations while rendering her work in English, I need to highlight that each and every one of the texts Angeliki Darlasi has written is itself the site of interlocking histories, languages, cultures, and styles. Whether intergenerational specific or universal in theme, her texts shed light on the power of relationships and learning between generations, inviting readers to look in the mirror and try to understand and embrace the self while understanding and embracing the Other. Something that is imperative and more than needed in today's fragmented world.

VASILIKI MISIOU

Assistant Professor, Department of  
Translation and Intercultural Studies,  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki





list of awards and distinctions



**The secret recipe of Francesca Dreamer (play) (2000)**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize at the International Competition for Young Playwrights of the General Secretariat of Youth & Notos Theatre

**A city in a state of emergency (play) (2004)**

- Distinction in the playwriting competition of the State Theatre of Northern Greece

**Dream Guardians (2004)**

- Greek State Prize for Children's Literature

**The time we hid an angel (2009)**

- Selected for the White Ravens Catalogue of the International Youth Library
- Greek IBBY Award
- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for YA Literature
- Shortlisted for the "Anagnostis" Magazine Literary Award

**The time we hid an angel (play based on the respective novel) (2010)**

- Greek State Prize for Children's Theatre Play

**The tree that had wings (2010)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for Children's Literature
- Shortlisted for the "Diavazo" Magazine Literary Award

**Bad boy (2014)**

- IBBY Honour List for writing
- Greek IBBY Award
- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for Children's Illustrated Fiction
- Shortlisted for the "Anagnostis" Magazine Literary Award

**When the statues went away (2015)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for YA Literature
- Shortlisted for the Greek IBBY Award
- Shortlisted for the "Anagnostis" Magazine Literary Award



**The boy in the loge (2017)**

- Greek IBBY Award
- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for YA Literature
- Shortlisted for the "Anagnostis" Magazine Literary Award
- On the "Golden List of the Year" by Elniplex educational portal

**Nur and Rayan or Rayan and Nur (play) (2018)**

- Greek State Prize for Children's Theatre Play

**The most beautiful Christmas ornament (2018)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for Children's Literature
- Shortlisted for the Greek IBBY Award

**The great... little ones: The Artists (2020)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek IBBY Award
- On the "Golden List of the Year" by Elniplex educational portal

**The ugly duckling and the grumpy old man (2020)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek IBBY Award

**The great... little ones: The Scientists (2021)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for Educational Children's Books

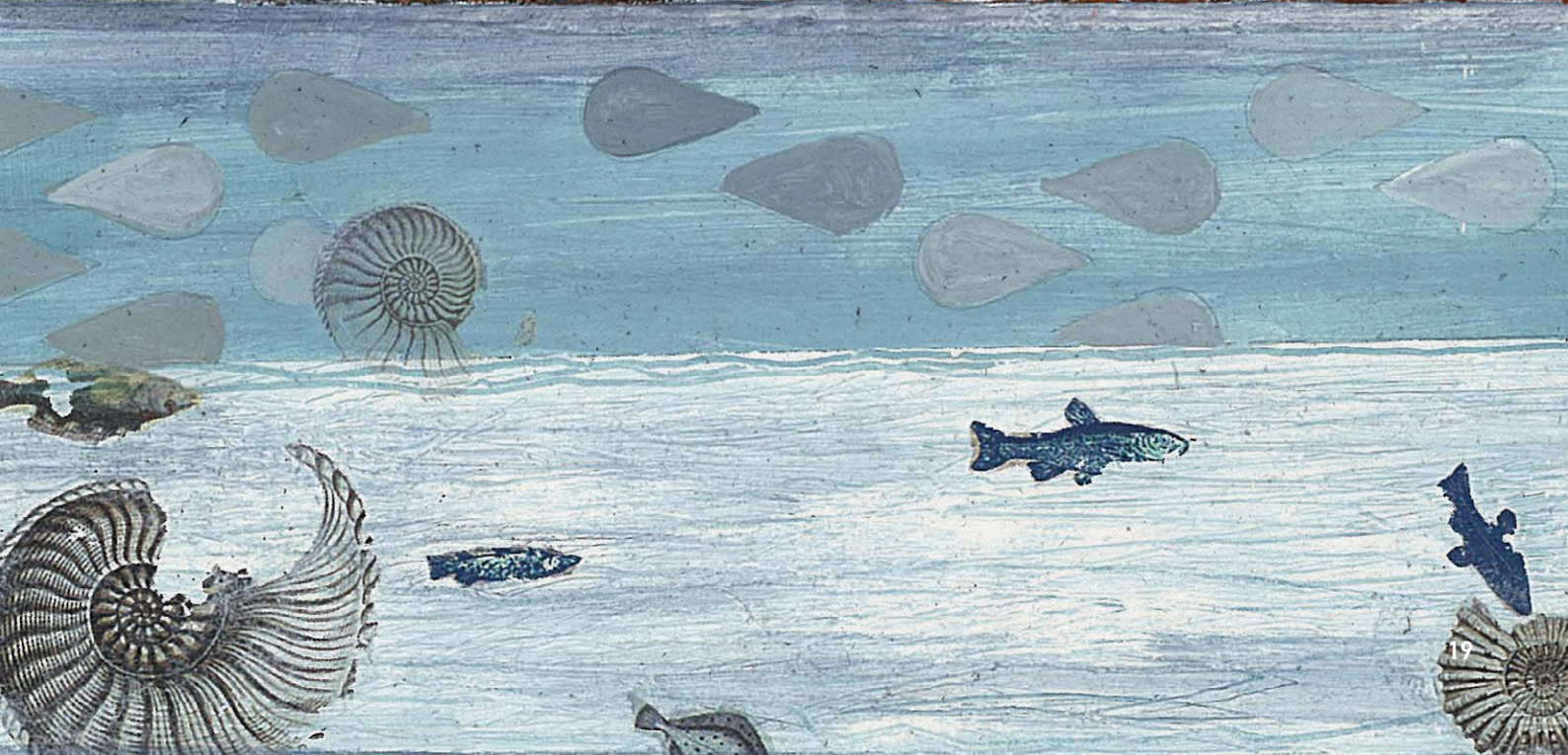
**From far away (2021)**

- Shortlisted for the Greek State Prize for Children's Literature
- "Public" Children's Fiction Award
- Shortlisted for the "Anagnostis" Magazine Literary Award
- On the "Golden List of the Year" by Elniplex educational portal
- One of the five best books of 2021 according to the online magazine for children's books "Kokkini Alepou"





Complete Bibliography

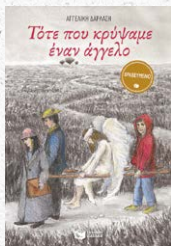


## Novels



**Ονειροφύλακες**  
**Dream Guardians**

Patakis Publications, Athens, 2004  
Pages: 184 | Ages: 9+



**Τότε που κρύψαμε έναν άγγελο**  
**The time we hid an angel**

Patakis Publications, Athens, 2009  
Pages: 226 | Ages: 10+

Metaichmio Publications, fall 2023



**Με λένε Σύννεφο...**  
**Ή Οι άγραφες σελίδες μιας Νεφέλης**  
**My name is... Cloud**  
**or the unwritten notes of a Nephelē**

Patakis Publications, Athens, 2012  
Pages: 136 | Ages: 14+



**Οι Ονειροφύλακες και ο φάρος των ονείρων**  
**The Dream Guardians and the lighthouse of dreams**

Patakis Publications, Athens, 2013  
Pages: 268 | Ages: 10+



**Όταν έφυγαν τ' αγάλματα**  
**When the statues went away**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2015  
Pages: 224 | Ages: 10+

Audiobook edition: Metaichmio Publications/Jukebooks, Athens, 2022



**Το αγόρι στο θεωρείο**  
**The boy in the loge**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
Pages: 197 | Ages: 12+

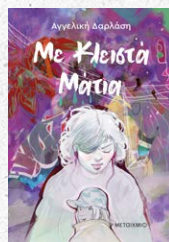
Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
Pages: 224 | Ages: 12+ (An anniversary hardcover edition with a foreword by Meni Kanátsoyl)

Audiobook edition: Metaichmio Publications/Bookvoice, Athens, 2022



**Οι Ονειροφύλακες (βιβλία 1&2)**  
**The Dream Guardians (Books 1&2)**

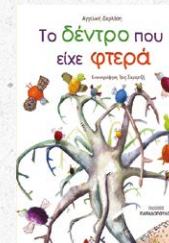
Patakis Publications, Athens, 2021  
Pages: 456 | Ages: 9+



**Με κλειστά μάτια**  
**With eyes closed**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2022  
Pages: 304 | Ages: 12+

## Illustrated Short Stories



**Το δέντρο που είχε φτερά**  
**The tree that had wings**

Illustrated by Iris Samartzi  
Papadopoulos Publications, Athens, 2000  
Pages: 40 | Ages: 7+



**Το παλιό παιδί**  
**Bad boy**

Illustrated by Iris Samartzi  
Patakis Publications, Athens, 2014  
Pages: 62 | Ages: 7+



**Το ωραιότερο χριστουγεννιάτικο στολίδι**  
**The most beautiful Christmas ornament**

Illustrated by Alexia Othoneou  
Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2018  
Pages: 48 | Ages: 5+



**Από μακριά**  
**From far away**

Illustrated by Vassilis Koutsyoiannis  
Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
Pages: 56 | Ages: 7+



**Το δέντρο που είχε φτερά**  
**The tree that had wings**  
 Illustrated by Vassilis Koutsoyiannis  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
 Pages: 52 | Ages: 7+

**SERIES: THE GREAT... LITTLE ONES**

(Inspired by the biographies of great Greek men and women, fictional short stories about their childhood)



**Οι μεγάλοι... μικροί: Οι αγωνιστές του 1821**  
**The Great... little ones: The Heroes of 1821**  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2020  
 Pages: 104 | Ages: 8+

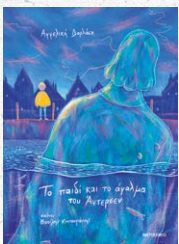


**Οι Μεγάλοι... μικροί: Οι καλλιτέχνες**  
**The Great... little ones: The Artists**  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2020  
 Pages: 112 | Ages: 8+



**Οι Μεγάλοι... μικροί: Οι επιστήμονες**  
**The Great... little ones: The Scientists**  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
 Pages: 104 | Ages: 8+

**Picture Books**



**Το παιδί και το άγαλμα του Άντερσεν**  
**The child and the statue of Andersen**  
 Illustrated by Vassilis Koutsoyiannis  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2022  
 Pages: 52 | Ages: 5+

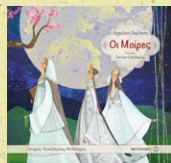
**SERIES: MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF MODERN GREECE**



**Η γοργόνα / The mermaid**  
 Illustrated by Iris Samartzi  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
 Pages: 36 | Ages: 5+



**Η ελιά / The olive tree**  
 Illustrated by Aimilia Kontaiou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
 Pages: 36 | Ages: 5+



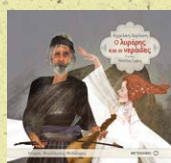
**Οι μοίρες / The fates**  
 Illustrated by Sandra Eleftheriou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
 Pages: 36 | Ages: 5+



**Το πετροκάραβο / The stone boat**  
 Illustrated by Theda Mimitaki  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
 Pages: 36 | Ages: 5+



**Το κάστρο της Ωριάς / The fair maiden's castle**  
 Illustrated by Katerina Veroutsou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
 Pages: 36 | Ages: 5+



**Ο λυράρης κι οι νεράιδες**  
**The lyre player and the fairies**  
 Illustrated by Vassilis Grivas  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2018  
 Pages: 36 | Ages: 5+  
 Audiobook editions: Metaichmio Publications/Jukebooks, Athens, 2022

**SERIES: LITTLE GOODNIGHTS**



**Η ξύπνια βασίλοπούλα**  
**The wide-awake princess**  
 Illustrated by Sandra Eleftheriou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2017  
 Pages: 32 | Ages: 4+  
 Audiobook edition: Metaichmio Publications/Jukebooks, Athens, 2022

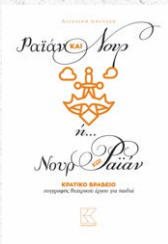


**Η γοργόνα που βγήκε στη στεριά**  
**The mermaid who came ashore**  
 Illustrated by Maria Bacha  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2016  
 Pages: 32 | Ages: 4+



**Το ασχημόπαπο κι ο γεροπαράξενος**  
**The ugly duckling and the grumpy old man**  
 Illustrated by Sofia Papadopoulou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
 Pages: 32 | Ages: 4+

## Published Theatre Plays



**Ραϊάν και Νουρ ή... Νουρ και Ραϊάν**  
**Rayan and Nour or... Nour and Rayan**  
 Kapa Ekdotiki, Athens, 2021 | Pages: 88

## Adaptations



**Το φάντασμα του Κάντερβιλ**  
**The Canterville ghost**  
 Based on Oscar Wilde's novel  
 Illustrated by Vassilis Grivas  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
 Pages: 48 | Ages: 5+

### SERIES: "MY FIRST LITERATURE"



**Όνειρο Καλοκαιρινής Νύχτας**  
**Midnight's summer dream**  
 Based on by Shakespeare's play  
 Illustrated by Sandra Eleftheriou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2016  
 Pages: 40 | Ages: 5+



**Η Αλίκη στη χώρα των θαυμάτων**  
**Alice in Wonderland**  
 Based on Lewis Carroll's novel  
 Illustrated by Sandra Eleftheriou  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
 Pages: 48 | Ages: 5+



**Το μόνο της ζωής του ταξίδι**  
**The only trip of his life**  
 Based on Georgios Vizyinos' short story  
 Illustrated by Efi Kokkinaki  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2021  
 Pages: 48 | Ages: 5+



Graphic Novel

**Ο μεγάλος περίπατος του Πέτρου**  
**Petros' war**  
 Based on Alki Zei's novel  
 Illustrated by Dimitris Mastoros  
 Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2020  
 Pages: 168 | Ages: 10+



## Theatre Plays performed

For children & Teens

### BASED ON HER BOOKS

#### Με λένε Σύννεφο

#### My name is Cloud

Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People - "The other side" theatre group, Pyrgos, 2012

#### Οι Ονειροφύλακες

#### Dream Guardians

Theatrical group of the Municipality of Moschato-Tavros "En drasei", Athens, 2015

#### Η ξύπνια βασίλισσα

#### The wide-awake princess

Theatrical group of the Municipality of Moschato-Tavros "En drasei", Athens, 2017

#### Το παλιόπαιδο

#### Bad boy

State Orchestra of Thessaloniki – State Theatre of North Greece – El Sistema Greece, Thessaloniki, 2020

### ORIGINAL

#### Πέφτει χιόνι κι είναι ροζ

#### It's snowing and the snow is pink

Stavros Niarchos Cultural Centre Foundation, Athens, 2021

#### Ραϊάν και Νουρ ή... Νουρ και Ραϊάν

#### Nour and Rayan or Rayan and Nour

Municipal Theatre of Komotini, Komotini, 2022

For adults

#### Η μυστική συνταγή της Φραντσέσκα Ντρίμερ

#### The secret recipe of Francesca Dreamer

Theatre Amore, Theatre of Notos, Athens, 2000

#### Πόλη σε κατάσταση εκτάκτου ανάγκης

#### A city in a state of emergency

Theatre Amore, Dokimes Festival, Athens, 2005

#### Μπορείτε να είστε ευτυχισμένοι

#### You may be happy

Theatre at home, Snaporatz Group, Athens, 2007

#### Κομμάτια... (θάλασσες εδώ)

#### Bits... (of sea here)

Analogia 2015, Theatro Technis, 2015

#### Ποτέ την Κυριακή-ξανά

#### Never on Sunday-revisited

in the Staged Reading Harbour 40, Short Theatre Festival-Union des Théâtres de l'Europe, Rome, 2017

#### Ποτέ την Κυριακή-ξανά2

#### Never on Sunday-revisited2

in the performance Harbour 40, Theatro Makedonikon Spoudon, Union des Théâtres de l'Europe, Thessaloniki, 2018

#### Cadenza – για έναν ηθοποιό κι ένα βιολί

#### Cadenza – for an actor and a violin

Megaron Athens Concert Hall – Music Library, Athens, 2019

#### Η κρεατόπιτα

#### Meat Pie

Alkmini Theatre, Athens, 2020

#### Ένα τίποτα

#### A nothing

in the performance Die Neuen Todsünden, Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Karlsruhe, 2019-2020 & 2020-2021



© Στέφανος Μισακίδης



## List of translated works



**The boy in the loge**  
**Το αγόρι στο θεωρείο**

North Macedonia  
Rights sold to Bata Press (2023)



**Petros' war Graphic Novel**  
**Ο μεγάλος περίπατος του Πέτρου**

France  
*La grande balade de Petros*, Futuropolis, Paris, 2022  
Translated by Dimitris Mastoros



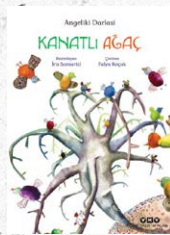
**Bad boy**  
**Το πάλιοπαιδο**

Turkey  
*Hayta*, Kuraldisi Yayincilik, Istanbul, 2015  
Translated by Seda Kostik



**Bad boy**  
**Το πάλιοπαιδο**

Republic of Korea  
못된 녀석, Seedbook, Seoul, 2016  
Translated by Sanghyo Kil



**The tree that had wings**  
**Το δέντρο που είχε φτερά**

Turkey  
*Kanatlı Ağaç*, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, Istanbul, 2018  
Translated by Fulya Koçak



**The mermaid**  
**Η γοργόνα**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2018  
Translated into English by Vasiliki Misiou



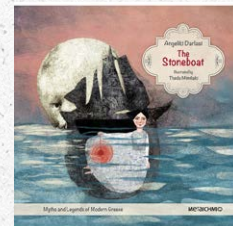
**The olive tree**  
**Η ελιά**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2018  
Translated into English by Vasiliki Misiou



**The fates**  
**Οι μοίρες**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2018  
Translated into English by Vasiliki Misiou



**The stone boat**  
**Το πετροκάραβο**

Metaichmio Publications, Athens, 2018  
Translated into English by Vasiliki Misiou





Ten of the most important titles

## With eyes closed

Με κλειστά μάτια

Athens, Metaichmio,  
November 2022, p. 304.

Crossover Novel (12+)



*He needed to have some companionship in patience. Because patience, like so many other things in this world, is better tolerated when you have company, he thought and smiled.*

After the accident of her best friend Alex, fourteen-year-old Lou remains with her eyes closed, unknown why. Nine-year-old Dodo is eager to get to know her, since he has a secret plan for both her and him.

A retired detective, the owner of a compassion cafe, a woman who claims that she has met an angel as a child, an old man and his goose are some of the adults who will help the two children solve the mystery: who is really responsible for the accident and Alex's disappearance?

A road story, full of quest and mystery. A story about unusual friendships, about what family really means, about stereotypes and abuse, about being yourself, about hidden and even difficult truths that hurt, but also for those that make life truly beautiful that they set one free if one only trusts and follows them... even with eyes closed.

*It is one of the best teenage books ever written. It is a compelling reading experience. [...] Like a story you know, that you lived, that a friend told you. Ideal, equally, for young people and adults.*

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ ΠΑΠΠΟΣ, "Elniplex"

## The child and the statue of Andersen

Ill. Vassilis Koutsoyiannis

Το παιδί και το άγαλμα του Άντερσεν

Athens, Metaichmio, 2022, p. 52

Picture book (5+)



*"You see, my beloved child, life is like a beautiful melody the lyrics of which are often messed up." "And we have to sort them out" said the child excited.*

Once a year, on April 2nd, a statue is emerging from the waters of Odense's port in Denmark. Or that's what the storytellers say. But a child could also collaborate that – a child that loved fairy tales and disliked reality, and then took a magical stroll with one of the greatest storytellers of all time.

Inspired by Jens Galschiot's Andersen statue, this is a story celebrating the power of imagination and storytelling and the magic of everyday life.

*This is an amazing text that masterfully integrates Andersen's heroes into our lives and shows in an intelligent and moving way how we change when we stop being children.*

ΠΑΝΟΣ ΤΟΥΡΛΙΣ, "Vivliokritikes"



## The tree that had wings

Ill. Vassilis Koutsoyiannis

**Το δέντρο που είχε φτερά**  
Athens, Metaichmio, 2021, p. 52

First edition: Ill. Iris Samartzi,  
Athens, Papadopoulos, 2010

Illustrated Short Story (7+)



*And thus passed that summer, as summers usually pass; the lovelier they are, the faster they end.*

There was once a plain that was different than other plains. What made it unique was that it had a beautiful, grand, robust tree at the center. And what made this tree unique was its loneliness. But one day that changed: A hatchling came to rest on its branches, a hatchling starting to discover the world.

Can the birds grow roots, and can trees grow wings? Yes, they can! A story about the power of love and friendship that transforms reality into a fairytale.

- [Adapted and staged in 2021-22 for puppet theatre in Izmir, Turkey by Uçan Pelerin Kukla Tiyatrosu'na](#)
- A short-animated film based on the book is in the pre-production stage by the Turkish filmmaker Burak Arlik.

*An excellent book that young and old will love and of course we rank it in the top 5 of last year. A masterpiece by Angeliki Darlasi.*

[THEODORA, "The big boss" blog](#)

## The great... little ones: The Artists

Ill: Sophia Papadopoulou

**Οι μεγάλοι... μικροί:  
Οι καλλιτέχνες**

Athens, Metaichmio, 2020, p. 112

Illustrated Non-Fiction for children (9+)



*That's why he will go to the cinema again.  
He can't wait to get lost in the magical  
darkness of the cinema.*

*Because, yes, pictures in the cinema exorcise the  
darkness; the fear; even death. Pictures for eternity...*

Yannoulis' (Halepas) petrified destiny... A gypsy's prophecy and an aria affect little Katina (Paxinou), who everyone considers rebellious. The loneliness of Carlos (Koun) when he goes to school for the first time at the age of twelve. The decision of Yannis (Tsarouchis) of not being a good student and his boredom in school. The need of Vaso (Katraki) not to paint the sun yellow. Zuzu (Nikoloudi) is in danger of being locked back in her glass tower. A trip and a "magic box" affect Kostas' (Balafas) decision to return to his village. The shadows that haunt the evenings of little Theo (Angelopoulos).

The second book of the series "The great... little ones" where we will come across stories, inspired by the personality and biographical details of important Greeks in their childhood. Stories about those Great ones who, as children, faced some minor or major difficulty that probably played its part in shaping their personality and/or the course of their lives and/or career. To (re) see the Great Ones through... "little" eyes.

*With the sensitivity of an adult and the humanity of an artist, that is with her writing style, Darlasi manages to embrace every diversity, showing young and adults this uniqueness that characterizes every human being.*

[RANIA PAPADOPOULOU, "H Epohi" newspaper](#)

## From far away

Ill. Vassilis Koutsogiannis

**Από μακριά**

Athens, Metaichmio, 2021, p. 56  
Illustrated short story (7+)



*None of the grown-ups had told us that she was not a toy, but a human being. And that we should not play with people – at least, not in this way.*

This is a story on prejudice, racism, and the Roma Holocaust. On the narrow-mindedness and harshness of adults, but, also, on the intrinsic empathy of children. Mostly, it is the story of a true and generous friendship; the story of a magical summer...

One of the five books sent to the jurors

## The boy in the loge

**Το αγόρι στο θεωρείο**

Athens, Metaichmio, 2017, p. 200  
Crossover novel (12+)



*I was running all day long, holding the lavender bunch in my hand, being haunted by the word "refugee" which had stuck with me and followed me. No matter how much I tried to escape, it would catch me. And I kept running away from a word.*

Based on historical events, that is the catastrophe of Asia Minor in 1922 and the refugees' settlement in the Municipal theatre of Athens, a story about the trauma of loss, full of courage, imagination and compassion which appeals to contemporary reality.

One of the five books sent to the jurors

## When the statues went away

**Όταν έφυγαν τ' αγάλματα**

Athens, Metaichmio, 2015, p. 224  
Crossover Novel (10+)



*"Why do you always smile like that? As if you have just told us a riddle and you are waiting for an answer that you know is hard to be found?"*

*The marble Sphinx looked into the girls' eyes once more. And she smiled her familiar mysterious smile.*

*"Trust me... I'm not the one smiling like that; life is."*

*The girl trusted her.*

A unique anti-war story about diversity, identity, friendship, resistance and kindness, which unfolds revealing a little-known part of history – the heroic effort to hide and secure the statues of the Greek National Archeological Museum during World War II.

One of the five books sent to the jurors

## The time we hid an angel

**Τότε που κρύψαμε έναν άγγελο**

Athens, Patakis, 2009, 226 p.  
Crossover novel (10+)



*Then Rallou raised her eyes and looked at us. She had a really serious look on her face as if she weren't about to take 'no' for an answer and, very casually, as if she were about to announce the most ordinary thing in the world, an everyday occurrence, she said: "Angel... It's an angel!"*

A road story of magical realism, where narration alternates between first and third person, creating cinematic suspense. Great adventure and lyrical emotion are combined to form this deeply anti-war, humanistic hymn to friendship and childhood.

One of the five books sent to the jurors

## Bad boy

Ill. Iris Samartzi

**Το παλιόπαιδο**

Athens, Patakis, 2014, p. 64

Illustrated Short Story (6+)



*Very well then! If you are going to say nothing,  
I'll do as I damn well please and be  
a bad boy - and worse!  
He decided he would never look up  
at the stars again.*

Bad boy is growing up in a poor barrio, sad and grey like his old coat, too large for him, someone's hand-me-down. They call him a bad boy, but he is only the poorest and unhappiest of all boys. But one day he decides to live up to his name, since this seems to be what everyone expects from him. Well, not quite everyone...

A story inspired by the true account of El Sistema and the world-famous Bolivar Orchestra of Venezuela; about faith in humanity and human beings; about the power of art and culture against poverty and social exclusion.

*Angeliki Darlasi has created a story for children and young adults, or, as Stuart Staples would put it, for 'the young at heart.'*

*Brimming with optimism and inspired by love and faith in humanity, this is a story about the loss of identity in a world defined by the unfair distribution of wealth.*

THALEIA KARAMOLEGKOU, "Popaganda"

## Dream Guardians

**Ονειροφύλακες**

Athens, Patakis, 2004, p. 184

Crossover novel (9+)

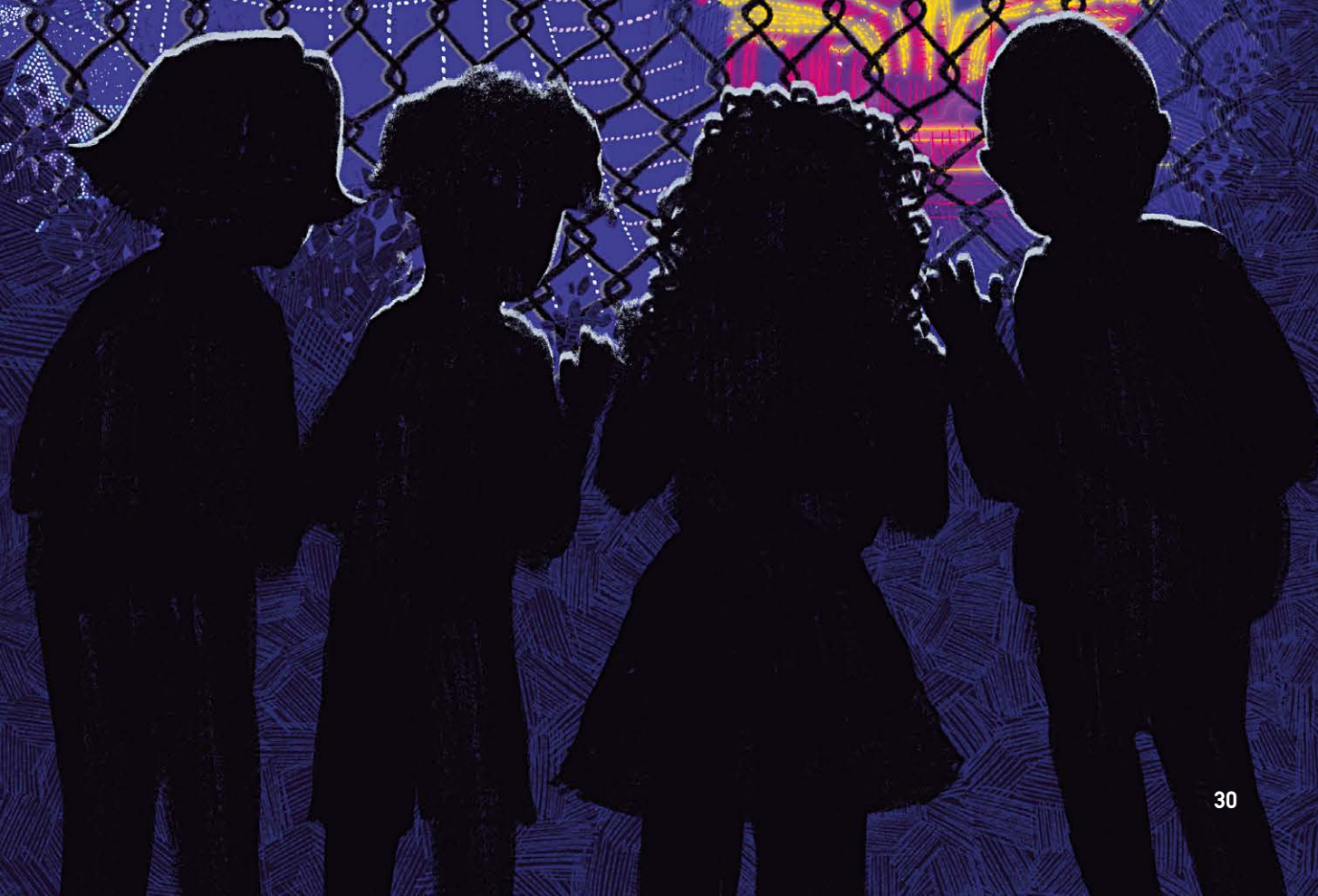


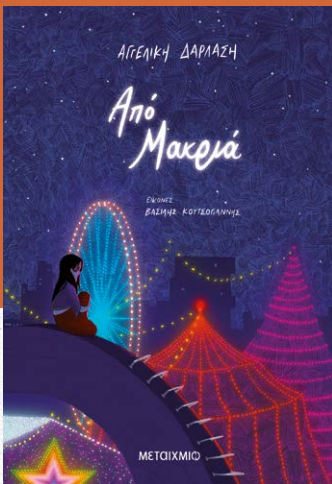
*No. I'm not sad. I'm happy. Because I know that the  
most wonderful stories have not yet been lived.*

The story like a fairy tale is being set in a utopia but is really an allegory for our own imperfect world along with its social inequalities and dysfunction. A modern fairy tale that resembles life about diversity, tolerance, individuality, mutual respect, friendship, love and of course, the power of dreams.

One of the five books sent to the jurors

The five books sent to the jurors





## From far away

Illustrated  
by Vassilis Koutsogiannis

“ And Walice, almost gasping for breath, said:  
“I’m tired of running away to save myself.”  
And this was the most earnest thing she could say. ”

It was summer when Walice, along with wandering performers and the fair-ground, pitched up their tents on a plot at the edge of our town. And there was a carousel at the fairground that we were dreaming of even while awake.

Walice had nothing, not even parents – but we only found out about this much later. What we knew was that she was different and, as the grown-ups told us, we should be afraid of her and avoid her. Therefore, they gave us a scarf to put on her so that she stood out. Until that night we found out she could do magic...

### About Walice

The writer has coined the name Άλν after the Greek adjective άλλν (fem. sing.) which means different, other. She chose this name because she wanted to stress that the heroine was different from the other characters and was treated as an alien, a stranger, a foreigner, not belonging to the local community. Taking this into consideration, I felt the need to create a name that would carry such connotations. Hence, while conducting research, I encountered the name Wallis which was used to denote a person who was understood to be foreign. According to various sources, the name is an abbreviation of Wallensis, which derives from the Anglo-Norman French word waleis that means foreign. There are several spelling variations: Wallis, Wallice, Wallace, Wallys, Wallace, and others. I decided to use Wallice and alter the spelling of the word. This way, Walice also evokes Alice in Wonderland, since, like the heroine in Lewis Carroll’s classic story, she invites the other children to a dreamlike, fantasy(-stic) world where everything is possible.

A note by Vasiliki Misiou, translator of the book,  
about the heroine’s name translation into English

## Review

### When you are a Walice/an Other

We see every day that deep-rooted stereotypes, which often mutate into racism, require a lot of work to change. Some books successfully shoulder this goal.

Angeliki Darlasi tells a story about diversity. But also, about the price paid by those who are different. “That summer, along with the wandering performers and their amusement park, came Walice.” And even though the story of the Roma genocide, the “forgotten Holocaust” is on the periphery of the narrative, in the foreground is everyday life where the different/others (women, refugees, Roma, LGBTQ) are targeted and -in some cases literally- exterminated.

Darlasi sets up a story where every word has its own semiology. Walice (a word-play by the author in itself) is an Other. A child who, because of her difference, experiences rejection and racism. But do her clothes, her hair, the fact that she walks around barefoot really makes her different?

In this town, “the grey, stupid and heartless town”, Walice will become the scapegoat. Parents -that is, those who act as role models, who instil values and perceptions in their children- will turn them into victims of their own stereotypes and prejudices. At first, children will be “taught” to fear Walice; a fear which will gradually turn into hatred. And the green scarf, which they give her to wear, will become their own downfall. Because “None of the grown-ups had told us that she was not a toy, but a human being. And that we should not play with people – at least, not in this way.”

Darlasí gets to the crux of the matter: children are vulnerable and susceptible to the visible and invisible labels that are easily assigned to people. At the same time, however, she shows that children are the only hope for a better world. Walice will make the children (re)see reality with different eyes: their own children's eyes. This will be her "magic".

Thanks to Walice's song, the amusement park will once again become a symbol of joy and carefreeness, and the mangy, dishevelled horse will take them on dreamlike journeys. Using an imaginative framing device, Walice's painful song (which is the national anthem of the Roma), the author will remind us of the importance of historical memory: it exists in order to restore the truth, to reveal the value of critical thinking, justice, empathy, that is, of humanity.

After all, every person is unique, the author will say through the mouth of the narrator, who is, "the most ordinary kid" in town and whose friends don't have names, but adjectives instead (the fairest, the most insecure, the frivolous...) that imply their differences, i.e. their uniqueness.

The illustration by V. Koutsoyiannis is impressive. The image of the scarf is a story within a story. Its dense initial weave with distinct triangles (a direct reference to the Nazi's targeting of Roma) slowly dissolves, like the fear and hatred towards Walice.

**If Hannah Arendt spoke about the banality of evil, Darlasí speaks about the magic of people when they do not see the problem "from far away".** Because, as Roma survivor C. Stojka says, "if the world does not change now, then I am unable to explain why I survived Auschwitz."

[Katerina Zamaria, "Avgi" Newspaper, 19.10.21 printed edition](#)

## Review extracts

Angeliki Darlasí wrote a wonderful, moving and subversive book (for children aged 8 and up) full of hidden meanings, universal truths and a multi-layered plot. I gave it at least three readings and each time I made a different discovery, a special journey, a completely new insight. [...] In "From far away" we can imagine whatever we want, but without the right to vilify those who are different. The difficult and the most human thing is to come closer and embrace the one who would need our help, to say a helpful "hello" to the one who is tired of running to save himself; us to stop living with stereotypes that were largely bequeathed or imposed to us by others. Angeliki Darlasí wrote one of the most beautiful books about racism and bigoted hatred. It moved me, it made me reflect, it troubled me, it gave me inspiration and optimism to improve my behaviour. There is still room for us to change – all of us!

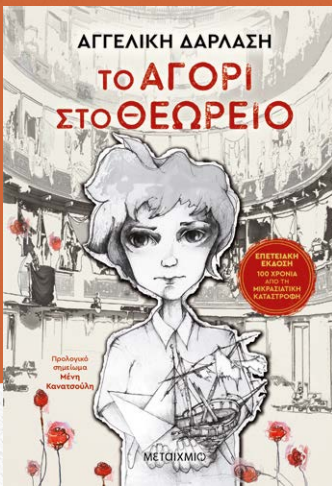
[Panos Tourlis, "Vivliokritikes"](#)

This is what Darlasí does with *From far away*: while she retains something of the free spirit and carefreeness that we want to believe that gypsy life possesses, she conveys to us a harsh story of violence, and especially towards a child. Violence is verbal, psychological and physical. Walice seems to live in an earlier era, but her story is timeless and universal: it is the story of a child who, through no fault of her own, is "objectified", and is being pushed away; however, the culture of her tribe, through her song, gives her a face and she becomes a friend of the children who previously ridiculed her.

The story is crafted with artful literary techniques, with allusions, without moralistic paroxysms, and the narrative has an unmistakable beauty of magic and authenticity.

[Meni Kanatsouli, "Anagnostis" literary magazine](#)





## The boy in the loge

“Roses”, Areti murmured standing next to me. The word itself was enough to give me chills. I looked around hoping to sense the scent of roses; neither I nor my sister were willing to accept the end of our former, first life.”

Drosos and his sister Areti, two refugees, arrive at a city’s theatre that offers accommodation to refugees. “It looks like a dollhouse” says Areti when she sees their new home.

However, Areti is not keen on dollhouses so she hides herself inside a trunk until one day she disappears... Drosos makes new friends in the theatre and they all try to find his sister. But is she a real person, is she alive, or is she his only way to endure pain? The truth will be revealed with the aid of Ariel, the spirit of the Shakespearean play “The Tempest” during an unforgettable performance, which will mark their lives.

Based on historical events, the catastrophe of Asia Minor in 1922 and the refugees’ settlement in the Municipal Theatre of Athens, this is a story about the trauma of loss, full of courage, imagination and compassion which also appeals to contemporary reality.

## Reviews

### “What if I speak to you in fairy tales and parables...”

In 1922 over 1 million refugees arrived in Greece. The government settled them in camps or empty buildings, such as the Municipal Theater of Athens. Its 81 loges were transformed into “doll houses” that would house the nightmares and dreams of the uprooted.

The author chooses at the beginning of the book *The boy in the loge* not to have a clear time reference in the narrative. Thus, the reader can make associations with today and Darlasi shows readers that history is not a list of events, but events laden with human stories. And people –regardless of era, ethnicity, social or political conditions– suffer equally in the face of such painful experiences.

Drosos, and the rest of the heroes, faces the challenge to accept the end of the life he had before and carry on by rebuilding a second one. The memory of the heroes is a cohesive element between before and after. “If I don’t talk about him, it’s like admitting that I’ll never see him again” says Savvas about his missing father. Some will throw themselves into the battle of survival for a better future; even if the locals shout at them: “Your ship should have sunk and you should have drowned with it too! You are taking our bread!”. Some others, such as Areti or Lenia, decide to withdraw to a closed and safe space, such as a trunk or silence; because there lies the consoling power of memory and the limit of what they can endure.

Loss as a traumatic experience of a child is the main theme of the book. The role of art is the secondary one. Darlasi tells a story not about “before”, but about “afterwards”. With a dual narrative, she records not only the reception and acceptance of the refugees by the locals, but also how they themselves accept the fact that they have become stateless and homeless.

With well-developed characters, a plot where magical realism coexists with

suspense, a vivid pace and a plot twist that reveals the defence mechanisms that everyone seeks in the face of loss, the book enchants the reader. With a solid narrative style, without a single word being too much (or useless), it transforms –through the first-person narrative– our own historical trauma into a mirror to help us face a major problem of our era: new waves of refugees.

With elements of intertextuality running through the text and with Shakespeare's *The Tempest* being used as a framing device, Darlasi brings theatre into the theatre. And she turns a performance into a symbol of the performance of life, illustrating the cathartic role of art.

"We only took our souls" testified S. Deligianni, an Asia Minor refugee. "From our house, I only remember the smell of roses in my mom's garden," 13-year-old Izra, a Syrian refugee in a camp, will tell us, almost a century later.

**This is the great achievement of the story told by Angeliki Darlasi: she transforms the story of Drosos, Domna, Savvas, Eudoxia, the refugees of the Asia Minor Catastrophe into a universal one;** because, the fate, the pain, the hope of the uprooted are always and everywhere the same.

[Katerina Zamaria, "Avgi" Newspaper, 08.02.22 printed edition](#)

### "The boy in the loge"

Angeliki Darlasi, multi-award-winning writer with rich theatrical studies, lives and creates in the present. She always has a way of approaching the teenage soul with tenderness, but also with honesty. In her famous book *Bad boy*, which has made a special impression on even the most demanding young and adult readers, she deals with a difficult topic in a piercing manner. Now, she presents another male hero, a boy, "The boy in the loge". In the first book we mentioned, she discusses –among other things– how art can benefit and save, while in this new book she shows how art can comfort.

It is very important that teenage readings touch the youth's soul, but at the same time be significant and purposeful in terms of approaching important topics. A good teenage book can become a beacon, a role model, a life guide and also make the young love to read. Such are Darlasi's books. They have that power.

The story of her new book is inspired by the life of the refugees who fled to Greece in 1922 having lost relatives, friends, property, and part of their own selves. Their new life is not easy, it hides many traps and mishaps, carries insurmountable difficulties.

Since History repeats itself, the theme of the book also touches today's reader who encounters people from foreign countries, from different religions. The theme of immigration and refugees has inspired many artists in multiple ways and this is natural and fatal at the same time. Darlasi creatively filters her subject, focuses where she needs to focus, always keeping in mind the tender audience she is addressing.

Well-designed characters and plot, an evocative atmosphere (since the play takes place in an old and abandoned theatre where the refugees found a shelter), strong images, meaningful and constructive dialogues create suspense and mystery about the fate of the little heroine, the sister of Drossos who is the central hero of the book; all this until a big plot twist appears which is so unexpected that it shakes the reader's consciousness.

Other minor twists and turns follow, but they are part of this tight-knit tragic story. Loss and Memory are the central themes. A child may handle these themes if a writer processes them in an appropriate way, if a writer handles these themes with care.

And how could theatre be missing from a text by Darlasi? Shakespeare enters with his iconic play *The Tempest*, a play of reconciliation and apology; a play that carries the power of the fairy tale. Evdoxoula, a sympathetic heroine in Darlasi's story, wants to stage *The Tempest* with all the means she has and may find. Even though she is struck by fate, she does not stop hoping that the lost girl will be found, that the truth will be revealed. And yet nothing is as it seems. The explanation is that there is often a distance between phenomena and the truth. The explanation –by poetic means– can be given through a timeless verse of the bard from *The Tempest*: "We are such stuff / As dreams are made on". In fact, sometimes dream and reality get entangled; the very same, as in Shakespeare's play(s), happens here. So, the metaphysical dimension to Darlasi's story stands out and sprinkles her characters with magic.

**What characterizes Darlasi's writing is that it is deeply human.** It is not humorous, it is not witty, it is not verbose, and it is not full of verbal fireworks. It has its own ethos and a humanistic character that wins over even the adult readers. It makes us love her well designed heroes and heroines, to think of what it would be like being in their shoes. We identify with them, sympathize with them, we grieve with those who were hurt a lot but managed not only to stand up but also to evolve, staying united in parallel lives.

The author gets to the heart of things while maintaining respect for her young audience. As in *Bad boy*, here too, she presents the harsh side of life, but in the end, she restores her heroes and heroines in the eyes of the readers and ends her story by redeeming the heroes/ines and readers; after putting them through a transformative inner process.

Adapted into a play  
for the Greek National  
Theatre for its 2022  
program

Asimina Xiroyanni, "Frear" literary magazine





## When the statues went away

“ My need to protest about something I had just realized was stifling me. A great truth and a well-hidden, beautiful secret. “It’s just that without them it will be... like I don’t know who I am. ”

The statues of the museum come alive at night. Angelina knows this because they are her best friends: having one and a half hand herself, she looks just like them. Her only real, flesh-and-blood friend is Tiko who, despite being short sighted, can also appreciate the beauty of the statues.

It is October 1940, when World War II starts for Greece. At the museum starts a grand, secret operation to hide the ancient statues under the floors. The two children will help as much as they can despite their disabilities, while trying to protect the statues in their neighborhood too.

A unique anti-war story about identity, friendship, resistance and kindness, which unfolds through alternate narratives between first and third person, revealing a little-known part of history: the heroic effort to hide and secure the statues of the Greek National Archaeological Museum during World War II.

## Reviews

### When the statues went away

I think our literature has acquired a new, classic work. It is the story itself; it is the way the author Angeliki Darlasi approaches it, it is her literary style, the art of her language; all these advocate her work to be considered a classic.

*When the statues went away* tells the story of hiding the exhibits of the Archaeological Museum of Athens, shortly before and shortly after the involvement of our country in the Second World War; a story largely unknown to most of us. A true, fascinating story, clothed in the words and warmth of Angeliki Darlasi’s pen.

The author, in addition to telling us and inscribing in our collective memory the event itself, in addition to reconstructing, in a human-centred way, the chronicle of the period of the Nazis’ Occupation, manages to make us think through a series of bipolar concepts, which are present throughout the story; the issues of whole–imperfect, culture–brutality, memory–oblivion, freedom–slavery, beauty–ugliness, morality–immorality, legality–illegality define the events of the story, but mainly they define its protagonists. A different approach of these concepts than the established one is being presented. Do you have to be aesthetically intact in order to be considered whole? Is illegality ever lawful? How barbaric can a “civilized” person become?

The author writes a story around a historical event, in a way that shows her sensitivity not only to cultural issues, but also to the issue of accepting diversity. Angelina and Tiko are far from the standard of beauty and dexterity, as we generally perceive it, but they manage to overcome their external disabilities, with their kindness and inner wealth. Tiko, this hyper-myopic, can see the hidden beauty in the simple, minor things in everyday life; that beauty that most of us pass by and ignore. Angelina, with the chubby, “cursed” hand, can embrace the beauty of the statues, converse with them, acquire their (moral) stature. For Angelina, the statues are exactly what the etymology of the Greek word “άγαλμα” (i.e., statue) means: “anything that makes one rejoice upon sight”. The statues are her joy, her play, her friends and her happiness.

In addition, for the people who worked to hide the museum's exhibits, the statues, besides being carriers of our historical memory and culture, were medicine for the soul. And they knew well, that if the medicine were to fall into the wrong hands, it might become poison. And they knew well that "if we lose the war and they become theirs (...) even History can change. In time it will be easier for people to forget the truth."

I will also talk about the scene that stunned me in the book. A scene so theatrical, you can almost see it playing out before your eyes i.e. the scene with the women in the museum and the confession of Angelina's mother. Their silent crying and the lullaby they start saying together... A scene strongly reminiscent of a chorus in an ancient tragedy.

"They cried and sang and wrapped the clay figurines in newspapers, carefully, as if they were wrapping babies in their bundles, as if they were lulling again to sleep babies who in the meantime had grown up and had been lost in the unexpected evils that life brings. As if they were shrouding the beloved bodies that they didn't manage to say goodbye to. And their touch on the clay figurines was laden with all the orphaned caresses of the world."

The most important thing that the author achieves through her story is, I think, identified by Alki Zei, who has also written the foreword of the book: "And so, the author tells children, without being pedantic, that Resistance is not achieved only with weapons. There are other things you can do that prove to be as brave deeds as defending a city or blowing up an enemy bridge. (...) And one more thing the author wants to say to young children: Do not forget. For the days to come. For the years to come. No matter how difficult it may be. It's important that they not forget; they need to remember."

[Angeliki Eystathiou, "Paidika Vivlia Blogspot", 25/2/2016](#)



## Reviews

### The statues are in the museum

Friday night, a book launch in our small town. At the same time, my favourite team is playing in the Euroleague. What a dilemma! [...] But I missed it because I got caught up in all the wonderful things I heard at the most interesting book launch ever.

How many of us who were (rightly) outraged by the destruction of Palmyra know about the great operation to hide the statues of the Greek National Archaeological Museum, that started as soon as the war was declared in 1940? Judging by the puzzled looks in the audience and a few raised hands, too few. Why is this heroic concealment so systematically withheld from us? The author (who herself was unaware of the endeavour, as she confessed) decides to write a story about it, having as her heroine a teenage girl who literally grew up inside the museum. Some grown-ups may think that since the historical context and this improbable story became known, one may further research it in more "serious" books and sources. Why bother reading a "teens' book" – we are not children, are we?

During the presentation I was thinking slyly to look in the last pages of the book for bibliography and sources and to buy serious studies on the subject. But the author convinced me to buy her book! Good for her! She said she prefers to write books with children and teenagers as heroes and heroines, because they can

become fascinating literary characters. Even if children and teens don't know as much as adults, they can perceive and understand the same or even more, in a strangely mysterious (for adults) unique way. They can also become incredibly cruel and incredibly loving in a matter of minutes. And that she prefers their point of view. And when an author understands her readers so well, she's sure to write a book that adults will love too.

If there's one thing children hate in books, it's to spend their free time reading preachy texts! And in this particular book there is no trace of that. The author talks about the most contemporary issues that concern us all in a subtle and meaningful way.

Angelina, the heroine of the book, is a girl with one and a half arms – one of her arms below the elbow is malformed. **With an amazing metaphor that I don't often come across, when we have to talk about diversity and tolerance, the author equates the great statues, though dismembered/headless/earless, with the people who are all different from each other.** Just as we have learned (or try) to admire a statue for its beauty and grace, its posture or its "movement", even though it may not be intact, so we should admire people.

*"She saw all those without legs standing upright, she saw all those without heads smiling at her and all those without arms waving "welcome" to her in the nebula, which was now even brighter and more colourful.*

*And it was the first time that girl felt like she belonged somewhere. Maybe it was the first time that she didn't mind that she didn't have two normal hands like ordinary people.*

*On the contrary, she was almost delighted".*

With the same tact, Angeliki Darlasi also talks about the refugees (Angelina's mother escaped from the Asia Minor Catastrophe), the need for people, even in the most violent uprooting, to hold onto objects that will remind them of the world that is crumbling in front of them – like the little sister of Angelina's mother who insisted on taking along some glass toys that you were allowed to play with only when you turned six, old enough to handle them properly. And she, who had just turned six, was ready to enjoy her toys but death was already lurking at the door, she had to leave, her fragile childhood was in danger of being broken forever!

The book is often moving but never melodramatic. Those who read the book will have fun with the adventures of Angelina and her vagabond friend, Tiko, with the coke bottle glasses, her constant companion in the taunts received from the other children in the neighbourhood. Tiko, who was determined to save beauty, the beauty he saw in his everyday life, by stealing the beautiful cornices of the houses of Athens and burying them to also save them from the Nazis.


[...] The deep theme of the book is undoubtedly the highlighting of this great story of occultation, as well as the importance that memory and beauty play in people's lives.

The author said in the presentation that what we go through from time to time can all be explained, as long as we remember it and discuss it without malice and prejudice.

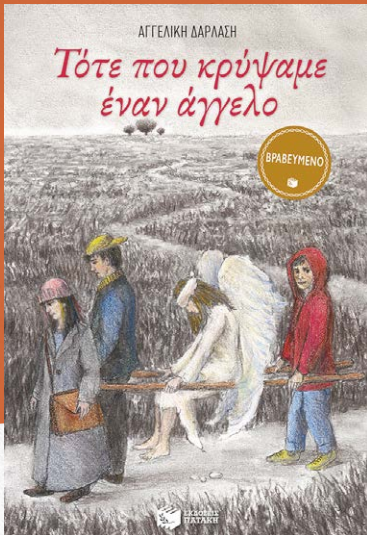
The author lives in Athens and will probably continue her presentations there. I learned that in each presentation, an archaeologist who brings the historical context to life and a teacher who talks about the text and the children's reactions

when they read it in class are asked to speak; **it was mentioned yesterday that a student who has learning difficulties and struggles with reading asked to be given a copy of the book and read it within three days!** The author, on her part, will tell you about her personal stories with the statues of her childhood. The edition of *Metaichmio* is very good, with a foreword by Alki Zei and an amazing cover that brings to mind chess motifs, which I personally cannot ignore. If you find out that she is giving a presentation near you, don't miss it – and don't miss the book. Even if your favourite soccer team is playing!

[Odysseas Mouzilis, in "Piperi kai spasmenes grammes"](#)



The book is being performed as a play by many schools on the occasion of the national anniversary of World War II.



## The time we hid an angel

“ On that slope, three children and an angel, refugees of earth and heaven, sleep in one another's arms. Maybe they are dreaming... That's all they've got left that's theirs... their dreams. ”

*“I just saw an angel, falling to earth. Rain must have swept him away!” said Rallou but, as usual, none of us paid much attention to her; Toto and I were too busy counting raindrops. The next day, though, we found the angel in the cornfields. We hid him in my grandma's hencoop, and when everyone found out about our secret, we decided to show him off, in the hope of earning some money to send him back home. We were betrayed: the police took him away and finally the angel was sold to the circus. So, we ran away, determined to get the angel back...*

Four villages (of the East, West, South and North), a school in the middle of nowhere, the cornfields, three trees and a dry landscape, a circus with an old tent stage the scene for this story, in a universal no (wo)man's land.

A teacher who dreams of a better future for the children, a crook, a violent uncle looking for a treasure, a policeman who secretly plays the violin, the master of a circus whose life has changed because of a banana skin, a beautiful acrobat, an old librarian lady and a blind poet who steal books from the city's library are some of the adults who take part in the story, offering their own point of view; adults that sometimes are for and sometimes against the children's efforts to save a wounded angel... just before war comes once more to this land.

A road story of magical realism; where narration alternates between first and third person, creating cinematic suspense. Great adventure and lyrical emotion are combined to form this deeply anti-war, humanistic hymn to friendship and childhood.

## Review

In the flood of books on the market some stand out, here and there, some small gems, books that shine, with originality, full of beauty. And they satisfy the most difficult reader, especially children and young people. I'm talking about Angeliki Darlasi's book "The time we hid an angel", a story impressive in conception, structure and narration. The narrative device, which functions as a cohesive thread in the course of the novel, is an angel (a winged creature) that fell from the sky on a rainy day and was found in the cornfields by the children: Rallou, Sergio and Toto. From this point the adventures begin. Angeliki Darlasi (awarded with a State Prize for children's literature for "Dream Guardians") wrote a book addressed not only to Greek children but to the children and young people of every country – beyond the narrow and restrictive borders of states and nations. From this point of view the novel has a universal and anthropological character, something that corresponds to open modern societies. And it deserves to be read by young and adults; and for them to reflect accordingly."

[V.D. Anagnostopoulos, Professor emeritus University of Thessaly,](#)  
["Index Magazine" No 36, 9/12/2009, p.53](#)



## Review extracts

### **Metal amarantns, wounded angels and the primeval gaze - On the occasion of the novel "The time we hid an angel" by Angeliki Darlasi**

I started sinking deeper and deeper into the dampness of fields and homes devoid of benign adult presence, sensing the children's world increasingly detached from that of the adults; a world which was described, with some exceptions, as dangerously dark and unforgiving. So I felt that this primordial landscape where impulses take precedence and emotions seem to be the privilege of only some children, where soon the magical element will confront reality and (seemingly) be defeated (although the defeat is, in our case, nothing more than a prelude to a coming victory, at least on an individual level), then this imposing landscape, which Darlasi sets up so well, brings to mind that which the Polish Olga Tokarczuk had set up in 1996 in her novel "Primeval and Other Times"!

[Philippos Mandilaras \(awarded children's and teenage books writer, translator, editor, reader and screenwriter\) at Patakis publications' blog](#)

### **On *The time we hid an angel***

The author begins the narrative with an image that all of us have experienced. Behind the glass, on a rainy day, a group of children are counting the drops of heavy rain. One of them, the taciturn and timid Rallou, within the raindrops sees an... angel falling from the sky. "Rain must have swept him away" she says to the others. This utopian phrase, a pleasant surprise for the reader, does not convince her classmates who glance at her fleetingly and continue counting. Hours later, Rallou and her slightly older Sergios, over in the cornfields, will retrieve a wounded creature (angel?), which will be the cause of fights and conflicts for many, since each will claim it for their own personal reasons. The author with figurative fluency sets up a story that keeps the reader's interest until the last page. A very strong point is the dual narrative. The main body of the story is narrated in the first person by Sergios, the protagonist of the book, and the "inset" narrative parts that are inserted like playing cards, are narrated by a third person. The different narrative voice is also indicated by the different type of font used in each text. This game favours the development of the myth, since the "second" narrative is another point of view of the same event, but at the same time a prelude to what follows. The reader enjoys a staged narration, which Darlasi possesses well due to her studies in theatre, and which develops the myth in a special way. Through the succession and development of events, situations, social characters and values emerge. The author gives us a powerful story with writing techniques that raise the quality of Greek children's literature. In the 226 pages, characters are developed and fleshed out, intentions are revealed, and the social indecency and suffering of war are outlined. The book is a surprise, as it outlines with realism but also with a dreamy fairy-tale spirit, issues of a humanitarian type. The novel is aimed at children aged 9 and up, as noted on the cover. But the quality of the writing also vindicates the adult reader, who as a mediator will find himself enjoying a genuine literary text that is poorly specified in terms of age as children's reading.

[Tassoula Tsilimeni, Assistant Professor University of Thessaly, \*Texts Online magazine of children's literature\*, Issue 10](#)



## Dream Guardians

“Tears rolled down her cheeks and a little sadness as small as the head of a pin stung her heart. But now Ersi was strong enough to bear this grief. She still had one dream left...”

Is there, in another time and space, somebody who guards our dreams?

Is there somebody who may keep the dreams of the world alive?

In a faraway land, beyond the edge of the world as we know it, a land lost in the depths of the mind and forgotten in the vastness of the heart, a land which is not found on any map, perhaps there might be... Dream Guardians. They are quite the same as common people, with the difference that they have strong and big, glass-made wings, in order to fly the peoples' dreams high, traveling in magical dreamspace.

In the Land of the Dream Guardians Ersi is born. Her name (in ancient Greek) means “dewdrop”. Ersi, in contrast with the other Dream Guardians, has small and weak wings. Does this mean that she is not going to be able to fly, to protect dreams? Is any child in the Land of Humans going to be left behind without dreams?

The story like a fairy tale is being set in a utopia but it is really an allegory for our own imperfect world along with its social inequalities and dysfunction... A modern fairy tale that resembles life; about diversity, tolerance, individuality, mutual respect, friendship, love and of course, the power of dreams.

It is a timeless, universal book.

Evgenios Trivizas, Children's books Awarded Author,  
President of the State Prize Committee 2004

(extract from the minutes of the State Prize committee's rationale)

In a time, like ours, when dreams seen to be in danger, Angeliki Darlasi comes to remind us what dreams are and what they are made of. Its heroes, the Dream Guardians, residents of a faraway land, are charged with the strange and great task of guarding the dreams of ordinary people. Every person from the moment they are born gets their own Guardian, the protector of their dreams, and the Dream Guardians with their big and strong wings take their precious cargo to the magical Dreamland. However, the country of the Dream Guardians is divided. Divided into the “competent” and the “inferior”. The former are “privileged”. The latter, with small and weak wings, cannot fulfill their duty in the “proper” manner, and are condemned to live in the ghetto, on the edge of the country. The author, through a narrative full of lyrical and imaginative elements that captivate, talks to us about the right that people have to dream. At the same time, it emphasizes the aspect of diversity and how members of society can be separated based on unfair and inhumane criteria. [...] It focusses on the uncontrollable aspects that hatred and envy can take fueled by the idea that some people may be better than others. With many allegorical elements that will make children think about the multiculturalism that increasingly characterizes modern societies and what means people can use to bridge differences and embrace weaknesses.

Konstantina Georgoulia, *Eleftherotipia* newspaper

## Review extracts

## Review extracts

The Dream Guardians! A modern fairy tale not unlike the real world, with its strong and powerful people and the weak living on the fringes. The author mentally transports us to a fantasy world with elements from reality and strong symbolism. Dream Guardians take on the role of guardian angels who protect every child that comes into the world and the dream symbolizes faith and hope for the future. Life often hides difficulties, dangers and difficult paths that you are called to navigate and leave the evil behind like a nightmare that disappeared at dawn. The book wins over both young and grown up readers.

[Dora Pouri, "Elniplex" magazine](#)

The concept is strong, you don't forget it. [...] The images from this otherworldly state are also powerful, but they accurately echo the weaknesses of human society. [...] Strong lyrical tone, emphasis on atmosphere, colours, shading, all lead to the enjoyment of detail, to a slow reading, even if the plot is tightly bound and solid.

[Eleni Svoronou, "Anagnostis" literary magazine](#)

The second book continues the little masterpiece that was the first "Dream Guardians". Reading the sequel, I find it hard to tell which one I prefer (after all, I've never been able to single out any one of the seven Harry Potters as better than the others). [...] The narrative quality of Darlasi becomes evident. [...] Lingual beauty ripples through unsuspecting phrases [...] Thus, by winking at children with a trick, one teaches them what style means. Darlasi knows this, as very few do.

[Maria Topali, at Kathimerini newspaper](#)

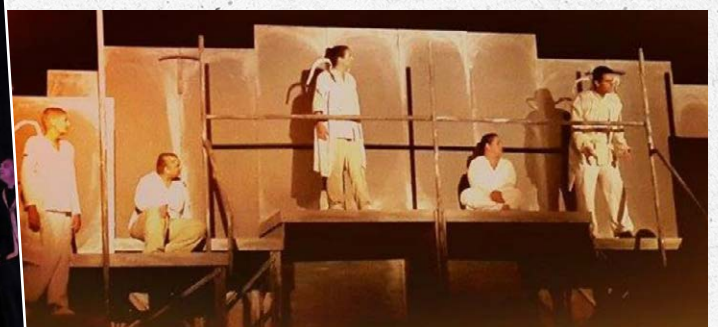
I have NEVER cried so much over a book. I haven't cried with Nobel laureates, with bestsellers, with sad movies, as much as I have cried with this damned book. I've read it three times, and each time I've been a wreck for days. Little Ersi touched my soul. I was wretched after the symbolic ending. I never expected a children's book to make me suffer so terribly... I adore it.

[A reader's review in Goodreads](#)

One of my favorite books when I was little, honestly don't miss out if you get it in a bookstore! The messages and the story still speak to me.

[A reader's review in Goodreads](#)

Adapted into a play for the Theatrical group of the Municipality of Moschato-Tavros "En drasei" and Theatrical group KEPEV.



## Books sent to the jurors in pdf attached to the dossier

### BOOKS IN PDF

**Από μακριά/From far away**

**Το αγόρι στο θεωρείο/The boy in the loge**

**Όταν έφυγαν τ' αγάλματα/When the statues went away**

**Τότε που κρύψαμε έναν άγγελο/The time we hid an angel**

**Ονειροφύλακες/Dream Guardians**

### TRANSLATIONS OF THE BOOKS IN PDF

**From far away/Από μακριά**

Full translation in English

**The boy in the loge/Το αγόρι στο θεωρείο**

Full translation in English

**The time we hid an angel/Τότε που κρύψαμε έναν άγγελο**

Full translation in English

**When the statues went away/Όταν έφυγαν τ' αγάλματα**

Full translation in English

**Dream Guardians/Ονειροφύλακες**

Extracts translated into English

**Los Guardianes de Sueños/Ονειροφύλακες**

Full translation in Spanish