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‘Gavdos: The House’. A theatre/archaeology narrative and pieces of knowledge of diachronic home life

On the Katalymata hillside, on the island of Gavdos, off the south western Cretan shores, the University of Crete has been excavating a spacious building complex dating back to the Bronze Age. In this paper, we discuss a theatrical performance inspired by this discovery, and first presented at the archaeological site in 2012.

Created by young members of the research team, who are themselves both archaeologists and actors, the play is based mainly: on the accounts in the excavation notebooks of living through the prehistoric stratigraphic trenches, and on natives’ memories of happenings at home. Combining this local experience with wider cognitive pieces of knowledge, philosophical, literary and other, produced a structured narrative of domestic life on the island through time – and some of its aspects and meanings, theoretical, material, cultural.

The event aimed to introduce to the Gavdiot community a comprehensive perception of ancient Katalymata as a familiar past animated space in its territory, rather than a secluded domain of its ‘cultural heritage’. It was also intended to spur both students and senior excavators to experience the ancient dwelling as a long lasting embodied *topos*, allowing for alternative interdisciplinary approaches and fresh insights.

Since its premiere, the work has been touring in Greece and elsewhere in Europe and adapted for different media, as a performative guided tour played in historic houses, a lecture performance for conferences and art venues, and an audio-visual installation in museums of contemporary art.

We submit this abstract for a full length paper (20 min plus question time)