Joanna Kłos, "Entry on: TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series Behind the Curtain: 1) Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece / 2) The Battle of the Greek Tragedies by TED , Tim Hansen, Melanie Sirof", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/73. Entry version as of November 05, 2026.

TED , Tim Hansen , Melanie Sirof

TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series Behind the Curtain: 1) Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece / 2) The Battle of the Greek Tragedies

Online (2013)

TAGS: Aeschylus Athens Chorus Greek Music Greek Theatre Muses Oedipus Philocles Poetry Sophocles Thespis Tragedy (Ancient)



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.



General information	
Title of the work	TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series Behind the Curtain: 1) Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece / 2) The Battle of the Greek Tragedies
Country of the First Edition	Online
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2013
First Edition Details	*Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece*. Tim Hansen, Educator, Hector Herrera, Director, Pazit Cahlon, Producer, Nick Sewell, Sound Designer. TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series Behind the Curtain [1]. ed.ted.com, December 3, 2013, 4:46 (accessed: AUgust 21, 2018). *The Battle of the Greek Tragedies*. Melanie Sirof, Educator, Andrew Foerster, Director, Devin Polaski, Sound Designer. TED-Ed Lessons Worth Sharing, Series Behind the Curtain [2]. ed.ted.com, June 1, 2015, 5:06 (accessed: August 21, 2018).
Running time	4:46 min / 5:06 min

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Official Website	*Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece* (accessed: August 21, 2018); *The Battle of the Greek Tragedies* (accessed: August 21, 2018).
Available Onllne	*Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece* (accessed: August 21, 2018); *The Battle of the Greek Tragedies* (accessed: August 21, 2018).
Genre	Animated films, Instructional and educational works, Internet videos, Short films
Author of the Entry	Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

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Creators

TED (Company)

Logo retrieved from Wikipedia, public domain (accessed: December 8, 2021).

TED: Technology, Entertainment, Design (accessed: July 6, 2018) is a media organization focused on "ideas worth spreading", which organizes conferences and creates online talks for free distribution. One of its initiatives is TED-Ed (ed.ted.com), an online platform hosting short interactive lessons. Each lesson consists of four sections:

– *Watch* – animated educational video (available also on YouTube);

– *Think* – a short quiz about the video's content;

– *Dig Deeper* – a concise text on where to search for more information on the topic (providing mainly hyperlinks to educational websites rather than "traditional" bibliographical references);

– *Discuss* – a forum with two types of discussions: Guided (i.e. created by the educators), and Free (i.e. created by the viewers).

Prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Tim Hansen (Author of lyrics, Composer)

Tim Hansen is an Australian composer and songwriter. He graduated in Theatre & Media at Charles Sturt University in Bathurst, New South Wales and in Composition, first at the Australian National University in Canberra (BA), then at New York University (MA). His music is largely inspired by storytelling: contemporary as well as historical and mythical narratives. He is also interested in education, apart from creating lessons for TED, he is engaged in the *Musician in the Classroom* program and *Soundfly* – an educational online music

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project. Hansen performs in W4 New Music collective; among their compositions there is an oratorio based on *Moby Dick*, and *Cellophilia*; he also worked with many others music and theatre groups and companies in Australia and USA. He also received the Frank Ponton Memorial Prize, the Darwin International Guitar Festival Composition Prize and an ArtStart Grant from the Australia Council for the Arts.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: July 2, 2018)

Profile at the australianmusiccentre.com.au (accessed: July 2, 2018)

Bio prepared by Joanna Kłos, University of Warsaw, joanna.klos@student.uw.edu.pl



Melanie Sirof

Melanie Sirof is a teacher at Wellington C. Mepham High School in New York. In 2013 she was awarded the grand prize in the Teacher Division of the 13th Annual School Essay Contest, sponsored by Long Island Presidents' Council of New York State United Teachers for the essay *How School Makes Me Feel Good To Be Me*.

Sources:

Profile at RateMyTeacher.com (accessed: March 30, 2017).

D. De Souza, Bellmore-Merrick CHSD Teacher Wins Essay Contest, *Patch.com*, 16.08.2013, (accessed: March 30, 2017).

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Additional information

Summary

Music and Creativity in Ancient Greece

The video states that contemporary society is obsessed with music – it is present in our religion, entertainment, emotional expression. Things worked this way also for ancient Greeks, even more so, as importance of music in their lives makes us "tame by comparison." Then the ancient myth about Muses is introduced: they were the deities inspiring the artists and each of them had a specific area of interest, which included not only musical arts, but also other creative intellectual endeavours. In ancient Greece, music was the common element of creative performances, such as poetry, dance, theatre, and presenting history; astronomy was associated with music as well because according to the Greeks the planets also created their sound, and together "composed" the harmony of the universe. Music was also of help in Greek medicine, sport, and daily work; and it could affect a person's *ethos*. Plato's opinions on the topic are quoted – only the music promoting intelligence and courage should be appreciated: the kinds of music that differ from the commonly accepted convention can lead to anarchy. As Plato's argument has often been used in recent decades to depreciate some un-classical kinds of music, the narrator finishes the lesson with a provocative question: "What do you think Plato would say about the music you're listening to? Is it beneficial to your ethos, or will it degenerate you?"

There are no classical motifs or references in the non-video parts of the lesson.

As at March 30, 2017 the video has been viewed 236, 148 times; it gained 2887 "thumbs up" and 119 comments on YouTube.

The Battle of the Greek Tragedies

The video is set in the convention similar to a football game – there are two commentators, Seacrestopolis and Mario Lopedokia, who make remarks about what is happening on the stage of the Theatre of Dionysus where 17,000 viewers are gathered. They have all came here to watch the contest between Aeschylus and Sophocles – but this serves only as a frame to present a short outline of the evolution of Greek tragedy. At first we see the retrospective scene from the previous week's contest: a chorus of 50 people travels across the

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stage. In today's performance something changes: one of the performers steps out and changes his mask – it is Thespis, the first actor in history. Then Aeschylus is about to present his art, abundant both in violence (not shown directly on the stage) and in dramatic tension. There are fewer people in the chorus than before, and a "revolutionary" thing happens: not one, but two actors appear on the stage. This is why the chorus has fewer members, as after Aeschylus' innovation, dialogues started to prevail over chorus' songs in the dramatic structure. Later, Sophocles takes the stage with his *Oedipus Rex* – he adds another actor, so now there are three people performing multiple roles. Oedipus' story is briefly summarized by the commentators and called "the most tragic." The King's terrible fate has not been shown on the stage but was reported by the messenger (although the commentators do not use the term *rhesis angelike*). At the end, neither Aeschylus nor Sophocles win the contest – to the disappointment of both commentators, the winner is Philocles.

The section *Dig Deeper* contains links to educational classical websites, such as classics.mit.edu (accessed: August 21, 2018).

As at March 30, 2017 the video has been viewed 173994 times; it gained 2195 "thumbs up" and 96 comments on YouTube.

Analysis

The videos serve as a didactic tool, which assists young people learn basic information about ancient culture, but also to reflect on the conclusions while interacting with the material's providers through discussions and YouTube comments. This helps to preserve the classical world as a vivid and important topic in contemporary educational discourse.

While the video on music compares contemporary and ancient people and their musical "obsessions", the video on tragedy focuses almost entirely on presenting classical Greek culture.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Aeschylus Athens Chorus Greek Music Greek Theatre Muses Oedipus Philocles Poetry Sophocles Thespis Tragedy (Ancient)

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Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	History Knowledge Learning Modernity Theatre Tradition Transformation

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