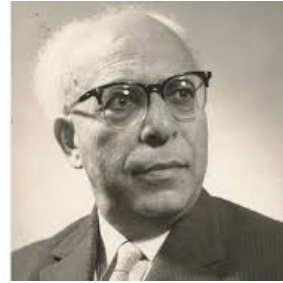


## GROUP 1 – WORK 1



**COMPOSER: SOLON MICHAELIDES**

**WORK TITLE: *Suite Grecque for Violoncello and Piano: I Allegretto***

Composed in 1963

*Suite Grecque* was composed in 1963 when Solon Michaelides was residing in Greece. It is a Suite in four movements: *Allegretto*, *Andantino*, *In Memoriam* and *Allegretto non troppo e giocoso*. The first movement, *Allegretto*, has a 2/4 time signature and is in A Aeolian mode. Its main theme is based on a traditional folk Cypriot song named “Foni Tillirkotissa”<sup>1</sup>.

**The movement is in ternary form (ABA’):**

**Section A: bars (measures) 1-18 – *main theme appears***

**Section B: bars (measures) 18 [last quaver]-61 -**

**Section A’: bars (measures) 61-76 – *main theme reappears***

### **Section A – b. 1-18**

Section A starts with a four-bar introduction in the piano part and then the main theme (Verse and chorus from the song “Foni Tillirkotissa”<sup>1</sup>) appears in the cello part. The opening ascending interval of a 5th, the characteristic rhythmic patterns, the repeated notes and the melismatic character of the melody are typical of Cypriot folk music. Listen to an interpretation of the Cypriot song Foni Tillirkotissa: <https://youtu.be/enpnd76ChnU?feature=shared>

Musical score for Cello, showing the verse and chorus of the main theme. The score is in 2/4 time and A Aeolian mode. The first staff is labeled 'verse' and the second staff is labeled 'chorus'. The third staff continues the melody. The music features repeated notes and melismatic character.

<sup>1</sup> “Fones” (voices, plural of the word “Foni”) refer to different melodies that are characteristic in different areas of Cyprus. “Tillirkotissa” refers to a woman who comes from Tillirea, an area in the northwest Cyprus.

The piano accompanies the melody. The harmony of the piano part is very different to that of the original song which has only primary chords, I, IV and V chords.

It is worth noticing that in several instances Solon Michaelides uses chords that consist only of the root and the fifth of the chord, without thus being able to be identified as major or minor (*please see the piano part in bars 18, 22 and 27 below where the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the A and D chords is omitted* ). This is in fact a reference to the way of playing chords on the Cypriot lute (*laouto*) which is one of the characteristic musical instruments of Cyprus.

### Section B – b. 18 [last quaver]-61

In section B, Michaelides uses segments of the main theme in different variations.

For example, in bars 18-22, the piano plays a segment of the main theme in staccatos by alternating the right and left hand while the cello plays a variation of the opening motif. This variation is repeated in bars 22-27.

Musical score for bars 18-22. The score is in 3/4 time and features a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part is marked *pizz.* (pizzicato) and *leggiero* (light). The piano part consists of staccato chords alternating between the right and left hands. The cello part plays a variation of the opening motif. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the first measure of the piano part.

Musical score for bars 24-27. The score is in 3/4 time and features a cello line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of staccato chords alternating between the right and left hands. The cello part plays a variation of the opening motif.

## Section A' – b. 61-76

The opening bars of this section (b. 61-69) are the same as those at the beginning of the piece (bars 4-13). Then, the melody of the chorus is split between the piano and the cello in alternation:

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the Cello (Vc.) and Piano (Pno.) parts for bars 61-69. The Cello part begins with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking and then switches to *arco* (arco). The Piano part features a complex accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands. The second system shows bars 70-76. The Cello part continues with a melodic line, and the Piano part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

**Video recording:** <https://youtu.be/GfLp8nUJv18?feature=shared> (0:00-1:53)

**Duration:** c. 2'

## **BIOGRAPHY – SOLON MICHAELIDES (1905-1979)**

Solon Michaelides was one of the most important Cypriot composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as he introduced massive changes and innovation to the musical life of the island.

Born in 1905 he started learning to play guitar and mandolin in primary school and later attended violin and Byzantine music lessons. He studied remotely at Trinity College of Music (London U.K.) and later continued his studies in Paris at the Ecole Normale de Musique where he studied harmony, counterpoint and piano. He also studied composition at the Schola Cantorum of Paris. After finishing his studies in 1934, he returned to Cyprus with the intention to improve the musical life of the island. He founded the Limassol Conservatory and its orchestra, and later the “Aris” mixed Choir, which is still active until today. Michaelides was the first musician to conduct live classical performances in Cyprus.

Michaelides' compositions were performed on various radio stations in Athens. He also wrote a harmony textbook called *The Harmony of the Contemporary Music* and the *Encyclopedia of Ancient Greek Music*.

In 1957, he became director at the Thessaloniki State Conservatory in Greece where he taught advanced music theory classes. In 1959, the Thessaloniki Symphony Orchestra was created and had its first performances under the baton of Michaelides. He also conducted other orchestras in Greece and other countries like France, Switzerland, Germany, Romania, America etc.

Michaelides composed a variety of works for which you can find information at

<https://www.limassol.org.cy/uploads/e102269304.pdf>

where there is an extended biography with life and work details.

The Cultural Foundation ‘Solon Michaelides’, founded after the composer’s death in Limassol, has established an instrumental competition named after him, honouring his contribution and oeuvre to the Cypriot and Greek School of Composers of his time.