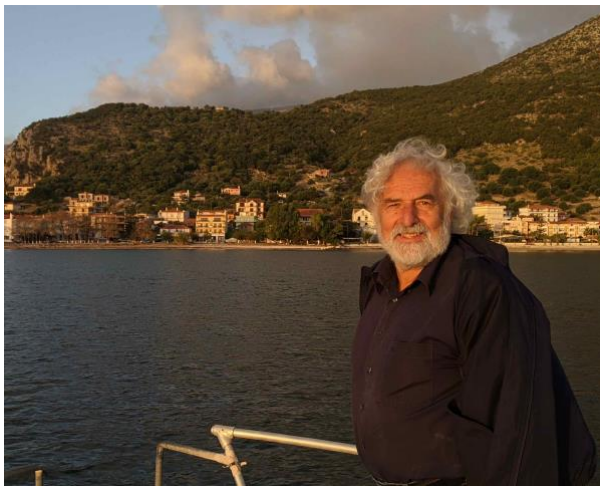




**ODYSSEUS RETURNS Premieres  
Wednesday, August 28 on PBS  
and Streaming on PBS.org and the PBS app**

**An Amateur Historian in Greece Embarks on His Own Odyssey to  
Convince the World That He's Discovered the Tomb of  
Homer's Hero**



*Makis Metaxas in Kefalonia, Greece.  
Credit: James Younger/ Revelations Entertainment*

ARLINGTON, VA; August 6, 2024 – Is King Odysseus, the Trojan Horse-building genius of Homer's epic poem the *Odyssey*, merely a fictional figure in classic literature? Or was he a real, flesh-and-blood man who lived and died in ancient Greece? That's the central question explored in **ODYSSEUS RETURNS**, which follows the quest of amateur historian Makis Mataxas to convince the world that he's discovered the tomb of Odysseus. Instead of being celebrated, his findings trigger a storm of controversy and an archaeological mystery that spans three decades. Directed by Seth Ward and James Younger, with readings from Homer

narrated by Morgan Freeman, the documentary premieres Wednesday, August 28, 2024, 9:00 – 11:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS, [PBS.org](#) and the [PBS app](#).

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus wanders the world for two decades before returning to his beloved homeland. For thousands of years, historians have believed the Greek hero's home was the island of Ithaca, known today as Ithaki. Although archaeologists discovered the remains of Troy, Mycenae, and other cities of Bronze Age Mycenaean civilization in the 19th century, they have continued to search in vain for almost 200 years on Ithaca, where no ruins of an ancient city have ever been found.

So, in 1991, when Metaxas, mayor of a village on Ithaki's neighboring island of Kefalonia, claims that clues in the *Odyssey* led him right to the door of a 3,000-year-old Mycenaean king's tomb, archeologists are skeptical. But an excavation by Greece's leading archeologist, Lazaros Kolonas, unearths a seal stone carved out of rock crystal, a type of jewelry used by Mycenaean nobility to prove their identity and one of the most important artifacts of the Bronze Age. The design on the seal bears an uncanny resemblance to a design described by Homer on a prized possession of Odysseus.

But instead of these history-making findings earning worldwide acclaim, they ignite a firestorm of controversy. Citizens of Ithaki, who passionately believe their island to be the homeland of Odysseus, become furious at the prospect of losing their ancient claim — and major draw for tourism. The battle becomes all the more pointed when Metaxas is elected governor of both islands. Political rivalries between Ithaki and Kefalonia lead to the discovery being swept aside and unpublished. The ancient treasures taken from the tomb are locked in a dusty museum storeroom for almost 30 years.

Now, after three decades of suppression, the mystery comes full circle. University of Kansas classics professor John Younger, the world's foremost expert on Mycenaean and Minoan seal stones, comes to Kefalonia to study the seal found in the tomb. And, after more than two decades away, archeologist Lazaros Kolonas returns to the site, finally agreeing to go on the record about whether this tomb really belonged to Homer's legendary king, Odysseus.

**ODYSSEUS RETURNS** will stream simultaneously with broadcast and be available on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the PBS app, available on iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO.

**ODYSSEUS RETURNS** is produced by James Younger and Kelly Mendelsohn. Executive Producers are Lori McCreary, Morgan Freeman and Seth Ward.

### **About Revelations Entertainment**

Morgan Freeman and Lori McCreary's Revelations Entertainment mission is to reveal truth. Academy Award-winning actor Morgan Freeman and Emmy-nominated producer Lori McCreary produced the hit series "MADAM SECRETARY." Revelations' film credits include the Award-winning "INVICTUS" and "5 FLIGHTS UP." Accolades include an Emmy nomination for "THE STORY OF GOD," three Emmy Award nominations for "THROUGH THE WORMHOLE," a Peabody Award for the "30 for 30" episode "THE 16th MAN" and an Academy Award nomination for Morgan Freeman in the film "INVICTUS."

### **About PBS**

[PBS](https://www.pbs.org), with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 36 million adults on linear primetime television, more than 16 million users on PBS-owned streaming platforms, 53 million viewers on YouTube, and 60 million people view PBS content on social media, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs and to take front-row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS's broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to [PBS LearningMedia](https://www.pbs.org/learningmedia) for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media

brand, [PBS KIDS](#) helps children 2-8 build critical skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality content on TV — including a PBS KIDS channel — and streaming free on [pbskids.org](#) and the [PBS KIDS Video app](#), games on the [PBS KIDS Games app](#), and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](#), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](#) or by following [PBS Communications on X](#).

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