

**HOLLAND
FESTIVAL 2018**



**Kinan Azmeh, Ibrahim Keivo,
Dima Orsho, Moslem Rahal, Jules Buckley
Special guest: Eric Vloeimans**

**METROPOLE ORKEST
& SOLOISTS OF THE
SYRIAN BIG BAND**

INFO

FRI 8, SAT 9 JUNE 2018

starting time 8 pm

venue Koninklijk Theater Carré

running time 2 hours, including one interval

introduction 7:15 pm, by Gerard Steeghs

PROGRAMME

Me Beriyas Te Kirlyha

Ghani Mirzo, Ibrahim Kevo
arrangement Wolf Kerschek

Allala

arrangement Wolf Kerschek

Sabiha

arrangement Wolf Kerschek

Those Forgotten on the Banks of the Euphrates

Dima Orsho

Tragoudi (2018)

Calliope Tsoupaki
solisten: Eric Vloeimans, Kinan Azmeh
world premiere

Trip to Ghouta

Dima Orsho
arrangement Wolf Kerschek

Dabkeh

Kareem Roustom

Song for Syria

Eric Vloeimans

Hidwa

Dima Orsho
arrangement Wolf Kerschek

Fantasy in three characters

Kinan Azmeh

Wedding

Kinan Azmeh

CREDITS

music

Kinan Azmeh, Ibrahim Keivo, Dima Orsho, Kareem Roustom, Calliope Tsoupaki, Eric Vloeimans

conductor

Jules Buckley

arrangements

Wolf Kerschek

soloists

Kinan Azmeh, Ibrahim Keivo, Dima Orsho, Moslem Rahal, Eric Vloeimans

performed by

Metropole Orkest:

1st violin – Arlia de Ruiten*, Vera Laporeva, Sarah Koch, Denis Koenders, Pauline Terlouw, David Peijnenborgh, Christina Knoll, Françoise van Varsseveld

2nd violin – Herman van Haaren, Wim Kok, Jasper van Rosmalen, Ruben Margarita, Ewa Zbyszynska, Merel Jonker, Gideon Nelissen

viola – Mieke Honingh, Julia Jowett, Iris Schut, Isabella Petersen, Adriaan Breunis

cello – Emile Visser, Maarten Jansen, Annie Tangberg, Jascha Albracht

double bass – Erik Winkelmann, Arend Liefkes

harp – Joke Schonewille

flute – Mariël van den Bos, Janine Abbas

oboe – Maxime le Minter

saxophones – Marc Scholten, Paul van der Feen, Leo Janssen, Sjoerd Dijkhuizen, Max Boeree

horn – Pieter Hunfeld

trumpet – Ray Bruinsma, Nico Schepers, Erik Veldkamp, Angelo Verploegen

trombone – Jan Oosting, Pablo Martinez, Jan Bastiani

bass trombone – Martin van den Berg

percussion/drums – Murk Jiskoot, Edwin van der Wolf, Alper Kekec

drums – Martijn Vink

guitar – Peter Tiehuis

bass – Aram Kersbergen

piano/synthesizer – Jasper Soffers

coproduction

Koninklijk Theater Carré, Holland Festival, Metropole Orkest

patron

FONDS 21

production partner



coproduction

CARRÉ



**METROPOLE
ORKEST**

PROGRAMME NOTES

'The idea is to give the audience a glimpse of Syria's musical riches. And of what Syria might sound like if there wasn't a war on.' So says Hannibal Saad, who founded the Syrian Big Band (Syria's first big band) in 2004 in Damascus and together with the Holland Festival has initiated this concert in which the Metropole Orkest is playing with several Syrian soloists who have performed with a number of soloists from the Syrian Big Band.

Most of the music this evening comes from the area between the Tigris and Euphrates, known in Arabic as 'the island', al-Jazira. For centuries, this area has been a patchwork of cultures and peoples: Anatolian tribes, Arabs, Armenians, Syrian Christians, Bedouins, Kurds, Turks and Yezidis. Apart from living alongside each other, these groups have also influenced each other. Several of the songs featuring in the concert are found in the repertoire of various cultures. One example is the opening song *Allala*, an ode to the moon, that possibly dates from the time before the rise of Christianity and Islam, and which is heard all across the Middle East.

Solo musicians from Syria also play an important role in this concert: mezzo soprano Dima Orsho, clarinetist Kinan Azmeh, singer Ibrahim Kevo, and Moslem Rahal on ney (a reed flute). Dutch jazz trumpeter Eric Vloeimans also features prominently. He has not before performed with the Syrian Big Band but has often played with Kinan Azmeh.

Apart from traditional material, the concert also includes new compositions. Dutch-Greek composer Calliope Tsoupaki has written a double concert for Kinan Azmeh and Eric Vloeimans, who some say can give his trumpet the soft, melancholy timbre of an Armenian duduk. Vloeimans will also perform *Song for Syria*, a composition he had already written for the Metropole Orkest. When Tsoupaki proposed to write a solo concert for Vloeimans, he suggested that he should perform a double concert with Kinan Azmeh.

Works by Kinan Azmeh also feature, and Dima Orsho will sing her own songs *Those Forgotten on the banks of the Euphrates*, *Hidwa*, and *Trip to Gouta*. The orchestra will play one of Kareem Roustom's festive pieces called *Dabkeh*; a dabke is a folk dance from the Middle East, which is typically performed at joyous occasions.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



The Metropole Orkest (MO) plays jazz, pop, world music and film scores, and has shared the stage with legends such as Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Pat Metheny, Brian Eno, Herbie Hancock, The Basement Jaxx and Bono. The MO invests just as much in playing with the next generation of stars like Caro Emerald, Laura Mvula, Robert Glasper, Woodkid, Snarky Puppy and Gregory Porter. Under the helm of the young British chief conductor Jules Buckley MO seeks to challenge boundaries of current symphonic pop and jazz. In recent years, the MO

won three Grammy Awards. The MO is a regular guest at the Holland Festival and played among others with Woodkid, Antony & The Johnsons and Markus Stockhausen.



Composer and conductor **Jules Buckley** is a musical pioneer who pushes the boundaries of contemporary genres. He is the Chief Conductor of the Metropole Orkest, whose highlights include a Grammy

Award for *Sylva*, their lauded collaboration with Snarky Puppy, and groundbreaking collaborations with Quincy Jones for the BBC Proms, Henrik Schwarz for the Amsterdam Dance Event, Kurt Elling, Tori Amos, Markus Stockhausen, Michael Kiwanuka, Kandace Springs and Basement Jaxx. Buckley is also the co-founder of The Heritage Orchestra, a flexible chamber ensemble, dedicated to performing new music with a daring approach to crossing and linking musical genres. Ever the musical agitator, Buckley's work has led to collaborations, recordings and live projects with an astonishing range of musical collaborators including Massive Attack, Arctic Monkeys, John Cale, Emeli Sandé, Hollie McNish, Anoushka Shankar, Laura Marling, Benjamin Clementine, Ibrahim Maalouf, Dizzee Rascal, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and Eric Vloeimans.



Founded in 2004, the **Syrian Big Band** soon developed into a jazz orchestra with an oriental identity. Members of the ensemble write their own compositions and arrangements, and experiment with

new ways of combining jazz with a diverse range of musical genres: world music, contemporary and classical Western music and traditional Arab and Syrian music. The Syrian Big Band has made an important contribution to a growing interest in jazz among Syrian musicians. It has also become an incubator for new talent. The Syrian Big Band has played at a number of prestigious festivals including several editions of Morgenland in Osnabrück. The orchestra has been adopted by Syrian Music Lives. Through the concerts it organizes, this organization wants to raise awareness of music and musicians from the war-torn country. The aim is to show a positive image of Syrian culture, and to help heal the wounds the civil war has caused among Syrians themselves.



Clarinetist and composer **Kinan Azmeh** (1976) was born in Damascus, and studied in Damascus and New York. He works in the genres of classical, jazz and world music. He has performed as a soloist with

the New York Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Orchestra and the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, which is made up of a variable group of young musicians from the Middle East. He has shared the stage with the Kurdish singer Aynur and the Armenian duduk player Djivan Gasparian. He is a member of Hewar, a quintet of musicians all sharing a Syrian background that will perform later this Holland festival, as well as the Kinan Azmeh CityBand quartet. He is also a member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble and serves as the artistic director of the Damascus Festival Chamber Players. His compositions include works for solo clarinet, orchestra and chamber music ensemble. Azmeh was previously in the Netherlands for

performances with the Fuse String Quartet on the Podium Witteman Live television programme, as well as at the Morgenland Festival in Amsterdam. Azmeh toured the Netherlands this spring with the jazz trumpet player Eric Vloeimans and the pianist Jeroen van Vliet.



Ibrahim Keivo (1966) was born to an Armenian family in the north of Syria. Apart from Armenian spiritual songs, his mother also taught him to sing works from Turkish, Kurd and Arabic traditions.

Keivo masters a diverse range of string instruments including the baglama, the kamancheh and the oud, and above all the bozuk, an instrument with three paired strings. In 2002 he sang the principal part in an adaptation of Euripides' *The Bacchae* by ZT Hollandia. He toured across the whole of Europe with this production. Since then, he has received frequent requests to perform on the international stage as a soloist and in ensembles. In 2009 he performed at the Morgenland Festival in Osnabruck. In his music Keivo primarily focuses on old religious music from his native region and songs from the folk tradition.



The repertoire of Syrian mezzo-soprano **Dima Orsho** (1975) comprises classical music (including the role of Titania in Benjamin Britten's opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), jazz and music from the Middle

East. She is also an active composer, mostly for TV, radio, film and theatre productions. Orsho has been a member of the Syrian jazz trio Hewar. Together with oud player and artistic leader of The Orchestra of Syrian Musicians Issam Rafea and percussionist Omar Al Musfi she started the DIO Trio, which plays old and traditional music from the Middle East. Last year she performed at the Salam Syria festival in Hamburg with Hewar, the NDR Big Band and members of the Syrian Big Band, and with a symphony orchestra of former Syrians. This production also featured her compositions. Orsho is one of the six female vocalists featured on *Awakening Beyond*, a recent double album by composer Kareem Roustom.



Moslem Rahal specialised in techniques for playing the ney. He later taught ney in the music department of the university of Homs. He became a soloist in the National Symphony Orchestra of Syria and

a member of the Syrian National Orchestra for Arabic Music (SNOAM). He was a member of the Twais Quartet, founded in 2004 by the artistic leader of SNOAM, oud player Issam Rafea, with the aim of going in search of the roots of instrumental Arabic music and incorporating these in contemporary compositions. He performed at the Holland Festival two years ago as a member of The Orchestra of Syrian Musicians, which consisted largely of members and former members of SNOAM. Together with singer and oud player Waed Bouhasoun he recorded an album of Sufi songs in 2008. These days Moslem Rahal lives in Barcelona, where he is a member of the renowned Hesperion XXI ensemble led by Jordi Savall.



Composer **Kareem Roustom** (1971) moved from the country of his birth, Syria, to the United States in the 1980s. At Tufts University in Massachusetts he founded the Arabic Music Ensemble. Apart

from his work for orchestras, smaller ensembles and choirs, he composes music for films, and is active as an arranger and producer. He composed *Aleppo Songs* for piano to raise money for Doctors Without Borders. A recent project was the 2017 double album *Awakening Beyond*, featuring female singers including Tina Turner, Mor Kabasi and Dima Orsho. His compositions are influenced by jazz and classical and traditional styles from his native region. He sees Maurice Ravel, Benjamin Britten and Oliver Knussen as his leading examples.



Calliope Tsoupaki (1963) is a Dutch-Greek composer. She was born in Piraeus, Greece, and has been mainly living and working in Amsterdam for over two decades. Tsoupaki studied composition with

Louis Andriessen and electronic music with Gilius van Bergeijk at the Royal Conservatoire in the Hague. A significant part of her oeuvre is closely connected to her Greek background. It also displays her love of old music. *Fortress Europe*, from 2017, focuses on the issue of migrants from war zones being stranded on Greek islands. The Holland Festival has premiered a number of her works, such as *Lucas Passie* (2008), *Greek Love Songs* (2010) and the oratorio *Oidipous* (2014). Calliope Tsoupaki teaches composition at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague.



Eric Vloeimans (1963) is famous for the velvety tone he can coax from his instrument, and, thanks to his melodic and versatile playing, he is a welcome collaborator with musicians from a wide range of

styles and genres. He has recorded albums with such diverse artists as the Portuguese singers Fernando Lamereinhas and Mafalda Arnauth, with the Calefax reed quintet, and with the Holland Baroque Society, as well as with composer and jazz pianist Martin Fondse, sound artist Michel Banabila, Colin Benders (a.k.a. Kyteman), and with DJ Armin van Buuren. He has received numerous prizes: in 2001, he won the Boy Edgar Prize, and the following year, the Bird Award. Three of his albums have earned an Edison Award. He toured the Netherlands this spring with the clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and the pianist Jeroen van Vliet.

text: René van Peer

translation: Sarah Welling

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