

The Mediterranean Concert

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Throughout history, this sea has been the cradle of exceptionally important civilisations, and for centuries a variety of languages, religions and traditions have coexisted on its shores.

Far from being a barrier, the Mediterranean has been a channel for communication, a bridge between cultures, since antiquity. Its peoples have used it as a route for the exchange of goods, but also of knowledge and wisdom. This is perhaps why their music and song have drunk from the same source of inspiration, and there are many influences of theme, style and rhythm that they all share.

This concert, **especially organised by Fundación ONUART at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva**, will have artists from different cultures sharing a stage, artists with diverse tongues, different religions, varied styles and traditions yet all of them with one common purpose: **to reclaim the Mediterranean as a meeting point of cultures.**

Tania Kassis

Lebanon

Her captivating voice and his musical style has attracted countries such as France, the United States, Australia, Canada, Brazil, Argentina and South Korea, as well as the public of his country, Lebanon. In July 2001 he was chosen as representative of Lebanon in the Fourth Francophone Games in Ottawa (Canada) where the press said it "this siren of the country of the cedars has enlightened the audience, who responded with a standing ovation." So successful was this concert that was awarded the Medal of the City of Ottawa, the Lebanese Success Medal and the Certificate of Excellence of Canada.



In October 2006 becomes soloist Choir Orchestre de Paris. 2009 creates the Islamo-Christian AVE (an Ave Maria which mixes the Muezzin "Allah Akbar").

This issue became a big hit from her concert in Beirut against President Michel Sleiman Lebanese, French Prime Minister Francois Fillon and Prince Albert II of Monaco.

The next year presents the same subject, compared to 200,000 people in Martyrs Square in Beirut in the presence of Pope Benedito XVI and Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri. His interest in the cultures of the world and its great musical and interpretive excellence Tania Kassis have made one of the most important contemporary figures and international projection of Lebanon.

Ari Malikian

Lebanon

born in 1968 in an Armenian family began on violin at an early age from his father's hand. His talent was recognized early despite the difficult circumstances that the Lebanese civil war forced him to live, forcing him even to study for long periods in the air-raid shelters. He gave his first concert with 12 years and when he was 14, conductor Hans Herbert-Joris heard him and got a grant from the German Government for him to study at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hannover.



With 15 years it was the youngest student admitted to this prestigious Centre of musical studies.

Later he expanded his studies at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London, in addition to receiving lessons from some of the leading teachers of the world like Franco Gulli, Ruggiero Ricci, Ivry Gitlis, Herman Krebbers or

members of the Alban Berg Quartet. He has won numerous prestigious global competitions, which include the first prizes in international competitions Felix Mendelssohn (1987, Berlin) and Pablo Sarasate (1995, Pamplona), in addition to numerous awards at competitions such as Niccolò Paganini (Genoa, Italy), Zino Francescatti (Marseille, France), Rodolfo Lipizer (Gorizia, Italy), Jeunesses Musicales (Belgrade, Yugoslavia), Rameau (Le Mans, France), International Artist Guild (New York, USA) and in the International Music Competition of Japan. In 1993 he received the award for dedication and the artistic fulfillment of the Ministry of culture of Germany.

Maria del Mar Bonet

Born in Palma (Island of Mallorca), the **Mediterranean** has always been the reference point in her personal and artistic life. Right from the start of her career as a singer, she has always taken an interest in the music and folklore of the Balearic Islands and on this foundation went on to create her own songs, seeking out the popular roots of everything that unites the different peoples of the Mediterranean: **North Africa, the Near East, Italy, Greece, Turkey, France and others.**



Maria del Mar Bonet has recorded more than 30 albums, many of which are dedicated to, inspired in or directly produced in collaboration with musicians and singers from around the Mediterranean Sea. Her own songs are, in many cases, inspired in the great poets of this geographic area. She is known for her works with **Mikis Theodorakis** in Greece and **Zülfü Livanelli** in Turkey, with the **Tunisian Young Musicians Orchestra** and the **Cham Ensemble of Damascus** in Syria,

with **Hossam Ramzy** and **Mohamed Munir** in Egypt, with **Lucilla Galeazzi** and **Mauro Pagani** in Italy as well as the Greek singers **Maria Farantouri** and **Nena Venetsanou**.

Also internationally renowned are her works with the North American **Jackson Browne**, the Brazilian **Milton Nascimento**, the Cuban **Omara Portuondo** and the Chileans **Quilapayún**. The Spanish dancer and choreographer **Nacho Duato** has created three choreographies from her songs, which continue to be staged in theatres all over the world.

She has won numerous awards in her almost fifty years of artistic career: the **Gold Record** (1971) for her single *L'Àguila negra* and *No voldria res més ara*; the **Silver Siurell** (1974); the **Creu de Sant Jordi Cross awarded by the Generalitat de Catalunya Government** and the prize presented by the **Académie Charles Cros**, France (1984); the **Medal of the City** bestowed by Palma City Hall (1997); the **SGAE Music Award for best traditional folk record** and **best Catalan album** for her album *Raixà* (2002); the **Tenco Prize** in Sanremo, Italy (2003); the **Mallorca Gold Medal** (2004); the **City of Barcelona Music Award** (2005); the **Gold Medal of the City of Barcelona** (2006), the **International Cubadisco Award** for her album *Bellver* and the **Gold Medal for Merit in Fine Arts** awarded by the Ministry of Culture (2010). She has also received **Honorary Doctorates** from the **University of Lleida** (2009) and from the **University of the Balearic Islands** (2015).

Silvia Pérez Cruz

A native of Palafrugell (Girona), she studied music theory, classical piano and classical saxophone from an early age. She graduated from the ESMUC in jazz singing. At 18 she went to live in Barcelona, where she continues to study music. She has worked with Joan Díaz Trio on the jazz album *We Sing Bill Evans* (winner of the Jaç Award 2009 for Best Album), with Joan Monné, Perico Sambeat, Javier Colina, Jerry González and Jeannette, among many others. She has sung for the dancers Damián Muñoz (contemporary dance) and Israel Galván and the Sol Picó Company (contemporary Flamenco, winners, Max Awards 2007).

She participated in several artistic ventures such as the group Las Migas (a female multicultural quartet created in Barcelona with Marta Robles, Isabelle Laudenbach and Lisa Bause), "Llama" (hang and voice improvisations and songs), Javier

Colina+Silvia Pérez Cruz (boleros in a jazz key), "Coetus" (Iberian percussion orchestra+Eliseo Parra), "Ressons de l'Al-Andalus" (jointly with the Lleida choir and 4 musicians).



She had previously taken part in the Flamenco spectacle *Camarón, La leyenda del tiempo, 30 anys després* (Camarón, The Legend of Time, 30 Years Later) together with Juan Gómez "Chicuelo", Duquende

and Rafaela Carrasco. She gave joint recitals with the guitarist **Toti Soler** in 2010 and 2011.

In 2012, together with Juan Gómez "Chicuelo" playing guitar, she participated in the soundtrack of the film **Blancanieves** (Snow White), directed by Pablo Berger, and also lent her voice in live presentations of the film screenings staged in September 2012 in Barcelona and in Madrid under the title of "**Great concert for the Blancanieves film**".⁹ The piece "No te puedo encontrar" (I Can't Find You) won the Goya Award 2013 in the category of "Best Original Song".¹⁰

In 2014 she released the cover album **Granada** with the guitarist and composer Raúl Fernández Miró.

Toni Cuenca

Orchestra Conductor

Toni Cuenca is a double bass player, composer, music producer and orchestra conductor. Born in Barcelona, he studied guitar in the Sabadell Conservatory (Barcelona) and double bass in the Palma de Mallorca Conservatory. He has played and recorded with top names in world jazz such as, among many others, **Paco de Lucía, Concha Buika, Peter Erskine, Alex Acuña, Gary Willys, Tete Montoliu, Max Sunyer, Chano Dominguez and Jorge Pardo.**

He has produced and worked with artists such as **Miguel Ríos, Santiago**



Auserón, Ismael Serrano, Raimundo Amador and Tomatito. He has written and composed symphonic works for soloists such as **Concha Buika, Maria el Mar Bonet and Jorge Pardo** and has played as a soloist with the **Balearics Orchestra, the Symphonic Ensemble of Madrid and the Symphony Orchestra of the Vallès.**

In the field of conducting he has led the **Presidential Symphony Orchestra of Turkey, the Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra, the Sofia Symphonic Orchestra, the Girona Symphony Orchestra, and the**

Symphony Orchestra of the Vallès, the Film Chamber Orchestra and the Balearics Symphony Orchestra.

The record *Bellver* by **Maria del Mar Bonet**, produced by Toni Cuenca, was recognised in 2010 by the ***Spanish Academy of Music.***

Orchestre Symphonique Royal du Maroc

Royal Symphonic Orchestra from the Kingdom of Morocco

Created on August 28, 2007, the Royal Symphony Orchestra of Morocco is born with the aim of promoting Moroccan musicians internationally offering them a highly professional environment. Seeks to enrich the artistic heritage of the country and allow better dissemination of symphonic music.



As part of its artistic seasons, the orchestra offers several programs with different genres. His repertoire ranges from classical music to contemporary works and jazz, without forgetting chamber music.

In addition to these regular concerts, the orchestra regularly participates in the Mawazines Festival.

Also in 2010 he participated in a concert of modern music with Sting, with Roger Hodgson in 2011 and in 2012 with Nigel Kennedy and Marouane Benabdallah and in 2013 with George Benson. The orchestra has also successfully produced the ballet by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker (January 2011), Swan Lake (January 2012) and Sleeping Beauty (January 2013). The orchestra is conducted by maestro M. **Younes Terfas**.

Francesca Schiavo

Italy

Singer and actress began her singing career at age 16. In 1990 he became the lead voice of the Italian Renzo Arbore Orchestra, who performed two albums; Napoli Napoli Point and Due Punti. From that moment he performs concerts around the world, getting to do at Radio City Music Hall and Madison Square Garden in New York. In 1993 he participates in the Sanremo Giovani festival performing at the Ariston Theater, one of the most important areas of the city, playing Voce e notte.



In 1994 and 1995 participates in Festival di Sanremo presenting two topics; Il mondo è qui-of Varo Venturi- in the Nuove Proposte section and war-of Amore e Sergio Campioni Cammarriere- in the section. At the same time it appears on the TV Mina contro Battisti,

playing L'important topics finire E and band songs that will be part of the album of the same name to reach the Platinum.

In 1996 i carciofi to Mimongo appears as an actress in the film Cresceranno plays with great success where the main theme of the soundtrack, Credimi. In 1998 he is the protagonist of the film Coppia omicida with Laura Morante. In 2003, in honor of Roberto Murolo, participates in the album Ciao Roberto, singing with Nino Buonocore Only nuje. Has participated, also, in telefilms like Sotto la luna (1998), with direction of Franco Bernini, Lui e lei 2 (1999), with direction of Elisabetta Lodoli and Luciano and Angelo il custode Manuzzi- (2001) -with address Gianfranco Lazotti- and Nazareno feature film (2007).

Hossam Ramzy

Egypt

Born in Cairo, from a very young age he began to play the *darbuka* and the tabla. In Saudi Arabia he learnt traditional Berber music. In 1970, in London, he began to play with the saxophonist **Andy Sheppard**. In 1989 he worked with **Peter Gabriel** on the soundtrack of **Martin Scorsese's** film ***The Last Temptation of Christ***. He has collaborated with **Frank Asher**. In 1994 he formed the ***Egyptian Ensemble***. The next year he entered into the first collaboration with the British arranger **Phil Thornton** on the creation of ***Eternal Egypt***.



The success of this work –a mixture of different types of Arabic music—continued with ***Immortal Egypt*** and ***Enchanted Egypt***.

In 1998 he performed with **Rachid Taha**, **Khaled** and **Faudel** in the concert ***1, 2, 3 Soleils***.

From 2000 onwards he began to work as an arranger for pop stars such as **Ricky Martin** (***Life***) and

Shakira (***She Wolf***). He has also collaborated on the soundtrack of films such as ***Prince of Persia*** and ***Conan The Barbarian***.

He has released more than 25 records in his long artistic career.

Yosra Zekri

Tunisia

Tunisia is, without doubt, one of the most promising young singers from Tunisia. Born in Sfax, it has been awarded in 2007 by the television program Star Academy Maghreb as one of the best voices in the country. He got the first prize of the Tunisian singing 2010 national competition and the prize young hopes of the competition International of Canto Lirico of Vivonne, France 2013.



He has performed many operatic parts, as well as popular Tunisian song and Arab issues in general. Diploma in musicology and lyrical song, he has participated in many international festivals such as the

International Cultural Festival of symphonic music of Algeria and the Festival of the community of France.

Oum El Ghaït Benessahraoui

OUM.

Morocco

She was born in Casablanca on April 18, 1978. Child, then teenager, she spends her youth in Marrakech where very young, she learns a repertoire from soul, pop and jazz music and interprets the songs of Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston. In 1999 and in Casablanca, Oum is discovered by Philippe Delmas, french artists manager like Assia, Leslie, Nadiya... and of which she accepts the invitation to be recorded in France.

Two years after- wards, she returns to Morocco where she goes to discover new universes of inspiration by visiting the Gnaoui and the Hassani from which are her origins Sahraoui.



In this same year she knows Barry, Moroccan musician who evolves in the fusion, with which she goes up on the scene of the festivals of Essaouira, Tanjazz, and of Casablanca and also BAM festival of Barcelona.

Trio Joubran

Palestine

Le Trio Joubran is an oud trio playing traditional Palestinian music. The trio consists of the brothers Samir, Wissam, and Adnan Joubran, originally from the city of Nazareth, now dividing their time between Nazareth, Ramallah and Paris. The Joubran brothers come from a well-known family with a rich artistic heritage. Their mother, Ibtisam Hanna Joubran, sang the Muwashahat (poems that originated in Arab Spain) while their father is among the most renowned stringed-instrument makers in Palestine and in the Arab world.

Samir Joubran, the eldest brother, began a successful music career in



1996, nearly a decade before the formation of the Joubran Trio. Samir released two acclaimed albums Taqaseem in 1996, followed by Sou'fahm in 2001. For his third album, Samir invited his younger brother, Wissam, to accompany him in duets.

In August 2004, in the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris, Le Trio Joubran came to life. They own several awards as; in 2009, Arab Muhr award, Dubai International Film Festival. Also the Best soundtrack for Adieu Gary, directed by Nassim Amaouche, in 2011, "Arab Muhr" award, Dubai International Film Festival and Best soundtrack for The Last Friday, directed by Yahya Al Abdallah.

In 2013, the Order of Merit and Excellence from Mr. President Mahmoud Abbas and International Award of Palestine

Maria Farantouri

Greece

Born in Athens, Farantouri has often been described as ***the voice of Mikis Theodorakis***. With him she has worked on important artistic productions. One of the best-known is undoubtedly **Pablo Neruda's Canto General**.

In 1971 she recorded ***Songs and Guitar Pieces by Theodorakis*** with the Australian guitarist John Williams, which includes poems by **Federico García Lorca**. She has recorded songs in Spanish, Italian and English and, in the Greek language; she has collaborated with composers of the stature of **Manos Hatzidakis**, **Eleni Karaindrou** and **Mikalís Bourboulis**.



With the last-mentioned she produced an interesting vocal and instrumental fusion work with musical accompaniment by **Vangelis**. During her extensive career she has worked with **Zülfü Livaneli**, **Lucio Dalla** and **Mercedes Sosa**.

She was the first non-German vocalist to be invited by the ***Berliner Ensemble*** to perform

songs by **Bertolt Brecht** in Greek. At her 2010 concert with the jazz saxophonist **Charles Lloyd** she showcased her vast interpretative versatility, her magnificent voice and her considerable artistic talent.

In 1991 she performed the ***Ballate di Mauthausen*** in the **Athens Odeon**, with texts by the poet **Iakovos Kambanellis**, accompanied by the **Israel Philharmonic Orchestra** under the direction of **Zubin Mehta**.

Vakia Stravou

Cyprus

She is a singer of Greek-Cypriot descent. She has studied in Belgium and Czech Republic. She has lived in Paris and London. In a recent interview with a Cyprus daily, O Politis Stavrou mentioned that, over time, she has been influenced by various genres and blends of what is today known as 'world music', including Portuguese fados, Argentinian tangos, Italian tarantellas, Greek rembetika and others.



Her first album, O.I.E. was released in 2003; although it didn't produce any big hit, it helped create an audience for Stavrou.

Perhaps her best-known song is Sozinha, which she performed in Portuguese with a rather convincing Brazilian accent.

Her second album, with song performed in English, French, Portuguese and Greek, was published in 2010.

Stavrou has kept a low profile, and has largely avoided performing in Greek night-clubs.

Hani Mitwasi

Jordan

He is an internationally renowned star of Jordanian music. He studied at the **Jordan Academy of Music**, specialising in **Flamenco guitar**.



His studies have led him to explore the language that exists between Arabic and Spanish music, creating his own and original style. In 2006 and 2007 he released his first records, re-interpreting traditional sounds and themes and thus becoming widely popular with a young and adult public.

In 2010 he won the ***Jordan Awards to Music*** as the **best artist of the year**.

His songs ***Ya Mohra*** and ***Mawtini*** are tremendously popular in Jordan. He has represented his country on multiple occasions at festivals and artistic activities of every kind. In 2013 he was appointed ***Young Ambassador for Orange Telecommunication Company***, producing one of his magnificent shows of Arabic and Flamenco music fusion, and this led him to perform together with the prestigious Spanish Flamenco guitarist **Alberto López**.

Renzo Spiteri

Malta



Renzo Spiteri is an internationally recognized musician and composer who boast versatility using unlimited ways of expression Maltese artist. He has worked in many countries around the world. Its many artistic sensibilities led him to delve into all genres; world music, jazz, classical music and contemporary music.

He has performed at major festivals such as Womad, the Festival of the Desert and Musica Viva. He has presented his work at the Royal Festival Hall (London), the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington), the Sota (Singapore) and the Babylon Club (Istanbul). In 2008 he was named National Ambassador of the European Union for the Year of International Dialogue.

He is Artistic Director of Ghanafest (World Music Festival in Malta), Le Meridien Cultural Ambassador of Malta, Artistic Director of Teatru Unplugged (located at the National Theatre of Malta) and artist supported by Yamaha Drums.

He has published several record albums. The most recent are Animus (2015) and Silence Sounds and Spaces (2011).