

**Contemporary Arab Music Week at Esterházy Schloss, Eisenstadt, Austria**  
**With the Kremerata Baltica Chamber Orchestra**  
**April 30<sup>th</sup> – May 4<sup>th</sup> 2012**

*One can't imagine worlds more apart, but isn't it wonderful to build bridges?*

*The world of classic music experiences certain decay in the West. The symptoms of this disease can be seen in an attempt to 'intellectualize' the meaning and often content of what is called 'contemporary'.*

*'Baltic' can be seen in two dimensions – its linguistic roots to be found in Sanskrit, mixes with its traditions in European (especially vocal) music. Arab music with its mystic (to us) orientation evokes another world. It is challenging and rewarding to build bridges between 'strangers'. But I truly think that trying to understand each other is the most satisfactory experience. If we would simply listen to each other, the world would be much more peaceful.*

*Combining tunes of the North and East inspires a dialogue, which is designed to enrich all of us. That is why I strongly feel this is a project which will allow for all of us – participants and listeners- to come closer to each other in understanding and sharing emotions. Some little contribution at times of worldwide turmoil. Some little step towards peace and harmony, to which music can be seen as a common denominator.*

Gidon Kremer

Maestro Violinist, Founder of Kremerata Baltica

February 2012

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*Music is a universal language that overcomes barriers. The Arabic musical legacy is steeped in the values of spontaneity and refinement - timeless features of quality artistic expression. Yet contemporary Arabic music is relatively unknown and is often seen through the prism of orientalism, which denies its presence as a legitimate representative cultural expression in its own right. The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture is in the business of creating networks that support Arab musicians by facilitating collaboration regionally and cross-culturally, giving them new opportunities for sharing their talents.*

*Unlikely partnerships between distant communities can be very enriching. They open up possibilities of growth, experimentation and mutual benefit. New avenues of communication and creative expression can be discovered and encouraged. Why not a Baltic- Arabic collaboration? The Contemporary Arab Music Week at Esterházy Schloss brings together emergent as well as established Arab classical composers and musicians with the award-winning Kremerata Baltica at the renowned Esterházy Festival in Austria. This event aspires to be an initiative step for future collaborations in contemporary music.*

Oussama Rifahi, Executive Director

Arab Fund for Arts and Culture - AFAC

February 2012

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*We at Esterházy are proud to be able to be the catalyst for such a unique and important musical partnership. The tradition of sponsoring "modern" musical dialogue was as vibrant in this house when Joseph Haydn was composer-in-residence as it is today. A dialogue where East meets West, where tradition melds with innovation, where community-building can replace discord: these are the makings of what we hope will be truly special musical events. We invite you to join us on this special journey.*

Robert Tannenbaum

Executive Director, Cultural Division, Esterházy Foundation

February 2012

## **Contemporary Arab Music Week at Esterházy Schloss, April 30 – May 4, 2012 Eisenstadt, Austria**

### **I. History:**

The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) was founded in 2007 as an independent Arab initiative for supporting contemporary artistic and cultural talent in the Arab region. Music is an important mode of artistic expression that AFAC seeks to support, especially as it is often neglected in comparison to more visual art forms.

During a series of events on cultural philanthropy hosted by AFAC last year, the challenges facing music composers from the Arab world were brought to the fore. Where does Arabic classical music stand today? Is it growing or stagnating? Does it contribute to creative communication? Is classical music by Arab composers able to reflect an authenticity of talent or is it mere mimicry of the West? Is classical music in general heading towards extinction with the rise of more popular musical forms? Or does classical music still have a relevant role to play in the contemporary scene?

Few are the opportunities for critical exchange projects for musicians today. Yet the possibilities of a cross-cultural classical musical experience with contemporary Arab composers began to crystallize thanks to a personal contact with the renowned Latvian violinist Maestro Gidon Kremer, recognized by *The New Yorker* as nothing less than ‘the greatest violinists alive today.’ Maestro Kremer was pleased to explore with AFAC the possibilities of collaboration that would bring value to the music scene, give visibility for Arab composers, and touch on the universality of music as a language that can heighten the appreciation of beauty and overcome all barriers.

Is it really possible for musicians from two regions as culturally and geographically disparate as the Baltics and the Arab world to coherently share a classical musical experience at the highest level of quality and talent? Through a series of discussions between Maestro Kremer and AFAC, stark differences as well as unexpected similitudes emerged and gradually evolved: a week of shared Arabic/Baltic classical music performance at one of Europe’s most prestigious palaces, the Esterházy Schloss in Eisenstadt, Austria.

Truth be told, the geography and history of the Arab and the European regions has long been intertwined. Cycles of transmission in knowledge and culture can be witnessed artistically in many moments - the Carolingian era of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and the Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad, the Norman kingdoms of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and their inheritance of Fatimid and Byzantine courtly practices, the extended interface between the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires. Oriental features appear in Renaissance and Baroque paintings while Occidental taste begins to emerge in late Ottoman arts and the Ottoman Sultan Abdul-Aziz (1830-1876) was himself a dedicated student of music and a classical composer.

And yet, the age of monarchies, aristocracies and courtly culture has been largely overturned by the many revolutions that heralded the modern age. On the level of music, much of the romantic and idealistic dedication of classical composers became invalidated by modernity, hampered by the strident currents of realism, industrialism and war. Composers, be they Baltic or Arab or otherwise, share the challenges of the contemporary era and its aesthetic shift away from refinement towards mass production and consumerism.

‘Contemporary Arab Music Week at Esterházy Schloss’ is a first of its kind. A musical project bridging two different regions of the world together, the Baltic and the Arabic, it promises to be a venue for multi-cultural exchange, exploration and networking which the AFAC, the Esterházy Foundation and the Kremerata Baltica are honored to host.

## **II. Rationale**

Since its inception, AFAC has been a careful listener to the Arab arts and culture communities it seeks to support. By analyzing Arab contemporary cultural practices, several areas in need of development and growth opportunities have been identified. Interactive and cross-cultural projects emerge as important opportunities for Arab practitioners seeking to collaborate with others and to share their talent with wider audiences. AFAC is constantly striving to facilitate the development of these networks, both on a pan-Arab scale and internationally.

Musicians are especially under-served by cultural initiatives and philanthropic endeavors. Because theirs is an intangible art-form, and the current era focuses on tangible, visible and commodifiable items, musicians are often left in the lurch.

In a recent cultural panel hosted by AFAC, Lebanese pianist and composer Joëlle Khoury stated that there is little place for non-commercial art in the Arab world and that international donors for culture in the Arab region are largely interested in projects with a social development aspect. It happens often that an excellent music composer who is purely interested in music is neglected while an average music composer whose project has a development angle, such as 'Music for Women's Rights' or 'Music for Abused Children', can find several sources of support. Cultural sponsorships need to separate development projects from projects that are truly about the artistic expression.

In light of the so-called 'Arab Spring', complicated questions arise vis-à-vis the relationship between public support for arts and culture and the creative process. Both the Baltic and the Arabic states have lived under totalitarian regimes. Music as an art-form has perhaps suffered less in the realm of censorship and state control, given its non-verbal and non-figurative mode of expression. However, it may have also suffered more in terms of negligence precisely due to its abstract, delicate and sophisticated content.

Another factor to take into consideration is the rise of more popular forms. Rap, hip-hop, rock, jazz and the use of electronic equipment have changed the playing field completely. Music conservatories, typically places of exacting discipline, are challenged to accommodate the new and to shift towards more experimental forms while upholding the highest standards of virtuosity and technique?

The Contemporary Arab Music Week at Esterházy Schloss with the Kremerata Baltica chamber orchestra endorses a spirit cross-cultural exchange and novel explorations essential to inspiring creativity and depth in the realm of music. By bridging the Baltic and the Arabic through this experimental classical music program, contemporary Arab composers are also given a place of privilege in sharing their music with a wider audience. We are hoping that, by providing visibility for this new form of cultural and artistic interaction, we will get the attention of cultural philanthropists, connoisseurs and art patrons of the Arab world and Europe, particularly those who appreciate the value of unexpected collaborations in fostering creativity and mutually beneficial exchange.

## **III. Event, A Baltic/Arabic Spring**

"One can't imagine worlds more apart, but isn't it wonderful to build bridge?" says Maestro Kremer on this collaborative project with AFAC. In an attempt to break apart all the political boundaries and build a creative link that allows both worlds to share their ideas and create a common cultural environment for future cooperation, this Baltic/Arabic Spring concert brings together for the first time in such format contemporary music compositions from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Sudan to be led by the Grammy winning chamber orchestra Kremerata Baltica along with selected soloists from Europe and Russia. World-renowned composers commissioning their music to this event include Grammy award winner Arvo Pärt, and Georgs Pelecis.

The concerts will accommodate 1,000 spectators. Before the concerts begin, the composers will meet among themselves to discuss and explore the different identities and aspects of their Arab and European musical heritage.

#### IV. Baltic-Arabic Spring Program 2012

Wednesday May 2<sup>nd</sup>

##### PANEL – “Contemporary Music: Between Heritage, Individualism and Dialogue – An Arab Perspective.”

Joëlle Khoury, Mustafa Said, Oliver Butterworth, Zaid Jabri and Gidon Kremer discuss with Oussama Rifahi their experience in contemporary music composition and in being an Arab composer today.

Venue: Joseph Haydn Hall at the University of Music.

Time: 19:00.

Thursday Concert May 3<sup>rd</sup>

##### FIRST PART

- **Grigor Narekatsi, Armenian Song “Havun Havun”, solo piece for cello. (4’)**  
Mario Brunello (Italy) – cello
- **Arvo Paert, "Fratres" for violin & strings. (10’)**  
Gidon Kremer – violin  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra.
- **A. Vivaldi, "Concert for mandolin". (12’)**  
Mustafa Said (Egypt) - Oud.  
Kremerata Baltica string orchestra.
- **Zaid Jabri, (Syria), "Song without words III"-(15’)**  
Percussionist 1 – Pushkarev Andrei (Ukraine/Latvia)  
Percussionist 2 - Mohammad Taha (Jordan)  
Cello – Eriks Kirsfelds (Latvia)  
Kremerata Baltica string orchestra.  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)
- **Joëlle Khoury (Lebanon) "Variations On Imaginary Folk Dances” (5’)** (A work commissioned to Kremerata Baltica with the singer Fadia El-Hage)  
Fadia El-Hage (Lebanon) – contralto  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)

*Duration of the first part ca. 40’.*

##### SECOND PART

- **S.K.Tickmayer, “East West Soundscapes” - for violin/vibraphone and strings. - (10’)**  
Jana Ozolina (Latvia) – violin  
Andrei Pushkarev (Ukraine/Latvia) - percussion  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)
- **Ali Osman Alhaj (Sudan-Egypt) "Fusions" - (7’)**  
Mohammad Taha (Jordan) - percussion  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)
- **Georgs Pelecis "Ashug's story”(work commissioned especially to this program) (10’).**  
Zakar Keshishian – duduk  
Ula Ulijona - Viola  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)
- **MAias Alyamani (Syria) "Sea waves" - (8’)**  
Mohammad Taha – tabla  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)
- **MAias Alyamani (Syria) "Longa Nahawand” - (3’)**  
MAias Alyamani (Syria) – 1<sup>st</sup> violin  
Gidon Kremer – 2<sup>nd</sup> violin  
Mohammad Taha – congos  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra  
Conductor Andris Veismanis (Latvia)

## ENCORE

- **Andrei Pushkarev "Fantasy on -"Night in Tunisia"** for vibraphone and strings- 7'  
Andrei Pushkarev (Ukraine/Latvia) – vibraphone  
Kremerata Baltica orchestra

Duration of the second part 40'.

## Friday Concert May 4<sup>th</sup>

### FIRST PART

- **Joëlle Khoury "Dream She Is"- ( 53')**  
Joëlle Khoury (Lebanon) - piano  
Fadia El-Hage (Lebanon) - contralto  
Maria Fedotova (Russia) - flute + (piccolo)  
Violin – Ruta Lipinaityte (Lithuania)  
Viola – Ula Ulijona Zebriunaite (Lithuania)  
Cello – Giedre Dirvanauskaitė (Lithuania)

\* Prerecorded intro from CD

### SECOND PART

- **Giovanni Sollima-fragments from "Spasimo". DE HARMONIA- LA PESTE, DE HARMONIA-VIA DOLOROSA**  
Mario Brunello (Italy) – cello

Musicians of Kremerata Baltica:  
Violin (trio) – Džeraldas Bidva  
Viola (trio) – Santa Vizine  
Cello (trio) – Henry David Varema  
Percussion – Andrei Pushkarev

- **Mahmoud Turkmani\_ "Schwarz/Weiss" (10')**

Oud – Mahmoud Turkmani  
Bass Darabouka – Mohammad Taha  
Solo violin – Dainius Peseckas  
Solo violin – Ieva Paukstyte  
Flute – Maria Fedotova  
Piano – Joelle Khoury

Musicians of Kremerata Baltica:

Violin – Rasa Vosyliute-Mickuniene  
Violin – Agne Doveikaite-Rubine  
Viola – Vidas Vekerotas  
Cello – Ruta Tamutyte  
Double bass – Dainius Rudvalis

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## Organizers:



### The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC) Oussama Rifahi Executive Director

The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture is an independent Arab initiative established in 2007. AFAC funds individuals and organizations in the fields of cinema, performing arts, literature, music and visual arts, while facilitating cultural exchange and cooperation across the Arab world and globally. AFAC envisions a thriving Arab art and cultural scene that is confident in its expression, open to dialogue, accessible to all, and sustained locally by committed patrons. We seek to play a leading role in achieving this vision by listening to and engaging with artists and cultural practitioners, analyzing and assessing their needs, facilitating cooperation and exchange, identifying and educating patrons on the social impact of arts and culture, advising stakeholders on necessary interventions, and supporting projects with direct independent funding. Our objectives are the enhancement of contemporary Arab cultural production, the perpetuation of cultural exchange and collaboration across the Arab region and globally, the delivery of a sustainable source of funding for independent artistic and cultural work, the development of distribution channels for Arab cultural world, and the cultivation of Arab cultural philanthropy to give contemporary expression home-grown sustenance while also maintaining diverse regional and international support.



## Maestro Gidon Kremer Founder of Kremerata Baltica Chamber Orchestra

Of all the world's leading violinists, Gidon Kremer has perhaps had the most unconventional career. Born in Riga, Latvia, he began studying at the age of four with his father and grandfather, who were both distinguished string players. At the age of seven, he entered Riga Music School. At sixteen he was awarded the first Prize of the Latvian Republic and two years later he began his studies with David Oistrakh at the Moscow Conservatory. He went on to win prestigious awards including the 1967 Queen Elizabeth Competition and the first prize in both Paganini and Tchaikovsky International Competitions. This success launched Gidon Kremer's distinguished career, in the course of which he has established a worldwide reputation as one of the most original and compelling artists of his generation. He has appeared on virtually every major concert stage with the most celebrated orchestras of Europe and America. Also he has collaborated with today's foremost conductors. Gidon Kremer's repertoire is unusually extensive, encompassing all of the standard classical and romantic violin works, as well as music by twentieth- and twenty-first century masters such as Henze, Berg and Stockhausen. He also championed the works of living Russian and Eastern European composers and has performed many important new compositions; several of them dedicated to him. He has become associated with such diverse composers as Alfred Schnittke, Arvo Pärt, Giya Kancheli, Sofia Gubaidulina, Valentin Silvestrov, Luigi Nono, Aribert Reimann, Peteris Vasks, John Adams, Victor Kissine, Michael Nyman, Philipp Glass, Leonid Desyatnikov and Astor Piazzolla, bringing their music to audiences in a way that respects tradition yet remains contemporary. It would be fair to say that no other soloist of his international stature has done as much for contemporary composers in the past 30 years.

An exceptionally prolific recording artist, Gidon Kremer has made more than 120 albums, many of which brought him prestigious international awards and prizes in recognition of his exceptional interpretative powers. These include the „Grand prix du Disque“, „Deutscher Schallplattenpreis“, the „Ernst-von-Siemens Musikpreis“, the „Bundesverdienstkreuz“, the „Premio dell' Accademia Musicale Chigiana“, the „Triumph Prize 2000“ (Moscow), in 2001 the „Unesco Prize“, in 2007 the Saeculum-Glashütte Original-Musikfestspielpreis Dresden and in 2008 the Rolf-Schock Prize, Stockholm, in 2010 "life achievement" prize of the Istanbul Music festival, and in 2011 he was awarded "Una Vita Nella Musica - Artur Rubinstein" Prize (Venice) which is considered by many to be the "Nobel Prize" of music, among many others.

In 1981 Mr. Kremer founded Lockenhaus, an intimate chamber music festival that continued to take place every summer in Austria for 30 years until 2011. In 1997, he founded the Kremerata Baltica chamber orchestra to foster outstanding young musicians from the three Baltic States. Since then, Mr. Kremer has been touring extensively with the orchestra appearing at world's most prestigious festivals and concert halls. In February 2002 he and the Kremerata Baltica were awarded with the Grammy for the Nonesuch recording "After Mozart" in the category "Best small Ensemble Performance". The same recording received in the fall of 2002 an ECHO prize in Germany.



## Esterházy Corporation - Cultural Division

The Esterházy princes were one of the most important European aristocratic dynasties and asserted a major influence throughout centuries of European history. The modern Esterházy Corporation is one of the most impressive private cultural institutions in Austria.

The Esterházy Foundation, with Esterházy Palace, Forchtenstein Castle, Lackenbach Palace and the Roman quarry in St. Margarethen greet approximately 500.000 visitors annually and represents several of the most important historical cultural sights in Austria. The preservation and maintenance of this 400 year-old cultural inheritance, as well as the commitment to make these sights available to a broad

public, is anchored in the mandate of the foundation.

The Haydnsaal in the Esterházy Palace – one of the acoustically best concert halls in the world – is home to an international program of chamber, vocal and symphony concerts. Add to this spectacular opera productions in one of the most beautiful natural settings in Europe and unique and fascinating exhibitions in the various Esterházy museums and you define the cultural brand Esterházy as internationally one of the most important of its kind.

## Arab Musicians:



### MAias Alyamani – composer (SYRIA)

Violinist and composer, MAias Alyamani has a master degree from Vienna University of Music, majoring in violin performance with special emphasis on composition. During his studies he won the *Competition of Vienna University of Music* and participated in the international *Paganini Composition* in Italy. He was the only Arab ever to participate in these competitions. MAias Alyamani. MAias's performances include the traditional classical repertoire and other musical genres, including his personal compositions. He was a member of *Südbahnhof* Band in Vienna which was a finalist at the *World Music Awards* which took place in Vienna 2007. In 2006, MAias established the ensemble MAqam in Vienna, specializing in classical Arabic music. The ensemble has been a big success with over 300 concerts performed in Europe

and the Middle East – [www.maqamensemble.com](http://www.maqamensemble.com). MAias is also a member of the Damascus Festival Chamber Players ensemble, which focuses on contemporary Arabic music.

Over 40 of his instrumental compositions were performed by Symphonic orchestras, jazz bands and other ensembles like in the Inauguration of Opera House in Damascus 2004, Donau Festival in Vienna 2007, First Chamber Music Festival in Doha 2010, Oriental Spaces Festival Damascus 2011, Season-Opening Concert with Dominican National Orchestra in Santo Domingo 2011, Syrian Cultural Week in Moscow 2011, Olympic Arab Games Opening Ceremony in Doha 2011, MAaqm album release tour in Russia, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Iran, U.S, Lebanon, Syria, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, China, S.Korea, Argentina, Venezuela, and Brazil 2011-12. He made a large amount of solo recordings for film music, music bands, live theatre and TV shows soundtracks. He currently has five music albums: "White" with Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, "Live at Aspire Hall" with MAqam, "Blended Cultures" with Opec Orchestra for Violin and Orchestra, "Syrian Contemporary Chamber Music" chamber music album with DFCP, Ethno music album with Suedbahnhof "Best of Ost Club 2008".



### Fadia El-Hage – vocals (LEBANON)

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Fadia El Hage started her musical career at the age of fourteen as a singer with the Rahbani brothers and with Fairouz, both icons of modern and contemporary Arabic music. She has also worked as an actor in Lebanese television and movies. In 1984 she graduated from the University of Lebanon with a degree in psychology after which she and her husband emigrated to Germany. There she studied voice at the Richard-Strauss-Konservatorium in Munich where she specialized in oratorio and obtained her diploma in 1990. She is one of the very few singers mastering and combining the traditions of Western and Arabic classical music. Her repertoire includes classical Arabic music, European music from the Middle Ages and contemporary music. Since 1990 she has performed as a soloist in Ensemble Sarband, Vox and L'Orient Imaginaire, specializing in Medieval and Mediterranean song. In

1994 she returned to Lebanon where, since her breakthrough concert at the 1998 Baalbeck Festival, she is currently considered one of the Arab world's notable singers.



### Zaid Jabri – composer (SYRIA)

Born in Damascus in 1975, Zaid Jabri began his musical education by studying the violin with Riyad Sukar in his native town. He completed his M.A. degree with honors from the Music Academy of Cracow in Poland where he studied composition with Zbigniew Bujarski. Jabri is currently working on his PhD at the same academy under the supervision of Professor Krzysztof Penderecki. He won the first prize at the Adam Didur Composers' Competition in Sanok in 1997 for his piece (Two Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra). In 1999 he participated in the International Musikwerkstatt Buckow in Germany. In 2008 Zaid Jabri was invited by the Istanbul Bilgi University Music Department as Artist/Composer during The Days of Polish Music. In 2011 he became a member of ZKP (The Polish Composers Union).

He was also recently invited to Brunel University in London to represent Syria during the inauguration of the Institute for Contemporary Middle-Eastern Music. Since 2008 Jabri has been also involved in teaching at The Academy of Music in Cracow.

Zaid Jabri's works have been performed in Poland (Warsaw Autumn, Cracow composer's Days & Festival of Polish Premiers By The Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra and Choir), Germany (Morgenland Festival Osnabrück , Dubai, Egypt (Opera House), Tunisia, France, Italy, USA ( by Pacific Symphony Orchestra ), Armenia (by Armenian National Symphony Orchestra), Syria (by Syrian National Symphony Orchestra), Slovakia, Belgium by (Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles ) during the young composers forum Tactus 2011, Ukraine (by Lviv philharmonic during Contrast Festival, Uzhgorod philharmonic & by Kiev Kamerata during The Festival of Modern Music), Holland (by Nieuw Ensemble and Ensemble Zerafin ), and the United Kingdom ( Plaisteres Hall, Cadogan Hall ) during Al Farabi Concerto (by English Chamber Orchestra).

"Zaid Jabri's *Oriente Grosso* for clarinet, cello and orchestra proved the biggest surprise of the evening. The young Syrian composer is currently studying in Krakow, Poland, with Penderecki, and his piece spoke in a strenuous, dissonant, modernistic language, with Arabic overtones." – a review by Timothy Mangan in the ORegister (March 13, 2009).



### Zakar Keshishian – duduk (LEBANON/ARMENIA)

Born in Anjar, Lebanon, Maestro Zakar Keshishian got his training in Folk Instruments and Choir Conducting at the Komtas State Conservatory in Yerevan, Armenia. He completed his post-graduate studies with distinction, also in Yerevan, in 1996. Keshishian has founded and conducted a number of choirs both in Lebanon and Armenia. A born pedagogue, he is beloved by the young singers of his children's choirs and much respected by the members of the adult mixed choirs he has led. A firm believer in the magical properties of music in general and choir music in particular, Keshishian has guided many students both in war-torn Lebanon and in Armenia to the world of beauty and the arts. Many of the members of his choirs, as well as many of his theory and wind instrument students at the National Conservatory of Lebanon or at the Armenian Ganatchian Music School (Lebanon) have embraced professional musicians' careers. In addition to his regular performances with his choirs in Lebanon and Armenia, Keshishian has also toured and performed extensively in Australia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Egypt, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates. He has played in various folk-instrument ensembles in both Anjar and Beirut. In parallel to his career as a conductor and a performer of shvi and duduk, Keshishian is currently a professor of music theory at the National Conservatory of Music and at Haigazian University, both in Lebanon. Keshishian has been decorated with various medals by the Armenian and Lebanese governments and has received several awards. His discography includes a recording of Armenian Spiritual Songs by the "Varanda" Choir of Shushi ("Fortress City", Pomegranate records, 2005) and a duet of Armenian music for *shvi* and piano with his wife, pianist Kamila Keshishian ("Nrneni", Hamazkayin Cultural Union, 2007).



### Joëlle Khoury – composer (LEBANON)

Pianist and composer of contemporary music and jazz, Joëlle was born in Beirut and received a double-major degree in musicology and economics from George Mason University, USA. She has a piano diploma from the Lebanese National Conservatory and a master's degree in philosophy from Saint Joseph University. She currently teaches piano and initiation to contemporary music at the Lebanese National Conservatory. Her musical career includes founding the jazz quintet Inversion and performing several original compositions. She also established an educational series of listening and discussion sessions called "Meet the Composer," to acquaint the Lebanese public with contemporary Arab composers. She has collaborated with various Lebanese and European artists in projects involving music, text, dance, video, and electronics.



### Ali Osman – composer (SUDAN/EGYPT)

A Sudanese composer of contemporary classical music, Ali Osman has lived in Egypt since 1978 and has been active in Egypt's contemporary music scene and in the study of Arab musical heritage. He studied at the Conservatory of Music in Cairo from 1978-82, where he earned his diploma, and later studied composition with Gamal Abdel-Rahim there from 1979-86 and earned his BMus in composition and music theory with distinction and MMus in arts. He was granted his master degree in Art in 1990 from the composition and conducting department; his research was titled "the rhythmic patterns in west and east Sudan and their role in distinguishing the music of these regions." Among his honors is Third Prize in the Abu Bakr Khairat competition of the Ministry of Culture in Cairo (1995) and a scholarship from Pro Helvetia to visit Switzerland (2000). He has also been the assistant conductor of the Light and Hope Orchestra for blind girls in Cairo since 2001. As a writer, he has authored numerous articles for Egyptian publications and international musical resources including coauthoring the series of books called Egyptian Contemporary Music (2000 – 2003, Ministry of Culture, Cairo) with Samha El-Kholy. In 2007 he participates in a symposium on "Oriental/Occidental Accord" in Salzburg, Austria. A lifetime dedicated to the study of Arabic music, in 2009 he was granted his PhD with honors in recognition of his meticulous research on "the Arabic rhythmic patterns and their role in constructing melody in traditional Arabic music". Ali Osman's music has been performed in Austria, Egypt, China, Germany, Italy, Qatar, Spain, Switzerland, the UK and the USA.



### Mustafa Said – oud (EGYPT)

Musician, composer and music researcher, Mustafa Said is Director of the Arab Music Archiving and Research (AMAR) foundation. His career is devoted to the classical Arabic repertoire while exploring new forms and new sounds. Mustafa Said was also Former professor at the House of Oud (Cairo) where he extends his musical approach from the already existent musical traditions of the east Mediterranean region with the spirit of the two previous musical renaissances: that of the golden age of Abbasid music, and that of the second half of the 19th century. Inspired by the oriental traditional heritage, the compositions and forms of interpretation by Mustafa Said offer a very contemporary approach and place great emphasis on instrumental and vocal improvisation (Taqsim). Said has composed music for several documentaries and drama and participated in many local and international festivals as a solo performer or as part of an ensemble: Institute of the Arab World (2007), Mugam Festival in Azerbaijan (2009), Songs of Peace and Réconciliation conference in Indonesia (2009), Sounds of Arabia Festival in Abu Dhabi (2010), toured in Japan where he performed 17 concerts and conferences (2010), Fes

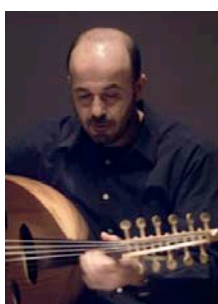


Festival of World Sacred Music (2010). Mustafa Saïd is also the founder of the Asil Oriental Ensemble and is a lecturer in traditional Arabic ensemble music at the Higher Institute of Music, Antonine University (Lebanon) since 2006. He has produced two contemporary classical Arabic music compositions with ensemble Asil, the first a collection of Omar al-Khayyam's Quatrains and the second is original Asil compositions. Mustafa's goal is to help create a scene for Arab contemporary classical music through creating compositions and through encouraging others to learn and research in the field of musicology.



### Mohammed Taha – percussion (JORDAN)

Born in Amman, Jordan in 1975, he studied Western and Arabic percussion at the National Music Conservatory in Jordan. Showing a talent, he joined the NMC Arabic Ensemble at the age of 16 as an Arabic percussion player; what's more, at the age of 23, Mohammed Taha joined the NMC Orchestra, performing Arabic and Western percussion instruments. Currently, he is the instructor of the Arabic and Western percussion at the NMC as well as member of the relative music ensemble. Mohammed Taha has toured in many countries like France, Germany, Sweden, Italy, USA, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Iraq, Kuwait, Tunis, Palestine and others as a percussion performer. Indicatively, in November 2003 he participated in a tour in France with the orchestra for peace directed by Estrella.



### Mahmoud Turkmani – composer (LEBANON)

The innovative guitarist, composer and oud player Mahmoud Turkmani is considered as a renovator and bridge-builder between contemporary Western-classical and Arabic-traditional music. Mahmoud Turkmani who was born in 1964 in Northern Lebanon studied from 1984 to 1989 classical guitar and composition at the Moscow Academy for Music. After his graduation he continued his studies at Oscar Ghiglia (1989/90, Conservatory of Basle, Switzerland), Juan Carmona (1991/92, Flamenco Programme, Andalusia) and Stephan Schmidt (1994-97, Conservatory of Berne, Switzerland). Stephan Schmidt encouraged him to develop his own musical language. It took Mahmoud Turkmani several years to devise his own musical world which, based on his own multicultural background, found its unique form and expressiveness. At present, Mahmoud Turkmani teaches classical guitar and oud at the Conservatory of Berne. He is the founder of the guitar quartet "Ludus" which has issued a compact disc ("Nuqta") with ENJA Records, Munich/Germany ([www.enjarecords.com](http://www.enjarecords.com)) in December 1999. Further discs were released by ENJA Records in 2002 /"Fayka", 2004 /"Zakira" and 2008 /"Ya Sharr Mout". Mahmoud Turkmani performs as a soloist (solo, duo, trio etc.) in various European cities and in Arab countries. Since 1994 Mahmoud Turkmani has composed works for well-known artists and ensembles such as Keyvan Chemirani, Barry Guy, Patricia Kopatchinskaya, Conrad Steinmann, Matthias Ziegler, the Trio Aspekte, the Erato String Quartet, the Eos Guitar Quartet, the Berne Symphony Orchestra and the Cairo Symphony Orchestra. In the multi-media project "Ya Sharr Mout" Mahmoud Turkmani experiments with video, word and sound. Currently, he is working on a composition about the book "Liliths Return" by the Lebanese writer Joumana Haddad, Director Frank Krug. He composed THE OCEAN IN A THIMBLE, an audioplay on two Audio-CDs (recorded in 2011) with documentation in book form by Hildegard Elisabeth Keller and he has a new CD recording in 2012 with the ensemble Chant 1540<sup>th</sup>.

### Kremerata Baltica chamber orchestra:



Kremerata Baltica, an educational project with a long-term vision, was Kremer's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday present to himself: a way of passing on his wisdom to young colleagues from the Baltic states while making no compromises on artistic standards as he nurtured and inspired musical life in the region. The talented group of musicians developed in few years into one of the best international chamber orchestras in the world and has cemented its international reputation in major concert venues around the world.

Kremerata Baltica has played in last 15 years in more than 50 countries, performing in 600 cities and given around 1100 concerts also in Japan, Australia, the USA, Latin America, Russia and all around Europe. It has released more than 20 CD-s and has won the Grammy Award, ECHO prize and the Praemium Imperiale Grant for Young Artists. The orchestra is supported by the governments of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Its members, all outstanding musical personalities, are selected through a rigorous auditioning process and play as a stable ensemble. Among the celebrated soloists with whom Kremerata Baltica has played are soprano Jessye Norman, pianists Mikhail Pletnev, Yevgeny Kissin and Oleg Maisenberg, violinists Thomas Zehetmair and Vadim Repin and cellists Boris Pergamenshikov and Yo Yo Ma; conductors have included Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Christoph Eschenbach, Kent Nagano, Heinz Holliger and Vladimir Ashkenazy.



### Mario Brunello – cello (ITALY)

Born in Castelfranco Veneto (Treviso - Italy) 1960, Mario Brunello studied under the guidance of Adriano Vendramelli at the Venice Conservatory of music and of Antonio Janigro. In 1986 he was awarded the first prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition (Moscow) in the cello section, launching his musical career. Since then Brunello has played with the most important orchestras in the world: London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, NHK Symphony Orchestra (Tokyo), Scala Philharmonic Orchestra, Santa Cecilia, only to name a few, and under conductors such as Valery Gergiev, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Yuri Temirkanov, Riccardo Chailly, Ton Koopman, Seiji Ozawa, Daniele Gatti, Myung-Whun Chung and Claudio Abbado. As a chamber musician Brunello has performed with artists such as Gidon Kremer, Martha Argerich, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Yuri Bashmet, Maurizio Pollini, Andrea

Lucchesini, Valery Afanassiev and the Borodin and Alban Berg Quartets. He is Artistic Director of the International String Quartet Competition Premio Paolo Borciani and of the Reggio Emilia String Quartet Festival. In 1994, Brunello founded the "Orchestra d'Archi Italiana" (Italian String Orchestra) where he performs activities as a conductor and also a soloist while touring in many European countries. Brunello has widened his work, going beyond classical music and towards mixed-media and multiple-genre projects with the aim of reaching a wider public and renovating the idea of music performances. In this spirit, he transformed a run-down ironworking factory in his hometown of Castelfranco Veneto into a laboratory for concerts, teaching classes, conferences and visual art exhibitions. This laboratory is named "Antruggine" (Italian for Anti-rust), echoing the original purpose of the place, but also taking on a metaphorical meaning in urging people to keep their minds awake and active through musical and artistic exploration.



### Giedre Dirvanauskaitė – cello (LITHUANIA)

Born in Kaunas to a family of musicians, Dirvanauskaitė graduated from the M.K.Ciurlionis Art Gymnasium in 1995 where she studied cello with the teacher Romanas Armonas and entered the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre to study with Prof. S.Sondeckiene. She is the laureate of several national competitions; she has attended master classes held by M.Rostropovich, D.Geringas, H.Beyerle, T.Grindenko, and others and she has participated in music festivals in Lithuania and abroad: the international music festival Sugrizimai, the chamber music festival in Gstaad and "les museiques" in Basel (Switzerland). Since 1997 she has been regularly participating in the Lockenhaus Chamber Music Festival in Austria, where she had the opportunity to perform in chamber ensembles together with artists like M.Bekovac, D.Geringas, H.Holliger, B.Pergamenschikov, L.Hagen, V.Mendelssohn and many others. As a soloist, she has played with the Lithuanian National Symphony

Orchestra, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Kremerata Baltica Orchestra, Armenian Philharmonic orchestra and the Kiev Chamber Orchestra with conductors like Juozas Domarkas, Roman Kofman, Andres Mustonen, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robertas Servenikas and Saulius Sondeckis among others. She has been a founding and permanent member of the chamber orchestra Kremerata Baltica, with which she continues to tour worldwide. In January 2005, Dirvanauskaitė was Kremerata Baltica soloist at the international music fair MIDEM in Cannes (France). More recently, she has toured extensively with many different chamber music formations (mainly piano trio and quartets) playing with pianists like A.Zlabys, Sa Chen, K.Buniatishvili, V.Affanasiev. She has performed at festivals in China, Japan, Russia, USA, Italy etc. with soloists like G.Kremer, M.Argerich, Y.Bashmet, M.Lethiec, M.Portal. Since 2009 Dirvanauskaitė regularly performs and tours in a piano trio with violinist Gidon Kremer and pianist Khatia Buniatishvili. Their recent CD with two trios-by Tchaikovsky and Kissine- released by the ECM label, was honoured by the "Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik" with the German Critics Award as a recording of exceptional artistry and praised all over the world as one of the best recordings of Tchaikovsky's piece ever made.

On the ECM label another piece by G.Kancheli "Silent prayer" was recorded by her together with Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica. This record, which includes as well a live performance of C.Franck Piano Quintet with K.Buniatishvili as a soloist, was released worldwide under the title "Hymns and Prayers". In 2011, Dirvanauskaitė premiered the Duo by Victor Kissine and a new version of "Ex-contrario", a piece by G.Kancheli for violin/cello and chamber orchestra. Dirvanauskaitė plays an instrument by Alexander Gaglianus, made in 1709.



### Maria Fedotova – flute (RUSSIA)

A graduate of the St. Petersburg Conservatory (1996), class of professor Alexandra Vavilina Mravinskaya, flautist Maria Fedotova started music when she was 5 years old and performed her first solo concert at the age of 7 with the chamber orchestra of the Mariinsky theatre, as

well as in duet with her father, the flautist Vladimir Fedotov. She is now an Honoured Artist of Russia and takes part in international festivals such as Salzburg, Verbier, Schloss Elmau, Lockenhaus, 'Snow and Symphony', 'Back at La Transcription', 'Les Museiques', "Europalya", Menton Festival, 'December Evenings', 'Palaces of St. Petersburg', "Easter", and many others. Her solo performances were held in the best halls: Moscow Conservatory, St. Petersburg Philharmonic Hall and Chapel, Musikverein Vienna, Cite de la Musique Paris, Muskhalle Hamburg... She successfully combines her solo activity with her work at the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of the Moscow radio under Vladimir Fedoseyev. At the age of 19 Maria already became a soloist in this leading Russian collective. Her constant creative collaboration with outstanding musicians such as Gidon Kremer, Jury Bashmet, Tatiana Gritenko, Alexander Rudin, Naoko Yoshino, Michala Petri, Alexander Knyazev, promotes perfection and the search for a new musical language. While still very young, she studied authentic performance on historical instruments which she considers relevant for contemporary music as well. She has also performed for Russian and European audiences premiers of works by notable modern composers – Christopher Rouse, Leonard Bernstein, Toru Takemitsu... In her repertoire, the classic works are combined with avant-garde, traditional programs with the alternative free jazz of Vladimir Volkov and multimedia performances in co-authorship with Olga Kumeger.



### Eriks Kirsfelds – cello (LATVIA)

Eriks Kirsfelds graduated from the Latvian Academy of Music (Prof. Eleonora Testeļeca and Prof. Māris Villerušs) and the Basel Academy of Music (Prof. Ivan Monighetti). He has experience in various orchestras as concertmaster and cello group leader (Kremerata Baltica, Liepāja Amber Sound Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of the Latvian Philharmonics, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Sinfonietta Rīga, etc.) Eriks Kirsfelds participates regularly in various Chamber ensemble and contemporary music project and is a laureate of "The Latvian Great Music Award" in 2009.



### Ruta Lipinaityte – violin (LITHUANIA)

Ruta Lipinaityte studied in Vilnius, Malmö and Paris. In 2008, she defended her thesis on principles of chamber orchestra performance and was granted a PhD degree by the Estonian Academy of Music and Theater. Here began her pedagogical activity as a violin class lecturer. She gave her own violin master classes during several music festivals.

The young violinist is the 1<sup>st</sup> Prize Winner of several Lithuanian Violin Competitions, Grand Prix Winner of the International Competition for Young Musicians "Petar Konjovic" in Belgrade. She was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize Winner at the Jascha Heifetz International Competition and International Competition "Remember G.Enescu" in Bucharest, as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize at the First International Duo Competition of Sweden and Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival's Orchester Academy. In 1998 Ruta Lipinaityte was awarded scholarship of the Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe.

As a soloist, she appeared with numerous orchestras including Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra, Brno Philharmonic Orchestra, Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra Kremerata Baltica, Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, Lithuanian, St. Christopher and Tallinn Chamber Orchestras, Symphony Orchestras of Lithuanian and Estonian Music Academies.

Ruta Lipinaityte is a member of Kremerata Baltica, established and headed by Gidon Kremer, ever since its foundation in 1998. Besides, the violinist performed chamber music in numerous festivals in Basel, Lockenhaus, Paris, New York, Elba, Louisiana, Riga, Tallinn, Vilnius and elsewhere.



### Andrei Pushkarev – percussion (UKRAINE/LATVIA)

Born in 1974 in Kiev in the family of musicians, he began his musical education when he was five, the first instrument being a piano. In 1980 he entered the Kiev Special Music School. By age 14 he concentrated on percussion – instruments, Andrei was dreaming from childhood. In 1992 Andrei Pushkarev became a student of Kiev Tchaikovsky National Conservatory, where he continued his professional development with Prof. Alexander Blinov. During the study in the Conservatory Andrei began to create his own works, his own compositions for vibraphone solo. While continuing to study orchestral percussion, the vibraphone becomes his favorite instrument – as a real solo instrument with its own world of colors and sounds.

In 1995 he was awarded First Prize as a solo vibraphonist in the newly established New Names of Ukraine competition where Andrei also performed his own musical compositions. Between 1995 -1999 Andrei performed as solo vibraphonist with many chamber ensembles throughout Ukraine. His orchestral career had a big development as well this time. In 1996 Pushkarev won the competition to the Kiev Philharmonic Orchestra as a main timpanist. At the age of 22 he became the youngest main timpanist of symphonic orchestra in Ukraine. In 1999 Andrei Pushkarev joined the chamber orchestra Kremerata Baltica founded by world famous violinist Gidon Kremer and has since participated in concerts around the world. He also participated in numerous recordings as a member of the ensemble on labels such as Nonesuch, Deutsche Grammophon. ECM etc. As a solo timpanist he can be heard on the CD release "After Mozart" which in 2001 received a Grammy Award in the U.S. as well the Echo Award in Germany in 2002.

Together with Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica, Pushkarev toured around the world, performing in numerous concert halls all around the world, including the Carnegie hall in New York, Albert hall in London, in the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and so on.



### Jana Ozolina – violin (LATVIA)

Jana Ozolina was born in Ogre, Latvia to a family of musicians and began her musical education when she was five. In 1994 she entered E. Darzina Special Music School (Riga, Latvia) in the class of Professor Roman Shne. Subsequently, Jana Ozolina studied with Zakhar Bron, Anita Zvaigzne, Eva Bindere and took master classes and master courses from Vadim Gluzman, Georgy Pauk, Pierre Amoyal, Anatoly Resnikovsky, Herman Krebbers, Charl Avcharian, Ruggiero Ricci. In 2008 she became a student at the Musical Academy in Graz (Austria) with Prof. Boris Kuschmir. Since 2010 she has been a student of the Musical Academy in Sion (Switzerland) in the class of Prof. Pavel Vernikov. Ozolina joined the Gidon Kremer's chamber orchestra Kremerata Baltica in 2006, performing in numerous concert halls all around the world, including the Carnegie Hall in New York, in the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam

and so on. In 2010 Jana Ozolina and Gidon Kremer, Tatjana Grindenko, Frans Helmerson, Andras Schiff were Jana's ensemble partners in Kronberg Academy's Chamber Music Connects the World project.



### Ula Ulijona – viola (LITHUANIA)

Born in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius in 1974, Ula Ulijona spent many years as solo violist with Kremerata Baltica. She completed her viola studies with Petras Radzevicius at the Lithuanian Academy of Music before transferring to the Basel University of Music, where she studied under Professor Hatto Beyerle. As a student of Tabea Zimmermann, she finally took her concert examination at the Academy of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin. She derived further inspiration from master classes with Wolfram Christ. In 2001 Ula Ulijona won second prize in the international William Primrose Competition in Chicago. Apart from numerous solo performances with famous orchestras such as the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, she has demonstrated her ability in chamber music performances in partnership with Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bahmet, Boris Pergamenschikow, Heinz Holliger, Sharon Kam and the Keller Quartet. Ula Ulijona was one of the first musicians to take part in Kronberg Academy's Chamber Music Connects the World project and has twice taught in the Mit

Musik – Miteinander workshop. She has been a permanent member of the Petersen Quartett in Berlin. Starting from 2009 U.Ulijona is first violist in RAI National Symphony Orchestra of Turin, Italy. Ula Ulijona plays viola made by Matteo Goffriller, 1722, Venice.

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The Contemporary Arab Music Week at Esterházy will be the first time that Arab composers and musicians perform at the Esterházy Palace in Eisenstadt, some 40 km away from Austria's capital, Vienna. The music hall of this venerable baroque castle, called the 'Haydnsaal' after the famous 17<sup>th</sup> century composer Joseph Haydn, ranks today among the most beautiful and acoustically perfect concert halls in the world.

This event is produced by Kremerata Baltica Management (KBM), The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), and Esterházy Foundation.

