



Austrian Music Encounter presents

THE
**SOUNDING
JERUSALEM**
FESTIVAL

VILLAGE VOICES

Festival Report 2011

DEUTSCHER VEREIN

VOM HEILIGEN LANDE



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Ramallah

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The Sounding Jerusalem Festival
Chamber Music Festival 2011

A.MUS.E - Austrian Music Encounter
registered non-profit association | ZVR: 241314821
Greith 169, 8103 Rein, Austria
amuse@soundingjerusalem.com
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Photos: The Sounding Jerusalem Festival;
Layout: NYXAS OG www.nyxas.com

Village Voices

Preface

In its sixth year, the Sounding Jerusalem Festival once once again was full of intense musical, cultural and human encounters.

The sixth edition of Sounding Jerusalem faced a conceptual reorientation where new impulses met the experiences of the past and created a new focus. In a course of a week, renowned local and international travelled the Jerusalem area and the Westbank to perform eight concerts of the highest artistic level.

With some locations being long time partners of Sounding Jerusalem, we are proud to be a regular cultural highlight in regions where classical concerts due to the political circumstances happen only very rarely. Our aim is to bring the music to the people, to encourage a creative exchange and to be a place where people can meet without prejudices.

Taking into account these years title, Village Voices, we wanted to make the different voices of the different vil-

lages heard and a part of the artistic experience. I am very happy that we had the opportunity to work together with a number of young locals, who made every evening a unique concert experience not only for the audience but also for the musicians.

Sounding Jerusalem's ethos of free and equal access to music for all people of whatever ethnic, social and religious heritage has always triggered various reactions. Nevertheless, or maybe just because of that, the festival is explicitly concerned with music and humans. Music is used as a medium, a universal language, to establish a dialogue between humans of the various social groupings. It is used to overcome borders through music and to launch a vibrant creative process because a conscious awareness of similarities and differences not only sharpens one's own



identity, but also improves a mutual understanding.

I would like to thank all participants of the Sounding Jerusalem Festival, our partners and supporters as well as our host, the Paulus Haus and the "Deutschen Verein zum Heiligen Lande" who have helped us to realize this season of Sounding Jerusalem.

Erich Oskar Huetter
Director of The Sounding
Jerusalem Festival

Sounding Jerusalem 2011

The 6th edition of The Sounding Jerusalem Festival presented a newly consolidated programme with 8 concerts taking place during one week in East Jerusalem and the Westbank, creating space for cultural as well as human encounter.

Keeping all concerts free of admission, the festival succeeded in providing cultural events of the highest artistic level for everyone – independent from their respective social, religious and ethnic backgrounds. With using music as a medium, a universal language, Sounding Jerusalem explored the various musical traditions to establish a dialogue between the humans of the various social groupings in a troubled region.

Melange Oriental

Melange Oriental came to live at the 4th Sounding Jerusalem Festival, became the programme in residence the following year and the artistic core of this year's festival. The ensemble brought together renowned international and local artists for an musical exploration of the multicultural facets of Jerusalem. Reflecting



“I know the Melange from last year and it is very joyful to see it evolve this very year.”

Visitor's comment
2011

its ethnic diversity of the Old City, the programme highlighted traditional music of the region, classical music and jazz as well as improvised music.

Intensifying Sounding Jerusalem's intercultural approach, musicians from Europe and the Middle East took on a journey together and guided the audiences of the numerous concerts through the rich and manifold sounding sites of Jerusalem. They traced the multiple voices and melodies of the different quarters and elaborated the fascinating aspects of cultural diversity.

The ensemble became a musical ambassador of the Jerusalem region and the musicians sounding travelers meeting Europe as well as the Middle East on eye level on their cultural encounters. Erich Oskar Huetter



(cello) and Stefan Heckel (accordion) together with Mahran Mohreb (cannon), Raed Saed (percussion), Wasim Oed (oud) and Michel Lethiec (clarinette) created a multi perspective sound fantasy about the vibrant melting pot that is Jerusalem.

On their journey, after meeting up in Jerusalem these artists visited Beit Jala, Adh Dahiriya/Hebron, Ras Karkar, Jericho and came back to Jerusalem for the two final concerts.

The ensemble was accompanied by photographer Christian Jungwirth who enriched the aural adventure with impressive photographs and visuals. The visual arts presented at the concerts allowed the audience to travel with the ensemble and made them even part of concerts they could not attend in reality.

Artisticly not only demanding a contention with one self, but also enabling an open dialogue with the for-

eign, Christian Jungwirth's part of this year's edition of Sounding Jerusalem is not to be underestimated.

International artists

Sounding Jerusalem 2011 brought together renowned local and international artists and formed an ensemble, that guided the audiences through the rich and manifold sounding sites of Jerusalem. During a week, the outstanding musicians met with



their audiences to create rooms for transcultural dialogues between Europe and the Middle East.

Erich Oskar Huetter, cellist and artistic director of the festival, gathered a wide range of international musicians to take on a fascinating musical journey: Stefan Heckel, accordionist, composer and the catalyst of „Melangé Oriental.

Mahran Moreb (canoun), who performed in many important international festivals such as the „Oud-Festival Jerusalem“, the “Yabous Festival” of Eastern-Jerusalem as well as the festival “Les Voix des Pays” in France. French clarinetist Michel Lethiec is considered to be one of the most eminent figures on the world-wide classical music scene. He performed with numerous international orchestras and is also devoted to teaching

and participates in research.

Raed Saed (percussion) learned percussion in different Arab countries like Egypt, Jordan and Syria, is active in many local groups played in several international festivals all over the world.

Due to health reasons, the French nightingale Magali Leger could not join the ensemble but for some selected concerts the gentle yet powerful voice of Rula Hazzan could be heard.



She currently is studying eastern vocals at the music academy in Jerusalem and played concerts in Israel and abroad.

Workshops

With the aim to reach a wider social range of the population, “Sounding Jerusalem” held workshops in cooperation with local partners. In the spirit of the festival’s main objective (free access to music), the workshops were open to everyone interested. This year’s intensified workshop programme expanded this ethos and added the important aspect of sustainability.

The workshops expanded the engagement with foreign forms of expression beyond the limited time of a concert. Being consciously aware of similarities and differences not only

“Music might achieve what is not yet possible on the ground: the equal participation of an ethnic, religious and cultural diversity in a peaceful and stimulating dialogue.”



sharpens one's own identity, but also improves a mutual understanding. Moreover the workshops aim to fulfill an other main idea of the festival – intense collaborations with local initiatives and people.

Under the supervision of Guenter Meinhart and Bernhard Richter (STUDIO PERCUSSION graz), the german actress and choreographer Nicole Kehrberger and percussionist Raed Saed, the local youth had the opportunity to experience percussion and acrobatics as creative means of expression. Moreover the participants even became an integral part of the performance, sharing the stage with the ensemble and performing short and sparkling interventions that ranged from intense percussion rhythms to acting and even acrobatics.

The workshop participants were invited to take part in so called „drum circles“ (a drum circle can be formed by any group of people playing hand drums and percussion) and discover the world of percussion and rhythm.

The concept of a drum circle proved to be a perfect implemetation of the Sounding Jerusalem's main objectives. A drum circle offers equality because there is no head or tail. The main idea is to share rhythm and get in tune with each other and themselves to form a group consciousness, to entrain and resonate. A new voice, a collective voice, emerges from the group as they drum together.

But even if some participants did not see the drums as their means of expression, they could make their voices heard by telling ancient stories or

presenting traditional songs from their village.

The Workshop Team

Founded in 1979 by Guenter Meinhart, STUDIO PERCUSSION graz has brought a wide range of productions to life over the past 30 years. Apart from the constant conservation and expansion of their repertoire of contemporary music, STUDIO PERCUSSION graz also enjoys repeated and exciting cooperation with musicians, composers and organisers from the field of Jazz.

Nicole Kehrberger was born in 1967 in Freiburg (Germany) and is working as an actress, producer, aerial-artist and choreographer. Starting in 1993 she has been part of different theatre- and film productions in England,





France, Italy, Spain, Israel, Palestine, Brazil, Switzerland and Germany. She teaches theater, aerial disciplines, acrobatic and movement at the École Philippe Gaulier in Paris, amongst others.

Venues

Since 2006 the Sounding Jerusalem Festival grew to be one of the most acknowledged chamber music festival in the whole region. More than 120 concerts took place in East and West Jerusalem as well as in atmospheric venues in the West Bank and were attended by over 19.000 people. The concerts, in which over 170 marvellous international musicians participated, always took place at unconventional, historically and spiritually important sights, as well as society based institutions.

In 2011, the Sounding Jerusalem Festival received a warm welcome in the village of Ras Karkar with its proud castle, found a contemplating audience in the Church of St. Anne and played for enthusiastic spectators in Adh Dahiriya. On its week long musical journey, Sounding Jerusalem visited The American Colony Hotel, the Courtyard of Talitha Kumi, as well as the Kids Centre in Jericho, to end with the final concert in the beautiful Courtyard of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer.

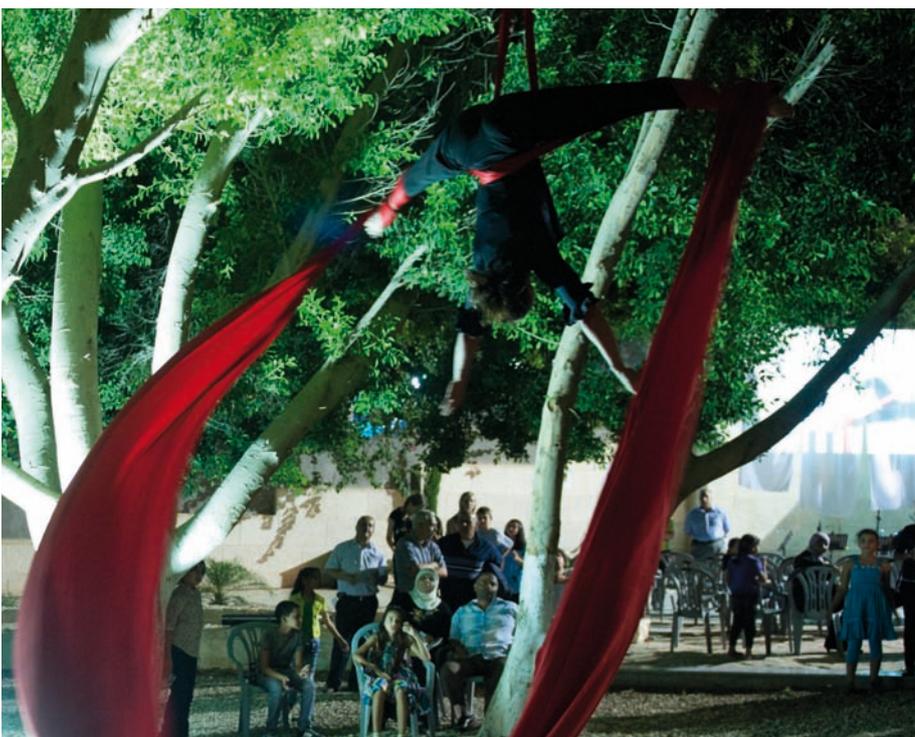
Sounding Jerusalem is explicitly concerned in music and human beings. Due to its intercultural competence, the knowledge of the difficult sociopolitical situation and a natural respect for the needs of the local residents, "Sounding Jerusalem" is highly accepted amongst the population of the region. With music as

a medium, an universal language, it aims of foster the cultural exchange between people of diverse ethnic, social and religious heritage, as well as to establish a dialogue between humans of the various social groupings in the troubled region.

The Sounding Jerusalem Festival intends to continue for its future not only to present classic music on highest standards to all people living in this region but also to create an open space for encounters in curiosity and respect.

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