

Composed by Ibrahim Al Junaibi

Responding to ***Dull Roar*** by [Michael Rakowitz](#) (2005)

Performed by Klip Lester (piano), Liliya Ostapchuk (violin 1), Andriy Khomyakevych (violin 2), Soren Hansen (cello)

**Composer's statement:** *I explored the artwork, only to linger on the theme of history. My composition focuses on the cyclical connection between the past and the future. My composition reflects the emotions I imagine are portrayed in Michael Rakowitz's Dull Roar.*

### **Ibrahim Al Junaibi, Composer (Abu Dhabi)**

Ibrahim is an Emirati composer who has nurtured a passion for music ever since he discovered the keyboard at the age of eight. Although Ibrahim was discouraged from pursuing his dream because his family deemed it culturally inappropriate, he continued to listen to and research music in order to understand the meaning behind the notes. Before long, Ibrahim was playing music by ear on his keyboard. Today, the determined Emirati pianist is composing music and making his parents and country very proud. When not at his piano, Ibrahim works as a public relations officer for an Abu Dhabi-based oil company.

### **Liliya Ostapchuk, Violin 1 (Abu Dhabi)**

Liliya is a violinist whose orchestral experience includes the Lviv National Opera and National Philharmonic orchestras. She graduated from Lviv State Conservatory (1992) and Lviv Institute of Postgraduate Education (2009), Ukraine. Liliya moved to the UAE to teach, preparing students for concerts and Trinity/ABRSM exams.

### **Andriy Khomyakevych, Violin 2 (Dubai)**

Andriy graduated from the Music Academy in Lviv named M.V.Lysenka. During his studies and after, Andriy worked as concertmaster of the Chamber Music department at the Music Academy, National Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra, Lviv Virtuosos, the Lviv Philharmonic string quartet and the International New Symphony Orchestra (INSO). Andriy has been living and working in the UAE since 2010.

### **Soren Lyng Hansen, Cello (Dubai)**

Soren is an accomplished Danish cellist, double bassist and pianist. Soren studied at the Funen Conservatory of Music (Denmark) and at the Royal College of Music (England) and privately with Jacqueline du Pre Barenboim and Mstislav Rostropovich. He has lived and worked as a musician and teacher in Denmark, France, Greece and the UAE. He was employed as 1st Solo cellist in the Northern Greece Symphony Orchestra, then as 1st Solo cellist in Southern Greece Symphony Orchestra and a full-time member of the Municipal String Quartet of Heraklion. Since 2015, Soren has been working out of Dubai as a cellist and double bass player.

### **Klip Lester, Piano (Dubai)**

Klip is English/American Grade 12 student at the American School of Dubai. He is an aspiring pianist, composer and singer who began playing piano when he was nine years old and composing for his school choir and orchestra at twelve. He has performed at international choir

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festivals in Asia, Europe and the Middle East and worked as an Artist Intern teaching choir and composition to elementary students. His interests outside of music include baseball, tennis, dirt biking and go-karting.

Composed by Mei Tahnon

Responding to **White Man Got No Dreaming** by [Michael Rakowitz](#) (2008)

**A Boy Under a Starry Night** Performed by Gulmira Abdulkhalikova (piano)

**Composer's statement:** *The composition A Boy Under A Starry Night tells the story of a boy who sits under the night sky full of stars, imagining himself flying and pursuing his dreams. He faces some ups and downs through his journey to the sky to reach where he wants to be. However, noticing that he is just a normal boy under a beautiful night sky, he will never stop running after his dreams. The boy reflects the plight of two individuals struggling on separate continents - Vladimir Tatlin, a Russian-Ukrainian painter and architect in the former USSR, and an Aboriginal boy in Australia. The policies of their respective governments made it difficult for them to realise their dreams and visions. However, neither ever gave up on chasing their dreams for their whole lives. The composition is more oriented towards modern Japanese music and is played by piano to create a soft and uplifting sound.*

**Mei Tahnon, Composer (Umm Al Quwain)**

Mei is an Emirati-Japanese piano player who started her musical journey at the age of five by the support of her mother who plays the piano as well. Mei is an architectural engineering student at UAE University who aspires to be a great architect.

Composed by Klip Lester

Responding to **Metropolis** by [Lubna Chowdhary](#) (1991 - 2018)

Performed by Layla Laubach (vibraphone), Klip Lester (piano)

**Composer's statement:** *When writing this piece, I wanted to capture a sense of creativity and emulate how the colourful clay sculptures fit together. Because all the sculptures are made of the same material, I decided to primarily use one instrument, the vibraphone, which I felt had a vibrant and bright sound to capture a bustling city's lively atmosphere. As I wrote the piece, I imagined myself strolling through the city on a sunny day, taking in the sights and sounds with amazement.*

*The composition is made up of 12 vibraphone parts, auxiliary percussion and piano. It starts simply, with repeating chords, but as different parts come in, the piece increases in complexity, with many of the patterns being off-beat. The piece starts in E Major, though halfway through, it shifts to C# minor before returning to E Major. Near the end, the piano joins the vibraphones and percussion, creating a final, bass layer to complete the aural package. The parts grow louder until a final triumphant chord involving all the instruments ends the piece.*

#### **Klip Lester, Composer, piano (Dubai)**

Klip is English/American Grade 12 student at the American School of Dubai. He is an aspiring pianist, composer and singer who began playing piano when he was nine years old and composing for his school choir and orchestra at twelve. He has performed at international choir festivals in Asia, Europe and the Middle East and worked as an Artist Intern teaching choir and composition to elementary students. His interests outside of music include baseball, tennis, dirt biking and go-karting.

#### **Layla Laubach, Vibraphone (Dubai)**

Layla Ilene Laubach is an undergraduate student studying psychology at Rice University in Houston, Texas. Although American-Lebanese, she was born and raised in the UAE. Layla graduated from the American School of Dubai in 2018, and is currently back home in Dubai to complete her academic year remotely. She has been playing piano for fifteen years and percussion for ten, and always makes room to participate in community and school bands. Layla also enjoys tap dancing.

Co-composed by Sara AlHajali, Tasneem Walid Kaakeh, Bayan Shaker Obeid, Majd Al Sabbagh, Zaid Sameer

Responding to **To My Brother** by [Taysir Batniji](#) (2012)

Performed by Sara AlHajali (vocals, piano1, derbakeh), Tasneem Walid Kaakeh (oud1), Yasmeen Walid Kaakeh (oud2), Bayan Shaker Obeid (piano2) , Majd Al Sabbagh (piano3), Zaid Sameer (violin)

### Composer's statement:

The composers' statement below is a reimagining inspired by the artwork.

*This composition brings together different cultures and traditions, blending traditional Arabic instruments (oud and derbakeh) with classical western instruments (piano and violin), creating a piece that aims to both celebrate and mourn life. A Palestinian wedding that has joyful music and traditional dancing starts with the traditional 'zaghareet,' or ululations. While the wedding takes place, a military general enters and shouts ferociously, stating that there is an emergency and enlisting in the military is mandatory for all men to stop the attacks. Thus, the joyful music shifts to a more frightening mood. The groom follows suit and enlists to protect his pride. Even on the day of his wedding, his country comes first. The bride waits anxiously in the wedding hall until one of the military men chimes in. His head low and voice cracking, he informs the new bride that she is now a widow and that her brave husband gave his life for his country. "Why is your voice low while you should be shouting? Raise your head and let the whole world hear", the widow screams while crying. Her tears are a mix of pride and hurt. She then watches her groom entering their wedding one last time. Carried in his casket by his friends while the music continues to play to celebrate the forsaken war hero.*

"Alas, the lemon trees will never perish. We are Akka. We are Haifa, Al Jaleel mountains and Lattron. Every lemon will birth a child. And the lemon trees will never dry out."

- *Gold inlay on a Damascus sword* by Nizar Qabbani

عرس فلسطيني تردد فيه الأغاني المفرحة والأهازيج الجميلة والدبكات الشعبية.

وفي هذه الأثناء يدخل أحد عناصر الجيش ويقوم بتبليغ العريس بضرورة الالتحاق الفوري بالجيش لحد هجوم العدو، فتتحول الأغاني إلى أغاني وطنية وقومية.

ومن ثم يلتحق العريس بالجيش مباشرة وبعد الانتهاء من مراسم الزفاف. وبعدها بيومين، يأتي خبر استشهاد العريس. فيدخل أحد الشباب ليخبر زوجة الشهيد التي لم تفرح بعريسها أبداً، ويخبرها بصوت خفيف ورأسه نحو الأرض.

وعندئذ تصرخ وتقول له: "أيش عبتقولها بصوت واطي يا (نايف)، ارفع راسك وعلي صوتك وخلي كل الدنيا تسمع". (تقولها وهي حزينة وتبكي)، وتتطلق الزغاريد.

وعندها يدخل بعض الشباب وهم يحملون الشهيد على أكتافهم، فتبدأ الأغاني والموسيقى الحزينة.

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ولكن محال أن ينتهي الليمون كما قال الشاعر السوري نزار قباني في قصيدة  
" ترصيع بالذهب على سيف دمشقي " :

نحنُ عكا ونحنُ كرمل حيفا.... وجبال الجليل واللطرونُ  
كل ليمونة ستجذب طفلاً.... ومحال أن ينتهي الليمونُ

### **Sara AlHajali, Co-composer, vocals, piano1 (Al Ain)**

Sara is from Syria and was born in Al Ain in 2012. At seven years old, Sara sings in Arabic and English, has played piano since the age of three and composes music. In 2019, Sara joined the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge's (ADEK) Mawhibaty Program for Talented Students in the Arts and holds accolades such as third prize at Al Fujairah International Piano Competition and second prize in Aldar's Battle for the Title of the Finest Young Musician in Abu Dhabi. In 2020, Sara successfully passed the Grade 3 ABRSM piano exam and is currently preparing for her Grade 5 exam. When not playing music, Sara enjoys drama, ballet, and playing football.

### **Tasneem Walid Kaakeh, Co-composer, piano2 (Al Ain)**

Born in Al Ain, Tasneem is fifteen years old and very proud of her Syrian heritage. She started learning the piano only two years ago. Her musical passion has inspired her to learn other instruments, including cello, ukulele, guitar and oud as well as composing. In 2019, she was accepted into ADEK's Mawhibaty Program for Talented Students in the Arts. Besides music, Tasneem loves math and enjoys playing basketball, swimming, drawing, painting, writing and learning new languages. She has published two Arabic books with her siblings.

### **Bayan Shaker Obeid, Co-composer (Al Ain)**

Bayan is a Syrian musician and was born and raised in Al Ain. She began learning piano online at the age of twelve and has since participated in various school events. She was delighted when she was accepted into ADEK's Mawhibaty Program for Talented Students in the Arts on her sixteenth birthday. Bayan is currently a freshman at Khalifa University and is balancing her music passion and practice with her studies in chemistry.

### **Majd Al Sabbagh, Co-composer, piano3**

Majd is from Syria and is currently a Grade 11 student. Born into a family of music lovers, Majd had been self-taught until he joined ADEK's Mawhibaty Program for Talented Students in the Arts in Al Ain. Today, Majd not only loves playing piano, but also composing.

### **Zaid Sameer, Co-composer (Al Ain)**

Sixteen-year old Zaid was born in Jordan and lives in Al Ain. He was introduced to the violin by his music teacher at twelve years old. With his music teacher and the school band, Zaid's musical talent grew. In 2019, Zaid won first place in his school music competition and was also

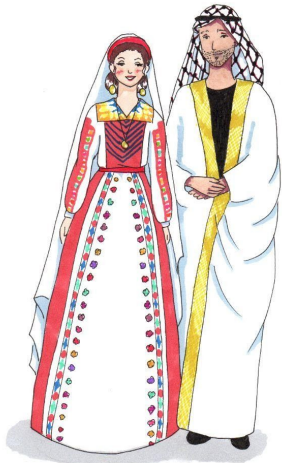
accepted into ADEK's Mawhibaty Program for Talented Students in the Arts, where he excels in performance and composing.

**Yasmeen Walid Kaakeh, Oud (Al Ain)**

Born in Syria, thirteen-year-old Yasmeen lives with her family in Al Ain. Two years ago, she started learning the oud, followed by the cello and ukulele. Inspired by her older sister, Tasneem, she also learned piano. Currently, she plays oud, cello, ukulele, guitar and piano. When not playing music or studying, Yasmeen finds time for her other passions - painting, drawing and basketball. She has published two Arabic books with her siblings.

**Jolnar Abo Khair (Drawings)**

Born in 1992 in Syria, Jolnar graduated with a degree in Fine Arts from Damascus University in 2014. In 2016 she opened her studio, Atelier, to teach and practice drawing, painting, sculpture and printmaking. She has worked as an archaeological illustrator with the Syrian National Archeological Expedition and volunteered with Children of Tomorrow Association providing art therapy to children. Jolnar currently teaches fine arts at Damascus University. Her works have been exhibited in Damascus and As-Suwayda (Syria).



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Composed by Falah Sheikh Mohamed, Kamal Pillai, David Dykov  
Responding to **Formation III: The Dappled Light of the Sun** by [Conrad Shawcross](#) (2015)  
Performed by Falah Sheikh (vocals), Kamal Pillai (guitar), Layla Laubach (piano)

**Composer's statement:** *In Shukriya, I interpreted the sunny days as a challenge of the pandemic. The kaleidoscope represents the dedicated COVID frontline workers and the shadows represent the recovery and wellness of society. Though this melodious piece, I express my gratitude to the frontline superheroes who work selflessly to protect us.*

**Falah Sheikh Mohamed, Co-composer, vocal (Ajman)**

Falah, whose family is from India, was born and raised in the UAE. He is currently pursuing a Master's in Engineering Management from the UAE University. Falah enjoys singing and playing violin and is a member of the university's orchestra. In addition to music, Falah enjoys athletics and is a member of four university sports teams. He speaks five languages. Falah is currently interning at a reputed hypermarket in UAE.

**Kamal Pillai, Co-composer, guitarist (Al Ain)**

Kamal is a multi-instrumentalist focussing on the guitar and melodic improvisation. Since the late 1990s, Kamal has been an active performer in various music groups, rock bands and is also a music teacher. Through teaching, Kamal discovered his life's purpose. After moving to UAE in 2007, he dedicated himself to the art of teaching music in his new home, Al Ain.

**David Dykov, Co-composer (Abu Dhabi)**

David is Bulgarian and has lived in the UAE for eight years. David started playing the piano at the age of eight. He has gained valuable experiences from undertaking the ABRSM piano practical exams, where he recently achieved Distinction for Grade 8, and participated in the Emirates Peace Music Competition. Most recently, David has developed an interest in composing music. He has recently composed the first movement for a Cello Sonata for piano and cello. David is now in his first year of university in the UK.

**Layla Ilene Laubach, Piano (Dubai)**

Layla Ilene Laubach is an undergraduate student studying psychology at Rice University in Houston, Texas. Although American-Lebanese, she was born and raised in the UAE. Layla graduated from the American School of Dubai in 2018, and is currently back home in Dubai to complete her academic year remotely. She has been playing piano for fifteen years and percussion for ten, and always makes room to participate in community and school bands. Layla also enjoys tap dancing.