

NODES | KESHARIM

A Tale of Four Cities

NODES (Hebrew: קשרים | kesharim) is a long-term collaboration between Austria and Israel aiming at bringing together leading composers, ensembles specialising in contemporary music and members of music colleges of both nations.

The NODES project, initiated by Israel Composers' League (ICL) and Österreichische Gesellschaft für zeitgenössische Musik (ÖGZM – Austrian Society for Contemporary Music), commenced in May 2018 with a concert series taking place in Graz (07.05.), Vienna (08.05.), Tel Aviv (22.05.), and Jerusalem (23.05.).



The two concerts in Austria were performed by Ensemble Zeitfluss – a highly distinguished Graz-based body of musicians, founded in 2003 by its conductor Edo Mičić and one of its longest serving members, the saxophonist Clemens Frühstück. “Zeitfluss” performed Arnold Schönberg’s Three Pieces op. 11 (1909; arranged for chamber orchestra by Richard Dünser), the Concerto for bass clarinet and ensemble in one movement (2014) (soloist: Arnold Plankensteiner) by Hilat Ben-Kennaz (Israel), D.I.E. (2013) by Roman Pawollek (Austria), Für Bläserquintett (1990) by Gerd Kühr (AT), Postlude (ensemble version 2017) by Ayal Adler (IL) and Whence Comest Thou, Whither Wilt Thou Go (chamber version 2017) by Ziv Cojocaru (IL).



Having arrived in Graz the Austro-Israeli circle of composers attended the rehearsals, met with local fellow composers and relished the specific flair of this charming South Austrian city. The concert at Großer Minoriten-saal – the former refectory of the baroque Minorites monastery – was not only the inception of the NODES | KESHARIM enterprise, but also witnessed the Austrian premieres of all three of the Israeli composers’ works. The entire performance won a lot of acclaim from the audience and was described as “cross-cultural sound rapture” in a review by Felix Jureček, published in the May 9 issue of Kronen Zeitung (a popular Austrian daily newspaper).



The second performance of the above mentioned programme took place the next day at the concert hall of Arnold Schönberg Center Vienna, a repository of Schönberg's archival legacy and a cultural center. The Viennese public was no less enthusiastic about the compositions and their elaborate and empathic interpretation by Ensemble Zeitfluss. Videos of the performance at Schönberg Center can be viewed on [youtube.com/user/oegzm](https://www.youtube.com/user/oegzm).

Ten days after the Vienna concert the Austrian delegation made its journey to sunny Israel in order to reconvene with the resident collaboration partners and to attend the remaining two concerts of the current NODES venture. These were to be performed by the much celebrated Israeli Meitar Ensemble, founded in 2004 by its artistic director Amit Dolberg. In the meanwhile the Israeli hosts made their guests acquainted with some of the manifold attractions of Tel Aviv-Yafo.

Prior to the Tel Aviv Concert (22.05.) the Austrian delegation attended a Composition Forum at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music which is a part of the Faculty of the Arts at Tel Aviv University (TAU) and operated in collaboration with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Prof. Ruben Seroussi had kindly invited Dr. Morgana Petrik, president of ÖGZM, and Austrian composer and ÖGZM board member Norbert Sterk to speak before the students of the TAU composition department. Morgana gave an

overview on Austria's new music scene and young composers, and Norbert introduced a composition/painting project he and artist Elisabeth Holzer, who was also present at the forum, have lately been working on.

After the forum the attenders proceeded to Clairmont Hall, the Buchmann-Mehta School's main concert venue. Built in 1998, it has been one of Israel's leading and most active venues ever since. The hall, equipped with a concert organ (built in 2001 by Hermann Eule Orgelbau) and two excellent Steinway grands, provides rehearsal and performance space for a full-sized symphony orchestra and an oratory choir.

The programme performed by Meitar under the baton of Guy Feder contained the ensemble works *Synchothron* (2014) by Viola Falb (AT), the premiere of *Sextet* (2017) by Erel Paz (IL), *Dream Fresco* (2000) by Richard Dünser (AT), *Concerto for bass clarinet and ensemble in one movement* (2014) (soloist: Jonathan Hadar) by Hilat Ben-Kennaz (IL), *Hôtel de la Paix - Rejouer* (2005) by Norbert Sterk (AT) and *The Yearnings of the Duck* (2008) by Ruben Seroussi (IL). Composers and audiences were equally delighted and impressed by the splendid performance. This was duly celebrated during the ensuing dinner, in the course of which personal acquaintances were made between the Meitar musicians and the Austrian composers.





The next day a visit was paid to the Old City of Jerusalem and some of its famous sights – amongst them the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall – before it was about time to proceed to the venue of this season's 4th and final NODES concert: the Jerusalem Music Centre (JMC), located in Mishkenot Sha'ananim on a hill directly across from Mount Zion, was founded in 1973 by violinist Isaac Stern and Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek. The JMC finds young musical talents from all over Israel and supports them by providing unique educational programmes and master classes, and by helping them on their way onto the global stage. Moreover the JMC hosts several outstanding concert series.

The remaining days of the Austrians' sojourn in Israel the collaboration partners held meetings in order to develop the next step of the NODES | KESHARIM enterprise. The general idea is to enhance the cultural exchange by arranging guest appearances of Meitar Ensemble in Austria and of Zeitfluss Ensemble in Israel in 2019.



It is a great (and rare) delight to experience a superb performance two times in a row, as was the case in the course of the Jerusalem concert. In addition to the original programme Meitar cellist Yoni Gotlibovich and pianist Amit Dolberg performed the winning works of the Mark Kopytman Composition Competition, initiated by the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance (JAMD). The three young composers – Omer Barash (1st prize), Eilon Rozman (2nd prize) and Shahar Regev (3rd prize) – received a lot of praise from the audience.



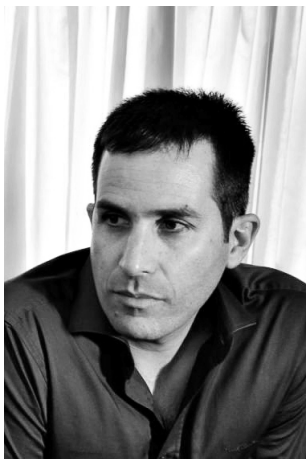


Photo: private

Dr. Ayal Adler

(b. 1968 in Jerusalem) is an Israeli composer. He is the chairperson of the Composition and Conducting department at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and the director of the Israeli Composers' League (ICL).



Dr. Morgana Petrik

(b. 1974 in Vienna) is an Austrian composer and musicologist. She is the president of the Austrian Society for Contemporary Music (ÖGZM) and one of two vice presidents of the Austrian Composers' League (ÖKB).

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