

Divan of the Continents | Short Info



The Divan of the Continents is a contemporary chamber orchestra and platform for music of the 21st century evolving from intercultural encounters. It negotiates contemporary culture in the medium of sound. The Divan was founded in 2013 in the context of the Berlin festival “Nights of Ramadan” and is directed by Cymin Samawatie and Ketan Bhatti, who are also composing for the orchestra. In 2015, the ensemble performed at Jazzfest Berlin.

The repertoire covers both composed, arranged, as well as free and improvised pieces. The vocals are in Persian, Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, and German. The lineup comprises nine to 22 musicians with origins in countries such as Iran, Japan, China, Australia, Lebanon, Israel, Turkey, Germany, and the U.S.

With the Divan of the Continents, singer and composer Cymin Samawatie and producer and drummer Ketan Bhatti follow their objective to create a transcultural orchestra of global reputation in Germany. The platform involves members of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as of the German jazz scene and musicians introducing traditional instruments from all over the globe. The compositions address the encounter of cultures in a post-migrant society, the search for common ground, the dialogue between different religions, as well as the appreciation of human cultural wealth.

The Divan’s music emerges out of diverse genres, such as contemporary jazz and Neue Musik. It reflects on questions: about communality; about new soundscapes. Questions, such as: “What is one’s own?” and “What is the other?,” are contested in order to conceive the entanglements of genres and cultures, and the ambiguity of identities.

Musical Directors & Composers

Cymin Samawatie & Ketan Bhatti | Arash Safaian *guest composer (2014)*

Members (2013 - 2015)

Sveta Kundish *Hebrew vocals* | Cymin Samawatie *Persian vocals* | Rabih Lahoud *Arabic vocals* | Defne Şahin *Turkish vocals* | Bassem Alkhouri *Arabic vocals*

Marlene Ito *violin* | Martin Stegner *viola* | Martin von der Nahmer *viola* | Knut Weber *cello* | Anna Carewe *cello* | Ralf Schwarz *double bass* | Demetrios Karamintzas *oboe* | Dominik Wollenweber *oboe* | Wu Wei sheng | Milian Vogel *bass clarinet, electronics* | Vladiswar Nadishana *flutes, percussion (Kavalla, Duduk, Ney, Hulusi)* | Esra Berkman *kanun* | Naoko Kikuchi *koto* | Nevzat Akpınar *baglama* | Alexander Lipan *oud* | Larry Porter *rubab* | Taiko Saito *marimbaphone, vibraphone* | Joss Turnbull *tombak, percussion, electronics* | Bassem Alkhouri *kanun* | Mari Sawada *violin* | Boram Lie *cello* | Christian Weidner *saxophone, duduk* | Hilary Jeffery *trombone* | Lars Zander *bass clarinet, electronics* | Tilmann Dehnhard *bass flutes, electronics* | Mohamad Fityan *ney, kawala* | Matthias Kurth *oud, guitar* | Sabrina Ma *marimbaphone, vibraphone* | Niko Meinhold *piano, guzheng* | Ketan Bhatti *drums, electronics*

Links:

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kplpv838XtI>

Documentation (2013): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iarT78hpQY>

Website: www.divanderkontinente.de

Website Cymin Samawatie: <http://www.cyminsamawatie.de>

Website Ketan Bhatti: <http://www.bhatti-music.de>