

Bringing Cyprus artists to the fore

Pharos Trust puts the focus on local talent

By Saskia Constantinou

THE PHAROS Trust recently launched a 'Cyprus Artists Series' which is presented concurrently with its internationally well established concert and recital series. The Cyprus Artists Series is dedicated to the promotion and support of musicians living and working in Cyprus who are not always given enough opportunities to perform.

Yvonne Georgiadou is the music project's co-ordinator at the Trust and is not only a professional singer but has also worked as a music therapist with special needs children and specialised in the practices of Kodaly, Orff, Suzuki and Dalcroze methods. She spoke to me about the importance of the series, both to the Trust and to the wider public.

During a coffee break in the artistic and relaxing atmosphere of the Trust, with a recording of the last chamber music concert playing, I asked exactly what her job entailed. Smiling she replied "I am responsible for the smooth organization of all the concerts - from the early scheduling of a music project until the day the

actual concert materialises. This new series is especially exciting for me, as it not only involves Cypriot musicians but also composers, as the Trust has concentrated on commissioning new works."

But was it necessary to go to the extent of developing a new series - why was it not just incorporated into the existing series? Georgiadou explained that the immense fund of musical talent which Cyprus has is not given the recognition it deserves and even more tragically, Cypriot artists and musicians often find that they can pursue a career more easily abroad. "Their home country actually stifles their artistic needs. In some cases, they even abandon their musical careers and settle for other occupations."

The Pharos Trust is associated with performers of high artistic standards and although the Cypriot artists have been separated from the rest of the concert and recital series, there is no distinction between the series. "It was simply that as a newcomer, the Cyprus Artist Series deserved more attention and exposure with the name merely underlining the unique character and principle of the series.

"We also chose to accentuate the local quality of the series by changing the venue to one of relative historical interest and value, choosing Kastelliotissa as opposed to the Pasydy Auditorium. It is undoubtedly more stimulating for classical music audiences to be given the choice to enjoy concerts in a variety of venues - just think of the fantastic Manor House in Kouklia where we have our Chamber Music Festival.

The venue often adds to the excitement of the concert."

Educational concerts are a priority for the Pharos Trust, and Georgiadou reiterated that this series is no exception. "All artists who perform under the Pharos umbrella are invited to participate in educational concerts so that our children, who are after all the audiences of the future, will have opportunities on a variety of musically related issues as all European children do. The Cyprus Artists Series will not be an exception."

Artists are chosen by forwarding promotional material to the Pharos Trust, such as biographical notes, photos and CDs with their suggestions and ideas about programming for a concert. Georgiadou explains that "auditions might be necessary for selecting orchestral players or an opera cast, but an artist's true grandeur is largely revealed on the concert platform."

She attends most of the concerts of musicians based in Cyprus and scouts for talent appropriate for the series, but welcomes all enquiries at Yvonne@thepharostrust.org.

Are there more challenges in arranging these series as opposed to the concert series? "Well, I guess one of the main challenges is the fact that Cyprus-based artists do not come up with exacting ideas or artistic partnerships in mind. We feel obliged to host an astonishing violinist for example, but a solo violin recital is not really a functional idea. That is why I always advise artists to collaborate in creating a special

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project or forming a specific chamber music ensemble for a Cyprus Artists Series concert.

"There is an astonishing wealth of talent and at the Pharos Trust; we only wished we had more resources for accommodating all this talent without further ado."

The next performers in the series are members of the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra – percussionist Nicolas Papageorgiou, Flautist Virginie Bove and cellist Aude-Marie Auphan, with a programme which includes works by Bach, Boismortier, Jolivet, Beck, Bresnick and Fenigstein. They will be followed in December by the Mavromoustaki sisters, violinist Victoria and pianist Eleni.

■ *Cyprus Artist Series. Percussion, Cello and Flute Recital. Nicolas Papageorgiou (percussion), Aude-Marie Auphan (cello), Virgine Bove (flute). November 28, 8.30pm. Casteliotissa Hall, Nicosia*



Yvonne Georgiadou



NICOLAS Papageorgiou studied percussion at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London (1993-97), followed by postgraduate studies at the Amsterdam Sweelinck Conservatoire. He has given concerts in Cyprus, Greece, England, Holland, Germany, Poland and France and recorded with the Capella of the Kremlin of Moscow Gousseau's *Vêpres du Millénaire*. In addition to his

position as Principal Timpanist of the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra, Papageorgiou regularly appears as recitalist and chamber musician and recently formed the Cyprus Contemporary Music Ensemble. He collaborates with the National Theatre of Cyprus, including the Athens Festival at Ancient Epidaurus, and with the experimental Dance/Theatre Group Echo Arts and more recently the Cairo Experimental Theatre Festival.



AUDE-MARIE Auphan was born in France and studied

cello at the conservatoires of Lille and Saint Maur des Fosses. She studied further in London at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and performed as a soloist and chamber player in France, England, Sweden, Czech Republic, Poland, Germany, Egypt, Greece and Cyprus. During her final two years of study, she worked regularly with the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse.

In 1999, she moved permanently to Cyprus following her appointment as Principal Cellist of the Cyprus Symphony Orchestra. Auphan is a keen chamber musician and considers collaboration with living composers a priority. She has premiered Savvas Savva's cello concerto *Pictures*, and has also worked with composer Christos Pittas, Sophia Serghi and Lior Navok. Auphan teaches cello at the Ethnikon Odeion Cyprus and for the scholarship programme of the Cyprus State Youth Orchestra. She coaches chamber music in the CSYO summer course and is invited by the Arte Music Academy for seminars.

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VIRGINIE Bove began playing flute at an early age and went on to study piccolo at the National Conservatoire of Paris. She has toured Italy, the United States and Belgium with the Sorbonne Orchestra and has participated in several recordings including Stanley Clark's film music for *The Transporter*.

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