

MALEK JANDALI

Composer and Pianist | Founder of Pianos for Peace

"... deeply enigmatic.. , speaks with voices and in tongues emerging from the composer's Syrian heritage that generously repay more reflective listening."

– **Gramophone**

"Heart-rending melodies, lush orchestration, clever transitions and creative textures."

– **American Record Guide**

"The piano writing is rhythmically spiky and highly virtuosic, while the orchestral scoring is brightly colored, vivid, and actively engaged with the solo part. A major new addition to the 21st century's symphonic literature."

– **Fanfare Magazine**

"Eclectic... stormy music evokes the image of a boat swamped by waves."

– **The Baltimore Sun**

"Commissioned by the BSO, Jandali's 'The Silent Ocean' found a rapt audience at its world premiere."

– **The Washington Post**

"A wonderfully gifted artist and a superb composer... his music is intensely passionate, eminently approachable, and filled with sophisticated surprises... music making of the highest caliber."

"Jandali belongs among the superb composer poets of our time. A meaningful voice of quite astonishing, almost unearthly beauty."

– **Marin Alsop**

Full Length Biography

Described as "**deeply enigmatic**" (*Gramophone*) and rich with "**heart-rending melodies, lush orchestration, clever transitions and creative textures**" (*American Record Guide*), Malek Jandali's music is widely regarded as "**a major new addition to the 21st century's symphonic literature**" (*Fanfare* magazine). Recent commissions and premieres include a viola concerto for Roberto Diaz, a string quartet for the Nashville Symphony, and a world premiere by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Marin Alsop, who described *The Silent Ocean* as "an evocative and emotional journey...Jandali captures the struggle, trauma, and triumph of our displaced brothers and sisters through the voice of a child. It is a beautiful and important message."

Jandali's compositions not only integrate Middle-Eastern modes into Western classical forms and harmony but also echo UNESCO's call to preserve and protect the rich cultural heritage of his homeland Syria at a time when it is being eradicated. His repertoire ranges from chamber music to large-scale orchestral works including seven symphonies, eight concertos, and various programmatic pieces. Jandali's works have been performed by numerous orchestras including the

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra, Stockholm Solister, Norrlandsoperan Symphony Orchestra, Cairo Symphony Orchestra, Russian Philharmonic Orchestra, and the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra. Jandali has produced nine albums of lauded performances of more than forty of his compositions. His albums *Syrian Symphony*, *SoHo*, *Hiraeth*, and *The Jasmine Tree* were released at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 respectively. The *Huffington Post* described his work as “**inspiring**” and Bob Stevenson of NPR stated that his music is both “**moving and thought provoking.**”

His most recent album, **The Desert Rose**, released in 2022, includes his Symphony No. 4 for String Orchestra and Symphony No. 6 “The Desert Rose”, recorded in Vienna with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra led by Marin Alsop who commented “**I don't know of another composer who so successfully weaves in the Arabic, particularly the folk elements... and by bringing that into the symphonic structure and integrating them, opens up a whole new form.**” The 2021 album release includes his Piano Concerto, recorded in Moscow with the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra led by Sergey Kondrashev, and his *Elegy*, recorded in London with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Firman who described Jandali's music as “**gorgeous, haunting, yearning and full of hope, with a pain more personal than that of Tchaikovsky or Rachmaninoff.**”

Since January 2021 Jandali has served as composer-in-residence at Queens University of Charlotte, where he once studied with Paul Nitsch, himself a student of Leon Fleisher. He is serving simultaneously in the same capacity at the National Museum of Qatar, which commissioned his Symphony No. 4 for String Orchestra and Symphony No. 6, “The Desert Rose.” His current and upcoming commissioned projects include his Symphony No. 7, Piano Concerto No. 2, and opera *The Square*.

The Syrian children were the inspiration for Jandali's second symphony, *Luminosity*, which was commissioned and premiered by the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. In 2016, the ZPO recorded *Luminosity* at The American Academy of Arts & Letters in New York City and performed the world premiere of Jandali's third symphony, *Hiraeth*, at Lisinski Hall under the baton of Pavle Dešpalj. Recent chamber music commissions include *String Quartet* and *Piano Quintet* by the Apollo Chamber Players, *Saxophone Quartet* by Wright State University, *String Quartet* by the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, and a *Symphonic Poem* by Marin Alsop and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra which received a standing ovation and “**found a rapt audience at its world premiere.**” (*The Washington Post*)

Also an “**acclaimed pianist**” (*BBC World News*) noted for his passion, imagination, and authenticity, Jandali enjoys a remarkable career that has taken him around the globe—throughout the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Austria, Germany, Norway, Qatar, and Australia among other nations. He continues to captivate audiences in performances at such prestigious venues as the Kennedy Center, Wiener Konzerthaus, Madrid's National Auditorium with the Queen of Spain in attendance, Cadogan Hall, Stockholm Konserthuset, Cairo Opera House, Nidaros Cathedral, Sydney Opera House, United Nations Headquarters, and Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall.

Dedicated not only to preserving Syria's cultural heritage but to humanitarian causes, Jandali has been regularly recognized by and invited to speak at key institutions such as Harvard University, the Skoll World Forum at Oxford, Duke University, Aspen Ideas Festival, Fordham University, the United Nations headquarters in New York City, the Doha Debates at Georgetown University in Qatar, TEDx Talks at Georgia Tech, and Sydney Ideas at the University of Sydney. Jandali is the recipient of the 2014 Global Music Humanitarian Award and in 2015 the Carnegie Corporation of New York honored him as a **Great Immigrant**.

He is a strong advocate for peace and was selected as a **Visiting Scholar** for the 2017/18 academic year in the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers University. Malek is passionate about making the arts accessible to all and is the founder and CEO of **Pianos for Peace**, a non-profit organization dedicated to building peace through music and education. He embraces young talent from all over the world through the annual **Malek Jandali International Youth Piano Competition**. Jandali makes his home in both Manhattan and Atlanta. His music is published exclusively by Soul b Music, and his recordings are available from Apple Music, Spotify, Amazon, and Virgin Megastores worldwide.

MalekJandali.com

This biography © 2023 by Malek Jandali. Any edited or altered use of their content without the express permission of Malek Jandali is prohibited. If you would like to make any edits to this biography or include it in a concert program or other materials, please contact agent@malekjandali.com