

# **ICONEA Conference 2012:**

**AEROPHONES IN THE ANCIENT WORLD: NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST, EGYPT AND THE MEDITERRANEAN**

**NOVEMBER 22, 23 and 24, 2012**

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON  
Senate House  
Malet Street  
London WC1E 7HU**

## **Programme**

**Thursday 22 November**

**1400: Registration**

**1430: Speeches: Paul Archbold, Irving Finkel and Richard Dumbrill**

**Chair: Irving Finkel**

**1445: Richard Dumbrill**

***When is a pipe not a pipe?***

I shall investigate so-called pipes, flutes, etc., from Neanderthals, Cro-Magnons, etc. and up to the literate Ancient Mesopotamians and later Mediterraneans.

**1545: Tea/coffee Break**

**1615: Barnaby Brown**

***Problems playing a modern reproduction of the silver pipes of Ur***

**1715 – 1800: Round table**

**Friday 23 November**

**Chair: Myriam Marcetteau**

**1000: Max Stern**

***Shofar: Sound, Shape and Symbol.***

The shofar has always been considered a magical instrument associated with the revelation of God's voice at Mount Sinai. Later, Joshua brought down the walls of Jericho with shofar blasts – in the ancient world, sound was known to influence matter. The shofar is the oldest surviving instrument still used in Jewish ritual. Its sound, shape, and symbolism are integral to the High Holiday Season. This lecture-demonstration exhibits a variety of shofar types and discusses their origins from animal to instrument through visual aids. It demonstrates the traditional shofar blast and deals with historical and symbolical issues aroused by its strident sonority. It concludes with a DVD presentation of the shofar as an artistic instrument, integrated into a contemporary biblical work by the author.

**1100: Tea Break**

**1130 : Malcolm Miller:**

***The music of the Shofar: ancient symbols, modern meanings.***

The Shofar discussed in biblical and post-biblical literature, is associated with a rich nexus of metaphorical symbolism, which has evolved over the course of time, and includes such concepts as supernatural power, joy, freedom, victory, deliverance, national identity, moral virtue, repentance, and social justice. While modern definitions have focused on the instrument's signalling, 'non-musical' character, there is evidence already in the ancient writings of its 'musical' function, whose potential to evoke a profound aesthetic response has led to multiple interpretations of its meanings. Composers in 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries have incorporated the shofar into their works as a powerfully eloquent musical resource, from Elgar's *The Apostles* premiered in October 1903 to Jörg Widmann's opera 'Babylon' premiered at the Munich Opera just a few weeks ago in October 2012. It is the purpose of this presentation to discuss these more recent uses of the shofar and the way composers interpret the shofar's ancient symbolism in a contemporary context, thereby highlighting both its ceremonial/religious, and its musical/aesthetic qualities.

**1230 : Lunch Break**

**Chair : Richard Dumbrill**

**1400 : Bruno de Florence**

***Shofar, Totemism and Voice: a Freudian-Lacanian Approach***

From a commentary by Jacques Lacan on a text by Theodor Reik, I shall attempt to outline how we can consider musical practices as incarnated thinking. Borrowing from the notions of perception (Merleau-Ponty), *jouissance* (Lacan) and libido (Freud), I shall propose a model of musical performance and its listening as a continuous path along a multidimensional Moebius strip, structured by the enigma of the real of the body. Shofar....

**1600: Tea/coffee Break**

**1630: Myriam Marcetteau:**

***Wind instruments from the ancient near East to the Greco-Roman period.***

This presentation will investigate the evolution of two types of aerophones from the Ancient Near East to the Greco-Roman period. I will focus on iconographic, philological, historical and sociological clues, for evidence of their affiliation. Some sources are easily traceable, such as the link between the Mesopotamian *hierodulae* and the female players of the *abub*-instrument. Some others, even though the affiliation is more hypothetical, are worth researching: I will attempt at giving possible origins for the ancient oriental roots of the *qarnu* and of the *tibia/aulos*.

**1730 – 1800: Round table**

**Saturday 24 November**

**Chair: Barnaby Brown**

**1000: Alan Prosser with the participation of Tansy Honey:**

***The organology, musicology, theory and spirituality of the ney***

The construction which has remained the same for at least 800 years, as shown from extant examples in the museums in Konya. I will describe the type of reed used, where they are found; their treatment and preparation; the making of the ney; its playing; its pitch range and the reason for having a pitch set of 34 within an octave. I will further discuss the Pythagorean and Sufi use of Makams for a deeper musical experience; how the intervals make it possible to assist with this process and give examples. I will discuss the possible source of makam construction extracted from the Ney and micro-tonalism, with examples.

**1130: Peter Strauven/Jan M.F. Van Reeth:**

***The Organ on the Mosaic of the Musicians from Maryamin at the Museum of Hama, Syria.***

**1300: Lunch Break**

**1400: Nicholas Stylianou**

***Diagrams, Cyclic Orderings and Aristoxenian Synthesis***

Despite difficulties surrounding the authenticity of writings on classical Greek music theory they have nonetheless been highly influential in subsequent theoretical developments. The broad polarisation of the domain into the Pythagorean and Aristoxenian traditions reflects the tension between their respective numerological and phenomenological approaches to music theory. Between these extremes Aristoxenus identifies the *Harmonicists*, commending them for their interest in musical reality whilst criticising their grasp of musical logic. Written some six centuries later, Claudius Ptolemy's *Harmonics* also stands out in attempting to reconcile reasoning and perception.

This paper employs contemporary diagrammatic representations of the various tetrachord species, as catalogued by Ptolemy, which form the building blocks of classical Greek musical structure. Particular attention is given to Aristoxenian criticisms of the Harmonicists' lack of attention to musical synthesis and consecution, specifically the *katapyknosis* (καταπύκνωσις) or close-packing of their diagrams and their use of cyclic orderings limited to a single genus in the range of an octave. It is hoped that the materials from this study may form the basis of a systematic framework against which these classical Greek music-theoretical constructs may be better understood.

**1530 Tea/coffee Break**

## 1600: Concert lecture

### ***Omar Bashir and the Bashir school of 'ud in Baghdad and beyond.***

**Munir Bashir** who died in 1997 was one of the most famous Iraqi 'udists in the Middle-East during the 20th century and a recognised master of the Arabian *maqam*.

Bashir's music is characterised by a unique style of improvisation which is the consequence of his study of Indian and European music in addition to Oriental forms.

**Omar Bashir** was born in 1970 in Hungary.

At the age of five, he left Hungary with his parents to live in Iraq, where he was educated. The 'ud he plays in performance is the same he had as a child.

At the age of seven Omar studied at the Baghdad Music and Ballet School where he became a teacher in his late teens. He created his own ensemble of twenty-four musicians, specialising in classical Iraqi music. Omar's performed with his father from the age of thirteen.



The death of his father marked a turning point in his musical career. He won many awards and on the first Anniversary of 9/11 was invited to play in the USA to raise funds for the Iraqi Symphony Orchestra which had been flown over on that occasion. Omar is certainly the most innovative 'udist to date.