

A Tribute to the Women of Rebetika

*A unique cultural event for
Victoria's Communities*



Shivanamusic in association with
Multicultural Arts Victoria Presents:

A Tribute To The Women Of Rebetika

(The Greek Blues)
*An all female cast performing songs
of love, desire, displacement, sorrow & survival*

Featuring
Anthea Sidiropoulos
vocals

Direct from Greece: 'San Mayemnes'
Christella Demetriou: vocal, bouzouki
Tilithena Koutlas: vocal, guitar
Sophie Moulakaki: vocal, accordion
Claudia Rossini: vocal, violin

Irene Vela
bouzouki, laute

7pm
Sunday
5th July 2009

Melbourne Town Hall
Tickets \$50 Adult
\$30 Concession
Bookings: www.shivanamusic.org



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Event designed by www.shivanamusic.org For more information please contact: Shivanam Music, tel: (03) 9577 0882

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SYNOPSIS

A Tribute to the Women of Rebetika (The Greek Blues) will be performed by an all female cast featuring an ensemble of local and international artists performing songs of love, desire, displacement, sorrow and survival.

This event will pay homage to some of the best female artist of that era including Roza Eskenazi, Rita Abatzi, Marika Ninou and Sotiria Bellou.



This emotionally charged show reflects the struggles of displacement and songs that were written at the peak of the Rebetika era. The expulsion of Greeks from Istanbul (Constantinople), Asia Minor (Smyrna) and the Black Sea (Pontos) from 1915-1922, resulting in millions of refugees, pouring onto the European mainland and into the heart of Athens where Rebetika music began to flourish.

This passion and spirit of survival likens itself to the similar plight of many emerging and refugee background communities who have settled in Melbourne, having lost their beloved homeland and who have fled persecution.

This event promises a cultural infusion of music and female voices performing songs embellished with traditional instruments including bouzouki, laouto (lute), guitar, baklama, violin and accordion.

An event not to be missed!

A Tribute to the Women of Rebetika

Proudly supported by
The City of Melbourne
Victorian Multicultural Commission
Multicultural Arts Victoria

WHY SUPPORT THIS PROJECT?

This project offers an emotionally charged insight into the struggle of displacement of Asia Minor refugees, recorded through song and music. The exile of Greeks from Istanbul (Constantinople) Asia Minor and the Black sea in 1915 and 1922 resulted in thousands of people pouring into the heart of Athens, and culminating in the birth of Rebetika (the Greek blues).

The passion and spirit of survival of this time likens itself to the African/American plight of the early 1900's reflected in blues music. It also resonates with emerging communities in Melbourne, who fled their homeland for a better life elsewhere. Themes of the Pontian, Armenian and Syrian genocide are also reflected in this genre of music.

This project proposes to bring to Melbourne one of Greece's all female Rebetika bands. '**San Mayemennes**' - a critically acclaimed group of women, each with an impressive array of artistic achievements in their own right. All female Greek Rebetika bands are rare and present rare insights into this period of history through women's eyes. This celebration of extraordinary levels of resilience, are particularly highlighted in women's stories from this time.

San Mayemennes will perform with local artist **Anthea Sidiropoulos** who has, in her own emotionally charged works, recorded the history of the experience of Greek migrants in Australia. Together, these artists offer what will surely be an unforgettable performance and expression of the history of displacement and sorrow, but also healing and survival. A selection of compositions will include songs written by the creators of this unique style of music dating between 1900 to 1950, as well as songs written by **Christella Demetriou** (founding member of San Mayemennes) and Anthea Sidiropoulos.

All material will be performed using traditional instruments including bouzouki, laouto (lute), guitar, baklama, violin and accordion.

Prior to the musical event, members of San Mayemennes will run workshops with local artists and interested community members, exposing them to this genre of music. This event will be coordinated with the NMIT and Victorian College for the Arts, School of Music.

It is a key intention of this project to explore opportunities for creating ongoing linkages and to raise enough funds to create a scholarship for a local musician to travel to Greece to study Rebetika in a mentoring program.

We are confident that this project will appeal to a diverse audience within the wider Melbourne community and plan to promote attendance and participation through a broad range of ethnic and mainstream media.

WHAT DO WE EXPECT TO ACHIEVE?

The Tribute to Women of Rebetika will expose Melbourne's broader community to a unique, innovative and quality arts program.

The main event will create a nostalgic environment, exposing audiences to a cultural performance of music expressing love, desire, displacement, sorrow, resilience and survival, and will attract a broad and possibly new audience base to Melbourne's art scene.

Expected outcomes will include:

- Stimulating broader community involvement in the Rebetika genre of music and encouraging access and participation in the arts by all cultures (especially culturally and linguistically diverse communities)
- Creating opportunities for a collaborative arts program between Greece and Australia (we are currently in the process of seeking support and funding from Greek organization such as The Hellenic Cultural Foundation, The Greeks Abroad Project and The Melina Mercouri Foundation.)
- Providing opportunity for local artistic development in the Rebetika genre
- Contributing to broader community understanding of displacement and the experiences of refugees
- Promoting cultural knowledge through the arts and creating opportunity for intercultural infusion in music.
- Enhancing intercultural awareness, dialogue and inclusiveness through the workshop and ongoing linkages.



“San Mayemennes”

(left) founder of the group Christella Demetriou, guitarist Eleftheria Kourlia, accordionist Sophia Moulakaki and violinist Caludia Rossini