



أغاني لأمام قادمة
SONGS FOR DAYS
TO COME

April 12, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM REFUGEE CAMPS TO SUMMER CAMP

Clarinetist Kinan Azmeh and St Urban Concerts to Support the International Rescue Committee's Refugee Youth Summer Academy in New Jersey

The International Rescue Committee of NY/NJ, St Urban Concerts, and renown Syrian clarinetist and composer **Kinan Azmeh** are pleased to announce a partnership to support the **Refugee Youth Summer Academy** in Elizabeth, New Jersey. This summer program provides a supportive and healing environment that helps refugee children overcome the trauma of forced migration. Through educational, recreational, and social activities, students improve their English language skills and their confidence, enabling them to assimilate in their new communities and become engaged citizens. St Urban and Kinan Azmeh will donate 50% of the sales of the album ***Songs For Days To Come, Vol. 1*** to help 70 refugee youth participate in the summer academy.

Commissioned and recorded by St Urban, ***Songs For Days To Come*** is a new musical work by Azmeh, setting poetry of his friends from Damascus (Hazem al-Azmeh, Mohammad Abou-Laban, Lukman Derky, Liwaa Yazji, and Adnan Odeh). Lenore Davis (director of St Urban) and Azmeh have collaborated musically since 2014. This new project was inspired by Azmeh's desire to set the poetry of his compatriots-in-exile to music, and expanding that sonic experience by including recordings of the poets' voices. The soundscape melds Arab and western traditions, and navigates the personal landscapes of home, faith, and friendship in times seemingly bent on shattering these human birthrights. It is also a reassuring expression of the freedom found in collaboration, and is an apt form of encouragement for the children in the summer academy and for refugees everywhere.

Songs for Days to Come adds another dimension to the chamber music canon and draws listeners through an intimate journey. It is performed by singer **Dima Orsho**, clarinetist **Kinan Azmeh**, cellist **Kinan Abou-Afach**, and pianist **Lenore Davis**. To learn more and purchase a download, go to www.songsfordaystocome.com.

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For more info: songsfordaystocome.com

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IRC

The International Rescue Committee responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic well-being, and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster. Founded in 1933 at the call of Albert Einstein, the IRC is at work in over 40 countries and 28 U.S. cities helping people to survive, reclaim control of their future and strengthen their communities. Since 1984, the IRC has welcomed over 8,000 refugees in New Jersey. Through resettlement, economic empowerment, health and wellness, education and learning and immigration services, the IRC NJ serves nearly 1,000 refugees, humanitarian entrants and other immigrants annually.

The Refugee Youth Program supports 165 youth enrolled in Elizabeth and Roselle Public Schools. Students in grades K through 12 come from over 15 countries and have relocated to the United States in search of safety from violence and oppression in their home countries. The obstacles this population faces – linguistic, academic, social, emotional, and economic – are complex. Up to 40% of the IRC's newly-arrived participants have had their schooling interrupted for months, or even years as a result of their family's displacement. A positive transition to school, social, and family life and ongoing support are essential for newly-arrived children and youth in the wake of crisis to continue on the path to high school graduation, post-secondary education, and engaged citizenship. In August 2017, 70 students will participate in IRC's second NJ Refugee Youth Summer Academy at Kean University's Human Rights Institute. Though English language enrichment and recreation activities, students thrive in a supportive and healing learning environment.

KINAN AZMEH

Described as “Intensely soulful” by the *New York Times* and “Spellbinding” by the *New Yorker*, Kinan Azmeh's utterly distinctive sound across different musical genres has been gaining international recognition. Born in Damascus, he has performed as soloist, chamber musician, improviser, and jazz artist around the world, from Paris' Opera Bastille to the UN's General Assembly. He has performed as soloist with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, the Knights Orchestra, the Osnabruck Symphony, and the Morgenland Festival Orchestra, to name a few. Azmeh's compositions include works for solo, orchestra, and chamber groups; and collaborations with film, live illustration, and electronics. In addition to his heavy touring schedule, Azmeh makes time to visit and play music with Syrian children in Jordanian refugee camps. He also performs with Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble and was featured prominently in the documentary *Music of Strangers*.

ST URBAN

Now in its fourth season, the New York chamber music series St Urban has reinvigorated the music salon through daring musical and literary programming, original commissioned works, and outstanding performances in intimate settings, including private homes and the Tenri Cultural Institute. At each salon, St Urban audiences meet and engage in discussions with performers, composers and writers to gain a deeper insight into their works and influences. St Urban was founded by Lenore Davis who commissioned Azmeh because, “His music is personal, and yet speaks to the entire world. The poetry he has selected and his settings transcend politics. There is a warmth and elevated humaneness pouring out of his performances and his compositions.”