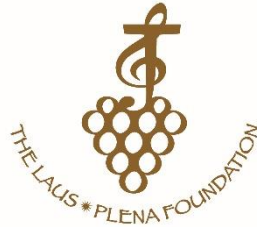


THE BAGHDIDA HOUSE FOR MUSIC

A project for social development in the Christian towns of the Ninive Plains

also helping to support the transmission of the ancient Syriac Christian sacred chant tradition

presented by the Laus Plena Foundation, Lugano (Switzerland)



Background

The Aramaic speaking town of Baghdida (Qaraqush), about 30 km from Mosul, Iraq, is the main Christian town of the biblical Ninive Plains. It was destroyed, burnt and looted by ISIS between 2014 and 2017. Its inhabitants, who had gone in exile to Erbil (Iraqi Kurdistan), made a courageous return to their homes and started rebuilding their cities in 2018.

The **Baghdida House for Music** is the follow-up of a social project started during the Erbil years, when some musicians in the Christian community started to provide music classes to their youth, to help them overcome the difficult situation affecting the community and all Iraq. The project aims at giving a stable and professional framework to the teaching of Music in Baghdida, in a general context that remains challenging socially, economically and geo-politically. It is based on the idea that music is a discipline of life, and a language that goes

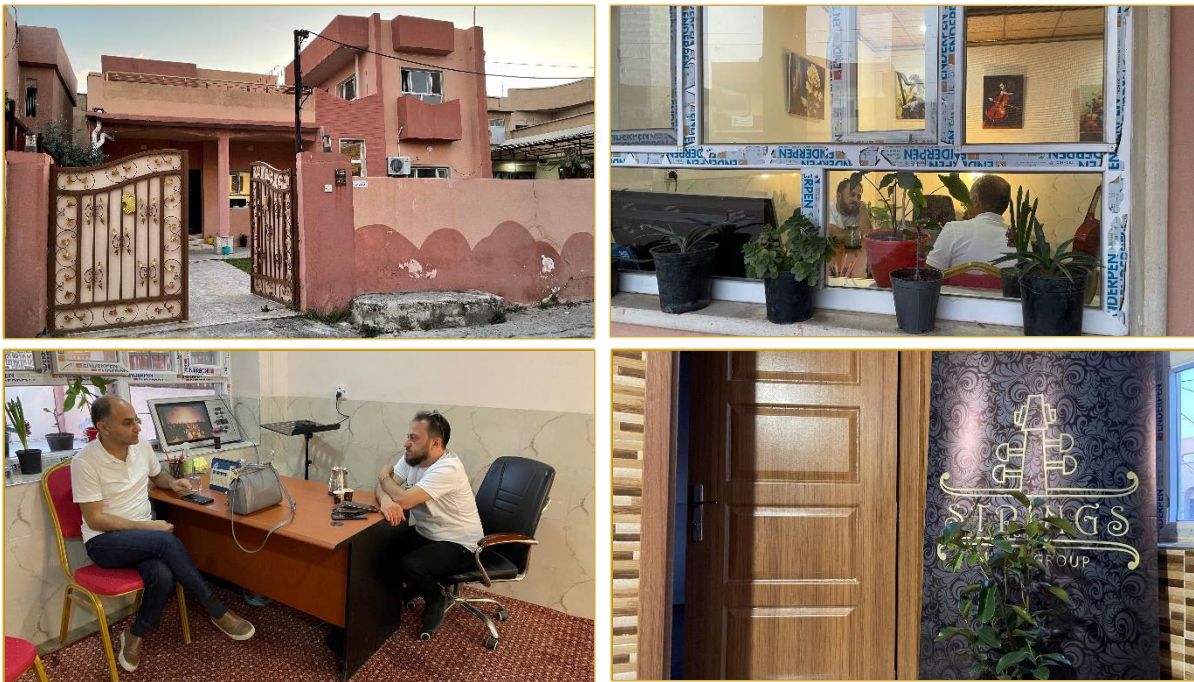


beyond words and educates to dialogue. The project also aims at giving a more systematic and structured context for the transmission of the very ancient musical tradition of the Syriac Churches, used on the liturgy celebrated in Aramaic (Syriac) in Baghdida, a treasure for all Christianity.

Description of the project

"Music is everyone's world"

The project started in 2016 in Erbil in an emergency context with the support of some charitable organisations, under the leadership of Fr. Duraid Barbar, a Syriac Catholic priest from the Diocese of Mosul with academic musical education. Upon making return to Baghdida, the demand of the Christian families decided the initiators of the project to give birth, with very limited and temporary means, to a Musical Center in Baghdida, also encouraged by the local Syriac Catholic bishop H.E. Younan Benedict Qusay Mubarak Abdullah Hano, Syriac Catholic Archbishop of Mosul (and formerly, his predecessor H.E. Mons. Petros Yohanna Mouche)¹. This Center, now placed under the leadership of Mr. Sam Salim Auffee, assisted by Fr. Duraid Barbar, has been running mainly collective classes for several Eastern and Western instruments (Violin and Cello; Oud or Eastern lute; Nay of Eastern flute;



Guitar; Keyboard/organ; Tambura), with about 5 teachers, who are paid sporadically with occasional financial support. The premises for teaching are a private house generously made available for the time freely by his owner.

The Baghdida House of Music project aims at establishing, with the help of stable donors, a more **permanent and stable School of Music in Baghdida**, considering the lack of such institutes or schools in the region.

It seeks at making the culture of music a way of life for society, starting with giving all children and youth the opportunity to study music, while also empowering talented children to further develop

¹ The Syriac Catholic Church is an Eastern Church in full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

their capabilities and potential. The project is an opportunity to bring about an artistic renaissance in the region that will provide everyone interested with a space for creativity.

The project focuses on preparing a creative, innovative and balanced youth. Whoever learns music learns discipline, the capacity to listen carefully, and develops its cultural sense and taste. The discipline of music has a wide educational potential, not only for those who may become professional musicians.

The project aims at using multiple paths to spread musical cultural awareness in society, including gathering amateur musicians and developing their hobby.

The project will also provide an opportunity to open new jobs, thus having an economic dimension for music teachers who will assume the task of teaching music for all grades.

The project also seeks to reinforce the established a youth orchestra, to increase the musical preparation of its members, and to be a cradle for choirs for children and adults. The Baghdida House of Music could be also an organiser of educational musical events throughout the year, including music festivals for children and youth, with the possibility to exchange with different musical cultures and regions.

Some attention should be given to ensuring that music teachers can continue to upskills and possibly benefit from visiting professors, to match the musical scientific level required for teaching.

Concretely and as a first priority, the project aims at providing musical educational programs over several years for different groups of youth of both sexes:

1. children under the age of six
2. children from the age of seven to fifteen
3. Youth above age fifteen

The wish of the initiators of the project is to be able in the Medium term to open new classes: Sas, Qanun, Clarinet and Saxophone, and percussions.

Educational and training programs will be designed according to international musical curricula, with the focus put on teaching music from a young age. This includes capacity to use and read musical notation – which is not obvious in some Middle East countries, where traditions remain still very much entirely aural.

Attention will be given mainly to the Eastern Musical tradition (including quarter and semi-tones, or other micro-tones), with insights to the Western musical tradition, to familiarize children from a young age with both. The instruments that will be taught are adapted to be used on both traditions.





A home for a school of Syriac Music

The Baghdida House of Music could become the home for a **Syriac Music School**. Syriac Music is the ancient musical tradition used by the Syriac Catholic Church and community in its liturgical celebrations. It is based on ancient, carefully composed melodies, supporting sublime Syriac texts of the Fathers of the Church. The tradition has been transmitted orally since the first centuries.

Today, there is no systematic teaching of this key aspect of the Syriac Church's and Syriac community's identity. Programs to teach Syriac Music to priests, deacons and children would be very much needed and could contribute to keep alive the treasure of Syriac music, essential to the Syriac Christian community.

Syriac chant will require also classes of Syriac to complement the base teaching of Syriac which all Christian children receive as now allowed by the Iraqi constitution, and classes on liturgy.

General musical education provided by the House for Music will be very beneficial for the teaching of Syriac music.

The creation of such a school of Syriac Music is strongly supported by the local Syriac Catholic bishop of Mosul, H.E. Younan Benedict Qusay Mubarak Abdullah Hano.



Project phases

The project is proposed to be divided into three basic stages:

First stage - 3 to 5 years

- Confirm the premises of the school, find a suitable place, with the possibility to pay a rent.
- Acquire the furniture and base material to run the school: Currently, all the chairs and base materials used are made available by the local Church.
- Equipping the school with the necessary musical instruments for training and exercising of the students. Many families, considering the difficult generally economic conditions post ISIS, cannot buy their own instruments to their children, and instruments should be lent to them.
- Attract suitable professors for teaching, and possibly increase the number of instruments thought: Sas, Qanun, Clarinette and Saxophone, Percussions.
- The project starts with three collective classes (ca 10-20 students each) for each instrument (beginner's stage, learned stage, advanced stage): Violin and Cello; Oud or Eastern lute; Nay of Eastern flute; Guitar; Keyboard/organ; Tambura. Talented students could receive individual classes on top of the collective classes.
- At his stage, the school will rely entirely on the support of sponsors, tough an effort will be made to start collecting fees from the families that are able to pay them.



Second stage - 6 to 10 years

- Development of the classes into potentially smaller groups reflecting advancement. Increase of individual classes for talented students.
- Classes offered for additional instruments (such a qanun, etc.).
- Systematic collecting of fees from the families that are able to pay them; Several families will not be able to pay them. Beyond a basic stage of musical education, only talented students would be retained to benefit from possible scholarships.
- The school will continue to rely on the support of sponsors to cover the costs.

Third stage -10 to 15 years

- Stabilization of the school in terms of maximum number of instruments taught;
- Collaboration with external musical institutions and professors, invitation to external teachers for Master classes.
- Systematic collecting of fees from the families that are able to pay them.
- Well-structured scholarship programs for talented students.
- The school will continue to rely on the support of sponsors to cover the full costs.



Expected project budget

The most urgent aspect currently is to ensure a fixed salary for the main coordinator of the project, Mr. Sam Salim Auffee, Violin, Viola and Cello teacher, who has been working freely to a large extent in the past years, but cannot further afford to offer his work as he has living needs. The second next priority is to ensure a certain salary for other teachers, and to acquire some basic items needed for teaching*.

Initial investments

Rehabilitation of current premises and repairs

#	Details	Time	Monthly cost	Annual cost	Cost through three years
1	Rehabilitation of the current house, including bathroom	3 Years	250\$	3000\$	9000\$

Musical Instruments

#	Item Name	Price	Amount	Total Price
1	Violin	100\$	20	2000\$
2	piano	800\$	2	1600\$
3	guitar	100\$	20	2000\$
4	flute	150\$	3	450\$
5	Oud	100\$	10	\$1000
6	cello	350\$	5	\$1750
7	Tanbura	100\$	5	\$500
8	Music stands	25\$	20	\$500
	Total			9800\$

Classroom equipment and supplies:

#	Items Name	Amount	Single price	Total price
1	Chairs	30	30\$	900\$
2	Portable blackboards*	4	50\$	200\$
3	Stationery: pens, erasers, notepads	1	100\$	100\$
4	Curtains	12	40\$	480\$
5	Administrative office	2	150\$	300\$
6	Secretary's office	1	150\$	150\$
7	Cabinet	2	150\$	300\$
8	Data show*	1	300\$	300\$
9	Computer*	2	900\$	1800\$
10	Printer*	1	250\$	250\$

11	Heating and cooling devices	5	600\$	3000\$
12	Sofa set	2	300\$	600\$
	Total			8380\$

Annual fixed expenses

#	Details	Monthly cost	Annual cost	Cost through three years
1	House Rent	200\$	2400\$	7200\$
2	Internet Expenses	50\$	600\$	1800\$
3	Electricity and generator expenses	150\$	1800\$	5400\$
4	Staff salaries and related administrative wages	2100\$	25200\$	75600\$
	<i>School Director/coordinator & Violin, Viola, Cello</i>	<i>1000 USD</i>	<i>12'000 USD</i>	<i>36'000 USD</i>
	<i>Keyboard Teacher</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Guitar teacher</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Oud teacher</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Tambura/Sas teacher</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Nay teacher</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Various Syriac chant teachers</i>	<i>300 USD</i>	<i>3600 USD</i>	<i>10'800 USD</i>
	<i>Intermediate Total</i>	<i>2500 USD</i>	<i>30'000 USD</i>	<i>90'000 USD</i>
5	<i>Additional instruments</i>			
	<i>Saxophone and Clarinet teacher **</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Qanun teacher**</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>
	<i>Percussion teacher**</i>	<i>240 USD</i>	<i>2880 USD</i>	<i>8'640 USD</i>

Apart from the Director, who will have a monthly salary, other professors are paid by the hour, as a rule for 6 hours of collective lectures per week.

*** New classes to be introduced if possible in phase 2.*

Contacts

- Current Musical Center of Baghdida

Facebook link

<https://www.facebook.com/people/%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%BA%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%82%D9%89/100083279143873/>

- Sam Salim Auffee – samusic9121@gmail.com, Tel. +964 770 043 6223
- Fr. Duraid Barbar – frdraid@yahoo.com, Tel. +964 770 171 8944
- The Laus Plena Foundation, Strada Regina 10, CH - 6900 Lugano, Tel. +41 91 994 85 23 – Please contact Véronique Nebel, nebelv@gmail.com, Tel. +41 79 2361226

