

First chance to hear music from the Nile Project in the UK

Two consecutive episodes of BBC Radio 3's World Routes, presented by Simon Broughton, explore the unprecedented musical collaboration between 18 musicians from Nile-sharing countries including Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Eritrea.

Sunday 10 and 17 February, 10pm, BBC Radio 3

ABOUT THE NILE PROJECT

The Nile Project was founded to address the Nile basin's cultural and environmental challenges using an innovative approach that combines music, education and an enterprise platform. The world's longest river runs through 11 countries (Congo DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt) and touches the lives of 400 million people. The Project's mission is to inspire, educate, and empower Nile citizens to work together towards fostering the sustainability of the river's ecosystem, and engage them in a cultural dialogue that evokes Africa's iconic river as a shared ecosystem

At the project's first Nile Gathering in Aswan (January 2013), a two-week music residency brought together an ensemble of Nile basin musicians to compose, record and perform new music. With so rich a pool of instruments and traditions to choose from, the project's founder (Egyptian Ethnomusicologist Mina Girgis) and musical director (Miles Jay) looked at timbres, local roles, regional relatives, linguistic etymology and connections to the Nile. The musicians were encouraged to gain a deeper sense of the various cultural aesthetics represented in the ensemble, and create new music where the merging of styles takes place closer to the roots of those traditions, rather than simply superimposing one system on top of another. Each individual musician brought to the ensemble the spirit of openness, a willingness to share knowledge and an appetite to learn from fellow ensemble members – a microcosm of what the Nile Project stands for.

Two initial concert were produced immediately after the residency in Egypt to expose local audiences to the cultures of their river neighbors and present the Nile Project ensemble and its new music for the first time. Despite the unrest in Egypt, hundreds of audience members flocked to both concerts and the overwhelming feedback was a great testament to the power of musical and cultural dialogue. The Nile Project is currently working on a short documentary, an Africa tour, a UK, Europe and US tour, in parallel with programs such as TEDxNile, Nile Camps, Nile Curriculum, Nile Stories and Nile Fellowship & Enterprise.

THE NILE PROJECT ENSEMBLE

Adel Mekha / Egypt / Nubian percussions & vocals
Ahmed Omar / Egypt & Eritrea / bass guitar
Ahmed Said Abuamna / Sudan / masankop & vocals
Alfred Gamil / Egypt / violin
Alsarah / Sudan / vocals
Asrat Ayalew / Ethiopia / kebero
Dina El Wedidi / Egypt / vocals

Hany Bedair / Egypt / percussions
Hazem Shahin / Egypt / oud
Jorga Mesfin / Ethiopia / saxophone
Lawrence Okello / Uganda / percussions, enanga and various other Ugandan instruments
Meklit Hadero / US & Ethiopia / vocals
Mekuanent Melese / Ethiopia / dance & vocals
Mohamed Fouda / Egypt / ney
Michael Bazibu / Uganda / adungu, amadinda and various other Ugandan instruments
Mohsen El Ashry / Egypt / simsimiya
Nyaruaach Jal / South Sudan / vocals
Endris Hassen / Ethiopia / masenqo

For more information about the Nile Project, visit the website www.nileproject.org or contact Sarah El Miniawy Hefni, Director of Communications on 07980 687877, sarah@nileproject.org