



e-Newsletter

HONORARY CONSULATE GENERAL OF SYRIA
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"Syria, the cradle of civilization and the gateway to history."

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University of Michigan Musical Society



The University of Michigan Musical Society in Ann Arbor is the largest Musical Society in the United States. It brings to Ann Arbor every year a world class selection of musicians, ensembles and musical groups. While I was doing my PhD studies at the University of Michigan I often enjoyed the privilege of simply walking from my dorm to Hill auditorium where I can listen to musical performances by the best operas and orchestras in the world.

After the tragic events of September 11, The UMS embarked on a policy of enlarging its selection to bring to Ann Arbor musicians from the Arab and Islamic world in an effort to build bridges and enhance understanding of the culture of the Middle East. They wisely reached out to collaborate with the Arab organizations in South East Michigan to assist them in selecting and sponsoring musical events. I had a very successful experience with them in the past bringing to Ann Arbor Hamzeh Chakour and the Dervishes of Damascus. More interesting projects and proposals for collaboration are in the pipeline.



For this year program, I recommended from Syria the brilliant Musician and composer Kinan Azmeh. I am delighted that Kinan will be performing next week in Ann Arbor his **Epic of Gilgamesh**. It is an innovative piece of work where Azmeh plays on his clarinet original compositions inspired from the Babylonian epic while the Syrian painter Kevork Mourad visualizes the story by live drawings on stage. It is a creative collaboration between two talented Syrian artists where music and paintings fuse together in a wonderful experiment.



Finally it is worth mentioning that Gilgamesh is the world most ancient epic. It is a series of Sumerian legends and poems from Babylonia about the mythological hero-king Gilgamesh, who ruled in the third millennium BC. It is not very difficult to figure that Azmeh seeking inspiration for his music from old Babylonia has to do with the current affairs in that part of the world!

For more information about the event, ticket, and program please click [here](#). Hope to see you many of you at this unique concert.

Dr. Naji Arwashan
Honorary Consul General

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