

A close-up portrait of Sofia Labropoulou, a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a dark, textured sweater and a gold earring. She is looking down and to the right with a thoughtful expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Sofia Labropoulou

(Kanun player - Composer)

Greek musician Sofia Labropoulou is a Kanun player and composer who has developed a distinct sound from masterfully blending her worlds of folk, classical Ottoman, western Medieval, experimental and contemporary music.

Classically trained with piano and theory since age of 8, it was instant love when she first encountered the kanun almost a decade later. With her Byzantine music diploma in hand she moved to Istanbul in (2003) to pursue her love of the kanun and study Ottoman music.

As a soloist she frequently collaborates with world - renowned musicians of various musical genres from Africa, Europe and the Middle East. When she is not travelling you can find her composing music for films and documentaries or presenting Kanun and Greek folk music master classes world wide.

Since 2013 after years of playing together with Vassilis Ketentzoglou, they released the duet' s first CD "Butterfly" by Odradek Records. Her first personal album "Sisyphus" was released in December 2020 (also by Odradek Records). She currently splits her time between Vienna, Austria and Athens, Greece. Between 2015 -2018 she lived and worked in Budapest (Hungary).

## Studies

- 1989 - 1999** She studied piano with E. Zacharaki and Nelli Semitekolo.
- 1998 - 2000** Classical and folk percussion in Greece with V. Karipis, K. Vorissis and K. Theodorakos
- 2003** Diploma in Byzantine music (prof. Spiros Pavlakis)
- 2003 - 2006** Studies of kanun, Ottoman music repertory and theory with Ahmet Meter, Ömer Erdoğdular and Necati Çelik in Istanbul. 1997.

## Awards

- 1997** Special award at the classical Piano Category at the Panhellenic Student Competition.
- 1998** First prizes at the Panhellenic Student Competition in the category of Traditional Music Instruments (for Kanun)
- 1998** First prize at the Panhellenic Student Competition in the category of Folk Orchestra (with Pallini Music School Folk Orchestra)

## Teaching

### Kanun Seminars and Masterclasses

- 2005 - 2007** National Conservatory.
- 2005 - 2011** Athens Conservatoire.
- 2007 - 2008** Circle of Seminars in Nicosia (Cyprus).
- 2011 - 2015** Philippos Nakas Conservatory - Athens.
- 2013** New Mexico, University of Art and Design together with Mamak Khadem.
- 2014 - 2020** "Musical Yards" Summer seminars at Ikaria Island (Greece).
- 2015** 2o International Kanun Symposium in Ankara (Turkey).
- 2016** 2o International Kanun Symposium in Algiers (Algeria).
- 2018** Kanun Seminars of technique and repertoire at Philippos Nakas Conservatory - Athens
- 2018** 8th Oriental Music Summer Academy στο Sulzburg (Germany).
- 2018** Athens Conservatoire.
- 2020** Presentation of kanun and Makam theory. Residency for Young Danish composers in Budapest

## Theory of Eastern music Seminars

- 2011 - 2015** Eastern Music Theory (Makam) together with Yorgos Simeonidis at Philippos Nakas Conservatory - Athens.
- 2014 - 2016** Seminars of Ottoman music theory and repertoire together with Yorgos Simeonidis at Philippos Nakas Conservatory - Athens.
- 2018 - today** Eastern Music Theory (Makam) together with Yorgos Simeonidis at Athens Conservatoire.

## Orchestra and instrumentation classes

- 2009 - 2011** Small ensembles in Athens Conservatoire.
- 2014 - 2015** Eastern Music Orchestra weekly workshop at Philippos Nakas Conservatory Athens.
- 2017 - 2020** Eastern Music Orchestra seminar at "Musical Yards" musical seminars at Ikaria Island (Greece).
- 2018 - today** Eastern Music Orchestra of Ikaria.
- 2018** Lecture about Rebetiko music and seminar of Rembetiko repertory at "Lumen" space in Budapest (Hungary) together with Theodora Athanassiou.
- 2018** Lecture about Rebetiko music and seminar of Rembetiko repertory at "Scuola di musica Gershwin" Padova (Italy).

## Projects - Collaborations

- 2020** Collaboration with the Hungarian saxophone player Viktor Tóth. A project based on free improvisation. Venues: Árpád-kori Templom (Óriszentpéter - Hungary)
- 2019-today** Project "Sur rive mer ". Collaboration with Dominique Vellard (FR), Ourania Lampropoulou (GR) and Keyvan Semirani (IRAN).  
Venue: Les Rencontres International de Thoronet 2019 (France)  
Voix et Route Romane festival in Saint-Dié-des-Vosges (France)
- 2019** Collaboration with the Libanese singer Ghada Shbeir and the Ensemble Multaqa (Rageed William – Nay, Bassem Hawar - Djoze, Saif Al-Khayyat - Oud, Nora Thiele Oriental Percussion) at Montalbâne Festival 2019 (Freyburg-Germany)
- 2019** Tectonics Festival - Athens 2019 at Onassis Cultural Centre. Kanun - Modular synth duet with Stratos Bichakis.

- 2019** New composition by Kostas Nikoleas. Concerto for kanun and Orchestra. Performed live at the International Dance Center of Kalamata (Greece)
- 2019** Parabases series. Performance of Dionysios Solomos' narrative poem "Lampros" together with the actors Giannos Perlegas and Marissa Triantafyllidou, under the guidance of Argyro Chioti at Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center 's Lighthouse (Athens).
- 2018** InMute '18 Together with Xavier Charles, Michalis Moschoutis, Ioannis Kotsonis at French Institute of Athens.
- 2018** St. Cyriak Church at Sulzburg (Germany). Angelika Moths (Hapsichord), Imene Sahir (voice, violin, kuitra). Combination of Baroque and Al Andaluse music.
- 2018 - today** Ëö Project. Together with Yannis Saxonis: Modular Synthesizer, Sofia Labropoulou: Prepared Kanun. A project that is based on free improvisation. Participation on the "Nuit de la lenteur" French Institue of Athens 2018. In 2019, the duet composed, recorded and performed the music of the Documentary "Georg" directed by Sotiris Bekas. The documentary is based on the life and legacy of the philosopher György Lukacs.
- 2018 - today** Collaboration with Ex Silentio and Dimitris Kountouras. Venues: Archaeological Museum of Chania, Open Day of the Onassis Cultural Foundation (Athens) for 2019-2020, GNO Alternative Stage at Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center (Athens).
- 2018** Collaboration with Alex Maguire, Joe Berger and Nikos Sidirokastritis. Venues: Beton7 (Athens), The zoo (Athens)
- 2018** "Lullaby project" at Stavros Niarchos Foundation (Athens) in the Opera Hall with an original composition by the composer Anna Mouzaki. A collaboration of El sistema Greece and Carnegie Hall.
- 2018** Collaboration with Lamia Bedioui (from Tunisia). Venue: The Benaki Museum for Islamic art (Athens) House of the fairytales (Athens).
- 2018 - today** Working with the artists Irini Karayannopoulou and Sandrine Cheyrol for the new project of Twin Automat. Composing the music for their new experimental film about Mount Athos.
- 2017-2018** Participation in the recordings of the soundtrack of the Italian movie "L' ordine delle cose" directed by Andrea Segre. Music Sergio Marchesini. Live performances of the soundtrack at the Film festival of Venice (Venice Biennale 2017), CUC- Centro Univer sitario Cinematografico Padova, Cinema Odeon / Circuito Cinema Bologna, Palazzo Liviano - Sala dei Giganti (Padova) (2018).

- 2017** Kurtag-Ligeti Masterclass 2017. Master Class with Andras Szalai and performance of the pieces of György Kurtag at Ferenc Liszt Academy.
- 2009 - today** Collaborations with John Psathas
- 2011** "View from Olympus" Documentary about John Psathas.
- 2013** "Between Zero and One" Original music by John Psathas for this multimedia show performed at Christchurch festival in N. Zealand by Strike Percussion group. Participation in the pre-recorded part.
- 2015** Recording for the music video "100 Years". Music by Serj Tankian και John Psathas.
- 2015** John Psathas' - "No man's land" New Zealand tour. Venues: New Zealand Festival (Michael Fowler Center) - Wellington, Auckland Townhall - Auckland, Baycourt Theater - Tauranga, Royal Wanganui Opera House - Wanganui, Napier Municipal Theater - Napier and Womad - Taranaki.
- 2019** Recorded for the original composition for the World of Wearable Art (WOW) Art design show in Wellington (New Zealand).
- 2020** John Psathas' - "No man's land" Athens' Concert Hall.
- 2016** Asia Minor Trio together with Vaggelis Karipis: Percussion, Stratis Psaradellis: Istanbul Kemençe. Venues: WOMAD NZ and Les Rencontres International de Thoronet
- 2016 - today** Labropoulou - Stanković duet. A collaboration between Sofia Labropoulou: kanun (GR) and Tijana Stanković: voice and violin (SRB) grew from the common interest and love for the folk music of Balkans as it is their region of origin. They have chosen to explore different styles of performance from the central region of Balkans as it gives an insight for the similarities and differences in traditional music of the nations which inhabit this area. Venues: Lumen (Budapest), Nyittot Mühely (Budapest), Dnevni Chillton(Belgrade)
- 2016** "GO" by Orestis Karamanlis. Original Compositions. A multi speaker performance for Kanun, Nei and Laptop. Together with Harris Lambrakis:nei and Orestis Karamanlis: laptop. Performed at Onassis Cultural Center (Athens).
- 2016** 634 minutes Inside the volcano. A collaboration of 6dogs (Athens) and Onassis Cultural Foundation (Athens). Probably one of the most captivating and ambitious site-specific projects that has ever happened in Greece, took place in the amazingly unworldly and enchanting environment of Nisyros' active volcano crater, that lasted

one whole night under the August full moon. 15 musicians improvising together under the August full moon for over ten hours. The event started at sunset on Thursday 18th of August 2016 at 19:58 and concluded 634 minutes later, at sunrise at 06:32 on the morning of Friday 19th of August. The participating musicians came together from a broad and seemingly diverse background: improvising and experimental artists, composers, with a classical or jazz and electronic or traditional background.

- 2016** With Saint Ephraim Male Choir - Szent Efrém Férfikar and the Hungarian poet Lackfi János. Venue: Óbudai Társaskör (Budapest)
- 2014 - today** «Sunday». Collaboration with Robyn Schulkowski and the choreographer Lia Tsolaki at Goethe Institute (Athens).
- 2014 - today** The «20 Greek folk songs» by Yannis Konstadinidis originally arranged for Voice and Piano. Re-arranged for voice, piano and kanun by Miranda Georgaki (voice), Popi Malapani (Piano).
- 2014** With Ilhan Ersahin and Istanbul Sessions at Gazette (Athens).
- 2013 - today** Guitar - Kanun Duet Together with Vassilis Ketentzoglou. The duets first album "Butterfly" was released on May 2019 By Odradek Records. Venues: Philippos Nakas Conservatory (Athens), Central European University (Budapest).
- 2019** The duet performed together with the Moroccan singer Hindi Zahra at Marka Conference
- 2019** The duet performed together with the Moroccan singer Hindi Zahra at Marka Conference in Istanbul at Çırağan Palace.
- 2013 - today** Collaborations with Dominique Vellard.
- 2013 - 2015** Dominique Vellard (FR), Nouredin Tahiri (Marocco).  
Venues: Montalbane Festival for Medieval music (Germany) (2013), Early music Festival at Vilnius (2015).
- 2012 - today** Member of the acoustic set of the historic Greek punk group Lost Bodies.
- 2012 - 2013** "Indebito" (GR/IT) (2013) A documentary by Viniccio Capossela about Rebetiko music and crisis in Greece. Directed by Andrea Segre, director of photography: Luca Bigazzi. Sotiris Bekas and Sofia Labropoulou worked on the research, collection of the archival material and advising on the musical part of the film.
- 2012 - 2013** God save the rest trio. From Cafe Aman to today's urban Cultures. Together with: Theodora Athanassiou (vocals, lavta), Sofia Efkleidou (cello), Sofia Labropoulou (kanun)

Venues: The group performed in several venues in Athens, THESSALONIKI and Istanbul.

**2011 - 2012** Recording of the cd *L'estima Venç La Salvatgia* of the group Yacine and the Oriental Groove Orchestra and participation of the cd s presentation in Auditori concert hall in Barcelona (Spain).

**2011 – 2018** Collaboration with Naziha Azzouz

**2011 - 2013** “Femmes du Monde” Trio. Naziha Azzouz (voice, percussion), Nora Thiele (percussion) Venues: Institute du Monde Arab (Paris), Amphiteatre d’ Opera de Lyon.

**2018** Recording and concerts with the Algerian singer Naziha Azzouz and her group. Freiburg (Germany)

**2009 - today** Collaboration with Márta Sebestyén in various projects through the years.

**2009 - today** Márta Sebestyén - Kalman Balogh - Sofia Labropoulou trio. Venues: Heraklion (Crete), Auditorium of Central European University (Budapest), Tiszti Pavilion (Komarno Slovakia)

**2009 - 2011** Márta Sebestyén and the Görög Ensemble - “Bridges”. - a “meeting point” of Hungarian and Greek folk music. Sofia Labropoulou was in charge of the instrumentation and the musical production and the composition of the original pieces and part of the project.

Together with Márta Sebestyén: voice, flutes and concept, Sofia Labropoulou: Kanun, musical arrangement, Ourania Lampropoulou: Greek santur, Nikos Paraoulakis: ney, Periklis Papapetropoulos: Lafta, Stratis Psaradelis: Istanbul kemence, Dimitris Emmanouil: Percussion, John Plagiannakos: Bass, George Kariotis and Eftichis Giannakouras: Sound Engineers

Special guests: Balogh Kálmán, Ökrös Csaba, Petro-loukas Halkias, Haig Yazidjian. Venues: “Dimitria” Festival (Thessaloniki), MUPA Palace of Arts (Budapest).

**2010** Márta Sebestyén - Derya Turkan - Sofia Labropoulou, Venue: Pecs’ Mosque. Pecs European Capital of Europe.

**2009- today** Márta Sebestyén - Judit Andrejszki - Sofia Labropoulou. A project that connects the Early music of Hungary with the folk music of the wider area of central Europe. Venues: Mád in Tokaj Wine Region, Fatemplom Fesztivál - Magyarföld  
As a duet: Fatemplom Fesztivál (Magyarföld - Hungary), Nyittot Muhelly (Budapest), Müpa Palace of Arts.

“Kodaly Kozpont” (2017). A program dedicated on the 60 years from the death of Zoltan Kodaly (Venues: Ferenc Liszt Academy, Kodaly Center at Pecs, Kecskemet)  
Other Venues: Vigado (Budapest), St. Stephen’s Basilica (Budapest), Archivum - Magyar

Nemzeti Levéltár (Budapest), Gradska kuća - Novi Sad (SRB), Kolarac Hall -Belgrade (SRB), Kragujevac (SRB), Calvinist church- Omoravitzza (Serbia), Nagytemplom - Debrecen together with artists such as Zoltán Szabó: flute, bagpipes, Szerényi Béla: organistrum, Béla Szerényi junior: organistrum, zurna, Midhat Mutapčić: percussion, Csaba Okros: Violin, Sebestyén. Farkas Ilona: Choir director.

**2009 - today** Collaboration with Kálmán Balogh.

**2010** Kálmán Balogh's Birthday concert. Together with the Gypsy Cimbalom Band (HU), Alan Bern (USA), Marin Bunea (Mol), Adam Stinga (Mol), Peter Ralchev (Bg), Sofia Labropoulou (GR), Ourania Lampropoulou (GR). (Palace of Arts - MUPA, Budapest)

**2014** "The art of Cimbalom" with Balogh Kálmán, Miklós Lukács, Rozsa Farkas and Ourania Lampropoulou at Palas of Arts (MUPA) in Budapest.

**2009 - 2011** The Story of the Return Home. Original compositions by Karolos Voutsinas. Venues: Perth Concert Hall in Australia, Parnassos Theater (Athens), Melina Mercury Room (Hydra Island- Greece) .

**2009 – 2011** Participation in the group The Oriental Big Bang "Babuba" is: Haris Labrakis: Nei, Martha Mavroidi: Lafta-vocals, Lefteris Havoutsas: Guitar-Oud-Vocals, Sofia Labropoulou: Kanun, Stratis Psaradelis:istanbul kemence, Kostas Meretakis: Percussion, Giorgos Vendouris: Double -bass.

**2009** Original Compositions for Kanun, Santur and Live electronics by Orestis Karamanlis. Ourania Labropoulou: Santur, Sofia Labropoulou: Kanun, Orestis Karamanlis: laptop. Performed at "The Sonic Lab" at SARC, Queen' s University, Belfast.

**2008 - today** Collaboration with Ourania Labropoulou. Ourania and Sofia Labropoulou Duet Venues: Festival Culturel Européen Algerie - Salle Ibn Zeydoun (Riadh El Feth) (Algeria), Opera d' Algiers (Algeria), MUPA Palace of Arts (Budapest), Les Rencontres International de Thoronet

**2019** (France),"The Sonic Lab" at SARC, Queen' s University, Belfast. The duet has also collaborated with: Marta Sebestyen, Nour-Eddine Saoudi, Dominique Vellard, Kalman Balogh, Miklos Lukacs, Orestis Karamanlis.

**2008** Recording the original composition for kanun, and quartet (nei, Istanbul Kemence, cello and doublebass) called "Fajum" by The composer Thanassis Moraitis for EMI Classics.



**2007 - today** Collaboration with Efren Lopez Sanz

**2007 - 2010** Aman aman group performing music from the Sefardik tradition. Mara Aranda: voice/bender, Efrén López: oud, santur, lavta, etc., Matthieu Saglio: cello, Diego López: bendir, darbukah, riq, etc., Sofia Labropoulou: kanun, Hristos Barbas: ney, kaval, and Eleni Kallimopoulou: istanbul kemence, bender. Venues: Tours in Spain and Germany.

**2010- today** Los Caminos de Serkeci Group performing music from the Sefardik tradition together with: Efren Lopez Sanz: ud, saz, rabab and Miriam Encinas Laflite: Percussion Venues tour in Spain, Ireland

**2015** Recording for his CD El fill de Llop.

**2007** Collaboration with the composer Kosta Dimoulea on the soundtrack of "A poet' s estate" by Athanasia Drakopoulou. A documentary about the life and poetry of Nikiforos Vrettakos.

**2006 - 2007** Recording and and performances with Ross Daly and Ballake Sissoko, Kely Thoma, Harri Lambraki and Perikli Papapetropoulo. Venues: French Institute Athens, Crete

**2005 - 2009** Member of Thria Orchestra (GR) together with Filipidis: Nikos clarinet Kostas Filipidis:lute, Stelios Katsianis: lute, Sofia Labropoulou: kanun, Ourania Labropoulou: santour, Irene Derebei: kaval, Maria Theofanidi: lafta, Karolos Kouklakis: lute, Kostas Meretakis: Percussion, Thomas Konstadinou: Ud, Vassilis Baraboutis: saz, Stratis Psaradellis: Istanbul Kemence, Chrisostomos Mitropanos: Voice.

**2002 - 2008** Collaboration with Turkish musicians such as: Ulaş Özdemir, Ömer Erdoğan, Şükrü Kapancı, Necati Çelik, Niyazi Zayin, Selim Seşler, Ahmet Erdoğan, Mehmet Güreli.

**2001 - 2004** Founding member of the band "Takim"

**2002** At the opening of the Library of Alexandria with the orchestra of the National Conservatory which represented Greece.

**2001-2013** Collaboration with Mamak Khadem. A multidimensional cooperation with the Iranian singer as a composer, orchestrator and kanun player in venues such as: Gramophone (Istanbul), LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art), Skirball Cultural Center (Los Angeles), Yoshi's (California - USA), DROM (New York), Santa Fe University of Art and Design (New Mexico - US), Festival del Sole (Napa Valley - California), Kölner Philharmonie (Cologne - Germany), Museum of Folk Instruments (Athens), Synagodge Pod Białym Bocianem - Wroclaw (Polland). Tour in Canada.

- 2008** Tehran (Iran) Recordings for her album Jostojoo.
- 2008-2014** Mamak Khadem and Group. Together with Ole Matthisen, Jamshied Sharifi, Chris Wabich, Ben Whitman, Ruben Harutunian, Afif Taian, Sahba Motalevi, Tsvetanka Varimezova, Sholeh Wolpe, Ali Akbar Moradi amongst others.
- 2015** Participation as a composer on the album "The road".
- 2001 - today** Collaboration with the renowned actor Kostas Kastanas.
- 2001- 2006** Collaboration with the Greek singer Glikeria. (Venues: İş Sanat Merkezi, Lütfi Kırdar Concert Salonu)
- 2001** Recording for the cd Open Heart
- 1998- today** performed with folk singers and musicians of the older generation of Greek folk music such as: Domna Samiou, Chronis Aidonidis, Christos Zotos, Christos Sikis, Xanthipi Karathanasi, Nikos and Giasemi Saragoudas, Lakis Halkias, Stelios Vamvakaris amongst others

