

# Malek Jandali, Composer & Pianist | Founder, Pianos for Peace

Hailed by BBC WorldNews as “**an acclaimed pianist**”, the music of German born, Syrian-American composer and pianist Malek Jandali has been described as “**moving and thought provoking**” by Bob Stevenson of NPR and “**inspiring**” by the Huffington Post. David Firman of the RPO describes Jandali’s music as “**gorgeous, haunting, yearning and full of hope, with a pain more personal than that of Tchaikovsky or Rachmaninoff.**”

Malek’s hit album “Echoes from Ugarit” was recorded in Moscow with The Russian Philharmonic Orchestra and released in 2008. It includes original compositions based on the oldest music notation in the world discovered on a clay tablet in the ancient Mediterranean city of Ugarit. His 2012 album “Emessa” has received critical acclaim in major newspapers and is “**hauntingly beautiful**” according to The Stream AJ America. His most recent commission was premiered by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. The world premiere of ‘The Silent Ocean’ by Malek Jandali was “**an evocative and emotional journey for musicians and audience members. In this piece Malek captures the struggle, trauma and triumph of our displaced brothers and sisters, through the voice of a child. It is a beautiful and important message.**” Maestra Marin Alsop

Malek was the recipient of the 2011 “Freedom of Expression” award in Los Angeles and was recognized in New York City with the 2012 Arab-American Cultural Achievement Award. He was honored with the 2013 GUSI Peace Prize for his dedication to peace and the humanitarian causes featured in his 2013-2014 world tour “The Voice of the Free Syrian Children”. Malek was the recipient of the 2014 Global Music Humanitarian Award and in 2015, The Carnegie Corporation of New York honored him as a *Great Immigrant*, joining the ranks of other great American immigrants such as Yo-Yo Ma and Itzhak Perlman.

Malek’s compositions not only integrate Middle-Eastern modes into Western classical forms and harmony, they echo UNESCO’s call to preserve and protect the rich cultural heritage of Syria and the Silk Road at a time when it is being eradicated. They range from chamber music to large-scale orchestral works including three symphonies and concertos for violin and piano. His compositions have been performed by numerous leading orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Cairo Symphony Orchestra, Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra, The Stockholm Solister, and the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra among others. According to Maestro Christopher Zimmerman, Jandali’s symphonic works “**spoke directly to the audience, poetically and evocatively, to such an extent that I received personal feedback from audience members telling me how touched they were by what they heard.**”

His albums “Syrian Symphony”, “SoHo”, and “Hiraeth” were released at Carnegie Hall in 2015, 2016, and 2017 respectively. His latest album “The Jasmine Tree” was released on February 3, 2018 at Carnegie Hall. Featuring The Malek Jandali Trio and his chamber works for piano, oud and cello, “The Jasmine Tree” honors the rich heritage of traditional Syrian and Andalusian music and masterpieces of world poetry, and is clearly influenced by the American spirit of creativity and artistic self-expression. From the Silk Road, to Little Syria to SoHo, this album is a continuation of Jandali’s musical journey.

Jandali’s compositions have been described by Fanfare Magazine as “**a major new addition to the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s symphonic literature.**” American Record Guide hailed the “Syrian Symphony” album as having “**heart-rending melodies, lush orchestration, clever transitions and creative textures.**” The Syrian children were the inspiration for his second symphony, Luminosity, which was premiered by the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and recorded at the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

A prolific composer, his repertoire includes four symphonies and concertos for piano, violin, and cello in addition to numerous chamber works. Recent commissions include a Piano Quintet for the Apollo Chamber Players, a Saxophone Quartet for Wright State University, a String Quartet for the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, and a Symphonic Poem, “The Silent Ocean” for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestra Marin Alsop, received a standing ovation and “**found a rapt audience at its world premiere**” (The Washington Post).

His causes go beyond those of humanitarian activism, as he is regularly recognized by and invited to speak to key academic audiences at Harvard University, the Skoll World Forum, Duke University, Aspen Ideas Festival, Fordham University, the United Nations headquarters in New York City and the Doha Debates at Georgetown University in Qatar. Malek’s diverse career remains truly international, as he continues to captivate audiences in concerts throughout North America and Europe at such prestigious venues as the Kennedy Center, Wiener Konzerthaus, Stockholm Konserthuset, and the National Auditorium in Madrid with the Queen of Spain in attendance. In collaboration with the Sydney Peace Foundation, Jandali embarked on his ‘Syrian Symphony for Peace’ Tour in June 2017 during National Refugee Week, which featured his Sydney Opera House debut and Sydney Ideas talk at the University of Sydney.

Jandali is a magna cum laude graduate of Queens College and received his MBA from The University of North Carolina. In addition to his demanding tour schedule, he is a strong advocate for peace and human rights and was selected as a Visiting Scholar for the 2017/2018 academic year in the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers University. He is the founder and CEO of Pianos for Peace, a non-profit organization dedicated to building peace through music and education. He embraces young talent through the Malek Jandali International Youth Piano Competition. Malek makes his home in both New York City and Atlanta, and is a member of The Recording Academy and The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). His music is published by Soul b Music and his albums are available on iTunes, Amazon and at Virgin Megastores worldwide.

## SHORT BIO

### **Malek Jandali**, Composer & Pianist | Founder, Pianos for Peace

German born, Syrian-American composer Malek Jandali has been hailed by BBC WorldNews as “**an acclaimed pianist**”, his music has been described as “**moving and thought provoking**” by Bob Stevenson of NPR. His most recent commission was premiered by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. **“The world premiere of ‘The Silent Ocean’ by Malek Jandali was an evocative and emotional journey for musicians and audience members. In this piece Malek captures the struggle, trauma and triumph of our displaced brothers and sisters, through the voice of a child. It is a beautiful and important message.”** Maestra Marin Alsop

Malek’s compositions not only integrate Middle-Eastern modes into Western classical forms and harmony, they echo UNESCO’s call to preserve and protect the rich cultural heritage of Syria and the Silk Road at a time when it is being eradicated. They range from chamber music to large-scale orchestral works including three symphonies and concertos for violin and piano. His works have been performed by numerous leading orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra, The Cairo Symphony Orchestra, The Stockholm Solister, and the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra among others. David Firman of the RPO describes Jandali’s music as “**gorgeous, haunting, yearning and full of hope, with a pain more personal than that of Tchaikovsky or Rachmaninoff.**”

His albums “Syrian Symphony”, “SoHo”, “Hiraeth”, and “The Jasmine Tree” were released at Carnegie Hall in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 respectively. Jandali’s compositions have been described by Fanfare Magazine as “**a major new addition to the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s symphonic literature.**” American Record Guide hailed the “Syrian Symphony” album as having “**heart-rending melodies, lush orchestration, clever transitions and creative textures.**” The Syrian children were the inspiration for his second symphony, Luminosity, which was premiered by the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and recorded at the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

A prolific composer, his repertoire includes four symphonies and concertos for piano, violin, and cello in addition to numerous chamber works. Recent commissions include a Piano Quintet for the Apollo Chamber Players, a Saxophone Quartet for Wright State University, a String Quartet for the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, and a Symphonic Poem, “The Silent Ocean” for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestra Marin Alsop, received a standing ovation and “**found a rapt audience at its world premiere**” (The Washington Post).

Jandali is the recipient of the 2014 Global Music Humanitarian Award and in 2015, The Carnegie Corporation of New York honored him as a *Great Immigrant*. Jandali is a strong advocate for peace and human rights and was selected as a Visiting Scholar for the 2017/2018 academic year in the Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights at Rutgers University. His causes go beyond those of humanitarian activism, as he is regularly recognized by and invited to speak to key academic audiences at Harvard University, the Skoll World Forum, Duke University, Aspen Ideas Festival, Fordham University, the United Nations headquarters in New York City and the Doha Debates at Georgetown University in Qatar.

He is the founder and CEO of Pianos for Peace, a non-profit organization dedicated to building peace through music and education. He embraces young talent through the Malek Jandali International Youth Piano Competition. Jandali makes his home in both New York City and Atlanta. His music is published by Soul b Music and can be found on iTunes, Amazon and at Virgin Megastores worldwide.

This biography © 2018 by Malek Jandali. Any edited or altered use of their content without the express permission of Malek Jandali is prohibited.