

**QPO, GERMAN
CHOIR TO
PERFORM ON
FEBRUARY 3**



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Weather Today

MISTY & PARTLY CLOUDY

Sunrise	6:17 am
Sunset	5:18 pm
High	23°C
Low	17°C
Wind	1-8 kts
Visibility	moderate

31.01.13

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QPO, German choir to perform on February 3

CATHERINE W GICHUKI

DOHA

THE Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) and the MDR Radio Choir of Leipzig will play Marcel Khalifé's famous composition *Oriental* to traditional Arabic poetry at Katara Opera House on February 3.

To be directed by QPO's Music Director Michalis Economou, the concert will also feature the world premiere of Marcel Khalifé's son Rami Khalifé's Requiem in which famous Korean Coloratura soprano What-ran Seo will perform.

Speaking at a press conference on Wednesday, Marcel Khalifé said that there would be altogether 100 musicians and 100 vocalists on stage singing in Arabic. "This is the first time that the musicians are collaborating to perform in Arabic. I think oriental culture is related to the soul. It goes beyond linguistic barriers and is all about peace and harmony."

Regarding the choir singing in Arabic he said, "It takes serious work to make this happen in Arabic. The singer has to have complete understanding of the Arabic text to be able to sing it beautifully. We are retaining the original

form of the traditional Arabic texts, which come from different periods of Arab history."

UNESCO Artist for Peace Marcel Khalifé is a Lebanese music composer, oud player and singer, who, is known for raising humanitarian issues such as oppression and violence through his music.

In his description of *Oriental* Marcel Khalifé says, "In smooth harmony and intimate discourse, there rises a hymn to the East, soaring like a happy bird over the sea, under the sunshine and the heavy rain. The melodies rise in vocal harmonies until the finale leads us to the inevitable end, to make the East perfect and to complete a lyricism full of spiritual struggle, and reach a depth which surpasses superficial curiosity amazed by temporary adventures and facts, where the heart can embrace all fine human values."

Rami Khalifé's Requiem will be in four movements, journeying between poles of fire and water, unity and separation, captivity and catharsis. Talking about the piece Rami Khalifé said, "The piece is theatrical and meditative. It draws a combination between East and West."

According to Rami Khalifé, he composed Requiem during the Arab Spring. He said



(From Left) Choir Master of the MDR Howard Arman, Marcel Khalifé and his son Rami Khalifé at Katara Opera House, in Doha, on Wednesday. (HANSON K JOSEPH)

that the piece was based on his emotions during the period of the uprising that engulfed Arab states.

"I got the piece from watching television during the Arab revolution. I could not stay insensitive to what I saw because it reminded me of my own life," said Rami Khalifé,

the son of Marcel Khalifé, who was born in Lebanon amid the rough and tumble of civil war in Beirut. He added, "We write such

things later in life, but you cannot be blind to what is happening around you. It is always better to meditate over how as humans we can improve situations."

Speaking on the occasion Choir Master of the MDR Howard Arman said that the group has a long tradition of singing contemporary music and added that this is the first time they would be singing in Arabic. "MDR is one of the largest professional choirs

widely known in Europe. This is the first time we are singing in Arabic. We are experiencing a new territory. This is the kind of cultural exchange which is typical, positive and very creative," he said.

The Philharmonic's next concert is Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, also with the MDR Radio Choir of Leipzig, on Friday, February 8, at the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) Theatre.