

Baryshnikov Arts Center Presents



BAC Salon: Tarek Yamani *Afro-Tarab for Two*

Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 7pm and 9pm

Tickets: \$20 at www.bacnyc.org or 866.811.4111

Baryshnikov Arts Center

John Cage & Merce Cunningham Studio | 450 W. 37th St. | NYC

“The pianist exploits the most expressive musical idiom of his adopted city (jazz) to explore, transform, transfigure and shed fresh light on the music of his rooted, real homeland.” – *Time Out*

Watch Tarek Yamani: <https://youtu.be/SYvAIYl6Kz0>

New York, NY – **Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC)** continues its Spring 2018 Music Series on **Wednesday, April 18, 2018** with *Afro-Tarab for Two*, two **BAC Salon performances at 7pm and 9pm** by critically acclaimed Lebanese-American composer and self-taught jazz pianist **Tarek Yamani** and vibraphonist **Sasha Berliner**.

Yamani reinvents classical Arabic music through original jazz compositions, exploring the music of his homeland within the framework of African-American jazz. The result, a genre often dubbed “Afro-Tarab,” takes audiences on a journey from late 1800’s Egypt and Iraq to contemporary New York. The John Cage & Merce Cunningham Studio, with cabaret-style seating and beverages provided, lends itself to the intimacy of a jazz club. The performances follow Yamani’s participation in Spring 2018 BAC Space, a four-week creative residency period designed to encourage peer exchange. Yamani will be in residence at BAC from March 19 to April 14, 2018.

Tarek Yamani has been described as, “A magician with his chromatics and disquieting passing tones,” by *New York Music Daily*. In 2010, he won the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Composers Competition for his composition *Sama'i Yamani* featuring Syrian singer Rasha Rizk.

Since the release of his debut album *Ashur* in 2012, Yamani has been dedicated to exploring relationships between African-American Jazz and Arabic rhythms/maqams which are most evident in his second album, *Lisan Al Tarab: Jazz Conceptions in Classical Arabic*. In 2016, he was commissioned by the Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation to write new work based on the rhythms of the Arabian Gulf. The new work, entitled *Peninsular*, was released in March 2017 and had its world premiere at the Abu Dhabi Festival 2017.

Yamani has shared the stage with luminaries such as Wayne Shorter, Richard Bona, Zakir Hussein, Esperanza Spalding, Antonio Sanchez, and Vinnie Coliauta and has performed in venues such as the United Nations Assembly Hall, Gran Teatro de la Habana, The Smithsonian Institute, MuCEM museum, NYU (Abu Dhabi Festival), The Blue Whale, The Detroit Institute of Arts, and Sunset Sunside. In April 2013, he founded, organized, and produced a cutting-edge performance called *Beirut Speaks Jazz* which aims to promote jazz in Lebanon by igniting adventurous collaborations between artists from the worlds of rock, pop, tarab, rap, and blues over the foundations of jazz.

Yamani is the recipient of many awards such as the Givanas Foundation grant, the Huygens scholarship, the Andrea Elkenbracht award, the Prins Bernhard Culture fund, the Thelonious Monk Composers Competition prize, the Betty Carter Jazz Ahead residency, the New Dutch composition contest, and the Composer's Platform Commission by the Abu Dhabi Festival. He scored the music of *I Say Dust*, a film by Darine Hotait which screened in over 70 festivals around the world and was shown on BBC,

Sundance TV, and AMC Network. As a writer, Yamani has self-published two books: *Duple vs Triple: A Melodic Approach to Mastering Polyrhythms in Jazz and other Groove-Based Music* and *The Percussion Ensemble of the Arabian Peninsula*.

Sasha Berliner is a musician, composer, producer, and band leader from San Francisco, CA. She started playing drums at eight years old and went on to pursue a jazz emphasis at her high school, Oakland School for the Arts, where she picked up the vibraphone at age 13. She attended the Banff International Workshop for Jazz & Creative Music, Atlanta Jazz Festival, NYC Winter Jazz Festival, NYC Composers Now Festival, and Deutsches Jazz Festival in Frankfurt, Germany, all by the age of 19.

Berliner has performed at venues such as the Fox Theater, Great American Music Hall, The Jazz Gallery, Treasure Island Music Festival, Davies Symphony Hall, the Jazz Education Network Conference, the SF Jazz Miner Auditorium, Smalls Jazz Club, The Velvet Note, and the Next Generation Monterey Jazz Festival. She has been featured by Hot House *Jazz Magazine*, *Downbeat Magazine*, *PBS NewsHour*, and *The New York Times* for both her musicianship and her activism. She has had the honor of sharing the stage with musicians such as Ravi Coltrane, Ambrose Akinmusire, Matt Wilson, Jane Ira Bloom, Billy Hart, Melissa Aldana, Ledisi, Vince Lateano, Victor Wooten, and Tyshawn Sorey, and has received personal recognition from musicians such as Sean Jones, Tia Fuller, Terri Lyne Carrington, Matt Stevens, Jen Shyu, Antonio Sanchez, Miguel Zenon, and Obed Calvaire.

Berliner is currently attending The New School of Jazz and Contemporary Music in New York City. She studies under contemporary jazz vibraphonists Stefon Harris and Chris Dingman. Sasha also currently works for Biophilia Records, the environmentally conscious music label cultivated by pianist Fabian Almazan. Berliner's sophomore album, *Azalea*, is projected to release by the end of 2018.

Leadership support for BAC's music programming is provided by the Anne and Chris Flowers Foundation and the Thompson Family Foundation.

ABOUT BARYSHNIKOV ARTS CENTER (BAC)

BAC is the realization of a long-held vision by artistic director Mikhail Baryshnikov to build an arts center in Manhattan that would serve as a gathering place for artists from all disciplines. BAC's opening in 2005 heralded the launch of this mission, establishing a thriving creative laboratory and performance space for artists from around the world. BAC's activities encompass a robust residency program augmented by a range of professional services, including commissions of new work, as well as the presentation of performances by artists at varying stages of their careers. In tandem with its commitment to supporting artists, BAC is dedicated to building audiences for the arts by presenting contemporary, innovative work at affordable ticket prices. For more information, please visit www.bacnyc.org.

Baryshnikov Arts Center is grateful for the support of its generous individual and institutional annual fund donors in 2017–2018.

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Yamaha is the official piano of the Baryshnikov Arts Center.

As of March 8, 2018

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