

Saturday, February 18, 2017, 8pm  
 Zellerbach Hall



Laila Yasser

## The Nile Project

Adel Mekha (Egypt, Nubia), *vocals and percussion*

Ahmed Omar (Eritrea, Egypt), *bass and tanbour*

Mohamed Abozekry (Egypt), *oud*

Nader El Shaer (Egypt), *kawala, accordion, farfisa, and vocals*

Saleeb Fawzy (Egypt), *vocals*

Asia Madani (Sudan), *vocals and percussion*

Selamnesh Zemene (Ethiopia), *vocals*

Ibrahim Fanous (Eritrea), *krar*

Dave Otieno (Kenya), *electric guitar*

Kasiva Mutua (Kenya), *percussion and vocals*

Michael Bazibu (Uganda), *entongoli, adungu, endingidi, percussion, and vocals*

Steven Sogo (Burundi), *vocals, bass, ikembe, and umiduri*

*Tonight's program will be announced from the stage and will include one intermission.*

*Cal Performances Classroom activities associated with this performance  
 are made possible, in part, by Wells Fargo.*



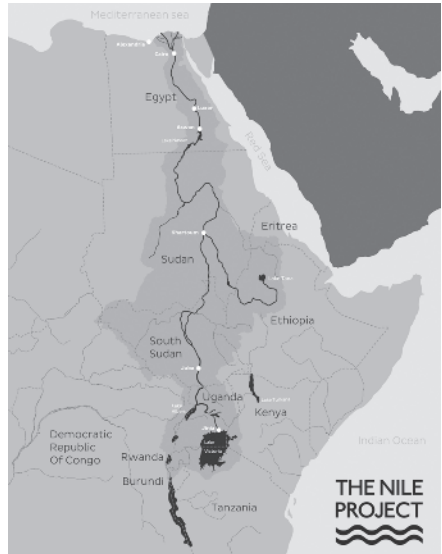
The Nile, one of the world's most iconic rivers, has captivated the imagination of millions throughout time. Originating in two sources—Lake Victoria in East Africa and Lake Tana in the Ethiopian highlands—the 6,670-kilometer river flows northward through a diversity of climates, landscapes, and cultures before passing through Egypt and emptying into the Mediterranean Sea.

The region's population of 450 million inhabitants is projected to double within the next 25 years, resulting in an ever-increasing demand for Nile water; water that is tied to all aspects of life, from the food on tables to the electricity that powers homes to people's health. Even now, people living along the Nile are vulnerable to water-related hardships. At least five nations in the Nile Basin are facing water stress. Seven of the 11 Nile countries continue to suffer from undernourishment rates higher than 30%. Less than 10% of basin residents have access to electricity. The core issue at hand is how to peacefully allocate Nile Basin water among 11 nations with different needs and priorities, whose populations are skyrocketing.

This mounting resource scarcity has contributed to a geopolitical conflict between upstream and downstream riparian states. Tremendous political capital has been expended to draft the Nile Cooperative Framework Agreement, an international treaty to govern water distribution and infrastructure projects differently from the existing 1959 Egyptian-Sudanese treaty that gives Egypt the majority of water rights annually. While the agreement has yet to win mutual consensus, the arduous negotiation process has exposed the deep-seated mistrust between countries, the absence of opportunities for citizen-led dialogue, and the lack of a unified identity and vision for the future development of a shared Nile ecosystem.

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The Nile River Basin is wrought with political, environmental, economic, and social challenges requiring a new approach to better address the myriad challenges it faces. As regional tensions flare, **The Nile Project** offers a unique grassroots strategy to effectively mobilize thousands of people across the Nile Basin and



beyond in constructive cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration.

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The Nile Project is transforming the Nile conflict by inspiring, educating, and empowering an international network of university students to cultivate the sustainability of their ecosystem. The project's model integrates music, education, dialogue, leadership, and innovation to engage students across disciplines and geographies.

### Music Program

An expanding collective of artists from the 11 Nile countries redefines principles of cross-cultural musical collaboration. Also, a series of community choirs applies the same principles across the Nile Basin.

### University Program

A suite of student activities includes a year-long fellowship program, university chapters, and local community projects in cities throughout the Nile Basin.

### Network Program

An international network of scholars, executives, and policymakers focuses on developing collaborative solutions to food sustainability throughout the Nile Basin.



**Adel Mekha** (*vocals, percussion*): A widely respected Nubian percussionist and vocalist based in Cairo, Mekha's knowledge of traditional Nubian rhythms and his expressive singing voice have led to work with a wide range of ensembles and projects.

**Ahmed Omar** (*bass, tanbour*): Having been born in Libya to an Eritrean father and Egyptian mother, it is no surprise that mixing cultures has become part of Omar's creative output. Today, he plays bass for several leading Egyptian bands and organizes the AfriCairo festival and music project.

**Mohamed Abozekry** (*oud*): Despite his youth, this Egyptian *oud* player has a stunning command of his instrument, as well as an open ear for other forms—skills that recently led to an album deal with Harmonia Mundi.

**Nader El Shaer** (*kawala, accordion, farfisa, vocals*): Born in the culturally rich town of Port Said, Egypt, El Shaer taught himself accordion and *ney*, only to fall in love with the tones of the *kawala* (an end-blown cane flute) and its role in Arabic classical music.

**Saleeb Fawzy** (*vocals*): Born in Minya, Egypt, vocalist and percussionist Fawzy has a deep knowledge of Coptic church hymns and has toured throughout Europe and the Arab world. He is currently working on the Tawasol project, which helps people to learn through art.

**Asia Madani** (*vocals, percussion*): A Sudanese vocalist and percussionist residing in Cairo, Madani grew up surrounded by music with a father who plays *oud* and a brother who is a professional percussionist. She is a captivating performer who has appeared at many international festivals.

**Selamnesh Zemene** (*vocals*): Hailing from a long line of unique culture bearers in Northern

Ethiopia, this young singer has contributed her talent and traditions to collaborations with indie favorites like Debo Band and The Ex.

**Ibrahim Fanous** (*krar*): An Eritrean *krar* player and vocalist based in London, Fanous began his vocal training at a young age in Eastern Sudan in three different languages—Arabic, Tegrenia, and Amharic. He performs internationally throughout North Africa and Europe.

**Dave Otieno** (*electric guitar*): One of Kenya's leading guitarists, Otieno is fluent in the Benga style common to the Lake Victoria region. He has toured throughout Africa and Europe and recently performed at the Folklife Festival at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC.

**Kasiva Mutua** (*percussion, vocals*): Kenyan percussionist and singer Mutua learned drumming from her grandmother, and has developed her own knack for powerful beats. One of Kenya's leading drummers, her expressive playing can tell a story on its own, or keep a band perfectly in the pocket.

**Micheal Bazibu** (*entongoli, adungu, endingidi, percussion, vocals*): A member of Uganda's leading traditional music and dance company, Ndere, for the past 17 years, Bazibu plays several traditional Ugandan stringed and percussion instruments with virtuosic grace.

**Steven "Sogo" Irambona** (*vocals, bass, ikembe, umiduri*): Born in Burundi, Irambona started to play the guitar and sing at an early age. He is a World Bank Musical Ambassador for Burundi and a popular voice of the people. Irambona has lived in exile in the United States since 2015.

**For more information:**  
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[facebook.com/nileproject](https://facebook.com/nileproject)  
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