

The Nile Project

Wednesday, March 11, 2015
The Englert Theatre
Hancher
University of Iowa



HANCHER

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

THE NILE PROJECT



ARTISTS

MOHAMED ABOZEKRY

Despite his tender years, this *oud* player has a stunning command of his instrument, as well as an open ear for other forms, skills that got him a recent album deal with Harmonia Mundi.

ALSARAH

Based in Brooklyn, this soulful Sudanese singer and ethnomusicologist's songs have won high praise from roots-music tastemakers like *Songlines Magazine*.

MICHAEL BAZIBU

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.

HANY BEDAIR

When the biggest stars in the Middle East need *daff* (hand drum) or *riq* (traditional tambourine), they call Bedair, whose percussion skills have also earned him a teaching position at several respected Cairo institutions.

NADER EL SHAER

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* (end-blown cane flute) and its role in Arabic classical music.

DINA EL WEDIDI

With experience that spans Arabic classical music, edgy theater, and street protest, this young singer has most recently worked with Brazilian heavyweight Gilbert Gil on her debut album.

JORGA MESFIN

This self-taught sax player meshes jazz with Ethiopia's wealth of musical forms and ideas, both as a respected bandleader and favorite sideman for greats like Mulatu Astatke.

KASIVA MUTUA

Kenyan percussionist and singer Mutua may have learned drumming from her grandmother, but has developed her own knack for powerful Afropop beats. Her expressive playing can tell a story on its own, or keep a band perfectly in the pocket.

SOPHIE NZAYISENGA

The first female master of the Rwandan traditional zither (*inanga*), Nzayisenga learned at her internationally acclaimed father's knee before setting out to make the instrument her own.

DAWIT SEYOUM

Known for his flexibility, Seyoum rocks both the *krar* and the bass *krar*, the six-string powerhouse harps at the heart of much of Ethiopia's music.

STEVEN SOGO

Burundi's leading bassist, this multilingual multi-instrumentalist can play anything with strings, including the *umiduri*, Burundi's answer to the *birembau*. Add to that Sogo's wonderful voice, and it's easy to see why he was named a World Bank musical ambassador.

SELAMNESH ZEMENE

Hailing from a long line of unique culture bearers in Northern Ethiopia, this young singer has brought her traditions to collaborations with indie darlings like Debo Band and The Ex.

PRODUCERS

MINA GIRGIS *President & CEO*

An Egyptian ethnomusicologist with background in hospitality experience design, Mina explores new ways to cultivate environments conducive to learning, making, and experiencing music. He specializes in curating and producing innovative musical collaborations across diverse styles.

MEKLIT HADERO *Co-founder of the Nile Project*

This American-based Ethiopian singer frequently digs deep into soul and hip hop, but never loses sight of her roots.

MILES JAY *Musical Director*

A contrabassist, composer, and arranger, Miles has worked with the likes of Youssou N'Dour, Ziad Rahbani, Fathy Salama, Ross Daly, Naseer Shamma, Niyaz, Mashrou3 Leila, and the Cairo Symphony Orchestra.

This presentation is supported by the Arts Midwest Touring Fund, a program of Arts Midwest that is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional contributions from Iowa Arts Council and General Mills Foundation.



RELATED EVENT - free and open to the public

PUBLIC TALK: The Politics of Water in the Nile River Basin

Thursday, March 12 at 3:30 pm

English-Philosophy Building, Room 427

This discussion of water resources management will feature artists from the Nile Project and University of Iowa scholars. The panel discussion will focus on how political boundaries and cultural practices impact sustainability efforts.



Photo: Jerzy Strzelecki

NILE BACKGROUND

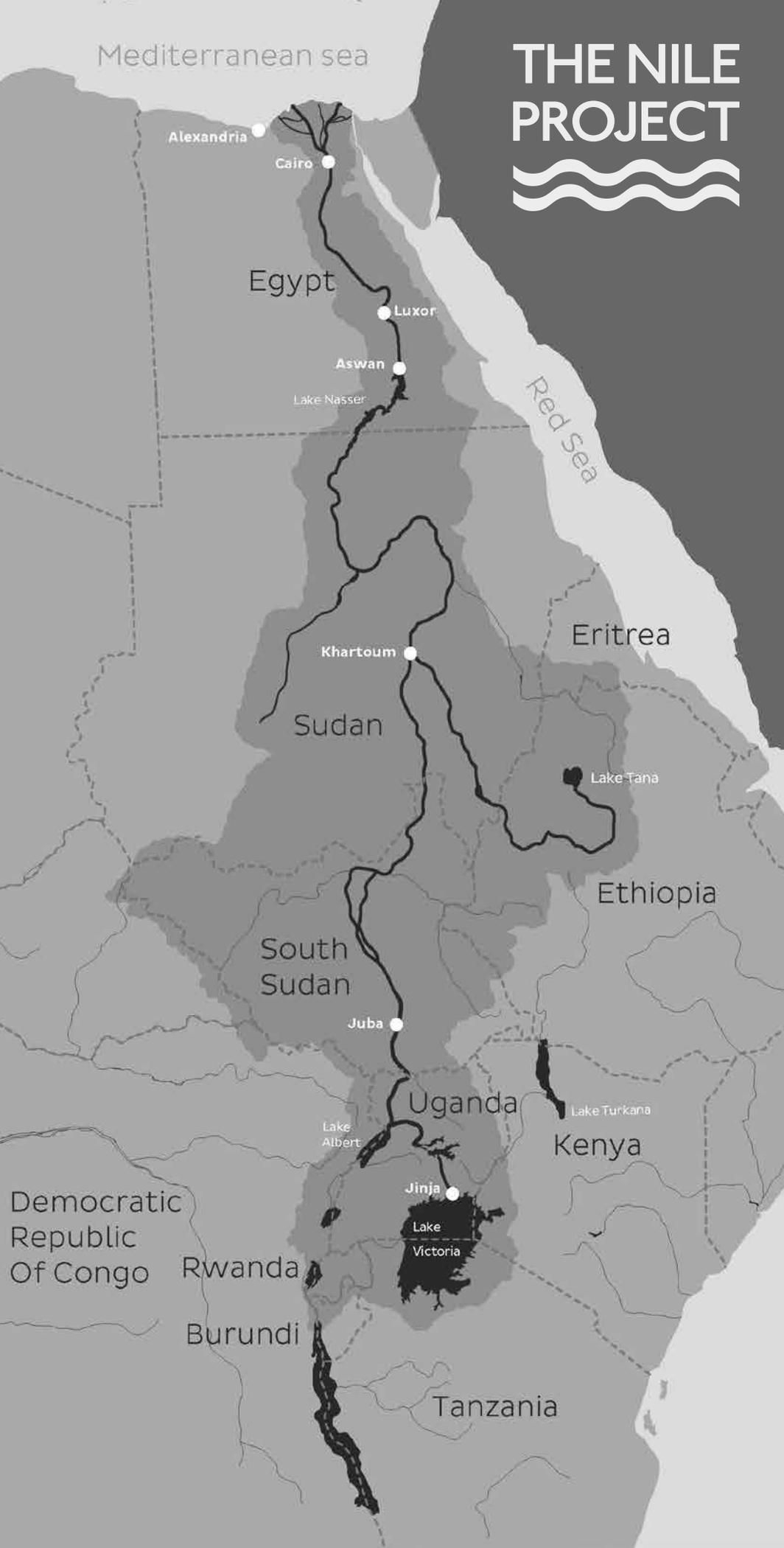
The Nile, one of the world's most iconic rivers, has captivated the imagination of millions throughout time. Originating in two sources—Lake Victoria in East Africa and Lake Tana in the Ethiopian highlands—the 6,670-kilometer river flows northward through a diversity of climates, landscapes, and cultures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

Its 437-million inhabitants are projected to more than double within the next forty years, creating 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 eleven Nile countries continue to suffer from undernourishment rates higher than thirty percent. Less than ten percent of basin residents have access to electricity. The core issue at hand is how to peacefully allocate Nile Basin water among eleven nations with different needs and priorities, all of which have populations that 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 giving Egypt the majority water right 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.

The Nile River Basin is wrought with political, environmental, economic, and social challenges requiring a new approach to better address the myriad difficulties 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.

THE NILE PROJECT



Mediterranean sea

Alexandria

Cairo

Egypt

Luxor

Aswan

Lake Nasser

Red Sea

Eritrea

Khartoum

Sudan

Lake Tana

Ethiopia

South Sudan

Juba

Uganda

Lake Albert

Lake Turkana

Kenya

Democratic Republic Of Congo

Rwanda

Jinja

Lake Victoria

Burundi

Tanzania



Photo: Matjaz Kacicnik

ABOUT THE NILE PROJECT

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 programs in music, education, dialogue, leadership, and innovation to engage students across disciplines and geographies.

MUSICAL COLLABORATIONS

The Nile Project brings together artists from the eleven Nile countries to make music that combines the region's diverse instruments, languages, and traditions. The concert experience aims to inspire cultural curiosity, highlight regional connections, and showcase the potential of trans-boundary cooperation.

DIALOGUE & EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Participatory workshops and cross-cultural dialogues provide university students with unique intellectual experiences, deepening their understanding of the Nile ecosystem, and stimulating new ways of thinking, communicating, and doing.

LEADERSHIP & INNOVATION PROGRAMS

The Nile Fellowship and Nile Prize programs incentivize university students to apply their education and training toward mobilizing their peers and pioneering innovative solutions to the Nile Basin's complex and interrelated challenges.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

nileproject.org

facebook.com/nileproject

twitter.com/nileproject

TERELL STAFFORD

shares the joy of jazz
with students

During his week in Iowa City in mid-February, Terell Stafford devoted much of his time to working with student musicians at City High, West High, Kirkwood College, and the University of Iowa. He was an encouraging, generous teacher, making the students smile and laugh throughout the workshops, while also helping them to play with confidence and skill. All of the students, no matter their level of experience, were obviously taken with him, and many were in the audience at his two shows at The Mill on February 13.

Above: Terell Stafford performs with his quintet at The Mill on February 13, 2015.

Below: Stafford works with student musicians at Kirkwood Community College (top), and performs with the City High jazz band as part of Night at the Jazz Showcase at City High School (below). Photos: Miriam Alarcón Avila



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Hancher thanks our Partners for their unwavering loyalty and crucial support.

Their generosity enables us to bring the world's finest performing artists to our region.

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ARTS & MINDS | BUILDING ON IOWA'S CREATIVE LEGACY



Future Hancher

Arts & Minds: Building on Iowa's Creative Legacy is a \$30 million fundraising campaign to support replacement facilities for Hancher, the UI School of Music, and the UI School of Art and Art History. Our flood recovery is well underway—we've moved from reimagining to rebuilding—and when all the work is complete, the landscape of our campus will forever be changed.

SUPPORTER



"This campaign is a crucial step forward in providing state-of-the-art facilities for our arts campus."

-Jane Downer
Arts & Minds Campaign Co-chair

"Seldom can a gift to a campaign have such a profound and immediate effect on generations to come."

-Steve West
Arts & Minds Campaign Co-chair,
pictured with his wife, Victoria

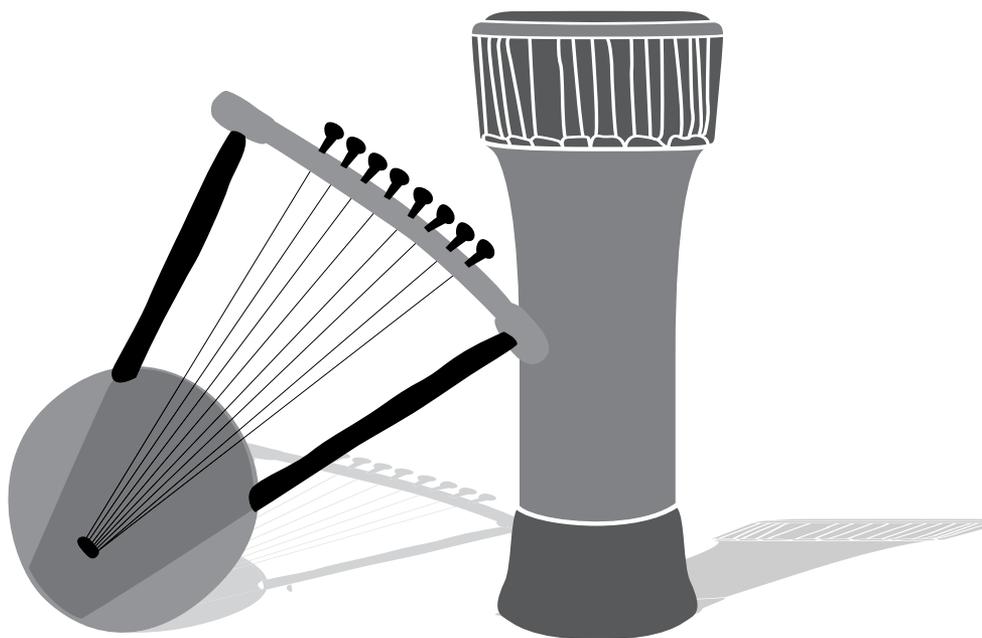
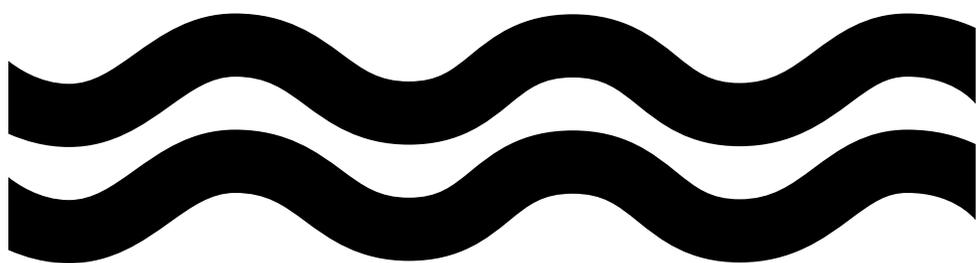


SPOTLIGHT

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givetoiaowa.org/ArtsAndMinds

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