

## Commissioned by **Het Gelders Orkest**.

First performance on 22 November 2018 by **Het Gelders Orkest** at Orpheus, Apeldoorn (NL). **Antonello Manacorda**, conductor.

### Performance Note:

- When the musicians are coming on the stage the conductor will also enter, hidden among them. He will take a seat near the rostrum so that he can move easily to his place when needed.
- Before the start of 1002, the lights in the concert hall and on the stage will be dimmed to complete darkness. A very soft dark blue light should be vaguely visible all over the stage. The conductor will take his place and will have a very small light on his stand, or a baton with a small light at the tip, so that the musicians can see him. The first four bars of the composition will start in total darkness. After bar 4 the light will gradually be intensified until normal brightness is reached (only on the stage) at bar 8.

دەريا وەرژنيكە خاموشە ، ههيمى بالى بەسەر ئاوەكاندا كيشاوە، ئەم بېدەنگىيە نيشانەپە كە ئيمە ونيووين..... بەر لەوەى ئيمە بگەينه ئيرە چەنگيكي گەورە رويداوە، زرمەى تۆپەكان ههيشتا لە سەرى مردووەكاندا دەنگدەدەنمە..... كەشتيپە سوتاوەكان رەنگى وئيرانەپەكى گەورەيان وەرگرتووە، دوكلەل وەك ماری توره دەدات بە ديوارەكانى ناسماندا.....

*The sea has been quiet for a day now, everything is quiet around us, this silence is a sign that we are lost.....*

*Before our arrival a great war took place, the sound of the explosives still resonates inside the skulls of the dead.....*

*The burned ships have taken the colour of a large ruin. Just like an angry snake, the smoke serpent against the walls of the sky.....*

## Summary

### From the Original Tale of Sinbad to Bachtyar Ali's Story:

The tale of Sinbad is one of the 'One Thousand and One Nights' stories. Briefly, the story is narrated this way: One day, a poor porter, named Sinbad, in one of the general markets of Baghdad complains to God. "My God, why life has to be that difficult? While I work so hard, I stay impoverish and even don't have enough to eat, yet some others are born and stay rich without breaking a sweat?" he said. At the same time, a rich Merchant, whose name happen to be Sinbad also, hears his complaints and invites him in. Finding that they are both named Sinbad. The rich Sinbad invites the poor Sinbad to visit his house for 7 consecutive days and listen to one of his stories about his adventures to obtain his wealth. In return, the rich Sinbad will pay the poor Sinbad 100 gold pieces every day.

At the end of the seventh voyage, the stories of Sinbad were so full of adventures, difficulties and challenges the poor Sinbad regrets all his complains to God. Now, he understands that becoming rich requires hard work, while he is now 700 gold pieces richer without working hard for it!

During his seven voyages, Sinbad faces several adversaries resulting from the challenges of nature and mischievousness of mankind. In this text the writer, Bachtyar Ali, makes a metaphor and refers to the voyages of a modern Sinbad that lives in the world full of challenges similar to those of the original Sinbad.

The theme of this novella by Bachtyar Ali is derived from the spirit of the original Sinbad tale. However, this piece tells the story of the first day "First Voyage" alone, during which Sinbad leaves a ruin and looks for another world, but the first Island he finds, Sinbad faces the same fears and devastations that he left behind. Capturing the fears of the modern man, Bachtyar Ali pushes Sinbad to a cross road of deciding to continue the life journey or give up?

In this text, Sinbad who lost his way, symbolizes the lost humanity, but has to strive not only to survive, but also keep his humanity.

## **Sinbad's First Day**

The sea has been quiet for a day now, everything is quiet around us, this silence is a sign that we are lost. As sailors, our minds are full of fear and longing. Oh Sinbad, the carnage of past shipwrecks is the only thing we see as we navigate the waters. Before our arrival, a great war took place. The sound of the explosives still resonates inside the skulls of the dead. The burned ships have taken the colour of a large ruin. Just like an angry snake, the smoke serpent against the walls of the sky. We humans, cannot return, we cannot return to the land. Steer the ship, Sinbad, let me hear the roar of its engine, let the sky witness our escape and see our ship sail through fog and smoke, seeking salvation.

Oh, water, you are the only thing on earth stayed the same. Embrace us and cradle us in the palms of your hands.

We are with you Sinbad, we are with you. We have been lost at sea for many days and nights. Both darkness and light torment us, from the sting of the sun's rays as they kiss our skin, to the agony of darkness. Gazing down at the water makes us nauseous, so does looking up at the heavens. As our bodies scream out of hunger and anger, the sea roars too. Upon reaching an island, we hear a voice emerge from the trees, strange and invisible, a voice that wafts through the air floating on a breeze, this unknown voice emanates from the earth, warning us against going forward. The earth rejects to embrace us and the water forces our reluctant return.

We must keep moving Sinbad, if not, we will perish with this ship.

As we go, the screams of the wounded draw our attention as their naked bodies lie under the trees. The ill know nothing but shrieking as if they never had tongues. Their cacophony of pain pervades the air just as their bodies blanket the rocks and the shore. This sound hunts us wherever we go. In this island, we neither see the birds nor hear the wind. The roaring of the sea cannot reach our straining ears. Everything has paused to listen to the scream of humanity. We want to know about their ailments, but we cannot. We cannot identify their wounds, the only thing there is, is the agony and pain and nothing else. The only thing that is there, is the groaning that sometimes sounds like a wailing of a lonely flute and some other time like a forceful heavenly choir.

As we walk shrouded in the darkness of this island, the only sounds that disrupt the quietness are the stomp of our feet and the discord of their screams.

Sometimes, all of them scream together as if someone is torturing them.

On this Island, everything seems to have been touched by a plague, even the sound of rainfall seems like a scream.

The screams are so dominant they are filling our ears and our dreams, they are so loud we can't rest nor hear each other. We must run away, we must run away from the screams and agonies of this plague for which we have no cure. But some of our friends stumble, and fall to the ground, screaming like them. We flee as if we are afraid that the plagues of this island will infect us, we run as if we are afraid of this everlasting scream, we run, we run.

Our return to the ship bears the weight of our disappointment. I know you hesitate Sinbad, I know you would say that the earth is a ruin, the plague spread throughout the islands, and the journey must stop. No! Even if the horizon is not in site, we should not stop. It is not important if we don't reach, but we have a ship and we keep sailing. That is what it matters.

Other voices call from the distance, as we hear the sea faintly urging us to new paths.

No, we should not allow the screams, the frightening islands, the stench of war, nor the spread of plagues on this earth to frighten us. We have two things: a ship that belongs to us, all of us, and the sea that stays the same. We must travel on this ship that carries us all, all mankind. We have no other option but to sail in this ship that carries all humans, all our friends regardless of the colour of their skin, languages they speak, or what plagues they carry with them. Sinbad let us start up the ship and move forward. The adversaries we will face are unimportant as far as the sea offers many other islands that will protect us. Let us play a different song, and guide the ship forward Sinbad. Let us steer the ship towards the center of the sea where all paths intertwine, all tunes originate, and all voices ring clear once again. Only then can we clearly hear the sounds of the sea.

Bachtyar Ali

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