



Internationally-acclaimed pianist, Malek Jandali, performs at AUB

Wednesday, April 7, 2010

Internationally-acclaimed pianist and musician Malek Jandali performed in Assembly Hall at the American University of Beirut on Tuesday, April 6, 2010.

The piano concert, which attracted a large audience, was organized by Kulturcentrum in coordination with the Office of Communications at AUB and in collaboration with the Syrian Cultural Club at the University.

Born in Germany to Syrian parents in 1972, Jandali, a composer and pianist, first shot to fame in 2008 when he released his debut album, "Echoes from Ugarit," which includes 10 original compositions that fuse classical music with Arabic sounds.

But Jandali's exceptional talent in music emerged much earlier: He gave his first concert when he was only eight years old. At 12, he won the National Young Artist in Syria Award.

Subsequently, he would study and play music abroad, performing at various concerts and with some of the best symphony orchestras in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East.

Although he had initially immersed himself in the study of classical composers with enthusiasm, he soon started displaying a gift for improvisation and for merging Eastern and Western musical traditions.

Jandali has received several international awards, including first prize in the International Competition for Young Musicians; the Best Pianist of the United States prize; the Stegner Foundation for the Arts Fellowship; the 1997 Outstanding Musical Performer Award; and the Grand Prize in Music Composition from Atlanta in the United States.

The Huntersville Herald has described Jandali as "A new piano talent...we were grateful for this opportunity... richer for this experience."

Tuesday's evening concert at AUB began with a brief movie describing Jandali's life, highlighting both his academic achievements and successful performances and compositions.

Jandali then shared with the audience his musical compositions from "Echoes from Ugarit," which includes 10 pieces: the prelude, Leil, Andalus, Echoes from Ugarit, Piano Dream, Sulaima, Yafa, Emessa, Arabesque, and Eid. The pieces are inspired by Syrian folk songs, Near Eastern and Spanish melodies.

Afterwards Jandali joined the crowd outside to sign his CD.

Jandali is also expected to perform on Wednesday, April 7, 2010, at 8:00 pm at Kulturcentrum, Jounieh and on the following day, at 7:00 pm, at Balamand University.