

ENSEMBLE K // SIMONE MENEZES // PROJECTS 2025-26

Availability upon request

SCHEHERAZADE, A TALE

with Simone Menezes (Conductor), Ensemble K // Golshifteh Farahani (Scheherazade), Kristin Winters (Dinarzade)

I have always been fascinated by Scheherazade. Her story is one of humanity's greatest literary and historical treasures, although our collective imagination has always seen her as either a seductress or a submissive woman who told stories to survive. The greatness of her character goes far beyond this and in fact represents the ancient figure of the hero - or rather the heroine!

A hero is a person who, based on moral and ethical principles, resolves critical situations by acting with exceptional courage and bravery. An attitude rooted in selfless thought and logic was held sacred by ancient peoples; heroes were considered superior beings because they transcended normal human limits. The pinnacle of heroism is to risk one's own life to save the life of another. Scheherazade is an archetype of female heroism: a woman of great intelligence and courage who voluntarily chooses to risk her life by presenting herself to the Sultan for marriage. She knows she may be killed the next day by her own father, but she accepts the risk in the hope of saving women and, by extension, the future of her people. Her words create worlds - and her intelligence brings healing to the Sultan and his people. It is her love for her people that first compels her to present herself to the Sultan; it is her love for the Sultan that leads her to cure him of his madness. Her heroic deeds give her the authority to rule in peace.

Based on the fascinating music of Rimsky-Korsakov, this project skilfully combines original texts with a free adaptation of stories from the Arabian Nights. It tells the story of Scheherazade, interspersed with historical love poems that pave the way to a free future not only for Dinarzade and future generations of women, but for humanity as a whole. The play combines the talents of Ensemble K's musicians, the lyrics of Simon Scardifield, Lynn Serfaty and Simone Menezes, and the brilliant performances of actresses Golshifteh Farahani (as Scheherazade) and Kristin Winters (as Dinarzade).

N. Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade (Opus 35)

**Conductor, 2 narrators, 14 musicians
(string quintet, wind quintet, trumpet, trombone, percussion and piano)**

COSMOS - The Planets von Gustav Holst (...und Jung's Archetypen)
with Simone Menezes (Conductor) // ENSEMBLE K // Volodia Serra (Narrator)

Archetypes are like ancient characters that live in our soul, invisible figures that guide and shape who we are. They are echoes of the past, like the shadow of a sage, the heart of a lover or the courage of a warrior, that inhabit each of us.

Each archetype is a universal image that everyone recognises without ever having seen it before, like stars in an inner sky that illuminate our dreams, our choices and our challenges. They are always present, whispering about our stories and pointing out paths that transcend time.

The planets can be associated with personality archetypes, reflecting both astrology and the universal aspects of the human psyche as described by Carl Jung. In Gustav Holst's The Planets we find a rich tapestry that reflects not only the cosmic energy of the planets, but also the profound archetypes they represent.

Today we explore the concept of archetypes by relating each musical movement of Holst's work to the archetypes that reside within each of us.

N. Bacri: Via-Lactea/zodiaque
G. Holst: The planets (orchestration George Morton)
I. Mars, the bringer of War - The Warrior
II. Venus, the bringer of Peace - The Lover
III. Mercury, the winged messenger - The explorer
IV. Jupiter, the bringer of Jollity - The King
V. Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age - The wiser
VI. Uranus, The Magician - The magician
VII. Neptune, the Mystic - The mystic

Conductor, 14 musicians, narrator

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