

By Sara Michieletto

THE SOUNDS OF VIOLIN IN PALESTINE



FINAL REPORT

**To promote classical music in the West Bank
whilst developing creativity and self-awareness in
Palestinian students**

The West Bank - April 2004

INTRODUCTION

This project was born in February 2004, when Prof. Sara Michieletto, a professional violinist, and Mr. Saher Yaseen, Head of the Music Division in the Palestinian Ministry of Education, met and agreed to work together.

They organized a plan by which Ms. Michieletto was to visit numerous schools in the West Bank, teaching a sense of music to the students and teachers.

The plan also included visiting various Music Institutes and Schools (such as An-Najah University and the Magnificat Institute of Jerusalem), holding workshops and concerts and promoting cultural exchanges between western and eastern classical music.



Mr. Saher Yaseen

For the school visits, we opted for a special method which helps children learn through play. Using a variety of entertaining activities, Ms. Michieletto concentrated on developing students':

- creativity
- self-awareness
- listening skills
- sense of rhythm
- knowledge of the violin and insight into the life of a professional violinist
- sense of community

All these activities, in addition to giving the students substantial artistic input, helped them to reduce the psychological pressure they are under due to the occupation.

The plan was organized by weeks: each week I travelled to a different town in the West Bank, always accompanied by the local music head of division for the Ministry of Education, working in the schools with students and teachers, meeting the local musical organizations, giving concerts, recording Arab music and teaching violin.



Throughout February and March, I visited at least 30 schools in Ramallah, Jerusalem, Ar-Ram, Nablus and Bethlehem as a volunteer.

The three subsequent weeks UNDP is supporting now were, therefore, the natural follow-up to the work already ongoing since February.

Ramallah, 6th April, after the lesson!

ACTIVITIES

Below is a detailed description of the activities undertaken from April 1st to April 22nd.

The first week of April took place in **Bethlehem** where we visited:

1. Banat Maryam al-A'drat School

Our music lesson here reached some 60 girls.



Bethlehem: playing and dancing

This was the last day of school visits after one week of meetings with many students. In Banat Maryam al'Adrat School three lessons were given, two of which were supported by UNESCO.

On the same day we had scheduled an interview with the local radio station "ISIS" but the journalist had some problems and eventually cancelled it.

The second week was based in **Ramallah**.

School visits

Names of the schools visited:

1. Banat al-Bireh Primary School
2. Banat at-Tatbiqat
3. Banat Ramallah Secondary School
4. Banat al-Bireh Secondary School
5. Banat Aziz Shahin

We think we reached around 450 students in Ramallah through the music lessons.



Ramallah: learning to play the violin!

Workshops

Unfortunately we were unable to run the workshop for teachers in Ramallah (see Appendix 1).

On the **6th of April** we held a two-hour Workshop with the students of Ramallah Conservatory. During this workshop the following activities were performed:

- Singing Canons, in order to be able to sing songs for two or three different voices;
- Performing rhythmical games, to enhance their sense of rhythm;
- Singing songs in unison, to improve their ability to sing in tune and perform together;

Around 15 students attended the workshop.



On the **8th of April** I gave a two-hour workshop for the first violins of the Ramallah Conservatory Orchestra, working on two pieces they were preparing for a concert on 29th of April. Miss Anna Bruening, a German violinist who is coaching the whole orchestra, made a special request for my assistance. Four students took part in this workshop.

During the same week, major efforts went into preparations for the concerts of the coming weeks.

More in detail:

- Ideation and preparation of the multimedia event;
- Ideation and preparation of concerts in Beit Sahour, Hebron, Majdal Shams (the latter was later cancelled)
- Meetings in Ashtar Theatre with Iman 'Aun and Mohammed 'Aid, both actors.
- First contact and meeting with Shadi Habib Allah, video/artist.



Mr. Tarazi and Mr. 'Aid rehearsing at Ashtar Theatre

On the **10th of April** we visited Majdal Shams School of Music and had a meeting with the Director (dr. Abu Jabal Ghassan from Beit Sahour) with a view to going back and giving a concert. The School is satisfactorily equipped and there are good teachers. The school, which is based in the Art Center of the Druse village, is apparently financed only by the students' fees.



On the **12th of April** the collaboration with the Magnificat Institute brought me to Emmaus, the Franciscan holy site, where the choir of the Institute was performing. At their request, I accompanied the singing of the "Magnificat" Choir as a solo instrument.

This performance had a large audience.

On the same day a first rehearsal for the Multimedia event took place in Ramallah, during the evening.

The second week was based in **Hebron**:

School visits

1. Banat Hassuna
2. Banat Taissir
3. Banat al-Maziniia
4. Awlad Shahiin
5. Awlad Shafi'ai



We reached around 500 students in Hebron.



Workshops

It was not possible to run the Workshop in Hebron (see Appendix 1).

On the **14th of April** I gave a special violin lesson to Reema Sharif, a girl I met while visiting a school; she plays the violin quite well but does not know the exact technique of holding the instrument.

The two violinists are still in e-mail contact.

Concerts:

On the **13th of April** an informal performance was given in Beit Sahour in the headquarters of Jadal Center for Culture and Development (see Appendix 3).

The rehearsals had taken place on the same day with the participation of Mr. Ashraf Abu Shamma on the Iraqi Ud and Mr. Wassim Qassis on percussions.

Around 50 people came to the event. A video of the concert is available at the Jadal Center.



There was a concert on **14th of April**, organized by Al-Anq'a Cultural Association (see Appendix 4).

This concert was also sponsored by UNESCO.

It was a challenge to perform classical music as a solo violinist in a place like Hebron, which is said to be very closed, but the people showed great appreciation of the event and invited me to go back for more concerts.

Some 130 people saw the concert.

Mr. Youssef Tartouri, president of Al-Anq'a, said that it was the first time in two years that a classical music concert had been given in Hebron.

A video of the concert is available at Al-Anq'a Cultural Association.



On the 14th of April I also visited the Palestinian Children's Art Centre in Hebron, meeting its president, Mr. Samih Abu Zakieh. This interesting meeting is likely to lead to further joint initiatives.

The third week was based in **Jerusalem**.

School visits:

1. Riad al-Aqsa
2. An-Nahuda
3. Al-Fatah
4. Al-Aitam
5. Beit Safafa

We believe some 540 girls were reached by these last visits.



Workshop:



It was not possible to run the Workshop in Jerusalem due to the difficult situation in Palestine (see Appendix 1).

On the 19th schools were closed, respecting the mourning after the assassination of Mr. Rantissi. So, some girls of Al-Bireh Secondary School demonstrated against the killings by going to Manara and waving the Palestinian flag.

On that occasion I was with them for a while, at their request.

The choir of the Ramallah Conservatory rehearsed on the **20th and on the 21st of April** (see Appendix 5) in order to prepare the concert of the 22nd.

Around 20 students took part in the rehearsals (see some of them in the picture).



Two long rehearsals (more than 3 hours each) were held at the Ashtar Theatre on the **19th and the 20th of April** to prepare the Multimedia Event of the 21st.

Concerts:

On the **21st of April** a Multimedia Event was held at the Ashtar Theatre in Ramallah. Unfortunately the video-artist Shadi Habib Allah, who was supposed to appear, improvising to the music, was unable to perform due to technical problems.

So a sort of ‘journey inside one’s feelings’ was achieved through music and body improvisation, a combination of theatre and dance (see Appendix 6), in which the audience was directly involved .

It was a big success.

Around 100 people attended the Event, and showed great enthusiasm

After the performance a long interview was given to some journalists and, on Saturday 24th, Al-Ayyam newspaper ran a long article on the Visual-concert (see Appendix 7).

A video recording of the event is available at the Ashtar Theatre.



Some students of the choir singing – Ramallah Conservatory.

On the **22nd of April** a Concert with the choir of the Ramallah Conservatory students took place at 4 p.m.

Around 10 people came to the performance.

The students and the audience enjoyed the concert very much and asked me to come back again in the future.



Hebron: depka dancers with Mr. Yaseen, prof. Michieletto and Miss Laila

Personal observations on the school visits:

After visiting more than 40 schools in the West Bank we would like to trace a general idea of how students and teachers reacted to this project.

Students in the West Bank are curious and receptive; they show respect for teachers and they have remarkable artistic potential.

What I have seen is that they really need activities such the ones offered by this program.

As many teachers told me, the difficult situation their country is facing has a profound impact on the students' daily life: they are always under pressure.

Activities like these, which are lighter, without good or bad marks, and in which body, mind and soul are involved, give them a breath of fresh air.

As a teacher from "A. Yasin" school told me: "Our students are more willing to learn and concentrate better after following your music lesson".



Rhythmical game in Jerusalem

Rhythm:

They have a good sense of rhythm, but not excellent. When I played easy rhythms they followed me, but as soon as I made it more complicated they would get lost. Furthermore, they did not show particular creativity in developing their own rhythms.

Creativity:

It was patent that children in the 6-8 age group were much freer to express creativity without feeling judged.

It also was clear that the girls with a strict Islamic upbringing were afraid to show imagination and creativity during the activities.

The most creative activity was "drama": while I played the violin, they had to invent a story which fitted in with the music (slow and sad at the beginning and fast and happy at the end) and then to mime and act it.

I noticed that:

- Boys almost always performed stories about the occupation (soldiers, shootings, killings and so on)
- the girls from Ramallah acted some romantic stories (such as a girl who loses her beloved and later finds him again), whilst the girls from the other towns never touched on this subject.
- the primary school children showed far more ideas and varied stories (rarely about the occupation and often about animals).



Ramallah, drama and music: two lovers at the restaurant

- one school in Bethlehem has a drama teacher and as a consequence students were brilliant.
- one boy in Nablus was amazing: he gave a brilliant and very expressive *solo* performance. I suggested to the Director of the school that he push him and help him to continue his acting.

I don't know if some children are shy or if they really are not very imaginative, but I believe it is very important to carry out activities to develop creativity in the students.

Singing



Girl's Choir in Hebron

During the lessons in all the towns I noticed that the students have quite good ability in singing. Some of them were really amazing.

In one case, a girl from a school in Al-Bireh sang so wonderfully that I gave the Headmistress the telephone number of a friend of mine, who would teach her music and singing for free. Unfortunately the Headmistress never called her.

I also heard some school choirs, which were good.

Knowledge of Music

The students did not show a good knowledge of music, even if we only consider Arab classical music. When I asked them how many strings an Ud has, they really didn't know. I also tried to play something they knew and I discovered that they only know the music they hear on TV, such as The Four Seasons and the music from 'Titanic'.



Hebron: showing how to hold the bow



Hebron, and now: play!

They were very interested in knowing how a violin is made, and they also showed great interest in trying to play it. It was always impossible to satisfy all their requests to try their hand at playing the violin.

Awareness

I worked especially hard on developing the students' awareness of their own feelings.

From what I have seen, I think they will now be able to be aware of sounds from the outside and to understand how they make them feel on the inside, if they only want to.

It was a bit more difficult to see awareness when they listened to music. Generally they understood it, but frequently students found their feelings



confused, or were not able to express what they felt.

Sometime I had to change my question from "how do you feel?" to "what do you understand?". In this way they could express not only emotions but also images or stories and this helped them to express their feelings.

Different lifestyles

It also was interesting to notice that they had no knowledge of Venice, my home town: so through my words and through some pictures from a magazine, they were surprised to discover a city where there are no cars.

I played some Venetian music to them and spoke about my job and my daily life in a place which is so different from their world.

This was also a way to help their imagination take flight, as they thought of different lifestyles and places.

In order to develop imagination, there was a game in which I played Venetian music, asking them what they felt the Italian town was like: one of the most frequent answers was: "free", followed by "beautiful, happy, ancient, with water, in the mountains, etc."

Another game was to make them guess from which country the music I was playing came, and so I played music from China, Ireland, Texas, France, etc. The older students often guessed after just a few attempts.



Teachers from Ramallah

Teachers

The teachers who accompanied me were often very interested and participative.

They helped a lot, especially by translating my words into Arabic and helping to organise the most active games. In some ways, they too benefited from attending the lessons, learning new way of teaching subjects through games.

Participation

Usually there was excellent participation: the students liked the games and they were happy to participate. It was easy to get volunteers to do special activities.

Special attention was paid to girls who, because of their upbringing, are less inclined to express themselves: for this reason 75% of the schools I visited were girls' schools.

Unfortunately there were some cases of Islamic girls declining to participate in certain activities because of their religious beliefs.

What surprised me was that one of the most active and participative schools was Al-Aqsa Islamic school: it is an apparently very orthodox place with a mosque annexed to the school building, but the students and the teachers there were wonderful and very participative.



Bethlehem, 1st April: everybody participating!

CONCLUSIONS

The project was really successful.

We saw the smiles of the students and their shining eyes asking us to come back again, after the lessons. We saw how they performed the drama-game, showing moments of their normal difficult life. We saw their joy in trying to play the violin and their will to study music. And we saw one weepy girl smiling again after the lesson.

This could be enough in itself to justify the whole project, in our opinion.

But the numbers are also surprising: in just three weeks of work (from 1st to 22nd of April) we reached at least **1550** students of public schools, **20** teachers (who were present at the lessons) **25** Conservatory students, **30** singers from the Magnificat Institute and **400** Palestinian people (audiences at the concerts).

Although there were some glitches in the organization (often due to the difficulty of living in a land of conflict), we must say that our efforts were fully recompensed.

The students - and the teachers too! - thoroughly enjoyed the activities and often asked me to come back to their school (see Appendix 2).

Boys and girls – especially teenagers – have such a need to express their feelings and to manage to live in awareness of them. And we think that for the space of just one lesson, we gave the students the sensation of living in a normal place, where music is the topic and where expressing one's body and soul is the most important activity.

The music and games used helped the students to express themselves and to feel alleviated, thinking of the arts and letting their imagination take wing. We believe that this also achieved the aim of partially reducing the psychological pressure they face on a daily basis because of the occupation.

Furthermore, classical music is pretty unknown in the West Bank, and to try to bring it closer to students is significant for their education.

Both Mr. Saher Yaseen for the Ministry of Education and I think that these activities are very important in Palestine, and, thanking UNDP for its support, hope that similar projects will be carried out again in the future.



Attached Documents:

- 1 – Letter of invitation by the Palestinian National Commission for UNESCO, Ramallah
- 2 – Letters of appreciation by schools/university/conservatories, West Bank
- 3 – Newspapers articles (in Palestine and Italy)

Annex

1

Palestinian Liberation Organization
Palestinian National Authority
Palestinian National Commission
For
Education, Culture & Science

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية
السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
اللجنة الوطنية الفلسطينية
للتربية والثقافة والعلوم

Ref: P.N.C/8/2/E- 1361
Date: 4/12/2003

Mr. Giampaolo Vianello
Sovrintendente of "Gran Teatro La Fenice"

Dear Sir,

We, the Palestinian National Commission for UNESCO, based in Ramallah, are willing to establish cooperation between our Commission and your Institution in the field of music, as we deal with fields of education, culture and science.

We have met the Violinist, Ms Sara Michieletto who gave us a clear vision on your activities, and we want her to assist us in training some young people on "Music and Violin". She expressed her readiness to do that provided that you give your prior approval to her.

Therefore, we invite Ms Michieletto to visit Palestine and stay for few months so as to perform this activity for the benefit of the Palestinian musicians.

Hoping that our invitation to her will receive your positive reply.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance.

With best regards and Compliments,



Jihad Qarashoulli
Secretary General of
PNCECS

(س.ش.ن.ع.) UNESCO Eng.doc \الملفات 2003 للمنظمات\يونيسكو D:\saleem

Palestine - Ramallah ☎ 174, ☎ 2401080, 2400901
Fax: 2406333 ,E.Mail: PNCECS@Palnet.com

فلسطين - رام الله ☎ 174, ☎ 2401080 : 2400901
فاكس 2406333، البريد الإلكتروني: PNCECS@Palnet.com

Web site :<http://www.pncecs.gov.ps>

Annex 2

An-Najah
National University
Faculty of Fine Arts
Dean's Office



جامعة
النجاح الوطنية
كلية الفنون الجميلة
مكتب العميد

Dear Sara,

It was great pleasure, for us, to have you among us at the school of Fine Art- Department of Music Sciences.

I would like to express our thanks to you for the efforts you put either in showing the lecturers the right classic way of dealing with the violin or the concert you performed at our School of Fine Arts on the 17th of March 2004.

Thank you again, hopping that our corporation will continue in the future.

Dr. Mohammad Ata Yousof

Dean School of Fine Arts
An-Najah National University
Nablus, Palestine



الرقم :

التاريخ : 4.4.2004

To whom it may Concern

The educational staff headed by the
headmistress in AL-Bireh secondary Girls school
found out the importance program for music
and fun that was done by Sara Michieletto.
That program helped the students much
spiritually.

We are looking forward to helping
us in doing such programmes in the
future.

Thank you

Name of Principle: Mahasen
4.4.04.



PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Ministry Of Education



السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية

وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي

مديرية التربية والتعليم - الخليل

مدرسة شاهين الأساسية (أ) للبنين

الخليل - تلفون: ٢٢٣٢٨٥٠

الرقم:
التاريخ:
الموافق:

by the name of God.

thank you for this visit.

pupils became happy when they see

you. those pupils from (Grade 5) I

thought that the most wonderful age to

learn them.

the pupils made many stories when they

heard the music.

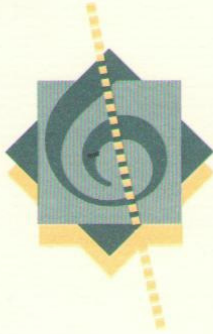
thank you very much for that.

because you let the pupils very

happy.

عبدالله
عز الدين





المعهد الوطني للموسيقى
THE NATIONAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

24th March 2004

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that Ms. Sara Michieletto has been volunteering as a music education consultant at the National Conservatory of Music, in the Ramallah branch, from early March 2004.

We have now asked her to collaborate with us on a choral training program until 21st April 2004.

Any assistance to Ms. Michieletto will be very much appreciated.

Yours truly,

Heather MacDonald
Academic Director, Ramallah branch

جامعة بيرزيت
BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

الإدارة المركزية - Central Administration
P.O. Box 66676 صندوق بريد
Tel. +972-2-6271711 Fax. +972-2-6271710
East Jerusalem - Palestine القدس - فلسطين
E-Mail: info@ncm.birzeit.edu
Website: www.birzeit.edu/music

*The "Magnificat" Institute
School of Music*

St. Saviour's Monastery
New Gate, Old City
P.O. Box 186, 91001 Jerusalem



معهد مانيفيكات

لتعليم الموسيقى

دير المخلص للآباء الفرنسيسكان
باب الجديد، البلدة القديمة
ص.ب. ١٨٦، ٩١٠٠١ القدس

Jerusalem, March 25, 2004

To whom it may concern,

Miss Sara Michieletto performed a violin concert in the hall of the music school, The "Magnificat" Institute, on March 14, 2004.

Before the concert she put a great effort in working with four of our students, in-order to enable them of an appropriate accompaniment. Miss Sara also made considerable rehearsals with The Franciscan Custody Choir in performing score of sacred music.

Therefore we deeply appreciated her presence, not only for the magnificent concert, but above all because she shared her talent in our activity, giving our Palestinian students and our choir the joy and the pride of making music together with an artist, as great as Miss Sara Michieletto.

With our warm gratitude.

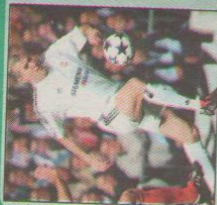
Fr. Armando Pierucci

"Magnificat" Institute Director



زیدان افضل اور بی علی مدی ۵۰ عاماً

(289)



في الأمسية الفنية «تعايير مع صوت الكمان» بـ«عشتار»

كتب يوسف الشايب:

[illegible]

الجسدي، وهو تجربة جديدة مفتوحة لتبصر الأحاسيس. وتُصنّف عور الجسدي في هذه التجربة أن التغيير الجسدي في مجمله وليد اللحظة. العرض عبارة عن تعرّض لخواص القوسين وأمام الجمهور العرض محاولة لكسر المألوف في كل شيء حتى في طريقة تعبير الجسد، وربما كان ذلك من خلال «حوار الفنان» خلال إحدى الخطوات، حيث كان الراس يتعانق القدمين، والذراعان يمسكان الرس. وتتناقض هذه صفاتها في حوجة سيولة... أجربا على السقوط وساهمنا في تعميق هذه الحرة في الوالت نفسه... نحن نعيش في متاهة، اعتقنا أن قتل الأحاسيس سيكون وسيلة للتجاذب معها، والفرقة على الاستمرار... واعتقنا أن التغيير عن الأحاسيس يتطلب «أجواء» من الحرية، وأنحاء شخصية... ما أربنا إحصائه في هذا العرض لابد أن تبصر الأحاسيس في تحصل على الراس أن تطلق العنان للروح التي الدخيلة المتجولة.



(عدسة: جمال العاروري)

ميشيتو هي العرض

ويضيف عيد: تقبل الجمهور للعرض سبباً على قادرا على اقحام عوام جديدة كالمسرح الرقاص والرقص التعبيري.. التحدي مهلة لليلة، وأتمنى أن

للتدريس الكائن في عدد من المدارس الفلسطينية، هذه المرة الأولى التي أقدم فيها تجربة من هذا النوع. أتمنى سعادتها، فمبدأ بدأنا البروفات، شعرت بحوار حيوي

المشاركة بموسمها في أعمال مسرحية المستقبل شريطة أن تجد "فص" وعائقا مناسباً، مثيرة إلى أن فترة انتهائها إلى فلسطين ستنتهي قريباً، وبالتالي ستعود إلى سبتة المغربية لوضع غيتو

غير مالوف بيني وبين الممثل محمد
عملها في الدور...

La violinista della Fenice tra i bambini di Nablus

SEGUE DALLA PRIMA PAGINA

Con accorto slalom tra check point, incursioni e coprifuochi, Sara ha realizzato il suo sogno: «Portare con il mio violino un po' di leggerezza in una terra oppressa dal conflitto e dall'assenza di speranze». Come faceva a descrivere la città da cui veniva a bambini che hanno raramente messo il naso fuori dal loro villaggio, oltre reticolati e sbarramenti? «Suonando pezzi di Vivaldi - racconta Sara -». Spiegavo ai bambini che questa era la musica della mia città. E poi chiedevo: ora ditemi, come vi immaginate Venezia? Tantissimi mi hanno risposto: una città libera. Altri: felice o antica, o triste. Qualcuno - ride lei - mi ha detto perfino: tra le montagne».

Forse nessuno di loro vedrà mai com'è fatta davvero Venezia, ma attraverso le note di Vivaldi modulate da una eclettica violinista italiana a zonzo in Terra Santa hanno dimenticato per qualche ora tre anni di Intifada, di lutti, di paura. Hanno chiuso gli occhi e immaginato un paese fantastico senza muri e senza armi, senza posti di blocco, senza sospetti. Sara ha fatto ballare attorno a sé ragazzeine velate e timorate, le ha invitate a interpretare la loro vita quotidiana sulla colonna sonora di Bach e Paganini. Come a teatro. E su quel palcoscenico improvvisato, ha scoperto quello che nessun psicologo indagherà nelle pieghe di un'adolescenza nascosta: i traumi di bambine maltrattate dai padri, di bambini ossessionati dalla violenza, dalla guerra, dallo scontro fisico. Non ha trovato un rimedio, Sara.

L'unica terapia che conosce è la musica. A Hebron non ne ascoltano più da due anni, prima che lei arrivasse. Per 55 minuti nella sala concerti, riaperta per

Suonando i pezzi del Vivaldi spiegavo ai bimbi che era la musica della mia città



l'occasione, non s'è sentito nemmeno un colpo di fucile. Neppure un secondo di quella preziosa melodia andava sprecata, perché chissà quando un'altra violinista come lei si presenterà nella città malata di silenzio, dove anche la musica è clandestina: «Per i musulmani integralisti, è addirittura peccato - ha scoperto Sara - ho temuto che qualche fanatico isolato potesse aggredirmi, ma quando ho visto tra il pubblico i carabinieri italiani del Tiph (Temporary International Presence in the city of Hebron, la missione di osservatori internazionali in servizio continuo ormai da sette anni, ndr.) mi sono sentita tranquilla». Mentre lei suonava, un uomo in platea scriveva: «Era uno scrittore palestinese. Mentre suonavo ha composto una poesia dedicata a me e alla musica, che ha letto al pubblico alla fine del

minile, quando c'è stata un'incursione di blindati israeliani. La preside ha avvisato le ragazze che la lezione era sospesa e che potevano approfittare della pausa per fare merenda. Merenda! Non credevi ai miei occhi. Le studentesse dicevano di essere spaventate, ma si capiva che erano abituate, e si sono messe tranquillamente a consumare il loro spuntino».

La scelta del repertorio non è stata semplice: «Ysaye e Prokofiev, certo. Ma volevo far ascoltare anche musica contemporanea, come quella di Nildo Savitdo, trevigiano, che con la sua musica dalle sonorità sorprendenti è riuscito a toccare l'animo del pubblico palestinese. Poi cercavo di esaudire le loro richieste». Per esempio? «La colonna sonora dei Titanic: miss miss, Titanic! Dagli adolescenti palestinesi è stata sicuramente la più gettonata. Alcuni cantavano, mentre io li accompagnavo. A un certo punto - ricorda Sara - ho sentito una voce strepitosa, apparteneva a una tredicenne di Al Breh, vicino a Ramallah. Ho chiesto alla direttrice di portarla da una mia amica inglese, che insegna musica a Ramallah, perché la seguisse. Ma la ragazza non si è mai presentata, forse i genitori non hanno voluto. Peccato, perché credo abbia il talento di una grande artista». Ma il lieto fine è raro in Terra Santa. Sara è tornata a Venezia, alla Fenice, alla casa di Robegano, dove è nata e da dove è iniziata la sua carriera attraverso i conservatori di Venezia e di Castelfranco. Ha messo via il violino palestinese, costruito apposta per lei da Luciano Cristilli. Ma quando chiude gli occhi, suonando Vivaldi sul suo violino da concerto, non è a Venezia che Sara sta pensando.

Elisabetta Rosaspina

fiacche Rosa