

ITHACA(S)

A Mediterranean Island Between Jazz & Baroque



Daphné Souvatzi (mezzo-soprano)
with Sébastien Giniaux (guitar & arrangements)
& Chris Jennings (double bass)

Co-produced by Cité de la Voix & Abbaye de Neimënster
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Artistic Statement

Daphné Souvatzi has developed a distinctive artistic universe at the crossroads of Baroque music and Mediterranean traditions, guided by an instinctive and deeply sensory approach. Her voice is rooted in the light, languages, and landscapes of the South—Greece, Cyprus, and Asia Minor. These inner territories, these desires or "Ithaca(s)," become the substance of a living art where Monteverdi, Marais, and the musical traditions of the Eastern Mediterranean meet naturally. A new dimension now enriches this journey: jazz. Surrounded by one of France's leading contemporary jazz guitarists, Sébastien Giniaux, and Chris Jennings, voted Best International Double Bassist by Jazz Magazine, Daphné Souvatzi brings Baroque repertoire into a new light through an organic and open approach. Freedom becomes the guiding thread, improvisation the shared language—a return to the music's origins, where the journey matters more than the destination.

The trio presents a repertoire that weaves together traditional music from Greece, Cyprus, and Asia Minor, Sephardic songs, Baroque repertoire by Campra, Monteverdi, Marais, and Pallavicino, alongside original compositions. Sébastien Giniaux's arrangements create bridges between these musical worlds, allowing Baroque arias to unfold as genuine jazz themes. Melodies, timbres, and forms become material for improvisation, enabling the three musicians to reinvent each piece in the moment. Traditional repertoire resonates with this same spirit of freedom, creating a dialogue in which cultures respond to one another without ever becoming fixed. The project thus becomes a meeting place between early music, Mediterranean heritage, and the language of jazz—a space where arrangement leaves as much room for memory as it does for invention.

The project's central theme is inspired by Constantine Cavafy's poem "Ithaca." It evokes the idea that Odysseus' journey was ultimately richer and more meaningful than his return to his native island. It becomes a metaphor for our own inner desires and aspirations: the path toward our goals is often as essential as their fulfillment. Experience and maturity shape our lives through the voyage itself. "Ithaca(s)," in the plural, becomes a constellation of inner destinations—our longing for peace, fulfillment, and freedom.

« *Ithaca* »

(Excerpts from the poem by C. Cavafy)

When you set out for Ithaca, pray that your road is long, full of adventure, full of discovery.

Fear neither the Laestrygonians nor the Cyclopes. You will never meet such creatures on your way if your thoughts remain lofty.

Pray that your road is long, that there may be many summer mornings.

Stop at Phoenician trading stations, and acquire beautiful things: mother-of-pearl and coral, amber and ebony, and every kind of intoxicating perfume.

Ithaca gave you the beautiful journey; without her, you would never have set out.

Program

C. Monteverdi « Si dolce è il tormento » [Lien](#)

M.A. Charpentier « Sans Frayeur dans ce bois »

Black Sea Greek Traditional

« Apo ta rlyka sou matia » (From Your Sweet Eyes)

Sephardic Song « Scalerica de Oro » [Lien](#)

M. Marais « Marche pour les matelots et matelotes » *Alcione*

C. Jennings « Ithaca(s) – Triste Kloak »

Htipo nekri (greek rebetiko) - **A. Campra** « Hâtez-vous, ma raison »
air de Clorinde, *Tancrède*

Wood & Mellin « My One and Only Love » - Standard jazz

S. Giniaux « Végétal »

C. Pallavicino L'Antiope « Vieni, Corri, Volami in braccio »

V. Tsitsanis Andra mou (greek popular song) [Lien](#)

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Cypriot Traditional – I Vrysi ton Pegiotisson ("The Village Women's Well")

Biographies



Greek-Luxembourgish mezzo-soprano **Daphné SOUVATZI** studied classical voice at the Paris Regional Conservatory while earning a Bachelor's degree in Musicology from the Sorbonne, followed by an Advanced Diploma (DEM) in Baroque Singing. Together with flamenco guitarist François Aria, she performs a repertoire inspired by Mediterranean traditions, at the crossroads of Baroque and traditional music. The duo regularly appears at prestigious venues including the Luxembourg Philharmonie, Radio France Montpellier Occitanie Festival, Lille Opera, and Trinità dei Monti in Rome. A three-time laureate of the Royaumont Foundation, she has performed the role of Prince Charming in Massenet's *Cendrillon* and appeared alongside Keyvan Chemirani at the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris. She has also performed as soloist with a mandolin orchestra conducted by F. Calvo in A. Markeas' *Les Noël's d'Orient*. Teaching occupies an important place in her artistic life: she teaches vocal technique at the Darius Milhaud Conservatory in Paris and at the Massy Opera within the Démon Orchestra programme.

Born in 1981, **Sébastien GINIAUX** is a guitarist, cellist, composer, arranger, and painter. He is widely regarded as one of today's leading figures in French jazz guitar and is internationally recognized as one of the finest contemporary musicians in the Gypsy jazz tradition. Alongside projects released under his own name—*Mélodie des Choses*, *African Variations*, among others—he performs with numerous ensembles, including Richard Galliano's New York Tango Trio and the celebrated Gypsy jazz collective Selmer #607. Appearing on around thirty albums as guitarist, cellist, composer, or arranger, he has shared the stage with artists including Youssou N'Dour, Taraf de Haïdouks, Toumani Diabaté, Yamandu Costa, Didier Lockwood, Biréli Lagrène, Zaz, and Anne Sila.

"Sébastien Giniaux is one of the greatest French jazz guitarists today." — TSF Jazz (2020)

"Forget everything you know about guitar heroes: Sébastien Giniaux belongs to a class of his own." — Jazz en Touraine (2024)





Jacques Grossemy - photographie
www.jacques-grossemy.fr

Canadian double bassist **Chris JENNINGS**, based in Paris since 2002, was voted Best International Double Bassist of the Year by Jazz Magazine/Jazz News in both 2024 and 2025. His eighth album as a bandleader, **CHRIS JENNINGS' 5 WAYS HOME**, received widespread acclaim in France and internationally, particularly for the album *Boy, She's the Dandy*. He has become a key collaborator within Dhafer Youssef's Quartet alongside Tigran Hamasyan and Mark Guiliana, and has worked extensively with guitarist Nguyễn Lê, notably in *Silk & Sand* with percussionist Rhani Krija. His remarkable career also includes collaborations with Rita Marcotulli, Danny Gottlieb, Karim Ziad, Bojan Z, Aynur Doğan, Kudsi Ergüner, Grégory Privat, Joachim Kühn, Titi Robin, David Linx, El Gusto, and Céline Bonacina, among many others.

Guest

A rare and refined musician, **Patrick GORAGUER** is simultaneously a drummer, pianist, composer, and arranger. Born in Paris into a deeply musical family, he is the son of legendary composer and arranger Alain Goraguer, renowned for his collaborations with Boris Vian, Serge Gainsbourg, and Jean Ferrat. Educated at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Patrick has built a remarkably versatile career spanning jazz, chanson, world music, and film scoring. As both drummer and pianist, he combines elegant groove with nuanced harmonic sensitivity, moving effortlessly between jazz's rhythmic vitality and more atmospheric musical textures. His extraordinary range of collaborations includes Maxime Le Forestier, Alain Chamfort, Arthur H, Juliette Gréco, Françoise Hardy, Salif Keita, Femi Kuti, Tony Allen, Keziah Jones, Lee Konitz, Jean-Luc Ponty, Richard Bona, and many others. In 2025, he joined Nicolas Repac's new project, *Trans Cover Express*.



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