

*A Sea-Drift of Songs* is a reconstruction of the sound- and visual scapes of the AfroAsian worlds of the 13th century gathered by the project. It is an effort to reconstruct the laments and joys, the rhythms and plausible melodies of that time. It is also made up of stories – the stories of women in servitude who made up most of the musicality of that time. They are searching for ways back home when the brilliant city of Baghdad was torched by Mongolian-led forces in 1258. The magical world of the AfroAsian seas is reconstructed by travelogues of fabulist captains and seafarers. It is a world of gigantic birds that lift elephants sky high to drop them to their death, of gigantic crabs that fly – it is also a world of trade, of ambergris and ivory, of gold and silk, of giraffes and pearls...and of slaves. We are delighted to have an array of soloists from at least 7 vantage points of the known world: from Mapungubwe to Al Andalus and from Muziris to the Habeshi Highlands.

The AfroAsia Ensemble is a gathering of composers, writers, performers and visual artists from South Africa, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Turkey, Spain, India and China. It was originally formed to respond to an invitation by the Asia Art Archive to be part of its celebrations this year in Hong Kong. Its core is made up of some of the award-winning members of the Insurrections Ensemble, that was featured as part of the project, and a new array of composers and performers who have been involved in aspects of the project's work. Alas, Covid-19 has scuttled the possibility of its expanded performance. The RAA annual conference has afforded an opportunity to have an 80-minute version of this pluri-medial work, however the Indian maestros were unable to travel.

## AFROASIA ENSEMBLE



Selamawit ARAGAW	violin
Mark ARANHA	composition, guitars, dotara
Brydon BOLTON	composition, double-bass, electronica
Thabo BOPAPE	film
Bronwen CLACHERTY	composition, voice, vibraphone, percussion
Sumangala DAMODARAN	composition, voice
Kathyayini DASH	composition, voice, artwork, scenography
Sazi DLAMINI	composition, voice, guitars, bows, strings, winds
Abhishek DUTTA	film
Somrita Umi GANGULLY	translations
Halim GENCOGLU	oud, tambur
Pritam GHOSAL	composition, sarod
Luis GIMENEZ	composition, guitar, mbira
Benjamin HASKINS	animations, projections
Rhoda ISAACS	stage management
Jill JOUBERT	sculptures
Nkosenathi KOELA	bows, percussion, voice
Reza KHOTA	composition, guitars
Grasella LUIGI	voice
Tlale MAKHENE	composition, percussion, voice
Benignus MBIRO	percussion
Masello MOTANA	voice
Kristin NG-YANG	artwork
Thania PETERSEN	curator of artwork
Lungiswa PLAATJIES	composition, voice, mbira, bows
Karen PRESS	words
Steven SACK	stage design
Tina SCHOUW	composition, words, voice, guitar
Ari SITAS	words, voice, scenography
Cara STACEY	composition, keyboards, bows, winds, voice

