

Big Bazaar Orchestra (Athens, Berlin)

- The Groove Orchestra from Berlin



Athens, Berlin, Havana ... you think of shimmering air, Mediterranean scents and sweaty people - don't you? That isn't Berlin - you are saying? Unfortunately you are right. It is just too cold in Berlin. In January 2005, ten notoriously freezing musicians from Berlin got together to change that. If you know the tough Berlin winter, you understand their motto right away: "Berlin müsste Süden sein". **Berlin should be South**. Simultaneously it is the name of their first song. A hymn to love in general, and a declaration of love to the German capital.

In spite of all their love to Berlin, the Big Bazaar Orchestra is yearning for the scents of the Orient, the lights of the Aegean and the Rhythm of the Caribbean. Torn apart between three different cultures the musicians decided to get together. That's how the **greek Bouzouki meets the electronic beats of a soundsystem, turkish singing meets afro-cuban beats and vibrant saxophone meets fine oriental melodies**. The Big Bazaar Orchestra ventures the synthesis of Jazz, contemporary DJ-Culture, afro-cuban beats, Greek Mambos and Turkish songs. In her original compositions, the band describes the sence of live and the reality of contemporary urban people. The unique sound of the band and the virtuosity of the musicians makes their concerts a special experience.



Arranger and composer of the group is the saxophonist Jorgos Psirakis. Johannes Alfred Mehnert contributes the german lyrics and is responsible for the Grooves. Conductor is the vibes player Oli Bott.

The Big Bazaar Orchestra consists of six musicians. According to the occasion they **invite different guest artists**.

The Big Bazaar Orchestra recently made the soundtrack for director and screenplay writer Hans-Christoph Blumenberg's „**Warten auf Angelina**“ (waiting for Angelina).

Choice if previous concerts

- € Since 2005 **regular concerts** at Jazzclub **Quasimodo**
- € 2006 **Creole**
- € Karneval der Kulturen
- € **SO 36**
- € Werkstatt der Kulturen
- € Ballhaus as unplugged Orchestra for **P.R. Kantate**

Big Bazar Orchestra in the Internet: www.cross-culture-music.de/bigbazaar

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Musicians biographies

Jorgos Psirakis (Greece) Soprano- and Altosaxophone, Arrangement

- € born 1962 in Athens
- € Grew up in Rüsselsheim at the Rhine
- € Has been living in Berlin since 1984 and started to learn Jazz-Saxophone at the communal music school in Berlin-Kreuzberg
- € Autodidactic studies about the music from the Balkan and the Orient
- € Likewise autodidactic studies of oriental percussions and the turkish Ney-Flute, student at the conservatory for tuskish music in Berlin
- € Since 1991 professional musician
- € Concerts in Germany and abroad with "Maria Farantouri", "Ramesh Shotham" and many more, intensive work as a theater musician
- € Co-Founder and arranger of the Big Bazar Orchestra

Katharina Debus Vocals

- € born 1979 in Hanau am Main.
- € Training at the "Stage School of Music Dance and Drama" in Hamburg.
- € Collaboration with Heinz Rudolf Kunze in the Musical "Rent".
- € Engagements as Studio singer and in different Musicals. Actual: "FrauContraBass" Vocals and Bass, the a-capella Band "Stouxingers".

Oli Bott Vibraphone, Marimba

- € born 1974 in Hofheim (Taunus)
- € studies vibraphone and composition at the „Berklee College of Music“ in Boston. Classes by "Gary Burton", "John La Porta", "Bob Mrookmeyer" and others
- € 1996 graduation, summa cum laude
- € winner of the "NDR-Musikpreis für Jazz-Dirigenten", the „Leipziger Improvisationswettbewerb“, the „European Jazz Contest“ and winner of the „Wayne Shorter Award“
- € several scholarships and composition orders from the senate of Berlin
- € TV- and radiobroadcast and concerts in Germany and abroad

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Johannes Alfred Mehnert Percussion, Vocals, Lyrics

- € born 1959 in Trier
- € studies of Philosophy, Paedagogy and Politics in Frankfurt am Main
- € privat lessons by "Tata Güines" (Cuba), "Mustafa Teddy Addy" (Ghana), "Dudu Tucci" (Brasil), "John Otis" (USA)
- € since 1980 professional musician, performances with "Gitte Haenning", "Peter Giger", "Trilok Gurtu", "Burhan Öcal", "Toni Lakatos" and many more
- € Studio- and radio productions in the field of Jazz, Pop, Salsa, radio play and music for children
- € Worked as a theater musician and composer
- € 2002 first Cd with the project "Sprechzeit" and the music from Thomas Zoller
- € Music pedagogy for children and teenagers
- € Co-Founder of the Big Bazaar Orchestra

Andreas Dormann Baritone saxophone

- € born 1978 in Kleve on the Rhine
- € he took clarinet lesson from the age of 11 and saxophone lessons from 17
- € Military service at the Stabsmusikkorps at the German armed forces in Berlin
- € 1999-2004 studies at the Jazz department of the University of Arts in Berlin
- € nationwide performances in Germany with the Saxophone quartet "Fraw Fraw", the vocalist "Andreas Schneider", with "DJ RAS", the "Gene Krupe Band" and many more

Roland Fidezius Bass

- € born 1972 in Wuppertal
- € Studies at Universität der Künste Berlin, departement Jazz
- € Workshops with Bill Frisell, Dieter Ilg, Maria Schneider
- € concert-, Theater-, Film-, and Studio musician
- € 2005 Stipendium of the Berlin Kultursenat with studies in New York
- € member of „So Weiss“ and the „Kaktus Sextett“