



**BASSIST/COMPOSER PETROS KLAMPANIS LOOKS TO PAST AND
FUTURE AS HE TRANSFORMS TRADITIONAL GREEK MUSIC WITH
*TORA COLLECTIVE***

Unique instrumentation bridges Greek folkloric and modern jazz worlds, with Klampanis (bass, artistic direction), Areti Ketime (vocals), Thomas Konstantinou (oud, laouto), Giorgos Kotsinis (clarinet), Kristjan Randalu (piano), Ziv Ravitz (drums, electronics, co-production) and more

Releasing November 25, 2022 on Enja/Yellowbird Records

Following up his acclaimed recent outings *Rooftop Stories* and *Irrationalities*, bassist and composer **Petros Klampanis** creates one of his most inventive musical settings to date with ***Tora Collective***, his sixth album as a leader. For Klampanis, who grew up in Athens, Greece surrounded by the confluence of Mediterranean and Balkan folk cultures, making music has always meant navigating cultural crossroads. With *Tora Collective* (“Tora”=“Now”) he puts traditional Greek music at the centre, even as he presents it from a bold new angle.

In addition to the two new originals “Disoriented” and “South By Southeast,” Klampanis and his compact hybrid jazz/Greek folk ensemble interpret popular

Greek songs such as “Xehorismata,” “Sybetheria,” “Hariklaki” and “Menexedes ke Zoumboulia.” These songs, Klampanis asserts, are “not just part of Greek cultural heritage or a fragment of the past, but also as part of the future: they live into the present, breathe into the ‘here and now,’ while constantly evolving in a dynamic state and in dialogue with contemporary music.”

“For me it’s a personal thing,” he says. “I want to reflect on what Greek music and culture offer the world. How can music from the Aegean to Epirus and from the Ionian Islands to Crete, meet and speak to the hearts and minds of musicians and audiences from different parts of the world, different traditions and backgrounds?”

To that end, Tora Collective draws on regional characteristics, as Klampanis explains: “Every region has a strong identity. In Epirus the clarinet is more prominent and the music has this slow, groovy, meditative vibe. The islands are lighter sounding, Macedonia is groovier, faster tempos and energetic dances. Music from Asia Minor or Istanbul is more sophisticated. Greeks often refer to Istanbul as ‘Poli,’ from Constantinopoli, so the songs from there are called ‘Politika.’”

There is magic in the clear and consistent voice of **Areti Ketime** throughout *Tora Collective*, as can also be said for the supremely voice-like articulation of **Giorgos Kotsinis** on clarinet. **Ziv Ravitz**, on drums and electronics, also plays a pivotal role as coproducer: “He added so much in the orchestration,” says Klampanis. “His knowledge of electronics, all these non-acoustic sounds and keyboards, treatments of the acoustic instruments, it’s all because of Ziv. He brought a new perspective on the whole thing.”

The string element in *Tora Collective* is also strong: in addition to Klampanis’ bass there is **Thomas Konstantinou** on oud and the traditional Greek laouto, as well as **Kristjan Randalu** (the pianist in Klampanis’ *Irrationalities* trio) providing an anchor and bringing Klampanis’ inventive arrangements into harmonic focus. Additional guests appear: **Alexandros Arkadopoulos** on clarinet for “Disoriented,” **Laura Robles** on percussion for “South by Southeast” and trumpeters **Sebastian Studnitzky** and **Andreas Polyzogopoulos** on “Milo Mou ke Mandarini” and “Hariklaki,” respectively. (“Milo Mou” is slated as a post-release bonus track.)

Using traditional Greek music to discover a common new voice, the project aims to build dialogue, spark creativity, cultivate respect for the past, pave a path

forward, discover a new musical storytelling powerful enough to reach and touch audiences in many countries. This is an experiment that bridges worlds: the east and the west, the traditional and the modern, the nostalgic and the forward-looking, using the power of music and improvisation.

Described as “a formidable player and composer” (*JazzTimes*) and “a musician who has always spoken from the heart” (*Downbeat*), Petros Klampanis divides his time between Athens and New York. He has collaborated with artists such as Greg Osby, Jacques Morelenbaum, Oded Tzur, Arooj Aftab, Anoushka Shankar, Shai Maestro, Gilad Hekselman, Jean-Michel Pilc, Snarky Puppy, Dimitra Galani, Maria Farantouri and Mario Frangoulis, among many others. His extensive list of performance credits includes Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Blue Note, The Kennedy Center, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA NYC), Barbican (London), Roskilde (Denmark), Glastonbury (UK), Rock in Rio (Lisbon), Athens/Epidauros Festival, JazzAhead (Bremen), Jazzkaar (Tallinn), Athens Jazz Festival, XJazz Festival (Berlin), as well as Megaron Mousikis Athinon, Megaron Mousikis Thessalonikis, Onassis Foundation (NYC) and the Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center. He has recorded six albums as a leader, meeting with major plaudits from NPR, *JazzTimes*, the Independent Music Awards and others.

** The Tora Collective project had its live premiere in 2021 at the Little Theater of Ancient Epidauros, as part of the 2021 Athens/Epidauros Festival.*

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