

Nile Project 2017 US Tour

University Residency Activities

About the Nile Project

The Nile Project's mission is to transform the water conflict in the Nile Basin by inspiring, informing and empowering Nile citizens to collaboratively cultivate the sustainability of their shared ecosystem. Through an innovative approach combining cross-cultural musical collaborations, youth leadership development, and a collaborative network focusing on food sustainability, the Nile Project seeks to address the cultural and environmental challenges at the root of the Nile conflict in order to shift the world's longest river from a divisive hydro-political argument to an opportunity for fruitful transboundary cooperation.

Since its founding in 2011, the Nile Project has grown its Musicians Collective to include 35 artists from 10 Nile Basin countries; held five music residencies resulting in the widely acclaimed album "Aswan" and the soon to be released album "Jinja;" performed for more than 100,000 people in the Nile Basin, the Middle East, across the US and Europe through 75 concerts; held over 130 workshops at 40 universities for more than 10,000 students; and received widespread local and international press coverage.

Using music to spark cultural curiosity, the Nile Project engages audiences to learn about the world's longest river and understand its large-scale social, cultural, and environmental sustainability challenges. The Collective's collaborative model offers a blueprint for new ways Nile citizens can organize themselves to make the Nile more sustainable. In an evolving series of interlocking programs that spring from the concert experience, the project hopes to inspire, educate and empower young people worldwide to contribute to Nile sustainability.

To learn more about the Nile Project, please visit nileproject.org

Residency Activities

The goal of the 2017 US Tour is to inspire your students, faculty, and university communities to take action by raising their awareness about Nile sustainability issues and how these relate to similar ones across North America.

Nile Project concerts invite your audiences to explore the longest river in the world through a sensory journey guided by some of the region's best musicians. These performances are curated to showcase the musical diversity found in the Nile Basin while highlighting the various threads that connect these traditions. Moving beyond the concert experience, the Nile Project offers a variety of opportunities for students and audiences to investigate the environmental, political, social and cultural contexts of the Nile Basin. Whether they take the form of lecture demonstrations, panels, class visits or workshops, these residency activities promise to provide unique intellectual experiences stimulating new ways of thinking and doing on your university campuses and in your communities.

While most topics revolve around the Nile River, they provide an opportunity for interlocutors to relate commonalities in your local community. Through these conversations, we aim to place music at the forefront of intellectual activity, highlighting its potential to catalyze transformational thinking, forge unconventional linkages across campus and drive meaningful social change. In breaking conventional disciplinary barriers, we hope that our discussions yield a fresh outlook that results in innovative thinking and new partnerships relevant to the Nile Basin, your local communities and elsewhere.

The Nile Project is offering the following activities during its 2017 US Tour:

Lecture Demonstrations:

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The Nile Project is also available for class visits on a variety of subjects including:

- Hydropolitics of the Nile
- Music entrepreneurship
- Arts administration
- World Music industry
- Applied ethnomusicology
- Water conflict transformation
- Network leadership
- Race relations & environmental justice

1. Musical Collaboration & Water Cooperation

During this interactive lecture demonstration, Nile Project artists relate their collective creative process to the efforts of diplomats and water professionals in finding win-win solutions to hydro-political conflicts. In the first half, Nile Project Producer & CEO Mina Girgis sets the stage by explaining how different environmental, economic and political factors have contributed to the Nile water conflict. By understanding this transboundary challenge as a problem requiring an innovative solution, the audience is invited to explore the creative challenges inherent in water conflict transformation. In the second half, various members of the Nile Project illustrate how they combine their diverse musical idioms to unearth a new Nile sound without compromising the integrity of their various age-old traditions. By the end of the presentation, the audience will understand how Nile Project performances serve as a blueprint for new ways in which Nile citizens can organize themselves in order to transform the Nile from a geopolitical argument to an opportunity for cooperation.

Musical Collaboration & Water Cooperation best demonstrates the aforementioned “blueprint” for new ways of working together. It has been presented to leaders and changemakers across fields; diplomats; entrepreneurs; and is the most popular activity at US Universities.

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| Format: | Lecture Demonstration |
| Lecturer / Moderator: | Mina Girgis |
| Participants: | Nile Project Artists |
| Musical Performance: | Yes |
| Length: | 90 - 120 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium or Classroom |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification; wireless mics (# tbd based on participants) A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- International Relations / Political Science- Economics- Business Administration- Law- Sociology- Anthropology- International Development- Natural Sciences- Music |

2. Zar: A Female Tradition Along the Nile

Women play a vital role in the use, management and supply of resources such as water, food and energy at community and household levels in all the Nile Basin countries. However, they are often overlooked in decision-making and planning processes. Despite making up over 52% of the Nile Basin countries' population, their participation at the political and organizational levels remains low. During this lecture demonstration, we will examine a traditional leadership role women have played in a ritual common among Nile riparians. Zar is a female-centric trance ritual that may have originated in Ethiopia, from which it spread to Sudan, Egypt and the Horn of Africa over several centuries. While the language, instrumentation, length, and structure of Zar rituals may vary, all involve music, dance, and animal sacrifice (chickens or goats). Supported by a bowl-lyre (tanbura), a belt of goat hooves (mangour), and a variety of percussion instruments, the female ritual master (kodia) leads her ensemble in a suite of call-and-response songs to induce a trance state that helps exorcise the malevolent spirit (or demon) from the possessed person. During this lecture demonstration, we will explore the different Zar traditions in the Nile Basin. At the end of the workshop, Nile Project musicians will teach participants a variety of Zar songs and rhythms.

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| Format: | Lecture Demonstration featuring Musical Interaction |
| Moderator: | Mina Girgis |
| Participants: | Nile Project Artists |
| Musical Performance: | Yes |
| Length: | 60 - 90 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium or Classroom |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification; wireless mics (# tbd based on participants) A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Studies - Anthropology - Public Health - Sociology - Psychology - Music |

3. The Nile & Religion

The Nile has featured prominently in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Many scholars believe that the river itself inspired early manifestations of monotheism and reincarnation in Ancient Egypt. During this panel, we will explore the various ways Nile ecology may have influenced ideas about divinity and facilitated the transmission of religious thoughts. We will also discuss how both Christian and Muslim key figures have played important roles in strengthening diplomatic relations among Nile riparians in order to resolve their hydropolitical conflict.

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| Format: | Lecture Demonstration |
| Moderator: | Faculty member to be jointly determined |
| Panelists: | Faculty members to be jointly determined + Mina Girgis |
| Performers: | Nile Project Musicians |
| Musical Performance: | Yes |
| Length: | 90 - 120 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium or Classroom |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification; wireless mics (# tbd based on participants) A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Religious Studies - African Studies - Anthropology - Sociology - International Relations / Political Science - Sustainable / International Development - Environmental Sciences |

4. River Stories

The Nile has captivated the imagination of many cultures throughout history; from its inhabitants who have grown their cultures around its banks to the many explorers who searched for its source for centuries. Your local river has equally inspired its own imagination. During this panel, Nile Project Producer & CEO Mina Girgis will use stories about the longest river in the world to engage interlocutors with expertise in your local watershed in a conversation that explores the diverse ways our rivers create meaning in our cultures.

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| Format: | Panel |
| Moderator: | Mina Girgis |
| Participants: | Riverkeeper, Watershed Council Representative or Faculty member to be jointly determined |
| Musical Performance: | No |
| Length: | 60 - 90 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium or Classroom |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification; wireless mics (# tbd based on participants) A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anthropology / Folklore - African Studies - Music / Dance / Theater - Literature - Art - Film - Sociology - Economics - International Development - Natural Sciences - International Relations / Political Science |

5. The Nile & African Identity

Water resource conflicts are often rooted in political and cultural differences. Divergent understandings of African identity have played a significant role in the case of the Nile Basin. In this conversation, we will investigate what it means to be African. How have different Nile civilizations seen themselves vis-à-vis their river neighbors? How have these relations been impacted by religions, colonial interests, slavery, and civil wars? We will explore the ways varying definitions of being “African” have affected Nile history. We will draw from examples of how the world music industry portrays African identity and share how the Nile Project represents a departure from traditionally-exported African music.

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| Format: | Panel |
| Moderator: | Mina Girgis |
| Participants: | Local Faculty to be jointly determined + Nile Project Musicians |
| Musical Performance: | No |
| Length: | 60 - 90 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium or Classroom |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification; wireless mics (# tbd based on participants) A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- African Studies- African American Studies- Anthropology- Economics- Sociology- International Relations / Political Science- International Law- Sustainable / International Development- Environmental Sciences |

6. Music, Citizen Engagement & Water Resource Management

Human life depends on the availability and quality of water to sustain our health, grow our food, power our homes with electricity, and stimulate our economies. However, due to overpopulation, increased demand for food, climate change and pollution, as much as two thirds of the world’s citizens may face water stressed conditions severely impacting the living and economic conditions of communities, countries, and regions by 2025. Without water, we cannot survive. How can we, as individuals, become more involved in the management of this precious and limited resource? During this panel, participants will explore ways in which music has been instrumentalized as a citizen engagement strategy to overcome political stakeholder barriers, create a common understanding between competing interests, and build constituencies for action both between and within nations where water has become an impediment to peace and socioeconomic development.

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| Format: | Panel |
| Moderator: | Local Faculty to be jointly determined |
| Participants: | Local Faculty to be jointly determined + Mina Girgis |
| Musical Performance: | No |
| Length: | 60 - 90 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium or Classroom |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification; wireless mics (# tbd based on participants) A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Relations / Political Science - International Development - Environmental Sciences - Agriculture - Anthropology - Sociology - Economics - Business Administration / Negotiation - Law and Mediation - Music |

7. Nile Project Concert

The New York Times described the Nile Project as *“a committed, euphoric international coalition.”*
Afropop Worldwide calls it *“seductive and beautiful [...] nothing short of revolutionary.”*

One of the tightest cross-cultural collaborations in musical history, the Nile Project brings together artists from the 11 Nile countries, representing over 450 million people, to compose new songs that combine the rich diversity of one of the oldest places on Earth. Kindred harps and resonant lyres from the river’s sources in East Africa and Ethiopia to its deltas in Sudan and Egypt have reunited to learn new musical modes while buzzing timbres and ingenious polyrhythms support vocals in more than ten languages.

On the surface, the Nile Project blends traditional musical idioms into one seamless Nile sound. But look a little further and you’ll begin to see an ensemble of musicians modeling contemporary organizational concepts such as systems thinking, network theory, and participatory leadership. The Nile Project is pioneering a new approach to transform transboundary water conflicts by using music to ignite cross-cultural empathy and spark environmental curiosity. And its collaborative model offers a blueprint for new ways in which Nile citizens can organize themselves to strengthen the sustainability of their river.

Nile Project Producer & CEO Mina Girgis is available for pre-concert talks to provide background about the Nile River as well as the Nile Project. If presenter wishes, Nile Project artists are available for audience Q&A immediately following the concert.

8. K-12 & Student Matinee Performances

In these hour-long musical performances, students will experience the Nile River through song and dance. Weaving their performances with multimedia and other tools, Nile Project artists will explain the geography, ecology, and cultures of the Nile Basin through music. The performance includes participatory dance and rhythmic activities, as well as an open Q&A with students. To complement the concert, a Nile Project study guide for teachers with pre- and post- concert educational activities is available upon request.

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| Format: | Interactive Performance |
| Moderator: | Nile Project Artist |
| Musical Performance: | Yes |
| Length: | 60 minutes |
| Room: | Auditorium |
| Tech Requirements: | See Tech Rider Plus A/V — HDMI input and audio connection (if needed); screen for projection |
| Target Audience: | K-12, middle school, high school or university students |

9. Music & Dance Workshops

Nile Project Artists are available to offer a wide variety of hands-on workshops or master classes for music and dance students. Themes include:

- The Nile Project Collective's creative composition and arrangement process
- Percussion
- Instrumental
- Singing
- Egyptian music and / or dance
- Sudanese music and / or dance
- Ethiopian music and / or dance
- Ugandan music and / or dance
- Kenyan music and / or dance

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| Format: | Hands-on Workshop |
| Leader: | Nile Project Artist(s) |
| Musical Performance: | Yes |
| Length: | varies |
| Room: | Depends on Workshop |
| Tech Requirements: | Sound Amplification, Instruments |
| Target Audience: | Students, Faculty, Community |
| Relevant Fields | Music Dance |