

## BIO YAZZ AHMED

Yazz Ahmed is a British-Bahraini trumpet player and composer who seeks to blur the lines between jazz, electronic sound design, bringing together the sounds of her mixed heritage. Her music has been described as ‘psychedelic Arabic jazz, intoxicating and compelling’.

In recent years she has led her various ensembles in concerts around the UK and abroad, including performances in New York, Toronto, Kuwait, Algiers, Berlin, Köln, Paris, Istanbul, Tunis and Amsterdam, and at major festivals such as WOMAD, Molde Jazz, Pori Jazz and Love Supreme. Yazz has also recorded and performed with Radiohead, Lee Scratch Perry, Nile Rodgers, ABC, Swing Out Sister, Joan as Police Woman, Tarek Yamani, Amel Zen and toured the world with These New Puritans. She recently appeared as a guest soloist/composer with Arturo O’Farrill’s Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra.

Yazz was awarded a jazz fellowship from Birmingham Jazzlines in 2014, who supported her during the course of a year in writing a major new suite, *Alhaan al Siduri*, premiered in October 2015 at the CBSO Centre, Birmingham. One year later the second performance marked Yazz’s debut in her paternal homeland at the Bahrain International Music Festival. In 2015, Tomorrow’s Warriors commissioned Yazz, with support from PRS Women Make Music, to write a suite inspired by courageous and influential women. *Polyhymnia* was premiered at the Purcell Room by a special all-female ensemble at the WOW! Festival in March 2015.

During her year as an LSO Soundhub composer in 2016, Yazz explored writing music for her newly developed quarter-tone flugelhorn, a unique instrument which enables her to get closer to the spiritual nature of the ‘blue notes’ in Arabic music.

2017 saw the release of her second album, *La Saboteuse*, on Naim Records. The album made a global impact, gaining multiple rave reviews and making many ‘best of 2017’ lists around the world, including Jazz Album of the Year in The Wire magazine and achieving the number 18 spot in Bandcamp’s top 100 albums (all genres).

*“..this is enchanting, late night music that floats on the liminal space between dreams and reality. And for sheer, unconquered beauty, there are few albums of any genre that reach these heady heights. Ahmed, in diving deep within herself, comes back up for air with a mysterious, wondrous artifact humming in her hands,”* the2010s.net

In August 2018 Yazz released an EP of remixes from *La Saboteuse*, featuring collaborations with Hector Plimmer, DJ Khalab and Blacksea Não Maya, which has brought her music to a new audience.

Alongside seven other composers, Yazz was commissioned by the Ligeti Quartet, to write music inspired by modern astronomy, each focusing on a different planet in the solar system. *The Planets 2018*, created especially for planetariums, features Yazz’s composition *Saturn* and was performed around the UK during October 2018. Continuing her explorations into space, Yazz was later commissioned by the Open University to write a solo piece inspired by the moon, which was performed at the OU Moon Night in December 2018.

In June 2019, Yazz released the coda to *La Saboteuse: A Shoal Of Souls*. Composed as a reaction to Sophie Bass’s striking artwork for *La Saboteuse*, the piece is dedicated to the

thousands of lives lost by those attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea in search of a better future.

The special limited edition single was released via Bandcamp's new vinyl fulfillment service, in association with Ixchel Records, bringing the *La Saboteuse* project to a close.

Yazz's highly anticipated third album, *Polyhymnia*, will be released this October 2019 on Ropeadope Records.