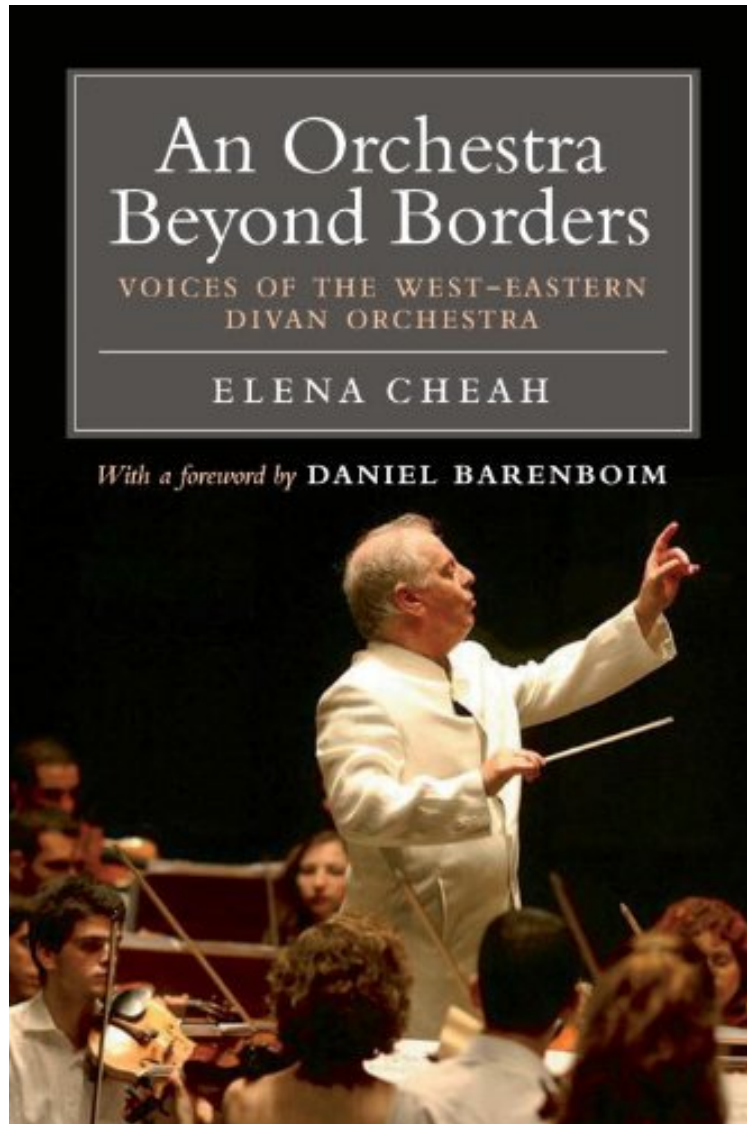


An Orchestra Beyond Borders: Voices of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra

Elena Cheah

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Elena Cheah : An Orchestra Beyond Borders: Voices of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Orchestra Beyond Borders: Voices of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. very inspiringBy PuppyTalkI'd always wanted to read this book. It's extremely inspiring and touching to read about Israeli musicians and Arab musicians express their own side of the

stories, and gradually come to understand and love each other. It's something a politician cannot do. I admire Barenboim and late Said for their efforts, love, and persistence to bring peace among peoples who are in this vicious cycle of misunderstanding each other. One of the most beautiful stories you'd ever read. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Music and friendship beyond borders By Denise Escamilla Ortiz This book has been such a great surprise. It's been a true delight to read. I didn't know of the existence of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra until last summer that I heard from them in a trip to Spain. I didn't have a chance to attend any of their performances though. Still, this wonderful project that brings together all these culturally diverse Middle Eastern musicians to play music every summer awoke my curiosity. I got this book not knowing much about it, but it was a great book. It is well written, pleasant all along and a true page turner. It's very interesting and moving to read how these musicians from Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Iran and Spain develop deep and meaningful friendships among themselves, regardless of their nation's political issues. Some have a hard time coping with the ideas and beliefs of the others, but at least they make an effort to be cool about it. They do learn a lot about each other, and they teach many about true friendship and love among fellow humans. And regardless of their political views, they are able to put them aside while they are playing music. It's really interesting to see how each of the musicians portrayed in this book ended up playing the instruments they play, and how their musical careers got started. And it's a joy to see how far they have come and grown as musicians and as individuals. If you are interested in the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, you'll enjoy this book. I fully recommend it. It inspired me to look more into the Middle East conflict, to understand where they come from, and where they are headed.

Bringing together young musicians from Palestine, Israel and other countries of the Middle East, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra is both one of the most acclaimed youth orchestras in the world and a rare note of hope in a war-torn region. Founded by Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said in 1999, it aims to promote Arab-Israeli understanding through music. In *An Orchestra Beyond Borders*, Elena Cheah, a professional musician and assistant to Daniel Barenboim, explores the orchestra's journey through the remarkable stories of the musicians that comprise it. These youthful testimonies are a window into the life of the region. Together, they communicate the musicians' ambitions and hopes, their varied and conflicting views on life and politics, and above all the orchestra's transformative ability to create an atmosphere of musical cooperation away from the implications and hardships of a world full of division and conflict.

The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra is a beacon of hope on the dismal political landscape of the Middle East ... Raised in enmity, these talented young men and women set an example by their devotion to their common craft. Together they play with wonderful energy and unanimity in an orchestra that is larger than life. Avi Shlaim

About the Author Elena Cheah was principal cellist of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Staatskapelle Berlin, before becoming professor of cello at the Academy for Orchestral Studies for the Barenboim-Said Foundation, Seville, Spain. Elena plays in the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra and runs workshops for its members. Born in Pittsburgh, Elena currently lives in Berlin. Daniel Barenboim is one of the most prominent musicians of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, as both pianist and conductor. He has received numerous Grammy awards, and is the author of *A Life in Music*, *Music Quickens Time*, and, co-authored with Edward Said, *Parallels and Paradoxes*. He was a UN Ambassador for Peace and has received many awards including the Goethe Medal, the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal, the Praemium Imperiale and the Wolf Prize in Arts.