The Bussola Institute invites you to attend a unique ‘on-line’ cultural event reflecting on the themes of solidarity and shared experience during this unprecedented time of pandemic.

Four celebrated musicians will draw from Arabic sounds and Western melodic flavours, showcasing fusion across world music: the lyrical notes of the flute and harp from Europe alongside the oud and traditional percussion instruments used in Arabic music in both folk and classical music throughout the Arab speaking world.

The event will open with a piece specially composed by the harpist, Jean Kelly, recorded separately during the lockdown but combined to produce a soundtrack to a video presentation to emphasise our shared humanity and human solidarity that have emerged as arguably the most positive elements during otherwise dark times for our world.

This will be followed by individual live performances of further musical excerpts, interspersed with short discussions with each participant about the significance and resonance of the music they are performing, and the cultural origins of the instruments they play so movingly and evocatively. We will be joined in our conversations by Dr Noura Al-Mazroui, Assistant Professor in international relations at the Emirates Diplomatic Academy and also at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi.

The whole event is intended to offer an opportunity, not only to appreciate and enjoy some of the finest exponents of their musical craft, but also to reflect on the importance that arts and culture have in building greater solidarity and their centrality in all our lives.

We hope you will join us and take a little time to enjoy this short programme of unique performances and reflections on this important theme.

Wednesday, 5th August 2020 from 13:00-14:00 Central European Time (CET)

Jean Kelly, harpist and composer, hails from an Irish family of several generations of professional musicians. Jean has performed with Michael Bublé, Sir James Galway, Rod Stewart, Max Richter and performs on commercial film and TV soundtracks, for composers such as Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead) and Dario Marianelli.

Fiona Kelly, flautist from Ireland has been hailed by the New York Times as a player with “impressive technique and elegant musicianship.” She has played as guest principal flute for all the major UK orchestras and regularly performs as guest principal with The Academy of St Martin in the Fields, the Philharmonia and the Royal Philharmonic orchestras, amongst others.

Attab Haddad is an oud player and composer who has worked within music, theatre, dance, film and advertising. He has collaborated with artists in many genres as composer, producer and performer, and continues to lead his band the Attab Haddad Ensemble which released its debut album, Days Distinctive to critical acclaim.

Louise Anna Duggan is a percussionist and composer based in London. She has worked extensively in theatre as a musical director, percussionist and composer. She is the percussionist and backing vocalist for Danish artist Agnes Obel, plays frame drums, dulcimer and sings with early music band Joglaresa, and composes music for Films with her husband Zands Duggan.

Dr Noura Al-Mazroui is currently Assistant Professor in international relations at the Emirates Diplomatic Academy and also at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi. She is a well-known expert on UAE affairs, in addition to being an author and historian who has published a number of highly regarded books on the region. Dr Noura is hugely interested in music and plays the Qanun, a traditional Arabic stringed instrument.