



NIKAN OMPA

VOCAL ENSEMBLE





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Nikan Ompa is a variable-formation ensemble founded in Geneva in 2020 by Emilio Gutiérrez Tlacaelel, with activities in Switzerland, France, and Mexico. Its name, which means “from here and there” in the Nahuatl language, embodies the exploration of rich Latin American musical traditions and their resonance with the ancient music of Europe.

A pioneer in the interpretative research of the polyphonies of Mexico’s oral tradition, the ensemble draws inspiration from these sounds to propose new, historically informed interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque American vocal repertoires, in dialogue with Mexico’s musical orality and contemporary creations inspired by these sonic universes.

Each program of Nikan Ompa is an evocation of the voices of the past and a tribute to the voices of the present, inviting the audience on a musical journey across continents and eras.

EMILIO GUTIÉRREZ TLACAELEL



A lyrical artist from Mexico and founder of Nikan Ompa ensemble in 2020, he conducts sensitive research between academic repertoires and oral tradition music, fostering a spirit of dialogue between the cultures of Europe and the Americas.

Formed at the National School of Music in Mexico (First Prize Francisco Araiza 2016), he received support from FONCA (2014-2017) before continuing his studies in Europe. He has been a fellow of the Turquoise Foundation of Monaco, the Rainier III Conservatory (2017), the Monte Carlo Opera Academy FIPAC (2018), and later at the Haute École de Musique in Geneva (2018-2023) and the ESMUC in Barcelona (2024-2025).

Specialized in choral art and ancient repertoires, he has refined his approach with internationally renowned musicians and ensembles, such as Ensemble Pygmalion, Utopia, the Balthasar Neumann Ensemble, the Namur Chamber Choir, Il Gardellino, Cantatio, among others. These collaborations have led him to perform on prestigious stages such as the Aix-en-Provence Festival, the Salzburg Festival, the Autumn Festival of Baden-Baden, the Paris Opera, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the Alte Oper Frankfurt.

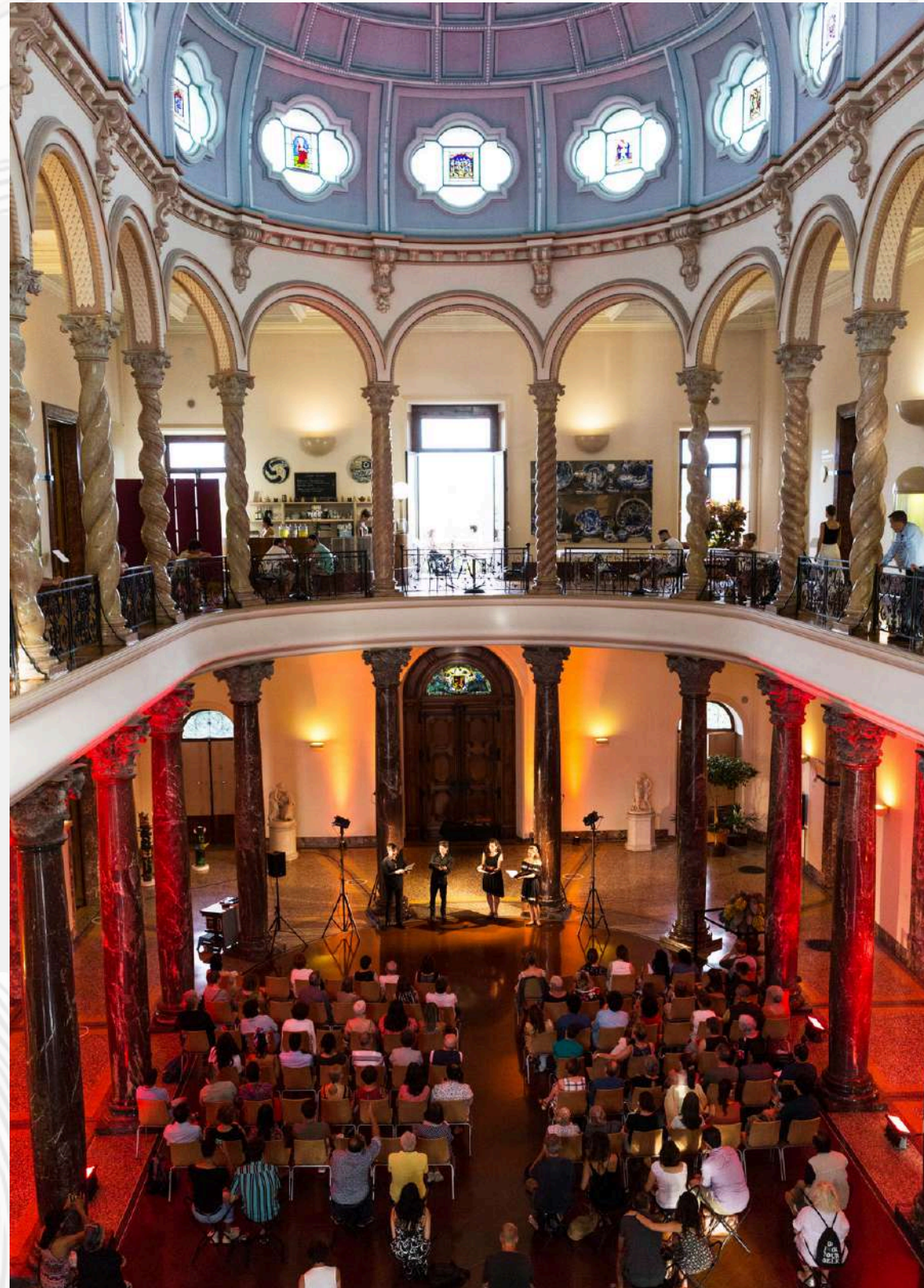
Currently, he continues with Nikan Ompa a unique artistic proposal, giving rise to pedagogical projects, immersive concerts, and cross-disciplinary creations, building bridges between musicians and audiences from Europe and Latin America, while fostering artistic and social reflections through music.

AN INTER- NATIONAL ENSEMBLE

After a temporary pause due to the global pandemic, Nikan Ompa ensemble is now an integral part of the cultural life in the city of Geneva. Through its social commitment, the ensemble helps bring music to hard-to-reach places in collaboration with the Swiss association Les Concerts du Cœur. The ensemble participates in festivals such as “Tournez la Meule” (Neuchâtel), “L’Été, c’est Concert au Musée Ariana” (Geneva), the “Montreux Choral Festival” (Vevey), as well as in France at the “Festival de l’Orgue de Ferney-Voltaire,” “L’Automne Musicale de Nîmes,” and “Les Jeudis de Nîmes,” among others.

Since 2023, Nikan Ompa has expanded its activities in Mexico, performing twice at the Tepetzotlán Early Music Festival and during the Novohispanic Week 2024 in Mexico City, where they premiered the program “De la Misión a la Tradición.” This project, conceived during a creation residency at the Templo de las Ánimas and the Mexico City Cathedral complex, was presented at the First Franciscan Convent of the Americas (Church of San Francisco de Asís).





THE SPECIALIZATION OF THE MEMBERS OF NIKAN OMPA ALLOWS THE ENSEMBLE TO PERFORM BOTH THE REPERTOIRES OF EUROPEAN COMPOSERS FROM THE 16TH, 17TH, AND 18TH CENTURIES AS WELL AS THEIR OWN ORIGINAL CONCERT PROGRAMS:



CELESTIAL - MUNDANE

Encounters | Transformation

Works of Mexican Baroque – Songbooks of Spanish Renaissance – Music for Organ.

From the crossroads between the sacred and the profane, this program unites the splendor of colonial Mexican music and the sung poetry born in the courts and streets of Spain. This connection, woven through music, links both countries through a shared history, full of contrasts still alive in the musical traditions of the “New World.”

Around the works of Manuel de Sumaya (Mexico, c. 1678–1755), the first mestizo chapel master of the Mexico City Cathedral, the story of this collision of worlds and universal emotions is told, with voices like those found in the famous Cancionero de Uppsala (Spain, 1556). The organ, a superior force both soloist and accompanist, traverses and links these worlds, between the **celestial** and the **mundane**.

Languages: Spanish, Latin

Aesthetics: Novohispanic accompanied polyphony, Renaissance music, Iberian works for organ

Ensemble: 4 to 5 singers – Organ – Flutes – Viola da gamba – Bass Violone – Spanish Harp

Nikan Ompa – Hispano-American Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble

Direction and Arrangements: Emilio Gutiérrez Tlacaelel

Duration: 1h15 to 1h30 – with or without intermission

Lectures and public encounters related to the program are possible.



VOICES OF THE THRESHOLD

Memories | Journey

Creation, historical polyphonies, and oral traditions from Mexico – Peru – California – Italy & Switzerland.

This program is a musical journey guided by voices emerging from ancient sources and living traditions. It transports the audience to a territory where legends, tributes to the dead, and celebrations of life intersect: a dance that is both solemn and festive.

The **voices of the threshold** traverse farewell and greeting, festivity and solemnity: from nostalgic songs of the Italian Alps to Mexican Day of the Dead chants, from devotional hymns of California to Andean Baroque cachus full of rhythm, from a Baroque Christmas carol to a mystical son from rural Mexico.

We sing to make the absent exist and bring together the present, beyond time and borders.

Languages: Spanish, Nahuatl, Italian, French

Aesthetics: Popular polyphony, Baroque music, contemporary harmonies

Ensemble: 5 singers + 1 historical guitarist (archlute, Baroque guitar)

Nikan Ompa – Vocal Ensemble

Direction and Arrangements: Emilio Gutiérrez Tlacaelel

Duration: 1h – Without intermission

Welcome encounters, mediations, and workshops.



FROM MISSION TO TRADITION

Rituals | Heritages

Sacred music from Mexico, Guatemala, Peru – Renaissance of Spain and France.

This program was conceived in 2024 within the complex of the Mexico City Cathedral. The heart of this program is Gregorian chant, the normative and unifying authority of beliefs. Around it, other voices are expressed, coming from forgotten manuscripts, Latin chants passed down through oral tradition, or devotional texts adapted to melodies from Spanish and French Renaissance music, following a common practice of the time (contrafacta).

In this dialogue between the written and the oral, the voices pilgrimage **from mission to tradition**. The vocal ensemble of this program is inspired by the Latin American choirs of the time: central, resonant voices supported by the deep sound of the Iberian bassoon. Together, they connect with the memories of the continent.

Languages: Latin, Nahuatl, Quechua, Zapotec

Aesthetics: Gregorian chant, early polyphony

Ensemble: 3 or 4 singers (MS, A, T, T) – 1 or 2 bassoons, flutes, Baroque guitar, percussion

Nikan Ompa – Ensemble

Direction: Emilio Gutiérrez Tlacaclael or Mauricio Montúfar

Duration: 1h15 – Without intermission

Workshops, lectures, and public encounters related to the program are possible.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"No one sings alone"

My main goal is to recover a forgotten universal strength: that of collectivity through song.

In a world marked by hyper-individualism and mass consumption, collective singing becomes an act of soft and profound resistance, reminding us that we are not alone.

Polyphonic singing, particularly collective devotional music, requires listening to others, patience, and an intention to harmonize differences. It teaches us once again how to vibrate together and build a common voice.

I have observed this connection with admiration at the heart of the festivals of indigenous identities in Mexico. There, singing, dancing, and food prepared in community are not mere entertainment: they are sacred acts, pillars of collective life organized within a complex communal structure, where everyone plays a specific role. In those moments, united by collective singing, the community moves as one and supports each other, especially in times of crisis.

Let us relearn the power of song.

Nikan Ompa offers a vision of music based on solidarity. Singing together is to create a space of cohesion where the individual finds their place, where otherness becomes a wealth, and even a political act.

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Voices:

Sopranos: Jeanne Amzal, Inês Flores-Brasil

Contraltos: Zoé Vauconsant-Massicotte, Alina Delgadillo

Tenors and Direction: Emilio Gutiérrez Tlacaheel, Mauricio Montúfar

Basses: Nestor Pindado, Luis Neiva, David Burkhard, Sebastião Peris

Principal Instrumentalists:

Organ: Norberto Broggini, Zeltzin Pérez, Dario Tamayo

Dulcians: Mélodie Michel, Carlos Bertão

Flutes, viola da gamba, percussion: Patricia Esteban

Bass violone: Rubén Castañeda

Historical guitars: Víctor Castillo

Spanish harp: Jennifer Vera





CONTACT:

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ASSOCIATIONS :

Nikan Ompa Ensemble (France)

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Association NikanOmpa (Switzerland)

Rue de la Fontenette 40. 1227, GE. David Burkhard, president.





www.nikanompa.com