

# SHISHANI

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# NAMIBIAN TALES

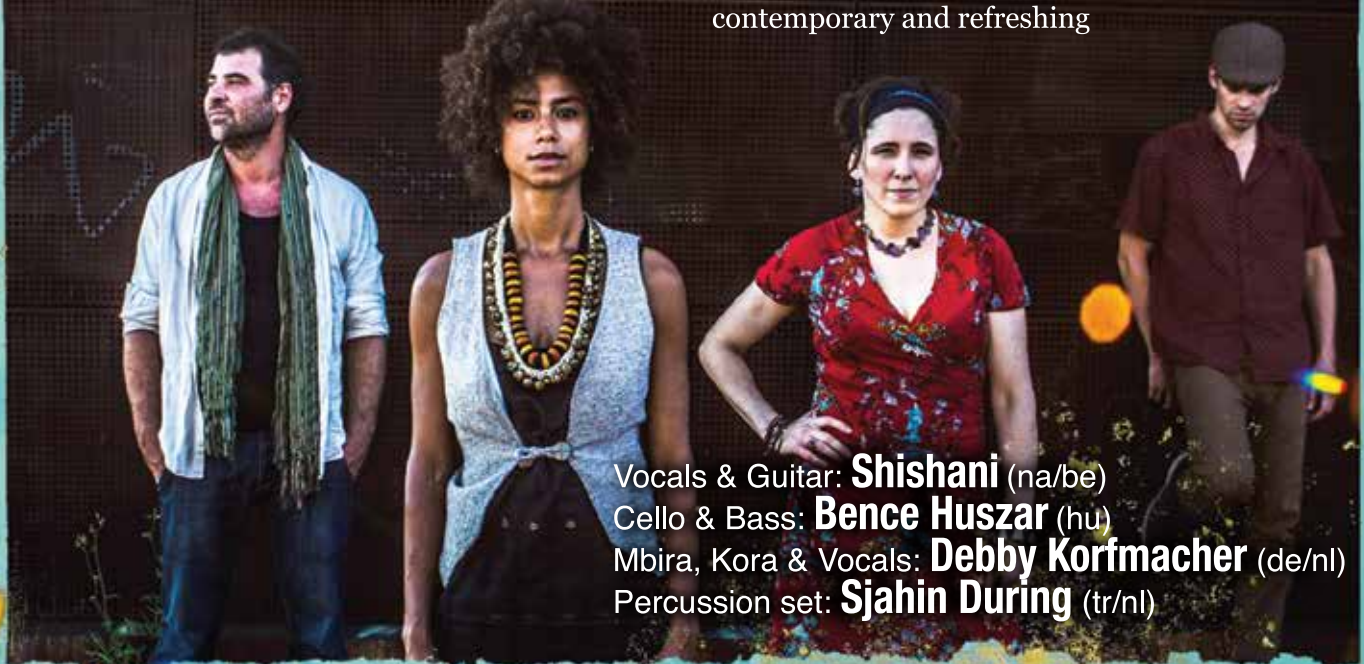




# SHISHANI & THE NAMIBIAN TALES

**M**any worlds flow smoothly together in the unconventional music of Shishani & the Namibian Tales. The group was founded by Sjahin During in 2015. Vocalist, songwriter and guitarist Shishani combines the little known but rich tradition of her native Namibia with such western influences as soul and jazz. Debby Korfmacher may have been born in Germany, but she went mad about the sound of the African mbira (thumb piano) and then took up the kora (lute-bridge-harp). Cellist Bence Huszar hails from a renowned family of Hungarian musicians but explores the sonic potential of his instrument far beyond traditional boundaries.

His pulsating, driving improvisations also land him a part-time job in the rhythm section alongside percussionist Sjahin During. During can draw on a wealth of experience in the widest variety of traditions, from Afro-Cuban via Turkish to Indian and jazz for his dynamic style of playing. Traditional music from Namibia and other African regions forms the starting point for Shishani's compositions. She sings her lyrics both in English and Oshiwambo, her mother's native tongue. Rooted in deep traditions, though partly thanks to unexpected harmonies and rhythms the music of Shishani & the Namibian Tales sounds surprisingly contemporary and refreshing



Vocals & Guitar: **Shishani** (na/be)  
Cello & Bass: **Bence Huszar** (hu)  
Mbira, Kora & Vocals: **Debby Korfmacher** (de/nl)  
Percussion set: **Sjahin During** (tr/nl)

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*“Best World Music production from the Netherlands of 2016.”*

**MixedWorldMusic (2016)**

*“Chosen no.5 in world chart of Best World Music of 2016.”*

**MixedWorldMusic (2016)**

*“Promise of 2016.”*

**Dutch Delta Sounds / World Blend Café (2016)**

*“With a jazzy pop sound that transcends continents, this sounds like nothing else we know from the Netherlands. That this colourful mix of cultures still stands out with its own unique character makes Itaala a very promising debut.”*

**NRC (2016)**

*“Shishani: The crown princess of urban contemporary music.”*

**Amsterdam Roots Festival (2016)**

*“This is worldpop of the highest order.”*

**Mixed World Music (2016)**

*“This makes the eight-track record “Itaala” to a real gem, which is extremely pleasant to listen, again and again: Shishani has a particularly beautiful voice, which is just as clear as it is flexible and with which she’s keeps your full attention. A more than just remarkable record, that is matured enough to start a great career.”*

**Rootstime, Belgium (2016)**

*“Very soulful and atmospheric.”*

**VPRO Vrije Geluiden (2016)**

*“The flamboyant singer-songwriter Shishani does not shy away from experimenting with her music. Her strong songs are rooted in both Africa and Europe and unfold in adventurous harmonies.”*

**Amersfoort Jazz Festival (2016)**

*“Shishani is the winner of the 2013 Mooie Noten singer-songwriter competition in Amsterdam. The jury was impressed by the Namibian-born artist. ‘She’s good with the audience,’ has ‘strong lyrics’ and ‘has something to say.’ The jury stated she can go straight to Lowlands and the North Sea Jazz Festival.”*

**GRAP Amsterdam (2013)**

*“Shishani and the Namibian Tales incorporate a European style with a proudly Namibian flair. Shishani's voice, as we know and love, provides the missing link – binding both sounds together to create a magical feel-good album.”*

**The Namibian newspaper (2016)**

*“Through her music, Shishani is not only speaking about her heritage and focusing on Namibian music; she is flying the Namibian flag high across Europe, and making people more aware of the sounds of culture from the Land of the Brave.”*

**Windhoek Observer, Namibia (2016)**



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### **Shishani** **Namibia / Belgium** **Vocals & Guitar**

Shishani's roots are Namibian and Belgian in origin, but she grew up mainly in the Netherlands. In her work she brings these worlds together. Her style has been influenced by African and Afro-American music traditions, giving her a truly unique sound. Her music is comforting and has a thread of social consciousness running through it. As a songwriter she has won various prizes for her music including: "Last Band Standing" (Namibia, 2012), "Mooie Noten" (Netherlands, 2013) and she was a finalist in the "Radio France International Discovery Awards" (2014). She has performed around the globe including Lake of Stars (Malawi), Glastonbury (England), Africa Festival Wurzburg (Germany), The Shift Series (India) and Windhoek Jazz Festival (Namibia). Shishani holds a bachelors in Cultural Anthropology (University of Leiden). In her master's degree in Musicology (Univerisy of Amsterdam) she specialized in Namibian music and currently writes for various institutions including "Music in Africa" and "The Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World."



### **Sjahin During** **Turkey / Netherlands** **Percussion**

Sjahin During is the percussionist and founder of Arifa, Bayuba Cante, Afro Anatolian Tales, Tarhana, Shishani and The Namibian Tales. As a young man, Sjahin set out to explore the world of music through travel by following the beat of the drum. He ended up studying with masters from Cuba who initiated him in Yoruba traditions. He then studied with Indian gurus embracing more sounds and techniques of the world. These influences are now intertwined with his Anatolian roots. Sjahin teaches at various conservatories in the Netherlands.

With his diverse percussion skills, unique self-made instruments, and distinct set-up he has toured worldwide working with world renowned artists such as Arto Tunçboyacıyan, Miguel "Anga" Diaz, Eric Vloeimans, Simon Phillips, Baba Sisokko, Edmare Castaneda, Ghalia Benali, Mola Sylla, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui & Les Ballets C. de la B, Aynur, the Gypsies from Rajasthan, and Theodosii Spassov.

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**Debby Korfmacher**  
**Netherlands / Germany**  
**Mbira, Kora & Vocals**

Debby Korfmacher grew up in a family of classical musicians, and studied violin and flute in her youth. At the beginning of her Music degree at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, she heard the sounds of the mbira for the first time: it was love at first sight. Everything that she loved about music seemed to be united in this one tradition. She set off to Zimbabwe as soon as she could, and many subsequent study trips followed. She also travelled to Senegal to learn the kora. Debby moved to Amsterdam in 2003, where she now resides, and she incorporates the influences of her many travels in her own music. She has also performed, amongst others, with Spirit Talk Mbira, Benita Tarupiwa & Negobmwe Mbira Group, and Chameleon. She is a mbira teacher at the conservatoire of Amsterdam and frequently gives workshops and lectures about African music. Over the years, she also developed a passion for music education. Debby is a creative music workshop leader, advisor and trainer, and develops projects such as “Speelafspraak!” for the David Kweksilber Big Band. She has also coached many artists in the quest of making their own performances for the Memorable Moments foundation.



**Bence Huszar**  
**Hungaria**  
**Cello / Bass**

Bence Huszar is a cellist of Hungarian origin, descendant of a renowned family of musicians. He started studying the cello at the age of six and dedicated himself to the instrument ever since. Over the years he has studied with eight different masters including Gyorgy Deri, Monique Bartels and Ernst Reijseger. Towards the end of his institutional studies Bence felt the need to dive further into his personal musical expression. He took classes with Ernst Reijseger who helped him develop his own musical language and style of playing. Ernst also taught him experimental cello techniques and the art of pulse based rhythmic improvisation. Bence has been exploring electronic sound effects in combination with cello. This opened the door to endless possibilities of new sonic colours. The discovery and development of original sounds has remained Bence's main focus ever since. His musical versatility led him into a variety of groups and ensembles performing world music, experimental classical music, experimental electronic music and cross-over genres. During his professional career he has played throughout Europe and the Middle East.



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### **Shishani**

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Shishani.Music

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