



# *Can You Bow?*

A music documentary

**DURATION:** 48 MINUTES

**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH, GREEK

**SUBTITLES:** ENGLISH (OPTIONAL)

**LOCATION:** BERLIN (GERMANY), ERMIONI (GREECE)

**DIRECTED & EDITED BY:** LEANDER BEHAL

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY:** RIVER CASAS

**PRODUCED BY:** LEANDER BEHAL


## LOGLINE

The journey of two Greek musicians, preparing their most personal concert in spite of underfunding, creative struggles and noise complaints.

## SYNOPSIS

George has just moved to Berlin. During the day he delivers cakes. At night he works as a double bass player. His latest project: An experimental concert composed by his friend and collaborator Christos, which is set to premiere in their Greek homeland. Many things are standing in their way; noise complaints, a cheap bass, dogs, and Capitalism, to name a few. But nothing will stop them from doing what they love. Not even their neighbours.



A photograph of two men standing outdoors at night. The man on the left has long dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark quilted jacket. The man on the right has a full beard and is wearing a dark coat with a scarf, pointing his right hand towards the first man. The background is dark with some blurred lights.

„George is a double bassist and self-proclaimed hard-timer: "I'm always having a hard time."  
Christos is a composer, which is funny because he does seem more composed than George. While they make an unlikely pair, they are a perfect fit when it comes to music.“

Leander Behal



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I met **Christos** five years ago when I was looking for a composer for my first short film. This resulted in the first of many collaborations. Then in August 2019, he told me about a double bassist friend of his, **George**, who was moving to Berlin soon and who I absolutely had to meet. Christos was right. I had to meet George. The first meeting with him was so fascinating that I simply had to ask: "Could I make a documentary film about this concert you are working on?". At first George was skeptical, but after Christos did a little convincing, George warmed up to the idea. I accompanied the two of them during their joint rehearsal process in Berlin all the way to their premiere in Greece. A friendship developed between us, and the ideal condition for any documentary filmmaker was established: Mutual trust. Christos and George forgot all about the camera, and showed themselves from their most personal sides. This resulted in an authentic portrait, somewhere between art and the profane.

Filming was completed at the end of December 2019. Shortly thereafter, the global pandemic broke out and for a year and a half, I dove deep into the raw footage, which had suddenly become a true time capsule. Even while shooting, it felt as if I was witnessing something that was no longer supposed to exist. That uncompromising artist's way of life, which was already endangered before the pandemic.

- **Leander Behal**

## George Kokkinaris

George Kokkinaris is a double bass player from Athens, Greece. He developed a passion for music at an early age, which only grew stronger with time. Although he initially decided on a "reasonable" career as a mechanical engineer, he realized over the years that this work only made him unhappy. So he took a leap of faith and decided to devote himself primarily to his music. In the late summer of 2019 he moved to Berlin to become a part of the independent music scene there. He knew that it was going to be a bumpy ride. But he was not prepared to reach his limits so quickly. The beginnings in Berlin were frustrating and exhausting. But this soon gave way to an exciting creative process that allowed him to open up about everything: His past as a mechanical engineer, his creative struggles, his dislike of authority figures, dogs and Capitalism. In „Can You Bow“, the viewer experiences George both as an angry young man and as a loving person. As an uncompromising artist and as a profane comedian; Say what you will, he was always 100 percent himself. Which is a rare trait, especially when being followed around by a camera.



## CHRISTOS DROUZAS

Christos Drouzas is a conductor, composer and multi-instrumentalist from Ermioni, Greece. In his project with George, he mainly focused on his role as a composer, which is funny, because he does seem to be a lot more composed than George. There is a peacefulness about him, that is in stark contrast to Georges excitability. By own admission, this comes from years of experience, having worked on theatre shows, operas and concerts, as a conductor, composer, director's assistant and performer. He also seems to show less interest in talking about his art. While he does enjoy creating, he is more fascinated with why things work the way they do. Why music affects us in such profound ways. It comes as no surprise that he also conducts research in the field of psychoacoustics. Currently, he divides his time between Athens and Berlin.



## CREW



### DIRECTOR & EDITOR

Leander Behal was born in 1998 in Berlin, Germany. After graduating high school, he studied Film Studies at the Free University Berlin for five years and directed short films and documentaries in his spare time. Since 2021, he is studying Directing Fiction at the Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg. His films are characterized by a very specific narrative style, taking its cues from surrealism, absurdism and magical realism.



### DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

River Casas grew up in Berlin and studied Film & Television with a focus on Cinematography at the DEKRA, Hochschule für Medien. He works as a director of photography and camera operator for various internet formats, documentaries and music videos. „Can You Bow?“ was the first collaboration between River and Leander. It is also their documentary debut. River is currently based in Berlin.

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## **CONTACT**

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