

## **INTRODUCTION**

Our goal as an organization remains to invite everyone to acknowledge and care about our shared humanity. We are doing our best to present this concert with nuance and transparency. Please refer to this FAQ document if you have any questions.

We also suggest referencing the FAQ sections on each of our charities' websites for further detailed information about their work:

[PCRF FAQ](#)

[Anera FAQ](#)

## **ABOUT THE CHARITIES AND PROTESTRA'S DONATIONS**

### **Where exactly will the money that I donate go?**

All proceeds raised through concert ticket sales and PROTESTRA's crowdfunding campaign for Gaza Relief will be donated to two organizations that have a record of providing direct relief to Gazans currently in need: Palestinian Children's Relief Fund ([PCRF](#)) and [Anera](#).

**From PCRF's website:** PCRF's "Gaza Relief and Recovery" campaign aims to address urgent humanitarian needs and support long-term recovery efforts in Gaza. The funds raised will primarily focus on immediate relief, including providing essential medical supplies, food, life-saving medical treatment, clean water, and other necessities for families affected by the conflict. Additionally, the campaign will support rebuilding healthcare facilities and providing long-term support through impactful programs and projects to support the needs of children and the health sector in Gaza. It will also allocate resources towards trauma counseling, mental health support, and other initiatives for children affected by the conflict, aiming to foster healing and resilience within the community.

**From Anera's Website:** Anera provides humanitarian assistance and sustainable development to advance the well-being of refugees and other vulnerable communities in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan. Anera envisions a Middle East where people live with dignity, purpose, and opportunity.

### **How are you prioritizing what type of aid is needed and where it is sent?**

At this acutely critical time for civilians in Gaza, we are focusing efforts to provide food and medical supplies.

In determining where and what type of aid is most urgently required, we are guided by the most critical needs as highlighted in reports from leading international organizations. According to the [World Food Programme](#), over half the population in Gaza has exhausted their food supply, and

are facing catastrophic levels of hunger and (IPC Phase 5) starvation. Declaring [IPC Phase 5](#), which represents the highest level of food insecurity, implies that despite utilizing all available coping strategies, people face extreme loss of access to food and are unable to sustain their survival. Consequently, starvation, death, and destitution become apparent due to the lack of water and diseases caused by malnutrition.

Similarly, the [World Health Organization Emergency Situation Report](#) shows none of the hospitals in Gaza that still remain are fully functional, compounded by severe shortage of doctors, medicines, and even basic medical supplies. As of May 14, the World Health Organization reported countless cases of various diseases, including an overwhelming number of acute respiratory infections, among other significant health challenges. This surge in disease incidence indicates the profound difficulties in managing health crises, exacerbated by a dire shortage of essential medical resources. Hospitals are grappling with the absence of maternity and pediatric services, and there is a critical shortage of doctors, medicines, and medical supplies including fuel, oxygen, and water. The World Health Organization staff has characterized the conditions in Gaza hospitals as “catastrophic and indescribable.”

These conditions reported by the World Health Organization and World Food Programme emphasize the urgent need for both urgent medical provisioning and food supplies. Our prioritization strategy involves addressing these needs first, ensuring that aid is directed where it can make the most significant impact in alleviating the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

### **What is Anera doing with the funds they receive to help Gaza?**

[From Anera’s website](#): “From the beginning of the war, Anera’s staff in Gaza has been able to buy, within Gaza itself, food from trusted, vetted vendors in order to make hot meals and put together parcels for distribution to displaced families. This is also true for hygiene kits and medical supplies. After October 21, when outside aid was permitted to enter the territory, Anera began bringing in trucks carrying food, water, charcoal, medicines, bedding, hygiene items and more. [Anera’s] teams in Egypt and Jordan have been supplying a steady pipeline of shipments into Gaza. [Anera] will also use funds for longer term relief and development projects.”

### **What is PCRf doing with the funds they receive to help Gaza?**

[From PCRf’s website](#): “PCRf’s ‘Gaza Relief and Recovery’ campaign aims to address urgent humanitarian needs and support long-term recovery efforts in Gaza. The funds raised will primarily focus on immediate relief, including providing essential medical supplies, food, medical treatment, clean water, and other necessities for families affected by the conflict. Additionally, the campaign will support rebuilding healthcare facilities and providing long-term support through impactful programs and projects to support the needs of children and the health sector in Gaza. It will also allocate resources towards trauma counseling, mental health support, and other initiatives for children affected by the conflict, aiming to foster healing and resilience within the community.”

## **How can I be sure my donations to PROTESTRA for aid to Gaza will go to the indicated charities?**

We commit to donating all ticket proceeds and funds in hand raised from this concert to Anera and PCRF within 7 days of the concert. We will further donate any contributions received after the concert as soon as possible. As a matter of transparency, we will publicly share both a running total of the donations that we make and copies of all donation receipts on the PROTESTRA website as the transactions are processed.

## **How can I be sure that aid sent to these charities will make it to Gazans in need, since it has been difficult to get aid into Gaza?**

### **From PCRF's website:**

PCRF's staff have been able to buy from within Gaza, nutritional items, water, hygiene kits, and medical supplies through trusted and vetted vendors. During the first week of the war, we were able to distribute over \$1.7 million of much-needed humanitarian aid and continue to source any aid within the Gaza market. [PCRF is also] currently preparing medical aid shipments and other relief supplies to send into Gaza as soon as possible. PCRF is also helping to facilitate logistic and medical treatment for sick and injured children outside of Gaza.

### **From Anera's Website:**

Anera's team in Gaza has delivered many millions of humanitarian relief items. Anera does this principally in two ways: using cash donations to procure goods locally from known and trusted vendors and farmers; and receiving items donated from other partners and donors who arrange to get those goods trucked into Gaza.

Some of these goods trucked in are designated to go directly to Anera (273 truckloads as of Feb. 22, 2024), while other goods are brought in by and/or delivered to other organizations and agencies, such as UN agencies, who then partner with Anera to deliver them "the last mile" to the intended beneficiaries. In either case, Anera packages (or cooks) and delivers that aid to those who need it most.

To make this happen, Anera's teams in Gaza, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Cairo, Amman and the US work together and with the appropriate parties, such as governments, military-civilian coordinators, logistics companies, and humanitarian actors, including some 30 other partners, to coordinate the necessary arrangements. It is not easy, and we are not getting either the quantities or speed needed, but our team knows how to work to get things moving towards our target outcomes.

The amount of aid currently entering Gaza is not consistent and certainly not nearly enough to meet the needs of this humanitarian catastrophe. We encourage you to share our call for more aid to be allowed in.

## **ABOUT PROTESTRA AND THIS CONCERT**

### **Why has PROTESTRA chosen to respond to this war with a concert?**

We are not aware of any large classical music organizations talking about this issue or using their platforms to raise funds for Gaza. We started PROTESTRA in part as a response to the general apathy around addressing social issues that is the norm among major professional orchestras in the US. Fostering awareness of and empathy for Gazans in desperate need of food and resources aligns with PROTESTRA's mission of connecting advocacy and classical music.

Through our benefit concert, we aim to inspire others to join us in offering meaningful support to those who are enduring ongoing displacement and violence. We believe deeply in the power of music to unite and heal. We also believe that having a platform comes with the responsibility to use it, and we hope this concert will motivate more individuals to contribute to alleviating the crisis in Gaza.

### **Why have a concert now?**

Gaza has been, and continues to be, in crisis. We wanted to give this issue the time and attention it deserves, and to ensure that we had a large enough team to produce a concert successfully. As the violence has progressed for the last seven months, resulting in countless displacements and suffering beyond measure, we have discussed our course of action at great length with our Board of Directors and team of volunteer Organizers. We are proud to be presenting a large-scale, intentional event that can bring people together and do some good to help mitigate the suffering of victims of this ongoing conflict.

### **What is PROTESTRA's stance on this war and on the recent protests?**

As a 501(c)(3) public charity, our purpose is not to align ourselves with political parties or politicians. Rather, it is our duty and mission to educate and engage with the public to advocate for positive societal change.

Even within our own organization and among our collaborators, we are individuals that hold differing shades of opinions, stances, and preferences for language used surrounding this conflict and other issues. We agree, however, that we are opposed to violence, we must stand up for humanity, and we want to do our part to help create a more peaceful world. First and foremost, we must focus on our collective humanity.

We unequivocally support free speech and people's right to protest. We admire those who stand up for what they believe in, and we support movements that advocate for human rights.

The act of protest can take many forms, and we are taking our own approach to a “protest” for this particular issue: to use music to bring people together. We aim to unite our community with the goal of making a concrete, collective contribution of humanitarian aid to the victims of this conflict.

### **What is PROTESTRA’s non-discrimination policy?**

PROTESTRA is committed to being a radically inclusive organization and stands strongly against discrimination and harassment. PROTESTRA does not tolerate, and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against, any form of discrimination, harassment, or mistreatment based on age, marital status, familial status, veteran status, race, creed, color, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship, alienage, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, or political affiliation.

PROTESTRA requires its staff, artists, employees, volunteers, and all third-party contractors to assume responsibility for maintaining an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and comport themselves in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner towards all the members of its staff, fellow artists, employees, volunteers, contractors, and audience members.

To that end, we’re vehemently opposed to the recent rise in anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic sentiment and propaganda that has surfaced in the last several months.

### **Who performs in PROTESTRA concerts?**

PROTESTRA welcomes artists from diverse backgrounds, creating a safe and accepting atmosphere for our artists and audience members. We have a core team of founders and volunteers who keep PROTESTRA running, and we have an extensive roster of musicians who join us to organize and perform in our concerts. Our ensemble includes professionals, amateurs, and students alike, and we also invite new musicians to join us for each concert to consistently expand our community of artists.

For this concert, we are also honored to collaborate with [The Brooklyn Nomads](#), a “cross-cultural ensemble rooted in musical traditions from the Arab World” who share our mission of supporting Gazans in need.

Collective music-making requires collaboration, compromise, and trust, and we have witnessed firsthand the beauty that results when musicians work together “in harmony.” By joining forces with Brooklyn Nomads to form the massive ensemble of 90+ musicians performing in this concert, we hope to set an example of the camaraderie and understanding that can happen when we work together. By extension, we hope this collaboration will inspire our audience to support efforts and leaders that use this approach to solve the world’s problems.

## **How is this concert funded?**

For each of our concerts and projects, PROTESTRA receives grassroots funding from a variety of sources. The largest source of our funding is from individual giving; beyond crowdfunding, our Board of Directors and members of our personal and professional networks generously support PROTESTRA's mission to use classical music to advocate for important causes. We do have multiple grant proposals currently pending and may yet receive additional funding that we will use to retroactively offset our expenses for this concert.

If you would like to help support our mission of advocacy through art now and in the future, consider making a donation [here](#).

## **Who is organizing this concert and creating the messaging?**

PROTESTRA's founders, Board of Directors, Executive Director and volunteer Organizer team are creating the content you see and producing this event. For this concert in particular, we have made an intentional effort to involve even more of our team and consult with advisors whose backgrounds and lived experiences relate directly to this issue so that we can gain a more well-informed and nuanced perspective.

## **Why did you choose this repertoire?**

We want to present a variety of music that features Jewish and Arabic backgrounds and identities. We hope our musicians and audience can come together to empathize with the different identities affected by this conflict.

We are thrilled to open this concert by featuring [The Brooklyn Nomads](#), a cross-cultural ensemble rooted in musical traditions from the Arab World, with a mission to create memorable experiences for its audiences.

For the second half of the program, PROTESTRA will perform Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony, one of the most famous symphonies in the repertoire, and one that we feel musically encompasses both the tragedy and hope of the human experience. Our priority for this concert is to put aside differences and acknowledge our shared humanity in an effort to help our fellow humans in need, and we felt that this piece truly embodies that spirit.

Mahler feared his Jewish identity would hinder his career as a conductor and composer, so he converted to Catholicism in an effort to culturally assimilate with his Austrian and German peers. It is tragic for anyone to have to reject their identity and background. We firmly believe in and will actively work towards a future in which all people are accepted, heard, and empowered in their unique identity.