

# Omar Harfouch Makes History with Concerto for Peace at the Vatican

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EINPresswire.com/ -- In an unprecedented cultural milestone, French-Lebanese composer and pianist [Omar Harfouch](#) performed his acclaimed Concerto for Peace in the Vatican Apostolic Library on November 14, marking the first-ever public concert in the centuries-old institution. This historic performance, attended by an audience of archbishops, interfaith leaders, cultural dignitaries, and global scholars, underscored the power of music as a bridge for unity and dialogue.

Harfouch's 17-minute Concerto for Peace, blending classical and oriental influences, resonated within the hallowed walls of the library - a space that holds some of humanity's most sacred texts. Conducted by Mathieu Bonnin and performed with an orchestra of 23 musicians and eight choristers, the composition conveyed a powerful message of hope and reconciliation.

"This was more than a concert," Harfouch said. "It was a call to action. Playing in the Vatican—a global symbol of faith and humanity—was an honor that reminded me of the shared responsibility we all have to work for peace."

## A Message of Unity in a Historic Setting

The event was made possible through the efforts of Monseigneur Vincenzo Zani, Prefect of the Vatican Apostolic Library, Monseigneur Guy-Réal Thivierge, and ambassador Pierre-Jean Gire, who had all championed Harfouch's mission of fostering dialogue through music. Speaking after the performance, Monseigneur Zani emphasized its significance: "This concert reflects the



Pope Francis greeting Omar Harfouch and his family in a private audience arranged by Monsignor Vincenzo Zani, Prefect of the Vatican Apostolic Library [R] following an orchestral and choral recital of Harfouch's Concerto for Peace. Credit: Daniel Topic

Vatican's commitment to fostering understanding and collaboration. Music is a universal language that transcends barriers and connects us all."

For Harfouch, the setting was deeply symbolic. "The Vatican represents more than 2.2 billion Christians worldwide," he noted. "But this evening was about more than faith—it was about our shared humanity. This sacred space became a place of unity, proving that peace is not just a dream but a tangible goal we can achieve together."

### Recognition from Pope Francis

The evening's high point came when Harfouch was presented with the Vatican Jubilee 2025 Pontifical Medal, the first of its kind. Struck by Pope Francis, the medal symbolizes peace and hope. Monseigneur Zani, who presented the medal, described Harfouch as a "pilgrim of peace," acknowledging his contributions to promoting harmony through art.

Two days later, Harfouch and his family were received in a private audience with Pope Francis, who personally blessed the Concerto for Peace. The pontiff encouraged Harfouch to continue his work, saying, "Don't be afraid to be a peacekeeper." The meeting underscored the deep resonance of Harfouch's mission, with the pontiff extending a personal gesture of warmth by gifting sweets to Harfouch's young daughter.

"This moment will stay with me forever," Harfouch shared. "Pope Francis's words and recognition reaffirm my commitment to using music as a tool for unity."

### From Personal Refuge to Global Message

Born in Lebanon during the civil war, Harfouch's journey to the Vatican is a testament to resilience and the transformative power of music. As a child, he found solace in the piano, which became a refuge amid the chaos of conflict. Decades later, his Concerto for Peace channels those experiences into a universal call for harmony.

"Music saved me," Harfouch said. "Now, I hope it can inspire others to see peace not as an abstract idea but as something real and achievable."

### A Continuing Global Mission

Following the Vatican performance, Harfouch's Concerto for Peace will next be performed at the Dubai Opera House on December 7, where he will collaborate with the Gipsy Kings in a unique blend of classical and gypsy music. The tour will then travel to Shanghai, New York, and major cities across France, including Lyon and Bordeaux, furthering Harfouch's mission to foster dialogue and unity through music.

Each performance adapts to its setting, ensuring that the message of peace resonates with

diverse audiences. "This concert is not just about music," Harfouch explained. "It's about creating moments of connection, where people can come together and imagine a better future."

## A Call to Action

Harfouch's historic performance at the Vatican is a reminder of the power of art to inspire change. With the support of Monseigneur Zani, Monseigneur Thivierge, and Pope Francis, the concert demonstrated that peace is not just an ideal but a tangible goal, achievable through respect, dialogue, and shared humanity.

As the world approaches 2025, Harfouch's Concerto for Peace offers a message of hope at a time when it is needed most. "Music alone cannot change the world," Harfouch said. "But it can start the conversations and inspire the actions that will."

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