

## AARGAUER ABROAD

The songwriter from Birr has built an existence in New York: "I call my music Yoga Pop" With the release of her new single and a music video, Leyla Mesic has put a heart project into practice. She explains why she collects money for dancing children and how she organized herself as a self-employed person after completing her musical training.

Leyla Mesic from Birr has lived in New York City for 16 years. When Leyla Mesic sits at the grand piano, grabs the keys and sings, the listener is not only moved by her voice, but also feels a lot of energy. "We have to stand together in solidarity and lift each other up," said the native self-employed at the beginning of 2018 - even before the corona pandemic - when her music video "Legion of Light" was published.

On June 14th she will release a new single. It is another project close to the heart of Leyla Mesic, who emigrated to New York City in 2005. In the music video for her new song "Lighting Up the Sky" she was able to engage girls from Uganda from the dance group Kisakye Cream Dancers. The 44-year-old songwriter started a Gofundme campaign to raise money for these children.

About her motivation, Leyla Mesic says: "I would like the children who live in the Kitintale ghettos in Kampala Uganda to have a voice through their dancing and a platform in the music video." The children are between 2 and 15 years old. Your living conditions are precarious. There is a lack of food, shelter and schooling. "Wherever drunk people come out of the bar and urinate, children are bathed," adds Mesic, who grew up in Birr. During the corona pandemic, schools in Uganda were closed indefinitely. She emphasizes:

"For the children, dancing means not only joy and structure, but also promoting their talent and the hope for a better future."  
With the donated money, the educators of these children should be able to rent a suitable room for dancing and for school.

Dancing is also central to Leyla Mesic. The Birrerin originally trained as a kindergarten teacher at what is now the Northwestern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences in Brugg. After teaching for a few years, she wanted to make her dream come true and attend a musical school in singing, dancing and acting in New York.

Since it was not clear whether the admission in New York would work, Mesic had previously applied - successfully - to the Stage School in Hamburg. When the positive answer came unexpectedly from New York, there was no stopping Leyla

Mesic and she traveled - with a queasy feeling - to the USA for the first time in her life.

However, because she had no idea what to expect after graduating from the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, this step didn't feel like emigrating to Mesic. Looking back, she says:

«I never thought that I would one day live in the USA. But I decided to go to NYC so that I am in the center of one of the largest musical metropolises and the Broadway theater mile. »

Meanwhile, Leyla Mesic has lived for many years in the Astoria district of Queens in New York in an apartment building in the countryside, only about 20 minutes from Times Square in Manhattan, where she originally lived. She currently has a roommate. She rents out a room in her two-room apartment as needed. The woman from Aargau raves: «Astoria is a multicultural district with many Greek cafés and restaurants where you can sit comfortably and relax. I also enjoy riding my bike or walking. »

Since many of their friends live in the same area, spontaneous and informal meetings take place regularly.

As a self-employed person, Leyla Mesic mostly works on different projects at the same time and often takes on too much. During the corona pandemic, she set up a small recording studio at home to record her vocals and work with producers from all over the world. Right now it's people from the UK, Mexico and Switzerland

Depending on the project, the Aargau resident writes the melody and text for a beat that has already been produced by a producer or she works with other songwriters for music that can later be placed in films, TV programs or advertising. And of course she also writes songs for herself as an artist.

Then she focuses on pop songs with positive intentions and elements from sound therapy, but also on pop mantras and affirmations that are recorded in different frequencies. The 44-year-old explains: "I call my music yoga pop or 'restorative / conscious pop', which means 'music with awareness'."

During the Corona period, the Aargau woman's everyday life in New York changed significantly and, like most people, she spent a lot of time at home. Usually she gets up early. «First I meditate, chant mantras and do yoga before I start my day. Then I spend time on my computer with e-mails, phone calls and administrative matters and the tasks that belong to the various projects such as writing songs, recording songs, drawing up contracts, online meetings. » In the afternoons she mostly teaches classes online. She spends an hour a day running. In the evening she delves into further training. For the artist, the day ends with meditation and yoga exercises:

"I'll read something inspiring, review the day and make a mental thank you list." The creative woman appreciates the melting pot and the casual life in New York. The Atlantic is just a subway ride from home. During the lockdown, Leyla Mesic put all her energy into personal projects.

In addition to training in respiratory therapy, Leyla Mesic would like to complete her second training as a teacher in Vinyasa Yoga this year as well as her new online coaching business "Awaken Your Authentic Voice" (awaken your authentic voice and inner truth through sound, voice, breathing, movement and mediation ) officially launch. There is still a lot of work to do with this. The 44-year-old has also planned to publish two new songs "Higher Love" and "Onyx" as an artist. Lyric and music videos must be created for this.

Although the last trip to Switzerland was a few years ago, Leyla Mesic still feels rooted in the Brugg region. Family and numerous friends live there, with whom she maintains contacts. How great it was back then in Birr to harvest fresh vegetables from her own garden, she only really realized in New York. If possible, she would like to visit Switzerland again.

Whether the Birrerin will stay in the US depends on how her life develops. "I could imagine living somewhere else, maybe by the sea," reveals Leyla Mesic. She is already dreaming of a short break somewhere on the beach.