

WOMEX 98

world wide music expo

SIVAN PERWER & ENSEMBLE, KURDISTAN / SWEDEN

Since the mid-80s, Siwan Perwer is known throughout Europe as *the* voice of Kurdistan. When WOMAD released one of his tracks on their "Talking Book Asia 1" album in 1987, they talked about "a voice under the penalty of silence". Not much has changed since then: the Kurds in Turkey (and not only there) are still a highly endangered people fighting for their rights and a human way of life. Siwan Perwer (who for a long time used only his first name) was and is Kurdistan's most famous singer – "The Kurdish Voice" (title of a biography written by Mahmut Baksi and published in Australia). Born in the province of Urfa in Turkish Kurdistan in 1955, he lives in exile since 1976 (and in Sweden since 1983). Siwan Perwer has shown many musical faces during his career: with only his saz as the archetypical topical singer, with a full orchestral sound, with a tight and good-rocking band. "He informs, motivates and inspires. He is a fighter. His unique expression is the artistic expression of the suffering of his people – a people with a long heritage, but a people virtually unknown to the world." (Baksi) But Siwan is not a political preacher, and Kurdish music is very powerful – it's dance music. In one of his songs, Siwan sang, "Hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder / fill Kurdistan with joy / they are afraid of our

dances / are afraid of the fight of the guerillas / these rulers in Teheran, Bagdad and Ankara" ("Pesmerge – The Guerilla Fighter", 1985). Songs and tunes for the head and the feet – from a musician with an attitude.

Siwan Perwer, voc, tembur, cura

Zahed Brifcany, voc, violin

Ismet Demirbag, flute, mey, ney, zurna

Edip Akinci, dabruka, def

Ardasir Zabardast, sentur, tar

Can Perwer, ackor, synth, klavier

