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Renaud-Gabriel PION

Qalandar : Le prince ascète | The Ascetic Prince

Gülay Hacer TORUK - voice

Renaud-Gabriel PION –piano, alto clarinet & bass clarinet

Vincent SEGAL – cello

Renaud-Gabriel PION :

- * BAĞLANDI YOLLARIM
- * BUGÜN BENİM EFKARIM VAR
 - * BAŞINDAKI YAZMAYI
- * BİR ÇİFT TURNA GÖRDÜM
 - * BU BAĞDA DOLANIRSAN
 - * BERCEUSE
 - * BULUT GELİR
 - * KAR MI YAĞMIŞ
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Note from the composer

In Persian, a Qalandar is a wandering ascetic who has cast himself away from society, or a holy figure, as portrayed in miniatures showing a prince who has chosen to abstain from material satisfaction.

A new inner sense of perception was needed to compose this music and somehow get closer to the Qalandar...

Qalandar is a cycle of pieces for two, three or four instruments where non-tempered singing and contemporary writing for the piano merge, adorned at times by cello or clarinet improvisations.

With their poems and the strings of their long-necked lute, the saz, Anatolian bards expressed passions in many forms, sacred and profane. Reflecting on the notions of encounter, and otherness, I in turn have attempted to make these poems mine, to let them live again through my western classical music culture, building a bridge between two serious music forms.

For the voice of the Istanbul-born singer Gülay Hacer Toruk, I have woven around the lines of these poems a cloak of harmonies which are essentially 20th century. In this contemporary encounter between the East and the West, the words are sung using non-tempered modes (*maqams*). The piano harmonies are an invitation and a response to the reflections emitted by the voice.

I had already trodden this path with other pieces inspired by Turkey and Iran's cultures: *Mylos*, for string quartet and Turkish clarinet and the orchestral suite *Paradise Alley*, both recorded for Radio France. The fascinating mix of non-tempered modes and western harmony is further explored with *Qalandar*. These pieces introduce the listener to an extra-ordinary musical world and may challenge one's perception.

As poetry succeeds with words and ideas, voice and piano together let us feel more colours, hear more notes than those actually played. One moves beyond sheer consonance to reach the 'ultra-consonance' of modal singing intertwined with tempered harmony.

The less contemplative poems called for *aksak* ('limping') rhythms, which also helped me conceive the crossover between my background and this modal musical tradition to which I have long been attracted.

Although an initial inspiration came from pieces by Thomas Adès, never far away were Bartók's folk songs, as well as Dutilleux, for the mystery of these instants, Debussy... Rihm, Holliger ... and also Messiaen, as in Turkish poetry, nature and birds are ever present. Migratory birds to whom sorrows are entrusted and who deliver messages to the beloved souls beyond the mountains, nightingales, cranes...

Voice and instruments walk alongside each other, telling the same poem. Languages blend with one another, while remaining intact.

The cello and the bass clarinet, played by Vincent Segal and myself, as in the modal tradition, bring improvisation into the composition, the written often giving way to freedom of expression.

Gülay Hacer TORUK was born in Istanbul and began her artistic career as an actress and a singer for the theatre. She then decided to devote her energy to singing, and has performed in recitals and concerts of traditional Turkish and Balkan music with several bands.

Her many collaborations with musicians close to her culture, be it Greeks or Bulgarians for the western part or Azeris, Iranians or Armenians towards the east, testify her desire to constantly learn more from the musical world influenced by the exchanges between all these close, yet very different cultures. She has recorded with the Trio Tzane and has performed with the choreographer Paola Ruggeri and the Renaissance ensemble Douce Memoire.

Vincent SEGAL's classical training on the cello and his approach to improvisation have allowed him to remain close to the demands of repertoire and contemporary music while opening up to world and experimental music.

After graduating from the Conservatory, he spent a year in Canada's Banff Fine Art School and then in the US, where he was able to explore and collaborate in the fields of hip-hop, reggae, afrobeat and industrial music.

He has since collaborated to many projects, recorded with French and international artists, produced albums, and released under his name *T-Bone Guarnerius* and *Cello*.

Renaud Gabriel PION is a composer and classically trained clarinet and saxophone player who then studied the English horn, the flute, the piano, and composition.

Also a soloist and improviser, having lived in Dublin and Paris, he has worked for the theatre, for dance companies, for films, and has collaborated with many international artists such as John Cale, Harold Budd, Elvis Costello, Björk, Jun Miyake, Thierry Robin, Omar Sosa, Lo'Jo and Antony & the Johnsons.

As a composer, he released the albums *First Meeting* and *Paradise Alley (Orchestra & Improvisations)*, for Radio France/harmonia mundi.

His dual approach, as instrumentalist and composer, establishing his own aesthetics influenced by 20th and 21st century music, has drawn him close to Frank Martin, Henri Dutilleux or John Adams, to contemporary creation, as well as to modal and non-tempered music.

Throughout his search for his instrument-based language, he has also worked in the fields of improvised and amplified music.

Either in opera form, a sonic cityscape sketching, a solo in a public place, an electronic duet or an improvised trio, his works reveal a commitment to modernity.