

March 2022

BROOKLYN RIDER

Johnny Gandelsman, violin
Colin Jacobsen, violin
Nicholas Cords, viola
Michael Nicolas, cello

with

AVI AVITAL

mandolin

La Musica Notturna Ritratata di Madrid

LUIGI BOCCHERINI
(1743-1805)

Prelude for Solo Mandolin

GIOVANNI SOLLIMA
(b. 1962)

Entr'acte

CAROLINE SHAW
(b. 1982)

Time and Again

COLIN JACOBSEN
(b. 1978)

Obrigado

CLARICE ASSAD
(b. 1978)

Arum der Fayer

OSVALDO GOLIJOV
(b. 1960)

Love Potion, Expired, from Culai

LEV "LJOVA" ZHURBIN
(b. 1978)

This program to be performed without intermission

Management for Brooklyn Rider and Avi Avital:
Opus 3 Artists
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Prelude for Solo Mandolin

Giovanni Sollima

The cellist and composer GIOVANNI SOLLIMA was born in Palermo in 1962. He studied cello with Giovanni Perreira and Antonio Janigro and composition with his father Eliodoro Sollima and Milko Keleman. As composer, Sollima has been captivated by multiple musical languages and has sought to create a unique compositional voice by combining elements of classical and rock music, as well as drawing from the ethnic musics characteristic of all the Mediterranean region, in particular his native Sicily. He composes for acoustic and electric instruments, and others invented by himself or created for him, as the tenor violin represented in the Caravaggio's paintings, or an ice-cello that he played at 3,500 m altitude, in an igloo-theatre. *Prelude for Mandolin Solo* was written for and dedicated to Avi Avital and was first premiered in the Festival "Suoni delle Dolomiti" in Italy in 2018. The piece takes inspiration from the Southern Italian folk music genre called "Pizzica" or "Taranta," featuring an ecstatic 6/8 rhythm which is highly characteristic of that style.

– Giovanni Sollima

Commissioned by Adele and John Gray Endowment Fund and Avi Avital.

Entr'acte

Caroline Shaw

Entr'acte was written in 2011 after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn's Op. 77 No. 2 — with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice's looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, technicolor transition.

– Caroline Shaw

First performed by the Brentano Quartet at Princeton University, April 2011

String orchestra version commissioned by A Far Cry, July 2014

Time And Again

Colin Jacobsen

Program notes forthcoming.

– Colin Jacobsen

Obrigado

Clarice Assad

"Obrigado" in Portuguese means "thank you." The idea for this piece came from a desire of mine to explore the music, chants and rhythms of an Afro-Brazilian religion called Umbanda. The music consists of simple melodies, with no harmonic support, which is accompanied by vigorous, complex rhythmic patterns underneath. I was introduced to this music as a child, and some of it, especially the rhythms, make up a significant part of my earliest musical memories.

As I wrote the piece, I found myself being deeply lured into the very source of this faith, which seems to have first appeared in the early African Yorùbá mythology. The Yorùbá religion (originated in Southern Nigeria) is extraordinarily rich, abundant in spiritual philosophy such as life after death and reincarnation. Overall, it carries beautiful messages of substance over matter, intangible values, and it honors the transcendent. Religious practices were common in the worship of divinities called Orishas (in Portuguese, orixás). An orisha is an entity, that acts as an 'intermediate' force between people and the supernatural. They can also be viewed as deities, because they can control certain elements in nature.

I have a vague idea of what Yoruba music sounded like in its original form before it was introduced to many parts of the world as a result of slavery in the Americas as early as the 16th century. But it is not wrong to

assume that african drumming and its intricate, complex polyrhythm played a huge role in the construction of the mixture it produced while in contact with other cultures and musics of the world. In Brazil, for example, samba and olodum were born out of ‘mother rhythms’ called after African regions such as Angola and Nago, respectively.

In writing OBRIGADO, I carefully listened to over one hundred chants and chose the ones I resonated the most with. The work is written in 11 movements and loosely follows the traditional religious practice of a Brazilian umbanda ceremony. From its opening chants, through the honoring of each of the most important Orishas until the final closing anthem, which sends out a powerful message of gratitude for the gift of life.

– Clarice Assad

Commissioned by the Concordia Chamber Players Ensemble.

Arum der Fayer

Oswaldo Golijov

Arum der Fayer or Around the Fire is a traditional Yiddish song that also talks about the bliss of being together around a small fire. In my version, the song appears and disappears, as a ghost, in the midst of a slow processional and restrained tears. Schubert’s motif of the slow movement of Death and the Maiden is in the background throughout that first section. A different manifestation of Death interrupts the processional in a short and furiously baroque appearance that opens the door to three funny and mischievous dance variations on the B section of the Yiddish song. The movement closes with the reemergence of the opening processional. I wrote this movement in memory of Guillermo Limonic, who loved singing in Yiddish, and died of Covid in the early days of the pandemic.

– Oswaldo Golijov

Love Potion, Expired, from Culai

Lev “Ljova” Zhurbin

“Culai” was the nickname of Nicolae Neacsu, the elder violinist and vocalist of the wild and infamous Gypsy ensemble, the Taraf de Haiidouks. Culai’s trademark tugging of the bowhair across a string, in the song Balada Conducatorului, have been widely seen by over 200,000 viewers on YouTube, in concerts worldwide, as well as in Tony Gatlif’s film “Latcho Drom”. Nicolae Neacsu died in 2002, and in writing this piece, I took much inspiration from the way he seduced the audience with his gaze, told stories of Gypsy life in Romania, and played violin, equally with the innocence of an amateur student, and the smirk of a professional who’s been on the road for decades and had seen everything.

I first heard Gypsy music recordings in the informal street markets of my native Moscow, when I was barely 7 years old. In 2005, I was asked to arrange several selections of the Taraf’s repertoire for Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble — a few months after that, I heard the Taraf perform live at Carnegie Hall. That year, I also met Inna Barmash, the vocalist of the New York-based Gypsy band Romashka, and now we are married with two beautiful children. In 2006, while assisting Oswaldo Golijov on the film soundtrack to Francis Ford Coppola’s “Youth Without Youth”, we visited the band’s village of Clejani, near Bucharest, where I even played with the band for a few tunes.

“Culai” is cast in five movements that depict a vague “life cycle” story.. The fourth movement, “Love Potion Expired” is an arrangement of a tune I had originally written for my ensemble, Ljova and the Kontraband, a breathless tarantella that perpetually falls onto itself.

– Lev “Ljova” Zhurbin

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