

GHEORGI ARNAOUDOV

A large flock of birds flying in a V-formation against a blue sky with light clouds. The birds are small, dark silhouettes, and their wings are spread, creating a clear V-shape that points downwards.

The Way of the Birds
FOOTNOTE (...und Isolde/ns Winkfall lassen...)

The power of Gheorghii Arnaoudov's music is carefully contained.
His sparingly built compositions are designed to activate intimate
and, above all, mysterious experiences in the listener.

In Arnaoudov's music, sound acquires a ritual dimension.
Its emotional memory is strained,
opening the wounds of its historical past ,
and we hear the gleaming resonance of the abyss.

This might be the very abyss that binds us together, one on one.

And we leap into the future,
looking back with the brothers Miladinovi, the collectors of song memories...
We dive into the wellsprings of modern man,
searching for a way out of the fierce and caustic loneliness
of James Joyce.
And we finish by delving into the enigma at the heart of our own bodies.

Why? Because the composer Gheorghii Arnaoudov
remains faithful to the most perplexing episodes in literature,
filling them with rapturous music.
His compositions
translate writing into dance,
into a musical score
delicately choreographed by Mila Iskrenova
for the most important modern dance ensemble in Bulgaria.

In fact, Iskrenova moulds Arnaoudov's enigmatic dance music
into a profusion of human movement,
into beauty that both excites and invites quiet.

— Marin Bodakov

Gheorgi Arnaoudov

The Way of the Birds I

The Way of the Birds II

The Way of the Birds III

FOOTNOTE (...und Isolde/ns Winkfall lassen...)

This CD is a presentation of four sound-poems by Gheorgi Arnaoudov written during the years 1991, 1996, and 1998. They are the result of his collaboration with the Bulgarian Choreographer Mila Iskrenova in various dance performances with the Arabesque Dance Company, theatre actors, and students from the New Bulgarian University. This collaborative process creates meaning on multiple levels and captures one of the most cosmopolitan Bulgarian artists, whose works seem to challenge time and space, at the height of his powers. Following the traces of the creation, the composer, in this work, converses with Orpheus, Thomas Aquinas, Wagner, Joyce, and the Miladinovi brothers traversing meridians and examining parallels in order to explore the sounds and thoughts of the modern world. The words of sages and poets inhabit his staves, and his music is always beautiful, pleasing, and prophetic. These four works relate to dance - to the human state that is closest to flying, the experience of which every being dreams.

The Way of the Birds I-III (1995-1996) represent three large fragments from Gheorgi Arnaoudov's cycle of three poems for soprano and various chamber ensembles based on medieval Bulgarian love texts dated from the time of the Bulgarian National Revival - around the 17th and 18th centuries-employed in their authentic form from the Zagreb edition of the Miladinovi brothers' *Bulgarian Folksongs* of 1861. The three parts follow the chronological order of

the entire cycle. *The Way of the Birds I* introduces a virtuoso “raga” in the flute over the pure cantus firmus in the voice, based on a song from the Western Rhodopi region, forming a strange kind of motet. *The Way of the Birds II*'s sumptuous and colorful development within the instrumental ensemble contrasts with the ascetic vocal melodies, which weave authentic ritual chants and auguries into the amorous texts. In the *The Way of the Birds III*, written for soprano and small chamber ensemble, the virtuoso line passes from the soprano voice in the beginning to the closing “raga”, this time assigned to the violin.

FOOTNOTE (...und Isolde/ns Winkfall lassen...) -1991 was written for voice (Sprechstimme), cello, and chamber orchestra. It is based on the poem “A Prayer” (1924) from the Pomes Penyeach collection by James Joyce. Also called “An Imaginary Interlude to the Second Act of Tristan and Isolde”, the work refers to the scene when Isolde, after her meeting with Brangena, waits impatiently for the arrival of Tristan. The German subtitle is also imaginary - a strange combination between an archaic possessive form and a semiotic neologism.

— Kalina Radicheva



Gheorgi Arnaoudov (born 1957) is a Bulgarian composer of stage, orchestral, chamber, film, vocal, and piano music, a representative of 21st century classical music with roots in minimalism. He graduated from the Bulgarian Academy of Music "Pancho Vladigerov" attending at the same time the summer courses in the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy, as well as the International composer's workshops. At present, Mr. Arnaoudov is appointed Associate Professor in Composition and Harmony at the New Bulgarian University in the "Music" and "Theatre" departments, as well as at the National School of Music.

His compositions include a number of symphonic pieces, chamber and solo instrumental, vocal and piano music, cycles of works based on old Bulgarian texts dating from the early Middle Ages, as well as on authentic archaic Orphic texts and rituals, studies of sound and fiction based on Gothic and Renaissance music, musical stage works, music for theatrical and film productions, performed and premiered at prestigious venues around the globe over the past years. This could be a music of stasis filled with silence and vibrating sound or sumptuous and colourful surrealistic baroque sound canvas, a kind of intense minimalism that tells no conventional stories but rather meditates on an idea.

Gheorgi Arnaoudov has won numerous international and national awards, including the Grand Prix of the European Broadcasting Union (1995), the Golden Harp Prize from Jeunesses Musicales (1995), the Carl Maria von Weber International Prize of Music (1989), and the National Music School Centenary Award (2004). Gheorgi Arnaoudov's works have been released on a number of CDs, domestically and internationally.

Tania Kazandjieva-Chauche is a soprano known for her performances of both baroque and contemporary music. She has performed with Les Arts Florissants, Les Goûts Réunis, Le Parlement de Musique, and with the opera companies of Paris, Dijon and Reims.

Mila Iskrenova is a Bulgarian dancer, choreographer and painter, working in Bulgaria and Italy. She is the co-founder of the Sofia Dance Week festival and is considered one of the most creative forces in Bulgarian contemporary dance. Her collaborations with Gheorghi Arnaoudov include: Offertorium I (1988), Offertorium II (1991), An Oddity (1991), Space Crossing I (1996), Choreordained (1996), The Highest point of my Inferiority (1998), Threshold (2001), Space Crossing II (2009).

Marin Bodakov, Bulgarian poet and journalist, is the literary critic of Kultura Magazine and is considered one of the leading and most popular voices of 21st century Bulgarian poetry.

The first edition of Bulgarian Folk Songs appeared one hundred fifty years ago. Written in Middle Bulgarian (12th to 15th centuries), this collection is virtually untranslatable into modern language. A total set of 674 songs and 23,559 verses, the collection comprises traditional epic and love poems, ritual nuptial songs, soothsayings, proverbs, and ceremonial texts (mostly mantras). These songs, with their sonic fragrance, speech ornamentations, incomprehensible onomatopoeia, inapprehensible humming and crooning, evoke memories of a lost time and a different world of sound.

— Gheorghi Arnaoudov

657.

Девојко църнокласнице,
Църно ми сърце за тебе,
Како гайтан-отъ на тебо!
Ела, девојко, по мене,
Ела ми на нашъ виляетъ,
Тамо је лепо 'убо'о,

Тамо ми греатъ две сѣнца
Две сѣнца, две месечини;
Два пѣти жито се рогягъ;
Два пѣти грозіе ми здреитъ;
Два пѣти овци се ягнагъ.

660.

Отъ Струга

Отлетала преперуга, ой люле ой!
Отъ орача на орача, --,
Отъ копача на копача,
Отъ режача на режача;
Да зароситъ ситна роса
Ситна роса берикетна
И по поле и по море;
Да се родитъ 'сѣ берикетъ
'Сѣ берикетъ вино-жито;
Чеинци-те до греди-те

Ячмени-те до стре'и-те,
Лено'и-те до пояси,
Уро'и-те до колена;
Да се ранетъ сиромаси
Дървете-не со осито
Да је ситна година;
Дървете-не со ошница
Да је полна кошница;
Дървете-не сѣ ямаче,
Да је тучна година

669.

Ономоно, дономоно; триафиле, карафиле; стото-пито, моногито; ляитинъ,
гуйтинъ; суезе, сукезе; делимаръ, кокошаръ; зби, каџии; тенеке, напърстокъ.

670.

Цуцулига, пеитанъ; петугора, хаиванъ; харджаманъ; чунчукъ, чукалчакъ,
ковачъ, керкелъ.

A Prayer

Again!

Come, give, yield all your strength to me!
From far a low word breathes on the breaking brain
Its cruel calm, submission's misery,
Gentling her awe as to a soul predestined.
Cease, silent love! My doom!

Blind me with your dark nearness, O have mercy, beloved
enemy of my will!

I dare not withstand the cold touch that I dread.

Draw from me still

My slow life! Bend deeper on me, threatening head,
Proud by my downfall, remembering, pitying
Him who is, him who was!



Again!

Together, folded by the night, they lay on earth. I hear
From far her low word breathe on my breaking brain.
Come! I yield. Bend deeper upon me! I am here.
Subduer, do not leave me! Only joy, only anguish,
Take me, save me, soothe me, O spare me!

James Joyce, Pomes Penyeach (Paris 1924)