

Jaipur to Cairo

Cuatro Puntos
resident musicians



métier

Jaipur to Cairo

1	Jaunpuri (Morning Song) (Kevin Bishop)	11:36
	Love Songs (Reza Vali)	6:46
2	No. 1 Armenian Love Song	1:35
3	No. 2 In Memory of a Lost Beloved	3:21
4	No. 3 Love Drunk	1:49
	Afghan Suite No. 2 (Kevin Bishop)	11:09
5	I. Arghawan	3:28
6	II. Merawi Keja Keja Yaraman	3:31
7	III. Sabzina Rang	4:08
	Calligraphies (Reza Vali)	12:07
8	No. 1 "Hazin"	4:36
9	No. 2 "Zánd"	3:42
10	No. 3 "Aksak"	3:47
11	The Oldest Song in the World (Sadie Harrison)	6:10
12	Ten Variations for Oboe, Piano and Strings (Gilad Cohen)	14:25
13	Rhapsody for Piano and Strings (Mohamed-Aly Farag)	9:55
	Total duration:	72:37

Cuatro Puntos Resident Musicians:

Kevin Bishop (viola/zerbaghali)

Aaron Packard (violin) | Annie Trépanier (violin)

Steve Larson (viola) | Allan Ballinger (cello)

Andrew O'Connor (contrabass) | Charles Huang (oboe)

Mohamed Shams (piano)

The Music

1 Jaunpuri (Morning Song) for string quartet

Kevin Bishop

Jaunpuri (Morning Song) is an originally-composed work that largely follows the rules, style, and mood associated with Raag Jaunpuri, one of the hundreds of ragas from the Hindustani (North Indian) classical music tradition. Hindustani classical music is based entirely around melodic interaction with rhythm. Each raag provides a specific set of notes and rules for how they may be used. By following the given rules a performer, or in this case a composer, may create an original piece while still preserving the mood of the raag.

Raag Jaunpuri conveys a contemplative mood, and is meant to be performed in the late morning hours. As in a traditional raag performance, *Janupuri* begins with a slow, unmetered "warm up" section. It is followed by the tabla entrance (imitated by the cello) where the bandish (composed song) is introduced. The bandish is elaborated, and toward the end of the piece the tempo and intensity increases. The cello uses the 16-beat "tentaal" tala (rhythmic cycle) throughout. The melody always hooks into this pattern, particularly where the pattern returns to beat one. Violin 1 takes the role of the traditional lead singer or sitar player. The viola plays an open "C" and often "G" string throughout, even while playing other notes, to imitate the open 5th drone of the tanpura. The second violin and viola take the role of the harmonium, mimicking the lead voice. "Harmonies" are accidental, occurring only from natural melodic interplay.

This piece is dedicated to Abhishek Adikary and Murchana Adhikary Barthakur, master sitar players from Kolkata, India. From 2015-2017 Kevin had the opportunity to work with and learn from them while they were all on faculty at the *Afghanistan National Institute of Music* in Kabul, Afghanistan. They ignited his love of Hindustani classical music, and taught him much through their performances and through many evenings sharing meals and music in their Kabul home-away-from-home.

2-4 Love Songs for piano quartet

Reza Vali

Love Songs was commissioned by the Chamber Music Festival of the East and first performed on August 6, 2003 in Bennington where Reza Vali was the Festival's resident

composer. The piece consists of three short songs titled as *Armenian Love Song*, *In Memory of a Lost Beloved*, and *Love Drunk*. All three songs are based on Persian folk music.

5-7 Afghan Suite No. 2 for zerbaghali and string quintet

Kevin Bishop

Kevin set these three Afghan melodies while living in Afghanistan. These songs were originally arranged for a full orchestra of both Western and Afghan instruments and played by the orchestras at the *Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM)*. They were later re-arranged for string quartet.

Kevin first heard *Arghawan (Lavender)* when he was in Kabul for the second time in 2014. The young men of *ANIM's Junior Ensemble of Traditional Instruments* recorded it for *The Rosegarden of Light*, a previous album released on Toccata Classics in collaboration between *Cuatro Puntos* and *ANIM*. The song came up again when the *Afghan Women's Orchestra "Zohra"* toured Europe, and the concerts opened with just traditional instruments playing *Arghawan*. Kevin later arranged it for the full Women's Orchestra to perform, and then arranged it for *Cuatro Puntos*.

Merawi Keja Keja Yaraman (Beloved Where, Oh Where Are You?) is a slow song in the typical Afghan meter of 7/8. It was first arranged for the *Afghan Youth Orchestra* at the request of one of the violinists, Sevinch. The song has an alternate title and set of lyrics in Pashto, making it a symbol of unity.

Sabzina Rang (The Color Green) is an upbeat, 7/8 folk song. While browsing through a bookstore in Kabul, Kevin found a book of Afghan musical melodies published in the 1970s. He played these melodies for some of his students one day in his office. Sunbol, a violinist, helped him decide which one to arrange. It was first arranged for the Women's Orchestra, and later for *Cuatro Puntos*. The drum heard on these pieces is the zerbaghali, and this one was made especially for *Cuatro Puntos* by an instrument-maker in Kabul.

8-10 Calligraphies – Nos 1-3 for string quintet

Reza Vali

Calligraphies was completed in July 1999. It was premiered by *Cuarteto Latinoamericano* in Mexico City on May 18, 2000 as part of the *International Forum for New Music Festival*.

The musical material of the composition is entirely derived from Persian traditional music. The tuning, rhythm, form, as well as polyphonic constructions (such as imitation,

inversion, retrograde) relate to the Persian modal system, the *Dástgâh*. The basic mode of the *Calligraphies* is the Persian mode of *Shoor*. *Shoor* consists of two interlocked tetrachords with the pitch D as the Finalis (the tonic). The descending order is: D, C, B \flat , A and the ascending series is: D, E \flat , F, G, A. The “B \flat ” and the “E \flat ” mean that these two pitches are a quarter-tone lower than B and E respectively. The mode *Shoor* is elaborated in *Calligraphy No. 1* and *Calligraphy No. 3*. A sub-mode of *Shoor* called *Bayâte Zând* and is employed in *Calligraphy No. 2*.

Calligraphy No. 1 (Hazin) is based on a short melodic/rhythmic segment called *Hazin*. The name of *Calligraphy No. 2 (Zând)*, as well as its modal characteristics, is derived from the Persian mode of *Bayâte Zând*. *Calligraphy No. 3 (Aksak)* is based on an asymmetrical rhythmic cycle (called *Aksak*) which is found in the folk music of Iran, Turkey, and other countries across the Near East.

11 The Oldest Song in the World for two violas

Sadie Harrison

This brief work for 2 virtuoso violists was written at the request of violist and Director of Cuatro Puntos, Kevin Bishop, as part of a concert programme entitled *Near East in America*. It weaves together two ancient Arabic sources, the ancient Syrian Hymn to Nikkal reputed to be the oldest notated song in the world dating from c. 1400 BCE, and لما بدا يتثنى (*Lamma bada yatathana: When she begins to sway*) which was written sometime in the 9th-10th centuries ACE.

The lyrics of both songs celebrate women - the Hymn praises Nikkal, the Semitic goddess of fertility and orchards, and لما بدا يتثنى compares the beauty of a lover to the swaying branches of a tree. The Hymn is heard at the centre of the work, a transformed version that brings out the unusually diatonic and expressive harmony of the music (most probably played on a lyre or sammûm). By contrast, the melody of *Lamma bada yatathana* is highly rhythmic, with its 10/8 metre (*samai thaqil*) punctuated by the accompanying viola as drum, emphasising the ‘doom’ on beats 1, 6 and 7 and the ‘tek’ on beats 4 and 8. The work ends with increasingly virtuosic counterpoint, the melody thrown between the two instruments with abandon! *The Oldest Song in the World* is dedicated with admiration to Kevin Bishop and Steve Larson who gave the work its premiere on 16 February 2018 at the Lutheran Church of St. Marks, Glastonbury, Connecticut.

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12 Ten Variations for oboe, piano, and string quartet

Gilad Cohen

Ten Variations confronts enigmatic and abstract sections with moments of clarity and directionality. It is based on a short, simple melodic theme that is travelling through a musical journey and gradually revealed throughout the piece.

Mysterious, rocky, festive, cool, or glum – a different mood and character is used in each variation in order to expose a new facet of the theme. While some of the variations live comfortably in the world of 20th century's concert music (Ravel and Shostakovich being highly influential), others use rhythms and sounds derived from popular and world music (here bands like Alice in Chains, Pink Floyd and the Israeli Arabic-Jewish ensemble Bustan Abraham come to mind). Likewise, different moments in the piece may be soothing, captivating or startling for the listener.

Ten Variations ends with a celebration of folk tunes, classical music polyphony, rock harmonies, and funk-dance grooves, while the theme is presented for the first time in its complete, triumphant form, thus offering a sense of catharsis.

13 Rhapsody for piano and strings

Mohamed-Aly Farag

"*Rhapsody*" was written in 2004 as Mo's first serious piece to be publicly performed. It is scored for five instruments which are piano, violin, viola, cello and clarinet (or 2nd viola) and is also given the Arabic title "*Khomaseya*", which means Quintet. Although one can clearly hear Eastern European influences, it is an attempt at the structuring of Egyptian classical music through the western manners of thematic development by harmony, rhythm and form.

Divided into three (fast-slow-fast) sections, it introduces a central theme which is taken on a journey across the three sections which contain contrasting melodic, rhythmic and harmonic styles and idioms which are rooted in Egyptian traditional music. New themes interact contrapuntally with the primary theme to depict scenes from daily street life, market scenes, traditional weddings and the slow chanting of long poetic songs which makes up the middle slower section. The final section returns to the faster tempo and reaches the recapitulation, concluding with the main "build up" which a series of sequences, scales and variations colliding in a crashing arrival of the first theme in its original key.

Cuatro Puntos

Cuatro Puntos is a multi faceted organization based in Hartford, Connecticut, USA dedicated to intercultural dialogue and universal access through the performance, writing, and teaching of music. *Cuatro Puntos* oversees a resident chamber music ensemble, a concert series, arts-integration workshops in local schools, the *Music Moves Hartford* program for those facing homelessness, and a partnership with the *Müzikhane Social Music School* in Southeastern Turkey. The *Cuatro Puntos Resident Musicians*, hailed by *Fanfare Magazine* as having a “great depth of sound” and “virtuosic performance”, have performed extensively throughout the United States as well as in Bolivia, Brazil, England, Germany, the Netherlands, and Afghanistan. They have produced or been collaborators on a number of albums spanning many genres, including a recent release of *Centennial Cole* with Connecticut-based R&B singer Orice Jenkins.

A four-year collaboration with Afghanistan’s only music school, which included several teaching artist visits to Afghanistan and a one-year teaching tenure by *Cuatro Puntos’* executive director, resulted in a collaborative album between *Cuatro Puntos* and the *Afghanistan National Institute of Music* titled *The Rosegarden of Light*. The album is released on *Toccata Classics* and has received critical acclaim worldwide as well as airplay on major stations such as BBC and NPR. Music from the album has also been used on the score of several films, most recently in *The Staging Post* and *Laila at the Bridge*. *Blackmore Vale Magazine* in the UK said “At a time when we are bombarded every day by images of the world in crisis, *The Rosegarden of Light* is a joyful celebration of musicians who share a fundamental right to express themselves through the universal language of music.”

The *Cuatro Puntos Resident Musicians* are just one arm of a multi-faceted organization aimed at using the power of music for social change. Learn about our programs at [**www.cuatropuntos.org**](http://www.cuatropuntos.org)

The Composers & Performers

Kevin Bishop (composer, tracks 1, 5-7; viola, tracks 1, 5-7; zerbaghali, tracks 5-7)

Kevin's life work serves the ideal of "social music making"- the belief that music education can aid community building, personal elevation, and reconstruction. His varied career as a violist, violinist, conductor, composer, educator, and arts administrator has taken him around the world to study, witness, engage with, and lead social music projects. Having grown up in a troubled neighborhood near Los Angeles, his entrepreneurial career began young when he founded the *Western Society of Chamber Music* after tragedy caused the demise of his school's music program. He led this organization and its community-minded efforts for 7 years before moving to Connecticut and founding *Cuatro Puntos*.

Vía *Cuatro Puntos* he volunteered with an *El Sistema* program in Bolivia for two summers, then in Afghanistan for three. Kevin eventually became Director of Orchestral Studies at the *Afghanistan National Institute of Music*, living in Afghanistan for an extended period. During this time he led the country's only orchestra in numerous concerts for presidents and ambassadors. He prepared the country's first female conductors to lead the *Afghan Women's Orchestra* in concerts across Europe, including the closing ceremony of the World Economic Forum in Switzerland. Currently, in addition to being Executive Director of *Cuatro Puntos*, Kevin is Co-Director of *Müzikhane Social Music School*. He divides his life between Connecticut, where *Cuatro Puntos* oversees the *Music Moves Hartford* street choir and other local initiatives, and Southeastern Turkey along the Syrian border, where *Müzikhane* serves refugee and vulnerable children from Syria, Iraq, and Turkey.

Kevin composes and records music inspired by the traditions he encounters, and he has records on *Toccata Classics* and *Métier* labels. Speaking of a solo viola track, *Fanfare Magazine* said he plays with "great intensity". Kevin also loves to keep music fun-sometimes you will find him playing viola and kick drum simultaneously. He records albums his own arrangements of pop music with the pop string quartet *Golden Scroll Soloists*. He has performed with the band *Foo Fighters* at the Grammy Awards and with

members of Led Zeppelin. Scores for his original compositions, including those on this album, are open-sourced and available on imslp.org.

Reza Vali (composer, tracks 2-4, 8-10)

Reza Vali was born in Ghazvin, Iran, in 1952. He began his music studies at the Conservatory of Music in Tehran.

In 1972 he went to Austria and studied music education and composition at the Academy of Music in Vienna. After graduating from the Academy of Music, he moved to the United States and continued his studies at the University of Pittsburgh, receiving his Ph.D. in music theory and composition in 1985.

Mr. Vali has been a faculty member of the School of Music at Carnegie Mellon University since 1988. He has received numerous honors and commissions, including the honor prize of the Austrian Ministry of Arts and Sciences, two Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships, commissions from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Kronos Quartet, the Carpe Diem String Quartet, the Seattle Chamber Players, and the Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, as well as grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Pittsburgh Foundation, and the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education. He was selected by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust as the Outstanding Emerging Artist for which he received the Creative Achievement Award.

Vali's orchestral compositions have been performed in the United States by the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the Baltimore Symphony, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestra 2001.

His chamber works have received performances by Cuarteto Latinoamericano, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, the Carpe Diem String Quartet, Kronos Quartet, the Seattle Chamber Players, and the Da Capo Chamber Players. His music has been performed in Europe, China, Chile, Mexico, Hong Kong, and Australia and is recorded on the Deutsche Grammophon, Naxos, New Albion, MMC, Ambassador, Albany, and ABC Classics labels.



Kevin Bishop

Reza Vali



Gilad Cohen





Sadie Harrison



Mohamed-Aly Farag

Allan Ballinger





Aaron Packard



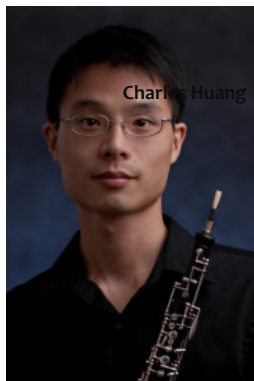
Annie Trépanier

Steve Larson





Mohamed Shams



Charles Huang

The Cuatro Puntos String Quintet



Sadie Harrison (composer, track 11)

Sadie's music has been released to critical acclaim on Naxos, Prima Facie, NMC, Cadenza, Sargasso, Toccata Classics, BML, Divine Art/Metier, and Clarinet Classics with frequent performances and broadcasts worldwide. Sadie is particularly well known for the socio-political aspects of her music-making with several works challenging stereotypes of marginalised peoples, celebrating their creativity and individuality with powerful expressions of musical solidarity. She has recently been Composer-in-Residence with Cuatro Puntos (USA) and Künstler Bei Wu Sculpturepark (Germany), supported by Arts Council England and PRSF Composer's Fund Grants. Sadie is also Composer-in-Association with the Afghanistan National Institute of Music, her symphonic work *Sapida-Dam-Nau* premiered by their Women's Orchestra at the Closing Concert of the 2017 World Economic Forum. Sadie's Afghan-inspired *Rosegarden of Light* (in collaboration with Cuatro Puntos and ANIM) has been used in several international films and documentaries (Australia, Kabul, USA).

2016-17 saw the release of 4 CDs on Naxos, Toccata Classics, Divine Art and Prima Facie, all receiving superb reviews: *Observer*: 'disc of glittering intensity'; *BBC Music Magazine*: 'beautiful and intriguing'; *Fanfare*: 'a special, fragile space', 5:4: 'daringly wild...positively feral. Utterly amazing', *Composition Today*: 'a riot of sound... a great shout of joy', *Gramophone*: 'an important contribution to piano repertoire'.

Gilad Cohen (composer, track 12)

Gilad Cohen is an active composer, performer, and theorist in various genres including concert music, rock, and music for theatre. His music adapts features from a wide range of musical realms, bringing together the persistent textures of rock, the painstaking orchestration of impressionism, the gloomy harmonies of grunge and metal, the jubilant rhythms of klezmer, the intricate imitation techniques of Baroque, the motionless landscapes of ambient music, and the agile melodies and scales of Arabic music.

Cohen's notable awards include the Barlow Prize, the Israeli Prime Minister Award for Composers, and top prizes in international competitions in the US, Europe, Asia and the Middle-East. In 2018 alone, his music was played in nine countries as well as seventeen different States in the USA. Also a rock performer and songwriter, Cohen performs regularly with various ensembles around the US, playing piano, bass guitar, and guitar. An Assistant Professor of Music at Ramapo College of New Jersey, Cohen holds a Ph.D. in

composition from Princeton University. His research about the music of Pink Floyd has resulted in publications in academic journals, lectures in the US and Israel, and the first-ever academic conference devoted to the band that he produced in 2014 at Princeton University together with composer Dave Molk. www.giladcohen.com

Mohamed-Aly Farag (composer, track 13)

Mohamed-Aly Farag is a classical violinist and composer from Cairo, Egypt. From an early age he was artistically inspired by Egyptian history and folkloric music. He studied piano and violin with Russian teachers in Egypt who introduced him to Eastern European music of the 20th century, a major influence in his compositions. Since composing short pieces for piano and other available instruments in his early years, Mo has written for a variety of ensembles ranging from large orchestra to unaccompanied solo instruments. Mo is currently enrolled on a full scholarship in the Doctor of Musical Arts program in composition at Arizona State University while maintaining a career as an active violin player and instrumental instructor.

In early 2019 Mo won first prize in the Myktyyn scholarship competition for composition awarded to him by the composition faculty at ASU. As composer Mo aims to create music in a style that combines different cultural dynamics and mark the similarities and contrasts between them. While conservative in nature, Mo's music tends to use contemporary techniques of modern compositional trends while remaining canonical in the classical sense of concert music and true to the foundational cultural inspiration of his homeland.

Allan Ballinger (cello, tracks 1-10, 12-13)

Dr. Allan Ballinger has pursued dual paths in the fields of music and history over the course of his life. His father was a high school history teacher and mother a church organist and choir director, and Allan's career unites the two passions of his parents. Allan is not only active as a performer with Cuatro Puntos, but also teaches history and political science in the Social Sciences department at Gateway Community College in New Haven, CT, reflecting his lifelong commitment to empowering the disenfranchised and underserved in our society.

Dr. Ballinger has masters' degrees in both modern European history and music education from Central Connecticut State University. He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree

from the University of Connecticut (2013) in cello performance, with a minor in music history. His doctoral dissertation, *In Quest of the Sacred: Arvo Pärt and Sieben Magnificat-Antiphonen*, combines an analysis of that composer's music with an exploration of his spirituality, and the historical context in which his unique style of composition evolved. Allan's fascination with the Estonian composer reflects his own interest in spirituality and the practice of kriya yoga, and his masters' thesis studying religious dissidents of the Soviet Union. His analysis of Arvo Pärt's *Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten* was recently published in the International Journal of Humanities and Social Science and was presented at the annual conference of the Community College Humanities Association in November 2017.

Annie Trépanier (violin, tracks 1-10, 12)

Annie Trépanier's playing has been hailed by The Boston Globe as "supercharged, clear-headed, yet soulful." She is a founding member of the acclaimed Avery Ensemble and has performed throughout Canada, the United States and Europe. Her recent Avery Ensemble CD of piano quartets by Mahler, Schnittke and Brahms was an obvious favorite of one classical.net reviewer: "gorgeous... the performers clearly have passionate feelings about what they are playing. This is what loving music is all about."

She has been heard regularly in national broadcasts on Radio-Canada, CBC and NPR and has recorded for the Zephyr, Toccata Classics, Ablaze Records and Nanova Records labels. She is a former member of the New World Trio and the Diabelli String Quartet and has appeared as a guest with such ensembles as the Copenhagen and Adaskin String Trios. For the past three summers, Ms. Trépanier has performed at Loon Lake Live!, a chamber music festival near Lake Placid, New York. She is also concertmaster of the Connecticut-based chamber orchestra Salisbury Sinfonietta.

Aaron Packard (violin, tracks 1, 5-10, 12, 13)

Aaron Packard is an avid improviser and proponent of new music, working closely with composers such as U.S.-born Norway resident Ellen Lindquist, and Elizabeth Adams and Ted Hearne in New York, to find and experiment with new sound ideas. Having studied period performance with Arthur Haas at SUNY Stony Brook, his interpretations are also informed by the strength of tradition and history. He currently teaches at the Joy of Music Program and at the Groton School, both in Massachusetts.

Performance collaborators include Orfeo Duo, 17th-century specialist and improvising harpsichordist Gabe Shuford, Mantra Percussion, violinist Vita Wallace, and bassist Nick Walker. He has been a frequent guest with Avery Ensemble, presenting works from Beethoven to Schnittke. Since 2007 Aaron has been honored to perform in and around Saranac Lake, New York, as a part of the Loon Lake Live concert series. Major violin teachers include Greg Fulkerson and the late Mitchell Stern, but he was really started on the path toward becoming a listener by the incomparable pianist Gil Kalish, and Tim Eddy of the Orion String Quartet. Aaron lets out a bit of his wild side as a long-time member of *Golden Scroll Soloists*, a pop string quartet. While at home, he spends time meditating on breath and movement, raising chickens, and loving life with his wife and two young children.

Steve Larson (viola, tracks 2-7,11, 13)

Steve Larson is a Senior Artist Teacher at *The Hartt School* of the University of Hartford, where he has taught since 1998 and has served both as Chair for Strings and Chair of Chamber Music. He is a founding member of the acclaimed oboe, viola and piano trio *Ensemble Schumann*, as well as of the *Adaskin String Trio*. He enjoys performing and recording in duo with his wife, violinist Annie Trépanier, and throughout the Americas and Europe with their chamber groups *Avery Ensemble* and *Cuatro Puntos*.

Both groups present their own Hartford, Connecticut concert series featuring numerous world premieres and cross-cultural collaborations in programs specially crafted to give the music a meaningful context. Larson is Principal Viola of the *Wintergreen Festival Orchestra* and Chair of Viola Studies for the intensive string chamber music program at the *Wintergreen Summer Music Academy* in Virginia. He has performed as a guest with groups such as the *Emerson Quartet* and the *Lions Gate Trio*.

Originally from Regina, Saskatchewan (Canada), Larson holds degrees from McGill University, l'Université de Montréal and The Hartt School. At the 1997 Lionel Tertis International Viola Competition in the United Kingdom he won second prize and received the special award for his performance of the commissioned work. He studied violin with Ernest Kassian, Elman Lowe, Howard Leyton-Brown, and Mauricio Fuks, viola with Jutta Puchhammer and Steve Tenenbom, and chamber music with members of the Emerson and Orford String Quartets. He plays an exceptional 17-3/8 inch viola made by Helmuth Keller in 1981.

Mohamed Shams (piano, tracks 2-4, 12, 13)

Mohamed Shams began his piano studies at the Conservatoire of Music at the Academy of the Arts in Cairo, Egypt, at the age of seven, later graduating with distinction at a young age. Hailed as a “deeply impressive pianist of tremendous flair and intellectual strength” and a “spectacular pianist” by *Herald Scotland*, Mohamed Shams enjoys a varied musical life with a strong emphasis on chamber music and neglected composers of the Romantic period and 20th century. He has performed a diverse repertoire as a chamber musician and soloist throughout the United States, as well as in England, Scotland, Italy, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Tunisia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Belgium, and, of course, in Egypt.

As the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship in 2006, in recognition of his work studying 20th century American composers, Shams performed masterpieces of Elliot Carter, John Corigliano, Leonard Bernstein, and John Musto with elite American orchestras and at historical venues. He earned a B.M. degree from the Cairo Conservatoire and two M.M. degrees- one from the Royal Scottish Conservatoire and another from the Manhattan School of Music.

Charles Huang (oboe, track 12)

Dr. Charles Huang has performed in chamber music and solo recitals throughout North America, as well as Brazil, Germany, and Taiwan. A founding member of Oboe Duo Agosto and the Sylvanus Ensemble, he is active in commissioning new works and advancing a wide variety of repertoire for their concerts.

Huang has been a Fulbright Scholar, semi-finalist in the Concert Artists Guild International Competition, scholarship recipient to the Music Academy of the West and the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, and a winner of the Miami String Quartet Competition. He is currently teaching oboe and chamber music at The Hartt School Community Division, and has been invited to teach masterclasses and perform at SUNY Purchase, the University of Michigan and at CCM, Cincinnati. Past positions include Artist Teacher of Oboe and Coordinator for Chamber Music at Hartt, and Professor of Oboe at the Festival Eleazar de Carvalho in Fortaleza, Brazil.

Recorded on March 22-24, 2018 at The Hartt School, University of Hartford, West Hartford, Connecticut, USA

Produced by Kevin Bishop

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