

LOUIS
FRANZ
AGUIRRE

KAROLINA
MIDNIGHT
GIRL

MINA
FRED
KAROLINA
LEEDO
ADAM
ØRVAD



KAMBIA

MPN

	Nsambia Mpungun	[17:01]
	for amplified solo viola/singer, 2012	
1	I. Nsambi	4:03
2	II. Chola Wengue	2:01
3	III. Centella Ndoki	2:01
4	IV. Mamá Kalunga, Sarabanda y Siete Rayos	8:56
5	Olokun II	10:49
	for viola and accordion, 2012	
6	Oggún Adeolá	13:40
	for bass flute/flute, viola, and accordion, 2011	
7	Fantaisie-Improromptu (after The Persistence of Memory by Salvador Dalí)	7:24
	for accordion, 2018-22	
	Gardens of the Beloved (Three Tropes for solo alto flute/flute) 2008	[8:07]
8	I. Cantus Firmus	2:36
9	II. You are always in my heart and soul	3:12
10	III. God is my final end	2:18
	Total playing time 57:22	

Mina Fred, viola
 Karolina Leedo, flutes
 Adam Ørvad, accordion

Produced by Mathias Reumert



Introduction by Louis Franz Aguirre

In 2006, while preparing my debut concert at the Aarhus Conservatory, I realized something decisive: none of the musicians I knew at the time could — or wished to — perform my works. I therefore had to bring almost all the performers from Amsterdam, with very few exceptions, the most notable being Karolina Leedo.

From the very beginning, Karolina became one of my closest collaborators in Denmark. Through her, I met other musicians who, over time, would become committed and insightful interpreters of my music.

A few years later, in 2011, while organizing a monographic concert in Aalborg, an idea gradually took shape: to bring together in a single ensemble the three musicians who were both able and willing to confront the particular challenges of my music — Karolina Leedo on flutes, Mina Fred on viola, and Adam Ørvad on accordion. Thus, the Snow Mask Trio was born, making its debut on 19 August 2011 at the OpenDays Festival in Denmark.

Since then, we have shared fifteen years of close collaboration — years of exploration, dedication, and deeply rewarding musical exchange. Over time, I have written two major solo pieces and several chamber works for Mina, my flute concerto ORULA and other works for Karolina, and more than forty new pieces for Adam, including solo and chamber works.

My gratitude to them is both profound and enduring.

This recording is the result of our long-standing musical friendship.













Nsambia Mpungun Lyrics by the composer, inspired by anonymous Bantú prayers

I. Nsambi

Sambi! Sambi! Sambi!
Nsambia nsulo.
Nsambia ntoto.
Primero Sambi que to'a las cosas.
Yo llama Siete Rayos.
Yo llama Sarabanda.
Yo llama Sambi, Sambi, yo llama Eggun.

II. Chola Wengue

Wángara!
Chola Wengue, Kibula, Sibimu, Kalunga.
Sibimu Kalunga! Kalunga!
Mamá Wanga, Kibube Bumba, Kibula.
Chola Wengue!
Mamá Chola!
Mamá Wanga!

III. Centella Ndoki

Wángara!
Sambi!

IV. Mamá Kalunga, Sarabanda y Siete Rayos

Yaya kindó, sarikalumbe lembé!
Sarikalumbe lembé!
Sarikalumbe!
Yo llama Siete Rayos.

Gardens of the Beloved Lyrics by Rumi (1207-1273)

I. Cantus Firmus

II. You are always in my heart and soul

You are always in my heart and soul.
You come late to those lost in love.
Love is the water of Eternal Life.

III. God is my final end

There is no reality but You.
God is my final end.

Nsambia Mpungun for amplified solo viola/singer, 2012

Nsambia Mpungun unfolds as a work of transcendental, mystical, and ritual intensity. Its aesthetic bears many of the hallmarks of Louis Aguirre's musical language, shifting between a wide spectrum of complex scratch sounds and a more contemplative, horizontally unfolding dimension.

In a continuous state of transformation — between the real and the unreal, the physical and the spiritual, the conscious and the unconscious — the work establishes a metaphysical connection between word, sound, gesture, and expression.

Nsambia Mpungun was commissioned by and written for Mina Fred with funds from the Danish Arts Foundation. She gave the premiere on 30 September 2012 at Kunsthall Nord in Aalborg, Denmark.

Program note by Dr. Iván César Morales Flores

Olokun II for viola and accordion, 2012

A work of striking intensity and profound physicality, *Olokun II* pays tribute to the powerful and mysterious marine Orisha of the Yoruba tradition, drawing on the emotional and spiritual force that lies at the heart of Aguirre's music.

Without warning, the piece opens in a state of ritual frenzy, as microtonal viola double-stops clash with biting eight-note chords in the accordion — a wild, polyrhythmic duel.

A contrasting texture of steady, scratchy sextuplets appears once, then returns, setting in motion a fateful sequence of events until, eventually, the Orisha emerges through the music:

Olokun...

Maferefún...

Olokun II was commissioned by Adam Ørvad with funds from the Danish Arts Foundation. It was premiered by Adam Ørvad and Mina Fred on 15 December 2012 at the Kunsten Museum of Modern Art Aalborg, Denmark.

Program note by Dr. Iván César Morales Flores and Mathias Reumert

Oggún Adeolá for bass flute/flute, viola, and accordion, 2011

While retaining many of the aesthetic attributes of Louis Aguirre's language, this work reveals what may be his most intimate, quiet, and mystical side.

A theme presented in the bass flute is followed by eighteen variations, ending with a solo accordion chorale. The continually evolving, organ-like sonority pays homage to Bach; it is an unusually contemplative work for Aguirre, especially in relation to other pieces from that period.

Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp had been an inspiration, but the final instrumentation — with accordion replacing the harp — was the result of Aguirre's close collaboration with the three soloists, "the only players on the Danish contemporary music scene at the time who could cope with my musical demands and long rehearsal hours."

The work was premiered by Karolina Leedo, Mina Fred, and Adam Ørvad on 19 August 2011 at the OpenDays Festival in Aalborg, Denmark.

Program note by Dr. Iván César Morales Flores and Mathias Reumert

Fantaisie-Impromptu (after The Persistence of Memory by Salvador Dalí)
for accordion, 2018-22

Like an intricate clockwork, a fast, looping arpeggio and a cycle of open fifths go in and out of phase with each other. Twice, this whirlwind of sound fades into a softly trembling stillness. After a climactic *bellows shake* followed by a particularly beautiful *pianissimo* chord, the clock restarts, at which point a faint shadow of Schubert's *Fantasia in F minor* for four hand-piano appears.

The brief Schubert shadow will come to play a larger role over the course of the piece. "It's a melted Schubert, like Dalí's clocks," Aguirre said.

Fantaisie-Impromptu was written for Ander Tellería, who premiered it on 10 September 2022 at the Festival Muribalta in Zaragoza, Spain. The piece also exists in a larger version for two vibraphones, entitled *Fantasy for the Persistence of Memory*.

Program note by Mathias Reumert

Gardens of the Beloved (Three Tropes for solo alto flute/flute) 2008

Based on texts by the Persian poet Rumi, the work combines Christian and Islamic references with Aguirre's ever-present connection to Afro-Cuban and Carnatic traditions. Conceived as an instrumental monodrama, *Gardens* unfolds as an allegorical and syncretic act of invocation — addressed to God, Allah, Brahma–Vishnu–Shiva, Olofi, or Nsambi. It becomes an intense, direct address to the divine, as if voiced by a priest, imam, *babalawo*, or *tata nkisi*.

Part II, “You are always in my heart and soul,” is especially arresting. The structure of the text itself seems to allude, obliquely, to the right-to-left orientation of Arabic script. The phrase begins with its final word and expands progressively in reverse:

Soul you soul

You are soul

You are always soul

You are always in my soul

You are always in my heart and soul (etc.)

Here, repetition takes on the character of ritual litany, moving from inward stillness — akin to Sufi devotional practice — toward an increasingly charged, incantatory intensity associated with Afro-Cuban ritual.

Structurally, Aguirre adapts a Carnatic “jathi phrase” technique in which rhythmic groupings expand systematically. The process unfolds with increasing density, growing from a single dotted quaver into rapid, tightly packed figuration.

The work was written for Karolina Leedo, who gave the first performance on 19 December 2008 at Aalborg Kloster, Denmark.

Program note by Dr. Iván César Morales Flores

With a catalogue of 221 published compositions, including four chamber operas, **Louis Franz Aguirre** (b. 1968, Camagüey, Cuba) is widely considered one of the foremost Latin American composers of his generation. Educated at the University of Arts in Havana, he was appointed Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Camagüey in his twenties. Seeking to expand his compositional scope, he relocated to Europe in the early 2000s, studying composition at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam and at the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus, Denmark.

Parallel to his conducting career, Aguirre became a priest in Afro-Cuban religions, a profound spiritual background that informs nearly all of his output. Musicologist Dr. Iván César Morales Flores has described Aguirre's music as possessing "the power of an exorcism, brutal and impenetrable, requiring the utmost of performers and their instruments... a strange marriage of modernism with the mysteries of the Afro-Cuban religions".

A resident of Denmark since 2004, Aguirre has founded the Snow Mask Trio and the Aña International Ensemble, and curates programming for the Waves up North festival alongside director Niels Chr. Rasmussen. His works continue to be performed at major New Music festivals worldwide by elite collaborators, including Joan Soriano and the SoXXI Percussion Group, Juanjo Guillem and Neopercusión, clarinetist Horia Dumitrache, oboist Pilar Fontalba, and percussionists David Hildebrandt and Mathias Reumert.

Mina Fred (b. 1978) is a Swedish violist, improviser, and vocalist. One of the most sought-after violists in Scandinavia, she is active in numerous chamber music groups and is a long-serving member of two of Denmark's foremost ensembles: the Danish Chamber Orchestra and the Athelas Sinfonietta.

In Athelas, she collaborates with both established and up-and-coming composers and has taken part in more than 100 world premieres. With the Danish Chamber Orchestra and its chief conductor, Ádám Fischer, she has made numerous acclaimed recordings, including the complete symphony cycles of Beethoven and Brahms.

Her dedication to premiering new works also extends to the Snow Mask Trio, founded in 2011 by composer Louis Franz Aguirre.

Karolina Leedo (b. 1977) is an Estonian flutist based in Denmark since 2001 and a distinctive interpreter of contemporary and performance-based music. She is a founding member of the socio-artistic new music ensemble Lydenskab and appears regularly at festivals across Europe with groups such as the Ensemble for New Music Tallinn.

Leedo's collaboration of more than 20 years with composer Louis Franz Aguirre has shaped her exploration of new sonic territories and produced a dozen new works. Her celebrated recording of Aguirre's flute concerto *ORULA*, with the Mathias Reumert Group, represents a milestone in their artistic partnership — a collaboration that also includes her membership in the Snow Mask Trio, founded by Aguirre in 2011.

Adam Ørvad (b. 1976) is a Danish classical accordionist and educator whose extensive repertoire spans from the Baroque to the avant-garde. He is also a specialist in Balkan folk music; since 2014, he has directed the Orfeus Balkan Ensemble, dedicated to Bulgarian folk traditions, and has published albums and books focusing on Bulgarian and Serbian musical styles.

A dedicated champion of new music, Ørvad has commissioned and premiered numerous works by contemporary composers. This includes a profound collaboration with Louis Franz Aguirre, resulting in more than 40 pieces, as well as his ongoing membership in the Snow Mask Trio, which Aguirre founded in 2011.

Olokun II and *Oggún Adeolá* were recorded on 16 May 2025 at KoncertKirken, Copenhagen.
Recording engineer: Federico Mattioli. Editing and mix: Mathias Reumert and Alma Hede

Nsambia Mpungun, *Fantaisie-Improptu* and *Gardens of the Beloved* were recorded by
Thomas Vang on 4 November 2025 at The Village Recording, Copenhagen. Editing and mix:
Mathias Reumert

Producer: Mathias Reumert

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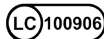
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