



Gateway Performance Series
2011-12 Season

Journey for Flute and Guitar – AlmaNova Duo

www.almanova.us

Jessica Pierce, flute | Alma Imamovic, guitar / composition



Saturday, January 28, 2012, 7:30 p.m.
Sanctuary of Gateway Christian Church
11760 Gateway Boulevard, Los Angeles

Program

AlmaNova Duo

Jessica Pierce, flute | Almer Imamovic, guitar & composition

Journey for Flute and Guitar

Sarajevo Nights	Almer Imamovic
Jamilla's Dance	Almer Imamovic
Histoire Du Tango: <i>Nightclub 1960</i>	Ástor Piazzolla
Pièce en Forme de Habanera	Maurice Ravel
Entr'acte	Jacques Ibert
Song for Marcus	Almer Imamovic
Bitola	Petar Georgiev-Kalica arr. by Almer Imamovic
Jovano, Jovanke	Tradational arr. by Almer Imamovic
Andante	Mauro Giuliani
Journey	Almer Imamovic
Kafana	Almer Imamovic

Total duration of tonight's program is about 1 hour, without intermission.

Additional notes will be announced on stage by the performers during the concert.

All audience members are welcome to join our performers at the reception following the concert. Program is subject to change.

The award-winning ensemble, **AlmaNova**, is an innovative flute and guitar duo presenting an eclectic program of chamber music. Flutist Jessica Pierce and guitarist Almer Imamovic are both masters of their instruments elevating the flute and guitar ensemble to the highest level of virtuosity and artistry. Their live performances are filled with energy and passion creating a “...graceful, intuitively choreographed display of seamless connection.” (*Fresno Beehive*).

AlmaNova met in France while studying at the famed *Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris*. They continued their graduate work at the *Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama* and the *USC Thornton School of Music*. Since then they have had the privilege to perform extensively throughout the world including recitals in Paris, London, Sarajevo, Stockholm, Tijuana, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Kansas City, and San Diego.

AlmaNova's recordings have been described as “...pure musical pleasure” (*Flute Focus Magazine*, 2009) and have received much critical acclaim. Their first CD recording 'Debut' features original works by Mr. Imamovic inspired by the sounds and folk melodies of his native Bosnia. It was recently honored by the largest worldwide independent music organization, *Just Plain Folks*, receiving *Best Instrumental Album, 2009* as well as *Best Instrumental Song, 2009* for 'Sarajevo Nights'. Their second CD, 'Classic Giuliani' was awarded *Critic's Choice, 2008* by American Record Guide calling it “... some of the best [Giuliani] I've heard”. Their newest release, 'After Hours', explores the music of Macedonia through thoughtful arrangements and more original compositions by Mr. Imamovic and Ms. Pierce.

Jessica plays Sankyo Flutes and Almer plays Kenny Hill Guitars exclusively.

Program Notes

Sarajevo Nights

So many images come to mind when one thinks of the beautiful city Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1984 Sarajevo was the proud host of the Winter Olympic Games. Just ten short years later Sarajevo was under siege. Now, the resilient city and its people are trying to recapture their soul and make up for lost time. I wanted to express this spirit of Sarajevo through this piece. Walking through Bascarsija (the old city), eating pita and drinking yogurt, hanging out with friends in the quaint cafes...these are all images I have when I think of Sarajevo.

Moj Golube

Moj Golube has always been one of our absolute favorite *sevdalinke* (Bosnian love songs). It tells the story a young boy and girl who are in love but not able to be together due to their young age. In order to communicate, they employ a pigeon to carry notes to one another. At the end of the song they realize their youth and decide to wait until they are older to continue a relationship!

Song for Marcus

During my time as a starving student in Cardiff, I earned some money to pay my rent by playing in a Turkish restaurant. Every evening a man would come in and sit right in front of me with a good bottle of red wine and listen to me play. Sometimes he would request songs and some of his favorites were rumbas by the Gypsy Kings! Eventually, this man, Mr. Marcus Lewis, and I became very good friends and I came to know his great passion for the guitar. To show my gratitude for his support and friendship during my student years in Cardiff, I wrote him *Song for Marcus*.

Entrac't

Jacques Ibert (15 August 1890 – 5 February 1962) was a French composer of classical music. Ibert's music is considered to be typically quite "light" in character, often witty, colorfully orchestrated with attractive melodies. In this work he explores the traditional flamenco songs repertoire of the *canto jondo*, or 'deep song'. He uses the guitar in a traditional way, providing a rhythmic and pervasive ostinato to accompany the flute's singing lines. French composers of this time had a fascination and great love of music from Spain. Manuel da Falla once said that some of the best Spanish music has come from French composers.

Piece un Forme d'un Habanera

Joseph-Maurice Ravel (March 7, 1875 – December 28, 1937) was a French composer of Impressionist music known especially for his melodies, orchestral and instrumental textures and effects. His *Piece en Forme d'un Habanera* was originally written as an etude for the voice. It has since been transcribed for a variety of chamber ensembles. The habanera is the simplest and most common of Latin rhythms constructed from multiples of a basic durational unit, and grouped unequally so that the accents fall irregularly in a one or two bar pattern.

L'Histoire du Tango

Astor Pantaleón Piazzolla (March 11, 1921 – July 4, 1992) was an Argentine tango composer and bandoneón player. His oeuvre revolutionized the traditional tango into a new style termed *nuevo tango*, incorporating elements from jazz and classical music. A virtuoso bandoneonist, he regularly performed his own compositions with different ensembles. *L'Histoire du Tango* composed in 1986, is a suite originally written for flute and guitar, the two original instruments in the traditional tango repertoire. In its four movements, it covers the evolution of Argentine tango through the twentieth century.

The first movement, "Bordel 1900," refers to the low origins of tango as a form of musical entertainment in the brothels of Buenos Aires. Musically, this movement is still closely related to the ancestors of tango, featuring Afro-Argentine and Afro-Uruguayan music elements. The second movement, "Cafe 1930," presents us Tango solidly established as a part of the social life of the porteños, the inhabitants of Buenos Aires. The music is more serious, and displays a patina of deep melancholy that would become a distinctive feature of this music genre. "Nightclub 1960" and "Concert d'aujourd'hui" contain autobiographical references. When Piazzolla returned from France to Buenos Aires in the mid 50s, Tango, displaced from the dancing floor by the wave of American rhythms that would soon flood the musical world, had found its place in the nightclub scene of Buenos Aires. It is here that Piazzolla and other Tango musicians struggled to enrich the vocabulary of Tango with Jazz and classical elements, and also to emancipate Tango music from its night-life environment - which they justifiably saw as an artistic dead-end-, turning it into a concert genre. These two last movements of "The History of Tango" present a musical picture of this development.

Program Notes (Con't)

Jovano, Jovanke

Jovano, Jovanke is a highly energetic arrangement of an old traditional Macedonian folk song about two young lovers whose passion is forbidden by their parents. Almer's arrangement focuses on the emotional turmoil those two young hearts have to endure.

Bitola

Simple beauty...an elegant, somber melody...this is what drew me to this timeless folk song from Macedonia. Bitola was actually the inspiration for our entire third album. We chose to focus on the wonderful music from Macedonia because of how much this piece touched us. At one of our performances last year we premiered our arrangement of *Bitola*. Our good friend Fumie, with tears in her eyes, said that she heard sadness and pain, but the ending left her hopeful. She saw sunlight coming through clouds of darkness. It was then that we realized the power and beauty of these 'simple' songs

Kafana

The folk bands that you may find entertaining the public in traditional Bosnian cafés inspired *Kafana*. It is a lively dance-like tune with the flute playing the part of the accordion. At times the harmonies are surprisingly exotic and the melody fluctuates between an up-beat drive and sultry, smooth lines.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, 1/29, 1pm

Opening Reception of *Californian Landscapes* by Nevin Wong (Free Admission)

Where can you see ice capped mountains when you are standing in a desert? Photographer Nevin Wong saw this for the first time in California. Originally from Hong Kong, he moved to Los Angeles in 2004 to complete his education. The wondrous landscapes in the US captivated him, and this was his motivation to start visiting National parks and capturing the diverse scenery of the country. He is presenting a collection from his travels through California

Saturday, 3/18, 7:30 pm

Rose Duo

Traveling from Brazil and Argentina to Mexico and the United States, pianist Rose Chen and cellist Lars Hoefs present a smoldering program of pan-American delights. Samba rhythms reinvigorate Bach, Stravinsky joins a mariachi band, and once-forbidden tango takes the stage. Music by Villa-Lobos, Ginastera, Piazzolla, Chavez, Revueltas, Barber and Bolcom draw expression and life's essence from the new world, crossing over one hemisphere in order to bridge another.

Sunday, 4/22, 1pm

Associate Artists Group Exhibition (Free admission)

This season we combine the concept of an art exhibition with an education program to inspire young artists to create new works. Members of the youth of the Gateway Christian Church will be welcomed as Associate Artists. Nevin will go into the field with them and guide them in creative photography. Their works will be showcased during this exhibition.

Sunday, 5/20, 7 pm

Gateway Jazz Orchestra with Alan Chan

After a successful debut in May 2011, the 17-piece Gateway Jazz Orchestra is returning this season! Coming from the tradition of big band music of Thad Jones, Jim McNeely and Maria Schneider, this band consists of some of the best jazz musicians in Hollywood and Los Angeles. and the program features progressive works by Dr. Alan Chan, the sole winner of the ArtEZ Jazz Composition Contest at the International Jazz Festival Enschede, Netherlands in 2011.

Acknowledgements

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