

It is curious to notice that most of Mr. Dellalian's writings for piano use aleatoric notation, next to extended techniques, to present an idea which is intended to be repeated a number of times before transitioning to the next. The 2005 compilation called "Sounds of Devotion," where the composer's family generously present articles, photos and other significant testimony on the composer's creative life, remembers the two major influences in his music to be modernism and the Armenian Genocide.

ABOUT DZOVIG MARKARIAN

Dzovig Markarian is a contemporary classical pianist, whose performances have been described in the press as "brilliant" (M. Swed, *LA Times*), and "deeply moving, technically accomplished, spiritually uplifting" (B. Adams, *Dilijan Blog*).

An active soloist as well as a collaborative artist, Dzovig is a frequent guest with various ensembles and organizations such as the Dilijan Chamber Music Series, Jacaranda Music at the Edge, International Clarinet Conference, Festival of Microtonal Music, CalArts Chamber Orchestra, inauthentica ensemble, ensemble Green, Xtet New Music Group, USC Contemporary Music Ensemble, REDCAT Festivals of Contemporary Music, as well as with members of the LA PHIL, LACO, Southwest Chamber Music, and others. Most recently, Dzovig has worked with and premiered works by various composers such as Sofia Gubaidulina, Chinary Ung, Iannis Xenakis, James Gardner, Victoria Bond, Tigran Mansurian, Artur Avanesov, Jeffrey Holmes, Alan Shockley, Adrian Pertout, Laura Kramer and Juan Pablo Contreras.

Ms. Markarian is the founding pianist of Trio Terroir, a Los Angeles based contemporary piano trio devoted to new and complex music from around the world. Recently, the trio gave the North American premiere of New Zealand composer James Gardner's piano trio *blessed unrest* (2006) at Disney Hall's REDCAT venue, with the composer in attendance. In the fall of 2012 and with a generous invitation from Lark Musical Society, the trio launched the new music series called Baricades Misterieuses, which researches and presents collaborations with living Armenian composers and echoes from their European counterparts.

Currently a doctoral student at the University of Southern California, Dzovig holds two degrees from California Institute of the Arts.

For upcoming events please call 562.985.7000 or visit the web at:
WWW.CSULB.EDU/COLECONSERVATORY

**BOB COLE
CONSERVATORY
OF MUSIC**
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

THE BOB COLE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH AND THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS PROUDLY PRESENT:



GUEST ARTIST SERIES

DZOVIG MARKARIAN

PIANO

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2013
8:00PM

GERALD R. DANIEL RECITAL HALL
PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC MOBILE DEVICES.

PROGRAM

I.
Les Ombres Errantes (1730)..... François Couperin
Languiſſamment (1668-1733)

Ambre Nous Resterons (2007)..... Gérard Pesson
Languiſſamment (b. 1958)

II.
Four Tankas (2011)..... Jirayr Shahriranyan
I. Adagio con anima (b. 1988)
II. Agitato
III. Andante con moto
IV. Lento

Echoes From Childhood (2012)..... Tatev Amiryan
Andante (b. 1983)

Epicenter: piano triptych (2011)..... Hayk Melikyan
Definitum—delicatamente (b. 1980)
Epicentrum—furioso
Infinitum—lontano

INTERMISSION

III.
Sonate, K. 213-L. 108, in d minor (ca.1750)..... Domenico Scarlatti
Andante (1685-1757)

IV.
A Poem for Elliott (2007)..... Ellen Taaffe Zwilich
(b. 1936)

90+(1994)..... Elliott Carter
(1908-2012)

V.
Six Chansons (1951)..... Iannis Xenakis
1. Ça sent le musc (1922-2001)
2. J'avais un amour autrefois
3. Une perdrix descendait de la montagne
4. Trois moines crétois
5. Aujourd'hui le ciel est noir
6. Sousta, danse

Dedication to Gomidas: piano sonata..... Harutyun Dellalian
Largo e rubato (1937-1990)
Allegro

vigorously practiced, and where urbanization itself was enough to inspire the new folk style of the *rebetiko*. It would be very easy today to locate, in this country, which unlike other European countries, has not had a Renaissance, and where classical music has not had a chance to penetrate fully, numerous national values which have not evolved beyond the initial cult phase. It would seem that in 1951 Xenakis had for a moment contemplated the ambition to be for Greece what Bartok had been for Hungary, and to rise to international significance by way of working on national traditions. Xenakis located the Greek folk music elements in treatises such as the ones by S. Baud-Bovy.

The first piece (*Ça sent le musc*) is a *syrtos* from the Aegean islands, and could be compared to the ones harmonized by G. Lambelet. The second piece, which can be located in the same collection, is a widely known dance in Greece: it is in 7/8 and it is called *kalamatianos*, with tender and naive lyrics that say 'I had a love back in my time, she was my treasure, my precious treasure. And I loved her with loyalty, while she would shamefully make fun of me. One morning, I went to her place, and I called her by her name. Good morning my apple, my apple, my orange, there is not another like you in the world, my treasure.' The third piece uses a fast accompaniment, which is meant to evoke the dizzying spin of the Cretan *lyra*, a rebec with three strings, the use of which is very uncommon nowadays. The fourth piece introduces uneven rhythms, typical of Balkan musical tradition. The fifth, is a completely different one: a funeral march in C# Major, in lied form, which could have been written in Chopin's or Schumann's time. The sixth piece is a typically Cretan *sousta*, (literally a 'spring'), with irresistible energy, and harmonized with parallel fifths, as in the tradition of works for *lyra*."

(Notes originally in French by François-Bernard Mâche, and approved by Xenakis. English translation by Dzovig Markarian, and approved by Sharon Kanach)

Six Chansons is perhaps a unique and isolated event in the compositional output of Xenakis (or at least among the so far published pieces of his), in the sense that his mature style is a radical departure from national roots and folk materials. Xenakis' later acoustic and electronic compositions rely heavily on the composer-architect's architectural drawings and models and to either draw their inspiration from these, or to present literal musical transcriptions of them. His rather stochastic processes result in pieces with highly complex rhythms and with pitch content that can be at times pointillistic and at others include multiple layers of sound. The example to best illustrate this sound world is the piece called *Synaphai* (1969) for piano and orchestra, where the piano part is ten staves of music, one staff for each finger of the pianist's hands.

An unexpected contrast to Xenakis' *Six Chansons* is a piano piece with extended techniques by contemporary composer Harutyun Dellalian, where the latter processes his national and ethnic musical tradition of folk song and dance, through a rather grim exposure to European and Russian modernism. *Dedication to Gomidas*, rather than sounding like Gomidas (Father of Armenian melody, who lived from 1869 to 1935 and is revered for his work in the collection, purification and transcription of Armenian songs from many countries), first creates a landscape of undetermined sounds with string resonances and clusters, before inviting fragments of Armenian melodies to emerge often in their typical dotted rhythms and modal settings. The piece is a quasi-sonata in two movements, and at the end of the second movement the pianist is required to sing/hum three words in various repetitions and combinations, from the nostalgic "Naroy, Naroy, beautiful, dear." Naroy is a legendary female name, which may refer equally to a distant or lost lover, as well as to a distant homeland.

half can look at the same theme from different angles. The first set presents two American composers, Carter and Zwilich, where the first was the teacher of the second, and they are presented here with both of them writing compositions as birthday presents to other composers. Carter wrote *90+* in 1994, as a 90th birthday gift to his friend and Italian composer Goffredo Petrassi (1904-2003). The piece is based on short and articulated notes, counting to 90, which are separated from each other by specific rhythmic intervals, and also within different layers of other music which happens simultaneously. This technique of foreground music and background music is standard practice in contemporary or modern music starting from Debussy and Schoenberg, and while with some composers it may dictate an attention to “melody,” in others such as Carter’s music, it dictates itself, that distinct gesture by which single notes occur in the space of other texture.

It is worth mentioning that Carter’s evolution over his relatively long lifespan of almost 104 years, offered to his repertoire in general, as well as his piano compositions, a variety of characters. As such, his earlier piano writing, while as atonal or serial as the later ones may be, provided for more “melodies and counterpoint” with relatively less complicated rhythms. Later pieces such as the one on this program, break away from the little predictable or comfortable bits, as they present major 9ths, pointillism, use of large registral shifts, within a rhythmic texture of complex juxtapositions: varieties of quintuplets versus varieties of triplets suddenly landing in rhythmic modulations. Theoretical analysis proves that almost no note is a random meaningless choice, but part of some kind of a hexachord, its complement, or a link.

Zwilich, on the other hand, has written *A Poem for Elliott* as a birthday present for Elliott Carter’s 99th birthday. It is a very short two-page simple piece, which experiments with rhythmic accelerations in a rather primitive way compared to the complex ways that Carter creates his “scorrevole” sections. The character of this piece is reminiscent of for example a fireworks piece for marching band, with parallel open octaves to be played in “bell-like” (in Zwilich’s words) character. The only similarity with Carter’s music, besides the diatonic or pan-tonal sound, is a literal similarity with the *90+* and in particular the opening dyad as a pick-up to the beginning of the piece (pitches, quality of dyad/chord and rhythm are however dissimilar).

V. The second set presents two composers who lived an important part of their early lives in Greece (Xenakis from 1932 through 1947, Dellalio from 1937-1947), and while they both belong to cultures known to have a deep attachment to ethnic and folk traditions, their music reveals how radically different is the way in which they both process their own traditional musical values.

“*Six Chansons*: The piano suite of 1951 is composed almost entirely of various harmonizations of Greek folk music, all according to conventions widely illustrated in Greece and elsewhere.

In the context of the era, a Greek political refugee has been able to temporarily be sensitive to positions taken by ‘progressive musicians,’ such as Durey, Koechlin and Nigg; to compose music which comes from the traditions of its people and its music which speaks to its people, as opposed to the music of the ‘bourgeois formalists.’

Almost every Greek composer believed in this position, even more so because Greece back in the 50s was still a rural country where traditions were respected and

PROGRAM NOTES

This program is part of a concert series called **Baricades Mistérieuses**, which my trio and I are presenting this season. The season consists of five concerts, which are all chamber music concerts in the exception of this one.

Baricades Mistérieuses, or “mysterious barriers” in English, is a title taken from one of Couperin’s harpsichord pieces, and it is said to refer to a woman’s eyelashes as the barrier to the soul. It is true to almost all titles of Couperin’s pieces in his Suites or Ordres, to be evocative as well as provocative. In my research, though, of how the ancient and present classical music of Europe, Armenia, the Middle East and America, connect or don’t connect, I decided to name the series **Baricades Mistérieuses**, for how it suggests a contemplation the journey and destiny of musical compositions.

As such, my program presents works grouped together, and that is to indicate two or more composers who inspired each other, who illuminate one another, or who despite the fact that they didn’t even meet, share strong characteristics.

I. The first half starts with a musical gesture which pairs François Couperin and Gérard Pesson, not just in an abstract comparison of three hundred years of musical trajectory. Pesson’s piece indicates to be inspired by Couperin’s *Les Ombres Errantes*, which is a piece in the 25e Ordre. Also, the pianist to whom Pesson dedicated the *Ambre Nous Resterons*, Alexandre Tharaud, is currently enjoying a versatile international career, where he records music by Couperin, Chopin as well as Pesson and movie soundtracks.

Furthermore, Pesson’s piece carries the (almost, except Pesson spells the word with 1 “s”, or “languissamment”) same tempo marking as Couperin’s piece, which says “languissamment,” or with a languishing character, and it starts with a fragment of the motif in Couperin’s opening gesture in c minor, the third and the fifth of the c minor I chord, E flat going up to G.

However, while Couperin’s piece is a two-part form, that starts and ends in c minor, Pesson follows no such conventions: in fact, he follows no conventions whatsoever. The only “convention” is the return of the E flat-G pair of notes as a distant echo (or remnants) of Couperin’s legacy, sometimes in diminution (original was in eighth notes) and at the very end in a very long and *espressivo* augmentation. The rest of this short piece uses delicate and quick gestures that look like written-out Baroque ornaments with all conventions of dynamics, register, and hierarchy non-existent. Further extended techniques include eliciting harmonic resonances by holding down register with the sostenuto pedal, and scraping strings, etc.

II. The grouping of three living Armenian composers is meant to not only enlighten one another’s style, but to also serve as an illustration of the more conservative aspect of modernism just like Couperin’s piece showed in comparison to Scarlatti’s.

The three young and talented composers from Armenia first started as piano and composition students in Armenia, and now have gone out to the world to specialize, perform, tour, etc.: Ms. Amiryman is currently studying at UMKC for her doctorate, Mr. Shahrmanyan recently finished a residency in Toronto and is now back

in Yerevan, and Mr. Melikyan is touring the world with solo recitals, recordings and premieres of his works as well as a number of his Armenian and European contemporaries.

Four Tankas is composed by Jirayr Shahrmanyan in 2011 specially for “1900+” World Piano Music Concert Series edition, and dedicated to pianist and composer Hayk Melikyan. Each of the four Tankas draws inspiration from a specific poem from the Japanese tradition of 5 line poetry. Below is the text for each of the Tankas.

I.

Is it a willow blooming in the spring,
Always cloaked in the misty haze,
Or plum-tree flowers at my house?
How should I understand,
Which is the most beautiful here?

—*Fukhito Okhara*

II.

In the Wakae bay,
The moment the flow rushes up
Shoal goes into hiding at once,
And that time the near cranes
Fly into rushes and yell...

—*Kaesi-uta*

III.

Broken by the sound of the breeze
That plays on the bamboo leaves
Near the window,
A dream even shorter
Than my fleeting sleep.

—*Princess Shikishi*

IV.

When you see—the moonlight cutting, passing
Through the garden dense where
The darkness of branches and leaves is falling,
Suddenly, your heart will wrench
And you’ll say; Fall. —Here it has come.

—*Unknown author*

Echoes from Childhood was written by Tatev Amiryanyan in 2012 and premiered by the composer herself at the UMKC Conservatory the same year. Based on childhood feelings while growing up in Armenia in the early 1990s, this piece echoes both the gloom of the war and the joy of child’s naïve soul.

Hayk Melikyan’s *Epicentrum: piano triptych* takes its name from a fellow artist Moko Khachatryan’s painting with the same title, “Epicentrum,” for which the composer writes the following text:

“You fly aloft, falling into the barbed wire for a moment. You escape from it and it seems that you don’t even feel the colic and continue to fly. You pass through wind circles, through black and dark and then bright passages. All of a sudden some pieces of ice shed on you. You continue to fly aloft and feel the nails beneath your feet which are hot and tingle because of the boiling rain. The nails seem to bring the pleasure from the first glance, but in couple of seconds, you...”

Here is Moko’s art expressing the relationship of her deep personality, reality and canvas. I am deeply impressed by Moko’s vivid imagination. Her unique individuality brought new shades of color to my musical thinking with emotions often incomplete and often with constant images. It seems to me, I found the epicenter of the conflict of emotions.”

The piece is published by “1900+” World Piano music Concert Series, Yerevan, Armenia. While the first and last movements deal with verticality versus horizontality (for the most part), the second movement is a graphic score which as per the composer’s instructions, while it could be interpreted as representing the curves and sharp angles of the Spitak-Armenia’s deadly earthquake of 1988, it really symbolizes the meeting point of human emotions: the epicenter between “definitum” and “indefinitum.”

III.

The second half starts with *Sonata* L. 108 by Scarlatti, both as a musical gesture, and also as an echo to Couperin’s atmosphere of delicate finesse, however, with a distinct flair that we have progressed from the purely Baroque, to the rather Classical style. In Scarlatti, the suggested mood is once again heavy, not through the tempo marking this time, but through the d minor tonality of the piece. D minor happened to be one of Scarlatti’s “favorite” keys to write in, as the analysis of his 555 sonatas reveals that 76 were written in D Major, 69 in G Major, and 32 in d minor, as the first three largest groupings of keys. Still very much in close ties to the Baroque and the Binary form like Couperin’s piece was (Couperin begins with c minor, and goes to the relative Major or E flat Major at the double bars, and ends back in c minor. Scarlatti begins in d minor and goes to the dominant at the double bars, and back to d minor to end.), Scarlatti finds more ways to lighten up the mood, mainly through its B section in the dominant or A Major, and the abundance of ornaments.

It is often observed and commented on in the press and other literature on contemporary performance practice, that as the landscape of piano recital shifted from large scale pieces as dominant features, to miniatures as dominant features, that the convention of playing by memory also shifted to playing with the score and even to having a page turner for convenience.

The number of pieces, or their difficulty, is therefore presenting a lesser conflict, while the bigger issue is the design and coherence of the program. More and more pianists are starting programs with what is called by analysts or critics as being a “musical gesture,” which has the quality of a musical greeting and also serves to set the mood. As such, a number of world-famous pianists such as Alexandre Tharaud, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Marino Formenti, to name a few experts at contemporary music, will begin a program with a movement from a larger Classical piece, or a shorter Bach piece paired with a Kurtág miniature, or a Purcell piece etc., to set the mood and declare the character of what’s to come next, or, better yet, to sharply contrast with the main menu: Aimard can have programs of solo music that run two or three pages long, with sets of miniatures or longer pieces that segue to shorter ones, such as starting with Bach’s *Art of Fugue* and at some point transitioning to Carter’s *Intermittences*, for example.

This technique is probably a derivative of Berg’s genius of composing an atonal opera, which he succeeded doing by combining numerous shorter pieces that share something, such as a note, a musical gesture, a *leitmotif*, a specific time in the plot, or are linked via interludes, etc.

IV.

The Scarlatti sonata in a way sets a precedent of how pieces in this second