



GREEK CLASSICS



GREEK FLUTE MUSIC
OF THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES

**Antoniou • Terzakis • Logothetis • Kounadis • Ioannidis • Adamis
Couroupos • Borboudakis • Tsangaris • Kossona • Koumendakis**

Katrin Zenz, Flute



Greek Flute Music of the 20th and 21st Centuries

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Katrin Zenz, Flute

Chara Iacovidou, Harpsichord ¹

Angelica Cathariou, Mezzo-soprano ²

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Despite the diversity of compositional styles and aesthetic ideals, all Greek composers of the 20th and 21st centuries share the same inescapable compulsion to tackle the issue of their inherited tradition. In the multiplicity of its interpretations, afforded by the immense time-span it covers, Greek musical tradition has preserved its ubiquitous presence in a country that remained for a long time insulated from developments in western art music owing to social and political conditions. Greek composers of the 20th and 21st centuries have explored a wide gamut of possibilities for the incorporation of elements of tradition in their music. The collection of works for flute in the present recording aspires to offer a succinct overview of these possibilities.

Lament for Michelle (1988) by Theodore Antoniou (b. 1935) was written for the death of the flautist Michelle Salm. It is based on a dirge (*moiralo*) from the area of Mani in Greece. With a noted emphasis on motivic coherence, the piece is characteristic of the composer's tendency towards elegantly constructed small-scale forms as well as of his eclecticism, mixing atonal elements with modal folk material. Acquiring an almost anthropomorphic rôle, the flute does not merely imitate the idiosyncratic intonation of the lamenting human voice but integrates it in its own musical texture.

Zwei Märcen (1996) by Dimitri Terzakis (b. 1938) typifies the composer's idiosyncratic relation to western musical tradition, described by himself as "negative in a fruitful way". With its roots in the music of the eastern Mediterranean, his musical language lays emphasis on the horizontal, i.e. melodic, dimension of music and moves away from the equal-tempered system through the use of micro-intervals. Even if this shift towards absolute monophony may be perceived "as a slap in the beautiful face of western music", Terzakis entices his audience to see "how its face will be after the slap".

Globus (1978) by Anestis Logothetis (1921-94) was originally written for *Vermeulenflöte* (an instrument devised by the Dutch flautist Greta Vermeulen) or for any other instrument or combination of instruments. Inspired by what the composer describes as a "less optimistic

world view", it is based on the superimposition of two sound layers: on the one hand, the serpentine melodic line of the flute that symbolizes the introverted, meandering path of the individual; on the other, a sonic substratum that resembles "a globe with borders of continents vaguely defined by oceans, covered with evenly scattered eruptive events like fireworks", a symbol of the adverse outside world that is "equally dangerous as it is endangered".

Written in 1970 for the flautist Aurèle Nicolet, *Blues* for flute and harpsichord by Arghyris Kounadis (b. 1924) is an intermezzo from his opera *Die verhexten Notenstände*. The striking discrepancy between the title of the work and the tongue-in-cheek invocation of Baroque style through its instrumentation and passacaglia-like form (essentially, a set of three flute variations over the "blues" patterns of the repeated harpsichord part) confirms the subversive sarcasm of Kounadis's idiom. The music teeters and totters *con morbidezza* like an atonal *danse macabre*, with the two instrumental parts proceeding in apparent indifference to each other's presence towards a sort of forced concordance in the coda.

A study in miniature form, *Fragmento II* (1971) by Yannis Ioannidis (b. 1930) is based on the organization of well-articulated formal units in a freely atonal idiom with distinct character, texture, timbre, and melodic-motivic content. Its formal clarity and restraint do not mirror the extreme polarization of its dynamics and registers. Without any clear sense of developmental drive, the music follows an implied cyclical formal plan that leaves the piece open-ended. In this respect, the work appears as a true fragment, implying a past before its beginning and a future after its final note.

Melisma (1981) for flute and mezzo-soprano by Michael Adamis (b. 1929) displays some of the most idiomatic traits of his compositional style. The two embellished melodic lines (*melismata*) bear references to Byzantine chant and are interwoven in a "polymelodic" scheme that allows striking harmonic conflicts to emerge. In the course of this process the music moves beyond

symbolism towards universalism. This is mirrored in the abstract vocalisations of the soprano line that deprive the human voice of any conceptual meaning and transform it to pure instrumental sound.

Élégie by Giorgos Couroupos (b. 1942) was originally written for oboe in 1973 in memory of Jean-Pierre Guézec, Professor of Music Analysis at the Paris Conservatoire. Displaying a distinctive style in the manner he deploys rhythm, metre, and ancient Greek modes, the work follows a sophisticated formal plan: the presentation of a basic thematic unit precedes its varied repetition, in the course of which the melodic flow is disturbed by bursts of virtuosity that intervene between thematic elements. The present recording is based on a transcription for flute by Katrin Zenz.

Commissioned for the International Competition of the Flute Meeting 2007 in Volos, Greece, *Aeolian Elegy* (2006-07) by Minas Borboudakis (b. 1974) is characteristic of the composer's preoccupation with musical *topoi* of ancient Greek literature and mythology. It unfolds the narrative of an imaginative exploration of the technical capacities of the instrument, in the course of which timbre and texture become essential elements of its structure.

Ansage (2003) by Manos Tsangaris (b. 1956) demonstrates an unmistakable theatricality that stems from the contribution of different sonic and visual elements (flute, little bells, lights, wooden shrine) to its dramatic fibre. These elements tend to participate in the music's structure as pure sounds or images (e.g. the recited poem, written by the composer himself, moulded with the air sounds of the flute, loses its meaning to become purely sound). Five formal units, distinct in

timbre and texture and referred to as "means" (*Mittel*), precede an attempt at integration that leads to their eventual return in a state of dissolved decomposition. In the present recording, several adjustments have been made in order to reproduce the multi-dimensional character of an on-stage performance.

Composed for Katrin Zenz, *Diathlaxis* (2009) by Fani Kosona (b. 1976) is linked to the optical phenomenon of diffraction (*diathlaxis*) through a mathematical model of catastrophe theory. One of the most important elements of its structure is the deployment of timbre over a spectrum that ranges widely from Aeolian to normal sounds and sound mixtures with notes sung by the flautist. "Smooth" Byzantine-chant-like melodic lines are suddenly broken, forcing the music to stammer with bends and multiphonics owing to the diffraction that distorts the direction of its melodic flow.

Dedicated to Katrin Zenz, *Forget me* (2009) by Giorgos Koumendakis (b. 1959) is based on two Greek folk-dances: a *karsilamas* from the area of Thrace and a *pyrrhichios* from the area of Pontos. Koumendakis reinvents, redeploys, and recomposes the folk material, preserving its primordial energy and authenticity as if he were "following the same process as the one followed by the anonymous composer of Greek demotic songs". The dazzling tempos and dense textures of this piece tend to neutralise its traditional content and leave room for the composer's personal imprint.

Petros Vouvaris and Katrin Zenz

Katrin Zenz



Born in Donaueschingen, Southern Germany, and established since 1993 in Greece, the German flautist Katrin Zenz plays a central rôle in the performance of contemporary Greek flute music. Her research in the use of extended techniques has brought her into close contact with many composers and subsequently a number of works have been dedicated to her. She is a founding member of the Vivier Trio, the Ensemble Actis, the Ensemble 2:13 and the Trio Windbruecke, as well as being a member of the Ensemble Köln, the Athens Camerata, the Ensemble Skalkottas, and of various ensembles of free improvisation. Her encounter with Peter-Lukas Graf has been decisive for deepening her musical and flautistic knowledge during the last years. She is Assistant Professor for flute in the Department of Music at the University of Macedonia in Thessaloniki. She has recorded music for flute by Iannis Ioannidis (Greek Music Society 1998), Anastassis Philippakopoulos (Edition Wandelweiser 2006), and numerous other Greek composers.

Angelica Cathariou

The mezzo-soprano Angelica Cathariou sings a wide range of operatic and symphonic repertoire, from Peri's *Euridice* and Bizet's *Carmen* to Britten's *Phaedra* and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, appearing at venues including Carnegie Hall, the Concertgebouw, Megaron Athens Concert Hall, Opéra National du Rhin, Budapest Spring Festival, Festival de Marseille, Ferrara Festival and the Festival de la Roque d'Anthéron. She has also performed in numerous concerts of contemporary music, including *Pierrot Lunaire*, *Le marteau sans Maître*, Berio's *Folk Songs*, Pärt's *Stabat Mater*, Crumb's *Ancient Voices of Children*, Miss Donnithorne's *Maggot* by Maxwell Davies and works by Xenakis, C. Halffter, Gubaidulina and Sciarrino. As a soloist she has performed under the musical direction of Abbado, Antoniou, Bedford, Latham-Koenig, Plasson and Alberto Zedda, with the Athens State Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Pomeriggi Musicali and Orchestre de Picardie. Her recordings include the world première of Skalkottas's *16 melodies* (BIS), Falla's *El amor brujo* (Naïve), Schubert's *Mass in E flat*, and the music of Alexandre Desplat for the film *11'09'01 New York September 11*.

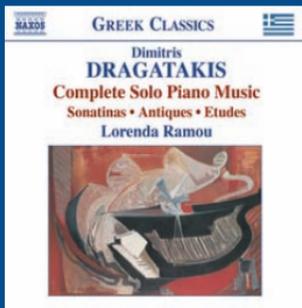


Chara Iacovidou



Chara Iacovidou was born in Athens to a famous family of artists. She studied in Athens, Paris and America and was a pupil of Marie-Françoise Bucquet, Leon Fleischer, John Perry and Jean-Claude Penner. Over the last years she has worked under the guidance of Alfred Brendel, the most decisive encounter in her musical life. She regularly performs as a soloist and in chamber music throughout Europe, as well as in Vietnam and in America, with a New York début at Carnegie Hall. She has appeared as a soloist with the Greek National Orchestra, the Athens Camerata, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice, the Orchestre Symphonique d'Orléans, and the USC Symphony Orchestra in Los Angeles. Her Lyrinx recording of waltzes by Schubert and Ravel won international critical acclaim. She also recorded Ioannidis's flute chamber music with flautist Katrin Zenz. She has translated Alfred Brendel's *Essays on Music* into Greek. Her recording of variations by Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven has been released by Lyrinx.

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This dazzling collection of flute music demonstrates the powerful individualism of contemporary Greek composers. It ranges widely, from the dirge that incorporates folk material in Theodore Antoniou's *Lament for Michelle*, to the use of ancient Greek modes in Giorgos Couroupos's *Elégie*. Dimitri Terzakis employs micro-intervals to sonically fascinating effect in *Zwei Märchen*, whilst Yannis Ioannidis explores extremes of dynamics and registers in *Fragmento II*, a powerful example of the vitality and variety to be found in all these compositions.

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Katrin Zenz, Flute

Chara Iacovidou, Harpsichord ¹ • Angelica Cathariou, Mezzo-soprano ²

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