



J. Keren: Three Israeli Dances

This piece was commissioned by The Tel Aviv Trio for their tour in the Persian Gulf emirate Qatar. The piece is a medley of three popular Israeli songs, originating from the Bedouin dance- "Debka".

In the early days of Israel struggling to be considered as an independent state, there was a need to find a new cultural language unifying all immigrants coming from all parts of the world. In order to create a new Israeli identity, closer to the Middle Eastern atmosphere, the popular music of that time adopted local elements, applying modal keys, complicated rhythms and folkloristic tunes. It tried to truly reflect the essence of the new land's ambiance.

However, when this piece was composed in 2001, the composer used the material not only according to the historical Middle Eastern point of view, but also tried to create a synthesis with the western classical tradition. This combination is a triple success- the Arabian Bedouin dances that became Israeli songs are now transformed into a classical European form of music- a piano trio!

Jonathan Keren, born in Israel in 1978, is an award-winner from the Koussevitzky Foundation at the Library of Congress (2007), a recipient of ASCAP's Young Composers' Award prize (2004) and Scholarships from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation (1997-2003). He is a recent graduate with a Master's degree in composition from The Juilliard School, under the tutelage of Milton Babbitt and Samuel Adler. Mr. Keren's works have been performed at the Carnegie Hall in New York; the Louvre Museum in Paris; the Berliner Philharmonie and the Tel-Aviv Museum by such artists as cellist Lynn Harrell, The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, The New Juilliard Ensemble, Kaprisma Ensemble, and the Fountain Chamber Music Society, of which he is the Composer in Residence since 2002.

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