



JOHN PSATHAS

the
new

Zeibekiko



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WELCOME – BARBARA GLASER

There's something special about performing a piece of music for the first time.

It's even more special when you've commissioned that work. It is for these and many other reasons that Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra is delighted to bring *The New Zeibekiko* to the stage, a piece that has for some years been a labour of love for its composer, John Psathas.

We're equally thrilled that this performance is in partnership with, and a key part of, Auckland Arts Festival; we believe the Festival should feature new and adventurous works from the city's cultural icons.

All of us at the APO thrill to the flavours John brings to his music: the rhythmic drive, the instrumental colours, the coming together of tradition and modernity; we are naturally quick and proud to claim John as one of our own. But equally his music thrums to the pulse of his parents' homeland, Greece. Perhaps never before have the connections between the place John lives and the place his ancestors hail from been made as explicit as they are in *The New Zeibekiko*, which pairs your own world-class symphony orchestra with Greek traditional musicians.

The Board, musicians and management of the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra are truly pleased to name John our Composer-in-Residence, and honoured to perform his new work as our contribution to the 2011 Auckland Arts Festival.

We are also pleased to welcome you to this world premiere. We're sure it will be as exciting for you as it is for us.

Barbara Glaser

Chief Executive

Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra



WELCOME – JOHN PSATHAS

The Auckland Philharmonia is one of the bravest, most innovative orchestras I have ever worked with. It is also exceptionally composer-friendly. To have been the APO's Composer-in-Residence has been one of the highlights of my career. I am grateful to the APO's management, artistic teams and especially to the players for making it possible to realise one of the great dreams of my life: tonight's spectacular celebration and sharing of Greek music and culture. And it is a privilege to have this concert as part of the 2011 Auckland Arts Festival.

The New Zeibekiko is an intoxicating journey through 2500 years of Hellenic musical history, from the temples of ancient Delphi to the exhilarating heart of 21st century Athens and the Greek islands. Sacred, profane and thrilling, this is a powerful musical odyssey, bringing together living practitioners of mystical, musical arts with the rich vibrancy of today's symphony orchestra.

Manos Achalinotopoulos and Petros Kourtis are custodians of

ancient musical traditions. They are master musicians, deep, soulful, and electrifying. Tonight they will take us all on an unforgettable journey.

With Hamish McKeich on the podium, and Jeremy Fitzsimons, Steve Bremner, Lenny Sakofsky and Eric Renick providing the life-pulse of the music, we are in for a truly great experience.

John Psathas

Composer-in-Residence
Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra



THE NEW ZEIBEKIKO

John Psathas

COMPOSER

Hamish McKeich

CONDUCTOR

Manos Achalinotopoulos

CLARINO & VOICE

Petros Kourtis

PERCUSSION & VOICE

Steve Bremner

Jeremy Fitzsimons

Eric Renick

Lenny Sakofsky

PERCUSSION



John Psathas

John Psathas is one of a few New Zealand composers who have made a mark on the international scene, particularly in Europe and North America. Since writing much of the ceremonial music for the 2004 Olympic Games, John's profile is much broader than is normally associated with contemporary classical musicians. He is now widely considered one of the three

most important living composers of the Greek Diaspora.

Raised in Taumaranui and Napier, John is the son of Greek immigrant parents who arrived in New Zealand in the early 1960s. After studying piano and composition at Victoria University, he studied privately in Belgium with Jaqueline Fontyn before returning to lecture at the New Zealand School of Music in Wellington.

John's music has been commissioned and performed by many great artists and orchestras around the world. These include Michael Brecker, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Michael Houstoun, Joshua Redman, The New Zealand String Quartet, Federico Mondelci, The New Zealand Trio, Pedro Carneiro, the Takacs Quartet, The Netherlands Blazers Ensemble, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, the Halle Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, the Melbourne Symphony, the BBC Scottish Symphony, the Vector Wellington Orchestra, the NZSO, and many others.

To John, music composition is first and foremost a communicative art form. He constantly seeks ways and means of making intellectual music accessible to a wider audience. He explores connections between contemporary music and age-old musical traditions and he puts together programmes, like *The New Zeibekiko*, that create a context for the appreciation of contemporary works.

The latest recording of John's work, *Helix*, is released by Rattle Music.

John Psathas is the current Composer-in-residence for the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra.



Hamish McKeich

An immensely versatile conductor, Hamish McKeich works regularly in New Zealand, Australia and Europe. He has performed in New Zealand, Australia, China, the Netherlands, Italy, England, Austria, Switzerland, France and Germany. From 2002 to 2006 he was Associate Conductor of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and performs regularly with them to this day. He has given more than 80 world premieres of new works and he is also chief conductor of the contemporary ensembles Stroma and 175East.

He has worked with many orchestras and chamber ensembles, including the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, ELISION ensemble, Metropole Orkest of the Netherlands Radio, Asko Ensemble of Holland, Stroma, Sydney Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, 175 East, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Christchurch Symphony and the EX Orchestra, among others. He has recently toured China, performing in Beijing's Zhongshan Music Hall and in Chengdu.

Hamish McKeich studied conducting with the legendary Ilya Musin and also prominent conductors Valery Gergiev, Sian Edwards and Peter Eötvös. McKeich was a finalist of the Gergiev Festival Conductors Masterclass, under the guidance of Professor Ilya Musin and Valery Gergiev.

He started his career as a bassoonist, first learning from his father, Ross McKeich. At 19, he became Associate Principal Bassoon with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and thereafter performed with orchestras in Britain and Holland.

Highlights of Hamish McKeich's immediate upcoming engagements include regular concerts and recordings with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, The Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Filarmonica Italiana, an 18-city tour of the USA, and further concerts with the Metropole Orkest of the Netherlands Radio, among others.



Manos Achalinotopoulos

Widely regarded as the finest of the new generation of Greek clarinettists, Manos Achalinotopoulos was born and grew up in Athens, taking up the flute and clarinet at the age of 9.

He immersed himself in traditional Greek music, studying and collaborating with masters such as Tassia Verra, Chronis Aidonides, George Koros and Aristidis Moschos.

In 1987 he was awarded the prize of 'best soloist' at the Ithaca Festival, and in 1991 he was chosen as the best clarinettist at the East-West Musical Meeting and Tour. He has appeared at many festivals including WOMAD and Montreux.

Manos travels extensively, performing and recording with a vast array of renowned singers, musicians and composers. In 2004 he performed at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Athens Olympics.

He has participated in more than 700 recordings, and has issued several CDs under his own name.

Manos's latest album, *Flight of Light*, is released by Rattle Music to coincide with his appearance in New Zealand.



Petros Kourtis

Petros Kourtis has been involved in the art of percussion since he was 12 years old.

He learnt classical percussion in the Municipal Conservatoire of Zografou (Athens), and continued at Berklee College of Music, where he studied ethnic percussion.

Since 1994 he has taught percussion at the Philippos Nakas conservatory. He has written two instructional books (Philippos Nakas publications).

In 2004 Petros Kourtis collaborated with Dimitris Papaioannou and George Koumentakis for the opening ceremony of the Athens Olympic Games.

Petros has worked with the most distinguished Greek composers, musicians and singers; he has toured internationally with most of Greece's leading artists.

He has also worked with international musicians including Loreena McKennitt, Al Di Meola, Omar Faruk Tekbilek, Dulce Pontes, Eddy Napoli, Mira Anwar Awad, Zohar Fresco, Arto Tunçboyacıyan and Ara Dinkjian.

Petros Kourtis is a founder member of the music ensemble IASIS and the percussion group KROTALA.

PROGRAMME NOTES

John Psathas (b1966)

The New Zeibekiko

"I was given the Greek language"

Odysseus Elytis

PART ONE

Clarino Solo

Manos Achalinotopoulos

Bacchic

Manos Achalinotopoulos/Arranged by
John Psathas

From the album *Hyacinth*

A] Diatonic

B] Sound from the region near the
borders

C] Kissing of the flute

Tradition, as I first came to feel it (as a child of nine years), was given to me by my grandfather when he was teaching me how to play the clarinet. To me this traditional musical language is not an "old loveless spinster who raises her threatening finger like an old-time teacher". My feeling about traditional ways of musical expression is exactly the opposite. It resembles a young girl full of verve, pleased and sorry, vivid and loving, who dances barefoot on the ground, as if being taken by a desire to sin, but then again she repents it. Later she falls in love, wishes to break the rules so to live and breathe freely. No concrete use of instruments, no

formal orchestration or particular musical formation can capture her essence. (Note by Manos Achalinotopoulos)

To Ponemeno Stithos Mou

(My aching breast)

Traditional arr: John Psathas

Adapted from the recording by Yiannis Parios on the *Nisiotika 2* album.

Ianni To Mandili Sou

(Yianni, your handkerchief)

Traditional arr: John Psathas

The introduction to the heart-breaking song is based on a very old rendition by Epirus musicians from the village of Ktismata (from the recording *Greece: Chants Polyphoniques et Musique d'Épire*). The continuation is an adaptation of a more recent realisation by Christos Zotos.

1st Pythian Ode

Text : Pindar (522-446 BC) / Music: A
Kircher (1601-1680)

Realised by Petros Tabouris / Transcribed
by John Psathas

The poem is devoted to Hieron of Aetna, champion of the Pythian games. The poet here first praises Apollo's lyre, which charms both mortals and immortals and warns off enemies, like Typhon, and then describes the eruptions of the volcano of Etna. Finally he praises his battle against the Carthaginians. (Note by Petros Tabouris)

Byzantine Memories

Krotala (Vagelis Karipis, Andreas Papas, Petros Kourtis, arr John Psathas)

Percussion Solo

Petros Kourtis and Percussionists

PART TWO

Doxastiko

Manos Achalinotopoulos (music and lyrics) / Arranged by John Psathas

“Ever shining light –Inner desert–Multi-moded chant”

A] Supplicatory

B] Proclamatory

C] Libation praying

I don't know if this way of expression is Greek, or whether its roots come from Byzantium or ancient Greece. Simply, this is the way of expression given to us like our mother tongue, this strange sound that came into existence by the soil and water of this country. We express ourselves using the living musical idiom of this country, not at all foreign or unfamiliar; this musical idiom exists to give way to a human communication between loving persons; i.e. the truth expressed by the word of God that is not to be forgotten. (Note by Manos Achalinotopoulos)

Kartsigar

Traditional

Tarantismo

John Psathas

From the name of the seaport Taranto comes tarantism - a psychological illness characterised by an extreme impulse to dance, prevalent in southern Italy from the 15th to the 17th century, and widely believed at the time to have been caused by the bite of a tarantula. From this comes the *tarantella*: a rapid whirling dance, so named because it was thought to be a cure for tarantism, the victim dancing until exhausted. Many people have suggested that the whole business was a deceit to evade religious proscriptions against dancing. The tarantella is a circle dance, performed clockwise until the music in the set changes to become faster, after which everyone changes direction. This cycle occurs several times, eventually becoming so fast that it is very difficult to keep up with the beat.

Tecmessa's Lament

lines 16-19 and line 23

Anonymous

Realised by the Atrium Musicae de Madrid / Transcribed by John Psathas

Fragment from the tragedy *Aias*. (Berlin papyrus 6870) Second to third century AD

Hymn to the Muse

Mesomedes of Crete (c.130AD)

Realised by Petros Tabouris / Transcribed by John Psathas

Aeolian Song

Melody: Manos Achalinotopoulos /

Texture: John Psathas

From the album *Flight on Light* launched at this evening's concert.

Maktrismos

Realised by Petros Tabouris / Transcribed by John Psathas

From the album *Music of Greek Antiquity*

At their favorite entertainment, the 'symposia' or dinner party courtesan dancers were called upon to entertain. In Greek vases they are pictured in scanty costume or entirely nude, dancing spiritedly to the music of the flute. The courtesans are often spoken of as notorious for their softness and lasciviousness. One such dance is called 'makter' or 'maktrismos' which translates as 'a kneading-trough, tub'. Specifically it involved a lascivious swaying of the hips. A similar dance called 'igdisma' derives its name from the word for a mortar, which in turn goes back to a verb meaning 'grind, pound'. In this dance 'they used to rotate the hips in the manner of a pestle' (in a mortar); it also involved "writhing, twisting". It was certainly a lewd performance.

Aivaliotiko

Traditional arr: John Psathas

One of the most well known and most frequently recorded Zeibekiko tunes among Greeks is the Aivaliotiko. As the

name indicates, it is especially associated with the town of Aivali / Ayvalik on the Aegean coast of Turkey.

Maenads

John Psathas

Draped in the skins of fauns, crowned with wreaths of ivy and carrying the *thyrsos* – a staff wound with ivy leaves and topped with a pine cone – the Maenads roamed the mountains and woods, seeking to assimilate the potency of the beasts that dwelled there and celebrating their god Dionysus with song, music, and dance. The human spirit demands Dionysiac ecstasy; to those who accept it, the experience offers spiritual power. For those who repress the natural force within themselves or refuse it to others, it is transformed into destruction, both of the innocent and the guilty. When possessed by Dionysus, the Maenads became savage and brutal. They plunged into a frenzied dance, obtaining an intoxicating high and a mystical ecstasy that gave them unknown powers, making them the match of the bravest hero.

From the CD *View From Olympus*. This arrangement based on the Netherlands Blazers Ensemble version, with the solo of Johan van der Linden transcribed for strings.

Notes by John Psathas, 2011

AUCKLAND PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA 2011

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Chair Donor
Siemens

Principal Guest Conductor

Roy Goodman

Concertmaster

Dimitri Atanassov
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Dame Jenny Gibbs

Assistant

Concertmaster

Miranda Adams
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Emeritus

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Rae Crossley-Croft =
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Sarah Hart

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Ewa Sadag

Katherine Walshe

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*Peter Wilson & Gerda
McGechan*

Benjamin Geller +

Anne Draffin #

Christine Bowie
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Claudia Price
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Basses

Gordon Hill β
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John Boscawen

Evgueny Lanchtchikov +

John Middleton #

Matthias Erdrich

Chair Donor
Sylvia Rosevear

Michael Steer

Flutes

Catherine Bowie β
Chair Donor
*Richard & Elizabeth
Ebbett*

Kathryn Moorhead +
Jennifer Seddon-Mori #
*Piccolo**

Oboes

Camille White
Chair Donor
Chip Dawson

Henry Ward
Chair Donor
Mollies

Martin Lee
*Cor Anglais**
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Clarinets

Gordon Richards β
Chair Donor
Tony & Deidre Anselmi

Bridget Miles +
*Bass Clarinet**
Chair Donor

*Stephen and Gail
Hofmann*

James Fry #

Bassoons

Ingrid Hagan β
Rachel Guan Ebbett +
Chair Donor

*Adrienne,
Lady Stewart*

Ruth Brinkman #
*Contrabassoon**

Horns

Nicola Baker β
Chair Donor
Marshall Day Acoustics

Emma Richards *

Carl Wells #

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Kevin Martin

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*The James Wallace
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Leigh & Carole Webb

Trumpets

Brent Grapes β
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Janet Smith

Huw Dann

Norman McFarlane +

Trombones

Douglas Cross β
Mark Close #
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Timothy Sutton *

Tuba

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Percussion

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Oud

Michael Gavriel

Composer-in- Residence

John Psathas

Composer Mentor

Kenneth Young

β *Section Principal*

= *Section Leader*
Emeritus

* *Principal*

+ *Associate Principal*

Sub-Principal

~ *Manchester
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Founded in 1980, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra is Auckland's leading arts organisation and is the city's only resident full-time, professional symphony orchestra.

In over 70 performances annually, the APO presents a full season of symphonic work and supports both the NBR New Zealand Opera and the Royal New Zealand Ballet.

Renowned for its innovation, passion and versatility, the APO has been and is the orchestra of choice for visiting international artists from Luciano Pavarotti and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa to popular musicians such as Dianna Krall, Burt Bacharach, and Serj Tankian and Kenny Rogers. The Orchestra also collaborates with some of New Zealand's most inventive artists, including The Topp Twins, Mika, Warren Maxwell, Shapeshifter and Little Bushman.

The APO also supports the development of a vibrant arts culture across the region by providing sector leadership and support for community orchestras and other art forms.

As Auckland's own orchestra, the APO is committed to delivering programmes which develop New

Zealand artists and music, reflecting the region's diverse communities. Through comprehensive and graduated education programmes throughout Auckland, the APO provides opportunities for 25,000 young people and adults nationwide to participate in music, ranging from hip-hop and rock to contemporary and classical.

Fulfilling its aim to make orchestral music available to the widest possible audience, the Orchestra also maintains a comprehensive programme of low-cost and free-access events. More than 100,000 people hear the orchestra live each year, with many thousands more reached through special events, other media, and recordings on APO Live and Naxos.

Most APO performances are broadcast live nationally and streamed online, allowing everyone the chance to share the excitement of a world-class performance.



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