

"Impressions intimes"

Anja Lechner/François Couturier Duo

Anja Lechner violoncelle
François Couturier piano

The musical affinity between Anja Lechner and François Couturier has been evident in their concerts and recordings with the Tarkovsky Quartet. In this new duo, the German cellist and the French pianist traverse a still-wider musical arc, playing pieces by G.I. Gurdjieff, Federico Mompou and Anouar Brahem, as well as Couturier's own compositions. New arrangements, free interpretation, and improvisation are all part of the work in their exploration of repertoire situated, metaphorically or musico-historically, at the crossroads of East and West. The Catalan Mompou's music drew influence, at different times, from French impressionism, from sounds of nature and from the mystical poetry of St John of the Cross. The Greek-Armenian philosopher and spiritual teacher Gurdjieff composed music influenced by his travels through the Caucasus and Asia Minor, channelling ancient knowledge in his adaptations from secular music and sacred dances. Anouar Brahem, a master of Tunisian oud tradition, writes music influenced by both oriental and occidental sources. François Couturier played with Brahem extensively, along the way learning much about Eastern melody and Arabic rhythmic cycles. Anja Lechner, meanwhile, has delved ever deeper into Gurdjieff's sound-world. More than a critical and popular success, her album "Chants, Hymns and Dances" (with Vasillis Tsabropoulos) influenced studies of Gurdjieff's compositions inside his Armenian homeland.

François Couturier and Anja Lechner also collaborate in the project In Compagnia D'Amore, with singer Maria Pia Di Vito, playing Couturier's re-elaborations of the music of Pergolesi. Work with the Tarkovksy Quartet continues, as does the expanded audio-visual "Le Temps scellé" project with live video by Andrei A. Tarkovsky.