

# Mp3 Iakovos Kolanian - Shoror- Armenian Folk Music For Guitar

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Groundbreaking interpretation of Armenian Folk Music via the classical guitar. Similar to John Williams and his folk music projects. 17 MP3 Songs WORLD: World Traditions, CLASSICAL: Contemporary Details: 2005 Armenian Music Awards- WINNER- Best Instrumental Album All Music Guide- 4 Stars- Rick Anderson Global Rhythm Magazine- "Second to None"- Stacy Meyn "Noubar Noubar" as heard in the 2005 off Broadway production of "Beast on the Moon". Iakovos Kolanian- Shoror: Armenian Folk Music For Guitar. {artist bio} Iakovos Kolanian was born in Greece in 1960, to an Armenian father and a Greek mother. At the age of 13, influenced by the musical currents of the time (pop, rock, as well as classical) he started his musical journey that eventually led him to the National Conservatory of Athens. There, he studied classical guitar with noted professors Evangelos Assimakopoulos and Lisa Zoe, and graduated in 1985 with the top award and a special honor for exceptional performance. Since that time, he has attended various special seminars and master classes in Greece and abroad, broadening his knowledge of the instrument from distinguished teachers such as Oscar Ghilia and Leo Brouwer. Throughout the years he has toured in Europe, Asia and Latin America, where he has presented to audiences a large part of the classical guitar repertoire. He also regularly takes part in important international festivals (Vienna, Milan, Athens, Israel, Cyprus and Yerevan) by giving individual recitals or acting as soloist with symphonic orchestras and ensembles of chamber music. He has performed as a soloist with Athens State Orchestra, Thessalonica State Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra of Greek Broadcasting Corporation (ERT), The Camerata Orchestra of Athens, Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as with numerous ensembles of chamber music. He has been regularly featured in well-known television and radio programs such as BBC, ORF, Radio France, ERT, RIK. One of these collaborations, in 1991, resulted in the recording and release of a CD of Loris Tjeknavorian's Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra with the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra with the composer himself as the conductor in a production of the Austrian Television (ORF). Most recently, in 2003, Kolanian's recording of the Lute Suites of J.S. Bach was released on the Eros label to critical acclaim. In addition to his career as a soloist and recording

artist, Iakovos Kolanian has been the head of the Classical Guitar Department at the Contemporary Athens Conservatory since 1992, and is an honorary professor at the Armenian Academy in Yerevan

{Iakovos's notes} I remember the surprise and the admiration I felt for the Armenian music as a professional when I dealt with it for the first time in 1984, particularly in my discovery of its musical richness and incredible lyricism. I began passionately searching for material (music scores, recordings, etc.) without really having identified the deeper motives that led me on this pursuit, yet I can still describe the awe and the emotions I felt each time I heard a piece for the first time. I managed to collect-with considerable difficulty due to the limited accessibility or availability of sources a considerable number of traditional dances and songs, deciding in the process that I would transcribe and re-compose part of this material for the guitar. However, such was the emotional impact of this music on me that, I sometimes found it difficult to hold back my tears as I worked through a particular piece. It was during this stimulating process that I came to the realization that this pursuit was not simply a professional step but, without a doubt, a journey into the depths of my soul in search of my Armenian roots. I recorded the transcriptions I made of this material for the first time in 1988, which was released on LP in Greece under my own independent production. In 1993, the same recording was released on CD by the Greek label Musica Viva and included transcriptions of various dance pieces composed by Komitas for the piano. I accepted with great joy the proposal from Pomegranate Music to re-record this repertoire. I started working on each of these pieces once again: this time, however, with the benefit of a new perspective gained from the experience and the knowledge accumulated through the intervening years. I took care to avoid some of the 'mistakes' in the harmonies that had existed in the previous recording. In this new offering, I have included the popular Yarimo, have re-transcribed Garoun A from the original piano score, and have rounded off Komitas's well-known dance suite by the addition of Shoror. I would like to warmly thank Kevork Imirzian for proposing this collaboration which, once again, afforded me the joy to experience some of the same sentiments that I felt more than twenty years ago. Iakovos Kolanian Piraeus, Greece 2004

{Producer's Notes} The Armenian musical tradition, like that of many other ancient peoples, dates back many centuries. Beginning with the reign of the Kingdom of Urartu, the ancient ancestors of the Armenians who put down roots in Asia Minor and who rose to dominance in the shadow of Mount Ararat, the epics and the dance songs have been handed down through the generations, often enriched by the assimilation of regional tribes and the consolidation of the Armenian people as an authentic and original

ethnic group. During the pagan era, many of the high-priests often happened to be good musicians as well. In the first century B.C., music, along with dramaturgy, came to be a regular feature of King Ardavazt's court. The musicians enjoyed great prestige and their figures were often profiled on the friezes of the temples and, later on, in the miniatures of the manuscripts. The establishment of Christianity as a national religion in 301 A.D. developed a new type of monophonic music that contained the secular and the spiritual elements of the pagan era, culminating in the artful and graceful canticles, kantzer (variations of canticles) and melodies of the twelfth-century Armenian Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali. The art of the ashough (or the troubadour or the minstrel) that developed alongside "spiritual" music, flourished from the fifteenth-century on up to the twentieth. Through songs of love and gallantry, these poet-musicians kept alive a cultural tradition which contributed to Armenia's musical heritage. Armenian folk music draws its richness from all these diverse strains: from the songs of plowing and threshing to epic songs, love songs, songs of village life and, most notably, to the dance tunes with their distinctive melodic patterns and rhythmic pulse. On the surface, these melodies may sound deceptively simple, for they tend to be more tender than voluptuous and are mainly lyrical in character. Yet they require of the performer a certain flair, a healthy dose of virtuosity and a great deal of that elusive feeling, that indescribable duende, to convey the appropriate feel of each tune. Needless to say, the challenge is even greater if one sets out to accomplish this feat utilizing a "non-traditional" instrument such as the classical guitar. One would certainly be required to possess both extraordinary musicianship and virtuosic gifts to capture the essence of these tunes and then be able to convey them with conviction. With this recording, Iakovos Kolanian not only rises to the challenge but, in doing so, he also sets a new standard in the interpretation and performance of this music in the Classical idiom. What he presents here to the listener is not an ordinary transcription of this material for the classical guitar but, rather, a meditation on these choice Armenian folk tunes that is the fruit of many years of study, reflection and refinement. Owing to an almost instinctive feel for this music, he bestows each individual piece with a unique touch that has been shaped by his solid grounding in the traditions of the Spanish guitar, his devotion to the music of J. S. Bach and, of course, his natural affinity for Komitas. In fact, this recording should clearly establish Kolanian as one of the premier interpreters of Komitas's music, regardless of the instrument. Performing these pieces (tracks 1, 10-17) on the guitar, however, presents certain requirements that go beyond the obvious complications of transposing the piano scores onto six strings stretched over twenty frets. Komitas used

harmony and polyphony in a unique and highly personalized way to retain the character of the original source with all its attendant subtleties and folkloric idiosyncracies. But, above all, his music requires the performer to feel and to reproduce that 'pulse' to move the listener. Kolanian is unwavering in his feeling and communicating of this pulse throughout the album but most notably in the five dances (comprising the last five tracks of this album) that Komitas composed in his musical maturity. With his rendition of these masterpieces on the guitar, Kolanian ushers the listener into a rarely-glimpsed world that is stunning in its elegance and beauty. While his bold and refreshingly contemporary interpretation of Garoun A, which opens the album, is enough to give one pause, the gracious dance tunes that follow in its wake fill in the emotional space created by this timeless piece in all their individual moods and colors. Kolanian conveys, with seeming effortlessness, the prodding urgency of a line usually reserved for the zurna, as in Noubar-Noubar or, some fluid and ornate slurring (or ligado) that would be regularly performed on the tar, as in Shourch Bar or Zankezouri, with his guitar. Aside from his breathtaking virtuosity, however, it is ultimately the musical refinement and emotional depth that distinguishes Kolanian's playing. The gems that he has created with this recording deserve to be treasured, and are sure to become a reference, for many years to come. Kevork Imirzian Boston, 2004

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