

“Interconexiones: New Quartets for Oboe and Strings” Cuarteto Emispherio (Oboe Classics, CC2037)



“Interconexiones: New Quartets for Oboe and Strings” is a project managed by **Cuarteto Emispherio** and consists of the commissions, premieres and recordings of five new oboe quartets composed by **Maricarmen Asenjo-Marrodán, John Richard Durant, Pilar Miralles, Luke Styles, and Althea Talbot-Howard.**

During 2022 Cuarteto Emispherio organised a Crowdfunding campaign in order to raise funds to cover minimum commissioning fees and recording expenses for the project. Thanks to the many supporters and sponsors, the project was brought to life in March, 2023.

All five quartets of the project “Interconexiones” were premiered by the Cuarteto Emispherio during the Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla XXXIII Chamber Music Cycle on March 5th, 2023 in Seville, Spain. Oboist, Lindsay Flowers and her colleagues performed the USA premiere of “Interconexiones” (including the world premiere of the second movement of “Uncertain Paths”) in April 2023 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Following the premiere in March 2023 Cuarteto Emispherio recorded all complete five works in Sputnik Studios in Seville and the album “Interconexiones: New Quartets for Oboe and Strings” was released through Oboe Classics in October 2023.

Cuarteto Emispherio is based in Seville, Spain. More recordings by Cuarteto Emispherio are available: “Quartets for Oboe and Strings” (CC2030, Oboe Classics 2015) and the single digital track “Cuarteto con Oboe” by Jesús Torres (Oboe Classics 2019).

Detailed biographies of the “Interconexiones” composers, information on how to acquire the scores, comments on their works and links to videos and interviews can be found at: www.cuartetoemispherio.com



CUARTETO EMISPHERIO
Interconexiones: New Quartets for Oboe and Strings

ALTHEA TALBOT-HOWARD (b.1966)

1. Seville Cathedral, A Study in Memory – in Arch Form. A Phantasy Quartet for Oboe and String Trio, with Aluphone Handbell or Tubular Bell (2022) 11:28

PILAR MIRALLES (b.1997)

2. Anti-Philosophy of the Subject – Mankind's Origin Is in Its Fellows (2022) 13:55

LUKE STYLES (b.1982)

Capturing Anthems (2022)

3. Sang. Watched. Waited 3:23
4. Ghosts May Be Heard 6:13

MARICARMEN ASENJO-MARRODÁN (b.1978)

Uncertain Paths for oboe, violin, viola, cello and electronics (2023)

5. Reminiscencias: Interconexiones 10:21
6. Material Inflamable 7:15

JOHN RICHARD DURANT (b.1960)

Mosaicos (2022)

7. El Laberinto 3:08
8. Sosos of Pergamon 2:00
9. Casa Batlló 2:02
10. Pan 2:25
11. Zellij 2:38

Total Time 64:48 | These are all premiere recordings



Recorded at Sputnik Recording Studios, Seville, 6,7 March 2023 | Production: Cuarteto Emispherio |
Editing, Engineering and Mastering: Jordi Gil | Oboe by Howarth of London (LXV) | Oboe image by Howarth of London |
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TRACK NOTES:

1 Althea Talbot-Howard - Seville Cathedral, A Study in Memory-in Arch Form

Althea Talbot-Howard (1966) is a British performer and composer. Born in Nigeria - of English and Nigerian parentage - thereafter, she was raised in England and Australia. She began her career as an oboist and currently her career is focused upon composing professional and pedagogical recital and chamber music, especially for oboe, saxophone, bassoon and recorder. She composed "Seville Cathedral" as part of a series of *Studies in Memory* and also as part of a thematic set about iconic church buildings. The quartet is minimalistic in style and relaxing to listen to, transporting us to the "Giralda" tower with the use of the Aluphone handbell in the cello part at the beginning of the piece. One imagines the huge arches and structure of the cathedral as we listen to the repeated motives and circular melodies based around musical letters taken from the names of composers Cristobal de Morales (1500-1553), Francisco de Peñalosa (1470-1528) and Francisco Guerrero (1528-1599).

2 Pilar Miralles - Anti-Philosophy of the Subject; Mankind's Origin Is in Its Fellows

Pilar Miralles, born in 1997 in Almeria, Spain, is currently resident in Helsinki and won First Prize in the prestigious "Fundación SGAE- CNDM" 2023 Competition for Young Composers. The name of the title: "Anti-Philosophy of the Subject" is cited and described by one of the characters as "mankind's origin is in its fellows" in Agnès Varda's 2000 documentary film "The Gleaners and I". This quartet is an honest and moving statement about the need for humankind to support and love one another. Part of the poem "Vuelo" (Flight) by Spanish poet, Miguel Hernández, is recited by the oboist, expressing that there is hope for those who love and fly freely. The work finishes with another theatrical aspect: As the violin plays a melancholic solo, expressing a feeling of helplessness, the remaining players leave the stage to invite members of the audience to hold hands and to connect.

3 - 4 Luke Styles - Capturing Anthems

Luke Styles (1982) born in Australia, is a British composer, whose music is performed regularly throughout the world. His concerto for oboe and 12 instruments "Neon Highway" was premiered in Australia, UK and Spain during 2019 - 2020. His quartet for oboe and strings is intellectual in style and is very compact with all voices fitting together like a jigsaw puzzle. The quartet is structured around two movements and begins with a complex and seemingly chaotic (yet very organised) section which soon transitions into a beautiful calm moment. Luke explains that this work "captures fragments of anthems and folk songs transforming them into a rich musical fabric. Like losing something shiny in a deep pond, the fragments of music sometimes catch the light and entice you to keep looking for them, ever drawing the listener into the depths of the music but never allowing themselves to be unearthed or taken away".

5 - 6 Maricarmen Asenjo-Marrodán - Uncertain Paths

Maricarmen Asenjo-Marrodán, born in 1978 in Seville, is the 2020 winner of the Manuel de Falla Composition Prize and currently teaches composition at music conservatoires in Andalucía. "Uncertain Paths" consists of two movements connected by an interlude of electronics and is conceived as one whole and continuous work. Asenjo-Marrodán incorporates many extended techniques for all instruments and tracks of prerecorded and manipulated string sounds are added at certain times during the piece as an extra layer. During live performances the audience experiences extra theatrical elements: The lights dim to darkness at the end of the first movement whilst the musicians are required to press reception bells with their feet whilst playing. The second movement is dominated by a bright red light on stage, adding to the sensation of fire (*Material Inflamable*) and rage, accompanied by an electronic heart beat until the end.

7 - 11 John Richard Durant - Mosaicos

John Richard Durant, born in 1960 in the UK and resident in Seville, Spain, trained as a clarinettist and is now a busy composer, arranger and conductor. John states that "Just as mosaics are patterns or images made of small regular or irregular pieces of coloured stone, glass or ceramic, so "Mosaicos" is similarly constructed from small fragments of musical ideas which develop into musical images." These delightful five concert pieces may be performed separately or together and are rich in Spanish rhythms and harmonies. They round off the "Interconexiones" series of works with a complete sense of connection between the cultures and roots of both the composers and musicians involved.

Notes by Sarah Roper. December 2023

Music Publishers: Seville Cathedral, Pantokrator Publications; Capturing Anthems, Belle Symphonie. For the other works please contact the composers. More information about the works and composers, including programme notes may be found on the Cuarteto Emispherio website:
www.cuartetoemispherio.com

Many thanks to all Supporters of the Interconexiones Project, especially our Platinum Patrons: Howarth of London, Lindsay Flowers /University of Wisconsin-Madison, Gold Patron: Lora MacPherson and Silver Patrons: Asociación de Amigos de la Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla (AAROSS), Casa Palacio de Carmona and Lenore Fishman Davis.

