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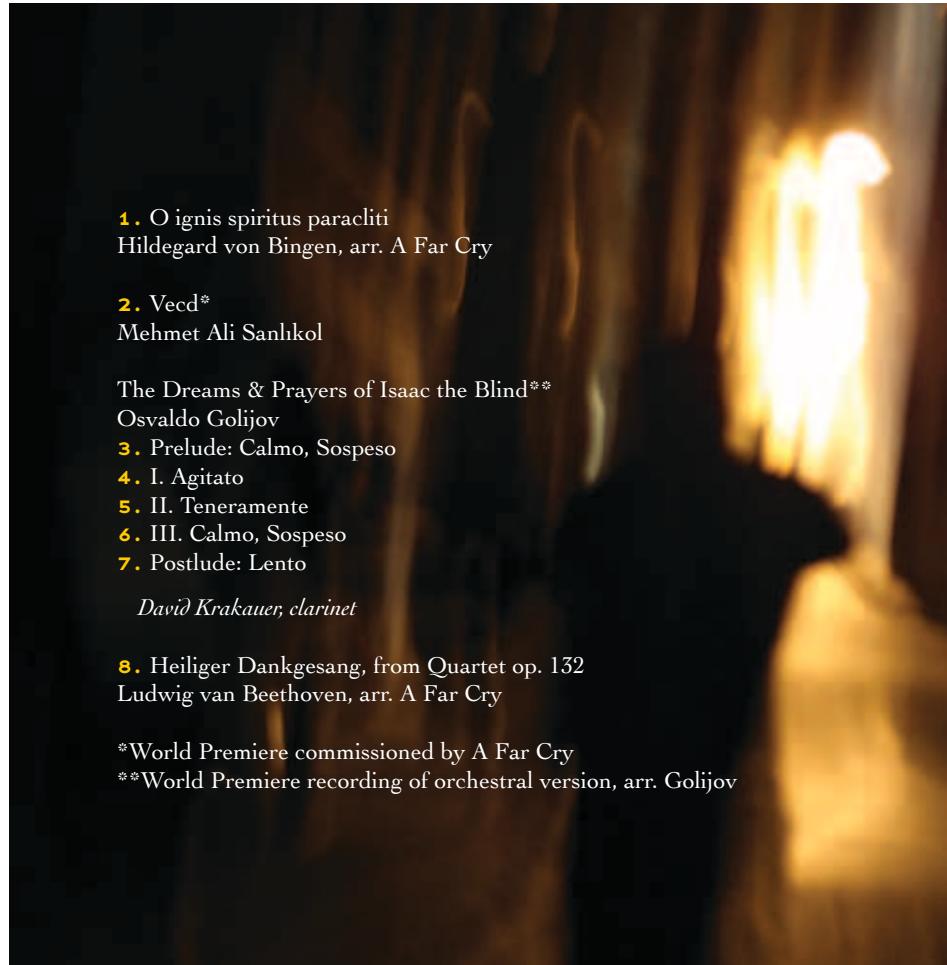
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DREAMS & PRAYERS

A Far Cry
David Krakauer



1. O ignis spiritus paracliti
Hildegard von Bingen, arr. A Far Cry

2. Vecd*
Mehmet Ali Sanlikol

The Dreams & Prayers of Isaac the Blind**
Osvaldo Golijov

- 3.** Prelude: Calmo, Sospeso
- 4.** I. Agitato
- 5.** II. Teneramente
- 6.** III. Calmo, Sospeso
- 7.** Postlude: Lento

David Krakauer, clarinet

8. Heiliger Dankgesang, from Quartet op. 132
Ludwig van Beethoven, arr. A Far Cry

*World Premiere commissioned by A Far Cry

**World Premiere recording of orchestral version, arr. Golijov



Viola:

Frank Shaw
Jason Fisher
Margaret Dyer
Sarah Darling

Cello:

Andrea Lee
Courtenay Vandiver Pereira
Nicholas Finch

Bass:

Erik Higgins
Karl Doty



A Personal Note: from *Dreams and Prayers* curator Miki-Sophia Cloud

One early morning years ago, I came across a text concerning St. Teresa of Avila—a Medieval Spanish nun and renowned Christian mystic. On a similarly sleepy morning 500 years prior, some novices stumbled upon Teresa in the abbey's kitchen, gripping a sizzling skillet with inhuman tenacity. Apparently, she had been in the middle of frying eggs when the Holy Spirit filled her with paralyzing spiritual ecstasy. Needless to say, it caught my attention.

What I found most compelling about that text, and what continues to fascinate me about religious mysticism as a whole is its deep connection between the sacred and the sensual, the divine and the domestic. It's the idea that God doesn't wait until you're all cleaned up, putting your best face forward in mosque/church/synagogue for an encounter. The spirit interrupts while you're making breakfast.

When I reflect on the most spiritually potent moments of my life, they are bound together in my consciousness with the most human, earthy physicality: the sound of communal breath, the flicker of a modest candle, the sensation of breaking into a sweat.

Being a musician has only intensified my belief in this connection. Somehow, the simple physical gestures of pulling a stick across a string, dropping fingers into place, and breathing in unison with colleagues has the power to move, inspire, and heal even the deepest corners of our complex human hearts. Really, it's perplexingly wonderful in the truest sense of the word, in that it actually leaves me full of wonder on a daily basis.

Dreams and Prayers, the album, explores music's role in religious mysticism as the ultimate passageway between the physical and the spiritual. In each of the four works on this album, drawing from three faith traditions and 1000 years of history, something very simple—a breath, a word, a turn, a single note is transformed into something transcendent, and even holy.

As we've performed and toured this program over the past two years, I've begun each concert by inviting the audience to react in whatever fashion they wish, removing any obligation to applaud. If this music makes you want to sit in meditative silence, please do so. If it makes you want to leap and dance and yelp in fervent ecstasy, by all means, do so.

The most gratifying part of this journey for me has been that during our performances, people from all walks of life, faith traditions, and personal philosophies have expressed the deep resonance of this music for them, and indeed, have sat in transcendent silence and danced down the aisles of stuffy concert halls. My hope is that this album will also find resonance within you. May it stimulate your mind, feed your soul, and light your spirit ablaze.

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) :: *O ignis spiritus paracliti*

From the age of five, Hildegard von Bingen saw gloriously vivid visions, but it wasn't until the age of forty-three that she began documenting them, then channeling their ecstatic energy into music. By that time, Hildegard was abbess at the Benedictine monastery Disibodenberg, her physical and spiritual home since the tender age of eight, when her family had dedicated her to the service of the church.

Monastic life builds a daily rhythm around the Divine Offices: services taking place at designated hours. Sequences (from the Latin, *sequentia*, "following") were elaborations of sacred texts. Originally, the last syllable of "Alleluia" was simply melodically prolonged, like a wordless ribbon extending, twisting, and trailing, in order to accompany lengthy processions. Eventually poetic text pertaining to the service was added with specific accompanying melodies, and sequences proliferated into the thousands. (The Church subsequently trimmed things down to a handful of approved sequences, one of which, the *Dies Irae*, is well known to many classical concertgoers from the *Requiem mass*).

What is striking about this sequence, and indeed all of Hildegard's music, is how elaborate it is in relation to most of the Gregorian chant being sung during her time — sheer artistic expression marrying form and function. Her music is often noted for its angular yet soaring lines crafted from breathless intervallic leaps. Her persistent, life-long visions were often centered on earthly elements of fire, water, and wind, and the texts to her compositions are preoccupied with expressing the spiritual through nature imagery — particularly the Holy Spirit as represented by the blazing light of flames.

-Kathryn Bacasmot

O ignis spiritus paracliti, written to honor the Holy Spirit, begins with the following text:

*O spirit of fire, bringer of comfort,
Life of the life of every creature,
You are holy, giving life to forms.
You are holy
anointing those perilously broken;
you are holy,
cleansing foul wounds.*

*O breath of holiness,
O fire of love,
O sweet savor in our breasts,
infusing hearts with the scent of virtue.*

Mehmet Ali Sanlikol (b.1974) :: *Vecd*

Vecd (wajd in Arabic) refers to a state of rapture or ecstasy. In Islamic mysticism, Sufi dervishes would try to attain the state of *vecd* during their ceremonies in which music played a central role. Since *vecd* is the essence of Sufi ceremonies, in this composition I have tried to capture the essence of several different kinds of Turkish Sufi ceremonies. When doing this I refrained from incorporating the sophisticated modal characteristics (or the so-called "microtones") of Turkish Sufi and Ottoman/Turkish classical music since this piece was being composed for a Western string orchestra. Instead, I decided to base the composition on *zikir*, the practice of singing repeated rhythmic phrases by Sufi dervishes. Typically, Turkish Sufi ceremonies would feature one ostinato in a simpler meter and would speed this ostinato up throughout the course of 5 to 10 minutes, if not more. During the speeding up of the ostinato, often a *hafiz* (Koranic chanter) would improvise on top of the ostinato using devotional poetry. In this composition, instead of using a single ostinato in a simple meter I used multiple rhythmic cycles ranging from 16 beats per measure to 4 beats per measure. The melodic phrases which develop throughout the piece replace improvisation, and these phrases together with the ostinati resemble another kind of Turkish Sufi ceremony: the *Sema* ceremony of the *Mevlevi* (whirling) dervishes.

-Mehmet Ali Sanlikol



Viola section in rehearsal



Jesse Irons and David Krakauer

Osvaldo Golijov (b.1960) :: Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind

Eight centuries ago Isaac The Blind, the great kabbalist rabbi of Provence, dictated a manuscript in which he asserted that all things and events in the universe are products of combinations of the Hebrew alphabet's letters: 'Their root is in a name, for the letters are like branches, which appear in the manner of flickering flames, mobile, and nevertheless linked to the coal'.

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Osvaldo Golijov

Isaac's lifelong devotion to his art is as striking as that of string quartets and klezmer musicians. In their search for something that arises from tangible elements but transcends them, they reach a state of communion. The movements of this work sound to me as if written in three of the different languages spoken by the Jewish people throughout our history. This somehow reflects the composition's epic nature. I hear the prelude and the first movement, the most ancient, in Aramaic; the second movement is in Yiddish, the rich and fragile language of a long exile; the third movement and postlude are in sacred Hebrew.

The prelude and the first movement simultaneously explore two prayers in different ways: The quartet plays the first part of the central prayer of the High Holidays, 'We will observe the mighty holiness of this day...', while the clarinet dreams the motifs from 'Our Father, Our King.' The second movement is based on 'The Old Klezmer Band,' a traditional dance tune, which is surrounded here by contrasting manifestations of its own halo. The third movement was written before all the others. It is an instrumental version of K'Vakarat, a work that I wrote a few years ago for Kronos and Cantor Misha Alexandrovich. The meaning of the word klezmer, 'instrument of song,' becomes clear when one hears David Krakauer's interpretation of the cantor's line. This movement, together with the postlude, brings to conclusion the prayer left open in the first movement: '...Thou pass and record, count and visit, every living soul, appointing the measure of every creature's life and decreeing its destiny.'

But blindness is as important in this work as dreaming and praying. I had always the intuition that, in order to achieve the highest possible intensity in a performance, musicians should play, metaphorically speaking, 'blind.' That is why, I think, all legendary bards in cultures around the world, starting with Homer, are said to be blind. 'Blindness' is probably the secret of great string quartets, those who don't need their eyes to communicate among them, with the music, or the audience. My homage to all of them and Isaac of Provence is this work for blind musicians, so they can play it by heart. Blindness, then, reminded me of how to compose music as it was in the beginning: An art that springs from and relies on our ability to sing and hear, with the power to build castles of sound in our memories.

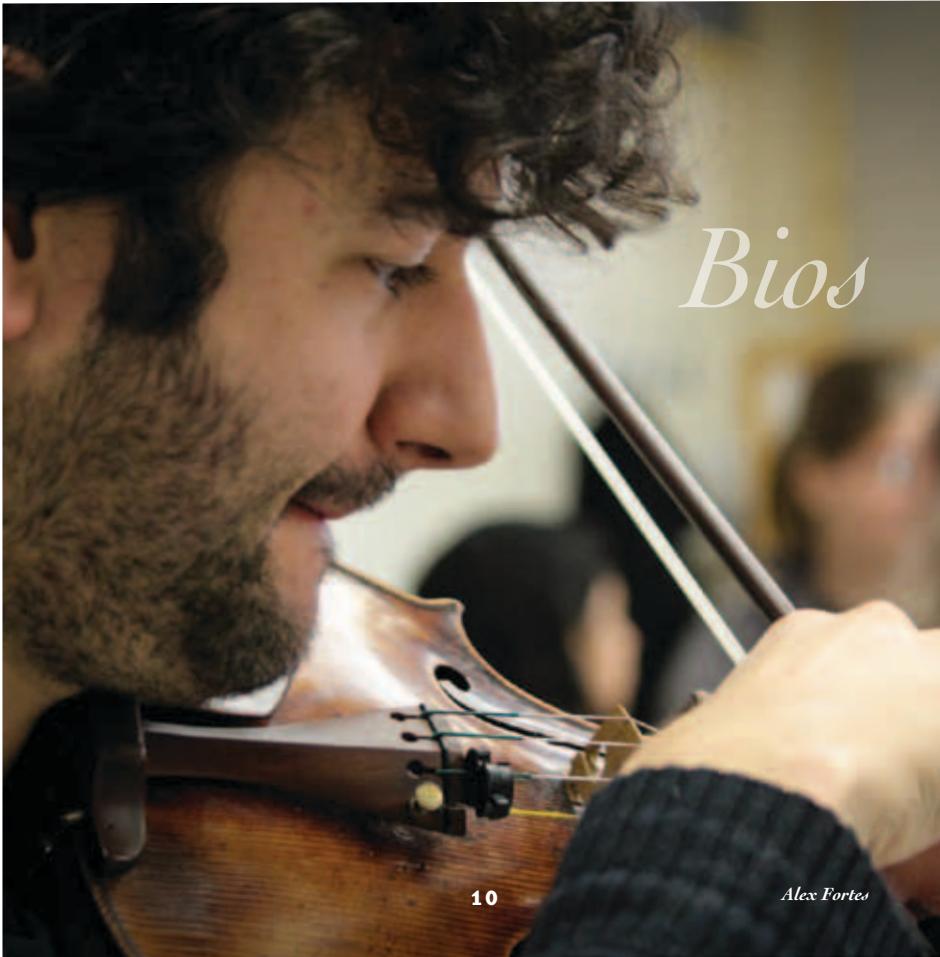
-Osvaldo Golijov

***Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) :: Heiliger Dankgesang,
from Quartet op. 132***

Beethoven's "Holy Song of Thanks by a Convalescent to the Divinity, in the Lydian Mode" (Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit, in der lydischen Tonart) is the expansive middle movement of the String Quartet op. 132, completed in 1825 as part of the so-called "Galitzien Quartets" (including opp. 127 and 130) after their commissioner Prince Nikolas Galitzin. Proportionally, it is nearly the length of the first two movements combined, and is twice as long as the two movements following. Structurally, it is divided into five distinct parts (perhaps a microcosmic reflection of the Quartet's five total movements), alternating three hymn-like "holy song of thanks" (Heiliger Dankgesang) sections with the shimmering melodic lightness of two "feeling new strength" (Neue Kraft fühlend) sections, forming a set of double variations as each repeats with increasing elaboration. Emotionally, the thanks expressed likely refers to Beethoven's recovery from an abdominal illness; perhaps, as Maynard Solomon suggests, also paying tribute to the healing powers of music on a beleaguered spirit. After all, in times of celebration or distress, we inevitably turn to music.

The Heiliger Dankgesang commences reverently in the old Lydian church mode, which, according to Renaissance music theorist Zarlino, "...is a remedy for fatigue of the soul, and similarly for that of the body." The first iteration achieves a floating, otherworldly quality through gently consonant harmonies. Then, with three declamatory unisons that grasp the listener as if to say, "pay special attention here!" the work shifts into D Major for the first of the two Neue Kraft fühlend sections. Beethoven uses trills as a kind of asterisk noting an important shift, and here, the first violin trembles with the onset of joy. Each subsequent restatement of the Heiliger Dankgesang and Neue Kraft fühlend gain confidence, strength, and resolve: passion, via dissonance and resolution, infuses the Heiliger Dankgesang, whilst the intervallic jumps and the violins' increasingly-intricate interweaving instill the second Neue Kraft fühlend with enhanced exuberance. The work concludes with a pledge to go forward with conviction and purpose, buoyed by spiritual and physical renewal.

-Kathryn Bacasmot



A Far Cry

A Far Cry stands at the forefront of an exciting new generation in classical music. According to the *New York Times*, the self-conducted orchestra “brims with personality or, better, personalities, many and varied.” A Far Cry was founded in 2007 by a tightly-knit collective of 17 young professional musicians—the Criers—and since the beginning has fostered those personalities, developing an innovative structure of rotating leadership both on stage and behind the scenes. Their omnivorous approach has led them to collaborations with artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Jake Shimabukuro, Urbanity Dance, and Roomful of Teeth. By expanding the boundaries of orchestral repertoire and experimenting with the ways music is prepared, performed, and experienced, A Far Cry has been embraced throughout the world with more than three hundred performances coast to coast and across the globe, exciting recordings, and a powerful presence on the internet. The Criers are proud to call Boston home, and maintain strong roots in the city, rehearsing at their storefront music center in Jamaica Plain and fulfilling the role of Chamber Orchestra in Residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Collaborating with local students through an educational partnership with the New England Conservatory, A Far Cry aims to pass on the spirit of collaboratively-empowered music to the next generation.

David Krakauer

Internationally acclaimed clarinetist David Krakauer redefines the notion of a concert artist. One of the world's leading exponents of Eastern European Jewish klezmer music, he is also a major voice in classical music. He has appeared with the Tokyo, Kronos, and Emerson quartets, plus as soloist with the Dresden, Seattle, and Detroit symphony orchestras, among others.

With his band Ancestral Groove, he has redefined the klezmer genre with major appearances at Carnegie Hall and internationally. His discography contains some of the most important klezmer recordings of the past decade,

notably *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* (Golijov/Kronos/Krakauer on Nonesuch). Consistently defying categorization, Krakauer has enjoyed artistic collaborations with Dawn Upshaw, Itzhak Perlman, John Zorn, Fred Wesley, Music from Marlboro, Abraham Inc, the Klezmatics, John Cage, Danny Elfman, and Socalled. His newest project, *The Big Picture*, explores the universal search for identity through reimaginations of familiar film themes brought together in a cinematic concert accompanied by original visuals. davidkrakauer.com

Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol

In today's world where we are constantly reminded of the differences between traditions, cultures, religions and ethnicities, Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol creates projects in which music connects disparate ethnic and religious groups through devotion, longing, celebration, and joy. Currently a faculty member at College of the Holy Cross and Brown University, Sanlıkol studied western classical piano with his mother Fethiye Sanlıkol and started giving piano recitals as early as age five. Later on he studied with the internationally-acclaimed Turkish composer/Jazz pianist Aydin Esen and won a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music. In 1997 he received Berklee's Clare Fischer Award and completed his degree in jazz composition and film scoring, studying with Herb Pomeroy and Ken Pullig. In 2000, he graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music with a Master's degree in jazz composition. In 2002, Sanlıkol was commissioned to write a piece for the PALS children's chorus accompanied by Turkish instruments and a chamber orchestra. The piece, entitled *Ergenekon: an ancient Turkish legend*, was a huge success. The Boston Globe's Richard Dyer wrote: "The music is colorful, fanciful, full of rhythmic life, and full of feeling. The multiculturalism is not touristy, but rather sophisticated, informed, internalized; Sanlıkol is a citizen of the world... and he is another who could play a decisive role in music's future in the world."

In 2004, Sanlıkol completed his DMA in composition at New England Conservatory, studying with George Russell, Paul Bley, John Abercrombie, Bob Brookmeyer and Lee Hyla. During the same year he co-founded DÜNYA, an ensemble dedicated to contemporary presentations of Turkish traditions, alone and in interaction with other world traditions, through musical performance, publication, and educational activities.

Osvaldo Golijov

Osvaldo Golijov grew up in an Eastern European Jewish household in La Plata, Argentina. Born to a piano teacher mother and physician father, Golijov was raised surrounded by classical chamber music, Jewish liturgical and klezmer music, and the new tango of Astor Piazzolla. Upon moving to the United States in 1986, Golijov earned his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied with George Crumb, and was a fellow at Tanglewood, studying with Oliver Knussen.

In the early 90's Golijov began to work closely with the Kronos Quartet, who expanded Golijov's musical family through collaborations with artists such as Taraf de Haidouks, Café Tacuba, Zakir Hussain, and Gustavo Santaolalla. For the past decade Golijov has been inspired by the voice of Dawn Upshaw, for whom he composed the Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra, the opera *Ainadamar*, and the song cycles *Ayre* and *She Was Here*. In addition, he collaborates closely with conductor Miguel Harth-Bedoya; vocalists Luciana Souza and Biella da Costa; cellists Yo-Yo Ma, Alisa Weilerstein, Maya Beiser and Matt Haimovitz; the Kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor and percussionist Jamey Haddad; ensembles including the Atlanta Symphony, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, Silk Road Ensemble and eighth blackbird; the artist Gronk, playwright David Henry Hwang, and directors Francis Ford Coppola and Peter Sellars.

In 2000, the premiere of Golijov's *St. Mark Passion* took the music world by storm. Commissioned by Helmuth Rilling for the European Music Festival, the piece featured the Schola Cantorum de Caracas with the Orquesta La Pasión. The CD of the premiere of this work, on the Hänssler Classic label, received Grammy and Latin Grammy nominations in 2002.

Golijov has received numerous commissions from major ensembles and institutions in the U.S. and Europe. He is the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship and the Vilcek Prize among other awards. Golijov's works are published by Boosey and Hawkes. His compositions have been released on Nonesuch, Deutsche Grammophon, Sony Classical, Hänssler Classics, Naxos, Koch, Harmonia Mundi and EMI. Golijov is Loyola Professor of Music at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, where he has taught since 1991.