

Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra  
*In the Key of the World*

ALBUM CREDITS

*In the Key of the World* was recorded on June 25-26, 2019 at Armoury Studios, Vancouver, Canada.

**Producer** Mark Armanini  
**Project Manager** Farshid Samandari  
**Conductor** Janna Sailor  
**Engineer** Sheldon Zaharko (Zed Productions)  
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*For the VICO*

**Mark Armanini** Artistic Director  
**Moshe Denburg** Founding Artistic Director  
**Farshid Samandari** Composer-in-Residence  
**Melanie Thompson** Communications Manager  
**Gina Hernandez Sanchez** Marketing & Production Assistant  
**Don Xaliman** Audio-Visual Recordist

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# VANCOUVER INTER-CULTURAL ORCHESTRA

**Mark Armanini** Artistic Director

**Janna Sailor** Conductor

**Mark Ferris** violin

**Christine Lin** violin

**Isabelle Roland** viola

**Finn Manniche** cello

**Mark Haney** double bass

**Jun Rong** erhu

**Lan Tung** erhu

**Marjan Alekhamis** alto qachak

**Bic Hoang** jaw's harp, birambau

**Saina Khaledi** santur

**Ali Razmi** tar, setar

**Dailin Hsieh** zheng

**Geling Jiang** sanxian, ruan, da ruan

**Qiu Xia He** pipa

**Douglas Hensley** oud, guitar

**Moshe Denburg** guitar

**Mark Takeshi McGregor** flutes

**Charlie Lui** dizi

**Zhongxi Wu** sheng

**Milan Milosevic** clarinet

**Mike Brown** clarinet, bass clarinet

**Geronimo Mendoza** oboe, English horn

**Jeremy Berkman** trombone

**Nicole Linaksita** piano, synthesizer

**Jonathan Bernard** percussion, mallets, hand drums

**Niel Golden** tabla

**Hamin Honari** tombak, daf

The **Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra**, founded in 2001, was one of the first ensembles of its kind in the world. The VICO brings together musicians and composers from many cultural and artistic communities in the greater Vancouver area, including Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, Indian, Persian (Iranian) and Middle Eastern, Latin and South American, Vietnamese, African, North American and European. The VICO strives to be a fresh and relevant voice in the contemporary music of our city, our province and our country. We build bridges of imagination. We approach diversity as a fascinating challenge and a creative call to action. We create and perform orchestral music that transcends boundaries: cultural, social, political, geographical. A 2012 recipient of the City of Vancouver Cultural Harmony Award, the VICO has been described as “a world music super-group” (Vancouver Sun), “music that sounds like Vancouver looks” (Georgia Straight), and “the United Nations of music” (CBC Radio).

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## TRACK LISTING

Lost & Found – Dorothy Chang

1. Folk Song
2. Two Gardens
3. Emergence
4. Meditation

Gypsy Chronicles – John Oliver

5. Crossing Byzantium
6. The Gates of Europe
7. Cri(se) de conscience
8. Retour aux sources

9. The King is Dancing – Moshe Denburg

Suite concertante: à cette époque-là – Farshid Samandari

10. days of *Kilim*
11. age of *Sarouk*
12. time for *Gabbeh*
13. a time for *Jajim*

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## ABOUT THE ALBUM

Intercultural music has existed for centuries in most traditional cultures. The VICO has spent the past two decades developing a contemporary musical art form that draws on this history and brings the idea of “music as a universal language” to global fruition. We have developed a ground-breaking intercultural sound palette and repertoire that combines aural and written traditions, ancient and contemporary styles, and a huge variety of instruments (bowed strings, plucked strings, winds, brass, percussion) into one ensemble, through which intercultural music is finding a voice... a voice that plays out in surprising technicolour, rich in new sonic combinations, as traditional historical extended techniques combine with western contemporary techniques and orchestrations.

Each of the traditions and instruments represented here - Chinese, Jewish, Persian, Indian and Western European - take on vibrant new colours when showcased in intercultural orchestrations that use techniques such as plucked instrument punctuation, microtonal shaped melodies and harmonies, and imaginative rhythms - all performed with an array of delicate ornamentations, both rhythmic and harmonic. Extended traditional and contemporary techniques find a place within the discipline of Western score writing, but we also use graphic, improvisatory and abstract notations and verbal instructions to transcend and expand beyond the limits of Western notation. This ongoing dialogue broadens the artistic and technical horizons of the intercultural orchestra and its place in contemporary society.

Each of the composers featured here has worked with the VICO over the past decade and more, as ideas transformed into scores and parts and sonic reality. These four works offer a glimpse into the limitless creative possibilities of the intercultural orchestra. The VICO is proud to present this music to the world, as an aural offering of humanistic beauty and hope for a harmonious future.

With respect for all who listen closely,  
Mark Armanini

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## COMPOSERS' NOTES

### **Lost & Found (2010)** 11:53

Dorothy Chang (b. 1970)

- i. Folk Song (2:32)
- ii. Two Gardens (3:48)
- iii. Emergence (2:34)
- iv. Meditation (2:59)

*Featuring:* Charlie Lui (dizi), Zhongxi Wu (sheng), Jun Rong (erhu), Lan Tung (erhu), Geling Jiang (sanxian), Dailin Hsieh (zheng), Qiu Xia He (pipa), Mark Takeshi McGregor (flute), Mike Brown (bass clarinet), Mark Ferris (violin), Isabelle Roland (viola), Finn Manniche (cello), Mark Haney (double bass), Nicole Linaksita (piano), Jonathan Bernard (percussion)

#### **Composer's Notes:**

I consider *Lost and Found* to be an autobiographical piece; the exploration of various approaches to combining Chinese and Western musical elements in this work is a reflection of the challenges I have faced as an American-born Chinese addressing issues of self-identity. The four movements of this work incorporate Eastern and Western influences in different ways, at times featuring the diversity of the two instrumental groups and musical traditions, and at other times merging them to create a distinctive hybrid sound world.

<https://www.dorothychang.com/>

### **Gypsy Chronicles (2010/2016)** (17:48)

John Oliver (b. 1959)

Commissioned by the VICO with support from the Canada Council for the Arts

- i. Crossing Byzantium (6:28)
- ii. The Gates of Europe (3:12)
- iii. Cri(se) de conscience (3:00)
- iv. Retour aux sources (5:08)

*Featuring:* Jun Rong (erhu), Ali Razmi (tar), Saina Khaledi (santur), Niel Golden (tabla), Douglas Hensley (oud), Dailin Hsieh (zheng), Jonathan Bernard (percussion), Nicole Linaksita (keyboard), Mark Takeshi McGregor (flute), Geronimo Mendoza (oboe), Milan Milosevic

(clarinet), Mike Brown (bass clarinet), Mark Ferris (violin 1), Christine Lin (violin 2), Isabelle Roland (viola), Finn Manniche (cello), Mark Haney (double bass)

### **Composer's Notes:**

*Gypsy Chronicles* is an imaginary musical journal in four parts, crossing Byzantium – modern-day Istanbul - toward the gates of Europe in search of the source of music in ancient melody and harmony, un-tempered and untamed, resonating with nature. I imagine musicians converging there, from all parts of the Silk Road, to play this music that comes down to a handful of tones which they might play over and over again, searching for the source of their common musical heritage. One day I will make this trip. Meanwhile, I am fortunate to live in Vancouver, a city where excellent musicians from these regions have settled and can realize my dream-music.

<https://www.johnlivermusic.com/>

### **The King is Dancing (1988) (15:09)**

Moshe Denburg (b. 1949)

*Featuring:* Jeremy Berkman (trombone), Mark Takeshi McGregor (flute), Mark Ferris (violin), Niel Golden (tabla), Douglas Hensley (guitar\*), Moshe Denburg (guitar\*), Jonathan Bernard (percussion), Bic Hoang (birambau, jaw's harp)

\*A western steel string guitar tuned only to the tonic and dominant notes of the mode; this tuning is utilized in India to play ragas.

### **Composer's notes:**

An intercultural ensemble work (India/West), based on the Phrygian mode, it was a direct result of my studies in Madras (Chennai), India, in the 1980s. The title has several meanings: firstly, I remembered a documentary about a Zulu chief who, after passing judgement in a tribal litigation, began to dance - enjoining the assembled members to do likewise. This image and idea resonated in me for some time, coming to represent 'the dignity of the sensual world'. Then, well after I titled the work, I realized that there are other references to 'a king who dances' - a) King David danced before the people, and was criticized in some circles for 'a lack of dignity'; and, b) very significantly for my journey in India, Lord Shiva, of Hindu mythology, dances an eternal dance of creation and destruction.

### **Suite concertante: à cette époque-là (2016/2018) (19:21)**

Farshid Samandari (b. 1971)

- i. days of *Kilim* (4:47)
- ii. age of *Sarouk* (5:14)
- iii. time for *Gabbeh* (4:20)
- iv. a time for *Jajim* (4:59)

*Featuring:* Ali Razmi (tar)

Saina Khaledi (santur), Hamin Honari (tombak), Dailin Hsieh (zheng), Marjan Alekhamis (alto qaichak), Douglas Hensley (oud), Jonathan Bernard (percussion), Mark Takeshi McGregor (flute), Geronimo Mendoza (oboe), Milan Milosevic (clarinet), Mike Brown (bass clarinet),

Mark Ferris (violin 1), Christine Lin (violin 2), Isabelle Roland (viola), Finn Manniche (cello), Mark Haney (double bass)

**Composer's Notes:**

*Suite concertante* is a program suite dramatizing Iran's history in the past 150 years, through the analogy of four Persian rugs. Each has a distinct social/geographical origin, recalling particular lives and times. 'Kilim' is a tribal flat tapestry woven carpet with geometrical designs derived from nature. 'Sarouk' is a delicate carpet, often made of silk, with curvilinear and floral designs of a more abstract nature. 'Jajim' is a nomadic flat woolen tapestry rug made and used by nomadic peoples, with abstract minimalist designs. 'Gabbeh' is a pile rug made and used by nomadic peoples, with designs derived from life. <https://farshidsamandari.com/>