



WINTER TALE

MILCHO LEVIEV

DUSAN BOGDANOVIC

When I arrived in the United States in the late seventies, here was a country filled with promise. Somebody in Los Angeles told me that there was a Bulgarian pianist who was in search of a musician with whom he would be able to play odd-meters. Since odd-meters were “first” nature to me, I thought that this would be a great opportunity to come up with something interesting! The rest is history: we spent many years playing and collaborating together, but nothing “concrete” resulted from this collaboration except for the occasional duo or trio gigs with our friend Russian sax player friend and composer Alexei Zubov at the Come Back Inn or Vine Street and Grill in L.A.

Sometime in the mid-eighties, upon the urging of Esmond Edwards, a wonderful man who had produced some of the first recordings of John Coltrane and many other jazz innovators, we decided to record one LP's-worth of material. So, we went to Sage and Sound Studio in Hollywood and did some work together – the work that is found here on this CD which was recorded in real time. Except for *Jovano*, *Jovanke*, a folk tune shared by both Bulgarians and Macedonians, the material on this CD is made up entirely of original compositions. In addition to this material, two solo pieces – *Dies Irae* and *Morning* – appear on this CD thanks to kind permission given by Todd Garfinkle, who also engineered and produced this project for M•A Recordings in Japan.

Some of the original works are what some people today call ethno-jazz or world/jazz music, notably *Women's Dance*, *Winter Tale* and *Jovano*, *Jovanke*. While these tunes suffer from an excessive influence of Balkan folk music idiom, other compositions such as *Dies Irae* (with its obvious reference to Stravinsky), *Morning*, or *Sugar Loaf* refer to classical, jazz or other music. All this music ultimately makes for an inspirational musical universe – a universe that is part of our lives now, and in the future – a space that we will want to share with other kindred spirits. Despite the inevitable march of time, this music remains a marker of a sort – a marker that may lend meaning to this ephemeral life of ours.

Born in Bulgaria, **Milcho Leviev** graduated from the Bulgarian State Music Academy with a Masters Degree in composition. In the early '60s he was musical director for the State Drama Theater and the Bulgarian radio/television's big band. Internationally acclaimed as a jazz performer, leading the Jazz Focus Quartet (prize winner at the first Montreux festival in 1967), he remained active as a composer, experimenting with music that was performed by both classical and jazz ensembles. Among his early compositions is *Music for Big Band* and *Symphony Orchestra*.



In the '70s, he was a key member of the highly regarded Don Ellis Orchestra. His piano virtuosity and ability to play effortlessly in odd meters – a skill that arose from familiarity with Bulgarian folk music – were major contributions to the fruitful association with Ellis. He contributed two chapters to Don Ellis's *The New Rhythm Book*. Milcho worked with Willie Bobo, John Klemmer, Airtio Moreira and Roy Haynes, and recorded with I. Subramaniam, Billy Cobham, and as the leader of a bop quartet that included Art Pepper (two very impressive albums: *Blues for the Fisherman* and *True Blues*). This famous quartet regularly recorded live at Ronnie Scott's Club in London. Leviev ably mixed the odd-metered tunes of his Bulgarian background with an excellent post-bop piano technique.

In the early '80s, he worked with Manhattan Transfer (for whom he arranged Parker's *Confirmation*), wrote arrangements for and recorded with Al Jarreau, and founded the famous jazz quartet Free Flight. That group featured a fusion of jazz, rock, and classical music. During the Free Flight period, he also performed and recorded as a member of Gerald Wilson's big band. One of Milcho Leviev's most impressive associations was formed with Dave Holland. This duo recorded the memorable album *The Oracle-Live* at Suntory Hall in Japan. He continues to work frequently with many all-star jazz musicians in Los Angeles and elsewhere, playing with Ray Pizzi, Ray Brown, Buddy Collette, Oscar Brashear, Jack Sheldon, Mundell Lowe, Dusan Bogdanovic, Billy Cobham et al.

In the '90s, he did numerous solo European tours, and in 1995 received an honorary doctorate and award on merit from the Paris Académie internationale des arts. Milcho Leviev is a lecturer on jazz composition and improvisation at the University of Southern California, and frequently performs with the American Jazz Institute ensembles.



A richly gifted composer, improviser and guitarist, **Dusan Bogdanovic** has explored musical languages that are reflected in his style today – a unique synthesis of classical, jazz and ethnic music. As a soloist and in collaboration with other artists, Bogdanovic has toured extensively throughout Europe, Asia and the United States. His performing and recording activities include work with chamber groups of diverse stylistic orientations including The Falla Guitar Trio and jazz collaborations with James Newton, Milcho Leviev, Charlie Haden, Miroslav Tadic, Mark Nauseef, Anthony Cox and others. He has over fifty published compositions ranging from guitar and piano solo works to chamber and orchestral ensembles (Berben, GSP, Doberman-Yppan et al.), as well as close to twenty recordings ranging from Bach *Trio Sonatas* to contemporary works (Intuition, GSP, Doberman-Yppan, M•A Recordings et al.).

Among his commissions are a ballet-poeme *Crow*, premiered by the Pacific Dance Company at the Los Angeles Theater Center; *Sevdalinka*, written for the Newman-Oltman Guitar Duo with the Turtle Island Quartet, premiered at Merkin Hall, New York; *Canticles*, composed for the Gruber-Maklar Duo; a mix media piece *To Where Does The One Return*, for sixteen ceramic gongs in collaboration with sculptor

Stephen Freedman, premiered in Hilo, Hawaii; *Games*, commissioned by the BluePrint Festival and dedicated to David Tanenbaum and Nicole Paiement; *Byzantine Theme and Variations*, premiered by James Smith with the Armadillo String Quartet, as well as works written for pianist Fabio Luz and numerous solo guitar compositions written for Alvaro Pierri, David Starobin, William Kanengiser, Scott Tennant, Eduardo Isaac, James Smith and others.

Bogdanovic was born in Yugoslavia in 1955. He completed his studies of composition and orchestration at the Geneva Conservatory with P. Wissmer and A. Ginastera and in guitar performance with M.L. São Marcos. Early in his career, he received the only First Prize at the Geneva Competition and gave a highly acclaimed debut recital in Carnegie Hall in 1977. He has taught at the Geneva Conservatory and the University of Southern California and is presently engaged by the San Francisco Conservatory.

His theoretical work for guitar includes *Polyrhythmic and Polymetric Studies* (Berben) as well as a bilingual publication covering three-voice counterpoint and Renaissance improvisation with a structural analysis of motivic metamorphoses in composition and improvisation.

Recorded at the Sage and Sound Studio, Hollywood, California in 1984.

Producer: Esmond Edwards

Engineer: James Moony

Mastering: Georgi "Johnny" Penkov

Cover art: Yana Levieva

*Dies Irae* from *Man from Plovdiv CD* (M018A) and *Morning* (M009) are recorded and produced by Todd Garfinkle for M•A Recordings; *California Winter*, *Women's Dance*, *Dies Irae* and *Luc's Punty* are published by Philippopolis Music/BMI; *Winter Tale*, *Morning* and *Monica's Stroll* are published by Singidunum Music/ASCAP; *Sugar Loaf* is published by Esmond Edwards; *Jovano*, *Jovanke* is a traditional Bulgarian/Macedonian song arranged in this incarnation by Milcho and Dusan.



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DO 667



# WINTER TALE

Milcho Leviev and Dusan Bogdanovic  
piano and guitar

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1 Winter Tale (Bogdanovic)                          | 7:28  |
| 2 California Winter (Leviev)                        | 6:38  |
| 3 Jovano, Jovanke (trad.)                           | 5:03  |
| 4 Women's Dance (Leviev)                            | 6:17  |
| 5 Monica's Stroll (Bogdanovic)                      | 6:54  |
| 6 Sugar Loaf (Edwards)                              | 4:46  |
| 7 Luc's Puntj (Leviev)                              | 4:10  |
| 8 Dies Irae (in memory of Igor Stravinsky) (Leviev) | 11:47 |
| 9 Morning (Bogdanovic)                              | 3:49  |

Total length 57:00

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Executive Producer: Paul Gerrits

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Winter Tale

Leviev-Bogdanovic

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Leviev-Bogdanovic

Winter Tale