



Alexander
RAHBARI

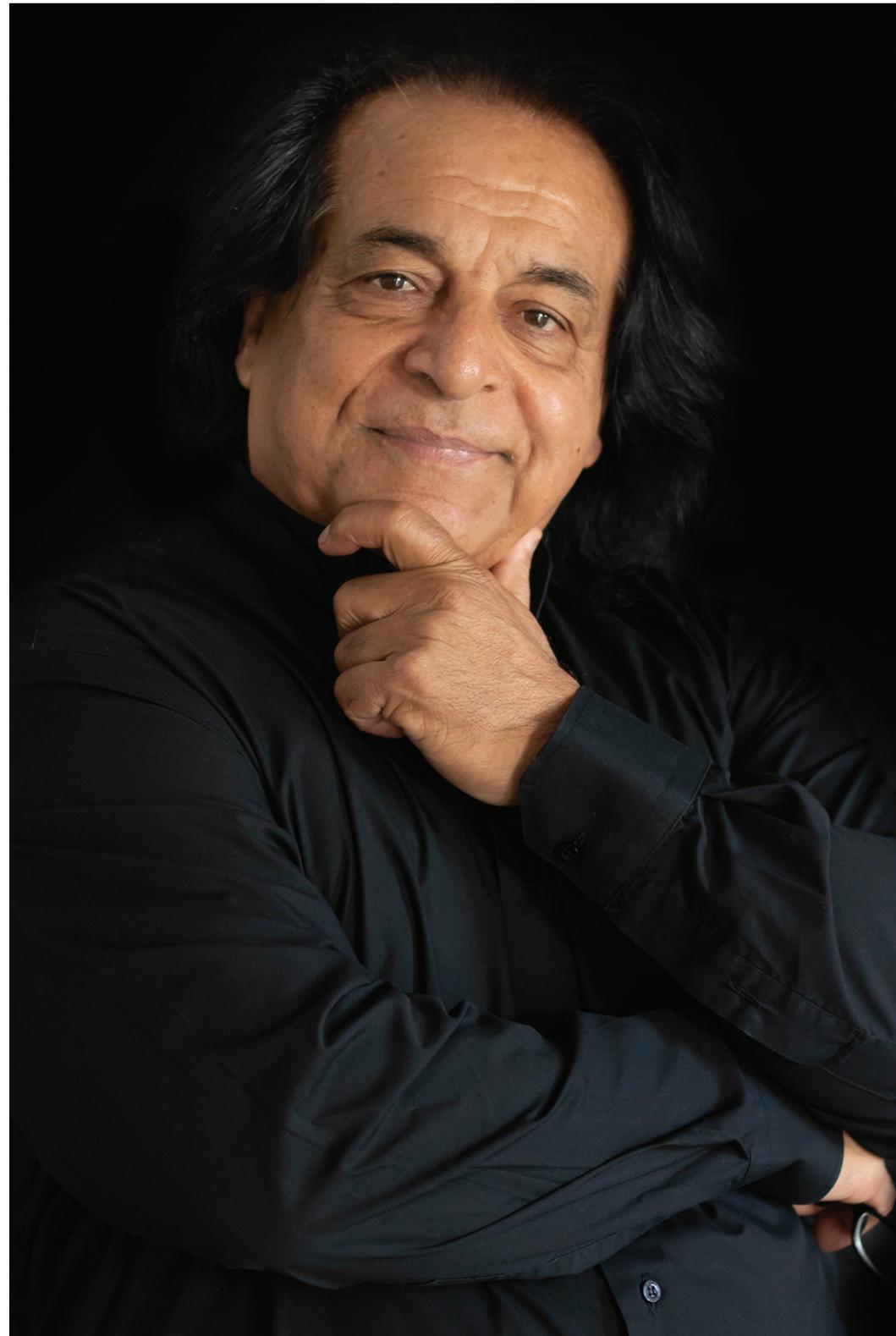
My Mother Persia
Symphonic Poems • 1
Nos. 1, 2 and 3

Paula Rahbari, Violin

Antalya State
Symphony Orchestra

Prague Metropolitan
Orchestra

Alexander Rahbari



Alexander Rahbari (b. 1948)

My Mother Persia – Symphonic Poems Nos. 1, 2 and 3

Alexander Rahbari was born in Tehran, Iran. He studied violin and composition with Rahmatollah Badiee and Hossein Dehlavi at the Persian National Music Conservatory. From the age of 17, he was a violinist at the Fine Arts Administration Orchestra under the baton of Hossein Dehlavi. Soon after receiving his violin diploma from the National Conservatory, he won a scholarship from the Iran Ministry of Culture and Art to study composition and conducting in Vienna with Gottfried von Einem, Hans Swarowsky and Karl Österreicher.

In 1973, after his studies, he became director of the Persian National Music Conservatory and Tehran Conservatory succeeding Mostafa Kamal Pourtorab and Hossein Dehlavi. He held these positions for four years before he emigrated back to Europe. Within the same year, he won First Prize of the International Competition for Young Conductors of Besançon, France, and in 1978 received the Silver Medal at the Geneva International Conducting Competition. In the same year he recorded three albums entitled *Symphonische Dichtungen aus Persien* ('Symphonic Poems from Persia') with the Nürnberger Symphoniker in Germany, including six works by some of the greatest 20th-century Iranian composers. In 1979 Rahbari was invited to conduct the Berliner Philharmoniker, and in 1980 he became Herbert von Karajan's assistant. From 1988 to 1996 Rahbari was the principal conductor of the Flemish Radio Orchestra (now the Brussels Philharmonic), and subsequently became music director of the Zagreb Philharmonic.

Rahbari was only twelve when his talent for composition was discovered by Hossein Dehlavi. Besides playing classical violin and Iranian traditional music, Dehlavi, who was director of the Persian National Music Conservatory at the time, began teaching him harmony and counterpoint. In his youth, Rahbari agreed a contract with the Iran Ministry of Culture to write a piece per month. As a student, he also wrote many pieces for the Eurasia Quartet, as well as vocal works and compositions featuring Persian mysticism. He became a pupil of

Gottfried von Einem, and began writing the most lauded pieces of his career. His works include *Persian Mysticism – A Symphonic Poem for Orchestra* (1968), music used in United Nation advertising performed by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (1975), the soundtrack for a documentary by French director André Malraux (1977), *Beirut* (1985) originally written for nine flutes, *Half Moon* (1984), a piece for orchestra and choir performed and commissioned by the National Youth Orchestra of South Africa, music written for the 154 sonnets of William Shakespeare (1990–2000) and *La Furza Flamenca* (2000).

The eight symphonic poems of *My Mother Persia* are full of melodies, rhythms and improvisations in the styles of Persian traditional music. As a child growing up with this tradition, Rahbari had a chance to learn from the best and most influential Persian maestros.

The support of Hossein Dehlavi, and Gottfried von Einem (one of the most influential professors at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna) helped him to retain the style he had originally created. In 2015, after many years focussing on his conducting career, Rahbari decided to write and dedicate pieces to Iranian maestros such as his colleague Hossein Alizadeh and Hossein Dehlavi.

Symphonic Poem No. 1 'Nohe Khan'

Concerto for violin and orchestra

Dedicated to Hossein Alizadeh

Nohe Khan is the name for the singer, usually a tenor, who sings in various religious ceremonies. They mostly sing in a sad, melancholic and emotional style, with an authentic Persian rhythm which is repeated in the Mass.

The Day of Ashoura is probably the busiest day for the Nohe Khan, as Ashoura is the day on which the grandchild of the Prophet Mohammad, Imam Hossein, was killed. On this day Muslims around the world organise a ceremony from morning until noon to mourn him.

As a child, Rahbari was impressed by the ceremony, and recalls this historical event as a symphonic poem for violin and orchestra. Here the violin plays the role of the Nohe Khan in three movements, which mostly represents the traditional Persian way of singing and playing. This piece, composed in 2018 is a revision of *Nohe Khan* originally written in 1972.

Symphonic Poem No. 2 'Mother's Tears'

Dedicated to Hamdam Rahbari

This short symphonic poem represents the evening of Ashoura when orphans gather to sing sad melodies. Rahbari lost two brothers and a younger sister during his childhood, and had witnessed his mother and relatives mourning in the Children's Cemetery. The childhood of the composer is recalled again in one of the saddest Iranian melodies, the *Orphan Melody*, which starts with an expression of deep grief that lingers until to the end of the piece.

Symphonic Poem No. 3 'Children's Prayer'

Dedicated to Rahmatollah Badiei

As a child in Iran, the composer was fond of group morning prayers when a prayer was read by one child and repeated by the others. As the melody continues it conveys the children's feelings of being a little naughty and afraid of their teachers at the same time.

Barbad Bayat



Paula Rahbari



Photo: Jan Zazlawski

Paula Rahbari was born in Zagreb in 1974. She began her studies at the age of six with Mirta Pleteršek Blašković. Between 1987 and 1992 she was awarded First Prizes at competitions in Croatia (twice) and Yugoslavia, winning another prize three years later at the Alfredo Marcosig International Violin Competition in Italy. She was also recognised as one of the most talented student to receive the Rektorpreis from the University of Zagreb. Rahbari has undertaken masterclasses with Alice Schoenfeld, Dora Schwarzberg, Maxim Fedotov, Radovan Lorković and Michael Steinkühler. In 1996 she earned her diploma from the University of Zagreb Academy of Music as a pupil of Maja Dešpalj-Begović, and within the same year joined the Zagreb

Philharmonic as first violin, becoming assistant concert master soon after. In 2001 she became a member of the Málaga Philharmonic until 2004. Since then she has been exploring her career as a soloist, focussing mostly on chamber music and teaching. Rahbari plays on a violin made by Alp Altiner in Istanbul in 1999.

Antalya State Symphony Orchestra



The Antalya Chamber Orchestra, founded in 1995, changed its name to the Antalya State Symphony Orchestra (ASSO) upon the decision of the Council of Ministers in 1997. The orchestra has a special place in the cultural life of

Antalya, and has played an important role in the promotion of the region. The orchestra regularly performs in the Aspendos Antique Theatre and various concert halls, as well as appearing at the Antalya Art Festival, the International Antalya Film Festival and the International Antalya Piano Festival. The orchestra has also toured within Turkey as well as South Korea, and plays a big role in the universities and educational life of Antalya. The ASSO has been led by İnci Özdil, Orhan Şalliel, Ender Sakpınar, Nezih Seçkin, Erol Erdinç, Antonio Pirolli, Marek Pijarowski, Vladimir Altschuler, Howard Griffiths, Leonard Slatkin, Theodore Kuchar and Alexander Rahbari. It has performed with soloists such as İdil Biret, Sun Kan, Verda Erman, Václav Hudeček, Liana Isakadze, Alexander Rudin, Jiří Bárta, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Massimo Quarta, Michael Martin Kofler, Soyoun Yoon and José Carreras.

Prague Metropolitan Orchestra



The Prague Metropolitan Orchestra was established in 2005, primarily as an ensemble for recording classical, film and theatre music. The orchestra was formed by violin player Radek Křížanovský together with members of his Apollon Quartet. The orchestra has been involved with many award-winning projects including the film *Leviathan* with music by Phillip Glass, which won Best Film at the London Film Festival. The orchestra also performed on the soundtrack of *The Musketeers* on BBC 3, in the major Czech film *Milada* and in a number of films by Polish director Jacek Bromski. The orchestra gives concert performances in Prague, throughout the Czech Republic and abroad, and performs many premieres by contemporary composers, including Argentine composer Daniel Doura's monumental *Sinfonia Argentina*, which was first recorded in 2015 and given its world premiere in 2018 at concerts in Prague, Teplice and Munich. In 2019 and 2020 the orchestra will be going on two tours in Asia, as well as taking part in recording and concert projects at home and abroad.

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Session photos: Vilem Zak

Alexander Rahbari



Persian-Austrian conductor and composer Alexander Rahbari studied in Vienna with Hans Swarovsky and Gottfried von Einem. At the age of 23 his violin concerto, *Nohe Khan*, received the special prize of the Academy of Music in Vienna and was performed in the Vienna Concert Hall. He wrote the following pieces in parallel with his conducting career: *Persian Mysticism*, *Music for Human Rights (Hunger in Africa)*, *Beirut* for nine flutes, *Half Moon*, *Musical Sister Angelica Extasy 1* and *Mr. Gianni Extasy 2*, 154 songs on complete sonnets of Shakespeare, *La Fuerza Flamenca* (ten pieces for men's choir and orchestra) and *My Mother Persia*. He won the Gold Medal at the international conducting competition in Besançon in 1977 and the Silver Medal the following year in Geneva. This led to the start of his international career. Herbert von Karajan took note of the young artist and invited him to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic as guest conductor in 1979. It was to be the first of a series of such invitations. Rahbari has been music director of the Brussels, Málaga and Zagreb Philharmonic orchestras, Virtuosi di Praga and the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, and has worked with countless acclaimed soloists such as Mischa Maisky, Henryk Szeryng, Mstislav Rostropovitch, Radovan Vlatković, Leonid Kogan, Heinrich Schiff, Nigel Kennedy, Shlomo Mintz, Krystian Zimerman, Radu Lupu, Maurice André and Grace Bumbry.

The Iranian conductor and composer Alexander Rahbari grew up with and trained in traditional Persian music with its most influential maestros. His eight symphonic poems, *My Mother Persia*, of which this is Volume 1 of 2, are full of melodies, rhythms and improvisations in these traditional styles, brought to life with the colours of modern orchestration. The first of these is an emotional violin concerto in which the soloist plays the role of the Nohe Khan, usually a tenor who sings in traditional Persian style at various religious ceremonies. *Mother's Tears* refers to a gathering of orphans and to Rahbari's own experiences of tragedy, contrasting with a subtext of mischief in *Children's Prayer*.

Alexander
RAHBARI

(b. 1948)

My Mother Persia • 1

Symphonic Poem No. 1 'Nohe Khan'

Concerto for violin and orchestra
(2018, revision of *Nohe Khan*, 1972)

35:23

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| 1 | I. Allegro | 21:40 |
| 2 | II. Andante | 4:19 |
| 3 | III. Allegro molto | 9:21 |
| 4 | Symphonic Poem No. 2 'Mother's Tears' (2018) | 8:24 |
| 5 | Symphonic Poem No. 3 'Children's Prayer' (2018) | 12:39 |

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Paula Rahbari, Violin 1–3

Prague Metropolitan Orchestra 1–3

Antalya State Symphony Orchestra 4 5

Alexander Rahbari

Recorded: 23 June 2018 at Czech TV Music Studio, Prague, Czech Republic 1–3,

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Mixing engineers: Hamid Adab 1–3, Can Aykal 4 5

Mastering engineers: Heidi Boba, Martin Oberneder • Editors: Hamid Adab 1–3, Can Aykal 4 5

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