

Giya Kancheli - Themes From The Songbook (2010)

Written by bluesever

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01. Herio Bichebo from *Earth, This Is Your Son* 02. Theme from *Bear's Kiss* 03. Main theme from *The Crucible* 04. Theme from *As You Like It* 05. Theme from *Don Quixote Var. I* 06. Theme from *Hamlet Var. I* [play](#) 07. Theme from *King Lear* 08. Theme from *Don Quixote Var. II* 09. Theme from *Kin-Dza-Dza* 10. Main theme from *The Role for a Beginner* 11. Theme from *Twelfth Night* 12. Main theme from *Cinema* 13. Theme from *Hamlet Var. II* 14. Waltz from *Richard III* 15. Theme from *Mimino* 16. Theme from *Don Quixote Var. III*

[play](#)

17. Main theme from *When Almonds Blossomed* 18. Waltz from *The Eccentrics* 19. Theme from *Hamlet Var. III* 20. *Herio Bichebo from Earth, This Is Your Son, with Jansug Kakhidze*
Personnel : Dino Saluzzi (bandoneon) Andrei Pushkarev (vibraphone) Gidon Kremer (violin) Jansug Kakhidze (voice/conductor) Tbilisi Symphony Orchestra

ECM record's Manfred Eicher has been a long time supporter of the music of Georgian classical composer Giya Kancheli, who turned 75 just last year. For Kancheli's 75th birthday, Eicher collaborated with three superb musicians --bandoneonist Dino Salluzzi, best know for playing jazz and tango, violinist Gidon Kremer and the vibraphonist from Kremer's Camerata Baltica, Andrei Pushkarev--to record Kancheli's music. Pushkarev arranged songs from Kancheli's book of show and movie music, *Simple Music for Piano* (2009). The pieces are played in a variety of combinations --bandoneon alone, or with the vibes, or with vibes and violin, violin alone and double dubbed, violin and vibes, and one stunning piece with vibes alone. One of the songs, "Herio Bichebo," was originally written for a Georgian movie, *This Is Your Son*, and was recorded in a very famous recording --famous in Georgia, that is-- by the Georgian singer, Jansug Kazkhidze, with the Tbilisi Symphony Orchestra. Saluzzi and Pushkarev play "Herio" at the beginning of the album and at the very end, nineteen songs later, the original recording with singer and symphony orchestra appears to close the album. Throughout, the music is lovely and the musicians excellent, although I'm not wild about Kremer's pinched tone on violin. The pieces are all short--only two are over four minutes--and all have the virtue of being both immediately accessible and possessing real musical depth. The more you listen to these songs, the more they sink into your psyche. It goes without saying that all three musicians play with consummate skill and deep musicality.

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The album was recorded without Kancheli knowing about it. On his birthday, it was given to him and released to the market as a birthday gift for a composer who writes great serious and popular music. --- David Keymer "David Keymer" (Modesto CA), amazon.com

Over the course of his career Giya Kancheli has written scores for over 100 films and plays, and in 2009 he gathered some of the music into a songbook, Simple Music for Piano: 33 Miniatures from Music for Stage and Screen. As a surprise for the composer's 75th birthday, his son and producer Manfred Eicher initiated a project with violinist Gidon Kremer, bandoneon player Dino Saluzzi, and vibraphonist Andrei Pushkarev to arrange and record an album of selections from the songbook. The original music was written over a span of almost 40 years, between 1965 and 2002, but there is a remarkable consistency in style and tone. The vast majority of the pieces recorded here have a mellow, semi-improvisatory, Latinate mood that is frequently reminiscent of Piazzolla at his freest. The prevailing sentiment of gentle melancholy makes for an album with a consistent tone. (It works beautifully as an album listening experience, but it's a little odd that the music is so unvaried for plays and films as diverse as The Crucible, As You Like It, Hamlet, Twelfth Night, King Lear, and Don Quixote, but that may have to do with the fact that it is re-scored for this chamber ensemble.) Each of the soloists is a star, but they put their egos at the service of the music and play with admirable sensitivity to each other, and the result is an exceptionally well-integrated ensemble. ECM's sound is impeccable. The album should interest anyone who wants to hear the composer's work in a lighter, more pop-influenced vein, and also fans of music in the mood of a very mellow Piazzolla. --- Stephen Eddins, allmusic.com

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