

***Cyprus: First Impressions* CD review: translation from Italian (<http://www.kathodik.it>)**

Cyprus: First Impressions is a sunny emotional expanse where one is free to lose oneself.

United States composer Carol Barnett (member of the American Composers Forum and composition instructor at Augsburg College in Minneapolis) has published this convincing collection of luminous movements inspired by Cypriot and Greek traditions and covering the time from 1991 to 2002.

The sunny frescos are realized by various performers (from the University of Minnesota and other associations).

Disregarding the dismaying New Age-influenced cover, what we find is an intriguing and fragrant collection of unexpected and agreeable listening with a Mediterranean flavor (a rare quality in endeavors of this kind...)

The genuine love that Barnett feels for the Balkan traditions yields a deeply felt and evocative series of ideas, strongly visual, in which musical and literary references from Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and Serbia are effortlessly interwoven.

There is an ongoing calm and dreamy sense which rises like delicate little clouds to cover the hot and intense rays of the August sun in the first hours of the afternoon, when everything seems to stop and dissolve itself into a suffocating embrace.

Cyprus: First Impressions begins with the call of the muezzin from the Turkish quarter of Nicosia, which is superimposed over the shouts of the fruit vendors of the enchanting old city; the contemplative sense of suspension woven by the alto flute reflects the inextricable hardship of a deeply divided country.

An enveloping cinematic capacity, an attenuation of the thread of remembrance in the service of an inner meditation, moving and respectful.

Mythical Journeys, composed in 1991 under the influence of the Greek writers George Seferis and Constantine Cavafy—a touching slow-motion between guitar and flute where in the rarified pauses there pulses an indescribable sadness, a sense of loss of identity.

And then all breaks out in instantaneous revelry, the tension relaxes, evening falls.

Cyprian Suite takes leave of us in a bittersweet manner, caught at sunset with glass in hand while noticing the gowns of the women being lifted with the impetus of the dance; the faces that brighten in a smile; it binds us all together in a single vital heartbeat that does not recognize ideological divisions of any sort.

Anyone who has enjoyed the charms of “Koan” by Stephan Micus may approach without fear.

But not only they.

We are all invited.