

RABIH ABOU-KHALIL
Songs for Sad Women
CD & Tour 2007
featuring: GEVORG DABAGHYAN - Duduk

The Lebanese virtuoso oud player and composer, Rabih Abou-Khalil, released "Songs for Sad Women" in Spring of 2007.

While his albums "Cactus of Knowledge" and "Morton's Foot," as well as his concert appearances with the Ensemble Modern and the BBC Concert Orchestra accentuated intensely rousing compositions, Abou-Khalil's work with the pianist Joachim Kühn has a strong base in jazz improvisation. The Kuehn collaboration "Journey to the Centre of an Egg," improbable for many familiar with Abou-Khalil's music, was a great success in concert as well as on CD.

The release of "Songs for Sad Women" marks another turning point in Abou-Khalil's, this time towards themes of musical melancholy. Nonetheless it remains distinctly recognizable as the work of the composer in its self-enclosed ambience and its thematic unity. To listen to "Songs ..." is to be led on a journey through soothing, mysterious and melancholy world.

The new sound is mainly inspired by the Armenian master musician, Gevorg Dabaghyan <http://www.dabaghyan.com/>, whose playing evokes an elegiac and mournful tone. The duduk, a traditional Armenian oboe, comparable to the Indian shenai, produces the most melancholy sound imaginable. Dabaghyan teaches duduk at Erivans conservatory and has come to be known through his work with Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Project, with which he has toured extensively. The two other musicians in Abou-Khalil's quartet are both long time musical partners. The wonderful French tubist Michel Godard plays an historical instrument called the "serpent," a wood-wind horn shaped like a snake with a deep and very mellow sound. The talented American percussionist, Jarrod Cagwin, plays frame- drums and is an outstanding musical asset to this project as to so many with Abou-Khalil.

The melodies on "Songs for Sad Women" spread a peaceful and warm ambience, and seem to breathe an almost feminine vibe. The sound produced by these traditional instruments is haunting, like a perfume scent once familiar awakening by gone memories and bringing them back to life. This music seeps deep into the soul soothing and reconciliatory. The songs flow along, as if without direction or goal and seem to encompass all and everything. This is music for a mellow mood and may shine deeper into the hearts of his listeners than ever before.