

Anglo-Turkish Society / Royal Anthropological Institute concert, 23 October 2018, 6.30 pm

Musicians: Esbe, Jeff Rodrigues (guitar)

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: *An Evening with Rumi*



I first became interested in the literary heritage of the Middle East when I read that the European troubadours shared a tradition with Bedouin poet travellers. I'd always been intrigued by the Troubadours – the freedom and romanticism. Reading more about the era and examples of poetry – in English translations – I was struck by the resonance of their themes and timeless connection with contemporary thought and life experience. With two day passes to the British Museum, I pored through various almost forgotten translations of Ibn Sa'id, Jamil of Udhra, and the most famous of all today, Jalaluddin Rumi – the most widely read poet in America.. The earliest date from around the 9th Century, whilst Rumi, the mystic Sufi poet from Afghanistan who lived most of his life in Turkey was born in the 13th century. The Rumi poems are taken from 'Words of Paradise', a book of new interpretations of Rumi by friend, Raficq Abdulla. This album is my homage to the region, its poets and our own literary past.

Unlike most of my other writing, the text very much arrived first, being existing poems. But as always the music itself is a Neo-Classical – Psych-Folk fusion. As many of the poems are written in a prose style, the approach is probably more classical and there are only a few standard verse-chorus structures, although the melodies repeat in a similar and familiar way. I've never overly analysed the harmonic progressions and scales, but have always been drawn to rich close harmonies and lyrical Middle Eastern/ East European music and love Russian and French composers. Vocally, I'm drawn to Early Music, in particular Dowland, and somehow feel a little part of the British song-writing tradition. We're lucky to be living at a time when we can hear so many styles of music, and on this album there are glimpses of those I've heard. A very special recent one was when a group of local musicians were hastily assembled for an impromptu courtyard gig when I was cycling in Macedonia.

Booking essential for members and non-members: <https://an-evening-with-rumi.eventbrite.co.uk>

Contact: contact@angloturkishsociety.org.uk

The Anglo-Turkish Society relies solely on membership dues and donations to continue its work. If you wish to become a member, sponsor one of our charities or wish to leave a legacy small or large, we would be happy to hear from you.

www.angloturkishsociety.org.uk