

The background of the entire page is a dark, textured blue. Overlaid on this background is a dense, intricate pattern of wavy, ribbon-like shapes. These shapes are colored in two distinct shades: a vibrant cyan blue and a bright magenta red. The shapes are scattered across the frame, creating a sense of movement and depth. Some shapes are long and thin, while others are shorter and more curved. The overall effect is a complex, organic-looking pattern that resembles a stylized forest or a dense thicket of leaves.

FE &

MALES

Vienna Art Special

Doppelchor

es mann spielt unser frauen mit nur schilfharfe
gehst ans fingerspitzen und vorbei es.
es frau spielt unser männer mit nur klarinettich
knopfst an und bläst ein immer lied aus es.
es mann spielt unser frauen mit nur moment-
harmonika
sperrst um und pfeifst schlüsselrüssel.
es frau spielt unser männer mit nur es
violinerin
stellst an diriganten hin und wickelst den
orchaster aus.

E. Jandl



On the Subject of Relationships:

This issue of men and women... we know what it's all about, especially where others are concerned. But when caught up in it ourselves, it's easy to lose sight of how things go. And we may not even want to know for sure. After all, given everything we've learned, heard and seen around us, we would be crazy if we still seriously believed in love...

In this production, Mathias Rüegg, after so many years with the Vienna Art Orchestra, has ventured in an unprecedented way into new experimental grounds. Building on the constellations of love relationships as portrayed in the love stories by Nizameddin abu Mohammed Ijas ibn Jusof (Nizami), who lived and wrote in the small Transcaucasian city of Gendsche from 1141 to 1203, Rüegg developed music and scenarios into musical loveplay in the form of seven compositions for seven pairs of female and male musicians. Then he withdrew, leaving the pairs to their own devices, giving reason and emotion fair play.

What was the result? Love in music? A battle of the sexes? Which musical qualities emerged as feminine? Which, if any, were masculine?

Strong and tough versus soft and gentle; cold rationality versus intuition and empathy; faith in technology and the powers of man versus nature-ties and spirituality. In music as in life it is ever more difficult to pinpoint the masculine, circumscribe the feminine, to ascribe contrasting qualities to one sex or the other. Whoever tries winds up in obscure territory.

Mathias Rüegg's aim was not to have a female orchestra engage in competition (a male tendency?) or play with (a female tendency?) an all-male group. He was even less concerned with finding musical expression for institutionalized concepts like equal opportunity or non-discrimination. Rather, out of enthusiasm for the Persian poet's love stories, he took Nizami's "Seven Tales of the Seven Princesses" and used them as inspiration for his music. Seven stories about fulfilled and unrequited love, about

more women and men, a pair each on trumpet, trombone, tuba, piano, bass and drums. Seven men, seven ribs.

The love play continues, not only with duos, but occasionally, as in real life, a third or a fourth mixes in, taking sides sometimes with one, sometimes with another. Towards the end, Rüegg loosens the rigid pair symmetry somewhat, as noted in the concert program... the strict male-female relationship is not the only one that exists.

All in all, what Mathias Rüegg undertakes in this concert – with the melding of music and elements of choreography, with well conceived lighting stagecraft, and other visual effects (by Catherine Dressler) – is more than just a game with some cheap gags. It is an attempt to integrate a second level to support the music, to make commentaries on it, or sometimes to cut it with irony. Where love and relationships are concerned, all the senses are called upon. All are stimulated. Anything goes which helps to rediscover love.

So, it appears, in this business of women and men, we know so much and yet always less. "That is the excitement, the adventure, the suspense," Max Frisch once wrote in his diary. "We can't get over loving the people we love. We love them as long as we love them."

Many try to give advice – technical, psychological, gymnastic – on how to handle these difficult life situations. Some appeal to logic; some to the illogic called "emotion." Nizami's wonderful love stories are the second best advice-givers we have today...

Christian Rentsch

(Translation by Karin Kaminker)

Ingrid Jensen	trumpet	Bumi Fian
Co Streiff	reeds	Klaus Dickbauer
Gabriele Rosenberg	trombone	Christian
Radovan		
Viviane Fortune	tuba	Jon Sass
Esther Bächlin	piano	Uli Scherer
Helena Labarrière	bass	Heiri Känzig
Sylvia Cuenca	drums	Marc Halbheer

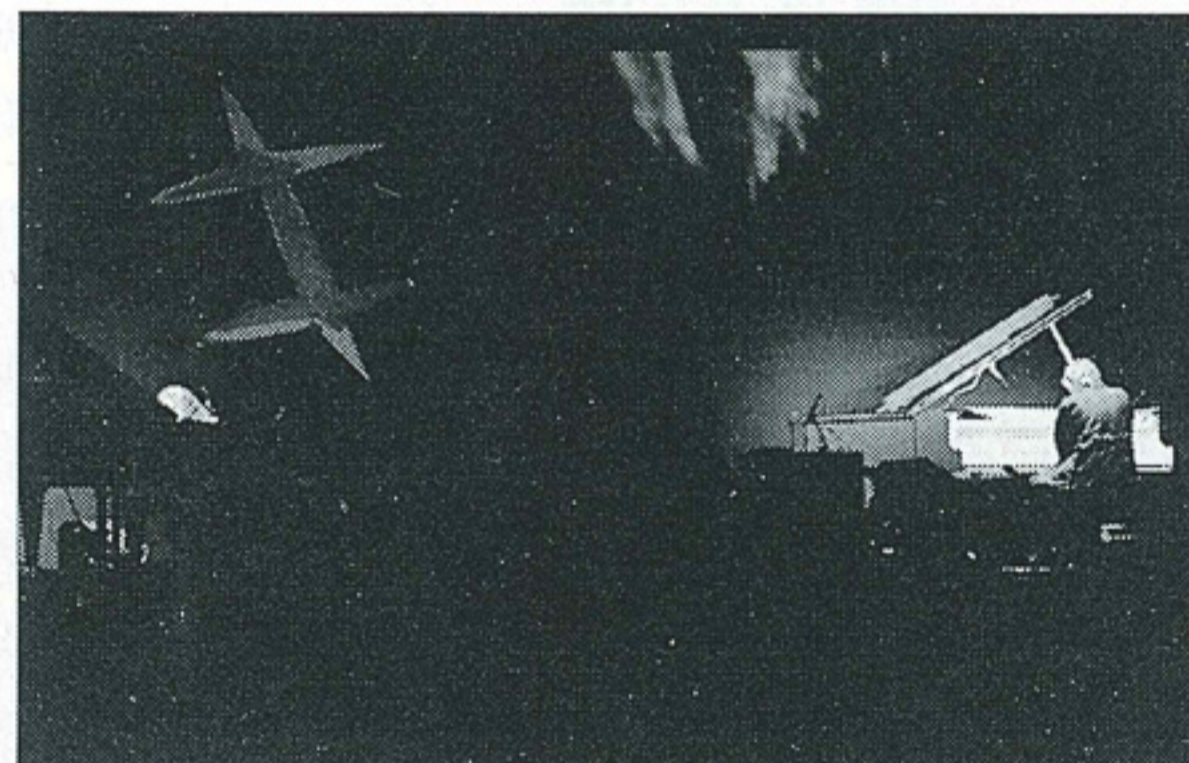
Regie	Remi Brandner
Light	Florian Radon
Special effects	Catherine Dressler
Sound	Erich Dorfinger
Idea	Uli Scherer & Mathias Rüegg
Music and direction	Mathias Rüegg

Fe & Males is based on «the seven stories of the seven princesses» by the persian poet Nizami.

jealousy, pain and strife – the sufferings and joys of love; about first meetings, acquaintanceship, flirtation, intimacy, union.

In each of these musical stories, one instrument pair is featured. Then, just as the love tales of Nizami unroll on seven different days of the week, in seven different locales and in association with seven different planets and colors, Rüegg

lets his songs unfold in different musical settings: The intimate "Geturtel" for the couple, small ensembles for "family plots", the Ripieno (Tutti) for gay and roisterous festivities. The pace oscillates from hectic to soft and leisurely. Only seldom does the mood sink into seriousness or sorrow. Rüegg's Love Songs, like six of Nizami's tales, end on a happy, cheerful note, occasionally with a final crafty or ironic twist.



Rüegg's music, powerful and bursting with life, is one important side (of the production). Hearing the songs, you can invent your own stories and mental images. The other aspect, of great importance to the players, is the stage direction or choreography of this concert, the intermingling of music and image.

The light goes out and the stage is black... at least that's how the concert opened in Baden's Kurtheater in mid-October 1990. From way behind in the auditorium, someone on alto sax leads off with a short phrase, winds it up and develops it into a little melody. The sax tries it out, lets it glide higher into the flageolet, slides it into the cellar, sustains it, stretches it, counters it with another melody, mixes the two together. In these ways, and in others, the music grows. (Since this intro, gains in the concert hall from the scenic, on the LP, understandably, it is shortened by several seconds.)

Meanwhile, the musician has moved on-stage and into the dim spotlight that falls on two music stands. Black trousers,

black jacket, black leather cap. From the right comes a second pair of black trousers, teamed again with a black jacket but topped this time by a black felt hat. Felt Hat mixes in, counters Black Cap's tones with its own, looks – timidly at first – for the right point between closeness and distance, between dissonance and harmony. Slowly, a dialogue evolves; livens up.

Behind a transparent black gauze curtain, upstage, an eccentric usher shows another pair of black trousers and jackets to their seats. A weak spotlight projects changing figures onto the dark backdrop: stylized flowers, stars, butterflies, human figures. In the meantime, Felt Hat and Leather Cap have come closer together. The newcomers start to mix in, not disturbing the ongoing idyll but providing a background for it.

A rhythm develops. A Big Band joins in and gradually goes into full swing. The light brightens to reveal the whole scene. Leather Cap is a woman; Felt Hat, a man. Behind the gauze curtain, which the shuffling usher later pulls away, are

Song 1 schwarz*

Song 2 grün

Song 3 rot

Song 4 türkis

Song 5 gelb

Song 6 sandelfarben

Song 7 weiss

Duo and Solos by Streiff/Dickbauer

Duo and Solos by Bächlin/Scherer

Duo and Solos by Fortune/Sass

Solos and Duo by Jensen/Fian

Duo and Solos by Rosenberg/Radovan

Solos by Labarrière/Känzig

Duo by Cuenca/Halbheer & Collectiv



All titles composed and arranged by Mathias Rüegg/SUISA and published by Antenna.

All tunes recorded at studio Powerplay (32-track digital) by Jürg Peterhans (November 4, 5 and 6 1991).

Remixed at studio Powerplay by Jürg Peterhans and Mathias Rüegg (December 26-29 1991)

Special thanks to the Bundesministerium f.U&K, the city of Vienna, the Aussenministerium, AKG and Bösendorfer.

Coverart by Niklaus Troxler

Liner notes by Christian Rentsch

* ded to g.m.

AMADEO

5 1 3 3 2 8 - 2