



Ministry of Culture and Tourism
of the Republic of Azerbaijan



2ND WORLD FORUM ON
INTERCULTURAL
DIALOGUE
BAKU 29 MAY - 1 JUNE 2013

MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

31

05

2013

21:30 – 22:30

SHADOWS OF GOBUSTAN

AN OPEN-AIR
BALLET
PERFORMANCE



GOBUSTAN STATE ARTISTIC & HISTORICAL PRESERVE

MUSIC: FARAJ GARAYEV, *AZERBAIJAN*

RE-INTERPRETATION CHOREOGRAPHY:

MAXINE BRAHAM, *GREAT BRITAIN*

*BASED ON THE 1969 PRODUCTION CHOREOGRAPHED BY RAFIGA
AKHUNDOVA AND MAGSUD MAMADOV, AZERBAIJAN*

LIBRETTO: RAFIGA AKHUNDOVA AND MAGSUD MAMMADOV

REVISED EDITION BY MAXINE BRAHAM

ASSISTANT CHOREOGRAPHER:

FRANCESCO MANGIACASALE, *ITALY*

LIGHTING DESIGN: THOMAS C. HASE, *USA*

LIGHTING ENGINEER: DENIS RUDOLPH, *GERMANY*

VIDEO MAPPING: HYPNOTICA VISUAL PERFORMANCE GROUP,
LED BY JAVID GULIYEV, AZERBAIJAN

PROJECT CO-ORDINATION AND ARTISTIC CONSULTANCY:
JAHANGIR SELIMKHANOV

PRODUCTION MANAGER: ULVIYYA KONUL

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGERS:
GURBAN BUNYATOV AND VAZEH MUSTAFA

COSTUME DESIGN AND HAND-PAINTING: F-STUDIO

COSTUME PRODUCTION: YELENA ALMAZOVA

MUSIC RECORDING: STATE ORCHESTRA OF THE USSR
*RAUF ABDULLAYEV, CONDUCTOR, MOSCOW CENTRAL HOUSE
OF GRAMOPHONE RECORDING, 1969*

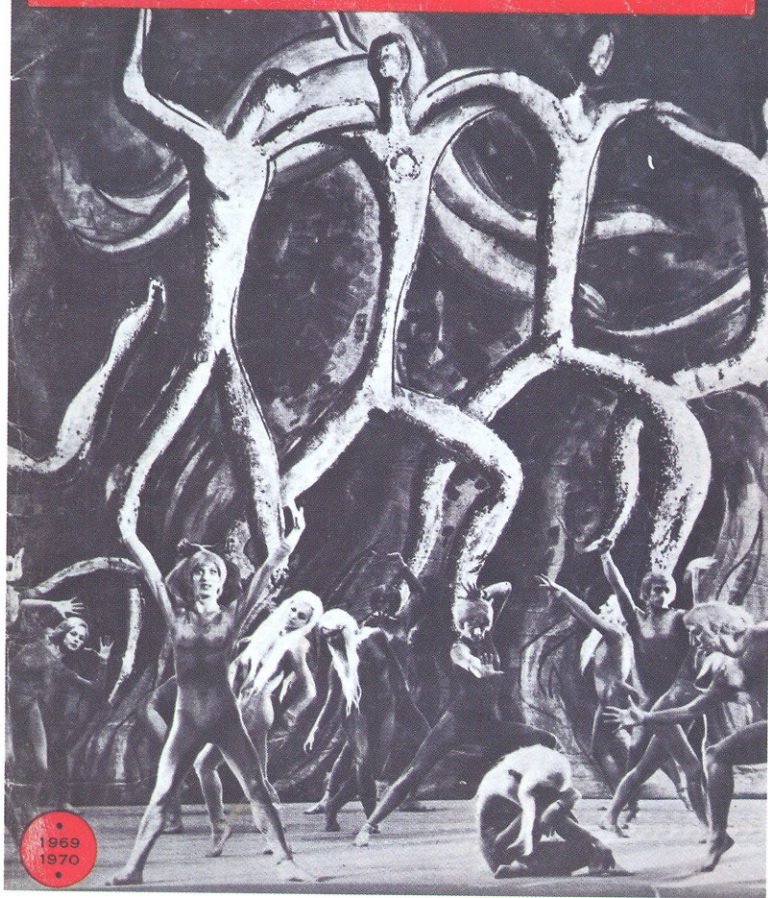
SOUND DESIGN AND RECORDING RE-MASTERING:
RAMIN VELIBEKOV

STAGE CONSTRUCTION:
CINEMAMIXER ALTERNATIVE VIDEO LABORATORY

TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT: ADZONE ADVERTISING AGENCY



BALLETS DE L'OPÉRA DE BAKOU



Rafiga Akhundova at the rehearsal with
Royal Ballet Flanders in Antwerp, 1981

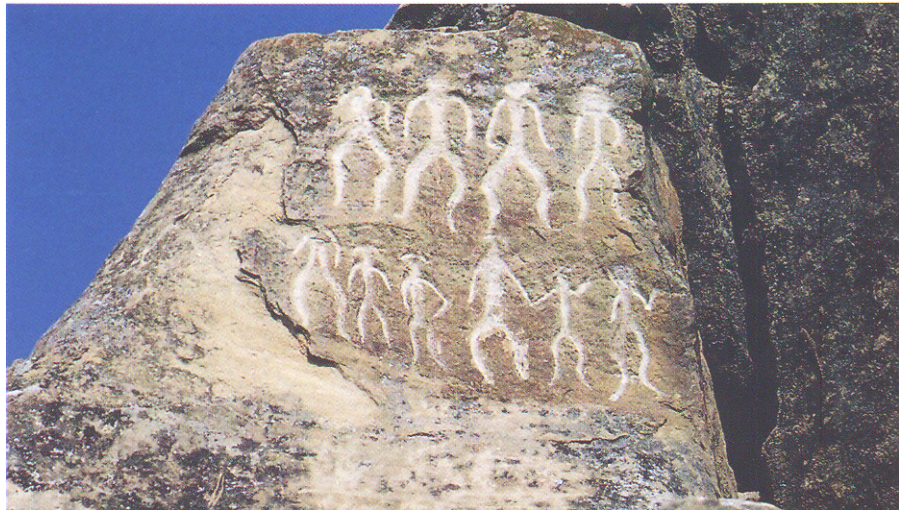
EVENT

This special project within the 2nd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue is an updated version of the successful production of 1969 which was staged at the Azerbaijan State Opera and Ballet Theatre and then presented in Paris, Nice, Luxembourg, Monte Carlo, St. Petersburg, Kiev and elsewhere to critical acclaim.

An unreservedly avant-garde work by composer Faraj Karayev, choreographers Rafiga Akhundova and Maksud Mammadov, the piece reflects on the building-up of a human collective able not only to learn about nature and make better living conditions, but also to transcend the utilitarian needs for warmth and food through creativity and memory. The prehistorical dawn of all mankind as a common unifying premise precursor pretext to the idea of dialogue opposing all kinds of difference, alienation, and separation between groups of people fits perfectly into the goals and topics of Baku Forum. British choreographer Maxine Braham, invited to

revive this notable yet nearly lost ballet work, has tried to retain the aesthetic essence of the original, combining scrupulously collected details remaining from the past and new elements inspired by development of modern dance language over the past few decades. Adapted to the splendid natural surroundings of Gobustan rocks, new production is a juxtaposition of acoustic and recorded sound, on-stage and off-stage lighting, video mapping and other elements of an up-to-date multimedia show. The curved imagery of the dance movements and solemn line patterns on the costumes are all inspired by the rock engravings of Gobustan.

The idea of the work is to show the process of shaping out a human being in the course of learning and overcoming the nature forces, assertion of the reason and will, establishing human relations and disclosing the beauty of creative action. Appearing throughout the work are elements of "yally", an ancient collective round dance, to create a sort of coordinated antithesis to random, chaotic and limp actions of a primordial drove.



GOBUSTAN

The ancient petroglyphs were discovered in Gobustan by archaeologist Iskhaq Jafarzadeh in 1939. Gobustan State Reserve, covering the area of Beyukdash, Kichikdash and Jingir-dag mountains, was established in 1966. In 2007, Gobustan petroglyphs were inscribed in the UNESCO List of World Cultural Heritage.

More than 6,000 petroglyphs were discovered in Gobustan, created over the course of about 15,000 years—from the Upper Paleolithic through the late Middle Ages. Archaeological excavations have found about 20 sites and 40 burial mounds in the reserve area. More than 100,000 artefacts have been unearthed during these excavations.

Gobustan rock drawings show varying themes. These are images of men and women, oxen, aurochs, deer, gazelles, lions, boars, boats and wheels, hunting scenes and battle scenes. Some images apparently bear symbolic and ritualistic meaning. Images of women drawn in profile that date back to the end

of Upper Paleolithic are considered to be the most ancient ones in Gobustan. Images of aurochs (the ancestor to domestic cattle) dating from the same period suggest their importance in the life of primitive people. Images of hunters armed with bows and arrows from the Mesolithic period, the image of domesticated ox and collective dance scenes from the Neolithic, goat images of goats from the Bronze Age—all are evidence of Gobustan having been the habitat and centre of rock art for millennia.

A new museum building was opened in 2011. Here one can get detailed information about rock art throughout the world and at the Gobustan site in particular. The museum uses touchscreens and 3D elements to explain and display world rock art, changes in the natural environment of Gobustan over of millennia, archaeological excavations were held in the reserve, the way of life of Stone Age people and their art, chronology and interpretation of Gobustan petroglyphs, etc. In May 2013, the Gobustan Museum has been announced among the winners of the EMYA—European Museum of the Year Award.

A SYNOPSIS

FOUR IMAGINARY AND POETIC
SCENES IN THE LIFE OF THE ANCIENT
INHABITANTS OF GOBUSTAN

FIRE

A tribe gather around the hearth. A woman dances, telling her people about her prophetic vision. The wind blows. In vain they try to protect their precious fire.

An uncontrollable fire started by a huge thunderstorm sends the community into panic and chaos. Everyone runs away, but one man decides to turn back and face the flames. Once again the community can sit and gaze into the fire, because of one man's selflessness.

SUN

The women perform an eternal ritual invoking the sun to rise again. An intimate moment of anticipated miracle—then and now.

HUNTING

A Hermit performs a mysterious dance passing on the wisdom about the interconnectedness of nature and man, about compassion and forgiveness.

The men gather to track and hunt animals. Suddenly they come across a beast, but the hunt fails due to the non-commitment of an arrogant young man. An Elder protects him from the fury of the group. Excluded from the community, he fearfully hunts alone. The Elder, sensing the Hermit's wisdom, decides to forgive the young man and invites him back to join the hunt, giving him a very special task.

THE ARTIST

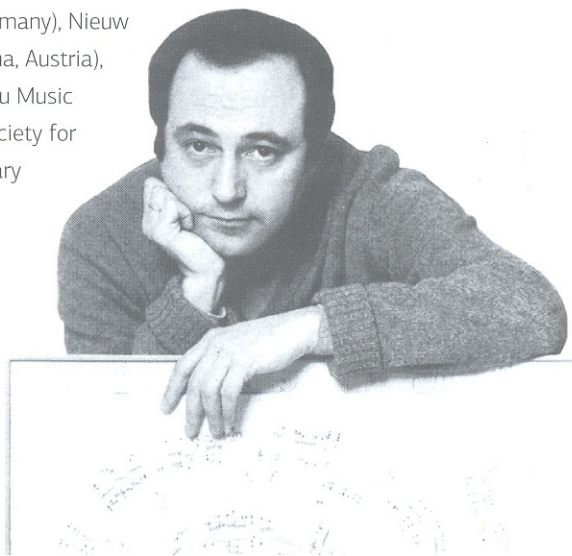
A man watches his daughter playing with a baby deer. Onto the rock he spontaneously draws the essence of the animal. Recognising the subject, she is amazed and intrigued at this completely new activity. He recalls hunting and she draws his memories.

They realise something extraordinary has happened, so they call the group to witness it. A dance ensues which celebrates what is, indeed, the beginning of Art, Literature, and the immortality of a man's artistic creation.

The restricting circle breaks, setting free imagination, creativity and diversity to transform our world. Watched by the echoes of the past, a new optimism dawns.

FARAJ GARAYEV

Considered among the leading composers of his generation in Azerbaijan and all post-Soviet regions, started his career in the mid-sixties. *Shadows of Gobustan* (1969) is among the first remarkable pieces by the then-recent graduate of Azerbaijan State Conservatoire. Music by Faraj Garayev has been performed at festivals and concerts in Europe, USA, South America and Japan. Among orchestras and ensembles performing and commissioning works by Faraj Garaev are Bolshoi Theatre Soloists Ensemble and Studio for New Music (Moscow, Russia), Basel Sinfonietta (Basel, Switzerland), Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt/Main, Germany), Nieuw Ensemble and Schoenberg Ensemble (Amsterdam, Netherlands), Ensemble Reconcil Wien (Vienna, Austria), Quatuor Danel (Brussels, Belgium), Continuum (New York, USA). He has been a professor at Baku Music Academy (since 1991) and Moscow State Conservatoire (1999), co-founder of Yeni Musiqi—Society for contemporary music (1995–2002), and artistic director of Gara Garayev Festival of Contemporary Music in Baku (since 1986).





RAFIGA AKHUNDOVA & MAGSUD MAMMADOV

A family couple of distinguished ballet dancers and choreographers and living legends of Azerbaijanin ballet, Rafiga Akhundova and Magsud Mammadov began their joint professional career in the 1950s with their study in the Ballet School of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. It continued both as dance partners on the stage of Azerbaijan State Opera and Ballet Theatre and elsewhere and as choreographers of internationally acclaimed ballet productions (Caspian Ballade, Shadows of Gobustan, Azerbaijan Suite, Kaleidoscope, Mugam, Seven Beauties, Path of Thun-der, Trois R, Babek). As ballet teachers they have worked in Algiers, Antwerp, Baku, Cairo, Gothenburg, Istanbul & Malmö.

MAXINE BRAHAM

Following a successful international dance career, Maxine now works as an award winning choreographer and director in pure dance, opera and spoken theatre. Her work has recently been premiered at The Met. in New York, The Mariinsky, St Peterburg as well as at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London. Maxine choreographed the Opening Ceremony of the Formula One Grand Prix in Bahrain, Conference of the Birds in Vilnius' Airport for LIFE Theatre Festival, Lithuania and Cybergeneration, a dance project for the Belfast International Festival funded by the United Nations Peace and Reconciliation Fund.

She works extensively with world class directors Tim Albery and David Alden. With the former she has choreographed Idomeneo (Het Nationale Reisoper, Netherlands), Madama Butterfly (Opera North, UK), Macbeth (Opera New Zealand), Tannhauser (The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, London) and Otello (Dallas Grand Opera, USA). With David Alden she has created Peter Grimes (English National Opera, Vlaamse Opera, Oviedo Opera, Der Deutsche Oper) Katya Kabanova (Warsaw, London, Lisbon), Luisa Miller (Opera de Lyon, France), Lucia di Lammermoor (London, Gothenberg, Toronto) and Billy Budd at the English National Opera with future dates in Berlin and at The Bolshoi, Moscow.

