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clarinetist Mariam Adam and pianist Evelyn Ulex

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Transatlantic Ensemble Shines at (le) Poisson Rouge

By Melanie Wong

[Feast of Music](#)

April 16, 2013

Last Friday at (le) Poisson Rouge, Transatlantic Ensemble actively expanded the boundaries of classical music. The dynamic duo, comprised of Imani Winds clarinetist Mariam Adam and German pianist Evelyn Ulex, presented an engaging concert that featured an array of music by living composers, most of which can found on their debut album, *Crossing America*.



Before Transatlantic took the stage, new-age psychedelic rockers Christy & Emily performed a set of eccentric and ethereal music that perfectly whet the ears for the main event. Ripe for listening, the audience eagerly greeted Transatlantic Ensemble. The duo opened with two works composed by members of Imani Winds: horn player Jeff Scott's soulful and bluesy Toccata; followed by flautist Valerie Coleman's Portraits of Langston, a series of sketches based on lesser-known poems by Langston Hughes. Actor Tim Cain's deeply seductive voice further enhanced Coleman's piece, as he recited each poem between movements.

Next, the duo offered the spellbound audience Miguel del Aguila's Pacific Serenade, which served as a sweet interlude before Ulex performed unaccompanied. Full of energy and mischief, the pianist gave a riveting performance of Rodion Shchedrin's Basso Ostinato.

Later on the program, Argentinean bandoneón extraordinaire JP Jofre joined the duo for two of his fascinating compositions: Tango Movements, which explores the pain, excitement, hope and fear felt by Argentines after their infamous economic crisis; and Primavera, a buoyant, vernal piece perfect for showcasing the group's virtuosity. Also on the program were Grammy-award-winning composer Paquito D'Rivera's Cape Cod Files and Chiquita Blues, both fun and light pieces, chock-full of Latin rhythms, and guaranteed to make you smile.

Transatlantic Ensemble's superb musicianship combined with their comfortable and cool stage presence makes them a joy to behold. Their choice of new and challenging, yet always audience-friendly repertoire brings newfound relevance to classical music for audiences of all ages and cultures.

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