

The Pronomos Flute by Julian Elvira

A new instrument, a new language, a new thinking



About Julián Elvira

Julián Elvira was born in 1973 and currently lives and works in Madrid. He is one of the most versatile flautists of the Spanish and European music scene. He received advanced training in the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid. In 1996, driven by his interest in performance and contemporary practices, he travels to Budapest to complete a postgraduate degree in Flute acoustics, with a focus on the new trends and performances in Corvin University.

In Hungary, he meets Istvan Matuz, creator of the Complex theory. Elvira becomes interested in Matuz's theoretical proposition and he decides to dedicate himself to its study and realization with the purpose of building a flute with all of those sonic possibilities. For more than 10 years he dedicates himself to the creation of the definitive flute: the Pronomo flute. The Pronomo flute accomplishes in 2009 its most complete form, thanks to the work of British flute maker Stephen Wessel. This unique instrument, created based on the propositions of its teacher, is the latest step in the evolution of the flute since Boehm... In addition to this innovative initiative, Julián Elvira has received praise as a performer for his versatility and virtuosity. In 2004 he performed the entire cycle Carceri D'Invenzione of Brian Ferneyhough, being the first flautist to interpret this cycle completely both inside and outside of Spain. Since 1997, he combines his participation in the Symphony Orchestra of Madrid with the musical creation and investigation, with an emphasis on the sounds of the flutes of the world, electronica music, improvisation and the vanguard. ..

In his performance repertoire we see such names as: Guerrero, Donatoni, Berio, Polonio, Posadas, Rueda, Cancó López, Sotelo, Villanueva, Arias, Sánchez-Verdú, Durán-Loriga, Halffter, Varese, Sciarrino, Bussotti and Ferneyhough, to name a few...

The uniqueness of his work has attracted the attention of various composers who demand his participation and resources in different productions: La Raya en el Agua by José Luís Turina, 1997;

Fragmento de Orfeo by Jesús Rueda, Bienal de Música de Venecia, 2005; Sodom by Eduardo Costa, presented in different festivals throughout Spain. He has been a guest at multiple festivals, both inside and outside of Spain... In his role as composer-performer he produces Expiral (1998), Ira (2002) and 2018 (2005). All of these works are multidisciplinary and emerge from the research and development of new technologies and structures. In this same line, but with a vision intended toward a younger audience, he creates Tubocatessen (2004) which he currently continues to perform.

He combines his facets of performer, researcher and creator with different educational activities about the Western concert flute and the Pronomos flute in different cities across the world. In 2009 his project, 3.1 Cultures, takes him to Japan where he has studied with the teacher of Shakuhachi, Teruhisa Fukuda. Later on he goes to Syria where he studies with the performer of Ney, the teacher, Moslem Rahal. Finally in 2010 he goes to India to study the Hindustani tradition with the renowned bansurist, Pandit Ronu Majumdar. 3.1 Cultures has already been presented in different festivals in Spain and abroad. Julián Elvira teaches regular classes at the Academy of Music "Maese Pedro" in Madrid and in the courses offered by the University Complutense of this city.

About The Pronomos Flute

The development of the Pronomos Flute represents the last evolutionary step for the transverse flute since Boehm's introduction of the keys and spatulas system. This new instrument is based on the Complex System developed by Istvan Matuz, and his prototype made on the 80s, now improved and produced by Julián Elvira and engineered by Stephen Wessel.

The Complex system is an operative method built on a set of assertions about the behaviour of acoustics on the tubes and applied to the fingerings and the embouchure of the flute. It is a functional system that goes beyond a theoretical dissertation to laid down the foundations of an innovative dialectic and a unique creative thinking. The Complex System contains the elements and mechanisms that allow the flutist (interpreter, creator, artist) to apply, experiment and verify these concepts from an objective perspective.

The Pronomos Flute is the result of more than ten years of work and experience on the Complex System; it is the embodiment of its full development comprising the full independence of all the holes in the flute.

There are three fundamental reasons in relation with the full independence of all the flute holes that define this flute and justify its creation.

1. The combination applied to its holes gives us more than twenty three million fingerings, capable of turning into sound resources with unlimited creative possibilities.
2. The possibility of transposing the fingerings keeping their acoustic nature intact.
3. The independence of the holes enables us to adopt the parameters of construction of other flutes from different cultures given that it generates an acoustic behaviour similar to them that favours the adoption of multicultural flautistic techniques. This new possibilities create the Pronomos language, capable of integrating different aesthetics and cultural ideas. A fundamental concept inherent to the Pronomos language is the possibility of hybridisation as a result of a plural conception of flautistic interpretation.

Regarding agility, an unavoidable feature in a flute, and easiness of performance, there are not more problems with this instrument than with the primitive version. Julián Elvira's design is based on the psico-ergonomics closeness between the traditional fingerings and the new ones, and the fundamental engineering work of S. Wessel, resolved with great wisdom and professionalism, all of which constitute the Pronomos Flute as a consistent and an absolutely practicable instrument.