

NATIVE AMERICANS: 4 voices

Music of Native Americans

Hans Zender: Aria from the opera *Chief Joseph*

Pascal Dusapin: *Red Rock* (with Native American instruments)

Karlheinz Stockhausen: *Am Himmel wandre ich*

My connections with Native Americans are deep. I started a PhD in ethnomusicology with Simha Arom and Carlo Severi which led to field work with the Kuna of Panamá deep in the Darién. The Achuar of Ecuador made me a member of their tribe, giving me an Achuar name. My most recent contact was with the Wixáritari in Northern Mexico and their unbelievable art and culture.

The music in this program begins with transcriptions done by the Smithsonian in the early 20th century. It continues with an aria from an opera by Hans Zender, with a set by Jimmy Durham, that I premiered at the Staatsoper in Berlin. Our subject was Chief Joseph, a hero of the Nez Percé tribe, who coined the phrase "no man can own any part of the land."

"Red Rock" was part of Pascal Dusapin's first opera, *Roméo et Juliette*, which I premiered, singing the role of Romeo. We have decided to add to its authenticity by using genuine Native American percussion instruments, rather than those used for the premiere.

Finally, we perform "Am Himmel wandre ich" by Karlheinz Stockhausen. I rehearsed the piece extensively with the composer and have staged it, using real Native American rituals and masks, as well as techniques for imitating bird songs that I learned from the Guaraní in Panamá.