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Irakli
Koiava UDU

2002-2013



Irakli Koiava

Irakli Koiava was born on February 27th, 1979 in Tbilisi, Georgia. His interest in music began in his early childhood. In 2002 he actively began studying percussion instruments and started practising the percussion music.

In 2005 Koiava was proposed to form a new project called Dimension. The project was a duo of Irakli playing percussion and his brother David Koiava playing acoustic guitar. Shortly after that, they were joined by a tenor saxophonist Goga Garsevanishvili. The trio performed ethno/folk jazz, drawing influence from folk music of various countries. In 2005, Dimension organized a cross-Caucasian tour, performing in various jazz clubs in Yerevan (Armenia) and Baku (Azerbaijan), as well as its hometown, Tbilisi. Sometimes Dimension was joined by other musicians, including a tablist Anna Kontridze.

In 2005, during Festival fur Neue Music "Close Encounters", Irakli participated and performed in a drum masterclass with Lucas Niggli, playing udu and ghatam alongside tablist Anna Kontridze. By the end of 2005 Irakli started to discover some of the high-profile jazz musicians, learning their performance techniques and approach to music. These musicians greatly affected Irakli and his music compositions. These musicians include Trilok Gurtu, Zakir Hussain, Vikku Vinayakram, Terry Bozzio, Jack DeJohnette, Vinayakram Salvaganesh, John Zorn, Keith Jarrett, Jan Garbarek, Michel Petrucciani, Peter Erskine, Don Alias, Cyro Baptista and others.

In 2006 Koiava founded a joint project by Georgian and Azerbaijani jazz musicians, including Yashar Guseynov (tabla) and Yasef Eyvazov (oud). The project performed in Baku (Azerbaijan) in a jazz club "Caravan".

In 2007 Irakli started to perform solo concerts, recording his first demo record "Acoustic Udu". Along with his acoustic work, Koiava began exploring the possibilities of electronic music, performing his "Electric Sample Night" in Literature Café.

In 2008 Koiava continued working in solo setting, performing two different projects - Udu Electronic World and Asian-African Evenings. During this time Irakli started playing duo with a drummer Irakli Sanadiradze. The duo played improvised and composed experimental ambient music, performing regular concerts and recording demos. In January 2008 Koiava created a jazz trio with Kakha Jagashvili (soprano and tenor saxophone) and Girshel Javakhishvili (keyboards), with Irakli playing percussion. The trio performed in "Rock Club", playing compositions by all three members.

In March 2008 Irakli was invited to State Jazz Center in Baku (Azerbaijan) where he performed in a "Drummers' Jam" festival alongside Azerbaijani and Russian musicians, namely Alexander Mashin (drums), Tofiq Djabarov (percussion), Ramin Sultanov (drums), Natsik Shirinov (nagara), Eyvaz Hashimov (drums), Ruslan Guseinov (double bass), and Isfar Sarabsky (piano). At that festival an impromptu trio was born, with Irakli improvising with Isfar Sarabsky and Ruslan Guseinov.

In February 2009 Irakli Koiava organized a 3-day festival "Udu and Friends". The opening performance, "Udu Ethno Project", was held in a Museum of Georgian National Musical Instruments. The rest of the festival saw Irakli performing with his new jazz sextet in the "Agora" club, with Irakli playing percussion alongside Kakha Jagashvili (tenor and soprano saxophones), Goga Garsevanishvili (tenor saxophone), Girshe Javakhishvili (keyboards), Levan Deisadze (bass) and Zaza Tsertsvadze (drums), David Azirashvili (guitar).

In January 2009 Irakli was invited to Lithuania by Lithuanian Ministry of Culture. While being there he performed about 60 concerts overall. This was a huge exposure to him. During that time he played his own compositions in various towns and cities, sometimes performing solo, sometimes with different groups and projects. Ramybės Kultūros Centras, Pažaislio vienuolynas, Pilies Aidas festival, Menuo Juodaragis - these are some of the notable events he was invited to play at.

Irakli performed in various jazz clubs and festivals, but perhaps the most interesting performances were held in an old female monastery Pažaislio vienuolynas and an evangelist church Kauno Evangeliku Liuteronu Baznycia. In December 2009 Irakli performed on Rustavi 2 television in a duo setting with Kakha Jagashvili (soprano saxophone, clarinet). An expanded version of this group with Girshe Javakhishvili (keyboards) and Guram Machavariani (guitar) performed on Catholic Christmas in St. Mary's Catholic Church, playing Kakha Jagashvili's compositions. In February 2010 the same group with Azerbaijani guest musicians (Sarabsky, Djabarov, Guseinov) performed two concerts avant-garde music in Baku (Azerbaijan). Since the start of his musical career in 2002, Koiava performed composed and improvised music of various genres and styles in widely different settings with musicians from various countries. In 2010 during the participation special project Jazz duo it Irakli & Tomas Čukauskas (saxophone) Irakli himself created five original compositions which are permanently performed during the various concerts and festivals.

