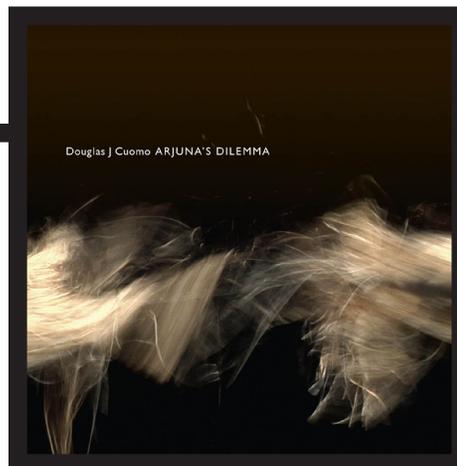




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Douglas J. Cuomo

ARJUNA'S DILEMMA



Douglas J. Cuomo has gathered an exciting array of artists from points East and West for his chamber opera **Arjuna's Dilemma**, which tells the story of the Bhagavad Gita in music that seamlessly melds classical, jazz, and Indian traditions. Indian singer *Amit Chatterjee* (*Zawinul Syndicate*), tenor *Tony Boutté*, and members of *Anonymous 4* are accompanied by a ten-piece ensemble that includes the *Ethel* string quartet, pianist *Kathleen Supove*, and bassist *Robert Black* of the *Bang on a Can All Stars*. Tabla player *Badal Roy* (*Miles Davis*, *John McLaughlin*) and tenor saxophonist *Bob Franceschini*, a giant of Latin jazz, are the featured instrumental soloists.

A work of both sweeping grandeur and piercing intimacy, **Arjuna's Dilemma** addresses ancient themes that remain startlingly topical: the conflicting claims of conscience and duty; the search for self-knowledge in a changing world. **Arjuna's Dilemma** showcases breathtaking vocal turns and virtuosic ensemble and solo playing. The piece utilizes North Indian performance styles, melodic structures, tuning systems, time signatures and rhythmic patterns alongside Western instrumentation, harmonies and forms. North Indian vocals co-mingle with a Western tenor and four-part choral writing, with references to both modern vocal styles and Byzantine and Gregorian chant. Improvisation is common to both musical worlds, with Chatterjee, Roy and Franceschini each using their respective improvisatory traditions to call into being the ecstatic, sublime, and sometimes terrifying world of **Arjuna's Dilemma**.

innova 697

Street release date: 7/1/08

File Under: New Classical > Cuomo

UPC: 7 26708 66972 0

Distributed by CBuJ

"What Cuomo does is what the best of today's composers, from the late Lou Harrison to Osvaldo Golijov, have done: he's developed a lingua franca that is international enough to allow the speakers of those different languages to communicate... The music seems to occupy a space that is not bound by geography or chronology." – John Schaefer, *New Sounds*

Douglas J. Cuomo has composed highly acclaimed and original music for concert and theatrical stages, television, and film. His compositions range from well-known television themes – for *Sex and the City* and *NOW with Bill Moyers*, among others – to evening-length theater works. *Arjuna's Dilemma* is preceded on disc by Cuomo's *Kyrie for And on Earth, Peace* (2007) commissioned by the vocal ensemble Chanticleer and recorded by the group on Warner Music.

During 2008, *Arjuna's Dilemma* will be produced in New York at BAM's Next Wave Festival on Nov. 5, 6, and 8. Both productions will be heavily promoted through a nationwide PR campaign coordinated with the venues' marketing and publicity departments.

NEWS RELEASE