

LEILA

a song cycle for Baritone, Guitar and String Quartet

Karim Al-Zand
(2000)

PROGRAM NOTE:

The name 'Leila' (or 'Laila') is a trope in classical Arabic poetry. The woman's name represents an ideal object of romantic love, but a love which is ultimately unanswered. The history of Leila, as this symbol of longing, begins with the 7th century poet Quais Ibn al-Mulawwah. As the story goes, the young poet became infatuated with his beautiful cousin, Leila. As their love for one another grew, Mulawwah began to express his romantic desire in poems of intense passion. These so angered Leila's family that the two were never allowed to wed. Soon Leila was married to another man, an event which ultimately caused the sensitive poet to lose his sanity. He spent the rest of his days wandering the country in search of Leila and professing his love for her in verse. He has since become known as 'Majnun Leila' ('majnun' literally means 'mad') and his poetry deals almost exclusively with his unrequited love.

In this work I have gathered together several 'Leila poems' from diverse sources, some attributed to Majnun Leila, others by later poets incorporating the symbol. The poems are arranged in a quasi-narrative, divided into roughly three sections: Majnun's initial affection for Leila; his despair at her loss; and the poet's undiminished love for her in old age. The guitar has the principle accompanying voice in the work; the string quartet plays a supporting role in the ensemble.

 December 2000

Premiere performance: ALEA III: Theodore Antoniou, director; Mark Aliapoulios, baritone; Luiz Mantovani, guitar; Mark Berger, Kaveh Saidi, violins; Sandra Nortier, viola; Mark Simcox, cello. February 7, 2001 Tsai Performance Center (Boston University), Boston MA.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

All harmonics in the guitar part are written where they actually sound. Natural harmonics are given in diamond-headed notes, with string and fret indicated when necessary. Artificial harmonics are in normal notation, indicated with a circle above the note. The guitarist begins the piece gently using the flat of the hand to produce a tremolo with a delicate brushing motion.

Accidentals carry through the measure in the same octave. Cautionary accidentals do not imply a relaxation of this rule.

DURATION:

ca. 11'

TEXT:

Shine in the moon's place when it dips.
The dawn is late, become the sun.
You reflect the light of the sun
But the sun lacks your mouth and smile.

Your quality is sunlight coiled
With moonlight, but your eyes dazzle
Too brightly to cup sun or moon.

You radiate the moon's first hue,
But the moon has no neck like yours.
Where are the sun's dark eyes and sleepy lids?¹

Leila, when I gaze upon you
My altered cheek turns pale;
And upon yours, sweet maid, I see
A deepening blush prevail

Leila, shall I seek to impart
Why such a change takes place?—
The crimson stream deserts my heart
To mantle on your face.²

When you mingled with the local girls they seemed
Lovely, when you left they lost their looks.¹

Mad love takes me to Leila's house,
I spill out all my wont and pain.

My cloudy eyes water the dust,
My heart is low and full of fret.
I shout my desire to the streets,
My tears roll, and I talk to her.
Only the cold earth seems to listen:
The face in the sand does not answer.¹

A crow caws 'Leila goes in the morning.'
This break was ordained. At gatherings with friends
I droop like a plucked arrow.¹

As I wake Leila slips away
Like water through clutched fingers.¹

Surprised by this heart, so inflammable still
when gray I stand in the wake of youth,
I think of Leila, her nearness gone,
of things untoward that set us apart.⁴

Do you wonder that I flew
charmed to meet my Leila's gaze?
Do you wonder that I stood
raptured by my Leila's voice? —
When I die, if I should know
where my Leila's relics lie,
Majnun's dust will flit away,³
there to join his Leila's clay.

¹ *Poems by Majnun Laila, a 7th Century Arab Poet*, Trans. George Wightman and Abdullah al-Udhari. [No Titles]

^{2, 3} *Arabian Poetry for English Readers*, Ed. W. A. Clouston, Trans. J. D. Carlyle, Darf Publishers Ltd., London 1881. Carlyle titles the poems: To A Lady On Seeing Her Blush (by Khalif Radhi Billah) and On The Death Of His Mistress (by Abu Saher Alhedily). I have excerpted the second poem and modernized the 19th century translations of both.

⁴ *Classical Arabic Poetry: 162 Poems from Imrukais to Maarru*, Trans. Charles Tuetey, KPI Ltd., London 1985. [No Title] excerpt (by Alkama of Tamim)

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Slowly; ethereal, magical ♩ = 58

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 1-4, and the second system covers measures 5-8. The Baritone part includes lyrics: "Shine in the moon's place when it" and "dips. The dawn". The String Quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) parts are marked with "poco cresc." and "pppp" dynamics. The Guitar part includes instructions like "sul tasto", "no accent", and "poco cresc.". The second system features a 2/4 time signature change and includes a "light, airy" section for the strings and a "tr^{is}" (trill) in the Cello part.

Baritone: *sotto voce* *ppp* Shine in the moon's place when it

Guitar: *sul tasto* *(trem.)* *no accent* *pppp* *poco cresc.*

Violin I: *mute on punta d'arco (trem.)* *pppp* *poco cresc.*

Violin II: *mute on punta d'arco (trem.)* *pppp* *poco cresc.*

Viola: *mute on punta d'arco (trem.)* *pppp* *poco cresc.*

Violoncello: *mute on punta d'arco (trem.)* *pppp* *poco cresc.*

Bar. (5): *pp* dips. The dawn

Guit. (5): *ppp* *ord.* *ppp*

Vln. I (5): *light, airy* *ppp* *p* *tr^{is}* *ppp*

Vln. II (5): *light, airy* *ppp* *p* *tr^{is}* *ppp*

Vla. (5): *light, airy* *ppp* *p* *tr^{is}* *ppp*

Vc. (5): *tr^{is}* *ppp* *p* *ppp*

9 *poco cresc.* *p*

Bar. is late be - come the sun.

Guit. *poco cresc.* *pp* *ord.* *p*

Vln. I *poco cresc.* *pp* *mp* *p*

Vln. II *poco cresc.* *pp* *mp* *p*

Vla. *poco cresc.* *pp* *mp* *p*

Vc. *poco cresc.* *pp* *tr^b* *mp* *p*

Slightly slower; rhapsodic ♩ = 52



13 *ardent mp* *suddenly coy*

Bar. You re - flect the light of the sun but the

Guit. *pp*

Vln. I *pp* *creep in* *mute off*

Vln. II *pp* *creep in* *mute off*

Vla. *pp* *creep in* *mute off*

Vc. *pp* *creep in* *mute off* (II) *tr^b*

but held back slightly - - - - - a tempo

18

Bar. sun lacks your mouth and smile. Your

Guit.

Vln. I *p* *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *p* *mf* *mp*

Vla. *p* *mf* *mp*

Vc. *p* *mf* *mp* *tr^b*

enraptured mf

22

Bar. qua-li-ty is sun-light coiled with moon-light, but your eyes daz-zle too bright-ly to

Guit. *mf* *ringing* *sul pont. shimmering*

Vln. I *p* *sul pont. shimmering*

Vln. II *p* *sul pont. shimmering*

Vla. *p* *sul pont. shimmering*

Vc. *p* *sul pont. shimmering*

25 *mf* *ardent mf*

Bar. cup sun or moon. You ra - di - ate the

Guit. *mp*

Vln. I *ord. mp p*

Vln. II *ord. mp p*

Vla. *ord. mp p*

Vc. *ord. tr^b mp p*

29 *suddenly coy* as before

Bar. moon's first hue, but the moon has no neck like

Guit.

Vln. I *p mp*

Vln. II *p mp*

Vla. *p mp*

Vc. *tr^b p mp*

head voice, non vib.
ad libitum
naively

34 5th *p*

Bar. yours. Where are the sun's dark eyes and slee - py lids? _____

Guit. 34 *p* *naively* repeat in time; gradually drop out notes; fade to nothing under voice *sonorous*

Vln. I 34 fade to nothing under voice; cut off ad lib. *sfz* > *ppp*

Vln. II 34 fade to nothing under voice; cut off ad lib. *sfz* > *ppp*

Vla. 34 fade to nothing under voice; cut off ad lib. *sfz* > *ppp*

Vc. 34 fade to nothing under voice; cut off ad lib. *sfz* > *ppp*

Moderato; nervous, apprehensive
[a comic waltz]

$\text{♩} = 92-96$



37

Bar.

Guit. 37 *tentative at first* *pp* *p* *mp* accented single stroke for each slur; hammer on

Vln. I 37 *pizz.* *mp*

Vln. II 37 *pizz.* *mp*

Vla. 37 *pizz.* *mp*

Vc. 37 *pizz.* not too swiftly arpeggiated vigorously *mf*

(42) *(coming in early)*
touchingly awkward *mf* *like a nervous stutter*

Bar. | Lei - la, when I gaze u - pon you

Guit. |

Vln. I |

Vln. II |

Vla. |

Vc. |

(47) *skittish* *trying again*

Bar. | my al - tered cheek turns pale; Lei - la, Lei - la, and u -

Guit. |

Vln. I |

Vln. II |

Vla. |

Vc. |

accelerando

becoming excited

52

Bar. | - - pon yours, sweet maid, sweet maid, I see, I see a deep - en - ing

Guit. | *v*

Vln. I | *cresc.*

Vln. II | *cresc.*

Vla. | *cresc.*

Vc. | *cresc.*

a tempo

57

Bar. | blush pre-vail. Lei - la, shall I seek to

Guit. | *f* *p* *mf* *v*

Vln. I | *mp*

Vln. II | *mp*

Vla. | *mp*

Vc. | *mf*

solo, rubato ad libitum
with (false) bravura

61

Bar. *assuredly*
im - part why such a change takes place? The *f*

Guit. *f*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *f*

66

Bar. *subito pp*
crim - son stream de-serts my heart to man - tle

Guit. *ff* *f*

Vln. I *decresc.* *mp*

Vln. II *decresc.* *mp*

Vla. *decresc.* *mp*

Vc. *decresc.* *mf*

70 *p*

Bar. *p*
on your face.

Guit. 70 *mf* *mp* (XII)

Vln. I *p* *pp*

Vln. II *p* *pp*

Vla. *p* *pp*

Vc. *p* *pp*

attacca → quartet tacet

Slowly; expressively and lyrically ♩ = 52 (rubato)

72 *plaintive* *mf*

Bar. *mf*
When you min - gled with the

Guit. 72 *mf* top line singing prominently; take time

75

Bar. *ten.*
lo - cal girls they seemed love - ly,

Guit. 75 *with voice* *ten.*

78 *poco rit.* - - - - *a tempo*

Bar. *passionately*
when you

Guit. 78 *f* *mf*

81

Bar. left they lost their looks.

Guit.

84 $\text{♩} = 80$

Bar.

Guit. *mp* *poco cresc.* *mf* accelerate gradually to tempo

Vln. I *p* *f* *pp* *cresc.* *f* *tr* *cued*

Vln. II *p* *f* *pp* *cresc.* *f* *tr* *cued*

Vla. *p* *f* *pp* *cresc.* *f* *tr* *cued*

Vc. *p* *f* *pp* *cresc.* *f* *tr* *cued*

Very Quickly; frantic, urgent $\text{♩} = 152$

88

Bar.

Guit. *f*

Vln. I *ff* *p* *f* *tr*

Vln. II *ff* *p* *f* *tr*

Vla. *ff* *p* *f* *tr*

Vc. *ff* *p* *f* *tr*

94

Bar.

Guit.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

cresc.

sfz p

tr^b

molto

99

Bar.

Guit.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

frantic

f

Mad _____ love _____ takes ___ me to Lei - la's house, _____

ff

f > *mf*

f > *mf*

f > *mf*

tr^b

f > *mf*

104

Bar. I spill out all my wont and pain.

Guit.

Vln. I *f* *mf* *espres.* *f*

Vln. II *f* *mf*

Vla. *f* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf*

109

Bar.

Guit.

Vln. I

Vln. II *f* *mf*

Vla. *f* *mf*

Vc.

114

Bar. My clou - dy eyes wa - ter the dust, _____

Guit. *cresc.*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *tr³*

119

Bar. My heart _____ is low _____ and _____

Guit. *ff*

Vln. I *cresc.* *tr³* *ff* *f*

Vln. II *cresc.* *tr³* *ff* *f*

Vla. *cresc.* *ff* *f*

Vc. *(tr³) cresc.* *tr³* *ff* *f*

124

Bar. *desperate*
ff

full of fret. _____ I

Guit.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *tr^b*

129

Bar. *crying out*

shout _____ my de - sire _____ to the streets, _____

Guit. *cresc.*

Vln. I *cresc.*

Vln. II *cresc.*

Vla. *cresc.*

Vc. *tr^b* *cresc.*

134

Bar.

Guit.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

fff

violently

fff

tr[♯]

saltando lightly

p

saltando lightly

p

139

Bar.

Guit.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

warmly

pp *p* *pp*

warmly

pp *p* *pp*

p *mp* *p*

p *mp* *p*

144

Bar. *exhausted mp*
My tears roll,

Guit. *pp mp*

Vln. I *decresc. ppp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp* *tr^b*

149

Bar. and I talk to her. On-ly the

Guit. 149

Vln. I 149 *trⁱ tr^b mp f*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *(trⁱ)*

gradual ritard - - - - -

154

Bar. cold earth _____ seems _ to lis - ten: _____ the face _ in the

Guit. *decesc.*

Vln. I *mp* *tr* *decesc.*

Vln. II *tr* *decesc.*

Vla. *tr* *decesc.*

Vc.

(rit.) - - - - -

160

Bar. sand _____ does not ans - wer. _____

Guit. *p* *pp*

Vln. I *p* *pp*

Vln. II *p* *pp*

Vla. *(tr)* *p* *pp*

Vc.

(rit.) - - - - -

Very Slowly; glassy, placid $\text{♩} = 40$

165 *ppp* *calm, disconnected p*

Bar. *A*

Guit. *played with the fingernail sonorously, sul pont.; let vibrate throughout*
 ② XII
 ⑤ XIX *(non harm.)*
f

Vln. I *with guitar sul I*
p

Vln. II *with guitar sul III*
p

Vla. *with guitar sul I*
p

Vc. *with guitar*
p
sul I

170

Bar. *crow cawed* 'Lei-la goes _____ in the morn-ing' _____ This break was or - dained _____

Guit. ④ V
 ⑥ IV ② VII
 ④ V ① XII ⑤ IV
 ⑥ V ② XII
 ④ XIX

Vln. I *8va*

Vln. II *sul I*

Vla. *sul I*

Vc.

175 *suddenly sad, dejected*

Bar. *pp ad lib.*

At gath'-rings with friends I droop like a plucked ar - row.

Guit. ④ IV# ② VII# ④ V ⑤ IV ⑤ VII ④ VII ⑥ V

Vln. I *Sw - - - -*

Vln. II *sul II*

Vla. *sul II*

Vc.

Slowly; ruminative, melancholy $\text{♩} = 58$

180 *mp* *sub. f*

Bar. *mp* *sub. f*

As I wake Lei - la slips a - way like wa - ter through clutched fin - gers. Sur -

Guit. *ord.* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

184

Bar. *p*
 — prised by this heart, — so in-flam-ma-ble still when gray I stand — in the wake — of youth, I

Guit. *f* sul pont. ord. *p* sul pont.

Vln. I *f* *p*

Vln. II *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

held back - - - - - a tempo

188

Bar. *tenderly* *sub. pp* *mf*
 think of Lei-la, her near-ness gone, of things un-to-ward — that set us a-part.

Guit. with voice ord. *delicate* *sub. pp* *mf* sul pont.

Vln. I *pp* *poco* *port.* *mp* *sub. pp* *mf*

Vln. II *pp* *poco* *mp* *sub. pp* *mf*

Vla. *pp* *poco* *mp* *sub. pp* *mf*

Vc. *pp* *poco* *mp* *sub. pp* *mf*

Slightly Faster; shimmering, ecstatic $\text{♩} = 62$

192 *quiet euphoria*
pp

Bar. Do you won - der _____ that I flew _____ charmed to meet _____ my

Guit. with hand as before (trem.)
pp

Vln. I *still non vib.*
ppp
glistening

Vln. II *ppp*
glistening

Vla. *pizz.*
pp

Vc. III (trem.)
ppp

195 *slight cresc.*

Bar. Lei - - - - - la's _____ gaze?

Guit. *slight cresc.*
p

Vln. I *slight cresc.*
pp

Vln. II *slight cresc.*
pp

Vla. *slight cresc.*
p

Vc. *slight cresc.*
pp

197

Bar. *pp* Do you won - der that I stood

Guit. *pp*

Vln. I *ppp*

Vln. II *ppp*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *ppp*

199

Bar. *cresc.* rap - tured by my Lei - la's

Guit. *cresc.*

Vln. I *cresc.*

Vln. II *cresc.*

Vla. *cresc.*

Vc. *cresc.*

201 *mp*

Bar. *voice?*

Guit. *mp*

Vln. I *p* *harm. gliss. (1)*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *mp* *arco*

Vc. *p* *harm. gliss. (1)*

A Tempo; plaintive (♩ = 58)

203 *mf*

Bar. *mf*

if guitar solo

ord.

Guit. *mf*

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

When I die, _____ if I should know where my Lei-la's re-lics lie,

take (a tempo)
time

poco rit. -----

208

Bar. | *Maj-nun's dust will flit a-way there to join his Lei-la's clay.*

Guit. | *mp*

Vln. I | *bring out*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. | *mp*

213

Bar. | *ppp*

Guit. | *arpeg.* *hammer on*
RH
LH

Vln. I | *pizz.*
mp

Vln. II

Vla. | *p*

Vc. | *p*

