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GUEST DJ PROJECT



Janet Echelman

WED SEP 4, 2013

Host: Jeremy Sole

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Artist Janet Echelman specializes in public artist installations and sculpture. From Bach to Balinese music, she chooses songs that reflect her visual art aesthetic – a beautiful blend of multiple elements and unlikely materials. Janet is one of 15 artists who will transform Santa Monica Beach as part of the all night art event Glow on September 28.

More: <http://www.echelman.com/>

Track List

1. Bach -- Two Part Invention No 13 in A Minor
2. Brahms Horn Trio in E Flat Op -- Andante
3. Gender Wayang -- Sukawati (Sulendro)
4. Bamboleo -- Gypsy Kings
5. Dan Rome -- "An Inventor Fiddles"

Transcript:

Jeremy: Hi, I'm Jeremy Sole and I'm here with Janet Echelman, an artist specializing in public artist installations and sculpture. Today, we'll be playing excerpts of songs that she's selected that have inspired her over the years as part of KCRW's Guest DJ Project.

And first of all, let me say, I'm a big fan of your works. I've been moved to the core at how beautiful they are, and how organic, and just the story behind them. So, I'm real excited to be talking to you, first of all.

Janet: Jeremy thanks so much for inviting me.

Jeremy: I could talk about music all day, and I'm excited to hear what you brought for us. So, what did you bring in?

Janet: I kind of thought about sharing music from each phase of my life. And I started with the earliest decade. As a kid I started playing piano, classical piano when I was five years old. And the music that really grabbed me was Bach. And I've picked a Two Part Invention because it's something that I keep going back to even now because I think it kind of helps to knit together the left and right parts of my brain. And these works, I never get tired of them. So, I'm sharing with you Bach's Two Part Invention in A Minor.

Song: Bach -- Two Part Invention

It's like two parts of myself speaking to one and other. It's sort of like the bass begins singing the motif and then it...it travels to the treble and then finally they...they kinda of weave together... and sort of join together in harmony and then go their own ways. And there's something about the kind of precision of the Bach, it's, you know, t's so clean and beautiful. And then at the same time it has these deep, emotional resonances.

Jeremy: We were just listening to a piece by Bach. It was Two Part Invention No. 13 in A Minor. I'm excited to go on to the next tune. What else have you brought for us?

Janet: The next phase of my life: As I moved into my teenage years I began learning about ensemble -- playing with other people and how that creates something greater than what I could do alone.

I picked the Brahms Horn Trio because it's another work that I can listen to and it just speaks so deeply to me; that melody that comes forth and moves between each of the three instruments.

When I was 14, I started playing chamber music and had the chance to play with a symphony orchestra. I was playing Griggs Piano Concerto, and there was something just so incredibly moving where this sound was created and I was one teeny, little part of it. And it was this, you know, lifting, floating experience. Being part of something larger, that's kind of why I picked this work. And again, the sound of the horn is just so soulful.

Song: Brahms Horn Trio in E Flat Op -- Andante

Jeremy: That was the Andante Movement of Brahms Horn Trio in E Flat. Jeremy Sole with you here as part of the KCRW Guest DJ Project. I'm sitting here with some guest selections from Janet Echelman. Can you tell me a little bit about the third song you picked?

Janet: In my 20s, I moved to the island of Bali, in Indonesia, all on my own. And I started studying what I thought was the equivalent of chamber music there, which was Gender.

And it's really interesting because they build two instruments as a pair and their tuned slightly off from one and other. So, when you play the same notes, they blend but they don't match. You play it with two hands -- like a damper, kind of like a xylophone -- and you stop the sound with the base of your hand. And so you're constantly playing and stopping the sound and you're blending with your partner. And it's this incredible experience.

This music is what they play during shadow puppet plays. And so I'm sharing with you Gender Wayang from a neighboring village Sukawati in Bali, Indonesia.

Song: Gender Wayang -- Sukawati

I fell in love with Balinese music. I played in a big gamelan orchestra from my neighborhood in the village where I lived. And I picked this piece of gender because it's a smaller, more focused group. You can really hear the two parts and hear how they're different and begin to blend and make this new kind of sound. And that whole aesthetic of being slightly off...leading to this beautiful blend is something that I take into the visual realm when I make sculpture.

Jeremy: Okay. So, to move forward let's get into a little Gypsy Kings.

Janet: I love to dance. I just love to...let go, kind of free dancing and to do that with friends. And when I lived in Bali, I had this little house on the edge of the rice field with a grass roof and a big wooden porch. And we'd have these dance parties there. And this was one of my favorite dance party songs. So, I thought I'd share that with you: "Bamboleo".

Song: Gypsy Kings -- "Bamboleo"

Later when I went to work in Spain - when I was invited to an artist colony in the south of Spain, it was in the desert and I would take walks in the afternoons. And nearby there were several gypsy villages. And one evening I came with a bottle of whiskey and the various gypsy guitarists started playing and I thought, "Wow, this is music that's just coming straight out of their soul."

Jeremy: Once again that was Bamboleo by the Gypsy Kings. Why don't you tell me a little bit about this last song you chose.

Janet: Right now in my life I'm making sculpture out of physical materials. And I came across a new composer, named Dan Rome. And his piece that I'm sharing with you called "An Inventor Fiddles" is entirely made of sounds that I couldn't figure out what they are. But it engaged me because I was constantly trying to figure out what that was.

I won't tell you what the sounds are, but I will say the sculpture I'm making for the beach in Santa Monica...I'm collaborating with this composer, Dan Rome and Zach Alterman, to create a new work of audio five channel sound for my sculpture, for the Los Angeles area, for Glow. Glow is a one night art festival that happens on the beach with new commissioned works of art that are about that experience on the beach in Santa Monica.

Song: Dan Rome -- "An Inventor Fiddles"

Jeremy: Thank you so much for sharing a little peek into your soul and the things that inspire your works. Once again this is Jeremy Sole sitting with Janet Echelman as part of KCRW's Guest DJ Project. Again, thank you so much.

Janet: Thank you so much.

Jeremy: For a complete track listing and to find these songs online, go to kcrw.com/guestdjproject and please subscribe to the podcast through iTunes.

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