



## The Skopje Connection meets Ernst Reijseger

Recorded in Hilversum, Holland in October 2010.

Recording engineer: Dick Lucas

Mixing and mastering: Alen Hadzi Stefanov and Dzijan Emin

Final Mastering: Rainbow Studios, Oslo

Produced by Enrico Blumer

### 1. The Skopje Connection

The Skopje Connection is a unique trio, put together by the Italian producer Enrico Blumer, and featuring the new Italian rising star, Luca Aquino on trumpet, and two of Macedonia's leading contemporary and jazz musicians, Dzijan Emin on French horn and melodeon, and Georgi Sareski on acoustic guitar. For this special project they are joined by one of the most renowned contemporary European musician, the Dutch cellist Ernst Reijseger.

These four musicians come from very different cultural and musical backgrounds as they meet with kindred sensibility and musicianship. The highly emotional songs, sophisticated sound, fantastic interplay and dream like ambience, are just few of the characteristics that make the Skopje Connection a one-of-a-kind listening experience. A tranquil and yet powerful music that deeply resonates within the human soul.

The first encounter of Aquino, Sareski and Emin was in 2009, in the city of Skopje, Macedonia, where they recorded their first album and discovered the sound of the Skopje Connection in a Turkish hammam from the XV century. This particular hammam boasts beautiful acoustics and an incredible natural reverb, which inspired surrealistic compositions and improvisations. The album, entitled "Amam", was released later that year for Enrico Blumer Productions, and it was selected as one of the best albums of 2009 by the Italian web site [italia.allaboutjazz.com](http://italia.allaboutjazz.com). In the new album, the Skopje Connection has maintained the animated, story telling magic of their previous album, "amam" - conjuring up cinematic scenes in the imagination of the listeners mind - this time with the added touch of Ernst Reijseger on the cello providing an element of lush sophistication to the trio's endearing compositions. The Skopje Connection fulfills the potential promised in "amam" - exhibiting both maturity and playfulness, restraint and mastery, making this album a compelling delight.



## 2. Biographies

**Ernst Reijseger**, (born November 13, 1954, Bussum) is a Dutch cellist and composer. He specializes in jazz, improvised music, and contemporary classical music and often gives solo concerts. He has worked with Louis Sclavis, Derek Bailey, Han Bennink, Misha Mengelberg, Gerry Hemingway, Yo-Yo Ma, Albert Mangelsdorff, Franco D'Andrea, Joëlle Léandre, Georg Gräwe, Trilok Gurtu, and Mola Sylla, and has done several world music projects working with musicians from Sardinia, Turkey, Iran, Senegal, and Argentina, as well as the Netherlands based group Boi Akih.

He has made numerous recordings, both as solo cellist and with other groups, and has been the subject of a documentary film. He has also written several film scores, including that for the 2005 Werner Herzog film *The Wild Blue Yonder*.

**Dzijan Emin**, plays French horn and melodica with this group. A versatile musician with professional experience only few people can match. A gifted composer and multi-instrumentalist, Dzijan's talents have been confirmed with numerous albums, awards, honors and recognitions throughout the years. He is the principal French horn with the Macedonian Philharmonic, but also he is an important ingredient of many international and domestic projects and groups, as a composer, arranger, keyboard player, guitarist, vocalist and producer. Dzijan has performed world wide and collaborated with outstanding musicians such as William Parker, Greg Hopkins, Peter Herbert, Damo Suzuki, Giovanni Falzone, Malcolm Burn, Frank London, Bob Stewart, Gianluca Petrella, to name a few. He has also performed with the Portland Symphony and East West World Orchestra. His vast discography includes six albums with his group "Project Zlust", two albums with Sareski's quartet, and 10 other releases.

**Luca Aquino** is a new rising star on the Italian scene. A trumpet player with a true voice, Luca quickly emerged on the scene as one of the leading soloists. As a leader, he has released three albums for Universal Music/Emarcy, including one exceptional solo album "Icaro", and his latest album "Chiaro" for Paolo Fresu's label Tuk Music.

Luca has collaborated and/or performed with musicians such as Paolo Fresu, Roy Hargrove, Bob Mintzer, Jimmy Heath, Slide Hampton, Tony Scott, and James Moody, among others. In 2008 he received the 2nd prize Best New Italian Talent Award and the critics' prize at the International Massimo Urbani Award. In 2009 he received the best new Italian talent award. Luca Aquino is playing Hub Van Laar trumpets and flugelhorn exclusively.

**Georgi Sareski**, is one of the most productive musicians from Macedonia, who in his career as a composer, guitarist and arranger (he began his career in 2005 after graduating from Berklee College of Music in Boston, USA) has released five excellent albums and has successfully promoted his music with numerous performances on many festivals for jazz and new music in Europe. Since graduating from Berklee, Sareski has become a fulcrum of Skopje's jazz scene, honing an impressive quartet and recording five albums, the two latest of which with the Skopje Connection. Aside from confident playing, there is a strong compositional personality at work here, for which he has received several international awards and accolades, including the 1st prize IAJE (International Association of Jazz Educators) award for jazz composition, and the Berklee Achievement Award.

### 3. Links

[www.lucaaquino.com](http://www.lucaaquino.com), [www.ernstreijseger.com](http://www.ernstreijseger.com), [sareski.xmkd.com](http://sareski.xmkd.com), [www.loosenrecords.com](http://www.loosenrecords.com)  
[www.enricoblumer.eu](http://www.enricoblumer.eu)

### 4. Final notes

All additional information, high resolution photos, audio files or similar, are available upon request.

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