

**Kronos Quartet (David Harrington) and Aleksandra Vrebalov**  
**Excerpts from email exchange during the composition & development of**  
**Aleksandra Vrebalov's ...*hold me, neighbor, in this storm...***  
**January 2007 to March 2008**  
**World premiere performance: February 22, 2008, Zankel Hall, Carnegie Hall, New York**

**June 3, 2007:**

Hi Aleksandra,  
Yesterday I had an idea.  
Right now I'm putting together an album that will focus on the Islamic world. We need something wild, fast and sonically refreshing. So I thought about the piece that you are working on for the Carnegie concert, and by putting 2 and 2 together I arrived at a 10! ....  
Read more

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**January 2007 to March 2008**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,  
Sorry to not have had more time to talk in NY [at Chamber Music America concert honoring Kronos?]. I think that I will be there again soon. We should talk about you doing something exceptional for Kronos.  
Love, David

**Friday, February 9, 2007**

Hey David,  
Here they are, three famous poems ["Tsar Lazar and Tsaritsa Militsa," "The Kosovo Maiden," "The Death of the Mother of the Yugovichi"] on the battle of Kosovo in 1389 against Turks, in which most of Serbian political elite died.  
"The Battle of Kosovo cycle of heroic ballads is generally considered the finest work of Serbian folk poetry. Commemorating the Serbian Empire's defeat at the hands of the Turks in the late fourteenth century, these poems and fragments of poems have been known for centuries in Eastern Europe." (Charles Simic)...(excerpt)  
Aleksandra

**Wednesday, May 2, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,  
Our meeting Monday [in New York] was really wonderful. Thank you. How would you describe what we talked about? I realized later that it was one of those special conversations that are very difficult to describe. When I tried to relay the essence of what had been said to the rest of Kronos I was drawing a blank. I'll bet that you have an amazing memory for conversations. Could you detail what we said in a few sentences?  
Best wishes,  
David

**Wednesday, May 2, 2007**

Hey David,  
Yes, there are conversations that are impossible to easily summarize, and I hope that in case of the one we had on Monday it only shows that we operated on an intuitive as much as verbal a level. So, our mulling over the piece for me brought out:  
Tapping into a deep well of music from Serbia and surrounding regions, pulling out the archaic/characteristic rhythms and sonorities of different ethnic groups whose identity is based

and defined by music they play, and confronting those "musics" in a (imaginary) narrative to show the urge and struggle to keep the identity in both confrontations and melding of the cultures (Christianity versus Islam, rural areas versus urban ones, minorities versus dominant groups). Musical narrative of the work would have 1) a dimension of space (geography), in which the music of different regions represents different identities and how those identities are preserved through songs and dances in case of immigrants, or minorities, surrounded by the main/dominant culture; 2) a dimension of time, in which the music serves as a connection to the heritage, the ancestry, the past, and is therefore the grounding element that defines ones identity and connects him/her with the language, memories and knowledge of his ethnic group and land.

How all of that I am going to translate to sound and form I still need to see - snapshots of rhythms, melodies, like a sound travel through an old photo album, memories and atmospheres, sometimes funny, sometimes melancholic, with a sense of time passing, change beyond an individual's control, loss, and at the same time warmth, familiarity, and belonging. I am also very excited about the possibility of actually using some documentary material, be that sound (recordings of singing or chanting) or visual materials, but that's still to cook a bit longer... in terms of length, I hear it as a 25-30 min. work. That's all for now.

Tell me if you want me to verbalize (!) more. And yes, I did realize that the composer needs to apply for Fromm [Music Foundation's commissions] not the performing group, so I'll be in touch with Laird [Rodet, Associate Director, Kronos Quartet] about it.

Good luck with all the meetings,

Hugs,

A

### **Wednesday, May 2, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

I knew that I could count on you to eloquently reconstruct what we said on Monday. Wow, that was an intense conversation! It was more than a conversation because I could almost hear the music myself and I was not certain whether it was in your mind or mine or both. Thanks for this. As an added element, it is still so much easier for us to deal with sounds than visuals. How about if you create/record some environmental sounds when you are in Serbia this summer. You could even get all the young composers to help out maybe. I can imagine all these microphones fanning out throughout the country leading to an amazing found sound. We can always add visual elements much later. Have you heard our album 'Nuevo'? We did that in Mexico City, so I'm really a huge fan of how music emanates from a place a sound environment that in some way molds it or at least frames it.

Take care,

David

### **Sunday, June 3, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

Yesterday I had an idea.

Right now I'm putting together an album that will focus on the Islamic world. We need something wild, fast and sonically refreshing. So I thought about the piece that you are working on for the Carnegie concert, and by putting 2 and 2 together I arrived at a 10!

So here's the idea: Why don't you write something wild, rustic and danceable that comes from and is inspired by Albanian Islamic music? Think of it as a study for the big piece - a distant cousin to 'Pannonia Boundless'. It should be at 4-6 minutes. Maybe it would be able to have us exploring traditional Albanian instruments and vocal techniques. Also, this would give us something to include in some fall concerts and point the way toward the piece we've been talking about. Maybe you could find a way of 'embedding' it in the larger piece? What do you think??

Best wishes,

David

### **Sunday, June 3, 2007**

David,

I just arrived to Belgrade, an hour ago; the last CD I uploaded on my iPod last night before the trip was Albanian village music...so, yes, the idea of a study is great, let me spend some time with the material just to figure out the rhythms, harmonic language, the general feel...let's email in a few days with more details, with me having a more concrete idea what of that original music I want to use as the starting point, etc. I hear it as pretty obsessive, almost dervish-like, circular, with insistent rhythm. More soon, all the best,  
Aleksandra

**Sunday, June 10, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

I just found this website that could be important for the new piece: [videoletters.net](http://videoletters.net)

Please let me know what you think.

David

**Wednesday, June 13, 2007**

Hi David,

I did look at the website -- my internet here seems to be to slow, wasn't able to find/hear any music. I do know pretty much all the names of artists involved, and places throughout the former Yugoslavia involved in the project are familiar to me. Is there anything specific you wanted me to see?

I have been working on the short piece and hope to have it done by the end of month. I cannot come to France as waiting lists in Serbia for visas are impossible - no slots opens before the end of summer for France.

Now I am looking into plane tickets to Berne, as with my green card I need no visa for Switzerland.

If I manage to finish the piece, or have it almost done by the 28th, I think it would be good to run through it together. What do you think?

If I manage to organize everything with the trip, what would our schedule be like in Berne?

Hope all is good,

A

**Wednesday, June 13, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

The website seemed like something to know about, that's all.

Re: rehearsing in Bern: I'll bet we could get a short intense rehearsal in on June 30 in the late morning. Would that work for you?

Great news about the short piece! I'll look forward to more info.

Best,

David

**Monday, June 18, 2007**

Greetings David,

I am working on the short "Albanian" piece at the moment, and plan to have it done in a pretty finite form by the end of June -- my travel to Berne serves as a deadline. Deciding to meet with you in Europe was a creative push in a way, as I have been working on something else with a late August deadline. So, I temporarily left that and focused on the Albanian study. It's becoming a dervish-like spiral piece, so far no points of calm, a surge to say so.

So, here's the situation -- I did make a reservation for a plane ticket, and the cheapest one I found costs around \$300. I still need to organize the hotel. Maybe we could talk on the phone or discuss via email how reasonable my coming to Switzerland seems - it will all together cost over \$600-\$700 with the train ride from Zurich to Berne and the hotel for a couple of nights.

So, the question is -- can we avoid the expense and be as productive if you read the piece without me and we discuss it on the phone? Now, when I have the piece in my head/fingers, the trip does not seem as urgent.

What do you think?

Hope all is well,

A

**Monday, June 18, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

I agree that we should get the score and parts and read through it in Bern and then I can call you that night after our show. The trip sounds too expensive, time consuming and inconvenient, not that it wouldn't be great to see you and talk over everything. But we can do that by phone. Does that sound OK?

How will you get us the score and parts?

Best,

David

**Tuesday, June 19, 2007**

Hi David,

Yes, that sounds reasonable. I do reluctantly give up the kick of hearing you read it while I am there, and bending it together, but it is definitely more reasonable this way.

Sending it - if anyone has Finale in your crew, I could email it and you print it wherever you are. Or send it by DHL wherever it is convenient - your Bern or Paris hotel? That should not be a problem, there's DHL in Serbia.

Let me know,

Hugs to all,

A

**Wednesday, June 27, 2007**

[Alexandra Vrebalov emails score and parts to Kronos.]

OK, this is the right score, I changed the layout...

David, let's talk on the phone - there are so many things to discuss. I cannot wait to hear what you think about the piece.

The situation here is worsening politically - Albanians/Serbs - and this is something to discuss too.

Have a great trip to Europe!

A

**Saturday, June 30, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

We spent almost 2 hours today on ["Sketch from a Balkan Notebook"] and it is sounding really great. Thanks for this. If you are there now please call. (excerpt)

Best,

David

**Date: Saturday, June 30, 2007**

I missed the Saturday time David, I am sorry!

It is almost midnight, I am in Sombor, and checked email just now. I can call you early in the morning if you are still there, or you call me on my cell phone any time tomorrow before 1:30pm.

After that I am on my way back to Novi Sad and will be available late at night. I hope the rehearsal went well. There are some missing arco marks - everything is arco after the first section in 6/8 with solo viola.

Hugs,

A

**Date: Monday, August 25, 2007**

Dear David,

I had a most amazing summer – working on our piece, and another piece for the San Francisco Conservatory, and organizing a week long international workshop for young composers in my grandmother's town Sombor. The workshop turned to be an incredible success – everything ran smoothly, the group of students was extremely diverse and curious and willing to experience a

new country, new faculty, new approaches to discussing music – different from what they are exposed to in schools. [...]

If you have a minute, check [www.southoxfordsix.org](http://www.southoxfordsix.org), that's a composers' collective that I co-founded in NYC and five of us were the teachers in Sombor – there are photos and a blog from the workshop already posted. The ensemble in residence was a string quartet, four young women whose lives we just changed, and we coached 15 new pieces – all premieres. I myself had two new sketches workshopped.

Regarding [Sketch from a Balkan Notebook] – I saw that you played it somewhere in France, and I realized that I never actually confirmed the changes that we had discussed - the tempo changes: you are absolutely right, the last section should start faster, forget about the quarter not equals 96 in measure 109. Gradually speed up into a trance at the end, as fast as possible. I am sure that's what you've been doing.

Also, I would like another measure of pizz. in the intro, it needs to be a bit longer, so just repeat measure 1 please. Also, at the end, in measure 140, add three more beats of your holding the high G, and everybody else should just be repeating their patterns. I hope these changes make it more compact and immediate.

I'll be back in the city in a couple of days. When are you going to be there? I hope to show you a few sections I've done so far. Very much looking forward to it.

Hugs, and all the best to all of you,

Yours, Aleksandra

### **Monday, August 25, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

Wonderful news about your summer, the workshop and the new piece!

I'll be coming to NY on 30 September and then I'll be leaving on October 9th. We've got 3 shows at BAM Oct. 3, 5 and 6. And some recording on 7 and 8. So if you are there, then we can get together and go over everything for the new piece. I'm anxious to hear all the details and see what I can.

We did not play [the piece] in France, but are planning to soon. So these changes are good to now about. [...] When are you in SF?

Best wishes,

David

### **Tuesday, August 26, 2007**

Good to hear from you!

I did not look closely at the site where I saw the piece announced, so I thought it was already played. I will plan on seeing you in NY, we can schedule it as soon as you know what your days will be like. I am completely free Tuesdays and Thursdays. No plans for visiting SF at this point, nothing before the spring probably for the Conservatory piece.

Looking forward to seeing you in NY!

A

### **Sunday, September 30, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

Nice to see you. I have an increasingly wonderful feeling about this new piece.

[Kronos audio engineer] Brian Mohr's # is [redacted]. [...]

David

### **Monday, October 1, 2007**

Hi David,

I too felt a surge of energy as I left yesterday, feeling like I could run back to Harlem and compose. Thanks for the number, I'll get in touch with Brian after your BAM week. I have some usable 30 seconds of my grandmother singing - all in one piece. She might actually end up being a part of the piece!!!

XO  
A

**Tuesday, October 9, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

I listened to your CD yesterday morning. The bells are so beautiful, perfect, in fact. But the [Islamic] call to prayer is beyond anything I could have hoped to hear. I have never heard one like it. The only other call to prayer that sounds so 'regional' to my ear is the one I've heard from western China. This recording has to be a part of your piece, as your Grandmother does, too. I mean, how else will she sing at Carnegie Hall?

John said that you might go back to Serbia for some gypsy recording - come to think of it, I remember that you mentioned that to me. But might it be possible to describe to someone what you want and have it recorded so that you could stay here and work on the piece?

Please give me your candid assessment: Will your piece work as the final piece on our concert? I'm thinking of it as big, soulful and complete in a way that seems like the evening will in a way be summed up by this piece. Am I right? For your information, the 2nd half would be John Adams ' Fellow Traveler' (a propulsive, energetic, short (5 min) piece), then yours (ca. 20-25 min?, right?). So nice to see you.

Best wishes,  
David

**Wednesday, October 10, 2007**

David,

I just saw the message - did not check this address yesterday. I'll call you regarding details that I want to discuss with you - for now - I am having an orchestral piece performed by Belgrade Phil on November 9th and wanted to be there for that. It would be a 6 day trip, and I planned to use it for recording the material for our piece as well.

I would love to close the program with the piece, and all my heart is in making it worth it. Did you have a chance to play through the segments I gave you? That might help you decide as well.

The call for prayer is unfortunately from iTunes, one among many that I listened to, the one I found to work so well for what I need - I suppose I can use it if I edit/manipulate it with Brian, using it as source material. My idea was to have the Belgrade Imam hear it and get one of his versions as similar as possible to that. I am not sure about legal issues with using this one. I guess as an excerpt it would be fine, but do I need to credit anyone? In any case something to think about/decide. Soon more.

Your concert at the BAM was very inspiring. Puppets really moved me.

XO  
A

**Thursday, October 11, 2007**

Dear Aleksandra,

I'll bet that [Kronos' Artistic Administrator] Sidney Chen, at the Kronos office, could be helpful regarding issues of rights involving samples. I still really like that example of 'The Call to Prayer', but if you can get one from the Imam of Belgrade, I'll bet that would even be better.

Best wishes,  
David

**Monday, October 22, 2007**

David - I found a GUSLE maker in Serbia. My entire family is involved, there's a lot of excitement around all the new contacts they are making. The instrument costs from 500Euros up to several thousands. The price is determined not by the sound, luckily, but by the carved ornamentation/decoration of the wooden part of the instrument. I'd like to get it, and keep it after you are done with playing the piece. Which I hope will be in some 30 years from now. :)

So, get ready to learn a new instrument...!!!

Hugs,  
A

**Saturday, November 3, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

I hope you are well and that things are going great for 'Hold Me Neighbor'. I am really looking forward to this piece and everything that I think/know it will bring to our music and our concerts. Do you have a completion date in mind? I know that there are many elements to bring together for this new piece and I don't want to rush you, but I am just trying to get a sense of our rehearsal schedule in December and even in late November. If there is anything we can begin to look at, that would be cool. Also, will I be playing the bowed string instrument [ghusle??], if so, when can I begin to try it out? Are you still going to Serbia in November?

We are in Switzerland until Tuesday then on to Budapest then Katowice followed by Copenhagen. So please keep me up to date on your progress and issues as they come up.

Have you made any arrangements with Brian?

Do we have some time scheduled for you to rehearse with us?

Best wishes,

David

**Sunday, November 4, 2007**

Hey David!

Good to hear from you. The work is going well, it's exciting and not always under control - it is like a puzzle, and I am still figuring the pieces out, how to turn them, put them together...so, here are the responses below:

*Do you have a completion date in mind? I know that there are many elements to bring together for this new piece and I don't want to rush you, but I am just trying to get a sense of our rehearsal schedule in December and even in late November.*

I would be happy to come to SF after my semester is over here in NYC, (after December 19) to read through and see what needs to be edited, and then spend January straightening the score.

*If there is anything we can begin to look at, that would be cool.*

I can keep sending things as they are done, although I prefer to be able to change and twist them as I go along. Have you looked at the sections I gave you in Brooklyn?

*Also, will I be playing the bowed string instrument (ghusle??), if so, when can I begin to try it out?*

*Are you still going to Serbia in November?*

Yes, I am leaving Tuesday, and coming back in a week - I hope to bring the instrument with me, and will ship it to you as soon as I am back in NY.

*Have you made any arrangements with Brian?*

I met with him, it was useful and informative, basically he made me keep it simple and pragmatic, easy to put together. Since I am using pre-recorded material there will need to be a tape, and I unfortunately cannot do it by myself. I inquired with Sidney about Brian's helping me and how financially that would be done, since we never (you and I or Janet) discussed it. So, now Brian and Sidney are in communication, and I can forward you these emails if you want me to.

*Do we have some time scheduled for you to rehearse with us?*

Not that I know of - I did mention to you before that it would be useful for me to play through the work in December, you said you were away for some part of it...can we make a plan at this point? As I said, after the 19th of Dec I can come to SF, and have another month with the piece after it, and give it to you a month before the premiere. Does that sound reasonable?

Hugs, and send me good/intense vibes, you can do that.

:) A

**Thursday, November 29, 2007**

Hi David, hi again Sidney!

I have different sections done or almost done, not in a consecutive order though - so, would that be helpful? I still need to connect them, and to indicate the places and timing for the prerecorded material.

Also, I brought the instrument from Serbia that I want David to play. It's a one string lute, very primitive, for the opening of the piece. I can have it shipped to your office, or bring it in January.

A

**Friday, November 30, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

Everything that you can send now will be helpful. Also, the backing track material would be great to hear, just to get an idea.

The Serbian instrument would be great to have soon if it can be sent safely.

Best,

David

**Sunday, December 2, 2007**

[Alexandra Vrebalov sends score and parts to ...hold me, neighbor, in this storm...]

Hi David,

Here is a part of the piece - the opening - an obsessive, primitive dance based on Serbian gusle music. There's a gusle part for you, and a two-sided drum part for John, which can also be on the tape instead of played live, depending what suits you guys best.

Your violin at the opening is differently tuned for dissonant double and triple stops - I hope it can be played that way.

Let's talk on the phone when you get a chance.

Hope this message finds you well,

XO

A

**Sunday, December 2, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

This all looks terrific!

What is the scordatura tuning for the retuned violin? Obviously, I will need an extra instrument.

I'm using my extra instrument for the first half of the Zankel concert during the 'Lullaby'[Iran] and the tuning is 2 A's and 2 D's. Will that work for... Hold me Neighbor?

Also, for some of the touring shows where we have planned ...Hold Me Neighbor', I will not be able to bring 3 violins. So it would be best to find a way for the tuning to be very close to 2A's and 2D's if possible.

Also, did you notate this part so that the notes are played in the normal place even though the strings are tuned scordatura?

Best wishes,

David

**Sunday, December 2, 2007**

Hi David,

The scordatura is A, Bflat, and two Es, low Es. You mostly have open strings and a maximum movement of up to a major third from an open string - and none of it needs to be hundred percent in tune. I may need to rewrite the part if you want the notes in normal place - that should not be a problem. More is coming soon - I am struggling a bit with my grandmother's section - it comes right after what I sent you....it is all pretty intense and emotional.

Hugs to all,

A

**Thursday, December 27, 2007**

Dear David,

Here's the piece - it still needs more work, sections #1 and especially #3, but I thought you should have it as is, since my coming to SF is getting close and I spent last five days battling bronchitis and high fever, and did not edit as much as I wanted to. I had plans to work with Brian Mohr on the tape, and will as soon as I recover.

Let's talk on the phone when you get a chance.

Hugs,

A

**Friday, December 28, 2007**

Hi Aleksandra,

I got the score today and I'm trying to figure out a few things. Here are some of my questions:

- 1] Will you be able to help me with the gusle part? I will study the DVD before you come to SF but I will need some help.
- 2] The 2 sided drum should be played live. But I'm concerned about the vocal "Ha's". This kind of thing can be very quaint if not done with extreme bravado. John is certainly capable of bravado, but the issue for me is the impetus for this vocalization. Hopefully, you will be able to give us strong advice and direction on this. And when Hank and Jeff join in I want the dramatics to be extremely clear and necessary to the piece.
- 3] The scordatura violin part looks like a nightmare for me to figure out. So I need your help now. Is the tuning: 2 E's, A and D# ? Is there any chance that you can write out the part so that it can look like normal tuning? ie. any note on the highest string would be written for the E string [ex. them first g would actually be written as A on the E string] etc...
- 4] Does the 'Call to Prayer' continue for the total length of the excerpt that you sent me? Or is it shortened?
- 5] Is the vocal line at bar 114 a part of the backing track? Is this the song you mentioned to me? Sung by your Grandmother? Can I hear a tape of it?
- 6] Will there be other sonic elements on the backing track?

Those are my questions for now.

I hope that you are feeling better.

Take good care.

David

**Saturday, December 29, 2007**

Greetings!

*1) Will you be able to help me with the gusle part? I will study the DVD before you come to SF but I will need some help.*

Yes, I will - all those pitches can be approximate, and they'll never sound polished - that's the kind of instrument.

*2) The 2 sided drum should be played live.*

Yes, should I try to get it in NYC before I arrive and bring it along?

*But I'm concerned about the vocal "Ha's". This kind of thing can be very quaint if not done with extreme bravado. John is certainly capable of bravado, but the issue for me is the impetus for this vocalization. Hopefully, you will be able to give us strong advice and direction on this.*

Yes, I absolutely agree - the kind of HA I had in mind is a low pitched kind of groan that is produced when one is hit into the stomach and cut out of breath. Nothing heroic or pleasant. Very dark. If it does not work, we'll get rid of it.

*3) The scordatura violin part looks like a nightmare for me to figure out. So I need your help now. Is the tuning: 2 E's, A and D# ?*

No, it is A Bb E E (low to high).

*Is there any chance that you can write out the part so that it can look like normal tuning? ie. any note on the highest string would be written for the E string [ex. them first g would actually be written as A on the E string] etc...*

Yes, I'll do that. I figured that it might be impossible to read it this way. Sorry about that.

4) Does the call to prayer continue for the total length of the excerpt that you sent me? Or is it shortened?

The first time it appears in m. 42 - it goes for only two first phrases of the excerpt that you have.

5) Is the vocal line at bar 114 a part of the backing track? Is this the song you mentioned to me? Sung by your Grandmother? Can I hear a tape of it?

Yes, it is - I have a very rough version of it, put together from a video of my grandmother - she starts and stops and sometimes cannot remember the words, so I edited it and have some 50 seconds of it in continuity. I want that section to sound like a memory, safe place, childhood...so I might want to process her singing somehow, give it some additional space, echo or maybe even have more than one line going on...I hoped to discuss it with you once we read through it in January and simply see how it fits into the whole picture. I can send you the raw singing.

6) Will there be other sonic elements on the backing track?

Section one - bells (which is the orthodox call for prayer), and Islamic call for prayer  
Transition from section two to three - distant bells, children running/playing - that would overlap for some 10 seconds and lead into my grandma singing

Section three - my grandma singing

Section four - distant explosions starting in m. 194 and becoming more present towards the end of the section (m.230)

Section five - none

Section six - Islamic call for prayer - I have to decide yet where to bring it in - probably in m. 343 until m. 394.

So, the journey of the piece:

It starts as a dark, narrative, epic, brutal, macho thing. All forces are out, stakes are high, history and present and future are mixed together. Gusle and bells suggest Christian Orthodox side, while call to prayer and tapan (two sided drum) suggest the Islam. Everybody is wrapped up in his own culture and myth, and sees the other as a threat. Being the louder, the bigger, the more macho is the way to survive. Or to drive it all to a disaster.

Section two - chanting of Serbian monks, dark, very rudimentary, very masculine, passionate; the storm is nearing kind of feeling, although everything is still calm on the surface.

Section three - grandma singing - memories and tenderness, the safe world as we know it is disappearing, feeling of warmth and displacement at the same time, security and fragility together.

Section four - is about escapism and denial of a decade of wars that left all involved impoverished materially and spiritually, many scattered all over the world - while bombs were falling the way to survive was to ignore them, while neighbors were killed by our armies it was easier not to know about it - we all were engaged in a destructive, hypnotic dance, unable to break out of it.

Section five - awakening, deepest sadness, bare raped land breathing, forgiveness and compassion.

Section six - new vitality, another beginning, seductive, relentless force at work. Visually - mountain tops, buoyant young men, swirling dervishes, fires.

I hope this helps - I am writing it from bed, have never ever struggled with fever as these days.

So, take the text as an intuitive guide/help. I need a few more days before I can rewrite the scordatura part. Very much looking forward to hearing from you and to seeing you soon!

Aleksandra

**Sunday, January 6, 2008**

Hi Aleksandra,

We are looking forward to seeing you on Tuesday. We will definitely be in the earliest stages of our preparation. We were going to rehearse today and I've been quite sick so we had to cancel.

But anyway, we will get going tomorrow. So here are the issues:

- 1) On Thursday my daughter, Bonnie, will bring her class of first graders for a field trip to our rehearsal for a short time (9:15-10:30) to observe. There may be some questions from the kids. I know that I agreed to this without asking you, but it seems like a fun thing and it will give us a chance to 'run' your piece, at least whatever we can. I was thinking that you can operate the CD player for all the backing tracks.
- 2) So I'm assuming that you will bring the drum, right? And that you can help me on Tuesday and Wednesday after our rehearsals to play the gusle. OK?
- 3) I'm a bit confused about the parts. I don't think that we have a complete set of parts. Is that right? Will you bring them?
- 4) Re: the notes- for me there should be something about the process, our relationship and history, that kind of thing. I will try to write something today. If I'm unsuccessful, then Sidney and I will talk it over tomorrow and he will 'interview' me and then edit something from that. He is very great at that and some of my best comments are a result of him using this process.
- 5) I'm assuming that you will bring all the backing tracks and anything Kronos should hear related music ie Orthodox chant, folk music, etc

I think that is it. Have a great day!

David

**Date: Tuesday, January 8, 2008**

[Aleksandra Vrebalov sends revised score and parts]

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[rehearsals with Kronos in SF]

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[rehearsal with Kronos at CSPAC/UMD]

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[premiere at Zankel]

**Date: Monday, February 25, 2008**

Hi Aleksandra,

I'm on my way home in 3 minutes. But I just wanted to say again how much I love "...Hold Me Neighbor In This Storm". What a huge accomplishment.

I'll call soon.

Love,

David

**Monday, February 25, 2008**

Hey dear David! I am so thrilled - thank you!

No one in my life influenced and supported my work as you and the Kronos have.

Thinking about how the piece can grow - it's a great idea.

Much love,

A

**Tuesday, March 4, 2008**

Dear David,

I am still receiving the comments and compliments about the piece, and I have been recovering from the adrenalin rush...

I have been thinking about the sequel to ...hold me neighbor... and there's a realtime-heartbeat movement emerging - something I wanted to do ten years ago and you rejected as too

emotionally draining/impossible for you. This might be the time. I'd like to revisit the idea with you.

Love, and thanks and give my best to everybody,

A