



> Grama002 / 2016 / LP (limited 200 copies)

Filipe Pires  
Canto Ecuménico



Tracklist:

Side A

Canto Ecuménico (1979) 24'45"

Side B

Litania (1972) 14'31"

Homo Sapiens (1972) 13'38"

Recording and realization

Filipe Pires in own studio (side A) and Groupe de Recherches Musicales of the former ORTF, Paris (side B).

Coordination of the edition  
Pedro Junqueira Maia

Executive production  
Matéria Prima

Production of the 1st edition  
Secretaria de Estado da Cultura  
(Direcção-Geral de Acção Cultural)

2nd edition  
Strauss, Música e Vídeo SAP 1997

Design  
M. Carvalhais

Photograph of Filipe Pires provided by  
Ligia Pires

About the composer

Filipe Pires started his musical career by learning the piano with Professor Artur Santos, winning first prize in Juventude Musical Portuguesa in 1950. Two years after, he completed the superior course on piano, in the Conservatório Nacional de Lisboa (as a student of Professor Lúcio Mendes), and one year later completed the composition course, studying under Professor Croner de Vasconcelos. Being awarded a grant for the piano, by the Instituto de Alta Cultura, enabled him to continue his studies in Hanover and Salzburg from 1957 to 1960. Coming into contact with the current avant guard movement redoubled his interest in composition. During this period Filipe Pires made tours in Central Europe and Scandinavia as pianist and composer. He was awarded various prizes in international composition competitions. On his return to Portugal, he was involved in intense activity as professor of composition in the Conservatório de Música in Oporto, a post he held until 1970. At the same time he acted as music critic, arranging music courses, conferences and many articles, of which a great number were for Portuguese radio and television.



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Between 1970 and 1972, being awarded a grant from the Gulbenkian Foundation, he underwent a period of training in electronic music. The professor was Pierre Schaeffer who was formerly at ORTF and the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris. The three years following, Filipe Pires was professor of composition, musical analysis and electronic music at the Conservatório Nacional in Lisbon, of which school he was Director. Between 1975 and 1979, he was engaged as the music specialist for the International Secretariat of UNESCO (Paris). While representing this organisation he undertook official work in various Eastern European countries, as well as Africa and Latin America. In 1979, he accepted the posts President Director of Juventude Musical Portuguesa and Vice-President of the Sociedade Portuguesa de Autores. At the same time he resumed intense activity as a creative artist. The musical language of Filipe Pires has strong tonal roots of neo-classical appearance, with sporadic incursions into the field of folklore. He orientates successfully the worlds of atonalism, twelve-tone music, chance, and the techniques of electronic sounds. In the later mentioned, he was one of the pioneers in Portugal during the 1970s.

#### Canto Ecuménico (1979)

The choice of a religious theme is a pretext for an approximate comparison of authentic traditional music from different cultural areas in many different styles. The similarities and differences are presented in the form of collages and quotations, connected and superimposed on the sequences of sonorous material, vocal and instrumental, drawn exclusively from the musicians. The most important musical material in this work is drawn from a great variety of countries. Some parts are fragments of Australian Aboriginal rites, joined with rain spirits and mixed with sonorous sounds taken from a funeral ceremony of the ethnic Somba from the North of Benim. Included also, are Buddhist ceremonies from Tibet and Japan, orthodox Christian songs from Armenia and Syria, Islamic rites from Morocco, Syria and Yugoslavia. The Jews of Morocco, Yemen and Tunisia are also quoted. From a formal point of view, the grand lines of the composition come together in a single block, in the middle of which are evolved distinct sections.

#### Litania (1972)

This work was composed while studying with the Groupe de Recherches Musicales, formerly ORTF in Paris. The improvised instrument parts are controlled in the process of the montage. The origin of the principal sound consists of sheets of iron, and metal wires. They are joined at their respective extremities. To produce sounds they are plucked, struck or rubbed, obtaining an extensive range and variety of vibrations. On the other side, the technique is to catch and put in relief a grand number of profiles of variations, resonances, and multiple details and structures of sound. Other objects to make sounds, elaborated for manipulation, are inserted into the discourse, upon which there are opposite characters, regular and punctual, that stop and start themselves under a repetitive form.

#### Homo Sapiens (1972)

The human voice, used as the symbol of earth and creation, constitutes the earth of this work. It is the phonetic frame in the context which evolves the sorrow of the movement, and for the elaboration and the fusion of various elements of sound. Homo Sapiens is a revision of the first part of the ballet Nam Ban, composed in 1970, commissioned by the Portuguese Secretariat for the Exhibition of Osaka. The present version was composed whilst studying with the Groupe de Recherches Musicales in Paris.

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