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MUSIC REVIEW

Genres and Styles Without Borders, in a Brooklyn Series

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The border-hopping proclivities of classical composers and performers have become more pronounced in recent years, resulting in a freewheeling blend of genres and styles. [Gala NYC](#), a new series (the name means Global Art, Local Audience) founded by [Mike Block](#), a Juilliard-trained cellist and disciple of Yo-Yo Ma and the [Silk Road Project](#), aims to promote this healthy eclecticism by combining performers from varying disciplines.

The inaugural concert on Saturday evening in the warehouselike space of the Brooklyn Lyceum featured Mr. Block; Anastasia Khitruk, a Russian violinist; Jefferson Hamer, a folk singer and songwriter; John Hadfield, a percussionist; [Kinan Azmeh](#), a Syrian clarinetist; Kyle Sanna, a guitarist; and Josh Meyers, a bass player. There was a pleasantly informal, spontaneous air to the proceedings, a jam session of sorts. The musicians explained the genesis of their various collaborations.

Some reflected the Middle Eastern heritage of Mr. Azmeh, like a traditional Arab piece in which a haunting, evocative clarinet melody unfolded over gentle cello and percussion accompaniment. Mr. Block introduced the work as the evening's first installment of a trilogy about men suffering in love. Mr. Azmeh's clarinet wailed rhapsodically in a rocking arrangement based on Syrian wedding music and floated soulfully in a work inspired by the morning after Thanksgiving.

The lineup included effective arrangements of the traditional folk song "Barbara Allen" and Vivaldi's Double Violin Concerto in A minor. Ms. Khitruk offered a passionate rendition of a virtuosic work, "The Golem," written for her by Michael Colina, and Mr.

Hamer demonstrated his appealing voice in several selections.

The event concluded with audience participation: three women relayed memorable (and prosaic) details of their lives, to an improvised accompaniment.