

Anjelika Akbar, my twins, and the message of the piano

The past three months have seen me with my nose to the grindstone, and it is precisely for this reason, dear readers, that I've not been able to write regularly. Due to being on the road the whole time, I was not even able to see and devote time to my beloved children – those two little terrors!

The project I am working on is a documentary. And it is this documentary that provided me with an opportunity to meet Anjelika Akbar and her family in person. I wanted to use the piece Rain Waltz from her "Raindrops" album as the lead track for the film, so I contacted her through our mutual friend Turgut Ünal. We then met during the shooting of a video clip for a song from her forthcoming album on Istanbul, to which I also humbly contributed. It is an amazing song and it is to be part of a very strong album.

As a listener, I first discovered Akbar when her album "A Drop of Water" was released in 2005 and then became a closer follower of her musical journey. It was, however, "My Turkey" which struck me the most. I was stunned by the way she chose to tell the tale of this country. She describes the day she first set foot in this country as "the day she was reborn," and it is no wonder that her album on Turkey would exude such passion. And just recently, she published her memoirs titled "My Turkey," a book full of very rich observations on this land. I humbly recommend it to you.

It has never been my want to write pieces of praise on people with whom I have established such a relationship. But in the past it was more her music that impressed me. Right now, how-



ever, it is her personality that opens a new world before me. I appreciate the humble people in life. And I adore genius that is humble.

And do you know why the Rain Waltz was my sole choice for the lead track in my documentary, which relates the turbulent childhood of a man who is at present in his early 30s?

I have been captivated with the piano since first hearing Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, which he completed in 1801 and dedicated to 17-year-old Countess Giulietta Guicciardi. As you will remember, Beethoven is thought to have been deeply in love with her, but she eventually chose to marry Count Wenzel Robert von Gallenberg, himself an amateur composer. Who knows, perhaps she was scared of Beethoven's stunning career. This was apparently a major disappointment for Beethoven, giving the piece in question is another emotional dimension to me.

As a small child, I remember my father suggesting that I listen to Mozart and learn how to play piano. However, he never insisted and I never did take up the challenge to learn the instrument. I have also never been a fan of Mozart. Classical music aficionados should forgive me for this naïve analogy, but Beethoven,

to my mind in those years, was the cool and rebellious kid of the neighborhood, whereas Mozart represented the spoilt mother's boy. Possessing a strong desire for my own independence, the seemingly rebellious Beethoven seemed the one to follow.

Years later, I now have two beloved sons – twins – and it was me this time who wanted them to learn how to play piano. One day, nevertheless, while listening to Akbar's "Raindrops," all of a sudden I remembered the letter Kafka sent to his father in response to his father's intellectual domination and his need for balanced encouragement as an inexperienced child. It was first our school teacher Frau Freitag, or Gertrud as I call her now, who wanted us to go over it. At some point, the letter reads, "What I should have needed was a little encouragement, a little friendliness, a little keeping open of my road, instead of which you blocked it for me though of course with the good intension of making me take another road."

It was at that moment that I promised myself I would never force my children to do anything to merely satisfy my ego. Life is simply a journey and as Edgar Allan Poe said, "All that we see or have seen / is but a dream within a dream." They must develop their own dreams. Instead, I will offer suggestions to them, as my dear father did once for me, to keep their ways always open. And allow them to be as rebellious as Beethoven once was.

It is their way, and the music of Anjelika, and of life, will help them find the right direction.