

## Yurodny/Myriada Meeting House Square, Dublin

.....  
**RAY COMISKEY**

Although the June weather tried to dampen the audience's enthusiasm for the combination of Nick Roth's Yurodny and the Cretan group Myriada, it was, by Irish standards, a half-hearted attempt and the music emerged triumphant.

And that, in itself, is tribute to the work both groups have done since the Cretan quartet arrived here.

Yurodny are a Dublin-based octet with the unusual instrumentation of two violins, cello, alto/soprano saxophone, trombone, accordion/percussion, bass and drums, while Myriada feature voice, percussion and two stringed instruments, with a double on wood flute. To bring two such groups together to tackle a programme of music from the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans and to make them sound like a real band

is a considerable achievement.

Apart from an attractive and idiomatically persuasive original composition, *Zomorud* by Myriada's lyra player, Paul Goodman, all of the music was traditional material, mostly dances, from Bulgaria, Macedonia, Turkey, Serbia, Thrace and Greece, as well as a classical Arab piece from Egypt, *Lamma Bada*. The pieces were distinguished not so much by any great interest in harmonic movement as by their unusual lines and, above all, their rhythmic complexity.

This was tackled and carried off with considerable gusto by the combined groups, although it was unsurprising, given the nature of the programme, that much of the rhythmic drive came from Myriada. The difference was apparent in each group's features, Myriada's Thracian suite of three regional dances and Yurodny's *Stamboliiska Ruchenitsa*, a dance by the great Bulgarian clarinetist, Ivo Papasov.

It would be ungenerous to make too much of this, because the feeling projected by the combined bands, if occasionally rough, was vibrant and irresistible. Particularly striking was the sheer verve of the contrapuntal playing on *Gankino Horo*, a Bulgarian line dance, and the zestful *Andikrystos*, another dance, from Asia Minor.

Among individual performances to catch the ear, singer Maria Koti and Paul Goodman from Myriada stood out, while Nick Roth's occasional solos, especially on soprano, seemed organic to the idiom. Likewise, from Yurodny, the solo work of violinist Oleg Ponomarev and trombonist Colm O'Hara stood out, while Francesco Turrisi gave evidence of his considerable talent on accordion, with a solo spot on the Serbian suite. But these belong to what is essentially an ensemble idiom, and as an ensemble performance the results were hugely enjoyable.