

Unknown World in Qerter

An exploration of space, resonance and sound

On May 3, 2026, I presented an improvisation performance centered on Qerter at CASA93 in Almaty.

This was not my first encounter with the instrument. For many years, I have been exploring the different possibilities hidden within its sound.

In this performance, I temporarily stepped away from familiar melodies and playing techniques, choosing instead to listen to the instrument itself.

While reading Jorge Luis Borges' *The Garden of Forking Paths*, I often found myself thinking about improvisation.

One sound leads to another sound.

One space opens into another space.

Each choice creates a new direction.

These pieces were not planned in advance.

They emerged gradually during the performance itself.

Some sounds appeared only briefly.

Others returned again and again.

Later, while listening back to the recordings, I noticed unexpected connections between them.

The titles were not created to define the music, but simply to remember the places through which the sounds had travelled.

About Sherter

Sherter (Qerter) is an ancient Kazakh string instrument.

Its history and traditional forms have been documented by many researchers.

For me, however, the most interesting aspect is not its past, but its unrealized possibilities.

Over the years, I gradually began to understand that Qerter can reveal not only melodies, but also sound itself.

Some sounds resemble wind.

Some resemble breath.

Others seem to arrive from a distant space.

In this process, Qerter is no longer only a musical instrument.

It becomes an open and evolving space.

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