



ALISON SMITH
CLASSICAL GUITAR



INCANDESCENT

The highly acclaimed British born classical guitarist Alison Smith has been described as one of the most exciting and lyrical guitarists to emerge in recent years. She delights audiences with her fluid technique and expressive playing, performing nationwide and in Europe. Her previous CD Album titled *Recuerdos* has been highly successful.

In 1995 Alison graduated with honours from Trinity College of Music, London. She was awarded the Grace Wylie Thesis Prize, a college scholarship and a scholarship from the Mary Datchelor Trust to enable her to pursue her Post-Graduate studies. She studied the Guitar with Gilbert Biberian and Nicola Hall and Piano with Raymond Banning. In July 1997 she was awarded a Distinction in the Post-Graduate Performance Certificate. Alison taught guitar and coached chamber music at the The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (formerly Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama) from 2002 – 2008 and lectured on Techniques of Teaching for the B Mus Course. She has given performances and talks as a guest artist at Plymouth University and has recently been appointed as the University Classical Guitar tutor for the BA Hons music course.

Alison has been supported in her playing career with awards from The Tillet Trust and Oppenheim John-Downes Memorial Trust. Engagements include the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, The Norfolk Symphony Orchestra's Thirty Year Anniversary Celebration, St Martin in the Fields, St James' Piccadilly, The Bolivar Hall, Lauderdale House, The Michael Tippett Centre, Queens Theatre, Barnstaple, Dartington, Exeter Cathedral, Edward King House at Lincoln Cathedral, The University of Dundee, Chateau le Risdoux in the Ardennes, St Martin Kirche, Nortorf, Germany, Kedleston Hall and Saltram House for The National Trust and Plymouth Museum and Art Gallery International Concert Series. She has broadcast on BBC Radio Devon and has also given a live performance on the Iain Anderson Show, BBC Scotland. Alison has performed at numerous classical guitar festivals including the Prussia Cove Guitar Seminar, The Garcia Biberian International Summer School, the 2011 Exeter Guitar Summer School, The Ards International Guitar Festival, Belfast and was guest soloist at The West Lothian Guitarfest. Alison has played at seven International Guitar Festivals of Great Britain where she received great critical acclaim. Alison also performs as part of Duo Volatus, an exciting and dynamic flute and classical guitar duo with flautist Ruth Ballantyne.

"the audience broke into tumultuous applause and gave another standing ovation to the young guitarist who had played her way into their hearts".

Nortorfer Zeitung Germany 2012 (Trans Fiona Bubbers)

"musicality,dynamic differentiation, and sensitivity, with almost mystical tension. You don't often hear a concert guitar played like that."

Nortorfer Zeitung Germany 2012

(Trans Fiona Bubbers)

"enthrralling....demonstrated sheer virtuosity ...superb technique and sensitivity"

The International Guitar Festival of Great Britain

"a master class of classical guitar played with friendly charm and sublime expertise"

The International Guitar Festival of great Britain

"Lovely hypnotic playing"

Iain Anderson BBC Scotland

"...one of the South – West's most promising musicians"

BBC Radio Devon

"The audience was spellbound by her sensitive playing."

Kieler Nachrichten Tues 17th July 2012 / Werner Bodendorff

(Trans Fiona Bubbers)



Isaac Albéniz (1860 – 1909) - *Asturias (Leyenda) No5 Suite española Opus 47*

Albéniz was born in Camprodon in Catalonia. He created a national style of composing and became a leading figure in Spain. He wrote orchestral music, songs and operas but it is his piano music that he is best known for. Many of his piano works have been transcribed for the guitar, one of the most famous pieces being *Asturias (Leyenda)*. It was first published in Barcelona in 1892 as the prelude of a three movement set entitled *Chants d'Espagne*. The German publisher Hofmeister gave the name *Asturias (Leyenda)* posthumously, when it was included in the 1911 complete version of the *Suite española*, although Albéniz never intended it for this suite. The subtitle *Leyenda* means legend. The music, however, suggests Andalusian flamenco traditions rather than the folk music of the northern Spanish region of Asturias. Albéniz's biographer Clark describes the piece as "pure Andalusian flamenco".

David Cottam (1951 -) - *Caprice for Maša*

David Cottam is a British Classical Guitarist, cellist and composer based in Devon. He studied at the Guildhall of Music in London and made his solo debut at the Wigmore Hall. David has recorded a

number of CD's for solo guitar and also with his duo partner, cellist Hilary Boxer. David has written extensively for the guitar and a number of his compositions are featured in the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) Guitar Examination Syllabus. He was commissioned to write pieces for the ABRSM Music Medals series for young guitarists. *Caprice for Maša* was composed for a pupil of David's called Maša Palos who came from Sarajevo. She was forced, with her family, to flee the terrible conflict there.

Mauro Giuliani (1781 – 1829) - *Variations on a Theme of G. F. Handel Op. 107*

The Italian born composer moved to Vienna in 1806 and became a pre-eminent figure in the Viennese guitar scene. Through his virtuoso performances of his own works and through his teaching he was responsible for a growth of interest in the guitar. Giuliani was acquainted with the highest musical figures of Austrian society and with notable composers such as Rossini and Beethoven. In 1819 Giuliani returned to Italy. Giuliani's *Variations on a Theme of Handel* is one of his most well-known guitar works. The famous Handel theme with accompanying variations was published in 1720 as the concluding movement of a suite. F. Chrysander comments on the origin of this

theme: “This melody, which with its five variations ends the fifth Suite, has been ascribed to an unusual form of inspiration. It is popularly known by the name ‘*The Harmonious Blacksmith*’, for the following reason: the story has it that Handel, walking one day in the vicinity of Cannons, was caught in a rain shower and sought shelter in the smithy of the jovial blacksmith and churchwarden Powell, who sang this song while he worked and played a kind of ringing bass harmony by striking his anvil” This set of variations is Guiliani’s own composition.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750) - *Andante & Allegro (Sonata 11 BWV 1003)*

Bach wrote six Sonatas and Partitas (three of each) for unaccompanied violin. They were written during his time as Kapellmeister at the court of Prince Leopold of Anhalt - Cöthen, The violin Sonatas were completed in 1720, the year that his wife sadly died. Despite this, his six years at the Court (1717 - 1723) were some of the most productive of his life. The *Andante* from the second sonata contains a beautiful lyrical melody written above ostinato quavers. It is sometimes referred to as one of Bach’s most loved melodies. The contrasting *Allegro* does not contain any multiple stopping and has an absence of

vertical harmony. Lateral harmony, however, can easily be heard and encouraged Schumann and Mendelssohn to write piano accompaniments. Bach is well known as a transcriber of his own works and he arranged this sonata for harpsichord. The occasional bass note has been added in the guitar transcription but the original key remains the same.

Francisco Tárrega (1852 – 1909) - *Fantasia on Themes from La Traviata*

Tárrega was born in the Eastern province of Valencia. By the middle of the nineteenth century the popularity of the guitar had declined. Tárrega is recognised as being the person responsible for the rebirth of the guitar in the twentieth century and is often called the Chopin of the guitar. He composed many original works. His music is often deeply rooted in traditional folk rhythms and dances of Spain and is extremely expressive. *Fantasia on Theme’s from Verdi’s La Traviata* opens with a paraphrase of the opera’s prelude. Arrangements of Violetta’s three arias make up the rest of the work. Each one utilizes special techniques on the guitar. “Addio del passato” features a short tremolo passage, “A fors’ e lui” is in harmonics, and the closing arrangement of “Sempre Libera” includes fast scales that hints at a new genre of

Gary Ryan (1969 -) - *Lough Caragh*

In 1997, highly acclaimed British Classical guitarist Garry Ryan was made an Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of his achievements. At the age of 27, he was one of the youngest ever Professors to be appointed at the Royal College of Music. As a composer Gary Ryan has received international recognition for his highly innovative guitar compositions which draw on the rich traditions of the instrument and combine them with popular contemporary influences and extended techniques. Gary writes ' *Lough Caragh* is influenced by the traditional Irish ballad and expresses for me something of the incredible beauty of the South West of Ireland. When my eldest daughter Jenny was only one year old in the summer of 2004, we stayed on the shores of Lough Caragh, a beautifully tranquil lake west of Killarney, visiting Glenbeigh where Jenny first played in the sea. I was trying to convey through the music the memory of those early, magical childhood days which can never be recaptured. '

William Lovelady (1945 -) - *Incantations No 1, 2, 6 & 7*

William Lovelady composes works for some of the world's leading guitarists. His guitar

and choral works have been performed worldwide as well as frequently played on Radio 3 and Classic FM. He has written and worked with musicians as diverse as Julian Lloyd Webber, Art Garfunkel, Shankar & Hugh Masekela. He has co-written with Stanley Myers on various projects including the Nick Roey film, "Castaway". Bill also writes for television. He has done several David Attenborough programmes and was nominated for an Emmy for the National Geographic Film "Flying Devils". His film music includes the Disney film "African Lovestory". Among other commissions, he has written a cantata for the Duke of Edinburgh's 75th Birthday which is now regularly performed at St George's Chapel, Windsor. Bill has written seven Incantations for the guitar. *Incantation No 1* is dedicated to Slava Grigoryen, *Incantation No 2* for Joe Sample, *Incantation No 6* for Hugh Masakela and *Incantation No 7* for Jackie Daly.

Johann Kaspar Mertz (1806 – 1856) - *Fantaisie Hongroise Op. 65 No.1*

Mertz was born in Pressburg, now Bratislava on August 17, 1806 and he became a guitar and flute virtuoso. He went to Vienna in 1840 which had also been home of other prominent guitar composers including Diabelli, Giuliani and Matiegka.

Mertz had immediate success as a performer and was appointed court guitarist for the Empress Caroline Augusta. He then toured giving concerts in Moravia, Poland, Russia, Berlin and Dresden. It was here that Mertz met Josephine Plantin, a concert pianist, whom he then toured with and later married in Prague in December 1842. Unfortunately four years later he became very ill and after eighteen months of nursing was ready to resume performing. Sadly Mertz died shortly before winning first prize in the 1856 composers competition in Brussels. The guitar music of Mertz follows the pianistic models of Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schubert and Schumann. Mertz's *Op.65* is a substantial and virtuosic trilogy. Although all three pieces are linked thematically and harmonically, the *Fantaisie Hongroise* is often played separately as a popular concert work.

Publishers

Tracks 1, 4 & 5 Schott Music Ltd

Track 7 Camden Music London

Tracks 8, 9, 10, 11 Neve Press England

Special thanks to Mike & Wendy Gluyas for all their time and kind hospitality, Lorna Yabsley & bangwallop, David Summers, the DMS team and all my family & friends for their continued support.





www.alisonsmithguitar.com

Recorded June 28th / July 23rd /
October 24th-25th 2013 at
Pump Cottage, Morchard Bishop
Engineer Mike Gluyas,
Producer Mike Gluyas & Alison Smith,
Edited/mastered Mike Gluyas
MCPS © & © 2014 A.Smith
Photography Lorna Yabsley,
Graphic Design DMS Ltd,
Guitar made by Christopher Dean