



Recuerdos

Alison Smith **Classical Guitar**



Recuerdos (memories) is dedicated to my mum, Joan Smith. Sadly, she died on 31st March 2007 after a courageous battle with cancer. This is a collection of some of her favourite guitar pieces.

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, Nicola Hall* and Piano with *Raymond Banning*. In July 1997 she was awarded a *Distinction* in the *Post-Graduate Performance Certificate*. She has also studied with *Stephen Gordon* and *Gerald Garcia*. From 2002 to April 2008 Alison was a guitar tutor and chamber music coach in both the Senior and Junior Departments of the *Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama*.

Alison performs nationwide and has played in France and Ireland. She has been supported in her playing career with awards from *The Tillet Trust* and *Oppenheim John-Downes Memorial Trust*. Engagements have included the *Edinburgh Festival Fringe*, *The Norfolk Symphony Orchestra's Thirty Year Anniversary Celebration*, *St Martin in the Fields*, *St James' Piccadilly*, *The Bolivar Hall*, *The Michael Tippett Centre*, *Dartington*, *Exeter Cathedral*, *Edward King House at Lincoln Cathedral*, *The University of Dundee*, *Kedleston Hall* and *Saltram House* for *The National Trust* and *Plymouth Museum and Art Gallery International Concert Series*. Alison 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 and The First Exeter Guitar Festival. Most recently she played at *The Ards International Guitar Festival, Belfast* and was guest soloist at *The West Lothian Guitarfest*. She has played at three *International Guitar Festivals of Great Britain, Wirral*, where she received great critical acclaim.

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

The International Guitar Festival of Great Britain, 2003

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

The International Guitar Festival of Great Britain, 2005

"Lovely hypnotic playing"

Iain Anderson BBC Scotland

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

BBC Radio Devon

"Alison Smith is rapidly convincing concert promoters that she is one of the most exciting and lyrical guitarists to emerge in recent years."

Nicola Hall (International Guitarist)



Heitor Villa Lobos (1887 - 1959) - Etude Nº 11

The cello was the main instrument of the Brazilian composer Heitor Villa Lobos. He was also very proficient on the guitar and enjoyed playing it with the Choros (groups of Brazilian instrumentalists who played folk and popular music), learning the art of improvisation. He travelled extensively at home and abroad and studied the history, the country, customs and backgrounds of people. He established a national musical style in Brazil and introduced it to a wider audience. The concert studies were written in Paris and dedicated to Andrés Segovia. It is thought that they were completed in 1929. *Etude no 11* explores the colour and sonority of the instrument and creates an almost tribal atmosphere. There is much rhythmic energy and syncopation. In the opening and closing soulful bass melody, one can hear the influence of him having been a cellist.

Fernando Sor (1778 - 1839) - Variations on a Theme of Mozart Op. 9

Ferdinando Sor was born in Barcelona. He learnt the violin and guitar as a child and then studied at a choir school at a monastery in Montserrat. He completed his education under parental pressure at a military academy and his early career combined both being a military officer and a musician. In 1813 he had to flee Spain due to his Napoleonic sympathies and move to France and then London. He was in demand as a player and performed all over Europe and Russia but gave up touring in 1827 to concentrate on composing. In 1821, during his time in London, he wrote this famous set of variations. It is his most celebrated work and was inspired by the first performance of Mozart's *Magic Flute*

on May 1819. The Theme, '*O'cara armonia*' comes towards the end of Act 1. The work begins with an introduction, setting the scene of the opera before the appearance of the amusing, cheeky theme. Five variations follow, which retain the humorous nature, except the second variation in the minor key, which has a much more serious character.

Frédéric Chopin (1810 - 1849) - 2 Waltzes Op. Posthume 69 Nº 1 & 2

Chopin was a Polish composer and virtuoso pianist of the Romantic period. His compositions were written primarily for the piano. He was very fond of the guitar, however, and is quoted as having said, "Nothing is more beautiful than a guitar, save perhaps two". Stylistically and emotionally, his works are romantic but they are underpinned structurally and articulated in a classical style. There are moments when the music is fragile and graceful, whilst others are passionate and impetuous. The two waltzes *op69 nos 1* and *2* are early works and are in a Schubertian mould.

Augustin Barrios Mangoré (1885 - 1944) - La Catedral

Barrios was born in Paraguay. It has been said that he was the greatest virtuoso guitarist/composer of the first half of the twentieth century and wrote over 300 works for the guitar. His works are largely late Romantic in character, despite his having lived well into the twentieth century. Many of them are also adaptations of or are influenced by South American and Central American Folk Music. *La Catedral* was originally written in 1914 as a two movement piece, *Andante Religioso* and *Allegro*

Solemne. The inspiration for these movements came from an experience Barrios had in the Cathedral of San Jose in Montevideo, Uruguay. He heard the music of J S Bach being played on the organ and the ambience inside the Cathedral was serene and sacred. When Barrios left the Cathedral, the atmosphere was of complete contrast, with the busy streets and hustle and bustle of every day life. The work also portrays elements of Bach's counterpoint. The *Prelude* was written 19 years later, in 1938 for his wife, Gloria. It is subtitled '*Saudade*' which means longing. Barrios added this to the *Andate Religioso* and the *Allegro Solemne*.

Roland Dyens (1955 -) - Saudade Nº 3 dédiée à F. Kleyjnans

Roland Dyens is a Tunisian born French guitarist/composer. He studied the guitar, composition and orchestration in Paris. He currently teaches at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris. Dyens' compositions are very original and utilise many different guitar techniques. He has a fascination with Latin American music. In *Saudade no3* (longing), Dyens pays homage to the Brazilian northeast and its African culture. The work is subtitled '*Lembrança do Senhor do Bonfim da Bahia*' (Remembrance of Senhor Bonfim, a saint whose festival is celebrated annually in the streets of Bahia). The first movement, *Ritual*, is unmeasured, free and improvisatory. This leads straight into the second movement which is a dance that uses the baião rhythm, typical of Bahia. The third movement is very dramatic and is said to be Dyens' vision of this folk music.

Francisco Tárrega (1852 - 1909) - Capricho Arabe and Recuerdos de la Alhambra

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 deeply rooted in traditional folk rhythms and dances of Spain and is extremely expressive. Many Spanish composers have been captured by the magic of Arabia. *Capricho Arabe* has a Moorish flavour to it. Tárrega was a wonderful improviser and played with a beautiful tone. In this highly lyrical work both these aspects seem to blend together. *Recuerdos de Alhambra* (memories of the Alhambra) is his most famous piece and is a tremolo study imitating the sound of a mandolin. This beautiful melodic work was inspired by the magnificent Palace overlooking Granada.

Yuquijiro Yocoh (1925 -) - Sakura Theme and Variations

Yocoh was born in Japan in 1925. He began training as a dentist but had such a passion for music that he left to study the guitar and music. *Sakura* is his most known work for the guitar and is based on the Japanese folk song, *Sakura*, which means Cherry Blossoms. The blossom in Japan in Spring time is an amazing, magical experience and a festival is held each year celebrating its wonder. This is a charming work conjuring up images of Japan. The English translation of the folk song is:

“Cherry Blossoms, Cherry Blossoms
As far as I can see across
The March skyline
The fragrance is carried like the mist or the clouds
Now, let us go to see them now

Cherry Blossoms, Cherry Blossoms
As far as I can see across
The hills and valleys
Like the mist or the clouds
The fragrance is carried into
The morning sun
Cherry Blossoms, Cherry Blossoms
They are in full bloom.”

Leo Brouwer (1939 -) - Un dia de Noviembre

Leo Brouwer is a Cuban composer, guitarist and conductor. His compositions comprise works for voice, solo piano, orchestra and film music. He is widely regarded as one of the twentieth century's most prolific guitar composers. His works fall into three phases. The first is nationalism, having been influenced by the Cuban Revolution in the 1950s. His second phase became avant-garde (1962-7), whilst in the third phase the avant-garde elements diminish. This is the phase in which *Un dia de Noviembre* (1968) was written. It is a highly melodic and nostalgic work with a bittersweet flavour.

Joquin Turina (1882 - 1949) - Sonata Op. 61

Turina was born in Seville. He wrote operas, orchestral, chamber, piano and vocal music. His guitar compositions often take their influence from flamenco rhythms and modes and are rich in their evocation of Iberian culture. The Sonata was

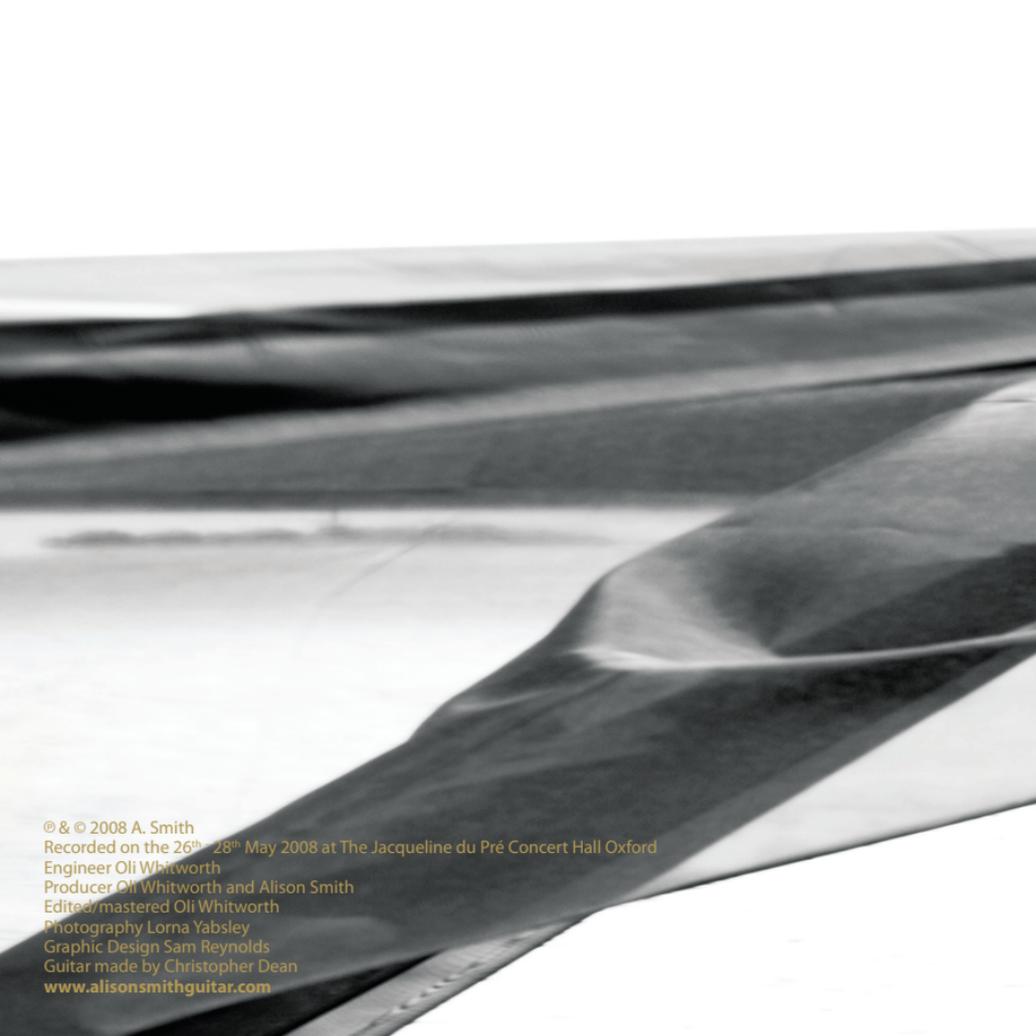
dedicated to Andrés Segovia and was premiered by him at the Academy of Saint Cecilia in Rome on 29 January 1931. The first movement has two contrasting themes as in the classical sonata form. The first subject is highly rhythmic and dramatic whilst the second subject is much gentler and lyrical. The second movement is influenced by the flamenco singing style *cante jondo*. There are ornamental single lines evoking this style, interspersed between lyrical guitar interludes. The final movement uses material from the first movement creating exciting flamenco dance music, utilizing lots of rasqueado strumming.

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