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Flamenco Pacifico's Berto Boyd (L) and Grant Ruiz

Recent Releases Tuesday: Intriguing Albums by Kenneth Meyer, Flamenco Pacifico, and Jonathan Richards

AUGUST 22, 2017

Most Tuesdays we take a peak at recent albums or sheet music releases. Here are three of the CDs that have come into the *Classical Guitar* office recently.

If you have a CD you'd like to submit to us, here's our address:

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Some of the albums we talk about online will be reviewed in the magazine, some not. But we want to at least mention them here. You can listen to some of these on various of streaming services, but we always encourage you to support the artists by actually *buying* anything you like! Obviously we cannot research and report every outlet or online business where these albums are sold, so check your favorite places that sell CDs and downloads!

To see our previous listings, scroll to the bottom of the page.

—Blair Jackson



Draw the Strings Tight

Kenneth Meyer

Innova Recordings

I'll be the first to admit that a lot of so-called "modern" guitar music leaves me cold. What can I say? I find some of the more anti-melodic and rhythmically chaotic pieces I hear ugly and off-putting, and no intellectual exegesis on their merits can convince me otherwise. I like music that draws me in and engages my emotions in some way. I've found, though, that there is large middle ground for me of modern pieces that don't conform to traditional approaches to melody, harmony, rhythm, and structure, but which still compel and beguile me in that inexplicable way that great art of any kind does. This album by [Kenneth Meyer \(https://www.kennethmeyerguitar.com/\)](https://www.kennethmeyerguitar.com/) is in that category of decidedly modern but seductive works; five were commissioned specifically for this recording.

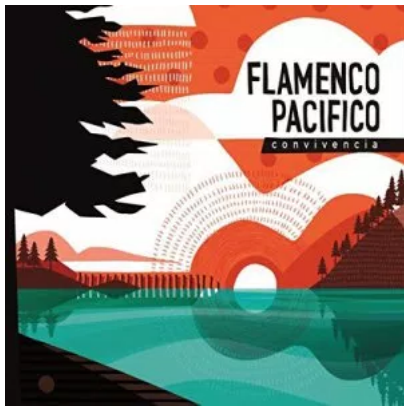
My gateway to being absorbed into Meyers' world was a nearly 16-minute piece on the album called *Roses Don't Need Perfume*, written by Kevin Ernste. It's a brilliantly evocative blend of harmonics, electronically manipulated tones from the guitar strings and body worthy of *Meddle*-era Pink Floyd, rhythmic pulses, even some spoken word from Uruguayan writer and philosopher Eduardo Galeano. It's quite a trip! Hans Werner Henze is the one composer on here I recognized: His *Drei Tentos* offers three fragmentary miniatures I found quite stimulating and, ultimately, moving. The title piece, by Edie Hill, took me a little longer to get into because it so all over the map: It opens with jerky rhythms and slap-pulling of strings before settling into a steadier, almost sinister vibe, but it also includes some atmospheric brushing, a hypnotic section called "Waves are Coming In" that sounds surprisingly like that title, and a concluding movement, "Sound of the Big Sea Shells! Sound of Bells," that is overtaken at points by some darkly Spanish intimations. Jesse Jones' *Ricordanza*, traverses several moods and intriguing musical textures over its ten-and-a-half minutes, and the concluding five-part suite by Nicholas Scherzinger, *Offering of the Five Senses*, is another kaleidoscopic journey, each movement a distinct entity, with moments of consonance and dissonance, concluding in a spiritually nourishing four-minute harmonic meditation. Highly recommended for folks looking for something out of the ordinary!

A Still More Excellent Way (Piorkowski); *Draw the Strings Tight* (Hill); *Roses Don't Need Perfume* (Ernste); *Drei Tentos* (Henze); *Ricordanza* (Jones); *Offering of the Five Senses* (Scherzinger)

Meyer's album can be purchased through [Innova \(https://www.innova.mu/albums/kenneth-meyer/draw-strings-tight\)](https://www.innova.mu/albums/kenneth-meyer/draw-strings-tight), [Amazon \(http://amzn.to/2vBKYHM\)](http://amzn.to/2vBKYHM), and [iTunes \(https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/draw-the-strings-tight/id1234701610\)](https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/draw-the-strings-tight/id1234701610), and heard on [Spotify \(https://open.spotify.com/album/2wkxbbfyezGI7nqWHyM2mI\)](https://open.spotify.com/album/2wkxbbfyezGI7nqWHyM2mI), Apple Music, and [YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kenneth+meyer+guitar+draw+the+string+tight\)](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=kenneth+meyer+guitar+draw+the+string+tight).

Below, Meyer plays part of *Ricordanza*:

Ricordanza (excerpt) composed by Jesse Jones



Convivencia

Flamenco Pacifico

flamencopacifico.com

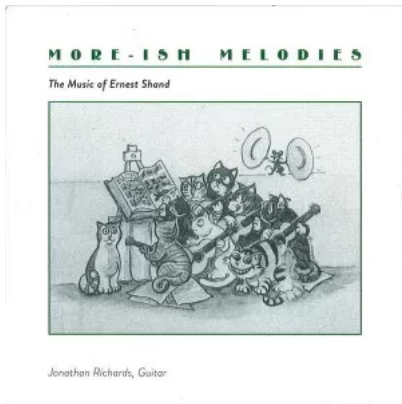
One might not expect the Pacific Northwest of the U.S. to be fertile ground for flamenco—or classical guitar, for that matter—but it is, on both counts! Flamenco Pacifico is an Oregon-based ensemble consisting of guitarists Berto Boyd and Grant Ruiz (who also sings) and percussionist Terry Longshore, and on this album (and apparently in some live performances), aided by various musical friends on some tracks—fretless bassist Randy Tico adds a strong, Jaco-esque jazz vibe to the several pieces on which he appears. Most of these are instrumentals, deeply infused with flamenco flavors (Spanish progressions, rasgueado strumming, rhythmic *palmas*, some Moorish vibe in places), and a few also feature effective lead vocals from Grant Ruiz. This group is not afraid to take some chances, as they show on the two longest pieces: *Convivencia*, which is bathed in Middle Eastern flavors, and the mutli-textured *Que Yo No Soy*. Yet they can convincingly play more traditionally structured pieces, like the pretty *Colores del Sur*, too, without sounding overly clichéd. I also really enjoyed the expansive, lone solo guitar piece, *Buenaventura*, and tip my hat to the imaginative percussion work by Longshore, particularly on what sounds like a ringing, clay pot *udu* (perhaps?). All in all a solid and entertaining album.

All pieces by Boyd except where indicated: *Arrincónamela* (Caracafe, Quilate); *Choco*; *Convivencia*; *Escapando del calor*; *Malecón*; *Que yo no soy*; *Colores del sur* (traditional) ; *Sueño del minero*; *Buenaventura*; *Lorca por soleá* (based on *Zorongo Gitano* by Lorca)

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Here's the trio and friends playing *Malecón*:

"Malecón" (Rumba) live



More-ish Melodies: The Music of Ernest Shand

Jonathan Richards

self-released

Wales-based guitarist [Jonathan Richards](http://jonathanrichardsguitar.co.uk/) (<http://jonathanrichardsguitar.co.uk/>) has fashioned an interesting recording career for himself since he was first covered in *Classical Guitar* way back in 1984. He has cut entire albums of music by Bach and Fernando Sor, one of *Latin American Guitar Gems*, another called *20th Century British Guitar Music*, and a few mixed recitals of pieces by semi-obscure composers, often peppered with his own compositions. British composer and sometime actor and music hall singer Ernest Shand (1868–1924) is known to many in England—where he was widely revered—but probably not in most other countries, even though he wrote more than 150 pieces for the guitar (mostly solo). From what I can tell, this may be the first CD devoted entirely to Shand’s guitar music—though pieces by him have turned up on a number of albums, and Richards himself included two on his 2007 effort, *Forever*.

I was completely unfamiliar with Shand before this album arrived, and I must say I am *thoroughly* charmed with Richards’ 16-piece recital. The melodies positively *sing* on nearly all these short works (most are under three minutes; the longest is just 4:22), and there is great stylistic variety from a gorgeous lullaby waltz (“Cradle Song”), to the aptly titled “Moorish Melody” (source of the pun in the album title), a mazurka, a lovely movement from a larger work called *Fantasie Irlandaise*, the introspective “Forever” (perhaps his best-known piece?), a thoughtful and somber “Funeral March,” and a few lilting late-Romantic-style pieces (such as *Légende*) that frankly made me think of Barrios—though I have no idea whether either were exposed to the other’s writing perhaps they shared some influences? (Unfortunately this CD comes in a simple cardboard sleeve with no information about Shand or the pieces. Wikipedia’s [entry on Shand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Shand) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Shand) is helpful, however.) Richards executes the program on a warm-sounding copy of an 1873 Torres guitar made by Mel Watson-Owen, and though occasionally I found myself wanting some of the phrasing to be a little less clipped—*rounder*, perhaps—it’s still a wonderful tour through some beautiful pieces. Almost any one of these could be a pleasant addition to a mixed program.

Now for the tricky part: Mr. Richards, who lives close to the sparkling white sand beaches of Colwyn Bay in remote North Wales, does not have any distribution set up for the album, nor any way for people to purchase it online. He also doesn’t do email. So the only way to buy the album is to contact him at: 12 Hawarden Road, Flat 1; Colwyn Bay; North Wales LL29 8NA. Or call him on the telephone at (country code) + 01492 539689. (When I called him from the U.S., I had to drop “0” before the “1” for the call to go through; not sure why.)

Or, maybe some distributor will pick up this worthy release and save us all some trouble!

Andante Religioso; Forever; Sorrow and Song; Chanson; Andante Expressivo; Moorish Melody; Cradle Song; Morceau Lyrique No. 2; Funeral March; Andante (from Fantasie Irlandaise); Légende; Fragment; Gavotte Roco; Exercise No. 68 in C minor; Exercise No. 52 in C major; Varsovie Mazurka

Ernest Shand Forever



Previous New CD Listings:

October 4: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/baroque-russians-moller-and-more-a-glance-at-some-recent-cd-releases/>) Jacob Cordover, Oleg Timofeyev and John Schneiderman, Arkaitz Chambonnet, Matthew Fish, Gidi Ifergan

October 18: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-bach-new-music-from-canada-sor-and-more/>) Norbert Kraft and Jeffrey McFadden, Steve Cowan, Katrin Endrikat, Jason Vieaux and Julien Labro, Yenne Lee, Emanuele Segre

November 1: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/new-releases-tuesday-cds-from-virginia-luque-jon-gjylaci-fabiano-borges-and-others/>) Virginia Luque and Bojidara Kouzmanova, Jon Gjylaci, Fabiano Borges, Alfonso Baschiera, Miscelanea Guitar Quartet, J.P. McShane

November 15 (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-by-antigoni-goni-adam-levin-antonio-malinconico-black-cedar-and-more/>): Antigoni Goni, Adam Levin, Radoš Malidžan, Black Cedar, Lou Marinoff, Antonio Malinconico

November 22: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-by-chroma-duo-thibaut-garcia-marcelo-de-la-puebla-yiannis-giagourtas-and-carsten-pedersen/>) Marcelo de la Puebla, ChromaDuo, Carsten Pedersen, Thibaut Garcia, Yiannis Giagourtas

December 13 (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-from-zsolia-boros-andrea-bissoli-philippe-sly-carlos-dorado-and-steven-joseph/>): Zsófia Boros, Andrea Bissoli, Philippe Sly & John Charles Britton, Carlos Dorado, Steven Joseph

December 27: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-by-joao-carlos-victor-frank-wallace-simon-thacker-justyna-jablonska/>) João Carlos Victor, Frank Wallace, Simon Thacker & Justyna Jablonska

January 10: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-from-alberto-la-rocca-jeffrey-mcfadden-michael-kolk-and-stefan-koim/>) Alberto La Rocca, Jeffrey McFadden & Michael Kolk, Stefan Koim

January 24: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-by-fabio-zanon-marcelo-kayath-david-norton-cindy-spell-and-jeff-gosselin/>) Fabio Zanon, Marcelo Kayath, David Norton & Cindy Spell, Jeff Gosselin

February 7 (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-from-the-canadian-guitar-quartet-mats-bergstrom-john-sargent-and-dimitris-kotronakis/>): Canadian Guitar Quartet, Mats Bergström, John Sargent, Dimitris Kotronakis

February 21 (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-cds-by-james-akers-gary-branch-karol-samuelcik-josef-mazan-and-john-lehman-haupt/>): James Akers & Gary Branch, Karol Samuelčík, Josef Mazan, John Lehman-Haupt

March 7: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-albums-by-meng-su-raphaella-smits-michaela-hrabankova-gabriel-bianco-and-mark-westling/>) Meng Su, Raphaella Smits, Michaela Hrabankova & Gabriel Bianco, Mark Westling

March 21: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-albums-by-sabrina-vlaskalic-ozan-saritepe-and-simon-cheong/>) Sabrina Vlaskalic, Ozan Saritepe, Simon Cheong

April 4 (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-albums-from-james-akers-duo-amaral-and-chris-fossek/>): James Akers, Duo Amaral, Chris Fossek

April 18 (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-albums-from-pepe-romero-vicente-coves-carlos-walter-and-david-harenstam-et-al/>): Pepe Romero, Vicente Coves & Extremadura Orchestra; Carlos Walter; David Härenstam (et al.)

August 8: (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/recent-releases-tuesday-albums-from-brasil-guitar-duo-maria-camitz-leif-hesselberg-and-duo-bohemico/>)Brasil Guitar Duo, Maria Camitz & Leif Hesselberg, Duo Bohemico



CD Review: Nicola Jappelli Offers a Different Look at Carulli's Solo Guitar Music (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/cd-review-nicola-jappelli-offers-a-different-look-at-carullis-solo-guitar-music/>)



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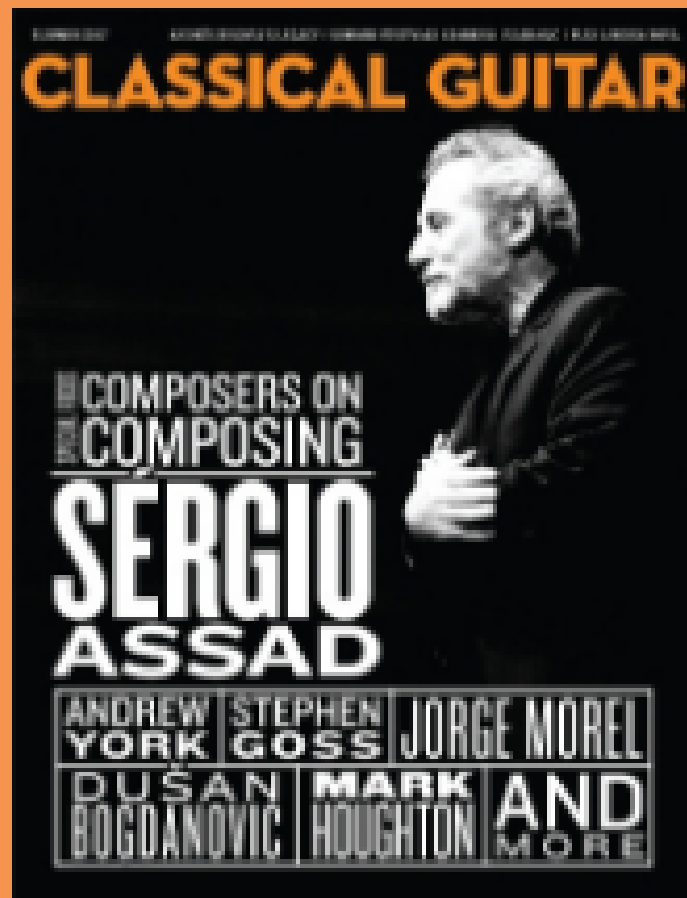
Classical Guitar Sessions: Piotr Pakhomkin Plays Scarlatti, Villa-Lobos, and Paganini (<http://classicalguitarmagazine.com/classical-guitar-sessions-piotr-pakhomkin-plays-scarlatti-villa-lobos-and-paganini/>)

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