

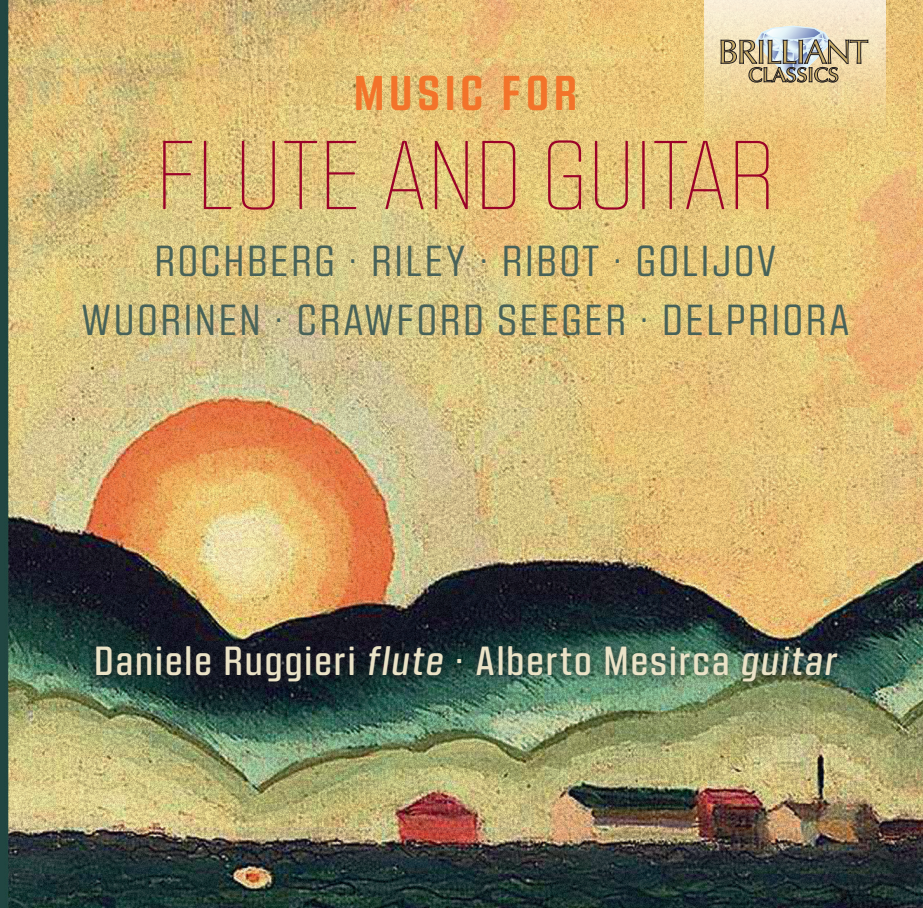
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BRILLIANT  
CLASSICS

MUSIC FOR  
FLUTE AND GUITAR

ROCHBERG · RILEY · RIBOT · GOLIJOV  
WUORINEN · CRAWFORD SEEGER · DELPRIORA

Daniele Ruggieri *flute* · Alberto Mesirca *guitar*



## Music for Flute and Guitar

**George Rochberg** 1918-2005

1. Muse of Fire (1990)  
*for flute and guitar* 19'01
2. Ora Pro Nobis (Nach Bach II)  
(1991) *for flute and guitar* 11'08

**Terry Riley** b. 1935

Cantos Desiertos (1993)  
*for flute and guitar*

3. I. Francesco en Paraiso 5'16
4. II. Cancion Desierto 6'54
5. III. Quijote 4'22
6. IV. Llanto 3'56
7. V. Tango Ladeado 3'18

**Marc Ribot** b. 1954

8. Bateau (2011) *for guitar* 4'55

**Oswaldo Golijov** b. 1960

9. Fish Tale (1998)  
*for flute and guitar* 11'20

**Charles Wuorinen** b. 1938

10. Hexadactyl (2002) *for guitar* 2'26

**Ruth Crawford Seeger** 1901-1953

Diaphonic Suite (1930) *for flute*

11. I. Scherzando 0'49
12. II. Andante 2'15
13. III. Allegro 1'01
14. IV. Moderato ritmico 0'50

**Mark Delpriora** b. 1959

15. Elegia (2003) *for guitar* 2'24

Daniele Ruggieri *flute* · Alberto Mesirca *guitar*

## «I hear America singing»

To borrow words from Whitman's magnificent *Leaves of Grass*, this recording focuses on the «various carols» of 20th century music in America, within the disparate perspective of chamber and solo works for two classical instruments, the flute and the guitar. It is not only their geographical background that these pieces have in common, however, since they also share a degree of coherence in their approach to complexity. The choice of composers is deliberate, and some of the works included in the collection have been recorded here for the first time. The outcome is an overall picture that reveals through major and minor works both the main and the branch lines of composition in the USA during the given period, with all the various hubs and interconnections. In this manner the usual categories of «classical» and «popular» or «folk» music become almost meaningless. As with many of Whitman's American songs, the cohesion of the selection lies in their common sense of belonging.

Of the seven composers featured in this album, the first two proved to be highly influential as regards traditional American music. In the second part of the recording there is also a piece by the Pulitzer prize-winning composer Charles Wuorinen (1938), whose presence emphasizes the contrast between two different tendencies: on the one hand, the Minimalism of Terry Riley (1935), and on the other, Wuorinen's music, which he himself was happy to describe as «maximalist». Apart from the profoundly different aesthetic and technical content, the divergence is also immediately evident in the choice of musical idiom: on the one hand, a degree of affinity with consonance, perhaps even tonality; and on the other, the accentuation of dissonance. With his own personal dichotomy between tonality and atonality, George Rochberg (1918-2005) occupies the middle ground between the two extremes, often including both elements in the same work in a manner that is highly original and expressive.

The two pieces for flute and guitar included in this recording are the product of Rochberg's collaboration with the guitarist Eliot Fisk. They were both written within

Recording: 19 and 21 June 2017, Francesco Zanotto's ancient instruments' atelier, Silvelle (Padova), Italy

Sound engineer: Matteo Costa

Recorded and Mastered by Matteo Costa

Cover: Sunset, Northport Harbor (1929), by Arthur Garfield Dove (1880-1946)

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the space of a couple of years (1989-1990), and reflect the political tensions of the Gulf War. It is no coincidence that the title of *Muse of Fire* comes from the Chorus at the beginning of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. In this Prologue the audience is invited to use its imagination to transcend the physical limits of the stage and conjure up the reality of a terrible war. Hence the peremptory passages, the martial elements, the evocations of funeral marches, the moments of dream-like lyricism and the rhapsodic parentheses that make up the complex puzzle of the single movement underpinned by skilfully structured developments and references.

Although it relates to the same political climate, *Ora Pro Nobis (Nach Bach II)*, recorded here for the first time, is entirely different in mood since it is an invocation for peace. As in other works, Rochberg adopts as a structure a segment of music by another composer: in this case the central movement of Bach's *Concerto italiano BWV971*, a true masterpiece of balance that he enriches to great effect. Clearly reworking material originally composed by a musician as important as Bach is a major challenge. Rochberg's radical contrivance is to transform the meter from triple to quadruple, so that the accompaniment becomes autonomous and embodies another Bach quote (the initial motto of the BWV1006 in the minor). Moreover, he replaces the almost uninterrupted melody with alternation of solo guitar and duo passages.

Riley's *Cantos Desiertos* (1996), on the other hand, is a sort of suite for flute and guitar that later became part of *The Book of Abbeyzoud*, an album with an evocatively inventive title suspended between the Biblical, the mystical and the exotic. The *Cantos* were largely composed in Mexico, and are largely Hispanic in mood, often with a touch of irony. Riley's heterogeneous material derives from his own varied musical experience, yet it still fits within an overall minimalist framework with its unfailing rhythmic complexity. *Francesco en Paraiso*, for instance, features baroque elements of the sort found in the vocal parodies of the countertenor Frank Royon Le Mée (1952-1993), to whom they are dedicated. In actual fact Le Mée had died of AIDS before Riley was able to work with him directly. Likewise *Cancion Desierto* is

based on a theme by Riley's Indian friend Krishna Bhatt (1949), later developed and transformed into the third, troubled movement *Quijote (Dreamer)*. Following a more introspective moment imbued with melancholy, *Llanto (Lament)*, the suite ends with a turbid *Tango Ladeado (Tango Off-Centre)*.

The next two pieces are both liquid in structure, which is perhaps not surprising since the two composers themselves reveal a certain fluidity in their musical choices. Marc Ribot (1954) is one of today's foremost guitarists, a musician engaged in different genres, from free jazz to post-rock, including no-wave and punk. The author of many film scores, Osvaldo Golijov (1960) was born in Argentina but now resides in the USA. On account of his own Jewish background he is related to the klezmer musical tradition.

The two thematic ideas that make up Ribot's *Bateau* (2003) are impregnated with delicate aquatic oscillation, like light shimmering on water translated into rhythm. Any brief composition for solo guitar by Ribot is bound to recall the intensity of the guitar works composed by his mentor, the Haitian-American Frantz Casseus. In actual fact, this piece was recorded in the version for guitar a few years after its first appearance in the album *Marco Ribot's Ceramic Dog*. Played for the first time on a classical guitar, it comes across as transformed, and almost French in tone despite the free improvisation that precedes the final recapitulation.

*Fish Tale* (1998) for flute and guitar is not so much an evocation as a description. The story told in Golijov's «watercolor for flute and guitar» is in some respects almost surreal, along the lines of Lewis Carroll, since it concerns the strange journey of a fish who leaves the ocean through a glass mouth leading to a little stream. With the help of a fisherman it manages to return to the open seas, where it meets up with its beloved, dancing a waltz with her «played by a marine music box» in which the flautist has to double the notes played by singing into the instrument. As the composer wrote to David Leisner, to whom the piece is dedicated, «I wanted everything to be beautiful, even at the expense of some sense». Thus the absurd tale is

simply a pretext for a work that expresses a sense of enthusiastic beauty in terms that are direct and communicative.

The last part of the recording features alternating solo pieces, returning to the “classical-contemporary” mode with a composition by Wuorinen, who has been writing for the guitar since the early 1960s, including various chamber works as well as highly demanding solo items. *Hexadactyl* (2002) is a solo piece that reveals the salient characteristics of Wuorinen’s music despite its brevity: great dramatic impact, intellectual prowess and communicative immediacy. The title refers to the six chords of the guitar, and it is the physical movement involved in playing the instrument that becomes the virtuoso focus of a composition in which arpeggios and resonance give rise to polyphony. This, along with exploration of the instrument’s range of registers, exalts the physicality of the guitar, which comes across as a body with six appendices in constant movement through space dilated by means of shifting vanishing points.

The work for solo flute that follows is like a herald of future developments in American music that concludes an imaginary circle. Despite the several decades that separate it from the other works, it is actually a fitting homage to another important trend: that of Modernism, born after the First World War as a witting rejection of European cultural supremacy. In this case the deliberate distance is expressed by Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901-1953). Following the initial post-Scriabin tendencies and the influence of Henry Cowell and Dane Rudhyar’s circle, her inclination towards experimentation was encouraged by the composer and ethnomusicologist Charles Seeger, whom she later married. He introduced her to compositional concepts and techniques such as dissonant counterpoint and diaphony. This latter term features in the title *Diaphonic Suite No.1* (1930), and is explained as the «controlled sounding out [extended] from the pitch field to other compositional dimensions, especially to rhythm» (F. Meyer). Indeed, the parameter that transcends formal structures and traditional phrasing in this piece is effectively that of rhythm. Instead there is “verse form”, another of Seeger’s techniques, tantamount to a musical translation of the

poetic concepts of rhythm and assonance. Alongside these innovations, the thematic material is developed in detail throughout the progression of the various pieces. Ruth Crawford Seeger’s music is unquestionably inventive, to the extent that certain critics have perceived in it ideas that were developed later by the post-war avant-garde composers of serial music. At all events, this *Suite* marked a major change in her activities: from 1933 on, she actually stopped composition and devoted herself entirely to the study and transcription of American folk music.

The idea behind this recording would not be complete without something by the guitarist and composer Mark Delpriora (1959). His *Elegia per Basil Keiser* for solo guitar was written in memory of a student of his who died. It is a short, deeply emotional piece in simple, three-part form. In the central section there is an echo of birdsong and the brief sound of a «vihuela lontana», as the score itself reveals. This is a reference to the first verse of Keats’s *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*, in which the poet yearns for a place of childhood, where solace is to be found in the «evening full of the linnet’s wings». The marvellous thing about this musical journey is that it leads us to precisely such an unreachable non-place.

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Translation by Kate Singleton



*... Rarely will you hear the flute flutter around a concert hall in such a beautiful and playful display of virtuosity.*

(M. Connolly, The Times, London)

*... magnificent performance of flautist Daniele Ruggieri...*

(L. Hontañón, ABC, Madrid).

*...here we must again mention the flautist Daniele Ruggieri for his sheer musicality...*

(R. Zecchini, Musica)

**Daniele Ruggieri** completed his studies in Venice where he graduated with the highest marks under Guido Novello and subsequently in Geneva where he was awarded the first Prix de Virtuosit  in the class of Maxence Larrieu.

He has been awarded several prizes including international competitions for chamber music in Stresa, Trapani, Caltanissetta and Casale Monferrato.

He has been intensely active on the concert circuit for several years taking part in major European festivals. These have included: Settembre Musica, Turin; Settimane della Scarlatti, Naples; Musica '88, Strasbourg; Eco & Narciso, Milan; MiTo, Turin; Nuove Musiche, Teatro Massimo, Palermo; Mittelfest, Cividale; Concerts Ville de Gen ve; Gulbenkian, Lisbon; The Venice Music Biennale; HCMF, Huddersfield,

RomaEuropa, Villa Medici; Warsaw Autumn Festival; Akademie der K nste, Berlin; Gaudeamus Foundation, Amsterdam; Italia-Espa a, Madrid; Festival d'Avignon; Ars Musica, Brussels, Klara Festival, Brussels, Time for music, Vitsaari, Finland; Sus  Festival, Denmark, and the chamber music season of the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, the Salzburg Mozarteum, La Scala, Milan, the Teatro S. Carlo in Naples, the Hamburg Musikhalle, the Kaufmann Concert Hall, New York and the Chicago Cultural Center. Moreover he premiered Salvatore Sciarrino's Adagio accompanied by the La Fenice Orchestra and made his Japanese debut at the Denki Bunka Kaikan in Nagoya accompanied by the Central Symphony Orchestra.

He actively collaborates with the Ex Novo Ensemble of Venice of which he is a founding member; with the Ensemble and as a soloist he has recorded more than thirty CDs for ASV, Black Box, Brilliant Classics, Resonance, Denon, Dynamic, Kairos, Naxos, Stradivarius, Tactus, Ricordi and other labels. He has also recorded concerts and programmes for all the principal European Radio stations: BBC, RAI, Radio France, Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR), Belgian Radios (RBFT and Klara), the Swiss German language Radio (DRS) and Swedish Radio.



The American Record Guide praised his Scarlatti as “*The best Scarlatti I’ve heard on solo guitar*”, and Classical Guitar Magazine wrote: “*Superb recording from the prodigiously talented Mesirca*”.

The Italian guitarist **Alberto Mesirca** was born in 1984. He obtained first class Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees at the Castelfranco Veneto Conservatoire, in the class of the eminent teacher Gianfranco Volpato. He then studied at the Music Academy of Kassel in Germany under Wolfgang Lendle, achieving the highest Honours in his Konzert-Examen. He has won the “Golden Guitar” award on three different occasions: for Best Recording in 2007, as Best Upcoming Artist of the Year in 2009, and again for Best Recording in 2013.

In collaboration with Hopkinson Smith and Franco Pavan, he published with Editions Orphée the forgotten compositions of Francesco Da Milano found in the Castelfranco Veneto 1565 Lute Manuscript. The re-discovery led Dusan Bogdanovic to write *Tre Ricercari su ‘La Compagna’* for him, based on a theme by Da Milano.

With Marc Ribot, he has recorded the complete guitar works of the Haitian composer Frantz Casséus.

In December 2011, he undertook the digitalization and creation of the Musical Archive of the Beyazit Library in Istanbul, Turkey.

As a frequent concert performer he has worked with eminent musicians such as Dimitri Ashkenazy, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Martin Rummel, Daniel Rowland, Domenico Nordio, Marco De Santi, Andras Adorjan, Peter and Jonas Giger, Mirko Satto, the Enesco, Ardeo and Acies string quartets, Quartetto d’Archi di Venezia, ChamberJam Europe and Ex Novo Ensemble.

At the 2013 Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival he premiered a work composed for him by Leo Brouwer. In 2014 his many concerts included performances at the City Hall of Helsinki, for the Guitar Foundation of America in Los Angeles (where he premiered Angelo Gilardino’s *Due Ritratti Italiani*), at the Italian Institutes of Culture in San Francisco and Stockholm, at the International Chamber Music Festivals of Stift, Kuhmo, Lessines, for the “Semana Tarrega” in Valencia and in New York with Marc Ribot, and with the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Ecuador.

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