

BGS | NEW HORIZONS IN GUITAR PERFORMANCE

serenade

romantic music for romantic guitars

Tom Kerstens



	Franz Schubert (1797-1828)	
	Six Songs (arr. Mertz)	
	<small>(First original recording)</small>	
1	Ständchen (serenade)	3.57
2	Die Post	2.49
3	Aufenthalt	3.20
4	Das Fischermädchen	2.16
5	Lob der Thränen	2.48
6	Liebesbotschaft	3.02
	Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840)	
	Grand Sonata	
	<small>(Tracks 7 – 11 First original recording, Urtext Edition)</small>	
7	Second Movement – Romance	3.42
8	Third Movement – Andantino variato	5.28
	Ghiribizzi	
9	No. 37 Adagietto (after Rossini)	1.29
10	No. 20 Là ci darem la mano (after Mozart)	2.27
11	Sonatina No. 1	2.17
	Giulio Regondi (c. 1822-1872)	
12	Introduction and Caprice Op. 23	10.02
	Franz Schubert	
	<small>(Tracks 13-28 first recording of Chantarelle Urtext edition)</small>	
	Two Pieces (arr. Tárrega)	
13	Menuetto (from Sonata in G Op. 78)	4.53
14	Moment Musical Op. 94 No. 3	1.38

	Frederyk Chopin (1810-1849)	
	Three Preludes Op. 28 (arr. Tárrega)	
15	No. 7 in A	0.51
16	No. 20 in C minor	1.42
17	No. 15 in D flat	5.39
	Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909)	
	Five Preludes	
18	Endecha	0.56
19	Oremus	0.50
20	Allegro	0.54
21	Andante sostenuto	0.53
22	Lágrima	1.30
	Three Mazurcas	
23	¡Adelita!	5.18
24	¡Marieta!	1.41
25	Sueño	2.09
	Pavana	1.32
26		
27	Capricho árabe (serenade)	1.43
	La alborada, la cajita de música (the musical box)	1.21
28		
	Total playing time	77.07

Producers

Tom Kerstens
John Taylor

Engineer

John Taylor

Recording Dates

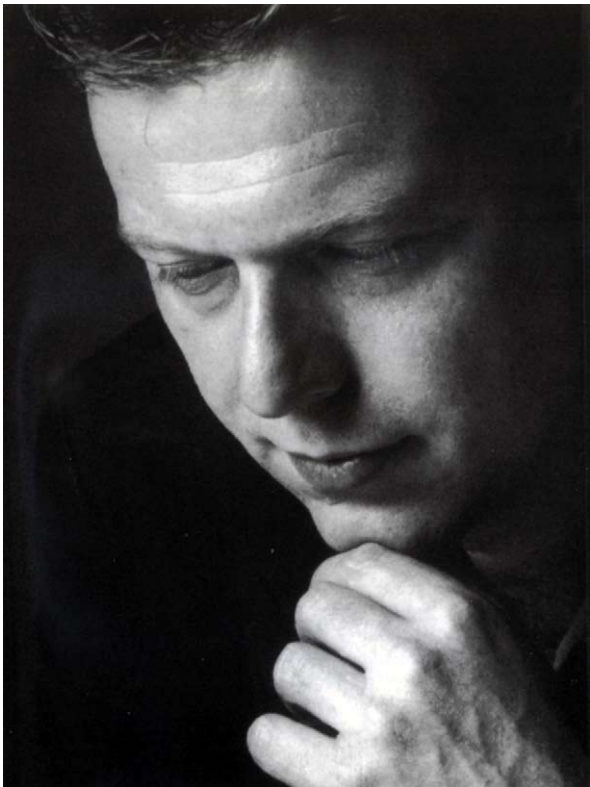
November & December 1992
& January 1993
at Seldon Hall, Elstree, London.

Photography

David Cockroft
Liz Helman

Cover Design

Clare Skeats
Rachel Godfrey
Bath Spa College
Re-issue artwork by
Sodapop Media



This recording offers a short history of the guitar in the 19th century played on original instruments.

Two features stand out: firstly, work by big name composers not normally associated with the guitar such as Schubert and Paganini and secondly, the special 19th century practice of arranging works written for one medium for another (although arranging is of course by no means unique to the 19th century). I tried not to confuse the issue by introducing my own arrangements of 19th-century music but only to use those made by 19th-century guitarists. Consequently, one can find two different sets of arrangements of works by Schubert – by Johann Kaspar Mertz and Francisco Tárrega – originating from different periods in the 19th century and therefore played on two different guitars. Some arrangements were clearly intended for professionals (Mertz, Tárrega) while others were for keen amateurs for use in the comfort of the home (Paganini's arrangements of Mozart and Rossini). In these pre-hi-fi days the function of the piano or guitar in people's homes was to a large extent to be able to access the great orchestral and opera music of the day. This explains the large market for sheet music of arrangements of this type.

The first part of the 19th century saw interest in the classical guitar booming, travelling virtuosos like Mauro Giuliani, Fernando Sor, Dionysio Aguado, Ferdinando Carulli and others were conquering the world giving concerts everywhere. Composing for the guitar, however, was mainly the business of the players themselves since, although many of the great composers of the age (Beethoven is one) expressed admiration for the guitar, they failed to write significant solo work for it.

As guitarists we are always reminded of our frustration when we are asked those same questions over and over again: "why didn't Beethoven or Brahms write for guitar?". However much we try to convince others that the guitar is, in fact, a serious classical instrument, the absence of repertoire by the greatest 19th-century masters keeps haunting us.

One can imagine the excitement when it was discovered that Schubert played the guitar! Two top quality instruments, made by no lesser maker than Johann Georg Stauer of Vienna, one of the world's leading luthiers of the day, were found in Schubert's legacy. One can forgive guitarists for romanticising about Schubert the guitarist. A. P. Sharpe wrote in his *Story of the Spanish Guitar*: "... Franz Schubert, not possessing a piano, did most of his composing on the guitar which hung over his bed and on which he would play before rising." There is very little evidence to substantiate this and other similar stories about Schubert's guitar playing and, in fact, most should be interpreted as wishful

thinking. Surely, if the guitar had been that important to Schubert he would have written solo works for it. Indeed, the thought of having a few guitar sonatas to rival his piano sonatas makes guitarists' mouths water!

Schubert did of course write for the guitar, using it in chamber works and songs such as the *Quartet for flute, guitar, viola and cello* (in fact a re-working of the *Notturmo for flute viola and guitar* by Matiega), and the *Cantata for three male voices and guitar* (D. 80). The song accompaniments may or may not be originals. Diabelli, Schubert's first publisher, was a guitarist and put out guitar and piano versions simultaneously. The received view nowadays is that most of these arrangements were actually made by others.

Johann Kaspar Mertz's arrangements of *Six Schubert Songs* for guitar solo from 1845 show us what could have been. Mertz followed the example of Liszt, who arranged 56 Schubert songs. Taking liberally from Schubert's originals as well as Liszt, Mertz made six most effective arrangements of *Ständchen*, *Die Post*, *Liebesbotschaft*, *Lob der Tränen*, *Das Fischer mädchen* and *Aufenthalt*.

Some composers suit the guitar. Both Debussy and Chopin expressed their admiration for it and one can imagine that they would have written very well for the guitar. Berlioz, on the other hand, despite being a guitar player himself, seems hard to imagine as a composer of guitar music. There is something in the expressiveness and intimacy of Schubert's musical language that seems perfectly in tune with the nature of the instrument and

this is why I believe the arrangements by both Mertz and Tárrega on this disc work very well.

Niccolò Paganini said: "I am the master of the violin but the guitar is my master!" Berlioz observed that when Paganini tired of the violin he often turned to the guitar. Although principally remembered as a violin virtuoso, Paganini not only was a virtuoso guitarist too(!), but he also composed numerous solo pieces as well as violin and guitar duos.

The 43 *Ghiribizzi* (short sketches) were written in 1820, the year when Paganini met Rossini. The *Adagietto* (No. 37) is in two sections: the first is marked 'Rossini', the second 'Paganini'. Did they write one half each or is the second section simply a variation of the first? *No. 20* is Mozart's *Là ci darem la mano* from Don Giovanni, in a simple – for home use – arrangement. The *Sonatina* is one of a series of simple, mostly mono-thematic pieces.

The Grand Sonata in A, on the other hand, is an ambitious work which was originally written as a guitar & violin duo. The rather amusing story is that it was written in response to complaints of Luigi Legnani, the guitar virtuoso who partnered Paganini in his violin & guitar duos. Legnani tired of the simple, unambitious guitar parts, which contrasted starkly with Paganini's virtuoso violin parts. In this *Sonata*, however, it is the guitar that takes centre stage and the violin doing the accompanying. When it came to the performance however, Paganini insisted on playing the guitar part himself, thus leaving Legnani again with the trivial part,

this time played on the violin! The violin part is normally omitted these days.

Giulio Regondi also excelled on two instruments: the guitar and the concertina! He was one of the few genuine prodigies of the guitar starting his career at the tender age of five. His concert tours first took him to Britain in 1831, where Paganini heard him and expressed "... his most unqualified astonishment and delight at young Regondi's performances". Regondi stayed in London, from where he undertook two very successful European tours, until his death in 1872 at the age of 49. His amazing performances made him one of the most popular musicians of early Victorian Britain and brought him top billing with artists such as Clara Schumann, Felix Mendelssohn and Ignaz Moscheles. In the final years of his life the guitar had fallen into decline, the Romantic development demanded ever more expressive and more powerful sounding instruments, leaving the piano as virtually the only solo instrument.

Regondi composed prolifically like most guitarist/composers of the day, but only six works survive (Opp. 19-23 plus a set of Studies). All are extremely demanding, pushing the expressive and technical limits of the instrument. The work on this disc, *Introduction and Caprice Op. 23*, is probably his best and indeed one of the best works in the entire 19th-century guitar repertoire.

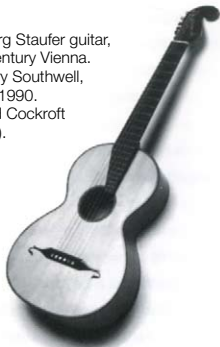
Francisco Tárrega is seen as the 'father of modern guitar technique', his innovations including a new sitting

position and the introduction of rest strokes. Another of Tárrega's major contributions to the development of the guitar is his special art of arranging music from other media for the guitar. The arrangements of Chopin and Schubert on this disc are good examples of his refined art.

His own compositions are mostly charming miniatures written for the salon, with a few exceptions such as the *Capricho árabe* (his best piece, I feel). His expertise in writing for the instrument is perhaps best demonstrated in *La alborada*, *la cajita de música* (the musical box) with its harmonics and left-hand slurs. The *mazurca* (three are represented on this disc) was a popular ballroom dance of the day and a link with Chopin.

© 2001 Tom Kerstens

Johann Georg Stauer guitar,
early 19th century Vienna.
Copy by Gary Southwell,
Nottingham 1990.
Photo: David Cockroft
(Tracks 1-12).



Antonio de Torres, original,
No. SE.117, 1888, restored by
José Romanillos, 1992,
Photo: S.L. Chai
(Tracks 13-17)



The Instruments

Johann Georg Stauer was born in 1778 and lived most of his life in Vienna. He was one of the finest guitar makers of the early 19th century as well as being a violin maker. Stauer refined guitar design and made many innovations through his experiments, acoustical tests and collaborations with leading players, notably Luigi Legnani, whose name was given to Stauer's ultimate model – the type of guitar used in this recording. Its unique feature is the adjustable neck and fingerboard raised above the soundboard, thus allowing the player to vary the action of the strings, choosing high action where powerful tone is required, as in chamber music. This technique Stauer patented. He was also the first maker to use a silver/nickel alloy for metal frets. He made guitars for notables other than Legnani, including Regondi, Mertz and Schubert. Stauer died in 1853; apart from a small number of pieces for guitar and arpeggione, his main legacy is his fine guitars and the inspiration he gave to future generations of makers, via his pupils J. G. Schertzer in Vienna, and C. F. Martin who emigrated to America and started the now famous steel string guitar company. (Gary Southwell)

Antonio de Torres is known as the 'Stradivarius of the guitar' – the father of modern guitar design, with enormous influence on several generations of guitar makers lasting until the present day. José Romanillos' thorough and very readable book *Antonio de Torres, guitar maker, his life and work* (Broadcast Books, Shaftesbury, 1987, 1990) gives the best account of this remarkable figure. Torres gave the guitar a much more powerful sound, a profound bass, a singing treble and a very wide spectrum of tone colours. As so often, the creation of guitar music and technical innovation went hand in hand. Tárrega's music is unthinkable without the Torres guitar, while Torres found in Tárrega's music the perfect realisation of the guitar's new potential.

Torres guitar, maple
body SE43, from
the Instrument
Museum of
the Paris
Conservatoire.
Photo: Tom Evans
(Copy used by
Gary Southwell,
Nottingham 1992
on Tracks 12-28)



Performance note: All guitars were tuned at concert pitch of A=435, which is an average of the wildly varying tunings used in the 19th century.

My thanks to:

José Romanillos for his invaluable advice and for graciously lending me his beautifully restored Torres guitar. Michael Macmeecken of Chanterelle Verlag for sending me photocopies of the new Urtext edition of Tárrega ahead of publication. Robert Spencer for letting me study the original edition of Mertz' arrangements of the Six Schubert Songs. Gary Southwell for providing me with excellent copies of historical instruments over the years. John Taylor for his immense patience and sense of humour during the making of this recording.

Tom Kerstens

The International Guitar Foundation (IGF) is an arts agency dedicated to the promotion, understanding and enjoyment of the guitar, its music and artists. Our work is defined by the Listen.Play.Create programme which features the guitar as the ideal vehicle for diverse and accessible concert and festival programming (Listen), participatory music making (Play) and contributes to the instrument's heritage through an extensive commissioning programme (Create).

IGF stages a range of events nationwide from festivals in London, Bath and the North East to large-scale summer schools in Bath, Cheltenham and London. We cover most styles of guitar and our events are attended by young people starting out and mature students rediscovering the passion.

BGS CD102

BGS Records is part of the:

