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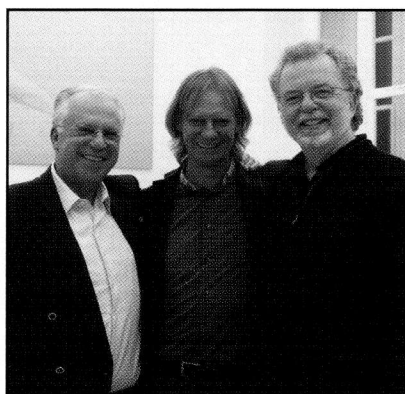
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Classical Guitar Magazine



Paulo Martelli –
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**Koblenz Festival and
Lifetime Achievement Awards –**
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*Although every care is taken to
ensure accuracy and propriety,
neither the editors nor the pub-
lishers necessarily agree with
opinions expressed by contribu-
tors, nor by readers in their pub-
lished letters.*

PHOTO: THÉRÈSE WASSILY SABA

crotchets and quavers which only succeed in hampering the flow and stopping the player dead in its tracks. That is what you get here. I do concede that there are places in a piece in D major (as here) where it is handy to be able to play a chord of D major, using an F# as an open string, as opposed to having to finger it on string 4 as normal, but the cons outclass the pros here by a considerable margin.

I didn't really see the need to play around with the tuning of the guitar in these pieces to make them apparently work better, for in my opinion, they simply don't.

Chris Dumigan

DANSES DE LA RENAISSANCE

by *Mercure D'Orleans*

Realisation by Pascal Bournet

Les Productions d'OZ DZ2171. 16pp.

I love Renaissance instrumental music, particularly on the lute and I have great respect for Pascal Bournet whose many works I have seen and heard before and am a committed admirer of. Therefore I was delighted to see some pieces by a composer whose name I had not come across before, apparently a nom de plume for Philippe-Emmanuel de Lorraine, also a name I had never come across before.

There are 13 pieces presented here, obviously from a much wider selection, judging by their titles. According to the Preface the pieces, it appeared were lute originals. Fine but what first strikes the prospective player is their entire lack of fingering or any other guitaristic help whatsoever. I took that, at first glance, to mean that any intervention of that sort would, on playing the pieces, be deemed to be unnecessary, then I hit on a dilemma, for there are several places where some of the stretches are awkward and laboured. Some I managed to find a way around, because as in the first piece *Ballet 18*, written in D I discovered it was much easier with a lute-like 3rd string to F#, likewise the next piece *Ballet 20*. But that was not always the case, as in the next piece *Ballet 21*, written here in E minor, in which the F# proved to be no help at all. So, had the key been changed from the lute original? It would have been nice to know that, because nearly all lute originals benefit from a 3rd string to F#, yet there were some here that didn't benefit at all.

As for the music itself it was, as Renaissance styles go, a little unusual with a number of places where you found yourself wondering where it was going, musically speaking but nevertheless still involving enough to want to try playing, and tuning and fingering would have been helpful in quite a few places.

In summation, this proved to be a book where I felt something was lacking; where some parts were downright awkward to play convincingly but where the music was, in essence, fine indeed. The player just needs a bit more help in a few places.

Chris Dumigan

19 SONGS for Solo Guitar by Chopin

Transcribed and arranged

by Miroslaw Drozdowski

Merakel. 56pp (+ CD of the entire contents)

Drozdowski's original works and arrangements remain firm favourites with me, but I must admit to being completely unaware of Chopin's songs, and have also been quite vociferous in putting down nearly every publication of Chopin's piano works for guitar as being hopelessly inadequate. So I was worried on a number of counts here.

However I needn't have been, for these pieces are a real find; very guitaristic, lovely harmonies, consistently interesting to play and, thanks to Drozdowski's impeccable work, constantly varied in style; from the immediately Chopinesque *A Maiden's Wish*, a little gem of a piece, to the Mazurka-like *Drinking Song*, and the beautifully wayward *What She Likes* with its opening lyrical harmonies followed suddenly by a *Scherzando Piu Mosso* which almost flies around the guitar.

There is not a second-rate piece in the whole 19, for they are all beautiful pieces and for me a real eye-openers, as I had no idea what a treasure trove Chopin's songs were, and in these wonderfully evocative arrangements, I can only say that Drozdowski has done them proud.

Chris Dumigan

SENVILLO for accordion, guitar, violin, piano and bass by *Jean-Marc Marroni*

Editions l'Empreinte Mélodique EEM706. 23pp plus parts

I've always seen the purpose of an ensemble review as two-fold. Will I like the music? Can I, and my friends, manage to play it?

This piece doesn't fit that mould. It's an interesting mix of instruments – some portable, some not, that make up this work. Mr Marroni is a well-respected button accordion player, and the accordion is at the top of the full-score; it's perhaps best to regard this a piece for an accordion player and some diverse friends, rather than for the guitarists and his musical mates. To be honest, then, it's not an edition for a guitarist to buy, it's a piece to be asked to play.

And even then, you might well baulk at it. It starts in two flats and modulates to five flats for the final page, leaving a horrid page-turn to be tackled in the middle of it all.

None of the guitar part is fingered, and I have to say there are dozens of chords that are genuinely impossible – for example, a chord containing four notes all lower than the third string – one cannot change the laws of physics! In rather too many places, the guitar is playing the same as the right hand of the piano, but an octave lower, of course, getting in the way of what the piano left hand is fabricating. There are places where the piano drops out, but the guitar part is hardly 'guitaristic' and despite its mental challenges, never rises above first position, with some extremely dark and gruff chords.

Much as I hate to be a killjoy, this is not a guitar part written by a guitarist, and if you were to be invited to join the eclectic mix of instruments that make up the ensemble needed here, you'd have to spend some considerable time re-writing the guitar part, deciding how to thin out the impossible chords. In terms of speed and complexity, it's generally about Grade 7, but only after some seriously thorough work with a pencil.

The music is nice enough, atmospheric and generally pleasing. But the guitarist doesn't get a good deal here.

Derek Hasted

LES SONS COMPLEMENTAIRES for solo guitar by *Arnaud Sans*

Editions l'Empreinte Mélodique EEM0050. 16pp

The five pieces contained here are all of a didactic nature aimed primarily at the Intermediate player. The opening piece, *El Camino*, a nostalgic, contemplative composition, takes the form of a milonga. The first two-thirds of the piece establish the strong, rhythmic character of this musical form.