

**EDEN STELL GUITAR DUO**

Mark Eden & Christopher Stell

**Mario Castenluovo-Tedesco (1895-1968)**

**Sonatina Canonica Op.196**

*I. Mosso (grazioso e leggero), II. Temo di Siciliane (Andantino), III. Ritmico e deciso (Tempo di Fandango)*

**Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) (arr. Mark Eden)**

Sonata K.475

Sonata K.474

Sonata K.545

**Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) (arr. Chris Stell)**

**Suite for Piano in C major**

*I. Presto, II. Andante, III. Vif*

**Laura Snowden (b. 1989)**

**Damn everything but the circus** (written for the Eden Stell Duo)

*INTERVAL*

**Mario Castenluovo-Tedesco (1895-1968)**

**Les Guitares bien tempérées Op.199**

Prelude & Fugue No.1 in G minor

Prelude & Fugue No.2 in D major

Prelude & Fugue No.3 in A minor

Prelude & Fugue No.4 in E major

**Federico Mompou (1893-1987) (arr. Mark Eden)**

***Cançons i Danses***

No. 3

No. 4

No. 6

**Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) (arr. John Williams)**

**Theme and Variations, from String Sextet in Bb major, Op.18b**

**Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco** was descended from a long line of Jewish bankers who were expelled originally from Spain in 1492, but had settled in Tuscany ever since. With the advent of Mussolini's governments promotion of new racial laws in 1938, and the subsequent cancellation of many commissions, and the banning of his music on public radio and concerts, Castelnuovo-Tedesco decided to leave Italy, accepting help from prominent musician friends Heifetz and Toscanini who wrote letters of support to aid his emigration to the United States just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Like many artists fleeing facism, Castelnuovo-Tedesco found work in Hollywood, composing film music for over 200 movies, but continued to compose works for performers such as Piatigorsky, Toscanini, many guitar works for Andres Segovia, and violin concertos for Heifetz. He also became an important teacher to many future composers including Andre Previn, Jerry Goldsmith, Henry Mancini, Scott Bradley, and John Williams to name a few.

In 1962 Castelnuovo-Tedesco started work on *Les Guitars bien tempérées*, a set of 24 Preludes and Fugues for the Presti-Lagoya Duo, after Bach's 48 Preludes and Fugues. As well as being inspired by his Jewish roots, his musical style always remained refined, often inspired by classicism and baroque forms and dances, with the all important Italian gift for a melody that could melt the heart, here clearly demonstrated in his *Sonatina Canonica* and the Preludes & Fugues.

Born in Naples, **Domenico Scarlatti's** association with the Iberian countries began when he arrived in Lisbon in 1719 to take up the position as music teacher to the princess of Portugal, Maria Magdalena Barbara. Scarlatti returning again to continue her instruction once she had married the King of Spain, settling in Spain for the remainder of his life.

He composed over 550 Sonatas, publishing only a few which he described as exercises. Most of his Sonatas are in binary form and break new ground in their audacious use of harmonic modulations and dissonance. Influence of Spanish and Portuguese folk music can be recognised in Scarlatti's use of the Phrygian mode, not common in European music, suggesting the sound of the guitar.

"Above all, a composer should not aim to be fashionable. If you are not fashionable today, you may not be unfashionable tomorrow." — **Francis Poulenc**

Poulenc was born in Paris on January 7, 1899 and attained both a distinct musical voice and success at an early age. During the 1920s, he was one of the leading spirits of the group of young French composers known as "Les Six." Their music was often light, witty, satirical and urbane. They were in sympathy with and influenced by Stravinsky and "Neo-Classicism," in opposition to the cerebral music of Schoenberg and what they considered to be the religio-musical excesses of their countryman Olivier Messiaen. Poulenc, in particular, often juxtaposes passages of wit and irony with lush, sentimental outpourings.

Poulenc composed orchestral, solo and chamber music, ballets, concertos, film scores, and opera, as well as powerful choral and sacred music. He was an acknowledged master of art songs, with over 130 to his credit. Indeed, melody was the most important element to him. Of his own work, he wrote, "I know perfectly well that I'm not one of those composers who have made harmonic innovations like Igor (Stravinsky), Ravel, or Debussy, but I think there's room for 'new' music which

doesn't mind using other people's chords. Wasn't that the case with Mozart-Schubert?"

Composed in 1920, the Suite for Piano was dedicated to the Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes, who premiered it in Paris along with works by Rimsky-Korsakov, Falla, Tommasini, Debussy, and other composers. A review of the concert stated that the Suite's "very name and subtitles, in their avoidance of any extra-musical suggestion, are significant of the present-date reaction, especially among French composers, against romanticism, Impressionism, expressionism, in fact of any "ism" . . . These three movements have an irresistible fascination."

**Laura Snowden** is one of the U.K's most talented musicians. As well as being an award-winning classical guitarist, she is also a highly skilled composer with an original distinctive voice. Many of her works have been featured on BBC Radio 3; Laura also performs in the folk ensemble *Tir Eolas*.

On composing '**Damn everything but the circus**' Laura says ...

*"I am often inspired by visual stimuli in my pieces - colours, people, places - and one image that keeps coming back is that of an imaginary circus. It is a circus that should be childlike and innocent, but which repeatedly becomes distorted and disturbed. This particular piece begins with an announcement that the circus has begun; the music then cuts rapidly between different ideas, as though we are seeing snapshots of activity from around the circus. Although it is full of colour and often playful, there is an ominous undercurrent to the music which becomes increasingly dizzying, culminating in a dark climax. The music then winds down eerily, ending in surreal, unexplained stillness. When I saw Eden-Stell perform at Wigmore Hall I was amazed by their intensely colourful, playful and vivid characterisations; I wrote this piece with those qualities in mind."*

Catalan composer **Frederic Mompou** is best known as a miniaturist, writing short, relatively improvisatory music often described as "delicate" or "intimate." His principal influences were French impressionism, Erik Satie and Gabriel Fauré, resulting in a style in which musical development is minimised and expression is concentrated into very small forms. He was fond of *ostinato* figures, bell imitations (his mother's family owned the *Dencausse* bell foundry and his grandfather was a bell maker), and a kind of incantatory, meditative sound. He was also influenced by the sounds and smells of the maritime quarter of Barcelona, the cry of seagulls, the sound of children playing and popular Catalan culture.

Mompou composed his fifteen **Cançons i Danses** (songs and dances) not as a set, but as discrete pieces over a 55-year span. They were all written for piano with the exception of the thirteenth for guitar and fifteenth for organ. Each piece consists of an introductory slow *Cançó*, followed by a more animated *Dansa* in a related key but not necessarily in the same time signature. They are, as Mompou describes "a contrast between lyricism and rhythm," the freedom of the song and the propulsion of the dance. They are mostly based on celebrated popular Catalan folk tunes known to many guitarists from the arrangements of another Catalan, Miguel Llobet, whose own arrangements Andrés Segovia called jewels of the guitars repertoire. Other influences in these pieces are hymns and religious ceremonial music, South American music such as the *Cubana* in No.6, fleeting moments of jazz, and extracts from the thirteenth century Galician song collection, *Cantigas de Santa Maria* by King Alfonso X *El Sabio* (the wise), in No.10.

**Brahms** was twenty-seven when he wrote the first of his two string sextets. It is among the earliest of his chamber works that is played with any regularity. The second of four movements, the most famous, is a noble Theme and Variations—an ancient form much loved by Brahms and of which he was a true master. The movement consists of six wonderfully imagined variations and boasts an especially exquisite coda.

Brahms obviously had a great deal of affection for this music. He made a piano four-hands arrangement of it and transcribed the second movement for solo piano (which he presented to Clara Schumann as a 41st birthday present). When a friend made a piano trio version of the sextet, Brahms was delighted. The Theme and Variations have become well-known to guitar audiences through the duo arrangement by John Williams, which he performed and recorded with Julian Bream.

### **EDEN STELL GUITAR DUO - Mark Eden & Christopher Stell**

Internationally renowned for their dynamism, innovation and breathtaking virtuosity the Eden Stell Guitar Duo have "breathed new life into the world of the classical guitar." (Rotterdam Dagblad).

Widely regarded as one of the world's leading guitar ensembles, the duo's chameleon-like ability to communicate in a multitude of musical styles makes them a constantly evolving entity with a unique creative voice.

Likened to a "miraculous single guitarist blessed with an impossibly wonderful technique and an exceptionally delicate touch" (The Observer), the Eden Stell Guitar Duo have been invited to perform at venues and music festivals around the world; including Germany, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Romania, Turkey, USA, China, Canada, Mexico, South and Central America and Australia, plus numerous radio and TV appearances on ITV, BBC, European and North American networks.

Mark and Chris were elected Associates of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of their outstanding musical achievements and they both currently hold teaching positions at the Royal College of Music, and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. The duo are D'Addario Strings endorsed artists.  
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