



BRITISH GUITAR MUSIC • 2

Dowland • Britten • Rutter • Scott • Maw

Graham Anthony Devine, Guitar



British Guitar Music • 2

Julian Bream was the inspiration for many of the works by British composers for the guitar. Building on the work of the great guitarist Andrés Segovia, Bream commissioned music from a number of composers with international reputations, thus creating a whole new repertoire of guitar music, which had until then belonged largely to the sound world of Spain and Latin America. At the same time, Julian Bream played an important role in the revival of interest in the Elizabethan lute, with his recitals of solo lute music, accompaniments for singers such as Peter Pears and Robert Tear, concerts with the harpsichordist George Malcolm and the establishment of his own consort, bringing Early Music to a new audience.

Born in London in 1563, John Dowland was a composer and lutenist, creating solo lute works, consort music, and many songs of exquisite beauty. By all accounts, the remarkable John Dowland led a colourful existence. Travelling extensively through Europe, he became the royal lutenist for Christian IV of Denmark between 1598 and 1606, and some years after he had returned to the UK Dowland was appointed as one of the King's Lutes at the court of James I in 1612. *Sir [or Mr] John Langton's Pavan* is one of Dowland's most beautiful and uplifting works, full of harmonic twists and turns, as well as wonderful singing melodic lines.

Nocturnal after John Dowland, Op. 70 by Benjamin Britten was written for Julian Bream and is unquestionably one of the most important works written for the guitar in the 20th century. Julian Bream gave the premiere performance at the Aldeburgh Festival on 12 June 1964. The worlds of sleep, dreams and nightmares, and the unconscious were all of great significance to Britten's creativity, inspiring works such as *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op. 31* (1943), *Nocturne, Op. 60* (1958), *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 64* (1960) *Night Piece (Notturmo)* for piano (1963) and the *Nocturnal after John Dowland, Op. 70* for guitar. The *Nocturnal* is written as a set of eight variations on John Dowland's melancholic lute song *Come, heavy Sleep*, with the Dowland theme appearing at the end of the work. Britten had in fact

previously used the delayed theme idea in another work based on a Dowland theme, *Lachrymae, Op. 48* (1950), and then again in his *Cello Suite* (1971).

Dowland's *Come, heavy Sleep* is imbued with melancholy not only in its text but also with the use of the 'tear' interval, a falling perfect fourth long associated with the emotion of sadness.

*Come, heavy Sleep, the image of true Death,
And close up these my weary weeping eyes,
Whose spring of tears doth stop my vital breath,
And tears my heart with Sorrow's sigh-swoll'n cries.
Come and possess my tired thought-worn soul,
That living dies, till thou on me be stole.*

Anonymous

Britten assigned descriptions for each of the variations creating a narrative of sleep, night, dreams and ultimately death. The titles are: I. *Musingly* (Meditativo) – II. *Very agitated* (Molto agitato) – III. *Restless* (Inquieto) – IV. *Uneasy* (Ansioso) – V. *March-like* (Quasi una marcia) – VI. *Dreaming* (Sognante) – VII. *Gently rocking* (Cullante) and VIII. *Passacaglia*, which leads to the *Slow and quiet* marking of the Dowland theme (IX). In a 1969 interview Britten admitted his *Nocturnal, Op. 70* 'had some very, to me, disturbing images in it'.

John Rutter (b. 1945) is one of Britain's best-known composers of the late 20th century, and his *Prélude Antique* and *Rondeau Caprice* are his only compositions for solo guitar to date. The *Rondeau Caprice* is John Rutter's own reworking of a movement from his *Suite Antique* written for harpsichord, flute and string orchestra.

Cyril Scott was born in Oxtou, Lancashire, on 27 September 1879. His sole work for guitar is the *Sonatina* written in 1927 and dedicated to Andrés Segovia. This work was long presumed lost until it was unearthed amongst Segovia's papers in 2001 by the Italian composer and guitarist Angelo Gilardino, artistic director of the Andrés Segovia Foundation in Linares, Spain.

Segovia is believed to have played only the first movement of the *Sonatina* under the name *Reverie* in at least two 1928 recitals, once at Wigmore Hall and the other in a performance in Buenos Aires.

The first complete performance of the Scott *Sonatina* was given by Julian Bream on 26 November 2001. Julian Bream added his own inimitable touch by completely revising the *Sonatina*, rearranging many chord voicings, adding bass notes to fill out the harmony and amplify the sonority of the guitar, as well as extending the last movement by re-using material from the first and second themes capped off with a more elaborate coda. Julian Bream never met Cyril Scott but was an ardent admirer of his compositions and he held his guitar *Sonatina* in the highest esteem. This present recording is the first recording of Julian Bream's revision.

The first movement is marked *Adagio quasi introduzione, Molto moderato* and is the most expansive of the work's three movements. Scott creates an eerie ethereal sound world in this movement through the use of parallel chords in thirds and fourths, ghostly arpeggios and harmonics, along with pentatonic and whole tone scales passages. After a brief introduction, the second movement marked *Allegretto pensoso* presents a creepy, almost child-like theme which is eventually interrupted by humorous and rather boisterous arpeggiated chords. The main theme returns before disappearing into the distance to round off the movement. The *Sonatina* ends with a flamboyant *Finale*.

Nicholas Maw was born on 5 November 1935 in Grantham, Lincolnshire. His *Music of Memory* was written for and dedicated to the American guitarist Eliot Fisk, who gave the premiere at Lichfield Festival in July 1989. The composition is a freely organised set of variations, or 'meditations' on the *Intermezzo* from Mendelssohn's *String Quartet in A minor, Op. 13*. The theme, in A–B–A form, is never fully presented, however, large segments from the *Intermezzo* are embedded throughout the work to remind the listener of its haunting presence around the seemingly far-removed musical events of the variations.

According to Maw:

'The work's title *Music of Memory* refers to the long-term memory of a golden age (and the corresponding hope that it can continue to nourish our own art) represented by the Mendelssohn; the shorter-term 'memory' of an original that lies behind the variation form; and the use of different kinds of memory-related techniques and material during the work – guitar sounds typical of the instrument and its repertoire, and the memory recalls of the coda.'

After an epic kaleidoscopic introduction, the first segment of the *Intermezzo* theme is followed by three variations: *Tranquillo ma con movimento, Poco vivace* and *Andante placido*. The middle section of the theme is then introduced to announce two further variations – *Deliberato ed appassionato* and *Impetuoso* – before the return of the theme's first section. Five further variations are developed: *Senza rigore, non troppo lento*, a toccata-like *Poco presto*, a three-part fugal *Moderato e risoluto*, a jazz inspired *Allegro energico* and a wild rasgueado strumming *Tempo giusto*. These variations lead to a coda where shorter fragments of the theme are interspersed with short segments of material from the previous variations.

Graham Anthony Devine

This recording would not have been possible without the invaluable help and guidance of one of the greatest guitarists in the history of the instrument, Julian Bream. I was very fortunate to spend many long days in Maestro Julian Bream's company discussing, playing and preparing (painstakingly preparing in the case of the Cyril Scott Bream revision) the music presented on this album – a truly unforgettable experience that strengthened my already incredibly strong admiration for such a wonderful musician and one of my musical heroes. Julian Bream died peacefully in his sleep at the age of 87 on 14 August 2020, and with his passing has left an incredible legacy for guitarists of the present and future.

Graham Anthony Devine



Graham Anthony Devine is one of the world's most outstanding virtuosos of his generation. A winner of major competitions around the globe, he has built an international career as recitalist, concerto soloist and masterclass tutor. He has performed to great critical acclaim at many of the world's most important recital venues such as Wigmore Hall and the Purcell Room, London, the Palau de la Música, Valencia, Hakuju Hall, Tokyo, The Phoenix Hall, Osaka, and many more. His recordings for Naxos of varied repertoire from all epochs have drawn the highest praise worldwide. Devine is currently head of guitar at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London, where he directs an exciting programme that attracts talented guitarists from across the UK and many countries abroad. Devine is also the artistic director of the Royal Greenwich Guitar Festival.

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The iconic guitarist Julian Bream commissioned music from a number of British composers with international reputations, thus creating a whole new repertoire of guitar music. He also played an important role in the revival of interest in the Elizabethan lute, his recitals bringing Early Music to a new audience. John Dowland's beautiful *Pavan* is followed by Britten's *Nocturnal after John Dowland*, written for Bream and one of the most significant guitar works of the 20th century. Cyril Scott's *Sonatina*, overlooked for decades, is heard here in the premiere recording of Bream's revised edition. Volume 1 can be heard on 8.557040.

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- John Dowland (1563–1626)**
[1] **Mr John Langton's Pavan, P. 14** (1604 or before) **5:07**
(arr. for guitar by Graham Anthony Devine [b. 1971])*
- Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)**
[2] **Nocturnal after John Dowland:**
Reflections on Come, heavy Sleep, Op. 70 (1963) **17:57**
I. Musingly – II. Very agitated – III. Restless – IV. Uneasy – V. March-like –
VI. Dreaming – VII. Gently rocking – VIII. Passacaglia – IX. Slow and quiet
- John Rutter (b. 1945)**
[3] **Prélude Antique** (1980) **2:26**
[4] **Rondeau Caprice** (1976) **1:56**
- Cyril Scott (1879–1970)**
Guitar Sonatina (1927) (ed. Julian Bream [1933–2020])* **12:18**
[5] I. Adagio quasi introduzione – Molto moderato 6:33
[6] II. Allegretto pensoso 1:55
[7] III. Finale 3:48
- Nicholas Maw (1935–2009)**
[8] **Music of Memory** (1989) **20:34**

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Graham Anthony Devine, Guitar

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Guitar by Andres Marvi, 2005 • Strings by D'Addario • Cover photo by simonthgolfer (iStockphoto.com)

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