



# THE GUITARIST'S PRAYER

MUSIC FOR SOLO GUITAR  
FROM PURCELL  
TO BEAMISH

# THE GUITARIST'S PRAYER

HENRY PURCELL (1659–1695) tr. FÁBIO FERNANDES

1. *Harpsichord Suite no.6 in D major: I. Prelude* (publ. 1696) [0.46]
2. *Hornpipe in E minor* (unknown) [0.50]
3. *Minuet in A minor* (publ. 1689) [1.12]

JOHN W. DUARTE (1919–2004)

*Round O, Variations on a Theme of Henry Purcell, op.148* (2003)

**WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

4. *Theme* [1.34]
5. *I. Allegramente* [0.34]
6. *II. Barcarolle* [2.47]
7. *III. Scherzando* [0.46]
8. *IV. Canzone d'amore* [2.50]
9. *V. Giocoso* [0.38]
10. *VI. Canto mesto* [2.40]
11. *VII. Passacaglia* [2.03]

ERNEST SHAND (1868–1924)

12. *March of the Pixies, op.16* (1896) [3.00]
13. *A Nymph's Dance (Petit Morceau) op.205* (1903) [3.38]
14. *The Gnomes (Pièce caractéristique) op.77* (1897) [2.02]

SALLY BEAMISH (b.1956)

*Unquiet* (2021)

**WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

15. *Var I. Adagio* [1.23]
16. *Var II. Un poco piu mosso, quasi improv.* [1.44]
17. *Var III. Allegretto giocoso* [1.32]
18. *Var IV. Allegro* [1.04]
19. *Var V. Andante con moto* [1.24]
20. *Theme* [1.42]

RICHARD STORRY (b.1965)

21. *The Guitarist's Prayer* (2011) [4.27]

**WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

ROXANNA PANUFNIK (b.1968)

*Sea Voyage* (2021)

**WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

22. *United Kingdom* [1.26]
23. *English Channel and Bay of Biscay* [2.21]
24. *Portugal* [4.39]
25. *Gibraltar Strait and Mediterranean Sea* [1.34]
26. *Egypt and Suez Canal* [2.52]
27. *Red Sea into Arabian Sea* [2.18]
28. *India* [1.36]
29. *Mercurial, with an element of unpredictability* [2.04]

JOSIAH ANDREW HUDLESTON (1799–1865)

30. *Rousseau's Dream, composed with Variations for the Guitar* (c.1840s) [6.53]

**WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

FRANK BRIDGE (1879–1941) tr. FÁBIO FERNANDES

31. *Three Improvisations for the Left Hand: no.2, A Vigil* (1918) [3.15]
32. *Three Lyrics: no.1, Heart's Ease* (1921) [2.46]

RICHARD STORRY (b.1965)

33. *Rondino for Fábio* (2023) [4.37]

**WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

**TOTAL TIME** [75.15]

FÁBIO FERNANDES *guitar*



Henry Purcell

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## HENRY PURCELL (1659–1695)

Although he died at the age of only 36, Henry Purcell was widely noted by his contemporaries as a composer of genius; one who could stand as an equal alongside the best European musicians of the age. His music is rich and varied, original and captivating; and his word-setting, in particular, is pointed, colourful, and always apt.

At the age of eight, Purcell became a Boy of the Chapel Royal, where he sang as a choirboy, was taught to play various string and keyboard instruments, and learnt composition and music theory. Such a thorough musical education undoubtedly served him well, enabling him to develop a solid compositional technique that acted as a bedrock to his vividly expressive style. An apprenticeship as Keeper, Maker, Repairer and Tuner of the King's wind and keyboard instruments led to his appointment as Composer for Stringed Instruments at the Chapel Royal; and two years later he was made Organist at Westminster Abbey, a post that he was to retain for the rest of his life, and the duties of which he combined with those of Court Composer to Charles II, Organist of the Chapel Royal and Keeper of the King's Instruments.

Purcell retained his position at Court upon the accession of James II to the throne, but his fortunes there declined during the reign of William and Mary; and he turned to the composition of incidental music for the theatre, a genre with which he had been familiar since boyhood, the choirboys of the Chapel Royal often participating in theatrical performances. Teaching, editing and writing also played an important part in his professional life at this time: he contributed to Playford's *The Second Part of Musick's Hand-Maid* and later revised and updated the same author's *Introduction to the Skill of Musick*.

Purcell's music, so popular during his lifetime, was quickly forgotten after his death, and his memory was neglected until his bicentenary, in 1895, stimulated a revival of his works. His compositions, vivid, dramatic and highly expressive, also convey a sense of architectural structure, which is, the present writer avers, due in no small measure to his understanding of the system of proportional mensuration, a system of rhythmic

notation used with great finesse in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although this system was beginning to wane in mainland Europe by the time of Purcell's birth, it was still in favour in England: it is described in Thomas Morley's *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* of 1597, a volume that was used throughout the seventeenth century for the instruction of young musicians. Purcell would thus, in all probability, have been imbued with this system; and if, in the performance of his music, the tempi of individual movements and sections are related mathematically, a sense of overarching unity is obtained, as well as an inevitable progression to the work's emotional apex.

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## SALLY BEAMISH (b.1956)

Sally Beamish is a distinguished British composer and violist. Born in London into a musical family, she studied viola at the Royal Northern College of Music, and later in Germany with the Italian violist Bruno Giuranna. Her early career was spent as a violist with ensembles such as the Raphael Ensemble, the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields and the London Sinfonietta.

In 1990, Beamish moved to Scotland, following the theft of her viola, to pursue composition full time. Her versatile and wide-ranging output, now exceeding two hundred works, encompasses orchestral scores, chamber music, concertos, operas, ballets and choral works. Her music is notable for its ability to draw together influences as diverse as jazz and Scottish folk traditions.

Among her numerous honours are the Paul Hamlyn Award, a Creative Scotland Award, election to the Royal Society of Edinburgh (2015) and the Swedish Academy (2022) and appointment as OBE in 2020 for services to music. She has twice been featured as BBC Radio 3's Composer of the Week (2012, 2015). In 2015, Beamish returned to performing after her daughter, the luthier Stephanie Irvine, made her a viola. She has since moved back to live in England and continues to perform regularly.

© Fábio Fernandes



John William Duarte with pipe, guitar and manuscript paper, 1954

## JOHN W. DUARTE (1919–2004)

John William “Jack” Duarte made a major contribution to the domain of guitar music. He was a composer, performer and teacher; however, he is not included in *Grove’s Dictionary of Music*, nor various other reference volumes. Many of his two hundred original compositions and arrangements have been issued on record and disc and his music has been recorded by eminent guitarists including Andrés Segovia and John Williams. Stylistically, Duarte was wide-ranging: from folk-song tunes to aleatoric pieces and he produced works for solo guitar, various ensembles, singers and string quartet. Important works include the *Catalan Variations*, the *English Suite* and *Sua Cosa*, as well as his *Variations on a French Nursery Song*.

Born in Sheffield on 2nd October 1919, he moved to Manchester at an early age; he was originally destined to be a chemist, studying at Manchester University’s Faculty of Technology. Duarte had lessons in jazz-guitar with Terence “Terry” Usher and taught himself to play trumpet and double bass. He played with Coleman Hawkins and Django Reinhardt. During the Second World War Duarte was employed by the Ministry of Supply and after the war he moved to London to teach part-time at the Spanish Guitar Centre. Ceasing his employment in chemistry in 1973, he concentrated on composition and teaching. In 1977 he was appointed director of the Cannington Summer School in Somerset. Equally notable was his association with the Wirral International Guitar Festival, now known as the International Guitar Festival of Great Britain, held in New Brighton. From 1978 until his death, Duarte was a regular contributor to *Gramophone* magazine. John W. Duarte died in Barnet, Hertfordshire on 23 December 2004.

© John France

## ERNEST SHAND (1868–1924)

Ernest Shand is a pivotal figure in the history of the guitar, particularly in England. At a time when the popularity of the guitar had declined, he was able to sustain its growth even against the rise in interest in related instruments.

Born Ernest William Watson in 1868 in Hull, Yorkshire, to musical parents, Shand's musical education began very early; his father taught him the violin, and his mother the piano. Furthermore, by 1886 he was engaged as an actor, making his debut at the Lecture Hall, Hull. It was here that, for professional purposes, he first adopted the name Shand, which after his death became the official family name. In 1886 he also began to study the guitar, saying "Besides the violin I wanted something more original, hence my adoption of the guitar."

Shand sought to have lessons with the great German guitarist Madame Sidney Pratten and after hearing Shand perform one of his compositions for her, she was so moved that she wrote: "Of course I will teach you, but I cannot teach you anything. You are too great a genius... my compositions fade into the shade after yours." Pratten continued teaching Shand and publishing his music until her death in 1895.

Shand's excellence as a performer allowed him to demonstrate the capabilities of the guitar and inspired amateurs to reach a new level of musical sensitivity. He attempted to disprove the accepted belief that the guitar was unsuitable for the concert hall and that its tone did not combine well with other instruments. All this did much to propagate the serious study of the guitar and eventually led Shand to compose and perform his *Premier Concerto pour Guitare et Quatuor ou Guitare et Piano*.

Shand's concerto represents the first known composition in this genre by a British composer and, although the première was a success, publishing the concerto proved rather difficult as publishers were not prepared to take the financial risk due to perceived lack of enthusiasm for the instrument.

Shand's reputation continued to grow and he felt confident enough to settle in London in 1896. Despite being compared, both as a performer and as a composer for the guitar, to some of the best, he was to be bitterly disappointed for he was only engaged for four concerts in the capital. His financial position forced him to abandon the venture and to return to his dual life of musician-actor touring the world.

Shand was seriously injured during an incident with an audience member during one of his concerts, and his career, except for composing, was virtually ruined. He found it necessary to retire and, in 1918, moved to Birmingham. There he died of heart failure on 28th November 1924. Thus died the leading British guitarist of his time – a position he held until the appearance of Julian Bream, twenty-one years after his death.

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Richard Storry

## RICHARD STORRY (b.1965)

A native of the Lake District, Richard Storry is a composer, guitarist and author.

Storry studied at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating with high honours and a Recital Diploma – the only guitarist in eight years to be awarded this distinction – and winning the Julian Bream Prize. He also received the Evan Senior Prize for Composition and the Lady Holland Award for the most outstanding student of his year.

Critical commentary highlights his technical ability and musicality, with John Williams describing Storry's playing as "very stylistic... really enjoyable", Julian Bream praising his "lovely sound... very expressive... a real performance", and Phillip Thorne remarking, "In addition to his great technical ability, Richard showed that he is, above all else, a musician."

Storry was a founding member of the TETRA Guitar Quartet, with whom he performed internationally for over thirteen years. The ensemble released four critically acclaimed recordings and appeared frequently on radio and television. As a soloist, he has given numerous broadcasts and performances, including a recital before Princess Anne at St James's Palace.

Alongside his performing career, Storry has developed a wide-ranging compositional output. His works include music for solo guitar, chamber ensemble, choir, theatre, radio, film and commercial media. He composed the incidental music for Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, seen in London's West End and later broadcast on BBC Four, and his score for *Rumpelstiltskin* received over three hundred performances in its first year alone. His musical *Kennedy* was nominated three times for the RUTAC Drama Awards, and he has received two commissions from the Chinese Orchestra of Hong Kong. In April 2009, his musical adaptation of *The Brothers Lionheart* opened at London's Pleasance Theatre, followed by a successful run at the Edinburgh Festival.

Storry's creative life extends beyond music: he is the author of fourteen novels across genres including mystery, fantasy and the supernatural, further demonstrating the

narrative imagination that also informs his musical language. His fifteenth novel is nearing completion, and he is also the ghostwriter of *This is Me*, the autobiography of Tommy Cannon, of *Cannon & Ball* fame.

In 2008, he was elected Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM), an honour conferred upon alumni who have made a significant contribution to the music profession. In addition to his work as a performer and composer, he has been in constant demand as a teacher and adjudicator and has served as an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and for numerous music festivals.

Always being keen to explore new avenues, in 2025 Storry participated in *Big Brother* on ITV and won the hearts of audiences, ultimately winning the show.

Storry continues to compose, perform and write from his home in a leafy suburb of South London.

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## ROXANNA PANUFNIK (b.1968)

Roxanna Panufnik is a celebrated British composer of Polish descent and is widely regarded as one of the most versatile and beloved British composers working today. Born in London, she is the daughter of the Polish composer and conductor Sir Andrzej Panufnik and Camilla Jessel. In childhood, Panufnik played violin, piano and flute, though she mostly preferred to improvise and create her own music. When she was twelve, Oliver Knussen, visiting the family home, encouraged her to write down her improvisations. At sixteen she composed *Sarah's Requiem*, which was performed at Chichester Cathedral. She later studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music, where she is now a Fellow.

Panufnik's compositional output spans opera, ballet, orchestral and chamber music, choral works and scores for film and television, and her music is performed widely across the world. Deeply inspired by her hybrid heritage, she frequently weaves together musical traditions from different cultures and faiths, reflecting her long-standing interest in building artistic bridges between communities.

Among her most notable compositions are the *Westminster Mass* (1998), written for Westminster Cathedral Choir, *Three Paths to Peace* (2008) for the World Orchestra for Peace, *Four World Seasons* (2007-2011) for Tasmin Little and *Aurora: Faith in Harmony* (2025) for the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Her operas *Silver Birch* (2017) and *Dalia* (2022), both commissioned by Garsington Opera, received considerable critical and audience acclaim. In recognition of her contributions, Panufnik received the Gloria Artis Medal (2021), a UK Coronation Medal (2023) and the Ivor Novello Award for Outstanding Works Collection (2024). In 2023, she was among twelve composers commissioned to write new music for the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. Her *Coronation Sanctus* was performed during the Eucharist and was later orchestrated for the BBC's *Last Night of the Proms*.

She is currently working on a Concerto for Orchestra for conductor Marin Alsop, as well as composing a work for choir and guitar.

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*Frank Bridge*

## FRANK BRIDGE (1879–1941)

Frank Bridge often impressed upon his pupils his main personal aim “that you should try to find yourself and be true to what you found”. Bridge was primarily a performer – his instruments being the viola and violin – and he claimed that he only spent three or four months a year at composition, yet during these months he aptly lived up to his aspiration. He was from a musical background, his father having been a professional musician, and, like a number of other important English composers of this period, he studied under Stanford at the Royal College of Music (RCM). He left the RCM to lead an uneventful and fairly simple but happy life with his beloved wife Ethel on the Sussex Downs, whilst maintaining professional engagements as a performer and conductor in London. As a conductor, he often stood in for Henry Wood at the Proms, and was well-respected by orchestras – indeed players remarked that he was one of the few conductors who actually interpreted works rather than merely beating time. Although he was reluctant to take up formal teaching posts, he is perhaps best remembered as Benjamin Britten’s teacher. He was a fairly shy and quiet man, who never longed for fame or the limelight, and was well-loved and respected by a close circle of friends and pupils. Yet, all too aware that he was not part of the musical establishment, he felt discouraged by the lack of recognition from the BBC and the public at large, a fear that was borne out by the fact that most of his major works remained unperformed at his death.

While all composers are bound to develop in musical terms, Bridge’s lyrical and conservative early music is strikingly different from his more astringent later works. As a pacifist, he did not see active service in the war, yet he was deeply affected by it and by the deaths of friends and fellow composers who did fight. This led to a transitional, more chromatic and experimental phase in his music. By 1924 his works had transformed into darker, more abstract, terse and dissonant pieces. One of the problems that Bridge faced was criticism of both ends of his musical style by champions of the other – those who preferred his more accessible conservative music regarded his later works as too avant-garde, and fans of contemporary music were put off by his earlier poeticism.

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## JOSIAH ANDREW HUDLESTON (1799–1865)

Josiah Andrew Hudleston was a nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish administrator whose outwardly reserved life belied a remarkable legacy as a guitarist, collector and musicologist. Born in Bray, Berkshire on 22nd February 1799, Hudleston was educated for a career in the East India Company. During his time at Haileybury College, Hertfordshire, he developed a keen interest in the guitar, likely inspired by encountering the Spanish guitarist Fernando Sor, during Sor's 1816 visit to the capital.

Hudleston spent most of his working life in India as a high-ranking official for the East India Company, eventually becoming the Chief Collector of Madras. Despite his administrative demands, he was a prolific musician. He maintained his passion while stationed abroad by importing scores and specially "climatised" Spanish-style Louis Panormo guitars (built in Bloomsbury, London) designed to withstand tropical humidity. During his time in India, Hudleston amassed a large collection of early guitar music and original manuscripts.

Retiring from the Company in 1855, he returned to England the following year. In 1857 he moved to "The Dell", Killiney, near Dublin.

After his death, his wife donated his collection to the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Comprising more than one thousand printed scores and some eight hundred manuscripts, this is one of the world's largest libraries of guitar music. It includes works for solo guitar and chamber pieces featuring the guitar, many arrangements of music by composers such as Handel and Bellini and also encompasses pieces by contemporary guitarist-composers such as Mauro Giuliani, Fernando Sor, Ferdinando Carulli, Napoleon Coste, Johann Kaspar Mertz and Giulio Regondi, as well as by Hudleston himself. His own music was noted for its "uncompromising difficulty" and virtuosity.

Josiah Andrew Hudleston died from heart disease on 19th August 1865.

© John France

## HENRY PURCELL • *THREE KEYBOARD WORKS* (TR. FÁBIO FERNANDES)

The three pieces that open this album are transcriptions of keyboard works by one of Britain's most important composers, Henry Purcell. Although they did not originally belong together, they have been gathered here, and placed alongside the Duarte *Variations* that follow, to create the impression of a suite, following a performance tradition established from the late fourteenth century onwards. While the movements do not share a single tonality, they progress stepwise through related keys, moving from D major, in the prelude, towards the D minor that prepares the opening theme of the following work.

The opening prelude introduces improvisatory gestures and expressive flexibility, characteristics typical of the period. It is followed by two dances in triple time: firstly, a hornpipe, which playfully interlaces rapid semiquaver passages with accented off-beats, and then a minuet of elegant and noble simplicity.

The minuet then leads directly into the next piece, Duarte's *Round O Variations*. It begins with Purcell's well-known *Rondeau*, marking both the conclusion of this imagined suite and the beginning of an extended set of variations.

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## JOHN DUARTE • *ROUND O VARIATIONS* *ON A THEME OF HENRY PURCELL, OP.148*

Henry Purcell was John Duarte's favourite British composer, and he chose Purcell's iconic *Rondeau* as the theme for this set of variations. The term *rondeau* (or *rondo*) refers to a musical form built around the recurring return of a principal theme. Typically structured as ABACA, the repeated A section provides a recognisable anchor, while the contrasting episodes allow the music to explore different tonalities, textures and characters. In performance, each repeat of the theme can also invite subtle variation in ornamentation.

Following the initial statement of Purcell's theme, Duarte embarks on a set of seven variations that explore a wide range of techniques and expressive possibilities. These include passages of three-note tremolo, moments of gentle lyricism and subtle jazz inflections, culminating in a grand and resolute Passacaglia. Throughout the work, Duarte introduces deliberately "wrong" notes and playful harmonic surprises that reveal his wit and unmistakable sense of humour.

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### ERNEST SHAND • *THREE PROGRAMMATIC PIECES*

Besides being a performer and composer, Ernest Shand was an actor, and in these three miniatures we clearly perceive his narrative imagination and theatrical instinct.

The first piece, *March of the Pixies*, opens with rhythmic lightness, depicting the approach of the mischievous pixies as they flutter through the forest. Soon, a more rigid marching character emerges, patrolling the woodland in search of the next wanderer to mislead. As we venture deeper into the forest, we encounter *A Nymph's Dance*, in which the lilting writing, along with sparkling harmonics and graceful emphasis on the upbeats, conjures images of nymphs leaping and dancing in and upon a magical lake.

The final item, *The Gnomes*, moves into darker territory. Alternating triplets and dotted rhythms create a sense of restless motion, depicting a constant search for new treasures while endeavouring to avoid detection by mortals, culminating in a descending chromatic scale that portrays the gnomes digging ever deeper into their caves, before giving one final mischievous laugh.

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### SALLY BEAMISH • *UNQUIET*

In 2020, Sally Beamish composed a large-scale work for three pianists at two pianos entitled *Sonnets*, inspired by Shakespeare's sonnets and the long-debated theory that

the playwright was captivated by two obsessive loves: the "Dark Lady" and the "Fair Youth". While the Fair Youth represents idealised youthful admiration and devotion, the Dark Lady embodies passion, sensuality and troubled relationships. In time, the two figures meet: the young man is seduced by the Dark Lady, beginning an affair that results in profound emotional turmoil for Shakespeare.

The following year, the guitar piece *Unquiet* emerged as a continuation of *Sonnets*. It drew on the same dramatic narrative and musical inspiration and formed part of a project consisting of two hundred new solo works celebrating the bicentenary of the Royal Academy of Music. The work is conceived as a reversed theme and variations, using the lute part from John Dowland's melancholic song *Unquiet Thoughts* as its theme.

Reflecting the turbulent triangular relationship between Shakespeare, the Dark Lady, and the Fair Youth, the music carries the listener on an emotional rollercoaster ride. Over five variations we encounter passion, jealousy, joy and desperation, while an ongoing dialogue (or confrontation) unfolds between the contemporary language of Beamish and the Renaissance lute chords of Dowland.

The piece opens with a spiky, bitter Adagio, punctuated by repeated references to Dowland's chord sequence. The second variation is contemplative and lyrical; the third is a quirky and rhythmically playful dance, while the fourth is dramatic, passionate and virtuosic, transforming Dowland's chord sequence into a flamenco-like gesture. Finally, a wistful and ruminative variation leads to a direct exposition of Dowland's theme.

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### RICHARD STORRY • *THE GUITARIST'S PRAYER*

With *The Guitarist's Prayer*, we reach both the summit of this album and its point of origin, as it is here that the entire project began. The reflective and intimate world that this piece creates has an extraordinary capacity to touch the listener's heart directly. Written in 2011 and dedicated to Storry's former teacher, John Mills, the piece evokes

those quiet, magical moments in which one senses the comfort or presence of God through prayer. The work requires a special tuning: the sixth string is lowered from E to D, and the fifth string from A to G, creating an ethereal and resonant sonority. It opens with a calm, arpeggiated introduction, from which emerges a long and beautifully sustained tremolo melody. A striking feature of this melodic line is its wide intervallic leaps, which lend the music both emotional intensity and a sense of suspended anticipation.

In its purity of expression and hypnotic tremolo texture, the piece invites comparison with the famous *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*, where the intrinsic beauty of the music speaks for itself, requiring little more than sincerity from the performer.



## ROXANNA PANUFNIK • *SEA VOYAGE*

Composed during the Covid lockdown in 2020, and commissioned by the Julian Bream Trust, *Sea Voyage* was born from a deep longing for travel and discovery, as Roxanna Panufnik traces, across nineteen minutes of music, an imagined maritime journey from the United Kingdom to India as if undertaken a hundred years ago, with the music of each country interwoven with continuously shifting “sea music”. The voyage opens in the *United Kingdom* with a grand, fanfare-like gesture, presenting the harmonies of the theme that will later unify the work. The *English Channel and Bay of Biscay* introduces the restless sea music, with rocking and swirling, and with enormous waves that vary in size and intensity. In *Portugal*, the principal theme appears – the traditional lullaby *José embala o Menino* (“Joseph Cradles the Infant”) – which is set at a slower pace and supported by warm, rocking harmonies. As the journey moves through the *Gibraltar Strait and the Mediterranean Sea*, the waters grow faster and more perilous, capturing the bustle of these famous shipping routes. Crossing *Egypt and the Suez Canal*, the theme takes on a haunting character in the bass line, transforming into the Phrygian dominant mode and being accompanied by percussive effects that evoke the Sai’di darbuka from

Northern Egypt. Through the *Red Sea into Arabian Sea*, the guitar imitates the oud with slides, tremolandi and trills, coloured by a Kurd-influenced Arabic mode.

Upon arrival in *India*, the theme re-emerges over a drone in the Kalyan and Purvi modes, played with improvisatory freedom reminiscent of the sarod. This meditative atmosphere is suddenly interrupted by a vibrant kaida tabla rhythm, propelling the music towards a joyful and exuberant conclusion.

This was Julian Bream’s final commission. Although he had the opportunity to read early drafts of the work, he did not live to see its completion. His extraordinary legacy of commissions – which continually expanded the guitar’s horizons – finds a poignant final chapter in this monumental addition to the repertoire.



## JOSIAH ANDREW HUDLESTON • *ROUSSEAU’S DREAM WITH VARIATIONS*

Hudleston’s substantial set of variations offers a rare glimpse into early nineteenth-century English guitar culture. It is based on the pantomime section of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s opera *Le devin du village* (“The Village Soothsayer”).

In its time, the original melody became extraordinarily popular. King Louis XV admired the work so greatly that he offered Rousseau the honour of a lifetime pension, which the composer declined. Nevertheless, the opera became one of the most successful of its time, bringing Rousseau both wealth and fame, and its music was performed at the wedding of the future Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Later becoming known as *Rousseau’s Dream*, the theme circulated widely beyond France, inspiring numerous arrangements and sets of variations by international composers, including J. B. Cramer. Its fame extended even further as it entered folk tradition under the title *Go, Tell Aunt Rhody* (or Nancy) in the UK, the United States and parts of Asia.

Hudleston's work unfolds through eight variations and a finale, exploring a wide range of emotions worthy of the operatic stage, alongside considerable technical challenges, all while preserving the charm of this seemingly simple tune.

Arguably, the composer and guitarist Fernando Sor not only inspired Hudleston to take up the guitar but also influenced his compositional voice, since the similarities between this work and Sor's *Variations on a Theme by Mozart* are difficult to ignore.



## FRANK BRIDGE • TWO PIANO WORKS (TR. FÁBIO FERNANDES)

Towards the end of the First World War, Douglas Fox, a pianist who had tragically lost his right arm in combat, requested Bridge to compose a work that would use only the left hand. From this request the *Three Improvisations for the Left Hand* originated, which stand as a testament to his genius, transcending the imposed technical limitations with effortless grace. Crafted amidst the tumult of war, these pieces reveal a significant shift in Bridge's compositional style, marking the emergence of his musical radicalism. The negative impact of the war on the British composer is palpable, as his music takes on new depths of emotion and innovation in harmonic language.

The second of these improvisations, *A Vigil*, brings us into a realm of profound introspection evoking the sleepless eve of the war. It showcases Bridge's mastery of harmonic exploration with its lingering progressions that dictate the uneasiness of the haunting melody. The resonant bass notes in perfect fifths serve as a solemn backdrop to the dissonant cluster-like chords that accompany the tune.

*Heart's Ease* is the first of *Three Lyrics* composed between 1921 and 1924. These song-like compositions were dedicated to his patroness Mrs Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, a generous supporter of the chamber music arts.

Frank Bridge's post-war compositions evoke deep feelings of emotion in the midst of a troubled time. While some of his works from this period displayed a modernist approach – exploring new harmonic and structural techniques and becoming more dissonant and experimental – others retained the deeply expressive quality of Bridge's past. This is the case in *Heart's Ease* which arguably draws inspiration from folk melodies and brings a sense of nostalgia and longing. The *Three Lyrics*, with their delicate fragility, can be thought to result from the English Pastoral School, transcending the realm of mere salon pieces and instead whispering of a dreadful war.



## RICHARD STORRY • RONDINO FOR FÁBIO

After Fernandes premièred *The Guitarist's Prayer* at the English Music Festival in 2023, he invited Storry to compose a new work – this time written especially for him. Like Purcell's *Rondeau* earlier, this concluding work also adopts a rondo form (ABACA), in which each return of the theme expands and transforms, culminating in an exhilarating, firework-like finale.

Described by the maestro Manuel Barrueco as “a modern take on Scarlatti”, *Rondino* is a true tour de force. It demands not only virtuosic dexterity and flamboyant brilliance to project its celebratory theme, but also refined voice control and warmth in its contrasting middle section, where an extended passacaglia-like melody unfolds over an accompaniment of increasing rhythmic vitality.

With this exciting addition to the ever-expanding guitar repertoire, the album draws to a close — reaffirming its mission to give voice to overlooked gems of the English tradition and to bring them vividly into the present.

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## FÁBIO FERNANDES

Fábio Fernandes is a classical guitarist and lutenist committed to bringing visibility to lesser-known and forgotten works, while expanding the repertoire for his instrument through transcriptions and new commissions. He is passionate about curating narrative-driven programmes that engage and stimulate audiences beyond the conventional expectations of classical music performance. Praised for his versatility and expressive performances, Fernandes has won prizes at the 21st Ivor Mairants Guitar Award (2nd Prize, 2021) and the Concorso di Chitarra Gaetano Marzali (3rd Prize, 2021). Recent highlights include recitals at the Barbican Centre, St James's Church Piccadilly, Milton Court Concert Hall, the English Music Festival, Auditorio de la Diputación de Alicante and a solo appearance with the Orquestra Con Spirito in Portugal.

Fernandes began studying the classical guitar at the age of eleven with Francisco Gomes in his home town of Viana do Castelo, Portugal. In 2014 he moved to London to study at the prestigious Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where he completed both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees under the guidance of Robert Brightmore, David Miller, Graham Devine and Jørgen Skogmo, before being invited to be a Junior Fellow there in 2020–2021. He was later awarded scholarships from Help Musicians and Asociación Arte de la Guitarra Española to join the internationally acclaimed Máster Guitarra Alicante in Spain. There he studied with some of the world's leading guitarists, including David Russell, Manuel Barrueco, Sérgio Assad and Fabio Zanon, graduating *cum laude*.

Fernandes began studying the lute and theorbo in 2015 with David Miller and James Johnstone. Since then, he has performed alongside members of the Academy of Ancient Music at the Deal Festival and taken part in the London Handel Festival. He was also invited by Dame Emma Kirkby to join her project *Dowland Works*.



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*EM Records and the artist would like to express their sincere thanks to Help Musicians and David Whiteman for their support of this recording.*

Recorded on 28th, 29th and 30th August 2025 in Holy Trinity Church, Weston, Hertfordshire

Recording Engineer and Producer: OSCAR TORRES

Editing and Mastering: OSCAR TORRES

EM Records Executive Producer: EM MARSHALL-LUCK

Cover Photograph by EM MARSHALL-LUCK

Image of John William Duarte courtesy of LINDSAY MCCLELLAND LTD, LONDON

Photograph of Frank Bridge courtesy of the LEWIS FOREMAN COLLECTION

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John W. Duarte: *Round O, Variations on a Theme of Henry Purcell*, op.148,  
published by UT ORPHEUS EDIZIONI S.R.L., 2024

Ernest Shand: *March of the Pixies*, op.16, published by BARNES & MULLINS, 1896

Ernest Shand: *A Nymph's Dance*, op.205, published by B. SCHOTT'S SÖHNE, 1903

Ernest Shand: *The Gnomes*, op.77, published by BARNES & MULLINS, 1897

Sally Beamish: *Unquiet*, published by PETERS EDITION LTD, 2022

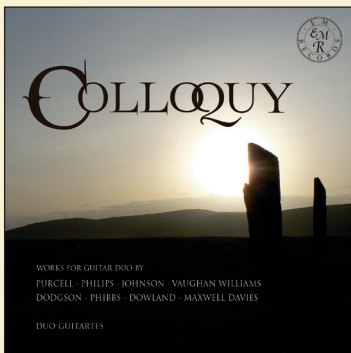
Roxanna Panufnik: *Sea Voyage*, published by PETERS EDITION LTD, 2021

Josiah Andrew Hudleston: *Rousseau's Dream, composed with Variations for the Guitar*,  
published (n.d.) by CHAPPELL & CO

Guitars: Michael Gee, 2025 (tracks 1-11, 15-29 and 31-33)  
and Joseph Gérard, 1840s (tracks 12-14 and 30)

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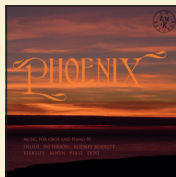


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Nicola Hands (oboe / cor anglais)  
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