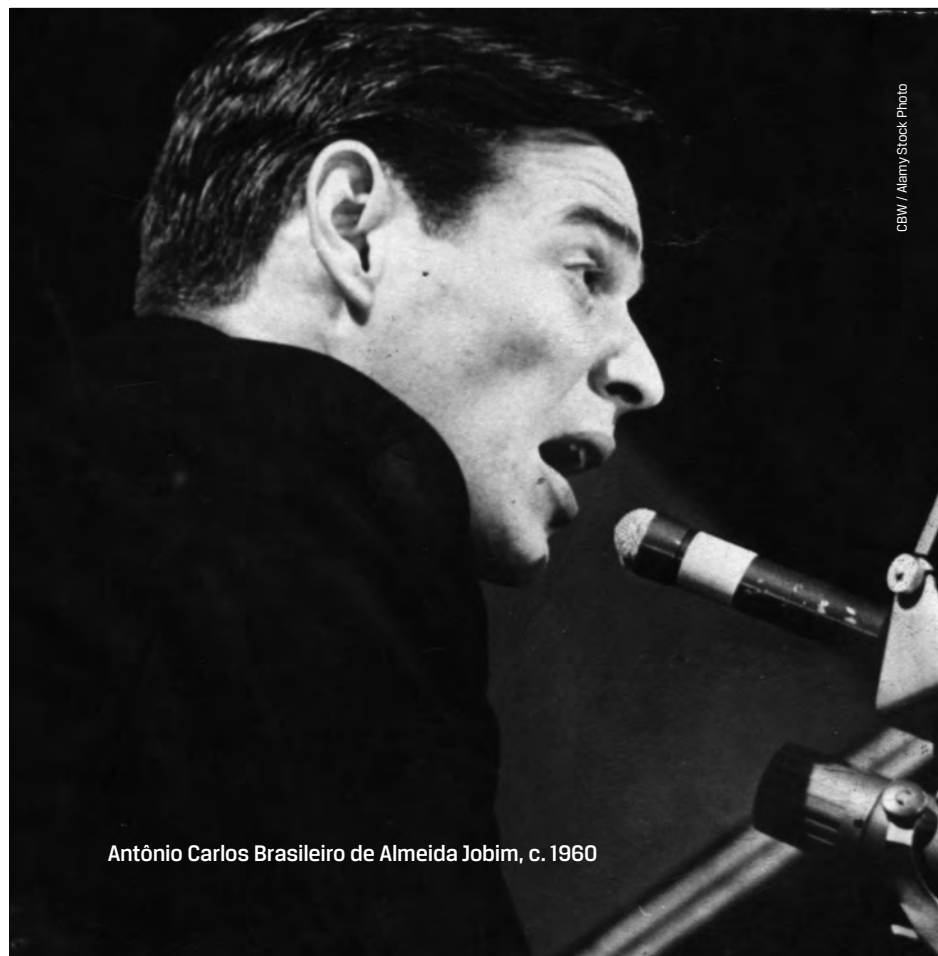


CHANDOS

LATIN CONNECTIONS



AQUARELLE GUITAR QUARTET FEATURING **SARA DOWLING**



Antônio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim, c. 1960

CBW / Alamy Stock Photo

Latin Connections

Andy Scott (b. 1949)

- | | | |
|---|---|------|
| 1 | Salt of the Earth (2011)*
for guitar quartet
Arranged by Michael Baker | 3:52 |
|---|---|------|

John Lennon (1940 – 1980)
and **Paul McCartney** (b. 1942)

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 2 | Blackbird (1968)*†
for guitar quartet with piano and vocals
Arranged by Clarice Assad | 4:21 |
|---|--|------|

Ariel Ramírez (1921 – 2010)
and **Félix Luna** (1925 – 2009)

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 3 | Alfonsina y el Mar (1969)*
(Alfonsina and the Sea)
for guitar quartet
Arranged by Roland Dyens | 5:27 |
|---|--|------|

Hermeto Pascoal (b. 1936)

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 4 | Bebê (1970)*†
(Baby)
for guitar quartet with piano and improvised vocals
Arranged by James Girling | 6:25 |
|---|--|------|

Antônio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim

(1927 – 1994)

- 5 **Por Causa de você** (1957)[†] 3:07
(Because of You)
for piano and vocals
Arranged by Sara Dowling

Armando Anthony ('Chick') Corea (1941 – 2021)

- 6 **Armando's Rhumba** (1976)^{*†} 2:57
for guitar quartet with piano and improvised vocals
Arranged by Vasilis Bessas

Antônio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim

- 7 **Lamento no Morro** (1956)^{*} 3:08
(Cry from the Hills)
for guitar quartet
Arranged by Marcus Tardelli

Ismael Ledesma (b. 1962)

- 8 **A mi Pueblo** (2014)^{*†} 4:03
(To My People)
for guitar quartet with improvised vocals
Arranged by Michael Baker

Pixinguinha (Alfredo da Rocha Viana Filho)

(1897 – 1973)

and **Benedito (Benedicto) Lacerda** (1903 – 1958)

- 9 **1 x 0 (Um a Zero)** (1946)^{*†} 3:38
for guitar quartet with piano and improvised vocals
Arranged by Michael Baker

Luiz Floriano Bonfá (1922 – 2001)

- 10 **Manhã de Carnaval** (1959)^{*†} 4:08
(Carnival Morning)
for guitar quartet with vocals
Arranged by Vasilis Bessas

Antônio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim

- 11 **This Happy Madness** (1958)[†] 3:32
for piano and vocals
Arranged by Sara Dowling

Sara Dowling (b. 1982)

première recording

- 12 **Adios** (2020 / 23)^{*†} 5:39
(Farewell)
for guitar quartet with cello
Arranged by Giorgio Serci

Egberto Amin Gismonti (b. 1947)

A Fala da Paixão (1983)^{*†} **5:22**

(The Language of Passion)
 for guitar quartet with cello and improvised vocals
 Arranged by James Jervis

TT 56:32

Aquarelle Guitar Quartet*

Michael Baker guitar

Vasilis Bessas guitar

James Jervis guitar

Craig Ogden guitar

with

Sara Dowling jazz vocals/cello/piano[†]

From left to right in the sound picture, the members of the Aquarelle Guitar Quartet can be heard playing the following instruments:

Vasilis Bessas

guitar made by Andreas Kirmse, 2015

James Jervis

guitar made by Paul Sheridan, 1999

Craig Ogden

guitar made by Greg Smallman & Sons, 2011

Michael Baker

guitar made by Paul Sheridan, 2007

Sara Porter Photography



Aquarelle Guitar Quartet



Sara Dowling

Daniel Devlin Photography

Latin Connections

A personal note

This is my first recording with the Aquarelle Guitar Quartet, of which I became a full time member in 2023. I had always admired the precision and musicianship in the Quartet's recordings and live performances, and was excited and delighted to join the group. I came on board when this dynamic collection of music had already been chosen and arranged so leapt on to a moving train, as it were!

© 2025 Craig Ogden

Introduction to the album

A project some six years in the making, *Latin Connections* was originally conceived as a collaborative project with the multi-instrumentalist, singer, and composer Clarice Assad. Global Covid restrictions forced us to postpone the recording, by which time Clarice had a young family and could no longer commit the time to take part in the project. Disappointed though we were not to be working with Clarice, we were delighted to refresh a friendship with the award-winning jazz singer, cellist, pianist, and composer

Sara Dowling who brings all these skills and instruments to our new recording.

Latin music encompasses a colossal range of styles, many of which have become popular the world over: salsa, samba, tango, cumbia, bossa nova, choro, merengue, rumba, candombe, and baião, to name but a few. Born out of the cultural trinity of the Spanish and Portuguese presence in South America, African music (courtesy of the slave trade), and the indigenous music and traditions of Latin America, Latin music is as rich and varied as any other musical tradition globally. Its incorporation into rock, pop, and jazz, notably in the USA, has further popularised and developed the many styles which are such a rich part of the cultural identity of South America.

Scott / Baker: Salt of the Earth

We have a long-established association with the English composer and saxophonist Andy Scott (b. 1949), a good friend through our connection at the Royal Northern College of Music, in Manchester. We commissioned and recorded Andy's 'Seven Dances and No Looking Back' on our album *Dances* (2010). *Salt of the Earth* started life as a

three-movement Concerto for Tuba with Brass Band. Andy has arranged both the second and third movements for a number of ensembles and soloists, whilst the Concerto as a whole remains exclusive to the tuba. The piece on our album is Mike Baker's arrangement for guitar quartet of the third movement of Andy's original tuba concerto, which is heavily influenced by jazz and Latin music and is particularly reminiscent of the harmonic and rhythmic world of Chick Corea. We fell in love with its energy, rhythmic incisiveness, and sheer joy and felt that it was the perfect opening for the album.

Dowling: Adios

The other two pieces on the album not originally South American are, first, Paul McCartney's *Blackbird* and, second, *Adios*, composed by Sara Dowling (b. 1982) originally for cello and piano. Of the latter, Sara says,

I wrote *Adios* in December 2020 during a difficult time, as I was grieving the loss of my cat, Moley. He was my little ray of sunshine, and watching him fade was heartbreaking. The melody came from that raw emotion and stayed with me for a year before I finished it. The melodies we write have the ability to capture what we feel in a single moment, turning it into something that lasts forever.

She subsequently asked the London-based Sardinian guitarist Giorgio Serici to arrange it for cello and guitar quartet.

Lennon and McCartney / C. Assad: Blackbird

Clarice Assad's arrangement of *Blackbird* transforms the beautifully simple and heartfelt song by Paul McCartney (b. 1942) – inspired by the civil rights movement in the US in the 1950s and the first integration of Black students into the state school system – into a Latin festival of rhythm and colour with syncopated, swirling accompaniments, jazz-inflected melodies, and improvised vocal lines while retaining the poignancy and pathos of the original.

Jobim / Dowling: Por Causa de você; This Happy Madness

With three tracks, the most represented composer on the album is the Brazilian legend Antônio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim (1927–1994), widely considered to be the father of bossa nova and one of the most celebrated song writers of the twentieth century. Who has not heard Jobim's *The Girl from Ipanema*?! Sara chose two of his songs to perform on her own and writes of Jobim that

his heart was rooted in Brazil, but his music reached the entire world. Singing *This Happy Madness* and *Por Causa de você* fills me with

the deepest emotion and nostalgia – there is something so honest and vulnerable in those songs. His music captures the beauty and fragility of life, and it has stayed with me through the ups and downs of being an artist. I have found great comfort in learning his songs. Thank Jobim for everything.

Jobim and Moraes / Tardelli: Lamento no Morro

Jobim's 'Lamento no Morro' (Cry from the Hills) first appeared in 1956 on the album *Orfeu da Conceição*. Originally a play by Vinicius de Moraes, *Orfeu da Conceição* was set to music by Jobim who also conducted the thirty-five-piece Grande Orchestra Odeon, which also featured such legendary musicians as Roberto Paiva on vocals and Luiz Bonfá on guitar. The original version of 'Lamento no Morro' was laid back in the classic style of bossa nova but this arrangement for guitar quartet, by the brilliant Brazilian guitarist Marcus Tardelli, is upbeat and adrenaline-fuelled. Dynamic, rapid interactions among all four guitars in an intricate, layered arrangement transform Jobim's original into a vivacious instrumental display.

Bonfá / Bessas: Manhã de Carnaval

Not just Jobim's guitarist in the Grande Orchestra Odeon, Luiz Floriano Bonfá (1922 – 2001) was an established composer and songwriter in his own right. He was

an exponent of the bold and emotionally charged *samba-canção* style that predated the arrival of the more refined and subdued bossa nova. 'Manhã de Carnaval' is his most famous composition and one of the songs that Bonfá wrote for Marcel Camus's film *Black Orpheus*; it has been among the top ten jazz standards played worldwide.

Pixinguinha and Lacerda / Baker: Um a Zero

Jobim remains a constant and central figure in the development of Latin American music in the twentieth century. His musical roots were firmly planted in the work of Pixinguinha (Alfredo da Rocha Viana Filho) (1897 – 1973), an Afro-Brazilian composer, arranger, flautist, and saxophonist who established the *choro* as a key South American style from the 1930s. *Um a Zero* is one of his most popular compositions, first recorded in 1946, co-written with Benedito Lacerda (1903 – 1958). The title represents a tribute to the Brazilian soccer team that won the 1919 South American championship in a match with Uruguay which ended 1 – 0 in favour of the Brazilian team (thus the title, which in Portuguese reads 'um a zero').

Pascoal / Girling: Bebê

Hermeto Pascoal (b. 1936) is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, bandleader,

breathhtaking improviser, and living legend of Brazilian music, who to this day (at the age of eighty-nine) continues to tour the world. Born in a remote corner of northeast Brazil, he produces work which combines important influences spanning (but by no means confined to) samba, forró, choro, and jazz, and his recordings have been highly influential on new directions in post-bossa nova Brazilian jazz. Rather than categorising it, and to prevent others doing so, Pascoal has referred to his work as 'universal music'. He recorded on, and composed three of the tracks for, Miles Davis's 1971 album *Live-Evil*, and Davis reputedly called Pascoal 'the most impressive musician in the world'.

Pascoal recorded 'Bebê' in 1973 on his eclectic album *Música Livre de Hermeto Pascoal*, and it is today one of his most-loved works. It is a prime example of his mission to share with wider audiences the various musical styles indigenous to rural parts of Brazil. A defining characteristic heard throughout 'Bebê' is the propulsive rhythm in the bass associated with the *zabumba* (bass drum) in *baião* music, a style native to the northeastern region where he started.

James Girling is one of the new generation's most talented and diverse artists, equally gifted in the worlds of classical, jazz, and world music. He first discovered Hermeto Pascoal as a teenager upon hearing his 'Nem um Talvez',

on Miles Davis's *Live-Evil*. In his arrangement of Pascoal's 'Bebê', he captured all the spirit and character of the original in the dialogue between strictly notated / rhythmical and improvised / gestural characters of Hermeto's music, also incorporating the occasional thwacking of guitars!

Ramirez / Dyens: Alfonsina y el Mar

Alfonsina y el Mar (Alfonsina and the Sea) is a tribute to the Argentine poet Alfonsina Storni (1892 – 1938). Born in Switzerland but raised in Argentina from the age of four, Storni emerged from difficult circumstances to establish herself as one of the leading, and often controversial, poets, journalists, and writers in Argentina in the early part of the twentieth century. At the age of forty-three, she underwent a radical mastectomy following the discovery of a lump in her breast. When the cancer returned three years later, she died by suicide, jumping into the sea at Mar del Plata. Her death inspired the Argentine pianist and composer Ariel Ramírez (1921 – 2010) and the Argentine writer Félix Luna (1925 – 2009) to compose this lyrical and poignant masterpiece. The version on this album was one of the last arrangements made by the legendary guitarist / composer / arranger Roland Dyens, who died, in 2016, at the age of only sixty-one.

Chick Corea / Bessas: Armando's Rhumba

One of the most prominent North American jazz musicians of his generation, Armando Anthony 'Chick' Corea (1941 – 2021) was a genre-spanning composer and performer, best known in the world of jazz but whose inquisitive musical genius saw him drawing on musical traditions from all over the world, though particularly Spain and South America. 'Armando's Rhumba' was a highlight of his epochal 1976 album *My Spanish Heart*, and was written in honour of his father, Armando J. Corea, a Dixieland trumpeter who had introduced his son to music and the piano at the age of four. It showcases Corea's classic fusion of Latin rhythms, jazz, and classical influences.

Ledesma / Baker: A mi Pueblo

The music of Paraguay is dear to guitarists the world over owing to the popularity of the composer and virtuoso guitarist Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885 – 1944). However, the national instrument of Paraguay is the Paraguayan harp, a unique instrument developed from the confluence of European and Guarani musical cultures. Our Quartet member Mike Baker is married to the British harpist Louise Thomson and consequently hears more music for this instrument than the rest of the group! On hearing *A mi Pueblo*

(To My People), by Ismael Ledesma (b. 1962), he immediately felt that it would work brilliantly for the Quartet and has crafted the beautiful arrangement recorded here, which captures all the character and emotion of Ledesma's original piece for solo harp.

Gismonti / Jervis: A Fala da Paixão

The album closes not in a sombre mood but in reflection with the stunningly beautiful *A Fala da Paixão* (The Language of Passion), by Egberto Amin Gismonti (b. 1947). Born in Brazil to a Sicilian father and Lebanese mother, Gismonti is an extraordinarily original figure on the world music scene. Although the piano is his first instrument, he is a self-taught guitarist who also designs his own guitars, with up to fourteen strings, approaching the fretboard more like a keyboard, creating a distinctive and original voice.

Originally for solo piano, *A Fala da Paixão* features an accompanimental gesture that studiously avoids the main beats of the bar, lending a rhythmically restless touch to the delicate yet rich harmonies. The addition of a vocalise to this arrangement adds a beautifully ethereal air to Gismonti's calm yet sophisticated piece.

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Aquarelle Guitar Quartet

Recognised as one of the world's leading ensembles of its kind, the **Aquarelle Guitar Quartet** is a dynamic and innovative group known for its extraordinary ensemble in performance, expansive repertoire, and ground-breaking work in developing the guitar quartet medium. Formed at the Royal Northern College of Music, in 1999, under the guidance of Craig Ogden and Gordon Crosskey, the Quartet went on to study with guitarists including Sérgio Assad, Oscar Ghiglia, and Scott Tennant, winning awards from the Musicians Benevolent Fund, Tillett Trust, and Tunnell Trust. In 2016 it performed at *Classic FM* Live at the Royal Albert Hall with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. The concert, which also featured Maxim Vengerov, Debbie Wiseman, Laura Wright, and Wayne Marshall, was recorded for subsequent broadcast. The Quartet has performed in such major UK concert venues as Wigmore Hall, St Martin-in-the-Fields, Perth Concert Hall, and Bridgewater Hall, and appeared throughout Europe, notably in Germany, Spain, Denmark, Greece, Estonia, Poland, and Ireland. It made its début in Asia in 2014 with a series of concerts in Seoul and since then has regularly returned, most recently with a nation-wide tour in 2022. The Quartet presents music from around the globe, spanning the period from the

Renaissance right through to the present day. Alongside its own arrangements of music from various genres, including works by Gismonti, Mussorgsky, Rossini, and the film music composer Ryuichi Sakamoto, the Quartet has performed the work of established international composers such as Carlos Rafael Rivera (USA), Phillip Houghton (Australia), Stephen Dodgson (UK), and Nikita Koshkin (Russia). In 2009 it commissioned the Brazilian composer Clarice Assad to write a piece for its début CD, the resulting *Danças Nativas* subsequently nominated for a Latin Grammy® award for best classical composition. Signed exclusively to Chandos Records since 2009, the Quartet has recorded six critically acclaimed albums: *Spirit of Brazil* (March 2009), *Dances* (July 2010), *Final Cut* (June 2012), *Cuatro* (November 2013), *Aspects* (November 2016), and *Voyage*, with the flautist Lisa Friend (September 2019). *BBC Music* awarded *Spirit of Brazil* five stars for both performance and recording and subsequent releases have received excellent reviews from the press (*International Record Guide*, *American Record Guide*, and *Classical Guitar*, among others) and been named CD of the Week on Classic FM and Editor's Choice in *Gramophone*. In 2023, Craig Ogden joined the Aquarelle Guitar Quartet, replacing Rory Russell who stepped back after seventeen years. As

well as being a world-renowned soloist, Ogden is an exceptional chamber musician and the Quartet is looking forward to new projects, commissions, recordings, and tours.

Recognised as one of Europe's leading jazz singers, the Palestinian-Irish jazz vocalist **Sara Dowling** was voted Best Vocalist in the 2019 British Jazz Awards. Owing to her mixed parentage her first contact with music was the voices of Fairuz and Umm Kulthum whom her mother dearly loved and, in complete contrast, the piano of Erroll Garner, her father's favourite. Originally trained as a classical cellist at Chetham's School of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music, in Manchester, she performed with the Hallé and for Yo-Yo Ma at the age of eighteen. All her musical experiences eventually led her to discover her voice and her passion for extemporisation, and thus she emerged as

a powerful and expressive jazz vocalist and composer. Her most important influences are Betty Carter and Sarah Vaughan. Now a resident of Spain after an extended career on the London jazz scene, she is currently playing on many European stages. *El País Internacional* recently published a feature on her in which the journalist Ferrán Bono wrote, 'Sara Dowling, the jazz singer with Palestinian roots, shines in Valencia [...] showcasing her powerful vocal range and commanding stage presence in Spain'. She has headlined jazz festivals all over Europe and shared the stage with many top artists, including Michael Kanan, Terell Stafford, Jason Rebello, Ross Stanley, and Mátyás Gayer. As an in-demand educator, Sara Dowling has taught at jazz seminars throughout Spain and her recent work includes collaborations on albums with Bruce Barth, Ignasi Terraza, Perico Sambeat, and the Albert Sanz Big Band.

Also available



Spirit of Brazil
CHAN 10512

Also available



Dances
CHAN 10609

Also available



Final Cut
CHAN 10723

Also available



Cuatro
CHAN 10786

Also available



Aspects
CHAN 10928

Also available



Voyage
CHAN 20037

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SARA DOWLING (b. 1982)

PREMIERE RECORDING

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AQUARELLE GUITAR QUARTET*

MICHAEL BAKER GUITAR

VASILIS BESSAS GUITAR

JAMES JERVIS GUITAR

CRAIG OGDEN GUITAR

WITH SARA DOWLING JAZZ VOCALS / CELLO / PIANO†

