

NAXOS

Dušan
BOGDANOVIĆ

Guitar Works

Rossignol

Folia Variations

Big Band Suite

Winter Variations

Sonatina 'Homage to J. Haydn'

Variaciones casi latinas

Lux et umbra (Five Ricercars)

Sonata No. 1

Daniela Rossi, Guitar



Dušan
BOGDANOVIĆ

(b. 1955)

Rossignol (2021)

- 1 I. Ballad
- 2 II. Passacaglia
- 3 III. Allegro

4 **Folia Variations (2022)**

Big Band Suite (1994)
(excerpts)

- 5 III. Tranquillo, Ad lib.
- 6 II. Swing, moderato
- 7 IV. Allegro camminando

Winter Variations (2021)

- 8 Theme: Lento, quasi improvvisando
- 9 Variation 1: Allegretto
- 10 Variation 2: Allegro
- 11 Variation 3: Ritmico
- 12 Variation 4: Lirico
- 13 Variation 5: Tempo di Blues
- 14 Variation 6: Allegro

Sonatina 'Homage to J. Haydn'
(2022)

- 15 I. Rubato – Allegretto
- 16 II. Largo rubato
- 17 III. Allegro

6:05 Variaciones casi latinas (1996)

- 1:28 18 I. Rubato, quasi improvvisando
- 2:57 19 II. Tempo di Bossa Nova
- 1:40 20 III. Medium Swing
- 4:46 21 IV. Rubato ed espressivo
- 22 V. Allegro non troppo

7:05

- 2:59 23 I. Rubato
- 2:32 24 II. Lento
- 1:34 25 III. Lullaby
- 6:53 26 IV. Moderato ritmico
- 27 V. Lento

6:53

- 0:12
- 0:44
- 0:47 28 I. Allegro ritmico
- 0:45 29 II. Adagio espressivo
- 1:33 30 III. Moderato un poco tenebroso –
Allegretto quasi scherzo –
- 1:14
- 0:38 31 IV. Allegro molto

7:50

- 2:27
- 3:15
- 2:08

Lux et umbra (Five Ricercars)
(2024)

8:11

- 1:39
- 1:01
- 1:37
- 2:35
- 1:19

10:52

- 2:09
- 1:24
- 3:08
- 1:30
- 2:41

Sonata No. 1 (1977)

12:50

- 3:05
- 3:48
- 2:19
- 3:37

Dušan Bogdanović (b. 1955)

Guitar Works

Described as ‘a composer of masterful craft with a genuine clarity and purity of vision’ (*Guitar Review Magazine*), Dušan Bogdanović has developed a personal synthesis of contemporary classical, jazz and world music. As a soloist and in collaboration with other artists, he has toured extensively throughout Europe, Japan, China and the United States. Early in his career, he received the only First Prize at the Concours de Genève and gave a highly acclaimed debut recital at Carnegie Hall in 1977. He has taught at the University of Arts in Belgrade Faculty of Music, San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the Haute école de musique de Genève.

Performance and recording activities include collaborations with chamber ensembles of various stylistic backgrounds, including The de Falla Trio, a harpsichord and guitar duo with Elaine Comparone, and jazz partnerships with Milcho Leviev, Charlie Haden and James Newton, among others. Notably, Bogdanović has co-authored *Prisms (Six Songs by Sting)* with Sting, published by Singidunum Music and Steerpike Overseas Limited.

Bogdanović’s discography includes numerous albums released on the Intuition, Naxos, Brilliant Classics and MA Recordings labels, among others, featuring repertoire from Bach’s *Trio Sonatas* to contemporary works. Over 200 of his compositions – including solo guitar pieces, chamber music and orchestral works – are published by Bèrben (Italy) and Les Éditions Doberman-Yppan (Canada). His theoretical writings include *Polyrhythmic and Polymetric Studies* and *Harmony for Classical Guitar* (Edizioni Curci), as well as *Renaissance Polyphony*, *Ex Ovo* and *Tradition and Synthesis* (Doberman Musique /Productions d’Oz).

Painting is just another way of keeping a diary.

*Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)*¹

Several components make up a work of art, but perhaps the strongest is the biographical. Composing, in that sense, is akin to capturing a snapshot of the present moment, marking time in the ceaseless alternation of days and nights. This recording is a kind of multidimensional diary, displaying my works from 1977 to 2024. I am very fortunate to have found a brilliant co-author of this diary, the guitarist Daniela Rossi, who is also the dedicatee of several premieres on this album. Together with Daniela, legendary sound engineer John Taylor, and videographer Michael Adlesee, I was happily present as the official ‘midwife’ to the recording of my music, which took place in the very inspiring winter atmosphere of Holy Trinity Church in Weston, UK.

The selection presented here not only reflects transformations in my music but also points to changes in real-life events, from one reality to another, that occurred during this period. While the earliest work reflects the stylistic orientation of my study years in Geneva in the 1970s, the middle period echoes my involvement in jazz and world music, which mostly occurred during my life in Los Angeles and San Francisco, starting with the dramatic move from Switzerland to the United States in the 1980s. Naturally, this change of circumstances is evident in my oscillation between differing psychological and aesthetic approaches. Over time, my efforts have been directed at integrating these diverse influences while remaining faithful to stylistic and formal coherence in my music.

My stay in California was fruitful, and resulted in many concerts and recordings with exceptional jazz artists such as Milcho Leviev, James Newton and others. Beginning with *Jazz Sonata* in 1982, my approach to jazz has mostly focused on synthesising jazz with classical forms and world music, rather than re-examining the venerable standards. Contrary to what aesthetic purists claim, I view musical forms as part of our inherited treasure, to be revisited and used as an inspiration for further creation and cross-fertilisation of idioms.

The earliest piece presented here, *Sonata No. 1*, dates to my studies of guitar and composition at the Conservatoire de musique de Genève. I still remember beginning work on this piece after lessons in one of the music studios. It may sound like a composer’s cliché, but since I couldn’t find any manuscript paper, I drew staff lines on a piece of scratch paper I found there. The *Sonata* is unmistakably written in a Bartók/Stravinsky style – the musical language I was steeped in during my youth. Balkan folk music, prominently featured in this piece, remains one of my central inspirations, reappearing in various guises throughout many years of my work.

Big Band Suite and *Variaciones casi latinas* are two ‘Californian’ pieces emblematic of my classical-jazz fusion style. In contrast to lighter guitar music in the same vein, both works feature dense textures and extensive counterpoint, particularly in the fugues. *Variaciones casi latinas* presents a series of idiomatically diverse, colourful movements: the first variation is a brief Brazilian bossa nova; the second, a medium swing fugue (from which the *casi latina* in the title derives); the third, a lyrical ballad combining Villa-Lobos and Piazzolla; and the fourth is best described as a ‘salsa gigue’. *Big Band* starts with a slow, transparent ballad, followed by a swing fugue, and ends with a virtuosic movement evoking the rhythmic feel of West African *kora* music.

The subsequent works on this recording are more recent, from 2021 to 2024. The first of these, *Rossignol* – named after its dedicatee, Daniela Rossi – is a suite of three movements based on a shared harmonic blueprint. The introduction is a brief miniature reminiscent of Joe Pass’s solo guitar improvisations, followed by an expressive, heartfelt passacaglia and a fast-paced dance.

Winter Variations, as the name implies, was written at the end of 2021, and is also dedicated to Daniela Rossi. This longer set of six variations evokes a melancholy mood, though it transitions through various humours and characters. The first two variations are improvisatory and dance-like, featuring harmonies built on spirited arpeggios. The third variation is more robust and hearkens back to my Bartókian roots. Interestingly, the fourth variation was composed first – I wrote the theme only after completing the rest, almost as an afterthought.

Created via Iberian folk idiom in the latter part of the 15th century, the *folia* has a reputation as one of the most enduring European musical themes. In addition to the famous version by Corelli and other composers, the *folia* was used by Manuel Ponce in his *Variations and Fugue on the Spanish Folia* for guitar. My treatment of *folia* draws from early improvisational practices, emulating the vihuela while enriching the harmony with chromaticism and rhythmic freedom. The piece progresses from slow-moving lines through an *accelerando* to a dramatic dénouement. *Folia Variations* is dedicated to Daniela Rossi.

Sonatina is a homage to one of my favourite composers, Joseph Haydn. The piece does not reference his works literally but reflects Classical formal balance, economy of material and occasional phrase quirks – traits Haydn was famous for, particularly his humour. The *Sonatina* consists of three movements: a traditional sonata form first movement, a rich and dramatic second, and a fast, Haydn-like third movement infused with Latin jazz references. It is dedicated to Daniela Rossi.

The final piece from this later period on this album, *Lux et umbra (Five Ricercars)*, also dedicated to Daniela Rossi, was composed in Hawaii during an extended stay in 2024. The *ricercar*, or fantasia, was regarded in the Italian Renaissance as the ‘ideal’ musical form. I’ve always been drawn to the combination of improvisatory spirit and architectural firmness that it offers. Built in three-voice contrapuntal texture, the five ricercars present an emotional and spiritual reconciliation of joy and sorrow – light and shadow – both of which are here to stay.

Dušan Bogdanović

¹ ‘One’s work is a way of keeping a diary’ often quoted as ‘Painting is just another way of keeping a diary’

From an interview in *L’Intransigent*, 15 June 1932, quoted in John Richardson (1924–2019): *Life of Picasso* (2007) vol. 3, ch. 39



Daniela Rossi



Photo: Jean-Luc Benazet

Described by composer Leo Brouwer as ‘a performer with a very rare combination of energy, expression, and perfect technique’, Argentine guitarist Daniela Rossi is an exciting presence on the international classical guitar scene. Originally from Bahía Blanca and now based in Cambridge, UK, she has studied with renowned artists including Eduardo Isaac, Paolo Pegoraro, Adriano del Sal and Graham Anthony Devine. Rossi is a prizewinner of numerous international competitions, including First Prize at the London International Guitar Competition (2015), First Prize at the ‘Dr. Luis Sigall’ International Music Competition in Chile (2009), and Second Prize at the Internationaler Gitarrenwettbewerb Heinsberg in Germany (2017). She has given masterclasses in Belgium, Canada, Chile, Germany, the UK and the USA, and continues to appear in concerts throughout Europe and Canada. Her passion for the music of Giulio Regondi led to a dedicated album of his works. Rossi’s debut solo release, *Duarte – Homages* (Brilliant Classics) was released in June 2025. She also shares her artistry through educational platforms, with seven tutorial videos for Guitar by Masters, video performances for Siccas Guitars, and an online concert for Altamira Guitars.

www.danielarossiguitarist.com

Dušan Bogdanović, an award-winning guitarist who gave his highly acclaimed debut recital at Carnegie Hall in 1977, has been described by *Guitar Review Magazine* as ‘a composer of masterful craft with a genuine clarity and purity of vision’. Bogdanović sees this recording as a ‘multidimensional diary’ of his works from 1977 to 2024, from the Balkan folk influences of the early *Sonata No. 1* via the jazz and world music of his middle period, to the emotional and spiritual reconciliation of joy and sorrow in *Lux et umbra*, a work dedicated to guitarist Daniela Rossi.

Dušan
BOGDANOVIĆ
(b. 1955)

1–3	Rossignol (2021)*	6:05
4	Folia Variations (2022)*	4:46
5–7	Big Band Suite (1994) (excerpts)*	7:05
8–14	Winter Variations (2021)*	6:53
15–17	Sonatina ‘Homage to J. Haydn’ (2022)*	7:50
18–22	Variaciones casi latinas (1996)	8:11
23–27	Lux et umbra (Five Ricercars) (2024)*	10:52
28–31	Sonata No. 1 (1977)	12:50

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Daniela Rossi, Guitar

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

Recorded: 27 **1–4** **8–14** **23–25**, 28 **5–7** **27–31** and 29 **15–22** **26** November 2024
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Engineer and editor: John Taylor • Booklet notes: Dušan Bogdanović
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