

The Sea

**SRDJAN BULATOVIĆ
DARKO NIKČEVIĆ**

MUSIC FOR GUITAR DUO

Darko Nikčević (b. 1971) • Srdjan Bulatović (b. 1972) The Sea: Music for Guitar Duo

This selection of compositions by Darko Nikčević and Srdjan Bulatović deploys a variety of compositional moods ranging from the rhythms of Spain to the atmosphere of the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, as well as Slavic and Balkan influences.

Summer Rain begins reflectively before going into the flamenco *rumba*. *Happiness* is a lively guitar duo recalling Baroque elements. *Alma*, a guitar duo with piano accompaniment, offers a ruminative introduction before the other guitar joins in and the keyboard enters to add further texture to the composition.

Synergy is reminiscent of a 19th-century guitar study though punctuated by energetic chords. *Bura*, a lyrical arpeggio study, progresses to become evocative of Andalusia. *Recollection*, reminiscent of a Sor study, is a meditative work based on a melody and arpeggio concept, while *Preludio arpeggio*, also based on sliding chords, becomes more embellished as the composition unfolds.

Flame starts with repeated notes before evolving into a rapid scale study. *SveMir*, for two guitars and percussion opens gently with plaintive chords and then introduces orchestral accompaniment in Mediterranean style. *Reflections* develops an Iberian energy after an arpeggiated introduction. In contrast, *Regata* explores a lyrical theme before becoming a vigorous contrapuntal duo with percussive effects.

Midnight presents a nostalgic theme increasing in tension as it moves along. *Maris* ('The Sea', after which the album is named), is a love song with hints of dissonance developing into pizzicato and intricate counter-rhythms. *Travelling* represents an energetic waltz with flavours of the Balkans.

Sadness, is self-explanatory in its gentle melancholy, and is appropriately a guitar solo while *Ritmico* evokes an eastern Mediterranean atmosphere. *Coral* relies on the *rumba* genre with snatches of catchy melody.

Slavic perpetuum mobile invokes Slavic wistful melodies before the vibrant dance beckons at the highest possible speed. *Mystery* has percussive effects before bringing in improvisatory Middle Eastern modes. *Morning*, an aubade, welcomes the dawn with an optimistic mood tinged with elements of reflection.

Fiesta, with its infectious beat, introduces a catchy tune rising to a climax. *In the Field It Rais'd*, jointly composed, begins with orchestral accompaniment, and evokes an eastern Mediterranean atmosphere with repeated phrases. *Ye Lassie* (also a joint composition), starts gently until the duo is joined by the orchestra in a lyrical theme. A second melody complements the first, followed by a tremolo section.

Graham Wade

Srdjan Bulatović and Darko Nikčević

The internationally renowned guitar players from Montenegro, Srdjan Bulatović and Darko Nikčević are lauded for their extraordinary virtuosity and exciting performances, most notably their two very successful concerts at Carnegie Hall in New York (2016 and 2017). Their unique blend of Balkan irregular rhythms and many other international influences evokes the beauty of the Mediterranean and Oriental mysticism. They have, for more than 25 years, performed for both national and international audiences (in the US, Russia, across Europe, and the Middle East), presenting their own compositions which invoke the 'languages' of classical and flamenco guitar. Their works are varied in terms of character, style, technique, rhythm and tempo, and share a common thread of Montenegrin traditional music, movie soundtracks, world music and popular contemporary movements. They have published seven albums: *Duo* (2001), *Nostalgia* (2005), *Touch of Montenegro* (2011), *Synergy* (2012), *Ritmico* (2015), *The Best of Montenegro* (2016), and *Balkan, Mediterranean, Orient* (2017).

Montenegro Strings

Montenegro strings is a string chamber orchestra comprised of Montenegrin musicians. It is led by the concertmaster Vili Ferdinandi and it was formed in 2015 with the sole purpose of performing the music of Srdjan Bulatović and Darko Nikčević, inspired by Montenegro.

1 Summer Rain	2:34	13 Maris (The Sea)	3:08
2 Happiness	2:19	14 Travelling	2:33
3 Alma	3:27	15 Sadness	3:39
4 Synergy	2:33	16 Ritmico	3:04
5 Bura	2:33	17 Coral	2:21
6 Recollection	3:10	18 Slavic perpetuum mobile	2:11
7 Preludio arpeggio	2:33	19 Mystery	3:28
8 Flame	3:10	20 Morning	3:44
9 SveMir	3:30	21 Fiesta	2:08
10 Reflections	2:57	22 In the Field it Rais'd	2:08
11 Regata	2:35	23 Ye, Lassie	2:08
12 Midnight	3:33		



Photo: Jovan Mandic

For a quarter of a century the Montenegrin guitarists Srdjan Bulatović and Darko Nikčević have thrilled audiences worldwide not only as artists but with their unique blend of original compositions. Sharing a common thread of Montenegrin traditional music, movie soundtracks, and contemporary world and popular music, while drawing on improvisatory Middle Eastern modes, flamenco and Balkan rhythms, their music recreates the rhythms of Spain, wistful Slavic melodies, as well as the atmosphere of the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East.

**Srdjan
BULATOVIĆ**
(b. 1972)

**Darko
NIKČEVIĆ**
(b. 1971)

1 Summer Rain (DN)	2:34	13 Maris (The Sea) (DN)	3:08
2 Happiness (SB)	2:18	14 Travelling (SB)	2:33
3 Alma (DN)	3:26	15 Sadness (DN)	3:40
4 Synergy (SB)	2:33	16 Ritmico (SB)	3:04
5 Bura (DN)	2:33	17 Coral (DN)	2:21
6 Recollection (SB)	3:09	18 Slavic perpetuum mobile (SB)	2:12
7 Preludio arpeggio (DN)	2:51	19 Mystery (DN)	3:27
8 Flame (SB)	2:17	20 Morning (SB)	3:44
9 SveMir (DN)	3:28	21 Fiesta (DN)	2:06
10 Reflections (SB)	2:57	22 In the Field it Rais'd (SB/DN)	3:25
11 Regata (DN)	2:35	23 Ye, Lassie (DN/SB)	3:42
12 Midnight (SB)	3:31		

Srdjan Bulatović, Guitar **1–6, 8–14, 16–23**
Darko Nikčević, Guitar **1–23, Piano** **3, Percussion** **9**
Montenegro Strings **22, 23**

Recorded: September 2014–October 2017 in Studio 6, Radio Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro
 Producer, engineer and editor: Darko Nikčević • Booklet notes: Graham Wade • Guitars: Sabmar luthiers
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Playing Time
68:35



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