



Konstantin VASSILIEV

Guitar Works • 1

El Faro Mágico • Wanderer in Time • Rose in the Snow
Synestha • The Jazz Story • Hommage à Tom Jobim

Yuri Liberzon, Guitar
Patrick O'Connell, Guitar

Konstantin
VASSILIEV
(b. 1970)

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	Hommage à Tom Jobim (2016)	8:52
1	I. Carioca	2:36
2	II. Contemplation	2:50
3	III. Jam Beat	3:23
4	Cavatina (2015)	5:58
5	Rose in the Snow (2019)	5:00
6	Fatum (1996)	9:11
7	Wanderer in Time (2010)	3:23
8	The Jazz Story (2016)	5:04
	Canto e Danza (2017)	5:10
9	Canto: Andante	2:14
10	Danza: Allegro ritmico	2:56
11	El Faro Mágico (2018)	6:36
12	Obrío (2013)	3:12
13	Synestha (2014) (after <i>Piano Concerto in F sharp minor, Op. 20 – I. Allegro</i> by Alexander Scriabin [1872–1915])	7:38
14	Danza fortaleza – No. 7. Cinderella (2010)	2:34
	Two Russian Pieces (2005)	8:03
15	No. 1. Vision	4:02
16	No. 2. Dance of the Skomorokhs	4:00

Konstantin Vassiliev (b. 1970)

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My first encounter with Konstantin Vassiliev's music was his work *Three Forest Paintings*. His compositions immediately spoke to me. Maestro Vassiliev and I both come from the same region of Siberian Russia, and I instantly recognised familiar folk themes and the melancholy melodies cleverly interwoven into his pieces. I learned later that his style has a very wide range, absorbing jazz and folk influences as well as aspects of popular contemporary Western music.

Some of Vassiliev's works are expansive in form, others miniatures. His music is multifaceted, and deserving of an eminent place in the guitar repertoire. His compositions achieve something unique – they strike a beautiful balance between the use of folk themes and contemporary music.

Over the years I asked Vassiliev to write a few solo works for me and he kindly obliged with *Cavatina*, *The Jazz Story* and *Rose in the Snow*. When I included these pieces in my concerts

the audience's response was invariably positive. To my surprise I discovered that a full album of his music had never been recorded, so the next logical thing was to propose my project to Norbert Kraft and Konstantin Vassiliev. As well as solo works I decided to include two compositions for guitar duo.

I am very excited to share my musical interpretations with listeners, and would like to express my profound gratitude to my Duo Equilibrium partner Patrick O'Connell, producer and recording engineer Norbert Kraft for making this recording come to life, Mark Paskin for giving me feedback on my playing and to my former teacher Manuel Barrueco for setting my musical and artistic compass. Of course our special thanks, are, above all, due to Konstantin Vassiliev.

Yuri Liberzon

This album contains music written over the course of the last 20 years. I could perhaps describe my composing style as a synthesis of various ideas and styles – one can hear in the pieces my passion for jazz, as well as for tonal and atonal systems, alongside my love of Russian folk music.

Yuri Liberzon has subtly grasped the essence and mood of my works. I tremendously enjoyed working with a musician who not only has the necessary virtuosity but also a beautifully expressive tone. I find his lyrical side especially attractive, as well as his desire to capture and convey the smallest details of each of my pieces.

Hommage à Tom Jobim

- ❶ I. *Carioca* – this is what citizens of Rio de Janeiro are called.
- ❷ II. *Contemplation* – this movement is a meditation, a lyrical intermezzo.
- ❸ III. *Jam Beat* – a fiery theme with an impulsive rhythm for jazz improvisation.

These compositions were inspired by the music of the Brazilian composer Antônio Carlos Jobim (1927–1994), also known as Tom Jobim. He was one of the creators of the bossa nova style. Some aspects of the movements are typical of this genre, featuring Latin American rhythms as well as contemporary fiery guitar percussion.

4 Cavatina

The cavatina originated in opera as a simple form of aria, and later evolved into its own genre. This musical form is presented here in two contrasting parts, a gentle melodic theme alternating with a faster *vivace agitato*.

Cavatina, written in 2015 as a commission for Yuri Liberzon, was awarded First Prize in the Fidelio Composition Competition in Spain.

5 Rose in the Snow

Dedicated to Yuri Liberzon, in this work a rose is portrayed as a symbol of fragility and vulnerability. The contrasting image of a lonely red flower on a cold, white background is conveyed by contrasting alternating moods, ranging from melancholic and lyrical to excited and anxious.

6 Fatum

This is one of my early compositions written in a large form. The guitarist Roman Viazovskiy was the author of the idea for the composition as well as the first to perform it. The piece, in variation form in the tradition of the Russian seven string guitar, has, at its core, the folk song *To ne veter*. This song details the dramatic testimony of a person located far from the motherland, hence the title *Fatum* ('Destiny').

7 Wanderer in Time

Dedicated to Roman Viazovskiy, this composition won an international competition in Nordhorn, Germany. It is a romantic miniature subtly combining stylistic features of both Baroque and contemporary music.

8 The Jazz Story

A kind of musical narrative, this piece presents a tale that features alternating multi-character episodes. The musical language is primarily derived from jazz harmony and syncopated Latin American rhythms. It is dedicated to Yuri Liberzon.

9 10 Canto e Danza

Canto e Danza is one of my early compositions, in which lingering Russian tones combine with Latin American rhythms and harmonies. The work is in two parts, linked by a unifying motif structure, each different in character – the lyrically nostalgic *Canto* contrasting with the spirited and impulsive *Danza*.

11 El Faro Mágico

This work was inspired by the painting *Lighthouse in Palermo* by the Russian artist Maksim Vorobyov (1781–1855). The piece provides a romantic contrast between the cold moonlight and the warm glow of the lighthouse, evoking various intense moments that allow us to appreciate the happiness of every moment in life. The composition won First Prize at the sixth Acerra Guitar Composition Competition in Italy.

12 Obrío

Some of my compositions have emerged through synthesising different ideas, and *Obrío* is one of these. I wanted to combine two sides of my musical perception, which was formed primarily, of course, under the influence of Russian culture. On the other hand, Western heritage (including Latin American heritage) is inevitably transmitted and absorbed through modern guitar music. Yuri Liberzon and Patrick O'Connell perfectly capture the essence and message of this music.

13 Synestha

Synestha is a fantasy on a theme from Alexander Scriabin's *Piano Concerto in F sharp, minor, Op. 20*. Scriabin undoubtedly played a big role in my creative development. He was a synaesthete, a person whose brain perceives a sense through the stimulation of another, a facility known as synaesthesia. Thus, Scriabin in his compositional activities connected musical sounds with individual colours.

Synestha is dedicated to the eminent Italian guitarist Carlo Marchione, who gave the work its first performance.

14 Danza fortaleza – No. 7. Cinderella

The technically uncomplicated *Cinderella* is an expressive composition from a collection of miniatures entitled *Danza fortaleza*. The piece depicts a romantic image of the famous fairy-tale character. The musical language features transparent textures, warm, slightly dissonant chords using seventh chords, and a lyrical melodic line with soft suspensions on non-chordal tones.

Two Russian Pieces

15 *No. 1. Vision* – this is a fantasy on the theme of the Russian folk song *Oy, to ne vecher*, also known as *The Cossack's Parable* or *Stepan Razin's Dream*. In the song the Cossack tells about his nightmare, foreshadowing trouble.

16 *No. 2. Dance of the Skomorokhs* is based on another famous Russian dance song *At the Gate*. The dancing, playful character is conveyed by the interspersing of unusual – and not always tonal – sections with tart harmony.

These two Russian pieces have been performed by prominent guitarists such as Shin-ichi Fukuda and Roman Viazovkiy. Another version exists, in which the work is arranged for a large guitar orchestra, performed at one time by an ensemble of no less than one hundred and thirty guitarists.

Konstantin Vassiliev

Booklet notes edited by Graham Wade

Patrick O'Connell



Patrick O'Connell studied at the Peabody Conservatory of Music of the Johns Hopkins University with Manuel Barrueco and Ray Chester, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music with David Tanenbaum, Dusan Bogdanovic and Marc Teicholz. While still a student at the latter he began his professional career with a debut solo performance at Carnegie Hall. After earning his Master's degree in guitar performance he joined the San Francisco Guitar Quartet, appearing on the album *Chasing Light*, which features numerous new works dedicated to the ensemble as well as his own arrangements. O'Connell has been a featured performer with the San Francisco Guitar Quartet at numerous festivals and concert series worldwide. Notable performances include La Guitarra California International Guitar Festival in San Luis Obispo, Second Sundays Classical Guitar Concert Series in New York City, the Monadnock Music Festival in New Hampshire, the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the Festival of Contemporary Music in San Francisco, California and Dresdner Gitarrenfest, and at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. www.patrickoconnell.net

Yuri Liberzon



Photo: Jon McCormack

Internationally acclaimed concert classical guitarist and recording artist Yuri Liberzon was born in Novosibirsk, Russia and raised in Israel. He has given countless concerts across the US, alongside numerous appearances in international media. Liberzon has released three albums in collaboration with GRAMMY-winning sound engineer and producer Nahuel Bronzini: *Ascension* (2015), *¡Acentuado!* (2017, Soundset Recordings), and *J.S. Bach – 3 Violin Sonatas* (2020, Laudable Records). Liberzon has transcribed the music of Scarlatti and J.S. Bach for guitar, and these have been published in *Soundboard Magazine* and distributed in Europe by Bergmann Edition. While in Israel, Liberzon studied with Yaron Hasson, and was the recipient of multiple America-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarships and grants. In 2000, Liberzon relocated to the US to study for his Bachelor of Music and Graduate Performance Diploma at the Peabody Conservatory with Manuel Barrueco, subsequently earning a Master of Music from Yale University with Benjamin Verdery, being awarded full scholarships at both institutions. Liberzon is a Royal Classics Strings artist.

www.yuriguitar.com

Konstantin Vassiliev's music synthesises several different styles including jazz, Russian folk music and contemporary Western traditions. This album contains music written over a 22-year period, with three works composed specifically for guitar soloist Yuri Liberzon. The *Hommage à Tom Jobim* was inspired by one of the creators of the bossa nova style, while the melancholic and lyrical contrasts of *Rose in the Snow* reveal Vassiliev's gift for storytelling. Arias, romantic miniatures, variations and multi-character episodes further reveal Vassiliev to be a vibrant and exciting composer of wide-ranging gifts.

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Yuri Liberzon, Guitar

Patrick O'Connell, Guitar 12 15 16

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

Recorded: 3–5 October 2021 at St Paul's Anglican Church, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada

Recording producer and editor: Norbert Kraft

Booklet notes: Yuri Liberzon, Konstantin Vassiliev, ed. Graham Wade

Publishers: Les Productions d'Oz 1–3 8–10 12 15 16, Verlag Neue Musik 4,
Konstantin Vassiliev 5, Gendai Guitar 6, Elgo Music Publications 7, Edition Margaux 11,
Joachim-Trekel-Musikverlag 13, Musikverlag Harald Burger 14

Guitars: Robert Ruck, 2015 (Yuri Liberzon), Gregory Byers, 1998 (Patrick O'Connell)

Cover photograph by Jon McCormack

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