



NAXOS



CARLO
DOMENICONI

(b. 1947)

DURANDARTE • PALASTMUSIK
TEMPELMUSIK • TARANTULA PRECOX
LE CITTÀ E GLI OCCHI - ZEMRUDE

MARE DUO

ANNIKA HINSCHÉ, MANDOLIN • FABIAN HINSCHÉ, GUITAR

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS

Carlo DOMENICONI (b. 1947) Works for Mandolin and Guitar

The mandolin and the guitar are plucked chordophones, stringed instruments of great antiquity. Each is distinctive in its characteristic shape. The mandolin has a flat soundboard and a vaulted symmetrical shell as the main components, played with a plectrum, while the guitar has a 'waist' and a flat back, and in classical guitar is played with the fingers. The structural differences actually enable them to blend admirably and this recording presents the combination of instruments in their most expressive manifestations.

Carlo Domeniconi, born in Cesena, Italy in 1947, began studying the guitar at the age of 13 with Carmen Lenzi Mozzani, granddaughter of the guitarist Luigi Mozzani (1869–1943). He later studied at the Conservatorio Rossini in Pesaro, Italy, and in Berlin at the Hochschule für Musik under the German composer and pianist Heinz Friedrich Hartig (1907–1969).

During subsequent years, though with a teaching post in Berlin, he made many trips to Turkey and became fascinated by its culture. He founded the classical guitar course at the Istanbul University State Conservatory and became internationally known both as a concert performer and a leading contemporary composer for guitar, with over 150 compositions published. His works include solo and ensemble pieces, chamber music and concertos, as well as compositions written for pedagogic purposes.

Michael Lydon, writing in the prestigious guitar

Durandarte, Durandarte,
buen caballero probado,
acordásete debería d'aquel **tiempo pasado**,
y dime si se te acuerda
cuando fuiste **enamorado**,
cuando en galas e invenciones
publicabas tu cuidado,
cuando venciste a los moros
en campo por mi aplazado:

journal *Soundboard*, commented that 'Domeniconi's music seeks repeatedly the synthesis of East and West. He seems able to take the quintessence of different cultures and tell them anew. A hypnotic inevitability goes through his music.'

All the repertoire for mandolin and guitar on this recording, with the exception of *Le città e gli occhi – Zemrude*, has been written by Carlo Domeniconi for the Mare Duo.

Durandarte, an extended composition for mandolin and guitar, takes us through the adventures of the renowned knight Durandarte (named after a magic sword). The inspiration is taken from a medieval poem, also celebrated in songs by Luis Milán (c. 1500–after 1536) and Joaquín Rodrigo (1901–1999), sung in the first instance by Belerma, Durandarte's unfaithful lover and replied to by Durandarte himself.

In the traditional story Durandarte serves Belerma for seven years but is unable to win her love. He then asks his cousin, Montesinos, to keep his promise after his death to cut out his heart and carry it to Belerma. Montesinos does indeed carry Durandarte's heart to Belerma's palace and she asks God to pardon Durandarte's soul. (In another version of the tale Belerma laments the knight's death and then dies herself.)

The titles (marked in bold) of movements in Carlo Domeniconi's suite are taken from one of the ancient Spanish poems telling of Durandarte:

Durandarte, Durandarte,
good, trustworthy knight,
you should remember that **time past**
and tell me if you recall
when you were **in love** with me,
when in banquets and displays you
showed how much you cared,
when at last you conquered the Moors
in battle for me:

agora, desconocido, di,
¿por qué me has olvidado?
– '**Palabras son lisonjeras**,
señora, de vuestro grado,
que si yo mudanza hice,
me la vos causado,
pues amastéis a Gayferos
cuando yo fui **desterrado**;
que si amor queréis conmigo teneislo
muy mal pensado;
y por no sufrir ultraje
moriré desesperado'.

The composer has commented that he would like the two instruments to be so interwoven that they are almost indistinguishable, the music moving between 'court and market, a love aria and a knight's lament' though there are echoes of other imaginative images such as acrobats and jugglers.

The first movement, *Durandarte*, provides a representation of the knight as he rides through the countryside. *En camino* ('On the Road') is a more complex adventure as Durandarte confronts the wildness of a journey full of danger. *Tiempo pasado* ('Time Past') is a lyrical ballad with medieval inflections and a sense of sadness. *Caballero enamorado* ('The Knight in Love') is a poignant love song integrated with quiet moments of reflection. *Por qué me has olvidado?* ('Why Have You Forgotten Me?') has intricate cross rhythms with brief melodic fragments and more rapid episodes. *Palabras son lisonjeras* ('Words are Flattering') recalls the timbres of medieval music in short stabbing phrases, expressing the ambiguity of love. *Vos lo habéis todo* ('You Have it All') offers further cross rhythms imparting a syncopated, slightly sardonic edge to the music. The interplay of the instruments offers a lively dialogue. *Desterrado* ('Exile'), a mournful elegy, evokes the past with gentle melodies and plucked chord accompaniment chiming like bells. *La muerte* ('The Death') is an agitated, frenetic finale to the suite with drum-like effects from guitar and extended tremolo from the mandolin, building up the tension.

now you are like a stranger,
why have you forgotten me?
– '**Words are flattering**,
Madame, by your leave,
because if I have changed,
you are the reason,
because you fell in love with Gayferos
when I was in **exile**.
If you want my love you have dealt
with it very badly;
and rather than suffering insult
I will **die** in despair.'

Le città e gli occhi – Zemrude ('The Cities and the Eyes – Zemrude') refers to *Le città invisibili* ('Invisible Cities'), one of the most mysterious novels by the Italian writer Italo Calvino (1923–1985), published in 1972. The book is structured as a conversation between the Emperor Kublai Khan and Marco Polo and consists of prose-poems describing 55 fictitious fantasy cities, all with women's names. The cities are divided into eleven thematic groups of five each: *Cities and Memory*; *Cities and Desire*; *Cities and Signs*; *Thin Cities*; *Trading Cities*; *Cities and Eyes*; *Cities and Names*; *Cities and the Dead*; *Cities and the Sky*; *Continuous Cities* and *Hidden Cities*.

The five cities with the names *Cities and Eyes* cannot be seen, or their beauty appreciated with a mere superficial glance. They are perhaps cities that never existed because there exist very few descriptions by visitors or because the eye is not able to appreciate their detail.

Zemrude is a city that changes its appearance according to the visitor's mood. If you go there in a serene mood the city appears festive and colourful, but if in a bad mood you will see a grey, humid city with sewers full of mud. One of the recurring themes in Calvino's writings is to explore contrasts between specious appearance and underlying reality, the former being generally misleading and the latter often more horrifying than we suspect at first glance.

Domeniconi's *Le città e gli occhi – Zemrude* is a kaleidoscope of moods, merging elements of the

Oriental and Middle Eastern with variations in pace and texture. After the initial energetic dialogue, a slower episode is introduced beginning with guitar chords and a solemn descending melody. This mood gently progresses into more vigorous interplay and intricate rhythmic patterns eventually arriving at a passage of echoes, trills and repeated notes. Then follows a series of sustained notes which advances into a two-part conversation between mandolin and guitar leading to a recapitulation of the opening thematic material. These components weave themselves into a thrilling climax.

Tempelmusik ('Temple Music') is a series of five compact movements which vary in tempo. They range from the quasi-improvisatory to closely worked contrapuntal writing. The composition seems less dependent on a programmatic structure than the previous works, being evocative of the contemplative attitudes appropriate to a temple. The melodic shapes and rhythmic intricacies bring to mind the hypnotic sounds of eastern Mediterranean plucked chordophones. Yet the music, however referential it may seem to a number of relevant cultures, retains its own identity and the location of any specific temple is left mysterious.

Palastmusik ('Palace Music') creates the atmosphere of the ideal palace where the sonorities

Mare Duo

Annika Hinsche, Mandolin · Fabian Hinsche, Guitar

After winning more than 20 prizes at international competitions as soloists and chamber musicians, Annika Hinsche, mandolin, and Fabian Hinsche, guitar, have been internationally performing as the Mare Duo for more than 15 years, receiving widespread critical acclaim. Both artists teach their respective instruments at colleges and universities, and give international masterclasses. The Mare Duo has inspired numerous composers to enrich the repertoire for their formation, including Carlo Domeniconi, Jaime Zenamon, Konstantin Vassiliev, Jürg Kindie, Frank Wallace, Thomas Allen LeVines, Lars Wüller, and many others. The Mare Duo is also interested in performing the classical repertoire for their formation as well as playing innovative transcriptions. Annika and Fabian have released several solo, duo and chamber music albums with labels such as Naxos, Schott Music and Gyre Records, and they have appeared on TV productions including *MTV Unplugged*. For more please information visit: www.mareduo.com

of plucked instruments resonate constantly. This is an extended work with subtly shifting moods from the reflective to a sense of disturbance. In the finale there is a return to ultimate serenity.

Tarantula precox ('The Tarantula That Grew Up Too Soon') was originally written for Annika Hinsche as one of the *12 Preludes for Mandolin Solo*. In this later version a guitar part is added to the original work. The composition is a homage to Raffaele Calace (1863–1934), the great mandolin virtuoso and prolific composer for the instrument, born in Naples.

The *tarantella*, a folk dance of southern Italy originating from Taranto (the ancient Tarantum) in Apulia, also features in works by Weber, Richard Strauss, Mendelssohn and Rossini. The large spider known as the tarantula (*Lycosa tarantula*) derived its name from the town of Taranto. Somehow the legend was spread about that the *tarantella* was a cure for the spider's mildly toxic bite.

Domeniconi's *tarantella* is a model of its genre, a wild, dervish-like dance conjuring up images of frenetic whirls of colour and movement.

Graham Wade

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Carlo Domeniconi is a master of guitar composition. His fusion of Western and Eastern elements is a distinctive feature of his writing, and this album presents a body of work for the unusual combination of mandolin and guitar. The large-scale *Durandarte* charts a medieval knight's wild journey through the countryside, which is accompanied by poignant love songs, elegies, and agitated cross-rhythms. In *Tarantula precox* he summons up a dervish-like dance; while in the kaleidoscopic moods of *Zemrude* the Orient and the Middle East merge dramatically. All but one of these works have been composed especially for the Mare Duo.

Carlo
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Playing Time
65:13

Works for Mandolin and Guitar

	Durandarte (2015)	32:23
1	I. Durandarte	5:31
2	II. En camino ('On the Road')	2:36
3	III. Tiempo pasado ('Time Past')	2:37
4	IV. Caballero enamorado ('The Knight in Love')	3:45
5	V. Por qué me has olvidado? ('Why Have You Forgotten Me?')	3:51
6	VI. Palabras son lisonjeras ('Words are Flattering')	2:51
7	VII. Vos lo habéis todo ('You Have it All')	2:47
8	VIII. Desterrado ('Exile')	3:09
9	IX. La muerte ('The Death')	5:16
10	Le città e gli occhi – Zemrude (‘The Cities and the Eyes – Zemrude’) (2013, rev. 2018)	9:10
	Tempelmusik ('Temple Music') (2018)	11:03
11	I. quarter note = 80	3:14
12	II. quarter note = 100	1:37
13	III. quarter note = 60	3:29
14	IV. dotted quarter note = 120	0:51
15	V. quarter note = 50	1:52
16	Palastmusik ('Palace Music') (2018)	7:36
17	Tarantula precox ('The Tarantula That Grew Up Too Soon') (2013)	4:32

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Guitar by Roland Metzner • Mandolin by Reinhold Seiffert