



(Lyrichord Classical LYRDL 6016)

THE SOUNDS OF SPAIN

Shawn Leopard and John Paul

MUSIC FOR TWO LAUTENWERCKE

The sound and timbre of the gut strung and plucked keyboard instrument called the Lautenwerck, has much in common with its cousins the harp, lute and guitar. What better way to celebrate characteristic sounds of a pair of lautenwercke, so reminiscent to that of the classical guitar, than in this beautifully transcribed music of Spain!

No collection of Spanish music is complete without the work of **Isaac Albéniz** (1860-1909). Albéniz was a Spanish Catalan pianist and composer best known for his piano works based on folk music idioms (many of which have been transcribed by others for guitar). Albéniz had a profound influence on the future of Spanish music. His activities as conductor, performer and composer significantly raised the profile of Spanish music abroad and encouraged Spanish music and musicians in his own country. In transcription, Albéniz's works have become an important part of the repertoire of the classical guitar. Here John Paul has transcribed **Albéniz' Asturias (track 1)**, one of the composer's most well known pieces played on guitar, also a Tango (**track 2**).

The Spanish Catalan composer **Padre Antonio Soler's** (1729-1783) works span the late Baroque and early Classical music eras. Soler took the holy orders at the young age of 23 and from then lived and served at the monastery of Hieronymite in El Escorial, Madrid. Though he managed to compose over 500 musical works, today he is best known for his keyboard works, which include 150 sonatas. Much of Soler's keyboard music is thought to have been composed as sheet music for his pupil, the *Infante Don Gabriel*, a son of **King Carlos III**. His **Concerto #1 in C Major (tracks 3 and 4)** was originally written for two organs, as the Escorial Monastery had separate organs on two opposing walls. One keyboard part is always more difficult than the other. From this, we can infer that Soler either wanted to show off the Prince of Spain's skill performing the harder part, or perhaps intended to play it himself.

Tracks 5 and 6 represent the work of **Enrique Granados** (1867-1916), **Oriental**, and **Andaluza (Playera)**, both transcribed by Shawn Leopard. Spanish composer, pianist and painter Granados, helped to further establish a uniquely Spanish style of music, that is so associated with his country, that it is loosely regarded as representative of musical nationalism. His many piano compositions have also been hugely successful as classical guitar transcriptions. Granados was an important influence on at least two other important Spanish composers and musicians, **Manuel de Falla** and **Pablo Casals**.

Turning the calendar back a few hundred years, Leopard and Paul go to the Spanish Renaissance composer **Antonio de Cabezon** (1510-1566) for his **Cancion religi6sa**, (**track 7**) in a transcription by Shawn Leopard. Blind from childhood, Caberson quickly rose to prominence as a performer and was eventually employed by the royal family. He was among the most important composers of his time and the first major Iberian keyboard composer.

Track 8 represents another work by **Soler**, his well known **Fandango**.

Moving ahead to the last century, the duo perform John Paul's transcription of a work by the celebrated Brazilian composer, **Luiz Bonfa** (1922 - 2001) Luiz Floriano Bonfá was a Brazilian guitarist and composer best known for the compositions he penned for the film *Black Orpheus*. His **Manha de Carnaval (track 9)** is from that film. As a composer and performer, Bonfá was an exponent of the bold, lyrical, and emotionally powerful samba-canção style that predated the arrival of João Gilberto's more refined and subdued bossa nova style.

Track 10 features a work by one of Spain's most celebrated composers, **Manuel de Falla** (1876-1946): **Ritual Fire Dance**, transcribed by John Paul. Manuel de Falla y Matheu was from Andalusia, Spain. Along with Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados and Joaquín Turina he is one of Spain's most important musicians of the first half of the 20th century.

Track 11 brings us to Shawn Leopard's transcription of **Sonata in E Minor** (originally for solo guitar) by the little known Late 18th Century composer **José Galles**, and **tracks 12 and 13** comprise **Two Spanish Dances from La Vida Breve**, also by **Manuel de Falla**.

Back again to Late 18th Century Spain, in **track 14** we hear **Concerto in C Major** by the Spanish composer, organist and harpist, **Josef Blanco**.

And finally, on **track 15** we go to an adaptation of a work by the great French Baroque composer, organist and harpsichordist **François Couperin** (1668 – 11 September 1735), from the *L'Art de toucher le clavecin*, transcribed for two lautenwercke by John Paul, in a piece he calls "**The First Tango in Paris**"

NOTES FROM THE INSTRUMENT'S BUILDER, ANDEN HOUBEN

The Lautenwerck, or lute-harpsichord, differs from the harpsichord in several important respects. While historical references indicate differing approaches to design, there is general agreement that the use of gut strings is of primary importance. Harpsichords, designed to be strung in metal, and for a number of reasons, simple replacement of their strings with gut will not give satisfactory results. Generally, a gut string requires a longer scale (or length at a given pitch) than a metal string. One might assume this infers a larger instrument, but this is rarely the case. Due to a rapid foreshortening of this longer scale (as one finds on the lute), Lautenwercke are often smaller than their metal strung relatives. This reduces the tension a Lautenwerck must bear in comparison to a harpsichord. Lighter construction is made possible by reduced tension, enabling a Lautenwerck to better respond to the less energetic gut string. This is especially true of the soundboards, which can be half the thickness normally found in harpsichords.

Gut stringing has other implications for Lautenwerck design. As gut strings have more internal friction than their metal counterparts, they generally have less sustain. This allows one to dispense with dampers to a large degree. Individual instruments will dictate where dampers are needed (and how effective they need

be), but one rarely finds Lautenwercke fitted with dampers on every string. Any resulting “over-ring” is likely to enhance the lute-like effect.

The Lautenwercke also demands special attention concerning string layout. Thick gut strings vibrate more vigorously than thin metal ones at higher tension. This requires more space be given between adjacent strings to avoid interference. This consideration encourages the builder to keep his design simple. Two choirs of gut strings seem to be the practical maximum, though a third choir in metal is sometimes found. Harpsichords normally have one dedicated jack per string. Lautenwercke often have more than one jack serving the same string in order to achieve tonal and dynamic variation. This is most often true of instruments with more than one manual. Problems associated adding more strings are avoided, and resonate construction maintained.

It was in the early Seventies that I discovered historical descriptions of the Lautenwercke in Frank Hubbard’s *Three Centuries of Harpsichord Making*. The concept of this instrument, a lute controlled by a keyboard, appealed immediately to me. It didn’t take long to discover there were no surviving examples. I remember working at the drafting table trying to work out a practical instrument from the scant information available. Technical problems and lack of experience would delay construction for the next twenty years.

Since the beginning my primary inspiration has been the writing of Jakob Adlung in *Musica mechanica organoedi*. His description of lute-harpsichords made by J.N. Bach, a cousin of J. S. Bach, offers more detail than other writings available. The instruments he writes about are a major departure from harpsichord building practice. The stringing is based on the actual lute. Most Lautenwercke seemed to have taken the harpsichord as a starting point, adjusting various perimeters for the use of gut strings. Adlung’s literal “transcription” of the lute into a keyboard instrument results in an instrument where the string diameters, lengths of strings for a given pitch, and plucking points are very lute-like indeed. The appearance of the soundboard can be confusing until one realizes it is a logical analog of a lute’s fretboard, and the motions of a lutinist’s left hand in stopping the strings against the frets. Strings get progressively shorter while ascending a scale until one arrives at the next full-length, “open string” in the lute’s tuning.

The two instruments used in this recording, like the lute, are primarily double strung. The first choir of strings is at eight foot pitch and is maintained for the full range of the keyboard, GG-d’’. The second choir, like that of some lutes is at four foot pitch in the bass changing to eight foot pitch between B and f#. From g’ to the highest note d’’, the second choir is absent as the lute is always single strung in this range. On the single manual instrument (1995) the second partial choir can be engaged selectively by means of a knee lever allowing a certain amount of dynamic and tonal control. The double manual instrument (1999) is strung in the manner above, but has five sets of jacks (one for dampers alone) and offers more variety in terms of tonal color brought about by plucking the strings at different points and using differing plectrum materials. This includes (not heard in this recording) a stop in soft leather capable of substantial dynamic control.

Both instruments use tied bridges that carry the full tension of the strings directly to the soundboard. This is perhaps the most radical departure from normal keyboard building practice where string tension is diverted to the case rim. Again, this is inspired by the lute bridge itself. It is only by following the example of low tension lute stringing that it is possible to build an instrument in this fashion which is able to withstand the pull of over ninety strings. This construction requires an overall lightness to better respond to the less energetic strings. Soundboard thickness is half that of most harpsichords and cases are constructed with lightness and resonance in mind.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SHAWN LEOPARD has been a specialist in early music since undergraduate study at the University of Southern Mississippi where her teachers included Dana Ragsdale and Lois Leventhal. She holds a Master's degree in musicology from Indiana University where she studied harpsichord with Elisabeth Wright. Shawn is currently based in Jackson, Mississippi, and she tours extensively in the Southeastern U.S. as a Lautenwerckist/harpsichordist with duo partner John Paul.

JOHN PAUL has been organist/choirmaster at St. Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral, Jackson, MS. since immigrating to the U.S. in 1965. During undergraduate study at the R.A.M. in London, his principal teachers were Alan Richardson, Harold Craxton, Eric H. Thiman, C. H. Trevor and Thurston Dart. He completed Doctoral studies at the University of Colorado in 1971. Touring as a solo harpsichordist since 1980, he has completed over 500 concerts and residencies in the Southeastern U.S. and since 1997 has collaborated with duo partner Shawn Leopard.

Shawn Leopard and John Paul began their collaboration as **SHAWN LEOPARD AND JOHN PAUL, MUSIC FOR TWO HARPSICHORDS** in 1997. They play the entire known repertoire for two harpsichords along with creative transcriptions of their own using both harpsichords strung in brass and iron and two Lautenwercke (harpsichords strung in gut). They travel with their own instruments, built by Anden Houben of Northport, Alabama, and have covered over 50,000 miles from Boston to Miami to Tulsa, presenting concerts, performances and school residencies.

TRACKS

TRACK NO	TITLE	COMPOSER	TIME
1	Asturias (Albéniz)	Isaac Albéniz	00.06:02
2	Tango (Albéniz)	Isaac Albéniz	00.02:36
3	Andante - from Concerto for 2 Organs No.1 in C major (Soler)	Padre Antonio Soler	00.05:36
4	Minuet - from Concerto for 2 Organs No.1 in C major (Soler)	Padre Antonio Soler	00.05:41
5	Oriental (Granados)	Enrique Granados	00.04:01
6	Andaluza - Playera (Granados)	Enrique Granados	00.03:21
7	Canción religiosa (Cabezón)	Antonio de Cabezón	00.03:07
8	Fandango (Soler)	Padre Antonio Soler	00.11:10
9	Manha de Carnaval (from "Orfeo Negro") (Bonfa)	Luiz Bonfa	00.01:58
10	Ritual Fire Dance (Falla)	Manuel de Falla	00.04:03
11	Sonata in E Minor (Galles)	Jose Galles	00.03:31
12	Spanish Dance from La Vida Breve No 1 (Falla)	Manuel de Falla	00.02:43
13	Spanish Dance from La Vida Breve No 2 (Falla)	Manuel de Falla	00.03:56
14	Concerto in C Major (Blanco)	Josef Blanco	00.04:48
15	"The First Tango in Paris" from <i>L'Art de toucher le clavecin</i> (Couperin)	François Couperin	00.03:13

CREDITS

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