CONTRA GUITAR DUO

CONTRA



TRACKLIST

DIVERTIMENTO 2’53”
ANDRÉS SEGOVIA

CRISANTEMI 5’48”
GIACOMO PUCCINI ARR. ANGELO GILARDINO

THE MANTIS AND THE MOON 3’32”
LAMENT 3’05”
ALCHEMY 2’51”
PHILLIP HOUGHTON – THREE DUETS

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF SCRIABIN 8’15”
ALEXANDRE TANSMAN ARR. TILMAN HOPPSTOCK

RUN TIME 26’24”

Tracks 2 and 6 recorded 2021 at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg by Jakob Schmidt.

Tracks 1 and 3-5 recorded 2018 in Augsburg by Jakob Schmidt.

All tracks mastered by Jakob Schmidt in 2022.

Photos by Vanessa van Dalsen of Vivid Visual Co.

Design by Sheridan Tully.

Guitars by Andreas Kirschner, Lance Litchfield and Jayson Elazzi.

move

℗ 2023 Move Records
move.com.au

© 2023 Contra Guitar Duo
contraguitarduo.com

Made in Australia.
All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

Contra Guitar Duo's debut recording showcases our musical personality and the elements we most enjoy about playing as a duo — lyricism, complex rubato and colour.

The recording opens with *Divertimento,* a vibrant work by Andrés Segovia, his only work for two guitars. Much like Segovia's other compositions, the work is colourful, lyrical and in a romantic style. The seamless passing of the melodic line between players is something we greatly enjoy in this short dynamic piece.

Crisantemi by Giacomo Puccini is a deeply sincere elegy composed in a single night following the death of the former King of Spain, Amadeo di Savoia, in 1890. Originally for string quartet, the work has been masterfully arranged by Angelo Gilardino. The music is poetic and creates a sense of yearning, employing sustained notes requiring extreme control and balance between players.

Three Duets by Phillip Houghton offers a stark contrast with its scherzo character and angular rhythmic figures. Houghton describes the first movement, *The Mantis and the Moon,* as an "existential Insect/Lunar Comic — Tragedy of Whimsical Proportions!" The second movement *Lament* is sparsely written and gives the impression of time standing still. The final movement *Alchemy* is inspired by Houghton's vision of "sparks of gold and threads of light coming out of the guitars" and features a driving ostinato traded between guitars.

We close with Alexandre Tansman's *Variations on a Theme of Scriabin* — a highly complex and dense work originally for solo guitar arranged by Tilman Hoppstock. By sharing the thick polyphonic writing across two instruments, the work's lyrical and colourful character is perfectly encapsulated; the medium of guitar duo enabling exceptional musical clarity far beyond what is possible on one instrument.



CONTRA GUITAR DUO

Opposing yet complementary performers can create thrilling artistry — this is the basis on which Contra Guitar Duo was formed by Hamish Strathdee and Emma-Shay Gallenti-Guilfoyle.

The pair met at their university auditions in 2011 and have been making music together ever since. Their contrasting musical personalities and charming personal chemistry bring a dynamic spin to the fantastic combination of two guitars. United by their passion to bring audiences music they love, Hamish and Emma-Shay are excited to present the varied and rich expressive capabilities of the guitar duo as an ensemble.

Contra Guitar Duo's debut recording showcases their musical personality and the elements they most enjoy about playing as a duo — lyricism, complex rubato and colour.



CONTRA GUITAR DUO

Opposing yet complementary performers can create thrilling artistry — this is the basis on which Contra Guitar Duo was formed by Hamish Strathdee and Emma-Shay Gallenti-Guilfoyle.

The pair met at their university auditions in 2011 and have been making music together ever since. Their contrasting musical personalities and charming personal chemistry bring a dynamic spin to the fantastic combination of two guitars. United by their passion to bring audiences music they love, Hamish and Emma-Shay are excited to showcase the varied and rich expressive capabilities of the guitar duo as an ensemble.

Contra Guitar Duo has performed extensively in Europe and Australia. Performance highlights include the Dubai World Expo, Staatsoper Hamburg, Melbourne Guitar Festival and the Darmstädter Gitarrentage.

The duo has studied at the ANU School of Music with Timothy Kain and Minh Le Hoang, the Darmstadt Akademie für Tonkunst and the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg with Prof. Tilman Hoppstock and Prof. Olaf Van Gonnissen.

WWW.CONTRAGUITARDUO.COM

HAMISH STRATHDEE

Classical guitarist, Hamish Strathdee, is regarded as an "excellent young Australian performer" (Limelight Magazine). Hamish's debut recording, *Impressions of Spain,* has received critical acclaim, hailed as "an excellent debut" (Classical Guitar Magazine) and his playing has been described as being of "the highest standard" (Soundboard Magazine) and with a "gloriously warm and rich" sound (Classical Guitar Magazine).

Hamish has performed to audiences across the globe both as a soloist and chamber musician, with international TV and radio appearances. He has received numerous prizes in domestic and international competitions including the: London; Stuttgart; and Aalborg International Guitar Competitions.

In addition Hamish has been the recipient of multiple scholarships and grants including: a postgraduate Stipendium from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD); outstanding achievement scholarships from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg; and awards from both the ANU School of Music and the PPCA Performers' Trust Foundation.

WWW.HAMISHSTRATHDEE.COM



EMMA-SHAY GALLENTI-GUILFOYLE

Classical guitarist and lutenist, Emma-Shay Gallenti-Guilfoyle, delights audiences with her charming persona. Known for her musical and sensitive playing, Emma-Shay enjoys sharing her diverse and compelling repertoire. Chamber music collaborations and new music projects are her passions; she also enjoys playing Renaissance and Baroque music on the lute.

As a champion of new repertoire for guitar, Emma-Shay has premiered original works written for her by leading Australian composers.

She has recently worked on multiple interdisciplinary projects with the Elbphilharmonie, Hamburger Gitarrenforum and the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg.

Emma-Shay has consistently been selected as a finalist in international guitar competitions, including New York, Melbourne and Adelaide; and has received numerous awards and scholarships from the Australian Music Foundation, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, PPCA Performers' Trust Foundation, Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg and the Australian National University.



WWW.EMMASHAY.COM

CONTRA

GUITAR DUO

WWW.CONTRAGUITARDUO.COM