

Midsummer's Night

Jonathan Paget guitar



move

music by Barrios | Sculthorpe | Walton | Bellinati

Five Bagatelles
William Walton

- 1** Allegro 3'54"
- 2** Lento 3'12"
- 3** Alla Cubana 2'25"
- 4** Sempre espressivo 2'10"
- 5** Con slancio 2'27"

6 Jongo 5'09"
Paulo Bellinati

7 Preludio in C minor 2'42"
Agustin Barrios

**8 Una limosna por el amor
de Dios** [An Offering for the
Love of God] 3'11"
Agustin Barrios

9 Julia Florida 5'04"
Agustin Barrios

10 Danza Paraguaya
[Paraguayan Dance] 1'59"
Agustin Barrios

11 Un sueño en la floresta
[Dream in the Forest] 7'20"
Agustin Barrios

La catedral
[Cathedral]
Agustin Barrios

- 12** Lento 2'35"
- 13** Andante religioso 2'11"
- 14** Allegro solemne 3'08"

15 Into the Dreaming 5'12"
Peter Sculthorpe

From Kakadu
Peter Sculthorpe

- 16** Grave 3'18"
- 17** Comodo 3'01"
- 18** Misterioso 1'34"
- 19** Cantando 3'37"



Now it is the time of night
That the graves all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide:
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream

[Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream* Act V, Scene I, Puck]

Here begins an enchanted journey of magic, mischief, dreams, and romance—a fantastical world akin to that of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its capricious fairies casting love-spells over mortals lost in the woods at night.



Nothing captures this Shakespearean imagery more vividly than the *Five Bagatelles* by English composer William Walton (1902-1983). As the title suggests, these pieces are essentially light-hearted in character; despite their fiery virtuosity and stormy passions they are little more than trifles. The capriciousness of the first movement (*allegro*) and the vitality of the fifth (*con slancio*) are balanced by the hypnotic qualities of the second (*lento*) and the dreamy enchantment of the fourth (*sempre espressivo*). The central piece, *alla Cubana*, combines the best of these

qualities, while also alluding to Latin America.

The *Five Bagatelles* were written for English guitarist Julian Bream in 1972 and were later orchestrated in a set entitled *Varii capricci*. They were Walton's second attempt at writing for the guitar, after his song-cycle *Anon in Love*, composed for Bream and tenor Peter Pears.

Jongo, is a lively dance related to the Samba. Written in 1982 by Paulo Bellinati (b.1950), one of Brazil's finest guitarists, this piece's catchy rhythms leap off the page in a continuous chain of virtuosic improvisations. But as with much Brazilian music, there is also a softer, more sensuous side to the work.

Central to this disc, are the works of the Paraguayan guitarist and composer, Agustin Barrios (1885-1944). A hopeless romantic, Barrios deliberately cultivated a fantasy persona, namely that he was a Guariní Indian chief taught by Catholic mission fathers.¹ He commenced

marketing himself as the "Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay".² The mystical and magical side of this persona is captured in many of the composer's poems, but most famously in *Profesión de fe* ("Profession of Faith"), which portrays the guitar as "a mysterious box" given the composer by Tupá, the great spirit, while "in the middle of the greening forest," along with "six silver moonbeams" (representing the strings of the guitar), "with which to discover its secrets". Like several of his poems, *Profesión de fe* emphasizes the mystery of the jungle, the enchanted forest of South America.³

The dreamy side of Barrios is perfectly represented by the hauntingly beautiful *Preludio in C minor*. A similar romanticism is found in the famous tremolo piece, *Una limosna por el amor de Dios* (An Offering for the Love of God). The last work that Barrios composed, this piece was supposedly written in response to the persistent knocking and heartfelt pleas of

a beggar woman.

The enchanting miniature *Julia Florida* was named after the niece of Barrios's good friend Francisco Salazar who provided Barrios with a home in Costa Rica in 1938. Its gentle rhythms are those of the barcarolle, a lullaby evoking the gentle rocking motion of a boat on water.

The lively rhythms of *Danza Paraguaya* are infused with the charm of Latin American folk music. Its textures are reminiscent of the Paraguayan harp, a folk instrument indigenous to Paraguay.

While several of Barrios's works have a dream-like character, this is most explicitly evoked in *Un sueño en la floresta* ("Dream in the Forest"). Originally named *Souvenir d'un reve* ("Remembrance of a Dream") its title was presumably changed in order to more elegantly mould with Barrios's mystical jungle persona. Enduringly romantic, the piece conjures up a fantastical world of magic and enchantment—the sort of magical

imagery that was popular in the early half of the twentieth century. One might think, for example, of such famous children's tales as Enid Blyton's *The Enchanted Woods*, peopled with fairies, gnomes, and fantastic creatures. It has been suggested that the title of *Un sueño en la floresta* might best be translated as "Dream in the Magic Garden".

La catedral (the Cathedral) is Barrios's most widely played work. Neo-baroque in its tonal language, the composition was inspired by Barrios's experience of San José cathedral in Montevideo, Uruguay. The dreamy spirituality of the *lento* is followed by an *andante religioso* full of regal, quasi-baroque, dotted rhythms. The final movement is an *allegro solenne* that is simultaneously virtuosic and solemn.

The works by Sculthorpe on this disc portray a very different sort of dreaming: one related to the concept of the dreamtime, the mystical time of creation in the beliefs of the Australian Aboriginal.

Into the Dreaming began its life as a cello solo and was later expanded into a longer guitar solo at the instigation of John Williams (in 1994). It is an introspective work, not virtuosic but poignantly expressive. The principal themes possess a child-like simplicity united with a sense of gravity and profundity. The work is descriptive of the landscape of Uluru (or Ayers Rock), a site of immense significance to Aboriginal spirituality, and is also concerned with the composer's grief for a dear friend (Lilian Peart). *Into the Dreaming* is a rare gem among the modern repertoire of the guitar.

From Kakadu was commissioned by Adrian Walter for the 1993 *Shell Darwin Guitar Festival*, where it was premiered by John Williams. Along with *Nourlangie* (Sculthorpe's guitar concerto), it has been widely acclaimed as an important contribution to the repertoire. The composer's note is as follows:



The terrain of Kakadu National Park, in the north of Australia, stretches from rugged mountain plateaus to coastal tidal plains. From Kakadu is the sixth work of mine that takes this terrain as its point of departure. Several of the works employ similar melodic material, and much of this work is based upon the main theme of my orchestral piece *Kakadu* (1988). *From Kakadu* is in four sections: Grave, Comodo, Misterioso, Cantando. The first and third sections are based upon the Kakadu melody; the fourth section grows from it into a long, singing line. The work is an intimate one, being concerned with the deep contentment that I feel whenever I return to Kakadu. This feeling is ever-present in the dance-like second section, and in the singing line, and its counterpoint, of the final Cantando.⁴

The first and third movements are based on the “Kakadu melody”, a lament from the Elcho Islands. The setting of the “Kakadu melody” in the first movement is taken from Sculthorpe’s first guitar concerto, *The Visions of Captain Quiros* (a work now withdrawn). Quiros was a Spanish explorer who set out from South America on a quest to discover and colonise the great southern continent. Quiros’s obsession for the great south land was never realised, at least in that he never made it to Australia (although he did colonise Vanuatu). Sculthorpe later based an opera on Quiros, portraying him as a passionate visionary and mystical dreamer.

The fourth movement of *From Kakadu* employs another Torres Strait melody previously used in *Songs of Sea and Sky* (1991) for clarinet and piano.⁵ This melody is combined with motives from the second movement (which are derived from the Elcho Island Lament), to create a complex contrapuntal web expressing a sense of rapturous contentment. Its long singing line is spun out in the final coda, as if transcending mundane reality and finally entering the timeless realm of the dreaming.

JONATHAN PAGET



One of Australia’s most exciting guitarists, Jonathan Paget maintains an active performance schedule as well as teaching on a range of musical topics, from guitar to theory and music history. He is full-time at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University, Perth.

As a solo classical guitarist, Paget has performed throughout Australia and the US. He released his first solo CD recording in 2002, entitled *Kaleidoscope*, a celebration of the guitar’s multicultural horizons with colourful works from around the world. Paget has won numerous competitions, including the Shell Darwin International Guitar Competition (1997), the Ramirez Australian Guitar Competition (Sydney, 1995), and the Rantucci Guitar Competition (Buffalo, 1999). He has also been a prize-winner in the Guitar Foundation of America International Solo Competition (Charleston, 1999).

Paget's performances continue to garner stunning reviews, being described as "subtle, intimate artistry" [*The West Australian*], "extensive and rewarding innings" [*Classical Guitar*], and "a fine musician with brilliant technique" [*Soundboard*]. In a recent duo performance, the *The West Australian* reported on his "near-peerless command of the instrument which, in his hands, seemed not so much an inanimate construction of wood, varnish and glue than an extension of his musical being".

Paget has been a frequent guest artist at the *Shell Darwin International Guitar Festival*. In 2007, he appeared with harpsichordist Stewart Smith, and also performed the *Concerto Andaluz* with Slava Grigoryan (as part of *Saphire*) and the Darwin Festival Orchestra. Recent concerto performances have included Sculthorpe's *Nourlangie*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Romancero Gitano* (for guitar and choir), and Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

A Fulbright scholar and recipient of the coveted Hackett Studentship, Paget completed higher qualifications at the Eastman School of Music in upstate New York. Studying with the esteemed guitarist and pedagogue, Dr Nicholas Goluses, he completed the Master of Music (performance and literature), the Master of Arts (music theory pedagogy), and the Doctorate of Musical Arts (performance and literature), which included research centring on the guitar music of Peter Sculthorpe. As president of the Classical

Guitar Society of Western Australia, Paget has played a significant role in the continued success of the Western Australian International Classical Guitar Ensemble Festival, which brings together some fifty guitar ensembles on an annual basis.



1. Richard Stover, *Six Silver Moonbeams: The Life and Times of Agustín Barrios Mangoré* (California: Querico Publications, 1992), 112.

2. Stover, *Six Silver Moonbeams*, 111.

3. Stover, *Six Silver Moonbeams*, 111.

4. Peter Sculthorpe, composer's note in Sculthorpe, *From Kakadu and Into the Dreaming* (London: Faber Music Ltd., 1994).

5. Peter Sculthorpe, composer's note in Sculthorpe, *Songs of Sea and Sky* (London: Faber Music Ltd., 1991). The source of this melody was *Traditional Music of Torres Strait* [sound recording], compiled by Jeremy Beckett; musical analysis and transcriptions by Trevor A. Jones.

Recording made at
Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Chapel
(Rochester, New York)

Recording Engineer: Anton Machleder

Mastering: Lee Buddle, Soundmine Studios
(Perth, Western Australia)

Guitar: Greg Smallman

Front cover painting: "Rising" (2006) by Garry Duncan, 92cm x 122cm, mixed media on belgium linen ... www.garryduncangenius.com

Photography: Graham Hall

Booklet layout: Martin Wright, Move Records

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