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# CHORDS & THYME

English Folksongs for Guitar

Edward Flower • Joel Brown, Guest Artist

- |                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| 1 The Death of Queen Jane      | 4:34 |
| 2 She Moved Through the Fair   | 4:31 |
| 3 I Wish                       | 3:58 |
| 4 The Lass of Patie's Mill     | 4:26 |
| 5 The Golden Vanity            | 2:08 |
| 6 Nottamun Town                | 4:07 |
| 7 The Water is Wide            | 4:20 |
| 8 My Last Farewell to Stirling | 3:33 |
| 9 The Cherry Tree Carol        | 4:23 |
| 10 Barbara Allen               | 3:52 |
| 11 The Drunken Sailor          | 1:56 |
| 12 Suo Gan                     | 4:42 |
| 13 Simple Gifts                | 2:24 |
| 14 The Grey Cock               | 3:48 |
| 15 The House Carpenter         | 3:38 |
| 16 Wild Mountain Thyme         | 3:26 |

Total Program Length: 63:10

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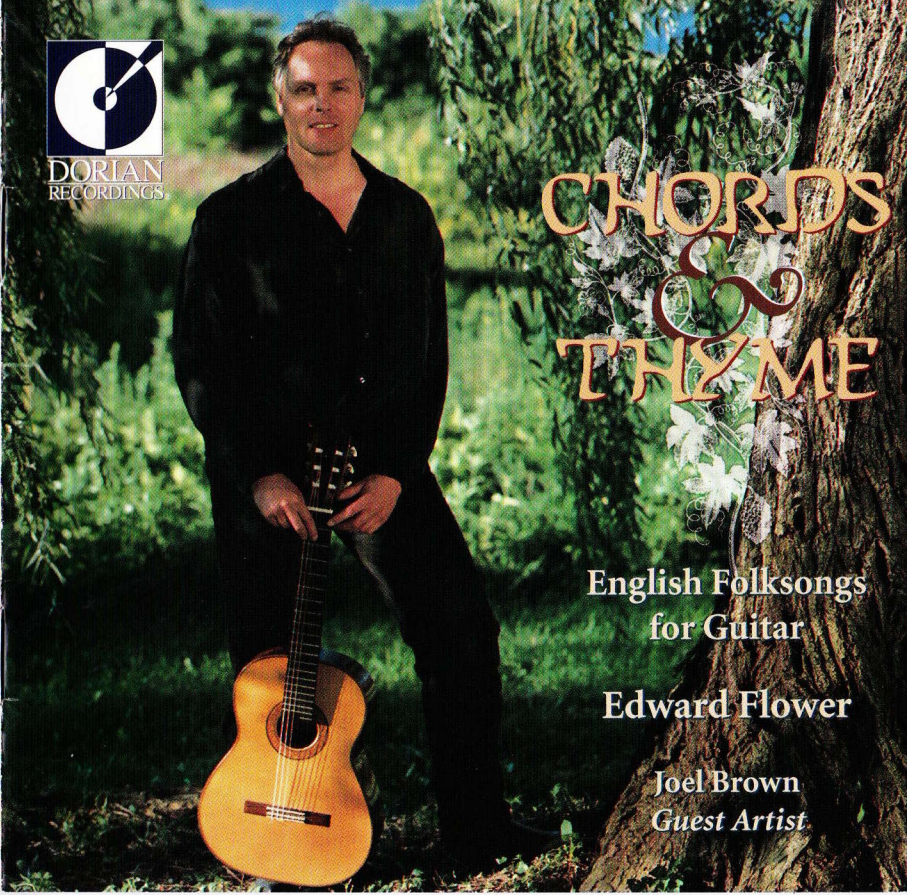
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# CHORDS & THYME

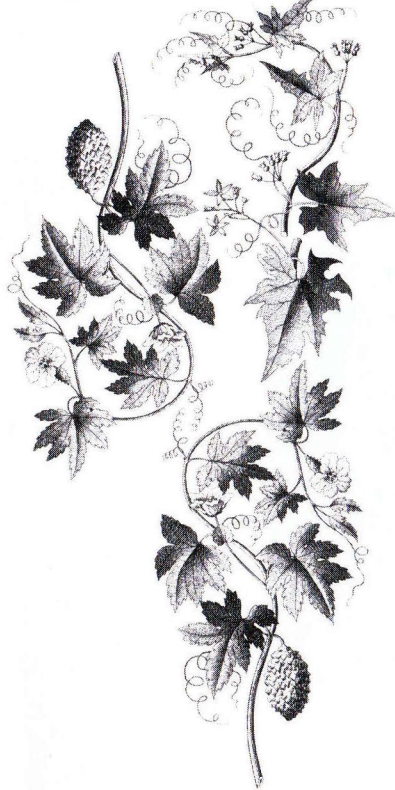
English Folksongs  
for Guitar

Edward Flower

Joel Brown  
Guest Artist







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English Folksongs  
for Guitar

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Guest Artist  
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*Cover photograph of Edward Flower by Rodolphe Smith Fouché*



## PROGRAM NOTES

To sing, dance, draw and tell stories are fundamental human expressive needs. Folk Music, passed down from generation to generation, and often combining various of

these fundamental elements is a natural cultural resource. It belongs to us all.

Folk song has a haunting, spiritual quality which all listeners seem to recognize instinctively. It bypasses

the intellect and goes straight to the heart, stirring a response at the core of our being. Composers through the ages have drawn inspiration from this resource because of its extraordinary, luminous quality. A folk song is what it is—it cannot be improved upon. A wild flower can be

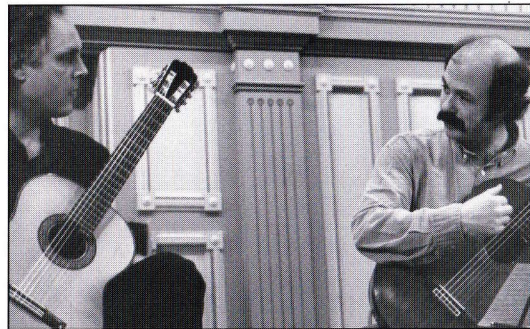


AMP/P

plucked from its natural setting and placed amid prize-winning roses, but its integral natural beauty is in no way diminished by such cultivated surroundings. In the same way, a composer may incorporate a folk song into a large symphonic work, yet no matter how grand the underpinnings are, the simplicity of the song shines through and its integral natural beauty can only be enhanced by such a setting.

The Industrial Revolution thrust much of this music into the category of “endangered species”, and no lover of folk song can ever forget the debt of gratitude

owed to such titans as Cecil Sharp, Ralph Vaughan-Williams and Alan Lomax to name but three without whose efforts much of this music might have been lost.



AMP/P

I wish I could write something which would give the listener some insight about the settings on this recording, but the process of writing them seems so chaotic in retrospect that it defies helpful description. I began them initially to doctor a concert program which seemed too severe. Working with these tunes became so uplifting that I just kept going, and the result is the collection presented on this album.

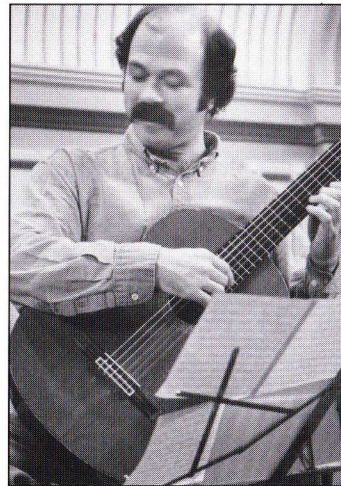
Almost all of these songs have important personal associations for me. Some I learned in childhood and many I learned for professional reasons, but they all have been “present” within me for many years.

So, in transforming these songs into instrumental settings, I found that I had to live with each song long enough so that I was no longer dependent upon the lyrics to propel the



song dramatically, and could unravel the possibilities of each one in purely musical terms. Folk melodies tend to be quite short, so the pleasure and the challenge came in varying the verses instrumentally either by raising or lowering the melody and occasionally modulating, or by changing the texture, style or harmony of the accompaniment, the purpose being to let the tune catch the light in different ways, and to convey a sense of storytelling.

All but four of these settings have been arranged for two guitars. This has been my combination of preference since I first heard Renaissance lute duets as a teenager. The Italian and English lutenist-composers used chord voicings and counterpoint to create a sort of sweet dissonance. It is not

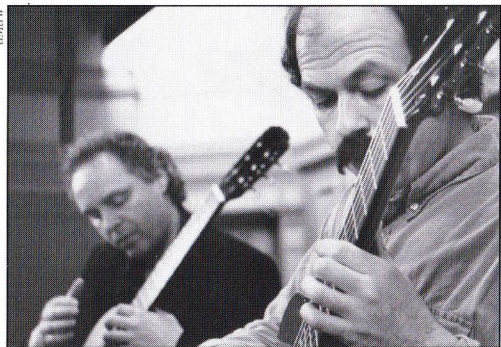




at all melodramatic, yet, for me, it has tremendous poignancy, passion and power. With two guitars, rather than one, there exist far greater possibilities of range and texture and, most importantly, one player can be left free to

play a melodic line without having to worry about the accompaniment. Conversely, the player with the accompaniment is free to explore fuller harmonic possibilities without having to be concerned with the tune.

I arranged four songs for solo guitar because I felt they demanded a simpler, less layered approach. Curiously, two guitars sound as intimate as one, and it is my hope and intention that each listener enjoy the beauty and feel the



power of these songs and derive as much pleasure as I had in writing these settings as Joel and I had in playing them.

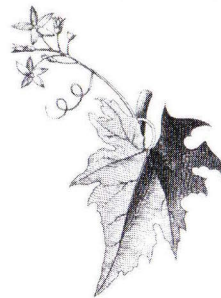
I am indebted to my friend and associate Joel Brown for all his support and helpful suggestions.

I gratefully dedicate all of these settings to Knell Wren.

—Edward Flower



*Producer Douglas Brown and Edward Flower discuss a take*



## EDWARD FLOWER

NELLIE FINK



Edward Flower was born in Stratford-on-Avon, England, and received his education at Winchester College. He began his musical studies at the age of nine on the violin but later switched to the guitar and lute.

He studied at the Spanish Guitar Centre in London and attended the course "*Musica en Compostela*", where he met the Spanish teacher José Tomás with whom he studied for three years in Alicante.

After returning to England, he formed a partnership with the singer Martin Best, becoming his accompanist and duet partner. Together they toured the U.S.A., Canada, UK, Sweden, New Zealand and Australia, making numerous recordings.

Mr. Flower has also worked with many theatre companies—most notably the Royal Shakespeare Company

where he met the director Peter Brook for whom he created (through improvisation) the guitar part in Brook's legendary production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

As a soloist, Edward Flower has played throughout the United States and Europe, performing with such renowned chamber music groups as the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in addition to festival appearances at Tanglewood, Bath, Camden, Corfu and Marlboro.

As a composer and arranger, he has worked with the Juilliard Theater — arranging the score of *The Beggar's Opera* — with Music Theater Group for whom he wrote two music/theater works, which were produced in both Massachusetts and New York City. He wrote the score for the documentary film *Into the Mainstream* and has written and arranged numerous works for solo guitar, two and three guitars, guitar and flute and also guitar with brass quintet, which he recorded with the Empire Brass on the Telarc album, *Romantic Brass*.

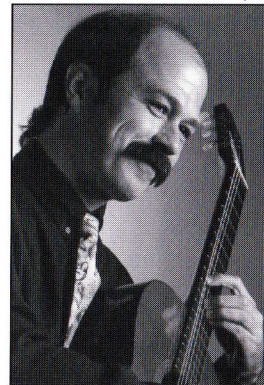
Edward Flower has taught at the University of Connecticut, Wesleyan University, Boston University, Tanglewood Institute and is currently on the faculty of Ithaca College.

Radio and television appearances of his include performances for BBC, ITV, PBS, Radio Nacional Español, Sveriges Radio, CBC, ABC, and NPR, and he is featured on the following recording labels: Argo, EMI, Classic Editions, Musical Heritage Society, Telarc. Mr. Flower now records exclusively for Dorian Recordings.



## **GUEST ARTIST: JOEL BROWN**

Joel Brown is a versatile guitarist who in addition to being an active soloist, has appeared with the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Hartford Symphony, and the New York City Opera Co. He has played lute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and performed at the Festival of Contemporary Music at Tanglewood. Mr. Brown tours and records regularly with Bill Crofut and Chris Brubeck, and with them appeared on NBC's TODAY, and CNN's Showbiz Today. In 1994, Brown's CD with Jan Vinci and Ann Alton, *Five Premiers: Chamber Works with Guitar* was released on Albany Records. Joel Brown graduated with honors from the Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts, and completed graduate studies at Ithaca College. He is presently Artist-in-Residence at Skidmore College, in Saratoga Springs, New York and is on the music faculty at Schenectady County Community College



LARRY ABRAMS







## **CHORDS & THYME / ENGLISH FOLKSONGS FOR GUITAR**

**EDWARD FLOWER, GUITAR**

**GUEST ARTIST: JOEL BROWN**

*CATALOG NO. DOR-90204*

*Recorded at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall in Troy, NY in April, 1994*

*Producer: Douglas Brown*

*Engineers: Douglas Brown, Brian C. Peters*

*Editor: Douglas Brown*

*Booklet Preparation & Editing: Brian M. Levine, Rita Marie Rowney*

*Graphic Design: design M design W*

*Executive Producer: Brian M. Levine*

All arrangements and compositions are by Edward Flower (Fordham Music/BMI) except "The Golden Vanitee" which is by Edward Flower and Martin Best.

Edward Flower's guitar is a "Millennium" by Thomas Humphrey, New York, 1991.

Joel Brown's guitar is by Paulino Bernabe, Madrid, 1975.



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