

**Shadow Lands** is Nick Fletcher's 2<sup>nd</sup> volume of Contemporary Classical Guitar music. On this recording Nick presents 19 of his original compositions from his catalogue of works published by **Les Productions d'OZ**, Canada. This is music for the Guitar that contains influences from diverse sources: Spanish, South American, Baroque, Celtic and Contemporary music abound in Nick's unique fusion of musical ideas that span the centuries and the Globe.



*I would like to give a special thank you to my friend and colleague **Carl Lamb** for making this recording possible and for his wonderful contribution to the recorded sound of the guitar.*

*Also thanks to my wife **Linsey** for her endless support through difficult times and to my beautiful daughters **Katherine and Rachel**.*

*Thanks also to **Les Productions d'OZ**, **Sylvain Lemay** and **Eric Dussault** for making this CD available, many thanks Sylvain for believing in my music.*

# Nick Fletcher

## Shadow Lands



DZ 1790



**CIUDAD DE LOS ENCANTOS:** This three movement work was inspired by a visit to the *Lady of the serrenia*, otherwise known as the enchanted *City of Ronda* in Andalusia, Spain. The city is situated high up in the serrenia. Surrounded by towering mountains the city is a jewel in the ancient kingdom of Granada. It's sublime architecture, which is a mixture of the city's greek, roman and moslem past is breathtakingly beautiful. The city has a fascinating history. Because of its strategic position it was, amongst others, much coveted by the kings of Malaga and Sevilla and was finally incorporated into the kingdom of Sevilla in 1059. The composition is my interpretation of this beautiful city and its vibrant history. The views from the Alameda-promenade of the gorge and the sights and smells of the fragrant gardens in summer is a taste of paradise!

**SHADOW LANDS:** Despite the composition being firmly rooted in the tonality of B minor the use of many chromatic notes, occasional dissonant chords and whole tone scales gives the piece a slightly unsettled feel. At times the tonalities of minor and major keys become slightly obscured as the composition explores a musical landscape that lies somewhere between them. Hence the title "Shadow Lands".

**THE RAPIDS:** My first encounter with the music of Dino Saluzzi was in 1983. I almost wore out my old "vinyl" LP of his recording "Kultrum" as I had listened so many times to Dino's mercurial accordion type instrument, the "bandoneon" and various other flutes and percussion instruments over and over again!

His music has always had a profound impact on me. It is often sad and reflective and at other times joyously uplifting, yet always reflecting the heart and soul of argentinean culture. Dino is a genius at fusing elements of folk, tango, jazz, pop and classical music into his compositions, but always with integrity, never for simple commercial reasons! This composition "The Rapids" is my humble musical Hommage to a man who has given me, and the world, such uplifting music.

The composition is loosely based upon the "Milonga", one of the most beautiful argentinean rhythms.

**WATERS EDGE:** It was inspired by the gentle movement of water. It is written in ways which are evocative of flowing water. The ebb and flow is very important to the interpretation of this piece, hopefully the natural contours of the lines will help reveal the flowing character of it.

**POEMA DEL CANTE JONDO:** Written in 1921, but unpublished until 1931, the collection of poems entitled *Poema del Cante Jondo* or in English "Poem of Deep Song" by the famous Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca have become an inspiration for many artists and musicians. Lorca was fascinated about the notion of cante jondo (deep song) In the 1920's he gave a lecture at the Alhambra in Granada where, along with the composer Manuel de Falla, he reflected on the idea of *duende* which he felt lay in the spiritual roots of indian, gypsy and flamenco music. The poetics of this idea became the means for him to express his feelings for the mystery and wonder of existence. He once wrote "an old maestro of the guitar says the duende is not in the throat; the duende climbs up inside of you, from the soles of your feet," meaning that art is not a question of ability but is in the life blood of spontaneous creation! Deep song concerns itself with exploring the depths of emotions, pain and sorrow and a sense of yearning for the mysteries of life.

This collection of poems touches on all these aspects of life and I have always found myself drawn to them and they have had an impact on my own artistic sensibilities.

The 2 compositions "El Grito" and "En el Huerta de la Petenera" form part of this suite and are directly inspired by this collection of Poems by Garcia Lorca.

**VOICE FROM THE PAST:** The title has two meanings. The first meaning is the work includes a number of chord voicings that I once used many years ago. It is also a reference to a famous composer who lived many years ago but that's my little secret! But you may be able to discern who it is after playing the music!

**THREE SCENES FROM BRAZIL:** These three compositions evoke the sights and sounds of both rural and urban Brazil by using traditional brazilian rhythmical forms. "Mariana" is based on a chôro rhythm and "Apreciando O Carnaval" is a lively samba. "Seres Minha, Para Sempre" is roughly translated as "Be mine forever" and is a cancao. A cancao in Brazilian music is a song with a particular meaning, that of a love song. This composition is an evocation of my love for my beautiful wife Linsey.

**FANTASIA NUMBER 5 AND 8:** Written in the neo-baroque style, this composition shows my love for all things baroque. No music was ever written for the classical guitar as we know it today during the baroque era. As guitarists we have to perform transcriptions of lute, violin, cello and baroque guitar music if we wish to enter into this sound world. Despite their being a great wealth of this wonderful music now available to the classical guitarist, it is nice to have music which is written for the modern player in mind. This music has been written with the modern classical guitarist in mind so you will find both musical and technical ideas that work much better for the guitarist. Baroque music has such a grace and purity of line which I find compelling. I call this composition Fantasia because I never know where the music is leading me when I begin. The forms emerge as the lines unfold and I only stop when it feels correct to do so. As this music is essentially written down improvisation sometimes you will notice odd metres of time. This, if anything, improves the flow of the line rather than hinders it you will notice that this type of rhythmical peculiarity also occurs in the wonderful music of the great lute composer Sylvius Leopold Weiss.

The music that I have written is not intended to be an exact copy of baroque musical style but an adaptation. You will often find harmonies and modulations which are not in common with the baroque period but give the music a more modern twist without losing any of its baroque charm. The interpreter is welcome to add any ornamentation they feel appropriate as a performer from that period would have done. In *The Chalice*, adding ornamentation to the work is perfectly acceptable and would further enhance the baroque character of the piece.

The title reflects a slow, almost processional movement, as if carrying something of value and of spiritual significance!

**UMA CAMINHADA NO PARQUE:** This composition evokes the distinct flavour of Brazil by the use of the chôro rhythm. Translated into english the title means "a walk in the park". The tempo should not be too quick but reflect the pace of a brisk walk. The opening idea came to me whilst walking my dog in the park, hence the title of the piece.

**THE SOUND OF ARISAIG:** The title has two meanings. Firstly it is the name given to a stretch of water around the hebridean islands of Rum and Eigg which are off the west coast of Scotland. This short composition is also an evocation of the landscape of this beautiful part of the british Isles and therefore is my interpretation and sound of Arisaig.

**BIRD OF PARADISE:** This tremolo study was inspired by the most exotic of birds the *Bird of Paradise*. A bird native to the island of New Guinea it is known as the great diva amongst the avian world. Its beautiful movements, colours, plumage and fluttering wings, displayed during the creature's courtship rituals, are one of nature's great wonders. Sometimes these rituals can go on for many hours! The tremolo technique, for me, always evokes a sense of romance and so it is apt that such a composition has a title that reflects one of nature's most flamboyant lovers!