

PUBLICATION REVIEWS (continued)

Jens Franke and Stuart Willis (editors).

Baroque Guitar Anthology, Vol. 2.

Mainz: Schott Music, 2012 [ED13437]. 36 pp. + CD. \$19.95.

Here is *Volume 2* of a two-volume collection of music written for the thirteen-course lute or the five-course guitar between 1620 and 1750. The intended audience is students at Grade 3 or 4. There are twenty-five pieces, by some well-known names (Visée, Weiss, Corbetta) and others, such as Daube, Conradi, Hagen, and Bittner. All the selections are quite short, save for a pair of Minuets by Weiss that conclude the book. These last ones were recorded by Segovia in 1969, and are worth concert performance. The CD (included) provides the student with a good rendering of each piece, and makes for pleasant listening on its own. — David Norton

David Gaudreau. *Prélude, Cantabile.*

Québec: Les Productions d'Oz, 2012 [DZ1719]. 3 pp. \$5.00.

Prélude and *Cantabile* are beautiful, simple pieces. They are both in E major and travel through multiple positions comfortably. *Prélude* includes use of open strings even while in higher positions. The *Cantabile* is more nostalgic with a handful of modern harmonies. More fingering would be helpful learning the pieces and tempo indications would be nice. Each piece is a single page in length. Both pieces are fairly easy to sight read through and are fun to play. — Amy Hite

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CD REVIEWS

SoloDuo (Matteo Meli and Lorenzo Micheli, guitars).

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco [:] The Well-Tempered Guitars [:] 24 Preludes and Fugues. Solaria Sol 201201, 2012 (two discs).

Any new recording by SoloDuo is a cause for celebration, especially when they release what is likely to be a definitive account of an important work. (I have not heard the complete recording by the brilliant Brasil Guitar Duo; the honor of “definitive” might well be shared!)

Castelnuovo-Tedesco was inspired by the great Ida Presti and Alexandre Lagoya, writing forty-eight pieces in the amazing span of just a few months in 1962. Sadly, Presti and Lagoya were able to record only the E-major pair before Presti’s tragically early death in 1967. The music is amazingly inventive. Despite the rapidity of its composition, Tedesco doesn’t repeat himself and every piece sounds fresh. The compositional requirement of using many keys, which seldom occur in the guitar literature, likely reduced the use of clichés.

Since we are dealing with fifty works here—the duo includes the *Fuga elegiaca* written after Presti’s death—I shall not attempt description of the individual pieces. Lorenzo Micheli’s admirable notes give a good overview of the composer’s approaches. Nonetheless, I must mention a few special favorites.

Disc 1: The A-minor prelude has a wonderful series of rapid undulating lines with occasional moments of repose leading into a lyrical fugue. The E-major set (recorded by Presti and Lagoya) begins with a beautiful melody over a rapid arpeggio accompaniment leading to a very Italian section and then to a light-hearted *bourrée* fugue. The quite unexpected B-flat major prelude is a *rumba* with a very “Tedescan” burlesque march as its fugue. The F-minor set is an eerie and sad pair of considerable depth.

Disc 2: The opening G-major prelude is a wonderful series of arabesques leading to a conversational fugue shared by the guitars. The rather Scottish sounding A-major prelude is inspired by the Whitman poem, “I Hear America Singing.” (Really.) Another poem, this time by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, is the inspiration for the E-flat major prelude. Its fugue is a whimsical *siciliana*. Rapid passages run throughout the *Allegretto mefistofelico* B-flat minor prelude and lend a devilish charm to the fugue as well.

As the set concludes, the *improvando* melody of the C-minor prelude sounds like a bit of Django Reinhardt at the beginning, then becomes a rather strict fugue subject, showing its versatility. Despite the above citations, be assured there are no “duds” in the set. It is a remarkable compositional achievement. The performers’ achievement is on an equal level, every work ideally realized and beautifully played. The recorded sound does not let down the enterprise at all, being both warm and detailed.

— Al Kunze