

A close-up photograph of a man and a woman, the guitar duo ChromaDuo, looking directly at the camera. They are holding a guitar together, with the strings and fretboard visible between them. The man is on the left, with a beard and short hair, and the woman is on the right, with dark hair and light-colored eyes. The background is a dark, neutral color.

WHAT I SAW IN THE WATER
21st-Century Works for Guitar Duo
ChromaDuo

What I Saw in the Water 21st-Century Works for Guitar Duo

For the five groups of works selected here we are fortunate to have been given detailed notes from each composer concerning the inspiration behind the pieces. The composers themselves are also leading concert guitarists intimately associated with the idioms, culture and expressiveness of the classical guitar as well as the complexities of writing for duos.

Simone Iannarelli (b. 1970, Rome, Italy), composer and classical guitarist, is professor of guitar at the University of Colima's Faculty of Fine Arts Music Department, Mexico. He studied classical guitar with Massimo Delle Cese, graduating from the Conservatorio Alfredo Casella in L'Aquila with first class honours. He later moved to Paris to further his guitar education with Roland Dyens and to study orchestration with Guillaume Cornesson. Iannarelli is a prolific composer, and has given guitar recitals throughout Europe and Mexico.

Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) was one of the most eminent Mexican painters of her era, particularly esteemed for finding her inspiration in Mexico's popular culture. In 1929 she married the great Mexican artist, Diego Rivera, a further immense influence on her life and art.

This work for two guitars, in the form of a suite, is a promenade over seven iconic pictures of the famous Mexican painter Frida Kahlo. Each piece tries to recreate the images, atmosphere, inside feelings or background of these works of Frida. Sometimes these are more descriptive, as in *Unos cuantos piquetitos* ('A Few Small Nips') and *Mi nacimiento* ('My Birth'), through the use of special guitar effects to catch the inner suffering of the artist, or, as in *Las dos Fridas* ('The Two Fridas'), use imitative (canon) style. Other times they are more oneiric (surrealistic), as in *Lo que vi en el agua* ('What I Saw in the Water'), or *El sueño* ('The Dream'), using harmonies borrowed from Impressionism. – Simone Iannarelli

Leo Brouwer (b. 1939, Havana, Cuba), is universally acknowledged as one of the most challenging and innovative of contemporary composers. His prolific output ranges from solo guitar pieces to symphonic works, including concertos, chamber music and many film scores. Brouwer's guitar works have developed over four decades through various styles embracing the avant-garde and the experimental, as well as neo-Romanticism. His guitar music is now performed internationally wherever the guitar is played and frequently recorded, making him one of the most popular 20th-century composers for the instrument.

Completed on 10 August 2021, *The Circle Game* for two guitars was composed expressly for Tracy Smith and Rob MacDonald, members of Canadian ChromaDuo. Their professionalism motivated me greatly to make this piece. The title *The Circle Game* comes literally from the book of the same name by Margaret Atwood, one of the most eminent writers of the last 50 years. This piece is, at the same time, a tribute to this special woman. It is really very difficult for me to talk or write about my music, I prefer to compose it and not to explain it. Thanks to Tracy and Rob for encouraging these projects in favour of the guitar duo repertoire. – Leo Brouwer

Dušan Bogdanović (b. 1955, Belgrade, Serbia) began playing the guitar at the age of twelve. He later studied composition with Alberto Ginastera and Pierre Wissmer, and guitar with Maria Livia São Marcos at the Geneva Conservatoire. Having won a number of prestigious guitar competitions he made his United States debut at Carnegie Hall, New York, in 1977. For some years (1990–2007) he taught at the San Francisco Conservatory, and now teaches at the Geneva Conservatory. He is a prolific composer with over 50 published compositions, often exploring different idioms and combining classical, jazz, and ethnic influences within his music, as well as a highly acclaimed recording artist with many albums to his credit.

The *Sonata No. 2* for two guitars was commissioned by ChromaDuo in 2013. The piece follows a customary scheme in four movements: the first movement is in the traditional sonata form; the second is a lyrical *Andante*; the third is a tongue-in-cheek humorous bagatelle and the last is a swing-infused fast-paced finale. Overall, the piece is a stylistic hybrid between contemporary classical music and jazz, which is apparent especially in the last two movements. An interesting detail: whereas the first subject of the sonata form is derived from Indian *purvi thaat*, the second subject is a chromatic harmonic progression reminiscent of a popular song. These two elements remain integral for the whole sonata, creating dramatic tension and complementarity throughout the piece. – Maria Livia São Marcos

Dale Kavanagh (b. 1958, Halifax, Canada) studied guitar with Eli Kassner in Toronto and later moved to Basel, Switzerland, where she studied with Oscar Ghiglia. Between 1986 and 1988 she won prizes in many international guitar competitions before embarking on an international career. Dale Kavanagh married the guitarist Thomas Kirchhoff, and they formed the Amadeus Guitar Duo, one of the world's foremost guitar partnerships. Many composers have written music for Kavanagh, including Roland Dyens, Carlo Domeniconi, Stephen Dodgson and Stephen Funk Pearson, and she is herself a prolific composer.

During the beginning of the Covid times, I was able to spend over seven months in Nova Scotia. Every single day I walked the coastline of the Bay of Fundy, or the beaches on the South Shore, and I walked along the rocks of Peggy's Cove. Rob MacDonald is a Maritimer and Tracy Anne Smith has many relatives in Cape Breton – her mother is from there. When they suggested that I write a piece on a ghost story,

I immediately agreed. Maritimers love their ghost stories; in fact, I started to think that this could be the beginning of a series of pieces. *The Ghost of Peggy's Cove* is one of the most famous ghost stories because of the famous lighthouse there.¹ I decided that this was the best story to begin with. I tried to be musically descriptive and I also chose my notes for themes from the words Margaret and Peggy's Cove to inspire me and to get the show on the road. There is the dance of the husband before he falls in the water and the beautiful waves of the sea mixed with the grieving of dear Margaret. – Dale Kavanagh

Sérgio Assad (b. 1952, São Paulo, Brazil), and his brother Odair (b. 1956) are international virtuosi whose partnership is acknowledged as one of the world's most eminent guitar duos. They studied guitar from an early age with Monina Tavora, a former student of Segovia. Together they have given recitals in many countries and have established a formidable discography. Sérgio Assad pays tribute here to the great Tunisian/French guitarist, improviser and composer Roland Dyens (1955–2016).

Back in 1979, Roland Dyens made his first visit to Brazil, competing in the Villa Lobos Competition, marking his initial foray into the Brazilian music scene. At that time, he was still a relatively undiscovered gem in the world of music. It wasn't until a few years later, around 1984 or 1985, when I relocated to Paris, that I truly began to appreciate his music.

Roland's compositions and performances gradually became part of my musical landscape, and our friendship blossomed as we bonded over our shared love for the guitar and Brazilian music. One standout moment in our collaboration was the composition *Côté Nord*, which Roland dedicated to my brother Odair and me, affectionately dubbing it

¹ The ghost of a woman named Margaret is said to haunt the lighthouse at Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia. As the tale goes, she and her husband moved there after losing their children in an accident. One day, in an effort to lift her spirits, her husband danced on the rocks, but tragically slipped and fell to his death. Distraught, Margaret jumped into the ocean, taking her own life. Ever since, a woman in a blue dress is said to haunt the area, and when visitors get too close, she jumps off the rocks and disappears.

Éloge du duo Assad. Performing this piece alongside Odair always brought immense satisfaction, as it showcased Roland's innovative guitar techniques and knack for crafting dynamic compositions that pushed the boundaries of traditional guitar music.

Roland Dyens swiftly found his place within the guitar community, not just as a player, but also as a composer with a distinctive voice. His compositions, including his most renowned piece, *Tango en Skaï*, captured the imagination of guitarists worldwide and solidified his reputation as a trailblazer in the genre.

In crafting my homage to Roland, *Dyens en trois temps*, I sought to capture the essence of his musical evolution. Each movement reflects a different aspect

of his career, from his exploration of northern themes in *Roland au Nord*, which echoes his recording of jazz standards, using the same set of pieces he used in his album, to his reinterpretation of French songs in *La Chanson et Roland*, where I used the same set he arranged for his extraordinary album dedicated to French songs. Finally, his passion for Brazilian music in *Roland au Sud*, where echoes of *Tango en Skaï* are woven into the fabric of the piece. It's a tribute born out of admiration for Roland's artistry and a deep sense of loss at his untimely departure from this world. – Sérgio Assad

Graham Wade



ChromaDuo

ChromaDuo shares uncommonly beautiful music with audiences throughout the world. For the past 15 years, Tracy Anne Smith and Rob MacDonald have given concerts across Canada and the United States, as well as in Mexico, England and Germany. Passionate advocates for their art form, their deep creative connection allows audiences to immerse themselves fully into the music. They are the dedicatees of works by top composers, including Cuban legend Leo Brouwer, Brazilian guitar duo icon Sérgio Assad, French classical-jazz virtuoso Roland Dyens, British iconoclast Stephen Goss, Canadian composers Dale Kavanagh and Amy Brandon,

and musical polyglot Dušan Bogdanović. Smith and MacDonald have performed, taught and adjudicated competitions at major festivals of the guitar world including the Guitar Foundation of America (GFA), Boston's Festival 21, the Iserlohn International Guitar Festival and Festival Internacional de Guitarra Sinaloa, Culiacán. This is their third recording for Naxos, following *Ravel and Debussy: Music for Two Guitars* (8.573286) and *Hidden Waters* (8.572757), largely comprising dedications to the duo. ChromaDuo sculpts its sound using Savarez strings. www.chromaduo.com

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ChromaDuo, one of the world's finest guitar duos, have greatly expanded the repertoire through friendships with leading composers. The five works featured on this album, four of which were written specifically for ChromaDuo, are all composed by renowned classical guitarists. Simone Iannarelli contributes a promenade to seven iconic pictures by the artist Frida Kahlo, whereas the writer Margaret Atwood offers the creative spur to Leo Brouwer. Dušan Bogdanović has created a stylistic hybrid in his *Sonata No. 2*, Dale Kavanagh has fashioned a marine ghost story, and Sérgio Assad fuses Brazilian and French elements in his moving tribute to Roland Dyens.

WHAT I SAW IN THE WATER

<p>Simone IANNARELLI (b. 1970) Siete pinturas de Frida Kahlo (2006) 14:49</p> <p>1 No. 1. Lo que vi en el agua 2:23</p> <p>2 No. 2. Unos cuantos piquetitos 1:27</p> <p>3 No. 3. Las dos Fridas 1:16</p> <p>4 No. 4. Autoretrato 'The Frame' 2:03</p> <p>5 No. 5. El sueño 3:17</p> <p>6 No. 6. Mi nacimiento 1:01</p> <p>7 No. 7. El abrazo de amor de el universo 3:17</p> <p>Leo BROUWER (b. 1939) 8 The Circle Game (after Margaret Atwood) (2021)* 10:00</p>	<p>Dušan BOGDANOVIĆ (b. 1955) Sonata No. 2 for Two Guitars (2013)* 9:55</p> <p>9 I. Allegro 3:32</p> <p>10 II. Andante 2:08</p> <p>11 III. Moderato 1:22</p> <p>12 IV. Allegro molto 2:52</p> <p>Dale KAVANAGH (b. 1958) 13 The Ghost of Peggy's Cove, Op. 14 (2021)* 9:26</p> <p>Sérgio ASSAD (b. 1952) Dyens en trois temps (2021)* 13:36</p> <p>14 I. Roland au Nord 4:20</p> <p>15 II. La Chanson et Roland 5:28</p> <p>16 III. Roland au Sud 3:45</p>
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WORLD PREMIERE RECORDINGS *Written for ChromaDuo

ChromaDuo

Tracy Anne Smith, Rob MacDonald, Guitars

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 Producer, engineer and editor: Norbert Kraft • Booklet notes: Graham Wade
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 Les Éditions Doberman-Yppan **9**–**12** **14**–**16** • Guitars by Matthias Dammann (Tracy Anne Smith) and
 Antonius Müller (Rob MacDonald) • Strings by Savarez • Cover photo © Bo Huang Photography