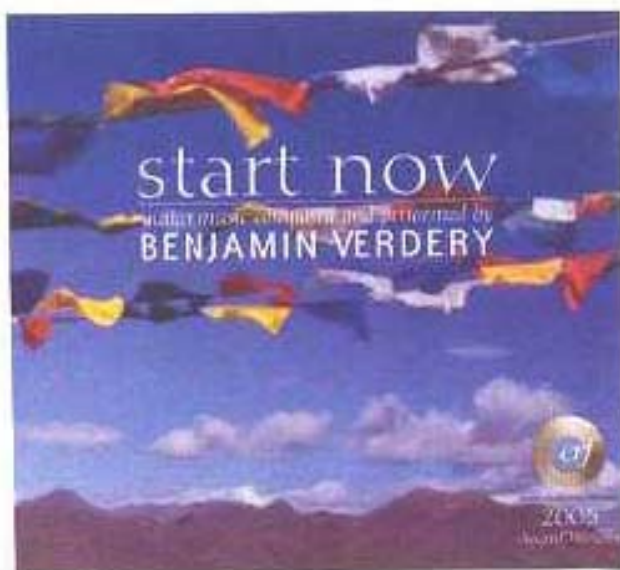


CLASSICAL GUITAR

AUGUST 2006

CD REVIEW
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B. VERDERY: *Prelude: Wedding Dance: Eleven Etudes: Tears for Peace. For Those Who Are Present: For Those From the Past: For the Children of the Future: Be Kind All the Time: Satyagraha: A Ghost in Cordoba: Fix the Funk: Capitola: Midnight Mango: Milwaukee: The Bay: The Estuary.*

Benjamin Verdery

Mushkabweek Recordings 4782

Benjamin Verdery is without doubt one of the classical guitar world's foremost personalities. His affable and charismatic personality shines through his on-stage performances and recordings, and none

more so than on this most enjoyable and tremendously entertaining disc.

Performing on classical guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar, 12-string guitar and a cavaquinho, (plus 'prepared' guitar with paper clips and chopsticks; volume pedal; slide bar; loops and delays) he entertains with his own compositions where emotions range from the extraordinarily dramatic to comical to poignant to downright spooky. Never one for putting boundaries and divisions betwixt musical styles here we have flamenco sitting side by side with funk; country picking with Giltrap-esque 'folk'; 'classical' with rock.

Choosing a high point from a programme list where nothing is below 'superb' is nigh-on impossible, but if pushed my preference would have to be the exquisitely-composed *Eleven Etudes*, which, according to Mr Verdery, are more character pieces than technical studies; this may be so but I would suggest that these could, and indeed *should*, become 'classic' modern study pieces for the advanced student in educating the player both technique and musicality.

A definite contender for the year's 'If you are only... award', as in 'If you are only going to see one film this year make it Hayao Miyazaki's *Howl's Moving Castle*'; or 'If you are only going to buy one DVD this year make it Martin Scorsese's *No Direction Home*' and 'If you are only going to buy one CD this year make it Ben Verdery's *Start Now*.'

Highly recommended.

Steve Marsh