



Benjamin Verdery

guitarist / composer

Distinguished as "*one of the classical guitar world's most foremost personalities*," by Classical Guitar Magazine, "*an American original, an American master*," by Guitar Review Magazine, and "*iconoclastic*" and "*inventive*" by The New York Times, Benjamin Verdery has enjoyed an innovative and eclectic musical career.

Since his 1980 New York debut with his wife, flutist Rie Schmidt, Benjamin has performed worldwide, including the International Guitar Festival (Havana, Cuba); Festival International de Agosto (Caracas, Venezuela); Theatre Carré (Amsterdam); Chichester Cathedral (England); Bad Urach Schubert Festival (Germany); the 92nd Street Y, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the Metropolitan Opera (NYC), the Ambassador Theater in Los Angeles, and concerts in Japan, Korea and Singapore. He has recorded and performed with such diverse artists as Frederic Hand, William Coulter, Leo Kottke, Anthony Newman, Jessye Norman, Paco Peña, Hermann Prey and John Williams. Several composers have composed music for him, including Daniel Asia, John Anthony Lennon, Ingram Marshall, Anthony Newman, Roberto Sierra, Van Stiefel and Jack Vees.

Benjamin has released over 15 albums, his most recent, *Branches* (Mushkatweek) features arrangements of works by Bach, Mozart, Strauss, Hendrix and the traditional *Amazing Grace*. His recording, *Start Now* (Mushkatweek), won the 2005 Classical Recording Foundation Award. Other recordings of note include *Some Towns & Cities* which won the 1992 Guitar Player Magazine Best Classical Guitar Recording and his collaboration with John Williams on *John Williams Plays Vivaldi* (Sony Classical).

Since 1985, Benjamin has been chair of the guitar department at the Yale University School of Music. In 2004, the Yale University Music Library commissioned Ingram Marshall to compose a work for classical and electric guitars. *Dark Florescence* was premiered at Carnegie Hall with the American Composers Orchestra and Steven Sloane in February 2005 and had its European premiere at the Belfast Festival (Ireland) with the Ulster Orchestra in November 2005. The electric guitarist for these occasions was Andy Summers (of The Police). Having met at the 2002 New York Guitar Festival, Benjamin and Andy have since recorded *First you Build A Cloud*, which will be released this spring.

A prolific composer, many of Benjamin Verdery's compositions have been performed and published over the years. Most recently, Benjamin completed *Peace, Love and Guitars* for John Williams and John Etheridge recorded at the Dublin Festival in July 2006 and released by SONY in September 2006. Williams had also recorded and performed his work *Capitola* in 1996. Benjamin's *Scenes from Ellis Island*, for guitar orchestra, has been extensively broadcast and performed at festivals and universities in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Europe, and the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet included it on their CD *Air and Ground* (Sony Classical). Benjamin's *Etudes* for guitar orchestra was commissioned by the Tidewater Classical Guitar Society and premiered at the 2004 Virginia International Festival. Doberman-Yppan (Canada) is currently publishing his solo and duo works for guitar and Workshop Arts (distributed by Alfred Music) has published the solo pieces from *Some Towns & Cities* as well as instructional books and video.

In addition to his solo tours, recording and teaching Benjamin performs with guitarist Bill Coulter (Bill & Ben), his ensemble Ufonia and with flutist Rie Schmidt (Schmidt/Verdery Duo). Benjamin Verdery is Artistic Director of the Yale Guitar Extravaganza, a one-day guitar conference featuring guitarists and artists in concert and lectures; and, of the Art & the Guitar series at the 92nd St Y (New York City). Mr. Verdery will hold his 9th Annual International Master Class on the Island of Maui (Hawaii), in August 2007 and is Honorary board member of the Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc.

Generous and courageous, Verdery offered a concert like we've seldom heard
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