

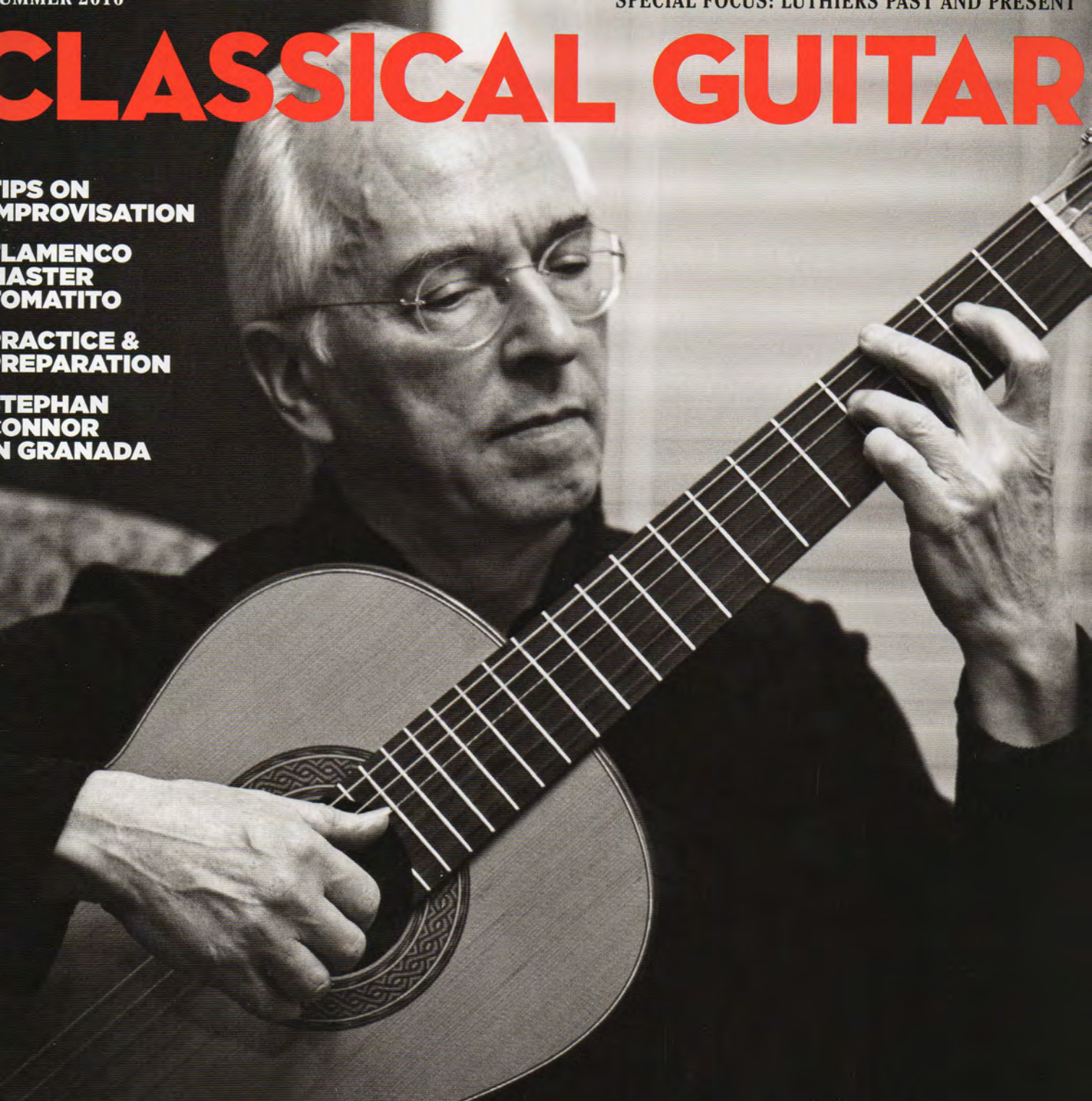
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Katrin Endrikat's
Between the Worlds
p.82

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of the Trade

versatile AC65HCE
some hybrid of classical
-string styles

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DISCS



Despertar

10 works by Chrystian Dozza
Chrystian Dozza
chrystiandozza.com.br

Impressive performances of superb, varied pieces

I have come across Dozza's playing before in the superb Quaternaglia Guitar Quartet recordings, so his effortless technique and musicianship come as no surprise, but the compositions are a great find. "Baiao de Dois (Baiao No. 2)" is a fine opener, full of rhythmic and melodic interest, and no hackneyed ideas in evidence! "Balada" is a beautiful, dreamy work with a lovely melody and harmonies and should be in print for us all to enjoy. Full of fireworks from the outset, "Sobre um Tema de Gismonti" keeps your attention throughout; another fine piece, "Sinos do Paraiso (Bells of Paradise)" begins with said bells, before becoming a thoughtful melody over a rocking accompaniment.

The "Homenagem a Tedesco" speaks for itself, with its lilting waltz rhythms, catchy melodies, and constantly inventive ideas. "Ella's Jig" sounds almost Scottish, with its warm melodies and syncopated "Scottish snap" elements in the theme; and the jig itself is outgoing and great fun. "Passacaglia Coral" follows the Baroque form to the limits, with the circle of fifths going right 'round until it arrives back at the opening A minor for its close. After *Estudios 1 and 2*, which echo the techniques used by Villa-Lobos in his first two studies, the album finishes with the title track, "Despertar," an entertaining piece with glissandi and hammer-ons and pull-offs very much in the folk/rock tradition. Wonderful performances, a beautiful recording, and some fabulous music. What more could you want? —CD



Royal Winter Music

Otto Tolonen
Alba

Heavy modern works demand much from player and listeners

Here is a CD with only two (or three) works on it, as we have both of the *Royal Winter Music* sonatas by German composer Hans Werner Henze (1926–2012) and, as an added bonus, Benjamin Britten's 1963 piece *Nocturnal After John Dowland*, both behemoths of the 20th-century guitar world—the Henze taking 57 minutes in total and the Britten a tad under 20. It is a brave player who decides to commit such landmark pieces to CD nowadays, especially when it is such challenging and at times dense material. Indeed, at one time the Britten was considered one of the heaviest modern guitar pieces, but it pales now in comparison to the nine movements of the Henze.

Royal Winter Music, for the uninitiated, is a set of two sonatas based on Shakespearean characters. It is highly demanding for player and listener alike. Henze was not a guitarist, so he had no preconceived notions as to what the instrument could or couldn't do. As a result, both sonatas are full of complex and some downright awkward passages, with many instances where the player's technical arsenal is pushed to extremes. Suffice it to say that Otto Tolonen has immersed himself into the sonatas' bizarre world to such an extent that what emerges is nothing short of brilliant. The *Nocturnal* has, of course, been recorded far more times than the Henze, but nevertheless is dispatched with consummate ease and musicality. Therefore, if (and that's a *big if*) you are in the market for a recording of these giant pieces, this one should do you fine. —CD



Between the Worlds

Katrin Endrikat
katrinendrikat.com

A safe but expertly played selection of pieces

When a young performer releases a disc of already ubiquitous works, it's neither unreasonable nor unfair to speculate about the motives behind it. So it is with this debut offering from a Yale graduate who is several years short of her 30th birthday.

Of the pieces presented, *Variations sur un thème de Scriabine* by Alexandre Tansman is arguably the least explored. This colorful and unusually expansive example of Tansman's guitar writing was a "sleeper" at its time of creation in 1971–72; however, it has found favor in recent years with such high-ranking names as Marcin Dylla and Irina Kulikova. Elsewhere on the disc Endrikat fields such established fare as *La Catedral* by Agustín Barrios, the Lennox Berkeley *Sonatina*, Bach's *Suite in E minor* BWV 996, and three Isaac Albéniz favorites. All are extensively represented on existing recordings, both old and recent.

Perhaps a clue to the opening question lies in the performer's notes, in which she mentions having "often heard members of the audience asking me for a record after the concert." In other words, this is perhaps best seen as an honest example of the "sell-at-gigs" disc, targeted at those who wish to acquire a sound souvenir of the performance they have just witnessed. As such, it's a premium-grade specimen, with mature and technically assured interpretations of a familiar yet challenging program, expertly captured by engineer Eugene Kimball. Nothing radical is attempted, but each track exudes quality. —PF