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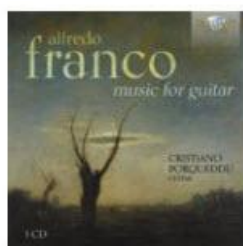
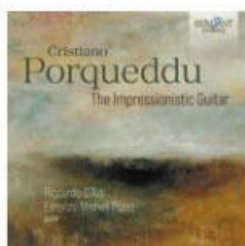
**PORQUEDDU** *The Impressionistic Guitar*  
chitarra **Riccardo D'Alò, Lorenzo Micheli Pucci**

BRILLIANT CLASSICS 96699 (2 CD)  
DDD 109:00



**FRANCO** *Music for guitar* chitarra **Cristiano Porqueddu**

BRILLIANT CLASSICS 96481 (3 CD)  
DDD 200:49



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We have dealt with composer Cristiano Porqueddu several times on these pages, both in the "Lecture Musicali" column and in record reviews. Inaugurated in 2010 with **Il silenzio del pendolo** (The Silence of the Pendulum), which was immediately awarded an international prize (and subsequently published by Editions Orphée), the Nuoro musician's catalogue for solo guitar is beginning to grow in size: so much so that the double album we present here does not fully document it, except for a couple of youthful compositions and the **Recuerdo una brisa triste por los olivos**, the score of which, published after these recordings, we presented in MUSICA in September 2024.

The schedule is distinctly bipartite: the first album is dedicated to Porqueddu's three Sonatas and performed by Riccardo D'Alò; the second,

entrusted to Lorenzo Micheli Pucci, contains the first recording of the **Diptico de la oscuridad** and the **Studies from Eight Views from Xiaoxiang**, as well as the **Metamorfosis de la soledad**, which we reviewed four years ago in Alberto Mesirca's interpretation.

Porqueddu's compositional output certainly reveals the "hereditary line" descending from his master Angelo Gilardino, both in language and in the inspirational matrix, almost always drawn from artistic or literary suggestions and also for a certain inclination to expressive "tenebrism"; but it also reveals his independent vein, which has certainly drawn lymph from his vast interpretative activity, concretized stage after stage almost in a recording encyclopedia of the twentieth century and the early two-thousandth guitar. The title's reference to Impressionism' is pertinent but should not suggest rhapsodic and instinctive writing: on the contrary, the presence of three Sonatas in the canonical three movements not only betrays a faith in the unchanged expressive capacity of the old and glorious Form, applied to an up-to-date language, but above all reveals to the analysis a remarkable solidity and structural cohesion; conspicuous internal references guarantee the unity of the compositions, and the first movements are expertly developed, whether the bitematism is contrasting, as in Sonata no. 1 (Des couleurs sur la toile), or less so, as in the second (Picerno Sonata). On the other hand, throughout the entire palimpsest, Porqueddu's ability to suggest or paint atmospheres can be felt in parallel and with evidence, perhaps culminating in the Eight Studies inspired by ancient Chinese prints, where inspired and skilful brushstrokes evoke often diaphanous landscapes with immediacy and poignancy: such as in the first study ("Snow in the Evening on the Xiang River"), or in the seventh ("The Moon in Autumn on Dongting Lake"), whose mood is declared by the explicit indication in the opening "half-light as if touching silent water". Both guitarists demonstrate the technical ability to cover often challenging, sometimes rough scores and the stylistic awareness to perfectly decipher the expressive character. The recording, however, is more enveloping and brilliant on the second CD.

**The name of Alfredo Franco (Turin, 1967)** recurs frequently in Porqueddu's discography. Porqueddu's triple album now offers us a truly significant cross-section of this eclectic composer, which translates into a very personal idiom and style, in which one can perceive multiple twentieth-century influences (guitar and otherwise), affinities with minimalism and timbre research, traces of jazz and blues, but above all a singular 'tone' that combines depth and irony. There is no shortage of more complex forms, suites and tripartite sonatas, but it seems to me that Franco possesses a particular talent for aphorism, as in the Seven Alphabetical Portraits, tasty evocations of as many composers, from Sibelius to Mosso to Martin; but also in works that are perhaps born 'minor' such as *Inezie deliziose*, which the author himself defines as 'a collection of 'old-fashioned' junk, a sort of manifesto of Turinese understatement. Innocent snapshots of the colours of memory'.

What strikes me about the composer, as I have already stated on another occasion, is the peculiar tension towards the unspeakable and silence, evident in pieces such as **A Night's Tale**, **Elegia** or - and here the title is more than significant - **La guitarra callada**, a rather broad and organic composition where, the author writes again, 'harmony and form are deliberately traced back to those of Mompou, not as an attempt at imitation but as a possibility of misty remembrance'.

Indeed, evocations and homages are recurrent in these compositions (a couple of which Porqueddu has already recorded on previous occasions), and the variety of the source of inspiration says something about the breadth of Franco's cultural horizons: from Mompou, one passes with ease to Charlie Watts (the Rolling Stones' drummer), from Grazia Deledda to Francisco Goya to David Lynch. But sometimes, the quotation does not constitute a tribute but is the object of caustic scratching: listen to the **Trittico del Verso Agro** in this regard. Precious are the introductions to the individual pieces by the author, contained in a very concise form in the booklet (in English and Italian), in a more extensive form on Porqueddu's website, to which a QR code in the booklet refers. The Nuoro guitarist's interpretative contribution is also

invaluable, as he brings all his experience, expressive sensitivity and timbral plasticity to bear. Finally, special praise for the choice of covers for both albums, which are beautiful and in intimate consonance with the musical content: **Seascape with Storm coming on** by Turner and **Aprile** by Antonio Fontanesi from Turin (which seems to refer to Franco's **Quaderno di aprile**, a diary of pandemic lockdown).