



# Meditations & Ricercars

Solo Guitar Music of Dusan Bogdanovic

Michael Kudirka, Guitar



**Levantine Suite** (1995)

- 1. I. Prelude [0:59]
- 2. II. Dance [1:38]
- 3. III. Cantilena [2:04]
- 4. IV. Passacaglia [2:36]
- 5. V. Postlude [1:14]

- 6. **Lament** (1996) [8:23]

**In Winter Garden** (1996)

- 7. I. Adagio rubato [1:49]
- 8. II. Rubato espressivo [1:30]
- 9. III. Ad libitum, spazioso [1:18]
- 10. IV. Andante caminando [1:50]
- 11. V. Adagio rubato e trasparente [1:23]

**Three Ricercars** (1998)

- 12. I. Moderato [4:19]
- 13. II. Lento [2:40]
- 14. III. Moderato [2:36]

- 15. **Lament's Commentary** (2000) [3:50]

- 16. **Ex Ovo** (2001) [7:50]

**Village Music** (2004)

- 17. I. Quasi improvvisando [5:02]
- 18. II. Moderato ritmico [4:17]

**Two Blue Meditations** (2020)

- 19. I. [2:36]
- 20. II. [2:52]

**Two Blue Ricercars** (2021)

- 21. I. Trasparente [1:57]
- 22. II. Adagio [2:23]

Total Time [65:33]



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## **A note from Dusan Bogdanovic:**

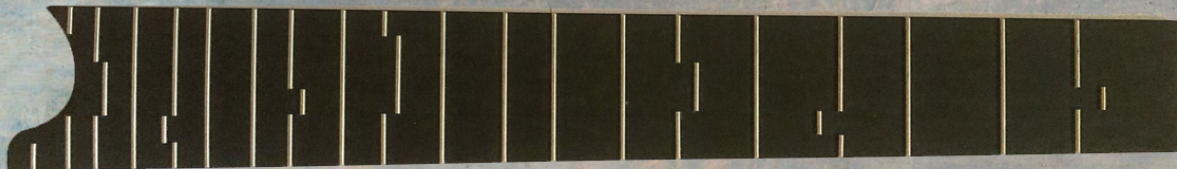
The following recording sums up almost three decades of my work - work which has had diverse routes and focal points in its journey. It is not obvious how to apprehend the changes that my work went through during this long period, but that is exactly what Michael Kudirka has accomplished in this recording; from the meditative *In Winter Garden* to the full-blooded *Lament's Commentary*, he has captured different facets of my music with great transparency and expressive subtlety. While some of my works have been composed with the microtonal guitar in mind, Michael has envisioned the entirety of this recording reinterpreted and enriched with microtonal tunings. Here, every piece becomes a unique sound world.

I give my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Michael Kudirka, who has delivered my music here in its authentic spirit.

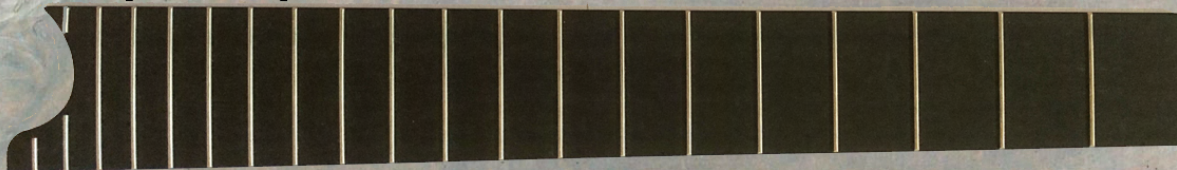
***Dusan Bogdanovic, 2022***



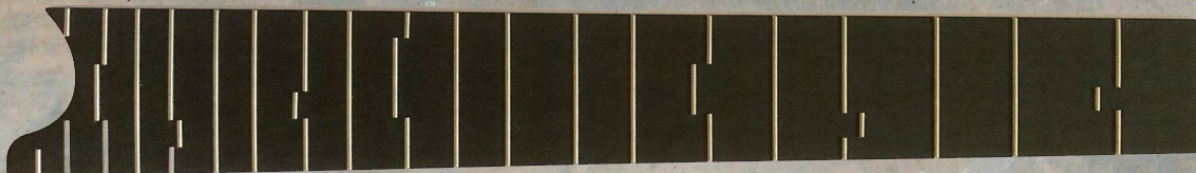
**1/5-comma Meantone** (*Levantine Suite, Lament, Lament's Commentary, Ex Ovo*)



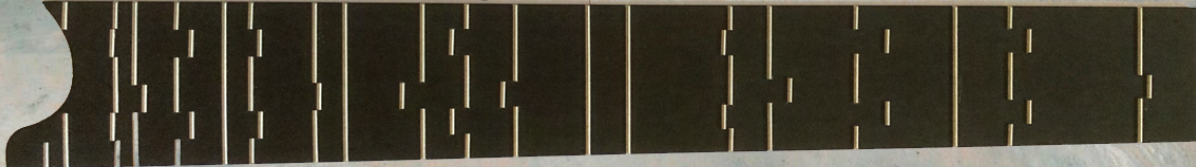
**12-Tone Equal Temperament** (*In Winter Garden*)



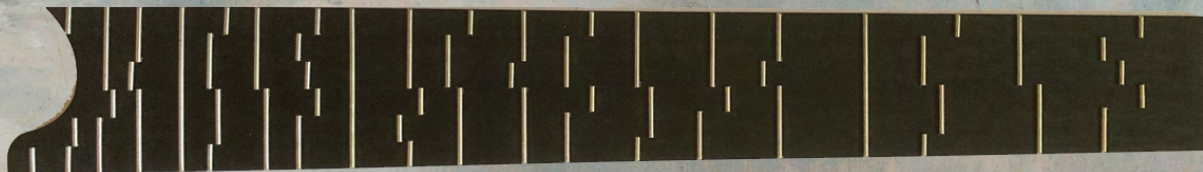
**Pythagorean** (*Three Ricercars*)



**11-Limit Just Intonation** (*Village Music*)



**5-Limit Just Intonation** (*Two Blue Meditations, Two Blue Ricercars*)





**Levantine Suite** (1995) begins with a short *Prelude* which establishes a modal language focusing on F Lydian with occasional excursions into closely related modes. Following the *Prelude*, there is a *Dance* in 7/16 time, divided into a Balkan 3+2+2. The central movement, *Cantilena*, features chant-like chords and is reminiscent of a *cappella* choirs that are common in Serbia and Bulgaria. The largest movement, the *Passacaglia*, begins with a statement of the bass line in 5/8 time divided into 3+2. After the initial statement of the repeating bass, two upper voices written in free-flowing polyrhythms enter. The piece concludes with a *Postlude*, which is an elaborately ornamented version of the *Prelude*.

**Lament** (1996) is written in a highly Balkan idiom, focusing on D minor, with accidentals occasionally added to invoke several modes of the harmonic minor scale. The piece begins with the indication "Adagio rubato e doloroso" and builds slowly over a long period of time, increasing in rhythmic and textural density towards a cathartic climax. This is followed by an ethereal coda with a free-flowing polyrhythmic middle-voice and a crystalline melodic line in harmonics high above. *Lament* is dedicated to Dusan's father, Časlav Bogdanović.

**In Winter Garden** (1996) is, out of all the pieces on this album, the most firmly rooted in Dusan's jazz language. While fully contrapuntal, the chordal relationships are based on common-tone enharmonic modulations, which allow the music to move freely among all keys in the circle of 5ths. The overall mood is one of stillness, with a kind of shimmering beauty and impressionistic sensitivity. *In Winter Garden* was written for Maria Livia São Marcos.



**Three Ricercars** (1998), has the subtitle “Omaggio al Divino”, referencing the great Renaissance lutenist and composer Francesco Canova da Milano, who earned the moniker *il Divino* because of his seemingly supernatural gifts as a musician. While dedicated to this master of 16th-century counterpoint, the piece, in many ways, is in fact evocative of Medieval musical practices. The first movement begins with a modern reconception of Parallel Organum, and over the course of the next two movements evolves into a reinvented Ars Nova with its frequent use of hocket and polymetric structures. *Three Ricercars* was written for Álvaro Pierri.

**Lament's Commentary** (2000) is the composer's own response to his earlier work *Lament*. The piece inhabits similar harmonic territory, centered on the key of D minor, but with accidentals added at times to imply various modes of the harmonic minor scale. The first half consists of tightly constructed rhythmic units grouped in a constantly shifting Balkan mosaic. After the initial climax, the piece resets itself into a kind of Balkan fugue. *Lament's Commentary* was written for Scott Tennant.

**Ex Ovo** (2001) gets its title from the Latin aphorism: *Omne vivum ex ovo* (All life comes out of an egg). While all of Dusan's music maintains a strong sense of motivic unity and development, this piece takes that idea to a kind of extreme. The opening melodic motif (E, B, A#, D) is the egg from which the rest of the piece grows. This initial motif simultaneously implies an E octatonic scale as well as the E “acoustic” scale. The rubato liquidity of the opening gradually coalesces into a rhythmic final section, which grows in intensity to a volcanic climax. *Ex Ovo* is dedicated to Paul Gerrits.



**Village Music** (2004) is in two movements, the first of which functions like the North Indian *Alap*, an improvisatory period which lacks any discernible rhythmic pulse. This first movement explores the sonic implications of the scale and its tuning. Interspersed among the traditionally fretted notes are percussive golpes and smooth glissandi which evoke the tabla and sarod respectively. The second movement is highly rhythmic and features constantly shifting meters built of combinations of 2 or 3 divisions of the beat, ultimately resolving into in a 2 on 3 polyrhythm which ushers in a new tempo via metric modulation. *Village Music* was written for David Tanenbaum.

The **Two Blue Meditations** (2020) are composed using the North Indian Raga *Shri*. It can be distilled to the scale: F, Gb, A, B, C, Db, E. These meditations move freely between the full Indian scale and the subset F#, A, B, C, C#, E, which is the American Blues scale. The first meditation is like a miniature Hindustani performance, with a micro *Alap* introduction, followed by a short, more rhythmic *Jhala*. The second Meditation expresses elements of the scale that sound more Balkan, with a three-part texture written in complex polyrhythms for maximal independence of the lines. *Two Blue Meditations* was written for Michael Kudirka.

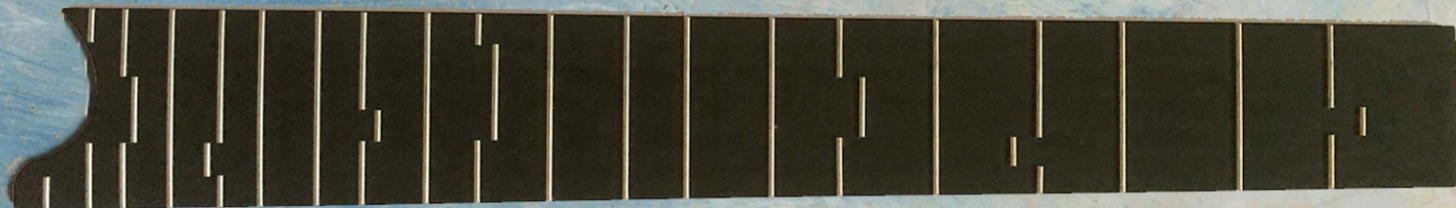
The **Two Blue Ricercars** (2021) pick up quite literally where the *Two Blue Meditations* left off. The rising harmonics that concluded the Meditations fall back to earth at the opening of the Ricercars. These ricercars use the same North Indian Raga as the Meditations, but now not only in the tonic key F, but in several transpositions. Both ricercars employ the same kind of free-flowing polyrhythms found in Meditation #2, which create a kind of dynamic conversation between the voices, allowing them to be both independent and interdependent, in my mind a kind of musical metaphor for an ideal civilisation. *Two Blue Ricercars* was written for Michael Kudirka.

- liner notes by Michael Kudirka



## On the Tunings...

### 1/5-comma Meantone (*Levantine Suite, Lament, Lament's Commentary, Ex Ovo*)



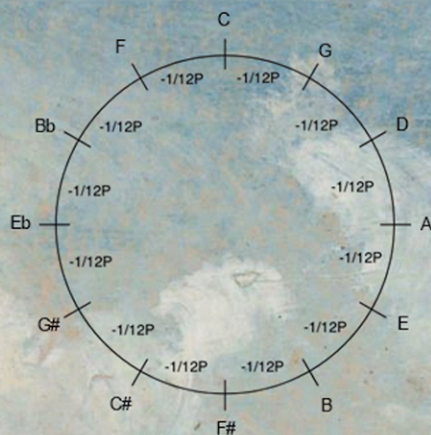
1/5-comma meantone temperament is built on a chain of perfect 5ths, each narrowed from pure by 1/5 of the syntonic comma (4.3¢). Since the syntonic comma is the difference between the Pythagorean Major 3rd and pure Major 3rd, a chain of four such 5ths (i.e. C-G-D-A-E) will yield a Major 3rd that is 1/5 of a comma wider than pure, the same amount of mistuning that the 5th is narrowed by. In this way, the Major triad has a balanced quality in that the 3rd is equally out of tune as the 5th (4.3¢). This tuning system was first described in the 17th century, and brings a warm resonant quality to tonal and modal music. Because of this, I chose to use 1/5-comma meantone for several pieces on this album, in particular, the pieces with the largest amount of triadic construction within a modal language.

Note	C	C#	D	E <sup>b</sup>	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	B <sup>b</sup>	B	C
Equal Temperament (¢)	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200
1/5-comma meantone (¢)	0	80.4	194.4	308.4	388.8	502.8	583.2	697.2	777.6	891.6	1005.6	1086.0	1200
Interval (¢)		80.4	114.0	114.0	80.4	114.0	80.4	114.0	80.4	114.0	114.0	80.4	114.0



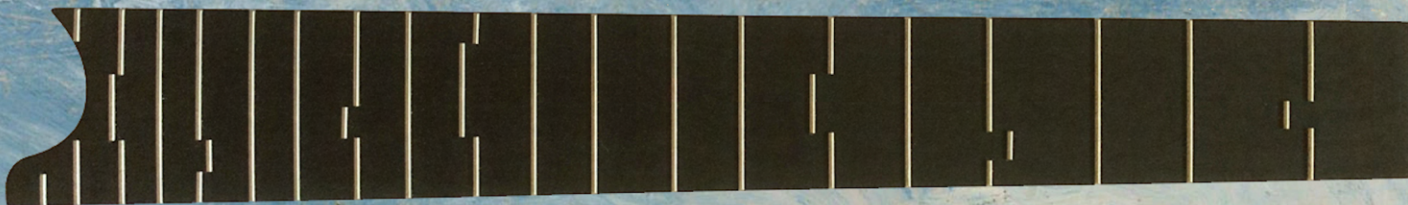
## 12-Tone Equal Temperament (*In Winter Garden*)

12-Tone Equal Temperament is the standard tuning system for most guitars in the world today. While it is often assumed to be the natural state of musical pitches, I consider it to be only one microtonal temperament situated in the wider realm of the tuning universe. As with every tuning system, it has its strengths and weaknesses, and can be paired appropriately with a particular musical language. Its structure is based on narrowing the Pure Perfect 5th by  $\frac{1}{12}$  of the Pythagorean comma ( $2\text{c}$ ). Since this comma is the amount a Pythagorean Augmented 7th overshoots the octave, narrowing each 5th by  $\frac{1}{12}$  of this amount creates a closed circle of 5ths instead of an infinitely expanding spiral. The primary disadvantage of this tuning is that the Major 3rd is quite a bit wider than pure ( $13.7\text{c}$ ). However, the equality of interval sizes regardless of key or enharmonic spelling allows for common-tone modulations and movement to any key, both of which are essential to the jazz language of *In Winter Garden*.





## Pythagorean (*Three Ricercars*)

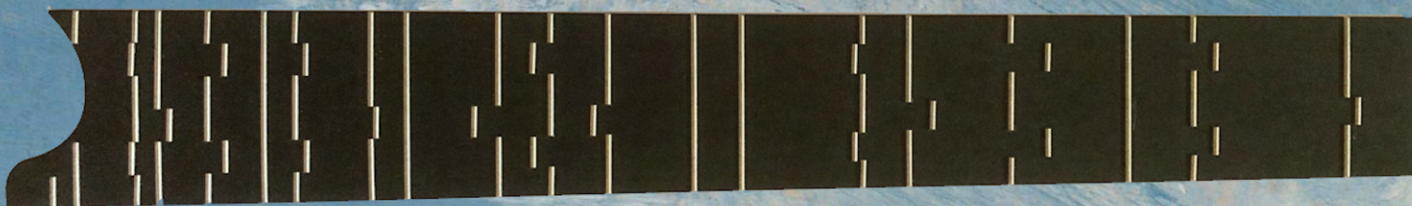


Pythagorean tuning is simply a chain of Pure Perfect 5ths. As a result, all the Perfect intervals (including the Perfect 4th) are pure, but the imperfect consonances (M3, m3, M6, m6) are extremely out of tune compared to their simple Just ratios. This was the tuning system used in the Medieval Era, and the stridently wide Major 3rds, and quite low, almost sour sounding minor 3rds are why these intervals were considered dissonant at that time. Enharmonic pitches are not equivalent, but rather, are separated by a Pythagorean comma (23.5 cents). For example, D# is 23.5 cents sharper than Eb. Because of this, one may play the 3rd of a Major triad as its enharmonic neighbor and achieve something quite close to a Just Major triad (since the syntonic comma is only two cents narrower than the Pythagorean). This kind of harmonic slight of hand may have been one of the ways in which the quality of Just 3rds and 6ths entered the ear of European musicians leading to radical changes in contrapuntal practice in the Renaissance.

Note	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C
Equal Temperament (¢)	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200
Pythagorean Tuning (¢)	0	113.2	203.8	294.4	407.6	498.2	611.4	701.9	815.1	905.7	996.2	1109.4	1200
Interval (¢)		113.2	90.6	90.6	113.2	90.6	113.2	90.5	113.2	90.6	90.5	113.2	90.6



## 11-Limit Just Intonation (Village Music)



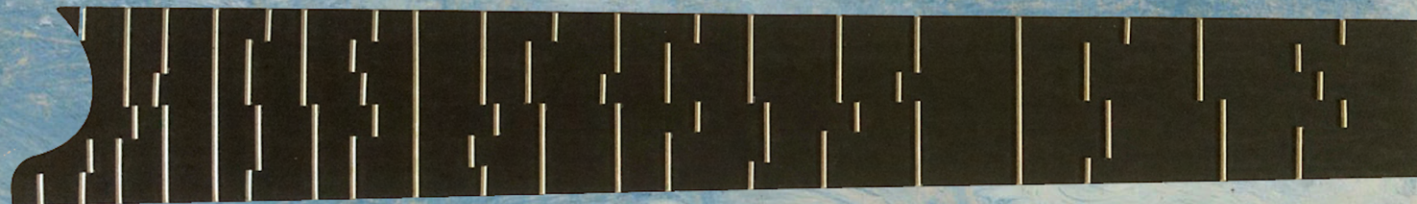
This particular 11-Limit Just Intonation scheme was developed by Lou Harrison, William Slye, and Bill Alves. It was used originally on a National Steel guitar commissioned by John Schneider for the 2002 MicroFest in Los Angeles. The backbone of this tuning comes from Harrison's need for harmonics 6 through 11 over a fundamental of G for his piece Scenes from Nék Chand. To fill out the additional 6 pitches needed for 12 notes to the octave, Slye and Alves included the same mode, but based on a fundamental of D. While, technically, every interval in this tuning system is Pure, the relative simplicity or complexity of the harmonic ratios makes for a vivid palette of sonorities. Familiar consonances like the pure Perfect 5th ( $3/2$ ) and pure Major 3rd ( $5/4$ ) contrast with the striking septimal minor 3rd ( $7/6$ ) and shockingly low Pure Augmented 4th ( $11/8$ ). All of these sonorities combine to create a sonic world which is simultaneously startling and yet Justly in tune.

### Chromatic 11-Limit Just Intonation Scale:

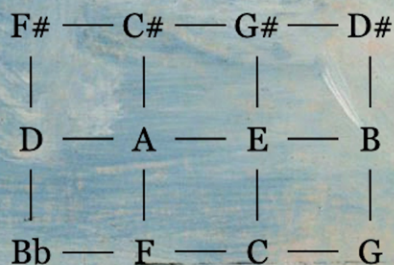
Note	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	Eb	E	F	F#	G
Equal Temperament (¢)	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200
Ratio from 1/1	1/1	33/32	9/8	7/6	5/4	21/16	11/8	3/2	14/9	27/16	7/4	15/8	2/1
11-Limit JI (¢)	0	53.3	203.9	266.9	386.3	470.8	551.3	701.9	764.9	905.9	968.8	1088.3	1200
Interval (¢)		53.3	150.6	63.0	119.4	84.5	80.5	150.6	63.0	141.0	62.9	119.5	111.7



## 5-Limit Just Intonation (*Two Blue Meditations, Two Blue Ricercars*)



This 5-Limit scheme was specifically developed for the tonal language of *Two Blue Meditations* and *Two Blue Ricercars*. It is built only using Perfect 5ths and Major 3rds. There are three short chains of linked Perfect 5ths ( $3/2$ ) each related to each other by pure Major 3rds ( $5/4$ ). In the following lattice, horizontal dashes show the  $3/2$  relationships while vertical dashes indicate the  $5/4$  relationship.



This can be thought of as a rearrangement of Pythagorean tuning, where the central horizontal line is the backbone [D-A-E-B]. Pure Major 3rds are above and below the backbone, while pure minor 3rds ( $6/5$ ) can be found using a down-right diagonal movement (i.e. D to F). Pure whole tones can be found by moving two steps to the right (i.e. A to B).

### Chromatic 5-Limit Just Intonation Scale:

Note	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
Equal Temperament (¢)	0	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200
Ratio from 1/1	1/1	16/15	9/8	6/5	5/4	4/3	45/32	3/2	8/5	5/3	9/5	15/8	2/1
5-Limit JI (¢)	0	111.7	203.9	315.6	386.3	498.0	590.2	701.9	813.7	884.6	1017.6	1088.3	1200
Interval (¢)		111.7	· 92.2	· 111.7	· 70.7	· 111.7	· 92.2	· 111.7	· 111.8	· 70.9	· 133.0	· 70.7	· 111.7



Guitarist **MICHAEL KUDIRKA** specializes in both contemporary works and in the field of microtonality with his interchangeable fretboard system, developed by the company he co-founded: MicroTone Guitars. An avid and long-time advocate of new music, Kudirka has maintained a close collaboration with Los Angeles-based composer Jeffrey Holmes since 2002, including a retrospective album of Holmes's microtonal guitar works titled *May the Bridges I Burn Light My Way...* released by MicroFest Records (USA). In the same year Kudirka also released the world-premiere recording of Bryan Johanson's 13-movement album-length composition *13 Ways of Looking at 12 Strings* with guitarist Eric Benzant-Feldra on Les Productions d'OZ (Canada).

In November, 2017 Michael Kudirka completed his third production run of Thomas Adès's *The Exterminating Angel* at The Metropolitan Opera of New York, following performances at the Salzburger Festspiele (Austria) and The Royal Opera House (UK). Kudirka worked personally with Adès on the composer's first-ever music written for guitar, and a DVD of The Met's Fall 2017 production has been released by Erato. Kudirka has also collaborated with 2017 MacArthur Foundation 'Genius' Award Winner Yuval Sharon in his production of Veronika Krausas's chamber opera *The Mortal Thoughts of Lady Macbeth*.

Michael Kudirka travels around the globe as a recitalist and chamber musician, and has performed at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Darmstadt Ferienkurse Für Neue Musik, EUROMicroFest, Le Chappelle Historique du Bon Pasteur, Covent Garden, the Royal Conservatory of Music, Conservatorio de Las Rosas, Palace of Fine Arts, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Zipper Recital Hall, REDCAT, the Frye Art Museum, and many others.





# Meditations & Ricercars

Solo Guitar Music of Dusan Bogdanovic

Michael Kudirka, Guitar

Recorded January 5-8, 2022 - Magic Closet Music, Los Angeles, CA

Producers: **John Schneider, Michael Kudirka**

Session Producer: **Brian Head**

Recording Engineer: **John Schneider**

Editing: **Michael Kudirka**

Mastering: **Scott Fraser (Architecture)**

Album Design: **Ergo Phizmiz**

Guitar by **Kenny Hill**

Fretboards by **MicroTone Guitars**

All scores published by Les Productions d'OZ

Special Thanks: Veronika Krausas and Dennis Dreith,  
without whom this recording wouldn't have been possible.



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