

“A COMPELLING, SELF-PENNED, SELF PERFORMED RECITAL FROM AN URGENT BUT ELUSIVE ARTIST”

“Vivid, Entrancing, and Remarkable:”

“Guitarists spend so much time alone that it is no wonder the music they play often expresses deep yearning for communication with the outside world. Peter Lewis’ three suites for guitar are personal and introspective ruminations that occasionally compel the listener to feel twinges of guilt for crashing the private party. But the pieces are also appealing and subtly coloured, so the guilt quickly morphs into appreciation.

Lewis composed the first two suites in the late 1970s, when he was under the influence of guitar masters and teachers Alirio Diaz and Carlos Barbosa-Lima. Even so, these pieces only momentarily bask in Spanish influences, instead embracing impressionistic harmonies, recitative-like phrases and borrowings from Northwest Indians. The Third Suites, written in 2000, isn’t light years away creatively from the earlier pieces, but its languished sighs, asymmetrical metres and motoric elements, complete with dashes of flamenco spices, are vivid and entrancing. Lewis’ music exudes songfulness, as when he tries for exuberance (as in the “Burlesque” movement of the first suite, which is based on a tritone), he sees the dark side of things.

The composer plays his own scores with all the urgency and commitment one would expect from a performer who knows the music from the inside out. There isn’t a wasted gesture or hesitant moment in these interpretations, a rather remarkable feat for an artist who hasn’t appeared in public since 1985. The intimate acoustics enhance Lewis’s restrained virtuosity.”

Donald Rosenberg: Gramophone Magazine, London, England (Complete Special Feature Review)