

Mp3 Michael Knopf - Solo



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Original guitar music blending jazz, classical, flamenco and world musics. Solo provides the listener with an ear-window on a diverse musical life which has pooled its experiences into a vivid and memorable panorama of sound. 11 MP3 Songs JAZZ: World Fusion, CLASSICAL: Contemporary Details: BIO --

Guitarist/composer Michael Knopf plays a 7- string classical guitar made by Brisbane Luthier Allan Bull. Playing classical repertoire, jazz standards, and evocative and mind-stretching originals, Michael aims to perform at the highest level combining elements from his eclectic guitar-playing career spanning 40 years. Elements of jazz, rock, classical, flamenco, Middle-Eastern and 20th-century compositional ideas present themselves in his playing. Michaels informed performance style draws on his sojourns into many musical genres. His early years saw him performing popular music publicly at the age of 12. His favourite bands were in the rock field and names such as Jimi Hendrix, Steppenwolf, Uriah Heep, Deep Purple and Yes were all early influences. Then, in high school he had his first encounter with Jazz and his ensemble conductor loaned him an album of Wes Montgomery, the legendary guitarist. Michael then studied Jazz and Contemporary Art Music formally at university and taught himself the classical guitar. A friend turned him on to Paco de Lucia, the 20th centurys most influential flamenco guitarist and innovator. All these influences come to bear in my playing style, Michael explains, sometimes subtly, sometimes prominently. Everything Ive ever heard or played informs my playing and my composition. I also am attracted to Eastern musics and play a little on the Persian setar. The guitar can be traced backwards from Spain and Italy to the Hittites and to the ancient Persians. There is a ceramic plate from Nishapur which displays a person playing a dotar a two string guitar. It s just such an influential and historic instrument-it resonates with all cultures. REVIEW -- "Everyone has a different taste and that's good. But if you listen to just one type of music, you're losing out on 99. And that 99 could enrich your life." Words of wisdom from guitarist

and composer par excellence Michael Knopf 20 years ago, in an interview with this writer for a long defunct magazine. Michael has more than lived up to his mantra. You could say he's eclecticism personified. Solo, his newest album, is a distillation of his catholic philosophy. It's a record on which tastefully revamped jazz standards sit snugly beside original compositions informed by sources as diverse as classical Iranian songs and passing airplanes. Performing mainly on a 7-string classical instrument, Michael Knopf has developed a unique style, combining various genres, techniques and idioms. Michael's innate sense of spirituality is reflected in the raga-like 'Ancient Beauty'. Elsewhere, he goes decidedly earthy with a blues written for two old friends and bandmates. On Chick Corea's 'Spain', a personal favourite, the maestro skillfully unites three of his great loves jazz, classical and flamenco. 'Nature Boy' and 'Close To You' you've probably heard a hundred times before, but not quite like this. Michael manages to imbue these timeless tunes with admirable freshness. Legendary trumpeter Clifford Jordan's 'Jordu' translates surprisingly well to guitar at least in Knopf's hands. But that's Michael's art, and that's why he rates so highly among Australian guitarists. (Tony Hillier Reviewer Rhythms magazine)

NOTES -- Jordy by trumpeter Clifford Jordan is one of the earliest standards that I learned as a youth. Nature Boy is one of those timeless pieces, here rendered flamencoesque. Ancient Beauty is an improvised piece based on the A mixolydian scale which is used from India to Ireland, I treat it like an evening raga. The inspiration is the Spirit that emerges in millennia through the Founders of the world's great revealed religions. Awen is Celtic for the spirit that comes over the bard before performing, much like the flamenco "duende". This piece is a blend of classical, flamenco and Arab influences. The Caspian uses an open E tuning is played a'la Persian classical setar. The melody is inspired by one from the Gilan region. I always loved the tune Spain the music of Chick Corea I perform the Rodrigo concerto that inspired this piece. Close to You interestingly, presents some wonderful opportunities for the guitar. A bit of space and well-placed colour chords give the melody a mystifying effect. Gregoriana is a chant (not Gregorian) aiming to combine several "voices" on the guitar. Inner Landscape was written after I heard an airplane passing overhead intoning a minor 7th. The sound allowed me to create a music-scape of harmonic and open strings played near a central note with a vigorous right-hand arpeggiated harmony. All blues is a classic, probably penned in a few minutes but still retains its charm as a lilting blues. Strange in Blue is a weird blues for my friends Giuseppe and Giles. This album displays my love of jazz, flamenco, classical, middle-eastern and popular music on the guitar. I aim to bring out the natural resonances of the

guitar which, for me, are poetic and delicious. I hope you enjoy the journey. (Michael)

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