

Mp3 Tom Ball - 18 Pieces For Solo Steel String Guitar



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Expertly played and recorded with tube microphones over a period of two years, Tom Ball's long-awaited second solo-guitar CD features a vast stylistic array of pieces from 11 nations and 6 centuries. 18 MP3 Songs in this album (44:55) ! Related styles: FOLK: Fingerstyle, CLASSICAL: Contemporary People who are interested in John Fahey Ry Cooder Leo Brouwer should consider this download. Details: Nearly twenty years ago Tom Ball recorded a critically acclaimed album for Kicking Mule Records called Guitar Music, (now a CD on Fantasy. see cdbaby.com/cd/tomball2/from/havaball .) The liner notes for that album started off with a quote from Kicking Mule, and although the words were written in 1987 they're still fairly accurate today. This is what the record company had to say back then: "Although he is perhaps better known as the singing/harmonica-playing half of the blues and ragtime partnership he has with Kenny Sultan, Tom Ball is also a steel-string guitarist of no small import; a picker whose interests and tastes cut headlong through dozens of musical cultures and several centuries." Well, not much has changed in the ensuing years, except maybe his hairline. Tom still plays gigs with his pal Kenny Sultan (they have eight duo albums -- for the latest release, see cdbaby.com/cd/ballsultan2/from/havaball) and he still does once-a-set guitar solos in concert -- but more often on his couch. Fifteen-plus years may seem a rather lengthy wait for a sophomore guitar effort, but the time was hardly wasted. In pursuit of his other musical interests (vocals and harmonica,) Ball played on 170 CDs, wrote five music books and a novel ("The Marty Graw Book" -- see booklocker.com/books/1023.html) But in the back of his mind he was always formulating another guitar project, and this recording confirms that sometimes good things do come to those who wait. On 18 Pieces for Solo Steel String Guitar, Tom brings his fingerstyle approach to a vast array of styles and compositions from eleven different nations: Paraguay, Cuba, Ireland, the Bahamas, Brazil, Germany, France, Mexico, Nigeria, Spain, and the USA. The music was written 500

years ago and as recently as last year. In addition to the varied material, another standout aspect of this recording is the use of a steel stringed instrument -- in this case a vintage 1936 Gibson. While other players have recorded pieces by Brouwer, Ponce, Barrios, etc., on the classical (nylon string) guitar, to our knowledge no one has done so before on steel strings. The result is an ultra-warm resonance, with an unusual clarity of attack and an often shimmering presence. Expertly played and recorded with tube microphones over a period of two years, 18 Pieces for Solo Steel String Guitar transports the listener to a musical world where contemporary Cuban composers can live next door to Celtic harpers; where Renaissance lutenists shake hands with Blind Blake; and where Merle Travis can peacefully coexist with Baroque composers. In Tom Ball's capable hands, it's all guitar music -- and fine guitar music indeed.

REVIEWS: "***** (Five stars.) Tom Ball knows his guitar like a mother knows her babies. This CD is elegance on a guitar, moving and sincere. 18 Pieces For Solo Steel String Guitar is a splendid instrumental album." - Roots Music Report, August 2003 "Thumbs up (highest rating.) Nice selection of pieces, from midieval and classical to Blind Blake and doo-wop, by accomplished guitarist." - fRoots Magazine, (UK) November 2003 "Perhaps the only thing that surpasses Ball's skill as a player is his exquisite taste in selecting material. First, his playing: Recorded with all tube mics and on a 1936 Gibson, Ball's nuance and sensitivity as an interpreter are astounding. Lines are rendered with clarity, grace and -- when necessary -- fire. When it comes to material, Ball's ears are wide open -- included are compositions from 11 countries, including Celtic Airs, lilting Cuban melodies, and the pure Americana of Blake and Travis. It's a truly fine effort -- uncomplicated because the music and musician are just that good." -Dirty Linen, Feb/Mar, 2004 "Steel string guitar is a thing of uncommon cool, grace and resonant clarity in the hands of Tom Ball -- yes, he of blues harp prowess, the growling half of Ball and Sultan... Ball as guitarist is a rangy one: He swaggers and swings, elegantly ponders in rubato, and violates protocol by using steel strings on classical works -- i.e. Leo Brouwer and Bittner -- and finds his own way into 'Swingin' on a Star' and 'Danny Boy.' A beautiful and bodacious outing." - Josef Woodard, Santa Barbara Independent, Nov 13, 2003. "Tom Ball is an excellent picker... (and) music historian." - Acoustic Guitar Magazine, October 2003. "Taking approximately 16 years to produce an album may seem a little absurd for most, but Tom Ball's '18 pieces for Solo Steel String Guitar' was clearly worth the wait. Ball is known for his work with TV and film, as well as playing some very haunting blues-harmonica side-by-side with Kenny Sultan. The compositions Ball offers his listener on his newest album span a wide range of musical orientations; we

find songs from Germany, Paraguay, Brazil, France, Mexico, Spain, and the USA. From the classical work of Leo Brouwer on 'One November Day' to Augustin Barrios' 'Julia Florida' to the more swinging up-tempo arrangements done by Ball himself the listener will find this album musically diverse as well as artistically enriching. The album is not intended to 'rock your world,' as it were, but if you give Ball's music the time and patience any good piece of music deserves, his work will move your soul. Many of the pieces are classics in their own right, so there is a kind of wonderful heritage brought home to the listener. Ball's technique has the unique quality of uniting graceful softness with a commitment to powerful, forward moving finger-picking. 'Variations on Themes by Bittner' features wonderful contrapuntal movement made possible through deep bass notes and middle range harmonics. Filled with all sorts of choice licks and crisp fret action, 'Police Dog Blues' provides a nice contrast to some of the more meditative ballads also available on the album." - Minor 7th, Nov/Dec 2003 "Virtuoso... talented... tasteful..." -Block Magazine (Holland) Summer, 2004 "A fascinating selection of tunes of variety and good taste... gentle, deft and enjoyable." - Songbook Magazine (U.K.) Winter, 2004 "An Ultimate Guitar Album." - Musician's Friend, 2005

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