

Albéniz



Iberia – Evocación; El puerto; El albaicín. Tango. Tango español. Mallorca, Op 202. Cantos de España, Op 232 – No 2, Oriental; No 3, Bajo la palmera; No 4, Córdoba. Rumores de la caleta, Op 71 No 6. Castilla, Op 47 No 7

Wulfin Lieske, Fabian Spindler *gtrs*

Challenge Classics © CC72374 (63' • DDD)

Includes bonus CD, 'Wulfin Lieske plays Albéniz'

Albéniz's Spanish evocations played on a pair of 19th-century guitars



Antonio de Torres (1817-92) was the god who created the classical guitar as we know it today, and the composer, arranger and guitarist Francisco

Tárrega was his prophet. Two of Tárrega's finest students were Miguel Llobet and Emilio Pujol; all three arranged for guitar the music of Albéniz, who counted Tárrega among his personal friends.

Wulfin Lieske is also a composer, arranger and guitarist, and was the first performer to make a CD using a Torres guitar; his musical partner Fabian Spindler studied with Alberto Ponce, who had met Pujol and was much influenced by him. For their latest disc, Lieske and Spindler play the music of Albéniz, as arranged mostly by Llobet, Pujol and Lieske himself, on two Torres guitars, the 1856 La Leona (which was played by Tárrega's teacher Arcas) and the FE 13 from 1860. A bonus disc features Lieske alone, playing Albéniz arrangements by Tárrega, Llobet, Segovia and, again, Lieske himself.

So there are plenty of connections here – but do they add up to more than the sum of their parts? Thankfully, yes. Lieske and Spindler's interpretations can be expansively orchestral in conception – try the opening "Evocación" from *Iberia*, the "Bajo la palmera" and "Oriental" from *Cantos de España* – or intimately lyrical and expressive, as in the barcarolle *Mallorca*. Lieske's solo performances have a more intense quality which nicely balances the increased intimacy of tone.

Albéniz apparently said his music appealed to him more when played on guitar. Hearing these performances on two such fine instruments, one can understand why that might have been so. **William Yeoman**