



A Beautiful Combination of Guitar and Violincello

By [Dennis E. Ferrara](#) on June 6, 2017

Ad Vitam an excellent French label is certainly utilizing several of its artists in creating new releases featuring the guitar in duo performances with other instruments. This new and exciting release is such a musical offering: guitar and violoncello. Benjamin Valette is one of Ad Vitam's brilliant guitarists who also performs as part of the young and exciting guitar ensemble entitled - Quatuor Eclisses. See other reviews elsewhere on AMAZON.

The Program - Retratos - 'Meeting of Two Musicians' - Juliette Salmona, violoncelle * Benjamin Valette, guitar - AD VITAM - TT: 50:52 - (2017) - Radames Gnattali - (1906-1988) - Suite Retratos - (extracts - 1956) i and ii - Sonate pour guitar et violoncelle - (1969) - (x, xi, xii); Ernesto de Nazareth - (1863-1934) iii. Odeon - (1910); vi. Carioca - (1913); ix. Fon-Fan - (1913); Heitor Villa-Lobos - (1887-1959) - iv. Chanson de cristal - (Cancão de cristal - (1950); viii. Bachianas Brasileiras - no. V - 91938); Francisco Mignone - (1897-1986) - v. Valse de Esquina, no. iv; vii. Valse de Esquina, no. v; Alberto Nepomuceno - (1864-1920) - xiii. Nocturno, Op. 33 - (1904).

This is indeed **a most colorful release with its music full of energy, nuance, warmth of tone and a total understanding of two instruments not usually associated with one another in performance. Mr. Valette's tone and phrasing are always subtle and full of warmth and charm.** As usual, he plays with 'anima e core' and stresses beautiful tone for its own sake. His technique is apparent throughout this superb release. On the hand, **Miss Salmona brings to this team duo an interesting color combination of plucking, bowing and strumming her very fine violoncello.**

The colorful rhymes and balance between these two excellent musicians truly forms which is better known as an 'artistic whole.' These performances sound like two friends 'making music' for the total fun of it in a home or salon setting. The repertoire certainly reflects the concept of 'variety is indeed the spice in life.' The original compositions - (Gnattali, Mignone, and Nepomuceno) are colorful and full of energy; likewise, the transcriptions are very interesting especially the Nazareth and Villa-Lobos which are better known through other original pieces - (Nazareth) and (Villa-Lobos) as well as through orchestral.

As always, excellent program notes are in French and English. **Highly recommended for anyone who loves the guitar as well as the violoncello.** The recording is warm and spacious. The sound engineer should be extremely pleased with this superb release.