

MIKKEL PLOUG
DAY IN THE SUN



MIKKEL PLOUG - STEEL STRING ACOUSTIC GUITAR, CLASSICAL GUITAR

1. Nocturne (2:20) | 2. Daybreak (4:22) | 3. Over the Hills (4:07) | 4. Day in the Sun (3:54) | 5. Rosette (2:20) | 6. Robledo (4:13) | 7. April (3:28)
8. Dance of Minor Motive (3:52) | 9. Afterthought (4:32) | 10. Mosaic (2:48) | 11. Hymn in E (3:14) | 12. Barcarola (2:43) | 13. Nighttide (3:35) | 14. Isolde's Song (2:57)

Total time: 49:02 Recorded in 24/192

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The collection of guitar pieces on this album represents the journey since my first solo album *Alleviation* (2017), which was inspired by my recently acquired 1945 Gibson bannerhead acoustic guitar. During this time I've become increasingly interested in modern Scandinavian classical music, especially the music of Danish composer Bent Sørensen. Studying and working with Sørensen's music suggested new directions for my guitar explorations, and many pieces on this album are through-composed.

This is also the first time I've included a classical guitar on a recording. The album opener "Nocturne" is a tribute to Spanish guitarist Josefina Robledo (1897-1972). For this piece I'm playing my flamenco-classical guitar, built by master luthier Manuel Bellido from Granada. On this song it's strung with real gut strings like the ones Josefina used a hundred years ago and I'm playing without nails as she did. ("Robledo" and "Dance of Minor Motive" are also played on this guitar.)

Compositions such as "Rosette," "Nocturne," "Dance of Minor Motive," "Hymn in E" and of course "Barcarola" (a piano nocturne by Bent Sørensen reworked for guitar) are among the "classical pieces" group on this record. "Rosette" is a very far stretching of a harmonic idea from Sørensen's piano nocturne "Wiegenlieder" that develops into new places.

The other side of this album lives in more genre-questioning territory. I love to venture into spaces that feel genreless, at their best timeless. I try to leave all prejudices at the door and let the guitar

"have a good time," whether that means pushing it into uncharted territory or just letting it do what it does best. On "Daybreak" I let a melody unfold on a canvas of repetitive notes, trying to create the illusion of the left hand and right hand playing independently on a piano. "Day in the Sun" sends the guitar resonating throughout the piece with fast tremolo and harmonics while melody is happening on the low strings. "Afterthought" is my attempt at capturing the feeling of someone simply playing a song on the guitar. "April" is half improvisation/half composition and has an almost folklike refrain.

"Robledo" is a danceable song written for my older daughter Ellinor, performed with an unorthodox bouncing right hand technique. "Mosaic" explores the development of an odd-meter pattern across multiple tonal centers with alien note inflections, creating tension in what at first appears to be a lush chordal quality. "Over the Hills" is a potpourri of four themes that find each other, even though they are very different in character. "Isolde's Theme," written for my youngest daughter on her birth, plays on presenting a very expected harmonic progression with carefully chosen unpredictable colours in coexistence with the melody.

I invite you to venture into this collection of guitar music and hopefully find something unexpected and inspiring, as I did creating it.

Mikkel Ploug
Frederiksberg, Copenhagen
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All compositions by Mikkel Ploug
(KODA), except "Barcarola" by
Bent Sørensen, Edition Wilhelm Hansen
(KODA)

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