

# Mp3 Ricardo Marlow - Madera Sonora

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High energy flamenco guitar instrumental in its purest format with simple hand clap percussion and "jaleos" (vocal encouragement). An album in the vein of the very best of flamenco guitar. 10 MP3 Songs in this album (52:22) ! Related styles: WORLD: Flamenco, LATIN: Flamenco People who are interested in Paco de Luca Tomatito Gerardo Nez should consider this download. Details: Saturday, July 12, 2008

Ricardo's CD, Madera Sonora - A review by Adam Solomon Music: Ricardo Marlow - Mi Copita de Jerez (Tanguillos) As Helen tells us about addiction, "[flamenco is] exquisite and leave one unsatisfied, what more could one want?" So it is no surprise that when I got home from flamenco at La Luna Negra just now (10 minutes of flamenco, an hour and 10 minutes of walking), I was struck by a sudden, irresistible urge to put on my favorite new track, Ricardo Marlow's tanguillo "Mi Copita de Jerez". I promised a review of the album it's on, his new (debut) album Madera Sonora, and now I just have to. Ricardo is a DC-based guitarist, and the rare American flamenco who can fool you into thinking he's another gypsy from Jerez. Madera Sonora is an album in the vein of the very best of modern flamenco guitar, a direct heir to top-five and all-around genius guitarist Gerardo Nez (who I've now switched to listening to, without any decline in musical quality). Ricardo offers us three stunning pieces in the universally-loved flamenco style of bulera, a haunting tangos in the unusual key of D, the aforementioned larger-than-life tanguillo (which begins in my personal favorite flamenco style, granana, with a lovely trmolo section), and the rest (for completeness, a rondea, a sole por buleras, a straight-up sole, an alegras, and a rumba). The music is all that's great about the modern school of flamenco exemplified by Nez (as opposed to, say, Tomatito or Vicente Amigo). The compositions are original, making use of experimentation in new tunings and keys (with lovely result), the rhythms are played around with, with the utmost brilliance and feeling involved, and the music just sounds nice. The tanguillos doesn't sound (at least to me) nearly as complex as a lot of modern flamenco guitar but the aire, or the musicality, the feeling, of it, the simple pounding of the rhythm or the haunting airs of the trmolo in the granana intro, are unforgettable. Since my guess is that most readers of this blog haven't the slightest clue of flamenco, I'm going to go out on a limb and say that Ricardo's album is a fantastic introduction, even for an album not from one of the Spanish legends like

Paco or Tomatito or Sabicas. It's beautiful music, easily accesible (though the addiction certainly helps you see some of what's great it in), and all this modern jazz aside, it's really just down-and-dirty flamenco.

Biography: Mr. Marlow has been playing guitar since childhood. He received a degree from the James Madison School of Music, subsequently became active in Flamenco, and studied with master guitarist Gerardo Nuez in Sanlucar de Barrameda, Spain. Mr. Marlow has played for the Danza del Rio Flamenco Company, and with Paco de Malaga and Ana Martinez Dance Company. Since 1997 he has performed with Arte Flamenco Dance Company in venues such as The Kennedy Centers Millenium Stage and the Baltimore Museum of Art, among others. Recently (2004-9) Mr. Marlow was a key member in the Edwin Aparicio productions of "Dos Mundos", Bailes Ineditos, Encuentros, Intimo, and "Entresuenos", with guest artists La Tati, Jesus Montoya, Eli La Truco, Carmela Greco, Roberto Castellon, and Pedro Cortes jr. He has performed in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall for the 20th Mayors Arts Awards, and Amor Brujo with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra both at the Strathmore Hall in Rockville, MD, and the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore, MD. His percussive style of playing is highly sought after by national flamenco artists. He can be seen playing nightly at numerous venues in the Washington, DC area. Awards: 2008 Winner of the Maryland Individual Artist Award Rondea, composed and performed by Richard Marlow, 2008 Individual Artist Award Recipient in Solo Instrumental Performance. Featured In New CD Madera Sonora. Interview with Richard Marlow Flamenco Guitarist On behalf of Flamenco-Teacher.com, Errol Putigna was able to catch up with Richard Marlow in Sanlcar de Barrameda, Spain, during the Gerardo Nez master class in July of 2007. Flamenco Teacher (FT): Its great to be with you here today in Sanlcar. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity. Richard Marlow (RM): No problem. Its my pleasure. FT: Tell us a little bit about how you got started playing guitar. RM: My father was a classical guitarist when he was alive, as was my mother. Thats how they met. They were both students of Sophocles Papas in the Washington D.C. area. FT: He was the Greek guy, right? RM: Yes. Im from Washington D.C. My dad also did a master class with Andrs Segovia in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, in 1965. FT: I guess your dad was a very serious classical guitarist. RM: Oh yes. He was a professional classical guitarist. My mother loved playing, but was more practical about the household income she made the sacrifice and gave up playing professionally after they got married. She got a regular job for more steady income. My father was teaching music and playing until he passed away. I grew up listening to Spanish guitar, basically classical guitar. I had a ukulele as a young child, but

that was really boring. I really didn't show any interest in the guitar until I was about 11 or 12 years old. It was then when I was watching MTV that I saw a music video, Eddie Van Halen was playing, I was hooked! I had made a cardboard cutout guitar and I would practice playing like Eddie. Later, I read somewhere that Tomatito also had a cardboard guitar in his youth. One day, in middle school, I saw another kid playing guitar (starts to play, Crazy Train by Randy Rhodes) and I was like, "That's cool". There were all these girls around him. So I went home that day and I started playing on one of my dad's guitars (playing, Wasted Years by Iron Maiden). I think it was around that Christmas that my parents bought me my first electric guitar. FT: How was that? You know, your dad being a classical guitarist/musician. Usually, I do mean usually let's say the stereotype of a classical musician is more of a conservative, uptight kind of person. Was he totally cool with you and the rock/metal music? Did he accept it? RM: Yeah, he actually liked a lot of different kinds of music. He wasn't like a nerdy, classical snob". FT: He was a very open minded guy. RM: Definitely. His first thing was also playing rock guitar. He got into classical later. FT: Did your dad ever really sit down and teach you? RM: Not really. I pretty much taught myself. FT: What about reading music? RM: Initially, my mom gave me a quick lesson on the basics. I would buy rock magazines and they would come with sheet music of different songs and I started to associate the TABS with the notes. That's how I really started to read music. I would also write my own songs and write them out with musical notations. I took a music theory class in high school. The class was actually for seniors (12th grade high school). I really wanted to take it. I had to ask for permission, as I was an underclassman. I was eventually allowed to take it. FT: Were you in the 9th or 10th grade? RM: Yes, 9th grade. They were very reluctant in allowing me to take the course. I later got an A in the class. I was always very into that (music theory). At the end of high school, my father died (Aug. 1997). I was still playing rock guitar and writing cheesy pop songs. Before then, I would listen to lots of stuff and I would ask my dad if he knew any of it. He would say, Yeah, that's a Bach Prelude and I would be like, What are you talking about?. He would prove it by finding the same piece in his record collection. I did have one teacher. It was at a summer camp at the Shenandoah Conservatory. That guy was such a cool dude. He was a former student of my father's. There were a large variety of guitarists with different styles and different backgrounds. He would ask us to bring in different music that we could share with the class. A lot of kids brought in country, rock.. there was this one kid that was into classical guitar. That was kind of weird at that time.. I think he was German or something. FT: What year was this, more or less? RM: It

was probably around 1989 or 1990. Our teacher brought the record by John McLaughlin, Al Di Meola and Paco De Lucia. It was the, Passion, Grace and Fire album. I was like, Oh my God, thats amazing! . So I went home and that was it. I was really into all three of those guitarists. I was buying all of their records. I couldnt find any from Paco de Lucia, so I asked my dad if he new of this guitarist. He said, "Yes, but the best flamenco guitarist was Sabicas". He had a record of Carmen Amaya with Sabicas called, Queen of the Gypsies. It was totally badass! So I made a tape of it and I brought it into class the next week. That was pretty much my first experience with flamenco. My dad didnt know too much about flamenco but I do remember him doing some rasgueados. My dad died when I was 17 years old. I really regret not taking more advantage of my dads knowledge of classical and acoustic guitar. FT: So from what I see, you not only had a great father/son relationship with your dad but a great musical relationship with him as well.

RM: Yeah, it was mostly just listening to music and talking about it. He never taught me how or what to play. FT: It was like friends listening to music. RM: Most of it was just listening to music while riding in the car. Id force him to listen to heavy metal and then he would get tired of it and put on some classical music. He would sometimes have me guess who the composer was. FT: It was kind of like ear training.

RM: Exactly!! So when I went to college, I was tired of electric guitar. You had to play classical in order to study music at James Madison University. That made me regret not studying with my dad even more. FT: So youd have to say that you did study classical guitar or at least forced into it. RM: I guess you could say that. My teacher was Keith Stevens at James Madison University, a great classical player. We used to fight a bit about music, though. I wanted more of a flamenco sound and he wanted more of a classical sound (plays a bit of, Concierto de Aranjuez with flamenco verses classical attacks). FT: Your teacher was going crazy! RM: Yeah! And I was like, No. This is what its got to sound like!. That was it. I just started teaching myself because there was no one that could help me. FT: What about the rhythms in flamenco? Were you aware of the different compases and times? RM: Well, when I was in the rock band, I realized how important rhythm and timing was. I was like; the drummer is the guy to hang out with because he knows about music. One of my best friends in college, Paul Erickson, was a percussionist. He happened to be one of the top percussionists in the university. He actually won first prize in the concerto competition on marimba. I learned a lot from him. I was also listening to a lot of flamenco records. I then started to figure out what they were doing with the rhythms. FT: So in reality, it wasnt about being taught, but knowing how to learn. RM: Or translate what I knew about rhythm into what it

meant in flamenco. FT: For me, and Ill come back, the most difficult thing was figuring out how to reproduce the sound. I knew what kind of sound I wanted but I was unable to reproduce it because I didnt know the technique. How did you do it? RM: I saw Paco de Lucias concert for the first time in 1995. I had a front row ticket. FT: Was this the first time you had ever seen flamenco? RM: No. There was this friend of my fathers, Paco De Mlaga, who played Flamenco. I would ask him questions, "pick his brain". He mailed me a tap plate when I was in college and he played at a benefit for my father. So along the way, when I was teaching myself, he was someone I would refer to once in while. FT: So in reality, you were pretty autodidactic. RM: I really figured out a lot of things by video. FT: So at the Paco de Lucia concert, you were mentally recording everything. RM: Yeah! FT: So it wasnt even a concert but more of a one on one lesson with Paco De Lucia! (Ha! Ha!) RM: After I got home from the show I said, Now, Im going to take this seriously! I wanted everything to sound right, you know. Sound "flamenco"! I also was listening to a lot of different music at the time, like Indian music and Jazz. College is a great atmosphere to listen to and explore different musical genres. FT: How did you start playing flamenco for a living? RM: I was looking for flamenco dancers in college but there was nobody. When I graduated and came home, I met whomever I could meet There was one guy at Paco de Lucia's concert who told me where to go to meet some dancers. Thats when I got hooked up with the Washington flamenco scene. I finally met a dancer. She had an incredible knowledge base about flamenco and the different styles of flamenco dance. She didnt play guitar but she would sing the parts that I needed to do. I would imitate them on the guitar. FT: Your wife is a flamenco dancer, right? RM: Yes. We met when I was playing for the flamenco company she was in at the time. FT: Did you ever get to the point in your evolution in flamenco where you said, I need to go to Spain. RM: Yeah. I knew I needed to do that. It became more of a reality when I met Gerardo Nez in North Carolina. Its about a 5 or 6 hour drive South from Washington D.C. We were trying to bring him to do a workshop. We got in touch with the record label and they said he would do it but they never quoted us a price or anything so, we decided to go see and ask him ourselves. Sadly, he said he wouldnt do it but he did invite us to his workshop in Sanlcar, Spain. He was a really nice guy. He invited us to go have dinner with him. FT: By this time you definitely knew who he was, right? RM: Oh yeah! He was one of my guitar heroes. Anyway, that night I wrote my name down on a napkin with a magic marker. He took that napkin home and mailed me all the course info. So that was a sign for me that I needed to go to Sanlcar and take his workshop. I couldn't convince any of my guitar playing friends to go with me

and I didn't want to go alone because I didn't speak Spanish. My Spanish speaking girlfriend at the time (later to be my wife), insisted that I go with her and we would take the course together. FT: So when you finally made it to Sanlcar, were you like, Man, Ive still got a lot to learn!. Was it a real eye-opening experience? RM: Absolutely! I was amazed on how much I was learning and how much I really needed to learn. FT: Was it a total overdose of information? RM: Not really. It was more like what I really needed at the time, not more than I could handle kind of like you need a cup of coffee in the morning, a well needed boost. FT: On a personal level, what did you get out of Gerardos course? RM: At first I wasnt really sure. Then I realized I had to change my technique, break old habits. His music is really inspirational too. I started to pick up on little details, nuances, rhythms, etc. Mainly, technique right hand especially. Of course, palmas, singing, juergas, you know. everything that goes with flamenco. Going now, it's more about being inspired, but I still learn details. FT: What about the fact of being a foreigner in the flamenco world. Lets face it, Richard Marlow is not Ricardo de Sanlcar. RM: To be honest with you, from the beginning before I could play flamenco I was an aficionado and developed my own kinds of prejudices, my own tastes. When I heard someone playing or singing, I would say to myself, "Theyre not Spanish". I could tell the difference to some degree. Especially when I would record myself. I would say, Oh, you sound like a gringo!. As a student myself, I think the important thing is that you make it sound flamenco, authentic, pay attention to the details. In the end, you are who you are and you cant change that. FT: Well, I can tell you this, Richard. Youve got an extremely flamenco sound and nobody can deny that. How about recording? Do you have any CD in the works? RM: Yeah, it should be done pretty soon. Ive got to mix it and set the CD layout and design. FT: There are a lot of people excited to hear your work. Is it going to be all original compositions? RM: Yes. Its going to be just guitar. FT: Do you have any recommendations for foreign flamenco guitarists, like from the rest of Europe, Japan or the USA? RM: Yeah, remember the details that I was talking about. Make sure you pay attention to them because, in reality, they are technical. In other words, they are something you can learn and work on. You have to respect the details, respect the art form. Do what youre going to do musically, be yourself. Take some risk and do the best you can. Dont be shy, show confidence but don't be arrogant. FT: Arrogance can put a limit on you. RM: Thats right. It really limits your learning. Even Gerardos learning everyday. Keep learning! FT: Thank you very much for allowing us this opportunity for this interview. We cant wait to hear your CD and any other things you have for the future. RM: Thanks a lot for giving me this opportunity.

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