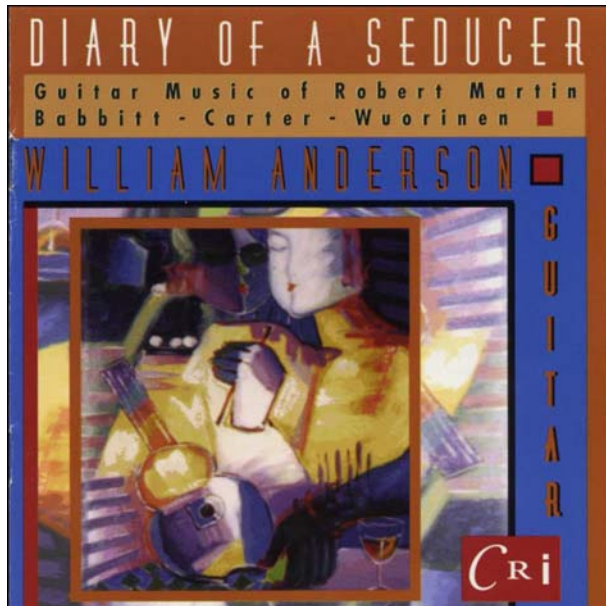


NWCR838

Diary of a Seducer

William Anderson, Guitar



Robert Martin

Diary of a Seducer (1981-95)

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| Volume I: Guitar Solos | (16:47) |
| 1. No. 1 (Sonoro – ♩ = 40) | (1:14) |
| 2. No. 2 (Lontano – ♩ = 48) | (0:47) |
| 3. No. 3 (Misterioso – ♩ = 54) | (0:55) |
| 4. No. 4 (Timoroso – ♩ = 76 or slower) | (1:10) |
| 5. No. 5 (Festoso – ♩ = 104) | (0:43) |
| 6. No. 6 (Appassionato – ♩ = 56) | (1:12) |
| 7. No. 7 (Andante – ♩ = 84) | (1:28) |
| 8. No. 8 (Caloroso – ♩ = 108) | (0:51) |
| 9. No. 9 (Animoso – ♩ = 126) | (0:45) |
| 10. No. 10 (Deciso – ♩ = 144) | (0:55) |
| 11. No. 11 (Innocentemente – ♩ = 160) | (1:24) |
| 12. No. 12 (Tranquillo – ♩ = 58) | (0:54) |
| 13. No. 13 (Cantabile – ♩ = 96) | (1:03) |
| 14. No. 14 (Affettuoso – ♩ = 112) | (1:08) |
| 15. No. 15 (Velato – ♩ = 42) | (2:18) |

William Anderson, guitar

Volume II: Guitar Duos

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| 16. No. 16 (Semplice – ♩ = 60) | (1:09) |
| 17. No. 17 (Serioso – ♩ = 69) | (0:45) |
| 18. No. 18 (Doloroso – ♩ = 88) | (1:14) |
| 19. No. 19 (Espressivo – ♩ = 63) | (1:03) |
| 20. No. 20 (Dolce – ♩ = 80) | (0:59) |
| 21. No. 21 (Elevato – ♩ = 66) | (1:05) |
| 22. No. 22 (Pesante – ♩ = 92) | (0:54) |
| 23. No. 23 (Delicato – ♩ = 116) | (0:55) |
| 24. No. 24 (Grazioso – ♩ = 44) | (1:05) |
| 25. No. 25 (Leggiero – ♩ = 72) | (0:53) |
| 26. No. 26 (Drammatico – ♩ = 46) | (1:03) |
| 27. No. 27 (Declamando – ♩ = 50) | (0:51) |
| 28. No. 28 (Lamentoso – ♩ = 100) | (1:11) |
| 29. No. 29 (Fuocoso – ♩ = 123) | (1:05) |
| 30. No. 30 (Mesto – ♩ = 120) | (1:11) |

William Anderson, guitar; Oren Fader, guitar

Volume III: Guitar Trios

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| 31. No. 31 (Mormoroso – ♩ = 152) | (1:56) |
| 32. No. 32 (Poco Precipitato – ♩ = 52) | (2:06) |
| 33. No. 33 (Risoluto – ♩ = 84) | (1:47) |
| 34. No. 34 (Agitato – ♩ = 138) | (1:45) |
| 35. No. 35 (Tempestuoso – ♩ = 88) | (1:55) |
| 36. No. 36 (Sempre stringendo – ♩ ca. 184) | (1:37) |

William Anderson, guitar; Oren Fader, guitar; Mark Delpriora, guitar

Charles Wuorinen (b 1938)

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| 37. Sonata for guitar and piano (1995 | (11:54) |
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William Anderson, guitar; Joan Forsyth, piano

Milton Babbitt (b 1916)

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| 38. <i>Sheer Pluck for solo guitar</i> (1984) | (7:19) |
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Elliott Carter (b 1908)

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| 39. <i>Changes for solo guitar</i> (1983) | (7:11) |
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William Anderson, guitar

Total Playing Time: 69:58

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Notes

A hand speaks. The guitar gives that hand a voice, a mode of speech, and so makes possible a kind of sign language for the hearing. Robert Martin's *Diary of a Seducer* is a sequence of statements delivered by one or more of these speaking hands.

The title of the work is taken from that of a painting by Arshile Gorky, but Martin's interest was apparently not so much in the subject matter of that particular picture as in the general notion of what gives an abstract image wholeness and presence. How can the speaking hand be felt to have said something meaningful, to have said it completely, and to have said nothing redundant along the way? Here are thirty-six answers to that question.

They come in three books, the first comprising fifteen solo pieces, the second fifteen duets, the third six trios. How these answers are phrased, and what they say, is for the listener to

discover. But we can all agree on the variety of expressive tones here. Wholeness and presence, for Martin, seem to bespeak particularity of mood and character. Each of these pieces is saying one thing (though it may be a complex and polyphonic thing), and saying it strongly.

Quasi-vocal melody is important to the effect of speech: the guitar is understood American-style, as associated with song, rather than Spanish-style, as having to do with dance. But, particularly in the duos and trios, the music begins to speak also in momentary effects of texture: in the use of harmonics, for example, or in the extraordinary chords that surface in the last two duos and, wildest of all, the penultimate trio. The duos and trios also explore the interplay of similarities slightly out of synchrony, as if the two or three hands were getting in the way of each other as each tried to say the same thing. Right at the end comes the most obvious example of this, in

Escher-like multiple staircases of scale patterns getting faster and faster.

Here the music is starting to become public, but the essence of the set is intimate and private, and the title seems no accident. The speaking hand seduces the instrument and thereby the listening ear. And the pieces unfold like entries in a diary, given a general wholeness by the personality of the writer and the simple fact of succession. This diary was written, though, over a period of many more than thirty-six days. Each book carries the dateline "1981–1995 in hotels and on planes."

Charles Wuorinen's Sonata for guitar and piano chimes in at the end of that period, having been written in 1995—and written for the musicians who perform it in this recording. Matching of timbres, which is not a problem when two or three guitars are in play, now becomes a compositional issue, and Wuorinen, by his choices of pattern, rhythm, dynamics, and harmony, creates music full of blendings or of passages where the guitar sounds almost like a piano, the piano almost like a guitar. Nevertheless, the friction between the instruments—as much as any contrast of thematic type—seems to provide the impetus that presses the piece strongly forward. The argument is suspended for a while, or differently engaged, in a central slow section, where the lines are more vocal in quality and the tempo more flexible, but for the most part this is active music, music with goals in the form of focal pitches (however brief the focus may be) and with clear strategies about how to get there and away again. At the same time, the guitar's history in dance begins to come to the fore.

In **Milton Babbitt's** *Sheer Pluck for solo guitar* (1984, also known more soberly as *Composition for Guitar*), the instrument seems almost to have no history at all: it is re-invented. As is often his way, Babbitt uses the full register available to him, and his music skips in agile fashion between extremes. Moreover, it soon becomes restless too in terms of color, switching, often rapidly, between notes played normally and others that are plucked rather than strummed, or played near the bridge, or given a tremolo (which never sounds like a normal guitar tremolo). Virtuosity and control are at a premium: the hand is moving so quickly that it rarely gets a chance to speak at all—or rather, it speaks through its movement. But not always. As the piece proceeds, so it passes through different nets of tones, and sometimes those nets are so simple that stray echoes of folksong begin to emerge, especially when the durations are also increased so that the tempo is felt to slacken. Many stories, and many kinds of story, are being told here with and about notes, and William Anderson's delivery of those stories shades them in a little by sustaining resultant harmonies. The end is a sort of clarification of the beginning, as the music keeps returning to a high E-flat, which eventually is all that is left.

Curiously enough, this same note is emphasized at the very start of **Elliott Carter's** *Changes for solo guitar* (1983), where, as much as in Babbitt or Wuorinen, the music is concerned with creating harmonic stations and surges in a twelve-tone world, with moments of familiarity and continuity—moments which can only be moments. The difference in Carter is that there are prevailing entities. What changes in *Changes* is the particular form, length and strength—but not the essential character—of various interwoven ideas: strummed chords that develop from a hint in the opening measure into fully fledged memories of the mark left on the guitar by flamenco; a kind or murmuring toccata in more or less even values; slow high melody, using mostly the ethereal tones of

harmonics. In the coda it is as if these different characters had been masks that have now been taken off, so that we can see the faces—the harmonies—beneath. The guitar, one might recall, had accompanied the baritone voice of Greek poetry in Carter's *Syringa* of 1978. What it delivers now, by itself, is both dance and oration.

—Paul Griffiths

Robert Martin (b 1952) began composing at age ten. After receiving bachelor's and master's degrees in music composition from the Peabody Conservatory of Music, he worked at various jobs, including as an apprentice in pipe organ restoration. In 1976, the American Academy of Arts and Letters awarded him the Charles Ives Scholarship for outstanding music composition. Returning to New York in 1980, he turned his attention to Wall Street, rising to the position of senior vice president in investment banking at a leading firm, and serving as full time and travels widely in Asia and Europe. Robert Martin's music is published by the Theodore Presser Company.

William Anderson has attained a unique position in the music world, reached through highly acclaimed performances, through his work as a composer, and also through his work with the pioneering chamber ensemble, Cygnus, which he founded in 1985. David Denton in *Fanfare* exclaims: "Anderson's playing is of a very high order of dexterity, virtuosity and brilliance, and is indicative of the tremendous advances made in guitar technique over the past four decades." Thomas May states in the *Washington Post*: "The mirror-paneled recital room provided an apt visual metaphor for how such seemingly modest dimensions can trick the ear into an impression of vaster scale. Guitarist William Anderson brought both technical and expressive virtuosity to his accounts...a quasi-orchestral palette of coloristic effects...deftly realized by Anderson as he shaped each entry with epigrammatic concentration."

At age nineteen he began playing chamber music at the Tanglewood Music Festival, where he performed from 1981 through 1988. In 1982 he began studying with America's premiere guitar pioneer David Starobin, who introduced him to the music community in New York City. His first solo recital was presented by the League of Composers/ISCM at Weill Hall, New York City (1990). He was also presented in recital by Music From Japan at the Asia Society (1993). He regularly appears in Washington D.C. with the Theater Chamber Players at the Kennedy Center, performing both solo guitar and chamber music repertoire. Mr. Anderson has been a soloist in festivals and ensembles such as the Bang on a Can Festival, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and Modern Works.

He is heard on radio broadcasts on WNYC, WKCR, WGBH, and National Public Radio. Mr. Anderson appears on numerous recordings, and has given recitals and radio broadcasts in ten European countries, Mexico, Japan and the U.S. With Cygnus, he has performed in Denmark, Holland, Poland, Russia, Mexico, and California. Cygnus also offers a series of three concerts each season at Merkin Concert Hall in New York City, presenting important new works by America's best composers. Paul Griffiths, in the *New York Times*, recently praised Cygnus for its "excellent concert." In the *New Music Connoisseur*, Leo Kraft wrote a review of a Cygnus performance in New York, saying, "If Mr. Anderson's aim was to show how the guitar can play a significant role in chamber music, he certainly succeeded." He teaches guitar at Sarah Lawrence College in New York.

Production Notes

Produced by Michael Calvert

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