

DRIFTWOOD

BEN LAHRING GUITAR

- 1. LULLABY FOR MY LOVE** *Liona Boyd*
- 2. BOUND BY SHADOWS** *William Beauvais*
- 3. EL TESTAMENT D'AMELIA** *trad. Catalan (arr. Miguel Llobet)*
- 4. FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD - the garden** *Ben Lahring*
- 5. FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD - the curse** *Ben Lahring*
- 6. FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD - the promise** *Ben Lahring*
- 7. SEARCHING FOR A CHORALE** *Seymour Bernstein*
- 8. A CLOSED WORLD OF FINE FEELINGS AND GRAND DESIGN** *Graeme Koehne*
- 9. OVER THE PACIFIC** *Ben Lahring*
- 10. DRIFTWOOD** *Ben Lahring*
- 11. FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS** *Ben Lahring*

Recorded in the Doolittle Studio at the University of Calgary, June 2022
Engineer: Ralph Maier Photography and Design: Dayla Lahring

1. **LULLABY FOR MY LOVE** *Liona Boyd*

Liona Boyd (b. 1949) earned a Bachelor of Music from University of Toronto in 1972, studying with Eli Kassner. After graduating, she moved to Paris and studied privately with Alexander Lagoye for two years. She has also taken lessons with Narciso Yepes, Alirio Diaz, Julian Bream, and Andres Segovia. She released her debut album in 1974 on Boot Records and made her Carnegie Hall debut the following year. She has won multiple awards, including five Juno Awards. She was inducted as a member of the Order of Canada in 1982 and was promoted to the rank of Officer of The Order of Canada in 2021.

Boyd composed *Lullaby For My Love* in 1991, for the man who would later become her husband of 12 years. She wrote it while on a performance cruise through the Carribean, putting the finishing touches on the piece while anchored in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It was originally released as the closing track on her 1995 album, *Classically Yours* and was rereleased as the opening track on her Juno Award-winning 2000 compilation album, *Passport to Serenity*, reaching the number one position on MP3.com that same year.



Photo by Keith Williamson

2. BOUND BY SHADOWS William Beauvais

Toronto-based guitarist and composer William Beauvais (b. 1956) is an associate of the Canadian Music Centre. As a music educator, he has taught at the Royal Conservatory of Music, York University, Queens University, and the University of Windsor. As a composer and arranger of music for guitar, dozens of his works have been published through Les Production D'Oz and the Canadian Music Centre. Bound by Shadows was composed in 2001 and dedicated to fellow Toronto-based guitarist Raffi Altounian.



Photo by Alan Bell

The composer's own description of the piece is as follows:

Bound by Shadows begins with a tune that is harmonized with some modern jazz style chords. Three variations follow, which strictly follow the harmonic outline of the tune. This is the shadow that binds the work together. The second section explores these harmonies with a punchy rhythmic figure, while the next section moves in single note lines that break into other voices like a Baroque prelude. The final section skitters through the harmonic pattern in a vivacious gigue.

- William Beauvais, 2001

3. EL TESTAMENT D'AMELIA trad. Catalan (arr. Miguel Llobet)

Miguel Llobet Solés (1878 – 1938) was a Spanish guitarist and composer who arranged many popular Catalan folk songs for solo guitar. His formative studies consisted of painting, violin, and piano. After hearing a guitar recital by Antonio Jiménez Manjón he sought out guitar instruction from Magí Alegre. He later studied with Francisco Tárrega at the Municipal Conservatory of Music in Barcelona.

El testament d'Amèlia is a Catalan folk song that Llobet arranged for solo guitar and published as part of a collection titled *Canciones Populares Catalanas*. The song lyrics detail the last will and testament of a dying woman, as told to her stepmother, who had poisoned her after stealing her husband.

*Ai, que el meu cor se'm nua
Com un pom de clavells!*

*Oh, my heart is becoming knotted
Like a bouquet of carnations!*



Photographer Unknown

4. **FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD - the garden** *Ben Lahring*
5. **FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD - the curse** *Ben Lahring*
6. **FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD - the promise** *Ben Lahring*

Tracks 4-6 are a three-movement work titled *Firstborn of the Dead*. It is a piece with religious themes inspired by my time as a church Music Director/Pastor.

FIRSTBORN OF THE DEAD

THE GARDEN • THE CURSE • THE PROMISE



FOR SOLO GUITAR
BEN LAHRING

Movement 1, "*The Garden*", is a celebration of innocence, naivety, and peacefulness.

Movement 2, "*The Curse*", is about the grief, frustration and fear that accompany undesired consequences.

Movement 3, "*The Promise*", provides reassurance and hope but is not a return to innocence. Consequence is fulfilled rather than removed.

7. SEARCHING FOR A CHORALE *Seymour Bernstein*

Seymour Bernstein (b. 1927) is a prolific composer and sought-after piano pedagogue. His education consisted of studies with Alexander Brailowsky, Sir Clifford Curzon, Jan Gorbaty, Nadia Boulanger, and Georges Enesco. Bernstein won the First Prize and Prix Jacques Durand at Fontainebleau, the National Federation of Music Clubs Award for Furthering American Music Abroad, a Beebe Foundation grant, two Martha Baird Rockefeller grants, and four State Department grants. He retired from a thriving concert career in 1977 to dedicate himself to teaching.



Photo by Jiyang Chen

Searching for a Chorale, composed in 2016, was directly inspired by Benjamin Britten's Nocturnal. Bernstein explores a series of contrasting musical ideas interspersed by melodic fragments that hint at the Bach chorale which concludes the piece in faithful four-part harmony. Bernstein uses his favourite chorale from Bach's St Matthew Passion, "Befiehl du deine Wege" (English: "Entrust your way"). The words for this chorale were written as a Lutheran Hymn by Paul Gerhardt, first published in 1653. The tune was originally written in 1601 by Hans Leo Hassler and is also used for the popular Christian hymn "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded".

8. A CLOSED WORLD OF FINE FEELINGS AND GRAND DESIGN *Graeme Koehne*

Graeme Koehne is an Australian composer best known for his orchestral and ballet scores. He completed undergraduate and post-graduate studies at the Elder Conservatorium of Music in Adelaide, Australia, where he studied composition with Richard Meale. In 1984, Koehne received a Harkness Fellowship to work at the Yale School of Music, during which time he studied with Louis Andriessen, Jacob Druckman, and Virgil Thomson. Koehne returned to Australia in 1986 and has been teaching composition at the Elder Conservatorium of Music since his return. In 2014 he was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia.

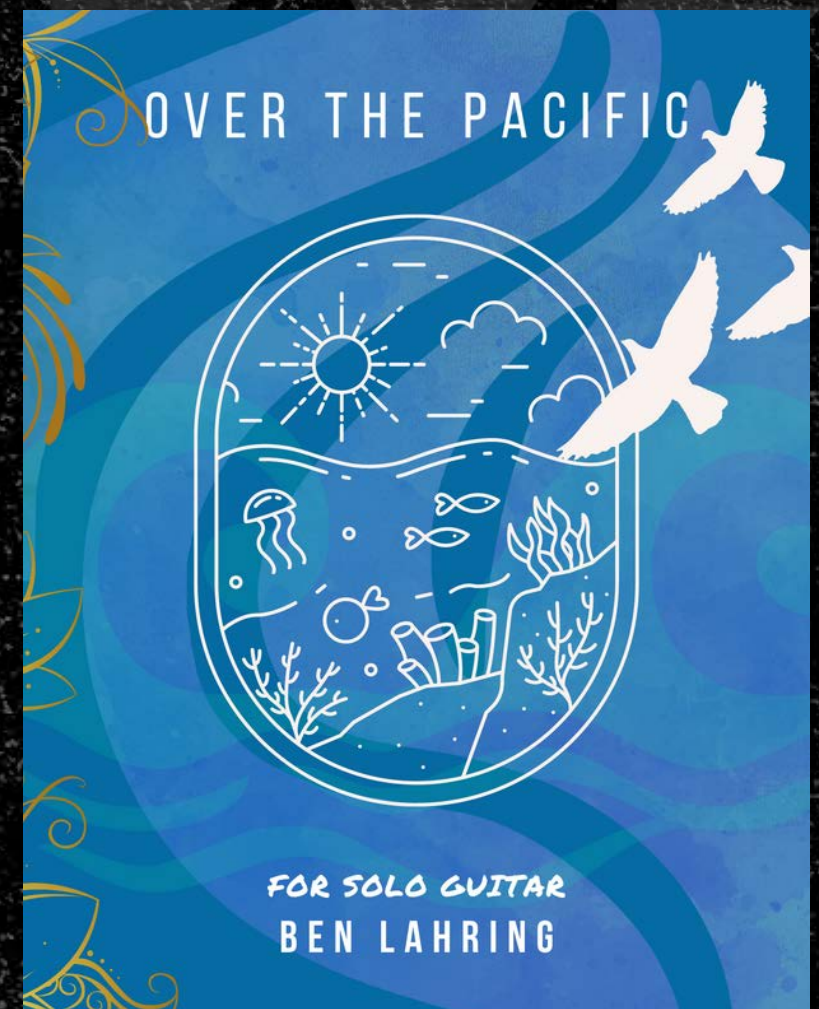


Photo by Sean Skitterall

A Closed World of Fine Feelings and Grand Design is a derivative of one of the movements of *Aphorisms*, a set of works that Koehne composed for solo piano in 1989. It was arranged for solo guitar in 1997 as a commission by renowned Australian guitarist Timothy Kain. The gradual development of chord groupings constructed from dyads enables a sense of spaciousness without losing the intimacy suggested by the title of the work.

9. OVER THE PACIFIC *Ben Lahring*

Over The Pacific is a revisiting of musical themes that I first composed while living in tropical Darwin, Australia. I continued to develop these themes while completing my Bachelor of Music in Sydney, Australia. I would often visit the beaches and stare out across the ocean, imagining that I could see Canada, the land of my birth. I did not consider the piece finished until after I had moved "across the Pacific" and had lived in Canada for about a decade.

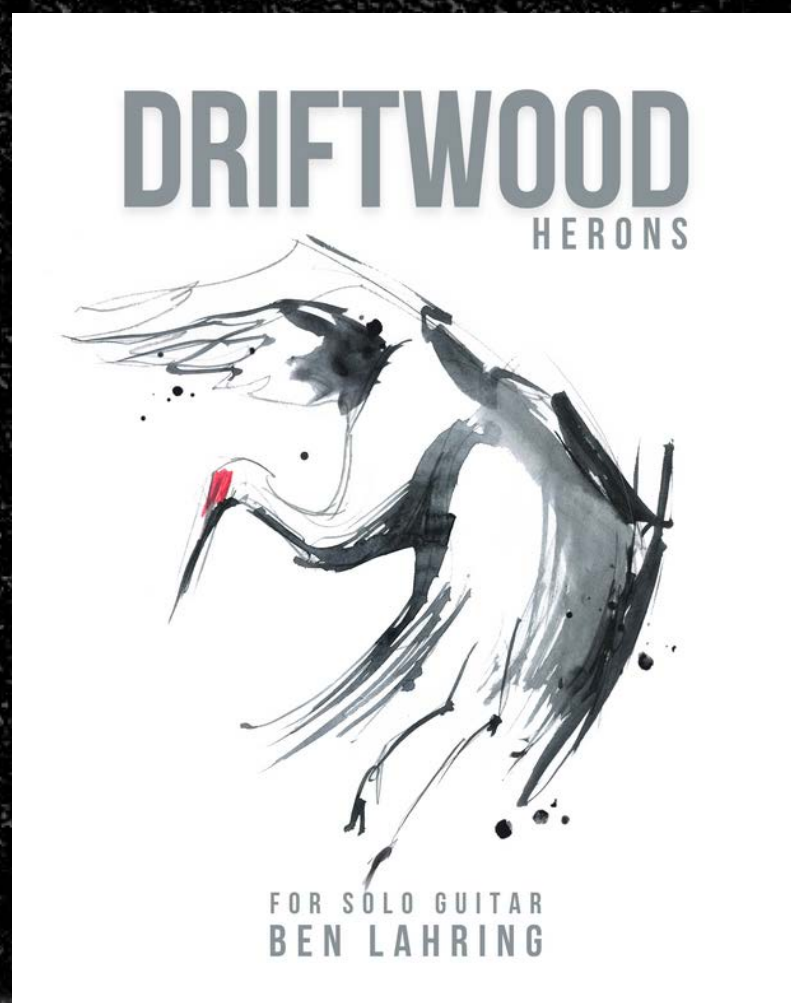


10. DRIFTWOOD *Ben Lahring*

Driftwood takes inspiration from *Poem on his birthday* by Dylan Thomas. I was 35 years old and reflecting on life and the passage of time when I composed this piece.

*This sandgrain day in the bent bay's grave
He celebrates and spurns
His driftwood thirty-fifth wind turned age;
Herons spire and spear.*

- Dylan Thomas (from *Poem on his birthday*)



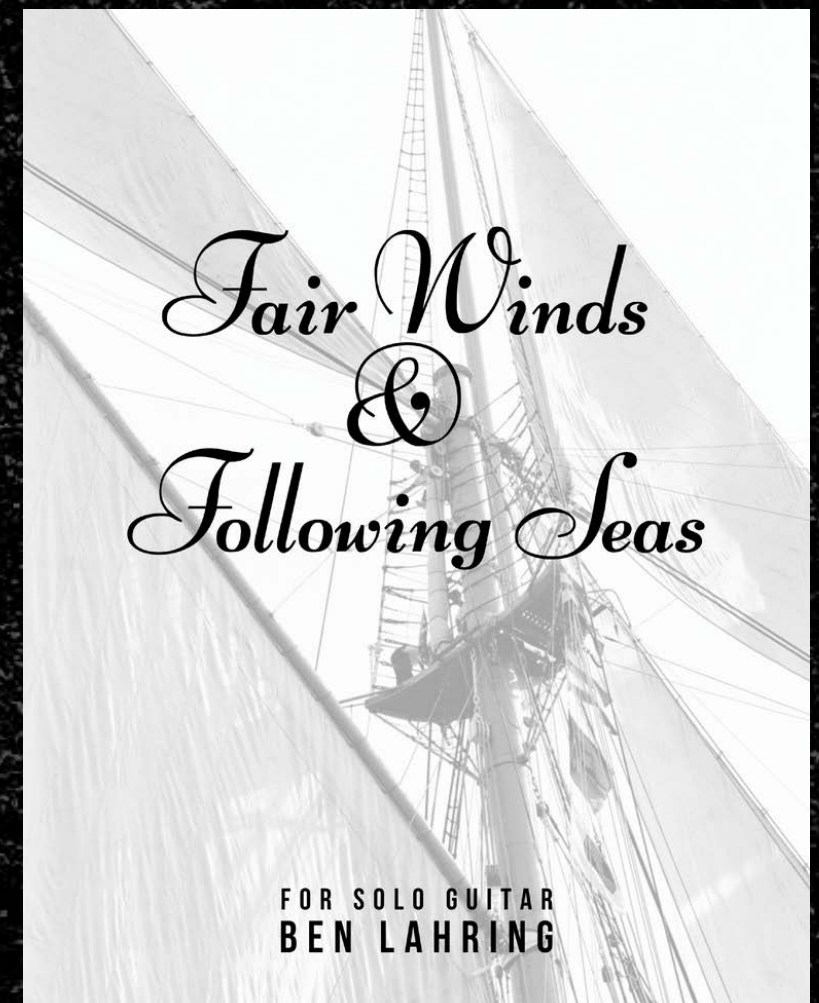
UNIT TWO

11. FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS *Ben Lahring*

Fair Winds and Following Seas is a solemn farewell that acknowledges loss while anticipating newness. It was composed after the passing of a loved one, in the midst of the global coronavirus pandemic, and is dedicated to "*the departed*".

*let me square the yards, while we may, old man,
and make a fair wind of it homewards,
to go on a better voyage than this.*

- Herman Melville (from Moby Dick)



UNIT TWO

UNITED WORLD

Ben Lahring has been praised for his “lovely” tone (Liona Boyd, guitarist), his compelling “sense of narrative, of story-telling” (Fanfare Magazine), and his “gift of playing the intention behind the music” (William Beauvais, composer).

Lahring's formative years were spent in tropical Darwin, Australia, where he began his classical guitar training with Stephan Bulmer at Charles Darwin University. He went on to earn his Bachelor of Music from Wesley Institute in Sydney, Australia, studying with Philip Moran while maintaining a weekly performance residency at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel.

After a decade working in church music, he pursued his Master of Music as a scholarship student at the University of Calgary in Canada under the tutelage of early music specialist Dr. Ralph Maier. Additional lessons with Ben Verdery, Iliana Matos and Patrick Roux, as well as masterclasses and workshops with many renowned musicians, have also been influential in the development of his playing.

Lahring's debut album, *My Stage*, was praised for being “fun and enthusiastic” and displaying “a natural feel for the music” (This is Classical Guitar). His latest album, *Driftwood*, has been lauded as "a work of originality and shimmering beauty" (Vivascene) and “one of the most singularly beautiful guitar recitals” (Fanfare Magazine).



*To unpathed waters,
undreamed shores*

*- William Shakespeare,
The Winter's Tale*