

Vincea McClelland

BIOGRAPHY

Throughout a career spanning five continents and more than two decades, Canadian guitarist Vincea McClelland has given concerts in a wide variety of venues from the Beijing Concert Hall to Stockholm's Music Museum, from Cleveland's Convention Center Music Hall, where she performed with the Festival Orchestra, to the Théâtre Villette at the Paris International Music Fair. Her playing has been consistently praised for its virtuosity and clarity, dynamic style, great sensitivity and remarkable tone described as "luminous" (Guitares, Belgium), "pristine" (Halifax Chronicle Herald, Canada) and "golden...heavenly" (Dorset Guitar Society, England). Vincea has been a featured soloist at numerous international guitar and music festivals such as the Paris International Guitar Weekend, the Classical Guitar Festival of Great Britain at West Dean, the International Guitar Festival of the Americas in Stockholm and the *Guitarras del Mundo* International Festival in Argentina.

Vincea's Canadian appearances are frequently broadcast nationally on both the English and French networks of the CBC. They include a concert recorded live in the Rideau Chapel of the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), the CBC/McGill Concert Series in Montreal and two invitations to perform at Prince Edward Island's Indian River Festival. Recitals and concert tours have also taken her to the U.S.A., Britain, France, Italy, Portugal, Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Morocco and China. In addition to her solo concerts, she has performed in numerous chamber music ensembles and has recorded for television and radio in Switzerland and Germany and for Radio France, CBC Radio-Canada and Chinese State Radio.

In September of 1988 Vincea McClelland and her husband, French guitarist and lutenist Raymond Cousté, received an invitation from the Chinese government to tour the People's Republic of China. Making their international début as a duo, the artists were named "Honorary Advisors" to the Guitar Societies of Shanghai and Beijing and Vincea also became the first Canadian to teach the classical guitar in mainland China. In November, 2005 Vincea was invited to represent Canada at the 10th International Strings Festival in Rabat, Morocco and also performed a recital for an audience of government officials and diplomats at the official residence of the Canadian Ambassador.

Vincea's CDs *Guitar Originals*, *Intermedio* and *Classique!* have been widely acclaimed for their high quality, choice of repertoire, energetic musicality and beautiful sound. They are regularly reviewed in international guitar and music magazines in France (Guitare Classique), Belgium (Guitares), Italy (GuitArt), Germany (Staccato), Poland (Swiat Gitary), England (Classical Guitar Magazine), Canada (WholeNote) and the USA (Soundboard). An all-duo album is due for release in 2010.

Born in Montreal and now based in Paris, France, Vincea McClelland obtained her Bachelor of Music in Performance degree at the University of Toronto where she studied with famed guitar professor Eli Kassner. Later she studied with Oscar Ghiglia at the Banff School of Fine Arts and with Alexandre Lagoya in France, both in Paris and at the *Académie Internationale* in Nice. She has won scholarships and awards including two Canada Council grants and the Floyd S. Chalmers Performing Arts Award from the Ontario Arts Council. Her many pedagogic activities have included giving masterclasses and workshops worldwide as well as teaching on the guitar faculties of the Toronto Board of Education, the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto, the University of Guelph (Ontario) and the Paris Central Conservatory. Founder of the International Guitar Festival of Rueil-Malmaison in France, she acted as artistic director from 2000 to 2005. She has published articles in *Classical Guitar* (Britain), *Soundboard* (USA), *Les Cahiers de la Guitare* (France), *Guitar Classique* (France) and for the Guitar Society of Toronto. Vincea McClelland holds a Professor of Music diploma from the French Ministry of Culture and teaches in Paris at the *Conservatoire Maurice Ravel de Levallois*.

REVIEWS

"A dynamic playing style" ROME DAILY AMERICAN (Italy)

"We were treated to the incredible playing of Vincea McClelland on her beautiful guitar... I don't think I have often witnessed such a 'Golden' tone, even more, one could compare it to silk, satin and velvet all rolled into one...she certainly produced a heavenly sound. Not only that, but with such a seemingly calm and effortless approach to every phrase in the music...Her playing was inspirational."

DORSET GUITAR SOCIETY (England)

"An admirable concert...Polished phrasing, clear voicing and crisply delineated rhythms helped to make it in many ways an object lesson in how to present a guitar recital...The second half abandoned itself to joyous Sud-Hispanicism, with Roland Dyens' *Saudade* No. 3 played by Vincea McClelland with clarity of style and firmly delineated rhythms."

Colin Cooper, CLASSICAL GUITAR MAGAZINE

"The charismatic Vincea McClelland..." GUITAR SOCIETY OF TORONTO (Canada)

"Vincea took the stage for some superb solos. Two Rodrigo pieces, *Tiento Antiguo* and *Junto al Generalife* were both very enjoyable...followed by *Misionera* and a blistering arrangement of Bernstein's *America*." SOUTHAMPTON CLASSICAL GUITAR SOCIETY (England)

"McClelland is a subtle player with pristine tone and impeccable fingers... As she played she tuned us all in to her wavelength, where all the subtlety in the world could not conceal her sensitive, expressive playing... Few audiences listen as hard as this one did. McClelland rewarded them by adding a charming arrangement of *America* from West Side Story, which fitted perfectly into the programme."

HALIFAX CHRONICLE-HERALD (Canada)

"McClelland brought to intriguingly intricate guitar parts a skill and sensitivity..."

MONTREAL GAZETTE (Canada)

"Sublime" EL LIBERTADOR (Argentina)

"Lively, energetic phrasing...very clean and musical...An enjoyable international tour of guitar music." SOUNDBOARD (USA)

"I like everything about this CD, the excellent choice of repertoire, the quality of the performance, the sound and the recording. It deserves only the best of receptions. Bravo!"

Bernard Maillot, President of SAVAREZ (France)

"Especially admirable is the sensitivity of Vincea McClelland's playing, her precision which makes a perfect marriage with virtuosity...completely convincing." GUITARE CLASSIQUE (France)

"*Intermedio* is an enjoyable recording and those who may have missed it can confidently add it to their priority wish-list... A highlight is the beautiful *Milonga* by Jorge Cardoso. This rendition by McClelland is most enjoyable and transcends a previously favoured version by Göran Söllscher."

MusicWeb INTERNATIONAL

"The CD begins with Jorge Morel's transcription of *America* from West Side Story performed with gusto by Vincea McClelland. There is another transcription of Morel's, admirably performed as a solo by Vincea McClelland: *Misionera* by Fernando Bustamante. The Canadian is then joined in duo by Raymond Cousté...In their performances the listener can experience the beautiful warm tone and the deep feeling of the two performers, both in the solos and duos, with a dash of brilliant virtuosity in Tango en Skaï by Dyens, played with lightness but with a touch of irony by McClelland. A really nice CD!" GUITArt INTERNATIONAL (Italy & USA)

"McClelland's well-tempered musical voice ensures that her interpretations are an ideal combination of mature sophistication and soul-moving energy. She unabashedly utilizes her distinctive color palette

to guide the listener through rich, sonorous melodies, as well as bright, fast paced dances. Meanwhile, her distinctive quick attack on the treble strings is perfectly suited for the many compositions which feature rhythmic bursts and sudden flourishes." MINOR7th.COM

"In her solo performances, Vincea McClelland shows considerable vitality and nice sound... In the duet pieces, the two guitars are very similar in colour and the perfect team-work manifests itself in simultaneous dynamics and phrasing...This is a CD pleasant to hear!" SWIAT GITARY (Poland)

"Right from the start, the artist displays her winning qualities: vigorous energy, luminous tone, a fine sense of phrasing and a brilliant technique...This CD is a worthy addition to any record collection and an indispensable one to any guitar lover's collection." _GUITARES... (Belgium)

"Taste is a word I'd readily associate with her playing...an ability to place the music first...I sense that I would enjoy her live performance equally." Chris Kilvington, CLASSICAL GUITAR MAGAZINE

"A programme which is eclectic and consistently of very high quality, the playing showing great mastery and variety throughout...A masterful performance of *Invocation et Danse*...

Vincea McClelland has, without doubt, enormous class. Her playing is energetic, precise and clear and her technique flawless...This is the CD of a great lady of the guitar."_

LES CAHIERS DE LA GUITARE (France)