

California Guitar Trio, Montreal Guitar Trio – In A Landscape (2019)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 31 August 2019 14:20 -

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1. *New Horizons* 04:35 2. *Weird Fishes* 05:12 3. *Magneto* 03:35 4. *In a Landscape* 06:19
5. *Fortune Island* 04:42 6. *Glass Tango* 04:16 7. *Space Oddity* 04:52 8. *First Steps* 03:01
9. *Perpetuum Mobile - Live in Atlanta* 03:34 Sébastien Dufour - classical guitar, charango
Glenn Lévesque - classical guitar, vocal Marc Morin - classical guitar, bass Bert Lams -
acoustic guitar Paul Richards - acoustic guitar, E-bow guitar, slide guitar Hideyo Moriya -
acoustic guitar

Our first studio album recorded together with the California Guitar Trio, just in time to celebrate our 10 years of musical collaboration in sextet ! Recorded in the beautiful Holy Trinity Church of Gore, QC in the Laurentians, "In A Landscape" features new original music and arrangements of music from Radiohead, John Cage and David Bowie. ---montrealguitartrio.bandcamp.com

The musical territory of *In a Landscape* doesn't take very long to cover, yet somehow still feels vast. There's a lot of exploring behind everything these two trios do, which is only fitting in light of their globe-spanning origins, not to mention the collective miles they've racked up on the road over the decades. So it's only natural that their first full collaboration is based around that endlessly fascinating theme.

There's a richly expansive work packed into these 40 minutes. There was already plenty of common ground (pun unintended) between the California Guitar Trio and Montréal Guitar Trio when they first crossed paths on tour and subsequently decided to keep their collaboration going. Both share an exceptional level of musicianship and focused interplay, good humor, and

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a near-total disregard for genre. Montreal Guitar Trio + California Guitar Trio Live (Self Produced, 2011) followed the usual format of their joint shows, alternating individual mini-sets from each group before all six played together at the finale. In a Landscape finally shows them as a unit from start to finish, and it's a humble success—a beautiful organism that exceeds the sum of its parts.

As a whole, the sextet smoothly showcases the characteristics common to both trios: non-flashy virtuosity, bogglingly intricate interplay and a stylistic range as wide as the tundra. At the same time it benefits from the different and complementary tones of each. The CGT aren't averse to judiciously coloring their steel-stringed acoustics with electronic tones, while the MGT produce all the sounds on nylon-string classical guitars with no 'artificial' effects. The material likewise ranges all over the figurative map, from several beautifully evocative originals to sources as diverse as John Cage, David Bowie and a most uplifting closer from the Penguin Cafe Orchestra.

To the surprise of no one who knows their music, all the players' parts lock together without any crowding, like the fine gears of a Swiss watch. These fellows could do complex in their sleep, but that's not really the point—everyone is happy to contribute as much or as little as needed, and they handle touching simplicity as well as virtuosic intricacy. The sonic landscape is masterfully crafted and a delight to explore. ---Geno Thackara, allaboutjazz.com

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