

# A DISTANT WIND CD

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**A Distant Wind** *music inspired by faraway times and places*

CD by Frank Wallace *guitar and composer*

music by Wallace, Britten and Sagreras; guitar by [Aaron Green](#), 2018

Gyre # 10113 | UPC code 802442101136

## Fünf Kleine Stücke

- 01) I. Sequenz I
- 02) II. Basel, 1298
- 03) III. Lindenberg, 2017
- 04) IV. Durch den Rhein
- 05) V. Sequenz II

## A Distant Wind

- 06) I. Tjaldur
- 07) II. Drunnhviti

## Timid Nightingale Sonata #2

- 08) I. The sweet voice sings
- 09) II. If I forget to love
- 10) III. Garden and grove
- 11) IV. A joy that rises

## Nocturnal after John Dowland, Op. 70

by Benjamin Britten

- 12) Musingly
- 13) Very Agitated
- 14) Restless
- 15) Uneasy
- 16) March-like
- 17) Dreaming
- 18) Gently Rocking
- 19) Passacaglia / Slow and Quiet

20) **Ben,\*** [Friends](#) #2

21) **La Ideal** by Julio Sagreras

22) Amanda's Dance

**Compositions:** by Frank A. Wallace unless otherwise noted; published by Gyre Music. ASCAP

**Release date:** December, 2019

**Duration:** 60:43

**Engineering and mastering:** recorded at [Elsa Voelcker Photography](#) Studio April 28-30 2019, in Antrim NH by Frank Wallace with Schoepps and Neumann microphones into a Prism Orpheus firewire interface to MacBook Pro.

**Artwork, photographs and design:** [Nancy Knowles](#), back cover portrait by [Daniela Spector](#)

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### Puerh

*A distant wind  
blows from the sun.  
It blows from China  
and the Faroes,  
It blows from  
Chichén Itzá  
and Paris,  
Machaut and Britten  
Basel, Boston and Brittany.*

*My cup is filled,  
sun, soil, soaked leaves  
flow in my veins.  
Ancient wisdom  
bathes cells  
in silence.  
A distant wind  
flows through.*

–Frank A. Wallace, Antrim NH, 9-7-19

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portrait by Daniela Spector  
guitar by Aaron Green, 2018

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### Many distant winds

In this age of retreat, anti-immigration and denial of our oneness, I dedicate this CD to the good that comes from afar: spices from Zanzibar, yoga from India, pizza from Italy, French fries, rosewood from Brazil, tomatoes and potatoes from Peru, corn from the Maya, the blues from Africa, hummus from the Middle East, poetry from Persia, stories from Nordic lands, sculpture and democracy from Greece. The music on this CD is inspired by a song from 16th century England (Nocturnal), friendship in the Faroes (A Distant Wind), friendship and history in Basel, choral singing in my young adult days in Boston (Amanda), the first cellist of the Boston Symphony in the 1950's who loved a troubadour song from 12th century Provence and has a loving son in New Jersey. OK, New Jersey isn't so far, but you get my point. All modern life takes treasures from all over the world to get through a day – any day, every day.

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### My influences

The I Ching says, “In the words and deeds of the past there lies hidden a treasure that men may use to strengthen and elevate their own characters.” My musical roots are as American as apple pie. In other words I am a polyglot of music – a melting pot of styles. Even as a teenager I listened to Jobim and Getz, Buddy Rich and Wes Montgomery, Los Romeros, Segovia and Bream, Bach and flamenco, the Beatles, the Stones and West Side Story and South Pacific. True, Machaut and Schoenberg came a little later, but not much. My music has been likened to Britten and Takemitsu – both had their roots in many pies as well. Takemitsu the Beatles, Britten ancient song and dance of the British Isles. As a composer I love the riches given to me in this incredible age we live in where time and place have become so fluid. In the practice of Qigong, it is said there are three forms of Q, or universal energy: Jing, Qi and Shen. They can be seen as equivalent to the energy of past present and future and it is believed they are all present at once. That is how I feel about the music on this CD.

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portrait by Nancy Knowles; Frank Wallace with Joel van Lennep lute

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### Medieval music

The first two pieces on **A Distant Wind CD** hearken back to medieval times with the use of parallel fourths and fifths, both raw and adorned. These open harmonies were the harbinger of polyphony about a thousand years ago. I performed this music in the 1970's and 80's with [Trio LiveOak](#). We roamed the Pyrenees searching for Romanesque architecture in which to sing these songs. We toured Europe looking for perfect acoustics and basked in the warm glow of vibration. In the Middle Ages beautiful resonances were achieved by very simple harmonic means with two or three voices and the same approach is vibrant on the guitar. I enjoy working in this archaic style and have done so throughout my compositional career: [Cunctipotens Genitor](#) 1997; [Nuevas Cantigas](#) 2001; and more recently in [Fünf Kleine Stücke](#), written while visiting Basel Switzerland in spring 2017, and [A Distant Wind](#) in 2018. My [Christmas CD JOY](#) also features sounds from many lands and times.



Photo by Nancy Knowles; Frank Wallace composing *Fünf Kleine Stücke* in Basel, Switzerland in 2017

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### The compositional process

While I do use the simple methods of the past in some thematic material, I also take advantage of my medium, the classical guitar. I ornament and expand the textures and harmonies in many ways inspired by what is possible on the guitar. I use some random or chance methods to generate new harmonies and note groups. Sometimes these more modern methods allow for greater exploration of harmonies and textures and even suggest larger forms. [Timid Nightingale](#) started with a modal troubadour song by Bernart de Ventadorn to which I added pitch groups generated by the name of the dedicatee, famed cellist [Samuel Mayes](#). In brief, the notes D#, E, F became a rich source of motivic material that spurred three more movements after being intertwined with the troubadour song in the first movement. This, my *Sonata #2*, was commissioned by good friend, guitarist and fellow early music enthusiast [Joseph Mayes](#).

Distant winds blow through our lives more than we can imagine. Thoughts, memories, dreams inspired by parents, grandparents and beyond. Religious tales and beliefs chained to time influence our decisions. Old books, a song we heard as a child, an ancient tree under which we might dawdle, dream or desire our first kiss. An argument from decades ago, a lost friendship or a new friend from distant lands.

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## Thanks for A Distant Wind

This CD is a celebration of connections to time, people and place. It is dedicated to many people who have changed and moved my life: Nancy Knowles, my adoring wife and my sons Gus and Adam, who have stayed by my side through great hardship; John Fleagle, an old friend who went down many distant paths with me for a time and whose musical gifts still blow through my life and music; Aaron Green who built my exquisite guitar; all those who have inspired my compositions, too many to name here; my parents who supported my musical education and loved listening to me play late at night as they went to sleep.

I conclude with a short recent poem that ponders the question where did I get my musical talent, my gifts? I never met my paternal grandfather, a poet, and my mother's Dad was distant after I was five years old and died soon after we moved from Texas to California. I was told he played piano by ear, but recall nothing of it...

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## My grandfather's piano

*My grandfather's piano  
It calls me  
It beckons me  
Its mystery  
surrounds me  
Its keys  
tickle my memory.*

*My source  
my soul  
moves  
my pen  
resounds  
again.*

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## Biography

Frank Wallace, composer, guitarist, baritone; b. November 22, 1952 —

**American Record Guide** calls Frank Wallace's compositions "*exciting, unpredictable, and fresh.*" **Fanfare** magazine has dubbed him a composer with "*an authentic expressive voice*" and a "*high standard of musical interest*" who performs with "*flawless technical proficiency.*" New music reviewers have also honored Wallace's work: Frank Oteri of **NewMusicBox.org** calls it "*contemporary musical emancipation.*" Wallace's works showcase the classical guitar in solo, duo and trio, as well as in chamber works with voice, flute, cello, English horn, mandolin, and piano. His compositional style has many influences, from the blues and jazz to medieval and *avant-garde*. Great passion and a sense of humor infuse both his compositions and his performances.

## A DISTANT WIND CD

Since 1997 Frank Wallace has become one of the most prolific composers of songs with classical guitar of our time. He has written over 100 songs set to classical guitar or lute, most of them in groups (cycles) ranging from five to fifteen songs, set to poetry from many sources including Pulitzer-prize winning poet Theodore Roethke, Charles Dickens, Robert Creeley, Rumi, Guillevic, Shem Tov Ben Palquera, his own grandfather and wife Nancy Knowles. The richness and complexity of his song accompaniments and his compelling vocal melodies highlight the influence of his mentors, from Dowland to Schubert to Britten.

On stage, Wallace is known for his “*elegant virtuosity*” (Classics Today) on the solo guitar as well as being a master of self-accompanied song. He tours internationally, performing music of the 21st century both as a soloist and as Duo LiveOak with mezzo-soprano Nancy Knowles. Wallace and Knowles originally founded LiveOak in 1976 (while he was on the guitar faculty at New England Conservatory) as an early music ensemble with the late John Fleagle. They have toured widely throughout the U.S., Europe and South America since 1976, performing at festivals such as the Holland Festival, Regensburg Festival, Música en Compostela, Boston Early Music Festival, Barcelona Festival, International Guitar Festival of Arequipa, the Festival of Spanish Song of Granada, and Guitar Foundation of America.

Frank Wallace founded and directed for four years the Boston Classical Guitar Society’s **Festival 21**, a celebration of all that is new in 21st century classical guitar. It inspired the current Guitar Ensemble Festival that still occurs every spring and continues to commission a major new work for guitar ensembles every year. Wallace also served a two-year term as artistic director of the Society in which he modernized the Board, the website and publicity. These actions set the stage for his successor, Daniel Acsadi, to establish the BCGS as the leading venue in New England for world class performers. In New York City Wallace founded and co-directed the Second Sundays Classical Guitar Series in conjunction with the NYC Classical Guitar Society and Roger Smith Arts. He has taught at the New England Conservatory, Plymouth State College, Emmanuel College, and has a B.M. degree from San Francisco Conservatory.

He has written works for the Olson / De Cari Duo, ChromaDuo, the Jugend Zupf Orchestra of Germany, Mare Duo, Marek Pasieczny, the Providence Mandolin Orchestra and others. He has recorded for Gyre, Titanic, Centaur, and Musical Heritage Society, which re-released a number of LiveOak and Frank Wallace recordings in 2008. His compositions have also been published by Tuscany Publications and have been featured in Guitar Review, Fingerstyle Magazine, The LSA Quarterly and Soundboard magazine. Wallace’s complete works and recordings are available at [www.gyremusic.com](http://www.gyremusic.com), a site rich with information and samples of sheet music and audio.

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## Reviews

*"...a composer with a distinct voice..."* — Soundboard

*"He is an impressive talent in every respect; he is a strong guitarist, a composer with a distinct voice, and a confident vocalist."* — Soundboard

*"The Pavana for a dying prince is a diamond..."* — Pablo Garibay

*Since Wallace is a virtuoso guitarist, he understands the finest details, the possibilities and limitations of his instrument. And he exploits every opportunity to emphasize or refine or hold back or exult the vocal character, to assert the melodic voicings or percussive effects of the guitar in ways that, yes, reward your ears, your decision to sit and listen. For this is truly listening music, which is not to say it's "easy" listening music. No, that is not what Wallace is concerned with. Nor is he concerned with "difficult". Rather, he's concerned with poetry, something you're not surprised at the more you listen, and with exploring and expressing what must come from the guitar—as he imagines and breathes and soulfully feels it. "Elemental" is a perfect description of this music, and in the liner notes Wallace briefly discusses his intentions, motivation, and inspiration for creating these compositions. There's lyricism, meditative reflection, sharp assertiveness, gorgeous billows of harmony, bursts of sparkling, ringing harmonics; there's boldness and even brashness, juxtaposed with the most tender warmth and delicacy. Wallace leads us along, never leaving us wondering where we are or what's going on. read complete review at [Classics Today](#) | review by David Vernier*

*Above all he is concerned with the sonorities of the guitar, and as a performer he employs a huge range of timbre and dynamics...all on an epic scale...Wallace has a unique and compelling voice as a composer, and he is a superb player. He uses a 1931 Hauser guitar, a magnificent instrument ideal for his works that explore so many different sonorities." [read complete review](#) American Record Guide | July/August 2014 | KEATON*

*"The music is incredible and the versatility of musical styles and genres is incredible. Your synthesis of style is remarkable...I felt transported to the world of Albeniz, de Falla and Montsalvatge one minute and another I was in a new and unknown realm."* — Orlay Alonso, [Seconda Pratica](#)

*"...a powerful player, possessed of an unfailing musicianship...an almost symphonic range of colors and articulations..."* — Al Kunze, Soundboard Vol 45 No. 4, Four Extraordinary Spanish Guitars CD

*"Frank Wallace plays his own works with inspiration, determination, and a wealth of creativity. With top notch playing and excellent compositions, this synthesis is a spectacular success. / ..he can match the musicality of any player out there...orchestral ideas in his playing...natural phrasing and rhythm...playing is virtuosic but always in a musically convincing way."* — Bradford Werner, This Is Classical Guitar