



### Isolation Track Listing

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Variations on " <i>The Carnival of Venice</i> " (Alan Thomas)                  | 11:04 |
| 2. From Honey to Ashes: Hot (Stephen Goss)                                        | 00:54 |
| 3. From Honey to Ashes: Milonga & Interlude in a Discrete Mode (Stephen Goss)     | 02:23 |
| 4. From Honey to Ashes: Brazil (Stephen Goss)                                     | 02:29 |
| 5. From Honey to Ashes: Malabar Hill (Stephen Goss)                               | 00:58 |
| 6. From Honey to Ashes: The Raw (Stephen Goss)                                    | 01:36 |
| 7. From Honey to Ashes: Flutes and Fiddles (Stephen Goss)                         | 01:35 |
| 8. From Honey to Ashes: Alba (Stephen Goss)                                       | 01:44 |
| 9. From Honey to Ashes: The Ajman (Stephen Goss)                                  | 02:05 |
| 10. Sonatina for Flute and Guitar, Op. 205: I. Allegretto grazioso (Tedesco)      | 04:22 |
| 11. Sonatina for Flute and Guitar, Op. 205: II. Tempo di Siciliana (Tedesco)      | 04:42 |
| 12. Sonatina for Flute and Guitar, Op. 205: III. Allegretto con spirito (Tedesco) | 04:20 |
| 13. Lough Allen (Ciaran Farrell)                                                  | 05:14 |

Redbrick Duo is back with their second album, *Isolation*. At the beginning of 2020, Jessica and Damien made a New Years resolution to learn new flute and guitar repertoire, with the vision of making a new album some time during the year. This opportunity came a lot sooner than expected, as everywhere went into lockdown at the end of March due to the coronavirus pandemic. They decided to make the most of this extra time and record their second album, aptly called *Isolation*. The album includes *Variations on "The Carnival of Venice"*, a reworking of the Tarrega/Briccialdi favorite by **Alan Thomas**, the jazzy and poetic *From Honey to Ashes* by

**Stephen Goss**, *Sonatina for Flute and Guitar* by **Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco**, and Irish infused music in the form of album closer, Lough Allen by **Ciaran Farrell**.

*Variations on "The Carnival of Venice"* by **Alan Thomas** is based on the famous melody that has been used by numerous composers as the basis for variation sets. Among the most significant versions are pieces by Paganini (for violin), Chopin (piano), Arban (trumpet), Briccialdi (flute), and Tarrega (solo guitar). Each of these uses this simple tune and its very simple harmonies as a springboard for a pyrotechnical display of the scales, arpeggios, trills and tricks that feature the instrument at its virtuosic best. While the melody of Paganini's 24th Caprice (to take another example which has been extensively used as a theme for variation sets) has qualities of virtuosity and harmonic tension built into it from the start, the "Carnival of Venice" melody is almost comical in its simplicity and lack of tension and pretension. But perhaps it is this quality that makes it so useful for pure exuberant displays of instrumental prowess.

After an extended introduction derived from Tarrega (which in fact the great guitarist stole from an opera by Julius Benedict!), the "Carnival of Venice" theme is introduced by the guitar and then taken up by the flute. From there the composition is really a kind of virtuoso dialogue between the two instruments in five variations of ever-increasing speed and complexity. It is perhaps worth mentioning that Variation 3 is an extended interlude which introduces a programmatic element, attempting to musically depict some of the stock characters of the Italian carnival or commedia dell'arte. The guitar imitates a military drum as Rugantino the gendarme enters the scene, only to be cruelly mocked by Harlequin (the clown). Harlequin's girlfriend Columbina then appears with her lovely waltz version of the theme, followed by the grumpy and complaining miser Pantalone as the music turns to a minor key. Finally, all is put into perspective by the happy-go-lucky hedonist Pulcinella as the music returns to the "Carnival" theme in the last two variations, followed by a coda which shifts the music into overdrive leading to an appropriately big finish.

*From Honey to Ashes* by **Stephen Goss** is a companion piece to *The Raw and the Cooked* for two guitars (2004). The resultant piece is a set of eleven highly contrasting miniatures. The movements range from original compositions (*Milonga*, *Interlude in a discrete mode*) to more or less straight arrangements (*Flutes and Fiddles*). Many of the other pieces make reference to composers, musicians and contrasting styles of music. *Brazil* is loosely based on Terry Gilliam's film of the same name and draws on fragments of popular songs from the 1930's. *Hot* was written as a tribute to Django Reinhardt, *The Raw* is loosely based on the jazz guitar style of Allan Holdsworth and *Malabar Hill* is built from snippets of a jazz-rock track by John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra. *The Hotel Kempinski* uses part of a David Byrne groove, *Tango Brawl* is a homage to Piazzolla, *Alba* draws on the style of Satie's *Gnossiennes*, and *The Ajman* is infused with Arabic influences. *Tango Brawl* (a Piazzolla homage) was originally

written for *Spin* (2002/03), a work for ensemble, dancers, video and electronics (funded by the Arts Council of England), which I wrote in collaboration with composer Tom Armstrong. The title of the piece is borrowed from Claude Levi-Strauss's book on structural anthropology *du miel aux cendres*.

***Sonatina for Flute and Guitar (Op. 205)*** by **Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco** fits into a long tradition of music for flute and guitar that emerged at the end of the eighteenth century and flourished in the first part of the nineteenth century thanks to vital contributions of Mauro Giuliani and Ferdinando Carulli. Castelnuovo-Tedesco, however, treats the relationship between the two instruments in an innovative way entrusting to the guitar a constant concertante role, whereas in the composers cited above it had remained relegated to mere harmonic support of the flute, at the most performing one or two thematic interventions in each movement. This even-handed treatment of the two instruments finds a model in Niccolò Paganini's celebrated *Sonata concertata M. S. 2 for Violin and Guitar*.

***Lough Allen*** from the ***Shannon Suite***, is one of the first works written by Irish composer **Ciaran Farrell** and was composed for guitarist John Feeley. There are three movements in 'The Shannon Suite', each of which represents the lakes Lough Allen, Lough Ree, and Lough Derg, found along the course of the river Shannon, Ireland's longest river. The Shannon, (in Irish 'Sionainn'), inherited its name from an old Irish legend which tells of how the red berries of a Rowan tree once fell into a shimmering well full of salmon. They were said to have eaten the berries which gave them the red spots on their backs, but it also gave them something more, great wisdom. Men, it is told, went to great lengths to catch these fish of knowledge in the hope that they could eat them and gain their wisdom. Women were not permitted to partake in the catching of the salmon but one bold and brave young woman, Sionan, defied the law to try her hand for one of these witty swimmers herself. She was successful, and after eating her catch it is said that a torrential flood exploded from the well and carried her through the Irish countryside where she was eventually spat into the sea, never to be seen again. The remaining river inherited her name and is so called to this day where it flows full and strong, almost dividing the country in two. Lough Allen incorporates many of Farrell's musical influences and combines lyrical melodies with driving rhythmic sections while hinting at his Irish heritage and rock roots.