

A FURTHER TRIBUTE TO JOHN DUARTE

By ELEFThERIA KOTZIA

WHEN I decided to record my Greek CD, the one that became *Mediterraneo*, I wanted to include not only Greek composers but also composers of fame who had been inspired by Greek culture. Basically I needed a repertoire that didn't exist!

I hardly knew Jack then, but nevertheless I dared to ask him to write a piece. When I explained the idea and the theme behind my CD, about how I felt that Greek folklore and Greek culture and musical traditions are as rich as those of Spain and South America, that we are used to associate the guitar with, you were just so enthusiastic about it. And so came *Musikones op.107*, a piece I have both performed and recorded and continue to love to this day. Thank you so much, Jack, for the life of this music!

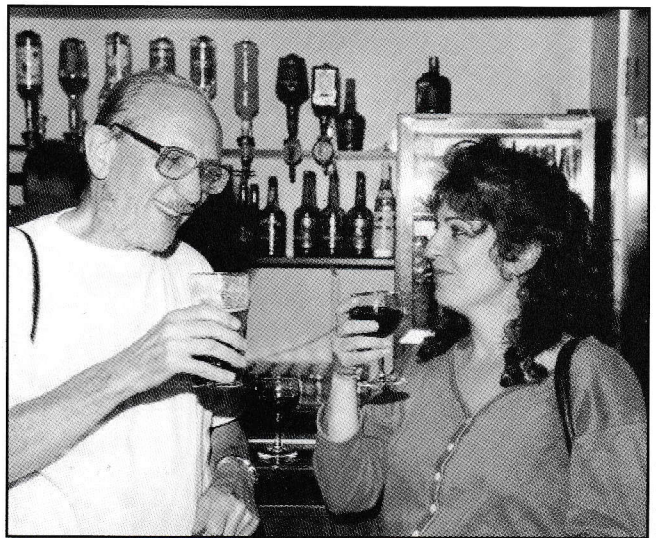
Did I also thank you for inviting me to perform and later be part of the teaching team in Cannington? It was a unique course, one where I made friends for life. I had a great time. You gave me all your confidence and never interfered with what I was doing, making this, my first experience of working on such a course, such a happy one.

'You must come round for dinner, to open a bottle of retsina', Jack used to say. Dorothy would make a special dish for me, lamb, and with such hospitable company I found it difficult to leave till very late, frequently risking missing the last train.

Well, it wasn't always lamb: Jack could be forgetful. There was that famous occasion when Dorothy had to go out, leaving you in charge of the lamb and you forgot to put it in the oven. Dorothy was not happy when she returned and the familiar smell wasn't around; it was fish from the freezer that night.

I cherished our conversations after dinner, some on his work and his music, on Presti, and Segovia of course; other times it was on jazz and Django Reinhardt, and on first coming to London and working for Len Williams. I loved leaving my imagination to picture guitar life in the London of those days. Sometimes I kept asking Jack the same questions, just to get the same answers.

Jack's knowledge of music and the guitar was immense; his memory was incredible, and was second to none. Even in the hospital, when I went to visit him in August 2004, lying in bed with his eyes shut, hardly talking, very frail, listening to a football match (or was it cricket or rugby?) with the headphones on. I forgot a couple of complex Czech composers' names, and you just stepped in to remind me. In that hospital,



John Duarte and Eleftheria Kotzia.

for the first time you didn't talk about guitar and music, you just wanted to go back home and be in the garden drinking a fizzy drink.

Jack had strong opinions, passions, he was direct, I always knew where I stood with him. He liked to 'put the record straight'. Whenever players were claiming to have done the premiere recording of Tippett's piece *The Blue Guitar*, he put the facts right and reminded them that my recording of this piece came first. He also told me off when I didn't put the name of the Arts Council that funded *Musikones*, the piece he had written for me. He even told me off during the Kutna Hora festival. I remarked that he should not eat so much protein daily; he was already over 80, and had eggs and bacon every day. Basically, he told me to mind my own business – and kept on eating it. However we shared a taste for chocolate and Kit-Kats, and found every opportunity to indulge.

Jack travelled so much each year. His energy was amazing, setting an example that would have exhausted many much younger. But this time it was a trip from which he will not return, and I am so upset. This time I have to say the final 'Gia su' (Goodbye).

MUSIC SUPPLEMENT

EDITED BY NEIL SMITH

SU COSA

by Alfonso Montes

Written as a tribute to John (Jack) Duarte by Alfonso Montes (Montes-Kircher Duo) this was officially premiered at the memorial concert for John Duarte on June 12th 2005 by Neil Smith.