# Sympathetic Serenade for Scalloped Frethoard Guitar

#### by Matthew Montfort

Ancient-Future.Com Records EP AF-2012. Mini-EP CD-R: \$9.98 list. Downloads at iTunes, etc. File under: World Fusion, World Music, Acoustic Guitar. Release Date: May 22, 2012. Radio Add Date: June 19, 2012. Signed CD-R exclusively at Ancient-Future.Com.



The Serenade

PLAY AUDIO 1. Sympathetic Serenade (Montfort. 10:58)

### Concept

When Matthew Montfort was working on his debut solo recording for scalloped fretboard guitar (a special guitar modified to enable ornaments characteristic of the sitar), he recorded a number of spontaneously improvised serenades. Were it not for

some serendipitous sequencing coupled with the allure of alliteration, it's likely that this recording would have been released as the eighth improvisation on what became 'Seven Serenades for Scalloped Fretboard Guitar.' Instead, this evocative Spanish serenade/raga hybrid receives a mini-EP treatment on Matthew Montfort's 'Sympathetic Serenade for Scalloped Fretboard Guitar.'

## Scalloped Fretboard Guïtar

Already well known as the leader of the trailblazing world music group Ancient Future, Matthew Montfort's solo recordings showcase his pioneering work on the scalloped fretboard guitar. In late 1978, luthier Ervin Somogyi carved out the wood between the frets of Montfort's Gibson SJ Deluxe so that the pads of his fingers touch only the strings, reducing friction while bending them to produce ornaments more characteristic of the sitar. While visually subtle, the difference in sound is striking. Montfort had his fretboard scalloped in order to play various forms of world music that require intricate note-bending ornaments while still being able to play chords. He uses the South Indian vina method of bending notes: the strings are pulled across the frets in order to raise the pitch.



Photo by Teja Gerken. Taken for his article about Matthew Montfort's scalloped fretboard guitar in the August 2010 issue of ACOUSTIC GUITAR.



P.O. Box 264, Kentfield, CA 94914-0264

Report to CMJ New World, ZMR World. Tracking: Reports/charts/reviews to promo@ancient-future.com (email preferred) or call 415-459-1892. Artist available for interviews & live radio/TV performances near tour dates.



Sympathetic Serenade by Matthew Montfort (AF 2012)



Břography

As leader of the world music group Ancient Future, Matthew Montfort has devoted himself to the scalloped fretboard guitar since 1978. Montfort immersed himself in an intensive study with vina master K.S. Subramanian in order to fully apply the South Indian gamaka (notebending) techniques to the guitar. He has worked with many world music legends, including tabla phenomenon Zakir Hussain and Chinese zither master Zhao Hui. He has performed hundreds of concerts worldwide since 1978, from New York City's Carnegie Recital Hall to the Atlantis nightclub in Beirut, Lebanon. His scalloped fretboard work was featured in 2003 and 2005 at the Festival Internacional de la Guitarra on the golden coast of Spain, which showcases top guitarists from all over the world. He toured India in 2006 and 2008, performing at the prestigious Festival of India in Mumbai with sitar master Pandit Habib Khan and tabla maestro Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri. He has performed live on national shows such as the Echoes Living Room Concerts on PRI, and the Rachel Maddow Show on MSNBC. He holds a B.A. in World Music and Composition and an M.A. in Arts and Media Technology from Antioch University. For his M.A. thesis, Montfort wrote the book 'Ancient Traditions — Future Possibilities: Rhythmic Training Through the Traditions of Africa, Bali, and India,' which has been used by many musicians to improve their rhythm skills.

#### Quotes

"I first realized Matthew Montfort was a true guitar wizard when he called me on the phone and played me one flawless Hendrix riff after another. We were in the seventh grade. By the time we escaped high school, Matt had gone acoustic, turning coffee house basements into his own planet with fierce improvisations. Now a pioneering master of world fusion, his knowledge and depth are staggering, yet he doesn't let it get in the way of the joy and spirit and soul that we like about music in the first place." — Jello Biafra, Dead Kennedy singer turned spoken word artist

"Matthew Montfort is an American Ravi Shankar on guitar."—Pandit Habib Khan, sitarist

"Matthew Montfort's synthesis of styles and sounds isn't superficial -- he plucks the essential musicality of several traditions without discounting them. Beautiful world fusion music." — Roger Carlberg, ELECTRONIC MUSICIAN

"The most beautiful, soulful guitar I have ever heard!!"— Chandi Devi, Editor-in-Chief, KARMACAFE.COM

"Master of the scalloped fretboard guitar." — J. Poet, EAST BAY EXPRESS

"Matthew Montfort plays a special, scalloped fretboard acoustic instrument that lets him get the bends of an Indian sitar. He uses it to weave seductive melodies." — John Diliberto (host of ECHOES, syndicated on PRI stations)

"Thorough knowledge of Hindustani microtonal ornaments, transferred in ways that create one of the most distinctive guitar sounds in contemporary music. When this level of mastery is reached, there is no need to rewrite. The first improvisation has the depth of a reworked composition." — Teed Rockwell, INDIA CURRENTS

"This guitar work is stunning, intricate and wonderfully melodic." — J.W. McClure, VICTORY MUSIC

"The mind-bending playing abilities of guitar virtuoso, Matthew Montfort, stem from the note-bending capabilities of the scalloped fretboard guitar." — Matthew Forss, INSIDE WORLD MUSIC

"Matthew Montfort conjures lovely Asian zither-like inflections with a scalloped fretboard guitar." — GUITAR PLAYER