

Gramophone

November 1997

N Guitar Recital Jason Vieaux (gtr).

Naxos © 8 553449 (64 minutes: DDD).

Barrios: Valses, Op. 8 – Nos. 3 and 4. Julia

Florida – Barcarola. **Bustamente** (arr. Morel):

Misionera. **Pujol:** Preludios – Nos. 2, 3 and 5.

Krouse: Variations on a Moldavian Hora.

Merlin: Suite del recuerdo. **Morel:** Chôro.

Danza Brasileira. Danza in E minor. **Orbón:**

Preludio y Danza.

I first encountered Jason Vieaux at a festival in Arizona ten years ago, when he was a teenage student of obvious talent. Just how great that talent has turned out to be is apparent for all to hear in this début recording. His technical prowess is impressive to say the least, as near flawless as one may get, and his tone is as clear and expressive as his musical thinking. There are now many finger-perfect guitarists on tap but those of Vieaux's natural musicality are rare indeed; everything in the moulding of the phrases comes from within – you just can't *programme* sensitivity of this kind.

The main thrust of the music is Latin-American, a nice juxtaposition of the well known (Morel, Barrios, Pujol and Bustamente) with some unfamiliar but substantial (of their kind) pieces by Merlin and Orbón. The apparent 'misfit' is the work by Krouse, far removed from Latin America, but why should music of this quality be excluded, for whatever reason? It is included for the best of reasons, because the performer loves it and is right to do so. The theme is Moldavian and the language of the imaginative and technically punishing variations convincingly matches it.

Vieaux plays everything with chameleon-like felicity of style and feeling. Superb recording and excellent notes complete an issue of the greatest distinction, by a player of whom we shall undoubtedly hear many more good things. **JD**