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Greek guitarist Smaro Gregoriadou performs these 6 works on three different instruments, one with three different tunings. This is perhaps the least interesting aspect of this release.

Gregoriadou is a student of Yorgos Kertsopoulos, who directs *Kertsopoulos Aesthetics*, which seems to be a research center concerned with guitar construction and historic context.

One of her instruments is a standard guitar with metallonylon strings. The term is said to “combine nylon’s tenderness with wire’s brilliance, largeness and duration of attack”. Another has scalloped frets, with the board between the frets scooped out. This instrument also has either back or right hand pedals, which seem to change the shape of the interior of the guitar to alter vibration character. The third instrument is the most radically different: a “triple-double-single course” instrument. The instrument is tuned a minor third below standard. The first two strings are single strings, the next two are double courses tuned in octaves, the fifth is a triple course with an octave and a unison, and the final is a triple course in three octaves (which then doubles the first string’s pitch).

That instrument is used only in the Bach. Bourdons, or courses strung in octaves, were found on both renaissance and baroque lutes. Gregoriadou plays the piece well and with interesting ornamentation. One hears a very rich sonority and some really odd octave doubling.

The Scarlatti is the E major that Horowitz was so fond of, and she uses an instrument with scalloped frets, tuned a fourth higher than normal. The metallonylon strings and the tuning afford a lovely, rich and brilliant sonority.

The real gem on this recording is the Jose Sonata—we have heard several performances since Bream introduced the newly discovered work back in the 80’s, including an excellent recording by Ismo Eskelinen (N/D 2007), but this surpasses even his. The connection to Ravel is stronger here than I’ve ever heard. Gregoriadou plays the work slower than most, reveling in the sonority— and perhaps that’s what makes this work so well. She also has an excellent grasp of the work’s elusive architecture, and the added brilliance of her strings is another plus.

The final pieces by her and Kertsopoulos are absolutely delightful. *Some Colour’s Rhythms* is an arpeggio study, reminiscent of Villa-Lobos’s first etude, but much more interesting and inventive. The two *Balkan Dances* recall Domeniconi somewhat-guitar music composed by a guitarist on a guitar, but no less enjoyable for that.

Performances are never less than competent, usually much finer, and the delight in her expanded sound world is evident. Get this for the Jose, and enjoy the rest.

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