



Mark Small

Scenes—Works for Solo Guitar

Classical guitarist Mark Small's first solo recording opens with his arrangements of popular hymn melodies for the guitar: "Where Can I Turn for Peace?," a gentle yet brief sentimental tune with an ascending, hopeful melody in a major key, closing with harmonics. William Clayton's "Come, Come, Ye Saints," which opens with a simple melodic line accompanied by a snare drum effect, produced by plucking the fifth and sixth strings after crossing and fretting them midway along the guitar neck. Small's "Mississippi Revisited" is a neatly manicured *mélange* of George Gershwin-like syncopated jazz with blues quotes and turns and descending arpeggios ending in a flourish of pretty harmonics. Small has written several homages to the beauty of nature, employing various musical ideas to convey a portrait of the seasons in his suite *Four Scenes from a New England Calendar*, such as a snowstorm suggested by block chords played in an eighth-note rhythm. "Metheny" is a musical homage to the jazz guitarist with references to his favored progressions, voicings, and construction. Small closes this mellow album, with its beautiful sound quality throughout, with a wistful performance of John Doan's Celtic-influenced "Farewell." (marksmallguitar.com)

—JULIA CROWE