

BIOGRAPHY

ALEX DE GRASSI

Windham Hill Records Recording Artist

Latest album: SOUTHERN EXPOSURE, WH-1030 and WT-1030 (cassette)

"De Grassi has mastered the art of playing melodies, countermelodies, harmonies, and intricate rhythms simultaneously. His touch is as exquisite as his lyricism, and his improvisational/compositional musical consciousness is as intricate and subtle as sparkling crystal."

—Lee Underwood, Downbeat

"De Grassi's solo steel-string pieces resemble orchestral overtures more than mere songs. Alex's control and sensitivity are almost as striking as his technical expertise."

—Tom Mulhern, Guitar Player

"De Grassi is certainly one of the greatest technical virtuosos of the guitar, and he innovates as much as he echoes the past masters of the field."

—Mark Leviton, BAM Magazine

"... One man guitar duets."

—Washington Post

Few artists fit the category of "folk-jazz" better than guitarist Alex de Grassi. Over the course of his four Windham Hill albums, de Grassi has evolved from fingerstyle folk guitarist to jazz composer to one of the leading figures in the new school of American acoustic guitar.

Born in Yokosuka, Japan, in February of 1952, Alex has spent most of his life in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he now resides. He began playing the guitar at 13, inspired by the folk and blues styles of British fingerpickers John Renbourn and Bert Jansch. Since that time he has been greatly influenced by jazz, classical, and various types of folk music, and has incorporated these influences into his unique compositions for the acoustic guitar.

Since releasing his first album in 1978, de Grassi has toured North America several times as well as Europe. His successful 1981 debut at New York's Carnegie Recital Hall with guitarist Daniel Hecht was followed by large and enthusiastic crowds at Louise Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, Boston's Berklee Performance Hall, Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, The Wax Museum in Washington D.C., and the 5,000 seat outdoor Greek Theatre in Berkeley, California. His albums have also been released in Europe, Canada and Japan.

De Grassi's crossover appeal endures, as witnessed by his receipt of both a Frets Magazine award in the Folk and Blues category as well as a Cashbox nod as #2 New Jazz Artist of 1982.

While his impressive debut LP, Turning: Turning Back (WH-1004), displayed de Grassi's fondness for the British folk guitarists, Slow Circle (WH-1009), released a year later demonstrated Alex as a serious jazz composer. Clockwork (WH-1018), his third LP, released in 1981, interspersed solo guitar pieces with ensemble works, utilizing an improvisational edge to his jazz style. The LP also featured musicians Darol Anger, Chuck Greenberg, and Scott Cassu.

In addition to his own recordings; Alex has appeared on other Windham Hill LPs by guitarist Daniel Hecht (Willow, WH-1013), pianist Scott Cossu (Wind Dance WH-1016), Shadowfax (WH-1022), and An Evening with Windham Hill Live (WH-1026). De Grassi also co-produced An Evening with Windham Hill Live, produced his own Clockwork (WH-1018), and co-produced his latest, Southern Exposure (WH-1030).

Southern Exposure is a return to the solo guitar format. The LP is challenging and yet very accessible collection of 10 new compositions. Musically, they range from lyrical folk/jazz to latin sambas and jazzy waltzes, each imbued with the stunning detailed resonance of de Grassi's guitar. The album is a live to two-track digital recording and is simultaneously being released as an LP, cassette, and compact disc.

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