



## Thomas Viloteau

### Biography 2017-2018

French guitar phenomenon Thomas Viloteau enjoys shaking things up. His approach to the instrument, its repertoire and its technique, has reshaped the term 'classical' guitar, into something new, alive and forward thinking.

At 25 he published a technique book '*In the Black Box, Technique(s) of the Classical Guitar*' which has sold more than a thousand copies on his website alone. At 27 he decided to go back to school to complete both a Master's and Doctoral degree. He is one of the very few players to have won both the Guitar Foundation of America and the Francisco Tàrrega competitions. In 2013 he won the Northern Trust/Piper Enrichment Award; which allowed him to commission the *Suite Brasileira 3* from composer Sergio Assad. Viloteau is the only guitarist to ever win the Arthur Foote Award from the Harvard Musical Association in 2016. He has also been the Artist in Residence at the show Performance Today in 2017, broadcasting his playing to more than a million people across the USA. As an avid world traveller, Thomas Viloteau has lived in Barcelona, Paris, San Francisco, New York City, London, Tucson, Montreal and Rochester, NY.

Viloteau's musical journey did not start in a typical way. At age 6, Thomas' father handed him a violin and tried to teach him how to hold the bow. Faced with a total lack of interest, Viloteau immediately gave up. At 10 and 11, he taught himself the recorder and harmonica, but found himself with the same disinterest as the violin. It wasn't until Viloteau was 12, that he chose the guitar. After seeing a pop musician play both the harmonica and guitar at the same time on television, he joined the local music school to try out an instrument untouched before. Holding a fret board for the first time, he instantly bonded with it. Reading through all the studies he could put his hands on with disconcerting ease, his first teacher had no choice but to see him twice a week right from the start.

From this moment on, things happened quickly. While pursuing his studies, both academically and musically, he sailed with his family from Provence to Barcelona and back to Paris. In less than eight years, he completed more than ten thousand hours of practicing on the guitar. Less than 10 years after starting the guitar, at the young age of 21, he flew to the USA and won first prize at the renown Guitar Foundation of America Competition. Then, just as suddenly as he started and perhaps due to an overdose of playing, he decided to put the

guitar back in its case. After five silent months he realized how his instrument was a necessary part of his life, and he flew to Canada to record his first CD with Naxos before starting a 50 concert tour of North America. Now, after more than 10 years touring the world, a book, cds, international broadcasting and degrees, he is more passionate about it than ever.

There is nothing 'classical' about Thomas Viloteau, and he likes to mix up different types of music in his concerts and recordings. Whether it's Brazilian, baroque or romantic music, to him, each piece is an excuse to turn into a different player. Viloteau adapts his technique to achieve a specific sound, phrasing or articulation to match the performance practices of any given repertoire. And when the instrument itself limits him, he will exchange it for an acoustic, baroque or romantic guitar...

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Guitars: Greg Smallman, Bastien Burlot.

Strings: Savarez (Alliances 500 ARJ, Bronze Phosphore 11-52)

Recordings:

- 'Guitar recital' – Naxos 2007
- Thomas Viloteau, GFA winner – Mel Bay DVD 2012
- Romàntic – La Ma de Guido 2014
- Dances through the centuries – Tigado 2015
- A song and dance – Tigado 2016

Book: In the Black Box, Technique(s) of the Classical Guitar

Awards:

- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Salou 2000
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Segovia, Linares 2005
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Antony 2005
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Mottola 2006
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Guitar Foundation of America 2006
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Sernancelhe 2010
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize Francisco Tarrega 2012
- Northern Trust/Piper Enrichment Award, 2013
- Arthur Foote Award 2016

Teachers:

- Georges Méjean, 1997/98, France
- Maite Rubio, 1998/99, Escola Juan Pedro Carrero, Barcelone
- Joan Furio, 2000, Conservatorio Municipal, Barcelone
- Alvaro Pierri, 1998/2000, Escola Juan Pedro Carrero, Barcelone
- Alberto Ponce, 2000/03, École Normale, Paris
- Roland Dyens, 2003-06, CNSM, Paris
- Judicael Perroy, 2002-06, Paris
- Marc Teicholz, 2008/09, SFCM, San Francisco
- Tom Patterson, 2012, U of A, Tucson

- Bruno Perron, 2013, U de M, Montréal
- Nicholas Goluses, 2014-17, Eastman School of Music, Rochester
- Paul O'Dette, 2014-17, Eastman School of Music, Rochester

Degrees:

- Diplôme Supérieur de Concertiste, 2003, École Normale
- Diplôme de Formation Supérieure, 2006, Conservatoire Supérieur de Musique de Paris
- Professional Studies Diploma, 2009, San Francisco Conservatory of Music
- Master, 2012, University of Arizona
- DMA, 2017, Eastman School of Music

Cats: Minouche and Tiga

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### Short Bio

French guitar phenomenon Thomas Viloteau is the winner of the Guitar Foundation of America and the Francisco Tárrega competitions. He is the author of the best-selling technique book *In the Black Box* and the only guitarist to ever win the Arthur Foote Award from the Harvard Musical Association. From being awarded the Northern Trust/Piper Enrichment Award, he commissioned Sergio Assad's *Suite Brasileira 3*, and recorded and world premiered the piece. Most recently he was Artist in Residence for the APM show, Performance Today and holds a Doctoral degree from the Eastman School of Music.