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Strings attached to recorder

Karin Schaupp and Genevieve Lacey are among Australia's most internationally known young musicians.

As solo artists of the classical guitar and baroque recorder, they barely touch the ground, so in demand are they around the world. These days, however, they're doing a bit of globe-trotting together.

"I love travelling with Karin and being her roadie," says Lacey, beaming.

"I get to feel like a real muso because I can carry one of her guitar cases and look really authentic."

"Luggage envy," murmurs Schaupp. (There's an easy camaraderie between the two friends — much like their playing.)

Lacey's unique hand-made recorders, even in their carry cases, barely register on the visual radar, but her musicianship and exploration of the repertoire of the often underestimated instrument means that can't be said of her.

Now, the two have collaborated on what is probably a world-first: a CD, titled *Songs Without Words*, of music adapted for the duo of guitar and recorder.

"We wanted to play together," says Lacey. "And when we finally got around to it, at the Barossa festival in 2004, we found we matched really well. So we started looking for music..."

"Reams and reams of music," Schaupp adds. Lacey concurs, "Yes — reams! — for what we thought might work and what ought to make sense."

"It was a treasure hunt," says Schaupp. "There's actually a lot of music published but it was all a bit obvious."

"Particularly for the recorder," agrees Lacey. "And then we looked at adapting music. There's actually a lot of flute music adapted for the recorder, but its not the flutiness of the recorder that I love."

"So we looked further afield."

The final repertoire came about by imagining themselves in a drawing room, the kind where Jane Austen heroines sewed, read, wrote, waited for husbands to come along and, when it all got too much, took a turn about the room or played music.

"It made the choices really simple," says Schaupp. "And we never once disagreed. Which is really unusual for this kind of collaboration."

Lacey chips in: "Yes, because we come from really different musical backgrounds and we'd find some time to get together and start putting music in the yes pile and the no pile." Says Schaupp: "The yes pile was much smaller than the no pile."

They have road-tested the combination and audiences love it. Both performers are dynamic and warm on stage and share a love of the live experience.

"It's shared alchemy," says Lacey. "Because it's not just the music and the musicians, it's the audience as well."

"Recordings are great substitutes but there's nothing like the real thing. That's why we dreamed up the drawing room — to try to capture that intimate feeling."

With works that range from the obscure to Mendelssohn and Schubert, the collection reflects not only their taste but also their playing styles and passion.

"Music is a language," says Lacey. "And there are so many dialects to learn and share. For instance the 19th century is a completely new world for me."

"And this is a new world for both of us," says Schaupp. "For audiences too. I'm always amazed how people pick up on subtle things in performance and in music, that you might not have heard yourself. It makes it a constant learning experience."

Songs Without Words, ABC Classics, \$30.95 from ABC shops and fine music stores.



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Easy camaraderie: Classical guitarist Karin Schaupp and her partner in music, recorder virtuoso Genevieve Lacey