



Alison Vardy

Solo Celtic & Paraguayan Harpist

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Alison is an exciting, creative performer on the Paraguayan and Celtic harps. She has a warm personality, captivating her audience with the beauty and grace of the harp. Her repertoire is broad; from Classic Celtic and rhythmic South American to her own poly-rhythmic compositions and improvisations based on musical traditions from around the world.

Alison started playing the harp while living in rural New Zealand. She taught herself in the folk tradition and has a passion for multicultural melody and rhythm. Her concerts and her recordings are a colourful tapestry of sound and mood that are both exciting and relaxing. In 1993 she built her 36-string Paraguayan harp in a luthier's workshop in Victoria, Australia. In concerts she performs on this, as well as a 36-string Nova Celtic Harp. The tone of both instruments is rich and warm, well suited to Alison's creative arrangements and expressive playing.

Returning to Canada from New Zealand in 1998, Alison now works full-time as a professional musician, performing and teaching regularly on the Westcoast and in the Pacific Northwest. She has been the recipient of arts awards and has produced three popular CDs, *Island Suite*, *Apasionada* and *Harping On*.

COMMENT FROM ALISON'S RECENT GULF ISLANDS TOUR

luscious round-the-world tour – News Leader

a complex embroidery of sound... runs, trills, triplets, glissandos with the confidence of a seasoned player

Vardy is a master of the technique of the harp – Island Tides

Combining the talents of an exceptional musician with the technology of a sound engineering partner, Alison Vardy transcends the usual concept of a concert performance. Vardy is generous with anecdotes and information about her instruments and tunes along with offering pure, ethereal sound– Gulf Islands Driftwood

Just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy your music. I'm that Seattleite who bought your CD Friday evening. Best \$20 Canadian I've ever spent! – James R. Illman



RECORDINGS

- 2003 - *Island Suite: A Solo Harp Odyssey*** – Recorded in Victoria BC by Hugh McMillan, produced by Alison Vardy. Features 18 tracks of original harp music, plus Canadian, Quebecois, Sephardic, Baltic and multi-cultural music (73 minutes)
- 2000 - *Apasionada: Solo Harp*** – Recorded in Victoria BC by John Ellis, produced by Alison Vardy. Offers 16 tracks of original harp music, plus traditional & contemporary world music (65 minutes)
- 1997 - *Harping On*** – Recorded in Dunedin New Zealand by Fish Street Studios and produced by Alison Vardy. Featuring 13 tracks of solo harp music including original compositions, South American melodies & Celtic medleys and more (56 plus minutes of playing time).

INSTRUMENTS

Alison's first performance instrument is a 36-string Paraguayan harp that she constructed at luthier *Andy Rigby's* workshop in NSW, Australia. This harp features on her newest CD, *Island Suite*. In concert performances she also plays a 36 string Nova Celtic harp made by John Westling of Sandpiper Harps in Oregon. This gorgeous sounding harp features on *Island Suite & Apasionada*. Her 30-string gut and nylon Celtic harp made by Kim Webby of New Zealand, and with her Paraguayan harp are both featured on Alison's first CD, *Harping On*. Alison also performs on *Apasionada* with a 33-string Walter Bresch Celtic Harp of White Rock, BC

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- ♦ ***Toronto Conservatory of Music*** – Grade VIII with Honours – Piano
- ♦ ***First Australian Harp Festival*** – selected performer in Canberra, ACT
- ♦ ***World Music Conference*** – selected participant – B.C. Festival of the Arts, Victoria BC
- ♦ ***National New Zealand Arts Council*** – Professional development grant to attend and perform at the *International Folk Harp Conference* in Washington USA.

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Alison performs at many public, private and corporate events. The following is an abbreviated list of her engagements since starting to play professionally in New Zealand and then moving to Sidney, B.C., Canada .

First Australian Harp Festival, New South Wales, Australia
 Television New Zealand (TVNZ) Nature Productions
 Seattle Northwest Folklife Festival
 Victoria (BC) Folkfest
 BC Festival of the Written Arts
 Hornby Island (BC) Arts Festival
 BC Ferries On-board Entertainer
 BC Governor General's Awards – Government House
 Provincial Premier's Conference – Victoria, BC

International Folk Harp Conference, Olympia, Wash.
 International Folk Harp Conference, Bloomington, Ind.
 Concert Tour, South Island, NZ
 Port Alberni (BC) MusicFest
 Filberg Festival - Courtenay, BC
 British Columbia Concert Tours .
 Latin and Caribbean Festival – Victoria, BC
 Dancing Man Festival – Gabriola Island, BC
 Island Folk Festival - Cowichan Valley, BC