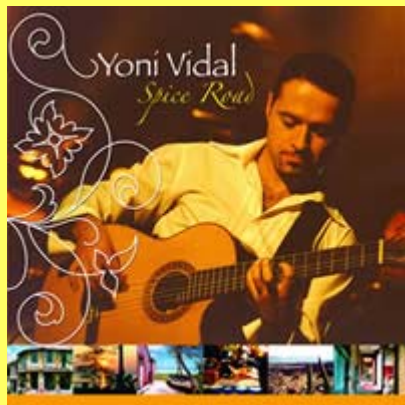


PUBLICATION OF THE ALBUM "SPICE ROAD" by YONI VIDAL



As a Spaniard, Yoni Vidal has the perfect cultural and historical foundation that when coupled with his love for and personal experience of the "Far East" and all the ports between legitimise his right to attempt to capture the adventures of the Spice Road in music. In understanding the compositions within the album one should expect to find sounds of exotic instruments that support rhythms of both excitement and romance.

Though the genesis of the music is historical, songs such as the "funky" Orchard lights celebrate modern cosmopolitan cities such as Singapore. The exquisite Mezquita celebrates Vidal's own village and his performance of one particular piece of "traditional" music (The Boat Song) reflects the cultures of both Indonesia and mainland China.

As a project "Spice Road" presented an unusual challenge. With an overarching influence of a Spanish feel, it was necessary to somehow capture the essence and authenticity of musical origins of the "Spice countries" without turning the creative process into a mechanical, soulless triumph of technology. This danger was averted by the gifted Yoni Vidal who by virtue of his skill, intelligence and total openness to other musicians and composers captured the truth of many flavours of sound in a result that is nothing less than wonderful music.

HISTORICAL

Fascination for the "spice road" of by-gone times begins in part with the realization that many empires were not only built on spices but were for centuries entirely maintained by them. The medieval Spaniards are historically known for their enthusiasm for acquiring gold and largely as consequence of this predisposition maintained one of the world's most powerful empires. What the Spanish could not have known then, was that for a very long time some spices were, pound for pound or kilo for kilo, more valuable than gold. Understandably those with knowledge of the source of particular spices, which eventually included the Spanish, would stop at absolutely nothing to guard the access roads to the distant and exotic lands that possessed them.



It is against this rich and colourful canvas that Yoni Vidal has collaborated with Aria International Artists to create a collection of unique arrangements of Vidal's original music that trace some of the travels of the "Spice Road".

Note: For the production of the album, musicians, (friends of Vidal and Aria) of world standard performed with Vidal. In all, the thirty five performers represent ten countries: Spain, Italy, Belgium, Turkey, Iran, India, China, Philippines, Singapore and Morocco.

A.J. Richter
co-founder of the Western Australian Opera