
Nuclear Okra

Larry Hammett, guitar

Miranda Arana, flute



Miranda Arana and **Larry Hammett** are faculty members of the University of Oklahoma's School of Music. Larry specializes in classical, jazz, and flamenco guitar. Miranda has played classical, Latin American, Vietnamese, Middle Eastern, and Irish music. They have played together as colleagues off and on since 2001, in various music ensembles. In 2017, they created the duo **Nuclear Okra** and began performing concerts and composing original music for flute and guitar. Their performances and their compositions blend stylistic elements and inspiration from their rich and diverse musical experiences. They have performed as a duo and as soloists throughout the United States and in Spain, Greece, Turkey, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, France, Serbia, Argentina, South Korea, Mexico, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Their Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/nuclearokra.



Señor Mouse

This classic jazz piece from the 1972 album *Crystal Silence* is quirky, abstract, and playful. Our arrangement for flute and guitar is accompanied by slides of paintings done by Miranda's father, Jay Arnold. The paintings are equally quirky and playful.

Chick Corea

Potes Suite

The four movements that comprise this suite were inspired by a three-week stay in Potes, a medieval village in the mountains in Cantabria, in Northern Spain.

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La Viorna

Overlooking the village of Potes is a majestic mountain called La Viorna that lies at the edge of the eastern massif of the Picos de Europa. While it is sometimes shrouded in clouds, on clear days, from the terrace of our apartment, we could see a huge white concrete cross that was erected at La Viorna's peak. Along hikes up to the cross, we encountered changing landscapes, a gentle rain, grazing sheep, beautiful vistas, and soaring birds. This movement reflects our experience hiking on this mountain. The accompanying photos were taken during these hikes.

Rio Quiviesa

Potes is nestled at the confluence of four valleys. Two rivers, the Deva and its tributary, the Quiviesa, meander through the center of the village, lined with stone footpaths and weaving under ancient stone bridges. Without knowing what we were getting into, we bought inner-tubes from a local auto shop, hiked a few kilometers out of town, and rode our inner tubes back toward town. This piece attempts to capture the excitement of maneuvering through the unpredictable twisting, narrow, rocky channels and rushing water.

Monasterio de Santo Toribio

The Monastery of Santo Toribio of Liébana lies just 3 kilometers west of Potes, near the base of *La Viorna*. It is an important holy site for Roman Catholics and a popular tourist destination. Thousands of visitors make pilgrimages every year to view and kiss a fragment of wood that is believed to be the biggest surviving piece of the original cross upon which Christ was crucified. We composed this piece to commemorate our own adventure there, and to celebrate the yearning for spiritual nourishment that motivates human beings to embark on pilgrimages all over the world.

Retratos de Potes

The town of Potes is a maze of rock pathways, stone stairways, bustling shops, houses, balconies, archways, and ancient bridges. The town retains its medieval atmosphere despite the bustle of modern life, the influx of tourism, and the surprising number of immigrants from all over the world who have chosen to live in Potes. This piece is our attempt to convey the many layers of history and humanity embedded in the town. The accompanying video was made while walking through the downtown area. We used an iPhone application to apply a filter to create the black & white effect.

Las Gatitas (Little Cats)

Larry Hammett

This piece is one of a series of compositions for solo guitar entitled *Fantasías Felinas*. The gentle tremolo throughout this piece suggests the soft purring of a contented cat. The accompanying photos were taken by Miranda in Greece, Armenia, and Turkey.

Tsaghkats Baleni

Khachatur Avetisyan

This piece is a well-loved Armenian melody. We set it to a short film made by our friend, Armenian film maker Ashot Mkrtschyan. His film *Winter Melody* poignantly captures the struggles of daily life in the capital city of Yerevan in the early 1990s, after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Venus & Mars

Nuclear Okra/Ladies at Play

This piece was composed in two parts: the first part is a delicate waltz written by Miranda's former instrumental trio, Ladies at Play. The second part was composed by Larry in the style of a *bulerías*, a driving Spanish flamenco rhythm of 12 beats. The juxtaposition of these two very different musical styles made us think of the book "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus."

Djudjino Oro & Balkan Express

Vojislav Ivanovic

The music of our friend, Serbian composer and guitarist Vojislav Ivanovic, is one of astonishing diversity, inspired by classical, jazz, rock, and traditional folk genres from Eastern Europe and Latin America. The first piece is in the style of an *Oro*, a brisk Serbian dance in 7/8 meter. The accompanying film clips (from *Karajan*, by Ashot Mkrtschyan) show the effects of mining in Karajan, in southern Armenia. The second piece, *Balkan Express*, evokes an imaginary train ride through the Balkans, in a vibrant 11/8 meter. Our film is made up of video clips from YouTube (used with permission).

Canarios

Gaspar Sanz (1640-1710)

Spanish composer, guitarist, organist and priest Gaspar Sanz wrote three volumes of pedagogical works for the baroque guitar that now form an important part of the classical guitar repertory. *Canarios* is a piece from the first volume, and is based on a dance rhythm in 6/8 meter. Nuclear Okra added an improvisational section of playful, jazzy rhythms and chords to complement the festive mood of the original piece.
