

From Bach to Beatles and barn-burners to ballads

Passion is guaranteed, when world renowned fingerstyle guitarist Richard Smith and cellist Julie Adams join forces

Can you imagine a full orchestra playing in your living room? Or two lovers flirting in a symphony hall? It's a little bit of both that you get from world renowned fingerstyle guitarist Richard Smith and his wife, versatile cellist Julie Adams – and they serve so much more.

The combination of Richard's **fretboard fireworks** and Julie's warm tone and lyrical style will melt your heartstrings, have your toes tapping and your jaws hanging open. Their ever growing repertoire comprises a wide variety of music from classical Bach to Beatles pop. It includes Scott Joplin Rags just like Sousa marches, Chopin, Mozart and fiddle tunes. It ranges from jazz standards to Chet Atkins and Jerry Reed and to Django Reinhardt gypsy swing, not to mention their intriguing originals. Richard and Julie deliver both, lightning fast barn-burners and beautiful ballads, occasionally spiced with gentle and witty vocals.

Their **incredible stylistic wealth** is founded in a lifelong love for music. Born in Beckenham, Kent, England in 1971, Richard started playing guitar at age 5 under the instruction of his father. Concentrating initially on the country picking of Chet Atkins and Merle Travis, young Richard digested everything he heard, learning even the most complicated of these tunes with ease, and **confounding everyone** with his dexterity. It seemed that not only did he possess amazing physical skill, but a photographic musical memory as well. Often, a single hearing was all it took to get a piece under his fingers, using all ten to play bass, rhythm and melody simultaneously and creating a universe of sounds, while easily switching between thumbpicking and flatpicking like hardly anybody else.

Richard first met his hero, the “Godfather” of fingerstyle guitar, Chet Atkins, when he was only eleven. Richard was **invited by Chet** to share the stage with him at Her Majesty's Theatre in London in front of an audience of 1,000. At first, the master accompanied him, but later on he just listened in stunned silence while the child played Chet's own arrangements – perfectly. By the time Richard reached his early twenties, both Chet Atkins and Jerry Reed began to refer to him as their “Hero”.

It's no surprise, that the **hymns of praise** subsequently never faded. Richard has toured the world as a solo artist, with his brothers Rob and Sam as the Richard Smith Guitar Trio and with his swing band, The Hot Club of Nashville, featuring Stu-

art Duncan on fiddle, Pat Bergeson on guitar and Charlie Chadwick on bass. Fellow guitar wizard Tommy Emmanuel prefers Richard Smith as one of his favourite duet partners. In 2001, Richard became the National Fingerstyle Guitar Champion in Winfield, Kansas. He has been a **mainstay** at the Chet Atkins Appreciation Society Convention in Nashville since 1991, where he has played with many world renowned artists including Nato Lima of Los Indios Tabajaras, sax legend Boots Randolph and John Jorgenson of Desert Rose Band and Elton John Band fame.

He has also performed with other great musicians such as Marcel Dadi, Tommy Tedesco, Thom Bresh, Joe Pass, Biréli Lagrène, Bryan Sutton, Les Paul, Mark O'Connor, Sam Bush, Martin Taylor, Jorge Morel, Suzy Bogguss, Muriel Anderson, Guy Van Duser, Béla Fleck, Victor Wooten, Tony McManus and Buster B. Jones and shared the bill with a host of others, most notably Steve Morse, Albert Lee, Paco Peña, Barney Kessel, David Russell and Johnny Hiland.

1999 turned out to be a **further milestone** for Richard Smith in both his life and career, when the British gentleman married the lovely and accomplished American cellist Julie Adams and settled in the Nashville area. Julie is one of the most diverse cellists on the music scene today. Raised in Dayton, Ohio, and classically trained at Interlochen Center for the Arts and the Cincinnati Conservatory, she has won many competitions and played in the most diverse musical settings. In 1996, Julie was selected to perform the Dvořák Cello Concerto with the Cincinnati Conservatory Orchestra. Since then, she has performed with orchestras in Chicago, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati, Ohio, and Vero Beach, Florida.

Julie has also branched into folk music, playing a significant role on Glenn and Holly Yarbrough's album "Family Portrait", produced by well-known fingerstyle guitarist Muriel Anderson. Julie and Muriel then teamed up to release their own duet CD titled "Theme for Two Friends" and toured extensively throughout the US. At home, Julie is a **sought-after** session player and has been featured on top ten albums as well as major film scores such as the soundtrack of the box office hit "Bridget Jones's Diary" in 2001 and Suzy Bogguss' contribution "Oh! May the red rose live always" to the Grammy winning CD "Beautiful Dreamer: the songs of Stephen Foster" in 2003.

Their rich artistic backgrounds led Richard and Julie to an exciting musical rendezvous. Soon they released their duet debut "Living Out a Dream", recently followed by their second album "Seems Like Old Times". This couple is driven by the passionate dedication to measure the boundaries of the unusual combination of guitar and cello. Audiences delight in the eclectic mix of Julie's **emotional depth** and Richard's flawless technique, when they embark on a journey through clever arrangements, swapping melodies, countermelodies, rhythm and bass lines, and earning them rave reviews around the world. They are truly soul mates – in life and in music!

What fellow musicians say

“The most amazing guy I know on the guitar. He can play anything I know, only better.”

Chet Atkins, CGP

(Legendary producer and guitarist, 14 Grammys, Country & R'n'R Hall of Fame)

“If you like my playing, you should hear Richard Smith! The world champion!”

Tommy Emmanuel AM, CGP

(Australian guitar phenomenon, two-time Grammy nominee)

“Guitar playing at its finest. Don't miss this one.”

Doyle Dykes

(Thumbpicking wizard, Taylor clinician)

“He is one of the world's greatest guitarists.”

Muriel Anderson

(Renowned composer, classical and fingerstyle guitarist, All-Star Guitar Night)

“Julie Adams is the best cellist in town.”

Pat Bergeson

(Nashville session ace, Chet Atkins, Lyle Lovett, Madeleine Peyroux)

What the critics say

“Richard Smith's fingers move so fast across the guitar strings that they're virtually a blur, but the music is pristinely clear ... The heroes' hero ...”

Kyra Gottesman, Chico Enterprise-Record, Chico/CA

“If you're a love of the only instrument able to turn mere mortals into gods, then here's a date for your diary.”

Champion Newspapers, Southport/United Kingdom

“There seems to be no limit to Richard's ability to quickly master whatever guitar style captures his fancy. The complex styles of many guitar greats including Django Reinhardt, Les Paul, and Lenny Breau have proved to be no impediment to his voracious musical appetite.”

The Chattanooga, Chattanooga/TN

“Julie Adams' eloquent cello solos deserve special mention.”

Andrew Porter, The New Yorker

“The unlimited lightness of guitar playing ... Smith masters everything with an effortlessness, that makes all music go straight to the heart. With that knowledge recognizable in every outstanding concert, that beauty is extremely easy. As easy as life could be.”

Lippische Landes-Zeitung, Detmold/Germany

“Strings of gold on guitar met strings of pearls on cello ... I never knew someone could play a sigh; make that two someones. Incredibly gifted musicians, with wonderfully silly senses of humor and a clear love for what they do, Richard Smith and Julie Adams rang the satisfaction chime at 20, on a scale of one to ten.”

Jean Bartlett, The Pacifica Tribune, Pacifica/CA

“A dazzling display of musicianship ... Richard and Julie play classics, jazz, pop and country with a feel that places them up there with the musical greats.”

Champion Newspapers, Southport/United Kingdom

“Wow. That seemed to be the consensus of the audience after Richard Smith and Julie Adams performed ... 'I never heard anyone play like that before, or even knew you could,' Carolyn Mayer, president of the Pendleton Concert Association, said ...”

Sandy Holtz, The East Oregonian, Pendleton/OR

“When they play together, it'll melt your heart – and blow your socks off.”

The Chattanooga, Chattanooga/TN

“Known as 'The Finger-Picking Virtuoso,' Smith performed stunningly complex renditions of classical and contemporary music alike ... a fantastic example of his dexterity and wide repertoire of songs ...”

Paige Cunningham, The UTD Mercury, Dallas/TX

“From the opening Beatles Medley to the lyrical 'Over the Rainbow,' Smith and Adams turned 28 songs into magical touches of technique, tone and enthusiasm for the spirit of their craft and comprehension of performance dynamics – making music 'music to the ears.’”

Jane G. Collins, The Item, Sumter/SC

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