



## Hucky Eichelmann

### "Musical Ambassador between East and West"



**B**oncafe would like to take you to the enchanting world of the life and passion of world-renowned classical world guitarist Hucky Eichelmann. Over the years, Hucky has developed a diverse music repertoire that bridges the cultures of East and West, especially with his dazzling, virtuoso contemporary versions of traditional Thai songs that delights both Thai and International audiences.

**B/S: Tell us, when and how did you discover your musical talent?**

**Hucky:** All my family and relatives play various sorts of music at various levels so I had music around since I can think or perhaps even before that. It came naturally to pick up the trumpet at the age of seven to play in the local brass bands and orchestras and later, at the age of 12, I finally got my first guitar which I actually really wanted to play.

**B/S: Why guitar? And why classical guitar specifically?**

**Hucky:** First, as every teenager at the time, it was the electric guitar playing with friends in a rock band. It was only about two years later at the age of 14 that I fell in love with the sound of the acoustic and especially the nylon string or classical guitar while listening to a recording of Spanish maestro Andres Segovia. To me, it was a miracle. So I decided that I must find out how to do that.

**B/S: What brought you to Thailand?**

**Hucky:** My first professional engagement was a professorship at the University of the Philippines. From there I undertook tours through neighboring countries including Thailand. On my first visit to Bangkok, I met with famous Thai musicians including Dnu Huntrakul, Asanee Chotikul, Surasri Ithikul and Rewat Budhinun who became friends and colleagues. I later became a professor at Ste. Cecilia Academy of Music, Chulalongkorn University and Mahidol University. The contract was only 2 years but it has become 30 years by now.

**B/S: What do you find charming about Thai music?**

**Hucky:** My first encounter with Thai music was the music of His Majesty the King. I was fascinated

by the Royal compositions so I and Kate-Arun Lertpipattana decided to ask for permission to arrange the Royal tunes for the guitar. It became an instant hit and the sweetness of the sound of the classical guitar was known by everybody in the kingdom.

During the same time I learned more about Thai classical and folk music. At the time I thought about recording an album with traditional Thai music, but instead I recorded Gamgah Gamgah, an album with contemporary Thai and Asian music. However, it is only 30 years later that I went into the studio to record *Magical Melodies of Thailand* featuring those Thai classical and folk songs which remained close to my heart ever since I heard them the first time.

**B/S: What's the inspiration for your style of music and what would you like to convey to audiences?**

**Hucky:** For me, music is something almost sacred and comes from deep within ourselves. It can't be ordered commercially or produced superficially for ego reasons. Music's got to have an honest source, a true meaning and a strong message to carry from human being to human being or even further. Music is a language without boundaries. I wish that people would believe more in the power of music, real music. It would perhaps help solve so many of today's problems.

**B/S: How many albums have you released?**

**Hucky:** About 7 albums. The most recent one is *Hucky Eichelmann – Magical Melodies of Thailand*. Others are *Sweet Words, Silk & Bamboo*, *Gamgah Gamgah, With Love from Asia and Candlelight Blues*. The *Sweet Words and Candlelight Blues* albums are the compositions of His Majesty the King of Thailand.

**B/S: What's your current project and when will we get to admire it?**

**Hucky:** Earlier in the year I released the *Magical Melodies of Thailand* album and I just returned from the highly successful first leg of my *Magical Melodies Thailand* tour with concerts, workshops and awards in the major cities of Northeastern

Thailand and in Bangkok. The tour will continue through more regions of the country in November 2010. Meanwhile I went to Pai where we support a school with some hundred children. During November I will produce another Thai album featuring renowned Thai Ranad (xylophone) maestro Khun-In To Sanga and in December I shall record another of my own albums.

**B/S: What is your most memorable musical moment?**

**Hucky:** There are quite a few of those moments. One was seeing Yuri Aronovich conducting Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony in Stuttgart. Another one certainly was the close collaboration with Indian sitar superstar Ravi Shankar, the guru of The Beatles and the father of jazz superstar and Grammy winner Norah Jones. The Royal Command performances for His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen and Her Royal Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn which I had the great honor to perform are the experiences I shall never forget.

**B/S: What is your goal for next year?**

**Hucky:** During 2011 the plans include several concert tours in Thailand, through Asia and Europe. There will be another new album with a well-known Thai singer and hopefully I will find the time to finally record the guitar concerto by Ravi Shankar which was written for me by the legendary Indian maestro.

**B/S: Final question, what do you think is the relationship or connection between music and coffee?**

**Hucky:** Music stimulates the aural senses setting free our imaginations and feelings, providing us with the space to live our dreams. As for coffee it stimulates our sense of taste as well as the nervous system hence giving us a similar feeling of freedom, happiness and timelessness which we may experience listening to good music.

Hucky's music is available at [www.amithailand.com](http://www.amithailand.com) and also at iTunes & amazon.com and most fine record stores and bookshops throughout Thailand.