

# Guitarist reaches for heartstrings

**Scott Sanchez's music is meant to make people happy.**

By **CLIFTON J. NOBLE JR.**

*Music writer*

Modest yet mighty musical goals drive classical guitarist Scott R. Sanchez.

"If somebody hears my recording or if I play a recital somewhere, maybe I'll bring some happiness into their lives for a short time," Sanchez said during a recent telephone conversation from his Westfield home. "It seems small on the surface, but it's very big for me. Music is a reflection of what I am — of my essence — and I hope that comes across in a positive way."

Sanchez's commitment to and love of his art burst from the opening notes of his recently released compact disc, "Preludio!" (Intraspect SRS001) and carry the listener through some 48 minutes of aptly chosen, richly colored, and brilliantly played solo guitar repertoire.

"I wanted to do something original, but I wanted to be sincere about it; not to do something just because it was different," he said.

Sanchez arrived at a neat solution, representing the traditional classical guitar canon with Federico Moreno Torroba's flamenco-tinted "Sonatina," and entering the realm of the (relatively) unknown with "Ten Concert Etudes," challenging and eminently accessible homages to composers including Villa-Lobos, Scriabin, Liszt, and Rachmaninoff that were written by his former teacher, Cuban guitarist Ricardo Iznaola.



**Classical guitarist Scott R. Sanchez of Westfield recently released a compact disc titled "Preludio!"**

Rounding out the disc, Sanchez plays the seductive "Suite Venezolana" by Antonio Lauro, and three excerpts from Leonard Bern-

stein's "West Side Story" ("I Feel Pretty," "Maria," and "America") in exquisite arrangements by Argentinian guitarist Jorge Morel.

Sanchez grew up in Colorado, following in the footsteps of his brother who played jazz and rock guitar. His grandmother, Marion Pearl Blue, to whose memory "Preludio!" is dedicated, encouraged the 10-year-old to take lessons and bought him his first guitar.

When he was 17, Sanchez took a masterclass with legendary Spanish guitarist Pepe Romero, which inspired him to pursue classical guitar-playing as a career. Ignited as he was by this early influence, it's no surprise that Sanchez retains the elegant ornamentation, expressive vibrato and broad, warm tone of the Spanish masters.

He also admires English guitarist Julian Bream's extensive palette of tone color and brings his own timbral versatility to bear, creating some magical effects, particularly in the Lauro suite.

After earning a bachelor's degree in music as a student of Iznaola at the University of Denver, Sanchez came to Yale School of Music (producer of many of this country's premiere classical guitarists, including Sharon Isbin). He earned his master's degree in music from Yale in 1995, and currently teaches at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. (where he coached chamber music as a graduate student) and at the Pittsfield Community Music School.

Sanchez said that his CD "Preludio!" will be available at Barnes & Noble in Holyoke. Further inquiries about the artist and his recording may be made by calling 1-800-884-6113, Code 70.

"I'm here to make music," Sanchez concluded. "I hope I can play a small part in contributing to society in a positive way."

"Preludio!" represents a firm step toward the fulfillment of that hope.