

# FRANÇOIS DIDIER BOUVET BIO

French native born on the Island of Mauritius, "l'Isle de France" as it was formerly called, François Didier began learning to speak English at seven and playing the guitar at eight (coming from a long line of accomplished classical composers and pianists on his paternal side, the latter came to him much more easily). His self-taught forays began casually at first, after moving to the U.S., until he was introduced to the likes of Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton (the Cream Years) and then later, Frank Marino, John McLaughlin, Al Di Meola, and Allan Holdsworth. By age 15, it was "all about the guitar: eat-sleep-school-guitar," with many countless hours burning the midnight oil, deciphering the solos of his heroes on an old turntable which fortunately had a half speed switch on it.

He moved to the San Francisco Bay Area after high school and began studying guitar with virtuoso Marc Bonilla (who has worked with such luminaries as Ronnie Montrose, Keith Emerson [Emerson, Lake and Palmer], and Glenn Hughes [Deep Purple]). Bonilla has since moved to L.A. to pursue an impressive career as a film and T.V. composer, while François Didier stayed on in the Bay Area as full time working guitarist/studio musician/composer/teacher.

His ability to play so many styles of music has led him to many diverse studio and performance projects. His playing has been repeatedly featured with the world-renowned vertical dance troupe Project Bandaloop in San Francisco, Oregon, and at the Banff Center for the arts in Alberta Canada. His fiery and passionate acoustic side (as keenly developed as his burning electric playing) is heavily featured on the newly released CD, "Despi A Alma" by internationally acclaimed Portuguese fado singer, Ramana Vieira. To further challenge his improvisational skills, he performed many seasons with San Francisco's longest running theater improv troupe, Flash Family. His musical flexibility also afforded him work with Latin jazz, Caribbean (soca), contemporary flamenco, hard rock, and blues bands all over the San Francisco Bay Area. He has also played with a funk-jazz quartet that performed, among other things, funky and creative renditions of Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Herbie Hancock. In the audio/visual world, François Didier has composed music for film and a children's story. He frequently collaborates with local film, theatre and T.V. composer Chris Houston (François Didier's musical contributions to Houston's compositions can be heard in the movie "Enchanted," which in the past has enjoyed wide circulation on Showtime). At present, he is performing with internationally acclaimed fado singer Ramana Vieira, where his Al Di Meola-style, nouveau flamenco flavored acoustic solos are heavily featured.

## **FRANÇOIS DIDIER BOUVET BIO (continued)**

When it came time to do his own project, François Didier knew he wanted to create an entirely new approach to the already saturated instrumental rock album genre. The concept for *Left Turn on Spanish Highway* came to him while jogging with the Gypsy Kings on his walkman: fusing the compelling rhythms of contemporary flamenco with the soaring passions of electric rock guitar (think Ottmar Leibert meets Satriani/Neal Schon). In the liner notes regarding the CD's only cover tune, *Pan In A Minor*, he writes: "Though Caribbean in its original genre, this piece has a sort of Latin chord progression that I decided to run with, like a sports car with a Les Paul for an engine." That statement very much speaks to the sense of adventure of this multi-faceted, multi-layered CD. *Left Turn on Spanish Highway* truly embodies François Didier's guitar style: melodic; tasteful; virtuosic; sometimes cinematic; always dramatic, and full of surprising twists and turns, and firmly establishes him among today's top Jazz/rock fusion guitarists.