

## *Rococo Café* for Classical Guitar Trio by Roland Chadwick

After travelling from England in 1957 to Australia I returned via LA in 1997 and ended up in Ealing W13. The Rococo Café was established a few years after my arrival in Ealing and became a second home to me and others like me with impressive dreams, grand schemes and no day jobs. My dear friend, TS and I spent many happy hours in the quiet mornings of Rococo Café away from the din of the **Rush Hour** traffic. But soon we'd driven from that sober quietude by parents returning from the morning school run eager to hear the latest news in their **Gossip Circle**.

TS and I would retreat to the now relative quiet of the side walk tables and continue putting the world to rights. TS's dog Nelson waited impatiently for us to finish so that he could get to work

A young man named Jerome would sometimes share a lunchtime table with me. He too had impressive dreams and grand schemes and was headed toward a life as a DJ. Then he didn't show up anymore. It was weeks later I noticed his absence and I asked where Jerome was. The owner of Rococo Café told me that his life had become unbearable and he had ended it. These are my **Flowers for Jerome**.

For many years, a quiet but extraordinarily beautiful young Polish woman came to wait on our tables. She said little. She smiled only a little despite our very best efforts but when she moved through the Café it was like observing Princess at a grand waltz. When she danced it was we that were now quiet. We were sure she must have some royal blood but for now she was our **Waltzing Waitress**.

On some days, the Café would fill with dozens of young women in exotic head gear, outlandish makeup and huge smiling faces. These were students at Greasepaint, a school for stage and movie makeup. Her name was Daisy but she fell for another man with blue eyes, a cheeky grin and a rather good story about diamonds in the Congo. His dreams were truly impressive but not so farfetched that they didn't appeal **To a Princess in Greasepaint**.

Arabiata is the Italian word for 'angry' and I believe that good food bites back and the Rococo Café's Sri Lankan chef and I created the most wonderful Pasta Arabiata. I was learning to Tango at the time and our pasta sauce embodied all the heat of that wonderful dance so we called it **Tango Arabiata**.

That's all 10 years ago now. I don't know what happened to those wonderful people except of course, TS but I wish them happiness and sincerely hope that all their impressive dreams and grand schemes came true.