



heritage





*\* works written for the WGC Heritage*







## **Welcome to the Worldwide Guitar Connections!**

The WGC is a creative project founded in 2011, and from its very beginning it counted with partners from all over the world in a vast array of activities. The idea of WGC is to tie together innovative possibilities and offer a fresh approach to the making and consumption of music. The first phase of WGC was divided into three seasons, from 2011-2017, and comprised commissions, recordings, world tours, and outreach work. One of WGC's ground rules is to support the creation of high-quality new works for guitar, and for that purpose a select group of incredibly talented composers from many countries has been invited to write for each season of the project, always working under a specific concept.

In 2016 WGC embarked upon its third season. Our adventure was to face the past and understand its place in our lives in the 21st century. My main idea was to reinterpret our sense of tradition, thus transforming the WGC Heritage into a mosaic of many historical colours, which we mixed in order to create a landscape of our own traditions. Perhaps the main innovation in this season was the instrument used for recordings and tours, a 'hybrid' guitar specially designed by the Korean luthier Heehong Kim inspired by a model made by J. G. Stauffer, a 19th-century Austrian luthier who revolutionized the guitar construction in many ways. The programme was comprised of original 19th-century works placed next to exciting new works by living composers written especially for this season and this particular instrument.

I wish you all a great experience with the WGC Heritage!

**Fabricio Mattos**

WGC Founder & Artistic Director

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## THEME & VARIATIONS

### Variations on a theme from 'The Magic Flute' op.09, Fernando Sor

Fernando Sor, Spanish composer who built most of his career in centres like Paris and London, was one of the most prolific guitarists of his time and a composer of very particular qualities. From études to concert pieces, Sor's works demand from guitarists a challenging combination of musical knowledge and technical competence. The Variations on a theme of 'The Magic Flute' op.09 is one of the most performed guitar works of all time. However, as with most masterpieces, it has not worn out over the years, as each guitarist explores a slightly different color or technical aspect of the work, which contributes to adding a sense of historical "freshness" to it. The theme that inspired Sor to this set of variations is called 'Oh Cara Armonia', from Mozart's opera 'The Magic Flute'. Sor's exploration of the guitarist's technical and musical capabilities in the first half of the 19th century is remarkable; technical aspects that make even the guitarists of the 21st century sweat with anxiety, which combined with extremely elegant and effective compositional solutions create a sense of perfection and balance that make this one of the most successful solo works ever written for the guitar.

### Variations on a theme from the Chinese Guqin, HuanQi Lin

HuanQi Lin is a composer from Shanghai, who actively works to promote classical guitar in China. Lin's work for the WGC is a set of variations on a theme from the Chinese Guqin, an instrument that dates back thousands of years in Chinese history, having been played by philosophers, poets and aristocrats, although today the access to it is more popularized. The instrument, played by Confucius himself, shares many peculiarities with the guitar, and the theme chosen by Lin is an excerpt from 良宵引, or 'Prelude to the wonderful night' in free translation. All variations follow Lin's very imaginative style and pose great technical and musical challenges. The theme is presented for the first time in a very idiomatic style, and sometimes the sound of the guitar can be confused with that of the Chinese instrument. The first variation is the "Variation of the bells", and this effect can be achieved by playing most of the note sequences on different strings, called campanella effect. The second variation is the variation of the motif, where the first three notes of the theme become a motif that appears throughout the variation. The third is a variation of "Chinese opera", as the rhythm is very typical of that country's most traditional opera style. In the fourth variation, the theme can be heard on the bottom line, with higher voices added in counterpoint. The final is a variation of the dance type, or what Lin considers to be a "variation of Latin music".



Here the melody of the dance comes from the inversion of the initial theme and, in fact, has a very strong Latin American character, pointing to my origins. The work then ends with a reminder of the original theme in an idiomatic manner.

## **COUNTERPOINT**

### **Presto-fugato op.23, Václav Tomáš Matějka**

Czech composer Václav Tomáš Matějka (adapted to Wenzel Thomas Matiegka), was born in Bohemia and moved to Vienna in the early 19th century to work as a composer, piano teacher and guitarist. In the artistically prolific Viennese environment, Matiegka worked as Kappelmeister in the city's suburbs and participated in a group of artists, composers and amateurs who contributed to his recognition locally and abroad. One of the works that best exemplifies Matiegka's technical mastery of the guitar is Sonata op.23, also called Fuga, Minuetto and Rondo. Particularly in the first movement, Presto-Fugato, Matiegka demonstrates an impressive handling of a counterpoint texture through a wide range of instrumental and compositional resources, dealing with elegance and great efficiency with the technical limitations of the guitar. Sometimes, one can even hear Beethoven's echoes in his music, but the guitar still imposes a more concise way of dealing with musical structures, limiting the composer to creating very "economical" works compared to those of piano and other instruments. However, through the use of compositional techniques such as hidden voices and crystalline forms, Matiegka's compositions dispense with any simplistic approach to his music, because behind seemingly simple ideas there are great intentions and echoes of one of the richest periods in music history.

### **preludiofuga II, Lucas Jordan**

Lucas Jordan is a composer whose life is a kind of 'fugato': born in Brazil, educated in Brazil, the United States, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and holding Brazilian and Italian nationalities. All of these cultural disruptions naturally create an image in his compositional identity that many artists strive to achieve, a way of summarizing this mosaic of cultures and experiences in a unique musical personality.

After a period of studies together in London and following our interest in theoretical and practical aspects of musical performance, Lucas and I had the idea of working together under the conceptual roof of the WGC to try something new: to mix our experiences and interests in a new work for guitar. The result of this collaboration was the preludiofuga II, a work that offers a wide exploration of the limits of the instrument and the performer,



in addition to addressing gestural processes in musical performance, a theme appreciated by both. Here, the composer doesn't follow a pre-established structure like the prelude or fugue, but a very personal structure in which the prelude fails to establish something and dissolves into the fugue, which in turn tries to capture the function of the prelude, thus creating the texture of a fugato. This leads to a communicative frustration between the two forms, which gradually forces the performer to transcend the musical barrier into non-verbal language - a situation analogous to being in a foreign country and resorting to gestures to communicate.

## **ADAPTATION**

### **Ständchen, Franz Schubert (arr. Mertz)**

One of the most important guitarist-composers who arranged and transcribed famous works in a very idiomatic and attractive way was the Austro-Hungarian János Gáspár Mertz. Known in Vienna and abroad as one of the greatest virtuosos of the guitar of his time, Mertz composed important works for the instrument, which helped to elevate his status at times when the piano had absolute priority and musical language and expectations were often associated with that instrument. One of the pieces that best demonstrates his main qualities as a composer is his famous *Elegie für die Gitarre*, an absolute masterpiece of expression for the instrument, and another important contribution came with the arrangements of six songs by Schubert. At Mertz's time, Schubert's works were already quite famous, especially in the genre in which the composer dominated at a deeper level, the Lied. Mertz's arrangements of Schubert's songs result incredibly idiomatic on the guitar, supported by the clever use of counterpoint and a rather free structural adaptation. *Ständchen* (Serenade) is by far the most famous of all Schubert's Lieder, and Mertz's arrangement brings with it the colors, textures and aromas of 19th century Viennese society.

### **Arirang, Tradicional coreana (arr. Mattos)**

Some say Arirang is Korea's unofficial anthem. It is a song known throughout Asia and, since recently, also in the rest of the world. Arirang does not have a fixed text and its singing style can vary according to regions and dialects. It is a UNESCO 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity', according to which music has around 3,200 variations, having recently been translated into nine languages to allow



more people to sing it. This degree of variation inside and outside Korea means, for me, that music is delivered to the world in a completely free and indistinct way. Reflecting on this fact, I concluded that this may be the true meaning of freedom: to let things flow and change. And it was with this feeling that I made yet another version of Arirang for solo guitar, trying to join and confront traditions and to find out what unites us. To that end, I used some composition techniques of European music, along with a sense of traditional Korean music, and instruments like the Kkwaenggwari. I've been using a guitar made by Korean luthier Heehong Kim for the past few years, who gladly agreed to make the guitar used at WGC Heritage. That fact, coupled with an outsider's appreciation for Korean culture, made me think that this was the perfect occasion to make an arrangement of Arirang. So, this is my tribute to the Korean people. This is my Arirang.

## **VIRTUOSITY**

### **3 Caprices (de 36 Caprices op. 20), Luigi Legnani**

The guitar built by the Austrian luthier J.G. Stauffer in the 19th century, which inspired the guitar used in WGC Heritage, was later called the 'Legnani model', due to his collaboration with the Italian guitarist and composer in its design. This instrument presented some structural changes that would help to outline the way the guitar would be built in the decades to come. In 1822, Legnani wrote his 36 Capricci op. 20, in all major and minor keys, where he explored not only "obvious" virtuoso techniques such as fast scales and arpeggios, but also more subtle technical and musical aspects of the guitar, such as innovative techniques for the left hand and unusual phrasing. The three Capricci presented at WGC Heritage bring a little of each aspect: Capriccio #5 is a kind of celebration of the 'Legnani model' guitar, as the first note of the piece is the last possible note (a D) to be achieved in that model, showing off its timbre qualities even in extreme positions; Capriccio #22 explores the technical aspect of the guitarist's left hand and the texture of the accompanied melody, putting the performer's cantabile skills to proof, while maintaining very tense positions in the left hand; and Capriccio #36, the last of the series, is a timeless challenge, composed of fast combinations of scales and strangely constructed arpeggios that take the guitarist's technique to its limits.



## **Tre Capricci, Mauro Bonelli**

Mauro Bonelli is a guitarist and composer from Genoa very active in the search for new technical and expressive forms for the modern guitar. Mauro is also a specialist in early plucked instruments, playing and recording regularly on guitars, lutes and other early instruments and often experimenting with these. Due to his vast experience with early instruments and new music, Mauro was a great option to create contemporary 'caprices' for our guitar inspired by Stauffer's 'Legnani' model. Each of the three Capricci carries a specific title that defines the type of technical or musical approach desired by the composer. The first, Capriccio Tribale, creates a seductive rhythmic movement combined with percussive sounds of crossed strings; its "tribal" character refers to "primitive" rhythms, while the technique is appealingly modern. The second, Capriccio Elettrico, is a breathtaking piece created by the free combination of preconceived ideas; the composer offers only boxes with some musical ideas and the performer decides in what order and how many times they will be repeated. The third and final caprice, Capriccio Idiomático, is an overdose of extremely fast arpeggios! Using a simple structure of two fast sections with a meditative interlude, Bonelli is here at his best: a clear demonstration of why guitarists generally consider his works to be technical challenges of the highest level, while his music is surprisingly organic and often enjoyed by audiences around the world.

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