

Nom/Name: *Kristian Del Cantero*

Date du récital/Date of recital: *May 7 14.00*

Classe de/Class of: *Steve Cowan*

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Fernando Sor (1778-1839) was a Spanish guitarist, a preeminent composer of the late Classical era. His contributions to the repertoire are extensive, and feature a wide range of different musical forms. In his formative years, Sor was educated in the choir school in the Abbey of Santa Maria de Montserrat in Catalonia, Spain. Many of his teachers took notice of his natural and prodigious musical talent, and he quickly developed a musical expressiveness that was demonstrated through the guitar.

Étude No. 6, Op. 11 stands out as a particularly sonorous and beautiful piece, contrasted with the numerous *Études* written from this period that lack a certain musical depth. This particular *Étude* invites the guitarist to develop their technique by maintaining a sweet melodic line of the outer voice amidst a continuous flowing of arpeggios and bass notes. This *Étude* is followed by *Introduction and Variations on a Theme by Mozart, Op. 9*, sharing the same key signature and 'Bel canto' atmosphere. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Opera '*Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)*' was premiered in Vienna in 1791. Sor's piece is inspired by the "*O cara armonia*" aria from this opera. It is most likely that Sor heard the Opera while living in England in 1819 after the country's first major production. Sor's *Op. 9* features a wide range of virtuosic and contrasting variations, following in the tradition of composers such as *Henri Herz* and *Michael Glinka* to write variations on this famous aria. *The Introduction and Variations on a Theme by Mozart* is a popular and beloved piece among classical guitarists today.

Manuel Maria Ponce (1882-1948) is one of the preeminent composers of the 20th century. Ponce would meet the legendary Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia in 1923. This would be the start of years of musical collaboration between Segovia and Ponce, resulting in the production of dozens of artistically fresh and genre defining compositions for the guitar. The Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos said of him after meeting in Paris years later in 1920, "*I remember that I asked him at that time if the composers of his country were as yet taking an interest in native music, as I had been doing since 1912, and he answered that he himself had been working in that direction. It gave me great joy to learn that in that distant part of my continent there was another artist who was arming himself with the resources of the folklore of his people in the struggle for the future musical independence of his country.*"

The *Prelude in E major* is a work originally published attributed as a composition by the German Baroque composer Sylvius Leopold Weiss (1687-1750). This piece features baroque idioms and styles, fashioned after an *Entrée* or *Prélude* typical of the period; it nevertheless is difficult to deny the style of Ponce after an encounter of the work.

Thème varié et finale is perhaps the most famous work for the guitar by Ponce, written in 1926 for Andres Segovia. The work features a somewhat austere theme in a descending-fifths progression, which eventually flowers out into a number of unique and challenging variations. Today I will be playing the Segovia's edition of the piece, which has substantial differences from the composer's manuscript.

Kristian Del Cantero gained much inspiration and curiosity towards composing amidst his 15 years of playing the guitar. His first formal compositions were premiered in a composition class concert in 2016 at the Royal Conservatory of Music's *Taylor Academy* of the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. Since then, Kristian has used his knowledge of the classical guitar repertoire and his experience as a guitarist to create a unique style of writing. Kristian focuses on composing in a way that addresses the problem of the guitar's *idiom* and the period of transition we as a guitar community finds ourselves in.

Indwelling is a piece written for Canadian guitarist Tim Beattie. It is a reflection on the initial creative desire one experiences at a young age to become enamoured with a certain art, contrasted with the unexpected sufferings that life brings that challenge the reality of artistic beauty and simplicity one experiences in their youth. At a certain point of complexity, one can only search within for that initial creative urge, or *indwelling* that caused them to pursue that art in the first place.

Prelude and Toccata is a piece written in 2021 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. It features a short musical motif (A-B-D-C#) that is presented in the *prelude* and developed further in the *toccata*. Over the two movements, the motif is combined with different modal harmonic tendencies, as well as a juxtaposition of the whole-tone scale. The *toccata* features different irregular time signatures such as 5\8 and 7\8 time.

Meditations on 'Dies Irae' is a composition surrounding the 13th century Latin sequence '*Dies Irae*' (*The Day of Wrath*), attributed to Thomas of Celano of the Franciscan Order (1200-1265). The guitar repertoire has witnessed a piece based on this sequence by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968), entitled '*No hubo remedio. Passacaglia sul tema del Dies irae*'. Tedesco's piece takes the theme and employs a variety of parallel-fifth harmonies and canonic passages, within the context of a passacaglia, inevitably pointing the listener's imagination back to the haunting *plainchant* style of the medieval past. Much different in style and harmony than Tedesco's piece, the composition you will hear today starts with an *introductory* section that incrementally exposes the theme, followed by the *motif* running in repeats expanded each time with a *counter-theme*.

Johann Sebastian Bach was a master composer and musician of the Baroque period. Coming from a long musical heritage of composers, Bach has composed works for many different instruments and musical settings, as well as mastering the old styles of counterpoint and harmony coming before him, and demonstrating an expressive knowledge of musical styles emanating from his neighbouring countries of France, England, and Italy. In 1717, Bach moved to Köthen after being hired by Leopold, Prince

of Anhalt-Köthen to become the *Kapellmeister*. It is here that Bach begins work on the *Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin*, home to the *BWV 1005 Sonata no. 3 in C major* which you will hear today.

The *Sonata no. 3* is the third of three '*Sonata da chiesa*' (*Church sonata*) written in Köthen. In Bach's Germany of the 17th century, it became fashionable for church services to contain music by instrumental ensembles, canzonas, and sonatas, deviating from the norm and tradition of solo organ. Primarily, the term *Sonata da chiesa* was originally meant to indicate the occasion of use, '*da chiesa*'. Eventually, the term shifted in its meaning and became known to distinguish itself from its neighbouring category of '*chamber music*' (*musica da camera*), music composed in courts which generally employed traditional dance forms. Some notable composers who wrote in the '*da chiesa*' style were Arcangelo Corelli, and George Frederick Handel. Bach's *Sonata no. 3* follows the '*da chiesa*' structure of *slow-fast-slow-fast*. The work opens with an *adagio* that takes a simple rhythmic motif from C-D and explores many possible harmonic combinations and contrapuntal lines. The following *fugue* is based off the '*Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott*' chorale from the *Great Eighteen Chorale Preludes, BWV 651-668*. It is a marvellous movement and features beautiful canonic passages and lush episodes that complement the theme. At the halfway point, the theme flips '*in riverson*' until the brilliant final episode bringing the fugue back to its exposition. The contrasting *largo* is a beautiful slow movement, with windingly long and simple melodies characteristic of the *galant style*. The final *allegro assai* is a fiendishly difficult finale which has a perpetual motion of sixteenth notes and multiple lines emerging from a simple theme.

Ludwig van Beethoven said of Bach's approach to writing: "I believe that Bach's solo works for violin are perhaps the greatest example in any art form of a master's ability to move with freedom and assurance, even in chains." It is a pleasure and a privilege to play the *Sonata no. 3* for you today.