



*International
Presentations of
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Michael Lorimer

Guitarist

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 26, 1983, AT 8:30
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Preludio-Allegro and Ayre (*c.* 1733) DE MURCIA

Suite in C major (1671) CORBETTA

Prélude

Caprice de Chacone

Gigue

Menuet

Autre Chacone

(pause)

From Etudes (1929) and Preludes (1940) VILLA-LOBOS
Selections to be announced

Five Temperaments (1983) LESLIE BASSETT

World première

Aggressive, energetic

Poignant, lyrical

Smooth, yet changing

Singing, nostalgic

Restless

*Prelude, BWV 1012 (*c.* 1720) BACH

INTERMISSION

*Danzas TURINA
Selections to be announced

Theme, Variations, and Finale (1925) PONCE

†Zambra Granadina ALBÉNIZ

†Sevilla ALBÉNIZ

**transcribed by Michael Lorimer*

†transcribed by Andrés Segovia

The University Musical Society expresses thanks to Liberty Music Shop for its generosity and service to the community in underwriting the printing costs of this concert program.

PROGRAM NOTES

by MICHAEL LORIMER

The baroque guitar

Tonight's concert begins with music performed on the instrument for which it was conceived, the baroque guitar. This instrument's relationship to the modern guitar is like that of the harpsichord to the piano, and the baroque guitar shares with the harpsichord a more nasal sound than its modern counterpart.

An important feature of baroque guitar technique is the mixture of strumming and plucking techniques. In the early 1600s the baroque guitar was an accompaniment instrument, one perfect for the new styles of music, and it was only strummed — much in the manner in which folk singers strum the guitar in our time. Later the method of plucking individual notes was added and by the end of the century the refined combination of techniques evolved that is displayed in the selections I am playing.

My instrument is an exact copy (by N. B. van der Waals, 1975) of a guitar by Jean Voboam, made in Paris in 1687 for Mlle. de Nantes, Duchess of Bourbon, a daughter of Louis XIV.

The classical guitar

The classical guitar, an instrument with six single strings rather than five pairs, followed the baroque guitar. It appeared at the end of the eighteenth century at the same time musical style was changing, the classical era succeeding the baroque. Early classical guitar methods include instructions on how to make the guitar sound like other instruments — harp, oboe, trumpets, string quartet, almost anything but a guitar! — and for the most part the new composers dropped idiomatic effects such as the strums featured on the baroque instrument. Their conception of the guitar continues today and was well expressed by the great Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia when he said, "The guitar is an orchestra seen from the wrong end of the telescope," and was echoed when, searching for words to criticize a student's performance, he once exclaimed: "It sounds like . . . a guitar!" Even so, twentieth century composers have increasingly included guitaristic materials in their works for our instrument, combining the aesthetics of the baroque guitarists with those of later players.

The repertoire for this recital is to me as special as it is varied. It is some of my favorite music, new and old, and reflects a spectrum of the guitar's many colors. The première of Leslie Bassett's *Five Temperaments* is one highlight to which I have especially looked forward.

Preludio-Allegro and Ayre (c. 1733) SANTIAGO DE MURCIA (c. 1680–c. 1740)

Santiago de Murcia was the guitar tutor to the first wife of Philip V of Spain, Queen Maria Luisa Gabriela de Savoy. In 1714 de Murcia published an important method of accompaniment. Later he brought together an eclectic collection of Spanish, Italian, and French music called *Passacalles y Obras* from which the Preludio-Allegro and Ayre are drawn. The first two pieces are in the new plucked style; the last demonstrates the older strummed style.

Suite in C major (1671) FRANCISCO CORBETTA (c. 1615–1681)

Gambler, guitarist, and courtier Francisco Corbetta was a fascinating man, and a look at his life touches on the whole history and spirit of the seventeenth century Europe. His music spans development of the baroque guitar in Italy and France, and he was one of the first masters of the musical styles of both countries. He was the greatest baroque guitarist and was sought after as teacher as well as performer. His pupils included professional players and a vast number of blue-blooded amateurs — including Louis XIV, Charles II, Mme. la Duchesse de'Orleans, the Duke of York (later King James II), and Princess Anne (later Queen). An epitaph written by a devoted pupil reads:

Here lies the Amphion of our day, Francisque, that man so rare
Who made the guitar to speak the true language of Love
He won, with his harmonies, the hearts of prince and king
And some believe a genius directed his moving fingers
If, passing by, you hear not his miracles know that he never would have died
That he would have Death himself but alas, unhappily, Death has no ears.

The gay *Suite in C Major* is found at the end of Corbetta's most important book, *La Guitarre Royale* (1671). The book is dedicated to the King of England (Charles II) and for the most part consists of French dance suites, arranged like those of J.S. Bach, an order that seems to have originated with Corbetta. The *Suite in C Major* is, however, unique — it includes two *chacottes*, a *gigue* with rhythms unlike others in the book, and a *menuet*. The customary *prélude* I've added, transposing it from another suite. The *chacottes* display the gamut of baroque guitar techniques (including extended strummed passages with remarkable harmonies) and give us a glimpse of how Corbetta sounded when he improvised.

From Etudes (1929) and Preludes (1940) HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS
(1887-1959)

A guitarist himself, the Brazilian composer Villa-Lobos lovingly dedicated himself to writing for our instrument, and his *Etudes* and *Preludes* have become mainstays of the repertoire. When they were written, their idiomatic style was so rare in classical guitar music that one would have had to go all the way back to baroque guitar music to best find parallels. Each piece demonstrates Villa-Lobos' seemingly unending ability to discover new, exotic, and colorful guitaristic resources. "Has anyone ever written more sublimely for the guitar?" asked one critic about Villa-Lobos' music. Certainly it is among the most engaging work for this century, exploiting as it does the open strings and natural harmonics, as well as the left-hand slur and glissando, the resonance of arpeggios, and the mellow timbre of the bass strings sounded in the upper registers.

Five Temperaments (1983, world première) LESLIE BASSETT
(b. 1923)

Leslie Bassett's *Five Temperaments* are musical portraits of different traits of character. Each movement has its own specific feeling. Throughout the work, Leslie Bassett's first for guitar, the guitar's sixth string tunes to E-flat, one half-step lower than normal guitar tuning. This produces a rare tuning, one whose unique and pungent sonorities have never before been explored to the degree they are in this piece.

Born in 1923 in Hanford, California, Leslie Bassett turned to composition while serving as trombonist and arranger with bands, orchestras, and jazz bands during and following World War II. After wartime service in France and Germany, he studied at Fresno State College and at the University of Michigan where he was a pupil and colleague of Ross Lee Finney, then composer-in-residence. As a Fulbright Fellow in Paris, he studied privately with Nadia Boulanger and at the Ecole Normale with Arthur Honegger. Since 1952 Mr. Bassett has been on the faculty of the U-M School of Music, where he is the Albert A. Stanley Distinguished University Professor and Chairman of the Composition Department.

Among Mr. Bassett's numerous awards are the coveted Prix de Rome and the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 1966 for his *Variations for Orchestra*. This work received its first Ann Arbor performance in January 1967 by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. To celebrate the U.S. Bicentennial, Mr. Bassett was among six American composers commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy, with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, to write a piece for orchestra. The resulting *Echoes from an Invisible World* was performed at the 1976 Ann Arbor May Festival by Maestro Ormandy and his orchestra and also throughout the Bicentennial year by the symphony orchestras of Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston, Cleveland, and New York.

Prelude, BWV 1012 (c. 1720) JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685-1750)

Bach's sixth suite for solo cello, from which this *Prelude* is drawn, was originally composed for a five-string cello, one with an extra string tuned to E, like the high string of the guitar. The music invites performance on the guitar not only because the two instruments share similar range and two open strings, but also because the arpeggios and the easy way chords lie under the hand make it seem as if this music was originally composed for guitar. Bach himself transcribed "for lute" the fifth of his six suites for cello solo. Bach's arrangement, other models of transcription from a bowed to a plucked medium he provided, and the beauty of Bach's music were in my mind when I transcribed Bach's cello suites for guitar.

Danzas JOAQUÍN TURINA
(1882-1949)

Joaquín Turina, noted Spanish composer of character pieces for piano and *zarzuelas* (Spanish light comic operas), also composed work for the guitar. His charming, impressionistic, flamenco-influenced style not only lends itself well to the guitar in the brilliant showpieces conceived in the 1920s for Andrés Segovia, but it also makes his music for other instruments inviting for transcription to the guitar.

Theme, Variations, and Finale (1925) MANUEL PONCE
(1882-1948)

A nationalist, Manuel Ponce wrote the famous song *Estrellita* and was one of the first composers to explore and extol the musical folklore of his native Mexico. An innovator, Ponce wrote developed orchestral and chamber music when unsophisticated salon music dominated in the Americas. Ponce began writing a rich catalogue of guitar music in Paris in the 1920s when he met Andrés Segovia.

The *Theme, Variations, and Finale*, an early fruit of the fortunate association of Ponce and Segovia, is a milestone. It broke ground for composers to write guitar music of length and development and it was the first example of a new repertoire Segovia sought. When it appeared, no twentieth century guitar piece approached its scope. Although Ponce wrote it when he, like many American musicians, had crossed the Atlantic to further his musical growth, it shows influence of Mexican music and jazz. It captures the composer when he and the European musical community looked to our side of the Atlantic for inspiration.

Zambra Granadina, Sevilla ISAAC ALBÉNIZ
(1860-1909)

The compositions of Spain's great composer Isaac Albéniz were influenced to a high degree by both the guitar and flamenco music, and thus speak quite naturally on the classical guitar. The legendary Spanish guitarist Francisco Tárrega made transcriptions of Albéniz's works, and an appealing (though undocumented) tale says that Albéniz, upon hearing Tárrega's rendering of some of his piano compositions, declared the music had found its rightful home. Tárrega's practice of performing Albéniz's music has been enthusiastically followed by guitarists to this day.

Zambra Granadina is about both meanings of the word *zambra* — a flamenco dance and an occasion when Spanish gypsies come together to make music. In Granada the *zambra* would probably take place in caves of the area called *Sacromonte*. Albéniz's picturesque work begins with the rhythmic hand-clapping of the spectators, and as the piece unfolds it vividly evokes in our imagination the exuberant singers and dancers taking part in this festive gathering.

Sevilla begins with *sevillianas*, rhythms characteristic of the Andalusian capital; the middle section portrays a singer and a guitar accompanist.

About the Artist

Michael Lorimer, a favorite protégé of Andrés Segovia, came to the attention of American audiences in the early 1970s through tours arranged by the late Sol Hurok. His popularity soon extended beyond the shores of America. The first American guitarist invited to perform in the Soviet Union, he toured major cities in 1975. So positive was his reception that he was immediately reengaged and he returned there in 1977. He has just returned from a tour of Israel.

Mr. Lorimer's command of an extensive repertoire is unique. His recitals often feature new works as well as baroque guitar music performed on an original instrument. On the modern guitar he has given numerous American premières of guitar concerti, including those by Brouwer, Ohana, Previn, and Moreno-Torroba, as well as solo works such as Takemitsu's *Folios*. Pieces dedicated to him include William Albright's *Shadows*, William Bolcom's *Seasons* (both performed under Musical Society auspices in Ann Arbor), Andrew Frank's *Night Music III*, and Alan Hovhaness' *Sonata*, Op. 329.

In addition to his crowded concert schedule, the guitarist gives master classes at universities and conservatories from coast to coast. An engaging spokesman, he is also in demand for experimental programs in arts presentation. During the academic years 1980-82 he was the University of North Carolina Wilmington Foundation Distinguished Visiting Professor. In the television field, PBS has presented a special about him, *The Artistry of Michael Lorimer*; in publishing, Mel Bay has issued a special series, the *Michael Lorimer Edition*.

Mr. Lorimer's concert this evening marks his fourth Ann Arbor appearance.

FITZWILLIAM STRING QUARTET Fri. Apr. 8
Tchaikovsky: Quartet in B-flat major; Shostakovich: Quartet No. 11; Delius:
Quartet (1916); Beethoven: Grosse Fuge, Op. 133
CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA/GEORG SOLTI Thurs. Apr. 14
JOFFREY II DANCERS Tues. & Wed. Apr. 19 & 20

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Wednesday — *Muti and Zimmerman*: Liszt: Les Preludes; Liszt: Piano Concerto No. 2;
Prokofiev: "Romeo and Juliet," Suites I and II

Thursday — *Muti and Kremer*: Mendelssohn: "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage" Overture;
Schumann: Violin Concerto; Brahms: Symphony No. 2

Friday — *Alcantara, Montoya, Festival Chorus, Burgess, Blake, Raftery*: Wagner: "Rienzi"
Overture; Montoya: "Suite Flamenca"; Orff: "Carmina Burana"

Saturday — *Muti, all orchestral*: Verdi: "I Vespri Siciliani" Overture; Schumann: Symphony
No. 4; Schubert: Symphony No. 9 ("The Great")

Single tickets now available, from \$9 to \$21.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

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