



Mauro
GIULIANI
Music for Two
Guitars • 1
Rossini Overtures
Variations
Polonaises
Jeffrey McFadden
Michael Kolk



Mauro Giuliani (1781–1829)

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Rossini Overtures • Variations • Polonaises

Mauro Giuliani, regarded as one of the finest guitar virtuoso performers and composers of the instrument's history, was born in Bisceglie, Italy, where as a boy he studied cello and guitar. In 1806 he moved to Vienna and very soon acquired a formidable reputation as a guitarist and composer. A report in 1807 commented that he '*truly handles the guitar with unusual grace, skill, and power*'. In the following year he was present at a concert on 27th March to honour Haydn's 76th birthday in the company of Beethoven, Salieri, Hummel, Kreutzer, and others. When in April 1808 Giuliani gave the première of his *Guitar Concerto, Op. 30*, a critic described him as '*perhaps the greatest guitarist who has ever lived*'. Giuliani also played cello in the première of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* in 1813.

During these Viennese years Giuliani performed in many concerts both as soloist and in ensembles of various kinds. He composed prolifically, publishing dozens of pieces, and also taught the guitar to members of the aristocracy, some of his most favoured pupils becoming dedicatees of various compositions.

Giuliani left Vienna in the summer of 1819 and returned to Italy. This move seems to have been precipitated following a legal suit against him. The guitarist's property was confiscated by the police, probably to be sold at auction to pay for the damages. After various travels, including visits to Venice and Trieste, Giuliani arrived in Rome in 1820. During his stay he consorted with Rossini and Paganini and the three of them may have taken part in concerts together. Letters to Rossini during 1822 indicate it was at this time that Giuliani was arranging some of the opera composer's pieces for guitar.

Late in 1823, Giuliani moved to Naples where he would reside for several years. His health was deteriorating, but he took part in various concerts, including some with his daughter, Emilia, a very accomplished guitarist. In October 1828, Emilia, aged fourteen, played a concert for the Queen and other royal personages, and was described by a critic as '*not only a worthy disciple but also an emulator of her father*'.

Mauro Giuliani died on 8th May 1829. The *Giornale delle Due Sicilie* commented that '*the guitar was transformed in his hands into an instrument similar to the harp, sweetly soothing men's hearts*'. His name was perpetuated by *The Giulianiad*, a London guitar magazine published from 1833 until 1835. The first issue praised his ability to '*make the instrument sing*' and to give to the guitar '*a character which it was thought before was totally alien to its nature*'. That quality was Giuliani's tone '*brought to the greatest possible perfection*'.

Giuliani arranged four Rossini overtures for two guitars. Brian Jeffery's *Complete Works in Facsimile of the Original Editions: Mauro Giuliani, Vol. 24* (Tecla, 1986) informs us that all these transcriptions were published by Ricordi in Milan around July 1830. The works carried no opus numbers.

La gazza ladra (The Thieving Magpie), an opera in three acts, first performed in Milan, in 1817, proved to be one of the triumphs of Rossini's career. The overture begins with a drum roll leading to a stately *Allegro maestoso*, followed by a helter-skelter *Allegro* section of great sparkle and brilliance. At the heart of the opera is the heroine, Ninetta, falsely accused by the magpie of stealing a silver spoon. After a trial she is sentenced to death. At the last moment her innocence is proved. Ninetta is united with her beloved Giannetto, the son of a rich farmer.

Gran Variazioni concertanti, Op. 35, was first published with the title *Grandes Variations concertantes* in Vienna in 1812 by Artaria. A further Ricordi edition appeared in 1830. The work begins with an expansive *Introduzione*, marked *Andante sostenuto*. This leads on to the theme, a *mazurka*, to be played *Andante grazioso*. The variations which follow, six in all, cover the range of the instrument's techniques including rapid arpeggios, soaring melodies, slurs, tremolo, and scale runs in octaves.

Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville) had its première in Rome in 1816. It is based, as with Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, on Beaumarchais's trilogy of Figaro

comedies. The *Overture to The Barber of Seville* was published in Giuliani's arrangement under the title of *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra* (Elizabeth, Queen of England). Rossini had used this same overture for three different operas between 1813 and 1816 with changes in the score each time. Of these only *The Barber of Seville* retained lasting popularity. The overture is in two contrasting movements, *Andante maestoso* and *Allegro vivace*.

In the opera, Figaro, barber to Dr Bartolo, conspires with Count Almaviva, who is in love with Rosina, the ward of Dr Bartolo. The latter intends to marry Rosina for her dowry when she comes of age. After many twists and turns the Count marries his beloved Rosina while Dr Bartolo receives the equivalent amount of his ward's dowry.

La Cenerentola (Cinderella) was given its first performance in Rome in 1817. The overture opens with an atmospheric *Maestoso* section. The second movement, *Allegro*, exploits Giuliani's predilection for fast arpeggios and lyrical melodic lines. The plot follows the customary outlines of the Cinderella story, the despised sister who marries a royal personage. In this instance the hero is Don Ramiro, Prince of Salerno, and the wicked sisters are Clorinda and Thisbe, daughters of Don Magnifico, Baron of Mountflagon. Cinderella (here named Angelina) is the step-daughter of the baron. Two other characters are Dandini, the prince's valet, and Alidoro, a philosopher and magician. Elements of disguises and misunderstandings thicken the plot into a fascinating confusion, ultimately resolved by forgiveness and reconciliation.

L'assedio di Corinto (The Siege of Corinth), originally under the title of *Maometto II*, was written in 1820 and became *The Siege of Corinth* in 1826. The opera is rarely performed but the overture has remained popular. The overture begins with an *Allegro vivace* introduction followed by a slow movement, *Marcia, lugubre dei Greci* (March, tears of the Greeks). The third part, *Allegro assai*, is superbly virtuosic in terms of the guitar duo.

The opera's background concerns a Turkish military invasion of Corinth. Pamyra, daughter of Cléomène, the city's governor, has fallen in love with Mahomet, the Turkish leader while he was in disguise. However Pamyra has been

promised to Néoclès, a young officer. When the Turks enter the city they capture Cléomène. Pamyra realises she is still in love with Mahomet, who agrees to negotiate for peace if Pamyra will marry him. But the wedding ceremony is interrupted by Néoclès, whom Pamyra pretends is her brother. Pamyra, hearing her father calling, rejects Mahomet who vows revenge on the city but allows Pamyra and Néoclès to leave.

In the Third Act, in the Corinth catacombs, Cléomène and Néoclès prepare to carry on fighting. Mahomet enters and demands to marry Pamyra. When Cléomène refuses to grant this request Mahomet vows to burn the city. When later Mahomet rushes in, Pamyra stabs herself, and as the building crumbles around them, the entire city is revealed to be in flames.

Variazioni concertanti, Op. 130, were published in Milan by Ricordi in 1840. Giuliani's biographer, Dr Thomas F. Heck, has commented that the work '*is characterized by careful, refined writing and makes great demands on the performers. ... This is the kind of work which Mauro Giuliani would have played in Naples with his daughter Emilia. It requires consummate mastery of the instrument.*'

The composition has six variations following a *Maestoso* introduction of great intensity, and a more complex theme than Giuliani chose for Op. 35. Once again a variety of techniques come into play including tremolo and arpeggio passages, expressive octave playing, the performance of the melody in harmonics, and a playful finale.

Tre Polonesi concertanti, Op. 137, were published by Ricordi in 1836. The *polonaise*, in triple time, originated in Polish folk dances performed at wedding and festivals. Giuliani's *Polonaises*, each accompanied by a contrasting *Trio*, are full of *joie de vivre*, elegant melodies, and lively dance rhythms.

Graham Wade

Grateful acknowledgements in the writing of these notes are due to Dr Brian Jeffery's Tecla Editions of Giuliani's music and to Dr. Thomas F. Heck's biography, *Mauro Giuliani: Virtuoso Guitarist and Composer* (Editions Orphée, 1995).



Jeffrey McFadden

Over the course of a twenty-five year career, Jeffrey McFadden has been a featured performer at many international music festivals and has performed widely in Europe and North America as soloist and chamber musician. His début recording was the first in the *Laureate Series* on Naxos. He has made eight recordings since then, featuring the works of Fernando Sor, Napoléon Coste, Agustin Barrios, J.S. Bach and others. In 2012 he was the recipient of the City of Hamilton Arts Award for Music. Jeffrey McFadden is the first ever graduate of the Doctor of Musical Arts degree programme at the University of Toronto. His groundbreaking book, *Fretboard Harmony: Common-Practice Harmony on the Guitar*, was published in 2010 by Les Productions d'Oz. He is the founder and artistic director of the Sauble Beach Guitar Festival, and Associate Professor in the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto. His students have garnered numerous awards and scholarships.

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Photo: Mike Culpepper Studios



Michael Kolk

Born in Vancouver, Michael Kolk has performed at music festivals and concert halls throughout Europe and North America to critical acclaim. A prize winner at numerous guitar competitions, he has released two solo albums to date, as well as two albums as part of the Henderson-Kolk Guitar Duo. His latest solo album, *Mosaic*, won high praise, and received frequent radio play in Canada. He has collaborated with musicians in both classical and popular genres, and made his début with orchestra as a soloist with the Toronto Philharmonia. Michael Kolk holds an ARCT performance diploma from the Royal Conservatory, and a Master's degree in guitar performance from the University of Toronto, where he studied with Jeffrey McFadden. In addition to performing he teaches in Toronto. Michael Kolk appears courtesy of Alma Records. **www.michaelkolkguitar.com**

Photo: Joel Yum

Mauro Giuliani was regarded in his day as ‘perhaps the greatest guitarist who has ever lived’, making his name in Vienna and mixing with the likes of Beethoven. On his return to Italy in 1820, he consorted with Paganini and Rossini which resulted in his arranging four of the latter’s overtures for two guitars. These versions abound in lyrical melodic lines, fast arpeggios, subtle colours and technical virtuosity also to be heard in the *Gran variazioni concertanti*. The *Tre Polonesi concertanti* are also full of joie de vivre, lively dance rhythms and elegant melodies.

Mauro
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| 1 | Overture to Rossini’s opera <i>La gazza ladra</i> | 7:41 |
| 2 | Gran variazioni concertanti, Op. 35 | 12:07 |
| 3 | Overture to Rossini’s opera <i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i> | 7:23 |
| 4 | Overture to Rossini’s opera <i>La Cenerentola</i> | 7:59 |
| 5 | Overture to Rossini’s opera <i>L’assedio di Corinto</i> | 10:19 |
| 6 | Variazioni concertanti, Op. 130 | 11:20 |
| | Tre Polonesi concertanti, Op. 137 | 13:45 |
| 7 | No. 1 | 4:36 |
| 8 | No. 2 | 4:46 |
| 9 | No. 3 | 4:20 |

Jeffrey McFadden, Guitar
Michael Kolk, Guitar

Recorded at St John Chrysostom Church, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, 3–5 May 2015
Producers: Norbert Kraft & Bonnie Silver • Engineer: Norbert Kraft • Editor: Jeffrey McFadden
Booklet notes: Graham Wade • Guitars by Roberto de Miranda, Milan
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Playing Time
70:54



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