



Ji Hyung Park

Winner 2018

Changsha International
Guitar Festival

ALBÉNIZ
BROUWER
CASTELNUOVO-
TEDESCO
D. SCARLATTI
TAKEMITSU
THIELEMANS

Ji Hyung Park: Guitar Recital Albéniz • Brouwer • Castelnuovo-Tedesco • D. Scarlatti • Takemitsu • Thielemans

The music of the classical guitar expresses many styles and characteristics. The selection here includes compositions from various nationalities – Italian, Spanish Cuban, Japanese and Belgian/American. Every track here presents substantial, virtuosic works demanding instrumental mastery and interpretative insights. The versatility of the panorama of music performed here is truly worthy of another young international prize winner.

Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757), born in Naples, spent nearly 30 years of his professional life in the Iberian peninsula. In about 1719 he was appointed as *mestre* to the Portuguese royal chapel of John V. Among his many duties was responsibility for teaching Princess Maria Barbara. In 1729, when the princess married Prince Ferdinand, son of Philip V of Spain, Scarlatti moved with his pupil to the Spanish court.

In 1738 Scarlatti's fame was enhanced throughout Europe by the publication of 30 of his *Essercizi* for harpsichord, dedicated to John V, who forthwith appointed him as a Knight of the Order of Santiago. The *Essercizi* were not merely 'exercises' but expressive and brilliant sonatas in binary form that would constitute Scarlatti's greatest legacy.

Scarlatti continued writing them for the rest of his life, ultimately completing a total of 555 such works, an extraordinary achievement. The great Scarlatti scholar Ralph Kirkpatrick saw him as 'influenced not only by Spanish music but also by the guitar. Though Scarlatti probably never played the guitar ... surely no composer ever fell more deeply under its spell'.

It is therefore appropriate that the playing of Scarlatti's sonatas is increasingly popular among guitarists. Over recent years guitar arrangements of over 200 sonatas have been published.

Sonata in D major, K. 491, marked *Allegro*, is a veritable tour de force for a guitarist. Its performance involves trills, scale passages, trumpet effects, thirds set against a lively bass, the delineation of melodic lines, complex arpeggiated episodes in various registers of the instrument, and an energetic rhythmic pulse.

Sonata in A major, K. 208 was described by Kirkpatrick

as 'courtly flamenco music, rendered elegant and suitable for the confines of the royal palace, as were its players and singers when Goya brought them into his tapestry cartoons a few years later.'

Its companion piece, *Sonata in A major, K. 209*, was characterised by Kirkpatrick as '... a *jota*. Under this dizzying whirl of twirling feet, stamping heels and shrill village instruments, the inevitable castanets are felt if not actually heard in the built-up crescendos of rhythmic acceleration which culminate in a clattering whirr at the trills.'

Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909), born in Camprodon, in northern Spain, spent much of his childhood in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. Although Catalan by birth, his celebration of the great cities of Andalusia remains a perennial evocation of Iberian Romanticism. Albéniz composed mainly for piano, writing nothing directly for the guitar, but ever since Tárrega first transcribed some of his pieces, Albéniz's music has remained at the very heart of the guitar repertoire.

Albéniz's finest pianistic masterpiece was *Iberia*, a collection of twelve pieces divided into four books, written between 1905 and 1909. *Evocación*, the first work in the set (also entitled *Preludio* by the composer), has been described by the musicologist Walter Aaron Clark as 'one of the most hauntingly reflective pieces Albéniz ever composed' with 'a strong fragrance of wistful nostalgia' where 'we feel that we have immediately penetrated to some inner core of being, not only of the culture but of the man himself.'

The piece has a single theme which is modified in contrasting sections throughout. The first section lasts for 54 bars before proceeding to a second gentler episode. The third part adopts the original tempo, while the fourth section is a copy of the second in a different register. Occasionally the work evokes the *fandanguillo* genre.

The title *El Puerto* refers to El Puerto de Santa María, a fishing port near Cádiz. Albéniz's piano writing here is strongly imitative of the musical characteristics of the Spanish guitar and thus a transcription to the plucked instrument is entirely appropriate.

Leo Brouwer, from Havana, Cuba, is universally acknowledged as one of the most challenging and innovative of modern composers. His prolific output ranges from solo guitar pieces to symphonic works, including concertos, chamber music, and many film scores. His guitar works have developed over four decades through various styles embracing the avant-garde and the experimental, as well as neo-Romanticism. His guitar music is now performed internationally wherever the guitar is played and frequently recorded, making him the most popular contemporary composer for the instrument.

Las Cíclades arcaicas ('The Ancient Cyclades') refers to some two hundred and twenty Cyclades islands situated south-east of the Greek mainland. The name is derived from the Greek word for 'circle' as the Cyclades encircle the sacred island of Delos. Between 3000 and 2000 BC these islands were the centre of the Cycladic civilisation and many beautiful sculptures from this early period bear witness to the creative vigour of the early inhabitants.

The work itself, one of Brouwer's most recent compositions, is a unique tapestry of evocations of that ancient world, with fragments of Greek rhythms and melodies, episodic reveries, and moments of dramatic silence interspersed with intricate filigree passages. The listener is thus invited to share imaginatively in the atmosphere and art of a fascinating ancient culture.

Toru Takemitsu, regarded by many in both the West and the East as the greatest Japanese composer of the 20th century, was deeply influenced early in his career by the music of Debussy and Messiaen. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* described the characteristic elements of his mature musical language as 'modal melodies emerging from a chromatic background, the suspension of regular metre, and an acute sensitivity to register and timbre.' We are fortunate that among his prolific output of orchestral, chamber music, film scores, and instrumental works, he also turned his attention to the intricacies of writing for the guitar, whether for solo or in an ensemble setting.

The classical guitar was an ideal medium for Takemitsu, combining subtleties of sonority with a wide range of timbres and possibilities. He brought to the instrument a unique sensibility and an imaginative flair for its colours and expressiveness which has seldom been equalled.

Mori no naka de ('In the Woods') (composed in hospital, November 1995, and Takemitsu's last composition before his death in February 1996), consists of three independent pieces for solo guitar: *Wainscot Pond* (After a painting by Cornelia Foss), dedicated to John Williams, *Rosedale*, dedicated to Kiyoshi Shomura, and *Muir Woods*, dedicated to Julian Bream.

The premiere of *Wainscot Pond*, performed by Norio Sato, took place on the occasion of the funeral service for Toru Takemitsu in Tokyo on 29 February 1996. Julian Bream gave the first performance of *Muir Woods* in London on 4 October 1996. The work in its entirety, as well as the second piece, *Rosedale*, was first played by Kiyoshi Shomura in Tokyo on 15 October 1996.

As Takemitsu has commented, each title is taken from a place where there is a beautiful forest. Rosedale Woods are in Toronto, Canada, in a quiet residential area of the city where the trees are especially beautiful in the sunlight of early autumn. Muir Woods are in a suburb of San Francisco where giant sequoia trees 'extend towards heaven in the deep forest', which reminded the composer of the frailty of humanity in the face of nature.

Takemitsu wrote *Wainscot Pond* after receiving a postcard from a friend showing a picturesque landscape, but confessed that he did not know where it was situated in the United States. In fact, Wainscot Pond is a lake in the Hamptons, Suffolk County, in the state of New York, some 160 kilometres from Manhattan.

Julian Bream has described *Muir Woods* in terms that could well apply to all three pieces: 'The music has an undeniable valedictory quality. It is highly distilled and the texture characteristically refined. It is also music of extraordinary stillness, music that dissolves gently into silence.'

In 1932 Andrés Segovia travelled by car with Manuel de Falla from Spain to the International Festival of Music in Venice. At the Festival, Segovia was introduced to Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, the eminent Italian composer from Florence, who became fascinated by the guitar and decided to explore its musical possibilities. Between 1932 and his death in 1968, Castelnuovo-Tedesco wrote over a hundred works for the instrument, including sets of variations, concertos, duos, chamber music with guitar, impressionistic pieces of various kinds, and, among his finest solo

compositions, *Sonata in D major, Op. 77 'Omaggio a Boccherini'*, written at Segovia's request in 1934 for 'a Sonata in four movements'.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco commented: 'The *Sonata* is in four movements, but it is mainly in the first movement, *Allegro con spirito*, and in the *Minuetto*, that one can find the graciousness which was so characteristic of Boccherini. The *Andantino, quasi canzone*, on the other hand, refers to Boccherini's 'romantic' mood, while the finale, *Presto furioso*, highlights the bravura elements always present in his music.'

It was a great shock to the guitar world when Roland Dyens died in October 2016 a few days before his 61st birthday. Dyens, born in Tunisia of French nationality in 1955, was a leading guitarist/composer, and a distinguished teacher at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. His concerts throughout the world frequently included arrangements for guitar of jazz standards as well as an extensive repertoire of original works. His transcription of *Bluesette* is a masterwork of its kind, making the piece fully idiomatic for the guitar and at the same time capturing

the intense rhythmic momentum of the original.

Jean-Baptiste Frédéric Isidor, Baron Thielemans (1922–2016), (known professionally as Toots Thielemans), was a Belgian jazz musician, renowned for his virtuosic harmonica and guitar playing and brilliant whistling, as well as his many compositions. He emigrated to the US in 1951 and became an American citizen in 1957. In the early 1960s he recorded his composition, *Bluesette*, which immediately attracted immense popularity among jazz improvisers. Throughout his career he appeared with the top jazz artists of his era such as Benny Goodman, George Shearing, Bill Evans, Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie and Quincy Jones among others. His music was featured in various films including *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) and *Looking for Mr Goodbar* (1977). He also composed the theme song for the long-running television series, *Sesame Street*. In 2009 he was awarded the title of Jazz Master by The National Endowment for the Arts, acknowledged as the highest honour for an American jazz musician.

Graham Wade

Ji Hyung Park

Born in 1993, Ji Hyung Park began learning the classical guitar at the age of 9 under the tutelage of Do-Hyung Kim. From 2009 to 2013 he studied at the Korea National University of Arts, and after obtaining his Bachelor's degree decided to continue his studies in Paris. In 2014, he was the first Korean to enter the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, where he obtained his Master's degree as a student of Roland Dyens and his assistant Jean-Marc Zvellenreuther. He also received regular guidance from his mentor Judicaël Perroy, with whom he is currently studying at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Ji Hyung Park has won numerous prizes in international competitions including First Prize at the 7th Changsha International Guitar Competition (one of the biggest guitar competitions in Asia), the 8th Terra Siculorum in Odorheiu Secuiesc, Romania, the 6th Stefano Strata-Città di Pisa, and the Korean Guitar Association competition. He was also awarded Second Prize at the 14th José Tomás Villa de Petrer, Spain, and the youngest finalist prize of the year (Premio Aurora Blardone) at the 50th Michele Pittaluga – Concorso Internazionale di Chitarra Classica in Alessandria.

Ji Hyung Park has won numerous prestigious competitions, with the 7th Changsha International Guitar Competition in 2018 his most recent triumph. The diverse selection of music performed in this programme features three virtuoso sonatas by Scarlatti, the world premiere recording of Leo Brouwer's evocation of ancient Greek culture *Las Cíclades arcaicas*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Sonata 'Omaggio a Boccherini'* in its original, pre-Segovia manuscript form, Takemitsu's final work *In the Woods* and rare selections from Albéniz's masterpiece *Iberia*. The programme ends with a colourful arrangement of Toots Thielemans' gorgeous *Bluesette*.



JI HYUNG PARK

Guitar Recital

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|--|---|---|--|
| Domenico SCARLATTI (1685–1757) | | Toru TAKEMITSU (1930–1996) | |
| Three Sonatas (1756–57) 14:40 | | Mori no naka de (In the Woods) (1995) 16:05 | |
| 1 | Sonata in D major, K. 491/L. 164/P. 484 (arr. David Russell, b. 1953) 5:28 | 7 | No. 1. Wainscot Pond (after a painting by Cornelia Foss) 4:05 |
| 2 | Sonata in A major, K. 208/L. 238/P. 315 (arr. Gérard Abiton, b. 1954) 4:03 | 8 | No. 2. Rosedale 5:00 |
| 3 | Sonata in A major, K. 209/L. 428/P. 209 (arr. Gérard Abiton) 5:02 | 9 | No. 3. Muir Woods 6:54 |
| Isaac ALBÉNIZ (1860–1909) | | Mario CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO (1895–1968) | |
| Iberia (1905–09) (excerpts) (arr. Javier Riba, b. 1974) 11:26 | | Sonata in D major, Op. 77 'Omaggio a Boccherini' (1934) 16:43 | |
| 4 | Evocación 6:32 | 10 | Allegro con spirito 4:07 |
| 5 | El Puerto 4:49 | 11 | Andantino, quasi canzone 5:28 |
| Leo BROUWER (b. 1939) | | 12 | Tempo di minuetto 3:30 |
| 6 | Las Cíclades arcaicas ('The Ancient Cyclades') (2018)* 8:02 | 13 | Presto furioso 3:31 |
| | | Toots THIELEMANS (1922–2016) | |
| | | 14 Bluesette (1964) (arr. Roland Dyens, 1955–2016) 4:28 | |

*** WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Recorded: 8–10 February 2019 at Challow Park Studios, Wantage, UK • Producer: Gerald Garcia • Co-producer and engineer: Oli Whitworth • Editors: Gerald Garcia and Oli Whitworth • Booklet notes: Graham Wade
Publishers: Les Éditions Doberman-Yppan **1–3**, Tritó Editions, Barcelona **4–5**, From the composer's manuscript **6**, Schott Music **7–9**, Berbèn Edizioni Musicali **10–13**, Guitar Solo Publications, San Francisco **14**
Instrument: Guitar made by Gernot Wagner • Many thanks to Martinez Guitars and CEO Alex Wang for their generous participation in this recording • Photo of Ji Hyung Park: Jung Woo Son & Yum Ho Nam



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Playing Time
71:42



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Booklet notes in English