

Italian Guitar Rarities

BETTINELLI
BRESCIANELLO
CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO
GHEDINI
GIULIANI
MALIPIERO
PAGANINI

Giuseppe Buscemi
Guitar



ITALIAN GUITAR RARITIES

Gian Francesco MALIPIERO (1882–1973)	
1	Preludio (1958) 2:08
Mario CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO (1895–1968)	
2	Aranci in fiore, Op. 87, No. 2 (1936) 6:04
Giuseppe Antonio BRESCIANELLO (c. 1690–1758)	
	Partita No. 7 in C major 5:59
	(arr. Giuseppe Buscemi, b. 1992) WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING
3	I. Allegro 1:44
4	II. Andante 2:31
5	III. Allegro 1:44
Bruno BETTINELLI (1913–2004)	
	Cinque preludi (1971)..... 7:10
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Niccolò PAGANINI (1782–1840)	
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12	Guitar Sonata No. 33 in C minor, MS 84 (c. 1800–20) 2:49
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Giorgio Federico GHEDINI (1892–1965)	
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Mauro GIULIANI (1781–1829)	
18	Rossiniana No. 2, Op. 120 (c. 1821) 14:53

Giuseppe Buscemi, Guitar

**BETTINELLI • BRESCIANELLO • CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO
GHEDINI • GIULIANI • MALIPIERO • PAGANINI**
Italian Guitar Rarities

The guitar in Italy has been of great musical significance ever since the publication of Montesardo's tutor book in 1606. In the 17th century eminent Italian guitarists included Granata, Pellegrini, Roncalli and the great Francesco Corbetta. The early 19th century saw the emergence of leading players/composers such as Giuliani, Carcassi, Carulli and Paganini, and their works still feature nowadays in concert halls and teaching studios. This selection presents both 19th-century masters and 20th-century composers of varied styles and compositional approaches. The contrasts are considerable, and the rich harvest of Italian guitar music has wide horizons.

Gian Francesco Malipiero (b. Venice 1882, d. Treviso 1973), Italian composer and musicologist, was acclaimed as the most original and inventive Italian composer of his generation. Born into an eminent family of musicians of aristocratic lineage he first studied as boy at the Vienna Conservatory (1898–99) before moving back to Venice to take up further studies at the Liceo Musicale under Marco Enrico Bossi. Later, having gained his diploma, he became amanuensis to the blind composer Smareglia, a former disciple of Wagner. Malipiero's musical vision expanded with extended visits to Paris and Rome, where he settled during the First World War. For some years after that he enjoyed the favour of Mussolini's approval though this eventually soured. In 1921 he became professor of composition at Parma Conservatory, a post he held for three years. Malipiero, as well as composing prolifically over the decades, also carried out significant historical research on Monteverdi and Vivaldi.

Malipiero's total compositional output comprises some 30 operas, half a dozen ballets and other dramatic works, many orchestral pieces, a host of vocal music and many chamber and instrumental items as well considerable piano compositions, and a number of editions of earlier Italian great masters.

His only guitar work, *Preludio*, was written in 1958 in Asolo, a town that became his home for many years. It is a thoroughly virtuosic piece, very idiomatic for the guitar with strummed chords, rapid scale passages and brilliant arpeggios in many patterns across the strings. Most impressive is the headlong momentum of the work and its dramatic immediacy.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, born in Florence, Italy, studied composition and piano at the Istituto Musicale Cherubini and later at the Liceo Musicale of Bologna. His teachers were Pizzetti and Casella, members of the Società Italiana di Musica, a group of influential composers with whom Castelnuovo-Tedesco became closely associated. In 1939, as a result of Mussolini's anti-Jewish edicts, Castelnuovo-Tedesco was obliged to seek refuge abroad. After settling in California, he became a prolific writer of film music between 1940 and 1956, in the same period composing more than 70 concert works.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco's interest in writing for the guitar began with his introduction to Andrés Segovia (1893–1987) – who had travelled to Italy with Manuel de Falla – at the Venice International Festival in 1932. As a result, he was to compose over a hundred works for the instrument, including concertos, chamber music, many solo works and some of the finest pieces for two guitars.

While Castelnuovo-Tedesco was completing *Savonarola*, Op. 81 for solo voices and mixed chorus in 1935, he became friendly with Aldo Bruzzichelli, the co-owner of a café in Piazza del Duomo, the cathedral square of Florence, and an amateur guitarist. In 1936 Bruzzichelli gave Castelnuovo-Tedesco a basket of oranges for the composer's son, Lorenzo, who was not well at the time. In gratitude Castelnuovo-Tedesco wrote *Aranci in fiore*, Op. 87, No. 2, depicting orange trees in blossom. The composition was published by Ricordi in 1939 revised and edited by Segovia.

Aranci in fiore, Op. 87, No. 2 is a meditative work, marked *Tranquillo e sognante* ('Tranquil and dreaming') for the introductory episode. The next section, to be played 'like a popular song', includes its own melodic theme supported by chords followed by quasi-improvisatory semiquavers. As a finale the main melody returns, ending with gentle flourishes of notes in the higher registers.

Giuseppe Brescianello (b. Bologna c. 1690, d. Stuttgart 1758), Italian violinist and composer, first appeared in historical documents in 1715 when he moved from Venice to Munich on being appointed to the court of the Elector of Bavaria as a violinist. His next post came the following year as music director at the Württemberg court in Stuttgart where he became Kapellmeister in 1717. The court's finances went bankrupt in 1737 but Brescianello was restored to his appointment in 1744 under Duke Carl Eugen. He was eventually pensioned off in the early 1750s. His compositional output comprises mainly violin music, apart from some vocal scores. His 18 suites, for colascione (a string instrument from the late Renaissance and early Baroque periods, with a lute-like resonant body and a long neck) were first transcribed for guitar by Ruggero Chiesa (1933–1993) in 1981.

Partita No. 7 in C major has attracted the attention of many guitarists on account of its lyrical amiability and intricate ornamentation. The first movement, *Allegro*, in 2/4, sets the mood with unusual rhythmic figures and increasing complexity of texture. The poignant *Andante* proceeds with Bach-like dignity and sweet melodic inventiveness. The final movement opens with witty interplay between treble and bass but with occasional solemn and dramatic pauses.

Bruno Bettinelli, born in Milan in 1913, was one of the progressive 20th-century Italian composers, and was profoundly influenced by the music of Stravinsky, Hindemith and Bartók, as well as by the previous generation of fellow countrymen such as Malipiero, Casella and Petrassi. He graduated from the Milan Conservatory in 1931, began teaching there from 1938 and was subsequently appointed professor of composition from 1957 to 1979. Bettinelli was a prolific composer of large-scale compositions such as operas, symphonies and concertos, chamber and vocal works. His guitar music, however, is a delightful distillation of his wider compositional concepts, rooted in 20th-century modernism but full of lyrical insights, inventiveness and sheer originality. His explorations of guitar sonorities take the listener into unexpected areas of contemporary expressiveness.

Bettinelli's early style owed much to the neo-Classicism of Hindemith, but after the Second World War he moved away from tonality into atonality and chromaticism and a close analysis of Webern's compositional concepts. His interest in writing for the guitar began during the 1970s when Bettinelli was encouraged both by the Italian guitarist, composer and editor Angelo Gilardino, who in the 1970s initiated a new series for Bèrben in an attempt to widen the guitar's contemporary expressiveness, and by Ruggero Chiesa, the distinguished Milanese editor and teacher.

The range of Bettinelli's guitar pieces cover twelve studies as well as sonatas, preludes, and shorter, more improvisatory movements. His music has no affinities with Spanish influences but approaches guitar composition in a uniquely contemporary manner. He is a composer with a distinctive voice and writes in an austere but often lyrical style which explores the instrument's resources with integrity and thoroughness.

With *Cinque preludi* (1971) the title may remind us of Villa-Lobos's famous *Cinq Préludes* written during the 1940s. But the Italian composer offers his own unique musical language. A chaste clarity of outline is characteristic of these pieces, each being short and to the point. In some ways they are reminiscent of Richard Rodney Bennett's *Five Impromptus* (1968) in that these brief contrasting statements establish structures within which a composer could explore guitar textures. *Cinque preludi* was dedicated to Ruggero Chiesa.

The genius of Niccolò Paganini never ceases to fascinate. As a violinist he has come to represent the ultimate virtuoso, but he was also a prolific composer, producing not only violin solos and orchestral pieces but also over a hundred works for guitar. Born in Genoa in 1782, Paganini was taught violin by his father. By the age of twelve he was playing concerts. Between 1801 and 1809 he settled in Lucca, where he was first violinist in the Republican Orchestra. He then became a solo artist, first touring the Italian cities. In 1828 he performed in Vienna and Prague as well as touring Germany and Poland. In 1831 he gave recitals in Paris and London. Though his health declined after 1837, he continued to compose. He died in Nice on 27 May 1840.

Paganini's relationship to the guitar is a vital element of the instrument's early 19th-century history. Paganini composed over a hundred works for guitar in addition to 43 *Ghiribizzi* (MS 43), 37 *Sonate* (MS 84), and 24 other varied pieces (MS 85–105) as well as nine quartets for guitar and strings, trios for guitar and bowed instruments, and a variety of compositions for violin and guitar, among them over 50 sonatas.

The *Ghiribizzi* date from 1819–20 and were written, according to a letter from Paganini, 'for a little girl in Naples, my intention being not to compose but to scribble'. The theme of *Ghiribizzi*, No. 22 also appears in *La Primavera* for violin and orchestra. The two other works in this selection are delightful miniatures characteristic of early 19th. century guitar style.

Giorgio Federico Ghedini took piano and organ lessons as a child and enrolled at the Liceo Musicale of Turin in 1903 at the age of eleven. He later entered the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, graduating in 1911. After some years as a conductor he took up teaching posts in Turin before becoming professor of composition at the conservatoires of Parma and Milan. His fame as a composer grew after the 1920s. Compositionally, his output is considerable and includes a number of operas (including one based on Melville's *Billy Budd*, performed 1949, two years before Britten's opera of the same name), many orchestral and choral pieces, solo vocal music, and works for chamber and solo instrumental, as well as editions of music by Frescobaldi and Monteverdi among others.

Studio da concerto (1959) opens *molto dolce* with a gentle melody before exploring trills and rapid triplets. A livelier episode follows, moving from single line melody in the bass to passages of slight dissonance and patterns involving the whole range of the guitar. The first theme, in modified form, returns with complex modulations, following a marking of *dolcissimo quasi più lento*. The final bars are the essence of serenity. *Studio da concerto* is an inventive work for guitar blending the traditional and the contemporary with great skill and originality.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Tre preludi mediterranei*, Op. 176 were written in 1955 in memory of his friend Renato Bellenghi, not long after the composer had visited Florence in the summer of 1954. The preludes are substantial virtuosic compositions with various unusual features. *Serenatella* ('Little Serenade'), marked *Allegretto*, opens with a lively, harmonised theme that leads to passages that feature Castelnuovo-Tedesco's favourite three-part chords played over a complementary bass line. This preliminary section leads to a lively *scherzando* with similarly voiced chords leading to a return of the opening theme though with modifications including descending groups of notes in the highest positions of the guitar. This progresses to a *dolce* climactic statement.

Nenia can be defined as a poetic composition written in praise of a deceased person. Beginning in the unusual key (for guitar) of E flat, the work is marked *dolce e languido* ('sweet and languid'). It presents a kind of rhapsody in 5/4 time, structured with gentle triplets played freely with much rubato before moving on *a tempo*, occasionally changing the time signature to 4/4. Soon another mood enters, marked as 'a little agitated' but also 'expressive and lamenting'. A final section marked *dolce* (and later *dolcissimo*) advances towards a calm conclusion.

The third prelude, *Danza*, is a virtuosic movement of rapidly alternating treble two-note chords and bass notes leading onto cadenza-like episodes of grand chords and stirring rhythms before the return in a different key of the opening textures. An *andantino* episode, marked 'languid and a little melancholic', reverts to a meditative mood before the reinstatement of the wild dance rhythms progresses to a *fortissimo* climax of chords in the higher register.

Mauro Giuliani, one of the greatest guitar virtuoso performers and composers of the instrument's history, was born in Bisceglie, Italy in 1781. As a boy he studied cello and guitar. In 1806 he moved to Vienna where he soon acquired a formidable reputation as both guitarist and composer. In 1808 he attended a concert to honour Haydn's 76th birthday in the company of Beethoven, Salieri, Hummel and Kreutzer, among others. When in April 1808 Giuliani premiered his *Guitar Concerto*, Op. 30, a critic described him as 'perhaps the greatest guitarist who has ever lived'. Giuliani also played cello in the premiere of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* in 1813. During these Viennese years Giuliani performed many concerts and composed prolifically. Giuliani left Vienna in 1819 to return to Italy, possibly as a result of a legal suit against him. In 1823, Giuliani went to live in 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. Mauro Giuliani died on 8 May 1829.

Gioachino Antonio Rossini (1792–1868), often considered the greatest Italian composer of his era, was born in Pesaro, on the Adriatic coast into a musical family. Rossini began composing at an early age and also played the horn. In 1804 the family moved to Bologna where in 1806 Rossini studied at the Liceo Musicale. His first opera was commissioned in 1810 and performed in 1812. Rossini's reputation steadily advanced, with a prolific number of successful operas being produced. Nearly 40 stage works constitute his ultimate output, as well as sacred music, cantatas, incidental music, hymns, choruses, miscellaneous vocal pieces and instrumental works, among others.

Giuliani's six *Rossiniana* for solo guitar are fantasias or potpourris (i.e. medleys) on themes taken from Rossini's operas. The first five are dated around 1820–23 during Giuliani's time in Rome, and the last was published in

1827/28. At the time of composition the public would have been well aware of the themes of Rossini's music but nowadays only the more popular may be immediately recognisable to an audience. However, the tunes are so strong and vivid that a first acquaintance with such melodies is itself a pleasant experience within both recital and recording contexts.

Giuliani's extraordinary virtuosity is displayed throughout the six *Rossiniana*, presenting a compendium of the guitar as a miniature orchestra employing the full resources of the instrument including the total fingerboard, brilliant scale passages, intricate arpeggios supporting a theme, dazzling octaves, differentiation of mood and pace and complex rhythmic structures. In his service to Rossini's music Giuliani brings the intimate nature of the early 19th-century guitar while offering refinements of technique and expressiveness never previously achieved on the instrument.

The themes of *Rossiniana No. 2* are indicated in the following list:

Introduction (Sostenuto): Andantino sostenuto – *Otello*, Act II. Scene e Romanza: Deh! calma o ciel (Desdemona)
Allegretto innocente – *Armida*, Arditi all'ire from Act I. Cavatina: Ah! No: Sia questo (Goffredo) *Maestoso* – *La Cenerentola*, Finale Secondo. Rondo: Non più mesta accanto al fuoco (Angelina) – *La gazza ladra*, Act I. Di piacer mi balza il cor (Ninetta) *Allegretto* – *La Cenerentola*, Fertilissima Regina from Act I, Cavatina: Miei rampolli femminini (Don Magnifico)

Graham Wade



Giuseppe Buscemi

Winner of the 2018 IBLA Grand Prize International Music Competition, Italian guitarist Giuseppe Buscemi has performed across Europe and the US, including at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. He has won many international competitions, not only as a soloist, but also in chamber music ensembles with pianist Gianni Bicchierini and flautist Leonardo Augello. In 2018 Buscemi recorded his first solo album *Come, Heavy Sleep* (DotGuitar) featuring works by Martin, Britten, Falla and Manén, and in 2020 recorded his second album *Dances & Dreams* (Da Vinci Classics) with Gianni Bicchierini as the Antipodes Duo, which includes the world premiere recording of Carlo Galante's *Piccole serenate alla luna piena*, a work dedicated to the duo. Both albums were critically acclaimed, and received airplay on Italian and Uruguayan national radio stations. Buscemi studied with Baldo Calamusa, Giovanni Puddu and Nazzareno Carusi. He is a teaching assistant on the guitar faculty at the Manhattan School of Music in New York where he is a doctoral student of David Leisner and David Starobin. Buscemi plays a Guido Di Lernia guitar. www.giuseppebuscemi.com

This programme represents a harvest of rare Italian gems from Baroque to contemporary masters for an instrument that has been of great significance to Italian culture for centuries. Exploration of the guitar's expressiveness ranges from the lyrical amiability of Brescianello's *Partita No. 7* to Paganini's delightful miniatures, and the improvisational austerity of Bettinelli's *Cinque preludi*. Virtuosity can be found in Malipiero's only guitar work, the dramatic *Preludio*, and Giuliani's extraordinary *Rossiniana*. Castelnuovo-Tedesco's meditative *Aranci in fiore*, was written in gratitude for the gift of a basket of oranges.

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Mario CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO (1895–1968)		Giorgio Federico GHEDINI (1892–1965)	
2	Aranci in fiore, Op. 87, No. 2 (1936)	6:04	14 Studio da concerto (1959) 7:33
Giuseppe Antonio BRESCIANELLO (c. 1690–1758)		Mario CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO	
3–5	Partita No. 7	5:59	15–17 Tre preludi mediterranei, Op. 176 (1955) 12:58
	(arr. G. Buscemi for guitar) *		
Bruno BETTINELLI (1913–2004)		Mauro GIULIANI (1781–1829)	
6–10	Cinque preludi (1971)	7:10	18 Rossiniana No. 2, Op. 120 (c. 1821) 14:53

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Giuseppe Buscemi, Guitar

Playing Time
67:19

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

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