



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

Fourth Year Recital.

Abshir Miller, Guitar

November 23, 2023 at 7:30PM
Walter Hall

PROGRAMME

Fantasia No. 33	Francesco da Milano (1497-1543)
Fantasia No. 34	Francesco da Milano (1497-1543)
Sei Grandi Variazioni Op. 112	Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829)
Cinque Variazioni e Finale, Op. 1s	Emilia Giuliani (1813-1850)

INTERMISSION

Variations Plaisantes sur un petit air populaire Op. 95	Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968)
Escarraman Suite, <i>after Cervantes</i> , Op. 117	Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968)

This recital is in partial fulfilment of the Doctor of Musical Arts in Performance.
Abshir Miller is a student of Dr. Jeffrey McFadden.

Abshir began his studies with Dr. Matthew Gould at Cambrian College. He continued his education at the University of Toronto, completing a bachelor's degree with Dr. Jeffrey McFadden, and a master's degree with David Tanenbaum and Dr. Richard Savino at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Abshir is in the process of completing a doctoral degree at the University of Toronto.

This program features music written by Italian composers, beginning with two fantasias originally written for renaissance lute by Francesco da Milano, and transitioning to the guitar music of Mauro Giuliani and his daughter, Emilia Giuliani. The latter half of the program is comprised of music by the great Italian composer: Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, who, unlike the aforementioned composers, was not a player of plucked stringed instruments. During the first half of the 19th century, a large exodus of Italian guitarist-composers left the Italian peninsula for musical epicentres such as Paris and Vienna, which had a greater market for guitar music. Emilia and Mauro Giuliani were part of this trend, both relocating to Vienna, albeit at separate times, to begin their respective careers. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco left Italy in 1839 for purposes of survival amid fascism, anti-semitism and the Italian Racial Laws which banned his music from radio broadcasting as well as live performance.

Fantasia No 33 and No. 34—Francesco da Milano

Francesco Canova da Milano (1497-1543) was a Renaissance lutenist known in his time as *il divino* (an epithet shared with Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci). Reverence for his compositional and instrumental expressivity, placed him within Pope Leo X's Roman Papal Court and private service. Francesco's service to the papacy greatly affected his compositional output, eliminating dance forms from his oeuvre due to their lascivious associations. Consequently, Francesco's works consist purely of Fantasias, but with occasional elements of dance music and in-tabulations of songs. His compositional style is melodically driven, exhibiting augmentation, diminution, inversion and retrograde of the melodic material, similar to fugal practices of the Baroque that would follow. Fantasias no. 33 and 34 feature these compositional manipulations. Fantasia no. 34 shares the motivic material with Fantasia No. 33 and is commonly referred to as "La Compagna."

Sei Grandi Variazioni, Op. 112—Mauro Giuliani

Mauro Giuliani's Sei Grandi Variazioni Op. 112 feature a Maestoso theme which then proceeds through six total variations. Each consecutive variation develops through typical rhythmic divisions, arriving at a melancholic fifth variation in the parallel minor before concluding with an idiomatic and joyous finale in d major. Sei Grandi Variazioni was published well after the composer left Vienna in 1819, but reflects the composer's Viennese style period.

Cinque Variazioni e Finale, Op. 1—Emilia Giuliani

Emilia Giuliani was an accomplished guitar composer and daughter of preeminent guitar composer of the 19th century, Mauro Giuliani. Emilia was born in 1813 in the small Italian town of Trieste, during the peak of her father's career in Vienna. Following in her father's footsteps, Emilia Giuliani moved to Vienna in 1822, a few years after her father had left, and became a teenage guitar prodigy. By 1828 she was performing duos with her father. Emilia's virtuosity are thought to be greater than her compositions suggest; this is inferred by concert reviews that describe unique techniques that are not observed in her published scores.¹ Emilia Giuliani received many glowing reviews of her solo recitals, and even shared the concert stage with Franz Liszt in 1839. Emilia Giuliani's *Cinque Variazioni e Finale, Op. 1* were published by Ricordi in 1834, and feature Bellini's theme: *l'amo, ah! l'amo* from his opera *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. Much like her father's numerous variation form works, Emilia Giuliani's *Op.1* is highly idiomatic, likely as a consequence to her great technical knowledge and mastery of the instrument. The variations proceed through the typical change of divisions: triplet, then sixteenth. The penultimate variation features a rather slow tremolo texture that sets up the finale.

Variations Plaisantes sur un petit air populaire, Op. 95—Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968) was one of the preeminent non-guitarist-composers for guitar during Andres Segovia's epoch. Being a Florentine born Jewish man, he left fascist Italy in 1939, immigrating to Hollywood where he enjoyed incredible success as a composer and teacher. He cultivated a studio of elite Hollywood film composers including including Henry Mancini, Nelson Riddle, Herman Stein André Previn Jerry Goldsmith, John Williams among others. Castelnuovo-Tedesco wrote for leading performers of his time, including Jascha Heifetz and Andres Segovia. Heifetz, also a Jewish-American immigrant, helped Castelnuovo-Tedesco land a film music career for Metro-Goldwyn and also submitted papers to assist Tedesco in immigrating to the United States. *Variations Plaisantes, Op. 95* is Castelnuovo-Tedesco's fifth work for solo guitar, and contains his first fugue for solo guitar. According to his letter to Angel Gilardino in 1967, the work is dedicated to Guilloux, a music critic writing for the *Journal de Genève*. Guilloux had reviewed a concert by Segovia in Geneva in which Castelnuovo-

¹ Nicoletta Gonfalone and Robert Coldwell, *Emilia Giuliani* (Dallas: DGA editions, 2013) 4-24.

Tedesco's Sonata *Omaggio a Boccherini* was performed. The critic wrote favourably about the sonata, stating that the Sonata was graceful and pleasant, but that Segovia could even make the French nursery rhyme: *J'ai du bon tabac*, sound like a masterpiece. Castelnuovo-Tedesco asked Segovia to write to Guilloux on his behalf, and requested the sheet music to *J'ai du bon tabac*; hence, his Op. 95 features variations on the theme and is dedicated to the Guilloux.² Each variation has a humorous affectation and description; the first variation is entitled, fat and vain, the second: monotone, the third transforms the theme's fragment into the famous Granados theme from Spanish Dance No. 6. The fourth variation is a romantic interlude, with a sincere, melancholic character but ending in scherzando fragment that transitions the work to its final variation: the inevitable fugue. The work is full of playful and well-spirited bitterness towards Guilloux. The irony that Castelnuovo-Tedesco treated this childish theme to the labor intensive compositional practices of fugue greatly demonstrates the composer's aptitude for humour in his guitar writing.

Escarraman Suite, *after Cervantes*, Op. 177—Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

Escarraman Suite, *after Cervantes* Op. 177 (1955) is among Castelnuovo-Tedesco's largest works for solo guitar and dedicated to the great Spanish writer, Miguel de Cervantes. The etymology of "Escarraman" pertains to a 15th century Spanish surname, as well as a dance similar to the sarabande; however, there is an entire escarramanesque corpus of literary works, featuring character's named Escarraman, as well as the dance itself. Among the works of Cervantes, there are numerous references to the Escarraman dance in his "Los Entremés." The entremés theatrical genre is a short, single act farce that often serves as a brief entertainment between the acts of a larger, serious play.³ In Cervante's short farce: "El ruffian viudo" (The Widowed Ruffian), the dance is mentioned, and its origin is asserted as a forbidden sarabande from hell.⁴ The six movements of Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Escarraman Suite in affectation are not unlike the theatric genre of entremés; the six movements are comedic, short, and character or

² Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, *Variations Plaisantes sur un petit air populaire* (Ancona: Bèrben) 3.

³ Enrique Santo-Tomas, *The Oxford Handbook of Cervantes* (Newark: Cervantes Society of America, 2022) 227-234, 241.

⁴ Elena Di Pinto, *La tradición escarramanesca en el teatro del Siglo de Oro* (Iberoamericana: Vervuert: 2005) 112.

narrative inspired with many interjections of scherzando sections and dances forms from the 17th century. The suite begins with a lugubrious Galliard with trio sections in the parallel major. The second movement, The Canary Gig presents a simple melody, reminiscent of Gaspar Sanz, but frequently interjects the main theme with frenetic scherzando digressions. The third movement, El Villano, *The Country Bumpkin*, may have been inspired by one of Cervantes' numerous ruffian characters in his *Los Entremes*. Castelnuovo-Tedesco calls for a lively, yet clumsy and heavy affect. The fourth movement, Pesame Dello, *I am Sorry*, serves as a melancholic relief. The fifth movement, El Rey Don Alonso El Bueno is swapped with the sixth movement, for the purposes of a more satisfying conclusion to the suite. It is possible that the published ordering is for tuning purposes, since the sixth movement is in standard tuning as opposed to the rest of the suite. This fifth movement is likely character inspired, given its reference to a good king; fittingly, the composer situates the movement in the royal key of d major, proceeding through variations that demonstrate Castelnuovo-Tedesco contrapuntal compositional skills. The final variation, which is the penultimate movement on the program, is entitled: La Guarda Cuydada, *The Soldier in Love*. This movement is certainly named after Cervantes' work from his *Los Entremes*: "La guarda cuidadosa." In Cervantes' work, two competing suitors fight over their love interest. The movement initiates with a simple militaristic melody with drone accompaniment, but the material quickly distorts into more dramatic and rhetorical musical material.