

WIGMORE HALL

Friday 16 September 2022
7.30pm

Sean Shibe guitar

Harrison Birtwistle (b.1934)

Guitar and White Hand (2007)

Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885-1944)

La Catedral (1921 rev. 1939)

*I. Preludio saudade • II. Andante religioso •
III. Allegro solemne*

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

From *12 Etudes* (1929)

Etude No. 8 in C sharp minor • Etude No. 3 in D •
Etude No. 4 in G • Etude No. 5 in C •
Etude No. 6 in E minor

Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885-1944)

Julia Florida (1938)

Interval

Luys de Narváez (fl.1526-1549)

Guárdame las vacas (pub. 1538)

Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521)

Mille regretz *arranged by Luys de Narváez*

Thomas Adès (b.1971)

Habanera from *The Exterminating Angel* (2015-6)

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

Homenaje 'pour le tombeau de Claude Debussy' (1920)

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Sarabande (1960)

Harrison Birtwistle (b.1934)

Beyond the White Hand: Construction with Guitar
Player (2013)

CLASSIC *fm* Wigmore Hall £5 tickets for Under 35s supported by Media Partner Classic FM

Friends of Wigmore Hall – celebrating 30 years of friendship

Over the past 30 years, Friends have been providing transformational support for the Hall, ensuring this historic building remains a home for great music making. Enjoy the benefits of friendship by joining as a Friend today, and be a part of the Wigmore story. Visit: wigmore-hall.org.uk/friends | Call: 020 7258 8230

FRIENDS OF
WIGMORE HALL

30

Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management.

In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.

Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141.

Wigmore Hall is equipped with a 'Loop' to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.



Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.

The Wigmore Hall Trust Registered Charity No. 1024838
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • Wigmore-hall.org.uk • John Gilhooly Director

Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND
LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported using public funding by

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



Registered with
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

Wigmore Hall Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Kent, KG

Honorary Patrons Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan

The programme has changed slightly since these programme notes were written.

The Paraguayan guitarist-composer **Agustín Barrios Mangoré** came from a well-educated family of intellectuals and musicians. He started playing the guitar at a young age and by 13 was awarded a music scholarship. Barrios travelled extensively, performing throughout Latin America. His *La Catedral* is a musical evocation of the Cathedral of San José in Montevideo. It was originally a two-movement work – *Andante religioso* and *Allegro solemne* – the opening movement, *Preludio saudade*, was added later. Barrios was a musical explorer too. Apart from his own compositions, he transcribed works by Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn and Chopin for the guitar. He was one of the first to transcribe Bach for classical guitar and his compositions show Bach's influence. *Julia Florida*, a barcarole, was written for Julia Martínez, marking her entry to adulthood, 'florida'.

It was Andrés Segovia who requested a study for the guitar from **Heitor Villa-Lobos**. Little did he know that this seemingly small request would set off Villa-Lobos's imagination to create 12 studies for solo guitar! At the start of the 20th Century, these *12 Etudes* dramatically released the solo classical guitar from its 19th-century role of being expressive but only within the constraints of the salon. Villa-Lobos explored the guitar's ability to take a fixed chord shape and move it out of its diatonic comfort zones, which broke down the formulaic barriers of conventional harmonic progression. By using a percussive technical approach and also insistent repetitions of harmonically uncomfortable chords, Villa-Lobos expanded the expressive range of the instrument enormously, making its traditionally sweet sonorities, which were also part of his work, even sweeter, in contrast with the fury and power he unleashed.

The Spanish 16th-century composer **Luys de Narváez** was one of a group of Spaniards who wrote music for the guitar-like Spanish instrument, the vihuela. Its life span was only within one century but music for vihuela has regained strong popularity in guitar repertoire since the start of the 20th Century, mainly through the extensive research and transcriptions of Emilio Pujol (1886–1980). Narváez's six-part anthology, *Los seys libros del delphin de música* (1538) has many fine works, such as his variations (*diferencias*) on the theme of the then popular song, *Guárdame las vacas* ('Watch over my cows'), and *Mille regretz: Canción I, del Emperador*, one of four French song arrangements in the anthology. *Mille regretz* is attributed to **Josquin des Prez** cautiously in modern times; however, the text, 'Mille regretz de vous habandonner' ('One thousand regrets for having abandoned you'), gives the background to the depth of sorrow expressed in Narváez's arrangement. The *Emperador* in the subtitle refers to Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor.

Thomas Adès's opera *The Exterminating Angel* is based on Luis Buñuel's surrealist film of the same title, *El ángel exterminador*, from 1962. The setting of the film, and Adès's opera, is an upper-class dinner party, at the end of which the guests are compelled to remain. The orchestration of the opera offers a very broad palette, particularly in the percussion section (a lion's roar, two large stones, two spring coils...), as well as ondes Martenot and, of course, the classical guitar is given a solo – the *Habanera*!

Remaining with the habanera but moving back a century to Spain/France, the *Homenaje 'pour le tombeau de Claude Debussy'* by **Manuel de Falla** is his only work for solo guitar. It begins with the habanera rhythm, much admired by French composers. Dedicated to the memory of Claude Debussy, who had died in 1918, Falla includes a small quote from Debussy's *La soirée dans Grénade*. The *Homenaje* was published in a special issue of the Paris *La Revue musicale* in December 1920, with contributions by Ravel, Satie, Bartók and Stravinsky as well as Falla. The work was premièred by the Spanish guitarist Emilio Pujol in the Salle du Conservatoire, Paris on 2 December 1922. As a measure of the economy of expression in this work for solo guitar, Manuel de Falla later orchestrated it and gave it the subtitle 'Elegia de la guitarra'.

In the *Sarabande* for solo guitar by **Francis Poulenc** also we can appreciate the economy of expression. *Sarabande* was written for and dedicated to the virtuoso French guitarist Ida Presti in 1960. Ida Presti (1924–1967) was a child prodigy and a great inspiration to guitarists throughout the world – most notably Julian Bream, who always mentioned her with great admiration. She began her recording career at a young age: from her 1937 recordings for French HMV, one can appreciate both her mature musicianship and her rich and attractive tone quality on the guitar. In this *Sarabande*, Poulenc has created a celebration of that unforgettable sound.

Early on in his career, **Harrison Birtwistle** noted the artist Francis Bacon's approach to creation, which combined a formality and at the same time created a sense of falling apart; this seemed to resonate with him. In *Beyond the White Hand: Construction with Guitar Player*, Birtwistle has drawn on the work of Pablo Picasso, from an art installation of 1927; in fact, since 1912–4, the guitar had appeared in some of Picasso's work in a deconstructed/reconstructed form. Birtwistle's substantial work for solo guitar is an articulate and satisfying composition, built on an absolutely solid musical structure, despite its claims of being a 'deconstructed guitar' in sound. It was commissioned by The Julian Bream Trust and was premièred by Andrey Lebedev in December 2014, with both the composer and Julian Bream present.

© Thérèse Wassily Saba 2022

Reproduction and distribution is strictly prohibited.