

Virtual Colloquium of the Cambridge Cohort for Guitar Research

4 November 2023

Convenor: Jelma van Amersfoort

SESSION 1

The late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

19.30 - 10.10

Damián Martín-Gil

'Que vous savez si bien embellir': Performing songs for voice and guitar in Paris at the end of the Ancien Régime

10.10 - 10.50

Stephen Kenyon

Personalised Playing Techniques; added character and value in the solo guitar works of Catherina Josepha Pratten

10.50-11.10

Break

11.10- 11.50

Cla Mathieu

Imagining the Rural Soundscape: The Guitar in Nineteenth-Century Bern

11.50-12.30

Declan Hickey

12.30 - 13.30

Break

SESSION 2

The twentieth century

13.30 - 14.10

Luiz Mantovani

In Search of a Fictitious *Fassung letzter Hand*: A case study about my 'posthumous collaboration' with Ferdinand Rebay

14.10-14.50

Katalin Koltai

Transforming Guitar Textures: Arrangements and New Music using the Magnet Capo System and the Ligeti Guitar

14.50-15.30

Taro Takeuchi

Presentation of some instruments

Abstracts

STEPHEN KENYON

Personalised Playing Techniques; added character and value in the solo guitar works of Catherina Josepha Pratten

There were two distinct questions in the way when I first seriously researched this repertoire starting in 2020.

Firstly, and most materially, the available music appeared to be unrepresentative of the composer's work as a whole. It should be a primary consideration, when passing any kind of assessment on an artist's work, that the assessment is made on the basis of a representative selection. I now have a collection of dozens of pieces covering all the main categories of the solo pieces in standard tuning.

Secondly, there are a number of 'personalised techniques' laid out in the three guitar tutor texts by CJP, however, there are also techniques, or instructions, within the compositions, that are not defined in the tutor texts, and there are aspects of the tutors that do not actually appear in the repertoire. Clarifying the meaning, significance and contribution of both the well- and the undefined techniques is part of the 'fair assessment' above.

I now have the proper definitions of these techniques and;

- a working basis to outline how the composer's own tuition would have been tailored to the individual student's capabilities
- a preliminary outline of how the composer's work evolved

Illustrated with screen-sharing graphic images from the tutors and pieces, and live demonstrations on a guitar.

CLA MATHIEU

Imagining the Rural Soundscape: The Guitar in Nineteenth-Century Bern

The city of Bern, Switzerland, underwent fundamental changes during the course of the 19th century. In 1848, it became the modern nation's capital, followed by a rapid growth in population. The guitar was part of the city's musical life throughout the 19th century, as evidenced by a wide range of sources. In the pages of the *Intelligenzblatt für die Stadt Bern*, for instance, the city's main outlet for official notices and advertisements at that period, guitars and strings were widely sold or auctioned, guitar teachers advertised their services, and music publishers promoted their products. During the Great Vogue for the guitar in Europe in the first decades of the 19th century, guitar music by internationally acclaimed guitarist-composers such as Mauro Giuliani was performed in concerts of the *Bernische Musikgesellschaft*, the city's society for instrumental music. Touring virtuosos occasionally performed in the city, and local musicians played chamber music with the guitar.

The main function of the instrument, however, was to accompany song, and it is in this area that a distinctly Swiss approach to the guitar can be discerned. Arguably the most important collection of songs from this period was the *Sammlung von Schweizer-Kühreihen und Volksliedern* [collection of Swiss 'Ranz des vaches' and popular songs], published in Bern in 1826 in its fourth extended edition. Set to texts by local poets, the songs feature accompaniments for the guitar or the piano by Ferdinand Fürchtegott Huber (1791-1863), a Swiss composer who also included the guitar in some of his chamber music. The collection was intended for a wealthy audience, often including early tourists, who could afford the ornate prints and some of the songs inspired amongst others *Franz Liszt*. The songs were reissued in various editions throughout the period and eventually

reached a wide audience. While the accompaniments for guitar are not overly difficult or elaborate, they place the guitar in the midst of an urban fascination with the rural and alpine, within an imaginary soundscape populated by singing peasants and shepherds playing the alphorn.

In the second half of the 19th century, the guitar was increasingly complemented by other plucked instruments such as the zither in its various regional and international forms. These instruments served a similar musical clientele than the guitar, mostly amateurs, but carried with them a clearer association to the rural and the alpine. Tyrolean singers to the zither became fashionable in Bern and zither ensembles were founded in the city in which the guitar only played a subordinate role. It is this group of plucked instruments that has received the most attention in the musicological literature on Switzerland, while the guitar, despite its popularity, was never considered an autochthonous element of the country's musical life in the 19th century.

Declan

DAMIAN MARTIN-GIL

‘Que vous savez si bien embellir’: Performing songs for voice and guitar in Paris at the end of the Ancien Régime

The guitar reached a level of popularity in Paris in the second half of the eighteenth century not equalled by any other major European city, yet it hardly ever appears in modern accounts of musical and social history. The fact that nearly thirty methods, twenty periodicals and hundreds of collections of songs for voice and guitar (a great majority arrangements from *opéra-comiques* of the time) were published in the French capital during this period, indicate a remarkable enthusiasm for this popular instrument.

Even though several studies have appeared devoted to the performance practice of this instrument – particularly focusing on the contents of guitar methods – the subject of improvisation has been widely disregarded. Moreover, none of them seem to have been focused on the repertoire for voice and guitar, being that, accompanying the voice, its main use at the time.

Analysing the contents of guitar methods and collections of music for voice and guitar published in Paris between 1757 and 1799, this paper aims to shed light on this practice, presenting a preliminary study on the formulas used by composers to create, enrich and modify guitar accompaniments to songs.

LUIZ MANTOVANI

In Search of a Fictitious Fassung letzter Hand: A case study about my ‘posthumous collaboration’ with Ferdinand Rebay

In this paper, I will contextualize and problematize the text sources for Ferdinand Rebay's Second Sonata in E Major (1941). Following a presentation of the issues involving the published editions and manuscript sources, I endeavour at what I have been calling a "posthumous collaboration" with the composer. This process presupposes an extensive familiarity with Rebay's music and is anchored on the need for performer revision and eventual intervention on the text that is often observed in guitar music written by non-guitarist composers. I will discuss the three main categories that arise when dealing with Rebay's text—unplayable passages, unidiomatic passages, and difficult/uncomfortable passages—followed by demonstrations of how I have managed to overcome them. The process culminated with the premiere recording of the sonata, filmed at the Heiligenkreuz Abbey, sponsored by the Hermann Hauser Guitar Foundation, and released by Guitarcoop in 2022.

KATALIN KOLTAI

Transforming Guitar Textures: Arrangements and New Music using the Magnet Capo System and the Ligeti Guitar

This paper centres around a transformative and versatile new guitar technology, the Guitar Magnet Capo System and the Ligeti Guitar, which integrates the system into a transformed fretboard. A brief literature review on instrumental space, embodiment and instrumental choreography provides the terminological grounds for the paper through the theoretical framework of De Souza, Zbikowski, Gibson and others.

This leads to a contextual and conceptual introduction examining diverse perspectives of the guitar space and its transformation in composition and guitar arrangement.

The body of the lecture describes the new affordances of the transformed guitar space of the Ligeti Guitar by turning to case studies examining its utilisation in three arrangements (Bartók: The Night's Music; Ligeti: *Musica ricercata*, no. 2; Chopin: Berceuse) and a new composition by Gorton, entitled Six Miniatures. Accompanying diagrams demonstrate the spatial (guitar and piano) mappings of signature musical elements, alongside notational extracts and tablature.