



Daniel Acsadi, Director

*presents*

## **Jason Vieaux**

November 6, 2010: 8PM – First Lutheran Church of Boston

“Sevilla” (from Suite Española, Op.47)

Isaac Albéniz  
(1860-1909)  
(arr. Vieaux)

Lute Suite No. 3, BWV 995

Prelude  
Allemande  
Courante  
Sarabande  
Gavotte I and II  
Gigue

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Julia Florida: Barcarola  
Vals, Opus 8, No. 4

Agustin Barrios  
(1885-1944)

### *Intermission*

Quatre Pieces Breves

Prelude  
Air  
Plainte  
Comme Une Gigue

Frank Martin  
(1890-1974)

El Decameron Negro

El Arpa del Guerrero (The Warrior’s Harp)  
La Huida de los Amantes por el Valle de los Ecos  
(The Flight of the Lovers Through The Valley of Echoes)  
Balada del Doncella Enamorada (Ballad of the Young Girl in Love)

Leo Brouwer  
(b. 1939)

The Bat

Pat Metheny  
(1954-)  
(arr. Vieaux)

Jason Vieaux uses Galli Genius strings and plays a guitar made by Gernot Wagner, Frankfurt  
He is represented by Jonathan Wentworth Associates, Ltd., Mt. Vernon, NY  
[www.jwentworth.com](http://www.jwentworth.com)

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

One of the “youngest stars of the guitar world” (New York Times, 2010), Jason Vieaux is a musician regularly noted for his engaging and virtuosic live performances, imaginative programming, and uncommon communicative gifts. Recent concert highlights include recitals for Lincoln Center and 92<sup>nd</sup> St. Y in New York, Dumbarton Oaks Series in Washington DC, a return to the Music@Menlo festival, a debut with Charlotte Symphony, and recitals for Spivey Hall and Indiana University. As one of the “leading guitarists of his generation” (Absolute Sound, 2009), Jason Vieaux has established a lasting connection with his audiences, as evidenced by numerous return invitations in 2010-2011 to series in Toronto, Cleveland, Michigan and North Carolina. In October, Mr. Vieaux will receive a 2010 Salon De Virtuosi Career Grant and perform with mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke at the Kennedy Center.

### UPCOMING BCGS EVENTS - [www.bostonguitar.org](http://www.bostonguitar.org)

**Saturday, November 20 – 1:30PM** BCGS Performance Party  
Union Music, Worcester, MA

**Saturday, November 20 – 1PM** Saturday Sounds Series: George Attisano  
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**Friday, February 25 – 8PM** BCGS Artist Series: Ana Vidovic  
First Lutheran Church – 299 Berkeley St. Boston, MA

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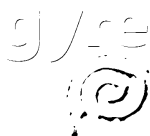
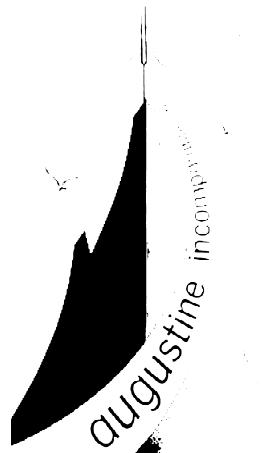
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## PROGRAM NOTES

"Sevilla" (from Suite Española, Op.47)

Isaac Albéniz

Isaac Albéniz was a virtuoso pianist and, along with Enrique Granados and Manuel de Falla, is considered to be one of the three greatest Spanish composers of all time. Among the best of Albéniz' works are Spanish character pieces for solo piano, often named after parts of Spain. *Sevilla* is one such work. *Sevilla* was first performed by the composer on January 24, 1886. It is one of the four works originally included in his *Suite Española, Op 47* and presented to the queen of Spain on March 21, 1887. Other movements were later added to the suite either by Albéniz himself or by his publisher.

The sevillanas is a popular Spanish dance in 3/4 meter. It is derived from the Seguidilla and may actually be Castilian in origin, though its strong association with Seville has given it its name. Seville (or Sevilla) is the most famous city of the southern region of Spain called Andalusia. Perhaps Albéniz had Seville's popular Holy Week festival in mind when he wrote this celebratory piece. This is one of his most orchestral compositions for the piano, with independent inner voices creating a full and busy texture, much like the movement of revelers in a festival.

-- Erik Mann

Lute Suite No. 3 in A Minor, BWV 995

J. S. Bach

In Germany in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the lute experienced its last great surge of popularity, and Bach had an obvious affinity for this delicate instrument. Although Bach did own a lute it seems unlikely that he played it, based on the music that he left, which is not idiomatic to the instrument. Bach also owned two lautenwerke (lute-harpsichords)- keyboard instruments in which the strings were plucked like a harpsichord, but with gut rather than metal strings. One of Bach's students remarked that its sound "could almost deceive even professional lutenists". It is likely that Bach actually composed his "lute works"- four suites; the *Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro, BWV 998*; and the *Prelude BWV 999*, on this instrument.

*Suite BWV 995* is actually an arrangement of an earlier work- the *Suite No. 5 BWV 1011* for solo 'cello. The six unaccompanied *Cello Suites* were groundbreaking works of a scale which had never before been approached for the instrument. Bach's writing for the cello features thin textures, often a single melody line, but within that is implied counterpoint that hints at a second line. In arranging it for the lute, Bach often added notes to make the instrument sound fuller, and at times was even able to add a new, independent line. The second section of the prelude, a fugue marked *presto*, is a good example of his ability to realize more fully all of the individual voices. A notable exception, however, is the enigmatic Sarabande, in which very few notes have been added for the lute, and in which the sparse texture remains. -- Erik Mann

Julia Florida: Barcarola  
Vals, Opus 8, No. 4

Agustin Barrios

Agustín Barrios led a varied and colorful life. He was successful as a touring guitar virtuoso in Latin America, performing in virtually every country in the region. For many years Barrios billed himself as Nitsuga Mangoré, sometimes with the fanciful slogan "The Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay". "Nitsuga" is Agustín spelled backward and "Mangoré" was the name of a legendary chief from the Guaraní tribe indigenous to Barrios' native Paraguay. Barrios claimed to be descended from this chief, and appeared in concert dressed in native Guaraní garb. Later in life he returned to traditional concert attire and eventually settled on the name Agustín Barrios Mangoré.

The music of Barrios can generally be divided into two styles: Latin American folk and popular music, and romantic salon pieces. Both *Julia Florida* and *Vals Op. 8, No. 4* represent the latter style. Barrios composed *Julia Florida* in 1938 for Julia Martinez, a student of his and the niece of his good friend Francisco Salazar of Costa Rica. "Florida" means blossoming, and may refer to both Julia's maturation into a young lady and her growth musically. Indeed, this piece goes well beyond simple melody and accompaniment, featuring voices that swell in and out of prominence, at times featuring as many as four voices at once.

*Julia Florida* is a barcarole, a type of song sung by Venetian gondoliers. The meter, typical for a barcarole, is 6/8 and the feel suggests the gentle propulsion of the gondola through the canal. *Vals Op. 8 No. 4* appeared in Barrios' programs at least by 1923. He recorded it and it was one of the few works that he published. It often appeared in his concert programs as *Vals Brillante*, referring to the sweeping, virtuosic scale and arpeggio passages. Though Op. 8 reputedly originally consisted of five waltzes, only the third and fourth survive today. Both are charming salon pieces in the style of Chopin. -- Erik Mann

Frank Martin's *Quatre pièces brèves* of 1933 is important in the guitar repertoire because it is one of the earliest works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century composed in a clearly modern style. At the time of this composition, Martin had just begun immersing himself in the compositions and theories of Arnold Schoenberg, guided by the principle of 12-tone composition- a system in which all 12 possible pitches are used more or less equally. Martin never used the system dogmatically however, preferring to keep some sense of tonal center most of the time. He did this through repetition of tonally important pitches and by occasionally implying a standard tonal chord progression.

The first and last movements of *Quatre pièces brèves* establish all 12 pitches of the chromatic scale within the first few bars. In both cases however, the note B is heard first, and returns several times in notes of longer duration than any of the other notes in the passage. The repeated and prolonged Bs return at other points in these movements, and both end with a IV-V-I bass progression, one of the most basic components of tonal music. *Prélude* and *Comme un Gigue* thus become quasi-tonal bookends in B (though really neither major nor minor) which frame the central movements.

*Air* is the most tonal movement, in the key of C# major. It features many standard chords, sometimes used both in standard progressions and sometimes in less predictable ways, reminiscent of the modal impressionism of Claude Debussy. An atmosphere of other-worldly melancholy is created.

*Plainte* begins with repeated chords keeping a quarter note pulse. A melody line then enters over the chords beginning with a repeated note, but both its pitch and rhythm clash with the harmony. The melody then expands, creating a free, improvisatory feel.

There are interesting similarities between *Quatre pièces brèves* and Bach's *Suite, BWV 995*, heard earlier in this program. First, Martin used movement names commonly used in the Baroque era. Preludes, airs, and giges were all frequently composed in the Baroque, and Martin's *Air* also has the feel of a Baroque sarabande. Next, the title *Quatre pièces brèves* is in fact quite similar to one of the titles on Bach's manuscript for BWV 995: *Pièces pour la Luth*. Lastly, just as Bach transcribed his work from 'cello to lute (or lautenwerk), so Martin arranged his *Quatre pièces brèves* for piano. Martin's transcription was re-titled *Guitare*. -- Erik Mann

## El Decameron Negro

Leo Brouwer

Leo Brouwer began composing in 1955, and his early compositions leaned toward neo-classical forms and a strong influence of popular Cuban music. In 1961, however, he attended the Warsaw Autumn contemporary music festival and very quickly began composing in the style of the Polish avant garde school. Throughout the 1970's, Brouwer's music moved gradually away from the avant garde and toward a style which he termed the "New Simplicity" or "National Hyper-Romanticism". He had found a way to merge such diverse elements as: quartal harmonies, clusters, and aleatoric sections borrowed from the avant garde; dance rhythms and jazz harmonies from his native Cuba; the repetition and manipulation of simple cells borrowed from minimalism; non-functional and neo-tonal harmonies; colorful timbral effects; and the use of multiple tonal centers. Brouwer still composes in this style today, and the most important work to herald his latest phase is 1981's *El Decamerón Negro*.

*El Decamerón Negro* is based on a collection of African folktales by the same name, compiled by the German anthropologist Leon Frobenius. Brouwer's first movement, *El arpa del guerrero* (The Warrior's Harp), depicts a great warrior who yearns to trade his life of fighting for music, leading to exile from his clan. When his former home is attacked, he leads his people to victory, but is then sent into exile again with his lover. Both the power of the soldier and the beauty of the harp are present in this movement.

In the second movement, *La huida de los amantes por el valle de los ecos* (Flight of the Lovers through the Valley of Echoes) the fleeing lovers' galloping horses are heard twice, interspersed with shorter, nostalgic sections. In the first galloping section, a steady stream of notes expand from a four-note cell to six notes, then eight, ten, and twenty, before gradually diminishing to only two notes. In the second galloping section, a different figuration is used with loud, marcato measures alternating with quiet, legato measures.

The final movement, *Ballada de la doncella enamorada* (Ballad of the Young Girl in Love), is a rondo. A beautiful love song alternates with more rhythmically driving parts. -- Erik Mann

## The Bat

Pat Metheny

"The Bat" is from an album Metheny recorded in 1981 with drummer Jack DeJohnette, bassist Charlie Haden and tenor sax players Michael Brecker and Dewey Redman. The famous *Pat Metheny Group* recorded the composition a year later on the "Offramp" album, with a completely different instrumental and sonic arrangement. Given the metric freedom of both versions, the former in a more traditional jazz group context and the latter in a more contemporary atmospheric mode, my arrangement is a combination of the two sounds and textures. The guitaristic effect of the tremolo (e.g., Tárrega's *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*), best recreated the sonic effect of the latter version, while the "solo" I wrote over the chord changes hearkens back to the original version. - Jason Vieaux