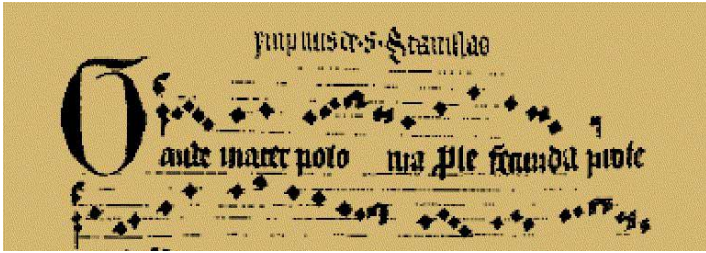


Guitar concert by Tom Chalko

Sounds of the Centuries

G **au**de **M**ater **P**olonia by Vincent of Kielcz (Wincenty z Kielcza, Poland ~1200-1262)



First performed in 1253, this hymn accompanied coronations of Polish kings and their victories for many centuries. For example, it was performed after the Polish king Jan III with his army saved Vienna from a brutal Turkish invasion in 1683. The Latin title means “Rejoice Mother Poland” and its Latin lyrics encourages the country to be proud of its sons. **Gau de Mater Polonia** hymn enjoys continuing popularity for over 770 years (!), so it can be considered **the most enduring hit** in the history of music. Today the **Gau de Mater Polonia** hymn it is performed by choirs at Polish Universities during official ceremonies. Tom will play his own guitar arrangement of **Gau de Mater Polonia** hymn.

Greensleeves, English folk song, likely known before 1580, is one of the most recognisable melodies in modern music with its popularity not fading since 1580. The origin of the Greensleeves melody is most likely Italian or Catalan, because its implied *harmonic progression* was unknown in England before the 17th century. Tom will play his own guitar arrangement of Greensleeves.

Aria con **V**ariazioni (1627) by Girolamo Frescobaldi (Italy 1583-1643) is one of the



earliest music compositions featuring “variations” on a musical theme. Originally composed for a keyboard instrument, the Aria was masterfully arranged for guitar solo by Andrés Segovia. Johann Sebastian Bach, who was born 102 years after Frescobaldi, is known to have studied and admired Frescobaldi's

music. Tom will perform the Segovia guitar transcription of the **Aria con Variazioni**.

Prelude in **C** BWV 846 (1722) by Johann Sebastian Bach (Germany, 1685–1750) is the first prelude in Bach's set of preludes collectively known as **The Well-Tempered Clavier**.

These preludes demonstrate the advantages of the “well-tempered” chromatic scale, in which

each octave is divided into 12 equal semitones. The invention of the keyboard created an urgent need for a method to tune each key. Mathematically speaking, the challenge was equivalent to calculating 2 raised to the power of 1/12 in the 18th century.

The well-tempered chromatic scale was apparently discovered in China about 5,000 years ago, but there were no instruments there to utilise it. 18th-century European mathematicians, unaware of the Chinese solution, had to develop their own approach. The creation and adaptation of well-tempered tuning for keyboard instruments sparked a revolutionary surge in musical creativity. It allowed composers to explore a vast new range of chord progressions, modulations, and extended chords. Bach's first **Prelude in C BWV 846** initiated this musical revolution.

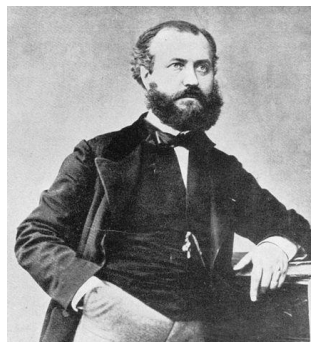


Bach score of Prelude in C BWV 846

The Prelude begins and ends in C major but incorporates **every chromatic note**, demonstrating beautiful chord progressions and modulations that would not have been possible without a well-tempered scale.

Tom will perform the **Prelude in C** on guitar, exactly as Bach composed it for the keyboard - note for note.

Ave **M**aria (1859) by Charles Gounod (France, 1818–1893) is an immensely popular and universally loved piece, in which Bach's **Prelude**



in C BWV 846 serves as the accompaniment. Gounod's *Ave Maria* showcases how Bach's modulations and chord progressions, made possible by the well-tempered scale, greatly enhanced the melodic line and its dramatic impact.

Tom will perform the Bach accompaniment on guitar, with his cyber-choir singing Gounod's **Ave Maria** melody.

Spanish **R**omance, very famous and much loved Spanish folk song, likely known before ~1800 during life of Fernando Sor (Spain 1778-1839), is sometimes referred to as a “Sor melody”. Sor did not claim to compose the melody, but it is likely that he played it on guitar. Today the **Spanish Romance** ranks among the most popular music played on classical guitar.

Prelude op 28 no 20 (1838) by Frederic Chopin (Poland 1810-1949) is one of the most popular Chopin piano preludes.



It is known as a “chord prelude” due to dramatic chords and their progression. Tom will play his own guitar arrangement of the Prelude.

Peruvian Air, also known as *Melodía Española* or *Feste Lariane*, probably a folk song from Peru, likely known before 1860. Guitar arrangements were published by Luis T. Romero (1889, USA), José Sancho (1905, Argentina), and Luigi Mozzani (1906, Italy), each of whom claimed to have composed it. Tom will perform the Mozzani version titled “Feste Lariane”.

Canço del Lladre ~ a folk song from Catalonia, likely known before 1850, arranged for guitar by famous Catalan guitarist Miguel Llobet (Catalonia 1878-1938). The title translates as “A Song of a Thief”. Original Catalan lyrics tell a story of a young poor man who was accused of a crime he did not commit and sentenced to death. His song expresses his moving farewell to life and his homeland of Catalonia. Tom will play the Llobet guitar arrangement of **Canço del Lladre**.

La Paloma (1863) by Sebastián Iradier (Spain, 1809-1865) is one of the most famous and admired melodies, beloved for its beauty and haunting Cuban **habanera** rhythm. Originally composed for voice and piano, there are now more than 1,000 versions of this song, making it **one of the most recorded songs in the history of music**. In Tom's arrangement, the guitar expressive capabilities enhance the piece's warmth and lyrical beauty, inviting listeners to experience the timeless charm of **La Paloma**, with its blend of Cuban rhythm and Spanish romance.



Asturias (1892) by Isaac Albéniz (Spain 1860-1909) is one of the most iconic works in the Spanish classical repertoire, renowned for its fiery *flamenco* and contrasting, melancholic *malagueña* sections.



Although originally composed for piano, **Asturias** is almost exclusively performed on guitar, because guitar arrangement greatly enhances **Asturias** Spanish character and authenticity.

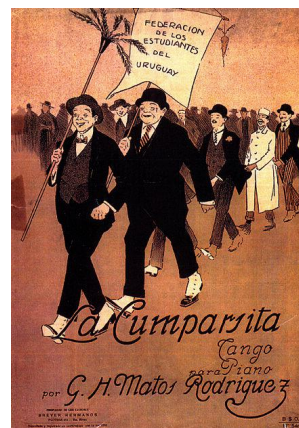
For over a century, guitar version of **Asturias** has been a firm favourite among both guitarists and audiences. Its virtuosic passages contribute to the very foundation of the classical guitar technique and repertoire.

Recuerdas de la Alhambra (1896) by Francisco Tárrega (Spain 1852-1909) is one of the most admired and memorable classical guitar compositions. The title translates to “Memories of the Alhambra,” a magnificent and famous 13th century Arabic palace in Granada, Spain. **Recuerdas de la Alhambra** pioneered



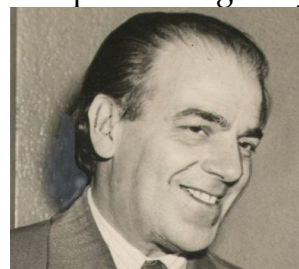
the virtuosic use of guitar **tremolo** technique and is celebrated for its technical brilliance, lyrical depth, and elegance, creating an almost hypnotic effect on audiences. Some members of the Mt Best community request Tom to perform **Recuerdas de la Alhambra** at every concert.

La Cumparsita (Uruguay 1916) by Gerardo Matos Rodríguez (Uruguay 1897-1948), is one of the most famous and recognisable tangos of all time. “La Comparsa” refers to a carnival march parade. “**La Cumparsita**” therefore means “a little carnival march”.



piece, it attracted hundreds of arrangements and became a symbol of the South American tango tradition. The hauntingly beautiful main theme, with its syncopated melancholic parts, is unforgettable. Over a century since its composition, it remains a favourite among musicians and audiences alike, cementing its place as a cornerstone of the tango repertoire. Tom will play his own guitar arrangement of **La Cumparsita**.

Cantilena – Bachianas Brasileiras #5 (1938) by Heitor Villa-Lobos (Brazil 1887-1959) is one of the composer's most celebrated works. Its evocative beauty played a significant role in establishing Villa-Lobos as a world-renowned composer. Originally written for voice and eight



cellos, the **Cantilena** was later transcribed by Villa-Lobos himself for guitar and voice, so he could accompany his soprano partner on guitar. Interestingly, the pizzicato technique used by the cellos in the original version creates a sound that resembles a gigantic guitar...

Cantilena showcases Villa-Lobos' unique ability to blend the Brazilian rhythms and melodies with classical forms established by J.S. Bach. With its profound emotional depth and artistic sophistication, **Cantilena** remains a testament to Villa-Lobos' genius and his lasting impact on both Brazilian and global classical music. Tom will perform the composer's guitar version of the **Cantilena** with his cyber-choir singing the melody.

Concierto de Aranjuez II Adagio (1939) for guitar and orchestra by Joaquín Rodrigo (Spain, 1901–1999).



Joaquin Rodrigo

The **Adagio** from *Concierto de Aranjuez* is one of the most memorable and recognisable concert masterpieces in music history. Its emotional depth seems to reach the most sensitive parts of human nature, invoking a goosebumps-inducing level of pleasure and appreciation - even among those who have never heard any classical music.



The main theme of the **Adagio** – guitar score

Blind due to a diphtheria infection at the age of three, Joaquín Rodrigo learned music and went on to graduate from the Paris Conservatory as a pianist and composer. During this time, he became friends with Maurice Ravel, the composer of the iconic *Boléro*.

Rodrigo composed *Concierto de Aranjuez* in Paris, as Spain was torn by Civil War. After the war, he travelled to Madrid to publish the music. The score was written in **Braille** and filled two large boxes.

Initially, Rodrigo offered the premiere of the *Concierto de Aranjuez* to Andrés Segovia, the most famous guitarist of the time. However, Segovia famously declined, declaring that the *Concierto* was "not playable."

The world premiere of *Concierto de Aranjuez* took place in 1940 in Barcelona, a capital of Catalonia, with guitarist Regino Sainz de la Maza and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Barcelona. Segovia never performed or recorded the *Concierto* and witnessed its incredible rise in fame and popularity without his involvement.



Regino Sainz de la Maza , who premiered **Concierto de Aranjuez** in 1940

The *Concierto de Aranjuez* had a profound impact on **guitar status** in the world of music. While the guitar had long been cherished in Spanish culture, it was rarely featured in concert halls. Rodrigo's masterpiece changed this, elevating the guitar to a prestigious, virtuosic concert instrument. It redefined the guitar's role in settings traditionally dominated by orchestras and pianos. The guitar's popularity soared, not only in classical music but also in popular genres, where it became a key instrument in recordings and performances. Its appeal extended into homes, where it soon became the most widely owned instrument.

Amazingly, this most famous and so influential guitar concerto was composed by a blind man who never played guitar and deliberately avoided holding one, because he couldn't see it...

Tom will perform the famous **Adagio** from *Concierto de Aranjuez* with his own cyber-orchestra.

Somnium Pace (2018) by Tom Chalko (1951-). The Latin title translates to "Dream of Peace". Tom performs it at every concert to remind people that peace should be the goal for human society on Earth. World premiere of **Somnium Pace** took place in 2018 at Melbourne Guitar Festival, with guitarist Harold Gretton.



First two lines of Somnium Pace guitar score