FRIENDS OF MUSIC

In order to assist talented students in the pursuit of their musical studies and professional goals, the Department of Music has established the Music Scholarship Fund.
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Mailing address:
Bridgewater State University Foundation
PO Box 42
Bridgewater, MA 02325

Special Thanks:

Dr. Jerome Mouffe, Dr. Steven Young, Linda Alberghini, and the BSU Music Department concert staff for making tonight possible.

My friends and classmates for their support and encouragement.

My family, and in particular my Mom and Dad, for their unwavering support.

All of my teachers and students, both past and present, for making me the musician that I am today.

My girlfriend Lauren, for being my rock and having the patience to hear me practice this program far more than anyone besides myself and Dr. Mouffe should ever have to.
Program

Capricho Arabe  Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909)

Lute Suite No. 2 in C minor, BWV997
  Prelude  Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
  Sarabande  arr. Frank Koonce
  Gigue

Sonata in F Major, K274  Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)
  arr. Eliot Fisk

Intermission

Grand Sonata  Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840)
  Allegro Risoluto

Nocturnal After John Dowland, Op. 70
  Musingly
  Very Agitated
  Restless
  Uneasy
  March-like
  Dreaming
  Gently Rocking
  Passacaglia
  Slow and Quiet (theme)

(If you would like an encore, please make it clear!)
Program Notes

Capricho Arabe is a standard of the classical guitar repertoire, written by the Spanish guitarist & composer Francisco Tarrega around the turn of the 20th century. Tarrega is one of the most important players and writers in the history of the instrument, often being seen as responsible for the guitar's recognition as a viable concert instrument along with Andres Segovia. Tarrega's 78 original compositions and 120 transcriptions were originally penned for his own performances, but are constantly programmed by guitarists around the world today. Capricho Arabe, or the "Arabian Caprice" is Tarrega's representation of the Arabian influence on Spanish music, dating back to the Moorish occupation of the Iberian Peninsula during the 8th Century AD. This is best heard in the piece's use of the Phrygian mode, as heard in the opening line.

Lute Suite No. 2, BWV 997, was likely written during Bach's later years, when he served as Cantor to the Thomasschule of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig from 1723 until his death in 1750. This period of Bach's life was marked by the feverish rate at which he composed sacred works such as oratorios and cantatas for events in the church calendar. Because of the creative output demanded of him, Bach often lifted or borrowed ideas from his earlier compositions, and the 2nd Lute Suite is a great example of this method in action: The Sarabande in particular borrows motifs from the final chorus of the St. Matthew Passion, "Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder". While Bach himself owned a lute, he never achieved a high level of proficiency on it. Instead, he often played an instrument called the lautenwerk, or "Lute-Harpsichord", a keyboard instrument that featured plucked gut strings and a bowl-shaped bottom made of strips of curved wood to imitate the sonority of the lute. The composition of BWV997 is likely related to Bach's collaboration with the lutenist and composer Sylvius Leopold Weiss. The two were known to improvise together, and a particular visit by Weiss to see Bach in Leipzig in 1739 was influential to Bach's lute works.

Sonata K274 is one of the 555 sonatas written by the Italian Baroque composer Domenico Scarlatti. Although almost all of his sonatas were written for harpsichord or piano forte, Scarlatti was heavily influenced by Spanish folk music, and was known for using relatively dissonant modes & harmonies idiomatic to the guitar in much of his keyboard music. For this reason, Scarlatti's music translates well to the guitar, and several of his sonatas have since been arranged for it by Eliot Fisk. Fisk, a leading figure in the classical guitar community, was led to study Scarlatti’s music when he attended Yale University. At the time, Yale had no guitar program at all, and in lieu of a guitar instructor, Fisk ended up studying with the famed harpsichordist Ralph Kirkpatrick. This collaboration between Fisk and Kirkpatrick is largely responsible for Scarlatti's presence in the modern guitar repertoire. Scarlatti was a champion of the Rococo style of the later Baroque, which focused on a graceful, heavily ornamented style of writing that contrasted with the more formal and grandiose style that had previously been fashionable. While the sonata came to represent the format for a multi-movement work in the Classical Period, Scarlatti’s sonatas were comparatively straightforward, one-movement works in binary form. Of note in K274 is the creative use of dissonances and contrary stepwise motion that is pervasive in throughout the piece.

While best known for his work on the violin, the Italian virtuoso Niccolò Paganini was also a surprisingly capable guitarist, writing extensively for the instrument: of Paganini's 134 confirmed works, at least 66 feature the guitar. The Grand Sonata is the third-oldest confirmed work by Paganini, written in 1803 when he was only 21 years old and premiered one year later. Unlike Paganini's other sonatas for guitar and violin, the Grand Sonata features a remarkably simple violin part that an intermediate player could handle with little difficulty, while the guitar part is very demanding. Theories run abound as to why Paganini chose to do this: he may have written the piece for a violin student whom he intended to accompany, or he may have intended to switch instruments with a guitarist during a performance. Because of the redundancy of the violin part, the piece is often played by a solo guitarist. Unlike the Scarlatti sonata, Paganini’s Grand Sonata is a representation of the sonata-allegro form that would come to define the genre from the Classical Period onwards, although the recapitulation of the Allegro Risonato first movement uncharacteristically omits the first theme of the exposition.

The Nocturnal After John Dowland was written by the English composer Benjamin Britten in 1963, and premiered on Jun 12th, 1964 at the Aldeburgh Festival by guitarist Julian Bream (who encouraged Britten to write for the guitar). The work is based on the John Dowland lute-song Come Heavy Sleep, presenting a series of variations reflecting on the moods of night and sleep. The Nocturnal culminates in a dramatic Passacaglia, followed by the serene original theme to end the piece, perhaps representing the relief of sleep, death, or daybreak. The concept of dualism is explored throughout the work: The Nocturnal has no single tonal center, and is oftentimes bitonal. The original Dowland song, based in Renaissance harmony, is principally in E Major, but ends in Ab Major. Even in psychology, dualism is a conceptual separation between the mind and body, much as how the words of the Dowland song speak of someone whose mind wishes for sleep, but whose body refuses to concede it. The tonal framework of the Nocturnal serves as an excellent representation of this personal dichotomy. Also of note: In the early 20th century, many composers explored the idea of nationalism in the arts, and Britten often used themes from fellow British composers such as Henry Purcell in his Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra or his Variations on a Theme by Frank Bridge for string orchestra.

“Come heavy sleep, the image of true death; and close up these my weary weeping eyes: Whose spring of tears doth stop my vital breath, and tears my heart with sorrow's sign swollen cries: Come and possess my tired thought worn soul, That living dies, till thou on me be stole.”

—John Dowland, Come Heavy Sleep
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   Restless
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   March-like
   Dreaming
   Gently Rocking
   Passacaglia
   Slow and Quiet (theme)
   Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

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Bridgewater State University
Department of Music

Student Recital

Jim Davidson, Guitar

December 4th, 2014
8:00PM
Lecture Hall L-13
Maxwell Library