



VIVAS!

FALL CONCERTS 2021

MILOŠ classical guitar

Avi Avital mandolin

Sunday November 14 2021

From the Artistic Director

Dear Friends:

This afternoon's performance by Miloš and Avi Avital has been in the works for such a long time that it almost feels as though it's over before it has even begun!

We could have sold the Playhouse to capacity for this concert, but because we promised our patrons that we would not go beyond 50% until January, we unfortunately have a long waiting list of disappointed Miloš and Avi fans.

This brings to a close our fall 2021 series of concerts, which have been varied and quite wonderful. We'll be putting tickets for the remainder of the season (January – May) on sale on November 17, so mark your calendars! There are 15 concerts in the winter-spring 2022 series, featuring outstanding artists such as Yuja Wang, Evgeny Kissin, Gerald Finley and Isata Kanneh-Mason.

I would like to thank our Season Sponsor, the Peak Group of Companies, and London Drugs for sponsoring this concert. We are also grateful to the City of Vancouver for its support.

Thank you to all of you for staying in touch *and* for returning to the theatre with us to experience the joy of live music once again.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season, and we look forward very much to seeing you in 2022.

Sincerely,

Leila



CELLPHONES

The use of cellphones and recording devices is prohibited in the concert hall. Please take this opportunity to turn off all electronic devices.

音乐厅内禁止使用手机，禁止拍照，录音，录像。请观众关闭所有电子器材，感谢您的合作。

Program

MILOŠ, classical guitar

Avi Avital, mandolin

Sunday, November 14, 2021

Vancouver Playhouse 3:00 pm

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)

**Concerto in D minor
(after Marcello) BWV 974**

Adagio

(approx. 3 minutes)

PHILIP GLASS (B. 1937)

The Poet Acts from The Hours

(approx. 4 minutes)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)

**Partita No. 2 in C minor
BWV 826**

Capriccio

(approx. 2 minutes)

ISAAC ALBÉNIZ (1864–1909)

Asturias for solo guitar

(approx. 6 minutes)

MANUEL DE FALLA (1876–1946)

**Siete Canciones Populares
Españolas**

El paño moruno

Seguidilla murciana

Asturiana

Jota

Nana

Canción

Polo

(approx. 14 minutes)

INTERMISSION

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)

**English Suite No. 2 in A minor
BWV 807**

Prelude

(approx. 5 minutes)

PHILIP GLASS (B. 1937)

Opening No. 1 from Glassworks

(approx. 3 minutes)

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH
(1685–1750)

**Well-Tempered Clavier 1, No. 2
BWV 847**

Fugue in C minor

(approx. 2 minutes)

PHILIP GLASS (B. 1937)

Etude No. 9

(approx. 3 minutes)

GIOVANNI SOLLIMA (B. 1962)

Prelude for mandolin solo

(approx. 4 minutes)

MATHIAS DUPLESSY (B. 1972)

Sonata for Guitar and Mandolin

Allegro

Andantino

Allegro vivace

(approx. 13 minutes)

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MILOŠ classical guitar



Photo credit: Lars Borges - MercuryClassics

'Love at first listen' is how Miloš describes the moment when, as a child in Montenegro, he first picked up the old guitar that was lying around his childhood home gathering dust.

Fast forward to 2010: Miloš signed an exclusive recording contract with the legendary classical label Deutsche Grammophon and before long he was performing sell-out concerts as a soloist with international orchestras and in recital.

His first three releases on Deutsche Grammophon achieved chart-topping successes around the globe overnight. Miloš' 2019 album, *Sound of Silence*, joined his previous albums in reaching No. 1 on the UK Classical charts and on Amazon.

In 2021, Miloš released his sixth album *The Moon and the Forest*, featuring the Talbot and Shore concerti as well as Ludovico Einaudi's 'Full Moon' and Schumann's 'Traumerei'.

Taking every opportunity to promote classical music to the widest possible audience, Miloš often finds himself in the role of a radio and TV presenter. He is a passionate supporter of music education and acts as a Patron of the Mayor of London's Fund for Young Musicians and the Awards for Young Musicians. Miloš records exclusively for Decca Classics. He lives in London and performs on a 2007 Greg Smallman guitar.

Miloš Karadaglić is represented by
Opus3 Artists, New York, NY.

Avi Avital mandolin



Photo credit: Zohar Ron

Born in Be'er Sheva in southern Israel, Avi began learning the mandolin at the age of eight and soon joined the flourishing mandolin youth orchestra founded and directed by his charismatic teacher, Russian-born violinist Simcha Nathanson. He studied at the Jerusalem Music Academy and the Conservatorio Cesare Pollini in Padua with Ugo Orlandi. Winner of Israel's prestigious Aviv Competition in 2007, Avi is the first mandolinist in the history of the competition to be so honoured. He plays on a mandolin made by Israeli luthier Arik Kerman.

Highlights of the 2021-22 season include a North American tour with Les Violons de Roy, returns to the Seattle and Atlanta Symphony Orchestras, a duo tour with the guitarist Miloš, and a 3-week tour of the US with Brooklyn Rider. His recent engagements include Il Giardiano Armonico, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Diego Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony, BBC Symphony, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Zurich Tonhalle, Deutsche Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Orchestre National de Lyon, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Israel Philharmonic, and the Norwegian Radio Orchestra.

An exclusive Deutsche Grammophon artist, his sixth album for the label *The Art of the Mandolin* has been received with high praise and top reviews in The Times, Independent, Gramophone, BBC Music Magazine, as well as the international press. This follows five other recordings: *Bach* (2019), *Avital meets Avital* (2017) with oud/bassist Omer Avital, ECHO Klassik Award winning *Vivaldi* (2015), an album of Avital's own transcriptions of Bach concertos and *Between Worlds* (2014), a cross-generic chamber collection exploring the nexus between classical and traditional music.

Avi Avital is represented by
Opus3 Artists, New York, NY.

Program Notes

Johann Sebastian Bach

English Suite No. 2 in A minor: Prelude

Well-Tempered Clavier 1: Fugue in C minor

Concerto in D minor (after Marcello): Adagio

Partita No. 2 in C minor: Capriccio

In Bach's time, the instrument closest to the sound world of the guitar and mandolin was the lute. Bach wrote suites for the lute, transcribed his own works for the lute, and much of the music he wrote for the harpsichord (another plucked-string instrument), imitated the arpeggiated texture of French lute music. So transcribing Bach's keyboard music for these two chordophone cousins of the lute works particularly well, especially since their difference in timbre offers the opportunity to imitate the contrasts of tone colour available on a two-manual harpsichord.

* * *

The *Prelude* from Bach's *English Suite No. 2 in A minor* BWV 807 is an exhilarating two-voice *moto perpetuo* movement with the motoric rhythms of a Baroque *concerto grosso*. Its main textural feature is the rhythmic contrast between a 'chatter-box' stream of 16th notes and a plodding accompaniment in lumbering 8ths. Harmonies change like clockwork at the beginning of every bar, sometimes as part of harmonic sequences using the circle of fifths, at other times creating harmonic tension through the use of a pedal tone in the bass.

Rhythmic pulse plays a major role, as well, in the appeal of the *Fugue No. 2 in C minor* from *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book 1*. This pulse is driven by a playful, mordent-like 'tick-tock' figure sounded three times in its opening subject. And as in the *Prelude*, this rhythmic 'hook' in the fugue subject, with its many leaps, is dogged by a countersubject of scalar running figures in lumbering 8ths. But in this fugue the harmonic rhythm is much faster, sometimes changing with every 8th note.

Soothing relief from all this rhythmic counter-play comes in Bach's keyboard transcription of the *Adagio* from the Oboe Concerto in D minor attributed to the Venetian composer Alessandro Marcello (1669-1750), in turn now transcribed for guitar and mandolin. This work remains at the

centre of the Baroque repertoire for the oboe, a virtual operatic aria for the instrument, with its unusual texture of a piercing and reedy but lyrical soprano voice set in high relief against a sympathetic string accompaniment. This work may well have inspired Ennio Morricone to create the same texture in his film score for the film *The Mission*.

The gentle pulse of its opening bars immediately engages the ear, as the dissonant close interval of a major 2nd resolves rewardingly into a dominant seventh, and then finally on to the tonic harmony from which the melody of the solo instrument takes upward flight. Lingering dissonances such as these, and the tension created by their delayed resolution, contribute in no small measure to the pathos emanating from the solo melodic line in this movement.

The *Capriccio* in Bach's Partita No. 2 in C minor supplants the partita's traditional *gigue* finale but nevertheless displays many *gigue*-like features. Prominent amongst these is its fondness for wide leaps in the melodic line – leaps of a 10th, in fact – that by dint of constant repetition in various registers come across as buoyantly whimsical and good-natured. Also very *gigue*-like is its structural layout in binary form, with the second half beginning with a melodic inversion of the first half's leaping motive. Most ingenious of all in this movement, though, is the fact that it's actually a fugue!

Philip Glass

Opening No. 1 from *Glassworks*

The Poet Acts from *The Hours*

Etude No. 9

Philip Glass is a giant among American composers. He is widely recognized as one of the founding fathers of the *minimalist* movement in Western music, along with composers La Monte Young, Terry Riley and Steve Reich, although he prefers to think of himself as a composer of "music with repetitive structures".

The general idea of these composers is to limit themselves to the most elementary musical elements and by dint of repetition to create a kind of aural tapestry that undergoes kaleidoscopic

changes of tone colour while pulsing, vibrating or shimmering in tonal space.

This is music that is simple, tuneful and direct, meant to be immediately appealing without irony or even emotional complexity. While the harmonies are diatonic, i.e., based on the notes of the major or minor scale, there is little feeling of harmonic tension and release, few leading tones to guide the ear in pre-ordained patterns of expectation, so every change in harmony becomes equally surprising, equally emotionally resonant.

Opening No. 1, originally scored for solo piano, is the first movement of *Glassworks* (1982), a six-movement suite for piano and chamber wind orchestra. It is conceived as a series of four-voice harmonies, one chord to a bar, in repeated four-bar and eight-bar phrases, the three upper voices of the harmony constantly rocking in intervals of 3rds, 4ths and 5ths, in a 2-against-3 rhythm.

The Poet Acts is an emotionally resonant excerpt from Philip Glass' score to the film *The Hours* (2002), which deals with the suicide by drowning of the British writer Virginia Woolf. This film score won a BAFTA for Best Film Music and was nominated for a Golden Globe Award, a Grammy, and an Academy Award. Here, too, there are constantly wavering harmony lines in the textural in-fill, but shining through them from time to time is also a mysterious melody fragment repeated in the tonal range of the cello.

Etude No. 9, from the collection of 20 piano etudes that Glass wrote between 1991 and 2012, is similar in texture to other works on the program in that its texture features ostinato patterns in pulsing 8th notes. But often superimposed over them are parallel streams of simple triadic harmonies in the treble. And as in many of Glass' works, triple metre ripples in constant contrast to duple metre in the texture.

Isaac Albéniz ***Asturias* for solo guitar**

The best-known piece of Spanish guitar music, Albéniz's *Asturias*, began as a work written for the piano. First published as a *Prelude* to Albéniz's three-movement *Chants d'Espagne* in 1892, it was posthumously re-published as part of the composer's *Suite española* just before the First World War with the title *Asturias* and the subtitle *Leyenda* (legend), under which names it is known today.

The publisher was quite mistaken, because this work has nothing to do with the northern coastal region of Asturias and everything to do with the southern Spanish region of Andalusia. Andalusia is the cultural homeland of the *flamenco* tradition, an art that developed under gypsy influence to embrace a passionate amalgam of guitar-playing, singing, wailing, dancing, stomping, clapping and finger snapping, the sonic echoes of which Albéniz transferred with consummate skill to the keyboard.

Many transcriptions of this piano work exist for the guitar, but the most popular is undoubtedly that of Andrés Segovia (1893-1987), who transposed it from its original G minor to the more guitar-friendly key of E minor, allowing the fingers of the right hand to play on an open string the work's most ear-catching riff: a chiming pedal note in the treble that constantly sounds while the guitarist's thumb picks out melody notes down below.

This opening section is structured as a long crescendo, eventually punctuated by brusque exclamatory full chords played *rasgueado* (strummed with the fingernails), in imitation of the sharp heel-stomp of a flamenco dancer.

The piece is in three parts. Its more soulful and pensive middle section features a free-floating melody with minimal accompaniment that eventually returns to the 'busy-bee' hum of the work's opening section.

Manuel de Falla ***Siete Canciones Populares Españolas***

De Falla's most popular vocal work was composed in 1913 from authentic regional folk songs to which the composer added a piano part bristling with added-note chords, strumming rhythms and other effects richly suggestive of the sonorities of the Spanish guitar. Its transcription for that instrument is thus a natural outgrowth of the composer's original source of inspiration.

The work represents a musical travelogue through the regions of Spain, each song offering a glimpse into the daily life and eternal concerns of the common people, beginning in Murcia from which the first two songs derive.

The first, *El Paño moruno* (*The Moorish Cloth*), despite its dance-like rhythms – or perhaps *because* of them – delivers a mocking warning to young girls to avoid the "stain" of an illicit love affair. The *Seguidilla murciana* that follows is an intense argument of insistent taunts and bitter

banter, conveyed in a shoulder-poking rapid-fire patter of repeated notes in the melody line.

The mood changes to one of bewildered sadness in the *Asturiana* from Northern Spain, the hypnotic figures in the accompaniment evoking the numbness of unfathomable grief. By contrast, nothing could be livelier than the Aragonese *Jota* that follows, a whirling piece in triple time danced to the rhythmic clicking of castanets.

The Andalusian *Nana* is a lullaby, said to be the one that De Falla's mother sang to him when he was an infant. A rocking rhythm is created by a syncopated accompaniment over a soothing, sleepy pedal point in the bass.

The whimsy of love-sickness fills the *Canción*, a rollicking tune known all over Spain. The set ends in the deeply flamenco-inflected Andalusian gypsy music of *Polo*, with its rich build-up of guitar sonorities supporting the dark fury of its melismatic solo line.

Mathias Duplessy **Sonata for Guitar and Mandolin**

Mathias Duplessy is a wildly eclectic French composer and multi-instrumentalist with an interest in classical music – Ravel, Stravinsky & Prokofiev in particular – and in world musical cultures, especially the music and guitar-like instruments of India, China and Mongolia. He is astoundingly prolific, having written scores for several dozen feature films and documentaries, and made more than two dozen recordings. As a performer he is described by one critic for Radio-France International in following terms:

A guitarist of the highest virtuosity, Mathias Duplessy is one of those rare performers capable of shining in every genre: classical, jazz, oriental music, flamenco ... As a composer he has assimilated all of these styles in order to compose and perform music that is uniquely his own, alive and personal, brilliant and coming from deep within, sensitive and yet contemporary.

* * *

The composer has provided these notes on his new Sonata for Guitar and Mandolin.

“These are three differently coloured *tableaux*, imprinted with different influences: film music from the 1970s, a bit of Ravel or Prokofiev, some jazz and some Baroque influences. It's music with passion and vital energy. Just like Miloš and Avi, who are formed by different cultures, and love so many different styles.

The first movement is something of a homage to Ennio Morricone. It's a movement based on arpeggios in the guitar idiom, fast and dramatic, over which the mandolin lays down a tuneful melody with a certain nostalgic quality.

The second movement features a romantic-style melody that unfolds in tremolo in the guitar, to which the mandolin adds its own tremolo. I was really intrigued by the sound of these two instruments both playing in tremolo.

The third movement is a funny kind of mix. I wanted it to be a fun movement in which Miloš and Avi toss out challenges to each other, with virtuoso fireworks, with an energy at times jazzy at times gypsy, and harmonies that travel between the Baroque and Prokofiev.”

Donald G. Gíslason 2021

Thank You!

Presenting exceptional artists is made possible by the generosity of our supporters, who make the journey with us throughout the year.

COVID-19 has changed a great many things about the way in which we move through the world and interact with one another. Over the last 20 months, our supporters have sustained us in ways that we couldn't have imagined, and never have we been more grateful or more appreciative.

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There are many ways to support the VRS including making a philanthropic gift, sponsoring a concert and/or including us in your estate plans. If you would like more information, please contact us at 604.602.0363.

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