**Paul Galbraith, Guitar**

Program, Winter 2024

Sylvius Leopold Weiss (1687-1750)

Passacaglia

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sonata in A

Andante (BWV 872/872a)

Fuga (BWV 872a)

Adagio (BWV 916)

Allegro (BWV 916)

Lennox Berkeley (1903-1989)

Sonatina Op. 52a

Allegretto  
 Lento  
 Rondo, Allegro non troppo

Intermission

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Seven Pieces:

Short Study (Album for the Young, Op. 68 no.14)

Fantasy Dance (Album Leaves, Op. 124 no.5)

Waltz (Op.124 no.15)   
For Clara (Coloured Leaves, Op. 99 no.1)

Vision (Op.124 no.14)   
Sheherazade (Op. 68 no.32)

Mignon (Op. 68 no.35)

Enrique Granados (1867-1916)

Valses Poeticos

Vivace molto e melodico; Tempo de vals noble; Tempo de vals lento; Allegretto umoristico; Allegretto (Elegante); Quasi ad libitum (Sentimental); Vivo; Presto; da capo vals noble

Isaac Albeniz (1860-1909)

Capricho Catalan, Op.165, no.5 (from *España*)

Prelude, Op.165, no.1 (from *España*)

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

All works arranged for 8-string classical guitar by Paul Galbraith

**PAUL GALBRAITH, Guitar**

PAUL GALBRAITH is internationally renowned as one of the foremost guitarists of our time. The searching depth of his interpretations, along with his revolutionary playing style and instrument, have made him an instantly recognizable figure in the world of classical music.

Galbraith has been named as the 2024 recipient of the Guitar Foundation of America's Hall of Fame Artistic Achievemant Award for "Monumental Contributions to the Development of the Art and Life of the Classical Guitar"—an extraordinary honor that places him alongside Segovia, Julian Bream, John Williams, the LAGQ, etc.

Galbraith’s recording of the Complete Bach Violin Sonatas and Partitas was nominated for a GRAMMY in the category of Best Solo Instrumental Album. This 2-CD set was also chosen as one of the two best CDs of the year by Gramophone Magazine, which called it “a landmark in the history of guitar recordings.” It received a Four Star rating in Stereo Review, and reached the Top 10 on Billboard’s classical charts.

Both Galbraith’s playing position, and his guitar's extraordinary design, are considered groundbreaking development in the history of the instrument. The guitar is supported by a metal endpin, similar to that of a cello, which rests on a wooden resonance box. The instrument has two extra strings, one high, one low, increasing its range to an unprecedented extent.

At the age of 17, Galbraith won the Silver Medal at the Segovia International Guitar Competition. Andrés Segovia, who was present, called his playing "magnificent." This award helped launch an international career including engagements with some of the finest orchestras in Britain and Europe (Royal Philharmonic, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, BBC Philharmonic, Scottish Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Orchestra, Scottish Baroque Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra among them). He toured the U.S. as soloist with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, and performed in Prague’s Dvorák Hall with the National Chamber Orchestra of Chile. In the USA he has appeared as soloist with the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Knoxville Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony and ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, among others.

Galbraith gave a nationally-televised closing-night performance of Rodrigo’s Concierto de Aranjuez at the Scottish Proms with the BBC Scottish Orchestra, and was invited by the CBC to give a special “Tribute to Glenn Gould” concert for Canada-wide broadcast at the Glenn Gould Studios in Toronto on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the great pianist’s death. Galbraith has been featured twice on National Public Radio’s “All Things Considered” and numerous times on “Performance Today.”

Galbraith has recently appeared in festivals in Vienna, Austria and in Spain, Italy, China and South Korea. He made his New York début at the Frick Collection, receiving a rave review in the New York Times; he appeared three times on Lincoln Center’s “Great Performances” series, and he has twice given solo recitals at the 92nd Street Y. Recent and forthcoming engagements include NYC, Boston, Washington DC, Los Angeles, San Diego, Atlanta, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Portland Seattle, Miami, Baltimore, Buffalo, Milwaukee, San Antonio, and San Juan (Puerto Rico). Recitals in Brazil, Mexico, the UK, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Israel and Turkey are among Mr. Galbraith’s international activities. He has appeared at numerous Bach festivals, including those of Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Denver and Carmel.

Among the highlights of Galbraith's current season are appearances at the Lichfield and Greenwich Festivals in the UK; the Swedish Guitar and Lute Society; a tour of Italy including the Padova Guitar Festival; and duo concerts in New York City, Washington DC, Atlanta and other cities with Antonio Meneses, the last cellist of the legendary Beaux Arts Trio, commemorating the 200th anniversary of Brazil's independence.

Born in Scotland and now residing in Cambridge, England, Galbraith has lived in Basel, Switzerland and São Paulo, Brazil, where he founded the Brazilian Guitar Quartet. He has been a professor at the Music Academy of Basel, the Royal Scottish Conservatoire, Columbus State University in Georgia, and taught virtually for the University of Colorado School of Music.

Further information on Paul Galbraith is available at www.paul-galbraith.com

**Discography**:

Bach: The Complete Violin Sonatas and Partitas

Bach Lute Suites

Paul Galbraith Plays Haydn

In Every Lake the Moon Shines Full (folk tunes from various countries)

French Impressions: Music by Debussy and Ravel

(the above CDs are on the Delos label)

A CD and DVD of works by Bach, Mozart and Britten, with encore pieces by Bach, Albeniz and Ravel

Allemande: Paul Galbraith Plays Bach and Mozart (Guitar Coop)

**Program Notes**

**WEISS:**

The German composer Silvius Leopold Weiss was one of the most important and prolific composers of lute music in history, and one of the best-known and most technically accomplished lutenists of his day. He was a contemporary of J.S Bach, and there are letters and such that show that Weiss and Bach met and knew one another. Weiss wrote around 600 pieces, exclusively for the lute, most of them grouped into sonatas or suites, which consist mostly of Baroque dance pieces. A passacaglia is a dance of Spanish origin, which provides a melodic line varied continuously.

**BACH:**

Bach’s lute works have long been a staple of guitar programs, much in the way Bach’s harpsichord works have long been a staple of piano programs. In fact, the analogy is inevitably made between the two pairs of instruments: historically the guitar relates to the lute as the piano relates to the harpsichord, approximately so at least.

I merged these keyboard pieces by Bach, taken in this instance from two separate works, in order to create a "lute sonata" as a compliment to the existing body of Bach lute works. The fact that Bach’s keyboard sonatas, suites and partitas often vary in texture from movement to movement, led me to think of lifting the lighter-textured, more lute-like movements from one or two of them, and matching them up with others of a similar type which sounded familial, to form a new extended structure (naturally transposing where necessary).

Of course Bach’s own partitas and suites were tightly structured on a level to which my, admittedly, ‘mix-and-match’ assemblage could never hope to aspire. Nevertheless, it’s maybe worth remembering that Bach himself largely created his great B minor Mass, for example, from disparate cantata movements written throughout his composing life, something you are never aware of when listening to this seemingly tightly integrated, towering structure.

Might Bach have approved then? Naturally it’s impossible to be entirely sure, but given Bach’s highly practical approach to arrangements of his own music and that of his contemporaries, as well as his penchant for reassembling and recycling musical material, I’d wager he would.

**BERKELEY:**

Sir Lennox Randal Francis Berkeley was one of the major English composers of his time. In 1957 he wrote his *Sonatina*, Op. 52, for Julian Bream, who gave the first performance the following year. The first movement is in traditional sonata form, its lyrical opening reminiscent of English folk-song. The second movement suggests French influence, a characteristic trait of a composer of partly French ancestry and a pupil of Nadia Boulanger. It begins with a simple motif that twists and turns throughout a variety of moods, magically recalling the reflective delicacy of some of Debussy’s piano music. The final movement is in rondo form.”

—Graham Devine

**SCHUMANN:**

My title for this set of Schumann transcriptions is taken from the opening piece, named "Short Study," which is one of the marvellous miniatures in the set Schumann published under the title "Album for the Young" (Op. 68). This title is a misnomer, as in fact of the 43 pieces in the collection, only the first 18 are for children; the remainder come under the title "For Adults"! But it was probably easier to market under the first general title, and the publication certainly proved to be one of the most popular books of piano music ever issued. The last couple of "Studies" in the group are two of the most beloved pieces from op.68, entitled "Scheherazade" and "Mignon" respectively.

Many of the most magical pieces from Op. 68 are slow and dreamy in character, and so for the sake of variety and thinking towards study-like challenges, I sought out suitable pieces from other collections: "Album Leaves," Op. 124 and "Colored Leaves," Op. 99, from which last I chose the opening number of the set (untitled), which Schumann had written as a Christmas gift to his beloved Clara in 1838, many years before this opus was assembled for publication.

**GRANADOS:**

Enrique Granados was born near Barcelona, Spain. An acclaimed pianist, he performed in Spain, France and New York, collaborating with musicians such as Isaac Albéniz and Pablo Casals, violinists Eugène Ysäye and Jacques Thibaud, pianists Mieczyslaw Horszowski and Camille Saint-Saëns. In addition to his numerous piano works he composed chamber music, vocal music, operas, and symphonic poems. Granados was also a fine teacher and in 1901 he founded the Academia Granados.

Granados wrote: "My motto has always been to renounce an easy success in order to achieve one that is true and lasting." Today, Granados is universally recognised as one of Spain's most important composers. His music is essentially Romantic with some nationalist characteristics. He has been variously described as "the Spanish Chopin," "the last Romantic," and, by his compatriots, "our Schubert." Yet he had a distinctive voice that is instantly recognisable and entirely his own.

Granados was primarily influenced by mid-nineteenth century European Romanticism, especially the music of Schumann and Chopin. The introverted luxuriance of his luminous harmonies, his rich palette of pianistic colour, loose formal structures and his vivid imagination, always tinged with nostalgia, place him firmly within the Romantic school. His artistic personality was best suited to shorter, rhapsodic forms, especially those based on variations.

The *Valses Poéticos,* originally for piano, is a set of seven waltzes selected by the composer from a larger set of 18; the others were never published. It bears the dedication "A mi amigo Joaquin Malats."

**ALBÉNIZ:**

Born in Camprodon, province of Girona, Catalonia, Isaac Albéniz was a child prodigy who first performed at the age of four. At age seven, he passed the entrance examination for piano at the Conservatoire de Paris, but he was refused admission because he was believed to be too young.By the time he had reached 12, he had made many attempts to run away from home.

His concert career began at the age of nine when his father took both Isaac and his sister, Clementina, on tours throughout northern Spain. A popular myth is that at the age of twelve Albéniz stowed away in a ship bound for Buenos Aires. He then found himself in Cuba, then in the United States, giving concerts in New York and San Francisco and then travelled to Liverpool, London and Leipzig. By age 15, he had already given concerts worldwide. This story is not entirely false, Albéniz did travel the world as a performer; however, he was accompanied by his father, who as a customs agent was required to travel frequently. This can be attested by comparing Isaac's concert dates with his father's travel itinerary.

Albéniz, along with Enrique Granados and Manuel de Falla, defined and elevated Spanish music at the turn of the 20th century, each answering the call of their revered teacher Felipe Pedrell for music that united traditional and folkloric elements with classical disciplines to create a true national style. It is ironic that much of this music, written by virtuoso pianists for virtuoso pianists, is better known in transcriptions for classical guitar.

When Albéniz wrote his six album leaves, *España,* at the age of 30, he was in London and his piano recitals were causing a sensation. At these concerts he often performed his own compositions which were infused with the flair of his home country. Albéniz also gave the first performance of the six-part piano cycle “España” in London, taking his audience on a journey through the Spanish countryside. *Capricho Catalán* is the fifth movement of *España*.

Albéniz began composing his *Suite española* in 1886. It was intended as a collection of eight pieces, each highlighting a particular region of Spain, including the then-colony Cuba. As it happened, only four pieces were published, but twenty years later, another publisher took up the project and the suite as we know it was completed using other pieces Albéniz had composed in the interim. Deliciously atmospheric, by turns languid and festive, the suite’s movements each bear a descriptive subtitle. *Sevilla,* the third piece in *Suite española,* is a *sevillanas*, a Castilian dance with origins in the 15th century.