

AMERICAS – Program Notes

Grand Solo, Op. 14 by Ferdinando Sor (1778-1839) opens with an introduction in D minor, which unfolds in compound duple meter, imparting a lilting quality. An Allegro follows in D major in sonata-allegro form. The exposition opens with an exuberant, propelling motive that is equestrian in character. Riding along with great momentum, theme group one establishes the tonic key with playful, effortless melodies that suggest an afternoon of pastoral bliss on horseback. The themes themselves are strongly Mozartean in terms of spirited fun and simplicity. The modulating bridge is easily heard as a repeated-note passage of sextuplets. Theme group two enters in the dominant key, presenting a gentle, singing theme. Thereafter, a sixteenth-note passage spins forth with such naturalness to suggest a gushing spring. Sor then introduces a wistful sigh motive over a dominant pedal. Slur passages ensue, delightful in their figurations, not unlike a canopy of chirping birds. Material from theme group one returns varied and leads to a strong cadence. The development is announced with blocks of repeated secondary dominant seventh chords that take us for a short exploration of D-flat major. Enharmonic modulation takes us through A major with an arpeggio section, and on to D minor with a mysterious bass melody. Chords rise above a dominant pedal; and the opening motive is heard in a descending sequence, which ushers in the Recapitulation. Musical material from both theme groups (abridged) reappears in the tonic key. The coda offers one last surprise with a deceptive cadence, which brings in the relative minor key. This is heard as a lively bass figuration that progresses harmonically to climax on the dominant. Sor brings his sonata to a grand conclusion in true classical style.

Wind Dance by Peter Ware is a lively addition to his *Forest Scenes* suite. A playful, programmatic piece alternating between quadruple and triple meter, it captures the spirit of "jest" or scherzoso. It opens with rasgueado strumming that leads to a snappy section of trills. A middle section opens again with rasgueado chords, which now alternate with slur passages. The melodic interest gradually descends to the bass register, from which snap pizzicati rise melodically to a dramatic pause. The final cadential section employs rasgueado strums, slurs and snap pizzicati to create an energetic close.

Variations on O Canada! was inspired after reading Alan Walker's book, "Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years". Throughout his concert tours, Liszt garnered great enthusiasm with his improvisations on national anthems, naturally tailored to accommodate his audience. Thus, the idea of a Millennium gift to Canada in the form of a Variation set took shape in December 1997, for a concert I would present at Lakehead University in March of 1998. As form dictates, a clear statement of the theme is heard and subsequently followed by a series of seven variations in which melody, rhythm and harmony are transformed into fresh textures. Variation 1 features a perky dotted-rhythm, while variation 2 introduces an ascending melodic motive (passing stepwise through the opening interval of a minor third) and then freely weaves itself through the pitches of the theme. Variation 3 features a lively arpeggiation, and variation 4 suggests a comforting cradle song in 6/8 meter. While variation 5 explores the minor, variation 6 disarms the seriousness with a playful slur figuration. Variation 7 (with passing tones added) evokes the triumphant, drawing on a similarity in melodic shape (the first seven pitches) to Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, *Ode to Joy*.

Historical Note: The famous melody, composed by Calixa Lavallée (1842-91) was first heard on Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, on the Plains of Abraham in Montreal, June 24, 1880. It was declared Canada's national anthem on July 1, 1880. While Lavallée was born in Verchères, Quebec, he participated in the American Civil War and eventually settled in Boston. The original French lyrics were written by Sir Adolphe-Basile Routhier and have survived many English translations. The official English version (1908) is credited to Mr. Justice Robert Stanley Weir, though the Senate and House of Commons recommended minor changes in 1968

The **Fantasia** by English composer and lutenist John Dowland (1563-1626) comes from the composer's *Variety of Lute Lessons* (1610). Performed on guitar, it is a triumphant tribute to the lute; and it is an honour to claim the inheritance of Dowland's music. The piece begins as an expression of pure, joyful polyphony which blossoms from its own invention and then soars into further bliss in a sixteen-note passage. It climaxes in the triplet section, which brings the piece to a close.

Folksong Suite by Doug Dawson was written at my request, reflecting my interest and love of folksongs. These lovely melodies would fill my mind during many an evening walk. With the exception of the Irish air, "Danny Boy", I would lull myself peacefully along, all the while completely ignorant of their national origins. The melody of "Aura Lee", written by George R. Poulton (1861), bears connection to the American Civil War. I risk an omission by hesitating to mention that Elvis Presley made this tune famous to the words "Love me Tender". "Loch Lamond" is of Scottish origin, while "Black is the Color of my True Love's Hair" is a Celtic love song, which originated in the British Isles. I am thankful for these traditional melodies, brought by immigrants to North America, which have given me joy and enriched our culture. I asked the composer to present these melodies in the simple, unpretentious form of a suite, with his characteristically rich, jazz harmonic palette. Each one is a gem.

Phantasia by Clifford Crawley is an episodic piece comprised of sections that spring up freshly, and connect in a free flowing seamless texture. It opens pianissimo with a slur figuration of 5 notes, over which an improvisatory-type melody gradually emerges. The music spins itself out into a playful scherzoso, full of personality and jest. Following is a dance-like Andante in 6/8 meter that occupies the central position in the piece, giving the piece a ternary feeling. When this section ends, a short pizzicato passage punctuated with chords ascends to a fermata. A soft, whispering section ensues; and the final passage recalls the mood of its magical opening.

Four Vignettes by Aris Carastathis is a suite of miniatures that explore various melodic ideas on the guitar. The first of these finds the melody shifting from the upper register to the lower with interjections of quick, quirky embellishments. In a flowing triple meter, the second vignette features disjunct melodic passages of eighth notes, connected by faster scale passages. The third opens as a series of harmonies from which a melody emerges and proceeds into a polyphonic dialogue of great interest. The closing miniature is characterised by embellishing slurs that decorate a lively interchange of registers.

Prelude and Fugue in A minor (BWV 894-895) is my arrangement of Bach's keyboard pairing from Kleine Präludien und Fugnetten. Free and rhapsodic in character, the prelude opens with an ascending flourish, which ends with a dramatic descending leap to the leading tone. A declamatory solo line descends stepwise to the dominant at which time, a second voice enters and brings the phrase to a cadence. As subsequent phrases unfold, a third, middle voice emerges and continues through its rhapsodic closing. A four-voice fugue follows with a twelve-pitch subject set forth in eighth notes. It begins on the dominant, drops to the tonic and then leaps up a minor sixth to the expressive submediant (5-5-5-1-6-6-6-5-4-3-2-3). The tenor voice first introduces the subject. The bass voice follows, providing a tonal answer in the dominant key. After a one-bar bridge, the soprano statement is heard, followed by the alto's answer. In this instance, Bach's tightly crafted fugue writing incorporates a stretto, making it all the more fun. It closes with a cadential-like passage of arpeggiated harmonies, recalling the rhapsodic feeling of the prelude.

Chama 'The Eagle and the Plumed Serpent' by Peter Ware was a consortium commission by the University of Kansas, Whitman College, the Cincinnati Composers Guild and the First Unitarian Church (Youngstown, Ohio) funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Originally scored for piano and flute duet, the piece was arranged by the composer to accommodate the guitar and violin. Named after a river near Santa Fe, New Mexico, *Chama* is meditative in character. Its subtitle, "the eagle and plumed serpent" is drawn from Toltec mythology.

Unfolding as a continuous variation form, the violin opens with a plaintive solo. The guitar makes its presence known with the entrance of strong, dark chords. The two partners then join in an ebb and flow of eighth-note motion with the violin reaching into its upper register. After cascading down to a calmer mood, an accelerando plunges them into an animated discourse recalling their initial pairing. As this diminishes, the violin employs a mute to create a quiet, introspective accompaniment as the guitar revels in its own intimate expression. Following this section, the partners join in a transparent octave section, which begins very slowly and grows through acceleration and heightened register to a powerful climax. At this point, the guitarist is asked to lower the sixth-string E to an E-flat with the right hand, while sustaining a trill in the left. The violin is heard in passionate outcries as the guitar provides a stabilizing foundation. When this outpouring is finished, the meditative character of the opening texture returns, however the guitar maintains its presence with a stark accompaniment of an E-flat drone. The violin now speaks directly to the soul in the wordless domain of music.

American Variations by Robert Rollin is a five-movement homage to American music. Like many American composers, Rollin has chosen to explore the potential of jazz and popular elements, but in an atonal context. Movements 1, 3, and 5 are entitled: Blues, Rock and Bebop. Spirited riffs, rhythms and syncopations, are easily identifiable, though clothed in a language of high dissonance. Such treatment of melodic/rhythmic material suggests comparison to his compatriot, Charles Ives. Gershwin wrote: "Jazz I regard as an American folk-music; not the only one, but a very powerful one which is probably in the blood and feeling of the American people more than any other style of folk-music. These composers are certain to produce something worth while if they have the innate feeling and talent to develop the rich material offered to them." Interspersed between these strongly rhythmic pieces, movements 2 and 4 provide contrast in terms of tempo and inspiration. In homage to the Zuni Indians of New Mexico, traditional Zuni melodies are incorporated into the musical fabric.

- Lynn Harting-Ware

Additional support for the recording of *American Variations* was provided by a grant from Youngstown State University Research Council.

Lynn Harting-Ware conveys dramatic musical flair, beautiful tone, and a variety of timbres, which enable her to transverse musical styles and venues with great success. Her recordings and concerts blend traditional classical guitar repertory with her own arrangements for guitar, such as Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. She has a fresh eclecticism and finds a sense of fun in blending popular styles such as jazz, blues, folk and new age into her concert programs.

Following in the footsteps of Clara Schumann, Harting-Ware also composes for her instrument. Her dedication and musicality inspire composers; and she has premiered and commissioned numerous compositions. In 1996, she was honoured with a repertory expansion grant by the Knight Foundation to build a program of 20th century American guitar works. She also works with composer consortiums in presenting music of our century. Harting-Ware has premiered guitar concertos written especially for her as can be heard on the CD *Impossible Dream*, conducted by Gerhard Samuel. She gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council, Guitar Society of Toronto and Symphony Hamilton for a new guitar concerto composed by Peter Ware.

She received a Master of Music Degree from Kent State University and a Bachelor of Music Degree from the University of Cincinnati/College Conservatory of Music. She teaches music history and rudiments classes; and has written workbooks including "*Romantic Music*" and "*From Bingen to Beethoven*" that prepare students for the Royal Conservatory of Music examinations. Her commitment to developing the classical guitar repertory leads her to publish a catalog of classical guitar music for Acoma-Nambe Editions. Her compact disc recordings include **The Many Moods of the Guitar** (GXD 5732), **Impossible Dream** (GXD 5733), **Forest Scenes** (GXD 5734), **Americas** (GXD 5736) and **Angelica** (GXD 5735). Ms. Harting-Ware performs exclusively on D'Addario strings.

James Wallenberg was born in Binghamton, New York. In 1978, he joined the Toronto Symphony Orchestra after receiving his Masters of Music Degree from the Yale Graduate School of Music. James is a dedicated chamber musician, who brings his love for humour to rehearsals. Coming from a musical family, he studied violin from his mother and piano from his father, a former conductor of the Binghamton Symphony. After receiving a Bachelor of Music degree from Ithaca College, he continued violin studies at Yale Graduate School of Music with Broadus Erle and Syoko Aki and chamber music with the Tokyo String Quartet. Past musical experiences reflect his sense of adventure and fun. Prior to the TSO, James played in an orchestra for Emerson, Lake & Palmer and in a Salsa band. Other interesting moments include wearing cow tights in a milk commercial, appearing in an orchestral scene in the movie *Camilla*, and performing with The Three Tenors for their Vancouver and Toronto concerts. James performs internationally in chamber concerts. This is his debut recording.

Aris Carastathis was born on May 25, 1957 in Athens, Greece. He completed his Bachelor and Master degrees in music at the University of Northern Iowa; and his Doctorate of Musical Arts Degree from Louisiana State University. Carastathis is currently Chair and Associate Professor of Theory/Composition at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, where he also directs the new music ensemble. An Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre, Carastathis' music has been performed in Canada, the United States, England and Germany.

Clifford Crawley was born in England on January 29, 1929. He studied composition at the University of Durham and in London with Lennox Berkeley and Humphrey Searle. From 1973-93, he was Professor of Composition and Music Education at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He is currently Professor Emeritus, living in Toronto.

Doug Dawson was born in 1947 in New York City. He obtained degrees from the American University in Washington D.C. An Associate Professor of Music at American University from 1973 and 1982, he is now a freelance composer living in Maryland.

Robert Rollin was born in New York City on February 16, 1947. While in high school, he attended the Juilliard School of Music and later obtained a B.A. at City College of New York. He received his Doctorate at Cornell University studying with Karel Husa and Robert Palmer, and also studied in Hamburg, West Germany with Gyorgy Ligeti. He is currently on the faculty at the Dana School of Music, Youngstown State University.

Peter Ware was born May 4, 1951 in Richmond, Virginia and grew up along the Rappahannock River, canoeing its intricate passageways. Ware's early love of music found expression by age four when he captured hearts at a benefit concert singing "on Top of Old Smokie", while accompanying himself on ukulele. In this simple, rural setting, his talents developed through the church choir and under the piano tutelage of Florence Robertson, a descendent of Beethoven's lineage. At Virginia Commonwealth University, he studied cello with Gisela Depkat and composition with Krzysztof Penderecki, Roman Haubenstock-Ramati and Toru Takemitsu; and at the University of Cincinnati with Scott Huston. Ware's musical style continues to evolve, but has always communicated a love of music coupled with a soul searching quality that leaves one with the feeling that some deeper meaning has been imparted.

Ware's teaching experience includes appointments at Queen's University, Brock University, Northern Kentucky University and the University of Cincinnati. In addition to composing and music publishing, Ware has written a series of theory books. These books give voice to this teaching method, which blends the philosophical implications of harmony with the theoretical nuts and bolts. While he teaches piano, theory and composition privately, he finds a captive audience for his work among music students engaged in the Royal Conservatory Examinations. Titles include: *Rudiments of Music in the Spheres* and *Harmony of the Spheres*. A respected composer, Peter Ware has been honoured with grants and awards from Yale University, the University of Cincinnati, the Canada Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.

O Canada!

O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all they sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

O Canada! Terre de nos aïeux,
Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux!
Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
Il sait porter la croix!
Ton histoire est une épopée,
De plus brillants exploits.
Et ta valeur, de foi trempée,
Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.
Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.

- Sir Adolphe-Basile Routhier