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Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Jason Breslin, guitar

Jason Breslin
Marshall University

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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

Senior Recital

Jason Breslin, guitar

Sunday, April 10, 2011
Jomie Jazz Forum
3:00 p.m.

Program

<i>Fantasia No. 10</i>	Alonso Mudarra (ca. 1510-1580)
<i>Prelude, Fugue and Allegro (BWV 998)</i> Allegro	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
<i>Grand Solo, op. 14</i>	Fernando Sor (1778-1839)
<i>Asturias ("Leyenda")</i>	Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)
<i>Etude No. 1</i>	Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)
<i>Prelude No. 3</i>	
<i>En los trigales</i>	Joaquín Rodrigo (1901-1999)
<i>Introduction to Sunburst</i>	Andrew York (b. 1958)
<i>Sunburst</i>	

This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at www.marshall.edu/cofa/music.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree guitar performance. Mr. Breslin is a student in the guitar studio of Associate Professor Julio Ribeiro Alves.

Program Notes

Alonso Mudarra (ca. 1510-1580)

Fantasia No. 10

Alonso Mudarra was a Renaissance Spanish composer who wrote some of the earliest music written for the vihuela, an instrument similar to the lute and early ancestor of the guitar. Fantasia No. 10 ("Fantasia that imitates the harp in the manner of Luduvico") was originally composed for vihuela. It was included in a collection of vihuela music entitled *Tres libros de musica en cifras para vihuela* (Three Music Books in Ciphers for the Vihuela), which was first published in Seville in 1546 while Mudarra was serving as a canon at Seville Cathedral. The fantasia is from the first of the three books. *Fantasia No. 10* is often cited as the most well-known of all of Mudarra's vihuela compositions. The arrangement performed this afternoon is by Miguel Abloniz, an Italian guitarist, teacher and composer.

The composition is not metered nor does it have a set key signature. The theme is stated in the beginning with descending arpeggios, which are repeated throughout. These arpeggios are meant to emulate the textures of the harp. The first section focuses mainly on two motives, which are varied as each modulation occurs. They can be identified from each other by their unique rhythmic feel. The second motive is more brisk than the first one. The ending sounds very dissonant; however, this was Mudarra's intention as hinted by his note in the score: "From here to the end there are some dissonances; if you play them well, they will not sound bad."

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Allegro from *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro* (BWV 998)

J.S. Bach has always been a favorite composer of many classical guitarists, and his keyboard and instrumental works are widely transcribed for the guitar. It is not known if Bach intended for this piece, composed between 1740 and 1745, to be played on the lute or a similar instrument called the lute-harpsichord, a keyboard instrument similar to the harpsichord that used gut strings. The original work was written in E-flat, but most guitarists transpose it to the more accessible key of D. Due to time constraints, only the *Allegro* will be heard this afternoon.

The *Allegro*, composed in 3/8 time, mainly serves as the conclusion to the composition. It is modeled after the gigue, a lively Baroque dance with a strong, triplet feel. The rhythmic energy of this dance translates to a feeling of motion throughout most of the movement.

Fernando Sor (1778-1839)

Grand Solo, op. 14

Fernando Sor was a Spanish composer and guitarist, nowadays mainly known for his 20 guitar studies edited by Andrés Segovia. The earliest known version of the *Grand Solo*, op. 14 for guitar appeared under the title "Sonata Prima" in a collection of seven works for solo guitar music published in Paris

around 1810. The *Grand Solo* is in sonata form, except it contains an introduction along with the standard sections of the sonata design: exposition, development, and recapitulation. The opus begins with a slow introduction that is completely separate in character from the main body of the composition because it is in a different key and a contrasting meter.

Following the introduction, the exposition, which is livelier and brighter, begins. The main body of the composition is in common time and faster. The piece contains a variety of unique musical themes that are heard throughout. The composition is concluded with a return of the initial theme.

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)

Leyenda

Isaac Albéniz was a Spanish composer and pianist best known for his piano compositions adapted from musical characteristics of Spanish folk music. *Leyenda* (also known as *Asturias*) was originally composed around the year 1896 as the unnamed prelude for a suite of Spanish songs for piano entitled *Chants d'Espagne*, and as the fifth movement of the *Suite Española*, op. 47. Francisco Tárrega first transcribed it for guitar. The original intention of the piece as written for piano was to imitate the classical guitarist's technique by "alternating the thumb and fingers of the right hand, playing a pedal-note with the index finger and a bass melody with the thumb." Since then, many guitarists have transcribed it to their liking, including classical guitar icon Andrés Segovia. Rock and roll music enthusiasts might recognize this composition from the introduction to "Spanish Caravan" from The Doors' 1968 album, *Waiting for the Sun*. The composition was also recently heard in the Keifer Sutherland thriller *Mirrors*.

The piece evokes Spanish flamenco music. The introduction in particular contains open-string pedal points and *rasgueado* chords, a technique of flamenco guitarists where the fingers of the right hand execute very fast strumming patterns. The first section introduces the main theme, which is then repeated with variations suggesting that the guitarist may be accompanied by the fast footwork of a flamenco dancer. The middle section is reminiscent of a gypsy vocalist singing a solo, followed by the guitar strumming a solo, which is archetypal of flamenco.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Étude No. 1

Heitor Villa-Lobos was a well-known Brazilian composer and performer on cello, guitar, and clarinet. He is best known for his *Bachianas Brasileiras* and *Chôros* pieces. His homeland of Brazil drove his composition style, and he blended elements of Brazilian folk music with those from the European classical tradition into his own works.

Étude No. 1 (also known as *Étude des arpèges* or "Study of arpeggios," the first of twelve studies) was composed by Villa-Lobos in 1928. The *Études* were premiered in 1947 by Andrés Segovia, for whom the études were composed. Arpeggios are featured in every single measure, consistently alternating between

ascending and descending. The study has a theme that is dark and somehow mysterious, and a middle section composed of diminished chords that descend through the range of the instrument.

There is a tendency to perform this study at breakneck speed. Consequently, the beauty of the melody of the piece is often lost, whereas the listener will be able to appreciate the melody as Villa-Lobos intended it to be heard at a moderate tempo. The work maintains a steady rhythmic pace until right before the end.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Prelude No. 3 in A minor

This next Villa-Lobos composition was published 11 years after the *Études*. It is one of the five preludes for guitar, published in 1940, and dedicated to his wife, Arminda Neves d'Almeida Villa-Lobos, whom he affectionately named Mindinha. This set of preludes is the final set of music Villa-Lobos composed for guitar. The lesser-known descriptive title of *Prelude No. 3* is "Homage to Bach." Villa-Lobos was influenced by the work of J.S. Bach as evidenced by his *Bachianas brasileiras* (Portuguese for "Brazilian Bach-like pieces").

The piece is written in two parts. It begins free-form, and switches meter throughout and is somewhat atonal, lacking a key signature. It contains very rapid ascending arpeggios that lead into a pause on a chord. This section is composed of arpeggiated chords. The second section, in contrast, is in common time, *adagio* and is more melancholic in sound as it is primarily in A minor. This section contains a single theme that is played in a descending sequence, until it gets into a short interlude, with a pedal tone leading back to the beginning of the second section.

Joaquín Rodrigo (1901-1999)

En los trigales

Joaquín Rodrigo was a Spanish classical composer and piano virtuoso. His compositions are best known among twentieth-century music enthusiasts and classical guitarists. *En los trigales* ("In the Wheat Fields") was written in 1938 during a brief trip to Spain after Rodrigo had spent a few years overseas. It was dedicated to Narciso Yepes, a Spanish guitarist and friend of Rodrigo's. It was composed as part of the composer referred to as an "imaginary suite that describes the Spanish landscape" called *Por los campos de España* ("Through the Fields of Spain").

En los trigales makes use of elements of flamenco guitar music, especially in the introduction, where a lot of tremolos and quick triplets are heard throughout. Swift repetition of phrases occurs throughout the beginning of the composition. The lyrical middle section is played more freely than the beginning, evoking the sound of a drum or handclaps. The section is concluded by a few artificial harmonics. The version of *En los trigales* that will be performed today contains a cadenza created by Spanish classical guitarist Pepe Romero.

Andrew York (b. 1958)

Introduction to Sunburst/Sunburst

Andrew York is a Grammy award-winning guitarist and composer and former member of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet and is one of the most prominent contemporary American classical guitar composers. York first recorded this piece on his debut solo album, *Perfect Sky* in 1986. York told *Classical Guitar Magazine* that the title was influenced by the state of California. The work made its foray into the classical repertoire after being recorded by guitarist John Williams in 1989. The Introduction was composed some years later by York for Christopher Parkening, who recorded it under the title "Jubilation" in 1996. York himself recorded a more complete version of the Introduction as a new recording of *Sunburst* for his 2003 recording *Into Dark*.

The Introduction contains similar musical ideas to those heard in *Sunburst*. It is meant to be played freely with no set tempo. The tuning of the guitar for *Sunburst* is nicknamed the "three-Ds" tuning because both the first and sixth string are tuned to D, and the fourth string remains in D. This tuning changes the sound of the classical guitar to a much brighter sound comparable to a steel-string guitar. The piece features extended techniques on the steel string guitar including hammer-ons and pull-offs. Another characteristic that makes it sound similar to a steel-string guitar is the longer sustaining of the notes, which imitates the longer vibrations of the steel strings. *Sunburst* is rhythmically active and utilizes some syncopation. Some of the rhythms and harmonies are associated with rock and jazz.

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