

JOHN SCHNEIDER: THE "CLASSIC" GUITAR



SOUTHWEST
CHAMBER
MUSIC

Music Unwrapped Guide – December, 2008

Free of charge, and lots of fun, *Music Unwrapped* is the ideal way for the family to spend a Saturday morning learning about a wide variety of great music. Join us for this special program as John Schneider takes the audience on a journey, exploring the evolution of the classical guitar and its immense repertoire. Put on your seatbelts: we'll be traveling four hundred years in one hour!

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ABOUT GUITARIST JOHN SCHNEIDER



John Schneider is an internationally recognized guitarist, composer, author and broadcaster whose weekly Thursday morning radio program *Global Village* on local station KPFK brings the sound of *music from around the world and around the block* into thousands of homes. A specialist in contemporary music, Schneider's *The Contemporary Guitar* has become the standard text in the field. He is the Director of the ensembles *Just Strings*, *Partch*, and the founding artistic director of *MicroFest*. He has just released a CD, *Lou Harrison – Por Gitaro*, on Mode Records, available on itunes.

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ABOUT SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC

GRAMMY® Award-winning **Southwest Chamber Music** has been bringing *PROJECT MUSE* in-school performances to schools throughout Los Angeles County since 1994 with music that reflects the vast diversity of art music from around the world. We perform throughout the year at the Armory Center for the Arts, Boston Court, Norton Simon Museum, Colburn School of Performing Arts, and a summer festival at The Huntington Library. To find out more about Southwest Chamber Music and our other programs, visit our website at www.swmusic.org.



FEATURED COMPOSERS

Alonso Mudarra (1510-1580), was a Spanish composer and vihuela player of the Renaissance. His music is some of the earliest surviving music for the guitar. **Fun Fact:** When Mudarra died, all his fortune was distributed to the poor of the city of Seville.



Fernando Sor (1778-1839) was known as the “Beethoven of the Guitar.” Sor composed operas, ballets, symphonies, and songs. He is best known for both his guitar compositions and an extensive set of guitar studies that include all aspects of playing technique.



John Dowland (1563-1626), was an English composer, singer, lute player. Most of Dowland’s music is written for the lute, an early version of the modern classical guitar. His compositions are known for being melancholy in melody and lyrics. In the 1960’s, a revival of early songs and music helped bring more attention to the importance of Dowland’s music in the evolution of classical guitar repertoire. **Fun Fact:** The popular artist Sting, is a huge fan of Dowland’s songwriting. In 2006 he released an album of Dowland’s songs titled *Songs From the Labyrinth* (Deutsche Grammophon).



Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829) was an Italian guitarist and composer who spent much of his adult life in Vienna, surrounded by elite composers such as Beethoven, Shubert, Rossini, and Paganini. Giuliani wrote over 150 compositions for guitar, and a great deal of chamber music. During his life, he was better known as a performer; on the guitar, cello, and as a vocalist.



Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909), Spanish wrote most of his works for piano. Many compositions were later transcribed to guitar. *Asturias (Leyenda)* is his most well-known contribution to the classical guitar repertoire. Originally it was composed for piano as the fifth movement of the *Suite Espanola, Op. 47*.



Agustín Barrios (1885-1944), was a Paraguayan guitarist, composer, and poet who drew inspiration from South American folk music, and the Baroque and Romantic periods of European composition. Barrios was well-known during his life, and was famed for his fantastic live performances.



Heitor Villa-Lobos (1889-1959) was possibly the most famous composer to have come from South America. His music was greatly influenced by Brazilian folk music and European classical composers. Before becoming a serious composer, Villa-Lobos spent many years exploring native Brazilian musical culture and performing with street-music bands.



Mason Williams (1938-), musician and comedy writer, wrote the most broadcast classical guitar piece in history, *Classical Gas*. Released in 1968, Williams was already involved in TV production as a comedy writer and was able to perform it several times on TV with orchestra accompaniment. The song sold over a million copies and topped the Billboard Easy Listening Survey.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CLASSICAL GUITAR



THE OUD is a pear-shaped, stringed instrument that originated over 3500 years ago in Persia. The Oud has a particularly long tradition in Iraq, where a saying goes that in its music lies the country's soul.



THE LUTE was developed in Europe after the Oud was brought to Spain by the Moors during their conquest (711-1492). The main difference between the Oud and the Lute is the addition of frets to the neck of the Lute.



THE CLASSICAL GUITAR has six strings, and is close to the common acoustic guitars widely available today. The earliest six string classical guitar was built in Italy in 1779. All kinds of music are performed on the instrument, including classical, flamenco, and jazz.

MUSIC VOCABULARY (from the California Standards for the Arts)

BAROQUE MUSIC describes a style of European classical music from 1600-1750, following the **Renaissance period**.

Notable Baroque composers include Antonio Vivaldi, George Frideric Handel, and J.S. Bach.

BOSSA NOVA is a style of Brazilian music that developed in the early 1960s and continues to inspire standard jazz repertoire. Notable Bossa Nova artists include Antonio Carlos Jobim, Vinicius de Moraes, and João Gilberto.

A **CAPO** is a device used to shorten the strings on a variety of string instruments including the guitar, mandolin, or banjo. The most common form is a rubber-covered bar fastened to the neck of the instrument with a clamp.

DYNAMICS are various degrees of volume in the performance of music, such as loud and soft.

The **FINGERBOARD** (also known as a **FRETBOARD** on fretted instruments) is a thin, long strip of wood that is laminated to the front of the neck of an instrument and above which the strings run. In the playing of such an instrument, a musician presses the strings down towards it in order to change their vibrating lengths, causing changes in pitch. This is called "stopping" the strings.

FLAMENCO is a Spanish art form that includes song, dance, and guitar playing.

A **FRET** is one of several ridges set across the fingerboard of a stringed instrument, such as a guitar, which help the fingers to stop the strings at the correct points.

HARMONY is the simultaneous combination of tones.

A **HARPSICHORD** is a musical instrument that produces sounds by plucking a string when each key is pressed. It was widely used in **baroque music**. Many pieces for harpsichord have been adapted to the classical guitar.

IMPROVISATION is the spontaneous creation of music.

An **INTERVAL** is the distance in pitch between two tones.

A **MELODY** is an organized sequence of single notes.

The **METER** is the grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured.

The **RENAISSANCE GUITAR** resembles a small lute, and usually has five strings. From the **Renaissance period**, a cultural movement from the 14th to the 17th century in Europe.

RHYTHM is the combination of long and short, even and uneven sounds that convey a sense of movement in time.

A **SCORE** is the written form of the entire composition. All players have a part of the score for their instrument, unless they have memorized the notes.

SOUND PERCEPTION is how you interpret what you hear and where you hear it.

The **STRING FAMILY** (also called **Chordophones**) is the group of instruments that uses strings to produce sound.

The strings are made of gut, steel, or nylon. Stringed instruments can be played with a bow- a long stick that has horsehair attached to it, or they can be played by plucking or strumming the strings with the fingers.

The **TIMBRE** is the tone color or character of sound heard.

The **TONALITY (KEY)** is the tonal center of a composition.

TUNING is to adjust a music instrument to the desired frequency or pitch.

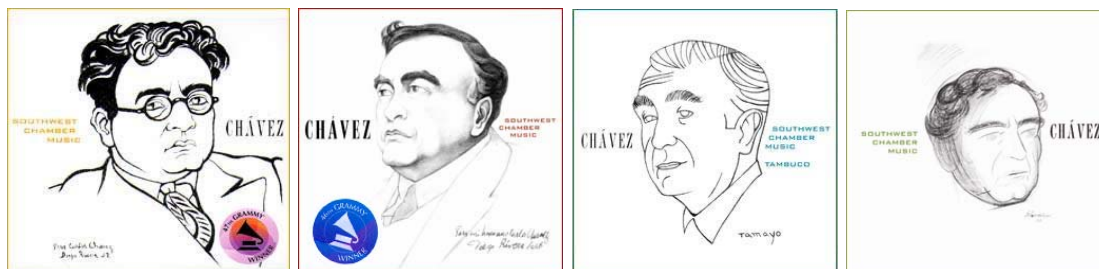
A **VIHUELA** can refer to an early guitar from 15th and 16th century Spain, or the Mexican Vihuela, typically played in Mariachi bands.

CDs from John Schneider & Southwest Chamber Music

AVAILABLE NOW on iTunes & CD Baby

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Check out John Schneider's performance in Volume 4 of Southwest Chamber Music's *Complete Chamber Works of Carlos Chávez*:



Continue Learning with these Internet Resources:

Listen to *John Schneider's weekly radio show, Thursdays at 10 AM on 90.7 FM:*
www.kpfb.org

For more information on *learning the classical guitar*, we recommend these links:

<http://www.guitarist.com/classical>
<http://www.classicalguitar.net>
<http://www.classic-guitar.com>
<http://www.learnclassicalguitar.com>

For more information on *the history of the classical guitar*, we recommend these links:

http://www.classicalguitarmidi.com/history/guitar_history.html
<http://www.earlyromanticguitar.com>
<http://www.guitarramagazine.com>

To try to create your own composition at

<http://www.creatingmusic.com>

Another excellent interactive website for kids with information about instruments is
www.playmusic.org

For more information, and to access exciting educational videos and podcasts:

1.800.726.7147 or visit our website **www.swmusic.org**

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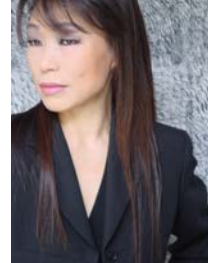
Joan Huang



Gabriela Ortiz



Unsuk Chin



Performed by Percussionist Lynn Vartan and Violinist Shalini Vijayan



Saturday, January 24 @ 8 p.m.

**Armory Center for the Arts
145 N. Raymond Ave., Pasadena 91103**

Pre-concert Talk @ 7:30 p.m. with Artistic Director Jeff von der Schmidt
\$38 general admission, \$28 senior and \$10 student

www.swmusic.org or 1.800.726.7147



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