

MUSICAL PRAYER

MARK HILLIARD WILSON

St. James Cathedral Guitarist

Magic Serenade

Bryan Johanson
b. 1952

Composer and classical guitarist Bryan Johanson was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. He studied composition with Charles Jones and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom. Johanson's compositions feature four symphonies, concertos for violin, cello and piano, numerous chamber works, song cycles and choral works, and compositions for solo instruments.

Ballad of Donegal

Maria Linnemann
b. 1947

Maria Linnemann was born in Amsterdam, Holland and grew up in England. She developed an early love for English, Scottish, and Irish folklore, and takes inspiration for many of her compositions from her extensive world travels. She studied conducting, piano and violin at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Since 1971 she has lived in Germany, working as a composer, teacher and performer. Linnemann's writing is accessible both technically and lyrically, and very engaging to the ear.

*Tenore del Kapsberger
Canario*

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger
c. 1580–1651
arr. Eric Crouch

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger, also known as Johann(es) Hieronymus Kapsberger, was a German-Italian composer and virtuoso player of the *chitarrone* (theorbo). *Tenore del Kapsberger* is from his collection *Libro primo d'intavolatura di chitarrone* published in 1604. The second selection, from his fourth book of *chitarrone* music published in 1640, is a Canario, or a Canary dance. This joyful couples dance that was popular in the Renaissance era drew from a traditional dance of the Canary Islands.

Ninna Nanna a Donegal

Giorgio Signorile
b. 1962

This piece is from Signorile's collection *Racconti di primavera* (Spring Tales). "Ninna nanna" is an Italian lullaby, and Signorile writes that his song is "[a] souvenir of a wonderful travel in Ireland, Donegal." It evokes the green lushness of the Donegal countryside and the peaceful feeling of being in a sun-filled meadow.

Wild Mountain Thyme

Traditional Scottish
arr. Edward Flower

Wild Mountain Thyme appears to be based on the song *The Braes of Balquhither* by Scottish poet Robert Tannahill (1774–1810) and Scottish composer Robert Archibald Smith (1780–1829), which was first published in Robert Archibald Smith’s *Scottish Minstrel* (1821–24). The Belfast musician Francis McPeak (1885–1971) adapted *The Braes of Balquhither* and performed it with his family for a recording for the BBC in 1957.

La Catedral

Preludio saudade

Andante religioso

Allegro solemne

Agustín Barrios Mangoré

1885–1944

Paraguyan composer and guitarist Agustín Barrios Mangoré (born Agustín Pío Barrios, he added Mangoré to his name around 1930) composed *La Catedral* in 1921. The original version, which included only the second and third movements, was published with the subtitle “Distico Sacro” (“Sacred Couplet”). The first movement, “Prelude saudade,” was written in 1938 in Havana, Cuba, and added to the work the following year. Agustín Barrios had been touring incessantly and was homesick—he borrowed the Portuguese word *saudade*, which means longing or extreme nostalgia. After he wrote this, he left Cuba to embark on what was to be a short residency in El Salvador, but the dictator there would not allow him to leave and he died there in 1944.

The second movement, “Andante religioso” was inspired by hearing the music of Bach on an organ in a grand cathedral in Montevideo, Uruguay. As the story goes, Barrios was a young man on one of his first tours outside of the jungles of his native Paraguay. He was admiring a grand cathedral when he was drawn in by the strains of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach being played on the organ in the cathedral. He listened deeply and took in the moment, and this is the inspiration for the “Andante religioso.” The last movement, “Allegro solemne,” features a bustling sixteenth note figuration that depicts his leaving the quiet and serenity of the grand cathedral full of Bach’s music and his entry onto the busy city streets of Montevideo. There is a repeated rising melodic figure that is supposed to represent his feeling of commonality with his fellow humans on the street. *La Cathedral* is often referred to as Agustín Barrios Mangoré’s greatest work. It is my favorite and also one of my favorite stories in music: one of a young man finding success and traveling the world with his guitar only to reach the end of a life of incredible accomplishment, but a terrible desire to return home.

—Mark Hilliard Wilson



MARK HILLIARD WILSON brings joy and technical finesse to the listener while integrating music from diverse backgrounds and different ages with a compelling story and a wry sense of humor. Performing regularly at festivals and concert series, Wilson has distinguished himself as a unique voice with programs that feature his own transcriptions of both the well-known and the obscure. Wilson's compositions for the guitar have been appearing on stages throughout the Northwest US and Canada for over 15 years. He works in is the relatively unexplored genre of an ensemble of multiple guitars as the conductor, composer, arranger, and music director to the Guitar Orchestra of Seattle. Wilson has taught at

Whatcom Community College and Bellevue College.

Wilson's CD *El Sueno del Camino* is the product of a series of concerts he played along the Camino de Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain. Wilson has been busy promoting his latest CD, a Guitar Orchestra recording that features compositions for 10 guitars, inspired by the pilgrimage to Spain as well as pilgrimages closer to home: Chuckanut Drive and the Edmund Pettis Bridge. Since the start of 2019 he has produced concerts for the Guitar Orchestra of Seattle in fun and unusual venues for the classical guitar, such as the restored bar "The Rendezvous" in The Jewelbox Theater (built in 1932 as a movie theater); the experimental cafe theater Cafe Nordo; and the former Elliot Bay Book Company location in Pioneer Square. Solo engagements have taken him to numerous living rooms and gardens across Seattle through the organization Groupmuse. The summer of 2019, Wilson was engaged in 10 concerts over an 8-week spread, where he played solo concerts, a concerto written for him and the Octava orchestra, and a series of concerts in Portland with the soprano Jessica Israels and baritone Erik Hundtoft. Shortly after this, Wilson was the guest guitarist with the Sun Valley Symphony.

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