



Friday, February 21, 2020, 8pm
 First Congregational Church

MILOŠ
with members of 12 ensemble

12 ensemble

Eloisa-Fleur Thom and Alessandro Ruisi, *violins*; Matthew Kettle, *viola*;
 Max Ruisi, *cello*; Toby Hughes, *double bass*

The Voice of the Guitar

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| Johann Sebastian BACH (1685–1750) | <i>Goldberg Variations</i> |
| Luigi BOCCHERINI (1743–1805) | “Fandango” from Guitar Quintet No. 4 in D major, G. 448 |
| Enrique GRANADOS (1867–1916) | From 12 Spanish Dances for Solo Guitar, Op. 37 No. 5, Andaluza No. 2, Oriental |
| Manuel DE FALLA (1876–1946) | “Dance of the Miller (Farruca)” from <i>The Three-Cornered Hat</i> |
| DE FALLA | “Nana” from Seven Spanish Folksongs |
| Isaac ALBÉNIZ (1860–1909) | Asturias |
| Anonymous | Spanish Romance |
| Astor PIAZZOLLA (1921–1992) | <i>Libertango</i> |
| <i>INTERMISSION</i> | |
| Heitor VILLA-LOBOS (1887–1959) | Prelude No. 1 |
| Emilio PUJOL (1886–1980) | Milonga |
| Isaías SÁVIO (1900–1977) | “Batucada” from <i>Escenas Brasileiras</i> |
| PIAZZOLLA | Caffè 1930 |
| Paul SIMON (b. 1941) and Art GARFUNKEL (b. 1941) | The Sound of Silence |
| Radiohead | Street Spirit (Fade Out) |
| John LENNON (1940–1980) and Paul MCCARTNEY (b. 1942) | Yesterday Eleanor Rigby The Fool on the Hill |
| George HARRISON (1958–2001) | Here Comes the Sun |

*This performance made possible, in part, by Liz and Greg Lutz.
 Cal Performances’ 2019–20 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*

This concert is a journey through music and time. It uses the classical guitar and its unique voice as a vehicle, and while the names of some of the composers on this program may be unfamiliar, the music itself will often be much better known. The music of more familiar composers will draw on Miloš's classical training at the Royal Academy of Music, while other pieces will showcase the link to his early training in Montenegro and his interest in the guitar as an instrument that is an intrinsic part of the Mediterranean environment in which he grew up. In those early days, Andrés Segovia had an immense influence on Miloš and much of this program demonstrates his subsequent devotion to the music of Latin America and the expansion of the technical and expressive qualities of the instrument.

Concluding the program, Miloš showcases his latest project with the music of The Beatles, as well as works from his fifth studio album, released in September 2019, *Sound of Silence*.

SELECTED PROGRAM NOTES

Luigi Boccherini

“Fandango” from Guitar Quintet No. 4

in D major, G. 448

Italian born, Boccherini spent most of his adult life in Spain and the influence of his adopted country is reflected in much of his music, including the famous Fandango from this quintet for guitar and strings. Boccherini specified the use of castanets in his original version to add to the local color.

Enrique Granados

“Andaluza (No. 5)” and “Oriental (No. 2)”

from 12 Spanish Dances for Solo Guitar, Op. 37

Granados belongs to the group of Spanish composers that fully embraced the Spanish nationalist style. Although he never wrote a guitar piece during his life, his works are often transcribed for the instrument. In the case of “Andaluza,” it's hard to imagine the piece played on anything other than the guitar. (As with “Oriental,” however, it was originally written for the piano.)

Studying the recordings and performance style of the great Spanish pianist Alicia de la

Rocha played an important role in Miloš's education at the Royal Academy of Music and inspired these repertoire choices, and Professor Michael Lewin transcribed both works for Miloš. “Andaluza,” as the name suggests, explores the idiomatic language of flamenco, while “Oriental” creates a magical nocturnal feeling. Rarely performed on solo guitar, these transcriptions push the boundaries of capabilities and expressive possibilities of the instrument.

Manuel De Falla

“Dance of the Miller (Farruca)”

from *The Three-Cornered Hat*

It was the great impresario Sergei Diaghilev who was behind De Falla's ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat*, which was inspired by Pedro Alcaon's story “El Corregidor y la Molinera.” The story centers on a magistrate who tries to seduce a miller's faithful wife. From Act 2, the “Dance of the Miller” is in the traditional flamenco form “farruca,” which is traditionally danced by men only. This orchestral and energetic piece sounds very powerful when performed on the solo guitar. After all, as Segovia once said, with all its colors and sounds, the guitar is indeed like a miniature orchestra.

Anonymous

Spanish Romance

Miloš once said that this was the first piece he ever played live, when he was eight years old. It is one of the most recognizable melodies ever written for this instrument, although the authorship has been much questioned, with suggestions that it might have been composed by Tárrega, Fernando Sor, or Narciso Yepes. It also appears under various titles, including Anonymous Romance, Spanish Romance, and, simply, Romanza. Yepes played it on the soundtrack for René Clément's 1952 film *Jeux Interdits*, thus giving the work yet another title.

Astor Piazzolla

Libertango

Piazzolla was the leading Argentinian tango composer and *bandoneon* player in the 20th century and his fame has expanded even further in the 21st century. He revolutionized tango with

his Tango Nuevo style and turned it into a high art form. Piazzolla regularly performed his own works with different ensembles, touring throughout the world. *Libertango* was recorded and published in Milan in 1974; the title simply merges the Spanish word for “liberty” with “tango.”

Heitor Villa-Lobos Prelude No. 1

In interviews, Miloš has said that “Villa-Lobos is an essential figure in the development of our instrument. In collaboration with Segovia, he created works that really challenged the humble nature of the guitar—its technical and musical possibilities, its palette of color and sheer power.” The Five Preludes were composed in 1940 for Segovia. “Here Villa-Lobos treats the guitar as if it were a cello—the melody is in the bass, rich, sustained, and legato. It sounds as if you would need a bow to play it. It is one of the best-loved pieces from the guitar repertoire and one that I have performed for many years.”

Isaías Savio “Batucada” from *Escenas Brasileiras*

Although born in Uruguay, Savio lived in Brazil from 1931 onwards, teaching guitar and eventually taking on Brazilian citizenship. He played a leading role in establishing the guitar tradition in his adopted country. This is one of his most frequently performed works. Miloš has often spoken of the directness of Latin American music, describing it as much more free and uninhibited than that of Spain. This work provides clear evidence for this. It is based on the Brazilian samba tradition, providing a pulsating guitar showpiece.

Miloš on The Beatles

After delighting audiences with his exploration of the core-classical heritage of the guitar in his three previous albums, Miloš made a thrilling new departure. He performed and recorded innovative new arrangements of songs by The Beatles, collaborating with celebrated artists of various genres. Together with Sergio Assad, Miloš explored the entire Beatles catalogue, collecting the songs that would work best for the classical guitar. “The guitar has always been the instrument that most comfortably transcends

genres and straddles the worlds of classical and mainstream. The challenge with these amazing songs is to respect their own truths, while giving them a new life through a different medium. The key is simplicity.”

Lennon–McCartney: Eleanor Rigby Lennon–McCartney: The Fool on the Hill George Harrison: Here Comes the Sun

Tony Award-winning orchestrator and composer Christopher Austin, a friend of Miloš from his student days at the Royal Academy, has contributed the string arrangements for these three iconic songs. The harmonics in the opening of “Here Comes the Sun” remind one of the noise of the crickets on a hot summer’s day. “The Fool on the Hill” transforms into a rhapsodic and emotional *tour de force*, while “Eleanor Rigby” explores relentless pulse and drama.

MILOŠ

“Love at first listen” is how Miloš describes the moment when, as a child in Montenegro, he first picked up the old guitar that was lying around, gathering dust in his childhood home. Montenegro in the early 1990s was not an obvious gateway to future success, so his family was only cautiously supportive when, aged 14, Miloš decided to attend a specialist music school rather than a grammar school. Leaving the Balkans and arriving in London to take up a coveted place at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music was, he says, “a bit like going to Mars. I was clueless.”

Fast forward to 2010, when Miloš signed his first record deal, with the classical label Deutsche Grammophon; before long, he was in high demand as a soloist with international orchestras and in recitals. Miloš appeared in some of the most important concert halls and at major festivals around the world, while continuously topping music charts with his hugely successful recordings. One of the highlights from that period was his solo guitar recital—the first of its kind and much lauded by the critics—to a full house at London’s Royal Albert Hall.

Miloš’ early albums, *Mediterraneo* and *Latino*, were hugely successful, while his 2014 recording of Rodrigo’s concertos with the London Philharmonic and Yannick Nezet-Seguin had the *Sun-*

day Times calling him “The King of Aranjuez.” His 2016 record, *Blackbird – The Beatles Album*, which included duets with Gregory Porter, Tori Amos, Steven Isserlis, and Anoushka Shankar, was received with unanimous acclaim.

However, Miloš’s career was almost cut short when, at his peak, he was struck down by a hand injury that left him unable to play. With a new record in development and a major international concert tour already booked for the 2017–18 season, Miloš was forced to pull out of multiple engagements, with no real sense of if—or when—he might recover. He recalls: “It was a really tough time. Being faced with the question, ‘What am I going to do if I can’t be a guitarist?’ It was terrifying. Being a musician is all I have ever known.”

Thankfully, in August 2018, fully recovered and mentally as well as physically fit, Miloš made a triumphant return to the stage. Before a crowd of 6,000 people at the BBC Proms, he performed the world premiere of Joby Talbot’s *Ink Dark Moon* guitar concerto, written specially for him, with the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Committed to commissioning new repertoire for the guitar, Miloš joined the NAC Ottawa in May 2019 to perform the world premiere of *The Forest* by Howard Shore. The concerto was recorded and will be released on Decca along with the Talbot Concerto later this year.

Highlights of Miloš’s 2019–20 season include performances of the Talbot concerto with the Atlanta Symphony and Borusan orchestras, solo recitals at London’s Wigmore Hall, the Verbier and Rheingau music festivals, as well as the current major tour of his *Voice of the Guitar* program with member of the 12 ensemble throughout the United States, the UK, and Asia.

In autumn 2019, Miloš released his fifth album, *Sound of Silence*: a musical treasure trove that includes brand new arrangements of classical repertoire, affectionate nods to the pop world, and collaborations with friends. “*Sound of Silence* is my reflection on that time. It’s a personal scrapbook of music that will always have a special meaning to me.”

For more information, please visit the artist’s website at www.milosguitar.com.

The **12 ensemble** is a pioneering string orchestra rapidly developing a reputation as one of the UK’s leading chamber orchestras. A modern, versatile, and virtuosic ensemble, the group is built around a core of 12 of London’s finest chamber musicians. Always playing without a conductor, the ensemble’s world-class performances combine the energy, excitement, and creativity of a small group with the breathtaking sound afforded by a string orchestra.

Formed in 2012 by artistic directors Eloisa-Fleur Thom and Max Ruisi, the 12 ensemble’s unique approach to performing and programming sets the group apart as a revolutionary classical ensemble for the 21st century. Exploring great music of the past alongside groundbreaking new commissions and evolving genres, the 12 ensemble sets itself no limits and reaches diverse audiences with world-class performances. Flexible both in spirit and in size, alongside the core setup of 12 players the group performs in formations ranging from duos to 23 strings and beyond.

The 12 ensemble is in demand internationally, recently performing at leading venues including the Barbican, Royal Albert Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, and Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg. The group has also made appearances at leading festivals worldwide, including a debut at the BBC Proms 2019, a residency at the Barbican’s Sound & Visions festival, and performances in South Korea and Iceland, plus multiple broadcasts on BBC Radio 3. Its 2018 debut album, *Resurrection* (including works by Lutosławski and premiere recordings of works by Bryce Dessner and Kate Whitley), received wide critical acclaim from publications including *Gramophone*, *The Strad*, and *The Sunday Times*.

Following the success of the recording, the 12 ensemble released its second album, *Death & the Maiden*, in January 2020. With an original arrangement of Schubert’s iconic string quartet at its heart, the album is a highly charged journey through an evolving musical landscape, and features accompanying works by Tavener and Icelandic band Sigur Ros plus a new commission from the Royal Opera House Composer in Residence Oliver Leith.