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EFFECTIVE ARRANGING PRACTICES FOR SOLO CLASSICAL GUITAR

James Reyelt

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EFFECTIVE ARRANGING PRACTICES FOR SOLO CLASSICAL GUITAR

by

James Reyelt

A Doctoral Project
Submitted to the Graduate School,
the College of Arts and Sciences
and the School of Music
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

Many great composers did not write a single note for the guitar, but guitarists have been able to perform their music through arrangements. I will identify effective and ineffective arrangement techniques in six piano works arranged for solo guitar. Solo piano works were chosen for this paper to allow for a more practical, thorough, and focused discussion of arranging techniques.

In addition to the analyses, I have also interviewed professional classical guitarists and arrangers Andrew Zohn, William Kanengiser, and Frank Koonce. Their numerous arrangements have enriched the guitar repertoire, and their insight provides a complementary perspective to my analyses. The full transcripts of the interviews are found at the end of the document.

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To Dr. Ciraldo, I cannot thank you enough for your guidance, support, and instruction over the last few years. Your teaching is inspiring and, more importantly, genuine. Your mentorship has shaped me into the guitarist and educator I am today.

To Jose Bronca, Dr. Troy Gifford and Dr. Ken Keaton, thank you for introducing me to the classical guitar, igniting my musical spark, and encouraging me to continue along this amazing path.

DEDICATION

For mom and dad. Your support for my love of music has been a constant for as long as I can remember. Your never-ending love and kindness have guided me throughout this journey. None of this is possible without you.

To Kate and Julie, you are the joys of my life. You are what keeps me going. Your love and support are felt every single day. I love you both so much.

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

Evidence of arrangements for a plucked instrument exists as far back as the early 16th century, for example when composer Luis de Narvaez published *Los seys libros del delphin*.¹ This collection of pieces for vihuela includes arrangements of masses by Josquin des Prez. Later, many of the great classical guitar composers from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, such as Fernando Sor, Mauro Giuliani, Francisco Tárrega, and Roland Dyens, arranged a large amount of music for the guitar. Arrangements have allowed guitarists to play the music of Scarlatti, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Debussy, and many others master composers.

Arranging and performing music by these composers allow guitarists a deeper, more intimate, and literally hands-on understanding of the music from their respective stylistic periods. Furthermore, possessing a basic understanding of how to arrange effectively will allow guitarists to keep making quality contributions to the repertoire. Additionally, as guitarist William Kanengiser says, “I think it's great for developing musical skill, for developing your aesthetic, and for developing your technique, because very often a challenging arrangement forces you to do stuff that is really outside the normal Sor, Giuliani, Tárrega world.”²

To make an effective arrangement for the classical guitar, the arranger must be familiar with the technical aspects of the instrument, such as fingerboard layout, tuning,

1 Steven Lerman. *Six Keyboard Sonatas of Manuel Blasco de Nebra: Transcriptions for Guitar and Analysis of Spanish Folk Music Influences, and Use of Keyboard Techniques That Imitate the Guitar, as Inspired by Domenico Scarlatti*.

2 William Kanengiser, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

pitch range, right- and left-hand technical requirements, capabilities, and limitations of the instrument.

In addition to the technical understanding, the arranger must be familiar with affect. In a musical context, this can be described as the emotional content of the work. The concept of affect in a performance setting dates as far back as ancient Greece. This concept was continued during the Baroque period as composers attempted to arouse a desired emotion through deliberate use of keys, harmony, and melodic range and contour. By preserving what is presumed to be the composer's affectual intentions of a work, the arranger has a stronger chance at achieving a more convincing arrangement. Indeed, on what makes an effective arrangement, Zohn asserts, "You have to really speak the language of the composer in order to kind of maintain the essence of the piece that you're transcribing."³

In her article, "Arrangement Practices in the Bach Tradition, Then and Now: Historical Precedent for Modern Practice", Rebecca Cypess writes that melody, harmony, tempo, and rhythm form the identity of a work, while instrumentation, timbre, and texture are flexible components.⁴ While the article targets arrangements from the 17th and 18th centuries, her assessment of a piece's identity could also apply to tonal music from the 19th and 20th centuries. If melody and harmony comprise part of a piece's identity, it is then prudent the arranger understands their function.

³ Andrew Zohn, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

⁴ Rebecca Cypess. "Arrangement Practices in the Bach Tradition, Then and Now: Historical Precedent for Modern Practice." *Journal of Musicological Research*, vol. 39, no. 2/3, Apr. 2020, pp. 187-212.

The goal of this paper, through analyses of six selected works originally composed for solo piano, as well as their accompanying guitar arrangements, is to identify and review effective and ineffective applications of the technical aspects of the guitar to better understand what makes these arrangements successful.

CHAPTER II – KEY SIGNATURE

The image shows a musical score for the first eleven measures of Isaac Albéniz's Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement I, "Granada". The score is written for piano and is in F major. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (F major). The tempo is marked "ALLEGRETTO" and the dynamics are "PIANO" and "pp". The score includes various musical notations such as chords, arpeggios, and fingerings. There are also some performance markings like "simile" and asterisks.

Example 1. Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement I, “Granada”, mm. 1-11

Example 1 shows the first eleven measures of Isaac Albéniz’s – *Suite Española*, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement I, “Granada”. This piece is in F major, which is a playable key on the guitar. However, the root notes of the I (F), IV (Bb), and V (C) harmonies all require a fretted note on the guitar. From a guitarist’s perspective, this can be very restricting. This is because all fretted pitches on the guitar will cease sounding as soon as the player lifts their finger from the fret. If one were arranging this piece in F major on the guitar and wanted the low F to sustain for the first four measures, as in the original, all the other notes would have to be within the left-hand’s reach. It might work out, but it might not. It is the responsibility of the arranger to consider this before moving forward. On the arranging process, Zohn states, “Things that you really need to be concerned about, especially, is key signature, means almost everything. This is how idiosyncratic the guitar is.”⁵

If the notes are not within reach, a common solution is to change the key of the piece to something “friendlier” for the guitarist. For example, having the key of E major

⁵ Andrew Zohn, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

would result in the root of the tonic (E) and subdominant (A) harmonies to be easily found on the open sixth and fifth strings, respectively.

Example 2, below, is an arrangement of “Granada”, set to the key of E major, by Andrés Segovia.



Example 2. Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement I, “Granada”, mm. 1-10, Arr. for guitar by Andres Segovia

Choosing this key allows for the low E on the sixth string to sustain for as long as possible without the requirement of a fixed left hand. The open E string becomes an effective tool when considering the positioning of the accompaniment. The two-note accompaniment in mm. 1-10 can only be played in the seventh position, which would make any fretted bass note lower than seventh position very difficult or impossible to play.

Now, we can look at an example from Albéniz’s *Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47*, Movement III, “Sevilla”. Both the original and arrangement are in the key of G major. As previously mentioned, having open bass strings to match tonic and dominant harmonies are a big advantage when arranging. To this point, Tárrega indicates in the score that the sixth and fifth string are to be tuned down one whole step to D and G, respectively.

Altering the tuning of the sixth string down to D on the guitar is fairly common practice, while the altering of the fifth string is less so. By doing this, though, there is an open tonic (G) and dominant (D) harmony available in the open bass strings. The arranger must consider early in the arranging process the effects of altering the tuning of any string. By altering the tuning, certain idiomatic possibilities normally found in standard tuning change and may create problems or solutions in the arrangement.

Could a different key be a better choice for this arrangement? Consider the keys of D and E major. D is a closely related key to G major and altering the tuning of only the sixth string to D would still result in an open tonic and open dominant bass strings (fifth string remains A). E major, while not as closely related to G major, is a guitar-friendly key with the open-string tonic E and sub-dominant A pitches on the sixth and fifth strings, respectively, while in standard tuning. Examples 3 and 4 show that transposing this to the key of D or E major will cause more problems than remaining in G.

1

Example 3 .Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement III, “Sevilla”, mm. 1-3

1

Example 4. Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement III, “Sevilla”, mm. 1-3, Arr. for guitar by Francisco Tárrega,

To interpret these figures correctly, mention must be made of “sounding” versus “written notes”. The classical guitar “sounds” one octave lower than the notes that are written. So, the top three notes in the right-hand of m. 1 in Example 3 and the top three notes of m. 1 in Example 4 are the same pitches. If transposed to the key of D or E major, the arranger could run out of room on the guitar if they transposed up and could run the risk of being too cluttered if they transposed down. In this case, keeping the original key of G major on the guitar may best allow for the first statement of the melody to remain in the original octave during these measures, and remaining in G major may have been the best choice, given the constraints of the fretboard.

Another example of choosing an effective key signature can be seen in Roland Dyens’ arrangement of *Gnossienne No. 1* by Erik Satie. This piece is in F minor, a playable but uncommon key for the guitar. The standard tuning of the guitar, beginning from the lowest sounding string to the highest, is E-A-D-G-B-E. Playing in the key of F minor eliminates the diatonic use of five out of the six open strings. As seen in the first two systems of Example 5, there is a repeating drone pitch F in the bass clef.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the first two measures of Erik Satie's *Gnossienne No. 1*. The music is in F minor, indicated by three flats in the key signature. The tempo is marked 'Lent'. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a repeating drone pitch F in the bass clef. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment.

Example 5. Erik Satie, *Gnossienne No. 1*, mm. 1-2

The need to realize that note on the guitar by using a fretted note, or, in other words, the inability to utilize the open strings on the guitar, immediately becomes an issue for the performer here. If arranged for the guitar in the key of F minor, one finger must always be dedicated to fretting an F for the duration of each whole note. If this was an isolated or infrequent occurrence, it could possibly be worked around or otherwise manageable; however, a quick survey of the entire piece reveals that the pedal F (and later B \flat) bass note is consistently present and part of the compositional foundation of the work.

Transposing this piece to a more guitar-friendly key, such as E minor, will solve these issues. “Guitar-friendly” keys utilize the open strings. On the importance of key signature, Zohn adds:

But things you really need to be concerned about, especially key signature, means almost everything. This is how idiosyncratic the guitar is. Something in C major could be really easy, C sharp major is impossible. Or even something like C major’s easy, and D major is impossible.⁶

Arranging this piece in E minor changes the pedal bass notes to E and A, which can be played using the open 6th and 5th strings on the guitar. The left hand is thus freer to move about the neck and play the melody and accompaniment in the original octave. Additionally, the accompanying chords now made up of the pitches G and B, can also be played on the open third and second strings of the guitar.

Debussy’s work *Preludes pour Piano*, “La fille aux cheveux de lin”, is in the key of G \flat major, another uncommon key for the guitar. G major, only one half-step away, would make for a more practical key for a guitar arrangement, as the notes of all six

⁶ Andrew Zohn, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

unfretted strings are diatonic to the key. Additionally, the unfretted third and second-string pitches G and B provide the root and third of the tonic triad, while the unfretted fourth-string pitch D is the fifth scale degree in G major. Having more convenient access to these tonic and dominant tones in the form of open strings is an advantage when creating an arrangement.

Just like the arrangements of “Granada”, “Golliwog’s Cakewalk”, and “Gnossienne No. 1”, a transposition of only one half-step down is helpful. This is not to suggest that the arranger should only choose pieces whose keys are close to guitar-practical keys, but rather to be familiar with these practical keys that better suit the instrument. Some examples of these practical keys are C major, G major, D major, A major, E major, A minor, E minor, B minor, and D minor.

CHAPTER III – ADDITION AND OMISSION OF PITCHES

The arranger must often omit certain pitches when making the arrangement. This is an important step in the arranging process, due to the limited number of notes a guitarist can play at once. For example, a pianist can play up to ten notes at any given time, while a guitarist is limited to just four, except when strumming all six strings at once. The arranger must recognize when it is appropriate to remove notes, and in order to do so, must understand the function of all the notes before deciding which to remove and which to keep.

Measures 1-8 of Albéniz’s “Granada” can be seen in Example 6.

The image shows a musical score for guitar, measures 1-8 of Isaac Albéniz's "Granada". The score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a tempo marking "Allegro" and a dynamic marking "p". The music consists of a series of chords, many of which are four-note chords. A bracket labeled "CVII" spans measures 1 through 8, indicating a specific fingering or voicing. The chords are simplified from their original piano accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as stems, beams, and slurs.

Example 6. Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement I, “Granada”, mm. 1-10, Arr. for guitar by Andres Segovia

To make the accompaniment idiomatic for the guitar, Segovia reduces the four-note chords from the original to two-note chords. Spelled from bottom to top, the original chord, found in the first eight measures, contains a fifth, root, third, and fifth, while Segovia’s contains a third and fifth. This is an effective solution because Segovia eliminates the lower fifth while keeping the higher fifth in the highest voice, just as it is in the original. Listeners will recognize the highest pitch in the chord and most likely not

recognize the absence of the lower fifth. Segovia’s omission of the root is justifiable

because he maintains the root in the bass on the sixth string. To this point, Koonce says:

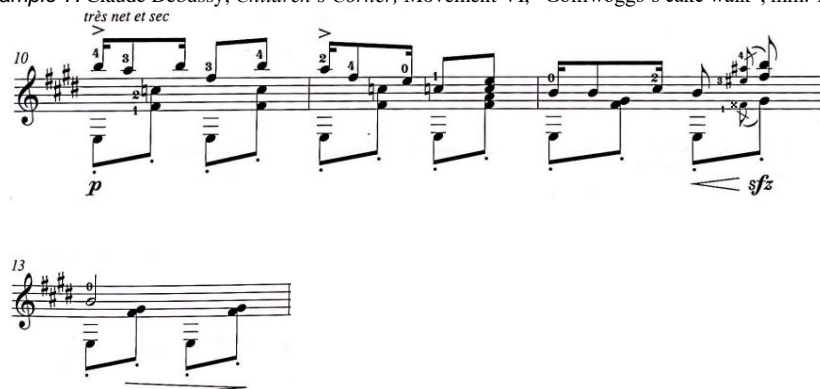
...Especially, I try to preserve more the outside voices, the things that you're going to hear, those what's important. But sometimes inner voices, things that you don't really hear anyway, why have a fingering that tries to preserve things that are not going to be useful anyway?⁷

Segovia’s decision shows how it is possible to maintain the affect of the original, while also making the arrangement idiomatic for the guitar.

Sometimes, the tempo of a section or entire piece affects how many notes can practically be performed at a given time. Examples 7 and 8, below, are examples of how Andrew Zohn effectively approaches this challenge in his arrangement of Debussy’s solo piano piece “Golliwogg’s cake-walk”.



Example 7. Claude Debussy, *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, “Golliwogg’s cake walk”, mm. 10-13



Example 8. Claude Debussy, *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, “Golliwogg’s cake-walk”, mm. 10-13, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

⁷ Frank Koonce, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

These examples represent the first theme in Debussy's solo piano piece "Golliwogg's cake-walk". The texture of this section is homophonic, with the melody in the uppermost voice of the right hand and a broken chordal accompaniment in the left hand. Because the melody's range is confined between B \flat 3 and B \flat 4, Andrew Zohn maintains the original octave and pitches in his arrangement. The left-hand accompaniment is slightly thinned out due to tempo and practicality, though it remains effective. Spelled from the bottom up, the pitches in the broken-chord accompaniment seen in Example 7, m. 10, are E \flat , B \flat , F, A \flat , C \flat , and E \flat . This chord is an F half-diminished seven with E \flat and B \flat acting as underlying pedal tones. F and C \flat are the important pitches in this chord because they outline the diminished fifth interval. These two pitches, now F \sharp and C \sharp in Zohn's arrangement in E major, are the two he keeps, over the E pedal tone. He leaves out B from the pedal dyad, as well as the A and E from the F \sharp half-diminished seven chord, most likely for playability purposes.

The staccato marking indicated under the accompaniment combined with the brisk tempo of the piece would prove very difficult for the player attempting to add the pitch B a fifth above the bass note E. This would require the player's thumb to move quickly through strings six and five followed immediately by the backside of the thumb muting both strings, all while the player's ring finger is plucking the melody. Not only is this technique difficult to perform at a fast tempo, but it would also have to be performed many times as this is a recurring phrase throughout the piece. It is thus effective to omit the B and keep the F \sharp and C \sharp , as the E pedal tone and diminished qualities of the chord are preserved. It is also practical and playable without making any changes to the melody.

On effective arrangement techniques, Zohn says, “I’ve always thought a successful transcription is not an athletic event, to look how many notes that I can get on the fret board at one point in time for making a successful performance piece.”⁸

Zohn respells the chord on the final beat of m. 12, shown in Example 8. The respelled E major add 9 chord is still effective because the melodic note B remains in place as well as the bouncing E to G# accompaniment in the bass. Zohn transposes the F# up one octave, replacing the E seen in the original. By making this change he can keep the clustered sound of the harmony F# against the G# which would be impossible to play in its original voicing due to the location of the melodic pitch B on the neck of the guitar. Even though E is the root of the chord, replacing it with the F# does not change its quality because the low E in the previous beat still functions as the base note in this arpeggiated accompaniment.

Now, is an example of a questionable change to pitches. Examples 9 and 10, on the following page, show two measures from Enrique Granados’ *Danzas Españolas*, movement V, “Andaluza”. Llobet’s arrangement of this work contains a few pitch changes worth addressing. The last three sixteenth-note dyads that the right-hand plays in m. 22 are A and C#, F# and E, and A and C#, as seen in Example 9 on the following page. This happens again in m. 23 with Cb replacing C#. The harmony of these pitches creates the chords F# minor seven in m. 22 and F# half-diminished seven in m. 23.

⁸ Andrew Zohn, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

Example 9. Enrique Granados, *Danzas Españolas* Movement, V, “Andaluza”, mm. 22-23

Example 10. Enrique Granados, *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 22-23, Arr. for guitar by Miguel Llobet

These chords function as minor and diminished dominant harmonies that temporarily tonicize the B major triad that appears earlier in each measure. As seen in Example 10, Llobet does not alter the pitches but instead swaps the positions of the C# and E in m. 22 and C# and E in m. 23, thus changing the contrary motion relationship of the two voices in the original to parallel fourths. He also removed the last sixteenth note in the lower voice of each measure.

From a musical and practical perspective, these changes are ineffective because they do not enhance the music or aid the performer in any way. Without making any concession to technique or comfort, the performer can just as easily perform those dyads in the original voicings. What is lost by Llobet’s changes, however, is the playful and “crunchy” contrary motion of the original, where the listener will no longer hear the dissonance of the F# against the E.

Another issue from the same work is seen in the downbeat of m. 38 in Example 12. The G# in the bass voice should be an A.



Example 11. Enrique Granados, *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 36-39



Example 12. Enrique Granados, *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 36-39, Arr. for guitar by Miguel Llobet

This is most likely a publishing error due to the left-hand fingerings next to the chord spelling 4, 0, 2, 3 from top down. If the G# was intended by Llobet, it would have to be fretted with the 2 finger instead and the C# fretted with the 3 finger. Thus, the given fingering suggests he wanted an A in the bass voice. However, the presence of the incorrect G# in the published edition changes the function of the harmony from a suspended dominant chord in third inversion to a C# minor in second inversion. From a practical perspective, changing the G# to A is an easy fix and does not impede the performer in any way. When creating an arrangement or performing someone else's, it is necessary to constantly consult the original score to avoid important mistakes such as this.

Additionally, as seen in Example 13, pitches G3 and C4 provide a syncopated rhythmic response to the eighth-note bass line.



Example 13. Enrique Granados, *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 10-11

This syncopated sixteenth-note rhythm is stated in the first measure of the piece, continues throughout much of the A section, and provides a distinct, rhythmic context of which the melody moves around. In m. 10 of Example 14, Llobet shifts the final G and C dyad over one sixteenth of a beat, temporarily interrupting the syncopated rhythm.

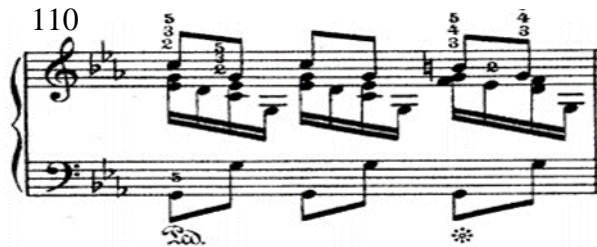


Example 14. Enrique Granados - *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 10-11, Arr. for guitar by Miguel Llobet

Though easily playable when arranged with the original rhythm, Llobet’s version more easily sets up the portamento into the G5 in m. 11. By shifting the chord back one sixteenth of a beat, it gives the player’s left hand the final sixteenth of a beat to lift the barre chord and more easily execute the portamento. This piece is homophonic and very lyrical, making this an effective decision because it prioritizes the melody while only

temporarily altering the syncopated rhythm. On technical and musical practicality for the player, Koonce adds, “If you’re not going to hear it anyway, and if the result is a very clumsy fingering that’s hard to play and makes your playing sound labored, then I think I went too far in trying to uphold that ideal.”⁹

Tárrega made some dramatic and problematic additions in his arrangement of Albeniz’s “Sevilla” that are worth addressing. Examples 15 and 16 show the same measure. Tárrega completely changes the notes from the original and incorporates new material. On incorporating new material, Kanengiser adds, “I’m trying to be really faithful to the original, maintain as much of what the original source had in it and not try to impose this kind of new aesthetic onto it, as it were.”¹⁰ Indeed, this is not a justifiable decision for the sake of the arrangement because the original content can mostly be accomplished on the guitar.



Example 15. Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement III, “Sevilla”, m. 110



Example 16. Isaac Albéniz – Suite Española, No. 1, Opus 47, Movement III, “Sevilla”, m. 60, Arr. for guitar by Francisco Tárrega

⁹ Frank Koonce, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

¹⁰ William Kanengiser, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

CHAPTER IV – RANGE, TRANSPOSITION, TEXTURE, AND HARMONY

Possessing a thorough understanding of the pitch range of the guitar, the texture of the work being arranged and its relationship to the guitar's technical capabilities, and the harmonic context of any given phrase will contribute to the arrangement's overall success.

First, let's examine range and its relationship with transposition. One major challenge facing arranging solo piano music for the guitar is the narrow range of the instrument. This is not surprising considering this process involves taking a piece of music that was written for an instrument spanning seven octaves and trying to fit it on an instrument spanning three and a half octaves. The standard pitch range on a classical guitar is E2 to B5.

Earlier, when discussing the matter of choosing a proper key signature, the priority was placed on utilizing the guitar's natural tuning structure and open strings to our advantage. Those examples favored technical practicality for the performer. Well, oftentimes, simply changing the key signature of the piece isn't enough. Due to the narrow range of the guitar, transposing certain phrases, measures, or even single notes up or down an octave, fifth, etc. within the work is frequently required. For the most part, this practice is an effective solution so long as it does not disrupt the cohesiveness of the melody or phrase or affect the voice leading.

Measures 31-39 in Examples 17 and 18, seen on the following page, represent the opening melody in the B section of Granados' *Danzas Españolas*, movement V, "Andaluza". In his arrangement, Llobet transposed the melody down one octave. While

this melody could technically be played in the original octave, it would be in the uppermost range of the guitar making it very difficult to sustain the melody while also playing the accompaniment. Transposing the entire phrase down one octave utilizes the “sweet spot” of the guitar’s range and makes it much easier to perform the accompaniment.

28

Example 17. Enrique Granados – Danzas Españolas, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 28-39

30

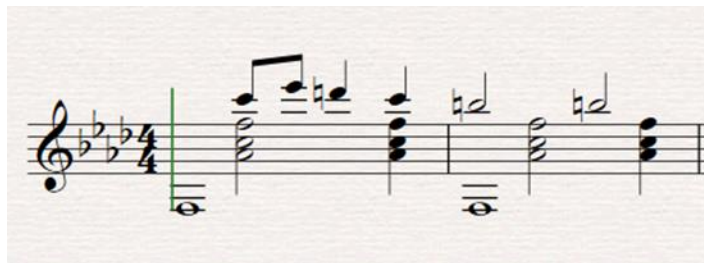
Example 18. Enrique Granados – Danzas Españolas, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 30-40, Arr. for guitar by Miguel Llobet

In Chapter II, Dyens' arrangement of *Gnossienne No. 1* was analyzed for his choice of transposing the piece to the key of E minor. That was an effective decision due to the advantages of the open fifth and sixth strings on the guitar serving as the tonic and subdominant harmonies in the key, both of which were used consistently throughout the piece as drone pedals. Could the arrangement be successful and effective in the original key of F minor with the use of octave transpositions?

Since the guitar sounds one octave lower than is written, if the original octave is to be maintained, the guitar arrangement must be transposed one octave higher. Example 20 shows how beats two through five in m.1 would look if notated for guitar. This would not be playable, given the restriction of the previously mentioned recurring fretted bass notes F and B \flat . When transposed up one octave, the remaining unfretted left-hand fingers cannot reach the melodic pitches C, E \flat , D \sharp , C, and B \sharp , nor the chords underneath the melody.



Example 19. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, m. 1



Example 20. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, Transposed up one octave, Arr. for guitar by the author

Another option to consider is transposing the piece down one octave, shown in Example 22. However, the low F still frequently inhibits the performer's ability to reach the required melodic pitches without sacrificing important harmonic pitches. Additionally, transposing down one octave causes the same issue of range seen in Example 20, this time in the lower voices.



Example 21. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, m. 2



Example 22. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, Transposed down one octave, Arr. for guitar by the author

The standard pitch range on a guitar is E2 to B5. Because the guitar sounds an octave lower than written, the whole note C (sounding pitch C3) in Example 22 cannot be transposed down another octave. The result is a very close voicing, where only one pitch, E, from the accompanying triad, is playable.

Examples 23 and 24, from Debussy's *Preludes pour Piano*, "La fille aux cheveux de lin", show another example of how transposing a phrase down an octave on the guitar can make it playable and practical.



Example 23. Claude Debussy – *Preludes pour Piano*, "La fille aux cheveux de lin" mm. 15-16



Example 24. Claude Debussy – *Preludes pour Piano*, "La fille aux cheveux de lin", mm. 15-16, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

Andrew Zohn transposes the melody in mm. 15-16 down one octave. There are a few reasons he most likely does this, one being the written pitch C6 (sounding pitch C5 on guitar) in m. 16. While some guitars include a twentieth fret (C5) on the first string, the standard sounding range on a guitar is E2 to B5. Arranging this section in the original sounding octave thus becomes unplayable for any player whose guitar does not have twenty frets.

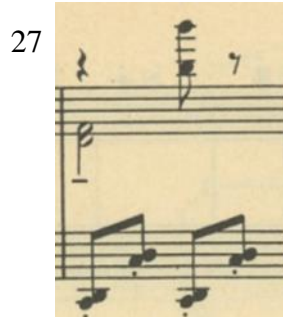
By Zohn transposing these measures down one octave, the phrase becomes more practical to perform. It would be difficult enough to cleanly perform just the C6 in m. 16, let alone perform the entire chord underneath it. This is because of the guitar's anatomy. The body of the classical guitar intersects with the neck at the twelfth fret, obstructing the left hand and making frets thirteen and up more difficult to access. Additionally, the

space between frets decreases as they get closer to the body, making chords more difficult finger at the highest range. Zohn's decision to transpose this section down one octave is successful in its service of practicality which will ultimately lead to a more consistently convincing performance.

The use of harmonics is one way to temporarily extend the range of the guitar, provide a different timbre, or make certain polyphonic music possible to play. On the guitar, harmonics are categorized as either natural or artificial. A natural harmonic is one that can be played without having to fret a string, whereas an artificial harmonic requires the string be fretted. In this way, natural harmonics are convenient in that the left hand is not bound to a fretted position. However, the arranger is limited to the pitches that are available as natural harmonics. The most commonly used natural harmonic pitches are played on any of the six strings on frets five, seven, and twelve. The technique involved in performing natural harmonics includes gently resting one finger of your left hand on the string directly above the fret of the pitch you wish to play. Unlike a regularly plucked fretted note, it is necessary that the player does not depress the string causing it to come in contact with the fret.

Artificial harmonics, while sometimes less convenient, allow the guitarist to play any pitch on the guitar. The difference in technique compared to the natural harmonic is that the player does depress the string onto the desired fret. While fretted, the right hand plucks the string twelve frets higher than the fretted note, resulting in a pitch one octave higher than the fretted note. Implementation of harmonics in an arrangement is a very convenient way to "steal" a higher fifth or octave on the guitar that would otherwise be unplayable.

Example 25 shows an example of the pitches B5 and B6 in m. 27 of Debussy's *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, "Golliwoggs's cake-walk".



Example 25. Claude Debussy – *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, "Golliwoggs's cake-walk", m. 27



Example 26. Claude Debussy – *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, "Golliwoggs's cake-walk", m. 27, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

In Zohn's arrangement, seen in Example 26, he maintains the original B5 octave in the right-hand part of the piano score. B5 can be fretted on the guitar, in fact that is the highest pitch in the guitar's register on the standard nineteen-fret neck. However, awareness of tempo and the surrounding pitches in these measures reveal the difficulty of practicality and playability should the performer attempt to play the B5 on the nineteenth fret. The tempo of this piece is often performed between 100-110 BPM. In m. 27, the performer is playing in seventh position which would require an impractically large leap to reach fret nineteen at the given tempo.

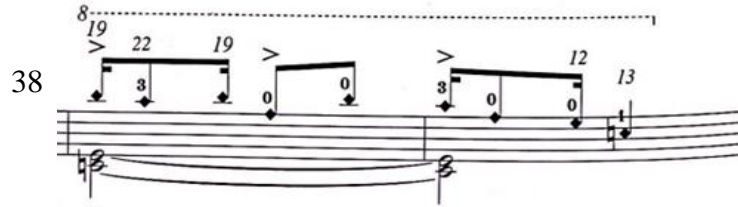
Additionally, the melodic pitches F# and D in the beginning of the measure are quarter notes, which would give the performer's left hand even less time to make the

large shift. By turning that pitch into an artificial harmonic, the performer can keep their left hand in place while their right hand plucks the first-string, nineteenth fret. This will help ensure the quarter-note duration of the melodic pitches in beat one, as well as the accuracy of the B5 in beat two.

Another effective use of harmonics can be seen in mm. 38-39 of Example 28. The use of harmonics is required to fret the accompanying C♯ and E for their written duration.



Example 27. Claude Debussy – *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, “Golliwoggs’s cake-walk”, mm. 38-39



Example 28. Claude Debussy – *Children's Corner*, Movement VI, “Golliwoggs’s cake-walk”, mm. 38-39, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

This is because C4 can only be fretted on the third fret of the fifth string or the eighth fret of the sixth string. Even if the performer opts for the latter, they still would be unable to reach the nineteenth fret. By changing those melodic pitches to harmonics, the performer can fret the C♯ and E for their written duration, up until the C♯ harmonic in beat two of m. 39. The number thirteen written above C♯ refers to the fret that the right hand must hover over and pluck, while the left hand depresses fret one. To play this note, the

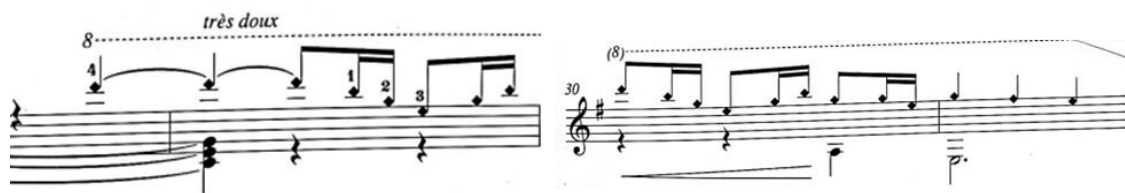
performer must release the C \sharp and E and shift down to first position, causing the harmony to be abruptly cut off.

A solution to this is to play the C \sharp harmonic on the tenth fret of the fourth string. In this position the performer can reach the pitch without having to shift, thus sustaining the accompanying harmonies. The only other fretted artificial harmonic pitch in these measures is the A, which is not problematic because the performer can reach that pitch on the tenth fret of the second string without having to release the accompanying chord.

Zohn gives us another example of harmonics being used, this time to realize the actual sounding pitches of the original piece, in his arrangement of Debussy's "La fille aux cheveux de lin", shown below.



28 Example 29. Claude Debussy – Preludes pour Piano, "La fille aux cheveux de lin" mm. 28-31



Example 30. Claude Debussy – Preludes pour Piano, "La fille aux cheveux de lin" mm. 28-31, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

Examples 29 and 30 represent the melodic motif of the work and contain the words "très doux", meaning "very gentle" or "soft". This written dynamic combined with an unreachable octave on the guitar lends itself nicely to the harmonic technique that Zohn successfully implements in Example 31.

Example 31 shows the melody from the B section of Granados' *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, "Andaluza", but with the words, "El canto con arm. octavados" which means to perform the melody up one octave with harmonics.

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The image shows a musical score for guitar, Example 31, consisting of two staves. The top staff is labeled "El canto con arm. octavados" and the bottom staff is labeled "arm. octavados". Both staves show a melody with harmonics, indicated by "Cj2" and "arm. 19". The bottom staff ends with "sonido natural" and "poco più mosso".

Example 31. Enrique Granados – *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, "Andaluza", mm. 46-55, Arr. for guitar by Miguel Llobet

In the original piece, the melody is not transposed up an octave on the repeat. Llobet is utilizing the guitar's ability to perform harmonics to add variety to the repeated melody. His decision is effective because the entire phrase can be done with harmonics, thus not disrupting the cohesiveness of the phrase.

The arranger must also consider transposition and its effect on voice leading. Next is another example from the B section of Granados' *Danzas Españolas*, movement V, "Andaluza" on the following page.

36

con molta espressione poco f

Example 32. Enrique Granados – *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 36-39

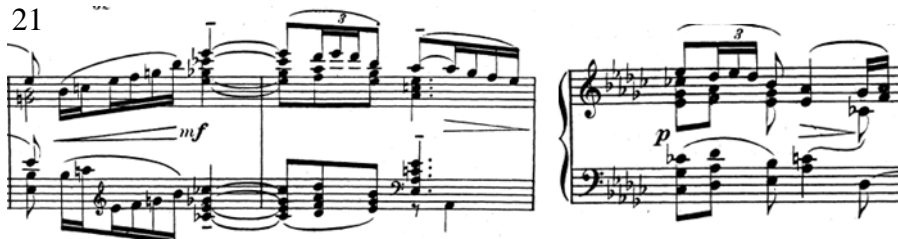
36

con molta expresion *poco f*

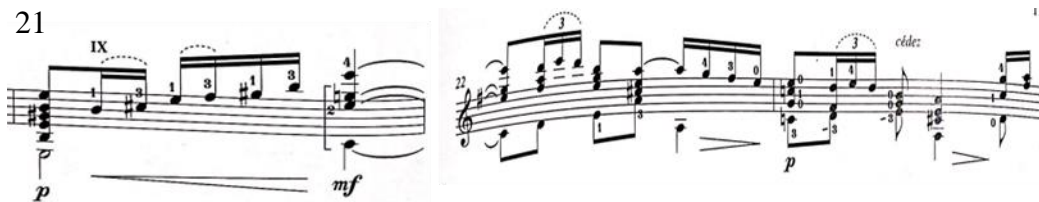
Example 33. Enrique Granados – *Danzas Españolas*, Movement V, “Andaluza”, mm. 36-39, Arr. for guitar by Miguel Llobet

In m. 38 of Example 33, Llobet transposes the E4 in beat one up one octave and the D#4 in beat two up one octave. Even though the E5 and D#5 on the guitar and E4 and D#4 on the piano are the same sounding pitches, this change affects the voicing of the chord by creating a dissonant major second interval between the melodic pitch F# and the E in beat one, thus obscuring the melody. Also, by transposing the D# up on octave in beat two, Llobet eliminates the possibility of the B4 being played, which is the tonic pitch of the chord. An effective solution is to eliminate the E5 in beat one, eliminating the major second interval and keeping a consistent three-voice texture between beat one and two. Additionally, changing the D#5 to B4 on beat two will keep the original voice leading consistent (C# resolving down to B), and although the strong harmonic resolution from D# to E is lost, the melodic F# fills that role by resolving down to E, which the listener’s ear would most likely follow anyway because the E is also a melodic pitch.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, transposing a phrase, measure, or note is, for the most part, effective, so long as it does not change the contour of the phrase. We can see an effective example of this in Examples 34 and 35.



Example 34. Claude Debussy – *Preludes pour Piano*, “La fille aux cheveux de lin”, mm. 21-23



Example 35. Claude Debussy – *Preludes pour Piano*, “La fille aux cheveux de lin”, mm. 21-23, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

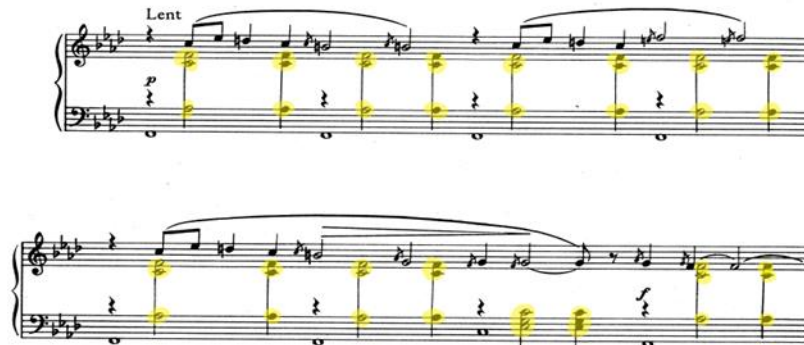
In Example 35, Zohn transposes mm. 21-23 down one octave because the guitar cannot sound pitches E6 and D6, found in mm. 21-22. However, he also transposes m. 23 down one octave, even though the guitar can comfortably realize that entire measure in its original octave. This keeps the contour of the melodic phrase intact by avoiding a large melodic leap, thus preserving the piece’s identity. In our discussion on his arranging process, Koonce says on melodic contour:

Oftentimes, unless it's part of the piece, I wouldn't jump up a 7th, for example, or jump up an octave. I see a lot of arrangers do that. They'll have a voice leading that makes absolutely no sense. So, if instead of, like, jumping up a 7th, for example, I would look to one or two notes before that interval and take those out where you can jump up a fifth or an octave and it would make better musical sense, and then come down by step to the 7th.¹¹

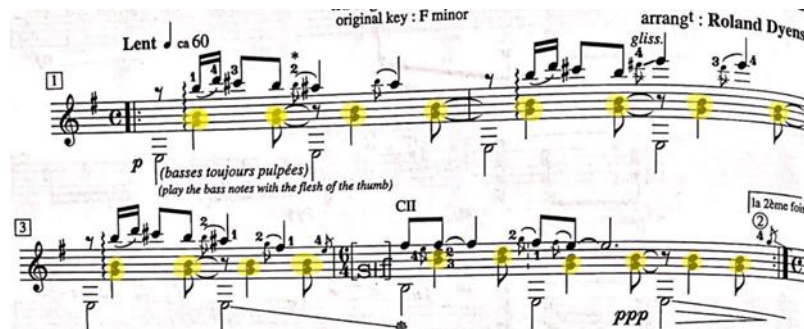
¹¹ Frank Koonce, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

It indeed appears that melodic contour is a high priority among successful arrangers.

The next few examples will examine the impact that texture and harmony have on an effective arrangement. Examples 36 and 37 show the opening two measures of *Gnossienne No.1* by Satie.



Example 36. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, mm.1-2



Example 37. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, mm. 1-4, Arranged for guitar by Roland Dyens

The texture of this piece is homophonic, transparent, and thin. This makes it a good candidate of a solo guitar arrangement, due to the limited range and strings of the instrument. Nearly all the pitches from the original composition can be brought over to the guitar arrangement without making the piece too difficult to perform and without losing the intended affect.

The highlighted portions of the figures represent the chords that supply the harmony in the first two systems. Harmonically, these chords function as root-position minor i and v tonalities in their respective keys, F minor and E minor. Dyens reduces the three-note voicings to two-note voicings, eliminating the doubled root-pitch F in the minor one chord and doubled fifth-pitch G in the minor five chord. The removal of these pitches does not change the harmonic quality of either chord. In his arrangement, the sustain from the bass note E in the previous beats provide root context for the chord, and the F#, which represents the fifth of the B minor chord, is being used in the melody.

Dyens' removal of these pitches is justifiable as it serves the arrangement by allowing a more accessible realization of the melody. By removing the inverted root-pitch E from the chord, the guitarist can perform the accompanying pitches B and G on the open 2nd and 3rd strings respectively, freeing up the left hand to perform the melody. On the removal of pitches, Kanengiser states:

“...there are some arrangements I've seen where people try to leave everything in, and it's, like, theoretically possible, but it's either so difficult or it forces the tempo to be slow or things not work. Knowing what you can leave out to keep the gesture...”¹²

If the inverted root-pitch E was kept in the chord, it would have to be played on either the second or third string, thus changing where the B and G are played, losing the unfretted open string advantage, and resulting in a cumbersome, fully fretted chord.

Examples 38 and 39, seen on the following page, illustrate these two options.

¹² William Kanengiser, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).



Example 38. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, m. 1, E on 2nd string, Arr. for guitar by the author



Example 39. Erik Satie – *Gnossienne No. 1*, m. 1, E on 3rd string, Arr. for guitar by the author

Harmony, especially in the impressionistic music of Debussy, contributes greatly to a piece's identity. In Example 40, the left hand is planing between the chords G \flat dominant seven and A \flat dominant seven, both in third inversion, while the right hand repeats the opening theme twice



Example 40. Claude Debussy – *Preludes pour Piano*, “La fille aux cheveux de lin”, mm. 8-9

“Planing” technique is a staple of impressionistic music in which the goal is to create blocks of sound through parallel, often chromatic, movement of chords. In this instance, the dominant seventh pitch serving as the bass note of each chord creates an unstable feeling that seeks resolution. Understanding this harmonic function is crucial for maintaining the identity of this section, yet in Example 41, Zohn respells these chords. In beat one of m. 8, he keeps the F \sharp , G, and B in the original octave, but transposes the D down one octave, making it the bass note of the G dominant seven chord.



Example 41. Claude Debussy – *Preludes pour Piano*, “La fille aux cheveux de lin”, mm. 8-9, Arr. for guitar by Andrew Zohn

If the D was left in the original octave, the full chord would not be playable. Because the D6 must be played on the tenth fret of the first, the F \sharp must then be played on the eighth fret of the fifth string. Given those constraints, the only place the D5 could be played is on the seventh fret of the third string, then eliminating the possibility for the open third-string G to be played. Thus, this arrangement shows no sacrifice of any of the pitches in the chord, but also a loss of planing technique.

In beat three of m. 8, Zohn does not respell the chord, but adds the pitch B4 to the A dominant seven chord. This pitch is not in the original score and should not be in the arrangement. One possible solution to the chordal planing in mm. 8-9 could be to remove both the D5 in the G dominant seven chord and the B4 in the A dominant seven chord. In

doing so, the passage maintains the seventh in the bass, the root and third of each chord, and the planing technique can remain intact. Zohn also changes the chord in beat three of m. 9 from what should be an E minor seven to a C major seven. Given that E minor and C major both contain the pitches E and G, this might be a publishing error, but should be pointed out, nonetheless.

CHAPTER V – CONCLUSIONS

Arrangements of music for plucked string instruments have existed since at least the 16th century. Composers, guitarists, and virtuoso arrangers such as Sor, Giuliani, Tárrega, and Dyens continued this practice throughout the 18th, 19th, and 20th, and 21st centuries. Having access to perform works by master composers like Bach, Mozart, Debussy, Albéniz, and many others allows guitarists a deeper understanding of the music from these time periods. This understanding paves the way for a more genuine approach to interpretation of the music.

Learning how to make effective guitar arrangements will not only continue the expansion of the repertoire, but can also provide the arranger with more well-rounded, wholly understood fundamental concepts of melodic and harmonic phrasing and construction that they can internalize as a performer.

As seen through these analyses, technical considerations of the guitar such as fretboard layout, tuning, pitch range, key, right and left-hand technical requirements, capabilities, and limitations of the instrument, as well as affect are the key factors of an effective arrangement. On his thoughts on what makes an arrangement effective,

Kanengiser adds:

“...it should sound and appear as if it could have been written for the instrument...if the sonority of the guitar is just not conducive to the feeling of the piece, if the range is too limited, or if the sustain is too short or independence of voices isn't able to be maintained kind of thing, then it's not successful.”¹³

¹³ William Kanengiser, interview by Jim Reyelt, August 2022. (complete interview in Appendix).

Basic understanding of music theory will aid the arranger in their practical application of the technical considerations previously listed. Furthermore, awareness of guitar-friendly keys, the layout of the guitar, and the guitar's volume and sustain were recognized as a common thread in establishing an arrangement's effectiveness.

1. How long have you been arranging and what led you to want to arrange music for the guitar?

William Kanengiser

It's great you're asking that question because this exact thing came up in a concert I did just about a month ago. I played in Granada, Spain, and my teacher, Pepe Romero was there. And for my encore, I played an arrangement of "The Millers Dance" by Manuel de Falla. And I said, "Well, this is appropriate because it's de Falla, and we're in Granada. But also, this was the very first arrangement I ever did for guitar because I was inspired by Pepe." He had, of course, arranged it for the quartet. And then I found an arrangement that was published of it by a guitarist who I will not mention. And it was just horrible. It just wasn't even close. And I asked Pepe and he said, "Well, do it yourself." And that was the first arrangement I did. So, I was probably 20 years old or 22 years old. So, it's a good 40 years ago.

Jim Reyelt

I feel like that's a pretty ambitious piece for kind of your first crack at arranging.

WK

Well, in a way, it's ambitious, but in a way, that piece is so rooted in flamenco. The glib remark I always made when I would announce the quartet's version of *El Amor Brujo*, the complete ballet that we do is that de Falla was just trying to make the orchestra imitate

one big guitar. So, the key, It's E going to the F Lydian thing. There are a couple of things that were a little trickier to work out, but I learned, even in that arrangement, I think, what I call the three rules of arrangement, of successful arrangement. And the first rule is pick the right piece. And the second rule is pick the right key. And then the last rule is know what to leave out. And so, picking the right piece, that's such a winner. The key, luckily, and this happened with *El Amor Brujo* as well, and with *Capriccio Espagnol* that you mentioned, that was the original key. But sometimes it doesn't work on guitar, and you have to change it.

And then the thing about leaving things out, and every once in a while, adding things, but there are some arrangements I've seen where people try to leave everything in, and it's, like, theoretically possible, but it's either so difficult or it forces the tempo to be slow or things not work. Knowing what you can leave out to keep the gesture and make it sound idiomatic on the guitar. I always feel that a successful arrangement should seem, when it's performed, that it could have been written for the guitar.

JR

Yeah, I would agree with that. And, you know, I like how you use the word gesture. The core of my paper is focusing on effective and ineffective arranging techniques as they relate to essence and affect. My stance is it almost doesn't matter what instrument a piece of music was originally written for, so long as you can capture the affect, you know, or the essence of the piece in your arrangement. And that's just a rip-off from CPE Bach's manual and treatise. He talks about affect and he talks about arranging stuff. I agree with that. And so, I like that word gesture. And I think, to me, that is the same thing, keeping

the same, really, root of the piece. And I think that's what was so successful about *Capriccio Espagnol*. I mean, first of all, I'm probably responsible for half of the streams of that piece on Spotify. I can't tell you how many people, you know, I would show that piece to when I was younger and them not knowing that it wasn't written for guitar. And it's like, "Boom, there you go. It wasn't. And you wouldn't believe what the original medium is." And so that's kind of the success that I would agree with, too. It's just making it sound like this is a guitar piece.

So, you arranged "The Miller's Dance", and that was because you had heard Pepe's arrangement for quartet. Was that all it took? Was it a successful arrangement for you? And then you were just off to the races like, "Oh, wow, I want to keep making arrangements." Or was there another reason?

WK

There was definitely another reason. Not that long after that, the quartet had already played two movements of *El Amor Brujo* that I didn't arrange, but Scott arranged the "Will of the Wisp", and my friend Ian Krause arranged the "Ritual Fire Dance". And we recorded them. We play them a lot. And then I was like, "Let me check out the ballet, like, the whole thing." And I just kind of locked myself in the room for a while, and I said, "We can do the whole thing. We can arrange the whole thing." And that was the first sort of epic arrangement that I tried to do. I think it really helped kind of establish the quartet as like, "Oh, okay, these guys are doing something out of the box a little bit." I will say that the other incredible inspiration and model for me about arrangement was my weekly teacher at USC during that time. Like, Pepe was like, the master class teacher, but

Jim Smith, who ran the guitar program at USC for 40 years, he was an unbelievable arranger, and he made some of the arrangements that LAGQ played in our very early days that he had done for a preexisting quartet.

And so, we did his arrangement of the Debussy *Evening in Granada*, which is the piece that Falla based the *Homenaje* on. He arranged the sixth “Brandenburg Concerto” that I think we've recorded it three times now. He arranged some really cool Stravinsky pieces that we played, and the majority of his arrangement was actually for the guitar, cello and flute. He had an amazing trio, and he did an arrangement of *Carmen* for them, which was so successful. And that was kind of my inspiration later on, doing the *Carmen* arrangement. So, Jim was really helping me a lot with the arrangement as well. I don't know how many times I showed him exactly what I was doing arrangement wise, but I was really inspired by his way of thinking about arrangement.

2. How do you go about finding pieces to arrange?

WK

It's really funny. In the beginning, I just sort of like, I would either hear something that seemed like it would work, or I stumbled on it upon it in the library. That's how that Bartok happened. I just had, like, the complete piano works of Bartok. And I just happened to turn to this *Sonatina*, and I was like, “This is really pretty spare for a piano piece. It's pretty simple. Could this possibly work?” Like, a lot of things in my creative life, some of them were just kind of like purpose driven. In other words, I had a recording theme in mind, and I had like 70% of the project. And then I needed to fill in. I did this

project called “Echoes of the Old World” where I already had the Bartok. And then I had some pieces by Dušan Bogdonović and Ian Krause and others like *Koyunbaba* and stuff. So, I was doing this Eastern European kind of thing, and I was like, “I need some more pieces.” So, I just started kicking around and I was like, what about Kabalevsky? I don't really even know his music that well.

And I just found these little pieces by Kabalevsky that I arranged, for instance, and I did an album called “Caribbean Souvenirs” where I did Brouwer and Ernesto Cordero and some Mexican composers and things like that. And I just wanted, like, this Caribbean feel. And I found these pieces by Louis Marie Gottschalk. He was kind of like the American Franz List. And I found these three pieces that were like one is based in Havana, one is a souvenir of Puerto Rico, and then another one with this very Caribbean feeling. And those are really good examples, actually, of pieces where the first eight pages work great. And then when I flipped over to page nine, I was like, “Oh my God, what am I going to do?” Where I was like, “This might not work.” but I figured out a way to make it work. And I actually did perform those live a few times but they're just so nasty. But I'm glad that I recorded them.

JR

I was going to ask; did they make the recording? Because I need to listen to those Gottschalk arrangements because I'm familiar with him and I love his music.

WK

Yeah. Unfortunately, it's on the GSP label. And I think maybe they're available online now. But for years he didn't believe in online anything, but it's on that record. And I published the scores, too. The arrangements are published.

JR

Okay. Very cool.

WK

So, you could take a look at the music and listen to it. I think they're really successful. I mean, the most famous one is the "Souvenir of Puerto Rico". It's a fantastic little piece. It's like a procession. Oh, no. Is it called the "March of the Heroes"? I think that's the subtitle. And it's like this procession. So, it starts really quiet, and it gets louder and louder and louder and then it goes away again.

JR

Very cool.

WK

But it's kind of a tour de force, actually, for solo.

3. What makes for an effective arrangement?

WK

At the end of the day, when someone hears it performed, it should sound and appear as if it could have been written for the instrument. And so, if the performer is struggling to make it work or unable to really bring the beauty of the piece out because the arrangement is so difficult, that's not successful. Just being able to hit all the notes is not a successful arrangement. And likewise, if the sonority of the guitar is just not conducive to the feeling of the piece, if the range is too limited, or if the sustain is too short or independence of voices isn't able to be maintained kind of thing, then it's not successful. But there's also a lot of slight of hand that can happen where you can fool people into thinking that it sounds better than it is. There's little tricks. When I arranged the Mozart Piano Sonata 331, especially in some of the theme and variations in the first movement, like, I had to definitely make concessions where there's this kind of Alberti based accompaniment and it drops in and out. Like when the melody has long notes, it's there, and then when the melody gets florid, it drops out. I think of it sometimes in terms of what I call composite rhythm in that if you've got fast notes and then the melody starts getting fast, we don't notice as much if the baseline if the accompaniment part doesn't maintain its duration. But you notice it if like the main harmonic points. I think the arrangement of the Mozart. I don't know if you've looked at that arrangement or not that's sort of a case study, in a way, of guitar arrangement. Because it threw a whole bunch of challenges at me.

JR

Yeah. And I think that in the case of some of these faster passages and just how it pertains to arranging, leaving some notes out, I think is acceptable in some instances. And maybe, you know, if you give those bass lines earlier on, maybe our ears can kind of fill in when it's not there or not fully there or something like that. And again, making concessions, "What's more important here in this section? Well, it's probably the fast florid scale. So, is that kind of the essence of this section here that needs to be kept?"

WK

And there's lots of examples of great composers essentially arranging their own music. Bach, of course, is maybe the best example. When he would take something from cello to lute or from lute to harpsichord or something, he would change it, sometimes change the key and make it work on the instrument, keep the most fundamental aspects of it and not be so beholden to every single note.

4. Do you think arranging music for the guitar is important? If so, why?

WK

Well, I think it's absolutely vital for a number of reasons. One is we need more repertoire. There's lots and lots of standard rep written for the instrument, and then there's lots of preexisting arrangements. But when I decided to arrange the Bartok *Sonatina*, there wasn't anything kind of like that, and it opened up some new ideas, new possibilities. But I think maybe almost more important, it's a way to be a more functional musician, a more

total musician. It's like, "Oh, I'm either getting used to reading grand staff notation for piano, or I'm looking at an orchestral score." And it always takes me about three days to figure out all the transpositions and clefs and everything. But after a while, I'm like, "Okay, I know what I'm doing." And it's just being more of a functional musician and then knowing the instrument well enough where you can say, "Oh, this could work here, but it could work here, or I could do this and leave this out." So, I'm a very hands-on arranger. Sometimes I'll just do it all in my head because I have a pretty good sense of where things lie. But a lot of times I'm really trying things out, and it means that you have to have really good fretboard harmony knowledge, which I'm going to sound like an old codger now, but I see some of these young kids today, it's like they don't know the notes over the 7th fret. It's like, come on.

So, I think it's great for developing musical skill, for developing your aesthetic, and for developing your technique, because very often a challenging arrangement forces you to do stuff that is really outside the normal Sor, Giuliani, Tárrega world. That being said, I think there's many examples of arrangements that have been played a great deal that don't work and stretch the technique too far or stretch the guitar too far. I haven't done solo arrangements in a little while. But there was a kind of ash heap of things I started that I abandoned because it was like, "Oh, this is going to work great." And then I turned to the third page and go, "Oh, my God, he modulated C sharp major" or something. So, there were also examples of arrangements I did for the quartet where I arranged something, and then I was like, "This key doesn't work." And I just chose a different key. "Oh, this works."

JR

I agree with what you said, and I think I would add, it helps, I'm curious if you agree with this, it kind of helps the student or the arranger understand, you know, context, melodic context, harmonic context. I know for me, you know, going beyond just your arrangement, I think just going forward as a musician, just analyzing scores, and trying to see, "Ok, where's the melody here? What's the harmony here? What needs to be done here? What can be left out?" And just practicing that, for me, really helped me just kind of understand building blocks of music and how to construct melodies and harmonies and just that technique I take with me as a performer. And it just makes, I think, for a more wholly understood performance of something that I'm playing.

WK

Yeah, great. I agree completely.

5. What is your process for arranging a piece for guitar?

WK

Over the years, I would say it's a little different if I'm doing a piano work for solo guitar and doing an orchestral work for quartet. If I'm doing an orchestral work, I will be like, listening to an orchestral version every now and then to just kind of get a sense of, "Okay, what's the big scenario here?" And typically, when I've done piano work for solar guitar, I'm not listening to performances, I'm just going off the score. Every measure's a whole new challenge and problem to be solved, especially solo arrangement. It's all hands

on. It's like, "Okay, does this work?" And then I jot ideas down and, "Is this going to work? Can I get from point A to point B?" And that's when the thinking outside the box stuff starts happening. It's like, "Oh, is this the right key? Like, should I be in a different key, like alternate tuning. Is that going to help me here or not? And if I do that, it's going to create problems down the road." But that's sort of the process. Sometimes, as you mentioned, you just hit a brick wall and you feel like there's no solution.

And then sometimes it's like solving a crossword puzzle. You can't find that word and then you wake up the next morning and you just fill it out.

JR

That's a good analogy. I like that because it's true. I've had times where I'm like washing the dishes or something and I'm just like, "Oh, I could do that. Why didn't I think of that thing?" Yeah, that's funny how that works. Cool. So, it sounds like there's like, you know, the basic laundry list of stuff, you know, like tuning key, tempo, kind of stuff that you're just kind of going through. But then once you make those early decisions, it's just guitar in hand and a lot of trial and error for lack of a better phrase or something like that. And just hopefully catching some sort of momentum if things work.

WK

Yeah, and referring to what you said before about the benefits of doing this, that it forces you to know what the harmony is and to play the melody by itself and to play the bass by itself and discover what's the movement of internal voices and what pitches if there's an eight-note chord, like, which pitches can be removed so they work on the guitar.

Understanding how doublings work on piano and whether you need to always double or not. Like all of those little details about understanding, structure and seniority come into play.

6. Does genre play a role in determining if a piece should be arranged for guitar?

WK

Yeah, for sure. No music exists in like a vacuum. Well, let me make sure I answer your question. And there's another point I want to make, but I'm just interested in lots of different kinds of music and different styles, different periods, different genres, as you say. That being said, there are some that just are more amenable than others. As much as I admire, I'm going to get into hot water here, as much as I admire the idea of arranging "Pictures at an Exhibition" for solo guitar, I would never even consider that because I feel like it's just outside the parameters of what the guitar is capable of successfully doing.

Yeah, I'm sort of stymied, actually, with this answer. So, what I did want to say maybe you'll ask this question or not, but I make a great distinction between what I consider transcription and true arrangement and almost all of the solo guitar things I've done, I consider transcriptions. In other words, I'm trying to be really faithful to the original, maintain as much of what the original source had in it and not try to impose this kind of new aesthetic onto it, as it were.

And then true arrangement is really an act of hybridization or synthesis. There are guys who I respect so much who do this so much better than I do. But I'm thinking of, let's say, Roland Dyens as one of the just virtuoso arrangers or Sergio Assad where they can take a

pretty simple basic thing and essentially compose a whole new work by going completely different directions. I did do a fair amount of that in quartet repertoire. I think a pretty good example of that is on our “Guitar Heroes” record. There's this tune by Ralph Towner that he recorded with originally the Paul Winter Consort, and it's a pretty famous folk-rock tune called *Icarus*. And if you hear the original, it's got this kind of driving four-four kind of feeling and for some reason I just decided to make it Brazilian and I gave it this whole kind of Assad-esque kind of flavor to it, just kind of superimposed something completely different onto it. So that one was really like a composition, creating new lines, creating new chord voicings. So, there I just used the overall harmonic and melodic sense of the piece and then just extrapolated kind of freely.

JR

Giving it new life to the instrument that you are arranging it for. Which I would say is part of the key difference between transcription and arrangement. I wasn't going to ask that question because, again, that's such a, I agree with your definitions of the two, but that's such a Bach kind of thing where people have such rooted beliefs about transcription or arrangement, or they don't and they toss the words around interchangeably. But I'm not interested in pressuring anybody with that sort of question backing potentially backing anybody in the corner. But, yeah, I would agree that a transcription is more, you know, closer to maintaining that original sentiment and a true arrangement is adapting and just making it for our instrument or a different instrument.

WK

Well, I also feel like it's not just adapting, but real arrangement is really modifying the feel or the intent or the affect of the original and maybe infusing a lot of original notes, original lines, sort of as a springboard for almost re-composition. Yeah. I don't mean to keep referring to my thing, but on that same album we were paying tribute to our guitar heroes. And when I was in high school, the guy I just idolized was Steve Howe from Yes. And so, there was this tune, this solo guitar piece he played. I learned it when I was in junior high. It was like the first guitar piece I learned. It's called "Mood for a day".

And very famous if you're as old as I am. I said, I got to do something to honor Steve Howe in this piece. And I went back and listened to his recording, and I was like, it's almost kind of like a flamenco piece, the way he's playing. And so, I completely flamenco-icized it. In fact, we had, like, flamenco dancers doing the palmas and stomping their feet, and we all played flamenco guitars.

JR

Very cool.

WK

I kept the piece, the melodic and harmonic, but completely changed it. The time signatures were completely changed, the form was changed. And actually, I hadn't heard it in years. I listened to it by randomly a little while ago. I was like, "That's pretty cool, pretty creative." So, I really thought outside the box with that one.

JR

I mean, when talking about taking lots of liberties with an arrangement in your definition, I can't help but think of Pachelbel's "Loose Cannon". That's like, boom, case study. Put it to bed right there. I mean, you're just going through different genres and different styles, and you're keeping like, yeah, we hear that this is still Pachelbel's canon, but that's it from there, it's just enjoy the new stuff, essentially that's happening and that's all fair game to me. When talking about arranging, if you don't want to hear this new inspired idea of my arrangement, well, then the original is still there. I don't want to necessarily make something that, if I'm making an arrangement, I don't want to necessarily make my guitar sound like a piano. My guitar will never sound like a piano better than a piano will sound like a piano. You can come along for the ride, and we can do some creative stuff in this arrangement or listen to the original.

WK

Well, you could say that part of the reason that Albéniz is so great on guitar is that Albéniz was trying to make his piano sound like a guitar.

JR

Right.

WK

The joke is that we're actually returning it to its original. He had the transcription. About a year ago, the quartet was invited to play at the Minnesota Beethoven Festival. And it

was kind of like, in the contract, “You will play a piece by Beethoven.” And it was like, okay, what are we going to do? And I thought, “Let's do the first movement of the “Moonlight” Sonata. Just like the most famous, beautiful thing.” And in a way, it was audacious, but I had to really think pretty creatively to like, in a way that was an interesting thing. How do you take this fairly simple piano piece and then make it for four guitars? There was almost not enough to do. But also, what I was really trying to do was to capture the sonority of that piece, which, especially in its day, it was like, revolutionary. Basically, it was like you hold down the sustain key the entire time, you know, and it's just like the sonority of the piano. And so, I had to pretty cleverly figure out where to double and how to create this sort of mist with the four guitars. And it seems like it works pretty well, actually.

JR

Did you win over the crowd? The Beethoven-ites? Was it successful?

WK

You know what, we've played it now a bunch of times, and especially in context, in our concert, we play it right after we play, like, Zappa and Hendrix, right? People totally love it. It's arguably one of the most successful things we're doing right now. People come back and say, “I was crying.”

JR

That's really cool.

WK

And it's also a little etude, in a way, for quartet in terms of being able to very subtly modulate your sense of time. Like, lots of little moving forward, pulling back, adjusting dynamics, all within this really kind of quiet thing. It's a sort of a wonderful, meditative moment in our concerts that's really different from all the banging, strum, picking and a grinning that we do well.

7. What's your favorite arrangement that you've made, and what's your favorite arrangement made by someone else?

WK

We've already discussed Capriccio. That's the one I'm kind of the most proud of. I think there are so many challenges to that to solve, not the least of which dealing with the fact that the main theme starts in A major and then it recapitulates in B flat major and how are we going to do that? And coming up with two guitars using capo and the seven-string guitar having a clip going to B flat and all this crazy stuff going on.

When I was doing the arrangement, it was kind of like microcosm, like, "Okay, this measure, how do I get it to work?" But also, macrocosm. "I forgot this guy's got to be in D tuning because three movements ago." That kind of thing.

JR

Yeah.

WK

And then solo transcription wise, I mean, the one that kind of put me on the map really, was the Mozart. And I'm not the only guy who's done that kind of serious classical sonata I have so much respect for, especially Paul Galbraith. Amazing stuff he's done with all his Haydn stuff. And other people have done Mozart. But that one, I think, sort of did put me on the map a little bit. And certainly, I got well known for it because there's that little snippet of the "Turkish March" that made it into that movie. Some people know about that. I'm proud of those. But I think I'm also kind of proud of a couple of the more arrangement ones just where I had to like, I already mentioned "The Mood for A Day" and the Ralph Towner "Icarus". But there's been a couple of other ones like that I think work pretty successfully.

I mean, Jim Smith's arrangement of the Debussy *Evening in Granada* is just brilliant and audacious. And he did the Stravinsky *Circus Polka*. Stravinsky was commissioned by the Ringling Barnam Brothers and their circus to write music for the baby elephant dance, and he wrote the *Circus Polka* and Jim Smith arranged it for four guitars. And it's just crazy. I learned so much from it. The funny thing is, it's not that I've never done other people's arrangements. I've done a lot. Here's a really great example.

One solo guitar arrangement that I played because it was just so fantastic, was I did a recording called "Classical Cool" where I did basically it was jazz on classical guitar. But it wasn't jazz. I'm not a jazz player. It was jazz inspired music written out and stuff. One of the pieces on there is Roland Dyens' arrangement of "All the Things You Are". And I

heard him play it live and I freaked out and I asked him, I said, “Roland, I've got to have this.” And he goes, “Oh, I haven't written it down yet.”

JR

Wow.

WK

And I was like, “I need it because I'm going to start recording soon.” And then somehow, he told me about a friend of his who had recorded him playing it. And I transcribed it off the recording. And this is old days, like cassette tapes. I faxed him the music. This is way back. We actually had faxes and he made all these corrections that I had gotten wrong. And also, it was live performance, so there were things he didn't hit right.

JR

Sure.

WK

He did give me this really great compliment. He drew a big elephant head and he said “To monsieur big ears” because he was impressed that I was able to transcribe it pretty well. But his arrangement of this jazz standard I mean, it's a classic Roland Dyens arrangement. It's not just the tune. It sounds like Bartok, it sounds like Bach, it sounds like Django Reinhardt, it sounds like bebop. And it's so creative. And I think you could

point to so many of Roland's arrangements. That Pixinguinha set he put out is just amazing. And his kind of last will and testament, his Piazzolla book has some incredible stuff. And of course, Sergio. Sergio. It's unbelievable. Of course, now, he's even surpassed himself as one of the most amazing composers of our day. But his arrangements, I remember years ago hearing the Assads play *Rhapsody in Blue* on two guitars and I was like, "What?"

JR

It's nuts.

WK

And I said, "This isn't possible." And it was like, "Oh, my God." It was so good, and I remember them doing *Suite Bergamasque* and going "I don't think I could do this on four guitars. How are they doing this?" Yeah, those are my heroes with arrangements.

INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW ZOHN

By Jim Reyelt – August 2022

1. How long have you been arranging and what led you to want to arrange music for the guitar?

Andrew Zohn

I think that every guitarist has piano envy to some degree. Beethoven did not write 32 sonatas for solo guitar. And also, having studied piano and really getting the feel for counterpoint, which is not too bad on the keyboard, but near impossible on the guitar. I just was always just looking for depth, just a little bit more music, because when you turn on the radio, you don't hear Torroba much as you hear Bach or something like that. I don't know. I've just really kind of gravitated towards it. I'm always looking for music that people don't play. Transcription is a really good way to do that. I also spent a really good amount of time when I was in conservatory, I hung out with the violin studio a lot, and that's kind of where I learned how to practice, was hanging out with the violinists who were really serious. But they're all playing much more mainstream music. And I was in that kind of mindset probably more so than I was in the guitar literature repertoire at that point in time. Giuliani always sounded like second-rate Mozart to me, until I really started to understand that music and really understand its value.

But things that you really need to be concerned about, especially key signature, means almost everything. This is how idiosyncratic the guitar is. Something in C major could be really easy, C sharp major is impossible. Or even something like C major's easy, and D

major is impossible. You know how it works. And try to find the voicing that's on the guitar. I'm mostly playing duo these days, and so I've been doing a lot of transcription. Actually, we're doing an all-Baroque recording, hopefully sometime this year. That's all transcriptions that I've done. Handel, Rameau, Bach, Scarlatti. On the keyboard, you've got this, and you probably have an octave in between these two hands. But in guitar, as you know, this is like this, and you have this might be melody and this might be accompaniment in that instance. So, if you're ever transcribing any Baroque piece for two guitars in particular. Go up either a fourth or a fifth. Basically, what you have to do is you've got to move the right hand of the keyboard up and out of the way to give the bass line a lot of place to work. Because you can get away with a little bit of co-mingling in range on two guitars but in the end, you've got to raise that voice up. And you might think, "Oh. This is fantastic. It's in G major. G major's an easy guitar key." Well, then you're going to be down in first position playing the melody most of the time and then we've got nothing underneath for the second guitarist. The music will trip over itself. So ever since I instituted that fourth or fifth rule, especially in Baroque music, it almost takes care of itself because in most Baroque, as you know, it's two single voices. You don't have all that interior of like trying to play a Scriabin prelude or something.

Jim Reyelt

Yeah, I think that's great advice and I think that is a luxury that you get playing in guitar duo or trio or quartet that guitar solo arrangements often struggle with is this issue of range and trying to capture as much as you can. And melody and bass are kind of the outside of the sandwich that need to be present in a well-rounded arrangement. And so

often because of the layout of our instrument, of course, you know, our base notes were often very restricted to this first position, second position and well, man, that really ties us down with our left hand in terms of being able to extend that range in higher positions. And with two left hands in a guitar duo, you might have an easier easy time or that luxury of saying “Hey, I'll handle this low stuff and let's just move you up there.” And that's really problematic for solo guitar arrangements.

AZ

Well, do you know the Scottish guitarist, Paul Galbraith? Well, you know how his guitar is built? Typically, when you have extra strings on the guitar, they just add the bass notes to the end. What he did was he put a string on each side. His highest string is actually open A, our fifth fret. And so, when he's playing, he's doing of course he's playing complete Mozart sonatas on the guitar. It's insane. But he never really gets that fourth position because instead of having to climb up and down that first string so much, he's basically down here. It's a brilliant, totally brilliant move.

JR

Yeah. I wonder if that trend will ever catch on with guitar building. I'm curious.

AZ

Like six strings is enough for me to deal with. You put a seven string on the guitar, I'll be lost even after 40 years of playing guitar.

2. How do you go about finding pieces to arrange?

AZ

Yeah, I would say there was a lot of trial and error. Like I said, I had a very early education in harmony, which helped me out a lot in figuring out how guitar works in general. Well, you can see over here, every guitar recording I own is actually here in my office. When I go home now and listen to music for pleasure, it's not guitar music. Guitar is like, I love guitar, but it's work and I do it all day long, and so I spend most of my time listening to music, well I seem to gravitate towards more intimate music. Like, I don't go home and put on a symphony. Almost never. And so, a lot of times, what I recommend to students to listen to that will directly impact their idea about how to make a guitar sing is solo voice, solo violin, I'll go as far as string quartet and piano trio and any type of keyboard music, and that's typically the music that I'll listen to. And you go on YouTube and see "Grieg, the complete piano music", and then it'll be 6 hours long, and I'll just kind of comb through that until I find things that I think are inspiring and maybe possible and go from there.

But most of the music that I've performed throughout my solo career has been transcription. There's actually very little guitar music. I've actually been doing it playing a lot more guitar music than I did when I was in my 20s and 30s. But no, like every other artist, we have a wandering mind and interest in new things and whatever catches my fancy. If I think it can work on the guitar and I think it'll be successful in a concert, I just get the score and, you know, knock it out, and if it doesn't work, goes in the trash.

JR

Gotcha. So, it sounds like it's a pretty casual process. You're listening to just music that you're interested in for pleasure. And if you hear something that sets off a radar , then you just try it. It seems like it's a pretty natural process.

AZ

Well, for the most part, that's not what my job is. My job, first of all, is to teach guitar. That's my real gig. And then my second is to play guitar. But the composing and arranging that I do, I can either do that or not do that. And I don't think the world would even hiccup one way or the other. So, if it's not something I'm interested in, or if you don't get some type of pleasure, artistic satisfaction out of it, what's the point of it? And also, there used to be kind of in the days of the wild west where you could get almost anything published. And now publishers are really, like my publisher, d'Oz, who I use the most, they are absolutely the most fantastic company in the world. And I just be able to introduce people there and they're like, yeah, sure, we'll do it. Because they don't have any overhead. They produce their music, like if you want ten copies or something, they push ten on the computer and then it has ten printed copies, rather than having a warehouse full of thousand scores, which really made it a whole lot better. But a lot of places are just being restrictive now in terms of how much volume that they want to handle, and so we got to make sure it's something good and hopefully something that people are going to be interested in.

3. What makes for an effective arrangement?

AZ

Well, okay, so, you know, you have to if you're if you're going to make a transcription, especially at the keyboard piece, in almost every circumstance, you're not going to play every note the way it is on the piano because, well, there's just too many notes. And so, you have to really speak the language of the composer in order to kind of maintain the essence of the piece that you're transcribing. I've always thought, like, a successful transcription is not an athletic event, to look how many notes that I can get on the fret board at one point in time for making a successful performance piece. I was infinitely more puritanical about trying to cram every last note from a piano score onto the guitar for its own sake. And then I, you know, started playing other people's arrangements of things like, I don't know, have you played any of the *Rossiniana* of Giuliani or any of the duos? He has this orchestral part that is written in a specific way for strings, and it's very very aggressive, but the intervals are put on violin and things like that. But Giuliani just takes the exact same thing that makes the guitar gesture. I think it's P-I-M-A-P-I-M-A-P-I-M-A. In that sense, you get everything you need out of the harmony and the harmonic aspect of it, but you're not trying to just take the strings verbatim, you're using the guitar's natural powers of the things that it does well and creating the energy from that. And that's, I think, a really big part of piano transcription, is that you have to make it into a guitar piece. And you shouldn't apologize about that.

JR

I agree with you on that. Kind of the heart of this paper is all of this analysis compared to affect. And so, my take on effective arranging techniques and what makes for successful arrangements is just capturing the affect, or, like you mentioned, the essence of the work. And I think CPE might have said the instrument almost doesn't matter in a lot of the case when you're making arrangements. And that's kind of my stance in this paper, is that it doesn't. And so long as you can capture the affect, and if you can, then I think most things are fair game for an arrangement. And I tried to pick pieces in my analysis that successfully demonstrated that. And that's something that I really like about your arrangement of "Golliwogg's Cakewalk". I think it's a super effective arrangement, very playable, but really it doesn't lose sight of the original work. I still get that same feeling out of it when I play it on guitar versus when I listen to it on piano.

AZ

I appreciate that because that's exactly what I'm trying to do.

4. Do you think arranging music for the guitar is important? If so, why?

AZ

Well, a big part of my teaching is literacy, musical literacy, and of course, you got to get the fingers moving. But the first thing I do in everybody's guitar lesson is I go and pull a duet off the shelf, and we sight read and that's the first 15 minutes of the lesson. It opens up all sorts of conversations about structure, melody, harmony, rhythm, et cetera, et

cetera. In one of the related courses I teach, I teach guitar literature every other year. And we're in the Renaissance right now, and the very first thing that they're going to do they're going to turn in is that I'm going to make them do an intabulation. They got to take some French tablature and make it for modern guitar notation, which tells students so much about how the guitar works and how fingerings affect musical decisions. Because, of course, tablature only tells you on this beat you play this note, it doesn't tell you anything about which notes it's voiced with, how long that note should be, et cetera, et cetera.

So, in doing that, man do they learn a whole lot about how the instrument works. And then the second semester, I have them do a piano transcription, so every student does that for me who takes the guitar literature class, and I'll always let them choose their piece, but I have veto power, so if they take something that's going to be completely nuts or something that's going to be completely easy, I'll usually kind of direct them around. But it's obviously such a big part for being a performer. If you're going to have this life, you're going to probably be doing a lot of teaching, probably more teaching than performing. Not just you. You, me, and everybody else, right? Even David Russell, who doesn't have a post, probably teaches more than I do. He's going to Arizona, going to London, et cetera. The ability to not only understand the music that you're playing, but to be able to articulate it and teach it, man, you can't just be a lesson ahead of the student. You have to live with music for decades and really get in depth, and that's going to absolutely define the quality of your life. If you're good at teaching, you're going to have more students, and you're going to have better students. When you have better students, then you're really going to work. I can teach somebody how to count if notes in my sleep

if I had to. But you get a student who's already playing at a very high level already, you've got to have something really important and interesting to offer them. Most of my students play, physically play the guitar better than I do, but that's not what our lessons are on.

Our lessons are on understanding in a very deep and personal way, how music is put together, trying to get closer to that spirit, what a Mozartian voice sounds like versus a Turina's voice and why that music is different. And so, arranging for the guitar, man, it's a master class. You know what Bach used to do in composition? He would give a student a few can say, "Copy that fugue out." What they're doing is they're watching how voices talk to each other, how modulations work, how sequences work. They're learning all those lessons, and then he gets a free copy of the music.

JR

A nice reward.

AZ

Before everybody had a printing press.

JR

Yeah, I got to say, I agree with you on that. If for nothing else, arranging is just so valuable in understanding the fundamental, kind of going back to what we're talking about, just the fundamental essence of the piece that you're practicing arranging. Whether

or not you know what you're doing or whether or not you have been arranging for a long time or not, just this process, I think of what you're saying of taking these notes and moving them around and seeing, "What is this the melody, the harmony, what is it linking to? What is its harmonic context here, or melodic context?" And it just grounds you and helps you understand really what the piece is driving at. And it has kind of a ripple effect to anybody as a performer, in my opinion. You practice arranging and you learn these skills, and it bleeds over into anything that you play. If you can help just get to the heart of the piece and what's trying to be conveyed, I think it thus leads to a more musical performance. And sounds like we're on the same page.

AZ

There also the other thing is that if you have a transcription piece that's really successful, nobody has that unless you give it away or sell it, and that could be your piece. The reason why I hear so much about that Debussy transcription is because one of my students, Dragos Illie used to play it, and he's such an incredible musician. He's won a whole bunch of competitions with that piece because he's fleet enough to find the whimsy in the gestures and really make his thing like a piano piece.

JR

I think I've seen maybe him perform that piece somewhere. You're referring to the "Golliwogg's Cakewalk", right? Yeah. He plays that piece beautifully.

AZ

Because I did that transcription easily over ten years ago, and I played it for a couple of years in concert and then moved on to something else. So, I hadn't really thought about it. He picked it up, we worked on it together when he was here, and then all of a sudden, people are writing me, "Oh, hey, that Debussy, who published that?"

5. What is your process for arranging a piece for guitar?

AZ

With regard to arranging, I mean, there's a lot of trial and error and everything that you think is going to work out in your arrangement. You might get all the way through it and then realize it's not going to be successful. And I have just no problem throwing those right in the trash. I've been doing a lot of pop song arrangements lately is what I've been really working on. Classic rock tunes for classical guitar. So, there's Doors and The Beatles. When you're trying to reduce the whole song onto a solo instrument, I could be four to 5 hours into a tune before I realize that it's not going to work. And because there's so much slang in the way the vocals are presented against the accompaniment, the saxophone solo is too difficult. You can't cover the baseline at the same time. And so, what I've really got used to is being able to let go of work that instead of, "Well, I started this and so I've got to finish it. And I don't care how playable and workable it is", you know, I'm really content now to really sit down and spend the time, you know, doing stuff that may or may not work because I'm always learning about how the guitar works. And it's amazing that something that's only about half a meter long has this eternal

mystery how things work on the guitar. You can always find some kind of new way to put something.

6. Does genre play a role in determining if a piece should be arranged for guitar?

AZ

Well, one of the things about growing up as an American and especially a guy in the 20th century is when I was born, is that, you know, the arts are a real collage and there's not this lane of, "I am a classical musician", or "I only play ancient music, I only play Baroque music", or "I only play contemporary classical music". Most of the musicians that I know, especially growing up in America, good music is good music of all types. And I find the same sense of joy and interest in a pop music piece that I would do with an Impressionistic piece or that I would with a Baroque piece. So, the only thing that's stopping me from doing any kind of genre is just the practicality. The more you can get deeper into romantic music, the more the idiomatycy of the keyboard comes into play. Bach pretty much is working two voices, maybe sometimes three, in a more complex fugue. But when you get to Beethoven you've got these arpeggios that are very keyboardistic, then that becomes a little bit more. But my choices really are a reflection of kind of who I am as an artist and what I gravitate towards if I think I can get away with it on the guitar.

Like, I was just looking at this very, very ambitious thing I did, a Rossini overture. It's a solo version and taking an orchestral thing and kind of reducing it to guitar. And I had to

make some really serious editorial decisions, mostly having to do with texture. The melody has got to be there, there's got to be supporting harmony underneath it, but like a very active beholden part in the middle just isn't going to work. So, you have to kind of reduce it down. And when I started playing, I did a recording for Naxos of this Giuliani duo. Never got made, it's sitting in a shelf somewhere up in Canada. But we had to learn all that music. And so, I really got to see how a guy in the 19th century approached music like that and how he was really bold to make the music into guitar music, rather than being like, "Oh, every single note, this is the way it is on the piano". Yeah. I don't know if you've ever seen the piano score to "Asturias", but there's no triplets, that P-M-I, the hardest part of that piece, and it's not even in the original score.

JR

Yeah, I know that exact thing very well. I'm a student of Nicholas Ciraldo, and he has an arrangement of "Asturias", and he would tell me the very same thing. He's like "I played this section like this. There's no triplets". And that was kind of in our preliminary discussions of this topic of me wanting to write on arranging he was just like, "Being as, if not more familiar with the original score of what you're arranging is just step one, it's step zero". And we were kind of talking about how we each have so many students who don't even know that a piece that they're playing is an arrangement of something. Or when you ask them, "Have you listened to or looked at the original score?", they say no. And it's just kind of like mind blowing. I'm not analyzing "Asturias" in this paper, but I'm analyzing "Sevilla" and "Granada" and some arrangements of those. I'm comparing like Barrueco's arrangement of the *Suite Española*, Tárrega's arrangement, Segovia's

arrangement. And I kind of put that in air quotes because I'm not really sure how much Segovia did differently than Tárrega and Llobet's arrangement. In spending some time studying the score, the arrangement of Tárrega and putting that up against the original score, it was very illuminating because as a guitarist, my first time hearing *Suite Española* was on guitar. And just years and years from a young age, hearing that recording and thinking, "This is what it is". And then, however old I was when I first listened to a pianist play and going, "Wow, I am hearing stuff that I've never heard come through on the guitar", and "Wow, that's wildly different, this section." It's interesting, to say the least.

AZ

Tárrega, I think it's Chanterelle has two volumes of the complete works of Tárrega. It's of course not complete. Every time somebody makes complete edition, then ten more pieces show up. But there's a huge amount of transcriptions that he made. He was Segovia before Segovia in that capacity. And they are very ambitious pieces like Wagner's "Overture" to *Tannhauser*, Chopin *Nocturne* in E flat major No. 2. It's impossible to play. You've got this big flourish at the end that's way up here, and he just turns it into something else. Like he just makes it into this kind of big arpeggio that really has nothing to do with the notes that are in there. But people heard that melody and said, "Oh, Chopin, I know that piece".

JR

I was actually not familiar that he arranged the “Overture” to *Tannhauser*. That's wild, I got to see that.

AZ

It's the Chanterelle edition. Two volumes. There's a red volume and there's a blue volume. And when you go through, it's transcription, transcription, transcription. Another one, yes. More than half of these is Schumann. There's the 7th Symphony of Beethoven, a fragment of the symphony of Beethoven. Just some crazy stuff. I don't know. Every time I look through this, I'm amused but I'm also not hearing necessarily things that will work in a concert, that I've seen anyway, but just all sorts of things. Bottesini. Never heard of him before. Kramer. Never heard him before. Haydn, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann. Grieg, Handel. Here is the waltz from the *Damnation of Faust*, and La Traviata.

JR

Wow.

AZ

Probably around 1900, I would guess.

7. What's your favorite arrangement that you've made, and your favorite arrangement made by someone else?

AZ

Let's see. Going to kind of take a look over at where all my stuff is. Well, I would say that at one point the last two recordings I made with duo, I used to play with Jeff McFadden. I don't know if you know Jeffrey.

JR

Yes, not personally, but I know of him.

AZ

We did the recording of the *Twelve Spanish Dances* of Granados and I really felt really strong about the quality of those and how with two guitars you can really capture the spirit of that music. The solo ones, I know you've probably played the Barrueco ones. They're fantastic, but they're really hard.

JR

Very difficult.

AZ

Yeah, it completely eliminates that. My wife was at a convention years ago and she went to a harpsichord concert and she's like, "I want to learn how to harpsichord, I got to learn harpsichord." And so, I was able to get her a harpsichord. And I have a really weird kind of friend up in Connecticut who had an extra harpsichord, so he gave me his old one. And I was in Leipzig, right across the street from St. Thomas's Church where Bach worked like the last 30 years of his life. And there was this great music store there. So, I just bought this huge amount of harpsichord music for my wife for her birthday. She's given it up a long time ago, but there was a time when she was practicing and these little, tiny, charming pieces by all these composers that you would never know. Salvator Rosa. Have you ever heard that name before? I never heard before. But all these collections of little harpsichord pieces and they're incredibly charming. Let me show you what I did. This book of 30 Baroque keyboard miniatures. And you know, there are some hits in here, you know, typical Bach "Minuet in G" type stuff.

But there's, like, Couperin, and Graupner and Kirnberger, Rameau, Purcell. Just some names you never heard before, but just really charming music. And it fits on the guitar really well. The other thing that I did with my second wife, is we recorded all of this. These are five divertimenti. You can get an idea about how completely insane Mozart was. This is K. 439 B. Within this, there's five divertimenti with five movements in them. So, it's 25 pieces of music just on this subset. This isn't even 439 A. But it was written for three basset horns which is kind of in the clarinet family, but it's an instrument that doesn't really exist anymore. But there is so much Mozart in this writing. But you have a

really good opportunity for two guitars because you have, obviously, the active Mozartian melody. A lot of scales, a lot of arpeggios, a lot of movement. And then whoever doesn't have the active part can pick up the other two voices really well. It's just very easy to go back and forth and man, in terms of finding the spirit of Mozart, of this music, and being able to really translate it for two guitars. There's a video of us playing the first movement of this on YouTube.

JR

I'll have to watch that.

AZ

And then, of course, his music is so interesting and so perfect, there's never a question of "Why is that note there?" It's like, "Oh, that note was meant to be there."

JR

Very tidy, very efficient.

AZ

And so, this is one of the things that I pull off the shelf all the time and read this stuff, because there's so many great music lessons that can be learned by playing Mozart, especially when he's not writing for keyboard, where he's doing melody and accompaniment, but he's writing for three voices and so you get a lot more counterpoint.

It's a lot more of a kind of fugue-ish music, if you will, when you have three independent voices rather than just a keyboard, et cetera.

The greatest arranger, bar none, is Roland Dyens. His ability to find color and interest in things you've never heard before on the guitar. His version of Jobim's "A Felicidade" might be the greatest single arrangement ever made. I mean, it's just absolutely magnificent. I enjoy his compositions, but I think where he really shows his brilliance is his ability to arrange. He does Chopin and things like that.

JR

Yeah, I have a collection of his that is five or six arrangements. I forget the publisher, but it's got a couple Chopin, it's got "Nuages".

AZ

Yes, I have the book on my shelf.

JR

Yeah, I'm analyzing a Dyens arrangement in this project as well.

AZ

Fantastic. Okay. I was going to recommend that.

JR

I mean, I agree his compositions are insane and fantastic, but for me, yeah, the creativity always seems to come through in his arrangements. It's like that thing where when you see it, or in our case, hear it happen, like a technique or something, you go, "Oh, that makes so much sense." But you can't think of it first, you know, you're like, "Man, how could I never thought to do something like that?" That always seems to happen to me when I listen to Dyens arrangements.

AZ

This is a guy who spent a lifetime figuring out how the guitar works, and he's got a lot of tricks at his sleeve, but this idea when he makes an arrangement, it's so much more than "What, do I put the melody on the top and then I'll put on the bottom?" Like, he's really orchestrating using every single part of the guitar to make that guitar resonate in the way that it does. It's really remarkable.

INTERVIEW WITH FRANK KOONCE

By Jim Reyelt – August 2022

1. How long have you been arranging and what led you to want to arrange music for the guitar?

Frank Koonce

Since I was about 18, I think. I went to the North Carolina School of the Arts for my senior year of high school. So that's when I started working at a music school and getting theory training. And at that point in time, I'd already decided I really liked the music of Bach a lot. And then perhaps a couple of years into my training there, I started making an arrangement of the fourth lute suite. And I look back at that now, and I realized I was fairly presumptuous because I actually wrote out my arrangement, and I took it up to Sophocles Papas in Washington DC. He at the time was the president of Columbia Publishing Company. And I went up there and I played for him, and I showed him my arrangement, and he said, "I hope you don't expect me to publish this, do you?" "Well, I was hoping you might consider it." And he said, "I could do this myself." And he said, "Who are you? No one knows you." So that was my first kind of lesson in reality, and I am so glad he didn't take it, because my own experience over time just negated a lot of what I had put in that edition.

I was mimicking Segovia and John Williams, and it was all instinctive. Yeah, but anyway, that was my first attempt at it, and I never stopped. I kept on working on

arrangements over a period of time, and then finally, many years later, I approached a couple of other publishers because I wanted to do the entire set and basically got similar answers. “You don't have a reputation. You're not established.” And I approached Editions Orphee. I did find another publisher that would do it. It's now a little publication that's no longer around, but I reached at the conclusion that at this point, people were starting to self-publish, and I figured that if no one wants to do it for me, I'll do it myself. And I found that, this was in the early 80's, so it was maybe ten years after my first experience. I found a Chinese lady who worked for the Beijing Publishing House. And back in those days, it was before computers, they did things with stamps, an ink pad and stamps that had the different character shapes on them. And I paid her, and she laid out all of the notes and staves and everything for the lute works.

And it came together, I believe it was '87. I hosted the GFA at Arizona State University. I hosted the convention, and it was very successful convention. It was the biggest one to date, and a lot of people came from all over, including the president of Kjos Music Publishers in San Diego. And I met him, and he said he was there because he wanted to scout out the guitar market to see if Kjos wanted to get into some guitar publications. So, I said, “Well, I'm glad to meet you. Here's what I've done if you're interested.” And he took it back to his hotel, and the next day he came and said, “You've really done all of this yourself, haven't you?” And I said, “Yeah.” He said, “I'll take it.”

Jim Reyelt

Wow.

FK

That's when the first edition came out.

JR

Wow. And so, pretty high target for, I guess, going back to when you're 18, to pick the Bach lute suite as kind of your first go at it.

FK

It was really stupid, but I love the music. What can I say?

There were not as many diverse editions back then as there is now. And so, a lot of the publications were by people, other than Segovia, there were other people like Azpiazu and Sinopoli and a lot of people that I thought had idiotic fingerings. Just things that I could not relate to. And even Segovia's approach to playing. I could not relate to a lot of Segovia's fingerings. I learned to appreciate him more later. But his fingerings are very much tied to his interpretation, and he has a very specific way of rubato and milking certain notes. And if you don't do it his way, sometimes those fingerings just don't make sense. But the main impetus was just reading other literature other than guitar books, reading books about Baroque music, and specifically about voicing, about the polyphony and the implied polyphony and Bach's writing in the style of called compound melody, where it's not a fully developed counterpoint or polyphony, but it hints at it. And there's sections of it, but oftentimes it's all stemmed together as one line. The lines are not so specifically spelled out. Well, it occurred to me that all of these guitar arrangements didn't respect any of that.

It was just what felt good to the hand or what tone color someone wanted. But there was no attempt to preserve the original voicing. And if you still have my edition in the beginning, there's a preface, I believe, and it sort of explains all of this in more thought-out terms than I can tell you right now what led me to develop this, because I really wanted to respect more the original lines. And so therefore, the strings that you played things on and the notes that you allowed to overlap determined a lot of what I did.

JR

Okay. Yeah. So, it sounds like maybe just a dissatisfaction with what was currently out there for you. And having read other books, knowing that there was a way to do it better.

FK

Prior to my edition, most of the editions were like a romantic approach and with different aesthetics than Baroque musicians. Back in those days, people would talk about authentic, and we've come to realize that who knows what authentic is? But then the term switched over to historically informed performance. Are you hip? Are you hip or not?

JR

Right.

FK

Well, I was trying to be hip, and I was trying to understand what I could learn from people who specialized in Baroque music. And I realized that none of the guitar editions at that time did that.

JR

I'm curious, when studying these arrangements that were out and not being satisfied and reading the books that you had read and knowing that there was a better way to treat this music, did you already know it could be done on the guitar? How you want to handle these lines and respect the music and all these implied melodies. Did you know "I can make this happen on guitar?" Or were you still like, "Well, I let's see."

FK

Little bit of both. I thought it could be done, but I wasn't sure that it could be. And if you'll look at, again, at the preface of my second edition, I state that those were my goals, to be as faithful as possible to the original music. But then I went on to say that over time I felt that sometimes I went too far and sometimes I didn't go far enough in trying to do this. I went too far when I was trying to preserve, let's say, the integrity of an inner voice and make the note sustain for its full value.

If you're not going to hear it anyway, and if the result is a very clumsy fingering that's hard to play and makes your playing sound labored, then I think I went too far in trying to uphold that ideal. And then in other cases I felt like over time I missed seeing some things that I later discovered. So that's why I wanted to come out with the second edition.

Actually, the second edition is more friendly, fingering wise, and it's less rigorously applied to the counterpoint. I felt like it makes a difference. Especially, I try to preserve more the outside voices, the things that you're going to hear, those what's important. But sometimes inner voices, things that you don't really hear anyway, why have a fingering that tries to preserve things that are not going to be useful anyway? So, I simplified things for the second edition and if I had it to do over again, I would change things again.

JR

Sure, yeah. I feel like that's a technique about arranging that you don't really think too much about or experience until you are arranging something, is these practical inclusions or exclusions of things when you're trying to fit all these certain notes in or a certain fingering or certain voicing and maybe you are forgetting the tempo of the passage. And once you play it at tempo, you go, "Oh, well, no one even here's this thing."

FK

Exactly.

JR

"If I get rid of this one note, I can do the whole phrase perfectly, much more easily."

FK

And it captures the spirit of the piece. It may not preserve every note, but it captures the spirit of the piece.

JR

Right.

FK

And I gradually came around to that way of thinking.

2. How do you go about finding pieces to arrange?

FK

Well, I do take note of pieces that I think could potentially be a guitar piece that could potentially work. And it just sounds like it has the right texture, it's not too busy, the range is more contained. If it seems like it could potentially work as a guitar piece, I'll make a note of it. And I did a lot of them over the years myself. And then I passed things to students, some of my doctoral students. Like, I had one student do arrangements of Antonio Soler because I always thought those really sounded like Spanish guitar pieces of the period. And indeed, Soler was inspired by the guitar. So, I said, "Well, why not actually try to play them on the guitar?" So, I had a doctoral student make an edition of that. And another student did an edition of *Woodland Sketches* by McDowell. I had another student do some less known Baroque players, Biber, for example, some of the

other violin composers, Bach's contemporaries. And so, I would point students and say, "Well, see if this works. See if you can make these pieces work."

JR

So, it sounds pretty much like just through casual listening. You'll just always kind of have an ear out, "Hey, this might work.", and just kind of jot it down. And I think that's kind of how I get drawn to some of these arrangements that I make in the Baroque period. It has to do a lot with what you said about kind of a close range and the proper amount of voicings and not too busy. And I feel like on some earlier keyboard instruments and, of course, a bowed string instrument with a continuo, it's usually a two or three texture, which oftentimes fits pretty nicely on our instrument.

FK

And with continuo, you've got a lot of freedom to do things different ways. You just have to follow the figured base.

3. What makes for an effective arrangement?

FK

Well, oftentimes it's important to narrow it down. My most recent publications have been the bowed string music by Bach and working on that, it opened up a whole new realm of ideas and things that I didn't know about when I did the lute suites, just many different aspects because you were in the position of sometimes having to add notes. And then I

learned all about concepts such as the rule of the octave, which is something I knew nothing about before, and schemata.

Apparently, most of the theory that we do, our concept of music education now really is built largely on Rameau's treatises, which came out when Bach was 37 years old. And if you could go back in time and speak to Bach and ask him "What is a dominant 7th chord?", he wouldn't know what it was. It didn't exist in his training. And the whole idea of building harmonies on an established base, whether it's an inversion or if it's in root position, you still look at it harmonically as having a root. Anyway, Bach and his contemporaries learned a completely different way. It wasn't based on the harmonic concepts that we know today. That's where you get things like fauxbourdon, other concepts of moving an inversion. But anyway, this doesn't directly apply to your research, but it's very interesting. And like I said, it sort of impressed on me how important it is to narrow things down, because the lute suites were easy compared to everything that needed to be known in the bowed string music.

JR

Sure. And I know that a lot of your specialty is bowed string arrangements, violin partitas, lute suites and the cello suites. And the reason I thought it would be so valuable to speak with you on this topic even though I'm focusing on piano music is because much of my approach for this paper is the affect being such a key and primary consideration when making an effective arrangement, and less so the instrument that it was written for.

FK

Capturing the essence of the music

JR

Yes, exactly. You do that so well in your arrangements, adding notes, taking away notes, changing octaves. All that stuff aside, is the arrangement still effective? And I believe that you accomplish that, at least in my opinion. So, I thought there's still value here in our conversation.

FK

I guess what I'm saying is that the Baroque music, more so than the Romantic music, really had a lot of established conventions and guidelines. They had what they called partiture, which are established lessons. And all music students in Germany, for example, went through this kind of rigorous hands-on approach and it's formulaic. I can send you some articles that would probably help with some of your Baroque transcriptions, but it's the same thing with continuo playing. There are certain rules that you have to follow. But when you're in later eras, Romantic music, different composers had different ways of doing things. So, getting to the essence of the music oftentimes is what you hear and what you think best conveys the affect, as you say, of the music itself. It's like you look at people who've done keyboard reductions for orchestral parts, for concertos. The best keyboard reductions are the ones that capture the spirit, that don't try to put in everything that the orchestra does and have you play on an instrument that's not designed to do a

particular technique. What can you do instead that captures the essence of it? One thing I would suggest to you is we'd look at some keyboard reductions of concertos.

4. Do you think arranging music for the guitar is important? If so, why?

FK

Well, I think you learn a lot by doing it, by making arrangements. It really makes you study the music and consider the alternatives that you have, especially if it involves learning new concepts. Like I said, working on the violin sonatas and partitas was a whole different ballgame than the lute suites for me because I studied the music theory that I knew Bach studied and so that influenced his choice of how to do cadences. You've got all of these stylized cadences and certain conventions when following certain chord progressions, it's not anything goes. They had rules they follow, and one of them being called the rule of the octave. I'll send you some paperwork on this. But anyway, studying that, it was just a new world for me. It just really completely changed my understanding of Baroque music. You know, let's say you've got a chord that you can fill in, and you've got a bass note and a treble note. You got different ways to harmonize it. And on guitar, what would fit? You know, it's our way of understanding something theoretically, it's what is possible physically and theoretically.

But Bach's vocabulary was much more restrictive. He had certain rules that he had to follow, such as not doing parallel fifths and parallel octaves. But it goes much deeper than that. They have a concept of chords being in motion or in rest. And the notes that

you use to harmonize a lower line oftentimes depends on its function in the chord progression. So, it's theoretically different from what we learned today.

JR

Right.

FK

Anyway, I can't help but think that studying things like this just opens your mind to different possibilities, the same way that I think all guitar students should play music from different eras, and you need to experience modern music and impressionistic music. I think arranging just teaches you a lot that you wouldn't know otherwise.

JR

Yeah, I took a performance practice seminar a few years ago, and it was a two-semester class and the first semester, I think, spent 90% of the time in the Baroque period reading articles and such. But the biggest takeaway from that class, goes back to what you're saying about all these rules at cadences and ornamentation rules. You know, there are so many treatises written mostly for vocalists, but I understood that a lot of these applied to keyboard. There were keyboard treatises, and string instruments took a lot, borrowed a lot of these same rules for ornamentations. And when you start reading some of these treatises, you're right in that they have rules for every type of cadence, if it's preceded by this note or this rhythm or what comes after.

FK

But here's the thing. It's more than just a rule. There's a purpose behind it based on their aesthetics and everything. I mean, when I was a student, and for the longest time, I was always taught Baroque trills start on the top, the upper auxiliary note. That's the rule. That's the way it's done. Well, why? "Well, that's the way it's done." No, there's a reason for that. It's because if you've got a major third, you've got C and E, and you want to start the trill, you started on the F because that creates a suspended sound. And so, what you've got is a decorated suspension and resolution. That's why most trills start on the upper auxiliary, to create that sense of resolution, harmonic resolution. Well, what about in those cases, let's say you've got a trill on the fourth interval, and if you start on the upper auxiliary, you are then starting the trill on the fifth. Well, different rules apply. Sure, because that's a justification for sometimes starting on the main note or starting ahead of the beat or doing some other work around to still create the sense of suspension resolution. It's not as simple as following the rule that baroque trills start on the upper auxiliary because they don't always, right? Learning things like that is what really opened my eyes. And so, to simply call them rules is, I think, a mistake. You've got to understand the musical theoretical reasons for things being the way they are.

JR

Right. And a lot of these treatises that we ended up reading oftentimes did provide context in a lot of these rules. There were explanations given.

FK

Some do, some do. But these early texts oftentimes are frustratingly vague, obtuse, and you have to read between the lines to figure out what things mean.

And I just want to draw one parallel thing about rules, tools, and explanations. Even in technique, back when I was a student, things are a lot more sophisticated now. But I was a student back in the early days of developing the classical guitar. But Segovia had a book out. Vladimir Bobri had a book called "The Segovia Technique". And Bobri stated "The footstool must be six inches off the floor." What the hell? What if you're six foot six? Or what if you're five foot three? What if you're sitting in a tall chair? What if you have long legs? That kind of explanation just drove me crazy. Another example is Segovia always kept his thumb halfway up the back of the neck. And then this was early on, I happened to get an LP by John Williams. And I saw John Williams with his thumb sticking up like that. And I said, "He knows better than that. He shouldn't be making that." After a while, I figured, "Yeah, John Williams did know better than that."

JR

Right.

FK

I'm the one who is blindly following things that don't make sense.

JR

Yeah, everybody, we're all different shapes and sizes. And what I tell my students is "As long as you're comfortable, you're not in pain." And that's first and foremost. I mean, don't contort any part of your body.

FK

Yeah. Back in the early days, we were all taught to contort our wrists and play perpendicular to the strings. Yeah, I hated that. It never felt natural. I was kind of gravitated towards a more diagonal approach. And then when players like Manuel and others came along, and Russell, and were playing more that way, I felt vindicated. But early on, I was taught to contort into this position. We all were.

JR

In our corner of the world, we have the famous story with Segovia and the master class with Michael Chapdelaine, Now, it seems wild that that would happen, and he would be treated like that, but I guess it was different then.

FK

Segovia was like a guru. And you found that out.

5. What is your process for arranging a piece for guitar?

FK

As far as my approach, I would say that one of the things I try to do first is to emphasize the importance of the outer voices, the topmost voice and the bass line, I think, are the most critical lines, generally speaking, that you have to work out first. And then when you're talking about inner voices, if you have to pick and choose, pick the 3rd or the 6th, something that defines the chord. You can get away with leaving off the fifth of the chord, for example, and octave doubling and things like that. Then as far as the bass voice goes, I would not just, like, try to keep things within the range of the guitar.

Oftentimes, unless it's part of the piece, I wouldn't jump up a 7th, for example, or jump up an octave. I see a lot of arrangers do that. They'll have a voice leading that makes absolutely no sense. So, if instead of, like, jumping up a 7th, for example, I would look to one or two notes before that interval and take those out where you can jump up a fifth or an octave and it would make better musical sense, and then come down by step to the 7th. You understand?

JR

Sure. So just as a way to maybe smooth out whatever melodic line you're doing instead of having such a drastic, all of a sudden huge leap up.

FK

Right. If the original effect was a release of tension, like four to three, I would try to preserve that maybe in another octave if I had to, rather than coming at it from the opposite direction and completely losing that effect.

JR

Right. So, yeah, it sounds like handle the outer voices to kind of get yourself situated, some of the higher melodies, some of the bass line, and that gives you more of a sense of what you have left to work with inside afterwards.

FK

That will be your first indication if a work will work or not, if it can be arranged or not.

6. Does genre play a role in determining if a piece should be arranged for guitar?

FK

Not at all.

JR

Interesting. Okay. So, anything's fair game.

FK

I think so.

JR

I like that.

FK

Can you give me an example where it would not be?

JR

Well, I guess I'm more wondering symphonic music and string quartet, those types of genres or even impressionistic music being better or worse or harder or easier.

FK

It's much harder. But there was not much impressionistic music when I was a student for the longest time. But I've heard a couple of really wonderful arrangements recently, in recent years. Like the "Arabesque No. 1". I never would have felt that could have been pulled off on a guitar, but it's beautiful. Rene Izquierdo did that.

JR

I was just about to mention that. I was curious if this is what you were referring to.

FK

It's beautiful. And there's another guitarist who did an arrangement of it. I can't remember who it was, but if you can pull it off and if it works, it works. When you were saying genre, I was thinking that you meant like impressionistic or Baroque or modern or whatever, or even like other styles jazz or tango or whatever. I think all of those are fair game. When you're talking about medium like orchestral, I do draw the line there. I do believe that there are some things that probably are best not done on the guitar. I mean, of course, we've all heard Yamashita's "Pictures at an Exhibition" and the "New World Symphony", and he also did the Beethoven's violin concerto. I mean, we're all amazed by that sort of thing, and guitar players may love it, but in the end, you've got to admit it falls far short of the original. And if you're not a guitarist and don't care about how fast someone can move his fingers, I think those may be not the most successful world.

8. What's your favorite arrangement made by someone else, and what's your favorite arrangement that you've made?

FK

Well, there are a lot of arrangements that I really like. These are old by this point in time, but when Barrueco came out with his *Suite Española* and the Granados pieces, to me, they were eye opening. I love that. I don't know if you know this story, but John Williams actually wrote a letter to Manuel complimenting him.

JR

I did not know that, no.

FK

Yeah. Saying how good they were. John Williams told Manuel that he was the best guitarist he'd ever heard.

JR

Wow. Well, I can believe that. That's not too hard to believe.

FK

But talk about humility and graciousness. That was just remarkable of John Williams to do that. But anyway, those pieces were wonderful to me. And since then, there have been many others that I do like. It's hard for me to think without seeing things.

JR

Sure.

FK

But I'll just say that those made a big impression on me. And some other attempts at transcribing that music have not appealed to me as much. Like, I haven't seen any arrangement of the "Valses Poeticos", for example, by Granados that I really like. Some

of the earlier ones would just do selective variations, selective waltzes that were playable, and that, to me, was more gratifying or more realistic. But later editions, people tried to put in all of them, you know, or the majority of them, and it resulted in all kinds of contorted solutions for things and retuning between the variations, which might work on a record, but it doesn't really work in a live concert, right? And when you have to do all those kinds of maneuvers to make a piece work, to me, it's not worth it. So, I thought Manuel's selection of pieces for his collections were very successful.

APPENDIX B – IRB Approval Letter

Office of
Research Integrity



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NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI via the Incident submission on InfoEd IRB.
- The period of approval is twelve months. An application for renewal must be submitted for projects exceeding twelve months.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 22-221
PROJECT TITLE: Effective Arranging Techniques for the Classical Guitar
SCHOOL/PROGRAM: Music
RESEARCHERS: PI: James Reyelt
Investigators: Ciraldo, Nicholas-Reyelt, James-
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Approved
CATEGORY: Expedited Category
PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 28-Jul-2022 to 27-Jul-2023

Donald Sacco

Donald Sacco, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chairperson

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