

TOUCHSTONES

Laurence Juber



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The Evolution of Fingerstyle Guitar

LA BERNARDINA
Spinacino/Josquin Des Pres (1507)

PAVANA
Milan (1536)

GUARDAME LAS VACAS
Narváez (1538)

ROMANESCA
Mudarra (1543)

RECERCATA
Ortiz (1553)

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GALLIARD
John Dowland (1601)

PRELUDE in D minor
De Visée (1686)

FOLIAS
Sanz (1674)

BOUREE in E minor
J.S.Bach (c.1708-1717)

DIVERTIMENTO
An Anonymous Gentleman (1763)

SONATA Op 15 1st movement
Giuliani (c.1810)

MARCH FROM CENDRILLON
Sor (c.1824)

CAPRICE #7
Legnani (c.1822)

AN MALVINA
Mertz (1847)

BOLERO
Arcas (c.1860)

PRELUDE No. 1
Tarrega (c1890)

SPANISH FANDANGO
Worrell (1866)

MAZURKA
De Janon (1889)

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE
Olcott-Bickford (1921)

THE CAPITOL MARCH
Foden (1920)

Fingerstyle - a method of plucking or striking the strings of a guitar with the right hand, while articulating harmony, melody and counterpoint with the left hand.

Guitar - a chordophone of the long-necked lute family, typically strung with six strings.

Performed and recorded by Laurence Juber at
The Sign Of The Scorpion, Studio City CA June 2018

Primary guitar: 1893 Martin 1-21
strung with extra light gauge Martin Retro strings

additional guitars:
Martin OM44J koa/Adirondack spruce
Martin OM18J mahogany/'moon' spruce
Collings OM1 mahogany/sitka spruce
all strung with Martin Retro 'LJ's Choice'

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www.laurencejuber.com

The guitar, and its historical relatives, the lute and the vihuela, have long been recognized as vehicles for the performance of popular and art music. Fingerstyle has been the dominant technique on these fretted instruments since the mid- 15th century. The tunes in this collection are historical touchstones in the evolution of what would become known in the 20th century as fingerstyle guitar.



It includes the first published Renaissance lute, vihuela and guitar pieces, then proceeds with representative examples from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic musical eras, before transitioning into the American parlor guitar repertoire with the influential 'Spanish Fandango.'

Originally written for gut strings, this music is performed by Laurence Juber on steel-strung guitars by C.F. Martin & Co. These instruments trace their lineage to a European guitar-making tradition that is distinct from that of the Spanish classical guitar.

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A conversation with guitarist Laurence Juber

What drew you to the classical repertoire?

I studied classical guitar as a teenager, and played some Renaissance lute at London University, where I earned a degree in music and musicology. My ambition was to be a studio guitar player and this musical education was a means to that end, an opportunity to understand the substance of music, and its ever-evolving style.

What was your career path?

While I was in college, I was paying my musical dues in London and playing for NYJO, the UK's National Youth Jazz Orchestra, which was a 'farm team' for the recording session world. That led me to a period in the studios where I learned to invent parts that would complement the tone and the texture of the song. One of the coolest experiences was playing the James Bond theme for the soundtrack of *The Spy Who Loved Me*.

Why did you leave studio work?

My father passed in March 1978. A month later, I became Paul McCartney's lead guitarist in Wings. That was life-changing — my 'Masters in Music from McCartney University.' I learned a lot about making records, being on tour with a Beatle, how music is promoted, the publishing business, and most importantly, not to smuggle cannabis into Japan!

What happened after Wings?

I was starting to spend a lot of time in the United States. The day after Wings officially folded in April 1981, I met my future wife, Hope, in a Manhattan comedy club. I relocated to her home in Los Angeles, where we raised a family. I went on to play recording sessions on hundreds of TV shows, movies and records.

How did you become a fingerstyle guitar soloist?

I'd accomplished my career goal to be a studio musician and managed to work with three Beatles - all but John.

Always simmering in the background was a fascination with the self-sufficiency of solo fingerstyle guitar. At age 12, I heard Bert Jansch's recording of Davey Graham's tune 'Anji'. With its loping melody and a simultaneous descending bass line, it was awesome. It was like The Shadows (England's instrumental twang - masters), but on one guitar.

Conquering 'Anji' was a high school guitarists 'rite of passage', an initiation, a fretboard Barmitzvah. The style was, in Davey Graham's words, 'Folk, Blues and Beyond.' The beyond being an eclectic mix of classical, jazz, middle eastern music and much more. My favorite DADGAD tuning was his invention.

So was Davey Graham a major influence?

I didn't absorb his playing directly, but rather from those he influenced: Pentangle, Jimmy Page, Paul Simon. Nonetheless, all British fingerstyle players are in his lineage. I had a lesson from him once - very cool. 'Anji' from the master!



Why play classical on a steel string guitar, rather than a more typical nylon string?

Not being a technician, I put music first and the pedagogy second, so the idea of playing 'classical' pieces on a steel-string guitar works for me. I play guitars by C. F. Martin, which can trace their lineage to a European guitar-making tradition distinct from that of the Spanish classical guitar. Sonically, they have more in common with the early 19th century Viennese guitars.

I'm certainly not a classical guitarist in the tradition of 'leg-up-on-a-footstool' players of nylon-strung Spanish-style guitars. I play on steel strings; I don't use nails. I perform standing: I'm more likely to play Beatles than Bach. Nonetheless, I've maintained a strong appreciation for music created by professional fretted instrument players of any era. When I spend time 'in the woodshed', I tend to work through the historical repertoire.

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Why this collection of pieces?

The tunes in this collection are touchstones in the evolution of what would become known in the 20th century as fingerstyle guitar. It started as a transcription folio, where I curated, from a steel-string guitarist's perspective, a collection based on a historical timeline. The album coalesced as I recorded the tunes and found that they flowed in a satisfying way.

Some are favorites that I've played over the years. Others are significant for being the first of their kind, or represent a window into a particular guitarist or style. One came from a college-era trip to the British Museum, while the rest were transcribed and arranged from facsimiles of original manuscripts or publications.

Describe the repertoire?

'La Bernardina' was written by Joaquin Des Pres, generally considered the greatest composer of the Renaissance. This version is from the first ever folio for lute, arranged by Spinaccino and published in 1507 by Petrucci.

Milan was a Spanish courtier who published the first folio of pieces for the Spanish vihuela, a guitar-like instrument tuned the same as a lute. The 'Pavane' was a stately dance of the period.

Both Narvaez' 'Guardame Las Vacas' and Mudarra's 'Romanesca' use the passamezzo antico chord progression as a basis for a set of variations. We are familiar with a variant of this harmonic sequence as 'Greensleeves.' Mudarra was the first composer to publish music for the four course Renaissance guitar.

All the tunes in this collection were all written for fretted instruments, although Ortiz 'Recercata' was intended for the viola da gamba, the bowed relative of the plucked vihuela. It represents a type of quasi-improvised variations over a repeated harmonic sequence (musically called a 'ground'). This passamezzo moderno progression, became known as the 'Gregory Walker' in Elizabethan England, and variants of it are still in use today.

Considered the greatest British lutenist of the era, John Dowland was highly paid, much traveled, and, being Irish, suspected of being a Catholic spy. This galliard, a kind of leaping dance, is dedicated to 'Queen Elizabeth', who would dance "six or seven galliards in a morning" for her morning exercise.

Robert de Visée was the court guitarist to Louis XIV of France: "In the evening His Majesty takes a long walk in his gardens; he always goes to bed at eight o'clock and dines in his bed at ten; he usually has de Visée come at nine to play the guitar." The 'Prelude' is from a suite for the five course Baroque guitar.

In music history, from Corelli to Rachmaninoff, there exist countless examples of another favored progression, the 'Folia' or the 'Folias D'Espana'. Gaspar Sanz, who wrote the 'Folia' in this collection, was the top Spanish guitarist of the 17th century.

The most revered composer of the Baroque era (debatably, of all time) is J.S. Bach. He was apparently fond of the sonority of the keyboard lute-harpsichord, and the E minor suite, from which the 'Bourée' is taken, was likely written for that. This piece was learned by George Harrison and Paul McCartney from a recording by Chet Atkins. McCartney admits to it influencing the accompaniment to his song 'Blackbird.'

The early classical style of 'Divertimento' was written anonymously for the English Guittar, a type of wire-strung cittern popular around 1750, and not in fact a guitar. The source for this is in the British Museum as: *Six Divertimentis or Lessons for the GUITAR - Composed by a Gentleman for his own private Entertainment, not originally intended for the press.*

In the late 18th century, when the guitar became a six-string instrument, Europe was struck with 'Guitarmania.' The enthusiasm for the newly evolved instrument, engaged such prominent musicians as Berlioz, Schubert and Paganini.

Giuliani was a contemporary of Haydn and Beethoven. His 'Sonata' is an example of an extended composition for guitar, with the thematic exposition and development characteristic of the classical sonata form. This is the first movement. I avoided the repetition of the first section for the sake of brevity.

Sor was an accomplished composer of songs, ballets and orchestral works. His 'March' is from a ballet, *Cendrillon* (*Cinderella*). He and Giuliani are considered founding fathers of classical guitar.

Legnani was known as the 'Paganini of the guitar.' This is number 7 of his 36 *Caprice*, which rival those of Paganini in virtuosity. His signature guitar was the model that C.F. Martin emulated when he established himself in New York in 1833.

Mertz wrote in a near-impressionistic, lightly chromatic style, similar to the pianist Schumann. 'An Malvina' is from the first of his *Bardenklänge* (tone poems) which, along with his arrangements of operatic themes, made a substantial contribution to mid-19th century guitar music.

The Spaniards, Arcas and his protege, Tarrega, laid the path that later allowed Segovia to establish their Spanish tradition as the dominant classical guitar paradigm. The 'Bolero' is a stylized dance that has a quasi-improvisational Flamenco-like quality. The 'Prelude' is typical of Tarrega's melodicism.

Worrell's 'Spanish Fandango' (neither Spanish, nor a fandango,) was highly influential and became a feature of American folk and blues guitar culture. Played in open G tuning, it's possible to trace a guitaristic progression through rural blues players, many of whom who use this 'Spanish' tuning, to the Rolling Stone's Keith Richards.

De Janon's 'Mazurka' (a Polish dance) is typical of the genre of parlor music. The term references not only the milieu for its performance but also, in general, the European-influenced, semi-classical style popular in the late 19th century.

William Foden and Vadah Olcott-Bickford were prominent in the early 20th century American guitar scene, and major figures in the BMG Movement that spearheaded the marketing of banjos, mandolins and guitars in America.

Olcott-Bickford was a fervent advocate for the guitar and left a substantial historical archive. Her method book includes a number of lyrical solo pieces, including 'Under The Greenwood Tree' which was, perhaps, inspired by the Thomas Hardy novel, rather than Shakespeare's song from *As You Like It*.

Foden, 'The Wizard Of The Guitar', was a master technician. 'The Capitol March' includes flavors of Souza and ragtime, blended into an Americana style.

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