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EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES

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By

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A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

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TITLE: EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Isaac Lausell

This document will discuss the repertoire selected for the required graduate master's recital. An overview of the historical background, harmonic analysis, style and, form, will be presented along with performance practice concepts involving the interpretation and technical challenges of each piece. The program will include: *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro BWV 998* by Johann Sebastian Bach; *Concerto for Guitar and Chamber Orchestra* by Heitor Villa-Lobos; *Historie del Tango* by Astor Piazzolla and *Usher Waltz Op. 29* by Nikita Koshkin.

A variety of resources that include books, articles, liner notes and dissertations will be used to form a fresh examination of each style of music represented in this program. Adapting *BWV 998* for the guitar requires a detail study of style, harmony and guitar technique because it was originally written for keyboards. The Villa-Lobos concerto explores idiomatic elements linked to the physicality of the guitar such as combinations of open string drones with parallel motion passages of the instrument. Piazzolla's composition for guitar and flute demonstrates how the guitar can blend with other instruments and the use of Argentinean folklore in concert level music. Finally, *Usher Waltz Op. 29* uses polyrhythms and colorful harmonies to interpret Edgar Allen Poe's short story of "The Fall of the House of Usher."

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CHAPTER 1

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685- 1750)

Bach's *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro BWV 998* contains a number of unusual traits that make this entire work interesting for the history of his music. During the composer's life time, the modern classical guitar did not exist, therefore the he never wrote anything directly for the instrument. Nevertheless, Bach's music reached the guitar through transcriptions of other instruments. According to scholar Anne Leahy, certain characteristics raise questions about this particular work; even though is seen as a secular composition, it may include sacred symbolism. The prelude is in 12/8 meter and to the composer this meant a sense of being set free from evil. The subject of the fugue follows a simple step-wise melody, though the theme came from Martin Luther hymn *Vom Himmel hoch, da Kommichher*. The text of Luther's hymn is about the birth of Jesus.[1]

Controversies regarding the original instrumentation of this work raise questions. Bach was in close contact with lutenist Silvius Leopold Weiss, so other scholarly studies suggest that it was written for one of the guitar ancestors. The title of the original manuscript *Prelude pour la Luth o Cembal* indicates that the work was composed for the lute or the cembal (a type of early harpsichord). The range of the composition shows that is not lute friendly, with the exception of the prelude. Bach owned a lute-harpsichord, most likely the instrument of choice for when the work was written (around 1735), towards the middle of his career. Johann Nicolaus Bach was a lute-harpsichord builder during the early 18th century (an instrument designed to resemble the sound of a lute). Instead of metal strings, the instrument was built with gut strings. The shape of

[1] Anne Leahy, *Bach's Prelude, Fugue and Allegro for Lute (BWV) 998: A Trinitarian Statement of Faith?* (Ireland: Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland, 2005), 37-40.

the device was not standardized and as a result, there were many different configurations for the lute-harpsichord.[2]

The form of this work is unique mostly because of the A-B-A fugue. This is the only Bach fugue with a precise repeated section.[3] In most fugues, complex forms of counter-point happen in the development of the work. The A-section begins with the soprano voice stating the subject, and later the middle voice coming on measure 3. By measure 7, the three predominant voices are providing counter-point and exploring the theme. It is unusual for Bach fugues to have such a dense harmonic material during the exposition of the work, leaving the B-section with a contrasting rhythm pattern and a more distant relationship to the subject. Guitarist and scholar Miles McConnell classified the *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro* as a combination of a "baroque-sonata and baroque-suite, which usually consists of around six movements, one of which is often a prelude, and the remainder of which are based on a dance rhythms and forms such as a *courante* or *sarabande*."[4]

The prelude begins in the key of D major and it modulates to the dominant key on measure 5. The 12/8 meter can easily trick the listener because there are different ways of feeling the pulse. This meter is a large subdivision of a 4/4 common time.[5] The flow of the harmony and melody allows the prelude to elude the listener that the time signature is actually in 6/8. Figure 1.1 shows the opening measures of the prelude. In the beginning, the bass notes work more as a pedal tone to the homophonic melody. As the prelude progresses, the bass becomes more active.

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[2] Anne Leahy, 33.

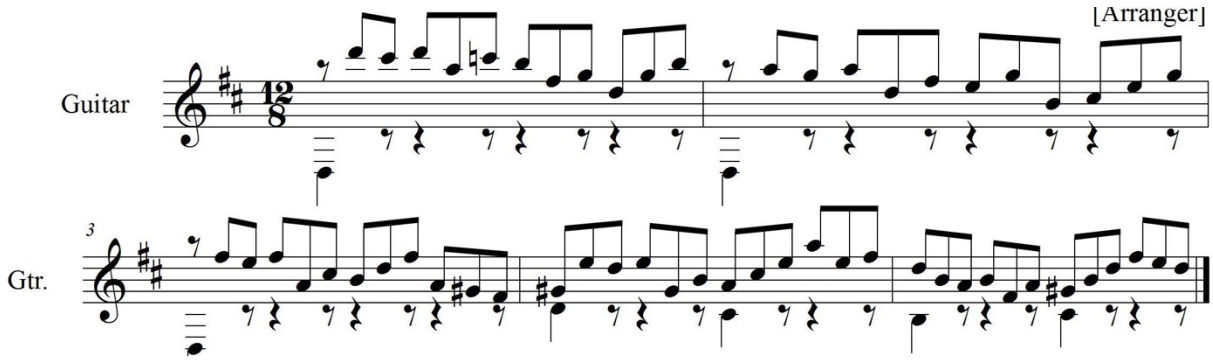
[3] David Walker, *A Fugue in Ternary Form by J.S. Bach* (BWV 998).

[4] Miles McConnell, *S'Wonderful Miles McConnell guitar*. (Madison Wisconsin: Miles McConnell Pub, 2014).

[5] Harold Farbeman, *The Art of Conducting Technique: A New Perspective.* (United States, Alfred Music Publications, 1999), 48.

In some measures, the bass becomes more present but only serving as a support. Measure 4 is an example of where the listener might think that the prelude is in 6/8; notice the two bass notes on that measure and how they are divided. The D3 comes on beat one and the C3 on beat three. This is the first time in the harmony that the bass appears twice in the same measure. The same number of bass notes occur on measure 5 and, for a brief moment creates a different sense of pulse. This pattern of increasing the number of bass notes in the middle of phrase repeats throughout this entire prelude. Bach uses the manipulation of time and harmony as an approach to transition the listener to the constant modulations.

Figure 1 mm. 1-5



Performing a work that was not originally written for the guitar may require even more concentration during the performance. One of the challenges of playing a polyphonic instrument is that more than one action takes place at the same time. This prelude can be used as a concentration exercise for guitarists. The single melody line accompanied by the support of the bass allows the guitarist to develop a detailed self-awareness of their technique. "Everyone knows the value of such concentration in guitar study and performance, but few guitarists do anything to improve it."[6] Preludes are written with the purpose to prepare the audience for what

[6] Lee Ryan, *The Natural Classical Guitar: The Principles of Effortless Playing.* (Wesport, Connecticut: Bold Strummer, 1991), 6.

is coming next: in this case, a difficult fugue. Therefore, the sensation that the performer sends is one of natural playing. This is not a composition to showcase the most challenging technical abilities. The real challenge is to remain concentrated and to provide a laidback perception to the audience.

Figure 2 mm. 1-4

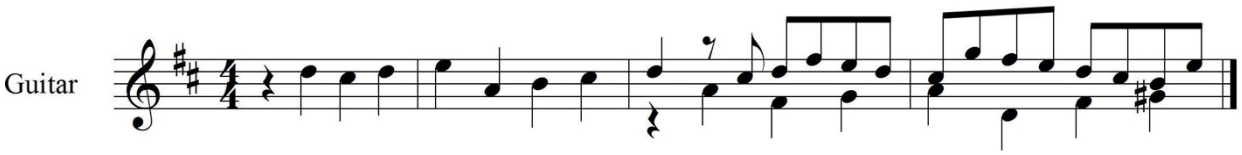


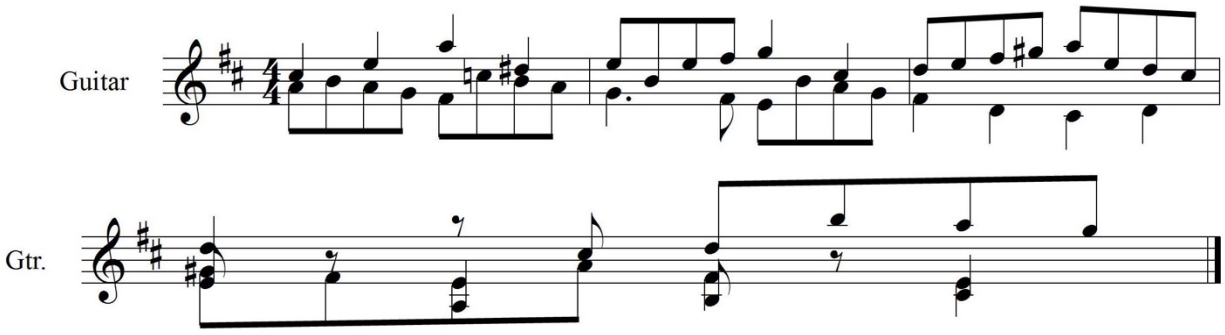
Figure 1.2 shows the first four measures of fugue and how the harmonic content quickly begins to expand. The soprano voice first introduces the subject that can be played with *vibrato* in order to gain greater tone color. In modern performance practice, *vibrato* is a common tool, but in the Renaissance and Baroque period it was used as an ornament. The guitar is a such soft instrument that it is critical to make use of all its technical possibilities to direct its sound. In a wrist *vibrato* "the hand will "rock" back and forth slightly at the wrist, up and down the length of the neck." This is a similar motion of a violinist; the instrument that the guitar is trying to mimic at this particular moment of the fugue.[7]

The implied chord progression based on the melody suggests that the fugue stays in the tonic key until the end of measure 4, when a V/V chord on beat four occurs (shown on Figure 1.2). By the beginning of measure 5, the counterpoint between the soprano and alto has already been established. Figure1.3 illustrates the entrance of the bass in measure 7; now the fugue is on the dominant key of A major. In addition, notice the different melodies that each voice is carrying. Measure 7 shows the opening subject now in the bass, while the soprano voice is

[7] Anthony Glise, *Classical Guitar Pedagogy: A Handbook for Teachers.* (United States: MelBay Publications, 1997), 105.

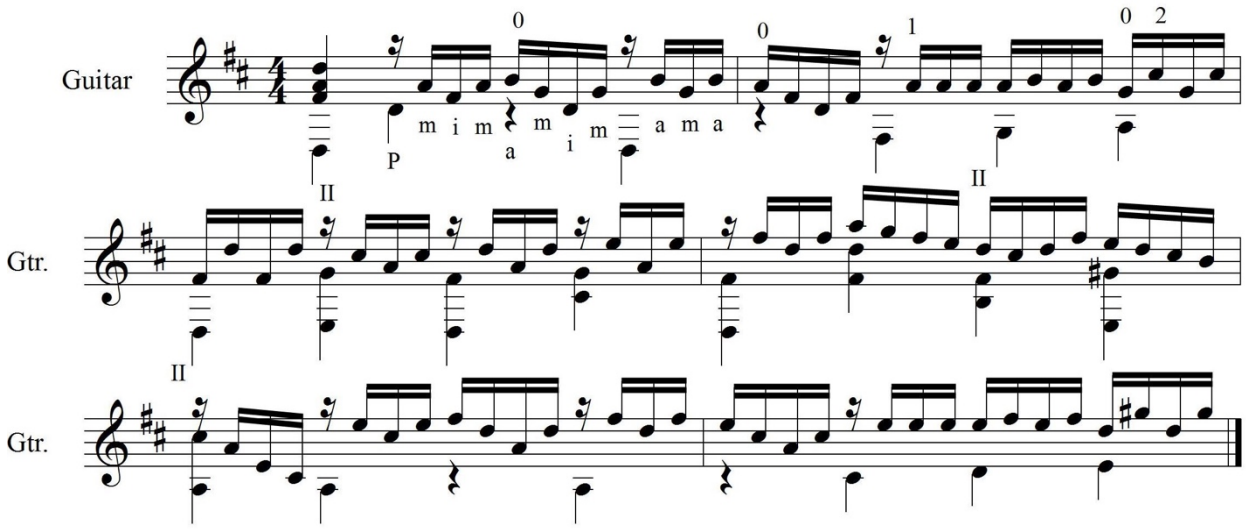
developing the current subject. This happens throughout the entire A section of the fugue showcasing a substantial amount of passages where each voice contains an individual melody line that references that opening subject.

Figure 3 mm. 5-8



The B section of the fugue begins with a succession of sixteenth note arpeggios that will continue until the recapitulation to the A section. Four bar phrases is how Bach divided the structure of the melody. The harmony of the subject is divided between three main voices: bass, alto and soprano. Occasional pedal tones take place, for example, between measures 41-42. Leaps of thirds, fourths and sixths give character to the new theme. Figure1.4 shows the first four bars of this new portion of the fugue (mm 29-34). Constant modulations occur throughout this piece, the first one begins at the end of measure 32. In the fourth beat, an E7 chord which it can be interpret as V/V chord serves as an indication that the piece is modulating to its dominant key of A major. The first beat of measure 33 is an A major in root position, symbolizing the resolution of the cadence and the beginning of the next phrase in the new key.

Figure 4 mm. 29-34

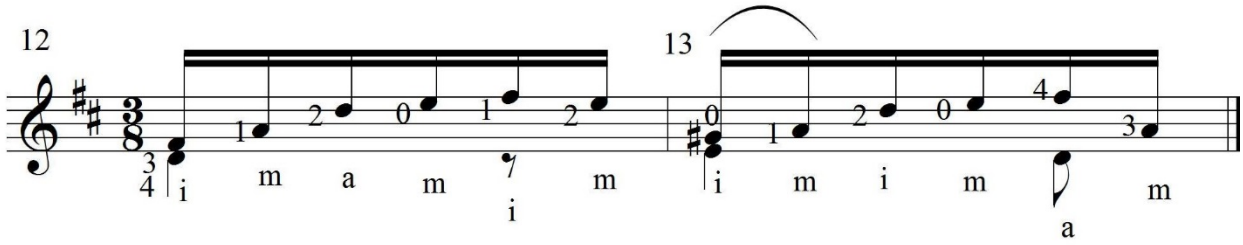


Making fingering decisions is a technical challenge, but perhaps even more in fugues. It is recommended to make choices at the early stages of study so that a practice routine can be established. In most scenarios, there is always more than one fingering option to any given passage. Only after trying each possibility a decision should be made. In addition, the guitarist should always keep in mind two important concepts: the melody and how it lines up with the harmony, and secondly, the technical strengths of each performer. The voice that contains the main subject should stand out from the rest of the harmony. At the same time, because it is a fugue, the counterpoint must be heard as an answer to the subject. It is important to choose fingerings that are comfortable to execute and presents all the voices with the greatest degree of clarity. Figure 1.4 is an example of a fingering that tries to maintain a comfortable position for the left-hand, gives preference to the open strings, and it avoid any awkward digits for the right-hand. In this situation, the open strings explore the natural sound of the instrument. The steady sixteenth-note rhythm will carry the sound of the open strings notes even after its original duration, providing a sense of fullness to the work. The chosen fingering in the right-hand avoids finger-crossing and it tries to copy the Mauro Giuliani arpeggio exercises. These consistent

conclusions will provide shape to the sound and interpretation, consequently creating a ground-base path to practicing this fugue.

Reaching a desired tempo for a specific work like the *Bach Allegro BWV 998,* requires extreme dexterity from the performer. Scott Tenant emphasizes that "control is more important than speed." Controlled hand movements lead to more speed.[8] The purpose is to train the body to react to the music being studied. To achieve such goal, fingering a piece of music in advance is a method that engages the body and mind. Young classical guitar students are still learning about the possibilities of fingering passages by combining open and fretted strings. An advance fingering choice will raise a critical thinking and problem solving musician. Just like one must look to both sides before crossing the street in order to make sure that no cars are coming, advance fingering educates the guitarist to proceed with caution.

Figure 5



One of the ways to be an efficient guitarist is to be aware of when cross fingering happens. "It occurs when *i* crosses over *m* to reach a higher string, or when *m* crosses under *i* to reach a lower string."[9] Cross fingering is unavoidable in some cases because of the phrasing choices or because of the digits chosen in the left hand. There are exercises designed to help the

[8] Scott Tenant, *Pumping Nylon: The Classical Guitarist's Technique Handbook*. (United States: Alfred Music Publications, 1995), 64.

[9] Scott Tenant, 73.

guitarist become more fluent with the cross fingering. Figure 1.5 is a passage from the *Bach Allegro BWV 998* that deals with the issue of cross-fingering. Measure 12 begins with a D major triad; notice that the first three sixteenth-notes where the chord is being outlined, the fingering suggested is a simple arpeggio going from *p* to *a*. From the fourth sixteenth-note on, the guitarist must make the choice of which fingering will be used in the right hand. The decision can be made based on the following considerations: what are the technical demands of measure 13? It has to do with the analogy discussed earlier that it is "necessary to look both ways before crossing the street." Musically, what is important at that moment? How does the performer interpret the phrase? How does their technique respond to the physical demand of the passage? These are some of the choices that the performer must not only make in advance, but have a solid reason and understanding of. To avoid cross-fingering the choice would be to play place *m* on the open E string and begin an alternation with the *i* finger. The sequence will carry on to the first note of measure 13. Therefore, when the guitarist lands on the open B of measure 13, cross-fingering has been avoided since *i* is not crossing under the *m* finger.

CHAPTER 2

HEITOR VILLA- LOBOS (1887- 1959)

Heitor Villa-Lobos was a Brazilian nationalist composer that was born in Rio de Janeiro, on March 5, 1887. His father was Raul Villa-Lobos, a Spaniard descendant. His mother Noemia Villa-Lobos, came from a Portuguese family. Raul worked as a librarian and, at the same time, played chamber music at his home. Villa-Lobos claims that the music education taught by his father was complete. Raul gave cello and clarinet lessons to his son when he was a child. In order to study the cello, a viola was adapted instead of the real cello so that young Villa-Lobos could place it between his legs. As for the clarinet, Villa-Lobos was caught messing with his father's instrument without permission. As a punishment, Villa-Lobos explains that he was forced to learn a major scale without any help in order to receive lessons. [10]

According to the guitarist and scholar Humberto Amorim, there is no exact date stating when Villa-Lobos first had contact with the guitar. Some assumptions about his encounter with the instrument can be made: it certainly happened after his father Raul passed away, because the guitar was not seen as a serious instrument. The strict conduct at their household did not permit Villa-Lobos to explore the guitar in greater depth. At the turn of the nineteenth century, in Rio de Janeiro, the guitar was considered an instrument played by vagabonds. *Panqueca* (1900) and *Mazurca em Re Maior* (1901) are his first two compositions for the guitar, both took place after his father passed away. There are no facts regarding who taught Villa-Lobos the guitar or where the concepts to his technique originated. During his youth, the friendship with Brazilian

[10] David Appleby, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: A Life,* (London: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 5, 8, 9.

bohemian musicians included the close contact with other important Brazilian guitarists. However, these musicians probably never gave a formal guitar lesson to Villa-Lobos.[11]

The relationship between Andres Segovia and Villa-Lobos was critical, because Segovia needed the prestige of Villa-Lobos as living composer. At the height of his career, the Brazilian composer was highly respected in Europe and North America, constantly giving tours and acting as a guest conductor.[12] At the same time, there was no better name than Segovia to perform any work for guitar in the first half of the twentieth century. "I found the guitar almost at a standstill—despite the noble efforts of Sor, Tarrega, Llobet and others— and raised it to the loftiest levels of the musical world."[13] Even though Segovia may sound pretentious, there is a significant amount of truth to the statement. Other respected 20th century composers such as Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Joaquin Rodrigo, Frederico Moreno Toroba and Manuel Ponce wrote guitar works for Segovia. The intent was to create a respected repertoire devoted to the instrument, something that was lacking before that time. As a result, his fame as the world's best classical guitarist grew. Any living composer would be lucky to have a piece performed by the Spanish guitarist.[14]

There are two different accounts of how the first meeting between Villa-Lobos and Segovia took place, and each describes the event in their own way. It is certain that it happened in Paris, in April of 1924, at the house of Olga Sarmento Nobre. According to Villa-Lobos, the

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[11] Humberto Amorin, *Heitor Villa-Lobos e o Violao*, (Rio de Janeiro: Academia Brasileira de Musica, 2009), 47, 49, 50.

[12]Ibid, 124.

[13]Ed. Victor Anand Coelho, *The Cambridge Companion to the Guitar,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 184.

[14] Ibid, 184, 185.

first words that Segovia ever spoke about him as a guitar composer were not very encouraging for a future friendship. To the Spanish guitarist, Villa-Lobos' guitar works did not fit the instrument. Segovia's argument was that the vernacular finger in the right hand was not part of the guitar technique. Villa-Lobos replied by saying that, "If you don't use it, you might as well cut it off of your hands." Later on that evening, Segovia lent his guitar so that Villa-Lobos could show off his skills or at least try. According to Segovia, "He was a terrible interpreter of the guitar. Nevertheless, in the few bars that he played on my instrument, two conclusions were made: first, he was a wonderful musician with original ideas. Second, he loved the guitar."[15]

Based on the first meeting between Villa-Lobos and Segovia, their collaboration often symbolized some divergence. In the letters that Segovia and Villa-Lobos exchanged over the years, the Spanish guitarist never criticized the Brazilian composer. Actually, the approach was always quite enthusiastic. He often complemented how the composer's understanding of the instrument by comparing him to other great composers. "Villa-Lobos has given to the history of the guitar fruits of his talent as luxuriant and savory as those of Scarlatti and Chopin."[16] This was part of the preface in the first publication of Villa-Lobos's *12 Etudes for Guitar*. However, this concerto for guitar and orchestra was only performed once by Segovia. In a few letters, the Spanish guitarist sent constant apologies to Villa-Lobos. According to Amorin, from 1951 until 1954 there are at least three formal letters regarding the difficulty of the music and other excuses that stopped Segovia from including certain pieces in his concert programs.[17]

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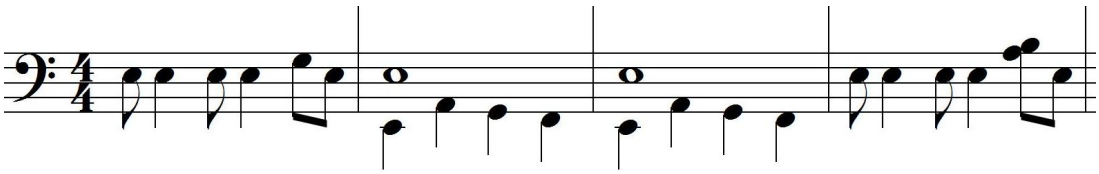
[15] Humberto Amorin, 116-117.

[16] Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Villa-Lobos Collections for Solo Guitar*, (USA: Max Eschig, 1990), 8.

[17] Humberto Amorin, 123-124.

The work was requested between the years of 1946- 1948 and originally titled *Fantasia Concertante para Violao e Pequena Orchestra*. That means that it was not a concerto, only a fantasia for guitar and orchestra. The first draft appeared in 1951 and, only after Villa-Lobos' wife insistence, he later added a *Cadenza* to the work. According to guitarist and scholar Turibio dos Santos, Segovia bribed the Villa-Lobos's family at every encounter with plenty of charm and champagne. Then the *Cadenza* was added as part of the second movement, *Andantino e Andante.* One of the reasons why it took Villa-Lobos' years to compose the work was because his lack of interest for the concerto itself. He believed that the guitar a was soft and personal instrument. Therefore, not appropriate to be accompanied by an orchestra. Segovia was not interested in using amplification and Villa-Lobos did not like the idea of limiting the dynamics of the orchestra in order to give preference to the guitar. As a result, Segovia only played the concerto in 1956, with the Houston Symphony Orchestra. Villa-Lobos was the guest conductor of that performance.[18]

Figure 6



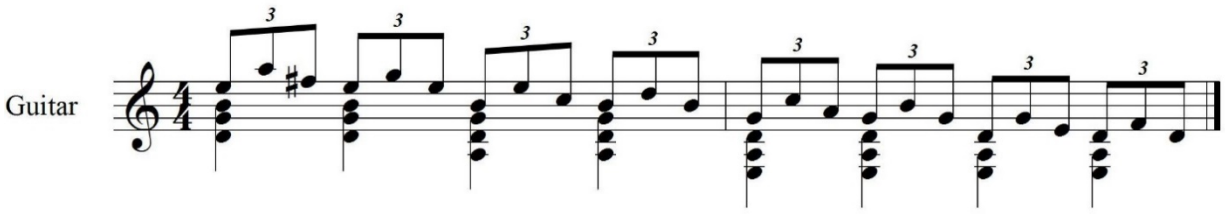
The first movement of the concerto *Allegro Preciso* is a *sonatina*; at the same time, an exact idea regarding the form of each movement is highly questionable, since this entire work was originally written as a *fantasia* and not a concerto. The first movement begins in the key of A minor and later modulates to the dominant key of E minor. Figure 2.1 shows theme 1 being

[18] Renata da Silva Almeida, *Do Intimismo a Grandiloquencia: Tragetoria e Estetica do Concerto para Violao e Orchestra.* (Sao Paulo: 2006), 129-130, 137.

introduced by the orchestra. During the initial part of the exposition, the guitar expands theme 1 using virtuosic sequences played in the upper register of the fretboard.

There are many elements that demonstrate how Villa-Lobos explores the open strings of the guitar not only in the first movement, but throughout the entire concerto. Constant harmonic sequences are constructed using chords with multiple open strings. The two predominant keys of A minor and E minor contribute because all of the open string notes of the guitar are diatonically accepted by both keys. Figure 2.2 is another section of the beginning of the exposition and, it shows an example of how the open strings are used in the context.

Figure 7



The second thematic material of theme 1 appears halfway through the exposition as it is shown in Figure 2.2. After an introduction of virtuosic scale runs and fast passages, the guitar introduces a new material. This new melodic theme demonstrates the rich timbre of the instrument. Theme 2 is initially voiced at the lower register and requires the guitarist to use the middle strings. In order to achieve a clearer sound, a precise placement in the right-hand is crucial. Placing the right-hand closer to the bridge of the instrument will produce a brighter sound, a necessary tool when the melody is orchestrated in the lower to middle voices. As a contrast to Figure 2.3, Figure 2.4 shows theme 2 being played in the higher strings. At this moment, the placement of the right-hand should be closer to the fretboard, producing a sweeter sound.

Figure 8

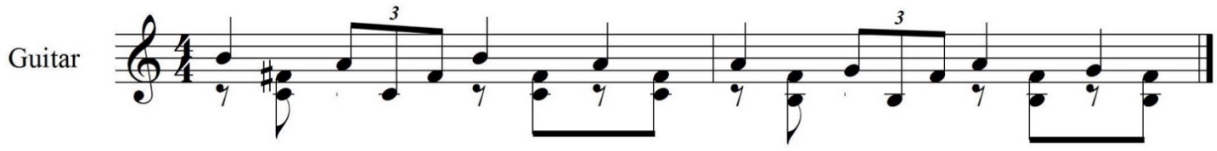
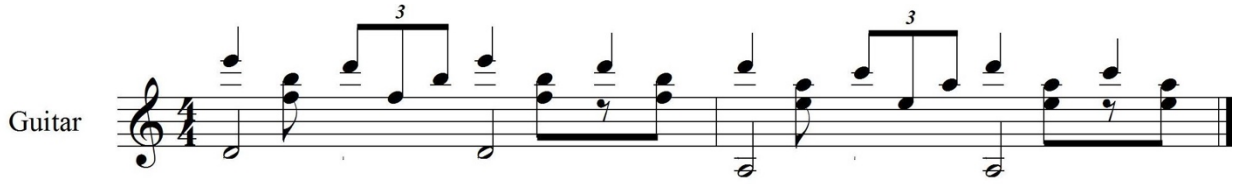
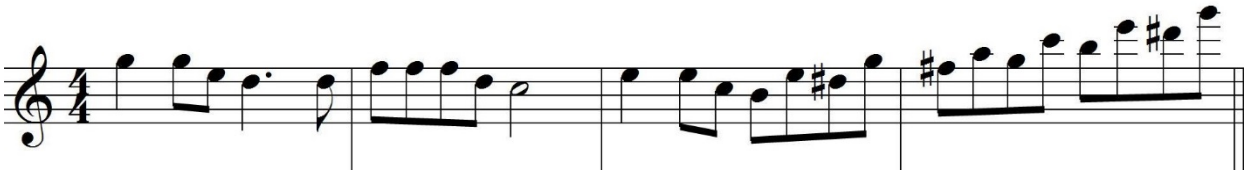


Figure 9



Theme 2 is introduced by the orchestra while the guitar rests for a few measures. According to Villa-Lobos, this section represents the folkloric music of the northwest of Brazil.[19] A number of poems, paintings, popular music and other ways of expressing that region of the country have been documented. Extreme hot weather, lack of water and poverty are characteristics suffered by the *sertanejo* (their people).[20] Now in the key of E minor, Figure 2.5 shows Theme 2.

Figure 10



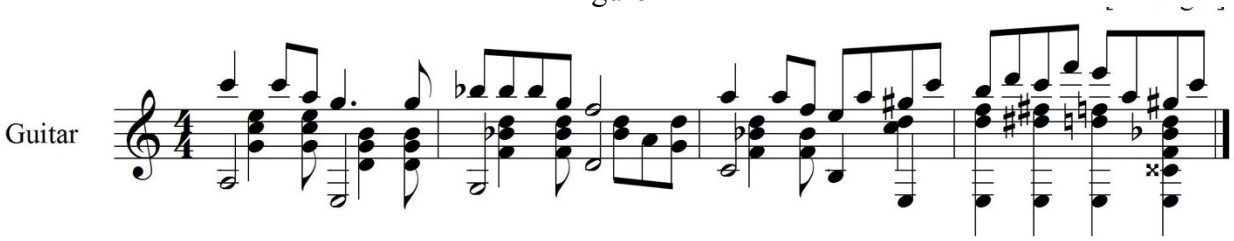
The most contrasting section of the development is the *Poco meno* (slower) section where the guitar is the focus of attention. It is almost as if the composer wrote a *cadenza* with a light accompaniment for the first movement. During this portion the guitar is playing theme 2. The main melodic material is first notated in the tonic key and later it modulates to the dominant of E minor. Figure 2.6 illustrates this final section of the development, a brief recapitulation that

[19] Renata da Silva Almeida, 144.

[20] Janaina Amado, *Regiao, Sertao, Nacao*. (Brazil: Ponto de Vista, 1995), 146-147.

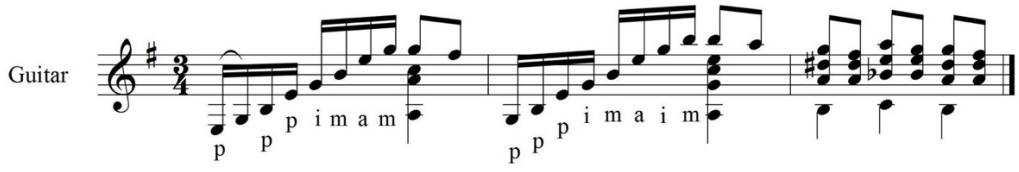
contains: theme 1 explored first by the orchestra, followed by the guitar and, a *codetta* marks the end of the first movement.

Figure 11



The second movement, *Andantino e Andante,* is a slow movement in triple meter that begins in the key of E minor. It is divided in A-B-A followed by a coda that will lead into the *cadenza.* Theme 1 is built with an arpeggio run of the i chord in the first and second beat, followed by a iv7 chord. The E minor arpeggio is an example of how Villa-Lobos understood the natural technique of playing the guitar. The melody uses all the strings of the guitar, jumping from one range to another. In addition, the suggested movement for the right-hand in order to complete the arpeggio uses *p, i, m* and *a* in a downward sequence. This thematic structure is repeated throughout the second movement. Figure 2.7 is a demonstration of theme 1 and how in this movement the guitar introduces the main content. In addition, pay closer attention in how Figure 2.7 is a completion of the development section of the first movement.

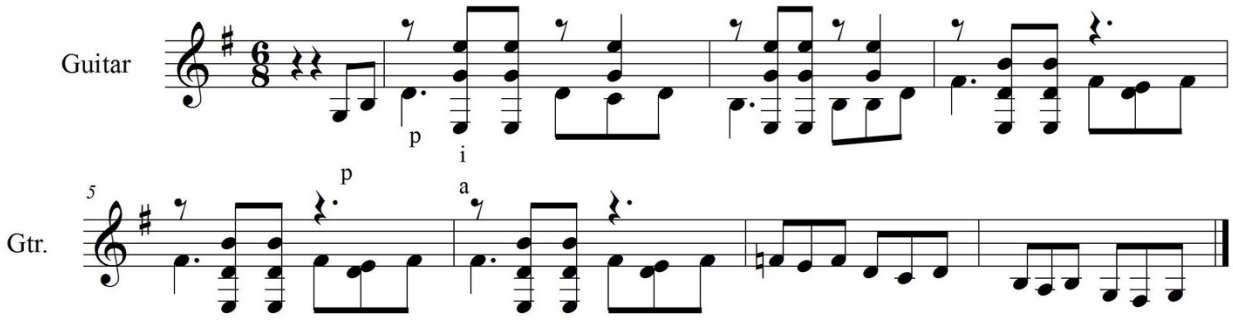
Figure 12



In contrast to theme 1, theme 2 uses a single line melody accompanied by pedal tones built with open strings. The melody is in the lower strings of the guitar and it marks the beginning of the B section. Villa-Lobos transfers ideas from his primary instrument which it was

the cello, to the guitar.[21] Figure 2.8 illustrates how the guitarist uses a *glissando* through the fretboard in order to interpret the melody, much like a cellist. Other passages involving a melody in the lower strings would suggest positioning the right-hand closer to the bridge of the instrument. Although in this situation, part of this concept may apply, the *expressivo* indication proposes another type of timbre. If a cellist were to perform this passage, the use of *vibrato* would be important to determine the quality of the tone. The same applies to playing theme 2 on the guitar. It is advisable to place the right-hand not so close to the bridge. Remember that the right-hand in this case is being compared to a cello bow and therefore, choosing the fingering that provides a fat color to the melody is critical too. Figure 2.8 gives a right-hand fingering, indicating that *p* (thumb) should play the melody line while, *i* and *a* play the open strings.

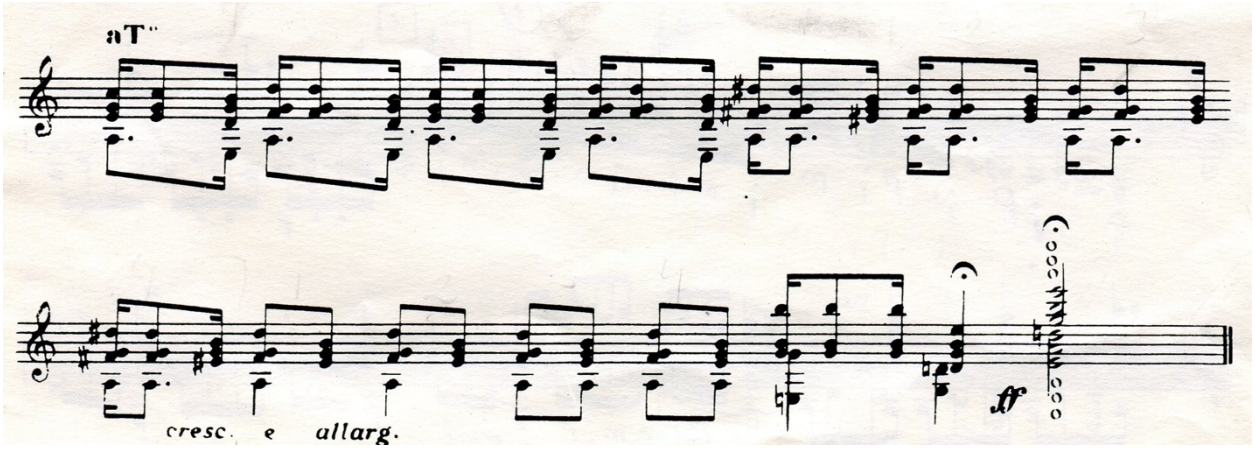
Figure 13



The *cadenza* is a showcase of different guitar techniques such as: arpeggio sequences involving open strings, scales using a combination of slurs and open strings, and arpeggios played only by the use of natural harmonics. It contains theme 1 and theme 2 of the second movement and it ends with a transition that will lead into the third movement.

[21] Renata da Silva de Almeida, 152.

Figure 14



Allegro non Troppo is the final movement of the concerto and it begins in the key of E minor, in 3/4 time. The key signatures do change throughout the movement in order to better fit the harmony and rhythmic pulse of the work. The introduction uses thematic material from the end of the second movement of the concerto (the *cadenza*). In this last movement, a number of small melodic passages could be classified as an individual theme. Nevertheless, not all of those thematic ideas are fully explored in this last movement. It reinforces the fact that this work was originally composed as a fantasia and therefore, there is a certain absence of structure. As a result, *Allegro non Troppo* can be studied as an A-B-B work. The main and only prominent two themes that are repeated with variations it will be shown and discussed in the following paragraphs.

In the A section, the orchestra introduces theme 1 (Figure 2.10). The guitar comes in measure 9, complementing theme1 with scale and arpeggio runs. Figure 2.9 shows the final measures of the *cadenza* (second movement), notice the syncopated rhythm played by the guitar. The last chord is an open Em7/11 chord played in the harmonics at the twelve fret of the instrument marks the end of the passage. There is no time signature assigned to the *cadenza*, which allows the guitarist to freely explore the virtuosic passage. However, a sense of forward

motion in the rhythmic material of Figure 2.9 will connect to the orchestra's opening measures of the third movement, as shown in Figure 2.10. This is the syncopated rhythm of theme 1 of *Allegro non Troppo*. The A section ends with the guitar restating theme 1 until the first time signature change to 2/4 which it marks when the orchestra takes over.

Figure 15

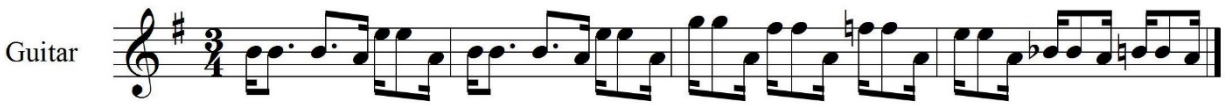
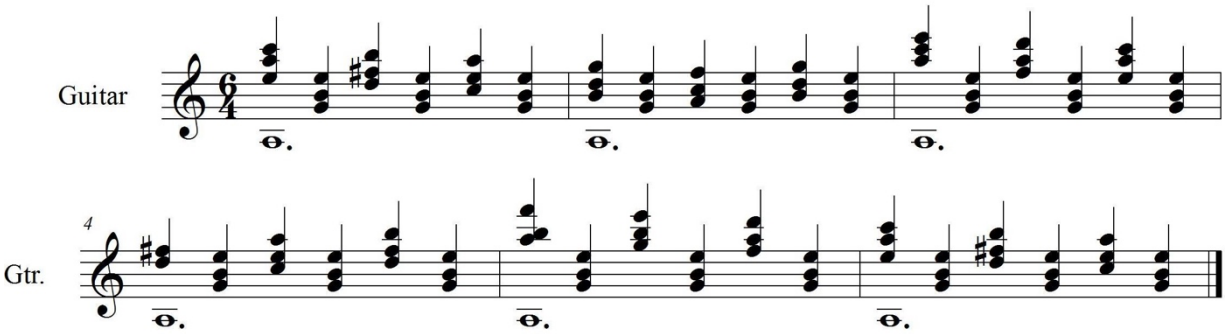


Figure 16



The B section begins in a new time signature and also in a new key. Figure 2.11 demonstrates theme 2 and it shows that the movement is now in 6/4 and in the key of A minor. Theme 2 has a sequence melodic material that begins on beat one and it moves in a downward step motion, structured by second inversion chords. This section is played in cut time and as a result, the open Em triads in second inversions are only treated as the offbeat and not part of the melody. Another aspect about the Em minor triads is that it serves another performance practice purpose in the guitar. They are played in the first three open strings of the guitar. This allows the

guitarist to maintain the movement of the left hand without breaking the sound. The chords that are placed in the strong beats move fairly quickly and in different positions of the instrument.

Theme 2 is repeated two more times and after each occurrence a complementary material to the melody is added. Villa-Lobos utilizes transition scales that involve slurs linked to open strings, reinforcing his use for the natural sound of the guitar. In the last few measures the range in which the harmonic content of the guitar is written does not feature the instrument's higher octaves. Instead, the composer ends the movement, indicating that the guitarist can remain within the fifth position of the instrument, unlike the first movement that explores all octaves of the guitar in order to showcase its possible colors and the ability of the performer.

CHAPTER 3

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA (1921- 1992)

Astor Piazzolla was an Argentinian composer and performer that embraced the traditional music of his country. He was born in Mar Del Plata on March 11, 1921. His father Vicente Piazzolla came from a family of Italian immigrants. Their family owned a small business that sold bicycles and motorcycles, one of his father's passions. Piazzolla gained his name in honor of another musician, Astor Bolognini. He was a family friend of the Piazzolla's and an Argentinian violinist. The essence of Piazzolla's music comes from Argentinian *tango*. However, other parts of the world certainly influenced the character of his compositions. In 1925 his family moved to New York City in hopes of a better life. It was in the new country that the composer had his first experience with music, when Vicente Piazzolla gave him a bandoneon. According to Piazzolla, he only began studying the instrument in order to please his father. His father was an amateur musician and played the bandoneon and the guitar as a way to reminisce about Argentina.[22]

The music of Carlos Gardel served as an approach to make *tango* a respected genre of music in the world. The rise of the record label and film industry in the beginning of the twentieth century contributed to boost his popularity. As a result, Gardel's popularity in Argentina, Uruguay and other parts of the world became instant.[23] To some of the Argentinian community it is the "deepest expression of their identity."[24] The rest of the world recognizes

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[22] Maria Suzana Azzi and Simon Collier, *Le Grand Tango: The Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 4-12.

[23] Tijana Llich, Carlos Gardel: Tango's King. http://latinmusic.about.com/od/artistsen/p/PROGARDEL.htm

tango as form of dance. Not all Argentinians see *tango* as a dance, instead they see *tango* music as one object and *tango* dance as something else. [25] Nevertheless, *tango* is a popular Argentinian genre that originated in the streets of Buenos Aires and became a prominent aspect of their culture. The roots of their music come from Cuban dances and other parts of Mediterranean Europe. Piazzolla describes and compares tango with other music cultures of South America. "Brazilian people are extroverted and we are introverted, that's why tango is always very sad. It is not happy music. It didn't have richness as Brazilian music has, of the percussion of Africa."[26] One can compare *tango* to what *choro* music means to the Brazilians and jazz means to Americans.

Piazzolla studied composition with Alberto Ginastera and Nadia Boulanger who advised composer to continue writing *tango*. It was Boulanger who said, "Astor your classical pieces are well written, but the true Piazzolla is here, never leave it behind."[27] Consequently, Piazzolla's *tango* style is considered different than the traditional form of *tango*. Perhaps because of the composer's exposure to a variety of different cultures, his compositions do not follow strict traditions of Argentinian music. Keep in mind, that even during his time in New York (1925) he was exposed to Irish, Italian, Jewish, German and early American musical traditions. As a result, his *nuevo tango* includes influences from jazz and classical music in addition to all the cultures that Piazzolla was exposed to during his growing years. As for scholar Gabriela Maurino,

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[24] Astor Piazzolla and Natalio Gorin, *Astor Piazzolla: A Memoir.* (United States: Hal Leonard Publications, 2001), 13.

[25] Christine Denniston, *The Meaning of Tango: The Story of Argentinian Dance.* (Buenos Aires: Pavilion Books, 2014), 85.

[26] Ed Pablo Villa, *Music and Youth Culture in Latin America: Identity Construction Processes.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 244.

[27] Jorge Pessinis and Carlos Kuri, *Astor Piazzolla: Chronology Revolution.* http://www.piazzolla.org/biography/biography-english.html.

Piazzolla's new tango is not a new genre of music but, an "expansion of the genre."[28] Other composers like Villa-Lobos who wrote a collection of *14 Choros,* captured a similar accomplishment in gathering a popular genre from their country and expanding to a new level of composition.

Bordel 1900 and *Café 1930* are part of suite *Historie du Tango*, composed in 1985. This work was originally written for violin or flute with guitar accompaniment. The atmosphere of this work is to represent the progression of *tango* music in Argentina.[29] *Bordel 1900* is a representation of the vulgarity and lively character of *tango* performed at the brothels. Therefore, the guitar provides an energetic rhythmic drive that supports the fast scale runs of the flute. The counterpoint provided by the guitar gives a dance feel to the movement. *Café 1930* is about the romantic era of *tango.* It begins with a guitar solo that leads the listener to think that the music is being improvised. Nevertheless, it sets the mood for the entrance of the flutist that repeats the initial theme.[30]

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[28] Kacey Link, *Popular Music Vol. 29, No2.* Cambridge University Press: 2010

[29]Constantine Carambelas, *Music for Solo Trombone and Instrumental Ensemble: Achilles Liarmakopoulos.* (New Haven: Naxos Music, 2010).

[30] Christian Laier and Karoline Kumst, *Alba Del Dia: Tagesanbruch.* (EU: Bella Musica Edition, 2010), 11.

CHAPTER 4
NIKITA KOSHKIN (b-1956)

Nikita Koshkin is a Russian composer, guitarist and teacher born in 1956, Moscow. He became known as a guitar composer in 1980, when Vladimir Mikulka premiered of a six-movement work *Prince Toys*. His music draws influence from Prokofiev and Shostakovich. In addition, his compositions are inspired by other forms of art such as poems, paintings, short stories and cultures from other parts of the world. Original sound effects that try to mimic characteristics of popular music enrich the texture of his music.[31] The *Usher-Waltz Op. 29,* as its name suggests, was inspired by the short story "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allan Poe, one of the finest tales by the finest of the classic horror writers.[32] Performers such as Elena Papandreou and John Williams have recorded the piece. Williams describes Koshkin's creation as "Reminiscent of Chopin and Shostakovich, combining musical shape and dynamic guitar to create a powerful effect."[33]

Koshkin explains the piece as a "Romantic-stylized theme that receives a mighty dramatic development and reflects not only Usher's (crazy) way of playing the guitar and his increasing madness, but the mood of the story as a whole."[34] It is the story of an unnamed narrator who comes to visit his ailing friend, Roderick Usher. As he approaches Usher's beautiful lakeside home, the narrator notices a crack running from the roof of the house, down the front of the building, and into the lake below. Roderick Usher, who lives with his twin sister

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[31] Frank Koone and Nikita Koshkin, *Classic Koshkin*: *A Collection of Guitar Solos by Nikita Koshkin*. (United States: MelBay Publications, 2003), 2-3.

[32] Jeffrey Meyers, *Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy.* (New York: Cooper Square Press: 2000), 6-7.

[33] Graham Wade, *A Concise History of the Classic Guitar*. (United States: MelBay Publications, 2010), 173.

[34] John W. Duarte, *Laureate Series Guitar: Elena Papandreou, Guitar.* (Naxos Music: 1995).

Madeleine, is a hypochondriac, wracked with anxiety, and confides in the narrator that he believes the house to be alive, and possibly cursed. The narrator does his best to cheer Roderick's spirits, but Usher remains obsessed with the notion of dark influences at play in his home.

The mood darkens considerably when Madeleine Usher, herself ill and susceptible to cataleptic trances, is pronounced dead by Roderick. As per family tradition, Roderick wants Madeleine temporarily interred in the family tomb located within the house for two weeks before giving her a proper burial. The narrator assists Roderick in the entombment; he noticed Madeleine's rosy cheeks, but thinks little of this. Over the next week, both Roderick and the narrator find themselves becoming increasingly uneasy, though neither fully understands why. On one particular night, a storm begins. Roderick makes his way to the narrator's bedroom, which is situated above the family tomb. Roderick looks out the window and claims the lake that surrounds the house has an eerie luminescence about it, in spite of the fact that no moon or lightning is present. The narrator, sensing Roderick's heightened anxiousness, attempts to calm him down by reading aloud a story of a knight named Ethelred.[35]

Seeking shelter from a storm, Ethelred forces his way into a hermit's dwelling (the narrator believe he hears distant cracking and ripping noises from within the house), Once inside, Ethelred is surprised to discover a palace of gold guarded by a dragon. On the wall is hung a shield of shining brass, on which is engraved a message declaring that he who slays the dragon shall win the shield and the treasure. With a swing of his mace, Ethelred slays the dragon, which emits a piercing shriek as it dies (a shriek is heard from within the house, startling the narrator, but he continues to read). Having vanquished the dragon, Ethelred goes to retrieve the shield as

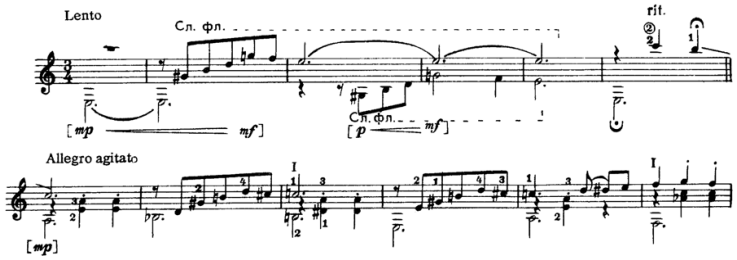
[35] Edgar Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher*. (United States: Elegant Ebooks, 1839).

his prize, but the shield falls to the floor with an unearthly clatter (a deep reverberation, metallic and hollow is heard within the house). Roderick suddenly turns crazy as he notices that the screams are coming from his sister, who then appears to not be dead. He screams that she is just outside the door, and as if on cue, the doors to the room blow open, and there stands Madeleine Usher, bloodstains on her white burial gown. With one final ghastly cry, she falls upon her brother Roderick, and both are dead before they hit the floor.

Consumed by terror, the narrator flees the house and runs off into the night. As he runs, he notices a sudden flash of light behind him; he turns, and is shocked to see the house split in two: "While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the 'House of Usher.'"

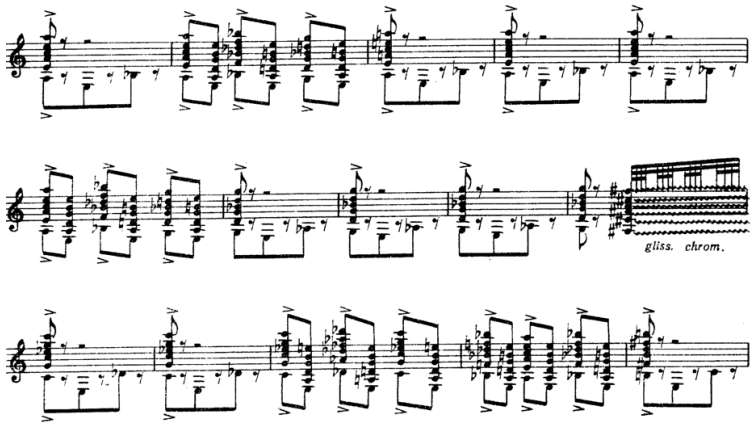
Usher Waltz Op. 29 is single movement piece that showcases a variety of guitar techniques such as scales runs using slurs, *bartok pizzicato*, artificial harmonics and powerful right-hand strokes. The piece is in 3/4 time and it is on the key of A minor. There are some signs of *ritardando* at the end of certain cadences and indications that performer should begin a section at a slow tempo in order to give mysterious mood to the music. Since Koshkin based this composition on a short story, there is no exact structural form to the waltz. After studying this piece for a few months, I consider this waltz to be a *fantasia* divided in three sections. Figure 18 illustrates the opening measures of the waltz which is part the first section. The following example showcases how the composer uses the artificial harmonics and the different tempo indications. In addition, measure 7 shows the main theme used in the first section of the waltz.

Figure 17 mm. 1-12



The second section of the waltz begins towards the middle of the piece which is the Figure 17. In this section, the composer introduces a new lively rhythmic theme using a combination of right-hand strokes, power chords in the left-hand and, the thumb (*p*) playing the bass notes on the off beats. At this moment, the piece shifts to a more aggressive mood. The introduction of the right-hand strokes serves as a dynamic contrast to the beginning of the piece which it starts with the soft artificial harmonics (shown in Figure 3.1).

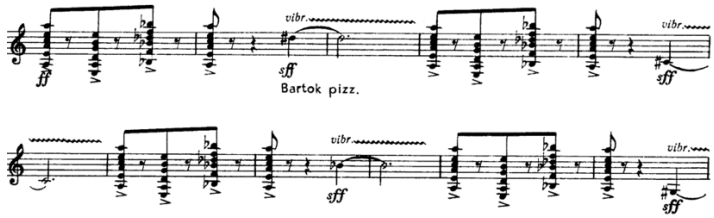
Figure 18



The *bartok pizzicato* is introduced at the end of the second section of the waltz and leading the piece to the third and last section. Figure 18 shows how Koshkin initially uses the technique on the beat three of a measure that begins with a power chord. This particular technique is used in order to keep a similar level of energy created by the power chord in the

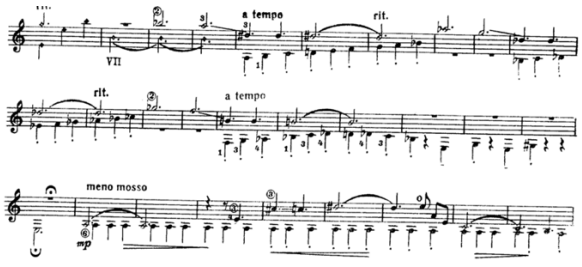
beginning of the phrase. As a result, the note played the in *bartok pizzicato* sounds like the guitarist is playing an electric guitar fill note. Since this piece was composed in 1986 and Koshkin's compositional style includes ideas from popular music, it is possible that this part is influenced by rock music.

Figure 19



The last section of *Usher Waltz Op. 29* is characterized by passages using the polyrhythm of 3 against 2 and passages using artificial harmonics. It contains elements of the theme used in the first section (Figure 18) and the second section (Figure 19). After performing the waltz in a few recitals and having the chance to collect feedback from some audience members, I received similar reaction regarding the last section. The audience's comments were that they could never tell when the piece was ending which it may have created a feeling of insecurity. This sentiment of uncertainty and perhaps terror connects to how the narrator felt when the discovery that Madeline Usher was alive inside of the tomb. Figure 20 shows the opening measures of the third and final section of Nikita Koshkin's *Usher Waltz Op. 29*.

Figure 20



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