

Fourteen & Six

A concert featuring the theorbo and classical guitar

Program

Bergamasca Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (1580-1651)

Kapsberger

Canario

Suite in A minor Robert de Visée (1655-1732/1733)

Prelude

Allemande

Courante

Sarabande

La Mascarade

Chaconne

Variations Mignonne – from Bardenklänge, Op. 13 Johann Kaspar Mertz (1806-1856)

Western Vista Olga Amelkina-Vera (Dates unknown; living composer)

OPHELIA...a haunted sonata Phillip Houghton (1954-2017)

Fear...and the angel

Suffering and madness...am I but a dream of a shadow?

Chant...of the flower-moon

Water...memories – hall of ghosts – wash away

Death...with moons in your hair

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Program Notes

"Fourteen & Six" is Dr. Andrew Flory's Theorbo and Classical Guitar Program in which the title references the fourteen strings of the theorbo and the six strings of the classical guitar.

The theorbo is the largest of the lute family of instruments and was developed in the very late 16th century in Florence, Italy. A behemoth in size and sound, the theorbo quickly gained popularity as an accompaniment instrument where it excelled in playing continuo in the earliest of operas and for chamber groups and solo voice. Throughout the entirety of the baroque era, the theorbo flourished in its accompanying role but a mere sliver of solo works for the instrument survive when compared to what can be played on the instrument for accompanying purposes. However, the works that do survive are generally of very high quality. Today's program will feature solo theorbo works by the Italian and French greats of the theorbo, Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (1580-1651) and Robert de Visée (1655-1732/1733)

The guitar works in this program feature the Viennese Romantic composer Johann Kaspar Mertz and two contemporary composers, Olga Amelkina-Vera and Phillip Houghton. *Variations mignonnes* by Mertz is from his *Bardenklänge, Op. 13* from 1847. Mertz's *Bardenklänge, Op. 13* is a collection of pieces based on folk and popular songs of 19th century Vienna and is also his largest collection of works.

Western Vista by Olga Amelkina-Vera is a beautiful portrayal of the American West and the larger-than-life image of the 19th century cowboy. In its bittersweet opening movement, we hear the tune of the famous cowboy song "Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie". This is followed by a rousing second movement based on the idea of a cowboy riding a bucking bronco.

The final work in this program is *OPHELIA...a haunted sonata* by the late Australian composer Phillip Houghton. This piece is centered around the tragic Shakespearean character Ophelia from the play Hamlet. Her descent into madness and her untimely death is outlined in the titles of the movements of the piece. Musically, Houghton employs an altered tuning of the guitar to create a dark sonority that complements the somber nature of the piece. I find this piece to be one of my favorites to perform as it is incredibly captivating and unrelentingly pulls at one's heartstrings.