

## Cleveland Classical Guitar Society: a conversation with Marcin Dylla

by Mike Telin



When Polish guitarist Marcin Dylla performed in Cleveland in April of 2013, James Flood, writing for this publication, said that “Dylla is a player of the utmost refinement. His tone is beautiful, his phrasing lovely and heartfelt.” On Saturday, October 15 at 7:30 pm at Plymouth Church in Shaker Heights, the award-winning artist will return to the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society stage.

His program will feature Mauro Giuliani’s *Sonata in C*, Op. 15, Heitor Villa-Lobos’s *Five Preludes*, Roberto Sierra’s *Sonata*, Manuel Maria Ponce’s *Theme, Variations and Fugue on Folia de España*, and Benjamin Britten’s *Nocturnal*, Op. 70. Click [here](#) for more information.

Since winning the Guitar Foundation of America International Concert Artist Competition in 2007, Dylla has enjoyed a busy international touring schedule, and has earned critical praise for his performances of thoughtful and demanding repertoire. This fall he will make his recital debut at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, as well as beginning a teaching residency at the San Francisco Conservatory.

Responding to questions via email, Dylla explained that the first half his CCGS program will include three major works, each from a different century. “The beautiful 19th-century sonata by Giuliani is an example of classical Viennese style, very light and elegant. Villa-Lobos’s *Five Preludes* are expressive and lyrical examples of 20th-century music, and Roberto Sierra’s *Sonata* is an interesting and energetic work that belongs to the 21st century.”

The guitarist said that he finds the second half of the program — featuring the music of Ponce and Britten — to be more profound. “The two sets of variations are very different, and at the same time very similar.”

Regarding his San Francisco Conservatory appointment, he said that he is grateful for the opportunity, and looks forward to working with the wonderful students and faculty. “Maestro Sergio Assad is taking the winter semester off and therefore the opportunity for selecting a replacement led to inviting me. I’m teaching the students in his class, and once a week, I teach the technique class to all guitar students. The students are an absolute joy to work with because they are very enthusiastic and they work hard.”

I asked Marcin Dylla if he thinks the statement that teaching makes you a better player is true? “Yes, Absolutely. As a teacher you learn how to listen in an analytical way. You must understand what makes a difference, what determines that something sounds good or sounds wrong. You try to find solutions, ways to improve things. All the advice you give you shouldn't ignore yourself as a player. I always say ‘to know what to do, and really do it, are two different things.’”

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