

## Musical Program

**Claudia Sessa (c.1570 - c.1617)**

“Occhi io vissi di voi” (Arranged by JIJI)

**Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)**

“Asturias”

**BAROQUE SET**

**Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)**

Sonata K. 10

**Marin Marais (1656-1728)**

“Les Voix Humaines”

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**

“Allegro” from Prelude, Fugue, and Allegro in E-flat Major, BWV 998

**Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909)**

“Recuerdos de la Alhambra”

**Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829)**

Grand Overture, Op. 61

**POP SET**

**Máximo Diego Pujol (b. 1959)**

“Verde Alma”

**Roland Dyens (1955-2016)**

“Tango en Skai”

**Harold Arlen (1905-1986)**

“Over the Rainbow”

**Nicolo Paganini (1782-1840)**

Caprice No. 24 from 24 Caprices for Solo Violin, Op. 1

## INTERMISSION

**Frantz Casseus (1915-1993)**

Three Selections from Haitian Dance Suite

**Gulli Björnsson (b. 1991)**

“Dynjandi” (Composed for JIJI)

**Krists Auznieks (b. 1992)**

“COR” (Composed for JIJI)

**Steve Reich (b. 1936)**

Electric Counterpoint

- I. Fast
- II. Slow
- III. Fast

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**Quarter Note**

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## Featured Artist of the Season

Dianna Shomaker is a Placitas treasure, a past board member and president of the Placitas Artists Series, and, above all, a consummate artist with incredible talent. We are pleased that Dianna is our *Featured Artist* for the 37<sup>th</sup> season.

## Our Next Concert

**November 12, 2023**

**Valerie Potter, Woodwind Quintets**

For tickets and other concert information, visit our website.

**[PlacitasArts.org](http://PlacitasArts.org) ■ 505-867-8080**

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Placitas Artists Series projects are made possible in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

*The Placitas Artists Series*

*Presents*

**JIJI**

**Solo Guitar**

**Sunday, October 22, 2023**



*Concert generously sponsored by*

*Cindy & Allen Bourne*

*Dianna & John Shomaker*

*Barbara Butler*



## Notes on Today's Concert

JJI has titled today's concert *Counterpoint Dream*. Beyond its musical sense, though counterpoint can refer to "the use of contrast or interplay of elements in a work of art." Viewing the concert itself as a work of art, we can appreciate the counterpoint at play in the sequencing of the pieces, as we consider the contrasts in tempo, dynamics, emotional intensity, levels of complexity, and, for the performer, required virtuosity.

The concert begins with Italian composer, vocalist, and instrumentalist **Claudia Sessa's** "Occhi io vissi di voi" (*Through your eyes I live*). Sessa spent her life as a nun in the Santa Maria Annunciata convent in Milan. This piece is one of two sacred works written for solo voice and published in 1613. They are the only Sessa compositions known to still exist.

Jumping to Spain of the late 1800s, we will hear **Isaac Albéniz's** "Asturias," also known as "Leyenda." It was originally published as the opening section of a three-movement piano suite. It is Albéniz's most widely performed piece and, arranged for guitar, has become a standard showpiece of this instrument's repertoire.

We are back in the Baroque period with a set of pieces in fast-slow-fast sequence. Italian composer **Domenico Scarlatti** is famous for having written 550 keyboard sonatas, many of which have been transcribed for guitar. The K. 10 sonata is characterized by rich harmony and rapid scalar passages. French composer Marin Marais was a virtuoso of the viola da gamba. His "Les Voix Humaines" (*The Human Voice*), written for that instrument, is a slow, sonorous, meditative piece. Johann Sebastian Bach's compositions for solo lute have all been adopted by guitarists. This "Allegro" is the finale of a three-movement lute suite.

Spanish composer **Francisco Tárrega** was a contemporary of Albéniz. His "Recuerdos de la Alhambra" is probably the best-known guitar piece incorporating tremolo technique, which allows the acoustic guitar to mimic the sustain of bowed instruments. The performer essentially creates the illusion of calm slowness through smooth, speedy motion.

**Mauro Giuliani** was a virtuoso Italian guitarist whose 150 compositions for that instrument are an essential part of the 19th-century guitar repertoire. This overture begins with a calm, slow introduction, but most of the piece is highly energetic, requiring the tasteful application of a variety of technical skills.

The next three pieces, all recently composed, are billed as the *Pop Set*. **Máximo Diego Pujol** is a prize-winning Argentine composer and guitarist whose style was influenced by the music of Astor Piazzolla. His "Verde Alma" is a pensive and poignant piece that encourages the performer to play with utmost subtlety and sensitivity. The late French composer and guitarist Roland Dyens was also influenced by Piazzolla, at least in this boisterous tango that is one of his best-known pieces. The set winds down with Harold Arlen's classic "Over the Rainbow," written for the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*.

Italian composer and virtuoso violinist **Nicolo Paganini** wrote 24 caprices for solo violin between 1802 and 1817. They are in the form of etudes, or studies, with each focusing on different skills necessary for violinists to master. Transcribed for guitar, the pieces still require a high level of

## Notes (continued)

mastery, although the specific skills often differ. JJI chose his final etude because "it brings out all the colors of the guitar."

**Frantz Casseus** was a classically trained Haitian guitarist who also liked jazz and folk styles. According to guitarist Marc Ribot, who studied with him, Casseus came to New York in 1946 "with the ambition to compose a distinctly Haitian classical guitar music, to fuse the European classical tradition with Haitian folk elements..."

Icelandic composer **Gulli Björnsson's** "Dyjandi" was inspired by the Dyjandi Waterfall, Iceland's "Jewel of the Westfjords." He wrote the piece for JJI, who explains that the seven sections of the piece represent the seven sections of the falls, each of which has its own character. We will hear counterpoint in nature woven into this musical creation.

Also written for JJI, Latvian composer **Krists Auzniek's** "COR" is a piece intended to challenge the guitarist. Auzniek explains that the title is meant to suggest the body (including the physical nature of music and its performance), the heart (and the emotional commitment of the performer to the music), and courage (to test, via the music, the limit of what is possible).

**Steve Reich** is an American composer known for minimalist compositions. His "Electric Counterpoint," written for jazz guitarist Pat Metheny, is the musical hub around which JJI chose all of today's other selections. She performs her solo part on her classical guitar, accompanied by the recorded *backing track* that Reich composed for the piece.

Notes compiled by Jay Rodman from JJI interview and various online sources.

## About JJI

JJI is an acclaimed guitarist praised by *The Washington Post* for her mesmerizing performances and versatile repertoire. An adventurous artist with expertise in both acoustic and electric guitar, she explores traditional and contemporary classical music, as well as free improvisation. JJI's impeccable musicianship, captivating stage presence, and dedication to commissioning and performing new works have established her as a leading guitarist of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She has presented solo recitals at prestigious venues like Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the National Art Gallery, and her performances have been featured on notable platforms such as PBS and NPR.

As a sought-after collaborator, JJI has premiered compositions by a diverse range of artists and performed alongside renowned ensembles including the New York Philharmonic and Cuarteto Latinoamericano. JJI's concerto performances have been widely acclaimed, and she has appeared with numerous orchestras. In 2023, she will release *UNBOUND*, the culmination of a multi-year commissioning and recording project.

JJI also showcases her compositional talents, recording and performing her own works while developing her distinctive voice, incorporating electronic media and acoustic music. JJI plays a 2009 Gernot Wagner double-top guitar.



**Raffle:** *Joy of Summer* by Dianna Shomaker, valued at \$2,000, will be given away to the raffle winner. Raffle tickets available on our website, at the library, and at the concert.

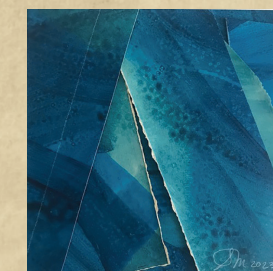
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