Degree project 1004, 30 credits

2025

Master Classical Music – Chamber Music and Soloist

Academy of Classical Music, Conducting and Composition

Supervisor: Sven Åberg

Examinator: Daniel Berg

Oscar James Watt

The Forgotten Romantics

Rediscovering romantic era classical guitar music from the Slavic regions

Written reflection within degree project

The sounding part consists of the following recording:

Project recital 02/06/25

KMH Kungl. Musikhögskolan

Abstract

This thesis investigates underrepresented Romantic-era classical guitar music from the Slavic regions between 1750 and 1850, challenging the perception that the instrument's solo tradition was limited to a few major composers. The project examines the music of Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz, Wenzel Thomas Matiegka, František Max Kníže, and Felix Horetzki, who were active performers and composers in their time but are rarely included in modern concert programming.

By combining historical research, musical analysis, and performer-led insight, this thesis demonstrates that much of this overlooked Slavic repertoire offers substantial artistic and practical value.

Keywords: Classical Guitar, Romantic Guitar, Slavic Composition, Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz, Wenzel Thomas Matiegka, František Max Kníže, Felix Horetzki.

Contents

Introduction

The history of classical guitar in Europe is often misunderstood and mischaracterised. There is a belief that guitar never quite reached the public eye until Andres Segovia and that there were only a handful of composers working before the 1900s. This is untrue. Guitar saw a boom in the early to mid-19th century right across the world. Due to the prevalence of a handful of influential composers, many fine compositions lie unplayed. More and more quality composers from the 1800s are being found and brought into the concert circuit. It was not long ago that Regondi (Audet, 2024) was a relatively unknown composer and now his music would be welcome in any concert.

I believe there is a wealth of guitar composers from the Slavic regions including Poland, Croatia and Bohemia that are underplayed and are only just starting to be recognised by concert guitarists. This project will highlight some of these exceptional composers and give practical insight into playing their music and how it can fit into a modern concert program.

This project will look exclusively at Slavic composers for 1750-1850. It will include only composers with a significant body of works to showcase the main Slavic composers from this period. I will use the Encyclopedia Britannica definition of Slavic and use the countries listed there as a guide:

> *"Slavs are subdivided into East Slavs (chiefly Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians), West Slavs (chiefly Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Wends, or Sorbs), and South Slavs (chiefly Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Slovenes, Macedonians, and Montenegrins)"*
>
> *(Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025)*

There will be one notable exception to this and that is Russia. The Russian composers have received a more favourable showing from modern guitarists, with recognisable names such as Andrei Sychra. The guitar mainly used in Russia at this time was a seven-string, g-tuned guitar. This project will only include 6-string guitar music as the project is designed to offer practical insight into concertising this music and including 7-string music would make it less accessible. I will also not be including any ensemble music (despite its abundance) for the same reason.

During the late 18th century and early 19th century, the guitar was in a transitional period. The 6-string guitar, as it is currently constructed, was starting to gain popularity and the other guitar forms (5-string, double-course, guitar/lyre hybrids) were slowly being phased out (Alves, 2015). Some of the most well-known guitar composers started to appear, such as Fernando Sor, Mauro Giuliani and Dionisio Aguado. These

composers shaped the guitar world that we see today and are still considered the forefathers of the modern guitar. However, the instrument was still more commonly used in accompaniment and its solo virtues were still being developed. Sor himself had lamented the state of classical guitar and was one of the leading factors in advancing the guitar.

> *"At first, I took up this instrument merely as an instrument of accompaniment; but, from the age of sixteen years, I was shocked to hear it said by those who professed to have but little talent, 'I only play to accompany'." (Sor, 1832)*

The composers in this project have, however, faded into obscurity. Despite being praised as virtuoso players who held extensive tours across Europe, their compositions are rarely played, with a heavy preference being placed on more recognisable composers. I believe modern guitarists are missing out on some real gems from the 19th century and by exploring these pieces we can better understand the place of the classical guitar in history.

The composers that I will highlight in this project are Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz, Wenzel Thomas Matiegka, František Max Kníže and Felix Horetzky.

I hope to show that each of these composers merit research and performances by guitarists and that they offer a variety of interesting and complex pieces that would suit many concert scenarios.

Methodology

To find pieces composed by these 19th century composers, I will be searching through various classical guitar music collections. The main collections I will be looking through are (with link to the digitized collection):

1. Rischel and Birket-Smith collection at the Royal Danish Library
   https://soeg.kb.dk/discovery/search?vid=45KBDK_KGL:KGL&lang=en
2. Boije's collection at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden
   https://musikverket.se/musikochteaterbiblioteket/ladda-ner-noter/boijes-samling/?lang=en
3. Hudleston collection at the Royal Irish Academy of Music
   https://riam.sirsidynix.net.uk/uhtbin/cgisirsi/0/x/0/60/80/X/BLASTOFF

I will also be checking the International Music Score Library Project (https://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page) and Classical Guitar Library websites (https://www.cglib.org/), as they have large collections of music from digitized library collections. I will find the original source for the music from these websites if scores are found there.

One of the sad factors when trying to trace this music was the lack of digitization (or apparent refusal to do so) especially from Doshisha University who own the Nakano Collection which contains over 6100 guitar pieces, some of which are unique to this collection. Access to this would have increased the range of music available to me as their catalogue of pieces contains some works relating to the composers mentioned in this project. Despite Robert Coldwell's (owner of the Digital Guitar Archive) best efforts, these pieces are still unavailable to most guitarists (Coldwell, 2019).

After finding the available music from each composer, I will first look at their historical context to give some background information. Following this, I will give a review of their body of work and general compositional style. I have chosen one piece by Bobrowicz and Matiegka to highlight some of the key features of music in this era and how they can be interpreted. I will analyse some key playing factors, including technical challenges and notable extended techniques, as well as looking at some options for interpreting them. This is to give an example of how that composer's pieces could be played. This analysis will not be a complete one and will not touch on compositional techniques or harmonic points unless they are a feature of the composer's style. The goal is only to give the reader an insight into some of the key features and give some suggestions about how to solve some of the problems with the music.

I will then draw a conclusion as to the quality of these rarely utilized compositions and give some practical advice on programming them in concerts.

Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz (1805-1872)[1]

Background

Feliks Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz is one of the most influential figures in Polish guitar history. He is also probably the best researched composer in this project due to his importance to Polish book publishing during the Polish uprisings in the 1800s. He was born in Krakow in 1805 and lived there with his family until 1831. His parents were nobles and music lovers with his father being a member of the Krakow Society for the Friendship of Music. During 1817-1819 Bobrowicz studied under Mauro Giuliani (considered one of the grandfathers of modern guitar) in Vienna and, after graduating, had a successful performance career. Although famed for his performances throughout Europe, he still worked as a secretariat in the Krakow Senate.
During the November uprising, Bobrowicz fought with the Polish rebellion as both a horse artillery officer and adjunct to General Józef Zachariasz Bem. During the war he received the Virtuti Militari, Poland's highest military honour. Despite his heroics in war, it would be difficult to paint Bobrowicz as a patriot as he later wrote that he would like to free himself from all previous relationships and cut off all ties with Poles.

After the failure of the November uprising in 1832, Bobrowicz, like many of the noble class, fled Poland to Saxony. He was able to sustain himself through his income from performing and was granted a permit to live in Leipzig. Due to his competence in writing and translating Polish, he was granted the right to work and permanent residence. This was also helped by his marriage to a wealthy Leipzig woman and having several children with her. While there, he became involved in the German publishing company Breitkopf und Härtel. For his remaining 40 years (1832-1872) Bobrowicz worked as a bookkeeper and publisher for the company in the two Saxon cities of Dresden and Leipzig.

Working through this German publisher allowed Borowicz to publish his first contribution to guitar in 1832, a new edition of Carulli's guitar method. It was not until 1837 that Bobrowicz was able to publish his first composition titled "Variations et Polonaises Sur un Duo del-Opera: "Montecchl e Capuletl" pour Guitare seule". Despite records existing of his works being published, in the 1925 "Katalog des Archivs von Breitkopf und Härtel" Bobrowicz name is not mentioned. This could be one of the factors contributing to his relative obscurity today. We know, however, from several

---

[1] *As most of the sources are for this composer are in local church or municipal records, I am relying on the accuracy of Hanna Batorowska's book "JAN NEPOMUCEN BOBROWICZ, Polish publisher and bookseller in Saxony during the Great Emigration" (Batorowska, 1992).*

encyclopaedic sources from the time that Bobrowicz had published over forty compositions during his life (Kolberg, 1860, p. 825). His life has only been researched in modern times due to his work as a book translator and publisher. Because of this, there is a lack of information about his guitar playing and teaching.

Publications

Rischel and Birket-Smith Collection at the Royal Danish Library	Marcher
	Quatre mazurkas pour le piano
	*Op. 6 - Grandes variations sur un duo de l'opéra: Don Juan
	Op. 7 - Air d'Ukraine: varié pour la guitare seule
	*Op. 10 - Variations brillantes sur un thème original
	Op. 16 - Variations pour la guitare seule sur la cavatine favorite: (Sorte secondami) de l'opéra Zelmira de Rossini
	Op. 17 - Distraction: Rondeau (brillant et facile)
	Op. 18 - Variations sur une valse favorite composées
	Op. 20 - Introduction et variations sur l'air polonais: Ja ciebie nie zapomnę
	Op. 21 - Souvenir de F. Herold: grand potpourri sur des motifs de l'opéra Zampa ou La fiancée de marbre composé
	Op. 24 - Première grande polonaise pour la guitare composée
Boije's collection at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden	Bohemia Volkslieder

Hudleston collection at the Royal Irish Academy of Music	Op. 28 - Variations de bravoure pour la Guitare Seule sur un Thème de Carafa "Oh! cara memoria"
	Op. 30 - Variations et Polonaise sur un Duo de l'Opéra "i Montecchi e Capuleti"
Jagiellonian Library	Op. 25 - Drei Märsche: für die guitarre allein

Overview of compositions

Bobrowicz was one of the main forces behind my decision to present this project. His compositions are hidden gems and deserve more recognition than they currently receive. I would not, however, consider him to be the same calibre as his teacher Giuliani or his contemporaries (Sor, Aguado, etc.), but this is mainly due to his low output as a composer. And, as with many other guitar composers, there are plenty of poor compositions that cloud Bobrowicz's overall merit. I believe that composers from this era are better judged by their best works rather than their complete catalogue.

There can be a real sense of commerciality about lesser-known early romantic compositions, especially on the guitar. The end of the patronage system and subsequent emphasis on entrepreneurship for musicians freed them from some obligations but also gave composers and players a new master – public opinion. Instead of composing for the professional, we can see an increase in compositions aimed at the amateur player. This makes sense when considering who would be purchasing the compositions. Bobrowicz was no different in this regard. His first publication for guitar was a revised edition of Carulli's method book and he subsequently published several more accessible works such as Op. 17 - Distraction: Rondeau (brillant et facile). This is not to discredit Bobrowicz; indeed, we can see in the section of this thesis on Matiegka that many composers struggled with income. But it does give a possible reason for his "formulaic" style.

One of the drawbacks of Bobrowicz's compositions is the overabundance of theme and variations pieces. Out of the sixteen pieces I found in this project, eight are theme and variations and once you exclude the "unconcert-worthy" compositions, there is very little left. This is not helped by Bobrowicz's own themes lacking great melodic or harmonic quality. I would go as far to say that without themes from other composers, there would be very little reason to look at Bobrowicz's compositions at all.
An example of this is Op.10 – Variations on an original theme. The theme itself is very repetitive, and the AABB form and andante speed only adds to its length and tediousness. By the time the audience finishes the first

section, the idea of variations on that same theme seems like torture, even if the variations themselves have merit.

Despite this obviously bleak look at Bobrowicz as a composer, his best works are great and deserve attention.

I have highlighted three excellent compositions as being of equal calibre to any of the great guitar pieces from this era, or at least worthy of serious consideration – Op. 6, Op. 7 and Op. 24.
Op. 6 is a variation piece using a famous theme from Mozart's Don Giovanni, "La ci darem la mano". Like Fernado Sor's famous set of variations on a theme taken from a Mozart opera (Op. 9), this piece is currently the most recorded and played work by Bobrowicz. It contains the best examples of the "usual" Bobrowicz variations and has enough technical and musical complexity to stimulate an advanced player. The same can be said for Op. 7, which I have chosen to look more closely at in the next section. Op. 24 is one of Bobrowicz's few "non-variations" pieces. I have a particular love for this piece after playing through Bobrowicz's collected works and wading through a seemingly endless sea of variations pieces. It has a strong melodic line and a great overall structure.
All three of these works have been recorded, Op. 6 and 7 by Mateusz Kowalski (Kowalski, 2021) and Op. 24 by Fabion Zanon (Zanon, 2016). While they have been recorded by other artists, Kowalski and Zanon are in my opinion the best. They give the pieces the humour and personality that they deserve.

Before looking at one of these selected works in greater detail, it is worth taking an overarching look at Bobrowicz's compositional style.

Compositional style

The first thing that becomes apparent when playing Bobrowicz' music is just how similar it is to Giuliani's. If someone were to ask me to define the characteristics of classical/romantic guitar compositions, I would point them in Bobrowicz's direction. He tends towards the "standard" and his style could uncharitably be described as predictable.
Looking at the keys of Bobrowicz's pieces highlights this. Out of the 15 pieces, ten were in A major[2], three in E major, one in D major and only one in a minor key – A minor. These are by far the most common keys for guitar pieces, but I have never encountered a composer who only uses these "basic" guitar keys. Even within these pieces, there is very little variation to anything other than the relative minor or dominant.

Looking at the guitar techniques used, there is a clear assortment of tools that Bobrowicz has that he employs in most (if not all) of his compositions.

---

[2] *I have excluded Op.21 from this number as it is a collection of arrangements of an opera rather than a standalone piece. It contains several keys, but all within the expected range*

Scalic sections, triplet arpeggios, a minor “contrast” variation, an octave section, a movement in 3rds or 6ths and fast arpeggio section finish can all be expected.
If I was to give a formula for Bobrowicz’s pieces, it would go as follows: Start with a theme in a major key. The first variation should still contain elements of the theme but often in 3rds or 6ths. The second variation contains triplet arpeggios. The third is used for contrast, often a tonal shift to the relative minor. The 4th and 5th variations introduce a new technical element, often chromatic scales, octave passages or the recapitulation of the theme but now in the bass. And the final variation builds the tension and speed through fast arpeggios and perfect cadences leading to a big finish.

In 2022 Krzysztof Komarnicki published a paper analysing Bobrowicz’s use of thematic material in his theme and variations pieces (Komarnicki, 2022). In this, he takes note of Bobrowicz’s use and transformation of thematic material. Bobrowicz tends to link the variations together through rhythm and form elements rather than melodic material. Because of this, the theme and variations pieces by Bobrowicz feel more like a multimovement work with small sections rather than a series of developments on a theme. The melody of the theme is almost always shown again to remind the listener of its existence, and often in the relative minor variation.

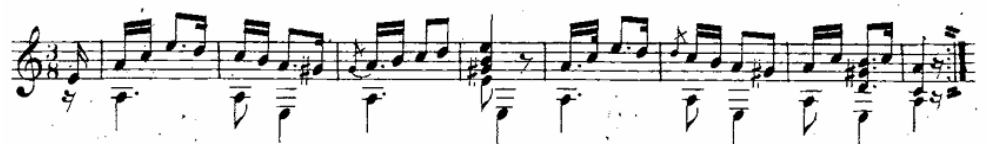
This might sound overly simplified or too formulaic but inside the boundaries of the pieces themselves, there is no issue as there is enough variation in how these sections play out to keep an audience entertained. Especially when there is no direct contrast to another of Bobrowicz’s pieces in a program, the pieces themselves still contain surprises and interest.

Op.7 - Air d’Ukraine: Varié pour la guitare seule

As far as theme and variations pieces go, Op. 7 gives us the best representation of Bobrowicz’s style and compositional intelligence. It is also the most “Slavic” sounding out of his works and serves as a good differentiating tool between him and his contemporaries. This section will contain a look at the particularities of this piece to show off some of Bobrowicz’s best qualities and hopefully inspire some ideas when learning one of his other compositions.

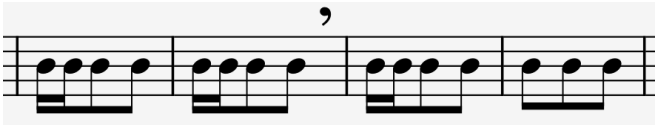
Because Ukraine had yet to gain its independence as a country, the title of this piece is referencing the eastern part of Poland which later became part of Ukraine. It is also possibly a nod to the rising Ukrainian independence movement which became more prominent in the early 1800s through artists like Taras Shevchenko (Antokhii et al., 2004).
The piece is dedicated to Count Vincent Tyszkiewicz, who was the commander and chief of the November uprising when Bobrowicz was a soldier (Coldwell & Komarnicki, 2005).

(Ex. 1, Bobrowicz Op 7, bar 1-8)



The theme (Ex. 1) has some differences to a usual polish mazurka. Most polish mazurkas do not have an upbeat and Komarnicki suggests that the addition of an anacrusis was to make the theme seem more "international". The addition of the dotted rhythm in the 2nd beat of some bars could be an editorialization by Bobrowicz or just a regional variation, but it is hard to tell since the theme's A section has no concrete source.

(Ex. 2, Polish mazurka rhythm, (Trochimczyk))



Komarnicki gives a possible solution to the lack of providence of the A section. The B section can be traced to a soldier's song (Kolberg, 1979, p. 856) and because of the similarities between the A and B sections it is not a stretch to say that the A section of the theme is just a minor variant of the B section.

There is no significant technical difficulty in playing the theme, but it is worth taking note of the stressed second beat conventionally found in polish mazurkas. I originally felt drawn to a slower, more lyrical and introspective tempo when first playing the theme but, upon learning more about mazurkas in general, I have found that a more upbeat speed of around 110bpm to be more appropriate.

The addition of some ornamentation has also helped to liven the music as each section is played twice and can feel repetitive without it. Out of the few players who have recorded this piece, all have added some level of ornamentation from Kowalski's lightly ornamented version (Kowalski, 2021) to Chris Wilke's abundant (if not excessive) ornamentation (Wilke, 2023).

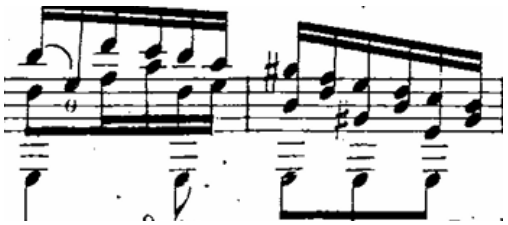
My own choice of ornamentation is a middle ground. Not ornamenting the first playing of each section but with a reasonably heavy hand the second time through. I think there is no "correct version" here as there is no indication of Bobrowicz's own intention. We can only make informed guesses as to the extent that he would have ornamented the piece, if at all. But as there were often improvisatory elements in music of the 1800s and in the polish mazurka style that Bobrowicz was composing in, so I think some ornamentation should be expected.

The first variation has very little reference to the original theme, but this is consistent not only with Bobrowicz's style of variations pieces, but also with the polish mazurka style in which the melody was often improvised over a chosen chord sequence. A surviving link to the original theme can only be found in the harmony and structure.

This variation consists of a new melody line in 3rds and 6ths, a common continuation for variations pieces of this era. There is no significant difficulty in playing this variation, but the player must make some artistic choices to keep the piece alive.

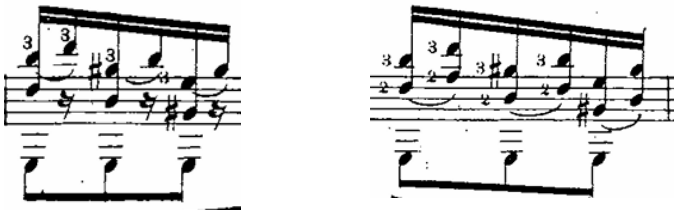
Tonal variety is the weapon of choice here. As each section is repeated, finding interesting tones without them becoming formulaic can be a thin line to tread. Adding more stress to some of the interesting rhythmic elements can also be an effective tool. Bars 3 and 4 are a good example of this. On the first playing, I take the section like a descending melody, playing as legato as possible and with direction towards the bottom of the sequence. On the second playing, I put more emphasis on the groups of two in the semiquavers to give a bigger impression of stress and resolution.

(Ex. 3, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 1, bar 3-4)



It is also worth mentioning the use of "slur" marks. Often, they indicate a slide in 19th century guitar music. This can be seen in bars 7 and 15 of the first variation. These are very clear examples as finger markings are also included, leaving little doubt as to the composer's intention.

(Ex. 4, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 1, bar 7 and 15)

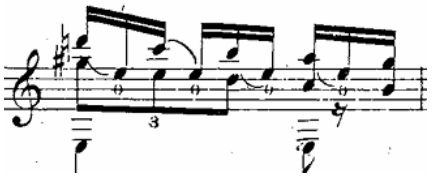


Variations two and four are the start of the technical showcase. Both contain fast scales and arpeggios with variation two containing triplet semiquavers and four having demisemiquavers. Both have the same harmonic

progression and general harmonic shape but they each have some slight variations.

There is an interesting triplet passage in bar 4 of the second variation.

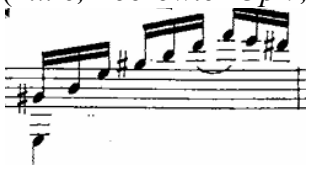
(Ex. 5, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 2, bar 4)



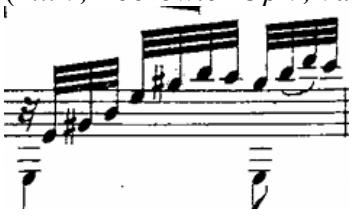
The triplet pattern adds a hemiola-like effect that further reinforces the idea of stressing the quaver pairs in the previous variation (Ex. 3). It gives the end of the bar a very abrupt feeling since there is no semiquaver to pair with the final note. While maybe not so interesting on its own, the link between this and the previous movement highlights the way Bobrowicz likes to develop his thematic ideas. This idea, however, does not continue any further than this. None of the remaining variations have any semblance of this motif and the idea seems to end here. This makes highlighting the idea when playing even more important.

The second and fourth variations show the notation problem that I mentioned earlier about slur markings. Below, example 6 contains the same marking as example 5. While at first glance they look like identical notations, ex. 5 notates a slur while ex. 6 notates a slide. While these examples are obvious upon testing, some examples can be less clear and lead to potential confusion for the player.

(*Ex. 6, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 2, bar 3-4)*



(*Ex. 7, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 4, bar 3)*

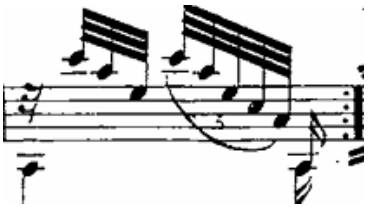


Example 7 is an example of this, both a slur and a slide would be possible. It does not affect the overall piece too much, and I find it hard to believe that an audience member would have any notion of the difference, but it allows

the player to take some artistic license and make their own decisions. I personally opted for the slide as it makes the passage more playable and gives a larger textural difference from the other variations.

One of the fourth variations particularities is found in the 8th bar.

(*Ex. 8, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 4, bar 8)*



Whether this quintuplet marking is strictly in rhythm or intended as an ornamental flair is left up to the player. I offer 3 possible solutions.

a. Play it as the rhythm indicates, the slightly faster pace and extra note make the passage interesting enough without any need for any further interpretation. This is my teacher's suggestion and one of the most used solutions.
b. Start with a slight lengthening of the first note and increase the speed with the descending arpeggio. This was my personal choice. It makes the passage link better with the 3 semiquavers before it and acts as an ornamental flourish to the passage's end.
c. Play it as fast as possible as an ornament and lengthen the last a to compensate for the time loss.

I believe that each of these options would be an acceptable way of playing this bar and is just one of the many small choices each player makes when crafting their own interpretation.

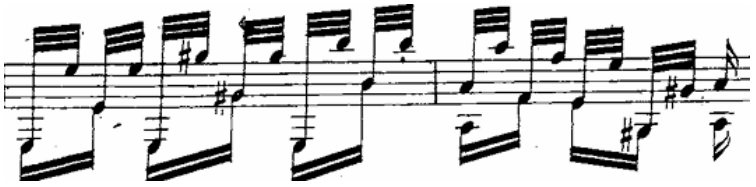
Variation three is a recapitulation of the theme in the bass. It's a straightforward and uneventful variation just used to remind the listener of the original theme. Without the technical or interpretive challenges of the previous variations, variation three comes across as slightly lacklustre. It serves the important purpose of changing the pace of the piece so that it doesn't move from quick movement to quick movement constantly. Some players, myself included, choose to drop the repeats in this variation as the section can drag when included.

The octave variation (variation five), like all octave sections in 19th-century music, requires the player to essentially play as fast as possible to stop the section from dragging and sounding like a poorly played technical exercise.

One of the technical challenges lies in the slight variance in the octave pattern. While entire octave passages are relatively rare for most composers (even in the 19th century), Bobrowicz employs them in several of his pieces, five of which include an entire octave section.

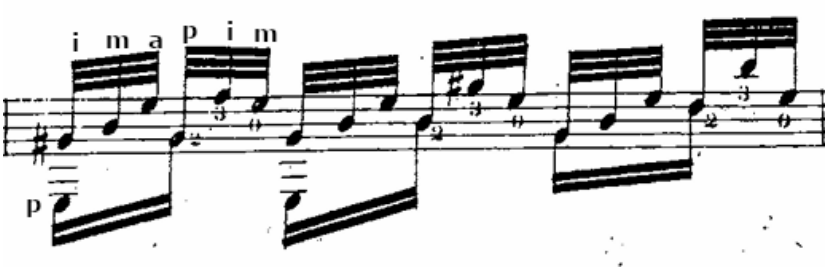
Because of this, Bobrowicz often adds some variation to the octaves themselves. The example in Op. 7 includes the thumb jumping between different bass strings (Ex. 9) and a change to two notes played simultaneously for one demisemiquaver in bar 8. These variations in the octaves are a nightmare for guitarists as having repeated patterns in the right hand is much easier to play. My solution was to use my middle finger for the upper notes in bar 7, leaving my index finger free for the extra note at the beginning of bar 8. Some amount of flexibility of thought is always required in these sections by Bobrowicz and speaks to his ability as a guitarist.

(*Ex. 9, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 5, bar 7-8)*



The final variation is the usual big triplet finish expected from most 19th-century theme and variations pieces for guitar. Bobrowicz doesn't make the task easy for the player though. As a development of the rhythmic peculiarities found in the first and second variation's 4th bars, the 4th bar in this variation changes the right-hand pattern to a significantly more difficult pattern.

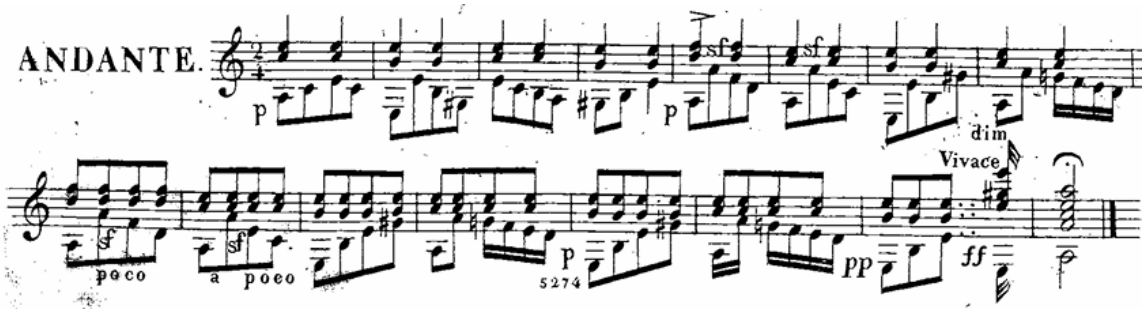
(*Ex. 10, Bobrowicz Op 7, Variation 6, bar 4)*



I have included my right-hand finger markings for reference in the above example (Ex. 10). I believe this to be the best solution as it avoids having to rely on a repeated "i,m,a" pattern. The variation follows the same form as the previous one with repeating A and B sections. It then deviates in one final build towards the end with constantly changing chords and an ascending sequence only to culminate in the warmly anticipated overuse of the perfect cadence.

In one last spot of originality from Bobrowicz, the piece does not end there. After a fermata bar, we hear a new melody.

(*Ex. 11, Bobrowicz Op 7, Andante)*



Melancholic and slow, and completely out of character compared to the previous few variations, this variation reminds us of the original theme. It is not the same melody but is still recognisable by its harmony. Only to be rudely awakened from our reminiscing by two final chords that never fail to elicit a chuckle and applause from the audience.
Although perhaps a strange ending to the piece after so much build-up, you cannot question its effectiveness at forcing a response from the audience.

Bobrowicz knew how to draw in the listener and subvert expectations when necessary. Although his pieces on the surface can be described as formulaic, we can see throughout this piece the subtle (or sometimes completely unsubtle) intricacies that he uses to ensnare the listener.

Much of what has been analysed here is repeatable in any of Bobrowicz's works and my goal is to encourage the player to engage with the novelties of his style.

Wenzel Thomas Matiegka (1773-1830)

Background

Unfortunately, there is little record about the life of Wenzel Thomas Matiegka. Despite spending his life in Vienna, he was born in Chotzen in Bohemia. I have included him in this project because of this and because of the shocking lack of research on his music. His compositions are some of the finest included in this project and are on par with some of the greatest in the 1800s.

In Schilling's Encyclopedia (Schilling 1840), Matiegka has a short article stating that he was a choir master at two churches, St. Leopold and St. Joseph in Vienna and that he was an accomplished guitarist and popular composer for the instrument. There was an article written by Josef Zuth that references a baptismal certificate related to Matiegka giving his birth as July 6, 1773, and a Viennese death certificate records his death due to pulmonary consumption on January 19th, 1830, at the age of 58. Unfortunately, Josef Zuth's article has been removed and is now only viewable through a website archive (Zuth, 2013).

We know that Matiegka taught due to the title pages of several of his compositions naming him as a guitar professor or maître de guitare. Zuth's article also says that estate documents from Matiegka's death have his total possessions valued at 24 florins. This was given to his widow and children who then paid thirty-seven florins and fifty-seven kronen for his medical and funeral expenses. We can assume from this that Matiegka, despite his success as a guitarist and job as a choirmaster, lived in relative poverty.

Unfortunately, this is the only information that I could find. There is a reference to an untitled book published by Wilhelm Klingenbrunner found in the archives of the Society of Friends of Music in Vienna in Zuth's article, but when searching the online catalogue, no book can be found. There are no scholarly works associated with this composer so either all records have been lost to time or further research is desperately needed.

Publications

Bavarian State Library in Munich	Op. 8 - 6 Variations pour la Guitarre Seule
	Op. 16 - Sonate Facile pour la Guitarre Seule
	Op. 29 - 12 Variations pour la Guitarre Seule
Boije's collection at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden	Grande Sonate No. 1
	Grande Sonate No. 2
	*Op. 4 - Fantaisie pour la guitarre seule
	Op. 20 - 24 Pieces Progressives pour la Guitarre
Guitar Federation of America archive	Op. 23 - Sonate pour la Guitare
IMSLP – Source unknown	Op. 17 - Sonate progressive pour la Guitarre seule
Matanya Ophee collection at the Special Collections Research Center of Appalachian State University	Op. 11 - Grande Serenade Facile
Moravian Library in Brno	Op. 31 - 6 Sonatas pour la Guitarre (1,2,5,6)

Overview of Compositions

Matiegka has the lowest output out of any of the other composers on this list but as I said in his background section, this could be due to pieces being lost over time or Matiegka's lack of opportunity to publish them. Especially considering the opus numbers of the pieces that have survived, there was likely to be many more compositions written. Based on the music that we do have, I consider Matiegka to be the most "talented" composer on this list. The number of recordings made of his music despite his relative obscurity speaks to the quality of his compositions. There have been thirty-four albums featuring Matiegka's music but the majority focus on his ensemble compositions (Discogs, 2025). Only nine of these albums feature Matiegka's solo guitar music. Yet I am yet to find any guitarist who does not appreciate Matiegka's contribution to our repertoire. A blog post by the guitarist Bryan Townsend about listening to Matiegka for the first time showcases this:

> "I haven't spent a lot of time with the music, but I have very much enjoyed these pieces, and I think they are a solid addition to our scant repertoire from the period. Think of Matiegka as a somewhat less-talented Joseph Haydn and you would not be far off. The music is well-composed and lies well on the guitar."
>
> - Bryan Townsend (Townsend, 2023)

I completely agree that Matiegka is not in the same league as Haydn, but most people would say that no guitar composer is. Especially when contending with the difficulties of composing for an instrument with so many restrictions. When researching the composers for this project, parallels are often drawn between them and more recognisable composers. But while I thought it was an exaggeration to compare Bobrowicz with Chopin, I think the comparison for Matiegka is closer to the truth.

Unlike Bobrowicz who worked mostly with theme and variations pieces, Matiegka mostly composed sonatas. After having listened to and played his available music, most of it could comfortably fit into any guitarist's program, excluding the compositions designed for educational purposes.

Compositional style

Matiegka differs from the other guitar composers in that his music sounds more distinctly "classical" than "romantic", like early Sor works. If I were to try and sum up his compositional style in a sentence, I would say he has the operatic grandness of the best early romantic composers without losing the playfulness. His compositions have a level of humour and personality to them, they feel open to a wide range of interpretations and allow for the players' personality to shine.

While other guitar composers focused on music that matches the instrument's idiosyncrasies well, Matiegka seems to care less about this and more about melody and form. That is not to say that his music is in any way harder to play than other guitar composers, but his concert pieces tend to have a few awkward or even seemingly impossible areas. There are several examples of this that I have highlighted in the next section analysing Op. 23.

Matiegka often takes themes (or even entire movements in the case of Op. 23) from other composers. This is a common practice of guitar composers at this time. His own themes are not as melodically brilliant as those he takes from operatic arias, but they are not as destructive to the music as Bobrowicz's were. He also does not always directly incorporate thematic material into the development, opting instead to use rondo form to repeat the theme then continue developing from there.

Op. 23 – Sonata in B minor

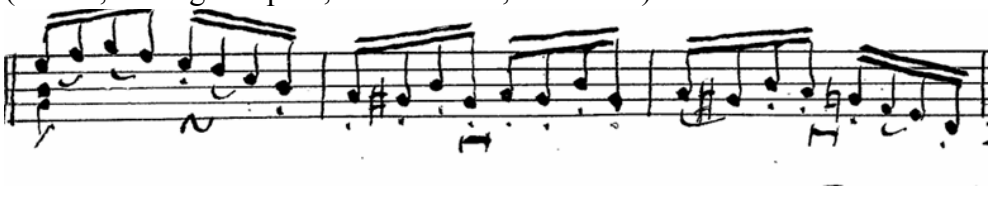
I chose this sonata not necessarily for its great compositional value, although I think the rondo especially is exceptional, but instead for its character and amount of variation that the player can play with.

This sonata has many unexplained oddities. The first being that the first and second movements are essentially an arrangement of Haydn's keyboard sonata in B minor. The first movement from Matiegka's sonata is the third of Haydn's with some changes but remaining very recognisable. While the second movement of each is tonally, harmonically and structurally similar, they have different melodies making it much harder to recognise the similarities without prior knowledge. I will not, however, be spending much time comparing Matiegka's sonata with Haydn's unless there is some context that will help our understanding of the piece. The goal of this analysis is as an aid for interpreting the piece and, on the broader scale, Matiegka's compositions in general.

As such, I will only be looking at the technical challenges presented by the first movement since composition itself comes from Haydn. I will take a similar approach with the second movement, but with more insight into interpretation since it contains space for it. My assessment of Matiegka as a composer will come in the third movement.

The first movement of the B minor sonata starts us off at maximum speed. The tempo marking of Presto tied with the semiquaver scales and repeated notes make this movement a significant technical challenge. The first of these difficult scales comes in bar 37 (Ex. 12). Each example from this sonata has a key signature of B minor (two sharps).

(Ex. 12, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 1, bar 37-39)



There is no real difficulty in working out a left-hand fingering and right-hand fingering can be wildly different between players, but my personal preference is to start the scale on the second quaver beat with your "a" finger then proceed with alternating "m and i". On the notation itself, the dots underneath most notes do not mean staccato notes but indicate a plucked note. I removed the final slur mark since it felt more natural without. This is one of the most common editorializations that can be made to Matiegka's pieces. His use of slurs is quite liberal, possibly due to preferences of the time or even a general lower standard of technical ability in playing scales. Whatever the case, the player themselves must decide on their own aesthetic and make whatever changes necessary to achieve this.

(Ex. 13, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 1, bar 135-137)

Another similar section (Ex. 13) causes us a different struggle, having to shift up to a higher position and land on a chord shape in bar 137. This can be solved by using the open E string to move up to 6th position and sliding your third finger from the last note of the scale, B, to the A#. This is another instance of making a slight change to the music to improve playability. An amount of adaptability is required to play this music and an openness to making alterations to the score.

A problem often encountered when playing Matiegka is the timing of rubato and pauses.

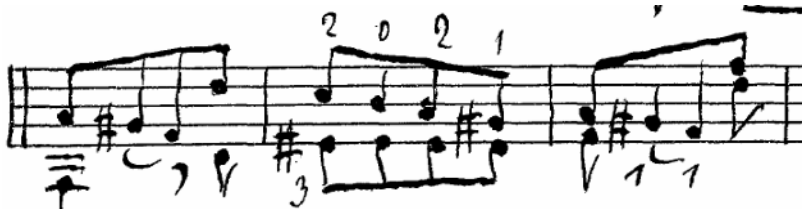
(Ex. 14, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 1, bar 22-26)

In this section we can see a collection of timing alterations from the "espressivo" scale to a pause and a significant break, only to return to the original tempo in bar 26. In such cases I would suggest listening to Haydn's original sonata for inspiration but here, we find one of the significant divergences from Haydn. This section does not exist in the original and is instead a fabrication of Matiegka, and probably a necessary one as the piano part becomes too scalic and textured for a true arrangement. I suggest taking this as a quasi-cadenza and playing with total freedom. I even take the "espressivo" scale on the second string rather than the first, giving myself

the time to enjoy the richer tone. Moments like this are important as Matiegka is a composer of “contrast”. His pieces often swing wildly between moods and the more obvious you can make the changes, the better the audience will understand them.

There is only one finger indication given to the player by Mariegka himself in bar 94.

(Ex. 15, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 1, bar 93-95)



This section, at first glance, does not look like a particularly difficult passage. But upon playing, it turns out to be quite uncomfortable for the left hand. The slurred G# to F# must be played on the 4th string, if we keep the slur that is. In this instance, I would hesitate to remove it as the slur is mirroring the slurs in the first page and is a thematic feature.

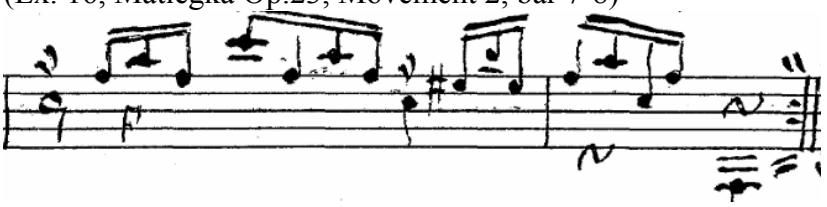
This is one of the beforementioned cases of Matiegka’s unidiomatic writing for the guitar. It is not unplayable or even hugely difficult, but it fits badly on the fingers and creates an awkward hiccup when playing at speed. There is also no alternate solution other than methodical practice for this passage.

The first movement is a test in speed and consistency. The biggest problem is that every mistake in the repeated pattern becomes instantly audible because of the repetitiveness.

The second movement is a significant change. It moves from B minor, an already uncomfortable key for the guitar, into the uncommonly used B major. The playability of this movement is, however, easy enough due to the slow speed, freedom of expression and thin texture.

This is a movement full of choice. I will start with the most interesting decision and a noteworthy change to the written music, bar 8.

(Ex. 16, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 2, bar 7-8)



To me, it makes sense to end this section with the chord still hanging over the bass note. This goes against the score and would be impossible to do without extended techniques since the stretch between the chord and F# is normally impossible. But to continue my idea that Matiegka had a playful side, I make a feature of this completely avoidable problem. This section is repeated three times and each time I employ a different extended technique to reach the F#, more for comic effect than practical use. In the first instance I do the sanest option, using the left-hand thumb. On the second, I use my right hand and hammer on the F#. And on the final playing, I use my nose. This is probably not Matiegka's intention here, but the second movement is an otherwise dull movement. When listening to other players attempt it, it often lacks life or intent. The two solutions I see are heavy improvisation on the repeats, which spoils the simple charm or the movement, or create a different atmosphere with physical gestures.

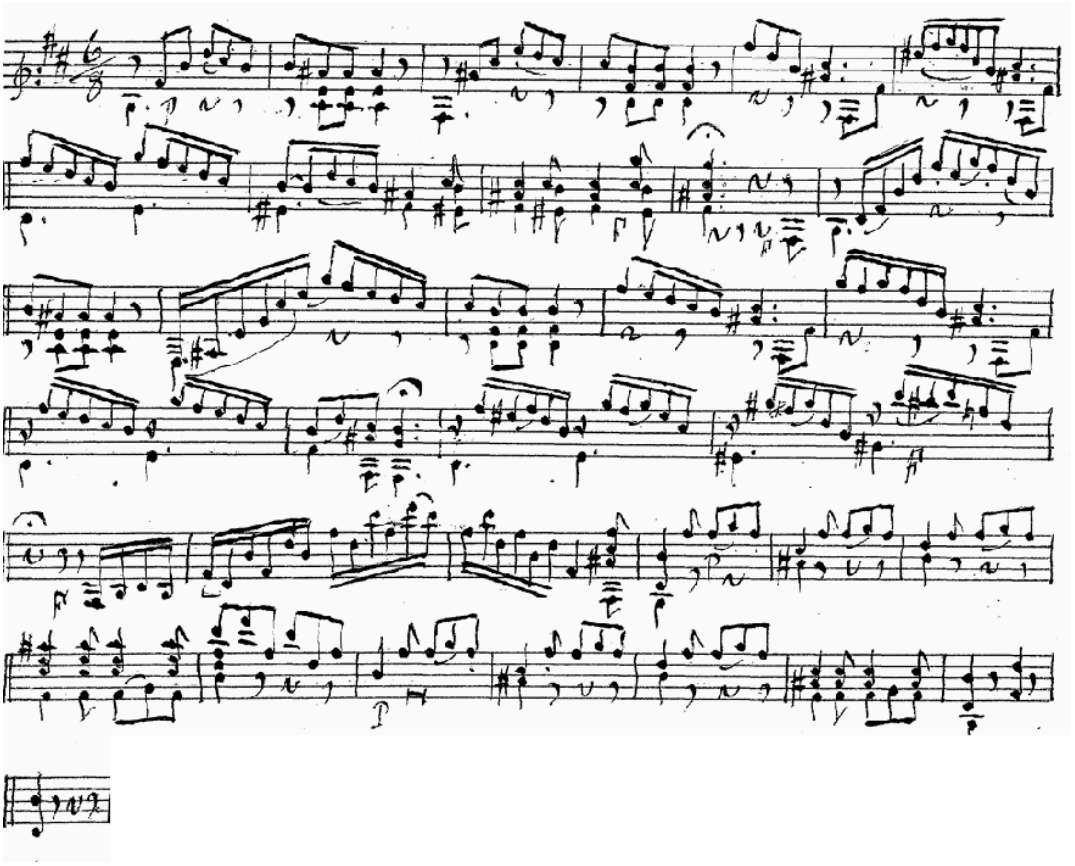
The rest of this movement is straightforward. There are still plenty of choices to be made about character, rubato and phrasing but they are the same choices that any guitarist makes when interpreting a piece.

The final movement, Rondo, is the only movement which is entirely Matiegka. It is also the only movement that works as a standalone piece, and I have used it as such in several concerts and auditions. It gives the best of Matiegka's eclectic style and allows the player to demonstrate both their technical aptitude and musicality. This is also the movement which requires the most alterations.

The rondo theme (Ex. 17) that begins the piece returns three times and therefore requires some different approaches to stop it becoming stale.

The first nine bars can be interpreted two ways. The first is to phrase the first four bars together followed by a six-bar phrase or you can have three sets of two-bar phrases followed by a longer four-bar phrase. The longer phrasing is achieved by ignoring the last rest in bars two and four and building through the bass notes in bar six into seven. This is the phrasing I used for the first two repeats, only to change on the last repeat. I found that starting with the two-bar phrasing meant that the beginning of the piece sounds too detached and, especially considering the pauses and rubato to come, left the audience without a good sense of the pulse. This is not a problem for the final playing as it can be used as an effect to subvert expectations since the pulse and flow of the piece is already well established.

(Ex. 17, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 3, bar 1-34)



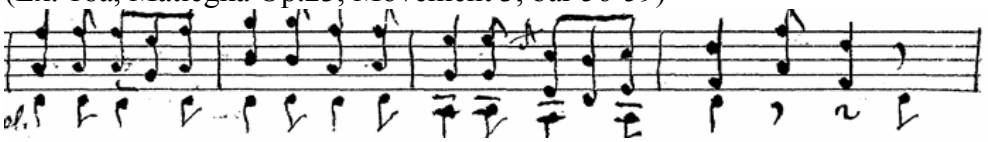
When dealing with the many repetitions in Matiegka's music, especially in movements where there is heavy rubato, ignoring all ritardandos and playing through the pauses can help move the music along. Considering this theme specifically, in the second repetition I increase the length of pauses and allow for more rubato, aiming for a smoother and more lyrical playing. To contrast this on the third repetition, I remove the pauses completely and play through the section more, allowing it to build and have a more "urgent" feel.

Neither recording of this complete work by either Marcyn Dylla (Dylla, 2024) or Giulio Tampalini (Tampalini, 2019) vary the repetition of the theme. There is an argument to be made for the theme being a stabilising point and the developmental sections afterwards being used for more artistic freedom. But this ignores the joy that playing with different interpretations within a single performance can bring, both to the player and audience. Certainly, if the option of a similarly interpreted repeating theme appeals to you, you must take more liberty with the rubato in the other sections. Dylla demonstrates this with significant changes to tempos, but Tampalini makes far fewer changes, and his recording therefore lacks imagination.

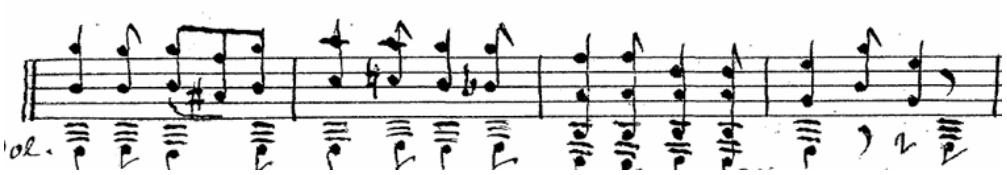
Moving on from the theme. A melody reminiscent of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," or perhaps "Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre" which the former

was derived from, can be heard twice throughout this movement (Ex 18a and b).

(Ex. 18a, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 3, bar 56-59)



(Ex. 18b, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 3, bar 167-170)



While this melody has some differences to the ones mentioned above, to many people there will be an association drawn. We can use this to aid our interpretation. Example 18a is the first occurrence of this and to better match the song "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," I play this with a slightly lighter, more rhythmic feel. I can then contrast this in the second playing when the melody returns in example 18b, by playing more tasto and with a warmer-broader tone.
This small association with a commonly known song adds to the levity in this section. The movement can feel somewhat heavy at times and adding in this element almost feels comical. To me it is an example of Matiegka's sense of humour being injected into the piece. Matiegka himself likely had some association with the melody as Max Cryer in his book writes,

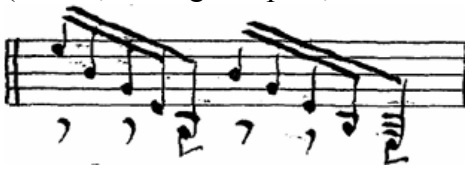
"Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre became so popular throughout France that it became the basis for comic song in theatre revues."

(Cryer, 2010, p.26)

The melody was also included in Beethoven's Battle Symphony, Op.91 and was popular in the UK.

There are a few technical challenges in this piece, from fast scales and arpeggios to tricky jumps around the fretboard. But these are not anything new to music of this era.
One of the more specific techniques employed by some guitar composers can be seen in bars 186 to 208 of which we can see in example 19.

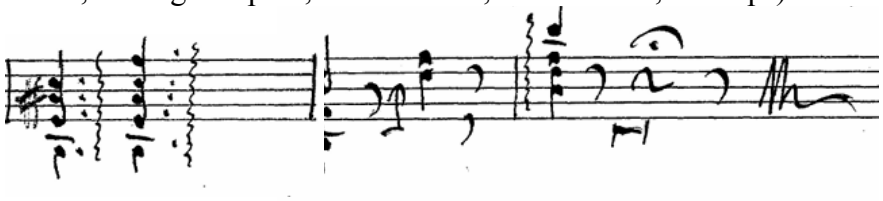
(Ex. 19, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 3, bar 186)



This arpeggio pattern is unlike other ones in that, while it can be played as a normal right hand plucking pattern, it is easier to rake a finger across the strings only plucking the last note with the thumb. There is no indication that this is how Matiegka intended this section to be played but I find it to be the most fluid solution. It's a hard passage when trying to maintain the feel of 6/8 since controlling the speed of the raking motion takes time to get used to. Both recordings fail to maintain the compound time feeling with Dylla playing too fast and falling into a 2/4 feel and Tampalini losing the bass note which contains the most interesting harmony.

The last section is perhaps the strangest to interpret. The piece builds with one final iteration of the rondo theme before coming to a jarring halt with a key change to B major and a tonal shift to a variation of the "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" melody. The section then finishes as abruptly as it began with a series of quiet, arpeggiated chords.

(Ex. 20, Matiegka Op.23, Movement 3, bar 251-253, 5 sharps)



Certainly not the strong ending that we would expect from sonatas from this period. After discussing this section with Johan Löfving, an expert in romantic guitar, we decided that the speed should be dropped going into this last section to highlight the tonal shift even more. On the final chords, the end is signalled more by gesture than by the music itself. The best example of this is Marcin Dylla, I recommend watching how he ends his recording. The chords themselves seem to drift off into nothingness, almost as if Matiegka ran out of ideas and just wanted to finish the piece. It is then up to the performer to supply a satisfying ending for the audience.

As with my Bobrowicz analysis, I intend this analysis of Matiegka's B minor sonata to show some of the choices available to the performer. In summary of Matiegka's compositions, I would like to say that they are "character" pieces. Bringing them to life requires the performer to take a very active role in adding their own musical take and personality into the performance.

František Max Kníže (1784-1840)

Background

We know little of František Max Kníže's life outside of music. His name has been published in several encyclopaedia articles which give some general information. His inclusion in this project is mainly because he seems to have been an important figure in guitar in Bohemia at the time and was an established performer and composer. He is credited as having created the first Czech guitar manual, highlighting his importance in the history of guitar teaching. Another reason is, unfortunately, to highlight some of the problems with music of this era being presented today. I believe Kníže's compositions for the guitar fall under the category of 'forgettable' and are good examples of why most modern guitarists turn away from this music.

Kníže was born in Drahelčice in Bohemia and spent his life in the country, dying in Prague. At the age of twenty, Kníže went to study composition in Prague under Jan Václav Tomášek, who was a well renowned composer and an important figure in Czech music history. After his musical education, he went on to play bassoon in the orchestra of the Estates Theatre. While performing here, he met and married the actress Therese Brunetti née Frey. From 1833, he worked as the choir master for several Prague churches which led to him composing the musical setting for three well received pastoral masses (Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1965).
His compositions were well received during his life and later Josef Srb wrote in his History of Music in Bohemia and Moravia –

> *'In Czech songs he best grasped the spirit of the simple people, and in his melodies there is a true feeling and a refined taste.'*
>
> - (Srb 1891)

Publications

Berlin State Library	Op. 2 - Leichte Stücke für die Guitarre
Boije's collection at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden	Pieces faciles et agreables
	Op. 3 - La Chasse en Rondeau
	Op. 4 - Six Variations sur un Theme Favori
	Op. 5 - Divertissements
	Op. 6 - 12 Laendler
	Op. 7 - Grandes Variations
	Op. 8 - Divertimenti
	Op. 11 - 6 Fortschreitende Lectionen
	Op. 15 - Pieces progresives
	Op. 16 - Ober-Oesterreicher, National Ländler
	Op. 19 - 12 Monferrine
	Op. 20 - Six Variations sur un Theme Original

Overview of Compositions

As I mentioned above, Kníže is an unfortunately uninteresting composer and as such I chose not to do a thorough investigation into a specific composition of his. Out of the thirteen pieces that I found, none of them, to my mind, deserved any greater study. If you have played any number of Sor studies, then you will have encountered everything Kníže has to offer. I believe he is a necessary inclusion due to this. Out of the many composers across history, very few have survived in the public consciousness until now. This is especially true of guitar composers. This can sometimes be due to a composer's fame during their lifetime or social factors pushing them out of the public eye but, often, the compositions themselves are the reason for their forgettability.

There are only four pieces by Kníže that can even be considered concert items, Op. 3, 4, 7 and 20. The rest are either collections of shorter pieces or intended for educational purposes. Even the educational or short form pieces would be hard to include in a concert form designed to include them. They, and all Kníže's pieces suffer from the physical restrictions of the guitar informing the compositional process. For example, there is not one single piece, long or short, that uses any key outside of conventionally "easy" guitar keys and in the next section I will showcase the repetition of ideas found throughout his works.

This is not to say that there is no way of performing his compositions. Really with any work, the guitarist can take an editorial roll and use the piece as a skeleton for his own artistry. There is maybe a future paper to be written about transforming compositionally "less interesting" pieces from composers like Kníže into concert-worthy ones. The process would likely involve significant improvisatory elements and probably a large amount of re-composition. The idea of reimagining pieces is not a foreign one to guitarists, with many like Alan Mearns making significant alterations to even well-known pieces (Mearns, 2023). A similar approach could be taken with Kníže's works but that is not the purview of this paper.

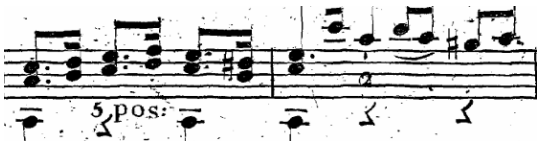
Compositional style

In this section I will show some of the commonly used tools that Kníže uses in his compositions. The repetition of compositional ideas in different pieces is not necessarily a terrible thing. All composers in some way recycle their good ideas into other forms. So, when only programming one Kníže piece in a concert, there should be no problem with this. To some extent, this is the case. But the issue lies in the commonality of these ideas when compared to concepts found in every other early romantic piece. There is almost always a better version of the idea that Kníže has in another composer's work, I couldn't identify a single feature of his music that was distinct to him, aside

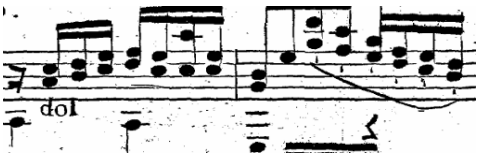
from the repetition itself. As such I will be using examples from Sor studies to illustrate the problem.

Kníže's four "concert" works each contain a section of melody harmonised in parallel thirds.

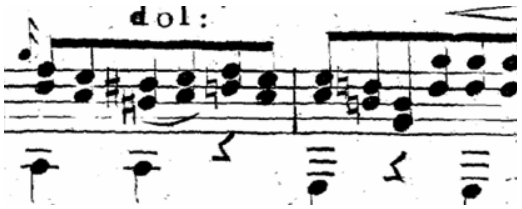
(Ex. 21a, Kníže Op. 20, Theme, bar 1-2)



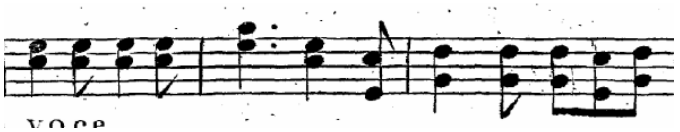
(Ex. 21b, Kníže Op. 7, Variation 5, bar 1-2)



(Ex. 21c, Kníže Op. 4, Theme, bar 2-3)



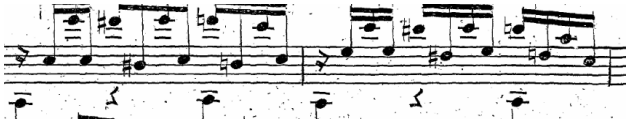
(Ex. 21d, Kníže Op. 3, Vivace, bar 1-2)



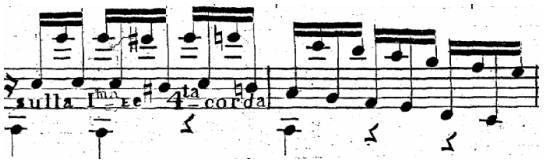
There are hundreds of examples of this in early romantic guitar compositions. Sor's studies are no different in the regard having several focused on this topic; Op.6 No. 6, Op. 35 No. 3, 6, 15, 21 and Op. 44 No. 8. There is no problem with using parallel thirds to harmonise on the guitar, my objection is the over-use of them.

Taking Op. 4 as the worst example of this. The theme itself and each variation, except the third, includes some instance of parallel movement in thirds. And in the instances where it is used, it is overused. Variations four, five and six have very few places where the melody isn't in parallel thirds. Even someone unacquainted with the idioms of romantic guitar composition would find this grating and for those who are, it is intolerable.

(Ex. 22a, Kníže Op. 20, Variation 4, bar 1-2)



(Ex. 22b, Kníže Op. 4 Variation 3, bar 1-2)



Above (Ex. 22a and b) is another instance of Kníže's lack of imagination. All composers recycle ideas with their compositions, but due to the low

number of compositions we should expect some differences. This does not appear to be the case. Every single one of Kníže's pieces sounds like a collection of the same compositional ideas, reconstituted to loosely resemble some earlier thematic idea.

One final nail in Kníže's coffin is his use of harmony and phrasing. In Op. 4, we are only listening to three chords played until the obligatory "minor variation" which comes on the fifth variation. While you could argue that this is due to the theme itself only containing three chords, this is a poor excuse since none of the more established composers feel tied to such basic harmony. And while you might consider the minor variation to have more impact because of this harmonic draught, I cannot fathom a listener holding their attention long enough to reach it.

I can only find one album that features any of Kníže's works by Jaromíra Ježková (Ježková, 1991). This recording features Op. 20 and does a good job of keeping some excitement in the music through maximising the speed and skipping almost all repeats. Op. 20 is probably the most reasonable piece by Kníže to include in a concert, but when comparing it with any other early romantic work, I can find no reason to include it myself.

Felix Horetzky (1796-1870)

Background

Felix Horetzky holds special importance for me in this project due to his prevalence as a teacher in my hometown of Edinburgh. Despite what I consider to be a good catalogue of compositions, Horetzky's music is rarely played or recorded despite his numerous publications, both musical and academic. Although most of his music is simple in both playability and harmony, his contribution to the guitar in the 1800s is important to recognize. There are some real gems of compositions to be found in his catalogue of works.

Born in Bohemia to a Polish family, he played guitar from an early age but only began formal study when his family moved back to their native homeland in Warsaw. At the age of fifteen he was employed in the Warsaw Chamber of Accounts but by 1815 he quit to pursue guitar teaching. After establishing himself as a guitar instructor in Warsaw, he moved to Vienna to study guitar with Giuliani. He had remarkable success here both as a performer and teacher and was appointed as the guitar instructor to the Archduchess, receiving the patronage of the Royal Court (Bone, 1914).

He was, however, more interested in performing at this time and undertook a lengthy tour of Germany, Paris and Britain. He found a home in Edinburgh and was well received as a teacher and performer. He lived in Edinburgh until his death in 1870.

As with most unresearched topics, there seem to be several contradictory accounts of Horetzky's life which were cleared up in Stewart Botton's PhD thesis (Botton 1983). His date of death is stated as 1846 in Philip Bone's book 'The Guitar and Mandolin' (Bone 1914, p.151-152) but in Józef Powrozniak's 'Gitarren-Lexicon' (Powrozniak 1988, p.46-47) his death is said to be 1870. Bone also states that Horetzky left London in 1840 and died in Russia, but post office records show Horetzky living in Edinburgh until 1863 and a death certificate there in 1870.

During his life Horetzky taught guitar extensively. Every source I can find mentions his teaching of Stanisław Szczepanowski, who is another well known, mid-18th century Polish guitarist. Horetzky was also one of the writers and publishers of the first recorded guitar magazine, the 'Giulianiad,' which holds a wealth of information about attitudes to guitar in the 1800s.

Publications

Boije's collection at the Music and Theatre Library of Sweden	60 National Airs
	La Lyre, Album Musical
	*Op. 10 – Valses Brillantes
	*Op. 11 - Rondo
	*Op. 12 - Sérénade
	*Op. 14 - Grande Fantaisie
	Op. 15 - Instructive Exercises
	Op. 16 - Grandes Variations
	Op. 18 - Amusemens
	Op. 20 - Grand Variations
	Op. 21 - Preludes, Cadences and Modulations
	Op. 23 - 12 Divertimentos
	Op. 33 - Instructive Lessons
	*Op. 40 - Fantasia
Hudleston collection at the Royal Irish Academy of Music	Twelve Easy Divertimentos for the Guitar
	Op. 17 - Divertissemens
	Op. 26 - Twelve Easy Divertimentos
	Op. 30 - Studies or Exercises Principally in Arpeggio
	Op. 32 - Introduction and Variations on What Fairy-like Music
	Op. 35 Recollections of Vienna
	Op. 37 - Grand Solo

Overview of Compositions

Instead of splitting my focus on Horetzky's compositions between his educational editions and concert pieces, and keeping to the purview of this thesis, I will only be looking into the later. Despite this, I believe it is necessary to mention something of his educational work as he made a significant contribution to the guitar teaching landscape of the 19th century.

Normally when looking at educational pieces and studies from early romantic guitarists, there is a feeling of disappointment when comparing them with our biggest study composer, Fernando Sor. Horetzky's approach to studies in general seems different though. Unlike Sor's studies (especially his early study collections like Op. 6 and 29) which tend towards making the study into a melodically sound piece, Horetzky seems more interested in the mechanical merit of the study. He seems also particularly interested in right hand tone production and has some rather uncharitable comments about previously written method books:

"All instruction books for the guitar which have been hitherto published are defective in this respect, one of their greatest faults being that they entirely neglect the use of the right-hand, or that they attempt to display its use by false principles."

- Felix Horetzky (Horetzky, 1827, preface)

Considering his concert works, there are eight that I would consider complete concert items, Op. 11, 12, 13, 16, 20, 32, 37 and 40. They contain a good mix of theme and variations, sonatas and standalone pieces. While I wouldn't consider these to be exceptional pieces of music, none of them are uninteresting. When considering the concertising of them I found myself drawn to Op. 32 - Introduction and Variations on What Fairy-like Music, but I would be happy to play any of these works in a concert.

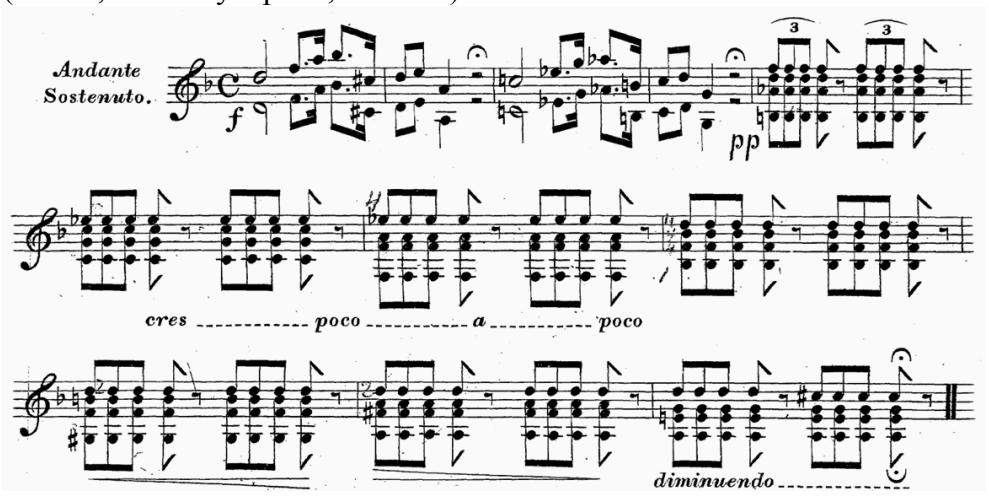
One aspect of Horetzky's works that I find most appealing is his use of good themes. Whether composed by him, as in the case of Op. 16, or by another composer (Op. 32's theme was composed by the Englishman Joseph De Pinna,) they all have an enjoyable melody and some amount of interesting harmony. This is something I have mentioned several times throughout this thesis, but one of the big hindrances of the other composers in this project is poor thematic material. Horetzky does not have this problem, he is not without fault, which I will discuss in the next section, but the foundation for most of his works are solid.

Compositional style

Horetzky's compositions are much like Bobrowicz's in the sense that they follow the "norm" of romantic guitar. He tends to avoid overcomplications and his compositions are a good mix of playability and technical challenge. It is not surprising that Bobrowicz and he have a similar style since they share the same teacher in Giuliani. The difference being that, while Bobrowicz's pieces have particularly hard technical passages, Horetzky's tend to be easier and more idiomatic. On the harmonic side, Horetzky takes more adventurous cadential sections and has no fear of modulation. He even wrote a manual on cadence points and modulation, showing his interest in these devices (Horetzky, c.1830).

A good example of his preference for harmonic movement can be found in the introduction to Op.40 – Fantasia (ex. 4a). The piece starts in D minor in the first two bars only to transition to C minor in the second two. What follows is a series of chordal changes with the intention of bringing us to our new key of D major in the second section.

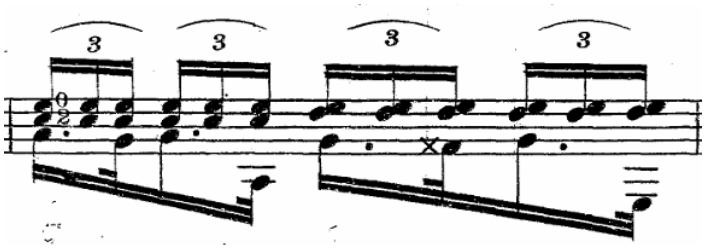
(Ex. 23, Horetzky Op. 40, bar 1-11)



While not exactly groundbreaking harmonic ideas, compared to the other composers in this thesis it is a significant step-up in harmonic competence. This is a common way for Horetzky to start a piece, flexing his "modulational prowess". In fact, all but two of his concert works have an introductory section starting in a different key from the main theme.

Aside from this, there are not many distinctive features in Horetzky's music. Because of his similarities to Bobrowicz, and the relatively in-depth description of the techniques mentioned in this thesis already, I will avoid repeating the same points.

(Ex. 24, Horetzky Op. 20, Variation 6, bar 1)



One technical element that is distinct to Horetzky is his use of repeated chords over a melodic bassline. This can be seen in almost all early romantic composers, but the difference with Horetzky is the weight that he intends with it. He often uses this at the end of a piece, and at a climax. This makes these sections particularly hard since the speed at which they should be played is often high. I originally found myself having to drop the speed since my right hand could not keep up with my musical intention. A solution to this is to play both treble notes with one strike. It's a relatively modern technique and unlikely to be something Horetzky himself intended. It does solve the issue of speed, but it's a technique that requires specific practice and rarely occurs in pieces.

While this is a relatively short section of this thesis, Horetzky's compositions deserve more study than I can give it here. If his works had more technical difficulty, I would have surely included one in my repertoire and fully intend to in the future.

Concert Programming

I will start with my own experiences concertising the music from this project.

J. S. Bach – Prelude, Fugue and Allegro

W. Matiegka – Sonata in B minor

N. Bobrowicz – Variations on a Ukrainian Theme

A. Ourkouzounov - Sonata

Encore: S. Rudnev – Dream

This programme is from my final degree recital. It's an hour-long programme of music primarily from Slavic composers and including two works from this project. The Matiegka and Bobrowicz pieces are ones that I have performed on many occasions for the last two years and in various settings. The programme itself could be improved by changing the Bach for another Slavic composer preferably from the baroque period but due to time constraints, I felt like a more well-known piece would be better than trying to arrange something new.
I would also consider swapping out the Bobrowicz piece in future concerts due to the large work by Matiegka already filling the role of a romantic piece and having them back-to-back lessens their effectiveness.

I have played the Ukrainian variations by Bobrowicz in various concerts, and it always elicits a good response but even though it has good qualities it pales when compared to some of the more famous works from this era. Previously, I had performed it in a programme with both Giuliani's Grand Sonata and Mertz's Elegie and unfortunately it sounds rather disappointing when sandwiched between the two.

I have found that if you are to include music from these composers, it can't be in a place where it can be directly compared with another, more recognisable work. Especially due to the length of the pieces in general, any more than one of them becomes a significant portion of the concert, making it feel lopsided. The solution, only include one, or have a fully thematic concert based around this music.

The idea of a concert of entirely romantic era Slavic composers appeals to me. Having listened to Mateus Kowalski's (Kowalski, 2021) full album of Polish guitar music, the concept could surely transfer to the concert stage.

From looking at Mateus's own concert recording in 2024 (Omni Foundation, 2024), he is clearly heavily promoting the Polish romantic guitar composers.

F. Chopin – Op. 7, 4 Mazurkas
(arr. J. N. Bobrowicz)
No. 1 B-Major
No. 3 F-Minor
No. 4 Ab-Major

J. S. Bach – BWV 208, Schafe können sicher weiden

S. Szczepanowski - Introduction and Variations on the National Anthem

F. Horetzky - Fantasy, op. 40

Marek Pasieczny - Flight of the Kikuidataki

M. Ravel arr. Dyens – Pavane pour une infante défunte

[BREAK]

B. Bartók arr. E. Sabuncuoglu - Romanian Folk Dances

F. Chopin arr. Bobrowicz - Mazurkas op. 6

M. Pasieczny – (szopen) re:membering

J. Bobrowicz: Variations on the „Là ci darem la mano" theme from Mozart's Don Giovanni

Encore:
S. Rak – Hora

We can see several of the composers mentioned in this project in the programme, namely Bobrowicz and Horetzky as well as a composer I ended up not including Stanisław Szczepanowski. It is easy to see how a similar programme could be used with Slavic music, broadening out the scope from just Poland. The restriction to Poland's music means the inclusion of plenty of arrangements, which is no bad thing, and some less exciting pieces, which is. I also find the inclusion of arrangements somewhat counter productive when creating a programme promoting a country's composers. But the concept of a heavily romantic, region-specific concert program works.

In a recital given at the 2025 Hamburg Guitar Festival in and steamed online (Hamburger Gitarrentage, 2025), Marcin Dylla includes the same Matiegka sonata that I included in my own recital, Op. 23 – Sonata in B minor.

S. Weiss – Suite in D minor

W. Matiegka – Sonata in B minor

L. Berkeley – Sonatina

J. Verdu – Kitob

J. Rodrigo - Invocation and Dance

A. Piazzolla - Cinco Piezos

Encore: A. Barrios - Mazurca Appassionata.

This programme is similar in idea to my own. It places the Matiegka piece as a “romantic era” component of a mixed concert. This is a patchwork concert of both famous and lesser-known works. It follows the spirit of guitarists like Julian Bream who’s concerts always included a mix of well-known pieces and other pieces that challenge the audience to engage with something unknown to them. This is probably the easiest way to include the Slavic romantic composers in concerts as they can just replace any existing classical/romantic era composer. I find that, more and more, concert promoters and festivals want a specifically themed concert. But for a self-organised concert, I find this format more appealing.

Reflection

One of the main conclusions from this project is how much of this music has just started to touch the public eye. Both concerts listed in the above section were only performed in the last two years and, before then, there are very few recordings or programmes that include this music. The zeitgeist of guitar is slowly turning back towards these forgotten works.

It is our job as musicians to engage not only with the commonly heard pieces, but to find works that show our own personalities and capabilities as guitarists. The pieces mentioned in this project and countless others, are a source of potential inspiration. They may, at times, contain lower quality harmonic, melodic, rhythmic or technical material but to only play the greatest works for our instrument is to miss out on the artistic challenge of bringing life to ordinary music. Saying that a piece is lacking in one area is meaningless if it has other strengths. The inability to enjoy a piece does not spawn from a lack of any singular area and any perceived weaknesses can always be solved by the player. One of the beautiful things about early guitar music is its flexibility, it is a plain canvas that the performer can impart his musical ideas upon.

My personal feeling is that each composer in this project has room within their compositions for the player to shine in a way that some well-known pieces don't. If a piece has been recorded and played consistently over the last hundred years, there are few new interpretations and ideas left without creating them for the sake of newness. Playing a good quality work by a neglected composer solves this problem. The player has the space for their own musicality and the audience gets to engage with something they haven't heard before. As shown in the analysis sections of this thesis, there are meaningful choices to be made when performing these works.

This project has allowed me to reflect on how guitarists view their own music. I remember being told by a famous Scottish guitarist at a festival that we have a very small number of good "historical" pieces and that we can expect to have played all of them by the time we're forty. To be charitable to this opinion, back in the early 2000s access to music was harder and research into unknown guitar composers was lacking. But this opinion still exists amongst players today, and for no good reason. We have both the access and knowledge now to see how expansive the guitar repertoire is. I had only played music by Giuliani, Mertz and Sor from this era before undertaking this project. I had never been exposed to composers from the Slavic regions or even had knowledge of their existence. I see this as a result of the repertoire of the great guitarists of the recent past such as Segovia and Bream. They focused so heavily on creating new music for the instrument that when looking back, they only played the most common and palatable

pieces. Now, guitarists look back and research the past more and lesser-known works can be unearthed and brought to the forefront.

Even if I were to never play another piece by these composers, I think that the process of trying to concertise their music has helped me to develop a better sense of my own musicality. The music from this project does not spoon-feed you musical ideas. It requires active participation by the performer and some editorializations. Returning now to more “standard” repertoire, I have new ideas about how romantic music should be understood and what amount of impetus the player has in creating the music that they envision. I find it easier to allow myself the freedom to add ideas or edit chord voicings, to find my own musical identity within the pieces I work with.

This is not to say that I will be turning my back on this music now that this project has reached its conclusion. I have several ideas of concerts that I would like to put together. For example, a full romantic guitar concert encompassing not only the known, but also the uncommon guitar composers. Another example would be an entirely Slavic recital showcasing music across different eras with Slavic influences. The potential future projects are endless.

The composers in this project are not necessarily worse than their contemporaries. But they do require more active engagement from the performer. With few recordings to help, the player must face these choices alone but in doing so they have the chance to more directly influence the way in which the piece unfolds. By choosing pieces like these, we give audiences a more truthful look at the history of the instrument and break free from the biases people often have about why certain composers are forgotten.

Bibliography

Alves, J. R. (2015). 'The History of the Guitar', *Marshall University Digital Scholar*, Fall 12/2015. Available at: (Accessed 16/07/2024)

Antokhii, M. et al. (2004) *Shevchenko, Taras*. Available at: https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CS%5CH%5CShevchenkoTaras.htm (Accessed: 20 March 2025).

Audet, J. (2024) *The Forgotten Works of Giulio Regondi.* [Doctoral Dissertation: Sydney Conservatorium of Music]. USYD Library: https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/32894

Batorowska, H. (1992). *JAN NEPOMUCEN BOBROWICZ polski wydawca i księgarz w Saksonii w czasach Wielkiej Emigracji*. Krakow: Wyższa szkoła pedagogiczna.

Bone, P. J. (1914). *The guitar and mandolin: biographies of celebrated players and composers for these instruments*. London: Schott.

Button, S. W. (1983). *The Guitar in England 1800 – 1924.* Ph.D. Thesis. University of Surrey. Available at: https://openresearch.surrey.ac.uk/esploro/outputs/doctoral/The-Guitar-in-England-1800-1924/99515371602346 (Accessed 22/07/2024)

Coldwell, R. (2019). *Digital Guitar Archive: Nakano Collection.* Available at: https://www.digitalguitararchive.com/2019/07/nakano-collection/ (Accessed 24/07/2024)

Coldwell, R. and Komarnicki, K. (2005) *J. N. de Bobrowicz, Selected Works, Volume 1, Variations*. DGA Editions.

Cryer, M. (2010) *Love Me Tender: The Stories Behind the World's Favourite Songs.* ReadHowYouWant.com

Discogs. (2025) *Wenzeslaus Matiegka.* Available at: https://www.discogs.com/artist/2315354-Wenzeslaus-Matiegka?superFilter=Credits&page=2 (Accessed: 19 April 2025)

Dylla, M. (2024) *Wenzel Thomas Matiegka (1773 – 1830) - Sonata op.23.* Available at: https://youtu.be/BB6_RSQ_XNo?si=Nq5Wr8dRRwB4wmHp (Accessed: 21 April 2025)

Hamburger Gitarrentage, (2025) *Hamburger Gitarrenfestival live: Marcin Dylla.* Available at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfTi2G8GDSM&t=1202s&ab_channel=HamburgerGitarrentage%2FGitarrenfestival (Accessed 25th April 2025)
Horetzky, F. (1827) *Op. 15 - Instructive Exercises*. London: Boosey & Co

Horetzky, F. (c.1830) *Op. 21 - Preludes, Cadences and Modulations.* London: Metzler & Son

Ježková, J. (1991) *Paganini, Giuliani, Sor, Kníže, Matějka [CD-ROM].* Czechoslovakia: Panton

Kolberg, O. (1860). 'Bobrowicz (Jan Nepomucen)', in: *Encyklopedia Powszechna.* Warsaw. Vol. 3.

Kolberg, O. (1979) *Dzieła wszystkie Vols 57, Ruś Czerwona, Part 2, entry 1770*. Warsaw: W. Ks. Poznanskie.

Komarnicki, K. (2022) *Form-integrating Elements in the Variation Cycles by Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz.* Available at: https://www.digitalguitararchive.com/2022/03/form-integrating-elements-in-the-variation-cycles-by-jan-nepomucen-bobrowicz/ (Accessed: 2 April 2025)

Kowalski, M. (2021) *Polish Romantic Guitar Works* [CD-ROM]. Frederick Chopin Institute

Mearns, A. (2023) Chaconne - *BWV 1004 - Bach/Mearns, Alan Mearns - Guitar - Link to score in description.* Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xA3ZDdwA8Y&ab_channel=AlanMearns. (Accessed 23 April 2025)

Omni Foundation. (2024) *Mateusz Kowalski - Part 1 - CLASSICAL GUITAR CONCERT - Live from St. Mark's - Omni Foundation.* Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXNDa1GdIm0&ab_channel=OmniFoundation (Accessed 25th April 2025)

Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon (1965). *Kníže, František Max (1784-1840), composer.* Available online at: https://www.biographien.ac.at/oebl/oebl_K/Knize_Frantisek-Max_1784_1840.xml (Accessed 21/07/2021)

Powrozniak, J. (1988). *Gitarren-Lexikon.* Berlin: Neue Music.

Schilling, G. (1840). 'Matiegka, Wenzeslaus', in: *Encyclopädie der gesammten musikalischen Wissenschaften : oder Universal-Lexicon der Tonkunst*. Stuttgart: Köhler. Vol. 4, p.592–593.

Sor, F. (1832). *Method for the Spanish Guitar: A complete reprint of the 1832 English translation with a preface by Brian Jeffery.* London: Tecla Editions, 1995.
Srb, J. (1891). *History of Music in Bohemia and Moravia.* Prague: Museum Království českého.

Tampalini, G. (2019) *Matiegka, Complete Music For Solo* Guitar [CD-ROM]. Bernareggio: Brilliant Classics.

Townsend, B. (2023) *Wenzelaus Thomas Matiegka.* Available at: https://themusicsalon.blogspot.com/2023/10/wenzelaus-thomas-matiegka.html (Accessed: 19 April 2025)

Trochimczyk, M. (no date) *Mazur (Mazurka)*, Polish Music Center. Available at: https://polishmusic.usc.edu/research/dances/mazur/ (Accessed: 20 March 2025).

Wilke, C. (2023) *Chris Wilke - Ukrainian Variations (Bobrowicz).* Available at: https://youtu.be/gKI-0SIyL08?si=oNgIYwFuDiDyM_OO (Accessed: 3 April 2025)

Zanon, F. (2016) *The Romantic Guitar* [CD-ROM]. Tratore

Zuth, J. (2013). *Simon Molitor Und Die Wiener Gitarristik*. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20131029190557/http://www.guitaronline.it/molitor_folder/zuthdiss/matiegka.html (Accessed 16/07/2024)