



# **Sérgio Assad**

# **70th Birthday Concert**

All Music Composed by Sérgio Assad

**Featuring**  
**SFCM Guitar Ensemble**  
**SFCM Pre-College Guitar Orchestra**  
**SFCM Community Guitar Ensemble**  
**Scott Cmiel, David Tanenbaum, *conductors***

Saturday, November 19, 2022, 7:30 PM  
Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall

# Program

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*Kaleidokithara* (2020)

SFCM Pre-College Guitar Orchestra  
SFCM Community Guitar Ensemble  
Scott Cmiel, *conductor*

*Imbricatta* (2015) (dedicated to Marc Teicholz)

Marc Teicholz, *guitar*

*Sun Wukong's Toccata* (2016) (dedicated to Meng Su)

Emilia Diaz Delgado, *guitar*

*From The Walls* (2017)

- I. Hadrian's Wall
- II. Chinese Wall
- III. Middle Eastern Wall

Kyle Stachnik, *cello*  
SFCM Guitar Ensemble  
David Tanenbaum, *conductor*

**- Intermission -**

Peppino Sotto Il Portico (dedicated to Peppino D'Agostino)

Una Serata a North Beach (dedicated to Peppino D'Agostino)

Peppino D'Agostino, *guitar*

Cameras, recording equipment, food and drink are not permitted in Conservatory performance halls.  
Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic equipment before the performance begins.

# Program

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## *Aquarelle (1986)*

I. Divertimento

II. Valseanna

III. Preludio y Toccata

Samuel Liang, *guitar*

## *Wednesdays at Sugar (2011)*

Marc Teicholz, Tatiana Senderowicz,

Gabe Balogh, and John Dearman, *classical guitars*

Peppino D'Agostino, *steel string guitar*

Richard Savino, *baroque guitar*

Jon Mendle, *arch guitar*

Sérgio Assad, *sazouki*

Paul Psarras, *oud*

Timothy Sherren, *electric guitar*

Matt Wherley, *bass guitar*

David Tanenbaum, *conductor*

# Program Notes

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*Kaleidokithara* is an exuberant and defiant response to the isolation imposed on the world by the coronavirus pandemic. While some composers meet communal difficulty with music exploring the pain involved in the the human condition, *Kaleidokithara* is an exhilarating work meant to bring guitarists from all over the world together in joyful defiance of imposed isolation. The name, derived from ancient Greek, refers to the beautiful shapes created by plucked strings, and the music is a rich blend of 12 separate parts for six virtuosic soloists and six additional parts that were written to ensure that anyone who wanted would be able to participate. In a reference to the multicultural intent of bringing together guitarists from the whole world, as well as to the colors seen in a kaleidoscope, each part is indicated by a different color of the rainbow.

- Scott Cmiel

When I wrote *Imbricatta* for the Biasini competition, I started with a theme to be worked in the variation form but instead of following the normal path of introducing a theme followed by a set of variations, I used the concept of the verb Imbricate to approach my set of 10 variations or episodes using a somewhat different strategy. To imbricate means to arrange similar things or (related ideas) in an overlapping manner (like roofing shingles for instance). Instead of beginning with a theme, this piece starts instead with three variations in search of one.

The 10 different variations are presented in a way such that each one of the episodes generates new material that is to be explored in the following one. Although the change of moods in the episodes can be volatile, they are nonetheless unified by shared thematic material... In this way, I hope to show that each variation lives in relation to its neighbors, always under one another's influence.

- Sérgio Assad

# Program Notes

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**Sun Wukong** is a superhero, he masters many special weapons, and is capable of 72 transformations into any person or object. On top of that, he has this charming, mischievous, kind and cool personality. He is every child's hero in China and certainly in other cultures: He is the original of Goku, the main character of the Japanese manga book Dragonball. I still remember when I was a kid, I would practice the guitar hard for many hours so my mom would reward me with the latest issue of the Dragonball manga book.

Over the years of playing the guitar, I have always been amazed by its beauty, its colors, and the infinite possibilities of the instrument—the guitar is capable of playing so many different styles of music from all over the world! In this way, I find the guitar similar to the Monkey King; it can do 72 transformations, too! And I'm so happy and honored that another childhood hero of mine – Sérgio Assad – would write a piece about the Monkey King on the guitar!

- Meng Su

Over an informal lunch in early 2017, Sérgio Assad and I began discussing the tumultuous political events of the recent past, and the increasing drumbeats of tribalism and nationalism echoing across the world. Both of us, feeling rather helpless to do anything to stem the rising tides of fear and hatred, wondered what we as humble musicians could do in the face of such powerful forces. We decided that, as artists, our only positive act must be a creative one, and I asked Sérgio to write a piece for me that would express our shared sentiments. We spoke about how music can be particularly well-suited to represent different cultural influences, and we wanted the work to somehow reflect the migrant/refugee experience... It was Sérgio's brilliant wife Angela who suggested the idea of ***The Walls***, conjuring up images of infamous historical barriers to migration and cultural assimilation. The work that finally emerged... presents musical representations of some of the most recognizable walls in human history.

- William Kanengiser

# Program Notes

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**Peppino sotto il Portico:** Sérgio really likes to speak Italian with me. I believe he chose this title because it sounds good in Italian!

**Una Serata a North Beach:** A few years ago Sérgio and I were having dinner in an Italian restaurant in North Beach. Suddenly he asked me how to properly spell my name and then, on a piece of paper, he matched different notes to each letter of my name! Two weeks later he came up with this composition.

- Peppino D'Agostino

In 1986 I wrote **Aquarelle**, my first solo-guitar piece, using techniques that I learned with Esther Scliar. It became very well-known and it is still played by many guitarists around the world. The work is in three movements, with the outer movements based upon a three-note music cell...blending the technical, academic writing with references of Brazilian traditional music. I still use that basic sort of idea as a blueprint for the music I create today. So, my general process has stayed quite the same, although my use of harmony got more complex.

- Sérgio Assad

We guitar faculty often gather after teaching on Wednesdays at the bar Sugar on Hayes street. The makeup is ever changing, depending on who's in town and who might be visiting, and the evenings are rather haphazard, with one eventual goal – deciding where to go to dinner. Should we go to North Beach for Italian, the Mission for tapas, or stay in the Hayes valley? People gather in groups of three or four, and sometimes all talk together. Finally glasses get emptied, hunger calls, and the group comes together with some urgency to make a final food decision.

**Wednesdays at Sugar** reflects those evenings, so the piece is filled with small sections for like instruments, surrounded by tuttis. Written for many of the regulars at Sugar, it is a celebration of Sérgio's first four years at SFCM, of his new friends and experiences. One hears a variety of plucked strings, and Sérgio joins us in the newest of those instruments, the Sazouki – a hybrid of a bouzouki and a Turkish saz – in a perfect party piece to end a birthday celebration concert.

- David Tanenbaum