

Manus Noble
Guitarist
Playing at Writhlington School on Thursday 4th June 2020



“Remarkably self-assured, Noble dispatched everything with refined technique, kissed by poetry.” The Times

“His fantastic technique, fluid, intuitive fingerwork...ethereal and graceful....many moods and colours, played with immaculate sensitivity.” The Oxford Times

Manus has put together a varied programme, ranging from Renaissance lute music to his own compositions: if you want to hear what a guitar can do, then look forward to being serenaded and surprised.

We begin with **Almain** by **Robert Johnson**, who was an English contemporary of Shakespeare, and wrote a considerable amount of music for Shakespeare's plays. He was also lutenist to King James I for thirty years until he died in 1633. It is easy to imagine yourself in the court of a Jacobean King with this gentle yet complex music.

Prelude No.1 is the first of five preludes written in 1940 by **Heitor Villa-Lobos** and has a very different feel, coming as it does from the southern hemisphere. Villa-Lobos is the most famous and prolific composer to be born in the warm and passionate country of Brazil. He was influenced by both the European classical and Brazilian folk music, which proved to be a winning combination. At home in Europe and South America, Villa-Lobos lived on both continents during his lifetime, but spent several years as the Director of Music Education in São Paulo after devising a plan for music education and in 1942 established a conservatory for choral singing, later co-founding the Brazilian Academy of Music.

Leo Brouwer is a Cuban guitarist, conductor and composer born in 1939. He studied music in the famous Juilliard School in New York and later studied in Berlin. Brouwer has composed for ballets and films and once wrote a piece for two hundred guitars! Brouwer has also transcribed Beatles songs for classical guitar. **Un Dia de Noviembre** is the score for a Cuban film of the same name.

Yuquijiro Yocoh was born in 1925 in Japan. He was studying to be a dentist when he gave it up to teach himself to play the guitar. **Sakura** is his most famous composition. The name means "Cherry Blossoms", and is a well-loved Japanese folk song. Some of these variations imitate sound of Koto, a traditional Japanese instrument.

We then move on to two compositions of **Manus Noble** himself, **Mirage** and **Heal**.

Finally we have three compositions by **Gary Ryan**, Manus' teacher and mentor. Ryan is a guitarist of international acclaim and a well-regarded composer of guitar music. He is a professor at the Royal College of Music in London and is an adjudicator for competitions such as the BBC Young Musician of the Year.

Out of Clonmel comes from a work called Scenes from the Wild West, which are songs about Ireland; Clonmel is where Ryan's grandfather lived. **Birds Flew over the Spire** is from a collection called City Scenes. Finally, **Benga Beat** will challenge all you thought you knew about playing a guitar.

