

Alec Roth – CONCERTO FOR GUITAR AND STRING ORCHESTRA

commissioned jointly by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and the Young Concert Artists Trust (YCAT)
first performed under the auspices of Orchestras Live by Morgan Szymanski (guitar), the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Kenneth Sillito (director), Wiltshire Music Centre, Bradford-on-Avon, 26 September; Christ Church, Cockermouth, 28 September; Assembly Rooms, Ludlow, 1 October; Great Hall, Dartington, 3 October; Stamford Arts Centre, 16 October 2010
London premiere given by the same forces at the Wigmore Hall, 22 May 2011

1. March
2. Serenade
3. Nocturne
4. Fiesta

COMPOSER'S NOTE

The great beauty and enormous popularity of Rodrigo's guitar concerto make it a hard act to follow, so for my own attempt I have turned to an earlier model – the Concerto in D major which Vivaldi composed originally for lute and which is now often heard on the guitar. I love the clarity and directness of Vivaldi's music, and this is something I've tried to emulate. The real inspiration behind my concerto, however, is the wonderful singing quality which Morgan Szymanski brings to his playing. I am deeply indebted to him for his help throughout the composition process; not playing the guitar myself, his advice has been indispensable.

The Concerto lasts about 22 minutes and is in four movements. The first (March) is built on a repeating theme heard on guitar at the outset. The second (Serenade) is lighter in mood, featuring much interplay between soloist and orchestra. The third (Nocturne) makes use of two contrasting ideas: the guitar's gentle lullaby, and the orchestra's darker, more unsettled music. The fourth (Fiesta) is dance-like in character, and based entirely on material from the first three movements.

DURATION

ca. 22 minutes

FORCES REQUIRED

Solo Guitar with String Orchestra

PERFORMANCE MATERIALS

Full Score
Solo Guitar Part
Orchestral Parts

REVIEWS

. . . But the specially commissioned Guitar Concerto by Alec Roth eventually stole the show, for here was a brand new contemporary work which was not only perfectly formed, but was such a delight to hear.
Plymouth Herald 7 October, 2010

. . . Alec Roth used the resources of the guitar and string ensemble very well to create attractive sound colours, such as his use of pizzicato strings against strummed chords on the guitar. There is an effective and beautiful tremolo section later. One could hear the pleasure of the composer in creating these sounds. The *Concerto* had a distinctly individual nature and did not sound like anyone else's composition.

Classical Guitar Magazine September 2011