

NAXOS

SOR

Twelve Studies, Op. 6

Fantaisie, Op. 7 • Six Divertimenti, Op. 8

Goran Krivokapić, Guitar



Fernando
SOR
(1778-1839)

	Douze Etudes, Op. 6	29:57
1	Etude No. 1: Allegro moderato	1:29
2	Etude No. 2: Andante allegro	0:53
3	Etude No. 3	1:19
4	Etude No. 4: Allegretto	2:12
5	Etude No. 5: Andante	3:08
6	Etude No. 6: Allegro	2:50
7	Etude No. 7: Allegro	2:31
8	Etude No. 8: Andantino	1:40
9	Etude No. 9: Andante Allegro	2:45
10	Etude No. 10: Moderato	4:03
11	Etude No. 11: Allegro moderato	3:25
12	Etude No. 12: Andante	3:41
	Fantaisie, Op. 7	16:39
13	Largo	6:33
14	Theme and Variations	10:06
	Six Divertimenti, Op. 8	10:59
15	No. 1: Minuetto	1:35
16	No. 2: Walze	0:54
17	No. 3: Andantino	2:22
18	No. 4: Allegretto scherzoso	2:26
19	No. 5: Marcia	2:02
20	No. 6: Walze	1:40
21	Introduction et Variations sur une Thème de Mozart, Op. 9	8:27

Fernando Sor (1778-1839)

Guitar Music, Opp. 6-9

All but one of the works on the present recording probably date from Fernando Sor's London period from about 1815 to 1822/23, and Op. 6 and Op. 8 first appeared in English editions. The Spanish-born guitarist and composer had a profound impact on the English guitar scene, and the story of how he came to England is worth repeating. After receiving excellent musical training as a young man, he chose the relative security of a military career; the two were not exclusive. As a young officer he managed to mingle with the nobility in the Spanish capital and, at the same time, to receive important exposure as a composer, guitarist, and singer. After Napoleon overthrew the Spanish Borbón monarchy in 1808, precipitating the rebellion in Madrid immortalised by the painter Goya, a nationalist resistance movement spread throughout the countryside. The British and Portuguese supported the Spanish insurgents, and the bloody Peninsular Wars began. Many young Spaniards, usually from the educated classes, had rejoiced that the backward and incompetent Spanish monarchs would be replaced by the French, with their Enlightenment ideals and the promise of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. At first Sor had resisted the French, perhaps out of a sense of duty, but in time he also became "afancesado" and joined the party of the new King, Napoleon's brother Joseph. By 1813 the wars had gone badly for the French. Napoleon misjudged the seriousness of the situation in the Spanish peninsula, and his armies there were mauled by British and Portuguese troops and Spanish guerrillas (the word was coined during this conflict). The French Emperor also managed to lose his greatest army in his unsuccessful invasion of Russia in 1812, inspiring all of his enemies to unite in a grand coalition against him. In Spain, the defeat of the French in 1813 condemned the *afancesados* to exile, imprisonment, or worse. Sor abandoned his military career and fled to Paris, where he achieved instant fame as a musician and composer. But the Bonapartist cause was collapsing everywhere, and in 1814 the Emperor abdicated the French throne.

As the Bourbons reclaimed Paris, Sor left for London.

Regency London gave the musician Sor a warm reception. The guitar, which had achieved great popularity on the continent in the previous decades, had finally arrived in Britain, elbowing out the previously popular English "guitar", a sort of wire-strung cittern. This new "Spanish" guitar was championed by expatriate Italian and Spanish musicians and by soldiers returning from Spain. Not only was it a surprisingly versatile solo instrument, but the guitar proved to be the ideal instrument to accompany the human voice, and the British were extraordinarily fond of songs of all kinds — art songs, sentimental Irish and Scottish ballads, French ariettes and Italian arias. Sor was a competent singer and prolific composer of songs as well as solos, and his reputation had preceded him to London; he had published some guitar pieces in Paris while he was still living in Spain, and still more after his move to Paris, and these had apparently received widespread attention among British *aficionados* of the instrument. His concerts were warmly received by the London critics, and many more compositions would appear in print in the early years of his exile, so many and so quickly that it is likely that at least some of them had been composed at some earlier point in his life. One critic commented that "a new set of ariettes from [Sor's] pen causes almost as much sensation as ... a new novel by the author of Waverley [Sir Walter Scott]."¹

Sor's many brilliantly-crafted sets of studies (*Opp. 6, 29, 31, 35, 44, and 60*) contain some of his best-known and most beloved works for guitar. The first set of *Twelve Studies, Op. 6*, and a second set of twelve, *Op. 29*, were conceived as a group and are true concert studies, works with didactic value but musically worthy of public performance on the concert stage. The *Op. 6* studies were probably first published in England in c. 1815-17, but a French edition soon followed, and they have remained continuously in print since that time. The virtuoso Andrés Segovia later championed the music of Sor and edited a collection of twenty of his studies that

became a standard of twentieth-century pedagogy. Segovia's source was probably an 1851 guitar method by Sor's pupil Napoléon Coste, because both contain many of the same textual variants from the original editions. No fewer than eight of Segovia's twenty studies were drawn from *Op. 6*:

- Etude in D, Op. 6, No. 1 (Segovia Estudio No. 4)*
- Etude in A, Op. 6, No. 2 (Segovia Estudio No. 3)*
- Etude in E, Op. 6, No. 3 (Segovia Estudio No. 11)*
- Etude in A, Op. 6, No. 6 (Segovia Estudio No. 12)*
- Etude in C, Op. 6, No. 8 (Segovia Estudio No. 1)*
- Etude in d, Op. 6, No. 9 (Segovia Estudio No. 13)*
- Etude in e, Op. 6, No. 11 (Segovia Estudio No. 17)*
- Etude in A, Op. 6, No. 12 (Segovia Estudio No. 14)*

Ignace-Joseph Pleyel (1757-1831) was the dedicatee and publisher of *Fantaisie, Op. 7*, which first appeared in Paris in 1814. Pleyel was an Austrian-born composer, piano manufacturer, a pupil and sometime rival of Haydn, and one of the most important music publishers of the age. This *Fantaisie* was also unique in the fact that the music was published on two staves, like piano music. Traditionally guitar music is written on a single treble staff, like vocal, flute, or violin music; this necessitates notating the music an octave higher than the guitar actually sounds and often results in a cluttered jumble of notes, expression and dynamic indications, and fingerings. The two-staff solution solves or mitigates virtually all of these problems, and the guitar's range falls nicely on the staves. The double staves were particularly useful in presenting Sor's music, which is harmonically rich and often contains moving inner voices (notably the first movement, a *Largo non tanto* in C minor — a key beloved by pianists but not guitarists), but the idea never caught on, probably because it also meant more pages (and page-turns), more paper, and thus higher costs for the publisher. In a second edition in 1816, also from Pleyel, the music was re-engraved on the traditional single staff.

In 1816, Sor performed a *Fantaisie concertante* for guitar and strings in London. The music is now lost, a

fact bemoaned by guitar enthusiasts for whom a Sor concerto would be a Holy Grail of the repertory. In the style of the day, however, this work was almost certainly no concerto but rather a solo work with a simple accompaniment for strings. It was also common practice to take a pre-existent solo work and make it the basis for such a performance. Sor's *Op. 7* was, chronologically, the most recent *Fantaisie* he had published before this 1816 performance, and so it may well have been the basis for the lost *concertante*.

Sor was a fashionable music teacher during his years in London. His charming set of miniatures, *Six Divertimenti, Op. 8*, published in London in about 1818, was dedicated to "Miss Smith", almost certainly one of his pupils.

It has often been noted that Sor-the-composer had an affinity with Mozart, and there was a rage for Mozart in London in the years Sor was resident there. Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte* had been written in German in 1791. Decades later, operas in the German language were still not widely accepted, even in the German states, and many of Europe's opera companies continued to be dominated by Italians. Thus *Die Zauberflöte* was better known as *Il flauto magico*, including at its London début in 1819. The theme "*Das klinget so herrlich*" was variously translated into Italian as "*O dolce concerto*", "*O dolce armonia*", or "*O cara armonia*". The latter title, which Sor biographer Brian Jeffrey also discovered on a vocal score published in London in about 1813², was the one by which Sor knew the piece.

Lively and virtuosic, Sor's *Introduction et Variations sur une Thème de Mozart, Op. 9*, first published in London in 1821, were dedicated to the composer's brother, Carlos, also a guitarist.

Richard M. Long

¹ Ackermann's *Repository of Arts* (1st March, 1820), quoted in Brian Jeffrey, *Fernando Sor, Composer and Guitarist* (London: Tecla Editions, 2nd edition, 1994), 39.

² Jeffrey, op.cit. 63.

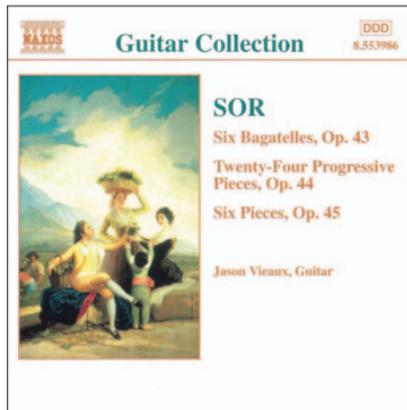
Goran Krivokapić



The Montenegrin guitarist Goran Krivokapić studied guitar with Mićo Poznanović, Srdjan Tošić, Hubert Käppel, Roberto Aussel and Carlo Marchione. He won eighteen prestigious international guitar competitions, and as a soloist has performed with the Montenegro Symphony Orchestra, New Russia Symphony Orchestra, Russian Philharmonic, Turin Philharmonic, Belgrade Philharmonic, Győr Philharmonic, Chilean Symphony Orchestra, Primavera Symphony Orchestra, Slovak Chamber Orchestra of Bohdan Warchal, St George Strings and the Montenegro Chamber Orchestra. He has given solo recitals and master-classes in important concert halls all over Europe and the United States as well as in Canada, Mexico, Chile, Russia, South Africa and Turkey. He has received several awards, including The Golden Guitar at the Tenth International Guitar Convention in Alessandria (Italy) 2005, for the best up-and-coming guitarist. A year later he received another Golden Guitar for the best CD of the year (Naxos 8.557809). Since 2006 he has been honorary director of the International Nikšić Guitar Festival in Montenegro.

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The Spanish-born guitarist and composer Fernando Sor was one of the great figures in the history of the instrument. His many brilliantly-crafted sets of studies contain some of the most popular works for guitar. The justly celebrated *Twelve Studies, Op. 6*, first published in England where the exiled Sor was both a fashionable teacher and a highly acclaimed performer, are notable for their fresh and distinctive ideas and skilful and varied harmony. Sor's *Introduction et Variations sur une Thème de Mozart*, is a lively and virtuosic treatment of *Das klinget so herrlich* from *Die Zauberflöte*.

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(1778-1839)

Guitar Music

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Booklet notes: Richard M. Long • Guitar by A. Marvi, Granada, Spain

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