The ‘Megaron’ Concerto For Guitar and String Orchestra by Nikita Koshkin: An Exploration of Performance Issues, a Performing Edition and a CD Recording

Elena Papandreou
Technological University Dublin

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The ‘Megaron’ Concerto
For Guitar and String Orchestra
by Nikita Koshkin:
An Exploration of Performance Issues,
a Performing Edition and a CD Recording

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Submitted for the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy,
Dublin Institute of Technology
Conservatory of Music and Drama

Supervisor: Dr. Philip Graydon
Advisory Supervisor: Dr. John Feeley

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Vol. I/II
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation puts the spotlight on the music of Nikita Koshkin (b. 1956)—Russia’s most important composer for guitar and one of the world’s leading composers for the instrument—and, in particular, his ‘Megaron’ Concerto for guitar and string orchestra, composed in 2005 and premiered in 2006 by this author. Performance issues are discussed in detail, in an innately practical manner, so that the guitarist who wishes to perform this work will have enough information to assist him. Moreover, a guitar instructor will find valuable guidance, not only for teaching this particular piece and other guitar music by Koshkin, but with regard to the training of students in guitar performance in general. It also explores the manner in which guitar technique serves interpretation. In the latter respect, this dissertation covers pioneering ground in terms of pedagogical studies of guitar repertoire.

The ‘Megaron’ Concerto is scrutinised according to the following features, which are indicating specific details of the Concerto: Dynamics; Articulation and Phrasing; Note Duration; Apoyando and Tirando; Fingering; Vibrato; Special percussive effects; Additional comments about slurring, and stopping unnecessary and dissonant resonance. These aspects are generalised throughout the so-called ‘General Remarks’, which can be arguably applied to almost any other guitar piece.

En route, this dissertation presents an overview of the history of the guitar in Russia, a detailed biography of Koshkin and a discussion of the evolution of the guitar concerto as a genre. It also includes a performance edition of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, featuring both the guitar part and the orchestral score, with detailed fingering for the soloist and changes from Koshkin’s initial score of 2005, carried out by this author with the composer’s approval. A CD recording of the Concerto by the prestigious Swedish company BIS is also included, along with a detailed plan of the way by which it was recorded.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was written with the valuable assistance of several people. First and foremost, I am grateful to Dr. John Feeley, who encouraged me to start this dissertation and convinced me that it would be possible for me to complete it, despite my parallel playing and teaching duties; being my supervisor for the years 2009-2012 and the advisory supervisor from the fall of 2012 until the end of my work, he was the mentor who helped me plan and start work in earnest.

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I would like to thank the composer and my good friend Nikita Koshkin, who has trusted me with his music by writing and dedicating several works to me; he has always been very supportive with regard to my playing career. It would have been impossible to write this dissertation without his help and the selfless giving of his time in offering interviews and information about his life, his work, the writing of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto and, not to mention, the benefit of his knowledge on the history of the guitar in Russia.

I would also like to thank Graham Wade who generously helped me find answers to numerous questions and for allowing me access to his impressive archive of magazines, recordings and books. Several other people helped me by clarifying various matters and I would also like to thank them forthwith: the guitarists Oscar Ghiglia, Roland Dyens, Erik Stenstadvold, Frédéric Zigante, Oleg Timofeyev, Adam del Monte, Vladimir Mikulka, Stanley Yates, Thomas Heck, Lena Kokkaliari, the percussionist Dimitris Desyllas, the violinist Dimitris Chandrakis, the violinist Chara Seira, the flautist Marilena Dori, the pianist Igor Petrin, the singer Angeliki Kathariou, the pianist and somatic educator Christos Noulis and the guitar strings manufacturer, John D’Addario. I would also like to thank the musical applications developer and Finale specialist Dimitrios Doulias for his valuable help in my learning how to use the Finale music program; and my dear old
student Pavlos Kanellakis who finished his own dissertation in DIT one year before his teacher (myself!) and who gave me much by way of practical advice.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, the great guitarist Oscar Ghiglia, for his precious influence towards my musical formation, as well as my parents and sister, for their support throughout the years that I worked on this dissertation.
INTRODUCTION

The modern six-stringed guitar was established in concert halls worldwide at the beginning of the twentieth century, mainly thanks to the great Spanish guitar virtuoso, Andrés Segovia (1893–1987), who encouraged numerous composers to write for his beloved instrument. Such figures included Manuel Maria Ponce (1882–1948), Joaquín Turina (1882–1949), Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959), Federico Moreno Torroba (1891–1982), Mario Castelnuovo Tedesco (1895–1968), Alexandre Tansman (1897–1986) and Joaquín Rodrigo (1901–1999). Continuing Segovia’s example, the famed British guitarist Julian Bream (b. 1933) asked composers such as William Walton (1902–1983), Lennox Berkeley (1903–1989) and Benjamin Britten (1913–1976) to contribute their own works to the guitar repertoire. Other significant composers who wrote for the instrument were Manuel de Falla (1876–1946), Hans Werner Henze (1926–2012) and Tōru Takemitsu (1930–1996).

However, the guitar as an instrument has some particularities that can serve to limit a composer who is not an executant (it is polyphonic and has six strings tuned in fourths, with only one major third) this, perhaps, being the main reason why only a few major twentieth century composers wrote for it. It was only natural that its principal exponents in terms of compositions for the instrument were themselves players, as they were thus equipped to explore the broad possibilities of the instrument and to expand its limitations. Since the Paraguayan composer-guitarist, Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885–1944), who concertized in various countries and wrote over three hundred works for guitar, there have been a number of remarkable composer-guitarists who have contributed numerous works and enriched the instrument’s repertoire, such as the Cuban composer, Leo Brouwer (b. 1939), the Brazilian composer, Sérgio Assad (b. 1952), the French composer, Roland Dyens (b. 1955), the Serbian-born composer, Dušan Bogdanović (b.1955) and the Russian composer, Nikita Koshkin (b. 1956).

What the abovementioned composer-guitarists have in common is that, while they are accomplished guitarists (thereby sufficiently schooled so as to master the idiomatic technique of the instrument), they also undertook advanced studies in compositional techniques and styles. Composers often avoid composing for guitar, since they find the instrument complicated and difficult to explore in depth. When they decide to do so, they
usually seek the help of a guitarist. However, guitarist-composers who demonstrate an equally high level as players and composers, possess the ideal combination of qualities. In a 1993 interview, Koshkin commented on the advantage of being a guitarist when composing for the instrument:

What I think helps me, is that I also perform on the guitar. I think that those who do not, are often incapable of treating various lines with equal importance and the result is that the guitar sounds like a not very nice instrument. Tedesco, Rodrigo, Ponce, all produced good guitar sounds without being players, but they are fairly rare examples.¹

Nikita Koshkin is the most significant Russian composer composing for the instrument today, having been born in a country that produced such major twentieth-century musical figures as Sergey Rachmaninoff (1873–1943), Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), Sergey Prokofiev (1891–1953) and Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975). Koshkin, who was deeply influenced by his predecessors, described the elements that he appreciates in their music:

I admire Tchaikovsky for his fantastic melodies, which are built upon excellent orchestration. There is a great mastery here, which is hidden within the score, great mastery of development, of the ability to create real drama. Prokofiev has a very fresh harmonic language. Shostakovich has an excellent feeling of shape. Stravinsky’s fine rhythms are marvellous; his approach to music was unusual in his time and is still fresh. He could have achieved a more traditional melodic development, but chose not to do so. I love his music, it is absolutely great. And Mussorgsky too. I also very much appreciate the French impressionists, Ravel, Debussy for their colourful scores; beautiful aesthetic music. They certainly influenced me. Charles Ives, I was shocked by, but enjoyed, his original ideas, so different from what I was used to.²

Russia has a great tradition in composition and a high level of education; Koshkin benefited a great deal from the strong educational foundation that his country offered him, allowing him to cultivate his remarkable talent and become one of the world’s leading composers for the guitar. For Koshkin, playing and composing for the guitar hold equal importance; both were essential to him, and he started composing as soon as he started to learn the guitar. Since his early ‘Spanish Dance’ in 1970 and his first published works (‘Three Pieces’, written in 1973), he has composed around eighty compositions for guitar, including solo pieces, chamber music, works for guitar and orchestra, as well as pieces for guitar orchestra. It was the Czech guitarist, Vladimir Mikulka, who introduced Koshkin’s guitar music to a wider audience when the former played Koshkin’s piece ‘The Fall of Birds (Andante quasi Passacaglia e Toccata)’ in London’s Wigmore Hall in 1978 and ‘The Prince’s Toys’ in Paris in 1980.³ After the Russian borders opened in 1989, the

² Ibid.
³ Please see more about these pieces in the biography on Koshkin, included in Chapter two.
composer started touring, bringing his music in four of the five continents, (save for Australia). His best known piece, the ‘Usher Waltz’, was played and recorded by several players, including the renowned Australian guitarist, John Williams (b. 1941).

The first contact that this author had with Koshkin’s music was when she heard the ‘Usher Waltz’ in 1995. She was immediately captivated by the piece and worked on it right away. Meeting the composer was only a matter of time and the opportunity arose when they were both invited in a guitar festival in Voronezh (Russia) in 1996, where the author included the ‘Usher Waltz’ in her programme. She immediately became friends with Koshkin (who expressed his enthusiasm about the author’s interpretation of his piece); he subsequently played to her a number of his pieces in private, including ‘The Prince’s Toys’, an experience that proved the freshness and originality of his works for the author. The author recorded the ‘Usher Waltz’ in a CD recording that was offered to her by NAXOS as a prize in the 1995 Guitar Foundation of America (GFA) competition.

The author and the composer soon expressed their mutual wish to collaborate on new pieces. First of these was the Sonata (1997), which was initially commissioned by Vladimir Mikulka. The latter found the piece to be too long, so he agreed that the composer gave it to another player and Koshkin gave it (and eventually dedicated it) to this author, who premiered it in 1998. The latter piece was then recorded for an-all Koshkin CD released in 2003 by BIS. On 12 December 1997, Koshkin organised a solo concert for the author in the Tschaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, an occasion that witnessed both Koshkin and this author playing the composer’s duo piece Cambridge Suite (1994), which they repeated during a concert of the latter in Athens on 19 December 1997. In a 1999 concert given by the author, she played once again with Koshkin: on this occasion, it was the world première of his duo piece Prelude by Bach (1999)—a clever paraphrase of the Prelude from Bach’s third Violin Partita BWV 1006.

4 Composed in 1984 (Ed. Margaux / Ed. Orphée) the ‘Usher Waltz’ was inspired by ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’ by Edgar Allan Poe, which Koshkin read when he was twelve. This piece was recorded by the present author in 2003 (BIS CD-1236, duration 6’43”); for Williams’s recording, see John Williams, The Seville Concert, from the Royal Alcázar Palace, John Williams guitar, Sony Classical SK53359, 1994.
5 ‘Guitar in Russia’ International Festival, 29 April 1996.
6 Laureate Series: Guitar: Theodorakis, Mamangakis, Boudounis, Stravinsky, Dyens, Koshkin, Elena Papandreou, guitar, NAXOS 8.554001.
In the same concert the author gave the American première of the Sonata.\(^{10}\) In 1997, the author commissioned Koshkin to write a piece for her debut in Weill Recital Hall at the New York Carnegie Hall on 23 March 1998. The composer came to New York for the world première of the piece, which he named ‘Kyparissos’,\(^{11}\) inspired by a Greek myth about the close friend of Apollo bearing the same name. The author recorded this piece in the abovementioned BIS CD of 2003. In 2000 Koshkin wrote a one-minute piece, that he playfully called ‘Polka Papandreou’;\(^{12}\) this was also included in the BIS 2003 CD. In 2006 he wrote a version for guitar and string orchestra.\(^{13}\) As the collaboration between the composer and the author was very successful and there was mutual artistic appreciation, the idea of a guitar concerto started to mature. Details about the ‘birth’ of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, as well as the places and dates that it was performed, are included in the introduction of Chapter four.

Despite Koshkin’s obvious talents as a composer, there is very little research on his music (scholarly, or otherwise), save one dissertation by Gregory Cain Budds\(^{14}\) and a number of interviews in guitar magazines. Since her first acquaintance with the man and his music, this author has noticed that there was an obvious necessity for more in depth exploration of his works, in order to help disseminate his music to a wider audience. The guitar repertoire is still not as rich as that for piano or violin, so the challenges inherent in promoting a composer who specializes in guitar works (even one as accomplished as Koshkin) are great. This necessity seemed stronger than ever while preparing for the première and the recording of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto; guided by the author’s editorial intervention and active championing by way of repeat performances, the latter has proven to be one of Koshkin’s most significant and representative works, and thus a piece worthy of in-depth, analytical treatment.

For the player, choosing to focus one's critical faculties in terms of thought and scholarly endeavour on a large-scale concert work for guitar (such as a concerto) is a significant

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\(^{10}\) ‘Guitar Foundation of America’ Convention, Charleston, South Carolina, USA, 27 October 1999.

\(^{11}\) *Kyparissos* is dedicated to this author; Koshkin, Nikita: *Kyparissos* (Athens: Papagrigorou-Nakas, 1999).


\(^{13}\) This version was played as an encore after the world première of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto; Koshkin, Nikita: *Polka Papandreou for Guitar and String Orchestra* (Athens: Papagrigorou-Nakas, 2012).

\(^{14}\) Among other works by Koshkin, Budds discusses the above-mentioned Sonata, dedicated to this author; Budds, Gregory Cain: *Nikita Koshkin: Insights into Compositional Process and Style*, unpublished PhD diss. (Arizona State University, 2005).
task, given that the composer's horizons are much broader in this sphere than in a work for solo guitar. Moreover, Koshkin’s writing (even in his solo pieces) is orchestral in nature; as he remarked in an interview in 1993:

I particularly enjoy the symphony orchestra, which can produce virtually anything. Nevertheless, the guitar is a rich instrument, with so many colours—a really diverse palette. Some of my own pieces, such as ‘The Prince’s Toys’, ‘Piece with Clocks’, ‘Usher Waltz’, all have orchestral flavour in their sound, but transcription would be impossible. They are for guitar only, for specific use of guitar colours.¹⁵

Being the first concerto that he composed for guitar and (string) orchestra,¹⁶ it was a turning point in Koshkin’s composing career. It was a great challenge for him and as he claims that, upon its completion, he felt that his ‘horizons and composition abilities became wider’.¹⁷ Moreover, it is one of the most integrated concertos for guitar, being also the longest (to the knowledge of this author)—it lasts thirty-eight minutes, while most guitar concertos last half this duration. It consists of four movements, a rare practice for concertos, making the ‘Megaron’ rather atypical.

Another observation that this author has made during her thirty years of experience as a guitar instructor is that, while there are several books written about guitar technique, there is very little literature on the means by which technique serves interpretation. With these factors in mind, the present study therefore makes an attempt to redress the balance, combining detailed exploration of Koshkin’s work through the ‘Megaron’ Concerto and an attendant ‘performance analysis’ of the latter, in a manner that explains the deep connection between technique and interpretation.

The ‘Megaron’ Concerto is a very demanding work and it incorporates many common guitar techniques, as well as some new ones, introduced by Koshkin. As such, this dissertation presents a detailed exploration of the work’s technical and interpretive issues. It is further envisaged that the current study will stand as an aid to the guitarist who wishes to study this work (and, indeed, cognate large-scale, modern works for the guitar), while providing the guitar instructor with advice concerning technical methods and ideas.

¹⁶ It was followed by the ‘Bergen Concerto’ for guitar and orchestra (2007), the ‘Concerto Grosso’ for guitar, clarinet quartet, drums, percussion and string orchestra (2007), the ‘Concertino’ for five guitars and string orchestra (2009), and the ‘Concerto’ for four guitars and orchestra (2010). For details, please see the ‘List of Works by Nikita Koshkin’ in Appendix A.
¹⁷ Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 12 April 2013.
In its presentation of such a template, this dissertation thus presents an attempt toward an integrated mode of critical thinking vis-a-vis the guitarist’s approach, by dissecting Koshkin’s concerto: note by note, phrase by phrase—always probing why should a player should play a particular passage one way and not another.

A second, but no less crucial, purpose of this dissertation is to create a performing edition with fingering and a commentary regarding the germane interpretational and technical issues. This study thus documents the analytical process through which interpretive decisions were made. The latter decisions, in turn, inform the fingering (which constitute a significant element in the edition) as well as other musical details, such as articulation. The original score provided by the composer has few indications concerning fingering and dynamics, with no instructions about articulation (as in most guitar scores) and, in general, very few details about its interpretation. While considerations regarding instrumental ensemble are discussed in the score, their treatment is of a generalised nature. Moreover, there are some special effects that require clarification about the manner in which they should be executed. The CD recording, which is included as part of this dissertation, offers the unique interpretive insight of the work’s dedicatée and makes the written comments that appear below even clearer, since all the performance issues discussed forthwith are demonstrated on the recording.\(^\text{18}\)

Finally, while there have been dissertations written on guitarist-composers such as Brouwer and Dyens (as well that by Budds on Koshkin), they present a musicological analysis of their works, in the main. Therefore, this dissertation has some rather unique attributes, as it presents an in-depth, practical guide to an important work of a guitarist-composer, written by a guitarist who is herself closely acquainted with the latter.

As a friend of the composer, the author had the opportunity to contact him as much as was needed in order to gather all the necessary information. Detailed interviews with the composer were conducted as part of this preparatory work, in a bid to accurately place the ‘Megaron’ Concerto in the context of his overall output. Additionally, letters and e-mails between the composer and the author, spanning the years of their acquaintance (1996–2014), presented substantial evidential material to support and document the factual

\(^{18}\) Additional works included on the CD recording are the abovementioned ‘Polka Papandreou’ (version for guitar and strings), the ‘Guitar Quintet’ for guitar and string quartet (2004) and the piece ‘L’Istesso Tempo’ for cello and guitar (2010), commissioned by, and dedicated to, the author.
content of this study. Moreover, the fact that they have also played together gave the author an in-depth understanding of his choices about how his music should be performed.

In Chapter one, the focus is on the guitar in Russia, aiming to explore the differences in construction, tuning and repertoire, between the seven-stringed, so called Russian Guitar (a folk instrument) and the evolution and eventual establishment of the Western six-stringed classical guitar; it also sheds light on the reasons as to why the latter only gained a foothold in Russian musical life after the middle of the twentieth century. This chapter introduces the reader to the musical environment from which Koshkin emerged.

Thereafter, a detailed biography of the composer follows (Chapter two). The purpose of this chapter is to complete and clarify previous biographies, such as the one in the above-mentioned dissertation by Gregory Cain Budds, as well as more minor examples found in guitar magazines or on websites, in order to present the most complete biography of the composer to date. Koshkin discussed several aspects of his life and music with the author, thereby serving to shed new light on his origins, musical education, influences and, not to mention, compositional modus operandi.

Chapter three focuses on the guitar concerto as a genre, presenting a short history of guitar concertos before Koshkin (mainly, works written in the twentieth century) and the contribution of other guitarist-composers to this form. It closes with an exploration of whether such works exerted an influence (conscious, or otherwise) on the ‘Megaron’ in either form or substance.

The dissertation hinges on Chapter four, which examines the ‘Megaron’ Concerto in detail. As such, this chapter discusses the musical kernel from which it grew, the influence by ancient Greek music and Russian music, and the challenges such a large-scale work presented for the composer. It includes detailed coverage of Koshkin’s compositional method, his choices with regard to harmony, tonality and orchestration and his justification for the length of the work and the number of movements. Each of the four movements is described in some detail in the ‘Outline of Individual Sections’.
A most significant part of this dissertation is the ‘Technical and Interpretive Aspects’ section of Chapter four, where all the abovementioned ideas about technique, and its use for an ideal form of interpretation related to this work, are explained in full. In sequence, these aspects are: Dynamics (including a section concerning amplification), Articulation and Phrasing, Note Duration, Apoyando and Tirando, Fingering, Vibrato, Special percussive effects, Additional Comments about Slurring and Stopping Unnecessary and Dissonant Resonance. An important, recurrent element here are the so-called ‘General Remarks’, which appear in several parts of this chapter and constitute issues arising from the concerto that can be generalised and applied to other (particularly large-scale) works for guitar. A guitarist or a guitar instructor may find these of considerable help, given the fact that such advice is rarely discussed in books on guitar-playing. The first movement is treated in much more detail than the following three, since it is the most important movement (as it is traditionally in concertos) and it demonstrates several different techniques and styles.

At the end of Chapter four, there is a section concerning the recording of the ‘Megaron’ concerto, describing in detail the method used; the latter can arguably be followed as a roadmap for future recordings of works of a similar nature.

Chapter five includes a detailed list of the changes and additions made to the initial 2005 score by this author, mainly in the areas of dynamics and tempo markings. These changes were executed in order to complete the score, or to adjust the dynamics to a more sensible level, as explained in the ‘Dynamics’ section of Chapter four. Having a more detailed and accurate score and parts, results in considerable savings by way of time during rehearsals with orchestras, when time is limited and valuable.

Finally, the overall conclusion of this dissertation appears, describing the issues proved and the results achieved. Appendix A presents an up-to-date list of works by Koshkin, Appendix B is the performing edition of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto (guitar part and orchestral part) and Appendix C is the BIS CD (2012) that includes the recording of the Concerto. A detailed bibliography is duly included at the end of this dissertation, including books, dissertations, periodicals, music scores, a webography, a discography, in addition to pertinent interviews, e-mails and letters.
EDITORIAL PRACTICE

For the right hand thumb, index, middle and ring fingers, the letters \( p, i, m, a \) will be used respectively and for the left index, middle, ring and little fingers, the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 (being the common numeric symbols for guitarists in terms of left-hand finger designation). Additionally, the letter \( c \) (abbreviation of the Spanish word *chico*, meaning ‘little’) was used for the little right-hand finger, which is normally not used by classical guitarists, but only by *flamenco* players.

Pitches are presented as they are written and not as they sound:

Considering that the guitar (as well as the double bass) sounds one octave lower than written, while instruments like the violin sound as written, this choice was considered more practical.

*Apoyando* and *tirando* in English translate as ‘rest-stroke’ and ‘free-stroke’ respectively, but for brevity’s sake, the Spanish terms commonly used by guitarists will be used.

Koshkin has mostly named his works with English titles, although when they were published, some works had titles translated in Italian, French, German etc, often due to the language of the publisher or the editor. When the composer lists his works, he does it with English titles, with few exceptions. Therefore, all titles in the list of his works supplied in the Appendix A, are in English, except the ones that were originally named otherwise by the composer.

Koshkin uses the English language with ease; however the author respected his wish that any possible mistakes (there were not many) in his written or spoken speech are corrected rather than writing *’sic’* or adding corrections in square brackets.

In order to simplify matters, the author will refer to the player as ‘he’.
CHAPTER ONE

THE GUITAR IN RUSSIA

This chapter begins by tracing the origins of the Russian seven-string guitar (which is mostly a folk instrument) and subsequently discusses the appearance and establishment of the classical (six-stringed) guitar. It refers to the most important representatives of either instrument, the entrance of both guitar kinds into the Russian educational system, as well as the strong conflict between the followers of the two guitar types. Finally, it explores the environment in which Nikita Koshkin came of age and began to compose.

Since their instrument became increasingly fashionable during the nineteenth century, European guitarists travelled around the continent, interacted by exchanging music and influenced each other with their playing methods. While Russian guitar music was easily accessible during the nineteenth century, the contact between Russian and Western European guitar literature and pedagogy was mostly interrupted after the October Revolution. Since then, the manner through which classical guitar repertoire and pedagogy evolved in Russia was not known in the West, until relatively recently. However, even today there are very few reliable sources in languages other than Russian.¹

The guitar is quite an established instrument in Russia. From the eighteenth century, many instruments crossed the Russian border, brought by Europeans who were either chased away by the turmoil caused by the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars, or searching for a better life and better income in the prosperous Russian Empire. The five-string Baroque guitar was followed by the six-string classical guitar as the eighteenth century progressed. The route it took was via Italy, brought in by immigrant musicians. By the end of the eighteenth century, the six-string guitar became popular and even fashionable. But there was another type that became the actual national Russian instrument in both a musical and a spiritual sense: the seven-stringed instrument.

The Russian seven-string guitar, which featured an open G-major tuning (d, g, b, d', g', b', d''), was introduced to Russia from Poland in the second half of the eighteenth century and, as such, was first known as the Polish guitar. Other instruments with alternative tunings were also prevalent—the so-called English tuning, German, Polish, Spanish and so on—but the G-major type rose to prominence. The first published guitar method for seven-string instruments appeared in 1798 and was written by Ignaz von Held (1766–1816) under the title: ‘Méthode facile pour apprendre à pincer la guitare à sept cordes sans maître’ (An easy method for learning to play the seven-string guitar without a teacher). In 1801, the method was published in a German-Russian edition, this time adapted for a six-string guitar. Though Held was of Czech origin, he nonetheless settled in Russia. Devoting his life’s work to six and seven-string guitar music, he published his own compositions as well as arrangements of Russian songs. He began his career in Moscow, but later moved to St Petersburg.

Held may have been the first practitioner, but the main figure in Russian seven-string guitar music was another musician, Andrei Sychra (1773–1850); commonly referred to as the ‘Patriarch’ of the seven-string guitar, he was incorrectly mentioned by some sources as the one

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2 The lute was also established, especially in the Western regions. There were also distinguished Russian lutenists, such as Timofiy Belogradsky (ca.1710–ca.1782), who had studied the lute in Dresden. Some lutes were adapted to become folk instruments, such as the Kobza and the Bandoura in Ukraine.

who invented it. Surprisingly, there is much by way of similarities in the biographies of both, Held and Sychra. Sychra was also of Czech origin and played both six and seven-string guitars. Like Held, he was also a teacher and composer rather than a renowned performer. Sychra worked in a close cooperation with publishers in a similar manner to Held. Finally, they both followed the same path, starting in Moscow and continuing in St Petersburg.

Seven years Held’s junior, Sychra was a well-educated musician for his time. Before taking the guitar, he was a harp virtuoso and his works for this instrument are still in use by Russian harp teachers. It is not known why Sychra switched to the guitar; other sources say that he predicted a more prosperous future for that instrument and others that he simply fell in love with it. He started with the classical six-string version and, later, he added the seven-string guitar to his arsenal before concentrating solely on the instrument. The seven-string guitar became so popular in Russia that it eventually acquired the name ‘the Russian guitar’. Ubiquitous nationally, it was mainly used for accompaniment and, despite its great popularity, there were few seven-string guitarists competent enough to revolutionise its repertoire. Although Sychra wrote a method for the instrument (as well as over one thousand original works), made numerous arrangements of folk and popular songs for the instrument and taught widely, he very rarely appeared in concert. Among his most prominent students were Vladimir Morkov (1801–1864), Nikolaj Aleksandrov (1818–1884) and Vasily Sarenko (1814–1881). His most significant pupil was Semion Aksyonov (1784?-1853) who, together with Sychra and Vysotsky (see below) were considered the main figures who contributed in the evolution and establishment of the seven-string guitar as a typically Russian instrument.

4 Ophee, Matanya: Andrei Sychra, Four Concert Studies, The Russian Collection, vol.II (Columbus, Ohio: Editions Orphée, 1992), i.
5 Ophee: Andrei Sychra, ii-iii.
6 Ophee: Andrei Sychra, i.
7 Ophee: Andrei Sychra, ii.
9 For information on the confusion concerning the date of birth of Aksyonov, see Timofeyev, Oleg: The Golden Age of the Russian Guitar: Repertoire, Performance Practice and Social Function of the Russian Seven-String Guitar Music, 1800-1850, unpublished PhD diss. (Duke University, 1999), 220.
10 Timofeyev: The Golden Age of the Russian Guitar, 152.
During the same period, Sychra was rivalled by the Russian guitarist and composer Mikhail Vysotsky (1791–1837). Considered the coryphaei of the seven-string guitar, the reputational stature of Sychra and Vysotsky is comparable to that of Fernando Sor and Mauro Giuliani in terms of the development of the six string classical guitar. According to one of Vysotsky’s students, Mikhail Stakhovich (1819-1858), his teacher never met with Sychra. Vysotsky, who was a master of improvisation, worked extensively with Russian gypsies, who used the seven-string guitar for creating their own music based on Russian folk music. Sychra was unapproving of the gypsy influence in the playing and composing of Vysotsky, who died early from drinking (quite a common ending for a Russian musician). By contrast, Sychra lived until the age of seventy-seven.

In Sychra’s lifetime, six-string guitarists in Russia were much less numerous (though no less determined in terms of ambition) than their seven-string playing counterparts. This element of tension later became the fuse for a veritable ‘Hundred Years War’, where Russian guitarists divided into two groups—semistrunniki and shestistrunniki (seven-string and six-string players). In a way, this conflict was similar to that which obtained between Carullists and Molinists in Paris during the first half of the nineteenth century, concerning disagreements about technique and posture. As this chapter suggests, the Russian equivalent was more serious and lengthy; indeed, it is not over.

Among Russian classical guitar players the most important was Mark Danilovich Sokolovsky (1818–1883). Though nominally Russian, Sokolovsky had Polish roots. His Polish name was Marek Konrad Sokolowski but, after moving to Russia, he had to give it a more Russian flavour. Sokolovsky was a player of great renown. After numerous concerts in Russia, he took a four-year European tour playing concerts in cities such as Vienna, Paris, London, Berlin, Brussels, Dresden, Milan, Krakow and Warsaw. In London, Sokolovsky met Giulio Regondi (1822–1872) who gave him possibly all his music, including the score of his Ten Etudes. After

11 Ophee: Andrei Sychra, i.
he returned to Russia, Sokolovsky continued to perform and even played a concert in the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. He tried to initiate a guitar class in the Moscow Conservatory, but was unsuccessful due to the resistance of his friend, the Conservatory’s director, Nikolai Rubinstein. The incident marked the end of their friendship; Sokolovsky was so disappointed that he left the capital and moved to Vilnius in 1877, where he died in 1883.

Another distinguished Russian classical guitarist of the period was Nikolai Makarov (1810–1890). Coming from a noble family, Makarov demonstrated musical talent at an early age. He studied the violin, but followed tradition by entering the army and becoming an officer. In 1837 he left the army, got married and moved to his estate near the Russian city of Tula during the following year. It was there that he first encountered the guitar, fell in love with the instrument and started practicing (despite the fact that he was twenty-eight years old!). With very hard work for many hours every day, Makarov reached a great technical level and decided to carve out a career as a concert guitarist. Unfortunately, interest in the guitar was in decline. As a result, Makarov came up with a very ambitious idea—to bring back the lost popularity of the instrument.

Full of enthusiasm, he went first to Sychra who did not approve of his playing. Makarov then went to Europe, where he met some of the most renowned guitarists of the time, such as Matteo Carcassi (1792–1853), Marco Aurelio Zani de Ferranti (1801–1878), Johann Kaspar Mertz (1806–1856) and Napoléon Coste (1805–1883); moreover he also became acquainted with Fryderyk Chopin. He learnt much and became an accomplished performer. In 1856, Makarov organized the very first International Competition in the modern sense. Held in Brussels, it was open to anyone interested, with a jury and prizes awarded. This was an innovation for all fields of musical endeavour, not just the guitar world. There were two nominations (with first and second prize for each one)—one was for the best composition for guitar and the other for the

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12 The strongest reason for this famous dispute was the use of the left hand thumb; the followers of Ferdinando Carulli believed that it had to be placed over the guitar’s neck and occasionally used for pressing the sixth string, while the supporters of Francesco Molino placed it behind the neck, a practice that pertains to the present day.

13 Bazzotti, Marco The Guitar of the Czars, a new English summary reduction, 24 March 2013, http://www.seicorde.it/articles/guiczar.htm#FN9REF
best instrument. The winner of the first prize was Mertz (Coste was placed second) and the best
guitar maker was Johann Schertzer (1834–1870). But despite this level of exposure, Makarov
failed. His activities did not bring the guitar to preeminence and finally he gave up and returned
to Russia. Although his life is a story of defeat, Makarov is one of the most impressive
personalities in historical Russian guitar music. His work ‘Several rules of the highest level
guitar playing’\textsuperscript{14} has some very innovative ideas, for example playing the ornaments on two
strings, etc.

After Makarov’s retreat from evangelisation on behalf of the guitar in Russia in 1875, the
instrument’s fortunes began to wane. The popularity of both six and seven-string guitars was
close to zero and their reputation was reasonably low. The seven-string guitar was considered a
Gypsy instrument (not even Russian anymore) and the six-string guitar disappeared almost
completely. Both guitars were never included in the musical education system in Russia. There
was no possibility for young people to become musicians if they pursued guitar studies. The
conflict between the respective aficionados of six and seven string instruments soon took a
different turn.

The conflict between Shestistrunniki and Semistrunniki was sparked by the famous Russian
guitarist Valerian Rusanov (1866–1918). He was a poor player and an even poorer composer,
but he was a very active writer and publisher. From 1904–1906, Rusanov’s magazine \textit{Gitarist}
published a series of issues united by the title ‘Odd or Even’ which he devoted to the tuning
problem and the number of strings. Before that, the relationship between the two groups of the
guitarists was quite normal; no conflicts ever. But Rusanov started the fire speculating on the
antagonism between professional and amateur musicians as well as on nationalistic feelings,
insisting on the Russian roots of the seven-string guitar (something that was, of course, a lie),
announcing Sychra as the creator of the Russian guitar (also false: Sychra did not add the
seventh string on the instrument; as mentioned above, the G major-tuned guitar with seven
strings came to Russia from Poland).

\textsuperscript{14} orig: Neskol'ko pravil vys'shei gitarnoi igry [title trans. by Nikita Koshkin].
Rusanov was supported by a group of disciples, the most important among them being Vladimir Mashkevitch (1888–1971). Mashkevitch collected an enormous amount of material, which later became the base of the ‘Classical guitar in Russia and USSR’, published in Russia in 1992 by Mikhail Yablokov. The dispute between six and seven-string guitarists is central to the Dictionary and in this manner Rusanov’s mistruths had a considerable afterlife. Another disciple, Pyotr Agafoshin (1874–1950), suddenly switched to the classical instrument after studying the seven-string guitar with Rusanov. Agafoshin started in earnest the promotion of the six-string guitar, which was almost forgotten in Russia. He was immediately announced as a traitor and the fight moved from the printed pages of Rusanov’s *Gitarist* to real life. Despite the hostilities, Agafoshin made a tremendous effort to enable the foundation of professional musical education for classical guitarists, with results eventually apparent after the first visit of Andrés Segovia to Russia in 1926. Segovia left a deep impression not only on Russian guitarists (his playing was described as ‘bewitching’ in a dithyrambic review of the time), but on musicians in general. Unexpectedly, Agafoshin found support from such important figures as Boris Asafiev (1884-1949) and Konstantin Igumnov (1873-1948); he started publishing music for classical guitar and, in 1928, he released the book ‘New word about guitar’ which left a great impression.

Guitar classes opened in music schools and colleges. Segovia's visits to Russia were a great support. The Maestro came to Russia four times: in 1926, 1927, 1934 and 1936. However, after the Civil War started in Spain, Segovia never returned, refusing numerous invitations. He either could not excuse the USSR for supporting the republicans in Spain, or he was fearful for his safety in Russia due to his well-known anti-communist position in Spain. Another difficult period started again for the classical guitar in Russia when the civil war in Spain ended and

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15 Yablokov, Mikhail: *Klassikeskaia gitara v Rossii i SSSR. Biografiheskii muzykalino-literaturnyi slovar’-spravohnik russkih i sovetskih deiatelei gitary*. Tiumen': Russkaia Entsiklopediia, 1992. (Classical guitar in Russia and USSR. Biographical musico-literary dictionary-handbook of Russian and Soviet guitarists [title trans. by Oleg Timofeyev]).
17 ‘Novoe o gitare’ [title trans. by Nikita Koshkin], Gos Izdatel’stvo, Muz Sektor (Moscow, 1928).
Franco came to power. Being Spanish in origin, the classical guitar shared the fate of its native country; it was considered a fascist instrument and, from 1939, it lost its position of supremacy. It was eliminated from most music schools, as well as most colleges.

Back in Russia, the only guitar class retained was in the Moscow Conservatory College (not to be confused with the Moscow Conservatory which represents the highest level of education, while the college is a secondary school). Agafoshin’s best student, Alexander Ivanov-Kramskoi (1912–1973), was a pupil of the Moscow Conservatory College; he tried to save the classical guitar and to keep it from being completely erased from the Russian music scene. For a long period, Ivanov-Kramskoi was a symbol of the classical guitar in Russia. He was quite an active performer, playing many concerts all over Russia in addition to composing and teaching. His articles about the guitar appeared in the main Russian musical magazines; he played on national radio and television and recorded several LP records. He also wrote a method, which is still used in Russian music education, along with other instructional material. Eventually, his heavy workload brought results. The classical guitar was put back on the primary musical education and returned to the music schools. Guitar classes were re-opened in the Gnesin College and in the October Revolution College. In the Gnesin College, the six-string guitar was joined by the seven-string type, initially taught by Lev Menro (1923–1994).

However, the guitar in Russia was not yet represented in the highest echelon of music education due to the constant arguments among guitarists. Letters abounded; especially active in writing denunciations were the semistrunniki (the seven-string players) probably because the classical guitarists were more busy furthering their careers. These frightening messages were addressed to the highest level of power in Soviet Union (to the Ministry of Culture and to the Central Committee of the Communist Party); indeed one group even asked the authorities to repress the other. Taking into consideration that repressions in Stalin’s time meant even death, one can imagine the intensity of this hatred and how far people could reach for such inane reasons. The semistrunniki called their classical colleagues ‘Enemies of the People’ who are

19 Bazzotti: The Guitar of the Czars.
playing bourgeois guitar and bourgeois music. Of course nobody at the highest power level took such a conflict seriously; nevertheless, it was terribly exasperating. As a result, guitarists were constantly treated with disrespect.

Among seven-string guitarists the most important name was Sergei Orekhov (1935–1998). He was a virtuoso player of Russian guitar and the only active performer throughout the decades. He played only his own arrangements of Russian folk songs and popular melodies, and never played classical music. He performed extensively with Gypsy ensembles and singers in addition to his so-called ‘solo concerts’—in reality, the latter were duo concerts as Orekhov always used a second guitar as accompaniment. He is still considered an idol among seven-string guitarists. A heavy drinker, Orekhov died from a heart attack.

Gradually, the classical guitar was gaining in terms of kudos in order for it to become worthy of being considered a professional instrument. Guitar classes were opened in several conservatories over the Soviet Union—Sverdlovsk (now Ekaterinburg), Kiev, Minsk, Gorky (now Nizhni Novgorod), but not until later did one open in Moscow; the capital was the last. The guitar only appeared in the Gnesin Institute (nowadays the Russian Academy of Music) in 1980. Koshkin was the first to enter the class and, five years later, became its first graduate. The class was lead by his coeval, Alexander Frautchi (1954–2008) who studied initially with his father and graduated from the Ural Mussorgsky Conservatory under the tutelage of Vitaly Derun. A very important achievement for Russia was also the first prize in the Habana competition, which Frautchi won in 1986.

The guitar class in the Russian Academy of Music brought some of the most talented players from all over Russia to the capital, some of whom won numerous prizes in international competitions all over the world, recorded records and concertized extensively. After the sudden death of Frautchi (2008), the quality of the guitar teaching in the Russian Academy of Music started to deteriorate while other academies began to gain ground and surpass the latter: the State Classical Academy and the Schnittke Institute of Music also number several significant players amongst their graduates.
Nowadays, the guitar scene in Russia is quite active and vivid. Several festivals and competitions occur all over Russia, as well as in the former Soviet republics (traditionally, Russian guitarists frequently appeared in competitions in Ukraine and Belarus). Moscow holds an annual festival entitled ‘Virtuosos of the Guitar’, which presents concerts in one of the most important and prestigious international venues: the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall.

Since the late 1970s, Nikita Koshkin has played an important part in the evolution of the guitar in Russia in his roles as an excellent performer and teacher but most of all, via his significant and internationally appreciated contribution to the guitar repertoire. His biography will be presented in detail in the next chapter.
Nikita Arnoldvich Koshkin\(^1\) was born in Moscow on 28 February 1956.

His grandfather (from his mother’s side), Nikolai Turgenev, was a descendant of the famed Russian author, Ivan Turgenev. Both his grandfather and grandmother came from noble families and, as such, they were exiled to Siberia after the 1917 October Revolution. Here they met, got married and had Koshkin’s mother (Ludmila) in 1929 in the city of Tulun. Ludmila’s father was an inventor, who subsequently divorced Ludmila’s mother and distanced himself from family life. Nikita did not know of him until several years later.

Nikolai’s brother, Sergey Petrovic Turgenev, was an architect of some repute in pre-revolutionary Russia and, although he was exiled after 1917, he later returned to the capital and taught for the remainder of his career at the Moscow Institute of Architecture. Remembered today as the first important Soviet architect, he was a pleasant person who took an active part in family life. Nikita and his brother always thought that he was their real grandfather. This chapter describes just how important a role Sergey played in Nikita’s life.

Nikita’s grandmother had him baptised secretly when he was little (without even notifying his parents), since it was practically forbidden in the Soviet Union; both his parents were members of the Communist Party and if the baptism had been revealed, they would have been expelled.

Before the Second World War, Nikita’s grandparents were allowed to return to Moscow (which is where they originated from), but they were forced to live not less than 101 [!] kilometres from Moscow’s city centre. As the authorities did not seem to be too strict on them in this regard, they later moved ever closer towards Moscow and, eventually, they settled in the suburb of Perovo (twelve kilometres from the Red Square), where Nikita was born.

\(^1\) Both ‘Arnoldvich’ and ‘Koshkin’ must be accented on the ‘o’
Koshkin’s father, Arnold (Arnoldvich indicates the son of Arnold in Russian) came from a town named Zaikovo in the Urals. He studied in the Moscow Aircraft Institute and then got a job in the military, where he remained all his life. He specialised in fuel matters for military and space aircrafts, so his laboratory was, naturally, top secret. It was in Moscow where he met and married Ludmila. The latter was a talented singer but while she possessed a true bel canto voice, she never cultivated a professional career.

At the tender age of three, Koshkin’s brother, Alexander, was a preternaturally precocious painter. Their parents encouraged his skill, the result being the internationally-acclaimed painter that he is today, having received several very important international awards. He specialises in drawing illustrations for books with fairy tales, myths and stories about heroes; indeed, the latter may have played a role in Koshkin’s preference for such themes in his music.

When Nikita was four, his ‘grandfather’ (who loved classical music), came to their home and put on a record featuring The Rite of Spring by Igor Stravinsky for Nikita’s brother (who was eight at the time) to listen to. He thought that he might make him interested in modern Russian music (at that time, Stravinsky was considered very modern). Alexander was rather indifferent but, as Nikita states:

I was sitting with my mouth open, listening to this music and when it was over I said ‘Put it again, please’. They were having dinner and I was listening to Stravinsky again and again the whole evening. They were so surprised; they thought that I was too little for that, but I was so impressed and said that it is unbelievable music so, that moment, they thought that I should have some musical talent.

When Nikita was six, his family tried to enrol him to a music school, but he was not admitted because the entrance exam jury adjudicated that he did not possess a good sense of pitch, had an indifferent musical memory and no rhythm! Being so young, he was not able to understand what they wanted from him. The professor played a note at the keyboard and asked him to sing, but the little boy did not understand that she wanted that particular note so he sang whatever came to his mind. Likewise, when they asked him to repeat a rhythmic pattern that they played for him, he just

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2 For the purposes of convenience, the brother of his grandfather (Sergey Turgenev) whom Nikita still considered his grandfather, will be called ‘grandfather’ hereafter.

3 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
improvised something else. Therefore, his parents gave up the idea that he was musically gifted and thought that it would be best for him to follow a diplomatic career (since this would assure him a wealthy living) and they enrolled him in an English school where half classes were in English and half in Russian. His favourite subject was literature and especially poetry. He preferred Russian poets such as Lermontov and Blok, but his best choice was Pushkin: ‘that was a genius, the greatest of the great’. Among writers, he naturally selected his distant relative, Turgenev. He enjoys reading to this day and has often found inspiration for his pieces in literature (such as Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’; the resultant piece will be discussed in due course).

When he was a teenager, his only musical interest was in rock, which was very popular and intriguing for youngsters of that era because it was of Western origin (they sang in English) and although it was not actually forbidden, it was neither considered ‘legal’. Part of a group of four boys, Nikita played drums at the beginning as it was easier and, also, because he did not have to read music. As a drummer, he was not bad, ‘at least the rhythm was good, unlike what they said in the elementary music school!’ They rehearsed in the Palace of Pioneers (similar to boy scouts) where, in order to let them use the drums and the electric guitars, they obliged them to participate in the folk instruments’ orchestra. Here Nikita played balalaika—the typical traditional Russian instrument. Nikita’s band played music by groups such as Led Zeppelin and The Rolling Stones (they did not like The Beatles, as they were not noisy enough!) during celebrations.

However, Nikita’s dream was to play electric guitar and, at the beginning of 1970, he started learning independently, later realising that he could not progress without tuition. He begged his mother to let him enter the music school; she eventually accepted and he enrolled in 1971. However, he soon discovered the music school only provided classical guitar tuition, something that, until then, he could not even imagine existed. As he states: ‘I was so astonished because it was so [he makes the ‘o’ last as he talks] beautiful, unbelievable.’ He soon announced to his family that he wanted to

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4 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 6 February 2013.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
become a musician, which was something that they all disapproved of, since it was not considered a profitable profession ‘especially if you were a serious one.’\textsuperscript{7} Nikita insisted, so they asked his ‘grandfather’ to try to change his mind. However, since Sergey was the only one who had never given up the idea that his teenager grandson had musical talent (after the abovementioned Stravinsky incident), not only he did not try to dissuade him but, on the contrary he gifted him his old guitar (until then Nikita was playing on borrowed instruments), along with an LP record of Andrés Segovia.\textsuperscript{8} That incident changed Koshkin’s life, as it confirmed his strong wish to become a guitarist and, as he later said: ‘Nobody was able to stop me.’\textsuperscript{9}

The guitar that his ‘grandfather’ gave him was a Lunacharky; it had six strings unlike all the others that were seven-string guitars. It was made in a factory in Saint Petersburg named after Lunacharsky who was Cultural Commissar at that time. The company made the best guitars in Russia and Koshkin played the instrument for some years afterward. Indeed, he claims that the American acclaimed guitar maker, Thomas Humphrey, was inspired by Lunacharky guitars when the former devised his famous elevated fret-board system.

The Segovia LP was the first classical guitar record Nikita had heard. Among other pieces, it featured Heitor Villa-Lobos’s Prelude No. 3 which made such a strong impression. As Koskin comments: ‘I thought “what a beautiful music, so unusual in sound and so different from all the other music on the record; I want to compose my own” ’\textsuperscript{10}—and this was something that he did as soon as he started studying the guitar. He took the Andantino by Matteo Carcassi (which he thought was a very nice piece, but too short) and developed it with twelve variations (which were not really such, since he had no idea how a variation should be done; he just prolonged the material, something that he now considers silly). He showed it to his guitar teacher, (Vladimir Kapkaev who will be discussed later on) who was appalled and told him that if he wants to compose, he should compose his own music instead of distorting other composers’ music. Hereupon he started writing a number of his own pieces every day.

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Bach: Chaconne and other works by Bach, Sor, Mendelssohn, Villa-Lobos, Rodrigo, Andrés Segovia, guitar, Brunswick AXTL 1069, 1955.
\textsuperscript{9} Clinton, George: ‘My work is inspired by my great love for guitar and music. Nikita Koshkin’, [interview with Nikita Koshkin] GUITAR INTERNATIONAL magazine (September 1986), 7-14.
\textsuperscript{10} Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 6 February 2013.
In the music school he had his first guitar teacher, Vladimir Kapkaev, son of Boris Kapkaev (ex-student of Agafoshin who was earlier mentioned in the chapter ‘The Guitar in Russia’). He completed his studies in the school in only two years (1971–1973) instead of the normal five, in order to avoid joining the army, which would be obligatory if he did not enter college by the age of seventeen.

As mentioned above, Koshkin started composing for guitar from the beginning of his music studies. The first piece he composed (probably in 1970) was called ‘Spanish Dance’. It was in A minor but since he was not educated enough he put a G# in the key signature. He composed away from the instrument—something that he has done ever since. Subsequently, he worked hard for three days in order to write it down, producing one page per day. He then tried to play it, only to find that it was too difficult! This was a great surprise because, as he says:

I wrote it and then I was not able to play it! So I was obliged to practise the guitar more in order to be able to play the ideas that I had in my mind. And this way from the very beginning I learned that composing is one thing and playing is another.’

In a 1986 interview, he stated: ‘When I composed my first piece for guitar, I did not expect that I would become a composer, that came later and so naturally that I did not even notice when.’ And later: ‘This period [when he first composed] was very important for me because I learned the rules of composing from my practical work.’

In 1973, Koshkin entered the ‘October Revolution College’ (nowadays ‘Schnittke College of Music’) where he studied from 1973 to 1977. During those years, he wrote the first version of a piece that later meant to make him famous in the international guitar world: ‘The Prince’s Toys’ (1974). The title was borrowed from a painting by the Italian painter, Giorgio de Chirico, which inspired Koshkin to invent a story of a child’s toys that come to life, due to the cruel treatment of their owner. After threatening the child, they eventually turn him into a toy. This first version had twelve movements and lasted around forty minutes; however, when Koshkin performed it in public he always sensed his audience getting fatigued in the middle and realised that the piece needed editing (more about the latter in due course).

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11 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
13 Ibid
1974 also marked the first time that Koshkin heard the Czechoslovakian guitarist, Vladimir Mikulka, in Moscow; he was deeply impressed by the quality and perfection of Mikulka’s playing and the latter swiftly became Koshkin’s favourite guitarist. Mikulka had just won the prestigious Paris Competition, he played in Moscow every year and it was only in 1977 that the twenty-one year old Nikita summoned up the courage to go after the concert and show Mikulka his music. So, as he states: ‘I came to him and that was the beginning’. 

Mikulka invited him to his hotel the next day and, when he got there, Koshkin found that another composer who played his own music was already present. Afterwards, the other young composer handed a huge pack of scores to Mikulka. Koshkin was afraid that the other composer would impress Mikulka more, since he was a faster player. After he left, Koshkin and Mikulka chatted for a while, Nikita played some of his music and he then gave him only a small pack of scores! On his departure from Mikulka’s hotel room, Koshkin saw the latter throwing the other composer’s pack of scores in the garbage—an act that naturally gave Koshkin the impression that he would do the same with his music! Not only this did not happen, moreover, that day saw the start of a long friendship and collaboration that will be discussed later.

In the ‘October Revolution College’, his guitar teacher was Georgyi Emanov (1906–1984), a former student of Piotr Agafoshin and a great fan of Segovia. Emanov was pretty old-fashioned as a teacher and he never talked about interpretation. However, Koshkin learned some important things from him: that he had to practise for long periods but only with an exact aim and he taught him the right way to play apoyando—he was not taught apoyando and he practically never used it before. Emanov was conversant with Segovia’s technique. His main aims were good technique and clean playing, which he did want to be musical as well, but he was not able to explain how. So when Nikita was preparing his diploma, Emanov was very impressed with his passion and expressivity because he had never taught him these things. During their lessons, he sometimes fell asleep (he was 77 at the time that Koshkin graduated), only to wake up at the end of the piece. However, he was such a nice person that his students respected him tremendously; they felt like his children,

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14 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 6 February 2013.
worked very hard and were a good class as a result. Koshkin gave his first official guitar concert in 1976.

A very important figure in terms of Koshkin’s musical education was Viktor Egorov, his composition teacher in the College. He studied with him for four years and discovered much later that Egorov was teaching him without ever having been paid for these lessons since Nikita was not from the theoretical division. But Egorov did not mind doing it for free as it was for such a good student; moreover, Egorov never looked at the clock when he taught Koshkin and the lessons were often rather long. Nikita was sitting for hours in his class watching the other students’ lessons as well. Egorov was not a great composer himself but, as a teacher, he was exceptional. Koshkin emphasises that he owes a lot to the latter for his compositional education and they became good friends as well. Koshkin also studied conducting with Viktor Podurovsky (who still teaches at the Schnittke College of Music), with whom he went through much by the way of repertoire (mainly orchestral scores, symphonies, and overtures) Koshkin learned more about interpretation in his class than he did from Emanov. When asked in an interview about his conducting studies, Koshkin said ‘You are taught how to work with music without touching an instrument. This is very important. [...] Conducting really helps you to think properly as a soloist!’

In 1978, Koshkin wrote another important piece that also marked the beginning of his international fame: ‘The Fall of Birds (Andante quasi Passacaglia e Toccata)’. He composed it for Vladimir Mikulka, who gave its première in The Wigmore Hall, London, on June 2\textsuperscript{nd} of that year. Initially he had only written the Toccata, but Mikulka wanted a slow introduction as well, which he included in the programme that he sent to the concert organisers but forgot to notify the composer! It was only upon viewing the programme a couple of weeks before the concert that Mikulka realised that the slow part mentioned had not been composed yet! He asked Koshkin to write something (even six bars would do, as he mentioned to him in despair), as long as there was some slow part before the Toccata. Mikulka’s girlfriend happened to be in Moscow at that time and could bring the music to Vladimir. Thus, Nikita had only two days and two nights (without sleep), producing directly the actual score ‘like

\footnote{15 Kilvington, Chris: ‘A Russian Voice: Nikita Koshkin Talks About His Composition With Chris Kilvington’, [interview with Nikita Koshkin] \textit{CLASSICAL GUITAR} magazine (September 1993), 11-14.}
Mozart! and Mikulka had only two weeks to learn the piece (which was no mean feat). Such moments show the calibre both of a composer and a player; on the occasion of its première, ‘The Fall of Birds’ was a great success, attracted interest in the West in this new, up-and-coming compositional talent from the Soviet Union.

In a letter to the present author, Koshkin had commented directly on ‘The Fall of Birds’:

In this structure I tried to use for a modern musical task the ancient two-movement suite: Pavana, Gagliarda or Passamezzo, Saltarello, etc. It was very interesting to take this structure as a base for completely different music without a slight sign of stylisation. As a result I got this masterpiece. I hope you will excuse me if I will not be very modest this time. I love the work and I must say it was a first success on the way of very deep and serious ideas in my creativity. [...] Please write to me your opinion about this composition of mine for guitar solo. I consider it not worse than the ‘Usher Waltz’… well, for me it has the same importance.

After the Wigmore Hall success, Mikulka invited Koshkin to Czechoslovakia in 1978 and again in 1979. In 1978, Koshkin accompanied Mikulka on a very interesting tour driving around his country, to appear on stage after every rendition of ‘The Fall of Birds’. Nikita watched Mikulka’s practice routines and now claims that he learned more from the latter than he had learned from any of his guitar teachers. For example, he learned to play without making unnecessary noise; he changed his hand position, filed his fingernails short in order to produce the sound both with nail and flesh and, most importantly, he learned to sustain a melody. As Koshkin states: ‘For me, that month on tour with Mikulka was the best school.’

During the tour, Mikulka caught Nikita by surprise at a concert in Mlade Boleslav during his usual appearance on stage to receive applause for ‘The Fall of Birds.’ On this particular occasion, Mikulka gave Nikita a guitar and asked him to play. Nikita obliged by playing the ‘The Doll with Blinking Eyes’ from ‘The Prince’s Toys’. Mikulka was very impressed by this music and asked to hear the rest of the piece. When Nikita said that he had not been able to finish it for years, Mikulka demanded that he finish it immediately! Therefore, Koshkin completed ‘The Tin Soldiers’ and ‘The Prince’s Coach’ in Prague. When he went to Czechoslovakia again in 1979, they did not tour, but mainly worked on ‘The Prince’s Toys’—a process that included

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16 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
17 Personal correspondence between Nikita Koshkin and this author (around 1997).
18 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 9 February 2013.
Koshkin showing Mikulka how to produce the numerous sound effects included in the piece, which had managed to finish that same year (this was the version that was eventually published). Mikulka organised interviews for Koshkin in newspapers, magazines and even on television. The same year, Mikulka fled from his country to Paris and was soon granted French citizenship. Koshkin kept contact with Mikulka through letters and telephone calls, resulting in the former being blocked from travelling anywhere outside the Soviet Union (even to fellow-socialist countries) from 1979 to 1989 (when the borders opened). Given that Koshkin's father had a top-secret job and the consequent fear that he might bring secret information abroad if he defected, the authorities were especially keen in ensuring he remained at home where they could keep an eye on him and his activities.

‘The Prince’s Toys’ premièred on 24 October 1980 in the Grand Auditorium de Radio France, Paris and, after that occasion, Koshkin began to be considered as one of the most important guitar composers of the twentieth century. The British composer and writer, John Duarte, who was a friend of Koshkin, wrote:

In late 1981 I played Mikulka’s recording of the ‘Andante quasi Passacaglia e Toccata’ to Maestro Segovia, not without some trepidation; his comment was:
‘How nice to hear a young man writing tonal music. What a work it is and what a player it needs!’ There was not time to play ‘The Prince’s Toys’, what might he have said if there had been?!19

Another piece that Mikulka performed was the ‘Porcelain Tower’, which was a set of variations on a theme by Štěpán Rak. Koshkin and Rak (who were friends) agreed that each one would write a theme and the other would compose variations on it. Then Rak did the same with their mutual friend, John Duarte and Koshkin proposed to close the circle repeating the same with Duarte and eventually have six pieces that could be played all together in one concert. Nikita composed ‘Oime’ on a Duarte theme; however, Duarte wrote a piece for three guitars instead of one, to the great disappointment of Koshkin because this way he broke the agreed circle. Nikita gave another theme to Duarte, who did eventually write a solo guitar piece. However, the whole project took seventeen years to complete and the pieces were never performed altogether in one concert.

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From 1977–1980, Koshkin taught in the music school where he first studied with Kapkaev while, from 1978 to 1980, he had private lessons in solfege and harmony with Alla Borisovna Raiskaya. Raiskaya was an exceptional teacher: very strict and demanding. The aim for Nikita was to be admitted in the Gnessin Institute (Russian Academy of Music), where the opening of a guitar class had just been announced. But none of the eleven candidate guitarists (including Nikita) was admitted in the first year (1979). At the guitar audition, the jury gave very low marks to all the guitarists since they probably did not like the idea of having guitarists in their school. If a candidate were rejected at the instrumental audition, he could not proceed to the next exam, so Koshkin could not sit for the theory examinations. After that, he went back to Raiskaya and asked that they work through everything from the beginning.

In 1980, he went through the audition again and, this time, three guitar students were admitted: Koshkin came first with the highest mark in all the subjects; Alexander Tchekhov and Vadim Kouznetsov were ranked next. After Koshkin passed the guitar audition, his zeal for being admitted was such that—to the immense horror of his fellow-guitarists—he clipped his right hand fingernails in order to play better at the piano exam that he was also obliged to pass. As for the theory subjects, the quality of Raiskaya’s teaching and Nikita’s own diligence meant that he scored high enough to enter the theoretical division (which required a much higher level of theoretical knowledge) if he had so wanted. When he had the theory exam for the guitar class, he was surprised that it was so easy and thus entered with highest marks. Without following the theory lessons, he went directly to the final theory exams and passed them at a canter.

In the Gnessin Institute, the guitar was (and still is) part of the folk division because, originally, they offered tuition on the seven-string guitar (which is, of course, a folk instrument) and when they introduced the six-string one, it was also put in the folk division (together with domra, balalaika and bajan). It seems that the Institute do not wish to let the guitar be independent as the other instrumental disciplines it is grouped with, have steadily decreasing students while the number of guitar students is steadily increasing.
Koshkin’s teacher in the Institute (where he studied from 1980 to 1985) was Alexander Frautchi. Being practically coeval, the relationship between Frautchi and Koshkin was somewhat more antagonistic than mutual appreciative. Teachers and students either match or they do not, depending on their taste, personalities, choices and moral principles; and in the case of Frautchi and Koshkin there was no successful match in any of these categories. Koshkin does not believe that he learned anything significant from his teacher and he disagreed with most of his suggestions: Frautchi was against the use of *apoyando*; he also advocated the *p, m, i* lute technique for scales; he held that someone has to touch the string before he plucks it (resulting in stopping the flow of the melody at every note)—he recommended the latter approach even for *tremolo* (which thus sounded *staccato*), when on the contrary, when playing *tremolo* ‘[the guitarist] is supposed to prolong the vibration of the string.’ 20 Frautchi would listen to his students and gave advice that Nikita could not accept, most of the time; however he would not voice his disagreements, out of respect. What made matters worse was that, from the second year on, Frautchi almost never went to the Institute to teach. His students would go to the classroom only to find it closed, so they would practise during the whole year by themselves, with Frautchi only hearing them play in the final exams, often not even knowing what their programme was! It is surprising that the school tolerated this (it seems that Frautchi was not the only one neglecting his teaching duties) and the students did not dare complain, since they would probably be the ones to get punished instead of the indolent professors.

However, Koshkin did not regret entering the Academy; as he mentions:

> In the Soviet Union times, the diploma of the highest level of education was the ticket to the future. Without a diploma, there was almost no chance to get a proper job and to develop as a performer and composer and nobody would take you seriously. That is why the other musicians were unapproving of guitarists. From the moment that the guitar occupied the highest level, the situation and the attitude started to change. Nowadays, the cooperation between the academic musicians and the guitarists is normal. 21

Moreover, he learned much in the other classes: theory, orchestra, conducting and chamber music. Guitar was a novelty at the time, and when anyone needed a guitarist they sought him in the Gnessin Institute. Koshkin always accepted every such offer, unlike his fellow students who preferred to only play solo—their only chamber music

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20 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
21 E-mail to author, 25 March 2013.
experience were duos with two guitars just to get the required mark, while they avoided collaboration with other instruments. Koshkin was often asked to participate in modern pieces that included guitar (sometimes even very awkward ones); that was propitious because it was paid work as well as interesting. Additionally, he played classic repertoire collaborating with flute, with string quartet, with string trio and so on. He was thirsty for performance opportunities, being on the stage as much as possible and, for that reason, the Institute was the best place for him.

In the Institute he studied composition first with Henrich Litinsky, whom he did not like and left his class to join that of Nikolai Peiko, who was affable but who later retired and passed Nikita to his ex-student, Gennadi Chernov. Koshkin (although he had the chance) did not apply for the composition diploma because he was tired of studying (he was already almost thirty years old). Moreover, he refused to study two extra years being an assistant, something that would allow him afterwards to apply for professorship. In the Academy, he also had conducting classes with Vyacheslav Chistyakov.

It is interesting to note here that the internationally-famous Moscow Conservatory does not have a guitar class even today! This appals Koshkin and every other Russian guitarist, since the guitar is taught in all the major schools internationally while the Moscow Conservatory seems to be a very rare (if not the only) exception. Sometime ago, there was an ineffective effort to introduce it as a discipline with Koshkin as the professor.

From 1983 to 1994, Koshkin was the main guitar teacher at the October Revolution College (and later Schnittke College of Music). In 1984, he wrote his most successful piece, the ‘Usher Waltz’ inspired by the novel ‘The Fall of the House of Usher’ by Edgar Allan Poe. It was made famous by John Williams, who included it on his CD *The Seville Concert*, in 1993.

After 1984, Koshkin and his wife changed several homes, so, unfortunately, many of his music scores were lost during those relocations. That year, his daughter Katerina was born.
In 1987, in Esztergom (Hungary) Koshkin won the international competition for the best pedagogical work for guitar with his piece ‘Mascarade’. Eleven German students played all the twenty-four pieces at the competition. He received the Second Prize (there was no First Prize awarded) due to a mistake of the Soviet royalties’ organisation (V.A.A.P), which put his name on the piece before they sent it to the competition organisers, though the rules required that it be anonymous. The jury decided to let it be included, but, in the event if it being adjudged the best (as it eventually was), it was decided not to award it the First Prize.

The same year he was chosen as a soloist of ‘The Moscow Concert,’ which gave him the opportunity to perform on numerous tours throughout the Soviet Union. At that time, the Soviet Union had committees that would decide whether a player deserved the opportunity to be on stage—thus not everyone was allowed to perform publicly. This may explain the fact that Soviet players won most of the western competitions, during this period; having been chosen as the crème de la crème of their country’s young talents, they were the standard bearers and bad artists very rarely reached the stage as a consequence. When the system changed, everyone had a chance to get on stage and Westerners were impressed to hear mediocre Russian players as well. Today, as Koshkin states, if someone is wealthy, that person can gain recognition throughout Russia, as he can pay for publicity (posters, television, radio, newspapers and magazines). Thus, players often become well-known solely on the basis that they appear everywhere and not necessarily because of their actual talent (something that is not only confined to Russia, in fairness).

Due to the ban imposed on him in terms of travelling abroad and, having no contact with the rest of the world, Koshkin could not develop enough as a player and update his repertoire, so he started playing only his own works. The last time that he played a concert which included the music of other composers was on 16 March 1985. The programme included Bach, Villa-Lobos, Terzi, Rak and Koshkin. Regarding the performance of his own music in concert, he wrote:

> When I am playing my own works, I have, of course, that complex of a composer, to reach the listeners with the main idea of the piece; to persuade them to

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22 Concert agency, which belonged to the city of Moscow.
understand it even if they do not want. Not to ask them tactfully if, belike, they can follow my idea but to ‘attack’ them with the music.23

Thanks to those ‘Moscow Concert’ tours, he visited many places that otherwise he would never have had the opportunity to see. He would often worry about the reception of the public around the country, but they received him very warmly; the general audience was always happy (especially when he performed the ‘Usher Waltz’), while the guitarists were more suspicious, often due to antagonistic reasons. During those years, he could make his living from playing and as he says ‘that was a Paradise’.24 For example, he might have twenty concerts in twenty days in twenty different cities and then he had enough money to live for half a year! This situation lasted for four years but, when in 1991 the Soviet Union ceased to be, very few people wanted serious music anymore; folk and pop music were the main choices, so the ‘Moscow Concert’ went bankrupt.

In 1989, an impresario from Amsterdam asked to meet Koshkin in Moscow in order to see if he had works for three guitars for The Amsterdam Guitar Trio. It seems that her information was that she would meet a respectful old man, to find out with astonishment that he was only thirty-three years old, resulting in great laughter on her part upon her first sight of him. He gave her his pieces for three guitars and played some to her; she realised that he was a very good player and invited him to play in Amsterdam, which resulted in his Western European debut in the prestigious Concertgebouw. When she asked him to go, he still had the impression that he was not allowed to leave his country, but she was obviously better informed and notified him that the Soviet borders limitation had been cancelled that very year. So, while up till then he had only been to Czechoslovakia, he suddenly found himself playing in one of the best halls worldwide.

Until that point, he had the impression that Russians were better people than any other, only to find out with disappointment that this was not true. For example, he was astonished when, as soon as he arrived to Amsterdam, his host (who had never met him before: Johann Dorestein from the trio), gave him his house keys and left for two weeks for a trip to Japan, entrusting Koshkin with his home. Many guitarists arrived

23 Letter to this author, 21 July 1997; the only one of his letters that had a date.
24 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 9 February 2013.
from other countries in order to hear his ‘Concertgebouw’ concert, among which his friend, Mikulka, from Paris and Chris Kilvington from London. Unfortunately, they all decided to make their presence known to Koshkin right before the concert, something that made the latter extremely nervous. However, Koshkin’s rigorous practice regime before the concert ensured that he played very well and had great success.

Following his Amsterdam debut, he embarked upon numerous tours in countries such as France, Germany (including a concert in the Berliner Philharmonie), Great Britain, Czech Republic, Poland, South Africa, China, and Mexico; he participated in many guitar festivals and has been a jury member in several international guitar competitions.

In 1996, Koshkin was awarded the Stevan Mokranyac Prize and a golden medal with Mokranjac’s profile for his contribution to Slavic culture in the city of Negotin in Serbia. He was also given a special diploma by the city of Novy Sad. That same year, he gave his Tchaikovsky Concert Hall debut in Moscow. In a letter to the author, he wrote: ‘I got a concert in the main concert hall in Moscow only after my fortieth birthday! It is not easy for a guitar composer to earn this hall!’

In 1997, he appeared for the first time in the USA, starting with a tour in Texas and Arizona during springtime before returning in the autumn in order to participate as a guest artist and member of the jury at the prestigious festival held by The Guitar Foundation of America (GFA), where he was invited again in 1999; since then, he has regularly visited the USA.

A competition under his name was twice organised in the years 1999 and 2000 in Rust, Austria (The Nikita Koshkin International Guitar Festival and Competition) and in March 2000, he gave a concert in the hall of the Nobel Institute (Oslo, Norway) in the same venue where the Nobel Prizes are awarded annually.

Undated letter of Nikita Koshkin to the author, [around 1997]
In 2000, he played his last tour (in South Africa) and, after that, he decided to give up playing due to focal dystonia. He first realised that he had this problem in 1994, when he watched a video of a concert of his and noticed some strange motions that his right hand was making; he took his guitar and realised that when he had to use the a finger, his hand was making an unusual motion. He tried then to cure it with studies and it seemed to improve temporarily but, after an hour, it was even worse. His flute-guitar CD ‘Oratorium’ was mainly recorded with three right-hand fingers, thus avoiding the use of the a finger. In a 1997 letter to the author (that he sent along with a recording of his), he wrote: ‘I guess I will never play like that anymore. It was a period of uninterrupted development. I was practising every day from the age of fourteen to the age of thirty.’

He believed that it would be a shame for him to be famous and make too many mistakes in concert, so he decided to stop. At that time, there were still no recognised treatment for the condition, but although there are today, he thinks that it is now too late to try. He would like to play again if he could, but he would only try if he felt his playing would be good enough. Besides, as he opines:

\[
\text{I always feel that I am occupying someone’s place, there are so many great players today and maybe some of them may not reach the stage because I am in the way since they would invite me as I am famous, instead of someone less famous who is better then me.}
\]

This quite rare way of thinking is, indeed, something to admire in an artist. Moreover, while the guitar world has several top-level players, there are very few top-level composers, so his choice to devote himself only to composition (which he probably prefers to playing) has made the guitar repertoire much richer. Moreover, 2000 was a happy year since he got married to his fourth wife Asya Selutina (an accomplished guitarist herself), with whom they have a son (Constantine) born in 2005.

From 1999 to 2004, he was the producer of a monthly radio program entitled ‘Guitar is my island’ on ‘Orpheus’ radio station. He presented the history of the classical guitar

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26 Focal hand dystonia causes involuntary movement, cramps or tremor in the hand or arm muscles usually when making highly practiced hand movements such as writing or playing a musical instrument. Focal hand dystonia is often called writer’s cramp or musician’s cramp.

27 Letter to this author, 21 July 1997.

28 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 9 February 2013.
and this definitely meant the classical one—when they announce on Russian radio the term ‘classical guitar’, they frequently broadcast flamenco guitar! He presented only a small amount of pre-classical music (e.g. that from the Baroque); he mainly started from Fernando Sor onward. He discussed famous composers, players and events. Among others, he broadcasted four programmes on Julian Bream: about the music that he inspired to be composed; about his lute playing; and a programme on the works Bream did with orchestra. There were three programmes on Heitor Villa-Lobos, discussing several issues including the discovery of the manuscript of his studies, which appeared different than the published version. He also broadcast a recording of Villa-Lobos performing his own Chôros Nr1 and Prelude Nr2 on the guitar proving that—unlike what Segovia had said—Villa-Lobos was an excellent player. In 2004, he was asked to cut down the programme to half an hour instead of one; he refused, arguing that there was not enough time for the presentation of whole pieces (which was a must for him), in addition to the fact that the fee was far too small and the workload too much. However, during this five-year stint, he sometimes received generous grants for specific projects; for example, he presented Joaquin Rodrigo’s music in six programmes, which were then included in the official Rodrigo archives by Cecilia, Rodrigo’s daughter. For five years, the ratings for his programme saw it in first place. He received many letters, most of them very moving and enthusiastic and only very rarely some offending ones from envious guitarists who did not want Koshkin to direct this programme, or from those who wanted to hear flamenco instead of classical. But most people were very warm and he was surely correct in his belief that many listeners did not like classical guitar because they did not know about it. And ‘if they learned about it they would love it, because it was not possible not to love it’. People thanked him for having opened for them this world, which they did not even guess that it existed.

Nikita Koshkin has released three CDs, two of them under the American label, Soundset Recordings: *The Prince’s Toys, Koshkin plays Koshkin (1998)* and *The Well Tempered Koshkin* (2000). The third CD, named *Oratorium*, included works for flute and guitar (Koshkin in collaboration with the Muscovite flautist, Svetlana Mitryaikina)

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29 Ibid.
and was released by Kreuzberg Records in Germany (2003).\textsuperscript{30} Around 1994, he had recorded the same program as his first CD for the Czechoslovakian company Supraphon, but it was never released because the cut they presented him with was very poor and it was impossible to repeat it since the recording engineer had deleted the rest of the takes!

In December 2010, the very first Asian international classical guitar festival and competition took place in Calcutta, India. The competition bore the title of the Calcutta International Classical Guitar Festival and Competition ‘Nikita Koshkin’ and the composer himself was the guest of honour of the event, as well as the chairman of the jury.

Since the time that he stopped playing, composition has been Koshkin’s main occupation, while he also teaches guitar in the ‘State Classical Academy’ in Moscow where the guitar is an independent class in the classical division. As he once commented, with an unusual degree of honesty for one in his position: ‘I do not like teaching very much, but I can see that my pupils like my teaching so I try to do my best’.\textsuperscript{31} However, he has tried to enrich the repertoire for young students by writing easy pieces for them, including those in the cycles ‘Masquerades’, ‘Happy Birthday!’, ‘Da Capo’, ‘Nominativus Singularis’, each of them including twenty-four easy pieces. Thus, despite the fact that he admits an element of dislike with regard to teaching, he has contributed to the profession more than many other teachers. Apropos of ‘Masquerade’, which was the first such cycle that he composed (1985), he said:

\begin{quote}
My idea was to lead young pupils very tactfully to modern musical language. That is why I used melody and titles and I tried to make the musical language very clear but also modern, not to frighten away little pupils from modern music.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

Koshkin never wanted to leave his country although, nowadays, he is not sure that this was not a mistake. The education system in Russia is constantly changing for the worse, while it was ranked as third worldwide during the Soviet era. Mikulka always


\textsuperscript{31} Clinton, George: ‘My work is inspired by my great love for guitar and music. Nikita Koshkin’, [interview with Nikita Koshkin] *GUITAR INTERNATIONAL* magazine (September 1986), 7-14.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid
tried to persuade Koshkin to flee (as he had done), however, even when he would be free to do so (after 1989), he considered that being a Russian composer it would be better if he lived in Russia—an idea that he later rejected.

Since 2000, he has lived with his wife and son in Zelenograd, a satellite city of Moscow, around forty-five kilometres from Red Square.

His mother never believed in his talent until the end of her life (2000) and was sure that his music is very strange, although she was indeed happy that he was travelling and was successful. She used to tell him ‘You know, Nikita, your musical career is a big mistake’! Even the Usher Waltz (which is somehow easier for the average listener to perceive) did not entirely convince her. Most likely, she did not want to accept that her wish to make him a diplomat might have been wrong after all. On the other hand, his father watched the program called ‘Musical Kiosk’ every week on the main television channel, hoping to hear Nikita’s name mentioned but, sadly, without success. Nevertheless, eventually he agreed that Nikita’s music was interesting. He died when Nikita was thirty (before his exit towards the West) so he did not have the chance to see his subsequent major success, otherwise he would have most likely become a warm supporter of his son’s choice.

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33 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
NIKITA KOSHKIN’S MUSIC

Almost all of Koshkin’s music is written either for solo guitar or includes the guitar; the only exception was music that he wrote during his composition studies, among others one piano piece entitled ‘Enchanted Stream’ (around 1975), a transcription for quartet of clarinets of his solo guitar piece ‘Parade’ and a piece for archlute (2013). His early pieces have all been lost during his several changes of home.

Koshkin’s music can be found in the repertoire of guitarists such as John Williams, Vladimir Mikulka, the Assad Brothers guitar duo, Stein Erik Olsen, Ricardo Cobo, Eden-Stell Guitar duo, Zagreb Guitar trio, Fabio Zanon, Judicael Peroit, Dimitri Illarionov, Gabriel Bianco and many others.

Koshkin has often been inspired by fairy tales, ancient Greek myths or stories, with several of his pieces bearing imaginative titles (The Prince’s Toys, Usher Waltz, Pan, Elves, Kyparissos—composed for the author—Orfeo, Leda, Amphion). Thus, his music has often been programmatic, a most representative example being ‘The Prince’s Toys’, where the sound effects facilitate the telling of the story through music, while in the ‘Usher Waltz’, loud rasgueado\textsuperscript{34} chords and ‘Bartok Pizzicatos’\textsuperscript{35} describe the descent towards madness of the main character of Poe’s novel.

Specifically concerning the sound effects in ‘The Prince’s Toys’, he said:

\textit{The idea was not to imitate—for instance military drums [...]—but to use the effect as a symbol in order to make the picture and the musical image more complete and vivid. I tried to use all the effects in this manner.}\textsuperscript{36}

Recently, Koshkin has worked extensively on a project that he calls either ‘invasion into the classics’ or a ‘music restoration’.\textsuperscript{37} He has been working on pieces for guitar and orchestra, or for guitar in a chamber group and even on solo pieces by guitar composers of the classic period, where he has either completed them, or added an orchestra part, remaining as faithful as possible to their original style. As he comments regarding the composers of that period: ‘They had such clean minds, which resulted in

\textsuperscript{34}\textit{This term will be described in Chapter Four (‘Megaron’ Concerto for Guitar and String Orchestra).}

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{A hard pizzicato in which a string is snapped back onto the fingerboard, first used by Béla Bartók (thus it was named after him).}

\textsuperscript{36}Clinton, George: ‘My work is inspired by my great love for guitar and music. Nikita Koshkin’, [interview with Nikita Koshkin] \textit{GUITAR INTERNATIONAL} magazine (September 1986), 7-14.

\textsuperscript{37}Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
music with a lot of sunlight, then the music started becoming more and more dramatic and now I think that we are at the bottom of that.⁴⁸

One of those pieces was Fernando Sor’s Grand Solo, which, as he states, was supposed to be accompanied by some kind of orchestra (presumably); there are different sources implying different ensembles for that piece, but it was apparently written for an ensemble with solo guitar. This perhaps explains why it has such long episodes that sound as if they need accompaniment, even though it was long considered as being purely for solo guitar. With the addition of the orchestra it sounds so natural, something that strengthens the belief that it was written for such a combination. The same issue arises with the Giuliani concerto for violin, guitar and orchestra (Original: ‘Duo Concertant pour violon et guitare op.25’). Koshkin was so enthusiastic to be commissioned for the edition of the latter that he feels as if it is his own music when he listens to it! One other such piece is the Ferdinando Carulli ‘Duo Concerto in G for flute, guitar and orchestra’ where Nikita initially corrected the printing mistakes and then later decided to add some variations and an orchestral tutti in the final movement. Another Carulli piece that he arranged was the Concerto in A, op.8a. Only the first and third movement (Polonaise) are extant, so Koshkin added a cadenza. He then found a beautiful little Carulli solo piece for beginners called Romance and he built a second movement on the latter by writing variations and orchestrating it in an attempt to replace the missing one. Moreover, he added several ideas, including a final virtuoso coda to the third movement.

Koshkin’s music is published by numerous important publishers around the world: Edition Margaux (Germany), Henry Lemoine (France), Papagrigoriou-Nakas (Greece), Mel Bay and Editions Orphee (USA), Doberman-Yppan (Canada), Gendai Guitar (Japan), Chorus (Finland) etc.

⁴⁸ Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 8 February 2013.
CHAPTER THREE
THE GUITAR CONCERTO:
ORIGINS AND A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ITS DEVELOPMENT

The first example of the guitar concerto as a genre was the ‘Grand Concerto for guitar and orchestra’ in D major by B. Vidal¹; while a few more guitar concertos were written during the nineteenth century, including some remarkable works by Mauro Giuliani (1781–1829), Ferdinando Carulli (1770–1841), Antoine de Lhoyer (1768–1852) and Francesco Molino (1775–1847), the form evolved mainly from the twentieth century onward.

The first known guitar concerto of the twentieth century was written (probably in 1930) by the Mexican guitarist and composer Rafael Gómez Adame (1906–1963); the composer premiered his concerto in July 1930 in his own guitar-piano reduction,² while, in 1932, he performed the orchestral version, too.³ In 1933 he wrote a second work with orchestra and although both works have some historical importance, their aesthetic value is minor.

Fortunately, the legendary guitarist Andrés Segovia (1893–1987), whose contribution to the guitar’s repertoire and destiny was crucial, began asking composers to write concertos in the late 1920s, so that he could stand next to famous performers of instruments such as the piano and the violin.⁴ He asked composers such as the Italian Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895–1968), the Mexican Manuel Maria Ponce (1882–1948) and the Brazilian Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959). His efforts bore fruits only a decade later when the first substantial guitar concerto of the century (and one of the most important for the instrument), was composed. It was the Concerto in D by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco,⁵ a work that Segovia had urged the latter to write for years. It was completed and premiered by Segovia on October 28th, 1939 (nine years after the Adame concerto) in Montevideo, Uruguay, where Segovia was residing at the time with his Spanish wife and important pianist, Paquita Madriguera (1900–1965).

¹ The concerto by B. Vidal (?-1800) [his full first name is unknown] was advertised for sale early in 1793. Guitar Notes, home page, (Accessed 30 April 2013)
http://www.spanishguitar.com/Product/11857/87/Concerto-(yates)-[gpr]_Vidal,-B./
² Initially it was simply called ‘Concierto’ but, for a subsequent performance in 1950, the composer renamed it ‘Concierto Clásico’.
⁵ With Segovia’s encouragement, Castelnuevo-Tedesco wrote around one hundred works for guitar.
From 1926, Segovia discussed with Ponce the notion of the latter composing a concerto for him; however, this did not transpire until 1940, occasioned by Ponce's conducting of the Mexican premiere of Tedesco's Guitar Concerto, with Segovia as soloist. After he received the biggest part of the score, in a letter to Ponce, Segovia—who was the inspiration of all Ponce’s works for guitar—wrote in a letter to Ponce that the concerto was ‘healthy, graceful, beautiful and, belonging all to music of superior dignity, it is also melodic, spontaneous and heart-rending. It will have a clamorous reception wherever there is a sensitive public accustomed to listening.’ Ponce’s ‘Concierto del Sur’ was premiered on October 4th, 1941, in Montevideo; naturally Segovia was the soloist.

Another important contribution directly spurred by Segovia was Heitor Villa-Lobos’s ‘Concerto for guitar and small orchestra’. Although they first discussed the idea in 1925 when Villa-Lobos told Segovia that he wanted to write a concerto for guitar and percussion [!], Villa-Lobos only composed the concerto in 1951. However, the composer had written another work for guitar and orchestra in 1929, the ‘Introduction aux Choros’ (an overture to the cycle of fourteen Choros for various instrumental combinations), which included some elements that were a forerunner of some of the Concerto’s ideas. The Concerto was premiered by Segovia in Houston, Texas, in 1956.

While Segovia was the inspiration behind these three very important concertos, it is a great surprise that he never played the most famous of all guitar concertos, the ‘Concierto de Aranjuez’ by Joaquín Rodrigo (1901–1999). By an impressive coincidence, Rodrigo composed ‘Aranjuez’ in spring of 1939, only a few months after Castelnuovo-Tedesco finished his own concerto, thus making the year 1939 a landmark for the guitar repertoire. The ‘Aranjuez’ was premiered on 9 November 1940 in Barcelona, with Regino Sáinz de la Maza as the soloist. It is a mystery why Segovia never played this significant work. It seems that he had the music and was working on it with enthusiasm, planning to play it in

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8 The concerto was originally called ‘Fantasia Concertante’. Heitor Villa-Lobos website, 30 April 2013, http://www.villalobos.ca/guitar-concerto
10 Sáinz de la Maza was the dedicatee and most likely the one who gave the idea to Rodrigo to compose a guitar concerto; Wade, Graham: Joaquín Rodrigo - A Life in Music, Travelling to Aranjuez: 1901–1939 (Withernsea: GRM Publications, 2006), 411.
various venues. However, as he often did with other works, Segovia proposed some changes to Rodrigo, which the latter did not approve of; maybe this was one of the reasons why the concerto remained in Segovia’s drawer forever—the other probably being that the guitarist refused to use amplification, with the size of the orchestra required by Rodrigo’s work making this too difficult a task. However, he did perform several times another concerto that Rodrigo wrote for him, the ‘Fantasia para un Gentilhombre’ (1954). In any case, the ‘Aranjuez’ is established as one of the most remarkable works for a solo instrument and orchestra.

By the mid-century mark, the guitar concerto consequently emerged as an important form. Apart from the abovementioned works, Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Rodrigo wrote another three concertos each. The great guitarist Julian Bream (b.1933) inspired the writing of concertos by composers such as Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006), Richard Rodney Bennett (1936–2012) and Lennox Berkeley (1903–1989).


The composer-guitarists mentioned in the Introduction (Leo Brouwer, Sérgio Assad, Roland Dyens, Dušan Bogdanović and Nikita Koshkin), have all written more than one concerto for guitar and orchestra. However, the figure who has contributed the largest number of guitar concertos than any other is the famed Cuban guitarist, composer and conductor, Leo Brouwer, who can boast no less than eleven concertos to date, as part of his voluminous output for the instrument. Ten of these concertos as well as other works for guitar and orchestra, were already composed by the time that the ‘Megaron’ Concerto was written.

Brouwer’s music has been played by practically every guitarist (Koshkin in the past performed his Espirai Eterna, Tres Apuntes, Elogio de la Danza, Danza Caracteristica etc.) and one would imagine that he possibly influenced Koshkin as well. However, as the latter said in an interview in 1993, he was influenced and he admired more his Russian composer-ancestors, rather than other guitarist-composers: ‘my musical education in Russia was anything but specifically centred on guitar. The composers I really appreciate are not guitar
composers.' Additionally, he was asked by this author if Brouwer’s concertos, or concertos by other guitarist-composers have influenced him in the composition of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto and he answered: ‘I was trying to make something different, very specifically my own style, with understanding of the concerto form, as it evolved in Russian music.’

Indeed, his ‘Megaron’ Concerto is rather unique among the other guitar concertos written by guitarist-composers and does not seem to have many similarities with them, other than the fact that they have all used the instrument’s possibilities to a great extent; a player can feel each work is especially for this instrument and could not be for another. Moreover, none of the above-mentioned, guitarist-composers have ever used an avant-garde musical language in their concertos (the only exception being Leo Brouwer in his first one); however, even the latter abandoned such syntax in his second concerto. Finally, all the composers in question utilized a form of tonality, even if it is rather free in most cases.

After Koshkin had composed works for solo guitar or small chamber groups on a broad scale, it was inevitable that he would seek to explore the possibility of incorporating the guitar into more extended forms. His first concerto, the ‘Megaron’ Concerto for guitar and string orchestra (2005), was followed by another six works for one or more guitars, with orchestra.

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12 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 30 January 2014.
For every composer, writing a concerto is considered a highlight in terms of their work and as challenging as writing a symphony, or even an opera. Koshkin had been planning to compose a guitar concerto long before he eventually undertook the task. In an interview back in 1986, when asked if he had written a concerto, he answered:

I haven’t yet had the occasion to compose one, but I would like to compose a guitar concerto. I’ve tried several times to compose a piece for guitar and orchestra, but I was immediately distracted from this work by some urgent orders.¹

The opportunity arose when the author discussed the idea with Alexandros Myrat, the director and conductor of the Camerata Orchestra of Friends of Music—the permanent string orchestra of the Athens Concert Hall (the latter also known as ‘Μέγαρο’ Μουσικής, trans. ‘Mansion of Music’). Mr. Myrat, who was very interested in the possibility of having a piece especially written for the orchestra by an internationally-renowned composer, awarded the commission to the latter in 2004. The ‘Megaron’ Concerto was composed in January–May 2005. The appropriately-titled concerto received its world première in the latter venue on 27 March 2006, and it was performed by the Camerata Orchestra, under the conductor, Alexandros Myrat, with Elena Papandreou (the author) as guitar soloist. The work was thus written for and dedicated to the author. Before he came to a decision about its final name, in an e-mail message to the author on March 19, 2005, Koshkin wrote: ‘Shall I give it a special title? Something like “Greek Concerto” or “Olympic Concerto”? ’ In another e-mail to the author, Koshkin wrote: ‘Dear Elena, the Concerto is finished. Right now I put the last note in the score!’³ After sending it to the author, Koshkin wrote to her:

Please, let me know if the score will reach you. And please let me know your impressions immediately. Because I’m really trembling. [!] I hope you'll like it! I pray to God for you to like the music!⁴

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² The Greek word μέγαρο (megaron) translates as ‘mansion’.
³ E-mail message to author, 2 May 2005.
⁴ Ibid, 6 May 2005.
It is understood that every new piece has a life of its own and only after it gets performed, can prove its actual value. As Koshkin remarked in an interview in 1993: ‘Every piece of music is sort of life which you are creating and each one has specific forces unique to itself and its development.’ Despite Koshkin’s worries, this author was very impressed by the Concerto and considers it one of the best works that she ever performed. Koshkin invests considerable energy and efforts in order to make every work of his at least at the level of the previous ones, confirming the measure of his conviction in a 1986 interview:

I am still trying to make all my new pieces like the last one; to put all my possibilities, soul and inspiration into the work, without any reservation for the future compositions. And every time I finish a new composition I have the feeling that it will be impossible to compose anything new.

When Koshkin writes a piece, he does not normally come under the influence of the person for whom he writes; but, as he opines:

When this person is a dear friend as you [this author] are, then it gets personal and I want to do the best I can. That is why the ‘Megaron’ Concerto is probably one of my most beloved works. And also I was not afraid. In some other work I might be scared to write for example such long pedal notes for the orchestra. Composers avoid doing this, since it is not so pleasant for string players to hold long notes. But with this concerto I did not worry about this or about anything. It is so important when you feel free and relaxed to write whatever you want.

After its première, the author had more opportunities to perform the ‘Megaron’ Concerto: with the Istanbul Chamber Orchestra and the Turkish conductor, Hakan Sensoy, in Istanbul, Turkey (3 April 2006); the Bucharest Philharmonic Orchestra ‘George Enescu’ and the Romanian conductor Cristian Mandeal in Bucharest, Romania (18 and 19 May 2006); the Orchestra of Colours and Greek conductor Miltos Logiadis in Athens, Greece (22 April 2007); and the Orquesta Juvenil de la ESMDM and the Argentinian conductor, Claudio Tarris, in Monterrey, Mexico (3 April 2009). In August 2009, it was recorded with the Singapore Philharmonic Orchestra and the Chinese conductor, Lan Shui, for a CD by BIS, which is duly submitted as part of this dissertation.

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7 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 12 April 2013.
The duration of the concerto is thirty-eight minutes\textsuperscript{9} and it is cast in four movements:

1. \textit{Allegro Sostenuto} – \textit{Allegretto Marziale} – \textit{Tempo Primo} (10’12’’)
2. \textit{Allegro Assai} (6’32’’)
3. \textit{Adagio} (10’57’’)
4. \textit{Vivo} – \textit{Andante} (10’19’’)

Four movements are more commonly found in symphonies, sonatas or quartets and less in concertos that more often comprise three movements (usually fast - slow - fast).

Koshkin made this choice in order to have contrast; after extensive development, the first movement ends in a calm manner; the second is fast and lively; the third is slow and expressive; and the last is, once more, fast. He took this decision before he started to compose the piece and did not change his mind on the way. However, this is not always the case with his music. In a 1986 interview he stated:

> Of course, the results do not always match up to my first ideas; the conception can change during the work, especially when the piece is long. For instance when I began to compose my ‘Concertino’ for two guitars [1981], I was sure that it would be a composition in three movements like the classical concerto: allegro, andante, allegro. [...] Working with the first movement I felt that the composition must be only in one movement. It was absolutely clear and the music prompted me to change the initial conception. [...] But some times when the work is finished I can see that I have exactly what I was planning.\textsuperscript{10}

Koshkin had gathered the material for the whole work and had a very clear idea how he wanted it to be, before he started working on it. He first composed the first movement, then the fourth; next came the second and, eventually, the third movement. He inscribed the melody and the harmony directly into the guitar part, being faithful to what he had said twenty years ago: ‘I cannot feel harmony as something which is independent from melody; they are a single unity. I never write a melody and then harmonise it; always the two come together. Never once I have done otherwise!’\textsuperscript{11} Moreover, he composed the guitar and the orchestra part simultaneously; as he mentions:

> It was so clear what should be where, that I did not really hesitate. It was coming immediately with the score. I ‘heard’ what the orchestra is playing along with the guitar. It was of course a hard work, just because it was a huge task but in reality it was very clear what I had to compose.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{9} The durations are as in the CD submitted with this dissertation.
\textsuperscript{10} Clinton, George: ‘My work is inspired by my great love for guitar and music. Nikita Koshkin’, [interview with Nikita Koshkin] \textit{GUITAR INTERNATIONAL} magazine (September 1986), 7-14.
\textsuperscript{12} Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 11 April 2013.
He certainly added many corrections after he finished every movement, but they were mostly minor ones. As he comments: ‘after I finish a work, I have to listen to it over and over and of course I find some mistakes that I have to correct.’13 Certainly, modern computer technology and music composition software, which allows listening to a score before it is actually played (by humans!), are a valuable aid for composers and naturally for Koshkin, as well. Besides, the ease with which he wrote the concerto can be proved by the fact that he finished it a couple of months before the deadline that was agreed with the orchestra (its compositional gestation took about five months, as it was completed in May 2005 while the première was scheduled for March 2006).

The period when he composed the concerto was a very happy one, as his son, Constantine, was born in January 2005. Before composing the third movement and completing the work, Koshkin wrote to the author: ‘I do really try to put all my love into the music of the Concerto. I hope I manage. Now the last step is to be made...’14

While Koshkin’s music is broadly tonal, he sets himself free from the boundaries of harmonic rules. Twenty years ago, he said:

As far as the architecture of the piece is concerned, I need a big solid foundation to keep the house in order. Tonality is that bedrock. I notice that many composers today are coming back to tonality, but I never went away from it. Take the tonality of C major. It does not mean that you have only seven steps; you have twelve, all with equal weight. Every step is independent.15

His harmonic language is derived from Prokofiev and Shostakovich, with the ‘Megaron’ Concerto being no exception in terms of his proclivities toward writing tonal music. As he claims:

It is a tonal work because we feel the tonality but this goes to all possible directions, even clusters, no limits. The mistake is to understand tonality as limitation. It is not a limitation, it is a basic tone, a centre, which gives the ground for the music.16

And as he said in the past:

If you think that tonality represents chains, then by all means cut them to be free—but [still] you will not have real freedom because you are already not able to use something.17

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13 Ibid.
14 E-mail message to author, 12 April 2005.
16 Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.
In the abovementioned interview he also stated:

My harmony is more based on intonation than on classical rules, founded on the melody and the feeling of the harmony.18

What he meant he explains today: he preferred to follow the harmony that was created by the melodic line, which is often beautiful. If he strictly obeyed rules that compel a composer to take into consideration every melody note as part of the harmony, then the latter might be wrong; thus he would have to change the melodic line. Therefore, in the past, he liked disregarding the rules in order not to miss chances for creating beautiful-sounding harmony. However, today he does this less and follows classical rules as much, depending on the requirements of the piece. As he states: ‘Now I am more classical and less dissonant’19

In an interview with the author, the composer was asked about the difference in approach between composing a solo guitar work and a guitar concerto:

The concerto form creates other issues for the composer. The idea of the competition between the soloist and orchestra—the balance problems, the much larger scale, etc. Even with modern equipment, which facilitates greater dynamic possibilities, the process of writing for guitar with the orchestra is different from writing for solo guitar. With orchestra the guitar is more like a single voice – there is no need to put the whole texture on to the six strings only. But the orchestral accompaniment gives other possibilities to the solo instrument—particularly with regard to virtuosity, expression and dramatic tension. Of course the special moment of the concerto is the cadenza, when the guitar is suddenly allowed to take flight by itself.20

The ‘Megaron’ Concerto was commissioned by a Greek orchestra/Concert Hall and a Greek guitarist so it was fitting to enquire if there is any ‘Greek’ influence in the writing. In response, the composer stated that:

It starts from the very beginning. Ancient Greek music considered the three-beat metre as perfect. In later European music, the more common basic metre is two. So I combined both of these metres in the main theme. Plus, the idea of monodia. We used to think that the Ancient Greek music was monodic—no polyphony, no harmony, just one voice moving. This idea I did develop into quite static harmony, which follows the themes. There are several moments like that in the concerto. And at the same time the score has quite a lot of the polyphony. That gives the idea of one more dialogue—between the Greek and the Classical elements—like the dialogue of impressions, or traditions... something like that.21

Likewise, Koshkin has an obvious liking for words, myths, Gods and other mythical

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18 Ibid.
19 Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.
figures related to ancient Greece and has used them for titles of some of his works: ‘Pan’, ‘Oime’, ‘Kyparissos’ (dedicated to the author), ‘Leda’, ‘Amphion’.

Koshkin was asked to compare this concerto with two famous precedents in the genre, namely, Joaquin Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s ‘Concerto in D’:

I like a lot both of these famous works, Rodrigo and Tedesco. Wonderful compositions, brilliant ideas, perfect writing for both—for the guitar and for the orchestra. But both concertos are in a way more decorative music. They show the possibilities of the guitar, which by now has been very well examined. I tried [in the ‘Megaron’ Concerto] to bring some new and different aspects to the role of the soloist—more drama and tension which are not so typical of guitar music, as well as to create a fresh modern atmosphere which is more close and clear, and in a way more interesting to the listeners today. The guitar is not a novelty anymore; it is already an accepted instrument.23

Apropos of the Russian spirit present in much of his music, he commented:

The Russian spirit is first of all the depth. And the development, dramatic development. This I tried to create in many works. But ‘Megaron’ and the quintet [for guitar and string quartet] give some supplementary weapons to my arsenal. So in those compositions I was able to go further with my ideas. Further than before.24

Another concern of the author was the fact that most guitar pieces, including concertos, are not longer than twenty minutes while the ‘Megaron’ Concerto lasts thirty-eight. Would it sound too long to audiences who usually listen to guitar music? In the past some guitarists shortened pieces that they considered too long. For example, the renowned Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia cut down parts that he considered unnecessary (albeit with the approval of the composer) in Manuel Maria Ponce’s ‘Concierto del Sur’ and in the same composer’s ‘Sonata Romantica’, as well as in Federico Mompou’s ‘Suite Compostelana’. Koshkin was thus asked to defend the length of time of his concerto, as well as the Sonata (thirty minutes long):

It depends on the idea of the composition. The big serious one needs space to be placed, needs time to be said. The attempts to make the guitar bigger than it is, you'll find even in my early works. ‘Megaron’, the Sonata, the Quintet go the same way. And ... the audience ... we always make this mistake ... we think for the audience ... we decide what the audience would like or wouldn't ... but we couldn't know that ... the audience is numerous and all from individual listeners. The task is not to guess what they would like or not, but to make such music that will touch ALL the people sitting in the hall ... . You have to admit that it is possible to be bored with a two-

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21 Ibid.
22 In 1986, at the time when he composed ‘Pan’, Koshkin said that he was ‘carried away’ by ancient Greek mythology; Clinton: ‘My Work is inspired by my Great Love for Guitar and Music. Nikita Koshkin’, 7–14.
23 Koshkin interview, 7 May 2011.
24 Ibid
minute long piece. So: it's not the problem of the length but the problem of the music.\textsuperscript{25}

In a letter written to the author during the time he was busy composing it, Koshkin answered thus a question about the piece’s length, when he had composed all but the third movement:

We have roughly about twenty-five minutes. The third could be from six minutes to eight. So it will be around half an hour. Is it too long? In the concert it should be OK because the first is \textit{Allegro moderato (sostenuto)}, the second is \textit{Vivo}, the first half of the final is also fast. Nobody will be bored! Plus the music is catching, holding the attention, and has some surprises. It shouldn't be boring at all!\textsuperscript{26}

About the number of string players that the orchestra should include he suggested:

The minimum is (as you wrote) \textit{8-6-4-4-2} [meaning first violins, second violins, violas, 'cellos and double basses subsequently]. But the more players they have, the better it will sound. The guitar will be anyway with the microphone. So, the progressing conclusions are: \textit{10-8-6-6-3(4), or 12-10-8-8-4}, etc.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{26} E-mail message to author, 12 April 2005.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
The first movement of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto is used here in order to discuss, in detail, a number of issues—technical and interpretive—that can be also applied to other guitar music, but commonly overlooked in the literature, which usually discuss technique alone, or describes the music from a musicological viewpoint rather than a pragmatic one, as is the focus in this thesis. This movement is rather long (ten minutes and twelve seconds) and incorporates many different musical characters, including the two main themes. Thus, as it is the first movement, nearly all of the pertinent issues relating to the work as a whole arise in this movement. These thoughts and comments will be listed as ‘general remarks’, describing approaches to guitar technique and interpretation that can be applied to most guitar music apart from Koshkin’s. The discussion in relation to subsequent movements, will only address new and additional aspects that occur and will not detail those issues already addressed in the first movement to the same extent.

The first movement is written in sonata form but not in the traditional way, as Koshkin confirms:

Of course it is not traditional. But it is based on the main principal of the sonata form—the conflict of the themes. There are some special characteristics in the themes. The main theme expresses the general subject of the concerto.\(^{28}\)

He thereafter speaks again about the fact that he used the combination of three and two beats in the main theme, something that ‘brings a very specific and clear character to the music—a somewhat nervous and unstable disposition.’\(^{29}\) As he continues:

The second theme is a sort of leitmotif of the concerto; it also appears in the final movement, where it sounds completely different than in the first. In the first movement, as well as its coda, it is subjected to various transmogrifications, metamorphosing into different characters along the way. In the final movement however, it is very Maestoso, and hymn-like.\(^{30}\)

\(^{28}\) Koshkin interview, 7 May 2011.
\(^{29}\) Ibid.
\(^{30}\) Ibid.
4.1.1. OUTLINE OF INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS

4.1.1.1. Bars 1–19

The guitar part in the first movement begins with a repeated D minor arpeggio, a very clever means by which to allow the soloist to ease into the task through easy warm-up bars before the statement of the difficult initial theme in bar 20. The soloist is almost alone in the three first bars, a fact that allows him to define the tempo as well. From bars 4–19, the first and second violins present the first theme (the ‘main theme’ as the composer refers to it), which ‘expresses the general subject of the concerto.’ It consists of sixteen bars (4 + 4 + 8), a pattern found in many works. Inspired by the abovementioned idea of combining three and two, he wrote groups of three quavers in the guitar part and tuplets for the theme played by the violins:

Example 4.1.1.1.1. (Bars 1–10)

In the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, Koshkin used an idea that he had not used before: while the melody would require him to change harmonies in the accompaniment, in some places he decided instead to maintain the same harmony (in this case, a D minor chord) throughout. As he states ‘this gives a macabre colour, very dark and depressing.’

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31 Ibid.
32 Ibid, 11 April 2013.
4.1.1.2. Bars 20–35

The first theme is then presented in the guitar part with rich six-voice chords, accompanied, on this occasion, by the orchestra with D minor arpeggios.

Example 4.1.1.2.1. (Bars 20–27)

4.1.1.3. Bars 36–61

This section sees the first development of the theme, with a virtuosic solo guitar part consisting mainly of fast arpeggios and scales. The orchestration becomes much lighter, the main element being intermittent interjections on the part of the violins who imitate the first four-quaver motive of the guitar part—the first violins an octave higher in bars 36, 40, 44 and 48, starting three quavers after the guitar; the second violins in unison with the guitar, in bars 37, 41, 45 and 49, starting one bar after the guitar. The rest of the orchestra—violas, ’cellos and double basses—play soft pizzicatos in bars 36–51.
In bars 52–55, the orchestra harmonically supports the sudden dynamic changes in the guitar part (from \textit{f} to \textit{mp}), in bars 56–58 they play again \textit{mp} D minor arpeggios and in bars 59–61 they sustain a D minor chord, thus helping the guitar release the previously accumulated tension.

\textbf{4.1.1.4. Bars 62–83}

Once more, the guitar presents the beginning of the first theme, this time with an accompanying second line a fifth lower. This line was played by the second violins in the first presentation of the theme in bar 4. Now it is the second violins and the violas, respectively, that imitate these two voices starting one bar later and the ’cellos two bars later. This is followed by a concluding segment before the presentation of the second theme in the next section.
4.1.1.5. Bars 84–122

The second theme is presented here. Koshkin had used this theme before, in the cycle of easy pieces for children ‘Nominativus Singularis’ (2004) and, in particular, in the last piece which bears the title ‘Farewell’.
He uses the same theme in the fourth movement (bar 270 onward). The character changes and, as traditionally happens with the two themes in the first movement of a concerto, there is significant contrast between each. The character of the first theme is more serious and heavy, as well as more expressive (espressivo). Despite the fact that this section’s title includes the word marziale (martial), the musical context indicates that this is a ‘caricature’ of a march, rather than a real martial theme. Therefore, a lighter and somewhat playful interpretation is recommended, an idea additionally justified by the fact that it was used originally as a children’s piece. As the composer comments:

Of course it is not military. I was trying to avoid that sort of exact association. It's more purely musical. Plus the second theme is the leitmotif, which changes quite a lot after its first appearance. Even in the first movement the changes are quite strong.33

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33 Koshkin interview, 7 May 2011.
In bars 86–87, the ’cellos imitate bars 85–86 of the guitar part. Another example occurs with regard to bars 89 and 93 of the guitar part, which are imitated by the ’cellos in bars 90 and 94, respectively. A similar phenomenon can be found in bars 98–103, where the ’cellos imitate the entire guitar line, starting one crotchet after the guitar.

From bar 87 onward, Koshkin uses a new effect that is found in several places throughout the concerto: the first and second violins outline a (mostly, but not entirely) chromatic line in crotchet motion, where successive notes alternate between the two groups of instruments. As Koshkin stated in 1993:

> Chromatic motion gives a sense of drama, development and movement. It makes all the ingredients such as melody, harmony, rhythm, very mobile. If you use chromatic steps quite infrequently, then this occasional intrusion gives more tension to the piece. […] I do not want a chromatic salad! The use of chromatic movement, its rate and quantity, depend entirely on the piece.34

In bars 105–114, the second theme is played by the orchestra: the first violins start a major third lower and the second violins an augmented fifth lower; the ’cellos imitate the first violins, starting one crotchet later, while the guitar is tacet.

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In bars 115–122, the guitar uses the motives of the second theme of bars 85–96 almost identically, although this time there are repeated crotchet pedal notes on the note \( a \). The violas imitate the guitar theme at a crotchet’s remove, with the ’cellos following suit three crotchets later:

Example 4.1.1.5.3. (Bars 115–122)

4.1.1.6. Bars 123–135

The second theme reaches its climax in bars 123–135.
Example 4.1.1.6.1. (Bars 123–127)

Here the *marziale* indicated earlier finds its most overt expression in this section, chiefly through accented chords both in the guitar as well as in the orchestral parts. The guitar in bars 123–130 has a quaver rest on the downbeat followed by two *rasgueado*\(^{35}\) chords which function as upbeats—instancing an example of syncopation—while the orchestra has equally-accented chords on every beat. The effect created here is of consecutive quavers alternatively played by guitar and orchestra, creating a very lively dialogue between the two.

**General remark:** The most effective means to extract the loudest volume from the guitar is through the use of rasgueado. Even with a full orchestra (and not a string orchestra, as in this concerto) the guitar is capable of competing dynamically when playing loud rasgueado chords. This technique, most frequently used by flamenco players, uses the external side of the nails to percussively and rapidly strike chords. More specifically, either the fingers i,m,a simultaneously strum from the sixth string towards the first, or the

\(^{35}\) Term used to describe the technique of strumming the strings of the guitar in a downward or upward direction with the thumb, or other fingers of the right hand. The term *rasgueado* was used most commonly from the late nineteenth century, while, historically, the Italian term *battuto* or the Spanish *golpeado* was used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Strizich, Robert and Tyler, James: ‘Rasgueado’, *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press. (Accessed 15 March 2013). <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ditlib.dit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/22914>.
p from the first towards the sixth. The chords usually consist of six notes, though they may also contain fewer.

4.1.1.7. Bars 136–181

The guitar uses only percussive effects throughout this section (described later in detail). In bars 139–161, the same chromatic scale effect first described in connection with bars 87–104 occurs again, this time among three groups of instruments: violas, second violins and first violins. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the fact that there should be no accenting so as to facilitate interplay from one group to the other as if they were acting on a unified basis. This section is one of the most difficult of this concerto for the orchestra, especially as the orchestra has to play as soft as possible.

Example 4.1.1.7.1. (Bars 136–143)

From bars 162–181, the orchestra uses fragments of the first theme in different registers, while the concertino plays solo:
4.1.1.8. Bars 182–209

The first theme reappears here in the guitar part, this time centred on $E$, with a lower second voice in counterpoint. One bar later, the first violins play the same theme and the second violins play the guitar’s second voice. The same two voices reappear in bar 198 in first and second violins, centred here on $G$ (a minor third higher), to be imitated a bar later by the violas and ’cellos. Here the guitar accompanies with arpeggios consisted only of $G$ and $D$ notes, reminiscent of the very beginning of the Concerto where it was playing a $D$ minor arpeggio.
Example 4.1.1.8.1. (Bars 182–190)
4.1.1.9. Bars 210–228

In this section the solo part is developed in a virtuosic manner, while the orchestra accompanies very discreetly:

Example 4.1.1.9.1. (Bars 210–217)
4.1.1.10. Bars 229–262

Here we have the final climax of the first movement; the guitar part has extended scalic passages until bar 244 and plays the first theme with loud *rasgueado* chords in bars 245–257.

Example 4.1.1.10.1. (Bars 229–235)

All the orchestral groups (except the double basses) play *divisi*, building a gradual crescendo with accented notes in bars 229–242. From bar 245 they play loudly—without accents this time—accompanying the guitar’s *rasgueados* and from bar 256, *diminuendo* starts, resulting to pianissimo in bar 262.

Together with the *cadenza*, this section was the most difficult to compose and it took him a long time, also. As Koshkin comments, after the extensive development:

> The climax was to be extreme and I tried several versions before I got the idea of the orchestra ascending and then descending creating something like a cluster, while the guitar is playing the theme [in a] *tremolando* [fashion].

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4.1.11. Bars 263–348 (end of first movement)

From bar 263–348 the composer presents the violas in *divisi*, once more utilizing the chromatic scale first encountered in bar 87, where the notes were alternately played by each group.

Example 4.1.11.1. (Bars 263–269)

![Example notation]

In an overall sense, a very soft background is formed, above which the guitar plays fragments from the second theme, initially with dotted crotchet chords and later with linear tuplets; the soloist ends the first movement with a percussion effect similar to that initiated in bar 136:

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This kind of soft ending is favoured by Koshkin in several of his compositions—the Usher Waltz\textsuperscript{37} being the most famous and characteristic example in this regard.

\textsuperscript{37} Please see details in the Introduction and in the ‘Nikita Koshkin: Biography’ Chapter.
4.1.2. TECHNICAL AND INTERPRETIVE ASPECTS

4.1.2.1. Dynamics

Dynamics are one of the most important aspects in music-making and in structuring the interpretation of a piece. As Oscar Ghiglia\textsuperscript{38} states:

> The dynamic curve within a piece of music outlines the emotional contents of the work performed. As any structural level forming a musical composition—be it melodic, harmonic, rhythmic or definable otherwise—this aspect of sound creativity covers its existence from the very first to the very last moment of the time-span during which the piece lives. As well as in literature or the visual arts, music shows an ideally perfected picture of life, without unnecessary dead spots or irrelevant repetitions. Its dynamic structure is perhaps the most vital phenomenon of artistic performance, as it leads the listener through a virtual experience of life, lived with his own means of perception; a moment of life-expression indescribable but in this form of art!\textsuperscript{39}

One problem concerning dynamics in guitar playing relates to finger independence. A guitarist plays a polyphonic instrument but, unlike a pianist, he does it with the right hand only and almost always with only four of the five fingers. A pianist uses two hands and ten fingers. Thus, on the guitar all dynamic nuances and tonal colour is produced with those fingers alone. When the whole hand needs to produce only one sound and/or only one dynamic level, there is no problem. However, a significantly harder task for a guitar player is the production of different levels of dynamics or sound simultaneously: the organization of movement from the mind to the hand is more unified in its primary form, thus utilising the whole hand as a choreographic tool rather than the fingers independently. The latter is a task that demands high levels of neuromuscular coordination, kinaesthetic independence and movement-prioritization.

Satisfactory resolution of the issue of finger independence is of prime importance to the guitarist, with varying articulation of the constituent notes of a particular chord being the hardest. The production of a simultaneous crescendo and diminuendo is one of the most difficult tasks, as it is not only difficult for the hand to execute, but also for the brain to conceive of. It is certainly easier for a pianist to produce a crescendo with one hand and a diminuendo with the other but this is a ‘luxury’ that a guitarist does not have.

Some composers add many dynamic markings on their scores, others less. Nikita Koshkin indicates only few of them. But even with works that have many dynamics

\textsuperscript{38} Born in Italy in 1938, Ghiglia has cultivated a distinguished international career as an interpreter and teacher.

\textsuperscript{39}
added by the composer, there are many decisions to be taken by the players, too subtle to be written out in the score but nonetheless fundamental to the formation of a convincing and expressive presentation of a musical score. One of the technical features a player has to master is the control of all possible dynamics that his instrument can produce, as well as the effective production of a wide range of different dynamic gradations. As Pablo Casals opined: ‘Remember, that all music, in general, is a succession of rainbows.’

However, a concerto for guitar and orchestra has certain limitations with regard to dynamics. On the one hand, the guitar has to accomplish a range between *mp* and *ff*. However, there is a distinct difference between what a *guitarist* might call *mp* (close to the softest sound of the guitar) or *ff* (the loudest that a guitar can produce) and the same dynamics played by an orchestra. As expected, the same dynamics produced by an orchestra sound much louder, implying that dynamic levels are not absolute but defined by the possible range of each instrument or group of instruments in question. Moreover, during a guitar concerto even a passage played by the soloist in *mp* of the guitar is considered too soft and, most of the time, inappropriate in terms of the setting (an exception being when the guitar plays alone and the orchestra is silent).

On the other hand the orchestra can only play at the maximum level of *mf* when accompanying the guitar, as anything more than that can be used only for passages in which the latter is tacet or when accompanying the orchestra. Composers often ignore or forget these limitations and frequently write the dynamic levels in an absolute way or in the way they would wish the sound to be; however, when the orchestral musicians play such dynamics at the actual level notated, the result is that the guitar is not heard. In the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, some of the original dynamics written by the composer were eventually changed (with Koshkin’s approval) to address the abovementioned limitations.

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39 Interview with Oscar Ghiglia, 17 July 2011.
4.1.2.1.1. Amplification

At this point it is considered necessary to introduce a few paragraphs concerning amplification, as it has become a necessary means for a guitar concerto performance. During the twentieth century, the guitar’s sound tended to grow as the increasing attendance at guitar concerts—in halls progressively larger—demanded. An augmenting number of players today bring their own amplifying equipment and perform whole programmes of solo works, as well as a growing number of concerti with orchestra.

Concerning the use of amplification, Andrés Segovia commented:

It alters the beautiful sound of the guitar, nullifies it, renders it acid and metallic. From a loudspeaker you can still appreciate the artistry of the performer, the agility of his fingers, but you do not have the true sound of the instrument. I tell my students not to use amplification.\(^{41}\)

But Segovia commented thus during an era in which amplification, when used, often seriously distorted the sound of the guitar as an instrument during performances; much has changed since then, not least pertinent equipment and, indeed, knowledge about how to optimally amplify a guitar. Later, amplification became a necessary aid to the guitar soloist so that, during a concerto performance, he can ‘compete’ with the orchestra on more equal terms. Julian Bream used amplification of a discreet kind from about 1956 onwards when performing concertos, but never in solo concerts. However, for many years, John Williams has used a microphone for concertos and solo recitals alike\(^{42}\) (though this makes sense, considering that he often plays in exceedingly large halls).

The amplification helps both guitarist and orchestra to be freer and transcend any volume restrictions. Although there are objections concerning the amplification due to the deterioration of sound quality that can often result, it has become almost mandatory for every live performance of a concerto for guitar, sometimes specifically written with the sound of an amplified guitar in mind. To this author’s question whether the orchestral score of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto was conceived to match the dynamics of an amplified guitar, Koshkin answered:

Of course the amplification gives a lot more possibilities, first of all dynamic ones. Nowadays the equipment is so perfect that it is possible to put much more expression into the music for the guitar with the orchestra. That inspires me a lot. No more


It is not the purpose of this dissertation to go into detail about how a guitar should be amplified; however, the author wishes to present a couple of proposals that might help a player achieve better results. If the sound engineer can read music (unfortunately, this is not always the case), it would be advised that he study the score so that he may make some minor adjustments in the amplification during the concert (perhaps reducing it when the guitar plays alone or almost alone, and raising it when the guitar plays with the full orchestra in loud passages). This has to be done while rehearsing with the orchestra and these minor adjustments should be approved by the soloist and the conductor. Such matters are crucial: if the volume is fixed on one level from the beginning to the end of the piece—and if that level is too soft—there will be moments when the guitar will totally disappear (while playing together with the orchestra), or in the opposite case, if the volume is fixed at a high level in order to make the guitar audible at all times, it will sound unrealistically loud, for an instrument of its dynamic capabilities, when it plays alone. Besides, the quality of sound will be unsatisfactory. For example, when the guitar plays the main theme from bar twenty of the first movement of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, the orchestration is rather rich and the volume of the amplified guitar should be kept louder. However, during the lengthy guitar cadenza in the third movement, the volume has to be reduced. If these minute volume-adjustments between loud orchestral tutti and solo guitar parts are not obtainable, then the player has to adjust it by himself as much as possible. Therefore, if the volume has to be fixed at a level where even in loud moments the guitar can be heard, he should not play too forcibly, as amplification will make the guitar sound too overbearing in the moments when the soloist plays alone.

A second consideration that should be borne in mind is the position of the loudspeakers (which are usually placed in the front part of the stage floor). Usually, when they face the audience, the sound from the speakers becomes harsh and the guitar is heard from the right and from the left side of the stage while the player sits in the middle. Moreover, in this case, the musicians of the orchestra often cannot hear the soloist and can only rely on watching the conductor’s gestures in order to play along with the guitar: something that

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43 Koshkin interview, 7 May 2011.
removes the possibility for the guitarist and the orchestra to make real chamber music listening to each other, as it should be with a concerto.

Therefore, an alternative would be that the loudspeakers be positioned to face either the back of the stage or the sides of the latter, though this is largely dependent on the hall, the acoustics, the stage-size and the material on the walls around the stage. In this manner, the sound could be reflected indirectly from the stage in the direction of the audience, and the members of the orchestra can hear the guitarist also. Another option is to place both loudspeakers in the middle of the stage, one in front of the soloist facing the audience and one behind the orchestra facing the orchestra. In this manner, the audience hears the soloist from the direction where he actually is seated and the orchestra can hear the soloist from the other loudspeaker placed behind them. While these options are not always possible, it is advisable for the soloist and the sound engineer to try them, in an attempt to optimize the sound during the sound-check for the concert.

A third (and, in this case, final) issue is that when a guitarist is amplified, he has to take into consideration that the audience will most likely hear a harsher sound than that intended. Therefore, he should be especially careful with his tone-quality and thus aim for a rounder sound. An extra aid would be to use thicker, mellow- sounding nylon strings rather than those that contain carbon and usually sound harsher.
4.1.2.1.2. Dynamics in the First Movement of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto: Issues and Solutions

In the beginning of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, Koshkin has written $f$ (forte) in the guitar part. However, an $mf$ (mezzo forte) would be preferable since here the guitar accompanies the orchestra and $mf$ would produce a sufficient amount of volume without being too loud. After the violins present the first theme from bar four, the soloist should follow the dynamics of the orchestra, rather than play in a monotonous fashion.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.1. (Bars 1–10)

For the guitar arpeggio, only the beginning of each bar should be accented (not the middle) to avoid sub-dividing this gesture.

From bars 20–35, the orchestra should play very softly because their arpeggios could easily mask the guitar, which now plays the main theme at the most appropriate dynamic level of $forte$. However, the guitarist has to play $espressivo$ (expressively) as well. The sound has to be rich and round, and attention should be paid here so that the chords are not over-accented.

**General remark:** A common habit of guitarists is that when they play loud, they tend to add accents on chords especially, following the tendency of the hand to do so. This usually happens when a player touches the strings before plucking them or because of the
excess tension in many guitarists’ playing manner. Therefore, it is advised that one should work towards a relaxed playing technique and, more specifically (i.e. in the abovementioned case), to start the gesture of plucking before touching the strings. The hand needs some motion before plucking—an act which resembles (albeit on a much smaller scale) that of a percussionist readying himself before hitting the tympani. Such a motion results in one having more control over the tempo, in addition to having a milder sound, with more legato and, in this case, more expressive (as written).

Example 4.1.2.1.2.2. (Bars 20–27)

In bars 23 and 27, as a part of the theme is completed, there should be a slight diminuendo, although not enough to give the impression that a whole phrase or section has finished.

Given the fact that the pedal notes d – a – d’ in the three bass strings are played in all the six-note chords and that, in most chords, the notes of the third and first strings form an interval of an octave, the player must take care to also bring out the voice on the second string—although to a lesser extent than the main melodic line on the first string. This means that the ring finger a will play the loudest, the middle finger m a little less and the index i the least (especially in the three-note chords played with i, m, a). This comment is necessary, as many guitarists do not assign sufficient importance to the inner voices of chords, which are often inaudible. Particular attention should be paid to the third chord in bar 24, where the e’’ is natural, unlike the e♭’’ of the similar second chord of bar 20. This
ability to pluck with different fingers with varying degrees of intensity is an advanced and crucial element of technique neglected by many guitarists and it is one essential in achieving an accurate performance of this particular passage.

The composer does not indicate dynamics throughout the section stretching from bars 36–61. It is therefore recommended to start *mf* in the guitar part, so that the sound level can increase through the phrases that follow. Playing at *mf* will render the soloist audible since the orchestration now becomes much lighter, as described earlier.
Example 4.1.2.1.2.3. (Bars 36–61)

Here, in general, the soloist can dynamically follow the general melodic contour—initiating a crescendo when the line ascends and a diminuendo through its descent. Therefore, a crescendo in bars 37–38 and a diminuendo in bar 39 are advisable. In bars 40–41 and in the first half of 42, a small crescendo is indicated in every five-note rising pattern, reaching a local climax at the high b♭”” in the middle of bar 42—louder than the high a♭”” in bar 38. From here on, a diminuendo until the end of bar 43 concludes this phrase in a shapely fashion. However, it should not be so extreme that the overall tension significantly lessens, as the main climax of bars 36–61 occurs in bar 56.
In bars 44–47, there is a rhythmic and melodic imitation of bars 36–39, only now they appear an augmented fourth higher. In addition to the higher register, the dissonant character of the tritone here justifies starting at the increased volume level of *più f*. Equivalent *crescendos* and *diminuendos* as in bars 36–39 should be inserted at this point. Bars 48–50 also have the same melodic contour as bars 40–42, justifying a similar treatment dynamically.

In bar 51, the soloist as well as the orchestra should *crescendo* to reach a *forte* on the chord in bar 52. When its major sixth interval (\(d♭'\) - \(b♭'\)) is repeated an octave lower, it is suggested that it should be played *mp* (mezzo piano). This will allow a stronger *crescendo* in bar 53 towards another *f* and *mp* in 54. This time the *f* and *mp* should be incrementally greater than the previous ones.

**General remark:** *It is important to note that every dynamic marking (for example *p*, *mf*, *f*) is not only one level of sound; on the contrary, it includes a whole nuance of dynamics. So once again it is left to the interpreter to decide where to play a louder or softer *f* or a louder or softer *mp*. It depends on the role that every fragment plays in the overall structure and whether it must add or release tension.*

Bar 55 initiates the final *crescendo* to the high *f'''* in bar 56, the climax of bars 36–61. From 56–61, a long and gradual *diminuendo poco a poco* tapers this section to its conclusion.

In bars 62–83, once again there are no dynamics indicated. The first time that the theme was presented by the guitar from bar 20, the composer indicated an *f* and an *espressivo*; however, this time, an *mf* would be preferable so that it sounds more like a reminder of the theme and not as another beginning.
A listener recognizes a theme already heard, even if it is played softer than the first time. However, a much softer dynamic is not recommended, as the orchestra plays along and the guitar will not be heard. *Espressivo* could be added here as well. A *crescendo* would be also advisable as the notes move upwards as described earlier. The orchestral part is more effective starting from *mp*.

**General remark:** As mentioned above, the dynamics written by most composers for the orchestra when accompanying guitar, should be changed to one or even two levels lower (in this case, from *mf* to *mp*). In fact, it is surprising that composers almost never take this into account. Much valuable rehearsal time is usually lost where the conductor or the guitarist himself has to explain to the orchestral musicians that they must play at a softer dynamic level than what they see written in their parts. It is well known that orchestral musicians usually sight-read their parts, so they just play what they see. Even though a score will look strange if an orchestra plays most of the time *mf* or *p* or even *pp*, this is actually the realistic level that they have to accompany one of the softest musical instruments—namely, the guitar. An amusing anecdote could be mentioned here: when Segovia premiered the Villa-Lobos Concerto in 1956 (and considering that he never used amplification), he seemed so worried that the guitar would be masked by the orchestra (which included even horn and trombone), that he asked the composer to change the dynamics in the orchestra to *pp* or at times even *pppp*! The result was that after the first rehearsal (under the direction of the composer), when Segovia asked his wife whether she could hear the guitar, she replied that she could not hear the orchestra!

In bars 62–67, as the lower voice of the guitar is one fifth lower than the original theme, it would be interesting if this voice were played slightly louder than the top. Thus, the theme will be recognized even if it is played softer and the voice a fifth lower will sound

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like a new element if sufficiently highlighted. Moreover, the \(mf\) will aid in attaining a correct measure of \textit{espressivo} this time, as well as the little ‘dialogue’ between the guitar and the strings in bars 62–66.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.5. (Bars 62–73)

In bars 67–73, the orchestra without the guitar may play \(f\) as indicated by the composer.

\textbf{General remark:} when accompanying a guitar, orchestral musicians have to play much softer than usual, something that often makes them feel quite ‘repressed’; however, in orchestral tutti (without the guitar), an opportunity appears for them to play louder dynamics and reach the orchestra’s more natural volume.

At bar 74, the guitar continues the phrase that the orchestra just played in bars 67–73 and, naturally, it is marked \(f\). It has to sound loud enough to convince the listener that it is able to continue at the same dynamic level as the orchestra.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.6. (Bars 74–78)
The $f$ should be followed by a long diminuendo, to be continued by the orchestra until bar 83, this way concluding the first big section of the first movement: in other words, the presentation and the development of the first theme.

In bars 84–114 (Allegretto marziale), the guitar starts with an $mf$. The orchestration is discreet, which allows the guitarist to play in an expressive and well-shaped manner without having to struggle to be heard.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.7. (Bars 84–92)

As mentioned above, from bar 87, the first and second violins share a chromatic line. For this reason, it is very important that the two groups exhibit equal colour and dynamics so that this particular counterpoint may be followed. Moreover, when the notes ascend, the two groups of instruments should play crescendo and diminuendo when the notes descend.

The guitar should similarly play small crescendos and diminuendos following the upward or downward melodic motion of the notes within the ambit of $mf$. 
In bars 98–103, the notes in the guitar part form a wave-like motion with clear steps downwards. Whenever the notes ascend the crescendo should be a little less and when they descend the diminuendo should be a little more apparent, so the overall dynamics end p in bar 103.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.8. (Bars 98–103)

**General remark:** Within a musical phrase, there is an overall crescendo or diminuendo, or both, while there are also small successive crescendos and diminuendos. For example, in bars 98–103 we have a long continuous diminuendo that starts from an f and ends with p, but, within the phrase, one sees four-fold crescendos and diminuendos, each time under just a few notes. This gives the dynamic shape of a phrase that can almost never have only crescendo or only diminuendo. However, the smaller crescendos and diminuendos should be executed in such a way that they form the bigger dynamic shape of the phrase, resulting in a general diminuendo in this case.

In bars 105–114, the dynamic of the orchestra is f. It is recommended that there should be no crescendo towards the end (as the composer had indicated); on the contrary a diminuendo would be preferable, since the orchestral dynamics in the following section were changed to mp and mf.

In bars 115–122, the guitar part has f indicated. The volume of sound should be achieved more with the melody and less with the bass pedal note, as the latter can easily attract the attention and sound too loud and too harsh. While the character here is marziale (as mentioned above), it must appear in a musical and not military manner.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.9. (Bars 115–122)
For the entirety of this section, the guitar dynamics should be kept at a high level, considering that the climax is yet to come in the following bars with the rasgueado chords. However, here the guitar should not be played too loud (so as to avoid distortion) nor, similarly, should the orchestra be so loud that it masks the guitar. Therefore the violins should play an mp, the violas and violoncellos may play mf as they also have the theme and the double-basses mf as well, so they can satisfactorily underline the rhythmic character of this section.

In bar 118, there is a third voice in the middle register, consisted of the descending crotchets d’’, c #’’, b’ and a’. However, it is the e’’ semibreve that needs to linger in the mind’s ear of the audience while the middle voice has to be played considerably softer.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.10. (Bars 118–122)

**General remark:** Unlike the voice, bowed string instruments and wind instruments, the guitarist is somewhat restricted when it comes to dynamics. After plucking one note or chord, he cannot produce a crescendo, or even maintain the level of volume of the note or chord. On the other hand, the guitar is a polyphonic instrument; therefore, it can play more than one voice (two or more) at a time. For these reasons, when a guitarist plays the melody, there is a risk that less important notes of shorter rhythmic value can obscure the sound of the long ones and the listener will thereby forget the melody notes. For example, when there is a minim in the melody and under this, four quavers in the accompaniment, these four notes will easily obscure the minim that is meant to be heard throughout. In order to avoid such a situation, the guitarist should play the long and more important notes, even louder than he would have played them with a bowed or wind
instrument and the other voices even softer. This way they will still be audible until the next melody note/chord and the melodic line can retain a level of unity in the listeners’ ears.

Although the notes move downwards and normally the soloist would produce a diminuendo in bars 121–122, a crescendo is preferred in this case so that the player is adequately equipped to play at the highest volume of the guitar in the following rasgueado part.

In bar 123, the composer initially had an $f$ in the guitar part, which was changed to $ff$ by the author, since rasgueados give the unique opportunity to a guitarist to actually reach this dynamic level. On the other hand, Koshkin had put $ff$ to the orchestra, which was changed to $mf$, since all instruments play accented staccato chords and an $mf$ will sound equally loud to the guitar’s $ff$ (thus making the ‘dialogue’ between guitar and orchestra more effective).

Example 4.1.2.1.2.11. (Bars 123–127)

The top notes of the guitar’s chords form the melodic line in this section. In each bar of the passage from bars 123–126 there is only one melody note, repeated alternatively by the guitar and the first violins (i.e. only $a''$ in 123, only $b_b''$ in 124 etc.) while the notes
in the rest of the chords move upwards. Special attention should be paid here, as equal notes tend to be played the same, while in examples of good musical interpretation, notes must always sound different. In this case, the upward motion of the chords implies a crescendo in each of these groups.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.12 (Bars 123–126)

Moreover, given the fact that the only strong beat of the guitar in bars 123–126 is the third one, this gives a further reason why the loudest of the chords in every bar is the one on the third beat. Despite the fact that the first up-beat is usually accented in syncopated passages, here it is preferable that the first up-beat chord is the least forte, in order to lead towards the strong, aforementioned third beat.

From bar 127 onward, meno (less)f can result in a bigger crescendo until the climax in bar 131 (its second beat with $f \#^{\prime \prime \prime}$ on top, being the loudest in this section).

Example 4.1.2.1.2.13. (Bars 127–131)

As a rule, in a four-beat bar, the fourth beat is considered weaker than the third and it would not be played louder than the former. However, in bars 127–130, the top note of the chords on the fourth beat is always a minor third higher than that of the third beat. Thus, it is better that the fourth beat is played louder here, since the melodic line—rather than the strong beats—often indicates the shaping of dynamics.

**General remark:** The first (and, in bars of four, middle) beat is considered stronger and is usually played a little louder. However, it is a common musical mistake to decide which notes/chords of a bar should be louder and which softer, judging by their position in the bar alone. In fact, many musicians do not even decide this; they do it in a
mechanical fashion often even accenting those beats. Naturally, organizing music in equal bars implies some periodic alternation of strong and weak beats and, indeed, most of the time, the first and the middle beats are stronger and therefore louder. After all, on those very beats one usually sees bigger or/and more dissonant chords notated; furthermore, the harmony changes more often on these beats and it is more likely that the notes or chords have longer note values than those on weak parts of the bar. But, as with everything, there are exceptions. For example, the higher notes in a melodic line should usually be louder than the lower ones, as this is one of the elements that give shape to the melody. Playing an instrument is akin to imitating the human voice; thus, when a higher melody note is found on a weaker part of the bar, a singer would never stress the low note only because of its position in the bar.

During bars 123–133, a crescendo should be produced on each chord in order to make the top note of that chord the loudest one, as well as to avoid buzzing bass strings.

**General remark:** For every guitar string there is a limit in terms of dynamic range, after which it may make a buzzing noise. This depends on which string it is (bass strings buzz easier than treble strings); upon which fret is pressed (some notes tend to reach their limit sooner than others); on the quality of the instrument and of the strings but, also, on the player’s ability to use his guitar. Every player should be aware of these limits and should not exceed them, unless he intentionally wants a very harsh, somewhat scream-like sound (maybe in a particular contemporary piece). Otherwise, the overall dynamic level should be adjusted to these limits. Fortunately, this often matches with what is musically preferable, as bass strings usually have less of an important line than the top ones, on which the melody often lies.

From bars 136–181, the guitarist uses a combination of percussion sounds (described below in the section 4.1.2.7.).
From bars 136–161, the guitar and the orchestra play very soft (\textit{p} and \textit{pp} respectively). Despite the fact that the guitar plays \textit{piano}, it still has the solo and it must be stressed to the orchestra musicians that they really have to play at the lowest level in terms of dynamics. This is very difficult, considering the fact that, this time, three groups (the two violin groups and the violas) share once more the chromatic motion that appeared earlier. This means that they have to produce minute \textit{crescendos} and \textit{diminuendos}, following the line of the notes and, the same time, stay within the \textit{pp} (something rather difficult for all instruments). The guitarist must also endeavour to play softly, as the amplification (that most likely will be used in a live concert) tends to favour the percussion sounds more than the plucked ones. Moreover, the soloist can also produce small \textit{crescendos} and \textit{diminuendos} to match the higher or lower-pitched percussion sounds. The position that the percussion sounds have in the staff does not represent the actual notes, but they do represent their comparative height in terms of pitch.

At bar 160 the guitarist produces a \textit{crescendo}, arriving at \textit{f} at bar 162 when the orchestra plays the first theme once more, only here one tone lower (i.e. centred on C). Once again, it must be underlined that the guitarist has to control the limit of \textit{forte}, which may (if amplified) sound too loud and too ‘foreign’ in terms of the orchestra’s theme at this point. The non-concertino first violins start the theme in bar 162 and the solo violin in bar 163,
thus forming a canon (the concertino itself plays alone a number of times during the concerto). First violins (including the solo violin) produce a crescendo following the ascending melody. The notes of the second violins are descending, but they should simultaneously track the overall growth in terms of sound nonetheless, thus exemplifying one instance where a crescendo can occur when certain notes descend. However, crescendos and diminuendos match the ascending or descending line everywhere else in this particular section.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.15. (Bars 162–168)

The $f$ in the guitar is maintained until bar 180 when a diminuendo starts that lasts until bar 181, whereupon the entire percussion section ends.

At bar 183, the guitar starts the first theme once more, centred on $E$ this time. It also has a second, descending lower line, while the first five notes of the theme are ascending. The general dynamic level of the guitar here is $mf$, a most appropriate level for presenting the theme once again.
In bars 193–197, the guitarist produces a *diminuendo* and from bar 198 accompanies the orchestra, which now plays once more the first theme, this time centred on G.

From bar 210, a further solo guitar passage starts at *p*, whereupon the notes climb to a higher register and the player has the opportunity to produce striking *crescendos* and *diminuendos* using the dynamics capabilities of the instrument as much as possible.

The orchestra has to follow those dynamics but only in a subtle way, imitating the guitar’s range and not that of the orchestra. It is always difficult to persuade orchestral musicians to adjust to the rather small dynamic range of an instrument such as the guitar and it is something, about which, they should be constantly reminded by the conductor.

From bar 220 onward the soloist plays a chain of undulating triadic figures, articulated with another long *crescendo*. Here the orchestra should not mimic the soloist, as the register of the guitar has many middle and low-pitched notes that would be easily lost in the mix. In initial rehearsals, the orchestra had only *p* notated, but players who by instinct tend to follow the line started to *crescendo*, so a *no cresc.* was added to the orchestral part.
At bar 229, the guitar has a long scalar passage that encompasses almost the entire melodic range of the instrument. The orchestral part is notated with a *poco crescendo* and it has to be explained to the musicians that the crescendo has to be very gradual. Additionally, it has to last from bar 229–245, where the first movement has its loudest climax.

**Example 4.1.2.1.2.19. (Bars 229–238)**

*General remark:* It is very important that all musicians know not only that they have to produce a crescendo or diminuendo, but also how long this is going to last and from what dynamic level it will start and to what level it will end. For example, going from *p* to *f* within two bars requires a more abrupt crescendo than to do the same within four bars. As earlier explained, a player has to master the way to pass from one dynamic level to the other, in effect this implies learning the many different ways to do crescendo or
diminuendo. In the abovementioned example, the orchestra has to start from p in bar 229 to end f or even more in bar 245 (i.e. sixteen bars later). As such, this requires a slowly gradual crescendo.

From bar 243, the orchestra plays interweaving chromatic scales once again, but this time it is played effectively tutti (with the exception of the double basses).

Example 4.1.2.1.2.20. (Bars 243–248)

From bar 245, the climax of the first movement occurs and the guitar has the opportunity to play ff, only possible with rasgueado chords (as notated here). The original theme is presented by the soloist with repeated chords and the dynamic level has to remain loud until bar 256, whereupon both guitar and orchestra have to diminuendo and close this section—the guitarist playing p and the orchestra, pp.
From bar 263 until the end of the first movement, it is the violas (in *divisi*) that play chromatic lines. The abovementioned pattern of *crescendo*, *diminuendo* and colour change is particularly burdensome as they have to achieve it within the constraints of *pp* and *pizzicato*, which is an exceptionally hard task for players of bowed string instruments. The rest of the orchestra is also at *pp* until the end.
From bar 270, the soloist also stays at $p$ and it would be preferable if the chords are not arpeggiated, thus conferring a plainer, ritualistic character on the last part of this particular movement. Even though playing $p$, the soloist should shape his phrases with subtle dynamic changes.

The pattern found at bars 292–296 is repeated five times and it represents a fragment of the second theme starting from $f^\flat$ instead of a $c^\#$. The guitarist may vary each one only slightly, as the continuous repetition here must sound more like an obsessive recollection rather than something that has to develop. The dynamic level must remain low with
minute changes for shape; the only aspect that can change (albeit within limits) is the rhythm.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.24. (Bars 292–303)

**General remark:** Repetition is used in music in order to give players the opportunity to convey the same piece of music in a different way or for developmental purposes using the repetitions as steps. In the Baroque era, the player was also supposed to add ornaments. It is a defect when a musician plays repeats exactly the same—a phenomenon most common in students who do not know yet why the repeats are there, or how to vary their playing. Variances can be added in terms of dynamics, colour, rhythm and, rarely, ornaments (in today’s music, it is not common practice for an interpreter to add ornaments). However, in rare exceptions, repeated patterns can be played the same way, almost resembling the ‘fade out’ effect in popular music recordings.

The last bars of the first movement continue the previous ‘fade out’ with some of the percussion sounds presented earlier, reaching an almost inaudible level of sound.

Example 4.1.2.1.2.25. (Bars 324–348)

**General remark:** A listener who just heard a sound may have the impression of just having heard it again if the player repeats the gesture that produced it in the first place.
While notes that were not played before must not go under the level of audibility for a particular hall, something repeated earlier can reach a level where a player ‘pretends’ he is still playing even when he is not. As a result, the listener ‘hears’ sounds that the human ear cannot actually detect, which can have an almost magical effect.
4.1.2.2. Articulation and phrasing

According to Geoffrey Chew, articulation and phrasing are:

The separation of successive notes from one another, singly or in groups, by a performer, and the manner in which this is done. The term ‘phrasing’ implies a linguistic or syntactic analogy and since the 18th century this analogy has constantly been invoked in discussing the grouping of successive notes, especially in melodies; the term ‘articulation’ refers primarily to the degree to which a performer detaches individual notes from one another in practice (e.g. in staccato and legato).45

To separate phrases from one another, a musician adds minute gaps in terms of time where he stops the sound—much the same way that a singer takes a breath in order to sing the next phrase. Every instrumentalist at that point takes a real physical breath (not only a wind instrument player who is obliged to do so). Players of musical instruments actually imitate the human voice, whether they accompany singers or play solo or in groups with other instruments. Moreover, musical ‘speech’ is closely related to spoken or written speech, consisted of phrases and fragments of phrases as well as longer periods, which are equivalent to paragraphs in printed text. Therefore, a very important part of an interpreter’s job is to define those periods, phrases and fragments. Failing to do so sounds the way that an actor would sound if he spoke without commas and full stops.

Most musical scores include long phrasing curved lines showing where a phrase—or a fragment of it—starts and where it ends. Additionally, these curves indicate smaller groups of notes that are to be played in an interconnected fashion, while all the other notes have to be played more or less separately. These are common practice rules for almost all instrumentalists since time immemorial. For a wind instrument player, a phrase line indicates the notes to be played connected (always with one breath, unless the phrase is too long) and a bowed string instrument player will see which notes have to be played within one bow direction. A singer’s score may not have phrase lines, as the singer sings real verbal phrases that make it obvious where a musical phrase starts and where it is completed. When there are phrase lines marked, the singer normally breathes at the end of each line (although when the phrase is too long, an extra breath could be added during the phrase). In any case, all these factors depend on the musical period.

It is surprising, however, that guitar scores rarely have such phrase lines and only a few composers who wrote for guitar have added them to their music. For example, Niccolò Paganini (a prominent guitarist as well as a virtuoso violinist) put phrase lines in for the bowed instruments, but did not put them in the guitar part—both in his solo guitar works as well as his chamber music that included guitar.

The reasons for this customary omission may vary. As with every instrument, the guitar has certain technical limitations and one of them is the difficulty in playing legato (this is achieved fluently on wind or bowed instruments). Only the notes of guitar arpeggios are naturally connected or even sustained; however, everything else is much easier to detach than it is to connect.

The guitar developed at a much later period than most other instruments and often guitarists (even today) play whichever way is technically convenient for them; they rarely consider exact reasons as to why they choose this or the other form of articulation. Maybe Paganini had a similar idea for the guitar, even though he played it himself. The few guitar scores that have phrase lines (such as works by Joaquin Rodrigo, Benjamin Britten and William Walton) have rarely influenced the actual interpretation of most guitarists who often fail to follow what the phrase lines indicate. This does not mean that they never connect the notes, but they have a more independent and often improvisatory way of deciding how to interpret and how to articulate a given piece of music.

It must be taken into consideration that orchestral players, most of the time have to sight read during rehearsals and have few chances to mark in bowing indications. Thus it is very important that they can immediately detect the phrase lines, or where to change the bow or breathe. A guitarist rarely has to rehearse sight reading (note that the guitar is one of the hardest instruments for sight reading).

Most piano scores also have phrase lines indicating legato or non-legato playing. Sometimes, composers put many short phrase lines as if it were a violin score indicating bowing, but for a piano score this practice does not make sense. A pianist often has to ignore such embellishment and connect a whole phrase without fragmenting it, as the short lines would suggest. At the end of a phrase line, the pianist is normally supposed to
stop the sound, but this rule may also be waived especially during fast pieces, since stopping the sound would interrupt the flow of the music.

With regard to the technical difficulty involved in connecting notes, the guitar is closer to the piano than to wind or bowed instruments. So why do piano scores usually have phrase lines and guitar scores do not? Maybe because the piano is part of a much longer tradition (as most wind or bowed instruments are) and composers who wrote for piano, also wrote for other instruments, often writing chamber music using them combined. For a long time, the guitar and its repertoire were somewhat isolated; its technical abilities or limitations often proving too much of a mystery to most non-guitarist composers. Before the twentieth century, composers who wrote for guitar were mostly guitarists themselves and when they composed for other instruments it was in combination with the guitar. In the twentieth century, some composers added phrase lines to their guitar scores; however, these were composers who wrote for many different instruments and their guitar pieces are but a small part of their work. Obviously they treated their guitar scores much the same way that they treated pieces they wrote for other instruments. As mentioned earlier, composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, Joaquin Rodrigo, William Walton and Benjamin Britten wrote significant twentieth-century guitar works, but often with a modicum of phrase lines.

Left hand slurs (discussed below) that connect two or more notes are the closest symbol to phrase lines; in fact, they are almost identical (save for the size, perhaps). Thus, it is quite possible that composers for guitar did not add phrase lines so as to avoid the creation of confusion with slurs. Even recent guitarist-composers (such as Leo Brouwer and Roland Dyens) very rarely add phrase lines. When asked by this author on this matter, Roland Dyens (a renowned French guitarist and composer for guitar) commented:

You're right in saying that I have considered putting articulation in my music. As a matter of fact I put them sometimes (rarely but more than before). Why this notable lack of articulation in guitarist's compositions? Mostly not to create additional confusion with the usual ties I think. Guitarists would be (and are generally) very confused and they play slurred notes when they should only be articulated (like in a violin or a flute score for instance).46

One last reason why guitar scores have no phrase lines could simply be a matter of space. The guitar is written on one staff only even though it is a polyphonic instrument that
ranges to three and a half octaves, so between the resultant potentially replete staves, little space remains to add the curved lines.

As is the case with most guitarist-composers who wrote mainly for guitar, Nikita Koshkin does not indicate phrase lines in any of his music, following the long tradition of omitting them. In the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, the author decided to add them for clarity of interpretation, with the approval of the composer. In other orchestral parts, phrase lines are used either to indicate the entire length of a phrase or parts of it, as well as smaller fragments. In the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, they were used only for phrases or parts of them in order not to create the abovementioned confusion with smaller articulation marks and technical guitar slurs.

As stated earlier, one of the greatest technical difficulties for a guitarist is the ability to connect the notes and to make them sound like a vocal line, and not as a series of separated and musically-unrelated sounds. This manner of playing is called legato, an Italian word that translates as ‘bound’; it means notes connected smoothly, without a break in the sound. One of the most difficult tasks for a guitar teacher is to show to a student how to achieve this. The two hands have to move simultaneously and swiftly. If one of the two hands acts earlier than the other or if the hand motions are slow, then the notes sound detached in a way that does not sound as if done by way of a conscious decision on the part of the player but, rather, as proof of an inability to play legato. Apart from learning the technique of connecting notes, a great aid for the guitarist in his efforts to play legato is to think of other instruments—or even better, the human voice—while playing the guitar. After having learned how to connect notes, he can learn how to detach them, since articulation has to do with connecting and detaching sounds.

One of the technical elements that a guitarist uses, that determine very much the way he articulates a given passage of music, is the left hand slur. One note is plucked by the right hand and the next (one or more) notes are plucked by the left hand. The left hand fingers pluck with a smoother sound than those of the right hand, for a whole host of reasons: left hand fingers do not have long nails (as modern guitar playing requires long nails for the right hand); the plucking is done far away from the sound hole (thus the sound is not

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46 E-mail message to the author, 6 March 2012

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augmented by the sound-box and the fingers have little space to make the motion between the strings and the fret-board). Therefore, left hand slurs are often an ideal solution for making successive notes vary in colour and dynamics. After all, an important task of a musician is to find in which way the notes can sound different, (unlike many players that let them sound all alike, resulting in dull performances).  

47 Slurring will be commented also in section 4.1.2.8.
4.1.2.2.1. Articulation and phrasing in the First Movement of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto: Issues and Solutions

Phrase lines are indicated throughout the score and they usually extend between two and six bars. The following discussion, centres on the most significant instances in the score.

As mentioned above, the main theme appears in the guitar part in bars 20–35, where it consists of groups of 4+4+8 bars. Thus, there should be three phrase lines over the respective groups:

Example 4.1.2.2.1.1. (Bars 20–35)

Since playing with an orchestra makes rhythmic freedom rather restricted, ‘breathing’ between phrases or phrase fragments, rarely implies the allotment of extra time; in fact, it is usually made possible by taking a tiny amount of ‘stolen’ time from one note or chord. The player essentially takes the breath right before starting the next phrase. In this example, it happens in bar 24 right before playing the \( a' - d'' - a' \) chord on the second quaver, as well as before the first chord of bar 28.

A singer or a wind instrument-player would take a breath here, a bowed instrument player would change the bow direction and a piano player would usually raise the key and the pedal. A guitarist can use both hands in order to stop the sound, depending on which fingers are not engaged and on whether there are open strings as well. Sometimes, the right hand thumb touches one or more strings, or one of the free fingers of the left hand does the same. On other occasions, it is enough to release the left hand pressure of the
strings. Such a case appears at this point, where the last chord of bar 23 is tied to the first of 24. The three open bass strings d-a-d’ may keep ringing while the fingers 1, 2, 4 that play the top a’-d”-a” will release the pressure and stop the sound before repeating the chord.

**General remark:** Throughout music history, identical repeated chords (or even repeated single notes) are usually supposed to be played detached. It is a tradition that all instrumentalists follow with music of any period. This gives better definition of every chord or note. Repeated notes or chords often accompany a melodic line. Playing the latter legato and the former ‘non-legato’ helps differentiate the melody from the accompanying voices. In a string quartet one often notices, when one of the instruments—usually the first violin—plays a melody, the others accompany with repeated detached notes.

While releasing the pressure or touching the strings in order to stop the resonance, attention must be paid so that this is done in a clear way.

**General remark:** A great deal of a guitarist’s work goes into playing without making unwanted sounds other than the actual music. The bass guitar strings are constructed with a wire enlacement, making it hard to play without unintentional squeaking. To avoid this, the player should lift his fingers before shifting the left hand from one position to another. Even lifting fingers carelessly can cause the open strings to resonate and produce sounds of foreign notes that do not belong to the harmony.

The phrase which extends from bar 36–43, consisting of two half phrases (36–39 and 40–43), is defined with two phrase lines accordingly. The sound should be stopped before starting the second half of the phrase, beginning at bar 40. The end of bar 43 requires a breath to highlight the start of a new phrase that starts at bar 44.
In bar 36, it is recommended to slur the first $e_b''$ and $d''$ in order to separate them from the following $e_b''$ and $c''$ quavers which should be *staccato* or better, non-legato.

**General remark:** When staccato is required, it is best to sustain the note for about half its length and stop the sound in the second half. Unlike what many guitarists think, playing staccato does not necessarily mean that one has to stop the note immediately after one plays it. Stopping the sound too early, results into not allowing the note or chord enough time to sound, so that, on the contrary it sounds incomplete. Staccato, as well as glissando, trills, vibrato, have to be adjusted to the prevailing tempo and dynamics. Occasionally, staccato can indeed indicate a desired cessation of the sound very shortly after playing the note, but this is the exception rather than the rule. For the aforementioned reasons, it may often be preferable to use the term non-legato, meaning that the sound has to be stopped sometime in between the two notes/chords (this could be right before the succeeding note/chord, even).

As early as 1753, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach wrote:

> There are many who play stickily, as if they had glue between their fingers. Their touch is lethargic; they hold notes too long. Others, in an attempt to correct this, leave the keys too soon, as if they burned. Both are wrong. Midway between these extremes is best. Here again I speak in general, for every kind of touch has its use.

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Obviously, time in music is relative and it is a good interpreter’s job to decide how long the notes should be and whether they should be connected or detached and if so, how much they should be detached.

The same articulation (i.e. the first two quavers slurred and the next note detached) is required in bars 37, 40, 44, 45 and 48. Additionally, since the first of each of these slurred notes is an appoggiatura, it is best if the second note (the appoggiatura’s resolution) of each slur is stopped slightly before the following note, a common practice in the case of appoggiaturas.

Although it would sound logical that the first and second violins also articulate their lines in the same manner when imitating the guitar’s first four notes, the composer’s choice to add a phrase line connecting the first three notes, instead of two, is preferable, as the violins are required to play legatissimo in this section.

The slurs indicated throughout this concerto are almost all inscribed by Koshkin, but a few were changed or added by this author in order to either facilitate certain difficult passages or to alter the articulation.

Bars 44–61 present a long phrase/period, consisting of four fragments: bars 44–47, 48–52, 53–54 and finally, the longest one in bars 55–61, all with the equivalent phrase lines. At the point where these fragments end, the sound should be stopped.

**General remark:** Every time a phrase or a fragment of a phrase ends, the sound must be stopped and not allowed to resonate at the beginning of the subsequent phrase. While a singer or a wind instrument player will take a new breath in order to sing / play the next phrase and a bowed instrument player will change the bow, guitarists often allow the sound to continue for reasons of finger-convenience rather than musical ones. At those points where both the orchestra and soloist should breathe, even if only momentarily, the player can agree with the conductor in advance about such details, or he may show his intention through his own breathing and moving during the performance. Even in instances where it is very difficult, or not musically appropriate, to actually take a breath, stopping the sound in this manner clarifies the phrasing. The breaths mentioned earlier
must be very small so that they do not hinder the momentum of the music and do not give
the impression that, after those breaths, an entirely new idea is to start.

The section comprising bars 36–61 necessitates a feeling of unity and cohesion. When the
player starts at bar 36, he should advance to bar 61, making clear that this is his aim and
destination. Any nuances in this section such as breathing, dynamics, articulation etc.
should support this motion towards this goal in order to achieve a sense of unity in the
performance.

The articulation of the guitar in bars 84–104 is rather obvious. Bars 85–86 constitute one
period, bars 89–90 another, 93–96 and 98–103 the next two periods. In the first three
periods, legato playing will sound better, although without keeping all the fingers
pressed, so that the notes sound more like a melodic line rather than arpeggiated chords.
The final period of bars 98–103 will sound more obvious if played non-legato, as the
cellos play the same line as the guitar, in a canon-like manner.

**General remark:** In order for the human ear to distinguish the sound of the guitar from
the sound of the orchestra, playing with different dynamics is the most obvious way.
However, there are other means as well: one way is to play detached (non-legato) notes
while the orchestra plays legato.

In the phrase that extends from bar 115–122 consisting of three smaller periods (115–116
117–118 and 119–122), the notes would be better played legato.

As mentioned earlier, there is syncopation at the beginning of every bar in the passage
from bars 123–130. It was suggested that the first upbeat chord should be accented less
than the following ones, but it would be better if it is held until the next chord every time.
As a result, it sounds sufficiently delineated, while the succeeding chords would be better
non-legato or even staccato—especially the strong one on the third beat, thus giving it
due emphasis.

Bars 125–126 are a repetition of 123–124, so the phrase lines effectively combine two
bars at a time and not just one, as the rests in the end of each bar might imply.
From bar 131–135, all chords should be legato, thereby releasing the tension before the next (comparatively softer) section, but still played loud (especially in bar 131).

From bar 139, the orchestra starts a section marked legatissimo sempre (always very connected). As described earlier, the first and second violins as well as the violas create a combined chromatic motion that has to be emphasized by the conductor, as it is not obvious when they only see their individual parts. Attention has to be paid so that the line passes horizontally from one group of instruments to the other and sounds like one and not three parallel lines. There must be no accents during that part, as it would result in stoppage of the phrase’s sense of flow.

In bars 210, 211, 213, 215, 216 and 218 of the guitar part, the open $b'$ repeated notes (and later the open $e''$ notes), do not belong to the same melodic line with the $e''$, $d\flat''$, $f''$, $a\flat''$ etc, despite the fact that they are connected with common horizontal lines. Therefore, the $c''$, $d\flat''$, $f''$, $a\flat''$ etc should be held and connected in one line as if they were crotchets and not each one of them connected with the succeeding $b'$ or $e''$ note.

Example 4.1.2.1.3. (Bars 210–219)

General remark: Occasionally, there can be more than one melodic lines/voices, even while the notes are all connected with only one horizontal line. For example, one often sees this phenomenon in J.S. Bach’s scores, either for instruments chiefly monophonic (violin or violoncello), or in lute or cembalo works. It is done for the purposes of simplifying the melodic writing, as to write several lines on the same staff is confusing to the eye and not necessarily clearer musically. However, a professional musician is
supposed to be able to identify such cases and he should not always consider all the notes that are connected with one horizontal line as one melodic line only.

In bars 245–260 (where the first theme appears again with repeated rasgueado chords), attention has to be paid so that the three repetitions of each chord will not result as an equivalent articulation of three semiquavers at a time (due to the shifts of the left hand, as well as the motion of the right one). On the contrary, the phrase has to flow and exhibit enough legato.

In bars 270–290, the successive chords must not sound only as vertical harmonic moments, but have horizontal motion in terms of their voices. The left hand shifts have to be swift and relaxed and the right hand has to play with enough clarity.

General remark: It was mentioned earlier that guitarists find the practice of connecting notes horizontally rather difficult in technical terms, while it is much easier for the human voice as well as wind and bowed instruments. Guitarists (especially students) often sound as if every note is vertically ‘hammered’ and placed on a specific metronomic spot, rather than flowing and leading towards the end of a phrase. This becomes harder with successive chords. Methods that help resolve this problem include singing voices before playing them with the guitar; working on quick and simultaneous motions of the two hands; and avoidance of the placement of one’s fingers on the strings before plucking them. The latter, which is a principle followed often by today’s guitarists, mostly results in phrases that do not ‘sing’ and offers less in terms of the technical security that it supposedly offers. An additional piece of advice for playing legato with the guitar is that, at every position, the weight of the left hand should lie mostly on the finger that plays the melody at the moment, and that every time the player changes position, he should make sure that the last finger to leave the previous position is the one that played the melody.
4.1.2.3. Note duration

In a musical score, each note has a certain indicated duration. It may be played exactly as it is written, in a precise metronomic way, but this is rather the exception than the rule; an interpreter’s task is to transform the exact values of the score into musical values, since to follow strictly the written rhythms is only one of a number of possibilities.

When time is divided into short, equal fragments, the music can often sound aimless and motionless. While the note values in any piece can be interpreted very closely or even exactly equal to the equivalent metronomic values, the actual musical rule is that the interpreter must choose how to make minute alterations to these values in order to help the music move, have shape and direction, and to sing—all the elements that allow music to come to life. The term ‘move’ means a slight accelerando, often strengthened by a slight crescendo. One of the rules that could be expressed (not without exceptions, obviously) is that long notes must not last less than their value; on the contrary, they must last at least their written length, although often it is better when they are a little longer. In chords with long time values, then this rule applies even more, as chords—especially chords with five or six notes—require an even longer time for a person in order to perceive them. On the other hand, a group of short notes can be a little quicker than their metronomic value. They should also move towards the next long note, which generally falls on a strong beat. However, the short notes must not sound even and monotonous. They must always be well-articulated, clearly-shaped and with dynamic changes depending on the intervals that they form. The fact that long notes often appear on strong beats of a bar is another reason why they must be even longer. In order to stress a strong beat, it is better to make it longer than just adding a sudden accent—a habit overly common amongst guitarists—that can obstruct the flow and unity of a phrase.

One of the difficulties of a concerto is to find possibilities for flexibility within a rather strict rhythmic frame. Even great players often forget this and ‘surrender’ to a strict metronomic rhythm, which considerably narrows the expressive resources of one’s interpretation. Certainly when the solo instrument (in our case, the guitar) plays alone and the orchestra has a long rest (in a cadenza, for example) an opportunity is presented by which the player may take a more liberal approach to rhythm. However, even when the guitarist plays along with the orchestra, there are many moments when the interpreter’s
playing may be flexible. The player must not forget that an orchestra is not a machine, but a group of musicians that can find many possibilities to be rhythmically flexible (under the guidance of a good conductor, of course).

In bars 1–19, the notes should keep their metronomic value. It is simply an accompanying *arpeggio* and, while the dynamics follow the motion of the *arpeggio*, the rhythm stays strict.

The six-note chords at the beginning of bars 20–35 should last slightly longer than their metronomic duration in order to underline their rhythmic, structural and textural role. Thus, the three-note chords should move a little quicker, so that the total duration of the bar is the same. More specifically, the first chord in bar 20 (which is the very first of the theme in the guitar part) may be slightly longer, so that the listener has time to adjust to the guitar’s first solo appearance and the rich six-note chord has time to ‘develop’. But the lengthening has to be so little as to avoid slowing down the momentum of the phrase that just started and allow it to move towards the next strong beat in bar 21. That first chord of bar 21, which has a much longer value (three quarters of the bar), can be significantly longer, following the rule regarding the lengthening of long values mentioned earlier. The remaining $f''$, $a^\#$, $f'''$ chord will then be shorter, moving more effectively towards the next downbeat while keeping the total value in terms of the duration of this particular bar.

**General remark:** Time added to a note or chord has to be balanced by playing other notes quicker, while keeping the total length of a bar the same. Whereas lengthening long notes (along with greater movement through the shorter ones) results in bars that have the same duration, this approach conveys a more rhythmic feeling to the listener. Good rhythm may not be a metronomic one, but keeping no pulse constitutes lack of rhythm. Thus, the rhythm is not dependent on having equal fragments within a bar but, rather, on having equally long bars.

*It is seldom that one adds time without ‘earning’ it somewhere else. In solo playing, this is usually done only when completing a phrase or period when a breath is added before the next phrase. When playing with an orchestra, it is rarer still, due to the comparative
lack of rhythmic flexibility achievable by the orchestra. Thus, while some rhythmic flexibility is advised even when playing with orchestra, the total length of each bar has to stay the same.

In bar 24, the first chord held from the previous bar should last long enough, in order to help the following five chords move again towards the next downbeat.

**General remark:** Usually, long notes or chords appear in the beginning of a bar and then a group of shorter notes towards the end of the bar, often leading to another long note in the next bar’s downbeat. The group of shorter notes can be treated as a long upbeat to the next bar and it should not be rhythmically divided in smaller segments. This helps the piece demonstrate a sense of direction. Moreover, it is highly recommended that a player divide bars in longer parts so that there can be some rhythmic flexibility within those parts. For example, a bar of 4/4 can be counted in two beats, as if it were 2/2, a bar of 2/4 in one; a bar of 3/4 can also be counted in one; and a bar of 6/8 (as it is here) can be counted in two. Sometimes, for even greater freedom, it may be counted in one, almost resembling even bars of 2/4.

In bar 30, there is use of syncopation. The second chord, whose total duration is a crotchet (two quavers connected), has to be stressed, as is the common practice with regard to syncopation; therefore, it is better if it is lengthened (the two quaver chords before and after this can be a little shorter so as to balance the bar’s total value).

**General remark:** As mentioned earlier, stressing a note or chord is more efficiently achieved with time than with accents. Guitarists as well as pianists—mainly students—often ignore this and accent a passage when they meant to stress it. This, results rather in making the note sound foreign to the ones preceding and succeeding it, while it should stay united with the prevailing context.

Although bar 85 of the Allegretto marziale consists of quavers, the high c♯‴, c♮‴, b and the notes a‴, g‴, f♯‴ and e‴ of the next bar may be considered as one melodic line. Therefore, the high c♯‴ can be played louder before playing the e‴ and g‴ softer in an accompanimental manner, in order to allow the c♮‴ to be heard and be connected in the
listener’s ears with the following $b''$. It is also advised that the $c^\natural'''$ (with the fourth finger) is allowed to ring along the $e''$ and $g''$, even though it has the value of a quaver. Thus, while it should not be held longer before the $e''$, it will sound for longer. It was earlier explained that occasionally we might have more than one voice while the written value of notes seem to form only one line.

The term *marziale* does not allow much freedom in terms of time and it represents one of the cases for which ‘metronomic’ counting is more suitable. However, the $a'''$ of bar 86 would be more distinguished if held for a bit more, while the two succeeding semiquavers $g'''$ and $f\#''$ should be slightly shorter and sound more like an ornament of the following $e''$. The same effect can be executed in bars 94–95, although the last semiquavers $a'''$ and $g'''$ can be played allargando, as this is the end of the first phrase.

The remainder (bars 98–103) can revert to the ‘metronomic’ pulse and emphasize again the *marziale* character.

In bars 115–122, as in bars 85–86 and 89–90, there is a melodic line that does not consist of all the quavers, save for the ones indicated in the afore-mentioned bars. Thus, the same should be done here as before, holding the $c^\natural'''$ of bar 115 until the $b''$ and the $g^\natural''$ of 117 until the $f\#''$.

However, a similar lengthening of the dotted crotchets in bars 116, 120, 121 (as was the case earlier in bars 86, 94, 95) is not recommended. The louder dynamics here suggest a more ‘military’ *marziale*, although always within the parameters of tasteful interpretation.

Bars 123–135, is one of the most rhythmical sections of the movement; every chord should be placed right on the metronomic spot upon which it is written.

In bars 136–181, the guitarist exhibits use of a percussive technique. Even percussion instruments do not necessarily play in a strict metronomic way; however, they often do so, as they usually represent the source of rhythmic stability in a group of instruments (e.g. in an orchestra). Here a more metronomic, although not monotonous, manner of playing would be preferable, as it is the guitar that creates this percussive background for
the orchestra. The interpretation will be based on dynamics and not on rhythmic alteration.

In order to achieve connection between the melody notes $c''$, $d''$, $e''$, $f''$, $a''$ in bars 210–211, it is recommended that the open $b'$ notes are played slightly later so that the melody notes remain in the mind’s ear of the listener and the $b'$ notes do not sound as part of the melody. The same approach can be taken in bars 213, 215, 216 and 218.

**General remark:** *In order to attract less attention in terms of articulating a note, or to make it weaker, a good way is by placing it slightly late. The ear notices the notes on exact rhythmic spots more, rather than off the beat. This is a very useful method for the resolution of an appoggiatura or a dissonant chord. The same approach is recommended for stopping the sound of notes: when it is done off the beat it is not noticed as interrupting a note, but rather as a means of concluding it.*

In bars 220–228, there are two melodic lines—in the top and in the middle—that appear as question and answer, each one consisting of one bar. Apart from playing these two lines with different dynamic levels, it is recommended that the first note of each bar (also the last of every group) be held for slightly longer than prescribed—especially for the first four bars. In doing so, the two lines will be clearly defined.

No other change in note duration is recommended until the end of the first movement; bars 229–244 will sound better without any rhythmic alteration (being a long scale passage). The same treatment comes into play in terms of the passage from bars 245–260, where the first theme is played for the last time with $ff$ rasgueado chords; the rest of the piece sounds better played in a plain and chaste style.
4.1.2.4. Apoyando and Tirando

It is a very common practice amongst today’s guitarists not to use *apoyando*. They do so because it makes their playing easier and faster but, at the same time, it makes their interpretation poorer, as *apoyando* helps to better differentiate the notes from one another given that it changes the colour of the sound. In much the same way a painter would not relinquish one of the primary colours because it happens to be more expensive to buy, a player should not give up any of his possibilities to create as many different qualities of sound as possible. A musician’s job is to use every possible means in order to make music as expressive and meaningful as possible, no matter how difficult this might be. If there is a way to create the same effect more easily without sacrificing the interpretation, then one can certainly do so but, if the choice is between a difficult and expressive solution rather than an easy and less expressive one, the first option is more desirable.

However, while the use of accents can occasionally help the articulation, the player should avoid excessive accents through the use of *apoyando*, as this hampers the flow of the music. Playing *apoyando* is recommended because it gives a richer and rounder sound to the melodic line, especially on strong beats of the bar, on high-pitch notes that need to be louder, on melody notes on the first two strings and on the first note of an *appoggiatura* (the latter will be discussed in due course).

In scalic passages, it is recommended that *apoyando* be used for the first and second strings. The higher pitches generally played on those strings often necessitate a louder volume than that required on the lower strings/pitches but, since these strings have a more penetrating sound due to their thinner construction, they can easily sound harsh when played loud. Therefore, *apoyando* helps to maintain better sound quality and raise the maximum level of dynamics without sound distortion. Occasionally, the third string can also be played *apoyando*, or even the bass strings, especially when the melody appears in the lower register. The guitarist should also be able to fluidly switch from *apoyando* to *tirando*, or vice versa, on all strings, in order to accommodate effective *crescendos* or *diminuendos* with a wide dynamic range.
Sometimes when guitarists play *apoyando*, they also play louder due to the position of the right hand, which makes it stronger and heavier. Playing louder when using *apoyando* is rarely necessary, as the change of sound-colour usually produces enough variation.

Depending on the dynamics, *apoyando* or *tirando* may be executed either with the nail only for softer dynamics, or with both nail and flesh for middle or loud dynamics. The latter creates a more ‘velvety’ sound and can support even very loud notes without losing quality. However, for very soft dynamics, nail-only *tirando* is preferable—when the sound has more clarity, it can reach further and be more perceptive by its auditors. This also explains modern preference for treble strings made with a special material (most guitarists call them ‘carbon’ strings because they contain some carbon) instead of the more traditional nylon treble strings, thereby resembling somewhat the sound of steel strings more commonly associated with the acoustic guitar; carbon strings produce an ideal sound for the production of soft dynamics. However, they have to be treated with extra care when played loud as they can easily sound harsh; thus, they are not recommended for inexperienced students who do not yet know how to produce a rich sound.

With reference to performance of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, the reasons for playing *apoyando* will be discussed mainly, since playing *tirando* is, rather, the rule with *apoyando* being the exception. Where a certain concept is expressed, it will not be repeated when it applies to similar cases later and details of lesser importance, or points that are very obvious, will be omitted.

The first $e_b''$ of bar 36 should be played *apoyando*, since it is the strongest beat of the bar; likewise the $c''$ in the middle of the bar should be played similarly, although softer than the $e_b''$ as it is the second strongest beat.

The $c''$ on the downbeat of bar 37 should be played *tirando*, while *apoyando* is more appropriate for the $d''$ in the middle of that particular bar. As this is the beginning of the section, only a small crescendo is required—an *apoyando* $c''$ at the beginning of this bar would add more volume than needed. Moreover, *tirando* is preferable because the preceding arpeggiated four semiquaver notes, along with the ensuing motion of the hand
will result into a rather accented downbeat. Such an accent stops the flow and the feeling of crescendo. On the other hand, an apoyando on the d'' in the middle of this bar adds to the crescendo which must, at this point, already be louder and must end with another apoyando on the e♭'' on the downbeat of bar 38.

Also, apoyando must be employed wherever possible on all notes from the d'' in bar 38 until the b♭ in bar 39 in order to help build the crescendo and before gradual release with the warm sound resulting from the diminuendo. As the b♭ is the last apoyando note in bar 39, it is better if it is played with a kind of ‘half’ apoyando.

**General remark:** In normal apoyando-playing, the guitarist must rest the finger over the string above the one he has just plucked, until the next finger plays. In the half apoyando, however, he must pluck with less weight and take his finger away from the string above the plucked one as soon as he touches the latter. This helps the next finger—which will play tirando—to be ready on time. Moreover, since this ‘half apoyando’ has a softer sound, it aids in changing the sound gradually when playing a scale passage with diminuendo or crescendo.

The first d'' and the e♭'' in the middle of bar 41, as well as the first g''' in bar 42, should be played apoyando, each one of these notes being the last of arpeggiated chords that are all played with a crescendo. Tirando is more appropriate in bar 43 due to the low register and the diminuendo present. In bar 47, apoyando must be used on all the non-slurred notes until c'', hence allowing the third and fourth strings to be softer for the diminuendo.

In bar 49, the first f♯'' the g#''' and the a'' in the middle, along with the last a'' should all be played apoyando for similar reasons as outlined with regard to bar 41. In bar 50, apoyando should be employed for all the non-slurred notes until the last e'''', which should be a half-apoyando. We have here high pitched, loud notes on the first two strings. The first d''' and f''' of bar 56 must be played apoyando, as they are the loudest and highest-pitched notes of bars 36–61, and are the climax of this section. In the second half of bar 57 the e'', g''' and a'' are played apoyando. Every other note until bar 61 should be played tirando preferably, in order to accommodate the arpeggiated pattern in the right
hand and to ease the long diminuendo that concludes this section.

In the first chord of bar 63 the e’’ can be played apoyando, while the ab’ and d can be played tirando.

**General remark:** All the notes of a guitar chord are normally played tirando, as it is practically impossible to do otherwise. But an exception can be made when the top note and the second note from the top are played on non-neighbour strings: in this example, the first and the third. In that case, it is possible to use apoyando on the top and tirando on the other, thus resulting the addition of a different colour and to it being accented a little heavier. It is possible to do this not only arpeggiated, but non-arpeggiated, as well.

The same apoyando–tirando combination can be used in the first chords of bars 64, 65 and 66. Vibrato (which will be discussed later) must not be neglected in all those chords, adding importance and duration all round.

Despite the fact that a single melodic line with notes in the high register usually sounds better when played apoyando, tirando is recommended from bars 85–95 in order to display some contrast with the previous section in terms of sound colour. This element of colour makes the melody sound lighter in order to demonstrate the playful marziale mentioned earlier. On the other hand, the g’’ and a’’ notes of bar 95 sound better if played apoyando, so that one can achieve a nicer crescendo in the end of this first phrase of allegretto marziale. In bars 98–103, apoyando is recommended since the orchestra has more body and a louder sound at this point. The highest notes of this section, c#’’’ and c’s’’’, should be the loudest and apoyando is usually a better option for articulating loud notes.

The notes of the melody on the first string in bars 115–122 should be apoyando, while the middle-range notes are better played tirando; this aids in the discernment of two clear melodic lines, in addition to producing a round sound on the notes in the high register which, incidentally, ring out louder.
In the middle beat of each of bars 220–226 there is an *appoggiatura* or ‘leaning-note’. This term relates to a note one step above or below the principal one (in bars 220–226, it is always above), which usually creates a dissonance with the prevailing harmony and resolves by step on the following weak beat.\(^{50}\) The linguistic connection between the term *appoggiatura* and the term *apoyando* (which in Italian translates as *appoggiato*) is obvious, the first having to do with leaning on a note, and the second on a string. Therefore, it is most appropriate to play *apoyando* all the *appoggiature* of bars 220–226: that is $f\,'', b\,'', a\,'', d\,\flat\,'', c\,'', e\,'$ and $c\,'$, respectively. It is suggested that the upbeats to these notes (always the same pitch as the notes themselves) should be played *apoyando*, in order not to have a sudden change of colour. The main point to bear in mind, though, is that they have to be softer.

Today, most guitarists prefer to play fast scales *tirando*, as they seem easier played in this manner. This may be done with the long scale passage in bars 230–244, but if it is possible to play it *apoyando*, doing so makes it easier for the guitar to be heard, since, in this section, the orchestra plays increasingly louder.

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4.1.2.5. Fingering

The guitar, like the piano, is a polyphonic instrument. A guitar score often consists of complex chords and more than one voice; there can be several ways to finger these in terms of the left or the right hand. The left hand, as in other stringed instruments, prepares the note by pressing the string on the right spot. The right hand is the one that actually plays and is responsible for the quality of sound. Exceptionally, the left plays some notes (i.e. those with slurs) and participates in the sound production by the use of vibrato and glissando.

In recent guitar history, there have been different fingering tendencies, which guitarists-editors have adopted. Andrés Segovia and Julian Bream included several fingering indications in the scores they edited, while John Williams indicated very few, or even none, considering apparently, that it is best to leave the player free to decide which fingering to apply. However, this author believes that the former directions are more correct. There seems to be no reason for editing a score, unless the editor proposes solutions to the performer, who can benefit by knowing which choices an accomplished player made. Subsequently, one can always alter and make his own decisions, but it is always good to have a starting point; moreover, it is very useful to see the fingering of players who worked closely with composers and knew their wishes with regard to their music. Different editions of guitar music can vary in terms of fingering indications and a good edition can exert an important influence on an interpretation. This is especially so when a student learns the piece, as the latter cohort rarely take the initiative to alter the printed fingering for something that might be more intelligent while, if there are no fingering indications, the choices that students can make might often be wrong. Thus, the edition proves crucial to the way the music eventually sounds.

Left-hand fingering printed in a score is very useful (for sight-reading, especially) as, apart from the polyphonic complexity involved, the tuning of a guitar’s strings not only includes intervals of a fourth, but also a major third between the third and second string. This complicates matters, the exact-same chord has a different finger shape if played on different positions. In the example bellow see a diminished seventh chord at three
different positions: first position on strings 1, 2, 3 and 4 (tuned in e’, b’, g’ and d’ respectively), fifth on strings 2, 3, 4 and 5 (b’, g’, d’ and a) and tenth on strings 3, 4, 5 and 6 (g’, d’, a, e):

Example 4.1.2.5.1.

This stands in contrast to violin music, where the score is mostly monophonic. The fact the instrument is tuned in fifths also means that the fingering relation will stay the same when changing string; this aspect explains the significantly fewer fingering indications in such scores.

Usually, a guitar score has fingering indications, more for the left hand and less for the right. This is because right-hand fingering is often more obvious. Therefore, in the ‘Megaron’ score, the author added, almost completely, the left hand fingering, and only what was considered necessary, concerning right-hand fingering.

In recent years, several guitarists who have edited scores have made it their priority to find the easiest possible fingering, such as: using open strings as much as possible; avoiding barré; staying as close as practicable to the first position; and using left hand slurs only in order to facilitate a quick passage (thus rarely or never for the particular sound that slurs produce). In the past, however, great guitarists as Andrés Segovia prioritised interpretation over facility. Of course, making something as easy as possible is not wrong, but sacrificing richness of expression for the sake of easiness is not right either. Thus, for the edition of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, the following principals were followed:

51 Graham Wade, one of the foremost writers on the classical guitar, comments: ‘In written sources Segovia, Bream and Williams never openly discussed individual works in terms of fingering’; E-mail message to author, 11 February 2014.
For left hand fingering, priority was given to the melody notes so that they are held for their full value, in addition to being connected smoothly (especially while changing position); open strings are largely avoided in order to facilitate vibrato. However, open strings were used in order to change position in fast passages, or when use of their tone colour was deemed more suitable.

After these basic considerations were followed, the next desideratum was to hold the accompanying notes as closely as possible to their written value.

**General remark:** Due to the polyphonic nature of the guitar, there are moments where it is hard (or even impossible) to produce a singing melody in conjunction with the maintenance of long accompanying notes. Composers often write notes that are longer than what is technically feasible, either because they notate how long they would wish a note to last, or because the bar looks more aesthetically pleasing in a particular manner; or simply because they neglected to confirm this with a guitarist. Subsequently, guitarists often observe the long accompanying notes more so and try to sustain them, thereby failing to hold and thus sufficiently ‘bind’ the melody notes together. Since it is not always possible to have it all, an interpreter has to set in order of preference what is more important and what is less: in this case, the melody has to come first with the long accompanying notes executed in such a way that the length of the melody notes will not be sacrificed.

Another left hand fingering matter concerned the choice of tone colour when there was more than one alternative (insofar as the abovementioned rules were followed). More precisely, this related to possibilities for using alternative strings, mainly for the melody. However, in detailed scores such as the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, it is somehow easier to choose left hand fingering than right hand fingering. If the abovementioned rules are followed, then the choices are more obvious.

Attention was given to the position that the numeric fingering symbols would have in the guitar part (i.e. next to the actual notes) so that, even when sight-reading, the player can immediately recognise the fingering in a swift, clear and comprehensive manner. Guitar
score engravers are not necessarily guitar players as well, and this often results in unclear positioning of the fingering symbols. Being a guitarist, this author had the opportunity to place them where most players would prefer to see them. The numbers indicating the left hand fingers (1, 2, 3, 4) were placed as close as possible to the equivalent note (on its left side) or, when this was not possible, over or under the note, so that it looks as clear as possible and does not get confused by the player with the stave or other lines. The string symbols (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; each one inside a circle) were placed after the left hand fingers; again, at a clear spot near each note. The right-hand finger symbols were placed last, usually over the note lines. The choice to print as much fingering as possible was taken in order to give the clearest idea to the reader and to thoroughly propose solutions for all the guitar part.
4.1.2.5.1. Fingering in the First Movement of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto: Issues and Solutions

Concerning left hand fingering, there is little that was considered necessary to mention: In bar 45, the first finger plays the \( e'' \) and then the \( d' \) by changing position and not by using barré; this facilitates the \( e'' \) (being the resolution of the preceding \( f' \) appoggiatura), to be stopped slightly before playing the following \( f'' \), as mentioned above in the ‘Articulation and Phrasing’ section.

In bar 89, the first finger that plays the top \( g'' \) should stay in position until the \( f'' \) is sounded, even though the second finger (which plays the \( d' \)) is consequently placed in the opposite way than is usual.

**General remark:** *When a guitarist plays notes that have to be pressed on the same fret of two or more neighbour strings, the fingers are placed as follows: the first on a lower pitched string than the second; the second on lower string than the third; and the third on a lower string than the fourth. For example, if fingers 2, 3, 4 have to be all placed on fret V on strings 4, 3, and 2, respectively, then the second finger will press down on the fourth string; the third finger will press down on the third string; and the fourth finger down on the second string. In some cases, two (though never more) neighbour fingers can be placed in the opposite way in order to facilitate holding a note, or in moving to another position.*

Here follow some right hand fingering indications that are important to mention: In bars 20–35, the six-note chords should be played with \( p \), rather than with all four right hand fingers, in order to obtain a richer and rounder sound. This allows the first appearance of the theme in the guitar part to ‘compete’ with the richness of the orchestral sound. An exception to this is the last chord of bar 23, as well as the last chord of bar 27, which can be more effectively played with \( p, i, m, a \). As mentioned in the section concerning dynamics, these bars have a slight *diminuendo* and this fingering is preferable since it creates a softer sound in contrast to the arpeggiated chords with the thumb, which tend to become accented when played loudly. It is also easier to control tone production with fingers \( p, i, m, a \) when using softer dynamics.
The chord in bar 35 is the resolving tonic chord of this section and to achieve finality it is most effective when played softly with slow arpeggiation. In this instance, the thumb rather than all the fingers should be used, as this is a more effective means to control a slowly arpeggiated soft chord. The other fingers may be placed on the first string in order to avoid plucking it by accident.

The three-note chords from bar 20 onward should be played with $i$, $m$, $a$ and not with $p$, $i$, $m$, so that the thumb is only used for the three bass strings, while the first string is played with the $a$ finger. The brighter sound produced by this finger helps to distinguish the melody in the upper register.

The last four semi-quaver notes in bar 41 must be played $p$, $i$, $m$, $a$ and the first $g''$ in bar 42 with $i$. The succession of $p$, $i$, $m$, $a$, $i$ for fast arpeggiated notes is preferred since, this way, the guitarist can be more precise rhythmically than when he uses $p$, $p$, $i$, $m$, $a$. The two strings played with $m$, $a$ give enough time to the index finger in order to go to the next (usually the first) string.

The chord in bar 67 will sound better if not arpeggiated and with the bass softer than the top. This helps the diminuendo to be completed while resolving in the tonic. Non-arpeggiated chords help in terms of releasing the tension.

The two six note chords in bar 75, as well as the first five-note chord in bar 76, will sound richer if played with the thumb only. However, the second and the third chords of bar 76 are better non-arpeggiated (since they have to be diminuendo); as such, they should be played with $p$, $i$, $m$, $a$ and $p$, $i$, $m$, $a$, $c$ respectively—‘$c$’ being used here as the symbol of the little ($chico$ in Spanish) finger of the right hand.

**General remark:** Normally, classical guitarists do not use the little finger of the right hand, but this is surprising as it is not hard to use it when sounding part of a chord. The other fingers playing together with the little one, support it and, although it is small and not utilised as much as the other fingers, it can be used in this case. It is very useful when used to play five-note chords that sound better unarpeggiated.
As mentioned earlier, in bars 123–133 the guitarist may use the *rasgueado* technique for producing the loudest sound possible and to ‘compete’ with the volume of the orchestra. When chords are played *rasgueado*, there is a choice whether to play them starting from the bass down to the treble strings, or vice versa. When chords follow quickly in succession, it is usually suggested to alter the direction of *rasgueado*. However, in this case, the chords are slower and all accented: this indicates that they may sound more convincing if they are all played towards the first string. There is an exception to this: the first four chords of each of bars 127–130 are played as mentioned above: from the sixth to the first string and are rendered with a *crescendo* towards the chord on the fourth beat, which has the highest pitch note of the bar on its top and thus has to be the loudest. However, the last chord of these bars is in the middle of the fourth beat (an upbeat to the next bar), with a lower pitch note on its top than the chord on the fourth beat and, thus, it is better if only this chord is played starting from the first string; this way, it will sound less accented than the preceding chords.

In order to achieve the abovementioned *crescendo* in bars 123–126, the first upbeat chords should be played with the *i* finger only and with a fast *rasgueado*; this results in greater accuracy in terms of the rhythmical placement of the chord, also. It is also suggested that the chord on the third beat should be played in broad fashion with all three (a, m and i) so that it will be more accented.

The chords in bars 131–133 should be played with *p* from the sixth to the first string (thus, not *rasgueado*) instead of *i*, in order to conclude the phrase with a milder sense of cantabile and less percussive than the chords heard before.

In bar 214, the pattern *p, i, p, i* is used instead of continuing with *i, m*; the former is a technique used extensively by lutenists for fast passages. It has a more refined and clear sound and it is also easier to play quickly using the bass strings.
4.1.2.6. Vibrato

Vibrato is a very important means of expression for all players of stringed instruments. For a guitarist, it is perhaps the only way to help sustain notes that would die away earlier without vibrato. There are many ways to use it, depending upon the speed of a phrase; on the length of the notes; and on the particular string or fret being pressed. Even bowed instrument players are often observed using the same kind of vibrato no matter what the character of the melody or harmony may be. Metaphorically, one could refer to this as a ‘canned’ vibrato (an unchanging vibrato, almost the same as canned food).

In the past, guitarists were wont to employ exaggerated vibrato, especially when playing slow pieces. However, a more recent tendency has been to neglect vibrato or even reject it outright in order to make the piece easier. In the same way as apoyando or left hand slurs are often overlooked, vibrato often becomes a ‘victim’ of the race towards speedy and easier playing, thus neglecting the most important need when playing or hearing music: i.e. the expression of emotions, thoughts and life experiences.

Therefore, vibrato can be used by a guitarist almost everywhere, the same way as it is used everywhere by a bowed instrument player. However, its use should be varied. Long notes need slower vibrato, especially using soft dynamics. For fast pieces, it must be quicker and more intense. Bass strings vibrate much better than trebles, doing so much easier when pressed closer to the twelfth fret; if playing nearer the first fret, the vibrato has to be quicker and may even be done vertically as long as it is not exaggerated. All kinds are useful: the more variety the better. Additionally, notes vibrate better when they are the same (or form intervals of octaves or fifths) with open strings. Thus, an a’’ on the seventh fret of the fourth string will vibrate much easier than a g’’ on the fourth fret of the first string.

Another common mistake made by guitarists is to use vibrato at the beginning of a note or chord only. This indeed proves that many guitarists forget about the note after it is plucked. Vibrato is even more necessary when the note fades away, rather than when it starts. Thus, it is recommended that vibrato be used after plucking and not simultaneously. Additionally, it is best to think of vibrato being applied to a phrase and
not one note at a time, continuing the motion of the left hand throughout without interrupting for every new note.

Chords can also be played with vibrato as well as single notes. Of course, it is more difficult with a chord, but the guitarist must remember that even a little vibrato sounds better than none. Even simple accompanying arpeggios should be played with vibrato (for example, the first nineteen bars of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto during which the guitarist repeats the same arpeggio). A repeated pattern can easily sound colourless and aimless. At this point, the top d’’ especially has to be played using vibrato. Vibrato makes it more alive; it gives a feeling of motion as well as more sound on the top while the bass has natural vibrato due to its harmonics. A further abovementioned reason is that higher pitched notes must sound louder than low ones and vibrato adds to this without having to accent the note; something that is against the flow of the music, so to speak.
4.1.2.7. Special percussive effects

Koshkin has used special effects in different works and has carried out considerable research on this matter; indeed, he even used certain effects before any other composer, particularly in ‘The Prince’s Toys’. As he states:

The idea of effects was solved for myself in ‘The Prince’s Toys’, although I did some more in ‘Piece with Clocks’. Afterwards I was not going to use effects anymore, or at least not for surprising [the listener], because the musical idea is much more important for me. Occasionally they were appearing in other works of mine because they were necessary for the meaning of a particular piece.\(^52\)

In the first movement (in bars 136–181 and from bar 324 until the end), Nikita Koshkin uses four different percussive effects:

Example 4.1.2.7.1.

With two or three right hand fingers (depending on the size of the hand), tap the bridge on its lower side (i.e. below the first string). This will produce a low-pitched sound. In executing this act, do not stop the resultant resonance with the left hand.

The sound that is produced when tapping the bridge with the fingertips, resembles the deep timbre of a log drum.\(^53\) The fingers have to bounce on the bridge in a flexible way and try to make the guitar top vibrate as much as possible. The strings must be allowed to resonate as well.

In order to achieve this effect, the composer suggests:

\(^{52}\) Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.
\(^{53}\) Interview with percussionist Dimitris Desyllas, 29 April 2013.
Find the place on the bridge of your guitar where you will get the lowest tone. On my guitar it [this place] is a little bit lower than the middle. Play either with the thumb or with two fingers m and a (that's what I did while working on the music).\textsuperscript{54}

For this reason, an optional version was used in the end of the first movement (as well as at the end of the second) in order to create an even lower-pitched sound, which is more suitable due to the soft ending:

Example 4.1.2.7.2.

Optional version of the above, for the end of the first movement: With the right hand wrist, tap the bridge on its upper side (i.e. over the sixth string). This sound will be of a lower pitch than that produced by the previous method. As in the example above, do not stop the strings’ resonance with the left hand.

The resultant timbre resembles the sound of a tympani.\textsuperscript{55}

Example 4.1.2.7.3.

Rotating the left forearm, tap the side of the guitar above the neck (near the sixth string) with the side of the thumb.

\textsuperscript{54} E-mail message to author, 8 August 2005.
\textsuperscript{55} Desyllas interview.
The composer suggests that the fingers 1, 2, 3, 4 are used in this case; however, the thumb was preferred by the author, since it creates a clear sound, while the four fingers, a rather blurred one. Moreover, it offers speed as well, since in some spots this effect alternates quickly with the effect, where the 1, 2, 3, 4 fingers tap the strings on the fingerboard (it will be explained below). When tapping the side of the guitar with the knuckle of the left hand thumb, a very dry sound is produced. The guitar sides resonate very little in comparison with the top and to use the bone of the knuckle rather than the flesh, stresses this difference more. This timbre could be compared with the tek colour of a bongo.  

Koshkin indicates with regard to the following effect:

My idea was the place just over the bridge. If you play the lower tone with the fingers $m$ and $a$, the thumb will be free to play this tone over the bridge. Not under the first string but over the sixth string.

Example 4.1.2.7.4.

With the side of the right hand thumb, tap the soundboard of the guitar, above the sixth string and near the sound-hole.

The author preferred to tap nearer the soundhole and not just over the bridge. When the right hand thumb taps on the top near the soundhole, a mid-ranged sound is produced. The top is less flexible here in comparison to the bridge, where it resonates the most. In addition to the use of the knuckle and not the flesh, this produces a middle-frequency sound, which is also rather dry and reminiscent of a Japanese Block.

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56 ‘Tek’: when a percussionist hits a drum near its sides, thus producing a dryer sound; ‘Dum’: when hitting the central part of the drum, producing a deeper sound; Desyllas interview.

57 E-mail message to author, 8 August 2005.

58 Desyllas interview.
Koshkin confirms to this author that four left hand fingers have to be used on the bass strings in order to produce the desired metallic sound: ‘Yes. The fingerboard and the bass strings. With the fingers 1, 2, 3 and 4 from the side of the sixth string. Not from under the first string.’

Tapping the strings on the fingerboard with the left hand fingers has a totally different effect given the metallic sound of the bass strings against the frets. This timbre resembles the sound of a *cajón.*

With these percussion-like sounds, the guitarist has the chance to play the role of a different kind of instrument in a work written for strings only. As Koshkin mentions:

> In the ['Megaron'] Concerto this was a very important moment because with the percussion effects I wanted to create the atmosphere of solo African drums, it is like a voodoo scene! As in an avant guarde cinema we see, for example, a scene with someone walking for a really long time and only after a while we realise that the actual walking is the subject and not where he goes, likewise when we hear the guitar playing percussion [for a long time], we wait for something to happen and only after some time we realise that this is the solo.

As explained above, like with percussive instruments, a vast variety of colours can be achieved—with Koshkin attempting to do just that.

One difficulty in this section is the need for the player to control it rhythmically. A guitarist has already learned to keep time when plucking strings, but tapping requires something that he is not trained to do; while being rhythmical is essential for a

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59 E-mail message to author, 8 August 2005.
60 Desyllas interview.
61 Interview with Nikita Koshkin, 12 April 2013.
percussionist, a guitarist must also master this quality. Thus, it is important to raise the fingers/hand in a rhythmical way and *in tempo*. When raised as such, the fingers consequently drop on time and under control; conversely, if this is not done properly, it is impossible to define the exact moment when the fingers will tap, resulting in a lack of rhythm. Moreover, the player must experiment with these sounds and find the most suitable ones. Every guitar has a different construction and will certainly sound differently depending on the spot where it is tapped and the strength and the flexibility of the hand’s motion.

Another aspect worth mentioning concerning such effects is that percussive sounds are also music (of course); they have also dynamic range (it was described in the ‘dynamics’ section) and must also match with the overall structure of the piece, melodic, harmonic etc.
4.1.2.8. Additional comments about slurring and stopping unnecessary and dissonant resonance

The guitarist must play the recommended slurs and not omit them in order to avoid technical difficulty. Slurs are added where a note is more important than its succeeding one; therefore the reason for a guitarist to use them is to achieve better articulation and not only to facilitate speed of execution. Tied and slurred notes are differentiated naturally; when plucked by the left hand, they are softer. However, a note played by the left hand has to be treated the same as any note produced by the right, sound-wise—the point being that it is as important to have a good quality sound. Moreover, since the slur is used because the first note is more important, the latter must not be shorter than its given value. As such, the guitarist should ensure that the second note does not sound too early: a common shortcoming in guitar technique. The first (plucked) note must be as long as its metronomic value or even slightly longer. Thus, before pulling a finger at a descending slur, the player should not be in a hurry to play the succeeding notes. For an ascending slur, he must not prioritise strength but, instead, make a contrary upward and relaxed motion of the finger before dropping it to the string and do that in tempo so that the finger falls on time and not earlier.

In bar 43 pay attention to the quality of the sound of the slurs to the open strings.

**General remark:** Slurring to an open string incurs the risk of a buzzing sound. The further this note is from the first fret, the higher the risk. To avoid this buzz and to make sure the sound will be clear and round, the left hand finger can be employed with a straighter shape (i.e. not as curved as it is normally). It should become again curved while pulling the string. This way, the finger plucks the string more with the flesh and pulls it in a softer fashion, while the harder part near the nail makes the sound more defined and not blurred as the softer part. This is particularly recommended for players with thin fingers.

In bars 98–103 it is suggested not to use any slurs. Combined with employment of non-legato, such an approach will serve to accentuate the marziale character and make it less light than the beginning.
One of the issues a guitarist needs to be aware of, is the avoidance of unwanted sounds and resonances. Unlike bowed string instruments where the sound stops when lifting the bow from the string, the guitar strings often resonate when they should not. A guitarist often thinks only of the moment of plucking and not how long a note should sound for. In some cases, the notes stop too early, either by lifting fingers before their values are concluded or by touching a string at the wrong moment; in other cases they last too long and create dissonances where there should not be.

With notes produced by pressing left hand fingers, the sound stops when the finger is lifted or when another is pressed on the same string at a higher pitched note. However, to lift a finger or to press another is not enough to stop the sound in the right manner. One such case is when lifting a finger to an open string. This often results in one hearing the open string note slightly. To avoid this, one should lift the finger gradually; it also helps if the string is only touched and not pressed. Another risk is to lift a finger before playing the next note; thus, the two notes will not be connected, or the next note will be plucked too early. Therefore, the two hands have to act simultaneously.

The most common cause of unwanted resonance is when a guitarist plays an open string and this note continues ringing after it is concluded, often resulting in one hearing wrong harmony. It is advisable that the player spots all the open strings, (usually in the bass) and finds a way to stop the resonance. Some notes will stop naturally when the next note is produced by pressing another finger on the same string. But others have to be stopped by different means. One way is to dampen the open strings, by slightly touching them with a left hand finger already in use, which may be pressed in an oblique angle so that, apart from pressing the right string, it also dampens the one below. One such case is in bar 44, when the open d’ fourth string from the previous bar has to be dampened and the c’ has to be played on the fifth string directly afterward. The first finger that plays the c’ may also dampen the d’.

Another similar case is when the player must avoid plucking a string unintentionally, especially while playing a chord with the right-hand thumb. An example occurs when the guitarist plays with the thumb the second chord of bar 31 and the first of 32. In order not
to pluck by accident the first string, he could slightly touch it with the second finger, which presses the second string; likewise, in bar 35.

However, this is often not possible with bass strings. In that case, the right hand thumb has to stop an open string, immediately after playing the next bass note. This device (i.e. the stopping of unwanted resonance) is hidden by the sound of the next note and is thus unnoticed.

The thumb can stop one string by touching it normally, or two strings by being placed in between them. This is very useful in executing a fast passage, in which the sixth string has to be stopped and the fifth has to be played right afterward, for example. In the abovementioned example of bar 44, the open $d$ sixth string from the previous bar, can be stopped with the thumb while it plays the $c'$ on the fifth string directly afterward.

The thumb may also stop more than two strings simultaneously by being placed flat on them, allowing the other three right hand fingers to play on the treble strings. The thumb is thus the principal implement used by a guitarist for stopping unnecessary resonance.

In other cases, the left hand may stop the resonance using idle fingers. Therefore, a guitarist has to use whichever fingers are available between plucking notes in order to stop others, making his task considerably more complicated.

The moment that the sound of a note or a chord will be stopped is important. When it is decided that a note/chord is to be given its full due, then it is preferable that the resonance is stopped as soon as the next note/chord is played; this ensures that the sound the fingers may make while stopping the notes—sometimes a little imprecise—is subsumed by the sound of the new notes. An example of this feature is the chord in bar 67, which should be stopped just after the start of bar 68. However, it is not recommended to wait too long after the new notes are played, as this could create a possible dissonance with the new harmony (unless the harmony is the same as the previous, or includes the notes that have to be stopped).
Attention should be paid to the fact that the resonance of the chords in bars 123–130 is stopped on every rest. However, it is preferable to stop slightly after the metronomic placing of this rest.

**General remark:** If a chord (especially a loud one) is stopped exactly where a rest is written, it sounds as if the sound was interrupted; if it is stopped slightly after, then it sounds as if it has naturally concluded. This is because exact metronomic beats are strong moments and can make even the silence of a rest sound accented. This is one of the several tips for using time musically, rather than mechanically. It should be stressed that the metronome is a tool for technical control and not the sole determinant for the maintenance of the correct pulse.
4.2. SECOND MOVEMENT, *Allegro Assai*

The second movement is in the style of a *scherzo*, which was (at least since the time of Beethoven) used in classical sonata form, although it was not always labelled ‘*scherzo*’. It has also been used to indicate a comic or ironically comic composition, usually fast-moving and often one movement within a larger work.\(^{62}\) Usually the *scherzo* was placed third among the movements and initially it was in 3/4 (taking the place of a minuet), but it was not rare to be placed second and could also be written in 2/4 or in 4/4 (the latter being the metre in the second movement of the ‘Megaron’). As the composer states: ‘after the calm ending of the first movement, the Scherzo would sound so natural.’\(^{63}\) He also comments that ‘the second movement is like youth, which is full of positive energy, power and promises before several hopes are disappointed by life.’\(^{64}\)

4.2.1. OUTLINE OF INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS

4.2.1.1. Bars 1–18

After a two-bar introduction by the orchestra, the guitar presents in bars 3–10, this movement’s first theme, which is in C major and consists of eight bars. As Koshkin states, he had composed this theme more than fifteen years earlier and ‘it was waiting for the moment when it could be used’;\(^{65}\) this moment came with the ‘Megaron’ Concerto. The second violins and the violas play intermittently a motif consisting of four semiquavers followed by a quaver, which they continue until bar 49. In bars 10 and 18, both violin groups play a bridge section with semiquavers:

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\(^{63}\) Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.

\(^{64}\) Ibid, 12 April 2013.

\(^{65}\) Ibid, 11 April 2013.
In bars 11–18, the guitar repeats the theme one octave higher, with a second voice as a counterpoint starting a sixth lower. The two groups of violins play the abovementioned motif this time. During the entirety of this section, the ’cellos and the double basses accompany discreetly with *pizzicatos*.

**4.2.1.2. Bars 19–34**

The theme, which originally appeared mainly in crotchets and in monophonic guise, is developed here using minim chords; this part, which is in A minor (the relative minor of C major), also contains eight bars.
The melody notes are now accompanied with rich, five-note (and some four-note) chords. Both violin groups (as well as the violas) continue with the same motif as before, however, this time in a syncopated manner. In bar 26, there is a bridge section in semiquavers, played by the guitar and the violins and a similar bridge in bar 34, played by the violins only.

**4.2.1.3. Bars 35–50**

The first theme appears again on the guitar in a similar fashion to the first time; only this time it is louder than the first (ff) and accompanied not only by the second violins and violas, but also by the first violins, which assist in the overall increase in dynamics.
The guitar’s upbeat notes are ornamented with semiquavers; there is a bridge section in semiquavers in bar 42 and when the theme is repeated, the second voice develops (bars 43–50) and a bass line is also added.

**4.2.1.4. Bars 51–62**

In this section there is a modulation to B-flat minor (with bar 51 functioning as a transition), with development of the material and a bridge passage in the guitar part in bar 62. The orchestration texture becomes denser:
Example 4.2.1.4.1. (Bars 51–55)

4.2.1.5. Bars 63–89

After a one-bar introduction, in bars 64–76, the guitar plays the second theme, which is in D (using both major and minor), the concerto’s original tonality. Here the orchestra accompanies with *pizzicatos*. 
The same theme passes to the first violins in bars 77–89; the guitar accompanies with short quaver notes on this occasion, while the second violins and 'cellos play semiquavers:

Example 4.2.1.5.2. (Bars 77–80)

The melodic line in the second violins and 'cellos here, reappears in a similar fashion in bar 103, with a seemingly unrelenting arpeggio in the guitar part.
4.2.1.6. Bars 90–102

This section contrasts highly with the previous one, being lively and accented (*marcato*). The guitar and the orchestra engage in dialogue, with repeated chords in quavers:

Example 4.2.1.6.1. (Bars 90–94)

Detached notes (*non legato*) are the order of the day—the chords in the orchestra played *pizzicato* as well—resembling the guitar’s timbre here, thus making the dialogue more homogeneous. The dynamics follow clearly the upward or downward direction of the resultant melody.

4.2.1.7. Bars 103–131

Here the guitar plays virtuosic and bright (*brillante*) arpeggios, accompanied by the orchestra with lighter instrumentation and sparser harmony (bars 103–116). Koshkin characterises this section as being ‘jazzy’.\(^{66}\)

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\(^{66}\) Koshkin interview, 12 April 2013.
The roles invert in bars 116–131, where the whole orchestra (except from the double basses) play in a similar manner to the guitar’s previous bars, while it is the soloist who now accompanies.

4.2.1.8. Bars 132–164
This particular section sees extended development of the initial theme, this time in B major (bars 132–145). The orchestra’s accompanying motif returns, although in a pattern of four semiquavers on this occasion. Played legato, it features in all its previous guises throughout the orchestra (except in the double basses).
Example 4.2.1.8.1. (Bars 132–135)

Bar 146 is a transition to A minor that starts in bar 147, where the guitar develops the material using techniques such as scalic passages, arpeggios and slurs amongst others. Bar 164 is a bridge to the next section.

4.2.1.9. Bars 165–185

The ’cellos play the same theme that appeared in the guitar part from bar 64, while the violins play a variation of it. This time the theme is not in D but in C, (again, both major and minor; C major being the original tonality of the second movement).
The guitar returns with the initial theme (in C major), this time played in a calm and expressive manner (dolce). The theme that appeared in C in the ’cellos (i.e. in bar 165), is now played by the violins and violas in a canon-like version:

Example 4.2.1.10.1. (Bars 186–191)
The whole orchestra then begins a *diminuendo* and the instrumentation becomes ever lighter, while in bar 193 the guitar uses the percussion effect that appeared in the first movement once more, before closing the second movement in bar 206 with a short, unadorned c’.
4.2.2. TECHNICAL AND INTERPRETIVE ASPECTS

As mentioned earlier, the following analysis of the remaining three movements of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto will focus exclusively on new elements.

Scalic passages occur in bars 26, 28, 30, 42, 62, 147, 149, 151, 154, 156, 158 and 164. The common manner for playing scales on the guitar is by using $i$ and $m$ (as in bar 62), sometimes adding one or more slurs (as in bars 42 and 164). However, in all the other scalic passages mentioned above, a different method was preferred. When there are notes that can be played with open strings, there is the possibility of arpeggiating neighbouring notes (known to guitarists as campanella or ‘harp effect’ technique) using $p$, $i$, $m$ and occasionally the $a$ finger also. In addition, some slurs are added. This way of playing scales makes them easier to play at a faster speed and they also sound lighter. Using three or four right-hand fingers, presents more possibilities for shaping, while adding a few slurs facilitates the flow of notes. In this case, slurs are used more for technical facility than for articulation. Another advantage of playing scales thus is that they sound clearer, while the usual $i$, $m$ sometimes results in buzzing sounds. A last comment about the scalic passages is that they must not sound as if they are simple exercises, and that the player must remember that scales—as everything in a music score—are also music!

**General remark:** During their student years (and beyond), guitarists need to play exercises in order to improve their technical abilities. Scales, arpeggios, slurs, etc. are a substantial part of their daily routine and become deeply engrained in their hands and mental habits. It is often noticed that even a player who is very musical during a melodic section, might act like a student and engage in empty showmanship when playing a section formed by one of the abovementioned technical aspects; but one must not forget that even scales or arpeggios are music.

In bars 59–60, attention should be given in order to avoid squeaking sounds on the fourth string.

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67 ‘[When] scale passages and melodic runs are played by plucking each note on a different course and employing as many open strings as possible. This allows each scale note to ring on, longer than would otherwise be possible. The effect should be similar to that of playing a scale on the open strings of a harp without damping any of them.’ Tyler, James: *A Brief Tutor for the Baroque Guitar* (Helsinki: Chorus Publications, 1984), 11.
**General remark:** The bass strings of the guitar are manufactured with a core material, which is a nylon multifilament and then wound with wire of various thicknesses, usually between 0.005–0.013 (thousands of an inch). This manner of string construction results in unpleasant noise when fingers slide on the string. Guitarists often fail to avoid those noises. Thus, when leaving a position on the bass, the finger must not touch the string. The player should lift the finger before leaving the position and not on the way to the next, as this will still result in noise. This technique is much harder than sliding the fingers and requires substantial work on the part of the player. Accuracy is even more necessary in sound recordings as every unnecessary noise is more audible. On the other hand, the fingers on the treble strings do not make noise when sliding as these strings are principally made of nylon. It is advised that the fingers playing the melody on treble strings continue to touch the string while changing position and even pressing it. This helps in the execution of legato.

Therefore, in these two bars, the fourth finger should continue pressing the string while shifting and the first and second fingers should be lifted.

In the lengthy arpeggios of bars 103–116, the player should be careful not to let the latter sound as if they are mere arpeggio exercises (a similar remark was mentioned above with regard to the scalar passages). When the thumb plays on the beat, it should not be accented and the bar should not be divided in four parts but let flow throughout this section.

In bars 117–130, the chords should be played with an eye and an ear to what the orchestra is playing at this juncture, as well as following the melodic line formed by their top notes. Attention has to be paid so that the six-note chords that are indicated to be played with *i* in a *rasgueado* manner have a well-rounded sound. Although it may as well be used in a *flamenco* fashion in terms of classical guitar technique, a chord played *rasgueado* should more commonly have a rich sound and ‘sing’.

In bar 132 the *forte* should be taken moderately so that there is room for *crescendo* later.

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68 E-mail message of the strings-manufacturer John D’Addario to the author, 25 January 2013.
In bars 155, 157, 159–162 the top line crotchets that form the melody should be played apoyando.

**General remark:** In repeated arpeggios, the notes on the first string often form a melody line. Guitarists frequently play all notes tirando, but it is preferable to play the top line apoyando and the rest tirando. Therefore, the guitarist has to be able to easily shift from one to the other without changing the position of his hand. Using short nails helps, too, in this endeavour.

In bars 165–185 the accompanying repetitive chords should not be played in a monotonous manner but should, again, follow the dynamics and melodic line of the orchestra.

**General remark:** A soloist in a concerto is not always a soloist. There are moments that he has to accompany and do so with the humility and supporting nature of a good accompanying pianist. For example, the first chords of the famous second movement of the Concierto de Aranjuez by Joaquin Rodrigo accompany the English Horn and can make a difference in how well the horn player will play; however, many guitarists play them flat and even, almost as a means of passing the time until they start their much-anticipated solo.

In the final bars from 193 onward, the percussion sound marked with a low $d$, will sound better if played with the optional version described in the first movement, (i.e. with the right hand wrist on the bass side of the bridge), creating a rather deep, velvety sound that suits best this *diminuendo* calm ending.

The final $c'$ will be damped better with the left hand.
4.3. THIRD MOVEMENT, _Adagio_

The third movement is the slow movement of the concerto, giving the opportunity for the soloist to demonstrate his expressiveness and ability to ‘sing’. It also includes the _cadenza_, the composition that consumed much of the composer’s time and energy. Upon sending it to the author, the composer wrote to the latter:

> Here is the third movement. About the fast notes in the Cadenza don't worry please. It is a funny effect, which will give you incredible speed for playing those episodes. It is called ‘tapping’—playing with both hands on the fingerboard. But please keep the secret of this effect. I want it to be a surprise on the première.\(^{69}\)

4.3.1. OUTLINE OF INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS

4.3.1.1. Bars 1–19

The guitar plays a theme centred on A, which consists of six solo bars with four-note or five-note chords. Koshkin comments that he had composed this theme, years before (as it happened with the theme of the second movement) and, as he states, ‘I love it so much!’\(^{71}\) He has a stock of ideas that he composed long ago and he keeps them until he finds the right piece in which to use them, something that may happen even several years after their initial inspiration. And, as he has pointed out with regard to this particular theme, it was just what he needed for this occasion, something that sounded so ‘guitaristic’ (thanks to the arpeggiated chords).

In bars 7–12 the soloist develops the theme in an angular melodic line with crotchet triplets and (mostly) three-note chords, while the concertino of the orchestra presents a second voice, imitating the guitar in the first two bars. The orchestra accompanies with _tremolando_ long notes:

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\(^{69}\) The ‘tapping’ effect will be explained in due course.

\(^{70}\) E-mail message to author, 6 May 2005.

\(^{71}\) Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.
In bars 13–20 the guitar plays again the first theme, however with a further development from bar 15. The only accompaniment is the concertino with a continuous high e’’’.

4.3.1.2. Bars 20–44
In bars 20–34, there is an orchestral tutti (without the guitar), which represents a development of the melodic line that appeared in bar 7, in a canon-like manner.
The soloist enters again in the middle of bar 34, playing the theme, while bars 34–40 being virtually identical with bars 15–20.

4.3.1.3. Bars 45–57 *Un poco più mosso*

The middle section starts here and its scope is to develop and increase the tension in order to arrive at the climax of the third movement (i.e. the *cadenza*). The composer wanted the *cadenza* to come as a result of the development, instead of adding it as a separate part (as per the *cadenza* of the Villa Lobos concerto, for example). A new theme appears in the guitar part, centred on G-sharp; this theme is linear, unlike the previous one that mainly consisted of chords. The intervals are mostly large: fifths, sixths and even sevenths, which give this theme a slightly avant-garde flavour, resembling also the shape of the second theme (*Allegretto Marziale*) in the first movement.
Another common element with the latter is that the two violin groups play in a similar manner as in bar 87 of the first movement, sharing a linear motion. The theme later modulates to become centred in E♭ and it passes to the orchestra, which plays it with minor alterations in bars 53–57.

4.3.1.4. Bars 58–74

In this section, the guitar develops the previous theme, this time centred in E minor. The orchestra plays short accented repeated notes, changing the character of the theme into a strongly rhythmic and impulsive one.
The guitar part becomes more virtuosic, with semiquavers and later, semiquaver sextuplets. The overall tension increases gradually with a crescendo, with a final glissando in the strings leading to a fortissimo, A-based chord, marking the beginning of the guitar cadenza:
4.3.1.5. Bars 75–124

This is the only solo *cadenza* of the concerto and it is a rather long one, consisting of fifty bars. The guitarist has the opportunity to demonstrate his technical skills with several means: continuous *rasgueados* at the beginning, fast passages with scales, arpeggios and the finger-tapping effect described later (which was probably never used to such an extent by another composer heretofore).

As the composer states, the *cadenza* was the part of the concerto that was more difficult for him to write:

> I wanted the *cadenza* to come very naturally, as a result of the development and I also wanted to do something unusual in it, something that nobody did before [in a guitar concerto]. I tried several options that were not good [before he came up with the idea of the tapping] and that took a long time.\(^{72}\)

\(^{72}\) Ibid.
Example 4.3.1.5.1. (Bars 76–101)

Moreover, the *cadenza* was the only part of the concerto where Koshkin used the instrument as well, in order to try different ideas. Otherwise, he almost never composes with a guitar in his hands; the image of the fret-board is in his mind without the need to physically use it. While he sometimes thinks of what he wants to compose and he adjusts it according to the guitar's possibilities afterwards, most of the time he composes directly as he ‘sees’ it in his mind, adapted for the guitar. This practice characterised his approach to the ‘Megaron’ also.

In bars 122–124 the soloist starts an *accelerando*, gradually reaching and establishing the next tempo (*Moderato*), whereupon the orchestra enters again (a clever way of reintroducing the latter).

### 4.3.1.6. Bars 125–153

The soloist continues the finger-tapping effect and the orchestra plays accented chords throughout this section, accompanying the concertino, which has a very melodic solo, from bar 128, arriving to a high $b’’’$ in bar 146, which it holds for nine bars. In the last four bars of this section, the orchestra holds the notes A, E and B, giving the opportunity for the soloist to complete the tapping section.
4.3.1.7. Bars 154–180 (end of third movement)

The concertino continues its solo, this time with the sole accompaniment of the guitar, which plays the first theme. This is another intelligent and unexpected idea on the part of the composer and it has a rather moving effect on the listeners.

Example 4.3.1.7.1. (Bars 154–169)

These bars are played without the conductor, giving the opportunity for the two soloists to play their duet with the freedom that can be obtained in chamber music. The orchestra (naturally including the conductor) enters in the last five bars, playing an A major chord and concluding this gesture in a very soft (pianissimo) manner. The ending sounds very optimistic; as Koshkin comments, it sounds as if ‘it comes from heaven’.\(^{73}\)

\(^{73}\) Ibid, 12 April 2013.
4.3.2. TECHNICAL AND INTERPRETIVE ASPECTS

In bars 1, 3 and 5, the crotchet chords should sound as if they are an upbeat into the next bar. Therefore, the first crotchet chord should not be accented.

*General remark:* It is a common habit of guitar players to accent the first note after a long note, making the accented one, sound as the start of a phrase and not a continuation (as it should be). This happens because guitarists tend to forget a note after plucking it, since they are not obliged to continue moving a bow or breathing into a wind instrument.

In bars 1–6 and similar sections, it is rather difficult to avoid unnecessary noises from the left hand, but these must not be overlooked. To avoid such noises in slow pieces is even more important, as such music has long notes that should rather sound clean, pure and beautiful, preferably without audible, interfering sounds. Additionally, the soloist should not neglect employing a little vibrato in all these chords.

In bars 75–78, the *i* finger may be used for the *rasgueado*, in an upwards-and-downwards continuous motion. But if possible, a variation of the flamenco technique of continuous *rasgueado* would be preferable. This consists of three strokes: the first is with *a, m, i* (or just *a, m*) altogether from the sixth string towards to first, while the palm of the hand stays still; the second stroke is with the *p* (again, from the sixth to the first string) while the arm is rotating following the thumb; and the third stroke is once more with the thumb from the first string towards the sixth, while the arm is rotating back to its initial position. When these strokes are executed quickly in a nonstop fashion, they sound as a continuous *rasgueado* and not as three individual strokes.\(^74\)

In bar 98, the following effect is used:

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\(^{74}\) Originally, the flamenco continuous *rasgueado* starts from the third of the abovementioned strokes and continues with the first and the second.
Example 4.3.2.1.

Pluck the indicated note with the right hand thumb (*apoyando*), then bend it and, with the external side of the knuckle, repeatedly hit the vibrating string very near the bridge. Do this slowly at the beginning and then accelerate, combining it with a diminuendo.

Koshkin describes this effect as follows:

First you play the bass note *apoyando* with the thumb. Then you have to bend the finger [...] Then touch the string near the bridge [...] Then lift the finger up and put it down again, touch the string. And again and again. Do it fast. You will get the effect a bit close to echo. Better play the note loudly because every touch of the string will make the sound softer and softer.\(^{75}\)

The player should try to follow the natural vibrations of the string and adjust both the strength of the percussive effect as well as the *accelerando* that accompanies it. The thumb should bounce on the string, preferably using the weight of the arm rather than additional strength.

From bar 99 onward, one finds the finger-tapping effect:

\(^{75}\) E-mail message to author, 24 June 2005.
Example 4.3.2.2.

**tapping** This is a technique used on the electric guitar; alternating the left hand second finger and the right hand *m* finger, tap the strings on the fret-board at the notes indicated and then slur to the open string.

This is one of the most difficult spots in the concerto. On the electric guitar, finger-tapping is an easy task, as the strings are low and the sound is mainly produced by the magnets and the amplifier; moreover, the player does not use long right hand nails. But on the classical guitar it is much harder. The greatest difficulty is to slur with the right hand *m* finger. The guitarist’s left hand is used to this technique, while the right one is not. Moreover, to slur from an open string to a high note on the fret board results more in the production of a buzz than an actual note and to produce a really musical sound and not just a noise, requires much work. The motion must not be too quick in order to give time for the string to ring and not simply bounce the finger back; additionally, it is advisable that both hands tap in a controlled manner. Another difficulty is to avoid touching the next string with the right hand fingernails; therefore, the *m* finger has to be almost parallel with the plucked string. On the other hand, when slurring from the pressed string to the open one, the nail is once more in the way, as it is the flesh that must be used. As before, having short nails makes it easier.

**General remark:** Using short right hand nails is advisable for a number of reasons. It is easier to play fast, since the shorter the nail, the less an obstacle it becomes. It can create a better quality sound and a larger variety of colours as well, since using the flesh is easier with short nails than with long ones. Short nails are less at risk of breaking. It is also easier to change from apoyando to tirando and vice versa. Even in such a rare case as the one described above, short nails are preferable.
Another difficulty revolves around controlling the tempo. One of the common tendencies when playing the guitar is to slur early. This is even more risky when changing tempo. All the tapping section of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto contains continuous *acellerandos* and *rallentandos*, so being able to perfectly control the rhythm of the slurs is very important.

From bar 156 until the end of the third movement, the guitar plays in tandem with the first violin. The conductor is not conducting here, leaving the two players free to follow one another in one of the magic moments of this concerto.
4.4. FOURTH MOVEMENT, Vivo – Andante

The fourth movement was written after he composed the first and, as Koshkin comments, it was the one that was the least difficult to compose, as he remembers that ‘it went so smooth.’ It consists of two large sections, the first 265 bars (Vivo) and the bars 266–391 (the end of the concerto). The first section has a dramatic character and includes elements of a strain of minimalism that Koshkin refers to being in his own manner; naturally, he is not a minimalist composer.

4.4.1. OUTLINE OF INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS

4.4.1.1. Bars 1–16

For the first sixteen bars, the guitar plays a D minor arpeggio (with added major seventh) consisting of quavers, while the violas play the same arpeggio with crotchets. The rest of the orchestra (except from the double basses) plays a lively (Vivo) introduction starting in bar seven until bar sixteen.

Example 4.4.1.1.1. (Bars 1–9)

76 Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.
There is a resemblance between the beginning of the first movement and that of the fourth: the guitarist starts both movements with a D minor arpeggio (only in the fourth movement, it has a major seventh as well—as mentioned above). Koshkin retains the same harmony in the guitar part (for sixteen bars) as he did in the first movement. The rhythm in the first movement is 6/8, and in the fourth is 3/4, but the arpeggio is played in the same manner (although much faster in the fourth). One should be reminded that 6/8 and 3/4 time are very similar, since they both consist of six quavers; moreover, music in 6/8 can have a dual character at times, being either divided in two or in three (the latter resembling 3/4 time). In both movements, guitar, violas, ’cellos and double basses play a few opening bars (three and six respectively) before the first theme or the introduction starts. On the other hand, the beginnings of the two movements have a contrasting character: melodic and expressive in the first one; lively and accented in the last.

4.4.1.2. Bars 17–73
In bars 17–36 the guitar presents the first theme, which consists of accented two-note chords (please see the Example 4.4.2.1. in the ‘Technical and interpretive aspects’ section). The violins and violas accompany in pizzicato quavers; a rather difficult task, considering the fact that the tempo here is crotchet=192 and violinists normally play pizzicatos using only the right-hand index finger. In bars 37–55, the orchestra plays the theme, while the soloist accompanies with extensive arpeggios in a legato manner, contrasting the abovementioned pizzicato arpeggios in the violins and violas. In bars 56–73, the tension is gradually lessened with descending arpeggios passing from the guitar, first to the violins, then the violas, ’cellos and the double basses. Although there is no diminuendo written, the composer achieves a similar effect by gradually lightening the instrumentation while moving towards the bass instruments of the orchestra.

4.4.1.3. Bars 74–133
In bars 74–104 the concertino plays a new solo theme (starting in bar 76). For thirty-one bars, the guitar repeats the same D minor chord (d’, f’, a’’) in crotchets and the orchestra sustains the same notes (D, d, a, d’) throughout. Once again—as he did in the beginning of the first and fourth movements—Koshkin uses the idea of retaining the same harmony in the accompaniment (typically, a melody is normally accompanied by different harmonies).
In bars 105–133, the guitarist plays the same theme as the one that the violin played before, including a six-note chord on every downbeat. The instrumentation becomes thicker by using D minor arpeggios, while the violins play in *divisi*. The idea of sustaining the harmony in the accompaniment continues here. Although the orchestra has *p* and the guitar *ff*, attention has to be taken so that the orchestra does not drown out the guitar, something that can easily happen due to the rich orchestration:

Example 4.4.1.3.1. (Bars 105–115)

4.4.1.4. Bars 134–157
The soloist and the orchestra play again the first theme; this time it is very loud (*ff* and *f* respectively), with accented short notes, in a canon-like manner.
4.4.1.5. Bars 158–199

The soloist develops the same theme with extensive arpeggios, using most of the guitar’s range in a virtuosic manner. The orchestra plays the theme in augmentation; while initially it consisted of crotchets, now the notes of the theme are at a distance of minims (crotchet notes alternating with crotchet rests):

Example 4.4.1.5.1. (Bars 158–171)
4.4.1.6. Bars 200–240

The guitar plays the first theme again in a similar manner as in the section from bar 134, this time with five or six-note rasgueado chords. The orchestra plays fragments of the theme, repeating every note twice in a tremolando manner.

Example 4.4.1.6.1. (Bars 200–211)

In bars 223–240, the guitar and the orchestra play the first theme one last time with very accented staccato crotchet chords. All the groups (except the double basses) are marked divisi, representing the richest point of the movement in terms of orchestration and sheer volume. This part then leads to the climax of this particular section and the fortissimo first beat of bar 241.

4.4.1.7. Bars 241–265

The abovementioned first beat sounds like an explosion on the note D, and it is played by all the instruments including the guitar, which sounds three Ds (as well as one A: the only exception). After this effect, the harmony in the orchestra (which plays without the guitar now) becomes more and more dissonant for the next seven bars, playing very accented minims with the chromatic notes C#, C♮, B, B♭, A, A♭, G, G♭, F and E being added one after the other to the D. This process of harmonic stacking creates a cluster in bar 247 that includes eleven pitches (the only one missing from the chromatic scale is E♭). This cluster is sustained for eight bars while the orchestra starts a diminuendo, leading from ff
to \( p \) in bar 254, which gradually releases the tension created in the previous section—thus allowing the guitar to introduce a new theme (with contrasting character) in bar 266.

Example 4.4.1.7.1. (Bars 241–254)

4.4.1.8. Bars 266–317
In this section, the second theme of the first movement (Allegretto Marziale) appears again in the guitar part (bar 270) and is repeated six times, only now it is a fifth lower and of a melodic character suggested by the slower tempo (Andante). The guitar plays over light instrumentation consisting of repeated D notes only, which allows the soloist to be slightly freer, rhythmic-wise:
Koshkin wanted to end the concerto in a hymn-like\textsuperscript{77} manner that would sound ‘like a triumphal celebration of the guitar, as if to represent Apollo descending from the sky playing his lyre’\textsuperscript{78}; he describes the end of his work with palpable enthusiasm: ‘The ending is really so full of sunlight.’ This reflects his personality insofar as, despite the difficulties that he has met in his life, he is, as he comments: ‘full of hope for the future’\textsuperscript{79}—a very optimistic approach that recall a comment he made in an interview in 1986:

\begin{quote}
 I am not self-assured but I am very optimistic. If I am working with music and the guitar, I must be optimistic. And if I have some hesitation or some uncertainty, or lack of success, or maybe depressions, every time my optimism is a winner. I am still working and I will continue my work, which is warmed and inspired by my great love for music and guitar.\textsuperscript{80}
\end{quote}

To serve his purpose and to end the work as planned, he chose this theme and subsequently decided to use it for the first movement as well, in order to have a uniting element (an ‘arc’ as he calls it) between the two.\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{77} This is one more reference to Ancient Greece and to the Greek word \textit{ὕμνος} (\textit{hymnos}), which means ‘a song of praise’ which usually designated a poem in honour of a God.


\textsuperscript{79} Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.


\textsuperscript{81} Koshkin interview, 11 April 2013.
In bar 279, the concertino and the principal second violinist use once more a similar effect to the one that appeared in bar 87 of the first movement, where successive notes alternate between the two groups of instruments, thus outlining a line, in quaver (not crotchet) motion:

Example 4.4.1.8.2. (Bars 279–285)

In bar 286, the concertino plays the theme along with the guitar (which repeats it for the third time), starting one crotchet later in a canon-like manner and, in bar 294, it repeats it one octave higher, while the principal of the second violins enters the canon, starting the theme three crotchets after the guitar and two after the first violins. In bar 302, the guitar starts the fifth repetition of the theme, one octave higher than before, with a second lower-pitched line. The overall dynamics of this section rise to \textit{mf}, while all the violinists play descending chromatic passages. In bar 310, the guitar repeats the theme for the last time while the instrumentation is dense, with all groups (except the double basses) playing in \textit{divisi}: 
4.4.1.9. Bars 318–391 (end of fourth movement)

The soloist plays a new theme, which is developed throughout the final section of the fourth movement (and of the whole concerto). It consists of chords, with their top notes forming a melodic line. The instrumentation is very light, with few *pizzicato* bars and a pedal represented by a repeated low pitch D, both in the guitar and double bass part:

Example 4.4.1.9.1. (Bars 318–325)
In bar 326, the same theme is played by the concertino. Three other solo violins (one from the first and two from the second group) play three more voices in a contrapuntal manner along with the concertino, following the same rhythmic pattern. The guitar and the double basses continue the pedal D notes with a one-bar exception (bar 329), in which the guitar plays a reminder from the previous theme. In bars 334–341, four cellists play four solo lines respectively, in a similar manner as the four violinists did before, while the guitarist plays virtuosic semiquavers, as well as semiquaver triplets. From bar 342, the guitar plays the theme again, with one internal bar (bar 345) thereof taken from the rendition of the theme in bars 270–317. This time it is *forte*, with all the orchestra (except the double basses) playing parallel voices in *divisi*, using the guitar’s rhythmic pattern (it was earlier performed by only four violins or four ’cellos). Bars 349–354 represent a bridge section, played by the orchestra with downward and then upward scales in quavers, which increase the overall tension. In bars 355–362, the theme is repeated one step higher in terms of dynamics, with the guitar traversing from *f* to *ff*, and the orchestra from *mf* to *f*.

The soloist has one more virtuosic part in bars 363–369, which the orchestra accompanies with *pizzicatos*, something that allows the guitar to be heard. Another bridge passage occurs in 370–375, where the guitar plays percussive notes as in the first movement (one more element in common with the opening movement of this concerto) and the orchestra plays a *crescendo* in bars 374–375, leading to the climax of this section and of the whole fourth movement in bars 376–387:
In bars 376–377 and in 380–381, the violins, violas and ’cellos play two-note chords, preceded by grace notes that also consist of two-note chords. All players (including the guitarist) play fortissimo and with accented notes. Bars 383–387 are slower (Meno Mosso), thus creating more tension in the final crescendo in bar 386 that leads to the fortissimo final chord of this movement in bar 387; both the soloist and the orchestra play in a tremolando manner.

In bars 388–391, the soloist plays, in a rhythmically free manner (a piacere), a virtuosic coda over a D major chord sustained by the orchestra—thus concluding the ‘Megaron Concerto’ in a traditional, masterly fashion:
Example 4.4.1.9.3. (Bars 388–391)
4.4.2. TECHNICAL AND INTERPRETIVE ASPECTS

For this movement, the author chose to follow a dynamic approach different than that of the composer. An interpreter first of all has to support the composer’s choices and bring the best out of them; however, he is also a creator and may have ideas that can illumine different depths of the work in question, which even the composer had not considered. The composer’s work stops when he finishes his piece on the paper and that is where the interpreter’s responsibility starts. In her very characteristic and direct manner of speech, the great harpsichordist Wanda Landowska (1879–1959) stated:

If Rameau himself would rise from his grave to demand of me some changes in my interpretation of his ‘Dauphine’, I would answer, ‘You gave birth to it; it is beautiful. But now leave me alone with it. You have nothing more to say; go away!’ [...] The idea of objectivity is utopian. Can the music of any composer maintain its integrity after passing through the living complex—sanguine or phlegmatic—of this or that interpreter? Can an interpreter restrict himself to remaining in the shadow of the author? What a commonplace! What a joke!82

Moreover, Andrés Segovia averred that composers have antennae so that they can capture all the good inspiration from heaven but that, after they wrote the music, they should take their hands off it and leave it to the interpreters.83

In the original score, Koshkin indicates forte for the first 104 bars of the guitar part, a feature that changes in bar 105 only to become even louder (ff) until bar 157. During the same period, the orchestra plays between mp and f depending on whether it accompanies the guitar or plays the theme. However, the twenty-bar theme consists of groups of four bars where the second group is an exact imitation of the first and the fourth is an exact repetition of the third, thus sounding like a question and answer. The last group of four concludes the theme.

For this reason, the choice was made to make a dynamic contrast and play the first and third groups forte (with mf in the orchestra) and the second and fourth piano, as well as the last four bars where there can also be a small crescendo and diminuendo. These changes add variety, since having 157 bars of forte or fortissimo can sound too monotonous. It is interesting to add here some commentary by Koshkin himself from an old interview of his that could partly justify this author’s choice:

83 Segovia, in a private conversation with Oscar Ghiglia; Interview with Oscar Ghiglia, 12 April 2013.
You need aesthetic proportion. If you go beyond it, then it stops being art. Forte, double forte, fortissimo, all prolonged—where next? After a while it is just a noise and the logical conclusion is the breaking of strings. It is a question of discipline. If you shout perpetually, the other person will not hear you. It starts to be boring.  

Moreover, repeating two or four bars is a very old compositional technique that was prevalent in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; contrasting forte and piano in such cases was common practice—it is commonly termed ‘echo’.  

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From bar 37 onward, the orchestra plays the same theme as the guitar and should also follow the same dynamics as seen in the guitar part. In the conclusion of this section (from bars 56–73), there is a very long and gradual *diminuendo*.

From bars 105–133, it is suggested that the six-note chords be played only with the *i* finger and with *rasgueado*. The common technique would be to use the thumb, but due to the *fortissimo* indicated in the score by Koshkin, the index finger will produce a louder sound. However, care has to be given so that the stroke is not too quick and not harsh.
**General remark:** A chord has to ‘sing’ as much as a melodic line. As the famous guitarist Julian Bream once said to this author during a master-class: ‘A chord is a piece’. Guitarists often play chords only passing on the surface of the strings and usually so fast so that there is not time to realise them properly. Moreover, when they play rasgueado, they tend to think that, since this is a flamenco technique, it does not have to sound round and full. This often results in hearing chords that sound detached from the musical context around them.

In this case, the index finger can still have a good quality sound—despite the fact that it strikes with the upper part of the nail. This can be achieved by passing the finger more deeply between the strings, as well as giving slightly more time to the chord without losing the general tempo. Only the chords whose top note is on the second string (bars 109, 125, 133) should be played with \( p, i, m, a \), to avoid playing the first string by accident.

In bars 134–157, the violins and the ’cellos imitate the four-note groupings in the guitar part, starting two crotchets after the guitar. Although there are no staccato dots over the guitar chords, it is recommended that the soloist follow the orchestra in actually playing staccato, resulting in a question and answer effect.

In bars 162–163, 166–167, 170–171 and 174–175, **hemiolas**\(^86\) are used so the two bars of three crotchets sound as if they are one bar of three minim notes. The first violins and the ’cellos play the theme this time with a crotchet rest after each crotchet, and the guitar accompanies with arpeggios with the same grouping. Thus, it would be preferable if the guitarist accents slightly every four-quaver note groupings to match their equivalents in the orchestra.

From bar 200 onward, the guitarist should play the chords again rasgueado with the index finger—though this time the first chord is more preferable with \( p, i, m, a \), to avoid plucking the first string by mistake. However, the manner in which these chords are

\(^{86}\) […] ‘Hemiola’ in the modern metrical system denotes the articulation of two units of triple metre as if they were notated as three units of duple metre […] Rushton, Julian: ‘Hemiola’, *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. (Accessed 15 March 2013), <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ditlib.dit.ie/subscriber/article/grove/music/12768>.\n
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articulated, should be unlike bars 105–133 (where the emphasis is upon making them ‘sing’); this time they should be done in a quick manner with an accented percussive character. The chords should not be played for their full duration, but should be slightly shorter or else *non-legato*. This will distinguish the guitar from the orchestra, which plays quick semi-quavers.

**General remark:** As the guitar plucks every note in an instant without having to hold it (unlike a bowed or wind instrument,) composers for the guitar are commonly imprecise in terms of indicating how long a note or chord should be kept, thereby leaving it to the discretion of the interpreter. As mentioned earlier in the articulation and phrasing section, notes often have no rests between them, no indication with regard to articulation and no staccato or legato indicated either. It is therefore left to the player to decide when they have to be connected or not. In this case, a piano score would have phrase indications added, as well as dots to indicate detached notes but nonetheless connected in the manner of a phrase. However, such notation can easily be misunderstood by a guitarist and the music played staccato; in light of this fact, only the phrase lines were added in the ‘Megaron’ score and not the dots.

From bar 223 onward, there are accents and dots for *staccato* written by the composer for all the full orchestra as well as for the guitar. It thus continues as before, only this time it has to be more emphatic, with the accents making it harder and more forceful. The rhythm must be very precise and percussive. This section leads to the climax of this movement (bar 241), which is followed by a long, twenty-five-bar-long *diminuendo* that gives enough time to release the considerable accumulation of tension in the previous section and to allow the next theme to start in a contrastingly peaceful atmosphere.

In bar 266, the final long section of the concerto starts. In bars 266–267, the soloist has to be very precise rhythmically with the bass notes, in order to indicate the tempo to the `cellos that play exactly the same notes in the following bars. The second theme of the first movement (*Allegretto Marziale*) appears again in the guitar part, this time a fifth lower. It is repeated some six times overall (with a lower pitched melodic line during the last two). As mentioned above, these repetitions must vary and the means are dynamics, colours, rhythm and articulation. In this case, every repetition has a richer orchestration
so the best approach is to play slightly freer at the beginning when there is only a bass line kept by the violas, ’cellos and double bass, in order to become rhythmically stricter as the orchestration becomes thicker. Additionally, at the beginning, the second theme can be played lighter and softer and altered accordingly as it undergoes a gradual crescendo until bar 317.

Another way to vary the abovementioned theme repetitions is to change the fingering register. Although bars 286-292 are the same as bars 270-276, the fingering chosen was different; in the latter, more bass strings were chosen than in the former, where open strings were also preferred. These choices make the notes in bars 270-276 sound mellower, while their repetition in bars 286-292 is clearer, louder and with more ‘light’.

From bar 318 onward, there are several four-note chords on the first four strings of the guitar, with the melody on the second string and not the first (which is also played). Care has to be taken so that the m finger plays louder than the a, since the hand’s tendency is to play the a louder. In that case, we would hear a repeated loud e’’ note covering the melody.

Bars 334–335 feature multiple successive position changes for the left hand. It is one of the cases that only a player, who has learned to use the minimum amount of energy for left hand shifts, can play without missing notes.

**General remark:** One of the main reasons for mistakes in guitar playing, are left hand shifts. Every motion requires a different amount of energy without adding more than needed; thus resulting in more technical security. Guitarists often use excess effort for every motion, under the misguided impression that this will enable them to move quicker. When a hand moves five frets away using energy for a position change covering seven, then it has to use even more force in order to stop over the right fret and not continue. This usually results in hand tension, insecurity, inability to connect the notes musically and, in the worst case, missing the next note. Much concentrated practice needs to be undertaken, making sure that each finger presses right next to the frets (neither away from them, nor covering them) and each motion is studied and executed with minimum effort. A good way is to play with closed eyes. This way, the player listens better and feels
the hand better. The sense of vision is almost needless for a good player, since it gives the
illusion that the eyes can direct the hands. The eyes only witness what the hands do,
without being able to direct them or prevent them from making mistakes. This explains
why some blind players play better music, listen better and have a more secure technique
than many that do have their sense of vision. The proper left hand motion is quick,
relaxed and precise. To confirm if it is right, the player has to close his eyes and listen. If
it sounds really well connected, effortless, calm and easy, then he has achieved his goal.

**General remark:** Since the guitar has frets, a common mistake of guitarists is to press the
string wherever convenient between the two frets. A violinist who does this, plays a note
out of tune. The guitarist will not be out of tune (given, of course, that he has tuned his
guitar accurately) since the fret and not the finger, defines the length of the string. But if
he always presses exactly before the fret without exceptions and no matter how
complicated a chord shape may be, then he will know only one place for every note;
something that will give his hand a much clearer ‘picture’ of the fret board. Most of the
time, when a guitarist misses a note, it is a result of the unclear feeling he has about the
exact position of every note and of the exact amount of energy he needs for every motion
on the fret board.

From bar 334 until the end of the concerto, ranks as perhaps the most technically
demanding part of the whole piece where arpeggios, scales, slurs, difficult chords and
rasgueados are implied and the soloist has an opportunity to display his technical
abilities. Thus, the piece concludes in an impressive way, most commonly employed in
concertos. The last four bars (where the guitarist plays a final *cadenza*) should be fast
enough but not overly-fast, so that every note is clearly articulated. To play loud and clear
is more important here than playing even faster, as to do so results in a loss of clarity.
4.5. RECORDING THE 'MEGARON' CONCERTO: ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

The ‘Megaron’ Concerto was recorded by this author and was released by the Swedish record company, BIS; thus, the author’s arguments discussed in this dissertation can also be listened to and better understood by the reader. For the recording, the author used a very different method than the one used in preparation for a concert. For a concert, the prerogative is to play a whole work at the highest level, only once; the listener remembers a whole impression from the interpretation and has no way to hear it again, thus making details seem somehow less important. On the other hand, a recording remains forever; the listener may hear it as many times as he wants and remember every tiny detail. Listeners that have done this are often impressed when they hear the same player in concert at a later stage and realise that he does not play it exactly as in the recording; indeed, sometimes his playing can be entirely different from the latter. When recording, one can record parts several times, although when recording with orchestra, time is very valuable and restricted (since an orchestra is rather expensive to employ) so, the dictum: the lesser, the better, obtains in this case. However, modern recording practice implies that a copious amount of editing is often used, until the maximum quality level is achieved; therefore, playing and recording long parts, or even whole pieces, is not necessary. Even recording with an orchestra is done by recording smaller sections.

The method that this author used for the preparation of this recording, consisted of the following stages:

- Working individually on short sections, mainly on single phrases.
- Recording all the preparation, in order to listen as often as possible to the progress made. When listening to his recording, a player has the clearest idea of how his playing really sounds; when he plays, some of his concentration is absorbed by the numerous problems that he has to face and resolve in situ.
- Conducting a formal analysis of the guitar and the orchestral parts.
- Carefully checking and rechecking that there are no mistakes in the notes, either misprints in the score, or possible oversights on the part of the player. A CD that lasts seventy-seven minutes includes tens of thousands of notes; while it is possible for every human to make mistakes, it is inexcusable if these are recorded and evident on a finished CD.
• Playing the chords that consist the phrase; in order to shape a phrase, its harmonic structure is more important than its melodic structure.

• Singing each melodic line and recording it, in order to form a clear idea of the desired shape. When singing, a musician is more free to interpret a melody than when playing it, especially an instrument which is difficult to make ‘sing’ (such as the guitar).

• Taking notes about the interpretation choices; writing out fingering after confirming that everything works; adding or changing dynamic indications. A significant part of the work required for the eventual writing of this dissertation was done via the notes taken during the preparation of the CD recording in 2009.

• Playing along with the *Finale* program midi tool. This experience gives a unique opportunity to listen to the orchestral part, to play along at many different speeds and to better prepare for the final encounter with the real orchestra. However, attention was given to the fact that this is only a machine playing in a metronomic manner, and that the player had to be ready to use flexibility with regard to her interpretation when playing with an actual orchestra.

• Listening to the recording of the première of 2006; this helped the author further improve the interpretation on the CD recording. The best way for players to improve, is to listen and learn from their previous performances, and to always demand the attainment of higher targets from themselves.

• Playing and recording every phrase; trying to reach this soloist’s maximum abilities and have the clearest possible idea of how exactly each phrase should eventually be recorded. While some of the interpretation can be left to the moment’s spontaneity during concerts, and in some situations, different and new ideas may emerge, a CD is recorded once and once only. For every player, the realisation of his full potential is an extremely difficult task. Contrary to popular belief, recording a CD is perhaps more onerous on the player’s ability, stamina and concentration, at least in the opinion of this author.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE ‘MEGARON’ CONCERTO:
CHANGES FROM THE INITIAL 2005 SCORE

In the first version of the score (dated 2005), Koshkin put in some dynamics or accents so that he would hear the desired sound through the MIDI tool of the Finale music notation software that he was using. However, when the concerto was performed by an orchestra, those marks did not make sense and had to be removed or altered by the author. Additionally, some dynamics were added or changed as a result of this author playing the concerto with four different orchestras and recording it with a fifth one. Several of the dynamics in the orchestral part were reduced in terms of intensity, since the guitar’s sound was often drowned out by the strings. The changes were usually carried out after consultation with the composer but sometimes with his general permission, too, given that he was often in agreement concerning their necessity. While giving his opinion on some suggestions in a letter to this author, he wrote: ‘About “Veloce” and “Tempo Primo” I agree. And with the rest I will agree for sure. Because I trust you. You are such a wonderful musician. You can make no harm to my Concerto.’

The present chapter thus surveys the alterations made to the original score. The phrase lines added to the guitar part will not be mentioned here, since they were discussed in the ‘Articulation and phrasing’ section of Chapter Four. As mentioned in the Introduction, the composer had added some fingering to the initial score purely as a guide to this author, but he advised the latter to change the fingering to whatever she thought more suitable. The final fingering decided by the author is included in detail in the Performing Edition in the Appendix B and, therefore, it does not need to be discussed in the present chapter.

1 Electronic mail to this author, 28 July 2011.
2 Note: where cresc. and dim. are mentioned below, they signify that the abbreviations of these words are written in the score. When the whole words are mentioned (i.e. crescendo, diminuendo) they signify the hairpins in the score.
5.1. FIRST MOVEMENT

Bar 1: the suggested tempo for *Allegro sostenuto* is dotted crotchet =80 for a; the *f* in the guitar part was changed to *mf*

Bars 4–19: both violin groups were accented, with accents later removed;

Bars 20–35: the guitar part was accented, with accents then removed; the *mf* in the orchestral part was changed to *p*

Bar 36: *mf* was added to the guitar part; *legatissimo* was added to the first violins

Bars 36–60: several *crescendos* and *diminuendos* were added to the guitar part

Bars 36–49: phrase lines were added to the violins

Bar 44: *più f* was added to the guitar part

Bar 52: *f* was added to the first chord in all instruments and *mp* to the second. The same situation obtains in bar 54

Bars 56–57: *dim. poco a poco* was added to the guitar part

Bar 62: *mf, espr.* and *crescendo* were added to the guitar part; the accents in second violins, violas and ’cellos were removed

Bars 63–64: the *f* in second violins, violas and ’cellos was changed to *mp*

Bar 67: the *più f* in the orchestral part was changed to *f*

Bars 70–73: the accents in the second violins were removed

Bar 74: *f* was added to the guitar part

Bar 75: *diminuendo* was added to the guitar part

Bars 78–81: *dim.* was added to the orchestral part

Bar 84: *marciale* was changed to *marziale*; the suggested tempo for *Allegretto marziale* is crotchet=108

Bar 85: *mf* was added to the guitar part

Bar 87: in the first and second violin solos, the *mp* was changed to *p* and *legatissimo* was added

Bar 91: *simile* was added to the violin solos

Bars 94–103: several *crescendos* and *diminuendos* were added to the guitar part

Bar 98: *f* was added to the guitar part

Bar 99: *dim. poco a poco* was added to the guitar part
Bar 114: the crescendo was removed from the orchestral part; diminuendo was added instead.

Bar 115: the ff in the guitar part was changed to f; the più f in the orchestral part was changed to mp in the violins and mf in the violas, 'cellos and double basses.

Bar 121: crescendo was added to the guitar part.

Bar 123: the f in the guitar part was changed to ff; the f in the orchestral part was changed to mf.

Bar 127: meno f was added to all instruments.

Bar 128: cresc. poco a poco was added to all instruments.

Bars 130–132: in the guitar part, crescendo was added in bars 130–131 and diminuendo in 132.

Bar 136: p was added to the guitar part.

Bar 139: legatissimo sempre was added to violins and violas.

Bar 158–159: the crescendo in the guitar part was moved to bars 160–161.

Bar 162: the mp in violins and violas was changed to p.

Bar 179–181: diminuendo was added to the guitar part.

Bar 182: the mp in violas and 'cellos was changed to p.

Bar 183: mf and crescendo were added to the guitar part.

Bar 184: the mp in the violins was changed to p.

Bar 187: crescendo was added to the guitar part.

Bars 193–194: diminuendo was added to the guitar part.

Bars 194–197: diminuendo was added to the violins.

Bar 197: poco rit. was added to the guitar part.

Bar 210: p was added to the guitar part.

Bars 215–216: the crescendo of the guitar part was moved to bars 216–217.

Bar 219: poco rit. was added to all instruments in the end of the bar.

Bar 220: A Tempo was added to all instruments; p was added to the orchestral part; the cresc. in the guitar part was moved to bar 222 and the cresc. in the orchestral part was changed to no cresc.

Bar 229: the crescendo in the orchestral part was changed to poco cresc.

Bar 232: the crescendo in the orchestral part was changed to poco cresc.

Bar 236: the cresc. in the orchestral part was changed to poco a poco cresc.

Bars 243–261: the accents in the orchestral part were removed.
Bar 245: \textit{ff} was added to the guitar part; \textit{f} was added to the orchestral part

Bars 256–257: \textit{diminuendo} was added to all instruments

Bar 324: \textit{p} was added to the guitar part

Bars 328–329: \textit{dim. poco a poco} was added to the guitar part

\textbf{5.2. SECOND MOVEMENT}

Bar 1: the suggested tempo for \textit{Allegro assai} is crotchet=125

Bar 2: the \textit{f} in the guitar part was changed to \textit{mf}; \textit{diminuendo} was added to the orchestral part

Bar 3: \textit{mp} was added to the orchestral part

Bar 10: \textit{più f} was added to the guitar part on the last beat; the \textit{mp} in the first violins was changed to \textit{p}

Bar 11: \textit{mp} was added to the orchestral part

Bar 14: \textit{f} was added to the guitar part on the last beat

Bar 19: the \textit{mf} in the orchestral part was changed to \textit{mp}

Bar 34: \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part on the last beat

Bar 35: \textit{ff} was added to the guitar part; the \textit{f} in the orchestral part was changed to \textit{mf}

Bar 48: \textit{dim.} was added to all instruments

Bar 51: \textit{mp} was added to all instruments; \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part

Bar 52: \textit{mf} was added to all instruments

Bar 58: \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part

Bar 59: \textit{f} was added to the guitar part

Bar 62: \textit{diminuendo} was added to the guitar part

Bar 63: \textit{mf} was added to the guitar part

Bar 77: \textit{mf} was added to the guitar part

Bar 90: \textit{marcato} was added to the guitar part

Bars 90–102: several \textit{crescendos} and \textit{diminuendos} were added to all instruments

Bar 132: the \textit{ff} in the guitar part was changed to \textit{f}; the \textit{più f} in the orchestral part was changed to \textit{mf}
Bar 134: *cresc.* was added to the guitar part; *cresc. poco a poco* was added to the orchestral part
Bar 136: *ff* was added to the guitar part
Bar 140: *dim. poco a poco* was added to all instruments
Bar 146: *crescendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 147: *f* was added to the guitar part; the *f* in the orchestral part was changed to *mf*
Bar 164: *mf* and *crescendo* were added to the guitar part
Bar 165: *f* was added to the guitar part
Bar 186: *dolce* was added to the guitar part; the *mf* in the first violins was changed to *mp* and *mp* was added to the rest of the orchestral part
Bar 189: the *mp* in the first violins was changed to *p*
Bar 191: the *mp* in the second violins was changed to *p*
Bar 192: the *mp* in the violas was changed to *p*; *p* was added to ’cellos and double basses
Bar 194: the *cresc.* in the ’cellos and double basses was removed
Bar 197: *mf* was added to the ’cellos and double basses
Bar 201: *dim.* was added to the guitar part
Bar 206: *pp* was added to all instruments

5.3. THIRD MOVEMENT

Bar 1: the suggested tempo for *Adagio* is *minim*=37 (or crotchet=74); *mf* was added to the guitar part
Bars 1–3: *crescendo* and *diminuendo* were added to the guitar part
Bar 3: *p* and *dolce* were added to the guitar part in the middle of the bar
Bar 6: *espr.* was added to the guitar part at the last beat
Bar 13: *mp* was added to the guitar part
Bars 15–16: *crescendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 17: *dim.* was added to the guitar part
Bar 39: *poco dim.* was added to the guitar part
Bars 41–42: *diminuendo* was added to the guitar part
Bars 43–44: *diminuendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 45: *Più Mosso* was changed to *Un poco più mosso*; the suggested tempo is minim=43
Bar 52: *crescendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 58: in the guitar part the *f* was changed to *mf* and *crescendo* was added; the *mf* in the orchestral part was changed to *p*
Bar 59: *diminuendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 60: *crescendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 62: the *cresc.* of all instruments was moved to the middle of the bar
Bar 64: the *ff* in the guitar part was changed to *f*; the *f* in the orchestral part was changed to *mf*
Bar 65: *diminuendo* and *crescendo* were added to the guitar part
Bar 67: *crescendo* and *diminuendo* were added to the guitar part
Bar 68: *mf* was added to the guitar part
Bar 71: the *f* in the orchestral part was removed; *cresc.* was added to all instruments
Bar 72: *crescendo* and *ff* were added to the guitar part (the latter in the middle of the bar)
Bar 74: *f* and *cresc.* were added to the guitar part
Bar 75: *ff* was added to the guitar part
Bar 78: *rall.* was added to the guitar part
Bar 79: in the guitar part, a fermata was added to the first beat and *ad lib.* to the third
Bar 85: *f, marcato* and *grandioso* were added to the guitar part in the middle of the bar
Bar 90: *vivo* was changed to *veloce* in the guitar part; the same in bar 93
Bar 91: the *meno mosso* in the guitar part was changed to *Tempo Primo*; the same in bar 94
Bar 96: *ord.* was added to the second beat of the guitar part
Bar 103: the *meno mosso* in the guitar part was changed to *ad lib.*; the same in bar 109
Bar 111: in the guitar part, *mf* was changed to *mp* and *accel.* was added
Bar 115: *ord.* was added to the guitar part
Bar 116: *Presto* was added to the guitar part
Bar 117: *ord.* was added to the third beat of the guitar part
Bar 118: *p* and *crescendo* were added to the guitar part
Bar 119: *f* and *crescendo* were added to the guitar part; moreover, *Meno Mosso, mp* and *espr.* were added on the last beat.
Bar 121: *p* was added to the fourth beat of the guitar part
Bar 122: *poco a poco accel.* was added to the guitar part
Bar 125: the suggested tempo for *Moderato* is *crotchet=100*
Bar 126: *repeat this bar 7 times* was added to the guitar part (instead of writing the bar 7 times) for economy of space
Bar 133: *repeat this bar 5 times* was added to the guitar part
Bar 154: *bars 154-175 without conductor* was added to the score

5.4. FOURTH MOVEMENT

Bar 1: the suggested tempo for *Vivo* is *crotchet=192* (or dotted minim=64)
Bar 17: *mf* was added to the violas, ’cellos and double basses
Bar 21: *p* was added to all instruments
Bar 25: *f* was added to the guitar part and *mf* to the orchestral part
Bar 29: *p* was added to all instruments
Bar 33: *mf* was added to the guitar part
Bars 33–35: *crescendo* and *diminuendo* were added to the guitar part
Bar 37: *f* was added to all instruments
Bar 41: *p* was added to all instruments
Bar 45: *f* was added to all instruments
Bar 49: *p* was added to all instruments
Bars 53–55: *crescendo* and *diminuendo* were added to the orchestral part
Bar 74: the *mf* in the orchestral part was changed to *mp*
Bar 105: the *f* in the violas, ’cellos and double basses was changed to *p*
Bar 106: the *f* in the violins was changed to *p*
Bar 107: *diminuendo* was added to the guitar part
Bars 109–110: *crescendo* was added to the guitar part
Bar 111: *poco dim.* was added to the guitar part
Bar 135: *f* was added to the violas
Bars 154–155: *diminuendo* was added to all instruments
Bar 158: *mp* was added to all instruments
Bar 162: \textit{mf} was added to all instruments
Bar 163: \textit{cresc.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 166: \textit{dim.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 177: \textit{cresc.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 181: \textit{dim.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 194: \textit{cresc.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 199: \textit{diminuendo} was added to the guitar part
Bar 200: \textit{f} was added to the guitar part
Bar 204: \textit{mp} was added to all instruments
Bar 208: \textit{f} was added to all instruments
Bar 212: \textit{mp} was added to all instruments
Bar 216: \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part
Bar 219: \textit{dim.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 223: \textit{f} was added to all instruments
Bars 239–240: \textit{crescendo} was added all instruments
Bar 266: the suggested tempo for \textit{Andante} is crotchet=90
Bar 270: \textit{mp, dolce} and \textit{espr.} were added to the guitar part
Bar 291: \textit{dim.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 299: \textit{cresc.} was added to the guitar part
Bar 302: \textit{mf} was added to the guitar part
Bar 329: \textit{p} was added to all instruments
Bar 332: \textit{diminuendo} was added to the guitar part
Bar 340: \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part
Bar 342: \textit{unis.} was added to all four ’cello strands
Bar 343: \textit{unis.} was removed from the ’cellos
Bars 374–375: \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part
Bar 380: the \textit{ff} was removed from violas and ’cellos
Bar 383: the suggested tempo for \textit{Meno Mosso} is crotchet=80
Bar 386: \textit{crescendo} was added to the guitar part
Bar 388: a fermata was added to the first beat of the guitar part; \textit{mf} was added to the orchestral part
Bar 391: \textit{f} was added to the orchestral part
CONCLUSION

This dissertation centres on the work of Nikita Koshkin—Russia’s most important composer for guitar and one of the world’s leading composers for the instrument—through the prism of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto for guitar and string orchestra (2005). Koshkin wrote it in a mature period of his life (he was forty-nine), when his compositional technique and inspiration had reached a peak. At the time, he had composed more than fifty works, for solo guitar and for various instrument combinations that include guitar.

Through interviews conducted by the author with the composer for this dissertation and through the detailed analysis of the work, it is obvious that, although the ‘Megaron’ Concerto is Koshkin’s first concerto for guitar and orchestra, he wrote it at an ideal point of his compositional career, after accumulating much by way of experience. Furthermore, he wrote it with impressive ease, in just four months, something that shows how sure he was of the form and structure of the piece.

The ‘Megaron’ Concerto is the longest guitar concerto to date, to the best of the author’s knowledge. Several other guitar concertos, especially the ones written during the first half of the twentieth century, last almost half that time. However, Koshkin, being influenced more by non-guitarist composers (and especially his great Russian ancestors), shows an impressive ability to use long lines and phrases in his material, developing his ideas in a similar manner that composers such as Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827), Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) or Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943) did in their own lengthy piano concertos (Beethoven, in his Fifth Concerto; Brahms, in his Second Concerto; and Rachmaninoff, in his Third Concerto). The ‘Megaron’ Concerto consists of four movements, a practice more commonly followed in symphonies, sonatas or quartets, while concertos traditionally comprise three movements. This was a deliberate design choice made in order to display contrast, with slow sections following fast ones, throughout the piece. As he has always done, Koshkin wrote the melody and the harmony simultaneously in the solo guitar part, unlike other composers who first write a melodic line and then harmonise it. Additionally, he wrote the orchestral score along with the
guitar part, again in contrast with composers who first write the solo part and subsequently they orchestrate it.

Although Koshkin considers his writing more ‘classical’ than in the past (and this concerto is a mainly tonal work), he utilizes what can be best described as free tonality. While the listener can feel the tonal centres, the composer uses his material without limits—he even used a cluster in bar 247 of the fourth movement, simultaneously sounding eleven of the twelve chromatic notes of an octave.

The ‘Megaron’ Concerto is very demanding for the soloist and showcases several aspects of the composer’s compositional technique, displayed in both the guitar and in the orchestral part. It is also a work that is very ‘guitaristic’ (i.e it is intrinsically idiomatic), as Koshkin is also an accomplished guitarist.

As Koshkin has stated, the ‘Megaron’ Concerto was composed with Greece and this author in mind. He has often been influenced by ancient Greece, having used titles that derive from the Greek mythology for some of his works. In the ‘Megaron’ Concerto he combined the three-beat metre, (more commonly used in ancient Greek music), with the two-beat one—more common in western European music. Additionally, he used static harmony in some parts of the concerto, reminding the ancient Greek tendency to only have one voice (monodia) and hardly any harmony to accompany it. Moreover, the composer posited that, due to the fact that he wrote for this author, he would be free to write the piece in whatever way he wanted, without putting limits on his inspiration. The result was a difficult work that was very challenging for this author in her efforts to give it the best possible interpretation.

A crucial part of this dissertation is the performing edition, including the guitar part and the orchestral score. Detailed fingering is added to the composer’s initial score, in a bid to guide the player towards a better interpretation of the Concerto, as the fingering that the player uses, can influence a great deal the final outcome. The priority that was set for the fingering choices was a better sounding interpretation, rather than making the performer’s task easier. The choice to add detailed fingering was preferred, not leaving the piece entirely to the discretion of each performer but, on the contrary, giving him guidelines for the manner in which fingering could be chosen in every guitar piece. Additionally,
articulation lines were added to the guitar part, in an effort to make the ‘Megaron’ edition similar to editions of other instruments’ works, which always include such lines. In the beginning of the guitar part, a table with explanation of the percussive symbols is included, where the equivalent symbols utilised by the composer are explained in detail and photographs are added, in order to clarify them entirely to the performer. Additions and changes were done in the orchestral score, mainly in dynamics and tempo markings, in order to facilitate orchestral rehearsals through a more thoroughly explained musical text. Dynamics were added were there were necessary and others were changed to softer ones, making it easier for the guitar to be heard during the concerto—a recognisably difficult task, even with the use of modern amplification.

Chapter one presents an overview of the history of the guitar in Russia since the nineteenth century. Traditionally, the seven-string folk guitar had a more important place and was considered the national Russian instrument. However, the six-string classical guitar gained ground and became ever-popular, especially after the first visit of Andrés Segovia to Russia in 1926. The young Nikita Koshkin was one of the new followers of this instrument and fell in love with it when he heard a record featuring Segovia. In 1980, the classical guitar was introduced at the highest level of education in Moscow, when a guitar class under Alexander Frautchi opened in the Gnessin Institute (with Nikita Koshkin being the first to graduate). Koshkin is also the first Russian composer to have written extensively for guitar and his works now feature in the repertoire of top-rank players worldwide.

Chapter two takes the form of a detailed biography of Koshkin. With his valuable help, this biography is the most accurate to date, completing and correcting previous discourse on the composer’s origins and development. It duly sheds light on all periods of his life, as well as illuminating the factors that led to him becoming the accomplished composer that he is today. He was influenced by Russian composers as Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Shostakovich and he undertook composition studies at the highest level. Along with his talent as a performer, he is a most complete composer for the guitar; thus, he is wholly devoid of the common defects of those guitarist-composers who can play the guitar, but have little knowledge about compositional technique, or others who are accomplished composers but do not know about the particularities of the instrument.
Chapter three discusses the evolution of the guitar concerto, which mainly occurred during the twentieth century. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Manuel Maria Ponce and Heitor Villa-Lobos wrote concertos in the first half of the century on the active encouragement of Andrés Segovia, while Julian Bream continued the contribution to the genre, with works that he commissioned from Malcolm Arnold, Richard Rodney Bennett and Lennox Berkeley. From the middle of the twentieth century, the number of concertos for guitar increased impressively, with concertos by composers as remarkable as Hans Werner Henze and Toru Takemitsu; however, guitarist-composers who compose extensively for the instrument, such as Leo Brouwer, Sérgio Assad, Roland Dyens, Dušan Bogdanović and Nikita Koshkin, made the most significant contribution to the genre. All of these figures have composed more than one concerto, with Leo Brouwer having written as many as eleven. Nikita Koshkin’s first concerto was the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, while he later added another six works for one or more guitars and orchestra. In comparison to other guitar concertos, there are very few similarities to be found between Koshkin’s work and its precedents in the genre, thus making the ‘Megaron’ Concerto a rather unique example of its kind.

Chapter four constitutes the main chapter of this dissertation, and sees the ‘Megaron’ Concerto presented in detail, discussing several technical and interpretational issues and how technique should be used only for the purpose of interpretation. With this in mind, this chapter presents a detailed guide of the way that a soloist can shape this concerto, as well as the manner in which it can be prepared for a recording; at the end of the chapter, the preparation for the CD recording is described in detail. Thus, a guitarist who decides to learn this piece will have a solid ground from which he can use as a basis for his work, not only for the ‘Megaron’ Concerto but, furthermore, for every work for guitar.

The material on the concerto is mainly from the player’s point of view; its viewpoint is inherently practical, rather than musicological in nature, as this author is a player and a teacher, in the main. Thus, a very important part of this chapter are the so called ‘General Remarks’; after discussing particular details that concern the ‘Megaron’ Concerto, the author reflects upon such issues in a manner that can be used for any other guitar work, both by players and tutors. The ‘Remarks’ may also be read individually, and it is hoped
that they are a point of departure for further research on how to connect technique and interpretation in guitar playing.

Each movement is first presented in the ‘Outline of Individual Sections’, followed by the most important part of this chapter, the ‘Technical and Interpretive Aspects’, where the concerto is scrutinised according to the following features, which indicate specific details of the Concerto: Dynamics; Articulation and Phrasing; Note Duration; Apoyando and Tirando; Fingering; Vibrato; Special percussive effects; Additional comments about slurring, and stopping unnecessary and dissonant resonance. All of these dimensions—constituting most of the main issues that concern every guitarist—are researched in depth, detailing several aspects that an advanced musician (and not merely guitarists) should explore, if he wishes to achieve imaginative and expressive performances.

Chapter five includes the list of changes made by this author to the initial score and guitar part of 2005. The changes are already adopted by Editions Margaux, in the rental material that orchestras will use for future concerts or recordings.

Appendix A, presents an up to date list of works by Koshkin, subdivided into: solo works; duos; three or more instruments; works for guitar and orchestra; works for guitar orchestra; and transcriptions. At the end of this appendix, a list of instrument abbreviations is cited, structured according to Oxford Music Online. With the valuable assistance of the composer, the list of his works is the most complete to date.

Appendix B is the performing edition of the guitar and the orchestral part, as described above.

Appendix C is the CD released by the Swedish company BIS in 2012 (BIS-CD-1846, world première recording), recorded by this author in 2009 in Singapore, with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and Chinese conductor Lan Shui. All the aspects described in Chapter four, can be heard in the recording, as they correspond entirely.

The composer kindly gave several interviews to this author and was always available for clarification of details, as well as answering questions that arose during the writing of this
dissertation; this ensures that the information and discussion that feature in this study are of the utmost accuracy.

Writing this dissertation gave the opportunity to the author to express, in writing, ideas she has pondered over the course of some thirty years of playing and teaching; such mature reflection is not possible to mine in research projects completed at an earlier stage of one’s life. However, by expressing such ideas through the agency of text, they have since acquired new perspectives and, thus, new ideas have emerged that had not yet crystallized in the mind of the author before she began working on this dissertation. Therefore, apart from being a helpful tool for guitarists and teachers, this dissertation will undoubtedly benefit the author’s further evolution as a performer and pedagogue.

The fingering and articulation, as well as the changes to dynamics and other additions or alterations in the guitar and orchestral scores, were presented to the composer, who approved of them and was impressed by the amount of work done in order to complete his score and have it ready for a publication, as complete and correct as possible. The score and the orchestral parts of the ‘Megaron’ Concerto are published by the German publisher, Edition Margaux (2006) and are available to orchestras for rental. A piano reduction of the orchestral score, is also published by Edition Margaux.1

Since its première in 2006, this author has already performed the concerto with six different orchestras and conductors, in five different countries and three different continents. The CD recording of the concerto received several commendatory reviews by guitar and non-guitar periodicals, in Greece, Italy, England, France, USA and Japan.2

The enthusiastic reception of audiences and critics proves that it is one of the most important concertos for the instrument, and that it has a promising future. It is the author’s contention that the ‘Megaron’ Concerto is among the most important works of its kind, thereby making this dissertation a useful resource for future soloists and researchers.
The ‘Megaron’ Concerto
For Guitar and String Orchestra
by Nikita Koshkin:
An Exploration of Performance Issues,
a Performing Edition and a CD Recording

Elena Papandreou, [B.A.]

Submitted for the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy,
Dublin Institute of Technology
Conservatory of Music and Drama

Supervisor: Dr. Philip Graydon
Advisory Supervisor: Dr. John Feeley

February 2014

Vol. II/II
## APPENDIX A: LIST OF WORKS BY NIKITA KOSHKIN

### Solos

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<td>Rain</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>Tristan Playing The Lute</td>
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## Chamber Music

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<td>Olsen &amp; Stein</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Erik Olsen</td>
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### Three or more instruments

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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Dealer Of Cicadas</td>
<td>2gui, db</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; edition: MPO Ivanov-Kramskoy (Moscow, Russia, 1994) 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; edition: Margaux (Berlin, Germany) Not yet published</td>
<td>Zagreb guitar trio</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>Zapateado</td>
<td>3gui</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany, 2004)</td>
<td>Zagreb guitar trio</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Rubicon</td>
<td>fl, vn, gui</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany)</td>
<td>Vladimir Mikulka</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Guitar Quintet</td>
<td>gui, str qt</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany, 2008)</td>
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<td>Amphion</td>
<td>gui, str qt</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany, 2009)</td>
<td>Matanya Ophee</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Suite in Three Movements</td>
<td>4gui</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany)</td>
<td>Georgia Guitar Quartet</td>
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<td>Triptych</td>
<td>4gui</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany)</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Orion</td>
<td>fl, 2gui</td>
<td>Unpublished</td>
<td>Maria Dem'yanova &amp; Galina Golovina</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Usher-Waltz Fantasia</td>
<td>gui, str qt</td>
<td>Unpublished</td>
<td>Edin Karamazov</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Happy Birthday Dmitrilla!</td>
<td>melodica, 2gui, vc, db</td>
<td>Unpublished</td>
<td>Dimitri Illarionov</td>
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## Works for Guitar and Orchestra

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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Megaron Concerto</td>
<td>gui, str orch</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany)</td>
<td>Elena Papandreou</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>F. Sor, arr. N. Koshkin, Fantasia Concertante</td>
<td>gui, str orch</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany, 2011) Hiring Material, Piano Reduction</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Bergen Concerto</td>
<td>gui, orch</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany, 2008) Hiring Material, Piano Reduction</td>
<td>Stein Erik Olsen</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>F. Carulli, arr. N. Koshkin, Concerto</td>
<td>fl, gui, orch (2ob, 2hn, str)</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany) Not yet published</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>M. Giuliani - N. Koshkin. Concerto (original - Duo Concertant pour violon et guitarre op.25)</td>
<td>vn, gui, orch (2fl, 2ob, 2cl, 2bn, timp, str)</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany) Not yet published</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Concerto Grosso</td>
<td>gui, cl qt, drums, perc, str</td>
<td>Dobberman - Yppan (Quebec, Canada) Not yet published</td>
<td>Dimitri Illarionov</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Concertino</td>
<td>5gui, str orch</td>
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<td>Concerto</td>
<td>4gui, orch (pf, hpd, str)</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>F. Carulli – N. Koshkin. Concerto in La maggiore</td>
<td>gui, orch (2ob, 2hn, str)</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany) Not yet published</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>Fantasia</td>
<td>3gui, orch</td>
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<td>Arkhangelsk Guitar Festival ‘The Fifth Generation’</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Romance [original for guitar solo]</td>
<td>gui, orch</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Elegy</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
<td>Margaux (Berlin, Germany)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[the Elegy was initially written for symphony orchestra and then he arranged it for guitar orchestra,]</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Moin-moin</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>[Moin-moin he wrote directly for guitar orchestra]</td>
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<td>Suite in Three Movements</td>
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<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>Changing The Guard</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>Albeniz, Isaac</td>
<td>Cataluna (Corranda)</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>Cordoba</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>Bach, Johann Sebastian</td>
<td>Sonata No. 3 in C major, BWV 1005</td>
<td>gui</td>
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<td>Bach, Johann Sebastian</td>
<td>Adagio and Allegro (4th and 3rd mov from the</td>
<td>2gui</td>
<td>vn, hpd</td>
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<td>Sonata No.6 in G major, BWV 1019)</td>
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<td>[3rd mov solo hpd]</td>
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<td>Bach, Johann Sebastian</td>
<td>Partita No.2 in C minor, BWV 826</td>
<td>2gui</td>
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<td>Benjamin, Arthur</td>
<td>Jamaican Rumba</td>
<td>4gui</td>
<td>vn, pf</td>
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<td>Brahms, Johannes</td>
<td>Theme and Variations (from Sextet in Bb, op.18)</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
<td>str sextet</td>
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<td>Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario</td>
<td>Sinfonietta (orig: Sonatina)</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
<td>fl, gui</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[Koshkin renamed it Sinfonietta since Sonatina</td>
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<td></td>
<td>cannot be for orchestra; he added several</td>
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<td>elements of his own]</td>
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<td>Ginastera, Alberto</td>
<td>Milonga</td>
<td>2gui</td>
<td>S pf / pf</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>[Koshkin used the piano version]</td>
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<td>Gismonti, Egberto</td>
<td>Agua y Vinho (transcription plus one variation)</td>
<td>2gui</td>
<td>pf</td>
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<td>Grieg, Edvard</td>
<td>Peer Gynt (suite N 1) Four pieces from Peer Gynt, Suite Nr. 1 (Morgenstimmung, Ases Tod, Anitra’s Tanz, In der Halle des Bergkonigs)</td>
<td>2 gui</td>
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<td>Haendel, Georg Friedrich</td>
<td>Passacaglia</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>Mendelssohn, Felix</td>
<td>Concertstuecke I</td>
<td>2 gui</td>
<td>cl, bhn, pf</td>
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<td>Milhaud, Darius</td>
<td>Brazileira (3rd mov. from Scaramouche, Op.165b)</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
<td>2 pf</td>
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<td>Molino, Francesco</td>
<td>Fantasia in D-dur</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
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<td>Ogiński, Michal Kleofas</td>
<td>Polonez</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
<td>str orch</td>
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<td>Petrov Andrey</td>
<td>Rumba</td>
<td>2 gui</td>
<td>Music for the film Amphibian Man (1961)</td>
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<td>Prokofiev, Sergei</td>
<td>Sonata</td>
<td>2 gui</td>
<td>2 vn</td>
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<td>Three pieces from the Ballet Suite N 1 (Polka, Waltz, Galop)</td>
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<td>orch</td>
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<td>Traumerei</td>
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<td>pf</td>
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<td>Shchedrin, Rodion</td>
<td>Humoresque</td>
<td>gui orch</td>
<td>pf</td>
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<td>Shchedrin, Rodion</td>
<td>Troika</td>
<td>gui orch, pf</td>
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<td>Strauss II, Johann</td>
<td>Polka pizzicato</td>
<td>gui orch, str orch</td>
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<td>Strok, Oskar</td>
<td>Tango</td>
<td>gui, v pf</td>
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<td>Villa-Lobos, Heitor</td>
<td>Bachianas Brasileiras Nr. 5</td>
<td>gui orch, S, vc orch</td>
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</table>
**Instrument abbreviations**

bhn : basset horn  
bn : bassoon  
cl : clarinet  
db : double bass  
fl : flute  
gui : guitar  
gui orch : guitar orchestra  
hn : horn  
hpd : harpsichord  
kbd : keyboard  
Mez : mezzo-soprano [voice]  
ob : oboe  
perc : percussion  
pf : piano[forte]  
qt : quartet  
S : soprano [voice]  
str orch : strings orchestra  
str qt : string quartet  
timp : timpani  
v : voice  
vc : violoncello  
vc orch : orchestra of violoncellos  
vn : violin

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APPENDIX B:
A PERFORMING EDITION
OF THE ‘MEGARON’ CONCERTO
FOR GUITAR AND STRING ORCHESTRA

[THE PERFORMING EDITION WAS DELIBERATELY
OMITTED FROM THE ELECTRONIC VERSION,
FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS]
PRINTED SOURCES

Books


Tyler, James: *A Brief Tutor for the Baroque Guitar* (Helsinki: Chorus, 1984).


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http://www.tar.gr/content/content.php?id=4220


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*Bach: Chaconne and Other Works by Bach, Sor, Mendelssohn, Villa-Lobos, Rodrigo, Andrés Segovia, guitar, Brunswick AXTL 1069, 1955.*

*John Williams, the Seville Concert, from the Royal Alcázar Palace, John Williams, guitar, Sony Classical SK53359, 1994.*


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Nikita Koshkin, 7 May 2011.

Idem, 6 February 2013.

Idem, 8 February 2013.


Idem, 16 February 2013.

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Idem, 11 April 2013.

Idem, 12 April 2013.

Idem, 30 January 2014.

Oscar Ghiglia, 17 July 2011.

Idem, 12 April 2013.
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Graham Wade, 11 February 2014.


Nikita Koshkin, 12 April 2005.

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Roland Dyens, 6 March 2012.

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Nikita Koshkin, undated letter [ca 1997].