

The 21st Century Guitar

Volume 1 *Proceedings of The 21st Century
Guitar Conference 2019 & 2021*

Article 15

5-8-2023

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Recommended Citation

Kam, K. (2023). William Walton: The evolution of the Five Bagatelles. In R. Torres, A. Brandon, & J. Noble (Eds.), *Proceedings of The 21st Century Guitar Conference 2019 & 2021* (pp. 216-242).

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William Walton: The evolution of the Five Bagatelles

Abstract

The distinguished British composer, William Walton wrote his first work involving the guitar in 1960. This is the song cycle *Anon. in Love*, composed for tenor Peter Pears and guitarist Julian. He wrote his only solo guitar work in 1971, *Five Bagatelles*, which he dedicated to the composer Malcolm Arnold, and was premiered by Bream in the same year. Walton admitted that he had never thought of writing for the guitar but was encouraged to do so by Julian Bream. This work was written hand-in-hand between Bream and Walton in Ischia, Italy, in which Bream even provided a chart which would explain what the guitar could do to assist Walton in his composing. There is also evidence to suggest Arnold might have helped Walton in composing this work. I present here an analysis of Walton's guitar writing, which was carried out through study and comparison with *Anon. in Love* (1959), *Capriccio Burlesco* (1968), *Scapino: A Comedy Overture* (1940), and his two symphonies. I also compared the *Five Bagatelles* and *Variii Capricci* (1976) to understand Walton's original intentions. Through correspondence with Michael Donley, the scholar who wrote in detail about this work in *Classical Guitar Magazine* back in 1990, and worked closely in person with Bream, the evolving nature of this composition, and some interesting facts are now unmasked.

Keywords

William Walton, music history, Five Bagatelles, music analysis, Julian Bream

Cover Page Footnote

Lecture given at The 21st Century Guitar Conference 2019. An earlier version of this paper was published in two parts in *Soundboard Magazine* Vol. 45, No. 4 and Vol. 46, No. 1.

William Walton: The evolution of the *Five Bagatelles*¹

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The distinguished British composer, William Walton wrote his first work involving the guitar in 1960. This is the song cycle *Anon. in Love*, composed for tenor Peter Pears and guitarist Julian. He wrote his only solo guitar work in 1971, *Five Bagatelles*, which he dedicated to the composer Malcolm Arnold, and was premiered by Bream in the same year. Walton admitted that he had never thought of writing for the guitar but was encouraged to do so by Julian Bream. This work was written hand-in-hand between Bream and Walton in Ischia, Italy, in which Bream even provided a chart which would explain what the guitar could do to assist Walton in his composing. There is also evidence to suggest Arnold might have helped Walton in composing this work.

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Anon. in Love (1960)

William Walton first got in touch with the classical guitar when commissioned by the tenor Peter Pears to write the song cycle *Anon. in Love*. Pears had established a successful musical collaboration with the renowned guitarist Julian Bream and was an advocate in commissioning new pieces for this duo (Lloyd-Jones, 2018, p. 119), of which a photograph can be found in Figure 1. In a letter to Pears on April 21, 1956, Walton wrote:

You are quite right in your surmise that I've my back to the wall with the 'cello Concerto, but at the moment I'm engaged on an overture for the Johannesburg Festival. But I'm all for some little songs with guitar, when I'm finished with these works. (as quoted in Lloyd-Jones, 2018, p. 119)



Figure 1 Julian Bream and Peter Pears. Reprinted with permission from *William Walton, The Romantic Loner: A Centenary Portrait Album* by H. Burton and M. Murray (p. 134), 2002, Oxford University Press.

¹ Lecture given at The 21st Century Guitar Conference 2019. An earlier version of this paper was published in two parts in *Soundboard Magazine* Vol. 45, No. 4 and Vol. 46, No. 1.

On July 24, 1959, the title *Anon. in Love* was first brought up in one of Walton's letters: "Actually at the moment I'm on a song cycle for P.P & Julian B called *Anon. in Love* – seven[sic] snappy 17th cent. Lyrics. I'll have most of them finished I hope before I leave" (as quoted in Lloyd-Jones, 2018, p. 119). He might have taken longer than desired, because a letter to Alan Frank on September 14, 1959, gives the impression that Walton seemed to have trouble handling the guitar accompaniment part – he described the guitar as "a fiendish instrument to write for" (as quoted in Lloyd-Jones, 2018, p. 119). To help Walton know what was feasible for the guitar, Julian Bream provided him with a long diagram of the fingerboard titled *Sir William's Dot Chart for the Box* (Kennedy, 1998, p. 210). This chart is partly reproduced in Figure 2.

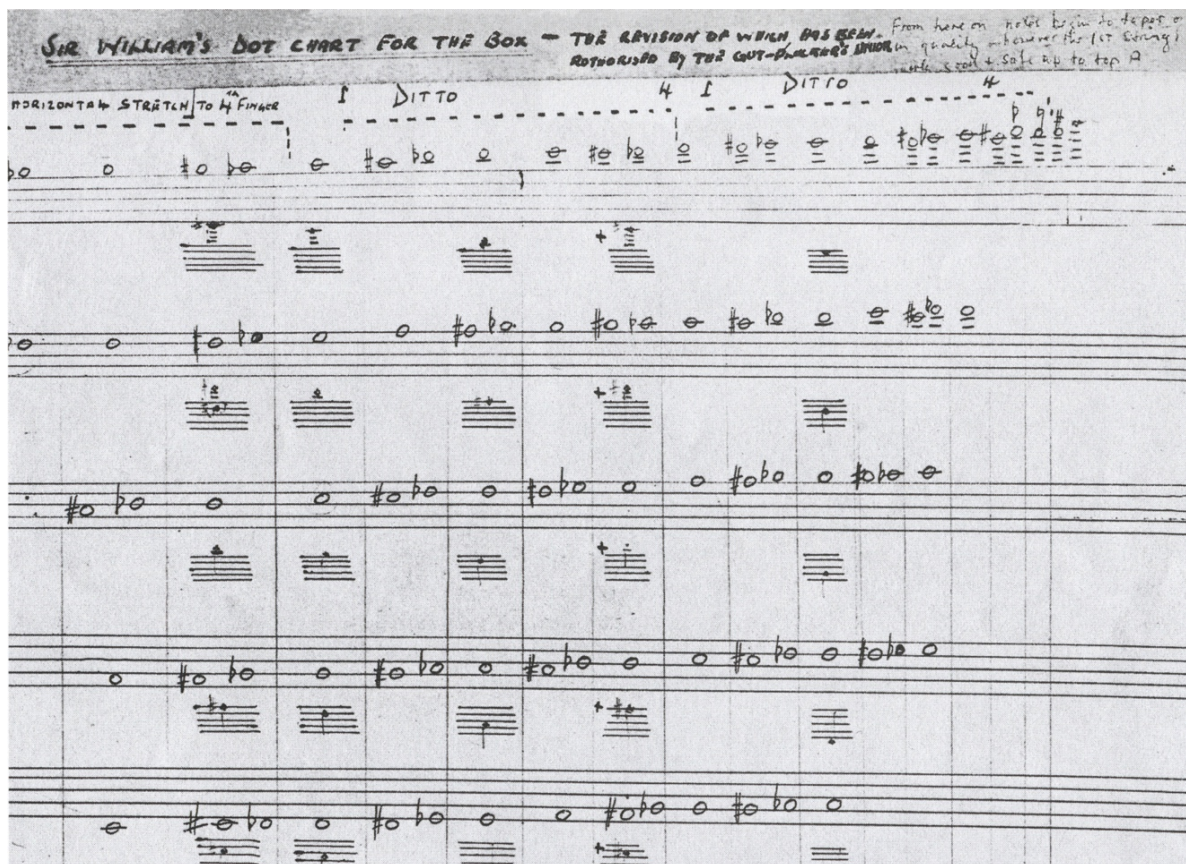


Figure 2 Excerpt of guitar chart created by Julian Bream for William Walton. Reprinted with permission from *William Walton, The Romantic Loner: A Centenary Portrait Album* by H. Burton and M. Murray (p. 151), 2002, Oxford University Press.

Anon. in Love was dedicated to one of Walton's hostesses in Suffolk, Liliash Sheepshanks of Eyke (Lloyd, 2001, p. 236). It is a collection of six songs for voice and guitar in which the texts were various anonymous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century lyrics that Christopher Hassall selected (Lloyd, 2001, p. 235). The song cycle was first performed as part of the Aldeburgh Festival on June 21, 1960, in Shrubland Park Hall, Claydon, near Ipswich. The work received a great success where the anonymous critic of *The Times* wrote: "Fired by the artistry of these two musicians Walton has distilled the fruits of his experience into a concentrated musical utterance, sometimes direct and sometimes curiously subtle...a brilliant premiere and [the cycle] will be heard everywhere with delight" (as quoted in Walton, 2003b, p. x). The critic John Amis of *The Guardian* even wrote: "Each of the six songs in compact, supremely professional, immediately

hummmable and thoroughly enjoyable. This is the most satisfactory music Walton has given us for a long while” (as quoted in Walton, 2003b, p. x).

Having the experience of orchestrating his own work *A Song for the Lord Mayor's Table* in March 1970, Walton decided to apply the same skill and orchestrated *Anon. in Love* for tenor and small orchestra in 1971. Once again, the critic of *The Times* gave positive recognition to his work: “Sir William, who was happily present, has deftly orchestrated the six songs without in any way losing the intimacy or gently lyrical character of the short cycle” (as quoted in Walton, 2003b, p. x).

***Five Bagatelles* (1971)**

The guitar writing in the *Anon. in Love* song cycle impressed Bream greatly, and ten years later in 1970, he commissioned Walton to compose some pieces for solo guitar (Walton, 2003a, p. xi). This became Walton's primary concern at that time. “Never having thought of writing for the guitar,” Walton (Walton, 1988, p. 205) said in a television interview,

I asked Julian for a chart which would explain what the guitar could do. I managed to write some rather pretty pieces [*Five Bagatelles*] for him, except that the first six notes of the first piece all need to be played on open strings. So when he begins to play, the audience will probably think he's tuning the bloody thing up.

Bream also mentioned this chart (Fig. 2) in a conversation between himself and Michael Tippett:

Actually, now I come to think of it, Michael, I once drew out a composer's guide to guitar fingering. I think Willie Walton still has it. I drew out the six strings, crossed them with the frets, and wherever they crossed I put the name of each note. Then I indicated the amount the four fingers of the left hand could stretch, you see, the number of positions, and then I also put in where the harmonics were. The beauty of this plan was that when you composed for guitar you could just have it near you and see the possibilities exactly, at a glance. (Bream as quoted in Palmer, 1982, pp.96, 98)

Bream first premiered Bagatelle II in London at Queen Elizabeth Hall on February 13, 1972. The first performance of the complete set took place on May 27, 1972, at Bath Assembly Rooms as part of the Bath Festival (Wade, 2008, p. 122) and delighted a large audience (Tierney, 1984, p. 158). A critic of the *Bath and Wiltshire Evening Chronicle* (1972) wrote:

The first showed Walton's professionalism in writing for solo guitar while yet retaining his own personality; the second was a simple valse, the third had some fine choral textures and a tune which seemed vaguely familiar, and the last gave Bream a chance to show off his own complete mastery of his own instrument and virtuosity. (p. 6).

According to (Burton & Murray, 2002), some time later, when visiting Julian Bream in his hotel in London – Figure 3 shows a photograph of this visit –, Walton upbraided Bream for not playing his *Bagatelles* often enough. Bream says Walton left the room “with the distinct impression that he thought I'd been pulling a fast one” (as quoted in Burton & Murray, 2002, p. 151).



Figure 3 Walton visiting Julian Bream in his hotel in London. Copyright 1982 by Daniel Meadows. Reprinted with permission

When comparing Walton's guitar writing in *Anon. in Love* to *Five Bagatelles*, it is not difficult to find elements that resemble each other. It is no doubt that Walton must have looked at and referenced his own writing in *Anon. in Love*, when he was composing *Five Bagatelles*. For example, the two extracts in Figure 4 are almost identical in pitch aside from the difference of syncopation added in Bagatelle I; in Figure 5, the *Anon. in Love* extract repeats a pattern three times, dropping the lower note a half step in each iteration (E, Eb and D) – this is similar to Bagatelle I extract, where the lowest note falls in stepwise motion (G#, G and F#): finally, in Figure 6, the same chord (E, A and D) is used in both *Anon. in Love* and Bagatelle I as an ending chord preceded by a low A.

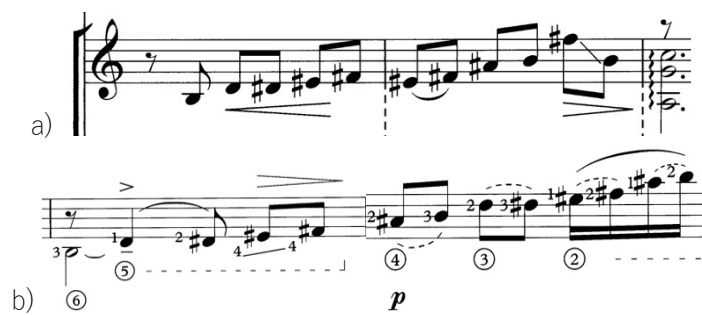


Figure 4 a) Measures 18–20 from Walton's *Fain Would I Change that Note*, the first song of *Anon. in Love*, and b) Measures 33–34 from the first of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Vocal Music* by W. Walton (p. 48), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 148), 2003, Oxford University Press



Figure 5 a) Measure 34 from Walton's *Fain Would I Change that Note*, the first song of *Anon. in Love*, and b) Measures 31-32 from the first of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Vocal Music* by W. Walton (p. 49), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 148), 2003, Oxford University Press

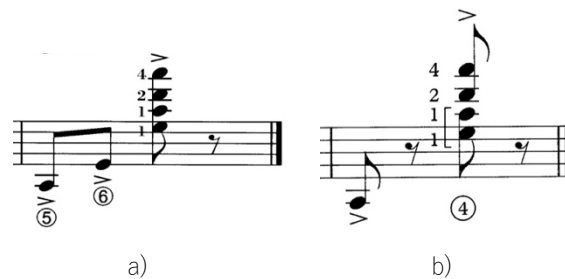


Figure 6 a) Measure 94 from *To Couple is a Custom*, the last song of *Anon. in Love*, and b) Measure 120 from the first of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* (the missing clef is in both cases the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Vocal Music* by W. Walton (p. 59), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 145), 2003, Oxford University Press

The *Five Bagatelles* are dedicated to composer Malcolm Arnold. Walton first brought up the dedication of the *Bagatelles* on a letter to Arnold on May 21, 1971:

We've just returned from staying with Hans W. H. [Hans Werner Henze] to hear his new piece. I don't quite know what to think, except that I wish he'd take to writing music again and not indulge in electronic (very good) noises...May I dedicate my guitar pieces [*Five Bagatelles*] to you? (Walton, 2002, p. 394)

However, on June 1, 1971, while Walton was busy composing the guitar pieces, he began to have doubts:

I'm beginning to have cold feet about dedicating the *Bagatelles* to you –I don't think they are good enough or worthy enough for you –from which you may gather they are not going at all well. I should dedicate something else if these aren't up to the mark... (Walton, 2002, p. 394)

Finally, on 30 August 1971, he wrote to Arnold with joy and confidence: "I've finished the guitar pieces (5) with dedication to yourself. I'm inclined to think they are rather good, but Julian will let you know about them. He's coming to inspect them on 1 September!" (Walton, 2002, p. 397). Two weeks later, he reported: "In a few days I shall be sending you a copy of the *Bagatelles*. Julian on the other hand when he saw the dedication was very pleased. After all, what is important to him is his rake-off as Editor!" (Walton, 2002, p. 397). The work was thus dedicated to Malcolm Arnold for his fiftieth birthday, as shown in the manuscript's front cover depicted in Figure 7.

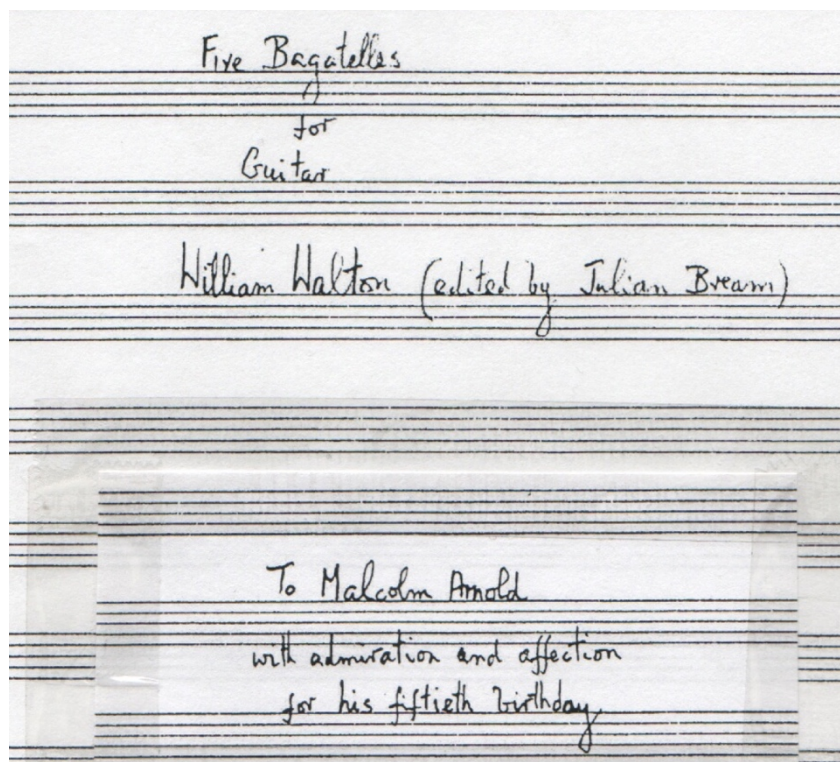


Figure 7 Front cover of the manuscript of Walton's *Five Bagatelles*. Reprinted with permission from *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 1), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

There have been some speculations that Malcolm Arnold might have assisted Walton in composing the *Bagatelles* (Michael, 1990b, p. 35). Walton, Arnold and Bream were close friends with each other. As Bream mentioned in an interview: "...I am a great friend of Malcolm Arnold who has also written music for me and Malcolm was a great friend of William and I was a great friend of William..." (Norman and Bream, 1982/2013). Arnold and Bream often visited and stayed with Walton. Arnold witnessed Walton's painfully slow progress with the *Bagatelles* while he was staying over for Christmas at Ischia, an island off the southwest coast of Italy where Walton had settled permanently the year after having spent time recovering from jaundice in the neighbouring island of Capri.² Arnold recalled that on a visit to Ischia, he had sketched in one or two suggestions as an example of what could be done for Walton to get a little further than the famous initial open-string flourish. The manuscript of the first draft received by Bream confirms this hesitancy, being skeletal, to say the least (Donley, 1990b, p. 35). Bream even admitted he noticed the similarity between Walton and Arnold's writing:

When William was writing these pieces, Malcolm was actually composing one of his symphonies about 400 yards away in a little cottage which.....one of them....a few cottages....that William rents to friends in the summer and I supposed Malcolm was around and he may have even influenced William. There are some passages in this piece which are very much like Malcolm. (Norman and Bream, 1982/2013)

Both Walton and Arnold had much in common in both musically and in character.

² A portrait of Walton during this stay may be visualized at <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw06576/Sir-William-Turner-Walton>

The manuscripts

The manuscript of *Five Bagatelles* that was presented to Malcolm Arnold for his 50th birthday is now in the Walton Museum in Ischia, bound between covers which also contain Walton's letters to Arnold (Donley, 1990c, p. 36). Appendix A contains selected pages of this manuscript. Until 1989, Bream did not seem to have knowledge of this particular manuscript that Arnold had donated to Ischia. He wrote a letter to Michael Donley, who possessed photocopies of the Arnold manuscript, hoping to meet with him to see the manuscript and compare it with his manuscripts and with what he knew, so as to "...help [him] to understand certain divergences which occur from time to time, not only in the published score, but also in the orchestral version known as *Varii Capricci*" (Bream, personal communication to Donley, October 1, 1989).

According to Donley, this Arnold manuscript is rather misleading compared to that of Bream, "...there being several versions of some of the pieces, revealing the evolving nature of composition..." (Donley, 1990c, p. 38). In a letter to the editor of *Classical Guitar Magazine*, Bream wrote: "...Walton saw and corrected two lots of proofs prior to the publication of the *Bagatelles*..." (Bream, personal communication to Donley, September 5, 1989). It is obvious that the Arnold manuscript is neither the only existing manuscript nor the original manuscript. A lingering question is, where is Julian Bream's original manuscript of *Five Bagatelles* now? Thérèse Saba of *Classical Guitar Magazine* was kind enough to help my research efforts by forwarding my questions to Bream. Thérèse reports that she spoke with him about that manuscript, and he doesn't know where it is – he worked from a copy. In fact, both documents are currently missing. I reached out to Donley hoping to get information about the manuscript Bream used, sent to him by Walton. Unfortunately, Donley could not recall anything in particular, but shared with me two interesting details that Bream mentioned to him during Bream's visit:

- The fingering was chosen by Walton when shown the different possibilities;
- In the final bars of Bagatelle V (123-125), Bream got Walton to agree to lower this section an octave. Bream thought the original ending would not be climactic enough, because it is hard to achieve a satisfactory fortissimo at the very highest frets.

The score

The published score for which Walton revised proofs was that by Oxford University Press (O.U.P.). This contains differences to the Arnold manuscript. There are a few measures that are worth a closer look. In the O.U.P. score, measure 42 of Bagatelle I (Fig. 8) was edited in a way that creates confusion about the meter: due to the insufficient amount of space in the published score, the eighth rest appears to be placed with the illusion of being on top of the note G, creating ambiguity.

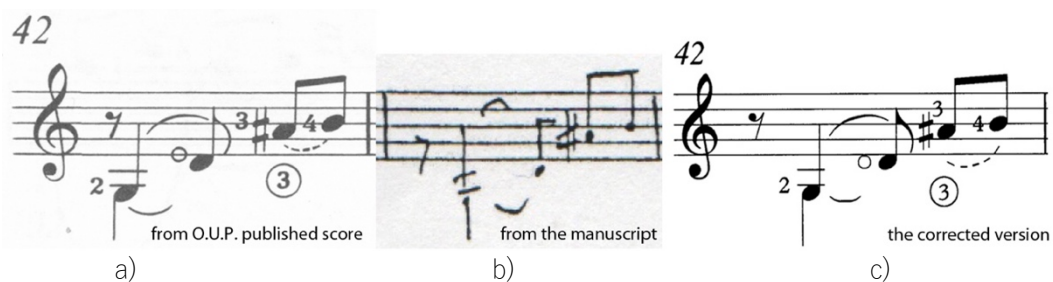


Figure 8 Comparison of measure 42 from the first of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in a) the originally published score, b) the Arnold manuscript and c) republished score. Reprinted and adapted with permission from a) *Five Bagatelles for Guitar* by W. Walton (p. 3), 1974, Oxford University Press, b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 3), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript) and c) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 148), 2003, Oxford University Press.

In measure 114 of Bagatelle V, there is a controversial chord on the last eighth note beat (Fig. 9). For Sergio Abreu (1976) “it is impossible to play the last chord with the fingering indicated” (p. 34). In the published score, the chord was written with the notes G#-B-D#. In the manuscript, it has the notes D-G-B-D#. The equivalent chord in *Variii Capricci* is E-G-B-D-F#. In correspondence with the editor, Julian Bream has stated that he believes William Walton probably wanted this chord to read G#-B-F#; he considers an acceptable alternative in performance to be G#-B#-F# (Walton, 2003a, p. xvii). If you listen carefully to Bream’s two recordings of the piece,³ you will be surprised to find out that Bream actually played two completely different chords in this measure.

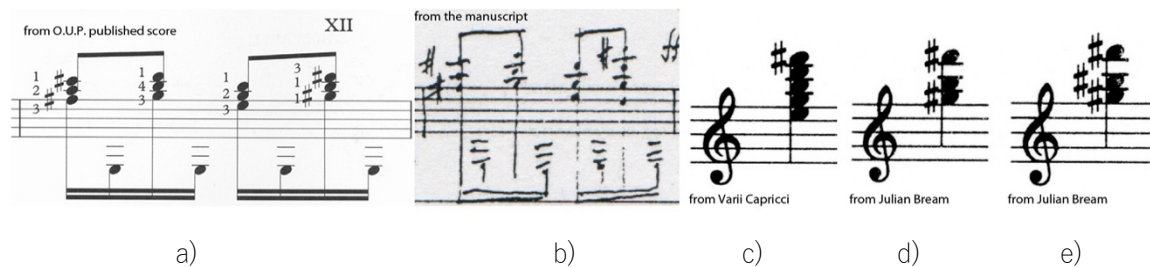


Figure 9 Comparison of the last chord of measure 114 from the last Walton’s *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score, b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is in both cases the treble clef), c) its orchestral version (*Variii Capricci*) and Julian Bream’s recording of the work in the albums, d) *Julian Bream 70s* and e) *Dedication*. Reprinted and adapted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 161), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 11), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

When comparing the Arnold manuscript to the published O.U.P. score, one major discrepancy is the key of Bagatelle IV. Instead of being in D major as in the published score, Bagatelle IV in the Arnold manuscript was written in B major. From measure 2 onwards, the tremolo marking (trem.) is present. This trembling effect prevails in this version of the Bagatelle IV as opposed to the well-known delicate harmonics section in the published score. In order to be able to play Bagatelle IV in B major, one has to maintain the sixth string as drop D as in Bagatelle III or all six strings down a minor third to C#-F#-B-E-G#-C# (⑥ - ①). The second way, no doubt, would be problematic to execute in a concert setting or even in a recording session. Perhaps Bream noticed the dark B major tessitura issue, and therefore transposed it to D major.

British guitarist Stewart French recorded a unique interpretation of the B major version.⁴ He tried to stay as faithful as possible to the Arnold manuscript by applying a tremolo to the upper part. This novel approach to Bagatelle IV not only provides a new perspective for our ears, but it also maintains the overall harmonic structure of *Five Bagatelles* as a set. The last measure of Bagatelle IV in the Arnold manuscript is a B major seventh chord with the D# written in the upper part (Fig. 10). When performing this final measure, the D# can be played as a note that has a stepwise connection with the open E of Bagatelle V, the tonic in e minor. This smooths out the transition between the last two bagatelles. By putting Bagatelle IV in D major, this unity is destroyed.

³ In the albums *Julian Bream 70s* (RCA SB 6876) and *Dedication* (RCA Digital RL 25419, 1981).

⁴ The recording is available in Amazon Music: Stewart French: Concert in Krakow.



Figure 10 The final measure (no. 114) from the fourth of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score and b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is in both cases the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 156), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 8), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

Arnold's manuscript reveals quite a lot of possible suggestions by Bream to Walton to make the pieces more idiomatic for the guitar. Since Walton did not play the instrument himself, he might have solely composed from the chart box (Fig. 2) in the first place. For example, in measures 52–55 of Bagatelle I, it is awkward to play the chords in pizzicato as marked in the manuscript (Fig. 11b) because it does not work well with high chords as a sonority. Therefore, the pizzicato indication was removed in the published score (Fig. 11a).

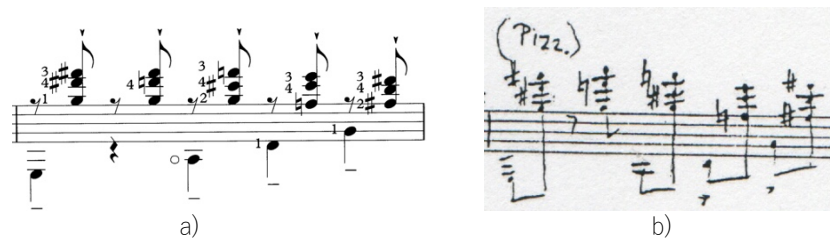


Figure 11 Measure 52 from the first of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score and b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is in both cases the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 148), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 4), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

Other examples can be found in measures 38–39 of Bagatelle II (Fig. 12) and measures 8 and 10 of Bagatelle III (Fig. 13). The harmonics and tambora present in the published score were most likely recommended by Bream to Walton, as they are absent in the manuscript.

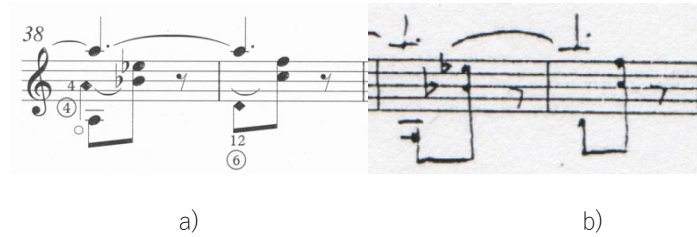


Figure 12 Measures 38–39 from the second of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score and b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 151), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 6), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

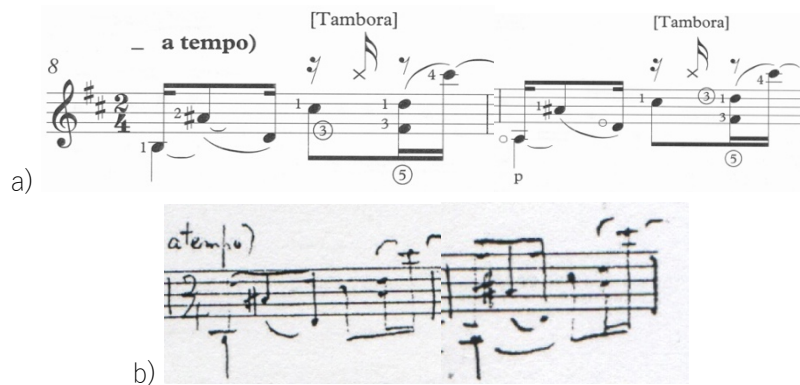


Figure 13 Measures 8 and 10 from the third of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score and b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 153), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 7), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

Another suggestion that likely originated from Bream can be found in measure 73 of Bagatelle V. A chordal appoggiatura sliding effect is in the published score, which is more effective than the one-note appoggiatura in the manuscript (Fig. 14).

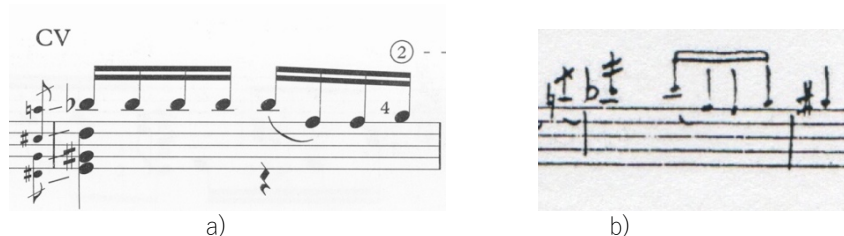


Figure 14 Measure 73 from the last of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score and b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is in both cases the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 159), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 10), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

Finally, in measures 121-122 of the same bagatelle, extra sixteenth notes are added in the published score that increase the rhythmic activity of the final section of the last bagatelle, whereas eighth notes are written in the manuscript (Fig. 15). This change could have originated from either Bream or Walton or

both. Considering that Bream suggested to Walton to take the ending an octave lower, as mentioned previously, they might have worked together on revising this section as well.



Figure 15 Measures 121–122 from the last of Walton’s *Five Bagatelles* in a) the published score and b) the Arnold manuscript (the missing clef is in both cases the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 161), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Five Bagatelles* by W. Walton (p. 11), 1971 (Unpublished manuscript).

So, what exactly can we conclude about Walton’s guitar writing in *Five Bagatelles*? First of all, he is fond of using wide intervals, particularly sevenths and ninths. For example, the interval of seventh can be found in the opening of Bagatelle III (Fig. 13), where the first note B rises to A#, and the note D rises to C#. Another instance of the interval of ninth can be found in measures 3-4 of Bagatelle III, where the note G# rises to A#, and the note G b rises to A #. Secondly, there is a frequent use of false, or cross relations in Walton’s writing. One example can be found in the final measure of Bagatelle IV from the O.U.P. score (Fig. 10), where the notes A and A# co-exist in the same measure. Another example can be found in measure 32 of Bagatelle I (Fig. 5b), where the notes C and C# also co-exist in the same measure. In measure 52 of Bagatelle I (Fig. 11), there are two false relation pairs in the same bar created by the notes F and F# and the notes D and D#. Thirdly, Walton often lingers on specific notes. In measures 6–7 from Bagatelle I, C# and D are repeated 8 times in 3 measures. His fondness for this technique can also be found in *Walton’s Symphony No. 1*. Figures 16 and 17 are two examples from the fourth movement of *Symphony No. 1* where there is a persistence of repeated notes (F# and E; D and C#).



Figure 16 Measures 75–79 from the first violin line of the fourth movement of Walton’s *Symphony No.1* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from *Symphony No. 1* by W. Walton (p. 167), 1998, Oxford University Press.

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Figure 17 Measures 189–197 from the first violin line of the fourth movement of Walton's *Symphony No.1* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from *Symphony No. 1* by W. Walton (p. 182), 1998, Oxford University Press.

Fourthly, Walton's love of octave leaps in busy sixteenth-note passages is evident in Bagatelle I, measures 57 and 59. The similar leaping figurations can be also found in *Symphony No. 2* (Donley, 1990b, p. 36; see Fig. 18). Figure 19 is an example mixing the use of octave leaps with a repeated two-note figure found in *Capriccio Burlesco*, where B and C are repeated six times in different registers. A similar example can be found in Bagatelle I in measures 112 and 113.



Figure 18 Measures 43 and 228 from the first violin line of the fourth movement of Walton's *Symphony No.2* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from *Symphony No. 2* by W. Walton (pp. 9, 228), 2006, Oxford University Press.



Figure 19 Measures 118–120 from the first violin line of *Capriccio Burlesco* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from *Orchestral Works 2* by W. Walton (p. 23), 2012, Oxford University Press.

Fifthly, *Five Bagatelles* contains Walton's characteristic use of busy sixteenth notes figurations. One example can be found in measures 22 to 23 of Bagatelle I. A similar example can be found again in *Symphony No. 2* (Fig. 20). Last but not least, a gradual increase from slow to fast rhythmic values is also part of Walton's guitar writing, such as in measures 26-28 in Bagatelle I. Identical examples can also be found in his *Symphony No.1* (Fig. 21a) and *Capriccio Burlesco* (Fig. 21b). In *Scapino, A Comedy Overture*, there is one example in which this technique is mixed with syncopations (Fig. 22), which is often found in Walton's writing.



Figure 20 Measures 127-128 from the first violin line of the fourth movement of Walton's *Symphony No. 2* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from *Symphony No. 2* by W. Walton (p. 25), 2006, Oxford University Press.



Figure 21 a) Measure 47 from the first violin line of the fourth movement of Walton's *Symphony No. 1*, b) Measure 46 of the trombone from the *Capriccio Burlesco*. Reprinted with permission from a) *Symphony No. 1* by W. Walton (p. 163), 1998, Oxford University Press and b) *Orchestral Works 2* by W. Walton (p. 10), 2012, Oxford University Press.



Figure 22 Measures 27-29 from the English horn line of Walton's *Scapino: A Comedy Overture* (the missing clef is the treble clef). Reprinted with permission from *Overtures* by W. Walton (p. 47), 2014, Oxford University Press.

Walton successfully put together his very first solo guitar work, the *Bagatelles*, modelling upon his own stylistic writing in previous orchestral works. The characteristics of guitar writing Walton used separate him from other guitar composers of his time. He found his unique and original voice as a composer writing his only solo guitar work. Some of the characteristics of Walton's guitar writing easily make the *Bagatelles* one of the hardest works of the guitar repertoire.

There has always been debate regarding whether the sixth bagatelle exists. Malcolm Arnold was insistent that there was one (Donley, 1990c, p. 40). Stewart Craggs stated: "there may have been a sixth bagatelle, I have not been able to verify this fact" (Craggs, 1990, p. 154). Bream never received any such manuscript or even a fragment, although he remembers that there was some talk about a sixth piece (Donley, 1990c, p. 40). Donley cannot concur that the present ending would have been improved upon by such an addition. In the letter from August 30, 1971, mentioned above, Walton specifically referred to the five pieces. It seems as if the sixth bagatelle was more of an idea than something written down.

***Varii Capricci* (1976)**

In the summer of 1975, the Greater London Council commissioned Walton and other composers to write commemorative pieces for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the building of the Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank. Sir William planned to write a new work for the celebration, *Adagio ed Allegro Festivo*, but the project foundered when Herbert von Karajan – who had been invited to conduct its premiere – declined (Tierney, 1984, p. 164). Walton instead agreed to orchestrate a not-very-old composition of his, the *Five Bagatelles* (Kennedy, 1998, p. 264).

This is not the first time Walton employed this sort of metamorphosis. He has transcribed quite a few works previously such as *A Song for the Lord Mayor's Table* and *Anon. in Love* for orchestra, and, with the help from Arnold, turning *String Quartet in a minor* into the *Sonata for Strings*. In a letter to Andre Previn on October 7, 1975, Walton mentioned his transcribing process and concerns:

They are working out well, but not easy to do. What to add and what to leave out, those are questions! I thought of asking you to do them, but I realized it was not fair to ask you especially as you are occupied...I don't know whether John Denison will want to do my transcriptions. They are called *Varii Capricci* [sic] in their new garb, by the way. (as quoted in Lloyd-Jones, 2018, p. 202)

On October 30, 1975, Walton wrote to Christopher Morris, head of the O.U.P. music department, explaining the orchestration of the pieces: "There's not got to be a whisper of a guitar in the orch. version which will be for a large orch. Sparingly used for the most part" (as quoted in Lloyd, 2001, p. 251). By April 16, 1976, Walton was experiencing his usual doubts when he wrote to Malcolm Arnold:

I've been much occupied and pre-occupied by scoring those *5 Bagatelles* for a large orchestra and they appear or rather re-appear under the name *Varii Capricci*. They are to be done at the F.H. on 4 May at its 25th anniversary concert. I fear I've not done them very well, in fact I should have asked you to do them, but having let myself in for something for the F.H. I thought these would be easy. I couldn't have been more mistaken. I found them full of pitfalls especially the last one which is musically very much changed and hurriedly scored and full of wrong notes! I'd left it to the last minute as the O.U.P. were panicking about part-copying. The only thing that is intact is the dedication... (Walton, 2002, p. 430)

The title *Varii Capricci* was actually not new to Walton. In 1939, he wrote a letter to Hubert Foss, then the head of music at O.U.P., which included a scheme for a suite of five pieces, to which he gave the title *Varii Capricci*. He had hoped to write them for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Although the piece did not materialize, the idea stayed in his mind (Lloyd-Jones, 2018, p. 202).

The final pages arrived at O.U.P. on April 20, 1976. On May 4, 1976, *Varii Capricci* was premiered at the Royal Festival Hall, London, as a 75th birthday tribute to Sir William Walton by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Andre Previn (Lloyd, 2001, p. 251). The music of the *Varii Capricci* stayed on the composer's mind to the end, occupying a place among his very last musical thoughts. He completed a short nine-bar coda to round off a ballet version of *Varii Capricci* shortly before his death on 8 March 1983 (Russ, 1993). Figure 23 shows a photograph of his desk on the day he died.

The score

The score of *Varii Capricci* was first published by O.U.P. in 1978 (Craggs, 1993, p. 169). The tempo/character indications have changed except for *Alla Cubana*, which remains unchanged (Craggs, 1977, p. 245). Table 1 compares the indications in both scores. The *Lento* in *Varii Capricci* remained in D major, the same key as in Bagatelle IV, instead of B major, as in Arnold manuscript.



Figure 23 Walton's work-desk, photographed on the day of his death. The manuscript is his *Varii Capricci*. He had completed his revisions of the orchestral score only two days earlier (Burton & Murray, 2002, p. 171). Reprinted with permission from *William Walton, The Romantic Loner: A Centenary Portrait Album* by H. Burton and M. Murray (p. 171), 2002, Oxford University Press.

Table 1 Tempo markings of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* and *Varii Capricci*.

Movement	<i>Five Bagatelles</i> (Walton, 2003a)	<i>Varii Capricci</i> (Walton, 2012)
I.	Allegro ♩ = 126c.	Allegro assai
II.	Lento ♩. = 46c.	Lento sognando
III.	Alla Cubana ♪ = 88c.	Alla Cubana ♪ = 88c.
IV.	♪ = ♪ = 126c.	Lento ♪ = ♪ = c. 126
V.	Con slancio ♩ = 126c.	Presto con slancio ♪ = 138 – 144

When listening to *Five Bagatelles*, guitarists often choose Bream's recordings, since, after all, the piece was written for Bream. The two existing recordings date from 1973 and 1984 and were included in the LP titled *Julian Bream 70s* (RCA SB 6876) and *Dedication* (RCA Digital RL 25419, 1981), respectively. In Bagatelle III, Bream took an approach of playing the *Alla Cubana* faster than the published tempo marking. He played them around ♪ = 100-120c., which is a big contrast to the *Varii Capricci* recording by the London Philharmonic in 1991 (Chandos, 8862, CD, 1991). By playing it slower, at ♪ = 88c., the London Philharmonic evoked a sad and mysterious atmosphere of Cuban rhythm, and personally, I favor this approach. Even Bream himself played it slower in his second recording, *Dedication*, than in the first one, *Julian Bream 70s*, although it is still not even close to ♪ = 88c. The tempo choice of most guitarists nowadays is oriented towards Bream's recording approach. Some play it so fast turning the piece into a speed contest that is completely ignoring Walton's original compositional intent.

In Bagatelle I, *l'istesso mov.*, the same speed, is marked in measure 65 in both the published score and the Arnold manuscript. In the *Varii Capricci* orchestra score, this is replaced with *poco a poco meno mosso e rubato*. In Bream's both recordings, he approached this measure with a ritardando in measure 64, which is not notated in the score, and then he started measure 65 with a very slow tempo. Guitarists tend to regard Bream's interpretation as the only way to play this piece correctly, without second guessing whether it fulfills the composer's intention or paying respect or attention to what is marked in the score. This also shows how influential on other guitarists' performances is Bream's relation to the work.

For Bagatelle IV, CD recordings commonly list the piece as either *Sempre espressivo* or *Lento*. However, the O.U.P. score has none of these markings. In fact, if you take a look at the manuscript, *sempre espress.* was originally written above the tremolo section to describe the tremolando section. *Lento* was not written in either the manuscript or the O.U.P. score, but only in *Varii Capricci*. Michael Donley and I discussed this, and he believes Walton (and Bream) left it blank on purpose. Perhaps the printers of the programme found it strange to have a blank space next to the number IV, and therefore, they made up a title.

Walton wrote *Varii Capricci's* last movement by lengthening Bagatelle 5 and effectively doubling its duration (Lloyd, 2001, p. 251). The tempo indication changed to *Presto con slancio* (see Fig. 24) (Craggs, 1990, p. 154). The speed of the piece is now given as $\text{♩} = 138\text{--}144$.

Figure 24 consists of two parts, a) and b). Part a) shows a single staff of music in 2/4 time, starting with a circled '6' and 'to E' above it. The tempo marking is 'Con Slancio' with a quarter note equal to 126c. The music begins with a double bar line, followed by a circled '2' above the first measure, and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic marking below the first measure. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, a triplet of eighth notes, and a quarter rest. Part b) shows an orchestral score for three staves: Fl. 1, 2; Picc.; and Ob. 1, 2. The tempo marking is 'Presto con slancio' with a quarter note equal to 138-144. The Fl. 1, 2 and Picc. staves are mostly empty with some rests. The Ob. 1, 2 staff has a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting with a fortissimo (ff) dynamic and a crescendo (cresc.) marking.

Figure 24 The opening measures of the last movements of a) Walton's *Five Bagatelles* and b) *Varii Capricci*. Reprinted with permission from a) *Instrumental Music* by W. Walton (p. 147), 2003, Oxford University Press and b) *Orchestral Works 2* by W. Walton (p. 161), 2012, Oxford University Press.

There are in fact two manuscripts of the last movement of the *Varii Capricci*. One manuscript, *Con slancio* (Fig. 25), reflects Walton's attempt to make a direct orchestration of Bagatelle V, while the other manuscript is *Presto con slancio*, the one that was published and which Walton considered a second version of the movement, as Figure 26 shows. Based on these two manuscripts, Walton clearly did not plan to rewrite the final movement in the first place. What caused him to make such a change then?

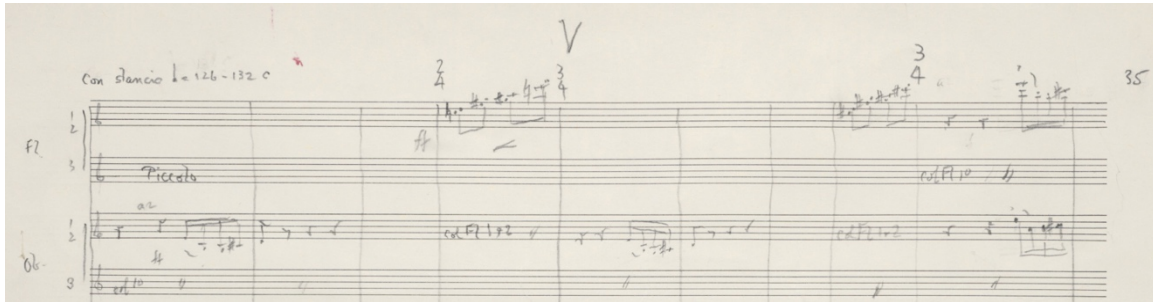


Figure 25 Manuscript of Walton's first version of *Varii Capricci's* last movement. Reprinted with permission from *Varii Capricci* by W. Walton (p. 37), 1975 (Unpublished manuscript).

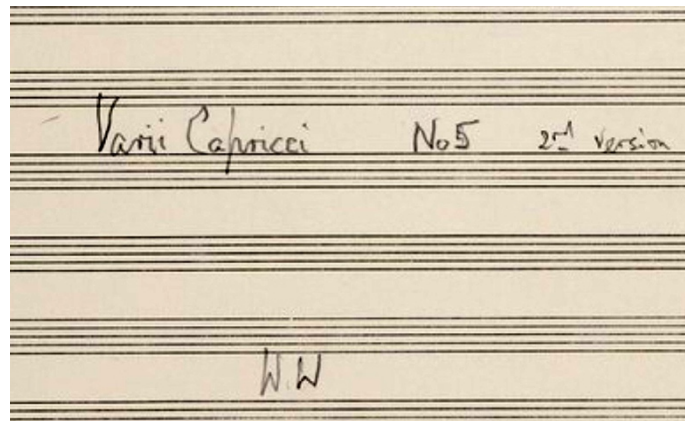


Figure 26 Cover page of the manuscript of Walton's second and definitive version of *Varii Capricci's* last movement. Reprinted with permission from *Varii Capricci No. 5 2nd version* by W. Walton (p. 3), 1975 (Unpublished manuscript).

In contrast to *Presto con slancio*, the orchestrated *Con slancio* is much closer to the solo guitar score of Bagatelle V. He kept both the tempo indication and the tempo marking. This *Con slancio* manuscript is clearly an unfinished product by Walton, in that it has only 88 measures compared to the 125 measures in Bagatelle V. The ending of the *Con slancio* is different from Bagatelle V, since after four measures of descending chords, a syncopated rhythm is added in the final three extra measures. In the second version, *Presto con slancio*, the syncopated rhythm is incorporated with the descending chords, followed by a modified restatement of the opening theme in the high register (Fig. 27).

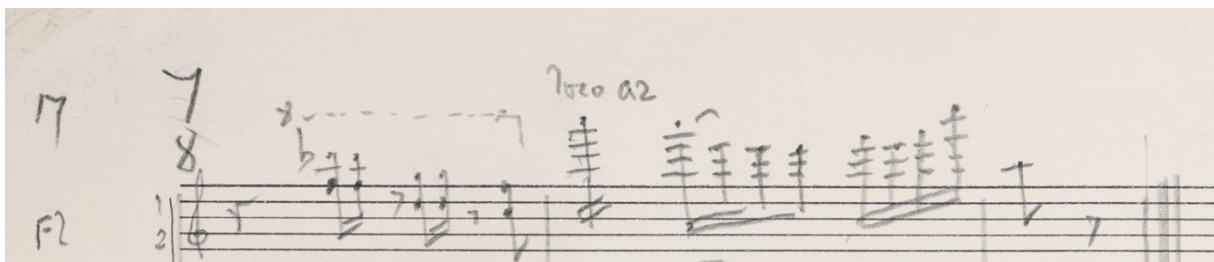


Figure 27 The final two measures of Walton's second and definitive version of *Varii Capricci's* last movement. Reprinted with permission from *Varii Capricci No. 5 2nd version* by W. Walton (p. 20), 1975 (Unpublished manuscript).

Walton was in a hurry trying to score *Five Bagatelles* for the orchestra. He did not get a lot of time to orchestrate the piece and thought that it would be very easy to do so. My guess is that he started out trying to keep the materials unchanged as in Bagatelle V. But then he found out that it was full of pitfalls, and he felt the need to revise the music, as mentioned in an above-mentioned letter to Arnold. Therefore, he created a distinctive 2nd version of *Varii Capricci* No. 5.

And do not forget that it was Bream's idea to have Walton set the Bagatelle V's ending an octave lower as discussed previously, since it is difficult to achieve a convincing ending in the high register on the guitar. Without any limitations or constraints by the physicality of the guitar, Walton could truly express his musical ideas via the orchestra. This explains both the high register sixteenth notes ending in *Presto con slancio* and the strings tremolando section in *Lento* as opposed to the harmonics section in the guitar version.

***Five Bagatelles for Guitar and Orchestra* (1991)**

Five Bagatelles for Guitar and Orchestra incorporates Walton's original solo guitar version into his subsequent orchestration as a concertante element (Russ, 1993). This work was arranged by the symphonic orchestrator Patrick Russ and is dedicated to Christopher Parkening. On 15 July 1995, Tony Morris conducted an interview with Christopher Parkening at the Meyerson Auditorium in Dallas, Texas. Parkening clarified the misconception of the origin of this piece:

...it actually wasn't his [Patrick Russ] idea...Bream had recorded the "*Five Bagatelle[s]*" as a solo guitar work, and later Walton had re-written the piece. He put it 'A free transcription of the guitar work', though for solo orchestra. And it was Lady Walton's idea to kind of "mesh the two together" in terms of a new guitar concerto. And we premiered it the San Francisco Symphony about...oh, nine months or so before we did the recording with the Royal Philharmonic. (Morris, 1995)

Figure 28 shows an excerpt of the first measures of Russ' manuscript.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the first measures of 'Five Bagatelles for Guitar and Orchestra'. The title is written in all caps: 'FIVE BAGATELLES FOR GUITAR AND ORCHESTRA'. To the right, it says 'WILLIAM WALTON' and 'ADAPTED BY PATRICK RUSSELL'. The tempo is 'ALLEGRO ASSAI' with a metronome marking of 112. The score is for 2 Flutes and 2 Oboes. The music is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line with sixteenth-note patterns. The score is marked with dynamics like 'mf' and 'mp' and includes performance instructions such as 'I.' and '3'.

Figure 28 Excerpt of the opening measures of the manuscript of Russ' orchestration of Walton's *Five Bagatelles*. Reprinted with permission from *Five Bagatelles for guitar and orchestra* by W. Walton/P. Russ (p. 1), 1992 (Unpublished manuscript).

Parkening gave the world premiere performance in 1991 under the baton of Andrew Litton, in honor of William Walton's ninetieth birthday celebration at the Royal Festival Hall. It preserved Walton's own orchestral colors as close as possible throughout. The orchestra size is the same as Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, except for the addition of percussion. This is to achieve an ideal balance with the guitar and

to make live performances more accessible. Christopher Parkening recorded *Five Bagatelles for Guitar and Orchestra* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra on the EMI classics label in 1993.

Five Bagatelles for Guitar and Orchestra can be described as a miniature concerto for the solo guitar. Particularly in *Presto con slancio*, there is a cadenza section where Patrick Russ incorporated elements from *Five Bagatelles* to allow the guitar to show off and explore materials (see Figs. 29 and 30). Considering the problem of balance between the guitar and the orchestra, the two seldom play together in the piece, but alternate quite often. There are times when the orchestra plays in support of the guitar part. In *Lento*, the guitar is now able to play with the accompaniment of the strings playing tremolo. It resembles the original idea Walton intended in the Arnold manuscript. This is in accordance with what Lady Walton wrote for the world première: "What we now have is a 'new' work, a delightful suite for solo guitar and orchestra which I'm sure all guitarists will want to play, and all Walton-lovers will want to hear. Bravo and best wishes!" (Russ, 1993, p. 5).

The image shows a musical score excerpt for Bagatelle V's cadenza. It consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'GUITAR' and the bottom staff is labeled '1ST VLNS'. The guitar part begins with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. It features a series of chords and melodic lines, with a 'rit.' marking and a circled 'rit.' above a section of sixteenth notes. The violin part starts with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. It begins with a forte 'f' dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte 'mf' dynamic, and ends with a piano 'p' dynamic. A large bracket labeled 'CADENZA' spans the final measures of the violin part.

Figure 29 Excerpt of Bagatelle V's cadenza of the manuscript of Russ' orchestration of Walton's *Five Bagatelles*. Reprinted with permission from *Five Bagatelles* for guitar and orchestra by W. Walton/P. Russ (p. 123), 1992 (Unpublished manuscript).

Conclusion

When I first started my research, I was surprised to learn how few articles had been written about *Five Bagatelles*. This *Five Bagatelles* research by no means will end here. After all, *Five Bagatelles* is considered to be one of the major pieces in British guitar repertoire in the 20th century. As its expressive power and formal brilliance continue to inspire performers and audiences a half century after their appearance, so too will this musical monument continue to invite ever-closer historical and analytical scrutiny. My interest for the piece has even led me to transcribe for the guitar the last movement of *Variii Capricci*, which I introduce in Appendix B and is provided as supplemental material to these proceedings.

When guitarists think of the *Five Bagatelles*, many have the impression that the work is not easy to approach, especially the first and fifth movements. I would like to end this article by sharing a conversation between Julian Bream and a student about *Five Bagatelles* years ago, where the student was going for everything he could get...:

Student: What about the Walton *Bagatelles*? Some of the movements are hard to play.

JB: All the movements are difficult.

Student: It's very hard to play the second movement legato and there are some harmonies that can't be maintained.

JB: Well, you can give the impression. You know, that's what guitar playing's all about, is giving impressions...good ones! (Snitzler, 1987, p. 32)

V.

The musical score for the guitar cadenza of "Presto con slancio" from *Five Bagatelles* is presented in a single system of eight staves. The notation is in treble clef and 2/4 time. The first staff is labeled "CADENZA" and "freely". The second staff begins with "(Start slowly)". The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Dynamics range from *pp* (pianissimo) to *fff* (fortississimo). The score includes several measures with "rit." (ritardando) and "a tempo" markings. The piece concludes with a final cadence marked *fff*.

Figure 30 Guitar cadenza of "Presto con slancio" of *Five Bagatelles* for Guitar and Orchestra. Excerpt of Bagatelle V's cadenza of the manuscript of Russ' orchestration of Walton's *Five Bagatelles*. Reprinted with permission from *Five Bagatelles* for guitar and orchestra by W. Walton/P. Russ (guitar part, p. 123), 1992, Oxford University Press.

Acknowledgements

I would like to record my gratitude to Maureen Murray, Alessandra Vinciguerra, Gerald Garcia, James Westbrook, Thérèse Saba and Michael Donley for the help given in preparing this article. In particular, I would like to thank Paul O'Dette and Nicholas Goluses for their help and guidance along the way.

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Appendix A

Selected pages from the Arnold Malcolm manuscript of Walton's *Five Bagatelles*
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William Walton Trust

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the first bagatelle. It consists of ten systems of music, each with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' with a metronome marking of 126. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'p cresc' (piano crescendo). Measure numbers 1, 6, 12, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39, and 45 are circled at the beginning of their respective systems. The notation is dense and characteristic of a composer's manuscript.

Figure A1 Page 1 (Bagatelle I).

(6 in D) III 5

alla Cubana ♩ = 98

(poco rit - atempo)

allegro ss.

(poco rit - atempo)

Figure A2 Page 5 (Bagatelle III).

6

The image displays a handwritten musical score for a guitar piece, identified as Bagatelle IV. The score is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and includes several systems of music. Key features include:

- Measure 43:** Marked with a circled '43' and the instruction 'P dim.' (piano, decrescendo). It features a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth notes and slurs.
- Measure 48:** Marked with a circled '48', containing 'Pizz.' (pizzicato) and 'Secco' (staccato) markings.
- Section IV:** A section titled '(6 m D)' and 'IV' with a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 126 \text{ c.}$. It includes the instruction 'sempre aspress. sur' (always accented, sur) and a note about tremolos: '(trem) * (trem più presto possibile)'. A 'pp' (pianissimo) marking is also present.
- Measure 6:** Marked with a circled '6', showing a sequence of chords and rhythmic patterns.
- Measure 10:** Marked with a circled '10', featuring a 'sul pont.' (sul ponticello) instruction.
- Measure 12:** Marked with a circled '12', showing a sequence of chords and rhythmic patterns.
- Measure 20:** Marked with a circled '20', starting with an 'a tempo' marking.

The score is characterized by intricate rhythmic patterns, slurs, and dynamic markings, typical of a technical guitar exercise.

Figure A3 Page 6 (Bagatelle IV).

(6 in E)

con slancio $\text{♩} = 126 \text{c.}$

V

7

9

15

23

29

35

41

47

53

P cresc.

Sim.

pp cresc.

Figure A4 Page 7 (Bagatelle V).

Appendix B

Kenneth Kam's solo guitar transcription of *Varii Capricci's* last movement

Given the fact that Walton rewrote the last movement of *Varii Capricci*, it made sense to me to adapt these changes and revise Bagatelle V for solo guitar. There is quite a bit of change in *Presto con slancio* compared to the *Con slancio* version. The total number of measures increased from 125 to 153. The tempo indication is now 138-144c. instead of 126c. There is a predilection for syncopated rhythms throughout. Accents are frequently placed on the offbeats, which makes this *Presto con slancio* unique. My transcription, which is provided as supplemental material to these proceedings, is a direct reduction of the orchestral *Varii Capricci's Presto con slancio*. No changes have been made to make the piece even more idiomatic. The original tempo (126c.) and fundamental structure were maintained, except for the ending, which was slightly modified. Instead of ending with descending block chords as in the solo guitar score, the extended opening motive is restated with fast sixteenth notes in the high register, concluding the work with gust and energy. Most of the rhythmic structure from the *Presto con slancio* was preserved.⁵

⁵ As I worked further on this project, I discovered there was another guitarist who also came up with the same idea to revise the piece. Serbian guitarist Petar Kodzas made his own arrangement and performed it in his Doctor of Musical Arts recital at the Eastman School of Music back in 1995. I would like to thank Petar, who was very generous to show me his arrangement. I was delighted and excited to meet another Walton-lover.