

DAILY FREEMAN

Jones, Maruri make return to Saugerties worth the wait

By KITTY MONTGOMERY

Reviewer

IS IT Two years since

Michael Kevin Jones and

Augustin Maruri played the

Saugerties Pro Musica

series?

The discography of this

international cello-guitar duo

is a spinning presence in a

miscellaneous CD collection we

keep at hand to clarify the

universe, when necessary, so

it seems they were never

truly gone to those faraway

places they've graced in the

meantime. Among these few

discs, we cherish a lush, re-

verentially joyous solo perfor-

mance of J.S. Bach's six

cello suites Jones recorded

at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on the 1667 Antonio Stradivarius cello.

The Pro Musica concert was their last in a North American tour. British-born,

London Royal

Music review

College of Music-schooled Jones later studied with Johannes

Goritsky of Germany and at

the Hindemith Foundation

in Switzerland in pursuit of

the luminous voice he brings

to this duo. Maruri is a

Madrid native who has stud-

ied with Spain's guitar mas-

ters and possesses a bril-

liant encompassment of

repertoire. Maruri's play

combines immaculate tech-

nique and fluency with a

Celtic passion and tender-

ness, Irish being the other

half of an ethnic heritage

this artist with a Spanish

name claims.

It was a rare experience

to share energy with the

Saugerties audience, who

absorbed the sonics of this

duo with the hunger of afi-

cionados at a jazz club.

Many of us, fans from previ-

ous appearances, anticipated

transparent and evocative

executions of classic works,

some transcribed for their

instrumentation by Maruri;

some few, originally written

for cello and guitar. As the

world turns, however, and

the duo's reputation has

expanded, composers have

sought out Jones and

Maruri as wing men for

their musical visions. Drew

Hemenger, whose "Songs

from America" was pre-

miered on the tour, is

among them. Programmed

contemporary works also

expressly written for cello

and guitar included Alain

Miteran's "Petite Suite Fran-

caise" — four French

melodies textured and levi-

tated with amazing enchant-

ment and grace — Radames

Gnatalli's three movement

"Sonata" and Hans Maria

Anton Hauswirth's "Konz-

ertino," in three movements.

Both Gnatalli and

Hauswirth's works were a

"stretch", with instrumental

patterns and harmonies jux-

taposed in ear-opening,

mind-expanding ways. Jones

and Maruri lit their

labyrinths of sound with a

combination of agape curios-

ity and certainty.

Hemenger, whose instinc-

tive sing as a composer was

honed at the Manhattan

School of Music, draws on

seven traditional American

songs for his suite. Varia-

tions on Negro spirituals

"Were You There" and

"Motherless Chile" carried

the evolving passion of

the evolving passion of

verse, with the duo discover-

ing these and other tunes

Hemenger set — "Two New

England Dances," "Gallows

Song" and "Evil Hearted

Man" among them — with

the innocence and wisdom

of men from other galaxies

or, anyhow, countries.

To keep us on the hook,

meet and transcend expecta-

tion of the classic traditional

in their repertoire, Jones

and Maruri left us with

Manuel de Falla's Suite

Espanola — six Spanish pop-

ular songs. Jones' cello lines

traced melody on the heart,

like the lingering finger of a

lover. Maruri's splendifer-

ous guitar play waxed inti-

mate and orchestral.