

Romantic & Contemporary Repertoire – by Chris Acquavella

Mandolin Solo

Composer	Notes/Title	Publisher/Vendor (edition)
Raffaele Calace	Preludes - There are 18 Preludes total, including the ones composed for Liuto. Calace composed 10 preludes for the mandolin. 1, 2, 3, & 10 are the most performed & studied. Most need very good RH technique & dexterity. Prelude 15, Op. 151 is the easiest and approachable for amateur musicians. Prelude 16, Op. 152 for Liuto is also very approachable; sounds great on octave mandolin, mandola and standard mandolin.	- Santabarbara Editore (Orlandi) - Trekel (Gertrude Weyhoven)
Raffaele Calace	Other Solo Works – There some wonderful solo pieces by Calace. All are very well written for the mandolin. The following pieces have very minimal advanced RH technique. Piccolo Gavotte Op. 73, Silvia Op187, Amor si Culla Op. 133, Notturmo-Cielo Stellato Op. 186. These pieces make use of chords, tremolo, LH pizzicato and a bit of duo-style (minimal). Very nice concert fillers.	- Santabarbara (Orlandi) - Trekel (Wilden-Husgen) - Trekel (Weyhoven) - Calace e figlio - Suseisha (japan) - Astute Music, UK (Stephens)
Carlo Munier	Aria Variata Nr. II – A haunting melodic piece that finishes with a bit of flash. Relatively easy with no advanced RH technique. Must have good cross-string ability. I always enjoy playing this piece.	- R. Maurri Editions
Carlo Munier	Love Song, Op. 275 – Could possibly be Munier’s most popular solo work. Requires good multi-string tremolo, duo-style and arpeggio technique. It’s a little “bitty” so requires a lot of musicianship to sell to an audience. Performed quite frequently.	- Trekel (Trekel, St) - R. Maurri Editions
Benedetto Persichini	Polcha Variata & Arrabiosa are two of his best pieces and personal favorites of mine. Both require the ability to quickly change between chords & single melody. Not good pieces if you have arthritis. Very cleverly written: mandolin sounds very full without any crazy advanced RH technique. Polcha Variata can be a real crowd pleaser.	Astute Music, UK (Stephens)
Giuseppe Pettine	Fantasia Americana & Christmas Song. The latter is a wonderful piece that requires good duo-style and chord/melody playing. Appears easy at first glance but is definitely trickier than it looks. Really fun piece	????? Ask Richard Walz
Yasuo Kawuhara	Jongara – One of his most accessible pieces for the audience & performer. Improvised Poem appears to be Kuwahara’s most performed solo work but I find it a bit violent & noisy. Extremely difficult. Jongara is quite the opposite. This piece can be musical & a bit repetitive, but pretty fun. All of Kuwahara’s works require excellent RH technique including duo-style, tremolo & arpeggio technique; more so than any Calace works, IMHO. Jongara emulates the Japanese instrument – Shamisen.	- Trekel
Oliver Kälberer	Kleine Suites Nr. 1 & 2 – Both are terrific contemporary pieces that don’t ask too much from the performer or listener. Very accessible for the audience. Both consist of 5 movements. Kleine Suite Nr. 2 is a better balanced whole work with fun descriptive titles. Good contemporary sound bites that show a different sound world of the mandolin.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Lutz-Werner Hesse	Six Preludes – Interesting, program fillers. Quite difficult. Requires all advanced RH Technique. Prelude 1 works very well as a stand alone piece. Lots of duo-style playing & dexterity in the LH.	- Trekel (Litchenberg)

Takashi Ochi	Fantasia No. 1 – Got a bit of everything in it; duo-style, tremolo double stops, arpeggio technique etc. Interesting, fun and can be a good show stopper. A must starting point for anyone looking to perform Calace Preludes. Very similar in style & technique.	- Zimmerman/Trekel (Ochi)
Zya Aydintan	Anatolisches Capriccio – fun & funky with a great 5/4 section. Requires good LH technique and double stroke ability. Not a stunning piece but worth a look. Very accessible for intermediate – advanced mandolinists.	- Zimmerman/Trekel
Graham Prowning	Eucalypts – Short contemporary piece that can be very effective. Very free (rubato) with no bar lines. Another good introduction to contemporary music.	- Three Centuries of Mandolin Music by Neil Gladd.
Jiro Nakano	Various pieces – Harugakita Op.36, Studies Op.23 1-3, Song of the Falling Leaves Op.32. Nakano’s solo pieces are mostly pastiches on Calace. These pieces sound romantic with a Japanese/folky twist. There is a definite romantic influence. Technically difficult and a bit awkward on the left hand. Nakano likes bass lines that move in the opposite direction as the melody. Song of the Falling Leaves is my favorite piece and is about 7 minutes of duo-style and reversed arpeggio technique. Very attractive piece though.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Juan Carlo Munoz	Estampes – A wonderful work. Created to help teach modern mandolin technique. Can be a great concert piece. The last movement “El Duende” can be performed on its own. Very interesting contemporary harmony and great use of the entire mandolin. Suits the mandolin perfectly. A must learn piece, IMHO.	- Grenzland-Verlag/Trekel
Alison Stephens	La Tristezza D’Inverno (The Sadness of Winter) – This work was heavily influenced by a trip to Greece and the sounds of the Rebetika, romantic RH techniques utilized by Calace, and the composer’s own inner feelings. This emotionally charged solo work that explores the full range of the fingerboard as well as many of the RH techniques. LH stuff isn’t too difficult (very chordy) but the RH technique is very difficult, requiring a ton of dexterity. Goes from triple stroke to fours to fives and then full blown arpeggio technique. Lots of stamina required. Great piece for working on RH technique.	- Astute Music, UK (Stephens)
Victor Kioulaphides	Diferencias & De Grote Markt. The former can arguably be Victor’s most performed solo mandolin work. It has been performed & recorded on mandolin, mandola and octave mandolin. A wonderfully technical piece that draws on minor folk traditions. Great concert piece. De Grote Markt is a good first technical piece for a beginning mandolinist. The piece is a study in changing meters and left-hand articulations. I highly recommend Victor’s work. Always fun to perform, rehearse and use as your “party piece”.	http://www.paperclipdesign.com/vk/ Victor is very kind to offer his compositions for free. Hence...we love to perform them.
Neil Gladd	Sonata No. 1 – This piece is in three movements. Requires stamina and a variety of techniques. The 3 rd movement is particularly fun. This piece is quite difficult for both the left & right hands. The chord voicings can be odd on the left hand. Need rubber fingers for some. A definite concert piece for any serious classical mandolinist.	- Plucked Strings/Trekel
Alison Stephens	Various folios – Six Episodes, Six Excursions, Six Adventures & Six Challenges. These books contain lovely pieces that help teach a particular technique. Every piece is enjoyable to play. I use these with all of my students to help train technique. Perfect for beginner – intermediate students. A couple of pieces can be used as program fillers.	- Astute Music, UK (Stephens) Ie. Mount Fuji.

Mandolin & Guitar

Composer	Titles/Notes	Publisher/Vendor (edition)
Raffaele Calace	Various selections: Many of Calace's works come in various formats, either originally or via Japanese/German publishers. Good mandolin & guitar pieces include Tarantella, Romanza, Danza Spagnuola, Rondo and Bolero. Calace's earlier pieces work well for both instruments. Usually a lot of fun to play.	- Trekel - Astute Music, UK (Stephens) - Suiseisha, Japan
Stephen Funk Pearson	Mountain Moor – written for Duo Mair-Davis. Possibly one of my favorite pieces. A very evenly composed piece for both instruments. The mandolin part has a bit of RH technique but nothing too advanced. Very accessible for intermediate students. You need a pretty decent guitarist for this piece; bit challenging at times. A very nice moody piece; one of the most recorded works for mandolin & guitar duos. Another piece worth checking out – Mountain Morning. (Guitar Solo Publications). Originally for flute & guitar but sounds great on the mandolin.	- Theodore Presser Co. /Trekel - Guitar Solo Publications, San Francisco.
Eduardo Angulo	De Aires Antiguos – A Huapango and lullaby combined. A great rhythmical concert piece. Not too hard technically but impressive sounding. Needs good rhythmic playing between guitar & mandolin.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Herbert Baumann	Sonata Capriccioso – written for Duo Capriccioso and an excellent duo piece. Similar to De Aires Antiguos in regards to being very rhythmical. Baumann's music always has beautiful eastern European sounding melodies. Not particularly hard but needs good speed & agility. Great concert piece.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Norbert Sprongl	Duo – fantastic early Germanic sounding piece. Pretty tough for both instruments. Need good LH agility and strong duo partner. RH technique includes arpeggio technique, tremolo & quick runs. A lot of 3 rd & 4 th position playing.	- Heinrichshofen (Hladky)/Trekel
Carlo Munier	Carnival of Venice – very fun little show stopper that's actually pretty easy. Good piece for intermediate player. Munier expands on the theme with variations including some advanced RH technique.	- Heinrichshofen (Behrend)/Trekel
Hermann Ambrosius	Suite Galante – Nice piece & enjoyable to play. Easy but a good program filler. Requires a bit of creative musicianship to really pull off. A good first piece for new duos – you learn a lot about your partner in this piece.	- Trekel
Wolfgang Condin	Himmel uber Kyoto – a wonderful minimalist atmospheric piece. Written in 7/4 with a 4/4, 3/4, & 11/8 middle section. Duo Lorch has done a really nice recording of this piece. I personally feel the middle section can be "rocked" out a bit more. No advanced RH technique and very minimal 3 rd position playing. A really lovely piece.	- Centraton Musikverlag/Trekel
Brian Israel	Sonatinetta – A must learn piece by an American composer. Excellent 1 st & 2 nd movement but the 3 rd movement is a bit weak, IMHO. 1 st movement has very tricky odd time signatures and quirky LH fingering. A real accomplishment when played fast & smoothly. The 2 nd movement has a wonderfully haunting melodic opening. 3 rd movement reminds me of circus music. I tend to perform just the 1 st movement which can be a show stopper or train wreck.....depending on how much you & your duo partner rehearse.	- Plucked String Editions/Trekel
Victor Kioulaphides	Canzona – written for Carlo Aonzo. A very nice accessible piece for the intermediate player. Doesn't require any difficult RH technique. The dotted rhythm section can be a bit tricky. All in all, a beautifully constructed piece and a lot of fun to	- Joachim-Trekel-Musikverlag, Hamburg

	perform. Pretty easy guitar part as well.	
Paul Mitchell Davidson	Rondo – a great modern piece with jazz overtones. Written only a couple hours before its premier on BBC radio. This piece is relatively easy as it doesn't have any difficult RH technique & fits very well on the LH. Guitar is pretty easy as well. Another atmospheric piece combining classical & jazz tones.	- Astute Music, UK
Will Ayton	Three Movements for Mandolin & Guitar – another must learn piece by an American composer. Medium difficulty but very obtainable for an intermediate player. No advanced classical technique; just great writing. Guitar part has a lot of linear runs. 3 rd movement is the trickiest with odd time signature and contrapuntal writing.	- NL Publications/Trekel
Alfonso Carlos Miguel	Summersuite, Op. 11 – A beautiful floating 1 st movement. Mandolin part has a lot of 3 rd position playing and technical fast runs that needs to sound effortless. Middle movement is easy to play and very pretty. Quirky, mock Brazilian choro 3 rd movement that finishes the piece off nicely. Some awkward LH positions but nothing too crazy. Not too difficult ensemble wise either. Intermediate mandolin & guitar players.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Maximo Diego Pujol	Suite Buenos Aires – originally for flute & guitar but works great on mandolin. Super fun piece that is similar to Piazzolla's famed Historie du Tango. I prefer Suite Buenos Aires because it is a little groovier and cool. Not as technically hard as Historie du Tango but still with some tricky sections. The last movement has odd time signatures and quick position shifts. No advanced RH technique needed. Guitar part is awesome and really makes the piece.	- Editions Henry Lemoine

Mandolin Duets (& other instrument)

Composer	Titles/Notes	Publisher/Vendor (edition)
Jose Antonio Zambrano	Suite Venezolana – A four movement work with a repeating 1 st movement at the end. Very well written for both mandolin parts. Not very difficult and very beautiful, fun & exciting. A great concert piece.	- Grenzland-Verlag/Trekel
Sebastien Paci	Trios Pensees Breves & Tres Aires Imaginarios – Two excellent pieces for duet mandolins. Sebastien Paci is one of my favorite contemporary composers. Everything he writes for the mandolin fits the instrument so well technically & sonority. He is very clever in developing a conversation between the two instruments. Most of his work is written for Duo Munoz-Pavon, who share input with Sebastien. Both the mentioned pieces have advanced RH technique, including arpeggio technique & reversed arpeggio tech. Great concert pieces for intermediate – advanced players.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Konrad Wölki	Heitere Sonatine in D Major Op. 104 – Written for mandolin & mandola (European/octave mandolin). Not technically difficult but very nicely written. A good conversation between the two instruments. Entire piece is in the 1 st position for both instruments.	- Joachim-Trekel-Musikverlag, Hamburg
Fritz Pils	Sonatine for Mandolin & Cello – Not too technically challenging. Uses some tremolo double stops and 3 rd position playing. Cello part fits mostly in 1 st position. Can be played on mandocello as well. (bass clef). A decent piece worth a look.	- Joachim-Trekel-Musikverlag, Hamburg
Theodore Hlouschek	DUOS – apparently the only modern composer than the late Hugo D'Alton approved of. After playing these duos I can see why. Very well written contemporary pieces that fit	- Trekel

	wonderfully on both instruments. Technically challenging to read (rhythms) but not to play. The two parts converse in a syncopated way with nice counterparts. Very, very fun when rehearsed to their full potential. Great concert pieces. Highly recommended.	
Eileen Pakenham	Lark's Song – One of my fondest memories is playing this with Alison Stephens in my lessons. A very virtuosic piece that is filled with notes, position shifts and good ole' fingerboard shredding. Highly recommended for the converted bluegrass. Need good alternate strokes, speed and dexterity. Extremely fun!	- Victoria College Exams (UK) - Not officially in print anymore.
Hermann Ambrosius	Duo for 2 mandolins – Similar to Suite Galante in regards to compositional material and technical demands. A bit quirky in rhythms but not beyond the beginner – intermediate level. Very enjoyable to play.	- Trekel
Fritz Pils	Heiteres Musizieren – Excellent mandolin duets that really work the reading ability of both performers. Intermediate difficulty technically but craftily written between the two mandolin parts. Both instruments must slot together perfectly to create the desired effect. Excellent publication with plectrum strokes and dynamics well written. A really interesting piece that could be a good program filler.	- Zimmermann, Frankfurt/Trekel
Raffaele Calace	12 Duetti – A wonderful folio of mandolin duets. These pieces are absolutely beautiful and like other Calace pieces are extremely well written for both instruments. I use these pieces as sight reading exercises for my students. Beautiful romantic & lyrical pieces. No advanced technique required; just a good tremolo and your musical input. Enjoy with a glass of wine....	- Sanatabarbara Editions (Mauro Squillante)/Trekel
Marlo Strauss	Funf Klangbilder for 2 mandolins – All of Marlo's pieces are excellent technical exercises and this one is no different. His compositions introduce RH & LH techniques in a fun and easy way to understand. The end result is beautiful modern, minimalist music. The movements of this piece are named after colors..ie.Red, Blue..etc. Great for high beginner to intermediate student. Really enjoyable pieces.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Konrad Wölki	Mandolin for Two – This folio contains three sonatas written in a classical style. Each sonata has 3 – 4 movements. Very well written pieces that are kind of classical period with a modern twist. Not too technically demanding and again great reading exercises. No advanced RH technique needed. A lot of fun to perform and play. Helps develop basic classical picking technique & phrasing.	- Apollo Publishing/Trekel

Mandolin & Piano

Composer	Title/Notes	Publisher/Vendor (edition)
Hans Gal	Partita – This piece is made up of five movements. Pretty hard but not all movements. Really good concert and pretty long in its entirety.	- Heinrichshofen (Hladky)/Trekel
Raffaele Calace	Tons!!! Calace has some awesome works for mandolin & piano. Rondo Op. 127, Romanza Op. 134 are perfect for the intermediate musician. Tarantella, op.18 is a great piece for beginning – intermediate students. Polonaise Op. 36 is a great concert piece. This piece has a few tricky bits so I recommend it for upper	- Astute Music, UK. (Stephens) - Trekel - Calace e figlio - Suiseisha (japan)

	intermediate – advanced performers. Calace has many works available for mandolin & piano so it is worth playing as much of his material as possibly in order to find the right piece for your repertoire.	
Paul Mitchell-Davidson	Four Progressive Pieces – Wonderful pieces that aren't difficult at all but can be very musical. Well written for both instruments and great concert program fillers. Paul is a professional jazz guitarist who has made a name for himself as a contemporary composer. Rondo for mandolin & guitar is a popular piece of his. Four Progressive Pieces is a perfect introduction for the beginning student to the soundscape of mandolin & piano. These pieces are mostly lyrical and tonal but the harmony is definitely contemporary. Highly recommend this piece.	- Astute Music, UK.
Carlo Munier	Capriccio Spagnuolo – A fantastic high energy concert piece that draws on Spanish flavors and traditions. This piece can be a bit tricky in places. Loads of tremolo required (including double stops), triple stroke and arpeggio technique. A great show stopper. Advanced	- Trekel
Eileen Pakenham	Several pieces varying in difficulty from grade 1 – grade 8 ability. Several are really good for concert programs as they offer a different style, compared to Calace, Munier and other standards. Alison's favorites are: Fantasy (hardest), Birds over Grey Water and Paper Boat. (funny titles but lovely music)	Victoria College Exams (UK)
Julian Dawes	"Suite" – in 6 movements. Pretty nice piece and some of the movements are quite lovely, including "Satie style" Valse. Julian's writing can be a little awkward on the mandolin so the musician needs to have good left hand technique. He usually doesn't write too much advanced RH technique. I like Julian's style and lyrical melodies. Has a folky overtone to his work.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
Armin Kaufmann	Burletta & Mitoka Dragomirna – These have become pretty standard contemporary repertoire for professional mandolinists who work with pianists. A little set of pieces that are stunning. They draw on Romanian influences. Guaranteed to have the audience going wild. Need very good pianist! Technique includes lots of very fast double stroking. Advanced.	Heinrichshofen/Trekel

Mandolin Concerti

Raffaele Calace	Concertos No1, Op. 113 & No 2, Op. 144 – Written for mandolin & piano only. No 1 has been orchestrated by various Germans but none of those orchestrations are in print, as far as I know. Also orchestrated for plucked orchestra by Alex Timmerman of Het Consort. Neither concerto is any harder than	- Trekel - Calace e figlio - Suiseisha (japan)
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	most “big” Calace pieces but musician needs stamina of an ox. (1 st movement of both concerti are over 10 minutes). Similar to Calace’s Preludes, both concerti include all advanced RH technique and lots of it. Both are wonderful “big” concert pieces.	
Silvio Ranieri	Concerto in D – Very big work and very hard. Seldom performed or recorded. Can be slightly unusual on the ear. Only published for mandolin & piano. I personally love this concerto, especially the 1 st and 2 nd movement. The 3 rd movement is a study in double stops and duo style. A wonderful concert piece but one could spend a lot of their life perfecting this piece.	- Cranz Publishers (No. 824)
William Bardwell	Concerto for mandolin & small orchestra – Very interesting work. Almost never performed. In fact, the only performance I am aware is Alison Stephens at St. Martin’s in Field with the TCM Chamber Orchestra in May 1991. I’ve heard that recording and it is definitely a cool concerto. Not extremely difficult – well in the reach of the upper intermediate student. Very musical piece. Bardwell wrote some lovely melodies.	- Plucked Strings/Trekel? (not sure if Trekel still has copies or can obtain them). Neil Gladd might be another source.
Roland Chadwick	Concerto No.1 “Diana of the Uplands” – Pretty cool concerto for mandolin & string orchestra. Roland is an Australian guitarist who also plays a bit of mandolin. He recorded this piece with the English Chamber Orchestra on a CD called “Revealed”. Very nice recording (orchestra is great). The concerto draws on bluegrass and folky influences. Uses an open G tuning. Hardest part of the concerto is remembering you are in an altered tuning. I’ve performed this concerto many times in London and USA. A really fun piece. The 2 nd movement “Prayer” is worth the performance alone. A haunting melody and against sustained strings. Lovely.	Not in print as far as I know. (might be available Sibelius Scorch). However, Roland is a very nice guy and would give you a copy if asked. Contact him via his website. www.rolandchadwick.com
Julian Dawes	Concerto for Mandolin & Strings – This concerto was written for the finals of the Schweinfurt Solo Mandolin Competition in Nov 2002. Very nice piece is a slightly romantic style. 1 st movement reminds me of the Barber Violin Concerto. The concerto is fully published including piano reduction. Features almost all advanced classical techniques. A wonderful project for advanced mandolinists. An attractive work.	- Vogt & Fritz/Trekel
John Craton	Mandolin Concerto No. 1 in D Minor - Written for Victor Kioulaphides, the concerto is largely conventional in style and features solo mandolin with string orchestra in three movements: Allegro; Adagio (“Alabama Lullaby”); Allegretto. The work was premiered by Dutch mandolinist Ferdinand Binnendijk and the Orkest van het Oosten in Zwolle, Netherlands, in 2006.	- Wolfhead Music