

YOUR COMPOSERS

music for around 100 movies and also composed electronic music. Tonight's piece is a theme from the film *Hiroshima to iu Nano Shonen* (A Boy named Hiroshima) directed by Yoshiya Sugata in 1987. He died at the age of 65 but his music lives on. Peter Grillio (Director of the Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture, Columbia University, New York) said in his written appreciation of Toru Takemitsu... "His greatest achievement extend far beyond his chosen world music. Music was his particular language, to be sure, but universal communication was his goal. Through him, the purest legacy of Japanese cultural traditions could be comprehended by outsiders".

A YOUNG SPROUT MINORU MIKI (b.1930)

arr. by L. Brower

Miki was born in Tokushima, Japan and graduated from the Tokyo National University of Music. He wanted to make known traditional Japanese instruments so he founded *Pro Musica Nipponia* in 1964, and gave more than 150 performances. His most successful works are *Paraphrase After Ancient Japanese Music*, *Convexity*, *Four Seasons*, *Hote*, *Concerto Requiem*, *Ki no Kane*. He invented a 21-string Koto instrument together with Keiko Nosaka in 1969. Miki is one of the most successful composers in the international percussion society and has written marimba pieces like *Time for Marimba* and *Marimba Spiritual*. He started writing choral pieces when he was very young, from this period he composed *Choral*, *Poem-Awa*, *Ode to Oceanide*, *Jode Kurudando*, *Ki Do Ai Raku*, *Choral Hannya Sutra* and more recently has written song collections such as *Noharauta* (21 small songs) and *Flowers' Story* (14 songs). He is also the author of film scores, the most well known is *L'empire de sons*. *A Young Sprout* is an intimate piece written in 1972 for Koto, a Japanese zither with 13 to 25 silk strings. The original Japanese title refers to the word *Mebae* meaning a feeling from the heart such as, the feeling one gets when sensing the coming of spring. *A Young Sprout* could also suggest something fragile, pure and just born which at the same time is full of strength and growing energy, like a bud of a plant. At present Minoru Miki is the Director of the Japan Federation of composers and a visiting professor of the Shikoku University. He is the recipient of the Cultural Prize of Tokushima Prefecture in 1991, an honorable Purple Ribbon Medal in 1994 and the Order of the Rising Sun in 2000.

INTERVAL

FORGED TOMI RÄISÄNEN (b.1976)

Tomi was born in Helsinki, Finland and studied musicology and composition with Harri Vuori at the University of Helsinki, but in 2000 moved on to the Sibelius Academy to continue his studies of

composition with Erkki Jokinen. Räsänen's works are varied from solo pieces to chamber and choral music, also orchestral pieces and concertos. His music is known in more than 20 countries across Europe, North and South America, as well as in Asia and Australia. He has won composition prizes in Finland, Italy and Australia. *Forged* for solo guitar was written in 2004-5 with a sense of freedom, the author usually let the composition flow until it finds its own shape and by then acquired its form in something like an organic composition. Let me quote Räsänen when he said... "in this case when writing I composed first a very strict and detailed predetermined form. The result was a kind of mould in which I had to cast the music. This task was not as easy as it might sound. The music had to be forged very carefully that it would finally fit the predetermined form, hence the title 'Forged'".

FIVE PIECES FROM THE SPANISH CASTLES

Sigüenza
Turegano
Romance de los Pinos
Alcañiz
Torja

FEDERICO MORENO-TORROBA (1891-1992)

The name of Moreno-Torroba evokes the rhythm of *Zarzuela* of which *Luisa Fernanda* (1932) and *La Chupalana* (1934) are the most famous, he is also known by his Spanish light operas. He was born in Madrid and his father was a famous organist and follower of Felipe Pedrell, the great father-figure of musical nationalism. Moreno-Torroba was able both to compose and conduct and was an empresario too, managing his own touring company. He wrote a number of symphonic and instrumental works. He was the first composer to write guitar music for Segovia, about fifty pieces in total. It was the time when classical guitar gained popularity and the most notable works for concert halls were *Sonatina*, *Concierto Ibérico* and *Concierto flamenco*. Sadly there are two pieces which have been neglected; *Capricho romántico* and *Suite castellana* two fine works for guitar. His compositions for guitar have the influence of beautiful melodies and Spanish folk influence rather than the new harmonic idioms of music writers of his generation. Mikko Ikäheimo has chosen five works from *Castillos de España* (Spanish Castles), a set of fourteen pieces named after Spanish castles.

INVOCACION Y DANZA (Invocation and Dance) JOAQUIN RODRIGO (1901-1999)

Rodrigo was the last of the great Spanish neo-romantics whilst not neglecting folk musical traditions he chose to celebrate the truly Spanish components of his country's art-musical past including baroque. Born in Valencia, he contracted diphtheria which left him almost completely blind from the age of three.

He was taught harmony and composition by Francisco Antich and received lessons from musicians Enrique Gomá and Eduardo López Chavárrri; but it was Rafael Ibañez, employed by his family to help him, who opened the world for him, he lent his eyes to Rodrigo and became his friend and secretary, reading to him literary master pieces together with books on philosophy. By 1927, Joaquín went to Paris to be taught for five years by the French Master, Paul Dukas in the École Normale de Musique, by this time he was already writing music and met Manuel de Falla who supported him in his career. During these years, he met Victoria Kahmi, an excellent Turkish pianist whom he married in 1933 and they went to settle in Valencia. She was an important collaborator in many respects of Rodrigo's work as a composer. In this period, he wrote his most important songs and piano pieces. He continued his studies of musicology in France at the Paris Conservatoire and later at the Sorbonne. The best known work of Rodrigo is the *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra premiered in Barcelona in 1940, closely followed in popularity by his *Fantasia para un gentilhombre*. Other guitar concertos included a *Concierto Madrigal* for two guitars and *Concierto Andaluz* for four guitars.

Rodrigo was frequently honoured throughout his life in many different countries and in Spain, the most significant were the Gran Cruz de Alfonso X el Sabio, Gran Cruz del Merito Civil, Medalla de Oro al Mérito en el Trabajo y en Bellas Artes, The National Music Prize (twice), Doctor (honoris) causa of several universities, Director of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando and the Fundacion Guerrero. He was raised to the nobility by H.M. Juan Carlos I, King of Spain with the title *Marqués de los Jardines de Aranjuez* when celebrating his 90th birthday. At the time of Rodrigo's death, preparations for his centennial in 2001 were already in hand but he died two years early. The composer's only daughter, Cecilia, founded the publishing house of Ediciones Joaquín Rodrigo in 1989 and ten years later the Victoria and Joaquín Rodrigo Foundation was created. In spite of Rodrigo not playing guitar, he is best known by his works composed for the instrument. *Invocacion y Danza* won the first prize at the Radio Television Française composition contest for the guitar. Joaquin Rodrigo has used themes from the ballet *El Amore Brujo* by Manuel de Falla. In the ballet, the first ballerina dances at night with her dead lover's ghost, whom she has conjured up. So the structure of tonight's piece is based on these elements. *Invocacion* is followed by a nightly *Danza* that is doomed to fade away when the morning rises.

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J S Bach (1685-1750)



Toru Takemitsu (1930-1996)



Minoru Miki (b.1930)



Tomi Räsänen (b.1976)



Federico Moreno-Torroba
(1891-1992)



Joaquin Rodrigo (1901-1999)