

KNOW YOUR

FRAGMENTOS, (1979)

(Fragments)

MIGUEL CUBANO (b.1954)

Based on a *plena* of Canario this piece has seven variations over a motif of *Cuando las Mujeres* of Manuel Jiménez nicknamed *Canario* (canary-bird), he was the first *plenero*, a popular Afro-Puerto Rican style of tropical song who succeeded in the USA. A composer, vocalist and band leader he recorded for RCA Victor and Columbia and was at his peak in the early 30's. *Fragmentos* was written by Miguel Cubano in Paris in 1979 and premiered by José Rodríguez Alvira, guitarist. The *plena* is typical rhythm of the shores of Puerto Rico played with drums of different sizes called *panderos* very similar to small drums but without the little lateral disks which identified them, the biggest drums are called *seguidoras* and the little ones are the *requintos*. Miguel Cubano is a lecturer at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico a metropolitan place offering classes of Popular Music in where he was a pioneer. Cubano gained his Bachelors degree at the University of Puerto Rico and later went to the National Conservatoire of Aubervilliers in France, and obtained a diploma in classical guitar under the supervision of Maestro Alberto Ponce. He also gained a diploma in composition at the Schola Cantorum in Paris where he studied with composer Alain Kremski. Cubano has written works for guitar, flute and voice together with music for films and documentaries.

TRES PRELUDIOS

(Three Preludes)

JOSE RODRIGUEZ ALVIRA (b.1945)

The musical language used in the short *Three Preludes* are tonal, simple and light, each one last only one minute. They were written to be played uninterrupted for they are a musical unity, in spite of their formal and harmonic simplicity this work use beats of 7/8 in the first and last prelude. We have to add that José Rodríguez Alvira is a lecturer at the Music Conservatoire of Puerto Rico since 1983, teaching music theory, composition, computer related courses and guitar classes too. He studied at L'Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris and at the Conservatoire de Musique d'Aubervilliers and at the Conservatoire of Puerto Rico. He was a member of the *Trío Taváres* and *Solistas* in Puerto Rico and as a composer has written pieces for piano, singing, choral music, chamber music and symphonic orchestra. He is well known in Puerto Rico and his music have been played at the *Festival Interamericano de las Artes* and at the *Casals Festival* founded by the famous cellist Pablo Casals. He has also visited the USA and France, around 1997 was invited by the American Composers Orchestra to take part in the *Sonidos de las Américas Festival: Puerto Rica* held at the Carnegie Hall in New York.

The Three Preludes were written as an essay of tones and voices in where the guitar of Alberto Rodríguez Ortiz will immerse into the music. They have the same magic of the miniatures but with a... "certain minimalism associated to Webern or Thelonious Monk for instance the meeting points of notes are placed with great harmony holding complexity in its simplicity, everything is necessary and at the same time extraordinary surprising. Here the music floats and is lyrical poetry, delicate and expressive up to

the limit of almost a broken fragility. The guitar of Alberto Rodríguez Ortiz seems to meditate about these musical forms, it is like an investigation in miniature found in those 'curious drawers' of the eighteen century..." *Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá Guayanabo, 28 March 2004.*

ARENA EN LOS BOLSILLOS, (2005)

CARLOS CABRER, (b.1950)

Carlos Cabrer is a neo-impressionistic composer who uses a *serial technique* which is clearly seen in his piece *La rota voz del agua* (1982) for soprano, flute guitar and cello. He has also written orchestral works such as, *Cánticos* (1977), *Ceremoniales* (1984) and *Lago de los sueños*, where he uses an atonal language of consonant intervals without going back to tonality. Carlos Cabrer was born in San Juan Puerto Rico, on 17th September 1950 and gained his Bachelor's degree at the University of Puerto Rico in where he studied composition with Rafael Aponte Ledée. He completed a Master of Music at the Michigan State University under the supervision of H. Owen Reed, Jere Hutchinson and David Liptak. Later completed his PhD in composition at King's College in London in where he studied with Silvina Milstein. At present is teaching at the University of Puerto Rico.

Arena en los bolsillos (Sand in the pockets) was composed specially for tonight's concert and is dedicated to Alberto Rodríguez Ortiz. It has three movements, all of them, with a unity of six notes with an interval relation in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 3rd and 2nd and as a motif uses the *aguinaldo fajardoño* a typical sound of rural music in Puerto Rico.

SOLILOQUIO (2005)

World Premiere

ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ ORTIZ (b.1971)

Alberto wrote this piece in 2005 and dedicated it to Nicholas Goluses, his guitar teacher at the Easman School of Music in New York. This work has a very distinctive Caribbean romanticism with some influence of the bolero most popular in the 70's and 80's decades in Puerto Rico and New York. The *bolero* rhythm have experienced a number of transformations since its appearance, for instance, with the influence of African *cinquillo* (five note cluster) brought from Haiti, and with the addition of lyrics, as well as, the *maracas*, *bongos* or *conga drums*, became a mixture of habanera, trova and song which did not have choreographic ties with the Spanish bolero, it surpassed it. It took a danceable form in Santiago, Cuba incorporating strumming and lead guitar, and is today, a slow paced and romantic music. *Soliloquio* has also the colourful harmony of the Japanese composer Yoshihisa Taira with whom Alberto studied at L'Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris. *Soliloquio* (monologue) is in essence a reflective work which celebrates the different types of emotions when oneself feels lonely.

HOMENAJE A HECTOR CAMPOS PARSÍ,

(1922-1998)

ALBERTO RODRIGUEZ ORTIZ (b.1971)

It will be useful to give some information about Maestro Campos Parsi, a composer with a neoclassicist style who wrote his music with a particular style, he mixed supremely lyricism and intelligence for his inspiration came from an "intelligent heart". A friend of Aaron Copland he wrote music within this style, although he

composed electronic and aleatoric music as well. Campos Parsi started his career in the 40's and became the first Puerto Rican composer with an international reputation when premiered his *Divertimento del Sur*, a string piece played by the American Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Later in the 50's he was closely associated to Leonard Bernstein when he advised him with the *West Side Story's* writing. He was also involved in the development of Puerto Rican classical music and the exchange with the North American Music Society allowed national artists to perform at the Metropolitan Opera House in the USA.

In his *Homage to Héctor Campos Parsi*, Alberto captures his way of meditating the music with brilliant precision exhibiting beautiful middle tones of great density similar to the sound produced by a mezzo soprano's voice for instance. He wrote this particular piece in 1997 and is based on a theme of six notes using the alphabet in correspondence with a chromatic scale starting with A = do, B = do# and like this consecutively which goes with the name of H-E-C-T-O-R. When reaching to the end of the piece HECTOR is interwaved with notations of the principal theme of the *Sonata del Sol* for piano written by Campos Parsi. Alberto wishes to give thanks to *Carlos Cabrer* for the wise advice he gave him during the process of writing this piece.

The Institute of Puerto Rican Culture released an album entitled *Música de Héctor Campos Parsi* in the late 1970's to reciprocate his enormous contribution towards music, he was one of the Director of Music programmes for some years. Lastly, he earned international accolades among them the prize of *Music by the Puerto Rican Academy of Arts and Sciences* in 1979

INTERVAL

CANTILENA (1996)

WILLIAM ORTIZ ALVARADO (b.1947)

This piece shows us the lyricism the guitar can reach in the same way that song and singing images are represented. This piece is like an account which reached its peak with a musical biographical sketch that we can appreciate in Héctor Campos Parsi compositions.

William was born in Salinas, Puerto Rico and grew up in New York, therefore he is part of a fascinating hybrid culture and for this reason his written works as a composer reflect the reality of New York city. Ortiz said... "I conceive my music like a violent beauty of the urban life like an expression of the cry and pain of the street which mirror the thoughts of the people with feelings because they are oppressed. It is my intention to convert the language of the street into a legitimate instrument..." in his own words.

121st STREET RAP, (2002)

WILLIAM ORTIZ ALVARADO

121st Street Rap was written by William and dedicated to Alberto Rodríguez Ortiz in 2002. This is a piece which pays homage to the hip-hop music developed by puertorricans and black people of the streets of New York. The repetitive theme of this piece and its vocal exclamations are integrated with other elements to create a dramatic atmosphere sublimely portraying the feeling of the urban streets of New York.