

# BRIEF NOTES

**ELISEO GRENER SANCHEZ (1863-1950)** Cuban composer, pianist, conductor and singer, most famous in the '30s who, at the age of 13, had written small scores film/music. He composed the famous *Lamento Cubano* (1932) a political song that came out during Gerardo Machado's period. In 1936 he went to New York writing Cuban rhythms such as *danzones*, *songs*, *tangs-congos* and *Lullabys*, one of them is known as *Duerme Negrito* or *Canción de Cuna*, arranged by the well known **LEO BROUWER (b. 1939)** who studied first with the Cuban guitar teacher Isaac Nicola, at the Julliard School of Music with Vincent Persichetti and at the Hart School of Music with Isador Freed and composition classes with Stefan Wolpe. Among his many compositions he has written solo guitar music, orchestral as well as chamber pieces, ballets, film scores and several arrangements of popular music such as *Lullaby* with AfroCuban rhythms and with Caribbean flavour too adapted from a popular song with a nice series of carefully resonant harmonics. It has been played by Ricardo Cobo, Pepe Romero, Carlos Barbosa-Lima, John Williams, Martha Montes, Sharon Isbin etc.

**HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS (1867-1959)** begun his musical career as a street musician in Río playing the cello taught by his father, and absorbing the popular rhythms performing them in an original and colourful way. With this background he went to Paris to have a formal musical education, and he stayed for nearly a decade being influenced by the impressionism movement, particularly Debussy, and Neoclassicism. It was the time when the guitar began its emancipation from the restrictions of conventional 19th century fingerboard configurations based on limited harmonic conventions. So it was expected that he would compose music not conforming to academic rules. Therefore, he wrote a completed system of musical instructions to allow creativity to flourish. In his mature phase Villa-Lobos wrote his *Five Preludes* of which Ostapenko is playing *Nº 1, Lyric Melody in E Minor*, using the 'open string pedal' to give a central tone which also provide a variety of them. *Nº 2, Capadocia Melody in E Major* employing contrasting arpeggios together with open string pedal tones capturing the melody of the choro for in its middle part suggests the sound of the berimbau a percussive instrument; and *Nº 3 Homage to Bach in A Minor*, where the composer included both the *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* and *Serenade* in the second half of this prelude to show his appreciation to the Master.

**ISAAC ALBENIZ (1860-1909)** was a child prodigy who begun given concerts as early as four years old and at eight left home and earned his living from concerts in Latin America and Europe. He was a travelling virtuoso and pupil of Liszt, and did not write for the guitar but for the piano. In 1885 he wrote *Suite Española Opus 47*, in three movements; *Granada*, (I am a Moor), *Sevilla* and *Cádiz* which were transcribed for guitar by Francisco Tárrega. But *Asturias* was included after Albéniz death and was written in an Spanish epic style, most eloquent including masterful fingering.

**ARNAUD DUMOND (b. 1952)** entered the École Normal de Musique de Paris and was taught by Maurice Ohana, LP. Guézec (musical theory) and Nadia Boulanger. His talent as a performer of the guitar and lute is recognised not only in France but in Japan (The Tokyo Yamaha Prize) and the Americas as well. Dumond is one of the most original musicians of his generation. He is also a prolific composer from the age of ten and currently is writing a Requiem Mass for chorus and instrumental ensemble and a concerto for guitar. *Comme un Hommage a Ravel* is a guitar piece full of melodic lines with rolling broken-chord accompaniment.

**MAXIMO DIEGO PUJOL (b. 1957)** guitarist and composer born in Argentina who was under the supervision of famous guitar Masters, among them, Horacio Ceballos, Abel Carlevaro, Liliana Ardissonne, Miguel Angel Girollet, and Eduardo Castanera, also harmony and composition with Leonidas Arnedo, Wolf Scheib and Antonio de Raco.. He is the winner of national and International prizes in competitions. He wrote *Tres Piezas Rioplatenses* (Three Pieces from the River Plate region): *Don Julián*, *Septiembre* and *Rojo y Negro*, using material from folk music of the River Plate region, inspired by three rhythms, the *tango*, *milonga* and the *candombe*. It was written in the style of a suite, with a common melodic element liaising the three pieces. Tonight we will hear *Don Julián*.

**JOAQUIN RODRIGO (1901-1999)** was born in Valencia, and become blind from the age of three caused by a spell of diphtheria. His family was determined that he was not going to miss on life and hired Rafael Ibañez as his secretary and copyist, he lent his eyes to Rodrigo.. They went to Paris in 1927 meeting Manuel de Falla, and studying with Paul Dukas for five years. He later married Victoria Kamhl, a pianist, in 1933 who dedicated herself to looking after her husband's career. They returned to Spain in 1939 when the Spanish Civil War ended. Their only child Cecilia was born in 1941 and the following year he was awarded the *National Prize of Music for Concierto Heroico*. *Sonata Giocosa* was composed in 1960 dedicated to Renata Tárrego, it has a Spanish flavour at the beginning of the piece with a strong strumming in its *Allegro moderato*. The second movement *Andante moderato* is most romantic with influence of baroque music and the final movement is *Allegro* in A major.

*Invocación y Danza Op 9*, was written in 1961 and premiered at the Mayo Musical de Burdeos, Château de la Brède in France by Alirio Díaz. It won first prize in a TV Franchise guitar competition. The composer found inspiration in the theme from the ballet *El Amor Brujo* by Manuel de Falla in where the leading ballerina danced at night with her dead lover's ghost whom she has conjured up. Therefore, *Invocación* is followed by a nightly *Danza* destined to fade away when morning rises. In spite of the fact that he did not play the guitar, he had an intimate understanding of the instrument. He gave a sense of universality to the Spanish guitar

**GIULIO REGONDI (1822-1872)** was an Italian composer, classical guitarist and concertinist, raised by a musical father who was a guitarist, composer and baritone, they performed in duo in Paris when Rigondi was a child. Father and son arrived in London in 1831 and achieved critical success. He had an extraordinary facility to play string instruments such as the guitar and concertina, he was a gifted prodigious musician who developed a consistent technique in later life. His father abandoned him in England and he grew up with the help of foster parents. He was earning his living as a performer at a very young age. He met Fernando Sor (1778-1839) who dedicated one of his works *Souvenir d'Amitié Op 46* when Rigondi was only nine years old. He also met other composers such as Carulli, Carcassi and Molino. He composed for the guitar a set of études and five larger works. In *Nocturne Reverie Op 19 for guitar*, the composer employed chordal passages moving on in arpeggio forms followed by long tremolo parts. This is a very musical piece with an expressive and highly emotional style using a powerful sound.