

BRIEF NOTES

Manuel Ponce (1882-1948) Mexican composer and one of the first to examine Mexican folklore which had a great influence in his work. He studied music in Mexico City, Bologna and Berlin; and continued studying in Paris with Dukas. After this period he wrote a number of pieces for guitar and piano as well as concertos for guitar. *Sonatina Meridional* was edited by Andrés Segovia, Mainz: Schott, 1939. It was written in Paris, commissioned by the insigne Segovia and was his last guitar solo, four months before his death. There is a predominance of Spanish folk elements in this piece which are present in its three movements: *Campo* (countryside), *Copla* (popular Spanish song) and *Fiesta* (festivity). The first one, marked *Allegretto* in D major is in sonata form with elements of Andalusian flamenco with a series of passing modulations. The *Copla*, *Andante* in D minor, has a melismatic melodic line with irregular phrase structure and evokes the *cante hondo* of Andalusia. The feeling of improvisational mood continues in the *Fiesta* which is marked as *Allegro con brio*, however the flamenco style is replaced by a free fantasy using the technique of the flamenco guitar.

Sylvius Leopold Weiss (1686-1750) learned to play the lute with his father Johann Jakob, who taught his three children Sylvius, Johann and Juliana to play the instrument, but it was Sylvius who became one of the greatest lute players of all time. His first appointment was to Count Karl Philipp of Palatinat-Neuburg and from 1714 to 1718 was employed at the Court of Dresden as a chamber musician. He accompanied the Crown Prince of Saxony, who was King of Poland, to Vienna to choose his bride among the young daughters of the Emperor because the lute was the instrument for *galanterie*. As a composer he contributed a great deal to the lute repertoire of which 650 works of his are accountable. It was a time where he was in serious competition with Bach (harpsichord) in Dresden and he did his best by playing fantasies and fugues on his lute. *Ciaccona* was arranged for guitar by Carlo Carfagna and is a tribute to nature. The modulations in this piece are well chosen. Weiss died in October 1750 and was buried in the cemetery of the Catholic Court Church and left seven children, only Johann Adolf followed his father to become a lute player.

Antonio José (1902-1936) was born in Burgos and when entering his artistic career dropped his surname **Martínez Palacios**. As a young man he won a grant to further his studies in Madrid with Conrado del Campo and Emilio Vega and later in Paris. He began writing music when he was almost twenty years old. *Sonata Castellana* for piano was composed in 1922 and a year later he orchestrated it, and *Sinfonia Castellana* was born, one of his most ambitious works of his youth. There is a constant influence of Burgos folk treated with compositional technique. In the first movement *Allegro moderato* we find the influence of the song *Penosita del Alma* (Pain of the Soul) which uses a scale of full tones giving the movement a special chromatic effect on its melody and harmonic discourse. The second theme *Minuetto* uses a counterpoint technique to anticipate elements of *burgalese dance* that are fully developed in the fourth movement. *Pavana Triste* concentrate in the chords, notorious are the evocation of the glissando played on the harp. The *Final, Allegro con Brio* is based again on two popular songs, *Esto si que va gueno* and *Echate niño* and is played in the chords. In 1936 a group of *Falangistas* took him and his brother Julio to the Jail of Central Burgos and two months later he was executed in the Estepar Mountain of Burgos. He previously wrote to some friends... "This is the way Castilla pays me after all I have done for her".

Vicente Emilio Sojo (1887-1974) was a notorious Venezuelan musicologist, teacher, composer and conductor. Music was in his family for both of his grandfathers performed as Chapel Masters. Sojo was taught by Régulo Ríos in 1896 and ten years later entered the School of Music and Declamation in Caracas without giving up his Humanistic studies; during this time he began writing music. The *Orfeón Lamas Choir* was founded in 1928 and Sojo wrote his first polyphonic opus to be sung by them and composed more than three hundred popular songs rooted in the Venezuelan folk; two years later, whilst being its conductor he founded the Venezuelan Symphonic Orchestra. He was also involved in politics and was elected MP for the Miranda State. Sojo's *Five Venezuelan Pieces: Aguinaldo, Canción, Aire Venezolano Cántico, and Galerón* were transcribed for classical guitar by Alfrío Díaz and are in notation standard only.

Javier Farías (b. 1973) Chilean composer told us that... "*Elegía a Nino García* was conceived as an invitation, a call to stimulate deep reflection to awake different emotions such as affliction, anguish and solitude.... The intention was to understand why life had forgotten a great artist, the Chilean creativity of a genius named Nino García. He was one who resisted and struggled against the neglect and indifference of an ungrateful musical circle, I did not have the opportunity of personally meeting Nino but I made up my mind to write a piece to pay homage not only to him but to all forgotten artists who feel desolated, ignored and misunderstood. The character of the piece is also sad, dramatic and with an anguished tone – sometimes violent – is essentially passionate, moving and delicate for I want to represent how upsetting is the feeling of loneliness in the human being. *Elegía* is dedicated to the outstanding Chilean guitarist Romilio Orellana, brother-in-law of Nino and who has taken the noble task of making known his music towards new frontiers.

Juan Antonio Sánchez (b. 1965) was exposed to folk music since the age of eight. He lived in Argentina, Mexico and Mozambique for six years playing guitar, quena and traverse flute in several folk groups. He studied music for five years at the University of Chile, guitar with Maestro Oscar Ohlsen, traverse flute with Alberto Harma, composition in *Taller 33* and later with Leo Maslian in the Musical Camping of Bariloche, Argentina. He is widely known in Latin America and has several CDs, among them: *La Noche Mágica, Que el canto tiene sentido, Entramos, Cenizas en el mar, Local 47, Centro* etc. One of his most played pieces is *Tonada por despedida* which is included in the repertoire of a great number of young guitarists nowadays. *Cueca Yuxtapuesta* is extroverted, in metrica six/eight with strumming effects typical of Latin American folklore.

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992) was a rebellious boy who grew up in the neighbourhoods of Greenwich Village, New York and Rivadavia 2568 in Mar del Plata, Argentina. As a youngster, he played in the Orchestra of Aníbal Triolo and by 1950 had begun writing music but he could not find many orchestras willing to play his music. Later on, he met Osvaldo Fresedo who agreed to play *Para lucirce*, tango instrumental. He settled in new York and from there travelled to Paris. From the '60s to '75 he wrote the most creative tangos. One of his favourites was *Adios Nonino* written after his father's death; he travelled to New York and hid himself in the living room asking to be left alone to write music, and instead of using his piano, played the bandoneon, and in between heartbreaking sobbings, wrote the piece in two hours. Inspired by the four annual seasons of the year he wrote, in 1984, *Las Cuatro Estaciones Porteñas* (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires) of which Romilio Orellana is playing *Invierno Porteño* and *Primavera Porteña* (Winter and Spring Seasons). The two movements are strictly musical pieces which stand out by their form and moderate structure evoking seasons in their tunes and motives moving from the nostalgic *Winter* bordered by moments into something pyrotechnic into the effervescence of the *Spring*. It is the contrast in between movements that gives a special character to the Four Seasons.