

CLASSICAL GUITAR

MARCH 1994

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NEWS • REVIEWS • FEATURES

CLASSICAL GUITAR
GUITAR IN
IBEROAMERICA
BY RICO STOVER



CLASSICAL GUITAR

MARCH 1994

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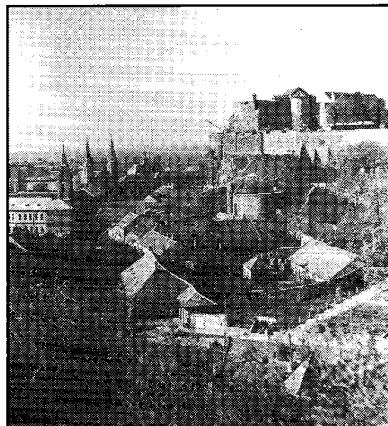
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ALIRIO DIAZ AND THE SEGOVIA CONNECTION

By COLIN COOPER

MORE than one guitarist proudly boasts the title 'heir to Segovia'. One or two, with an equal right to it, take care to avoid so limiting an appellation. Leaving aside the suitability of such a doubtful title as the 20th century draws to a close, it must be clear that the man most entitled to it, the man whose long association with Segovia, as a student and later as a teaching colleague, must be the Venezuelan guitarist Alirio Díaz, who celebrated his 70th birthday on 12 November 1993 (he was born at La Candelaria, 20 miles from Carora, in 1923). But Díaz was no solemn disciple, and quickly established his own supercharged style as a viable alternative in a world where lesser guitarists took pains to copy every Segovian *tenuto*, every change of tone colour, every nuance that could be copied, in a vain attempt to capture the magic and preserve it for all posterity. Diaz made his own magic, and any who heard him in his prime or who has listened to the recordings he made in the 1950s and 1960s will know just how potent that magic was. His has been a wide-ranging art, extending over the music of Lauro, Barrios, Sojo, Borges, Bach, Scarlatti, Barrios, Villa-Lobos, Frescobaldi, Rameau, Couperin and many others, and much of it is preserved on the 25 recordings he has made (many of them were issued in Venezuela and may not be available in Europe). The association with Segovia was of course of paramount importance in his career, but in 1958, in Paris, he met Villa Lobos, and that experience too made a profound impression.

"Guitarists who could not grasp the rhythms were rejected"

Alirio Díaz spent 30 years in Italy. His wife is Italian. He now lives in Venezuela, but Italy forms a pivotal part in his career, and you know that it will always have a strong place in his affections. His presence at the 1993 Classical Guitar Festival of Great Britain at West Dean provided a good opportunity to get to know more about him, his methods and his teaching. The following is an account, mostly in his own words, of a remarkable beginning followed by an even more remarkable career. It took the form of an address made before his first masterclass.

My life has been quite a long one — I am 70 years old now. In spite of my long life — though it is not as long as Segovia's — I was very old when



Alirio Diaz

I began to study the guitar with method. I was 22 years old. Until then I played the guitar only for popular music.

Since I was a child I had played the Venezuelan cuatro, a small guitar with four strings, a characteristic and very interesting and popular instrument. In spite of only having four strings, you can do many things with that small instrument, especially in the area of popular music, traditional folk music. For me it was going to school; it was my kindergarten. The cuatro is like the guitar in the 17th century: it was strummed only. But it was very rich, because of the harmonies. You can produce chords, and chords mean harmony. At the same time the cuatro is taught in 42 keys, all the keys in our system. But all by ear. I have sung a song in E flat minor, another in F sharp: there was no problem in practising the piece. It was a wonderful school.

When I had the guitar I was almost twelve years old. It was a very interesting period, full of music: guitar, cuatro, violins, dances, serenades, maracas, percussion. It was a very important time in my life.

We did not practise only chords on the cuatro,

but also the rhythms. That was very important, because the rhythm is essential, especially for Venezuelan or Latin American music, which is so rich in syncopation. Guitarists who could not grasp the rhythms were rejected.

I also sang as a child, very much. My family were very demanding: they were critical of those who did not have a good rhythm when they accompanied. When they heard a dance without rhythm, they said 'No, we didn't dance that when we were children.' The family were always dancing as children! I was told that I had a good sense of rhythm. I was 16 years old when I received that first positive compliment of my life.

When I was nine 9 years old, Barrios came to play at Carora. The whole village turned out to hear him, farmers and all. I heard my first guitar record when I was twelve. It was by a Spanish guitarist called Gomez, a marvellous player who played a *guajira* and a transcription of a mazurka by Wieniawski. It made me see the possibilities of the guitar as a polyphonic instrument — which, as a matter of fact, is part of the Venezuelan guitar tradition.

**"The ambience surrounding
a great teacher who
recognises your talent
imparts more self-
confidence"**

I was a farmer. I ran away from my parents' home one day, at three o'clock in the morning, with my guitar, when I heard the cock crow. He was very kind because he woke me at three o'clock in the morning. I was ready, and went out of the house. A guitarist would have been lost if I hadn't escaped! I would like to erect a monument to that cock.

I did not go because I wanted to learn music. I did not have aspirations or pretensions, I could not see into the future — nothing! I only wanted to go to school and get a diploma. I wanted to study at a university and then become a doctor.

Then someone in Carora discovered what I could do with the guitar. A lot of people could play simple melodies and accompany themselves, but I was told that I had the ability to become a musician, and that I should study the guitar.

I heard some recordings that Segovia had made, but I didn't understand: in my ear I could hear only the sound of popular music. Then this man, who was a writer, said: 'You must go to study the guitar.' So, at 16 years old, I moved to Caracas, where I worked so hard (for the State printing company) that I might just as well have studied something else. Because I had no money. But at the same time I was very much encouraged by this person from Carora. So I have

a monument in my memory for him too. One night, thanks to him, I heard Segovia on the BBC from London. He was playing Bach.

In Caracas I studied the guitar with a great teacher, Raul Borges, who had been a pupil of Barrios, taught at the Music School. I studied with him from 1945 to 1950. The ambience surrounding a great teacher who recognises your talent imparts more self-confidence. All my technique today comes from that Venezuelan master. Also the history of music, composition, everything else. At that time Caracas was at the top of the tree for teaching.

After five years I was the best guitarist in Venezuela. But at that moment, of course, beside the teachers there were the other students: Lauro, for instance, and Rodrigo Riera. Lauro was a great guitarist. He did not have the temperament to build a career as a performer, but he really had the qualities of a great guitarist. I was lucky in that area too.

It was difficult to get music in those days, because it was at the end of the Second World War. But many people had music editions, and I still have a copy of Bach's *Chaconne* and Ponce's *La Folia*. And strings: I play with nylon strings, though at first I used metal strings. I didn't know about gut strings. After that period of transition from metal to gut, the quality of nylon strings was discovered.

I heard Segovia for the first time — he played in Caracas about 1945, I think, and gave of course a great concert. For the first time I could really appreciate that beautiful tone. In 1948 Segovia returned to Venezuela, and I, Lauro and Rodrigo Riera played for him. We met at the house of a well-known painter. Segovia was very professional, indicating some fingerings and telling me above all to respect his fingerings — he did not permit any changes!

Segovia was already planning to teach in Siena; that was very important for us, because Segovia represented the very highest point of reference.

Segovia was the maximum: a very bright musical talent. A maestro *par excellence*.

One of my first teachers when I was living at Trujillo, near Carora, was a conductor of military bands, and he taught me the first elements of theory. He knew nothing about the guitar, but he was a good teacher of theory, solfeggio, harmony, and the saxophone. I can teach you the saxophone and the B flat clarinet! It was a very good school, a good experience, because in that band there was also another group who played other music, things that were important for the development of musical learning. I worked for five years as a saxophonist. Maybe you would like to hear me one day? It is an instrument I love very much. For five years it was my most important possession. (*There is a photograph extant of Alirio Diaz in a group of three saxophonists in this band in 1947.*)

Well, the Venezuelan Government decided, after

consulting many people, that this boy really deserved to be helped. They believed that Segovia taught in Europe (though he had never taught in his life — the first time was in Siena). Because Segovia was the great name.

The Venezuelan Government gave me a scholarship. From that moment my happiness began. No more hunger!

Regino Sainz de la Maza came to Caracas in 1950. The possibility of studying with him in Madrid Conservatory opened up. I studied with him from 1950 to 1953. A great composer — but as a guitarist, disastrous! Forgive me! But he was the only teacher in Europe at that time. So I studied with him and tried to please him. I learned from him, especially composition and how to harmonise — for instance, the melody of a Castilian song. He was very inspiring in the elements of Spain. With him I learned above all the interpretation, form and colour of Spanish music.

The works Maza left represent an artistic richness for the guitar, and I have included them many times in my concerts.

"I worked for five years as a saxophonist. Maybe you would like to hear me one day?"

At that time he was a kind of rival of Segovia. When I went to study in Siena with Segovia in 1950, he asked me 'Who is your teacher in Spain? Regino Sainz de la Maza? Oh! Mr Regino! OK, my dear!' Then I understood, when I came back to Madrid after spending so much time with Segovia. It was a little bit of a difficult moment, because Regino did not have a good relationship with Segovia. He asked me, 'What are you doing with Segovia? You are studying *here*. Show me what you are studying with him! Show me!'

But the only possibility of keeping my scholarship was to go to Siena. The document said that I was studying with Segovia, and I needed to go there. Anyway, Regino Sainz de la Maza was very kind to me, recommending me for records, recitals, concertos and so on. He was very nice in that respect, an academic with a *grande culture*.

After being with Segovia in Siena, I was much happier regarding technique and the repertoire. At that time the guitar in Europe was not in a very good state. Segovia was always in the United States or in South America, first because of the Civil War in Spain, and then because of the other war, so for ten or 15 years he was outside Spain, outside Europe. So the first time he taught was in Siena, at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana. Imagine my surprise when I met some friends of mind in Spain, a viola player and a

cello player, who said 'Look, Alirio, now Segovia is teaching in Siena, you must go.' They gave me the brochure. The condition was studying the guitar music in the Academy, scales and all that entails, Giuliani, Carcassi, Sor, the shortest and simplest things for a first-year student of the guitar. Alongside the masters who were teaching Beethoven, Scarlatti etcetera, Maestro Segovia could only teach these simple things. But it was justified, because guitar students at that time were very much behind in music technically. The guitar was absolutely 'in the ground'.

I was very lucky, because I was able to study with him things that I had studied in Venezuela, and because Segovia recognised the quality of my playing — I was the best! Nobody could play the Chaconne by Bach. Nobody! And do you know how many students there were then? In this so important course by Segovia? Five! Five students! Alexandre Lagoya was one, the only one who is known today.

It is important to remember that this was the first time in his life that Segovia had taught. He said that he himself was both teacher and pupil, because he had not had any orderly progress in his own learning. He did not have an academic background. He had been kept busy building his own career. When he arrived in Siena for the first time, in 1950, he did not have enough experience in speaking to a class. But he never talked about that; he never talked about *how* he taught. At that time he paid attention mainly to expression. At the same time he paid a lot of attention to the quality of the sound. I believed he spent a lot of time seeking to improve the quality of his sound. It enabled him to reach a quality of sonority in his own playing that was inimitable. It was the result of that research, that reaching for a great quality of sound. Maybe his sound was not always brilliant; sometimes it was soft and delicate — but always with contrast, of course. And he taught us how to play with a better sound, how to stroke the strings. Each day he taught us, but only through the works: in which part of the work lay the greatest expression, which part needed a different sound.

Segovia discovered that the guitar is essentially an impressionistic instrument, maybe through his experience of the music of Debussy, Ravel, Falla. They considered the instrument to be of the neo-romantic movement, an instrument of the night. Many other composers have considered the guitar to be 'un instrumento de la noche'. But he didn't much like the new expression in music - atonal music, *musique concrète*, aleatoric music, all this modern expression.

Essentially, what we learned from him in Italy was the large range of colour which could be obtained from the strings. He always played with colour in mind, and it was delightful. And he was very generous in showing everyone how he did it, showing everything, how he played the Bach Chaconne, modern composers like Castelnuovo-

Tedesco and Ponce. Everything was demonstrated, with great generosity. It was the best lesson we could have had. We only observed, you know, but it was very positive.

It was in the mentality of his generation. I also took part in the courses of Pablo Casals, also in Siena, and it was the same: he was always very generous, always playing. For hours! Hours, hours, hours.... With no fatigue, never getting tired. It was a very beautiful period in the Accademia Chigiana of Siena at that time, because we had the opportunity of hearing such 'sacred monsters' as Pablo Casals (*great Spanish cellist, 1876-1973*). Jacques Thibaud (1880-1953), who was a great violinist, taught in Siena: I remember how he taught the Debussy Sonata, which was dedicated to him. Alfred Cortot (*famous French pianist, 1877-1962*) taught there. Another 'sacred monster' was Georges Enesco (*leading Romanian violinist and composer, 1881-1955*). He also taught in that way. They always showed you — how to conduct, how to play. They demonstrated. Not too much expression or analysis. No academic analysis! They were all very much like Segovia in this respect.

Technically, Segovia paid much attention to colour on the guitar. Pizzicato, the imitation of the harpsichord, imitation of old instruments like the lute or the chitarrone or something like that. But especially expression: romantic expression, sentimental, *amoroso*.

He did not tell us to practise as much as he practised. No, he knew the level of the students. Some of them needed scales, others needed to know how to prepare chamber music or a concerto with an orchestra, or to learn about musical form. Of course he advised us about famous works, how to reach the most important moments in a work, the very special moments.

Regarding technique, he was against Tárrega's theory of playing without fingernails. Some students came from the Tárrega school, you know, using this technique. But the guitar needs the strength given by fingernails. Segovia explained the use of the fingernails, how to avoid an awful sound, how to apply the nails and which position on the guitar. Of course today it sounds very simple; everybody knows it, but at that time nobody knew how to do a crescendo or a decrescendo. I believe those were among the most important points.

Also, Segovia prepared the better students for concerts, how to prepare the programme, how to introduce it, the order of the works, how to coordinate and plan a programme. For example, starting with the primitive, baroque or renaissance. It sounds very simple today, but today you can dedicate a whole concert to one composer. That was impossible at that time. Only one guitarist did that, and that was Agustín Barrios Mangoré. He played a lot of his music, yes. And Bach. But Segovia was able to do that only with the music of Ponce and

Castelnuovo-Tedesco.

He was of course against the popular guitar played in a vulgar way, anything like that. He accepted great flamenco, because he began to play the guitar in the great flamenco period, and he'd seen it. But all those guitarists playing in bad taste, especially the ones who came from Spain...!

"Segovia discovered that the guitar is essentially an impressionistic instrument"

Because he wanted the guitar to be universal, he was always looking for music that was not particularly Spanish. Concierto de Aranjuez? No, too Spanish! At that moment he was looking for something different, something more universal. Today we can laugh, but he was absolutely right. He was looking at what would happen to the guitar later. He wanted to see the guitar taught in the conservatories, he wanted to improve the condition of the guitar all over the world. Maybe he didn't like the masterclasses very much, because when he established his classes in Siena there were very few guitarists. He was busy with many other things. But he was able to understand what was going on in the world of the guitar, and he was happy to give lessons to young guitarists, with his beautiful technique and his good repertoire — and his good instrument, not an easy thing to find at that time.

He had a special affection for England. He was Spanish, but he appreciated the orderliness, the discipline and some other things he wasn't happy about in Latin countries!

You ask what I think of the standard of playing in England. My response is positive. In England, of course, maybe more than in other countries, you had very fine guitarists in the time of Segovia, and the consequence is that you have them today. Segovia longed for these consequences, you know. The best thing for the guitar is to have good professional teaching.

Another question you ask is : do British guitarists lack some of the essential sense of rhythm that would make their playing of South American music less strict, less 'four-square'? But it's sometimes difficult to play Hungarian or Romanian music — so many complexities! But the substantial things we can do well, because when you play, for instance, the Romanian Dances by Béla Bartók, it's right already - because it's been *pasado por un filtro*, passed through a filter: the piano, the voice. So my response is that all people have their own characteristics, and the British are no different. ♪

Selected discography:

Alirio Diaz Guitar Recital No.1 (*Frescobaldi, Bach, Villa-Lobos, Barrios, Gomez Crespo, Borges, Llobet*) BAM LD 032 (France).

Alirio Diaz Guitar Recital No.2 (*De Visée, Bach, Purcell, Milán, Sor, Galilei, Torroba, Guerau, Barrios*) BAM LD 053 (France).

Panorama of the Classical Guitar (*Tárrega, Sor, Giuliani, Lauro, Bach*) Teppaz Lyon 25-759 (France).

400 Years of the Classical Guitar (*Tárrega, Lauro, Sojo, Albéniz, Haydn, Scarlatti, Bach*) Everest 3155.

Guitar Music of Spain and Latin America (*Sanz, Sor, R. Sainz de la Maza, Mompou, Lauro, Ponce, Barrios etc.*) EMI/HMV HQS 1175.

Diaz Plays Bach EMI/HMV HQS 1145.

Diaz Plays Tedesco Quintet/Ponce Sonata EMI/HMV HQS 1250.

Alirio Diaz: Concertos by Rodrigo & Giuliani. EMI ASD 2363.

Virtuoso Guitar Vanguard HM 32SD.

Four Centuries of Music for the Classical Guitar (*Mudarra, Narváez, Sanz, Tárrega, Granados, Albéniz, Rodrigo, R. Sainz de la Maza etc.*) Vanguard VSD 71135.

Masterpieces of the Spanish Guitar (*Albéniz, Granados, Falla, Malats, Segovia, Turina, Torroba, E. Sainz de la Maza*) Vanguard VRS 1084.

The Classical Spanish Guitar (2 LPs) Vanguard VPD 20002.

Boccherini Quintets (La Ritirata di Madrid) Vanguard VSD 71147.

The Virtuoso Guitar (concertos by *Tedesco, Vivaldi, Kohaut*) Vanguard VDS 71152.

Masters of the Guitar Vol.2. RCA RB 6599.

Anthology of the Guitar (*Rodrigo, E. Sainz de la Maza*) RCA Victor 76-520.

All the pieces on Vanguard VRS 1084 and Vanguard VSD 71136, together with the Vivaldi and Tedesco concertos from Vanguard VSD 71152, have been re-issued on a double CD, Vanguard 08 9003 72.

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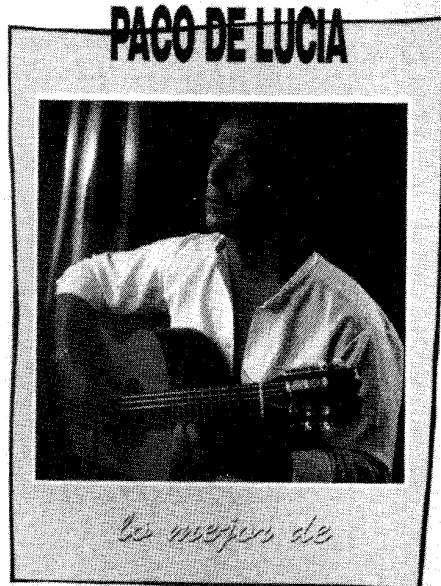
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PERFORMING PAINS

by THERESE WASSILY SABA

MANY of our readers may have heard a lot about, if not experienced, injuries from playing an instrument. Few, however, may have heard about the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM). I was introduced to the clinic by Mrs Jane Kember, a Chartered Physiotherapist, a member of the BAPAM Trust and part-time oboist.

The monthly clinic at the Royal Free Hospital was set up by Dr Ian James, the Chairman of the BAPAM Trust, Dr C. Wynn-Parry and the Senior Registrar in Rheumatology. BAPAM hopes to set up many more clinics like that at the Royal Free, all over the country.

The initial aim of the clinic is to analyse the problems confronting a musician or performer and then refer them for treatment to a broad range of practitioners such as technique specialists, physiotherapists, psychotherapists and dentists.

Dr C. Wynn-Parry, the rheumatologist who runs the Royal Free Clinic in conjunction with Dr Ian James, also attends a clinic at the London College of Music.

Performers often lead a very competitive and lonely life with agents pushing hard. There is little financial security for them, and to have to stop work, even for a short time, can cause severe hardship.

The physiotherapist, Jane Kember has a special interest in musicians' disorders, and attends the Performing Arts Medicine Clinic at the Royal Free. She commented that 'Specialist knowledge is required because it is very different from treating sports injuries or general musculoskeletal conditions. One has to be aware of playing positions and the types of conditions which may occur and the lifestyle of the artist. The treatment is needed immediately rather than in three weeks.'

'In the National Health Service, unfortunately, the physiotherapy departments are overloaded. Unless you are an acute emergency, you are put on a waiting list. To a freelance performing artist a waiting list is no solution. There has been a big surge in sports physiotherapy and we need to supply a similar service for performing artists.'

'A musician's problems may show up in small ways, from simply having a disobedient fourth finger to more large-scale symptoms. The disorders need careful assessment as there may be complex pathology involved. BAPAM is concerned that performers realise that there are solutions to these conditions.'

The reasons for developing pain through playing an instrument are as different and as individual as we all are. They include bad sitting positions, pushing ourselves beyond our limits,

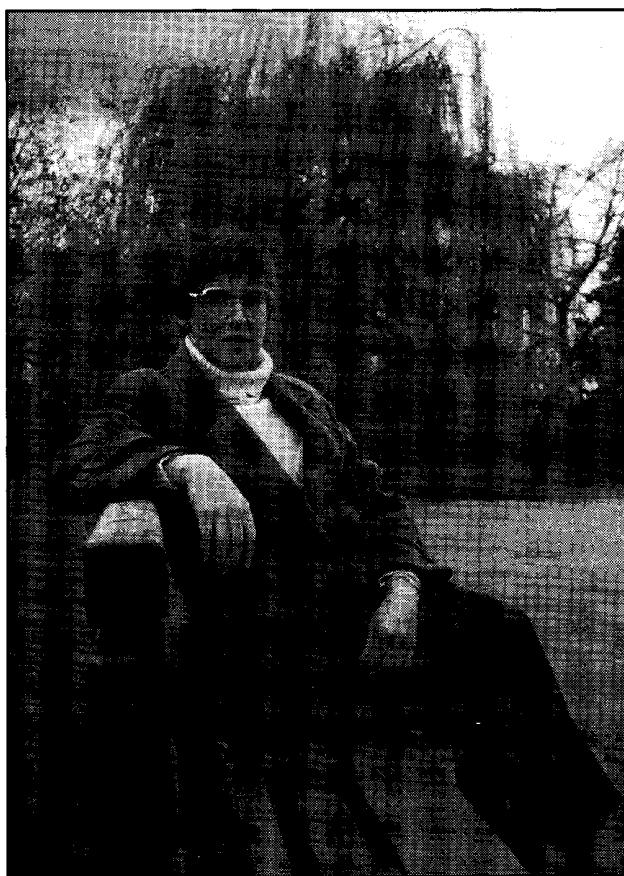


PHOTO: THERESE WASSILY SABA

Jane Kember

playing instruments that are not the right size, or having a body size that does not sit easily with the instrument of our choice. Then there are the strains of the career itself. Travelling, overly long recording sessions, crowded orchestra pits, the pressure of playing repertoire that either we do not enjoy or that we do enjoy but is constantly pushing us to the edge of our technique, agents pushing, not even having an agent and having to push oneself. When one begins to make the list it is almost frightening.

If one has difficult music to play, tension increases incredibly and therefore one's faults are compounded.

BAPAM aims to get a vast range of specialists, including orthopaedic surgeons, dentists, physiotherapists, psychologists, Feldenkrais and Alexander Technique specialists and art therapists, listed into directories for all parts of the country so that a performing artist who has an emergency during a tour can quickly get access to help.

Illnesses related to the performer's trade are not a new phenomenon. Evidently Schumann suffered from problems with his right hand; Rachmaninov had Marfan's Syndrome, and Toscanini had recurrent bursitis of his shoulder after he had been attacked. Of course the

development of Alexander Technique was the result of the actor Matthias Alexander's recurring loss of voice which finally destroyed his stage career.

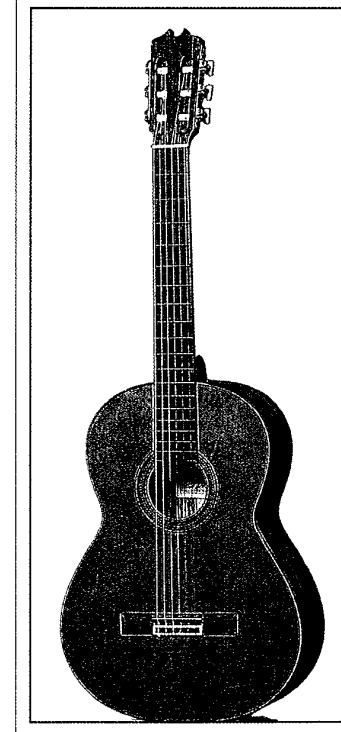
One of the difficulties of treating performers with injuries is having the performer actually admit that they are having problems and then seeking help. Dr Ian James said: 'Performers are mostly freelance, therefore it creates even more anxiety if they are not earning. The Musicians Benevolent Fund, the Musicians Union and Equity are very supportive in that area.'

'People have heard a lot about Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) and tenosynovitis, and they are terrified of being diagnosed because the outlook has always seemed bleak. They have heard all the bad tales and they have not heard the good ones. A lot of them have common complaints which can be dealt with, but there are the odd pain patterns: they should not be dismissed, because many of them may be caused by adverse neural tension.'

The Performing Arts Medicine Clinic at the Royal Free Hospital takes place on every second Wednesday of the month. Referral to the Clinic requires a letter from a GP. For further details contact the Royal Free Hospital on (071) 794 0050 or Jane Kember on (081) 889 4505.

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by
Andrew Liepins

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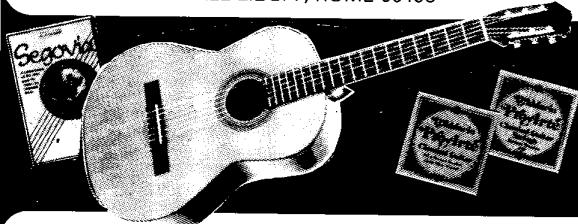
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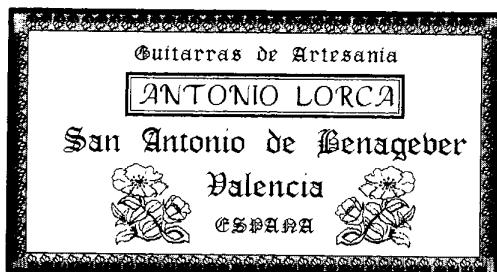
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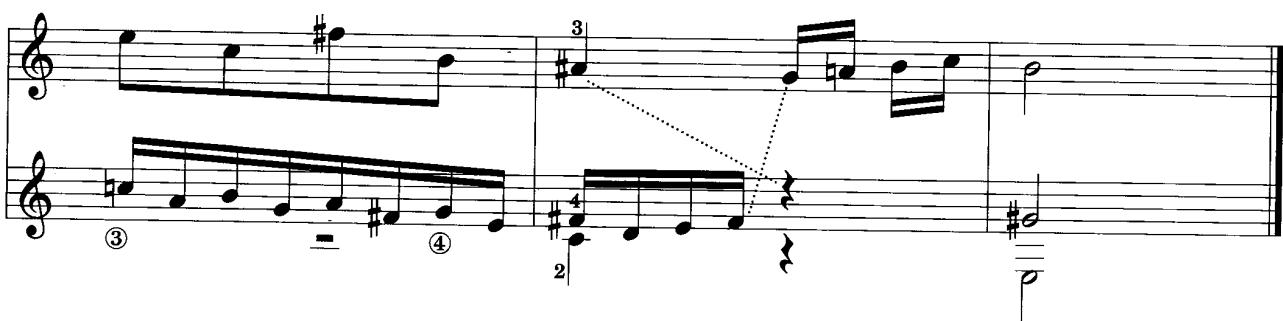


$\frac{1}{2}$ CII

Musical score page 2. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The bottom staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The music consists of two staves with various notes and rests. A circled '3' is placed below the first measure of the top staff.

Musical score page 3. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The bottom staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The music consists of two staves with various notes and rests. Measure 1 starts with a 'v' above the staff. Measures 2 and 3 start with a '4' above the staff. Measures 4 and 5 start with a '8' above the staff.

Musical score page 4. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The bottom staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The music consists of two staves with various notes and rests. Measures 1 and 2 have a 'v' above them. Measures 3 and 4 have a 'V' above them.



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ARNE BRATTLAND

Profiled by Colin Cooper

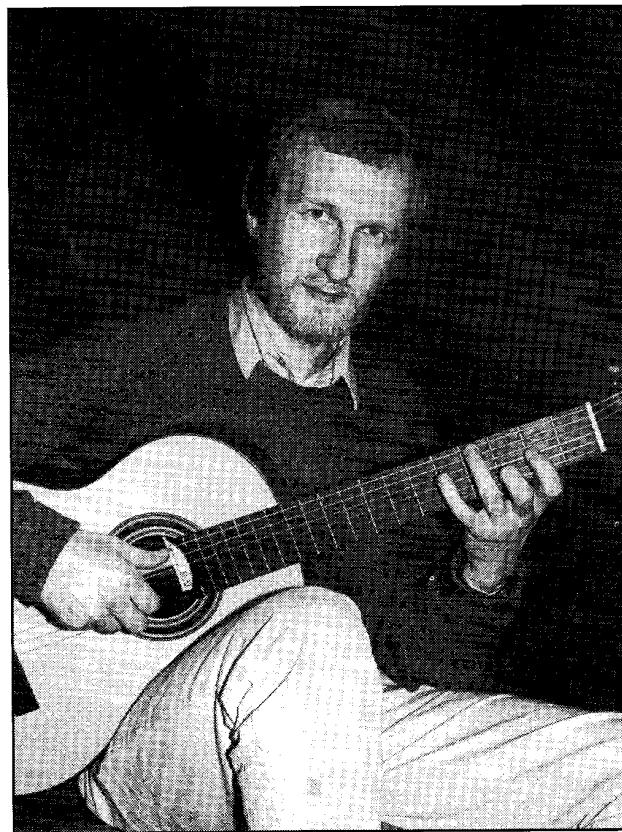
NORWAY is not the largest country in Europe, but it always seems to have more than its fair share of good guitarists. Arne Brattland came to my notice when he came to England to study with John Duarte, Nigel North and Gilbert Biberman, a well-assorted trio of teachers that might almost be guaranteed to imbue him with an exceptionally wide range of musical skills.

Whoever imbued him with what, a recital in a Hampstead church opened my eyes to a player of high musicality; not a tearaway virtuoso but a sensitive, lyrical player blessed with clarity of mind and a poetic streak that enables him to project music with a telling power.

He was born in Norway in 1955. A small place, just north of the Arctic circle; a sparse, basic sort of place with dark winters (but light summers) and the loneliness of sea and sky. His parents played a little — 'guitar and mandolin, things like that. It was on an amateur level; there were no professional musicians around in that area. In fact, there was no opportunity for tuition. Things have changed enormously over the last generation.' Arne, in fact, had his first proper guitar lesson at the age of 20, when he was accepted at the Royal Academy. But he started to play about the age of five, playing chords and singing. 'It's funny to say what is a cliché yet again, but I heard Segovia, whose records were played a lot on the radio. I liked this music very much, though I couldn't do it. We had a steel-stringed guitar at home, and I couldn't figure out then how he made the sounds. Later on I met an old person who had a guitar and could play pieces. You find them here and there. Where I live now, in a town called Mo, south of the Arctic Circle, I met the old town baker, now retired. He told me that he'd heard a guitar piece in his youth, and he borrowed my guitar, retuned it and started strumming, and there was a piece coming out there. I recognised it from the magazine — it was a Spanish fandango he was playing. And that was on a remote island there, in this man's youth. So people have been travelling and have picked up things. There is the odd fellow who can play one or two pieces, but there's very little classical inspiration in those areas. I had to make up for that later.'

'My relationship to the instrument became a very personal one. There's always been a way in which I could express myself. I like to sit on my own very often with the instrument. And when I heard a piece, I often tried to play it back by ear, from memory. At first I couldn't read music, so I had to teach myself. I got some books and records, and eventually I understood more, of course.'

'Up to a point I can both sight-read and play



Arne Brattland

PHOTO: COLIN COOPER

from memory. At least, that was the starting point: the guitar is something you pick up. But that's also the general attitude in countries like Norway, where you have to struggle a little bit in order to survive. It's cold, and you have to get your fish and sheep and everything you need to survive. When these important things were done, then you could enjoy taking out the guitar. It took me a while to get a professional attitude, where I could say to myself "What I'm doing is worthwhile".

***"People sometimes say:
What pieces are you playing
at the moment?, but I don't
find that very interesting.
It's much more interesting
to ask: What ideas are you
occupied with at the
moment?"***

Arne's way of learning was to some extent unconventional, but it worked for him. It is not something that he would recommend, now, to a

small child who was on the point of taking up the instrument. There needs to be some guidance. Things happen much quicker. On the other hand, when you have your own growth you're not perhaps so much under somebody else's pressure. I think the most efficient way is probably to have an intelligent teacher who will look for your qualities and try to bring them out. I suppose it could happen at any age.

'Now things have changed very much. I belong to the generation where you find qualified guitar or music teachers around. In the town where I live now, where I have lived for more than two years, there is a music school where about seven or eight teachers are employed full time, and a few part time. Part of the job lies in teaching the pupils; the other part consists of performing in chamber groups or as a singer or other performer. It's quite an amazing job. One of the problems could be that it tends to tie you to an area. Since I've been doing that, I haven't toured or played much outside Norway. So I'm taking a little break now, and coming to stay for a year in England.'

**"We need to be different.
And you know it will be different if you try to find your own way. The risk is that you are going to be too different, so that no one will listen to you"**

Arne Brattland has been arranging guitar music for some years — Edvard Grieg's music, for instance, is one of his conspicuous successes. The National Institute of Concerts in Norway offered him a tour in February 1993, with the aim of playing Grieg in celebration of his 150th anniversary — Grieg was born in 1843. Through them Arne was able to commission a new piece from John Duarte, *Arctic Suite*, which he performed during the Wirral Guitar Festival in the autumn of 1992. He says: 'I was thinking, what can I play to complement Grieg's music? So because I was getting involved in local folk music from my home area, I thought perhaps it would be possible to have a suite based on songs and themes from those areas. So I went through piles of music and selected quite a number to send to Jack. *Arctic Suite* is based on tunes from those areas, and it's more correct than calling it "Norwegian Suite". I'm very pleased with it.'

Arne's present job in Norway entails his assistance in whatever local activities might come along, including annual meetings and conferences in addition to concerts. 'I have a certain number of hours set aside for that, for which I am paid as part of my job. In a way it is brilliant.

In the last couple of years I've found myself accompanying choirs, improvising on stage — things like that. I haven't had much confidence in that sort of thing before, but I've learnt it. I've been fortunate to be involved with many types of programmes, based on certain poets, for instance, certain composers, other themes.'

Part of Arne's job is to give school concerts, with two other musicians, for all the schoolchildren in the region —'Quite a number of schools,' he said. 'We get them together and give 20 or 30 short concerts. Sometimes we have set themes to work from, but we can also select our own. We had our own environmental concert last year, in co-operation with local companies, factories, hydro-electric power stations and things like that, where we brought the students out of the schools and into these places, to see what was going on there and to have a concert there and perhaps to learn something about a factory's environmental policy.

'In that job you tend to think more "What is the theme, what is the idea?" And then put some music to it. So the most difficult thing is to get the ideas; the music is a detail.

'People sometimes say, "What pieces are you playing at the moment?", but I don't find that very interesting. It's much more interesting to ask "What ideas are you occupied with at the moment? What is your inner state of mind? What do you like to express at the moment?" One example: I've been quite involved in searching around my roots. It's been taking quite a lot of time for me. Before I took this job, I lived in England, so I was far away. It's important to go back now and to be there. I live fairly close to my birthplace, so I'm able to go there every now and then. But also to look into local history and the musical heritage, which I hadn't been properly aware of. I'm actually involved now in a project with four composers — five altogether: I was one of them, though I'm not a composer! But I do write music.

'We had a little orchestra and a choir, and got this pile of old manuscripts and worked through them, selecting things. I've been arranging things for choir and little orchestra, which was very interesting. It was a nice experience for me to hear my things being played. Usually it's been on a much smaller scale.

'The job takes you perhaps a little bit away from the focus of attention to, say, the soul of guitar playing, a narrow belt of subtle expression. In this kind of work you have to be efficient and not subtle: if you have "loud-soft", you must do it: people want to hear the difference and not waste time on details. It is practical musicianship, but I now feel the need to again concentrate on the subtle things and perhaps bring some of the practical things into it, to get perspective.

'There are a lot of question marks for the coming year, but I want to do this. We'll see what happens. I've always found England a most

inspiring country in which to do it. It was a natural choice.'

Arne Brattland has made two records. He has a part in a third, with Sven Lundestad and Geir-Otto Neilson, and Egil Haugland, another Norwegian. But the company has had some problems. 'We were doing some Villa-Lobos things, having a few preludes and studies each. The idea was to present Norwegian guitarists in familiar programmes — quite a brave idea considering how many recordings there are of that particular music.'

'Another thing I've been doing is working with two other guitarists from the Arctic regions. You'll probably guess the name: "The Arctic Guitar Trio". We have been working for over a year, but not continually because one of the members has been studying with John Mills in England, so there was a problem. We've tried to put the emphasis on northern music, and some things have been commissioned. I've also arranged some Grieg things for the Trio, and they work! More than three guitars is a problem, I think.'

"You must be prepared to consider music as not only one thing; you must be able to do many things"

Arne plays a guitar by the English luthier Philip Woodfield. There is plenty of wood in Norway, but unfortunately no tradition of guitar making. Many people have attempted to make guitars, says Arne, but without notable results. 'Norway is a long country; turn it upside down, and you are in Italy. Now, being tied up in my job, I haven't been able to search for that kind of thing very much. But I don't think there are any full-time makers.'

Nevertheless, there are a lot of guitars in Norway — and, it follows, a lot of guitarists. Many of them have had associations with England, studying at the Guildhall, the Royal Northern or privately. 'In this country you have a great system of musical teaching, which in many ways is excellent. In other ways it's dangerous, if you stick rigidly to it. It is now,' says Arne, 'a question of what everybody is supposed to do to make a living. That's not easy.'

Arne has some of the answers, apart from the obvious element of luck which every guitarist needs, together with supportive relatives and friends. 'Of course we need to be different. And you know it will be different if you try to find your own way. The risk is that you are going to be *too* different, so that no one will listen to you. But I think you must also be prepared to consider music as not only one thing; you must be able to do many things. And it's important to be able to get the overall view. I've learnt a lot through doing these choral and orchestral works, and

through playing with other musicians of all styles.'

There is a possibility that Arne Brattland will turn more of his attention to composition. He has had to write during his stay at Mo; the job requires it, even though he was able to wait for inspiration. Delivering a commission on time is another thing; he admires anyone who can do it, but thinks he might manage it sometime. The little music writing he has done has made him very much aware of the possibilities.

'We've been reminded on this course (Cannington 1992) by Ricardo Iznaola of the natural growth process, trying to let things happen as naturally as possible. It is not so easy in a world where you are continually being compared with others.'



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9: BARRIOS' LA CATEDRAL PART II

By RICO STOVER

LAST time I stated that all editions of La Catedral are derived from one or more of three sources:

- 1) the phonograph recording (Odeon No. 210-A, recorded August 1, 1928);
- 2) the published edition in the DiGiorgio anthology;
- 3) Barrios' handwritten manuscripts from Central America.

Observation: Versions 1 and 2 share similarities and uniformly differ from the Central American manuscript version. Taking into account all these factors, I will now continue my analysis and look at the *andante religioso* movement, comparing musical details:

ANDANTE RELIGIOSO

In the DiGiorgio version an anacrusis is given at the beginning:



Music Example 1: Andante ms. 1

Savio gives this:



Music Example 2: Andante ms. 1

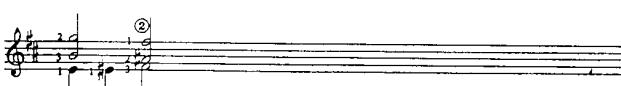
In all other treatments, including the recording, this anacrusis is eliminated.

Measures 3-4 of the DiGiorgio version give this:



Music Example 3: Andante ms. 3-4

Savio gives this slight difference in measure 4:

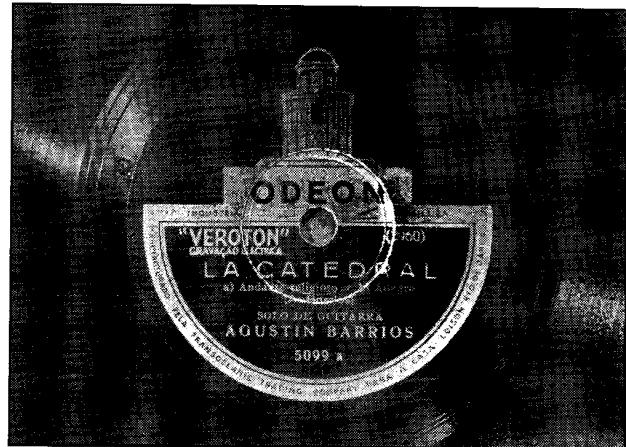


Music Example 4: Andante ms. 4

Years later Barrios changed these measures to this:



Music Example 5: Andante ms. 3-4 revised



Here is the label from an Odeon release of La Catedral in Brazil. This is the same as the recording released in Argentina and Uruguay, recorded in Buenos Aires, August 1, 1928.

Measures 5-8 in the earlier version shown this left hand fingering:



Music Example 6: Andante ms. 5-8

He changed this fingering in his later version:



Music Example 7: Andante ms. 5-8 revised

Measures 10-12 in the DiGiorgio version:



Music Example 8: Andante ms. 10-12

Slight changes in the left hand as well as in certain voicings occur in the manuscript version:



Music Example 9: Andante ms. 10-12 revised

Beginning in measure 12 is a bar 4 bar phrase descending chords:



Music Example 10: Andante ms. 12-14

As seen in Example 11 below, the manuscript version gives these chords as played only on the beat:



Music Example 11: Andante ms. 12a-14

Note that Barrios also included a repeat at measure 12. He also added a repeat at measure 21. Perhaps he was attempting to make the piece more substantial in length by incorporating these repeats.

Another interesting alteration: he increased the length of the Preludio by one measure by symmetrically adding 2 crotchets to measure 14 and 2 crotchets to measure 15, extending them from this:



Music Example 12: Andante ms. 14-15

To this:



Music Example 13: Andante revised ms. 14-16

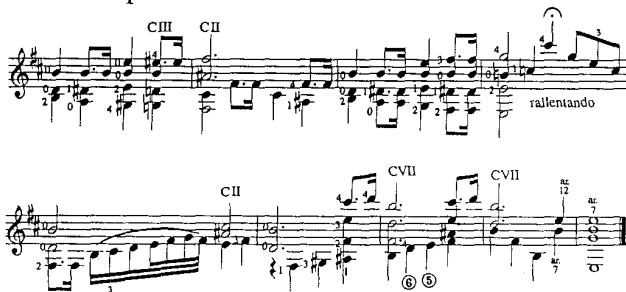
As such the revised *andante* becomes 25 measures in length.

The final 8 bars in the DiGiorgio version give this:



Music Example 14: Andante ms. 16-24

As expected, subtle changes in the music as well as the left hand are seen in the later manuscript version:



Music Example 15: Andante ms. 17-25 revised

These music examples are given in order to avoid unnecessary verbiage describing what one can discern better with guitar in hand. In all the above examples, which ideas are 'better'? I know what I personally like after deliberating the alternatives (and in most, but not all, situations I opt for his later ideas; however, 'revised' does not necessarily always equate with 'improved'). But knowing how Barrios was always changing his music and improvising, I would say that it is up to the guitarist to decide.

Next time I will continue my comparative analysis of the versions of *La Catedral* with an in-depth look at the dynamic *allegro solemne* section. Until then: Adiós y hasta la próxima.



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FUNDAMENTAL PERSPECTIVES

PART 7: GETTING UP EARLY

By JIM FERGUSON

WE should all get up early to practise, but that isn't what this column is about – it's about learning the guitar's high notes as soon as possible. Traditionally, guitarists first learn to read music in the area of the fingerboard's first four frets and then gradually work their way upward one position at a time until every note on each string and fret is mastered. In an ideal world where steady progress is assumed, this would all be well and good; however, what usually happens is that we tend to get bogged down with not only learning the lower notes, but also working on technical issues and associated etudes, all of which delays moving up the fingerboard. Ultimately, this results in the over-reinforcement of some notes and the slap-dash learning of others – not a good situation for someone who wants to be a solid, well-rounded musician.

Example 1 shows the range of the notes in the area of the first four frets that we tend to get stuck in. It also points out the resulting musical imbalance that takes place; the range from low E (in the space below the third leger line beneath the staff) up to only G# (directly above the staff) is both graphically and musically lopsided. Example 2 shows a range that includes everything from low E up to high E three leger lines above the staff, a balance that is both more symmetrical and more musical.

One approach to rectifying Example 1's imbalance would be to learn the first string's upper notes right along with the other basic notes in the area of the first four frets. If you've just begun to learn to read music on the instrument, tackle the upper notes as soon as possible; if you've been stuck in first position for a while or are presently working on the higher positions, become familiar with them now. There are several ways in which this can be approached and you'll surely have to rely on your own ingenuity since most teachers and method books follow tradition by delaying the learning of the higher pitches, but the benefits of an early familiarity with the notes above the staff are many – plus, it's not really as difficult as you might think.

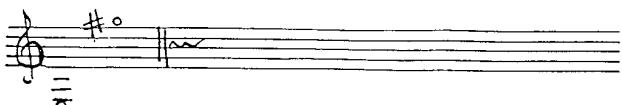
Now, traditionalists might argue that most classical guitar playing is performed in the area of the first four frets with only occasional ventures into the higher regions, so we should concentrate on the fingerboard's lower region. While this rings with a certain amount of truth, isn't it also true that the solo classical guitar repertoire features few extended scale passages? Yet no reasonably thinking musician, guitarist or

otherwise, would deny the many rewards of regular scale practice. Working on the higher notes as soon as possible will not only make the upper positions easier to master, but will ultimately help you be a better sight-reader and a better ensemble player. In both the short and long runs, it makes musical sense.

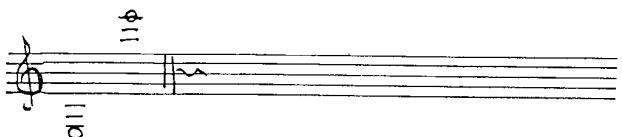
Over the decades, method books have introduced music reading on the guitar in various ways; however, they invariably first focus on the notes that correspond to the piano's white keys, leaving the black-key notes for later. If you apply this line of reasoning to the pitches on the first string up to high E, you are confronted with the five new ones shown in Example 3, which are really no more difficult to learn than the white-key notes from low C down to low E.

Once you are somewhat familiar with all the white-key notes from open E up to the high E (see Example 4), you have the possibility of playing them in succession, which can be a constructive exercise in terms of reinforcement. But, like aspects of playing in the area of the first four frets that you've probably already experienced, this also raises a new technical issue: position shifts, which, along with single-string scales, will be explored in my next instalment.

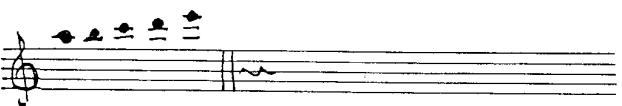
FP #7



Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



Example 4

SEGOVIA – A CENTENARY CELEBRATION

By GRAHAM WADE

Part XIV – 1962

ANDRÉS Segovia began 1962 with his customary tour of the United States, playing in Chicago, New York, Columbus, Toronto, Montreal, Glen Falls, Rochester, Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, San Diego, Baltimore, New Orleans, Atlanta, Savannah, Cleveland.

For several of these concerts he performed a concerto and some solos, a blend which nowadays would be somewhat unfashionable. Loris O. Chobanian (a guitarist from Baghdad, Iraq, studying at the time at Louisiana State University) sent the following report to *Guitar News* (July/August 1962):

On March 27th Segovia created another furore at New Orleans Municipal Auditorium when he appeared as soloist with the New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in the season's final subscription concert. He was accorded by a 'sold-out' house one of the greatest ovations a soloist has ever received in New Orleans. His tone was as pure as ever, his performance superb . . . The orchestra conducted by James Yestadt . . . provided brilliant support to Segovia in Boccherini's Concerto in E major (written for cello but transcribed for guitar by Gaspar Cassadó).

For solo numbers Segovia played a Suite by R. de Visée, a Study by F. Sor and Albéniz's Sevilla. For encore numbers he played a Prelude and a Study by Villa-Lobos as well as Song and Dance by Torroba. In all Segovia was called to the platform fifteen times.

On 3 May Segovia performed the same Concerto in E at the Royal Festival Hall. The critic for *The Times* wrote:

Mr Segovia played it with a refinement of musicianship and taste and a technical accomplishment that are unsurpassable.

On 8 May Segovia gave a recital at the Royal College of Music in aid of the New Building Fund for the College. I was fortunate enough to attend this concert and well remember Segovia's triumphant entrance to the College as he emerged from a sumptuous, chauffeur-driven limousine and ascended the steps, accompanied two paces behind by John Williams. The programme for this concert was as follows:

I

Three Pavanias	L. Milan (1535)
Study	F. Sor
Rondo	
Canción y paisaje	M. Ponce
La Fille aux cheveux de lin	C. Debussy

Prelude	II	J. S. Bach
Two Sonatas		Domenico Scarlatti
Largo and Menuet		J. Haydn
Two Songs without Words		F. Mendelssohn

Berceuse d'Orient	III	Al. Tansman
Mazurka		
Hommage to Debussy		Manuel de Falla
Two Preludes		H. Villa-Lobos
Romance y Madroños		F. M. Torroba

This programme represents a distillation of Segovia's musical career. In many ways it was something of an uncharacteristic programme as it included neither compositions by Albéniz nor a substantial unit such as a *Sonata* by Ponce or Castelnuovo-Tedesco. But it did contain several of the times for which Segovia was renowned with a blend of both transcriptions and original works dedicated to him.

Nowadays such a recital programme may seem entirely of another era from our own. At that time the revolution in guitar concert programming was some way off and the chronological pattern of a recital, beginning early with the 16th century and ending in the 20th century, was still very usual. (All the leading guitarists followed the Maestro in this respect in the 1960s). Segovia's tripartite division of the programme was a survival not only from the early decades of the century but further back into the age of Tárrega.

The August issue of the American magazine *Holiday* presented an article by Samul Chotzinoff, 'A Conversation with Segovia – a verbal impromptu, warm and candid, with the world's greatest guitarist'. Chotzinoff had been one of the first American journalists to report a Segovia recital and had known the Maestro for some 34 years. *Guitar News* (Nov/Dec 1962) gave a summary of the article, presenting, as it were, a cryptic authorised version of Segovia's life:

Segovia told his interviewer he was the son of a lawyer. He was born in Jaén, but spent his boyhood in Linares in the Spanish province of Granada. He was his own 'teacher and pupil' and studied the guitar in secret because of the opposition of family and friends. Tárrega was expected to visit Granada, but his death prevented this so Segovia was unable to meet him.

Segovia told of his first concert in Paris (1924) and how Madame Debussy, widow of the composer, invited to her box Paul Dukas, Manuel

de Falla, Joaquín Nin, Albert Roussel, Unamuno (the philosopher) and Segovia's wife. After a visit to London, followed by European tours, Segovia, on the recommendation of Fritz Kreisler, was booked for a series of concerts in the USA.

Segovia enjoys playing in private, and one such occasion was for Toscanini and a few of his friends. Sometimes he is asked to play flamenco but always declines. He likes to hear it but his attitude towards it is 'indulgent rather than serious'. He is evidently pleased that the guitar is 'such a success' and proudly claimed that it was being taught in every major conservatory in Europe. Even now he practises five to six hours a day, but not more than two hours at a stretch.

Hobbies? he likes to swim and ride horseback, to read philosophy, poetry, history and to view works of art, but he has strong views on art, which will be expressed in more detail when he writes his autobiography. 'The abstract painting and the concrete music!' he exclaimed – 'both are denials of true art!'

On 23 August 1962, Andrés Segovia married Emilia Corral Sancho. Emilia, the daughter of an amateur guitarist, began playing the guitar when she was five years old, studying with Jose Maria de la Fuente, a teacher in Madrid. In her teens she was a pupil of Emilio Pujol and is mentioned in Riera's biography, *Emilio Pujol* (publ. Lerida, 1974), as having attended the Commemorative Supper for Emilio Pujol and Matilde Cuervas in 1950 in Madrid. Emilia later obtained a degree from the Conservatorio de Madrid, and studied also in Barcelona and Lisbon.

According to an interview in *Guitar Review* (Spring, 1988), Segovia, being a friend of her family, had first seen her when she was six months old. In 1955 she attended her first class at Siena with the Maestro. She remembers that when she played Capriccio Diabolico by Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Segovia turned to Emilia's father and commented: 'Lalo, she plays very well, but she has prettier eyes.'

A translation of an article about Emilia Corral appeared in *Guitar News* (Dec, 1954/Jan, 1955):

... under the tutelage of Emilio Pujol, Emilia Corral has lived intensely through the formative period when an artist acquires the cast and seal of individual qualities. Her outstanding gifts, her pliancy, her enthusiasm for the guitar, have enabled the master to mould a new force for the world of art. Already, at the outset of her career, she allies a superb technique with a spiritual sensitivity which makes her one with the music she interprets.

(From the illustrated cultural magazine *Ciudad*, Lerida, 1954, translated by Mrs A. Korwin-Rodziszewski).

Segovia had been married twice before. His first marriage, in 1918, was to Adelaida Portillo, who features prominently in the final chapters of Segovia's autobiography. In 1936 Segovia married Paquita Madriguera, the distinguished

pianist who had studied composition with Enrique Granados and pianoforte with Frank Marshall (the teacher of Alicia de Larrocha). Both of these marriages ended in divorce.

Segovia's first son, named Andrés, was born in 1919 in Argentina, and became a painter, living in Paris. Another son from the first marriage died in a tragic accident in 1927: at school in Switzerland, he was accidentally electrocuted crossing an aqueduct near Geneva. Segovia's daughter, Beatrice, from the second marriage, died in Guatemale in the 1960s from a toxic reaction to antibiotics. In an interview in the *Los Angeles Times* (16 July, 1986) Segovia described these personal tragedies as 'the only great pain I've ever had . . .')

Segovia once again attended Santiago de Compostela for the Master Classes in the summer of 1962, though staying only ten days before leaving for a concert tour of Switzerland and Scandinavia. In his absence, John Williams took over the teaching, and according to *Guitar News* (Nov/Dec, 1962) performed in some of the concerts.

In September, 1962, the Fifth Film Festival of Cork, Ireland, featured a film entitled *Wisdom – A Conservation with Andrés Segovia*. In the film, the music critic Jack Pfeiffer 'obtains some interesting viewpoints from Segovia on his music, guitar and his reflections on life', according to the press report of the event. Segovia was not only interviewed but also performed *Passacaglia* (Robert de Visée), *Sonatina in A* (Torroba) and *Homenaje, Le Tombeau de Debussy* (Falla).

The wide-ranging interview mentioned that Bernard Shaw had asked Segovia if he had sold his soul to devil in order to play that way. Segovia praised Ponce as 'a kind of St Francis of Assisi in music', and made his habitual comments on dissonant modern music by announcing his desire to 'isolate the guitar from those microbes'. Segovia preferred the guitar to sing 'straight to the heart of the public who has sensitivity'.

In November 1962 The Gramophone reviewed a Segovia recording on Brunswick AXA 4504. The programme was *Passacaglia* (Couperin), *Prelude, Allemande* (Weiss), *Minuet* (Haydn), *Melodie* (Grieg), *Mexican Folk Song* (Ponce), *Serenata burlesca* (Torroba), *Sicilian* (CPE Bach), *Preludio, Allegretto* (Franck), *Theme, Variations and Finale* (Ponce), *Canción* (Aguirre) and *Serenata* (Malats). A feature of this recording was that each side was arranged chronologically, giving the impression of a recital on each side. The reviewer, Malcolm Macdonald, gave a thumbs up for the playing if not for the material:

The music indeed is various. But the quality of performance and recording is not; both are uniformly of the very first class.

(To be continued) . . .