

A man with short grey hair, wearing a blue suit jacket over a white shirt, stands holding a light-colored classical guitar. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a blurred, colorful mural with warm tones of red, orange, and yellow.

ROBERTO MORONN PÉREZ

GRAND FINALE

ANDRÉS SEGOVIA ARCHIVE

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XXII

At the beginning of the 20th century, the way of thinking about music changed. Similarly in other forms of art, new views on the possibilities and capabilities of its language started to emerge. Further exploration of the sound world by composers was one of the main elements underlining this evolution, and it is within this investigation that the expressive potential of the guitar was ‘rediscovered’. In this context, the compelling charisma and virtuosity of Andrés Segovia (1893–1987) helped to stimulate non-guitarist composers to write music for him, resulting in a significant increase in the instrument’s repertoire. Many of these works featured in concerts and recordings throughout his career. Additionally, many more languished in the Andrés Segovia Archive, a collection of recently-discovered works among Segovia’s private papers which were not made public until some years after his death. It is this collection of barely-known, or in some cases, almost totally neglected works that were the focus of my three previous albums containing pages of musical quality of the highest order. With the intention of closing the circle and providing a more holistic perspective, I felt I should not leave aside those pieces that the Spanish virtuoso chose to perform and record, and which stand as pinnacles of the Segovian repertoire. As is the case with my previous recordings, I use, where possible, the versions that appear on the original manuscripts found in the maestro’s papers.

ALEXANDRE TANSMAN

After listening to Segovia, the Polish composer Alexandre Tansman (1897–1986) developed a lifelong love for the guitar. Coming from a well-to-do cosmopolitan, cultured Jewish family, he moved to Paris at the age of 22 under the sponsorship of Ravel. He lived there until the time of his death, apart from the years of World War Two when he moved to the United States. In 1925, soon after meeting the Spanish virtuoso, he wrote his first piece for guitar, *Mazurka*, which demonstrated a very personal sonorous conception of the instrument. It was not until twenty years later, in 1945, that he approached the guitar again with his refined *Concertino pour guitare et orchestre*. In 1951, his *Cavatina* was awarded first prize in the Composers Competition of the Accademia Musical Chigiana in Siena. A Suite in four movements (to which he added the final *Danza Pomposa* in 1952) and which Segovia immediately included in his favourite repertoire. Inspired by Tansman's fascination and admiration for Venice, it seeks to convey and evoke the mystery of the Italian city. Written to sound baroque, it is nevertheless a neo-classical-sounding work. The form is conceived as a mosaic of juxtaposing contrasting episodes and sharp use of rhythm with regular figures often supported by a pedal or melodic lines drawn with incisive geometric simplicity. He uses harmony between tonality and modality, between chromaticism and a diatonic style, and all this with a language of abundant polyphony and rhapsodic character. The *Preludio* sets out the elements involved in the whole composition with restrained vigour.

A *Sarabande* follows delineating a poignant slow melody. The mood changes again with the *Scherzino* with which the use of tremolo and intricate passages leads us towards the *Barcarole* that brings out the serenity and cantabile element of the guitar. The final movement comes with the fanfare that presents the *Danza Pomposa*. *Cavatina* is a work that requires enormous control and precision while never losing the rhythmic energy that pulsates throughout.

MARIO CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO

As was the case with Tansman, the friendship and admiration of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895–1968) and Andrés Segovia continued throughout their lives. From the time they met in 1932, the Florentine composer never abandoned his compositional relationship with the guitar, filling his catalogue with a large number of pieces for the six strings. Being of Jewish origin, his life was traumatically divided into two parts, before and after 1939, when at the age of 44, he was forced to emigrate to the USA. During his years in Italy, he had lived comfortably in an intellectual environment where his music was performed by artists such as Heifetz and Toscanini. His profound knowledge of his craft enabled him to work as a composer of soundtracks for Hollywood. He also worked as a teacher with students such as Henry Mancini, Elmer Bernstein, Jerry Goldsmith and André Previn.

His guitar music, parallel to his biography, can be divided into three periods. The *Sonata (Omaggio a Boccherini) op.77* on this recording belongs to his first period which runs from 1932 with his first work for guitar, *Variations à travers les siècles* to the composition of his *Concerto per chitarra e orchestra n.1 (op.99)* finished just before his departure from Italy. Written between 1933 and 1934, the *Sonata* brings together all the most significant characteristics of Castelnuovo-Tedesco's language at this stage: Mediterranean brightness, immediacy, freshness, vigour, richness of musical ideas, melodies full of lyricism, use of ironic humour and a pervasive colourful character. All of this framed in a coherent and solid formal structure. In the first movement, full of vitality, he interweaves rhythmic and dancing passages with others of a markedly lyrical sensibility. Although the development of the first and second themes is elided, it never loses its sense of unity. In the second movement, he establishes a polyphonic setting full of melancholic and vaguely sentimental overtones. The Minuetto which forms the third movement, for its part, presents an elegant, agile, and stately dance. As for the fourth movement (marked in the manuscript as "Presto furioso" and not the "Vivo ed energico" that Segovia writes in his edition) it is written in the form of a Rondo and is a constant of arpeggios as a gesture in itself of pure energy and temper leading us to a resolute conclusion.

With his *Sonata*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco has composed not only one of the most important works of the guitar repertoire but also one of his crowning achievements.

HANS HAUG

While Segovia was living in Switzerland between 1926 and 1935, many Swiss composers excited by his virtuosity were inspired to write music for him, but it was only Hans Haug (1900–1967) who attracted his attention. Having solid musical training, his catalogue of works includes orchestral music, concertos, operas, film scores, string quartets and oratorios. His post-romantic style was very much to the taste of the Spanish guitarist. His little piece *Alba* (Dawn) is a clear reflection of this. The piece is composed on two distinctly contrasting poles in form and expression. On one end, an episode of choral style and archaic flavour where the chords are joined according to harmonic laws of attraction different from academic procedures. And on the other end, a melodic section with an exquisite line contour, perfumed with a subtle melancholy that shows the first rays of the morning sun. It offers a fantastic opportunity for the performer to exploit the instrument's riches and tone colour. This piece exalts the harmonic properties of the guitar in an atmosphere of serene meditation. It is music about joy and vitality rather than technical mastery.

In planning my programme for this album, I included *Alba* as a moment of respite both for the listener and the performer after two enormous pieces (Tansman and Castelnuovo-Tedesco) and before two others of no lesser dimension (Manén and Mompou).

JOAN MANÉN

Child prodigy, violin virtuoso and self-taught composer, the Catalan Joan Manén (1883–1971) achieved with his only piece for guitar, the *Fantasia-Sonata op.A-22*, a work of a magnitude unknown in the guitar repertoire. Although there is no exact record of when Segovia and Manén met, it appears that his *Fantasia-Sonata* was written in 1929, published in 1930 and premiered in 1933. It was not until 1956 that Segovia made his recording of the piece. Composed as a single movement, it reveals great formal ambition. The main thematic materials developed with different elaborations throughout the entire work like an organic element in an original formal mixture between sonata and variations. He makes use of a refined harmony with dense textures, but always in a specific instrumental context. His style, which the composer himself calls “Iberismo” unites Spanish-type nationalism with a formal construction of Germanic pattern. His use of traditional popular elements has to be seen from an abstract prism far removed from a superficial folklorism.

The work opens with a *Largo* of rich four-voice polyphony that contains in an expansive and cantabile form the theme that articulates the whole piece. It is followed by an *Allegro* that dilutes the theme in a series of agile imaginative chases of an improvisatory nature while maintaining the musical discourse with perfect coherence and initiating a development of an abundant richness of motifs. Once this first section has been completed,

the Sonata reproduces the thematic elements transformed into an *Adagio cantabile, quasi in modo di un recitativo, ma in tempo*, a moment of calm and passing tranquility before leading us to a new *Allegro* which unfolds mainly on the central register with an insistent rhythmic motor compressed into its conclusion with compact strummed chords. The agitation slows down as it looks back to the quiet recollection of the *Adagio* and returns to the opening section to fade out towards the pianissimo that brings it to an end. The fact that the composer also wrote a version for orchestra confirms the supremacy of this piece.

The guitarist who embarks on this work has a formidable challenge ahead of him. The musical and technical breadth that the piece proposes in an uninterrupted way from beginning to end, does not allow the performer a moment's relaxation. The player must at all times sustain the interpretative tension and maintain absolute control and balance without ever losing the overflowing energy and expressive intensity that runs through all its pages.

FEDERICO MOMPOU

Federico Mompou (1893–1987) is one of the Spanish composers of greatest international renown whose music features frequently in the piano programmes of which he was also a sublime interpreter. Naturalness, sincerity, authenticity, virtuoso of tonal colour and rubato,

these are some of the adjectives that always describe him both as composer and performer.

The combination of objective skill, intellectual clarity and his use of colour in all its luminous shades, as well as the way he can make the guitar sing and sparkle, are all present in his *Suite Compostelana*. Written in 1962, it was a gift from Mompou to Segovia arising from their friendship which was established during their participation in the Compostela Summer Courses in Galicia. The music, impregnated with a warm religious, mystical, monastic feeling portrays a pilgrim on his way to Santiago de Compostela, and aims to capture the images, aromas and sounds that permeate the pilgrimage. It is basically a journey into oneself, a voyage he proposes through the six short pieces that give shape to the Suite. They are exquisite miniatures, brief in duration but rich in allusion; music that makes its mark with subtlety, understatement and a unique economy of means; austerity blended with warmth, elegance and profundity.

The *Preludio* evokes the drizzle typical of the Galician climate and is constructed with a subtle polyphonic web, a moving voice and a pedal against time. The sections that make up this movement are followed by brief, dreamlike interludes, like memories of lost songs. The *Coral* is a three-part modal polyphony and its melody is the *Dum Pater Familias* from the 12th century Codex Calixtinus, the hymn pilgrims are said to have sung on entering the Cathedral. The sweet *Cuna* is a gentle and subtle lullaby with a polyphonic middle section which gathers the notes of the

melody and the arpeggios on the same line. The *Recitativo* is highly animated, alternating a dramatic monodic exclamation with sophisticated polyphonic evocations. The *Canción*, in ternary pulse, provides a distinguished example of a delicate and refined accompanied melody. Finally, the contemplative atmosphere of the Suite gives way to the *Muñeira*, a demure dance of grace and dignity.

For repertoire like this, a sensitive and subtle touch is essential. Through mild gradations of dynamics or delicate sculpting of a phrase, the sparest and simplest of these pieces assume a rare beauty.

All the works that make up the programme of this album are fundamental milestones of the guitar repertoire of the 20th century. The musical heights they transcend confirm them as masterpieces. If there is one thing that unifies them, it is not the use of an exhibitionist language in search of easy applause, but quite the opposite — a deep immersion in the essence of the instrument, free from artifice and fashion. To be at the level that this music demands, one must pursue a constant search for sound that seeks not to impress but to move. It is this interpretative honesty that I want to transmit in my performances and has been my main goal in the making of this recording.

—ROBERTO MORONN PÉREZ



ROBERTO MORONN PÉREZ

Spanish-born Roberto Moronn Pérez studied in Madrid, Italy and the UK, graduating with first class honours and a degree in Musicology from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, then completing a postgraduate programme at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music in London, where he received the Julian Bream Prize.

A prize-winner of many international competitions, Roberto has appeared as soloist in Spain, Switzerland, Italy, the USA, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Germany and Japan, and in concert with numerous Spanish orchestras. Recently, he played the famous *Concierto de Aranjuez* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine. Stephen Dodgson and Angelo Gilardino are amongst the prominent composers with whom he has worked, and the famous English pianist Stephen Hough has written a guitar piece for him.

Roberto Moronn Pérez has released world premier recordings with pieces by Stephen Dodgson and has collaborated with the Italian publisher Berben in the edition of *The Andrés Segovia Archive*.

Apart from his musical interests he enjoys literature, art and likes to participate in various sports. Currently, Roberto is a professor of guitar at the Conservatorio de Madrid.

www.robertomoronnperez.com

CREDITS

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Producer: John Taylor

Album Art Director: JoAnn Nunes

All Photographs: Boreal fotografías

Page 2 Drawing: Andrés Segovia at a recital in the
“Concerts Ysaye” in Brussels,
15 December 1932,
by Hilda Wiener (1877–1940)

*I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Marcia Martin and
all the Reference Recordings team for their support in this project.*



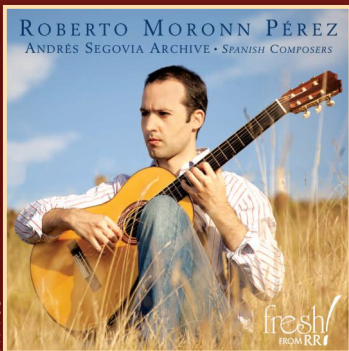
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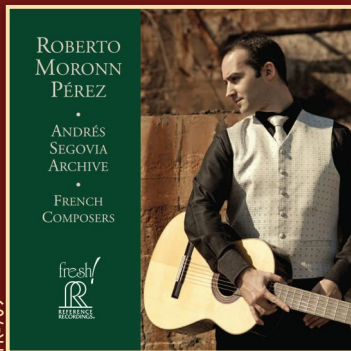
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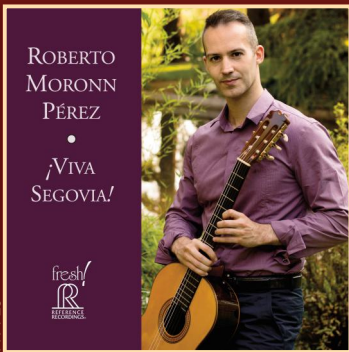
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GRAND FINALE

ANDRÉS SEGOVIA ARCHIVE

ROBERTO MORONN PÉREZ, guitar

TANSMAN: *Cavatina*

- 1 I Preludio 3:16 2 II Sarabande 3:33
3 III Scherzino 3:08 4 IV Barcarole 3:33

5 TANSMAN: *Danza Pomposa* 3:39

CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: *Sonata*

- 6 I Allegro con spirito 4:33 7 II Andantino, quasi Canzone 4:46
8 III Tempo di Minuetto 3:23 9 IV Presto furioso 4:41

10 HAUG: *Alba* 5:21

11 MANÉN: *Fantasia-Sonata* 17:11

MOMPOU: *Suite Compostelana*

- 12 I Preludio 3:24 13 II Coral 3:00
14 III Cuna 3:50 15 IV Recitativo 2:38
16 V Canción 3:30 17 VI Muñeira 3:13