

PROGRAM NOTES

AN EVENING IN OLD MADRID

The Quintessence of Old Madrid during the 17th and 18th centuries was elegance, courtesy and gallantry. These quinessential qualities were perhaps reflected most of all in the music of one of Spain's greatest composers, Enrique Granádos.

Known as the Spanish Poet of the Piano, Granádos was born at Lérida in 1867 which is in the Barcelona-Catalan region of Spain. He was both a brilliant pianist and composer and was a pupil of Felipe Pedrell who did much to revive the ancient music of Spain which later proved to have an important influence on Granádos's music. *of Granádos.*

In 1901 Granádos founded his own modern school of Spanish music at Barcelona. Madam Alicia de Larrocha, one of the world's greatest interpreters of Spanish piano music today heads the school where she was once a pupil herself.

In 1916 Granádos and his wife were invited to the United States to attend the premier of his opera Goyéscas which was to be performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. President Woodrow Wilson had persuaded the couple to stay a day or two longer so that Granádos could give a recital much against their wishes. Like most Spaniards both were terrified of the water particularly since WWI was raging at the time. On the way home to Spain, their ship, the S.S. Sussex was torpedoed by a German submarine. Granádos and his wife had made it into the lifeboat but somehow she fell overboard and he gallant to the end, jumped into the water to save her even though he couldn't swim. Both were drowned and the death of this fine composer and his lovely wife has remained as one of Spain's greatest tragedies.

THE TONADILLAS

The Tonadillas were thought to have originated with the Andalucian gypsies and are considered to be one of Spain's oldest song forms. And although it is still under investigation it is possible that the Tonadillas may be linked to the Muwashshah, a form of Andalucian Love Poetry, written by the Arabs, while they were in Spain.

The 17th century tonadillas were short, sacred or secular songs for two or more voices; that is to say, for instrument and voice or various combinations of these, thus placing them in the genre of Spanish chamber music. The favoured second voice was the vilhuela, a guitar-like instrument.

The verses were set off by instrumental interludes called estribillos or refrains. For the most part they were modal with modulation to the dominant or to a key a minor 3rd away. The Colección de Tonadillas which will be heard this ^{evening} for the first time in Canada reflect many of the characteristics of the 17th century songs.

They are short. All 12 of them have been written for piano and voice although I have taken the liberty of arranging two of the songs for a third voice, in this case the viola.

7 of the 12 are in the major mode with modulation to the tonic minor or to a key which is a minor 3rd away. El Majo Tímido and La Maja de Goya contain estribillos, a strong characteristic of the old Andalusian Love Poetry written by the Arabian poets.

Inspired by the paintings of the great Spanish artist Goya, tonight's collection of tonadillas by Granados speak of love, pain, relentless anger and desperate grief. At the same time they reflect the elegance, courtesy and gallantry of a traditional, authentic Madrid as it once was in the 17th and 18th century.

THE TWELVE SPANISH DANCES of which we shall hear 3 this evening, constituted a point of departure for Granados in his compositions. Each dance is based on an authentic national air and reflects influences of the ancient music of Spain. Each dance has its own individual character and although some seem to have a certain rustic sound, all 12 of the dances display the quintessential qualities of 17th-18th century Spain - elegance, courtesy and gallantry. Above all, the 12 dances reflect refinement, the outstanding element in the music of Granados.

Although written separately, the dances contain certain motives and silhouettes that are reminiscent of the Tonadillas. The dances also reflect the old modes and each has its own unique harmony.

EL GALANTE belonged to the Palace Dances which were of an aristocratic, spontaneous nature and were performed indoors at the homes of the nobility. They were most likely from the minuet genre because of its construction (three part) and its 3/4 time signature.

While some of the Palace dances were grave and solemn, some required great technical ability which included for the gentlemen, somersaults, chest rolls, high jumping steps and brilliant twirls. Above all the gentlemen had to be able to lift the ladies graciously and easily into the air in their voluminous gowns without dropping them.

El Galante, in spite of some of its more vigorous passages, reflects the refinement and aristocratic spontaneity of the Palace Dance.

THE ORIENTAL comes from the remote past and reflects strong Arabian Oriental influences. Oriental influences found their way to Arabia about the 5th century A.D. and were carried to Spain about the 9th century during the Arabic conquest by a famous Arabian musician named Ziryab.

The Oriental reflects such Oriental-Arabian influences as the use of double 3rds in the opening melodic motif played against a flowing arabesque figure in the left hand. The use of double 3rds tends to give a geometric aspect to the melodic line which was very typical of far eastern music and dance.

In the central section with its beautiful Spanish guitar-like accompaniment the use of a particular mode known as the Arabian-Oriental mode known as the gypsy mode) is heard and the use of the augmented

second interval is also heard. These Arabian-Oriental influences bring to the music a deep sadness and melancholy as well as an archaic remoteness which was also typical of far Eastern music.

THE PLAYERA belongs to the category of flamenco known as cante jondo which is the most profound and emotional of all the elements of flamenco. The Playera is sung, danced and played, and is an exceedingly plaintive form of the siguirigas which reflects strong Arabic influences.

Originally the Playera began as a song of mourning which was sung during the procession to the graveyard and at the gravesite. Its forlorn verses express the relentless stalking of Death and the hopelessness of living in a cruel and unkind world.

The following is an example of a verse of a Playera. The alternative verse form reflects the influence of the Andalucian Love Poetry form written by the Arabs.

El carro e los muertos
paso por aqui
como llevaba la manita fuera
yo la conoci.

The cart of the dead
passed by here.
I recognized her dangling hand.

THE MELANCOLICO has a certain rusticity to its sound yet it still expresses the quintessential qualities of 17th-18th century Spain - elegance, courtes and gallantry. It takes its name from the continual downward turn of the melodic figure and the constant return to the original key after each modulation which in itself expresses a certain sadness and melancholy.

THE MAZURKA originated in Poland in the province of Mazovia and took its name from the people of the province who were known as Mazurs. The dance is characterized by a certain pride of being and improvisation.

The music reflects Arabian-Oriental influences such as those found in the ancient melodies of the Andalucian and Hungarian gypsies. Some of these influences were the so-called gypsy mode, minor modal melody and the augmented 4th interval.

Granados greatly admired Chopin who had spent some time in Spain and it is likely that the inspiration for his Mazurkas was, in part, drawn from the Chopin Mazurkas.

The Mazurka which we shall hear this evening ends with a recitative and closes on the dominant. Both the recitative and closure on the dominant were prominent characteristics of Arabian poetry and music forms.

THE WALTZ Compared to some Spanish dances, the Waltz was not meant to be pictorial, dramatic or realistic. Its elements were drawn from aristocratic life at the courts of England, Paris and Vienna. When the Waltz finally found its way to the Spanish court, dancers adored whirling around the elegant ballroom with its glowing candelabra, masque.

Tonight's little waltz is romantic and poetic in its character. It reflects the refinement of its composer as well as the quintessential qualities of 17-th-18th century Spain.

