

Agustín
BARRIOS

Guitar Music • 5

Pericón • Choro da saudade • Danza paraguaya No.1

Celil Refik Kaya



Agustín Barrios (1885–1944) Guitar Music • 5

There is some obscurity over Agustín Barrios Mangoré's birthplace. Recent research has claimed he was born in Villa Florida, north of San Juan Bautista, in Southern Paraguay. He showed great musical ability early on, and first studied guitar with Gustavo Sosa Escalda. Aged 13 he attended the National College in Asunción, where he soon established a reputation as an outstanding guitarist. In 1909 Barrios made his first visit to Buenos Aires. After this he became a travelling artist, giving recitals in many countries including Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico and Cuba, among others.

In August 1930 in Bahia, Brazil, Barrios made his first public appearance as 'Chief Nitsuga Mangoré', 'the Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay'. 'Nitsuga' was Agustín spelled backwards, and 'Mangoré' the name of a legendary Guaraní chief. Quite dramatically, Barrios dressed up in native costume, complete with headdress and feathers. This phase concluded around 1934 when the Paraguayan ambassador to Mexico advised Barrios that the Nitsuga presentation was 'not dignified or appropriate'.

In 1934 Barrios travelled to Belgium, performing at the Royal Conservatoire, Brussels before moving on to France, Germany and Spain. He played in Madrid on 1 December 1935, staying in Spain for three months before returning to South America.

In 1939 he suffered a heart attack while in Mexico City. Barrios, having partially recovered, then went to El Salvador where, with the help of the country's president, he was appointed as professor at a music school. He died in San Salvador on 7 August 1944.

Barrios' significance in guitar history, apart from his frenetic life of recitals and travels, is his legacy of recordings and compositions. He was also the first guitarist to realise the possibilities of the new art of recording, and recorded more than 50 tracks for the Atlanta and Odeon labels between 1910 and 1942. These enabled later generations to notate his compositions, especially when definitive manuscripts were not extant.

Vals, Op. 8, No. 3 ('Waltz'), composed around 1919 while Barrios was in Brazil, is one of his few works to be given an opus number. This was said to be on the advice of Barrios'

friend, Martín Bor y Pergola, who wished to dignify the compositions in this way. Only two other pieces, *Vals, Op. 8, No. 4*, and *Preludio, Op. 5, No. 1*, were provided with opus numberings. Clearly inspired by the aura of Chopin's waltzes, Barrios creates his own unique atmosphere of enchantment and romance.

Pericón, the title referring to a folk dance from the River Plate area, was recorded by Barrios in 1928. The *pericón* became the national dance of Uruguay following the publication in 1887 of a version entitled *Pericón Nacional* by Gerardo Grasso (1860–1937). This was a group circle dance of the Uruguayan and Argentinian pampas originating in the late 18th century. Barrios' version of the dance is one of his comparatively neglected pieces, though guitarist Rico Stover regards it as one of the composer's 'greatest works'. It is virtuosic from beginning to end, and a composition of great momentum and dynamic energy.

Julia Florida, dedicated to Barrios' pupil Julia Martínez de Rodríguez, was written in Costa Rica in 1938. This romantic piece, in the style of the *barcarolle*, perhaps owes some of its inspiration to Mendelssohn's *Venetian Gondola Song (Songs without Words, Op. 19, No. 6)*, which was transcribed for guitar by Francisco Tárrega.

Danza paraguaya No. 1 ('Paraguayan Dance'), described by Rico Stover as 'perhaps Barrios's most popular work', was composed around 1926, and over the course of the years the composer wrote down at least five versions as well as an arrangement for two guitars. The form of *Danza paraguaya No. 1* is known in its native country as *polca paraguaya* ('Paraguayan Polka').

Estudio in G minor, dedicated to Don Martin Borda y Pagola and composed in 1920, has a Bach-like quality. The key is unusual for the guitar, and offers some fresh and illuminating moments of colour and tonality.

Estudio No. 3, in the more customary key of E minor, reveals the composer's mastery of the *concert étude* genre following the precedent of early 19th-century masters such as Fernando Sor (1778–1839) and Mauro Giuliani (1781–1829).

Choro da saudade is acknowledged as one of Barrios' finest compositions. The piece is written in the Brazilian

choro form, a type of music originally denoting urban ensemble music comprising wind instruments and guitars. The word *saudade* is one of those untranslatable Portuguese words referring to 'a feeling of longing, melancholy, or nostalgia, supposedly characteristic of the Portuguese or Brazilian temperament.' A smooth performance demands that the guitarist has hands capable of playing the extended positions of the left hand bass line without undue effort. The composer's ability to write in many different South American musical genres is apparent here in his vibrant recreation of a Brazilian style.

Preludio in E minor 'Pequeño preludio' ('Little Prelude') is a brilliant study with resemblances to the composer's *Las abejas* ('The Bees'). Within a few bars Barrios has packed a variety of technical exercises for both right and left hands that demand considerable dexterity.

Invocación a la luna ('Invocation to the Moon') was performed by Barrios in concert in 1932 under the title of *Fiesta de la luna* ('Fiesta of the Moon'), described by Rico Stover as another 'Guaraní inspired' work from 'indigenous themes'. Barrios recorded the work in 1943.

Petit Pierrot, Marche ('Little Pierrot, March') recorded by the composer in 1913, presents a good-humoured theme reminiscent of a circus orchestra accompanying various acts. As a guitar piece it is sophisticated, one episode presenting the theme quasi-orchesterally on the middle and lower strings with a treble flourish reminiscent of woodwind.

Estudio No. 2, also known as *Estudio en arpeggio* ('Study in Arpeggios') was written in 1941, and is one of Barrios' most appealing studies, its gentle tune and harmonic progressions being reminiscent of the studies of the early 19th-century masters such as Fernando Sor (1778–1839) and Dionisio Aguado y García (1784–1849), but with an expressive quality that represents Barrios' late Romanticism.

Gavota al estilo antiguo ('Gavotte in the Old Style'), composed on 29 August 1941, is Barrios' tribute both to the Baroque and to Tárrega's transcriptions of similar works. But the melodic line and sweetness of the harmonies bring to the music an essentially personal voice, characteristically the composer's own.

Preludio in G minor, Op. 5, No. 1 was composed in Uruguay in 1921 and published in Buenos Aires in 1929. This *Preludio* was one of the first of Barrios' pieces to be recorded by a later generation of concert recitalists, and

appeared on Laurindo Almeida's album *Guitar Music of Latin America*, issued in 1955 on Capitol Records (P8321). The work was described on the sleeve note as 'a classical work without folk or popular elements, its principal characteristic is that it treats the guitar as a single-voiced instrument. No two strings are plucked simultaneously until the final cadence. All the harmony is unfolded horizontally – that is, it is inferred from the succession of melodic events, some of which are of course only figurations of broken chords.'

Romanza No. 1 'Romanza en imitación al violoncello' ('Romance in Imitation of the Cello') was written in Brazil in 1918 and recorded by the composer on 10 May 1928. Its use of melody in the bass against a two-note accompaniment is most expressive, its historical antecedent being *Study, Op. 6, No. 1* by Fernando Sor in the early 19th century. This *Romanza* has also been given the titles *Página d'album* ('Album Page') and *Fuegos fatuos* ('Wild Fires') in other contexts.

Zapateado caribe ('Caribbean Zapateado'), arranged here for solo guitar, was composed in 1931 and had its first performance in Trinidad. Later, Barrios arranged it for guitar duo and performed it in a concert with Raúl Borges in April 1932, in Caracas, Venezuela. While in El Salvador, a further arrangement was made for three guitars, and this is the only extant version of the piece. *Zapateado*, literally meaning 'tapped with the shoe' refers to the flamenco dance, a virtuosic solo for a male dancer. The genre is akin to the *tanguillo* rhythm, and alternates between 2/4 and 6/8 time signatures.

Abrió la puerta mi china ('Open the Door, My Country Girl'), contained in a manuscript of 1905, is the earliest composition by the composer found so far. The piece re-creates aspects of the tango, and with its delicate *glissandi* and harmonisation demonstrates distinct influences from Tárrega in its texture and mood.

Estudio del ligado in D minor ('Slur Study') is a delightful exercise, Bach-like in its restraint, helping the student to develop the tricky art of slurred notes on a fretted instrument. It was written in 1941 during Barrios' prolonged stay in San Salvador where he was an esteemed teacher as well as recitalist.

Variación al estudio No. 3, also from the El Salvador phase of Barrios' travels, is a pleasing addition to the more

complex *Estudio No. 3* featured earlier in the selection.

Estilo y pericón is another ideal representation of Barrios' ability to re-create the indigenous essence of varied South American musical cultural idioms. *Estilo* is an Argentine song type related to the *triste* or *tonada*, usually provided with a passionate song text. The *pericón* is an Argentinian national dance which involves the waving of handkerchiefs.

Estudio del ligado in A major is a brilliant exercise in the difficult art of slurs, which on the guitar involves the process of the left hand fingers 'hammering on' or 'pulling off', necessitating an individual and equal strength between all combinations of fingers.

Isabel, Gavota is a tribute to Barrios' lover around 1908, Isabel Villalba, with whom the composer had two sons. The relationship, in one form or another, seems to have survived until the early 1920s, but was complicated by his lengthy absences from her.

Variación al estudio No. 6 presents a lively afterthought to *Estudio No. 6* (available on *Guitar Music, Volume 4* Naxos 8.573897), an arpeggiated study with wide sweeps across the fingerboard in both directions.

Vals de primavera ('Springtime Waltz'), written around 1921 and performed in recitals by Barrios during the early 1920s, is a joyful evocation of spring. After the opening melody in the treble, contrasting sections use the bass strings for the melody before ascending higher. This piece also brings in some interesting modulations from A major to F and C before the recapitulation.

Diana Guaraní is an extended work, rescued, in the absence of a manuscript, by Rico Stover from a number of non-commercial out-takes recorded in El Salvador in 1943. The composition's episodes include various effects such as snare drum imitations, tambora (drum sounds), rapid scale runs, arpeggiated passages, ornamentation, and other virtuosic devices.

La paloma, Habanera ('The Dove'), written by Sebastián de Iradier (1809–1865) in the 1850s, presents one of the world's most popular tunes. Its *habanera* rhythm was originally a Cuban genre brought back to Spain by sailors and blended with the flamenco *tanguillo* style. It had previously been arranged for guitar by Francisco Tárrega.

Graham Wade

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Celil Refik Kaya

Celil Refik Kaya was awarded First Prize at the JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition in 2012 and has since received multiple awards from several prestigious American guitar competitions, as well as the Rising Young Musician of the Year from the Donizetti Classical Music Awards in Istanbul in 2017. Kaya has performed in the most prestigious concert halls and festivals around the US and Turkey, including Carnegie Hall, the Frick Collection Museum, the New York City Guitar School (NYCGS), the Round Top Festival Institute, Brevard and the Ankara International Music Festival, as well as numerous radio and TV broadcasts throughout the US and Turkey. Born in Istanbul, Celil Refik Kaya studied in Turkey with his father Mehmet Refik Kaya, Yusuf Doğan Büyükköğüt, Raffi Arslanyan and Soner Egesel. He later undertook his master's degree at the Mannes School of Music, New York, with Michael Newman and privately with Sharon Isbin. Kaya is only the third recipient of Harvard University's prestigious Dumbarton Oaks Early-Career Musician Fellowship, and also holds the Harrington Fellowship at The University of Texas at Austin under the study of renowned guitarist Adam Holzman. Kaya is also an avid composer, with his chamber and instrumental works being performed throughout the US, Turkey, South Korea and Australia. www.celilrefikkaya.com



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Agustín Barrios Mangoré's first public appearance was as 'the Paganini of the guitar from the jungles of Paraguay'. This flamboyant image was soon retired, but his legacy as a composer has endured and flourished, as have the recordings he made as the first guitarist to take advantage of new technology from as early as 1910. Ranging from romantic enchantment to fearsome virtuosity via works with Bach-like restraint, this programme embraces Barrios Mangoré's art from his earliest known piece, *Abrí la puerta mi china*, to the reconstruction of the substantial *Diana Guaraní* from a recording made in 1943.

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1 Vals, Op. 8, No. 3 ('Waltz') (c.1919)	4:05	14 Romanza No. 1 'Romanza en imitación al violoncello' ('Romance in Imitation of the Cello') (1918)	3:07
2 Pericón (1928)	5:07	15 Zapateado caribe ('Caribbean Zapateado') (1931) (version for solo guitar)	2:56
3 Julia Florida (1938)	4:30	16 Abrí la puerta mi china ('Open the Door, My Country Girl') (1905)	4:17
4 Danza paraguaya No. 1 ('Paraguayan Dance') (c.1926)	2:03	17 Estudio del ligado in D minor ('Slur Study') (1941)	1:40
5 Estudio in G minor (1920)	2:24	18 Variación al estudio No. 3 (1941)	2:29
6 Estudio No. 3	2:04	19 Estilo y pericón	2:51
7 Choro da saudade (c.1929)	6:00	20 Estudio del ligado in A major (1941)	0:56
8 Preludio in E minor 'Pequeño preludio' ('Little Prelude') (1939)	0:27	21 Isabel, Gavota (1913) (arr. Tony Morris)	2:39
9 Invocación a la luna ('Invocation to the Moon') (1932)	4:04	22 Variación al estudio No. 6	1:02
10 Petit Pierrot, Marcha ('Little Pierrot, March') (1913) (arr. Tony Morris)	3:18	23 Vals de primavera ('Springtime Waltz') (c.1921)	5:07
11 Estudio No. 2 'Estudio en arpeggio' ('Study in Arpeggios') (1941)	2:14	24 Diana Guaraní (1924) (arr. R. Stover)	8:47
12 Gavota al estilo antiguo ('Gavotte in the Old Style') (1941)	2:04	25 Sebastián de Iradier (1809–1865): La paloma, Habanera ('The Dove') (1859) (arr. A. Barrios Mangoré)	3:36
13 Preludio in G minor, Op. 5, No. 1 (1921)	5:23		

Celil Refik Kaya, Guitar

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