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NAXOS

Federico Moreno

TORROBA

Guitar Concertos • I

Concierto en Flamenco

Diálogos entre guitarra y orquesta

Aires de La Mancha

Suite castellana

Pepe Romero and

Vicente Coves, Guitars

Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra • Manuel Coves



Federico Moreno Torroba (1891-1982): Concierto en Flamenco

Diálogos entre guitarra y orquesta · Aires de la Mancha · Suite castellana

Federico Moreno Torroba is one of the outstanding figures in the history of modern Spanish music. He is renowned as the composer of many popular zarzuelas, Spanish operettas alternating musical numbers with spoken dialogue. Chief among these are such masterpieces as *Luisa Fernanda* (1932) and *La chulapona* (1934). Torroba is best known to concert audiences, however, for his nearly one hundred works for the guitar, including solos, quartets, and ten concertos. Most of these were composed at the behest of Andrés Segovia and, later, the Romeros. Whether for the theatre or the guitar, Torroba's distinctive style always embraced a wide variety of Spanish regional folklore in the context of a musical language that is resolutely tonal, metric, and traditional in form. Torroba's guitar works in particular are notable for their memorable melodies, animated dance rhythms, and evocative character.

Concierto en Flamenco (1962)

Torroba wrote two guitar concertos for notable flamenco guitarists. One was the *Fantasia flamenca*, which was first heard in 1976 at Carnegie Hall, with Mario Escudero as soloist, but the first such work he composed emerged perhaps two decades earlier and was dedicated to the great virtuoso Sabicas. This was the *Concierto en Flamenco*. The difficulty writing a "flamenco concerto" poses is that it requires a soloist of exceptional abilities. Most flamenco guitarists are not accustomed to operating in the classical milieu of the symphony orchestra, but classical guitarists generally do not play flamenco. One needs more than flashy technique to play flamenco guitar; it requires a broad and deep knowledge of the various styles of song and dance (*palos*), their rhythms, melodic character, and emotion. This can only be acquired by accompanying singers and dancers and developing the ability to improvise. This sort of music making is as alien to the classical guitarist as a symphony orchestra is to the flamenco guitarist. Pepe Romero is justly famous for his masterful interpretations of both classical and flamenco repertoires. His interpretation of the *Concierto en Flamenco* is notable both for

its technical precision and for conveying the emotional directness and sincerity of Sabicas's playing.

The first movement begins with an orchestral introduction that is both reflective and emotionally charged. The guitarist and orchestra then elaborate on themes from the *fandango de Huelva*. The second movement presents a stirring rhapsody on the *faruca*, a *palo* in duple metre that is only danced, not sung. The third movement is a beautiful *alegrías*, whose very name suggests the mood of gaiety and high spirits that prevails here. The *bulerías* is the most animated of *palos* and dominates the final movement, bringing this flamenco concerto to a thrilling conclusion.

Diálogos entre guitarra y orquesta (1977)

Constructing a concerto as a series of "dialogues" between the guitar and the orchestra is not only an appealing idea but the best way to allow the guitar to be heard. Despite its rather abstract title, the Spanish character of this work is unmistakable. Originally composed for Andrés Segovia in the early 1960s, it was later revised and given its première by Michael Lorimer in 1977. The first recording of it, however, was made by Pepe Romero in 1980. Vicente Coves's interpretation is a worthy successor. Torroba's orchestra includes the usual complement of strings and woodwind, in addition to trumpet, percussion, celesta, and harp. This distinctive ensemble provides plenty of tone colour but is not so large as to overwhelm the soloist.

The first movement is marked *Allegretto, comodo* and starts with a light-hearted melody in the wind and celesta, which prepares the way for the solo guitar's presentation of yet another component of the opening group of themes. Its symmetrical phrasing and modality suggest Spanish folk-lore. The guitarist also introduces a contrasting secondary theme, in triple meter and more reflective in nature. Throughout, Torroba skillfully develops his themes in both the guitar and orchestra.

The second movement is marked *Andantino mosso* and exhibits the triple metre typical of Spanish folk-music. Again, Torroba makes colourful use of woodwind and percussion in laying out Spanish rhythms reminiscent of the *seguidillas*, though his harmonic idiom is very modern. The guitar soon answers with its distinctively folkloric theme; in fact solo guitar passages dominate this movement, though occasional interjections from the orchestra continue the impression of a dialogue. An atmospheric *Andante* precedes the finale. This captivating essay is an arrangement of *Romance de los pinos*, a solo composed for Segovia in the 1950s. A dreamy, meditative mood prevails, and everything about the writing suggests a true romance of the pines. The movement is basically a series of variations on this number.

The lighthearted *Allegro* wastes no time shifting into high gear, with its rocketing scales in the winds and syncopated punctuations in the strings. There is a strongly flamenco character to the music, and the digital pyrotechnics this movement demands of the soloist constitute the supreme test of a guitarist's agility.

Aires de La Mancha (1966)

Correspondence between Torroba and Segovia from 1963 refers to a work "sobre ambiente manchego" (with the ambience of La Mancha), which Segovia had apparently requested from the composer. The result of this collaboration was *Aires de La Mancha* (Airs of La Mancha), published in 1966. This work consists of a series of short, evocative pieces clearly inspired by the Castilian folklore of La Mancha, in central Spain. The first movement, *Jeringonza*, refers to a language game popular among children in Spain and Latin America. It involves adding the letter p after each vowel in a word, and then repeating the vowel. For example, *Carlos* turns into *Cápar-lopos*. The playful character of this movement suggests something of the tongue-twisting lightheartedness of the game. *Ya llega el invierno* (Winter is already arriving) is a melancholy song that receives an appropriately introspective setting here. *Copilla*, or very little *copla* (song or song verse), is one of the shortest pieces Torroba ever composed, lasting about a

minute. Yet, in that short time he succeeds in capturing the melodic essence of his subject. The equally songlike *La Pastora* is inspired by Torroba's affection and admiration for the novel *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, specifically the Pastoral Episode of the shepherdess, Marcela, who was painfully in love. The suite ends with a *Seguidilla*, a lively song and dance in triple meter that Torroba evoked time and again in his works for the stage and the guitar.

Suite castellana (c. 1920)

The *Suite castellana* contains Torroba's first-ever composition for the guitar, the *Danza*; he composed the *Fandanguillo* and *Arada* afterwards and then combined them into a Castilian suite. This was composed about 1920 for Andrés Segovia, who gave the première, published, and recorded it. The *Fandanguillo* is marked *Allegro, tempo di Fandango*. A *fandanguillo* is a variant of the fandango, and like so many Spanish songs and dances, it alternates sections in which either dancing or singing (*copla*) predominates. A striking feature of this piece is that it starts out presenting a very brief *copla* melody. This is followed by a lively A section, which soon yields to a lyrical B section elaborating on the *copla* idea presented as an introduction. A repeat of the A section brings this little masterpiece to a close.

An *arada* is traditionally a work song associated with plowing fields. *Arada* is also in ABA form, and the relatively expansive middle section makes imaginative use of natural and artificial harmonics, as well as striking exploration of the instrument's potential for chromaticism and modulation. The *Danza* is marked *Vivo*, and the A section evinces a lively triple metre, while the brief B section features a lovely *copla*-like passage, marked *Lento espressivo*. A verbatim restatement of the A section serves as the suite's vivacious finale.

Walter Aaron Clark, University of California, Riverside
William Craig Krause, Hollins University

Authors of *Federico Moreno Torroba: A Musical Life in Three Acts* (Oxford, 2013)

Pepe Romero



Photo: Jesús Ruiz

The guitarist Pepe Romero has been honoured by kings, heads of state, and major institutions, but his most important contribution has been to communicate the richness and beauty of the classical guitar to millions of people throughout the world. He has, indeed, become an ambassador of classical music, and, correspondingly, of the classical guitar. He is the second son of the great guitarist Celedonio Romero, and brother of the two guitarists Celin and Angel Romero. Born in Málaga in 1944, by the age of seven, he had appeared on the concert stage for the first time, at the Teatro Lope de Vega in Sevilla. More than fifty years later, he continues to mesmerise audiences throughout the world. During that time, he has given literally thousands of concerts worldwide, many with the remarkable Romero Quartet, and many as a solo instrumentalist. He has worked with almost every major conductor, and has to his credit more than sixty recordings, among which are twenty concerto recordings with the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, with both Neville Marriner and Iona Brown. Pepe Romero has given premières of works by some of the finest composers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and Joaquín Rodrigo, Federico Moreno Torroba, Lorenzo Palomo, Padre Francisco de Madina, Paul Chihara, Enrique Diemecke, Ernesto Cordero, and, most poignantly, Celedonio Romero, have written compositions for him. Always a champion of music by composers from earlier periods of music history, he has also delved into rare archives to re-explore lost pieces by Fernando Sor, Mauro Giuliani, Francesco Molino, Ferdinando Carulli, Johann Kaspar Mertz, Luigi Boccherini, and others. Amid many honours and distinctions Pepe Romero holds an honorary doctorate in music from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the University of Victoria, British Columbia. In June 1996 he received the Premio Andalucía de la Música, the highest recognition given by his native country for his contribution to the arts. In addition His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain knighted Pepe Romero and his brothers into the Order of Isabel la Católica. www.peperomero.com

Vicente Coves



Photo: Jesús Ruiz

Born in Jaén in 1982, the guitarist Vicente Coves lived in Linares until 1997, when he moved to Granada. He began his musical studies with his brother, the conductor Manuel Coves, and since 1997 has been a disciple of the legendary Pepe Romero. His career has brought international acclaim, with appearances in many countries since the age of eleven, as a soloist in the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires, the Orquesta Sinfónica de RTVE (Spanish Radio & Television Symphony Orchestra), the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Russia, the Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra della Toscana, the Cologne Chamber Orchestra, the Orquesta de la Comunidad de Madrid, the Orquesta Ciudad de Granada, the Orquesta de Córdoba, the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Ecuador, the Orquesta Nacional de España, the Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia and the Qatar Philharmonic, among others. He has collaborated with conductors such as Jean-Jacques Kantorow, Adrian Leaper, Isaac Karabtschevsky, Juanjo Mena, Miquel Ortega, Enrique Diemecke, Manuel Coves, and John Neschling, and has played alongside such artists as Pepe Romero, María Bayo, Esperanza Fernández, Horacio Ferrer and Enrique Morente. In 2008 he was awarded the Rubinstein Medal by the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. www.vicente-coves.com

Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra

Principal Conductor and Artistic Director: Manuel Hernández-Silva



Photo: Carlos Barón

The Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra gave its inaugural concert on the 14th February 1991. Throughout all these years it has maintained the commitment to offer the city quality music along with the best conductors and soloists on the national and international scene. The orchestra's programmes comprise mainstream international classics alongside more challenging contemporary works, as well as première performances of new works. Its five principal conductors have been Octav Calleya, Odón Alonso, Alexander Rahbari, Aldo Ceccato and Edmon Colomer. The list of guest conductors includes Jesús López-Cobos, Sergiu Comissiona, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, and Krzysztof Penderecki, among others. The orchestra has been privileged to collaborate with soloists of great distinction, among them Alicia de Larrocha, Boris Belkin, Alfredo Kraus, Joaquín Achúcarro, Montserrat Caballé, Ainhoa Arteta, and Carlos Álvarez.

Manuel Coves



Photo: Jesús Ruiz

Born in Jaén, Manuel Coves studied piano, chamber music and orchestral conducting. He conducts in leading theatres across the world, such as the Teatro Arriaga (Bilbao), Teatros del Canal (Madrid), Teatro Argentino de la Plata (Buenos Aires), Gran Teatro del Liceu (Barcelona), Teatro de la Zarzuela (Madrid), and the Teatro Mayor Julio Mario Santo Domingo (Bogotá), and with orchestras such as the Orquesta de la Comunidad de Madrid, the Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa, the Orquesta Sinfónica del Gran Teatro del Liceu, the Orquesta Sinfónica de les Illes Balears, the Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra, the Extremadura Orchestra, the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia, the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Ecuador, and the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra. His most recent conducting engagements have included Verdi's *Otello* (Mallorca), Puccini's *La bohème* (Madrid), Albéniz's *Pepita Jiménez* (La Plata), *Viva Madrid* and *El Caseño* (Madrid), and Torroba's *Luisa Fernanda* (Bogotá). Since 2009 he has also held the post of artistic and musical director at the Carlos III University of Madrid. www.manuelcoves.com

Special thanks to Walter Clark and José Luis Morata
Guitars made by Pepe Romero Jr. (Pepe Romero, no. 90; Vicente Coves, no. 206)
Vicente Coves plays on Savarez Strings

Left to right: Manuel Coves, Pepe Romero, Vicente Coves
Photo: Jesús Ruiz



An outstanding figure in the history of modern Spanish music, Federico Moreno Torroba is best known for his guitar works, his traditional style embracing the folklore and character of Spain. The *Concierto en Flamenco* requires an exceptional soloist, and Pepe Romero is justly famous for his masterful interpretations in both classical and flamenco genres. The playful *Diálogos entre guitarra y orquesta* adds the luminous sonorities of harp and celesta to its colourful orchestration. *Aires de la Mancha* is evocative of this distinctive region in central Spain, while the *Suite castellana* includes Torroba's first ever composition for guitar, *Danza*. This is the first of three volumes of Torroba's complete works for guitar and orchestra.

Federico Moreno **TORROBA**

(1891-1982)

Concierto en Flamenco (1962)*

1 Fandango	9:36
2 Farruca	5:28
3 Alegrías de Cádiz	4:43
4 Bulerías	6:52

Diálogos entre guitarra y orquesta (1977)

5 Allegretto mosso	9:57
6 Andantino mosso	6:22
7 Andante	6:17
8 Allegro	9:09

Aires de La Mancha (1966) 9:32

9 Jerigonza	1:50
10 Ya llega el invierno	2:05
11 Coplilla	1:04
12 La Pastora	2:05
13 Seguidilla	2:27

Suite castellana (c. 1920) 9:22

14 Fandanguillo	1:56
15 Arada	4:07
16 Danza	3:18

***WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

Pepe Romero, Guitar 1-4 9-13 • Vicente Coves, Guitar 5-8 14-16

Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra 1-8 • Manuel Coves 1-8

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