Regino SÁINZ DE LA MAZA

Guitar Music

Zapateado • El Vito • Seguidilla-Sevillana

Franz Halász, Guitar
Regino Sáinz de la Maza (1891-1981)

Guitar Music

Regino Sáinz de la Maza y Ruiz was born in Burgos, Spain, the eldest son of Serafín Sáinz de la Maza, proprietor of a food shop. One of his younger brothers, Eduardo (1903-1982), often overshadowed by Regino, also became internationally acknowledged as a leading Spanish composer of exquisite guitar works.

Regino began playing the guitar at the age of ten, also taking lessons in piano and composition. When the family moved to San Sebastián in 1910, he continued musical studies at the local Academy of Fine Arts. Later, in Barcelona, he studied with Daniel Fortea, pupil of the great Tárrega, and was deeply influenced by Miguel Llobet, perhaps the most eminent of all Tárrega’s pupils.

In 1916 Sáinz de la Maza made his concert début in Bilbao, performing at the Teatro Arriaga. This was followed by his first Madrid recital on 2nd March, 1920, at the Teatro Lara. Also that year, possibly in Granada, Sáinz de la Maza met Falla who inscribed a photo for him with the words, ‘To Regino Sáinz de la Maza, with all my admiration for the friend and the artist, Manuel de Falla’.

On 20th May he played in Granada, receiving an eloquent comment from the great poet, Federico García Lorca, with a line from his ‘Madrigal de los azucenas’:

‘Con el vito vito va
Con el vito vito viene
La Frontera de Dios.

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The compositions of Regino Sáinz de la Maza reflect his background, experience, and Spanish identity. His student, Ricardo Iznaola, commented: ‘As a composer, he wrote exclusively for the guitar in a stylized idiom that drew heavily on Castilian and Andalusian folkways’.

The recordings and transcriptions of Sáinz de la Maza’s compositions were usually published at the Union Musical Española, the body that popularized the guitar in the 20th century. It was at the Union that the definitive edition of the great guitarist and composer Francisco Tárrega’s Metodo de Guitarra appeared in 1935.

Other works by Sáinz de la Maza include the Etude and Bachianas for solo guitar, the suite Concierto de La Palma, El Vito, La Frontera de Dios (now known as Sydenham’s chorea), and the suite for guitar and orchestra, Lamentación de un Gitano. The compositions of Sáinz de la Maza are characterized by uncontrolled movements of face, hands and feet. The original words of the song begin:

Con el vito vito
Vita (With El Vito vito come, With El Vito vito go)

The style of many traditional studies for guitar, a plaintive melody accompanied by flowing chords, is superstitiously associated with bad luck. The composer of this music is superstitiously associated with bad luck. The composer

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The original

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zalonymus, Ramón Montoya, created a new Rondónia, with different guitar tunings and characteristic themes. Here Sáinz de la Maza provides his own contribution to the genre, rhythmic passages being interspersed with melodic episodes.

The original Petenera (publ. 1964) was probably named after Petenera de Rivera, a singer from Cádiz, though its origins may lie in the music of the synagogue. Often the form is superstitiously associated with bad luck. The composer here provides a classical distillation of the style, blending moments of rhythmic impetus with melodic inventiveness. Albarda y Pasaje (Dawn and Landscape) (publ. 1963) is a further movement from La Frontera de Dios. It begins with repeated notes and animated rhythms before bringing in a slow chordal episode marked lento y triste (slow and sad), but this mood gives way to a more ebullient mood with a lively melody over marching chords.

Sáinz de la Maza was the recipient of many honours including membership of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, the Medal of the City of Burgos, and The Gold Medal of Merit in Work. His daughter, Paloma, received a further posthumous Gold Medal from King Juan Carlos in June 1982.

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Zapateado (publ. 1962), has become one of the composer’s most admired pieces. The flamenco dance is famed for its skilful footwork. This composition moves from lively patterns in the bass to elegant figurations in the upper register. A middle section provides a change of mood with one of Sáinz de la Maza’s most inspired melodic lines.

Meditación (publ. 1963), from four pieces for a film entitled La Frontera de Dios (1965), is a quiet chordal work with a serene melody.

Rondónia (publ.1962), a flamenco form derived from the fandango, takes its title from Ronda, the picturesque Andalusian town surrounded by limestone hills. The

Regino Sáinz de la Maza's sensitive and erudite guitar frequently resounded among our meetings’. Though she makes no mention of the Burgos connection, his daughter’s biography, Regino Sáinz de la Maza, Semblanza de mi padre by Paloma Sáinz de la Maza, includes photos of the artist playing for wounded soldiers in 1938 and giving a recital in the Palacio de Oriente for Generalissimo Franco, Head of State, and the King of Thailand.

In the post-war period Sáinz de la Maza continued to give recitals in Spain and abroad and embarked on both scholarly and creative work. A series of publications with Union Musical Española introduced transcriptions of works by Milan, Sanz, de Visee, Weiss, Bach, and others, and original solos by Monpou, Pittaluga, Pahissa, and other composers. He prepared an edition of Aguado’s Método de Guitarra and edited the standard pedagogic repertoire of Sor, Giuliani, and Carcassi. At the same time his compositions began to be published.

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The German guitarist Franz Halász began his international career in 1993, when he was awarded first prize in the Andrés Segovia Competition in Spain and in the same year first prize in the Japan Seto-Ohashi Competition. In 2000 he won an award from the Munich Ministry for Science and Culture and in 2007 took the Bavarian Culture Prize. His many recordings for BIS include the complete guitar music of Joaquín Turina and Toru Takemitsu, and for Naxos the complete guitar compositions of Hans Werner Henze (8.557344 and 8.557345), and the works of Ferdinando Carulli for guitar and piano (8.570587 and 8.570588). A guest performer at major festivals and events throughout the world, he has worked together with colleagues of high distinction. He is a professor at the Munich University of Music and Performing Arts, and also offers master-classes at Institutes all over the world including the Manhattan School of Music in New York, the Royal Academy Stockholm, the Academy of Music in Oslo, the Salzburg Mozarteum, São Paulo University, Esmuc in Barcelona and Musikene San Sebastián.

This early Seguidilla-Sevillana (publ. 1933) presents strongly evocative Spanish themes and a sense of profundity entirely in keeping with the original inspiration for the work.

Meditación-Estudio (publ. 1923) was intended as an exercise for the co-ordination of right-hand thumb and fingers. But the composer always makes his studies worth playing as pleasant compositions in their own right.

The minuet was originally a French dance popular from the mid-seventeenth to the late eighteenth century. Yet the early nineteenth-century guitarist Sor wrote an abundance of minuets, Tárrega composed Estudio en forma de Minueto and another simply titled Minueto, while Agustín Barrios Mangoré wrote several. Thus Sáinz de la Maza is following a guitar tradition in doing homage to a noble dance.

Cantilena is a term used for a sustained or lyrical vocal line and in Italian refers to a lullaby, but formerly it was also a Latin word for ‘song’ or ‘melody’. Sáinz de la Maza’s Cantilena (publ. 1926) explores a plaintive theme supported by moving chordal patterns. It is an optimistic composition and the mood is ideally suited to the cantabile qualities of the guitar.

Graham Wade
Regino Sáinz de la Maza was a leading guitarist, composer and teacher who earned a place in history as the first soloist to perform Rodrigo’s Concierto de Aranjuez. His compositions are deeply rooted in his Spanish identity, drawing heavily on Castilian and Andalusian folksong. Award-winning guitarist Franz Halász has selected the finest examples of Sáinz de la Maza’s creativity, including the admired Zapateado, atmospheric pieces from the film La Frontera de Dios (tracks 2, 8, 10 and 12), and the profoundly evocative Seguidilla-Sevillana.

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(1896-1981)

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1 Zapateado 2:47 11 Canciones Castellanas 5:26
2 Meditación 1:39 12 Sacrificio 3:10
3 Rondeña 4:04 13 Alegrías 4:05
4 Petenera 2:49 14 Recuerdo 1:19
5 Albada y Paisaje 2:19 15 Estudio en La Menor 1:10
6 Baile de Muñecas 1:47 16 Seguidilla-Sevillana 1:50
7 El Vito 1:44 17 Meditación-Estudio 1:17
8 Idilio 1:37 18 Minueto 1:27
9 Soleá 3:16 19 Cantilena 1:58
10 Romancillo de María Belén 1:54

Franz Halász, Guitar

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