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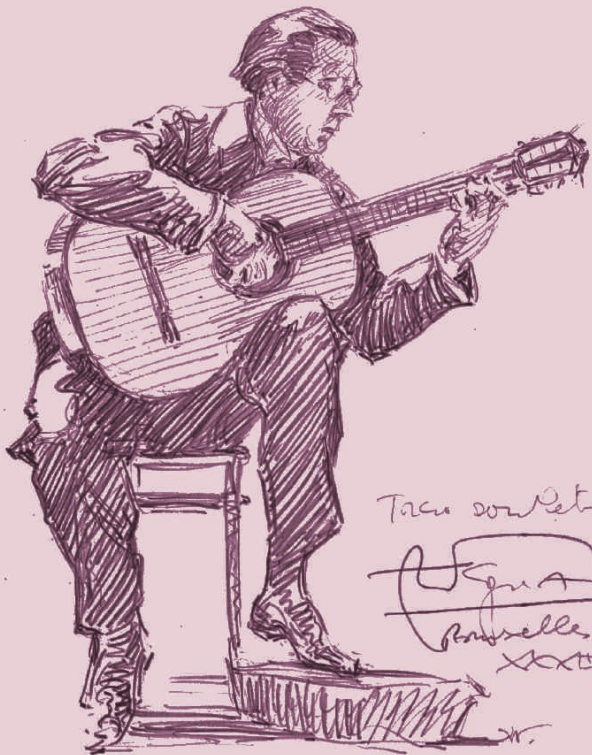
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If today we can talk about the guitar as a concert instrument, it is undoubtedly thanks to Andrés Segovia (1893-1987). His charisma, both as a person and as an artist, was a magnet for composers eager to write music for him, and to give to the guitar a repertoire of the quality available to other classical musicians. Until then, it had been mainly restricted to music written by guitarists themselves.

A great number of these new pieces are to be found in the *Andrés Segovia Archive* — a collection of recently discovered works among Segovia's private papers which were not made public until some 15 years after his death. Most of them were never played by the maestro and only a few were performed once or twice, and then dropped.

After his Paris debut in 1924, the great Spanish guitarist became a regular and much respected performer on the most important musical stages. During the 1920s, he performed in several European centres as well as in the USA to invariable universal acclaim. One city that soon came to occupy a special position in his career was London, where he made his first recordings in 1927 and where he met the British composer, author, poet and occultist Cyril Scott (1879-1970).

CYRIL SCOTT

Many of the works in the Segovia Archive were thought to have been destroyed when his house was sacked during the Spanish Civil War. Among the most legendary of “lost works” for guitar is Cyril Scott’s *Réverie* (this title seems to be Segovia’s) of which only two performances by him are known, in London and Buenos Aires in 1928. *Réverie*, in fact, probably constituted the first movement of what has been revealed to be an entire three-movement *Sonatina*, composed by Scott in 1927 and sadly, his only guitar piece, but an absolute pearl for the guitar repertoire.

Cyril Scott was a highly-respected composer, not only in England but all over Europe, with a large corpus of symphonic and piano pieces. He was often described as the “English Debussy”. If the influence of the French master is obvious, especially in the harmony, his rich personality created his own unique musical language. A scholar of Indian philosophy and Theosophy, this mysticism is also reflected in his music.

The first movement is the most elaborated. In a reduced *Sonatina* form, he creates an illusory world from the very first bars of the introduction with the use of harmonics, light arpeggios, and parallel chords in minor thirds and fourths which he also uses in the two themes for its melodic material, plus whole tone and pentatonic scales which were then considered exotic.

The second movement begins with the use of chromaticism that again introduces parallel chords leading to a distant memory of the beginning at

the end to continue in that dreamlike world.

Finally, the last movement, more vivid rhythmically and imbued with Spanish flavours in the manner of a rondo with constant parallel chords and flashbacks of the first movement that unify the piece.

We are presented with a major work, with an evasive and dreamy atmosphere, composed by an extraordinarily creative man and which requires of the performer a spiritual immersion to fully bring out all its fragrances.

LENNOX BERKELEY

If Cyril Scott's *Sonatina* deserves to be added to the regular repertoire, another *Sonatina* which has already achieved this status is *Sonatina op.52* by Lennox Berkeley (1903-1989) written in 1957 for Julian Bream. It was always thought to be his first piece for solo guitar, followed by *Theme and variations* (1970). So, it was a huge surprise when a new piece by Berkeley was recovered from the Segovia Archive. *Quatre Pièces pour la guitare*, whose French title leads us to deduce it must date from his Parisian years (between 1927 and 1932), is now a little gem in our repertoire. It is a great example of the young Berkeley, still in his twenties, and completing his studies with the famous teacher Nadia Boulanger. From the same generation of British composers as William Walton and Michael Tippett, he admired Ravel and Poulenc who were both personal friends and also representative in his music. Maybe it was through his teacher Boulanger that he met Segovia, a big name on the Paris music scene at that time. In any case, his piece was set aside by

the Spanish guitarist. However, the exciting thing is that we find a composition which shows a very remarkable understanding of the language of the guitar. Four delightful miniatures, lively, gracious, with light textures and neo-classical elements influenced by the French group “Les Six” in what some historians have called Mediterranean lyricism.

The first piece is a dance in a simple triple metre that can evoke a Spanish rhythm with a middle section in tremolo and a humorous accent. The second one is more pensive, two-voice writing alternating with chords and always in a peaceful mood. In the third, we find a slow and melancholic meditation with a sarabande tempo. He uses the texture of the voices in a choral form and the pauses with the silences have a dramatical sense. The last piece is a toccata written in *moto perpetuo* mode and Ravelian style with fast modulations and chords in between. This piece is the most “athletic” one for the performer.

Quatre Pièces pour la guitare reveal an elegant and unaffected virtuosity and these attributes are required of the guitarist who really wants to play this gentle music.

In my previous CD, Andrés Segovia Archive: French Composers (Reference Recordings FR-709), I played *Quatre Pièces pour guitare* by Henri Martelli and in the booklet notes I wrote that Martelli’s work together with Frank Martin’s *Quatre pièces brèves* are the most outstanding four pieces for guitar of the twentieth century; now, they have to share that honour with Berkeley’s *Quatre Pièces*.

Cyril Scott's *Sonatina* and Lennox Berkeley's *Quatre Pièces* have re-written the history of the guitar. They are the first guitar compositions of the 20th century ever written by British composers who were not themselves guitarists.

ETTORE DESDERI

In the first half of the 20th century, composers looked to the earlier generation of German and French composers as their exemplars. Following in the wake of Brahms and Reger is the Italian composer Ettore Desderi (1892-1974) who, despite not being a familiar name, is highly regarded. He also trained as an architect. Two important qualities are manifest both in his personality and in his music: austerity and honesty. He avoided any kind of self-promotion.

Along with his orchestral and chamber music, he composed many songs using the lyrics of Italian poets, but he is particularly noted for his sacred music.

During the 1950s, Desderi was the director of the conservatory in Bologna. Andrés Segovia, already an illustrious concert player and constantly on tour probably met him at one of his Italian recitals. As a result of this meeting, Desderi wrote *Sonata in mi* (1954/55), in four movements (Preludio, Arioso, Scherzo and Toccata) and dedicated it to the Spanish maestro.

After playing this piece, my thoughts went back immediately to my previous recording in which I played *Suite* by Raymond Moulaert. The same comments I made then came swiftly to my mind. *Sonata in mi* is a monumental guitar work. Not only because of its length, but also because of the rigour of the language, idiomatic and austere without any concessions to the gallery. Only complete honesty by the player can reveal its deep inner power.

In the *Preludio*, we find a simple triple metre dance with a rhythmical motor that leads the whole movement with two voices in contrapuntal writing. The *Arioso* is a very lyrical and expressive choral work, very well-structured. In contrast, the dizzying *Scherzo*, in minuetto form with the trio at the middle, is a prestissimo that requires total technical control of guitar skills. The last part, *Toccata*, is the only one already published (in 1975) as a solo piece before the full Sonata was found. It is a *toccata e fuga*, in an improvisatory style with fantasy like an introduction to the fugue which brings us to the climactic moment, maintaining the tension until the end that recalls the beginning of the movement.

Sonata in mi was not his only guitar piece. He published in 1955 a triptych for solo guitar (*Serenata, improvviso e tarantella*) and in 1957 two Italian songs for voice and guitar, *Due cacce quattrocentesche*. Ettore Desderi approaches the guitar with great respect and devotion. For this reason, his music deserves not only to be added to the guitar repertoire but also demands of the guitarist the intense intellectual commitment to do it justice.

ALOÿS FORNEROD

Among the countries where Segovia played most often after his triumphant Paris debut is Switzerland. Since the best place to meet up with composers is after recitals, it is in this context that he met the Swiss composer, teacher and critic Aloÿs Fornerod (1890-1965). Coming from a French-speaking heritage, he studied in Lausanne and then in Paris with Vincent d'Indy. On returning to his country, he taught in Lausanne and Fribourg.

His only guitar work is a short but delicate, charming and sparkling *Prélude*. We can deduce that it was composed in 1926 or 1927 because of a reference in a letter from Segovia to his friend, the Mexican composer Manuel Ponce, and because it is also numbered opus 13. Later, it was reworked into a piano piece and published in the composer's op. 14 collection. It is written in a Scarlatti sonata form with diatonic harmonies, some dissonant chords, and gentle modulations and arpeggios that make constant motion in a harpsichord style.

When I play this Prelude, it reminds me of a glass of champagne with petits fours. A very nice piece to play and to listen to. It is a pity that Segovia didn't play it.

FERNANDE PEYROT

Several cities around the world became important places in the development of Segovia's career. One of these was Geneva, where he was resident during the 1930s. It was there that he met the only female composer in this CD, Fernande Peyrot (1888-1978), and it was in this period that she wrote her *Thème et variations pour guitare*. Even if the Spanish guitarist didn't play it, it is not her only guitar work. In 1954, she composed *Petit suite pour guitare op.31*, and a set of four *Préludes* was published in 1986.

She was born in Geneva and lived there for most of her life except for a period in Paris where she studied with Paul Dukas. A highly-respected figure in her home town, she was not only an eminent composer, but a teacher and conductor. The prestigious Ernest Ansermet gave premieres of some of her compositions.

Thème et variations consists of a theme followed by six variations. In a very refined style, she shows efficient and artistic compositional skills and a good balance between tradition and modernity. Each variation has contrast and original ideas but is unified stylistically. The theme exposes a warm and lyrical melody; a brilliant and cheerful first variation; strong and resonant in the second one, while the third variation is sweet and cantabile; question-and answer between vertical and horizontal lines in the fourth; vibrant and robust in the fifth; and a modest little fugue at the end. We have here another major guitar piece. It is a completely idiomatic work, measured and perfectly articulate. For sure, it is going to be added to the repertoire of many concert players.

HANS HAUG

Many Swiss composers were attracted by Segovia's playing and wrote music for him, including the celebrated Frank Martin, but it was only Hans Haug (1900-1967) who received his attention. His post-Romantic style was very much to the taste of the Spanish guitarist. Several of his pieces for solo guitar had already been published and recorded. Even so, two new pieces were rescued from the maestro's papers: *Étude (Rondo Fantastico)* (1955) and *Passacaglia* (1956). Both of them use chromaticism to try to overcome a tonal idiom very different to the language he uses in his other guitar music.

Thinking about the repertoire for this recording and having chosen the music I wanted to play, another important decision to make was the order of the pieces. As a concert player, when I arrange a concert programme, I think like a chef balancing the menu. For this reason, I begin my CD with *Étude (Rondo Fantastico)*, scales and arpeggios to create the melodic lines, a wonderful way to warm up the fingers, so a good way to start. And to finish my recording as a circular structure, a significant work, *Passacaglia*, a very solid piece: A theme with variations, it combines dark and melancholic sections with subtle harmonies contrasting with brighter and more playful parts. With a solemn end. Not an easy piece to play, but a terrific composition.

My goal in this recording, as it was in my two previous ones, is to put together a high-quality programme of little-known, or in some cases, almost totally neglected gems excluded from the guitar repertoire, and to bring new life to these works, playing with the conviction that this music requires.

A man's music is the key to his character and personality, the reflection of his soul, it is the most authentic representation of the composer who wrote it and also of the musician who interprets it.

—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, France, the USA, the UK, 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 among 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 premiere recordings with pieces by Stephen Dodgson and has collaborated with the Italian publisher Berben in the edition of The Andrés Segovia Archive.

His previous CDs on Reference Recordings have been widely acclaimed. Apart from his musical interests he enjoys literature, art, and likes to participate in various sports.

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

Special Thanks:

I would like to express my sincerest thanks to
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www.robertomoronnperéz.com

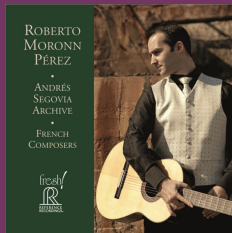
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