



AVAILABILITY
CD: Crotch AmazonUK AmazonUS

Evocaciones de España

Joaquín RODRIGO (1901-1999)

Aranjuez ma pensée [5:29]

Enrique GRANADOS (1867-1916)

Danza Española Op.37 No.5: Andaluza [4:52]

Federico Morena TORROBA (1891-1982)

Cuatro Canciones Españolas: Canción [2:05];
Habanera [1:47]; Romance [1:25]; Malagueña [2:33]

Joaquín NIN (1879-1949)

Cantos de España: Tonada de la niña perdida [2:05];
Tonada Murciana [1:41]; Asturiana [2:51]; El vito [1:45]

Manuel de FALLA (1876-1946)

Suite Popular Española: El paño moruno [2:09];
Nana [2:38]; Canción [1:26]; Jota [3:40];
Asturiana [2:49]; Polo [1:23]

Danza, from *La Vida Breve* [3:27]

Isaac ALBENIZ (1860-1909)

Cordoba, from *Cantos de España* [6:33]

Hector VILLA-LOBOS (1887-1959)

Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 5 [5:17]

Paul COLES (b.1952)

Evocaciones de España: Café solo - Tango [3:29];
Meditación de Poeta-Jondo [3:17]; La chica en el Naranjal - Rondeña [3:43]

Delfín COLOME PUJOL (b.1946)

Dels Ocells [6:58]

Satoshi TANAKA (b.1956)

Nocturno de San Idelfonso [5:21]

● Jones-Mauri Duo: Agustín Mauri (guitar);
Michael Kevin Jones (cello)

rec. 17-19 October, 2007, Santa Eufemia de Cozuelos, Olmos de Ojeda, Palencia (Spain).
DDD

● EMEC E-075 [78:29] P

This well-filled, well-played and well-recorded CD treats us to some unfamiliar music and to some very familiar music heard in a new and attractive guise. And the verb 'treat' is not casually chosen - this is a special entertainment, a feast at which one feels specially privileged, given the intimacy of the music-making. The unfamiliar includes the pieces by Paul Coles, Delfín Colomé Pujol and Satoshi Tanaka - all of them dedicated to the performers and all of them heard here in world premiere recordings.

Guitarist Agustín Mauri and cellist Michael Kevin Jones have plenty of experience of working together - having been active as a duo since 1990 - both on the concert platform and in the recording studio. It shows in the ease and certainty of their musical dialogue, the unpedantic precision with which they support one another and interweave the voices of their instruments. The booklet notes don't make it clear quite who is responsible for many of the arrangements which occupy all but the close of the programme; they are certainly accomplished and effective.

Rodrigo's *Aranjuez ma pensée* derives from the *Concierto de Aranjuez* via an arrangement Rodrigo himself made for voice and guitar; it works well in this new version, lines beautifully sustained and, to borrow from the title of the CD - itself taken from the title of Paul Coles's composition - this really is richly evocative music. It even makes a non-Spaniard feel homesick! The fifth of Granados's *Danzas Españolas*, originally written for piano, also thrives in this arrangement, its Andalusian echoes perhaps even stronger in this form.

In truth, all the more or less familiar music by some of the great Spanish composers of modern times - Albéniz, de Falla, Nin and Torroba - comes up fresh and bright in these arrangements. There are times when hearing the music played by this combination of instruments saves it from the relative inertia of over-familiarity. The same might be said of the fifth *Bachianas Brasileiras*, using an arrangement made for voice and guitar by the composer himself, with the cello substituted for the voice. In truth, though, this was perhaps the one piece to which my strongest reaction was a desire to hear the original rather than the arrangement!

It is with original music that the disc closes. Paul Coles was born in Pembrokeshire and describes himself as "basically a self-taught musician". Though it isn't the only idiom in which he writes, he has long - especially in his writing for the guitar - been attracted by the musical language of Spain. His *Evocaciones de España* was commissioned by the Jones/Mauri duo and premiered by them in 2006. Without ever being in danger of being mere pastiche, Coles's three 'evocaciones' do have about them the feeling that they are a foreigner's take on the Spanish scene, on a traditional idea of Spain more than on the concrete reality of the country. They have a genuine charm, whether in the tango of 'Café solo' or the powerful, appropriately 'deep' meditation of the second piece or the seductive fandango-like rhythms of 'La chica en el Naranjal' ('The Girl in the Orange Grove').

The booklet tells us nothing, biographically speaking, of Delfín Colomé, but I assume that 'Dels Ocells' must be the work of the diplomat and composer of that name. What the booklet does tell us is that the piece was written in Seoul in February 2007, occasioned by an Asian tour made by the Jones and Mauri Duo. Colomé was for a while Spanish Ambassador in Korea, and died, I believe, in the early months of 2008. Colomé was a Catalan by birth and his piece, aptly enough, is what he describes as "a deconstruction of the outstanding and most beautiful Catalan Folk song *El Cant dels ocells*, which Pau Casals played all over the world". Not only Pau Casals, of course - there are versions of the traditional Catalan Christmas carol by, to name but a few, Joaquín Nin, Jose Carreras and the wonderful Catalan jazz pianist Tete Montoliu, as well as endless popularised 'folk' versions. Colomé's version plays all sorts of respectful games with the original, in a fashion both entertaining and quietly moving.

The same Asian tour which the Duo made in 2007 led to the Japanese composer writing for them his *Nocturno de San Idelfonso*: St. Idelfonsus was a seventh century bishop of Toledo. A quiet, reposeful piece, with some beautiful bell-like chords for the guitar and some whispered lines for the cello, Tanaka's piece shows a very refined ear for details of sound, a savouring of small sounds and a relishing of created silences. It isn't particularly Spanish in mood or language. Like everything else on this CD it gets an exemplary performance.

Only those with a puritanical aversion to all arrangements or, indeed, an aversion to the guitar - I have met both before now - are likely to find this CD anything other than a highly pleasurable - a real treat. My only minor dislike is of the rather banal painting by the Valencian artist Manuel Benedito (1875-1963) on the booklet cover.

Glyn Pursglove