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### FEATURE REVIEW by Maria Nockin

**SEGOVIA** *Estudios diarios. Estudio sin luz. For Carl Sandburg. Estudio in E. Estudio-Vals. Estudio para Deli. Macarena. Neblina. Leccion 11; Leccion 12. Tres Preludios en la mayor. Impromptu. Tonadilla. Cinco anécdotas. Once preludios* • Agustín Maruri (gtr) • EMEC 1070 (42:44)

Andrés Segovia (1893–1987), the father of the modern classical guitar movement, composed music for his instrument but never included any of his own pieces on his concert programs. Nor did he record them. He published them only at the request of avid publishers who knew they would sell. Thus, most of his compositions were not available until after his death. He left two volumes of his works to his wife, Emilia, who published them through Editioni Musicali Bérben. Other pieces have



orchestra

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been discovered with other heirs and it is possible that more will yet be found. In his compositions Segovia was definitely in tune with the music of the time in which he was writing, and he composed over much of his career. Some of his works have the simple themes of songs and others require more technical prowess on the part of the guitarist. Agustín Maruri plays all of the works on this disc with great dedication and exquisite style. It was Segovia who brought the guitar out of the bars and cantinas and into the concert hall. His one problem in playing in more formal settings was the inability of the guitars of the early 20th century to be heard in the larger halls. Having heard Segovia play in Carnegie Hall, I can attest to the fact that he and the luthiers who worked with him solved it. At the beginning, he had to hunt for repertoire. He and the composers who worked with him brought guitar studies to universities and conservatories. A born performer, Segovia preferred to concentrate on playing the works of composers he most admired, such as Manuel Ponce, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Alexandre Tansman, and Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Segovia was an avid teacher who had many students throughout his career. Christopher Parkening, John Williams, and Elliot Fisk are among those whom he taught and who carry on his traditions to this day. Most likely his pupils and their technical problems inspired many of Segovia's Studies. The *Estudios diarios* (Daily Studies) entitled "Prayer" and "Remembrance" are simple pieces that honor a good friend. Segovia wrote The *Estudio sin luz* (Study without Light) when he had to undergo an eye operation and began to realize the true value of the gift of sight. His piece *For Carl Sandburg* is charming in its simplicity and the Study in E has some interesting melismas. The waltz adds a bit of

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Melba

Michael Antonello

toe tapping to the mix while the *Study for Deli* has a dark melody that relates to French Impressionism. Segovia's *Macarena* is a bright Spanish dance that makes use of an Afro-Cuban rhythm. In contrast, *Neblina* (Fog) surrounds the listener with soft textures. Lessons 11 and 12 reinforce material that Segovia taught with enchanting melodies while his *Three Preludes in A* could put the student in the mood to tackle Bach. The impromptu also requires strict rhythm and Maruri complies with an excellent technique. The *Tonadilla*, a song that is not danced, offers a full plate of sweet melody. There is a comparable recording of this piece and the *Estudio sin Luz* by Segovia student Christopher Parkening on EMI from 1991, but the other selections on Maruri's disc are not easily available. Segovia referred to the *Five Anecdotes* as sins of his youth, but he wrote them when he was looking back from his fourth decade. These works and the 11 Preludes that follow contain subtle harmonic surprises that pique the listener's interest. The sound on this disc is a little bit dry, but it does give the listener the impression of sitting in a small concert hall directly in front of the guitarist. **Maria Nockin**

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