



## Andrea González Caballero

Winner 2016  
'Alhambra'  
International  
Guitar Competition

CLERCH  
TÁRREGA  
ARCAS  
ASSAD  
BRITTEN  
ALBÉNIZ  
CALANDÍN  
MANJÓN

## Andrea González Caballero: Guitar Recital

Joaquín Clerch • Francisco Tárrega • Julián Arcas • Sérgio Assad • Benjamin Britten  
Emilio Calandín • Antonio J. Manjón • Isaac Albéniz

The compositions selected here represent elements of the guitar repertoire which when juxtaposed illuminate various aspects. For example, the first piece, *Estudio de trémolo* by Joaquín Clerch contrasts and compares with Francisco Tárrega's famous *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*, one of the most esteemed tremolo solos in guitar history. *Preludios de Primavera*, homage to Tárrega, also takes us to the Alhambra and to Albéniz's *Torre Bermeja*, the tower near the Alhambra. Next a contemporary composer, Sérgio Assad, pays homage to Julián Arcas, one of the 19th-century composers who influenced Tárrega.

Benjamin Britten's *Nocturnal after John Dowland, Op. 70* is followed by Emilio Calandín's *Tres cuentos para Alhambra* concerning insomnia and dreams. Antonio J. Manjón's *Aire Vasco* ('Basque Air') includes the Spanish dance, the *zortzico*, and is paired here with Albéniz's dance-like evocation of Andalusia. Listeners may well discover further co-relations and resonances between works.

Joaquín Clerch, born in Havana in 1965, studied with several teachers including Leo Brouwer and Costas Costioli. Later he moved to Salzburg to have lessons with Eliot Fisk, graduating with the highest honours. Clerch has performed concerts worldwide and won many international guitar competitions. He is now professor of guitar at the Robert Schumann University in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Clerch's *Estudios* are well known among guitarists not only for the technical aspects but as appropriate concert studies. Dedicated to Andrea González Caballero, his *Estudio de trémolo* is an expressive composition moving to the intricacies of the tremolo after a brief introduction. (The tremolo is a technical effect by which a melodic line on the guitar can assume some of the continuity of the human voice. It is akin to the art of the mandolin where this device is used constantly.)

Andrea Caballero has added the following comment: "This piece ... is based on *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*'s first three notes motive (E–D–C). This study was written to exercise the different accents on the tremolo and to get more power and precision especially for the index finger. The dissonant and powerful parts are combined with evocative

and melodic moments which remind the listener of Tárrega's most famous composition."

*Preludios de Primavera* ('Preludes of Spring'), a suite in seven movements written in Moncofa, Catalonia, and Düsseldorf, Germany in the spring and summer of 2005, is dedicated to Mary Carmen Bertos, 'who inspired these preludes'. The first prelude, *Primavera*, bears the quotation *Todo lo que tocas se hace primavera*, by the Cuban folk singer Silvio Rodríguez (b.1946). This is from his song *Mariposas* ('Butterflies'), where butterflies symbolise the souls of warriors fallen in battle:

*Eras como esos días en que eres la vida  
y todo lo que tocas se hace primavera.  
(You are like those days in which you are life itself,  
And all that you touch creates springtime.)*

The piece begins slowly before evolving into passionate chords and fragments of tremolo and scalic passages. The coda returns to the mood of the opening.

*Las olas de Moncofa* ('The waves of Moncofa'), dedicated to Adrián Rius, the biographer of Tárrega, is a brief work with startling streaks of colour. The heading quotation, *Se lo confió a la espuma de una ola* ('We trust in the spume of a wave'), is by Raúl Roa (1907–1982), Cuban politician, diplomat and writer. *Homenaje a Tchaikovsky*, marked *andante*, in modern idiom, has a lyrical melody over a steady bass line. The time signature shifts from 4/4 to 3/4 and back again.

*El adiós* ('The Farewell') presents a quotation from the great Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda (1904–1973):

*Aunque éste sea el último dolor que ella me causa,  
Y éstos sean los últimos versos que yo le escribo.  
(Though this will be the last pain that she will cause  
me to suffer,  
and these will be the last verses that I write for her.)*

The fifth movement, *Y si pienso en la Habana* ('And if I think of Havana'), dedicated to Inge and Florian Kadner for their silver wedding, introduces the rhythmic echoes of Havana, a vivacious dialogue between bass and treble.

*Souvenir de Granada*, a virtuosic work in two distinct sections, is dedicated to Paco Marín (b. 1946), a renowned guitar maker of Granada. The final movement, dedicated to the composer's daughter Minerva, is sad and reflective, as its title suggests, *Cuando tú no estás* ('When you are not here').

Julián Arcas, composer and guitarist, was born in Almería, Spain. In 1862 he visited England where he played for the royal family at the Brighton Pavilion. In 1870, after giving many concerts throughout Europe and Spain, he returned to Almería where he collaborated with the great luthier, Antonio Torres (1817–1892), in developing guitar construction. He moved ten years later to Antequera, near Málaga, where he died at the age of fifty. His compositions are based primarily on Iberian folk and flamenco elements.

The *bolero*, a popular dance or song, originated in Spain during the final decades of the 18th century. Arcas's *Bolero*, in moderate tempo and triple metre, alternates between arpeggiated chordal patterns and lyrical themes in traditional style.

The brothers Sérgio and Odair Assad, born in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1952 and 1956 respectively, are one of the top guitar duos in the world as well as being successful solo recitalists with international careers. They studied in their formative years in Rio de Janeiro with the guitarist/lutenist Monina Távora, a student of Segovia. Their virtuosity has inspired many composers to dedicate pieces to them. Sérgio Assad, acknowledged as one of the finest contemporary composers for guitar, has a long list of works in his catalogue.

For *Homenaje a Julián Arcas* Andrea Caballero has kindly provided this introduction: 'Sérgio Assad composed this piece in remembrance of Julián Arcas's *Bolero*. The composition opens in a meditative mood and progresses towards the main theme of the work. The central section reveals various new rhythmic patterns the composer has introduced to give the piece a new character. In the final section the motives of the first part reappear followed by a technically challenging and exciting coda.'

Francisco Tárrega was a personality of immense significance in the development of technical innovations, compositions, and the art of arrangement. His advocacy of new concepts of guitar construction embodied in the work of Torres has proved influential right up to the present time.

Working with the Torres type of instrument, Tárrega established teaching methods including the most practical way of holding the guitar, principles of left and right hand techniques, and studies to develop a player's skills. Furthermore, Tárrega composed some remarkable music for the instrument. In many exquisite miniatures, often influenced by Chopin, he established a Spanish Romantic voice for the guitar which has enchanted public and players ever since.

The most famous of his compositions is *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*, celebrating the Moorish palace, the Alhambra in Granada, one of the world's finest historical monuments. This superb example of Tárrega's wistful creation of atmosphere is a thin sliver of delightful melody, tastefully harmonised, concise but utterly memorable.

Completed in 1963, *Nocturnal after John Dowland*, Op. 70 by Benjamin Britten, the greatest English composer of the mid-20th century, was soon acknowledged as one of the most significant compositions in the guitar's history. Dedicated to Julian Bream, it unites the contemporary world of dissonance and strangeness with Elizabethan concepts of emotion and melancholy. Though written for the guitar, at Julian Bream's request, the work also pays homage to the dedicatee's affinities with the lute of John Dowland whose music Bream took to international audiences, demonstrating its eternal depths, uniqueness, and relevance. The composition is a set of eight variations with the theme, Dowland's song *Come, heavy Sleep* appearing at the very end:

Come, heavy Sleep, the image of true Death,  
And close up these my weary weeping eyes,  
Whose spring of tears doth stop my vital breath,  
And tears my heart with Sorrow's sigh-swoll'n cries.  
Come and possess my tired thought-worn soul,  
That living dies, till thou on me be stole.

The *Nocturnal* is an exploration of moods of sleep, passing through intense agitation and disquiet, leading towards the final statement of melancholy serenity which resolves all tensions. It was first performed by Julian Bream at Aldeburgh, England, on 12 June 1964, and recorded soon afterwards, bringing about a virtual re-orientation of the guitar's repertoire.

Emilio Calandín, was born in Valencia into a family with a strong artistic tradition in visual arts, acting and music. His

mother, a pianist, taught him his first music lessons. Later he enrolled at the Valencia Conservatory. Emilio Calandini has since pursued a very successful academic and creative career including appointments as professor of harmony and composition at Valencia Conservatory.

The composer has written the following note on *Tres cuentos para Alhambra* ('Three Tales of the Alhambra'): '*Tres cuentos para Alhambra* was written for a commission from the Alhambra International Guitar Competition and is dedicated to this important enterprise. The title paraphrases Washington Irving's Tales of the Alhambra and, like the book itself, sketches three situations varied in character but linked by a single theme. The composition is intended to highlight the immensely expressive potential of the guitar.

'*Insomnio* ('Insomnia'), *El sueño de una noche de invierno, casi primavera* ('A winter night's dream when it is almost spring'), and *El sonido de la mariposa* ('The sound of the butterfly') are three individual movements which, without being descriptive, do have a poetic basis. In creating the piece and constructing it in three movements I have used fifteen melodic designs already present in a previous work, *La vía del sol* ('The Path of the Sun'), from a poem written by the young Valencian poet, Ana Dopicó.

'More than anything else my aim has been to find sonorities and tone qualities in this instrument that will transport us to unknown and unfathomable places such as the world of dreams or the sound of a butterfly in flight, beautiful, irregular and intangible.'

Antonio Jiménez Manjón, born in Villacarrillo, Jaén, southern Spain, became blind when still a young child. In 1893 he went to South America and settled in Buenos Aires, returning to Europe for a concert tour in 1912–13. He met the

great Paraguayan guitarist, Agustín Barrios, in Montevideo in 1912 and gave him some tuition. It is said that after hearing a concert by Manjón in 1889, the Catalan maestro, Miguel Llobet, decided to make the guitar his lifetime's occupation.

*Aire Vasco* ('Basque Air') is a virtuoso piece beginning with a harmonised statement of the theme itself, marked *dolce e semplice*. After a shift from E minor to E major, a traditional Basque dance, the *zortzico*, in 10/8 time with many dotted rhythms, takes over, also moving from E minor to E major in two distinct sections. A highly intricate series of episodes follows until the return of the original theme concludes the work.

Isaac Albéniz, born in Camprodón, in northern Spain, spent much of his childhood in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. Though he was Catalan by birth, his celebration of Andalusian cities remains a perennial evocation of Iberian Romanticism. Albéniz composed mainly for piano, writing nothing directly for the guitar, but ever since Tárrega first transcribed some of his pieces, Albéniz's music has remained at the very heart of the guitar repertoire.

*Torre Bermeja* ('The Red Tower') refers to the stone towers south of the Alhambra palace of Granada. In the wars of the 13th-century, Spanish forces used the old castle of Torres Bermejas as their fortress. The composition begins with rapid *arpeggio* passages in D major, after which the first theme appears in D minor. The middle section introduces a touching melody in D major using expressive harmonics and *pizzicato* effects. Then we return to the opening theme and a rousing finale.

Graham Wade

## Andrea González Caballero

Andrea González Caballero (b. 1992) is one of the most acclaimed young guitarists of her generation. She made her solo debut at the age of eight and has since performed in international guitar festivals and halls such as the Spanish National Auditorium, King's Cross in London, the Monterey Guitar Festival and the San Diego Guitar Festival. She has performed extensively across the United States, Europe and Asia to outstanding reviews. Celebrated as a young talent, Caballero has been awarded with international prizes such as the XIII Alhambra International Guitar Competition in Spain and the XL Fernando Sor Guitar Competition in Italy, and has been supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and AIE (Spanish Artists Association), among others. In 2010 she began her studies at the Robert Schumann Musikhochschule in Düsseldorf where she completed her Bachelor's and Master's degrees with honours under the tutelage of the world-renowned guitarist Joaquín Clerch. [www.andreagonzalezcaballero.com](http://www.andreagonzalezcaballero.com)

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This programme by Andrea González Caballero, winner of the 2016 Alhambra International Guitar Competition in Spain, has been carefully chosen for comparison and contrast. Containing a wide range of compositional styles from the romantic 19th century to the present, it includes characteristic Spanish music by Tárrega and Albéniz, freshly minted works by some of today's most important composers from Cuba, Spain and Brazil, as well as one of the most significant mid-20th-century works for guitar, the *Nocturnal* by Benjamin Britten.

## ANDREA GONZÁLEZ CABALLERO

### Guitar Recital

- |                                      |       |                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Joaquín CLERCH (b. 1965)</b>      |       | <b>Sérgio ASSAD (b. 1952)</b>        |       |
| 1 Estudio de trémolo ***             | 2:52  | 11 Homenaje a Julián Arcas **        | 4:50  |
| <b>Francisco TÁRREGA (1852–1909)</b> |       | <b>Benjamin BRITTEN (1913–1976)</b>  |       |
| 2 Recuerdos de la Alhambra           | 4:25  | 12 Nocturnal after John Dowland,     |       |
| <b>Joaquín CLERCH</b>                |       | Op. 70 (ed. Julian Bream)            | 16:46 |
| Preludios de Primavera               | 11:49 | <b>Emilio CALANDÍN (b. 1958)</b>     |       |
| 3 1. Primavera                       | 2:50  | Tres cuentos para Alhambra           | 6:25  |
| 4 2. Las olas de Moncofa             | 0:27  | 13 No. 1. Insomnio                   | 1:28  |
| 5 3. Homenaje a Tchaikovsky          | 1:18  | 14 No. 2. El sueño de una noche de   |       |
| 6 4. El adiós                        | 2:24  | invierno                             | 3:14  |
| 7 5. Y si pienso en la Habana        | 1:07  | 15 No. 3. El sonido de la mariposa   | 1:41  |
| 8 6. Souvenir de Granada             | 1:49  | <b>Antonio J. MANJÓN (1866–1919)</b> |       |
| 9 7. Cuando tú no estás              | 1:51  | 16 Aire Vasco                        | 6:59  |
| <b>Julián ARCAS (1832–1882)</b>      |       | <b>Isaac ALBÉNIZ (1860–1909)</b>     |       |
| 10 Bolero                            | 2:13  | 17 Torre Bermeja, Op. 92, No. 12     | 4:45  |

\*Dedicated to Andrea González Caballero

\*\*WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS

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