



**Leo  
BROUWER**

**Music for Bandurria  
and Guitar**

**Pedro Chamorro,  
Bandurria**

**Pedro Mateo González,  
Guitar**



## Leo Brouwer (b. 1939)

### Music for Bandurria and Guitar

Leo Brouwer from Havana, Cuba, is universally acknowledged as one of the most challenging and innovative of contemporary composers. His prolific output ranges from solo guitar pieces to symphonic works, including concertos, chamber music, and many film scores. Brouwer's guitar works have developed over four decades through various styles embracing the avant-garde and the experimental, as well as neo-romanticism. His guitar music is now performed internationally wherever the guitar is played and frequently recorded, making him one of the most popular of twentieth century composers for the instrument.

On this recording we hear the music of the bandurria, in consort with the guitar. The bandurria is a five or six-course lute type with a small, cittern-shaped body, a flat back, and a shorter fretted neck than the guitar, played with a plectrum. The instrument dates back to the sixteenth century hence its perennial popularity in many countries of South America having been transported to the New World by the Spanish explorers.

*Música Incidental Campesina* (Incidental Music of the Countryside) expresses the rhythms and energies of Cuban folk music. It has been arranged for various ensemble combinations such as two guitars, or mandolin and guitar.

*Preludio* uses the traditional alternation between 6/4 and 3/4 rhythms from bar to bar, the *hemíola*, as well as shifting to other time signatures within the piece, to communicate a sense of a group of rural musicians overheard from a distance. The intricate rhythms and syncopations are characteristic of folk music in this region. *Interludio* offers a moment of reflection with a plaintive tune accompanied by gentle chords. *Danza*, marked *Allegretto*, is a vigorous intermingling of rhythmic patterns beginning with a 5/8 time signature and moving rapidly to 6/8 and 3/4 alternation as in the *Preludio*. Once again a line of melody, switching from player to player and back again, is punctuated with energetic chords, some syncopated. *Final* offers some dazzling interchanges between the two players

involving intricate rhythmic effects. Though the rhythms are traditional the mood is modern with more than a hint of dissonance. The movement ends with a suddenly reflective chordal sequence.

Victor Jara (1932-1973), Chilean singer and songwriter, theatre director, teacher, poet, and political activist, became a martyr for his beliefs when during General Pinochet's army coup in Chile on 11th September 1973, he was arrested, tortured and murdered.

Brouwer's variations take as their inspiration one of Jara's most popular songs, *Lo único que tengo* (The Only Thing I Have). Its theme is the sadness of being without a place on the earth, far from family and home. The variations cover a kaleidoscopic range of emotions and techniques.

*Sonata for Bandurria* was given a first performance in 2012 by its dedicatee, the bandurria virtuoso Pedro Chamorro. It was the first sonata Leo Brouwer had written for an instrument somewhat overlooked by serious composers. For Pedro Chamorro to have such a composition dedicated to him was the fulfilment of an ambition and he described how the work encapsulates the aesthetics of Brouwer's characteristic style, including Afro-Cuban elements, minimalism, and many rhythmic and harmonic contrasts.

*Sonata del Caminante* (The Wanderer's Sonata), composed in 2007, is dedicated to the eminent Brazilian guitarist, Odair Assad. Leo Brouwer wrote in the liner notes for the first recording:

*Sonata del Caminante was composed in a few days for Odair Assad. Composition is like a birth with pain, effort and joy, but in this case everything was organic. Thinking and doing were the same. An impossible challenge for any guitar virtuoso is commonplace for Odair...Thematically you will not find in Sonata del caminante sweet melodies nor gracious batucadas; if I intended to achieve something it was 'intensity'. I hope to have succeeded.*

The sonata offers tribute both to Odair Assad and the immense vistas of Brazil. The second movement, *El Gran Sertão*, refers to the great outback, the semi-arid region in north-eastern Brazil close to the equator. *Toccata Nordestina* celebrates the municipality of the state of Bahia in the northern region of Brazil.

*Micropiezas*, completed in August 1957, were dedicated to Darius Milhaud. The first four movements were published by Max Eschig in 1973, though the fifth came into print only in 1985. The work is in the form of a suite with echoes of a Cuban salon dance of the nineteenth century and presents contrasting rhythms with a vivid musical dialogue between the players.

There are many subtle aspects of interest within this suite. *Micropieza No. 2*, for example, alludes to the conga at the beginning while *No. 3* just before the end quotes from Brouwer's guitar piece, *Danza característica*. Isabelle

Hernández, in her biography of Brouwer, recommends that 'careful attention should be given to *Micropieza No. 4* since this piece contains some of the most successful polyphonic effects the composer has achieved'.

*No. 5* takes the form of a theme with variations on the French children's song, *Frère Jacques*. This involves various styles and *tempi* from the comparatively traditional (as at the opening) to flamenco type embellishment, from markings such as *tranquillo* (just before the section in harmonics, the little bell-like sounds which sound poignant on the guitar), to *agitando poco* a few bars later. The movement achieves its effect by the juxtaposition of many contrasts in remarkably close proximity subjecting the theme's familiar simplicity to a variety of unexpected dissonances and moods.

Graham Wade

### Pedro Chamorro



Photo: Angel Valencia Rubio

Performer, composer, professor of plucked instruments at the Conservatory Arturo Soria, and Doctor in Arts (Music) *cum laude* at the Conservatorio Profesional de Música Arturo Soria, Madrid, Pedro Chamorro studied bandurria with Manuel Grandío in Spain and mandolin with Juan Carlos Muñoz in Luxembourg. He later perfected his studies with Marga Wilden-Hüsgen in Germany. He has received several awards, including the Bandurria National Prize 'Manuel Grandío' in 1976/77, the 1986 National Award for his Beethoven recording with the pianist Esteban Sánchez, and the Interregional Mandolin Prize at the Konservatorium Esch-Alzette (Luxembourg) in 1994. As a performer, he has played in numerous chamber music ensembles, including a duo with Caridad Simón, formed in 1986. He is the main conductor of Il Forum Musicale European Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra in Luxembourg, the Orquesta Efimera de guitarras José Tomás in Petrer, Spain, and the plucked strings instruments orchestra of the Conservatory Arturo Soria. He is the dedicatee of Leo Brouwer's *Sonata para Bandurria* of 2011 and the *Concierto de La Mancha* for bandurria and symphony orchestra of 2015. [www.pedrochamorro.com](http://www.pedrochamorro.com)

### Pedro Mateo González



Photo: Albert Simón

Born in Avila in 1983, where he started his musical studies, Pedro Mateo González studied in Germany and Spain with teachers including José Luis Rodrigo, Roberto Aussel, Hugo Geller and Thomas Müller-Pering. He carried out post-graduate studies in Düsseldorf and Salzburg with Joaquín Clerch, Ricardo Gallén and Eliot Fisk, supported by scholarships from, among others, La Caixa, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Spanish Ministry for Culture. He is currently a professor at the conservatories of Mallorca and Zaragoza. He has been a prize-winner of several competitions, including the Boston Guitar Fest, the Jeunesses musicales, the Ciudad de Coria and Miami's International Competition, and has performed in prominent concert halls of Europe, Asia and America, and as a soloist with orchestras including the Orquesta Sinfónica de RTVE, the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León and the Orquesta Sinfónica de les Illes Balears, conducted by Alejandro Posadas, Adrián Leaper and Leo Brouwer. He has recorded for the Naxos and Eudora labels and has played chamber music concerts with outstanding musicians such as Pedro Chamorro (bandurria), José Manuel Losada (violin) and Joaquín Riquelme (viola).

A native of Cuba, Leo Brouwer is universally acknowledged as one of the most challenging and innovative of contemporary composers. This programme brings the guitar into consort with the bandurria, a small lute dating from the 16th century and perennially popular in South America, the combination perfect for expressing the rustic rhythms of Cuban folk style in *Música Incidenta Campesina*. This recording covers a kaleidoscopic range of techniques and emotions, from political martyrdom in Chile to the immense vistas of Brazil. The *Sonata para Bandurria* was composed for one of the virtuoso performers on this recording, Pedro Chamorro.

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**BROUWER**  
(b. 1939)

**Música Incidenta Campesina  
(Incidental Music of the  
Countryside) (1978)\* 1, 2**

1 I. Preludio	1:05
2 II. Interludio	1:12
3 III. Danza	1:04
4 IV. Final	1:07

**Variaciones sobre un tema de  
Víctor Jara (Variations on a  
Theme of Víctor Jara) (2007) 2** 16:12

5 I. Introducción	2:43
6 II. Variations 1-4	4:52
7 III. Variations 5-7	4:46
8 IV. Finale	3:51

**Sonata para Bandurria (2011)\* 1** 16:58

9 I. El ritmo de las luces y las sombras	5:48
10 II. Nocturnal	6:19
11 III. Introducción y Toccata	4:51

**Sonata del Caminante  
(The Wanderer's Sonata) (2007) 2** 16:09

12 I. Visión de la Amazonia	1:17
13 II. El Gran Sertao	6:03
14 III. Danza Festiva	3:16
15 IV. Toccata Nordestina	5:33

**Micropiezas (Micropieces) para  
Bandurria y Guitarra (1957)\* 1, 2** 8:48

16 I. No. 1 Tranquillo	1:18
17 II. No. 2 Allegro vivace	1:40
18 III. No. 3 Vivacissimo muy rítmico	1:08
19 IV. No. 4 –	1:26
20 V. No. 5 Andante tranquilo	3:16

\* **WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

**Pedro Chamorro, Bandurria 1 • Pedro Mateo González, Guitar 2**

Recorded at St John Chrysostom Church, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, from 15th to 18th May, 2014

Producers: Norbert Kraft and Bonnie Silver • Engineer and editor: Norbert Kraft

Guitar by Paco Marín, Granada • Bandurria by Alfonso Benito, 1947

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