

RODRIGO

Guitar Music • 3

Elogio de la guitarra

Tríptico • Dos preludios

Sonata a la española

El álbum de Cecilia

Dos pequeñas fantasías

Celil Refik Kaya



Joaquín Rodrigo (1901–1999)

Elogio de la guitarra (1971)	14:17	El álbum de Cecilia (1948) (arr. Pepe Romero [b. 1944])	7:45
1 I. Allegro	5:00	12 No. 1. María de los Reyes, Sevillanas	0:44
2 II. Andantino	4:00	13 No. 2. A la jota, Jota de las palomas	1:26
3 III. Allegro	5:14	14 No. 3. Canción del hada rubia	1:18
Dos preludios (1977)	7:19	15 No. 4. Canción del hada morena	0:44
4 I. Adagio	3:34	16 No. 5. El negrito Pepo	1:50
5 II. Allegro	3:45	17 No. 6. Borriquillos a Belén	1:29
Sonata a la española (1969)	8:03	Triptico (1978)	10:22
6 I. Allegro assai	2:48	18 I. Prélude	3:30
7 II. Adagio	3:09	19 II. Nocturne	4:16
8 III. Allegro moderato – IV. Tiempo de bolero	2:06	20 III. Scherzino	2:32
9 Aria antigua (1960) (version for flute and guitar)	3:41	Dos pequeñas fantasías (1987)	9:15
Serenata al alba del día (1982) (version for flute and guitar)	4:24	21 No. 2. Ecos de Sefarad	4:49
10 I. Andante moderato	2:41	22 No. 1. ¡Qué buen caminito!	4:25
11 II. Allegro	1:43	Total Timing	65:24

Joaquín Rodrigo (1901–1999) Guitar Works · 3

Joaquín Rodrigo, composer of the renowned guitar concerto, *Concierto de Aranjuez*, is acknowledged as one of the great Spanish composers of the 20th century. He extended the Romantic Impressionist tradition of Albéniz, Granados and Falla, but was deeply influenced by French music, having studied from 1927 to 1932 with Paul Dukas in Paris. Though blind from childhood, Rodrigo wrote almost two hundred works, including orchestral, choral and ballet music, many concertos, a host of songs, and a quantity of instrumental solos for pianoforte, guitar, violin, cello and other instruments.

The composer's contribution to the guitar is now appreciated as one of the central pillars of the concert repertoire. Over the years Rodrigo explored the Spanish nature of the guitar, responding to the distinguished history of plucked instruments going back to the 16th century. Many strands of Iberian culture, including Catalan, Valencian, flamenco and folk song, as well as elements from European music north of the Pyrenees, are integrated in his guitar writing and his achievement remains central in the instrument's development since the 1940s.

Rodrigo's compositions for solo guitar comprise no more than some 25 titles. Yet the significance of his output is far greater than the sum of its parts because of his extraordinary insight into the nature of the guitar, developed over decades. His works for the instrument range between *Zarabanda lejana* ('Distant Sarabande') (1926), and his final contribution to the repertoire, *Dos pequeñas fantasías* ('Two Little Fantasias') of 1987. Often Rodrigo wrote nothing for guitar for several years, being occupied during these periods with his normal creation of hundreds of pages of music for concertos, orchestral and choral works, songs, piano and other instrumental pieces.

Joaquín Rodrigo, a concert pianist, never played the guitar, though once in a casual moment he was photographed holding one. The fact that Rodrigo was not a guitarist may explain some of the technical intricacies in many of his pieces. Certainly Rodrigo remained indifferent to the usual limitations of the guitar in his compositions. Once

he imagined a sound it had to be played.

Rodrigo's guitar music is full of variety and contrast. He wrote no progressive studies or 'easy' pieces to tempt students. Every composition is a committed artistic statement intended to do honour to Spain's national instrument by extending its expressive capabilities. Thus the works range from impressionistic geographically inspired vignettes to the more challenging forms of sonatas and distilled essences of traditional dances.

It took a few years for Rodrigo's solo guitar works to achieve the acknowledgement they deserved. To some extent they were overshadowed for decades by the mighty mountain of the *Concierto de Aranjuez*, but from the 1960s onwards, the impetus gathered and Rodrigo was ultimately appreciated as one of the great creative composers for the 20th-century guitar.

Elogio de la guitarra

Elogio de la guitarra ('In Praise of the Guitar') (1971) is an extended work of great charm and momentum in three intense movements. Rodrigo delighted in writing introductions and his comments on this composition are of particular interest:

'My intention was to demand a precise and infallible technique of the guitarist, as well as a profound sensitivity to the framework and thematics of the music. I have composed my "challenge" to the guitarist, starting rather comfortably with the "sonata" form. The first movement, *Allegro*, is made up of two parts: the first is a chordal progression embellished by scale triplets. This leads to a melodic theme which combines at the end of the movement with chordal writing.

The second movement, *Andantino*, has a more serene character and evokes an ancient Castilian cathedral. The firm resonances of the harmonic chords underline the two themes of a distant Gregorian chant. The first theme of the chant ends in a calm series of

chords that lead to the second theme in arpeggios. These chords help reach the essence of the theme. The second movement is based on the harmonic register of the guitar.

The third movement, *Allegro*, begins with lively triplet figures and is developed in extended passages of scales, such as those previously heard in the first movement. The second part (indicated *più allegro*) is characterised by rapid patterns requiring great virtuosity and leading to a conclusion of sharp contrasts, with notes executed by the left hand alone that are repeated by the performer as he strikes the guitar's wood with his right hand.'

Rodrigo's wife, Victoria Kamhi, explained that in this work Rodrigo 'managed to encompass the brilliant possibilities of classical guitar music, as well as the diabolical requirements made of its player, due to the characteristics of this instrument'. *Elogio de la guitarra* remains one of the most technically demanding works in the contemporary repertoire and a thrilling experience for the listener.

Dos preludios

Dos preludios ('Two Preludes') (1977), published by Éditions Max Eschig as *Deux Préludes* in 1978, were first recorded by Wolfgang Lendle in March 1988. Lendle described the first *Preludio* as 'a *cantabile* piece with impressionistically undulating accompaniment' and the second as 'a dance-like piece with the character of a *malagueña*'. What he did not mention is the virtuosity required to perform these two works.

No. 1. Adagio deploys a complex accompaniment pattern snaking across the six strings of the guitar and covering the range of the fingerboard. To this is added a *cantabile* melodic line, the texture being almost Chopinesque in the independence of the two strands of music. The melody gravitates towards flourishes of demisemiquavers, pauses to take breath by way of various chords plus a rapid scale passage, and concludes with a brief recapitulation of the theme. The key is fundamentally D minor but the inclusion of lower open strings set against the B flat gives a shimmering, modal feel. It is a piece of fine imaginative

power and deserves close attention.

No. 2. Allegro is also very demanding, involving restless scampering scale passages in triplets and lively *malagueña* rhythms, with a folk melody in the bass against a repeated chord performed on the top three strings. When this folk theme recurs it undergoes some ingenious modulation, followed by passages of downward triplets and demisemiquavers of great velocity and some astonishing four note chords. The latter are first played as ordinary plucked chords and strummed in continuous *rasgueado* for the length of two bars. The piece ends with a recapitulation of rapid triplets, high chords, the melody in the bass, and more strumming at the end.

Sonata a la española

This work was published in 1969, dedicated to Ernesto Bitetti. Joaquín Rodrigo commented:

'There are many instances, using a variety of instruments, where I have used sonata form...The appendage 'a la española' ('in the Spanish style') must be regarded as a slight touch of irony – irony which must be emphasised in the *bolero*, for example. This sonata is styled in a classical mould and its technique is on a moderate level.'

Sonata a la española is a work of Rodrigo's mature years founded on his deep understanding of the guitar. The vision of Spain within this composition is light and fresh, not moody or given to introversion. The opening movement demonstrates the utmost economy of means. A rising single line of melody recalls the flamenco guitar, broken by a rasping two-note discord, D sharp and E. It is only halfway through the piece that Rodrigo allows the use of four-note chords. The development is very brief before the recapitulation and the section which might be termed *codetta*.

The *Adagio* is in A–B–A form. The A section uses the minimum of material, a small vocabulary of discords contrasted against *Aranjuez*-like bass patterns. The B section has flowing arpeggios with unusually placed accents and a pleasant little theme before the return of the A section.

The *bolero* of the last movement is one of Rodrigo's

finest miniatures. Vigorous strummed chords contrast with single line sections which include some of the composer's characteristic triplet passages. The tight organisation of this movement functions admirably and provides a most satisfying conclusion.

Aria antigua

Aria antigua, dedicated to the Austrian guitarist Konrad Ragossnig (1932–2018), was composed in 1960 with arrangements by the composer for flute and guitar, flute and piano, and recorder and keyboard.

Set in a single movement, with the tempo marked *Adagio*, the work has initially the feel of an expressive sarabande, the flute articulating the melody over gentle guitar chords in elegant dotted rhythms. The texture steadily thickens leading to rapid flute arpeggios and virtuosic scale runs in sextuplets, climaxing in demisemiquavers and little brilliant flourishes in a miniature coda.

Serenata al alba del día

Serenata al alba del día ('Dawn Serenade'), composed for flute (or violin) and guitar and dedicated to Jiri Knobloch (b.1937), guitarist, luthier and string producer, was premiered in Los Angeles in 1983. The composition is structured in two sections, marked respectively *Andante moderato* and *Allegro*. It begins with the guitar alternating between gentle chords and pizzicato passages before the entrance of the flute with a serene rising melody. The serenity is broken into with a few bars of vigorous guitar chords accompanying agitated flute figurations before the melody returns. These patterns of melody, interrupted by sudden moments of dissonance, recur in the climax.

The *Allegro* second section begins with staccato guitar chords and loud flute octaves, followed by strummed chords. Raymond Calcraft has described the movement as 'an evocation of a distance dance, in something of the manner of Debussy's *Iberia*'.¹ After the presentation of the main theme in the opening the piece progresses into greater complexity of interplay between flute and guitar full of Rodrigo's essential *joie de vivre*.

El álbum de Cecilia

El álbum de Cecilia (1948), here transcribed for the guitar, was originally a collection for piano of 'six pieces for small hands' dedicated to the composer's daughter, Cecilia Rodrigo, who at the age of eleven gave the premiere at the Círculo Cultural Medina, Madrid in May 1952. Though written for a young pianist, this album is quite technically demanding, involving two-part polyphony and lively rhythms.

The suite begins with *María de los Reyes, Sevillanas*, a miniature recreation of the flamenco dance of Seville, the left hand based on the first five notes of a C major scale matched against a tricky sequential melody. *A la jota, Jota de las palomas* ('Jota of the Doves') is another dance form, characterised here by a slow middle section before a brief coda. *Canción del hada rubia* ('Song of the Golden-Haired Fairy') and *Canción del hada morena* ('Song of the Dark-Haired Fairy') are contrasting movements, a slow lyrical mood being followed by a vigorous piece with staccato melodic lines and dotted rhythms. *El negrito Pepo* ('Little Black Pepo'), referring to a family pet, offers two-part writing with a rhythmic bass and intricate melody, as well as a contrasting middle section with lively rhythms. The finale, *Borriquillos a Belén* ('Little Donkeys in Bethlehem') presents filigree patterns of harmony and stabbing discords against an unpredictably capricious melody.

Tríptico

According to the catalogue, this was the only work that Rodrigo composed in 1978, dedicated to Alexandre Lagoya (1929–1999) and published by Schott Music in 1985. Lagoya commented in the sleeve notes for his recording of October 1979 that the 'evocative and impressionistic *Nocturno* is flanked either side by rhythmic miniatures painted in primary colours'.

Prélude explores four chords reminiscent of the opening of *Fandango*, one of Rodrigo's earlier works for guitar. The little tune is subjected to strumming effects with episodes of cascades of falling intervallic patterns and demisemiquaver arpeggios with the return of all these elements during the course of the piece. It is as if, from a distance of many years, the composer looks back affectionately at a previous work,

refers to it, and develops some new ideas implicit in the original,

Nocturne, marked *Molto adagio*, offers a vivid contrast to the other movements, being reflective and inward rather than exuberant. It is the work of an artist contemplating life with serenity and no urgency. But there is indeed much poignancy and well defined emotion here.

Rodrigo's sense of humour, a feature in various elements of his music, is also there in the *Scherzino*, marked *Allegro vivace*. This makes a reference to the guitar part of bars 19 to 24 in the first movement of the *Concierto de Aranjuez*, the little bass theme played by the bassoon punctuated by big orchestral chords. After a jocular introduction with a four-note theme repeated across the strings (as a few 'wrong note' chords thrown in for good measure), the bass theme enters. Reference is also made to certain rapid scale passages in the *Aranjuez*, while the tune itself is subjected to skillful development.

Dos pequeñas fantasías

Dos pequeñas fantasías ('Two Little Fantasias'), written in 1987, was Rodrigo's swan song in terms of the guitar, his final guitar piece after many years of creative work with the instrument. The first part, *Ecos de Sefarad* ('Echoes of the Sephardic') refers in its title and melodic lines to the Sephardic Jews of Iberia. The Jewish population, after many persecutions, were given the option by Ferdinand and Isabella on 31 March 1492 to be baptised as Christians or leave the country, a move which irreparably damaged the Spanish economy and culture. There is, however, a rich Hebraic effect on the Andalusian *cante jondo* as well as in other areas of Muslim Spain despite the decisions of 1492.

Ecos de Sefarad is marked *Allegro moderato* with words underneath the stave asking for *expressive e nostálgico*. The piece opens with a Sephardic melody, exploring scale patterns and quasi-improvisatory associations. These passages are followed by stark chords, suggesting some kind of instrumental accompaniment to the melodies themselves. This stricture continues through the piece and is somewhat similar to the devices of vihuela music of the

16th century, where single line effects (*redoubles*) alternate with chordal passages (*consonancias*). In the same way as the vihuela masters, Rodrigo shortens note values as he proceeds moving from quavers to semiquaver, and then to demisemiquavers. The solo thus settles down into a contrasting routine of Sephardic melody, chordal interludes and descending scale passages of great rapidity before returning to the Sephardic element.

¡Qué buen caminito! ('What a Good Little Road!'), captures the rhythms and moods of the *sevillanas*, the traditional flamenco dance of Seville, though unexpectedly marked *andante*, not *allegro*. For this is *sevillanas* recollected in tranquility, a memory of dance and movement rather than an evocation of fiesta energy. In the opening bars strummed chords are superimposed over pedal basses before dissolving away into the familiar descending triplets the composer often used as a characteristic flourish. A middle section, marked *Allegro*, still uses the pedal basses but this time in arpeggio patterns with shifting time signatures. The fantasia ends with the reprise of the *Allegro*, thus forming an A–B–A–B type of structure.

The composer's final guitar pieces therefore appropriately offer homage to two great Spanish musical traditions, 16th-century vihuela music and the world of Andalusian flamenco.

Graham Wade

Author of *Distant Sarabandes: The Solo Guitar Music of Joaquín Rodrigo*; *Joaquín Rodrigo: A Life in Music*; *Joaquín Rodrigo: Concierto de Aranjuez*; *Joaquín Rodrigo, A Portrait: His Works, His Life* (Naxos 8.558204-05), etc.

Unless specified, all quotes taken from Kamhi, Victoria: *De la mano de Joaquín Rodrigo: Historia de nuestra vida (Colección Memorias de la música española)* (Fundación Banco Exterior, 1986)

¹ Taken from the CD booklet note of EMI Classics CDC 7243 5 57292 2, *Joaquín Rodrigo 100 Anos, Obras de cámara/Chamber works*

Marianne Gedigian

Marianne Gedigian, member of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers at The University of Texas (UT) at Austin, professor of flute and the holder of a Sarah and Ernest Butler Professorship in Flute, was acting principal flute with the Boston and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras and Boston Pops for a decade prior to her appointment at UT. She has served on the faculties of Boston University College of Fine Arts and Boston University. She can be heard on dozens of *Evening at Pops* broadcasts with the Boston Pops with John Williams and Keith Lockhart conducting, soundtracks from *Saving Private Ryan* and *Schindler's List*, and has a brief appearance in the film *Blown Away*. As principal flute, Gedigian has recorded with the Boston and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestras and Boston Pops. She was featured as principal flute on several GRAMMY Award-nominated recordings with these orchestras, and as a soloist on the GRAMMY Award-nominated album *Shadow of Sirius* with the University of Texas Wind Ensemble and Jerry Junkin (9.70255). In 2018 Flutistry Boston published her first children's book, *Survival of the Flutist*, with illustrator Patti Adams.



Photo © Chelsea Tanner

Celil Refik Kaya

Since his concert debut at the age of six, Turkish American guitarist and composer Dr Celil Refik Kaya has received many high accolades. He was the youngest contestant to win First Prize in the 2012 JoAnn Falletta International Guitar Concerto Competition, and is a prizewinner of international guitar competitions across Europe and the US. In 2017 he was named Rising Young Musician of the Year by the Donizetti Classical Music Awards in Istanbul and awarded a prestigious fellowship from Harvard University's Dumbarton Oaks. Dr Kaya has performed in concert halls and festivals, giving solo performances at Carnegie Hall, Raritan River Music Festival and Ankara International Music Festival among others, and numerous radio broadcasts and concert performances throughout the US and Turkey. Kaya's first recording, *Morel: Guitar Music* (8.573514) was critically acclaimed by *American Record Guide*. Kaya has also recorded works by Carlo Domeniconi and Agustín Barrios Mangoré for Naxos. Dr Kaya is currently the coordinator of guitar studies and teaching at the New Jersey City University. www.celiirefikkaya.com



Photo © Orhan Cem Çetin

Joaquín Rodrigo, composer of the renowned *Concierto de Aranjuez* (Naxos 8.579053), is acknowledged as one of the great Spanish composers of the 20th century. His music extends the Romantic Impressionist tradition of Albéniz, Granados and Falla, and is inspired by the French style and colour Rodrigo experienced during his studies in Paris. From the thrilling and virtuosic *Elogio de la guitarra* to his swan song in the *Dos pequeñas fantasías*, Rodrigo's guitar music explores the Spanish nature of the instrument and blends tradition with innovation. Always filled with variety, contrast and compelling atmosphere, his *oeuvre* is now appreciated as one of the central pillars of the entire guitar repertoire.

Joaquín
RODRIGO
(1901–1999)
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1–3	Elogio de la guitarra (1971)	14:17
4–5	Dos preludios (1977)	7:19
6–8	Sonata a la española (1969)	8:03
9	Aria antigua (1960) (version for flute and guitar)	3:41
10–11	Serenata al alba del día (1982) (version for flute and guitar)	4:24
12–17	El álbum de Cecilia (1948) (arr. Pepe Romero [b. 1944])	7:45
18–20	Tríptico (1978)	10:22
21–22	Dos pequeñas fantasías (1987)	9:15

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

Celil Refik Kaya, Guitar
Marianne Gedigian, Flute 9–11

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