

GRANADOS

Liliana – Lyric Poem

Suite oriental • Elisenda

Barcelona Symphony Orchestra • Pablo González



Enrique Granados (1867-1916)

Orchestral Works • 3

From Orientalism to Modernism

This third volume in a series devoted to the orchestral music of Enrique Granados brings together three works that were written at very different stages in his career, and represent two very different styles of composition. The exotic touches of the early *Suite oriental* (1888-89) form a stark contrast with the Modernist sensibilities of a pair of mature works inspired by poems by one of Catalonia's leading literary and artistic figures, Apel·les Mestres (1854-1936). The one-act "lyric poem" *Liliana* (1911) and the short suite for piano and orchestra *Elisenda* (1912) are seen as among the best and most representative works of musical Modernism, the artistic movement that dominated Catalan cultural life from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. In both works, Granados reveals a pared-down idiom, bearing undisguised stylistic similarities to the worlds of Wagnerianism and Impressionism.

On 9th July 1911 Granados's *Liliana*, setting Mestres' Catalan-language libretto, was premièred at the Palau de les Belles Arts in Barcelona. That evening's concert was conducted by composer Jaume Pahissa and also included works by Weber, Strauss and Pahissa himself. Although well received, this Modernist gem soon vanished without trace. Its manuscript was lost, with just a few fragmentary sections surviving in the Biblioteca de Catalunya. Decades later, in late 1989, British researcher Mark Larrad discovered the manuscripts of five stage works by Granados (four with texts by Mestres), hidden away in the archives of Parisian publishing house Salabert, which had acquired the works and the associated publication rights in the 1920s from one of Granados's children.

The compositions in question were *Miel de la Alcarria* (1895), *Petrarca* (1899), *Picarol* (1901), *Gaziel* (1906) and *Liliana*, which is now considered a Modernist masterpiece. The poem on which it is based was originally written in 1907, Mestres later adapting his own

work to create the libretto for Granados's stage piece. Its protagonists are sylphs, gnomes, witches and other magical beings who live in an enchanted forest. Granados's music conjures up a mythical world similar to those of works such as Wagner's *Parsifal*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* or Liadov's *The Enchanted Lake*. The simple plot tells the story of the love between the water nymph Liliana and a sylph, or spirit of the air, called Flor de Lis. Composed while Granados was also immersed in writing the original piano version of *Goyescas*, *Liliana* was one of his last collaborative efforts with Mestres. It is one of the most significant works of his mature period, and also marks the high point of his relationship with the Modernist movement.

In an extensive (thirteen-page) letter written in French to violinist and impresario André Mangeot, dated 22nd October 1911, Granados describes the work as follows:

"The poem *Liliana* ... is a series of scenes peopled by gnomes and flowers. Liliana is a flower who has been lovingly raised by the three gnomes, Puck, Mick and Flok ... Each of them represents an emotion. Each has his own quality or gift: Flok represents the *fauna*, Mick represents riches and Puck poetry. Liliana grows up to be very beautiful, however, and one day someone arrives who will destroy their happiness ... Love and youth arrive, and Liliana is stolen away."¹

Granados also gave a detailed analysis of the score in this letter, including twelve musical examples. At the point at which he describes how Liliana leaves the forest to be with Flor de Lis, he mentions that this music later became an orchestral work ("There are long orchestral passages ... These are in fact concert pieces."²) and that his friend Casals had been moved on hearing the various sections of the work.

Although there are various manuscripts for *Liliana* in the Granados Collection at the Museu de la Música, Barcelona, there is no complete orchestral manuscript. The work recorded here, therefore, is a four-movement suite

arranged by Casals, who conducted its première at the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona on 30th April 1921. It is possible that Casals and Granados had discussed this adaptation of *Liliana* before the latter's untimely death.

Like so many of his contemporaries, in the late nineteenth century Granados was caught up in the Orientalism that was exerting such an influence on European cultural life at the time. Indeed, he embraced it: many of his piano and orchestral works feature the augmented intervals, chromaticism and attractive arpeggios and arabesques evocative of Middle Eastern/ North African music. Among such works are, for example, *Moresque y canción árabe, Oriental (Canción variada, intermedio y final), Danza española No. 2 'Oriental' and the Suite oriental* (also known as *Suite árabe*), which he composed between 1888 and 1889, and which incorporates all the elements one would expect from a work with such a title. Granados's characteristic compositional skill, sense of orchestral colour and melodic imagination combine in its four straightforward and unpretentious movements, two of which were later to inspire piano works from the composer: the main theme of the second movement, *Serenata*, was used in his *Serenata goyesca*, while the third, *Marcha oriental*, was transformed into a solo piece of the same name and included in his *Seis piezas sobre cantos populares españoles*.

The first, *Ante el desierto* (Facing the desert), opens in a contemplative but disquieting atmosphere, and acts as a kind of sombre, minor-mode prelude, full of subtle and mysterious touches, as if the desert were reluctant to give away any of the surprises in store in the following episodes. While still touched by the same orientalisising air of the work as a whole, *Serenata* is perhaps the least "Moorish" of the four. It keeps the dominant minor key, and the phrases intoned by the woodwind are crowned by delicate arpeggios on the harp. In the last section, and before the recapitulation, the cellos have a chromatic theme full of drama and almost Tristanesque resonances, reminiscent in particular of King Mark's monologue. In *Marcha oriental* Granados lets the exoticism flow freely,

before it explodes into the two dazzling dances that form the final movement, in which it is easy to imagine the twisting and turning body of a cobra in thrall to a snake charmer's pipes.

On 26th January 1913, the première took place at Barcelona's Sala Granados of *Elisenda*, "a small suite", based on the poem of the same name by Apel·les Mestres. The work had been completed by Granados a few months earlier, on 7th July 1912, and was written for soprano and a small instrumental ensemble of piano, two flutes, oboe, clarinet, string quintet and harp. It was originally a four-movement work, but the last movement, entitled *El retorn o Final* (A refrain, or the end), the only one that featured the soprano, has been lost without trace. The originals of the first three movements are housed in the Biblioteca de Catalunya and are dedicated to Casals and his then partner, cellist Guilhermina Suggia. Granados later adapted the work in various ways, creating a solo piano arrangement of the first movement, a piano/cello duet version of the second, and, finally, the arrangement for piano and chamber orchestra that appears here.

Elisenda is very much a work of Granados's Modernist period. It is a descriptive work, dubbed by one critic after the première, at which Granados conducted from the keyboard, "exquisite" and full of "profound emotion". The music is ethereal and woven from pre-Impressionist textures above which are heard in turn the voices of the violin, oboe, clarinet, cello and flute, the piano providing the backdrop throughout, while always making its presence felt, with much of its writing focused in the upper register. Writer Fernando Periquet, the librettist of *Goyescas*, described *Elisenda* as a "wonderful bucolic poem that evokes the charms of nature, blossoming flowers on sunlit mornings, and the perfumes of the forest".

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English translation: Susannah Howe

¹ Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MFC G748.J43.

² Ibid.

Enrique Granados (1867-1916)

Música Orquestal • 3

De Oriente al Modernismo

Este tercer volumen de la música sinfónica de Enrique Granados congrega tres obras surgidas en un amplio espacio de tiempo, representativas de dos maneras de componer bien diferentes. Por una parte, el temprano exotismo de cartón piedra de la *Suite oriental*, compuesta entre 1888 y 1889; y por otra dos obras de madurez inspiradas en poemas de Apel·les Mestres, adscritas decididamente al modernismo, el movimiento artístico que con tanta fuerza arraigó en Catalunya entre finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Tanto el poema sinfónico *Liliana* (1911) como la pequeña suite para piano y orquesta *Elisenda* (1912) figuran entre las mejores y más representativas muestras musicales del movimiento modernista. En ambas composiciones Granados revela una estilización y depuración del lenguaje ciertamente relevante, con indisimulado acercamiento a los universos wagneriano e impresionista.

El 9 de julio de 1911 Granados da a conocer en el Palau de les Belles Arts de Barcelona el “poema en una escena” *Liliana*, basado en un libreto en catalán firmado por la figura literaria del modernismo Apel·les Mestres (1854-1936). El programa del concierto, que fue dirigido por el compositor Jaume Pahissa y se celebró en el marco de la VI Muestra Internacional de Arte de Barcelona, incluía además obras de Weber, Strauss y del propio Pahissa. A pesar de la buena acogida, esta joya del modernismo desapareció inmediatamente, hasta el punto de perderse su manuscrito, del que apenas se conocían algunos fragmentos conservados en la Biblioteca de Catalunya. Fue a finales de 1989 cuando el británico Mark Larrad localizó, arrumbados en la sede parisiense de la editorial Salabert, cinco obras escénicas originales de Granados, cuatro de las cuales con textos de Apel·les Mestres. Todas ellas y sus correspondientes derechos de edición habían sido adquiridos por la editorial francesa en los años veinte del siglo pasado a uno de los hijos de Granados.

Los manuscritos en cuestión son *Miel de la Alcarria* (1895), *Petrarca* (1899), *Picarol* (1901), *Gaziel* (1906) y *Liliana*, compuesto en 1911 y considerado como “una obra maestra del modernismo”. El texto original de Mestres data de 1907, y posteriormente realizó la adaptación para la obra escénica de Granados. Un sinnúmero de “sílfos, sílfides, nomos, brujas y espíritus encantados” que habitan en un bosque mágico son los protagonistas del poema, para el que Granados crea pentagramas que solazan un mundo mágico que se adivina próximo al de obras como *Parsifal* de Wagner, *La leyenda de la ciudad invisible de Kitej* de Rimski-Kórsakov o *El lago encantado* de Liádov. El sencillo argumento recoge la historia de amor entre el hada acuática Liliana y un sílfo llamado Flor de Lis. Compuesto en los días que anda inmerso en la versión original para piano de *Goyescas*, *Liliana* representa una de las últimas colaboraciones de Granados con Mestres, además de un momento de madurez dentro de su ciclo evolutivo y, desde luego, el punto culminante de su relación con el movimiento modernista.

El sencillo argumento lo describe Granados en una extensa carta de trece páginas en francés que remite el 22 de octubre de 1911 al crítico, violinista y empresario André Mangeot. “El poema Liliana”, escribe el compositor, “se compone de una serie de escenas que se desarrollan entre nomos y flores. Liliana es una flor que ha crecido gracias a los atentos cuidados de tres nomos: Puck, Mick y Flok. Cada uno de ellos representa un sentimiento. Flok es la fauna; Mick la riqueza y Puck es la poesía. Pero un día, cuando Liliana alcance su máxima belleza, llega el que va a robar la felicidad a los nomos. El Amor y la Juventud se la llevan.”¹

Granados deja un pormenorizado análisis de la obra, con ejemplos musicales. En el momento en que describe la historia donde Liliana se marcha por Amor, detalla que esta música se convirtió posteriormente en una pieza sinfónica (“sus largos pasajes sinfónicos son piezas realmente de concierto”), y comenta que Pau Casals se conmovió al

escuchar la obra en varias fases de su creación. Los Fons Enric Granados del Museu de la Música de Barcelona conservan varios manuscritos, aunque no existe uno de orquesta completo. Esta grabación recoge la suite sinfónica que realizó Pau Casals y que fue estrenada el 30 de abril de 1921 en el Palau de la Música Catalana de Barcelona, dirigida por el propio Casals.

Como tantos otros compositores, Granados tampoco escapó a la fascinación que lo oriental ejerció sobre la cultura de su tiempo. Es más: se entregó con regusto a ella. Tanto en su obra pianística como orquestal abundan las composiciones en las que late esa corriente poblada de intervalos aumentados, cromatismos y seductores arpeggios y arabescos. *Moresque y canción árabe*, *Oriental (Canción variada, intermedio y final)* o *Danza española número 2 “Oriental”* son algunas de estas obras, a las que se suma la *Suite oriental* (también conocida como *Suite árabe*) que compone entre 1888 y 1889, y que responde a todos los tópicos que se esperan de una página así denominada. La buena escritura, el sentido del color orquestal y esa imaginación melódica tan característica de Granados se amalgaman con acierto en los cuatro números que integran la suite, concebidos sin más pretensión ni hondura. Dos de sus movimientos están directamente relacionados con composiciones pianísticas de Granados, quien reutilizó el tema principal del segundo *–Serenata–*, en su *Serenata goyesca*, mientras que el tercero *–Marcha oriental–*, fue trasladado al piano con el mismo título e incluido en las *Seis piezas sobre cantos populares españoles*.

Una atmósfera contemplativa pero inquietante abre el primer número, *Ante el desierto*, una suerte de oscuro preludio en modo menor. Todo es tenue y enigmático, como si el desierto se resistiera a mostrar supuestas sorpresas reservadas a los episodios siguientes. Sin dejar de respirar el aire orientalizante de toda la obra, quizá sea *Serenata* su episodio menos moruno. Se mantiene el dominante tono menor, y las frases entonadas por los instrumentos de madera son coronadas por delicados arpeggios del arpa. En el último episodio, y antes de la reexposición, los violonchelos declaman un cromático tema de aire dramático y resonancias casi tristanescas, de monólogo de Marke. En *Marcha oriental* Granados da

rienda suelta y sin remilgos al exotismo más epidérmico, que estallará con rotundidad y desenfado en las dos brillantes y previsibles danzas finales, en las que es fácil imaginar el sortilegio de alguna cobra que alza su cabeza desafiante hechizada por el sonido de alguna chirimía.

El 26 de enero de 1913 se presenta en la Sala Granados de Barcelona *Elisenda*, pequeña suite basada en un poema homónimo del patriarca de las letras catalanas Apel·les Mestres. La obra, fechada por Granados el 7 de julio de 1912 y configurada para soprano y un pequeño conjunto instrumental que incluye piano, 2 flautas, oboe, clarinete, quinteto de cuerdas y arpa, constaba de cuatro movimientos, el último de los cuales *–El retorn o Final–* que era precisamente el único en el que participaba la voz– se perdió, sin que se haya conservado ningún manuscrito o copia del mismo. Los originales de los tres movimientos restantes se conservan en la Biblioteca de Catalunya y están dedicados a Pau Casals y a su compañera, la violonchelista portuguesa Guilhermina Suggia. Granados elaboró posteriormente varias versiones y arreglos, como el que realizó del primer movimiento para piano solo, o el de violonchelo y piano del número central (*Trova*), y finalmente la versión para piano y orquesta que recoge este disco.

Elisenda se inscribe de pleno en la fase modernista de Granados. Se trata de una composición descriptiva, “exquisita” y de “profundos sentimientos”, como escribió la crítica barcelonesa tras el estreno, en el que intervino el propio Granados en calidad de pianista y director. Todo es etéreo y tenue, de texturas preimpresionistas sobre las que sucesivamente alcanzan sus melodiosas voces violín, oboe, clarinete, violonchelo, flauta... y siempre, como telón de fondo pero con presencia protagonista, el piano, particularmente centrado en su registro agudo. Para el escritor Fernando Periquet, libretista de *Goyescas*, *Elisenda* es un “precioso poema bucólico que evoca los encantos de la naturaleza, el abrir de las flores en las mañanas soleadas y los perfumes del bosque”.

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¹ Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MFC G748.J43.

² *Ibid.*

Dani Espasa



Photo: May Circus

Born in La Canonja (Catalonia), Dani Espasa studied piano at the Conservatories of Tarragona and Barcelona, and Architecture at the UPC of Barcelona. He has worked as a composer, as a pianist and as a musical director of theatre, dance and television. He is musical director, pianist and accordion player for the singer Maria del Mar Bonet. He has conducted the contemporary music ensemble BCN216, and he has recorded and given the premières of piano pieces by the composer Joan Albert Amargós. Since 2003 he has been collaborator pianist and harpsichordist of the Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya (OBC). After he finished his studies in harpsichord and continuo at the ESMUC (Barcelona) with Béatrice Martin, he dedicated himself to baroque, renaissance and medieval groups, working with Le Concert des Nations, Hespèrion XXI, Mala Punica, La Hispanoflamenca, Les Sacqueboutiers and La Caravaggia. Since 2005 he has been the conductor of the Vespres d'Arnadi baroque orchestra. He has performed in prestigious music festivals and concert halls of Europe, America and Asia. Since 2012 he has been improvisation and chamber music teacher at ESMUC.

Barcelona Symphony Orchestra – the National Orchestra of Catalonia

Music director: Kazushi Ono • Principal guest conductor: Jan Willem de Vriend



Photo: May Circus

The OBC (Barcelona Symphony Orchestra – the National Orchestra of Catalonia) was founded in 1944 by Eduard Toldrà. Its commitment is to promote classical and contemporary music of all cultures, giving special attention to Catalan composers. Since its foundation more than 70 years ago, the orchestra's Music Directors have been Eduard Toldrà, Rafael Ferrer, Antoni Ros Marbà, Salvador Mas, Franz-Paul Decker, García Navarro, Lawrence Foster, Ernest Martínez Izquierdo, Eiji Oue and Pablo González. Kazushi Ono took over as Music Director in September 2015. The OBC has enjoyed collaboration with renowned conductors and soloists as well as major Spanish institutions and festivals, with regular performances at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Palau de la Música, Festival Grec, Festes de la Mercè, Sonar, Mercat de les Flors and Festival Castell de Peralada. It has made more than 100 recordings for Decca, EMI, Auvidis, Koch, Claves, Naxos, Telarc, Tritó, Columna Música and BIS, combining Catalan with wider repertoire. The OBC has visited some of the world's major concert halls, including New York's Carnegie Hall and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and has taken part in international festivals including the Proms in London at the Royal Albert Hall and the Schleswig-Holstein Festival. The OBC belongs to the Consorci de l'Auditori i l'Orquestra, formed by the Catalan Government and the City of Barcelona. Since April 1999, the OBC has performed in its own venue, L'Auditori of Barcelona, designed by Spanish architect Rafael Moneo.

Pablo González



The conductor Pablo González was born in 1975 in Oviedo. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London and went on to become winner of the Donatella Flick Competition and the Cadaqués International Conducting Competition. He has held the positions of Associate Conductor with both the London Symphony Orchestra and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, as well as Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra of the City of Granada. From 2010 to 2015 he was Music Director of Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya. He enjoys a wide reputation as a conductor, working with orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Gürzenich-Orchester Köln, Konzerthaus-orchester Berlin, the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen and many orchestras in Spain. Also active in opera, he made a highly successful British operatic début conducting *L'elisir d'amore* for Glyndebourne on Tour, leading to another major collaboration in 2016/17. Other work has included *Carmen* in San Sebastián, *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly* and a double bill of Poulenc's *La voix humaine* and Montsalvatge's *Una Voce in Off* for Opera de Oviedo and *Die Zauberflöte*, Strauss's *Daphne* and Wagner's *Rienzi* (in concert) at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona. His recordings include Prokofiev's *The Prodigal Son* with the SWR Sinfonie-orchester Baden-Baden und Freiburg and discs with the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie-Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern with whom he has enjoyed an ongoing collaboration for many years. His recording of Schumann's works for violin and orchestra with Lena Neudauer and the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie won the International Classical Music Award.

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In the last of this three volume series devoted to Granados's orchestral music, two very different compositional strands are explored. The early *Suite oriental* reveals his sense of vivid orchestral colour and melodic imagination, couched in the exotic language of the time. Written in a more pared-down style, the one-act 'lyric poem' *Liliana*, a collaboration with the writer Apelles Mestres, is a four-movement suite in which Granados conjures up a vivid, mythical world. *Elisenda* is another impressionistic score, both emotive and ethereal, here performed in its arrangement for piano and chamber orchestra.



ORQUESTRA SIMFÒNICA
DE BARCELONA
I NACIONAL DE CATALUNYA
PABLO GONZÁLEZ DIRECTOR TITULAR

Enrique
GRANADOS
(1867-1916)

Liliana – Lyric Poem (arr. Casals) (1911/21)* 16:34

- | | | |
|----------|--|-------------|
| 1 | I. Preludio y Salutación al sol | 4:16 |
| 2 | II. Liliana y los gnomos | 4:12 |
| 3 | III. Canto de las ranas | 4:51 |
| 4 | IV. Coro de silfos y farándula | 3:15 |

Suite oriental (Suite árabe) (1888-89)* 16:19

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 5 | I. Ante el desierto | 3:41 |
| 6 | II. Serenata | 4:24 |
| 7 | III. Marcha oriental | 3:03 |
| 8 | IV. Dos danzas | 5:11 |

Elisenda (1912) – Critical Edition by Douglas Riva 17:18

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 9 | I. El jardín de Elisenda | 6:00 |
| 10 | II. Trova | 7:30 |
| 11 | III. Elisenda | 3:48 |

***WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

Dani Espasa, Piano [9]-[11]

Barcelona Symphony Orchestra

(Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya)

Pablo González

Recorded at the Auditori Hall, Barcelona, Spain, from 16th to 19th September, 2013 (tracks 1-4),
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