

Mp3 Paul Henry, Guitar Jamie Shaak, Piano Maria Lagios, Soprano - Romance Of Spain

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An enchanting exotic journey through the heart of Spanish music expressed by the sounds of beautiful guitars, powerful yet sensitive piano and thrilling singing. 23 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Traditional, FOLK: Traditional Folk Details: Romance of Spain All of the composers featured on this recording were pianists. All of the music contained here carries in it elements taken from Spanish folk music, and consequently, draws inspiration from the guitar, the national instrument of Spain. The guitar has been centrally important to the culture of Spain, as well as to the daily lives of both nobility and the common man for centuries. Look deep into the heart of Spanish music, and at its very center is the guitar. Music for Guitar Paul Henry and Arturo Guzman begin with Henry's arrangements of two traditional folk melodies. Listeners will find it interesting to compare the guitar version of "El Pao Moruno" (The Moorish Cloth) with Falla's setting of the same melody for high voice and piano. The Jerez of "A Jerez" is the same wine-making village in Andalusia that Isaac Albéniz immortalized in the fourth book of his suite "Iberia." Although it is difficult to determine the age of these melodies, "El Pao Moruno" harkens back to the 15th century when the Moors still controlled part of the Iberian peninsula. When Enrique Granados (1867-1916) wrote "Danza Española #2" for piano in 1892, he had already studied with Felipe Pendrell in Barcelona and with the pianist Charles de Bériot in Paris. Both Spanish and French characteristics can be discerned in the exotic Arabian sound of the melody, and in the careful discipline of the accompaniment. The title "Oriental" does imply Moorish, or Arabic, and echoes of North Africa can be heard here. Henry's transcription for two guitars returns "Danza Española #2" to the home territory from which Granados drew inspiration. In his solo guitar arrangement of Ernesto Lecuona's "Malagueña" is a free improvisatory form, a kind of toccata, that allows the guitarist to "stretch out" with a wide range of expression and technical bravura. Antonio Ruiz-Pip (b.1934) is both a distinguished composer and pianist now on the faculty of the Paris Conservatory of Music. His "Cancin y Danza #1" was composed at the urging of guitarist Narciso Yepes and it remains his most popular work. His several canciones y danzas resemble those of Federico Mompou: a slow melodic movement followed by a lively rhythmic one. In Ruiz-Pip's work, the Cancin has

a wistful, contemplative feel to it, in the manner of a Catalonian folk melody, and the danza reminds us of the 17th-century Spanish guitarist, Gaspar Sanz. Francisco Trrega (1852-1909) is often called the "father of the modern classical guitar." A pianist as well as a guitarist, Trrega would often play the first half of a recital on the one instrument and the second half on the other. Trrega is often recalled as a shy recluse whose influence came chiefly through his famous students and admired compositions. This image is not entirely accurate. Trrega introduced the guitar to thousands of the new fans through his extensive concerts throughout Europe. The difficult and beautiful "Capricho Arabe," perhaps his most popular composition, gives us a hint of the fine guitarist Trrega must have been. Once again, the Arabian flavor is suggested by the title and is evident in the voluptuous and intricate melodic line. The piano music of Isaac Albniz (1860-1909) is, ironically, heard most often today in guitar transcriptions. Henry's transcription for two guitars brings the "Berceuse" (Lullaby) from the "Suite Sueno) (Dreams) nestling comfortably into its new medium. The "Asturias" from the "Suite Espaola," heard here in solo guitar transcription, is the most guitaristic of the Albniz piano pieces, remaining quite close to its Spanish folkloric roots. When heard on the guitar, "Asturias" can pass for authentic Flamenco guitar music. Music for Piano Joaquin Rodrigo (b.1901), although best known for his guitar music (particularly the "Concierto de Aranjuez" of 1939), is a pianist and his catalog of piano compositions is important to any understanding of his work. Written as a homage after the death in 1943 of his friend, the pianist Ricardo Vies, "A l'ombre de Torre Bermeja," (In the Shadow of the Crimson Tower) is inspired by the famous piece by Albniz. The combination of Spanish and French in the title may point to the time Rodrigo, Vies and Albniz lived in Paris. The piece can be heard as a tone poem on the tower itself (a part of the structure of the famous Alhambra), or Rodrigo could be humbly suggesting that his piece stands in the shadow of the Albniz work, or that he himself stands in the shadow of Albniz. "Fandango del Ventorrilo" (Fandango of the Little Tavern) is a quirky two-part invention. Through his characteristic use of non-functional dissonance, Rodrigo gives this cheerful Spanish dance an ironic twist, displaying an acerbic sense of humor. Federico Mompou (1893-1987) planned early in his life on a career as a pianist. However, upon hearing Gabriel Faur play his own music at the concert in Barcelona in 1909, Mompou resolved to dedicate himself to composition. Again we see the close connection between the composers of Spain and France. Born in Barcelona, Mompou relished Catalonian folk music, and his fondness for it is evident in his four canciones y danzas. The two "Catalonian Folk Songs" will sound familiar to guitar

aficionados who have heard these famous melodies in settings for guitar by Miguel Llobet. Mompou's piano settings complement the delicate beauty of the folk melodies through careful, spare harmonization. Mompou largely rejected the trend towards the complex, dissonant music of his time and espoused a simple "nave" approach to writing, what he called primitivism. The resulting, unpretentious beauty of his music has made it popular with audiences, and his importance as a composer has been increasingly recognized in recent years. The 21-year-old Mompou had already found his voice when he finished his "Impresiones Intimas" (Intimate Impressions) from which his "Secreto" (Secret) and "Pajaro Triste" (Sad Bird) are taken. He had studied in Paris, and the French influence is evident. These pieces are reminiscent of Satie and Debussy. The allusion to pagan rituals in the title invites one to compare "Secreto" to Satie's "Gymnopdies." The "Sad Bird" sings of its life of solitary imprisonment. The three notes of the melody were claimed by Mompou to have been the notes sung by his father's parrot. "Cancin y Danza #6", written in 1942, is entirely original. There are no quotations from Catalan folk songs or from any other source. The piece is dedicated to Arthur Rubenstein. Of special interest is the danza, which is the rumba, a type of syncopated rhythmic dance from South America. Rubenstein toured in Latin American frequently and exerted considerable influence on the musicians there, most notable Heitor Villa-Lobos. Perhaps Rubenstein infected Mompou with his own enthusiasm. "Cancin y Danza #5, also composed in 1942 and also wholly original, was said by Mompou to have come to him, complete and intact, in a dream. Still, the style and sentiment are simpatico with his beloved settings of Catalan folk melodies. Mompou liked to refer to himself as a "musica" or a musical being, a natural conduit through which music effortlessly flowed. Viewed this way, "Cancin y Danza #5" can be seen as new, but wholly authentic Catalan folk music. Music for Voice and Piano Manuel de Falla (18-1946) composed the "Seven Popular Spanish Songs" in Paris in 1914. It is important to emphasize the close musical connections and mutual admiration that joined Albiz, Dukas, Faur, Debussy and Falla. After all, the single guitar piece written by Falla was a eulogy written after the death of Debussy. We find in the Spanish songs a rare balance of passion and intellect, of flash and substance—a combination of fiery Spanish impulsiveness with French precision. The popular songs are heard here in the original key, which is suited to the soprano voice (as opposed to the slightly lower keys favored by mezzo-sopranos). The lyrics function on more than one level, having both a literal and symbolic meaning. The Moorish cloth, which loses its value on a store shelf, can be seen as a metaphor lamenting the loss of a woman's virginity. The songs range

across the emotional spectrum, from the angry confrontation of the "Seguidilla Muciana," to the tender sweetness of the lullaby "Nana," to the bitter despair felt by the abandoned lover of "Polo." The music and lyrics touch on theme from the very marrow of the human condition. And the joy and pain of an authentic passionate life are captured here. THE ARTISTS PAUL HENRY (Guitar) has received high acclaim for his performances across the United States since winning first prize in the Society of American Musicians Competition. Following his first Carnegie Recital Hall performance for the La Folia Series, Guitar International Magazine said, "Paul Henry thoroughly enthralled the audience." A frequent performer for National Public Radio, Mr. Henry has also given several live performances for the Wisconsin Public Radio Network. The great Spanish guitar master, Andres Segovia, said of Henry, "He possess finesse and a great sense of musicality." The Washington Post, reviewing Henry's first compact disc, The Virtuoso Guitar of Spain and Latin American, observed, "Henry has a fluent technique, an adept sense of style and phrasing, and a fine ear for unfamiliar repertoire." Mr. Henry began his formal studies in theory and composition at the University of Wisconsin, and subsequently graduated from the Cincinnati College Conservatory. He received a master's degree from Ithaca College and holds a performance diploma from L'Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy. Through a national audition in 1981, Henry was selected to study under Segovia in a series of master classes at the University of Southern California. An active teacher, Henry has been Chairman of the Guitar Department and was founder of the Guitar Institute at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. He is now a member of the faculty at the Chicago College of the Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Henry has also recorded the Twenty Sor/Segovia Etudes and is currently working on another compact disc featuring the works of Francisco Tarrega.

MARIA LAGIOS (Soprano) is a highly recognized, versatile performer who has made her mark on opera, oratorio and concert stages in the United States, Europe and Asia. She has appeared in fifteen leading roles with the Chicago Opera Theater and as a guest artist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Bordeaux d'Aquitaine, Elgin Symphony, Michigan Opera Theater, Chicago String Ensemble, Apollo Music Club, New Philharmonic, Orchestra and in chamber concerts with the Exsultate Trio and Chicago Vocal Quartet. Television and radio broadcast audiences have heard Ms. Lagios on WGN Artists Showcase, numerous PBS specials, WFMT's Dame Myra Hess Concert Series, Continental Bank and United Airlines Concert Series. She has recorded Songs of Les Six of with Elizabeth Buccheri for Spectrum Records. In addition to her career in concert, Ms. Lagios serves on the voice faculty of the

Chicago College of the Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. JAMIE SHAAK (Piano) is known throughout the United States and Southeast Asia for her recitals of rarely performed works, as well as traditional repertoire. Her concert hall appearances have included performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and Lincoln Center in New York City. Ms. Shaak has been a soloist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra, the National Repertory Orchestra, the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, the Jefferson Symphony and the Cherry Creek Orchestra in Denver, Colorado where she performed Bach's D Minor Concerto at age 13. In the early 1990's, she performed solo recitals throughout Southeast Asia as an ambassador with the United States Information Service. She recently returned to Thailand and Laos for concerts with the American Piano 4-tet. Ms. Shaak received a bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music as a student of Nelita True and her master's degree from the Juilliard School, where she worked with John Browning as a Vladimir Horowitz scholar. Ms. Shaak is currently on the faculty of the Arts Academy at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin. ARTURO GUZMAN (Guitar) began performing at age 9 as a guitarist for St. Philomena's Church choir in Chicago. He received scholarships to both the American Conservatory of Music and the College for the Performing Arts, where he recently completed his M.M. in classical guitar. He has appeared in several performances with Paul Henry, including the Concert for the Spanish Association of the Midwest, the Morton Arboretum Chamber Concert Series, the Evanston Symphony Orchestra Concert Series and a live performance on WFMT radio in Chicago.

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