



Leon Fleisher



# Wonderful Spanish Piano Works By Composer Ernesto Halffter

BY ADAM KENT

Pianists who would like to explore Spanish repertoire beyond the well-known works of Albéniz, Granados, Falla, and Turina should investigate the music of Ernesto Halffter, who lived from 1905 to 1989. His pieces for solo piano are only moderately difficult technically and can be used to introduce students to the Spanish style as a change of pace from German and French composers.

In the 1920s Halffter was part of a Madrid-based group of eight musicians that included his brother Rodolfo and six other young Spanish composers: Gustavo Pittaluga, Rosita García Ascot, Julián Bautista, Salvador Bacarisse, Fernando Remacha, and Juan José Mantecón. They were part of a generation of artists, musicians, and writers – *Generación del '27* – that included the poet and playwright Federico García Lorca, surrealist painter Salvador Dalí, surrealist poet Rafael Alberti, and film director Luis Buñuel. Surrealism attracted Halffter at an early age, as did the avant-garde trends of the 1920s. Nevertheless, he continued to write music with a Spanish flair, mindful of Falla's advice to create music "with vistas towards Europe."

Born in Madrid, Ernesto and his older brother Rodolfo became the first professional musicians in the Halffter family. Later musicians in the family included a nephew, Cristóbal, born in 1930, who became one of Spain's leading composers, and his son Pedro, who arrived in 1971 and became a conductor. At the age of six Ernesto wrote his first composition *El Cuco* for solo piano and continued to develop as a composer. In 1923 at the age of 18 he was introduced to Manuel de Falla, who influenced Halffter's music and indefatigably supported his career. At Falla's insistence Halffter became the musical director of the newly created *Orquesta Bética de Cámara de Sevilla* in 1924, beginning a long and distinguished career as an orchestral conductor.

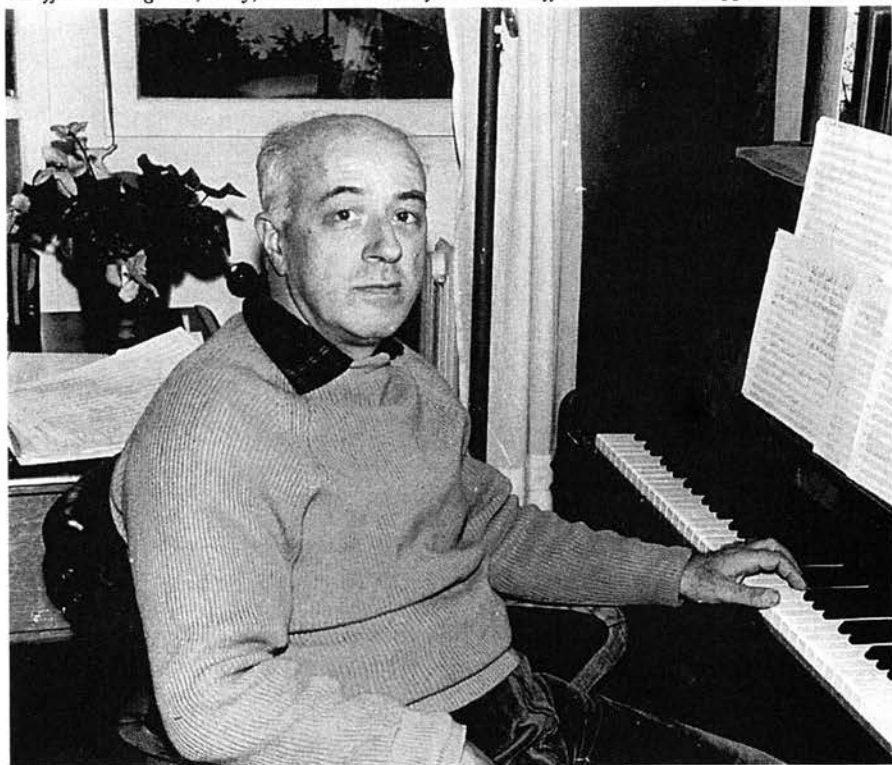
He studied composition with Maurice Ravel and composed his most enduring works in the 1920s. These included *Sinfonietta*, which received the *Premio Nacional de Música* award in 1925, and *Sonatina*, a ballet that was premiered in Paris in 1928 by the famous Spanish flamenco dancer La Argentina and her company. That year Halffter married Portuguese pianist

Alicia Camara Santos and moved to Lisbon in 1935 on a grant from the *Fundación Conde de Cartagena*. While living there he composed a series of Portuguese songs in 1940-1941 and the brilliant *Rapsodia portuguesa* for piano and orchestra in 1937-1940. He also wrote film scores, arrangements for Antonio Román's adaptation of *El Amor Brujo*, and other works for the ballet, including *El cojo enamorado* of 1955 and the *Fantasia galaica* 1956.

Falla died in 1946 and left behind an unfinished epic cantata, the composition *Atlántida*. Halffter later agreed to complete the music and worked intermittently on the project for nearly 20 years, coming up with a preliminary version in 1961 and the final edition in 1976. Undoubtedly this protracted involvement with Falla's music influenced several of Halffter's works, including *Canticum in P.P. Johannem XXIII*, composed in 1964; the *Canticum elegiacum in memoriam Pierre de Polignac Praeclarissimi Principis* in 1966; and *Psalmi* in 1967.

In 1983 Halffter received a second *Premio Nacional de Música*, this time for his life-long contribution to Spanish music. To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the premiere of *Sinfonietta* in 1997, the *Residencia de Estudiantes* of Madrid and the *Fundación Archivo Manuel de Falla* created an exhibition culled from the library's collection and those of Ernesto's son, Manuel Halffter. The tenth anniversary of

Halffter in Belgrate, Italy, in 1961. Falla influenced Halffter's music and supported his career.



Adam Kent received a doctorate of musical arts degree from The Juilliard School where he studied with Jerome Lowenthal and bachelor and master's degrees from the Manhattan School of Music where he studied with Solomon Mikowsky. He has performed in recitals, as a soloist with orchestras, and in chamber music programs throughout Spain, Switzerland, South America, and the United States, where he has offered several all-Spanish concerts at Merkin Concert Hall, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Spanish Institute, and Bruno Walter Auditorium. Kent is on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music preparatory division. His recording of the complete piano works of Ernesto Halffter is available on the Bridge C.D. 9106, 200 Clinton Avenue, New Rochelle, New York.

Halffter's death was marked by concerts and recitals in New York, Paris, and Buenos Aires.

Halffter's solo piano music reflects several early 20th-century musical trends. The most immediately appealing works have a nationalistic character, including the two dances from *Sonatina*, the Cuban-inspired *Habanera* and *Pregón*, the *Sérénade à Dulcinée*, and *L'espagnolade*.

The *Danza de la pastora* (*Dance of the Shepherdess*) and the *Danza de la gitana* (*Dance of the Gypsy*) of 1927 quote such popular tunes as "Me casó mi madre" and "Marabú," paying homage to the folklore of Spain. Halffter dedicated the pieces to his fiancée, Alicia Camara Santos, and although both works were written for the keyboard and became Halffter's most popular piano solos, he included them in the orchestral score of *Sonatina* within a year.

*Sonatina* relates the tale of an unhappy princess and an entourage of maidens who try to cheer her up by dancing. When the princess remains melancholy, the maidens look for help from a shepherdess. In the end, however, only the unexpected intervention of a gypsy lifts her spirits. In what seems to be a deliberate reversal of the premise of Falla's *El Amor Brujo*, the gypsy summons a prince.

*Danza de la gitana* (Editions Max Eschig) follows the structure and even some of the musical textures of Falla's celebrated *Danza ritual del fuego*. It opens with hand crossings and exciting dissonances. The harmonic language is a mixture of traditional diatonic tonality and modal colors. The introduction in G with numerous A<sup>b</sup>s suggests the Phrygian mode, typical of much Andalusian gypsy music. Halffter continues to confuse listeners with numerous references to C minor, using G major harmonies that appear to function as dominants. The main body of the dance develops a single theme over a series of pedal points: first C, then E, A, and D before a reprise of the introduction on G and a repeat of the entire dance. A brilliant coda rounds out the piece with the tonal center of the introduction in the G Phrygian mode. Halffter borrows

from different modes throughout the piece and creates a folklore flavor in the writing, but the underlying cycle of fifths is clearly diatonic.

The *Danza de la pastora* (Editions Max Eschig) unfolds in a neatly structured binary form, following the tonal and thematic layouts of early sonata forms used by Padre Antonio Soler and his contemporaries. The piece mimics the Baroque style with its relentless 16th notes, but the harmonies are just dissonant enough to remind listeners of the dance's 20th-century origins.

The *Sérénade à Dulcinée* (Editions Max Eschig), composed in 1944,



creates a musical picture of Don Quixote's idealized peasant woman. It is based on incidental music written for the drama *Dulcinea* by Portuguese author Carlos Selvagem. According to the composer's son Manuel, only this *Sérénade*, a *Prólogo y Alborada* and a *Nocturno* survive from the complete score. *Sérénade à Dulcinée* opens with an extensive introduction that leads to an ABA form, with the outer sections in A minor and the middle section, a brief plaintive interlude, in C minor. Throughout the work the sounds of a plucked guitar accompany the plaintive, expressive melody. Balancing the numerous light staccato accompaniment chords against the sustained legato of the top voice is the

main technical difficulty. When carefully practiced, the staccatos should create a flowing line, and the interpretation should have the sense of fantasy and myth that pervades Cervantes's great novel.

Like several other Spanish composers in the 1940s and 1950s, Ernesto Halffter borrowed Caribbean musical traditions to create a style called Antilleanism, the most well-known example of this being the *Cinco canciones negras* of Xavier Montsalvatge. The piquant dissonances and treacly melodies and harmonies of Halffter's *Pregón* (*Proclamation*), written in 1945, belong to this tradition (Editions Max Eschig). Spanish pianist Guillermo González has compared its  $\frac{5}{8}$  rhythm to a habanera shorn of the sixth beat, and the frequently accented fifth beats and phrase endings further upset the rhythm.

Students should carefully follow these quirky accented upbeat and enjoy the contrasts between the lush, lyrical melodic line and the rugged, percussive accompaniment. Halffter adapted the piece from the film score he composed for José Luis Sáenz de Heredia's *Bambú*, a sentimental love story set in Cuba at the time of the Spanish-American War. In the movie the song *Pregón* is performed by Bambú, a fruit vendor.

The *Habanera* of 1945 (Editions Max Eschig) was written for the same film, although only vague intimations of it appear in the finished score. Halffter casts

Havana's eponymous dance in a simple ternary form, following the traditional rhythm and harmonic scheme. The A section is in G major and features flowing legato triads in the right hand over a steady rhythmic background in the left. The middle section is in C major and has a pervasive dotted rhythm in the left hand, although the writing becomes somewhat more polyphonic in places. The natural contour of the melody and the sultry ambiance add to the appeal of the music.

*L'espagnolade* (Editions Max Eschig) was written in 1938 for French pianist and pedagogue Marguerite Long in celebration of Expo 37. The Paris-based publisher Max Eschig commissioned several non-French composers to





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contribute to an album of short piano works in Long's honor. The result was *Parc d'Attractions Expo 37*, which became a sequel to *A l'exposition*, a similar collection of pieces by native composers published by Salabert. *L'espagnolade* is a spoof on the clichés typically associated with Spanish music. The guitar imitations, hemiola, decorative triplets, and Phrygian cadences are all part of the popular tendency to reduce Spanish music to the most superficial aspects of Andalusian flamenco. The work is essentially in rondo form, the primary theme bearing some resemblance to the "First Spanish Dance" from Falla's opera *La vida breve*. Halffter alternates  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{8}$  time signatures in much of the introduction and transitional material, which is bound to raise a few eyebrows. Juxtapositions of  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{6}{8}$  naturally result in a traditional hemiola, where metrical subdivisions of three and two beats alternate. Here listeners are left dangling by the  $\frac{3}{8}$  measures, expecting another three eighth notes to round out the effect.

Like so many early 20th-century Spanish composers, the music of Debussy and Ravel enthralled Halffter, and their influence shows up in another group of his pieces. The three *Crepúsculos (Dusk)* of 1920 (Editions Max Eschig), his first published works, feature droning gong sounds, a hazy atmosphere, and the colorful nonfunctional harmonies that are typical of French Impressionism. Halffter provided the following program in a preface to the Max Eschig edition:

Escorial, autumn 1920. Through the stained glass, decorated with prophetic figures, filters the evening light; it's an ancient light, bathed in gold. In the solitude of the space, I meditate and dream of musical spaces. Almost imperceptibly, the multi-colored stained-glass figures start to move in a solemn, choreographic crescendo. Freed from the glass, they fill the room with the half-tints of their sacred evolutions. I watch in wonder, with tremulous astonishment, this sacred spectral round that encircles me in steps of some arcane sanctity.

All is transfigured: the old wall clock hurries and strengthens its beats, matching them to the hallucinogenic rhythm of the dance, while the febrile atmosphere is invaded by the sound of bells, sonorous and splendid. But all of a sudden, shattering the exalted spell, come the sound of other bells, slow, whole, and round: it's the bells sounding 5 P.M. on earth. Silence returns. The fading light

## VICKI ray



Pianist Vicki Ray performs widely as a soloist and collaborative artist. She is a member of the award-winning Los Angeles-based ensembles California E.A.R. Unit and Xtet, and has performed with ensembles worldwide including the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Compañia (Germany) and Blue Rider Ensemble (Canada).

A long-time champion of new music, Ms. Ray has had works written for her by composers John Adams, Paul Dresher, Stephen Harttke, Shaun Naidoo, Donald Crockett, and many others. She has performed in major festivals including the Salzburg Festival, Berlin 750 Jahre Festival and the Ojai Festival, where she premiered a new concerto with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sir Simon Rattle conducting.

Her most recent solo recording, from the left edge, is a collection of work written for her by California composers and is on the CRI label. Ms. Ray is the head of the piano department at CalArts, where she has been a faculty member since 1991.

## PETER miyamoto



Peter Miyamoto holds degrees from the Curtis Institute of Music (B.M.), Yale University (M.M. and A.D.), Michigan State University (D.M.A.), and the Royal Academy of Music (A.D.) in London. His teachers have included Maria Curcio-Diamond, Leon Fleisher, Claude Frank, and Peter Frankl. He captured top prizes in numerous competitions including the Irving S. Gilmore Young Artist Award, the American Pianist Association National Fellowship Competition, the D'Angelo International Competition, and the National Chopin Competition.

Peter has already enjoyed a brilliant international career, performing to great acclaim in recital and as soloist in Canada, England, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, China, and Japan, and throughout the United States.

In addition to serving on the faculty at CalArts, Peter has also been a member of the faculty at Michigan State University. His CD of the Chopin Ballades and Fantasies has just been released by the Blue-Griffin Label ([www.blue-griffin.com](http://www.blue-griffin.com)).

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Halffter (right) with Maurice Ravel, Sevilla, 1935. Halffter was enthralled with Ravel's music.

hovers, polychrome, through the stained-glass figures, once again imprisoned in their leaden profiles. And in the sad fullness of recovered reality, at the end of this vanishing hour, I feel the mysterious prelude of my future arise with a pure joy of hope.

This imaginary scene clearly appears in the first work, *El viejo reloj del castillo* (The Old Castle Clock), with its endless bell effects, gongs, and drones. It is in ternary form, with the outer sections grounded in a B $\flat$  broken-octave ostinato, while the middle portion builds dynamically and rhythmically to an impressive climax, full of brilliant 32nd-note runs.

*Lullaby*, the second piece, cast in the traditional  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a berceuse, has sweeter harmonies, although subtle dissonances in the middle section add expressive depth to its simple melody.

The concluding work, *Una ermita en el bosque* (A Little Chapel in the Woods), is introspective, alluding to a woodland hermitage the young composer frequented in El Escorial. Halffter's score suggests a vivid program, with solemn four-part chorales interrupted by the distant call of birds. The piece imaginatively explores the various registers of the piano, evoking angelic effects in several phrases scored for the instrument's treble range. The tenor range has episodes suggesting monastic chanting marked *calmo*.

The *Marche joyeuse* (Unión Musical Española), composed in 1922, was supposedly influenced by Debussy's *L'isle joyeuse*, although its zany bitonal escapades, lean textures, and transparent scoring also point to the influence of Igor Stravinsky. Several passages have

different key signatures for the right and left hands, occasionally with C major or A $\flat$  major superimposed over B major, which prevails in the bass and creates striking dissonances. Halffter generally resolves these clashes favoring the harmony in the left hand, as Darius Milhaud did in his celebrated work, *Saudades do Brazil*.

The sudden shifts of mood and texture throughout the *Marche joyeuse* have a startling effect reminiscent of the surrealist film techniques pioneered by Halffter's friend and colleague Luis Buñuel. Interestingly enough in the same year Halffter also composed a set of *Hommages* to various contemporary composers for piano trio and included tributes to both Stravinsky and Debussy. In any case *Marche joyeuse* became popular when Arthur Rubinstein included it in his repertoire.

A neo-classical element is unmistakable in Halffter's work, especially in such early orchestral scores as the *Sinfonietta* and *Sonatina*. The *Danza de la pastora* also fits this pattern by imitating Scarlatti and Soler, as does the *Sonate: Homenaje a Scarlatti* of 1985 (Editions Max Eschig) for piano or harpsichord, composed for the Scarlatti tricentennial. The work is in the binary form of the harpsichord sonatas of Scarlatti and follows a similar tonal layout. Like his Baroque predecessors Halffter dramatically juxtaposes contrasting themes and alludes to popular musical idioms, although his polyphony is more dissonant. Toward the end of the work, the subject of Scarlatti's "Cat's Fugue" (Sonata in G Minor, K. 30) appears in a cadenza-like

figure. Futuristic harmonies accompany the theme, said to suggest a cat treading over the keys of a harpsichord, and place the music squarely in the 20th century.

An earlier single-movement work, *Sonata per pianoforte* (Editions Max Eschig) composed from 1926 to 1932, also recalls antiquated musical styles, especially in the development section, although the thick pianistic textures and complex rhythms place the work clearly in the 20th century. The development section opens with a four-part fugal exposition based on the first theme and follows the traditional I-V-I-V format for each successive entrance of the subject. The piece is perhaps Halffter's most complex and technically difficult piano solo.

The *Preludio y Danza* (Unión Musical Española) from 1974 is also reminiscent of Baroque music. The *Preludio* opens with dotted rhythms and sweeping arpeggios that recall the French Overture style, but the underlying tonality is filled with dissonance. A roiling middle section functions as a cadenza-like improvisation that leads back to the austere chordal texture of the opening.

The *danza* begins with an introduction that acts as a transition between the drama of the *preludio* and the lighter, wittier mood of the new section. Halffter modeled this part of the piece after the familiar rounded binary structures of so many Baroque dances. Students should slowly practice the quick repeated notes and rapid triple-note tremolos that fill this section. The work was written in honor of Alonso Ortiz, an arts patron and businessman in Madrid.

A number of homages round out Halffter's solo piano output, including the *Nocturno otoñal: recordando a Chopin* (Autumnal Nocturne: Remembering Chopin) of 1987, the *Llanto por Ricardo Viñes* (Lament for Ricardo Viñes) of 1943, and the *Hommages* of 1988, dedicated to Joaquín Turina, Federico Mompou, and Rodolfo Halffter. The *Llanto por Ricardo Viñes* (Unión Musical Española) is a moving work that recalls Falla's *Hommage à Dukas*. Viñes was a revered Catalan pianist associated with promoting the latest works of such early 20th-century composers as Debussy, Ravel, Poulenc, Mompou, Falla, and Granados, as well as Halffter.

The three homages of 1988 begin with a salute to Turina (Editions Max

Danza de la pastora, Allegro vivace, Measures 1-5

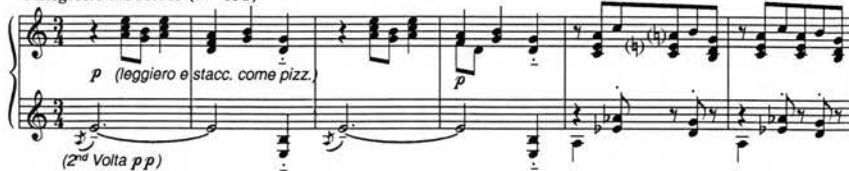


Danza de la gitana, Measures 36-39



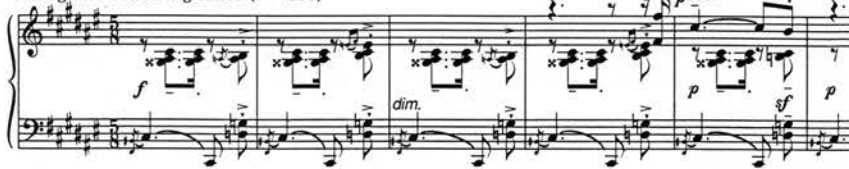
Sérénade à Dulcinée, Measures 1-6

Allegretto moderato (♩ = 132)



Pregón, Measures 1-6

Allegretto ritmico e grazioso (♩ = 168)



Habanera, Measures 4-9

In Tempo di Habanera, moderato assai (♩ = 58)



L'espagnolade, Measures 1-5

Con fretta (♩ = 144)



"Lullaby" from Crepúsculos, Measures 1-4

Moderatamente mosso (♩ = 108)



El viejo reloj del castillo, Measures 21-25





Marche joyeuse, Measures 17-22



Sonate: Homenaje a Scarlatti, Measures 92-97



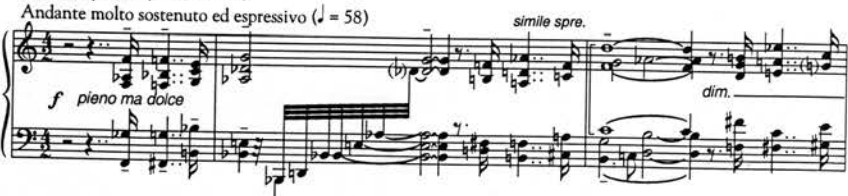
Domenico Scarlatti, Fuga, K. 30, Measures 1-7



Sonate per pianoforte, Measures 63-67



Preludio y danza, Measures 1-3



Hommage à Joaquín Turina, Measures 1



Hommage à Federico Mompou, Measures 18-20



Hommage à Rodolfo Halffter, Moderato (♩ = 92), Measures 1-6



Sonata de El Escorial by Rodolfo Halffter, Measures 1-6



Eschig), one of the most prolific Spanish composers of the early 20th century. In this lively evocation Halffter quotes "De los álamos vengo, madre," a popular 16th-century villancico by Juan Vázquez, which Falla and Rodrigo also included in their works. The references to Seville in Vázquez's original text allude to Turina's native city. The piece is best understood as a rondo, with the Renaissance-era tune making three appearances. The first and last of these are in E major and lead to brilliant cadenzas, both of which cadence in the prevailing key of A major. The first episode is a lilting tune in  $\frac{5}{8}$ , accompanied by a strongly diatonic bass line with 3+2 metrical subdivisions. The second statement of the borrowed theme is set in A major and introduces a rhythmically freer central episode, with melismatic melodic contours and throbbing repeated notes, at one point set over a G# pedal point. The section recalls the *cante jondo* vocal style of Andalusian flamenco music.

Halffter captured the simple compositional style of his close friend, Federico Mompou (1893-1987) in the middle movement of the triptych. The homage is in ternary form, with the outer sections featuring a flowing melody in A natural minor over an A pedal point. The bell sounds that are Mompou's stylistic hallmarks appear in the central section of this lyrical miniature.

*Homenaje a Rodolfo Halffter* (Editions Max Eschig) is a poignant tribute to the composer's older brother. It is in three discrete sections, the first quoting the opening of Rodolfo's celebrated piano solo *Dos sonatas de El Escorial*, one of his first published compositions. The *Escorial* was a monastery built by the Spanish king Philip II in the 16th century that became a burial site for the monarchs of Spain. Scarlatti accompanied the Spanish royal family on its annual sojourns to the forbidding site, where he undoubtedly met and instructed the young Soler. Rodolfo Halffter's allusion to the *Escorial* refers to the neo-classical flavor that pervades his work. Ernesto transposes his brother's theme down a half-step, slows the lively tempo of the original, and smooths the quirky alternating meters into a more staid  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature. All this imparts a sense of reflection and hazily recalls the quotation. The central section has sharply dotted rhythms and sturdy chordal textures evoking brilliant fanfares for the deceased Rodolfo. It leads to

slow-moving dissonant chords in the final segment that seem to function as a prayer for the composer, suggesting the religious association with Philip II's austere monastery. When pianist Guillermo González asked Ernesto Halffter about the meaning of the concluding enigmatic harmonies, he responded, "I was thinking of Rodolfo's soul, that, good as he was, can only be in Heaven."

*Llanto por Ricardo Viñes* was written in memory of the Catalan pianist who fearlessly promoted the music of numerous early-20th century composers, including Debussy, Ravel, Poulenc, Mompou, Falla, and Granados, as well as Halffter. This moving piece recalls the austere sacred polyphony of such 16th- and early 17th-century Spanish composers as Cristóbal de Morales, Francisco Guerrero, and Tomás Luis de Victoria. Falla also had paid homage to the music of this era in such works as the Harpsichord Concerto, *El retablo de Maese Pedro*, and the *Hommage à Dukas*, all worth hearing when studying Halffter's composition.

*Llanto por Ricardo Viñes* is in rondo form with the main theme in C# minor appearing three times. Although the writing is essentially chordal, the voice leading will make pianists think polyphonically. The initial statement of the main theme in measures 1-16 has four four-bar phrases, the first three ending on the dominant or its enharmonic equivalent, and the last on the tonic. Students should follow the many important interpretive directions in the music, taking care to differentiate between gradual crescendos and sudden dynamic shifts; a metronome of a ♩ = 50-54 seems to do justice to the tempo marking.

Several types of articulations appear in the score, including some marked *arpeggiato* in measures 1-4 or *non arpeggiato* in measures 5-8; there are written-out arpeggiations in contrary motion between the two hands in measures 10-12, as well as traditional signs that imply a chord rolled more slowly than those designated *arpeggiato*. Syncopated pedaling throughout the piece will sustain the line without blurring adjacent notes, and pianists can experiment with bringing out different voices in the large chords, especially where passages repeat.

The first episode in measures 17-32 is best understood as two four-bar phrases with a written-out echo. The two-note slurs with the tenuto markings and

*Continued on page 35*

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# Llanto por Ricardo Viñes

## De La Suite Lirica

Andante moderato assai, nobilmente espressivo

BY ERNESTO HALFFTER

*dolce ed arpeggiato* *cresc.* **f**

*sub. p e non arpegg.* **p** *arpegg.*

**f sub.** **p** *cresc.* **f pieno-non arpegg.**

*appena rit.* *a tempo* **p** *cresc. poco*

*cresc. sempre* **f**

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First system of musical notation. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The system consists of two staves. The right staff has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *pp* (pianissimo). A crescendo marking *cresc. poco* is present in the final measure.

Second system of musical notation. The right staff continues the melodic line. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *cresc. espress.* (crescendo, expressive) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Third system of musical notation. The right staff has a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *arpegg.* (arpeggiated), and *f sub.* (forte, subito).

Fourth system of musical notation. The right staff has a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *f piena, non arpegg.* (forte, full, not arpeggiated).

Fifth system of musical notation. The right staff has a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *appena rit.* (appena ritardando), *p* (piano), *sf-p* (sforzando-piano), and *pp* (pianissimo).



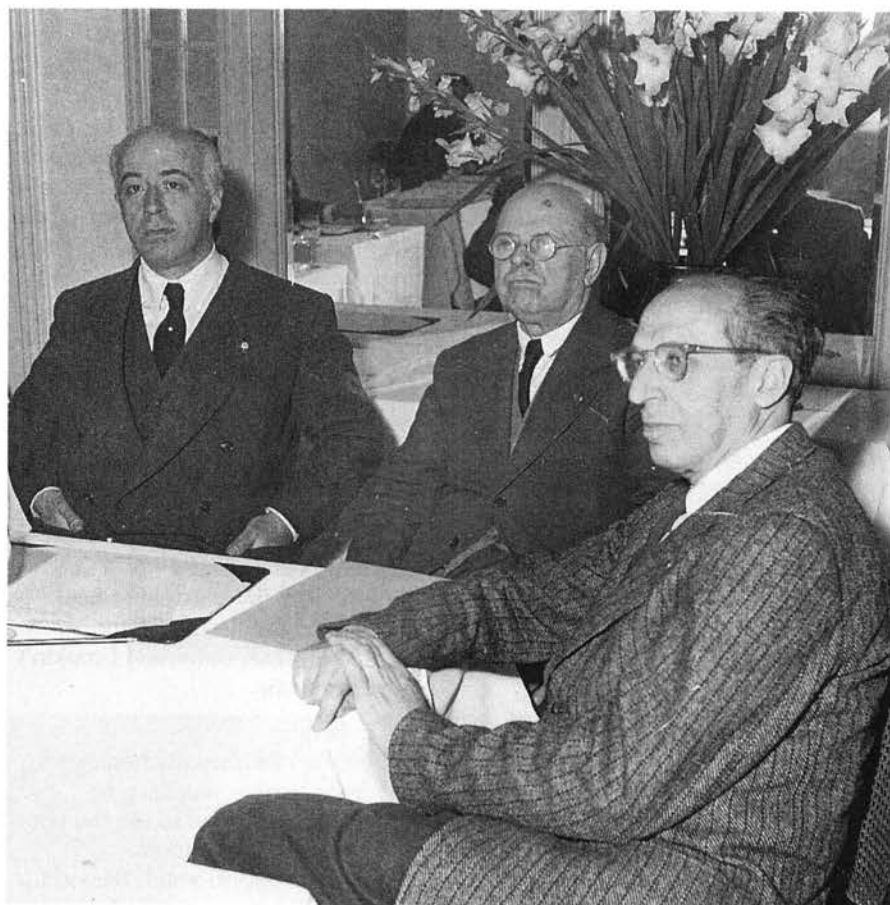
First system of musical notation. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The system consists of two staves. The right staff begins with a *mf* dynamic and features a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line with chords. Dynamics include *mf*, *sf-p*, *pp*, *sf-p*, and *pp* with hairpins.

Second system of musical notation. The right staff continues the melodic line. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *p* (arpegg. e cresc.) and *simile*.

Third system of musical notation. The right staff features a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *f* and *sub. p* (non arpegg.).

Fourth system of musical notation. The right staff features a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *pp*.

Fifth system of musical notation. The right staff features a melodic line with a slur. The left staff has a bass line. Dynamics include *più lontano*, *mf pieno e cresc.*, *f*, and *p*.



Halffter (left) with Pablo Casals and Aaron Copland, Monte Carlo, 1955, as members of the Olympic anthem competition jury, organized by the International Olympic Committee. Photo by Detaille.

## Pupil Savers

### Beautiful Dream

*Après une Rêve* (Willis) by Gabriel Fauré, transcribed by Duncan Stearns, has a beautiful, singing melody and colorful chords to portray the title, *After a Dream*. The music appeals to the teenage girls in my studio. Abundant triplets over eighth notes make this piece perfect for teaching two-against-three rhythms and experimenting with slight accents in the left hand.

Andantino, Measures 1-4 *mp* warm, rich tone

*pp* dolce cantabile

always very smooth, even, and connected without pedal.

do not hurry

Stearns's annotations appear throughout the piece, providing a variety of ideas for interpretation and suggestions for teaching. The indication "always very smooth, even, and connected without pedal" appears in the first bar before the right hand introduces the cantabile melody in quarter notes. After 15 bars without pedal he adds a copious use of pedal to provide contrast.

Of the three climaxes in this piece, the first at measure 32 may be the most difficult, with three-against-four rhythms, parallel 16th notes that move from the bass to the treble range of the keyboard, and large chords.

The end includes diminuendos, decrescendos, ritards, and fermatas as the dream fades away from memory.

Measures 22-23

warm tone

use full tone

lush cresc.

project top

Ped. Ped. Ped.

Fauré composed the original for voice and piano in the late 1870s. Of the many transcriptions of the piece, the one performed by cellist Pablo Casals is the most famous.

— George Ingham  
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

diminuendos at the start of these sections should have a sighing quality. Measures 21-22, which repeats at measures 29 and 30, provide opportunities to vary the voicings, such as highlighting the moving inner line one time and the top voice of the broken octaves the other. An abbreviated restatement of the main theme follows in measures 33-40, followed by the second episode in measures 41-48.

This section is a parallel period, divided into two four-measure phrases. The bass notes in measures 41, 42, 45, and 46, indicated as staccato with tenuto markings, suggest the muffled drumming of a funeral procession. This effect should be brought out while maintaining the implied legato between the upper chords, which requires careful control of dynamics and pedaling. Halffter's thinking here was truly orchestral. The episode ends on a G# major chord, preparing the final statement of the rondo theme at measure 49.

This last section begins like the opening, but it expands into an inspiring coda at the upbeat to measure 58. Until this point the piece has centered around C# minor, but now it moves towards E major, the relative major. The expanded A chords of measures

58 and 59 should sound like distant chiming bells, with the F# and B in the bass connected with pedal, which imply a cycle of fifths leading to E. A slight ease in tempo will highlight the hushed effect of the *più lontano*, which means more distant.

The downbeat of measure 61 suggests E major with a restruck suspension in the inner voices, but there are few hopes of a happy ending with the ensuing arpeggio leading back to C# in the bass. Following the dynamic markings is important here, from the powerful, defiant *f* at the start of this measure to the diminuendo and its implied feeling of resignation. The final harmony, E major superimposed over C# minor, suggests a ray of hope at the end of this tragic work, leaving a moment for the pianist to linger over the last arpeggio.

In a certain sense, most of Ernesto Halffter's output was an act of homage. Whether evoking the styles of specific composers, recalling Iberia's musical past, or borrowing from the folk traditions of Spain or Portugal, Halffter devoted much of his career to memorializing the music he loved. His voice is always discernible, however, enriching the tradition of Spanish music to which he gave so much. □