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Jan J. de KLOE. *Oscar Esplá in Belgium (1936-1949)*, (Columbus, Ohio: Editions Orphée, 2001), 264 pages. 41 illustrations, bibliography, index. ISBN 1-882612-21-3.

European art music is often divided into two aesthetic camps: the Germanic and the Mediterranean. The former represents intellectual rigor – complex polyphony, abstract meaning, and textural density, whereas the latter stands for sensual pleasure – beguiling instrumental color, easy lyricism, and crystalline textures. The Spanish nationalist composers who worked heroically in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to win Spain a place on the European musical map have traditionally been identified with the Mediterranean axis, and not only for geographic reasons. Most Spanish composers of the period – Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados, Manuel de Falla, and Joaquín Turina – gravitated toward France and French musical trends in their artistic and professional development. Conversely, Spain provided wonderful fodder for many composers north of the Pyrénées, most notably Emmanuel Chabrier, Georges Bizet, Claude Debussy, and Maurice Ravel.

It is useful to remember, however, that Germanic music had its allure for certain Spanish composers as well. Felip Pedrell (1841-1922), the Catalan musicologist, author, composer, and pedagogue responsible for stimulating a generation of young Spanish composers to forge an authentically Spanish music with universal relevance, considered Richard Wagner a role model for creating a distinctively nationalistic art form. Indeed, Wagner enjoyed enormous popularity in turn-of-the-century Barcelona, where *Parsifal* received its post-Bayreuth premiere, Catalan-language translations of the German master's operas were published, and an Associació Wagneriana was founded in 1900. Granados was certainly inspired by Wagner in his *Goyescas* (1909-11), rich in lurid chromaticism and bound throughout by leitmotiv-like thematic connections. Even more significantly, Roberto Gerhard, a pupil of Granados and Pedrell, became Arnold Schoenberg's sole Spanish student in the 1920's. Gerhard would ultimately synthesize a highly personal style by wedding Schönbergian harmony and counterpoint to Spanish instrumental color and rhythm.

*Oscar Esplá in Belgium (1936-1949)* prompts many such musings on the Germanic/Mediterranean dichotomy, as it details an important segment in the life of one of Spain's most interesting composers after Falla. Esplá (1889?-1976) was born in the Mediterranean seaside town of Alicante and would frequently turn to Levantine themes in many of his works, including the *Dos tonadas levantinas* for chorus and the *Bocetos levantinos* from *Lírica española* for solo piano. While Esplá may have had contact with Camille Saint-Saëns and his circle in France, his work with Max Reger and his trip to Vienna in 1911 would be more determinant of his evolving style. Esplá's music reflects a Spanish bias expressed in the thick textures and sober colors of the Germanic tradition. Among his better

known works are the *Canciones playeras*, the scenic cantata *La nochebuena del diablo* (both on texts by Rafael Alberti), the symphonic poem *Don Quixote velando las armas*, and numerous solo piano works. Belgium around the time of the Second World War is the other "player" in this tale, embodying a similar cultural duality with its Dutch/Flemish and Francophone populations. The period in question covers the years of German occupation, when nationalistic interpretations of art would acquire sinister implications.

Jan de Kloe's splendidly researched work provides valuable insight not only into Esplá's life and work, but also into the phenomenon of artists working under dictatorships. In addition to his work as a guitarist and musical scholar, de Kloe brings to the task a background in computer technology and graphic design, skills he puts to good use in this generously illustrated publication. De Kloe's research has led him to all the standard secondary sources, which he painstakingly compares and evaluates throughout the course of the narrative. Numerous primary sources have been consulted as well, including the archives of the Belgian daily *Le Soir*, for which the composer wrote during the Second World War, a wealth of personal correspondence housed in the Fondo Documental Oscar Esplá in Alicante, and the records of Belgian and Spanish performance rights organizations. The irony of Esplá's fleeing Spain at the outbreak of that nation's Civil War only to find himself working under the Nazi occupation in Belgium is certainly not lost on de Kloe. Esplá suffered not only at the hands of the Nazis, but also the communist-leaning fanatics of the Spanish Republic, the brutally repressive Fascists under Franco, and even the over-zealous government of the newly liberated Belgium. Through it all, de Kloe paints a human portrait of "his" composer, depicting a man of strong but not incorruptible moral principles, committed ultimately to his art and family.

*Oscar Esplá in Belgium* is not easily classified. De Kloe avoids any sort of musical or psychological analysis, generally presenting biographical data as objectively as possible. The work is probably best understood as a "guide to research", with its exceptional detail and careful documentation of source material. De Kloe has here the start of an excellent bio-bibliography on Esplá, if the project were expanded beyond the stated period and the material were organized differently. As it stands now, *Oscar Esplá in Belgium* proceeds more or less chronologically, examining separately various aspects of Esplá's years in Belgium. Chapters are given over to the composer's journalistic activities and performances for specific years, as well as particular events or recurrent themes of his Belgian sojourn.

The lines between text, endnote, and appendix do not seem to exist for de Kloe, however. While various articles

referenced or quoted in part are printed in their entirety towards the book's conclusion, other chapters seem to interrupt the forward-flow of the narrative with full-scale translations of entire pieces (as in the chapter entitled "Oscar Esplá on Manuel de Falla"). The minute examination of every scrap of documentary evidence within the narrative itself also seems disruptive: surely, the debate over Esplá's precise year of birth might have more practically been relegated to foot or endnotes, for example. Still, readers owe de Kloe a debt of gratitude for making this primary material available, much of it translated into English.

Esplá's richly diversified academic background makes him a rewarding figure for this sort of documentary monograph. The composer studied industrial engineering and philosophy in Barcelona before committing himself to a career in music, and his extensive musicological and journalistic writings provide a wealth of valuable material. De Kloe documents Esplá's career as a music columnist for the German-controlled *Le Soir*, which required the composer to sign a supposedly pro-forma oath of loyalty to the Nazi Propaganda Abteilung. The author quotes numerous articles as well as exchanges with readers, the most chilling and ultimately fascinating of which involves the vitriolic response of the Nazi-sympathizer Walter Weyler, music critic for the Dutch-language *Volk en Staat* of Antwerp, to several less than enthusiastic comments by Esplá on the music of Max Reger and Anton Bruckner. The interaction between the two critics provides a fascinating window into journalism under totalitarianism, artistic criticism under a racist dictatorship, and an artist's struggle to adhere to personally held convictions without taking undue risks.

Esplá may well have maintained his artistic and intellectual integrity even when writing under Nazi supervision, but his role as a potential collaborator with German occupying forces was viewed harshly by the military tribunals of liberated Belgium. The composer was arrested on two occasions and was actually imprisoned before being exonerated. Even after being cleared of legal charges, however, Esplá remained blacklisted in the Belgian press and remains to this day a rather ambiguous figure in the annals of war-time Belgium. Undoubtedly, the censure he experienced was a major motivating factor in his return to Franco's Spain in 1949.

De Kloe does his share of clarifying and debunking throughout *Oscar Esplá in Belgium*, candidly acknowledging those matters still undeterminable. For one thing, the composer's inflated claims about his accomplishments directing the Laboratoire Musical Scientifique in Brussels are effectively scrutinized. De Kloe also describes several unpublished, aborted, or lost projects from Esplá's Belgian years, most tantalizingly the unpublished opera-ballet *La Balteira*, and an opera *Le Père Misère*, the manuscript of which has yet to be located.

Throughout, de Kloe reproduces an impressive store of iconographic material, including photos of prominent colleagues and collaborators, copies of personal notes and dedications, and newspaper clippings. Regrettably, many of these reproductions are too small, not clearly scanned, or not effectively placed within the layout of a page to make their ideal impact. De Kloe also prints the scores of several arrangements of Flemish folk tunes prepared by Esplá and creates tables detailing the composer's compositional activities.

A native of The Hague, de Kloe generally earns high marks for his command of English, although the occasionally awkward turn of phrase impedes comprehension in places. The following example from page 159 is representative: "He returned with two letters – one from Lifar which confirmed his support to the operation within the possibilities he has currently being contracted by the Paris Théâtre National de l'Opéra...". More generally, readers must be on alert for the characterization of communities as "communes" and collaboration as "cooperation."

These small caveats aside, Jan de Kloe's *Oscar Esplá in Belgium* is a masterly work of scholarship, which effectively documents the activities of an under-represented Spanish master at a critical point in twentieth-century history. The author's scrupulous reporting allows his readers to react directly to primary source material and to behold firsthand the challenges facing artists and intellectuals during the darkest days of the last century. Esplá's music certainly deserves a wider audience, and de Kloe's work should stimulate greater interest through its insightful historical perspective.

ADAM KENT

Mònica PAGÈS I SANTACANA, *Acadèmia Granados–Marshall: 100 anys d'escola pianística a Barcelona* (Barcelona: Acadèmia Marshall; Taller Editorial Mateu, 2000), 174 pàgines.

Este volumen fue publicado, con la ayuda de instituciones oficiales y privadas, por la Acadèmia Granados–Marshall en diciembre de 2000 para celebrar el centenario de su fundación en 1901. A primera vista presenta el aspecto del catálogo de una exposición conmemorativa: for-

mato apaisado, alta calidad del papel, abundancia de material gráfico (y el texto catalán va acompañado por sus correspondientes traducciones castellana e inglesa, situadas respectivamente en una columna paralela y al final del libro). Pero lo que al leer este volumen hace pensar en la

naissance, and Baroque, and 18th-century keyboard music to study of organs in Canary Islands, and music and musical life of Tenerife. In addition to many articles she published the book *La iconografía musical latinoamericana en el Renacimiento y en el Barroco: Importancia y pautas para su estudio* (Washington, D.C., 1993). She is the director of the record collection of the SedeM and, together with Lothar Siemens, is in charge of the musicological project RALS, aimed at preserving the Canarian musical heritage.

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The musicologist and composer ANNA CAZURRA studied composition and music pedagogy at the Conservatori Municipal de Música and history of art at the Universitat Autònoma in Barcelona. She completed her PhD dissertation on the eighteenth-century Catalan composer Joan Rossell (1992) and wrote the book *Introducció a la música: De l'antiguitat als nostres dies* (2001). She teaches at the Universitat de Barcelona.

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JOSÉ MUÑOZ MILLANES is professor of Spanish literature at the Lehman College and the CUNY Graduate Center. He is the author of *Modos y afectos del fragmentos* (1998) and the translator from Catalan into Spanish of Marià Manent's diaries.

HIROYUKI MINAMINO received his Ph.D in music from the University of Chicago. He has written on 16th-century lute music, music iconography, and the cross-cultural relation in music between Europe and Japan in the 16th century.

ANNO MÜNGEN received his doctorate in 1995 with a dissertation on Gaspare Spontini and the contemporary German opera (published in 1997). Since 1994 he is affiliated with the music department of Mainz University. His post-doctoral thesis on the "archeology" of film music will be published in 2003. He has written