

Bronx Arts Ensemble
New World 80379-2
Works by Héctor Campos Parsi, Max Lifchitz, and Roberto Sierra

THE BRONX ARTS ENSEMBLE was formed in 1972 to bring performances of chamber and orchestral music to the Bronx. Its members include some of New York's finest freelance musicians, performers who also appear with such groups as the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, and American Symphony orchestras. Currently in residence at Fordham University, the ensemble over ninety concerts each season in such varied settings as the Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, Bronx Community College, Wave Hill, and elsewhere in the community. The Bronx Arts Ensemble has recorded for Leonarda, Musical Heritage Society, CRI, and Newport Classics.

ROBERTO SIERRA was born in Puerto Rico in 1953. Upon graduation from the Conservatory of Music and University of Puerto Rico in 1976, he studied in England for two years, at the Royal College of Music and University of London. Further studies followed at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht, and the Hochschule für Musik in Hamburg, with György Ligeti. He returned to Puerto Rico in 1982 thoroughly versed in international composing techniques, yet dedicated to preserving the cultural identity of his Latin American origins. According to Sierra, he has “incorporated elements of folklore and of popular music (urban folklore) in order to create a music that in essence is Puerto Rican, and portrays the marvelous and contradictory world of [that] tropical island.” Since his return he has continued to compose and now serves as Chancellor at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music as well. A one-man concert as part of the 1987 Almeida Festival in England was taped for broadcast by the BBC.

Doña Rosita la Soltera (Doña Rosita the Spinster), for soprano and wind quintet, dates from 1985. Commissioned by and dedicated to the soprano Puli Toro, it was first performed on November 7 of that year at Carnegie Recital Hall by Ms. Toro with the Quintet of the Americas, and was later repeated at the Inter-American Music Festival in Washington, D.C. The text is drawn from the Act I monologue of the play of the same title by Federico García Lorca, written in 1935, six years after the Andalusian poet's sojourn in New York, and the year before his death.

Salsa para Vientos, also for wind quintet, was awarded a prize at its premiere in 1983 at the Budapest Spring Festival. An atmospheric work, it is divided into three movements—Tropical, Antillana, and Jaleo (jam session)—of contrasting mood, but sharing certain thematic elements. There are allusions to Puerto Rican popular music and even to tropical night sounds, including a “cadenza with tropical insects” toward the end of the Jaleo.

HÉCTOR CAMPOS PARSI was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, in 1922. Like Sierra, he started with a liberal arts education, attending the University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras. Soon after graduation he began a series of musical studies abroad, first at the New England Conservatory in Boston with Francis Judd Cooke, then at the Berkshire Music Center summer session with Aaron Copland, Irving Fine, and Olivier Messiaen (1949-50). These were followed by study for four years with Nadia Boulanger at

Fontainebleau. He returned home in 1955 in time for the cultural renaissance that was springing up in Puerto Rico in the late 1950s. During a quarter century as director of music programs for the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, he has been active in setting up cultural centers, festivals, concerts, and television programs, as well as working in research and publications. In addition, he serves as professor of composition and theory at the Conservatory and is a member of the Puerto Rican Academy of Arts and Sciences, which awarded him its Gran Premio de Musica in 1970. Like Dvorák, he has written both national- and international-style music. Parsi's compositional approach is fundamentally tonal, though he has branched out on occasion into electronic and aleatoric music.

Sonetos Sagrados (Sacred Sonnets), the first Puerto Rican score written for the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage of discovery, commemorates an Old-World Spanish heritage, albeit from a period slightly later than that of Columbus. The five songs are based on four sources from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, known as the Siglo de Oro (Golden Age) of Renaissance Spain. The songs explore the various aspects of the relationship between God and the human individual. The composer describes this work as “a small sacred cantata, each section casting a different light on the many faces of divine love.” The world premiere during the Inter-American Arts Festival in San Juan in 1986, by Tamara Escribano and the Aulos Wind Quintet, was followed by the first New York performance on May 8, 1988, by the artists of the present recording, at Merkin Concert Hall.

MAX LIFCHITZ was born in Mexico City in 1948, and since 1966 has lived and worked in the United States, where he earned degrees at the Juilliard School of Music and Harvard University meanwhile pursuing further studies at the Berkshire Music Center and the Aspen Festival summer school. Active as a pianist and conductor, he has organized North/South Consonance Inc., which presents concerts to promote awareness of new inter-American music. Lifchitz was a member of the music faculty at Columbia University from 1977 to 1986, and currently teaches at the State University of New York at Albany. Attracted to unusual combinations of instruments, he has written extensively for chamber ensembles and small orchestra, on occasion utilizing electronic instruments and tape as supplements.

Yellow Ribbons is part of an ongoing series of compositions—now about halfway completed, and designed to reach a total of 64—one for each captive held during the Iran hostage crisis. Yellow ribbons worn in honor of the hostages stirred the composer to a way of “celebrating the artistic and personal freedom so often taken for granted in the West.” Each work in the series uses a different instrumentation, ranging from solo through chamber to orchestral. The composer has written, “They share some melodic, harmonic and rhythmic relationships, and some motivic material reappears throughout the series.” Number 11 is dedicated to Windmill, a performing group. Number 12, written for the Bronx Arts Ensemble, was introduced by it on August 29, 1982, with Johannes Somary conducting.

—JOHN W. FREEMAN

John W. Freeman, a composer, has been associate editor of Opera News magazine since 1960, and served for ten years as board chairman for the Bronx Arts Ensemble.

ROBERTO SIERRA: Doña Rosita La Soltera

Granada, calle de Elvira,
donde viven las manolas,
las que se van a la Alhambra,
las tres y las cuatro solas.
Una vestida de verde,
otra de malva, y la otra,
un corcelete escoces
con cintas hasta la cola.
Las que van delante, garzas;
la que va detras, paloma;
abren por las alamedas
muselinas misteriosas.
¡Ay que oscura está la Alhambra!
¿A donde irán las manolas
mientras sufren en la umbría
el surtidor y la rosa?
¿Que galanes las esperan?
¿Bajo que mirto reposan?
¿Que manos roban perfumes
a sus dos flores redondas?
Nadie va con ellas, nadie;
dos garzas y una paloma.
Pero en el mundo hay galanes
que se tapan con las hojas.
La catedral ha dejado
bronces que la brisa toma.
El genil duerme a sus bueyes
y el Dauro a sus mariposas.
La noche viene cargada
con sus colinas de sombra;
una enseña los zapatos
entre volantes de blonda;
la mayor abre sus ojos
y la menor los entorna
¿Quien seran aquellas tres
de alto pecho y larga cola?
¿Por que agitan los pafluelos?
¿Adonde ir a estas horas?
Granada, calle de Elvira,
donde viven las mano....

*Granada, Elvira Street,
where the manolas live,
who go to the Alhambra*

*in threes and fours, alone.
One is dressed in green,
the other in mauve, the third
wears a Scotch bodice
with ribbons to the train.
The two in front are herons,
the one behind, a dove;
along the poplar lane
they open mysterious muslins.
Ay, how dark is the Alhambra!
Where will the Manolas go
while the fountain and the rose
suffer in the shade?
Which lovers will expect them?
Under which myrtle will they rest?
Whose hands will steal the perfume
from their two round flowers?
No one goes with them, no one;
two herons and a dove.
But there are gallants in the world
who hide behind leaves.
The cathedral has left
bronzes which the breeze takes up.
The Genil sleeps his oxen,
and the Dauro his butterflies.
The night arrives laden
with its hills of shadow;
one shows her shoes
between the silk lace flounces,
the older opens wide her eyes,
and the younger half-closes hers.
Who will they be, those three,
with high breasts and long trains?
Why do they wave their handkerchiefs?
Where will they go at these hours?
Granada, Elvira Street,
where the Manolas live,
who go to the Alhambra,
in threes and fours, alone.*

Doña Rosita la Soltera by Federico García Lorca, from Obras Completas © Heredos de Federico García Lorca. English-language translation by James Graham-Lujan and Richard L. O'Connell. From Five Plays. Comedies and Tragicomedies, ©1963 by New Directions, New York. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

HÉCTOR CAMPO PARSI: Sonetos Sagrados

I. No me mueve, mi Dios... (Attributed to St. Theresa of Avila)

No me mueve, mi Dios para quererte,
el cielo que me tienes prometido,
ni me mueve el infierno tan temido
para dejar por eso de ofenderte.

Tu me mueves Señor, mueveme el verte
clavado en una cruz y escarnecido.
Muéveme ver tu cuerpo tan herido
muévenme tus afrentas y tu muerte.

Muéveme, al fin, tu amor de tal manera
que aunque no hubiera cielo, yo te amara
y aunque no hubiera infierno, te temiera.

No me tienes que dar porque te quiera
pues aunque lo que espero, no esperara,
lo mismo que te quiero, te quisiera.

No me mueve, mi Dios...

To love you, my God, I am not moved by the Heavens you have promised me. Neither am I moved by fright of Hell, so that I do not offend you. You move me, my Lord. I am moved by the sight of your crucifixion, to see you debased; by the sight of your wounded body, the way you have been affronted, and your death. Lastly, I am moved by your love, in such a way that I would love you even if Heavens did not exist, and I would be afraid of your might even if Hell never existed. You need not give me anything to love you, because, if I did not expect what I expect, I would love you anyway.

II. Siguiendo vá... (Alfonso de Bonilla, 1617)

Siguiendo vá su natural porfia
la piedra hasta el centro que apetece,
el aire puro seca y humedece,
el fuego dá calor, el agua enfría.

La presencia del sol, engendra el día,
levanta el vuelo el ave, nada el pesce,
anda todo animal, la planta crece.

La piedra imán levanta, el norte guía,
bufa el pesado buey, bala el cordero,
conoce al dueño el can por el olfato,
el caballo relincha, el león brama.

Todas las cosas con eterno fuero
siguen su natural; y el hombre ingrato,
no sigue el suyo, pues a Dios no ama.

Siguiendo vá...

Following its natural inclination, the stone falls toward the center; pure air dries and humidifies; fire heats, water cools. The presence of the sun begets day. Birds fly, fish swim; every animal walks, plants grow, magnets draw and guide to the North. The heavy bull bellows and lambs bray. Dogs know their master by their scent, horses neigh, lions roar. Everything by eternal law follows its natural bent, but ingrate man does not follow his... he does not love God.

III. O dulces prendas...
(Sebastián de Córdoba, 1505)

O dulces prendas, por mi bien tornadas
dulces y alegres para el alma mía.
¿Estando yo sin vos cómo vivía,
prendas del alto cielo, derivadas?

Mis culpas os perdieron y apartada
el alma, aunque animaba, no sentía,
sentía pero no como debía
que estaban sus potencias alteradas.

Pues en una hora, junto me llevastes,
por mi todo bien, cuando partistes
si ya por la bondad de Dios, volvistes
no os aparteis del alma que sanastes,
porque no muera, entre dolores tristes.

O dulces prendas...

Oh, sweet jewels, for my sake transformed into sweet and joyful ones; how could I live, jewels of the highest heavens, without you? I lost you because of my sins, and thus separated, my soul, though animated, did not feel. It had feelings, but not the way it should, its own stuff being altered. In one single hour, you took with you all of my well-being and left only evil with me. Now, that by the kindness of God you have returned, do not separate yourself from the soul you have healed, so that it may not die amid sad pains.

IV. Contento, amor y paz
(Gregorio Silvestre, 1502)

Contento, amor y paz, gloria y consuelo,
descanso y quietud del alma mía,
refugio, amparo, ardor dulce alegría,
espejo, vida, luz, norte y modelo,
lucero, luna, sol y claro día.

Sabrosa, celestial, dulce armonía,
refugio y redención de los del suelo.
Eterno, inmutable, omnipotente de gracia,
de virtud y santo cielo, profundo amor,
incansable fuente, levántame señor,
álzame el vuelo,
que vaya yo a gozar de tu corriente,
contento, amor y paz, gloria y consuelo.

Contento, amor y paz

Contentment, love and peace, glory and consolation, rest and quiet of my soul; refuge, haven, ardor, sweet joy, eternal bliss and goodness of land and skies. Mirror, life, light, north and model, star, moon, sun and clear day, savory, celestial sweet harmony, shelter and redemption of those from below. Eternal, unchangeable, omnipotent, with grace, virtue and saintly zeal, deep sea, unfathomable spring. Lift me, Lord, remove the veil, so that I could enjoy your stream; Contentment, love and peace, glory and consolation.

V. Levánta y despierta...
(Gregorio Silvestre, 1502)

Levanta y despierta, hombre dormido.
Mira de que masa estas formado
y entiende para que fuistes criado
y todo lo que en ti está contenido.

Veraste bajo, falso y abatido
y sobre las estrellas levantado
sujeto a las miserias y el pecado,
al tormento, al hastío instituido.

El uno barrancoso, el otro llano
te enseña aquí el camino de la gloria
y el mal, despeñadero del infierno.

La rienda del camino está en tu mano,
el uno te dará eterna victoria
y el otro, dura muerte, llanto eterno.

(Levánta y despierta, hombre dormido....)

Levántate y despierta...

Rise and awake, sleeping man, and see of what stuff arest thou fashioned, and understand the purpose of thine creation, and everything in thyself contained. Thou shall see thyself base, false, defeated. Raising above the stars, subject to misery and sin, torments and boredom. Here I show-one steep, the other even—both the road to glory or the evil abyss of Hell. The reins to the road are in thine hands. One shall give eternal victory; the other, hard death, eternal weeping. Arise, sleeping man!

These sonnets were selected from the Anthology of Spanish Verse of the Golden Century, published by the Academy of Spanish Language, Madrid, 1930. Translations by Hector Campos Parsi. Used by permission.

Roberto Sierra:

1. Doña Rosita La Soltera (5:12)
(© Roberto Sierra and Heredas de Federico Garcia Lorca)

Héctor Campos Parsi:

Sonetos Sagrados

(© Hector Campos Parsi)

2. I. No me mueve, mi Dios (5:26)
3. II. Siguiendo vá (2:46)
4. III. O dulces prendas (5:28)
5. IV. Contento, amor y paz (1:45)
6. V. Levántate y despierta (4:05)

Roberto Sierra:

Salsa para Vientos

(publ. Editio Musica Budapest)

7. Tropical (2:11)
8. Antillana...(1:50)
9. Jaleo (2:38)

Max Lifchitz:

Yellow Ribbons

(publ. North/South Editions)

10. No. 12 (5:22)
11. No. 15 (7:45)
12. No. 11 (5:59)

Doña Rosita la Soltera and *Salsa para Vientos* recorded May 10, 1988.

Puli Toro, mezzo-soprano (on *Doña Rosita*) Brad Garner, flute; Marsha Heller, oboe/English horn; Paul Gallo, clarinet; Sharon Moe, horn; William Scribner, bassoon.

Sonetos Sagrados recorded June 22, 1987.

Evangelina Colon, soprano Mary Landolfi, flute; Louise Scribner, oboe; Paul Gallo, clarinet; Sharon Moe, horn; William Scribner, bassoon

Yellow Ribbons recorded June 27, 1986.

Mary Landolfi, Lucille Goeres, flutes; Louise Scribner, Marsha Heller, oboes; Mitchell Weiss, Mitch Knegler, clarinets; William Scribner, Peter Simmons, bassoons; Charles McCracken, contrabassoon; Sharon Moe, Ronald Sell, Roger Wendt, horns; Nancy Elan, violin; Gabriel Morales, cello; John Beal, bass; Joseph Kubera, piano; Max Lifchitz, conductor

Recorded at Holy Trinity Church, New York.

Cover art: Olga Kitt. *Bronx Arts Ensemble rehearsal at Fordham University Church* (detail), 1988. Pastel. © Olga Kitt.

Cover design: Bob Defrin

With special appreciation to Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer for his support of this project.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Héctor Campos Parsi

Serenata para trio de cuerdas. José Madera, violin; Guillermo Figueros, Adolfo Odnoposoff, cello. Sonatina Num. 2 para violin y piano. Henry Hutchinson Negrón, violin; Luz N. Hutchinson, piano. Musica de Camars Puertorriqueña Vol. IV. Divertimento del Sur. Bernard Goldberg, flute; Wallace Shapiro, clarinet; Casals Festival Orchestra, Milton Katims conducting. Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña ICP/C- 1. *Juan Bobo y las fiestas*: Ballet Suite No.1 (arr. for 2 pianos). Gloria Whitney, Marilu Alvarado, pianos. Coronet 3120.

Max Lifchitz

Night Voices No.8. North/South Consonance Ensemble. Classic Masters CMCD-1011. *Consorte; Exceptional String Quartet; Rhythmic Soundscape No.1: Winter Counterpoint*. Various artists. CRI SD 516.

Affinities. Max Lifchitz, piano. Opus One 87. *Transformations No.1*. Theodore Mook, cello; *Yellow Ribbons No.2*. North/South Consonance Trio. Opus One 118.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Thompson, Donald. "Héctor Campos-Parsi" In *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie, eds. London and New York: Macmillan, 1986.

(p) 1989 © 1989 Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc. All rights reserved.

THIS RECORDING WAS MADE POSSIBLE WITH GRANTS FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, THE R. J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO., THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS, AND FRANCIS GOELET.

FOR NEW WORLD RECORDS:

Herman E. Krawitz, President; Paul Marotta, Managing Director; Paul M. Tai, Director of Artists and Repertory; Lisa Kahlden, Director of Information Technology; Virginia Hayward, Administrative Associate; Mojisola Oké, Bookkeeper

RECORDED ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN MUSIC, INC., BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Francis Golet, Chairman; David Hamilton, Treasurer; Milton Babbitt; Emanuel Gerard; Adolph Green; Rita Hauser; Herman E. Krawitz; Arthur Moorhead; Elizabeth Ostrow; Don Roberts; Patrick Smith; Frank Stanton.

**NO PART OF THIS RECORDING MAY BE COPIED OR REPRODUCED
WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION OF R.A.A.M., INC.**

NEW WORLD RECORDS
16 Penn Plaza #835
NEW YORK, NY 10001-1820
TEL 212.290-1680 FAX 212.290-1685
Website: www.newworldrecords.org
email: info@newworldrecords.org

LINER NOTES © Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc.