

LEONARDO BALADA
Torquemada

New World Records 80442

On the Music of Leonardo Balada

Three or four centuries from now when the splendors and miseries of twentieth century music are at last understood, I suspect it will be in terms quite different from our own. The presence of schools of composition is deceptive, disguising real differences and hidden affinities; and even from our present vantage—which contains no distance at all—there seems room for historical revision. For example, is there not a greater motoric relationship between the hyper-romantic Scriabin and the ultra-cool Stravinsky than has been noticed, and aren't there more similarities in the choral writing of the Mahler Eighth Symphony and the Janacek *Glagolitic Mass* than have been recognized? Perhaps Debussy and Webern will seem more like cousins than polar opposites when the propaganda of schools has perished. In the meantime, music such as Leonardo Balada's—which is not minimal, serial, aleatoric or stochastic, but is, rather, intensely allusive—does not require a label so much as some identification of its salient features.

The influence of Stravinsky is apparent in Balada's snarling brass parts, the frequent use of ostinati, the sometimes diatonic choral writing, and asymmetrical rhythms. Mr. Balada, born in 1933, studied with an American, Aaron Copland, and one infers that he learned not so much from the "folkloric" Copland of *Appalachian Spring* as from the Copland of the tight, hard-edged modernist works of the 1930s, particularly the Second Piano Sonata and the *Short Symphony*. That Balada's work is of a different generation altogether is equally apparent, however, and while he does not adopt the methods of Karlheinz Stockhausen or Pierre Boulez or the minimalists, he recognizes their potentialities, particularly in the realm of contrasting sonorities. Paradoxically, precisely because he is a late-twentieth-century composer, Balada is also aware of the expressive possibilities of Medieval and Renaissance music in a way an earlier generation was not. Stravinsky and Webern, of course, led the way with their involvement in Gesualdo and Heinrich Isaac, respectively, but it has remained for the composers of Balada's generation—people as different as Arvo Part and John Tavener and Balada himself—to short-circuit the dialectic of serialism and claim the Medieval heritage. Thus, *Torquemada* refers to the music of the Spanish golden age, and the Sonata for Ten Winds includes hocketed brass parts straight out of Perotin and the Notre Dame School.

Until the history of twentieth-century Spanish music is better known (and we may blame in part forty years of a repressive regime for the fact that it is not known better), the specifically Spanish elements in Balada's work will prove difficult to identify; four generations of experimentalism, including the work of the underestimated Roberto Gerhard, stand between Balada and the Gypsy pyrotechnics and castanets of de Falla. And while nothing short of a slide-and-music presentation would demonstrate this point, there seems to be a strong relationship with Spanish painting behind aspects of Balada's work; like his fellow Catalan, the painter Joan Miro, he can allow himself extreme flights into fantasy, the unexpected, the unknown, because of the strength of a basic armature, a powerful (but unseen and unheard) center of gravity. Would it be too fanciful to say that Balada can fashion a Miro-like armature out of Stravinskian rhythm? Picasso also looms as a presence—Balada has written a *Guernica* cantata—and while there are as many Picassos as there are viewers, Balada's Picasso might be characterized as the dark Picasso of the 1930s, the Minotaur at the bullfight, the disemboweled horse in cubist death throes, the dove-like woman holding a lamp on an atrocity

reenacted from Goya. One point of kinship is the use of expressive distortion as a means of bearing witness to history.

Balada also shares Picasso's wizardly fascination with metamorphosis: the Sonata for Ten Winds moves from a sort of stochastic night-scene to Poulenc in his Boulevardier mode into Perotin-like hocketing, before ending in a fanfare reminiscent of those used to announce the august presence of the Kings of Gabon, much as Picasso will change an African mask into a cubist face into a Roman monument in the same painting.

Torquemada, whose name has become synonymous with the institutionalized cruelties of the Spanish Inquisition, may seem at first a curious subject for a cantata. It is here that Balada's Spanish heritage and his role as a witness to history are perhaps most apparent. This work is in response to the extremities of his country's history: The Spanish Inquisition did not end until 1830, and Balada's cantata received its premier in Spain in 1980, only five years after the end of the Franco regime. It is a merciless conundrum that the time of the Inquisition was also a golden age of painting (El Greco, Zurbaran, Velazquez), of literature (Saint John of the Cross, Cervantes, Gongora), and of music—Tomas Victoria and Christobal Morales come immediately to mind. It is in an echo of the serene and God-rapt idiom of Victoria and Morales that Balada has his inquisitor sing. The voices of the twentieth century are quite opposite: turbulent, furious, accusatory. They issue from a different musical time as if separated by an invisible partition which is history, and all that in the meantime has transpired. If by the end of *Torquemada* the voices of the fifteenth and the twentieth centuries are not reconciled, if the Inquisitor does not "hear" the twentieth century's questions, this is appropriate for, in the words of Elias Canetti, "the twentieth century cannot fault another period for savagery."

The Sonata for Ten Winds harks back to its roots in the ritornellos of the early Renaissance and perhaps forward to an emerging global music. It is a virtuoso piece starting with snarls and flares, synthesizing into a bright mosaic-like passage, a happy traffic jam out of Paris in the 1920s, the Paris of Poulenc and klaxon-horns, before reverting toward the Middle Ages and ending at the aforementioned Kings of Gabon fanfare, like a highly condensed form of time travel to the origin of the instruments.

The Concerto for Piano, Winds and Percussion, a single-movement work, arises out of the spiky neoclassic concertos of Stravinsky and Poulenc in the 1930s, but moves hastily away from them as a model through the use of what Balada characterizes as a "Ping-Pong motif." What happens to this motif can be described as a table-tennis game in which the balls multiply every time they hit the table and none roll off, and then a few do, and then all do. As the game degenerates it is supplanted by a mood of pensive romanticism with reminiscences of Chopin. Whereas the nineteenth-century would have topped off a concerto with a triumphant final movement, the early twentieth century with an aerobic one, Balada, being of the late twentieth century, ends up with a staccato section ending in a gesture of uncertainty.

The *Transparencies on Chopin's First Ballade* begins with a low ostinato from which a brooding fandango-like theme emerges, becoming a glassy cassation from which erupts a virtuosic, almost Lisztian, passage of rolling arpeggios before subsuming into a whisper in which the first bars of Chopin's First Ballade are uttered. "Thus [in the words of the Welsh poet David Jones] he reaches through time to touch his ghostly father."

—Philip Guerrard

Philip Guerrard *is a painter and writer who lives in California*

TORQUEMADA

The text sung by Torquemada is taken from his General Instructions. The rest is by the composer, based on essays and historic documents.

CHORUS:

Hic est reverendus Tomas de Torrecremata, prior Sanctae crucis Inquisitor Generalis.

CHORUS-XX CENTURY:

Ay! Fuego al fuego; fire to the fire; foc al foc. Fire to the fire; the flame which burns. Tomas of Torquemada; who burns, who kills; fire to the fire of your justice, of fanaticism, of the crack of innocent bones, of the burning of sad violated flesh; fire to the fire which devours dignity and the principle of being; Friar Tomas of Torquemada, Grand Inquisitor, torturer, seed of Tyrannies, Sputum of Humanity, hypocrite to Christ and betrayer of His teaching.

CHORUS Soli-XV CENTURY:

In the name of God, President of the Holy Church of Rome, his Holiness Innocent the Eighth and the Rulers of Castile and Aragon, the most High and Powerful Prince and Princess Don Fernando, Dona Isabel, most Christian King and Queen in Seville on the 29th day of November in the year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ 1484.

TORQUEMADA:

The Inquisitors shall announce a period of grace so that all those people who are guilty of any sin or heresy or apostasy, of following the Jewish rites or others contrary to the Christian religion, shall come and confess their errors, assuring all those who come in contrition and repentance shall be received charitably.

CHORUS Soli:

Holy and Just Inquisition.

TORQUEMADA:

And they shall be given penance beneficial to their souls,

CHORUS Soli:

Just and Holy Inquisition.

TORQUEMADA:

they shall not be sentenced to death nor to life imprisonment and nor shall their goods be taken but shall be given lighter sentences.

CHORUS Tutti-XX CENTURY:

Ay! Merciful is the word of Christ and the forgiveness that his voice brings, but you, with pride you would draw justice from torment, impose your faith with punishment and you break the laws of Christianity sealing the destiny of these lands with prejudice of race and hate and envy between

father and son. Señor Torquemada! Our graves and our memories tremble at the mention of your name. Who kills... who beats... who sins... prays... kills....

TORQUEMADA-XV CENTURY:

If it should be determined that some people who are guilty of the crime of heresy do not confess within the period of grace but before they are caught, their goods shall be confiscated and, should the case demand it, they can be sentenced to life imprisonment.

CHORUS Soli:

Holy, Just Inquisition, that sacrifice, sorrow and fire shall raise the soul to eternal delight and save it from eternal suffering.

CHORUS Tutti-XX CENTURY:

Torquemada, who takes... beats... kills... takes... and burns... and decrees prejudice... extermination... expulsion of the Jews from the lands and homes into exile.

TORQUEMADA-XV CENTURY:

If the children of heretics have fallen into sin by the teaching of their fathers, the Inquisitors shall receive them with lighter penances than their elders.

CHORUS-XX CENTURY:

Those ignorant people... fratricide... social misery is the residue of your existence.

TORQUEMADA-XV CENTURY:

If the criminal accused of heresy be caught, confesses his sins, he shall receive life sentence.

CHORUS Soli:

Fear

CHORUS Tutti-XX CENTURY:

Centuries of hypocrisy!

TORQUEMADA and CHORUS Soli-XV CENTURY:

And punishment removes everyone from sin.

CHORUS Tutti-XX CENTURY:

No freedom... opinions....

TORQUEMADA-XV CENTURY:

If the conversion seems pretended,

CHORUS-XX CENTURY:

Divided lands... persecuted beliefs...

TORQUEMADA-XV CENTURY:

...they must give the death sentence. Holy and Just Inquisition, that saves the soul, Just and Holy Inquisition.

TORQUEMADA

El texto cantado por Torquemada esta sacado de sus Instrucciones Generales. El resto, es del compositor, basado en ensayos y documentos historicos.

CORO:

Hic est reverendus Tomas de Torrecremata, prior Sanctae crucis Inquisitor Generalis.

CORO-SIGLO XX:

Ay! Fuego al fuego; Fire to the fire; Foc al foc. Fuego al fuego; La llama que abrasa. Tomas de Torquemada; que quema que mata; fuego al fuego de tus justicias, del fanatismo, del crujir de los huesos inocentes, del arder de las tristes carnes violadas; fuego al fuego que devora la dignidad y el principio del ser; Fray Tomas de Torquemada, Inquisidor General, Torturador, Germen de Tiranias, Esputo de la Humanidad, Farsante hacia Cristo y Traidor de sus doctrinas.

CORO Soli-SIGLO XV:

En el nombre de Dios, Presidente en la Santa Iglesia de Roma, el muy Santo Padre Inocencio octavo e Reynantes de Castilla y Aragon los muy Altos y muy Poderosos Principes Don Fernando, Dona Isabel, cristianisimos Rey y Reina en Sevilla a veintinueve dias de Noviembre ano del Nacimiento se nuestro Salvador Jesucristo, de 1484.

TORQUEMADA:

Que los Inquisidores hagan publicar un termino de gracia para que todas las personas que se hallen culpadas en cualquier pecado de herejia o de apostasia, de hacer los ritos de los Judios u otros contrarios a la religion Cristiana que vengan a manifestar sus errores asegurando que todos aquellos que vernan con buena contricion y arrepentimiento seran recibidos caritativamente.

CORO Soli:

Santa y Justa Inquisicion.

TORQUEMADA:

E les seran dadas penitencias saludables a sus animas,

CORO Soli:

Justa y Santa Inquisicion.

TORQUEMADA:

que no recibiran pena de muerte ni carcel perpetua y que sus bienes no seran tomados pero que seran condenados a penas menores.

CORO Tutti-SIGLO XX:

Ay! Misericordia es el habla de Cristo y el perdon lo que porta su voz, pero tu, con soberbia sacas justicia del tormento, con castigo impones tu fe y rompes la ley Cristiana sellando el destino de estas tierras con prejuicios de estirpe y odio y recelos en padres e hijos. Senor Torquemada! Nuestras tumbas y memorias tremolan al decir de tu nombre.
Que bate... que pega... que peca... Reza... Mata....

TORQUEMADA-SIGLO XV:

Si determinaran que algunas personas que se hallen culpadas del delito de herejia no se confesaran en el periodo de gracia pero antes que sean presas, los bienes que tienen son confiscados y si el caso lo requiere puedan imponer carcel perpetua.

CORO Soli:

Santa, Justa Inquisicion, que el sacrificio, que el llanto y el fuego eleva el alma al goce eterno y la salvan de la eterna miseria.

CORO Tutti-SIGLO XX:

Torquemada, que quita... bate... mata... y saca... y quema... y decreta prejuicio... exterminio... expulsion... de los Judios de sus tierras y hogares al exilio.

TORQUEMADA-SIGLO XV:

Que si algunos hijos de los herejes habiendo caido en el dicho error por las ensenanzas de sus padres, los Inquisidores deben recibirlos con penitencias menos graves que los mayores.

CORO-SIGLO XX:

Esa gente ignorante... fratricida... de miseria social son residuos de tu existencia.

TORQUEMADA-SIGLO XV:

Que si es preso el reo acusado de herejia, confiesa sus errores, debe recibir carcel perpetua,

CORO Soli:

Que el temor,

CORO Tutti-SIGLO XX:

Siglos de hipocresia!

TORQUEMADA y CORO Soli-SIGLO XV:

Y el castigo saca a todos del error.

CORO Tutti-SIGLO XX:

Sin libertades... opiniones....

TORQUEMADA-SIGLO XV:

Si la conversion les pareciera fingida,

CORO-SIGLO XX:

Tierras divididas... dogmas perseguidos...

TORQUEMADA-SIGLO XV:

deben dar pena de muerte. Santa y Justa Inquisicion, que salva el alma, Justa y Santa Inquisicion.

Leonardo Balada was born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1933. He graduated from the Juilliard School in 1960, and has been Professor of Composition at Carnegie Mellon University since 1970. His works have been performed by many of the world's leading orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic, and the BBC Radio Orchestra. Balada has written chamber music, symphonies, cantatas, a chamber opera, and two full length operas, *Zapata* and *Christopher Columbus*. His compositions have been recorded on The Louisville Orchestra Editions, Deutsche Grammophone, Serenus, Grenadilla, and New World Records.

Anthony di Bonaventura began his piano studies at age three. He studied with Madame Isabella Vengerova, and is also a graduate of the Curtis Institute. As a dedicated performer of new music he has had works written for him by Ligeti, Berio, Persichetti, Ginastera, and Kelemen. Mr. di Bonaventura has performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Royal Philharmonic, and other major orchestras. He has recorded for Columbia, RCA, the Connoisseur Society, Sine Qua Non, and Titanic.

The **American Brass Quintet** gave its first public performance December 11, 1960. Since then the Quintet has performed in all fifty states, Europe, Central and South America, the Middle East, Asia, and Australia. They have commissioned works from William Bolcom, Elliot Carter, Jacob Druckman, and Virgil Thomson, among others. ABQ has recorded for Bridge, CBS, CRI, Folkways, Japan Victor, New World, Nonesuch, Serenus, and other labels.

The **Carnegie Mellon Concert Choir** is a select ensemble of students conducted, since 1988, by Robert Page. The choir has sung the Pittsburgh premieres of Samuel Jones's *The Trumpet of the Swan* and Leonardo Balada's *Torquemada*. They have also performed works by Bernstein, Honegger, Vivaldi, Poulenc, Brahms, and Copland.

The **Carnegie Mellon Contemporary Ensemble** performs a series of concerts devoted to new music, including works by Carnegie Mellon faculty and students. Each presentation is an exploration of current trends in composition, guided by Artistic Director Leonardo Balada and Conductor Eduardo Alonso-Crespo. In 1989 the Department won the American Music Award in the National Federation of Music Clubs annual competition.

The **Carnegie Mellon Wind Ensemble**, directed by Denis Colwell, annually presents four concerts drawn from the rich repertory of wind music. They have performed a wide variety of music including works of Beethoven, Hindemith, and Dvorak.

Since their inception in 1961 at Tanglewood, the **Dorian Wind Quintet** has toured throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, India, Africa, and Asia. In 1981 they became the first wind quintet to appear at Carnegie Hall. The Quintet has recorded standard and contemporary wind repertory for Vox, CRI, Serenus, New World, and Summit Records.

Harry Franklin studied piano with Alexander Siloti and chamber music with Carl Friedberg and Felix Salmond at Juilliard. He has performed under the direction of William Steinberg and Pablo Casals, and with the Musica Viva Trio and the Carnegie Mellon Trio. At present (1993) he is Professor of piano and chamber music at Carnegie Mellon University.

Robert Page, Director of Choral Studies at Carnegie Mellon since 1988, has been associated with premieres of works by Ginastera, Barber, Rorem, Penderecki, and Rands. He was Director of

Choruses and Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra from 1971-1989, and currently (1993) is Director of Special Projects and Choral Activities with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. His choirs have recorded for Columbia, London, RCA, Telarc, Decca, and Sony Classics.

Richard Strange, Professor of Music and Director of Bands at Arizona State University received his degrees from Wichita State University, the University of Colorado, and Boston University. He previously was Director of Bands at Carnegie Mellon University. Dr. Strange has performed with the big bands of Buddy Morrow, and Ted Herbert, among others, and accompanied such performers as Carol Channing, Ethel Merman, Andy Williams, Bill Cosby, and Issac Hayes.

Stephen Totter is a 1992 graduate of Carnegie Mellon University. While there he performed in *Street Scene*, *Company*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. He was also the bass soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* with the Carnegie Mellon Philharmonic. In 1992, Totter was a full scholarship recipient at the Chautauqua Institute and was a winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society Competition. He made his professional operatic debut with Opera Theater of Pittsburgh in their 1993 production of *The Barber of Seville*.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Analogias. N. Yepes, guitar. Deutsche Grammophon DGG 2530-802.

Apuntes. Quartet Tarrago. BASF 37-53901.

Cuatriis. (Wind version). Serenus SRS 12064.

Cumbres. Geometrias N.1. Sonata for Violin and Piano. Carnegie Mellon University Symphony Band, Richard Strange, conductor; Conj. Cameristico, Leonardo Balada, conductor; Seymour Harth, violin; Harry Franklin, piano. Serenus SRS 12036.

Guernica. Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, conductor. Louisville LS-636.

Homage to Sarasate. Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, conductor. Louisville LS-765.

Maria Sabina. Louisville Orchestra, Jorge Mester, conductor. Louisville LS-726.

Mosaico. American Brass Quintet. Serenus SRS 12041.

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Rosenberg, Donald. "Torquemada Comes Home a Winner." *The Pittsburgh Press*, November 11, 1991.

Stone, P. E. "He Writes for the Audience, But on His Own Terms." *The New York Times*, November 21, 1982.

Stone, P. E. "Leonardo Balada's First Half Century." *Symphony*, XXXIV/3 (1983), p.85.

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LEONARDO BALADA 80442-2
TORQUEMADA AND OTHER WORKS

1 ***TORQUEMADA*** (24:21)

Carnegie Mellon Contemporary Ensemble; Carnegie Mellon Concert Choir; Stephen Totter, baritone; Solo quartet: Camille Kowash, soprano; Dominic Rossi, countertenor; Dillon McCartney, tenor; Robert Fire, bass; Robert Page, conductor.

2 **CONCERTO FOR PIANO, WINDS, AND PERCUSSION** (15:07)

Carnegie Mellon Concert Winds; Harry Franklin, piano; Richard Strange, conductor.

3 **SONATA FOR TEN WINDS** (15:01)

American Brass Quintet: Raymond Mase, trumpet; John Aley, trumpet; David Wakefield, horn; Ronald Borrer, tenor trombone; Robert Biddlecome, bass trombone; Dorian Woodwind Quintet: Karl Kraber, flute; Jerry Kirkbride, clarinet; David Jolley, horn; Gerald Reuter, oboe; Jane Taylor, bassoon.

4 ***TRANSPARENCIES OF CHOPIN'S FIRST BALLADE*** (9:31)

Anthony di Bonaventura, piano.

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