Chantons la Mélodie Espagnole

¡Cantemos Canciones de España!

Dr. Suzanne Rhodes Draayer, presenter

ICVT, Saturday, July 18, 3:35 p.m.  
  
Who was the Schubert of Spanish song? Is there a Schubert of Spanish song?  
  
Which 19th century Spanish composers led to the compositional techniques continued by the Spanish Five?  
  
Should we include Spanish song literature in our studios and recitals?  
These are the questions that led to my research and rescue of Spanish song literature languishing in the Spanish archives.   
  
Published by Scarecrow Press, the 3 anthologies – ***Canciones de España —Songs of Nineteenth-Century Spain*** - are available in high and low keys.  
  
vol. 1 - 23 songs (2003)  
  
vol. 2 - 29 songs (2005)  
  
vol. 3 - 31 songs (2007)

Why Study Spanish Song?  
The beauty of Spanish song and poetry appeals to all singers and listeners.  
Who doesn’t love Spanish Music? And who hasn’t copied its rhythms?  
  
We think that we know Spanish music through its popular imitations.  
Here is a short list of composers who copied the rhythms and melodies of Spain:  
Liszt, Bizet, Delibes, Debussy, Saint-Saëns, Chabier, Glinka, Menotti, Ravel, Wagner, Rimsky-Korsakov, and so many more composers.  
  
Why has Spanish music been neglected?  
Spain is often omitted from our music history texts and  
from our world history classes.  
Spanish musicologists and music publishing companies have failed to promote the music of Spain.  
  
The Spanish music available is determined by the publishing house. If a British or US music publishing company printed music by a Spanish composer, that music became part of the repertoire, such as the *Cuatro Madrigales Amatorios* by Rodrigo or Granados’ *Tonadillas*. Rodrigo, for example, composed 87 songs yet most singers know only four of his songs.  
  
The isolationistic policies of the Franco regime and the geographic location of Spain further complicated the recognition of Spanish art song.

Songs from volume 1 of *Canciones de España* (2003)  
  
(We will sight read 3 songs from volume 1)  
Taboada composed dozens of stage works, songs and song cycles.  
Lavapiés is a working class neighborhood in eighteenth-century Madrid.

“La Manola de Madrid”  
(song translation) The most beautiful girl in the world is a Madrilenian from  
Lavapiés!   
  
Vives composed more than 100 zarzuelas and operas.  
“El Amor y los Ojos”   
(song translation) Your eyes have stolen my heart, the wicked robbers.  
  
  
“El Arreglito” by Sebastián de Iradier, 1809-1865.  
Iradier lived many years in Paris, during which time Bizet heard   
“El Arreglito” in a bar. Bizet, believing that the song was a folksong,   
stole it for his “Habanera” in Carmen.  
  
There are two characters – Pepito and Chinita  
Pepito: Because I love you so much, we will make an agreement. I have   
such passion for you! You ignite my burning soul. If you will marry me, I will adore only you!  
  
Songs from volume 2 of *Canciones de España* (2005)  
“Las Hadas” (“The Fairies”) - Antonio de la Cruz, (1825-1889), composer and voice teacher.  
  
(song translation) At midnight, the fairies come to the edge of the blue lake to comfort the sad victims of love. Comfort me for I die of love!  
  
“El Abencerrage” - An important Arabian family in 15th-century Granada.   
This poem refers to the ancient wars in Spain between the Christians and the Moors (711 to 1492).  
  
(song translation) Beautiful Christian girl with dark skin, black eyes, and little feet. Why do you sigh? I will free you if you can love a Moorish warrior.  
  
“La Vuelta del Soldado” (“The Return of the Soldier”) by Falcó.  
  
Evidences of the Spanish/Moorish conflicts are visible in the mudéjar architecture, the ruins of Arab castles dotting the landscape...  
and the lovely white villages of Andalucía in southern Spain.   
  
(song translation) The soldier returned home from the battlefield, eager to tell his adventures. But when he saw his village, he only wanted to kiss the beautiful earth of Andalucía.  
  
Songs from volume 3 of *Canciones de España* (2007)  
Mariano Obiols Tramullas (1809 to 1888) was a Catalán composer, director, violinist, and professor.   
  
Rosa   
  
(song translation) When I look at you, beautiful girl, I am delirious.  
Each time I see you, you appear more lovely.  
  
Felipe Pedrell Sabaté (1841-1922) was a professor of music history   
at the Conservatorio de Madrid. His most famous students were   
Granados and Albéniz. He was the Nadia Boulanger of Spain.

“A...”  
Fly, the sigh of my soul, to the beautiful place where she lives, to the place which gives me great torment.

“Si al Mecer las Azules Campanillas” (“If to Swing the Little Bells”)  
  
by Gabriel Rodríguez (1827? - 1921)  
The songs of Rodríguez rival the lieder of Schubert and Schumann. This canción is the setting of a Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer poem.  
  
(song translation) If you believe that the sighing wind passes  
by your balcony to ring the little bluebells, know that hidden in the leaves, I sigh.  
Other books to enhance your teaching and performing:   
***Art Song Composers of Spain*** (2009) - 90 composers, 175 song examples, complete biographies, etc.  
  
***A Singer’s Guide******to the Songs of******Joaquín Rodrigo*** - A comprehensive guide to the 87 songs of Joaquín Rodrigo – word-for-word translations, IPA transcriptions, biographies of Rodrigo and his wife, Victoria Kamhi

These books and the volumes of ***Canciones de España—Songs of Nineteenth-Century Spain*** can be ordered through your favorite music shop or through [www.scarecrowpress.com](http://www.scarecrowpress.com). Search under Draayer.

Or, contact me at sdraayer@winona.edu