

# GUITAR MANUSCRIPTS AT YALE:

## THE SEGOVIA COLLECTION PART II

by John Mangan



One of the most important concerts in the long career of Andrés Segovia took place at the Palau in Barcelona circa 1918. It was there that Segovia appeased many of his detractors who believed that the guitar, besides being an instrument of questionable integrity, could not be heard in a large concert hall.

*In a night abounding in emotions, the one that moved me most was the realization that I had broadened the scope of the guitar and proved it could be heard from any stage. Concert audiences in the great European halls could enjoy the poetry of sound, the richness of orchestral color, the alluring musicality with which heaven had endowed this instrument to make it the noblest close friend of the human soul.*

*But alas! Something was still to be accomplished if, as I dreamed, the guitar was to share a stellar place in the music firmament with the violin, the cello, the piano. My kingdom for a repertoire!!*

Segovia's endeavors in transcribing and encouraging composers to write for the guitar are well documented. But what of Segovia the composer? In keeping with the rich tradition of nineteenth-century instrumental virtuosi that Segovia came from, not only did he compose for the guitar, but he was also performing his own works as early as 1916.<sup>2</sup>

This article is the second (see *Guitar Review* #104, Winter 1996) of two that deal with the Segovia manuscripts in the Yale University Music Library (Misc. Ms. 342). Acquired in May 1995 at a Sotheby's manuscript auction in London, this collection consists of ten transcriptions, one edited version of another composer's work, and one original piece, all in the hand of Andrés Segovia. Collectively, they document some of the earliest efforts by Segovia to broaden the repertoire. Segovia's original composition, *Allegro*, as well as his transcription of Robert Schumann's *Canción Silvestre* for two guitars will provide the primary focus of this discussion. These works are printed for the first time here in *Guitar Review*.

*Allegro* was composed circa 1917 in Barcelona.<sup>3</sup> It is the earliest extant composition by Segovia. He dedicated this work to Paz Armesto de Quiroga who, along with her husband Dr. Antonio Quiroga, was an early supporter of Segovia's career.<sup>4</sup> This piece was composed as a gesture of thanks for the hospitality the Quirogas had extended to the young guitarist in the nineteen-teens. It was in the Quiroga household in Barcelona that this piece

along with the rest of the manuscripts in this collection remained until 1994. In his autobiography, Segovia remembered Quiroga this way: "She had studied under Tárrega, but her incurable shyness made it impossible for her to play in front of anyone outside her closest family. No one else had heard her play, or knew she played or whether she still played the guitar. What was obvious to anyone interested in the guitar was her deep love and concern for the instrument...she was a gracious person to meet and know."<sup>5</sup> Presumably with this sentiment in mind, Segovia inscribed this work: *Para Dona Paz Armesto de Quiroga, la mas intensa, enamorada de la guitarra del pasado, presente y futuro.*

*Allegro* is a compact study in diversity. Though only sixteen measures long, this miniature by the self-taught composer and guitarist exhibits a cognizance of harmonic variety and melodic contour. The chromaticism in the outer voices outlines the diminished chordal texture. The style of this composition is portentous of one that would reach its full development in later works such as the *Five Anecdotes* composed in the 1940s.

Though Segovia's output and ability as a composer were both modest, acquainting himself with the travails of the compositional process would later prove invaluable, particularly in his fruitful association, as their correspondence can attest, with Manuel Ponce (1882-1948).

Returning to Spain from South America aboard the *Infanta Isabel* in

1921, Segovia transcribed for two guitars Schumann's *Canción Silvestre* originally from the collection of short piano pieces entitled *Album für die Jugend*, op. 68. It is the only known transcription for two guitars by Segovia. Who Segovia intended to play this arrangement with is a matter of conjecture. Perhaps he played or even performed it with Miguel Llobet or with another of his many guitar associates in Spain. Conceivably, as touring became a constant in his life, Segovia might have thought it appropriate to have a guitar duo along should he meet another accomplished player along the way.<sup>6</sup>

How Segovia truly felt about the duo as an art form is difficult to ascertain. In 1969 in *Guitar Review* he commented: "The sound of one guitar is like a sheet of good glass—clear and transparent; that of two guitars has depth and substance but is still clear."<sup>7</sup> A guarded endorsement perhaps, but those who knew him well suggested he genuinely liked the medium (this transcription is certainly a testament to that). According to Emilita Segovia, Andrés Segovia never had a regular duo partner during his long career. Unfortunately, plans for the two of them to make a duo recording late in his life never came to fruition.<sup>8</sup>

*Canción Silvestre*, or "New Year's Song" as it is also called, commemorates Saint Sylvester I (d. 335) whose feast day is December 31st in the Western Church. Schumann's original could have been easily transcribed for two guitars such that the separate hands of the piano version were kept on separate instruments. Segovia, in deference to his inescapable artistic vision, would have nothing to do with that. Instead, he arranged a version where melodic material is cleverly divided between the instruments creating a thematic dialogue not present in the original. A balanced polarity is

created by permitting both parts to alternate between upper and lower ranges. Additional dynamic markings, the occasional use of harmonics, and unison doubling add further color to the canvas. Indeed, in many ways, this transcription more closely resembles an orchestration.

Segovia transposed his version of *Canción Silvestre* up a fifth to the key of E major from Schumann's original of A major. The Orfeo Tracio firm published Segovia's transcription of this piece for solo guitar in the 1920s (also in E major) and Segovia himself composed *Divertimento* for two guitars in 1955, however, the version of *Canción Silvestre* printed here remains his only known transcription for the duo guitar literature.

One of the perpetually unique aspects of Segovia's artistry was his approach to left-hand fingering. From the sublimely placed single-line phrase to the well known upper-position chord voicings to the use of different fingerings in repeated phrases, his ability to achieve maximum color and resonance remains unequalled. Though only harbingers of things to come, the two works presented here are replete with these subtle nuances.

Part of the Segovia legend in the music world is that of the great virtuoso, with the hopes of the classical guitar community hoisted on his back, carrying the instrument to previously unknown heights of recognition and veneration. Although there is a great deal of truth in this assessment, this collection of manuscripts as a whole, allows us a glimpse of the young Segovia who was not yet quite so sure of himself, not supremely confident. These documents predate his first triumphs in Paris in 1924 and New York in 1928 and are concurrent with his first tour outside of Spain in 1921. *Allegro* goes back even further to the time of his first concerts in

Barcelona. These manuscripts are, in large part, a testament to the vision and determination of the young Segovia. As a group, they endure as one of the most important finds in the classical guitar world in recent decades.

I would like to extend my thanks again to Emilita Segovia for her continued interest and support of this project. Finally, to the Maestro who, by leaving these manuscripts behind three-quarters of century ago and almost a decade after his own passing, continues to breath new life into the classical guitar repertoire. □

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## Notes

1. Andrés Segovia, *Segovia: An Autobiography of the Years 1893-1920*, New York: Macmillan, 1976, p. 121.

2. Graham Wade, *Segovia: A Celebration of the Man and His Music*, London: Allison & Busby, 1983, p. 46.

3. Emilita Segovia based on the dating of this composition on conversations she had with the composer.

4. Segovia, *Autobiography*, p. 112.

5. Segovia, *Autobiography*, p. 112.

6. Emilita Segovia was unsure who her husband had in mind (if anyone) when he transcribed this or if he ever performed it with anyone. She strongly doubted all of these possibilities offered here by the author.

7. John Duarte, "The Rationale of the Guitar-Duo Form," *Guitar Review* no. 31 (1969) p. 9.

8. This information was taken from conversations with Ron Purcell as well as Emilita Segovia.

*MS*

I

# Cancion Silvestre

Schumann

por Adolfo Quintana  
Alapuz

The score is written on 14 staves. The top staff is the melody, and the bottom staff is the guitar accompaniment. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals. Fingering numbers (0-5) are written above or below notes to indicate fingerings. Dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'cresc.' (crescendo) are used throughout. There are also some handwritten annotations and symbols like 'pizz.' and 'pizz.'.

G. Schirmer, New York  
Style No. 3-14 Staves

A handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of 14 staves. The score is written in treble clef with a common time signature (C). It features a complex melodic line with many accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats) and a rhythmic accompaniment. The notation includes various note values (quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes), rests, and dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte), 'p' (piano), and 'pp' (pianissimo). There are numerous circled numbers (1-6) and other annotations throughout the score, likely indicating fingering or specific techniques. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, with some measures containing multiple beams or slurs. The handwriting is clear and legible.

G. Schirmer, New York  
Style No. 3-14 Staves

III

G. Schirmer, New York  
Style No. 3-14 Staves



Handwritten musical notation for guitar, consisting of two systems of three staves each. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and fret numbers. The first system includes markings like "C#", "C# 2", and "C# 6". The second system includes "C# 2".

Handwritten musical notation for guitar, consisting of two systems of three staves each. The notation includes rhythmic values and accidentals. A large scribble is present in the middle of the second system.

A Bardo "Infante Isabel"  
 VII - XI - X - XI

Para dar fin a los instrumentos de cuerda por el más interesante examen  
modo de la guitarra del pasado, presente y futuro.

*Allegro*

# Canción Silvestre

from Album for the Young, Op. 68

por dos guitarras  
Andrés Segovia

Robert Schumann  
(1810 - 1856)

Moderato

*f*

C II

*f*

CIV C III CIV

C IV

arm. 8va

C II C III CIV

*f*

C IV

arm. 8va

C VII

*f*



12

12

*f*

*pp*

15

15

*pp*

*f*

C VII-

C IX-

18

18

*f*

*f*

C IX

C II

C IV

C II 2#

21

21

*f*

*f*

C VII-

C IV

24 C II C IV

24

24

*pp*

27 C IV C II 2#

27

27

*pp*

A Bordo "Infanta Isabel"  
VIII-XI-XXI

# Allegro

*Para Doña Paz Armesto de Quiroga, la mas intensa, enamorada de la guitarra del pasado, presente y futuro*

Andrés Segovia

Allegro

C IX C V C VII C IV

5

9

13