

ELENA MARTIN AND JOSE MELITON: BIOGRAPHY

Spanish born duo-pianists ELENA MARTIN and JOSE MELITON have been hailed by critics and audiences alike as one of the most compelling talents of their generation. These pianists emerged in only a few years as one of the main references within the realm of Spanish two-piano music, thanks to their "playing in perfect synchronization and with hypnotic poetry...sharply chiseled refinement, fierce commitment, and palpable charisma" (John Salmon, American Music Teacher's Magazine, U.S.A.), and their "combining a sensitivity of interpretation with their magnificent technique. Bravo!" (Joaquin Rodrigo. Madrid, Spain). In this short period of time, the duo Martin-Meliton has conquered the most critical audiences in the United States, Europe and Asia. Their numerous collaborations with Spanish Embassies and cultural institutions throughout the world, makes them the Ambassadors of two-piano music from Spain.

One of the main characteristics which makes this duo unique in the world and keeps it constantly touring is Elena Martin's own transcriptions for two pianos of many of the pieces they perform. Having approached and performed the two-piano transcriptions which Enrique Granados and Frank Marshall made of Isaac Albeniz's "Triana" and "Navarra" respectively, Ms. Martin decided to continue this challenging task, and today the duo and audiences around the world enjoy more than a dozen transcriptions from various Spanish composers, which constitute an splendid addition to the music literature for two pianos. Copies and recordings of Ms. Martin's manuscripts of "Spanish Dance No. 1" and "Spanish Dance No. 2", from "La Vida Breve," are proudly kept at the Manuel de Falla Archives in Granada, Spain.

Ms. Martin has been offered by leading publishing companies to make her transcriptions available to the public, but she prefers to wait until completion of future projects. Manuel Albacete, a critic from Cleveland, Ohio, who saw them perform, once said: "The two revealed at once their sense of unity, two bodies playing as a single mind and spirit. Occasional glances across the pianos were all that were necessary to keep them perfectly synchronized...This duo beats out all the competition!...This duo's own transcriptions for two pianos are superb. The pianist-transcriber, who did not deviate radically from the original score, added rich coloristic effects and dense but by no means dull pianistic in filling."

Since their powerful appearance at the MTNA National Convention in Los Angeles, the duo has received enthusiastic acclaim as guest artists in Festivals, Concert Series, Master Classes, and Workshops, in more than thirty states in the U. S. alone, at prestigious Universities, as well as in fine Halls throughout the world, including International Artists Series-University of New Orleans, Virtuoso Piano Series at Town Hall-Seattle, Loke Yew Hall-Hong Kong, Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel-Atlanta, The Doris Duke Hall at the Honolulu Academy of Arts-Hawaii, Lantaren Venster Theater-Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Mechanics Hall-Massachusetts, Woodstock Opera House-Chicago, The Detroit Institute of Arts-Detroit, Constance Pilkington Hall-London, England, and The National Gallery of Art-Washington, DC, to name a few.

Live and recorded performances continue to appear on numerous TV and radio broadcasts worldwide, such as Radio Nacional de Espana (Spain), National Public Radio (U.S.A.), SWR 2 Landesmusikredaktion (Germany), RTHK (China), WICN in Worcester, Massachusetts, WXXI-TV in Rochester, New York, and Galavision (Mexico).

Spain's Ministry of External Affairs proudly supports many of their artistic endeavors, including the recording of their CDs "Duende" and "Jaleo", on the Centaur Label, which include some of the never before recorded transcriptions by Ms. Martin, and which have been featured on prestigious music magazines such as American Music Teacher (U.S.A.), and Musica y Educacion (Spain). Mr. Harold C. Schonberg, Pulitzer Prize winner as Chief Music Critic for the New York Times, on the internationally known American Record Guide, writes: "Two fine professionals, enjoying themselves, play with strong rhythm and unusual clarity...outlines are clear, passages work precise...they produce a nice, resonant sound...Martin and Meliton know exactly what they are

doing." The artists plan on recording more of these transcriptions on their next CD.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Meliton both hold the Titulo Superior de Piano from the Real Conservatorio Superior de Musica de Madrid, as well as Master's degrees from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Ms. Martin and Mr. Meliton also perform standard repertoire both as a duo as well as with orchestras. On one of their orchestral appearances performing Mozart's Two-Piano Concerto, K. 365, Pierre Kenyon writes: "The phrasing of the pianists playing by themselves and with the orchestra accompanying them was exemplary...like a sweet conversation...lively and delightful...I believe that Mozart and his sister would have been delighted to have heard this fine performance by Martin and Meliton, which I had the privilege to attend." (The Chieftain, Colorado)