

Guitarist Jason Vieaux with the Fort Worth Symphony

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Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra pays tribute to Latin music

By Olin Chism
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FORT WORTH -- Like Eduardo Mata in Dallas in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, Miguel Harth-Bedoya pays generous tribute to Latin music. His performance with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra in Bass Hall on Friday night reflected this. It introduced the audience to an attractive work by Celso Garrido-Lecca, a fellow Peruvian and a former teacher of Harth-Bedoya's, and followed with a most delightful Spanish composition, Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez.

As is his custom, Harth-Bedoya made some introductory remarks about the works, illustrating them with short passages played by the orchestra.

Although a brief essay in the printed program stated rather ominously that Garrido-Lecca had studied serial technique with a Dutch teacher, his Retablos Sinfonicos proved to be an eloquent piece full of lyrical music leavened with catchy Latin rhythms. It even employs an indigenous Peruvian percussion instrument.

Garrido-Lecca was in the audience and acknowledged enthusiastic applause. He's 84 years old but looks at least 15 years younger.

This seems to be a time for top-rank guitarists. A few days ago, Carlos Barbosa-Lima played a superb recital for the Fort

Worth Classic Guitar Society, and on Friday night Jason Vieaux, who is head of the guitar department at the Cleveland Institute of Music, joined Harth-Bedoya and the orchestra for the Concierto de Aranjuez.

Vieaux gave a cleanly played performance full of personality. This gentle concerto (it was a favorite of Mata's) gave the soloist plenty of opportunities to display his technical skill. The orchestra contributed its own lyrical sounds, including some beautiful English horn playing.

Harth-Bedoya and the orchestra rounded out the program with Ravel's La Valse -- appropriate just before Halloween. I have always thought of this as a rather spooky work. Hearing its mysterious sounds, one can imagine ghostly dancers from a time long ago whirling around in a dim cobwebbed ballroom.

The program will be repeated Saturday and Sunday afternoon. As usual, another work, Strauss' Death and Transfiguration, will be inserted to stretch it out to standard length.

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