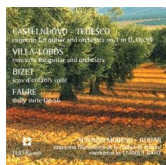


Castelnuovo-Tedesco – Concerto For Guitar & Orchestra No. 1, Op. 99 (2013)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Allegretto* (6:39) 2 *Andantino Alla Romanza* (7:47) 3 *Ritmico E Cavalleroso - Quasi Andante - Tempo I* (6:24) Alfonso Moreno – guitar Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra Enrique Bátiz - conductor

In the early 1930s Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco became concerned about the situation of Jews in his native Italy. When severe purges hit the country in 1938, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, himself Jewish and a well-known figure in Italy's musical community, was quickly targeted. "I happened to be the 'pioneer,'" he wrote later. "My music was suddenly banished from the Italian radio and some performances of my works were cancelled." Official anti-Semitism drove Castelnuovo-Tedesco to emigrate to the United States in the summer of 1939. Settling initially in New York, he eventually became an American citizen and lived in the country until his death in Hollywood in 1968. It was during the stressful year of 1939 that he wrote the Guitar Concerto No. 1; the work was dedicated to legendary guitarist Andrés Segovia, who gave its first performance in Montevideo.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed dozens of works for the guitar, both solo and with orchestra. He understood the instrument and knew how to balance the comparatively quiet guitar with the volume of an orchestra. The composer has indicated that the present concerto's orchestration was designed "to give more the appearance and the color of the orchestra than the weight." In later years Segovia used the Concerto as a counterexample to the proposition that a solo guitar cannot be heard over an orchestra.

The first movement, *Allegretto*, opens with a mock-stately melody in a neo-Classical style, and proceeds at an easygoing gait; its orchestration is quite transparent, sometimes taking on an almost Impressionistic shimmer. A short cadenza and a final flourish close the movement. The gently melancholy second movement, *Andantino alla romanza*, is based on three Italian folk

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songs. Segovia described it as Castelnuovo-Tedesco's "tender farewell to the hills of Tuscany which he was about to leave." A rustic, somewhat tongue-in-cheek tune is the basis of the third movement, Ritmico e cavalleresco. Slower, more mysterious regions are explored in a contrasting central section. An extensive cadenza, a return of the movement's opening melody, and a final flourish closes out the work. --- Chris Morrison, Rovi

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