

ALICIA DE LARROCHA IN THE PEDAGOGICAL AND COMPOSITIONAL LINEAGE OF
THE GRANADOS SCHOOL: A CENTURY OF GRANADOS'S SPANISH LEGACY
EXAMINED THROUGH HER SOLO PIANO MUSIC IN *PECADOS DE JUVENTUD*

by

EMILY BLANDON KOVAR

(Under the Direction of LIZA STEPANOVA)

This dissertation examines Alicia de Larrocha's compositional legacy and her role in extending the influence of Enrique Granados. It explores how de Larrocha's works evolved from Granados's pedagogical methods and creative ideals, solidifying her position as a key figure in the Spanish piano tradition. The study also highlights Marta Zabaleta, de Larrocha's student and successor as director of the Granados-Marshall Academy, who continues this legacy through her teaching and recordings.

The dissertation begins by situating Granados within the context of Spanish piano pedagogy. His collaboration with Frank Marshall and the founding of the Granados-Marshall Academy laid the foundation for a distinct Spanish piano tradition. Granados's teaching emphasized expressive performance, technical precision, and emotional depth, principles that shaped de Larrocha's development and later compositions.

De Larrocha's compositions, *Pecados de juventud*, are analyzed observing their stylistic evolution from her early romantic influences. While her works are often overshadowed by her concert career, they reveal her deep understanding of Spanish and European musical traditions.

This analysis also categorizes her works chronologically and by difficulty, illuminating how de Larrocha's style grew from Granados's pedagogical methods.

The dissertation also underscores de Larrocha's influence on Zabaleta, who succeeded her as the Academy's director. Zabaleta's recordings and teaching methods perpetuate the pedagogical traditions of Granados and de Larrocha, ensuring continuity of this rich legacy. Her perspectives on de Larrocha's work enrich the study, highlighting an ongoing evolution in the Granados-Marshall tradition.

In conclusion, this dissertation underscores the lasting impact of Granados and de Larrocha on Spanish piano music and pedagogy. It highlights how de Larrocha's compositions and her mentorship of Zabaleta contribute to the continued growth of this musical heritage, offering valuable insights for educators and performers dedicated to preserving and extending the Granados legacy.

INDEX WORDS: Performance guide, Alicia de Larrocha, Pecados de juventud, Marta Zabaleta, Goyescas, Enrique Granados, Academia Granados-Marshall, Piano works, Pedagogy, Analysis, Stylistic Characteristics

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DEDICATION

To my parents,

Your unwavering support and encouragement have been the foundation of all my achievements.

Thank you for believing in me, for nurturing my dreams, and for always standing by my side.

This work is a testament to your sacrifices and a reflection of your enduring faith in my journey.

I am forever grateful for everything you have done and continue to do.

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I cannot adequately express my deep gratitude for your mentorship. Your guidance has profoundly shaped me into the musician I am today, and I will be forever grateful for your support and wisdom. This dissertation is possible only due to your extraordinary guidance and unwavering belief in my abilities. Thank you for everything.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Enrique Granados (1867–1916) was a Spanish composer and pianist known for his significant contributions to the Romantic music period. An influential figure as both a piano teacher and a composer of a rich catalogue of piano music, he established the foundation for a prominent school of piano playing in Spain, a legacy that endures today.

Granados was a trained pedagogue and ultimately founded a music Academy where he taught alongside his colleague Frank Marshall. Mark Larrad's biography of Granados provides insights into the early years of the Academia Granados and Granados's role in its development. Founded in 1900 with a concert society and followed by the Academy in 1901, the institution became a respected center for chamber music, reflecting Granados's standing within Catalonia's musical circles.¹ Despite finding teaching less appealing, Granados contributed pedagogically with works such as a pedal tutor.² Balancing the Academy's administrative demands, he maintained an active performance career, collaborating with notable artists like Thibaud, Saint-Saëns, and Casals—his friend and dedicatee of several compositions.³

Granados's piano compositions showcase his deep understanding of the instrument. His protégé Frank Marshall (1883-1959), who eventually became his assistant, carried forward

¹ Mark Larrad, "Granados (y Campiña), Enrique," Grove Music Online (2001), accessed August 10, 2024, <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000011603>.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Granados' pedagogical legacy and in turn, passed it on to his own student—the celebrated pianist and accomplished composer Alicia De Larrocha (1923-2009).

Granados's body of work is extensive, encompassing collections of dances, Romantic suites, pedagogical compositions, and more. The Boileau edition⁴ of his complete piano works, revised by Alicia de Larrocha, includes 254 compositions.⁵ One of Granados's more technically demanding compositions is the *Goyescas* suite (1911), a mature seminal work that serves as a prime example of the Spanish soundscape that would later influence his musical “granddaughter”, Alicia de Larrocha.

When examining the lineage established by Granados and passed on to his students, it's important to note that his influence extends far beyond Spain. Granados himself had a direct connection to South and Central America as his father was born in Havana, Cuba. Furthermore, his pedagogical legacy reverberates across the Atlantic, reaching as far as Georgia where this research is being undertaken. Carlos Kussrow-Corma (1919-1985), a student of Frank Marshall like Alicia de Larrocha and thus a pedagogical "grandchild" of Granados, served on the University of Georgia piano faculty, showcasing the widespread impact of Granados's teachings.

Alicia de Larrocha's biography describes how she was one of the most significant musicians of the 20th century, and a direct descendent of Granados himself: “Alicia de Larrocha (1923-2009), a musical descendant of Granados through her teacher Frank Marshall, is one of the most significant pianists of the 20th century. Over a span of more than seventy years, she mesmerized audiences worldwide with nearly four thousand concerts, performing in renowned venues alongside prestigious orchestras and conductors⁶.”

⁴ Editorial Boileau, "Integral para Piano," *Boileau Music*, accessed August 18, 2024, <https://boileau-music.com/en/works/integral-para-piano-b.3300>.

⁵ *Granados Collection: Enric Granados* (Barcelona: Editorial Boileau, n.d.), ISBN 978-84-8020-693-8.

⁶ Alicia de Larrocha Official Website, accessed August 10, 2024, <https://aliciadelarrocha.com>.

A precociously talented musician, de Larrocha also explored the art of composition early in her career, alongside her concert performances: “This exploration is evident in her extensive catalog of nearly fifty works titled *Pecados de juventud* or “Sins of youth”, composed beginning when she was just seven years old⁷.” The initial short pieces from this collection already demonstrate Alicia’s considerable compositional talent. Her output became more prolific in adolescence, highly influenced by her studies with Frank Marshall and another respected pedagogue, maestro Domènec Mas i Serracant (1866-1944).

Alicia de Larrocha’s compositional style was shaped by her admiration for composers like Bach, Scarlatti, and Schumann. As her understanding of piano tradition grew, she created works that echoed these influences, even while managing an increasingly demanding career. Her catalog includes pieces such as *Homage to Schumann*, *Allegro in D-sharp Minor*, *Dance*, *Childhood Dream*, *Slow March*, and *Scherzo*, each reflecting her virtuosic skill and expressive depth, linking her style with the Romantic repertoire of the 19th century.⁸

These early compositions or “sins”, including both solo piano and ensemble pieces, showcase Alicia de Larrocha's intimate understanding of the instrument.

⁷ Alicia de Larrocha, *Pecados de Juventud: Complete Collection*, 1st ed. (Barcelona: Editorial de Música Boileau, S.L., November 1, 2014), ISBN 978-84-15381-66-2.

⁸ Alicia de Larrocha, "Pecados de Juventud - Alicia de Larrocha," Alicia de Larrocha, [2014], accessed September 26, 2024, https://aliciadelarrocha.com/sites/default/files/dossier_prensa_Pecados_Juventud_Larrocha.pdf.

Rationale

This dissertation investigates the enduring pedagogical lineage in the Spanish piano tradition, stemming from Enrique Granados (1867-1916) and continuing through his student Frank Marshall to the acclaimed pianist Alicia de Larrocha (1923-2009), whose influence extends to her active students today. Furthermore, this dissertation addresses an important gap in research for several reasons. Firstly, there is a scarcity of research on Alicia de Larrocha's original compositions, emphasizing the importance of further exploring and promoting her works, particularly for their pedagogical value. Alicia's compositions were not published during her lifetime for various reasons, and it is not until 2014 that her scores first appear in print in Barcelona⁹¹⁰. Further research into Alicia de Larrocha's compositions is crucial given the pressing need to diversify the piano performance repertoire by introducing lesser-known pieces written by underrepresented composers.

While there is an abundance of existing research about Granados and his seminal cycle *Goyescas*, his significance for this project lies in connecting the dots and providing a frame of reference for Alicia de Larrocha's pieces, thereby enhancing our understanding of the Spanish piano tradition. The presence of disciples from this tradition in the U.S. underscores the topic's relevance to an American audience.

⁹ Alicia de Larrocha, *Pecados de Juventud*, 1st ed. (Barcelona: Editorial de Música Boileau, S.L., November 1, 2014), ISBN 978-8415381631.

¹⁰ Alicia de Larrocha, "Pecados de Juventud - Alicia de Larrocha," Alicia de Larrocha, [2014], accessed September 26, 2024, https://aliciadelarrocha.com/sites/default/files/dossier_prensa_Pecados_Juventud_Larrocha.pdf.

Purpose

This research aims to serve as a resource for piano teachers and performers, facilitating the expansion of their pedagogical and recital repertoire by exploring lesser-known works from the Spanish tradition. The piano solo pieces in Alicia de Larrocha's catalogue of works are notable for their varying difficulty levels, making them suitable for students at different stages of development and seasoned performers aiming to include them in concert programs. Regrettably, there is only one existing recording of her complete works, and they are noticeably absent from today's concert stages¹¹.

As pedagogical literature, the solo works of Alicia de Larrocha are well-positioned to prepare students for the technical demands of mature Spanish music interpretation, fostering the development of skills and stylistic awareness inherent in the Spanish piano tradition, spanning from passionate dance elements to more modern lyrical expressive qualities found in various compositions. Mastery of romantic-influenced forms such as those found within de Larrocha's *Pecados de juventud* facilitates the approach to complex works like *Goyescas*.

This project examines the repertoire composed by Alicia de Larrocha from multiple angles. Most notably, this document features insights on *Pecados de juventud* derived from a personal interview with Marta Zabaleta, a former student of de Larrocha. Additionally, the author categorizes the pieces based on various musical and structural characteristics and grades them according to their difficulty, facilitating their assignment in the teaching studio. While the included repertoire selection may not encompass every aspect of Spanish music nor the repertoire of every Spanish composer, the author has chosen to highlight specific selections from

¹¹ Marta Zabaleta, *Pecados de Juventud*, Amazon Music, ATVPDKIKX0DER, accessed September 14, 2024, https://amazon.com/music/player/albums/B01A7HBKGS?marketplaceId=ATVPDKIKX0DER&musicTerritory=US&ref=dm_sh_pmoFtyVwAjSeK2Z3gKK2CVH4q.

Alicia de Larrocha's *Pecados de juventud* chosen for their pedagogical value, wide stylistic variety, and ease of categorization. The primary objective is to immerse students and teachers in the diverse musical styles representative of the work of Alicia de Larrocha and to cultivate a newfound appreciation among students and performers for the rich and vibrant textures that define the Spanish tradition.

Methodology

This document encompasses primarily musicological and pedagogical research. The musicological aspect offers an overview of Granados's pedagogical endeavors throughout his career, the perpetuation of his legacy through his students and the Granados-Marshall Academy in Barcelona, and Alicia de Larrocha's overlooked compositional contributions as a direct descendant of the Granados lineage. This project focuses on highlighting the pedagogical value of Alicia de Larrocha's *Pecados de juventud*, specifically analyzing a selection of the solo piano works within this collection for future pianists who may learn these pieces.

The author categorizes the solo piano compositions from this collection by difficulty, from easy to advanced, and, where possible, chronologically. Relevant connections to other works in the Spanish tradition are highlighted as appropriate. A selection of carefully curated solo pieces from the collection that are representative of the wide range of de Larrocha's compositional style undergo additional investigation.

The author catalogs the solo pieces based on stylistic characteristics and difficulty, providing a graded guide for teaching studios, referencing established piano syllabi such as the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) and the broader scope Henle Grading system to accomplish this.

A pedagogical analysis of selected repertoire from *Pecados de juventud* helps future performers identify intriguing structural and harmonic characteristics in the composer's works. This study presents these compositions as a representation of and an introduction to the Spanish musical tradition, providing musical examples for students and performers to access information at a glance. Crucial information for all facets of this discussion is drawn from an interview with Pianist and pedagogue Marta Zabaleta, the most recent director of the Frank Marshall Academy

and a former student of Alicia de Larrocha, who has recorded de Larrocha's complete works. The author hopes that the conversation provides valuable insights into de Larrocha's lineage within the Spanish tradition and her role as a pedagogue.

This interview, included as an appendix to this document and translated by the author, emphasizes the unique pedagogical value of de Larrocha's compositions. It delves into specific questions about her background, including her vast repertoire and childhood influences from composers like Schumann, Chopin, and Bach. These musical influences were crucial in shaping her repertoire as both a teacher and performer. The interview also covers topics such as the music she taught, the pieces still emphasized at the Granados-Marshall Academy, and how her compositions reflect the rich tradition of the Spanish piano school.

CHAPTER 2

THE PEDAGOGICAL LEGACY OF ENRIQUE GRANADOS

The lasting impact of the pedagogical legacy of Enrique Granados can be felt across the Atlantic, reaching as far as the University of Georgia, where this research is being undertaken. Granados's students include Carlos Kussrow-Corma (1919-1985), one of the first generation of students to study at the Granados-Marshall Academy who disseminated his teachings to students in the United States. This chapter aims to provide an overview of the establishment of the Granados-Marshall Academy, the predecessors and disciples of Granados, and the significant roles of Alicia de Larrocha and contributions of her student Marta Zabaleta (the most recent director of the Granados-Marshall academy) in the Granados lineage. Additionally, it addresses the enduring pedagogical methods of performance established by the Granados school.

Predecessors of Granados and his Peers

This subsection provides background on Granados's pedagogical lineage, linking it to the Romantic tradition. Granados's lineage can be traced back to Franz Liszt, who toured Spain in 1844-1845 giving numerous concerts and later composing his own Spanish Rhapsody as a result of his travels. Pere Tintorer, a student of Liszt, played a foundational role in Barcelona's piano education.¹²

Born in Palma de Mallorca in 1814, Tintorer studied in Madrid and Paris under Liszt, later becoming a professor at Barcelona's Liceu Conservatory until his death in 1891.¹³ Tintorer's pedagogical works, such as *The Art of the Pianist*, *Method for Piano*, and *The Art of Preluding*, became key texts that helped establish Barcelona's piano school. His influential teaching extended through his student Joan Baptista Pujol, who, like Tintorer, studied in Paris before returning to Barcelona, where he continued Tintorer's pedagogical legacy.¹⁴

It is possible to trace the lineage of Granados from his own teachers all the way back to Franz Liszt. One of the pioneers in piano teaching preceding Granados was, precisely, a disciple of Franz Liszt, Pere Tintorer. He was born in Palma de Mallorca in 1814 and studied in Madrid and Paris, where he refined his training with the great Hungarian master. After the period spent in France, where he achieved many successes as a performer, he obtained the piano chair at the Liceu Conservatory, which he held until his death in 1891 in Barcelona. Tintorer also worked in the field of composition and left an extensive body of work, which unfortunately has not been recovered. His teaching marked significant progress in piano education in Barcelona, which at that time achieved a prominent position.¹⁵

Pere Tintorer (1814-1891), a key figure in piano pedagogy and the predecessor of Granados, made significant contributions through his pedagogical treatises. His works, including

¹² Mònica Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall: 100 Anys d'escola Pianística a Barcelona* (Spain: Taller Editorial Mateu, 2000), 10–15, <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=82437282-9f5e-3304-867c-f71d22fc1c80>. Translated by author.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

The Art of the Pianist (op. 106, c. 1886), *Method for Piano* (op. 104, c. 1878), and *The Art of Preluding* (op. 105, c. 1878), became foundational texts for the Barcelona piano school.¹⁶

Ultimately, Tintorer's teachings influenced many, including his distinguished student Juan Baptista Pujol (1835-1898), who, after completing his education in Paris, settled in Barcelona and continued to carry forward Tintorer's pedagogical legacy.¹⁷

Tintorer's pedagogical treatises, such as *The Art of the Pianist op.106 [c.a.1886]*, *Method for Piano op.104- Complete Piano School [c.a. 1878]*, and *The Art of Preluding op.105 [c.a. 1878]* became landmark references in the study of this instrument and made it possible to properly speak of the Barcelona piano school. One of his distinguished disciples was Juan Bautista Pujol (1835-1898). Pujol continued Tintorer's teaching, also went to Paris to complete his musical education, and settled permanently in Barcelona after a long stay in France.¹⁸

¹⁶ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 13. Translated by Author.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Pere Tintorer's pedagogical legacy significantly influenced his student, Juan Baptista Pujol (1835-1898), who continued Tintorer's teachings and became one of Granados's most important predecessors. Pujol is considered one of Granados's most influential predecessors. Granados scholar Walter Clark, author of the authoritative biography of the composer, notes that Pujol managed his own music academy and taught several distinguished pianists. He also wrote an important treatise on piano technique, establishing a pedagogical model later adopted by Granados. It's reasonable to suggest that Granados drew some inspiration from Pujol's career accomplishments, even though their pedagogical philosophies differed significantly. Clark notes that Granados's students observed his notably more liberal approach in contrast to Pujol's more authoritarian style.¹⁹

After studying under Henri Reber at the Paris Conservatoire, Pujol returned to Barcelona, where he developed a Catalan school of piano virtuosity celebrated for its contributions to both pianism and Spanish music. Pujol trained numerous pianist-composers who made significant contributions to Spanish national music through their compositions and performances. Clark notes that his publishing venture, founded in 1888, was instrumental in promoting the works of Granados and Albéniz. The Barcelona school he established emphasized clear voicing, rich tone color, and advanced pedaling techniques.²⁰

Mónica Santacana describes the splendor of the Spanish piano school and affirms that Pujol was a significant figure in the progression of the musical scene in Barcelona. It's particularly significant that Granados and his successors paved the way for new, more impressionistic composers. Granados, in particular, was a bold and adventurous composer in his own right.

¹⁹ Walter Aaron Clark, *Enrique Granados: Poet of the Piano* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 14-65.

²⁰ Ibid, 14.

Pujol was a key figure in the evolution of piano and musical performance in Barcelona, from the chair he occupied at the Municipal School of Music. His students included Isaac Albéniz, Carlos G. Vidiella, Joaquín Malats, Mario Calado, Antonio Nicolau, Juan Bautista Pellicer, Carmen Matas, Ricardo Viñes, and Enrique Granados, to name the most prominent. From this exceptional generation of performers, the Spanish piano school enters a period of increasing splendor, both in solo performance and composition. Thanks to its most distinguished representatives — Albéniz, Vidiella, Malats, Viñes, and Granados — the piano became the mirror-instrument reflecting the musical inspiration of an entire era in the country. This inspiration projected mainly from one of Europe's cultural capitals, Paris, which at that time was opening its doors to the modernity of the new century with the chords of Fauré, Debussy, Ravel, and Satie.²¹

²¹ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 15. Translated by Author.

Establishment of the Granados-Marshall Academy

This subsection examines the key elements that led to the founding of the Granados Academy and its ability to attract a broad range of top-tier musicians. Walter Clark provides an in-depth account of both the academy's beginnings and Granados's initial career as a private instructor. In the fourth chapter of his book, Clark highlights Granados's distinctive teaching style, especially his decision to diverge from the strict, authoritarian methods of his own teacher, Pujol.

In addition to his performance career, Carol Hess notes that Granados founded a music academy in Barcelona, where students like Alicia de Larrocha, Rosa Sabater, and Conchita Badía trained. Insights into his teaching methods can be found in his diary and Guillermo de Boladeres Ibern's *Enrique Granados: Recuerdos de su vida y estudio crítico de su obra*. Ibern, a devoted student of Granados between 1900 and 1915, provides valuable perspectives, though the diary offers only occasional glimpses of Granados's evolving teaching approach.²² Ibern reaffirms that Granados believed that effective muscle training was more crucial than constant practice, allowing all students to reach a high level of artistry with the right guidance.^{23,24}

Drawing on insights from Granados's former student, Boladeres Ibern, Clark presents a detailed view of Granados's more liberal and supportive approach to teaching, which significantly shaped the academy's philosophy. Clark states that during the 1890s, Granados taught individual students from his home on Carrer Tallers in Barcelona. In summary, Guillermo de Boladeres Ibern (1882–1973), a former student of Granados, recalls that he felt more like a

²² Carol A. Hess, "Enrique Granados and Modern Piano Technique," *Performance Practice Review* 6, no. 1 (1993): Article 5, <https://doi.org/10.5642/perfpr.199306.01.05>.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Guillermo de Boladeres, *Enrique Granados: Recuerdos de Su Vida y Estudio Crítico de Su Obra por Su Antiguo Discípulo*, ed. Guillermo de Boladeres Ibern (Barcelona: Editorial Arte y Letras, 1917), 57–61.

friendly peer than a traditional professor, describing him as "a fellow student who knew how to impart the secrets that he also loved."²⁵ In contrast to Pujol, who was known for his commanding voice and strict methods, Granados adopted a more liberal approach that some perceived as excessive leniency. Ultimately, his gentle and approachable teaching style was generally well-received.²⁶

Many musicians today supplement their income through teaching in addition to concertizing. Granados followed a similar path by founding his own music academy to ensure a more stable income alongside his busy concert schedule. After experiencing financial difficulties with his private teaching and work at the Acadèmia de la Societat Filharmònica, Granados established the Acadèmia Granados in 1901. Initially located at Carrer de Fontanella, the academy moved to Carrer de Girona, where it remained, and where Granados and his family also lived.²⁷

In exploring the initial appeal of the Granados Academy and its ability to attract exceptional musicians, Clark describes the academy, founded in 1901, as providing a comprehensive and diverse musical curriculum at affordable rates. This accessibility played a significant role in drawing top-tier musicians to its orbit. The academy provided courses in music history, theory, solfège, harmony, composition, orchestration, violin, and piano, with an academic year running from September to June. According to its *Plan de Estudios*, the piano curriculum was designed to span nine years.²⁸

Many of Granados's students were young women aiming to refine their social skills through music. The academy drew some of Barcelona's leading musicians to its faculty,

²⁵ Clark, *Enrique Granados*, 65.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid, 66.

²⁸ Ibid.

including Maestro Mas i Serracant, who served as assistant director and taught theory and composition. The academy's success was supported by a board of trustees offering financial and business guidance, which included notable figures like the mayor of Barcelona, Eduard Conde, and physician August Pi i Sunyer.²⁹

The Granados Academy played a pivotal role in nurturing young musicians, offering not only lessons but also valuable public recital experiences. As Mónica Santacana describes, the Academy became a sanctuary for art and a vital training ground for future performers. It served as a nexus where composers, performers, and students came together to serve music, with Granados at the helm, infusing it with creativity and sensitivity.³⁰ Students had the rare opportunity to perform full recitals for a select, discerning audience, often composed of Granados's inner circle, including family and prominent figures.³¹ Additionally, the Academy was the venue where Granados shared the first performances of his own works and prepared theatrical pieces, such as *Elisenda*, *Gaziel*, and *Follet*, often with the presence of the poet Apel·les Mestres (1854-1936).³²

The Academy thus became a nexus between composers, performers, and students, with the sole purpose of serving music and becoming a kind of sanctuary of art. It was, without a doubt, Granados' home, and this is why it breathed the impulse of creativity, communication, and sensitivity. His students had the opportunity to face the interpretation of an entire recital in public for the first time, with an especially select and rigorous audience that lived music with the deepest devotion, and Granados shared the first performances of his works with his circle of friends and students, as well as with colleagues and acquaintances. He prepared the rehearsals for the theatrical pieces he composed for Apel·les Mestres, such as *Elisenda*, *Gaziel*, or *Follet*, with the presence of the poet and a select audience made up mainly of his family and prominent personalities.³³

²⁹ Clark, *Enrique Granados*, 66.

³⁰ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 49. Translated by author.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

Granados as a Teacher: Pedagogical Contributions

The following subsection will examine Granados's contributions as a pedagogue and their enduring impact on musicians who studied with him, extending his legacy to the present day.

Pianist and pedagogue Marta Zabaleta, a pupil of Alicia de Larrocha—and thus a musical descendant of Granados—compares the methods developed by Granados and his student Frank Marshall. Marshall is primarily known as the author of two pedagogical treatises *Practical study about Piano pedals* (1919) and *Piano Sonority* (1940). Zabaleta notes, "I believe Marshall wrote a book, a method called 'un método de sintonización'. Marshall's method is very, very good. In fact, Granados also wrote one, but it was more complicated to understand. Marshall simplified it, making it more suitable for children. It's a method I used when teaching children because it's very necessary."³⁴ When Zabaleta refers to Marshall's method, she is referring to Marshall's pedagogical tenets as outlined in his book *Piano Sonority*.

Granados was renowned for his expertise in pedal technique, both as a performer and a teacher. Mònica Santacana describes his method of pedaling as an attempt to systematize the technique, despite his naturally improvisational approach. Granados believed that once the mechanical aspects of piano technique were mastered, only the true artist could use this knowledge to communicate effectively through music.

His method of pedaling aimed to systematize in some way – something that, fundamentally, did not fit at all with his improvisational temperament – the teaching guidelines for the correct assimilation of a solid foundation in piano technique. According to Granados himself "Once the mechanism required by the instrument is mastered, only the true artist can determine how to put their knowledge at the service of communication".³⁵

Santacana includes a passage from an unpublished source on Granados's pedaling method, where he emphasizes the importance of timing pedal changes carefully to avoid

³⁴ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

³⁵ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 43. Translated by author

"cleaning impurities" too quickly. As an educator I believe this principle is essential for foundational pedaling, as it helps to enrich the sound. Clearing the pedal too soon can result in a dry sound, lacking the warmth and resonance needed for a concert performance. Granados likens this concept to musical arches and columns, stating that while the "journey" of notes (the arches) may contain some impurities, they should only be cleared when they reach the "column" or resting point, where the ear demands a pure, clean sound.

It is essential that, at the moment when one of these musical arches rests on one of these columns, the pedal change occurs, coinciding with that moment. All the impurities passing from note to note in the arches will have absolutely no importance if, upon reaching the column, these impurities are cleaned, disappear, considering that the column is like the point of rest, and that during this rest the ear will never tolerate the imperfections acquired within the arches. [...] Similarly, our ear tolerates the impurities of what we could call the journey of the notes, which are the arches, on the condition that they rest on that column or pedestal, which we could call the definitive resting place of the ear.³⁶

Additionally, Santacana describes Granados's scientific approach as a pianist, providing manuscripts written in 1913 as an example: "Alongside the image of an artist, poet, and emotional idealist musician, Enrique Granados was also a scientist of his instrument, and a good example of this is the manuscripts of his 1913 lectures on piano interpretation and technique, which are preserved in the Granados Room on Avenida del Tibidabo".³⁷

Walter Clark thoroughly details Granados's commitment as a pedagogue to the technical and artistic growth of his piano students, emphasizing the integral relationship between the two. Granados organized his instruction into two weekly lessons: one dedicated to technical mechanics and the other to interpretation. His multifaceted dedication to pedagogy included founding and teaching at the Granados Academy and authoring the pioneering treatise

³⁶ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 44. Translated by author. Unpublished document written by Enric Granados on pedal technique, Marshall academy archives.

³⁷ Ibid, 34. Translated by author.

"Theoretical and Practical Method on How to Use the Pedals of a Piano" (*Método teórico-práctico para el uso de los pedales del piano*), the first of its kind in Spain. In this work, Granados strikingly describes the piano's pedals as its "lungs," essential for controlling sound continuity. He explores pedaling techniques for legato playing, tone production, creating consonant or dissonant harmonies, and manipulating timbre within melodies. However, Alicia de Larrocha pointed out that Granados's treatise only begins to address pedal technique, describing it as providing "only the most basic—the primer level of pedal study"³⁸.³⁹

Carol Hess describes Granados' physical approach to playing as one which favored physical flexibility. From a modern perspective on piano technique, Granados's physical approach to playing is particularly noteworthy.⁴⁰ Boladeres Ibern observed that Granados offered a completely original viewpoint on technical issues from the very first lesson. Like many pianists of the early twentieth century, Boladeres seemed to be trained in a tradition similar to the Lebert-Stark school of Stuttgart, which emphasized high finger action, an excessively curved hand, and the isolation of individual fingers.⁴¹

This approach proved unsuitable for the demands of Romantic repertoire, often resulting in crippling muscular tension, injuries to the fourth and fifth fingers, and a brittle, percussive sound. In contrast, Granados rejected the impractical idea of lifting each finger to its maximum height, instead advocating for his concept of *mecanismo*, where the arm, forearm, wrist, and

³⁸ Clark, *Enrique Granados*, 67.

From a conversation between Mark Hansen and Alicia de Larrocha of April 14, 1983, quoted in Hansen, "The Pedagogical Methods," 13. Hansen goes on to point out that "Deviation from this primary training comes when the student has demonstrated mastery of the principle involved, and the readiness to exercise freedom" (p. 34).

³⁹ Clark, *Enrique Granados*, 67.

⁴⁰ Carol A. Hess, "Enrique Granados and Modern Piano Technique," *Performance Practice Review* 6, no. 1 (1993): Article 5, <https://doi.org/10.5642/perfpr.199306.01.05>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

fingers function together as a coordinated unit.⁴² He also emphasized the importance of physical flexibility in piano playing, a relatively novel idea in 1900, when many teachers still placed coins on students' hands and employed other rigidity-inducing methods.⁴³

Scholar and Pianist Douglas Riva states that Granados valued his own students as key interpreters of his music, believing they were best equipped to distinguish between his recordings and actual performances. Through his teaching, he passed on his musical intentions, particularly in works like *Goyescas*, offering a more authentic interpretation of his pieces than the printed scores. Granados shared his insights by illustrating his intentions at the keyboard during lessons, thus creating a performance tradition for his students.

It is significant that Granados valued his students as listeners who would best be able to judge the distinction between the maestro's recording and his actual performance. Granados' pupils had special knowledge about their teacher's playing and particularly about his intentions in his works. Granados passed on his intentions in the *Goyescas* and other works through his students. He gave them a performance tradition for his works. By explaining and illustrating at the keyboard his intentions during the course of their lessons, Granados taught his pupils more "authentic" versions of his works than the printed scores".⁴⁴⁴⁵

Riva also notes that Granados did not teach all his students to perform his compositions. Instead, he reserved this privilege for dedicated students like Frank Marshall, who were fully committed to mastering his music. As Riva states, "Apparently, Granados did not teach all of his students to play his own compositions, but reserved them for those students, such as Marshall, who committed themselves to mastering his music."⁴⁶

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Douglas, Riva: Personal interview with Alicia de Larrocha, Salisbury Hotel, New York, August 3, 1979.

⁴⁵ Douglas J. Riva, *The "Goyescas" for Piano by Enrique Granados: A Critical Edition (Spain)* (PhD diss., New York University, 1983), <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/goyescas-piano-enrique-granados-critical-edition/docview/303172830/se-2>.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 36.

To conclude the discussion of Granados's many pedagogical contributions, which later influenced de Larrocha, it is important to recognize that appreciation and evaluation of his work continue to this day. Beyond the well-known writings cited above, his lesser-known pedagogical writings have recently been gathered and studied. Highlighting his other treatises on ornamentation and technical challenges offers valuable insight into his approach. Walter Clark references several other works Granados did not publish during his lifetime⁴⁷, including *Brief Considerations Concerning Legato, Ornamentation, and Special Difficulties of the Piano*.⁴⁸

According to Clark, Granados was also renowned for his scientific approach to teaching, and his lectures—such as his 1913 presentation on "The Interpretation of Works with Sentiment" at Sala Granados—illuminate both his philosophy of piano playing and his educational principles. The term "sentimiento" in Spanish conveys emotion and feeling, which are fundamental to the essence of music beyond mere sentimentality, reflecting a vital aspect of Granados's teaching philosophy.⁴⁹

Granados also penned unpublished treatises on technique, including "Brief Considerations Concerning Legato, Ornamentation, and Special Difficulties of the Piano." Known for his scientific approach to pedagogy, Granados's lectures, such as his 1913 presentation on "The Interpretation of Works with Sentiment" at Sala Granados, illuminate not just his piano playing philosophy but also his teaching ethos. "Sentimiento" in Spanish denotes emotion and feeling, fundamental to the essence of music beyond mere sentimentality, a concept vital to Granados's teaching philosophy.⁵⁰

In my interview with Marta Zabaleta, recent director of the Granados Academy, she shared valuable insights into Granados's philosophy, emphasizing his commitment to fostering organic and natural music-making. Granados sought to inspire students to play with genuine expression, a priority reflected in the detailed directions found in his musical scores.

⁴⁷ *Integral para Piano: Pedagógicas 2*. Barcelona: Editorial de Música Boileau, S.L., 2003.

⁴⁸ Clark, *Enrique Granados*, 67.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

We consider Granados a romantic, post-romantic musician, right? And with a very original style because he has that love for Schumann, Grieg, Chopin, Liszt, but at the same time, he has a Spanish flavor, right? And that's something that needs to be combined well. This is very important. The thing is, he (Granados) was a pedagogue; he loved teaching, and his scores are full of indications. Sometimes these indications can overwhelm the student, causing them to misinterpret the style because what he wanted to convey to the students was not to play mechanically with just their fingers, but to make music.

That's why he wrote so many indications: forte-piano, crescendos, accelerandos, ritardandos. He was very passionate. So when a student played mechanically, without expression, he made them exaggerate in some way, right? So the important thing is that all the written indications, not just the notes, like dynamics, rubatos, accelerandos, all of that should be interpreted as naturally as we would with Chopin, Liszt, or Grieg. Just because it is Spanish music doesn't mean it has to be eccentric or strange.

No, that's not the case; it's still romantic music. And this is very important because, for example, Falla is more folkloric. Falla sometimes writes more abruptly, a bit more harshly, and is more modern. But Granados is still very romantic, so we shouldn't exaggerate excessively. We need to take all these indications in a literal sense and think, "Okay, all these indications have a pedagogical purpose, and I need to interpret them in a way that what I play sounds absolutely natural."⁵¹

I was interested in how other aspects such as the rhythmic integrity in romantic Spanish piano music was transmitted from Granados to de Larrocha and later to Zabaleta. When I asked Marta Zabaleta about her experience studying with de Larrocha, she highlighted de Larrocha's focus on rhythm above all else. Zabaleta explained that, while de Larrocha didn't offer extensive technical advice, she emphasized rhythm as the core of technical precision. De Larrocha often advised her students to practice slowly, focusing on placing the hand quickly within the slow tempo and carefully listening to the sound quality when using the pedal. She was very meticulous, especially when students encountered technical challenges.⁵²

While Zabaleta didn't study de Larrocha's compositions directly with her, she shared that de Larrocha made specific fingerings and hand arrangements in works by other composers, such

⁵¹ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

⁵² Ibid.

as Iberia and pieces by Granados, to optimize performance, sometimes advising redistributing parts between hands to maintain rhythmic clarity.⁵³

Well, she worked a lot, literally with us. And emphasized the rhythm, above all. But when there was a technical problem, what characterized and concerned her the most was this—the rhythm. She didn't give many technical tips.

Well, I think she advised us to work very slowly always. And, well, to place the hand very quickly within the slow tempo, place the hand quickly, listen carefully to the sound we had caught with the pedal to see if it was really what we wanted or if it was poorly caught. She was very, very demanding about this.

But really, not many tips. Some arrangements, yes, some arrangements (ie. Redistributing fingering), but with her works, I don't know because I didn't work on her works with her, but with Iberia, with Granados, yes, there were many re-arrangements that she advised us, like taking one hand with the left hand, with the right hand etc.⁵⁴

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Disciples of the Granados Lineage

This subsection focuses on Alicia de Larrocha (1923-2009) and Marta Zabaleta (b. 1965) as two key disciples in the Granados lineage, offering insights into their formal musical education and their connection to the Granados-Marshall Academy. De Larrocha's biography traces her early musical training, beginning with her primary teacher, Frank Marshall, under whose mentorship she thrived and ultimately became a member of the academy's faculty.

De Larrocha made her public debut on May 14, 1929, at the Marshall Academy, introduced by Maestro Mas i Serracant in a lecture titled "Children in Art," with composer and critic Joaquín Turina writing an introduction to the program, praising Alicia's extraordinary talent.⁵⁵ On December 12, 1929, she performed a recital during the Barcelona International Exhibition. Her orchestral debut came on October 28, 1934, at the Palau de Belles Arts in Barcelona, where she played Mozart's Concerto in D major "The Coronation" with Joan Lamote de Grignon and the Barcelona Municipal Band.⁵⁶ At the age of 11, she repeated the concert in Madrid on April 1, 1936, with the Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Fernández Arbós. Throughout her youth, she had the opportunity to meet and form friendships with distinguished pianists such as Arthur Rubinstein, Alfred Cortot, and Emil von Sauer, all close associates of her teacher.⁵⁷

De Larrocha's official website emphasizes her exceptional personality and the quick recognition of her talent by her teacher and peers. Notably, despite the disruptions of the Spanish

⁵⁵ Alicia de Larrocha, "1923-1940," Alicia de Larrocha Official Website, accessed August 10, 2024, <https://aliciadelarrocha.com/en/content/1923-1940>.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Civil War, she was able to continue her musical education. The young de Larrocha quickly stood out in Maestro Marshall's group of students for her precocity and artistic talent. Although the war separated her from Marshall, she continued her studies with Maestro Mas i Serracant and later joined the academy's faculty. Her solo career flourished with international tours, starting with her first European concert in Lausanne.⁵⁸

In her early adulthood, de Larrocha debuted in the United States and also gave a historic concert at the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona alongside Francis Poulenc (1899–1963), a fellow pianist. She eventually married pianist Juan Torra, who played a crucial role in supporting her career, notably by designing her concert programs and offering various other forms of assistance.

In the United States, she debuted in 1954 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, invited by Alfred Wallenstein. But before that, in 1950, she gave a historic concert at the Palau de la Música Catalana, sharing the stage with the French composer Francis Poulenc; it was the first performance in Spain of the Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra, conducted on that occasion by a dear friend of the pianist, the composer Carlos Suriñach. That same year, she married a fellow student at the Marshall Academy, the pianist Juan Torra, who always supported her in her work and, upon Marshall's death, became part of the Academy's administration.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 116-118. Translated by author.

⁵⁹ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 117. Translated by author.

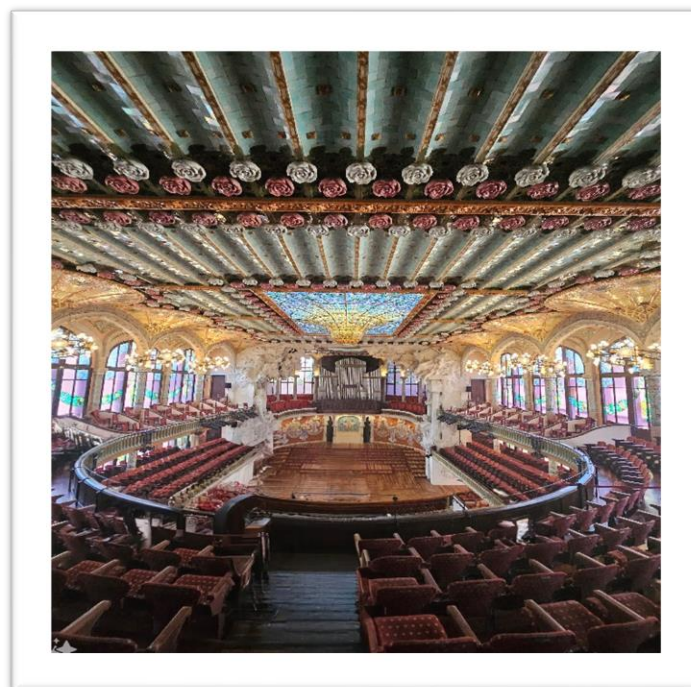


Figure 1: *Palau de la Música Catalana, The concert hall where De Larrocha performed Francis Poulenc's concerto for 2 Pianos with the composer himself. photo taken by author.*

After Maestro Marshall's death in 1959, Alicia de Larrocha was chosen to uphold his legacy at the Granados-Marshall Academy. Her prestigious reputation and deep connection to the academy made her the perfect successor, preserving its high artistic standards. De Larrocha's international career solidified her as one of the leading pianists of her time, renowned for her contributions to Spanish music alongside other great musicians like Granados, Marshall, Rubinstein, and Iturbi.⁶⁰

Upon the death of Maestro Marshall in 1959, De Larrocha was selected to carry on his legacy. Alicia de Larrocha thus became, through her prestige, her musical temperament, and her almost innate connection with the Granados-Marshall Academy, the continuator, the ideal heir to maintain the artistic level that has distinguished the Academy since its foundation. The years have confirmed the worth of this great interpreter who has performed worldwide, in the finest concert halls and with the best orchestras, also receiving numerous honorary distinctions, which place her among the universal pianists of this century. Her story joins those of Enrique Granados and Frank Marshall, as well as other performers like Arthur

⁶⁰ Pagès i Santacana, *Acadèmia Granados-Marshall*, 120. Translated by the author.

Rubinstein and José Iturbi who, like her, have brought Spanish music to audiences worldwide.⁶¹

Pianist Marta Zabaleta, a disciple of Alicia de Larrocha, completed her formal musical studies in San Sebastian at the age of 16, where she won First Prize in piano. Her bibliography details her education, professional recordings, and contributions to piano pedagogy as an active clinician and performer.

Marta Zabaleta has trained at premier European conservatories, studying under Dominique Merlet, Dmitri Bashkirov, and Alicia de Larrocha. She has won multiple international piano competitions and recorded works by composers like Rodrigo, Granados, and De Larrocha. An esteemed educator, Zabaleta is a recent director of the Marshall Academy in Barcelona, continuing De Larrocha's legacy with masterclasses focused on Spanish repertoire and piano interpretation.⁶²

In my interview with Zabaleta, I had the chance to ask her directly about her first meetings with de Larrocha. I found it particularly meaningful to hear how de Larrocha valued connecting with younger musicians, often sharing stories of her travels and life in music. Marta Zabaleta recalls first meeting Alicia de Larrocha at concerts, where she would ask for her autograph. Eventually, de Larrocha invited her to dinner, where she shared many anecdotes and showed a love for spending time with students over important figures.

Later, while studying at the Reina Sofía School of Music in Madrid, Zabaleta had the opportunity to play for de Larrocha during a class on Spanish music. After receiving valuable feedback, Zabaleta asked if she could continue studying with her. De Larrocha graciously invited

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Marta Zabaleta, "Biography," *Marta Zabaleta Piano*, accessed July 2, 2024, <https://www.martazabaletapiano.com/en/biography/>.

her to Barcelona, and after following advice to learn the Marshall technique, Zabaleta became de Larrocha's private student for many years, an experience she describes as very meaningful.

Well, look, I always met Alicia de Larrocha at concerts and asked her to sign my records after her performances. She probably didn't remember me much. But once, with a group of friends, she invited us to dinner. I was living in Paris at the time, so we went to dinner with her. It was super fun; she told us many anecdotes. She loved being with young people, with students. If she had a choice, she would always pick dinner with students over a representative or an important political person. Subsequently, I studied at the Reina Sofía School of Music in Madrid with Dimitri Bashkurov. Alicia de Larrocha was invited to teach Spanish music classes because the department was named after her. I played for her there. I think I played 'Triana' by Albéniz.

She gave me an amazing lesson. We all played; all the students played. I dared to ask her if this experience could be repeated. I thought she would say no because she travels everywhere, staying in hotels, but she said, "Yes, it can be repeated. You can come to Barcelona if you want when I'm there." I couldn't believe what she was saying to me. So I called the Marshall Academy and told them what Alicia's response had been. They advised me to work with another student of Marshall, a colleague of Alicia's, to get familiar with the pedal method, their working techniques, and Spanish music before directly joining Alicia's classes. And that's what I did. After completing this phase of absorbing and getting closer to the Marshall technique, I became her private student for many years, which was a very beautiful experience.⁶³

I also asked Zabaleta during the interview about her experience studying under De Larrocha, given her teacher's demanding travel schedule. I was curious how often she had the chance to play for her. During the interview, Zabaleta shared her experience studying with De Larrocha, noting that due to her teacher's busy travel schedule, lessons were not regular. De Larrocha would offer to listen to her students when she had a few days between concerts, but these opportunities were sporadic, as she could be away for a month at a time: "Yes, she didn't have much experience as a professor. She had me and a few other students, but she didn't have a regular teaching schedule. Every time she returned from a concert, she would say, 'I am back, I

⁶³ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

have three days. If you want, I can listen to you one afternoon," but then she might be away for a month. It wasn't a regular thing".⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

ALICIA DE LARROCHA AS A COMPOSER AND AN HEIR TO THE GRANADOS- MARSHALL SCHOOL

This chapter delves into Alicia de Larrocha's profound legacy as one of the most influential figures in Spanish music, emphasizing her dual role as both a world-renowned performer and a composer. Trained under Frank Marshall, a direct disciple of Enrique Granados, de Larrocha became the torchbearer of Granados' pianistic traditions and musical ideals. Her deep understanding of Granados' style, combined with her own innovative voice as a performer and composer, allowed her to preserve and expand the Spanish piano tradition. As a composer, de Larrocha's works merge the expressiveness of a wide range of influences—from Romantic to Baroque—with virtuosic technique. Her performances and countless recordings have captivated audiences worldwide, ensuring the lasting legacy of Spain's musical heritage for future generations.

Biography

Alicia de Larrocha was born into a deeply musical family as the third of four children to Eduardo de Larrocha and Teresa de la Calle. Both her mother and aunt, Carolina de la Calle, were students of Enrique Granados.⁶⁵ At the age of four, Alicia began her musical studies, and in 1927, she began formal lessons under Frank Marshall, a direct disciple of Granados. Marshall, as her sole teacher, provided her with a strong and disciplined foundation in piano technique, focusing on careful training rather than early exposure to the public.⁶⁶ Despite her prodigious talent, Alicia's family and teacher were cautious about overworking her, limiting her concert appearances to just two or three each year to ensure her well-being.⁶⁷ This cautious approach allowed her to develop her skills gradually and laid the groundwork for her future success.

Alicia de Larrocha (1923-2009) was the third of four children born to Eduardo de Larrocha and Teresa de la Calle (Teresa, Berta, Alicia, and Ramon). Raised in a deeply musical environment, Alicia's mother and aunt, Carolina de la Calle, were disciples of Enrique Granados. In 1927, Alicia began her musical education under Frank Marshall, a disciple of Granados and heir to his piano school, who became her sole teacher thereafter. Despite her exceptional talent, her family and teacher were cautious of exposing her to the exploitation often faced by child prodigies. Alicia's training focused on acquiring a solid foundation, limiting her public performances to two or three annually, under Marshall's careful guidance.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Generalitat de Catalunya, "Alicia de Larrocha: Biografia," Departament de Cultura, accessed August 25, 2024, <https://cultura.gencat.cat/en/temes/commemoracions/2023/anyaliciadelarrocha/biografia/index.html>.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Performer

Alicia de Larrocha, as a student of Frank Marshall, inherited a rich pianistic lineage originating with Enrique Granados. Granados, known for imbuing his works with expressive depth and Spanish musical idioms, passed these essential stylistic elements to Marshall, his student and eventual successor. As a pedagogue, Granados shared his distinctive approach with Marshall, who, according to scholar Douglas Riva, became the primary continuator of Granados's pianistic techniques and musical vision. Marshall, in turn, imparted these traditions to his own students, including Alicia de Larrocha and Mercedes Roldós, ensuring the lasting influence of Granados's artistry.⁶⁹

In 1959, following the passing of her beloved teacher Frank Marshall, Alicia de Larrocha assumed the role of director of the Marshall Academy, continuing the legacy of the Granados Academy. In this capacity, she oversaw teaching duties and, when her demanding performance schedule allowed, gave masterclasses focused on Spanish composers.⁷⁰ During her absences, the management of the academy was entrusted to Juan Torra, Mercedes Roldós, and Carlota Garriga, in that order.⁷¹

Throughout her monumental performance career, de Larrocha received strong support from her husband Juan Torra, who had relinquished his own career as a pianist to manage the academy and care for their two children, Juan Francisco (1957) and Alicia Torra (1959).⁷² Juan Torra also played a key role in facilitating the academy's operations, making contacts with

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Alicia de Larrocha, "1941-1960," Alicia de Larrocha Official Website, accessed August 10, 2024, <https://aliciadelarrocha.com/en/content/1941-1960>.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid

agents and assisting in program development, thus helping to manage the logistical challenges of Alicia's international performing career.⁷³

From 1970 to 1990, Alicia de Larrocha's career reached new heights as she toured the world, performing across continents and captivating audiences with her musical artistry.⁷⁴ At the age of 47 in 1970, De Larrocha had already established herself as an international sensation, performing in major cities like London, Berlin, Buenos Aires, New York, and Tokyo.⁷⁵ Her busy concert schedule included seventy-three performances in a single year, spanning nearly fifty different venues. With a contract with Columbia Artists and management support from Felicitas Keller in Madrid and Herbert Breslin in New York, Alicia continued to tour extensively, including two U.S. tours annually and frequent trips to Japan.⁷⁶

Her repertoire featured a mix of classical and Spanish composers, such as works by Bach, Soler, Liszt, Schumann, Chopin, and Ravel, alongside pieces by Spanish composers like Granados, Albéniz, and Falla. Her orchestral performances were also in high demand, particularly Mozart's and Rachmaninoff's piano concertos.⁷⁷

De Larrocha's travels provided countless memorable experiences, including one amusing anecdote from her time in Texas while serving as a member of the Van Cliburn Competition jury. She shared how, while practicing in her hotel room, she discreetly used the mute pedal to avoid disturbing her neighbors. One day, she received a bouquet of flowers from the guest next

⁷³ Alicia de Larrocha, "1961-1980." Alicia de Larrocha Official Website, accessed August 10, 2024. <https://aliciadelarrocha.com/en/content/1961-1980>.

⁷⁴ Mònica Pagès Santacana, *Alicia de Larrocha: Notas para un genio*, 1st ed. (Barcelona: Alba Editorial, 2016). Translated by author.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

door with a note expressing enthusiasm for her music, requesting she not use the mute pedal, as he enjoyed hearing her play so much.⁷⁸

I always say that one of my greatest joys while traveling, now that I have been traveling for a few years, has been discovering that there are still truly wonderful people in the world. We have the idea that the world is finished, corrupted, and in a terrible state, but instead, we find fantastic people in every corner of the globe, everywhere. First and foremost, and then there is the indescribable, beautiful feeling of returning home. [...] There are many anecdotes, but one very funny one occurred last year when I was in Texas as a member of the Van Cliburn Competition jury. We were staying at a hotel in Texas, and I needed a piano, so they kindly placed one in my hotel room. I never like to work while being heard because it feels like being in the ladies' restroom—professional secrets that should not be overheard by others. Moreover, I don't like working because I always have the feeling that I'm disturbing the neighbors, especially in a hotel. So, very discreetly, I would use the mute pedal until I thought it was a reasonable hour and until I believed the gentleman next door had left his room. Then, at those times, I allowed myself the freedom to remove the mute and play a few measures comfortably. One day, I received a beautiful bouquet of flowers with a note from my next-door neighbor saying, "Please, I beg you, when you remove the mute, don't put it back on, because I am so enthusiastic hearing those passages, and suddenly you end them abruptly!"⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Pedagogical and Performance Tenets

In an interview with Elyse Mach, Alicia de Larrocha discussed her musical upbringing and her thoughts on being labeled a "specialist" in Spanish repertoire. She reflected on being surrounded by music from an early age, with her mother and aunt both having studied under Enrique Granados, though her mother stopped playing after marriage. De Larrocha emphasized that her education was broad and traditional, with no particular focus on one period or composer. She expressed that she did not consider herself a specialist in any genre and preferred to explore a wide range of music.

It seems to me that I was born listening to music because I was completely surrounded by it. Both my mother and my aunt had been students of Enrique Granados, but my mother abandoned her piano studies when she married. Not so my aunt. She played and she taught piano, too, so I had a strong musical environment... I'm not engaged in any special period, and I've never really wanted to be considered a specialist in anything. I was musically educated in all the contemporaries, but in a traditional way. I didn't go beyond Prokofieff. It would be impossible for me to single out one or two composers as favorites or preferences. In my choice of composers, I enjoy going from one to the other. I suppose I might be called a free spirit in this regard.

I totally believe that in every period there are new moods, new idioms, and people are searching for new systems. I know we can't stand still, but I'm not much involved in the so-called new music, so I take a wait-and-see attitude. My feeling is that humanity today has gone a bit crazy to some extent and everything, including music, has gotten out of control. So, we will have to return to the very real, the very sensitive music as well as a sensible way of life. We are going to have to make a complete return to sensibility. I don't know this for sure, of course; it's only a feeling I have. I don't want to put this on a comparative basis, either.⁸⁰

In the same interview, Alicia de Larrocha shared her approach to learning new repertoire, which performers working on difficult Spanish repertoire such as *Goyescas* may find valuable. She explained that rather than playing a piece straight through, she first studies the music carefully to understand its overall structure.⁸¹ She then focuses on difficult passages, particularly

⁸⁰ Elyse Mach, *Great Contemporary Pianists Speak for Themselves* (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1991), 54-60.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 58.

with regard to fingering, which she considers crucial. It is particularly significant that de Larrocha considered fingering a crucial aspect of pianism, in fact de Larrocha noted that she may initially choose a finger to produce a certain tone, but if it doesn't work as intended, she would adjust the fingering to achieve the desired sound.⁸²

First of all, I'm not the kind of person who likes to sit down to a score and play it from beginning to end. I study the music carefully first to form an idea of what it is all about. Then I seek passages or sections which offer the most difficulty, especially in regard to fingering. For me, the fingering is very important. I may decide on using a certain finger to produce a particular tone, but if it doesn't work, then I have to change the fingering accordingly.⁸³

Alicia de Larrocha further emphasized the importance of establishing practical fingering early in the learning process to ensure technical security. She noted that she does not advocate practicing away from the piano, as fingering decisions made outside of the concert hall may not be feasible in performance. For her, fingering is the foundation of security, and she prefers to work out a practical fingering plan beforehand.⁸⁴ Additionally, she shared that playing a piece slowly helps solidify memorization, check note accuracy and refine phrasing.⁸⁵ Slowing down allows for a clearer understanding of musical details such as chords, harmonic groupings, and nuances like accents and ritardandos, reinforcing both memory and interpretation.⁸⁶

I don't advocate practicing away from the piano as some pianists do; a decision on fingering may not be practical at the concert hall, and by that time it's a little late to change. It's better to have a practical fingering worked out ahead of time, especially for me because fingering is the base of security, I think. Sometimes, too, I have to play a piece very slowly to solidify the memorization of the part. Slowness helps to check note accuracy and phrasing, because when you lay in slow motion, just as in viewing a movie run slowly, you see very detail and at the same time reinforce the memory. You are able to see chords more clearly, the form, the design, the harmonic groupings, and so on. It helps enormously to

⁸² Ibid, 58.

⁸³ Ibid, 58.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 59.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 59.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 59.

know the phrases, the *ritardandos*, an accent here, an accent there, an ending phrase, a starting phrase, that is, all the details.⁸⁷

In a personal interview, de Larrocha herself provided a few recommendations for developing students looking to explore Spanish music, suggesting certain works by key Spanish composers as a good introduction. She specifically mentioned Granados' *Danzas Españolas* and *Seis piezas sobre cantos populares Españoles* as excellent repertoire for young students. Additionally, she recommended *Cantos de España* and *Suite Española* by Albéniz, as well as Turina's *Cuentos de la antigua España*, along with the pieces "Sacromonte" and "Zapateado" from *Danzas Gitanas*, Op. 55. These works, with their rich Spanish character, offer an accessible entry point for students wishing to learn about and perform Spanish music."⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Ibid, 59.

⁸⁸ Dean Elder, *Pianists at Play: Interviews, Master Lessons, and Technical Regimes* (United Kingdom: Instrumentalist Company, 1982), 110.

In Dean Elder's book, de Larrocha further discusses the many challenges of phrasing and repetition in Spanish music, particularly in *Goyescas* and *Iberia*. She explains that the folkloric origins of the music, along with the free, romantic nature of composers like Albéniz and Granados, influence interpretation.⁸⁹ However, in pieces like *Iberia* and *Goyescas*, which begin to introduce more structured forms, repetition of phrases can make the music feel routine if not approached with variety.⁹⁰ To overcome this, she emphasizes the importance of incorporating variations in rhythm, color, and emotional expression to maintain interest and bring out the music's full potential.⁹¹

You take into account the music's folkloric origin. You take the *copies*, the couplets, as the guide to the music. And then, the music of Albeniz and Granados is romantic music - it is written in an absolutely free fashion except in *Iberia* and *Goyescas* which already start to have a form. The repetition of phrases does create difficulties in the interpretation: if you don't create variety, the music becomes a routine thing. It is difficult to give variety to all this, but you must look from one side to the other. There is the variation of the rhythm, the color, the state of soul. You must do many things because you have the liberty to do these things.⁹²

Performers intending to play large-scale works like *Goyescas* must consider the importance of the edition they use. In my interview with Zabaleta, she highlighted that Spanish publishing houses are sometimes prone to misprints and minor errors. She strongly recommended the edition supervised by Alicia de Larrocha, her esteemed teacher, as the most reliable. This edition not only corrects mistakes found in other versions but also clarifies interpretive markings. Although some minor errors persist, such as a slipped bass note or missing "G," Zabaleta praised it for its thoughtful pedaling and its accommodations for pianists with both

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

large and small hands. She noted that Granados himself would adjust pieces for students with smaller hands, and she believes this edition best captures the work as it should be heard.

The version supervised/ edited by Alicia de Larrocha is the most reliable of all because she has evidently corrected some errors present in other editions. Despite this, the edition still has some errors, like a note in the bass that always slips through, or a missing “G” note because the machine always misses something. But, I believe this is the most reliable version because it really provides an explanation of the entire work and how it is ideally heard. The pedaling is very well thought out, which is very important, and it offers options for larger and smaller hands. Granados himself did this a lot; when he had a student with smaller hands, he would adjust the piece or make a small modification in the work so that the student could continue playing. So, I truly believe this is the best version, that being the most recent edition with Alicia’s supervision.⁹³

When approaching a complex and intricate work such as *Goyescas*, students should also consider Granados’s pedagogical approach and the wealth of indications in his scores. According to Zabaleta, Granados’s scores are full of detailed markings that can sometimes be overwhelming, but they should not be ignored. Granados, with his romantic style influenced by composers like Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, and Grieg, also infused his music with a distinctly Spanish flavor, which must be carefully balanced.⁹⁴

Zabaleta emphasized to me that Granados’s many notations, including dynamics, rubato, and tempo changes, are not meant to be played mechanically but should inspire a natural, expressive approach to music-making. His pedagogical purpose was to encourage students to play with emotion, not just with technique. The key is to interpret these markings literally, with the same naturalness and expressiveness we would bring to works by composers like Chopin and Liszt, rather than exaggerating or distorting the

⁹³ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

music. While Granados's music is undeniably Spanish, it remains firmly within the romantic tradition and should not be treated with excessive eccentricity.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Precocious Composer

Alicia de Larrocha quickly became a precocious composer, influenced by the styles of her favorite composers. She began composing at an exceptionally young age, completing her first piece at just seven years old⁹⁶. During her adolescence, she became an even more prolific composer. She studied primarily with Frank Marshall (1883-1959) and Domènec Mas i Serracant (1866-1944), who became an important mentor for her after Marshall left Spain due to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)⁹⁷.

The time she spent studying with both teachers allowed her to develop a style that could recreate the essence of her favorite composers. Many of her earliest works recall pieces by Schumann, Bach's Inventions, and Scarlatti's sonatas.⁹⁸ In my interview with Marta Zabaleta, Zabaleta described de Larrocha's early compositional style to me as romantically inclined and influenced by composers like Schumann, reflecting works such as *Album for the Young* and *Scenes from Childhood*.⁹⁹

Zabaleta observed that while de Larrocha's style is personal and modern, it does not strongly reflect the influence of Spanish composers like Granados, Albéniz, or Falla. Instead, her compositions align more with the styles of Joaquín Nin-Culmell, Xavier Monsalvatge, and Mompou, suggesting themes and influences tied more to Catalonia than to the southern Spanish sound.¹⁰⁰

Well, I think she (Alicia de Larrocha) has a more personal language. I don't find very much Granados, I don't find Albéniz practically anywhere, I don't find Falla anywhere. I mean, I think she has a style closer at times to Schumann. Well, when

⁹⁶ Editorial de Música Boileau, S.L., *Pecados de Juventud*, 1st ed. (November 1, 2014), 4-9.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

she was very young, in her early works, she has a very romantic approach. You can tell a bit that she was working on the Album for the Young or Scenes from Childhood because you can hear it in some way, right? But later on, I don't know, I find it more modern, perhaps closer to Joaquín Nin-Culmell, to Xavier Monsalvatge, who was her friend, maybe a little Mompou. But I don't think she follows the line of Granados. No, it doesn't have as much of a southern flavor, let's say, from the south of Spain. Rather, I think her themes are more closely related to Catalonia.¹⁰¹

During her early years at the Granados-Marshall Academy, Alicia de Larrocha demonstrated remarkable compositional talent. Under the guidance of her teacher Frank Marshall and the mentorship of Domingo Mas y Serracant, she composed a variety of pieces, including a Chorale, a Jota, a Mazurka, and several inventions—works that highlighted her mastery of harmony and counterpoint.¹⁰² Notably, at just 12 years old, she composed a *Romance* for cello and piano, dedicated to her brother Ramón. As she matured, her compositional style evolved to a more informal register.¹⁰³

Despite her increasingly demanding concert career during her early adulthood, de Larrocha continued composing, producing small works that showcased her technical and expressive virtuosity. Pieces such as *Homage to Schumann*, *Allegro in D# minor*, *Dance*, *Child's Dream*, *Slow March*, and *Scherzo* reflected her connection to the romantic tradition.¹⁰⁴ Over time, she began creating more personal and larger-scale works, many of which were dedicated to her future husband, Juan Torra, including *Primaveral*, *Aiguablava*, *Ofrenda*, and *Aplec*. This period also saw her production of vocal works, deeply influenced by the passionate texts she selected.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Alicia de Larrocha, "Dossier de Prensa: Pecados de Juventud," PDF file, accessed June 26, 2024, https://aliciadelarrocha.com/sites/default/files/dossier_prensa_Pecados_Juventud_Larrocha.pdf.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4: PECADOS DE JUVENTUD

Introduction and Pedagogical Considerations

Alicia de Larrocha's most prolific compositional period occurred when she was around 17-18 years old, during which she was influenced by Romantic composers. Zabaleta explained that de Larrocha had to stop composing when her concert schedule became overwhelming, with nearly 100 performances annually. As a result, her last compositions were completed when she was around 28 to 30 years old.¹⁰⁶

De Larrocha's complete catalogue, published in 2014 as *Pecados de juventud*¹⁰⁷ (de Larrocha's own title, translated as "Sins of Youth") showcases her early compositional voice and impressive understanding of the piano, despite her youth. Marta Zabaleta revealed to me how she rediscovered Alicia de Larrocha's works after her death. De Larrocha's daughter (Alicia Torra de Larrocha) decided to publish the compositions, as her mother had never intended them for public performance, considering them to be of lesser importance and not wanting to be seen as a composer. Zabaleta received the manuscripts and found them intriguing, leading to an editing process that took over six months.¹⁰⁸

The works, ranging from pieces written when de Larrocha was very young to more mature compositions, were considered beautiful and interesting. Some were discarded due to incompleteness, but most were preserved and recorded. Despite de Larrocha's initial

¹⁰⁶ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

¹⁰⁷ Editorial de Música Boileau, S.L., *Pecados de Juventud*, 1st ed. (November 1, 2014).

¹⁰⁸ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

embarrassment about the works, calling them "youthful sins," Zabaleta reflects that she would have been proud to see how much appreciation they now receive.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

The complete collection *Pecados de juventud*, encompasses around 50 works, with approximately 39 for solo piano. This catalogue is divided into four volumes, two of which are dedicated solely to solo piano works, while the others include chamber music and repertoire for voice and piano. This chapter and its subsections will assist performers in approaching the solo repertoire by categorizing selected works into "easy," "medium/intermediate," and "advanced" levels.

It is important to note that these categorizations are made within the context of de Larrocha's entire body of work. Therefore, while the easiest pieces were written at a young age, they may still involve elements that exceed the true beginner level. The repertoire selected for further consideration, analyzed chronologically and by difficulty, is informed by discussions with Marta Zabaleta, who has created the only available edition of these scores and recorded the entire de Larrocha catalogue.

The works highlighted during my interview with Zabaleta are those for which I can provide the most detailed information, offering a diverse range of genres and levels of difficulty. These pieces encompass a broad spectrum of Alicia de Larrocha's compositional style, from her imitations of her favorite composers to her distinctive sound, which incorporates modern and innovative harmonies.

From a performer's perspective, some of the most challenging works in the collection include the *Nouvelette*, *Suite*, *Estudio*, and *Allegro in D# minor* among others. De Larrocha's compositions were influenced by composers like Schumann, Bach, Scarlatti, Soler, Chopin, and Granados. For early advanced students, her ten *Invenciones*, composed in 1939, offer a range of contrapuntal challenges and dance elements inspired by Bach, such as the gigue in No. 8.

The tables within this section provide a quick reference for performers to visualize the varied difficulty levels of the works. The chapter will include two graded general difficulty tables containing all of the 39 solo pieces in volumes I and II, with individual selections further categorized, accompanied by brief backgrounds, technical considerations, and other useful information.

Aligning De Larrocha's Compositions with Piano Grading Systems

In this study, both the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) and Henle grading systems will be utilized to categorize Alicia de Larrocha's compositions. These widely recognized grading frameworks offer a structured approach to classifying pieces based on their technical and interpretive demands. By applying these systems, we can provide a clear context for understanding the level of difficulty and pedagogical suitability of de Larrocha's works. This dual approach will help in examining how her compositions align with existing grading standards.

The Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) piano syllabus provides a structured approach to piano examinations, emphasizing a balanced program of repertoire across various musical styles, genres, and tonalities. Students, from Preparatory A to Level 10, are encouraged to select pieces from the Celebration Series®, Sixth Edition (RCM Publishing), or from other recognized sources as listed in the "Complete Repertoire" section of the syllabus.¹¹⁰ The repertoire is organized into lists by genre or stylistic period for each level, including the Associate Diploma (ARCT) in Piano, (Performer) to ensure a diverse and well-rounded approach to learning and performance.¹¹¹

The Henle Grading Chart categorizes levels of difficulty based on repertoire frequently performed by today's pianists, providing a broader scope practical guide to gauge the technical demands of various pieces. Using Henle's broad applicability, I will compare the difficulty levels of Alicia de Larrocha's compositions, assigning each piece in the collection a graded number to indicate its preparation level for performance. In the following sections, I will include these

¹¹⁰ Royal Conservatory of Music. Piano Syllabus, 2022 Edition. Toronto: RCM Publishing, 2022. Available at: <https://rcmusic-kentico-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/rcm/media/main/about%20us/rcm%20publishing/piano-syllabus-2022-edition.pdf>.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

graded charts along with a separate column for numerical grading within the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) syllabus—an established classification system that guides students through progressive technical requirements from the preparatory level to level 10. Professor Rolf Koenen who created the Henle system, explains that, after thorough consideration, he established nine levels of difficulty for musical pieces, grouped into three general categories: 1–3 (easy), 4–6 (medium), and 7–9 (difficult). In assessing difficulty, he looked beyond just the speed of notes or chord patterns, focusing instead on the complexity of composition, rhythmic challenges, sight-reading demands, and the clarity of the piece's musical structure. Each "piece" is defined as a standalone musical unit, such as a sonata or a single piece in a cycle—thus, Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* Part I has 48 separate levels for each prelude and fugue, while Schumann's Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11, is rated as a single unit. Koenen's approach centers on a performer's ability to prepare the work for performance.¹¹²

Levels of difficulty		
The levels of difficulty of the piano music published by G. Henle Publishers:		
Level	Gradetable	Example
1	easy	Bach, Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach, nos. 4 and 5
2		Bach, Well-Tempered Clavier I, no. 1 Prelude C major
3		Beethoven, Piano Sonatas op. 49, 1 and 2
4	medium	Grieg, Lyric Pieces op. 12, no. 4
5		Schumann, Fantasy Pieces op. 12, no. 1
6		Chopin, Nocturnes op. 27, nos. 1 and 2
7	difficult	Beethoven, Piano Sonata op. 10, no. 3
8		Beethoven, Piano Sonata op. 81a
9		Schumann, Toccata op. 7

Figure 1a: Henle Grading Chart

¹¹² Henle Verlag, "Levels of Difficulty," G. Henle Verlag, accessed November 6, 2024, <https://www.henle.de/en/Levels-of-Difficulty/>.

Table I: Volume I of *Pecados de juventud*- A general difficulty guide containing the pieces with their respective keys and dates composed.

<u>Volume I</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Date Composed</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Proposed grade of difficulty</u> <u>HENLE</u>	<u>Proposed grade of difficulty</u> <u>RCM</u>
Coral	Eb Major	10-11-1930	7	2	5 6
Cajita de música	Ab Major	24-11-1931	8	2	7 8
Jota	Db Major	04-11-1937	14	6 7	9 10
Mazurca	Ab Major	16-11-1938	15	6	8 9
10 Invenciones					
Invención 1	A Major	14-01-1939	16	5	7 8
Invención 2	B Minor	18-01-1939	16	6	8
Invención 3	D Minor	02-02-1939	16	6	8
Invención 4	F# Major	16-02-1939	16	7	9
Invención 5	Ab Major	06-03-1939	16	7	9
Invención 6	D Minor	17-04-1939	16	7	9
Invención 7	Bb Minor	19-04-1939	16	7	9
Invención 8	G Minor	21-04-1939	16	7	9
Invención 9	F# Minor	23-04-1939	16	7	9
Invención 10	E Minor	29-04-1939	16	7	9
Suite	-	13-06-1939	16	8 9 (Very difficult)	10

I. Moderato	Eb Major	-	-	8	10
II. Andante Cantabile	Bb Minor	-	-	8	10
III. Adagio	Db Major	-	-	7	10
IV. Allegro con brio	Bb Major	-	-	8 9	10
Invitación	Ab Major	16-10-1940	17	5	8
Primaveral	F# Major	14-11-1940	17	5	8
Allegro en Re# menor	D# Minor	13-12-1940	17	8 9 (Very difficult)	10
Paseo	Ab Major	26-05-1941	18	7	8
Sonata antigua	F Major	02-07-1941	18	7 8	9
Homenaje a Schumann	F Major	09-07-1941	18	4 5	7 8

Table II: Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*- A general difficulty guide containing the pieces with their respective keys and dates composed.

Volume II	Key	Date Composed	Age	Proposed Grade of Difficulty Henle	Proposed Grade of Difficulty (RCM)
Scherzo	Ab Major	11-07-1941	18	6	8
Sueño infantil	Bb Major	14-07-1941	18	5	7
Danza	G Major	11-01-1942	19	5	7
Marcha lenta	F Major	12-01-1942	19	5	7
Jugando	G Major	14-01-1942	19	5	7
Pavana	C# Minor	17-01-1942	19	6	7 8
Aiguablava	Ab Major	24-06-1942	19	7	8
Burlesca	G# Minor	15-07-1942	19	7 (Difficult)	9
Romanza sin palabras	Bb Minor	09-08-1942	19	8 (Difficult)	10
Estudio	C Minor	15-08-1942	19	8 (Very Difficult)	10
Balada	C# Minor	18-08-1942	19	7	8 9
Impromptu	Bb Minor	11-09-1942	19	7	9
Nouvelette	E Major	09-12-1942	19	8 9 (Very Difficult)	10
Travesuras	Eb Major	02-04-1943	20	8	8 9
Minué triste	Eb Minor	07-04-1943	20	5	7 8
Ofrena	Eb Major	03-03-1944	21	5	7 8
Aplec	D Major	05-01-1947	24	6	9
Preludio	Bb Minor	15-07-1953	30	6	9
Festívola	D major	Unknown	Unkno wn	8 (Difficult)	10

Easiest Pieces: *Coral, Cajita de Música, Invitación, Danza, Marcha Lenta, Jugando, Minué triste*


The following section provides background information on the most accessible pieces within Pecados de juventud. Based on an interview with Alicia de Larrocha's pupil, Marta Zabaleta, these works are categorized by the author as "easy" or approachable for students. This categorization considers factors such as length, musical complexity, and technical demands. Each piece is briefly described with relevant background information, followed by a chart that highlights key features to help students and educators assess the suitability of each piece as repertoire.

Although these pieces are among the most approachable within the broader context of de Larrocha's works, they still contain elements—such as voice leading, octaves, and key signatures—that may challenge beginner-level students. "Easy" here reflects their relative accessibility rather than an absolute beginner standard.

Coral (1930)

This piece is the earliest in the collection of *Pecados de juventud* and among the easiest to interpret. It spans twenty-nine measures and is just one page long, composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of seven. The tempo marking is Andante, indicating a moderate walking pace. Students approaching this work can aim to produce an expressive sound with a good variety of dynamics. Unlike some of the more complex pieces later in the collection, this one avoids large leaps and complex polyrhythms, making it well-suited for the Intermediate level student. The primary technical challenges involve voice leading and maintaining the fluidity of moving lines. Notably, the piece does not include any rhythmic values faster than an eighth note.

Table 3: *Coral*

Category	Details
Title	Coral
Chronology	Earliest in the collection (11-10-1930) Composed at the age of 7
Length	29 measures, one page
Key	Eb Major
Tempo	Andante (moderate tempo)
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical focus	Expressiveness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize dynamic variety to allow for expressive playing, ensuring contrast between softer and louder sections while maintaining clarity. - Voice Leading: Focus on smooth transitions between voices, ensuring clarity and balance in polyphonic passages. - Maintaining Fluidity in Moving Lines: Practice keeping the musical lines flowing seamlessly, particularly in fast or connected passages, to preserve the piece's continuity. - Octave Hand-Span: Work on developing hand flexibility and strength to manage large intervals, especially in octave passages, while maintaining evenness and tone quality. - Difficulty: - Among the most accessible for interpretation - No rhythmic values faster than an eighth note - No large leaps or polyrhythms; ideal for intermediate students
Examples	 <p>Figure 1.1: mm. 1-5.</p> <p>Simple rhythms, Large dynamic range, Octaves in Left Hand.</p>

12

cresc. *f* *dim.* *p*

19

rit. - -

24

a tempo *rit.* *cresc.* *ff*

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Figure 1.2: mm. 12-29.

Students should carefully observe dynamics, especially the Forte in measure 15 preceded by a passage with parallel octaves. Overall this entire passage has no rhythms faster than an eighth note and is approachable for a student who does possess an octave hand span. Students should practice transitions between hand positions carefully.

Cajita de música (1931):

This brief, two-page piece (50 measures) is the second composition in Alicia de Larrocha's *Pecados de juventud*. Written in the key of Ab Major, it is easily accessible to intermediate students. Alicia composed this work at the age of eight. The piece features a repeated, bell-like pattern that transfers playfully between hands, paying homage to its title, "Little Music Box." The piece presents several technical challenges for intermediate students, including repeated sections which require different dynamics, trills, an allegro tempo marking, and the use of rubato. Notably, only one piano dynamic marking is given at the start of the work.

Table 4: *Cajita de música*

Category	Details
Title	Cajita de música
Description	This brief, two-page piece (50 measures) is the second composition in Alicia de Larrocha's <i>Pecados de juventud</i> . Written in the key of Ab Major, it is easily accessible to intermediate students. Alicia composed this work at the age of eight. The piece features a repeated, bell-like pattern that transfers between hands, paying homage to its title, "Little Music Box."
Chronology	Composed at the age of 8 years old (24-11-1931)
Key	Ab Major
Tempo	Allegro
Length	Two pages, 50 measures total
Technical Challenges/ Pedagogical focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repeated Sections: Ensure consistency in dynamics and articulation across repeated sections to maintain a sense of cohesion. - Trills: Focus on achieving a smooth and controlled trill, especially in faster tempos, to avoid excessive tension in the hands. - Allegro Tempo Marking: Practice maintaining clarity and precision at the faster tempo, especially in fast passages, ensuring accuracy in note execution. - Rubato: Encourage flexibility in tempo, particularly in expressive sections, but with careful attention to maintaining structural integrity. - Ledger Lines: Teach students to confidently read and navigate ledger lines, especially in higher or lower registers, to maintain accuracy. - Dynamic Markings: - Initial Piano Dynamic: Emphasize the challenge of starting the piece with a soft dynamic marking, potentially requiring careful control and consistency throughout the first section, and planning how dynamics will evolve later in the piece.

Examples

12 *Pecados de juventud. Piano 1* - Alicia de Larrocha

Editorial BOILEAU

Cajita de música

24-11-1931
(8 anys)

Alicia de Larrocha
(1923-2009)

Allegro

Piano *p*

Figure 1.3: mm. 1-5.

Repeated pattern distributed in between the hands.

Figure 1.4: mm. 21-25.

Trills and LH arpeggios. This passage is a good opportunity for students to practice measuring the length of their trills and using comfortable fingering.

Figure 1.5: mm. 46-50.

Ending (dying away)- Students should practice good phrasing and rubato here- note that no *ritardando* is marked in the score- Instead the passage is marked *morendo* or dying away.

Invitación (1940)

This piece is the seventh in the first volume of *Pecados de juventud*, composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of seventeen. The title translated into English is “Invitation.” It is one of the most (inviting) and approachable works in the collection for several reasons. The piece is only seventeen measures long and spans a single page, making it achievable for intermediate students within a reasonable time with daily practice. Marked at an Andante tempo, the speed does not pose a significant challenge for those aiming to learn and perform this work.

The piece presents challenges, beginning and ending with an incredibly soft dynamic marking (pp and ppp). It includes triplets and requires a hand span of at least an octave, as well as comfort with key signatures up to four flats (it is composed in the key of A-flat major). The final measures feature a large, rolled chord with a suggested hand distribution by Marta Zabaleta. The piece is flowing and expressive, and students should focus on keeping the left-hand chords fluid to maintain the momentum of the melody.

The right-hand features ties, a concept that students should be familiar with before approaching this piece. The opening measures introduce a brief melodic imitation that should be highlighted with consistent articulation. Measure twelve contains the only staccatos in the piece, making it a special melodic moment that precedes chromaticism. The last four measures also involve chromatic movement in the left hand, requiring diligent practice in shifting between white and black keys. Overall, the tone of the piece is languid, reflective, pensive, and reminiscent. Students should aim to capture the subtle nuances in the dynamics as indicated in the score.

Table 5: *Invitación*

Category	Details
Title	Invitación
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> Volume I
Chronology	Composed by Alicia de Larrocha at age 17 (16-10-1940)
Key	Ab Major
Tempo	Andante (moderate tempo)
Length	17 measures, one page
Technical Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical Requirements: - Requires a minimum hand span of an octave. - Familiarity with key signatures up to four flats (A-flat major) is essential. - Challenges: - Dynamics: The piece starts at <i>pianissimo</i> (pp) and concludes at <i>pianississimo</i> (ppp), requiring delicate control of soft dynamics. - Left-Hand Chromatic Shifts: Practice is needed on chromatic movements, especially in the last four measures, for smooth transitions. - Fluidity in Left-Hand Chords: Sustaining a gentle, connected sound in the left-hand chords is essential for the piece's flow. - Triplet Rhythms and Ties: Right-hand ties and triplet figures should be precise, maintaining rhythmic integrity. - Melodic Imitation: The opening measures feature brief imitation between hands, which should be clearly articulated. - Expressive Staccatos: Measure 12 includes the piece's only staccatos; these should be played with expression to emphasize contrast. - Large Rolled Chord: One large rolled chord requires a specific hand distribution, as suggested by Marta Zabaleta, to achieve a balanced sound.
Pedagogical focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capturing Dynamic Nuances: Guide students to explore subtle dynamic shifts, emphasizing expressive control to enhance the piece's introspective nature. - Highlighting Melodic Imitation: Encourage students to bring out any melodic imitation between the hands with clear, consistent articulation, aiming for a seamless dialogue across voices. - Tone and Character: - Languid, Reflective, and Pensive: Cultivate a contemplative atmosphere by focusing on a warm, legato touch and carefully controlled tempo. - Reminiscent Quality: Inspire students to infuse the piece with a sense of nostalgia, using tone color and phrasing to evoke a feeling of gentle reminiscence.

Examples

62 Pecados de juventud. Piano 1 - Alicia de Larrocha

Editorial BOILEAU

Invitación

16-10-1940
[17 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Andante

Piano

pp

Figure 1.6: mm. 1-8.

Simple rhythms include triplets and ties. Soft dynamic range. Block chords in Left hand require careful practice to shift positions smoothly.

9

14

ppp *espress.*

ten.

accel.

rit.

ppp

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Figure 1.7: mm. 9-17.

Some chromaticism featured in this passage. Extremely soft dynamic marking in measure eleven. Hands separate practice required for positioning of block chords in left hand and chromatic line in right hand. Students should note the rolled chord will require some rubato and a decision about the speed of the roll to be made.

Danza (1942)

This piece is the third work in the second volume of *Pecados de juventud*, composed in G major when De Larrocha was nineteen years old (11-01-1942). The title translates to "Dance" in English. Spanning two pages, the piece is written in a 6/8 time signature, which enhances its pastoral character. It presents several challenges for students, including the execution of scales, voicing of chords and dyads, and maintaining a lively tempo marked "Allegretto." This tempo marking suggests that the piece should not be played too slowly, to preserve the dance-like qualities implied by its title.

Students should pay attention to the melodic shift from a descending line in measure five to an ascending line in measure nine, creating a sense of contrapuntal interest. The work requires an octave hand span and provides an opportunity for students to refine their rubato, particularly at the ends of phrases. The piece concludes with a diminuendo to a notably soft dynamic (pp), so students should be comfortable playing softly to achieve the desired effect.

Table 6: *Danza*

Category	Details
Title	Danza
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> Volume II
Chronology	Composed 11-01-1942 (19 years old)
Key	G major
Tempo	Allegretto (lively, but not too slow)
Length	Two pages
Technical Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scales: Ensuring evenness and precision in fast scalar passages. - Voicing: Emphasis on clear voicing within chords and dyads. - Tempo: Maintaining a lively, consistent tempo throughout. - Time Signature 6/8 (pastoral character) <p>Rubato Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phrase Endings: Provides an opportunity to develop tasteful rubato, particularly at phrase endings for expressive timing. <p>Hand Span</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires an octave span, necessitating hand flexibility. <p>Final Dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diminuendo to a soft pp at the conclusion, requiring control in softer dynamics. <p>Melodic Features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descending melodic line in measure 5 and ascending line in measure 9. - Contrapuntal Interest: Alternating melodic direction enhances interpretative focus on melodic movement.
Pedagogical focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize maintaining a flowing, pastoral character throughout the piece. - Practice scales and right-hand passages to ensure consistent fingering and overarching phrasing of the melody. - Develop "autopilot" for the left hand by practicing smooth hand positioning and transitions, ensuring seamless movement between positions.

Examples

14 Pecados de juventud. Piano 2 - Alicia de Larrocha

Editorial B01(EA)

Danza

11-01-1942
[19 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Allegretto

Piano *p*

Figure 1.8: mm. 1-8.

Notable elements here include the allegretto tempo marking, pastoral feel, and tranquil melody in the right hand embellished by scales.

Bva.

cresc. poco a poco

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Figure 1.9 mm. 9-15.

Beginning in Measure 9, the direction of the melody shifts upwards. Passages like these require comfortability with scales ascending and descending. The octave shift in measure 12 requires a shift of hand position. Left hand leaps become slightly more difficult in this passage but stay within an octave span.

Figure 1.10: mm. 20-29

Scalar passages in right hand are continuous and should flow gently. Left hand jumps should be tranquil and practiced carefully for the best balance between the hands. Ending of the piece is pianissimo- coming from a decrescendo. Students should practice the arpeggio slowly until the transition between the hands is comfortable and less noticeable.

Marcha Lenta (1942)

This piece, titled *Marcha lenta* or "Slow March" in English, was composed by Alicia De Larrocha at the age of nineteen (12-01-1942). It is the fourth work in the second volume of *Pecados de juventud*. The author of this document categorizes this piece as "easy" due to its short length (35 measures over 2 pages), slow Largo tempo, rhythmic simplicity, and approachable key signature of F major. While the piece features a dotted eighth-sixteenth march rhythm, the slow tempo makes it accessible for less advanced students.

The work contains ties and suspensions where notes are held and resolved over a barline, so students should be familiar with this rhythmic concept before approaching the piece. An octave hand span is required. Technically, students preparing to perform this piece should be comfortable playing triplets followed by eighth notes, as the transition from triple to duple rhythm can be challenging. Measure 18 introduces a polyrhythm between the right and left hands, and the piece also includes some contrary motion that students should be ready to navigate.

Because the melodic line occasionally occurs in a lower register, students will need to focus on ensuring that the melody projects clearly, regardless of register.

Table 7: *Marcha Lenta* (Slow March)

Category	Details
Title	<i>Marcha Lenta</i> (Slow March)
Chronology	Composition Date December 1, 1942 Age at Composition 19 years old
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Key	F major
Tempo	Largo (Slow)
Length	35 measures over 2 pages
Technical Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Octave Hand Span Required: Practice maintaining a relaxed hand while reaching octaves to avoid tension, especially in transitions. - Comfortable with Triplets and Eighth Notes: Ensure rhythmic precision and fluidity, alternating between triplets and steady eighth notes without losing tempo. - Navigation of Contrary Motion: Develop coordination for smooth, controlled contrary motion between hands, especially in faster passages. - Melody Projection in Lower Registers: Focus on voicing to bring out the melody in lower registers without overwhelming the texture. - Rhythmic Features: - Dotted Eighth-Sixteenth March Rhythm: Emphasize the march-like quality of this rhythm with clarity and precision to maintain a strong rhythmic drive. - Ties and Suspensions: Resolve suspensions thoughtfully, allowing for expressive tension and release. - Transition from Triple to Duple Rhythm (Triplets to Eighth Notes): Practice the transition to keep it smooth and cohesive, balancing the change in rhythmic feel. - Polyrhythm (Measure 18): Isolate the measure to master the polyrhythmic texture, ensuring independence and clarity between the rhythms.
Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Familiarity with ties and suspensions - Ensuring clear melody projection regardless of register - Students should approach this work by practicing in layered sections to master contrapuntal voicing within each hand. Given that some passages require extended reaches, students should allocate time to gradually develop the flexibility and control necessary for handling a multi-voice texture effectively. This methodical approach will support both technical precision and expressive clarity in the voicing.

Examples

16 Pecados de juventud. Piano 2 - Alicia de Larrocha

Editorial BCL(A)

Marcha lenta

12-01-1942
(19 anys)

Alicia de Larrocha
(1923-2009)

Largo

Piano

p

Figure 1.11: mm. 1-6. March Rhythm, Some Ties and Repeated Notes. Slow Steady Tempo.

Figure 1.12: mm. 7-10. Voicing of Melody Required. Multiple Voice Texture, Left Hand Flexibility.

The musical score is for a piano piece, measures 25-35. It is written in 4/4 time and features complex phrasing with triplets and position shifts. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 25-27) shows a treble and bass staff with various note values and triplets. The second system (measures 28-31) continues the phrasing with more complex rhythms and triplets. The third system (measures 32-35) concludes the passage with a final cadence. The score includes a copyright notice at the bottom: © Copyright 2014 by Alicia de Larrocha. All rights reserved worldwide. © Copyright 2014 by E.M. Boileau, S.L. Derechos de edición para todos los países / Drets d'edició per a tots els països.

Figure 1.13: mm 25-35. More LH Flexibility Required, Mastery of Position Shifts, Phrasing Over Bar Lines.

Jugando (1942)

This piece is the fifth work in the second volume of *Pecados de juventud*. The title translates to "Playing" in English, a fitting name given the charming melody that captures attention from the very start. Composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of 19 (January 14, 1942), the piece is categorized here as approachable or “easy” due to its length—28 measures across one page—and its key of G major.

Although an octave hand span is required, the piece is generally manageable for students with smaller hands, as it primarily features individual melodic lines that flow between the hands. Some of the technical challenges students may encounter include phrasing in the left hand across barlines, maintaining the brisk tempo marked as Allegro, handling repeats, and imitating melodic lines in both hands.

Students should be comfortable with scales and arpeggios, as the piece uses these elements conversationally between the hands, creating a playful, humorous effect. The piece also features abrupt register changes and hand position shifts that must be executed at a quick pace. As a result, less advanced students may benefit from an extended study period to master the necessary coordination.

Table 8: *Jugando* (Playing)

Category	Details
Title	<i>Jugando</i> (Playing)
Chronology	Composed January 14, 1942, 19 years old
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Key	G major
Tempo	Allegro (Brisk)
Length	28 measures over 1 page
Technical Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Octave Hand Span: Ensure flexibility and comfort with octave stretches, focusing on smooth transitions to avoid tension in the hand. - Phrasing in the Left Hand Across Barlines: Maintain fluid phrasing through barlines, emphasizing musical continuity and line direction in the left hand. - Handling Repeats: Develop subtle variations in dynamics, articulation, or tone to keep repeated sections engaging and expressive. - Imitation of Melodic Lines Between Hands: Practice precise timing and articulation to create a seamless transfer of melodies between hands, achieving balance and clarity in imitation. - Abrupt Register Changes: Build agility to navigate quick jumps between registers, maintaining accuracy and consistent tone across these shifts. - Rhythmic Features - Brisk tempo marked Allegro - Build a conversational use of scales and arpeggios between hands
Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand Coordination: Develop seamless coordination between the hands, especially in passages with overlapping or contrasting rhythms. - Mastery of Hand Position Shifts: Practice swift and precise hand position shifts, as this will enhance fluidity in fast-paced sections. - Scales and Arpeggios: Achieve comfort and fluency with scales and arpeggios, which are essential for smooth transitions and technical clarity. - Playful and Humorous Interpretation: Encourage an expressive, playful approach to bring out the humor and character of the piece. This interpretation adds vitality to the performance, helping students engage with the work's mood and rhythmic drive.

Examples

18 Pecados de juventud. Piano 2 - Alicia de Larrocha

Editorial BOILEAU

Jugando

14-01-1942
[19 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Allegro

Piano

Figure 1.14: mm. 1-8. Allegro Tempo, Imitative Texture. Groups Of Slurs. Comfortability With Scales.

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Figure 1.15: mm. 17-28. Scales In RH, Position Changes in LH. More Imitative Melody mm. 17-22.

Minué Triste (1943)

This piece is the 15th work in the second volume of *Pecados de juventud*, composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of twenty (07-04-1943). Titled "Sad Minuet," in English the piece is one page long and 24 measures long. It is categorized here by the author of this document as the last “easy” piece in the collection, bordering on “medium” difficulty due to its key signature of E-flat minor and the numerous accidentals throughout.

Students playing this piece will encounter technical challenges, including flowing eighth notes in both hands, managing a four-part texture (two voices per hand), and resolving suspensions over barlines. Although the work contains few dynamic indications, it ends quietly with a (pp) marking. The repeated melody requires students to find ways to make each iteration unique. Additionally, the piece features chromaticism, as evidenced by the frequent accidentals.

Table 9: *Minué Triste*

Category	Details
Title	<i>Minué Triste</i> (Sad Minuet)
Chronology	July 4, 1943- Composed at 20 years old
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Key	Eb minor
Length	24 measures over 1 page
Technical Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing a Four-Part Texture (Two Voices per Hand): Develop hand independence and finger control to maintain clarity in each voice, ensuring each part within the texture is well-articulated and balanced. - Handling Numerous Accidentals: Build familiarity with accidentals through focused, slow practice, helping students navigate complex passages smoothly and accurately without interrupting the musical flow. - Creating Unique Iterations of the Repeated Melody: Work on varying dynamics, articulation, and timing for each melodic repetition, allowing students to explore interpretive choices that add contrast and interest while retaining musical coherence. - Flowing Eighth Notes in Both Hands: Develop a steady, even flow with clear articulation in both hands, focusing on smooth transitions and consistent tempo to maintain musical continuity. - Suspensions Resolved Over Barlines: Practice awareness of harmonic tension and resolution, carefully timing the suspensions to highlight the expressive quality of each resolution across barlines, emphasizing a sense of phrasing and direction.
Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth Chromaticism: Guide students to play chromatic passages with fluidity and evenness, paying attention to fingerings that support smooth transitions. • Dance Elements of a Standard Minuet: Emphasize the rhythmic character and phrasing typical of a minuet, encouraging lightness and elegance in the interpretation to capture the dance's stylistic essence. • Expressive Dynamics, Especially Towards a Quiet Ending (pp): Focus on dynamic control throughout, particularly as the piece moves towards a soft and delicate ending. Practice sustaining a controlled pianissimo to maintain expression even at low volume. • Interpretation of Repeated Melodic Lines with Variation: Encourage students to explore subtle variations in dynamics, articulation, and timing on repeated melodies to add depth and expression. This can help bring out the nuances of the piece while keeping it engaging for the listener.

Examples

Editorial BOILEAU Pecados de juventud, Piano 2 – Alicia de Larrocha 69

Minué triste

07-04-1943
[20 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Figure 1.16: mm.1-10. Polyphonic Texture, Tracing 8th Notes Between Hands. Romantic Texture

Figure 1.17: mm. 13-15. Accidentals, Some Chromaticism.

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Figure 1.18: mm. 16-24. Chromaticism, Polyphony, Suspension mm.22.

Medium Pieces: *Jota, Mazurca, Primavera, Sonata antigua, Homenaje a Schumann, Scherzo, Impromptu*

The aim of the following section of this document is to explore selected repertoire for intermediate to early advanced students in *Pecados de juventud*. These works are categorized in the scope of the collection as "medium" in difficulty, based on an interview with Alicia de Larrocha's student Marta Zabaleta. Each piece in this section will be accompanied by a brief background description, followed by a table that organizes key information. This table allows educators and students to quickly assess the features of each work at a glance, with musical examples included as visual aids.

Jota (1937)

The third work in the collection is a slightly lengthier piece, spanning 6 pages (146 measures). This work is noticeably more difficult than the earlier two works in the same volume (*Coral*, and *Cajita de música*). This piece was composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of fourteen and showcases virtuosity likely inspired by Albeniz's Spanish pieces, which Alicia de Larrocha was learning at the time.

Within the 12 *Danzas Españolas* written by Alicia's musical "Grandfather" Enrique Granados, Op. 37, the sixth dance also features a virtuosic Jota dance *Rondalla Aragonesa*. The Jota is a Spanish genre of music and dance originating from the region of Aragon, but it exists throughout Spain. Like most Spanish dances of its time, the Jota varies by region, with versions from Navarra, Galicia, Murcia, and other areas. The Jota dancers tend to wear regional costumes and sometimes use castanets while dancing; however, this is not always the case in less formal settings. The dance steps used in the Spanish dance Jota resemble those of a waltz, yet there is much more variation.¹¹³

Recommended by the author of this document for an early advanced student, it requires proficiency in playing octaves and comfort with chord inversions in both hands. The middle section features virtuosic Spanish elements, with passagework that switches between hands at a rapid pace (mm. 49).

¹¹³"The Jota Dance." Spanish Art. Accessed September 2, 2024. <https://www.spanish-art.org/spanish-dance-jota.html>.

Table 10: *Jota*

Category	Details
Title	Jota
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume I
Chronology	Composed at the age of 14 years old (04-11-1937)
Key	D flat Major
Length	6 pages, 146 measures
Technical Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic Markings; This work features far more dynamic markings, ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo. - Octaves: Maintain accuracy and strength in octave passages, focusing on evenness and control. - Thirds and Sixths: Practice finger independence and alignment to play thirds and sixths with clarity and balance between voices. - Chord Inversions: Familiarize with various chord inversions for smoother transitions and greater harmonic understanding. - Arpeggiated Melodic Lines: Develop fluidity in arpeggiated lines, paying attention to evenness and articulation within the melody. - Controlled Acceleration: A significant tempo increase toward the end of the piece requires precise control; work on building this gradual acceleration without sacrificing accuracy. - Dynamic Contrast and Rubato: The piece's wide dynamic range and use of rubato demand intentional planning. Encourage students to thoughtfully shape dynamics and employ tasteful rubato, ensuring expressive phrasing while maintaining the work's rhythmic integrity.
Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The piece's virtuosity is inspired by Albeniz's Spanish pieces which Alicia de Larrocha was learning at the time. - Granados inspiration: Within the 12 Danzas españolas, op.37 written by Enrique Granados, The 6th Dance features a Jota dance (Rondalla Aragonesa) which de Larrocha would have known.

Examples

14 Pecados de juventud. Piano 1 - Alicia de Larrocha

A mi querida "Nina Mona" (lila Carolina)
con todo el cariño de su pequeña Alicia de Larrocha

Jota
04-11-1937
(14 anys)

Alicia de Larrocha
(1923-2009)

Piano *pp*

Figure 1.19: mm. 1-10. (RH Chord Inversions, Arpeggios Spread Between Hands)

16

cresc. poco a poco

21

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Figure 1.20: mm. 16-25. (LH Melody)

45

p

Figure 2: mm. 45-49. (Octaves, Sixths) LH Position Shifts.

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Editorial BOILEAU

50

54

58

f

p

Piu mosso

Figure 2.1: mm. 50-61. (Virtuosity- Octaves with LH Chord Inversions)

136

141

a tempo

accel. molto

ff

fff

Figure 2.2: mm. 136-146. (Virtuosity, Accelerando, LH Octaves)

Mazurca (1938)

The fourth work in the collection, spanning three pages (68 measures) and composed at 15 years of age, is a whimsical dance written in an elegant manner, inspired by the Mazurkas of Chopin. This piece, along with the following two works in the collection (10 Invenciones and Suite), highlights Alicia de Larrocha's understanding of polyphony and stylistic variety. From the score, it is apparent that the Mazurca is more accessible to a middle-advanced student. It presents a variety of technical challenges without becoming too lengthy for a student, including left-hand leaps in the bass pattern (waltz bass pattern), dotted rhythms, and changes in key signature. The espressivo melodic lines require much care to ensure they are presented as elegantly as possible.

Table 11: *Mazurca*

Category	Details
Title	Mazurca
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume I
Chronology	Composed at 15 years old (16-11-1938)
Key	Ab Major
Length	3 pages, 68 measures
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Left Hand Leaps in Waltz Bass Pattern: - Influence of style: Inspired by F. Chopin. - Focus on developing control and precision in left-hand jumps, ensuring smoothness and even rhythm. - Dotted Rhythms: Practice maintaining clarity in dotted rhythms, paying close attention to their timing within the context of the waltz. - Voicing of Melody and Chords: Emphasize proper hand positioning and finger control to bring out the melody clearly while balancing the accompaniment in both hands. - Chord Inversions (LH): Develop familiarity with chord inversions in the left hand to facilitate smooth transitions and create more musical phrasing. - Key Signature Changes (B Major in Middle Section): Ensure smooth adaptation to key changes, focusing on fingerings and hand positions that ease the transition. - Espressivo/Elegant Melodic Lines (Rubato): Encourage flexibility in phrasing, allowing rubato to enhance expressiveness without disrupting the rhythmic flow. - Parallel Thirds: Work on finger independence and hand coordination to maintain smoothness and evenness while playing parallel thirds.

Examples

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Mazurca

16-11-1938
(15 anys)

Alicia de Larrocha
(1923-2009)

Piano *mf*

Figure 2.3: mm. 1-9 (Dotted Rhythm (RH), Triplets, LH Chord Inversions-Waltz Pattern)

Figure 2.4: mm. 26-34. (Modulation to B Major)

Figure 2.5: mm. 59-68. (Ending, LH Leaps and Rubato Required)

Primaveral (1940)

The word "Primaveral" means pertaining to early springtime (the word "Primavera" translates to "spring" in English). This work was composed when Alicia de Larrocha was 17 years old and spans 4 pages (65 measures). Although Alicia composed this piece at the age of seventeen, her compositional talent is evident in the complexity and leaps present throughout this short work. The author recommends the study of Primaveral for advanced students.

Written in the key of B major, it features technical challenges, including large leaps, syncopations, polyrhythms, left-hand accompaniment with many leaps, chordal clusters, rubato, and more. The piece captures the essence of early spring, utilizing a wide range of the keyboard and evoking the ambiance of spring with a melody reminiscent of the sun peeking out of the clouds in the morning while birds sing. The work possesses a pensive and reflective quality which can be interpreted in a variety of ways by performers.

Table 12: *Primaveral*


Category	Details
Title	Primaveral
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume I
Meaning	Pertaining to the early springtime (The word “Primavera” translates to spring in English)
Chronology	Composed at 17 years old (14-11-1940)
Key	B major
Tempo	Allegretto
Length	4 pages, 65 measures
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large Leaps: Focus on building accuracy and control when executing wide intervals, particularly in the left hand, while maintaining the overall flow of the piece. - Syncopations: Ensure that the off-beat rhythms are executed with precision, paying close attention to the timing and keeping the pulse steady. - Polyrhythms/Triplets: Practice hand coordination to maintain clarity when playing polyrhythms, especially when juxtaposing triplets with other rhythmic patterns. - Left-hand Accompaniment with Many Leaps: Work on smooth left-hand transitions, ensuring that leaps remain in time and that the accompaniment supports the melody without becoming clunky. - Wrist Flexibility: Develop wrist mobility to manage the demands of large leaps and quick tempo changes, while avoiding tension in the arms and hands. - Chordal Clusters: Practice voicing and finger control to execute chord clusters cleanly, ensuring that each note in the cluster is clearly heard. - Rubato: Encourage expressive use of rubato, making sure it is applied tastefully without disrupting the rhythmic flow. - Dynamic Range (ppp-fff): Focus on achieving the full dynamic spectrum from very soft (ppp) to very loud (fff), paying particular attention to control at the extremes and maintaining balance throughout the range.
Examples	 <p>Figure 2.6: mm. 1-4 (Pensive Melodic Line)</p>

Figure 2.7: mm. 10-17. (Syncopation), Alternating Chords, Arpeggio LH mm. 17.

Figure 2.8: mm. 18-23. (Polyrhythms)

Figure 2.9: mm. 27-32. (LH Leaps- Wrist Flexibility Required)

Figure 2.10 shows musical notation for measures 44-49. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measures 44-46 are marked *poco a poco*. Measures 47-49 are marked *ff* and *fff*. The notation includes triplets in both the right and left hands.

Figure 2.10: mm. 44-49. (Loud Dynamic Range/Polyrhythms)

Figure 2.11 shows musical notation for measures 53-58. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measures 53-55 are marked *brutal*. Measures 56-58 are marked *rit.*, *a tempo*, and *con languidez*. The notation includes large leaps in the left hand and clusters in the right hand.

Figure 2.11: mm. 53-58. (LH Leaps, RH Clusters, Rubato Required)

Sonata Antigua (1941)

Composed by Alicia de Larrocha at eighteen years of age, this work is four pages long and consists of 51 measures. The piece is structured by De Larrocha much like a sonata by Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757). Due to its difficulty, comparable to a Scarlatti sonata, the author recommends it for advanced students. The work is marked *allegro scherzando* and maintains a playful energy throughout. The title "Sonata Antigua" translates to "ancient" or "old" sonata, paying homage to the form used by composers like Scarlatti and Soler. The work features numerous challenging registral changes, rapid scales, hand crossings typical of a Scarlatti sonata, some melodic polyphony, octaves, and arpeggios to close each section. It is constructed in a binary form reminiscent of Scarlatti's compositions.

Marta Zabaleta speaks about the baroque influence and expected staccato touch in *Sonata Antigua*.

So, what is essential in that sense of the antique baroque style, it clearly invites us to think that it will be a piece with less pedal, perhaps a bit more contrapuntal, where the two hands will respond to each other, right? There is a lot of clarity. With a much more staccato touch than we would do if it were a more dedicated piece, closer to Schumann, for example, right? This is important, and almost always we have these influences.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

Table 13: *Sonata Antigua*


Category	Details
Title	Sonata Antigua
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume I
Meaning	“Old sonata”/ “Ancient sonata”
Chronology	Composed at 18 years old (02-07-1941)
Key	F major
Tempo	Allegro scherzando (playful energy)
Length	4 pages, 51 measures
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Registral Changes: Navigating quick transitions between registers, requiring precise hand movements to maintain clarity in sound without interruption. - Rapid Scales: Mastering fast scales with consistent articulation and fluidity, ensuring evenness between hands across the range. - Difficult Hand Crossings: Developing fluid hand crossings to sustain melodic continuity and avoid awkward positions, maintaining the musical line. - Melodic Polyphony: Managing multiple melodic voices simultaneously, necessitating strong hand independence and clear voicing to differentiate each line. - Octaves: Executing octave passages with accuracy and control, particularly at faster tempos, while ensuring an even and balanced tone. - Fast Arpeggios: Building speed and clarity in arpeggio passages, emphasizing clean articulation of each note to preserve smoothness and flow. - Structural Focus - Binary Form: The piece follows a binary structure, reminiscent of a Scarlatti sonata, with two contrasting sections that may be repeated. This structure requires clear delineation of each section and careful attention to dynamic and thematic contrasts to enhance musical expression.
Examples	 <p>74 Pecados de juventud. Piano 1 - Alicia de Larrocha</p> <p>Editorial BOILEAU</p> <p>Sonata antigua</p> <p>02-07-1941 [18 anys]</p> <p>Alicia de Larrocha [1923-2009]</p> <p>Allegro scherzando</p> <p>Piano</p>

Figure 2.12: mm. 1-3 (Allegro Tempo, Some Polyphony in RH)

7

cresc. poco

10

cresc. poco

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Figure 2.13: mm. 7-12. (Scales, LH Leaps/Register Changes)

16

cresc.

19

cresc.

Figure 2.14: mm. 16-21. (Hand Crossing and Scales)

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28

cresc.

Figure 2.15: mm. 28-30. (LH Octaves, RH Some Polyphony)



Figure 2.16: mm. 37-39. (LH Leaps, Register Changes)

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Figure 2.17: mm. 40-45. (RH Polyphony)

	Figure 2.18: mm. 45-51. (Scales, Harmonic sequence, LH octaves, ending arpeggio)
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Homenaje a Schumann/ Homage to Schumann (1941)

Composed at the age of eighteen, this concise piece in F major spans two pages and is 23 measures long. This work is a prime example of Alicia de Larrocha's inspiration from and absorption of the compositional styles of the masters who preceded her. From the outset, Alicia de Larrocha's contemplation of Schumannesque melody is evident in the flowing, pensive lines and melodic sequences typical of this style. The piece also features polyphony and a pastoral element that harmonizes with the melody. Recommended for early to middle advanced students, it poses technical challenges such as left-hand jumps in the accompaniment and achieving a full melodic sound with multiple voices in the right hand, including syncopated rhythms characteristic of Schumann's style.

Marta Zabaleta gives her insight to me about voicing in *Homage to Schumann*.

Yes, in this one (Homage to Schumann), for example, what is very important is that the upper voice has much more weight, well, weight, no, more relevance, more support. Let's say that all the rest, this is the most important because andante espressivo can be many things, it can be a little faster, more andante, and the espressivo can make us think it's a bit slower too. What is important to me is the sound plane. In this case. You must be very clear; there are others that are more...complicated to understand. In general, it's almost always in the treble. Allegro in D# minor, for example, is more difficult. And the first time too, for example, you have to imagine things a little, but what I always find in these less known pieces is that the most important thing is to find the line, the line that must be followed constantly, or when it breaks, because suddenly it's more rhythmic and then it becomes more of a dance, right? But it's about finding these reference points that are important.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

Table 14: *Homenaje a Schumann*

Category	Details
Title	Homenaje a Schumann
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume I
Meaning	Homage to Schumann
Chronology	Composed at 18 years old (09-07-1941)
Key	F major
Tempo	Andante expresivo
Length	2 pages, 23 measures
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polyphony: Managing multiple voices, particularly in the right hand, requiring clear differentiation of melodic lines while maintaining musical flow. • Left-Hand Jumps (Accompaniment): Developing control over larger hand movements in the left hand, especially in the accompaniment, to ensure smooth transitions and evenness in sound. • Multiple Voices in Right-Hand Melody: Balancing the right hand's melody while managing multiple voices, which requires careful voicing and clarity in each line. • Syncopation: Mastering the syncopated rhythms inherent in the piece, ensuring they are articulated properly and do not disrupt the flow of the music. • Dynamic Contrast/Shading: Implementing subtle dynamic shifts to highlight different aspects of the piece, ensuring a balance between expressive depth and technical control. • Tasteful Rubato (in Melody): Employing rubato with restraint to bring emotional depth to the melody without losing rhythmic stability. <p>Musical Style and Recommendations:</p> <p>The piece embodies typical features of the Schumannesque style, including dotted rhythms, polyphony, flowing introspective melodies, and melodic sequences characteristic of the Romantic era. A pastoral element subtly weaves through the melody, enhancing the expressive quality of the work. Recommended for early to middle advanced students, it presents challenges such as left-hand jumps and achieving full melodic sound with multiple voices in the right hand, along with syncopated rhythms and Schumann-esque dynamic contrasts.</p>

Examples

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Homenaje a Schumann

09-07-1941
[18 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Andante espressivo

Piano


p (seconda volta più *f*)

pp

Figure 2.19: mm. 1-5. (RH Polyphony (Piano-Pianissimo Dynamic Marking First Time Only), LH Wrist Flexibility)

Figure 2.20: mm. 3-11. Schumannesque Dotted Rhythms, RH Polyphony, Dynamic Contrast, Rising Melodic Sequence

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12 *cedez* *a tempo* *p*

15 *cresc.*

Figure 3: mm 12-17. (Return of Main Theme)



18 *mf* *cresc.*

21 *dim. al fine*

Figure 3.1: mm. 18-23. (Closing Material/Different Melody, Diminuendo, Pastoral Element/ Some Polyphony)

Scherzo (1941)

This work is the first piece in Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*, written by Alicia de Larrocha at 18 years of age. True to its title, the piece features the witty and playful nature typical of a scherzo. Students should not underestimate the left-hand leaps and accompaniment pattern when learning this work, dedicating time for hands-separate practice. The author recommends this piece for students comfortable with reading key signatures up to five sharps and four flats. Despite its short length—only two pages long and thirty-six measures—the piece presents several challenges.

The bright, flowing melody requires refinement to articulate effectively, and the daring leaps in the right hand on the first-page demand precision. At the beginning, students must decide how to articulate the right-hand rhythm crisply and maintain the melodic motion across bar lines. Performers must also be comfortable with repeated notes. Since the left-hand spans at least an octave, students with smaller hands may require additional left-hand practice to master this short piece. The rhythmic pattern is very repetitive, which can aid students in learning the piece. In the final line (measures 33-37), students will need to navigate slight shifts and the register change in measure 35 confidently.

Table 15: *Scherzo*

Category	Details
Title	Scherzo
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Chronology	Written when Alicia de Larrocha was 18 years old (11-07-1941)
Key	Ab major
Tempo	Scherzo
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Character embodiment: - Witty and playful nature typical of a scherzo - Left Hand Leaps and Accompaniment Pattern: The left hand requires control over leaps and maintaining a consistent accompaniment pattern, essential for the overall rhythmic and harmonic structure of the piece. - Key Signatures: The piece involves modulations up to five sharps (measure 15) and four flats (the piece is in Ab major), requiring students to be comfortable with key signatures involving sharps and flats. - Length: The piece spans two pages, totaling 36 measures, making it a manageable length for students to work through, though it requires focused attention to detail. <p>Melody:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bright and Flowing: The melody should be played with a bright, flowing character. Students must refine their articulation to maintain clarity and continuity in the melodic line. <p>Right Hand Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daring Leaps: The first page includes daring leaps that require accuracy and control in finger placement. - Articulation of Right-Hand Rhythm: The rhythm in the right hand, particularly at the beginning, requires careful attention to ensure it remains crisp and clear. - Hearing Across Bar Lines: Students must maintain the flow of the melody across bar lines, requiring attention to phrasing and musical continuity. <p>Repeated Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comfort with Repeated Notes: The piece features repeated notes, and students must be comfortable executing them with consistency and clarity. <p>Left Hand Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand Span: The left hand spans at least an octave, which may require additional practice for students with smaller hands to achieve control and evenness in tone. <p>Rhythmic Pattern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repetitive Rhythms: The repetitive rhythmic pattern can help students solidify their understanding of the piece's structure and improve fluency.

Ending Line (Measures 33-37):

- **Register Shifts:** The final line (measures 33-37) includes slight shifts and a register change in measure 35, which may challenge students to adjust their hand positioning quickly.

Recommended For:

- Students who are comfortable reading in key signatures up to five sharps and four flats, and can manage the technical challenges outlined above. This piece is suitable for students looking to refine articulation, hand coordination, and control over rhythmic patterns.

Examples

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Scherzo
11-07- 1941
[18 anys] Alicia de Larrocha
(1923-2009)

Figure 3.2: mm. 1-8. (Featured LH Accompaniment Pattern, RH Staccato Articulation in mm. 1)

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Figure 3.3: mm. 9-16. (Featured RH Leaps, LH Flexibility)

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Figure 3.4: mm. 17-28. (Return of Main Theme, Syncopation, Chromaticism)

Figure 3.5: mm. 29-37. (Syncopation, RH Rising Sequence mm. 33, Ending Leaps, Dotted Rhythm)

Impromptu (1942)

This work is the 12th piece in Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*. Composed in B-flat minor and spanning 45 measures across 3 pages, it was written by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of 19. The piece is distinguished by its agitated mood and the use of dotted rhythms, which evoke the style of Schumann. It is most accessible for advanced students who are comfortable reading in minor keys and capable of managing multiple voices spread between the hands.

The author suggests that students should consider learning one of Alicia de Larrocha's "Invenciones" alongside this work to master playing harmonies in two or more parts. This short piece presents technical challenges, including polyphony, scales, large left-hand leaps, short rests, dotted rhythms, and articulation. Marked "muy agitato," the piece emphasizes an agitated mood, essential to its overall atmosphere. The composition offers a variety of colors and characters for performers to engage with, and students can expect accidentals and brief modulatory sequences throughout.

Table 16: *Impromptu*

Category	Details
Title	Impromptu
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Chronology	Written when Alicia de Larrocha was 19 years old (11-09-1942)
Key	Bb minor
Tempo	<i>Muy agitato</i> - a very agitated mood with dotted rhythms reminiscent of Schumann's style.
Length	3 pages (45 measures)
Technical Considerations and Pedagogical Focus	<p>Technical Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Advanced Level: This piece is suited for students at the early advanced level who are comfortable with minor keys and more complex textures. - Control of Multiple Voices: The piece requires complete control over multiple voices distributed across both hands, demanding strong independence and hand coordination. <p>Recommended Preparations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students should consider learning one of Alicia de Larrocha's ten <i>Invenciones</i> to develop the necessary skills for handling two or more parts of harmony simultaneously. This will help build the technical foundation required for mastering polyphonic textures. <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Polyphony and Complex Harmonic Passages: The piece features challenging polyphonic sections that require clarity in voice leading and careful balance between harmonies. - Large Left-Hand Leaps and Short Rests: The left hand includes large leaps, along with short rests, requiring precision and control to ensure smooth transitions and avoid unwanted noise. - Dotted Rhythms and Articulation: The dotted rhythms must be articulated clearly, and the student should pay special attention to maintaining rhythmic consistency throughout the piece. <p>Musical Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variety of Colors and Characters: The piece demands a range of dynamic and expressive contrasts, requiring the performer to explore a wide variety of tonal colors. - Accidentals and Modulatory Sequences: Frequent accidentals and brief modulations add complexity to the piece, and students must be adept at handling these changes fluidly. <p>Student Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional Expression: Students should focus on achieving the emotional depth required by the <i>muy agitato</i> marking, ensuring that the technical aspects do not overshadow the expressive intent of the piece.

- **Managing Technical Demands:** Balancing the technical challenges with expressive interpretation is key to performing this piece successfully.

Examples

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Impromptu
11-09-1942
[19 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Muy agitado

Piano

Figure 3.6: mm. 1-7. (Agitated Mood, LH Leaps, RH Polyphony, Wrist Flexibility)

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Figure 3.7: mm. 12-19. (Some Chromaticism, Octaves, LH Flexibility Required.)

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28

32

Figure 3.8: mm. 24-36. (Transitional Sequences, Return of Theme mm. 31, More Accidentals)

37

42

Figure 3.9: mm. 37-45. (Ties, Polyphony, LH Wrist Flexibility, Dotted Rhythm)

Advanced Pieces Suite, Burlesca, Romanza sin Palabras, Estudio, Nouvelette, Allegro in D# Minor

This section of the document highlights some of the most challenging pieces in *Pecados de juventud*. The advanced repertoire was selected by the author based on the technical demands placed on the performer, with insights drawn from an interview with Marta Zabaleta, a student of Alicia de Larrocha. In this interview, Zabaleta confirms that the later works in *Pecados de juventud* are among the most complex to perform: “What is certain is that her later works are among her most complex. She might have been working on pieces that had a certain level of difficulty and ultimately used those experiences to compose and explore new pianistic possibilities.”¹¹⁶

The section is organized to provide a brief background on each work, followed by a chart that visually outlines key features and challenges. Additionally, musical examples are provided for educators and students who wish to further explore the work's features before learning the repertoire. Marta Zabaleta also gives some insight about her approach to practicing the repertoire.

Well, I remember very well that she (Alicia de Larrocha) liked rhythmically “strict”/ sober styles of playing, so I would strive to interpret her works rhythmically very close to her style, with pedaling that was also as close to her style as possible. Regarding difficulty, yes, as always, I would treat the process like working on a piece by Chopin: practicing slowly, doing exercises, quickly positioning the hand, emphasizing the weight of the hand and fingers, etc. These are exercises that I do for everything, for any type of music that I perform.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Suite (1939)

This work is the sixth work in Volume I of *Pecados de juventud*. The work as a whole consists of four movements I Moderato, II Andante Cantabile, III Adagio, IV Allegro con brio. This work is selected by the author as advanced due to numerous technical challenges as well as the longer length of the work in comparison to other intermediate selections.

I. Moderato:

This movement in E-flat major spans 25 measures and three pages, offering technical challenges such as repeated motifs between the hands, fast scales, ornaments, and more. From the outset, students should focus on the repeated trill motif that appears immediately in the right hand and consistently alternates between the hands. A notable feature of this work is how the ornaments infuse the melodic flow with an almost Baroque influence, reminiscent of Bach or Handel, while also allowing the performer to experiment with pedaling and a more fluid texture.

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Suite
13-06-1939
[16 anys]

I
Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Moderato

Piano

p

cresc.

Figure 3.10: mm. 1-6. Opening Melody- Polyphony and Exchanging Voices

Students should aim to follow the melodic line closely and highlight the imitative passages that occur between the hands. Due to the contrapuntal nature of this piece—particularly in the middle section, where the episodic material ends around measure 15 and the theme reemerges in measures 18-19—it can be beneficial to practice hands separately, as one would when preparing a Bach prelude and fugue or Handel suite.

The image displays a musical score for measures 13 through 16. The score is written for two staves: a treble staff (right hand) and a bass staff (left hand). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo marking 'a tempo' is placed above the right hand staff at measure 13. The dynamic marking 'p' (piano) is placed below the left hand staff at measure 13. The left hand part features several measures with ties, indicating sustained notes. The right hand part shows a series of notes with accidentals (sharps and flats) that change color, likely to highlight specific intervals or melodic lines for practice. The score is enclosed in a rectangular box.

Figure 3.11: mm. 13-16. LH Ties, Right Hand- Color Change (Accidentals)

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17 *cresc.*

19 *a tempo* *f* *poco rit.*

Figure 3.12: mm. 17-20. End Of Phrase- Set Up for Return of Modified Theme (mm. 19)

21 *a tempo* *fp* *cresc.*

23 *cresc.* *riten.* *tr.* *ff*

Figure 3.13: mm. 21-25. Ending (A Tempo)- Large Dynamic Range, Octaves.

II. Andante Cantabile

This movement clearly reflects the influence of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, imitating a large-scale prelude. The piece presents notable technical challenges, stemming from its "learned" character and the key of B-flat minor, which includes a nod to Bach with a Picardy third at the conclusion. One of the primary difficulties for a performer is tracing the melodic lines while emphasizing the flexibility of the counterpoint. Mastering the contrapuntal elements within the four-voice texture is demanding, particularly with the parallel thirds, sixths, and other intervals that require careful voicing.

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II

Andante cantabile

Figure 3.14: mm. 1-6. Subject Passing from RH To LH

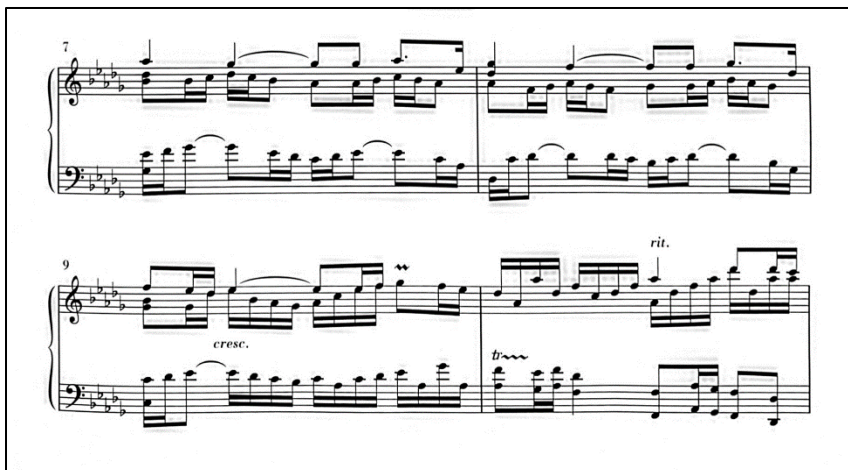


Figure 3.15: mm. 7-10. Melody Continues in RH. Note: Ties and Trills

Additionally, the movement features ornaments such as trills, which demand dexterity and precision. There are also striking moments of pedal point, such as in measure 21, where De Larrocha may have been evoking the sound of an organ.

III. Adagio

This is the slowest movement of the suite, set in D-flat major. While it retains the challenge of contrapuntal lines found in the first two movements, the slower tempo requires performers to focus on voice leading, ensuring that the melody remains expressive and does not become stagnant. The movement offers a wide dynamic range, from forte to pianissimo, and despite the slower tempo, performers should aim to make the melodic lines as expressive as possible, as if they were being sung.

This movement provides a reflective moment before the brisk pace of the following Allegro.

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Adagio

mf cantabile

III

Figure 3.16: mm. 1-6 Opening Theme, Ties In RH/ Octave Bassline.

Deceptive Resolution in mm. 3

Figure 3.17: mm. 9-12. Dynamic Range-RH Expressive Leap (RH) in mm. 9

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13

mf

p

15

17

Figure 3.18: mm. 13-18. Color Change in Mm. 18, Expressive Suspensions

IV. Allegro Con Brio

This movement is a gigue or jig. Written in 6/8 time, it challenges the performer with its fast tempo and polyphonic texture. Maintaining a steady pace at the close of each section is crucial. The movement features large leaps and parallel octaves, evoking an organ-like quality, as well as numerous harmonic sequences that build tension throughout the piece.

Performers should pay close attention to passages such as measures 111, 50, and 38, where the harmonic sequences intensify the tension, and dynamics play a key role in propelling the music forward. The accents indicated in the melody of the harmonic sequences are also important for capturing the movement's lively character. Notably, this piece requires a handsplay capable of reaching octaves.

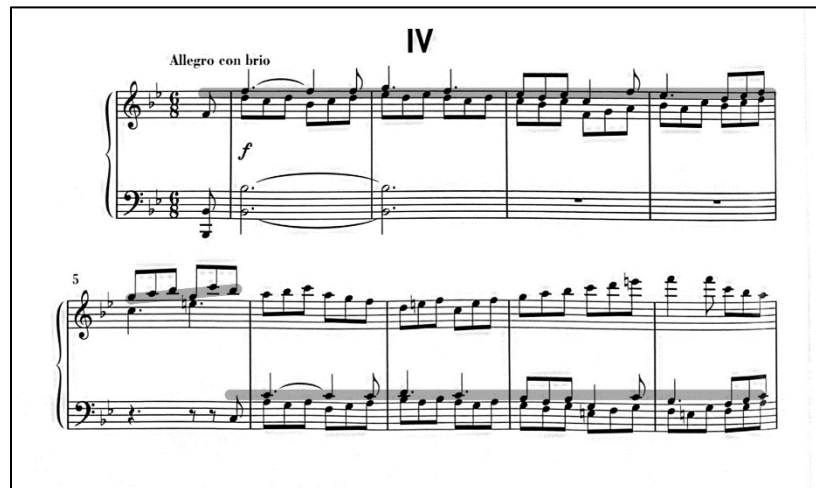


Figure 3.19: mm. 1-9, Gigue Theme.

The musical score is presented in two systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system begins at measure 25. The right hand starts with a whole note chord, followed by a half note rest, and then a quarter note. The left hand plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. A first ending bracket spans measures 27-28, marked with a '2.' above it. The second system begins at measure 30. The right hand features a series of eighth-note chords. The left hand continues with an eighth-note pattern. Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measure 27, *p* (piano) in measure 31, and *cresc.* (crescendo) in measure 33. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 3.20: mm. 25-34. False Theme Entrance in Minor Mode; Modulatory Sequence

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The musical score consists of five systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ornaments, and dynamic markings. The left hand (LH) is characterized by frequent jumps between notes, which are highlighted by the caption. The right hand (RH) plays a more melodic line with various ornaments and slurs. The score includes the following dynamic markings: *ff* (fortissimo), *energico* (energetic), *dim.* (diminuendo), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *f* (forte).

Figure 4: mm. 35-58. Harmonic Sequence- Notable LH Jumps

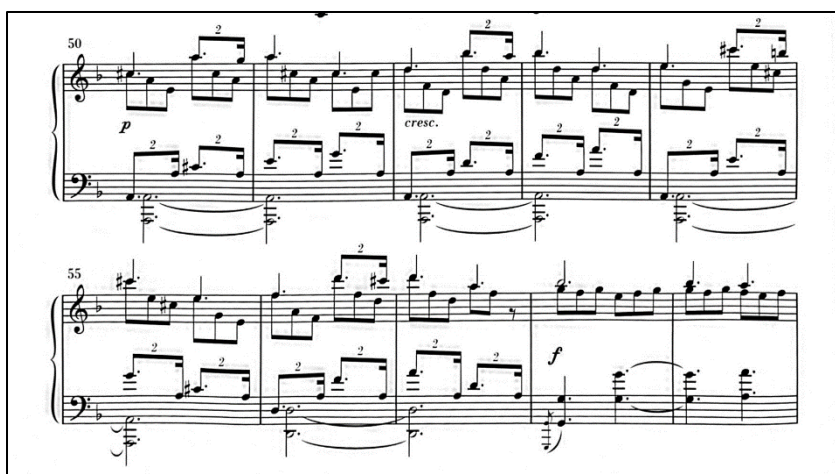


Figure 4.1: mm. 50-59. Harmonic Sequence (Transitioning Back to Theme Statement in Bb Major)

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Figure 4.2 mm.60-74: Theme Restatement in Original Key mm.62, G Minor Statement of Theme, mm.66 (Fortissimo)

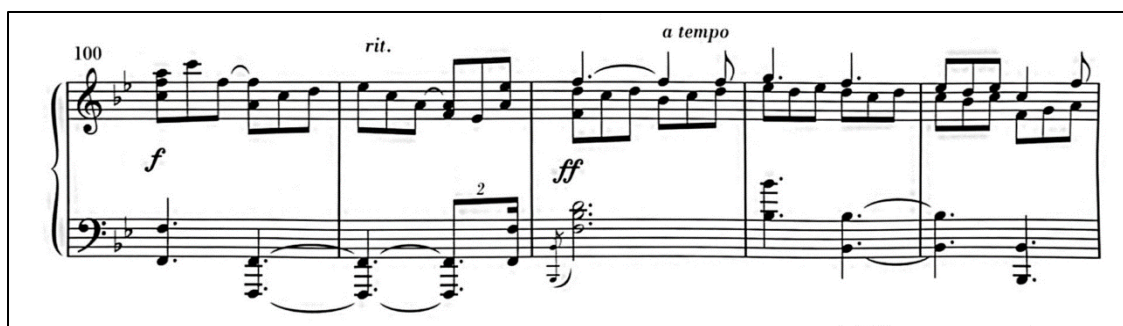


Figure 4.3: mm. 100-104: Fortissimo Statement of Theme in Original Key (Bb Major) – Penultimate Statement Of Theme

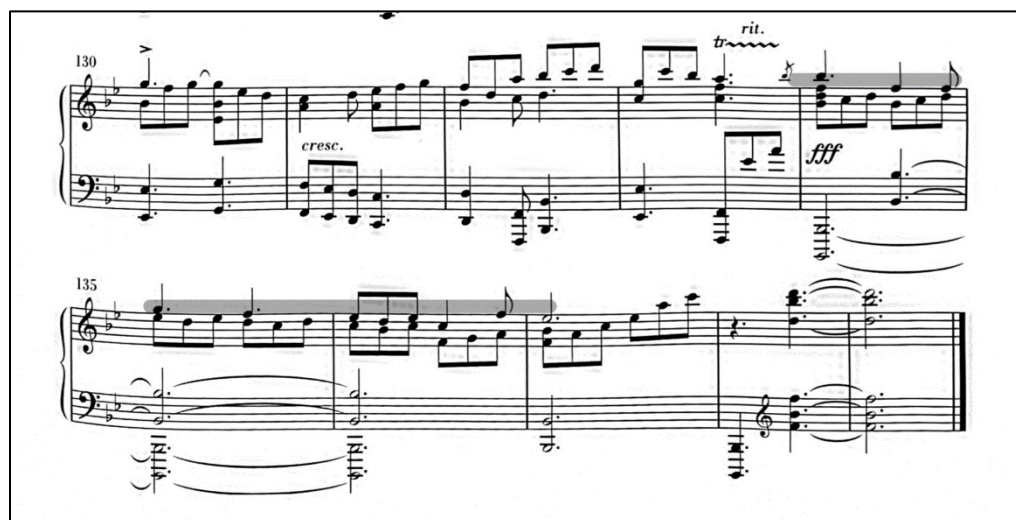


Figure 4.4: mm. 130-139. Final Statement of Theme in Home Key. Coda.

Table 17: *Suite*

Title	Suite	
Chronology	Composed June 13, 1939	
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud, Volume I</i>	
Movement	Description	Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus
I. Moderato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25 measures, 3 pages long. - Features repeated motifs between the hands, fast scales, and ornaments. - Notable Baroque influence, reminiscent of Bach or Handel. - Emphasizes melodic flow, with opportunities to experiment with pedaling. - Contrapuntal texture, especially in the middle section (measures 15-19). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repeated Trill Motif: Developing control and endurance for a trill motif that alternates between hands, ensuring consistent tempo and tone across repetitions. - Imitative Passages: Identifying and highlighting imitative sections to clarify musical lines, enhancing the piece's overall texture and structure. - Hands-Separate Practice: Emphasizing hands-separate practice in contrapuntal sections to strengthen independence, accuracy, and clarity in voicing. - • Ornaments and Fluid Texture: Managing ornaments smoothly within a fluid texture, ensuring that embellishments enhance rather than disrupt the melodic line.
II. Andante Cantabile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflects the influence of Bach's <i>Well-Tempered Clavier</i>. - Imitates a large-scale prelude. - Written in B-flat minor with a Picardy third at the end. - Emphasizes counterpoint within a four-voice texture. - Incorporates trills and pedal points, creating an organ-like effect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tracing and Emphasizing Melodic Lines: Developing clarity and continuity in melodic lines to ensure they are distinct and expressive within the texture. - Managing Contrapuntal Elements: Navigating contrapuntal passages, particularly in parallel thirds, sixths, and other intervals, to maintain evenness and independence between voices. - Precision with Trills and Pedal Points: Achieving

		<p>accuracy and consistency in trills, with mindful use of pedal points to support harmonic stability without overwhelming the texture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic Balance and Expressive Melodic Lines: Balancing dynamics carefully to maintain the prominence and expressiveness of melodic lines, especially in more complex textures. - Voicing Challenges in Harmonic Sequences: Controlling voicing within harmonic sequences to bring out primary voices and prevent blending, especially in layered textures. - Execution of Pedal Points and Baroque-Inspired Ornaments: Practicing clean execution of pedal points and stylistically appropriate Baroque ornaments to add texture and stylistic depth.
III. Adagio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slowest movement in the suite, set in B-flat minor. - Retains contrapuntal lines from previous movements. - Offers a wide dynamic range (forte to pianissimo). - Requires performers to maintain expressiveness and avoid stagnation in the melody. - Provides a reflective moment before the faster <i>Allegro</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voice Leading for Expressive Melodic Lines: Emphasizing smooth voice leading to sustain the expressiveness and clarity of melodic lines. - Maintaining Momentum in Slower Tempi: Ensuring that slower sections retain momentum and musical direction without losing flow. - Dynamic Balance and Consistent Expressiveness: Achieving a balanced dynamic range while maintaining expressiveness across all dynamic levels. - Expressive Suspensions and Deceptive Resolutions: Highlighting suspensions and deceptive resolutions, with

		<p>careful attention to voicing and phrasing for emotional impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flow and Continuity in Melodic Lines: Developing fluid, continuous phrasing to give the impression of a vocal quality in melodic passages. - Handling a Wide Dynamic Range: Managing shifts in dynamics effectively, from delicate pianissimos to full fortes, while preserving tonal quality. - Voicing in Contrapuntal Passages: Differentiating voices in contrapuntal sections to clarify texture and enhance structural understanding. - Fluid, Vocal-Like Expressiveness: Striving for a lyrical, song-like quality in phrasing, ensuring each line flows naturally as if it were sung.
IV. Allegro con brio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gigue or jig, written in 6/8 time. - Fast tempo with a polyphonic texture. - Features large leaps and parallel octaves, creating an organ-like effect. - Contains harmonic sequences that build tension throughout. - Accents and dynamics are crucial to maintaining the movement's lively character. - Requires a handspan capable of reaching octaves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Navigating Fast Tempos with Steady Pace: Developing the ability to play at a fast tempo while maintaining a consistent pace, avoiding rushing or dragging. - Handling Large Leaps and Parallel Octaves: Practicing accuracy in large leaps and parallel octaves, focusing on control and precision to keep passages clean. - Attention to Harmonic Sequences and Tension: Recognizing harmonic sequences and understanding their role in building musical tension, enhancing expressive phrasing. - Clear Accents and Dynamic Control: Emphasizing clear accents and careful dynamic

		<p>control to bring out the lively, energetic character of the movement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Clean, Consistent Octaves: Ensuring octaves are executed with evenness and clarity, paying attention to finger strength and coordination.- Managing Tension Through Harmonic Progression: Controlling the buildup of intensity through harmonic sequences, leading phrases naturally towards climactic points.- Precision in Fast Tempo and Articulation: Balancing speed with accuracy and articulation, keeping passages crisp and well-defined.
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Burlesca (1942)

This work is the eighth piece in Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*, written by De Larrocha at nineteen years old. The Spanish verb "burlar" translates to "to mock," or "to make fun of" depending on the context. With its highly witty rhythmic character, this piece demonstrates Alicia de Larrocha's sense of humor and spontaneity.

Marta Zabaleta speaks about the virtuosity of the *Burlesca*:

When she was young, someone recorded her (Alicia) without telling her. Can you believe that? And of course, it was important for me because she sometimes didn't mark tempos, didn't mark anything, not thinking that someone would play it later. It's very important because we quickly discovered that she was a great pianist, playing very fast and doing everything spectacularly well, setting the bar very high. I think I only listened to one of them. And I realized that, of course, we had to bring these pieces to a level of maximum virtuosity because she (Alicia) was a virtuoso and played them quickly. For example, the *Burlesca* is very fast, very cheerful, she (Alicia) played it without any problem. Other pianists, like Carlota Garriga, who was her friend, commented on the pieces to me, saying she sang this one a lot and played it like this. Sometimes I chose to follow that, but other times I thought I would play it slower because I liked it to be a bit more relaxed, a bit calmer, since I didn't have a real version of hers, just comments on how she had played it.¹¹⁸

The tempo marking of *Allegro grazioso quasi scherzo* signifies that the piece should be performed with a playful character and not too slowly. It features marked dynamic contrasts, particularly in the melody. Written in G# minor and spanning five pages (88 measures), the most notable aspect of this work is the left-hand repeated accompaniment pattern, combined with dissonance typical of Scarlatti's acciaccaturas. The author recommends this work for study by an advanced student capable of navigating the *subito* dynamics throughout and handling the left-hand leaps.

The middle section features a striking modulation, cancelling out the previous key signature, and a forte scale glissando in the right hand. While the melody includes some flowing

¹¹⁸ Marta Zabaleta, interview by Emily Blandon Kovar, July 17, 2024.

sections, the scalar passages could be taken directly from a Scarlatti sonata (e.g., K.14, L.387).

The ending of the piece perfectly demonstrates Alicia de Larrocha's humor, with frequent dynamic changes. The last two measures feature one final leap in both hands. Students should note the dissonance in measure eighty-six and not shy away from it, ensuring that the soft ending retains its humorous quality.

Table 18: *Burlesca*

Category	Details
Title	Burlesca
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Translation	"Burlar" translates to "to mock" or "to make fun of" in English
Chronology	Composed at 19 years old (15-07-1942)
Key	G# minor
Tempo	<i>Allegro grazioso quasi scherzo</i>
Length	Five pages (88 measures)
Technical challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Character: Demonstrates Alicia de Larrocha's sense of humor with a highly witty rhythmic character. Performers must capture the essence of the lightness of the dancelike elements. - Left-hand Repeated Accompaniment Pattern: The piece features a repeated left-hand accompaniment that provides a rhythmic foundation and supports the melodic flow. - Dissonance and Acciaccaturas: True to Scarlatti's style, the piece includes dissonances created by acciaccaturas, adding an expressive, ornamented character to the music. - Recommendation: - This piece is suitable for advanced students who are capable of handling subito dynamics (sudden changes in volume) and left-hand leaps, which require precise control and coordination. - Melody: - The melody includes flowing sections, with scalar passages reminiscent of Scarlatti's sonatas, such as <i>K.14, L.387</i>, which students should be familiar with to effectively interpret the style. - Technical Challenges: - Scalar Passages: Rapid scalar runs that require fluidity and control across the keyboard. - Modulations: Frequent modulations that demand adaptability and a firm grasp of key transitions. - Key Signature: Handling the complexity of various key signatures, particularly in modulations. - Flexibility: Flexibility in both hands, especially for handling the quick shifts between voices and dynamic changes. - Subito Dynamics: Mastery of sudden changes in volume, requiring careful attention to the expressive markings in the score. - Legato: Achieving smooth legato playing while maintaining clarity, especially in fast passages. - Acciaccatura/Dissonance: Proper execution of the acciaccatura ornaments and management of dissonances to maintain their expressive character. - Glissando: Incorporation of a glissando, which demands control and smooth execution.

Examples

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Burlesca

15-07-1942
[19 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Allegro grazioso quasi scherzo

Piano

staccato
f *p*

5

p

Figure 4.5: mm. 1-8 (Staccato Articulation, Dynamic Contrast, Acciaccatura, Allegro Tempo, Wrist Flexibility)

9

p

13

p *f*

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Figure 4.6: mm. 9-16. (Scales, Dynamic Contrast, LH Flexibility)

21 *rit.* *p cantabile*

25 *p*

29 *cresc.* *f molto cantabile*

Figure 4.7: mm. 21-32. (Contrasting Melody, LH Flexibility)

41 *cresc.*

44 *rit.* *ff* *p subito a tempo*

47 *cresc.*

Figure 4.8: mm. 41-47. (Scales, Version of Theme in New Key, *Subito* Dynamics)

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56 *cresc. molto* *glissando*

60 *ff p subito*

Figure 4.9: mm. 56-63. (RH Glissando, *Subito* Dynamics, Return of Theme in Original Key)

Andante

76 *rit. molto* *pp*

80 *rit.* *pp*

85 *ff* *dim.* *p* *pp poco rit.*

Figure 4.10: mm. 76-88. (Wrist Flexibility, Rubato, Major Dynamic Contrast, Humor, Leaps mm. 85)

Romanza sin Palabras (1942)

This piece is the ninth work in Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*, composed by Alicia de Larrocha when she was nineteen years old (09-08-1942). The title of this work translates in English to “Romance Without Words.” The author of this document has selected it as an advanced piece due to its technical difficulty and the facility required to perform it. Marked *andante espressivo*, this piece is heavily influenced by Romanticism and experiments with chromaticism. While it retains some polyphonic challenges, the melodic line has an improvisational, fantasy-like quality.

The piece shows the influence of Schumann, Chopin, and possibly even Mendelssohn who also composed songs without words. This influence is evident in the lush, full chordal textures present throughout this work. The numerous accidentals and chromaticism challenge performers to trace the melody across the hands, even when faced with large leaps or hand crossings. The work also features polyrhythms, particularly in measures 11 and 13. The main melody from the opening two measures returns later in the piece (mm.35), and performers should strive to make this moment particularly special.

The piece concludes with a beautiful passage in B-flat major, preceded by some of the most chromatic sections in the work.

Table 19: *Romanza sin Palabras* (Romance without words)

Category	Details
Title	Romanza sin Palabras
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Chronology	Composed August 9, 1942 (at age 19)
Key	Bb minor
Tempo	<i>Andante espressivo</i>
Length	42 measures
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Style and Influence - Heavily influenced by Romanticism - Shows the influence of Schumann, Chopin, and possibly Mendelssohn - Lush, Full Chordal Textures (Voicing): The piece features rich, full chords that require careful voicing to ensure clarity and balance within the harmonies. - Numerous Accidentals and Chromaticism: Frequent accidentals and chromatic passages demand a high level of technical control and familiarity with key transitions. - Melodic Quality: - Improvisational, Fantasy-like Quality: The melody has a free, improvisational character, giving the piece a sense of fantasy or spontaneous creation. - Melody Across Hands: The melody is often traced across both hands, sometimes involving large leaps or hand crossings, requiring precision and fluidity in hand coordination. - Harmonic Features: - Chromaticism: The piece is harmonically rich, featuring a significant amount of chromaticism and modulations that create an intriguing, evolving harmonic landscape. - Concludes in B-flat Major: The piece concludes with a shift to B-flat major, preceded by chromatic sections, adding to the complexity and expressiveness of the harmonic movement. - Polyphonic and Rhythmic Challenges: - Polyphonic Elements: There are polyphonic challenges in the piece, similar to earlier works in the collection, demanding careful management of multiple voices. - Polyrhythms: Notably, measures 11 and 13 feature polyrhythms, requiring the performer to manage contrasting rhythmic structures across the hands. - Recurring Theme: - The main melody from the opening returns later in the piece, and performers should emphasize this return to make it stand out, giving a sense of unity and development within the work.

Examples

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Romanza sin palabras

09-08-1942
(19 anys)

Alicia de Larrocha
(1923-2009)

Andante espressivo

Piano

Figure 4.11: mm. 1-4. Main Theme- Hand Crossing

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Figure 4.12: mm. 11-14. Some Polyrhythms Between RH and LH

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Figure 4.13: mm. 21-24. Thick Chromaticism, LH Position Changes

Figure 4.14: mm.35-42. Return of Theme, Chromaticism mm. 39-42

Estudio (1942)

This piece is the tenth work in Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*, composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of nineteen (15-08-1942). It has been categorized as "Advanced" by the author of this document due to the technical facility, speed, and stamina needed for a successful performance. At 87 measures long (9 pages), it is one of the longer works in the collection.

The title translates to "study" in English, indicating that it functions similarly to an etude. Marked presto, it is one of the fastest tempo markings in the collection. The right hand drives the momentum with rapid 16th-note runs, while passages feature rapid thirds and alternating chords.

Notably, the left hand takes over the fast-paced passages beginning in measure 39. Parallel octaves appear in measure 63, accompanied by a descending melodic line that should be voiced appropriately. The piece builds to a climax with rapid chords alternating between the hands, incorporating chromaticism from measure 83 to heighten tension until the final, bombastic chords.

Table 20: *Estudio*

Category	Details
Title	Estudio
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Chronology	Composed August 15, 1942 (at age 19)
Key	C minor
Tempo	Presto
Length	87 measures, 9 pages
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tempo: The piece is set at a Presto tempo, one of the fastest in the collection, requiring precision and control at high speed. - Right Hand: - Rapid 16th-Note Runs: The right hand drives the momentum with rapid 16th-note runs, demanding agility and smoothness. - Thirds and Alternating Chords: The right hand includes rapid thirds and alternating chords, requiring control and clarity in articulation. - Left Hand: - Fast-Paced Passages: Starting from measure 39, the left hand takes over fast-paced passages, maintaining the energy and drive of the piece. - Parallel Octaves: In measure 63, the left hand plays parallel octaves accompanied by a descending melodic line, which requires careful voicing and hand coordination for balance. - Climax: - Rapid Alternating Chords: The climax of the piece is built with rapid alternating chords between the hands, increasing the intensity and speed. - Chromaticism: From measure 83 onward, chromaticism is incorporated to heighten tension, adding harmonic complexity to the climax. - Final Bombastic Chords: The piece culminates in final, bombastic chords, demanding precision in timing and a strong, resonant sound.
Function	- Functions similarly to an étude, as indicated by the title "Estudio" (Study)

Examples

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Estudio

15-08-1942
[19 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Presto

Piano

Figure 4.15: mm.1-4. Presto Tempo, RH Fast Rotation- Some Hand Crossing

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Figure 4.16: mm.7-8. RH Pattern Continues, LH Has Melody- Hand Crossing

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Figure 4.17 shows measures 9 through 14 of the piano part. The left hand (LH) continues its melodic line, while the right hand (RH) provides a rhythmic accompaniment. The LH melody is circled in the original image.

Figure 4.17: mm.9-14 Hand Crossing, LH Melody Continues

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Figure 4.18 shows measures 29 through 34 of the piano part. The left hand (LH) plays a melodic line with leaps, and the right hand (RH) plays a rhythmic accompaniment with some double notes and challenging dyad voicing. The LH melody is circled in the original image.

Figure 4.18: mm.29-34. LH Melody, Leaps. RH-Some Double Notes and Challenging Dyad Voicing.

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Figure 4.19: mm.39-44. LH Scales- Quintuplets, Challenging Voicing. (RH Melody)

Figure 4.20: mm. 45-48. LH Two Voice Texture, Octaves. RH- Two Voice Texture. Double Notes (3rds, 6ths)



Figure 5: mm. 61-64. Melody Marked in Top Voice (Stems Up), LH Octaves

This musical score shows measures 81 through 87. The notation is for the left hand (LH) in octaves, with stems pointing upwards. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The texture is an alternating chord pattern, with rapid hand position shifts indicated by dashed lines and brackets. Measure 83 shows some chromaticism in the bass line. Measures 81 and 83 contain eighth-note runs, while measures 82, 84, 85, 86, and 87 contain quarter-note patterns. The bass line consists of sustained chords and moving lines in the lower register.

Figure 5.1: mm. 81-87. Alternating Chord Texture- Rapid Hand Position Shifts (Some Chromaticism mm 83).

Nouvelette (1942)

This piece is the 13th work in Volume II of *Pecados de juventud*, composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of nineteen on December 9, 1942. It is one of the most technically challenging works in the collection due to the texture of the melody—where the right hand plays double notes reminiscent of a string instrument—and the extensive dynamic range required for effective performance. The piece is influenced by Romanticism.

De Larrocha provides specific indications on which melodic voice to prioritize; for example, in measure 34, performers should emphasize the left-hand line. Spanning 125 measures, it is one of the lengthier works in the collection. The Andante section in measure 58 features polyphony, requiring the performer to navigate the passage without losing momentum, as specified in the score.

Performers will encounter challenges with the frequent texture changes, necessitating various practice approaches, such as isolating hands separately or focusing on the melody alone. Abrupt dynamic changes also pose a challenge, particularly in the final measures starting at measure 114, where the performer must play loudly before suddenly dropping to piano in measure 117, and then build again to a triple forte marking for the last three measures.

Table 21: *Nouvelette*

Category	Details
Title	Nouvelette
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume II
Chronology	Composed December 9, 1942 (at age 19)
Key	Eb Major
Tempo	Allegro
Length	125 measures
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Texture of the Melody: The melody features right-hand double notes that resemble the sound of a string instrument, requiring students to develop clarity and precision in this texture. - Extensive Dynamic Range: The piece spans a wide dynamic range, demanding careful control and expression throughout, with particular attention to sudden shifts in dynamics. - Melodic Emphasis: - There are specific indications to prioritize certain melodic voices. For example, in measure 34, the left-hand line should be emphasized, requiring students to focus on voice-leading and balance between hands. - Polyphony: - The Andante section (measure 58) introduces polyphony, requiring careful navigation of multiple voices without losing the overall momentum of the piece. Students should pay attention to voicing and articulation in this section. - Practice Approaches: - Isolating Hands Separately: It is essential to practice hands separately, particularly in sections with complex textures or challenging voicing. - Focusing on the Melody: Practicing the melody alone helps ensure clarity, especially in areas with intricate double-note passages or shifts in voice-leading. Note: consistently changing key signatures. - Dynamic Challenges: - Abrupt Dynamic Changes: The piece includes sudden dynamic shifts, particularly in the final measures. For instance, measure 117 features a transition from loud to piano, which requires control and precision in managing the contrast. - Building to Triple Forte: In the last three measures, there is a buildup to a triple forte marking, which challenges students to gradually increase the intensity while maintaining a focused sound.

Examples

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Nouvelette

09-12-1942
[19 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Allegro

Piano

Figure 5.2: mm.1-12. Allegro Tempo. RH Plays Double Notes, String Texture. LH Position Shifts, Some Chromaticism. Octave Hand Span Required.

17

rit.

pp estacado y juguetón

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Figure 5.3: mm.17-20. Dynamic Contrast. Legato Touch LH, Playful and Staccato In RH.

26 *p* *f* *p*

30 *dim. mucho y rit.*

34 *pp* *dolicísimo cantando la izquierda*

Figure 5.4: mm. 26-37. Melody in LH. Soft Dynamic Range mm. 34.

53 *mf* *dim. y rit.* *Muy tranquilo* *p*

58 *Andante* *rit. poco* *a tempo*

63 *pp* *pero inquieto aunque sin perder el movimiento* *cresc.* *apasionado* *mf*

Figure 5.5: mm. 53-66. Parallel Chords mm. 53 Alternating Texture-
Tranquil Syncopation Without Losing Motion.

The musical score is for a piano piece, measures 114-125. It is written in a key with three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The score is divided into three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system (measures 114-117) features fast parallel chords in the right hand and octaves in the left hand. The second system (measures 118-121) includes a *rit.* (ritardando) marking and a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic. The third system (measures 122-125) includes a *fff* (fortissimo) dynamic and a *p* (piano) dynamic. The score is characterized by fast parallel chords and LH octaves, with chromaticism in the bass line.

Figure 5.6: mm. 114-125. Fast Parallel Chords. LH Octaves. Chromaticism.

Allegro in D# minor (1940)

This work is the ninth piece in Volume I of *Pecados de juventud*, composed by Alicia de Larrocha at the age of 17 (December 13, 1940). Categorized as advanced, this piece challenges performers with its tempo, chromaticism, large jumps in both hands, and the high level of coordination required. Spanning 39 measures over three pages, this piece resembles an étude in its demand for dexterity.

The right hand must navigate a continuous eighth-note line while simultaneously managing underlying triplets, while the left hand faces the challenge of parallel octaves and chromatic chords. Despite its relatively short length, the piece is comparable in difficulty to one of Chopin's études. The most significant challenge lies in maintaining speed, accuracy, and lightness without allowing the running notes to obscure the melodic line.

Table 22: *Allegro in D# Minor*

Category	Details
Title	Allegro in D# Minor
Collection	<i>Pecados de juventud</i> , Volume I
Chronology	Composed December 13, 1940 (at age 17)
Key	D# Minor
Tempo	Allegro
Length	39 measures, 3 pages
Technical Challenges and Pedagogical Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tempo and Speed: The piece requires the ability to maintain a fast tempo while keeping clarity and accuracy, similar to the demands of a Chopin étude. • Chromaticism: The presence of chromaticism throughout the piece requires precise finger control and the ability to navigate frequent accidentals without losing fluidity. • Large Jumps in Both Hands: The piece features large hand spans and jumps that require strong hand coordination and control, especially when transitioning between registers. • Coordination Between Hands: There are sections with complex coordination between hands, where the right hand may be playing rapid runs or running notes while the left hand handles accompaniment or a different rhythmic structure. • Continuous Eighth-Note Line: Maintaining a steady, flowing eighth-note line in both hands while managing dynamics and articulation can be challenging, especially when coupled with other technical difficulties. • Underlying Triplets: The triplet rhythm in the underlying structure of the piece must be balanced with the eighth-note line, which requires careful attention to rhythmic alignment. • Parallel Octaves: The use of parallel octaves demands precision in hand placement and finger control, especially in the faster sections. • Chromatic Chords: Managing chromatic chords effectively requires quick and smooth transitions between complex harmonies, ensuring the sound remains coherent. • Comparable in Difficulty to a Chopin Étude: The piece, though shorter in length, presents a similar level of difficulty to a Chopin étude in terms of technical demands such as accuracy, speed, and the lightness of touch required. • Maintaining Accuracy, Speed, and Lightness: Achieving speed without sacrificing accuracy or tone quality, particularly in passages with rapid runs and chromatic passages, is a key challenge. • Ensuring the Melodic Line is Not Obscured: The running notes and accompanying textures should not overshadow the primary melodic line. Students must focus on keeping the melody clear and prominent while maintaining technical precision in the accompaniment.

Examples

Editorial BOULEAU

Pecados de juventud. Piano 1 - Alicia de Larrocha 67

Allegro en Re[♯] menor

13-12-1940
[17 anys]

Alicia de Larrocha
[1923-2009]

Allegro

Piano

Figure 5.7: mm. 1-9. Running Triplets RH. Allegro Tempo. LH Position Shifts.

8

19

p

mf

22

p

25

Figure 5.8: mm. 19-27. Chromaticism. Running Triplets Continue. LH Leaps.

The musical score for Figure 5.9 consists of two systems of music, measures 34-39. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 3/4. The right hand (RH) plays a series of eighth-note triplets in measures 34-37. In measure 38, the RH plays a triplet that crosses the hand, starting with a note on the right staff and ending with a note on the left staff. The left hand (LH) plays parallel chords in measures 34-37. In measure 38, the LH plays a triplet of eighth notes. In measure 39, the LH plays a single eighth note. The score ends with a double bar line in measure 39.

Figure 5.9: mm. 34-39. Parallel Chords LH. Running Triplets, Hand Crossing.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this document has traced the origins and legacy of the Granados Academy, founded by Enrique Granados and his close associate Frank Marshall, to provide a historical framework for understanding the Spanish piano school. It has highlighted key pedagogical treatises by Granados and his predecessors, which reveal the tradition's emphasis on emotional depth, and virtuosity. Alicia de Larrocha, a central figure in this lineage, upheld and expanded Granados' influence as both a performer and a composer. Her student and recent director of the Marshall Academy, Marta Zabaleta, has contributed to preserving this legacy, recording her compositions and extending the Academy's pedagogical tradition.

The initial discussion of Granados serves to contextualize Alicia de Larrocha's own compositions, showing how she absorbed and built upon his influence in both teaching and creative work. The Granados legacy further endures through Marta Zabaleta's directorship at the Marshall Academy, where foundational works like *Goyescas* continue to hold a central place in the curriculum. Zabaleta underscores the prominence of *Goyescas* as a foundational piece in Spanish musical education and notes that students often choose it for their studies, reflecting its longstanding value.

The document also examines de Larrocha's solo piano volumes of *Pecados de juventud*, underscoring its unique contribution to piano literature and its suitability for concert performance. Though de Larrocha initially viewed her compositions as modest, nostalgic expressions of her youth, these works—especially the two primary volumes of piano solo

repertoire—demonstrate her depth as a composer. Her pieces, composed until around age 30, provide a testament to her artistry before her concert career demanded her full attention.

Throughout my experience cataloging de Larrocha's works, I encountered an impressive diversity in her musical language. While some pieces are approachable for intermediate students, many offer significant challenges, particularly the mature pieces that are ideal for recital settings.

The variety of shorter works in the collection allows them to be programmed flexibly, complementing other concert pieces without overwhelming the program. Her Baroque-influenced pieces are especially demanding in counterpoint, while others, like the *Estudio*, present technical challenges comparable to a Chopin etude. Although composed in her youth, these works should not be underestimated, as they provide students with real tests of skill and reveal de Larrocha's mastery across styles.

This document serves as a resource for audiences, piano students, and their teachers, offering insights into the foundation of the Granados-Marshall Academy and its lasting pedagogical influence. It is my hope that it also provides a valuable reference for pianists interested in exploring works by underrepresented composers to enrich their repertoire.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

- *Professor Zabaleta, could you share some insights into your own musical upbringing and the influence Alicia de Larrocha has had on your musical career?*

I would say that Alicia de Larrocha was one of the concert pianists I have known the longest (since I was about five years old listening to her recordings). I didn't know about Martha Argerich until much later- I didn't know about other pianists either. Well, I did know about Rosalyn Tureck, whom I liked a lot, and Clara Haskil, but I didn't know about María Sołtys either. So, for me, she was my reference, right? And this always helped me a lot morally because, well, I thought that it wasn't a matter of hand size, but of intelligence, hard work, artistry, imagination, etc.

-How did you first meet Alicia de Larrocha, and in what capacity did you study with her? Additionally, could you speak about how she ultimately selected you as the new director of the Granados-Marshall Academy?

Well, look, I always met Alicia de Larrocha at concerts and asked her to sign my records after her performances. She probably didn't remember me much. But once, with a group of friends, she invited us to dinner.

I was living in Paris at the time, so we went to dinner with her. It was super fun; she told us many anecdotes. She loved being with young people, with students. If she had a choice, she would always pick dinner with students over a representative or an important political person.

Subsequently, I studied at the Reina Sofía School of Music in Madrid with Dimitri Bashkirov. Alicia de Larrocha was invited to teach Spanish music classes because the department was named after her. I played for her there. I think I played 'Triana' by Albéniz. She gave me an amazing lesson. We all played; all the students played.

I dared to ask her if this experience could be repeated. I thought she would say no because she travels everywhere, staying in hotels, but she said, "Yes, it can be repeated. You can come to Barcelona if you want when I'm there." I couldn't believe what she was saying to me.

So I called the Marshall Academy and told them what Alicia's response had been. They advised me to work with another student of Marshall, a colleague of Alicia's, to get familiar with the pedal method, their working techniques, and Spanish music before directly joining Alicia's classes. And that's what I did. After completing this phase of absorbing and getting closer to the

Marshall technique, I became her private student for many years, which was a very beautiful experience.

-Alicia de Larrocha maintained an extremely busy concert schedule throughout her career. As your teacher, did she ever discuss how to maintain physical health and avoid injury with such a demanding schedule?

I forgot to answer one of the previous questions: When Alicia de Larrocha died, she wanted me to continue with my career.

Regrettably I was not at her deathbed because I was in Peru at the time, but I found out through Carlota Garriga, who was a great friend of Alicia's and also a great friend of mine. She is a professor at the Marshall Academy. As I mentioned, I don't live in Barcelona; I live in the Basque Country and also work at a higher conservatory in the Basque Country so I have had to make many trips and balance being in both places.

I think you asked about maintaining physical health?

Alicia de Larrocha never complained about her busy schedule because she gave very few classes. She only taught when she was in Barcelona. Sometimes she invited me, but at first, she was studying and traveling all the time. I believe her mental health depended a lot on this—on studying (practicing). She always studied a lot, and if she couldn't find a piano to study on, she wasn't herself. That was the most important thing.

Yes, she didn't have much experience as a professor. She had me and a few other students, but she didn't have a regular teaching schedule. Every time she returned from a concert, she would say, "I am back, I have three days. If you want, I can listen to you one afternoon," but then she might be away for a month. It wasn't a regular thing.

-As a concert artist who travels frequently, how do you balance your important role as the academy's director with your performing career?

Alright, very well. You asked me as a concert artist who travels frequently, how do you balance your important role as director of the Academy with your performing career?

First, I should mention that I left the direction of the Academy last year because I had a health issue and handed it over to another of Alicia's students, Alba Ventura. Yes, yes, yes.

This is important.

I directed the Academy for 12 years, and it was somewhat complicated. The travels to Barcelona, the classes here in the Basque Country, the concerts, and having two children—it wasn't easy at all. The secret, if there is one, is to work a lot and have little fun. I can't say there's a magic solution.

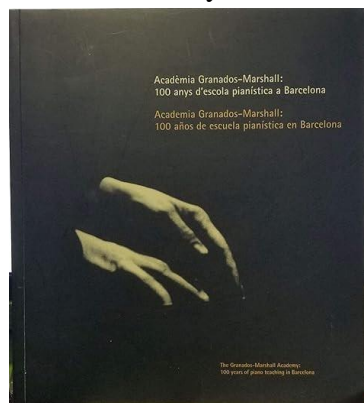
Part of my decision to appoint Alba Ventura was because she is also a student of Alicia and she lives in Barcelona. So, any issue that arises, she doesn't need to catch a flight like I did; she just has to take the metro or walk. For me, it was a bit difficult.

-What books or other resources do you recommend in Spanish about Granados, Frank Marshall, and the establishment of the Granados-Marshall Academy, essentially covering the history of this pedagogical tradition before Alicia de Larrocha?

Yes. Look, the Academy is called the Marshall Granados Academy. Why? Because it was founded by Granados. And then his student Marshall continued it. So, there you have it. Yes, this is the book that speaks best about it, written by Mònica Pagès, which talks about the Academy and a bit about the relationship between Granados, Marshall, Alicia, and the Foundation. All of this, right? I think it's also in English, if I remember correctly. I believe it has a part in English.

-I can now see it is in Catalan and Spanish only, not in English.

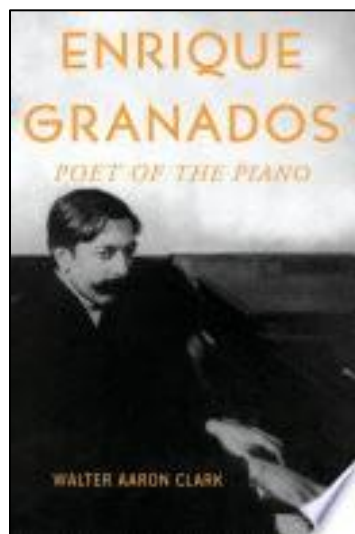
But this book by Mònica Pagès, I liked it a lot.



And Mònica Pagès is the daughter of someone from the Academy named—Carlota, no, what is her mother's name? Montserrat Pagès?

So she knows the Academy very well, and she did journalism about music. She also has a very interesting biography of Alicia de Larrocha. About Frank Marshall, I haven't read or found any

biography that interested me. I don't know if you have seen one. And then, about Granados, I like Walter Aaron Clark's book a lot. I think it is very good.



-Goyescas is widely regarded as a pinnacle of the Spanish Romantic repertoire. Have you worked on this piece with Larrocha?

Yes, yes, I worked on them with her. From the beginning, also Iberia—not all of Iberia, but almost all. And I also worked on Joaquín Rodrigo, Falla, and a lot of Soler, a lot of Spanish music. I also worked on many Mozart, Beethoven, and Rachmaninov concertos with her because she was a great interpreter of all music, not just Spanish music. As a comment, I would say that the Goyescas begin with the most difficult piece- *Los Requebros*.

-Los Requebros is the most difficult piece of the suite for me. And Alicia de Larrocha used to tell me, it's difficult because the first one is the hardest. So, of course.

-What are some essential elements of the style and performance practice in this piece that a non-Spanish performer should be aware of?

Alright, here we get into something a bit subjective, but we consider Granados a romantic, post-romantic musician, right? And with a very original style because he has that love for Schumann, Grieg, Chopin, Liszt, but at the same time, he has a Spanish flavor, right? And that's something that needs to be combined well. This is very important. The thing is, he was a pedagogue; he loved teaching, and his scores are *full* of indications. Sometimes these indications can overwhelm the student, causing them to misinterpret the style because what he wanted to convey

to the students was not to play mechanically with just their fingers, but to make music. That's why he wrote so many indications: forte-piano, crescendos, accelerandos, ritardandos.

He was very passionate. So when a student played mechanically, without expression, he made them exaggerate in some way, right? So the important thing is that all the written indications, not just the notes, like dynamics, rubatos, accelerandos, all of that should be interpreted as naturally as we would with Chopin, Liszt, or Grieg. Just because it is Spanish music doesn't mean it has to be eccentric or strange.

No, that's not the case; it's still romantic music. And this is very important because, for example, Falla is more folkloric. Falla sometimes writes more abruptly, a bit more harshly, and is more modern.

But Granados is still very romantic, so we shouldn't exaggerate excessively. We need to take all these indications in a literal sense and think, "Okay, all these indications have a pedagogical purpose, and I need to interpret them in a way that what I play sounds absolutely natural."

-What are your thoughts on the different editions of "Goyescas," including De Larrocha's?

The version supervised/ edited by Alicia de Larrocha is the most reliable of all because she has evidently corrected some errors present in other editions. Despite this, the edition still has some errors, like a note in the bass that always slips through, or a missing "G" note because the machine always misses something.

But, I believe this is the most reliable version because it really provides an explanation of the entire work and how it is ideally heard. The pedaling is very well thought out, which is very important, and it offers options for larger and smaller hands. Granados himself did this a lot; when he had a student with smaller hands, he would adjust the piece or make a small modification in the work so that the student could continue playing.

So, I truly believe this is the best version, that being the most recent edition with Alicia's supervision.

-Alicia de Larrocha is renowned for her interpretations of Spanish music, especially works by Granados and Albéniz. While "Goyescas" is a standard concert piece in the US, how is it perceived and performed within the Spanish piano school today? Do many students at the academy perform it?

Yes, at the Marshall Academy, we have a master's degree. An official and an unofficial master's in Spanish music, and it is mandatory to play works by Granados, Albéniz, Falla, Nin-culmell, Joaquín Rodrigo, and other Spanish music like Soler, etc...

In other conservatories in Spain, it is generally required for students to prepare a Spanish piece, whether from Albéniz's "Iberia," Falla, or other Spanish composers. Students usually perform them with affection and dedication, since although these pieces are quite difficult and present a significant pianistic challenge, they also enjoy them.

This music is very challenging to play well due to the density of notes, but learning to interpret it correctly helps students improve their technique and understand how to make the piano sound good. Therefore, working on these pieces is, in my opinion, good training. These works are studied and practiced quite extensively in Spain, though I believe not as much outside the country.

Well, maybe in the United States. But I think in Germany, France, Italy, less so. Austria, also less so.

-Alicia de Larrocha's complete catalogue, including "Pecados de juventud," features approximately 50 works, with about 39 for solo piano. Since you have recorded these works in their entirety, how were you first introduced to them, and how did you organize them chronologically? How did you rediscover these compositions?

Well, let's see, I got to know them because when Alicia de Larrocha died, her daughter (also named Alicia) decided to publish them because her mother, didn't want to publish them as she considered them to be of lesser importance. I mean, she had composed them, but more for herself, without intending for them to be performed in concert halls or anything because she was quite modest, right? And she didn't want to be considered a composer since she hadn't formally studied composition. So, she didn't want to be considered a composer.

What happened? Well, her daughter gave me the manuscripts, and I thought they were very interesting. We started reading them, and I first said, well, let's make a selection because maybe not everything would interest us, but in the end, almost everything was very beautiful, very interesting. The works she composed when she was six or seven years old are for children, but they can be worked on by a child. It's not necessary that only adults play them. It's great that one child's work serves another child (from a girl for another girl).

And so, well, they kept coming out, more and more, from a drawer, from a closet at home. And we were editing and correcting them. Not everything was clear; some we discarded because they were unfinished. Not just missing measures, but significantly incomplete, so I didn't want to finish something she hadn't done because there was already enough material to understand her work.

So, it was quite a long job, maybe half a year or more of intense work, and in the end, we recorded it with Columna Música and edited it, thinking a bit about this—that they were

children's works, youthful works, and some more mature pieces. What happened was that when she reached an absurd number of concerts per year, almost 100 or a little over 100, she had to stop composing. So let's say that the last pieces she composed were when she was around 28-30 years old.

It's a shame. She called them youthful sins because she said they were things one does without thinking when young, and now they embarrassed her. But well, she would have been very proud to know that now many people listen to and appreciate these "little sins".

-What was the process of cataloging them?

-Were the pieces dated, or in manuscript form? What was the process leading to your edition of them?

Yes. Well, the process was playing them (each volume). Seeing, sometimes the handwriting wasn't always clear, we had to review carefully what was correct and what wasn't because there were some surprising harmonies. Ideas she had were a bit unexpected at times, so we had to distinguish between surprise and error. This wasn't easy, but after some time, when I had gone through all of them, I could go back and see them as familiarized with the language she used. It's a language very close to Schumann, sometimes very close to Granados.

And so, with the editors who directed the edition at that time, we thought about arranging them by date, thinking about titles as well, adding some ourselves. For several pieces, we added a title because it seemed very appropriate. In the edition, we also added tempos, dynamics, pedaling, not for everything, but we did a bit of pedagogical work in that sense because she hadn't marked any of this.

-How do you group these pieces in your mind: by date, difficulty, subject matter, etc.?

By date, I think. I think they are all by date. From the early ones to the last ones. By date, not of publication, because I don't remember when we published them, but from the manuscript.

-How do you feel these pieces fit into the Spanish tradition, particularly the Granados lineage?

Well, I think she (Alicia de Larrocha) has a more personal language. I don't find very much Granados, I don't find Albéniz practically anywhere, I don't find Falla anywhere. I mean, I think she has a style closer at times to Schumann.

Well, when she was very young, in her early works, she has a very romantic approach. You can tell a bit that she was working on the Album for the Young or Scenes from Childhood because

you can hear it in some way, right? But later on, I don't know, I find it more modern, perhaps closer to Joaquín Nin-Culmell, to Xavier Monsalvatge, who was her friend, maybe a little Mompou. But I don't think she follows the line of Granados. No, it doesn't have as much of a southern flavor, let's say, from the south of Spain. Rather, I think her themes are more closely related to Catalonia.

-Did possibly hearing Alicia de Larrocha perform her own works in person influence your own interpretations?

I listened to the cassette tapes!

I mean, actual cassette tapes that you had to rewind and turn...

When she was young, someone recorded her without telling her. Can you believe that? And of course, it was important for me because she sometimes didn't mark tempos, didn't mark anything, not thinking that someone would play it later.

It's very important because we quickly discovered that she was a great pianist, playing very fast and doing everything spectacularly well, setting the bar very high. I think I only listened to one of them.

And I realized that, of course, we had to bring these pieces to a level of maximum virtuosity because she (Alicia) was a virtuoso and played them quickly. For example, the *Burlesca* is very fast, very cheerful, she (Alicia) played it without any problem. Other pianists, like Carlota Garriga, who was her friend, commented on the pieces to me, saying she sang this one a lot and played it like this.

Sometimes I chose to follow that, but other times I thought I would play it slower because I liked it to be a bit more relaxed, a bit calmer, since I didn't have a real version of hers, just comments on how she had played it.

But yes, I researched a lot. They always told me that when she was young, she played very fast, very virtuously. And that she was very carefree about her works, doing a bit of what she wanted. This sense of freedom and virtuosity had to be captured later in the recording.

-Some of Alicia de Larrocha's pieces feature large leaps and stretches, particularly in the left hand. Did she assign specific technical exercises to her students to build flexibility and strength in the non-dominant hand? Do you use any of these exercises in your own teaching?

Well, she worked a lot, literally with us.

And emphasized the rhythm, above all.

But when there was a technical problem, what characterized and concerned her the most was this—the rhythm. She didn't give many technical tips.

-Well, I think she advised us to work very slowly always.

And, well, to place the hand very quickly within the slow tempo, place the hand quickly, listen carefully to the sound we had caught with the pedal to see if it was really what we wanted or if it was poorly caught. She was very, very demanding about this.

But really, not many tips.

Some arrangements, yes, some arrangements (ie. Redistributing fingering), but with her works, I don't know because I didn't work on her works with her, but with Iberia, with Granados, yes, there were many re-arrangements that she advised us, like taking one hand with the left hand, with the right hand etc.

-Some of Alicia de Larrocha's solo works feature intricate contrapuntal, multi-layered textures with interwoven melodies. Do you have any practical advice for working with students on these types of figurations, where coordination can be challenging?

Well, what I think is that, first, you have to be very clear before choosing the tempo and everything else. The melody that always needs to be followed, because sometimes she has it a bit intertwined. It is very important to know, in a kind of soup of notes, what is going to be?

The line we want to follow and the one we will prioritize above all.

Because once we have that clear, the rest falls into place. The problem is when this idea is not very clear, and then we get tired with everything equally, not paying the same attention to everything. So we go crazy. We have to be very clear about what the idea is, what the line we want to follow is, and then, from there, prioritize.

The focus is here; the rest is less important, not melodically. Then the bass, and then the tempo is less important in the end because there are very different versions. I think she could sometimes play faster, three times slower. It depends a little, right? But I don't know. Do you have a clear example of one of the pieces that seems intertwined?

I need to get the sheet music for a moment.

Yes, in this one (Homage to Schumann), for example, what is very important is that the upper voice has much more weight, well, weight, no, more relevance, more support. Let's say that all the rest, this is the most important because andante espressivo can be many things, it can be a little faster, more andante, and the espressivo can make us think it's a bit slower too.

What is important to me is the sound plane. In this case. You must be very clear; there are others that are more...complicated to understand. In general, it's almost always in the treble. Allegro in D# minor, for example, is more difficult.

And the first time too, for example, you have to imagine things a little, but what I always find in these less known pieces is that the most important thing is to find the line, the line that must be followed constantly, or when it breaks, because suddenly it's more rhythmic and then it becomes more of a dance, right?

But it's about finding these reference points that are important.

-Many titles in Larrocha's solo collection suggest influences from composers such as Bach, Scarlatti, Schumann, and Chopin. As someone who has recorded the entire collection, could you discuss how these influences are evident in her pieces? For instance, "Sonata Antigua" closely resembles a Scarlatti sonata in form.

So, what is essential in that sense of the antique baroque style, clearly invites us to think that it will be a piece with less pedal, perhaps a bit more contrapuntal, where the two hands will respond to each other, right?

There is a lot of clarity

With a much more staccato touch than we would do if it were a more dedicated piece, closer to Schumann, for example, right?

This is important, and almost always we have these influences. El paseo, for example.

It's our title, not hers.

But it's because of this (influences) that I find more of a very nostalgic idea.

Closer to guitar music, more like Xavier Montsalvatge or something like that, right?

With harmonies that are a bit closer to jazz, which she liked a lot.

-As part of my project, I plan to organize Alicia de Larrocha's solo pieces into a pedagogical resource based on stylistic traits and difficulty etc. using some already established syllabi for reference. Having recorded her entire oeuvre, do you have any practical advice on introducing these pieces to budding pianists today and the technical difficulties present in the collection?

The difficulty classification in the published edition is purely based on chronological age, meaning it reflects what she wrote from age 7 in the first volume to her later works. For example, the Coral is quite simple and not difficult to interpret, and the music box (Cajita de música) isn't too challenging either. However, the Jota, written when she was 14, is notably more difficult and represents a significant leap in complexity. It's included in the first book purely due to its chronological placement, not its difficulty level. If we were to rank pieces by difficulty, the Jota would not be the third piece.

Similarly, the Mazurca and the Inventions are also not easy. Very few pieces are truly simple, like the first three in the first volume.

For example, Invitación is not very difficult and is quite beautiful (p. 62). It's only one page long and is relatively slow, making it one of the simpler pieces.

For me, the simplest pieces are the music box (Cajita de música) and the first piece called Coral. The subsequent pieces and inventions are more complex. Homage to Schumann is also not very difficult.

The Scherzo in the second volume is not very complicated, nor is La Danza or Jugando in the same volume. The slow march (Marcha lenta) is also relatively simple and among the easiest.

Balada (p. 47) is also not very difficult, though it is a bit longer. Ofrena (p. 71) and Minué triste (p. 70) are also not particularly challenging.

Looking at the more difficult pieces, the Jota would be considered intermediate, but the most challenging pieces are the allegro in D-sharp minor and the suite. Additionally, Novelette is quite difficult, as is the piece marked *agitato*. Another challenging piece is Estudio, and Romanza sin palabras also presents significant difficulty.

The remaining pieces are at an intermediate level I would say.

-As Alicia de Larrocha matured as an artist, her style likely evolved, potentially influenced by her personal life, including her marriage. Could you speak a little about how her style changed as she matured? Are there traits in her later pieces that reflect her development as a pianist and composer?

I think that when she (Alicia de Larrocha) matured and reached the 1980s, she was at the peak of her career. She had an incredibly extensive repertoire, the largest I've ever known in a pianist personally. She played everything, performing a different concert piece/repertoire every day.

Alicia's evolution was perhaps towards the purity of music, always maintaining strict rhythm. She never sacrificed time for gestures or audience engagement; she was always very sober/serious in her musical choices. She didn't consider the presence of cameras or feel the need to perform for them.

As she aged, her focus leaned more towards classicism, towards Mozart and Schubert.

Regarding her personal life, I can't say much because I didn't have that kind of personal relationship with her. She was very reserved and didn't talk about her personal life. I know she traveled a lot, so I imagine her life was quite different from that of other mothers or fathers. This might have been challenging, but I can't really speak about her marriage or how it influenced her compositions.

What is certain is that her later works are among her most complex. She might have been working on pieces that had a certain level of difficulty and ultimately used those experiences to compose and explore new pianistic possibilities.

During the process of learning and recording De Larrocha's pieces, were there any works in the collection that stood out to you as particularly challenging? If so, did you have a specific approach to learning and practicing these more difficult pieces?

Well, I remember very well that she (Alicia de Larrocha) liked rhythmically "strict"/ sober styles of playing, so I would strive to interpret her works rhythmically very close to her style, with pedaling that was also as close to her style as possible.

Regarding difficulty, yes, as always, I would treat the process like working on a piece by Chopin: practicing slowly, doing exercises, quickly positioning the hand, emphasizing the weight of the hand and fingers, etc. These are exercises that I do for everything, for any type of music that I perform.

Are there any Spanish resources/methods you recommend for students, like educational resources?

Yes, there are.

For example, I believe Marshall has written a book, a method, I think it's called "Un método de Sintonización", yes.

-Are there others (methods) that you feel students should be aware of as well?

This method by Marshall is very, very good. In fact, Granados wrote one too, but it was more complicated to understand. What Marshall did was to simplify it, making it more suitable for children. It's a method I used when teaching children because it's very necessary. Not only because technically it's difficult to apply in terms of motor skills and coordination of feet and hands, but it also encourages working very slowly. What Marshall seeks is for the student to be immediately aware of what's happening behind the music stand, understanding what the pedal does when engaged in a particular way, and what sound it produces.

So, there's a constant relationship between playing and listening. This is always an excellent way to progress because when one learns to listen, they recognize what is right or wrong and can make progress. It's no longer just about moving the fingers but understanding the reaction of the instrument.

-Alicia de Larrocha had a vast repertoire and was always expanding it. Are there staples in the pianistic repertoire she shared or assigned to you as your mentor?

Well, she (Alicia de Larrocha) always advised working in the most varied way possible. That is, if we were playing a very complicated piece, we should also return to a simple Mozart sonata. Not to limit ourselves excessively in repertoire, but to do a bit of everything.

Of course, she recommended working through all the classics. She often suggested studying a piece, letting it rest, and then coming back to it as something familiar but seen with new eyes and ears.

She advised having a broad and varied repertoire- that's how you learn.

And to study with a lot of patience and self-awareness, not rushing through the practice.

That's how you learn to really understand- having a lot of order in your work. So that when everything is very organized, you can then play more freely.