

Joaquin Rodrigo & Concierto de Aranjuez

The Concierto de Aranjuez draws its title from the royal palace of Aranjuez in Andalusia, Spain—a town steeped in history and place of Rodrigo's honeymoon with his wife Victoria. Like many composers, Rodrigo battled physical adversity. Blinded from diphtheria from the age of three, he often said that his disability led him to music.

Rodrigo (1901–1999) wrote the piece in 1940 during the Spanish Civil War and World War II. The Concierto was only half-finished when Victoria, pregnant with their first child, fell seriously ill. On being told the news, Rodrigo vented his grief by composing the hauntingly beautiful Adagio at the piano. As it happened, Victoria survived, but the child died. Yet when asked the origins of the concerto, Rodrigo simply shrugged his shoulders and said that it came from general thoughts and feelings, and the wind in the trees around Aranjuez.

The Concierto de Aranjuez revived the guitar concerto from obscurity, the last great guitar concerti being written by Vivaldi and Giuliani hundreds of years ago. It successfully weds the guitar to the modern orchestra with Rodrigo's characteristically light, simple but interesting orchestration. Its bright and breezy outer movements contrast stunningly with the profound central Adagio.

"The beautiful Concierto de Aranjuez is perhaps the best-loved classical guitar concerto of all time, and we are fortunate to have a MWC faculty member of Gray's capability play it with us."

— Kevin P. Bartram, Conductor

DVD Chapters:

1. Play Concert
2. Allegro con Spirito
3. Adagio
4. Allegro Gentile
5. Credits



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Joaquin Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez

Featuring Philip Gray Snead

2003

Joaquin Rodrigo's

Concierto de Aranjuez

Mary Washington College – Community Symphony Orchestra
Kevin P. Bartram, Conductor
Friday, October 17, 2003

Featuring
Philip Gray Snead

