

Homenaje a Mompou (2006)

Notes by Elisenda Fábregas

I have always felt very close to Mompou's music. I performed for him in Barcelona in 1978 before going to study piano at the Juilliard School in New York City. A few years back, Mompou had performed and lectured on his music at The Juilliard School and he was well remembered and respected there. Mompou was a very imposing and tall man, with very large hands, but with a very gentle and quiet personality. While in New York I studied and performed most of Mompou's music. The Catalan melodies in his music made me very nostalgic of my country. Later on, the study of Mompou's music proved to be a powerful influence on my own compositional style. When in the summer of 2006 Marcel Worms approached me with the idea of writing an Homage to Mompou for the 25th anniversary of his death I was delighted!

Homenaje a Mompou is a set of three short pieces where I use quartal harmony and frequent changes of mood and pace. Since *Homenaje a Mompou* was going to be premiered at an all-Mompou's piano recital I decided to focus on the playful, joyous and rhythmic side of Mompou's music so that my piece would provide some contrast with Mompou's lyric style.

- I. "*Crits en el carrer*" (*Screams in the street*) - I focus on the characteristic melodic and rhythmic motif (ascending and descending major second) of the beginning theme of "*Cris dans la rue*" from ("*Scenes of infants*"). My objective was to work with this melodic and rhythmic motif in different moods: from mysterious and longing to playful and energetic. A fragment of this characteristic theme is featured at the climactic center of the piece marked (Energico). Surrounding the theme appear short variations of the above-mentioned motif in diverse moods, sometimes in an abrupt manner without transitions.
- II. "*Tengo una muñeca vestida de azul*" (*I have a doll with a blue dress*) - I emulate Mompou's use of folksongs by featuring a Spanish children's song: varying it and presenting it with different harmonizations and rhythms. The rhythmic motif of the folksong is a powerful force in this movement and it originates the new theme appearing at the Piu mosso in forte. Afterwards both themes and their variations start a conversation but the first theme has the last word.
- III. "*Jocs de carrer*" (*Street games*) - This movement celebrates the most playful and rhythmic side of Mompou. It is a colorful piece featuring a characteristic propulsive rhythm in the main theme that permeates the whole movement. The use of clusters, glissandi, syncopations, insistent rhythms, and abrupt changes of harmony and register give color and restlessness to this movement. A varied quotation of a chord and melodic progression from Mompou's *Impresiones Intimas* (III) appears in bars 56-60.