

Abstract

This lecture-recital presents five pieces from the first two books of Elisenda Fabregas' *Album for the Young*. These intermediate-level pieces are written in styles ranging from Renaissance to Modern periods. The goal in presenting these works is to analyze what technical and musical skills they develop, suggest ways to teach these pieces, and to explore their interaction with more traditional teaching repertoire.

The lecture-recital presents— pedagogical exercises developed to target specific skills needed to play these pieces; performance practice for each genre represented; and finally, pairs each piece with pieces by Bartok, Bach, Czerny, Kahlua, Clementi, Tchaikovsky, Chopin, and Debussy.

The works of Fabregas were chosen to promote the work of women composers and to expand the teaching repertoire that students and teachers are exposed to.

Chapter 1 - Biographical Information

Elisenda Fábregas was born in 1955 in Terrassa, Barcelona and is a renowned musician known for her style and flair in composition. She came from a family of amateur musicians, and although she showed talent from a very early age, pursuing education beyond high school was not the norm in her family. As a teenager, she “rebelled against the prejudices of the conservative upbringing and actively pursued musical studies”.¹

After obtaining her pianistic training the Barcelona Conservatory in 1978, she left for the United States. “She was carrying a recommendation letter from Federico Mompou and a certification from the American Institute of Studies in Barcelona saying that she could answer five basic questions in English: what, why, where, when, [and] how much”.² With this recommendation in hand she began private lessons with Dr. Joseff Raieff so that she could prepare for her entrance exam into The Juilliard School of Music the following year. In May of 1979, she was accepted into Juilliard as a piano student and by May of 1982, Fábregas earned a

¹ Park, Jinha. “Piano Music of Elisenda Fábregas: A stylistic Analysis.” DMA diss., University of South Carolina, 2013.

² Ibid.

Bachelor of Music and a Master of Music degree in piano performance in 1983. She continued her professional studies at Juilliard until 1985, when she started her studies at Columbia University Teachers college, earning her Ed. D. in 1992.

In the fall of 1993 she was appointed Assistant Professor of Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Texas in San Antonio (UTSA) and from 2000-2002 she became an Adjunct Professor at UTSA so that she could compose full-time. In May of 2011 she was awarded a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Composition from the Peabody Institute of John Hopkins University.

Because of her long-term residence in three different continents (Europe, Asia and America), Fábregas' music is considered cosmopolitan and eclectic. However, much of her inspiration for her compositions is from Spanish and Catalan poets and music styles. She is also heavily influenced by the flamenco and folk music of Spain. Her vocal works are based on texts by poets such as Federico Garcia Lorca, Antonio Machado, Josep Janes and even Fábregas herself. In her dissertation, Mary Etta Hobbs points out that Fábregas takes the medium of folk music and develops it beyond its original boundaries, making her pieces “intensely dramatic” and exciting to perform.³

Although many of her pedagogical works were commissioned, *Album for the Young* was not. Fabregas composed in 2002, inspired to write pieces for intermediate players that would cover many styles. Volume 1 and 2 covers styles from Renaissance to Contemporary, and Volume 3 is devoted to Spanish style music – inspired by her heritage.

Elisenda is currently serving as a visiting professor at Kyung-Hee University in Seoul, South Korea.

³ Hobbs, Mary Etta. “An Investigation of the Traditional Cante Jondo as the Inspiration for the Song Cycle Five Poems of Garcia Lorca by Elisenda Fábregas.” DMA diss., University of North Texas, 2004.