

The stormy, fresh, accelerated-tempo character which is supported by many sforzati and dynamical contrasts has to be emphasised.

The return of the third movement's primary theme and tempo (bar 256) make the quasi una fantasia clear. Here, Beethoven writes Tempo I - at this point, he means the Tempo I of the third, not the 4th movement. Once again, this indication shows Beethoven's concept of an entire fantasia-sonata without separation in the movements.

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"The Interpretation of Manuel de Falla's Fantasia baetica"

INTERPRETING MANUEL DE FALLA'S

FANTASÍA BÆTICA: An Introduction and Masterclass

By Nancy Lee Harper ©2004

INTRODUCTION

In this day and age of pianistic pyrotechnics, Falla's chef d'œuvre still remains as illusive and daunting today as it was 75 years ago when it was commissioned by and dedicated to the great Polish pianist, Artur Rubinstein. Shrouded in bad luck, Rubinstein was unable to learn the piece in time for his Barcelona concerts in 1919, giving the premiere later in New York on 20 February 1920. The work was destined neither to have the impact nor become the mainstay of his repertoire as other works in his repertoire. Rubinstein played the Fantasy a handful of times, abandoning it, complaining that it was too long, too difficult, had too many glissandi, too many guitar and flamenco figures, etc.. If the truth were known, Rubinstein probably did not have the same audience success as with his version of Falla's earlier work, the "Ritual Fire Dance". It seems that he never recorded the work.

Although the Fantasy is now played by those pianists who wish to have a musical and technical challenge, it cannot be considered standard fare on the concert menu, nor in competitions. Why is the Fantasy so pianistically polemical? How does one arrive at an authentic interpretation? Not easy to answer, these questions require some knowledge about the work's history, structure, and musical elements.

Historical Background

Situated between the great virtuosic pillars of the piano repertoire, such as Albéniz's *Ibéria* (1906-1909), Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit* (1908), Alban Berg's *Sonata*, op. 1 (1908), and Charles Ives' "Concord" *Sonata* (1909-1915) Falla's *Fantasia bætica* has been described as a kind of Spanish

Islamey and an Andalusian Fantasy but not an historical evocation. The large-scale work is definitely the most abstract of all of Falla's solo piano pieces. Difficult and uncomfortable under the hand, the question arises: "Why didn't Falla write something more 'pianistic'?"

Full of guitar figures, the Fantasy belies its name with its rhapsodic nature. Not a traditional improvisatory fantasy in the sense of Frescobaldi or Louis Couperin, the work also does not emulate the fantasies of Bach, Haydn or Mozart. Rather, it is more akin to the grand romantic style found in the works of Schubert, Chopin, or Schumann with the suggestion of improvisation or spontaneity. The adjective *bætica* was added when, in 1922, Chester publishers wanted a more descriptive title. Falla was adamant about the spelling with the diphthong in order to show the ancient Roman name of Andalusía that included the areas of southern Iberian Estremadura and some parts of Portugal.

The circumstances surrounding the genesis of the work are fascinating. Falla had become an international figure from the time of his Paris years (1907-1914) when his opera, *La vida breve*, attracted wide attention. Back in Madrid at the onset of World War I, Falla began his Andalusian period (1915-1919), in which he composed some of his most famous works, *El amor brujo* (Love Bewitched), *Siete canciones populares españolas* (Seven Popular Spanish Songs), *El sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-Cornered Hat), *Noches en los jardines de España* (Nights in the Gardens of Spain). Falla was greeted warmly, but cautiously, by the proud and fickle Spanish press. He was criticised as being "Frenchified" with there being some truth to this criticism. Even before his sojourn in Paris, his idol had been Claude Debussy, who befriended and counselled him. Paul Dukas opened many professional doors for him in Paris. And who better would understand Ravel than Falla? Indeed, Falla is reported to have said that without Paris he would have remained buried in Madrid and his score for *La vida breve* locked away in a drawer.

Ansermet-Rubinstein-Stravinsky-Debussy influences

The Fantasy was born as the result of Stravinsky's financial problems, due to the closure of his Russian publisher at the beginning of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the ongoing WWI. On 10 March 1918 the Swiss conductor, Ernest Ansermet, wrote to Falla, asking him to contact Rubinstein, who was then in Madrid, to see if they could find a way to assist Stravinsky. Originally the idea was that Rubinstein would purchase Stravinsky's manuscript of *L'Oiseau de feu* (The Firebird), but instead he had a "better" idea — to commission a work from Stravinsky (Piano-Rag Music, 1919) and a work from Falla (*Fantasía bætica*, 1919).

Coincidentally, two weeks after Ansermet's letter, Debussy died on 25 March. Falla surely must have felt enormously this loss, for Debussy was his mentor, friend, and idol who wrote exquisite Spanish music without ever having visited Spain. Is it possible that Debussy's death influenced the composition of *Fantasía bætica*? Outwardly there is no direct evidence to support this supposition. After all, it was the guitar that Falla chose to eulogise Debussy in *Homenaje. Le tombeau de Claude Debussy* (1920), the first modern guitar piece (also written for piano). However, upon closer examination of the Fantasy many French influences will be ascertained, especially that of Debussy.

While the exact date of the composition of the Fantasy is not known, it is confirmed that Falla composed the work during 1919, in three or four months. 1919 was bitter-sweet, bringing both great happiness and deep tragedy to Falla: international accolades for Diaghilev's production of *El sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-Cornered Hat) with the Ballets russes (Massine, Kasarvina, et al) and decor by Picasso; the death of both of his parents (father in February and mother in July);

and the final rupture with Gregorio and María Martínez Sierra, the couple with whom he had collaborated on many projects (*El amor brujo*, *Fuego fatuo*, *El sombrero de tres picos*, amongst others).

The Fantasy marks the end of an era, as well as the beginning of Falla's most mature and highest level of composition, one in which he would search for a more universal language and create his greatest masterpieces — *El retablo de Maese Pedro* (1923) and the *Concerto for Harpsichord or Piano, Violin, Flute, Clarinet, Violoncello*, and (1926).

MASTERCLASS

Often in approaching a work, the interpreter will search out recordings by the composer. While Falla did play the Fantasy quite brilliantly according to those who heard him in private, unfortunately there are no recordings left by him. Nor were there public performances by him that could have had critical reviews, as was the case of his *Concerto*.

Therefore, without a recorded model by the composer (sometimes not so helpful), an authentic interpretation must be gleaned from his written indications in the score, of which there are many. Musical form, melodic-harmonic-rhythmic-stylistic characteristics, textual matters, ornamentation, pedalling, fingering, amongst others, are important to consider. The Spanish song and dance flamenco tradition is especially necessary to understand.

Contextual Considerations: Stylistic Features: Spanish, French, or other?

What is readily apparent upon the first hearing of the Fantasy is its strong Spanish flavour. The imitation of the guitar is paramount, as well as the suggestion of the *cante jondo*, the "deep song" or flamenco tradition. These are Andalusian songs and dances (*tangos*, *malagueñas*, *rondeñas*, *siguirillas gitanas*, *soleares*, etc.; specific to the Fantasy are the *bulería* or *bolero*; *seguidilla*; *fandango*; *guaríja*; *siguiriya*; *soleá*), whose style of execution includes guttural exclamations ("Ay"), *melismas*, *jipío* - voice break of the *cantaor* (singer of the *cante jondo*) and *quejío* or *quejido* (lament). One aspect to remember is that these songs and dances are usually not separate entities but rather are often combined into one genre. Included in the flamenco tradition are the *toque jondo* or "deep touch" (the instrumental equivalent to *cante jondo*) and the *baile jondo* (dance equivalent) with its *taconeo* (heel/foot stamping). Also, techniques like *hemíola* are integral to some types of song-dances, as are ornamental melodic figures such as *acciaciaturas* and *echapées*.

Guitar influences impregnate the Fantasy, such as: *punteado* — guitar plucking; *rasgueado* -guitar strumming; *copla* (poetic interludes); *falsetas* — guitar "coplas" that introduce or are played between the vocal parts of the *cantaor/ra* (lead singer). Chords based on tuning of the guitar strings (e-a-d-g-b-e) are frequently found. (Example 1)

Modal usage, not only from the Gypsy influence, but resulting also from Falla's studies of Bartók and Stravinsky as well as his interest in the exotic (Indian, Moroccan, Hindu *Sriraga*, etc.) colour the harmonic language. Through Falla's ingenious usage of these modes he is able to emulate the

micro-tonal undulations of the cante jondo. Large tonal poles of E-B-E major, followed by A minor, then E-E-B-C-E-E major, are found. Within these large areas, Phrygian, Ionian, Aeolian, Mixolydian, Lydian, Dorian, Andalusian modes (a-g-f-e), and the gypsy scale (a-g#-f-e) are found either in isolation or juxtaposition. In general, chordal constructs derive from the guitar tuning; from the imitation of the cante jondo ("micro-tonal" cluster-like aggregates, taken from enharmony concept of the 19th-century Parisian Louis Lucas's *L'Acoustique nouvelle* and developed as *Superposiciones* by Falla); and from the melodic contours of the piece (melody inspires harmony). (Example 2)

Falla remains loyal to the cante jondo tradition, employing a limited melodic range. Lack of melodic development is compensated for by constant repetition, very typical of Spanish dance. To offset this limitation, Falla uses the entire range of the keyboard and/or transposes the patterns a 3rd, 4th, or 5th forming a new tonal centre. The interval of the 2nd (F-E), found typically in the "andalusian" mode is used in a "neo-classic" construction, while the interval of the 3rd is used more for harmonic modulations or motivic variations. Possibly the only literal use of a folksong, "El zorongo" from Isidoro Hernández's *Flores de España* (1884) and the basis for many of the work's variations (see Table 1) is presented in the Intermezzo. (Example 3)

In spite of the Fantasy's strong Spanish flavour, the subtle smell of French perfume can be detected in the Fantasy. However, the interpreter should not be deceived into thinking that there are Impressionistic moments in the work. Falla was never considered to be an Impressionistic composer by his followers, such as Rodolfo Halffter. If one looks carefully at the Fantasy, the following French influences may be ascertained:

Jardines sous la pluie - Debussy (opening); Falla, Ms. 54-57;

L'Isle joyeuse - Debussy (ending); Falla, Ms. 157-166;

Quartet - Debussy; Falla, Ms. 97-98;

"La sérénade interrompue" (B-C-B pattern used harmonically by Falla) - Debussy; Falla, Ms. 36-46.

Ballade (Ms. 13-15)- Fauré; Falla (Ms. 97-114);

Sonatine - Ravel (rapid, undulating notes) - Falla (Ms. 36+; 306+);

"Une barque sur l'océan" (Miroirs) - Ravel; Falla (Ms. 87-96).

Other "French-inspired" musical influences from Falla's own works, such as:

El amor brujo - "Midnight"; Fantasy, Ms. 1-4;

Noches en los jardines de España , "Danza lejana"; Fantasy, Ms. 324, Ms. 369-380.

Surprisingly, Falla's first contact with Debussy was about pianistic interpretation, not about composition. While still in Spain in 1907, Falla wrote to Debussy about the interpretation of the

harp part (transcribed for piano) of Debussy's *Danses sacrées e profanes* in anticipation of his performance in Madrid in early 1907. Debussy responded that certainly a pianist of the calibre as Falla could find a way to link the seriousness of the first piece to the humour of the second. [Falla was an outstanding pianist, having won the Ortiz y Cussó first prize in 1905 against the best Spanish pianists of the day, most notably Frank Marshall. The extant recordings of Falla, and there are many, attest to this fact. Had his nerves permitted, he could have had a career as a concert pianist.]

Stylistically, the Fantasy is related to *El amor brujo*, the gypsy-ballet that features singing (again, Falla's ambiguity or originality - has there ever been another gypsy ballet? Or was Falla recalling Bizet's *Carmen*? - yet another instance of being "Frencified"?). Falla is reported to have said that he could have written twenty *Amor brujos*, so easy was this for him. However, his famous scruples would not let him. This compositional experience may have been the reason that he was able to compose the Fantasy in such a short period of time.

Structural analysis

In interpreting any work, it is necessary early on to understand its formal structure. The Fantasy, in typical Fallian ambiguity, does not fall into an easy analysis, structurally speaking. Some have called it a Sonata form or large ternary form. Pianist-musicologist Antonio Iglesias deems it a large binary form, [A-B-C] — [A'-B'-D] — Coda . One of the most intriguing analyses is that of Yvan Nommick, who has termed the work a Rhapsody with three important aspects: 1) the impregnation of the dance and popular music of Andalusía; 2) an improvisatory nature; and 3) a free form in one movement with a succession of parts and contrasting sections. He identifies the following form: A-B-C-D-E(Intermezzo)-A'-B'-C'-D'-F-coda. Nommick does not agree with the other ideas due to the fact that the Intermezzo section, while most significant in its placement and impact on the work (a moment of great calm), only lasts approximately 2-3 minutes in the overall duration of about 13-14 minutes. Yet, he does not account for the fact that the work is permeated with the melody from the Intermezzo section in previous sections, only attaining its "pure" form in the Intermezzo.

What is particularly relevant in analysing the Fantasy is the obvious lack of melodic development. The nervous, rapid and juxtaposed multi-motivic units weave the rich fabric of this multi-coloured carpet of pianistic pirouettes. Structurally, this technique is similar to that of Domenico Scarlatti, a composer who also imitated the Spanish flamenco tradition and was greatly admired by Falla. Falla too would have observed a similar structural approach in Debussy's Spanish works. It is precisely the way in which Falla uses these short motives that we begin to see the influence of the French school suggestive of its magnificent tradition of orchestration no less in the hands of the masters Debussy and Ravel. Falla's constant interplay of texture and dynamic intensity is quite orchestral in his approach. There was actually a plan to make the Fantasy into a concerto for piano and orchestra, but was never realised.

TABLE 1: Structural Analysis

Measures	Parts	Sections	Themes
			1st Thematic Block

1-8	A	1	<p>Motives A1, A2</p> <p>A1 — 1st chord: rasqueado, Hindu mode Sriraga.</p> <p>A2 — running notes: punteado, boleras, bulerías, seguidilla.</p>
9-15		2	<p>Motives b1, b2</p> <p>B1 — Ms. 9: taconeo, redoble, seguidillas andaluzas.</p> <p>B2 — Ms. 12: fandango.</p>
16-28		3	<p>Motives C1, cell a. , C2, C3 - Ms. 16</p> <p>C1 — "Ay" (r.h. leap in first beat).</p> <p>C2 — descending running notes.</p> <p>C3 — ascending running notes.</p> <p>cell a. — guitar (l.h., F-E).</p>
29-35		4	<p>Motives D1, D2 — Flessible, scherzando</p> <p>D1 — Ms. 29: rasqueado (Superposiciones), punteado, 4-note motive.</p> <p>D2 — Ms. 32: punteado, descending motive.</p>
36-53	B	5	<p>1st Block of Variations</p> <p>Melodic variation on D1, D2, A2.</p>
54-62		6	<p>Ornamented variation on D2, varied & shortened repetition from section 3.</p>
63-86		7	<p>Ornamented variation on C2, D1, A2 alternating with a variant (changes of</p>

87-114		8	dynamic intensity) from B1, B2. Melodic variation on B2, D1, D2.
36-53	B	5	1st Block of Variations Melodic variation on D1, D2, A2.
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63-86		7	Ornamented variation on C2, D1, A2 alternating with a variant (changes of dynamic intensity) from B1, B2. Melodic variation on B2, D1, D2.
87-114		8	
115-120	C	9	2nd Thematic Block Motive E1 — Ms. 115: falseta or guitar imitation (punteado) that prepares for the vocal entrance .
121-149		10	Motive F1 (cante jondo theme with jipío or ay of the cantoar, accaciaturas): — Ms. 121 (copla sombría, siguriya gitano) with guitar accompaniment (rasgueado, in Ms. 121 punteado in Ms. 124+) using vocal melismas; altered repetition (dynamics, ornamentation, sonority) .
150-171	D	11	2nd Block of Variations Motive G1, from cell a: Ms. 150 (transition with hemiola); variation +

			superposition of the variant D2 (Ms. 158).
172-194		12	Motive H1 (Ms. 172) H2 (Ms. 174), from B1, alternating with variations C2, C3, & on G2, using taconeo, zapateado.
195-204		13	Melodic variation on D1, D2, after ornamental variation of the beginning of G1.
205-270	E	14	Intermezzo ("El Zorongo") Long melodic variation: I1 (guajira, alternating pulse of 6/8 & 3/4), based on D1, D2 or vice versa.
271-278	A'	15	Recapitulation of the 1st Thematic Block Same as Section 1.
279-285		16	Same as Section 2.
286-298		17	Same as Section 3, but modulating to a 4th above (measure 298).
299-305		18	Almost equal to Section 4, but a 4th below.
306-331	B'	19	Recapitulation of the 1st Block of Variations Almost equal to Section 5, but a 4th below, and increased by 8 measures. Sections 6, 7, 8 are not repeated.
332-337	C'	20	Recapitulation of the 2nd Thematic Block Similar to Section 9.
338-352		21	Recapitulation at a 5th below of the 2nd

			part of Section 10 (measures 135-149). Recapitulation of 2nd Block of Variations
353-369	D'	22	Similar to Section 11, but shortened 9 measures; immediately follows a transition passage of 4 measures. (Ms. 366-369), based on D1 e G (Sections 12 e 13 are not recapitulated).
			Final Development
370-393	F	23	Variation on A1, A2, followed by B1, D1, D2, G.
394-407	Coda	24	Brilliant Conclusion on B1, B2, C1, C2, C3, a, finishing with click of castanets & zapateado.

Wrong notes

Upon first reading, the pianist may naturally question several places. And quite rightly so, as there are several suspect notes in the Chester edition, for example:

Measure 22 - . the last C# and D# in the right hand should be C and D. In the Fallian scheme of this piece (noted in the beginning phrase), there are generally three repetitions of a pattern before changing it. Measures 24 and 26, repetitions of Ms. 22, are correct;

Ms. 70 - within the first right hand chord, the printed notes are G#-C-E. However, since this is seemingly a literal repetition of the previous pattern, the chord should logically read G#-B-E;

Ms. 105,106, 110 - according to Antonio Iglesias, the penultimate right hand chord should read F double sharp-B#-D double sharp, not F#-B#-D double sharp;

Ms. 276 in the Re-Capitulation has the last right hand "a" where it should be a "g", as given in the Exposition;

Ms. 398, ascending G (4th r.h. chord) should be G natural, not G#.

Manuscripts and editions in the AMF and the British Library should be consulted for any lingering doubts.

Fingering

As with most pieces, there are many possible choices of fingering. Above all, comfort and clarity are needed in such an uncomfortable work. Careful observation of the Falla's stemming (Ms. 1) will give clues to his desired fingering, although they may not be comfortable for every pianist. He does not indicate any specific fingering beyond this aspect. Falla's own fingering indications in Debussy's *Jardins sous la pluie* (similar passages in the *Fantasy* occur) may be of some help, for example the changing of fingers in repeated octave notes.

Some fingering considerations are:

Ms. 1 - 1st chord: grace note A with left hand, remainder of chord with r.h.;

Ms. 1 - 2nd half of 1st beat, only play A with l.h., all other notes with r.h.;

Ms. 17 - ascending scale: A with l.h., next 5 notes with r.h. fingered 1-2-3-4-5, next 5 notes with l.h. fingered 5-4-3-2-1, scale finished with r.h. 1-2-3-4;

Ms. 23 - ascending scale: grace note + 3 notes as 5-3-2-1 with l.h., next 5 notes with r.h. 1-2-3-4-5; next pattern the same way;

Ms. 29 (Flessible) - hold r.h. thumb on B in the 1st chord, then use Falla's implied fingering or do next 2 patterns all with the r.h. I find that it depends on the response of the piano. I use either fingering;

Ms. 399 - 1st beat - r.h. = 2-1/3-2/4-1/3-5; l.h. = 1-2-3-1-2-4; 2nd beat - r.h. 1-2-3-1-2-4; l.h. = 5-4-3-2-1 or alternatively the last G of the l.h. could be played with the C in the r.h.;

Ms. 402 1st beat - r.h. = 5/3-4/2-3/1; l.h. 1/3-2/4-3/5; fingering repeated for remaining patterns.

Dynamic shadings

Clearly, one of the most complex and difficult aspects of interpretation of this work is the correct realisation of the dynamic timbres that Falla requests. Falla is diabolical in this respect. The piece ranges from FFF-ppp. The rapid diminuendo - FF-p - required in the opening motive in the space of a beat is very difficult on a modern piano, as is the 2-beat diminuendo (*molto*) in Ms. 63 from FF-pp. The work is replete with similar examples, which make the pianistic delivery quite exigent. Difficult too, but so easy on the guitar, is the clarity of articulation needed for the ppp beginning in Ms.115 (*falseta*). Important to note is the FF *ma dolce* of the *cantaor* (Ms. 121, Ms. 338). Today's flamenco singers really belt it out, so probably during Falla's time the singing was already on the verge of becoming too guttural and raw (*Iº Concurso de Cante Jondo*, Colección Manuel de Falla, Granaada, Corpus de 1922, Colección Federico García Lorca, SONIFOLK 20106).

It goes without saying that all the dynamic shadings indicated by Falla should be strictly observed. Indeed, he leaves little leeway.

Pedalling

Contrary to Falla's explicit dynamic control, the question of the pedal is left to the interpreter. However, if we hear his own playing of the *Siete canciones populares españolas* in Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) Grabaciones Históricas ALMAVIVA 0121, we hear a very conservative or dry use of the pedals, for clarity's sake.

In certain places in the *Fantasy*, Falla gives very specific pedal indications, such as:

section Ms. 135-137 and, although not indicated, Ms. 338-340: "Le piccole note sempre molto breve e senza pedale". Here he marks exactly where the pedal should go down and up. In imitation the cantoar, it is clear that Falla does not want the grace note to be sustained with the principal note, just as it would be impossible for the singer to do so;

Ms. 94-96 and 120-121, Falla uses the French indication often found in Debussy's and Ravel's music in which the chord is indicated by curved lines to continue across the bar line;

Ms. 128-129 - the only solution for the sustained r.h. note over the guitar figures is to employ the pedal and immediately release it;

Ms. 306 - Falla writes 2 Ped. Like Debussy's piano, Falla did not have the *sostenuto* pedal.

Tempo and Rubato Indications

As with the dynamic shadings, Falla is also very specific about his tempo indications, which should be seriously considered by pianists. Given his specificity, one wonders why there is such a diverse panorama of recordings available, ranging from 8-15 minutes. Leschetitzky's pupil, Mark Hamburg, gives the fastest and shortest on record found on the historical recording referred to above, while Portuguese pianist Manuela Gouveia (*Iberic Impressionist Piano Works*, PAVANE ADW 7238) must take the prize for the slowest version. Hamburg's interpretation is interesting from the standpoint of its "Impressionism".

To give an example of the many specific tempo-rubato changes that Falla asks for, we find the following until Ms. 205 (*Intermezzo*): Allegro moderato (♩ = 88); giocoso (molto ritmico); poco pesante; a tempo; pesante; a tempo; Flessibile, scherzando; appena rit.; A tempo (quasi libero); Assai più mosso (quaver = 120); vibrante; poco rit.; Tranquillamente mosso (dotted quaver = 60); appena rit.; Molto lento (liberamente) (♩ = ♩); Tempo primo; Lento di nuovo, (♩ = ♩); Tempo primo; Lento (quaver = 72, ma libero); Tempo primo; Lento di nuovo; Tempo primo; Lento; Tempo primo; (quaver = quaver); (quaver = quaver); (♩ = ♩); appena rit.; a tempo, ma meno vivo che prima; rit.; meno rit.; primo tempo; affrettando sempre ma gradualmente; rit.; Intermezzo - Andantino (dotted quaver = 52) (rubato).

Breathing space is indicated by Falla at the ends of sections or within phrases when he indicates a gradual slowing (appena rit. or Lento di nuovo) or flexibility of tempo (ma libero). And in a work that has few rests (almost a *perpetuum mobile*) it is important to find those moments of repose. Also, he is very clear about where and how to move ahead in the tempo, such as *Affrettando sempre ma gradualmente* (Ms. 201-203). Alternating meters also give the effect of moving ahead and create inner tension. Not infrequently Falla uses 6/8 followed by 3/4 or 3/4 followed by 2/4. However, in the 10/16 section (semi-quaver = semi-quaver) beginning at Ms. 390 (final

development before the Coda) Falla puts the brakes on the running semi-quavers by adding dots to them last two and the effect is most unusual.

Ornamentation

One of the most difficult aspects of the interpretation of this work lies in the ability to convey well the many uncomfortable written-out ornaments. Accaciaturas abound. Falla, in the cante jondo sections, ingeniously uses the ornaments to convey the micro-tones of the flamenco singer (canteo) smaller than the half-steps of the piano (Ay, Ms. 16, 135-136, 338-339). Yet more difficult is in the execution of those many passages that convey the strumming (rasgueado) (Ms.1, ms . 390-391) or the plucking (punteado) of the guitar (Ms. 64, final development - Ms. 383-385, 388-389). This ornamental aspect of the work may be the worst pianistic nightmare.

Memorisation

Aside from the technical difficulties of this piece, memorisation of the Fantasy can be also be problematic. One of the reasons is the constant changing of motives or the small alterations that occur not only between the Exposition and the Re-Capitulation Sections, but also within sections such as the Intermezzo. The interpreter has to become the composer, to get inside his head, for the logic to remain. Once this is done, the memorisation is greatly facilitated. The lack of melodic development impedes a facile memorisation. Rhythmic patterns from the Exposition to the Re-Capitulation may have to be viewed in their numeric changes. For example, compare the falseta parts of both cante jondo sections (Ms. 138+ and Ms. 341+):

Exposition	Re-Capitulation
1+4+1 (Ms. 138-140)	1+4+1 (Ms. 341-343)
1+2 (Ms. 143-144)	2+1 (Ms. 346-347)
1+2+2 (Ms. 146-147)	1+2+2 (Ms. 349-350)

Other tricky areas might be in the slight alteration of a bass line, for example Ms. 247-249 (Intermezzo) or the ornaments distributed between the hands of the cante jondo that represent the micro-tones (Ms. 135+, Ms. 338+).

On the positive side, the technical difficulties require much finger exercise. The many repetitions necessary to technically dominate the difficult passages naturally afford an automatic digital memory. Understanding the structure of the piece goes a long way in solidifying the memory.

Organological Aspects

While Falla also studied the guitar and understood its capacity quite well, the transposition of plucked figures to the piano does not make life easy for the pianist. What is interesting is that around the time Falla was composing the Fantasy, the revival of the harpsichord was taking place

mostly at the hands of Wanda Landowska (the dedicatee of his Concerto) who was responsible for taking it out of the museum and placing it centre stage. The re-discovery of early music was trendy during Falla's Paris years and he heard many a concert of Couperin, Rameau, the Scarlattis, and others. Falla was particularly fond of Domenico Scarlatti, analysing his works and identifying a structural technique he termed "internal rhythm" ("relations of symmetry between periods and cadences"), as well as playing an entire program of sonatas in 1927 on the piano. The Scarlatti influence is also very strong in the Fantasy in this kind of phrase structure with its crisp and juxtaposed melodic motives. Lest we not forget what a debt Scarlatti owed to the Iberian peninsula.

As was stated earlier, Falla soon afterward began experimenting with the harpsichord, writing the first modern works for the instrument in Retablo and the Concerto. Sometimes Falla also interchanged keyboard parts with the harp-lute when a harpsichord was not available. With the sound of the guitar so evident in the Fantasy, it would seem that a natural interpretation could be made on a pedal-harpsichord. As owner of one of these instruments specifically for contemporary music, I have had the opportunity to play the piece on it and concluded that it actually works better on this instrument than on the modern piano, except in the Intermezzo section. Indeed there is rumoured to be a recording of Frank Pelleg on harpsichord of the Fantasy. Falla's piano in Granada (1919-1939) reportedly had a pedal system with harpsichord register, as did a piano he played on in Madrid.

Conclusions

Although markedly Spanish in character, the *Fantasia bætica* wears a definite French couture. The big question then is how to interpret it - Impressionistically as Mark Hambourg (whom Falla heard in Paris)? Or in proud flamenco guise? Where is the balance? Does the pianist play exactly as written or is there margin for freedom?

My answer is both: convey the Spanishness while bending a little, as Falla himself indicates. It is important to maintain the clarity of the guitar figures that only a strong fingering can give. The spirit of the work must also be strong and passionate. However, within the sections that have no specific tempo or rubato changes, there is room for going ahead or pulling back.

Technically, the piece is difficult to know how to practise - a bit like Debussy. It is a piece that is not easy to put into the fingers, nor easy to keep there. Often a high wrist facilitates certain passages (Ms.115+, *falseta*) or thinking staccato (Ms. 388) or finding the physical gesture for the musical one (Ms. 402). The French school of playing seems to be the best approach to technical domination of this piece.

It is fundamental to understand the shape of the work and to find which notes are not important in showing that shape. Falla helps with this aspect through his dynamic markings. It is also useful to know something about the traditional flamenco songs and dances.

Many pianists have scaled the heights of this Andalusian Everest, but few have stayed there and have been able to convey its meaning. It is Falla's most abstract solo piano piece with the essence so distilled and intense that audiences too may have trouble absorbing it. No wonder then that a pianist of the stature of Artur Schnabel stopped playing it.

Strong Spanish character blended with a light French perfume, the ambiguous Fantasy contains all the markings of a pianistic Homage a Debussy and is worthy of serious study, whether or not the

interpreter chooses to be deceived by the composer's own words:

It is the only [work] written by me with 'purely pianistic' intentions, in what is referred to as instrumental technique. On the other hand, the title of 'Baética' has no 'especialmente sevilliano' significance whatsoever...I only tried to pay homage to our Latin-Andalusian race. Manuel de Falla

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Salvatore Moltisanti, pianist, ITALY
Chie Sato Roden, pianist, JAPAN-USA

CELESTIAL MECHANICS [MAKROKOSMOS IV] (1979)

George Crumb (b.1929)

- I. Alpha Centauri**
- II. Beta Cygni**
- III. Gamma Draconis**
- IV. Delta Orionis**

Born in Charleston, West Virginia, George Crumb is a world-renowned composer whose enthusiastic following in Europe and East Asia complements the devotion and high esteem he has long garnered among musicians and audiences in the United States. The interest in Crumb is not confined to a small circle of professional musicians, but extends outwardly to a broad audience. What especially distinguishes Crumb from many of his peers is his ability to communicate with persons who may have only a passing interest in classical contemporary music. He achieves this by appealing directly to the hearts of his listeners through his rich variety of sound, his engaging selection of titles, and his pulsating rhythms and vibrant melodies. In his journey to expand the musical possibility with the piano, he wrote a series of piano compositions entitled MAKROKOSMOS.

The Music of George Crumb is also interesting for the performer. It's hand-made texture is produced by the performer's striking, plucking, stroking, strumming the inside of the piano. In addition, he carries on the tradition of Western music with abundant references to Bach, Chopin, Debussy, and Messiaen. This attention to classical heritage is filtered through a fabric of non-Western rhythmic elements and structural symbols. As in the tradition of the best Baroque and Romantic composers, George Crumb's compositions have poetic titles and the scores are often visually stimulating.

The composer himself writes about the subtitle of the Makrokosmos IV –Celestial Mechanics: "The title was taken from the book written by a French mathematician Pierre Laplace (1749-1827). Because the piece invokes the sounds of stars dancing across the sky, each movement bears the name of one of the constellations. The vast sweep of the constellations is inseparable from the vast variety of sounds the four hands create in this music. And with its all-embracing conceptions of time and space, one can think of no more appropriate work to celebrate the dawn of the new millennium. The majestic movement of the stars does indeed suggest the image of a "cosmic choreography" and, in fact, I briefly considered opting for an alternate title (proposed by my brother, punster that he is)" -- The Celestial Ballroom."

Crumb also explains about the four-hand form he has taken for this piece: "I had long been