

# Liszt in Mexico 1840–1911

## I

ENRIQUE OLAVARRÍA Y FERRARI'S *Reseña del Teatro en México*, 3rd ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1961) carries its record of concert life in Mexico to Porfirio Díaz's overthrow May 25, 1911. The 107 allusions to Liszt gathered by him begin as early as a newspaper reference dated November 4, 1840, in which William Vincent Wallace's pianism is compared with that of Thalberg and Liszt [*Reseña*, 341]. On January 21, 1854, Ernest Lübeck (1829–1876)<sup>1</sup> appeared with violinist Franz Coenen (1826–1904) in a concert at the Teatro de Santa-Anna during which he offered as request numbers Liszt's *Norma* fantasy and *Galop infernal* = *Grand Galop chromatique* [545]. Oscar Pfeiffer, who concertized at Mexico City in February and March of 1856, claimed to be a follower not of the Herz school of piano playing but rather that of Liszt [634].

On January 14, 1866, after several months of planning, the Sociedad Filarmónica Mexicana held its first formal session. Claiming 74 members at its birth, it was preceded by a Club Filarmónico that

<sup>1</sup>In company with Coenen (of Rotterdam), Ernst Heinrich Lübeck toured South America in 1853. At Santiago de Chile, their concerts included a fantasy "sobre temas de Liszt" (Eugenio Pereira Salas, *Historia de la música en Chile (1850–1900)* [Santiago: Editorial Del Pacífico, 1957, p. 115]. *El Museo*, No. 1 (Santiago, June 11, 1853) qualified Lübeck—court pianist at the Hague—as an *expressivo, enérgico y preciso* player. After Mexico, Lübeck returned to his court post.

In 1855 he settled at Paris. For further details, see George Grove, ed., *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians (1450–1889)* (London: Macmillan, 1889), II, 171.

had been meeting at the house of the paramount Mexican pianist of the epoch, Tomás León (1826–1893).<sup>2</sup> The leading Mexico City critic of the epoch, Alfredo Bablot, reported that León's repertory heard at his Sunday soirées consisted chiefly of selections by Hummel, Gottschalk, Liszt, Prudent, and Thalberg. According to a *Memoria* written in 1866 by the secretary of the newly founded Sociedad Filarmónica Mexicana, the noted physician, Eduardo Liceaga (1839–1920), its absentee members included that year not only the Mexican celebrities José Antonio Gómez, Cenobio Paniagua, and Angela Peralta, but also so famous a foreign figure as "el Abate Liszt" [714] (on April 25, 1865, the "Abbé Liszt" had received the four minor orders at Rome—doorkeeper, reader, acolyte, and exorcist).

Just as Liszt retained earlier documents in Russian and Latin certifying membership in St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra and an honorary doctorate from Königsberg University, so also he preserved the diploma in Spanish dated December 1, 1865, that attested his honorary membership in the Mexican Philharmonic Society. Zsigmund László-Béla Mátéka published a facsimile of his extremely handsome Mexican diploma in *Franz Liszt: A biography in*

<sup>2</sup>Tomás León's primacy among Mexican pianists was recognized by Juárez, who sent him to entertain distinguished foreign guests. In 1869 Lincoln's Secretary of State William H. Seward arrived in Mexico City November 15 (left for Puebla December 18). Lodged at Alfaro núm. 15, he and his party were entertained by León and Eusebio Delgado, then Mexico's leading violinist. See Benito Juárez, *Documentos, Discursos y Correspondencia*, ed. J.L. Tamayo (Mexico City: Editorial Libros de México, 1975), XIV, 32.

*pictures* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1968), page 172. Now archived at the Liszt Museum, Budapest (in the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music), the Mexican diploma reads thus:

Sociedad Filarmónica Mexicana./Queda inscrito en la clase de Socios Honorarios y Correspon-/dientes el Señor Abate Listz/En fé de lo cual se le expide el presente diploma sellado con el gran sello/de la Sociedad./En México el primero de Diciembre de mil ochocientos sesenta y cinco./El Presidente Manuel Siliceo/El Secretario Eduardo Liceaga.

However, the love affair of "el Abate Listz" with Mexico took another turn after Maximilian was shot at Querétaro. Item 6 in *Années de Pèlerinage, troisième année* is a *Marche funèbre En mémoire de Maximilien I, Empereur du Mexique. + 19 Juin 1867* (Searle catalogue 163 = Raabe 10e, no. 6). Headed in the *editio princeps* (Mainz: B. Schotts Söhne, 1883) with the epigraph "In magnis et voluisse sat est" (a quotation from Propertius, book II, elegy no. 10, line 6: "In great enterprises the very 'I would' is enough"), this funeral march also exists in Liszt's autograph at Weimar (Liszt Archives, Ms. I 65<sup>a</sup>). The earlier, somewhat shorter manuscript version is headed with the motto thus translated into German: "In grossen Dingen genügt auch gewollt zu haben" ("In great things it is sufficient even to have wished").

Beginning appropriately in cavernous gloom with the tolling of discordant funeral bells, Liszt's march in memory of Maximilian who was shot June 19, 1867, gives way to an *espressivo* middle section (*recitativo*) followed at the end by a build-up from *tranquillo, grandioso* to an F sharp Major *trionfante* 24-bar apotheosis (*Neue Ausgabe Sämtliche Werke, Serie I, Band 8, ed. Zoltán Gárdonyi and István Szélenyi* [Editio Musica Budapest, 1975], 40–43).

## II

Visiting virtuosi who programmed Liszt's works at Mexico City before 1900 include: Albert Friedenthal<sup>1</sup> (September 3, 1884, Teatro Arbeu: *Hungarian*

<sup>1</sup>Before introducing Liszt to audiences at Mexico City, Friedenthal—a native of Pomerania who had studied with Kullak—had done the same at Lima, Peru. His first concert at Lima dated December 30, 1876 (given at the Hotel Francia-Inglaterra)

*Rhapsody, No. 2* [1110]); Elisa Joran (December 8, 1882, Gran Teatro: *Rigoletto* paraphrase [1233]); Eugen D'Albert (April 6, 8, 10, 13, 1890, Gran Teatro: *Tarantella, Rhapsody, No. 12, Polonaise, No. 2, Soirée de Vienne, No. 6* [1286–1288]); Ignacio Cervantes<sup>4</sup> (July 19, 1891, Gran Teatro: *Faust* fantasy [1329]); Alberto Jonas (August 6, 1892, Gran Teatro, Isolde's Love-Death [1403]); Eduard Scharf (February 25, 1893, Skating Ring, San Juan de Letrán, número 5: *Polonaise, No. 2* [1428]); Blanca Llisó (September 29, 1893, Teatro del Conservatorio: unspecified Hungarian Rhapsody, probably No. 2 [1505]); Gonzalo de J. Núñez<sup>5</sup> (January 21, 1895, Teatro del Conservatorio: 3 Hungarian Rhapsodies [1647]); Eduard Scharf (April 28, 1895, Teatro del Conservatorio: *Rhapsody, No. 2* [1695]); Vicente Mañaz (January 9, 1897, Sala Wagner, Calle Zuleta Nos. 13 & 14: *Rhapsody, No. 12* [1796]).

Almost invariably, these visiting virtuosi closed with Liszt. D'Albert shared his programs with Sarasate, Cervantes appeared with Rafael Albertini, Joran with Louise Pyk, Scharf with Ovide Musin. Friedenthal included in his concert *Aires nacionales mexicanos* by Julio Ituarte (1845–1905) and

ranged from a Bach prelude and fugue, Handel's Harmonious Blacksmith variations, Beethoven's *Appassionata*, Weber's *Invitation to the Waltz*, shorter pieces by Mendelssohn, Chopin, and Schumann, to Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 12*. His programs at Lima in January of 1877 pleased his Peruvian audiences better because they emphasized Chopin and Liszt, rather than Bach and Beethoven. See Rodolfo Barbacci, "Apuntes para un Diccionario Biográfico Musical Peruano," *Fénix* 6 (Lima, 1949), 457.

In 1889, Friedenthal concertized throughout Chile—taking with him much the same repertory that he had played in Mexico. His first recital at Santiago de Chile ended with the Wagner-Liszt *Tannhäuser* March and the second Hungarian Rhapsody (Pereira Salas, *Historia*, p. 208).

<sup>4</sup>See Serafín Ramírez, *La Habana artística Apuntes históricos* (Havana: Imp. del E.M. de la Capitanía General, 1891), p. 109, for Cervantes's review in *Diario de la Marina*, June 25, 1879, of Manuel Jiménez's first public performances at Havana (Gran Teatro de Tacón) of Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole* and *Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 15*.

<sup>5</sup>According to Fernando Callejo Ferrer, *Música y Músicos Portorriqueños* (San Juan: Tip. Cantero Fernández & Co., 1915), pp. 142–143, Gonzalo Núñez was a native of Bayamón. From 1868 to 1875 he studied with Le Couppey and Georges Mathias at the Paris Conservatoire. After a brief visit to Puerto Rico he spent 1876 to 1892 chiefly in the United States. In 1892 he concertized at San Juan, Mayagüez, Ponce, and Arecibo, thereafter giving recitals at Paris and Barcelona before resettling at New York, where he still resided in 1915.



# MARCHE FUNÈBRE

POUR

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PAR

# F. LISZT

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## ANNÉES DE PÉLERINAGE.

## VI.

## MARCHE FUNÈBRE.

EN MÉMOIRE DE MAXIMILIEN I,  
EMPEREUR DU MEXIQUE. † 19 JUIN 1867.

F. LISZT.

„In magnis et voluisse sat est.“

Andante, Maestoso, funebre.

PIANO.

8<sup>va</sup> bassa  
Ped.

8<sup>va</sup>  
8<sup>va</sup> bassa  
Ped.

8<sup>va</sup>  
Ped.

8<sup>va</sup>  
Ped.

*f marcato.*

*diminuendo.*  
*mp pesante.*  
8<sup>va</sup>  
Ped.

8va  
Ped. *sempre legato.* Ped.

This system features two staves. The upper staff contains a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (3, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3). The lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. Pedal markings are indicated by a dashed line with diamond symbols.

8va  
Ped. *cre - acen - do* *p* Ped.

This system continues the piece with similar notation. The lower staff includes the lyrics "cre - acen - do" and a dynamic marking of *p*. Pedal markings are present throughout the system.

8va  
Ped. Ped. Ped.

This system shows a continuation of the musical texture. The lower staff features a more complex accompaniment with some chromaticism. Pedal markings are indicated by a dashed line with diamond symbols.

*mp pesante.* *f marcato.* *sempre legato.*  
8va  
Ped. Ped. Ped.

This system introduces a change in dynamics and articulation. The upper staff begins with *mp pesante* and *f marcato*. The lower staff continues with *sempre legato*. Pedal markings are indicated by a dashed line with diamond symbols.

8va  
Ped. *cre* Ped. Ped.

The final system on the page shows the continuation of the musical piece. The lower staff includes the lyric "cre". Pedal markings are indicated by a dashed line with diamond symbols.

The musical score is arranged in five systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a vocal line. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The first system features a vocal line with the lyrics "scen do" and a piano dynamic marking *p*. The second system includes a piano dynamic marking *p* and the instruction *espressivo*. The third system is marked *dolce*. The fourth system is also marked *dolce* and includes the instruction *espressivo*. The fifth system is labeled "Recitativo" and features a vocal line with a fermata. Pedal markings "Ped." are placed below the grand staves at various intervals. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\vee$   $\diamond$

Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\vee$   $\diamond$

*tranquillo, grandioso.*

*p*  
*tremolando*  
*un poco cre.*

Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$

*scen . do .*

*diminuendo.*

Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$

*crescendo molto.* *ff* *ff*

Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.  $\diamond$  Ped.

trionfante. *ff* sempre

Ped. Ped.

This system contains the first two staves of music. The upper staff begins with the tempo marking *trionfante.* and the dynamic marking *ff* sempre. The music features complex rhythmic patterns with many beamed notes. Pedal markings (Ped.) are placed below the staves at the beginning and end of the system.

*legato.*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

This system contains the next two staves. The tempo marking *legato.* appears at the end of the system. Pedal markings (Ped.) are placed below the staves at the beginning, middle, and end of the system.

*sempre ff*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

This system contains the next two staves. The dynamic marking *sempre ff* appears at the end of the system. Pedal markings (Ped.) are placed below the staves at the beginning, middle, and end of the system.

Ped. Ped. Ped.

This system contains the final two staves of music. Pedal markings (Ped.) are placed below the staves at the beginning, middle, and end of the system. The music concludes with a final chord.



D'Albert on April 13, 1890, played Felipe Villanueva's (1862-1893) *Mazurka, No. 1*, in D. But, in general, travellers shunned native Mexican repertory. If they played anything not European, they preferred their own original compositions (Cervantes from Cuba, Mañaz from Spain, Núñez from Puerto Rico via New York).

The first native-born Mexican to perform Liszt's *Concerto, No. 1*, was Ricardo Castro (1864-1907), June 7, 1895, at the salon of the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria [1680]. However, the orchestra part was on this occasion confided to a string quartet headed by Luis G. Saloma (1866-1956). Castro played the *Hungarian Fantasia* with orchestra July 11, 1902, at the Teatro del Renacimiento [2386]. Mexican-born Luis Alfonso Marrón performed the *Concerto, No. 1* with orchestra July 19, 1903, at the Teatro del Conservatorio in a program including also Liszt's *Mazeppa* transcendental study and the Wagner-Liszt *Spinning Song* [2448]. Alberto Villaseñor—another premier Mexican pianist (died in early manhood)—offered the E flat *Concerto* as the *pièce de résistance* January 8 and September 22, 1905, at the Teatro Arbeu [2650 and 2734] and was the first Mexican to play *Rhapsody, No. 14*. Castro's Mexican-born pupil Rafael J. Tello (1872-1946) made his first important public appearance playing Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasia*. Accompanied by orchestra, he gave it at the Teatro del Conservatorio February 20, 1907 [2891] to conclude a testimonial to the Italian actor Novelli. For an encore, Tello played a waltz of his own composition.

### III

Continuing with a chronological listing of Liszt's solo piano works given at Mexico City: Paderewski closed each of his recitals March 10 and 11, 1900, at the Gran Teatro Nacional with Hungarian Rhapsodies (Nos. 6 and 2) [1988]. In 1901 Teresa Carreño (who like Paderewski was sponsored in Mexico by the publishing and music instrument firm, A. Wagner y Levien) gave four concerts at the Teatro del Renacimiento February 26, 28, and March 2, 3. She closed her first with the *Rhapsody, No. 6*, and her third with *La Campanella*. Pedro Luis Ogazón (1873-1929), one of the two or three Mexican-born pianists of his generation who enjoyed international

fame, included the unacknowledged Schubert-Liszt *Du bist die Ruh* and *Hark, hark the Lark* at his conservatory concert November 16, 1901, and from then on showed more enterprise than visitors in avoiding the inevitable Hungarian Rhapsodies, Nos. 2 and 6. At the Teatro del Conservatorio January 11, 1902, he moved from Beethoven's *Appassionata* to Liszt's *Polonaise, No. 2*, without forgetting to garnish the interior of his concert with works by his compatriots Ernesto Elorduy and Villanueva [2246]. Theodor Hansen, Russian *chargé d'affaires*, played Liszt's grandiose transcription of the *Marseillaise* at a concert in the Sala Wagner May 24, 1902, for the benefit of sufferers in the Martinique catastrophe [2329]. The English pianist Arthur Newstead's performance of the *Rákóczy March* (Rhapsody No. 15) at the Teatro Arbeu January 22, 1906, reaped an ecstatic review in *El Imparcial*. At the tenth concert of Newstead's series February 25, 1906, he played the Étude in D flat known as "Un sospiro," and *La Campanella*, but as a concession closed with the by now inescapable *Rhapsody, No. 2* [2784, 2785]. Ogazón programmed *Funérailles* at the Teatro Virginia Fábregas April 22, 1907 [2924] in a program that also included Debussy's *Jardins sous la pluie*. On July 6, 1907, assisting artist to the Brussels Quartet, F.W. Otto de Voss, closed his lengthy program at the same theater with the Mozart-Liszt *Don Juan* fantasy—after which he added as encores the Liszt *Tarantella* and *La Campanella* [2928]. At a benefit for Carlos J. Meneses (1863-1929) in the Teatro Arbeu September 1, 1907, Ogazón gave the first Mexico City performance of the *Rhapsodie espagnole* [2948].

Beginning January 5, 1908, Josef Hofmann played seven concerts, dividing them between the Academia Metropolitana and Teatro Arbeu. During the series he played 42 numbers by Chopin, 14 by Schumann, 10 by Liszt. The ten by Liszt included Rhapsodies, Nos. 2 and 6, *La Campanella*, *Funérailles*, *Gnomenreigen*, the Wagner-Liszt *Tannhäuser* overture, and the Bach-Liszt *Prelude and Fugue in A minor* [3005-3008]. That same year Marie Louise Deboges was the first visiting artist to program a Liszt song at Mexico City—his setting of Victor Hugo's *Enfant, si j'étais roi* (Searle catalogue, 283). Which version she chose is not clear, the 1844 or 1859. But the version given by her July 3, 1908, in the Teatro Arbeu was rapturously applauded [3057]. She again sang it July 23, 1908, during a historical recital in the Teatro del Conservatorio that ended

with *Allerseelen* by Strauss and *Mandoline* by Debussy.

Josef Lhevinne, who gave six concerts at Mexico City in 1909, opened his February 19 recital with the first Mexican performance of the Liszt B minor Sonata. On May 14, 1909, Liszt's "pupil" William Piutti played the *Polonaise, No. 2* at a concert in the Sala Wagner that also included his own *Ballade in A flat* published at Los Angeles, California [3189]. On June 1, 1910, Olga Steeb from Los Angeles included Liszt's Petrarch Sonnet 123 in her first Mexico City recital at the Academia Metropolitana—and was greatly thanked by critics for making known "this novelty" [3280].

To celebrate the opening of their new building at Zuleta 13 y 14 (= Capuchinas 21), A. Wagner y Levien in 1911 brought Arthur Friedheim to Mexico City for appearances February 16, 19, and 23 at their concert hall and February 20 at the Teatro Arbeu. Marking the centennial year of Liszt's birth, Fried-

heim played the B minor Sonata, *Ballade in B minor, Norma Fantasy*, both *Légendes, Feux follets*, 6 Paganini études, *Rhapsodie espagnole*, Hungarian Rhapsodies, Nos. 2, 9 (*Le Carnaval de Pesth*), 10, and 12, and the *Tannhäuser* overture [3358].

Three months later, Porfirio Díaz's overthrow halted any further plans to recognize the Liszt centennial. In the first decade of the century, the *Concerto, No. 1* had been played every other season (Carmen Munguía, October 8, 1908; María Solórzano, September 20, 1910 [3104, 3291]). The *Rhapsody No. 2* had become a military band staple [2169, 2827], a pianola exhibition piece [2724], and even a popular item in arrangements for string quintet [2567], for mandolins, and for guitars [2426, 2441]. Child prodigies had cut their teeth on the *Rhapsody, No. 6* and on *La Campanella* [2446, 3283, 3285, 3288]. What remained yet unheard by the Mexican public were any of his symphonic poems, symphonies, or choral works.