

Soundboard

Fall 2000

Asencio guitar works

Denis Azabagic

This CD presents the complete works for guitar of the Spaniard Vicente Asencio(1908-1979).

Although Asencio was overshadowed by his countryman Rodrigo and Torroba this recording gives eloquent testimony to the quality of his compositions. Asencio's style is more intimate than that of Rodrigo and not as idiomatic as that of Torroba, but his music is powerful, nevertheless the pieces were written over a span of approximately 45 years, from the mid-1930s until his death, and include several suites as well as two free-standing pieces. Of particular interest are the suites: specially the Suite Valenciana, and the Suite Mistica. The first has a beautiful haunting prelude followed by two equally effective movements. The Suite Mistica, commissioned by the Spanish National Radio to celebrate Holy week in 1971, is a musical representation of several of Christ's final words, and it is appropriately solemn and melancholy. The largest work on the CD is the Col-lectici intim, a group of five works that display a wide range of character. The opening "La Serenor" is a languid and bittersweet introduction to what follows. The virtuosic "La Joia" provides a spirited contrast with rapid passages.

Denis Azabagic The 1998 GFA competition winner is more than equal to the considerable demands this music presents. He **possesses a beautiful tone and an unerring musical sense** that renders every track utterly convincing.