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**PATRICIA CAICEDO (SOPRANO) AND EUGENIA GASSULL (PIANO).** *A Mi Ciudad Nativa/To My Native City: Art Songs of Latin America*. Vol. 2. Barcelona: Mundo Arts, 2005.

In her bio, Colombian-born Patricia Caicedo is described as a “soprano and musicologist,” indicating that her activities go beyond the simple performance of songs. She is something of an ambassador for Latin-American songs, regularly presenting this repertoire in recitals and concert-lectures around the world, and she has edited an anthology of Latin-American art songs that includes the scores for a number of the songs on this recording.<sup>1</sup> *A Mi Ciudad Nativa* is meant to complement Caicedo’s previous recording, *Lied: Art Songs of Latin America* (2001).<sup>2</sup> On the earlier disc, Caicedo presented songs that were more familiar (at least to listeners with some knowledge of Latin-American music), and it was recorded at a time when she was in the early stages of her research on Latin-American art songs. This new recording represents the broadening of her knowledge of the repertoire through research and through the cultivation of relationships with living twentieth-century composers or with their descendents. Reportedly she has amassed a collection of scores for some 2,500 songs from eighteen countries, a number that amazes even those of us who have studied Latin-American art songs for some time. Not surprisingly, Caicedo has ambitious plans for future recordings. She intends to make a series of recordings, one CD for each Latin-American country that gives an overview of the art song’s development in each respective country. She is also making a series of lecture-recital DVDs having to do with the art songs of each country, and she has already completed the DVDs for Argentina, Colombia, and Brazil. Other projects include a recording of the complete art songs of Colombian composer Jaime León, as well as a CD of songs dedicated to her by composers she has met during the course of her studies.

*A Mi Ciudad Nativa* (a title taken from one of the songs by Jaime León) is the first CD to be released by Mundo Arts, an organization devoted to the advancement of Latin-American and Spanish classical music (see <http://www.mundoarts.com> for more information). The disc is essentially a recital program organized by the geographical origin of the songs: Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, Mexico, and Cuba. The composers represented on the disc are Jaime León (b. 1921), José María Tena (1895–1952), and Adolfo Mejía (1905–73) of Colombia; Claudio Santoro (1919–89), Osvaldo Lacerda (b. 1928), Francisco Mignone (1897–1986), and Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959) of Brazil; and Carlos Guastavino (1912–2000), Julio Perceval (1903–63), and Ariel Ramírez (b. 1921) of Argentina. The remaining composers

are Theodoro Valcárcel (Peru, 1896–1942), Juan B. Plaza (Venezuela, 1898–1965), Eduardo Caba (Bolivia, 1890–1953), Manuel M. Ponce (Mexico, 1882–1948), and Nilo Meléndez (Cuba, 1902–87).

Of the twenty-eight songs on the disc, thirteen are recorded here for the first time. I have to admit, though, that the only song I had heard previously on a long-playing record was Guastavino's "En los surcos del amor." All of the others were new to me, even those by Ponce and Villa-Lobos. One of Caicedo's goals with this recording was to give space to lesser known composers, and as such well-known composers are granted less space. Villa-Lobos is only represented by one song, "Estrela e lúa nova," but it shines like a tiny gem. The most unusual set is probably *Cuatro Canciones Incáicas* by Peruvian composer Theodoro Valcárcel. His songs are based on Quechuan and Aymara texts, and the composer sets them with pentatonic melodies typical of highland music and vaguely impressionistic accompaniments. Caicedo gives top billing to fellow Colombian Jaime León, including five of his songs (the most of any composer on the CD) and placing them first on the program. These are very attractive, and I look forward to Caicedo's promised recording of a complete CD of León's canciones. Other highlights of the disc for me were Adolfo Mejía's "Cartagena" and Osvaldo Lacerda's "O menino doente." In all, this is a fine CD that should prove valuable to scholars of Latin-American song and enjoyable to listeners seeking new repertoire. Caicedo's voice is what I would call a light soprano with a pleasing timbre, plenty powerful when she needs to be, but not overbearing.

I should mention that the CD booklet contains program notes in Spanish and English, as well as texts and English translations for the songs. One thing I did not like about the booklet is that the translations of the song texts do not appear side-by-side with the original texts. The translations are in the second half of the booklet with the English program notes, while the Spanish notes and original texts are located in the first half. I would strongly advise that the song texts and their translations appear side-by-side in future volumes, so that it is not necessary to flip back and forth between pages to compare the texts. One other problem is an apparent word-processing mishap on the first page of the English half of the booklet. Halfway down the page there is a false start in the English version of the notes, then a whole paragraph in Spanish followed by the finished translation of the English program notes.

Finally, I personally am touched that the disc is dedicated to the memory of Gerard Béhague, who was my own doctoral mentor and the editor of this journal until his passing in June 2005. It never ceases to amaze me how many lives he has touched, and how far and wide is his influence. We all miss him very much.

To see a complete song list and hear samples from *A Mi Ciudad Nativa*, visit her website: <http://www.patriciaaicedo.com/Discography.htm>.

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## Notes

1. Patricia Caicedo, ed. *La canción artística en América Latina : antología crítica y guía interpretativa para cantantes* (Barcelona, Spain: Edicions Tritó, 2005).
2. Patricia Caicedo (soprano) and Pau Casan (piano), *Lied: Art Songs of Latin America* (Barcelona, Spain: Edicions Albert Moraleda, 2001). Catalog no. 0132.