

Malaguena from *Espana* Op 165 No 3 by Isaac Albeniz (1860-1909)

Description: Composed in 1890, this is an energetic piece full of Spanish harmonies and rhythm. It requires clear rhythmical playing, evenness between hands, and independence of parts to project the guitar-like accompaniment with melody. This is a good piece for smaller hands and recitals. AMEB 7th Grade List C.

What does the title mean?

'Malaguena' refers to a Spanish dance or folk song that comes from Malaga in Spain. The malaguena is usually accompanied by a mandolin, cuatro, guitar. It has a sad melancholic melody and is now associated with a religious celebration in May.

Which musical period does this piece come from?

The Romantic period.

What is the style of the Romantic period?

Music from the Romantic period is typically made up of or features some of the following:-

- singing melodies, with long phrases
- accented dissonance or chromaticism, but usually with a resolution following (can be delayed somewhat)
- homophonic texture, though polyphony was used towards the end of this period
- elastic rhythm, tempo rubato
- large range of dynamics and expressive devices for personal expression
- more score markings from composers
- epic pieces or miniatures, character pieces, poetic/lyrical works, program music
- prominence of piano music, rise of the virtuoso - a large piano repertoire developed at this time
- secular works for paying audiences
- rise of Nationalism and influence of folk music

What is the style of this piece by Albeniz?

The malaguena is a type of Flamenco style which originates from Spain. Typically, the flamenco uses the Phrygian mode. This type of dance often features a solo dancer that uses hand clapping, percussive rhythmical foot stomping and large sweeping arm movements. The rhythmic patterns are important in both the music and dance movements. The malaguena also uses a stanza form (in verses), and strict rhythmic patterns. This work is an example of Nationalism. It uses folk dance elements derived from the composer's country.

What key is this in?

The piece uses a B Spanish phrygian scale with a descending chord progression that is typical of the Spanish Flamenco style.

What is the form of this piece?

The form of this work is ternary form.

Section A begins with an introduction, followed by the entry of the bass melody.

The rhythm is reminiscent of Spanish castenets and guitar strumming/plucking.

Section B, in G major, uses songlike phrases with arpeggio interludes.

Section A returns after a short cadenza.

Score markings:

<p>staccato - short and detached sf - sforzando - heavy accent sonoro - in a singing style marc. - marcato - marked, accented ben. ten. - very tenuto poco cres. - gradually become louder, little by little ff - fortissimo - very loud legg. - leggiero - light and rapid sempre stacc. - always short and detached cantando - in a singing style una corda - one string - left pedal (mute) rall. - rallentando - gradually become slower ben. marc. - well marked poco piu - a little more movement p - piano - soft pp - pianissimo - very soft mf - mezzo forte - moderately loud Allegretto - moderately fast Adagio - slow and calm Lento - slow ten. col. Ped. - tenuto with Pedal</p>	<p>triplet - 3 notes in the time of 2 slur - play legato cresc. - crescendo - gradually getting louder fermata - pause - hold for longer than written tenuto - hold note for full value martellato - hammered accent Molto Adagio - very much slow (at ease) mordent - like a trill but only four notes ottava - up an octave higher than written acciaccatura - play quickly before the main note diminuendo - gradually getting softer</p>
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