

Music in Review

April 20, 2010

‘FALLA AND FLAMENCO’

[Brooklyn Academy of Music](#)



In the 1990s the [Brooklyn Philharmonic](#) offered a series of thematic programs, assembled by the writer Joseph Horowitz, usually with several events built around a single subject. One memorable installment, devoted to the influence of flamenco on the early-20th-century Spanish nationalist composers, included films of classic flamenco singers, and an orchestra concert with the dancer [Pilar Rioja](#).

Mr. Horowitz revived that idea and refined its focus in “Falla and Flamenco” on Saturday afternoon and evening at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, this time with the [Orchestra of St. Luke’s](#).

Along with a concert of Falla rarities, the program included two film screenings and a postperformance discussion.

Pedro Carboné, the Spanish pianist, opened the concert with a solo showpiece, the “Fantasía Baetica,” in which he deftly balanced Falla’s flamenco-influenced decorative figuration, brash chord progressions and lilting, modal themes.

The orchestra, led by Angel Gil-Ordóñez, joined Mr. Carboné in a muted but graceful account of “Nights in the Gardens of Spain,” a tour of Spanish music that touches not only on the Gypsy influences that crystallized as flamenco but on Moorish influences as well.

After intermission, Mr. Gil-Ordóñez led a reduced ensemble in the ballet-pantomime “El Corregidor y la Molinera” (“The Magistrate and the Miller’s Wife”), which Falla later expanded as “The Three-Cornered Hat.” But the revised score’s most familiar themes are already here, and they benefit from the transparency of this chamber scoring.

Ramón Oller’s choreography was busier than necessary, but the dancers — Mr. Oller as the Magistrate, Javier García as the Miller, Sandrine Rouet as the Miller’s Wife, Jonathan Windham as the Chief of Police and members of Peridance — conveyed the story with seductive clarity. Magdalena Llamas, a mezzo-soprano, gave a lovely account of the score’s single vocal movement, the “Song of the Cuckoo.” **ALLAN KOZINN**