

Cellists' Corner

Brief Career Details of Important Cellists

prepared by David Johnstone from public information

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CELLISTS' CORNER

SANTOS GANDÍA LAHIDALGA

A Basque-Guipuzcoan cellist, born in San Sebastián (Basque Country), on 1st November, 1899. He died in Madrid on October 28th, 1975.

In his hometown he studied with Alfredo Larrocha (his only real teacher) and at the San Sebastian Conservatory he obtained the 'Extraordinary end of studies' Prize. The Provincial Council of Guipúzcoa granted him a scholarship that allowed him to move to Paris, where he perfected himself by listening, almost daily, to the best "cellists" in the world.

In 1928 he settled in Madrid; at the Conservatory there he finished his career with First Prize and joined the Madrid Symphony Orchestra as principal cello. With this orchestra, he performed many times the symphonic poem 'Don Quixote' by Richard Strauss, and Beethoven's Triple Concerto. In other activities he was founder musician of the Madrid Chamber Orchestra, he was a member of Abelardo Corvino's Spanish Quartet, and he formed the Chamber Trio which, in addition to himself included Manuel Garijo (flute), and his San Sebastian colleague Nicanor Zabaleta (harp). They debuted at the Madrid Musical Culture Association on April 25th, 1932, and then carried out an extensive tour of the Spanish provinces, programming (in addition to others) works of José María Franco, Salvador Bacarisse, and Mantecón.

Two years later, in 1934, on March 7th, he re-appeared at the Madrid Philharmonic Society, joining the Spanish Classical Trio, in which Federico Senén was the violinist and Quevedo the pianist; He performed more concerts in the aforementioned entity, with the interpretation of the complete cycle of Beethoven's Trios.

When the Spanish National Orchestra was founded, he was entrusted with the position of soloist cello. Given his beautiful sound, exquisite taste and mastery of the instrument, Conrado del Campo did not hesitate to commission him to give the first hearing of his own 'Concerto in A', taking place on November 8th, 1942, under the direction directed by Bartolomé Pérez Casas.

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