

THE "ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO"

OF MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study has been to compile into one volume a clear, direct explanation of the educational and musical philosophies which have guided Manuel López Ramos in his role as director of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico since he founded it in 1962. This study clarifies the methodology for guitar studies at that school in México City.

An examination of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico as a school is undertaken. This is a school founded by a performing artist with a passion for teaching not just the very gifted, but also those with no special talent other than a sincere desire to play the guitar. This school, in its thirty-sixth year of operation, offers a comprehensive plan of study in guitar consisting of eight courses in three sections, which leads to the awarding of a Diploma. The faculty consists of Maestro López Ramos and six graduates of the program. This school claims to be the first in the world to develop a singular tradition in the study of the guitar.

On May 24th, 25th, and 26th of 1997, the author conducted a series of taped interviews with Maestro López Ramos at his home in México City. López Ramos is of the opinion that anyone has the right to learn; not just the privileged few and the exceptionally gifted. This study explains the methodology López Ramos employs in implementing

this philosophy. Finally, a comprehensive view of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is presented, with implications for further research.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

...With such universal plaudits it seems inconceivable that the artist could at one time have been critically appraised by some pundits because of right hand technique--it just didn't look right, But this was an era when how things looked was as important as how they sounded; when a student with an inflexible thumb, wanting to produce a soft sounding chord, couldn't be seen to sweep the ball of the thumb across the strings with hand flat out, fingers extended (to avoid the strings.) Nowadays, notions of sound technique begin with the ear and at the point of contact with the string. Also, López Ramos had the misfortune to have some rigid adherents who couldn't do with their right hand what the master could do with his...¹

Manuel López Ramos was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1929. When he was seven years of age, he began working in the theater as a singer and dancer with his family who were artists that traveled and performed music throughout Latin America. He worked in that ensemble until he was sixteen. When he was twelve, he began to play the guitar. It was at that age that he also heard Andrés Segovia for the first time which left an unforgettable impression. Although he studied music with several professors, he studied the guitar with only one, Miguel Michelone, his future father-in-law.² López Ramos was awarded first prize by the Argentine Chamber Music Association in 1948 "as the best instrumentalist of the year."³ In 1962, he started the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in Mexico City.⁴

The intent of this study is to show that the curriculum of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is a progressive one and that students, regardless of natural ability, who follow its logical order may expect to achieve positive results. This is the basic assertion. The author will, of course, define what he believes constitutes a successful classical guitar student and/or guitarist graduate.

This author graduated from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, May of 1971, the first person in the State to graduate with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Classical Guitar Performance. His teacher at the time, Mr. David Underwood, recommended attending a class taught by Manuel López Ramos at Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, for three weeks in June of 1971. A colleague of his, Mr. Terry Muska, guitar instructor at San Antonio College, had attended a one-month curso (course) for foreign students given by López Ramos at his Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in México City and had returned with what both felt was a wealth of knowledge concerning guitar technique and musical interpretation.

What the author had heard before that time led him to believe that López Ramos was a dogmatist with extreme ideas. Upon reading Mr. Muska's notes from the one month curso, this author could immediately tell that his poorly conceived notion of this teacher and his teaching methods was at best mistaken. What the author read was from the hand of someone

who had not only performed in some of the class sessions, but who had observed the interactions in all the class sessions, in order that he might be able to utilize that information in the future. The contents of the notes revealed that López Ramos was an individual of strong convictions but an open mind, a teacher of great compassion for the sincere student at any level, and a performing artist of great imagination who enjoyed his dual profession as teacher and performer. What this author read in those notes was a revelation.

The summer class at Spring Hill College was initiated by Daniel Creagan, S.J., who taught guitar at the college and was head of the Fine Arts Department.⁵ At Spring Hill College in June of 1971, an audition tape was not a requirement for being accepted as a performer in the class with López Ramos. There were no restrictions on the enrollment. The number of performers was such that in a three-hour class, with one portion of the time devoted to lecture, each participant was expected to play in class every two days. Many things impressed me during this three-week course. One was that López Ramos seemed as interested during regular class time coaching a professional performer such as Jack Cecchini,⁶ an established and impressive guitarist from Chicago who had taught guitar at De Paul University (Chicago), as he was teaching two other students who had special needs. Thus, he would teach the two

students with special needs individually, every day, and at no extra cost for thirty minutes each, before the actual class began. It was, of course, an extra imposition, but López Ramos did not want the majority of the class who were eager and impatient to learn something new bored by the efforts of those who were not capable of learning any faster. If one were scheduled to play on a given night, and the time progressed past ten o'clock (the time class was scheduled to end), one performed anyway, even on at least one occasion when the class ran as late as eleven-thirty. If you did not want to stay and wait your turn, it was your loss. In those cases when the class exceeded its time frame, and for good reasons--such as transportation difficulties, or for employment considerations--the participant could not stay late, then special consideration was made for that individual and that person was not deprived of a rightful opportunity. As far as López Ramos was concerned, it was his decision to give whatever time he felt was necessary to the particular performer, so that if you were scheduled to play, he was going to teach, even when it meant he might work one or two hours more than for what he was being paid. The reason for the classes running overtime, and in most cases they did, was because he would not be held to an absolute amount of time with a student, only a general amount of time. For example, if a student were scheduled to perform two pieces, but had only prepared

one, then there were usually various reasons for this: such reasons as the student did not have the confidence in his/her abilities, was simply nervous, or perhaps felt intimidated by the quality of performance of the previous guitarist. If it were a scenario where the student could play the piece, but felt insecure about possibly a note or two, or about an ability to be musically expressive, or unable to perform as expressively as the guitarist who had just finished playing, then López Ramos would change the mood in the room, usually through a humorous musical anecdote which would put everyone in a relaxed mood, and would then encourage the student to go ahead and play the piece, even if the student did not feel adequately prepared. Usually, López Ramos was successful in his attempts to get the student to perform. After the student performed, López Ramos would inevitably praise whatever was positive about what had been prepared and then offer truly constructive and attainable suggestions for improvement. The student left inspired, anxious to begin practicing, and the class learned how to recognize new elements in a piece of music while the work is still in a state of preparation. Another reason for only one of two pieces having been prepared by a student was quite simply that there was only time to work on one of them, and there was absolutely no reason to put a mature student and a large class through a pressure-driven, belabored performance of a piece that would be a repetition

of what had been heard two days prior. What else would there be to say other than the obvious, i.e., "You haven't worked enough on this piece and you need to practice those things which were mentioned two days ago." This would be a waste of time for the mature student and for a class of performers and auditors wanting to be inspired by new ideas and concepts. On the other hand, when a student was scheduled to prepare two pieces and prepared three instead, López Ramos would make at least some time to listen to the third piece, depending on his familiarity with the work. If he had not heard the piece before, and perhaps felt he needed more time to think of ideas for fingering and/or artistic expression, he might listen to the piece once or twice and/or ask to borrow the music for a day or two in order to become more acquainted with the work. Of course, if he were already acquainted with the work, then his approach to the piece would be different. It should be mentioned that the preparation of two works was not necessarily a class requirement, as there were students working on longer works which, to listen to and discuss, take as much or more time than two shorter pieces.

One other point which impressed the author and which is now to be addressed concerns what López Ramos refers to as the Metodología, or what we may call "curriculum." A re-typed version, the copy of which the author received at that class, may be reviewed in Appendix C. My first vision of

that Program of Study was a true revelation. What appeared in print was a logical and systematic approach to learning to play the guitar that, if followed, would enable a student, with the addition of dedication and hard work but without any guesswork, ultimately to achieve the level of a concert artist, if he/she so desired, or at least that of a truly successful student of the guitar.

Before the author arrived at Spring Hill College in 1971, he had never seen a program of study that would guide a student from the very beginnings of learning the guitar (i.e., Sagreras, Book 1; Giuliani, Arpeggios, nos. 1-10; etc.), to the other end of the spectrum (Sagreras, Book 6; Villa-Lobos, Études; and works by J. S. Bach). This was a virtual map for the aspiring guitarist who would otherwise be forced to chart a course in an unmarked wilderness. It showed a logical and progressive manner for progressing from point A to point B without any frustrating and unexplainable gaps. This program of study devised by Manuel López Ramos allows the aspiring guitarist to see that the time invested would not be wasted nor, perhaps, ill-spent. It was all there in black and white, and it all made sense. There were no secrets, it was just a logical, progressive order of studies with suggested repertoire for each year of study.

The scope of this dissertation will be first to discuss the educational philosophy of Manuel López Ramos as it pertains generally to music, and specifically to the guitar.

Next, a view of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico from its beginnings in 1962 to its present-day operations, the size of its faculty and student enrollment, its facilities, and its curriculum will be taken. Finally, the Metodología, or curriculum, used in teaching the individual classical guitar student at the Estudio will be reviewed, and how it has changed over the years will also be examined. In summation, implications for further research and recommendations for further study will be presented.

Notes

George Clinton. Introductory remarks from, "My Right Hand Technique" by Manuel López Ramos, Guitar International, April, 1989, 34.

²Manuel López Ramos, "Viewpoints: Manuel López Ramos," interview by Catherine Lawrence (Pamela Kimmel, interpreter, 13 June 1979) Guitarra Magazine, (September-October 1979): 5.

³John Ford, "The 'Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico' of Manuel López Ramos" (Ph.D. diss., Texas Tech University, 1998), 216.

⁴Manuel López Ramos, interview by author, 24 and 26 May 1997, México City. Tape recording. Appendix B, 141 and 161-162, Appendix A, 101 and 122.

⁵Ruth and Jerry Mock, "On campus: Music, art offered," Creative Guitar International, Volume 3, Number 1 (Fall 1975): 32.

⁶Mr. Jack Cecchini is a distinguished guitarist, performer, and teacher who has worked professionally in recording studios, with symphony orchestras, with Grant Park, with opera productions, as a solo classical guitarist, with flutists, with vocalists, as a jazz guitarist, as leader of his own jazz quartet, with Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, Johnny Mathis, and the Belafonte Enterprises. Information obtained from "Guitar 101, The Fender Method," (Philadelphia: Lyrrus, 1997, CD-ROM) Chapter 6, "About Jack Cecchini."

CHAPTER II
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF
MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS

Every human being has the right to make music, because a child hears sounds in the womb before it is born, and afterwards. Knowing musical sounds but not being able to reproduce or create them results in a frustrated lifestyle. The teacher needs to develop ways, methods for all, not just some to be able to play correctly.

The above quote, from a conversation the author had with Manuel López Ramos in México City, may explain why a gifted performer cares more about teaching, perhaps, than performing; and not just teaching the very gifted, but anyone with a sincere desire to learn. On one occasion, López Ramos once made the comment² that many teachers have a philosophy that in time, given the prodigy, they could make a virtuoso out of that student. When López Ramos considers this philosophy, he feels that it really claims nothing; for the prodigy is going to succeed in any case, no matter how bad or good the teacher. López Ramos feels that the mission of a teacher should be to serve. A person dedicated to teaching should be willing to give his/her knowledge, patience, and guidance to anyone with a sincere desire to learn, regardless of the absence or presence of any innate ability.

When López Ramos came to México, it was not with the intention of teaching, much less of opening and maintaining

a school. He was concerned with establishing a career as a concert artist in South, Central, and North America, as well as in Europe. But upon arriving in México, he discovered that many of the teachers in that country were not aware of an established guitar school, and were merely teaching themselves and their students in any manner they could devise. This approach could hardly guarantee results for anyone, much less the majority of those seeking to play the guitar. So, many teachers asked López Ramos for his ideas and concepts about guitar instruction, in order that those teachers might incorporate them for the mutual benefit of themselves and their students. López Ramos did not feel particularly capable, from the standpoint of having had experiences as a teacher, of what would work and what would not; he only felt capable from the standpoint of having been a student of Miguel Michelone³ in Argentina. Michelone was a student of Julio S. Sagreras who was taught by Miguel Llobet, a student of Francisco Tárrega. López Ramos was well acquainted with the approach that had been used to successfully guide him, and believed this system which his former teacher developed was a progressive one. Therefore, López Ramos felt it was logical to surmise this system could render positive results with others; the six books of Sagreras, in conjunction with the studies by Carulli, Carcassi, Sor, Coste, and so on, had afforded him a progressive approach for the systematic study of the

guitar, and for the development of his performance abilities on that instrument.

The deep belief of López Ramos is that anyone sincerely wishing to play the guitar, even those who were seemingly denied the ability by nature, not only could learn, but should not be denied the opportunity. For that opportunity to render positive results, however, there should be a curriculum in place that would allow for the development of the student's ability through an impassioned and disciplined creative teaching environment which is ever evolving and progressive, taking into consideration new didactic literature and repertoire.

Because of this belief, López Ramos in time came up with the idea of starting his own school. He felt it should be a private one; private in the sense that it would not be affiliated with the National Conservatory or other schools of music that, by their nature, must deal with matters of education within a bureaucratic system.

"Si nosotros no hacemos música, es conocer un idioma y no poderlo hablar. Y eso, indudablemente, es traumático para todo ser humano. (If we do not make music, it's like knowing a language and not being able to speak it. And that, undoubtedly, is traumatic for every human being)."⁴ If as human beings we are aware of sound as early as the fetal stage, then it follows that sound must include music as well as the spoken word. For those individuals who, as

children, grew up in an environment of musical sound, it could well be frustrating to a degree to hear these sonorities year after year but yet not to be able to experience reproducing them. As a non-participant, the person can only enjoy these sonorities by means of the radio, compact disc player, audio or video tape, television, or live performance. Then, if a youth with a desire to reproduce musical sound meets with an unpleasant and discouraging educational experience that diverts him/her from that enjoyable musical activity, as an adult that person may pass through life with a love/hate relationship with music. Unfortunately, this type of experience all too often manifests itself in a youth who grows up to become an administrator in an institution of higher learning who must make decisions concerning the budget for the fiscal year of a music program; or, even worse, that there may not be a budget for a music program. Therefore, if a person feels the need to be of service, and realizes that need as a teacher, then perhaps everyone will be best served if that teacher recognizes the responsibility of guiding the way for all individuals who are enamored with the sounds of an instrument, but do not know how to reproduce those sounds. Further, it seems not only reasonable, but logical and practical, that there be an established school with a philosophy that would serve the needs of all individuals, whether they display a natural propensity for music or not.

López Ramos feels an immense degree of pleasure and satisfaction in having guided many instrumentalists performing today who were not necessarily gifted, nor who had special abilities, but were simply persons who happened to love music in general, and the guitar in particular. He is proud that he has accomplished this not only in México, but in the United States, Europe, and other areas of the world. He feels he was able to achieve this by giving those seeking a way to learn to play the guitar, a progressive and disciplined path, complete with many examples to study. First, this process is initiated by teaching the correct position of the body, the arms, the hands, the fingers and their proper movements. The next step is to teach by explanation and example the necessity for daily use of the metronome, slow study and practice, and for the marking of right-hand fingerings in a reasonable form. The final step is to exhibit the different groups of studies, and to demonstrate different methods of memorization. In summation, López Ramos related that he had enthusiastically dedicated himself to teaching for the reason he had just explained: he felt obligated to respond to any human being who felt the need to make music.

It follows that this philosophy should naturally carry over directly to López Ramos' school, the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. López Ramos is of the opinion that a school should first be a system which is of service to the student,

and to the music. His responsibility as a teacher and as the Director of the school is first to the student, who as a human being has the right to perform music, and second, to maintain a school which fosters this concept of responding to the needs of the students.

The educational basis of this school of López Ramos is to teach the student how to study. What will be studied, and how, is defined by the metodología or curriculum (which will be discussed in Chapter IV,) and the needs of the individual student.

The metronome represents a cornerstone in the educational base of learning to study music in the system of López Ramos, for it is essential in the management of the time and effort expended by the student in the performance of the music, the lessons, the scales, and the arpeggios. "El metrónomo viene a ser el maestro en casa del alumno. (The metronome becomes the teacher in the student's house)." ⁵ It is Maestro Lopez Ramos' experience that most students have a tendency to rush, and as a consequence, he insists on giving all of the study material at metronome markings that he feels the student is capable of realizing when practicing alone. In a lesson, the teacher can watch the student's every move and stop the student to mark time if he/she falls out of synchronization with the tempo. At home, the metronome must take the place of the teacher. This method allows the student to control the movements of

the hands and fingers, to learn what it is that the composer is trying to communicate rhythmically on each page of the music, and also to sense the concept of regular rhythmic feeling. López Ramos believes that the metronome is really not the enemy of the instrumentalist. Certainly, when a piece of music has been correctly learned, notes and rhythm, then the instrumentalist will want to introduce other musical elements such as rubato, tonal shadings, nationalistic characteristics present in the work, and so on. But, to the student who is learning the music, the metronome is a policeman of sorts that obliges the student to maintain established and regular rhythm. This being the case, the teacher needs to know how to give the proper tempos for the individual student, in order that the student might not proceed too quickly and ignore the necessary clarity and care that each work requires, be it more technical or musical in spirit.

According to López Ramos, not only is it very important to learn to study, but it is also very important to learn to memorize. With this statement, the Maestro led the author to possibly what will be, perhaps, one of his (López Ramos) last pedagogical legacies. This is to explore the possibility of learning the correct movements of the hands and fingers in the lessons, technical studies, and musical works, i.e., those movements that are assimilated by the subconscious through the positive reinforcement of

consistent repetitive movements associated with specific sounds, and that the eyesight not be allowed to intervene. To put it another way, Maestro López Ramos feels that the eyesight can be an impediment to memorization when it constantly, not merely occasionally, observes the fretting hand in performance. When music is memorized, it is stored in the subconscious mind. The constant observation of the fretting hand by the performer in performance is a liability, in that what the eyes are observing is being taken in by the conscious mind. When any distraction occurs to divert the concentration of the conscious mind from the information being supplied by the subconscious mind, then the performer is no longer aware of the performance but, rather, of the distraction. When a guitarist is learning the music from a score, he/she looks at the notation first, and then, if unsure of the location of the note(s), at the fretboard. Eventually, though, even that need to refer to the fretboard diminishes. Yet, in performance, this is exactly what many guitarists will do: stare at the left hand. But why? The music was not learned by focusing constantly on the fretboard. Therefore, it seems unreasonable, if not counterproductive, to foster a habit in performance that has not been sufficiently practiced. So, the logical question follows: why stare at the fretboard and fretting hand in performance?

Maestro López Ramos feels that if the vision does not intervene by constantly observing the left hand, then a significant step can be made in consistently creating guitarists of the same level as other instrumentalists; such as keyboardists, violinists, and violoncellists. He believes that this is the great secret of many instrumentalists who do not know why they are great, due to their natural abilities. This author feels that it is not so much a secret as it is something taken for granted by these instrumentalists, who feel that their respective instrument is an extension of their very being. Regardless of how it is said, López Ramos feels that teachers need to be in search of those natural qualities. He refers to the process of searching for those natural qualities seemingly inherent in the great instrumentalists as "en busca del don" (in search of the gift).⁶ The natural gifts of ability, pitch, and facility, are innate qualities placed by Divine Providence in many of the great artists. Regardless, López Ramos is of the opinion that it is not only necessary, but possible that everyone be able to play correctly and well, and strive for the possibility of becoming a great artist if he/she so wishes. If someone wishes to strive for the goal of becoming a great artist, then the teacher is obliged to search for and discover means whereby this may be achieved.

López Ramos believes that it is necessary to be in search of the don (gift). "Si Dios no nos dio ese don, vamos en busca de él. Veamos cómo se puede llegar a tenerlo. Encontremos el camino para darle esta posibilidad a todos los seres que quieren tocar un instrumento. (If God doesn't give us that gift, we go in search of it. Let's see how one can arrive at obtaining it. Let's find the road in order to give this possibility to all those who want to play an instrument)." ⁷ For, as far as Maestro López Ramos is concerned, the right to play is not something that should be reserved for only those born with this natural gift.

It is for this reason that López Ramos analyzes himself, his students, searching through the free exchange of impressions and ideas, and seeking the possibility that guitarists might arrive at the same level as other instrumentalists. What López Ramos is hoping to achieve, is that guitarists will someday have as great a repertoire as the other instrumentalists.

López Ramos stated that, in his opinion, it is understandable why guitarists suffer from memory slips and mistakes which disrupt their concentration. The reason for this, he believes, relates back to what was mentioned earlier: the fact that many guitarists constantly stare at the fretboard and the fretting hand in performance. Most guitarists seem unwilling to rely on what is stored in the subconscious, or what Mr. López Ramos calls, "en el

receptáculo que el hombre tiene de conocimientos profundos. (in the receptacle man has for profound knowledge)." ⁸ López Ramos hopes that this search will render the results that he foresees at this time, in order that performers born without the don will be able to persevere. If this is accomplished, then all the anguish and suffering experienced due to lapses of memory, the self-doubt when one plays, may be dismissed, and that "pueda hacerse música con la misma tranquilidad que la hacen los grandes artistas. (music can be made with the same tranquility that the great artists make it [music])." ⁹

A problem which never ceases to amaze López Ramos, one which he feels must be overcome in teaching the guitar and guiding the student to the same level as that achieved by other instrumentalists, involves the attitude of many would-be guitarists who desire to play as well as the late Andrés Segovia did, but in a matter of only a very few months. This is, of course, as unrealistic a notion as a beginning violinist, violoncellist, or pianist, who expects to play as well as, respectively, the late Henryk Szeryng, Pablo Casals, or Artur Rubinstein did, but in only a very few months. López Ramos made the following analogy to this author, in order to point out the difference between a serious student and one not-so-serious. The serious student of the guitar is like the serious medical student who is determined to attend medical school for eight years,

plus four more for specialization, in order to cure the sick. The not-so-serious student of the guitar is like the not-so-serious student of medicine who places himself/herself in a school of curanderos (folk healers,) so that in three months to a year he/she can be free to cure or kill whoever comes along. In this author's interview with López Ramos, after having given the above analogy, the Maestro said that a student must decide whether or not his/her wish is to become a dedicated guitarist, or a guitaristic curandero. To achieve great technique, or improve what might come naturally for some, it takes years, rather than months, of disciplined effort. This application of one's time and effort, however, has not failed to give good results for students who have adhered to the plan of study as outlined in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. Maestro López Ramos claims that the above is true not only in cases where the student's wish was to pursue the guitar professionally, but also in the cases of doctors, lawyers and engineers, preparatory and university students, who only have one or two hours a day to dedicate to the guitar. López Ramos also commented that in some cases--such as with Víctor Saenger for one, who began studying the guitar while an engineering student at a university, and Mario Beltrán del Rio, also a university student--the results were so successful that those students became impassioned and left

their first careers to dedicate themselves to the guitar and make new careers.

López Ramos knows from experience that if a teacher has one student who becomes a great guitarist (such as Alfonso Moreno, who won First Prize at the 10th Concours International de Guitare, sponsored by the Organization of Radiofusion and Television France (O.R.T.F.) in Paris, 1968,) or even two or three (Mario Beltrán del Rio, First Prize in the Alirio Diaz, Concurso Internacional de Caracas, Venezuela, 1969; Enrique Velasco, First Prize in the Concurso Nacional de Guitarra of Mexico, 1970; and so on), that it results in a marvelous feeling of satisfaction (see Appendix I). Nevertheless, Maestro López Ramos does not feel that he is a successful teacher because he has had several successful students under his tutelage. He feels that, if he has been a success, it is because he has fulfilled his mission to the human being: to develop a technique of teaching that would allow everyone to play the guitar correctly. For López Ramos, the greatest satisfaction in teaching has been to work in ensemble with the other teachers at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, collectively guiding students in the same direction, and to share this philosophy of teaching and technique of helping students to play the guitar with others in master classes throughout the world (see Appendix H).

Each student at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is regarded by his/her teacher as equally important, and is given complete attention in the lesson. Regardless of how much didactic work was assigned to the student in order to make a significant technical effort (e.g., all twenty-four scales in the Segovia edition of the Diatonic Major and Minor Scales, with the following right-hand fingerings index-middle, index-ring, middle-ring, ring-middle-index, and, ring-middle-index-middle, at the metronomic speeds assigned), the teacher will listen to all the work the student has completed. This can also include one portion of the 120 Studies for the Right Hand by Mauro Giuliani, a set of exercises from the Coordination Exercises by Manuel López Ramos, and up to eight lessons from two different books contained in the curriculum (see Appendix F). The lessons which are in their fourth week of preparation are suspended after they are presented for memory in the lesson. Once this has happened, the lesson is supplanted with a new one. If the new lessons do not contain fingerings, then these are added at this time. The teacher also adds metronomic indications at this time to the new lessons, increases the tempos on the old lessons, and marks each lesson with the amount of time it should be studied. In addition to this, if the student has prepared some musical work which is at the student's level, this is also listened to in order to suggest technical advice, and offer

interpretive ideas within the realm of the student's present capabilities.

It is the philosophy of Maestro Manuel López Ramos that a teacher should work in this way in order that the student will feel stimulated. By knowing that the teacher will be listening to everything he/she has prepared in its entirety, the student will naturally want to feel pride in what has been prepared and will strive even harder to produce quality work.

Mr. López Ramos feels that if his school were not a private one and he were affiliated with some other school with bureaucratic constraints, then he might very well find himself in a situation of having to teach more students than time would reasonably allow, or worse, turn some students away who were sincerely interested in learning to play the guitar. Maestro López Ramos feels that is another philosophy in teaching, and one that does not interest him.

In the opinion of López Ramos, the performing instrumentalist is not necessarily the best teacher. This can be especially true regarding soloists, who achieve success quite often due to natural ability and not necessarily by having been well taught. Therefore, if that soloist does not have the experience of being well taught, it seems reasonable to surmise that the soloist would lack the necessary pedagogical background to be effective with

every student in a teaching situation, especially the student without natural ability.

The author was told the story of Héctor González, who came to Maestro López Ramos after not having been accepted by the Conservatory as a student of the violoncello. He had failed the entrance exam and was told that he lacked the ability to play any instrument. After Mr. González was rejected, he was told to visit with Manuel López Ramos, who, as a teacher, "es capaz de hacer ver a los ciegos y hacer caminar a los cojos. (is capable of making the blind see and making the lame walk)."¹⁰ The response of López Ramos was the following:

Yo me limito a enseñar a todos aquellos que quieran hacer música, porque es su derecho. Si te parece, vamos a empezar hoy mismo. Yo no te haré ningún test ni me interesa saber si tienes buen oído o habilidad natural en las manos, no me interesa nada de eso. Tú eres un ser humano normal y eso es bastante. (I limit myself to teaching all those who want to make music, because it's their right. If that is okay with you, let us start today. I shall not give you any test nor am I interested in knowing if you have a good ear or natural ability in your hands, I am not interested in any of that. You are a normal human being and that is enough).¹¹

López Ramos went on to say that Héctor González was giving concerts in only four years and performing as a duo with another student in Europe. He felt that in just four years Mr. González had developed a clean technique, a marvelous playing ability, and was one of the best students he had ever had the pleasure of teaching.¹²

The first years of study are the most basic and should be the most guided and positive of all, according to López Ramos. The first years of guitar study are analogous to a child's first years. In a child's first years, until the age of seven, the mind is very active in the subconscious. If a child at this stage of development is given poor examples, then the child learns improper behavior. If, on the other hand, a child is given good examples, then the child learns proper behavior. Maestro López Ramos feels that it is the same with the beginning guitarist. From the start, it is essential that the guitar student be taught well and with proper examples, so that when that student has matured, he/she is equipped to make intelligent decisions concerning any modifications for his/her refinement.

In conclusion, the author includes a quote from an interview that appeared in the October, 1986, issue of Guitar International, and which took place between Manuel López Ramos and a former student of his, Roberto Limón. In this interview, Maestro López Ramos was asked by Mr. Limón how his vocation of teaching came about. López Ramos responded in part by saying, "The vocation of teaching is simply the vocation of giving. If one has by nature this desire to give something to others, I think that one has the basic motivation for teaching."¹³

Notes

¹Manuel López Ramos speaking to this author while traveling together in a car back from the airport in México City, May 24th, 1997. A similar comment may be found in Appendix A, 95, and Appendix B, 135.

²The author does not remember exactly when he heard López Ramos make this comment. It was most likely during a lecture at Spring Hill College in June of 1972. The author's notes from this year and 1977 have been misplaced.

³Robert Bluestone, "A First Course of Study Based on the Guitar Method of Manuel López Ramos Using Examples by Julio S. Sagreras" (Master's thesis, Eastern Michigan University, 1977), iv.

⁴Manuel López Ramos, interview by author, 24 and 26 May 1997, México City. Tape Recording. Appendix B, 135, Appendix A, 95.

⁵Ibid., Appendix B, 148, Appendix A, 109.

⁶Ibid., Appendix B, 149, Appendix A, 109.

⁷Ibid., Appendix B, 149, Appendix A, 110.

⁸Ibid., Appendix B, 150, Appendix A, 110.

⁹Ibid., Appendix B, 150, Appendix A, 110.

¹⁰Ibid., Appendix B, 158-159, Appendix A, 119.

¹¹Ibid., Appendix B, 159, Appendix A, 119.

¹²Ibid., Appendix B, 159, Appendix A, 119. In a tragic set of circumstances, Mr. González passed away from complications of anesthesia in an emergency operation. In concluding this story, López Ramos added that a cousin of Héctor González has developed as a strong guitarist, and currently teaches at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

¹³Manuel López Ramos, "Manuel López Ramos," interview with Roberto Limóm, Guitar International, October 1986, 8.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO

"Al Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. Con mis sotos por el música desborde siempre de la guitarra. (To the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. With my prayers that the music will overflow always from the guitar)." ¹ These words were written by Andrés Segovia during a trip to San Francisco in 1974, on a large photograph of himself, which now hangs in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. The placement of this portrait seems only fitting, as López Ramos founded his Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico on the Segovian manner of playing. Even though teaching was not the intention of López Ramos when he first arrived in México City, much less starting a school, after thirty-six years the school is still operating successfully.

The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in 1962 was originally located at the intersection of Insurgentes Sur and Aguascalientes in México City. The address was listed as Insurgentes Sur 421, Conjunto "Aristos", Edificio B-601, Colonia Roma, México 11, D. F. (D. F. stands for Federal District, the capital of México, which constitutes México City.) Today, it is in a new location, not far from the old one, at Dakota 204, Despacho 103, Colonia Nápoles, México D. F. C.P. 03810.

In its present location, the school consists of six private studios for teaching individual lessons, and one

large lecture hall for giving concerts and lectures. The hall is equipped with recording facilities that can make both audio and video recordings of the concerts and lectures. Formerly at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, there was an annual, one-month curso (course) offered for foreign students every summer. This summer class was offered for many years and met with great success. It has been discontinued now due to the time constraints experienced by López Ramos, and because it completely disrupts the lessons of those students who are studying there regularly. However, if something like this were to be reinstated, it would be held in the aula grande (large hall). In this hall, master classes are occasionally given for the more advanced students, so that those who are not as advanced may come, audit, and begin learning the more advanced repertoire and what is required in the preparation of those musical works.

A copy of a brochure, available at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, explaining the regulations of the school and the methodology in use is presented in Appendix D (English) and Appendix E (Spanish) in modified form to fit dissertation format.

While there are no entrance requirements for enrollment in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, there does exist a problem in that there are only a limited number of teachers available to teach a full schedule in any given week. When

there are no vacancies at the school, which is more often than not the case, the prospective student's name is placed on a waiting list. López Ramos said that there have been times when a prospective student has had to wait up to two years before being assigned a teacher. At the present time, Maestro López Ramos estimates that there are more than one hundred names on the waiting list. Even with this obvious demand for guitar instruction, López Ramos has no intention of expanding the size of his school. As Director of the school, he feels that it is his duty to oversee the teachers, the students, and the week-to-week operation of the school. López Ramos feels that the size of the school is one that is manageable, and that if it were any larger, the overall quality would suffer since it could easily become too impersonal.

Taking into consideration that students are expected to give concerts periodically, the need for personal, individual attention becomes more critical. Each month there is a time set aside for a concert given by three to four pupils, each of whom performs fifteen to twenty minutes of music. There are also times when a student who has completed his/her course of study must present a full-length recital. In addition to this, every year or two, each member of the faculty presents a concert in order to set an example for the students.

The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico also maintains a library with extensive holdings. All of the musical works acquired by López Ramos during his lifetime are available for the benefit of all the students. Therefore, López Ramos feels that the school maintains more of a musiteca (library of music) than a biblioteca (library of books).² There is also a large collection of long playing records which may be listened to on equipment provided by the school. These holdings are being augmented frequently by compact discs, as well.

In addition to having access to a music library, students are able to buy from the school certain guitar recordings, strings, methods, books, and other materials necessary for their studies. The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico does not run a music store on the premises for profit, rather, it merely provides a service for the students at cost, in order to make certain necessary items more accessible.

The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico has not kept an accurate account of the number of students that have graduated over the past thirty-six years. López Ramos feels that this activity represents living in the past, when his philosophy is to live in the present and in the future. In the words of López Ramos,

Nunca me ocupé de esas estadísticas. Porque los latinos no vivimos de las estadísticas. Yo creo que los norteamericanos son víctimas de las estadísticas. Pero nosotros no le damos ninguna

importancia. Quizá estamos equivocados, pero somos más felices. (I never worry about those statistics. Because we Latinos do not live by statistics. I think that the Americans are victims of statistics. But we do not give it any importance. Perhaps we are mistaken, but we are happier.)³

According to López Ramos, when it comes to a guitar school, there exists some difficulty with the ability of his critics to provide a substantive answer as to what exactly is their concept of a formal guitar school. In the beginning, it was the idea of Mr. López Ramos to establish a comprehensive and progressive system of learning to play the guitar, incorporating the principal contributions of the major pedagogical figures such as Tárrega, Pujol, Sagreras, and so on, without pretending to discover anything new. Maestro López Ramos's passion for teaching grew with the success achieved by each new pupil. As a result of this, he began a search for new systems and other methods that he felt would further the development of the guitarist. Always in his mind, however, was this idea that, given a disciplined, systematic, and progressive teaching system, the aspiring guitarist could achieve an ability that was not naturally his/hers. This attitude toward learning is a mainstay of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico; for if a system of teaching allows a student to develop an ability that does not come naturally, it is logical to surmise that the results can be even better in those with an ability that does come naturally.

According to the recollection of Manuel López Ramos, during the course of the past thirty-six years, some twenty to thirty first-rate guitarists have graduated from the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. In other words, those students who began their studies dedicated to the guitar were very few. The reason for this is that the school does not require a student to be a professional musician. There are no entrance exams. There are no terribly limiting age requirements, nor requirements concerning a prospective student's abilities with regard to note reading, pitch, and rhythm. If the student does not read music, he/she is taught to read music.

The only entrance requirement of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is that the prospective student be interested in learning to play music on the guitar. If the prospective student is a doctor with only thirty minutes a day to devote to the study of the guitar, then a practice regimen is established to help him achieve his goal. In the past, there have been students of sixty years of age that work in the agricultural fields as laborers who have been accepted as students. López Ramos, himself, has accepted them as students. He feels that he taught those students with the same energy and dedication as some other students who had dedicated themselves to eventually making their mark in the guitar world as performers. The reason for all students being treated on an equal basis is found in the philosophy

there have been students of sixty years of age that work in the agricultural fields as laborers who have been accepted as students. López Ramos, himself, has accepted them as students. He feels that he taught those students with the same energy and dedication as some other students who had dedicated themselves to eventually making their mark in the guitar world as performers. The reason for all students being treated on an equal basis is found in the philosophy of the school which fosters the belief that all human beings have the right to make music.

What was often the case, and still continues to be, is that students who do not begin their studies with the idea of dedicating themselves to the instrument end up doing so when they not only see, but experience the results. Anyone from any social, educational, and professional level who wants to study the guitar, regardless of that student's professional intentions, is accepted. The purpose of the the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is to act as a learning center for all those who wish to avail themselves of its philosophy and methodology in a focused and productive atmosphere, created by López Ramos and those former students who feel a mutual vocation of service as teachers of the guitar. All those who teach at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico today are former students of the school who have completed the course of study. The faculty of the

school works as a team, adhering to a common philosophy of teaching.

This author observed López Ramos working with students at summer classes that were held at Spring Hill College in 1971, 1972, 1973, and 1977. López Ramos was as dedicated to the young student with little or no experience and virtually no natural ability as he was to the more mature performers with not only many years of experience, but with more than their share of natural ability. With the young, or even older beginning student guitarist, this author witnessed López Ramos on his knees in front of the student, placing himself in this position in order that he might more easily and correctly position the student's hand on the guitar, and more clearly demonstrate for the student exactly what the correct movement of the finger should be. When asked why, as a respected concert artist, he would humble himself in such a manner, he first responded with a look as though the question had no merit; then, realizing that the question was not rhetorical, he responded by saying that it gave him a feeling of peace, contentment, and pride to feel as though he had been useful to others. López Ramos never felt the need to respond to the remarks of critics who felt that an artist of his stature should only be sharing his time with the very talented, and to those who did not fully understand his right-hand approach to the guitar in the beginning stages of instruction (which will be addressed in some

detail in Chapter IV), if he thought that the criticism was foolish, unfair, and/or unwarranted: "Y a palabras necias, oídos sordos. (Pay no heed to the words of a fool)." ⁴

While López Ramos will be the first to admit that he is no saint, nor that it was ever his mission to be one, he feels very strongly about the fact that he has never regarded a sincere student in a negative manner.

From the beginning, the intent of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico was to pass along the experiences López Ramos had received from his teachers. Because the results of what López Ramos had been taught were positive, he felt that the same would be true for future generations. Through the passage of time it was seen that this was, indeed, true. In at least one case, that of Alfonso Moreno, the results of the teaching was truly remarkable. In less than three years, Mr. Moreno had carried out the successful completion of all the books in the curriculum, some fourteen to fifteen, all from memory, and all performed at above average tempo. In four years, Alfonso Moreno had won first prize at the 10th International Guitar Competition in 1968, sponsored by Radio France, in Paris. This was one of the most highly competitive years for the competition wherein Eduardo Abreu, a member of the successful duo that included his brother, Sergio (who had won first prize in this same competition the year before) was considered one of the top competitors. Of course, Mr. Moreno began his musical studies at the age of

eight with the violin, was a guitarist of natural ability, and practiced with great intensity for some twelve to thirteen hours a day. Still, other students, who in some cases took seven to eight years to finish the course of studies, also met with favorable results. A partial roster of students who won national and international competitions, such as Mario Beltrán del Río, Jesús Ruiz, Enrique Velasco, Alfredo Sánchez, and Rafael Jiménez, may be seen in Appendix I. With results such as these, one finds it difficult to doubt the effectiveness of the studies as they are outlined in the metodología (curriculum), and especially, the manner utilized to implement that plan of study.

The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is unique in the world of the guitar in that there is not another school quite like it in existence. Of course, there are institutions called "School of Guitar," or "Guitar School," but they exist largely as businesses, employing as many teachers as the market will support, each teacher employing his/her own manner of teaching and utilizing his/her own particular system or method of preference. At the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico all of the faculty are graduates of the program and they all teach as a team utilizing the same curriculum as well as the same pedagogical techniques.

There are also schools of guitar that exist in book format. One of the best known is the Escuela Razonada by Emilio Pujol, based on the principles of Francisco Tárrega.

López Ramos considers the books by Pujol to be well written, to contain constructive and progressive technical exercises, and most important, to uphold the principles of Francisco Tárrega (except for the use of nails), especially with regard to the use of the rest-stroke. In the method Pujol considers the use of nails, but in a later book, El dilema del sonido en la guitarra ("The Dilema of Sound in the Guitar") he recommends plucking the strings of the guitar without the use of nails. López Ramos believes that without the use of nails, or a flesh/nail combination, a good quality of sound cannot be achieved. Maestro López Ramos has always been a proponent of using the combination of fingertip and nail. His rationale for this is his belief that it is the fingertip which gives robustness to the sound, and it is the nail which gives the sound its brilliance and clarity. López Ramos finds that many guitarists today tend to play their instrument in a very faint manner. He feels that luthiers are striving to build guitars of greater sonority, but that guitarists are playing more faintly and, as a result, cannot be heard in a hall of great dimensions. Many guitarists opt for the use of a microphone, but in the opinion of López Ramos, this causes the guitar to lose its true sound and creates another instrument of sorts, one which he calls a "guitafono."⁵ It is no secret that, like Segovia, López Ramos is against the use of amplification in recitals. An exception to this

preference is when the guitar is used with large orchestra, as in the Eduardo Angulo, Primer Concierto para Guitarra y Orquesta (First Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra.) In the words of López Ramos:

La guitarra tiene sus defectos que uno debe aceptar (sonoridad tenue) que debe compensar con la intensidad y la fuerza del toque y realizar sus virtudes: El sonido de la guitarra es como la voz interior del hombre, llena de lejanía y nostalgia. (The guitar has its defects that one must accept (faint sonority) and must compensate with the intensity and the power of the touch and realize [make real] its virtues: The sound of the guitar is like the inner voice of man, full of remoteness and nostalgia.)⁶

There is also a guitar school in book format written by Abel Carlevaro which López Ramos thinks is quite solid and has much merit. He feels, however, that the lack of emphasis given to the rest-stroke is a shortcoming. Rather, it appears to him that this method gives mere guidelines for plucking the string. López Ramos believes that this is a failure in that it is the rest-stroke that gives body to the sound and highlights the melody over the harmony, which creates a further distinction from the bass.

Other schools of guitar, as exhibited in the books given in the Bibliography, fall short in the opinion of López Ramos because, while they may show photographs of how the guitar is held and how the hand is placed, they do not discuss in any depth whether or not the hand should move, whether or not it should be placed in a perpendicular manner, and whether or not the fingers should attack the

strings straight on or from the side. As far as López Ramos is concerned, these pictures are superficial and ambiguous at best. In many ways they raise more questions than they answer, because they do not discuss with clarity a progressive manner of playing the guitar.

Maestro López Ramos finds that he cannot compare his school with others, because he is not at all sure that there is another school quite like the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. He has not encountered a school that really seems to care for the very beginner: one that teaches the placement of the hands, the movement of the fingers, how to read music, and that presents a correlating curriculum which allows for the application of those technical principles.

López Ramos does not believe he is like some teachers who think that the only path to learning to play the guitar correctly is their own; however, he has not found any evidence to persuade him that there is another manner of learning to play the guitar that is any better, if as good. López Ramos invited this author, who lives in the United States and perhaps would have access to more information, to send him any information on different approaches to learning to play the guitar, on different schools, whether they exist as institutions or merely in book, or video format, in order that he (López Ramos) may examine the school's merits.

As another example, Mr. López Ramos offered an examination of a book by Vladimir Bobri, The Segovia Technique. It appears to Maestro López Ramos that the hands of the late Andrés Segovia are being exhibited as a model for a school of guitar playing and technique. The problem with this, as López Ramos sees it, is that Segovia's hands were not the size nor the dimensions of the majority of guitarists. Segovia's fingers were very large, especially at the first knuckle, tapering toward the direction of the fingernail; and the fingernails, as well, were of a special shape that was very advantageous for playing the guitar, but not common to all guitarists. So, while this book by Mr. Bobri gives a very careful explanation of how Segovia attacked the strings with his right hand fingers, it does not necessarily show how every guitarist should attack the strings. Segovia's manner of playing was to a great degree dependent upon his physical size, a manner that is not adaptable to all students. For example, if Segovia's manner of playing with his right hand was to place that hand off-center in order to pluck the string with the nail and fingertip on the side, then a guitarist with a thin finger will take hold of the string with very little fingertip and nail in this same manner, and the resulting sound, even if played with a rest stroke will, in López Ramos opinion, be one that is very thin.

The most obvious difference, of course, between the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico and the schools of Pujol, Carlevaro, and Bobri, is that the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico maintains an office with individual studios where several instructors teach with a mutual philosophy, curriculum, and methodology. This points to a critical difference with other businesses that exist as schools of the guitar. It was related to this author by López Ramos that some teachers from Argentina came to visit the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico to observe the operation there with the idea of starting a similar school in Buenos Aires. In López Ramos' opinion, they were not successful because they were not unified as a school. They were a group of teachers, each intending to teach what he, individually and not as a group, thought was important. They were intending to establish several individual schools under one roof; the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is one collective school under one roof.

It occurred to López Ramos while giving master classes throughout the world that when guitarists came to perform for him, he saw a display of varied and different plucking-hand approaches to playing the instrument. This was, indeed, a curiosity for López Ramos, as he felt that other string players, such as violinists and violoncellists for example, all over the world hold their instrument and their bow in basically the same manner. Of course, there may

exist minimal differences depending on the size of the instrument and the physical make-up of the performer's body and hands, but essentially, one violinist or one violoncellist is a copy of the next one. Maestro López Ramos had always observed that pianists, also, share similar positions and movements when playing the piano. So why do some guitarists hold their plucking hand perpendicular to the strings, others with it leaning to the right side or to the left side, some with their wrist close to the strings, and yet others with their wrist at a purposeful distance from the strings? Because of this, López Ramos felt that there was no uniform idea about how to approach the guitar with the plucking hand in order to best produce the sound from the instrument, and/or to perform the technical requirements inherent in the music. He also felt that what prevailed in the world of the guitar was largely a vast array of improvisations of a school. He felt with each passing class, and with each student within those classes, that there was a need for a unification of ideas and a school that would foster that unification. (As mentioned earlier, a detailed explanation of Maestro López Ramos's approach to the placement and movement of the plucking hand will be addressed in great detail in Chapter IV.)

Not only must a school foster a unification of ideas with respect to such matters as the plucking hand, but it should also exhibit an overall approach to the instrument

that is complete; an approach that deals with the expressive elements, as well as the technical ones at the same time.

It is a strong belief of López Ramos that music is expression, and that the guitar should be played as the expressive instrument that it is. Therefore, if a guitarist does not have an expressive technique, that guitarist cannot make expressive music.

Consequently, the lessons and studies as taught by the faculty of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, and to be ultimately performed by the students, are presented in the most artistic manner possible, given the level of the student. The management of dynamics, tone color, and rhythm are addressed, beginning with early lessons in the Sagreras books, and the Carulli and Carcassi studies. López Ramos feels that an early discipline which needs to be acquired by the aspiring performer is how to make music given a work that contains very few artistic elements. López Ramos recalled to this author how Segovia, especially early in his concert career but even later on, would play simple, innocent works for the guitar such as a minuet by Sor, or a Catalonian folk song arranged by Miguel Llobet, and with just a few notes Segovia would consistently captivate his audiences. Segovia did this before he had the great sonatas of Manuel M. Ponce and many of the works of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Joaquín Rodrigo, and Heitor Villa-Lobos (to name a few), added to his repertoire.

López Ramos feels that a principal responsibility of the teacher, then, is to prepare the students by cultivating their facility and imagination with expressive elements throughout their studies, even while increasing their velocity with scales and arpeggios, in order that once a mastery with the instrument is achieved, the student will be well prepared for exploring more fully the world of the imagination and feeling. This author was reminded by López Ramos of the interrogatories he would direct at students during the course of a master class:

'¿Qué sientes tú en este pasaje?' '¿Qué te dicen estas notas?' '¿De qué hablan estas notas?' 'Dime lo que piensas; dime lo que sientes.' Y recordarás que exponían muchos argumentos que bien podían servir para hacer una película ('What do you feel in this passage?' 'What do these notes say to you?' 'Of what are these notes speaking?' 'Tell me what you're thinking; tell me what you're feeling?' And you will recall that they would lay open many plots that could well serve for the making of a movie.)⁷

All this having been said, the question arises as to what evaluative criteria are used to determine if a student is ready to pass from one level to another in the study of guitar performance. The answer, according to López Ramos, lies with the individual teacher of the student, for it is he or she who observes the progress or lack thereof, and the possibilities exhibited by the student. Only the teacher is in a position to ascertain whether or not an assimilation of technique and musicality has taken place. If this assimilation has taken place through the proper study of the

works that constitute the present level of the student, then the student is ready to pass to the next, higher, and more difficult level. As far as López Ramos is concerned, this is one part of a process which defines a school.

The examinations used to determine if a student is ready to pass from one level to another are to verify the student's progress and to ascertain whether or not the student should be awarded a certificate of study. The memorization of lessons and studies is tested as well as the velocity of the scales and arpeggios. There are also certain compositions prepared by the student, appropriate for the student's level, which are performed as well during the examination. The student takes his/her examination in front of all the faculty of the Estudio. Beyond this technical work students also take courses in harmony, solfège, and other other disciplines that help comprise a well-rounded musician. Those students who have no intention of dedicating themselves professionally satisfy the leveling requirements by displaying a sound, basic knowledge of musical principles and a proper performance facility with the guitar.

After satisfactorily completing the course of studies at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico (also to be discussed in Chapter IV), a student can expect to receive the Diploma. At different stages in the program, however, certificates of study are also awarded. In order to receive a certificate

of study, the student must have satisfactorily completed all of the studies leading up to his/her present level of achievement and must take an examination before the faculty. As was initially stated, once the student completes all of the curriculum and has presented one or two concert programs representative of the student's level of performance for which the certificate of study is awarded, the student is then required to give a graduation recital before finally being awarded the Diploma. This Diploma is already recognized by some universities in México as official and valid. At the time of this writing, the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico has taken the necessary steps to be officially recognized by the Mexican government. In addition to the certificates of study and the Diploma, if letters of recommendation are ever needed to aid in job placement or for acceptance to another institution, they can be obtained upon request.

After thirty-six years, López Ramos' feelings about the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico involve a deep sense of satisfaction. He feels that the Estudio can call itself a school because it is based on all the necessary steps involved in learning to play an instrument. The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico is not based on an improvised system of teaching that changes according to the whims of the student. This school is based on sustained, fixed, and rigid principles that remain the same and require adoption by the

student. A system of learning so improvisatory that it allows for any technical variance in the beginning stages of a student's studies as long as he/she can execute the technical demands required of the music is, at best, precarious. It has been López Ramos' experience that if there is no logic behind that student's approach, then, while there may not be a problem in the beginning when the studies are easy, the possible immediate success can be short-lived once the technical demands increase and the fingers get in the way of one another due to poor hand positioning. Maestro López Ramos has encountered many students of the guitar who work very diligently at improving their skills, who desire a career as a performer, but who also find themselves unable to progress adequately due to excessive and obstructive movements of the fingers and an inefficient hand position. He parallels the efforts of guitarists with this type of approach to a violinist that attempts to play the instrument by holding the bow with the whole hand rather than in the traditional manner. "El resultado auditivo será desastroso. (The auditory result would be disastrous.)" ⁸

A clear advantage to studying the guitar at a school with a teacher, according to López Ramos, is that the teacher can explain how the hand is placed, how the fingers move efficiently in order to pluck the strings, how a good sound is achieved, what the movements of the fingers are

after they pluck the string(s), how are short movements consistently achieved, what are the most advantageous methods to study and in what manner, what is the progressive order of the methods, and how the student learns to approach the repertoire without attempting to perform musical works that are years beyond the student's present technical level. While these matters may or may not be addressed in instructional videos and/or instructional books, the student is left with either understanding the information adequately or not. Discourse, at any rate, is something that cannot be factored in when attempting to learn a skill without the advantage of a teacher who is present. With the benefit of a teacher, the student may discuss issues that are not clear and demonstrate practiced technical and musical activities in order to receive necessary positive feedback. While it is possible to eventually learn about the guitar on one's own--its strengths, its weaknesses, its limits, and how to manage these characteristics in order to play with intensity--it is a more efficient process of discovery when there is an instructor not only to demonstrate (which can be accomplished in a video or by the written word in a book), but to offer constructive follow-up commentary on the student's efforts, which cannot be accomplished without a teacher present. For example, to play with intensity does not necessarily equate to playing with force; and understanding how to play with nails that are just the right

length in order that the proper degree of fingertip be employed is something the student must experiment with for quite some time before arriving at a point of comfortable understanding. Another example points to the problems faced by the beginner who, perhaps with little or no musical background, must deal with the matter of tuning the guitar on his/her own. Even with as straightforward and understandable a procedure as is presented in the late Maestro Emilio Pujol's Guitar School, Book II, Lesson I, titled "Tuning the Guitar," the beginner can still be riddled with self-doubt when attempting the procedure on his/her own. With the aid of a teacher who is present, much of the experimentation and the resulting self-doubt can be avoided.

In concluding this chapter on the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, this author will quote Manuel López Ramos, the school's Founder and Director:

Una escuela no se puede basar en improvisaciones ni adecuaciones circunstanciales. Todo se debe regir sobre una evolución progresiva y natural, contemplando las limitaciones del hombre común y no el de un superdotado. Creo que hemos cumplido con nuestro deber de maestros (A school cannot be founded on improvisations nor circumstantial adaptations. It all should be governed by a natural and progressive evolution, considering the limitations of the common man and not those of an extremely gifted person. I think that we have fulfilled our duty as teachers).⁹

Notes

¹Inscription by Andrés Segovia in San Francisco, California, 1974, on large photograph of himself which hangs at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

²Manuel López Ramos, interview by author, 24 and 26 May 1997, Mexico City. Tape recording. Appendix B, 162. Appendix A, 123.

³Ibid., Appendix B, 166, Appendix A, 127.

⁴Ibid., Appendix B, 142, Appendix A, 102.

⁵Ibid., Appendix B, 170, Appendix A, 131.

⁶Ibid., Appendix B, 139, Appendix A, 99.

⁷Ibid., Appendix B, 146, Appendix A, 106.

⁸Ibid., Appendix B, 137, Appendix A, 97.

⁹Ibid., Appendix B, 137, Appendix A, 97.

CHAPTER IV
THE CURRICULUM (METODOLOGÍA) OF THE
ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO

Music is a language...you learn the sound first, and then you acquire the grammar later...there's a wall...a ten-foot wall between most players and their instrument. Your instrument and you have to become one, so that what you hear, or think, you're able to execute it...'

Prefatory Remarks

It is this author's belief that any classical guitarist with an overall comprehension of the graded complexities in the didactic literature for the classical guitar can peruse the curriculum of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico and see that it is not only logical, but progressive. The curriculum is systematized to the extent that a student who follows it conscientiously should experience only a similar reasonable amount of difficulty as any other student. If a student is under the proper guidance of a teacher and is committed to exerting the necessary amount of discipline required in the acquisition of any skill, then this author believes that such a student who starts with the beginning lessons in this curriculum and proceeds to the most advanced technical and musical problems of the final lessons will meet with satisfactory results.

López Ramos realized that a progressive and systematic approach to the guitar needed to be established after he arrived in México. This realization became even clearer

when he traveled to other parts of the world. He discovered that the first musical and technical contact many students had with the classical guitar was the Segovia edition of the studies by Fernando Sor. He felt that the Sor studies are musically important enough to be reserved for the fourth or fifth year of study, and not be struggled with in the first months. López Ramos' suspicions became confirmed once he realized that after the studies by Sor, many students, because of what was readily available, had to approach the music of Robert De Visée, sonatas by Fernando Sor, and the difficult works by Mauro Giuliani. This, López Ramos felt, was unfortunate. The reality, however, became worse because it was this inadequate preparation that was all a student had to fall back on when approaching musical works of the next level: the works of Manuel M. Ponce, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Federico Moreno-Torroba, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Joaquín Turina, Joaquín Rodrigo, and so on.

Without proper technical and musical preparation, the interpretation of these major works is bound to suffer. There are, of course, exceptions. A guitarist with natural ability may very well not share the same needs as other guitarists when it comes to dealing with matters, technical and musical, of the instrument in a logically progressive manner. López Ramos reasoned that teaching one student with natural ability does not establish a precedent for a school of guitar. Rather, he saw his role as one who, because of

his training and experience, could establish a progressive order of the existing teaching materials. By applying what he had learned from his teacher, and from personal observations, he felt he could in a systematic manner guide the way for the beginning student who might know absolutely nothing about the guitar and who may or may not have any natural ability. After reflecting on what he had been taught and observing what worked most effectively and logically for him, he felt capable of instructing the beginner in such matters as how to hold the guitar, where the forearm and arm of the plucking hand are placed on the guitar, how the hand is placed perpendicular to the strings, what are the individual movements of each finger, the different attacks of the fingers on the strings, the free stroke and the rest-stroke, "para que el futuro guitarrista tenga elementos que le sirvan en su desarrollo y llegue a hacer música sin problemas ni limitaciones. (so that the future guitarist will have elements that will be of service in his [or her] development and come to make music without problems or limitations)." ² López Ramos discovered he had a greater passion than that of wanting only to perform on the concert stage. This greater passion was one of feeling fulfilled by giving to, and sharing with, those who desired the joy of performing music on the guitar, but did not know where and/or how to begin. As a direct result, in 1962, Manuel López Ramos began his school, the Estudio de Arte

Guitarrístico, with the philosophy that any person wanting to learn the guitar could do so and would be accepted for study at the school. He further believed that if a proper curriculum were in place and taught correctly, then any student with a sincere desire to learn could achieve success.

Although López Ramos is a methodical man, one who approached the task of establishing a school from a cerebral standpoint, he viewed the guitar as the most expressive of instruments and, because of this, felt strongly that what students needed to acquire during their course of study was an expressive technique.

The Right-Hand Technique of Manuel López Ramos

Among guitarists there have been widespread misconceptions regarding the right-hand technique of Manuel López Ramos. As a result of this, George Clinton asked López Ramos to write an article on the matter for publication in Guitar International. This right-hand approach to playing the instrument is the means employed by López Ramos in initiating the development of expressive technique. Before elaborating on this process, this author would point out that the goal of López Ramos was never, nor indeed is it now, the means. The goal which López Ramos wished, and still wishes, for all of his students is quite simply put: "I mean a clear, precise, quick and brilliant

mechanism tied to expressive elements such as the production of the physical beauty of sound (a Segovian concept), the ability to bring out the different sonorous planes with authority (using the rest stroke), and the mastery of the dynamic range in all of its intensities (from *pp* to *ff*)."³ López Ramos has always maintained that if the guitar is played with the intention of producing weak sounds, such as may be obtained by using the nail alone, for instance, a certain musical monotony results because the dynamic range and any other contrasts required by the music have been compromised.

Manuel López Ramos is of the opinion that those teachers and their students who have heard of his ideas, and have criticized them, have done so from a less than comprehensive standpoint of understanding. Ramos said, "They believe that I insist that the students play with a rigid right hand which is muscularly tense. Nothing could be further from the truth."⁴ Generally, López Ramos has found that teachers of the guitar are faced with the task of correcting a student's plucking hand which has already achieved some degree of facility with strumming accompaniments in the popular music idiom, and perhaps occasionally in the performance of a melodic line. Therefore, since the hand is functional with the instrument to some limited extent, any corrections that the teacher recommends are relative to what the student is already able

to do. López Ramos felt, however, that because of the shape of the guitar and how it is held in standard classical guitar technique, it is necessary for there to be a more structured position for the plucking hand, in order that each movement be controlled internally and individually, both prior to and in the actual production of the sound. He believed that, as an end result, this muscular control could more easily render the production of the varied and different sounds that are often required in the music.

From the beginning, it was Maestro López Ramos's feeling that the production of sound on the guitar needed to be accomplished with short movements, as this is a requirement to attain a virtuosic technique on several other instruments. In order to achieve control over the action of the fingers, it seemed logical to López Ramos that initially the muscles would have to be somewhat rigid, and the hand would appear somewhat inflexible in order to control the individual movements of each finger. However, once an assimilation of the control over the individual movements and angle of attack of the fingers against the strings has taken place, López Ramos states, "the muscular tension of the right hand will be released. This will give the sensation of a right hand in relaxation, but at the same time the fingers will have the force necessary to create the dynamic intensity with which the guitar should be played."⁵

While this author feels capable of explaining the right-hand technique of Manuel López Ramos, he feels that in order to avoid any further possible confusion over the issue, the wisest and most straightforward approach is to direct the reader's attention to Appendix I. There the reader may find a copy of the article entitled, "My Right Hand Technique" by Manuel López Ramos and translated by Patrick Read, which appeared in the April 1989 edition of the late George Clinton's out-of-print (unfortunately for the classical guitar world) Guitar International. In this article, complete with prefatory remarks, an explanation in Manuel López Ramos' own words and with pictures of his own hands that help demonstrate his explanation, is as definitive an explanation on just what López Ramos' philosophical approach was, and still is, concerning this issue of his right-hand technique. The only forum in which this could be presented in a clearer fashion would be if the reader were to actually visit with Maestro López Ramos in order to ask any possible questions in person.

Manuel López Ramos is the first to admit that this method is not the only manner for approaching the strings of the guitar with the hand that is to produce the sound. A good description of what this author considers the basic, different approaches to plucking hand technique may be found in Robert Bluestone's Master's thesis from 1977, "A First Course of Study Based on the Guitar Method of Manuel López

Ramos Using Examples by Julio S. Sagreras," on pages iii and iv. With reference to the position of Segovia's right hand as illustrated in the book by Vladimir Bobri and mentioned by Robert Bluestone in his thesis, López Ramos points out that Segovia's hand in general, and specifically his fingers, are beyond what may be considered average size. Fingers that large do not readily allow attacking the string from the front. Mr. López Ramos also points out that when Segovia was younger, his fingers were thinner (as can be seen in earlier photographs) and he did indeed play more from the front than from the side; in both instances, earlier and later in life, however, Segovia used a flesh and nail combination.

López Ramos also acknowledges the right-hand approach of Alexander Lagoya, one which attacks the string from the right side, opposite from the approach of Segovia. While Maestro López Ramos does not hesitate to admit that there are successful performers who utilize this approach, he insists that, in his opinion, one should attack the string from the front, not only to obtain a robust sound, but so the fingers do not interfere with one another.

While this approach is López Ramos' preference, he realizes that it may not ultimately provide the best results for all guitarists. As a teacher, he is encouraging when it comes time in a student's technical development for "una reacomodación personal. (a personal readjustment)." ⁶

The author pointed out during the course of his interview with Maestro López Ramos that many people in the classical guitar world might very well be under the impression that he (López Ramos) is insistent upon guitarists playing in only one manner. The response from Maestro López Ramos was that whether or not they may be under that impression is one thing, but, in reality, their impression is short-sighted. The guitarist and the teacher, in truth, must allow for a personal readjustment, but only after the correct movements have been learned. It is only at that point in a guitarist's technical development that a personal readjustment should be considered. In concluding this topic of discussion, López Ramos made the analogy of someone who wants to be a great runner, such as in a marathon. If the runner learns to run with his feet twisted to one side or the other, he/she will never be very fast. It seems logical that the potential runner would want to learn to run with his/her feet straight, in order to experience a natural freedom of movement. If the runner learns the basic principles of running, and then wants to experiment with personal readjustments in order that he/she may be ultimately faster than others, then this should pose little or no problem, because he/she has already learned the correct method of running.

Marking the Music with Fingerings
for the Right Hand

In addition to the movement of the fingers and overall position of the plucking hand, marking the music with exact fingerings for the hand which produces the sound is of major importance in this school's teaching. At the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, it is not only important to mark the music with fingerings, but it is also important that the principles of fingering be understood by the student. Simply stated, fingering principles for the plucking hand are based on achieving maximum facility when executing string changes. The importance of this idea became apparent to López Ramos around the year 1956. Certainly he must have been aware of this concept of plucking-hand fingering before, having studied the books of Julio S. Sagreras. Still, it is conceivable that, from having worked through the series of Sagreras books, plucking-hand fingering is something that could easily be taken for granted. Regardless, the importance of this concept became apparent to Mr. López Ramos when, during the course of giving concerts at that time, one concert would go very well, but the concert of the following day might well result in disaster. It is true that he may have felt at peace one day and nervous the next; but, a question demanded resolution: why was there was no overall consistency in the outcome of these concerts? He reasoned that he knew which fingers pushed down which strings onto which frets in order to

produce the right notes. So, if a concert is successful one day, it seemed reasonable to expect a similar result on the following day. It was López Ramos's discovery that the fingerings for his right hand were totally improvised, and were not regulated in any intentional manner. While it is the case at times, with music for the guitar, that fingering for the plucking hand can only be performed in one logical manner, it is also often the case that the music presents certain problems that require careful consideration, especially when dealing with advanced music. There may exist various reasons for deciding to mark the music in one manner or another with a particular plucking-hand fingering. The question arises, for example, should the musician finger the music in order to perform it in the most technically efficient manner, or in the most expressive manner? Is there a fingering that can accomplish both? Can it possibly be a logically sound practice to perform from memory a musical work with one set of fingerings one day and another set of fingerings the next? López Ramos felt that he had been running a risk by performing music in a technically intuitive manner for his right hand. He observed that he had been repeating fingers unwittingly and attempting to execute what he later considered were absurd leaps from string to string, e.g., the ring finger plucking the third string followed in quick succession by the index finger plucking the first string. Given the natural position of

the plucking hand, a leap such as this appeared at best to be illogical. What he (López Ramos) realized, was that he had learned the music in his left hand (or fretting hand,) but not in his right hand (or plucking hand).

Consequently, López Ramos established some basic, reasoned principles for dealing with string-crossings in the most advantageous manner. By teaching this practice of marking the music with carefully calculated fingerings and insisting that the movements be practiced as they have been marked down, a kinetic memory of sorts is established, and only one set of movements, not two or three, is assimilated in the hands for the performance of a specific passage.

Maestro López Ramos is not hesitant to point out that the internationally-acclaimed British guitarist and lutenist, Julian Bream, exploits this concept to the fullest in his editions of published musical works. In the opinion of López Ramos, it is obvious that this contribution to the technique of the guitar is worth embracing for its efficiency, or Maestro Bream would never have gone, nor would he continue to go, to the trouble of marking fingerings for the plucking hand in such an exhaustive manner. One may occasionally observe fingerings for the plucking hand in the music of Mauro Giuliani and Matteo Carcassi, for example, and a fingering here and there in some editions by Andrés Segovia. But, only in the works of Julio S. Sagreras, and in editions of music by

Julian Bream, is this concept of marking the music for the plucking hand dealt with in detail. So, as far as López Ramos is concerned, regardless of who discovered the efficiency of marking musical works for the plucking hand, what is important is that great teachers and guitarists have come to accept and value this concept.

A New Concept in Memorization

The new concept in memorization was first addressed in Chapter II. Currently, at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, it is being taught that memorization should be accomplished without looking at the fretboard and the fretting hand. Students are encouraged to work as much as possible with memory not based on sight. For López Ramos, this concept of memorization is not only new, but revolutionary. Even though this is new to him, Maestro López Ramos believes that many guitarists and teachers will be quick to say that they already knew about this concept. Whether or not this will happen, López Ramos told this author that he has spent fifty years playing the guitar and looking at the fretboard when he performed, and noticed other guitarists in the habit of looking at the fretboard as well. Yet, no one ever advised him that it was better to play the guitar without staring at the fretting hand and the fretboard. Regardless, in the two years since he discovered this approach and began utilizing it, he has been amazed by the results.

The Repertoire for Each Year of Study

The repertoire for each year of the student's study is decided upon after consultation with the student's teacher. It is important that the repertoire be at the same technical level as the works in the curriculum for the particular year of study. The student must not attempt to play works of a higher level than those of the curriculum at the present point in his/her development. López Ramos feels that to allow the student to attempt this is to invite a technical and musical disaster. He feels very strongly that it is essential for a student to have all of the technical and artistic elements necessary to attempt performance of works from the concert repertoire.

Therefore, a decision about the repertoire for each year of study for a particular student is based largely upon the individual student's progress and level of ability.

The Plan of Studies

In comparing Appendix C (curriculum devised by Manuel López Ramos and obtained at the first three-week classical guitar seminar, Spring Hill College, Mobile, Alabama, June, 1971) with Appendix D (brochure explaining the regulations and methodology of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, A. C. [Asociación Civil] circa 1980), this author pondered whether the curriculum of the school had changed that much over the years. López Ramos conceded that, while there have been some modifications, the essential foundation has remained

unchanged. The books of Sagreras, Carulli, Carcassi, Sor, Giuliani, Coste, Villa-Lobos, and so on, as well as the Segovia scales, Giuliani arpeggios, and López Ramos Coordination Exercises may essentially be considered mainstays in the curriculum. Nevertheless, if one student has a copy of the Ablóniz arpeggios, rather than those by Giuliani, one may supplant the other. If a teacher finds value in a new didactic work, such as the "Estudios Sencillos" by Leo Brouwer, then it can be added to the curriculum. What is important is that nothing be removed without being supplanted by something else of equal value, and at the same technical level for the student.

What would seem wrong to López Ramos is if someone did away with this curriculum, this methodology, and attempted to play the major works in the repertoire in the first year, for example. To López Ramos, this is the same thing as "se quiere empezar la casa por el techo. (to want to begin [building] the house with the roof)." ⁷

The material that is in place in the curriculum is material that has been tried and that has given results over the years. If a student feels that he/she can impose his/her own criteria, this suggests that the student knows more than the school. If a school is established and has a curriculum in place that has worked to the technical and musical success of those students who have employed it, then in López Ramos's opinion, this underscores the necessity for

the student to adapt to the school, and not the school to the student.

It is part of the educational philosophy of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico that the mission of the teacher is to guide the student by recommending what material should be used and, more importantly, how it should be studied. For instance, if a person with normal abilities who is not seeking a concert career wishes to learn to play the guitar, then the minimum amount of time this person must dedicate to achieve this goal is one hour per day. This hour is divided between the study of Julio S. Sagreras' Las Primeras Lecciones de Guitarra (The First Lessons of Guitar) for forty-five minutes and the first Coordination Exercises by Manuel López Ramos for fifteen minutes.

In the second year, the materials become more complicated and difficult; therefore, one half-hour more study time per day is required.

By the third year, the amount of time required increases to two hours. This is the minimum amount of time required. Essentially, it amounts to an additional one half-hour of study per day for each additional year. Students are individuals, however, and if a student becomes more motivated and decides to make more time for the guitar, then the number of minutes per day can be increased as the teacher sees fit, according to the student's progress.

As an analogy, López Ramos equates formulas which he gives for the study of assigned material to a medical prescription. For instance, it may be that a student is assigned to study scales for twenty minutes a day at a specific metronomic speed, arpeggios for fifteen minutes at an assigned metronomic speed, ten minutes of study for this lesson, twenty minutes for that lesson, and thirty minutes for yet another lesson, each one at an assigned metronomic speed, and ultimately, fifteen minutes a day for a musical work in progress. This adds up to approximately two hours a day for a week that the student should devote to studying the guitar in a specific manner until the next lesson. If the student does not follow the prescribed week's program for study, López Ramos feels that it is similar to a medical patient who, being instructed by his/her doctor to take one pill every three hours, begins to feel better, and therefore takes ten tablets at once in order to get completely well sooner. This is improper logic, as the patient could conceivably die from an overdose. Nor is it any more reasonable for the student to practice in any manner different from what has been prescribed by his/her teacher, simply because he/she starts to experience positive results.

As has been stated earlier, at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico all of the faculty are graduates of that school's established program of study. The faculty, therefore, share a similar learning experience and are

examples of the positive results that evolve from progressive study habits. If the study material did not help produce positive results, then that material would be replaced with some other material. If the manner of study did not produce positive results, then that manner of study would be modified.

So, the manner of study is at least as important as the material studied, and perhaps more. Essentially, the study plan for the lessons is spread out over a four-week period. An example of this would be a lesson from the Sagreras method, or perhaps the Carulli method, which would be assigned at a slow tempo. The following week, the tempo of that lesson would be increased to one closer to normal. The third week, the speed of the music would be increased to one considered normal. The fourth week, the speed would not be increased, but the requirement would be that the music would be practiced from memory. Each week, the amount of time required to practice the music would be decreased, as the metronomic speed was increased. Less time would be spent on each lesson per week, but, because the metronomic speed increased, the number of times the lesson was repeated would remain approximately the same, week to week.

In June of 1998, Juan Reyes Unzueta, a teacher at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico and respected solo concert artist as well as a duo performer with his wife, guitarist Laura Pavón, completed a long-term project of benefit to all

of the students of the Estudio. He took it upon himself, based on his early years as a student and many more as a teacher, to place many of the lessons and studies utilized in the curriculum into a more logically progressive order than they often appear in the format of a published book.

An example of this is the Segovia edition of the Twenty Studies for the Guitar by Fernando Sor. Segovia, himself, in his editorial remarks to this volume, commented that the particular studies contained within were chosen from what he (Segovia) thought were the most beautiful and the most effective. What Segovia did not claim was to have placed them in any particular increasing order of difficulty. As a matter of fact, it was not until this author purchased a recording of the late Narciso Yepes, that he became aware of the extent of Fernando Sor's didactic work: Twelve Studies, Opus 6; Douze Études (Twelve Studies) Opus 29; Vingt-Quatre Leçons (Twenty-Four Lessons) Opus 31; Vingt-Quatre Exercices (Twenty-Four Exercises) Opus 35; and, Vingt-Quatre petites Pieces Progressives pour la Guitare pour servir de leçons (Twenty-Four little Progressive Pieces for the Guitar to serve as lessons) Opus 44. What follows is a comparison table, compiled by the author, showing the order of the musical works in the Segovia edition, and the location of that same work as published by Sor (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison Chart Showing Opus and Placement Number of Segovia Edition Sor Study.

Segovia Edition Number	Sor Edition Number
Number I	Op. 6, no. 8
Number II	Op. 35, no. 13
Number III	Op. 6, no. 2
Number IV	Op. 6, no. 1
Number V	Op. 35, no. 22
Number VI	Op. 35, no. 17
Number VII	Op. 31, no. 21
Number VIII	Op. 31, no. 16
Number IX	Op. 31, no. 20
Number X	Op. 31, no. 19
Number XI	Op. 6, no. 3
Number XII	Op. 6, no. 6
Number XIII	Op. 6, no. 9
Number XIV	Op. 6, no. 12
Number XV	Op. 35, no. 16
Number XVI	Op. 29, no. 23
Number XVII	Op. 6, no. 11
Number XVIII	Op. 29, no. 22
Number XIX	Op. 29, no. 13
Number XX	Op. 29, no. 17

This author was sent a copy of the revised order of lessons and studies as they now appear in the curriculum, in a gesture characteristically generous of both Mr. Reyes and the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. A copy of this revision with prefatory remarks by Mr. Reyes, and a translation by this author, may be viewed in Appendix F, and in Appendix G.

In Conclusion

Manuel López Ramos believes that it is unreasonable to question the effectiveness of the material in the curriculum and the manner in which it is taught; in other words, the methodology employed by the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico

has yielded and continues to yield results that are positive. This is not to say that it can never be improved upon. In time, it is reasonable to conceive of some lessons and/or studies, even a didactic work as long standing as the Diatonic Major and Minor Scales by Segovia, being supplanted by some other comparable work.

Maestro López Ramos stated that if some items in the curriculum are supplanted by other comparable items, it would pose no danger to the effectiveness of the methodology. However, while one problem would be to subtract items from the curriculum without supplanting them, another problem would be created if more and more items were continually added to the curriculum without supplanting existing literature.

Manuel López Ramos said that he felt many students were reluctant to embrace the course of study at the Estudio because of the amount of time it takes to complete the work. Many students are very impatient. López Ramos states the following:

todos piensan de que estamos mal porque hoy en la actualidad todo lo quieren para ayer. Quieren tocar la guitarra clásica como Segovia en tres meses. (they all think we are bad because today at the present time they all want to have it all yesterday. They want to play the classical guitar like Segovia in three months.)⁸

This is not a major concern to Manuel López Ramos. It has always been his experience that technical work on an instrument is something that takes much discipline and work

for many years. He is content with the methodology of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico because he has seen that the discipline, work, and years dedicated to the study of the guitar have given positive results in the majority of cases, not merely in a select few.

Notes

¹"Guitar 101, The Fender Method," (Philadelphia: Lyrrus, 1997, CD-ROM) Chapter 6, "About Jack Cecchini."

²Manuel López Ramos, interview by author, 24 and 26 May, 1997, México City. Tape recording. Appendix B, 135, Appendix A, 95.

³Manuel López Ramos. "My Right Hand Technique," trans. by Patrick Read, April 1989, Guitar International, 35.

⁴Ibid., 35.

⁵Ibid., 35.

⁶Manuel López Ramos, interview by author, 24 and 26 May, 1997, México City. Tape recording. Appendix B, 168, Appendix A, 129.

⁷Ibid., Appendix B, 150, Appendix A, 111.

⁸Ibid., Appendix B, 152, Appendix A, 113.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

I think that a good student should have a discipline to study, and curiosity is probably the single most important factor. If he's curious, and he keeps looking--you lead the student to the door, but he has to go through the door.'

Manuel López Ramos would like for the work done at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico to serve as a model for teachers of the guitar and other instruments the world over. Furthermore, he hopes that all teachers may realize that the responsibility to teach the guitar, or any instrument, is perhaps the most important aspect of music. The true spirit of teaching, in the opinion of López Ramos, is to give of yourself without hoping to receive anything in return. By giving of oneself in the teaching experience, one can feel not only useful in this life, but that one has contributed to making the world a better place in which to live. It is the hope of López Ramos that every teacher would aspire to be "útil y darles [estudiantes] belleza. La música da paz, felicidad. Yo quisiera que eso fuera lo que perdurara de nuestra escuela. (useful and to give them [the students] beauty. Music gives peace, happiness. I would want that to be what endures from our school.)"² Also, should the technical principles of the school endure, be maintained and passed along from generation to generation, always being

improved upon and perfected, then López Ramos would feel a great amount of pride in that legacy. A part of López Ramos' personal philosophy is reflected in the idea that if a person leaves a mark in this life and it endures, that person will have fulfilled the opportunity given by God in his/her lifetime.

When asked why an artist of his caliber would be interested in teaching a rank beginner with no obvious natural ability, López Ramos explained that the initial study is what needs to be the most correct teaching of all. Elaborating on this point, he stated that the first years of study are the most fundamental ones, the same as the first years of a child's development. If a child is given bad examples, that child will learn improper behavior. If the child is given good examples, the child learns proper behavior and becomes a productive adult. It is a similar set of circumstances in the teaching of the guitar, as far as López Ramos is concerned. If you teach beginners to do things well, then when they mature they will be on the right path; especially when it comes time to make any necessary modifications in their technique.

In addition to this, it is the personal philosophy of López Ramos that every human being has the right to make music. Because of this, it seemed necessary that there be a procedure and mechanism in place that would allow everyone to play correctly if they so desired and if they applied

if God has not given one the gift of natural ability, then it becomes necessary to go in search of the means required to obtain this gift through correct practicing techniques.

One necessary procedure that must be employed in this search is the study of a progressive system of didactic literature. The student must not only study a progressive system of didactic literature for the guitar, but the student must also, more importantly, learn how to study that literature.

Because it is a common problem amongst instrumental students to rush the tempo, and no less a problem with guitar students in particular, much of the work should be done governed by the metronome. It has been López Ramos' experience that the metronome can act, in a limited capacity, as the teacher when the student is practicing alone; for it regulates not only the tempo, but the coordination required for diverse movements of the hands and fingers.

In addition to the importance of learning to study, López Ramos feels strongly about the importance of learning to memorize. He has found that it is not a productive habit to observe constantly the fretting hand when memorizing. The constant intervention of the vision is an activity of the conscious mind. In performance, the conscious mind can be easily distracted by what the vision might inadvertently observe besides the fretting hand. When the music is being

observe besides the fretting hand. When the music is being memorized, the sound of that music and the movements of the hands and fingers associated with those sounds become stored in the subconscious mind. López Ramos has found that the music, in effect, becomes assimilated and tends to be retained less conditionally. He has been astonished by the results he has obtained in applying this approach to his own efforts. He does not believe this is really anything new, a fact to which those vision-impaired performing musicians can attest.

A mission of López Ramos is to contribute different methods for guitarists ultimately to arrive, on a large scale, at the same level as pianists, violinists, and violoncellists, for example. That more and more guitarists will come to enjoy as large a repertoire as other instrumentalists is something that Manuel López Ramos hopes will become a reality. He believes that a progressive manner of studying and this manner of memorizing by storing the knowledge in the subconscious mind will eliminate many of the mistakes and memory slips which plague and cause anxiety in many performers. López Ramos hopes that these methods which he has worked to develop will have the positive results that he anticipates.

Ojalá tenga el resultado que yo preveo. Ojalá, pueda ser definitivo para que la angustia del olvido, del sufrimiento, de la duda que se tiene cuando se toca, pueda eliminarse. (I hope that it has the results that I foresee, I hope that. I hope it will be definitive so that the anguish of

forgetting, of the suffering, of the misgivings one has when one plays, I hope that it can be eliminated.)³

Finally, Maestro López Ramos feels that the younger generation of guitarists, by and large, are satisfied with a respectable, cerebral approach to the guitar. This is in sharp contrast to the Segovia generation of artists, those who occupied themselves with a more emotionally aesthetic search for musical expression. López Ramos considers the guitar an expressive instrument. Even when the music is approached from a more intellectual standpoint, he believes that it is a shortcoming, if not a mistake, to ignore the expressive qualities of the instrument. "I think that young musicians have to seek out how to move the audience rather than to impress them."⁴

When asked about the place of this school in the world of music, in the world of the guitar, at the end of this century, López Ramos expressed that, in his opinion, time is largely an invention of man, and that the end of one century or the beginning of another was of no consequence in the grand scheme of things. "Simplemente el hombre vive en el tiempo que marca su vida. (Simply, man lives in the time that marks his life.)"⁵ From a historical perspective, López Ramos sees this century as an important one for the guitar and guitarists, due in no small part to the great impetus given by Segovia.

López Ramos feels that as a direct result of Segovia's influence the guitar has gained a greater degree of respect than it had known before. Institutions of higher learning have established guitar teaching positions and have accepted the guitar as a principal instrument for performance majors on an increasingly broader scale. Due to Segovia's great impact as an international performer, major composers responded favorably to his requests for new musical works that tremendously expanded the repertoire of the classical guitar. Important composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, Manuel M. Ponce, Joaquín Rodrigo, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Alexandre Tansman, Joaquín Turina, and Federico Moreno-Torroba wrote music for this virtuoso. Segovia's trailblazing accomplishments as a concert artist secured a path for other performers of the following generation, such as Julian Bream, who influenced other composers to write for the guitar: for example, composers such as Malcolm Arnold, Richard Rodney Bennett, Benjamin Britten, Peter Maxwell Davies, Toru Takemitsu, and William Walton.

Students of the guitar must be prepared for also performing this new music, which quite often utilizes a new musical language with new technical demands. Juan Reyes Unzueta addresses this issue in his prefatory remarks of Appendix G, Proyecto para Plan de Estudios EAG (Design for the Curriculum EAG [Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico].)

No debemos pasar por alto las contribuciones de indudable valor didáctico como son las de Brouwer, Quine-Dodgson, o Kleynjans, ejemplos claros de la evolución del lenguaje guitarrístico y musical contemporáneos; no obstante, ninguno de ellos podrá sustituir la obra de los maestros precursores de la guitarra pues sería como negar la esencia misma del instrumento, pero insistimos en que, llegado el momento deberán abordarse como complemento a la formación técnica adquirida.

(We must not omit the contributions of unquestionable didactic value, such as those by Brouwer, Quine-Dodgson, or Kleynjans, clear examples of the evolution of the contemporary guitaristic and musical language; nevertheless, none of them can replace the work of the pioneering masters of the guitar for that would be to deny the very essence of the instrument, but we insist that, since the moment has arrived, they ought to be treated as a complement to acquired technical foundation.)⁶

If this has been the golden age of the guitar, then López Ramos hopes that the coming age will be one of platinum and the following age one of the diamond.

A question which, in the opinion of this author, should be addressed is whether or not and if so to what degree any of this tradition which has been established by Manuel López Ramos in México can be applied to better the situation of classical guitar students and teachers in the United States? What the author refers to is the typical scenario of an entering college freshman who desires to be a music performance major and chooses the guitar as the principal instrument. All too often, while the student might have a certain natural affinity for the instrument, that same student will usually display an acquired and/or improvised technique that accompanies a lack of note-reading skills.

In other words, this student plays the guitar only because of natural ability, and happens to enjoy doing so. But this student has no concept of correctness with regard to technique, nor does he/she have more than a little, if any at all, acquaintance with the classical guitar repertoire. If that student does have any knowledge of the classical guitar repertoire, it is usually from recordings, and if the student can perform any of the literature, it is quite often "by ear," or from an arrangement of the music in tablature format; that is, finger notation, rather than pitch notation.

On the one hand, a teacher is tempted to guide the student toward another area of concentration in music, due to his/her lack of preparation and background. On the other hand, the student does display a certain natural ability. If the student keeps up with all of the scholastic work, as well as practice the guitar, under the best of circumstances, however, this student will only be able to progress so far in the four-year bachelor's degree of a liberal arts program. For the performance major, that same four-year bachelor's degree program may incorporate the basic requirements of a three-year music conservatory degree program. Together, that may constitute a seven-year course of study, under the umbrella of a four-year integrated program. When the ill-prepared guitar student this author has characterized begins such an undertaking, there is

virtually little hope of that student's achieving anything close to his/her true potential.

So, is there an answer? And, if so, what is that answer? Presented below is Robert Bluestone's plan of study for the student intending to pursue a bachelor's and a master's degree. On page vi of his 1977 master's thesis, "A First Course of Study Based on the Guitar Method of Manuel López Ramos Using Examples by Julio Sagreras," Bluestone proposes the following: for the Freshman year, (a) his own master's thesis ("intended to present the initial phases of hand positioning utilizing exercises taken selectively from the first volume of Julio Sagreras' Guitar method."⁷), (b) Las Segundas Lecciones para Guitarra (The Second Lessons for Guitar) by Julio S. Sagreras, and (c) Metodo Completo de Guitarra Libro I y II (Complete Method for Guitar Book I and II) Fernando Carulli; for the Sophomore year, Las Terceras Lecciones de Guitarra (The Third Lessons for Guitar), and Las Cuartas Lecciones de Guitarra (The Fourth Lessons for Guitar) both by Julio S. Sagreras, as well as Composiciones para Guitarra, Album I y Album II (Compositions for Guitar, Album I and II) by Mauro Giuliani; for the Junior year, (Las Quintas Lecciones de Guitarra (The Fifth Lessons for Guitar) by Julio S. Sagreras, 30 Minuetos para Guitarra (30 Minuets for Guitar) by Fernando Sor, and Twenty Studies for the Guitar, revised, edited, and fingered by Andrés Segovia, but composed by Fernando Sor; for the Senior year, Las Sextas

Lecciones de Guitarra (The Sixth Lessons for Guitar) by Julio S. Sagreras, and selected musical material from an edition of Dionisio Aguado's Guitar Method; and at the Master's level, Douze Études (Twelve Etudes) by Heitor Villa-Lobos, and selected studies from 25 Estudios Superiores (25 Advanced Studies) opus 38, by Napoleon Coste.

Robert Bluestone goes on to explain that the didactic material he listed will optimally take up approximately two-fifths of the practice time for the student. The more technical exercises, such as scales and arpeggios, should occupy at least one-fifth of the practice time. The final two-fifths of the time remaining would be used to learn new musical works in order to establish a personal repertoire.

Mr. Bluestone's proposal appears to be a step in the right direction. This author believes that the proposal has merit and would be worth putting into practice in order to observe the potential of the results. What this author believes to be not only important, but essential, is that the results be positive in all cases when the student is applying him/herself in a disciplined manner. For, as Jack Cecchini was quoted at the beginning of this chapter, "you lead the student to the door, but he has to go through the door."⁸

It is this author's belief that the day will come when guitarists, as a rule rather than as an exception, are at

the same technical and musical level as are so many of the pianists, violinists, and violoncellists. One aspect that must not be overlooked, however, is that so many pianists, violinists, and violoncellists, begin their studies at a very young age, learning not only proper technique through guided instruction, but how to read the notes, rather than being left to their own devices. The young pianist who wishes to learn the piano has little or no problem finding a competent teacher who can guide his/her musical steps in one of several established methods. It is the norm for a string player to become involved, early on, in an elementary, junior high, and/or high school string program; it is certainly not unusual. To take private lessons with an established string player, perhaps a member of a symphony who teaches privately, or to become part of a Suzuki program, is more common than not for a young instrumentalist. The young guitarist with the big dreams, however, is all too often left to his/her own devices, and has to look a little harder for answers. This author recognizes that times have changed since he was a youth. Pedagogical material of significant value for the younger guitarist and teachers with the vocation and patience to deal with the younger student are not as rare and/or inaccessible as they once were.

Certainly this is a key to opening that same door of possibly unlimited success for the guitarist that other

instrumentalists enjoy. If a student begins at the age of twelve to learn to play an instrument correctly, this can produce wonderful results. But if that student can learn to play that same instrument correctly at an earlier age and enjoy the process, it can ultimately produce even better results.

As more and more teachers share a common philosophy with Manuel López Ramos that if anyone, not just the very gifted, has the right to learn to play the guitar, and he/she exerts himself/herself enthusiastically in order to realize this principle of knowledge and conduct, then the stage will indeed be set for guitarists to share the experience of a successful and progressive technical background, and the accumulation of a large repertoire, with their fellow instrumentalists.

As a suggestion for further research, perhaps at some time in the future one might care to trace the relationship of guitar education in the United States to López Ramos, as it involves teachers in the United States or students of teachers who studied with Manuel López Ramos.

Notes

¹"GUITAR 101, The Fender Method," (Philadelphia: Lyrrus, 1997, CD-ROM) Chapter 6, "About Jack Cecchini."

²Manuel López Ramos, interview with author, 24 and 26 May, 1997, México City. Tape recording. Appendix B, 162, Appendix A, 123.

³Ibid., Appendix B, 150, Appendix A, 110.

⁴Manuel López Ramos, "Manuel López Ramos" interview with Roberto Limón, Guitar International, October 1986, 9.

⁵Manuel López Ramos, interview with author, 24 and 26 May, 1997, México City. Tape recording. Appendix B, 163, Appendix A, 124.

⁶Juan Reyes, "Proyecto para Plan de Estudios EAG," Appendix G, 16 June, 1998, 2.

⁷Robert Bluestone, "A First Course of Study Based on the Guitar Method of Manuel López Ramos Using Examples by Julio S. Sagreras," Master's thesis, Eastern Michigan University, 1977, v & vi.

⁸"Guitar 101, The Fender Method," (Philadelphia: Lyrrus, 1997, CD-ROM) Chapter 6, "About Jack Cecchini."

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APPENDIX A
ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF TAPED INTERVIEW
IN SPANISH CONDUCTED WITH
MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS AT HIS
HOME IN MEXICO CITY,
MAY 24 AND 26, 1997

FORD: For what reason and on what principle did you establish the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, Maestro?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: First of all, I consider[ed] that there [was] not an established school of guitar, there [were] no principles of other schools, and I probably asked: upon what are other schools based? I would like for them to define it for me, as I can define ours. That is, in the beginning, when one speaks of a school, and when one speaks of there being other schools different from a school, we would have to know: what issues do these other schools address? Am I explaining myself? There [wasn't], as far as I [knew], an established school, there [was] no system of learning, there [was] not, in a word, a ladder for progressing upwards, there [didn't] exist a basic methodology for learning to play an instrument, learning to play the guitar. There [wasn't] an established position of the hands, there [weren't] established movements, and there [wasn't] a manner for acquiring this, for acquiring those elements, there [wasn't] a manner because there [wasn't] an established school.

When I arrived in Mexico, I was not dedicated to teaching. I was making a concert career in America, South America, Central America, and intended to do it in the United States and in Europe, more than anything in Europe. But I arrived in Mexico and many teachers who lived in Mexico and who did not have much knowledge of a school, were simply teaching themselves as they were able to. But they did not have exact elements that could be useful for each person who might want to play the guitar. Therefore, they asked me to guide them, to give them principles to see whether they could have different ideas and make progress. Neither did I have much knowledge, except those that my teacher, Miguel Michelone in Argentina, had given to me, that is a series of books to study. Together with the six books of Sagreras, he also began by giving me [the studies by] Carulli, Carcassi, and later we went on to Sor, to Coste, Villa-Lobos, etc. Effectively he gave me a vertebral column for studying and developing my skills, those that remain dormant as long as one does not learn to study in a progressive manner.

Here in Mexico, and in many other parts of the world, those who were studying the guitar, the first music, the first contact they had, was, for example, with the studies of Sor. It seems to me that those studies, for their musical importance, should be given once the student has spent four or five years studying, and not in the first months. After the student had exhausted

that musical material of Sor--I'm continuing to speak of the question of pedagogy in Mexico--out of necessity they had to go on to the music of De Visée, Bach, the sonatas of Sor or the difficult works of Giuliani, in order to then face that of Ponce, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Moreno Torroba, et cetera.

If the student does not have an adequate preparation, as much technical as musical, their interpretation suffers. Except in those people, who by nature, by natural ability, can play without climbing a progressive ladder and without having a defined school. Therefore, I saw myself in the necessity of imposing an order, applying what I had learned with my teacher, in other words a methodology, and applying my personal observations--how my hands are placed, how one moves the fingers, and how one can begin in the work of a guitarist, the work of a student who knows absolutely nothing about the guitar. How one places the guitar upon the legs, how one places the forearm and arm on the edge of the guitar, how one places the hand perpendicular to the strings, how one should learn, step by step, the individual movements of each finger, thus learning as a group the distinct attacks of the fingers with respect to the strings, the free stroke, the rest stroke, all of this, so that the future guitarist will have elements that will be of service in his or her development, and come to make music without problems or limitations.

For that reason, I began in Mexico this school, which was named, Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, basing myself on this principle of which I have spoken.

I believe in the principle that every human being has the right to make music, to play music, because this is a language learned from the most tender infancy. A language that we hear perhaps before we are born. We already hear the music, the sounds, we learn the language of the sounds, when we are born we hear; in the air is an abundance of music; by the medium of radio, by the medium of songs your mother sings you to sleep with, by the medium of television, et cetera. If we do not make music, it's like knowing a language and not being able to speak it. And that, undoubtedly, is traumatic for every human being.

Therefore, a teacher who feels the responsibility of enabling those who know the sounds speak, that is to be able to play an instrument, needs to have an established school that is of service to everyone, not just those who possess natural ability.

I have had the pleasure and satisfaction of having done [this] in Mexico and in other countries of the world. In the United States, in Europe, many instrumentalists today are playing the guitar because they worked with me, and they don't have special abilities, they aren't extremely gifted, they are normal people who loved music. And I gave them, tried to give them, at the least, a path, tried to give them a technical beginning, a stairway, and climbing little by little, full of disciplines, full of forms to study. For example, the use of the metronome in the daily work, the slow study, the right hand fingerings in a reasonable form, all of this once the position and the movements are correctly learned. Then, come the systems of studies, the forms of memorizing, et cetera, et cetera. Thus it is for this that I dedicated myself to teaching with such fervor, with such enthusiasm, because I felt an obligation to respond to the need of the human being to make music.

FORD: What are your feelings about the school?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: I think that we have accomplished our commitment in all senses, I think that our school can call itself a school because it is based on all of the steps that are necessary for learning to play an instrument. It isn't something improvised, nor is it a school that adapts itself to the possibilities of the student; it is the student who must adapt to the school. They are two distinct concepts: a school ought to be rigid, and ought to be sustained with fixed principles. The student should adapt to the school and the school shouldn't think, well, this young person, this child, or he' plays with the hand placed poorly but he plays. Then, if he plays, so what? That is a serious error! If his hand is incorrect, in the beginning he is going to be able to play because the lessons are easy, but when he has the problems of movement, when one finger obstructs the other finger because his position is incorrect, when they see themselves in the necessity of using artificial or very long nails to be able to play by hooking the strings however they can, given that his fingers are poorly positioned, they are totally outside of the logic, of the normalcy that one thinks an instrumentalist ought to have. Then, serious problems are produced for the guitarists who study a great deal, who want to make a career, but who cannot progress because their position, their movements are extensive and the fingers obstruct one another. It would be the same, it would be exactly the same, if you saw a violinist hold the bow with the whole hand, and not as

it should traditionally be held. The auditory result would be disastrous. That is, he holds it as if it were a broom handle. Like this. Do you think that this violinist is going to have the marvelous bow that can make music? No! I am worried, because they may come and say to me, "What could another school deal with?" I want to know! I would be very interested in someone sending me pamphlets, video, that may tell me the process of teaching. I am able to explain it. I can explain the process of teaching. I can explain how one places the--how I think one should place the hands. How one learns to pluck. How one learns to achieve the sound. What the movements are after the execution. Not only the execution but, where the finger should arrive to create short movements, the foundation of a virtuosic future. I can define which methods there are to study. Which books are progressive. In what manner one can learn to play without those enormous gaps; it's like saying, today I play "Adelita" or "Lagrima" by Tárrega and tomorrow aspire to play the "Chaconne" by Bach. That is absurd. The fact that some able guitarist could do this doesn't establish a school. For that reason I think that, at least, I have fulfilled the mission of an honest teacher, and I believe, having always worked, the same as all of my collaborators, who are many, and not only in Mexico but in other parts of the world; in Argentina, in Europe, in the United States. Fortunately there exist many students of mine who continue my school, who continue my ideas, who are persons of a sensitive nature and who wish to give what they know, in a logical manner, and in the best way possible, not permitting any improvisation. A school cannot be founded on improvisations nor circumstantial adaptations. It all should be governed by a natural and progressive evolution, considering the limitations of the common man and not those of an extremely gifted person. I think that we have fulfilled our duty as teachers.

The future will bear fruit, and I hope that [for] our school, that is based on achieving the sounds that Segovia obtained on the guitar. For example, our school defends the apoyatura, the rest stroke. It is upheld by fundamental principles of music. The rest stroke is the only thing that can make the sonorous levels in the music. The importance that the melody has, that it should be made to stand out above the harmony and contrapuntal basses. Without that distinction, it's like going to play the harpsichord, that doesn't have these faculties as evident as the piano does. Nonetheless, the pianists have a great dedication to distinguish the melodic part from the

harmonic part and that of the bass. And the interior voices should be handled with the distinct individual forces of the fingers. Therefore, the rest stroke, the apoyado, cannot be cast aside as unfortunately the young guitarists, with exceptions, have done. They have dismissed this Segovian manner of playing, and as a result, the young guitarists, if they do not play through a microphone, cannot be heard. No one can hear them. Those guitarists have never been presented in a concert hall of great dimensions: as it could be Orchestra Hall, Masonic Auditorium of San Francisco, in short the Orchestra Hall of Chicago. Those concert halls where I listened to Segovia many times, who was seated in the middle of an enormous stage, to play for more than twenty-five hundred people. I had the possibility of playing in Orchestra Hall, for example, and also following the footsteps of Segovia. Never did I think of using a microphone. I was having to play with great force, with great dynamics, with great intensity in order to make music, and in order that the sounds might flow in the concert hall, might reach the furthest seats. And the notes that I noticed, that arrived and flowed furthest were those that had body, cuerpo as I say, body. The rest stroke, the apoyatura, gives it body. That gives body to the sound. That body flows, moves along, goes toward the end of the concert hall. The free stroke, the enganche, stays like flies around a honeycomb, around the honey. It doesn't go very far. It stops half-way down the road, or much less. It stays one meter from the guitarist. For that reason, as I said to you before, I conceive the guitar more melodically, than harmonically, than polyphonically. The beauty of the guitar, its mystery, its charm, its power to bewitch, is in the melody. That is the enchantment of the instrument. That is what one hears in the end. The guitar I can define in this manner: I think it is the inner voice of man. That is, if we wish to give it sound, give voice to our thoughts that are our inner voice, they would sound with sounds of the guitar. In that way, we would be able to say it is the inner voice of man. The guitar responds to that sound. And as I said to you before, so that you may remember now when you may courteously translate this conversation, the guitar needs to be played in a very special manner; one needs to know the instrument. I said to you that the majority of guitarists have a woman seated on their legs and embraced with their heart, and they don't know the woman. It's extremely important to know your instrument, its defects, its virtues, as it is important to know the virtues and defects of the woman you wish to marry. If you marry and you don't know

her, unfortunately, you will have to get a divorce right away. Thus, it is necessary to know its limits, its virtues, its defects, which it also has, and know how to manage this treasure of interior voices, handled with great care, with great spirit, with great delicacy. That is what one needs to know very, very well, to [be able to] play and know profoundly this instrument and the range it has for making music. And above all learn to play the instrument with intensity because the instrument has a defect: it is weak. It has little sound, it has no volume, its sound is very soft. And if a soft instrument--one plays it softly, no one will be able to hear it. It is necessary to wound the instrument many times: one must pluck it with intensity, with force, with vigor, with energy. The sounds, the notes need life. And there is no life if there is no energy. The sounds don't have life. They die. Therefore it is important, not just playing with force, but pressing the string, feeling it under the yema of the finger, because our school is based on short nails, not on long nails. The finger contacts the string at the yema. What do you call that part of the finger?

FORD: The finger tip.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: The finger tip. And it presses down the string, it squeezes it, it plucks it upwards to rest the finger on the higher string, but at the same time it has a very short nail that gives it the right amount of a metallic quality that the sound needs. Then, when one sinks the finger tip, passes it by part of the nail, that is the robust, full sound: Segovia's [sound] which we loved so much, the one that captivated the entire world so much, that is what we have to achieve. And to play with the force which Segovia used, because Segovia played in concert halls of enormous dimensions, and he played. He needed great silence, but he could be heard perfectly. Therefore, our school also is based on the continuation, not only of the marvelous manner in which Segovia played, of his artistic consciousness, his refinement, his sublime art, his personal, marvelous artistic conception, marvelous characteristics, that captivated everyone. For seventy years he captivated the entire world, not the guitarists--perhaps those he captivated the least were the guitarists--he captivated the world that loved music. The music lover who likes to hear the piano, violin, orchestra. No, he didn't captivate the guitarists. On the contrary, the guitarists deep down didn't feel great kinship toward Segovia. They criticized him very much for making use of exaggerated

rubatos, because he played Bach in the Spanish manner. What things they said! They didn't realize that Maestro Segovia had the capacity to drive the whole world crazy for seventy years or more. That is something inestimable, it's marvelous. We can't close our eyes to that. We need to realize the wonder that Segovia left us and to continue listening to his records, and keep listening to [him], learning something that we need to learn. We must listen beyond the sounds that Segovia makes. Much beyond. Therefore, I do not know if I am answering the question that you asked me, or not, but, let us go ahead.

FORD: Maestro, you may have answered this in another question but, what is your philosophy behind the school?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: The philosophy? I think that, more or less, that I have already told you. The philosophy of a school is that it be a system at the service of the student and the music. That is the principal philosophy. To the student, as a human being, who has the right to play music, to make music, and a school that responds to those needs.

FORD: Are there provisions for the school continuing on in the future, for future generations?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Will we have new generations of students, or new ideas?

FORD: For example, fifty years from now: what do you think will be the future of the school?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of our school? Look, there aren't many people who know it. In reality, youth are impressionable. And, in reality, the new students have the idea that what is past doesn't work too well, it's not good. Perhaps we too, may think the same. If the school is not established we cannot evaluate it. But, the young person thinks that everything of the past-- instead of the way we think was better-- the youth thinks that it was worse. What's past is past and they are not interested. One must look at new ideas, new forms that are more intellectual, less real.

It is very difficult to foresee if our school is going to endure. I don't know. I think so. I think many are going to recognize, also, that it was necessary to have a solid and well founded school. But I can't think that within forty or fifty years they will speak of these things. That is, or continue

thinking, that there was a school that one would have to adapt. Man, is always looking for progress (in quotation marks). Now you see how he progresses with the atomic bomb, for example. And you saw what great progress it made, killing hundreds of thousands of people. A progress of humanity, is truthfully in many cases a step backward.

The television, how much damage is it doing and does it do? How many terrible examples is it giving to the young, to the children? Because there is so much drug use, there is so much crime, the influence of the television, the movies, the media. The advances? The advances of science, on occasion, aren't very positive. And at times the consequences are grave. Therefore, for that reason, speaking of a school, I think that, like all things, it shall die, perhaps, or it shall remain in oblivion. No. I do not believe that the youth still, save some people, like to analyze the techniques of the past and find that it had solidity, reasoning, and that it might be interesting, for the guitar students of the future.

FORD: How many years has the school been in operation, Maestro?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: We began it in the year 1962. Therefore we have been around some thirty five years. In thirty-five years I believe that at least some twenty or thirty first-rate guitarists have come out of our school in Mexico. I ought to tell you that we are talking about the fact that those students that were dedicated to the guitar were very few. We have a school that does not require that a student be a professional. Our school is not based on the idea that if you do not have a sufficient age, and perfect pitch, and rhythmic development you're not going to be accepted. No, our school accepts every human being who wants to make music. And therefore, if a doctor has a half an hour of time to study, we give him a prescription of study, and he can rest from his work making music correctly with his instrument, studying and learning. A campesino comes with calloused hands from agricultural labor that he has to do and who is sixty years old, because we have had students of that age with those characteristics and we have accepted them, I have accepted them. And I have taught him with all the fervour as if he were going to be the greatest guitarist in the world. In other words, we don't reject anyone for being inept. We do not give an aptitude test. Never have we done it. Why? Because we have that philosophy.

Of course when the students, or some of them, saw the results of the school, they begin to dedicate themselves more and later ended up dedicating themselves professionally. But at the beginning all of our students went completely without professional basis, without wanting to be guitarists. No, we have accepted everyone: from all levels both professional and social. We never made the distinction that if one did not have a university education he could not study. We have accepted people who do not know how to read, it's not important to us. We will teach them. If it is necessary to teach reading, also we will teach him how to read. That is, we have a vocation of service. We want to serve all humankind. We want to be useful to them. Former students of mine today are teachers who teach at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico and work at my side with the fervour of giving knowledge of music and the guitar. We have formed a solid team and we are of profound mutual understanding in the principles that our philosophy of teaching maintains.

And if I do have some feeling of contentment, and pride, it is to be able to say this to you--do you understand, John?--I feel that I have been useful in life, that I have been useful to others. I feel content, and peaceful. I can sleep at night without a single worry, I have done nothing that I could regret. I do not speak badly of others, it doesn't matter if they criticize me. I have never answered a critic. If ever they have attacked me, [and] I think it unfair never have I responded, because I believe that they are always idiotic words. And, "Pay no heed to the words of a fool". I have done my work with all of my soul, with all of my capacity. You have been witness many times in the Master Class that we gave in the United States, and you can give testimony as to how I always gave, and you know more than anybody, how I was dedicated to all the students, big ones, little ones, dumb ones, intelligent ones, able ones, awkward ones, you saw it. I would walk around on my knees in front of them positioning their hands on the guitar, and showing them the movements. You were witness to that. Therefore, in reality no one can tell me that I have committed some sin in that respect. Of course, I am not a saint, but I have not been a negative person, toward anyone.

FORD: Has the curriculum changed over the past thirty-five years? For example, I have here a copy of the program of study from 1971: is the current program any different?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes. Well, there have been some modifications. Some things have been added, some have been removed, I would not be able to establish them exactly for you. But, each teacher has been contributing ideas and they have been put into practice with good results. Nevertheless, the foundation remains the same.

FORD: The books of Sagreras, Carulli, Carcassi, Giuliani, Segovia, your Co-ordination Exercises, for example, these are constant?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes.

FORD: But the repertoire for each year's study?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, the repertoire is very conditional. That progresses, so to speak, being defined according to the progress of the particular student.

FORD: But, for example, the arpeggios of Ablóniz?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: These are similar to the ones of Giuliani. They're much the same. They work.

FORD: So if one student wants to work in the Ablóniz book and another wants to work in the Giuliani book?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: He can do it. There can even be some modifications. What doesn't seem correct to me is to do away with this methodology, and to want to begin [building] the house with the roof, beginning to play the the works of Albéniz within a month of studying the guitar. Right? Or that you might want to play the suites of Bach, when you may have had three months. I mean that is the serious part. The rest is a little, it is conditional. Look, what's important, also, is not only the methodology, but the manner of studying. That is what is important. How you have to study it. And that, more or less, you know. Remember that we would divide the lessons by weeks. Remember how the first week the lesson of Sagreras or of Carulli was done at a slow tempo. Later [with] that same lesson, the tempo was changed to a speed closer to normal. The third week with that same lesson, it was done always marking the minimum necessary number of minutes. The first week you studied twenty minutes. The second week fifteen minutes, the same lesson. The third week ten minutes and the fourth week ten minutes. And now we add the new ideas that I am to be passing to you, that I am explaining to you, we would add that that memory

ought to be done without looking at the fingerboard, that is, without looking at the left hand. Doing away with the vision, closing the eyes, if you like, and working with pure memory, no sight except to feed the subconscious, and to store there the movements inherent to the lessons or the studies that you are playing.

FORD: And this is a new concept?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: This latest, which I am telling you, is a concept that for me seems revolutionary, and which I already told you how fast everybody will say that they already knew it. "Who doesn't know that the guitar ought to be played without looking at the fretboard? Latest thing, what a notion!" And I have spent fifty years playing, and looking at the fretboard. No other guitarist stopped looking at it. No one advised me that it was better to play without looking at the left hand. It has been two years since I discovered it, and I am astonished at the results. But no other teacher told me this. What a shame.

FORD: So, are there other didactic works that are part of the methodology now, that were not a part of it in 1971; say, perhaps, the "Estudios Sencillos" of Leo Brouwer?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course, always and whenever, I repeat, it is done in accordance with the level the student is acquiring. You can study the estudios of Brouwer, and you can put in what you want, so long as you don't take the risk of attempting works from the concert repertoire. Because if you already have a student play a concert work, since he doesn't have the sufficient musical or technical elements, there's going to be a disaster. Musically it is going to be a disaster, technically it is going to be a disaster, he is going to try to play a work that is beyond his reach.

Then, the teacher ought to give works at the same time as the lessons and the studies, for they are the students' guinea pigs. That they can damage, throw away, never play again. What's important is that when they acquire the responsibility of the works of the concert repertoire, that they have all of the artistic and technical elements to face them.

Then, you can change many things about that Methodology. What you should not do is remove, and remove, and remove. It's all right if you supplant, in place of one thing you may do something else, well that

is all right. What is bad is when you remove and you don't replace. This, in my opinion, is what's bad.

FORD: What evaluative criteria are used to determine if a student is ready to pass from one level to another?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well. What criteria do we use for him. Look, the teacher, is the one who uses the criteria for observing your possibilities, and your progress, and your advances. It is the teacher who knows how much the student has assimilated what he has studied, and how much [he] lacks in order to assimilate it. Then the teacher is the only one who can evaluate, not because you may have studied all of the studies are you going to attain the (next) level. But generally if you are able to study the books that are set up and programmed, if you are able to study them, and if it is acceptable to the teacher, the level corresponds to the step you are taking. That's to say, if you climb the steps of a ladder, you will reach the technique necessary to face the works of the guitaristic repertoire. In other words, if you are competent to manage to study, to climb five steps of a ladder and climb them correctly, there is no doubt that you have arrived at a level that capacitates you to pass to a second level; and begin to climb other steps. Perhaps harder, more difficult, but if you also succeed in climbing it, a higher level awaits you. That defines a school.

FORD: So it's all these factors, not just playing the notes correctly and/or with expression. Everything together becomes the determining factor.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course. Look, what happens is that one must teach expressive elements; if you don't have an expressive technique, you cannot make expressive music.

The teaching ought to be complete. You have to teach how to play the studies and lessons in the most artistic manner possible. You should teach how to manage the dynamics, to manage the color: metallic, the dolce, you need to teach the management of the rhythm, to be flexible with it in the lessons. These contain music. There are marvelous lessons, there are brilliant studies. You read the studies of Coste, those of Aguado, those of Sor. Less interesting but useful also, are the studies of Carulli, of Carcassi.

Then, I can't see for what reason one won't make music with these studies. On the contrary. One has to

learn to make music with very few artistic elements. You know well that Segovia played little works, simple ones, that captivated the world; they were the smallest ones and the most simple. The minuets of Sor played by the *Maestro de Jaén* (Segovia) drove the people insane, drove insane the most exacting musician. With three notes Segovia made music. He didn't need great sonatas to delight the public of all the world. That is what one must learn and that is what one must teach to the students. That is the task of a teacher. That is. And afterward, when one already has technical dominion, and has a mastery of the instrument and has accomplished a velocity with scales, with arpeggios, and one has all the elements and the musical formation necessary, is when one can open the expressive worlds that I always tried to open, the world of the imagination, the feelings, the interior ideas. You are a witness, when I asked the students of the Master Class: "What do you feel in this passage?" "What do these notes say to you?" "Of what are these notes speaking?" "Tell me what you're thinking; tell me what you're feeling." And you will recall that they would lay open many plots that could well serve for the making of a movie.

We discovered then that the teaching should be complete: technical and artistic at the same time; they can't be nor should they be separated. I will even say never: I cannot conceive of a man dedicated to music that may be a bad person. I can not understand it. I believe that if a person loves music and works in it, his soul has to be more pure and he must be a good-natured person; he has to be a good man. That is extremely important. I cannot conceive of a musician that shelters a perverse soul, I can not conceive of it because music is everything that is noble, everything that is beautiful, it is all enchanting, it is all the good that man has.

FORD: It's possible that I need to revise my copy of the methodology. Do the Carulli and Carcassi studies, for example, exist in the same order, or has the progression of studies been revised?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Look, if there is being made a progressive change, Juan Reyes, of the Duo, Pavon/Reyes, that you have heard, who are extraordinary teachers, is doing that work. He is placing in order the lessons and the studies in a progressive manner, in a more logical form than how they come in the books. We are doing that to better our idea of progressive levels.

But in this way, all I would be able to tell you [is] what we have established for years. Our experience and the results demonstrate it.

FORD: But in many of the editions of studies, at least in years past, there existed no marks at all for the right hand. What are your feelings about this?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: We in our school have marked everything for the right hand, everything. The left hand is less important in terms of markings. It's not so-- fundamental to repeat the way Sagreras did in an exaggerated manner for both hands. I believe that the right hand is important to mark and our studies are all marked, they are all fingered. All of them. It is important to know the principles of our fingering, which is another important contribution of a school. The principles of fingering, you understand, are based on the change of string by the fingers in order to achieve facility of change, according to the classical position of the fingers of the right hand upon the strings. That principle, of fingering for the right hand, has contributed very much to the faultless performance of guitarists. And that was an idea that occurred to me in the year '56 [1956], '57 [1957]. We were still not in the school, de Arte Guitarrístico. It occurred to me because I observed that in the concerts that they gave at the time--I began to play in the year '48 [1948]--in the concert that I was playing at that time, one concert I would play very well because perhaps I was tranquil. And the concert of the following day would go very bad for me. I was very nervous and made a mess of the performance. Then, I wondered, why did this happen to me? And I observed how my right hand was with improvised fingerings. This is to say, there wasn't regulation, there wasn't a faultless apprenticeship for the hands, a reasoned fingering for the right hand above all.

Then, I saw myself needing to observe what were the risks that I was running for having learned intuitively the right hand. And I noted that there were repetitions of the fingers; I noted that there were absurd leaps; that, for example, the ring was the last finger that played on the fourth string and was followed with the index finger on the the first string, a leap totally absurd given the position of the right hand. And then, I made some fundamental principles for string crossings, that you well know, and that are the basis for fingering the right hand in a reasoned way and furthermore, with an advantage. When one fingers the right hand with care and reasoning one needs to

mark it down, and when one studies in this way one ought to learn the movements as they are marked. To repeat exactly as it is written in order that the muscles--we're going to say that the muscles learn--don't assimilate two movements in order to perform the same note or three, but to practice one only.

This contribution to the technique of the guitar was so important that Julian Bream himself began to finger the right hand in works published by him. Possibly this idea would have arrived to his ears and perhaps, he may have embraced it for its efficiency. Anyway, how good it is that the English master decided to mark the fingering of the right hand in an exhaustive manner. And before, never, no one had done it.

FORD: Occasionally, in Giuliani and Carcassi, for instance, there are fingering indications.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course, Segovia himself also marked on some occasions, not knowing, perhaps, its importance. But, in any case he knew that it was important.

FORD: And now only Bream...

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Obviously, of course, but I think that the master, Bream, did certainly base his actions on what I started to give and teach since the year [nineteen] fifty-eight. But it's not important who may have started to discover the efficiency of fingering the right hand in the musical works. What's important is that this idea has become valued and adopted by the great guitarists and teachers.

FORD: At the Estudio, are specific editions of music used?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, no, they are the ones that are in public domain. Everybody can buy these editions. Of Sagreras, Carcassi, Carulli, Coste, Sor, we do not have editions that are particularly ours.

FORD: What is the process utilized for determining the sequential use of materials?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, it is the criteria of the individual teacher. Of course the criteria are similar among all of the teachers. And the needs that the student presents, is what defines the material that has to be done--how it has to be studied. Because one of the bases of our school is learning to study, how you

should learn to study the lessons, the studies, how you ought to manage the work of scales, arpeggios. All of this we do governed by the metronome. The metronome becomes the teacher in the student's house. I give the metronome to the student at the velocities that I think the student is capable of realizing at home, alone, without the vigilance of the teacher. This is very important because all students have a tendency to rush, they tend to play rapidly, and then, if I am there present when the student wants to rush, I stop them and I mark the time. But as soon as the student is in his house he does as he wishes. Then, I require all the students to work with the metronome in order to not have this tendency to rush; in order to control the movements and learn a regular rhythmic feeling. The metronome is not the enemy of the instrumentalist. The metronome obliges us to keep perfectly established and regular rhythms. Therefore, it is necessary to know how to give the correct speeds that the student needs in order that the student not tend to impede his or her movements and do them without the necessary clarity, without the necessary care. It is very important to learn to study. It is very important now to learn to memorize. And with these last inferences that I have been making with respect to the possibility of learning the movements of the lessons, studies, and works, directly in order that they may be assimilated in the subconscious and the eyesight doesn't intervene, in other words the vision doesn't intervene by looking at the left hand in order to memorize, I believe that these are definitive steps necessary to create an instrumentalist of the same level as would be a cellist, or a violinist, or a pianist. We believe that this is the secret of many great instrumentalists who don't know why they are great because they have natural qualities. But we have to go in search of those qualities. I--this study that I am making recently with respect to the subconscious assimilation of the movements and to the succession so that the fingers move sequentially--I am naming this idea in a very poetic manner, maybe, or very ambitious, perhaps. I call it "in search of the gift." To look for the gift of those who have it, because God touched them on the forehead with His divine finger and they have the gift of ability, of facility, the gift of the ear, the gift of so many positive things that the majority of great artists have by nature. But always I continued thinking that it is necessary that all of us be able to play well, correctly, and have possibilities of becoming a great artist. Why not?

What it is necessary to know, what is necessary to look for is the gift. If God doesn't give us that gift, we go in search of it. Let's see how one can arrive at obtaining it. Let's find the road in order to give this possibility to all those who want to play an instrument. And not only those who are born with the gift have the right to play. That is the reason why I am analyzing with myself, with the students; we are exchanging impressions and looking for the possibility of achieving that the guitarist has the same level as the violinists, and the pianists, and the cellists. That he may have a great repertoire like those instrumentalists, of the violinists, et cetera. To have a great repertoire. The guitarist, in general, has a very limited repertoire because almost all of us suffer from memory slips. We suffer from mistakes and forgetfulness. Then, I believe that with this new system, with this new idea of working the pieces of music without looking at the fretboard, and without looking at the fingers, and working, trying to assimilate in the subconscious all of those movements without any order other than the one assimilated in the receptacle that the man has for profound knowledge. It may be that we will come to have an extensive repertoire, as great or enormous as the music written for the guitar. I have the impression that this will be, perhaps, my last effort, my last work because I think that I do not have many years left to live, and therefore I wish to give to my students and those that believe in our school, who love our school who value it with the generosity that it is necessary to value the efforts of all those who have contributed to consolidating these ideas. I think that this is one of the last legacies. I hope that it has the results that I foresee, I hope that. I hope it will be definitive so that the anguish of forgetting, of the suffering, of the misgivings one has when one plays, I hope that it can be eliminated and music can be made with the same tranquility that the great artists make it [music].

FORD: What is your method or system of deciding which materials to use and which ones' to reject?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: We have material that is established. The students do not have a reason to elect other material that is not ours. For what reason? Because ours has been tried. Because ours has given results. Then, if a student comes and wants to impose his own criteria, then, it means that perhaps he might know more than the teacher with whom he wishes to consult, I believe that the students ought to adapt themselves to the school and not the school adapt itself to the

student. If there is a methodology established, it is because it has been seen that it has given results in a great majority of students. If the student, let's say, wants to play a specific work, and if the same student who has been studying six months says to me that he wants to play the "Sonata" of Castelnuovo-Tedesco, I say to him, "You know what? It is not advisable for you." Because the "Sonata" of Castelnuovo-Tedesco is the roof of a house. Then if you wish to begin the house with the roof, it's going to come down on you. Then, the teacher is the one who needs to orient, who needs to say what material he should use and how to study, how to work. That is the mission of the teacher. And to explain the steps that correspond to each section, to each work. I always have given a sort of prescription like medical prescriptions. It's the same. I have said, "Good, you need to study twenty-four scales with distinct fingerings for twenty minutes, and you should use twenty minutes at such and such a speed with the metronome. Every day up until I hear you again, the next class, or the class that comes after it, or next week. And you ought to dedicate fifteen minutes to the arpeggios, at the speed that I am marking with the metronome. And you should dedicate, according to the amount of time that you have for studying ten minutes for this lesson, twenty minutes for this study, and thirty minutes for this other one, and fifteen minutes for a little piece that you are studying. In total, you need to study two hours. Every day." The student should follow exactly that order and that prescription. Because if not, the same thing can happen to him as the sick person who is told to take a pill every three hours, one tablet each three hours. And if it is better, I take ten tablets at once and I'm going to get well sooner. That is the same. One musn't take ten tablets all of a sudden because the patient will die; and the guitarist ought to study with discipline and with patience, taking tablets when the doctor, which in this case is the teacher, prescribes. In other words, I think that the criterion of the teacher intervenes in all of the actions, and our teachers have a generalized criterion. We maintain a similar criterion because we have learned and we have studied in the same manner and we have seen that it gives results. Because if we see, if we might see that it doesn't give results, we would look for other material, we would look for other ideas, we would look for other paths. And there are undoubtedly teachers that are doing research in order to better the technique, in order to work other levels of mechanisms, in short, there are worries that are seething because I have around me five, six professional guitarists of a

high level that are giving classes at the same time in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. Anyway I don't know if this answers, more or less, your question.

FORD: It's possible that I have asked this question in another manner before and, if this is true, please forgive me. In what manner did the idea of starting your own school occur to you; and not just starting it, but planning for its continuation?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, always since the first moment we intended to give them the experience and what I had received from my teachers, we thought that this road was going to be positive. But until we saw the results, we couldn't do it. Because at the beginning one makes a plan of work and begins to have students in order to begin to climb these ladders, these steps. Then, it was not known if it was going to give surprising results as they did give. One of those surprising results was Alfonso Moreno who worked intensely, with incredible intensity twelve or thirteen hours each day, but in less than three years he carried out successfully the study of all the books, all by memory at great speeds and with great perfection; and there are some fourteen or fifteen books. And then, after three years I said to Alfonso Moreno, "Look, I'm going to prepare you for the concurso de París that is within one year. We are going to work on the pieces, we are going to work on the techniques and artistically under my direction, and you are going to win the concurso." And I was not mistaken. I was not mistaken, he won the concurso, one of the most difficult ones, because great instrumentalists took part in it, Eduardo Abreu, in short great guitarists and nevertheless Alfonso won unanimously. And this he did in four years. The result of the technique and the plan of study went marvelously. I'm not leaving out the acknowledgement that Alfonso Moreno was a guitarist of natural ability. But I also had other students that instead of taking four years they took seven, they took eight. But they also won competitions: Mario Beltrán del Río won the concurso de Venezuela, Alirio Diaz, various competitors won first and second prizes in Europe, Jesús Ruiz, Enrique Velasco. In summation, it occurs to me I am forgetting the guitarists that surprisingly arrived at the same technical and artistic level that Alfonso could in four years. Therefore, I have the impression that one cannot doubt too much that the plan of studies, the manner of doing it, and the methodology employed, the material employed gives its positive results. Perhaps it can be improved, perhaps some lessons can be supplanted by others, some studies

for others. Perhaps other scales can be found, more complicated exercises can be sought. In short, there can be a thousand and one more things. But if with that all of the students are scared away because they say that the work is very slow, and this that I was telling you this morning that many people think that our established studies, the quantity of lessons, studies, and technique that the students have to do for seven, eight years, or perhaps more, scares away all of the students, they all think that we are bad because today at the present time they all want to have it all yesterday. They want to play the classical guitar like Segovia in three months. Then, I made this comparison that I want to leave recorded with you in order for to see if you develop it because in fact, it's true. It's like wanting to study medicine in order to cure the sick and being determined. Either go to the university to study medicine for eight years, plus four more years of specialization, or put yourself into the school of curanderos (folk healers). If you put yourself into the school of curanderos for perhaps one year, or in three months you learn to cure or kill your patients. Then, do you want to be a professional doctor, or do you want to be a curandero of the guitar? What do you want to be? Do you want to be a professional guitarist, or do you want to be a guitaristic curandero? Then choose: if you want to be a curandero it may be that you will cure someone: it may be that you will even have fame and even become a millionaire because the whole world has come on their knees to solicit you to caress them on the head in order that this blessed hand might cure. And there is the other who has studied twelve years, and who knows if he can cure or not. In short, it has seemed to me that technical work on one's instrument takes many years, much discipline, many efforts, but those efforts, those disciplines, and that work, it has to give good results for the majority of the students. Not so that one can play and the other cannot give one note. No. All of our students, without exception, play the guitar well. And they're not professionals, because they do not dedicate themselves for all the hours [necessary]. They do it a little; on the margin we have doctors, lawyers, engineers, preparatory students, university students who dedicate one or two hours per day to study their instrument. And they progress and they play very well. And there comes a moment for many of those that were studying. For example, Victor Saenger used to study engineering in a university, but he made such amazing progress on the guitar dedicating one or two hours per day with discipline, that he dedicated himself to the guitar

because he became impassioned and because the results were magnificent. Mario Beltrán, also, was a university student who left that career in order to dedicate himself to the guitar because he was doing it at the margin, he was not doing it as a profession directly. That demonstrates to you that the results and the technique of the teaching is marvelous. And it can make everybody play correctly, since that was always my ambition. If of so many people one great guitarist turns out, or two or three, how great! It's marvelous, but I have fulfilled my mission for the human being, not with one or two guitarists. I don't think that I'm a good teacher because I have one good guitarist in my students. No. I am a good teacher because I have had a thousand good students in all of my life. All of them have played well, some have been extraordinarily great guitarists but it doesn't satisfy me. Only this is my satisfaction: the work of the whole ensemble of very many people. And my students in other places in the world in their turn are giving this philosophy, doing this work, and doing good giving the people the possibility of making music, because that is their right, acquired when one is born.

FORD: How do you feel this school compares with others, if there are others to compare?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: I am not acquainted with other schools, perhaps there are other schools, but they are very superficial. For example, there is this school of Carlevaro, there is a book written about it. It is quite solid. I do not want to say to you that it does not have any value, but it appears to me as though it is leaving to the side, and not giving importance to the rest stroke, to the apoyatura. Then it is solely giving guidelines for plucking the string in a totally different manner; which in my judgement, is not a good idea because the sound loses body and it's difficult, then, to highlight the distinct musical elements, that are like sonorous planes. Then, that is the closest that I am acquainted with, the closest to the establishment of a school, is the School of Carlevaro. But then, I am not acquainted with other attempts at [establishing] schools because some show photos of how to hold the guitar, how to place your hand, always from afar and not teaching a slow and progressive path. Simply, there are drawings that indicate how one must pluck, but they are simple, a little superficial. They aren't profound. They have not really investigated whether the hand moves, doesn't move, whether it's perpendicular or not, whether the fingers attack facing or attack from the side. It's always very ambiguous.

It doesn't define the way with clarity. Then, I cannot make comparisons, and besides, since I'm ignorant if there is a school, I think there may not be one, that really cares for the beginner, that cares how the hands are placed and how the fingers move, and which teaches a methodology in order to apply those teachings. Then, I can't give an opinion upon these differences that other schools have. You who are in the United States would perhaps have more information. And if you find any, [I hope] it would not be too much if you sent me a copy because I want to see another path. I am not like those teachers who think that the only one that is good is theirs. I don't believe this. But I have seen nothing that may convince me. For example, there is this book by Bobri that places the hand of Segovia as if it were a school. But the hands of Segovia are not the hands of the majority. They are very corpulent, very thick fingers, very ample, very special nails that are difficult to find. Generally, one doesn't find those fingers so thick, one doesn't find those specific nail shapes. Then, that book of Bobri, with photos of Maestro Segovia, does not give very much guidance. It shows how Segovia attacks [the strings], but it doesn't show how everyone ought to attack [the strings]. Because he gives photos of Segovia and gives his manner of playing but perhaps that's not a manner adaptable to all students. It's an individual manner, very personal to Maestro Segovia that can give some guidance but, for example, it gives one bad direction which is to twist the hand completely in order to play the string and play the nail and finger-tip with the side. If I have a delicate finger, very thin, I'm going to take hold [of the string] with very little finger-tip, very little, and very little nail. Then, the sound, even if it may be rest stroke, is going to be thin. It's not going to be strong, no. Therefore--but this is more or less what I know, and I think we have a more solid school, a more reflective school, a more thought-out school, more profound perhaps, and with more experiences with the results. That is what I can tell you with respect to other schools of which I confess my ignorance. What are we going to do?

FORD: And Carlevaro and Bobri do not maintain offices where a staff of instructors teach the guitar on a daily basis.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, of course, no, no. This I don't think that...

FORD: The others are basically schools of thought.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Obviously. And imagine also that many times some teachers who saw our organization here, and in our work as a team, a team of five, six, seven teachers, or eight, working with the same principle, with the same school, with the same bases, with the same methodology, the results were magnificent. One time, some Argentine teachers saw this and wanted to do the same in Buenos Aires. And they did not succeed because they did not have a school. Then each one-- they were their own [individual] students whom they were going to teach together, but each one taught in his own manner. In other words, they were going to be teachers teaching the guitar, but they were not unified by a school, but rather teaching individually each one what he thought should be taught. That is the difference.

FORD: So, I may say you do not know of another school like the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in the United States, México, or in other parts of the world?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course. I have been, for example, in Europe and came across the same thing. One time, I gave a course in Zurich, in Switzerland, and some students came to me from the conservatories there; from Zurich, and from Winterthur, around, because it is a very small country, and they all came abominably taught. They all wanted to play the "Chaconne" and they couldn't play three notes together. Then, I saw myself in the necessity of having to say to those young people, that they had to start from zero. They had to begin again to place their hands on the instrument, to learn the positions and the preparatory movements to learn to pluck with the fingers, to learn to pluck the strings, in order to produce a good sound and to accomplish movements which will lead them to virtuosity, over time, through their efforts and [because] of the methods, and of the exercises we give. Then, but it was a sampler of different hands, and I repeat to you, if you look at the violinists all over the world, everybody holds the violin almost in the same manner, if not exactly the same. The cellists do exactly the same. There's not a great difference of positions of how the cellist holds the bow, how a cellist uses his left hand. There are some minimal differences according to the structure of the hands and the dimensions of the hands but practically speaking, one cellist is the copy of the other. Then, look at the pianists. The majority of the pianists also have the same positions and movements for playing the piano. For what reason with the guitar do some place the hand straight [hand perpendicular with respect to the

strings], others place it twisted [hand oblique with respect to the strings], another presses it in closely [places the wrist close to the strings], another keeps it away [places the wrist at a distance from the strings]? It's completely an improvisation of a school. I think there has to be a unification of ideas. That is our point of view.

FORD: In the United States, colleges and universities grant degrees.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, degrees, yes.

FORD: But what can a student expect to receive after satisfactorily completing the course of studies at the Estudio?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of Course. We give certificates of study. Of course it is endorsed by renowned teachers and they take their examination in order to receive their certificate of study, and when they finish all of the methodology and put on one or two concert programs of a proper level, they give a graduation recital and they are awarded a diploma from our institution. A diploma that is recognized by some universities here in México, as a valid and official diploma. Though we are not--we have taken the necessary steps to be able to be recognized officially. I have not been interested in seeing official recognition. Governmental posts do not interest me. Never have they interested me. In two opportunities the directors of the National Conservatory of Music here in México, of México City, when Francisco Savín was director, and who is now director of the Symphonic Orchestra of Jalapa, he occupied the post of director of the orchestra, director of the National Conservatory. And at the time, he called and said to me, "I want you to come and give classes here at the Conservatory." And then, I said to him, "Look, I won't come for various reasons: first, because I am making my career in Europe and in the United States and I don't want to be tied to the Institution." [Francisco Savín replied,] "No but, you can go when you need to, we'll make things easy for you." "Yes, but in the second place," I said to him, "look, besides I'm an Argentine and even if I have the right to work in México, I don't want it to be said in the future that I as a foreigner am taking away the position from a Mexican. Neither would I be happy about that. Therefore I do not accept your offer for which I am very thankful, Francisco." Around the year 1966 or '67, I don't remember precisely, something similar happened with Tapia Colman, another musician,

another composer, who occupied also the directorship of the National Conservatory, and he also called me to give classes, and more or less I said the same thing to him. I have always been satisfied with doing individual work in the professional and economic aspect; I never wanted to depend on any government post. You know very well that many universities in the United States, for example, the one in Seattle, offered me a situation to stay and give classes in the United States, and they even offered me very good money. But I had several important situations. First, I had my children studying in México and I wasn't going to change their schools and universities. And in the second place, I had the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico with seven or eight teachers working together and I wasn't going to abandon them for any amount of money in the world. I wasn't interested, then, in going to another country because I would have had to go with all of my family and I would have had to abandon my students who were the teachers who were accompanying me in this work. Therefore, perhaps I committed an error, but on the other hand I don't regret it because we carry out an interesting work and many American students have come, like yourself, to study here in México, and our school has an international reputation. We have supported ourselves for thirty-five years working privately, and know that each class signifies a very careful work. We listen, I said this to you before, to all of the technique they are studying. They work on twenty-four scales, all of them together in order to make a great technical effort, with all of the fingerings: index-middle, index-ring, middle-ring, ring-middle-index, and ring-middle-index-middle, that is, we listen to the twenty-four scales at the different metronomic speeds that we are requiring. We listen to all of the arpeggios of Giuliani which are very many. We review four lessons in each book, each one at different speeds as corresponds to our system of learning, which you know. Then, we give the fifth lesson and suspend the first. If they are dealing with two books of studies and lessons at the same time, we listen to eight lessons with two different styles per class: the Romantic of Sagreras, and the Classic of Carulli, Carcassi, et cetera. To summarize, we listen to four from one book at different speeds, some very slow, others faster, and in the other book, the same. Eight lessons in all. Then, we play for them those that follow. We mark the lessons with fingerings for them if it has not been done, we put metronome markings for them and the amount of time they should study it. And if they play some work in agreement with their level, we also listen to it for them and try to correct

the art of the interpretation within their possibilities. A teacher should work in this way. The student will feel stimulated because he studies and knows that his teacher is going to listen to what he is studying in its entirety. Instead, in other musical institutions, generally they have more students than time permits. Then, they have to attend to fifteen or twenty students in one hour. What can they do? Well, listen five minutes to each one. What can they teach? Then, when the student doesn't have any ability, they are advised: "Go and sell little toys there in the street, or clean automobiles. You weren't born for music." How do they know whether they weren't born for music if they never have taught them, if they have never been concerned? No, that is another philosophy, it's another manner of teaching.

Generally, the musician, the instrumentalist, isn't a good teacher. An instrumentalist, and even less a soloist, because the soloists get there usually by ability and not by having been well taught, and therefore, they don't have the pedagogy or knowledge of teaching. I have already told you that one time a young man came and said to me that they had rejected him in the conservatory because he wanted to study the violoncello. They gave him a test and they told him that he did not have the capacity to play any instrument. Then, this young man came to me and said: "You know Maestro, they have not let me study the violoncello in the conservatory and they told me that you are a teacher who is capable of making the blind see and making the lame walk." I responded to him: "I limit myself to teaching all those who want to make music, because it's their right. If that is okay with you, let us start today. I shall not give you any test nor am I interested in knowing if you have a good ear or natural ability in your hands, I am not interested in any of that. You are a normal human being and that is enough." In four years this young man was giving concerts and with another student of ours went to Europe playing as a duo. In four years he came to play marvelously. He had a clean technique, perfect, fantastic. Héctor González was one of the best students that I have had. He had the misfortune of being operated on in an emergency and the anesthesia carried him to his death. Today, a cousin of his is a great guitarist and teaches in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. His name is Guillermo González, and he is an extraordinary musician.

FORD: What is the make-up of the examinations given, before a student can pass from one level to another?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: What do the examinations deal with? Well, the examinations, of course, are to verify whether the level that is being given to the student being given the certificate is justified by what they are doing. The speed with the scales is tested, the speed with the arpeggios is tested, the memorization of lessons from the books is tested. They have to play the lessons and the studies from memory. The teacher can ask, "Please play number twenty from the fourth book," if they are studying at the second level, and the student has to play that. And then, each one prepares some works according to his level. That is the technical work, what we examine of the instrumentalists. But also they have to take other specialties. They have to take courses in harmony, in solfeggio, and in all of the other disciplines that comprise a professional musician. Those who are not going to dedicate themselves professionally, we are satisfied that they have basic musical principles and that they play the instrument correctly.

FORD: Are these examinations taken in front of a jury?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, of course, before all of the teachers at the Estudio.

FORD: What is the physical size of the institution?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, we have six cubicles and one large lecture hall for giving concerts and lectures.

FORD: Does the hall contain facilities for recording?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: In general, we record and make a video tape.

FORD: Is there a room large enough where a class could be given as in years past, when you would give a month-long class for foreign students?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, I have been stopping that little by little, because I have less time, but we did it for many years with great success.

FORD: But conceivably, something like this could take place in the lecture hall.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, in the large lecture hall. We have master classes for the more advanced, and those that are not as advanced go to listen to the classes.

They are courses with our own students who already have a developed technique. Then we work on the pieces for programs, in front of the students that are at different levels in order that they may learn knowing the repertoire a little at a time.

FORD: More or less, what is the size of enrollment each month?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: We always had so many students we used to keep a list of applicants, those who had to wait for a vacancy. Many times they had to wait one or two years in order to enter to study with us. Thus was our success in the teaching of the guitar and thus it continues to be.

FORD: And how many names occupy places on the waiting list?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: More than one hundred are waiting to enter.

FORD: Do the students give concerts periodically?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: The students give concerts periodically. Those who are preparing small works during fifteen minutes play each one. Each month, we have a concert of pupils, of students.

FORD: Each month?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Each month. Each month there is a day dedicated to this and three or four pupils play; fifteen or twenty minutes each one.

FORD: And are there certain members of the faculty that give concerts, and some that do not?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, no, of course, the teachers also every year, or every two years, perform a concert for the students so that they may see that the teachers continue playing.

FORD: And yourself?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: I also can do it, after discovering that without looking at the fretboard one can maintain the works without having to study and practice many hours.

FORD: I should have asked this question first. Are there facilities at the school for giving concerts?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, of course, of course there are facilities here.

FORD: Also, are these facilities equipped for making recordings?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, at one time we had a recorder, and we would record the lessons of the pupils. But it was a task that took away much time from us and it wasn't possible to give classes of more than two hours.

FORD: But once each month, when four students are being presented in recital?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: The recital can be recorded and it can even be recorded on video tape. I think I have told you this already.

FORD: Do you anticipate moving the school to another location?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: We are now at Dakota 204, Colonia Nápoles in the Federal District [México City]. Nothing can move us from this place.

FORD: This a question from a member of my committee. You are known as a teacher, concert artist and arranger of music.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, yes of course.

FORD: But are you a composer?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No.

FORD: And the other teachers at the Estudio?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: They are not composers. They are performers. They are specialists in the instrument and they teach according to our school.

FORD: And you started the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in 1962?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: So it was.

FORD: What are your dreams for the future?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: My dreams for the future? With respect to what?

FORD: With respect to the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. What do you want for this institution? What vision do you have for this school?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Look, I would want the work done by our Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico to be an example for those who want to dedicate themselves to teaching, that the philosophy we have tried to maintain during so many years will be taken up by teachers who, even if they have not studied with us, can understand that the responsibility to teach music, to teach an instrument, is more important than all the rest. One must learn to give without hoping to receive. It is necessary to feel useful in this life. My hope is that the teachers who teach an instrument, be it the guitar or something else, have this philosophy. And that they will know how to be useful to their fellow-man, to their neighbor. To be useful and to give them beauty. Music gives peace, happiness. I would want that to be what endures from our school. And if also our technical principles endure, and if they are maintained and passed from generation to generation, if these ideas are being passed along, and are improving, and are being perfected, that will be for me a great satisfaction, even if I am no longer in this world.

FORD: Are you happy with the size of the school?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: I think so. One cannot make an institution where we have a hundred teachers, because it couldn't be watched over. I am always at the school, I am always seeing the students. I review the teachers, I review the students. If I had a hundred students it would cost me a lot of work to be there checking up from time to time on how it is going. But if I have a thousand students, how will I do it? No, I think that the size of our Estudio is one that is manageable.

FORD: Does the school maintain a library?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: We have a musiteca (library of music), perhaps, more than a biblioteca (library of books). We have an archive of music that all students may copy, that all may have, to come to have all the works that I have purchased during my life and studied all of my life. And that is at the disposal of everyone.

FORD: And recordings as well?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, there are records that they can acquire. We are not a business, we simply have this

material for those who want to buy guitar records, for those who want to buy strings. This is not to make a profit, it's simply to help those who study. Strings, records, methods, books.

FORD: But is there a library of recordings, or just of printed music?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No. We have facilities for listening to music. Before, we had long play records. Now, they are being supplanted by the CD, and, more or less, we have a good record library.

FORD: I think many things are explained here on the website also, but if I need further clarification of certain matters, may I call you?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, of course.

FORD: It is the end of the century. What place do you think this school holds in the world of music, in the world of the guitar?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: And why do I have to think something different because the century is ending? The days will continue and so will life.

FORD: This is not a question of mine, it is a question of one of my teachers. Where and/or how does the school fit in with the end of the century, as far as you are concerned?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: My opinion is that time is an invention of man; it's not important in what moment we are, the end of the century or the beginning of the next. Simply, man lives in the time that marks his life. It's good to leave huellas on the road. Do you know what a huella is? When one walks in the sand--in the desert--that is a huella. If you can leave a huella [footprint/ mark], like the astronauts left on the moon, and this endures, you will have fulfilled the opportunity that God has given you to live.

I think that this century is important for the guitar. The guitar received the boost from Segovia. He was known throughout the entire world. They created schools and they created teachers in all of the universities. This we owe to Segovia, that is the honest truth. Besides we owe to the Maestro de Jaén (Segovia) a repertoire that the great composers created for him. This is the Golden Age for the guitar, and we hope that the coming century will be much better.

Instead of the golden age, may it be the platinum age. And may the one which follows be that of the diamond.

FORD: How has the school changed since 1962? For example, at one time there was one month each summer when classes were offered for foreign students.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, we had to stop doing that due to the quantity of students that we had. We had so many students here, Mexicans, that we no longer had the capacity to give those classes for foreigners; and above all, because I occupied my time giving classes in the United States and playing concerts in other countries. Therefore, practically, we are continuing to do, more or less, the same since we began up until now. We have changed some things, but, fundamentally we are continuing by the same principles and the same activities because they have given us very good results. Then, why are we going to change? People say that everything has to evolve. I say fine, everything evolves but at times it evolves for the worse. Perhaps it is better to stay with that which we have verified for effectiveness, even if we are branded as conservatives.

FORD: All movement forward isn't progress.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course. Then, for that reason, are we satisfied with the results? No, let's look for more, John, let's not make life more difficult than it is.

FORD: So, for example, in the future, is it possible that you might have classes for foreign students again?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Maybe yes, maybe no. I had to stop giving the master class because the concerts had me very busy. Now I am very old and somewhat tired. The new teachers inherit this responsibility.

FORD: The last time I was in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, I noticed a large, inscribed photograph of Segovia as I was leaving. What did Segovia write on the photograph?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, Segovia wishes success to the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico and that always (he says something like this, I don't remember with exactness) he said that may it always be music that flows from the guitar. That is, that the important thing is the music that the guitar makes, and not the guitar that makes

the music. Something like this Maestro Segovia wished to say to us.

FORD: I would like to copy the exact inscription in order to include it in the dissertation.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course, obviously, precisely, yes. Do you remember what you read by Segovia? His dedication on a painting made of him.

FORD: If I could just get a copy before I leave?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: I am going to give you a brochure. One so that you will have critical reviews, they are in English and include the words dedicated to me by the unforgettable Maestro. I repeat them to you: "Manuel López Ramos serves the guitar with talent and love". I am very grateful for so complementary an opinion about me.

FORD: I don't have the address of the web-site, or the number of the school. Could I get these from you before I leave? (see Appendix J)

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, of course.

FORD: And now, the order of the studies in whatever book, for example, the numerical order of the Segovia edition of the Sor studies, et cetera, these are all being reorganized now by Juan Reyes?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yes, Juan Reyes, who is one of our teachers, is organizing it.

FORD: And a respected concert artist as well.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course.

FORD: In duo and solo performance as well, no?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: He's magnificent as a soloist and when performing with Laura Pavón, his wife.

FORD: You may possibly think that I am crazy for asking this, but it is for the document that I ask, and for that reason is important. Does the Estudio maintain a list of its graduates?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, in reality we do not have them with much exactness. Because we are not people who like to show what we have done in the past. We do not live in the past. We live in the present and the

future. Then, I cannot remember, I would not be able to tell you if one or two hundred fifty have been graduated and have been international guitarists amongst so many-- what do I know? I never worry about those statistics. Because we Latinos do not live by statistics. I think that the North Americans are victims of statistics. But we do not give it any importance. Perhaps we are mistaken, but we are happier.

FORD: Yes, of course. Though at some point in the existence of the school, a secretary might have marked all this down and placed it somewhere; and perhaps someone at the Estudio is continuing to add to this which is in some logical place?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: I don't know what to tell you, but yes, we have the memory of having worked a great deal, but nothing more.

FORD: If a person without extraordinary talent, a person not seeking a concert career but one in the legal or medical profession, for example, wishes to learn to play the guitar; what is the minimum amount of time, each day, this student must apply him or herself?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Well, if it is not a student who is going to dedicate himself--which generally almost all those who begin with us do not come with the intention of dedicating themselves to the guitar--I set as a condition that they must study, at least, one hour a day. And formulas are given in minutes and material in order to be able to study one hour per day. Later, in the second year inasmuch as there are more complicated materials, and more difficult, we ask that it be increased by at least a half hour more. Then, in the second year they will have to study one hour and a half, the doctor, or the lawyer, or the engineer. And that hour and a half can last until the third year. The third year, will need two hours. And so on, the minimum, we are speaking of the minimum. Because, surely, two hours will be little for the student, who verifies his own progress. The doctor who has no capacity or time progresses; the shoe-maker who spends his time mending shoes progresses; and they progress to the same levels. The student progresses; the worker progresses. They all progress in the same measure, or almost in the same measure. Then, it is important to give everyone the possibility of playing well, of playing correctly, and of having a [kind of] work that signifies a spiritual and mental rest for the professionals, such as doctors and lawyers. It is a

cambio de cansancio (break from weariness), as they say. A change of activity. If the doctor is one hour with his instrument, then he will be free to go and operate and cure the patient. Do you know what I mean?

FORD: Not completely.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: (In a joking manner.) The doctor studies the guitar for one hour. And afterwards he goes and performs a heart operation. And very likely he is thinking about the guitar and commits errors that cost the life of the patient.

FORD: Then it's one hour, each day, for one year?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course, and then two. And one can [stay] with two several years, three or four. If the doctor becomes enthused and sees that he can play competently, then he leaves medicine and dedicates himself to the guitar.

FORD: A half an hour more is added each additional year of study?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: One-half hour each year.

FORD: And how is the hour divided in the first year?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: They should be divided between the first book of Sagreras [for] 45 minutes, and the first Coordination Exercises [for] 15 minutes in order to develop scale position. As he goes through the books, the daily minutes are increased. It also depends on the developing skill of the student. Everything should be examined according to the criterion of the teacher and should give the formula for study in accordance with the progress that the student shows.

FORD: Please read about four pages of the Preface to Robert Bluestone's Thesis, [A First Course Of Study Based On The Guitar Method Of Manuel López Ramos Using Examples By Julio Sagreras] and give me your reaction to the information that is presented there; especially with respect to the right hand and the nails.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Who says? Bluestone? Oblique, no? In order to be able to approach the string--but that is done because the size of the finger doesn't permit playing facing the string. Then, it's a finger this big, it cannot approach facing the string. It occupies a lot of space on the string. Then, he has to do that in order to play from the side. But that takes away a

great amount of technique, from Segovia. Segovia, when he was young, had much thinner fingers, and he played more from the front. The position of Segovia's hand formerly was different from what it was later, when he was older: a corpulent man, and with very large fingers; very different from the fingers that he had in his youth.

Alexandre Lagoya thinks that one ought to attack the string with the right side of the finger, opposite of the position of Segovia. I insist that one should attack the string from the front, so that the sound has robustness. These are different points of view, but when the finger attacks from the front, the fingers that are together do not obstruct amongst themselves.

FORD: It starts in this manner and...

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Of course. Well, there is a personal readjustment. But first one needs to learn the free movements.

FORD: Yes, but I think it is important that this is understood, because there are people who think it is necessary to play only in this manner.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, no. One must certainly allow for a personal readjustment, but once the correct movements have been learned, there is a possibility of a personal readjustment. Look, it's as if I were to say to you, "You're going to be a great corredor." Do you know what a corredor is? A runner in a marathon.

FORD: Okay.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: "You're going to be a great runner." Good, very good. "But in order to run you are going to learn to run with with your feet twisted." If I learn with my feet twisted, I am not going to be able to run much. I would want to learn with my feet straight, in order to have freedom of movement. Later, I shall look for a personal readjustment to be faster than the others, but you already learned to run correctly.

FORD: Many times when someone asks a question about your teaching, or your right hand technique, the answer is that it is principally for those persons beginning to study, not for a person with natural ability.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, obviously!

FORD: I believe that you think your right hand approach to the guitar is a good thing for the person who is beginning; yet, I believe there are those who feel you intend this right hand approach to be for every guitarist in the world, of every level and ability.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No!

FORD: But, because of this I would like a clarification in your own words.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: The initial study is what ought to be the most correct of all. The first years are fundamental, so fundamental. They are the same as the first years of a child. If you--in the first years of a child, until they're seven years old, since it works in the sub-conscious--if you give him bad examples, you teach him bad things. You say he is going to be a criminal, that he is going to be a murderer, that he is going to be a rapist, and [if] you teach him all that, that is what the child will become. It is necessary to teach children well, it is necessary to tell them good things in order that they might form good adults. If you teach the child evil, that child is going to go down a bad road. If you teach him good things, that child is going to be good. It is the same thing. In the beginning you have to teach him to do things well. Then, when you are bigger, you yourself will make the necessary modifications for your perfection.

(At this point the interview was concluded. What follows is an e-mail response to my request for comments on the guitar school of Emilio Pujol.)

John, I am going to attach some commentary about Pujol's technique and his books.

I think all study material is interesting and can be used effectively. The books of Pujol are written well and have positive exercises for the development of technique, above all because he maintains the principles of Tárrega and the use of the apoyaturas (rest stroke). In an old book, (I think it was called: El dilema del sonido en la guitarra, "The Dilemma of Sound in the Guitar", I'm not sure,) Pujol recommended playing the guitar without the use of the nails (right hand, of course.) I think without nails one cannot achieve the quality and the beauty of sound on the guitar. Always I have proposed using the finger tip/nail, within the same stroke. The finger tip gives robustness to the sound and as it passes the string by

the nail, the nail will give it the metallic "ring" that [the sound] needs to be the most beautiful, the best, and one can make music with robust and intense sounds. The present tendency of almost all the guitarists is to play their instruments very faintly. While the luthier strives hard to attain guitars of great sonority, the guitarists have changed their technique and in a big hall they cannot be heard. Of course now they opt to play with a microphone. What a pity! The guitar ought to be called "Guitafono" since with the use of an amplifier, it has lost the real sound and is another instrument of generally harsh twangy and metallic sounds. You already know, John, that I am against--like Segovia--the use of the microphone, above all in recitals. With an orchestra it can be tolerated, if the work is written for guitar and large orchestra (Angulo, for example) [First Concierto for Guitar and Orchestra by Eduardo Angulo] but the guitar has its defects that one must accept (faint sonority) and must compensate with the intensity and the power of the touch and realize [make real] its virtues: The sound of the guitar is like the inner voice of man, full of remoteness and nostalgia.

/ Receive a fond abrazo.
(an embrace, a warm
embrace, a hug.)

Notes

¹Dr. Ted McVay, Jr.. E-mail response to the author. 7 August, 1998. "...I don't know that using 'he' or 'she' necessarily constitutes 'sexist language' of a type that would be censurable...The problem occurs in the translation; it is not a problem in Spanish since their rule is that the masculine form covers both genders. A possible explanatory note might read something like this: The almost exclusive use of the pronouns 'he,' 'him,' and 'his' for an indefinite subject in the English translation of the López Ramos interview does not imply that he uses language in a non-inclusive way. Many of his more outstanding pupils have been women, and he is surely sensitive to gender bias. The problem lies in the translation; in Spanish, the plural form for groups of both genders is the same as the masculine form. In order to avoid the cumbersome use of both pronouns in English, I have chosen to use the masculine form. The reader should not infer sexual bias on the part of Mr. López Ramos nor the author of this dissertation..."

APPENDIX B
TRANSCRIPTION IN SPANISH FROM CASSETTE
TAPE OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH
MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS AT HIS HOME IN
MEXICO CITY, MAY 24 AND 26, 1997

FORD: Maestro, ¿por qué razón y en que principios estableció usted el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Empezando porque, considero que no hay una escuela de guitarra establecida, no hay principios de otras escuelas, y yo preguntaría: ¿En qué se basan otras escuelas? Yo quisiera que me lo definieran, como yo puedo definir, la nuestra. Eso es, en principio, cuando se habla de una escuela, y se habla de que hay otras escuelas contrarias a una escuela, tendríamos que saber: ¿De qué se tratan las otras escuelas? ¿Me explico? No hay, hasta lo que yo conozco, una escuela establecida, no hay un sistema de aprendizaje, no hay una, en una palabra, una escalera para subirla, no existe una metodología básica para aprender a tocar un instrumento, aprender a tocar la guitarra. No hay establecida posición de las manos, no hay movimientos establecidos, y no hay manera de adquirirla, de adquirir esos elementos, no hay manera porque no está establecida una escuela.

Cuando yo llegué a México, yo no me dedicaba a enseñar. Estaba haciendo la carrera concertística en América, Sudamérica, Centroamérica, e intentaba hacerlo en los Estados Unidos y en Europa, más que nada en Europa. Pero, llegué a México y muchos maestros que vivían en México y que no tenían muchos conocimientos de una escuela, simplemente se enseñaban cómo se podían enseñar. Pero no había elementos exactos que pudieran ser útiles para todas las personas que quisieran tocar la guitarra. Por lo tanto, me pidieron que los orientara a que les diera principios a ver si ellos podían tener otras ideas y lograr progresos. Yo tampoco tenía muchos conocimientos, excepto los que mi maestro, Miguel Michelone, en la Argentina, me había dado, o sea una serie de libros para estudiar. Junto con los seis libros de Sagreras, también me empezó a dar Carulli, Carcassi, y después pasamos a Sor, a Coste, Villa Lobos, etc. Efectivamente me dio una columna vertebral para estudiar y desarrollar mis habilidades, aquéllas que están dormidas mientras uno no aprende a estudiar progresivamente.

Aquí en México, y en muchas otras partes del mundo, las personas que estudiaban la guitarra, la primera música, el primer contacto que tenían, era, por ejemplo, con los estudios de Sor. Me parece que esos estudios, por su importancia musical, deben ser dados una vez que el estudiante lleve cuatro o cinco años estudiando, y no en los primeros meses. Después que habían agotado ese material musical de Sor--sigo hablando de la cuestión pedagógica de México--tenían

que pasar forzosamente a la música de De Visée, Bach, las sonatas de Sor o las obras difíciles de Giuliani, para luego encarar a Ponce, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Moreno Torroba, etc.

Al no tener una preparación adecuada, tanto técnica como musical, se resentía la interpretación. Excepto en aquellas personas, que por naturaleza, por habilidad natural, logran tocar sin que hayan subido una escalera progresiva y sin que tengan una escuela definida. Entonces, yo me vi en la necesidad de poner un orden, aplicando lo que aprendí con mi maestro, o sea la metodología, agregando mis observaciones personales, cómo estaba colocada mis manos, cómo se movían los dedos, y cómo se podía iniciar en trabajo de un guitarrista, de un estudiante que no sabe absolutamente nada de la guitarra. Cómo se coloca la guitarra sobre las piernas, cómo se pone al antebrazo y el brazo sobre la arista de la guitarra. Cómo se coloca la mano perpendicular a las cuerdas. Cómo se debe ir aprendiendo paso a paso los movimientos individuales de cada dedo, para que entonces en su conjunto ir aprendiendo los distintos ataques de los dedos con los respectivos de las cuerdas, el free stroke, el rest stroke, todo esto, para que el futuro guitarrista tenga elementos que le sirvan en su desarrollo, y llegue a hacer música sin problemas ni limitaciones.

Por eso, inicié en México esta escuela, que se llamó, Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, basándome en este principio de cual yo te he hablado.

Creo en el principio de que todo ser humano tiene derecho a hacer música, a tocar música, porque es un lenguaje aprendido desde la más tierna infancia. Un lenguaje que oímos quizá antes de nacer. Ya oímos la música, los sonidos, aprendemos el idioma de los sonidos, cuando nacemos escuchamos en el aire está la música bastante; por medio del radio, por medio de los cantos de la mamá para dormirte, por medio de la televisión, etc. Si nosotros no hacemos música, es conocer un idioma y no poderlo hablar. Y eso, indudablemente, es traumático para todo ser humano.

Entonces, un maestro que sienta la responsabilidad que tiene para hacer hablar a las personas que conocen los sonidos, o sea para poder hacer tocar un instrumento, tiene que tener una escuela establecida que sirva para todas las personas y no sólo para los que poseen habilidad natural.

Yo he tenido el gusto y la satisfacción de haber[lo] hecho en México y en otros países del mundo, en los Estados Unidos, en Europa, muchos instrumentistas hoy están tocando la guitarra porque trabajaron conmigo, y no tenían condiciones especiales, no eran superdotados, eran hombres normales que amaban la música. Y yo les di, intenté darles por lo menos, un camino, intenté darles un principio técnico, una escalera, y subiendo poco a poco, lleno de disciplinas, lleno de formas de estudiar. Por ejemplo, el uso del metrónomo en el trabajo cotidiano, el estudio lento, las digitaciones de mano derecha en forma razonada, todo esto una vez que la posición y los movimientos están correctamente aprendidos. Entonces, entran los sistemas de estudios, formas de memorización, et cétera, et cétera. Así que por eso me dediqué a la enseñanza con tanto fervor, con tanto entusiasmo, porque me sentí obligado para responder a la necesidad del ser humano de hacer música.

FORD: Maestro, ¿cuales son sus sentimientos en cuanto a la escuela?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Creo que hemos cumplido con nuestro compromiso en todo sentido, creo que nuestra escuela sí podemos llamarla escuela porque está basada en todos los pasos que se necesitan para aprender a tocar el instrumento. No es algo improvisado, o no es una escuela que se adapta a las posibilidades del estudiante; es el estudiante que se debe adaptar a la escuela. Son dos conceptos distintos: una escuela debe ser rígida, y debe ser sostenida con principios inamovibles. El estudiante debe adaptarse a la escuela y no la escuela pensar, bueno, este joven, este niño, o este hombre toca con la mano mal puesta pero toca. Entonces, si toca, ¿qué importa? ¡Eso es el error grave! Si la mano la tiene mal, al principio va a poder tocar porque son lecciones fáciles, pero cuando tenga los problemas de movimiento, cuando un dedo le entorpezca el otro dedo porque su posición esté incorrecta, cuando se vean en la necesidad de usar uñas postizas o muy largas para poder tocar engancho las cuerdas de la manera que pueda, dado que sus dedos están mal colocados, están totalmente fuera de la lógica, de la normalidad que uno cree que debe tener un instrumentista. Entonces, se producen los graves problemas de los guitarristas que estudian mucho, que quieren hacer carrera, pero que no pueden progresar porque su posición, sus movimientos son amplios y los dedos se entorpecen unos a otros. Sería igual, sería exactamente igual, que si tú vieras que un violinista toma el arco con toda la mano, y no como

tradicionalmente se debe tomar. El resultado auditivo será desastroso. O sea, lo toma como si fuera un palo de escoba. Así. ¿Tú crees que este violinista va a tener el arco maravilloso que puede hacer música? ¡No! Yo estoy ansioso, porque vengan y me digan, "¿De qué se trata otra escuela?" ¡Yo quiero saberlo! Me interesaría mucho que me mandara quien pudiera, folletos, video, para que me digan el proceso de enseñanza. Yo lo puedo mostrar. Yo puedo mostrar el proceso de enseñanza. Yo puedo mostrar cómo se ponen la--cómo yo creo que se debe poner las manos. Cómo se aprende a pulsar. Cómo se aprende a lograr el sonido. Cuáles son los movimientos posteriores a la ejecución. No sólo la ejecución sino, hasta donde el dedo debe llegar para crear los movimientos cortos, base de un futuro virtuosismo. Yo puedo definir qué métodos hay que estudiar. Qué libros son progresivos. De qué manera se puede ir aprendiendo a tocar sin esos saltos enormes; es decir, hoy toco "Adelita" o "Lagrima" de Tárrega y mañana pretendo a tocar la "Chacona" de Bach. Eso es absurdo. Que algún guitarrista habilidoso lo pueda hacer no establece escuela. Por eso pienso que, por lo menos, la misión de un maestro honesto la he cumplido y, creo, haber trabajado siempre, lo mismo que todos mis colaboradores, que son muchos, y no solamente en México, sino en otras partes del mundo: en Argentina, en Europa, en Estados Unidos. Afortunadamente existen muchos alumnos míos que siguen mi escuela, que siguen mis ideas, que son seres humanos sensibles y que quieren dar lo que saben, de una manera lógica, y lo mejor posible, no permitiendo improvisación alguna. Una escuela no se puede basar en improvisaciones ni adecuaciones circunstanciales. Todo se debe regir sobre una evolución progresiva y natural, contemplando las limitaciones del hombre común y no el de un superdotado. Creo que hemos cumplido con nuestro deber de maestros.

El futuro seguirá dando frutos, y espero que nuestra escuela, que está basada en lograr los sonidos que Segovia obtuvo en la guitarra. Por ejemplo, nuestra escuela defiende la apoyatura, el rest stroke. La defiende por principios fundamentales de la música. El rest stroke es lo único que puede hacer destacar los planos sonoros en la música. La importancia que tiene la melodía, que se debe destacar por encima de la armonía y de los bajos contrapuntísticos. Sin esa distinción, es como ir a tocar el clavecín, que no tiene esas facultades tan evidentes como las tiene el piano. Sin embargo, los pianistas tienen una gran dedicación a destacar la parte melódica de la parte armónica y de los bajos. Y las voces interiores deben

ser manejadas con distintas fuerzas individuales de los dedos. Por lo tanto, el rest stroke, el apoyado, no se puede desechar como desgraciadamente los guitarristas jóvenes, salvo excepciones, han hecho. Han desterrado esta manera segoviana de tocar, y como consecuencia, los guitarristas jóvenes, si no tocan a través de un micrófono, no se les oye. No se les escucha. Esos guitarristas nunca se han presentado en una sala de concierto de dimensiones grandes--como podría ser Orchestra Hall, Masónica Auditorio de San Francisco, en fin el Orchestra Hall de Chicago esas salas donde escuché muchas veces a Segovia, quien se plantaba en medio de un escenario enorme, a tocar para más de dos mil quinientas personas. Yo tuve la posibilidad de tocar en Orchestra Hall, por ejemplo, y también siguiendo los pasos de Segovia. Jamás pensé en usar un micrófono. Había pues que tocar con gran fuerza, con gran dinamismo, con gran intensidad para hacer música, y para que los sonidos corrieran en la sala, llegaran hasta el final de las últimas butacas. Y las notas que noté, que llegaban y corrían lejos eran aquellos que tenían cuerpo, body como tú dices, cuerpo. El cuerpo lo da el rest stroke, la apoyatura. Eso da cuerpo de sonido. Ese cuerpo corre, camina, va hacia el final de la sala. El free stroke, el enganche, se queda como moscas alrededor de un panal, como alrededor de la miel. No va lejos. Se queda en la mitad del camino, o mucho menos. Se queda a un metro del guitarrista. Por eso, te decía yo antes, de que la guitarra yo lo concibo más melódicamente que armónicamente, que polifónicamente. La belleza de la guitarra, su misterio, su encanto, su embrujo, está en la melodía. Eso es el encanto del instrumento. Eso es lo que oyes finalmente. La guitarra, podría yo definirla de esta manera: yo creo que es la voz interior del hombre. O sea, si quisiéramos darle sonido, darle voz a nuestro pensamiento que es nuestra voz interior, sonaría con sonidos de guitarra. Así, podríamos decir es la voz interior del hombre. La guitarra responde a ese sonido. Y como antes te dije, para que lo recuerdes ahora cuando te traduzca[s] gentilmente esta conversación, la guitarra hay que tocarla de una manera muy especial; hay que conocer el instrumento. Te dije la mayoría de los guitarristas tienen a una mujer sentada en las piernas y abrazada con su corazón, y no la conocen. Es importantísimo conocer tu instrumento, sus defectos, y sus virtudes, como es importantísimo conocer las virtudes y los defectos de la mujer con quien te vas a casar. Si te casas y no la conoces, desgraciadamente, tú tienes que divorciar enseguida. Entonces, hay que conocer sus alcances, sus virtudes, sus defectos, que también los tiene, y saber manejar

este tesoro de voces interiores, manejados con gran cuidado, con gran espíritu, con gran delicadeza. Eso hay que saberlo muy, muy bien, hacer y conocer profundamente de este instrumento; y los alcances que tiene para hacer música. Y sobre todo aprender a tocar con intensidad el instrumento; porque el instrumento tiene un defecto: es tenue. Tiene poco sonido, no tiene volumen, su sonido es muy suave. Y si a un instrumento suave lo tocas suavemente, ya no lo escucha nadie. Al instrumento hay que herirlo muchas veces, hay que pulsarlo con intensidad, con fuerza, con vigor, con energía. Los sonidos, las notas necesitan vida. Y no hay vida si no hay energía. Los sonidos no tienen vida. Se mueren. Por lo tanto es importante, no sólo el tocar con fuerza, apretar la cuerda, sentirla bajo la yema del dedo, porque nuestra escuela está basada en uñas cortas, no en uñas largas. El dedo toma la cuerda en la yema. ¿Cómo le dices tú esta parte?

FORD: The finger tip.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: The finger tip. Y hunde la cuerda, la aprieta, la pulsa hacia arriba para descansar el dedo en la superior, pero al mismo tiempo tiene una uña muy corta que le da la dosis de metalicidad que necesita el sonido. Entonces, al hundirse la yema, y pasar por parte de la uña, ése es el sonido robusto, lleno, el que tanto amamos de Segovia, el que tanto cautivó al mundo entero, ése es el que tenemos que lograr hacer. Y tocar con la fuerza que Segovia tocaba, porque Segovia tocaba en salas de dimensiones enormes, y tocaba. Necesitaba gran silencio, pero se oía perfectamente. Así que, nuestra escuela también se basa en la continuación, no sólo de la manera maravillosa de tocar de Segovia, de sus sentidos artísticos, su refinamiento, su arte sublime, su concepción artística, personal, maravillosa, que cautivó a todo el mundo. Durante setenta años cautivó al mundo entero, no a los guitarristas, quizá los que menos cautivó fue a los guitarristas, cautivó al mundo que amaba la música, al melómano que gusta de oír el piano, violín, orquesta. No, no cautivó a los guitarristas. Al contrario, los guitarristas en el fondo no le tenían gran simpatía de Segovia. Lo criticaban mucho porque hacía rubatos exagerados, porque tocaba Bach a la española. ¡Cuántas cosas dijeron! No se dieron cuenta que el maestro Segovia tuvo la capacidad de enloquecer a todo al mundo durante setenta años o más. Eso es algo inapreciable, es maravilloso. No podemos cerrar los ojos ante eso. Necesitamos darnos cuenta de la maravilla que nos legó Segovia. Y seguir escuchando en el disco, y seguir

oyéndola, aprendiendo algo que hay que aprender. Hay que escuchar más allá de los sonidos que Segovia hace. Mucho más allá. Así que, ya no sé si te estoy respondiendo a la pregunta que me hiciste, o no, pero, siga adelante.

FORD: Maestro, es posible que usted haya contestado esto en otra pregunta, pero, ¿cuál es su filosofía subyacente de la escuela?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿La filosofía? Creo que ya te, más o menos, te la he dicho. La filosofía de una escuela es que sea un sistema a servicio del estudiante y de la música. Ésa es la filosofía principal. Del estudiante, como ser humano, que tiene el derecho a tocar música, para hacer música, y una escuela que responda a esas necesidades.

FORD: Hay provisiones para que la escuela le continúe en el futuro, para generaciones futuras?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿Si tenemos nuevas generaciones de estudiantes, o nuevas ideas?

FORD: ¿Por ejemplo, cincuenta años de ahora, ¿qué piensa usted será el futuro de la escuela?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿De nuestra escuela? Mira, no hay mucha gente que la conozca. En realidad, el joven es influenciado. Y, en realidad, los nuevos estudiantes tienen el concepto de que lo pasado no sirve demasiado. No es bueno. Quizá nosotros también, pensemos lo mismo. La escuela si no está establecida no la podemos valorar. Pero, el joven piensa que todo lo pasado, en vez de que nosotros pensamos que fue mejor, el joven piensa que fue peor. Lo pasado ya pasó y no interesa. Hay que ver nuevas ideas, nuevas formas más intelectuales, menos reales.

Es muy difícil prever si nuestra escuela va a perdurar. No sé. Pienso que sí. Pienso que muchos van a reconocer, también, que era necesario tener una escuela sólida y bien fundamentada. Pero no puedo pensar que dentro de cuarenta o cincuenta años se hable de estas cosas. O sea, o se siga pensando, que era una escuela que hay que adaptar. El hombre, siempre busca progresar (entre comillas). Ya ves cómo progresó con la bomba atómica, por ejemplo. Y viste qué gran progreso hizo, matando a cientos de miles de personas. Un progreso de la humanidad, es verdaderamente en muchas ocasiones un retroceso.

La televisión, ¿cuánto daño está haciendo y hace? ¿Cuántos ejemplos terribles está dando a los jóvenes, a los niños? Porque hay tanta droga, porque hay tanto crimen, la influencia de la televisión, el cine, los medios de comunicación. ¿Los avances? Los avances de la ciencia, en ocasiones, no son muy positivos. ¡Y a veces las consecuencias son graves! Así que, por eso, hablando de una escuela, yo pienso que, como todas las cosas, morirá, tal vez, o quedará en el olvido. No. No creo que el joven todavía, salvo algunas gentes, que les gusta analizar las técnicas del pasado y encuentren que esto tenía solidez, razonamiento y que pueda ser interesante, para los estudiantes de guitarra del futuro.

FORD: ¿Cuántos años ha estado en funcionamiento la escuela, Maestro?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: La empezamos en el año 1962. Así que llevamos como treinta y cinco años. En treinta y cinco años yo creo que de nuestra escuela de México, nada más, han salido guitarristas de primer nivel, por lo menos unos veinte, o treinta. Debo decirte que hablamos de que fueron muy pocos, los estudiantes que se dedicaron a la guitarra. Nosotros tenemos una escuela que no exige que el estudiante sea profesional. Nuestra escuela no está basada en que si tú no tienes la edad suficiente, y el oído absoluto, y el desarrollo rítmico no vas a ser aceptado. No, nuestra escuela acepta a todos los seres humanos que quieran hacer música. Y entonces, si un médico tiene media hora de tiempo para estudiar, le damos una receta de estudio, y descansa de su trabajo haciendo música correctamente con su instrumento, estudiando y aprendiendo. Viene un campesino con las manos callosas por la labor agrícola que tiene que realizar y que tiene sesenta años como hemos tenido alumnos de esa edad con esas características y los hemos aceptado, yo los he aceptado. Y le he enseñado con todo el fervor como si él iba a ser el más grande guitarrista del mundo. O sea, nosotros no echamos a nadie por inepto. Nosotros no hacemos test de capacidad. En ningún momento lo hemos hecho. ¿Por qué? Porque tenemos esa filosofía. Por supuesto que cuando los alumnos, o algunos de ellos, vieron los resultados de la escuela, empezaron dedicarse más y después terminaron dedicándose profesionalmente. Pero al principio todos nuestros alumnos fueron completamente sin bases profesionales, sin querer llegar a ser guitarristas. No, nosotros hemos aceptado a todas las personas, de todas las condiciones, tanto profesionales como sociales. Nunca hicimos distinción de que si no tenía la universidad no

podía estudiar. Nosotros hemos aceptado personas que si no saben leer, no nos importa. Nosotros les enseñamos. Si hay que enseñar a leer, también le enseñamos a leer. O sea, tenemos una vocación de servicio. Queremos servir al ser humano. Queremos serles útil[es]. Antiguos alumnos míos hoy son los maestros que enseñan en el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico y trabajan a mi lado con el fervor de dar conocimientos de música y guitarra. Hemos formado un equipo sólido y estamos compenetrados profundamente en los principios que mantiene nuestra filosofía de la enseñanza.

Y si de algo tengo que estar contento, y orgulloso, es poder decirte a ti, ¿sabes, John?, siento que he sido útil en la vida, he sido útil a los demás. Me siento contento, y tranquilo. Puedo dormir en las noches sin ninguna preocupación, no he cometido nada que me pueda arrepentir. No hablo mal de los demás; no me interesa si me critican. Nunca he contestado una crítica. Si alguna vez me han atacado, creo que injustamente, nunca he respondido, porque creo que eran siempre palabras necias. Y a palabras necias, oídos sordos. Yo he hecho mi trabajo con toda el alma, con toda mi capacidad. Tú has sido testigo muchas veces en la Master Class que dimos en Estados Unidos, y puedes dar fe de cómo siempre di, y tú sabes más que nadie, cómo me dedicaba a todos los estudiantes, grandes, chicos, tontos, inteligentes, capaces, o torpes, tú lo viste. Yo me pasaba arrodillado ante ellos colocándoles las manos en la guitarra, y enseñándoles los movimientos. Tú fuiste testigo de eso. Así que, realmente nadie me puede decir que yo he cometido algún pecado en ese aspecto. Claro, que no soy un santo, pero no he sido un hombre negativo, para nadie.

FORD: ¿Se ha cambiado el curriculum durante sus treinta y cinco años? Por ejemplo, tengo aquí una copia del programa de estudio de 1971: ¿es el programa actual?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí. Bueno, ha habido algunas modificaciones. Se han agregado cosas, y se han quitado otras, no te los podría yo establecer exactamente. Pero, cada maestro ha ido aportando ideas y se han puesto en práctica con buenos resultados. Sin embargo, el fundamento sigue siendo el mismo.

FORD: Los libros de Sagreras, Carulli, Carcassi, Giuliani, Segovia, los Ejercicios de Coordinación de usted, por ejemplo, ¿son constantes estos?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí.

FORD: Pero, ¿el repertorio para el estudio de cada año?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, el repertorio es muy aleatorio. Eso lo se va, a decir, definiendo según los progresos del propio alumno.

FORD: Pero, por ejemplo, ¿los arpeggios de Ablóniz?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Esos son como los de Giuliani. Igual. Sirven.

FORD: Entonces, ¿si un estudiante quiere trabajar en libro de Ablóniz, y otro quiere trabajar en el libro de Giuliani?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Puede hacerlo. Puede haber unas modificaciones inclusive. Lo que yo no me parece correcto es que se quite esta metodología, y se quiera empezar la casa por el techo, empezando a tocar las obras de Albéniz, al mes que estás estudiando la guitarra. ¿Verdad? O quieras tocar la suites de Bach, cuando lleves tres meses. Digo eso es lo grave. Lo demás, es un poco, es aleatorio. Mira, lo importante, también, es no sólo la metodología, sino la manera de estudiar. Eso es lo importante. Cómo lo tienes que estudiar. Y eso, más o menos, tú lo conoces. Te acuerdas que dividíamos las lecciones por semana. Te acuerdas que la primera semana se hacía la lección, de Sagreras o de Carulli, a una velocidad lenta. Después esa misma lección, se cambiaba la velocidad a una velocidad cerca de lo normal. La tercera semana a esa misma lección, se hacía siempre marcando la cantidad de minutos mínimos necesarios. La primera semana estudiabas veinte minutos. La segunda semana quince minutos, la misma lección. La tercera semana diez minutos y la cuarta semana diez minutos. Y ahora agregamos las nuevas ideas que te estoy pasando, que te estoy explicando, agregaríamos que esa memoria debe hacerse sin ver el diapason, o sea, sin ver la mano izquierda. Quitando la vista, cerrando los ojos, si tú quieres, y trabajando con la pura memoria, no visual sino para alimentar el subconsciente, y almacenar ahí los movimientos inherentes a las lecciones o los estudios que estás tocando.

FORD: ¿Y éste es un concepto nuevo?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Este último, que te estoy diciendo, es un concepto que para mí me parece revolucionario, y que

ya te dije que pronto todo el mundo va a decir que ya lo sabía. ¿Quién ignora que la guitarra debe tocarse sin ver el diapasón? ¡Vaya novedad! Y yo me pasé cincuenta años tocando y observando el diapasón. Ningún otro guitarrista dejaba de mirarlo. Nadie me advirtió que era mejor tocar sin ver la mano izquierda. Lo descubro hace dos años, y estoy maravillado de los resultados. Pero ningún otro maestro me lo dijo... qué lástima.

FORD: Pues, ¿hay otras obras didácticas que formen parte de la metodología ahora, que no aparecieron en ella en 1971? Digamos, quizá, ¿los "Estudios sencillos" de Leo Brouwer?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Por supuesto, siempre y cuando, te repito, se haga, de acuerdo con el nivel que un alumno va adquiriendo. Puedes estudiar los estudios de Brouwer, y puedes poner lo que quieras, siempre cuando no arriesgues obras del repertorio de concierto. Porque si tú a un estudiante ya haces tocar una obra de concierto, como no tiene los elementos ni suficientemente musicales, ni técnicos, va a ser un desastre. Musicalmente va a ser un desastre, técnicamente va a ser un desastre, va a intentar tocar una obra que está fuera de su alcance.

Entonces, el maestro debe dar obras al mismo tiempo que las lecciones y los estudios, que son el conejillo de Indias de los estudiantes. Eso lo pueden malear, tirar, no tocar nunca más. Lo importante es cuando adquieran la responsabilidad de las obras de repertorio concertístico, tengan todos los elementos técnicos y artísticos para enfrentarlas.

Entonces, se pueden cambiar muchas cosas de esa Metodología. Lo que no se debe hacer es quitar, y quitar, y quitar. Si está bien que suplantes, en lugar de la cosa hagas otra, bueno eso está bien. Lo que está mal es quitar y no poner. Eso, me parece, que está mal.

FORD: ¿Que criterio evaluativos se usan para--
determining--

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Para determinar.

FORD: Gracias--para determinar si un estudiante está listo para pasar de un nivel a otro?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. ¿Que criterio se usa para ello?

FORD: Sí.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Mira, el maestro es el que usa el criterio para observar tus posibilidades, y tus progresos, y tus avances. Es el maestro que sabe hasta donde has asimilado lo que has estudiado, y cuánto te faltaría para asimilarlo. Entonces, es el maestro el único que puede evaluar, no porque hayas cursado todos los estudios vas a tener el nivel. Pero, generalmente si tú eres capaz de cursar los libros que están establecidos y programados, si eres capaz de cursarlos, y [son] aceptados por el maestro, el nivel corresponde al paso que estás dando. Es decir, si tú subes los peldaños de la escalera, alcanzarás la técnica necesaria para encarar las obras del repertorio guitarrístico. O sea, si tú eres capaz de llegar a cursar, a subir los cinco peldaños de una escalera y los has subido correctamente, no hay duda que has llegado a un nivel que te capacita para pasar a un segundo nivel, y empezar a subir otros peldaños. Quizás más duros, más difíciles, pero de si también logras subirlo, te espera un nivel superior. Eso define un escuela.

FORD: Así que, ¿son todos estos factores, no sólo tocar las notas correctamente y/o con expresión? ¿Todos juntos llegan a ser el factor determinante?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. Mira, lo que pasa es que hay que enseñar elementos expresivos; si no tienes una técnica expresiva, no puedes hacer música expresiva.

La enseñanza debe ser completa. Tú tienes que enseñar a que se toquen los estudios y las lecciones lo más artísticamente posible. Tú debes enseñar a manejar la dinámica, a manejar el color: metálico, el dulce, tienes que enseñar a manejar el ritmo, a flexibilizarlo en las lecciones. Estas contienen música. Hay lecciones maravillosos, hay estudios geniales. Tú lees los estudios de Coste, los de Aguado, los de Sor. Menos interesantes pero útiles también, son los estudios de Carulli, de Carcassi.

Entonces, no veo por qué razón no se va a hacer música con esos estudios. Al contrario. Uno tiene que aprender a hacer música con muy pocos elementos artísticos. Tú sabes bien que Segovia tocó obras pequeñas, simples, que cautivaron al mundo; fueron las más pequeñas y las más simples. Los minuetos de Sor tocados por el Maestro de Jaen enloquecían a la gente, enloquecía al músico más exigente. Con tres notas Segovia hacía música. No necesitó de grandes sonatas

aprender a hacer música con muy pocos elementos artísticos. Tú sabes bien que Segovia tocó obras pequeñas, simples, que cautivaron al mundo; fueron las para deleitar al público de todo el mundo. Eso es lo que hay que aprender y eso es lo que hay que enseñarles a los alumnos. Eso es la labor de un maestro. Ésa es. Y después, cuando ya tiene dominio técnico, y tiene un dominio del instrumento y tiene alcanzada una velocidad en escalas, en arpeggios, y tiene todos los elementos y la formación musical necesaria, es cuando se puede abrir los mundos expresivos que yo siempre intenté abrir, el mundo de la imaginación, los sentimientos, las ideas interiores. Tú eras testigo, cuando a los alumnos de las Master Class les preguntaba: "¿Qué sientes tú en este pasaje?" "¿Qué te dicen estas notas?" "¿De qué hablan estas notas?" "Dime lo que piensas; dime lo que sientes." Y recordarás que exponían muchos argumentos que bien podían servir para hacer una película.

Descubrimos entonces que la enseñanza debe ser completa: técnica y artística, al mismo tiempo; no pueden ni deben separarse. Incluso te diré jamás: no concibo que un hombre que se dedica a la música sea una mala persona. No lo puedo entender. Yo creo que si una persona ama la música y trabaja en ella, su alma tiene que ser más pura y debe ser un hombre bondadoso; tiene que ser un hombre bueno. Eso es importantísimo. No concibo un músico que anide un alma perversa, yo no lo concibo porque la música es toda la nobleza, toda la belleza, todo el encanto, todo lo bueno que tiene el hombre.

FORD: Es posible que yo necesite revisar mi copia de la metodología. ¿Los estudios de Carulli y Carcassi, por ejemplo, existen en el mismo orden, o ha sido revisado la progresión de los estudios?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Mira, si está haciendo un cambio progresivo, Juan Reyes, que conforme el Dúo, Pavón/Reyes, que tú has escuchado, que son maestros extraordinarios, está haciendo ese trabajo. Está poniendo en orden las lecciones y los estudios progresivamente, en una forma más lógica que como vienen en los libros. Estamos haciendo eso para mejorar nuestra idea de los niveles progresivos.

Pero así todo te podría decir [es] que se puede aceptar lo que tenemos establecido hace años. Nuestra experiencia y los resultados lo demuestran.

FORD: Pero, en muchas ediciones de los estudios, por lo menos en años pasados, no existía ninguna marca para la mano derecha. ¿Cuales son sus sentimientos sobre eso?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Nosotros en nuestra escuela hemos marcado toda la mano derecha, toda. La mano izquierda es menos importante en su señalamiento. No es tan in... fundamental repetir cómo Sagreras repitió exageradamente las dos manos. Yo creo que la mano derecha es importante marcarla y nuestros estudios están todos marcados, todos digitados. Todos. Es importante conocer los principios de la digitación nuestra, que es otra contribución importante a una escuela. Los principios de digitación tú sabes que están basados en el cambio de cuerda de los dedos para lograr facilidad de cambio, según la posición clásica de los dedos de la mano derecha sobre las cuerdas. Ese principio, de digitación de mano derecha, ha contribuido muchísimo a la ejecución perfecta de los guitarristas. Y eso fue una idea que a mí se me ocurrió en el año cincuenta y seis, cincuenta y siete. Todavía no estábamos en la escuela de Arte Guitarrístico. Se me ocurrió porque yo observé que en los conciertos que daban en aquel tiempo--yo empecé a tocar en el año cuarenta y ocho--en el concierto que yo empezaba a tocar en esa época, un concierto lo tocaba muy bien porque quizá estaba tranquilo. Y el concierto del día siguiente me iba muy mal. Estaba muy nervioso y no daba una. Entonces, me pregunté, ¿por qué me pasaba esto? Y observé que mi mano derecha estaba con digitaciones improvisadas. Es decir, no había regulación, no había un aprendizaje perfecto de las manos, una digitación razonada de la mano derecha sobre todo.

Entonces, me vi en la necesidad de observar cuáles eran los peligros que corría al haber aprendido intuitivamente la mano derecha. Y noté que había repeticiones de dedos; noté que había saltos absurdos; que, por ejemplo, el anular era el último dedo que tocaba en la cuarta cuerda y seguía con el dedo índice en la primera, un salto totalmente absurdo dada la posición de la mano derecha. Y entonces, hice unos principios fundamentales de pasos de cuerda, que tú conoces bien, y que son la base para digitar la mano derecha razonadamente y además, con una ventaja. Cuando uno digita la mano derecha con cuidado y razonadamente lo tiene que marcar y cuando uno lo estudia así debe aprender los movimientos marcados. Repetirlo exactamente como está escrito para que los músculos--vamos a decir que los músculos aprenden--no

asimilen dos movimientos para ejecutar la misma nota o tres, sino que practiquen uno sólo.

Fue tan importante esa contribución a la técnica de la guitarra que el mismo Julian Bream empezó a digitar la mano derecha en obras publicadas por él. Posiblemente esta idea habría llegado a sus oídos y tal vez, las haya adoptado por su eficacia. De cualquier modo, qué bueno que el maestro inglés se decidió a marcar la digitación de la mano derecha en forma exhaustiva. Y antes, jamás, nadie lo había hecho.

FORD: A veces, en Giuliani y Carcassi, por ejemplo, hay indicaciones para las digitaciones.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro, el mismo Segovia, también marcó en algunas ocasiones, ignorando, tal vez, su importancia. Pero, de todas maneras sí se sabía que era importante.

FORD: Y ahora sólo Bream.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro, claro pero yo creo que el maestro, Bream, se basó indudablemente en lo que yo empecé a dar y enseñar desde el año cincuenta y ocho. Pero que no importa quién haya empezado a descubrir la eficacia de digitar la mano derecha en las obras. Lo importante es que se haya valorado esta idea y adoptado por los grandes guitarristas y maestros.

FORD: En el Estudio, ¿se usan ediciones específicas de la música?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, no, son las que son del dominio público. Todo el mundo puede comprar las ediciones. De Sagreras, Carcassi, Carulli, Coste, Sor, no tenemos ediciones nosotros especiales.

FORD: ¿Cuál es el proceso utilizado para determinar el uso secuencial de materiales?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, es el criterio del maestro individualmente. Claro que es un criterio similar entre todos los maestros. Y las necesidades que el alumno ofrece, es lo que define el material que se tiene que hacer: cómo se tiene que estudiar. Porque una de las bases de nuestra escuela es aprender a estudiar, cómo debes aprender a estudiar las lecciones, los estudios, cómo debes manejar el trabajo de escalas, arpeggios. Todo esto lo estamos haciendo regidos por el metrónomo. El metrónomo viene a ser el maestro en casa del alumno. Yo doy el metrónomo al alumno de las

velocidades que creo que es capaz de realizar en su casa, solo, sin la vigilancia del maestro. Esto es muy importante porque todos los alumnos tienden a correr, tienden a tocar rápido, y entonces, si estoy yo presente cuando el alumno quiere correr, yo lo detengo y le marco el compás. Pero en cuanto está en su casa hace lo que quiere. Entonces, le exigo a todos los alumnos que trabajen con metrónomo para que no tengan esa tendencia a correr; para que controlen los movimientos y aprendan una sensación rítmica regular. El metrónomo no es el enemigo del instrumentista. El metrónomo nos obliga a mantener ritmos perfectamente establecidos y regulares. Por lo tanto, hay que saber dar las velocidades justas que el alumno necesita para que no trate de entorpecer sus movimientos y hacerlos sin la claridad necesaria, sin el cuidado necesario. Es muy importante aprender a estudiar. Es muy importante ahora aprender a memorizar. Y con las últimas deducciones que he estado haciendo con respecto a la posibilidad de aprender los movimientos de lecciones, estudios, y obras, directamente a que sean asimilados en el subconsciente y la vista no intervenga, o sea la visión no intervenga mirándose la mano izquierda para memorizar, creo que son pasos definitivos para crear un instrumentista al mismo nivel que podría estar un celista, o un violinista, o un pianista. Creemos que ése es el secreto de muchísimos grandes instrumentistas que no saben por qué son grandes porque tienen cualidades naturales. Pero nosotros tenemos que ir en busca de esas cualidades. Yo este estudio que estoy haciendo últimamente con respecto a la asimilación subconsciente de los movimientos y a las órdenes sonoras para que los dedos se muevan secuencialmente estoy denominando esta idea de una manera muy poética, quizás, o muy ambiciosa, tal vez. Yo lo llamo, "en busca del don." Buscar el don de aquellos que lo tienen, porque Dios los tocó en la frente con su dedo divino y tienen el don de la habilidad, de la facilidad, el don del oído, el don de tantas cosas positivas que la mayoría de los grandes artistas tienen por naturaleza. Pero siempre sigo pensando que es necesario que todos podamos tocar bien, correcto, y tener posibilidades de llegar a ser un gran artista. ¿Por qué no? Lo que hay que saber, lo que hay que buscar es el don. Si Dios no nos dio ese don, vamos en busca de él. Veamos cómo se puede llegar a tenerlo. Encontremos el camino para darle esta posibilidad a todos los seres que quieren tocar un instrumento. Y no solamente tengan derecho a tocarlo aquellos que nacieron con el don. Esa es prácticamente el por qué estoy analizando conmigo mismo, con los alumnos; estamos cambiando impresiones y buscando la

posibilidad de lograr que el guitarrista tenga el mismo nivel que los violinistas, y los pianistas, y los cellistas. Que pueda tener un gran repertorio como esos instrumentistas, de los violinistas, et cetera. Tener un gran repertorio. El guitarrista, en general, tiene muy limitado su repertorio porque casi todos sufrimos el olvido. Sufrimos el error y el olvido. Entonces, creo que con este nuevo sistema, con esta nueva idea de trabajar las obras sin ver el diapason, y sin ver los dedos, y trabajando, tratando de asimilar en el subconsciente todos esos movimientos sin otra orden más que la asimilada en el receptáculo que el hombre tiene de conocimientos profundos. Pueda ser que lleguemos a tener un repertorio amplio, tan grande o enorme como la música escrita para la guitarra. Tengo la impresión de que éste será, quizá, mi último esfuerzo, mi último trabajo porque pienso que no me quedan muchos años de vida, y entonces quiero dar a mis alumnos y aquéllos que creen en nuestra escuela, que aman nuestra escuela, que la valoran con la generosidad que hay que valorar los esfuerzos de todos aquellos que hemos contribuido a consolidar estas ideas. Pienso que es uno de los últimos legados. Ojalá tenga el resultado que yo preveo. Ojalá, pueda ser definitivo para que la angustia del olvido, del sufrimiento, de la duda que se tiene cuando se toca, pueda eliminarse y pueda hacerse música con la misma tranquilidad que la hacen los grandes artistas.

FORD: ¿Cuál es su método, o sistema, para decidir cuáles materiales se usan y cuáles se rechazan?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Nosotros tenemos un material ya establecido. Los alumnos no tienen por qué elegir otro material que no sea el nuestro. ¿Por qué razón? Porque el nuestro está experimentado. Porque el nuestro ha dado resultados. Entonces, si viene un alumno y quiere imponer sus propios criterios, entonces, quiere decir que quizá sepa más que el maestro a quien quiere consultar. Yo creo que los alumnos deben adaptarse a la escuela y no la escuela adaptarse al alumno. Si está establecida una metodología, es porque se ha visto que ha dado resultados en una gran mayoría de alumnos. Si el alumno, vamos a decir, quiere tocar determinada obra, y si el mismo alumno a los seis meses que está estudiando me dice que quiere tocar la "Sonata" de Castelnuovo-Tedesco, yo le digo, "¿Sabes qué?, no te conviene." Porque la "Sonata" de Castelnuovo-Tedesco es el techo de una casa. Entonces si tú quieres empezar la casa por el techo, te va a venir abajo. Entonces, el maestro es el que debe orientar, debe

decir qué material debe usar y cómo estudiar, cómo trabajar. Ésa es la misión del maestro. Y explicar los pasos que corresponden a cada sección, a cada trabajo. Yo siempre he dado una especie de recetas como las recetas médicas. Igual. Yo he dicho, "Bueno, veinte minutos tú debes estudiar veinticuatro escalas con distintas digitaciones y debes usar veinte minutos a tal velocidad en el metrónomo. Todos los días hasta que yo te escucha nuevamente, la otra clase, o la clase que viene, o la semana que viene. Y debes dedicar quince minutos a los arpeggios, a la velocidad que yo te estoy marcando por el metrónomo. Y debes dedicar, según el tiempo que tenga para estudiar, diez minutos para esta lección, veinte minutos para este estudio, y treinta minutos para este otro, y quince minutos para una pequeña obra que estás estudiando. Total, tienes que estudiar dos horas. Todos los días." El alumno debe seguir exactamente ese orden y esa receta. Porque si no, le puede pasar lo mismo que le pasa al enfermo que le dan que tomen una píldora cada tres horas, una pastilla cada tres horas. Y si mejor, me tomo diez pastillas de golpe y voy a sanar más pronto. Eso es lo mismo. No hay que tomarse las diez pastillas de golpe porque se va a morir el paciente; y el guitarrista debe estudiar con disciplina y con paciencia, tomando pastillas cuando el médico, que en este caso es el maestro, le recete. O sea, yo pienso que interviene el criterio del maestro en todas las acciones, y nuestros maestros tienen un criterio generalizado. Todos mantenemos un criterio similar porque hemos aprendido y hemos estudiado de la misma manera y hemos visto que da resultado. Porque si vemos, nosotros si viéramos de que no da resultado, buscaríamos otro material, buscaríamos otras ideas, buscaríamos otros caminos. Y hay indudablemente maestros que están haciendo investigaciones para mejorar la técnica, para trabajar otros niveles de mecanismos, en fin, hay inquietudes si hirviendo porque yo tengo a mi alrededor cinco, seis guitarristas profesionales de alto nivel que están a la vez dando clases en el Estudio del Arte Guitarrístico. Así que no sé si esto contesta, más o menos, tu pregunta.

FORD: Es posible que yo hay hecho esta pregunta de otra manera antes, y, si eso es la verdad, por favor discúlpeme. ¿De que manera se le ocurrió esta idea de comenzar un escuela privada; y no sólo comenzarla sino proyectar para su continuación?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, siempre desde el primer momento nosotros pensamos darles la experiencia y lo que yo recibí de mis maestros; pensamos que este camino iba a

ser positivo. Pero hasta que no vimos los resultados no podíamos ha[c]erlo. Porque al principio uno hace un plan de trabajo y empieza a tener alumnos para que empiecen a subir esas escaleras, esos peldaños. Entonces, no se sabía si iba a dar resultados sorprendentes como lo dieron. Uno de los resultados sorprendentes fue el de Alfonso Moreno que trabajó intensamente, increíblemente intenso doce o trece horas por día pero en menos de tres años él logró cursar todos los libros, todos de memoria a grandes velocidades y con gran perfección; y son como catorce o quince libros. Y luego, después de tres años yo le dije a Alfonso Moreno, "Mira, te voy a preparar para el concurso de París que es dentro de un año. Vamos a trabajar las obras, vamos a trabajar las técnicas y artísticamente bajo mi dirección y tú vas a ganar el concurso". Y no me equivoqué. No me equivoqué, ganó el concurso, uno de los más difíciles, porque intervenían grandes instrumentistas, Eduardo Abreu, en fin grandes guitarristas y sin embargo ganó por unanimidad Alfonso. Y eso fue en cuatro años. El resultado de la técnica y del plan de estudios fue maravilloso. No dejo de reconocer que Alfonso Moreno era un guitarrista de habilidad natural. Pero tenía también otros estudiantes que en vez de tardar cuatro años tardaron siete, tardaron ocho. Pero también ganaron concursos: Mario Beltrán del Río ganó el concurso de Venezuela, el Alirio Díaz, varios concursantes ganaron primero y segundo premios en Europa, Jesús Ruiz, Enrique Velasco. En fin, se me pasa, se me olvidan de los guitarristas que sorprendentemente llegaron al mismo nivel técnico y artístico que pudo llegar Alfonso en cuatro años. Por lo tanto, yo tengo la impresión de que no puede uno dudar demasiado de que el plan de estudios, la manera de hacerlo, y la metodología empleada, el material empleado da sus resultados positivos. Quizás se pueda mejorar, quizás se puedan suplantar unas lecciones por otras, unos estudios por otros. Quizás se puedan encontrar otras escalas, buscar otros ejercicios más complicados. En fin, puede haber mil y una cosas más. Pero si ya con eso todos los alumnos se espantan porque dicen que es muy lento el trabajo, esto que esta mañana yo te estaba contando de que mucha gente piensa que nuestros estudios establecidos, la cantidad de lecciones, estudios, y técnica que los alumnos tienen que hacer durante siete, ocho años, o quizá más, todos los alumnos se espantan, todos piensan de que estamos mal porque hoy en la actualidad todo lo quieren para ayer. Quieren tocar la guitarra clásica como Segovia en tres meses. Y entonces, yo hacía esta comparación que te la quiero dejar grabada para ver si tú la

desarrollas porque realmente, es cierto. Es como querer estudiar medicina para curar enfermos y estar decidido. O, irte a la universidad estudiar medicina durante ocho años, más cuatro años de especialización, o meterte a la escuela de curanderos. Si te metes a la escuela de curanderos tal vez un año, o en tres meses aprendes a curar o matar a tus pacientes. Entonces, ¿quieres ser médico profesional, o quieres ser curandero de la guitarra? ¿Qué quieres ser? ¿Quieres ser guitarrista profesional, o quieres ser guitarrista curandero? Entonces elige; si quieres ser curandero puede ser que cures a alguien, puede ser que hasta tengas fama y hasta te hagas millonario porque todo el mundo ha de llegar de rodilla a solicitarte que le acaricies la cabeza para que esta mano santa lo cure. Y está el otro que ha estudiado doce años, y quien sabe si puede curar o no todavía. En fin, a mí ha parecido que un trabajo técnico en su instrumento lleva muchos años, mucha disciplina, muchos esfuerzos, pero esos esfuerzos, esas disciplinas, y ese trabajo, tiene que dar buenos resultados para la mayoría de los estudiantes. No para que uno pueda tocar y el otro no pueda dar una nota. No. Todos nuestros estudiantes, sin excepción, tocan bien la guitarra. Y no son profesionales, porque no se dedican todas las horas. Lo hacen un poco; al margen tenemos médicos, abogados, ingenieros, estudiantes de preparatoria, estudiantes de universidad que dedican una o dos horas por día para estudiar su instrumento. Y van progresando y van tocando muy bien. Y llega a un momento [para] muchos de ellos que estudiaban. Por ejemplo, Víctor Saenger estudiaba ingeniería en una universidad, pero hizo tan buenos progresos en la guitarra dedicándole uno o dos horas por día con disciplina, que se dedicó a la guitarra porque lo apasionó y porque los resultados fueron magníficos. Mario Beltrán, también, era un universitario que dejó la carrera para dedicarse a la guitarra porque lo hacía al margen, no lo hacía como profesión directa. Eso te demuestra de que el resultado y la técnica de la enseñanza es maravillosa. Y puede hacer tocar correcto a todo el mundo, que eso fue siempre mi ambición. Si de tanta gente sale un gran guitarrista, o dos o tres, ¡qué bueno! Es maravilloso, pero mi misión la he cumplido por el ser humano, no con uno o dos guitarristas. Yo no pienso de que soy buen maestro porque tengo un buen guitarrista en mis alumnos. No. Yo soy buen maestro porque he tenido mil buenos alumnos en toda mi vida. Todos han tocado bien, algunos han sido extraordinariamente grandes guitarristas pero no me satisface. Solamente eso me satisface: el trabajo del conjunto de muchísimas gentes. Y mis alumnos en otros lugares del

mundo a su vez están dando esta filosofía, haciendo este trabajo, y haciendo el bien dando a la gente la posibilidad de hacer música, porque eso es el derecho, adquirido desde que uno nace.

FORD: ¿Cómo piensa usted que se compara esta escuela con otras; si hay otras para compararse?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yo no conozco otras escuelas, quizá hay otras escuelas, pero son muy superficiales. Por ejemplo, hay esta escuela de Carlevaro, hay un libro escrito sobre ello. Es bastante sólida. No quiero decirte de que no tenga un valor, pero me parece que como está dejando de lado, o no dándole importancia, al rest stroke, a la apoyatura. Entonces solamente está dando guías para pulsar la cuerda de una manera totalmente distinta, que a mi juicio, no conviene porque pierde cuerpo el sonido y es difícil, entonces, destacar los distintos elementos musicales, como son los planos sonoros. Entonces, eso es lo más cerca de lo que yo conozco de lo más cerca a establecer una escuela, es la escuela de Carlevaro. Pero después, no conozco otros intentos de escuela porque algunos muestran fotos de cómo se toma la guitarra, cómo se pone la mano, siempre de lejos y no enseñando un camino lento y progresivo. Simplemente, hay dibujos que indican cómo hay que pulsar, pero son simple, un poco por encima. No son profundos. No han investigado realmente si la mano se mueve, no se mueve, si está perpendicular o no, si los dedos atacan de frente o atacan de costado. Es siempre muy ambiguo. No define con claridad el camino. Entonces, no puedo hacer comparaciones, y además, pues ignoro que haya una escuela, no creo que haya una escuela, que cuide realmente al principiante, que cuide cómo se ponen las manos y cómo se mueven los dedos, y que enseñe una metodología para aplicar esas enseñanzas. Entonces, no puedo dar opinión sobre las diferencias que hay de otras escuelas. Tú que estás en Estados Unidos podrías quizá tener más información. Y si la logras no estaría demás que me mandarás copia porque yo quiero ver otro camino. Yo no soy como esos maestros que creen que lo único que es bueno es lo de uno. No creo esto. Pero no he visto nada que me convenza. Por ejemplo, está el libro de Bobri que pone la mano de Segovia como si fuera una escuela. Pero las manos de Segovia no son las manos de la mayoría. Son manos muy gordas, unos dedos muy gruesos, muy amplios, unas uñas muy especiales que son difíciles de encontrar. Generalmente, no se encuentran esos dedos tan gruesos, no se encuentran esas formas tan específicas de uña. Entonces, ese libro de Bobri, con fotos del maestro

Segovia, no son muy orientadores. Pone cómo ataca Segovia, pero no pone la manera de que todos deben atacar. Porque él da sus fotos y da su manera de tocar pero no es quizá esa manera adaptable a todos los estudiantes. Es una manera individual, muy personal del maestro Segovia que puede dar algunas orientaciones pero, por ejemplo, da una mala orientación que es torcer la mano completamente para tocar la cuerda y tocar la uña y la yema con el costado. Si yo tengo un dedo fino, muy delgado, voy a tomar muy poca yema, muy poco finger-tip, muy poco, y muy poca uña. Entonces, el sonido, aunque sea apoyado, va a ser flaco. No va a ser robusto, no. Así que--pero eso es más o menos lo que conozco, y creo que nosotros tenemos una escuela más sólida, una escuela más meditada, más pensada, más profunda tal vez, y con más experiencias de los resultados. Eso es lo que te puedo decir con respecto a otras escuelas que confieso mi ignorancia. ¿Qué vamos a hacer?

FORD: Y Carlevaro y Bobri no mantienen oficinas donde hay personal docente que enseñan la guitarra diariamente.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, claro, no, no. Eso no creo que...

FORD: Las otras son básicamente escuelas de pensamiento.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. E imagínate también que muchas veces algunos maestros que vieron nuestra organización aquí, y en nuestro trabajo en conjunto, un equipo de cinco, seis, siete maestros, u ocho, trabajando con el mismo principio, con la misma escuela, con las mismas bases, con la misma metodología, los resultados eran magníficos. Alguna vez, unos maestros argentinos vieron esto y quisieron hacer lo mismo en Buenos Aires. Y no lo lograron porque no tenían una escuela. Entonces cada uno--eran propios alumnos que iban a enseñar juntos, pero cada uno enseñaba a su manera. O sea iban a estar maestros enseñando la guitarra, pero no unificados por una escuela, sino enseñando individualmente cada uno lo que creía que había que enseñar. Esa es la diferencia.

FORD: Así que, ¿puedo decir que usted no conoce otra escuela como el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico en los Estados Unidos, México, o en otras partes del mundo?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. Yo he estado, por ejemplo, en Europa y pasa lo mismo. Una vez, di un curso en Zurich, en Suiza, y me vinieron algunos estudiantes de

los conservatorios de allí; de Zurich, y de Winterthur, alrededor, porque es un país muy pequeño, y venían todos pésimamente enseñados. Todos querían tocar la "Chacona" y no podían dar tres notas juntas. Entonces, yo me vi en la necesidad de decirles a estos muchachos jóvenes, de que tenían que empezar de cero. Tenían que volver a empezar a poner sus manos en el instrumento, aprender las posiciones y los movimientos preparatorios para aprender a pulsar los dedos, aprender a pulsar las cuerdas, para producir buen sonido y para realizar movimientos que los conduzcan al virtuosismo, a lo largo del tiempo, a lo largo de los esfuerzos y de los métodos, y de los ejercicios que damos nosotros. Entonces, pero era un muestrario de manos distintas, y te repito, si tú ves a los violinistas de todo el mundo, todo el mundo toma el violín casi de la misma manera, por no decirte exactamente igual. Los celistas hacen exactamente lo mismo. No hay una gran diferencia de posiciones de cómo toma el arco un celista, cómo maneja la mano izquierda un celista. Hay unas mínimas diferencias según la estructura de las manos y las dimensiones de las manos pero prácticamente, un celista es el calco del otro. Entonces, ves los pianistas. La mayoría de los pianistas también tienen las mismas posiciones y movimientos para tocar el piano. ¿Por qué razón en la guitarra unos ponen la mano derecha [mano perpendicular con respecto a las cuerdas], otros la ponen torcida [oblicua], otro la mete [coloca la muñeca pegada a las cuerdas], otro la saca [coloca la muñeca alejada de las cuerdas]? Es todo una improvisación de escuela. Yo creo que hay que unificar las ideas. Ese es nuestro punto de vista.

FORD: En los Estados Unidos, las escuelas y universidades otorgan degrees.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, grados, sí.

FORD: Pero, ¿qué puede esperar--to recieve--

LÓPEZ RAMOS: A recibir.

FORD: Gracias--recibir un estudiante después de cursar satisfactoriamente los estudios en el Estudio?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. Nosotros damos certificados de estudios. Por supuesto es avalado por maestros de renombre y dan su examen para recibir su certificado de estudio, y cuando terminan toda la metodología y ponen uno o dos programas de concierto a un buen nivel, dan un recital de graduación y se les otorga un diploma de nuestra institución. Diploma que es reconocido por

algunas universidades de aquí de México, como un diploma valedero y oficial. Aunque no estamos nosotros, no hemos hecho los trámites necesarios para poder estar reconocidos oficialmente. A mí no me ha interesado ver reconocimiento oficial. No me interesan los puestos gubernamentales. Nunca me interesaron. En dos oportunidades los directores del Conservatorio Nacional de Música de aquí de México, de la ciudad de México, cuando lo ocupó como director, Francisco Savín, que es director actual de la orquesta sinfónica de Jalapa, él ocupó el puesto de director de orquesta, director del Conservatorio Nacional. Y entonces, me llamó y me dijo, "Quiero que vengas a dar clases al Conservatorio." Y entonces, yo le dije, "Mira, no vengo por varias razones. Primero porque estoy haciendo mi carrera en Europa y en Estados Unidos y no quiero estar atado a la institución." "No pero, tú puedes salir cuando necesites, te damos todas las facilidades." "Sí. Pero en el segundo lugar," le dije, "mira, además yo soy argentino y aunque tengo derecho a trabajar en México, no quisiera que en el futuro me dijera que yo como extranjero le estoy quitando el lugar a un mexicano. Eso tampoco me haría feliz. Por lo tanto no acepto tu ofrecimiento que te agradezco mucho, Francisco." Corría el año 1966 o 67, no me acuerdo con precisión, algo parecido sucedió con Tapia Colman, otro músico, otro compositor, que ocupó también la dirección del Conservatorio Nacional, y también me llamó para que diera clases, y más o menos le dije lo mismo. Yo me conformé siempre con hacer un trabajo individual en el aspecto profesional y económico; nunca quise depender de ningún puesto gubernamental. Tú sabes bien que en los Estados Unidos muchas universidades, por ejemplo, la de Seattle me ofreció que me quedara a dar clases en los Estados Unidos, y me ofrecían muy bien dinero inclusive. Pero yo tenía varias situaciones importantes. Primero, tenía mis hijos estudiando en México y no los iba a cambiar de escuelas y universidades. Y en segundo lugar, tenía el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico con siete u ocho maestros trabajando juntos y no los iba a abandonar por ningún dinero del mundo. No me interesó entonces irme a otro país porque tenía que irme con toda mi familia y tenía que abandonar a mis alumnos que eran los maestros que me acompañaban en este trabajo. Por lo tanto, quizá cometí un error, pero por otro lado no me arrepiento porque realizamos una labor interesante y muchos estudiantes norteamericanos han venido, como tú, a estudiar aquí a México, y nuestra escuela tiene fama internacional. Nosotros nos hemos mantenido durante treinta y cinco años trabajando privadamente, y sabes que cada clase significa un

trabajo cuidadoso. Escuchamos, yo te lo dije antes, toda la técnica que estudian. Trabajan veinticuatro escalas, todas unidas para hacer un gran esfuerzo técnico, con todas las digitaciones: índice medio, índice anular, medio anular, anular medio índice, y anular medio índice medio, o sea, le escuchamos las veinticuatro escalas a las distintas velocidades metronómicas que estamos exigiendo. Les escuchamos todos los arpeggios de Giuliani que son muchísimos. Les revisamos cuatro lecciones de cada libro, cada una a distintas velocidades como corresponde a nuestro sistema de aprendizaje, que tú conoces. Entonces, damos la quinta lección y suspendemos la primera. Si se llevan dos libros de estudios y lecciones al mismo tiempo, escuchamos ocho lecciones por clase con dos estilos diferentes: Romántico de Sagreras, y Clásico de Carulli, Carcassi, et cétera. Resumiendo, escuchamos cuatro de un libro a distintas velocidades, unos muy lentos, otros más rápidos, y en el otro libro lo mismo. Total, ocho lecciones. Luego, les tocamos las que siguen. Les digitamos si no están digitadas, les ponemos los metrónomos y el tiempo que deben estudiarla. Y si tocan alguna obra acorde a su nivel también se la escuchamos y tratamos de corregirle el arte de la interpretación dentro de sus posibilidades. Así debe trabajar un maestro. El alumno se sentirá estimulado porque estudia y sabe que lo que estudia lo va a escuchar su maestro íntegramente. En vez, en otras instituciones musicales, generalmente tienen más alumnos de lo que el tiempo lo permite. Entonces, tienen que atender quince o veinte alumnos en una hora. ¿Qué pueden hacer? Bueno, escuchar cinco minutos a cada uno. ¿Qué pueden enseñar? Entonces, cuando el alumno no tiene habilidad, le aconsejan: "Vete a vender juegetitos allí en la calle, o a limpiar automóviles. Tú no naciste para la música." ¿Cómo saben que no nació para la música si nunca le han enseñado, si nunca se han preocupado? No, es otra filosofía, es otra manera de enseñar.

Generalmente, el músico, el instrumentista, no es buen maestro. Un instrumentista, y menos un solista, porque los solistas llegan generalmente por habilidad y no por haber sido bien enseñados, y por lo tanto, no tienen pedagogía ni conocimientos de la enseñanza. Ya te he contado que una vez vino un joven y me dijo que lo habían rechazado en el conservatorio porque quería estudiar el violonchelo. Le hicieron un test y le dijeron que no tenía condiciones para tocar ningún instrumento. Luego, este joven vino conmigo y me dijo: "Sabe maestro, no me han permitido estudiar el violoncelo en el conservatorio y me dijeron que

usted es un maestro que es capaz de hacer ver a los ciegos y hacer caminar a los cojos." Le respondí: "Yo me limito a enseñar a todos aquellos que quieran hacer música, porque es su derecho. Si te parece, vamos a empezar hoy mismo. Yo no te haré ningún test ni me interesa saber si tienes buen oído o habilidad natural en las manos, no me interesa nada de eso. Tú eres un ser humano normal y eso es bastante." En cuatro años este muchacho estaba dando conciertos y con otro alumno nuestro fue a Europa tocando a dúo. En cuatro años llegó a tocar maravillosamente. Tenía una técnica limpia, perfecta, fantástica. Héctor González fue uno de los mejores alumnos que he tenido. Tuvo la desgracia de que lo operaron de emergencia y la anestesia lo llevó a la muerte. Hoy, un sobrino de él es un gran guitarrista y enseña en el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. Su nombre es Guillermo González, y es un extraordinario músico.

FORD: ¿De que consisten los exámenes dados antes de que un estudiante pueda pasar de un nivel a otro?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿De qué se tratan los exámenes? Bueno, los exámenes, por supuesto, son para comprobar si el nivel que se está dando al certificado se justifica con lo que están haciendo. Se toman velocidades de escalas, se toman velocidades de arpeggio, se toma el conocimiento de memoria de los libros. Ellos tienen que tocar las lecciones y los estudios de memoria. El maestro puede pedir, "Toque usted el número veinte del libro cuarto," si están cursando el segundo nivel, y eso lo tiene que tocar. Y después, cada se prepara algunas obras acorde con su nivel. Eso es el trabajo técnico, lo que examinamos a los instrumentistas. Pero también ellos tienen que tomar otras especialidades. Tienen que tomar cursos de armonía, de solféo, y de todas las otras disciplinas que compone a un músico profesional. Los que no se van a dedicar profesionalmente, nos conformamos con que tengan principios básicos musicales y que toquen el instrumento correctamente.

FORD: ¿Son tomados estos exámenes ante un jurado?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¡Sí, claro!, ante todos los maestros del estudio.

FORD: ¿Qué es el tomaño físico de la institución?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, nosotros tenemos seis cubículos y una aula grande para dar conciertos y conferencias.

FORD: ¿Tiene el aula facilidades para grabación?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Generalmente, grabamos y tomamos videotape.

FORD: ¿Hay un cuarto bastante grande para dar una clase, como en los años pasados cuando usted daba una clase de un mes para estudiantes extranjeros?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, eso ya lo he ido dejando porque tengo menos tiempo, pero lo hicimos muchos años con gran éxito.

FORD: Pero, ¿es posible que algo así su diera tener lugar en el aula?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, en el aula grande. Sí hacemos cursos de perfeccionamiento para los más adelantados y los que no lo están tanto, van a escuchar las clases. Son cursos con nuestros propios alumnos que ya tienen una técnica desarrollada. Entonces trabajamos las obras de los programas, frente a los alumnos que están en distintos niveles para que vayan conociendo el repertorio.

FORD: Mas o menos, ¿cuál es el número de estudiantes cada mes?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Siempre tuvimos tantos alumnos que debíamos mantener una lista de aspirantes, los que tenían que esperar que se produjera una vacante. Muchas veces tenían que esperar uno o dos años para entrar a estudiar con nosotros. Así fue nuestro éxito en la enseñanza de la guitarra y así sigue siendo.

FORD: ¿Y cuántos nombres hay en la lista de espera?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Esperan su entrada más de cien.

FORD: ¿Dan conciertos periódicamente los estudiantes?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Los estudiantes dan conciertos periódicamente. Los que van preparando pequeñas obras durante quince minutos tocan cada uno. Cada mes, se hace un concierto de alumnos, de estudiantes.

FORD: ¿Cada mes?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Cada mes. Cada mes hay un día dedicado y tocan tres alumnos o cuatro; quince, veinte minutos cada uno.

FORD: ¿Y hay algunos miembros de la facultad que dan conciertos, y otros que no?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, no, claro, los maestros también cada año, o cada dos años, hacen su concierto para los alumnos para que vean que los maestros siguen tocando.

FORD: ¿Y usted?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: También podré hacerlo, al descubrir que sin ver el diapasón se pueden mantener las obras sin tener que estudiar y practicar muchas horas.

FORD: I should have asked this question first. ¿Hay facilidades en la escuela para dar conciertos?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, ¡claro!, ¡claro! que ahí está.

FORD: También, ¿son provistas estas facilidades para hacer grabaciones?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, hace tiempo tuvimos grabadora, y grabábamos las lecciones de los alumnos. Pero era un trabajo que nos llevaba mucho tiempo y no era posible dar clases de más de dos horas.

FORD: ¿Pero una vez cada mes, cuando cuatro estudiantes están se presentan en recital?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: El recital se puede grabar e incluso se puede grabar en videotape. Creo habértelo dicho ya.

FORD: ¿Espera mover la escuela a otro lugar?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Ya estamos en Dakota 204, Colonia Nápoles en el D.F. Nadie nos puede mover de ese lugar.

FORD: Esta es una pregunta de uno miembro de mi comité. Usted tiene renombre como maestro, artista de concierto y arreglador de música.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, sí claro.

FORD: Pero, ¿es usted compositor?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No.

FORD: ¿Y los otros maestros del Estudio?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No son compositores. Son ejucantes. Son especializados en el instrumento y lo enseñan según nuestra escuela.

FORD: ¿Y comenzó el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico en 1962?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Así fue.

FORD: ¿Cuáles son sus sueños para el futuro?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿El sueño mio para el futuro? ¿Con respecto a qué?

FORD: Con respecto al Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, ¿qué quisiera para esta institución? ¿Qué visión tiene usted para esta escuela?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Mira, yo quisiera que el trabajo hecho por nuestro Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico sea un ejemplo para aquellos que quieran dedicarse a enseñar. Que la filosofía que hemos tratado de mantener durante tantos años, la tomen los maestros que aunque no estudiaron con nosotros, puedan entender que la responsabilidad de enseñar música, de enseñar un instrumento, es más importante que todo lo demás. Hay que aprender a dar sin esperar recibir. Hay que sentirse útil en esta vida. Mi ilusión es que los maestros que enseñen un instrumento, sea la guitarra o cualquier otro, tengan esta filosofía. Y sepan ser útil a su semejante, a su prójimo. Ser útil y darles belleza. La música da paz, felicidad. Yo quisiera que eso fuera lo que perdurara de nuestra escuela. Y si también perduran nuestros principios técnicos, y si se mantiene y se va de generación en generación, se va pasando estas ideas, y se va mejorando, y se va perfeccionando, eso será para mí una gran satisfacción, aunque ya no estuviera en este mundo.

FORD: ¿Está feliz con el tamaño de la escuela?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Creo que sí. No se puede hacer una institución donde tengamos cien maestros, porque no se pueden vigilar. Yo estoy siempre en la escuela, yo estoy viendo a los alumnos. Yo reviso a los maestros, reviso a los alumnos. Si tengo cien alumnos me cuesta mucho trabajo estar revisando de vez en cuando cómo van. Pero si tengo mil alumnos, ¿cómo voy a hacer? No, yo creo que el tamaño de nuestro Estudio es el que se puede controlar.

FORD: ¿Mantiene la escuela una biblioteca?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Tenemos una musiteca, quizá, más que biblioteca. Tenemos los archivos de música que todos los alumnos pueden copiar, que todos los alumnos puede tener, llegar a tener todas las obras que yo he comprado durante toda mi vida y estudiado toda mi vida. Y eso está a disposición de todos.

FORD: ¿Y grabaciones también?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, hay discos que se pueden adquirir. No hacemos negocio; simplemente tenemos ese material para los que quieran comprar discos de guitarra, para los que quieran comprar cuerdas. No es para lucrar, es simplemente para ayudar a los que estudian. Cuerdas, discos, métodos, libros.

FORD: Pero, ¿hay un biblioteca de grabaciones, o solamente de música impresa?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No. Tenemos aparatos para escuchar música. Antes teníamos discos de aquellos grandes. Ahora, se están suplantando por el CD, y, más o menos, tenemos una buena discoteca.

FORD: Pienso que muchas cosas están explicadas en el web-site también, pero si necesito más clarificación de algunas materias, ¿puedo hacer una llamada a usted?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, claro.

FORD: Ya estamos al fin del siglo. ¿Qué lugar, piensa usted, ocupa esta escuela en el mundo de música, en el mundo de la guitarra?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿Y por qué tengo que pensar algo distinto porque se termina el siglo? Los días continuarán y la vida también.

FORD: Esta no es una pregunta mia, es una pregunta de uno de mis maestros. Where, and/or how, does the school fit in with the end of the century, as far as you're concerned?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Me parece que el tiempo es un invento de los hombres; no importa en qué momento estamos, fin del siglo o principios del otro. Simplemente el hombre vive en el tiempo que marca su vida. Es bueno dejar huellas en el camino. ¿Sabes lo que es una huella? Cuando uno camina en la arena--in the desert--esa es una huella. Si puedes dejar una huella, como dejaron en la luna los astronautas, y ésta perdure, habrás cumplido con la oportunidad que te ha dado Dios de vivir.

Yo creo que este siglo es importante para la guitarra. La guitarra recibió el impulso de Segovia. Fue conocida en el mundo entero. Se crearon escuelas y se crearon maestros y todas las universidades. Ello se lo debemos a Segovia, ésa es la pura verdad. Además le

debemos al Maestro de Jaén un repertorio que los grandes compositores crearon para él. Este es el siglo de oro para la guitarra, y esperamos que el siglo que viene sea mucho mejor. En vez del siglo de oro, sea el siglo de platino. Y el que sigue sea del diamante.

FORD: ¿Cómo cambió la escuela desde 1962? Por ejemplo, hacia tiempo había un mes cada verano cuando clases eran ofrecidas para estudiantes extranjeros.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, eso lo fuimos dejando de hacer por la cantidad de alumnos que teníamos. Teníamos tantos alumnos aquí, mexicanos, que ya no teníamos capacidad para dar esas clases a los extranjeros. Y sobre todo, porque mi tiempo lo ocupaba para dar clases en Estados Unidos y para tocar en otros países los conciertos. Así que prácticamente seguimos haciendo, más o menos, lo mismo desde que empezamos hasta ahora. Hemos cambiado algunas cosas, pero, fundamentalmente seguimos por los mismos principios y las mismas actividades porque nos han dado muy buenos resultados. Entonces, ¿para qué vamos a cambiar? La gente dice que todo tiene que evolucionar. Digo bueno, todo evoluciona pero, a veces, evoluciona para mal. Tal vez es mejor mantenerse con lo que hemos comprobado su eficacia, aunque nos tilden de conservadores.

FORD: No todo el movimiento hacia adelante es progreso.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. Entonces por eso, ¿si estamos satisfechos de los resultados? No, busquemos más; John, no nos hagamos la vida más difícil de lo que es.

FORD: Así que, por ejemplo, en el futuro, ¿es posible que tenga clases para estudiantes extranjeros otra vez?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Puede ser que sí, puede ser que no. Yo tuve que dejar de dar master class porque los conciertos me tenían muy ocupado. Ahora ya estoy muy viejo y algo cansado. Son los nuevos maestros los que heredan esa responsabilidad.

FORD: La última vez cuando yo estaba en el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, noté una foto grande de Segovia con inscripción al salir. ¿Qué escribió Segovia en la foto?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, Segovia desea éxito al Estudio del Arte Guitarrístico y que siempre, dice algo así, no recuerdo con exactitud, dice que siempre sea la música

la que fluya de la guitarra. O sea que lo importante es la música que hace la guitarra y no la guitarra que hace la música. Algo de eso quiso decirnos el maestro Segovia.

FORD: Yo quisiera copiar la inscripción exactamente para incluirla en el disertación.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro, claro, exactamente, sí. ¿Te acuerdas lo que leíste de Segovia? Su dedicatoria en una pintura que alguien le hizo.

FORD: ¿Si pudiera obtener una copia antes de salir?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Yo te voy a dar un brochure. Una para que tenga las críticas, están en inglés e inclusive las palabras dedicadas a mí por el inolvidable maestro. Te las repito: "Manuel López Ramos sirve a la guitarra con talento y amor". Le estoy muy agradecido por tan elogioso concepto sobre mi.

FORD: No tengo la dirección del web-site o el número de teléfono de la escuela. ¿Pudiera obtenerlos también, antes de salir?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, claro.

FORD: Y ahora, el orden de los estudios en cualquier libro, por ejemplo el orden numérico de la edición segoviana de los estudios de Sor, etcétera, ¿todos esos ya están siendo reorganizados por Juan Reyes?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Sí, lo está organizando Juan Reyes, que es uno de nuestros maestros...

FORD: Y además un concertista estimado.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Por supuesto.

FORD: ¿En la interpretación a dúo y a solo también, no?.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Es magnífico solo y tocando con Laura Pavón, su esposa.

FORD: Posiblemente piense que yo esté loco por preguntar esto, pero es para el documento que lo pregunto, y por eso es importante. ¿Mantiene el Estudio una lista de sus graduados?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, en realidad no los llevamos con tanta exactitud. Porque no somos gente que nos guste

enseñar lo que hemos hecho en el pasado. No vivimos del pasado. Vivimos del presente y del futuro. Entonces, no podemos recordar yo, no te podría decir si se han graduado y han sido guitarristas internacionales entre tantos, que sé yo, cien o doscientos. Nunca me ocupé de esas estadísticas. Porque los latinos no vivimos de las estadísticas. Yo creo que los norteamericanos son víctimas de las estadísticas. Pero nosotros no le damos ninguna importancia. Quizá estamos equivocados, pero somos más felices.

FORD: Sí, por supuesto. Aunque a cierto punto en la existencia de la escuela, ¿es posible que una secretaria marcara todo eso y lo pusiera en algún lugar; y quizás alguna persona en el Estudio ahora continuá a añadir más nombres a esta lista, que se encuentre un lugar lógico?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No sé qué decirte, pero sí, tenemos el recuerdo de haber trabajado mucho, pero nada más.

FORD: Si una persona sin talento extraordinario, que no busca una carrera concertística sino una en la profesión legal o médica, por ejemplo, quiere aprender a tocar la guitarra, ¿qué es la mínima cantidad de tiempo, cada día, que este estudiante necesita aplicarse él mismo o ella misma?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Bueno, si no es un estudiante que se va a dedicar, que generalmente casi todos los que empiezan con nosotros no vienen con intención de dedicarse a la guitarra, yo pongo como condición, que se debe estudiar, por lo menos, una hora por día. Y se da recetas en minutos y material para poder estudiar una hora por día. Ya en el segundo año, como hay materiales más complicados, y más difíciles, pedimos que se aumente por lo menos media hora más. Entonces, en segundo año tendrán que estudiar una hora y media, el doctor, o el abogado, o el ingeniero. Y esa hora y media puede durar hasta el tercer año. El tercer año va a necesitar dos horas. Y así, el mínimo, hablamos del mínimo. Porque, seguramente, se le van a ser poco dos horas al alumno que compruebe sus propios progresos. Progresa el médico que no tiene condiciones, ni tiempo; progresa el zapatero, que se pasa remendando el zapato, y progresan a los mismos niveles, progresa el estudiante, progresa el obrero. Todos progresan en la misma medida, o casi en la misma medida. Entonces, si es importante darle a todas las personas la posibilidad de tocar bien, de tocar correctamente, y de hacer un trabajo que a los profesionales, como médicos y abogados, le significan

un descanso espiritual y mental. Es un cambio de cansancio, como se dice. Se cambia de actividad. Si el médico está una hora con un instrumento, luego estará listo él para ir a operar y curar al paciente. ¿Sabes lo que quiero decir?

FORD: Totalmente, no.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: (En una manera humorística.) El médico estudia una hora la guitarra. Y después va y hace una operación de corazón. Y seguramente está pensando en la guitarra y comete errores que le cuesta la vida al paciente.

FORD: ¿Pues es una hora cada día, por un año?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro, y después dos. Y ya con dos, se puede estar bastantes años, tres o cuatro. Ahora sí, si entusiasma el médico y ve que puede tocar capaz que deja la medicina y se dedica a la guitarra.

FORD: ¿Una media hora más se agrega a cada año más de estudio?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Media hora, cada año.

FORD: ¿Y de que manera se divide la hora en el primer año?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Deben dividirse entre el primer libro de Sagreras [por] 45 minutos, y en los primeros Ejercicios de coordinación [por] 15 minutos, para desarrollar la posición de escala. A medida que recorre los libros, se aumentarán más minutos diarios. También depende de la habilidad que el alumno desarrolle. Todo debe ser examinado por el criterio del Maestro y dar las recetas de estudio acorde con el progreso que evidencie el estudiante.

FORD: Por favor, Maestro, lea aproximadamente cuatro páginas del Prólogo de Bluestone, y deme su reacción, por favor, a la información que se presenta allí; específicamente con respecto a la mano derecha y las uñas?

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¿Quién dice? ¿Bluestone? Torcidos, ¿no?, para poder entrar a la cuerda. Pero eso lo hace porque su tamaño del dedo no le permite tocar de frente. Entonces, es un dedo así de grande, no pueden entrar de frente. Ocupa mucho sitio en la cuerda. Entonces, tiene que hacer eso para tocar de costado. Pero eso le quitó muchísima técnica, a Segovia.

Segovia, cuando era joven, tenía los dedos mucho más delgados, y tocaba más de frente. La posición de la mano de Segovia antiguamente, era distinta a la que fue después, ya de más edad: hombre gordo, y con dedos muy gruesos; muy distintos de los dedos que tenía en su juventud.

Alexandre Lagoya piensa que se debe atacar la cuerda con el costado derecho del dedo, lo contrario de la posición de Segovia. Yo insisto que se debe atacar a la cuerda de frente, para que el sonido tenga robustez. Son distintos puntos de vista, pero cuando el dedo ataca de frente, los dedos que están juntos no se entorpecen entre sí.

FORD: Comienza de esta manera y...

LÓPEZ RAMOS: Claro. Pues, hay una reacomodación personal. Pero primero hay que aprender los movimientos libres.

FORD: Si, pero yo pienso que es importante que eso sea entendido, porque hay gente que piensa que es necesario tocar solamente de esta manera.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: No, no. Hay indudablemente que permitir un reacomodo personal, pero una vez que los movimientos correctos se hayan aprendidos. Hay una posibilidad de reacomodo personal. Mira, es como si yo te dijera, "Tú vas a ser un gran corredor." ¿Sabes lo que es un corredor? A runner in a marathon...

FORD: Está bien.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: "Tú vas a ser un gran corredor." Bueno, muy bien. "Pero para correr vas a aprender a correr con los pies torcidos." Si yo aprendo con los pies torcidos, no voy a poder correr mucho. Yo quisiera aprender con los pies derechos, para tener libertad de movimiento. Más tarde buscaré un reacomodo personal, para ser más rápido que los demás, pero ya aprendiste a correr correctamente.

FORD: Muchas veces cuando alguna persona hace una pregunta sobre su enseñanza, o su técnica de mano derecha, la contesta es que es principalmente par las personas que empiezan a estudiar, y no para ellos con habilidad natural.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¡No, claro!

FORD: Yo creo que usted piensa que el acercamiento suyo de la mano derecha a la guitarra es una cosa buena para la persona que está comenzando sus estudios; empero, yo creo que hay algunos que creen que su intención es, que usted piensa que esta acercamiento de mano derecha es para todos los guitarristas del mundo, a cada nivel y habilidad.

LÓPEZ RAMOS: ¡No!

FORD: Pero, por eso, yo desearía una clarificación en sus propias palabras..

LÓPEZ RAMOS: El estudio inicial es el que debe ser el más correcto de todos. Los primeros años son fundamentales, tan fundamentales. Son igual que los primeros años de un niño. Si tú--en los primeros años de un niño, hasta los siete años, que trabaja en la subconsciente--si tú le das malos ejemplos, le enseñas cosas malas. Le dices que va a ser un criminal, que va a ser un asesino, que va a ser un violador, y le enseñas todo eso, el niño lo va a ser. Hay que enseñar bien a los niños, hay que decirles cosas buenas para que se formen como hombres buenos. Si tú le enseñas mal, ese niño va a ir por mal camino. Si tú le enseñas cosas buenas, ese niño va a ser bueno. Es lo mismo. Al principio tú tienes que enseñarle a hacer las cosas bien. Ya, cuando ya eres grande, tú mismo harás las modificaciones necesarias para tu perfección.

(At this point the interview was concluded. What follows is an e-mail response to my request for comments on the guitar school of Emilio Pujol.)

John, voy a agregar algún comentario sobre la técnica de Pujol y sus libros.

Creo que todo material de estudio es interesante y se puede usar con eficacia. Los libros de Pujol están bien escritos y tiene ejercicios positivos para el desarrollo de la técnica, sobre todo porque mantiene los principios de Tárrega y el uso de las apoyaturas. En un libro antiguo, (Creo que se llamaba: El dilema del sonido en la guitarra, no estoy seguro,) Pujol recomendaba tocar la guitarra sin el uso de las uñas (mano derecha, por supuesto.) Yo creo que sin uñas no se logra la calidad y belleza del sonido en la guitarra. Siempre he propuesto usar la yema-uña, dentro de la misma pulsación. La yema dará robustez al sonido y al pasar la cuerda por la uña, ésta le dará el "toque" metálico que necesita el sonido para que sea el más bello, el mejor, y se pueda hacer música con

sonidos robustos e intensos. La tendencia actual de casi todos los guitarristas es tocar muy débil su instrumento. Mientras el luthier se esforzó por conseguir guitarras de gran sonoridad, los guitarristas han cambiado su técnica y en una sala grande no se les oye. Claro que ahora optan por tocar con micrófono. ¡Qué pena! La guitarra debía denominarse "Guitafono" pues con el uso del amplificador, ha perdido el sonido real y es otro instrumento de sonidos generalmente ríspidos, gangosos y metálicos. Ya sabes, John, que estoy en contra--como Segovia--en el uso del micrófono, sobre todo en recitales. Con orquesta se puede tolerar, si es que la obra está escrita para guitarra y gran orquesta (Angulo, por ejemplo) pero la guitarra tiene sus defectos que uno debe aceptar (sonoridad tenue) que debe compensar con la intensidad y la fuerza del toque y realizar sus virtudes: El sonido de la guitarra es como la voz interior del hombre, llena de lejanía y nostalgia.

/Recibe un cariñoso abrazo.

APPENDIX C
CURRICULUM DEVISED BY MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS
AND OBTAINED AT THE FIRST THREE-WEEK
CLASSIC GUITAR SEMINAR,
SPRING HILL COLLEGE,
MOBILE, ALABAMA,
JUNE, 1971

PROGRAM OF STUDY FOR THE CLASSIC GUITAR

According to Manuel López Ramos

First Year:

Julio S. Sagreras - Las Primeras Lecciones de Guitarra
(The First Lessons of Guitar.)

Ferdinando Carulli - Complete Method of Guitar, Book 1
(fingered for right hand.)

Manuel López Ramos - Coordination Exercises, no's 1-12
(slow metronome speed.)

Mauro Giuliani - 120 Arpeggios, first 60 (with correct
right hand fingering - always rest
stroke on the "a" finger.

Second Year:

Julio S. Sagreras - Las Segundas Lecciones de Guitarra
(The Second Lessons of Guitar.)

Ferdinando Carulli - Complete Method for Guitar, Book 2
(fingered for right hand.)

Manuel López Ramos - Coordination Exercises, 13-24.

Mauro Giuliani - 120 Arpeggios, last 60 (with correct
right hand fingering.)

Andrés Segovia - Diatonic Major and Minor Scales, C - B
(fingering im; ma; ia; imam) Practice
scales without stopping from C Major
through G-sharp minor with metronome--
imam most important. Study this first
with one metronome beat per note.
(see, NOTES...)

Pieces suggested by Ramos. Others on technique level of
each year may be chosen. Pieces need interpretive work.

"Romanza" - Anonymous.

"Six Pavanés" - Luys Milan.

"Study #5" - Fernando Sor, (Segovia ed., Twenty Studies.)

"Lagrima" - Francisco Tárrega.

"Partita" - Anton Logy (Universal Edition - Karl Scheit.)

Third Year:

Julio S. Sagreras - Las Terceras Lecciones de Guitarra
(The Third Lessons of Guitar.)

Matteo Carcassi - 25 Melodic and Progressive Studies,
Op. 60.

Andrés Segovia - Diatonic Major and Minor Scales
complete, 2 notes per beat, e.g. 80-120.

Miguel Ablóniz - 50 Arpeggi per la Mano Destra (50
Arpeggios for the Right Hand.)

Tremolo and Trill Exercises (see, NOTES...)

Manuel López Ramos - Coordination Exercises (metronome
at greater speed.)

Pieces:

"Six Lute Pieces" - Oscar Chilesotti.

"Minuets," from sonatas, Opus 22 & 25 - Fernando Sor.

"Suite in D minor" - Robert de Visée (Universal Ed. Karl
Scheit.)

"Adelita" - Francisco Tárrega.

Fourth Year:

Julio S. Sagreras - Las Cuartas Lecciones de Guitarra
(The Fourth Lessons of Guitar.)

Fernando Sor - 30 Minuetos para Guitarra (30 Minuets for
guitar,) ed. by Domingo Prat, RICORDI.

Miguel Ablóniz - 50 Arpeggi per la Mano Destra (50
Arpeggios for the Right Hand.)

Andrés Segovia - Diatonic Major and Minor Scales
(4 notes per beat slowly.)

Tremolo and Trill Exercises

Pieces:

"Sonatina" - Federico Moreno Torroba.

"Preludio y Allegro" - Santiago de Murcia.

"Ballet" - Christoph Willibald Gluck (transcribed for the guitar by Andrés Segovia, from a portion of the ballet music composed by Gluck for his opera, "Orfeo." Transcription published by Columbia Music Co., 1816 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. Publication CO. 125.

"Andante" - Franz Joseph Haydn [transcribed by Francisco Tárrega and called "Andante", this piece is actually a "Menuet/Trio/Menuet" from the TRIO 87 Hoboken II, by Haydn for Baryton, Viola, and Basso. This transcription was published between 1907-09 by Vidal Llimona y Boceta, Editores de Música, Mallorca, 273, Barcelona, publication # 1105:16.

"Preludes 1 & 3" - Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Fifth Year:

Julio S. Sagreras - Las Quintas Lecciones de Guitarra
(The Fifth Lessons of Guitar.)

Fernando Sor - 20 Studies for the Guitar, (ed. Segovia.)

Andrés Segovia - Diatonic Major and Minor Scales
(4 notes per beat at greater speed.)

Manuel López Ramos - Coordination Exercises.

Julio S. Sagreras - Técnica Superior (Advanced Technique,) scales in thirds, sixths, octaves; scales with slurs added to edition.)

Pieces:

"Minuetto I/II" - Jean Phillippe Rameau, transcribed for guitar to the keys of A Major /A minor by Andrés Segovia, from the original in G Major/G minor which appeared in Nouvelles Suites de Pieces de clavecin, published in Paris, ca. 1728.

"No. 5", from Spanish Dances, Op.37 - Enrique Granados.

"Nocturno" - A. Uhl (Universal Ed.)

"Twelve Preludes" - Manuel M. Ponce.

"Valses" - Antonio Lauro.

Sixth Year:

Julio S. Sagreras - Las Sextas Lecciones de Guitarra
(The Sixth Lessons for Guitar.)

Francisco Tárrega - Eight Preludes.

Julio S. Sagreras - Técnica Superior (Advanced
Technique,) scales in thirds, sixths,
octaves, last exercises - starting
from #10.

Pieces:

"Leyenda" - Isaac Albéniz.

"Estudio sin Luz" - Andrés Segovia.

"Nocturno" - Federico Moreno Tórroba.

"Aria con Variazione", from La Frescobalda - Girolamo
Frescobaldi.

"English Suite" - John Duarte.

"Six Characteristic Pieces" - Federico Moreno Torroba.

Seventh Year:

Napoleon Coste - 25 Estudios Superiores (25 Advanced
Studies,) Op. 38. Ricordi, ed.

Dionisio Aguado - Advanced Studies.

Heitor Villa-Lobos - Douze Études (Twelve Etudes.)

Mario Rodriguez Arenas - La Escuela de la Guitarra,
Libro VI (The School of the
Guitar, Book VI,) Ricordi.

Pieces:

Any works by Johann Sebastian Bach.

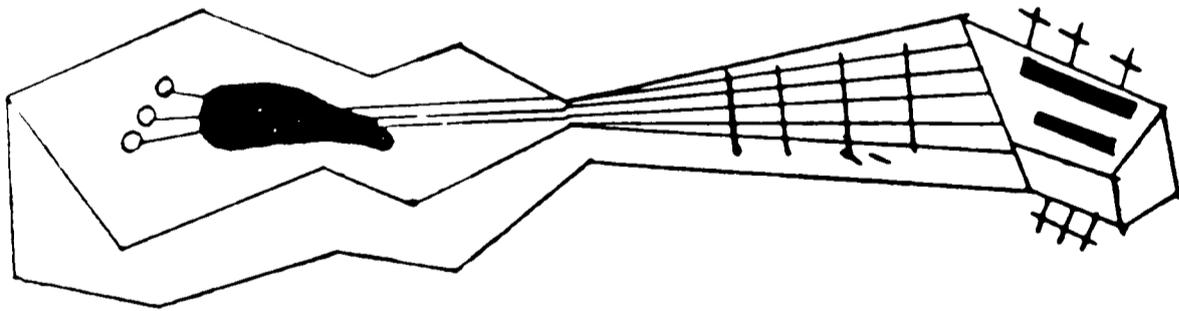
NOTES: Tremolo exercise - the problem is that the thumb and
"a" finger strike string almost simultaneously.
Practice pami on one string (2). Then, thumb on
(3) and (2); thumb on (4), (3) and (2).

Keep thumb in control; accent it.
Metronome: ♩ = 60 - 108

APPENDIX D

MODIFIED COPY TO FIT DISSERTATION FORMAT
OF BROCHURE EXPLAINING THE REGULATIONS
AND METHODOLOGY OF THE ESTUDIO DE ARTE
GUITARRÍSTICO, A.C. (ASOCIACION CIVIL)
CIRCA 1980

**Estudio
de Arte
Guitarrístico,
A. C.**



REGULATIONS

FEES:

Article 1. - Upon beginning the classes, the student must pay the enrollment fee that corresponds to the Course in which he is enrolled, and the first month' school fees.

Article 2. - The student must pay his fees in advance.

Article 3. - The payment of the fees must be made in the course of the first week of the month. If the student has not paid, the teacher will be compelled not to give the second class of that month, and the third week he will occupy the hour with another student.

Article 4. - The student will be informed of the cost of the theory courses on attending the respective meetings.

Article 5. - For all of the examinations that the student may attend, he must cover the corresponding cost.

STUDIES AND EXAMINATIONS:

Article 6. - The student must stick to the plan of study (Methodology) worked out by the academic personnel of this Institution. (See attachment.)

Article 7. - During the course of the year various public recitals, in which the students must participate, will take place.

Article 8. - In order to have the right to enroll in the next Course, the student must submit to a public examination.

Article 9. - Once the corresponding Course is completed, the student must apply for a date for the examination with his teacher. The exams will be scheduled in advance.

Article 10. - The students who have reached the advanced level will have the right to carry out the studies of the last stage with Maestro Manuel López Ramos.

ATTENDANCE AND VACATIONS:

Article 11. - If the student fails for whatever reason to attend class, the teacher is not obligated to make it up.

Article 12. - The student who fails to attend two consecutive classes without prior notice, will lose his hour and the teacher will have complete right to occupy the hour with another student.

Article 13. - In the case the teacher fails to meet the class for whatever reason, the teacher will have to make it up (in agreement with the student), or if this fails, to deduct that cost from the monthly fee.

Article 14. - On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week, February 5th, March 21st, the 1st and 5th of May, September 16th and November 20th, the Estudio will suspend its work without obligation on the part of the teachers to make up the classes that coincide with these days or deduct the cost from the monthly fees.

Article 15. - There will be two vacation periods that will include the last week of August and the last two weeks of December. The students who enroll during the first week of May or before, will pay for the complete month of August; those who enroll after that date, will pay only for three-fourths of the fee for August. The students who enroll during the first week of September or before, will pay for the complete month of December; those who enroll after that date, will pay for half of the fee of December.

Article 16. - The student whose discipline, effort, or available time are below the minimum required for the study of the instrument, will have their classes suspended.

Article 17. - The student who having lost his hour and who wishes to enroll again in the Estudio must pay the fees on account and register on the waiting list.

Article 18. - The Estudio has the power to expell any student, without any obligation to express the reasons that may lead to such a determination.

Article 19. - The teacher reserves the right of admission.

(As of November, 1998, tuition was 700 pesos per month.)

METHODOLOGY

FIRST COURSE

The First Lessons of Guitar.....(J. S. Sagreras)
The Second Lessons of Guitar.....(J. S. Sagreras)
Complete Method of Guitar.....(F. Carulli, Books I and II)
Coordination Exercises...(Manuel López Ramos, elem. level)
120 Arpeggios for Guitar.....(Mauro Giuliani)
Scales.....(Andrés Segovia, first course)

Course in Solfège.

Works corresponding to the First Course.

Presentation of a public examination.

(1st CERTIFICATE)

SECOND COURSE

The Third Lessons of Guitar.....(J. S. Sagreras)
The Fourth Lessons of Guitar.....(J. S. Sagreras)
The Fifth Lessons of Guitar.....(J. S. Sagreras)
Compositions for Guitar...(Mauro Giuliani, Books I and II)
25 Studies for Guitar.....(Matteo Carcassi)
30 Minuets for Guitar.....(Fernando Sor)
20 Studies for Guitar.....(Fernando Sor)

Coordination Exercises.(Manuel López Ramos, middle level)

120 Arpeggios for Guitar.....(Miguel Ablóniz)
Advanced Guitar Technique.....(J. S. Sagreras)
Scales.....(Andrés Segovia, second course)

Course in Music Theory.

Instrumental Ensemble.

Works corresponding to the Second Course.

Presentation of a public examination.

(2nd CERTIFICATE)

THIRD COURSE

The Sixth Lessons of Guitar.....(J. S. Sagreras)
Studies for Guitar.....(Napoleón Coste)
Studies for Guitar.....(Dionisio Aguado)
Advanced Studies, Book 6.....(Rodríguez Arenas)
12 Studies for Guitar.....(Heitor Villa-Lobos)
Album of Transcriptions.....(Francisco Tárrega)

Coordination Exercises...(Manuel López Ramos, upper level)
Advanced Guitar Technique.....(J. S. Sagreras)
Advanced Guitar Technique.....Rodríguez Arenas, Book VI)
4 Studies for Violin.....(Schradiék)
Scales.....(Andrés Segovia, third course)

Preparation of a concert program, under the direction of
Maestro Manuel López Ramos.

Presentation of a examination-concert in public.

(DIPLOMA)

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OPTIONAL COURSES

Comparative History of Music.
Music Appreciation.

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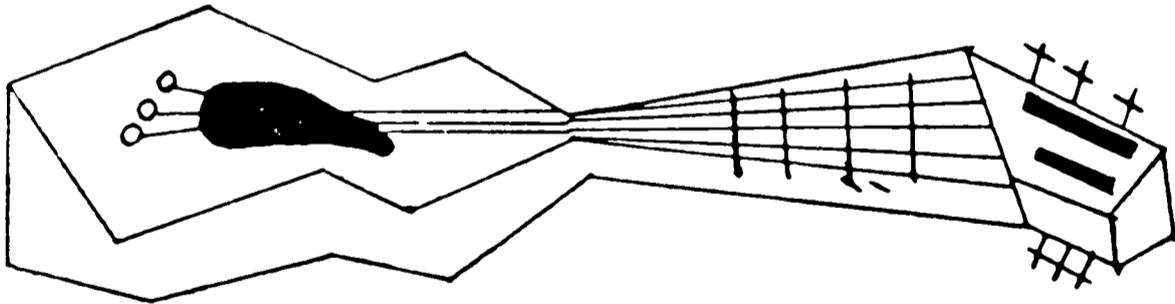
NOTES

- a) The courses in Solfèò, Music Theory, and Instrumental Ensemble, will have a duration of 3 months, and develop in the form of a workshop.
- b) The students who may be interested in an in-depth study of one of the particular subjects of the theory courses, must consult with the corresponding teacher.
- c) Each year, Maestro Manuel López Ramos gives a traditional COURSE IN INTERPRETATION, during which he will review works of the different musical periods, and students of diverse technical levels, from the Third Book of Sagreras on, will participate.

The academic personnel of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, A.C. have worked out the present plan of studies desiring to elevate the technical, artistic, and cultural level of its students. Of them we ask their complete collaboration, toward achieving the optimum development of the objectives created by our institution.

APPENDIX E
COPY OF ORIGINAL SPANISH VERSION OF
APPENDIX D MODIFIED TO FIT
DISSERTATION FORMAT
circa 1980

**Estudio
de Arte
Guitarrístico,
A. C.**



R E G L A M E N T O

DE LAS CUOTAS:

Artículo 1o.—Al iniciar las clases, el alumno deberá cubrir la cuota de inscripción que corresponda al curso en que se inscriba, y la colegiatura del primer mes.

Artículo 2o.—El alumno deberá pagar sus cuotas por adelantado.

Artículo 3o.—El pago de las cuotas deberá hacerse en el curso de la primera semana del mes. Si el alumno no ha pagado, el maestro se verá obligado a no darle la segunda clase de ese mes, y la tercera semana ocupará la hora con otro alumno.

Artículo 4o.—El costo de los cursos teóricos se informará al presentar las convocatorias respectivas.

Artículo 5o.—Para todos los exámenes que presente el alumno, deberá cubrir la cuota correspondiente.

DE LOS ESTUDIOS Y EXAMENES:

Artículo 6o.—El alumno deberá apegarse al plan de estudio (Metodología) elaborado por el personal académico de esta Institución (ver anexo).

Artículo 7o.—Durante todo el año se realizarán diversos recitales públicos en los que deberán participar los alumnos.

Artículo 8o.—Para tener derecho a inscripción al curso siguiente, el alumno deberá presentar un examen público.

Artículo 9o.—Una vez terminado el curso correspondiente, el alumno deberá solicitar fecha de examen a su maestro. Los exámenes se programarán con la debida anticipación.

Artículo 10o.—Los alumnos que hayan alcanzado el nivel superior tendrán derecho a realizar los estudios de su última etapa con el Maestro Manuel López Ramos.

DE LAS ASISTENCIAS Y VACACIONES:

Artículo 11o.—Si el alumno falta por cualquier causa a su clase, el maestro no tendrá obligación de reponerla.

Artículo 12o.—El alumno que falte sin previo aviso a dos clases consecutivas, perderá su hora y el maestro tendrá pleno derecho a ocuparla con otro alumno.

Artículo 13o.—En caso de que el maestro falte a la clase por cualquier causa, tendrá que reponerla (dé acuerdo con el alumno), o en su defecto, descontarla de la cuota mensual.

Artículo 14o.—Los días Jueves, Viernes y Sábado Santos, 5 de febrero, 21 de marzo, 1o. y 5 de mayo, 16 de septiembre y 20 de noviembre, el Estudio suspenderá sus labores sin obligación por parte de los maestros de reponer las clases que coincidan con esos días o descontarlas de la cuota mensual.

Artículo 15o.—Habrá dos períodos de vacaciones que abarcarán la última semana de agosto y las dos últimas semanas de diciembre. Los alumnos que ingresen durante la primera semana de mayo o antes, pagarán el mes de agosto completo; aquéllos que ingresen después de esa fecha, pagarán solamente las tres cuartas partes de la cuota de agosto. Los alumnos que ingresen durante la primera semana de septiembre o antes, pagarán el mes de diciembre completo; aquéllos que ingresen después de esa fecha, pagarán la mitad de la cuota de diciembre.

Artículo 16o.—El alumno cuya disciplina, esfuerzo o tiempo disponible estén por debajo del mínimo requerido para el estudio del instrumento, se le suspenderán sus clases.

Artículo 17o.—El alumno que habiendo perdido su hora desee ingresar nuevamente al Estudio deberá cubrir las cuotas que adeude e inscribirse en la lista de espera.

Artículo 18o.—El Estudio tiene la facultad de expulsión de cualquier alumno, sin obligación alguna de expresar las causas que lleven a tal determinación.

Artículo 19o.—El maestro se reserva el derecho de admisión.

M E T O D O L O G I A

PRIMER CURSO

Las Primeras Lecciones de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Las Segundas Lecciones de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Método Completo de Guitarra (F. Carulli, libros I y II)
Ejercicios de Coordinación. (Manuel López Ramos, nivel elem).
120 Arpegios para Guitarra (Mauro Giuliani)
Escalas (Andrés Segovia, primer curso)

Curso de Solfeo.

Obras correspondientes al Primer Curso.

Presentación de un examen público. (1er. CERTIFICADO)

SEGUNDO CURSO

Las Terceras Lecciones de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Las Cuartas Lecciones de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Las Quintas Lecciones de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Composiciones para Guitarra .. (Mauro Giuliani, libros I y II)
25 Estudios para Guitarra (Matteo Carcassi)
30 Minuetos para Guitarra (Fernando Sor)
20 Estudios para Guitarra (Fernando Sor)

Ejercicios de Coordinación. (Manuel López Ramos nivel medio)

12 Arpegios para Guitarra (Miguel Ablóniz)
Técnica Superior de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Escalas (Andrés Segovia, segundo curso)

Curso de Teoría de la Música.

Conjuntos Instrumentales.

Obras correspondientes al Segundo Curso.

Presentación de un examen público.

(2do. CERTIFICADO).

El personal académico del Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, A.C. ha elaborado el presente plan de estudios deseando elevar el nivel técnico, artístico y cultural de sus alumnos. A ellos solicitamos su entera colaboración, a fin de lograr el óptimo desarrollo de los objetivos planteados por nuestra institución.

TERCER CURSO

Las Sextas Lecciones de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Estudios para Guitarra (Napoleón Coste)
Estudios para Guitarra (Dionisio Aguado)
Estudios Superiores libro 6 (Rodríguez Arenas)
12 Estudios para Guitarra (Héctor Villalobos)
Album de transcripciones (Francisco Tárrega)

Ejercicios de Coordinación. (Manuel López Ramos, nivel sup.)
Técnica Superior de Guitarra (J. S. Sagreras)
Técnica Superior de Guitarra ... (Rodríguez Arenas, libro VI)
4 Estudios para Violín (Schradiék)
Escalas (Andrés Segovia, tercer curso)

Preparación de un programa de concierto, bajo la dirección del
Maestro Manuel López Ramos.

Presentación de un examen-concierto en público.
(DIPLOMA).

— — * — —

CURSOS OPCIONALES

Historia Comparada de la Música.
Apreciación Musical.

— — * — —

NOTAS

- a) Los cursos de Solfeo, Teoría de la Música y Conjuntos Instrumentales, tendrán una duración de 3 meses, y se desarrollarán en forma de taller.
- b) Los alumnos que estén interesados en profundizar en alguno de los temas de los cursos teóricos, deberán acudir a los maestros correspondientes.
- c) Cada año, el Maestro Manuel López Ramos imparte el tradicional CURSO DE INTERPRETACION, durante el cual se revisan obras de diferentes épocas y en el que participan alumnos de diversos niveles técnicos, a partir del Tercer libro de J. S. Sagreras.

APPENDIX F
DESIGN FOR THE CURRICULUM IN ENGLISH OF
THE ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUÍTARRÍSTICO
BY JUAN REYES U. (Unzueta)
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 1998

DESIGN FOR THE CURRICULUM / ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO

Tuesday, June 16, 1998

Juan Reyes U. (Unzueta)

METHODOLOGY

From among the great number of guitar methods available at the present time, we can select and order progressively a great part of the didactic work of the great masters of the past century as a well-deserved homage to Carulli, Carcassi, Sor, Giuliani, Aguado and Coste, who established the basis for the terrific takeoff that our instrument was to have in the present century; their work served as the foundation for the labor that Tárrega and his disciples, led by Llobet and Pujol, were to realize and the brilliant Andres Segovia based his exceptional technique precisely in their work, for which we consider not only currently in affect but obligated [to study], for the consummate knowledge and understanding of the development of present-day music.

Nevertheless, the order for the apprenticeship of the movements, the systems of regulated and supervised study with the help of the metronome, the obligatory fingering for both hands and the disciplines established by Maestro López Ramos are, without a doubt, what give a focus and completely new perspectives different from any method published so far, because of which, as we said, it becomes essential to reorder the study material according to this concept.

We must not omit the contributions of unquestionable didactic value, such as those by Brouwer, Quine-Dodgson or Kleynjans, clear examples of the evolution of the contemporary guitaristic and musical language; nevertheless, none of them can replace the work of the pioneering masters of the guitar for that would be to deny the very essence of the instrument, but we insist that, since the moment has arrived, they ought to be treated as a complement to acquired technical formation. The method of Julio Sagreras is by itself a sure guide for the study and development of the basic elements, that is why its inclusion in our system is essential; we suggest some modifications in the order of the lessons, especially in what is put in the first book. Maestro Sagreras himself acknowledges in his prologue to the "Second Lessons" the necessity of revising and ordering progressively the studies of the great teachers mentioned as a complement to his method, because of which, we present the following Plan of Study (Curriculum), expressing this idea in specific terms.

All of the authors mentioned made very valuable contributions that should be studied, in their time, by whoever may be seriously interested in the guitar; nevertheless, during the initial stage we cannot dedicate our valuable time entirely to the revision of each one of the existing methods since it is preferable to dedicate ourselves to more advantageous ends, such as the development

of the technical elements. This signifies that at present the problem lies not in which book or method to follow, since each one contains elements important for our formation, but rather in how to study them, to obtain from them the most benefit in this way saving time and effort. Summarizing the experience acquired and scrutinized during more than thirty years of work in the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, we have produced, following the principles set out by Maestro López Ramos, an Anthology of the best studies written for the guitar in the past century, which, by arranging them progressively and specifying the fingerings that must be followed, will serve as the basis for satisfactorily resolving the technical and musical problems that our beautiful instrument poses.

Even if the reason might appear obvious for indicating the fingering of both hands, it is good to remember that we learn correctly the movements of the fingers with a basis in the systematic, conscious, and ordered repetition of them; because of that, all of the fingerings marked must be respected and followed strictly, no matter how exaggerated they may seem. In those cases where none are indicated, the student must analyze most carefully which is the one that is better and annotate it for his study.

FIRST COURSE

- Julio S. Sagreras, The First Lessons for Guitar.
- Fernando Carulli, Guitar Course, Book I.
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Mauro Giuliani, 120 Arpeggios for the Right Hand, (Nos. 1 through 10).
- Course in Solfa.
- Preparation of a 15-minute program with works of the repertoire.

SECOND COURSE

- Julio S. Sagreras, The Second Lessons for Guitar.
- Fernando Carulli, Guitar Course, Book II.
- Leo Brouwer, Estudios Simples (Nos. 1 through 5).
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Mauro Giuliani, 120 Arpeggios for the Right Hand, (Nos. 11 through 50.)
- Course in Music Theory.
- Preparation of a 15-minute program with works of the repertoire.

THIRD COURSE

- Julio S. Sagreras, The Third Lessons for Guitar.
- Anthology of Classical Studies for Guitar, Vol. I (various authors).
- Leo Brouwer, Estudios Simples (Nos. 6 through 10).
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Mauro Giuliani, 120 Arpeggios for the Right Hand, (Nos. 51 through 90).
- Andrés Segovia, Diatonic Major and Minor Scales.
- Course in Basic Harmony(I) applied to the guitar.
- Preparation of a 20-minute program with works of the repertoire.

FOURTH COURSE

- Julio S. Sagreras, The Fourth Lessons for Guitar.
- Anthology of Classical Studies for Guitar, Vol. II (various authors).
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Mauro Giuliani, 120 Arpeggios for the Right Hand, (Nos. 91 through 120).
- Andrés Segovia, Diatonic Major and Minor Scales.
- Course in Harmony (II) applied to the guitar.
- Preparation of a 20-minute program with works of the repertoire.

FIFTH COURSE

- Julio S. Sagreras, The Fifth Lessons for Guitar.
- Anthology of Classical Studies for Guitar, Vol. III (various authors).
- Julio S. Sagreras, Técnica Superior [Advanced Technique], (scales in thirds).
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Andrés Segovia, Diatonic Major and Minor Scales.
- Preparation of a 20-minute program with works of the repertoire.

SIXTH COURSE

- Anthology of Classical Studies for Guitar, Vols. IV and V (various authors).
- Francisco Tárrega, Compositions for Guitar.
- Leo Brouwer, Estudios Simples (Nos. 11 through 20).
- Julio S. Sagreras, Técnica Superior [Advanced Technique], (scales in sixths).
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Andrés Segovia, Diatonic Major and Minor Scales.
- Preparation of a 20-minute program with works of the repertoire.

SEVENTH COURSE

- Anthology of Classical Studies for Guitar, Vol. VI.
- Napolean Coste, 25 Advanced Studies for the Guitar, op. 38.
- Julio S. Sagreras, Técnica Superior (scales in octaves and exercises).
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Andrés Segovia, Diatonic Major and Minor Scales.
- Preparation of a 30-minute program with works of the repertoire.

EIGHTH COURSE

- Julio S. Sagreras, The Sixth Lessons for Guitar.
- Heitor Villa-Lobos, 12 Études.
- Manuel López Ramos, Coordination Exercises.
- Andrés Segovia, Diatonic Major and Minor Scales.
- M. Rodríguez-Arenas, (from, Técnica Superior), "10 Exercises of L. C. Hanon."
- Preparation of a 60-minute program with works of the repertoire.

Julio S. Sagreras, First Lessons for Guitar.

Order of the Lessons:

Revised Order Number = RON / Sagreras Lesson Number = SLN

<u>RON</u>	<u>SLN</u>	<u>RON</u>	<u>SLN</u>	<u>RON</u>	<u>SLN</u>
1.-	44, 45	12.-	65	23.-	75
2.-	46, 47	13.-	59	24.-	84
3.-	48	14.-	61	25.-	83
4.-	49	15.-	52	26.-	86
5.-	50	16.-	76	27.-	85
6.-	51	17.-	68	28.-	80
7.-	53	18.-	81	29.-	82
8.-	54	19.-	72	30.-	77
9.-	55	20.-	70	31.-	78
10.-	62	21.-	74	32.-	79
11.-	67	22.-	69		

Fernando Carulli, Guitar Course, Book I.

Order of the Lessons:

Revised Order Number = RON / Carulli Lesson Number = CLN

<u>RON</u>	<u>CLN</u>	<u>RON</u>	<u>CLN</u>	<u>RON</u>	<u>CLN</u>	<u>RON</u>	<u>CLN</u>
1.-	4	5.-	18	9.-	19	13.-	16
2.-	5	6.-	6	10.-	20	14.-	22
3.-	12	7.-	7	11.-	15	15.-	9
4.-	2	8.-	5	12.-	14	16.-	17

Anthology of CLASSICAL STUDIES FOR GUITAR

BOOK ONE

Matteo Carcassi

(25 Melodic and Progressive Studies, Opus 60, edited by Miguel Llobet. Ricordi Americana S.A.E.C., Cangallo 1558, Buenos Aires, Argentina. BA 10659)

Anthology Number = AN / Llobet Number = LN

<u>AN</u>	<u>LN</u>
1.- Andantino	No. 3, from op. 60 (Ed. M. Llobet)
2.- Allegretto	No. 4 '' ''
3.- Andante Mosso	No. 12 '' ''
4.- Allegro Moderato	No. 19 '' ''
5.- Andante Grazioso	No. 13 '' ''
6.- Allegro Moderato	No. 15 '' ''
7.- Andante	No. 6 '' ''

Fernando Sor

(*20 Studies for Guitar by Fernando Sor, revised, edited, and fingered by Andrés Segovia.* 1945, Edward B. Marks Music Corporation, 136 West 52nd Street, New York, N. Y. 10019.)

Anthology Number = AN / Segovia Number = SN

<u>AN</u>		<u>SN</u>	
8.-	Study in B minor	No. 5	(Ed. A. Segovia)
9.-	' ' in D Major	No. 6	' '

Mauro Giuliani

- 9.- Allegretto, No. 2, from op. 111
- 10.- Allegro
- 11.- Sonatina, op. 71, No 1 Allegretto maestoso,
Minueto, Rondo.
- 12.- Danza del Norte, from Opus 147, No. 10

Fernando Sor

(*30 Minuetos para guitarra, Fernando Sor, Revisión, digitación, y biografía del autor por Domingo Prat.* Ricordi Americana S.A.E.C., Cangallo 1558, Buenos Aires, Argentina. BA 9534)

Anthology Number = AN / Prat Number = PN

<u>AN</u>		<u>PN</u>	
13.-	Minueto in C Major	No. 14	(Ed. D. Prat)
14.-	' ' in G Mayor	No. 1	' '
15.-	' ' in G Major	No. 2	' '
16.-	' ' in G Major	No. 3	' '
17.-	' ' in C Major	No. 11	' '
18.-	' ' in C Major	No. 4	' '
19.-	' ' in D Major	No. 6	' '

Anthology of CLASSICAL STUDIES FOR GUITAR

SECOND BOOK

Fernando Sor

(*20 Studies for the Guitar by Fernando Sor, Segovia, ed.*)

Anthology Number = AN / Segovia Number = SN

<u>AN</u>		<u>SN</u>	
1.-	Study in C Major	No. 2	(Ed. A. Segovia)
2.-	' ' in A Major	No. 3	' '
3.-	' ' in D Major	No. 4	' '
4.-	' ' in A minor	No. 9	' '
5.-	' ' in C Major	No. 1	' '

Matteo Carcassi

(25 Melodic and Progressive Studies, Opus 60, Llobet, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Llobet Number = LN

<u>AN</u>	<u>LN</u>
8. - Allegretto	No. 10, from op. 60 (Ed. M. Llobet)
9. - Agitato	No. 11 '' ''
10.- Moderato	No. 12 '' ''
11.- Allegretto	No. 18 '' ''
12.- Moderato	No. 8 '' ''
13.- Allegretto	No. 9 '' ''
14.- Andantino	No. 24 '' ''

Mauro Giuliani

- 15.- El Clavel, from op. 46 (Ramillete de mis Flores Preferidas)
- 16.- El Lirio '' ('')
- 17.- Andantino, from op. 139, No. 5
- 18.- Rondó in A Major, op. 14, No. 4
- 19.- El Jazmín, from Op. 46 (Ramillete de mis Flores Preferidas)
- 20.- El Mirto '' ('')
- 21.- Sonatina, Op. 71, No.2. Andantino espressivo, Andantino grazioso, Allegretto con brio.

Fernando Sor

(30 Minuetos para guitarra, Fernando Sor, Prat, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Prat Number = PN

<u>AN</u>	<u>PN</u>
22.- Minueto in G minor	No. 8 (Ed. D. Prat)
23.- '' in C Major	No. 14 ''
24.- '' in F Major	No. 15 ''
25.- '' in A Major	No. 29 ''
26.- '' in Bb Major	No. 30 ''

Anthology of CLASSICAL STUDIES FOR GUITAR

THIRD BOOK

Matteo Carcassi

(25 Melodic and Progressive Studies, Opus 60, Llobet, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Llobet Number = LN

<u>AN</u>	<u>LN</u>
1.- Allegro	No. 23, from op. 60 (Ed. M. Llobet)
2.- Allegro	No. 7 '' ''
3.- Moderato espressivo	No. 2 '' ''
4.- Moderato	No. 1 '' ''
5.- Allegro	No. 7 '' ''
6.- Allegro Moderato	No. 14 '' ''

Fernando Sor

(20 Studies for Guitar by Fernando Sor, Segovia, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Segovia Number = SN

<u>AN</u>	<u>SN</u>
7.- Study in D minor	No. 15 (Ed. A. Segovia)
8.- '' in A Major	No. 14 ''
9.- '' in E minor	No. 17 ''
10.- '' in G Major	
11.- '' in E Major	

Mauro Giuliani

- 12.- Allegro, from op. 43, No. 10
13.- El Narciso, from op. 46 (Ramillete de mis Flores Preferidas)
14.- El Pensamiento, '' ''
15.- La Rosa, '' ''
16.- La Violeta, '' ''

Fernando Sor

(30 Minuetos para guitarra, Fernando Sor, Prat, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Prat Number = PN

<u>AN</u>	<u>PN</u>
17.- Minueto in G Major	No. 7 (Ed. D. Prat)
18.- '' in A Major	No. 19 ''
19.- '' in C Major	No. 24 ''
20.- '' in G Major	No. 25 ''
21.- '' in E Major	No. 27 ''
22.- '' in G Major	No. 17 ''
23.- '' in A Major	No. 5 ''
24.- '' in E Major	No. 20 ''

Anthology of CLASSICAL STUDIES FOR GUITAR

FOURTH BOOK

Matteo Carcassi,

(25 Melodic and Progressive Studies, Opus 60, Llobet, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Llobet Number = LN

<u>AN</u>	<u>LN</u>
1.- Moderato	No. 17, from op. 60 (Ed. M. Llobet)
2.- Allegro Brillante	No. 20 '' ''
3.- Andantino	No. 21 '' ''
4.- Allegretto	No. 22 '' ''
5.- Allegro Brillante	No. 25 '' ''

Fernando Sor

(20 Studies for the Guitar by Fernando Sor, Segovia, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Segovia Number = SN

<u>AN</u>	<u>SN</u>
6.- Study in F Major	No. 17 (Ed. A. Segovia)
7.- '' in E Major	No. 11 ''
8.- '' in D minor	No. 8 ''
9.- '' in A Major	No. 10 ''
10.- '' in D minor	No. 13 ''

Mauro Giuliani

11.- Gran Obertura, op. 61

12.- Seis grandes variaciones, op. 112

Fernando Sor

(30 Minuetos para guitarra, Fernando Sor, Prat, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Prat Number = PN

<u>AN</u>	<u>PN</u>
13.- Minueto in F Major	No. 23 (Ed. D. Prat)
14.- '' in F Major	No. 18 ''
15.- '' in C minor	No. 16 ''
16.- '' in A minor	No. 26 ''

Anthology of CLASSICAL STUDIES FOR GUITAR

FIFTH BOOK

Fernando Sor

(20 Studies for the Guitar by Fernando Sor, Segovia, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Segovia Number = SN

<u>AN</u>		<u>SN</u>	
1.-	Study in A Major	No. 12	(Ed. A. Segovia)
2.-	' ' in G Major	No. 16	' '
3.-	' ' in Eb Major	No. 18	' '
4.-	' ' in Bb Major	No. 19	' '
5.-	' ' in C Major	No. 20	' '

Mauro Giuliani

6.- Sonatina, op. 71, No.3, Andantino sostenuto, Tempo di marcia, Scherzo con moto, Finale.

Fernando Sor

(30 Minuetos para guitarra, Fernando Sor, Prat, ed.)

Anthology Number = AN / Prat Number = PN

<u>AN</u>		<u>PN</u>	
7.-	Minueto in Eb Major	No. 12	(Ed. D. Prat)
8.-	' ' in Bb Major	No. 13	' '
9.-	' ' in D Major	No. 20	' '
10.-	' ' in F Major	No. 21	' '
11.-	' ' in F Major	No. 22	' '
10.-	' ' in G Major	No. 9	' '
11.-	"Introduction and Variations for the Guitar on the Favorite Air, 'Oh Cara armonia', from the opera, <u>Il Flauto Magico</u> , by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, op. 9."		

SIXTH BOOK

Dionisio Aguado

1.- 27 Estudios Superiores [Advanced Studies]

DESIGN FOR THE CURRICULUM / ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRIÍSTICO

Tuesday, June 16, 1998

Juan Reyes U. (Unzueta)

APPENDIX G
DESIGN FOR THE CURRICULUM IN SPANISH OF
THE ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO
BY JUAN REYES U. (Unzueta)
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 1998

PROYECTO PARA PLAN DE ESTUDIOS EAG

Tuesday, June 16, 1998

Metodología

De entre la gran cantidad de métodos para guitarra disponibles actualmente, seleccionamos y ordenamos progresivamente gran parte de la obra didáctica de los grandes maestros del siglo pasado, como un merecido homenaje a Carulli, Carcassi, Sor, Giuliani, Aguado y Coste, quienes sentaron las bases para el formidable despegue que habría de tener nuestro instrumento en el presente siglo; su obra sirvió de fundamento a la labor que Tárrega y sus discípulos, encabezados por Llobet y Pujol, habrían de realizar y el genial Andrés Segovia fincó su técnica excepcional precisamente en el trabajo de aquéllos, por lo que los consideramos no solo vigentes sino obligados para el cabal conocimiento y comprensión del desarrollo de la música actual.

Sin embargo, el orden para el aprendizaje de los movimientos, los sistemas de estudio regulados y supervisados con ayuda del metrónomo, la digitación obligada para ambas manos y las disciplinas establecidas por el maestro López Ramos son sin lugar a dudas, lo que dan un enfoque y perspectivas completamente nuevas y diferentes a cualquier método publicado hasta ahora, por lo que resulta indispensable como ya dijimos, la reordenación del material de estudio de acuerdo a este concepto.

No debemos pasar por alto las contribuciones de indudable valor didáctico como son las de Brouwer, Quine-Dodgson o Kleynjans, ejemplos claros de la evolución del lenguaje guitarrístico y musical contemporáneos; no obstante, ninguno de ellos podrá sustituir la obra de los maestros precursores de la guitarra pues sería como negar la esencia misma del instrumento, pero insistimos en que, llegado el momento deberán abordarse como complemento a la formación técnica adquirida. El método de Julio Sagreras es por sí solo una guía segura para el estudio y desarrollo de los elementos básicos, por lo que es obligada su inclusión en nuestro sistema; sugerimos algunas modificaciones en el orden de las lecciones, especialmente en lo que se refiere al primer libro. El mismo maestro Sagreras reconoce en su prólogo a las "Segundas Lecciones" la necesidad de revisar y ordenar progresivamente los estudios de los grandes maestros mencionados como complemento a su método por lo que, concretando esta idea presentamos el siguiente Plan de Estudios.

Todos los autores mencionados hicieron aportaciones muy valiosas que, en su momento debiera estudiar aquél que esté seriamente interesado en la guitarra; sin embargo, durante la etapa inicial no podemos dedicar nuestro valioso tiempo enteramente a la revisión de cada uno de los métodos existentes pues es preferible dedicarnos a fines más provechosos como es el desarrollo de los elementos técnicos.

Esto significa que actualmente el problema no está en que libro o método seguir puesto que cada uno contiene elementos importantes para nuestra formación, sino en cómo estudiarlos para obtener de ellos el mayor provecho economizando así tiempo y esfuerzo. Resumiendo la experiencia adquirida y tamizada durante más de treinta años de labor en el Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, hemos elaborado, siguiendo los principios expuestos por el maestro López Ramos, una Antología de los mejores estudios escritos para la guitarra en el siglo pasado, misma que ordenada progresivamente y precisando las digitaciones que habrán de seguirse, servirá de base para resolver satisfactoriamente los problemas técnicos y musicales que nuestro hermoso instrumento plantea.

Aunque pareciera obvia la razón por la que se indica la digitación de ambas manos, conviene recordar que aprendemos correctamente los movimientos de los dedos con base en la repetición sistemática, consciente y ordenada de éstos, por lo que deberán respetarse y seguirse estrictamente todas las digitaciones marcadas por exageradas que parezcan. En los casos donde no se indique alguna, el estudiante deberá analizar cuidadosamente cual es la que más conviene y anotarla para su estudio.

PRIMER CURSO

- Primeras Lecciones para guitarra, Julio S. Sagreras
- Curso de Guitarra Libro I, Fernando Carulli
- Ejercicios de Coordinación, Manuel López Ramos.
- 120 Arpeggios para la mano derecha (Nos. 1 al 10), Mauro Giuliani.
- Curso de Solfeo.
- Preparación de un programa de 15 min. con obras de repertorio.

SEGUNDO CURSO

- Las Segundas Lecciones para guitarra, Julio S. Sagreras.
- Curso de guitarra Libro II; Fernando Carulli.
- Estudios Simples (1 al 5), Leo Brouwer.
- Ejercicios de Coordinación, Manuel López Ramos.
- 120 Arpeggios para la mano derecha (Nos. 11 al 50), Mauro Giuliani.
- Curso de Teoría de la Música.
- Preparación de un programa de 15 min. con obras de repertorio.

TERCER CURSO

- Las Terceras Lecciones para guitarra, Julio S. Sagreras.
- Antología de Estudios Clásicos para guitarra, Vol. I (varios autores).
- Estudios Simples (Nos. 6 al 10), Leo Brouwer.
- Ejercicios de Coordinación. Manuel López Ramos.
- 120 Arpeggios para la mano derecha (Nos. 51 al 90), Mauro Giuliani.
- Escalas Diatónicas mayores y menores, A. Segovia.
- Curso de Armonía (I) básica aplicada a la guitarra.
- Preparación de un programa de 20 min. con obras de repertorio.

CUARTO CURSO

- Las Cuartas Lecciones para guitarra, Julio S. Sagreras.
- Antología de Estudios Clásicos para guitarra, Vol. II (varios autores).
- 120 Arpeggios para la mano derecha, (Nos. 91 al 120), Mauro Giuliani.
- Ejercicios de Coordinación, Manuel López Ramos.
- Escalas Diatónicas mayores y menores, Andrés Segovia.
- Curso de Armonía (II) aplicada a la guitarra.
- Preparación de un programa de 20 mi. con obras de repertorio.

QUINTO CURSO

- Las Quintas Lecciones para guitarra. Julio S. Sagreras.
- Antología de Estudios Clásicos para guitarra, Vol. III (varios autores).
- Técnica Superior (escalas en terceras), Julio S. Sagreras.
- Ejercicios de Coordinación. Manuel López Ramos.
- Escalas Diatónicas mayores y menores, A. Segovia.
- Preparación de un programa de 20 min. con obras de repertorio.

SEXTO CURSO

- Antología de Estudios Clásicos para guitarra, Vols. IV y V (varios autores).
- Composiciones para guitarra, Francisco Tárrega
- Estudios Simples (Nos. 11 al 20), Leo Brouwer
- Técnica Superior (escalas en sextas), Julio S. Sagreras.
- Ejercicios de Coordinación, Manuel López Ramos.
- Escalas Diatónicas mayores y menores, A. Segovia.
- Preparación de un programa de 20 min. con obras de repertorio.

SEPTIMO CURSO

- Antología de Estudios Clásicos para guitarra, Vol. VI.
- 25 Estudios Superiores para guitarra op. 38, Napoleón Coste.
- Técnica Superior (escalas en octavas y ejercicios), Julio S. Sagreras.
- Ejercicios de Coordinación. Manuel López Ramos.
- Escalas Diatónicas mayores y menores, A. Segovia.
- Preparación de un programa de 30 min. con obras de repertorio.

OCTAVO CURSO

- Las Sextas lecciones para guitarra, Julio S. Sagreras.
- 12 Estudios H. Villa-lobos
- Ejercicios de Coordinación. Manuel López Ramos.
- Escalas Diatónicas mayores y menores, A. Segovia.
- 10 Ejercicios de L:C: Hanon (Técnica Superior, M. Rodríguez Arenas).
- Preparación de un programa de 60 min. con obras de repertorio.

Primeras Lecciones para guitarra, Julio S. Sagreras

Orden de las Lecciones:

1.- 44, 45	12.- 65	23.- 75
2.- 46, 47	13.- 59	24.- 84
3.- 48	14.- 61	25.- 83
4.- 49	15.- 52	26.- 86
5.- 50	16.- 76	27.- 85
6.- 51	17.- 68	28.- 80
7.- 53	18.- 81	29.- 82
8.- 54	19.- 72	30.- 77
9.- 55	20.- 70	31.- 78
10.- 62	21.- 74	32.- 79
11.- 67	22.- 69	

Curso de guitarra, Libro I, Fernando Carulli

Orden de las lecciones:

1.- 4	5.- 18	9.- 19	13.- 16
2.- 5	6.- 6	10.- 20	14.- 22
3.- 12	7.- 7	11.- 15	15.- 9
4.- 2	8.- 5	12.- 14	16.- 17

Antología de ESTUDIOS CLASICOS PARA GUITARRA.

LIBRO PRIMERO

Matteo Carcassi

1.- Andantino	No. 3, del op. 60	(Ed. M. Llobet)
2.- Allegretto	No. 4	()
3.- Andante Mosso	No. 12	()
4.- Allegro Moderato	No. 19	()
5.- Andante Grazioso	No. 13	()
6.- Allegro Moderato	No. 15	()
7.- Andante	No. 6	()

Fernando Sor

8.- en Si menor	No. 5	(Ed. A. Segovia)
9.- en Re mayor	No. 6	()

Mauro Giuliani

9.- Allegretto, No. 2, del op. 111	
10.- Allegro	
11.- Sonatina, op. 71, No 1	Allegretto maestoso, Minueto, Rondo.
12.- Danza del Norte	

Fernando Sor

13.- Minueto	en Do mayor	No. 14	(Ed. D. Prat)
14.-	en Sol mayor	No. 1	()
15.-	en Sol mayor	No. 2	()
16.-	en Sol mayor	No. 3	()
17.-	en Do mayor	No. 11	()
18.-	en Do mayor	No. 4	()
19.-	en Re mayor	No. 6	()

Antología de ESTUDIOS CLASICOS PARA GUITARRA.

LIBRO SEGUNDO

Fernando Sor

1.- en Do mayor	No. 2	(Ed. A. Segovia)
2.- en La mayor	No. 3	()
3.- en Re mayor	No. 4	()
4.- en La menor	No. 9	()
5.- en Do mayor	No. 1	()

Matteo Carcassi

8. - Allegretto	No. 10, del op. 60	(Ed. M. Llobet)
9. - Agitato	No. 11,	()
10.- Moderato	No. 12,	()
11.- Allegretto	No. 18,	()
12.- Moderato	No. 8,	()
13.- Allegretto	No. 9,	()
14.- Andantino	No. 24,	()

Mauro Giuliani

15.- El Clavel, del op. 46	(Ramillete de mis Flores Preferidas)
16.- El Lirio	
17.- Andantino del op. 139,	No. 5
18.- Rondó en La mayor	op. 14, No. 4
19.- El Jazmín del op. 46	(Ramillete de mis Flores Preferidas)
20.- El Mirto	
21.- Sonatina op 71, No.2.	Andantino espressivo, Andantino grazioso, Allegretto con brío

Fernando Sor

22.- Minueto	en Sol menor	No. 8	(Ed. D. Prat)
23.-	en Do mayor	No. 14	()
24.-	en Fa mayor	No. 15	()
25.-	en La mayor	No. 29	()
26.-	en Si bemol mayor	No. 30	()

Antología de ESTUDIOS CLASICOS PARA GUITARRA.

LIBRO TERCERO

Matteo Carcassi

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1.- Allegro | No. 23, del op. 60 | (Ed. M. Llobet) |
| 2.- Allegro | No. 7, | () |
| 3.- Moderato espresivo | No. 2, | () |
| 4.- Moderato | No. 1, | () |
| 5.- Allegro. | No. 7, | () |
| 6.- Allegro Moderato | No. 14, | () |

Fernando Sor

- | | | |
|------------------|--------|------------------|
| 7.- en Re menor | No. 15 | (Ed. A. Segovia) |
| 8.- en La mayor | No. 14 | () |
| 9.- en Mi menor | No. 17 | () |
| 10- en Sol mayor | | |
| 11- en Mi mayor | | |

Mauro Giuliani

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 12.- Allegro, del op. 43, No. 10 | | |
| 13.- El Narciso, del op. 46 | (Ramillete de mis Flores Preferidas) | |
| 14.- El Pensamiento | | |
| 15.- La Rosa | | |
| 16.- La Violeta | | |

Fernando Sor

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|---------------|
| 17.- Minueto en Sol mayor | No. 7 | (Ed. D. Prat) |
| 18.- en La mayor | No. 19 | () |
| 19.- en Do mayor | No. 24 | () |
| 20.- en Sol mayor | No. 25 | () |
| 21.- en Mi mayor | No. 27 | () |
| 22.- en Sol mayor | No. 17 | () |
| 23.- en La mayor | No. 5 | () |
| 24.- en Mi mayor | No. 20 | () |

Antología de ESTUDIOS CLASICOS PARA GUITARRA.

LIBRO CUARTO

Matteo Carcassi

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1.- Moderato | No. 17, del op. 60 | (Ed. M. Llobet) |
| 2.- Allegro Brillante | No. 20, | () |
| 3.- Andantino | No. 21, | () |
| 4.- Allegretto | No. 22, | () |
| 5.- Allegro Brillante | No. 25, | () |

APPENDIX H
CURRICULUM VITAE, PROFESSIONAL
ACTIVITIES, HONORS, AND PRESS
MATERIALS OF LÓPEZ RAMOS

CURRICULUM VITAE

MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1929.

Member of a family of Artists, who traveled and performed music through all of Latin America.

Began his musical and guitaristic studies at twelve years of age, in the Michelone Musical Institute of Buenos Aires, whose director, Miguel Michelone, was his guitar teacher.

In 1947, López Ramos graduated with the highest grades, and in 1948 won the Primer Premio (First Prize) awarded by the Asociación Argentina de Música de Cámara (Argentine Chamber Music Association), as the best instrumentalist of the year.

Starting in 1948, he began his international concert career.

COUNTRIES WHERE LÓPEZ RAMOS HAS PERFORMED

ARGENTINA *

BRAZIL *

URUGUAY

GUATEMALA

SAN SALVADOR

PANAMA

COLOMBIA

CUBA

MEXICO *

UNITED STATES *

CANADA

ITALY *

FRANCE *

GERMANY

ENGLAND

HOLLAND

GREECE *

SPAIN *

SWITZERLAND *

YUGOSLAVIA

POLAND *

SOVIET UNION *

AUSTRALIA *

* Indicates countries where he has toured.

In 1969, the Unión Mexicana de Cronistas de Teatro y Música (Mexican Union of Theatre and Music Columnists) awarded López Ramos a Diploma for his important and well-conceived performance as an eminent guitarist and pedagogue.

In 1971, the Orquesta de Cámara de la Ciudad de México (Mexico City Chamber Orchestra) awarded him a Diploma of Honor for his outstanding pedagogical work for the good of the guitar and of music in México.

In 1978, EMI CAPITOL DE MEXICO (EMI CAPITOL OF MEXICO) awarded him a Testimonio de Reconocimiento (Affidavit of Recognition) for his brilliant supervision in the recording of the commemorative series on the 30th anniversary of the death of Manuel M. Ponce.

MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS HAS PERFORMED AS SOLOIST WITH THE

FOLLOWING ORCHESTRAS

ORQUESTA DE RADIO DEL ESTADO (Buenos Aires)
Bruno Bandini, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA JUVENIL (Buenos Aires)
Luis Gianneo, Director.

ORQUESTA DE CAMARA DE LA PLATA (Argentina)
Roberto Ruiz, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DE GUATEMALA.
Maestro Raúl Gómez, Director.

ORQUESTA DE LA U.N.A.M. [Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México]. Kurt Redel; Icilio Bredo; and, Eduardo Mata, Directors.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DEL ESTADO DE MEXICO. Enrique Bátiz, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DE JALAPA (México)
Luis Ximénez Caballero; and Francisco Savín, Directors.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DE GUANAJUATO (México)
José Rodríguez Frausto, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DEL NOROESTE (México)
Luis Ximénez Caballero, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICO DE GUADALAJARA (México)
René Klopfenstein, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DE DURANGO (México)
Maestro Alfredo González, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA DE MONTERREY (México)
Maestro Héctor Montford, Director.

ORQUESTA DE CAMARA DE LA CIUDAD DE MEXICO.
Bernal Matus, Director.

ORQUESTA CLASICA DE MEXICO. Carlos Esteva, Director.

ORQUESTA SINFONICA NACIONAL (México)
Maestro Leonard Slatkin, Director.

PHOENIX SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (U.S.A.) Phillip Spurgeon,
Director.

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Chabot College, Hayward, California,
U.S.A.) Rudolph Foglia, Director.

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY - CIVIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
(U.S.A.) Edward Szabo, Director.

FORT COLLINS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Colorado, U.S.A.)
Wilfred Schwartz, Director.

MONTEREY COUNTY SYMPHONY (Calif., U.S.A.) Haymo Taeuber,
Director.

THE UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Wyoming, U.S.A.)
David Tomatz, Director.

BOISE PHILHARMONIC (Idaho, U.S.A.) Mathys Abas, Director.

THUNDER BAY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Canada) Manuel Suárez,
Director.

PAŃSTWONA FILHARMONIA IM. M. KARLOWICZA (W. Szczecin,
Poland) Stefan Marczyk, Director.

MASTER CLASSES GIVEN

BUENOS AIRES (Asociación Guitarrística)

ESCUELA DE MUSICA DE LA U. N. A. M. [UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL
AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO]

CONSERVATORIO DE GUATEMALA (Guatemala)

SAN FRANCISCO (sponsored by the University of Santa Clara,
California, U.S.A.)

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A.)

UNIVERSITY OF SANTA CLARA (California, U.S.A.)

SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE (California, U.S.A.)

SPRING HILL COLLEGE (Mobile, Alabama, U.S.A.)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT RIVERSIDE (California, U.S.A.)

ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY (Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.)

EASTERN UNIVERSITY (Ipsilanti, Michigan, U.S.A.)

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN (Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.)

Manuel López Ramos is Director of the Estudio de Arte
Guitarrístico, an institution founded in the year 1962, in
México City.

Some of the great guitarists trained by Maestro López Ramos:
Alfonso Moreno; Mario Beltrán del Rio; Maricarmen Costero;
Jesús Ruíz; Enrique Velasco; Cecilia López;
Minerva Garibay; Leticia Alba; Oscar Solís;

- SONATA MEXICANA.....Manuel M. Ponce
 (Revision and fingerings by Manuel López Ramos)
- SUITE ANTIGUA.....Manuel M. Ponce
 (Revision and fingerings by Manuel López Ramos)
- SONATA FOR GUITAR AND HARPSICHORD.....Manuel M. Ponce
 (Revision and fingerings by Manuel López Ramos)
 Edition, Peer International Corporation, U.S.A.

WORKS FOR GUITAR DEDICATED TO
 MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS

Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario. "Estudio", per chitarra, sul
 nome di Manuel López Ramos. (GREETING CARDS - Op. 170,
 no. 42.)

Rodrigo, Joaquín. "Entre Olivares", from "POR LOS CAMPOS DE
 ESPAÑA."

ORIGINAL WORKS OUTSIDE OF MUSIC

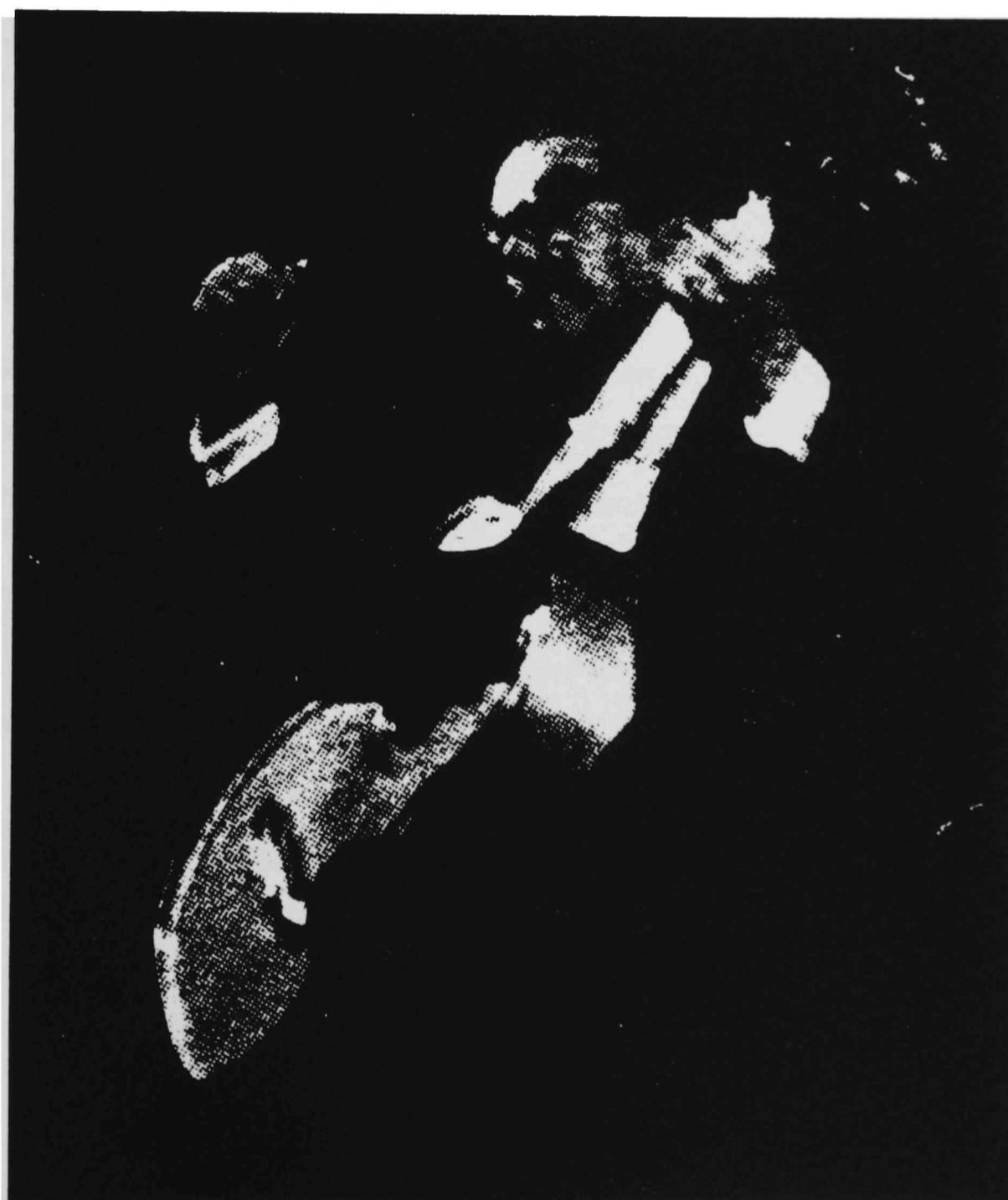
As a writer and script-writer for television, he
 enjoyed an impressive national success with the broadcast of
 the series, *Nadie es Perfecto* [No One Is Perfect], produced
 for the Cadena Televisa de México in 1991 and broadcast by
 the network to the largest audience in the country.
 Furthermore, he has a series of humorous cartoon-strips
 under the title of *Kiki Aguacate* (Hank Avocado).¹

In 1995 he published *Cuentos de Vida, Amor y Muerte*
 (Stories of Life, Love and Death). American International
 Publishers; ISBN:1-57468-010-2

The following four pages contain documentation of
 promotional materials taken from a brochure.

Manuel López Ramos

"This musician is of the race of the great".
MICHEL LOUVET, PARIS



The Argentine classical guitar player Manuel Lopez Ramos, residing in México City studied with the most famous teacher of his native Country, Miguel Michelone, whose didactical work continues with such success that more than 10 of Lopez Ramos' students had obtained international awards. Lopez Ramos has given master classes in the University of Michigan, UCLA, Eastern Michigan University, the National University of Mexico, University of Arizona, and other universities and colleges through out the USA.

Lopez Ramos keeps performing recital or concerts with orchestra in the best concert halls all around the world. During his outstanding career he has left many recordings with RCA France, where he recorded with Robert Veyron-Lacroix and with the "Quartet Parrenin", as well as recordings with Boston records in the U.S.A., and Emi-Capitol and Luzan Records in Mexico.

Segovia created a new place for the guitar in the world, which Lopez Ramos continues with exceptional talent, great dedication and love. Lopez Ramos has taken a first lead among the best guitar players in the world today.

"On behalf of the people and the state of Louisiana, the state governor Edwin E. Edwards gives especial recognition to Mr. Manuel Lopez Ramos and expresses him how proud the state feels to give him this prize that calls on the international promotion he has given to the guitar".

LOUISIANA STATE

"For his important performance as an eminent guitarist and for his 26 years of teaching labor".

UNION MEXICANA DE CRONISTAS DE TEATRO Y MUSICA

"We thank Mr. Lopez Ramos for his outstanding teaching labor".

ORQUESTA DE CAMARA DE MEXICO

"On the occasion of a tribute to Andres Segovia, the University of Veracruz expresses its recognition to Manuel Lopez Ramos for founding in him the successor of famous Segovia's guitaristic school, demonstrating it both in teaching and in concert performances".

UNIVERSITY OF VERACRUZ

"A recognition to Lopez Ramos for his important participation in this festival".

FESTIVAL CERVANTINO

BOSTON RECORDS B-216 U.S.A.

RCA- 76515 FRANCE

RCA- 76516 FRANCE

RCA- 86025 FRANCE

RCA- 430197 FRANCE

RCA- 540051 FRANCE

RCA-LM 2717 U.S.A.

RCA-VISI367 U.S.A.

ANGEL-SAM 35024

ANGEL-ASM 77039

ANGEL-SAM 35077

"His interpretations were of the highest quality for their technical and expressive contents".

PAUL HUME, WASHINGTON POST

At its best, as in a fluent superbly poetic traversal of the prelude, Mr. Ramos' performance did transform Bach's music in unexpected ways"

JOSEPH HOROWITZ, NEW YORK TIMES

"At the concert in the Tschaikowsky hall, Lopez Ramos demonstrated that he is a really distinguished artist, the audience too found him to be an excellent musician".

SOVIETSKAYA CULTURA, MOSCOW

"Superb, absolute knowledge of styles and technique, phenomenal interpretation..."

SLOWO POLSKIE, POLAND

"We could easily think that Lopez Ramos was Segovia's pupil for he follows his same steps when playing Bach's Chaconne, and Castelnuovo Tedesco's sonata to Boccherini. Lopez Ramos has succeeded, demonstrating therefore his magnitude as an artist".

MAURICE IMBERT, CETTE SEMAINE, PARIS

"We admired his profundity in the complexities of Bach's Chaconne".

DALLY TELEGRAPH AND MORNING POST, LONDON

"The concert-giver showed himself to be a virtuoso of high quality. He has sensibility and interpretative imagination, and he has a skill that permits him to call out all variety of tones which the guitar is capable".

TELEGRAAF, AMSTERDAM

"The masterpieces of Bach and Scarlatti were played with such an intensity that we owe high respect to the artist."

NEVE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG, ZURICH

"A complete artist with a magnificent technique, of profound musical sensitivity and with a rare interpretative equilibrium".

L'ITALIA, MILAN

"In his concert at the "Communita delle Arti", Lopez Ramos demonstrated that he is really a great artist".

LA GIUSTIZIA, ROME

"Manuel Lopez Ramos proved to be an expressive and mature guitarist who knows how to make the best of his instrument. The seriousness of his work reveals not only his great knowledge but the ability he has to transmit deeply to the people what he's playing".

LA PRENSA, BUENOS AIRES

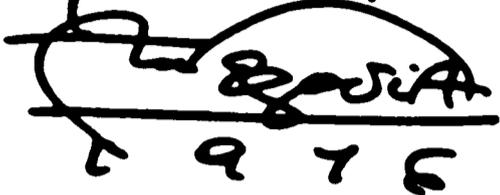
"The greatest revelation among guitarist of the present time".

O DIA, RIO DE JANEIRO

"Manuel Lopez Ramos is a master in all the extended of the word. His teaching labor has influenced many people to the art of playing this musical instrument, but this has not kept him from being one of the best in his field. His interpretations were remarkable".

BARROS SIERRA, EXCELSIOR, MEXICO CITY

Manuel López Ramos, sirve
a la guitarra con talento y amor.



1976

"Manuel Lopez Ramos caters to the guitar with talent and love".
ANDRES SEGOVIA

"This guitarrist seems to me to have a class and interpretation which are very personal and which no one would think to compare with interpretation of his predecessors".
HENRYK SZERYNG

"López Ramos is among the best guitar players in the world that have enheritaged the best spanish tradition, and he's remarked for his clear and passionate interpretations".
JOAQUIN RODRIGO

"Apart from Segovia, I recognize only Mr. Ramos as an artist who knows how to make so noble an instrument of the guitar. An artist such as he makes of his instrument what Landowska made of the clavichord. I shall never forget the impression which he made upon me the first time I heard him".
IGOR MARKEVITCH

Represented by:
Organización Musical P.G.
Federico Del Real
Ernesto Elorduy No. 96
01020 México, D.F.
MEXICO

Notes

¹Translation of excerpt from back cover of Cuentos de Vida, Amor, y Muerte, by Manuel López Ramos, translation by this author, Appendix H, 230.

APPENDIX I
ARTICLE FROM GEORGE CLINTON'S
GUITAR INTERNATIONAL APRIL,
1989, MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS '
"MY RIGHT HAND TECHNIQUE"



MY RIGHT HAND TECHNIQUE

by Manuel Lopez Ramos

translated by Patrick Read

"The masterpieces of Bach and Scarlatti were played with such an intensity that we owe high respect to the artist." **Neve Zuercher Zeitung, Zurich.**

"Superb, absolute knowledge of styles and technique, phenomenal interpretation" **Slowo Polskie, Poland.**

"An expressive and mature guitarist. The seriousness of his work not only reveals his great knowledge but the ability he has to transmit deeply what he is playing" **La Prensa, Buenos Aires.**

"We admired his profundity in the complexities of Bach's Chaconne" **The Daily Telegraph, London.**

"His interpretations were of the highest quality for their technical and expressive content" **Washington Post.**

"Lopez Ramos demonstrated that he is really a great artist" **La Giustizia, Rome.**

"Manuel Lopez Ramos is a master in all the extension of the world. His teaching labour has influenced many people to the art of playing this musical instrument, but this has not kept him from being one of the best in his field. His interpretations were remarkable" **Excelsior, Mexico City.**

"On the occasion of a tribute to Andres Segovia, the University of Veracruz expresses its recognition to Manuel Lopez Ramos for founding in him the successor of famous Segovia's guitaristic school, demonstrating it both in teaching and in concert performances" **University of Veracruz.**

With such universal plaudits it seems inconceivable that the artist could at one time have been critically appraised by some pundits because of his right hand technique — it just didn't look right. But this was in an era when how

things looked was as important as how they sounded; when a student with an inflexible thumb, wanting to produce a soft sounding chord, couldn't be seen to sweep the ball of the thumb across the strings with hand flat out, fingers extended to avoid the strings. Nowadays notions of sound technique begin with the ear and at the point of contact with the string. Also Lopez Ramos had the misfortune to have some rigid adherents who couldn't do with their right hand what the master could do with his.

I still recall his recital at the Wigmore Hall in 1961 (regrettably his only visit — not least for the first hearing of Ponce's beautiful *Serenata Mexicana*). Some time ago I mentioned to Lopez Ramos that his right hand was controversial and it could be a good idea for him to say something. He agreed and said that he would think seriously about it and send me something when he had a call in his very busy professional life. Two years later he has kept his promise.

George Clinton

Mr. George Clinton has asked me to write an article concerning the method of teaching the classical guitar, especially as it relates to the right hand.

According to the Editor of *Guitar International*, there exists a controversy over the veracity, or lack thereof, of my concepts. I am not sure that in one article I can offer absolute clarity in this matter, although I may be able to clear up a few points which have confused my critics or which they simply do not understand.

This article in no way has as its purpose to stir up a polemic. I do not have all the answers. However, as I set forth the principles which guide my system, those who are not in agreement with them should feel free to express their differences. I am not sure, though, that I would wish to debate them. I repeat, I will not enter into a discussion over this matter since it tends to lead to further confusion which only serves those on the other side of the question.

I began to teach the guitar over twenty-six years ago and I believe that I have sufficient experience upon which to base a school of thought, or at least its general principles. Some wonderful guitarists have developed at my hands—almost all of them winners of international competitions. More important is that in each case I myself have placed their hands on the guitar from the very outset. By this I mean that these guitarists did not come to me with an already developed guitar mechanism which I merely had to perfect (although I have done that too in a myriad of master classes).

I believe that confusion exists with respect to the means that I employ to reach a goal, which, simply stated, is an *expressive technique*.

By an expressive technique, I mean a clear, precise, quick and brilliant mechanism tied to expressive elements such as the production of the physical beauty of sound (a Segovian concept), the ability to bring out the different sonorous planes with authority (using the rest stroke), and the mastery of the dynamic range in all of its intensities (from *pp* to *ff*). All of this is tied to variety of timbres which our beautiful instrument offers us to enrich its sonorous and interpretive beauty.

I maintain that our instrument should not be played with the intention of producing weak sounds, pure as these sounds may be, using the nail alone, which limits the dynamic range and which has, as a consequence, a musical monotony without ever arriving at the boldness and the contrasts which the music often requires.

The right hand basically produces the sound on the guitar. I believe that the initial learning process should be based on developing a mechanism and an expressive technique which will lead the guitarist to the artistic spheres which his or her soul commands.

I have the impression that some teachers and guitarists have heard a little about my ideas but do not understand them in a comprehensive way. They believe that I insist that the students play with a rigid right hand which is muscularly tense. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Having met many teachers and having asked about their "schools of thought", I have come to the conclusion that generally they correct a right hand which comes to them with a position for strumming the accompaniment to popular music and occasionally playing a melodic line. The corrections they make are relative and half-hearted. Perhaps the natural facility of the student is what leads him to play well, although he will certainly have to face future technical problems connected with playing expressively and artistically.

I have never received a concrete answer from my critics with respect to their concept of a formal "school" in the way that we think of a violin school or a piano school.

In 1962, I undertook to form a school of thought without the pretension of creating anything original or different, following the generally ambiguous ideas concerning certain principles developed by Tárrega, Pujol, Sagreras, Segovia, etc. I did attempt to establish a solid system which included their main points. I felt it necessary to structure a right hand from which would come the muscular movements necessary for the production of the different sounds and exercising an

individual and internal control of each movement, not only in the execution of the sound but also the movement prior to the sound.

The idea of playing with short movements, as required by most instruments to achieve virtuosity, was based on the idea of utilizing, as a first step, only the first two joints, the distal interphalangeal and the proximal interphalangeal, of the right-hand fingers (*a, m, i*). Once this short movement was learned, the movement of the knuckle joint (metacarpophalangeal) would be added to accomplish a natural movement of the fingers with a relative relaxation.

Logically, to achieve domination over the action of the fingers, it occurred to me that the muscles would have to be semi rigid and the hand would look somewhat tight in order to control the individual movement of the fingers plucking the strings—with the subsequent braking of that movement—which the sound production required when using the free stroke.

Once the control of the muscular movements has been assimilated, with the independent force of each finger executing the pressure and release which each sound requires, and paying attention to the angle of attack with respect to the strings for the production of diverse qualities of sound, the muscular tension of the right hand will be released. This will give the sensation of a hand in relaxation, but at the same time the fingers will have the force necessary to create the dynamic intensity with which the guitar should be played. To play without that intensity would be to convert our instrument into a "music box" which would cause a strain on the listeners' ears, leaving them exhausted at the end of the recital and subsequently driving them away from the concert halls for lack of dynamic range and contrasts of sounds.

With this rational process, we end up with a student who has expressive technical elements in a state of development which, when tied to a methodology and a progression of studies, will give us a whole technique which can be placed at the service of the art of interpretation and which will move the audiences with the very qualities which make the guitar the most expressive of instruments.

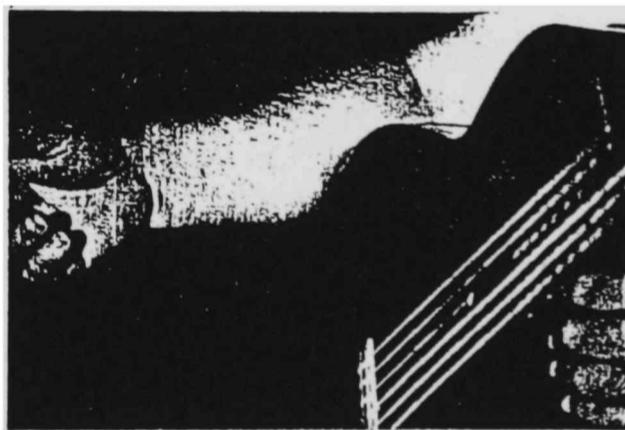


FIGURE #1

Resting place of the forearm on the front top bout of the guitar (exact placement depends upon the anatomical measurement of the forearm, hand and fingers of each student). Observe that the angle of the forearm will determine the correct position of the fingers. (see Figure #7).

FIGURE #2

The right hand shall be placed above the strings so that the *i* finger is to the right side of the soundhole (as seen from the perspective of the student) for the purpose of



developing a "normal" sound which falls between "dolce" and "metalico"

The right hand is perpendicular to the strings. This position will make it somewhat difficult to pluck the strings using the tip of the finger and the nail. It is therefore recommended that the nails be kept very short in the beginning.



FIGURE #3

Preparing the hand away from the strings. The teacher forms the position of the hand.

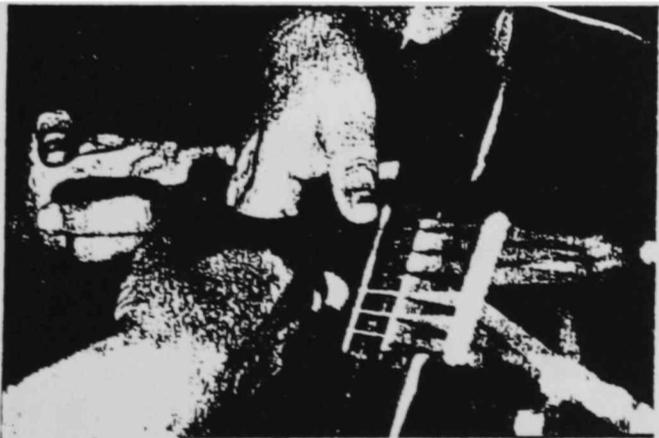


FIGURE #4

The back of the hand should be somewhat flat, more convex than concave, to assign most of the finger movement to the distal interphalangeal and the proximal interphalangeal joints. This position allows the student to control the workings of the fingers and to conserve movement. Observe that the upper part of the thumb is positioned behind the hand with only the tip of the thumb peeking out.

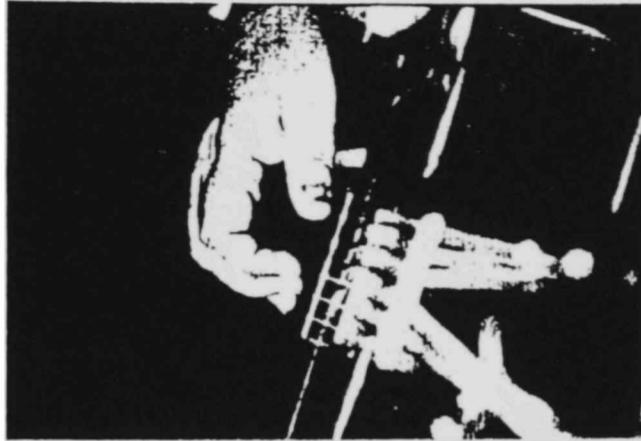


FIGURE #5

The hand has been formed away from the strings. Now the fingers are placed on their respective strings (*i* on the 3rd string; *m* on the 2nd string; *a* on the 1st string; *p* on the 5th or 6th string, depending on the size of the hand) which become the reference strings for those fingers.

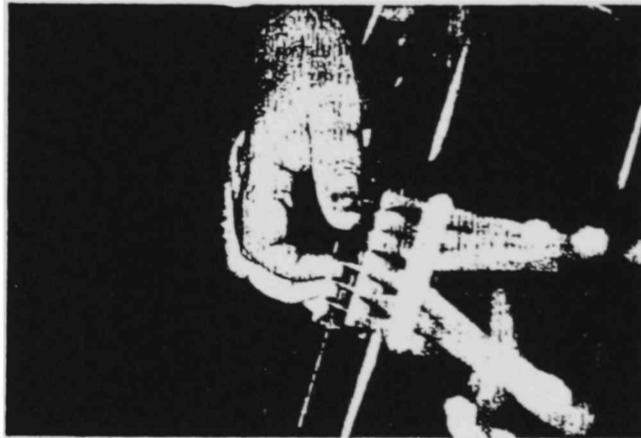


FIGURE #6

Arpeggio position with the correct angles of the hand in relation to the strings.



FIGURE #7

Make an imaginary perpendicular line with a pencil from the knuckle of the *m* finger to the point of contact at the 2nd string. This will allow for a reference point for the thumb placed on the 5th or 6th string.

I insist that in the beginning the fingers should have definite reference points (contact with the strings) in order to avoid modifying the angles of the hand and fingers in relation to the strings and also so that the finger tips can feel the strings.

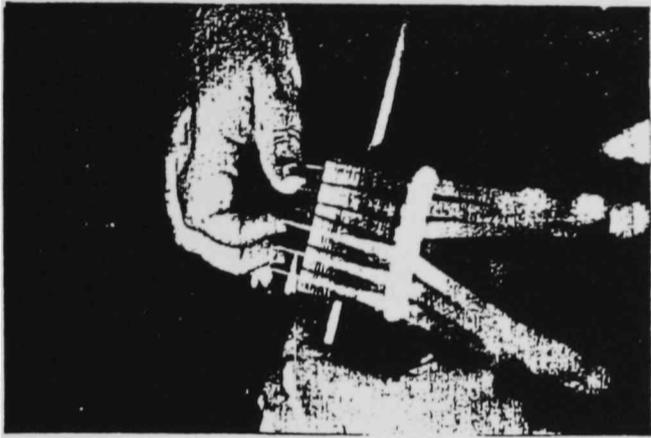


FIGURE #8

The *i* finger pulls the string upward toward the palm of the hand (free stroke) without changing the position of the hand nor the angles of the other fingers.

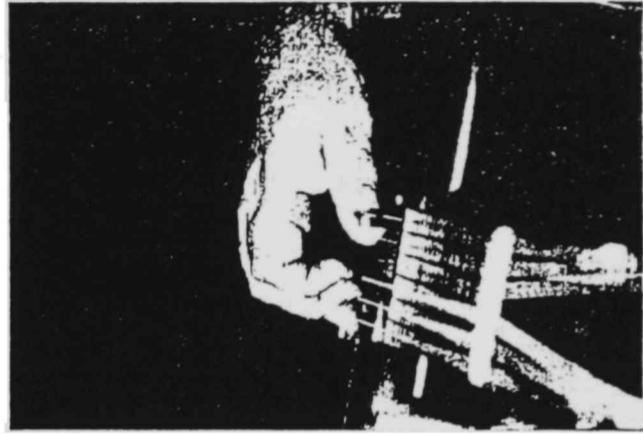


FIGURE #11

The *m* finger executes a free stroke on the corresponding 2nd string and terminates the stroke between the 2nd and 3rd strings.

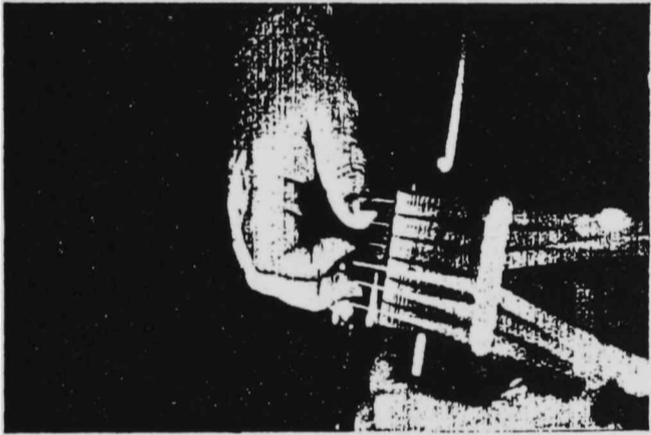


FIGURE #9

The *i* finger produces its first sound and the stroke should end between 3rd and 4th strings. The finger should be held static between these two strings.

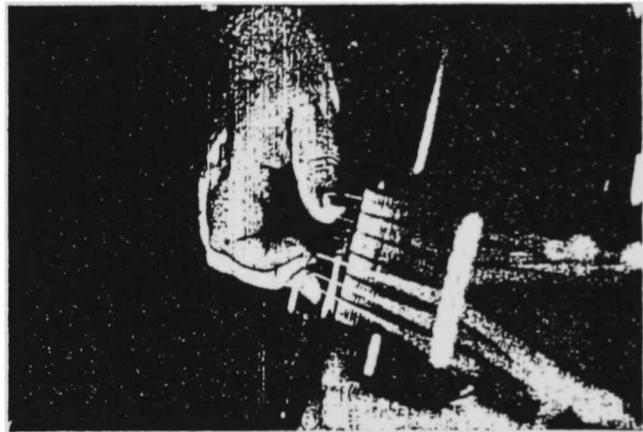


FIGURE #12

Given the position of the hand and the established angles in reference to the strings, it is well to use the rest stroke ("apoyando") with the *a* finger—the pressure is upward and inward toward the soundhole at an oblique angle.

In the first arpeggio lessons the rest stroke of the *a* finger will be useful since the melody is generally assigned to that finger.

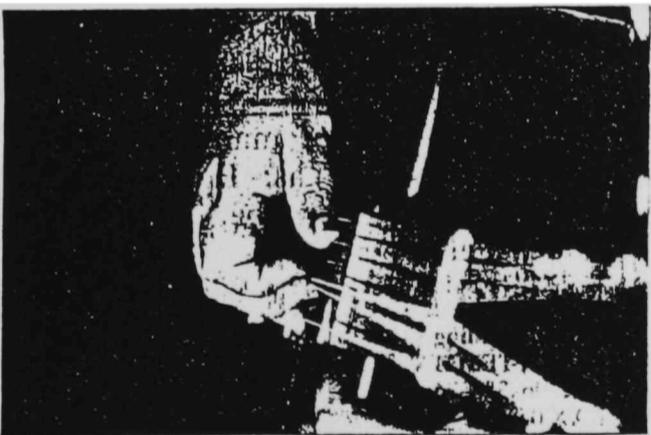


FIGURE #10

With the *i* finger held in a static position between the 3rd and 4th strings, the *m* finger begins its stroke in a manner similar to the *i* finger.

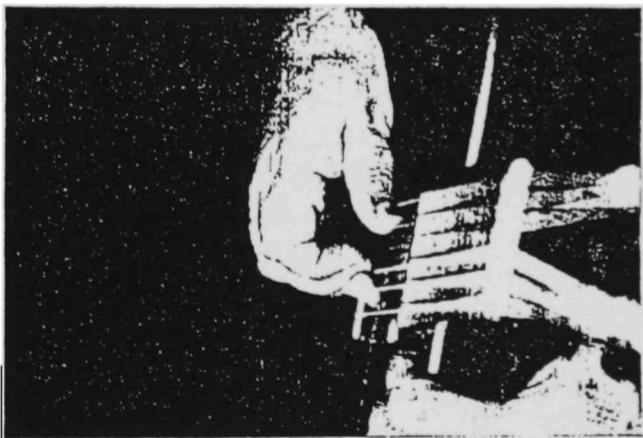


FIGURE #13

The stroke has been completed with the *a* finger and its movement is stopped by the 2nd string.

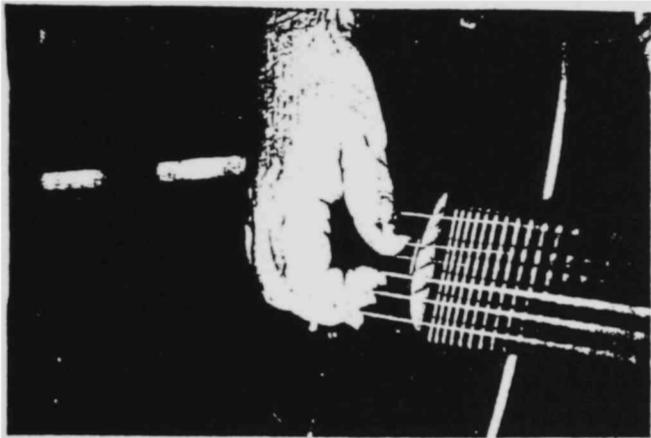


FIGURE #14

The thumb should play with the force down and outward at the same time. At first one should work with the pad of the thumb only. Later, with positional changes of the thumb, one can play with the pad or the nail, with rest stroke or without, according to the interpretive requirements.

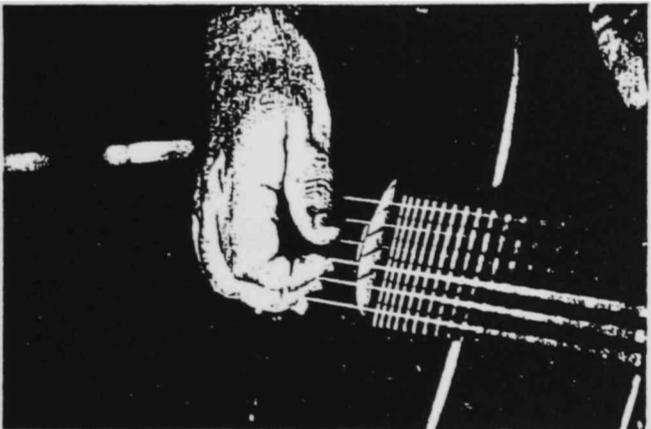


FIGURE #15

The thumb has to play the note and should not finish the stroke too far from the strings.

Observe that the original position of the hand has not undergone any changes. We now have all the elements required to begin the study of simple arpeggios with the correct movements of the *i*, *m*, *a*, and *p*. In the beginning it is a good idea to practise on the open strings followed by simple melodic arpeggio studies. The student should always practise very slowly.

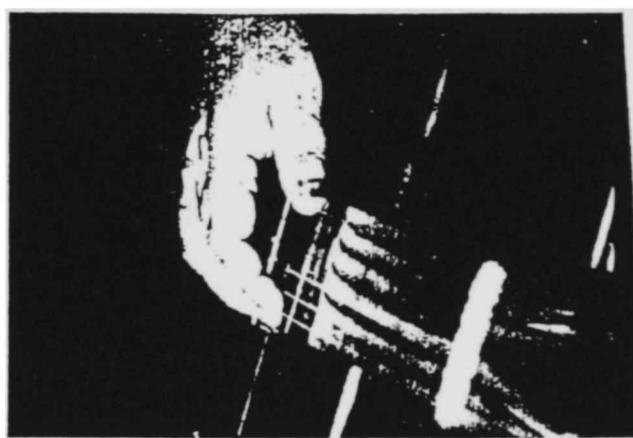


FIGURE #16

Here is the position and angle required to begin to practise the rest stroke with all the fingers. The *a* finger already knows this stroke. Now, the other fingers will learn the rest strokes (always with a force upward and inward at an oblique angle). The fingers should always touch the strings first with the pad of the tip of the finger so that the guitarist can control the dynamics and the quality of the sound.

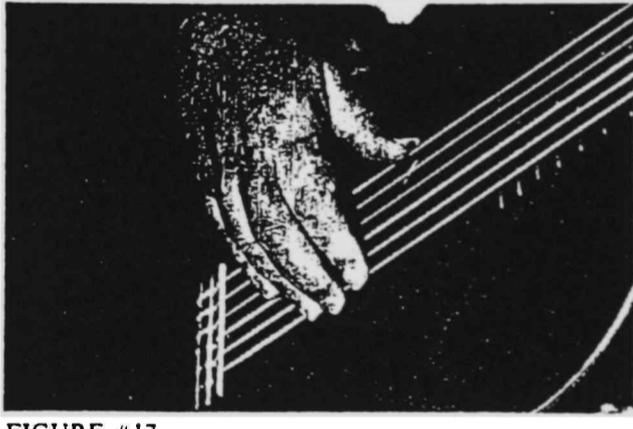


FIGURE #17

This last photograph shows again the angle in relation to the strings of the fingers in position to play the rest stroke. I suggest that the student works only with the arpeggios (with the *a* finger supported) for a reasonable time to establish firmly the correct position of the hand and fingers. Afterwards, one can proceed with the minimal position modifications required to play the rest stroke and combine arpeggios, chords (using the same arpeggio position but with the *a* finger using a free stroke), and the scales or melodic lines ●

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APPENDIX J

MODIFIED COPY TO FIT DISSERTATION FORMAT
OF PAGES CONSTITUTING WEB-SITE OF THE
ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO



Welcome

to the web site of The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico which can be translated as The Academy of the Art of Guitar Playing. Following the basic principles created and developed by Maestro Manuel Lopez Ramos, the brilliant Argentine performer and pedagogue, young artists have graduated from this Academy and won first prizes and honors in many prestigious international guitar competitions in Mexico, France, Brazil, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Poland, and Italy. Many of these guitarists have gone on to have important careers as international touring artists.

Manuel López Ramos

Alfonso Moreno

Alfredo Sánchez

Cuarteto de Guitarras
Manuel M. Ponce

Dúo Costero-Beltrán

Dúo Pavón Reyes

Enrique Velasco

Jesús Ruiz

Rafael Jiménez

Mario Beltrán del Río

Trío Tansman

Víctor Saenger

Graduated Guitarists at the
EAG

Teacher Staff at the EAG

Study Plans

Links to Other Pages

The Academy has produced several generations of internationally recognized teachers under the expert hand of Maestro Lopez Ramos. They continue to work both in Mexico and throughout the world in the task of preserving and promoting this unique and well proven system for performing on and learning the classical guitar which has been confirmed and enhanced by the success of their own experience.

Thousands of amateur guitar lovers and players have found in this approach the ideal vehicle to express their artistic and musical aspirations.

Learning from the great classical guitar masters' methods and repertoire is the basis and foundation for true artistic development at the Academy. Sagraeras, Carulli, Giuliani, Coste, Carcassi, Aguado and Sor are among those covered in the curriculum of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. They form the core of serious studies that any aspiring professional guitarist must work at to conquer the technical difficulties of the instrument. Music by Bach, Ponce, Rodrigo, Tansman, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and Villa Lobos are among the repertoire that any serious guitarist must know.

The Certificate issued by our Academy recognizes the highest level of discipline, dedication, and love that students must sustain for many years in order to begin to achieve the artistic and technical mastery of the guitar.

The Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico was founded in 1961 in Mexico City by Maestro Manuel Lopez Ramos and has been based there ever since.

In this web site we cannot expect to show you details of almost 40 years of continued work, but we wish at least to present a summary of four generations of artists who have graduated from our School in a very sincere tribute.

Versión en Español

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"This musician belongs to the race of the great artists"

Michel Loubet, París

"Manuel López Ramos serves the guitar with love and talent"

Andrés Segovia

Manuel López Ramos

Master of several generations of outstanding guitarists, and also the owner of a refined musicality and mastery in the virtuous aspect of the art -all together with a deep knowledge of diverse styles- Manuel López Ramos becomes a milestone in classical guitar history.

Maestro López Ramos was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1929. He studied with the most famous teacher in his country: Miguel Michelone. In 1948 he was distinguished with the Price granted by the Asociación de Música de Cámara Argentina and since then he has been traveling, constantly, offering presentations and collecting successes in the most important world's concert halls.

Manuel López
Ramos

He has performed as soloist with countless orchestras and conductors. He gave master classes and lessons at the University of Arizona, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, the University of Santa Clara, California, San Jose State College, Spring Hill College in Alabama, the University of Eastern Michigan and in San Francisco, California. His recordings for Boston Records, Emi Capitol, RCA Victor of France, available and distributed in Mexico and Latin America, Europe and the United States are a very nice testimony of why public and critics unanimously consider this great artist as a legitime inheritor of the most noble Spanish traditions. In 1960 the Unión Mexicana de Cronistas de Teatro y Música awarded him his annual price.

In 1961 he founded the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in Mexico City, an international recognized and prestigious school, in which

he acts as the Director since. From this school the most prominent guitarists from the new generations had been, in some or all levels, product of his wise and patient devotion as a tutor, sharing without limits his huge experience and knowledge.

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Alfonso Moreno

Born in Aguascalientes, Mexico. He started his musical instruction at age 8, in the Conservatorio de la Universidad Veracruzana, in Jalapa City, where he studied violin and composition.

In 1963, he joined the Orquesta Sinfónica de Jalapa as violinist.

In 1964, he started his classical guitar studies at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, in Mexico City, having Manuel López Ramos as his only teacher.

In 1968, he won the First Price at the 10th International Guitar Contest, sponsored by the O.R.T.F. in Paris, France.

Since then, he has given more than 3,000 concerts in the most

prestigious and important concert halls around the world.

In 1994, he made a tour in Japan with 25 presentations in October and November of that year.

Nowadays he is recognized by the international critics as one of the best guitarists alive today in the world.

Since 1989 plays as soloist with The Atlanta Virtuosi, besides being soloist guest with almost all main Orchestras in the world. He has directed several music ensembles. Now he is expanding his musical curriculum as Conductor of the Orquesta de Guitarras de Xalapa.

**Alfonso
Moreno**

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Alfredo Sánchez

Born in Mexico City. He started his musical studies at the Escuela Nacional de Música. In 1981 he graduated at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, being his teacher maestro Manuel López Ramos.

He has participated in Master Classes with Andrés Segovia, David Russell, Robert Guthrie, Leo Brouwer, Iván Rijos, Abel Carlevaro, José Luis Rodrigo and Wolfgang Lendi just to name a few.

He also has participated in several national and international contests as the Concurso Internacional de la Casa de España "Homenaje a Don Andrés Segovia", in San Juan, Puerto Rico where he won the First Price; V Concurso Nacional de la Universidad Metropolitana de México, D.F.: First Price; III Concurso Internacional Manuel M. Ponce, Second Price.

Alfredo Sánchez

Alfredo Sánchez has played at main theaters and concert halls in Mexico City, and the rest of the country, with many appearances on Mexican TV and Radio.

Since 1981 he has been following a very heavy agenda with international presentations: Washington, DC at the Kennedy Center, Teatro del Patio in Puerto Rico and the Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, Russia, are just an example.

In November 1988 he gave an acclaimed series of presentations in Cuba, as a result of the First Place won at the First Place on the V Concurso Nacional de la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana.

He is normally promoted by the Goskoncert Agency. Up to date he has played in eleven cities of the Ex-Soviet Union, with an incredible success and gaining the best critic comments of the public, and the Guitar Societies in Tbilisi, Odessa and Moscow.

He is a member of the Ensamble Clásico de Guitarras de la Universidad Veracruzana.

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Cuarteto de
Guitarras Manuel
M. Ponce

Cuarteto de Guitarras Manuel M. Ponce

Founded in 1994, the Manuel M. Ponce Guitar Quartet, promotes the music of the great composers, and most specially the music of Mexican composers, through their own transcriptions, arranges and original works.

Combining study and concertism, each of its members has worked as soloist, and also in several chamber ensembles, participated in international and national contests, TV and Radio, and the Cuarteto itself as soloist with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Aguascalientes, besides giving concerts in Aguascalientes, Baja California Norte, Estado de México, Morelos, Puebla, San Luis Potosí, Tamaulipas and Veracruz.

The Cuarteto is directed by maestro Manuel López Ramos, assisted by maestro Guillermo González. The Cuarteto are Gerardo Díaz de León, Ernesto Martínez, Víctor Martínez and Raúl Zambrano, all graduated at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

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Dña Costero-Beltrán

Maricarmen Costero was born on Mexico City and Mario Beltrán in the State of Chihuahua, in Mexico. Both started their studies in 1962 at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico under the direction of maestro Manuel López Ramos.

They had expend lots of time on tours across Mexico, and had several presentations on TV in Mexico City, and other main cities in the country. In 1969 They extended their activities, giving outstanding concerts in Europe and the United States, where they were recognized by the critic and public.

Besides their activities as concertists, They work on teaching their art and promote the School they represent.

In 1969, Mario Beltrán won the First Price on the Concurso Internacional de Caracas, Venezuela and the "Premier Accesit" in the International Contest of Paris, sponsored by the O.R.T.F. on the same year.

"This two artists made an exceptional duo, not only because of the beautiful technique they have, but for the high degree of exquisite sensibility that they show on their performances. I've been working with them for more than 10 years and I am convinced that I transmitted to them all the expressive beauty contained in our wonderful instrument. They understood that the guitar is an extension of our sensibility, and the artistic concept becomes manifest completely in their performances. I have the absolute conviction that they do have great talent, and my best testimony is for you to attend one of their presentations, that for sure will be one of those that remains for ever on our minds, and produces an unforgettable impact on our souls"

Manuel López Ramos

"Both are amazingly young, but wonderful given. They completely domain their 'meter' and their art, at the downing of concertism career, full of promises already came true. They had reached that point of perfection in which technical virtuosity is forgotten, to give way to the magic of true poetry"

P Claudin, Journal Lunéville

"The attendants, from the very beginning of the presentation, let themselves wrapped on that game in which one values what other expresses. Wonderful Duo! Concordance Spirit! What unit of movement! Each soloist was competing in strength, joy and good taste"

J. Senecal, Le Republicain Lorrain

"Maricarmen Costero and Mario

Dúo
Costero-Beltrán

*Beltrán, are too young,
exceptionally given and with that
extraordinary musical personality of
the great artists"*

M. Debus, Est Republicain

*"Even being so young, Maricarmen
Costero and Mario Beltrán can
consider themselves between the
best concertists of the guitar"*

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zurich

*"In a perfect way, and with stylized
mastery, both shown a solid and
whole perfection on the technique in
the most complex rhythms and the
fastest parts"*

Frotz Muggler, Zivilitation

*"The sound and color in this night,
never had a moment of hesitation...
After the third encore we were
asking how many else would be
correct to ask, but finally we
stopped with courtesy"*

Salzburger, Voksblatt

*"The night ended with three encores
asked unanimously by the attendant
public. An extraordinary night that
for sure will not be the last with Duo
Costero-Beltrán"*

Salzburger Nachrichten

*"Due to their finest and pure
interpretation, the guests earned the
warm applause of the public"*

Der Tagesspiegel, Berlín

*"They interpreted with great
precision, control and unity of
sound and color. They let felt a
romantic Latin warmth that results
very refreshing"*

Gooi En Eemlander, The Netherlands

*"This Duo doesn't need exaggerated
fortes, neither overwhelmed
virtuosity to keep live the interest of
the public. Something that is worthy
to emphasize from the performance
was the perfect coupling of both
instruments"*

Lou Tervervoort, The Netherlands

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Dúo Pavón-Reyes

Laura Pavón and Juan Reyes were graduated at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

Under the artistic direction of maestro López Ramos, in 1986 they became a dúo and since then they have traveled all along diverse places, giving performances in the Mexican Republic, letting the public know the precious repertoire of music written for two guitars gaining popular acceptance and success in each of their performances.

Their work as soloists and as members of several chamber music groups, as Sonia Amelio's or the Cuarteto de Guitarras Manuel M. Ponce with whom they toured several times Mexico, Spain, Hungary and the Ex-Soviet Union, allowed them to achieve, in a very short time, the maturity and coupling needed to become a music group unique in its way.

Dúo Pavón-Reyes

The dúo Pavón-Reyes has performed invited by institutions as the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, the ISSSTE and the Departamento del Distrito Federal, besides a long career in concertism with presence in Aguascalientes, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, México, Morelos, San Luis Potosí, Sonora, Querétaro and Tlaxcala. They had perform also in the United States.

The dúo has appeared in TV and Radio, and in 1988 they published their first long play recording with works by Carulli, Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Piazzola, and now they are promoting the second one, just released in CD, with works by Gibbons, Bach, Turina and Petit.

Juan Reyes is part of the Teaching Staff at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

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Enrique Velasco

Enrique Velasco

Concertist made at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, guitar School of the Argentinean guitarist Manuel López Ramos. He has followed a wide musical path in concerts and presentations, and as soloist of diverse orchestras and chamber ensembles, TV and Radio presentations. He has 4 long play recordings.

His presentations includes the main halls and cities of Mexico, and more than 70 cities in 23 countries more, from which we should mention: Washington, Los Angeles, Chicago, Roma, Paris, Prague, Athens, Peking, Bucharest, Warsaw, Cracovia, Moscow and Leningrad, besides many others. He has toured the Ex-Soviet Union 5 times, in more than 20 of the main cities of that musical country (Kiev, Odessa, Riga, Tbilisi, Baku, Erevan, Vilna, etc.).

Just to mention few of the distinctions he received, it is worthy to name: First Price in the Concurso Nacional de Guitarra (1970) in Mexico; considered Concertist of the Year by the Unión Mexicana de Cronistas de Teatro y Música (1975); President of the Jury at the National Guitar Contest of Poland and the International Guitar Contest, both in Poland (1982); Public performances for film archive for Warsaw TV at the Frederick Chopin Academy in Warsaw (1987) or the famous performance at the UNESCO Auditorium in Paris (1990).

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Jesús Ruiz

Jesús Ruiz

Jesús Ruiz was born in Mexico City. He started his musical and guitar studies in 1964 at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, under the direction of Manuel López Ramos.

In 1967 he obtained the First Price in the Guitar Contest organized by the Centro Universitario México.

He started as a professional concertist playing in guitar duo, and since 1971 he presents himself as soloist.

He has been performing, every year, at the most prestigious concert halls in Mexico, for Mexican TV, and also in Central America and South America. In 1974 and 1975 he gave a series of concerts in Europe.

From 1973 to 1977 he gave classes as part of the Teacher Staff at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

In July 1975 was recognized at the International Guitar Contest in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Apart from other prizes he was granted the Bronze Medal and several presentations in Brazil for the season in 1976.

In 1975 he was named, by the President of Mexico, the Youth National Value.

For several years he was part of the Ensemble de Guitarras de la Universidad Veracruzana and acted in dúo with guitarist Cecilia López, gaining great successes in each of their performances.



Rafael Jiménez

Rafael Jiménez

The Mexican guitarist Rafael Jiménez Rojas has been awarded with several prizes during his career: First Price at the 17th International Classical Guitar Contest in Alessandria, Italy; First Price in the II Concurso Internacional de Guitarra Manuel M. Ponce de la Ciudad de México; and the Premio Nacional de la Juventud in 1985.

He started his guitar studies at age 8, and at 12 he enters the Facultad de Música de la Universidad Veracruzana to obtain his guitar concertist degree. He studied with Manuel López Ramos and has participated at the Primer Festival Internacional de Música de Xalapa, with maestro Alfonso Moreno, who has been his teacher while studying his career at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. In 1979 he joined the Ensamble Clásico de Guitarras de la Universidad Veracruzana and in that same year he won the First Price at the Concurso Nacional de Guitarra in Paracho, Michoacán. In 1980 he became graduated and presented himself at the Villa-Lobos International Contest in Rio do Janeiro, Brazil.

In 1981 he performed as soloist with the Sinfónica de Veracruz, and went touring with famous violinist Hermilo Novelo. When he obtained the Third Place in 1982 at the International Manuel M. Ponce Guitar Contest, as part of the prize he is recognized with a scholarship by the French Government and performed at they International Guitar Meetings in France, being elected to perform at the closing night concert of the event. In 1984 he is awarded with the Second Price at the II Concurso y Festival Internacional de Guitarra de La Habana, Cuba, and is granted with the Special Price for the Best Interpreter of Latin American Music. The same year he won the contest to b soloist at the Sinfónica del Estado de México.

Nowadays, he is the Director for the Ensamble Clásico de Guitarras

de la Universidad Veracruzana.

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Mario Beltrán del
Río

Mario Beltrán del Río

Born in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico. He made his studies of guitar with maestro Manuel López Ramos at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico in Mexico City and studies of composition at the "Taller de Estudios Polifónicos" with maestro Humberto Hernández Medrano.

From 1967 to 1971 he presented himself at the most important international contests: O.R.T.F. (French TV and Radio Organization) in Paris; Gian Battista Viotti in Vercelli, Italia; Citta de Alessandria, Alessandria, Italy; Alirio Díaz in Caracas, Venezuela; Heitor Villa-Lobos, Rio do Janeiro, Brazil, winning the highest prizes in each of them and highly recognized by the Juries, public and critics.

The Unión de Cronistas de Teatro y Música, in Mexico City, granted him twice his annual prize: 1971 and 1973, being the first musician to achieve two times this distinction.

Since 1969 has being touring, with heavy agendas, several European countries, the United States, Central and South America and, specially Mexico. He had performed at the most prestigious concert halls in the world, obtaining outstanding critic reviews from the most serious newspapers and magazines in the topic.

With Maricarmen Costero, student also with Manuel López Ramos, founded the Dúo Costero-Beltrán achieving great successes in every place they presented.

He has three recordings with Angel brand, two with the Dúo Costero-Beltrán, an homage to Mexican composer Manuel M.

Ponce, and also with Roberto Limón, another graduated guitarist from the EAG, with music for two guitars.

He gave several master classes in the United States, Mexico and Europe and his pedagogic work has been very prolific in Mexico City, in the Escuela Superior de Música, in his own studio and for more than ten years at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico.

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Trío Tansman

Trío Tansman

Dedicated to the endless search of new possibilities for the guitar inside the chamber music scenario, trio Tansman appears in late 1984. Its members are all graduated at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, and are part of the Teacher Staff of the EAG.

Similar personal experiences brought them to have the same feelings on the guitar, as an instrument to bring classical music to all kinds of public. There is a lack of musical works written for this particular formation (a trio), and this has forced Trio Tansman to adapt, arrange and transcribe their own program music.

Since the beginning of their career, the group has been covering a pretty close concert schedule in Mexico. The trio has performed on the most prestigious places and festivals in the country. They have also toured the United States of America, including several appearances on American Radio and TV.

Program music of Tansman Trio covers all music eras, including those of traditional style that become enriched by the exquisite arrangements performed by the Trio.

Trío Tansman are Verónica Bulnes, Luis Robert and Guillermo González.

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Víctor Saenger

He started studying at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico as a disciple of Mario Beltrán del Río, becoming later a pupil of maestro López Ramos with whom he concluded his studies.

Víctor Saenger

He has been very prolific in public performances on prestigious Art galleries, Schools and Concert Halls in Mexico.

Nowadays, he is part of the Teacher Staff of the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, being one of the more experienced teachers in the country. He works very close with maestro Manuel López Ramos in promoting the classical guitar.

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ALFONSO MORENO

Mexico

JESÚS RUIZ

Mexico

PRIMO VEGA

Mexico

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United States of America

HÉCTOR GONZÁLEZ

Mexico

JORGE MADRIGAL

Mexico

ROBERTO LIMÓN

Mexico

JUAN GASPAR

Mexico

CECILIA LÓPEZ MICHELONE

Mexico

JUAN REYES

Mexico

VERÓNICA BULNES

Mexico

DEBORAH MARIOTTI

Switzerland

JORGE MARTÍNEZ
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JOSÉ LUIS ROSENDO
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LEÓN AGUILAR
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STEVE GALLEGOS
United States of America

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We also wish to show our appreciation to all our teachers and students who day by day in more than 35 years had shown their love

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ALFREDO SÁNCHEZ
Mexico

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for the guitar. And last, but not least, to all the public in general who attending concerts and recitals give their warmest acceptance to the wonderful music of the classical guitar.

Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico
Dakota 204-103
Colonia Nápoles
03810 México, D.F.
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Teacher Staff at the
Estudio de Arte
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Classical Guitar

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Classical Guitar

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Study Plans

At the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, different approaches of guitar interpretation and instruction are supported for the guitar. The main object, and the whole institution essence, is directed towards the learning of the art of the Classical Guitar, but this not means exclusion to other artistic manifestations of our times.

Due to this fact, there are four different study plans:

CLASSICAL GUITAR
FLAMENCO GUITAR
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Solfage Courses
Music Theory Courses
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Interpretation Courses
Musical Appreciation Courses
Concerts
Musical Talks and Meetings
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Chamber Music Ensemble Development
Assessment and Consulting (on class schedule)
Guitar Repertoire Score Archive

Study Plans

Each year maestro Manuel López Ramos presents his traditional Interpretation Course. In this course works from different music eras are reviewed for those students, with different technical levels, that are at least studying the lessons on the Third Book of J.S. Sagreras.

Class Schedule

Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Saturday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

To be a student at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, there is no need to have already music or guitar studies. There is no limit on age for admission.

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Links to Other Pages

Here we suggest other Classical Guitar related sites to visit:

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[Guitar Foundation of America](#)

[Spencer Doidge's Guitar Page](#)

[The Guitar Review Magazine Website](#)

[Editions Orphée Home Page](#)

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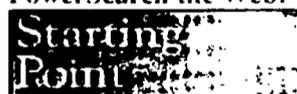
Links to Other Pages

Also we provide other links, not related directly with the Classical Guitar, but that may result interesting to our visitors:

[Classical MIDI Archives](#)

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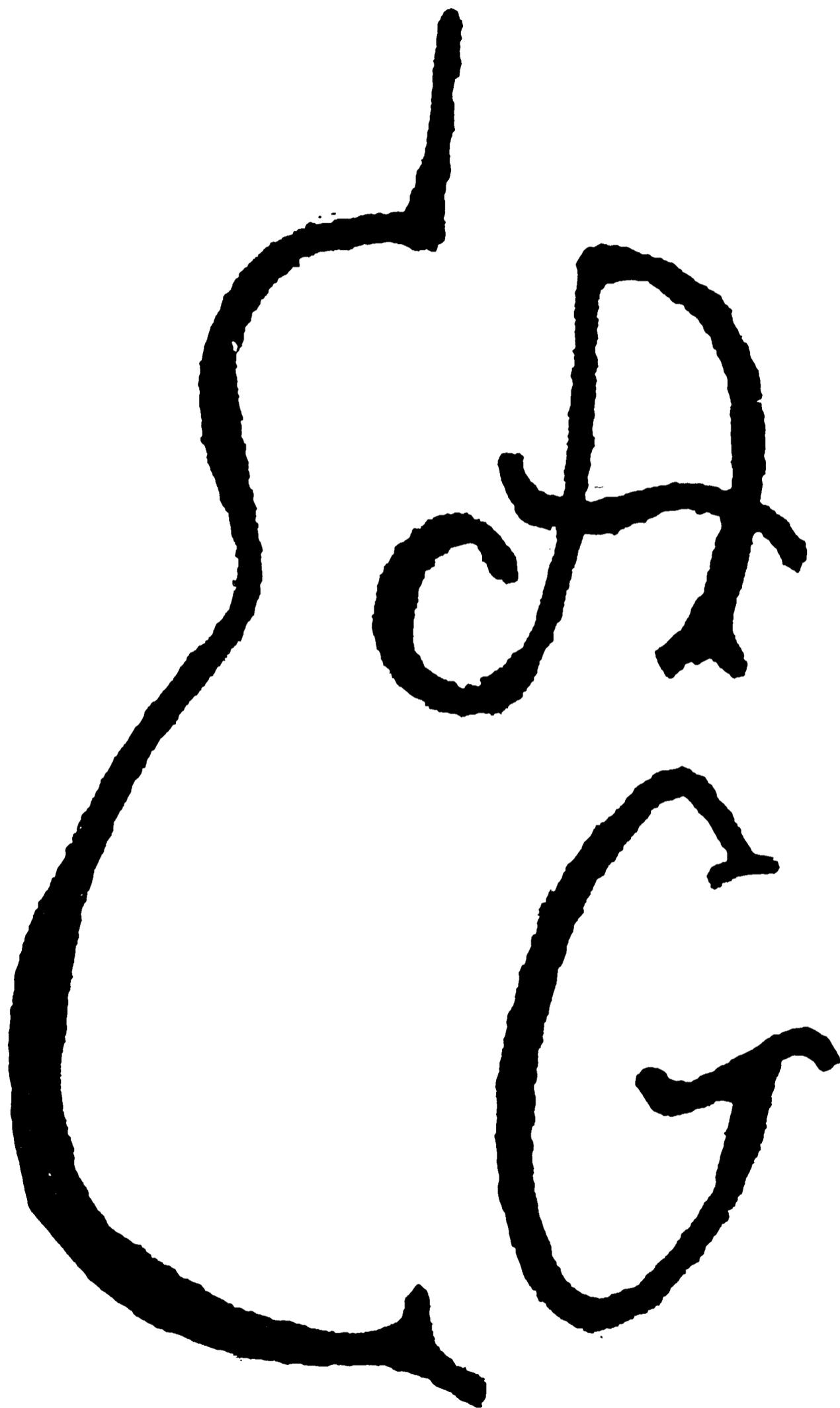
APPENDIX K
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OF PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE FROM THE
ESTUDIO DE ARTE GUITARRÍSTICO

El Placer de escuchar Música no es comparable
a la inmensa satisfacción de ejecutarla.



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Archivo con las partituras más importantes
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Supervisado por el maestro López Ramos, nuestros profesores enseñan a tocar la guitarra siguiendo un sistema único en el mundo, que va guiando a los alumnos paso a paso desde el aprendizaje de los conocimientos elementales hasta el desarrollo de niveles superiores indispensables para los que deseen seguir la carrera de concertista.



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El Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico, fundado en 1961, es una institución dedicada a la enseñanza y difusión de la guitarra clásica. De él han surgido grandes guitarristas mexicanos laureados en concursos nacionales e internacionales como París, Ginebra, Brasil, Venezuela, etc.

Numerosos guitarristas de diversas partes del mundo (Suiza, Francia, Islandia, Finlandia, Checoslovaquia, España, Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala y Estados Unidos), acuden cada año a perfeccionar sus estudios bajo la dirección del maestro Manuel López Ramos.



ESTUDIA LA GUITARRA CON MAESTROS DEL INSTRUMENTO

Treinta años de experiencia nos respaldan como la primera escuela en el mundo con verdadera tradición en el estudio de la guitarra.

APPENDIX L

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OF ROBERTO LIMÓN'S INTERVIEW WITH
MANUEL LÓPEZ RAMOS FROM OCTOBER,
1986, GUITAR INTERNATIONAL



“The musician who does not contemplate the audience is heading the wrong way”

Manuel López Ramos

Interview & photos by Roberto Limon

Manuel Lopez Ramos was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the year 1929 and studied with the most famous teacher of his country, Miguel Michelone. In 1948 he received the prize from the Association of Chamber Music of Argentina, since then he has been travelling constantly throughout all America and Europe.

He has performed as a soloist with the most important orchestras. Also being a brilliant pedagogue and has been teaching officially since 1968 at the University of Arizona, the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, University of Santa Clara, California, San Jose State College, College of Spring Hill in Alabama, University of Eastern Michigan and in San Francisco, California.

For the last twenty years he has been residing in Mexico, where he founded the “Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico”, school of international recognition from where the best Mexican guitarists have emerged.

Maestro Lopez Ramos is an exclusive artist for “Angel” records

“This guitarist possesses a very personal quality and musicality that no-one could compare with the interpretations of his predecessors” **Henryck Szeryng**

Maestro Manuel Lopez Ramos, how was your first encounter with the guitar?

I come from a family of actors and musicians, therefore since I was seven years old, I was already participating in musical activities. Later when I turned twelve my father bought me a Domingo Estevo, a flamenco guitar, and being a typical Andalusian, he wanted me to play flamenco music. But he sent me to a classical guitar teacher, Miguel Michelone, and so I started to study the guitar from notation, and flamenco remained as an imaginary project of my father.

It was in the same year (1941) when I first listened to Maestro Andres Segovia at the Odeon Theatre in Buenos Aires, and that was a definite point for my vocation. The impression that caused in me when I was twelve years old was something unforgettable. His guitar was like a mysterious and wonderful world that captured me totally, to the point that I came out of that concert as if I had witnessed a miracle. It was not only the impression of a brilliant technique, but his tone entered into my soul in another form, with another strength. And I told myself at that time “someday I will play like Maestro Segovia” — many years have gone by and I tell you again, someday I will play like Maestro Segovia.

But don't you consider that it could be dangerous to admire such a strong personality like Segovia; that in a given moment it could annul the interpreter's own personality, or that it may fall into imitation?

Well, who can imitate a genius? Who? I would give anything to imitate a genius, not to mention Segovia. It is impossible to

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imitate him no matter how hard you try. You cannot imitate him because one's own personality always intervenes. What is important is to learn and apply these examples, with their own proper individuality and sensitivity, but applying the same principles. Look, if I noticed that one of Segovia's impressive qualities in his early recordings were his profound, moving, captivating vibrato; Don't you believe that one should follow that path to search for that expressive element? If you listen to his wide tonal pallet of metallic, sweet contrasting tones, wouldn't you take it as an element to be used in music? Of course!

Would it be to a certain point that the interpretation of Segovia is bound to certain physical dispositions, that for another guitarist these generosities are not so, such as big hands, plumpy fingers, thick nails, which provides those qualities to his tone, his vibrato?

Look, evidently these factors could influence, but I will tell you something I discovered long ago; as I previously mentioned, Segovia's vibrato always captured me, so for years I searched and struggled to achieve that vibrato. Because for me that was an indispensable element, of course as you mentioned, obviously my hands were not Segovia's nor the physical conditions the same, but my yearning was the same. So to substitute the plumpy finger of his, what I did in the vibrato was to use two fingers on the same string instead of one, obtaining a more profound vibrato. And since I achieved this, I think the same could be done with the right hand. I have always looked for that tonal beauty that impressed me so much in my childhood, and if I do not have the same thickness of nail, my approach is very close to that type of tone, looking for it in my technique where I combine finger tip and short nail with a very specific action of the right hand so it can have the consistency and smoothness of Segovia's tone. That is to say, if I was not provided with the same physical qualities as he was, I tried to find them by other means, and I believe to have come really close, although naturally I will have to keep looking.

Do you consider that the Segovian interpretation is still, in effect, an example for young guitarists?

We should not think that the interpretations can become obsolete or belong to the past, for this would be from a false basis. I do not see why we ought to classify in periods the interpretations. We must make of music an element that responds to our own human restlessness. This idea that young people of today cannot feel as the ones of fifty years ago seems like a mistaken one to me.

But don't you consider that the romantic style of interpretation forms a part of a generation of musicians like Rubinstein, Heifetz and Casals were?

Yes, in those days the musicians, the instrumentalists, would make of music something of their own. They tried to be like the filter of the supposed interpretations of the composers. They took the music and made it their own with the sole means of giving it to the audience and moving them with it. They did this with extreme sensitivity, and many times did not stop for too much theoretical analysis of the music they played. They gave to the music the spontaneity which was inspired by their artistic intuition. They thought (I imagine that's how it was) that the concert had to be a moment of extreme emotion and infinite beauty so it could be transmitted to the audience, delight and captivate them with the music. They did not want to make of the concert an exhibition of theoretical knowledge; they thought that the most important thing was an expressive communication with the audience. Those types of artists nowadays (with some exceptions) are disappearing and those are the ones that really captivated and motivated me to follow those paths; Because at present we can listen to recordings of those musicians and notice that the expressive power is still alive; like something that does not change with time, that does not belong to the past but is latent with the power it had 50-60 years ago.

I have the impression that those musicians are teaching us a lot of things that the young people of today will not put aside

too easily. My feelings about the interpretations of these great performers is that they are fresh, spontaneous. They have feelings of extraordinary beauty that do not belong to different periods, but belong to the world's history.

In your long concert career, which personal experience have you received from this?

You see, the fact of having had the fortune of travelling throughout many countries of the world, almost all over Europe, America and naturally, the socialist countries, like the Soviet Union where I have done three grand tours and have visited Yugoslavia, Poland, etc. I could tell you that the contact with the audience of different countries does not differ, for as I said before, concerning the sensitivity of the past and present, I have felt that music can capture the audience from the Soviet Republic as well as the smallest town in Mexico. But to obtain this, the music has to have a common sense of beauty, of appreciation. As for myself, to play a recital is a compromise not only with the composer but also with the audience.

Composers such as Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Rodrigo, have dedicated works to you. Which do you consider the most important compositions for the guitar in these last years?

In my judgement the important contributions in these years are the *Bagatelles* of William Walton. This is undoubtedly for me the culmination of what the guitar can accept as modern or contemporary music. Henze with his *Tientos* made wonderful things that will endure, as well as Britten or Arnold, many important composers. I am not aware of the latest trends because it really frightens me a little when the guitar wants to participate in the avant-garde music, because to produce harsh tones, and mistreatment of the instrument seems risky and daring to me. Only time will tell what music will endure in the repertoire, and let us not forget that our instrument: so eminently romantic that even the thumb touching the strings of a guitar is like a declaration of love.

Together with your performing activities you have dedicated a great part of your time teaching at the Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico. How did this vocation come about?

The vocation of teaching is simply the vocation of giving. If one has by nature this desire to give something to others, I think that one has the basic motivation for teaching. Now then, when I came to Mexico I noticed the narrow field of the classical guitar and its teaching, it was then that I first had the idea to start a private school apart from the Conservatory and the other music schools. Also a private school would prevent the risk of falling into a bureaucratic system, because I wanted a place where there would be a passionate spirit of teaching and creativity.

So my passion for teaching grew with me. I noticed that the initial results were positive, and then started looking for new procedures and systems that I had not even utilized but that I sensed they would work. It was like this, little by little that I developed a method that could help the future instrumentalistic development. Also there was a Quixotic idea that all human beings desirous to play the guitar would have the right to. Without having the necessity of a personal ability. I never depend on the student's ability, I have always thought that the ability could be achieved if there were disciplined, evolving and progressive systems of teaching. This is one of the successful points of the "Estudio de Arte Guitarrístico" — to be able to create systems that will work for the majority to make people play when by nature they are almost denied. Now then, if there are persons with great natural ability, as is the case of four of my best students, Alfonso Moreno, (first prize winner Paris, France ORTF), Mario Beltran and Alfredo Sánchez and yourself (all of you developing a solid international career) then the results are excellent.

What are the indispensable elements you consider a guitarist needs to have a good professional development?

To make a career as a performing artist requires not only qualities of the guitarist, but also of other conditions such as

opportunities, possibilities to demonstrate that you know what to do. And the audience's response, the musician that does not contemplate the audience is heading the wrong way. One has to capture the audience's interest in what you are going, not to lose or bore them. One has to evaluate if these interpretations are the one that reach, move and that will endure in the soul of the listeners. For me the secret in this art consists in moving the audience, to delight them, and make them experience an unforgettable beauty, this should be the performer's search, the objective of the performance.

And the competitions?

Well, there are now so many competitions that even though you might win nothing becomes of it. I really believe that the most important and authentic career is the one whose priority is pleasing the audience. If the performer does not take care of this, no matter how much support is received from managers, records etc. . . . it may turn out to be only a one day flower.

All along your career you have used instruments of the category of Robert Bouchet, Hermann Hauser, which guitar are you using at the moment and what do you expect of a guitar?

I have had excellent guitars. When I first started I played a Simplicio that belonged to Domingo Prati, later in 1935 I acquired a Hermann Hauser with which I played my first concerts in Europe and in the United States. After that, in 1961, Bouchet made me a marvellous guitar that I used for the following eleven years. Unfortunately, after some time the tonal range changed; it became too ill-adapted for my type of attack. Then it was that an Argentine luthier named Joaquin Garcia made me a double chamber guitar with the same qualities of the Bouchet. At present I am using a John Shealon, a guitar constructor from Oregon, inspired in the double box guitar of Garcia. It has a clear and strong tone for playing with an orchestra. Although I always vary, sometimes I play with the Bouchet, the Hauser or the Garcia.

What advice would you give to the young guitarists who are eager to dominate this instrument?

The majority of the young guitarists now dominate the instrument, but maybe they lack the artistic yearning and ambition. That is, they satisfy themselves too easily with a very respectable world of intellectuality, but of few sensitive searches. I would tell them not to fear being labelled ridiculous or sentimental. The guitar is a romantic instrument by excellence and will not be able to avoid that criticism. One has to return to a more sensitive state in one's life, live more intensively, and as a consequence music has to return to that expressive flow. I think that young musicians have to seek out how to move the audience rather than to impress them.

(Roberto Lamón is a faculty member at the Superior School of Music of the National Institute of Fine Arts.)



Manuel Lopez Ramos with the author.

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