

Mac McClure

Albéniz • Cassadó • Morera

Piano Works



1. Danza española, Op. 37 No. 3 — Isaac Albéniz
2. Suite española, Op. 47: Granada — Isaac Albéniz
3. Iberia: El Albaicín — Isaac Albéniz
4. Toujours — Joaquim Cassadó
5. Alborada catalana: Adieux dès oiseaux au printemps — Joaquim Cassadó
6. Gavotta — Joaquim Cassadó
7. Tango Zerka — Joaquim Cassadó
8. Mazurka — Enric Morera
9. Col·lecció d'or: La més petit — Enric Morera
10. Col·lecció d'or: Al bosc — Enric Morera
11. Col·lecció d'or: A reveure — Enric Morera
12. Col·lecció d'or: Cançó matinal — Enric Morera
13. Col·lecció d'or: Cançó del fadri — Enric Morera
14. Col·lecció d'or: L'orfaneta — Enric Morera
15. Col·lecció d'or: Gavota — Enric Morera
16. Col·lecció d'or: Cap al tard — Enric Morera
17. Col·lecció d'or: Minuet — Enric Morera
18. Col·lecció d'or: Per la muntanya — Enric Morera

INTRODUCTION

The piano music written in Catalonia between the late 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century represents one of the most original chapters in European musical history. During those years, Barcelona experienced an extraordinary artistic blossoming driven by Modernisme—a movement that sought to integrate architecture, painting, literature, the decorative arts, and music into a single aesthetic ideal. While Paris radiated new musical trends, Catalonia developed a voice of its own: one that engaged in a creative dialogue with Europe without forfeiting its Mediterranean identity.

This album offers a journey through three composers representative of that creative universe: Isaac Albéniz, Joaquim Cassadó, and Enric Morera. Each embodies a distinct approach to the instrument, yet all share a common artistic horizon: the quest for a modern idiom capable of transforming folk traditions, Mediterranean lyricism, and French influences into a pianistic writing of extraordinary richness.

From an interpretive standpoint, these works demand a delicate balance between structural clarity, rhythmic flexibility, and tonal color. Their apparent simplicity belies a meticulously crafted texture in which phrasing, resonance, and pedal control play a vital role. Heard together, they reveal both the diversity and the coherence of the Catalan pianistic school.

ISAAC ALBÉNIZ



Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909) was the first Spanish composer to achieve true international renown. A child prodigy, he forged an intense concert career that took him across Europe and the Americas. His travels, coupled with an insatiable intellectual curiosity, enriched a pianistic language that reached its zenith in Iberia—one of the absolute masterpieces of the universal repertoire.

The three pieces included in this program illustrate the evolution of his style: Granada, from the Suite española, recreates the intimate atmosphere of a nocturnal serenade through a song of boundless lyricism. Danza española No. 2, Tango, belongs to the 19th-century tango hispano, closely tied to the habanera and other Caribbean rhythms. Catalonia, deeply linked to Cuba through maritime trade, seamlessly woven these influences into its musical fabric. El Albaicín, from Iberia, represents the pinnacle of his output: a soundscape of immense harmonic complexity and extraordinary timbral imagination.

JOAQUIM CASSADÓ

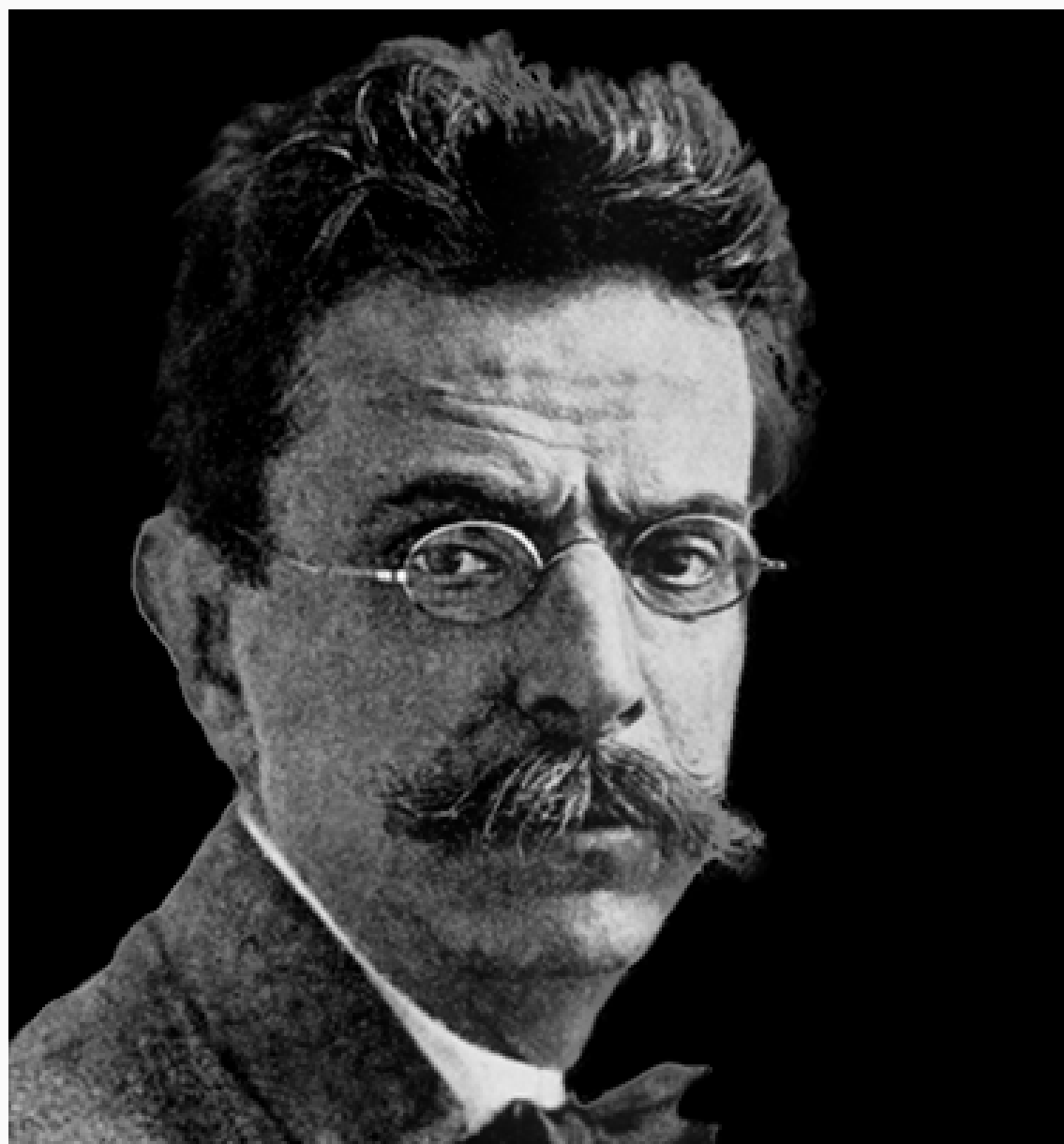
Joaquim Cassadó (1867–1926) divided his career between Barcelona and Paris. Although his name was eventually eclipsed by the international stature of his son, the cellist Gaspar Cassadó, his catalogue reveals a composer of refined personality, elegant craftsmanship, and remarkable melodic sensitivity.

The selected miniatures offer a captivating tour through the aesthetics of the Belle Époque: *Zerka* and *Adieux des oiseaux* display a delicate assimilation of the habanera rhythm.

Toujour and *Gavota* reflect the modernist predilection for the polished miniature. *Pour une larme* encapsulates French intimacy with admirable economy of means. Together, these works reclaim Cassadó's place as one of the most original voices in early 20th-century Catalan piano music.



ENRIC MORERA



Enric Morera (1865–1942) embodies the explicitly nationalist dimension of Catalan Modernisme. Trained in Belgium, he successfully integrated European currents into music deeply rooted in Catalan culture. His multifaceted work as a theatrical composer, conductor, and pedagogue decisively shaped generations of musicians. *La Col·lecció d'Or* began as an educational project inspired by Robert Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. However, its harmonic

sophistication, double-stop passages, and far more demanding technique prevented it from entering the elementary teaching repertoire. Published decades later, it stands today as an exceptional testament to Morera's lyricism and pianistic elegance.



MODERNISME, PARIS, AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

All three composers shared a single cultural geography. Barcelona, Paris, and the Mediterranean formed the artistic triangle in which their language evolved. The French influence never implied mere imitation, but rather a fruitful dialogue. Harmonic color, formal clarity, and a taste for the miniature coexisted alongside folk rhythms, landscape evocations, and a profound sense of Catalan identity.

Furthermore, the presence of the habanera and the tango hispano underscores the vibrant 19th-century ties between Catalonia and Cuba. Naturally absorbed into the keyboard repertoire, these rhythms lent an unmistakable flair to many works by Albéniz and his Catalan contemporaries.

CONCLUSION

The works gathered in this recording invite us to rediscover a pianistic tradition of extraordinary wealth. Albéniz irrevocably paved the way toward modernity; Cassadó represents a cosmopolitan refinement ripe for revival; and Morera proves that Catalan Modernisme also found an authentic voice at the keyboard.

This project aims to reinstate these pages into the great international repertoire—not as historical curiosities, but as vibrant, living works whose artistic quality fully merits a place in contemporary concert halls and discographies.

MAC MCCLURE



He is internationally acclaimed for his passionate interpretations of Spanish and Latin American repertoire. Composer Xavier Montsalvatge famously noted: “Mac knows my music better than I do, and his interpretations of Albéniz, Granados, and Mompou possess a deeply felt authenticity.” Meanwhile, critic Dan Stevens of the British magazine *International Record Review* described him as “a powerful communicator who enfolds listeners in the magic world he creates.”

Born in Florida, USA, he holds a degree in Philology from the University of North Carolina. He began his musical studies under Consuelo Colomer before continuing his training with Michael Zenge and Phyllis Rappeport. In 1984, he moved to Barcelona to study with Carlota Garriga at the prestigious Marshall Academy, founded in 1901 by Enrique Granados. From 1991 onward, he worked extensively on Spanish and classical repertoire alongside Alicia de Larrocha.

His extensive discography of over forty recordings is available across digital platforms, including iTunes, Amazon, and Spotify. Since 2010, he has served as Associate Professor at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

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Edicions Albert Moraleda



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Recorded at Black Cat Estudios

La Garriga, Barcelona

July 17, 18, and 19, 2021

With the support of the Generalitat de
Catalunya