

Proposal for Bio-Bibliography on Teresa Carreño

Introduction:

Teresa Carreño (1853-1917) and her family emigrated from Venezuela to New York City in August of 1862. Upon their arrival, the Carreños realized that the property and finances they had left in Venezuela were misappropriated by a friend's son resulting in a complete loss. Their extreme financial situation hastened Carreño's entrance into the concert arena and on November 25, 1862, she gave her debut at Irving Hall in New York. Carreño continued to build her reputation as a concert artist with twenty recitals in Boston, including an appearance with the Boston Philharmonic Society as a soloist. Between 1862 and 1916, Carreño undertook numerous tours in the U.S., Europe, South America, and Australia. Her last orchestral performance was with the New York Philharmonic in 1916. As other women pianists and composers before her, Carreño balanced the duties of wife, mother, and professional musician at a time when most women were not encouraged to become public entertainers.

In addition to a pioneering career as a touring concert pianist, Carreño was a composer and teacher, and appeared on several occasions as a conductor or opera singer. She wrote approximately forty compositions, published or in manuscript form, including works for voice, piano, chamber, and orchestra. It was believed that Carreño studied under the Louisiana-born pianist and composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869), but in reality she only received several lessons from the artist. She did however study with Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) and briefly with Georges Mathias (1826-1910), Chopin's student; amongst her pupils was the American composer Edward MacDowell (1860-1908). Other pianists were often compared to and contrasted with Carreño, including the British born pianist and conductor, Ethel Liginska (1886-1970).

Among her many contributions to American music is her legacy on the American concert stage, her friendship and mentoring of Edward MacDowell, as well as her role as pedagogue to other American pianists.

State of the Literature:

The sole biography in the English language (1940), later translated into Spanish (1953), was written by Marta Milinowski, a Vassar graduate and student of Carreño's, as well as a family friend.¹ As someone who developed a close relationship with Carreño and her family, Milinowski relied heavily on Carreño's memories or even possible fictional remembrances. The language is florid and romantic in its description of Carreño's interactions with other musicians, performances, and personal memories. For example, describing Carreño's first interaction with Gottschalk, Milinowski wrote, "When Gottschalk left the piano the blood seemed to rush to Teresita's face, the beautiful black eyes grew veiled as by a cloud, and all at once she fainted [but not without first registering in her mind certain peculiarities of Gottschalk's fingering and pedaling, according to her great-aunt Gertrudis]"² This is just one example of many, which demonstrates that Milinowski's biography of Carreño, while a valuable resource, offers more than just facts or accurate information.

Other scholars have also noted the inaccuracies found in Milinowski's biography, for example in "Dislates en la obra *Teresa Carreño* de Marta Milinowski" Mario Milanca Guzmán states that there are factual mistakes, inaccuracies concerning the dates and trips, and even translation errors.³ In an article entitled "The Carreño Collection at Vassar College," Brian Mann points to a specific error in Milinowski on page 173 where she stated that Carreño gave the premier of the Second Piano Concerto in Chicago on July 5, 1888 with Theodore Thomas when in fact it was the First Piano Concerto.⁴ In the article, "Carreño's 1875 California Appearances," Robert Stevenson also points to the Milinowski biography as being highly fictionalized and reading "like a novel." He writes:

¹ Marta Milinowski, *Teresa Carreño*, "by the grace of God." (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940).

² *Ibid.*, 33.

³ M. Milanca Guzmán, "Dislates en la obra "T. Carreño" de Marta Milinowski," *Latin American Music Review* 8, H.2 (1987): 185-215.

⁴ Brian Mann, "The Carreño Collection at Vassar College," *Notes* Second Series, Vol. 47, No. 4 (June 1991): 1.

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Milinowski wrote her extremely entertaining biography without looking at a map of California, without consulting any California newspapers, and without availing herself of any California city directories...Much as Milinowski's fictionalized drama may titillate the unwary reader, Carreño the artist now deserves a scholarly, footnoted, biography utilizing

nineteenth-century United States newspapers, city directories, and gazateers.⁵

Milinowski's book is still considered the only extant biography available in the English language therefore there is a great need for a fresh examination of the primary and secondary sources which are available at Vassar and other U.S. institutions. More importantly, as Stevenson points out, Carreño "deserves a scholarly, footnoted, biography."

More recent works in English include a 2001 master's thesis by Barbara Tilden Thompson entitled, "The Twentieth-Century United States Concert Tours of Teresa Carreño," and a 2000 D.M.A. dissertation by Hun Ju Sohn entitled, "Six Major Women Pianists: Clara Schumann, Teresa Carreño, Myra Hess, Clara Haskil, Alicia de Larrocha, and Martha Argerich." A 1999 dissertation in the Spanish language by L.M. Parra Pita entitled, "Presencia De La Obra De Edward MacDowell En El Repertorio De Teresa Carreño: Revisión De Programas De Concierto, Correspondencia, Reseñas De Prensa y Otros Documentos Pertenecientes Al Archivo Histórico De Teresa Carreño En Caracas" provides many access/reference points to primary sources.⁶

Important articles that explore and clarify the facts associated with Carreño's tours and visits to U.S. states and abroad were published in the *Inter-American Music Review* between the early 1980s through the 1990s, these include, "Teresa Carreño's

⁵ Robert Murrell Stevenson, "Carreño's 1875 California appearances," *Inter-American Music Review* 5:2, (1983): 15.

⁶ Barbara Tilden Thompson, "The twentieth-century United States concert tours of Teresa Carreño". (master's thesis, Temple University, 2001). Hun Ju Sohn, "Six major women pianists: Clara Schumann, Teresa Carreño, Myra Hess, Clara Haskil, Alicia de Larrocha, and Martha Argerich". (D.M.A., Rice University, 2000). Laura Marina Pita Parra, "Presencia de la obra de Edward MacDowell en el repertorio de Teresa Carreño: revisión de programas de concierto, correspondencia, reseñas de prensa y otros documentos pertenecientes al Archivo Histórico de Teresa Carreño en Caracas". (master's thesis, Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1999).

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Russian Visits ” (1981), “Carreño's 1875 California appearances” (1983), and “Carreño in Nevada” (1991).⁷ There were additional articles published in the Spanish language, which focused on correcting the inaccuracies found in Milinowski’s biography, these included M. Milancz Guzman’s “Dislates en la obra *T. Carreño* de Marta Milinowski”

(*Latin American Music Review*, 1987) and “T. Carreño, cronología y manuscritos” (*Revista Musical Chilena*, 1988).⁸

In addition to these studies, Carreño is included in the standard reference works, and while these have helped sustain her reputation, they add little to a deeper portrait of the artist and woman. These provide no more than background information and selective bibliographies. A select list of reference sources, which contain entries on Carreño include *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *The Norton Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*, and *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*.

Project Description:

There is a great need for a re-examination of Carreño as an artist, composer, pianist, musician, and woman. A biography and annotated bibliography needs to be written and compiled from primary sources, including archival materials, such as correspondence, diaries, programs, scrapbooks, as well as periodicals and writings by Carreño’s contemporaries. The main archive that will be accessed for this project is Archives and Special Collections library at Vassar College in New York. Housed with the Teresa Carreño Papers (1862-1891), that would be pertinent to this bio-bibliography, are two scrapbooks containing periodical clippings; the first was compiled by Carreño’s father and the second by Carreño herself. The collected clippings range from 1862-1868 are in chronological order and include annotations, while those from 1872-1885 are not in

⁷ Robert Murrell Stevenson, “Carreño’s 1875 California appearances,” *Inter-American Music Review* 5:2, (1983): 9-15. _____. “T. Carreño in Nevada,” *Inter-American Music Review* 11, (1991): 25-40. M. Fejnstejn, “Teresa Carreño’s Russian Visits,” *Inter-American Music Review* 3:2, (1981): 121-123.

⁸ M. Milanca Guzman, “Dislates en la obra “T. Carreño” de Marta Milinowski,” *Latin American Music Review* 8, H. 2 (1987): 185-215. _____. “T. Carreño, cronología y manuscritos,” *Revista Musical Chilena* 42, no. 170 (1988): 91-135.

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order. These clippings are a valuable resource to understanding Carreño's reception as a concert artist in the U.S. yet there is no one single comprehensive list or access point to these periodicals. The repository also contains correspondence between Carreño and other musicians, as well as correspondence between her first biographer Marta Milinowski and other important figures, such as Rubinstein or MacDowell. Compositions, published and in manuscript form, are in this collection and would be annotated and included in my proposed bio-bibliography. Although there are over 150 recordings worldwide, there is no complete discography of Carreño's works, or

recordings of Carreño herself, taken from piano rolls. This bio-bibliography will be divided into two main sections, as well as an appendix and index. It will include the following:

Part I: Biography (further divided into several chapters)

Part II: Works; Discography; Literature & Writings

Appendix: Chronology or timeline of Carreño's concert tours; Alphabetical index of compositions

Index

The Works section will be divided into primary and secondary sources, each arranged chronologically with the following annotations when available or provided:

Title: Transcribed from edition at hand. The titles of unpublished works are determined by reference to autographs, correspondence, or other primary sources.

Dedicatee: Transcribed from edition at hand.

Text (for vocal works): Author or translator, dates, and any other information.

Notes: Any pertinent information, distinguishing features.

(19thc.) Editions: City, publisher, date, plate number (PN), price, holdings locations, and call numbers. Inscriptions, dedications, or distinctive features when available.

(Modern) Editions, facsimiles, reprints: City, publisher, date, OCLC numbers,

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and ISBN.

The Discography will be organized alphabetically by title of each composition with the following annotations:

Title of Composition:

Title of Recording: As given on the recording.

Edition: Format, company, copyright info (year, cassette or disc number)

Artists: Name of performer(s) and instruments.

Works: Pieces on CD.

Liner notes: Author and any other information.

Literature & Writings will be divided into primary and secondary sources, which will include periodicals (reviews of and advertisements for performances and compositions), writings about Carreño, such as biographies or articles, and correspondence. Each subsection will be in an annotated bibliography format. The periodicals subsection will be arranged alphabetically according to the publication title and will include the following annotations:

Title of Publication:

Title of Review or advertisement: Citation, author, and any other pertinent information.

Edition: City/country, publisher, issue, volume, date, and pages.

The subsection listing writings about Carreño will be arranged alphabetically by author and will include the following annotations:

Title: Author

Edition: City/country, publisher, date.

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Abstract:

The correspondence subsection will be arranged alphabetically by author and will include the following annotations:

Correspondence information: Author, recipient, date, location, and page length.

Autograph: Location, call number

Notes: Distinguishing features or any other pertinent information.

Such a project will contribute enormously toward the understanding of this American pianist's life and will ensure that Carreño is accurately portrayed. This project

will result in a beneficial reference source and will act as an access point to materials that were currently only accessible to scholars visiting archives or libraries.

Budget:

I would like to request an award of \$1000 for this research project. The majority of this amount will cover my cost of travel to institutions beyond Vassar College in New York, which include Brown University, Yale University, and the Library of Congress. In addition, this funding would cover any translations of foreign-language texts, scanning/xeroxing of documents that I am not able to physically access, as well as license or permissions fees for materials that are copyrighted.

I have applied for additional funding of \$2100 through the Dena Epstein award in order to cover my cost of travel/lodging to primarily Vassar College, as well as to hire a research assistant to proof-read, gather citations and compile data for the bio-bibliography.