

## Santiago Serrate conducts the world premiere of the opera *Tenorio* by Tomás Marco

**July 28, 2017.-** Santiago Serrate, recipient of a Leonardo Grant from the BBVA Foundation, has conducted the world premiere of the opera *Tenorio* by Tomás Marco. Taking part were the soprano Carmen Gurriarán (in the roles of Lucía, Donna Ana and Donna Inés), the tenor Juan Antonio Sanabria (narration and Don Luis Mejía), the baritone Alfredo García, the work's dedicatee, in the role of Don Juan, and the Modus Novus Chorus and Group.

The Teatro Auditorio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial theater has premiered *Tenorio*, the latest chamber opera composed by Tomás Marco. Serrate obtained one of the 2016 [Leonardo Grants](#) for this project, which has now come to fruition. The grants are awarded by the BBVA Foundation to researchers and cultural creators who are at the mid-points of their careers.

As Tomás Marco himself explains, this opera 'has continued with the musical and poetical examination of some myths I had begun working on in previous operas, such as *El viaje circular* (on the *Odyssey*), *Segismundo* (on *La vida es sueño*) and *El caballero de la triste figura* (on *Don Quixote*).' Marco has also examined in more depth his 'idea of how there can be an operatic vocalism today, and the representative function of characters and orchestra.' With this in mind, he himself wrote the libretto, 'basically the text of Zorrilla with additions from Tirso de Molina, Molière, Lorenzo da Ponte, Lord Byron and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and with a reflection on this myth, which neither saves nor condemns the character: it crystallizes him in history and legend.'

Santiago Serrate notes that from the musical point of view, 'the work develops its own space, whose vocalism is related to that developed previously in the works of Tomás Marco, but adapting it to the text and the characters that are dealt with this time. The function of the orchestra is to bring out the action and at the same time amplify it conceptually, at times becoming a dramatic character or a type of instrumental chorus that comments on the action. Although the language adopted is entirely contemporary, it is fluid and characterized by the stylistic separation of the characters and situations. The singing is mostly conceived so that the texts can be understood as far as that is possible in an opera. The vocal and instrumental music provides a continuum that avoids the gaps that at times occur in a production.'

*Tenorio* was commissioned by the 10th Burgos Musical Summer for 2009 and its director, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, although in the end only a suite was premiered, conducted by Serrate himself.

The world premiere of this opera was in the form of a concert version. The cast included the soprano Carmen Gurriarán (in the roles of Lucía, Donna Ana and Donna Inés), the tenor Juan Antonio Sanabria (narration and Don Luis Mejía), the baritone Alfredo García, the work's dedicatee, in the role of Don Juan, and the Modus Novus Chorus and Group.

Serrate explained that the Leonardo Grant 'has been essential for being able to perform the world premiere of *Tenorio*. It seemed that the curse of Don Juan was hanging over this project, as it could not be brought to life since it was written. We are all very emotional today to be part of this historic event for our musical heritage.' In addition, the Leonardo Grant will make it easier to record the opera and publish it subsequently in CD format.

### **A successful career**

Santiago Serrate (Sabadell, 1975) is a prestigious double-bass player who has received classes in conducting from Antoni Ros Marbá, Arturo Tamayo, Salvador Mas, George Hurst and Otto-Werner-Mueller. He often conducts some of the major Spanish orchestras, as well as groups in Portugal, Italy, China, Greece and Mexico. His commitment to contemporary music is demonstrated in his world premieres of some thirty works of authors of the 20th and 21st century, and his recordings with the Modus Novus Group and the Sax Ensemble.

He has achieved great critical and public success in the more than 60 operas he has conducted, among them *La Voix Humaine* by Poulenc (Santiago de Compostela), *L'Ape Musicale* (Gran Teatro del Liceo), Puccini's *Turandot* (Teatre Principal de Mallorca), *Lo Speciale* by Haydn and *Der Schauspieldirektor* by Mozart (both in the Teatro de la Maestranza) and *Carmen* (Opera de Sabadell).

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