

Vistes al mar

A journey between Catalonia and Chile

About the composers and about the pieces

DAVID SALLERAS (1980)

Tango pour une princesse désespérée (2006)
Il momento perduto (2008)

David Salleras (Figueras, 1980) is a Catalan saxophonist and composer. He studied saxophone at the Conservatori Superior de Música del Liceu in Barcelona. He continued his training as a performer in France where he also began to work professionally as a composer. His compositions are characterized by the presence of folkloric elements of flamenco and tango, as well as truly virtuosic passages for the saxophone. 'Tango pour une princesse désespérée' (Tango for a desperate princess) tells the story of a

princess who is in despair because she cannot be together with her beloved. In this way, the music reflects all the feelings that she experiences: euphoria, anxiety, melancholy, and rage. Il momento perduto (The lost moment) could be considered the soundtrack of a story that refers to a romantic relationship between two individuals. To compose it, Salleras was inspired by old Italian films –the ones filmed in black and white– with their characteristic dramatic style.

EDUARD TOLDRÀ (1895-1962), Arr: Julián Álvarez

Vistes al mar (1921)

Eduard Toldrà (Vilanova i la Geltrú, 1895 – Barcelona, 1962) is one of the most representative composers of the Catalan Noucentisme. As a violinist, he played in orchestras and gave solo recitals, although he always preferred chamber music. This is why he worked intensely with his ensemble, the Quartet Renaixement, from 1912 to 1921. His work 'Vistes al mar', originally composed for strings, was inspired by three poems written by Joan Maragall, which are based on elements typically found in the Mediterranean. Many of his melodies present a popular lyricism with components of Catalan folklore.

The piece was arranged for our quartet by the saxophonist, composer, producer and physicist Julián Álvarez Chaia in 2019. In early 2020, we had the pleasure of conducting one of the last interviews with the composer's daughter, Narcisa Toldrà (1924-2020). Her reaction to the question of what her father would think if he knew that his work would be performed by saxophones, was: 'He would probably take it very well indeed, yes, I'm sure. Because these things didn't bother him at all. He would say the same thing again; that if they do it well, they play it well and are musical, then go ahead.'

JEAN PIERRE KARICH (1953)
Tres aires latinoamericanos (1999)

Jean Pierre Karich (Santiago de Chile, 1953) is a Chilean pianist, composer and pedagogue. He studied at the National Conservatory of the University of Chile and at the École Normale de Paris, France. Currently, Jean Pierre teaches at the IMUC and at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Chile. His work 'Tres aires Latinoamericanos' (Three Latin American airs) was composed for the saxophonist Miguel Villafruela and his quartet back in 1999. This piece, consisting of three small movements, combines popular music from different regions of Chile (trote and tonada) and Argentina (tango). They are pieces of a simple

nature, with a practically unaltered folkloric essence. The trote is a popular dance from the north of Chile. The name comes from the concept of "trotting", corresponding to the steps of horses. The tonada is the folk song par excellence that derives from Arabic-Andalusian forms and it is sung with guitar or harp accompaniment. The tango is undoubtedly one of the most popular folk music and dance styles in the world. Born during the 19th century in Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Montevideo (Uruguay), it is a dance full of sensuality, with elegant and passionate movements.

MARCO CHIAPEROTTI (1975)
Tramontana (2019)

Marco Chiaperotti (Rome, 1975) is a composer who has achieved his own style by fusing classical music techniques with influences from jazz improvisation, as well as rhythmic and sonorous influences from African music. He has composed soundtracks for short and feature films, and dance and theater performances. He studied composition at the Conservatori Superior de Música del Liceu in Barcelona. Marco wrote his

work 'Tramontana' for the Quartet Vela. The piece is inspired by the wind of Menorca, a small Mediterranean island. Because of the flat relief of the island, the 7 winds are very present throughout the territory. However, the most characteristic wind is the north wind (tramontana), a cold, impetuous and constant wind. This wind is reflected in the work mainly through the tempo changes.

MIQUEL DE JORGE (1994)
Hårgalåten (2019)

Miquel de Jorge (Lleida, 1994) is a Catalan violinist and composer, lover of cinema and polytonality. He studied at the Conservatori Superior de Música del Liceu, ESMUC and at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm (Sweden). He has composed music for several audiovisual projects, delving into genres such as horror, comedy, drama and animation. His music is full of details and loaded with symbolism. 'Hårgalåten'

(Sound of Hårga), dedicated to the Quartet Vela, is a Swedish folk song based on a legend of the same name; the people of Hårga were possessed by the devil, who by playing his enchanted violin, made them dance until they dropped dead. Miquel was inspired by the melodies of this song to create a whole new version: "I wanted to explain the story as I imagined it, which is not exactly as in the original legend."

DANIEL LÓPEZ (1994)
Mirall trencat (2015)

Daniel López (Olot, 1994) is a composer known for his versatility and his multi-instrumentalist side. He studied saxophone and composition at the Conservatori Superior de Música del Liceu in Barcelona. Daniel has opted for the interpretation of several instruments, and he also excels in playing many different styles; "I am a restless musician with multiple interests who seeks to develop and be

enriched by all the diversity the 21st century has to offer". Daniel wrote 'Mirall trencat' (Broken mirror) for saxophone quartet in 2015. The name refers to the structure of the work itself and the violent character of the beginning and the end. The piece mixes different styles, although the elements of jazz and 20th century classical music are surely the most remarkable ones.

LUIS ADVIS (1935-2004)
Cinco danzas breves (1998)

Luis Archibaldo de Lourdes Advis Vitaglich (Iquique, 1935 - Santiago, 2004) is one of the most prolific and outstanding Chilean composers of contemporary history. His musical career began at the age of 23, but he was surrounded by music since he was a child: his parents were both amateur musicians. He studied philosophy, and it was during his university years that he became interested in composition. Although he did not formalize his musical studies, Luis studied piano and composition with teachers privately. His vast catalog of works includes compositions that have left an important mark on Chilean society.

The work 'Cinco danzas breves' (Five brief dances) was written in 1998 for the Villafruela Saxophone Quartet. In an interview conducted by Quartet Vela, Miguel Villafruela defined the work as "music of our America with roots in popular music for saxophone quartet." The work consists of five movements of short duration, inspired by the popular music of the American continent. In spite of this, its structure is rather classical and within the academic standards of composition. This is the first and only piece that Advis composed for saxophone quartet.

CARLA OBACH ESTEBAN (1992)
Femmes à la fontaine (2020)

Carla Obach Esteban (Cerdanyola del Vallès, 1992) is a saxophonist, member of the Quartet Vela and composer. She studied music performance at the Conservatori Superior de Música del Liceu de Barcelona, the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln (Germany) and The Royal Academy of Music Aarhus/Aalborg (Denmark). 'Femmes à la fontaine' (Women at the fountain) is a musical evocation of

the homonymous painting by Constant Montald (1862-1944), one of the greatest representatives of Belgian symbolism. The painting is currently at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Belgium. Carla Obach's work is dedicated to the Quartet Vela and includes female voices and double bass. It uses transparent textures and its structure is reminiscent of the folia.