

For Immediate Release

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**PIANIST JORGE FEDERICO OSORIO PERFORMS WORKS BY
MEXICAN COMPOSERS RICARDO CASTRO AND
MANUEL MARÍA PONCE ON *CONCIERTOS ROMÁNTICOS*
TO BE RELEASED BY CEDILLE RECORDS JUNE 9**

Album features Romantic-era concertos with conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería, alongside solo works by both composers



CHICAGO (May 22, 2023) — *Conciertos Románticos*, an album featuring piano concertos and solo works by Mexican composers **Ricardo Castro** and **Manuel María Ponce** performed by Mexican-born pianist **Jorge Federico Osorio** will be released by **Cedille Records** on June 9, 2023. The concertos — Castro's Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 22 and Ponce's Piano Concerto No. 1 "Romántico" — feature the **Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería** led by Mexican conductor **Carlos Miguel Prieto**.

Hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as “one of the most elegant and accomplished pianists on the planet,” Mexican-born and Chicago-based Osorio says: “At the core of this recording are undoubtedly two of the most representative Mexican piano concertos, both bursting with passion, poetry, and drama. Castro and Ponce are two composers that wholly illuminate the beautiful fusion of European and Mexican musical styles. Performing these works with Carlos Miguel Prieto and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería, is not only a celebration of Mexico's rich cultural heritage, but also an opportunity to convey the emotion and passion that is at the heart of the Romantic era.”

The works on the album exemplify the highest point of the romantic musical language in vogue in Mexico at the end of the 19th century, which later initiated the musical Nationalist movement brought on by the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Both Castro (1864–1907) and Ponce (1882–1948) made significant contributions to the development of classical music in Mexico, their compositions reflecting a synthesis of Mexican and European traditions, with influences from Chopin, Liszt, and Debussy.

In the recording's booklet notes, José-María Álvarez writes that Castro's Piano Concerto in A minor, premiered in 1904, exemplifies true romanticism with lavish and spectacular orchestral lines. He notes that this concerto constitutes the first concertante piece for piano that any Mexican or Latin American composer had written up to that time. Ponce's Piano Concerto No. 1 "Romantico," premiered in 1910, simultaneously exhibits themes of great brilliance for the soloist, lyricism, introspection, virtuosity, and beauty writes Álvarez.

Born almost 20 years apart, both Castro and Ponce studied at the National Conservatory of Mexico and were celebrated in their home country before traveling to Europe as young men, travels that had a significant impact on their compositions and their careers and contributing to the Romantic-era sound of their concerti. Castro did not live to see the Mexican Revolution, dying of pneumonia aged 43 in 1907 soon after being appointed director of the National Conservatory of Mexico. Ponce, Álvarez writes, was “a unique personality in the field of musical culture in Mexico, developing many activities in favor of music promotion and artistic enrichment. Ponce combined his brilliant career as a composer with those of pianist, conductor, educator, musicologist, researcher on Mexican musical folklore (resulting in a considerable number of writings), and music critic, among other activities. Likewise, the title of initiator of the musical Nationalist movement fell to Ponce after the consummation of the Mexican Revolution.”

Serving as companion pieces to the concertos, Osorio performs three of Castro's charming and expressive solo works, *Berceuse*, *Canto de amor*, and *Plainte*, and four of Ponce's short solo piano pieces including one of his most popular works, *Gavota*, which captures the romantic nostalgia of Mexican society before the Revolution.

Conciertos Románticos is Osorio's ninth recording for Cedille following his highly acclaimed *The French Album*, *Final Thoughts – The Last Piano Works of Schubert & Brahms*, *Russian Recital*, Carlos Chávez Piano Concerto, *Salón Mexicano*, an entire disc devoted to music of Ponce, a 2-CD set of Debussy and Liszt, and *Piano Español*.

Conciertos Románticos is produced by the Grammy-winning team of **James Ginsburg** (producer) and **Bill Maylone** (engineer). The concertos were recorded August 1 and 8, 2022 at the Sala Nezahualcóyotl in Mexico City (Bogdan Zawistowski, session director); the solo works were recorded November 11, 2022 at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago.

JORGE FEDERICO OSORIO

Recipient of the prestigious Medalla Bellas Artes, the highest honor granted by Mexico's National Institute of Fine Arts, Jorge Federico Osorio has been lauded throughout the world for his superb musicianship, powerful technique, vibrant imagination, and deep passion. He has performed with many of the world's leading orchestras, and has collaborated with such distinguished conductors as Marin Alsop, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, James Conlon, Bernard Haitink, Manfred Honeck, Lorin Maazel, Ken-David Masur, Jorge Mester, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Robert Spano, and Jaap van Zweden, among many others. His

concert tours have taken him to Asia; North, Central, and South America; and Europe, where he has performed at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, London Royal Festival Hall, and Leipzig Gewandhaus, to name a few. Osorio has appeared on Chicago's Symphony Center's distinguished Piano Series on four separate occasions. He has also given two recitals in New York City at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, both of which were highly acclaimed by *The New York Times*. North American festival appearances have included the Hollywood Bowl, Mainly Mozart, Bard, Newport, Grant Park, and Ravinia, where he has performed all five Beethoven concertos with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of James Conlon over two consecutive evenings. Highly revered in his native Mexico, Osorio resides in the Chicagoland area and is a Steinway Artist.

CARLOS MIGUEL PRIETO

Musical America's 2019 Conductor of the Year, Carlos Miguel Prieto was born into a musical family of Spanish and French descent in Mexico City. His charismatic conducting is characterized by its dynamism and the expressivity of his interpretations. Prieto is recognised as a highly influential cultural leader and is the foremost Mexican conductor of his generation. He has been the Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, the country's most important orchestra, since 2007. Prieto has also been Music Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra since 2006, where he has led in the cultural renewal of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. In 2008, he was appointed Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería, a hand-picked orchestra that performs a two-month-long series of summer programmes in Mexico City. In 2022, Prieto became Music Director Designate of North Carolina Symphony Orchestra; he will begin his tenure in the 2023–2024 season. Since 2002, alongside Gustavo Dudamel, Prieto has conducted the Youth Orchestra of the Americas (YOA), which draws young musicians from both American continents. A staunch proponent of music education, Prieto served as Principal Conductor of the YOA from its inception until 2011 when he was appointed Music Director. Prieto is renowned for championing Latin American music and for his dedication to new music. He has conducted over 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers. His recordings include Korngold's Violin Concerto with Philippe Quint and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería, which received two Grammy nominations.

ORQUESTA SINFÓNICA DE MINERÍA

The Music Academy of the Mining Palace is a non-profit private organization, established in 1978 by a group of music-loving engineers, alumni of the National and Autonomous University of Mexico's Engineering Faculty. The Academy sponsors the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería, a professional body of the highest quality, regularly performing a series of summer programmes at the famous Nezahualcóyotl Hall. In the late 18th century, one of the most exquisite neoclassical buildings in the Americas was built in Mexico City: the Palacio de Minería, housing, until 1954, the School of Mining. Mining was the foremost economic activity in colonial Mexico, and the Palace became a center for serious musical activities. In the 20th century, the Palace became the base of the Engineering Faculty, and later a permanent Music Academy was established, thus honoring a fruitful tradition and the commitment of Mexican engineers. The orchestra has been directed by the late Jorge Velazco, Luis Herrera de la Fuente, and Carlos Spierer. Appointed in 2006, Carlos Miguel Prieto is the current principal conductor.

CEDILLE RECORDS

Launched in November 1989 by James Ginsburg, Grammy Award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing and promoting the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area. The label's catalog of more than 200 front-line albums brims with attractive, off-the-beaten-path repertoire from the Baroque era to the present day. Works from the classical canon, when they do appear, are usually heard in particularly imaginative pairings. Cedille has recorded more than 180 Chicago artists and ensembles, with over 80 making their professional recording debuts on the label. Its catalog includes the world premieres of more than 400 classical compositions. Cedille recordings are available on CD, as MP3 and hi-resolution FLAC downloads, and on all major streaming platforms.

CONCIERTOS ROMÁNTICOS

(CDR 90000 221)

Jorge Federico Osorio, piano

Carlos Miguel Prieto, Conductor

Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería

RICARDO CASTRO (1864–1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 22 (23:54)

1 I. Allegro moderato (7:58)

2 II. Andante (8:33)

3 III. Polonaise: Allegro (7:21)

4 Berceuse Op. 36, No. 1 (3:42)

5 Canto de amor (6:27)

6 Plainte Op. 38, No. 2 (3:06)

MANUEL MARÍA PONCE (1882–1948)

Piano Concerto No. 1 "Romántico" (22:48)

7 Allegro Appassionato — (6:45)

8 Andantino amoroso — (11:14)

9 Finale: Allegro (4:47)

10 Arrulladora mexicana (3:35)

11 Gavota (4:11)

12 Romanza de amor (3:31)

13 Intermezzo No. 1 (2:36)

TT: (74:31)

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