





## Complete Piano Works Vol. 1 & 2



## Arturo Nieto-Dorantes

Manuel M. Ponce is the precursor of Mexican nationalism, but his music is not based on the fictional recreation a Pre-Hispanic narrative, nor the dazzling modernity of the post-Revolutionary Mexico. A piano student of Martin Krause, who, in turn, was a pupil of Liszt, Ponce's piano lineage comes directly from Beethoven but his musical soul is deeply rooted in the nostalgia of rural Mexico, the love stories and nostalgic longings of the inhabitants of Zacatecas and Aguascalientes. Like Bartok he collected folk songs, but he also composed songs that reflect so expressively the music of the late 19th century rural Mexico that the lines become blurred.

When we examine what he created and what he collected is hard to tell them apart. He was also a music chameleon who can sound Spanish, Baroque, Cuban, Modern or Mexican with equal ease.

The remarkable piano virtuoso and scholar Arturo Nieto-Dorantes, Chair of the piano department at Laval University in Canada, has embarked in a creative and rigorous journey of recording the complete piano music of Ponce. An arduous enterprise, since very much like Chopin, Ponce left different versions of his music in manuscripts, recordings, printed scores and even pianola rolls. And this was not due to carelessness, but rather to the freedom he gave his performers.

The concert hall, the drawing rooms of educated señoritas or popular street musicians were all invited to perform his works.

Nieto-Dorantes who recently completed a reference recording of Albeniz's Iberia is particularly suited to perform the music of Ponce. Both artists were very close to great singers, Ponce's wife was a gifted French soprano, just as Nieto-Dorantes is the son of a remarkable Mexican couple, a soprano and a baritone with national and international careers. No wonder he performs this music with elegant lyricism and phrasing, as well as with dazzling virtuosity. This is a reference recording of fantastic and diverse Mexican piano music that needs to be heard and enjoyed around the world.