

# PREFACE

Jaime or Jacques Bosch was the best-known guitarist in late nineteenth century Paris, together with Napoléon Coste. He was a Catalan, born in Barcelona in 1826, who spent most of his life in Paris and died there in 1895. He was an active and sociable man, a good performer and composer, and a friend of the painter Edouard Manet. Until now his works have been little known and difficult to find. In this year, 1995, this present edition of eighteen of his works appears in honour of the centenary of his death. As a successor of Sor, a contemporary of Coste, and a predecessor of Tárrega, his compositions will fill a gap in the history of the guitar in the late 19th century.

Edouard Manet wrote to Emile Zola in 1873: "Bosch is unable to go to the Charpentiers on Friday – he is dining out and has two evening receptions. He would be happy to go another time." and to Madame Charpentier at the same time: "Madame, you can count on Pagans next Friday – Bosch, however, is not free but would be delighted to oblige another time."

Bosch was born in Barcelona in 1826, his full name being Jaime Felipe José Bosch Renard (he was christened Jaime, not Jaume which would be the Catalan form). He wrote in his method for the guitar that he knew the classical tradition of violin playing. Like Sor, that other Catalan guitarist, he came to Paris, in his case as a young man of 26 in 1852, where he soon came to be referred to as "Le roy de la guitare" (the old spelling "roy" indicating a certain old-style dignity). In Paris he was known as Jacques Bosch. He published much, played frequently, and in 1857 played in Germany (Mainz and Frankfurt). He moved in Paris society. He dedicated his opus 85, *Plainte moresque*, to the painter Edouard Manet, who contributed a lithograph for its title-page (reproduced in this edition). We should beware, though, of thinking that that title-page is a portrait of Bosch: more probably it is a romantic idea, by Manet, of a Moorish subject, because of the title of the piece. Manet had a strong penchant

for Spanish subjects, and also for the guitar. His famous picture "Le chanteur espagnol" is said to have been inspired by Huerta, although again we know that the picture is not a portrait of Huerta but rather a painting of a hired sitter (from Seville). Bosch died on 30 March 1895 at his home at 25 Rue des Dames, Paris, and is buried in the Cimetière Saint-Ouen.

Most of what we know about Bosch comes from an article on him in Felipe Pedrell's *Diccionario Biográfico y Bibliográfico de Músicos* (Barcelona, 1897), pp. 211-2, which was largely (but not completely) reproduced in Domingo Prat's *Diccionario de Guitarristas* (Buenos Aires, 1934). Pedrell corresponded with Bosch; indeed, five letters from Bosch to Pedrell are conserved in the Biblioteca de Catalunya in Barcelona, with details of what was happening in Paris. According to Pedrell, Bosch wrote an opera entitled *Roger de Flor*, as well as his method for the guitar and many compositions for the guitar. Pedrell praised in particular a set of ten songs composed by Bosch for voice and guitar on French texts by Georges Montière, which he said revived the art of accompanying the voice from the times of the vihuela and the lute.

It seems that the composer Charles Gounod was a friend of Bosch and collaborated with him in at least one work, a *Passacaille*. Prat writes in his *Diccionario*, in the article "Gounod":

Gounod fué íntimo amigo del guitarrista español Jaime Bosch, para el cual la casa del gran músico francés era un segundo hogar. Escribió una obra para guitarra, titulada "Passacaille", para la cual se asesoró en la parte técnica con dicho guitarrista.

("Gounod was a close friend of the Spanish guitarist Jaime Bosch, for whom the house of the great French composer was a second home. He (Gounod) wrote a work for guitar entitled 'Passacaille', for which he consulted the said guitarist on the technical aspect.")