

# J. Rodrigo – Invocacion y Danza (Homenaje a De Falla)

## Notes

This piece is one of the famous works of the guitar repertoire in more than one regard. It's a masterpiece, great to play and to listen to, and therefore loved by many, but it's also the center of one of the big debates about manuscript and editions interpretations. J. Rodrigo being blind and not guitarist (he was a pianist), his pieces often show gray areas where what is written cannot be played on the guitar (Rodrigo, *Invocacion y Danza (Homenaje a Manuel De Falla)*, 1961). Great guitarists have come to help and created their editions, sometimes working with the composer himself, or his family.

Regarding this piece, two superstar guitarists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Alirio Diaz (the dedicatee) and Pepe Romero, have published their own edition. They sometimes show very big differences with the manuscript and between themselves (see examples below) (Rodrigo, *Invocacion y Danza (Homenaje a Manuel de Falla)*, 1961) (Rodrigo, *Invocacion y Danza (homenaje a Manuel de Falla)*, 1972).

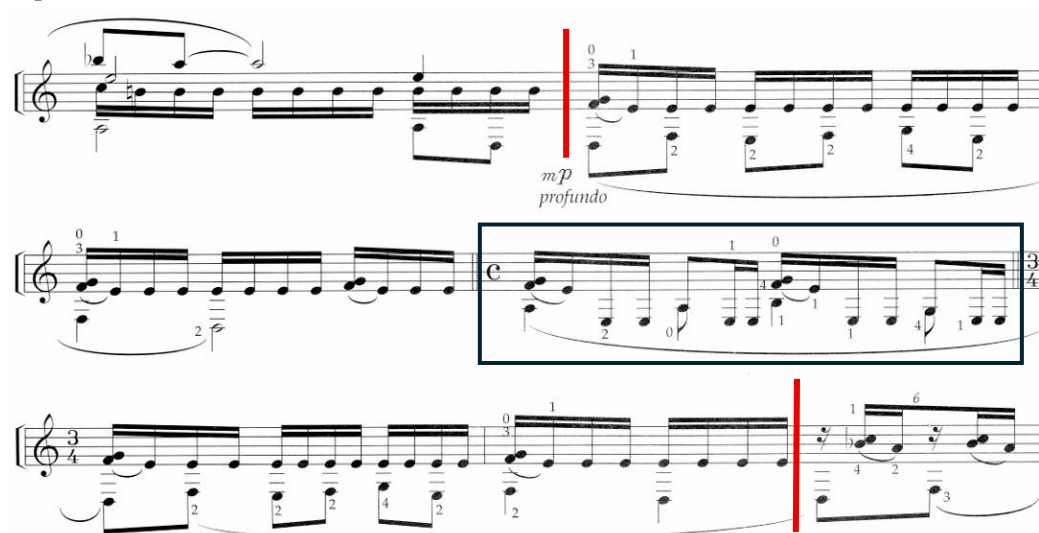
Nowadays, the Pepe Romero edition is the one acknowledged by the family of J. Rodrigo, and has been reedited with the *Ediciones Joaquin Rodrigo*.

### *Manuscript of J. Rodrigo*



The image shows a handwritten manuscript of a guitar piece. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It features a melodic line with various ornaments and a bass line with complex fingerings. A red vertical line is drawn through the manuscript, separating the two systems. The second system continues the piece with similar notation and includes a 'vac' (vacillando) marking with an upward arrow. The manuscript is filled with handwritten notes, including fingerings and dynamic markings.

### *Pepe Romero edition*



The image shows a printed edition of the same piece. It consists of three systems of music, all in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The notation is clean and includes detailed fingerings and dynamic markings such as 'mp' and 'profundo'. A red vertical line is drawn through the printed edition, separating the first and second systems. The second system is enclosed in a black box. The printed edition shows significant differences in notation and fingerings compared to the manuscript.

## Alirio Diaz edition

Bars 28-32 : Here, we can see the original intention of Rodrigo, that was then modified by Romero, changing some notes and most importantly : the rhythm. Diaz, in this instance, doesn't even bother to include it in his edition and deletes the whole bar

From manuscript (Rodrigo, Invocacion y Danza, 1961)

In the manuscript of the piece, these arpeggios cannot be played the way they are written at the required tempo, and the fingers cannot stretch through the board to reach the notes in time

From edition by Alirio Diaz (Rodrigo, Invocacion y Danza, 1972)

Arpeggios can now be played but suffer heavy modifications.

Bar 46 : From Pepe Romero's edition, the arpeggios have been a little bit simplified, but are closer to the original version than Diaz' version

## Tuning

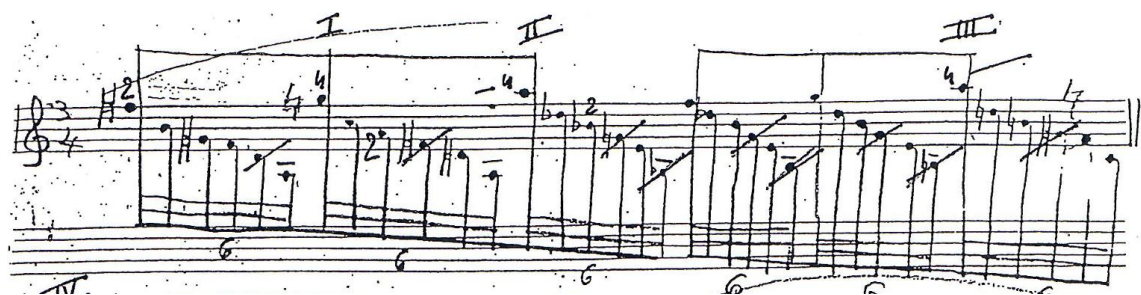
Even with the 6<sup>th</sup> string already tuned one tone lower (6=D), I decided to tune the 7<sup>th</sup> string in D too, so that some passages where 2 notes should be played on the 6<sup>th</sup> string (and are therefore impossible) are now possible. It also provides new rhythmical possibilities in the *arpeggio* section (see below).

6=D / 7 = D / 8 = G

## Non solvable issues

Unfortunately, some passages remain unplayable even with the help of the 8-string guitar (see examples below), often because the pitch of the problematic notes are in the medium or high range, or because the stretch between two notes on the fretboard is technically not possible.

While I will not list all of the impossibilities that cannot be solved with the 8-string guitar, I will try to find all of the places where we **can** offer solutions (or alternatives) with the extra basses.



Bar 49 : the arpeggios here are unplayable because of unrealistic choices of notes, as the stretch of the fingers cannot reach the notes written. Since they are placed in the medium range, the 8-string guitar and its extra basses in the low range are no help.



Bar 90 : the combination of high/low pitch is in this case impossible, as no open strings are used. Even with extra basses, the chosen notes make it non-viable.

## Possible improvements

In this piece, even with all the problems in the score, we unfortunately cannot find so many solutions with the 8-string guitar. Only a few places could be improved following the exact score, but sometimes can also make it even more difficult. In this case, solutions only use the 7<sup>th</sup> string, as the 8<sup>th</sup> string cannot offer new feasible fingerings given the speed or the finger stretch.

- Bar 30 – 1) : With 2 strings tuned in D, it is now possible to play the whole bar, including the place where there's a G (that can only be played on the 6<sup>th</sup> string). One still has to be careful as to make the melody clear in this section, as the heavy accompaniment in the low range could overpower the melodic line, also in the bass.
- Bar 36 – 2) : See *Alternatives*, where an improvement can be gained by adapting the score a little.
- Bar 42 – 3) : The 7<sup>th</sup> string tuned in D also offers a solution for this chord. In position V, it would not be possible to play that chord as all bass notes (D-A-Eb) can only be played on string 5-6. With the open D as the 7<sup>th</sup> string, we can now play the A and Eb on strings 5-6 and play the full chord.

## Alternatives

Some alternatives can also be found, where we cannot exactly play what is written but, with the help of the 8-string guitar, we can offer new ideas to find a closer way to the original score. These possibilities are of course a suggestion, as every artist could have a different opinion on these artistic choices.

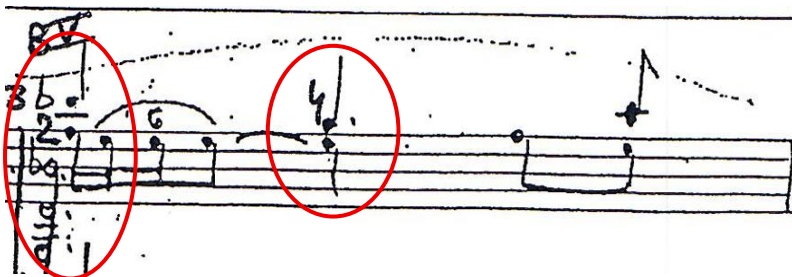
- Bar 36 – 2) : The chord here is technically playable, *if* the fingers are capable of stretching in an awkward position (big stretch between fingers 3-4), but usually not played that way as the transition and intensity needed make it very difficult. By octaviating the low G down into the open 8<sup>th</sup> string, we can change the position with an open D and go to position III and now keep the E ringing as written while playing the high G on the 1<sup>st</sup> string. While the fingering is still very difficult, this alternative is actually offering us an improvement to follow the exact score. Furthermore, the intensity needed in that chord will actually be enhanced by the very low G on the 8<sup>th</sup> string.
- Bar 46 – 4) : The arpeggios here cannot be played as written, even with the 8-string guitar (improvement or alternative). However, the commonly used solution here for editions and guitarists is to simply delete the problematic note and thus create an arpeggio with less notes (see Alirio Diaz' edition, where the double sextuplet becomes an octuplet). With the solution of replacing some of the impossible notes by open strings in the bass, and with an **extra** string (open 5<sup>th</sup> in A, open 6<sup>th</sup> in D, open 7<sup>th</sup> in D), we could finally have the right number of note in the arpeggio. This would allow us to at least respect the rhythmical pattern since we cannot play the exact notes anyway.

## Interesting sections



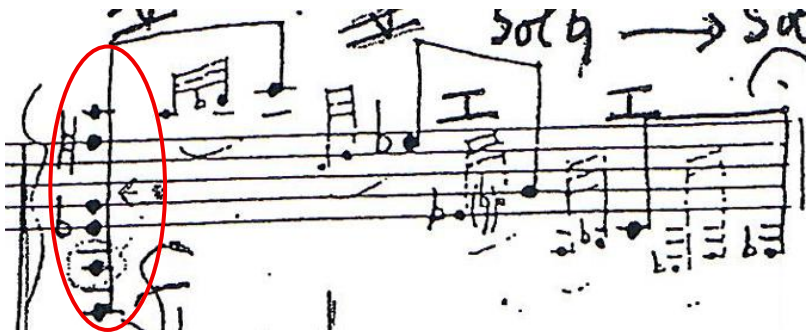
1) Bar 30

Having 2 strings tuned in D (6 + 7) allows for the G and E to be played simultaneously.



2) Bar 36 (Alternative) + solution

With 8=G, it's now an open string (one octave lower), which allows us to adapt the fingerings and play all the notes.



3) Bar 42

Having 2 strings tuned in D (6 + 7) allows for the D and A to be played simultaneously in position V.



4) Bar 46 (Alternative)

Here, the notes are still not possible, but the rhythmical pattern could be respected by playing the extra 7<sup>th</sup> string in D.

### Works Cited

Rodrigo, J. (1961). *Invocacion y Danza (Homenaje a Manuel De Falla)*.

Rodrigo, J. (1961). *Invocacion y Danza (Homenaje a Manuel de Falla)*. (P. Romero, Ed.) Ediciones Joaquin Rodrigo.

Rodrigo, J. (1972). *Invocacion y Danza (homenaje a Manuel de Falla)*. (A. Diaz, Ed.)