

Minnesota Orchestra
 Carlos Miguel Prieto, conductor
 Gabriela Montero, piano

Friday, February 3, 2023, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall
 Saturday, February 4, 2023, 8 pm | Orchestra Hall

Maurice Ravel	<i>Rapsodie espagnole</i> Prélude à la nuit Malagueña Habanera Feria	ca. 15'
Gabriela Montero	Piano Concerto No. 1, <i>Latin</i> Mambo Andante moderato Allegro Venezolano <i>Gabriela Montero, piano</i>	ca. 31'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Carlos Chávez	Symphony No. 2, <i>Sinfonía India</i> [in one movement]	ca. 11'
Manuel de Falla	Suite from <i>The Three-Cornered Hat</i> Introduction: Afternoon Dance of the Miller's Wife (Fandango) The Neighbor's Dance (Seguidillas) The Miller's Dance (Farruca) Final Dance	ca. 18'

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [YourClassical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities. The February 3 concert will also be broadcast live on [Twin Cities PBS \(TPT-2\)](#) and available for streaming at minnesotaorchestra.org and on the Orchestra's social media channels.



Carlos Miguel Prieto, conductor

Carlos Miguel Prieto's charismatic conducting and expressive interpretations have led to critically acclaimed performances with orchestras throughout the world, including a memorable debut with the Minnesota Orchestra in 2017, when he stepped in on short notice to lead concerts in place of David Zinman. He is recognized as a highly influential cultural leader and is the foremost Mexican conductor of his generation, and was recognized by *Musical America* as the 2019 Conductor of the Year. Since 2007 he has been music director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, considered that country's most important orchestra. Prieto has also been music director of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra since 2006. In 2008 he was appointed music director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería. In February 2022, he added another appointment as music director of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra starting with the 2023-24 season; he is acting as music director designate for the 2022-23 season. He is renowned for championing Latin American music, as well as his dedication to new music, and places equal importance on advocacy of works by Black composers such as Florence Price, Margaret Bonds and Courtney Bryan. He has conducted more than 100 world premieres of works by Mexican and American composers, many of which were commissioned by him. More: arabella-arts.com, carlosmiguelprieto.com.



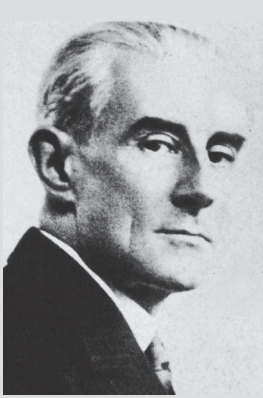
Gabriela Montero, piano

Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Montero, who makes her Minnesota Orchestra debut this week in the rare capacity of a soloist performing a concerto she composed, has garnered critical acclaim and a devoted following around the world for her visionary interpretations and unique compositional gifts. In 2018, she was the recipient of the prestigious Heidelberger Frühling Music Prize. Recent and forthcoming highlights of her calendar include debuts with the New World Symphony, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony, Orquesta de València and Bournemouth Symphony, the latter of which featured her as artist in residence for the 2019-20 season. In addition, she has performed with many of the leading orchestras of the world including the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Pittsburgh Symphony, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Dresden Philharmonic and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, among a plethora of others. Her discography includes a 2019 album featuring the concerto she performs this week, along with Ravel's G-major Piano Concerto, recorded with the Orchestra of the Americas under Carlos Miguel Prieto. A committed advocate for human rights, Montero was named an Honorary Consul by Amnesty International in 2015 and recognized with Outstanding Work in the Field of Human Rights by the Human Rights Foundation for her ongoing commitment to human rights advocacy in her native Venezuela. More: imgartists.com, gabrielamontero.com.



Sarah Hicks, broadcast host

For the concert on February 3, Sarah Hicks serves as host and writer of the Twin Cities PBS broadcast and online livestream *This Is Minnesota Orchestra*. Hicks, the Minnesota Orchestra's principal conductor of Live at Orchestra Hall, has led a broad range of programs since joining the Orchestra as assistant conductor in 2006. Her notable projects here have included co-creating the *Inside the Classics* series and *Sam & Sarah* series with Orchestra violist Sam Bergman and leading original productions with collaborators such as PaviElle French, Kevin Kling, Peter Rothstein, Robert Elhai and The Moving Company. She has been an artistic leader in concerts featuring artists from Minnesota's popular music scene including Dessa—with whom she and the Orchestra also made a live-in-concert recording on Doomtree Records, and will collaborate with again in August—and The New Standards. In addition, she led a concert broadcast and livestream with Cloud Cult and the Orchestra that won a 2022 Upper Midwest Emmy Award. She has led several movie concerts with the Orchestra this season, with *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* on the schedule later this month and *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* coming in April. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Maurice Ravel

Born: March 7, 1875,
Ciboure, Basses-Pyrénées,
France

Died: December 28, 1937,
Paris, France

Rapsodie espagnole

Composed: March 15, 1908

Rapsodie espagnole, the Frenchman Maurice Ravel's first published orchestral work, is Spanish to the core, subtly and brilliantly evoking the sights, sounds, colors and physical sensations of this land. Ravel's mother was of Basque heritage, so Ravel grew up familiar with traditional Spanish music, and he drew on this for his *Rapsodie*. It was written in 1907 within the space of 30 days and given its world premiere the following year in Paris.

The Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, whose music from *The Three-Cornered Hat* concludes today's concert, heartily endorsed the authentic Spanish flair in *Rapsodie espagnole*, noting that "This 'Hispanization' is not achieved merely by drawing upon popular

'folk' sources (except in the jota in 'Feria'), but rather through the free use of the modal rhythms and melodies and ornamental figures of our 'popular' music, none of which has altered in any way the natural style of the composer."

evocations of night, dances and a festival

prélude à la nuit. The *Rapsodie* is in four movements of approximately equal duration. The *Prélude à la nuit* opens with a veiled, diaphanous sound resulting from the unusual spacing of muted violins and violas. This functions as a backdrop against which a number of small motifs are played. The dynamic range throughout is subdued, never rising above mezzo forte, and the delicacy of orchestration is extraordinary. The movement is often said to evoke the languor of a lazy, warm Andalusian night.

malagueña. The following *Malagueña* is rhythmically much more active. It begins quietly in the double basses and rises to a brilliant climax. The English horn next gives forth a plaintive, exotic arabesque, after which the basses return with their *Malagueña* motif. The movement seems not so much to end as to evaporate into thin air.

habanera. The *Habanera* had its origins in an unpublished piece Ravel had written in 1895 for two pianos. So closely does it resemble Debussy's *Soirée dans Grenade* (1903) that Ravel noted the date of his original piano version in the score to protect himself against accusations of plagiarism.

one-minute notes

Ravel: *Rapsodie espagnole*

Ravel grew up familiar with traditional Spanish music, and he drew on this for his *Rapsodie*. An understated *Malagueña* and a vigorous *Habanera* lead to a vigorous finale that overflows with melodic invention.

Montero: Piano Concerto No. 1, *Latin*

Venezuelan-born Gabriela Montero's *Latin* Piano Concerto—performed this week with the composer as soloist—merges the European classical concerto form with idioms, traditions and characteristics of her native continent. Montero notes that her concerto reflects South America's complexities and contradictions, from an opening *Mambo* that includes surface celebrations and elements of disruption, to a closing movement that cites the Venezuelan *pajarillo* dance, interrupted by reminders of forces that "hold our continent hostage to tyranny in its multiple guises."

Chávez: *Symphony No. 2, Sinfonía India*

Carlos Chávez's one-movement *Sinfonía India* is based on traditional melodies of Indigenous tribes from the western states of his home country of Mexico, fused with European classical elements. Of special note are a solo horn singing a tune from the Yaqui people of Sonora and a percussion section that employs several instruments of Indigenous origin.

Falla: *Suite from The Three-Cornered Hat*

This suite, comprising selected movements from the composer's Suites No. 1 and 2 selected by conductor Carlos Miguel Prieto, are a mosaic of vibrant dances and colorful melodies infused with the character and charm of the Spanish countryside.

feria. The *Feria* conjures up the brilliance, commotion and joyous confusion of a Spanish festival, offering the composer splendid opportunities for dazzling orchestral effects and colors.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 piccolos, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, castanets, tamtam, triangle, tambourine, xylophone, celesta, 2 harps and strings

Program note by **Robert Markow.**



Gabriela Montero
Born: May 10, 1970,
 Caracas, Venezuela

Piano Concerto No. 1, Latin
Premiered: March 20, 2016

no matter how many concerts you attend, chances are you have never encountered a classical musician quite like Gabriela Montero. The Venezuelan pianist has all the bona fides one would expect of a top-tier performer: a prodigious childhood, exquisite artistry combined with flawless technique and limitless expressiveness, and a busy concert career full of performances with world-class orchestras. Less typical of the profession is that Montero is also a passionate human rights activist; in 2018, she became the first woman to receive the International Beethoven Award from the Beethoven Academy in Bonn, which honors musicians for their advocacy and dedication to human rights, peace, freedom, inclusion and the war on poverty. Three years earlier she was named an Honorary Consul by Amnesty International, and the Human Rights Foundation has recognized her for her ongoing commitment to human rights advocacy in Venezuela. Montero's current hometown is Easton, Maryland, where she recently launched her own year-round residency and concert series that has brought in major guest stars such as Yuja Wang and Joshua Bell.

a complementary profession

Adjacent to her performing career, Montero is also a composer. Her works provide an outlet for her to express the passion and anguish she feels about what has happened to Venezuela and its people over the past quarter century. In her first piano concerto, composed in 2015-16 and aptly titled *Latin*, Montero widened her

focus to celebrate what she describes as “the complex and often contradictory character of Latin America, from the rhythmically exuberant to the forebodingly demonic.” By performing it with the Minnesota Orchestra this week, she joins a small and impressive circle of composer-pianists who have played their own concertos with the ensemble, most notably Amy Beach in 1917 and Sergei Rachmaninoff seven times between 1920 and 1942.

Montero's modest but growing catalog of compositions also includes the piano-and-orchestra work *Ex Patria*—a tribute to her home country's people that was featured on her recording that won the 2015 Latin Grammy for Best Classical Album—and *Babel*, a composition for piano and string orchestra premiered in 2019 that she calls a reflection of “the joys and the frustration behind the absurdity of trying to speak in a world that doesn't want to listen; to cut through the noise and through the silence.”

the composer as storyteller

In her liner notes for the 2019 recording of the *Latin* Concerto on the Orchid label with the Orchestra of the Americas—led by Carlos Miguel Prieto, conductor of this week's Minnesota Orchestra concerts—Montero writes: “[I] consider myself to be a musician whose primary role is to tell stories that reflect the wide gamut of human experience across both time and geography. Every era and continent has its story to tell, however joyful or troubling, from Renaissance Europe to the contemporary Americas, and composers are well positioned not only to tell it, but to provide a unique form of social commentary....[My] Piano Concerto No. 1, the *Latin* Concerto, honors the musical traditions that have shaped me, while inviting the cultural idioms of my native continent to the concert halls of Europe and the wider world. European formalism and the informality of Latin America's rich, rhythmical identity merge in a complementary dance of both the joyful and macabre.

“Unlike my previous work for piano and orchestra—the specifically Venezuelan polemic *Ex Patria* (2011), a musical portrait of a country in collapse—the *Latin* Concerto draws upon the spirit of the broader South American continent. For every suggestion of surface celebration in the *Mambo*, for instance, there are undercurrents of disruption. The third-movement *Allegro Venezolano*, which cites the well-known Venezuelan *Pajarillo*, is interrupted at times by the dark arts of black magic, a symbolic reminder of the malevolent forces that, too often, hold our continent hostage to tyranny in its multiple guises.”

Montero was the soloist for her concerto's world premiere performance on March 20, 2016, at the Leipzig Gewandhaus, with Kristjan Järvi leading the MDR Leipzig Symphony Orchestra.

Instrumentation: solo piano with orchestra comprising 2 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, timpani, bongos, brake drum, large claves, piccolo claves, congas, 4 cowbells, cymbals, guiro, hi-hat, maracas, pedal bass tom, rototom, tambourine, tamtam, 3 tom-toms, piccolo triangle, 3 wood blocks, marimba, harp and strings

Program note by *Elizabeth Schwartz* © 2023.



Carlos Chávez
Born: June 13, 1899,
 Mexico City
Died: August 2, 1978,
 Mexico City

**Symphony No. 2,
*Sinfonía India***
Premiered: January 23, 1936

Carlos Chávez was a dominant force in 20th-century Mexican music. He served for 20 years as conductor of the Mexico Symphony Orchestra (1928 to 1948), wrote articles throughout his life for the newspaper *El Universal*, was for a time director of the National Conservatory, and founded and directed the Mexican National Institute of Fine Arts. Chávez composed seven symphonies, five ballets, concertos for violin and piano, and a number of vocal and instrumental works. But, like every other Mexican composer writing in the classical sphere, Chávez faced the problem of how to write an authentic Mexican music, given Western classical music's European origins. Like so many other composers in this period—Vaughan Williams in England, Bartók and Kodály in Hungary and Chávez's good friend Aaron Copland in America—he was drawn to the folk music of his own country.

"a mixture of influences"

But finding an authentic "native" music in a country as ethnically and historically diverse as Mexico proved a challenge, and Chávez responded in several ways. His interest in native materials was not that of a dilettante, and his contact with that music was direct. Chávez's maternal grandfather was Indigenous, his family took their vacations in the Tlaxcala region, and as a young man Chávez came to know and love the folk music of the various regions of Mexico. While serving as director of the National Conservatory, he established sources for Mexican music. First, the music of the nomadic Indigenous tribes of Mexico, rather than the Aztecs. Second, the music brought to Mexico over a period

of centuries by its European invaders. And third, the inevitable fusion of those different kinds of music. Chávez recognized that this heritage was diverse: "Mexican music is largely the product of a mixture of influences, that is, of cross-breeding," he said.

While Chávez did not make a point of building his music on specifically native materials, one exception is his *Sinfonía India*, composed in 1935-36 while on a visit to New York City. Chávez himself conducted the first performance with the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra on January 23, 1936. The *Sinfonía India* is concise: it is in one continuous movement that spans only about 12 minutes, and Chávez based it on authentic melodies of Indigenous tribes from the far western states of Mexico.

an energetic start

The *Sinfonía India* is packed with high-energy music throughout its brief runtime. The *Vivo* gets off to a blistering start with music that skips asymmetrically along alternating 5/8 and 2/4 meters. All this serves as an introduction to the first Indigenous melody, a quick-paced tune from the Huichole of Nayarit (on the west coast of Mexico near Mazatlán), announced by oboes and violins. Alternating with the opening *Vivo*, this speeds directly into the second Indigenous melody, a lovely tune from the Yaqui people of Sonora first presented by the E-flat clarinet and then taken up by a number of other instruments. A third theme, also from Sonora, is sung by solo horn at a slower tempo and quickly extended by the woodwinds. The final theme, in a very fast 6/8 marked *Poco più vivo*, comes from the Isla Tiburón, off the coast of Sonora in the Gulf of California. Chávez does not develop these themes but quickly reprises them before the music rushes to its close without the slightest relaxation of tempo.

A further question facing Mexican composers writing in the classical tradition is the issue of using native Mexican instruments in their music. In the *Sinfonía India*, Chávez chose two paths, providing material for two different sets of percussion instruments. The "authentic" percussion included such instruments as the Yaqui drum, clay rattle, Yaqui metal ratter, water gourd, tenabari (a string of butterfly cocoons), teponaxtles (a drum with different pitches), grijutian (a string of deer hooves), tlalpanhuehuatl (a cylindrical drum), and raspador Yaqui. But—a pragmatist—he specified that these instruments could be replaced by maracas, rattle, tenor drum, xylophone, bass drum and rasping stick.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes, piccolo (1 flute also doubling piccolo), 3 oboes, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, timpani, snare drum, tenor drum, bass drum, suspended cymbal, claves, grijutian, guiro, Indian drum, maracas, metal rattle, soft rattle, rasping stick, water gourd, xylophone, harp and strings

Program note by *Eric Bromberger*.



Manuel de Falla

Born: November 23, 1876,
Cádiz, Spain

Died: November 14, 1946,
Alta Gracia, Argentina

Suite from *The Three-Cornered Hat*

Premiered: July 22, 1919 (original ballet)

In 1916 the great Russian impresario Serge Diaghilev approached Spanish composer Manuel de Falla with a proposal. Diaghilev had just heard Falla's haunting *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* and suggested using it as the basis for a new ballet by his company the Ballets Russes, then presenting a season in Madrid. But Falla had a different suggestion: he wanted to write a new work based on Pedro de Alarcón's novel *El Corregidor y la Molinera*—"The Magistrate (or governor or mayor) and the Miller's Wife." Diaghilev agreed to let Falla try this idea out as a pantomime, and Falla composed a score for small orchestra, which was produced in Madrid in April 1917. Diaghilev liked the pantomime, but suggested some revisions for its use as a ballet, including new scenes and an expanded orchestra.

The result was the ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat*, first produced in London on July 22, 1919. That premiere brought a spectacular collaboration: Diaghilev oversaw the production, Leonid Massine designed the choreography and danced the part of the miller, while Tamara Karsavina danced the part of his wife; Pablo Picasso painted the decor and Ernst Ansermet conducted the orchestra. It was a great success then, and it has remained one of Falla's most popular works.

romance, humor and charm

The reasons for that popularity are not hard to discover: *The Three-Cornered Hat* is a story full of romance, humor and charm, it breathes the warm atmosphere of Andalusia, and it is told in brilliant music. The plot tells of a miller and his beautiful young wife, their flirtations and intrigues, and the trickery that ensues when a third party comes upon this situation. The couple is visited one day by a corregidor (the magistrate, whose three-cornered hat symbolizes his authority). The corregidor quickly develops an eye for the beautiful young wife. He orders the miller arrested to clear his own path to the wife, but his flirtation ends in humiliation when he falls into a stream. The corregidor lays out his clothes to dry, and the returning miller discovers them and puts them on, then sets out in pursuit of the magistrate's

wife. It all ends happily: the police rush in and accidentally arrest their own magistrate, the miller and his wife swear their mutual devotion, and the ballet concludes as the happy townspeople toss an effigy of the magistrate in a blanket.

Falla drew two orchestral suites from *The Three-Cornered Hat*, and they include almost all the music from the ballet. The version the Minnesota Orchestra performs this week has not previously been heard at Orchestra Hall, and with good reason: this week's conductor, Carlos Miguel Prieto, has selected movements from both suites to provide a broader view of the ballet's music than is offered in just one suite. Prieto's version consists of the first two movements of the Suite No. 1 followed by the entirety of Suite No. 2.

the conductor's suite

A powerful *Introduction* that sets the scene, and the relaxed *Afternoon* depicts a village in the sultry Andalusian countryside in southern Spain (in the original production, this introduction also gave the audience a chance to admire Picasso's curtain before it was raised). The crisp *Dance of the Miller's Wife* shows her in all her charm and energy—this dance takes the form of a fandango, a dance of accelerating tempo.

Matters continue with *The Neighbor's Dance*, a seguidilla, which is a dance of Andalusian origin. Neighbors gather at the miller's house on St. John's Eve—it is a warm summer evening, and they drink and dance. *The Miller's Dance* is a farruca, an ancient dance associated with the Galicia region. This one is full of rhythmic energy, and the miller dances it to demonstrate his strength and masculinity to his wife. It opens with solos for horn and English horn, but then the music turns rough: full of hard-edged strength, it grows stronger as it develops, finishing with a great flourish of energy. The *Final Dance* is a jota, a lively dance from northern Spain, often danced to the accompaniment of guitar and castanets; here it is danced to celebrate the defeat of the corregidor. Falla draws themes from the dance of the miller's wife in the first scene and drives the suite to its close in a blaze of energy.

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, castanets, tamtam, triangle, xylophone, glockenspiel, piano (doubling celesta), harp and strings

Program note by **Eric Bromberger**.