

**Sueños de España – The Spirit of Spain**

**Thursday, April 5 – 8 pm**

**Robert Bernhardt**, conductor

**Camille Zamora**, soprano

**Celina Rotundo & Hugo Patyn**, dancers

**Tomas Galvan & Gimena Herrera**, dancers

**Robert Uchida**, violin

**Tara Whittaker**, flute

**GIMENEZ**

***La Boda de Luis Alonso: Intermedio***

**GIMENEZ**

**“La tarantula é un bicho mú malo”** (Zapateado from *La Tempranica*)

**CHAPI**

**Arieta** (from *El rey que rabió*)

**CHAPI**

**“Carceleras”** (from *Las hijas del Zebedeo*)

**MORES**

**Tanguera**

**FALLA**

**Spanish Dance No. 1** (from *La Vida Breve*)

**BIZET**

**Carmen: excerpts**

**INTERMISSION** (20 minutes)

**MÁRQUEZ**

**Danzon No. 2**

**TYZIK**

**Mallorca**

**GARDEL**

**“Por una Cabeza”**

**LECUONA**

***Suite Espagnol: Andalucia***

**CHUECA / VALVERDE**

**El tango de la Menegilda** (from *La Gran Vía*)

**RODRIGUEZ**

**La cumparsita**

**A Jeff Tyzik Production**

program subject to change

Program Notes

**Gerónimo Giménez** (1854-1923) was an important conductor and composer, most famous for some of his works written in the zarzuela style – a well-established Spanish opera form that began to regain popularity with the emergence of Spanish nationalism. A number of excerpts from his zarzuela operas continue to hold the stage in Spain, while excerpts are popular in concert. ***La boda de Luis Alonso*** is a zarzuela that premiered in January 1897, from which we will hear an orchestral interlude.

***La tempranica*** is another zarzuela. It premiered in 1900, and is considered one of the finest examples of the form. Composed by Giménez, the work’s title could be translated as “the headstrong one,” referring to its main character, Maria. The colourful ***“La tarantula é un bicho mú malo”*** is a Zapateado (a traditional Spanish dance) sung in the first scene by a young boy (a “trouser” role for a soprano) nominally about the wicked ways of the tarantula, but between the lines is a warning about the dangers of love.

***El rey que rabió*** (“The Raging King”) is a zarzuela with music by **Ruperto Chapi** (1851-1909), which premiered in Madrid in 1891. Its satirical libretto was written by Miguel Ramos Carrión y Vital Aza, and while set in an imaginary country, certainly alludes to events in Spain. Rosa is the niece of the mayor, and is in love with the titular king, and sings her ***Arieta*** in Act II.

***Las hijas del Zebedeo*** (“The daughters of Zebedeo”) is another zarzuela farce with music by **Chapi**, which premiered in Madrid in 1889. The romanza ***“Carceleras”*** is sung by the character of Luisa, who has managed to create all manner of entanglements and misunderstandings without meaning to. She addresses her song “to the owner of my love.”

*Tanguera* is a tango-inspired orchestral composition by Argentinian composer **Mariano Mores** (1918-2016), which has proved to be a versatile and popular piece. It has shown up in many guises. Mores himself recorded it in 1957 – one of several recordings of the work. Film director Baz Luhrman adapted *Tanguera* by interpolating it with “Roxanne” by The Police in his film *Moulin Rouge*. It was also used in the 1985 Broadway musical revue *Tango Argentino*.

**Manuel de Falla** (1876-1946) was a pioneering Spanish composer – one of the first from his homeland to capitalize on the late 19th century trend of nationalism to infuse his classical training (included an extended time in Paris soaking up all he could from Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, and others) with the music of his native land. *La Vida Breve* (“The Brief Life”) was an early two-act opera, composed in 1905 by never staged until 1913. The entire work lasts only an hour, and has as much instrumental music as vocal music. The **Spanish Dance No. 1** is a popular concert work to this day.

By the time the opera *Carmen* premiered in 1875, the tide of popular taste was beginning to change. The grand spectacles, involving larger-than-life characters, was giving way to stories of ordinary people and everyday events. Yet, *Carmen* was still a little ahead of its time. Its tale of the gypsy woman who defies the morals and strictures of the day to pursue love and happiness on her own terms shocked its first audiences, and the initial response to the opera was less than encouraging. Tragically, its composer, **Georges Bizet** (1838-1875), died before popular opinion began to swing the other way, establishing *Carmen* as one of the greatest and most often-performed operas ever written.

Tonight’s concert presents several excerpts from *Carmen*, in several different guises. We will hear instrumental excerpts, taken from the first of two purely orchestral suites that were made from Bizet’s score. Camille Zamora will also sing two of Carmen’s most famous arias. We hear first three excerpts from **Suite No. 1**: the **Prélude**, the **Aragonaise**, and the **Danse bohème**. Next is the aria “**Près des remparts de Séville**” (“Near the ramparts of Seville”), sung by Carmen as she recalls a tavern she and her fellow gypsies frequent. It is sung to the rhythm of a Seguidilla, a Spanish dance of Moorish origin. We follow that with the famous Habañera, “**L’amour est un oiseau rebelle**” (“Love is a rebellious bird”), Carmen’s anthem from Act I describing her need to be free. We finish our survey of the opera with another excerpt from the orchestral suite. **Les Toréadors** features the famous melody sung by Escamillo of the bravery of the bullfighter.

The name of **Arturo Márquez** (b. 1950) is not known widely outside his native Mexico, but there he is held in high regard. The second in a series of characteristic nationalist dances for the concert hall, **Danzón No. 2** begins quietly, on a clarinet accompanied by percussive sticks and piano. Other woodwind instruments eventually join in, and the sound expands broadly from there. A second section, one of urgency and drive, turns into a vivacious orchestral dance with strong brass accents. There is a more tender middle section recalling the opening, though featuring the strings much more prominently. After a brief pause, the passionate pace picks up once again, with a vibrant trumpet solo ushering in a rousing finish.

American pops conductor/arranger **Jeff Tyzik** (b. 1951) is also an accomplished composer. ***Mallorca***, a work for flute and orchestra, is a brief showcase which demands improvisatory skills from the soloist. It premiered in 2015 in a version for flute, percussion, double bass, and piano, performed at a Hochstein festival of Latin-inspired music for flute.

The song ***Por una Cabeza*** ("By the Head of a Horse") is probably the tune that comes to mind most when one thinks of the cliché idea of the tango. It was written in 1935 by **Carlos Gardel** (composer) and Alfredo Le Pera (lyrics). A brief list of movies in which this tune has been used includes: *Planet 51*, *Scent of a Woman*, *Delicatessen*, *True Lies*, *All the King's Men*, *Bad Santa*, and *Schindler's List* – the latter of which features an arrangement of the song by that film's composer – John Williams.

The ***Suite Espagnol*** was composed by Cuban composer **Ernesto Lecuona** (1895-1963) in the 1920s for solo piano. Yet, for years, only excerpts of it were known widely, thanks to a number of performers (including Lecuona himself, who had an ensemble called Lecuona's Cuban Boys in New York) who adapted various movements from the six-movement suite. It was not until Thomas Tirino started to champion the music of "the Cuban Gershwin," as Lecuona has been called, that the suite has become known in its entirety.

Considered one of the most popular of zarzuela compositions, ***La Gran Vía*** is technically more of a revue than a formally constructed zarzuela. It has virtually no plot, and the "characters" are stereotypes, many named after streets in Madrid. The music was co-composed by **Federico Chueca** (1846-1908) and **Joaquín Valverde** (1875-1918). Felipe Pérez's script was a bold mixture of comic fantasy, social comment and political satire, centred on the creation of La Gran Vía, Madrid's answer to London's Piccadilly or New York's Broadway. A "menegilda" is a house maid.

One of the reasons for the popularity of ***La cumparsita***, written in 1917 by **Gerardo Rodríguez** (1897-1948), was the hit recording of it, with words added to it, performed by Tito Schipa in 1930. Its main theme has become the melody perhaps most associated with the cliché of the ballroom tango.

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