



Blackheath
Chamber
Music
Festival



PIETRO LOCATTO & MARTINA BIONDI

Saturday 20 April 2023, 12:00 pm
Phillips Hall | Blackheath Blue Mountains NSW

Pietro Locatto | guitar
Martina Biondi | cello

PROGRAM NOTES

Duo Evocaciones

“Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados, and Manuel de Falla defined the idiom of Spanish music at the turn of the 20th century, each answering the call of their revered teacher Felipe Pedrell (1841-1922) for a music that united traditional and folkloric elements with classical disciplines to create a true national style. It is ironic that much of this music, written by virtuoso pianists for virtuoso pianists, was better known to music lovers for much of the 20th century in transcriptions for classical guitar!” ~ Grant Hiroshima (LA Phil)

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Enrique GRANADOS [1867-1916] | *Intermezzoda Goyescas* (1915)

One of Granados’s best-loved works and one of the best-known pieces in all Spanish music, this *Intermezzo*, (musical interlude), comes from the Opera, *Goyescas*. Inspired by the paintings of Goya, Granados first wrote *Goyescas* as a piano suite and transcribed it to an opera, at the suggestion of American pianist Ernest Schelling. The *Intermezzo* was composed in one night, just days before the premiere of the opera at the ‘old Met’ in New York, to accommodate a longer than expected scene change between the first and second acts. A lush romantic and intensely lyrical melody has given this work a life of its own.

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Isaac ALBÉNIZ [1860-1909]

Granada No.1 Suite española Opus 47 (1886)

Suite española was first intended as a collection of eight pieces, each representing a

particular region of Spain, including Cuba. However, only four pieces were published at first, Granada, Cataluña, Sevilla and Cuba. The editor Hofmeister republished the *Suite Española* in 1912, after Albéniz's death, but added Cádiz, Asturia, Aragón and Castilla.

Granada, a serenade, was originally a piano piece, but since first being transcribed for guitar by Miguel Llobet, it has become one of the most important works of the classical guitar repertoire.

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Cordoba No.4 Cantos de españa Opus 232 (1892)

Cordoba comes from the suite of five pieces for piano, *Cantos de españa*, (songs of Spain). *Córdoba* was one of Albéniz's favourite cities. Home to the great mosque, Mezquita-Catedral, Cordoba is rich in both Christian and Moorish history. This piece captures the mood of both. It begins with the sound of tolling church bells followed by a droning hymn that resembles liturgical singing. The first section ends with a Moorish flavoured serenade. The second section is filled with flamenco dancers and Spanish folk idioms as it leads to a moving climax before repeating the first section again and ending in a short coda.

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Gaspar CASSADÓ [1897-1966] | *Requiebros* (1934)

Spanish cellist Gaspar Cassadó was revered as both a composer and performer. Whilst studying cello with the great Pablo Casals, an artistic collaboration was born that lasted a lifetime. Although Cassadó studied composition with Manuel de Falla and Maurice Ravel, he dedicated his *Requiebros*, (flirtations), to Casals. A musical triumph for cello, *Requiebros* demands strumming guitar effects, fiery dance rhythms and strong melodies to create the dazzling tone poem of a Spanish suitor wooing his lady.

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Manuel DE FALLA [1876-1946] | *Siete canciones populares españolas* (1914)

El pãno moruno (The Moorish cloth)

Seguidilla Murciana

Asturiana

Jota

Nana

Canción

Polo

The *Seven Popular Spanish Songs* are a set of traditional folk songs arranged by De Falla while living in Paris. Being from different parts of Spain the styles and

provenance of the songs are strikingly diverse. An *asturiana* is from Asturias, in the north; the *seguidilla*, a type of flamenco, from Murcia in the southeast; *jota* is from Aragón in the northeast.

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**Enrique GRANADOS** [1867-1916]

*Oriental No.2 Doce danzas españolas* Opus 37 (1890)

*Doce danzas españolas* (twelve Spanish dances) for piano, is a series of pieces largely written by Granados when he was just 16. The heavy influence of Spanish idioms in these works make them ideal to be arranged for guitar. The exotic, simple and plaintive nature of the *Oriental Dance No. 2* is quietly compelling.

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*Andaluza No.5 Doce danzas españolas* Opus 37 (1890)

The twelve *Danzas Españolas* are among Granados's early piano works. While they are written in a seemingly romantic style, at the same time they exude the intense, distinct colour taken from the dances of Spain. The fifth dance, *Andaluza*, typifies the Romani flamenco influences of the music from southern Spain.

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*Elegia Eterna* (1914)

Cançons catalanas are songs for voice and piano written in the Catalan language. *Elegia Eterna* (eternal elegy), was dedicated to the soprano Maria Barrientos, who performed it in London on June 20, 1914. Written to sound improvisatory yet completely structured, this divinely melancholic melody languishes with passionate interjections of longing for a life that cannot survive.

*The butterfly has never told her:  
he dares not disclose his suffering;  
but longs for the love of a rose  
that idolizes the morning breeze.*

*The morning breeze is dying  
of love for the mist,  
and the mist, lost and deeply affected,  
languishing of love, adores the river,  
adores the river.*

*But, oh dear! The river, frolicsome, ran away  
frolicsome, from rock to rock.*

*The enamoured mist followed the river,  
and the morning breeze the mist.*

*In the meantime, alone and abandoned,  
the flower has shed her petals,  
and, on that stem without corolla,  
the butterfly comes to a halt, folds his wings, and dies.  
Ah! Folds his wings and dies, folds his wings and dies.*

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**Manuel DE FALLA** [1876-1946] | *El amor brujo: viii. Danza ritual del fuego* (1915)

Manuel De Falla, one of the greatest Spanish composers of the 20th century, had a distinctively nationalistic style. As clearly seen in his 1915 ballet, *El Amor Brujo*, (*Love the Magician*), Falla is inspired by Andalusian folk tunes, melodies, rhythms, and harmonies, although, Falla asserted: “There is not a single folk tune in it, anywhere, from beginning to end.”

*El Amore Brujo* was written for the renowned Flamenco dancer and singer, Pastora Imperio and her family. *Danza rituel del fuego*, (*Ritual Fire Dance*), taken from the ballet, is inspired by the traditional Spanish ceremony where people would worship the Fire-God by dancing around and leaping through a fire.

“In the ballet, Candela, an Andalusian gypsy girl, is haunted by the ghost of her late husband who is jealous of her new lover, Carmelo. To exorcise the ghost she and her fellow gypsies gather at midnight, forming a large circle around a campfire. Within the circle Candela performs a fire dance which induces the ghost to appear. Together they dance, whirling round ever faster until, at the climax, the ghost is drawn into the fire and is finally laid to rest.” ~ Portus Press

| Notes by LOUISE JOHNSON