



Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José

28th Season

From Laughter to Fire

Saturday, March 1, 2025

7:30 PM

Hammer Theatre Center
San Jose, California

Program

Two Melodies Op. 53

Edvard Grieg

- I. Norwegian
- II. The First Meeting

Suite No. 1 for Small Orchestra

Igor Stravinsky

- I. Andante
- II. Napolitana
- III. Española
- IV. Balalaika

Violin Concerto No. 3, Op. 61

Camille Saint-Saëns

Alex Eisenberg, Violin

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Andantino quasi
- III. Molto moderato e maestoso

INTERMISSION

Suite No. 2 for Small Orchestra

Igor Stravinsky

- I. March
- II. Valse
- III. Polka
- IV. Galop

El Amor Brujo

Manuel de Falla

Stephanie Sanchez, Mezzo-soprano

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| I. Introduction and scene | VIII. Ritual fire dance |
| II. In the cave | IX. Scene |
| III. Song of suffering love | X. Song of the Fire |
| IV. The apparition | XI. Pantomime |
| V. Dance of terror | XII. Dance of the game of love |
| VI. The magic circle | XIII. Finale – the bells of sunrise |
| VII. Midnight | |

EL AMOR BRUJO

Canción del amor dolido

¡Ay! Yo no sé qué siento,
ni sé qué me pasa,
cuando éste mardito
gitano me farta!
Candela que ardes
¡Más arde el infierno
que toita mi sangre
abrsa de celos! ¡Ay!
Cuando el río suena
¿qué querrá decir?
¡Ay!
¡Por querer a otra se orvía de mí! ¡Ay!
Cuando el fuego abrsa... Cuando el
río suena...
Si el agua no mata al fuego,
a mí el pesar me condena!
¡A mí el querer me envenena!
¡A mí me matan las penas!
¡Ay!

Canción del Fuego fatuo

¡Ah!
Lo mismo que er fuego fatuo,
lo mismito es er queré.
Lo mismo que er fuego fatuo,
lo mismito es er queré.
Le juyes y te persigue,
le yamas y echa a corré.
¡Lo mismo que er fuego fatuo,
lo mismito es er queré! Nace en las
noches de agosto
cuando aprieta la calor.
Nace en las noches de agosto,
cuando aprieta la calor.
Va corriendo por los campos en

LOVE, THE MAGICIAN

Song of a Broken Heart

Ah! I don't know what I feel,
nor what is happening to me –
But how I miss this damned gypsy!
Fire, that blazes
Blazing stronger
is the inferno
Which burns my blood
with jealousy!
When the river boils
what does it mean?
Ah!
For the love of another he forgets me!
Ah!
When the fire blazes,
When the river boils...
If the water doesn't kill the flame,
then sorrow will damn me!
Love is poisoning me!
Grief is killing me!
Ah!

Song of the Will-o'-the-wisp

Ah!
Just like the will-o'-the-wisp
Is love.
Just like the will-o'-the-wisp
Is love.
You flee from it and it pursues you,
You call it, and it runs away.
Just like the will-o'-the-wisp
Is love. When the heat bears down.
It is born in August nights
When the heat bears down.
It runs through the countryside
looking for a heart...
Just like the will-o'-the-wisp
Is love.

busca de un corazón...
¡Lo mismo que er fuego fatuo,
lo mismo es el amor!
¡Malhaya los ojos negros que le
alcanzaron aver!
¡Malhaya los ojos negros que le
alcanzaron aver!
¡Malhaya er corazón triste que en su
yama quiso arder!
¡Lo mismo que er fuego fatuo se
desvanece er queré!

Danza y canción del juego de amor

¡Tú eres aquél mal gitano que una
gitana quería!
¡El querer que eya te daba tú no te lo
merecías! ¡Quién lo había de decí que
con otra la vendías!
¡Soy la voz de tu destino!
¡Soy er fuego en que te abrasas! ¡Soy
er viento en que suspiras! ¡Soy la mar
en que naufragas! ¡Soy la mar en que
naufragas!

Final: las campanas del amanecer

¡Ya está despuntando er día! ¡Cantad,
campanas, cantad! ¡Que vuelve la
gloria mía!

Damned are the dark eyes that can
see it! Damned are the dark eyes that
can see it! Damned is the sad heart
that wanted to burn in its flame!
Just like the will-o'-the-wisp
Is love.

Dance and Song of the Game of Love

You are the evil gypsy that a girl once
loved! You didn't deserve the love
that she
gave you! Who would have said that
you would betray her with another!
I am the voice of your destiny!
I am the fire in which you burn!
I am the wind in which you sigh!
I am the sea in which you are
shipwrecked! I am the sea in which
you are shipwrecked!

Finale: The Bells of Morning

Dawn is breaking! Sing, bells, sing! I
feel joy returning to me!

No still or video photography is permitted during the performance.

A Message from our Board

Would you like to help the Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José by volunteering your time? Looking to grow or use your leadership skills to enhance your resume? The Santa Clara Valley Performing Arts Association Board of Directors, responsible for the MCOSJ, is looking for a few good people interested in helping this musical community organization dedicated to artistic excellence! In particular, the board needs people with financial or marketing experience.

If you are interested in becoming a board member or are just curious what a board member does, email info@missionchamber.org and leave a message, or approach any one of us directly.

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Program by: Mary Lou Meeks

Community Support is Vital

The Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José relies heavily on community support to bring high quality symphonic music to Silicon Valley at affordable prices. If you would like to help support the orchestra by making a donation, you may:

1. Donate online at the MCOSJ website: www.missionchamber.org
2. Make a check payable to our sponsoring organization SCVPAA, and mail to: **Santa Clara Valley Performing Arts Association**
P.O. Box 32872, San Jose CA, 95152
3. Donate to Santa Clara Valley Performing Arts Association through Arts Choice (workplace giving program)

All donations are tax deductible and donors will be acknowledged in the printed programs. Also, please remember to ask your employer to match your donation. **Thank you for your generous support!**

Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José

Violin I

Geoff Noer *
Ann Byler
Marianne Cooper
Emma Dohner
Nana Kurosawa
Carolyn Lowenthal
Tomomi Matsumoto
Ima-Karina Narvaez

Violin II

Anne Spector *
Marian Lin
Peggy Spool
Kathleen Thompson
Alson Wang **

Viola

Goetz Leonhardt *
Silvio Rocha
Claire Wilson

Violoncello

Garth Cummings *
Deb Fenzel-Alexander
Dalia Lévy
Sarah Moffat

Double Bass

Clark Cox *
Patrick Kennedy

Flute

Amelia Archer *
Sarah Lloyd

Oboe

Robert Scott *
Emily Petersen

Clarinet

Sue Biskeborn *
Jordan Selburn

Bassoon

Gail Selburn *
Lynne Burstein

Horn

Gary Crandell *
Kathryn Crandell
Jeanette Levinson

Trumpet

Guy Clark *
Susan Schadeck

Tenor trombone

Randy Chase *
Ken Rydeen

Bass trombone

Steve Barnhill

Tuba

John Whitecar

Timpani

Stuart Langsam

Percussion

Kathryn Crandell

Concertmaster

* Principal

** Piedmont Hills H.S

**Piedmont Hills High School
Chamber Orchestra**
Yu-Ting Wang, *director*

Violin I

Daniel Huang
Alina Wang
Alson Wang
Shannon Zhou

Viola

Aurora Nguyen

Cello

Cindy Lu
Francesca Segoviano
Sarah Xu

Bass

Nathan Tran

Percussion

Jaimee Dalit
Rylen Tuliao

Mark your calendars!

Upcoming Mission Chamber Orchestra 2024-25 concerts:

Dancing in the Scores

De Anza College Visual & Performing Arts Center,
21250 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino

Saturday, May 3, 7:30PM

Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José concerts are supported, in part, by a Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San José; a grant from Silicon Valley Creates, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Mission Chamber Orchestra is a member of the Silicon Valley Arts Coalition.

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Thank you!



About our new Conductor



Juan Cristóbal Palacios

“I am thrilled to announce my new role as Music Director at the Mission Chamber Orchestra of San Jose. This position allows me to collaborate with fellow musicians who share a common vision, engage in the creation and performance of new music, and work alongside renowned soloists. The opportunity to explore a diverse repertoire and

contributing to an organization committed to the highest standards of musical excellence is truly a dream come true for any conductor. I am excited to embark on this journey and contribute to the vibrant musical community at the Mission Chamber Orchestra.”

Juan Cristóbal Palacios brings passion and joy to his work as a conductor, his creativity as a composer and his commitment as an educator. He is always seeking to share his love for music with others.

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, he began his musical studies at an early age, first at the Dalcroze Rhythmic School and then at the Juan Manuel Olivares Conservatory. In 1983 he moved to the USA where he received degrees in Composition and Orchestral Conducting from Boston University and Yale University. During his college years he conducted the premiere of more than fifty works while writing music and studying the classical repertoire. From 1985 to 1988, Juan Cristóbal participated as a conductor at the Aspen and Monteux School and Music Festivals. His first commissions were performed in the Latin American Music Festivals of the 20th century and National Composition Meetings. Palacios’ career continued to advance after his return

to Venezuela in 1991. His organizational skills and vision for the future allowed him to lead two of the most important and influential musical and cultural institutions in Venezuela: The Fundación Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil de Chacao and the Fundación Cultural Chacao. During these years, he sought to integrate all the various elements of the musical arts by dedicating himself to educational, informative and recreational activities. This multidisciplinary effort was recognized by the County government of Chacao when he received the order “José María y Bote” in its first degree, for his ability to impart knowledge, inspire citizens and awaken intellectual curiosity among young people. During these same years, Juan Cristóbal became a guest conductor of the main orchestras in Venezuela and his compositions were performed at various contemporary music festivals, including in São Paulo, Brazil, where at the end of the 90’s, he conducted the Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de São Paulo where his commission “Alma Mater” was premiered worldwide.

Juan Cristóbal then began to focus on the musical education and development of young individuals. Helping to prepare new generations of young people not only in music, but also in becoming full-fledged individuals with a full range of capacities and perspectives in life, became his direction and life project.

Sixteen years after returning to Venezuela, in 2007, Juan Cristóbal left with his family for the United States due to the unsustainable political and economic situation in his native country. In 2010 he joined the faculty of the San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory music program. As an educator, he collaborates with the NIA National Youth Orchestra program in Philipsburg, Sint Maarten, the Guayaquil Youth Symphony and serves as a teacher and conductor of the San Diego Youth Symphony and Conservatory.

Along with his teaching, Juan Cristóbal has continued his career in orchestral conducting, most recently appearing as a guest conductor with the Symphonic Orchestra of Guayaquil, Ecuador. His musical compositions have moved to a more personal approach. He has been writing several short pieces for different instrument combinations and grouped them in what he calls “Cuadernos Musicales” (“Musical Notebooks”).

About the Artists



Alex Eisenberg

Alex Eisenberg, a brilliant violinist, was born in Odessa, into a musical family that included his grandfather Michael Greenberg, a famous Russian pedagogue and chamber musician.

Alex began his musical studies in Odessa and then at the Moscow Conservatory where he won numerous competitions. After leaving the Soviet Union, he continued his studies at Hochschule für Music, Vienna.

Alex has won many prestigious awards, including First Prize and a Gold medal in the Michelangelo Abbado Violin Competition in Sondrio, Italy, along with the Paolo Borciani special prize for chamber music. He is also a winner of Concorso Internazionale Rameu in France.

As a soloist and chamber musician, Alex has performed in Europe, South and North Americas with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Odessa Philharmonic, Belgrade Radio Symphony Orchestra, Dubrovnik Festival Orchestra, Kansas City Chamber Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, and Heidelberg Chamber Orchestra. Alex has been guest conductor of West Coast Chamber Orchestra, Heidelberg Kammerorchester and Vorarlberg Kammerorchester.

Currently, he enters his 8th season as music director of Capriccio Chamber Orchestra and also is the founding music director of Capriccio Music.



Stephanie Sánchez

Stephanie Sánchez has been praised by Opera News for her “polished, Italianate mezzo” and by ReviewSTL for her “exquisite singing.” Sánchez opens her 2023-24 season in her debut with Kentucky Opera performing the role of the Witch in *Hänsel und Gretel*. She also makes debuts with the Phoenix Symphony, where she will sing as a soloist in Handel’s *Mesías* [Spanish Messiah], Nettie Fowler in *Carousel* with Intermountain Opera Bozeman,

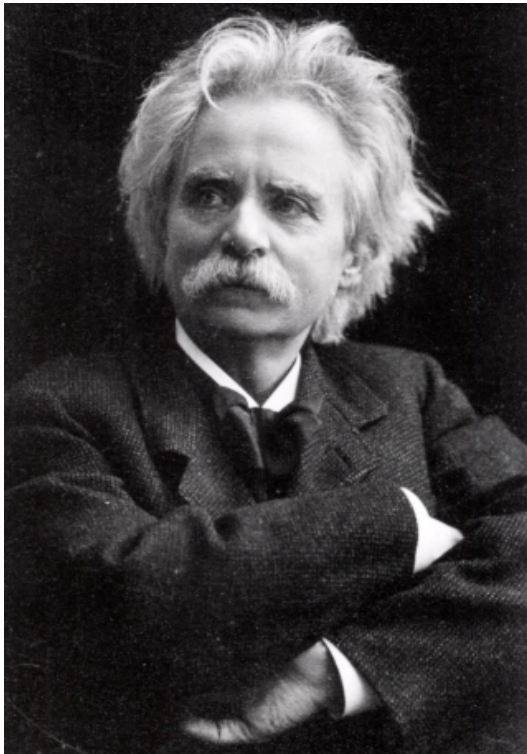
and with Opera Omaha in the title role of *Frida* in Gabriela Lena Frank’s *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*. She returns to Arizona Opera to reprise the role of Carlotta de Obragón in abbreviated performances of *Zorro* for the company’s New Works Festival. Sánchez made several notable house debuts in the 2022-23 season, including as Third Spirit in *The Magic Flute* at Ravinia under the baton of Marin Alsop; as Chief Officer’s Wife in *The Knock* with Cincinnati Opera, and as Passenger #3 and Chief’s Daughter #2 in the world premiere of *Proximity: Four Portraits* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. As a resident principal artist with Opera San José for two seasons, she performed the roles of Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Hänsel in *Hänsel and Gretel*, and Azucena in *Il Trovatore*. She returned to perform the role of Mercedes while covering the title role in *Carmen* in 2022. She was selected as a Marion Pullin Studio Artist with Arizona Opera where she sang the roles of Persephone in *Hercules vs. Vampires*, Paquette in *Candide*, Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and Flosshilde in *Das Rheingold*, and returned to the company to cover the title role in *Maria de Buenos Aires* and sing Baroness Nica in Charlie Parker’s *Yardbird*. Sánchez counts among her notable engagements singing the role of Ines while covering Azucena in Francesca Zambello’s 90-minute adaptation of *Il Trovatore* at The Glimmerglass Festival; and

singing the roles of Carlotta in Zorro with Opera Southwest, Abuela in En mis palabras at Atlanta Opera, Maddalena in Rigoletto and Olga in Eugene Onegin with Intermountain Opera, and Dryade in Ariadne auf Naxos with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Arizona Opera. She also has been seen in roles with Brava Opera Theater, St. Petersburg Opera, Teatro Nuovo, Sarasota Opera, and Opera Maine. With Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Sánchez performed the role of Third Lady in The Magic Flute, and as a Digital Studio Artist in 2020 played Ruth in Pirates of Penzance, for which KDHX cited her “impressive combination of vocal power and comic flair.” Sánchez has been the recipient of several prizes, including the "Audience Choice Award" at the 2021 Jensen Foundation competition. She was the recipient of the 2018 Igor Gorin Memorial Award, took first place in the Young Texas Artist Music Competition and second place in Opera Connecticut’s Opera Idol Competition, was a finalist in the Brava Opera Theater Competition, and has received grants from the Anna Sosenko Assist Trust and the Hispanic Scholarship Association. Born and raised in Las Cruces, New Mexico, Sánchez received her Artist Diploma from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and her master's degree in vocal performance from New Mexico State University.

www.missionchamber.org

Program Notes

Two Melodies, Op. 53 Edvard Grieg (1843 - 1907)



Edvard Grieg's approach to composing for strings differed markedly from many of his contemporaries. Rather than writing for specialized string ensembles or chamber orchestras, Grieg composed his string music with the full symphony orchestra in mind. He was captivated by the vast palette of colors and the blend of sounds achievable with a large string section.

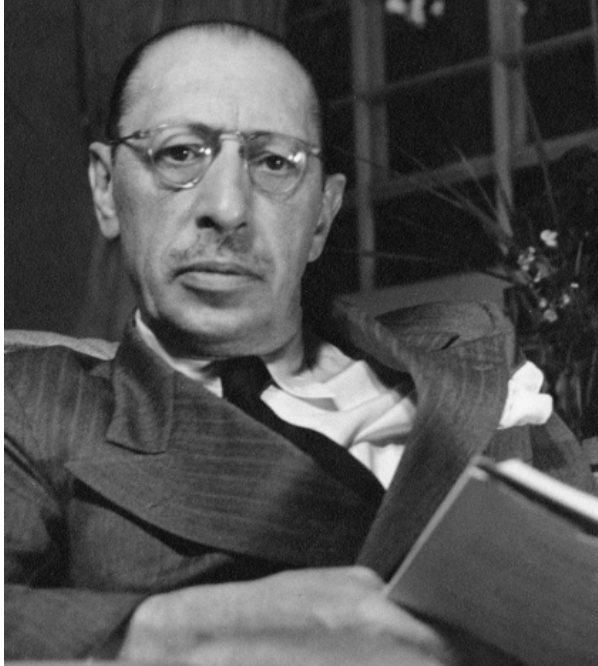
The *Two Melodies for String Orchestra, Op. 53*, composed in 1890, exemplify Grieg's distinctive approach. These pieces are based on songs with texts by two notable poets: "Fyremål" (The Goal) by Aasmund Olavsson Vinje and "Det første mødes sødme" (The Sweetness of the First Meeting) by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832–1910). Each melody reflects the

unique character of its respective poet and their thematic concerns.

"Norwegian" in the string orchestra version, is imbued with a strong sense of Norwegian nationalism. The message underscores the importance of maintaining one's course despite challenges. The piece conveys a message of solidarity and camaraderie, with a call to "work side by side" in the quest for a common goal.

In contrast, "The First Meeting" offers a serene nature idyll. The blending nature and human emotions into a tranquil and magical experience. The melody features evocative imitations of animal calls and shifts between major and minor modes, enhancing the sense of wonder and magic. The piece concludes in an ethereal soundscape where human and natural worlds merge in a profound sense of awe.

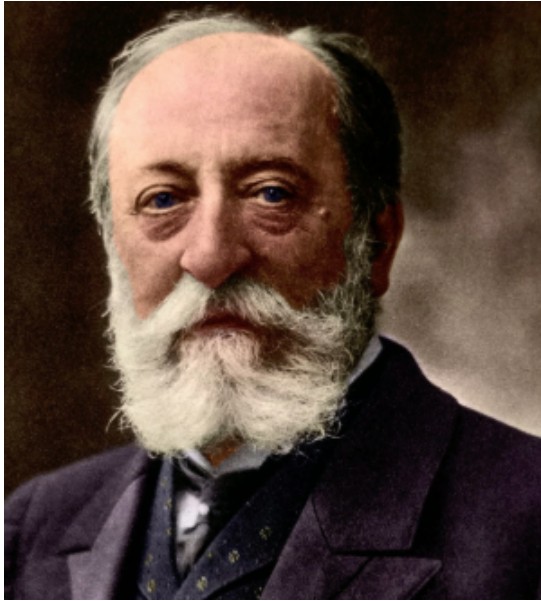
Suite for Small Orchestra, No. 1 K. 045 & No. 2 K. 038
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)



With these pieces, Igor Stravinsky begins his transition from the world of Russian popular and nationalistic music—most notably captured in his early ballets—to a more international style of light music. The enchanting and gently satirical Suites for Small Orchestra are orchestrations of eight piano duets that Stravinsky originally composed for his children. Designed as “teaching pieces,” the right-hand part was crafted for his children, while Stravinsky himself handled the more complex left-hand part. The two Suites for Small Orchestra were orchestrated in 1921 and 1925 from these lesser-known sets of piano duets.

Exiled in Switzerland following *The Rite of Spring*, Stravinsky spent this period focusing on compositions for smaller ensembles. This time in exile allowed him to refine his compositional voice and explore the language and folk heritage of his homeland in greater depth. Beyond their charm and wit, the Suites offer a glimpse into Stravinsky’s emerging Neoclassical period. They feature lean instrumentation, an infectious rhythmic drive, and impeccable dramatic timing—all hallmarks of his later works. The Suites are filled with clownish comedy and musical satire, yet they rise above mere caricature. These eight “Easy Pieces” are quintessential Stravinsky, showcasing his distinctive style and artistry.

Violin Concerto No. 3, op. 61 in B minor Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)



Born in 1835 in Paris, Camille Saint-Saëns is the most renowned French composer of the 19th century. In an era when opera and ballet reigned supreme in France and largely defined a composer's reputation, Camille Saint-Saëns stood out for his dedication to the concerto genre. His Violin Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61, is a testament to this intuition and stands among his most celebrated works.

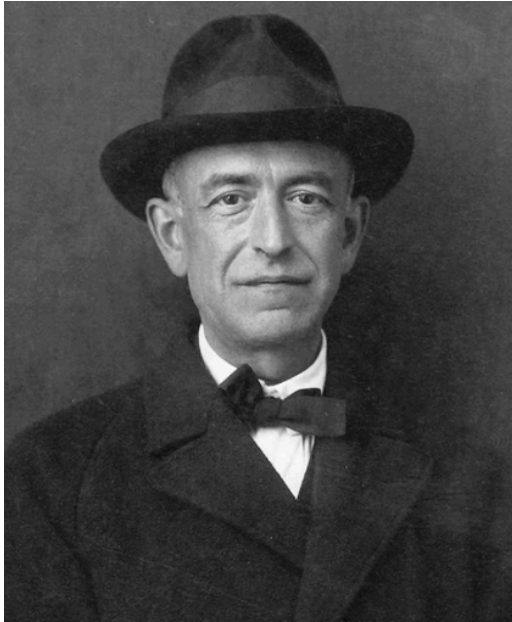
At the age of 45 during his time in Spain in 1879, Camille Saint-Saëns' Violin Concerto No. 3 in B minor was inspired by the renowned Spanish violinist Pablo Sarasate, to whom it was dedicated, and it premiered on October 15, 1880, in Hamburg with Sarasate as the soloist. Although he frequently experimented with forms, in this concerto he adhered to the traditional three-movement structure: fast-slow-fast. Instead of a traditional cadenza for the soloist, Saint-Saëns crafted the violin part with brilliant, technically demanding passages that showcase both virtuosity and musicality.

The concerto begins with a dramatic and direct entrance by the solo violin, bypassing the usual orchestral introduction. The first movement presents a passionate theme that evolves into a more lyrical secondary theme. The Andante middle movement, evocative of Italian barcarole, offers a contrasting pastoral beauty. The finale brings the work to its climax with an energetic bravura theme, rounding off the concerto with both dramatic intensity and virtuosic flair.

Saint-Saëns' Violin Concerto No. 3 continues to captivate audiences with its combination of technical prowess and expressive depth, reflecting the composer's exceptional understanding of the violin's capabilities.

El Amor Brujo

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)



Manuel de Falla stands as one of Spain's most influential and defining composers. His works are infused with the sounds, rhythms, folk songs, and folk-like melodies of Spain. While Falla's formative years in Paris—learning from illustrious colleagues such as Debussy, Ravel, and Dukas—left an indelible mark on him, his music remained firmly anchored in Spanish arts, both folk and classical. At the onset of World War I, Falla departed from Paris, resolute in his belief that the Spanish musical voice required a broader platform, one that his compositions could supply. Upon his return to Madrid, he penned *El amor brujo*.

El Amor Brujo (Love, the Sorcerer) is a ballet-pantomime in one act, woven around a narrative rich in themes of love, death, exorcism, and release. The story revolves around two gypsies: the sensual Candela and the handsome Carmelo. Candela's first husband's ghost haunts their relationship, prompting Candela to enlist her friend Lucia to flirt with the ghost, thereby distracting him. Lucia's success paves the way for Candela and Carmelo's love to flourish.

- **Notes by Juan Cristóbal Palacios**

Acknowledgements

(Donations received February 28, 2024 - February 27, 2025)

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