

LSO St Luke's

CHAMBER MUSIC

BBC
RADIO 3

SPANISH CONNECTIONS
JUAN PÉREZ FLORISTÁN

Thursday 15 February 2024 1-2.05pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

Manuel de Falla Fantasía bética
Maurice Ravel Pavane pour une infante défunte
Claude Debussy La soirée dans Grenade;
La sérénade interrompue; La puerta del vino
Joaquín Turina Orgía from 'Danzas fantásticas'
Franz Liszt Spanish Rhapsody

Juan Pérez Floristán piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

LSO

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SPANISH CONNECTIONS February

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THE CRYPT CAFÉ & BAR

The Crypt café and bar is open from one hour before concerts and during the interval (where applicable). Please note, card payments only. Only cold drinks are permitted inside the Jerwood Hall.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER

Kate Hopkins is English-language editor (concerts) for Salzburg Festival. She has written articles for organisations including the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia, the Salzburg Festival and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and book reviews for *NB Magazine* and *The Wagner Journal*.

In accordance with the requirements of Islington Council persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any gangway.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly forbidden without formal consent from LSO St Luke's.

Please make sure that digital watch alarms and mobile phones are switched off during the performance.

Fantasia bética

Manuel de Falla



1919



14 minutes

Manuel de Falla wrote his *Fantasia bética* in 1919, to a commission from the pianist Arthur Rubinstein. It was his last substantial work for solo piano.

The title alludes to the old Roman name for Andalusia: 'Baetica'. The work pays tribute both to the virtuoso keyboard tradition in which Arthur Rubinstein and Manuel de Falla himself had trained, and to Andalusian traditional music. Bravura passages full of cascading scales, arpeggios and glissandos (rapid slides up and down the keyboard) contrast with more soulful episodes.

As the piece progresses, the pianist imitates strumming guitars, clicking castanets, foot-stamping dancers and the soulful deep song (cante jondo) of flamenco, brilliantly evoking one of Spain's most characterful regions.

Pavane pour une infante défunte

Maurice Ravel



1899



3 minutes

Pavane pour une infante défunte was one of Maurice Ravel's first successful compositions. He wrote the piece in 1899 while still a student, and it was first performed in Paris in 1902 by his friend Ricardo Viñes.

The title refers to a processional dance that was very popular at European courts during the Renaissance. Ravel stated that the work was 'not a funeral lament for a dead child [as the word 'défunte' might imply] but rather an evocation of the pavane that could have been danced by such a little princess as painted by Diego Velázquez at the Spanish Court'. The piece's serene recurring main theme and subdued dynamics give it an air of austere beauty.

La soirée dans Grenade; La sérénade interrompue; La puerta del vino

Claude Debussy



1903–13



12 minutes

Unlike Maurice Ravel, Claude Debussy had no family connections to Spain, and his direct knowledge of the country was limited to an afternoon trip to a bullfight in San Sebastián. However, late 19th-century Paris' enthusiasm for all things Spanish meant that he had plentiful access to books about the country and to examples of its visual art and music. All this inspired him to compositions in which – according to his friend Manuel de Falla – he captured ‘the essence’ of Spain. We hear three today.

‘La soirée dans Grenade’, from *Estampes* (1903), was one of Debussy’s first explicitly ‘Spanish’ compositions. In it, he uses the languid rhythms of the Habanera – a dance from Cuba that Georges Bizet immortalised in his opera *Carmen* – to create a mood of dreamy sensuality. The piece also includes a quasi-Arabic melody that recalls Andalusia’s Moorish past.

‘La sérénade interrompue’ comes from the first book of piano *Préludes* (1910). It depicts a young Spaniard nervously tuning his guitar then attempting to serenade his beloved – however, repeated interruptions lead him to eventually give up.

‘La puerta del vino’ comes from the second book of *Préludes* (1913) and was inspired by a postcard de Falla sent the composer of the ‘wine gate’ of Granada’s Alhambra palace. It too uses the rhythms of the Habanera, but here the mood is more volatile: Debussy marks that the piece be performed ‘with abrupt contrasts of extreme violence and passionate sweetness’.

Orgía from ‘Danzas fantásticas’

Joaquín Turina



1919



6 minutes

Joaquín Turina’s three-movement *Danzas fantásticas* (1919) is perhaps his best-known work, both in its original solo piano version and in the composer’s subsequent arrangement for orchestra. The piece is loosely inspired by José Más’ novella *La orgía* (The orgy).

However, Turina stressed that he was not attempting to musically depict its narrative, but rather to capture the atmosphere of certain scenes. The finale, ‘Orgía’, is prefaced by this quote from Más’ novella: ‘The perfume of the flowers merged with the odour of manzanilla, and from the bottom of raised glasses, full of the incomparable wine, like an incense, rose joy’. The music is modelled on the *farruca* – a rapid and flamboyant flamenco dance – and is full of dynamic and textural contrasts.

Spanish Rhapsody

Franz Liszt



1867



13 minutes

Franz Liszt composed his *Spanish Rhapsody* in Rome around 1863–64. It was published in 1867. The piece was inspired by a tour Liszt had made to Spain and Portugal in 1844–45. Much of its musical content consists of variations on two themes: the popular dance melody *La Folía* (an inspiration for earlier composers including Antonio Vivaldi and George Frideric Handel) and an Aragonese *jota* (a fast Spanish dance in triple time).

The *Folía* variations come first and are increasingly flamboyant. The *jota* variations are contrastingly playful and make striking use of the piano’s delicate and bell-like upper register. The piece culminates in a grand restatement of both themes.

Juan Pérez Floristán

piano



Winner of the First Prize and the Audience Prize at the 'Arthur Rubinstein' Piano Competition 2021 in Tel Aviv, the First Prize and the Audience Prize at the Santander Piano Competition 'Paloma O'Shea' 2015, and the Medal of the City of Seville, Juan Pérez Floristán is at the age of 30 a benchmark among the new generations of Spanish and European musicians.

In a short time he has made his debut in some of the world's major venues, such as the Royal Albert Hall (with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra during the BBC Proms Festival), Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall in London, Herkulessaal in Munich, Tonhalle in Zürich, Béla Bartók Hall and Liszt Academy in Budapest, Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Laeishalle in Hamburg, Schloss Elmau, Auditorio Nacional of Madrid, Palau de la Musica de Barcelona and Auditori of Barcelona. He has also performed at festivals such as the Ruhr

Klavier Festival, the Verbier Festival, the Sommets-Musicaux Festival in Gstaad (Switzerland), the Santander Festival, the Granada Festival, and Beethoven Festival in Warsaw.

He owes his training mainly to his mother, María Floristán, Galina Eguiazarova and Eldar Nebolsin. He has also received advice and lessons from international figures such as Luca Chiantore, Eberhardt Feltz, Claudio Martínez Mehner, Daniel Barenboim, Ferenc Rados, Menahem Pressler, Kirill Gerstein, Nelson Goerner and Stephen Kovacevich. A special mention in his training goes to Elisabeth Leonskaja, who has been invaluable in helping both his career and his personal and artistic development.

Since 2020 he has held a position as piano teacher at the Fundación Barenboim in Seville, and since 2021 he has taught 'Rhythm applied to the performing arts' at the theatre school 'La Colmena' in Seville.

FUTURE CONCERTS

At LSO St Luke's

Friday 16 February 1pm

SPANISH CONNECTIONS: CLARA MOURIZ & JOSEPH MIDDLETON

Manuel de Falla

7 canciones populares españolas

Plus music by **Joaquín Turina**, **Antoni de Lliteres**, **Blas de Laserna** and more.

Clara Mouriz mezzo-soprano

Joseph Middleton piano

Thursday 22 February 1pm

SPANISH CONNECTIONS: ALBAN GERHARDT & STEVEN OSBORNE

Claude Debussy Sonata for Cello

Plus music by **Gaspar Cassadó**, **Manuel de Falla** and **Maurice Ravel**.

Alban Gerhardt cello

Steven Osborne piano

Thursday 29 February 1pm

BERTRAND CHAMAYOU & FRIENDS

Felix Mendelssohn Variations concertantes

Benjamin Britten Cello Sonata

Felix Mendelssohn Cello Sonata No 2

Bertrand Chamayou piano

Sol Gabetta cello

Friday 1 March 1pm

BERTRAND CHAMAYOU & FRIENDS

Maurice Ravel Jeux d'eau

Unshuk Chin Six Piano Études

Maurice Ravel Gaspard de la nuit elix

Bertrand Chamayou piano

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At the Barbican

Sunday 3 March 7pm

LISTENING TO AMERICA

George Gershwin arr Don Rose

Overture: Let 'em Eat Cake

George Gershwin

Piano Concerto in F (ed Timothy Freeze)

Roy Harris Symphony No 3

John Adams Frenzy (world premiere)

George Gershwin arr Don Rose

Overture: Strike Up the Band

Sir Simon Rattle conductor

Kirill Gerstein piano

London Symphony Orchestra

Thursday 14 March 7pm

BEETHOVEN AND UNSUK CHIN

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No 2

UnsuK Chin Piano Concerto

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No 8

François-Xavier Roth conductor

Bertrand Chamayou piano

London Symphony Orchestra

Thursday 18 April 7pm

RAVEL PIANO CONCERTO

David Raksin

The Bad and the Beautiful – Suite

Maurice Ravel Piano Concerto in G major

Ralph Vaughan Williams Symphony No 5

Sir Antonio Pappano conductor

Bertrand Chamayou piano

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