

Fandango!




**BERMUDA
FESTIVAL**
OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

JANUARY

Tuesday 7, 8:00 pm

Earl Cameron Theatre, City Hall

Wednesday 8, 8:00 pm

St. Peter's Church, Their Majesties
Chappelle, St. George's



The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment of any kind during performances is strictly prohibited.

Eugenia Moliner	Flute
Desiree Ruhstrat	Violin
Denis Azabagic	Guitar
David Cunliffe	Cello

Programme

*L'Inverno (Winter) from Le quattro stagioni
(The Four Seasons)*

Allegro non molto
Largo
Allegro

Trio Sefardi

i. Komo Páxaro en su Vuelo
iii. Una Matika de Ruda

Three Balkan Pieces

Pajdushka
Zajdi, Zajdi
Gajdarsko Oro

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
(arr. Fandango!)

Alan Thomas (1968-)

Miroslav Tadic (1959-)

INTERMISSION

Duos for Violin and Cello, Opus 39

Prélude
Berceuse

*Fantasy on Themes from "La Traviata,"
(1968-) after Krakamp, Briccialdi and Tarrega*

Plegaria y Kanto (Al Bodre de la Mar)

*Grave assai-Fandango, from Quintet for
Guitar and Strings in D major*

Reinhold Glière (1875-1956)

Giuseppe Verdi / Alan Thomas
Commissioned by and written for the
Cavatina Duo

Carlos Rafael Rivera (1970-)

Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)
(arr. Jeremy Sparks/Fandango!)

Programme Notes

Winter from The Four Seasons

Almost three centuries ago, Antonio Vivaldi composed his most famous works and the most significant examples of Baroque programmatic music. The Four Seasons are the opening works in Opus 8, a set of twelve violin concertos published in 1725. The brilliance and popularity of the first four have generally obscured the remaining works. Such widespread popularity is a double-edged sword: The Four Seasons' ubiquity in popular culture has too often presented as background music, a fiendishly inventive work by a composer of terrific originality. (The Seasons also established the concerto as a vehicle for

instrumental virtuosity—fittingly so, given Vivaldi's stature as one of the finest violinists of his generation.)

Vivaldi chose to publish each concerto with a corresponding sonnet, correlating passages from the sonnets to specific themes in the music. Some scholars believe Vivaldi penned these poems himself, though their authorship remains in doubt.

Winter includes perhaps Vivaldi's most inspired and adored music, and is a fitting conclusion to The Four Seasons as a whole.

Trio Sefardi

Alan Thomas is an American composer and guitarist living in the UK. His compositions draw on a broad range of styles and techniques, ranging from Renaissance polyphony to modern masters (passing via a quasi-obsession with Rachmaninoff along the way!) Other influences include the music of Africa and the Balkans. He creates music that is both rigorously constructed and accessible. His compositions have been performed around the world by artists such as Denis Azabagic, harpist Eleanor Turner, soprano Juliet Fraser, the Cavatina Duo, La Catrina String Quartet, Chicago Symphony String Quartet, Helix Ensemble, Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra and many others. He has been the featured composer at festivals including "Guitar Art" (Serbia), Calcutta Guitar Festival, Sarajevo Guitar Festival and the Cheltenham Guitar Festival (UK).

A Note from the **Composer**

Like many other composers, I have often looked to what is called "folk music" for inspiration and

musical ideas. I was therefore delighted when the Cavatina Duo commissioned me to write a substantial piece drawing on the music of the Sephardic Jews—the Jewish ethnic group which emerged as a distinct community on the Iberian peninsula around 1000 AD.

Although none of the melodies today known as "Sephardic music" can be traced back to the Jews in Spain prior to their expulsion from that country in 1492, over the subsequent centuries a beautiful repertoire of song has grown from the experience of the Sephardic Jews as they migrated and settled throughout the Mediterranean, North Africa and the Balkans. As they did so, they adapted their Ladino (Judeo-Spanish language) song texts to the musical styles and melodies of their new cultures, and therefore what we know as Sephardic music today is a rich mixture of musical styles found in Morocco, Turkey, the Balkans and many other countries. As with all



folk music, the Sephardic repertoire was in a constant state of transformation, and indeed has only become relatively fixed since a number of important transcriptions were published in the 1950's and 60's and the melodies were taken up and recorded by early music and world music performers in recent decades.

"Komo Páxaro en su Vuelo" (Like a Bird in Flight) is based on the song "Ya viene el kativo" ("Here comes the slave"). Its lyrics involve a slave girl's lament in memory of her homeland. Apart from the emotional content of the lyrics, what particularly attracted me to this song was the symmetrical intervallic properties of the song's opening melody, which consists of three chromatic notes surrounded by a minor third on both sides. I am fascinated by such symmetries in music, and by the possibilities they open up for development in different harmonic contexts and in permutations of the intervallic pattern (inverted, reversed, re-ordered, expanded/contracted etc.). While this movement might best be described as a set of linked and continuous variations, several main formal sections can be delineated: slow and lyrical in the initial presentation and variation of the Sephardic melody, leading to an energetic scherzo, following which the theme is modified in a slow major key version and finally a fast fugue.

"Una matika de ruda" means "A Sprig of Rue" ("rue" is an herb native to the Balkan peninsula as well as being a synonym for "regret"). In addition to being attracted to these multiple meanings, I was immediately drawn to the song's lyrics, which take the form of a dialogue between a mother and daughter. The daughter tells her mother that a young man is in love with her and has given her a bouquet of rue. The mother warns the daughter not to sacrifice her virtue to young love, and that a bad husband is better than a new lover. It is the daughter's perfect and poetic reply though that makes the song: "A bad husband, my mother? There is nothing worse. But a new lover, my mother? The apple and sweet lemon."

The song "Una matika de ruda" is known in two different versions—one playful and rhythmic, the other simple and lyrical—which together perfectly capture for me the dual emotional character of the song's lyrics. In my third movement the two different versions serve as first and second themes in a quasi-sonata form.

"Trío Sefardi" was commissioned by Thomas Baron and Mark Cavalenes through grants to Cedille Chicago, NFP, and the work is gratefully dedicated to them as well as to my dear friends Eugenia Moliner and Denis Azabagic.



Programme Notes

Three Balkan Pieces

Macedonia has a rich cultural heritage in art, architecture, poetry, and music. Miroslav Tadic, a classically trained guitarist and composer from former Yugoslavia, captures the essence of its folklore in these pieces. This music brings together a mixture of multiple styles, from Turkish music, Albanian music, Roma (“Gypsy”) music and other ethnic Balkan music idioms. Local dances are called “oro.”

Macedonian folk songs are often historical in nature; lyrics detailing great heroes and warriors, love songs, shepherd songs such as Zajdi Zajdi, are common. The music of Eastern Europe is known for complex rhythms, and Macedonian music exemplifies this trait, using odd meters such as 5/4, and 7/8, and non-traditional scales like the Phrygian dominant.

Duos for Violin and Cello

Reinhold Glière was born in Kiev, Ukraine in 1875. He studied composition in Kiev and at the Moscow Conservatory, where he later taught. His students included Prokofiev, Miaskovsky, and Khachaturian. Glière’s musical life spanned the period from late Romanticism to Modernism, although his own music has more in common with the former. His best-known works are the ballets “The Red Poppy” and “The Bronze

Horseman,” although his Third Symphony, “Ilya Murometz,” is considered by many to be his greatest work.

Glière’s rarely performed Opus 39 set of eight duos for violin and cello was composed in 1909. They are an assortment of miniatures ranging from the playful to the tender.

Fantasy on themes from “La Traviata”

One of the most widely used forms of instrumental music in the 19th-century was the operatic fantasia—a virtuoso piece based on themes from a popular opera. Generally composed by virtuoso performers (with Liszt’s many outstanding fantasias being examples by a great performer and composer), these “salon” pieces combined well-known tunes from favorite operas with a healthy dose of instrumental “showing off.”

Alan Thomas writes: My Fantasy on themes from Verdi’s opera is based on 19th-century fantasias for flute by Emanuele Krakamp and Giulio Briccialdi as well as Francisco Tárrega’s solo guitar version. Many of La Traviata’s most well-known melodies are there, including “Ah, fors’è lui,” “Parigi, o cara,” “Sempre libera” and the famous “drinking song.” —Alan Thomas



Plegaria y Kanto (Al Bodre de la Mar)

Carlos Rafael Rivera is an award-winning composer whose career has spanned multiple genres in the music industry. His music has been acclaimed by the Miami Herald, the San Francisco Examiner, and the LA Times, helping establish him as a composer with the unique ability to incorporate a wide diversity of musical influences into his captivating compositions, which reflect his multicultural upbringing in Central America and the United States. His soundtrack for Universal Pictures' *A Walk Among the Tombstones*, starring Liam Neeson, is now available through Varèse-Sarabande Records.

His works have been performed by some of the most prominent ensembles and soloists, including Arturo Sandoval, Colin Currie, Chanticleer, Cavatina Duo, the American Composers Orchestra, the New England Philharmonic, and the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet; commissioned by the Simon Bolivar Youth Symphony, the Miami Symphony Orchestra, and the American Wind Symphony; recorded by Warner, Sony, Naxos, and Cedille labels; published by Mel-Bay, and Doberman Editions; and awarded by the ACO, the Herb Alpert Foundation, the Guitar Foundation of America, BMI, and ASCAP.

A note from the **Composer**

About a year ago, Eugenia Moliner and Denis Azabagic approached David Leisner, Clarice Assad, Allan Thomas, Joseph Williams, and myself to write chamber works for what would be a collaboration between the Cavatina Duo and members of the Lincoln Trio Desiree Ruhstrat and David Cunliffe.

The register of the violin—along with its near infinite *sostenuto* (sustained sound)—was a welcome addition to the now familiar flute and guitar combination. It became clear that rather than compete with the violin's range, a better choice was to use (mostly) the alto flute for its wonderful and grounded color, allowing the guitar to live comfortably in its own register. Most importantly, the melodies that were to inform this piece were of Sephardic origin. My knowledge about the music itself was scant, but Eugenia and Denis' passion for it was contagious. So I began to investigate, and learned for the first time about the troubled history of the Sephardic Jews in Spain . . . and then I fell into their poetry, and music.

The first poem/song to grab me was "Ven Kerida". It loosely translates to: "Come, my love / to the edge of the sea / I will tell you of my sufferings / They will make you cry / An orphan, without father or mother / I have nowhere to rest / Stretch out your leg a bit so I may rest / I will have a beautiful dream / In your arms I will die."

It was this poem and gorgeous melody that formed the pillar of the piece I composed. Throughout the writing process, I had a recurring vision of a proud yet helpless soul approaching the edge of the coastal town of Burriana in Eastern Spain, pleading her misery as an affront to the Ocean. After a silence, she hears a song. She joins in, perhaps comforted, and tells her story. It is a story wrought with sadness, yet hopeful—and to me perfectly encapsulates the Sephardic peoples' plight.

Programme Notes

Grave assai-Fandango

The Italian-born Boccherini was a court musician in Vienna as a young man. He moved to Spain and served in the Royal Court in Madrid, enthusiastically adopting Spain sounds and rhythms.

The "Fandango" Guitar Quintet was written for the Duke of Benavente, a guitar enthusiast. It is a transcription of movements from earlier Boccherini string quintets. In the quintet's final

movement, a melancholy and halting "Grave assai" (serious enough) leads to the traditional Spanish couples' dance, the Fandango. It is here that the guitar truly takes the lead, playing the assertive and accented rhythms we associate with the world of Spanish music. The work swirls and relaxes, finishing with mounting intensity from the strumming guitar and a resounding flourish from the whole ensemble.

(adapted from a note by Fran Rosenthal)

About the Artists

Fandango!

The most exciting new group on Chicago's musical scene, FANDANGO! is a toe-tappingly spicy mix of Latin, Spanish, Sephardic, Balkan, and classical sounds founded by four multi-award-winning, globe-trotting virtuosi who hail from Spain, the USA, former Yugoslavia, and

the UK, and who have played, separately and together, on the world's most prestigious stages. This season FANDANGO! makes its Washington DC debut on the illustrious Dumbarton Oaks series, and will appear at venues across the USA.

Please visit www.fandango4.com for more information

Eugenia Moliner and Denis Azabagic are a husband-and-wife team acclaimed worldwide as the Cavatina Duo. "If there is a finer flute and guitar duo in the world than Cavatina Duo, I have not heard them" raved Soundboard Magazine in June 2015.

Flautist Eugenia Moliner, a native of Spain, has been acclaimed as "brilliant" by the British Flute Society magazine. She has performed with principal musicians from the Chicago Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic and Toronto Symphony orchestras and appeared with many renowned

ensembles including the Chicago Chamber Musicians. Eugenia has been featured on radio and television programs in Europe, Asia and the USA. Her discography includes seven CDs.

Prizewinner in twenty-four international competitions, Bosnian guitarist Denis Azabagic has been described as a "virtuoso with flawless technique" by Soundboard Magazine. He has appeared as soloist with orchestras such as the Chicago and Madrid Symphonies, among many others. His discography includes eleven CDs and two DVDs.



Also a married couple, violinist Desirée Ruhstrat and cellist David Cunliffe are both members of the Lincoln Trio, winner of the 2008 Masterplayers International Competition in Venice, Italy. Praised for their “joy of sheer technical ability, unanimity of phrasing and beautiful blended tone,” the trio has become one of Chicago’s most celebrated chamber ensembles.

The artistry of American violinist Desirée Ruhstrat has captivated audiences throughout Europe and the Americas. Desirée has won numerous awards including First Prize at the National Young Musicians Debut Competition in Los Angeles, where she was also lauded with a special award for a young performer of extraordinary talent. She was the youngest prizewinner at Switzerland’s Tibor Varga

International Competition, where she also won the award for best interpretation of a contemporary composition. She won top prizes at the Carl Flesch, Julius Stulberg, and Mozart Festival Violin Competitions.

British cellist David Cunliffe has served as principal cello in performances with BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish and Royal Scottish Symphony Orchestras. As a member of the Balanescu Quartet, he toured Australia, Europe and the United States. In England, David was a recipient of the Terrance Weill and Leonard Hirsch Quartet Prizes and the Lady Barbirolli Chamber Music Award. David has appeared frequently on radio and TV, including NPR and the BBC, and is a founding member of the Virtuosi Chicago Chamber Orchestra.

Patrons

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Argus

David J. Astwood

J. Christopher & Denise Astwood

Bruce Barritt

Lars & Diana Bergquist

Robert & Susan Blee

Tom & Cal Booth

Gita Blakeney-Saltus

Laura Butterfield

Richard & Susan Butterfield

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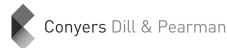


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