

Ealing Symphony Orchestra @100

DEBUSSY 'Iberia' from *Images for Orchestra*
FALLA 'Ritual Fire Dance' from *Love, the Magician*
José Pablo MONCAYO *Huapango*

Silvestre REVUELTAS *Sensemayá*
FALLA *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*
CHABRIER *España*

Ealing Symphony Orchestra
John GIBBONS musical director
Arta ARNICANE piano

Saturday, 14 May 2022 · 7.30pm
St Barnabas Church, Pitshanger Lane, W5 1QG

Concert Programme



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John Gibbons is a multi-faceted musician: conductor, composer, arranger, pianist, and organist, who works across musical genres including opera, cathedral music, and recording neglected British orchestral music.

John has conducted most of the major British orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and, most recently, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has recorded orchestral works by Nikos Skalkottas with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the string concertos of Arthur Benjamin with the RSN0 on the Dutton Epoch label, four Mozart Piano Concertos with Idil Biret — two with the London Mozart Players and two with the Worthing Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner's Ninth Symphony (with a completion of the finale by Nors Josephson) with the Aarhus

Symphony Orchestra on the Danacord label, and William Wordsworth's Orchestral Works (Vol. 1) on the Toccata label.

Renowned for his adventurous programming, John has given many world and UK premieres of both new pieces (most recently the Triple Concerto by Errollyn Wallen with Kosmos Ensemble and WSO in Chichester Cathedral) and neglected works including the Third Orchestral Set by Charles Ives, the Violin Concerto by Robert Still, and both the Second Piano Concerto and Violin Concerto by William Alwyn. His performance of George Lloyd's Fourth Symphony with the Ealing Symphony Orchestra drew an ecstatic review from Simon Heffer in the Daily Telegraph.

John recorded Laura Rossi's film score *The Battle of the Ancre* (Pinewood Studios) and conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra in her score to *The Battle of the Somme* at the live screening in the Royal Festival Hall to commemorate the centenary of the ending of this battle.

Overseas work includes Walton's First

Symphony with the George Enescu Philharmonic as well as concerts with the Macedonian Philharmonic, the Çukurova Symphony (Turkey), the Portuguese Symphony Orchestra, and performances of Malcolm Arnold's Fourth Symphony in Latvia and Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* in Worms, Germany.

John Gibbons studied music at Queens' College, Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Royal College of Music, winning numerous awards as conductor, pianist, and accompanist. He assisted John Eliot Gardiner on the 'Leonore' project and the recording of music by Percy Grainger, and was Leonard Slatkin's second conductor for a performance of Charles Ives's Fourth Symphony with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

He has conducted numerous opera pro-

ductions at Opera Holland Park with particular emphasis on Verdi, Puccini, and the verismo composers, including Mascagni's *Iris* and Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*. He conducted *La Bohème* for the Spier Festival in South Africa, toured *Hansel & Gretel* around Ireland with Opera Northern Ireland and Opera Theatre Company, and conducted a number of productions for English Touring Opera. John's orchestral reductions include Walton's *Troilus & Cressida* for Opera St Louis, Missouri and Karl Jenkins's *Stabat Mater*.

John, a renowned communicator with audiences, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Vice-Chairman of the British Music Society, and Choral Director at Clifton Cathedral. His own music has been performed in various abbeys and cathedrals as well as at the Southbank, London. ||

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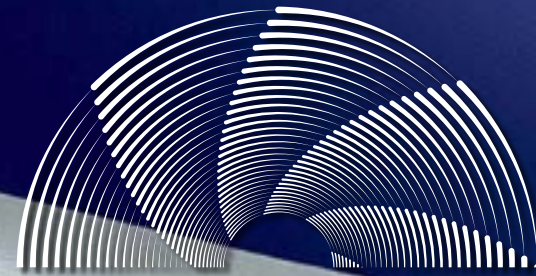
Communication with the audience, coupled with talent for creating a special concert atmosphere have taken the young Latvian pianist Arta Arnicane to a large variety of performance venues across the world. Her quality of winning listeners' full attention, combined with the warmth and intelligence of her programmes and interpretations, allows her to fascinate both small gatherings and large audiences in concert halls such as the Rudolfinum, Prague and the Zurich Tonhalle.

Born into a family with a strong and longstanding musical tradition, she started playing the piano and composing at the age of four. Supported by numerous scholarship awards and eminent artists such as John Lill and Homero Francesch, Arta has studied in several countries and graduated with distinction from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (2004), the Latvian Academy of Music (2008), and Zurich University of the Arts (2010 and 2012).

Her professors Sergejs Osokins, Norma Fisher, and Homero Francesch influenced

the artistic development of Arta's personality and guided her into the international music scene. Arta has won many prizes at international music competitions, including the 'Vianna da Motta' (2001), 'Premio Iturbi' (2010), and 'Prague Spring' (2011) to name but a few.

Arta is especially devoted to creating thematic and narrative programmes, as well as discovery and performance of rare repertoire. Her creative collaboration with conductor John Gibbons has included performances of both piano concertos by William Alwyn and the recording of the powerful and expressive piano concerto by William Wordsworth (Tocatta Classics, 2019). Arta is also an enthusiastic chamber musician and performs regularly in a duo with her husband, cellist Florian Arnicans. The third album by the 'Duo Arnicans' will be soon released, and follows the emotionally charged programme of sonatas by F. Chopin and E. von Dohnanyi (2015), and the more lyrical album 'Enchanted' (2018). ||



Ealing Symphony
Orchestra @100

Platinum Jubilee Prom in the Park

Sunday, 5 June 2022 · 7.30pm
Walpole Park, Mattock Lane, W5 5EQ

ealingso.org.uk

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

‘Iberia’ from *Images for Orchestra*

- *Par les rues et par les chemins* (In the streets and by-ways)
- *Les parfums de la nuit* (The scents of the night)
- *Le matin d'un jour de fête* (The morning of a feast day)



For a composer who had a rigorously formal academic training, Debussy emerged as a surprisingly revolutionary figure, constantly challenging the accepted musical practices of his time, simply by going his own way and taking no notice of any convention for which he found no use. His music constantly advanced, developing new sounds and colours. By the time his fellow musicians had caught up with what he had achieved, Debussy had moved on to new levels of refinement, abstraction and understatement. He possessed a unique sense of which sonority or instrument would add exactly the colour he

sought to his music; he had a lifelong interest in painting and knew many of the great impressionists, who were his contemporaries. Though he came to be regarded as their musical equivalent, he himself likened his own work to that of Turner (the painter), and said “... What I am trying to do is something very different, an effect of reality, but what some fools call impressionism, a term that is usually misapplied, especially by critics who don’t hesitate to apply it to Turner, the greatest creator of mysterious effects in the whole of art.”

Iberia took shape over a long period (1903–1910) and went through numerous revisions, some of them drastic. Debussy originally intended a second set of *Images* for solo piano, to balance the first set (1903) but in the process of composing, decided that his ideas fell more naturally into an orchestral score. The orchestral *Images* consist of three movements, representing the three countries the composer was most familiar with: *Gigues* summons images of England, using the folk song *The Keel Row*. The final *Rondes de printemps* depict his native France, and between the two, *Iberia*, itself in three movements, a triptych within a triptych, presents a colourful portrait of Spanish life.

Writing in 1935, an anonymous commentator aptly summed up Debussy’s approach and achievement:

“In *La mer* (1905) Debussy had attempted and succeeded in an expression which marked the possible limits of impressionism. Composing *Iberia* (1909), he turned

from this method to a harder and more precise style. He remains the tone-painter and worshipper of nature, but his manner of colouring is now that of the ‘pointillistes’, who painted with a multitude of fine points rather than with free brush strokes and manipulations of colour. The score of *Iberia* is very detailed and exact if examined closely, and in its development it is the most symphonically conceived of all Debussy’s orchestral pieces. But stand off a little from this tone-picture. Listen from a distance: the sum of its details will be atmosphere and colour planes of vivid and exotic hue.

“The work is also a triumphant vindication of Debussy’s purposes in that, despite the employment of symphonic devices, it is admirably free of convention; of the German school. Nowhere did he more conclusively than in *Iberia* expound a doctrine of development which liberated and followed the inner urge of the musical idea itself, instead of forcing that idea into a preordained channel. And never had he been more close-knit in the exposition of his thought.”

Debussy’s Spain moves from languorous afternoon, through the subtle night to brilliant morning. The first movement opens with a flourish of pizzicato strings accompanied by scintillating woodwind figures, and a shrill figure on the clarinets which returns in many transformations. The interweaving melodic lines are carried forward on robust rhythms. The end of this movement is especially poetic, shadowed and vague like falling evening in the melancholy distance.

The second movement evokes the summer night of exhaling flowers borne on wafting breezes. The opening habanera figure can be traced back to the first movement and this motif pervades the orchestra. The instrumentation creates a moonlit haze and the horn sings yet another transformation of the clarinet motive of the opening. A hush falls upon the orchestra, and from far away comes the faint tolling of bells. Morning breaks, flashes of colour dart across the orchestra, woodwind instruments dance merrily and the life of the festival erupts vibrantly and joyously. ||

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Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)

'Ritual Fire Dance' from *Love, the Magician*



native Andalusia would colour his thinking and his music for the remainder of his life, though ironically he only awoke to the full realisation of this after his arrival in Paris. Prior to this he had studied with the musicologist and folklorist Felipe Pedrell, for whom he maintained a great admiration and respect, at the Madrid Conservatoire from 1902. He began to make some headway as a composer and completed his opera *La vida breve (A Brief Life)* in 1905. Commenting later on his decision to try his luck in Paris, Falla observed "... without Paris, I would have remained buried in Madrid, done for and forgotten, laboriously leading an obscure existence, living miserably and keeping my first prize in a frame, like in a family album, with the score of my opera in a cupboard. To be published in Spain is worse than not being published at all, it is like throwing the music into a well."

In parallel with his experience in Paris, and the impact of meeting Albéniz in particular, Falla was inspired by Felipe Pedrell whose goal was to create a unique brand of music for Spain which combined Spanish polyphony with the colour and rhythm of Spanish folk music. Falla did not base his music directly on folklore, but rather extracted the substance of its sonorities, rhythms and spirit, fusing them to create his own style. Falla observed, "It has been occasionally asserted that we have no traditions. But in our dance and our rhythm we possess the strongest traditions that none can obliterate. We have the ancient modes which, by virtue of their extraordinary inherent freedom, we can use as inspiration dictates."

At the outbreak of World War I, Falla had spent seven years in Paris, and then decided to return to Madrid. There, Pastora

At one or other time, the Spanish community in Paris around the turn of the twentieth century included composers Albéniz, Granados, and Turina, the singer Pauline Viardot, the pianist Ricardo Viñes, and the cellist Pau Casals.

Manuel de Falla joined this teeming expatriate community in 1907 aged 31. Born in Cádiz, the traditions and idioms of his

Imperio, a leading ballerina from a gypsy background, commissioned him to write a song and dance work, in collaboration with the poet Gregorio Sierra, based upon legends recounted by her mother Rosario de la Mejorana, and fashioned into a scenario by Sierra. The scenario emerged as a chamber ballet which was premiered at the Teatro Lara of Madrid on 15 April 1915, to restricted enthusiasm, mainly from gypsies in the audience.

Falla was not disheartened, but refashioned the score into an abstract ballet, removing the dialogue which had obscured some of his most captivating music, and expanding the eight-piece ensemble into a full orchestra. The revised ballet *El amor brujo* (literally, *Spell-bound Love*, but generally translated as *Love, the Magician*),

was premiered in the same concert in April 1916 in which *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* was premiered.

The scenario tells the story of the widowed gypsy, Candela, haunted by the ghost of her late husband. Candela has found a new love, Carmelo, but the jealous spirit intervenes and will not allow the relationship. Candela first arranges for her friend Lucía to distract the haunting spirit by flirting with it. When this is not effective, Candela must resort to sorcery to free herself; in the *Ritual Fire Dance*, Candela dances around open flames to ward off the evil spirit, and finally breaks the spirit's hold. After the night of sorcery Candela and Carmelo face the splendour of a new dawn, as morning bells peal in hopeful triumph. ||

Spring Recital in Chiswick

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José Pablo Moncayo (1912–1958)

Huapango

José Pablo Moncayo was introduced to music by his elder brother Francisco. His first teacher, from 1926, was Eduardo Hernández Moncada, who remained a presence in his career for most of Moncayo's life. Moncayo studied at the National Conservatory where Moncada was one of the tutors from 1929; financing his studies by working as a jazz pianist.

The Director Carlos Chávez created a composition course at the National Conservatory starting in 1931 and the initial group of students included Silvestre Revueltas and José Pablo Moncayo, who passed the rigorous selection on account of his sight-reading ability at the piano. Moncayo was one of only four students who attended the final examination.

The new *Sociedad Musical Renovación* (*Renovation Musical Society*) presented its first concert on 22 August 1931, including two short works for solo piano by Moncayo: *Impressions in a Forest*, and *Impression*, both for solo piano, which were his first public performances as a composer. The following year, Moncayo joined the percussion section of the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico.

In the same season 1932, Chávez organised a festival of chamber music at the National Conservatory and invited Aaron Copland to participate, beginning friendships between Copland and both Revueltas and Moncayo. After Chávez was dismissed from the National Conservatory by the new regime, life became very difficult for the students, including Moncayo, who had been his personal pupils. They were branded as “Chavistas” and blacklisted by the new administration of the Conservatory. The students refused to be defeated, joined forces and emerged as an

avant-garde group, promoting a concert of their own work on 25 November 1935 at which Moncayo premiered his *Sonatina* for solo piano, performed by himself, and *Amatzinac*, for flute and string quartet.

Moncayo joined the percussion section of the controversial Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional created in 1935 at the National Conservatory by Estanislao Mejía and conducted by Silvestre Revueltas. Moncayo's *La Adelita* was premiered on 5 September 1936 as part of the children's concert series, conducted surprisingly by Carlos Chávez. One week later, Moncayo made his debut as conductor with the OSN.

In 1940 Chávez organised a concert of Mexican music in New York, as part of his aim to establish Mexican music in the wider repertoire. The following year he repeated the programme in Mexico City, but requested Moncayo among others to write a new work for this concert. In New York the programme had included a work called *Huapangos* by Gerónimo Baqueiro Foster; for the concert in 1941 this was replaced with *Huapango*, by Moncayo. The earlier work had been a simple arrangement of popular dance tunes; Moncayo's *Huapango* is inspired by popular music, but weaves the tunes into full scale orchestral fantasy.

Moncayo later noted “Blas Galindo and I went to Alvarado, one of the places where folkloric music is preserved in its most pure form; we were collecting melodies, rhythms and instrumentations over several days. The transcription of it was very difficult because the *huapangueros* [musicians] never sang the same melody twice in the same way. When I came back to Mexico, I showed the collected material to Candelario Huízar; Huízar gave me a piece

of advice that I will always be grateful for: ‘Present the material first in the same way you heard it and develop it later according to your own thought.’ And I did it, and the result is almost satisfactory for me.”

Moncayo's *Huapango* was premiered on 15 August 1941, at the Palacio de Bellas Artes by the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico conducted by Carlos Chávez's baton. Moncayo played piano as well as percussion.

The following year, probably thanks to the recommendations of Chávez and Copland, Moncayo was awarded a scholarship from the Rockefeller Foundation to study at the Berkshire Music Institute, Tanglewood, where he completed his only Symphony, which was premiered in September 1944.

Moncayo was appointed assistant conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico in 1945 and artistic director of the Orchestra in 1949 while Chávez remained its musical director, although politics continued to interfere and Moncayo's last concert was in 1954.

Although he wrote a considerable body of chamber and orchestra music, of which *Huapango* is the best known, his colleagues felt that his influence went far beyond his actual music, Yolanda Moreno Rivas writing that:

“The death of Moncayo in 1958 tangibly marked the end of the Mexican nationalist composition school. In the same way that



his work without followers surpassed and abolished the innocent use of the Mexicanism theme, his death closed the predominance of a composition style whose imprint marked musical creation in Mexico during more than three decades; although only at the beginning of the sixties would it be possible to talk about the definitive abandonment of the great Mexican fresco, the oblivion of the epic tone, and the search for new structural factors in composition.” ||



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Silvestre Revueltas (1899–1940)

Sensemaya

Silvestre Revueltas Sánchez was the oldest of twelve siblings, several of whom had artistic careers. At the age of five, Revueltas was given a violin as a gift from his father and began studying seriously when he was eight. Revueltas entered the National Conservatory of Music in Mexico City but after the upheaval of the Mexican Revolution in 1917, his family had to move to the United States, where he studied at St Edward College in San Antonio, Texas. He then continued his studies in Chicago in 1919 and enrolled himself at the Chicago Musical College. Revueltas began his professional career in the US playing violin in a theatre orchestra in San Antonio, Texas, and conducting an orchestra in Mobile, Alabama.

He came to the attention of the composer Carlos Chávez, who was the leading figure in all musical circles in Mexico and who organised a concert in Mexico in 1924 for Revueltas to conduct. After further concerts Chávez invited Revueltas in 1929 to be the assistant conductor at the Orquesta Sinfónica de México, so the younger man returned permanently to Mexico.

In December 1934, a new president of Mexico, General Lázaro Cárdenas, was inaugurated. The resulting political changes included José Muñoz Cota becoming head chief of the Department of Fine Arts; as a result Carlos Chávez was removed from the head of the National Conservatory and was replaced by his enemy Estanislao Mejía. Chávez therefore lost the commission to write the score for the film *Redes*, sponsored by the Ministry. The commission was given instead to Revueltas, who thereby fell out with Chávez.

Revueltas left Chávez's orchestra in 1935 to be the principal conductor of

a newly created and short-lived rival orchestra, the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional, and when this folded, Revueltas travelled to Spain as part of a tour organised by the leftist organisation *Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios*, and remained to fight for the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War. When the fascist forces triumphed he returned to Mexico, but the Republican defeat embittered him and he took little care of his declining health. On 4 October 1940, his ballet *El renacuajo paseador*, written four years earlier, was premiered in Mexico City. Revueltas failed to attend the performance; as he was walking through the streets he suffered sharp bronchial attack, was taken to hospital and died the following morning.

Sensemaya is based on a poem of the same title by the Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén, to whom the score is dedicated. The poem evokes a ritual Afro-Caribbean chant performed while killing a snake.

In the poem the *mayombero* is the leader of rituals, master of ceremonies and witch doctor with a knowledge of herbal medicines. The *mayombero* leads a ritual which offers the sacrifice of a snake to a god, perhaps Babalú Ayé. This god is the Afro-Cuban spirit who has the power to heal, or spread pestilence. One of the main motives in *Sensemaya* is based on this word *mayombero*, derived from an actual ceremony.

Revueltas originally composed *Sensemaya* in 1937 for small orchestra. In 1938, he expanded the score into a full-scale orchestral work including 14 percussion instruments, and conducted the premiere on 15 December 1938, with the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico in the Palacio de Bellas Artes where *Sensemaya* was received



with considerable acclaim. The synopsis published at the time noted:

“The work begins with a slow trill in the bass clarinet as the percussion plays the sinuous, syncopated rhythm that drives the work. Soon a solo bassoon enters playing an eerie but rhythmic ostinato bass line. The tuba then enters playing the first of this work's two major themes, a muscular, ominous motif. Other brass join in to play the theme, growing louder

Sensemaya [fragmentos]
(*canto para matar una culebra*)
by Nicolás Guillén

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

La culebra tiene ojos de vidrio;
La culebra viene y se enreda en un palo;
Con sus ojos de vidrio, en un palo;
Con sus ojos de vidrio.

Sensemaya, la culebra, sensemayá.
Sensemaya, con sus ojos, sensemayá.
Sensemaya, con su lengua, sensemayá.
Sensemaya, con su boca, sensemayá.

and more emphatic, but rigorously yoked to the underlying rhythm. Eventually the horns blast as loudly as they can, with obsessive trills on the low clarinets far underneath, and the strings enter with the slashing second theme. The brass take up this new theme and bring it to a climax, after which the music returns to its opening texture. This recapitulation brings with it a mood of foreboding. The rhythm becomes even more obsessive, and finally the music reaches a massive climax during which both themes are played, overlapping, sometimes in part and sometimes in whole, by the entire orchestra in what sounds like a musical riot. The coda feels like the final dropping of a knife.”

In a life cut short too soon Revueltas managed to write a considerable body of music including four string quartets, and over a dozen orchestral works. He also completed scores for eight films, in one of which, *Vámonos con Pancho Villa* (*Let's Go with Pancho Villa*, 1935), he made a cameo appearance as a bar piano player. When shooting breaks out in the bar while he is playing *La cucaracha*, he holds up a sign reading “Se suplica no tirarle al pianista” (“Please don't shoot the pianist”). ||



Sensemaya [excerpts]
(*chant to kill a snake*)
translated by William Knapp Jones

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

The snake has eyes of glass;
The snake coils on a stick;
With its eyes of glass on a stick;
With its eyes of glass.

Sensemaya, the snake, sensemayá.
Sensemaya, with its eyes, sensemayá.
Sensemaya, with its tongue, sensemayá.
Sensemaya, with its mouth, sensemayá.

Manuel de Falla (1876–1946)

Nights in the Gardens of Spain

- *En el Generalife (In the Generalife)*
- *Danza lejana (A Distant Dance)*
- *En los jardines de la Sierra de Córdoba (In the Gardens of the Sierra de Córdoba)*

At a concert in October 1907, days after his arrival in Paris, Falla and his fellow composer Joaquín Turina encountered Isaac Albéniz; the encounter, and the conversation which followed long into the night, fired Falla with enthusiasm for the music of the country he had so recently left behind. Turina later distilled the mood of the evening thus: “Music should be an art and not a diversion for the frivolity of women and the dissipation of men. We were three Spaniards gathered together in that corner of Paris, and it was our duty to fight bravely for the national music of our country.”

Originally intending a short visit, Falla remained for seven years, until the outbreak of war. In that time *La vida breve* was produced (1913) at the Paris Opera on the instigation of Paul Dukas, and Falla associated with many leading musicians, including Debussy, Ravel, and Stravinsky, and with the impresario Serge Diaghilev, whose Ballets Russes were the greatest single creative force of the period.

The last work which Falla conceived in Paris before his return to Spain at the outbreak of war in 1914 was a series of nocturnes for solo piano. The Catalan pianist Ricardo Viñes persuade the composer that his ideas were better suited to a work for piano and orchestra and *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* took shape as Falla’s most overt homage to his homeland, which the composer completed in 1915 and dedicated to Viñes, who did not however give the first performance. The premiere was given by José Cubiles on 9 April 1916, at Madrid’s Teatro Real, with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid conducted by Enrique

Fernández Arbós. The composer himself was the soloist at the London premiere in 1921, at a Queen’s Hall concert conducted by Edward Clark.

In the same year, Falla settled in Granada, making his home opposite the hill of the great Alhambra — the fortress of the Moorish kings, which he had depicted so evocatively without ever having seen it, knowing it only from a second-hand book found on a Paris book stall.

Although the subtitle is *Symphonic Impressions*, the Symphonic element is barely noticeable, and the Impressionism reveals the influence of Debussy particularly in its glowing evocation of atmosphere and setting. Falla depicts three gardens:

The first is the celebrated Generalife, the jasmine-scented gardens surrounding the summer palace of the king’s harem at the Alhambra. (The word “Generalife” comes from the Moorish *Jannat al-Arif* — the builder’s garden.) “Nowhere,” wrote Alexander Dumas, “were so many orange trees, so many roses, so many jasmines gathered in so small a place... Nowhere will you see so many springs, so many leaping waterfalls, so many rushing torrents.”

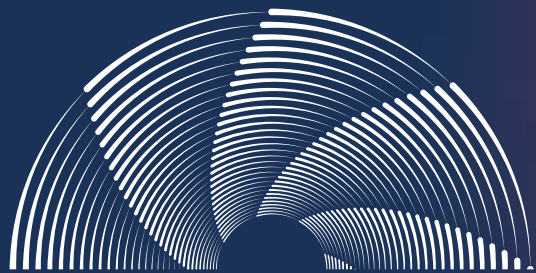
The second movement, set in an unidentified garden, is an exotic dance. The piano, with its arabesques, trills, arpeggios, and stomping octaves, suggests a guitar, then a dancer, later a singer. Without pause, the music flows into festivities in the Sierra de Córdoba. Falla never wanted to be at all specific about his inspiration, writing of the work:

“If these ‘symphonic impressions’ have achieved their object, the mere enumera-

tion of their titles should be a significant guide to the hearer. Although in this work — as in all which have a legitimate claim to be considered as music — the composer has followed a definite design regarding tonal, rhythmical, and thematic material... the end for which it was written is no other than to evoke places, sensations, and sentiments. The themes employed are based (as is much of the composer’s earlier work) on the rhythms, modes, cadences, and ornamental figures which distinguish the

popular music of Andalusia, though they are rarely used in their original forms; and the orchestra frequently employs, and employs in a conventional manner, certain effects peculiar to the popular instruments used in those parts of Spain. The music has no pretensions to being descriptive; it is merely expressive. But something more than the sounds of festivals and dances has inspired these ‘evocations in sound’, for melancholy and mystery have their part also.” ||





Ealing Symphony Orchestra @100

Saturday, 9 July 2022 · 7.30pm

St Barnabas Church, Pitshanger Lane, W5 1QG

ELGAR *Pomp and Circumstance*, March No. 4

George LLOYD *Symphony No. 2*

Paul LEWIS *Seaside Concerto* for organ and orchestra

STRAVINSKY *The Firebird Suite* (1945)

John GIBBONS musical director

Richard HILLS organ

Tickets: £15 (£6 students & U25s, accompanied U18s free)



ealingso.org.uk

Emmanuel Chabrier (1841–1894)

España



Emmanuel Chabrier was a comparatively late starter in music and pursued a career in the French Ministry of the Interior for nearly twenty years before committing himself to a life in music. Although music became a full-time occupation when he was almost forty, the arts had filled whatever spare time the Ministry allowed him for many years before that. Chabrier's home acted as a salon for musicians, writers and artists in every sphere, he was friendly with Fauré, Saint-Saëns, Duparc and d'Indy amongst composers, Eduard Manet painted his portrait and Chabrier owned eleven of this artist's works, along with paintings by Monet, Renoir, Cézanne and others, at a time when these artists were still highly controversial. The Ministry was evidently not a wholly demanding role, allowing Chabrier ample time to com-

pose, and his comic opera *L'Étoile* was premiered in Paris in November 1877.

The final event which persuaded Chabrier that music was where he belonged was a performance of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*; Chabrier was already completely devoted to Wagner's music and was so absorbed in the spirit of *Tristan* that he was moved to tears even before the performance had begun.

Whilst holidaying in Spain in 1882 he studied the folk music of different regions and incorporated this into his orchestral rhapsody *España*. The work was first performed on 4 November 1883, and was an immediate success, transforming Chabrier's reputation and allowing him to concentrate on his ambition to be a great opera composer. He considered *Gwendoline* to be his masterpiece, but ironically he is best remembered for this work, which he referred to as "a piece in F and nothing more", though later French composers, notably Ravel, found it to be remarkable. The work opens with strings in duple time and woodwind in triple time. The buoyant themes are developed with vivid orchestration. But the famous trombone passage which crowns the work is pure Chabrier, owing nothing to Spain.

Chabrier had a reputation as a considerable wit. In the 1870s and 1880s one of the most prolific and popular French composers was Benjamin Godard, now almost completely forgotten, except that on encountering Chabrier at a reception he remarked "What a pity, my dear Chabrier, that you started so late", to which Chabrier replied, "And what a pity, my dear Godard, that you started so early." ||

Programme notes by Dominic Nudd.



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