

# GRANT PARK MUSIC FESTIVAL

**Carlos Kalmar** Artistic Director and Principal Conductor

**Christopher Bell** Chorus Director



Wednesday, August 9, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

## CIRQUE RETURNS

**Grant Park Orchestra**

**Stephen Alltop**, conductor

**Troupe Vertigo**

**Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov**

*Capriccio espagnol*

Alborada

Variazioni

Alborada

Scena e canto gitano

Fandango asturiano

**Manuel de Falla**

Ritual Fire Dance from *El amor brujo*

**Ástor Piazzolla**

*Oblivion*

**Arturo Márquez**

Danzón No. 2

**Georges Bizet**

Selections from *Carmen*

Les Toréadors

Introduction

Intermezzo

Seguedille

Les Dragons d'Alcala

March des contrebandiers

La garde montante

Danse bohème

Introduction

Prélude & Aragonaise

Habanera

Chanson de toréador

Les Toréadors

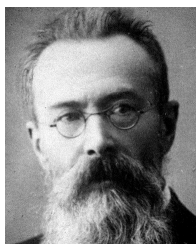


Conductor, harpsichordist, and organist **Stephen Alltop** serves on the faculty at Northwestern University Bienen School of Music. He is director of music at Alice Millar Chapel and is conductor of the Baroque Music Ensemble. Beyond the university, he is music director of the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, the Green Lake Choral Institute, the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, and the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra. He was named Conductor of the Year by the Illinois Council of Orchestras (2012) and appears with choruses and orchestras across the U.S. and Europe.



Los Angeles-based theatrical circus company **Troupe Vertigo** was founded in 2009 by Aloysia Gavre (Cirque du Soleil) and her husband Rex Camphuis (Pickle Family Circus/Film & Theater Producer). In each production, they create an eclectic mix of circus-dance-theater works. Troupe Vertigo's facility is also home to Cirque School, LA's premier circus training space, which inspires an appreciation for the circus arts for "Anybody with Any Body". Aloysia and Rex's expertise is used often for the film and television industry, most notably for Rebel Wilson's aerial performance in *Pitch Perfect 2*

and for the film *Water for Elephants* starring Reese Witherspoon and Christoph Waltz.



**NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV** (1844 - 1908)  
**CAPRICCIO ESPAGNOL (KAPRICHCHIO NA  
ISPANSKIYE TEMI), OP.34 (1887)**

**Scored for:** three flutes including piccolo, two oboes including English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings

**Performance time:** 15 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:** July 4, 1935;  
Eric DeLamarter, conductor

In the nineteenth century, musical nationalism arose alongside political independence movements. Composers at the time would use musical ideas, such as folk tunes, dance rhythms, and instruments, to evoke a specific country, region, or ethnicity. Ironically, in addition to capturing the soundscape of their own countries, composers often looked outward. Spain was a particularly popular destination for its perceived "exoticism." In 1887, Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov composed *Capriccio Espagnol*, a fantasy on Spanish themes. Traditionally, capriccios showcased the virtuosity of a single instrument. Though Rimsky-Korsakov originally intended to highlight the violin, the work developed into a virtuoso tour de force for the entire ensemble, with solo instruments from across the orchestra contributing their own unique effects and colors to evoke the Spanish countryside.

*Capriccio Espagnol* begins with an alborada, or morning serenade. These were sometimes played on bagpipes and accompanied by a small hand drum. The drone of the bagpipe can be heard in the repeated bass notes of the orchestra while brilliant clarinet and violin solos take flight above. Next, a horn quartet introduces a simple folk melody. This melody undergoes five variations in different solo instruments, ending with languorous

chromatic scales in the flute. The alborada returns, but this time the clarinet and violin switch solos. After a stirring brass fanfare, Scene and Gypsy Song features a string of virtuosic cadenzas in various instruments, out of which grows a lively triple-meter dance. Finally, an Andalusian fandango complete with castanets brings the work to a rousing conclusion.



## MANUEL DE FALLA (1876 - 1946)

### RITUAL FIRE DANCE FROM *EL AMOR BRUJO* (1914)

**Scored for:** two flutes including piccolo, one oboe, two clarinets, one bassoon, two French horns, two trumpets, timpani, and strings

**Performance time:** 5 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:** August 26, 1936;  
Dino Bigalli, conductor

In 1914, renowned flamenco dancer and singer Pastora Imperio commissioned Manuel de Falla to compose a gitanería, or gypsy dance. Though in its first incarnation, *El amor brujo* (or “Love, the Magician”) was unsuccessful, Falla revised the work over the next decade, resulting in the one-act ballet we know today.

The story, derived from a gitano tale that Pastora’s mother told, involves a gypsy girl named Candelas. She is in love with a man named Carmelo but is tormented by the ghost of her jealous ex-lover. She tries to exorcise his evil spirit by seeking help from a witch in a cave. There, she experiences hallucinations, performs acts of ritual purification (including the ritual fire dance depicted in this excerpt) and ultimately confronts the ghost. By dawn, she frees herself from his bonds, and church bells peal in celebration in the distance.



## ASTOR PIAZZOLLA (1921 - 1992)

### (ORIGINALLY FOR OBOE (OR BANDONEON) & STRINGS; ARR. EDUARDO MARTURET)

#### *OBLIVION* (1982)

**Scored for:** one flute, one oboe, one clarinet, one bassoon, one trumpet, timpani, percussion, piano, and strings

**Performance time:** 3 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance**

Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla revolutionized the tango. He developed what came to be known as nuevo tango, which incorporates elements of jazz and classical music into the traditional dance form. With roots in the Andalusian tango and Cuban habanera, the Argentine tango grew out of the bordellos of Buenos Aires in the nineteenth century. “He actually took the tango to another level by inhabiting his music,” renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma explained. “The music grew in him, and he adeptly incorporated the influences of his surroundings—whether from New York, Paris, or Buenos Aires.”

Composed in 1982, *Oblivion* became one of Piazzolla’s most popular tangos, due in part to its use in *Enrico IV*, a film by Italian director Marco Bellocchio. *Oblivion* has since seen countless arrangements. The piece begins as a slow milonga, an Uruguayan and Argentinian dance that predates the tango. The milonga allows the legs and body to be more relaxed than in the tango, and the movement—a kind of stylized walking—is generally faster with fewer pauses. The soloist and orchestra eventually unite in the haunting melody before breaking apart again, the piece ending in pensive uncertainty.



## **ARTURO MÁRQUEZ** (b. 1950)

### **DANZÓN NO.2 (1994)**

**Scored for:** two flutes including piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, and strings

**Performance time:** 10 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:** August 4, 1999; Enrique Arturo Diemecke, conductor

Arturo Márquez's *Danzón* No. 2 is one of the most widely-performed pieces of contemporary Mexican classical music. It was commissioned by the National Autonomous University of Mexico and first performed by the university's Philharmonic Orchestra in 1994. It gained international recognition when conductor Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela took it on their European and American tours in 2007. Though the *danzón* has roots in the Cuban habanera, it migrated to the cafes and dance halls of urban Mexico, particularly in the state of Veracruz. The dance is similar to the tango in its passion and some of the rhythms, but it has its own intricate footwork.



## **GEORGES BIZET** (1838 - 1875)

### **SUITE FROM CARMEN (1873)**

**Scored for:** two flutes including piccolo, two oboes including English horn, two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings

**Performance time:** 34 minutes

**First Grant Park Orchestra performance:** July 17, 1936; Ebba Sundstrom, conductor

Even if you've never set foot in an opera house, you will likely recognize many of the themes of Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen*. Despite its unshakable popularity today, *Carmen* was an unlikely success, coming from a composer who had seen his fair share of ups and downs. His career was full of missteps—works that were never finished or were finished but never performed and a general unevenness in quality. Shortly before his premature death at 36, however, Bizet struck gold with *Carmen*. Though the orchestra complained that the score was “unplayable” and the female chorus balked at having to do such unladylike things as smoke and fight onstage, the scandalous nature of the plot propelled the opera to notoriety and eventual success.

The opera is set in a remote frontier town outside Seville, Spain. A soldier named Don José has been told to marry Micaëla, a wholesome girl from his home village. However, he quickly becomes enamored of Carmen, the seductive cigarette girl with a devil-may-care attitude. He abandons his military duties to run away with her and her Romani community. The elusive Carmen eventually tires of Don José and tells him to go home. She runs off with the dashing toreador Escamillo, leading Don José to stab her in a jealous rage outside the bullring.

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