

GENEVA CONCERTS



presents

RPO

François López-Ferrer,
conductor

Xiayin Wang, piano

Friday 4 March 2022 • 7:30 p.m.
Smith Opera House

GENEVA CONCERTS, INC.

2021-2022 SEASON

The Second Year of the PLAGUE

Friday 24 September 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

Symphor!a

Lawrence Loh, conductor; Tai Murray, violin

ROSSINI Overture to *Semiramide*

TCHAIKOVSKY Violin Concerto in D Major

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 5

Friday 29 October 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

Step Afrika!

Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the tradition of African-American stepping.

Sunday 20 February 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

Symphor!a

Lawrence Loh, conductor; Jon Nakamatsu, piano

COLERIDGE-TAYLOR *Ballade* in A minor

RAVEL Concerto in G Major for Piano and Orchestra

RACHMANINOFF Symphony No. 3

Friday 4 March 2022 at 7:30 p.m.

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

François López-Ferrer, conductor; Xiayin Wang, piano

GERSHWIN *Cuban Overture*

GERSHWIN Piano Concerto in F Major

FRANK *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*

GINASTERA *Estancia: Four Dances*

Performed at the Smith Opera House, 82 Seneca Street, Geneva

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

Andreas Delfs, Music Director



François López-Ferrer, conductor
Xiayin Wang, piano

George **GERSHWIN**
Cuban Overture

George **GERSHWIN**
Piano Concerto in F Major
I. Allegro
II. Adagio—Andante con moto
III. Allegro agitato

Xiayin Wang, piano

INTERMISSION

Gabriela Lena **FRANK**
Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout
Toyos
Tarqueda
Himno de Zampoñas
Chasqui
Canto de Velorio
Coqueteo

Alberto **GINASTERA**
Estancia: Four Dances
Los trabajacores agricolas (The Land Workers)
Danza del trigo (Wheat Dance)
Los peones de hacienda (The Cattle Men)
Malamba

This concert is made possible with generous financial support from the Williams Family Foundation

François López-Ferrer

Spanish-American conductor **François López-Ferrer** grew up in Cincinnati where his father, Jesús López-Cobos, was Music Director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra from 1986-2001. He first trained as a composer at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Finding the solitary life of writing symphonies not for him, he began conducting studies with Leonid Grin – introduced by another CSO maestro, Paavo Järvi. He founded Ensemble Vita, composed of fellow students from CCM, and led concerts throughout the Cincinnati area with innovative programming spanning Baroque through 21st-century repertoire.



He came to international attention after a critically acclaimed debut at the 2018 Verbier Festival, where he jumped in for Iván Fischer in a shared program with Sir Simon Rattle and Gébor Takács-Nagy. Subsequently, he has been in demand as a guest conductor with orchestras from Hong Kong to Spain to Chile to Switzerland.

López-Ferrer has been Associate Conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony since 2019 and for 2021-22 is a Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

López-Ferrer was winner of the inaugural 2015 Neeme Järvi Prize awarded at the Menuhin-Gstaad Festival and received third prize at the 2018 OFUNAM International Conducting Competition. He holds a master's degree in Orchestral Conducting from the Haute École de Musique de Lausanne, under the tutelage of professor Aurélien Azan Zielinski.

Xiayin Wang

Pianist Xiayin Wang is an artist of keen musicality and sweeping virtuosity, and was praised by *The New York Times* for her “estimable grasp of pianistic color and her ability to maintain and illuminate a strand of melody within the thickest of textures.” An exclusive Steinway Artist, Ms. Wang has released numerous celebrated recordings and has performed throughout the world, from New York’s Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, to music centers in South America, Europe, and Asia. As *Musical America* put it: “She can be at one moment sensual and the next rhythmically driving...with such assuredness, such delicacy, that one forgets the difficulties inherent in the performance, and is left breathless in musical awe.”

She completed her studies at the Shanghai Conservatory and garnered an enviable record of first prize awards and special honors for her performances throughout China. Ms. Wang, who began piano studies at the age of five, came to New York in 1997. She holds Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Professional Studies degrees from the Manhattan School of Music.



Ms. Wang’s discography has received international acclaim, with her recent Chandos recording of Tchaikovsky and Scriabin piano concerti being hailed as “terrific” (*Gramophone*) and “the model of refinement” (*The Herald*). Her recordings of Alberto Ginastera’s Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2 with the BBC Philharmonic and Music Director Juanjo Mena were commended by *Gramophone* as “jaw-droppingly impressive,” and were singled out by *The New Yorker*’s Alex Ross. Ms. Wang’s 2018 release of a lesser-known collection of works by Granados on Chandos was praised by the *BBC Music Magazine* as catching “the spirit of youthful Spanish ardour.”

Program Notes

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937)

Cuban Overture

Gershwin visited Cuba in 1932. A non-stop round of parties was always accompanied by Latin bands, with their exotic melodies, rhythms and home-grown percussion instruments. Fascinated by what he heard, he decided to create a musical impression of it. He took some of the instruments home to study, then composed this festive and sultry orchestral souvenir of his trip.

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937)

Piano Concerto in F Major

In 1924, Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra, heard the première of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* for piano and orchestra.

Impressed by its unprecedented amalgamation of popular and classical styles, he commissioned Gershwin to compose a full-scale piano concerto.



“Many persons had thought that my rhapsody was only a happy accident,” Gershwin wrote. “Well I went out, for one thing, to show them that there was plenty more where that came from.” The first performance took place in Carnegie Hall on December 3, 1925. The audience acclaimed the concerto and its composer/performer, but the critics were more reserved in their judgment.

For the première, Gershwin wrote the following description: “The first movement employs the Charleston rhythm. It is quick

and pulsating, representing the young, enthusiastic spirit of American life. It begins with a rhythmic motive given out by the kettledrums, supported by the other percussion instruments, and with a Charleston motive introduced by bassoons, horns, clarinets and violas. The principal theme is announced by the bassoon. Later, a second theme is introduced by the piano. The second movement has a poetic, nocturnal atmosphere which has come to be referred to as the American blues, but in a purer form than that in which they are usually treated. The final movement reverts to the style of the first. It is an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping the same pace throughout.”

GABRIELA LENA FRANK

Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout

Born Berkeley, California, USA, September 26, 1972

Identity has always been at the center of Gabriela Lena Frank’s music. Born to a mother of mixed Peruvian/Chinese ancestry, and a father of Lithuanian/Jewish descent, she explores her multicultural heritage most ardently through her compositions. Inspired by the works of Béla Bartók and Alberto Ginastera, she is something of a musical anthropologist. She has travelled extensively throughout South America, and her pieces reflect and refract her studies of Latin-American folklore, incorporating poetry, mythology, and native musical styles into a western classical framework that is uniquely her own. She writes challenging idiomatic parts for solo instrumentalists, vocalists, chamber ensembles, and orchestras.

The composer has provided the following note.

The string-orchestra composition *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout* (2001) mixes elements from the western classical and Andean folk music traditions, drawing inspiration from the idea of *mestizaje* as envisioned by the Peruvian writer Jose María Arguedas, wherein cultures co-exist without the subjugation of one

by the other. **Toyos** depicts one of the most recognizable instruments of the Andes, the panpipe. The largest panpipe is the breathy *toyo*, which requires great stamina and lungpower and is typically played in parallel fourths. **Tarqueada** is a forceful and fast number suggestive of the *tarka*, a heavy wooden duct flute that is blown harshly in order to split the tone. *Tarka* ensembles typically play in casually tuned fourths, fifths, and octaves.

Himno de Zampoñas takes its cue from a particular type of panpipe ensemble that divides up melodies through a technique known as hocketing. The characteristic sound of the *Zampoña* panpipe is that of a fundamental tone blown flatly so that overtones ring out on top. **Chasqui** depicts the *chasqui*, a legendary runner from the Inca times who sprinted great distances to deliver messages between towns separated from one another by the Andean peaks. The *chasqui* needed to travel light, so I imagine his choice of instruments to be the *charango*, a high-pitched cousin of the guitar, and the light-weight bamboo *quena* flute, both of which influence this movement. **Canto de Velorio** portrays another well-known Andean personality, a professional crying woman known as *llorona*. Hired to render funeral rituals (known as *velorio*) even sadder, the *llorona* is accompanied here by a second *llorona* and an additional chorus of mourning women (*coro de mujeres*). The chant *Dies Irae* is quoted as a reflection of the *llorona*'s penchant for blending verses from Quechua Indian folklore and western religious rites. **Coqueteo** is a flirtatious love song sung by men known as *romanceros* and is direct in its harmonic expression, bold, and festive. The *romanceros* sang in harmony with one an-



other against a backdrop of guitars, which I think of as a *vendaval de guitarras* (storm of guitars).

ALBERTO GINASTERA (1916-1983) **Dances from the Ballet *Estancia*, Op. 8a**

Ginastera was the finest composer that Argentina has produced. Until the 1950s, such early compositions as the ballet score *Estancia* showed the strong influence of Argentinean folk music. Later creations displayed an exciting, colorful style with less folk flavor to it. In 1940, the dance company known as American Ballet Caravan was touring South America. Impressed by Ginastera's music, its director, Lincoln Kirstein, commissioned a new score from him, one which would reflect Argentinean life and music. The composer obliged with *Estancia (The Ranch)*. The story takes place on the vast, grassy pampas. The central character is a young man from the city who comes to work on a ranch. A girl whom he finds attractive thinks him a weakling at first. He wins her affections by demonstrating that he can match the local gauchos in sheer physical strength. Then he shows off his artistic side by becoming the last person on his feet at the end of a men-only dance contest, the *Malambo*, which Ginastera used as the rousing finale of this concert suite from the ballet.



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Shannon Nance,
Assistant Concertmaster
Perrin Yang
Tigran Vardanyan
Willa Finck
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Aika Ito
Youngsun Kim
Molly McDonald
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Hayley Grainger
Angela Lombardo

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Geoff Sanford

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Anna Steltenpohl

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Andrew Brown

E FLAT CLARINET

Kamalia Freyling

BASS CLARINET

Andrew Brown

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Karl Vilcins

HORN

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Maura McCune Corvington
Nathan Ukens
Stephen Laifer

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Principal
Wesley Nance
Herbert Smith
Paul Shewan

TROMBONE

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Lisa Albrecht
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Thank you for keeping the music playing.

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