

## **Program Notes**

### *Españolería: A Spanish Song Experience*

In 2020, Dave McLellan and I embarked on the Espanoleria project, an ambitious exploration of Spanish song. However, the pandemic forced a pause. Dave delved into virtual lessons, and I embraced motherhood. In 2023, I returned to singing and invited Dave back. Gladly, he accepted.

Below you will find some in depth remarks about the composers of our program and some personal reflections of mine in regards to each one.

#### **Joaquín Rodrigo (1901-1999)**

Rodrigo was a luminary in 20th-century classical music. Despite becoming blind at the age of three due to Diphtheria, Rodrigo used the Braille system to convey his compositions which were then translated into musical notation. His compositions, including the iconic "Concierto de Aranjuez," seamlessly blend Spanish folk influences with classical forms. Beyond his music, Rodrigo's solid academic background laid the groundwork for his enduring legacy.

In 2024, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of Rodrigo's passing, Cecilia Rodrigo (Joaquin Rodrigo's daughter) reached out to me via email, with warm wishes for our upcoming performances and emphasizing the significance of preserving Rodrigo's legacy through the Victoria and Joaquín Rodrigo Foundation. She also shared a [Link to Rodrigo's Dossier of works](#) which I'm happy to share here. Since Cecilia's correspondance my connection to the Spanish and Latin American repertoire has deepened knowing that as a musician and through my heritage, I'm a messenger of this music.

#### **Federico García Lorca (1898-1936)**

A Spanish poet and playwright, Lorca explored rural Spanish life and the human psyche. Tragically, he fell victim to political violence during the Spanish Civil War. Despite his untimely end, Lorca's legacy endures as a beacon of Spanish cultural expression.

In 2018 while in Granada (Spain), I visited "La Huerta de San Vicente," one of Lorca's family homes which was transformed into a Casa-Museo (Home-Museum), where he penned renowned plays and collaborated with artists like Manuel de Falla. Lorca and de Falla had a close friendship, and delved into many artistic projects together, some of which were concerts presented at "La Huerta de San Vicente."

## **Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)**

A revered composer, de Falla blended Spanish melodies with modernist elements. His impact extends beyond compositions, fostering collaboration in vibrant artistic circles like the collaborations with Lorca. Despite his diverse musical experiences while living in France and meeting other composers like Ravel, Debussy and Stravinsky, Manuel de Falla's music always remained deeply rooted in Spanish culture. Once back in Spain, de Falla escaped the Spanish Fascist regime, and went to Argentina where he continued to compose until his passing.

*El Paño Moruno* (one of the *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas*), was one of the first Spanish art songs that I learned, and it ignited my love for Spanish music. While initially really challenging, learning the rest of the "Siete Canciones Populares Españolas" became a compelling need for me. The more that I perform this repertoire, the more I fall in love with its intricacies and expressive beauty.

**We invite you to savor *Españolería*, a Spanish Song Experience!**

