Creating Community Through Great Music 2025-2026

Chamber Music Amici

SPANISH JOURNEY

December 14, 2025 • 3:00 pm
December 15, 2025 • 7:30 pm

Richard E. Wildish Community Theater
630 Main St, Springfield

Artwork by Hannah Dean
2025-2026 Season Artist

Welcome, friends of Amici!

We are so happy you are here to enjoy Amici's holiday-season treat! In this concert, we revisit the colorful Spanish music of Turina and Granados—whose other works we last shared with you in December 2022—and we add a fresh spark with a beautiful piece by Albéniz. A special highlight is Prokofiev's Sonata for Two Violins, one of Sharon Schuman's beloved pieces. Throughout this season, we honor our founding musician by performing works she treasured and introduced in Amici's early years. We are also thrilled to welcome guest artist Juan Luis from Spain, along with cellist Eric Alterman of the Delgani String Quartet.

As we wrap up 2025, we wish you a joyful, festive season with your loved ones. Thank you for your continued support and for sharing your love of chamber music with us. Enjoy the concert!

Eunhye Grace Choi, Artistic Director

Chamber Music Amici

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Join us for treats after the concert on stage.

SPANISH JOURNEY

Piano Trio No. 2 in B Minor, Op. 76 — **Joaquín Turina**

I. Lento - Allegro molto moderato
II. Molto vivace
III. Lento - Andante mosso - Allegretto

Eunhye Grace Choi, piano; Juan Luis, violin; Eric Alterman, cello

Sonata in C Major for Two Violins, Op. 56 — **Sergei Prokofiev**

I. Andante cantabile
II. Allegro
III. Commodo (quasi allegretto)
IV. Allegro con brio

Juan Luis, violin; Tomás Cotik, violin

Selections from Suite Española, Op. 47 — **Isaac Albéniz**

I. Cádiz
II. Asturias

Tomás Cotik, violin; Juan Luis, violin; Lillie Manis, viola; Eric Alterman, cello

Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 49 — **Enrique Granados**

I. Allegro
II. Allegretto quasi andantino
III. Largo - Molto presto

Eunhye Grace Choi, piano; Tomás Cotik, violin; Juan Luis, violin
Lillie Manis, viola; Eric Alterman, cello

Program Notes by Dr. Terry McQuilkin

Joaquín Turina (1882–1949):
Piano Trio No. 2, Op. 76

Born in Seville in 1882, Joaquín Turina studied with José Tragó in Madrid, then with Vincent d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum in Paris. There he met Isaac Albéniz and Manuel de Falla, both of whom advised him to look for inspiration in the popular music of Spain. Several of Turina's compositions, such as his early orchestral tone poem "La procesión del Rocio," consciously evoke the rhythms and colors of his native Andalusia, but most of his works also reveal the influence of the French aesthetic he absorbed during his years at the Schola.

Turina completed his Piano Trio No. 2 in 1933. The first movement, ostensibly in sonata form, begins with a very brief Lento, after which the strings, in octaves, initiate a fast section dominated by a soaring theme in B minor. When the tempo slows slightly, the violin introduces a cheerful theme in E major, which quickly builds in intensity. After about one minute, the tempo slows considerably, and the cello introduces an expressive melody over the piano's Phrygian-mode chords; this is where Turina's Andalusian roots become evident. After this elegiac section the two earlier themes are reprised.

The second movement, in 5/8 meter, is rhythmically akin to a Basque *zortzico,* but it has the lightness of a Mendelssohn scherzo, as the violin and cello, both muted, toss back and forth a flittering melodic line. A short Lento, with material derived from the first movement, offers a brief moment of calm before the scherzo returns.

The finale is at once the most "Francophile" and the most eclectic of all the movements, with seven distinct sections and multiple tempo changes. Despite the movement's heterogeneity, the result is remarkably cogent, with Turina's mastery of melodic variation very much in evidence. We also hear the composer's fondness for using cyclical principles with the re-emergence of two of the themes from the opening movement.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953):
Sonata for Two Violins in C Major, Op. 56

In the summer of 1932, Sergei Prokofiev holidayed with his family in Sainte-Maxime, near Saint-Tropez. His workspace was a large room with a view of the Mediterranean, where he practiced the solo part of his Fifth Piano Concerto and composed, among other works, the Sonata in C Major for Two Violins. He was motivated, paradoxically, by having recently heard an unsuccessful work for violin duet and his conviction that "in spite of the apparent limitations of such a duet, one could make it interesting enough to listen to for ten or fifteen minutes without tiring."

Prokofiev wrote the Sonata for Triton, a Parisian chamber music society which needed new repertoire. A month after a performance of the work in Russia in November 1932, two members of Triton gave the work its "official" premiere in Paris.

In this lean, concise Sonata, we hear Prokofiev's turn toward a "new simplicity." The two violinists are equal partners, continually weaving their lyrical lines in counterpoint. While dissonant harmonies abound and key centers vacillate frequently, each movement gravitates toward its home key: C major in the outer movements, G minor in the two middle ones.

The slow-fast-slow-fast design of the Sonata is akin to a Baroque *sonata da chiesa*. The opening Andante cantabile, a kind of prelude, is followed by an assertive Allegro with two contrasting themes. The third movement, lyrical and quiescent, is in ABA form. The energetic finale, the most substantial movement of the Sonata, is full of stark contrasts.

Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909):
"Cádiz" and "Asturias" from
Suite Española, Op. 47

Isaac Albéniz was born in 1860 in Camprodón, in northeastern Spain. After studying with various teachers in Madrid, Leipzig, and Brussels, he returned to Madrid and pursued a career as a pianist and composer. In 1883, he moved to Barcelona and began studies with the influential musicologist Felipe Pedrell, who urged the young composer to find inspiration in Spanish folk music.

The "Suite Española," op. 47 for piano was an early consequence of Pedrell's advice. The work has a convoluted publishing history. In 1886 the Madrid

publisher Zozaya published four pieces under the collective title, "Suite Española," though eight pieces (each named for a region of Spain) were listed on the title page. (Neither "Asturias" nor "Cádiz" were included in that original publication.) Since Albéniz never completed the Suite, other publishers simply filled out the group with short pieces from the composer's œuvre, using the titles on Albéniz's original list, whether or not the music was characteristic of the region indicated by the new title.

"Asturias" first appeared under the title "Prelude," as a part of Albéniz's "Chants d'Espagne," published in 1891. The piece, which has nothing to do with the music of Asturias in northern Spain, evokes the spirit of Andalusia, with its imitation of characteristic flamenco guitar techniques. (For this reason, "Asturias" has become a favorite of guitarists.) The middle section of the piece brings to mind the impassioned singing of flamenco performances.

"Cádiz" was originally published with the title, "Sérénade Espagnole," in 1890. Over an accompaniment built on bolero rhythm, a songful melody is played in octaves. As in "Asturias," the middle section is evocative of southern Spain.

The late German cellist/composer Werner Thomas-Mifune created the string quartet arrangements of "Asturias" and "Cádiz" that we hear in today's concert.

Enrique Granados (1867–1916): Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op. 49

Born in 1867 in Lérida, Catalonia, Enrique Granados studied piano in Barcelona and Paris and quickly developed a reputation as a piano virtuoso. He had little training in composition; perhaps his only instruction in that area was with Felipe Pedrell. Although Granados composed a few overtly nationalistic works, most of his music falls firmly in the tradition of European romanticism. "My ambition is to be in my country what Saint-Saëns and Brahms are in theirs," he wrote in a letter to his wife, Amparo.

Unlike Saint-Saëns and Brahms, however, Granados generally avoided employing classical structures such as sonata form. The Piano Quintet in G minor, written in 1894 and 1895, is in three movements. The strings begin the opening Allegro with a bold unison statement built on a modal scale with two augmented seconds. A melody in triplets follows shortly thereafter, and

these two thematic ideas are developed freely throughout the movement. The composer's adroit use of counterpoint is continually in evidence, and there is even a brief fugal section.

The piano opens the placid second movement with open-fifth chords, over which the muted first violin introduces a haunting theme constructed on a D-minor modal scale. At measure 42, the tonality shifts to A major, and the violins deliver the secondary theme: a meandering melody line over static harmonies in A-major in the lower strings and piano. The main theme is reprised, followed by a coda in which both themes are quoted.

The finale reignites the forceful energy and rhythmic drive heard in the opening movement. It starts with a dance-like melody in the Phrygian mode. The movement is structured unconventionally; if the repeat sign at measure 57 is observed, the form is ABABCA (a quasi-rondo), with the "B" theme recalling the tranquility of the second movement. The coda is fashioned from the first movement's opening bars.

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As always, we thank the Richard E. Wildish Community Theater for their hospitality. We welcome Mollie Skye as the new General Manager of the Wildish!

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Our concert season is dedicated to

Sharon Johnson Schuman (1946-2025)

Co-Founder of Chamber Music Amici

Sharon was a visionary musician, educator, and community leader whose joyful spirit and fearless creativity helped shape the very heart of Amici. Her passion for making chamber music accessible, welcoming, and deeply personal transformed the concert experience for audiences of all ages.

Sharon touched countless lives through her performances, mentorship, and civic engagement. Chamber Music Amici honors her extraordinary legacy and the enduring community she helped to build. Sharon's music lives on in all of us.

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Musicians

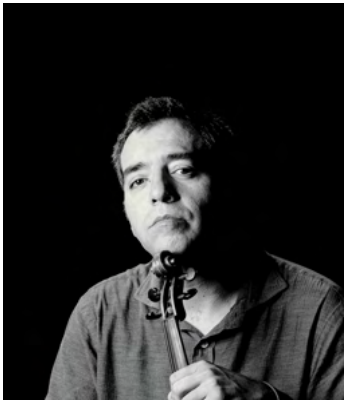
Eunhye Grace Choi, piano

Korean pianist Eunhye Grace Choi has been praised for her “nice touch and excellent technique” (American Record Guide) and “meticulous attention to detail” (Fanfare). Grace has recorded extensively for Naxos, MSR, Albany, Emeritus, and Origin Classical. As a sought after collaborative pianist and chamber musician, she regularly performs with musicians and soloists from the major symphony orchestras, including Cleveland, Philadelphia, Dallas, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Paul, and San Francisco Symphony, as well as many of the world’s most prestigious music institutions and conservatories. Grace served as Collaborative Piano Faculty for six years at Eastern Music Festival. She has also served as music faculty and collaborative pianist at Tennessee Tech University (2013–2017). Grace is Artistic Director of Chamber Music Amici as well as The Classical on Broadway Series in Eugene, Oregon.

Tomás Cotik, violin

Tomás is internationally recognized as a soloist, chamber musician, and professor. A highly sought-after recording artist, he has released 20 albums for Naxos and Centaur Records, accumulating over 6 million streams. Fanfare Magazine praises him, writing: “Cotik never indulges in violinistic brilliance at the expense of music, but he sounds consistently brilliant nevertheless.” Tomás’ thoughtful research on historical performance and in-depth interpretations have repeatedly earned him favorable comparisons to some of the world’s most famous musicians. As Professor of Violin at Portland State University, Tomás has received numerous prestigious awards, including First Prize in The American Prize for String Performance and the Dean’s Council Award for Research. His discography includes complete works by Bach, Telemann, Mozart, and Schubert, as well as his own arrangements of music by his countryman Astor Piazzolla.

Juan Luis, violin



A disciple of Víctor Martín and Nicolás Chumachenco, Juan Luis trained at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Madrid and the MusikHochschule in Freiburg. Salvatore Accardo, Lorand Fenyves, Ruggiero Ricci, and Xavier Gagnepain also influenced his training. Juan Luis is the winner of the Pablo Sarasate National Violin Prize. As a soloist, Juan Luis has performed under the baton of Arturo Tamayo, Hans Zender, Yuri Bashmet, and many others. He has performed with the Reina Sofía Chamber Orchestra, the Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Spanish Chamber Orchestra, among others. As a chamber musician, Juan Luis has been very active in festivals and concert halls in Europe, Canada, South America, and Asia. In recent years, he has visited international music festivals in Paris, Seville, Úbeda, the Canary Islands, St. Petersburg, and Copenhagen.

Juan Luis, continued

Juan Luis has also participated in the recording of more than ten CDs with music by Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, García Abril, Tapia Colman, Arbós, and Mompou, among others. He has made numerous recordings for Radio Nacional, Radio France, TVE, and Radio Suisse Romande. Juan Luis is currently Professor of Violin at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Madrid.

Lillie Manis, viola

Widely recognized for her work as a Suzuki educator, Lillie is currently completing her doctorate at Teachers College, Columbia University, where her research focuses on studio teachers' holistic strategies for cultivating expressive performance in young violinists. From 2009-2020, she was a faculty member at the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance, where she mentored graduate violin and viola pedagogy students and served as the Assistant Director of the Community Music Institute.Active as a clinician, masterclass presenter, adjudicator, and conference presenter at both the regional and national levels, she enjoys performing chamber music alongside some of the Northwest's finest players, and recently joined the editorial committee of the American String Teacher.

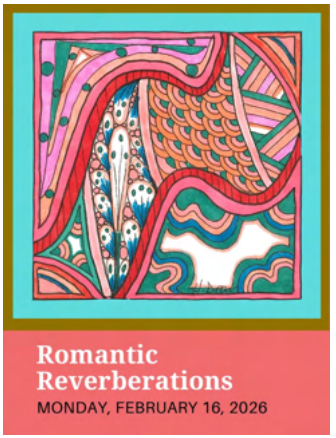
Eric Alterman, cello

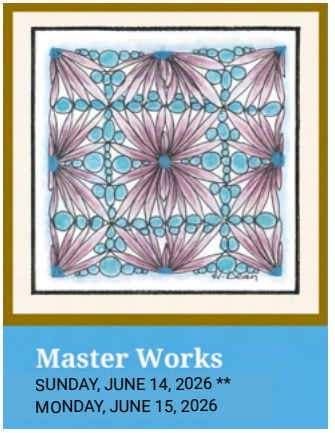
Cellist Eric Schatz Alterman has led a varied musical life spanning continents and roles as a chamber musician, orchestral performer, soloist, and composer. Residing in Rio de Janeiro, he performed for 5 years as a section cellist and assistant principal in the Orquestra Sinfônica Brasileira. He is currently based in Oregon as cellist of the Delgani String Quartet. Known regionally for his heartfelt, expressive playing, Eugene Scene writes that Eric, "revealed the cello's achingly soulful side." Eric's creative passion for music and improvisation has made him a frequent collaborator of all types of artists. He has created music for dancers, performed improvised solo sets, and composed an original cello suite based on the Bach suites. An experienced orchestral performer, Eric continues to serve as Assistant Principal Cellist of the Eugene Symphony and Acting Principal Cellist of the Oregon Mozart Players, and is a frequent substitute with the Oregon Symphony.

Thank you for joining us on this *Spanish Journey*.
Our performances are better because of your presence.

We hope you will join us for our next concert, **Romantic Reverberations**, on Monday, February 16th at 7:30 p.m. The program will be:

Johannes Brahms • Two Songs for Voice, Viola, and Piano, Op. 91
Max Bruch • Three Pieces from Eight Pieces, Op. 83
Frank Bridge • Three Songs for Voice, Viola, and Piano, H. 76





**Additional Sunday concert

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