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*The Robert and Ruth Dell Guitar Series***THE ROMEROS | Guitar**Pepe Romero
Celino RomeroCelin Romero
Lito Romero**Saturday, November 22, 2025 | 7:30pm**

Herbst Theatre

VIVALDI*(arr. Romero)***Concerto in D Major RV93***Allegro***PRAETORIUS***(arr. Romero)***Three Dances from Terpsichore***Bransle**Ballet**La Volta***GRANADOS***(arr. Pepe Romero)***Danzas españolas, Opus 37***No. 2 "Oriental"**No. 5 "Andaluza"***CHAPI***(arr. Lorenzo Palomo)***Preludio de la Revoltosa****BIZET***(arr. Torroba/Romero)***Carmen Suite** *(Habanera and Chanson de toreador)***BOCCHERINI***(arr. Pepe Romero)***Introduction and Fandango (from Guitar Quintetto No .4)****INTERMISSION****CUOMO****La Cita (World premiere)***Amy Goymerac, soprano***DE FALLA***(arr. Pepe Romero)***Miller's Dance from *El Sombrero de très picos*****ALBÉNIZ***(arr. Pepe Romero)***Granada from *Suite Española*, Op. 47****GIMENEZ***(arr. Pepe Romero)***El Baile de Luis****ROMERO****De Cadiz a la Habana (Colombianas)****This series is made possible in part by the generous support of Robert and Ruth Dell.**



ENSEMBLE PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents *The Romeros* for the third time. The ensemble first appeared together here in April 2014. Pepe Romero has appeared 10 times as a soloist, beginning in May 1992.

Over half a century after walking onto the world stage as the first classical guitar quartet, **The Romeros** continue to be a veritable institution in the world of classical music, dazzling countless audiences and winning the raves of reviewers worldwide.

Known to millions as “The Royal Family of the Guitar,” the Romeros were founded by the legendary Celedonio Romero with his sons Celin, Pepe and Angel in 1958. The Quartet went through natural transformations and today consists of the second (Celin & Pepe) and third generations (Lito & Celino). To have so many virtuosi of the same instrument in one family is unique in the world of musical performance, and in the realm of the classical guitar it is absolutely without precedent. *The New York Times* has said: “Collectively, they are the only classical guitar quartet of real stature in the world today; in fact, they virtually invented the format.”

The Romeros have performed on multiple occasions at the White House and many other venerable institutions worldwide. In 1983 they appeared at the Vatican in a special concert for John Paul II, and in 1986 they gave a command performance for his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales. In 2000, His Royal Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain knighted Celin, Pepe and Angel into the Order of “Isabel la Católica.”

With a 60-year plus history, The Romeros have built an enviable discography and their achievements have not gone unnoticed. In February of 2007, The Romeros were granted The Recording Academy’s President’s Merit Award from the GRAMMYs® in honor of their artistic achievements. Television fans have seen and heard The Romeros many times on such shows as *The Tonight Show* and *The Today Show*, PBS’s *Evening at the Boston Pops*, the KPBS/PBS biographical documentary *Los Romeros: The Royal Family of the Guitar*, other PBS specials and the NDR documentary film *Los Romeros: Die Gitarren-Dynastie*.

Perhaps The Romeros’ most lasting legacy is the creation of an entirely new repertoire for guitar quartet, both as a chamber ensemble and as a concerto soloist. For 60 years, The Romeros have inspired distinguished composers to either write new works or arrange existing ones, including Joaquín Rodrigo, Federico Moreno Torroba, Morton Gould, Francisco de Madina, and Lorenzo Palomo. As Rodrigo has said, “The Romeros have developed the technique of the guitar by making what is difficult to be easy. They are, without a doubt, the grand masters of the guitar.”

Amy Goymerac is widely known for her rich soprano instrument and her enchanting stage presence. Comfortable in opera, early music, musical theatre and symphonic works, Ms. Goymerac’s experience spans from Baroque to Contemporary, with notable experience debuting works by living composers. In Fall 2025 she will premiere the work, *La Cita*, by Douglas

Cuomo, with renowned Romero Guitar Quartet at the historic Herbst Theater in San Francisco, her first time on that stage. This will be her second collaboration with the legendary Pepe Romero, the first being an intimate recital in spring of 2022 where her rendition of the *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 5 by Heitor Villa Lobos received a minutes-long standing ovation and remains as one of her most memorable performances.

Career highlights include her first studio album, *To All Women Everywhere* by composer Deon Nielsen Price, released during Summer of 2024 and recorded at the beautiful Presidio Chapel in San Francisco. Her European debut was in summer of 2022, singing the Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem* in Athens, Greece with the Pan-European Philharmonia Symphony Orchestra. She also premiered the role of Charlotte in the world premiere of Kirke Mechem’s newest opera, *Pride and Prejudice*, with Redwood Symphony in Redwood City, California

Highlight operatic roles include Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*), Adele (*Die Fledermaus*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Julie Jordan (*Carousel*) among others. As a concert soprano soloist, Ms. Goymerac has performed Mahler’s *Symphony No. 4*, Samuel Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Handel’s *Messiah*, the Poulenc *Gloria*, the Fauré *Requiem*, Vaughan Williams’ *Dona Nobis Pacem*, and the Mozart *C minor Mass*. You can catch her next revisiting the role of Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*) with Opera San Luis Obispo in fall of 2025.

Ms. Goymerac holds a Graduate Certificate of Vocology from Lamar University and is a practicing vocologist and singing voice habilitation specialist on the central coast of California. She holds a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Cal Poly, SLO. She is a lecturer in voice and performance at California Polytechnic State University, SLO and lives on the sunny central coast with her husband, two daughters and Labrahuahua mix.

PROGRAM NOTES

Allegro from Concerto in D Major RV 93

ANTONIO VIVALDI
(1678–1741)

Antonio Vivaldi was one of the most important and productive composers of the

Baroque era. He wrote choral music, opera, church music, and was particularly admired for his over 500 instrumental concerti. The *Concerto in D Major* was written in the 1730s and is one of four works written by Vivaldi which features the lute, an instrument with a similar sound quality and technique to the guitar. The *Concerto in D Major* works exceptionally well as a work for guitar quartet.

3 Dances from Terpsichore

MICHAEL PRAETORIUS
(1571–1621)

The German composer Michael Praetorius is known for his *Syntagma Musicum*, an encyclopedic treatise on Renaissance instruments; a large number of sacred vocal works written while he served as Protestant kapellmeister in various German towns; and *Terpsichore*, his primary instrumental collection. Published in 1612, *Terpsichore* contains Praetorius' arrangements and harmonizations of over 300 Renaissance dance tunes drawn from the repertoire of the court musicians of King Henry the IV of France. The *Bransle* is a rhythmic and vigorous country dance. The *Ballet* is the instrumental counterpart of a vocal piece in a simple tuneful style. *La Volta* is a wild dance with flamboyant moves that led to its being banned from the French court.

Danzas españolas: No. 2 "Oriental" and No. 5 "Andaluza"

ENRIQUE GRANADOS
(1867–1916)

In the late nineteenth century Spanish musical taste was conservative and under the influence of foreign composers. The principal public musical entertainment was Italian opera while instrumental recitals featured the works of Chopin and Schumann. The musical nationalism that swept across Europe in the last decades of the nineteenth century led to an interest in the historical and folk roots of Spanish music.

Enrique Granados, one of the great figures of this renaissance of indigenous music, was also inspired by the grace, elegance and sense of proportion of Spanish courtly life in the eighteenth century as depicted by the painter Francisco Goya. Granados' *Danzas españolas*, Op. 37 were first conceived when Granados was very young but

subsequently polished over many years. *Danza española No. 2* is titled "Oriental" and evokes, not the music of Asia, but of the Moorish people of North Africa who ruled Spain during the Middle Ages. It features a haunting, chromatic melody supported by a hypnotic, drone-like bass. *Danza española No. 5* is titled "Andaluza" and evokes the flamenco music of Andalusia, the southern part of Spain. The contrasting major and minor keys, tempo changes and passionate and graceful moods have made it a very popular piece.

Preludio de la Revoltosa

RUPERTO CHAPI
(1851–1909)

Ruperto Chapi rose from humble beginnings to win fame and fortune as a composer of Zarzuelas, Spanish language dramas that alternated between spoken and sung scenes, incorporating operatic and popular songs, as well as dance in a Spanish nationalistic style. Chapi's masterpiece was the one act *La Revoltosa* of 1897 and aroused the admiration of Saint-Saëns.

Carmen Suite

GEORGES BIZET
(1838–1875)

The opera *Carmen* by Georges Bizet broke the conventions of the day with its portrayal of working-class characters. It was initially a failure but has since become one of the world's most popular operas. It tells a tragic story of a naive soldier, Don José, and Escamillo, a macho toreador or bullfighter, who vie for the affection of the fiery gypsy Carmen. In Carmen's sultry *Habanera* she sings that life should be lived for the moment and that opportunities for love must be seized. Her sinuous, sexy melodic line is justifiably famous. *Chanson du toréador* is sung by the confident bullfighter Escamillo and celebrates the excitement and fame of the bullring, boasting of the crowd's cheers and the triumph of the bullfighter's victory.

Introduction and Fandango

LUIGI BOCCHERINI
(1743–1805)

The Italian composer and cellist, Luigi Boccherini, served as composer for the royal court of Spain during much of his life. Although he thought of himself as introduc-

ing the early Classical style of Haydn to the unsophisticated Spanish, he was influenced by the country's indigenous music. At the request of an enthusiastic amateur guitarist and Spanish nobleman he began to incorporate the guitar into some of his music.

The *Introduction and Fandango* was arranged by Boccherini for guitar and string quartet from the final movement of his String Quintet, Opus 40, No. 2. The *Introduction* is aristocratic, delicate and Rococo in style. The *Fandango*, in marked contrast, is wild and exuberant, a courtship dance in three-quarter time featuring colorful harmony and rhythmic vitality. It is said to have been influenced by the playing of the great Spanish guitarist Padre Basilio, music master to the queen of Spain and later teacher of Dionisio Aguado.

La Cita

DOUGLAS CUOMO
(B. 1958)

Douglas Cuomo, a native of San Francisco Bay Area, has composed for the concert, operatic and theatrical stage, as well as for television and film. His expressive musical language, with its arresting juxtapositions of sound and style, is a natural outgrowth of his wide-ranging background and training. A professional guitarist while still in his teens, he alternated years of college—studying jazz, world music and ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and University of Miami—with years on the road playing in jazz, pop and funk bands. Cuomo's concert works have been performed by the London Philharmonic, the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, saxophonist Joe Lovano, guitarist Nels Cline, the Ethel string quartet, the PRISM saxophone quartet, Anonymous 4, and many others. His work for television and film includes themes for *Sex and The City*, *NOW with Bill Moyers* and *Wide Angle* on PBS; music for *Homicide: Life On The Street*; over 20 documentary and feature films; and music for over a dozen Broadway plays. *La Cita*, is a suite of Spanish love poems composed for the Romero Guitar Quartet.

Douglas Cuomo provided this program note for *La Cita*:

La Cita (The Rendezvous) is a suite of Spanish love poems, setting three poems by Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (1904–1973) and three by Celedonio Romero (1913–1996). Celedonio Romero is the patriarch of the Romero guitar family, and the current quartet consists of his sons and grandsons. He was one of the

towering figures of Spanish guitar, revered throughout the world, despite not being permitted by the fascist Franco government to travel outside of his country, even to perform concerts. At the age of 44 he was able to, through a ruse, leave with his family and settle in Southern California.

Neruda is of course well known as one of the great poets of the 20th century, but it's less widely known that Celedonio was a poet as well, writing many poems celebrating love, life and music in his native Spain. He was also a composer who wrote over 100 compositions for guitar, along with transcribing many classical works for guitar. His contribution to the literature and performance practices of classical guitar were among the greatest of the 20th century.

As the family says, "He is the spirit of the quartet; all our concerts pay homage to him." The music of *La Cita* is an homage as well. It is indebted to both the classical and the flamenco traditions, with the latter particularly evident in the heightened dramatic and emotional character of guitar playing and singing.

This is the world premiere of *La Cita*.

Miller's Dance from *El Sombrero de très picos*

MANUEL DE FALLA
(1876–1946)

Manuel de Falla is the acknowledged master composer of twentieth century Spain. His music passes from meditative repose to dynamic action with great rapidity and is marked by painstaking attention to detail and disciplined striving for perfection. His ability to absorb the essence of flamenco into his unique compositional voice is evident in his ballet *El Sombrero de très picos*, which was written for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, choreographed by Léonide Massine and with set design by Pablo Picasso. The *Miller's Dance* is a passionate version of the flamenco dance *farruca*.

Granada

ISAAC ALBÉNIZ
(1860–1909)

Isaac Albéniz was one of the most significant figures in Spanish cultural circles at the close of the nineteenth century. A remarkable child prodigy, he ran away from home at age 12, sailed to Argentina as a stowaway and subsequently traveled

to America, where he paid his way by playing the piano in honky tonks and spending some time playing at San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf. On his return to Europe he became a serious student of composition. He fell under the spell of Spain's indigenous music and was influenced to a high degree by both flamenco and the guitar. The legendary Francisco Tárrega made transcriptions of Albéniz's piano music, and an appealing though undocumented tale says that Albéniz, on hearing Tárrega's performance of his transcriptions, declared the music had found its rightful home. Tárrega's practice of performing Albéniz's music has been enthusiastically followed by guitarists to this day.

Albéniz's *Suite Española*, Op. 47 contains his most well-known music. The opening movement, *Granada*, is an idyllic serenade with wistful melody and simple harmonies which call to mind a solitary singer accompanying himself on the guitar.

El Baile de Luis Alonso

GERONIMO GIMENEZ
(1854–1923)

The nineteenth century Spanish zarzuela was nationalistic and populist, exuberantly exploring lower class existence from rural village customs to urban slice-of-life street scenes and in explicit contrast to the

more decorous Italian opera favored by the Spanish aristocracy and upper classes. *El Baile de Luis Alonso* by Geronimo Gimenez was one of the most popular works of the day. It featured a great deal of dance music and borrows a *seguidilla* that Falla also used in *El sombrero de tres picos*.

De Cadiz a la Habana (Colombianas)

PEPE ROMERO
(B. 1944)

Pepe Romero, born in Málaga, Spain in 1944, is the second son of one of the great guitarist, composer, and teacher Celedonio Romero, is the brother to two more musical phenoms—Celin and Angel Romero—and is a member of the Romeros Quartet with Celin, Celino, and Lito Romero. A legend as a performer, Pepe Romero has been honored by kings, heads of state, and major institutions but his most significant achievement has been to communicate the richness and beauty of the classical guitar to millions of people throughout the world. He is less known as a composer but has written several works in honor of his family members and *De Cadiz a la Habana (Colombianas)* has been taken up by quartets throughout the world.

—Program notes by Scott Cmiel



JASON VIEAUX | Guitar
JJI | Guitar

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