

Minnesota Orchestra and Coro Entrevoces

Roderick Cox, conductor
Digna Guerra, conductor, Coro Entrevoces
Michael Adams, host

Celebrate Cuba!

Sunday, July 5, 2015, 2 pm | Orchestra Hall

Selections by Coro Entrevoces will be announced from the stage.

George Gershwin	<i>Cuban Overture</i>	ca. 11'
Alejandro Garcia Caturla	Danzón	ca. 4'
Ernesto Lecuona	<i>Malagueña</i>	ca. 4'
I N T E R M I S S I O N		ca. 20'
Guido López-Gavilán	<i>Guaguancó</i>	ca. 7'
Arturo Márquez	Danzón No. 2	ca. 10'
Leonard Bernstein	<i>Mambo</i> , from Symphonic Dances from <i>West Side Story</i>	ca. 3'



Coro Entrevoces welcoming Minnesota Orchestra musicians, staff and patrons accompanying the Orchestra's recent Cuba tour after they arrived at the Hotel Nacional de Cuba on May 13.
Photo: Travis Anderson

Roderick Cox's profile appears on page 52, Coro Entrevoces' and Digna Guerra's on page 51.

music up close	Conversation with Phillip Gainsley, host, and Digna Guerra, director of Coro Entrevoces Sunday, July 5, 1:15 pm, Target Atrium
thank you	Sommerfest is presented by U.S. Bank

“FORGET SUGAR, CIGARS AND RUM— MUSIC IS CUBA’S GREATEST EXPORT.”

invites you to share in the celebratory spirit of the Minnesota Orchestra’s historic visit to Cuba less than two months ago.

“¡Que rico bailo yo!” (How well I dance!) is a song by Orquesta Ritmo Oriental, one of Cuba’s most popular bands in the 1970s and ’80s—and that title might well serve as a description of Cuba’s music scene. Every piece the Minnesota Orchestra plays today is either a dance or dance-inspired, and each type of dance originated or developed in what Fairley calls one of the world’s true “musical powerhouses.”

So declares Jan Fairley in his article on Cuban music in *World Music: The Rough Guide*. This concert offers a musical tribute to that island nation—and

For an interesting visual representation of Cuban music starting in the 1930s, visit boogalu.com/features/history-cuban-music and look at the chart by Kevin Moore at the end of the article. In five colors—one each for Spain/France, the U.S., Africa, Jamaica, and all others—Moore neatly traces the genealogy of music in Cuba today. It’s all there: habanera, mambo, rumba, bossa nova, merengue, conga, samba, son, montuno, malagueña, danzón, cha-cha, bolero, spirituals, reggae, funk, blues, salsa and much more. Music simply oozes out of the pores of this country. “You’ve only got to go to Havana’s outdoor dancehall, the Tropical,” notes Fairley, “...and join thousands of mostly black Cuban teenagers swiveling hips and bottoms to bands like Orquesta Revé to feel the vitality and driving physicality inherent in the island’s music.”

This afternoon the Minnesota Orchestra and Coro Entrevoce give us a taste of this thriving, driving, music scene in many flavors.



George Gershwin

Born: September 26, 1898, Brooklyn, New York

Died: July 11, 1937, Hollywood, California

Cuban Overture

don’t be misled by the title. This “overture” screams rumba. In fact, that’s what Gershwin originally called his *Cuban Overture*.

Early in 1932, eight years after composing *Rhapsody in Blue*, Gershwin took a brief holiday in Cuba. Throughout his stay he encountered much native Cuban music, whose rhythms and special percussion instruments especially attracted his interest and led to the composition of the *Cuban Overture* several months later. It was premiered at a most auspicious event, the first all-Gershwin concert given anywhere—but not just “anywhere” anywhere: it was in New York’s Lewisohn Stadium, on August 16, 1932. Nearly 18,000 people attended, and some 5,000 were turned away, breaking the all-time record for Stadium Concerts. (Records were broken there again in both 1937 and 1941, both times for an all-Gershwin concert.) On November 1, *Rumba* was performed again,

this time indoors at the august Metropolitan Opera House, as part of a musicians’ benefit concert, now with the name changed to *Cuban Overture*.

Catchy tunes, provocative rhythms, colorful orchestration and native percussion instruments all contribute to the *Cuban Overture*’s lively effect. The work is in three parts, with zesty outer sections framing a slower, romantic central passage (introduced by a clarinet cadenza) richly evocative of a sultry Caribbean evening. The *Cuban Overture* concludes with the infectious gaiety of the rumba rhythm colored by the sounds of the bongo, gourd, tom-tom, maracas and the Cuban stick.



Alejandro García Caturla

Born: March 7, 1906, Remedios, Cuba

Died: November 12, 1940, Remedios

Danzón

as with Rimsky-Korsakov (a naval officer) or Borodin (a research chemist) or Gordon Getty (businessman and investor, son of the famous oil tycoon), composing

for Alejandro García Caturla was an avocation. His real calling was law, and that's what killed him. (He was murdered by a criminal on whom he was about to pass sentence.) Caturla studied music in the big cities of Havana and Paris but returned to the small city where he was born, Remedios, to practice law and write music. A fine violinist, pianist and singer as well as a composer, he was something of a symphonic revolutionary, combining seemingly contradictory elements in many of his works. The conservatory in Havana was named after him.

Like Gershwin, Caturla wrote a *Cuban Overture*, and like Márquez, who follows later on this program, numerous Danzóns. The many dances he composed are infused with exuberance and rhythmic drive. In this lively Danzón we hear a fusion of three influences: the elegance of a European dance, African rhythms and dance modes, and the sounds of traditional Cuban folk music.



Ernesto Lecuona

Born: August 7, 1896, Guanabacoa (a Havana suburb)
Died: November 29, 1963, Santa Cruz de Tenerife

Malagueña, arr. Gordon Jenkins

How appropriate that music of Gershwin is programmed with a work by Ernesto Lecuona! Through his mastery of blending popular tradition with classical style, Lecuona acquired the moniker "the Cuban Gershwin." And that's not the only connection: Lecuona was also responsible for giving the first Cuban performance of *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Lecuona is generally regarded as the leading figure on Cuba's musical scene during the first half of the 20th century. At 17 he had already graduated from his country's National Conservatory. He went on to compose some 400 songs, 11 Hollywood film scores and nearly 200 piano pieces, of which the *Malagueña*, one of six numbers in the *Suite Andalucia*, is perhaps the best known. A *malagueña*—one of which Ravel included in his *Rapsodie espagnole*—is a smoothly-flowing dance in rapid triple meter from the region of Malaga in southern Spain.

Lecuona's *Malagueña* was a success right from its first performance in 1927. It has been orchestrated by

composers including Ferde Grofé (of *Grand Canyon Suite* fame), Morton Gould and Gordon Jenkins, renowned for his lush arrangements for such jazz and pop legends as Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald. It has also been popularized by the Stan Kenton Orchestra, Carlos Montoya and Jose Feliciano, and countless marching bands and drum and bugle corps have made it their own.



Guido López-Gavilán

Born: January 3, 1944, Matanzas, Cuba;
 now living in Havana

Guaguancó

Composer-conductor Guido López-Gavilán was among those who played a role in the Minnesota Orchestra's educational activities during its recent tour to Cuba: he directs the Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil del Conservatorio Amadeo Roldán, also known as the Cuban National Youth Symphony, with which Minnesota Orchestra musicians worked intensively in a side-by-side rehearsal. There the composer himself conducted the combined forces in *Guaguancó*, a work with rhythms that required extra effort from the Minnesotans—the successful results of which will be heard here today.

López-Gavilán, who also chairs the orchestral conducting department at Havana's Instituto Superior de Arte, has conducted the Cuban National Symphony Orchestra, all other Cuban orchestras, and orchestras in major cities throughout Europe and South America. He has served as guest conductor for festivals across the U.S., Canada, Spain and other countries. He won the Audience Prize at the Winnipeg Symphony's renowned New Music Festival, and he visited Minneapolis in 2002, when his *Conga* was premiered here at the Sixth World Symposium on Choral Music.

Guaguancó is one of the three subtypes of the rumba (the others are yambú and columbia). Cuban musicologist Helio Orovio writes in *Cuban Music A to Z* that guaguancó "is a faster and more aggressive variety of rumba. Steps are sexually charged, as the man pursues the woman in a stylized sort of conquest."



Arturo Márquez

Born: December 20, 1950, Álamos, Sonora, Mexico;
now living in Mexico City

Danzón No. 2

Arturo Márquez ranks as one of Mexico's most prominent living composers, largely through the huge success of his *Danzón No. 2*. He teaches at the National University of Mexico and the Superior School of Music. Commissions have come from the Organization of American States, the Universidad Metropolitana de Mexico, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Márquez' *danzón* series now numbers eight. The *danzón*—a formal dance for couples that developed from elements of the *habanera* and *contradanza*—is generally considered to be of Cuban origin, in rondo form and 2/4 meter with a characteristic syncopated rhythmic pattern. "What I do," says Márquez, "is to take up the spirit of the rhythm and the harmony and the melody and transport it to the concert hall....The *danzón* is still very popular in Mexico. In Mexico City there are special dance halls where only the *danzón* is danced."

Danzón No. 2, written in 1994, has been hailed as the successor to the concert anthem *Huapango* of José Pablo Moncayo (the country's second "national anthem"), and has been performed by many orchestras throughout the world, especially in North America. It was further established as a popular favorite when the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, made its highly publicized tour of Europe and the United States in 2007. Long melodic lines and *montuno* rhythms characterize the ten-minute dance.



Digna Guerra, director of Coro Entrevoces, with Ismo Vänskä at the Hotel Nacional de Cuba.
Photo: Travis Anderson



Leonard Bernstein

Born: August 25, 1918, Lawrence, Massachusetts
Died: October 14, 1990, New York City

Mambo, from *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*

Right from its opening night on Broadway on September 26, 1957, *West Side Story* became one of the biggest success stories in the history of American music. The stunning fusion of Arthur Laurents' book, Stephen Sondheim's lyrics, Jerome Robbins' choreography and Bernstein's music brought new meaning to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* story, which was transported into a modern urban setting with rival street gangs replacing ancient Veronese families.

At the heart of the work is ballet. *West Side Story* made headlines for its daringly advanced, sophisticated and pervasive use of dance within a musical play, and much of Bernstein's music accompanies a dance of some kind. The wild, free-wheeling *Mambo* is played as the rival gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, compete in feverish dances. *Mambo* originated in Cuba and was developed by the big bands in New York.

Readers interested in more information about Cuban music may wish to review the following:

Alejo Carpentier: *Music in Cuba* (University of Minnesota Press, 2001, translation by Alan West-Durán of *Música en Cuba*, c. 1945)

Helio Orovio: *Cuban Music from A to Z* (Duke University Press, 2004)

Program notes and reading suggestions by Robert Markow.

Sommerfest PERFORMER PROFILES



Photo: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco

Alessio Bax, piano

Alessio Bax, now welcomed for his Minnesota Orchestra debut, is praised for his lyrical performances and compelling, insightful interpretations. As First Prize winner at the Leeds International Piano Competition, the recipient of an Avery Fisher Career Grant and Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal Award, he is a star on the rise. He has appeared as soloist with more than 100 orchestras, including the London and Royal Philharmonic, Japan's NHK Symphony, Dallas Symphony with Jaap van Zweden, St. Petersburg Philharmonic with Yuri Temirkanov, and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra with Sir Simon Rattle. His schedule for summer 2015 includes fourteen festivals on three continents. His discography includes works by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart, Rachmaninoff and Stravinsky, all of which have been singled out for distinction by prominent critics. More: barrettvantage.com, alessiobax.com.



Photo: Joel Larson

Sam Bergman, host

Violist Sam Bergman, who joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 2000, has hosted Inside the Classics since its inception

in 2007. He has also hosted many additional Orchestra programs. Since 2013 he has been principal viola of the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in Santa Cruz, California. In recent years he has performed as a guest or substitute musician with ensembles including the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, IRIS Orchestra, New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestra. He has performed works in many Minnesota Orchestra chamber music concerts, including Brett Dean's *Night Window* at this year's Sommerfest. His recent writings about the Orchestra's historic Cuba tour can be viewed online at minnesotaorchestra.org/showcase. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Photo: Joel Larson

Steven Campbell, tuba

Principal Tuba Steven Campbell, who joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 2005, has twice taken center stage with the ensemble, soloing in Lundquist's *Landscape* and, at Young People's and Family Concerts, Kleinsinger's *Tubby the Tuba*. He previously served as principal tuba with the Milwaukee Symphony, New Mexico Symphony, New World Symphony, Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia in La Coruña, Spain, Rhode Island Philharmonic and Vermont Symphony. He has participated in many music festivals, and he has performed chamber music with such ensembles as Proteus 7 and the Empire Brass Quintet. In May 2014 he premiered James Stephenson's *Vast and Curious* trio for French Horn, Tuba and Piano, an international micro commission funded by numerous individual donors, at the International Tuba conference in Bloomington, Indiana. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

Coro Entrevoce

Digna Guerra, founder and conductor

The Cuban choir Coro Entrevoce, known as the pride of its homeland, has drawn acclaim for performances of music of all periods and styles, ranging from Spanish, English and Italian Renaissance polyphony to contemporary music, spirituals, Latin American and Cuban folk music. In addition to appearing in Cuba's most prestigious halls, the choir has gained international renown through appearances at festivals and competitions, among them the World Choral Symposiums in both Minneapolis and Kyoto, and competitions in Germany, France, Belgium and Spain. Further performance highlights include singing mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at the Oregon Bach Festival under conductor Helmuth Rilling, and a performance at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. In 2012 the choir's recording *The Edge Wants to be Light* won an Echo Klassik Award in Germany.



Coro Entrevoce's founder and conductor, Digna Guerra, is recognized internationally for her passion and artistic creativity. Since 1975 she has been the general director of the Coro Nacional de Cuba; in addition, she is president of the Cuban Association of Choirs and a member of the International Federation for Choral Music. She has also performed many works as a solo vocalist, and her curriculum includes two publications: *El Canto* and *El Director*, the latter a reference work for specialists in choral conducting. She holds degrees from the Havana Conservatory, Havana Choral School and Hanns Eisler College of Music in Germany.



Roderick Cox, conductor

Roderick Cox, the Minnesota Orchestra's newly appointed assistant conductor, is also the Project Inclusion Conducting Fellow of the Chicago Sinfonietta. He debuted with the Orchestra in April 2015, leading Young People's and Family Concerts with the Okee Dokee Brothers. For two seasons he was assistant conductor of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and music director of the Alabama Symphony Youth Orchestra. He has also conducted the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and he has been a fellow at both the Aspen Music Festival and the Chautauqua Music Festival in New York. Among his honors, in 2013 he won the Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize from the Aspen Music Festival. A native of Macon, Georgia, he earned degrees from Northwestern University and Columbus State University. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.

well as Inside the Classics concerts, two programs of film music and "A Musical Feast," a program that combines music and food. Her recent engagements have included concerts with the San Francisco Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Alabama Symphony, Santa Fe Symphony, Tokyo Philharmonic, Edmonton Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Nagoya Philharmonic and Kansai Philharmonic. In 2011 she toured with British rock icon Sting, leading 31 concerts over two months in venues throughout Europe. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Photo: Joel Larson

Adam Kuenzel, flute

Adam Kuenzel, the Minnesota Orchestra's principal flute since 1990, has been featured here in many solo works, including two world premieres in recent seasons: Skrowaczewski's *Fantasies for Flute and Orchestra* and Sosa's *Eloquentia*. The latter work, which was written for Kuenzel, garnered the composer a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2011. Kuenzel has played in numerous chamber concerts; at this year's Sommerfest he will play Rorem's *Trio for Flute, Cello and Piano*. He has been a guest artist at the Aspen, Grand Teton, Spoleto, St. Bart's and Oregon Bach music festivals, among others. An Ohio native, he attended the Oberlin Conservatory, studying with Robert Willoughby. After graduation, he studied with Tom Nyfenger in New Haven and played in jazz groups for two years in Cincinnati. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Greg Milliren, flute

Greg Milliren, who joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 2009 as associate principal flute, makes his debut as soloist during this year's Sommerfest. He has performed works of Takemitsu and Mozart at Orchestra chamber concerts and next March he will be a soloist in performances of Martin's *Concerto for Seven Winds*, *Timpani*, *Percussion and String Orchestra*. He has been honored to serve as guest principal flute with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Seattle Symphony, guest piccolo with the Chicago Symphony and guest flute section member with the Boston, San Francisco, National, Detroit and Colorado symphonies. He has also performed the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra, Spoleto Festival USA and New World Symphony. A committed educator, he is in demand locally and nationally as a teacher and audition coach. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Photo: Jake Armour

Sarah Hicks, conductor

Sarah Hicks, the Minnesota Orchestra's principal conductor Live at Orchestra Hall, has led a broad range of programs since joining the Orchestra as assistant conductor in 2006. During the 2015-16 season she will lead the Orchestra in performances with Ben Folds, Rajaton, Pink Martini and Cirque de la Symphonie, among other artists, as

