

# Loves & LEGENDS

**Loves & Legends** is a dramatic journey from the Old World to the New.

Anna, Nathalie & Andrew take you from a love story in Spain to the vigorous folk-inspired musical tales of Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Argentina and Cuba.

**Loves?** It's the story of Salud, the main character in de Falla's opera *La Vida Breve*. She's in love with the wrong guy. He's rich, she's poor. They're in love all the same. In the end, he makes a choice and it's not for Salud. We tell her dramatic and emotional story through the passionate music of de Falla, Turina and Granados.

**Legends?** We're in South America where you'll experience the power of the new world and how its culture enriches and redefines the cultural heritage of old Europe. The culture and legends of Bolivia, Argentina and Cuba are rich and inspiring, given new life as they are incorporated into the energetic music of Ginastera and Lecuona among others. Nathalie plays the bass flute. If you've never heard this fantastic instrument then now's your chance! We work up to a rousing finale through the music of the Cuban Ernesto Lecuona. He was once immensely popular, winning an Academy Award for Best Song with his hit number *Siempre en mi Corazón*. And he's going to be popular again, partly thanks to Plácido Domingo who recorded a brilliant album of his songs recently.

Our starting point is the famous *Danse Espagnole* from de Falla's *La Vida Breve*. It's one of those instantly recognisable pieces that you think you don't know until it starts but then immediately remember you've heard it many times before. The central figure of *La Vida Breve* is the gypsy girl Salud, passionately in love with the well-to-do Paco and he with her. However he's actually already engaged to a woman of his own social class. At the end of the opera, betrayed, Salud falls dead at his feet. We retrace the steps of her fiery and poetic love through the *Tonadillas* of Enrique Granados and the *Poema en forma de canciones* by Joaquín Turina.

Our legends start in Brazil with the piano intermezzo *Lenda da Caboclo* by Villa-Lobos. The "Caboclo-d'Água" is a supernatural being guarding the river São Francisco. Thence to the famous Iguaza Falls in Paraguay, setting of the unforgettable movie *The Mission* (1986) and its equally unforgettable music by Morricone. Bolivia has its own legends and we share four of them with you in new arrangements from Eduardo Caba's collection of *Cantares Indios*. Then we are in Argentina. Alberto Ginastera was one of the most important 20th-century classical composers of the Americas. In search of cultural identity, Ginastera absorbed traditional Argentine folk elements in his own highly original musical idiom. We sing and play his *Cinco canciones populares argentinas*, while Anna & Nathalie demonstrate some surprising talents apart from those you're already familiar with.

Finally we are in Cuba though also in some ways back in Spain. Ernesto Lecuano was a prolific composer in the days of his fame, writing for stage and film as well as for himself as virtuoso pianist. His suite *Andalucía* has been recorded dozens of times, for piano, for orchestra and notably for voice with added lyrics by Plácido Domingo. We end with his *Malagueña* (from the city of Malaga), a song as immediately recognisable as the de Falla dance which began our programme.