



Newcomers Concert Notes
European Explorations
October 12, 2019

Ariana Strahl, soprano (Guest Artist)

After college, soprano Ariana Strahl spent four years studying in Vienna and two seasons as a soloist with the Komische Oper Berlin. She now resides in Chicago. *"Music, whether practiced as a hobby or eventually as a profession, is an incredibly enriching experience that offers so much to everyone who undertakes it."*

Emmanuel Chabrier - *España*

His composing career began in 1880, when he was almost 40. Like many French composers of his day, Chabrier was captivated by the sun and sounds of Spain. On a trip in 1882, he became enthralled with the tremendous variety of Iberian folk music and dance. The result was *España*, which features a bubbling fusion of upbeat rhythms. The piece was used in the 1950s by singer Perry Como in his hit single, *"Hot Diggity."*

Maurice Ravel - *Alborada del Gracioso*

Born in the French Pyrenees, only a few miles from the Spanish border, Ravel cultivated a lifelong love of Spanish music, which was inspired in part by his mother, who was Basque. Ravel's *Alborada del Gracioso*, meaning "morning music," was one of his most popular works.

Manuel de Falla - *Seven Popular Spanish Songs*

His *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas* is a set of songs based on indigenous melodies culled from various regions in Spain, for which Falla created his own harmonies. The composition was largely completed by the time he retreated to Spain in 1914 in the face of the German invasion of France.

Johannes Brahms - *Symphony No. 4 in E minor*

For many years, Brahms resisted writing a symphony for fear that he would not measure up to the standards set by his idol, the great German composer Ludwig van Beethoven. He composed his final symphony, *Symphony No. 4*, in the summers of 1884 and 1885, at the small town of Mürzzuschlag in the Austrian countryside.