

October 31, 2025

Friends of LAMC Spotlight

Honoring Professor Rosemarie Ruiz Houghton

Dear Friends of the Latin American Music Center,

As part of our Spotlight Series, we are dedicating this edition to the esteemed Professor Rosemarie Ruiz Houghton — a distinguished soprano, educator, and advocate for Spanish and Latin American vocal repertoire.

Professor Houghton has been a member of the faculty at the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art at The Catholic University of America since 1993, where she continues to teach graduate courses in Spanish Lyric Diction, Combined Latin and Spanish Lyric Diction, and Survey of Vocal Literature.

She has collaborated with the Latin American Music Center in producing recitals that highlight Ibero and Latin American art songs—curating repertoire, selecting artists, and providing translations, including for the Hispanic Heritage Concert. Her dedication to teaching and performance continues to inspire students and enrich our musical community.

God bless,

Gustavo Ahualli

Director, Latin American Music Center

Professor Rosemarie Ruiz Houghton



Holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Miami and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Jacksonville University. She studied voice extensively with acclaimed opera singers Mildred Miller, Frances Yeend, and George Gibson, professor emeritus at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

Ms. Houghton has performed widely throughout Florida and Pennsylvania. In Pittsburgh, she appeared as one of the witches in *Dido and Aeneas* under Andrew Parrott, sang as a soprano soloist in various churches, and was a member of the Pittsburgh Opera Chorus under Tito Capobianco.

In the Washington, D.C. area, she has performed as a soprano soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra in Beethoven's Choral Symphony, participated in zarzuela productions with *The In Series*, and performed as a soloist at the embassies of France, Germany, Japan, Canada, and Australia. Internationally, she has given recitals of Spanish and Latin American art songs at the Ateneu in Barcelona as part of the Barcelona Festival of Song.

A specialist in Spanish and Latin American vocal repertoire, Ms. Houghton teaches graduate-level courses at The Catholic University of America, including Spanish Lyric Diction, Combined Latin and Spanish Lyric Diction, and Survey of Vocal Literature.

As a member of the Latin American Music Center, she has produced numerous recitals highlighting Spanish and Latin American art songs. Notably, she organized the Hispanic Heritage Concert in collaboration with the Center for Global Education and the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art, connected to the Second International Conference of the North American Academy of Spanish Language. She selected the repertoire, artists, and wrote the translations. Other recitals have included music from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and sacred works from Spain and Latin America.

Interview Questions

1. Could you tell us about your early musical education and how you came to discover your passion for singing (especially in Spanish and Latin repertoire)?

I was born in New York City to Puerto Rican parents, and Spanish was the main language spoken at home. I grew up surrounded by Spanish songs and lullabies that my family would sing. During the 1950s, there was a group in New York called Centro Cultural de Puerto Rico, which met monthly in midtown Manhattan. There, I was introduced to the culture of Latin America through poetry readings and musical performances.

I began piano lessons with Manuel Serra, who introduced me not only to the standard piano repertoire but also to Spanish composers, particularly Manuel de Falla's Fire Dance. These early experiences awakened in me a deep curiosity and love for music from Spain and Latin America.

Eventually, I decided to become a classical singer and began vocal studies with the opera soprano Edith Duft. As my training progressed, I started to include popular Spanish songs in my recitals. Later, while studying with Mary Henderson Buckley at the University of Miami, I discovered the songs of Joaquín Turina, which deepened my interest in Spanish vocal repertoire. My studies with Mildred Miller Posvar in Pittsburgh further strengthened that connection. Realizing how rarely this music was performed, I became determined to promote these beautiful works.



2. You have devoted much of your career to Spanish and Latin American vocal repertoire. What draws you to this repertoire, and how do you see its uniqueness in contrast to other vocal traditions?

My passion for this repertoire stems from its richness, its poetry, and its rhythmic diversity. Classical Spanish and Latin American songs are filled

with vivid colors, profound emotion, and an authentic connection to cultural identity.

When I visited Madrid in 1991, I began building a personal collection of Spanish and Latin American vocal music—a journey that would shape much of my career. Later, my experiences at the Barcelona Festival of Song in 2008 and 2009 opened my eyes even more to the vast variety within this repertoire: Spanish, Latin American, Brazilian Portuguese, and Catalan art songs. I studied under wonderful teachers like Dr. Patricia Caicedo and Dr. Stela Maria Brandão, whose expertise helped me deepen my understanding of the style, pronunciation, and expressive character of this music.

To me, what makes this repertoire unique is how, in some cases, it blends classical structure with deep folkloric roots.



3. Over the years you have worked with remarkable artists such as Mildred Miller, Frances Yeend, and George Gibson. What are some insights, techniques, or philosophies from those collaborations that you still carry with you?

Working with these incredible artists taught me the importance of authenticity and respect for the text. Mildred Miller instilled in me a love for vocal color and clarity of diction. From Frances Yeend and George Gibson, I learned the

value of emotional honesty in performance and how technique serves expression.

These mentors also reinforced my belief that repertoire choice should reflect one's cultural and emotional truth. Their influence remains in how I teach, coach, and perform today.

4. As a professor of lyric diction in Spanish and Latin, what do you consider the most essential elements singers must understand to perfect diction and performance in these languages?

My philosophy in teaching Spanish diction has always been to achieve a neutral sound and maintain forward vocal production with pure vowels. Precision in diction must never come at the expense of musicality; instead, it should enhance expression and clarity.

I believe understanding the cultural context behind each piece is equally vital. For example, when I introduced my students to Afro-Cuban music through dance classes at Dance Place in Washington, DC, they learned to feel rhythm in their bodies. That experience transformed their understanding of phrasing and rhythm. Diction is not just pronunciation—it's embodiment.



5. The LAMC deeply values your contributions—including donating materials, supporting recitals, and organizing events like the Hispanic Heritage Concerts. Could you reflect on what producing recitals has meant to you, and what lessons or challenges you learned from the experience?

When I joined the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music in 1993, my goal was to give students meaningful access to the Spanish and Latin American repertoire. In 1994 with the enthusiastic approval of the Dean of the time, I created a course in Spanish Vocal Literature that combined seven weeks of

Later, under the auspices of the Latin American Music Center (LAMC), I began organizing biannual concerts dedicated to Spanish and Latin American music—each centered around a particular country or theme. These programs featured works from Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, and Puerto Rico, as well as special events such as a Sephardic music concert with Ramón Tasat and a centennial tribute to Enrique Granados.

THE
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Benjamin T. Rome School of Music

GRAYSON WAGSTAFF, PH D. DEAN

Duelette de Mi Senora Miguel de Fuenilana (1554)

Rosemarie Ruiz Houghton, Soprano
Richard Miller, Guitar

Tiererit Suite El Albiacin Fernando Obradors (1897-1945)

Isaat Albeniz

Leyenda Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)

Four Inca Songs Jose Ramos Santana, Piano
Suray - hurritá
Hachak Wayta

INTERMISSION

Algun Dia Teodoro Valcárcel (1896-1942)

LaCampešina

Valdo Vanevuela Antonio Lauro (1917-1986)

Numbers One and Two

Chorro Richard Miller, Guitar

Heitor Villa Lobos (1887-1959)

La Hacemos "Santa Maria" Hector Campos Parsi (1922-1998)

Jose Ramos Santana, Piano

CONCERT OF MUSIC FROM
SPAIN AND LATIN AMERICA

Duelette de Mi Señora Jose María Vitier (1954)

Soledad

Te vas de Mi

El Abismo de Séd Carlos Guastavino (1912-2000)

Maria Lao Ernesto Lecuona (1835-1865)

Eres Mi Sueño Ana Castillo, Mezzo Soprano

Bengálio Valdés

Erik Gramatges, Tenor

CONCERT OF MUSIC FROM
SPAIN AND LATIN AMERICA

Tuesday, March 15th, 2011

7:30 PM

Two Cuban Songs José María Vitler

Soledad

Te vas de Mi Carlos Guastavino (1912-)

Carlos Guastavino Carlos Guastavino-Deo

Maria Lao Ernesto Lecuona (1895-1963)

Eres Mi Sueño Ana Castillo, Mezzo Soprano

Erik Gramatges, Tenor

Erik Gramatges, Tenor

6. In your long and distinguished career as both artist and teacher, what have you found most rewarding about mentoring emerging singers and passing on this repertoire to new generations?

Teaching and sharing this repertoire has been one of the greatest joys of my life. I have seen students discover the beauty of Spanish art songs and make it their own. Some have even taken the initiative to bring these works to the concert stage—for example, one DMA conducting student programmed Joaquín Rodrigo's *Amor y Guerra* after discovering it in my class and even obtained the orchestral parts directly from Cecilia Rodrigo.

I am proud to see more Spanish art songs programmed in recitals today. Watching students embrace this repertoire with enthusiasm fills me with hope. It shows that this music—so rich, expressive, and culturally significant—is finding its rightful place in the classical canon.



7. Looking ahead, what do you hope your legacy will be in the landscape of Spanish/Latin vocal music and in the training of future generations?

I hope my legacy will be that more singers and educators recognize the beauty and importance of Spanish and Latin American vocal music. I want to be remembered as someone who helped open doors for this repertoire—someone who inspired others to perform it, teach it, and love it.

Seeing the continued work of the Latin American Music Center under the direction of Professor Gustavo Ahualli brings me great pride. It ensures that this music—so close to my heart—continues to thrive for generations to come.

Announcements

The [VII ARLAC-IMS](#) Congress (Association of Latin American Musicology Researchers – International Musicological Society) will take place in 2026 at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. This international event brings together scholars to share research on Ibero-American and Latin American music, music periodicals, and cultural heritage.

BIENVENIDO AL SITIO WEB DE ARLAC



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América Latina y el Caribe de
la Sociedad Internacional de
Musicología.
ARLAC/IMS



The Call for Papers is now available in Portuguese, Spanish, and English, providing detailed instructions for participation. We invite all interested researchers to explore the guidelines and prepare their contributions for this important academic forum.

View the Call for Papers here:

[Chamada de trabalhos](#) Portuguese

[Convocatoria](#) Spanish

[Call for papers](#) English

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OR CALL (202)-319-5861

SONUS INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Sonus International Music Festival returns with a milestone 5th Anniversary Celebration 🌍! Tune in with us for 2 days of brilliant young talents, the 21st-century premiere of Guastavino's Sonata for Trombone & Piano, and a journey through folk traditions that shaped the American Art Song, with award-winning composer and Sonus collaborator, Andrew Gerle. 🌟

www.youtube.com/@sonus614'. There are several white starburst graphics scattered across the right side and bottom left."/>

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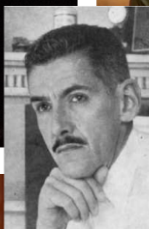
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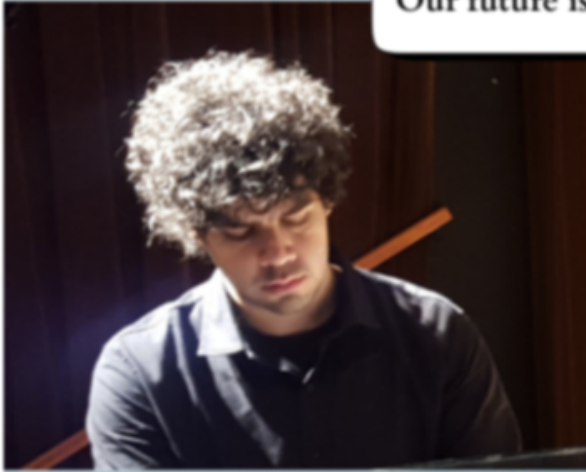
Concerts



The Faculty of the College of Music
University of Colorado Boulder



Our future is looking bright



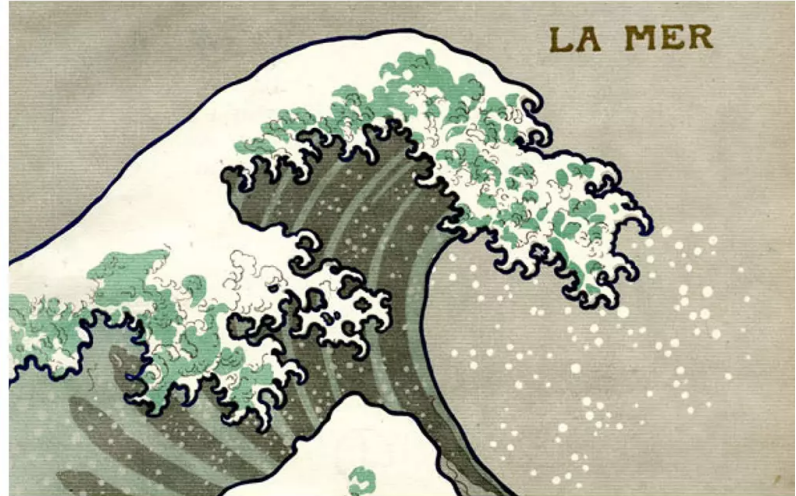
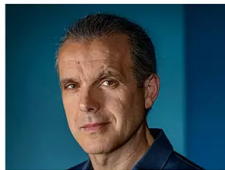
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Spain Flamenco Arts

CRÓNICA DE UN SUCESO

Choreographed &
performed

by Rafael Ramírez

NOV 6 - 9

Presented by TORCUART

AULA DE FLAMENCO

NOV 8

FREE, 2pm

Flamenco Aparicio
Dance Co.

ENREDO

Directed by

Edwin Aparicio

& Aleksey Kulikov

NOV 14 - 16

With Sara Jerez &

Richard Marlow

FLAMENCO EN FAMILIA

NOV 15

FREE, 1:30pm

Compañía

Flamenca

Irene Lozano

LAS MUJERES QUE

HABITAN

EN MI

NOV 21 - 22



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