

EASTMAN OPERA THEATRE

AINADAMAR

April 3 – 5, 2025 | 7:30 PM

April 6, 2025 | 2:30 PM

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

CREDITS

AINADAMAR

AN OPERA IN THREE IMAGES

MUSIC BY **OSVALDO GOLIJOV**

LIBRETTO BY **DAVID HENRY HWANG**

*Translated into Spanish by **Oswaldo Golijov***

First performance: Tanglewood Festival, August 10, 2003

First performance of the revised version: Santa Fe Opera, July 30, 2005

Commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra for the Tanglewood
Music Center

Ainadamar is dedicated to Anthony Fogg and to the memory of
Sue Knussen

Ainadamar is presented by arrangement with *Hendon Music, Inc.*,
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ARTISTIC TEAM

Artistic Director

Timothy Long

Director of Production

Pat Diamond

Music Director

Wilson Southerland

Stage Director

Octavio Cardenas

Choreographer

Lisa Piccione

Scenic Designer

Liliana Duque Piñeiro

Costume Designer

Nicole LaClair

Lighting Designer &

Photographer

Nic Minetor

Assistant Conductors

Henry Griffin
Immanuel Mykyta-Chomsky

Assistant Director

Joelle Lachance

Chorus Master

Henry Griffin

Original Sound Designer

Jeremy Flower

PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director

Mark Houser

Production Stage Manager

Josh Lau

Scenic Construction

José Maisonet
Dylan Skwirba
Steve Woznick

Costume Construction & Wardrobe

Alanna Beilke*
Leah Camilleri
Shelbie Colombo
Claudette Hercules
Megan Lancy
Andrea McGaugh
Jessamyn Slon
Hutton Stiller*
Elizabeth Wager

Scenic Artists

Shelbie Colombo
Katherine Duprey

Electrician

Jay Moscovitz

Audio Engineer

Gregory Thompson

Assistant Stage Managers

Alessandra Capasso*
Jessica Kodsi*
Amy Pressman
Gu Hong Wu*
Hannah Yan*

A2

Mary Fator

*student production assistants

GRADUATE OPERA ASSISTANTS / PIANISTS

ZeLin Huang
Cynthia Chun Hsin Liu
Mizi Li

Jeongmin Oak
Guhan Peng

CAST

April 3, 7:30 PM		April 4, 7:30 PM
April 5, 7:30 PM		April 6, 2:30 PM
Neylan Loffredo	Margarita Xirgu	Anna Bjerken
Daphne Buan	Nuria	Ashley Schlusberg
Grace Lauther	Federico García Lorca	Caroline Smith
Jason Garcia-Kakuk	Ruiz Alonso	Thomas Lynch IV
Finn Bucci	José Tripaldi	S Joshua Sheppard
Evan McMahon	Prisionero: Torero	Owen Connolly
Ashton Rapp	Prisionero: Maestro	Logan Dubner
Madeleine Christopher	Estatua	Konstantina Gotouhidis

Niñas y Las Rosales (Chorus Ensemble):

Isa Apodaca, Ally Arenson, Alanna Beilke, Mira Belanger, Sarah Cao, Madeleine Christopher, Mackenzie Collins, Konstantina Gotouhidis, Izabella Gozzo, Abigail Liebegott, Anastasia Maritsas, Mackenzie Minguillo, Christine Sheng, Julia Tooker, Nichole Waligóra, Maya Watters

Voces de la Fuente:

Ally Arenson, Alanna Beilke

Covers:

Mariana Iguavita for ***Margarita Xirgu***
Eleni Nicholas for ***Nuria***

ORCHESTRA

Wilson Southerland, conductor

Violin

Juyoung Lee
Liliana Mahave
Enyu Ye
Yueyang Zhang
Olivia Lieto
Grace Belsie
Cece Santiago
Qi Su
Ingrid Buschkopf

Viola

Max Wang
Mack Jones
Juan Alvarez Jimenez
Matthew Vu
Anna Brooke
Abigail Benzinger

Cello

Satoshi Kamei
Haozheng Sun
Anastasia Wilson
Joseph Yang
Amarilli Severa
Tyler Brown

Bass

Angshen Sun
Zoë Gutierrez
Isabel Goldstein
Liz Young

Flute
Julia Benitez-Nelson
Allison Schultz
Kaja Hammerschmidt

Oboe

Myles Meader

Clarinet

Yinuo Wang
Kelsey Waters

Bassoon

Adrian Lau

Horn

Jennelle Williams
Lilah Costanzo

Trumpet

Yue Zhang
Jarrett Jean Jacques

Trombone

RJ James

Guitar

Frederik Jernberg
Alex Nazaretski

Percussion

Lexi Kunz
Liz Morad
Grace Qian

Harp

John DiFatta

Keyboard, Laptop, &

Piano

Guhan Peng

Celeste

ZeLin Huang
Jeongmin Oak

SYNOPSIS

Emerging from darkness, the mythic world of Federico García Lorca comes into being. The sound of horses on the wind, the endless flow of the fountain of tears (“*Ainadamar*” in Arabic), and the trumpet call of wounded freedom, the aspiration and determination that have been denied generation after generation echo across the hills.

FIRST IMAGE: MARIANA

Teatro Solfs, Montevideo, Uruguay, April 1969. The voices of little girls sing the opening ballad of Lorca’s play *Mariana Pineda*. The actress Margarita Xirgu looks back across 40 years since her premiere of this daring play. In the last minutes of the last day of her life, she tries to convey to her brilliant young student Nuria, the fire, the passion, and the hope of her generation that gave birth to the Spanish Republic. She flashes back to her first meeting with Lorca in a bar in Madrid.

Lorca tells her that the freedom in his play is not only political freedom, and sings rhapsodically about the world of imagination, a world inspired when, as a child in Granada, he saw a statue of Mariana Pineda. Mariana was martyred in 1831 for sewing a revolutionary flag and refusing to reveal the names of the revolutionary leaders, including her lover. Her lover deserted her, and she wrote a serenely composed final letter to her children explaining her need to die with dignity.

Margarita reflects on the parallel fates of Mariana and Federico. The reverie is shattered by the call of Ramón Ruiz Alonso, the Falangist who arrested Lorca in August 1936.

SECOND IMAGE: FEDERICO

The ballad of *Mariana Pineda* sounds again, taking Margarita back to the summer of 1936, the last time she saw Federico. The young Spanish Republic is under attack: the rising of the right wing generals has begun, there are daily strikes and massacres. Margarita’s theatre company is embarking on a tour of Cuba. She begs Federico to come. He decides to go home to Granada instead, to work on new plays and poetry.

No one knows the details of Lorca’s murder. Margarita has a vision of his final hour: the opportunist Ruiz Alonso arresting Lorca in Granada and

SYNOPSIS

leading him to the solitary place of execution, *Ainadamar*, the fountain of tears, with a bullfighter and a teacher. The three of them are made to confess their sins. Then they are shot. 2,137 people were murdered in Granada between July 26, 1936, and March 1, 1939. The death of Lorca was an early signal to the world.

THIRD IMAGE: MARGARITA

For the third time we hear the ballad of *Mariana Pineda*. One more time the play is about to begin, the story retold for the generation of Margarita's Latin American students. Margarita knows she is dying. She cannot make her entrance, others must go on. As her heart gives way, she tells Nuria that an actor lives for a moment, that an actor's voice may be silenced, but that the hope of a people will not die. The fascists have ruled Spain for more than thirty years. Franco has never permitted Margarita Xirgu, the image of freedom, to set foot on Spanish soil. Margarita has kept the plays of Lorca alive in Latin America while they were forbidden in Spain.

The spirit of Lorca enters the room. He takes Margarita's hand, and he takes Nuria's hand. Together they enter a blazing sunset of delirious, visionary transformation. Margarita dies, offering her life to *Mariana Pineda's* final lines: I am freedom. Her courage, her clarity, and her humanity are passed on to Nuria, her students, and the generations that follow. She sings, "I am the fountain from which you drink." We drink deeply.

— *Peter Sellars*

Warning: This opera contains simulated smoking, gunshots, use of a torture device, theatrical haze, a derogatory slur, and strobe lighting effects.

SONGS

Preludio de Agua y Caballo

IMÁGEN I: MARIANA (26'50")

Balada.....Niñas, Margarita
Mariana, tus ojos.....Niñas, Margarita, Nuria
Bar “Albor de Madrid”.....Lorca, Margarita
Desde mi ventana (Aria a la estatua de Mariana).....Lorca, Estatuas, Margarita, Nuria
Muerte a Caballo.....Ruiz Alonso

IMÁGEN II: FEDERICO (30'55")

Balada.....Niñas, Radio Falange*
Quiero arrancarme los ojos.....Margarita, Nuria
A la Habana.....Lorca, Margarita
Quiero cantar entre las explosions.....Lorca, Margarita, Radio Falange*
Arresto.....Ruiz Alonso, Las Rosales, Margarita, Lorca
La Fuente de las Lágrimas.....Voces de la fuente, Margarita
Confesión.....Tripaldi, Lorca, Torero, Maestro

Interludio de Balazos y Lamento por la Muerte de Federico

IMÁGEN III: MARGARITA (22'25")

Balada.....Niñas, Nuria, Margarita
De mi fuente tu emerges.....Lorca
Tome su mano.....Nuria, Niñas, Margarita, Lorca
Crepúsculo delirante.....Niñas
Doy mi sangre.....Margarita, Nuria, Lorca
Yo soy libertad.....Voz de Margarita, Niñas, Voces de la fuente

Duration: 80'

This opera is performed without an intermission.

*The “Radio Falange” are quotes from Falangist Officers in Spanish newspapers, 1936, read by Antonio Labad Alquézar.

PROGRAM NOTES

“Golijov’s Deep Song”

Ainadamar means “fountain of tears” in Arabic. It is the name of an ancient well near Granada, where, in August 1936, during the early stages of the Spanish Civil War, the poet Federico García Lorca was killed by Fascist Falangist forces. Osvaldo Golijov's opera *Ainadamar* is centered around the scene of the poet's murder, but its main character is the Catalan tragedian Margarita Xirgu, who collaborated with Lorca on several of his plays. The story begins in Uruguay, in 1969, as Xirgu is about to perform the lead role in Lorca's *Mariana Pineda*, the tale of a revolutionary martyr from another century. She is haunted by memories of Lorca, by the thought that she might have saved him. By the end, she has surrendered to the strange beauty of fate, and she bequeathes her longing for freedom to her students. The opera ends as it began, with the prophetic Ballad of *Mariana Pineda*: “How sad it was in Granada. / The stones began to cry.”

Lorca was among the most musical of poets - an accomplished pianist, a part-time composer, something of a musicologist. He supplied countless cues for music in his writing; in one poem he compared the crescent moon to a fermata, a held note in the harmony of the night. In 1922 he worked with the composer Manuel de Falla to stage a festival of *cante jondo*, or “deep song”, as the most substantial branch of flamenco is known. Of the *siguiriya* form of *cante jondo*, Lorca memorably wrote, “The melody begins, an undulant, endless melody. [It] loses itself horizontally, escapes from our hands as we see it withdraw from us toward a point of common longing and perfect passion.” This is the mood to which *Ainadamar* aspires. Indeed, when Golijov was younger, he read those sentences in Lorca, and cherished them as a musical ideal.

Golijov grew up in Argentina, the son of Eastern European Jews. He has made his name with an arresting sequence of works which honor his multiple homelands; *Yiddishbuk*, for string quartet, combines avant-garde techniques with Hebraic motifs; the *St. Mark Passion* mobilizes an army of Latin-American styles; the song cycle *Ayre*, which Dawn Upshaw has also recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, weaves together Sephardic, Spanish and Arabic melodies. *Ainadamar* is properly saturated in Spanish music, particularly Lorca's beloved flamenco, but rival influences are felt throughout, just as Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions once mingled on the Iberian peninsula.

The most striking aspect of Golijov's work is not what he assimilates but how he does it. Early in the 20th century, the likes of Falla, Janáček, Bartók, Stravinsky and Villa-Lobos infused their music with folk material, bending their notation to make room for informal expression. Golijov goes a step farther; he routinely collaborates with folk and popular musicians, leaving room for improvisation in his scores, and he seeks out classical performers who are willing to roughen up their conservatory-

PROGRAM NOTES

trained techniques. His work hovers on the border between notated and oral traditions. It remains, however, a fiercely personal vision, the outward echoing of a solitary voice.

Ainadamar was given its premiere at the Tanglewood Music Festival in the summer of 2003. The score was bewitching throughout, but the dramatic effect was at times diffuse. Subsequently, Golijov worked with his librettist, the playwright David Henry Hwang, to make extensive revisions. Peter Sellars, who directed *Ainadamar* at the Santa Fe Opera in 2005, had a decisive impact on the final version. Most of the original score was retained, but the narrative was tightened. Before, Xirgu shared the stage with a younger version of herself; now she converses with her student Nuria, who resolves to carry on her work. Also, there is a new sequence in which Margarita tries to persuade Lorca to go with her to Cuba. Lorca's refusal is the turning point of the piece; he knowingly seals his doom. In the process of revision, a dreamlike, meditative piece took on political bite and fervor, as befits a Sellars production.

The opera begins with taped sounds of gurgling water, evoking *Ainadamar*. These give way to galloping hoofbeats, which recall the horse flight of the bride and her lover in Lorca's *Blood Wedding*. The trumpet plays a rising, trembling figure, which Sellars calls the "call of wounded freedom". Then, percussionists pick up the beat, a chorus of six girls cry out the Ballad from *Mariana Pineda*, Xirgu enters on a long held note (D natural against B flat minor), and a flamenco fury unfolds. Then, as Xirgu's mind drifts back to the opening night of the play, the orchestra falls into a languid rumba rhythm, and time suspends. Lorca, sung by a mezzo-soprano, is given stately, ornate music, reaching back to bel canto and the Baroque. The trance-like atmosphere is shattered by a thrilling, terrifying sound - Ruiz Alonso, the man who ordered Lorca's death, crying "Bring him to me!" ("Muerte a caballo"), in florid flamenco style. The great irony of *Ainadamar* is that the villain of the piece is the one most steeped in "deep song".

The central sequence, devoted to Lorca's arrest and death, begins with a frenzied, dissonant reprise of *Mariana's* Ballad. Xirgu's attempt to save Lorca takes the form of a lurid musical tourist brochure for Cuba, replete with mention of "naked black angels" and "the agony of impossible sex" (Lorca was homosexual). Over slashing strings, Lorca announces his intention to "stay among the dead, singing my immense song". After Ruiz Alonso resumes his fatal cantillation, Lorca goes to his death in muted, rapt tones. Golijov incorporates, to heart-stopping effect, his 2001 piece *K'in Sventa Ch'ul Me'tik Kwadalupe*, over a recording of indigenous Mexicans chanting to the Virgin of Guadalupe, strings and marimbas play a broken chorale, and the Falange's victims protest their innocence. The famous poet disappears into the anonymous crowd of the doomed. A brutal electronic fugue of repeating gunshots describes the murder itself.

PROGRAM NOTES

At the start of the final section, despair hangs heavy, and the energy of the Ballad seems spent. But when Lorca rematerializes to absolve Xirgu, there is a telling harmonic change. Whenever Ruiz Alonzo enters in prior scenes, the bass line chillingly slips down from D to C sharp. Now, the assassin is undercut; the bass slides down to C, and over this pedal-tone the final episodes unfold. There are two great swells for orchestra, describing the delirium of sunset and the ragged march of liberty. The lead voices intertwine in ethereal trios. At the end, the chief motifs of the opera recur, floating in from another world: *Mariana's* crying ballad, the chords of Granada's weeping stones, the trumpet's wounded fanfare. Golijov strikes his point of common longing and perfect passion.

— Alex Ross, *music critic*

The Voice, Opera, and Vocal Coaching Department expresses its sincere gratitude to the Friends of Eastman Opera for nearly 30 years of support and advocacy. It also thanks all donors who have made a gift in support of Eastman Opera Theatre.

UPCOMING EASTMAN OPERA THEATRE EVENTS

Jessie Kneisel Lieder Competition

Kilbourn Hall

Saturday, May 10, 2025 at 1:00 PM

Jessie Kneisel Lieder Winner's Concert

Kilbourn Hall

Saturday, May 17, 2025 at 7:30 PM

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the "Great Hill People" and "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.



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