

The NAXOS logo is located in the top left corner. It consists of the word "NAXOS" in a white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a blue square. Above the text are three stylized white icons representing classical architecture: a column, a pediment, and a row of columns.

GRANADOS

12 Danzas españolas



AZULEJOS GUITAR DUO

Eugenio Della Chiara • Pietro Locatto

Enrique
GRANADOS
(1867–1916)

12 Danzas españolas (pub. 1892) **61:10**

(arr. for two guitars by Eugenio Della Chiara [b. 1990]
and Pietro Locatto [b. 1990], 2024 **1**–**5** **7**–**10** **12**,
and Miguel Llobet Solés [1878–1938], 1924 **6** **11**)

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|------|
| 1 | No. 1. Galante | 2:46 |
| 2 | No. 2. Oriental | 5:16 |
| 3 | No. 3. Fandango | 3:46 |
| 4 | No. 4. Villanesca | 6:47 |
| 5 | No. 5. Andaluza | 4:39 |
| 6 | No. 6. Rondalla aragonesa | 5:28 |
| 7 | No. 7. Valenciana | 5:38 |
| 8 | No. 8. Sardana | 3:55 |
| 9 | No. 9. Romántica | 5:54 |
| 10 | No. 10. Melancólica | 4:33 |
| 11 | No. 11. Arabesca | 6:12 |
| 12 | No. 12. Bolero | 5:40 |

13 Capricho español (c. 1889) **6:51**

(arr. for two guitars by Fabio Rizza [b. 1969], 2024)

Enrique Granados (1867–1916)

12 Danzas españolas • Capricho español

Together with Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados was one of the leading figures of the late-19th-century Impressionist Spanish nationalist school of musicians. Born in Lleida in 1867 to an officer of the Spanish army, he spent most of his childhood in Tenerife. In 1874, his family moved to Barcelona, where Granados displayed a precocious musical talent and was able to study with Juan Bautista Pujol, the pianistic mainstay of the city.

Because of his delicate health, Granados did not attend school and could therefore concentrate completely on music. During those years, he distinguished himself by winning a piano competition in Barcelona – where he met Felipe Pedrell – and he became a café pianist, with his playing widely acclaimed. The pivotal moment in his musical development came in 1887, when he managed to move to Paris to pursue his studies with Charles-Wilfrid de Bériot: there he met prominent figures such as Debussy and Ravel, and strengthened his friendship with Isaac Albéniz, thus coming into contact with the leading figures in Impressionist music of the time. Notwithstanding his efforts, Granados did not achieve the success he had hoped for among French publishers, and instead went back to Spain where he married Amparo Gal. In 1893, he first achieved international recognition with the publication of his *Danzas españolas*, which were praised by well-known composers such as Fauré and Saint-Saëns.

In Barcelona, Granados collaborated with the most prestigious concert societies and composed important orchestral works. The premiere of the opera *María del Carmen* at the Teatro de Parish in Madrid in 1898 was a huge success, earning him the Cross of the Order of Carlos III. In 1900, he founded the Sociedad de Conciertos Clásicos and the Academia Granados, where eminent musicians such as Alicia de Larrocha would be trained.

Finally, in 1911 he composed his true masterpiece, *Goyescas*, a piano suite inspired by the aesthetic universe of Francisco Goya, and subsequently transformed into a theatrical work for the Paris Opera. *Goyescas* was the zenith of Granados's career: it consolidated his international fame, but it also marked the tragic end of his life. Indeed, the war that was devastating Europe during those years prevented the first performance of the opera in Paris, although it piqued the interest of The Metropolitan Opera House in New York. Granados subsequently left for the United States in November 1915, on the same boat that was taking Miguel Llobet to perform overseas. However, while Granados was returning to Europe in 1916 (due to a series of unfortunate changes to his plans), a German submarine erroneously torpedoed the steamboat on which he was travelling, the SS Sussex. Granados died together with his wife.

Danzas españolas (*Op. 37*) is a collection of twelve piano pieces first published in 1892. It is thus an early work that marks the beginning of the Spanish pianist's career in composition, yet it already embodies his refined style, characterised by a strong bond with a folkloric image of Spain combined with a typically Romantic melodic refinement. A few years later, in 1915, *Capricho español* (*Op. 39*) was published in a larger collection by the Unión Musical Española. Both works describe a world – they are musical paintings that evoke a setting and an unmistakable cultural context.

Granados's piano works give the listener something that goes beyond just the instrument itself: they are a musical translation of a pictorial world such as that of his contemporary Joaquín Sorolla, filtered by the deeply rooted lesson of the Romantic composers and the new French school in which Granados had immersed himself. It is into this picturesque Spanish scene that the guitar appears: it naturally fits, and the notes of the piano already evoke the instrument. It is not by accident that, in a short time, a few of the *Danzas* were given a new life through the guitar by Miguel Llobet (who followed in the footsteps of Francisco Tárrega and outlined the basis of the repertoire of the eminent Andrés Segovia), which – erroneously – even became 'original' guitar works in the collective imagination. Our transcription, like that of *Capricho español* by Fabio Rizza, aims to adopt this evocative spirit, and hence part of the heritage left by Llobet with his *Dances Nos. 6 and 11*, which he transcribed for his renowned guitar duo in which he appeared alongside María Luisa Anido.

We have thus decided to transcribe each piece in the original key: not out of self-imposition, but because during a journey – and Granados's collection of works is a journey in all respects – each moment should have its own colour. This choice has sometimes entailed a creative usage of the guitar, especially with regards to the tuning used in some dances. Yet, above all, it has spurred us to explore in-depth the wonderful auditory world that Granados presented in his pages, whose musical invention is characterised by unequalled freshness and spontaneity.

Although the musical material presented by the author is extremely diverse, the structure he uses to organise it is quite simple: out of twelve dances, nine (*Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12*) are in tripartite form. The first section, where the main theme of the piece is introduced and repeated several times with or without variations, is followed by a *copla*, the true beating heart of the composition. This musical discourse sometimes contrasts with the initial section in mode or agogics (*Dances Nos. 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10*); more infrequently, it can create continuity (*Dances Nos. 2, 11, 12*), thus originating a sort of reflection that seeks to deepen the initial idea instead of differing from it.

Usually, the thematic material of the *coplas* is not substantially tied to that of the initial section: the sole exceptions are the fourth dance, *Villanesca*, and the fifth, *Andaluza*, which are easily the most famous of the collection thanks to renditions by luminaries such as Andrés Segovia and Fritz Kreisler. After the *copla*, the musical discourse continues by returning to the initial section, which is repeated in a shortened reprise and later converges towards a coda that can be longer or shorter. It is worth mentioning here the spectacular finale of the eighth dance, *Sardana*: as it is extremely idiomatic on the piano, it is quite fascinating to re-imagine it for guitar duo.

Among the twelve *Danzas españolas*, three do not follow the above-mentioned formal structure. In the third dance, the exposition of the main idea is followed by two contrasting moments and then everything is repeated without variations and ends with a virtuoso coda. The same scheme, though enriched with a number of episodes, is used in *Capricho español* as well.

The ninth dance is similar in form to the seventh, though its reprise is enriched with a new episode. Here, Granados seeks to recall the European pianistic repertoire of the mid-19th century. Indeed, this is the only dance whose title is a reference to one of Chopin's favourite musical forms, rather than Spanish culture – although this piece would not really resemble its title, if not for its brilliant salon style.

Beyond the more or less plausible relationships between Granados's music and works by other composers, it is interesting to dwell on the fact that each of the twelve *Danzas españolas* has a particular dedication. For example, the Russian composer César Cui is the dedicatee of *Dances Nos. 7, 8 and 9*, while Isabella of Bourbon, Duchess of Burgundy, is the dedicatee of *Dances Nos. 10, 11 and 12*. In addition, the fourth dance is dedicated to Torquato Tasso. Here, the connection between the music and its dedicatee is most evident: indeed, the major section of the composition seems to evoke a carefree bucolic world – a very popular topos in Italian literature of the 16th century – while the heart-breaking *copla* is a homage to Renaissance polyphony that goes well beyond a mere stylistic exercise.

Eugenio Della Chiara, Pietro Locatto

English translation: Camilla Rubagotti

Eugenio Della Chiara

Born in Pesaro, Eugenio Della Chiara studied with Giuseppe Ficara in the conservatoire of his hometown, graduating with honours at 19. He was later a pupil of Andrea Dieci and Oscar Ghiglia at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena. He also earned degrees in classical studies and modern philology at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. Della Chiara has performed across Europe and in Japan, and as a soloist has appeared with the Palermo Orchestra Sinfonica del Teatro Massimo, the Filarmonica Marchigiana and the Orchestra Senzaspine, under conductors such as Diego Ceretta, Tohar Gil and Matteo Parmeggiani. Between 2020 and 2023 he recorded three albums for Decca, and in 2024 released his first album on Naxos, which featured the guitar works of Gaspar Cassadó and Frederic Mompou (8.579103). He also collaborates with actor Alessio Boni, violinist Piercarlo Sacco, pianist Alberto Chines, guitarist Pietro Locatto and tenors Juan Francisco Gatell and Mert Süngü. Della Chiara has been artistic director of the chamber music series MUN – Music Notes in Pesaro since 2005. In 2024 he was appointed full professor of guitar at the Conservatorio di Musica Lucio Campiani in Mantua.

www.eugeniodellachiara.com

Pietro Locatto

Pietro Locatto received his musical education under the guidance of Stefano Grondona and furthered his studies with Frédéric Zigante, Oscar Ghiglia and Lorenzo Micheli. A scholar of the De Sono Associazione per la Musica, he has won several international competitions, including First Prize at the Gianni Bergamo Classic Music Award in Lugano. Awarded the 'young promise' Golden Guitar at the Convegno Internazionale di Chitarra in Milan, he has collaborated with the Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini in Parma and the Orchestra Sinfonica d'Este in Ferrara, and has performed in festivals across Italy, Europe, Australia and Mexico. In recent years, he has focused on recording projects that have been praised by critics in Italy and abroad, ranging from original early-20th-century Spanish repertoire to Bach transcriptions and works by Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Barrios. He is active in several chamber projects and, together with cellist Martina Biondi, founded Duo Evocaciones, dedicated to expanding the repertoire for guitar and cello. He has collaborated with the Teatro Regio in Turin since 2019. He teaches at the Conservatorio di Musica di Trapani and regularly gives masterclasses throughout Italy. Pietro Locatto plays instruments made by his father, luthier Luigi Locatto.

www.pietrolocatto.com



Photo: Amati Bacciardi

Enrique Granados was one of the leading figures of the late-19th-century Spanish nationalist and impressionist school of musicians. The much-loved *Danzas españolas* is a collection of piano pieces that represents Granados's refined blend of Romantic lyricism and Spanish folk imagery. This charming and charismatic journey through Spain is presented here in a colourful transcription for two guitars. Fabio Rizza's 2024 arrangement of the evocative *Capricho español* completes the programme.

Enrique
GRANADOS
(1867–1916)

1–12 **12 Danzas españolas** (pub. 1892) **61:10**

(arr. for two guitars by Eugenio Della Chiara and Pietro Locatto, 2024

1–5 **7–10** **12**, and Miguel Llobet Solés, 1924 **6** **11**)

13 **Capricho español** (c. 1889) **6:51**

(arr. for two guitars by Fabio Rizza, 2024)

Azulejos Guitar Duo
Eugenio Della Chiara • Pietro Locatto

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

Recorded: 22 **1** **4** **10** **11**, 23 **2** **3** **6** **7** **12** and 24 **5** **8** **9** **13** November 2024

at the Forum Della Chiara, Pesaro, Italy

Producers: Gabriele Zanetti, Eugenio Della Chiara

Engineer and editor: Gabriele Zanetti

Booklet notes: Eugenio Della Chiara, Pietro Locatto

Publishers: Unión Musical Española (original editions), SZ Sugar (arrangements)

Cover photo by Amati Bacciardi

© & © 2025 Naxos Rights (Europe) Ltd • www.naxos.com