

In 1492, the discovery of the Western Hemisphere opened the door for colonization and the spread of the Catholic Church. By 1534 Guatemala City, now known as Antigua, Guatemala emerged and the first Cathedral de Santiago was built there. Guatemala City and Mexico City, soon became the most important centers of sacred music in New Spain. Until recently, exposure to Latin American music composed during this colonial period has been limited, but over the past twenty years there has been an increase in availability leading to its description as the “new frontier in music history.”

As the Franciscans and other orders established schools, they brought with them the current styles of European music, especially in sacred music. These styles were taught to and mastered by native-born musicians. When native-born musicians began to compose in these adopted styles, they added new and different elements, including native rhythms and melodic figures. This may be seen in the fact that most of the music gathered and stored in the archive at the Cathedral de Santiago are *vivancicos*, a form originating in sixteenth-century Spain, but clearly adapted to fit the musical interests of Latin America. One fact that accounts for the large number of *vivancicos* that survive is that each Matins service called for eight or nine different such pieces. These pieces are comprised of a refrain that alternates with several verses.

For today’s program, we have omitted some of the verses in these pieces so that we could present you with a greater variety of compositions. Much of today’s music was customarily performed during Matins (early morning) services during the Christmas season and other important feast days. These poetic texts were newly composed for the season and are sung in Spanish, instead of Latin, which helps account for their popularity as churchgoers easily understood them.

Today’s program brings you music by several composers, including the *Italian-born* Ignatio de Jerusalem, *Mexican-born* Manuel de Zumaya, and *Guatemalan-born* Manuel de Quiròz and Rafael Castellanos. Each of these pieces has been newly edited for this concert and will be heard for the very first time in St. Louis. We hope you will enjoy experiencing this fascinating and beautiful music surrounded by the architectural splendor of St. Cecilia’s.

Born in Lecce, Italy, Ignacio de Jerusalem was the son of a Neapolitan musician. He was trained as a violinist and was recruited to go to Mexico

City in 1742. Although he was initially hired as part of a theatre orchestra, in 1750 he became the Director of Music at the Mexico Cathedral. His solo motet, composed for the Feast of the Ascension, that you are hearing, *O golpe soave*, is typical of the arias found in the Neapolitan operas of the day, both in musical style and in that it is in *da capo* form (an initial section that is repeated after a contrasting middle section). Jerusalem did receive some criticism from church officials for being “too modern,” but he continued to serve in that post until his death in 1769.

A native of Toledo, Spain, Favian Garcia Pacheco received his musical training at the Cathedral of Toledo, beginning at age ten as a choir boy. He was active as a composer in Madrid from 1756 until his death, some time around 1808. He wrote all styles of music current for that time, including sacred and theatrical pieces. Interestingly, Garcia Pacheco’s style is similar to that of Franz Josef Haydn. His *Valgame dios y que tres* is the largest and most formally complex piece on today’s program. Composed for the Feast of the Sacred Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is written in several contrasting sections, some of which are repeated throughout the piece.

Little is known of the life of Gregorio Mariano de Soberanis, beyond the music compositions that survive and are found in the libraries of Latin America. The *vivancico*, “*Vengan las flores*,” is a lively and engaging piece, celebrating the birth of Jesus. Originally written for two voices, Manuel de Quiròz added the third voice, apparently in 1747, and this is how we present it in today’s concert.

Manuel de Zumaya was the first native-born American to be the chapelmaster at the Cathedral of Mexico City. He was a master of the older styles of church music, as well as the more modern Baroque styles. The two duets written by him on today’s program are representative of this latter Baroque style, written as *vivancicos*.

We are deeply indebted to Manuel Joseph de Quiròz, since he seems to be one of the guiding lights behind the collection of music that has survived from this period. He was born in Santiago, Guatemala and remained there for his entire life. He took Franciscan orders and was in charge of the Franciscan press until 1738, when he was appointed as chapelmaster of the cathedral choir and orchestra. He continued to hold this post until his death in 1765. His chief duties there were to compose music for the cathedral services and to teach the

choir boys. One of his pupils was his nephew, Rafael Antonio Castellanos whose music is also represented on today's program. While written in the form of a *vivancico*, the initial section of "Ay, Jesus" that we are presenting, has the flavor of the older style of church music inherited from the Renaissance. The other selection you will hear is the remarkable "Que bien", composed in a more modern style and drawing upon a stunning use of dissonance to help evoke the sense of wonder inherent in the text.

Rafael Antonio Castellanos followed in his uncle's footsteps as a noted musician. Trained as a choir boy, he also played violin and harp. In 1765, he succeeded his uncle to the post of chapelmaster at the Cathedral de Santiago. His music was known for its mastery of style and a deep expressivity. Castellanos oversaw the removal of the cathedral musical establishment in 1779, after the city was moved to its present location following the devastating earthquake of 1773. His musical legacy includes manuscripts for 176 compositions, all vocal, that he composed to be sung in the cathedral. Castellanos is also significant as he was among the first native composers to incorporate Guatemalan folk idioms in his music.

As is the case with de Soberanis, nothing is known about José de San Juan, except for his music that survives him. *Oye Dueño de mi vida* is composed for a solo tenor with two violins, harpsichord, and bassoon, with an optional chorus. We are pleased to use this sparkling *vivancico* to bring our program to a close.

One of the important components of our mission is to bring little-known or rarely heard musical compositions of the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries before the public. Today's program is an opportunity to explore a neglected repertory as it is gaining more attention from both scholars and the public. The short-sighted and nearly-exclusive emphasis on European art music over the past couple of centuries is well known. As scholars expand their horizons to encompass other peoples and their cultures, new experiences await all who venture into these previously unexplored areas, much as when nineteenth-century explorers ventured into the jungles of Central America in search of lost civilizations. While the names of the composers on today's program are unknown to all but specialized scholars, it is clear that this music is valuable and repays close attention. The Collegium Vocale of St. Louis is proud and delighted to be able to bring it before you today.