

**Illinois State University
Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts
School of Music**

Graduate Lecture Recital
Chona P. Noble, *violin*
with Collaborative Artist
Olesia Pupina, *piano*

**This recital is in partial fulfillment of the
graduation requirements for the degree,
Master of Music in String Pedagogy.**

**Kemp Recital Hall
April 27, 2025
Sunday Evening
8:30 p.m.**

This is the two hundred and nineteenth program of the 2024-2025 season.

Program

Please silence all electronics for the duration of the concert. Thank you.

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| <i>Hating Gabi</i> for Violin and Piano | Antonio Molina
(1894 – 1980) |
| <i>Habanera Filipina</i> No. 2 for Violin and Piano | Ernesto Vallejo
(1909 – 1945) |
| <i>Sa Kabukiran</i> for Violin and Piano | Manuel Velez
(1894 – 1959)
arranged by Redentor L. Romero |
| <i>Cavatina</i> for Violin and Piano | Nicanor Abelardo
(1893 – 1934) |
| <i>Sarung Banggi</i> for Violin and Piano | Potenciano Gregorio
(1880 – 1939)
arranged by Redentor L. Romero |
| <i>Capriccio Espagnol</i> , Op. 15 for Violin and Piano | Nicanor Aberlardo |

Biography

Chona Noble serves as an Assistant Professor in the Strings and Chamber Music Department at the College of Music, University of the Philippines. She is also a Violin Instructor at the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan.

Her musical journey began at the age of 12 when she started performing with the Philippine Youth Orchestra as the 1st Violinist, eventually rising to Concertmaster. Throughout her career, she has collaborated with many esteemed orchestras, including the Manila Symphony Orchestra (1st Violin), Manila Chamber Orchestra (Principal 2nd Violin/1st Violin), Manila Philharmonic Orchestra (Principal 2nd Violin), San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra (Principal 2nd Violin/1st Violin), FILharmoniKa (1st Violin/2nd Violin), and the ABS-CBN Philharmonic Orchestra (1st Violin). Additionally, she has worked with the City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong in various roles, such as Assistant Concertmaster, Assistant Principal 2nd Violin, and Principal 2nd Violin. She was invited to join the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra as a guest violinist for multiple concert seasons, including the landmark 2016 concert at Carnegie Hall in New York—a significant event that showcased Filipino musicians on one of the world’s premier stages.

Chona Noble has participated in the ASIA Orchestra Week Festival in Tokyo, Japan, on two occasions—first in 2013 and then in 2022—where she performed as Principal Second Violin with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra and as First Violin with the Manila Symphony Orchestra. Furthermore, she served as Concertmaster for the TOFARM Philharmonic Orchestra during the Banaue International Music Composition Competition in 2018.

Her musical education features her participation in various esteemed workshops and festivals. In 1989, she served as the Quartet-in-Residence with the Athenaeum String Quartet at the Pan Pacific International Music Camp Festival in Sydney, Australia, (Asst. Concert Master). Additionally, she represented the Philippines as a delegate at multiple ASEAN Youth Music Workshops, including the 2nd ASEAN Youth Music Workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia, (Concert Master) in 1991, the 5th ASEAN Youth Music Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand,

(Asst. Principal 2nd Violin) in 1986, and the 4th ASEAN Youth Music Workshop in Singapore, (2nd Violin) in 1985.

Throughout her academic journey at the University of the Philippines College of Music, Chona Noble received numerous prestigious honors. She was named University Scholar for the second semester of 2009-2010 and College Scholar for the second semester of 1987-1988. She was also honored as a Philippine Youth Orchestra Scholar during the first semester of 1987-1988. In 1986-1987, she earned the distinction of University Scholar with the highest overall average per department for the first semester. Additionally, Chona was awarded the Ramon Tapales Scholarship in 1986-1987, 1985-1986, and 1984-1985. These accolades reflect her commitment to excellence and academic dedication during her studies.

Chona Noble, an award-winning musician, has received numerous accolades throughout her career. In April 1991, she won First Prize in the College Mozart Competition at the University of the Philippines College of Music. Furthermore, she secured First Prize in the Chamber Music Category (Athenaeum String Quartet) at the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA) in 1985 and Third Prize in Category A of the Solo Violin section at NAMCYA in 1978. She is also a founding member of the Athenaeum String Quartet, a group that has significantly influenced the cultural development of chamber music in the Philippines.

Currently, Chona Noble is pursuing a Master of Music in String Pedagogy at Illinois State University, under the tutelage of Dr. Igor Kalnin and is a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Illinois State University String Project. Previously, she obtained her Master of Music in Violin Performance from the University of the Philippines College of Music, where she also earned her Bachelor of Music with a major in Violin. Additionally, she holds a Diploma in Creative Performing Musical Arts from the same institution.

Chona Noble inspires aspiring musicians through her teaching and is dedicated to passing on her love for violin performance to future generations.

Artist Statement

The topic of my lecture recital is "Expanding the Advanced Student Violin Repertoire with Music by Filipino Composers of the Late Romantic Period." I would like to share six beautiful violin and piano compositions from five composers we have in the Philippines. Two of these compositions are originally written for voice and were transcribed or transposed by Redentor Romero for violin: *Sa Kabukiran* and *Sarungbanggi*. The other four were written for solo violin and piano. These works are underrepresented because they have not received sufficient attention and exposure on the global stage. Therefore, through this recital, I aim to provide an opportunity for the rich Filipino musical culture to be showcased and properly represented in a space where it has sometimes lacked recognition. With each song, dance, and artwork we present, we honor our rich heritage while introducing it to a new audience. Tonight, my goal is not only to expand the repertoire of advanced violin students but also to broaden their appreciation for music—not only within Western classical traditions but also in local compositions—and to build an important cultural bridge between Filipino and American cultures, as well as the broader Western culture and the world. I hope you enjoy these musical works, and may they provide a deeper appreciation for the music of Filipino composers.

Intersection of Three Cultures

The Philippines is made up of 7,100 islands. Consisting of 77 provinces grouped together by 16 regions. The main group includes Luzon, the Visayan islands, and the Mindanao islands. Based on religion, the population can be grouped into three major categories: Indigenous religions, Christian groups, and Muslim groups. Christian is the largest in the land of Luzon and Visayan Island. Indigenous religious groups can be found in upland northern Luzon, Mindanao and Palawan. Muslim communities are concentrated in Mindanao, the Sulu island and southern Palawan.

Spanish and American influences are very visible in the music of the cities. Although, geographically, the Philippines belongs to the East, its music has been greatly influenced by the West due to the conquest of Spanish rule for more than 333 years and 48 years of American rule. The music in the mountain and rural village, where traditional culture continues to flourish has a strong Asian influence. When talking about the music of the Philippines, three main categories are evident: (1) an old Asian-influenced music referred to as indigenous; (2) a secular and religious music influenced by Spanish and European forms; and (3) an American/European inspired classical, semi-classical and popular music.

The Indigenous Traditions

Although there is no written information about music in the Philippines before the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan in 1521, successive reports made by friars, government officials and travelers include descriptions of instrumental and vocal music. From these documents, various types of hidden or buried objects made of copper, bamboo, or wood are mentioned. These include gongs of various sizes and shapes, various types of flutes, zithers, lutes, clappers and buzzers. Vocal genres include epics related to the ancestry and make use of heroes and gods; work songs related to planting, fishing, harvesting; there are ritual songs to ward off evil spirits; songs to celebrate a joyous occasion particularly a wedding, birth, victory in war, or reconciliation of tribal feuds; songs of mourning for the dead; courting songs; children's play songs. It is this type of music that is still practiced by the natives.

The indigenous tradition is practiced by about ten percent of the population. Eight percent of this minority consists of about 50 language groups of people living in the highlands of northern Luzon and the islands of Mindanao, Sulu, Palwan, and Mindoro in the southern and western Philippines. The remaining two percent of these groups are Muslims who come from Mindanao and Sulu.

The Spanish-European Influenced Traditions

With the coming of the Spaniards the music of the Filipinos underwent a transformation of flowing western influence, particularly the Spanish-European culture prevalent in the 17th to 19th centuries. Hispanization during the next three centuries after 1521 was occupied with religious transformation. It caused a change in people's musical thinking and turned out a hybrid expression with a hispanic flavor. It produced religious music connected outside of the Catholic liturgy and a secular music of European origin that was adapted by the Filipinos and can be seen in instrumental music and folk songs.

The American Influenced Traditions

The regime of America lasted from 1898 to 1946 during which time the music of the Philippines went through a process of transformation again.

The public school established a new system, the music subject was included in the curriculum in elementary and high school. Music conservatories and colleges are established at the tertiary level. The first generation of Filipino composers who graduated from the institution whose works were written in western idioms and forms. Their work and those of the succeeding generations of Filipino composers represented the traditional classical art music that continued to flourish today.

The solid or stable band tradition in the Philippines, started during the Spanish era that continued until today, producing great musicians, composers and performers. Another famous or popular instrumental ensemble is the rondalla

which was replaced by a type of ensemble called the *cumparsa*. The said group was converted into instrumental groups called the *murza* of Mexico and the *estudiantina* of Spain.

The American lifestyle and pop culture gave rise to music created by Filipinos that used western and pop forms. Associated with Pinoy Pop it includes with it a wide range of forms. These are folk songs, dance tunes, ballads, Broadway type songs, rock'n'roll, disco, jazz and rap.

The three conventional of Philippine Music - indigenous is the influence of the religious and secular music of the Spanish. American and European influences are classical, semi-classical, and popular music that we now call Philippine Music.

Program Notes

ANTONIO MOLINA (1894 - 1980)

Antonio Molina, multi talented musician, composer, music educator was the last of the three musical giants, two of them were Nicanor Abelardo and Francisco Santiago, who took music to a higher level than just folk music. He studied under the great Nicanor Abelardo and at the University of the Philippines for Conservatory of Music. Antonio Molina is one of the most respected musicians and composers that this country has ever produced. His early exposure to music helped him build a career as a musician, composer, conductor, music educator, musicologist and writer. At an early age, he started playing the cello and became so skilled it did not take long before he was playing as orchestra soloist for the Manila Grand Opera House. He not only became skilled at playing the violincello but learned to play various Western and indigenous instruments as well. He was a creative composer who wasn't afraid to try new ideas and create some of the most original music of his time. He was one of the first composers to combine ethnic/native instruments with Western instruments in his works and combined Eastern modality and Western harmony. As a member of the faculty of the UP Conservatory, he had taught many of the country's leading musical personalities and educators like Lucrecia Lasilag and Felipe de Leon. He took formal lessons with Nicanor Abelardo in 1918. In 1919, he enrolled at the University of the Philippines (UP) Conservatory of Music for a teacher's diploma in violoncello which he obtained in 1923.

Molina's most popular composition is *Hating-Gabi*, a serenade and the first Filipino danza for solo violin and piano. By the time he passed away in 1980, he had won a National Artist Award for his compositions and research into Philippine music. He wrote hundreds of scores for chamber music, chorus, orchestra, instrumental and vocal solo music, and zarzuela. About 200 of his works utilize folk tunes.

HATING-GABI (A Midnight Serenade)

Antonio J. Molina was so deeply ingrained in Filipino culture that many of his compositions are frequently confused with authentic folk tunes. Hating-Gabi, his internationally acclaimed composition, is among his most enduring or eternal musical achievements. Hating-Gabi, Molina's first Filipino danza for violin and piano, was composed in 1915 and was intended as a serenade. With an ABBACC form, the composition starts in a minor key before switching to a major key in the C section. The composition depicts the lowest points in life, when love becomes the only source of direction. In it, the composer exhorts his sweetheart, "Come to me, and let us promise each other our love." In the gentle breeze, tree leaves quiver beneath the dark sky. A couple promises to support one another in both happy and sad times. It has grown to become one of the most cherished tunes in the violinists' repertoire from the Philippines.

ERNESTO VALLEJO (1909 - 1945)

Ernesto Vallejo, prewar "Violin King" of the Philippines, was born in Manila on December 19, 1909, Vallejo started his musical training from his parents. His father, Jose Vallejo of Ilocos was a violinist himself and was for a long time, conductor at the Army and Navy Club Orchestra. His mother, Feliza Arriola, was a skilled harpist. Ernesto is the sixth of the twelve children. His three brothers played the piano while a sister was an accomplished singer.

Ernesto is not only a violinist but also a classical guitarist which he also mastered. He studied piano, became proficient in French and excelled in tennis and swimming at the same time. His talent was noticed by Prof. Marcelo Adonay and Prof. Bonifacio Abdon. He studied the violin for several years with Prof Abdon, with the support of the Asociacion Musical de Filipinas.

One-time concertmaster of the New York philharmonic, Mishel Piastro, heard him play in Manila when he was 13 and said: "It is a crime that this child should continue here longer. Of the 11 million Filipinos, I am sure there is only one Vallejo. What is more, I doubt that in the entire Malay race, he has his equal. No time should be lost in sending young Vallejo to the United States. To fail to do so would be to lose a genius who will bring honor to the Philippines."

The Philippine government granted Vallejo a scholarship with the help of Filipino philanthropist Dr. Ariston Bautista Lin. In October 1923 at the age of fourteen, he left the country as a scholar of the government and remained in the US for six years.

Ernesto Vallejo studied under renowned American violinist Franz Kneisel. When his teacher died in 1926, Vallejo continued his violin lessons under Sacha Jacobsen, a pupil of Kneisel. In March 1929, Vallejo gave his graduation concert at Town Hall in New York. He performed Edouard Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* and Brahms' *Sonata in A major*. In just three years of studying the violin in the United States, he gave his first series of concerts in Florida, Ohio, Washington D.C., and Boston.

Vallejo was the first violinist to debut at the New York's Town Hall, where he received a lot of praise. He was also the first Filipino to give a command performance for the US President Calvin Coolidge at the White house and for General Douglas MacArthur.

In September 1929, Vallejo came back to Manila and held a welcome-back concert at the Manila Grand Opera House. Upon his return, Vallejo served as a concertmaster of the Manila Symphony Orchestra (1935-1941). He also concertized frequently and taught music first at the UP Conservatory and later at the Academy of music.

Vallejo was the first Filipino violin soloist of the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO) which was founded in 1926 by Lippay. Dr. Alexander Lippay described Vallejo's talent by saying, " He plays everything with soul and his interpretation is always intelligent. His tone and modulation are beautiful, and his bowing technique is masterful. There is no question about his talent. Although only 20 years old, he plays with the maturity of a man of forty. It is phenomenal!"

He spent his career in the Philippines, where he focused on performing and teaching. His treasured possessions were his four expensive violins and lots of musical pieces. On February 10, 1945, during the Japanese retreat in Tanauan town, Ernesto Vallejo, his wife, and their three children were sadly killed. Their house was burned, along with important music scores and four expensive violins. Today, only a few of his compositions, like the violin solos *Dream Melody* and *Habanera No. 2* remind Filipinos of him. This was a tragic end for a talented musician and teacher.

HABANERA FILIPINA No. 2

The most famous piece Ernesto Vallejo wrote for violin and piano is Habanera Filipina No. 2. This piece is very famous because of its Habanera style. It resembles Habanera No. 2 Op 21 by Pablo Sarasate in the violin part. The solo violin styles of Sarasate and Vallejo are quite similar. In Vallejo's arrangement, the violinist's technical proficiency is highlighted. Both employ techniques such as pizzicato, harmonics, tremolo, and spiccato. This composition by Vallejo is structured in binary form. It begins with an 11 bar cadenza for the violin, accompanied by tremolo chord in the piano. It is performed slowly and sensuously, fusing the romantic beauty, grace, and passion of the Filipino people with the rhythmic aspects of Spanish dance. Audiences now consider this violin selection to be among their favorites.

MANUEL P. VELEZ (1894 - 1959)

Manuel P. Velez was a teacher of voice and piano, a composer, band leader, and an organizer. He directed and produced stage plays, zarzuelas (a type of musical play) and operettas (a light opera).

He was born into a family that loved music in Cagayan, Misamis on October 27, 1894. Velez began studying music under his father, a former orchestra leader and government officials in Cebu. After graduating from high school, he organized a music club in Cagayan that staged light musical comedies. In Manila, studied harmony, composition and voice, while also working as a pianist at the popular Cine Ideal. At the same time, he started a music studio where he trained well-known bands like the Ilaya, Oriental, and Constabulary bands.

Velez then moved to Hawaii, where he stayed for seven years, presenting on stage shows and putting on a brass band.

In later years, Velez founded the Cebu School of Music and the Sta. Cecilia Music Store. He spent much of his free time transcribing traditional music and composing. His song Sa Kabukiran (In the Farmlands) later became one of the most popular, beloved Philippines songs of all time.

SA KABUKIRAN (In the Farmlands)

Sa Kabukiran, composed by Manuel Velez for soprano and originally performed in Cebu in 1928, is full with lively and upbeat tunes that depict agricultural life. An exquisite vista of verdant fields dotted with scarlet gumamelas, yellow santans, pink bougainvilleas, and white sampaguitas, all against a backdrop of blue skies and golden sun, greets one as they emerge from the yard. The happy chirping of birds, which can make one smile or aid in falling asleep, adds to the pure, clean air of the countryside. The composer feels that being in the country, away from the bustle and clamor of the city, is

where life is most tranquil and ideal. The popular songs and film music of Manuel Velez, a well-known pre-war composer, create a happy musical portrait of agricultural life. The song is classified as a balitaw and is composed in the key of D. Balitaw is an extemporaneous exchange of love verses between a man and a woman. It has an allegretto speed and a $\frac{3}{4}$ time signature, which results in a cheerful, carefree melody that goes well with the lyrics.

NICANOR ABELARDO (1892-1934)

Nicanor Abelardo, Sr. was born into a family of artists in San Miguel Bulacan, and was introduced to music when he was five years old, learning the solfeggio and the bandurria. At the age of eight, he composed his first work entitled “Ang Unang Buko”, which was dedicated to his grandmother. By the age of 15, Nicanor had begun playing publicly in Manila, and began teaching in local schools. In 1916, Nicanor Began studying at the University of the Philippines Conservatory of Music. As a composition major, he composed the melody for the university’s official anthem, U.P. Naming Mahal. The building for the College of Music at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Abelardo Hall, and the main theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo, are named in his honor. In 1924, he was appointed head of the composition department at the Conservatory. Later, he started a school for young musicians, where he trained future National Artist Antonino Buenaventura, Alfredo Lozano, and Lucio Sacramento. Then, in 1933, Nicanor Abelardo received his Master’s from the Chicago Musical College in Chicago, Illinois.

Abelardo is most famous for elevating the Philippines genre of Kundiman into a western art song form. In the field of composition, he is known for his redefinition of the Kundiman, bringing the genre to art-song status. Among his works were “Nasaan Ka Irog,” “Magbalik Ka Hirang,” and Himutok.” He is recognized as the most well-known and influential composer during the peak of classical music in the Philippines, a time that lasted from the 1860s until the end of World War II.

He is considered one of the greatest composers in the history of the Philippines. Nicanor Abelardo died in 1934 at the age of 41, leaving behind a collection of more than 140 works, including sonata, concertos, and chamber music, as well as a family legacy that continues today.

CAVATINA by Nicanor Abelardo

Abelardo composed this piece in 1921, marking the start of his productive years. The word “cavatina” originated in the 18th century, describing a song in an opera that was simpler than an aria. “Cavatina,” from the Italian word “cavata” (which means to produce sound from an instrument), is a short lyrical instrumental piece. Today, it typically refers to a short, expressive

musical piece with a simple and emotional character. Abelardo's "Cavatina" is a soft and graceful melody, full of dignity and emotion. It follows a single, delicate theme from the first note to the final, gentle sounds, with a brief, lively moment in the middle.

The first section is in D major. The key shifts to B minor in the middle section. It returns to the original key in the final section with heightened expressiveness in a higher register, completing the ternary design. The melodious violin part and its harmonically rich piano accompaniment have become an essential part of the notable Philippine violin and cello repertoire. The piece was transcribed for orchestra by Redentor L. Romero, who conducted and recorded it with the London Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 1978. An arrangement for violin solo and orchestral accompaniment was done by Antonio Buenaventura, and his score was donated to the UP College of Music Library in 1982.

CAPRICCIO ESPAGNOL

Abelardo wrote Capriccio Espagnol in 1923 before moving to Chicago to continue his composition studies. The piece is a dance (danza), despite the title Capriccio. In the piece's opening section, the violin plays in triple meter (3/4), and the piano plays in duple meter (6/8). The opening portion of the composition features a dancing rhythm that blends duple and triple accents in a cross-rhythm or vertical hemiola (3:2). There is a tension in rhythm between the two as a result. This is an illustration of syncopated cross rhythms, particularly the tresillo and cinquillo, which are fundamental Afro-Latin rhythmic patterns. The beat is basically a vertical hemiola or cross-rhythm (3:2) overlaying duple and triple accents.

Composed in ternary form (A-B-A), the A section is in minor key and features a violin solo and part that dances against the piano accompaniment in a compound duple of 6/8 feel. The B section, which is in major key, demonstrates Abelardo's ability to compose a beautiful, lyrical "kundiman" melody.

POTENCIANO V. GREGORIO (1880 - 1939)

Potenciano Gregorio, Sr, a talented musician and composer from Bicol, was born in Albay and was known both as a violin prodigy and a noble soldier.. He is most famous for his folk song "Sarung Banggi." Gregorio was born on May 18, 1880, in Libog, now called Sto. Domingo Albay. He was the youngest of two children of Narciso Gregorio and Canuta Valladolid. He started learning to play the violin at the age of three and was considered a musical prodigy. His first music teacher was Fr. Jorge Barlin, the parish priest of Libog, who later became the first Filipino bishop.

In 1919, Gregorio went to Manila to audition for the Philippine Constabulary Band. He played Sarung Banggi on the banduria and piano to showcase his musical talent. Gregorio's capacity to play several musical instruments made an impression on the bandmaster Col. Walter Howard Loving and when he found out Gregorio composed Sarung Banggi, he immediately accepted him as a member of the band. Afterwards, he was given the responsibility of arranging the score of the Sarung Banggi for the band, in which they performed his composition multiple times in 1920. The song became well-known outside Bicol and was often asked to be played by the crowd in Luneta on Sunday afternoons up until World War II.

In 1939, Gregorio was chosen to compete in the Golden Gate International Exposition in Honolulu, Hawaii. Unfortunately, his promising career was interrupted when he caught pneumonia on the S.S. President Pierce while traveling to the event. He passed away due to his illness on February 12, 1939 in Honolulu. His body was returned to the Philippines and buried at La Loma Cemetery in Manila. In 2005, at the request of his descendants and the people of Sto. Domingo, Albay, his remains were moved back to his hometown.

SARUNG BANGUI (One Night of Love)

Potenciano Gregorio wrote the beloved Bicol song in 1910, "Sarung Bangui." describes a lover who is waiting for his sweetheart on a night when the moon is shining. He says, "Look at the moon and stars sparkle! They are proof that my love for you is genuine. My heart has experienced agony and longing because of you, and I have learned to make songs as a result. This is an immensely popular song with the stature of a folk song, and has a moderate tempo. It is divided into three sections: A, B, and C. Section A and B are in a minor key, while section C shifts to the parallel major key. The lyrics consist of four stanzas, each with four lines. The structure of each section is simple, featuring two periods. Both periods start with the same opening phrase, but the second period ends with a different concluding phrase.

Gilopez Kabayao transcribed the song for violin and piano in 1974, and performed it with Corazon Kabayao at the piano, in their concert tours abroad. The song inspired a 1947 movie of the same title."Sarung Banggi" was performed by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) in a concert titled Serenata (Serenade), 2015, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines

(CCP) Tanghalang Nicanor S. Abelardo.

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