

## Two Concerts and an Encuentro: El Fuego at Loco for Love March 4-6

History is hitting some high notes this year, and you're invited to join in the song and dance. Two hundred years ago, Florida became US Territory. Thirty years ago, FSU's Wiley Housewright published a groundbreaking history of music and dance in Spanish Florida. This March, those two roads into Florida's past will intersect, as Theater with a Mission brings El Fuego to Tallahassee to premiere *El Camino Real*.

Theater with a Mission (TWAM) has a history of bringing world-class artists to Tallahassee – artists whose talents pick you up and take you right back into Florida's Spanish past. In 2019, Loco for Love featured Florida's first chance to enjoy the Dragoncillo Puppet Troupe from Michigan, performing new translations of plays from the 1600s. In 2021, TWAM brought Efe Tres Teatro from Mexico City via Zoom, performing plays by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (creator of Don Quixote) in Spanish. This March, TWAM is collaborating with South Arts, the FSU College of Music, and the Tallahassee Bach Parley to showcase El Fuego, in person, in two concerts and an Encuentro.

This is news of historic proportions for lovers of music and dance. El Fuego is famous for finding and reviving music that gets you laughing, singing, praying, thinking, and dancing in the present, while it transports you into the past. All of El Fuego's musicians are experts at building bridges between worlds – Old World and New, Spanish and English, classical and popular. Music director Salomé Sandoval was born in Venezuela, trained in the US, and currently performs music from the 1700s at early music festivals, in movies and TV shows, and on iTunes, where you can hear her guitar and voice album *Singing with the Fire*. Harpsichordist Frances Fitch is famous at the Festival de Música Antigua in Mexico, where critics praise her keyboard artistry for its "precision and delicacy of wit." Singer-scholar Luciana Kube is writing the book on how *villancicos* connected Spain with its colonies and has already published *Diarios de Venezuela*, which is teaching Spanish to people all over the world. A bilingual native of Puerto Rico, baritone Eric Miranda has built an international reputation through appearances at Chicago's Latino Music Festival and inventive projects like *A Mexican Christmas*, a concert that combines sacred and popular music from the 1700s.

On Friday, March 4, all four of these El Fuego artists will join forces with FSU's Early Music Ensemble to present the world's first performance of *El Camino Real*, a musical journey through 300 years of Florida's history. You'll hear the chant that friars sang when Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded St. Augustine in 1565... and the dance tune that made Menéndez rescue French musician Nicolas Bourguignon from the slaughter at Matanzas. You'll hear soul-stirring extracts from an epic poem about Florida from the 1600s. You'll hear Native American stories from Misty Penton, traditional storyteller to the Muscogee Tribe of Florida, and African stories from a troupe of griots called ETA. And you'll become an eyewitness to the dance of history, as Ken Pierce Baroque Dance from Massachusetts joins El Fuego onstage to revive dances from the 1700s.

On Saturday, March 5, TWAM will host an Encuentro exploring music, dance, and ideas from Spanish Florida in the 1700s. Musicians from El Fuego, dancers from Ken Pierce Baroque Dance, scholars from all over the USA, and storytellers from TWAM will guide you through a conversation that's part lecture-demonstration, part question-and-answer session, part dance lesson, part music concert, and completely focused on inviting you to step into this encounter and experience how Floridians sang, danced, and kept company during the 1700s.

On Sunday, March 6, El Fuego takes you to church, for a program of Spanish Devotions from the 1700s. Tallahassee Bach Parley joins forces with TWAM to present this second concert, which – like *El Camino Real* and the Encuentro – is free, family-friendly, and welcoming to all. For more information about all three of these events, visit [www.theaterwithamission.com](http://www.theaterwithamission.com). Then polish up your dancing shoes and come harmonize with history's high notes in Tallahassee this March 4-6.