

ALMA ESPAÑOLA - Isabel Leonard & Sharon Isbin

First Spanish art song album with guitar of its kind in 40 years. Duos by García Lorca, Falla, Rodrigo, Lara, Montsalvatge; guitar solos by Granados and Tárrega. Includes 12 World Premiere arrangements by Isbin
A #1 Bestseller on Amazon Classical Charts

2018 GRAMMY Award for *Producer of the Year, Classical* / David Frost



"Leonard and Isbin swing with infectious enthusiasm ... Their performance of Rodrigo's *Aranjuez, ma pensée* is a study in exquisite beauty masking controlled emotion, each arc of Leonard's phrasing telling a story of its own, Isbin's guitar delivering spectacular rhapsodic riffs among the strums. The solo tracks are an audiophile's dream ... Isbin imbues each tone with its own special beauty without restricting flow, creating a resonance that hangs in the air like aural perfume." **Gramophone**

FIVE STARS ***** "Vivaciously, seductively idiomatic ... The result is a delight, recovering the spirit of this music as something living, part of the *cante jondo* tradition ... Exuberant high spirits ... thoroughly entrancing ... Isbin's range of color in the *Siete canciones populares españolas* masterfully matches the twists and turns of Leonard's bewitching voice. With nuanced performances of songs and solo guitar pieces woven through the collection, this is an absolute joy. **BBC Music Magazine**

"Enchanting album ... The blend of Isbin's guitar and Leonard's voice is both powerful and exquisite ... splendid solo showcases for Isbin ... The recording, produced by David Frost and recorded by Tim Martyn, is exemplary." **Classical Guitar Magazine**

"Leonard and Isbin perform together brilliantly ... it's hard to imagine two people more suited to one another. Both musicians seem to share an innate connection that pervades this entire recording like sunlight through a dissipating cloud. An outstanding effort." **SCENE Magazine**

"Powerful homage to Spain's *cante jondo* ... intensely soulful vocal prowess ...exquisite solo guitar. A classical music gem from beginning to end." **Acoustic Guitar Magazine**

"If there are two artists who should have come together for a recital, they are Isabel Leonard and Sharon Isbin ... a rousing performance" **American Record Guide**

CRITIC'S CHOICE "Astounding delicacy ... an excellent display of talent exposing worthy repertoire." **Opera News**

RECORDING OF THE MONTH "Communicates the essence of the Spanish 'soul' superbly, perhaps more powerfully than any other recording of modern 'classical' song ... a revelation ... Isbin is one of our age's finest guitarists ... a dream team ... fascinating and rewarding" **MusicWeb International**

"Masterful renditions of works by Enrique Granados and Francisco Tárrega. Together, Isbin and Leonard bring truth and immortality to García Lorca's words and music, and in doing so they evoke the very essence of Spanish soul." **Guitar Player Magazine**

"A fabulous new CD" **Performing Arts Monterey Bay Magazine**

"Leonard and Isbin combine their artistry in a rich selection of songs and guitar pieces that get to the very soul of Spain ... depths of passion ... hauntingly beautiful." **Audio Video Club of Atlanta**

"Incredible! "Spanish Soul" doesn't even begin to describe the beauty and depth of this new Bridge Records release! The exciting repertoire, new arrangements, and detail to phrasing are truly exquisite." **WBAA-FM**

"America's leading guitarist, one lavished with prizes, is joined by the equally celebrated mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard for a delightfully vivacious collection of music for guitar and voice ... done with great panache." **Apple Music**

"*Alma Española* is a beautiful new album of Spanish songs performed by Sharon Isbin and Isabel Leonard. While pairing a classical guitarist and an opera singer for this repertoire would seem a natural choice, this is in fact the first known recording of its kind in more than 40 years." **The Epoch Times**

"A showcase for the bewitching talents Isabel Leonard, mezzo soprano, and Sharon Isbin, guitar ... It's atmosphere. It's sophistication. Perfume." **Beyond Criticism**

ARTIST OF THE WEEK "Isbin's guitar meshes beautifully with Leonard's voice. It's almost as if Isbin were also a robust mezzo soprano, so in sync are these two artists on this excellent recording." **Capital Public Radio**

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