



**Cayambis Institute for Latin American Studies in Music**  
**Latin American Classical Notes — Hosted by John L. Walker**  
**Program 014 : August 29, 2021**

**Program 014 Notes**

**Héctor Campos Parsi (PR, 1949): *Serenata para trio de cuerdas*.** Although Campos Parsi's earliest works are stylistically nationalistic, when he left Puerto Rico for additional studies in composition, the teachers with whom he worked helped move him towards universalism. First, it was during the period 1947 to 1950, when he was at the Berkshire Music Center in Tanglewood, where he had the opportunity to interact with Aaron Copland and Olivier Messiaen; later, it was at Fontainebleau in France, where he studied with Nadia Boulanger, such that by the 1960s he had adopted serialism.

• J. Madera / G. Figueroa / A. Odnoposoff. "Música de Cámara Puertorriqueña, vol. IV," Instituto de Cultura.

**Gustavo Becerra-Schmidt (CHI, 1955): *Symphony No. 1, IV, Andante*.** Becerra-Schmidt was one of the most successful and articulate of the Chilean composers born during the 1920s. Similar to Campos Parsi, this composer's works also underwent a stylistic change. After earlier neo-classic works, during the mid 1950s he turned to serialism. And in these works, generally speaking, he stressed thematic relationships and a highly condensed form. In fact, this entire four-movement symphony is less than fifteen minutes in length.

• Louisville Orchestra / Jorge Mester. "Chileno Moderno," Soundmark.

**César Guerra-Peixe (BRA, 1958): *String Quartet No. 2, IV, Allegro*.** A student of Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, Guerra-Peixe's earliest works were based on the serialist technique. However, he began to write music with the intention of reconciling serialism and nationalism, to create a new way to express nationalism in music. But, this approach proved to be untenable. The final movement of this quartet is in the form of a fantasy that concludes with references to a three-note motive that was presented in the first movement.

• Brazilian String Quartet. "Brazilian String Quartet," Troy.

**Manuel Enríquez (MEX, 1963): *Pentamúsica*.** This five-movement work is the sixth chamber music work in this composer's catalog. Its subtitles are "Discusión," "Fagot obbligato," "Jazzeando," "Con ternura," and "Scherzo." In the final movement, a horn call invites the other instruments to the dialogue, and after an attractive solo in the flute, there is a fugue-like section with consecutive entrances in the clarinet, horn, flute, oboe and bassoon. The movement concludes with a lively coda.

• Quinteto de Alientos de la Ciudad de México. "Nueva Música Mexicana," Spartacus.

**Jacqueline Nova (COL, 1966): *Metamorfosis III*.** Born in Belgium in 1938, Nova is considered to have been one of the most ardent advocates for new music in Colombia. Her musical production can be divided into three periods; 1) her earliest works, 2) the music she composed while a scholarship student at the Di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires, and 3), the music she composed after leaving the institute. To a certain extent, this work reveals the influence of Edgard Varèse, in that she uses a kind of chromatic saturation, while at the same exploring instrumental colors and registers.

• Orquesta Sinfónica de Colombia / Luis Biava. "None," None.

**Héctor Quintanar (MEX, 1969): *Sideral II*.** This work for orchestra was premiered on May 23, 1971, in Washington, DC, during the Fifth Inter-American Festival. Writing in the *Washington Post*, critic Paul Hume concluded his review by saying, “It is music that moves with the fine conviction that stamps its composer as a man who is, at 36, already as secure in ideas as in technique with which to express them.”

• Louisville Symphony Orchestra / Jorge Mester. “México Moderno,” Soundmark.

Earlier this week, I received a message from a listener curious about the sort of music that was composed in Cuba after Fidel Castro took over in 1959. Since this is actually a very good question, I’ve selected the next three works, all by Cuban composers, in response to this question. Now the short answer is, that some composers left the island while others remained, and each surely for a mixture of professional as well as personal reasons. But first, I’d like to quote from a 1969 book written in Cuba by José Ardévol, in which, talking about the communist government’s support for musical organizations, says, “Since the first of January 1959, the passion for triumph, the revolutionary impetus, the eagerness to summarily satisfy the old needs, the desire to start functioning as soon as possible and to turn into reality what Cuban musicians had needed and waited for so long, produced, almost immediately, the creation of new organizations and a large number of activities.” Although this is true, I think you can hear in this some concern that any text written during that time had to pass government muster. Nevertheless, it was because of Ardévol, in his role as the national director of music, that Cuban composers enjoyed a remarkable freedom of artistic expression. So here’s a little musical quiz: one of these three composers went into exile. Let’s listen to each one. And then, can you tell which one it was?

**Julián Orbón (CUB, 1963): *Partita No. 1*.** During the 1960s, Orbón became increasingly influenced by the philosophic and religious world. At the same time, there are other compositions that reveal his artistic and personal relationship with harpsichordist Rafael Puayana.

• Rafael Puyana, harpsichord. “Harpsichord Concerto,” Philips.

**Argeliers León (CUB, 1973): *Hoy canto a mi patria sobre aquella sangre heroica vertida en el Moncada*.** This may be the longest title that I’ve ever come across. The word “Moncada” refers to a military garrison and prison in eastern Cuba that was assaulted by a group of young people led by Fidel Castro, thus beginning the revolution that led to the overthrow of dictator Fulgencio Batista. Regarding the composer himself, this work was written during his third stylistic period, in which he uses aleatoric and electroacoustic procedures as an expressive language. About this music, he said, “the musician feels free playing pieces like this, they sound different every time they are performed.”

• Nancy Casanova, “Contemporáneos 7,” Egrem.

**Carlos Fariñas (CUB, 1977): *Preludio para Penthesilea*.** This composer also shows avant-garde stylistic development. With a constant barrage of multiple percussion instruments adding layer after layer of cross-rhythms and powerful forward momentum, and a hypnotic and almost ritualistic effect, this work could certainly bring an audience to its feet.

• Orquesta Sinfónica de Cuba / Enrique Pérez Mesa. “Cuban Symphonic Music,” MDG Scene.

**Alfredo del Mónaco (VEN, 1977): *Tupac-amaru*.** Using this same year as a bridge, let’s listen to one more work, also from 1977, by Venezuelan composer Alfredo del Mónaco, his *Tupac-amaru*, which was composed for a music festival that was held in Maracaibo that same year. The title refers to the leader of a large Andean uprising against the Spanish in Peru in 1780. Sentenced to death, he was first made to watch the deaths of his wife, eldest son, uncle, brother-in-law and some of his captains. After his tongue was cut out, he was to be dismembered by four horses. But this failed. So his body was quartered and then he was beheaded. This work intends to pay tribute to the brave attitude of the last Inca in defense of his people.

• Orquesta Filarmónica de Caracas / Eduardo Marturet. “Música venezolana de concierto,” Supravox.