



Cayambis Institute for Latin American Studies in Music
Latin American Classical Notes — Hosted by John L. Walker
Program 016 : September 12, 2021

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Tania León (CUB, 1987): *Pueblo mulato*. This is a set of three songs on texts by the Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén for soprano and chamber ensemble. The instrumentation bears the strong imprint of the composer's native Cuba: both the percussion and the guitar reflect her Latin American origins. But to categorize her music by its ethnic roots reduces it unfairly. She has something to say, with power and clear articulation; such that the Cuban elements in her musical background are but one aspect of this complex and gifted composer. The three movements are titled, "Canto negro," "Organillo," and "Quirino."

- Virginia DuPuy, soprano / ensemble conducted by James Rives-Jones. "Voices of Change," CRI.

Mario Lavista (MEX, 1988): *Responsorio in memoriam Rodolfo Halffter*. This work is one of many that belongs to a tradition of composition in memory of a recently deceased composer. But in this case, Lavista had a very close association with Halffter. Regarding the use of percussion, in this work Lavista allows for some flexibility, and in this way, by using four instead of a minimum of two percussionists, the work is able to achieve a more ritualistic or theatric character, which for the composer also reflects his admiration for Verdi's use of percussion in the "Dies irae" section of his famous *Requiem*.

- Wendy Holdawey, bsn. / R. Gallardo & A. Mendoza, perc. "Mario Lavista : Cuaderno de viaje," Quindecim.

Ronaldo Miranda (BRA, 1991): *Variações sérias sobre um tema de Anacleto de Medeiros*. A graduate of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, in 1974 Miranda became the chief music critic for the *Jornal do Brasil*. Three years later, while still employed as a critic, he won a first prize in the chamber music category in a prestigious music competition in that country. His variations, which are considered to be among some of his finest works, are based on a famous theme by Anacleto de Medeiros, who was one of the great leaders of Rio's marching orchestras during the beginning of the 20th century.

- Kammerensemble Modern der Duetschen Oper Berlin. "Klang der Welt : Brasilien," NCA.

Miguel del Aquila (URU, 1994): *Conga-Line in Hell*. Here's the composer explaining how this work came to be: "It began in my imagination as the visual image of an endless line of dead people dancing through the fires of hell. I gradually started hearing the music, and Dante's Paolo and the Francesca de Rimini story soon became part of the scene. This inferno is humorous, sarcastic, grotesque and at times also terrifying. I rely mainly on the dramatic and expressive qualities of rhythm to convey the evil forces that govern my imaginary hell. As thematic material I primarily use claves as they are used in Latin American music [as] a sort of 'rhythmic tonality' to which harmony and melody conform."

- Camerata de las Américas / Joel Sachs. "Conga-Line in Hell," Dorian.

Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon (MEX, 1999): *Páramo*. This work, written at the request of the Stony Brook Chamber Players, was conceived as the instrumental overture to a cycle of compositions. Its sound world is closely inspired by the peculiar unfolding of the novel, *Pedro Páramo*, by the great Mexican writer Juan Rulfo. In this novel, the orderly flux of time has been derailed, such that the borders between past and present, life and afterlife, have become porous. Consequently, the piece frenziedly ticks, tolls, and cuckoos, like a deranged musical clock.

- The Furious Band / Paul Vaillancourt. "Exchange : Latin America," CRI.

Diego Luzuriaga (ECU, 2002): *Once canciones, I*, “En poco tiempo nacerás.” Luzuriaga has often said that his finest compositions are those that were composed simply for his own pleasure. Though without any particular deadline, these songs, which were inspired by people and things near and dear to him, were therefore rendered in a more personal voice, and as such, came about almost effortlessly. At the same time, however, they are infused with the sort of personal flaws or blemishes that nevertheless make them so especially attractive.

- Dana Hanchard, soprano / Bill Girolamo, guitar. “Eleven Songs,” Fertile Ground.

Oswaldo Golijov (ARG, 2004): *Ayre, XI*, “Ariadna en su laberinto.” The initial inspiration for this work came from Golijov’s desire to create a companion work for Luciano Berio’s 1964 *Folk Songs*. *Ayre* centers on southern Spain with its intermingling of Christian, Arab and Jewish cultures. About this, Golijov says, “With a little bend, a melody goes from Jewish to Arab to Christian.” Golijov has scored the work for a richly colored chamber ensemble, the music of which is derived both from pre-existent melodies as well as ones of his own creation.

- Dawn Upshaw / The Andalucian Dogs. “Ayre,” Deutsche Grammophon.

***Luis Ernesto Gómez (VEN, 2008): *Cantos veloces, I*, “Canto vivo.”** The four movements of this work were conceived in order that the soloist can demonstrate his or her virtuosity. Gómez uses a style that interweaves a rhythmic and melodic discourse that simulates two voices through a fragmentation of the phrases by using large intervallic leaps while at the same time repeating some notes with different timbres and articulations. The work, premiered by Venezuelan clarinetist Carmen Borregales on May 24, 2010, during the 16th Festival of Latin American Music, generated excellent critical review from Luis Ochoa, Alfredo del Mónaco, Xavier Berenguel and Enzo Filippetti.

- Carmen Borregales, clarinet. “Carmen Borregales : Cantos Veloces,” None.

***Adriana Verdié (ARG, 2008): *Tangoescente*.** This work seeks to re-capture the essence of the *tango* for the concert hall. Slow melodies flow over punctuating rhythms; while a number of extended instrumental techniques add fresh timbres and percussive interest. The piece was composed as a humble tribute to Piazzolla’s lyricism.

- Lyrique Quintette. “Arrivals and Departures,” Mark.

Beetholven Cunha (BRA, 2012): *Três paisagens brasileiras*. Beetholven Cunha is composer, director and educator who was born in the Brazilian state of Pernambuco in 1978. About his musical style, he says, “My music has a very strong Armorial influence, but as a friend once put it, it is no longer armorial; rather, it’s a combination of elements of my experiences and research, combined with the personal lyricism of my compositional nature, all diluted into a great cauldron of sound.”

- Fernanda Krug, violin / Capella Bydgosciensis / José Maria Florêncio. “Classical Music from Brazil,” Dux.

***Alexandre Travassos (BRA, 2016): *Aurora Australis*.** *Aurora Australis* was commissioned by the Orquestra Experimental de Repertório in 2016. It is the composer’s musical impression of the southern hemisphere’s version of the electric optical phenomenon Aurora Borealis with its spectacular display of lights, shapes and colors that occurs near the poles. The Latin word *aurora* (dawn) is also a reference to the homage given to the young players of the Brazilian orchestra to whom the work was dedicated. *Aurora Australis* was premiered on November 13, 2016, by the Orquestra Experimental de Repertório at the Theatro Municipal de São Paulo, under the direction of Katarine Araujo.

- Orquestra Experimental de Repertório / Katerine Araujo. “None,” None.