



Cayambis Institute for Latin American Studies in Music
Latin American Classical Notes — Hosted by John L. Walker
Program 048, June 12, 2022

José Antonio Gómez (MEX, 1841): *Variaciones sobre el tema “Jarabe Mexicano.”* This composer is known mainly for his work as an organist and chapel master of the cathedral in Mexico City, where he reorganized the music archive. In addition, thanks to his leadership a philharmonic society was established in that city in 1839. The following year he published an influential book on musical grammar.

- Cyprien Katsaris, piano. “Latin-American Recital,” Piano 21.

Federico Guzmán (CHI, 1851): *Zamacueca.* Guzmán is considered to be the first authentically Chilean composer of the 19th century, who is, at the same time, one of the most forgotten musicians of his country. Indeed, the entirety of his output as a composer remains largely unknown. And his *Zamacueca*, which suggest the ancient colonial dance of the same name that originated in the Viceroyalty of Peru, may be his only work of this type.

- Elvira Savi, piano. “Isidora Zegers y su tiempo,” Par Media.

Antônio Carlos Gomes (BRA, 1870): *Il Guarany, Act I, “L’idalgo vien.”* This was the first Brazilian opera to gain acclaim outside Brazil. Italianate style, text in Italian.

- Orchester der Beethovenhalle Bonn / John Neschling. “Il Guarany,” Sony.

Ignacio Cervantes (CUB, 1875): *Danzas cubanas, I, “Invitación.”* Ignacio Cervantes is generally considered to have been the most important Cuban composer of the 19th century. In 1875, around the time that he had begun composing his *Cuban Dances* (1875-1895), he was forced into a period of self-exile, because the Spaniards found out that he had been using his concert proceeds to fund the independence movement in his country.

- Alvaro Cendoya, piano. “Danzas Cubanas,” Naxos.

Carlos Enrique Pasta (PER, 1875): *Atahualpa, Act I, “Invocazione al Sole.”* This opera was premiered later that year in Genoa. Its first performance in Peru occurred on Nov. 1, 1877. Atahualpa, the last Incan emperor, was captured by the Spaniards in 1532. In 1533, he escaped being burned at the stake by agreeing to be baptized into the Catholic faith. Instead, he was strangled with a garrote.

- Orquesta Sinfónica y Coro Nacional del Perú / Manuel López-Gómez. “Atahualpa,” Universal Music Italia.

Julio Ituarte (MEX, 1880): *Ecos de México, Capricho.* As the very concept of musical nationalism stemmed from European romanticism, it was with a group of romantic pianists, including Julio Ituarte, that the first local elements began to appear in Mexican music. In particular, the *jarabe* became the most popular dance following independence, and as such, it drew his attention in his *Ecos de México*, which is perhaps the first work to reveal the integration of Mexican melodies. Listen carefully to see if you recognize the half dozen or so popular airs that are contained in this piece.

- Cyprien Katsaris, piano. “Latin-American Recital,” Piano 21.

Alexandre Levy (BRA, 1890): *Suite brésilienne, IV, “Samba.”* This movement is considered as the first decisive step towards musical nationalism in Brazil, and became during the early 20th century one of the most acclaimed pieces of the symphonic repertoire in that country. However, for his *samba*, which around that time was developing in rural areas along the Tietê River, the composer actually drew on two traditional tunes that were well-known at that time in São Paulo.

- São Paulo Symphony Orchestra / Roberto Minczuk. “Danças brasileiras,” BIS Records.

Alberto Williams (ARG, 1890): *En la sierra Suite, IV, “El rancho abandonado.”* After returning from Paris as a music student, Williams composed a set of piano pieces titled *En la sierra*. The fourth one of these, “*El rancho abandonado*,” is possibly the first Argentinean work in which folk elements were incorporated,

particularly those of the *gaucho* tradition in his country, and on the basis of this, Williams went on to claim that he was the father of a new musical constitution.

- Valentín Surif, piano. “Alberto Williams,” Acqua Records.

Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1892): *Série brasileira, II. “Intermédio.”* This composer’s extensive production reveals a great deal of eclecticism. In 1897, he presented a concert in Rio de Janeiro of some of his most recent symphonic works at that time, including the four-movement *Série brasileira*, which is like Alexandre Levy’s *Suite Brésilienne* (1890), in that it became a standard in the repertoire of Brazilian concert music.

- Minas Gerais Philharmonic Orchestra / Fabio Mechetti. “Alberto Nepomuceno,” Naxos.

Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1894): “Ora, diz-me a verdade.” Composed in 1894, this is one of the first settings of Portuguese to music. When it was first sung in Brazil, it provoked a controversy led by people who believed Italian to be the only suitable language for art song.

- André Vidal, tenor / Gisele Pires Mota, piano. “Luz e névoa,” CD Baby.

Antônio Francisco Braga (BRA, 1898): *Jupyra, Act 1, Scene 1.* Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1868, Braga studied at the Paris Conservatory, and later spent time in Germany and Italy. Composed in 1898, his opera *Jupyra* was premiered in Rio de Janeiro on October 7, 1900. Writing the next day in a local paper, Alfredo Angelo said, “there will be no date more memorable for national art than this one, on which Francisco Braga surprised and enraptured an entire auditorium, by yesterday presenting us his first opera, *Jupyra*, in two acts.”

- Orquesta de São Paulo / John Neschling. “Francisco Braga : Jupyra,” BIS.

Ricardo Castro (MEX): *Aztimba, Intermedio.* Composed in 1900, this opera revolves around conflicts between the indigenous inhabitants of southwest Mexico after the arrival of the Spanish in 1522. Aztimba is a princess who falls in love with a Spanish official. Libretto in Spanish. The music has impressionist tendencies.

- Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas / Alondra de la Parra. “Mi alma Mexicana,” Sony.

Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1904): *O Garatuja. One of Nepomuceno’s finest works of national character, this prelude is the only completed portion of a planned lyric comedy based on a 19th century novel by Brazilian lawyer and dramatist José de Alencar. Its theme is that of a Brazilian *lundu*, which is a dance of African origin that was introduced to Brazil during the colonial period.

- São Paulo Symphony Orchestra / Roberto Minczuk. “Danças brasileiras,” BIS Records.

Daniel Alomía Robles (PER, 1913): *El cóndor pasa.* What we know today as *El cóndor pasa* is actually based on a piano arrangement of the most famous melody from the zarzuela of the same name which was composed in 1913. We’ll be listening to a reconstruction of the music from the original score that was completed in 2013. The libretto has a strong social content about Peruvian miners and their relations with a foreign mining company. And in spite of whatever version you may have previously heard, the original was written for traditional orchestral instruments.

- Unidentified artists. “None,” none.

Manuel Ponce (MEX, 1917, rev. 1921): *Chapultepec, IV, “Canto y danza.”* Ponce, the “father of Mexican music,” is the most performed Mexican composer worldwide. The symphonic *Chapultepec* was his first large-scale orchestral work and was also the first Mexican orchestral work written in a style that is similar to French impressionism. Each of its four movements bears a suggestive subtitle.

- Orquesta Sinfónica de San Luis Potosí / José Miramontes Zapata. “Orchestral Music, vol. 1,” Toccata Classics.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (BRA, 1917): *Amazonas.* By the middle of the 1910s, V-L is now on his way towards accomplishing his objective to become a central participant in the construction of a myth of Brazilian musical nationalism. In this work, he freely incorporates the musical elements that he gathered while in the indigenous areas along the Amazon river, in a manner that has been described as his most daring attempt up until that time.

- Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra / Enrique Arturo Diemecke. “Music of Latin American Masters.” Naxos.