

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: VIOLA MUSIC FROM THE AMERICAS:
MUSIC FROM CANADA, UNITED STATES,
CUBA, VENEZUELA, MEXICO, AND
BRAZIL

Maria A. Montano, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2016

Dissertation directed by: Professor Katherine Murdock
School of Music

The enthusiasm towards writing music for the viola that flourished in the early 1900's thanks to the efforts of a number of twentieth-century violists and composers rapidly spilled over to North and South America. Viola works by American and Canadian composers have already become cornerstones of the viola repertoire worldwide. On the other hand, compositions from other parts of the American continent remain lesser known outside of their country of origin. This is due in part to the less developed publishing and recording industry in these countries which makes it difficult for performers and programmers from other countries to buy or rent performing materials.

As a violist born and trained in Venezuela, performing works by important Latin American composers to new audiences is deeply important to me. This dissertation was completed by performing selected works by Canadian, American, Cuban, Mexican, Brazilian, and Venezuelan composers. Composers from these countries have mixed their rich musical traditions with modern compositional techniques, creating original works that have greatly enriched the viola repertoire. This eclectic mixture of styles makes the music from Latin American composers not only very different from that of American and Canadian composers, but also very different from those of their neighboring countries. Through my three dissertation recitals, I intend to share this music with new audiences and inspire other violists to become familiar with this repertoire.

The first recital includes compositions by American composers George Rochberg (1918-2015), Elliott Carter (1908-2012), and Alan Shulman (1915-2002) and Canadian composer Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945). The second recital includes works by Cuban composers Cesar Orozco (b. 1980), and Keyla Orozco (b. 1969), Venezuelan composers Aldemaro Romero (1928-2007) and Modesta Bor (1926-1998), and Venezuelan-Uruguayan composer Efrain Oscher (b. 1974). The third recital includes works by Mexican composers Carlos Chavez (1899-1978), José Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958) and Manuel M Ponce (1882-1948), and Brazilian composers Francisco Mignone (1897-1986) and Brenno Blauth (1931-1993). This music represents a bouquet of a distinctive mixture of styles from different parts of the American continent. Recordings of all three recitals can be accessed at the University of Maryland Hornabake Library.

VIOLA MUSIC FROM THE AMERICAS: MUSIC FROM CANADA, UNITED
STATES, CUBA, VENEZUELA, MEXICO, AND BRAZIL

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandfather Dimas Montano, who taught me my first Venezuelan waltzes *Campana* and *Anhelo* when I was a child. Even though I only knew him for few years of my life, I owe him my love and passion for music.

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Recording Track Listing

First Dissertation Recital (CD#1)

Recorded December 9, 2016 at 5:00PM in Smith Lecture Hall
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, College Park

[1] *Elegy* for viola and piano, Elliott Carter (1908-2012)

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Sonata for viola and piano, George Rochberg (1918-2005)

[2] Allegro Moderato

[3] Adagio Lamentoso

[4] Fantasia: Epilogue

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

[5] *Prayer and Dance of Prayer* for viola and piano, Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945)

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

[6] *Theme and Variations* for viola and piano, Alan Shulman (1915-2002)

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Second Dissertation Recital (CD#2)

Recorded February 20, 2016 at 8:00 at Ulrich Recital Hall
Tawes Hall, University of Maryland, College Park

Sonata para viola y piano, Modesta Bor (1926-1998)

[1] Allegretto

[2] Madrigal, Andante Lento

[3] Allegro Moderato

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

[4-6] 3 *Diálogos* para violín y viola, Keyla Orozco (b. 1969)

Jorge Orozco, violín
Maria Montano, viola

[7] *Escenas del Sur* para viola y contrabajo, Efraim Oscher (b. 1974)

Maria Montano, viola
Ian Saunders, double bass

[8] *La Esencia de mi Raiz* para viola sola, Cesar Orozco (b. 1980)
Maria Montano, viola

[9] *Piezas de Bolsillo* for viola and piano, Keyla Orozco (b. 1969)
Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

[10] *Fuga con Pajarillo*, Aldemaro Romero (1928-2007)
Jorge Orozco, violin
Jamie Chimchirian, violin
Maria Montano, viola
Seth Castleton, cello
Ian Saunders, double bass

Third Dissertation Recital (CD#3)

Recorded April 5, 2016 at 8:00 at Ulrich Recital Hall
Tawes Hall, University of Maryland, College Park

[1] *Madrigal* for viola and piano, Carlos Chavez (1899-1978)
Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Sonata para viola y piano, José Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958)

[2] Allegro Moderato

[3] Lento

[4] Allegro

Maria Montano, viola

Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Sonata a Duo para violin y viola, Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948)

[5] Allegro, piuttosto moderato

[6] In tempo di Sarabande, andante espressivo

[7] Allegro

Jorge Orozco, violin

Maria Montano, viola

Três Valsas Brasileiras, Francisco Mignone (1897-1986)

[8] Valsa Lenta

[9] Vivo e com Entusiasmo

Maria Montano, viola

Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Sonata para viola y piano, Brenno Blauth (1931-1993)

[10] Dramático

[11] Evocativo

[12] Agitato

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Introduction

Since the early 1900's viola repertoire has flourished thanks to efforts of a number of twentieth-century violists and composers. Violists Lionel Tertis (1876-1975), Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979), Paul Hindemith (1895-1963), and William Primrose (1904-1982) are key figures in the emergence of the viola as a solo instrument. They composed or arranged works for the instrument, and also had works written for them. The sudden increase in fine young violists, especially in the United Kingdom, created a new interest in composers and audiences alike to create and program new repertoire for the viola. As more solo repertoire was written for the viola, changes and innovations in the design of the instrument developed. Due to these changes as well as to the development of viola technique in general, violists could now project with more sound and clarity in big concert halls, and often instruments were custom designed or re-cut to fit the build of specific players.

This enthusiasm towards writing music for the viola spilled over to North and South America. We have today an extensive repertoire from American and Canadian composers who have written for solo viola, viola and piano, and viola and orchestra. Many of these works have already become cornerstones of the viola repertoire worldwide (e.g. George Rochberg's *Viola Sonata* and Allan Shulman's *Theme and Variations*). On the other hand, compositions from other parts of the American continent remain lesser known outside of their country of origin. *Fuga con Pajarillo*, written by Aldemaro Romero in 1976, is a well-established work in the string repertoire in Venezuela and Latin America; it is, however, rarely performed in The United States and Europe.

As a violist born and raised in Venezuela, it is important to me to include compositions by noteworthy Latin American composers on my dissertation recitals, specifically works from Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, and Venezuela. Composers from these countries have mixed their rich musical traditions with conventional compositional techniques, creating original works that have enriched the viola repertoire. This eclectic mixture of styles makes the music by Latin American composers not only very different from that of American and Canadian composers, but also very different from those of their neighboring countries. A less developed publishing and recording industry in these Latin American countries has contributed to the fact that this repertoire is much less known and less accessible to musicians abroad. In fact, it is uncommon to see works by Brazilian composers programmed in Venezuela, Mexico, and the United States, and vice versa. With my second and third dissertation recitals I intend to bring a small sample of this rich and sophisticated repertoire to encourage more musicians to become curious about music from Central and South America. By programming music from different parts of the American continent, I also intend to bring a message of unity and harmony among all musicians from the Americas.

The first recital includes compositions by American composers George Rochberg (1918-2015), Elliott Carter (1908-2012), and Alan Shulman (1915-2002) and Canadian composer Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945). The second recital includes works by Cuban composers Cesar Orozco (b. 1980), and Keyla Orozco (b. 1969), Venezuelan composers Aldemaro Romero (1928-2007) and Modesta Bor (1926-1998), and Venezuelan-Uruguayan composer Efrain Oscher (b. 1974). The third recital includes works by Mexican composers Carlos Chavez (1899-1978), José Pablo

Moncayo (1912-1958), and Manuel M Ponce (1882-1948), and Brazilian composers Francisco Mignone (1897-1986) and Brenno Blauth (1931-1993). This music represents a bouquet of a distinctive mixture of styles from different parts of the American continent.

CHAPTER 1: First Dissertation Recital: Music from Canada and The United States of America

Recital Program

December 9, 2016 at 5:00PM in Smith Lecture Hall
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, College Park

Elegy for viola and piano, Elliott Carter (1908-2012)
Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Sonata for viola and piano, George Rochberg (1918-2005)
I. Allegro Moderato
II. Adagio Lamentoso
III. Fantasia: Epilogue
Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Intermission

Prayer and Dance of Prayer for viola and piano, Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945)
Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Theme and Variations for viola and piano, Alan Shulman (1915-2002)
Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Program Notes

Elliott Carter (1908-2012)

American composer Elliott Carter, born in New York on December 11, 1908, is regarded as one of the most influential composers after Aaron Copland. By the time of his death in 2012 he had written an outstanding oeuvre that masterfully combined the musical traits of European and American modernism.

During his early life, Carter was exposed to music of Alexander Scriabin, Maurice Ravel, and Charles Ives. Carter became friends with Ives and was influenced by the elder composer through the critical study of a wide range of new music. This had an impact on Carter and helped him develop an interest for modern music. After studying in Harvard with Walter Piston, Edward Burlingame Hill, and Gustav Holst, Carter spent three years studying in Paris with Nadia Boulanger.

Carter's early music has the characteristic American sound pioneered by Copland blended with the neoclassicism inspired by his studies with Boulanger. The composer disregarded many of his pre-war compositions but he kept his *Elegy* as a work in progress. The short piece was originally written for cello and piano in 1943 and later revised and arranged various instrumentations: for string quartet in 1946, for string orchestra in 1952, and for viola and piano in 1961. This later version introduces new written out rubato markings and unlike the string quartet and string orchestra versions, ends with tonal ambiguity.

The piece is predominantly diatonic and does not contain the intense chromatic and metric modulation characteristic of Carter's later works. Instead, it reveals an emotional and intimate conversational interplay of independent voices.

Thematically it resembles the slow movement of the composer's first symphony written in 1942 and revised in 1954. The expressive melodies use the power of ascending lines and the interval of a fourth to portray the open and honest sound so characteristic of Americana Music.

George Rochberg (1918-2005)

George Rochberg, born in Paterson, New Jersey, on July 5, 1918, studied at Montclair State Teachers College in New Jersey and the Mannes College of Music in New York. His teachers during this time included Hans Weisse, George Szell and Leopold Mannes. After serving in World War II, Rochberg continued his studies at Curtis Institute of Music with Rosario Scalero and Gian Carlo Menotti. After receiving his Master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Rochberg joined the faculty of Curtis in 1948. With this academic appointment, he started a formative career as a composer and teacher in which he held guest composer positions at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Festival of Contemporary Music at Oberlin, Ohio, and the Conference of Contemporary Music at Aspen, Colorado.

Rochberg's early compositions were influenced by Igor Stravinsky, Paul Hindemith, and Béla Bartók. In 1950 while in Rome, Rochberg became interested in the music of Italian composer Luigi Dallapiccola and his lyrical twelve-tone compositions. Rochberg's exposure to Dallapiccola's music started a new era in which he immersed himself in Schoenberg's serialism. With *Twelve Bagatelles* and his Symphony No. 2, Rochberg mastered his twelve-tone technique and explored ways to expand the natural expressive limitations of serialism.

Rochberg's compositional style took a new path after his son died in 1964. His grief paused his creative output for a couple of years. After this personal crisis, the composer employed new ways to express himself through tonality, lyricism, angular continuous melodies, and strongly accented rhythmic patterns. Rochberg's Viola Sonata written in 1979 exemplifies the style of his later works.

The Viola Sonata was commissioned by Friends of William Primrose, The American Viola Society, and Brigham Young University in honor of William Primrose's seventy-fifth Birthday. It was premiered by Joseph de Pasquale and Vladimir Sokoloff at the Seventh International Viola Congress on July 14, 1979 in Provo, Utah. The first movement is based on soaring angular melodies and tri-tone harmonies that explore the highest range of the instrument. The main theme, based on a twelve-tone row, outlines long shifts and portamento slides that create a powerful sense of desperation and yearning from the very opening of the movement. A fugato section in triple meter contrasts this lyricism with strong accents on beats one and three that create a sense of grounded asymmetry. New melodic material emerges after the fugato and reprises the idea of big leaps, now with a different character of defiance and power. The development of the first movement exposes the virtuosic possibilities of the viola creating a cumulative effect that is anxious, soaring, and chaotic. The quiet ending of this movement gives a sense of resignation and prepares the audience for the delicate subsequent movement.

The second movement is based on a mournful melody sung by the viola while accompanied by the piano in different variations. The movement follows an arch-like shape and ends with quiet short fragments of the melodic material.

The brief final movement, Fantasia, reprises fragments from previous movements with large arpeggiated gestures that retain the sense of directness and sorrow of the composition. The indication *un poco parlando* and the heavy expressive and tempo markings, make this movement and improvisatory fantasia. The ending of the piece combines the wide set of emotions of the sonata. After the movement has calmed down, Rochberg returns to the expressive portamento leaps from the first movement.

Elizabeth Raum (b. 1945)

Elizabeth Raum, born in Berlin, New Hampshire, on January 13, 1945, studied oboe with Robert Sprenkle at Eastman School from 1962 to 1966 and was an active oboist from 1968 to 1975. During this time she held principal oboe positions at the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and later at the Regina Symphony Orchestra in Saskatchewan. In 1984 she received a Master's degree in Music Composition from the University of Regina. Her opera, *The Garden of Alice*, established her as a major Canadian Composer.

Raum's music is neo-romantic in style. Her lyricism, expressiveness, and her idiomatic writing make her music accessible to performers and audiences. Her oeuvre includes music for theater and film, ballet, orchestra, piano, voice, chorus, and band as well as electroacoustic compositions. Raum has developed a particular interest in music for trombone and tuba resulting in numerous commissions for that instrumentation.

Prayer and Dance of Prayer was commissioned by the Eckhardt-Gramatte National Competition for the performance of the Canadian Music in 1997. The piece

grew out of a chamber work, *Searching for Sophia*, which celebrates the women of the Bible who had no voice because of their gender. The first section of the piece, *Prayer*, is a plea for the women to be recognized as individuals, in a tradition in which this was not encouraged. The composer wrote the following poem as a verbal expression of the music.

MOTHER

Grant me a voice
Oh Mother of Life.
Don't let them silence me,
Those who would take away
My name,
My children,
My place in existence,
Those who would denounce
My very soul;
For I have much to say,
I have much to do

I feel the life stir
Within my body.
And though it be agony
To let it forth,
I would willingly suffer
To allow that life to exist,
To grow and thrive.
But it must know
That I was its mother.

The second section, *Dance*, was inspired by Syrian folk music heard by the composer as a child at family gatherings with extended family. This section is rich in polyrhythms without a structure of triple or duple meter, but rather a mixture of strong and weak beats. The music is built on a scale of two tetra-chords: ABC#D# (Lydian) depicting youth and joy, and E#F#G#A depicting age and knowledge.

Alan Shulman (1915-2002)

American cellist and composer Alan Shulman, born in Baltimore, Maryland on June 4, 1915, studied cello, theory, and harmony at the Peabody Conservatory with Bart Wirtz and Lois Cheslock. Shulman continued studies in New York. After winning a New York Philharmonic scholarship he studied cello with Joseph Emonts and harmony with Winthrop Sargent. In 1932, the composer continued his studies at

the Juilliard School where an additional scholarship provided him tutelage with Felix Salmond, Bernard Wagenaar, and Albert Stoessel. Shulman continued cello studies with Emanuel Feuermann in 1939 and composition studies with Paul Hindemith in 1942. Shulman was a versatile performer and composer; he was a founding member of the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Toscanini (1937), co-founder of the Stuyvesant String Quartet (1938-1954), member of the Philharmonia Trio (1962-1969), and cellist of the Haydn String Quartet (1972-1982). As a composer he explored a wide range of classical and jazz genres for orchestra, chamber ensembles, piano and voice, as well as incidental music for television, film, and radio.

Theme and Variations for viola and piano is considered among Shulman's most successful compositions. It was scored for viola and orchestra with a piano reduction made by the composer in 1940. It was later revised for viola, string orchestra, and harp in 1954. *Theme and Variations* is a neo-classical composition based on a theme that alternates between triple and duple meter in B minor. The theme suggests an interesting combination of emotions: sadness and despair mixed with an insinuation of hopefulness brought by the D major in the middle section. The theme transitions again into B minor bringing back the somber emotions that are portrayed in the work. The theme is followed by seven variations that show influences of Bach, Brahms, Vaughan Williams, and Debussy. These variations move listeners through an intense emotional journey that range from the virtuosic to the spiritual. Its expressive characteristics and variety of style is perhaps what established this work as part of the standard viola repertoire soon after its premier by violist Emanuel Vardi and the NBC Symphony Orchestra in 1941.

Shulman interrupted his career a year after the premier of *Theme and Variations* to serve in Word War II from 1942 to 1945. He died in Hudson, New York in 2002.

CHAPTER 2: Second Dissertation Recital: Music from Cuba and Venezuela

Recital Program

February 20, 2016 at 8:00 at Ulrich Recital Hall
Tawes Hall, University of Maryland, College Park

Sonata para viola y piano, Modesta Bor (1926-1998)

I. Allegretto

II. Madrigal, Andante Lento

III. Allegro Moderato

Maria Montano, viola

Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

3 *Diálogos* para violin and viola, Keyla Orozco (b. 1969)

Jorge Orozco, violin

Maria Montano, viola

Escenas del Sur para viola y contrabajo, Efrain Oscher (b. 1974)

Maria Montano, viola

Ian Saunders, double bass

Intermission

La Esencia de mi Raiz para viola sola, Cesar Orozco (b. 1980)

Maria Montano, viola

Piezas de Bolsillo for viola and piano, Keyla Orozco (b. 1969)

I. Cha-cha-cha-plus

II. Merengada de Frutas

III. Cancion de Cuna

IV. Seis por Izquierdo

Maria Montano, viola

Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, piano

Fuga con Pajarillo, Aldemaro Romero (1928-2007)

Jorge Orozco, violin

Jamie Chimchirian, violin

Maria Montano, viola

Seth Castleton, cello

Ian Saunders, double bass

Program Notes

Modesta Bor (1926-1998)

Modesta Bor, born in Margarita Island, Venezuela in 1926, was a prominent Venezuelan composer, pedagogue, and choir conductor. She is remembered as a passionate academic who was ardent about Venezuelan traditional music. Her legacy is the extensive repertoire of vocal compositions and arrangements, which have become standard repertoire in Venezuela.

Bor was raised in a musical family, her father was a guitarist and *cuatrista* and her mother was a violinist. Bor began piano studies in Juangriego with Elena de Arrarte and continued in Caracas in 1942. She studied with many of the preeminent teachers of the day. Bor was a promising pianist but a diagnosis of Guillain-Barré Syndrome caused her to focus on composition. She moved to the Soviet Union in 1960 and continued her composition studies with Aram Khachaturian in Moscow. She auditioned with her own viola sonata for entry to the Tchaikovsky Conservatory.

Bor returned to Caracas in 1964, serving as the director of the children's chorus of the *Universidad de Oriente* (1963-1964) and arranger and copyist for the *Instituto Nacional de Folklore* (1964). She was professor of composition in the *Escuela de Musica Jose Lorenzo Llamaza* (1973-1990) and dean of the music school at the *Universidad Central de Venezuela* (1974-1989). Bor moved to Merida in 1990 where she continued teaching and composing until her death in 1998.

The viola sonata was a pivotal work for the composer, a work which opened doors to her studies in Moscow. This composition is representative of her Venezuelan Nationalistic style. Additional compositions of this era include *Suite Criolla* and *Suite*

para Orquesta de Camara. The viola sonata was dedicated to violist Lazaro Sternic and won the Venezuelan National Prize of Chamber Music in 1960. This sonata explores the rich lyricism of the Venezuelan folklore. It is structured in three movements written in a cantabile style: allegretto, *Madrigal* - andante lento, and allegro moderato. Venezuelan rhythms permeate the sonata. The first movement uses a theme of a traditional Venezuelan merengue. The second movement titled *Madrigal* is written in *serenata* style. The third movement engages the style of a Venezuelan waltz. The viola sonata is available in its original manuscript, thus devoid of bowings, fingerings or other edits. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the violist to interpret the lyricism and articulation of this composition.

Keyla Orozco (b. 1969)

Keyla Orozco, born in Santiago de Cuba in 1969, began piano studies at the Esteban Salas Conservatory in the traditions of the Russian School. She continued her piano studies with Yliana Bautista in the *Escuela Nacional de Artes* and later studied composition with Harold Gramatges at the *Instituto Superior de Artes in Havana*, Cuba. Orozco left Cuba in 1995 to continue her composition studies with Theo Loevendie at the *Koninklij Conservatorium* in The Hague and the *Conservatorium van Amsterdam*. Orozco established herself in The Netherlands as an independent artist for many years. She moved to the United States in 2015 but continues pursuing her professional career in both countries.

Orozco's work has been awarded with the Guggenheim, the Cintas and the MacDowell Residence Fellowships. She has received commissions from several arts funding organizations in The Netherlands and has composed for internationally

acclaimed Dutch ensembles and soloists. Orozco has recently created her own chamber ensemble Camerata Cubana de Amsterdam, based in The Netherlands.

Orozco's writing style has been influenced by her father, Danilo Orozco, and his life-long research on Cuban traditional music. The modern compositional sphere, which she experienced in Amsterdam and The Hague, also greatly influenced her compositional style. The fusion of these two musical worlds has led her to employ folk and modern traits in her compositions. Works like *Many Eléctrico* (for recorder and live electronics) and *Traveling Shoe Story* (for violin, bass clarinet, percussion, marimba, piano, and tap dancer) are prime examples of her eclectic use of instrumentation.

In 2006, Orozco embarked on an intensive field study of Venezuelan traditional *musica llanera* (music of the plains). This project was subsidized by the *Netherlands Fonds Podiumkunsten* (Dutch Performing Art Fund). The in-depth study of Venezuelan music influenced her recent compositions *Estudio del Pajarillo*, *Habanera en Pajarillo voor de gestolen fiets*, *Piezas de Bolsillo*, and *Diálogos*.

Piezas de Bolsillo was commissioned by the Fonds Podiumkunsten (Dutch Performing Art Fund) and written for violist Mikhail Zemtsov in 2011. Orozco describes the piece as a four-movement suite: *Cha-cha-plus*, *Merengada de frutas*, *Canción de cuna*, and *Seis por izquierdo*.

The four movements are inspired by traditional music from Venezuela and Cuba. *Cha-cha-plus* is a parody of the Cuban rhythm Cha-cha-chá, while *Merengada de Frutas* is a recreation of the well-known Venezuelan song *El Frutero* by Cruz Felipe Iriarte. *Canción de Cuna* explores the pentatonic harmonies characteristic of

the nineteenth century Afro-Cuban songs from which the lullaby *Drume Negrita* is quoted briefly. The last piece, *Seis por Izquierdo* is based on *seis por derecho*, a type of Venezuelan *loropo*. As in *Cha-cha-plus*, Orozco modifies the *seis por derecho* with a satiric recurring ostinato that drives the entire piece.

Diálogos was written for Maria Montano and Jorge Orozco in 2015. The three miniatures are inspired in ancient songs from Western Cuba. These songs are compiled in Danilo Orozco's most important work *Antología Integral del Son* (Comprehensive Anthology of Son) produced in 1986. *Diálogos*, written as tribute to her father after his death, is meant to represent a dialogue between daughter and father.

Orozco enjoys the challenge of communicating complex ideas in short amounts of time. For her, miniature is the perfect genre to capture the essence of our fast-changing modern world. The songs *Coro de María Belén*, *Lágrimas del alma*, and *Allá va Candela, mama* are the foundation of *Diálogos*' three untitled movements. The composer uses small motives from the songs and transforms them through the use of ostinato, rhythm, and harmonic dissonance to create an atmosphere of otherworldly rhythmic and harmonic complexities.

Efrain Oscher (b. 1974)

Composer Efrain Oscher portrays in *Escenas del Sur* a reality that Latin America has suffered for decades: dictatorship and repression. During the second half of the twentieth-century fear and terror were seeded in many South American countries. Families often emigrated from their home countries to regions that offered them a better future.

Oscher, born in Uruguay in 1974, moved with his family to Venezuela when he was a child. It was in Venezuela that he trained as a flutist and studied composition. He was the first flutist of the Valencia Municipal Orchestra and later received the Benjamin Dale Award at the Royal Academy of Music. Oscher undertook postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy, completing his studies with Merit in June 2003.

Currently based in Germany, Oscher composes for *The Bolivar Soloists* as well as other ensembles and soloists such as Edicson Ruiz, a renowned Venezuelan double bass player. In addition to this duo for viola and double bass, *Escenas de Sur*, Oscher has written two pieces for double bass and piano. These pieces have been presented at Carte Blanche Music Festival and Lucerne Music Festival.

Escenas del Sur is a programmatic work narrating the story of families who endured the horrors of dictatorship. The story is told in a series of continuous scenes:

1. no hace muchos años, en un lugar del sur... (not so long ago, in a far south land...)

The opening passage and thematic material are based on the Uruguayan national anthem.

2. los gorilas (the gorillas)

Los gorilas is the colloquial term for the military in Uruguay. This section's musical construction is terse, rhythmically disruptive and harmonically intimidating, thus portraying the clumsiness of los gorilas.

3. juramentos (vows)

This scene represents the oath of the oppressed people to their families and the commitment to their convictions and their culture. The bass accompanies the viola with a Uruguayan folk rhythm known as the milonga campera.

4. la resistencia (the resistance)

This powerful section presents rhythmic instability and low textures dominated by the double bass, rendering the sense of the deserter's dangerous life.

5. la casería (the hunt)

La casería showcases the overlapping themes of los gorillas, juramentos, and resistencia, simulating a military chase.

6. luz en las tinieblas (light in the darkness)

The viola's melancholic melody symbolizes the solitude of those unjustly imprisoned.

7. llenando el vacío (filling the emptiness)

This solemn chorale portrays families being reunited after being separated by war and time.

8. candombe de los sueños (candombe of dreams)

Candombe is a characteristic afro-Uruguayan rhythm traditionally played by percussion ensembles in carnivals, religious celebrations, and town festivals. Candombe symbolizes a new life of peace and prosperity.

Cesar Orozco (b. 1980)

Cesar Orozco, born in Santiago de Cuba in 1980, is a versatile composer and pianist influenced by classical and popular music. He holds a bachelor degree in violin and ensemble conducting from the *Escuela Nacional de Artes* (National School for the Arts) in Habana, Cuba, and a Graduate Performance Diploma in Jazz Piano from The Peabody Institute where he studied with pianist Tim Murphy. Orozco resides in New Jersey where he is an active pedagogue in addition to his performing career. He has given master classes at the Berkley College of Music in Boston and Loyola University Baltimore in Maryland.

Orozco moved to Valencia, Venezuela to join the Orquesta Sinfónica de Carabobo (Carabobo Symphony Orchestra) as a violinist in 1997. He moved to Caracas in 2004 where he focused on his career as pianist and composer. During this time, he continued developing his innovative approach to fusion between Venezuelan and Cuban traditional music with jazz and worked with important Venezuelan and Latin American artists. In addition, he was the music director, composer, and pianist of the musicals *Venezuela Viva* and *Orinoco*, productions that have had more than a hundred international performances. Orozco taught at the *Universidad Experimental*

de Artes in Caracas from 2008 to 2011. He became an exclusive Yamaha Artist in 2010.

Orozco has written music for several ensembles and orchestras around the world such as the Netherlands Blazers Ensemble, Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela, Editus String Ensemble (Costa Rica), and the string quintet Amazonas. He has recorded three solo albums with his project Cesar Orozco and Kamarata Jazz, in addition to several recordings he has collaborated with as a guest artist.

La Esencia de mi Raíz was written originally for violin, piano, bass, and percussion in 2001. It has been recorded in two of Orozco's albums: *Esencia de mi Raíz* and *Son con Pajarillo*. The piece is written as a *danzón*, which is a traditional Cuban genre and dance. The piece keeps the original *danzón* structure but in this case is mixed with elements of contemporary jazz harmonies. The viola solo version of this work was transcribed for Maria Montano for this dissertation project in 2016. It was premiered by Maria Montano on February 20, 2016, at Ulrich Recital Hall.

Aldemaro Romero (1928-2007)

Aldemaro Romero, born in Venezuela in 1928, is one of the most influential Venezuelan musicians of the twentieth-century. He is credited with the creation of the new genre of Venezuelan music *onda nueva* (new wave), which was derived from the traditional dance *zoropo* and influenced by Brazilian *bossa nova* style. Romero lived in both Cuba and New York from 1949 to 1952. He returned to Caracas in 1952 and remained there until his death in 2007.

Romero was a gifted pianist, composer, arranger, and conductor. His most noted accomplishment has been the blending of folklore, popular music, and classical

music styles. In 1951 he was contracted by RCA Victor to make a series of popular Latin American music recordings. This anthology brought him international recognition, resulting in tours to Central and South America, Europe, Scandinavia, and Japan. Romero lived in London from 1975 to 1977. During this time, he appeared as guest conductor of the London Symphony and worked on *Fuga con Pajarillo*. Romero was an influential figure in the classical scene of Caracas. He became the founder and music director of the Orquesta Filarmónica de Caracas in 1979.

Romero's oeuvre is archived in the Marta and Austin Week's Music Library at the University of Miami. This collection includes one hundred original manuscripts of works for symphonic orchestra, chorus, solo concertos, and chamber music. His popular music anthology contains an abundance of compositional materials of diverse styles.

Fuga con Pajarillo was dedicated to the Venezuelan composer Juan Bautista Plaza (1898-1965) who had written two fugues for string orchestra: *Fuga Criolla* written in 1931 and *Fuga Romantica Venezolana* written in 1950.

It was originally conceived as the first movement of a suite for strings in 1976. The piece gained popularity on its own merit, and thus, was performed as an individual concert piece. Romero arranged this movement for full orchestra (2003), for twelve saxophones (2006), and for woodwind quintet (2006). The original version for strings is often performed as a string quintet, which is the version prepared for this dissertation project. The complete suite was premiered in London by the English Chamber Orchestra in 1976.

Romero based his fugue on the *pajarillo*, a folkloric Venezuelan dance in triple meter. *Pajarillo* is a type of *joropo*, which is considered the national dance music of Venezuela. Unlike a waltz, the *pajarillo* accents weak beats two and three. It is usually played with the traditional instruments *cuatro*, *arpa llanera*, and maracas, which usually accompany a singer with interjections of improvisatory instrumental sections. Romero's fugue is built on rhythmic variations of the *pajarillo* theme in D minor alternating with improvisatory material. The rhythmic complexity and polyrhythms of this composition challenges the performers and the audience. The triple meter is peppered with strong hemiolas giving the feel of compound meter.

Fuga con Pajarillo is associated with conductor Gustavo Dudamel, who won the inaugural Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition in 2004 with the full orchestra version of this work. Dudamel's version was recorded under the Deutsche Grammophone label in 2008.

CHAPTER 3: Third Dissertation Recital: Music from Mexico and Brazil

Recital Program

April 5, 2016 at 8:00 at Ulrich Recital Hall
Tawes Hall, University of Maryland, College Park

Madrigal for viola and piano, Carlos Chavez (1899-1978)

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Sonata para viola y piano, José Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958)

I. Allegro Moderato

II. Lento

III. Allegro

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Sonata a Duo para violin y viola, Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948)

I. Allegro, piuttosto moderato

II. In tempo di Sarabande, andante espressivo

III. Allegro

Jorge Orozco, violin
Maria Montano, viola

Intermission

Três Valsas Brasileiras, Francisco Mignone (1897-1986)

I. Valsa Lenta

III. Vivo e com Entusiasmo

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Sonata para viola y piano, Brenno Blauth (1931-1993)

I. Dramático

II. Evocativo

III. Agitato

Maria Montano, viola
Hsiang-Ling Hsiao, Piano

Program Notes

Carlos Chavez (1899-1978)

Carlos Chávez, born in Mexico City in 1899, is considered one of the most influential Mexican musicians of the twentieth-century. He was a composer, conductor, scholar, and pianist who distinguished himself in a wide range of endeavors throughout his life. Growing up he had outstanding teachers, Manuel Ponce and Pedro Luis Ogazón, and started publishing when he was in his early twenties. Ponce was an exceptional supporter and promoter of his pupil's success early in his career; this helped launch Chávez's career and secure early publications. Chavez died in 1978 in Mexico City.

Chávez had contact with Aztec culture early in his life; from the age of six he went with his family on vacations to Tlaxcala. He later explored more about Mexico's indigenous culture during his visits to Puebla, Jalisco, Nayarit, Michoacán, Guanajuato and Oaxaca. This contact with the Aztec world had great influence on two of his early ballets: *El Fuego Nuevo* and *Los Cuatro Soles*. In 1921 a new cultural nationalism began to take shape with the inauguration of Obregón as constitutional president. Chávez made his debut as a composer the same year with a performance of his Piano Sextet (1919). At the same time, Chávez met Jose Vasconcelos, who was then the minister of education and patron of the arts. This started a lifelong relationship between the composer and the official musical endeavors in Mexico.

In 1922, Chávez spent five months in Europe where he was able to publish two of his piano works in Berlin. The following year, he spent three months in the United States and began a long relationship with the country that included

friendships, repeated engagements as guest conductor, commissions, prestigious premiers, and musical publications. He returned to New York from 1926 to 1928 and worked closely with Copland, Cowell, and Varèse.

In 1929 he founded the Orquesta Sinfónica de Mexico which he conducted for twenty-one years. Under his baton, this orchestra premiered almost a hundred works by Mexican composers. The orchestra toured extensively throughout Mexico, bringing classical music to small towns and cities for the first time.

Chávez's journalistic talent started early in his career when he created a cultural journal with his friends titled *Gladios*. He also published articles in the most important Mexican newspapers and journals. By 1955 he had written over two hundred articles on a wide range of musical topics. He also created the musical journal *Música*. Chávez designed and taught a course in free composition that employed several modern compositional techniques of the time. From these courses the *Grupo de los Cuatro* (group of four) emerged. These four young composers, Ayala Pérez, Galindo Dimas, Salvador Contreras and José Pablo Moncayo became great composers and continued Chávez's legacy of bringing Mexican music to wide audiences.

Chavez's *Madrigal*, written in 1921, is a lyrical piece written with an intimate character. It is romantic in terms of melody and structure, but its use of dissonance, however, shows a modern and deliberate use of terse harmony. Despite been written when the composer was only twenty-two years old, *Madrigal* presents characteristics that remain staples of Chávez's music: bitonality, thematic austerity, extensive polyphony, and the use of vertical seconds, sevenths, and ninths. The piece was

originally written for cello and piano and later arranged by the composer for viola and piano.

José Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958)

José Pablo Moncayo, born in Guadalajara, Mexico in 1912, was a distinguished Mexican conductor, pianist, and composer. He studied composition with Candelario Huizar and Carlos Chavez and piano with Eduardo Hernandez Moncada. He continued his studies with Aaron Copland at Berkshire Institute in Massachusetts in 1942. Moncayo returned to Mexico in 1944 and became the artistic director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional in Mexico City and conducted the orchestra from 1949 to 1952. He was also an avid pedagogue and held the post of professor of composition and orchestral conducting at the *Conservatorio Nacional de Musica de INBA* in Mexico City. Moncayo died in Mexico City in 1958.

Moncayo was a member of *El Grupo de los Cuatro* along with Daniel Ayala Perez, Salvador Contreras Sanchez, and Blas Galindo Dimas. This was a group of four Mexican composers, students of Carlos Chavez, who decided to start a series of concerts to promote their original compositions in 1935. Critics received their first concert well and the group was further publicized in newspapers and journals. Members of *El Grupo de los Cuatro* are still referred to nowadays as the most important composers of the nationalist movement of Mexican music after Silvester Revueltas and Carlos Chávez.

Among Moncayo's most important compositions are *Tres Piezas para Piano Solo* (three pieces for solo piano) and his orchestral compositions: *Sinfonietta*, *Tres Piezas para Orquesta*, *Homenaje a Cervantez*, and *Huapango*, which is Moncayo's

most frequently performed composition. In addition to his piano and orchestral works, he wrote a selection of chamber music. His sonata for violin and sonata for viola are fine examples of his nationalistic style.

Guided by Chavez, Moncayo brings the music of the Aztecs into his compositions to express his Mexican heritage. His viola sonata is a vivid example of how Mexican composers of Moncayo's time were successfully blending modern musical techniques with Mexican idioms within the standard Western musical forms.

In the viola sonata, written in 1934, Moncayo uses repetition of small motives and ostinatos to generate his melodies supported by diatonic textures with unconventional resolutions and chord progressions. The first movement is built on small musical ideas that flow continuously throughout the movement with little contrast in tempo and dynamics. This overall economy of musical expression is characteristic of Moncayo's music. The dance-like third movement in rondo form showcases a first theme with a changing meter that alternates between 6/8 and 5/8 that resembles a lively mariachi, contrasting with a more lyric second theme in 2/4. The percussive first and third movements are masterfully balanced by a slow second movement that has the character and simplicity of an affectionate lullaby in three-part form.

Manuel M. Ponce (1882-1948)

Pianist and composer Manuel M. Ponce, born in Mexico City in 1882, was one of the leading Mexican musicians of his time. He contributed to the development of a Mexican nationalistic style and became one of the first Mexican composers to obtain international recognition. By the time of his death in Mexico City in 1948 his

music, especially his songs, had been incorporated into the standard Latin American repertoire.

Ponce was born into a musical family, and it was his sister Josefina who introduced him to music. He continued his studies with Cipriano Ávila. In 1898, Ponce joined the choir of San Diego in Aguascalientes and became its organist. He later moved to Mexico City where he studied with Vicente Mañas and Eduardo Gabrielli. Ponce continued his studies in Europe, first in Bologna with Marco Enrico Bossi, Cesare Dall'Olio, and Luigi Torchi, and later in Berlin where he studied with Martin Krause. He returned to Mexico in 1907 where he taught in Aguascalientes and then in the *Conservatorio Nacional* (National Conservatory) in Mexico City.

Ponce was a crucial figure in introducing Mexican audiences to the music of important European composers through a series of recitals performed by himself and his pupils. In 1912, Ponce dedicated a recital to Debussy. This concert is considered to be the first public performance of Debussy's music in Mexico. Ponce's eleven-year-old pupil, Carlos Chávez, opened this concert.

Ponce's most famous song *Estrellita* was widely performed and arranged during Ponce's lifetime. Although his songs established themselves more rapidly in the standard repertoire than his other works, Ponce's oeuvre includes a diverse range of genres and styles. The romantic language of his early piano works and the atonal language used in his sonata for violin and viola are clear examples of the variety of Ponce's style. His shift from romanticism to a contemporary style employed nationalism and the constant use of popular Mexican themes. Summarizing his research on Mexican folk music, Ponce prepared a lecture titled *La Música y La*

Canción Mexicana (The Music and the Mexican Song) in 1913. The lecture was published shortly thereafter and became the foundation for the Mexican Nationalistic School.

Ponce incorporated elements from other cultures in his music. He composed works inspired by Cuban music (e.g. *Suite Cubana* and *Elegia de la Ausencia*) and works influenced by the Spanish style (e.g. *Diferencias sobre las Folias de España*). Ponce's lesser-known later works are significant contributions to the Latin American modernism. Fine examples of this repertoire are his violin concerto, his sonatas for harpsichord and guitar or cello and piano, and his symphonic poem *Ferial*.

The *Sonata a Duo*, composed in 1938, is written in the traditional three-movement structure: *Allegro piuttosto moderato*, *Andante espressivo*, and *Allegro*. Ponce uses elements of atonalism, tonalism, and polytonalism in the sonata. The first movement has a virtuosic character and features a rich counterpoint. This movement combines strong dissonances with lyrical tonal passages and depicts European traditions of the early twentieth-century incorporated with elements of Spanish music. The second movement, titled *In Tempo di Sarabande*, is a neo-baroque lyrical movement written in binary form. The sarabande rhythmic structure is heard through the movement and it is embellished by flamenco melismatic melodies and harmonies. The brief last movement is a lively Hispanic dance with alternation of the meters 3/8 and 4/8. It showcases imitation and a rich variety of rhythms and dynamic contrast.

Francisco Mignone (1897-1986)

Composer and conductor Francisco Mignone, born in São Paulo in 1897, was a prominent musician in the Brazilian spheres of his time. He grew up in a musical

family of Italian immigrants and started his flute and piano studies with his father. Mignone studied also with Silvio Motto and later continued his studies at the São Paulo Conservatory with Mário de Andrade. During his time in the conservatory he studied composition, piano, and flute. In 1920 he continued his studies in Europe with Vincenzo Ferroni at the Milan Conservatory. While in Milan, he wrote his operas *O Contratador de Diamantes* and *L'Inocent*; both pieces were premiered in Rio de Janeiro with great success. Mignone returned to Brazil in 1929 and was appointed harmony teacher of the São Paulo Conservatory. In 1933 he moved to Rio de Janeiro as music director and conducting teacher of the *Escola Nacional de Música*. Mignone was an avid pedagogue and held several posts in various Brazilian institutions during the next two decades. He died in Rio de Janeiro in 1986.

Mignone's early compositions were influenced by his studies in Italy. Romantic structures and harmonies are found in early works such as his tone poem *Festa Dionisiaca* and *Suite Campester*. Even though he had some interest in national idioms early in his career, it was not until 1929 that Brazilian folk traditions and popular music started permeating his works. Important compositions from this period include the four *Fantásias Brasileiras* for piano and orchestra and his ballet *Leilão*. The composer turned to modernism in the 1960's. He experimented with polytonality, tone clusters, atonality, and serialism. *Variações em Busca de um Tema*, written in 1972, was intended to include a wide variety of modern compositional techniques.

In the later years of his life, Mignone turned back to nationalism and wrote several compositions that were meant to be more accessible to a broad audience, such as his ballet *Quincas Berro d'Água* and several *Valsas Brasileiras* for different

instrumentations. *Três Valsas Brasileiras* for viola and piano represents Mignone's mature nationalism.

The first waltz performed in this program, *Valsa Lenta* (slow waltz) is a stylized Brazilian waltz in C minor that features an abundance of rubato and changes in tempo, which is characteristic of traditional Brazilian waltzes. It is written in the traditional A B A structure in which the middle section is written as a faster *piu vivo*.

The second waltz selected for this dissertation project, *Vivo e con Entusiasmo* (Lively with Enthusiasm), in G minor, is more contrapuntal in character. The piano accompaniment contrasts to the one in *Valsa Lenta*. The pianist either plays occasional chords in beats two or three or contrapuntal passages with the viola, making the waltz rhythm more implied than in the first waltz. These two pieces represent the sophisticated lyricism of Brazilian waltzes. *Três Valsas Brasileiras* is considered a true jewel of the Latin American viola repertoire.

Brenno Blauth (1931-1993)

Brenno Blauth, born in 1931 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, is one of the most important Brazilian folkloric composers of his generation. During his life, he did vast research of Brazilian folklore and incorporated his findings into his compositions. His early teachers were Enio Freitas e Castro and João Schwartz Filho at the Conservatorio Mozart in Porto Alegre. Later, in Rio de Janeiro, Blauth studied harmony with Paulo Silva and counterpoint with Newton Padua. In 1963 Blauth moved to São Paulo, where he continued his studies with the respected Brazilian pedagogue Camargo Guarnieri. Blauth worked in São Paulo until his death in 1993.

Blauth made a professional career as a composer and teacher. Among his most important works are his two symphonic suites, his *Elegy* for Orchestra, and *No Cimo das Copas* for soprano and wind quintet. Blauth's early works followed the nationalistic style of Villa-Lobos. In his later compositions, Blauth experimented with polytonal, atonal, and aleatory techniques. His approach to music integrated other fields. He taught acoustics and biology applied to music at the *Faculdade de Musica de Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado* in São Paulo.

His viola sonata, written in 1978, exemplifies the lyrical refinement and rich rhythmic contrasts of his later compositions. It is written in three movements: *Dramático*, *Evocativo*, and *Agitato*. The first movement, in sonata form, exploits the virtuosic possibilities of the viola using an abundance of double stops, chords, and high register passages. The piano part is equally demanding. The movement starts with a dialogue in which viola and piano present the main theme by themselves, uniting these themes twenty-three measures later. The movement uses modern harmonies with the tonal center of A minor. The second movement, titled *Evocative*, is a delicate slow movement written in three-part form in which the B section is faster with searching melodies that resemble a Brazilian waltz. The A section has a dissonant introduction played by the piano, followed by a lyrical melody played by the viola with a tonal center of E minor. The third movement is a rondo that contrasts a minor fast theme with calmer lyrical sections written in a slower tempo in C major and A major.

Conclusion

Composers from the American continent have made significant contributions to the development of the viola repertoire, and continue to do so. The viola has become a more viable and exciting choice as a solo instrument for modern composers to develop their creativity, thanks in part to the contributions of composers showcased in this dissertation project and their predecessors. There are of course many great composers whose works were not included on this dissertation, but who have also written significant works for the viola. American composers Quincy Porter (1897-1966) and Kenji Bunch (b. 1973), Mexican composers Julián Carrillo (1875-1965) and Luis Sandi (1905-1996), Brazilian composers Edino Krieger (b. 1928), and Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993), and Venezuelan composer Paul Descene (b. 1959) are but a small representation of excellent composers whose works were considered when programming the repertoire for this dissertation. The viola repertoire has been greatly enriched in the last few decades, and through this dissertation project I am happy to bring greater awareness to a number of composers from the Americas who have contributed to this development.

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