

## ABSTRACT

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MANUEL M. PONCE, JULIÁN CARRILLO,  
AND CARLOS CHÁVEZ  
IN NEW YORK, 1925-1932

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From 1925 to 1932, music by Manuel M. Ponce, Julián Carrillo, and Carlos Chávez was performed in New York and widely reviewed in the city's newspapers. Although they are among the most significant figures in Mexican musical history, the influence of these composers and their works in New York from 1925-1932 has not been sufficiently studied. During these years, New York was not only the cultural capital of the U.S. but it was also a center for modernism and expatriate Mexican culture. In addition, the years in question mark the period directly preceding the premiere of Chávez's ballet, *H.P.*, with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, a performance that transformed Chávez's career and made him one of the most well-known Latin American composers in the U.S.

This dissertation seeks to provide a multi-faceted examination of these composers and performances of their works in New York during the critical years before Chávez's ascendancy and to demonstrate the diverse Mexican musical aesthetics represented there during a relatively short period of time. Specifically this dissertation focuses on performances of Ponce's *canciones* and guitar compositions, Carrillo's avant-garde microtonal music, and Chávez's modernist chamber works; all of which were presented in New York between 1925 and 1932. It also provides information about Mexican music in New York directly before and after the central period in question, examining in some detail New York performances of Carrillo's First Symphony in 1915, Ponce's performance of his own piano music in 1916, and the aforementioned Philadelphia premiere of Chávez's *H.P.* in 1932.

THE MUSIC OF MANUEL M. PONCE, JULIÁN CARRILLO,  
AND CARLOS CHÁVEZ IN NEW YORK, 1925-1932

By

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I placed inquiries with several institutions and presses for the use of the material in this dissertation. Carl Fischer gave permission to use examples from Carrillo's scores. *Musical America* allowed me to copy a musical example printed in their publication. The Art Resource, the Modern Museum of Art, and Banco de México, which represents the estate of Diego Rivera, gave me permission to reprint the drawing of "H.P., the man" in Chapter 6 of this document. Carmen Viramontes, representing the Archivo Julián Carrillo, permitted the use of images taken at the archive and reproduced in Chapter 4 of this document. My heartfelt thanks to each person involved in allowing me to access and to include the works of others.

I have had numerous jobs over the course of the dissertation that helped me fund my work and retain my sanity. Teaching jobs at the College of William and Mary, St. Mary's College of Maryland, and the University of Maryland were joyful, fulfilling experiences. A graduate assistantship at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland provided a different sort of knowledge and experience. Most recently, I have enjoyed working at the Special Collections of the Performing Arts at the University, where I have learned about archival preservation and cataloguing.

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## Abbreviations

AGN	Archivo General de la Nación
CENIDIM	Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical
CSM	Christian Science Monitor
ICG	International Composers' Guild
JAMS	Journal of the American Musicological Society
LC	Library of Congress
NMQ	New Music Quarterly
NYPL	New York Public Library
NYHT	New York Herald Tribune
NYT	New York Times
OSM	Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana (later Orquesta Sinfónica de México)
PAAC	Pan American Association of Composers
UNAM	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

## Introduction

In an article titled “Latin American Composers in the United States” (1980), the Cuban composer and scholar Aurelio de la Vega issued an implicit challenge to musicologists:

A complete, accurate survey of the presence of Latin American composers in the United States is an almost impossible task. Records of visits of these composers to North America prior to the 1920s are scarce. We know, for example, that Ignacio Cervantes appeared as a pianist in the United States as early as 1882. But until the various significant visits of Chávez, starting with one in 1932 to attend the premiere in Philadelphia, under Stokowski, of his ballet *Caballos de Vapor* (Horsepower), there are no records to verify the presence of Latin American composers in the professional musical life of the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Recently, John Koegel referred to de la Vega’s statement in an article on Mexican and Cuban composers in New York,<sup>2</sup> asserting that since 1980 musicologists have been gradually constructing a history of Latin American composers in the U.S. As he readily acknowledged, however, we still know too little about the subject.

The period directly before Carlos Chávez’s 1932 visit provides a striking example of one lacuna in the field. From 1925 to 1932, music by Manuel M. Ponce and Julián Carrillo was performed in New York and widely reviewed in the city’s newspapers. Although Ponce and Carrillo are certainly among the most significant figures in Mexican musical history, the influence of these composers and their works in New York, the cultural capital of the U.S., has not been studied. During this same period, Chávez’s works were also performed and reviewed in New York. While his

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<sup>1</sup> Aurelio de la Vega, “Latin American Composers in the United States,” *Latin American Music Review* 1, no. 2 (Fall-Winter 1980): 162-175.

<sup>2</sup> John Koegel, “Compositores Mexicanos y Cubanos en Nueva York, c. 1880 – 1920,” *Historia Mexicana* 56, no. 2 (October-December 2006): 533-602.

activities have been more widely examined,<sup>3</sup> his participation in various intellectual circles in New York deserves further investigation. In addition, comparisons of the aesthetic approaches found in the relevant Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez works; the promotion of performances of their works in New York; and the ways in which audiences responded, help to explain why Chávez and his music were ultimately granted such a large role in U.S. musical life.

This dissertation provides a multi-faceted examination of these composers and performances of their works in New York during the critical years before Chávez's ascendancy and to demonstrate the diverse Mexican musical aesthetics represented there during a relatively short period of time. Of particular interest are performances of Ponce's *canciones* and guitar compositions, Carrillo's avant-garde microtonal music, and Chávez's modernist chamber works; all of which were presented in New York between 1925 and 1932. It also provides information about Mexican music in New York directly before and after the central period in question, examining in some detail New York performances of Carrillo's First Symphony in 1915, Ponce's performance of his own piano music in 1916, and the aforementioned Philadelphia premiere of Chávez's *H.P.* in 1932.

As demonstrated in the dissertation, Ponce, Carrillo and Chávez left very different types of legacies within the music community of New York. Regardless of the degree of success or recognition ultimately achieved, the performances of these

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<sup>3</sup> E.g. Robert Parker, "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet: A Study in Persistence," *Choreography and Dance* 3-4 (1994): 81-88; Leonora Saavedra, "Carlos Chávez y la construcción de una alteridad estratégica" in *Diálogo de resplendores: Carlos Chávez y Silvestre Revueltas*, edited by Yael Bitrán and Ricardo Miranda (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura, 2002): 125-136; Antonio Saborit, "Mexican Gaities: Chávez en la Babilonia de hierro" in *Diálogo de resplendores*, 139-148.

composers' works were remarkable because they followed a period of relative disinterest in Mexican culture among New Yorkers. By the 1930s it became clear that Chávez would achieve the most enduring and widespread recognition for his works and abilities. Following the premiere of *H.P.* in 1932, Chávez became the most prominent Mexican composer in the U.S. From that enviable position he was able to influence performances of Mexican classical music, limiting the aesthetic diversity available to New York audiences. I argue, therefore, that the moment of musical history examined in this dissertation holds particular interest because it represents a period of Mexican musical aesthetic diversity unknown in New York during the years preceding and following it.

#### *Carrillo, Ponce, and Chávez in Mexico*

Although performances of their works in the U.S. have not received adequate attention, scholars clearly recognize the important place that Carrillo, Ponce, Chávez, and their music held in Mexico.<sup>4</sup> During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these composers were leaders in their country's musical community. Their lives, like those of all Mexicans, were disrupted by the Mexican Revolution (c. 1910-1920), a complicated war fueled, in part, by continuing class conflict, which devastated the population, the economy, and the landscape of Mexico. The war and the tenuous peace that followed inspired many artists to contemplate what it meant to be Mexican. Nationalist themes had been explored in Mexican music since at least the early 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See histories of musical life in Mexico, such as Robert Stevenson, *Music in Mexico*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, 1952; Yolanda Moreno Rivas, *Rostrros del nacionalismo en la musica Mexicana: Un ensayo de interpretacion* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989); Moreno Rivas, *La Composición en México en el siglo XX*, Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional Para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994.

century, but the Revolution prompted a more fervent and widespread interest in the expression of nationalism through music. Carrillo, Ponce, and Chávez each wrote works that can be understood as part of a broader post-Revolutionary discourse about *mexicanidad* in music.

By the time the Revolution began, Carrillo (1875-1965) had already established a prominent position in Mexican cultural life.<sup>5</sup> A prodigy on the violin, Carrillo was granted a series of prestigious scholarships, including one that enabled him to study in Brussels and Germany, where he premiered his First Symphony conducting the Leipzig Orchestra. After returning home, Carrillo held several prominent posts: professor of composition at the National Conservatory, Inspector General of Music, director of the National Conservatory, and conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra. He also became the principal proponent of German music in Mexico and was the first to lead a Mexican orchestra in a performance of all nine of Beethoven's Symphonies. Carrillo's early works were in a German Romantic style, but in the wake of the Revolution, he began championing a new microtonal compositional technique that he called *Sonido 13*. Although most of the works he created did not contain obvious references to nationalist themes, Carrillo and his followers called *Sonido 13* "revolutionary" and found the innovations of the method analogous to the changes embodied in the Revolution.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See histories of musical life in Mexico listed above as well as biographical documents pertaining to Carrillo, including, Julian Carrillo, *Julián Carrillo: Testimonio de una vida* (San Luis de Potosí, México: Comité Organizador, 1992); José Velasco Urda and Julián Carrillo, *Julian Carrillo: Su Vida y Su Obra* (México: Edición del Grupo 13 Metropolitano, 1945).

<sup>6</sup> A series of conferences about nationalism and music was held in Mexico City during the early 1920s. Carrillo did not attend these conferences himself, but his students, including Geronimo Baquero Foster and Vicente Mendoza, argued in behalf of *Sonido 13*. For more information about these conferences and their import in Mexican compositional circles, see Leonora Saavedra, "Of Selves and

Ponce (1882-1945) was in the process of developing his career when the Revolution began.<sup>7</sup> He was well-known as a professor of piano at the National Conservatory of Mexico, and as an advocate for the performance of works by Debussy. But he became more famous during 1912 and 1913 when he gave concerts, made speeches, and published articles that made clear his desire to research, compose, and perform *mestizo* folk music. At the time, Ponce believed that such music offered the best opportunity to cultivate a body of Mexican nationalist music. While Ponce's own views changed over time, to this day Mexicans view much of his music as quintessentially nationalist, which led to his enduring reputation as the father of Mexican musical nationalism.

Chávez (1899-1978), a generation younger than the other composers, was just a boy during most of the Revolution.<sup>8</sup> Although he composed a handful of works during his youth, Chávez did not learn composition in a classroom or other formal setting. Rather he studied piano—first in Ponce's studio and later in Pedro Luis Ogazón's studio. By the early 1920s, Chávez was performing his own works in piano and chamber music recitals. These concerts made his avant-garde tastes obvious to the Mexican public, inspiring both praise and criticism. Chávez became a more prominent figure in Mexico City musical life around 1928, partly in response to his perceived successes during two New York sojourns in 1924/25 and 1926-1928, but most immediately and obviously because of his appointments as director of the

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Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> For more information about Ponce's career and biography, see Ricardo Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo Sobre su Vida y Obra*, México, D.F.: Ríos y Raíces, 1998.

<sup>8</sup> See Robert Parker, *Carlos Chávez: Mexico's Modern-Day Orpheus* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983); Roberto García Morillo, *Carlos Chávez: Vida y Obra* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960).

Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana and as the head of the National Conservatory. For the next several decades he was the *de facto* head of musical life in Mexico City.

Through his official positions he encouraged the performance of both Mexican and modernist music. During the 1930s, Chávez's own compositions reflected both nationalist and modernist tendencies.

*Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez in New York, 1925-1932*

As one might expect from the previous descriptions, performances of music by Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez in New York between 1925 and 1932 reflected various aesthetic styles. Works by all three composers were performed in New York's Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, and Aeolian Hall. Notices of upcoming concerts including their works were printed in the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune*, and often reviewed in local magazines and newspapers.

Although Ponce composed a wide variety of music, from complex works for orchestra to simple and intimate songs, it was his *canciones*, straightforward arrangements of Mexican folk songs, that were most frequently performed in New York during the late 1920s. The *canciones* were included in recitals by prominent musicians, including Clarita Sánchez,<sup>9</sup> Fanny Anitúa,<sup>10</sup> and Jascha Heifetz.<sup>11</sup> In addition to performing *canciones*, the Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia, a close friend

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<sup>9</sup> See reviews: "Sociedades Hispanas," *La Prensa*, 23 May 1925, 6; "Clarita Sánchez, Mexican Soprano, Gives Concert," *NYHT*, 17 November 1925, 17; "Concierto de Fanny Anitúa esta noche en el Waldorf-Astoria," *La Prensa*, 3 November 1926, 2.

<sup>10</sup> "Programs of the Week," *NYT*, 11 November 1928, sec. 9, 10.

<sup>11</sup> "New York Concerts," *Musical Courier*, 2 February 1928, 32.

of the composer, introduced some of Ponce's most virtuosic guitar music to New York audiences.<sup>12</sup>

From 1926 to 1928 Carrillo lived in New York and participated in its musical life. There were only two significant concerts of Carrillo's music in New York during the period in question: the first was a performance of *Sonata Casi Fantasia* organized by the League of Composers (1926), and the second a performance of *Concertino* by the Philadelphia Orchestra (1927). Though few in number, these concerts attracted reviewers from nearly every New York newspaper and many New York periodicals.<sup>13</sup> In addition, Carrillo's approach to composition was described in several articles published in the months leading up to the performances.<sup>14</sup> He attempted to draw more attention to his composition theories through *Sonido 13*, a self-published bilingual magazine.

Chávez's U.S. career began in December 1923 with a short, four-month trip to New York and continued with a longer visit there from 1926 to 1928. Partly as a result of these visits, performances of Chávez's chamber works were presented in concerts organized by the International Composers Guild (1924 and 1926), the Copland-Sessions Concerts (1928), the Pan American Association of Composers (1928), and the League of Composers (1930). The early U.S. performances

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<sup>12</sup> Segovia began touring in the U.S. in 1928, and he included many of Ponce's compositions in his recitals. Reviews of such concerts include: Lawrence Gilman, "Music: Guitar Recital by a Great Musician, Mr. Segovia's Debut," *NYHT*, 9 January 1928, 15; "New York Concerts," *Musical Courier*, 19 January 1928, 12; "Concerts and Recitals," *Musical America*, 25 January 1930, 107. Additional reviews are listed in Appendix C.

<sup>13</sup> Examples include: Olga Samaroff, "Music," *New York Evening Post*, 15 March 1926, 13; Olin Downes, "Music," *NYT*, 14 March 1926, 29; W.J. Henderson, "Demonstrate New Musical Scale," *New York Sun*, 15 March 1926, 19; Marion and Flora Bauer, "Music in New York" *Musical Leader*, 17 March 1927, 6; H.T. Craven "Stokowski Presents 'Thirteenth Sound,'" *Musical America*, 12 March 1927, 12.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix D for a list of articles.

culminated with the highly publicized premiere of Chávez's ballet, *H.P.*, in March 1932.

### *Cultural Life in New York*

It is not surprising that both Carrillo and Chávez lived in New York during the 1920s for it was an exciting place to experience Mexican expatriate culture and modernist music. Helen Delpar has identified these years as part of the “Mexico Vogue,”<sup>15</sup> which started around 1920 and peaked around 1930. “The Vogue” was characterized by Mexico-themed art exhibits, magazine articles, theatre shows, and musical performances that displayed pride in Mexican culture and that attempted to restore the image of Mexico abroad somewhat tarnished by the Revolution.

Many “Vogue” participants engaged in an aggressive campaign on behalf of nationalist Mexican art. For example, New York patrons such as Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Frances Flynn Paine, Anita Brenner, and Alma Reed commissioned work by José Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera, and arranged exhibitions of their work.<sup>16</sup> Articles in the *The New Republic*, *New Masses*, *Mexican Folkways*, and numerous other publications touted the values of Mexican culture, reviewed local displays of Mexican art, and informed readers about Mexican customs.

New York City was also a center for musical modernism during the 1920s: a number of organizations created concert series for the performance of new music. The earliest organizations were the International Composers' Guild (ICG), founded in 1921; the Franco-American Musical Society (later called the Pro-Musica Society),

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<sup>15</sup> Helen Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations Between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

founded in 1920; and the League of Composers, founded in 1923. Around 1928, after Edgar Varèse dismantled the ICG and returned to Europe, two additional organizations were formed: the Copland-Sessions Concerts and the Pan-American Association of Composers (PAAC). These groups encouraged the composition and performance of new music through their concert series. Publications associated with a few of these organizations—such as the League of Composers’ *Modern Music* and the Pro-Musica Society’s *Pro-Music Quarterly*—fueled intellectual examination of contemporary compositional trends.

The “Mexico Vogue” and modernist musical life were just two of many factors influencing the performances of Mexican classical music in New York during the late 1920s and early 1930s. The composers’ personal investment in New York musical life, the aesthetic approach of the music presented, and the opinions of critics were all important as well. This study examines each composer’s music and the relevant performances of that music in order to study many facets of their New York careers.

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This dissertation consists of six chapters and an introduction. The first chapter provides a brief review of scholarship with a list of the relevant archival sources. Chapter 2 examines musical life within the Latino community of New York before the “Vogue,” with a particular focus on performances of Ponce and Carrillo’s music. It demonstrates the ways in which the aesthetic and political environment of New York during the 1910s discouraged some expressions of Mexican national identity in

music. Chapter 3 offers a history of the performance and critical reception of Ponce's music in New York from 1925 to 1932, showing how the "Mexico Vogue" of the late 1920s encouraged performers to program the composer's nationalist *canciones*, with the understanding that they would be well-received by critics and audiences. Chapter 4 contains an account of Carrillo's activities in New York in the 1920s and the reception of his music there. It examines Carrillo's interactions with the modernist music community, which initially showed intense interest in the composer's approach to microtonal composition. Chapter 5 describes the reception of Chávez's modernist music in New York before 1932, during a period when he struggled to establish his place in U.S. musical life. It demonstrates how Chávez's used his talents as a composer, writer, teacher, and friend to find recognition during his early career. Chapter 6 focuses on Chávez's achievement of sought-after recognition in the U.S., which began with the premiere of *H.P.* in March 1932 and continued during the years that followed. It demonstrates the ways in which the *H.P.* premiere functioned as a turning point within Chávez's U.S. career, making him the most prominent Mexican composer in the U.S.

## Chapter 1: Literature Review

### *Secondary Literature*

The scholarly literature leaves many lacunae in the history of music by Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez in New York from 1925 to 1932, but it does provide important pieces of this history. There are three types of studies that explore related subjects: (i) biographies of the composers, (ii) examinations of the “Mexico Vogue,” and (iii) studies of musical life in the U.S.

### *Biographies*

Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez have been examined most extensively in biographical studies based on the Chávez archives in the *Archivo General de la Nación* (AGN, Mexico City), the Ponce Archives in the *Escuela Nacional de Música* (UNAM, Mexico City) and, to a lesser extent, the Julián Carrillo archives, scholars have written biographies of these composers. These new studies offer very little information about performances of music by Ponce and Carrillo in New York. Detailed scholarly accounts of Chávez’s activities in New York focus on the ways those activities informed his career as a whole rather than their place in New York musical life. Collectively, biographical studies of these composers offer an incomplete account of the performances of their music in New York during the 1920s and 1930s.

Recent studies, by authors with greater access to Ponce's personal papers, have explored Ponce's relationship with his wife Clema,<sup>17</sup> his exile in Cuba,<sup>18</sup> his studies abroad,<sup>19</sup> and his friendship with Andrés Segovia.<sup>20</sup> Whereas traditional narratives draw a dividing line between Ponce's compositions before 1925, which were considered Romantic in style, and those written after 1925, which were considered modernist, recent studies by Ricardo Miranda have demonstrated the use of modernist techniques in the early compositions and Romantic approaches in the later works.<sup>21</sup> Biographers, including Miranda and Emilio Díaz Cervantes and Dolly R. Díaz, have examined Ponce's visit to New York in 1916, during which he performed a poorly received piano recital of his music. However, because the composer was not involved in performances of his music during the late 1920s, these performances have gone unacknowledged by Ponce scholars.

Carrillo scholarship presents an unbalanced account of his reception in New York. Several recent studies examine the Sonido 13 theories and place them in a historical context.<sup>22</sup> Ernesto Solís Winkler examined most of the extant written

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<sup>17</sup> Yael Bitran, "Manuel M. Ponce: Cartas de amor desde Cuba (1915-1916)," *Heterofonía* no. 118-119 (1998): 9-23.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.; Clara Díaz Perez, "Presencia de Manuel M. Ponce en la cultura musical cubana," *Heterofonía* no. 118-119 (1998): 24-40.

<sup>19</sup> Ricardo Miranda, "D'un cahier d'esquisses: Manuel M. Ponce en Paris, 1925-1933," *Heterofonía* no. 118-119 (1998): 52-73.

<sup>20</sup> Mark Dale, "'Mi querido Manuel': La influencia de Andres Segovia en la musica para guitarra de Manuel M. Ponce," *Heterofonía* no. 118-119 (1998): 86-105; Alejandro Madrid, "De Mexico, concierto para Andres Segovia: Una vista al *Concierto del Sur* de Manuel M. Ponce," *Heterofonía* no. 118-119 (1998): 106-117; Andrés Segovia, *The Segovia-Ponce Letters*, edited by Miguel Alcázar, translated by Peter Segal (Columbus, OH: Editions Orphée, 1989).

<sup>21</sup> Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce: ensayo sobre su vida y obra*.

<sup>22</sup> Laurette Bellamy, "The 'Sonido Trece' Theoretical Works of Julian Carrillo: A Translation with Commentary," (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1972); E. R. Blackaller, *La revolucion musical de Julian Carrillo* (México, D.F.: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 1969); José Rafael Calva, *Julian Carrillo y microtonalismo: 'la visión de moisés'* (México, D.F.: CENIDIM, 1984); Luca Conti, "Introducción crítica al 'Sonido 13' de Julián Carrillo," *Heterofonía* no. 123 (2000): 75-88; Alfred John Pike. "The discoveries and theories of Julián Carrillo, 1875-1965" *Inter-American Music Bulletin* no. 55 (September 1966): 1-4.

evidence to untangle the chronology of Carrillo's microtonal discoveries.<sup>23</sup> Luca Conti has demonstrated how Carrillo developed his Sonido 13 ideas through his compositions as well as through his theoretical prose. Alejandro Madrid's recent analyses of Carrillo's music have determined that key aspects of his style appearing in the non-microtonal works written before the 1920s continued to appear in the Sonido 13 music.<sup>24</sup> Such studies provide important background material for this dissertation, but they do not examine Carrillo's activities in the U.S.

Two studies provide accounts of the performances of Carrillo's music in New York: his autobiography, *Testimonio de una vida*,<sup>25</sup> and a collection of formal interviews with José Velasco Urda, *Julián Carrillo: Su Vida y Su Obra*.<sup>26</sup> Both furnish detailed information about Carrillo's activities in New York; however, because both were written and edited by Carrillo, his followers, and his family, strive to establish Carrillo's historical importance, presenting an entirely favorable view of his life and work. Although helpful, both texts quote selectively from contemporary reviews, presenting an incomplete and biased reception history of Carrillo's music and theoretical works in New York.

Literature about Chávez provides more details about that composer and his activities in New York, but fails to consider certain aspects of his New York career.

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<sup>23</sup> Ernesto Solís Winkler, "La revolución del sonido 13: Un ensayo de explicación social," (Master of History Thesis, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, 1996). Solís Winkler examined many documents relating to Carrillo and Sonido 13, including periodical articles published in Mexico, recorded radio addresses, and various autobiographical accounts.

<sup>24</sup> Alejandro Madrid, "Writing Modernist and Avant-Garde Music in Mexico: Performativity, Transculturation, and Identity After the Revolution, 1920-1930," (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2003); Ricardo Miranda, "Romanticism and Contradiction in the Work of Julián Carrillo," (paper presented at the annual national meeting of the American Musicological Society, Washington, D.C. on 28 Oct. 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Julian Carrillo, *Julián Carrillo: Testimonio de una vida* (San Luis de Potosí, México: Comité Organizador, 1992).

<sup>26</sup> José Velasco Urda and Julián Carrillo, *Julian Carrillo: Su Vida y Su Obra* (México: Edición del Grupo 13 Metropolitano, 1945).

Scholars naturally investigated Chávez's role in New York musical life,<sup>27</sup> because the composer was so open about his ties to the U.S. Increasingly they are recognizing the significant influence the cultivation of a U.S. audience had on Chávez's career.<sup>28</sup> In particular, recent studies draw links between his new approach toward nationalist music in the 1920s and early 1930s and his concern about U.S. audiences.<sup>29</sup> For many years, the premiere of *H.P.* has been recognized as a seminal event in the history of Mexican music in the U.S.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the wealth of information already available, there are aspects of Chávez's U.S. career that remain unexamined; the present narrative adds several elements missing from earlier accounts. For example, the strength and influence of Chávez's friendship with fellow composer Henry Cowell is evaluated here even though it receives little attention in biographies about either man.<sup>31</sup> Chávez's participation in a production of Michael Gold's play *Fiesta*, has not been mentioned, to my knowledge, in any published account of Chávez's New York years, but it is included here. The premiere of *H.P.* is often referred to as a seminal performance and

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<sup>27</sup> This scholarship includes: Robert Parker, "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet: A Study in Persistence," *Choreography and Dance* 3-4 (1994): 81-88; Leonora Saavedra, "Carlos Chávez y la construcción de una alteridad estratégica" in *Diálogo de resplendores: Carlos Chávez y Silvestre Revueltas*, edited by Yael Bitrán and Ricardo Miranda (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura, 2002): 125-136; Antonio Saborit, "Mexican Gaities: Chávez en la Babilonia de hierro" in *Diálogo de resplendores*, 139-148.

<sup>28</sup> Robert Parker's writings chronicling Chávez's activities in the U.S. have added to a body of earlier literature by Robert Stevenson, Herbert Weinstock, and others.

<sup>29</sup> This scholarship includes: Gloria Carmona, "Carlos Chávez y la musica del futuro" *Pauta: Cuadernos de teoria y critica musical* 12, no. 45 (January-March 1993): 5-18; Yolanda Moreno Rivas, *Rostros del nacionalismo en la musica Mexicana: Un ensayo de interpretacion* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989); and Saavedra, "Carlos Chavez y la construcción de una alteridad estratégica."

<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey Belnap, "Diego Rivera's Greater America," *Cultural Critique* 63 (Spring 2006): 61-98; Nancy Brooks Schmitz, "A Profile of Catherine Littlefield" (PhD Diss., Temple University, 1986); Robert M. Stevenson, "Carlos Chávez's United States Press Coverage." *Inter-American Music Review* 3, no. 2 (Spring-Summer 1981): 125-131.

<sup>31</sup> Joel Sach's biography of Cowell, scheduled for release in 2009, may also shed new light on the relationship.

has been examined in a number of significant articles, but previous studies have not analyzed Chávez's collection of press-clippings to the same extent as this dissertation.

### *"Mexico Vogue" Literature*

Literature about the "Mexico Vogue" emphasizes the visual and literary arts, rather than musical arts. However, in those few texts considering music and the "Vogue," Chávez's role is emphasized over that of other composers. Scholars have examined the papers of patrons Abby Aldrich Rockefeller<sup>32</sup> and Dwight Morrow;<sup>33</sup> and U.S. writers and managers such as Frances Flynn Paine,<sup>34</sup> Anita Brenner,<sup>35</sup> and Frances Toor and have established their roles in the "Mexico Vogue."<sup>36</sup> But many of these documents reflect more interest in visual, indianist art than in music. Although Paine and Toor demonstrated a limited interest in Mexican music, none of the other Vogue sponsors appear to have funded or promoted purely musical projects. Toor, in keeping with the topic of her "little magazine,"<sup>37</sup> *Mexican Folkways*, collected folk songs, ignoring classical Mexican composers. Paine was genuinely interested in cultivating Mexican art music that could be presented in New York through Chávez's

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<sup>32</sup> Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Papers, Rockefeller Archive Center, North Tarrytown.

<sup>33</sup> Dwight W. Morrow Papers, Archives, Amherst College, Massachusetts; Elizabeth Cutter Morrow Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts. See also: Elizabeth Morrow, *The Mexican Years: Leaves from the Diary of Elizabeth Cutter Morrow* (New York: Spiral Press, 1953); Susan Danly, ed., *Casa Manana*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002).

<sup>34</sup> Paine produced several exhibits of Mexican art, eventually forming the Mexican Arts Association to promote Mexican fine arts in the U.S. Correspondence, Carlos Chávez, AGN.

<sup>35</sup> Anita Brenner wrote about Mexico in U.S. periodicals and published a book about Mexican culture. She became an advocate for the artwork of Clemente Orozco, arranging several commissions and exhibitions for him. Anita Brenner, *Idols Behind Alters* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929); *The Wind That Swept Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971); Richard D. Woods, "Anita Brenner: Cultural Mediator of Mexico" in *Studies of Latin American Culture* 9 (1990): 209-22.

<sup>36</sup> Frances Toor published the influential magazine, *Mexican Folkways*. See also: Francisco Javier Iñiguez, "Discursos imaginarios, cultura popular y formación del Estado en 'Mexican Folkways'," (PhD diss., University of California, Irvine, 2001).

<sup>37</sup> Here "little magazine" refers to highly specialized publications with smaller publics and often artistic or literary themes which proliferated at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

ballets.<sup>38</sup> Mabel Dodge Luhan<sup>39</sup> participated in the *Vogue* from her home in Taos, New Mexico, running a salon for visiting artists and intellectuals. Yet, like Paine, she did not show very much interest in the work of Ponce and Carrillo. Instead, she befriended Chávez and promoted his work, providing him access to her extensive network of contacts. In general, the papers of the “Mexico Vogue” patrons indicate little interest in music, particularly classical music; the few exceptions limited their promotion to Chávez’s most populist and indianist works. Nonetheless, their efforts to recognize and promote Mexican culture effected a more welcoming environment for Mexican music in New York and, therefore, “Mexico Vogue” studies should and do inform the present project.

### *Histories of U.S. Musical Life*

While biographical studies of Ponce and Carrillo highlight performances of their music outside the U.S., rather than in the U.S., and “Vogue” studies stress visual and literary arts rather than music, histories of music in New York have been more concerned with U.S. and European composers and their activities during the 1920s and 1930s rather than those of Latin American composers. Once again, of the three Mexican composers, Chávez receives the most attention in the scholarly literature about New York musical life, while Ponce and Carrillo are less prominently featured.

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Parker, “Carlos Chávez and the Ballet: A Study in Persistence,” *Choreography and Dance* 3-4 (1994): 81-88.

<sup>39</sup> Luhan Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University Archives. See also, Correspondence, Carlos Chávez, AGN. The most pertinent article is: Robert Parker, “Leopold Stokowski y Carlos Chávez: Contacto en Taos,” *Heterofonia* 98-99 (January-December 1999): 4-11. Biographical studies of Luhan include: Emily Hahn, *Mabel: A biography of Mabel Dodge Luhan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977); Jane V. Nelson, *Mabel Dodge Luhan* (Boise: Idaho Boise State University Press, 1982); Winifred Frazer, *Mabel Dodge Luhan* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984); Lois Palken Rudnick, *Mabel Dodge Luhan: New Women, New Worlds* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984).

Studies of Cowell's *New Music* publications and concerts,<sup>40</sup> the "Copland-Sessions" concerts,<sup>41</sup> and the International Composers' Guild<sup>42</sup> are just a few examples of articles with a New York focus that include information about Chávez.

Among the most relevant studies to the subject of this dissertation are those that deal with various aspects of cultural life in the U.S., such as: Helen Delpar's book, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican*,<sup>43</sup> Robert Parker's articles treating Chávez and "Mexico Vogue" patrons,<sup>44</sup> Leonora Saavedra and Robert Stevenson's work on Chávez and the U.S. press,<sup>45</sup> John Koegel's studies of Mexican music in the U.S.,<sup>46</sup> and Carol Oja's depiction of musical life in 1920s New York.<sup>47</sup> Most of these scholars draw their conclusions through consultation of the periodical literature. Many of the studies stress Chávez's role and de-emphasize the influence of others, but Delpar, Parker, Saavedra, Stevenson, Koegel, and Oja recognize that the breadth of Mexican music in New York from 1925 to 1932 extends beyond Chávez.

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<sup>40</sup> Rita H. Mead, "Latin American Accents in New Music," *Latin American Music Review* 3, no. 2 (Fall-Winter 1982): 207-228.

<sup>41</sup> Carol Oja, "The Copland-Sessions Concerts and Their Reception in the Contemporary Press," *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979): 213-229.

<sup>42</sup> Deane L. Root, "The Pan-American Association of Composers (1928-1934)" *Yearbook for Inter-American Musical Research, International* 8 (1972): 49-70.

<sup>43</sup> Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue*.

<sup>44</sup> Parker, "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet" and "Leopold Stokowski y Carlos Chávez: Contacto en Taos."

<sup>45</sup> Leonora Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001); Robert M. Stevenson, "Carlos Chávez's United States Press Coverage," *Inter-American Music Review* 3, no. 2 (Spring-Summer 1981): 125-131

<sup>46</sup> John Koegel, "Compositores Mexicanos y Cubanos en Nueva York, c. 1880 – 1920" and "Del Rancho Grande y a través del Río Grande: Músicos mexicanos en Hollywood y en la vida musical norteamericana, 1910-1940," *Heterofonía* 128 (Jan.-June 2003): 101-130.

<sup>47</sup> Carol Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

### *Primary Literature Review*

Primary sources consulted in preparation for this dissertation include contemporary newspapers and magazines, scores, recordings, and archival documents. Newspapers, magazines, and journals chronicle important performances through reviews and program listings. Sunday editions of New York newspapers from the late 1920s and early 1930s, especially the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune*, provide extensive program listings for New York concert halls and radio stations that prove invaluable for the reconstruction of musical life in the city. Reviews of concerts, printed nearly every day in these papers, are also helpful.

*La Prensa*, the principal Spanish-language newspaper of New York and one of the few early 20<sup>th</sup>-century New York Spanish-language periodicals to survive in a relatively complete form, provides a different view of the same set of performances. It is one of the few sources to document social events within the New York Latino community. Performances open to a wider public, but featuring music of interest to *La Prensa's* readership, received particular attention in the paper, which often provided more information about Latino performers than any other source.

New York music magazines for a broad readership, such as *Musical America* and *Musical Courier*, included many short reviews that add to and deepen the picture of musical life provided by newspapers. Profile articles were far more common in these publications than in the large daily newspapers; in *Musical America* U.S. audiences could read biographical articles about both Carrillo and Chávez.

Other magazines, such as *The New Republic*, *New Masses*, and *Mexican Folkways*, were known for their articles about Mexican culture. *The New Republic*

catered to intellectual, left-wing readers; during the 1920s the magazine published several articles about Mexican culture, including profiles and reviews of Chávez and his music. *New Masses* was the principal communist magazine in New York of the time, and it also included many articles about Mexican culture, especially the politicized muralist movement. *Mexican Folkways*, edited by anthropologist Frances Toor, made *canciones* and other Mexican folk music available to New Yorkers through the yearly publication of a volume that focused on a particular genre of Mexican music; the volume invariably included some basic analysis of the song type presented alongside a collection of melodies and lyrics.

Carrillo received particular attention in two idiosyncratic publications published in New York. The first was the *Musical Advance*, a magazine written for a much broader audience than that subscribing to *Modern Music* or *Pro-Musica Quarterly*, but smaller than that reading *Musical America*. Topics of interest in the magazine included modernism, especially of the Germanic variety, perhaps explaining the attraction Carrillo and his music held. The second was *Sonido 13* magazine, a publication written and published by Carrillo himself as a tool to promote his microtonal compositional methods, which were also called Sonido 13. Initially the magazine was written in Spanish and published in Mexico City; according to an editor's note at the beginning of the first issue, the purposes of the magazine were to educate interested readers and quiet Carrillo's critics in the Mexican music community.<sup>48</sup> At least 24 issues were published in this format. In addition, while Carrillo was living in New York, he published three bilingual issues of the magazine in an attempt to attract a broader audience to his ideas and music.

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<sup>48</sup> Carrillo, "Nuestro Programa," *El Sonido 13*, January 1924, 1.

The information located in periodicals was enhanced by the material found in the Carrillo<sup>49</sup> and Chávez archives.<sup>50</sup> Carrillo documented every U.S. performance of his music in his scrapbooks, including articles from major and minor publications, as well as a few photographs and concert programs. Many of the articles Carrillo collected are difficult to find elsewhere.

The Carrillo archive also contains a nearly complete collection of his autograph manuscript scores, including *Sonata Casi Fantasia* and *Concertino*, the works most closely examined in this dissertation. A smaller but equally valuable collection in the archive of rare recordings of Carrillo's works provides recordings of both works. Also of interest are the photographs of Carrillo with U.S. musicians, including his New York "Grupo 13" and a photograph of Carrillo and Stokowski. Where possible, I have also consulted recent recordings and musical scores of the works examined in this dissertation.

Chávez did not document the earliest U.S. performances of his music with care; however he did save some clippings. Invaluable to this study was the extensive and thorough clipping file for the 1932 *H.P.* premiere. In addition, the Chávez archives contain a large collection of correspondence, draft copies of Chávez's writings, and extensive documentation of his various professional activities. Material from these parts of the collection supported and augmented evidence found elsewhere.

Other archives proved important, albeit to a lesser extent. The New York Public Library's Henry Cowell, Edgard Varèse, Herbert Weinstock, and Pan

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<sup>49</sup> Julián Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>50</sup> Carlos Chávez Archive, Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City, Mexico.

American Association of Composers Collections provided context for much of the information found in the Mexico City Chávez Archive. The Jascha Heifetz Collection in the Library of Congress supplied materials that informed the Ponce chapter. Other Library of Congress collections, including the *Modern Music*, Nicolas Slonimsky, and Aaron Copland Collections shaped chapters about Chávez.

By combining information found in the more comprehensive periodical sources with that in the more selective archival collections of Carrillo, Chávez, and their friends, one gains a sense of the community as well as the personal responses of composers and critics to the music performed in New York during the late 1920s and early 1930s.

## Chapter 2: Prelude to the Vogue Years: Carrillo's Orchestra Concert of 1915 and Ponce's Piano Recital of 1916 in Context

Scholars have established the existence of a “Mexico Vogue” in New York during the late 1920s and 1930s, which appears to have influenced the reception of music by Mexican composers there during the this period.<sup>51</sup> Far from being just a momentary fad, however, many of the musical styles popularized during the “Vogue” were being performed and enjoyed in New York during earlier decades, including the 1910s and early 1920s. In this chapter, I examine Mexican musical life in New York before the “Vogue” with particular emphasis on two performances: the 1915 performance of the American Symphony Orchestra featuring Julián Carrillo directing his own first symphony; and Manuel M. Ponce's 1916 recital of his own piano works.

### *Mexican Music in New York during the 1910s and early 1920s*

Miguel Lerdo de Tejada,<sup>52</sup> Carlos Curti,<sup>53</sup> Ignacio Rodríguez Esperón (“Tata Nacho”)<sup>54</sup> and María Grever<sup>55</sup> all composed and performed in New York before 1925. New York was a center for music publishing and recording, and many Latin American artists, especially Mexicans and Cubans, came to the city to profit from the presence of these industries.<sup>56</sup> Many of the Mexican compositions written, published,

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<sup>51</sup> See Chapter 3 for more details about the “Mexico Vogue.”

<sup>52</sup> John Koegel, “Compositores Mexicanos y Cubanos en Nueva York, c. 1880 – 1920,” *Historia Mexicana* 56, no. 2 (Oct.-Dec. 2006): 533-602.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> See letters to and from Carlos Chávez in: Gloria Carmona, ed. *Epistolario Selecto* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1989).

<sup>55</sup> María Luisa Rodríguez Lee, *María Grever: poeta y compositora* (Potomac, Md.: Scripta Humanistica, 1994).

<sup>56</sup> Koegel, “Compositores Mexicanos y Cubanos.”

recorded, and performed in New York before 1925 were dances and songs in Latin forms—similar to works later associated with the “Vogue.”

Further evidence of a pre-“Vogue” Mexican musical culture in New York City can be found in *La Prensa*, a Spanish language New York newspaper that reported on social events hosted by Latin American, Spanish, or Mexican organizations. The brief descriptions found in *La Prensa* indicate that some events included music performances by marching bands, dance bands, or classical recitalists. Frequently music from the native countries of those in attendance was featured.<sup>57</sup> Among the Mexican performers mentioned in the pages of *La Prensa* are the violinist Patricio Castillo,<sup>58</sup> the singer Consuelo Escobar de Castro,<sup>59</sup> the singer Trina Varela,<sup>60</sup> the pianist and conductor Enrique Torreblanca,<sup>61</sup> and the singer J. de Salgado.<sup>62</sup>

While composer biographies and *La Prensa* columns give some indication of the variety of musical performance in the Mexican expatriate community of New York during the 1910s, a comprehensive history is difficult to construct. For the most part, this aspect of musical life was not chronicled in mainstream publications such as the *New York Times* or the *New York Herald*; nor was it recorded in music specialist magazines such as *Musical America* or *Musical Courier*.

The information about Mexican music in mainstream New York newspapers during the 1910s pales in comparison to the amount of information about Mexican

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<sup>57</sup> E.g. “Una Recepción y Baile en el Club ‘La Luz’,” *La Prensa*, 3 January 1919, 5; “En una fiesta de caridad se pondrá en escena ‘Las Flores’ de los Quintero,” *La Prensa*, 2 May 1922, 1; “Baile de flores en el Waldorf-Astoria,” *La Prensa*, 4 May 1922, 2.

<sup>58</sup> “El Festival del Club Latino Americano Será Brillante,” *La Prensa*, 5 May 1922, 1.

<sup>59</sup> “De Música,” *La Prensa*, 31 March 1923, 7.

<sup>60</sup> “Suplemento Ilustrado,” *La Prensa*, February 1923. [no page numbers supplied]

<sup>61</sup> “En una fiesta de caridad se pondrá en escena ‘Las Flores de los Quintero,’” *La Prensa*, 2 May 1922, 1.

<sup>62</sup> “Música,” *La Prensa*, 5 May 1921, 5.

music available in similar publications during the 1920s. For example, a search of the *New York Times* database under “Music and Mexico” produced 144 records for the years 1910 – 1919. Many are advertisements or shipping reports; when these are eliminated only 88 documents remain. By contrast, for the years 1920-1929, there were 522 records of which 402 are neither advertisements nor shipping reports. One significant factor appears to be the location of the Mexican music concerts in question. Many of the Mexican music performances advertised in the pages of *La Prensa* during the 1910s were not given in concert halls frequented by critics for the *New York Times*, *Musical America*, or other mainstream publications. In the 1920s, several concerts of Mexican music were held in Carnegie Hall, Aeolian Hall, and Town Hall—venues such critics often attended. The locations of the 1920s concerts may have resulted in more articles about Mexican music in the mainstream press.

Nevertheless, although most performances of Mexican music were overlooked by mainstream publications prior to 1925, two concerts did receive attention: Carrillo’s performance with the American Symphony Orchestra on 15 January 1915 and Ponce’s solo piano recital on 27 March 1916. Both were held in New York’s Aeolian Hall. Although both concerts featured works by Mexican composers, critics viewed them very differently. The American Symphony Orchestra performance was well received, perhaps because the symphonic repertoire presented was in a Germanic style familiar to New York audiences. By contrast, Ponce’s performance featured several nationalist compositions unfamiliar to New Yorkers. Furthermore, it took place a few days after Francisco “Pancho” Villa invaded Columbus, New Mexico,

during a period of severe anti-Mexican sentiment in the U.S.<sup>63</sup> Unlike the American Symphony Orchestra concert, Ponce's recital was poorly received in the New York press.

In the remaining sections of this chapter, I will examine Carrillo and Ponce's New York performances of 1915 and 1916 respectively in an attempt to understand some of the events that shaped the reception of their music in the same city a decade later. To that end, I will examine each performance, its reception, and the influence that the performances appear to have had on the composers' careers.

Although based upon published scholarly accounts, the following offers new information about performances of Mexican music in New York. For example, I present the first complete narrative describing Carrillo's 1915 concert. While descriptions of the concert may be found in Carrillo's autobiographies,<sup>64</sup> they concentrate on the most positive aspects of the composer's experience. This narrative analyzes both positive and negative reactions to the performance. Ponce's 1916 New York recital is beautifully described in Ricardo Miranda's *Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo Sobre Su Vida y Obra* and Emilio Díaz Cervantes and Dolly R. de Díaz's *Ponce: Genio de México*. The account offered here draws upon these sources, adding necessary information about Ponce's compositional style, and a comparison between the experiences of Ponce and Carrillo. This is the first narrative to compare reactions to Carrillo's 1915 concert and Ponce's 1916 recital and to place them in a wider cultural context.

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<sup>63</sup> For a complete description of the incident, see pp. 47-48.

<sup>64</sup> Carrillo, *Testimonio de una vida* (San Luis Potosí: Comité Organizador, 1994); José Velasco Urda, *Julián Carrillo: Su Vida y Obra* (Mexico: Edición del 'Grupo 13 Metropolitano,' 1945). I list the Urda as an autobiography because the text contains a series of interviews so the text about Carrillo is, for the most part, reflective of the composer's point of view.

*Carrillo in Mexico and Abroad Before 1914*

Carrillo was born into a poor lower-class family living in the small town of Ahualulco in San Luis Potosí. At the age of ten he traveled to the city of San Luis Potosí to begin formal violin studies. In 1899, when in his mid-twenties, Carrillo earned scholarships from the Porfirio Díaz administration to study violin, composition, and theory in Leipzig and Ghent.

When Carrillo returned to Mexico in 1905, he received a series of prominent posts that established his favored position within the Díaz regime including Professor of Composition at the National Conservatory and Inspector General of Music of Mexico City. While there, Carrillo continued his studies of music theory, as well as his career as a performer, pedagogue, and composer. His first formal foray into the field had occurred in 1900 when he presented a paper at the International Congress of Music in Paris, which was held in connection with the Universal International Exposition. Later, he presented his ideas at musical congresses in Rome and London in 1911.

It is possible that Carrillo's close association with the Díaz regime made it particularly difficult for him to continue his professional activities during some of the Revolutionary administrations. Carrillo was not favored by Madero, the leader of the party that had forced Díaz to resign. When Madero was overthrown by Victoriano Huerta, many believed there would be a return to Porfirian policies. Within the music community, Huerta's government seemed to confirm such assumptions by appointing Carrillo the director of the National Conservatory of Mexico and encouraging plans to expand the institution. Unfortunately the funds to realize Carrillo's ambitious ideas did

not exist and, as opposition to Huerta increased, Carrillo could count on little support. Perhaps realizing that the political tides were turning yet again, in December 1914 Carrillo left Mexico and brought his family with him to New York City.

#### *Carrillo in New York, 1914-1915*

The concert given by Carrillo's American Symphony Orchestra in January 1915 occurred several months after Carrillo fled Mexico. Almost immediately upon arriving in the city, Carrillo began an aggressive promotional campaign, notifying critics of his presence in New York, the music he had composed, and his plans to form a new symphony orchestra. A November 1914 article in *Musical Advance* introduced the composer to New York audiences with a brief biography. At the outset, it announced Carrillo's plans to "organize a symphony orchestra and a society for the special cultivation of chamber music."<sup>65</sup>

Although the biography listed Carrillo's positions with the Conservatory of Mexico City, it emphasized his various activities abroad including Carrillo's participation in a Musical Congress held in Paris in 1900, lessons with Salomon Jadassohn at the Leipzig Conservatory, performances as a violinist in the Gewandhaus Orchestra, studies at the Ghent Conservatory, and participation in the International Music Congress in Rome. Perhaps of particular interest to those who would later attend the performance of the American Symphony Orchestra was the news that Carrillo had conducted the Leipzig Orchestra in the 1902 premiere of his first symphony.

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<sup>65</sup> "Carrillo in New York," *Musical Advance*, November 1914, 3.

Carrillo was never able to organize the chamber music society mentioned above, but the American Symphony Orchestra was created shortly after his arrival, sometime in late 1914. In his autobiography, Carrillo recalled the formation of the group:

I could tell immediately the absolute ignorance [the people] of that enormous city had about the development of music in Latin American countries, and not only that, but also that when one of our artists arrived to go through the intense whirl of New York, the press published opinions so unfavorable that they could satisfy themselves when they said that [he/she] wasn't so bad for a Latin American . . . I also believed that it was necessary to see if it was possible to condense in a single ideal all of the artists of the continent, without distinction of race or nationality—all of my efforts to form the American Symphony Orchestra rotated around that idea.<sup>66</sup>

The group was organized without start-up capital; the musicians donated their time with the understanding that they would share in the profits, if there were any. Such an arrangement was possible because many opera theatres and concert halls had closed their doors in the winter of 1914 in response to the war abroad, and musicians were desperate for work. The January 1915 issue of *Musical Advance* printed a full-page copy of the program for the first planned American Symphony Orchestra concert, 6 January 1915, in Aeolian Hall [Example 2-1]. The program included the overture to Beethoven's "Leonore No. 3," Ave Maria from Bruch's "The Cross of Fire," Le Massena's arrangement of "Albumblatt" by Wagner, the waltz from

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<sup>66</sup> "Pude darme cuenta inmediatamente del desconocimiento absoluto que aquella enorme ciudad tenía del desarrollo musical en los países hispanoamericanos, y no solo eso, sino que la prensa cuando llegaba a pasar por el torbellino intenso de la gran urbe neoyorkina, alguno de nuestros artistas, publicaba opiniones tan poco favorables que había que darse por satisfecho cuando decía que no era tan malo si se atendía a que era un latinoamericano" Carrillo, *Testimonio*, 178. All translations by author unless otherwise noted.

Tchaikovsky's Serenade, and Carrillo's own Symphony No. 1 in D major [Example 2-1].<sup>67</sup>

**America Symphony Orchestra**

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FIRST CONCERT, AEOLIAN HALL, NEW YORK  
*Wednesday Evening, January 6th, 1915*

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At 8.15

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**JULIAN CARRILLO, Conductor**  
Soloist — MARGARET HARRISON, *Soprano*

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**PROGRAM**

Overture Lenora No. 3 - *Beethoven*

Ave Maria from "The Cross of Fire"  
*Bruch*  
MARGARET HARRISON

(a) Albumblatt - - - *Wagner*  
Transcription by C. E. Le Massena

(b) Valse from Serenade - *Tschaikowsky*  
STRING ORCHESTRA

Intermission

Symphony No. 1 in D major - *Carrillo*  
First Time in America

Largo—Allegro  
Andante sostenuto  
Scherzo  
Finale—Allegro con fuoco

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Tickets for sale at the box office Aeolian Hall, 43d Street entrance and at the office of the America Symphony Orchestra, 501 Fifth Ave. MANUEL DIAZ, *Representative.*

Example 2-1: The program for the American Symphony Orchestra concert as printed in the *Musical Advance* with a photograph of Carrillo to the left.

<sup>67</sup> "America Symphony Orchestra," *Musical Advance*, January 1915, 3.

### *Carrillo's First Symphony*

After offering a preview hearing of his Symphony in December 1914, Carrillo made the score available to New York reporters. As a result, brief analyses of the composition appeared in the pages of the *New York Herald*,<sup>68</sup> *Musical America*,<sup>69</sup> and *Musical Advance*.<sup>70</sup> The critic for the *New York Herald* thought the work “showed little originality,” but reviewers for *Musical America* and *Musical Advance* disagreed. The writer for *Musical Advance* noted:

The symphony is in the orthodox form of four movements, each finely developed and nicely contrasted. It abounds in instrumental color and tonal variety and captivates the listener by reason of its beauty, and therefore is one of the most important contributions to symphonic literature that has been heard for some time.<sup>71</sup>

The symphony's most remarkable elements are its soaring melody, virtuosic string parts, and loud dramatic endings. The outer movements conform to traditional sonata-form and contain two contrasting themes, while the short inner movements are monothematic. The most compelling movement is the finale, the first theme of which, unlike most of the melodic material in the symphony, is fast-paced and malleable [Example 2-2]. In contour and key, it resembles the first theme of the first-movement [Example 2-3]; both are in D major and consist of an initial leap followed by a gradual descent. Whereas the first movement is slow and romantic, the first theme of the Finale is a loud, rapid-fire burst of energy.

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<sup>68</sup> “American Symphony Plays,” *New York Herald*, 17 December 1914, 7.

<sup>69</sup> A.W.K., “Mexican Tinge to Orchestral Event,” *Musical America*, 16 January 1915, 7.

<sup>70</sup> “Carrillo's First Symphony” *Musical Advance*, January 1915, 4.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*



Example 2-2: The first theme of the Finale.



Example 2-3: The first theme of the first movement is similar in contour.

The second theme of the Finale is in the romantic style typical of Carrillo's writing elsewhere in the symphony [Example 2-4]. Even longer than the other melodies, this theme retains interest through periodic interpolations by the orchestra. In the approach to the development, the melody modulates frequently, often alternating between major and minor to add color and harmonic interest. When the first theme returns in full, it is in A, not D major, as expected [Example 2-5]. The harmonic equivocations of the "false recapitulation" continue throughout the recapitulation. After a series of modulations and the last full iteration of the theme, there is finally a cadence in D. The second theme enters in D, but it is quickly subsumed into a modulatory texture. These harmonic equivocations justify the bombastic repetition of the D major chord in the Coda.



Example 2-4: The second theme in the Finale is typical of Carrillo's writing elsewhere.

Example 2-5: The “false recapitulation.” Permission granted from Carl Fischer on behalf of Jobert.

Carrillo's first symphony demonstrates facility within the expected forms; it is neither avant-garde nor nationalist. Any elements of surprise, including the false recapitulation in the Finale, are presented using established compositional techniques. There are no allusions to folk song, titles, or programs evoking Mexico, or any signal within Carrillo's symphony that the composer might be Mexican. If Carrillo wished, as he stated in his autobiography, to represent musical life in Latin America through the performance of his symphony,<sup>72</sup> the image he presented was familiar to a New York audience well-versed in the German Romantic tradition.

#### *Reception of Carrillo's Symphony and the American Symphony Orchestra*

Although several critics had already heard the work in a preview performance, the official premiere in January elicited additional comments from New York critics. The *New York American*,<sup>73</sup> *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*,<sup>74</sup> *New York Sun*,<sup>75</sup> *New York Tribune*,<sup>76</sup> *New York Herald*,<sup>77</sup> and *Musical America*<sup>78</sup> published reviews. While the writer for the *New York Herald* continued to believe the symphony, "does not interest greatly," the critic for *Musical America* noted that the work was "much applauded." Most articles were brief but complimentary. Critics found Carrillo's skills as a conductor laudable, but they criticized occasional mistakes by the musicians.

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<sup>72</sup> "I also believed that it was necessary to see if it was possible to condense in a single ideal all of the artists of the continent, without distinction of race or nationality—all of my efforts to form the American Symphony Orchestra rotated around that idea." For full quote, see above. Carrillo, *Testimonio*, 178.

<sup>73</sup> "New Orchestra Wins N.Y. Favor," *New York American*, 7 January 1915, 15.

<sup>74</sup> "New Symphony Orchestra," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 7 January 1915, 5.

<sup>75</sup> "New Orchestra Conductor," *The Sun*, 7 January 1915, 12.

<sup>76</sup> "Carrillo Better than Orchestra," *New York Tribune*, 7 January 1915, 9.

<sup>77</sup> "New Orchestra Heard," *New York Herald*, 7 January 1915, 17.

<sup>78</sup> A.K.W., "Mexican Tinge to Orchestral Event," *Musical America*, 16 January 1915, 7.

Nearly every article mentioned the composer's nationality and it appears that the Latin American community supported Carrillo in his efforts. In the review for *Musical America*, the author observed that, "the audience included large numbers of [Carrillo's] countrymen."<sup>79</sup> Several articles about the event appeared in Mexico City newspapers and magazines, probably based upon accounts provided by expatriates in attendance.<sup>80</sup>

Carrillo's nationality was mentioned in most mainstream reviews printed in New York, but the composer's Mexican or Latin American identity was not the primary focus of such articles. Reviews of the concert in mainstream U.S. publications did not relate the Pan-American ideals of the group or note the number of Latin American musicians in the Orchestra. Instead, most critics analyzed Carrillo's performance of standard symphonic works, including his own composition.

Following the premiere of his symphony, Carrillo encountered financial difficulties. It appears from the account offered in his autobiography that Carrillo attempted, unsuccessfully, to raise funds for the orchestra. Few details are given, but Carrillo does write that a promised payment from an unnamed "prominent Mexican" never materialized.<sup>81</sup> Carrillo was unable to pay the participating musicians, much less afford a second performance.

Yet Carrillo continued to make ambitious plans for the organization. His goals were prominently featured in an extensive profile article by María Cristina Mena for

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> L. Lara Perdo, "Julián Carrillo," *Revista Universal*, December 1914, 13; "La Emancipación Musical de América: El Pro del Arte," *Revista Universal*, September 1916, 21; "Orquesta Sinfónica 'America'" *Revista Universal*, [n.d., 1917]. Scrapbooks, *Archivo Julián Carrillo*, Mexico City.

<sup>81</sup> Carrillo, *Testimonio*, 181.

the *Century Magazine*, published two months after the first performance.<sup>82</sup> It was in this article that Carrillo outlined his Pan-American ideals for the Orchestra. Despite an ongoing lack of funding, Carrillo told Mena that he wished to perform new works by composers from throughout the Americas with the Symphony Orchestra.

Declaring Carrillo, “the Herald of a Musical Monroe Doctrine,” Mena portrayed Carrillo as an ambitious idealist:

In a waking vision he saw the Americas, North and South, become spiritually federated by the free evolution and jealous nurture of a music neither of North nor South, but of America; and he felt a prescience that that music of the Western World would assert its fountainhead, by the force of logic, in the United States.<sup>83</sup>

Despite the positive publicity of the *Century Magazine* article, the American Symphony Orchestra never escaped from its economic doldrums. Over the next few months, Carrillo was not able to meet his monetary obligations, much less plan for future performances. His wife supported the family financially while Carrillo looked for suitable employment. Unfortunately various plans to teach composition and violin pedagogy and perform as a soloist proved equally disappointing and, as a consequence, Carrillo returned to a considerably more peaceful Mexico City in 1918.

Despite his financial troubles, it appears that Carrillo retained fond memories of his visit to New York. He memorialized his stay there through an extensive scrapbook, still in existence at the Carrillo archives. Shortly after writing his new microtonal theory in the early 1920s, Carrillo permitted the *Musical Advance* to print the first English language version.<sup>84</sup> Later, writers at *Musical America* became

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<sup>82</sup> María Cristina Mena, “Julián Carrillo: The Herald of a Musical Monroe Doctrine,” *Century Magazine*, March 1915, 753.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Carrillo, “The Thirteenth Sound,” *The Musical Advance*, May 1923, 1.

interested in his theories as well. In 1926, Carrillo returned to New York to share his new ideas about music composition. Several of the articles about Carrillo and his music published during the 1920s mentioned his earlier visit.<sup>85</sup> It is clear that Carrillo built upon the reputation he developed in 1914 and 1915 to create interest in his microtonal music during the 1920s.<sup>86</sup>

### *Varèse and Carrillo in New York: A Comparison*

Although Carrillo expressed satisfaction with his first foray into New York musical life, he hardly experienced unqualified success. The well-documented career of Edgard Varèse offers an example of the possibilities available to some foreign musicians in New York and illuminates the comparative difficulties Carrillo faced. Varèse arrived in New York in December 1915, a year after Carrillo had made his own pilgrimage to the city, and immediately began to establish his reputation by granting interviews to New York reporters.

From that point forward, the similarities between the two composers' early New York careers are striking: both presented themselves as conductors as well as composers, both found support in expatriate communities of New York, both formed cooperative symphony orchestras, and both faced early mixed reviews. Yet Varèse's early forays as a conductor, composer, and musical organizer in New York led to a long and successful career in that city whereas Carrillo had no significant engagements in New York between the American Symphony Orchestra premiere in

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<sup>85</sup> "Advanced Musicians in Mexico Use Quarter-Tones and New Notation," *Musical America*, 4 April 1925, 9; Carrillo, "Music Without Tones and Semitones," *The Musical Advance*, June 1925, 1; William Spier, "Mexican Composer Proposes New Quarter-Tone Notation," *Musical America*, 15 August 1925, 18.

<sup>86</sup> See Chapter 4 for more information about Carrillo's activities in New York during the 1920s.

1915 and the League of Composers' concert in 1926. The differences in their New York careers seem to be attributable, in part, to Varèse's careful cultivation of his image in the U.S. press, to his persistent search for sympathetic patrons in the New York music community, and to a political environment that made the New York public particularly receptive to his ideas and aesthetic.

Varèse's New York debut as a conductor was more widely recognized and lauded than that of Carrillo, at least partly because Varèse made some wise decisions about how he would present himself and his music. Whereas Carrillo raced to form the American Symphony Orchestra and presented it in a concert a few months after he came New York, Varèse's debut concert occurred 1 April 1917, well over a year after his arrival. Rather than introducing his own music, Varèse featured a performance of Hector Berlioz's *Requiem*, dedicated to soldiers dying in World War I. Critics declared him a "genius," and, as a consequence, Varèse was able to pursue additional conducting opportunities.<sup>87</sup> In contrast, critics agreed that some members of Carrillo's American Symphony Orchestra were ill prepared for their premiere—perhaps one reason Carrillo struggle to find additional opportunities for the organization to perform.

After his conducting debut Varèse continued to cautiously pursue opportunities to direct U.S. symphony orchestras. He was invited to conduct the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and led a concert in March 1918. Shortly thereafter he became the director of the New Symphony Orchestra, a cooperative endeavor organized with the express purpose of performing new music in New York. An initial

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<sup>87</sup> Select reviews quoted and analyzed in Carol Oja, *Making Music Modern* (Oxford University Press, 2000) 29. Additional reviews may be found in Louise Varèse, *Varèse: A Looking Glass Diary* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972) 128-130.

pair of concerts occurred 11 and 12 April 1918. The program included works by J.S. Bach, Claude Debussy, Alfredo Casella, Béla Bartók, and Gabriel Dupont—every selection was a New York premiere. Reviews were mixed; most critics seemed to deplore Varèse's skills as a conductor while acknowledging the contributions he was making to New York musical life.<sup>88</sup>

Varèse responded to the criticism by reducing his activities as a conductor while increasing his visibility as a composer and musical organizer. By 1921 he had composed *Amériques* and *Offrandes*, two of his most significant works of the period. That same year, he formed the International Composers Guild with Carlos Salzedo. Although Salzedo was a French compatriot, several of the early patronesses of the ICG were from the U.S. including Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, Clare Reis, and Alma Wertheim. The critic Paul Rosenfeld became one of Varèse's most valued champions in the New York press. Thus, by the 1920s, Varèse had extended his reach well beyond the French expatriate community of New York, finding money and support in the larger music community of the city.

By contrast, according to Carrillo's own account, the budget for the American Symphony Orchestra depended entirely upon funds from an unreliable wealthy Mexican expatriate living in New York. Carrillo had no opportunity to repudiate criticisms in the press because there was no second concert, nor did he find patrons to support another public event through which he might demonstrate his skills. Carrillo did not become integrated into New York musical life.

It is clear that Varèse was a skilled composer, musician, and publicist and that his abilities in these areas contributed to his success in New York. Nevertheless

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<sup>88</sup> For analysis of these reviews see Oja, 32.

Varèse was also able to take advantage of environmental circumstances largely outside his control. Shortly after he arrived in New York, the U.S. entered World War I, forming a strong alliance with France and declaring war on Germany and its allies. Musicians and artists from Europe, especially France, flocked to New York, forming a strong expatriate community. Meanwhile, anti-German sentiment swept the city and audiences and critics searched for an alternative to the Germanic repertoire that had dominated the classical music scene in New York. Varèse had the good fortune to be able and willing to offer such an alternative—a French oriented modernism. While some critics objected to his aesthetic, others appreciated the freshness and novelty of Varèse's approach. The strength of his support among patrons, critics, and audiences was such that, regardless of objections or momentary disappointments, Varèse continually attracted attention for his performances, projects, and ideas.

By contrast, Carrillo faced a less positive environment. Rather than presenting a desired change in music aesthetic, the music Carrillo's American Symphony Orchestra offered was Germanic in orientation—it did not shock New York critics but it also did not provide something new. Furthermore, Carrillo did not benefit from a positive view of his country and culture in the New York press. To the contrary, most articles about Mexico printed in New York newspapers of the time described the bloody and threatening Revolutionary conflict. The events of the Mexican Revolution as reported in New York newspapers directly influenced the responses of critics and audiences to Ponce's 1916 recital, described below. It is less clear that they had such a direct impact on Carrillo's New York career; it is, however, evident that Varèse was

far more advantageously placed in terms of national identity and compositional aesthetic.

*Ponce and Mexican Musical Nationalism*

Varèse's New York debut was an unqualified success, lauded by both the public and the participants; Carrillo's New York debut received mixed reviews from critics but satisfied the composer-conductor; Ponce's first New York recital was not well regarded by either the critics or the composer, and contemporaries called it a "fracaso" (failure).<sup>89</sup> Unlike Carrillo's concert, which featured the performance of standard Germanic symphonic works, Ponce's 1916 piano recital featured works that used the music of Mexican *canciones* to express overt nationalism. It was performed at a particularly difficult time in the history of U.S.-Mexican relations. Perhaps not surprisingly, the concert was disliked by nearly every New York critic to write a review.

Ponce's recital of nationalist music performed in New York in 1916 was only a small part of his long-standing effort to cultivate, compose, and perform nationalist music. His first efforts were two compositions titled *Arrulladora Mexicana*, published in 1905 and 1909, based on popular Mexican tunes. Shortly after the publication of the second piece, around the beginning of the Revolution, Ponce began to spend more time and energy collecting *mestizo* music and composing works based on this music.<sup>90</sup> At that time as Ponce recounts in the essay, "Notas sobre música mexicana,"

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<sup>89</sup> See the diary of Ponce's friend, Frederico Gamboa, cited by Ricardo Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce*, 41.

<sup>90</sup> Leonora Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music." (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001): 19-20.

the Mexican *canción* began to be accepted as part of the salon repertoire.<sup>91</sup> While patriotic compositions by Mexican composers were not entirely unknown, the popular acceptance of the *canción* offered new possibilities to the classical composer.<sup>92</sup>

Ponce introduced some of his nationalist efforts to the Mexican public through two concerts given in July 1912. The first, held July 7, was an orchestral concert performed by the Orquesta Beethoven, directed by Carrillo which featured Ponce's *Piano Concerto* alongside orchestral selections from Weber's *Freischütz* and Liszt's *Faust*. Ponce performed his own work and received an encore for his efforts; he responded with a performance of a nationalist piece, *Rapsodia mexicana*, for solo piano. The second concert, on July 9, was a solo piano recital featuring Ponce's works. Several nationalist compositions were programmed near the end, including settings of four Mexican songs, the *Tema mexicano variado*, and, once again, *Rapsodia mexicana*.

Ponce strengthened his connection to the swelling nationalist movement through a lecture given at a Mexico City bookstore in December 1913, the fourth in a series that had included the poet Luis G. Urbina, the teacher Antonio Caso, and the historian Pedro Henríquez Ureña.<sup>93</sup> In this lecture, titled "La Música y la canción mexicana," Ponce declared the *canción* "the soul of the people," a people he specifically identified in later paragraphs as the poor and down-trodden.<sup>94</sup> He also advocated the use of the mestizo *canción* as the basis for a nationalist body of music.

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<sup>91</sup> Ponce, "Notas sobre musica mexicana," in *Nuevos escritos musicales* (Mexico, D.F.: Stylo, 1948): 9-27.

<sup>92</sup> For a history of nationalism in Mexican music, see: Yolanda Moreno Rivas, *Rostros del Nacionalismo en la música mexicana* (Mexico: Fondo de cultura económica, 1989).

<sup>93</sup> The lecturers were members of *Ateneo de la Juventud*, group of intellectuals originally formed in opposition to Porfirio Díaz's *Científicos*. Díaz Cervantes y Díaz, 173; Miranda, 31.

<sup>94</sup> First printed: Ponce, "La música y la canción mexicana," *Revista de Revistas*, 21 December 1913, 17. Reprinted in Díaz Cervantes and Díaz, *Genio de Mexico*, 175-183.

For models, Ponce pointed to the work of Glinka, Brahms, Chopin, Schubert, and Grieg.<sup>95</sup> A week later, “La Música y la canción mexicana” was published in *Revista de Revistas*, a Mexican periodical with a broad readership. Such statements, delivered at a time of class conflict, created a public image of radicalism for Ponce and the genre he promoted.

Ponce’s words inspired composers such as Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, Mario Talavera, Ignacio Rodríguez Esperón (popularly known as “Tata Nacho”), and others. They wrote simple songs in binary form imitating the *canciones* of the Mexican mestizo. While Lerdo de Tejada, Talavera, and “Tata Nacho” lacked classical training, they participated in an explosion of *canción* composition in Mexico over the next several years.<sup>96</sup> It seemed every young Mexican composer wished to write the perfect *canción* or *canción* arrangement, even those most interested in pursuing classical careers. For example, some of the earliest compositions by Carlos Chávez and Silvestre Revueltas were also *canciones*. In part because of Ponce’s lecture, these simple songs became closely identified with Mexican nationalism. As Saavedra describes it:

Soon it became difficult to distinguish traditional songs from arrangements and newly composed songs, and for fifteen years after Ponce’s first compositions the singing, arranging, composing, and collecting of songs all were forms—in the minds of most people, in fact the only forms—of what passed as musical nationalism.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid. Although it was the call for *canción* composition and performance that Mexican musicians heeded with the most enthusiasm, Saavedra and Miranda argue convincingly that it was really the development of these folk songs into large-form classical compositions for which Ponce wished to advocate.

<sup>96</sup> Saavedra, 22. Mauricio Magdaleno describes this environment in an article about Ponce for *El Nacional*. Reprinted in: Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce*, 173-174.

<sup>97</sup> Saavedra, 23.

Although only the simple *canciones* became popular compositional forms for many Mexican composers, Ponce himself also composed and advocated the composition of larger works based on *canciones*. In such works, often written for piano or orchestra, Ponce used complex compositional forms associated with high art. However, despite the formal complexity, the quotes from *canciones* included in such works were recognizable. For example, the *Balada Mexicana*, first featured in a recital given in Havana, Cuba, and later in the 1916 New York recital, demonstrates the clarity with which Ponce often presented his *canción*-based melodies, even when transferred to a classical form. This sonata-form work uses two *canción* melodies as primary and secondary themes. As examples 2-6 and 2-7 demonstrate, the clarity of the melodies is not lost in the settings.



Example 2-6: The principal melody to the *canción* “Me he de comer un durazno.” An arrangement can be found in *Mexican Folkways* 6, no. 1.

**Andantino placido**

Piano

Example 2-7: Ponce opens his *Balada Mexicana* with the melody to “Me he de comer un durazno.” It is repeated in an octave lower and then developed through measure 95.

A similar approach may be found in the two *Rapsodia Mexicana* pieces and the *Tema mexicano variado*, both frequently performed in Ponce’s concerts during the decade. Piano arrangements of *canciones*, presented more plainly, were also staples in Ponce’s concerts of the period. As Ponce pointed out in “La Música y la canción Mexicana,” he was using an established method of signaling nationalism. Just as Brahms had mined German and Hungarian folk songs or Glinka had arranged Russian folk songs to express national pride, so Ponce employed the folk music of Mexico to represent his own feelings of nationalism.

### *Reception*

Ponce performed his nationalist music for audiences in three cities: Mexico City, Havana, and New York City. While the receptions in Mexico City and Havana

were extremely positive, the reception in New York was negative. Luis G. Urbina, reviewing one of Ponce's performances in Mexico City for *El Imparcial*, noted:

The ovation is unanimous, and grows, motivated by an emotive impulse which is half admiration and half amazement. People look at each other as if saying to themselves: We had a musician of this stature and we didn't know it!<sup>98</sup>

An unfortunate political alliance made work in Mexico City difficult for Ponce; as a consequence he moved to Havana, Cuba in 1914. There he continued composing and performing, giving numerous concerts. In addition to the *canciones* and larger compositions based on *canciones*, these concerts included works based on the popular music of Cuba. As in Mexico City, Cuban critics showered accolades on the young composer. A writer for *La Lucha* wrote, "Manuel M. Ponce possesses all: execution, mechanics, feeling, technique. . ." <sup>99</sup>

The reputation Ponce developed in Mexico City and Cuba allowed him to arrange a performance in one of the best New York halls—Aeolian Hall—and to attract critics to his concert. The program for the 1916 New York recital was very similar to those offered in Cuba [Example 2-8]. It included piano chamber works in traditional forms alongside works using the folk music of Cuba and Mexico. Works with nationalist titles such as *Mexican Ballade*, *Mexican barcarolle*, and *Mexican Rhapsody II* were featured prominently toward the close of the program. In addition to these larger nationalist works, the program also included four arrangements of Mexican *canciones*. Predicting a success similar to that found in Mexico and Cuba,

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<sup>98</sup> "El concierto de anoche," *El Imparcial*, 10 July 1912, as translated and quoted in Barron Corvera, *Bio-bibliography*, 150.

<sup>99</sup> "Elegantes," *La Lucha*, 5 Nov. 1915, as translated and quoted in Barron Corvera, *Bio-bibliography*, 153.

Ponce planned to improve his economic circumstances with the New York concert, using it as a starting point for a U.S. tour.<sup>100</sup>

27 March 1916 Aeolian Hall Recital	
Works written and performed by Manuel M. Ponce	
Prelude and Fugue (theme by Handel)	Spinner Song
Sonata	Mazurka XXIII
Tragic Prelude (Etude I)	Cuban Rhapsody I
Gallant Prelude (Etude VIII)	Mexican Songs (I, XVII, XIV)
Morire Habemus (Etude IV)	Mexican Ballade
Love's Romance	Mexican Barcarolle
Life Smiles (Etude XII)	Mexican Rhapsody II
Plenilunio (Moonlight)	

Example 2-8: Ponce's New York recital program.

Things did not proceed as Ponce had planned; the critical reception of the 1916 New York recital was devastating. Published reviews were short and negative. The reviewer for *Musical America* wrote, "The present writer heard about half a dozen numbers and found one quite as pointless and inconsequential as another. Mr. Ponce's playing was on a level with his compositions."<sup>101</sup> The *New York Times* critic opined, "Neither as pianist nor composer does Mr. Ponce demand extended consideration."<sup>102</sup> The *New York Herald* reviewer thought the music derivative, writing, "On the program it was asserted that Mr. Ponce's recital was one of 'original music' . . . However, there were many reminiscences of other composers in the

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<sup>100</sup> Miranda, 41; Diaz y Diaz.

<sup>101</sup> H.F.P., "Mexican Pianist Plays Own Compositions" *Musical America*, 1 April 1916, 29.

<sup>102</sup> "Yesterday's Concerts," *New York Times*, 28 March 1916, 11.

music.”<sup>103</sup> Only the critic for the *New York Tribune* wrote a positive review, noting that Ponce had “fluent technique, a good sense of rhythm and an evident musicianly sense.”<sup>104</sup> But even this writer had to confess that the audience was, “exceedingly small.”<sup>105</sup>

Perhaps the reception in New York was colored by a sense that Ponce had violated some of the programming norms in that city’s music community. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Germanic tradition was most highly valued in New York. However Ponce performed salon music not associated with dominant German genres. Similarly, most successful performers in New York had cultivated a reputation in Europe before performing in the U.S. However, although Ponce had studied abroad, the most significant performances of his music took place in Mexico and Cuba.

Nonetheless, while these reasons may account for some of the negative reception of Ponce and his music, it appears the principal reason for the unfavorable reaction to his music in New York was a bias against Mexican nationalist music. This bias was particularly strong for critics attending Ponce’s recital, because the concert occurred two weeks after Francisco “Pancho” Villa invaded Columbus, New Mexico (9 March 1916). The invasion set off a diplomatic nightmare for U.S. President Woodrow Wilson’s administration; its alliances with Villa’s opponent, Venustiano Carranza, the current president of Mexico, and his administration had ignited Villa’s anger. Although the situation was beyond his control, Wilson faced an upcoming presidential election and needed to demonstrate his strength. On March 15, he summoned troops under General John J. Pershing and sent them into Mexico to find

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<sup>103</sup> “Mexican Plays Own Music” *New York Herald*, 28 March 1916, 12.

<sup>104</sup> “Music by a Mexican” *New York Tribune*, 28 March 1916, 9.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

and kill Villa. Daily articles in U.S. newspapers encouraged such bellicose activity by publishing exaggerated reports of the Columbus invasion and by following the movements of Pershing's troops. These articles continued through the month of March—papers for March 27, the day of Ponce's premiere, and March 28, the day the concert was reviewed, contained front-page stories about the ongoing hunt for Villa.<sup>106</sup>

Despite the extremely negative anti-Mexican environment in the U.S., publicity for Ponce's recital promoted the "Mexican" aspects to his program. Before the concert, Ponce recorded his *Mexican Barcarolle* on a piano roll for the Aeolian Company, a fact that was trumpeted in advance publicity,<sup>107</sup> preparing critics and audiences for the "Mexican" aspect of his performance identity. His nationalism was confirmed in the programs printed in major New York papers listing titles such as *Mexican Rhapsody* and *Mexican Ballade*. The promotional material clearly identified Ponce as proudly Mexican, perhaps an unwise choice given the environment. Although some of his concerts in other U.S. cities were cancelled following Villa's invasion, the Aeolian Hall concert was not.

The review for the *New York Herald* linked the invasion with Ponce's concert. In the opening sentence the critic wrote, "Manuel M. Ponce . . . has invaded New York and made his principal attack yesterday afternoon at a recital in Aeolian Hall."<sup>108</sup> While the *New York Herald* critic probably intended a light-hearted tongue-

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<sup>106</sup> "Pershing's Men Still on Villa's Trail" *New York Times*, 27 March 1916, 1; "Villa Eludes Trap, Fleeing Toward Hills" *New York Herald*, 27 March 1916, 1; "Cavalry Half a Day Behind Villa" *New York Times*, 28 March 1916, 1; "Troops Race After Villa 300 Miles Below Border," *New York Tribune*, 28 March 1916, 1; "Pursuers Within Half Day's March of Villa" *New York Herald*, 28 March 1916, 1.

<sup>107</sup> Díaz Cervantes and Díaz, 260.

<sup>108</sup> "Mexican Plays Own Music," *New York Herald*, 28 March 1916, 12.

in-cheek reference, it seems a broader feeling of political ill will was behind Ponce's failure. The small size of the audience, the unavailability of performance opportunities both before and after the recital, and the negative response of the critics indicate that audiences and critics adopted a pre-determined stance that may have had no relationship to the quality or intrinsic appeal of the performance.

### *After Ponce's Recital*

Despite the localized reasons for Ponce's poor New York reception, the event cast a shadow over the composer's future interactions with the New York music community. Ponce never again presented a recital of his piano music in New York, even though his reputation as a composer continued to flourish in Mexico and Cuba. Two articles written for *Mexico Moderno* in 1920 indicate the composer's remaining resentment over the interaction. In the first, "The Torture of the Performer" ("El Suplicio del Concertista"),<sup>109</sup> Ponce describes a situation similar to his own:

[Performers] arrive in North America anxious to earn glory and money (money more than glory) and, inevitably, fall into the claws of the managers . . .

The debutantes without European reputations are the 'small fish' in the ocean of egotism of the big cities – 'The recital,' the manager of the Aeolian in New York used to say, 'is a business like any other. It is not enough to contribute talent or aptitude; money is indispensable, capital *in cash*.'<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Ponce, "El Suplicio del Concertista," *Mexico Moderno* 1, no. 1 (1 Aug. 1920): 33-36.

<sup>110</sup> "Casi todos los 'virtuosos' que constituyen la segunda categoría son pobres o disfrutan de un discreto bienestar. Llegan a Norteamérica ansiosos de conquistar gloria y dólares (más dólares que gloria) y caen irremediamente en las garras de los *managers* . . . Los debutantes sin reputación europea, son los *pocos chicos* en el mar de egoísmo de las grandes ciudades.—'El recital, solía decir el *manager* de la Aeolian de Nueva York, es un negocio como cualquier otro. No basta aportar el talento o las aptitudes; es indispensable el dinero, el capital *en efectivo*.'" Ibid.

In this transparent allusion to his New York experience, Ponce makes it clear that he felt part of the blame for his failure was due to poor management by those in charge of the Aeolian. Later in the article, Ponce expressed similar distaste for New York critics. He recounted the story of a New York critic who, 25 years after writing a malicious review of Hans von Bülow, retracted his statements. “Does this late repentance at least sooth the conscience of the critic?” Ponce sarcastically inquired.<sup>111</sup>

In the next issue of the magazine, Ponce’s criticism of New York reviewers continued. Quoting from an article in *Musical America*, Ponce noted that reporters for the *Times*, *Tribune*, *Post*, and other publications missed a last minute program change in a concert of Spanish music, so that critics reviewed *Procesión del Rocío* by Turina rather than the *Roi d’Ys* of Lalo. To make matters worse, they criticized the work. Ponce appended the quotation with the following commentary: “After hearing this, are you going to keep believing in the efficacy of Yankee criticism?!”<sup>112</sup>

#### *Mexican Musicians in the New York Press, 1910-1920*

The anti-Mexican press that emerged after Villa’s invasion of Columbus, New Mexico probably encouraged critics to disdain Ponce’s performance of his own nationalist compositions. However, in addition to the specific circumstances surrounding the recital, both the performer and the critics were operating in an environment inhospitable to Mexican culture. Popular entertainment often portrayed

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<sup>111</sup> “Cierta redactor de un semanario musical neoyorkino confessaba, poco tiempo ha—¡después de un cuarto siglo!—que había atacado injustamente a Hans V. Bulow en una reseña escrita a propósito de los conciertos del gran pianista alemán en Nueva York. ¿Este arrepentimiento tardío habrá aquietado, al menos, la conciencia del crítico?” Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> “Después de los que antecede, ¡vaya Ud. a creer en al eficacia de la crítica yanqui!” Ponce, “El Arte Musical en el Mundo,” *Mexico Moderno* 1, no. 2 (1 Sept. 1920): 119-121.

the Mexican as a “greaser” or a bandit.<sup>113</sup> As a writer for the *New York Times* attested in 1916, a common adjective for the Mexican country and its people was “barbarous.”<sup>114</sup> Little factual information in the press countered these images; during the years of the Revolution, most newspaper articles about Mexico described a country over-run with violence.

A story relayed in Mexican singer José Mojica’s autobiography suggests that Ponce’s reception reflected the experience of other Mexican musicians and composers. During the 1920s, Mojica became a famous opera singer and movie star in the U.S., lauded for recitals of *canciones* in which he serenaded the audience while wearing ornate Mexican *trajes* and *sombreros*. Mojica claims that he conceived of these Mexicanist concerts in 1916 when he was living in New York. At the time, Mojica was working as a dishwasher while trying to make a career as a musician. During a conversation with his manager, Mojica suggested creating a recital of *canciones*, but the manager worried that anti-Mexican sentiment would endanger Mojica’s reception, and plans for the concerts were temporarily abandoned.<sup>115</sup>

Other, more positive, accounts of Mexican music performances during the late 1910s and early 1920s suggest that Mojica’s manager may have been overly cautious. For example, the mainstream press records New York performances by pianist Ernesto Berumen in the years leading up to the “Vogue.” Articles suggest that he performed mostly European music but included the occasional work by Mexican

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<sup>113</sup> See Helen Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations Between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992); Delpar, “Goodbye to the ‘Greaser’: Mexico, the MPPDA and Derogatory Films, 1922-1926,” *The Journal of Popular Film and Television* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 34-41.

<sup>114</sup> Joyce Kilmer, “Mexican Painter Proud of Nation’s Culture,” *New York Times*, 2 July 1916, 12.

<sup>115</sup> José Mojica, *I, a sinner . . .* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963).

composers. Berumen was favorably reviewed and found reliable employment performing with Frank La Forge in the principal halls of New York. It appears that his first New York concerts were given in 1918, and that Berumen remained for the subsequent two seasons; in 1920, he included Ponce's *Balada Mexicana* on a program performed in Aeolian Hall. Berumen did not receive the welcome afforded Mexican artists in the late 1920s, but unlike Ponce, neither did he inspire mean-spirited reviews.

#### *After 1920*

During a period when few Mexican composers and performers were reviewed in mainstream New York publications, Ponce and Carrillo received attention from New York critics for their works and performances. Following the premiere performance of the American Symphony Orchestra in January 1915, critics were impressed with Carrillo's European training, and his skills as a conductor and composer. However, the musicians were viewed as poorly prepared, financial troubles plagued the organization, and a complimentary article in *Century Magazine* describing Carrillo as the "Herald of a Musical Monroe Doctrine" did little to shore up support. Ponce's piano recital, containing nationalist compositions and performed during a tense moment in U.S.-Mexican political relations, suffered an even worse fate, inspiring brief, negative reviews in most of the mainstream New York newspapers.

Even though scholars have an incomplete picture of Mexican musical culture in New York during the 1910s, the lack of attention toward Mexican music in mainstream publications, the indifferent reaction to Carrillo's "Musical Monroe

Doctrine,” the discouragement of José Mojica’s song recitals, and the negative reaction toward Ponce’s performance of nationalist music suggest that, there was, at the very least, a bias against open displays of Mexican nationalism in that city during the 1910s. The collective impression left by these specific incidences is supported by evidence gathered by scholars in other fields, especially those studying films of the era.<sup>116</sup> Varèse, one of the foreign musicians most successful in New York during the period, benefitted from New Yorkers’ openness toward French culture and an early interest in modernism. Ponce and Carrillo faced an environment hostile to Mexican culture. Perhaps as a consequence, neither composer presented music that New York critics found new and exciting.

The modernist and Mexicanist movements, which gained strength in New York during the early 1920s, made the positive receptions of music by Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez from the late 1920s and early 1930s possible. Anti-Mexican prejudices were diminished through an active campaign by Mexican expatriate artists, the Mexican government, and sympathetic New Yorkers, leading to the “Mexico Vogue.” As a result, the number of articles about Mexican composers and musicians in New York began to increase and the reactions to their music were often positive. Meanwhile, the growing modernist movement, encouraged by Edgard Varése and the composer-students of Nadia Boulanger, created an audience for Carrillo’s microtonal experiments and Chávez’s dissonant abstractions.

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<sup>116</sup> See Helen Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican* and “Goodbye to the ‘Greaser;’ Alfred Charles Richard, Jr., *The Hispanic Image on the Silver Screen*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992).

### Chapter 3: Ponce's Music and the "Mexico Vogue" in New York

Manuel M. Ponce's first and only New York concert occurred on 27 March 1916 in Aeolian Hall.<sup>117</sup> The recital featured his original compositions for solo piano and was not well-received by critics because anti-Mexican sentiments prejudiced them against Ponce's nationalist music. Ponce left feeling disillusioned about concert life in that city. Understandably, he was not anxious to return to New York and did not perform there again. Approximately ten years later, from 1925 to 1932, Ponce was living in Paris, studying with Paul Dukas and absorbing modernist musical developments in France.

Not surprisingly, Ponce scholars regard the 1916 performance as the beginning and end of his relationship with New York.<sup>118</sup> Yet for audiences there, the story is somewhat different. An examination of New York newspapers and periodicals reveals that, even though Ponce was not living in that city from 1925 to 1932 and did not personally cultivate a U.S. audience after 1916, performers such as Jascha Heifetz, Clarita Sánchez, José Mojica, and Fanny Anitúa included Ponce's *canciones* in recitals given during these years. Starting in 1928, Andrés Segovia began to perform in the U.S., often programming Ponce's works for the guitar.

At least two factors contributed to the growing number of performances of Ponce's music in New York and the positive reviews of those performances between 1925 and 1932: the "Mexico Vogue" and the proliferation of "star performers." Many

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<sup>117</sup> For more information about this performance, see Chapter 1.

<sup>118</sup> See Ricardo Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo Sobre su Vida y Obra* (Mexico: Ríos y Raíces, 1998) 37-45; Emilio Díaz Cervantes and Dolly R. de Díaz, *Ponce: Genio de México* (Mexico: Federación Editorial Mexicana, 2003) 231-246.

of Ponce's *canciones* were performed on programs that were advertised as "Mexican." Such programs might include a set of Mexican songs or dances, or feature a singer known for her "Mexicanist" performances. These performances seem to have been encouraged by the "Vogue," drawing audience members from the Latino community as well as the mainstream population.

By contrast, the well-attended and widely reviewed performances by Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia do not appear to have been motivated by affection for Mexican culture, and audiences did not expect to hear Mexican music in his recitals. The guitarist's display of his Spanish heritage was the only nationalist emotion apparent in these performances. Furthermore, it appears that Segovia's primary motivation was a desire to promote the guitar and the classical repertoire written for that instrument. Audiences attended his performances, not because of his nationality, but because Segovia was a "star performer," internationally renowned for his artful interpretations.

The present chapter is the first study of performances of Ponce's music in New York during the late 1920s and early 1930s, and brings to light a previously unexamined relationship between Ponce's compositions and New York audiences. In order to understand the music chosen for these performances, the chapter begins with an examination of Ponce's *canciones*. This is followed by a brief description of the time and place in which the performances occurred—New York during the "Mexico Vogue"—and an examination of known performances of Ponce's songs there between 1925 and 1932. To deepen our understanding of the place of Ponce's *canciones* in New York during the "Vogue", we turn to two case studies. The first

concentrates on the New York career of Mexican soprano Clarita Sánchez, showing that she, a Mexican classical performer, found acclaim because she displayed her national identity in performance. The second provides an account of the performances by Russian violinist Jascha Heifetz of Ponce's famous *canción* "Estrellita." In these performances, a non-Mexican expressed affection for Mexican culture through Ponce's "Estrellita," appealing to "Vogue" audiences and more general audiences alike. Finally, we turn to the exceptional performances of Ponce's music by Andrés Segovia, studying these non-nationalist performances of his work and how they might have enhanced Ponce's reputation in the U.S.

### *Ponce's Canciones*

Ponce began writing the repertoire attractive to "Mexico Vogue" audiences fifteen years before it became popular in New York. By the end of his life, he had arranged or composed over sixty *canciones*, and his efforts to publicize and encourage composition in the genre resulted in many additions to the literature by other composers as well. The *canciones* remain among Ponce's most popular works, as demonstrated by the regularly released recordings of performances of this repertoire.<sup>119</sup>

As Ponce describes it in his essays, "La Canción mexicana" and "La Forma de la canción mexicana,"<sup>120</sup> the Mexican *canción* is a short work with a memorable melody and romantic lyrics set in a repetitive binary form. The entire principal

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<sup>119</sup> Eduardo Contreras Soto, "Fonografía de Manuel María Ponce," *Heterofonía* 118-119 (1998): 137-213.

<sup>120</sup> Ponce, "La canción Mexicana" in *Escritos y Composiciones Musicales*, an issue of *Cultura* 4, no. 4 (1917) 17-26; Ponce, "La Forma de la canción Mexicana" in *Nuevos Escritos Musicales* (Mexico: Editorial Stylo, 1948) 49-61.

melody is presented in the first half of the piece, which begins and ends in the same key. In the second half, there is a brief bridge, followed by the ritornello section of the melody. Then, typically, the first half of the composition is repeated. In his arrangements Ponce frequently harmonized the melodies with simple chords, however, he strove to emphasize the melody, believing it to be the most characteristic trait of the *canción*. The subject matter of *canción* lyrics varies, but most speak of love and many include poetic references to Mexican landscapes.

Most of Ponce's *canciones* are arrangements of well-known pre-existing Mexican *mestizo* melodies, including "A la orilla de un palmar," "Cuiden su vida," "Acuérdate de mí," and "Soñó mi mente loca." However, Ponce also composed a handful of original *canciones*, including the most famous of his works, "Estrellita." The form, lyrics, and melody of "Estrellita" are typical of the *canción* repertoire. A brief instrumental introduction presents a modulating and shortened version of the principal melody, followed by the A section in full in F major [Example 3-1]. Then there is a brief bridge, modulating to D minor, the repetition of the second half of the A melody, and a "del signo" return. "Estrellita" is, like so many other *canciones*, a love song; the protagonist sings his adoration to a star, an obvious substitute for a distant and desired lover.<sup>121</sup> Most important, as Ponce himself would have noted, is the melody, notable for phrases beginning with conjunct seconds and progressing to

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<sup>121</sup> The mythology surrounding "Estrellita" would have us believe that Ponce wrote the song as a tribute to his wife, Clema. There is, however, no dedication ascribed to recent editions; on the contrary there is a note, "'Estrellita' NUNCA FUE DEDICADA A NADIE por su autor."

leaps of a fifth and then a sixth in the upper register of the voice:



Example 3-1: The principal melody is stated in full after a six-bar introduction. The accompanying lyrics are: “Estrellita del lejano cielo, que miras mi dolor, que sabes mi sufrir, baja y dime si me quiere un poco porque yo no puedo sin su amor vivir.”

As can be seen from the above description and example, in most technical respects, the lyrics and musical form of the Mexican *canción* are similar to those found in many art songs and opera arias. Some lyrics, like those of “Estrellita,” are vague about place, but others, such as “A La Orilla de un Palmar” and “China de mi Alma,” refer to the Mexican landscape or people. During and after the Revolution such pieces were subsumed into nationalist discourse and became part of Mexican national musical culture.<sup>122</sup> As observed in Chapter 2, Ponce stated that works by Glinka, Brahms, Frédéric Chopin, Franz Schubert, and Edvard Grieg, who also used the folk music of their homelands in their compositions, served as models for Ponce’s *canciones*.

Although the New York public rejected Ponce’s 1916 recital because it was too overtly nationalist in the anti-Mexican environment of the time, it appears that the same audiences embraced performances of his nationalist *canciones* during the 1920s.

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<sup>122</sup> Leonora Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music.” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001): 19-24. Many scholars have examined this phenomenon in other cultures, perhaps beginning with Herder. For an excellent history of this discourse, see Richard Taruskin’s article, “Nationalism” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

The changed reaction to Ponce's music was part of a "Mexico Vogue" environment that affected opinions about many types of Mexican nationalist expression. By 1925, the number of U.S. newspaper articles recounting Mexican violence had decreased; in their place, many articles expressed curiosity about the post-revolutionary government and its reforms, admiration for the beauty of Mexico's natural environment, and genuine interest in Mexican culture.

The "Vogue" was made manifest by the increased travel between Mexico City and New York and the free flow of information between the two cities. "Mexico Vogue" writers included Mexican expatriates living in New York, U.S. expatriates living in Mexico City, or citizens of any country who traveled frequently between the two cities. Such writers often wrote for readers in both cities. For example, José Juan Tablada, a Mexican expatriate in New York, wrote a weekly column about Mexicans in New York for *El Universal*, but also published articles in U.S. magazines. Frances Toor, a U.S. expatriate living in Mexico, edited the bilingual magazine *Mexican Folkways*, which was published in Mexico City, but was nevertheless available to interested New Yorkers and written with a U.S. audience in mind.

Participants in the "Vogue" were interested in promoting Mexican culture for many different reasons. Some were simply attracted to Mexican life, art, food, or customs. Others admired the idealism some of the Mexican Revolutionaries expressed and believed that the Post-Revolutionary government was an encouraging experiment in left-wing governance. Some U.S. citizens believed that Mexico presented a less complex pre-modern utopia. Most Mexicans associated with the "Vogue" wished to ameliorate the image of Mexico portrayed in popular U.S. culture.

Because of the diverse reasons motivating “Mexico Vogue” participants to write, create, and perform works reflecting the positive aspects of Mexican culture, the information, images, and sounds presented to New York audiences were also diverse in nature. Yet, if one theme might be traced through the “Vogue” work of this period, it is an admiration for Mexican folk and popular traditions. One might follow this theme through a series of important Mexican folk art exhibits in the U.S.—the first in Los Angeles in 1922, the second in New York in 1928, and a third touring exhibit originating in New York in 1930.<sup>123</sup> One might also point to the growing amount of information available in the U.S. about Mexico, including that found in books by Anita Brenner, Carlton Beals, Elizabeth Morrow, and Stuart Chase; and articles in magazines such as *New Masses*, *The New Republic*, *Mexican Folkways*, and *Arts*.<sup>124</sup>

Most pertinent to the present study is evidence that the interest in Mexican folk art was manifested in the musical life of New York. For example, during the late 1920s touring Mexican *orquesta típicas*,<sup>125</sup> often funded by the Mexican government, visited New York frequently.<sup>126</sup> The *orquesta típica* repertoire included *canciones* and other works representative of national identity; one organization performed

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<sup>123</sup> James Oles, “For Business or Pleasure: Exhibiting Mexican Folk Art, 1820-1920” in *Casa Mañana: The Morrow Collection of Popular Arts*, ed. Susan Danly (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002).

<sup>124</sup> Helen Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1992).

<sup>125</sup> *Orquesta típicas* are large string-based ensembles that present the music of a certain country or region.

<sup>126</sup> “New York Concerts,” *Musical Courier*, 2 December 1926, 20; “Plans of Musicians,” *New York Times*, 21 November 1926, sec. x, 10; Winthrop P. Tryon, “With Hamlet Left Out,” *NYT*, 2 December 1926, 21; “Mexican Orchestra Acclaimed at Palace,” *NYT*, 13 March 1928, 23; Susan L Cost, “St. Louis Greets Tipica Orchestra,” *Musical America*, 31 March 1928, 29; C.E., “Colorful Music Will Mark Tipica Tour,” *Musical America* 10 January 1930, 10.

Ponce's *Balada Mexicana* in New York.<sup>127</sup> In 1928, the radio station WABC, with the support of the consul general of Mexico, began a series of programs about Mexican culture, including performances of Mexican music.<sup>128</sup> Guty Cárdenas and "Tata Nacho," the composers of many famous *canciones*, lived in New York during the mid-1920s. Cárdenas performed widely and made many recordings of *canción* arrangements.<sup>129</sup> "Tata Nacho" collaborated with Miguel Covarrubias for the "Rancho Mexicano" scene of the Broadway review, *The Garrick Gaities*.<sup>130</sup> *Mexican Folkways* printed copies of *canciones*, devoting one issue every year to Mexican folk music.

Given this environment, it is not surprising that many performers began including Ponce's *canciones* on their programs. According to programs printed in the *Herald-Tribune* and *Times*, Nina Koshetz sang Ponce's "Serenade" in her Carnegie Hall appearance,<sup>131</sup> Juan Pulido performed "Ya sin tu amor,"<sup>132</sup> Rosalie du Prene sang "Voy a partir" in her concerts,<sup>133</sup> and Richard Crooks performed "Marchita el alma."<sup>134</sup> In addition to these non-Mexican singers, at least five Mexican singers of note performed in New York during the period between 1925 and 1932: Rosa Domínguez (*sic*),<sup>135</sup> Manuel Millet,<sup>136</sup> Fanny Anitúa,<sup>137</sup> José Mojica,<sup>138</sup> and Clarita

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<sup>127</sup> "Plans of Musicians," *NYT*, 21 November 1926, 21.

<sup>128</sup> "Sección de Radio" *La Prensa*, 6 February 1928, 3.

<sup>129</sup> Enrique Martín, ed., *Guty Cárdenas Cancionero* (Mérida, Yucatán: Instituto de Cultura de Yucatán, 2006).

<sup>130</sup> José Juan Tablada, "Nueva York de Día y de Noche," *El Universal*, 31 May 1925, sec. 1, p. 3.

<sup>131</sup> "Programs of the Week," *NYHT*, 15 January 1928, sec. 7, 10.

<sup>132</sup> "Programs of the Week," *NYT*, 18 November 1928, sec. 9, 10.

<sup>133</sup> "Programs of the Week," *NYT*, 8 February 1931, sec. 8, 10.

<sup>134</sup> "Programs of the Week," *NYT*, 28 February 1932, sec. 8, 9.

<sup>135</sup> "Rosa Domínguez," *Musical America*, 21 April 1928, 22.

<sup>136</sup> Helen Ten Brock, "De Música," *La Prensa*, 7 March 1927, 3.

<sup>137</sup> "Programs of the Week," *NYT*, 11 November 1928, sec. 9, 10.

<sup>138</sup> "Music: José Mojica, Tenor, Greeted," *NYT*, 17 April 1932, 27; Y., "Mojica in Recital," *Musical America*, 25 April 1932, 38.

Sánchez. Domínguez gave a benefit costume recital that included Ponce's "Estrellita" and "Tata Nacho"'s "Borrachita." Millet performed Mexican, Cuban, and South American songs in his first New York appearance. Anitúa, a native of Durango, included Ponce's "A la orilla de un palmar" on a Carnegie Hall recital. Clarita Sánchez sang Ponce's *canciones* in many of her concerts in New York, detailed below. José Mojica only gave one performance in New York, which did not include a *canción* by Ponce.<sup>139</sup> However, Mojica did include such works in his concerts in other U.S. cities.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, the radio and the gramophone brought many closed studio recordings and distant concerts of Mexican music, including those by Mojica, into New York homes.<sup>141</sup>

Several *canción* performers emphasized the Mexican-ness of their concerts by dressing in Mexican or Spanish costumes, advertising the Mexican songs on their programs, or including Mexican and Latin American dancing in performances. Mojica drew attention to his "exotic" Mexican identity in several of his publicity photos. For example in one photograph advertising his recitals, Mojica wore a lavish *charro* outfit, stared off-camera with heavily lined eyes, and held a cigarette in his right hand [Example 3-2].<sup>142</sup> Mojica's stage name for his recitals was "Don José

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<sup>139</sup> "Hermoso Programa para el Concierto de Jose Mojica en el Town Hall el Sabado," *La Prensa*, 13 April 1932, 5.

<sup>140</sup> Mojica made recordings with Edison and Victor; while operatic repertoire predominates on his recordings they often included Latin American folk songs. Of particular interest: Ponce, "Lejos de ti," José Mojica, Edison 60049 (master no. 10383-A).

<sup>141</sup> For example, see notices about "Sueños Españoles," Angelita Loyo, and Los Aztecas in "Seccion de Radio," *La Prensa*, 8 February 1930, 6. Several New York radio broadcasts were announced in the *Times*: "Today's Radio Program," *NYT*, 2 April 1926, 22; "The Microphone Will Present," *NYT*, 26 January 1930, 120; "Today on the Radio," *NYT*, 31 January 1930, 28.

<sup>142</sup> "In the Costume of His Native Mexico—Señor Don José Mojica," *Musical Digest*, January 1929, 37.

Mojica,” and accounts of the performances report that he routinely wore a *traje* costume for a concluding section of Mexican serenades.



Example 3-2: Photograph of Mojica printed in *Musical Digest*, January 1929

Mojica was one of the best-known performers giving Mexicanist concerts, but similar performances by others proliferated in the mid-to-late-1920s. For example, David Dacca gave a performance in December 1925 that was clearly “Mexicanist” in content: he performed a Pueblo Indian song, two unattributed Mexican folksong arrangements (“Noche Serena” and “El Cefiro”), Yradier’s “La Paloma,” and LaForge’s arrangement of “Estrellita.”<sup>143</sup> Anitúa’s 1928 Carnegie Hall performance of “A la orilla de un palmar” occurred during a set that also included “Ya soy feliz”

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<sup>143</sup> “Current Programs in Detail,” *NYT*, 6 December 1925, sec. x, 11.

by “Tata Nacho” and “Canción Mixteca” by Avilés.<sup>144</sup> In an interview with *La Prensa*, Anitúa expressed her continued devotion to Mexico and Mexican culture, despite her frequent travels outside the country.<sup>145</sup> Rosalie du Prene performed a song recital with Julian Huarte and his Argentine Orchestra that included Ponce’s “Estrellita” and “Voy a partir” amidst many Latin American songs and dances.<sup>146</sup>

Performers of Mexican music had devoted followers in New York’s Latino community, as conveyed by the detailed reviews and articles found in *La Prensa*. The newspaper followed the activities of Clarita Sánchez,<sup>147</sup> Fanny Anitúa,<sup>148</sup> and José Mojica<sup>149</sup> with devotion. Recitals of singers performing Mexican music were often hosted and funded by organizations within the Latino community. These performers benefited from the proliferation of organizations such as the *Sociedad Mutualista Mexicana*, *El Centro Hispano Americano*, and *El Centro de Amigos* during the 1920s.<sup>150</sup>

Although the Latino community hosted, promoted, and applauded the concerts, support for Mexican musical performances in New York extended beyond it. In addition to Latino social organizations, wealthy New Yorkers without Latino roots were creating groups to promote Mexican culture. For example, the Roerich

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<sup>144</sup> “Programs of the Week,” *NYT*, 11 November 1928, sec. x, 30.

<sup>145</sup> “Veinticinco años de expatriación y fama no alejan a Fanny Anitúa de Méjico,” *La Prensa*, 16 November 1928, 1.

<sup>146</sup> “Programs of the Week,” *NYT*, 8 February 1931, sec. x, 10.

<sup>147</sup> Helen Ten Broeck, “De Musica,” *La Prensa*, 4 November 1926, 7; “Un interesante recital de canciones de España y Méjico habrá el domingo,” *La Prensa*, 14 February 1928, 2.

<sup>148</sup> “Concierto de Fanny Anitúa esta Noche en el Waldorf-Astoria,” *La Prensa*, 3 November 1926, 2; Fanny Anitúa Recibe una Larga Ovación,” *La Prensa*, 5 November 1926, 2; “Veinticinco años de expatriación y fama no alejan a Fanny Anitúa de Méjico,” *La Prensa*, 16 November 1926, 1.

<sup>149</sup> “Aclamado en una jira triunfal por las Antillas, José Mojica visita New York,” *La Prensa*, 7 April 1932, 1; “Hermoso programa para el Concierto de José Mojica en el ‘Town Hall’ el Sábado,” *La Prensa*, 13 April 1932, 5.

<sup>150</sup> See the “Sociedades Hispanas” page in *La Prensa*. It appears that many of these groups disappeared after 1929, probably because of economic hardships.

family, wealthy Russian émigrés, created similar opportunities for Mexican musicians through the foundation of the “Inter-American Group” of the Roerich Society, a concert series that frequently showcased Mexican singers.<sup>151</sup> Performers featured in the columns of *La Prensa* also attracted attention from the mainstream press, receiving mention in the columns of the *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Musical America*, and *Musical Courier*.

### *Clarita Sánchez*

Within this broader context, the recitals given by Clarita Sánchez are particularly remarkable because of the frequent and overt references to her Mexican identity in the accompanying mainstream press reports. Unfortunately, there is very little in the press about Sánchez’s biography. According to a *New York Herald Tribune* article, the singer came to New York in the 1920s to study voice with the former Metropolitan Opera coloratura, Marcella Sembrich.<sup>152</sup> The Mexican government funded her lessons, ostensibly in hopes that she would advance a positive image of Mexican culture abroad.<sup>153</sup> By 1923, she was advertised in *La Prensa* as the “brilliant Mexican soprano lauded in New York.”<sup>154</sup>

From 1925 to 1932, Sánchez performed at least nine recitals in New York, most of them during the mid-1920s. Like other performers, Sánchez used Ponce’s music to perform her national identity. Programs from some of her concerts, printed

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<sup>151</sup> “Programs of the Week,” *NYT*, 24 April 1932, sec. x, 7; “Programs of the Week,” *NYHT*, 24 April 1932, sec. vii, 7; “Programs of the Week,” *NYT*, 13 November 1932, sec. x, 7.

<sup>152</sup> “Clarita Sanchez, Mexican Soprano, Gives Concert,” *NYHT*, 17 November 1925, 17.

<sup>153</sup> J.A.H., “Recitals of High Caliber Fill New York’s Concert Halls,” *Musical America*, 28 November 1925, 30.

<sup>154</sup> “La Representación Artística de España e Hispano-América en los Estados Unidos,” *La Prensa*, February 1923 [supplement, no day given].

in the *New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune*, give us a sense of her repertoire. Among the Ponce compositions and arrangements included on her programs are: “A la orilla de un palmar,” “Marchita al alma,” “Las Mañanitas,” “Todo Pasó,” “La Pajarera,” and “Estrellita”.

Probably in an attempt to appeal to as broad an audience as possible, Sánchez’s performance identity extended far beyond Ponce’s music and “lo mexicano” in its most restrictive sense; she performed works from throughout the Ibero-American world, accentuating contemporary Spanish music almost as much as Mexican music.<sup>155</sup> Most of her recitals contained a significant section of songs from Spain and Latin America, including works by Falla and Albéniz. Press photos depicted Sánchez in a Spanish *mantilla*, emphasizing her Hispanic identity. Sánchez furthered her representations of the Latino world through the use of traditional dress in concert. Her costume recitals could be quite elaborate; in one recital, for example, she changed her apparel for each country represented in the program.<sup>156</sup>

The cultivation of a Pan-Hispanic identity was not unusual in vocal recitals of Latin American artists during this period. Many other singers performing Ponce’s work at the time presented similar recitals. Ponce’s *canciones* usually formed part of a Spanish-language group including works from Spain and Latin America.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> The tendency of Sánchez, Mojica, and other Mexican singers performing in the U.S. to emphasize the Spanish cultural influence in Latin America has a long history. Some scholars assert that this “Hispanic” approach might be a vehicle to avoid or counter anti-Latino or Mexican racism in the U.S. See David G. Gutierrez, “Migration, Emergent Ethnicity, and the ‘Third Space’: The shifting Politics of Nationalism in Greater Mexico,” *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 2 (September 1999): 481-517 and Roberto R. Treviño, “Prensa y Patria: The Spanish-Language Press and the Biculturalization of the Tejano Middle Class, 1920-1940,” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (November 1991): 451-472.

<sup>156</sup> “Spanish Song Recital,” *NYT*, 14 February 1927, 14.

<sup>157</sup> For example, Sophie Braslau’s Carnegie Hall performance of “Estrellita” occurred in a set including work by Falla and Obradors [“Concert Program,” *NYT*, 19 January 1930, sec. x, 10]. Lucrezia Bori

Whereas Spanish music had been popular for many years in New York, during the late 1920s, *mexicanidad* was becoming fashionable as well and, like Sánchez, more performers embraced their Mexican nationality in public. Furthermore, Sánchez's Hispanist presentation capitalized on stereotypes popularized through Hollywood films, which often presented Mexican "señoritas" dressed in Spanish costumes, emphasizing Spanish influence in Mexico and displaying a female exoticism associated with women from other cultures.<sup>158</sup>

Nonetheless, Sánchez viewed her performance of Spanish-language songs as an expression of patriotism. When asked by an interviewer why she performed these works, she answered:

[those songs] carry in their notes memories of the mountains, of the prairies, and of the distant land where we were born, the songs that our mothers sang to us when we were children, and stay recorded in our hearts; the songs of Mexico, of my homeland.<sup>159</sup>

From the beginning, Sánchez presented herself to critics as a representative of the Mexican government. Several of her concerts advanced Mexican cultural diplomacy. One of the Pan-American Union concerts, held in Washington, D.C. but broadcast in New York, featured Sánchez as a soloist.<sup>160</sup> During a New York concert, the stage was draped with Mexican, Spanish, and U.S. flags to pay tribute to the

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performed "Estrellita" over the radio alongside Yradier's "La Paloma," and Valverde's "Clavelitos" ["The Microphone Will Present," *NYT*, 13 March 1932, sec. x, 10].

<sup>158</sup> The depiction of this stereotype in film may originate with *Rose of the Rancho* (1914). See: Alfred Charles Richard, Jr., *The Hispanic Image on the Silver Screen* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992) 131. The film was re-made in the 1930s and starred Gladys Swarthout wearing similar costumes. Other films creating a similar image include *Buried Treasure* (1921) and *Girl of the Rio* (1931).

<sup>159</sup> "aquellas canciones que traen en sus notas recuerdas de las montañas, de las llanuras y de la tierra lejana donde hemos nacido, las canciones que nuestras madres nos cantaron cuando éramos niños y se quedan grabadas en el corazón; las canciones de Méjico, de mi patria." "Clara Sánchez: La Cantante Mejicana," *La Prensa*, 15 February 1928, 5. All translations by author unless otherwise noted.

<sup>160</sup> "Washington, D.C.," *Musical Courier*, 11 February 1926, 51.

Consul General of Mexico and the Consul General of Spain, both in attendance.<sup>161</sup>

The headlines for reviews of her concerts often included the words “Mexico” or “Mexican.”<sup>162</sup>

Generally, responses from New York critics toward the Mexican music on Sánchez’s concerts were overwhelmingly positive. Although reviewers varied in their evaluation of the singer, nearly everyone agreed that the sets of Mexican and Spanish folksongs were laudable. She became so recognized for this aspect of her programs that one of the few disapproving critics, writing for *Musical America*, referred to her as a “ward” of the Mexican government.<sup>163</sup> Sánchez’s performances were considered sufficiently marketable that she was recorded singing “Estrellita” and “Marchita el Alma.”<sup>164</sup>

#### *Jascha Heifetz and “Estrellita”*

Through the efforts of performers such as Sánchez, New York audiences learned more about Mexican culture and the *canción* tradition that was an integral part of it. Although Mexican folk music gradually became more familiar to New York audiences, only one *canción* became well-known to mainstream U.S. audiences: Ponce’s “Estrellita.”

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<sup>161</sup> “Clarita Sánchez Sings,” *NYT*, 20 February 1928, 14.

<sup>162</sup> *E.g.*: “Clarita Sánchez, Mexican Soprano, Gives Concert,” *NYHT*, 17 November 1925, 17; “Mexican Soprano in Recital,” *NYHT*, 9 November 1926, 20; “Clarita Sánchez Sings: Mexican Soprano Displays a Voice of Beautiful Quality at the Gallo,” *NYT*, 20 February 1928, 14.

<sup>163</sup> J.A.H., “New York Recital Week Includes Unusual Variety of Music,” *Musical America*, 13 November 1926, 11.

<sup>164</sup> Ponce, “Estrellita,” Clara Elena Sanchez, Vocalion 15191, 8053. Listed in Ross Laird, ed., *Other Non-U.S. Recordings and Indexes*, vol. 4 of *Brunswick Records: A Discography of Recordings, 1916-1931* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001). Ponce, “Marchita el Alma,” Clara Elena Sanchez, Vocalion 15289.

By 1930 the work was ubiquitous—it was on the radio, in the concert hall, and sold at the local sheet music store. Arrangements of nearly every imaginable variety existed, from traditional versions for voice and piano<sup>165</sup> to those written for instrumental trios,<sup>166</sup> organ,<sup>167</sup> band,<sup>168</sup> orchestra,<sup>169</sup> and violin.<sup>170</sup> Moreover it seems “Estrellita” was appropriate for any performing venue—from a Carnegie Hall art music concert to the local radio variety show. As a popular song in its own right, “Estrellita,” unlike other Ponce *canciones*, was occasionally performed in contexts that offered no reference to national identity.

Yet “Estrellita” retained its identification as a Mexican contribution to popular music literature, appearing as the token Mexican piece on many concerts featuring Latin American, Folk, or World music.<sup>171</sup> In most concerts “Estrellita” was grouped with other Mexican or Latin American songs, performed in costume, or identified in the program notes as “Mexican.” Covers to “Estrellita” scores often declared it a Mexican serenade, melody, or song, solidifying the connection for those playing it at home.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Voice and piano arrangements include: Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Charles Fonteyn Manney, in *Mexican and Spanish Songs* (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1928) 37-39; Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by N. Clifford Page (New York: Carl Fischer, 1927); Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Frank La Forge (New York: G. Ricordi and Co., 1923).

<sup>166</sup> Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged for violin, cello, and piano (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser Co., 1929); Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Edward G. Simon for two violins and piano (New York: C. Fischer, 1927).

<sup>167</sup> “Estrellita” arranged by Gordon Bach Nevin (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1928)

<sup>168</sup> Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Charles J. Roberts for piano and orchestra (New York: C. Fischer, 1927).

<sup>169</sup> Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Mayhew Lake for modern band (New York: C. Fischer, 1929).

<sup>170</sup> Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Jascha Heifetz (New York: C. Fischer, 1928).

<sup>171</sup> See David Daca listing “Current Programs in Detail,” *NYT*, 6 December 1925, sec. x, 11; Fanny Anitúa listing “Programs of the Week,” *NYT*, 11 November 1928, sec. x, 10; Rosalie DuPrene listing “Programs of the Week,” *NYT*, 8 February 1931, sec. x, 10; and Lucrezia Bori listing “The Microphone Will Present” *NYT*, 13 March 1932, sec. x, 16.

<sup>172</sup> See covers to the following arrangements distributed in sheet music form: Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by N. Clifford Page (New York: Carl Fischer, 1927); Ponce, “Estrellita” arranged by Frank

Perhaps the clearest and most interesting uses of “Estrellita” as a vehicle for “Vogue”- inspired performance were Jascha Heifetz’s concerts of the late 1920s. Heifetz first performed his now-famous rendition of “Estrellita” during the last Mexico City concert of his 1927 world tour (11 December 1927). Some of his most lauded concerts of the world tour occurred in Mexico, where reporters followed his every move, and audiences flooded halls in order to hear him play.<sup>173</sup> For the concert in question, Heifetz was requested to play something Mexican in origin. From a book of Mexican folk songs, he chose “Estrellita,” and arranged the simple vocal score into a vehicle to display his virtuosity. The resulting composition was the first of Heifetz’s arrangements for the violin; over subsequent years, he would make many such arrangements. The delicate tribute to Mexican culture, attributed to Ponce in the program, was greeted with wild applause. In response to audience requests, Heifetz repeated the work.

Heifetz was known for having a reserved and distant relationship with his fans, but he seemed unusually warm toward his Mexican audiences. In scrapbooks documenting the world tour, Heifetz collected many clippings from Mexican newspapers. For example, in one his oversize scrapbooks, over twenty pages are dedicated to the Mexico visit, more than any other country visit recorded in the same book.<sup>174</sup> An amateur photographer, Heifetz took pictures throughout this tour. Photographs from Mexico, some of them reprinted in music periodicals and

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La Forge (New York: G. Ricordi and Co., 1923); “Estrellita” arranged by Gordon Bach Nevin (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1928).

<sup>173</sup> See Appendix B for a list of articles written about Heifetz in Mexico City.

<sup>174</sup> Boxes 248, 253, and 254, Heifetz Collection, LC. The oversize scrapbook referenced here is in Box 248.

newspapers, show Heifetz near famous landmarks.<sup>175</sup> In a publicity photo from the same era, Heifetz wore a traditional Mexican *traje* while playing the violin.<sup>176</sup>

Heifetz's emotional connection with Mexican audiences and music was publicized in the U.S. press upon his return. Many profile articles described Mexican audiences throwing hats, jewelry, and flowers on stage in appreciation for the performances.<sup>177</sup> In an account of his activities, a reporter for *Musical Courier* wrote:

But of all gay and exciting and stimulating audiences, the Mexicans are the best. Down there a concert is a riot . . . And when they applaud they do it with all their might and work themselves into a perfect frenzy, which, however quick to start is just as quick to end when the player appears on stage for an encore or another number of the program.<sup>178</sup>

A few weeks after returning to New York, Heifetz began to tour in the U.S., making "Estrellita" a standard work on his programs.<sup>179</sup> U.S. audiences and critics, already familiar with the tune, embraced Heifetz's rendition.<sup>180</sup> In 1928, Carl Fischer published Heifetz's arrangement of "Estrellita" and in the summer of 1929, a recording of the violinist playing the song became available.<sup>181</sup>

The images of Mexico and Mexican culture propagated through Heifetz's publicity and U.S. tours contrast sharply with those found in the periodical literature a

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<sup>175</sup> Charles Drake, "Traveling with Heifetz," *Musical Courier*, 22 December 1927, 4; "World Tours and Shorter Ones," *Musical America*, 21 January 1928, 44.

<sup>176</sup> Boxes 248, 253, and 254, Heifetz Collection, LC.

<sup>177</sup> "Throwing Hats at Heifetz," *NYT*, 25 December 1927; "Jascha Heifetz in Recital Here After Two Years Absence," *New York Review*, 31 December 1927; Jascha Heifetz, "Around the World with a Fiddle," *The World Magazine*, 25 March 1928, 5; "Heifetz Returns After Two Years Circling World," *New York Herald Tribune* [n.d.]. Box 264, Heifetz Collection, LC.

<sup>178</sup> "Heifetz Returns from World Tour" *Musical Courier*, 5 January 1928, 22.

<sup>179</sup> For a list of Heifetz performances in which "Estrellita" was listed on the program, see Appendix B.

<sup>180</sup> "Heifetz Stirs Audience," *NYT*, 30 January 1928; "New York Concerts," *Musical Courier* 2 February 1928, 32; "Heifetz Gets Tremendous Ovation in Violin Recital at Mizpah," *Syracuse Herald*, 5 January 1929; "Heifetz Gives Fine Concert," *Times Herald* (Dallas), 5 April 1929. Box 264, Heifetz Collection, LC.

<sup>181</sup> Ponce, "Estrellita" arranged by Jascha Heifetz (New York: C. Fischer, 1928); "Concert Music Records," *New Yorker*, 25 August 1929, Box 264, Heifetz Collection, LC.

decade earlier.<sup>182</sup> For example, although the *Musical Courier* article quoted above refers to the Heifetz recital as a “riot,” the audience members described in the *Musical Courier* account are also cultured—they immediately became quiet in deference to a performer of the classical violin. Heifetz’s Mexico was warm-hearted and culturally aware, with audiences engaged in the celebration of high art. The heft of Heifetz’s Mexico scrapbook indicates a personal affection for the culture. More importantly, the reception of his performances of “Estrellita” signals a wider cultural shift within the U.S. – one that welcomed positive images of Mexican culture.

### *Andrés Segovia*

Heifetz’s performances of “Estrellita” and the recitals of Clarita Sánchez provide evidence of the influence of the “Mexico Vogue.” It is tempting, given the strength of this evidence, to attribute all of the positive reception given Ponce’s music in 1920s New York to the “Vogue.” The reception of Andrés Segovia’s recitals, which often included Ponce’s music, proves such an assumption wrong. Instead, the popularity of these concerts seems to have been based on Segovia’s own attraction for the press and the novelty of his campaign on behalf of the guitar as a classical instrument.

From his very first New York concert in 1928, the U.S. press adored him. Most of Segovia’s New York concerts included at least one work by Ponce, and the guitarist often voiced his preference for Ponce’s compositions.<sup>183</sup> Segovia’s New

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<sup>182</sup> See Chapter 2 for more about the period preceding the “Vogue.”

<sup>183</sup> “Ponce is the greatest for the guitar, melodically, harmonically, and musically. You know, in Ponce everything is magnificent for the guitar . . .” Graham Wade, “Manuel Ponce,” *Andres Segovia* (London: Robson Books, 1986) 87.

York performances between the first concert in 1928 and the last concert of 1932 included Ponce's *Theme, Variations, and Finale; Sonata Mexicana; Sonata Romántica*; several *canciones* arranged for guitar; and the "Suite in A," attributed to Baroque composer Sylvius Weiss, but actually written by Ponce.<sup>184</sup>

With very few exceptions, the Ponce compositions that Segovia performed were different from the simple *canciones* appearing on recital programs of the time. Ponce and Segovia enjoyed a close friendship, especially during the late 1920s when Ponce was living in Europe and Ponce composed almost all of his guitar music especially for Segovia in close consultation with the performer. Aside from the handful of *canción* arrangements for the guitar and the *Sonata Mexicana*, Ponce's first large work for the guitar, there are few references to Mexican folk music within these works. Far more common are works that demonstrate Ponce's facility with complex Western forms.

Ponce's *Theme, Variations, and Finale* was frequently featured in Segovia's programs, and it typifies the compositional style of Ponce's works for guitar. Most of the variations in the work use a bass line first presented in the opening bars, an idea borrowed from the Baroque passacaglia. The melody forms a simple ABABA' pattern. Its most identifiable feature is a sequenced pattern of seconds that is presented in the A section. The B section is characterized by a descent in the upper line from A to D. The reliance on sequences and decorative fast-moving notes gives

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<sup>184</sup> The attribution to Weiss was a joke Ponce and Segovia conceived of together. The work was composed in the style of J.S. Bach but Ponce and Segovia were disinclined to attribute the work to such a well-known composer. After some consideration, they settled on the lesser-known Weiss, who composed in a similar style. Fritz Kreisler's musical jokes were probably used as a model. Miranda observes that the work continues to be misattributed in programs and disc notes. See: Miranda, "Exploraciones," *Ensayo*, 115.

the melody a Baroque sound [Example 3-3]. To the Baroque form and melody, Ponce added post-Romantic, semi-impressionist harmonies, at times set in close dissonances and at other times spaced beyond the octave [Example 3-4].

**Andante un poco mosso**

Example 3-3: On top of a low slow-moving passacaglia pattern, a baroque-like melody forms two recognizable sequence patterns, the first in measures 1-4 and the second in measure 6.

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**VAR. III Allegro moderato**

**VAR. IV Agitato**

C III

Example 3-4: Variations III and IV, demonstrate the variety of harmonization techniques used in Ponce's composition. Whereas Variation III presents a closed pattern of 3rds, Variation IV is more open with an emphasis on the melody.

The display of Western form, melody, and harmony in the *Theme, Variations, and Finale* is typical of Ponce's work for the guitar. By playing this music in New

York, Segovia offered listeners access to more complex works by Ponce. In truth, these works were more representative of Ponce's compositional style as a whole than the simple *canciones*.

It is difficult to detect any display of Mexican national identity in Segovia's performances of Ponce's music. Although the guitarist occasionally performed some of Ponce's nationalist compositions, including arrangements of Mexican *canciones*, Segovia's recitals were not understood to be displays of Mexican nationalism. If Segovia manifested any nationalist tendencies on his programs, they were, naturally, reflective of his own Spanish heritage and the Spanish origins of the guitar. Many of the composers whose works appeared in Segovia's concerts were Spanish; examples include Fernando Sor, Manuel de Falla, Frederico Moreno Torroba, Enrique Granados, Isaac Albéniz, Joaquín Turina, Francisco Tárrega, and Felipe Pedrell. In reviews, Ponce was occasionally listed with these other names as one of the many Spanish composers featured on Segovia's programs.<sup>185</sup> Unlike programs and reviews of Sánchez's recitals, even in accounts with accurate biographical information about the relevant composers, there was no emphasis on Ponce's nationality. *Folias d'Espagne* and *Concierto del Sur*, two of Segovia's favorite pieces by the composer, both evoked images of Spain rather than Mexico. However, it appears from press material surrounding his U.S. tours, that while Segovia's recitals might have demonstrated pride in Spain and Spanish music, the dominant purpose was the promotion of the guitar as a classical instrument and the establishment of the importance of the guitar music literature.

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<sup>185</sup> "Segovia Again Charms," *NYT*, 12 January 1928, 24; Francis Perkins, "Andres Segovia Opens His Season," *NYHT*, 20 January 1930, 11.

The frequent performances of Ponce's music in Segovia's recitals rarely elicited comment from reviewers. Although reviews of Segovia's concerts were generally positive, when critics wrote about the music he performed, they tended to emphasize the older music on his programs. J.S. Bach's lute music, Segovia's arrangements of Bach and Scarlatti for the guitar, and the inclusion of Sor's compositions were frequent topics in reviews of Segovia's recitals. The "Suite in A," masquerading as a piece by Weiss, elicited more comment from New York reviewers than any of Ponce's other compositions.<sup>186</sup>

*After the "Vogue"*

Similar performances of Ponce's music continued through the 1930s and 1940s. During this period, as in previous years, Ponce's *canciones* were featured in vocal or instrumental recital programs, and Segovia toured in the U.S. performing Ponce's guitar music. Three performances of Ponce's music from these decades departed from the patterns established during the late 1920s and deserve particular attention: the performance of his "Preludes for Cello and Piano" on the 6 March 1932 League of Composers concert, the performance of *Chapultepec* by the Philadelphia Orchestra on 21 November 1934, and the U.S. premiere of *Concierto del Sur* on 13 January 1946 by Segovia and the New York Philharmonic.

The League of Composers concert featured music by composers throughout the Americas, including Chávez's *Sonatina* for violin and piano and Ponce's

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<sup>186</sup> "Segovia Recalled by Audience 16 Times," *NYT*, 20 January 1930, 16.

*Preludes*.<sup>187</sup> The performance occurred three weeks before the premiere of Chávez's *H.P.* with the Philadelphia Orchestra, possibly because the League wished to promote Chávez's music in advance of the ballet premiere. Regardless of the League's motivation, the music community's excitement about the upcoming *H.P.* performance drew notice to the Chávez work at the expense of the other works on the program. As a result, Ponce's music received very little attention.

Ponce faced a similar problem when the Philadelphia performed his *Chapultepec* alongside William Dawson's *Negro Symphony* and Harl MacDonald's "The Santa Fé Trail." Dawson's symphony, the second composed by an African-American to be performed by a major symphony orchestra in the U.S., was the most interesting work for critics, and resulted in relatively little commentary about Ponce's *Chapultepec*.<sup>188</sup>

Chávez had a role in selecting the repertoire for both the League performance and the Philadelphia Orchestra performance of Ponce's music.<sup>189</sup> This marked a departure from the patterns developed during the 1920s, when almost all performances of Ponce's music reflected the performer's desire to place a work on a program. The reliance on Chávez's advice for the selection of Mexican concert material became increasingly common during the 1930s. Chávez's influence among

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<sup>187</sup> "League to Give A Pan-American Program," *NYHT*, 28 February 1932, sec. VII, p. 7; H.H. "Music in Review," *NYT*, 7 March 1932; F.D.F., "Composers' League Gives Works from 7 Countries," *NYHT*, 7 March 1932; C., "No Halt in Concerts During Lenten Season: League Presents Third Concert," *Musical America*, 25 March 1932, 26.

<sup>188</sup> Olin Downes, "Stokowski Gives American Works," *NYT*, 21 November 1934, 22; W.J. Henderson, "Stokowski Offers 3 Novelties," *New York Sun*, 21 November 1934, 16; Leonard Lieblich, "Stokowski Leads Three Novelties of Merit," *New York American*, 21 November 1934, 13; Pitts Sanborn, "Negro Music Played Here at Carnegie," *New York World Telegram*, 21 November 1934, 17.

<sup>189</sup> Sanborn to Chávez, 8 Nov. 1934, c. 10, v. VI, exp. 165, "Correspondencia Personal," Chávez Archive, AGN; Claire Reis to Chávez, 19 Dec 1930 and Chávez to Reis, 7 Jan. 1931, c. 8, v. I, exp. 85, "Correspondencia Personal," Chávez Archive, AGN.

U.S. musicians and critics allowed him to shape the presentation of Mexican music within the U.S.

In addition to serving as an advisor for U.S. performers interested in playing Mexican music, Chávez was also often consulted by those writing about Mexican musical life. As a result, although the number of articles about music in Mexico published in the U.S. increased during the 1930s and 1940, Chávez and his students were more frequently featured. Articles including information about Ponce usually cast him as a past master, even though he was still writing music and garnering acclaim from Mexico City audiences.<sup>190</sup>

It does not appear that Chávez participated in any way in the 1946 U.S. premiere of Ponce's guitar concerto, *Concierto del Sur*. Two U.S. performances of the work were given in January 1946, the first in New York City and the second in Washington, D.C. Unlike the reviews of the League and Philadelphia Orchestra concerts, reviews of the 1946 concerto performances often included biographical information about Ponce and analysis of his music. *Concierto del Sur* was lauded widely<sup>191</sup> and was canonized in the guitar repertoire shortly thereafter. However, the acclaim accorded the guitar concerto proved momentary and did not help Ponce develop a sustained reputation in the U.S.

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<sup>190</sup> Verna Arvey, "Mexico's Significance in Present Day Music," *Etude* 54, no. 2 (February 1936): 79-80, 129. Elgin Groseclose, "Mexico's Artistic Development," *NYT*, 8 Nov. 1936, sec. x, 7. Charles Poore wrote a series of articles for *The Musician* in 1940 and 1941. Some of the articles mention Ponce but none of them discuss his music or seriously consider the value of his music. Examples include: Poore, "Daniel Ayala and Racial Music," *The Musician*, July 1940, 122-123; "Mexico Finds Art a Nationalizing Force," *The Musician*, January 1941, 6; "Mexico Has Its Nationalists," *The Musician*, February 1941, 25; "Mexico Sponsors Music for the Masses," *The Musician*, May 1941, 88; "Music in Mexico," *The Musician*, October 1941, 156.

<sup>191</sup> Noel Straus, "Segovia Presents a Novel Program," *NYT*, 14 January 1946, 14; Virgil Thomson, "Guitar with Orchestra," *NYHT*, 14 January 1947, 11; Alice Eversman, "Segovia is Accorded Ovation in Appearance with Orchestra," *Star* (Washington, D.C.), 28 Jan. 1946, sec. B, 2.

### *Ponce's New York Legacy?*

Despite the numerous and well-regarded performances of Ponce's *canciones* and guitar works in New York during the late 1920s and early 1930s, Ponce never achieved the reputation apparently required for lasting influence within the New York music community. It appears that one contributing factor was Ponce's absence from New York, which prevented him from participating in the promotion of his own music in the U.S. Instead, performers programmed and promoted his work as they saw fit. The common practice of grouping Ponce's works with compositions by other composers did not encourage audiences to develop a taste for Ponce's compositions; rather it massed Ponce with other Mexican or Latino composers.

Possibly because Ponce was not exerting pressure on publishers and writers, there are no known articles published in the U.S. during the late 1920s analyzing his style or offering accounts of his biography. The work by Ponce most recognizable to U.S. audiences became "Estrellita," a modest popular song that did not demonstrate the composer's artistry in larger forms and more complex styles of composition. Although Segovia's recitals did include Ponce's more complex music, they did little to educate audiences about the composer, because the performer, not the composer, was the subject of reviews, and his instrument served as the focal point of the recitals. Without more exposure to his music or recognition of his work in the press, New Yorkers were never able to recognize the composer for the breadth of talent he possessed.

As Chávez became increasingly well-known in the U.S. during the 1930s, he quickly overshadowed most other Mexican classical composers, including Ponce. As

a result, performances of Chávez's music in the U.S. were most widely and attentively reviewed, his view of musical life in Mexico influenced most accounts published in the U.S., and his tastes often governed programs of Mexican or Latin American classical music in the U.S.

For these reasons, scholarly accounts of musical life in New York rarely mention Ponce. Yet concerts of his music are remarkable; performers featuring Ponce's *canciones* on their programs offered a cultured and refined presentation of *mexicanismo* at odds with the "greasers" depicted in early Hollywood films. While Chávez used his personal influence to propagate his Mexicanist aesthetic during the 1930s, the performances of Ponce's *canciones* detailed in this chapter came many years earlier. Such performances helped reform the image of Mexicans in the press, making Chávez's attempts to cultivate New York audiences for Mexican music easier in the years that followed.

## Chapter 4: Carrillo and Sonido 13 in New York, 1925-1932.

In 1926, just as Mexican culture was becoming a focus of the New York press, Julián Carrillo, once dubbed “the herald of a musical Monroe Doctrine,”<sup>192</sup> returned to New York. A decade earlier, Carrillo had attracted notice from New York newspapers and magazines for his single performance as director of his American Symphony Orchestra.<sup>193</sup> Following the performance, Carrillo solicited manuscript scores from contemporary composers residing throughout the Americas for performance with American Symphony Orchestra. As a result, he was viewed as a would-be musical diplomat.

During the 1926 visit Carrillo once again gained attention. However, this time it was not his diplomacy but his modernism that drew interest. In 1926, Carrillo brought a new approach to composition with him to New York. He called it ‘Sonido 13’ to indicate its use of microtones—that is, tones beyond the traditional twelve notes of the chromatic scale. First proposed in a small theoretical document published in 1923,<sup>194</sup> by 1926 Carrillo and his students had demonstrated the potential of Sonido 13 microtonality through concerts of new works held in cities throughout Mexico. In addition to composing and performing, Carrillo continued to expand his hypothesis about microtones into an integrated new approach to composition. News of his theoretical and compositional progress was reported to followers through a self-published Spanish-language periodical *Sonido 13*. Although his new compositional

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<sup>192</sup> María Cristina Mena, “Julián Carrillo: The Herald of a Musical Monroe Doctrine,” *The Century Magazine*, March 1915, 753-759.

<sup>193</sup> See Chapter 2 for more information about this performance.

<sup>194</sup> Carrillo, *Pláticas Musicales* (Mexico: Julián Carrillo, 1923) 225-274.

methods were derided by many members of the Mexican musical establishment, New York modernists and critics seemed interested in Carrillo's music and theories.

When Carrillo became frustrated by the poor Mexican reception of his music and theories, he traveled to New York, expecting to find a new more positive evaluation. Carrillo's second extended visit to New York lasted over two years, from the winter of 1925/26 to the spring of 1928. Over that period, Carrillo expanded his theory, writing three treatises about *Sonido 13*,<sup>195</sup> and continued, albeit sporadically, to publicize his progress through his magazine, *Sonido 13*, now published in New York in bilingual English/Spanish editions.

Perhaps most significantly, while in New York, Carrillo participated in two performances of his music. The first was a concert hosted by the League of Composers in March 1926, which featured the composer's *Sonata Casi Fantasia* for a chamber ensemble of microtonal instruments. The second, a year later, was a performance by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra who played an orchestrated version of the same piece, re-titled *Concertino*, assisted by a small ensemble of microtonal instruments. In advance of both concerts, New York music periodicals published articles explaining Carrillo's theories, notation, and musical style. After each performance, reviews appeared in nearly every New York newspaper.<sup>196</sup>

This chapter constitutes the first systematic study of Carrillo's activities in New York and the reception of his music there. Recent studies by Alejandro

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<sup>195</sup> The three treatises are: *Pre-Sonido 13* and *Teoría Lógica de la Música, Las Leyes de Metamorfosis Musicales*. See below for analysis of their contents and applicability.

<sup>196</sup> See Appendix D for a list of relevant reviews.

Madrid,<sup>197</sup> Luca Conti,<sup>198</sup> and Ernesto Solís Winkler<sup>199</sup> have shed new light on the composer's compositional methods and activities in Mexico, and, to a lesser extent, in Europe, but rarely mention his activities in the U.S. Earlier biographical books and articles, including those by Gerald Benjamin,<sup>200</sup> E.R. Blackaller,<sup>201</sup> José Rafael Calva,<sup>202</sup> Alfred Pike,<sup>203</sup> and Laurette Bellamy<sup>204</sup> refer to Carrillo's 1926-1927 visit to New York, but most include few details. The autobiographical accounts, *Testimonio de una vida* and *Julián Carrillo: Vida y Obra*, do provide information about Carrillo's 1926-1927 visit to New York, but provide subjective narratives largely written or shaped by the composer and his close circle of acolytes. Thus, this chapter is both more comprehensive and more objective than previously published accounts.

The chapter is organized chronologically. It begins with an investigation into the origins of the Sonido 13 theory and a description of its basic tenets. This is followed by an examination of some of the first microtonal music Carrillo produced and the early reception of his microtonal music and theories in Mexico City. After a study of the reception of Carrillo's music and theories before his arrival in New York

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<sup>197</sup> Alejandro Madrid, "Writing Modernist and Avant-Garde Music in Mexico: Performativity, Transculturation, and Identity After the Revolution, 1920-1930," (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2003).

<sup>198</sup> Luca Conti, "Introducción crítica al 'Sonido 13' de Julián Carrillo," *Heterofonía* no. 123 (2000): 75-88.

<sup>199</sup> Ernesto Solís Winkler, "La revolución del sonido 13: Un ensayo de explicación social," (Master of History Thesis, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, 1996).

<sup>200</sup> Gerald Benjamin, "Una deuda cultural saldada: la contribución de Julián Carrillo a la música del futuro," *Revista Musical Chilena* 158 (1982): 60-7.

<sup>201</sup> E. R. Blackaller, *La revolución musical de Julian Carrillo* (México, D.F.: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1969).

<sup>202</sup> José Rafael Calva, *Julian Carrillo y microtonalismo: 'la visión de moisés'* (México, D.F.: CENIDIM, 1984).

<sup>203</sup> Alfred John Pike. "The Discoveries and Theories of Julián Carrillo, 1875-1965," *Inter-American Music Bulletin* no. 55 (September 1966): 1-4.

<sup>204</sup> Laurette Bellamy, "The 'Sonido Trece' Theoretical Works of Julian Carrillo: A Translation with Commentary," (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1972).

in 1925, the chapter provides a detailed account of Carrillo's visit there from 1926 to 1928. Finally, the after effects, or lack thereof, of Carrillo's visit are examined.

### *The Invention of Sonido 13*

The first time Carrillo introduced his thoughts about the utility of microtonal compositional techniques to the Mexican public was in 1923, with the publication of his second book of *Pláticas Musicales* (Music Lectures), which included a chapter titled, "El Sonido Num. 13 – Algunos Antecedentes."<sup>205</sup> Here Carrillo suggested that the music of the future would move beyond whole-tones and half-tones into the realm of smaller divisions of tones. As the self-proclaimed "discoverer" of the 13<sup>th</sup> tone, Carrillo implied that he would play a central role in this inevitable musical development:

We are on the eve of witnessing one of the transcendental events that has occurred in musical technique not only since the Renaissance or medieval period but since the beginning of the Christian Era . . . The thirteenth sound is going to start a real revolution.<sup>206</sup>

The ideas presented in "El Sonido Num. 13—Algunos Antecedentes" were limited to the two most basic tenets of the theory: that the whole tone could be subdivided into sixteen portions and that the human ear could distinguish each of them. Over the next few months and years, Carrillo would augment his theory,

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<sup>205</sup> Carrillo, *Pláticas Musicales*, 225-274. Carrillo claimed the chapter stemmed from a letter he wrote to the editors of the Parisian periodical *Le Ménestrel*. The magazine did not print his letter and I have not seen definitive evidence that it was written or sent. Nonetheless, Carrillo correctly recalled that an article about microtones appeared in the 19 May 1922 issue: E.C. Grassi, "L'Orient et la Musique de l'Avenir," *Le Ménestrel*, 19 May 1922, 225-226. Ernesto Solís Winkler believes it was this article that motivated Carrillo to formalize his theory.

<sup>206</sup> "The Thirteenth Sound," *Musical Advance*, May 1923, 1.

devising a new notation, commissioning the creation of microtonal instruments, and proposing compositional techniques to assist those wishing to write microtonal music.

In 1923, when the second *Pláticas* was printed, Carrillo was a prominent member of the Mexico City music community, serving as the conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra and as a Professor of Composition at the National Conservatory of Mexico. His leadership within the music community made him a frequent target for those dissatisfied with his reforms. One of the most visible signs of unrest occurred in February 1923 when a group of students revolted against the implementation of pedagogical and institutional changes, requesting Carrillo's removal.<sup>207</sup> Despite his prominence and the frequency with which his name appeared in Mexico City newspapers, the new theoretical material presented in Carrillo's second *Pláticas* was not reported upon in Mexican newspapers for several months.

The theory reached a wider audience in 1924, following the re-publication of the *Pláticas* chapter in serial form in the first three issues of Carrillo's new periodical titled *Sonido 13*. Apparently already the cause of disagreements within his circle of colleagues, Carrillo wrote that the purpose of those creating the magazine, "to dedicate their efforts only and exclusively to the progress of musical art," had been derailed by "the small-minded character assassinations that never disappear and enemies who, because they lack artistic personalities, do not matter to the universal movement."<sup>208</sup> Following the publication of the *Pláticas* chapter in the *Sonido 13*

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<sup>207</sup> "La Dirección del Conservatorio Nacional de Música," (?) February 1923, [n.p.], scrapbooks, Julián Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>208</sup> "'EL SONIDO 13' hará abstracción en sus momentos de lucha, si es que ésta se presenta, de todo interés personal, para dedicar sus esfuerzos única y exclusivamente al progreso del arte musical, pues son tantos y tan variados los problemas técnicos por resolver, que sería lamentable distraer esfuerzos de un fin tan noble y alto, y detenernos a combatir pequeñeces de carácter que nunca faltan y enemigos

magazine, the argument within the elite music community about the value of Carrillo's new techniques of microtonal composition became increasingly public. Luis Delgadillo, a Nicaraguan composer living in Mexico City, was the first to declare in print his skepticism about the applicability of Sonido 13 techniques. On 24 May 1924, an article by Delgadillo appeared in *El Demócrata* challenging Carrillo to support his theory in a scientific manner.<sup>209</sup> In defense of Sonido 13, Carrillo wrote his own article for *El Demócrata*, published on 29 May 1924, responding to Delgadillo's every accusation and belittling his musical training throughout the document.<sup>210</sup> Predictably, the article did little to defuse the situation; rather it fanned the discussion into a very public and personal debate.

Within weeks Delgadillo had recruited eight Mexico City composers to join his campaign against Sonido 13: Alba Herrera y Ogazón, Ignacio Montiel y López, Estanislao Mejía, Ernesto Henríquez, Jesus C. Romero, Pasqual H. Toral, Manuel Barajas, and Roberto Gutiérrez Arreola. The argument quickly migrated from the pages of *El Demócrata* to *El Universal*, one of the largest and most influential newspapers in the city. Those in the group, known as "The Nine," wrote articles for local newspapers and held radio broadcasts in which they stated their opposition to Carrillo's ideas.<sup>211</sup> They attacked Carrillo's claims directly, challenging him on scientific and aesthetic grounds.

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que, por falta de personalidad artística, poco significan el movimiento universal." Carrillo, "Nuestro Programa," *El Sonido 13* 1, no. 1 (January 1924): 1-2.

<sup>209</sup> Delgadillo, "Notas de Arte Musical: Critica Sobre el Sonido 13, del Maestro Carrillo," *El Demócrata* (Mexico City), 24 May 1924, sec. 1, p. 3.

<sup>210</sup> Carrillo, "El Sonido 13," *El Demócrata* (Mexico City), 29 May 1924, sec. 1, p. 3.

<sup>211</sup> A list of some of the most significant articles published in *El Universal* can be found in: Solís Winkler, 371-372.

In June 1924, the Sonido 13 theory received an additional blow from an unexpected corner; the young modernist composer Carlos Chávez wrote an article in *El Universal* titled “El Cruti Hindú y el Cuarto de Tono Europeo.”<sup>212</sup> Superficially, the article appeared to be a straightforward account of the history of microtones in world music. Because it was published in the midst of debates about the value of Sonido 13, the article was widely interpreted as an attack on Carrillo’s claim that he had been the first to discover the applicability of microtones in classical composition. Any doubt about the target of “El Cruti Hindú” was erased with the publication of another article by Chávez, “La Importación en México” which presented Chávez’s problems with Sonido 13 in more direct terms.<sup>213</sup>

To Chávez’s articles, Carrillo responded angrily, writing an article published in *La Antorcha*, which was reprinted in his *Sonido 13* magazine.<sup>214</sup> It is possible that Chávez’s articles were written in retaliation for Carrillo’s refusal to premiere the younger composer’s works in 1921.<sup>215</sup> However, regardless of the motivation behind

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<sup>212</sup> Chávez, “El Cruti Hindú y el Cuarto de Tono Europeo [part 1],” *El Universal* (Mexico City), 24 Aug. 1924, sec. 3, p. 11; Chávez, “El Cruti Hindú y el Cuarto de Tono Europeo [part 2],” *El Universal* (Mexico City), 31 Aug. 1924, sec. 3, p. 11.

<sup>213</sup> Chávez, “La Importación en México,” *La Antorcha* (Mexico City), 11 Sept. 1924, reprinted in Chávez, *Obras I: Escritos Periodísticos (1916-1939)*, ed. by Gloria Carmona (México: El Colegio Nacional, 1997) 51-61.

<sup>214</sup> Carrillo, “El Sonido 13,” *La Antorcha*, 29 Nov. 1924, quoted in Chávez, *Obras*, 51.

<sup>215</sup> Stevenson wrote that Carrillo refused to perform *El Fuego Nuevo* [Stevenson, *Music in Mexico*, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, 1952]. No evidence of Carrillo’s rejection of *El Fuego Nuevo* was found in either the Chávez or Carrillo personal archives. However, in his autobiography, Carrillo remembers refusing to perform a different composition by Chávez, *Sinfonía de la Patria*. A letter from Carrillo to Chávez from 1921 indicates that the younger composer invited Carrillo to concerts featuring new compositions. The letter reads: Mucho agradezco la amabilidad que tuvo Ud. de invitarme a sus conciertos . . . Deseo que continúe Ud. por el camino emprendido y que tenga todo el éxito que su talento tan justamente hace esperar. Con todo afecto, Ud. Manda a su muy atento servidor y amigo. [Much thanks for your kindness in inviting me to your concerts . . . I hope that you continue along your current path and that you have all the success that justifiably awaits your talent. With much affection from your servant and friend]; Carrillo to Chávez, 16 June 1921, c. 3, v. I, exp. 12, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN. Leonora Saavedra discusses this exchange in her dissertation; her discussion of José Vasconcelos’ role is particularly interesting, although tangential to

their publication, the articles began a period of open enmity between the composers that lasted through the rest of their lives.<sup>216</sup>

### *The First Performance of Sonido 13 Music*

Pressured by his detractors to produce evidence of the theory's efficacy and responding directly to a request from José Gómez Ugarte, the editor of *El Universal*,<sup>217</sup> Carrillo organized the first concert of microtonal music in Mexico City. The performance, funded and promoted by the *El Universal* newspaper and radio station, occurred 15 February 1924.<sup>218</sup> The program included several works by Carrillo's students—Rafael Adame, Elvira Larios, and Soledad Padilla—as well as five of Carrillo's own works.<sup>219</sup> Over the following months, this concert was repeated many times as Carrillo led the musicians in his performing ensemble, nicknamed "El Grupo 13," in a tour of Mexican and Texan cities. The press reports surrounding these

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the present discussion. See, "Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001) 123.

<sup>216</sup> Upon gaining control of the National Conservatory, Chávez employed many of Carrillo's former students, elevating them to important government posts. Such favors were never bestowed upon Carrillo. Chávez followed Carrillo's career and participated in several efforts to discredit him, as documented in the AGN. Interviews with Carrillo conducted late in his life evidence continuing resentment toward Chávez and his participation in the 1924 debate. See José Velasco Urda, "El Maestro Carlos Chávez," *Julián Carrillo: Su Vida y Obra* (Mexico: Edición del 'Grupo 13 Metropolitano,' 1945) 371-379. For more description of Chávez's hiring practices, including the admittedly impressive qualifications some of Carrillo's former student brought to their posts, see Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others," 229-238.

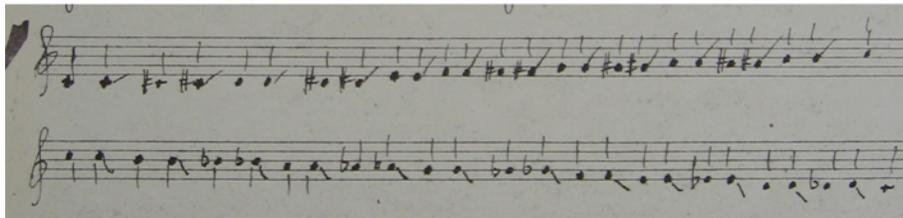
<sup>217</sup> *El Universal*, 2 December 1924.

<sup>218</sup> For more information about this performance see Luca Conti, "Preludio a Colón, Tepepan, Horizontes: proceso compositivo y estrategias formales en dos diversas fases del Sonido 13 de Julián Carrillo," *Heterofonía* 128 (January-June 2003) 9-32.

<sup>219</sup> Program: Rafael Adame, Guitar Prelude in Quarter Tones; Elvira Larios, Melody for Female Voices; Adame, Capricho for Guitar in Quarter Tones; Soledad Padilla, "¡Oh Salutaris Hostia!" for voices and instruments; Larios, Melody for solo instruments in 16<sup>th</sup> tones; Carrillo, *Preludio a Colón* for soprano in quarter tone and instruments in 16<sup>th</sup> tones; Carrillo, "Ave Maria" in eighth and sixteenth tones; Carrillo, Prelude for Obligato Cello in quarter tones; Carrillo, "Tepepan" for voices and harp in quarter tones; Carrillo, "Hoja de Album" for instruments in quarter, eighth, and sixteenth tones. Carrillo, *Testimonio de una vida* (San Luis Potosí: Comité Organizador, 1994) 224.

performances indicate that many of them were greeted with anticipation and pleasure.<sup>220</sup>

Among the works on the program, only one is still performed and studied: Carrillo's *Preludio a Colón*. Probably Carrillo's first microtonal work, *Preludio* is among the best examples of his early approach to microtonal composition. At this stage, Carrillo notated his music by altering the traditional style, indicating microtones through the attachment of diagonal lines to note heads [Example 4-1].



Example 4-1: Quarter-tone scale written in altered tonal notation.<sup>221</sup>

Later Carrillo derived a numeric notation in which he assigned a fixed number to every 16<sup>th</sup> tone, starting with C=0 and ending with B+15/16=96. Thus a quarter-tone scale in C major would begin: 0, 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, etc. with the numbers 0, 16, and 32 representing C, D, and E respectively. The octave placement of the numerically notated pitches were indicated by placement relative to a single horizontal line augmented by a ledger line placed, when needed, above and below the central line. Numbers written on the central line were to be played in the octave above middle C, numbers above the line an octave higher, and numbers on a ledger line two octaves above. Duration was indicated through the appearance or non-appearance of stems, adapted from traditional notation. The “translation” of an excerpt from

<sup>220</sup> “El Sonido Trece en Linares,” 26 July 1925; “Julián Carrillo sale en Jira Artística,” *La Prensa*, San Antonio, Texas, 1925; “La Conferencia Sobre el Sonido 13, Oída en Jalapa,” *El Universal*, 21 Nov. 1925; “Producer of 13th Sound Will Give Concert Here,” *Tampico Tribune*, 15 July 1925 in Scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>221</sup> Carrillo, 2 *Bosquejos*, Manuscript Score, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" was offered to *Musical America* readers as a way of explaining the system [Example 4-2]. It is this later system that was used to create the well-known edition of *Preludio a Colón* published by the *New Music Quarterly* in 1944 and excerpted in the examples that follow.<sup>222</sup>



Example 4-2: Translation of Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony into Carrillo's microtonal notation. Printed with permission from *Musical America*.

As others have noted,<sup>223</sup> in *Preludio* Carrillo combines traditional and avant-garde approaches, relying upon tonal relationships to structure the work while elaborating those relationships in a microtonal foreground. Thus, while form and harmony are governed by Western tonality, it is the melody that best exhibits Carrillo's microtonal innovations. Carrillo demonstrated his facility at composing microtonal music from the very beginning of the work through a long, haunting line exchanged between the soprano and violin [Example 4-3].

<sup>222</sup> Carrillo, Julián, "Preludio a Cristobal Colón," *New Music* 17, no. 3 (April 1944).

<sup>223</sup> For a more detailed analysis of *Preludio* see Madrid, 46-69.



only the *arpacitera*, a harp constructed for the express purpose of realizing Carrillo's microtonal music, slides in a direction contrary to the other instruments while playing 16<sup>th</sup>-tone glissandi. This is perceived as a superficial addition to the principal lines.

The lack of harmonic complexity in *Preludio* is one indication of the difficulties *Sonido 13* presented to Carrillo. Bereft of the systematized procedures developing out of traditional tonal harmonic composition, Carrillo needed to create a method suited to microtones. Harmony continued to provide obstacles for the composer in microtonal works written over the next several years. In *Preludio*, the inflexible approach toward harmony seems to have limited the structure; the entire work elaborates E, never modulating to another key [Example 4-4].<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

The musical score consists of three systems of staves for Flauta, Soprano, Violin, Arpa, Guitarra, and Octavina. The first system shows the initial entries of the instruments. The second system, marked *un poco movido*, features a *poco a poco rall.* section where the violin line descends while the guitar line ascends. The third system is marked *largo* and includes *ppp* dynamics and *armonios* markings. The score is heavily annotated with pitch class numbers and dynamic markings.

México, 13 de Noviembre de 1934

Example 4-4: In the middle stanza, the violin moves downward whilst the guitar line rises. The final cadence reiterates the centrality of pitch class E. Permission granted by the current holders of the copyright, Carl Fischer, on behalf of Jobert.

*Advance Press in New York for Sonido 13*

Despite the acclaim accorded the “Grupo 13” concerts in other Mexican cities, opposition to Sonido 13 remained formidable among Mexico City musicians. During 1924 and 1925, Carrillo faced strenuous opposition to his theories from his colleagues at the Conservatory. Perhaps in response to Mexico City musicians’ derisive attitudes toward his microtonal compositions, Carrillo decided to leave Mexico and share his music and theories abroad.<sup>225</sup> He quit his positions at the Conservatory and as director of the National Symphony, and, in the winter of 1925-26, he moved to New York City. During the period between Carrillo’s first trip to New York (1914-1915) and his second trip (1926-1928), the cultural life of New York underwent significant changes. Most importantly, the city became an international center for modernist music. In the mid-1920s, New York’s modernist musicians exhibited a particular interest in microtonal music. The recent studies of Eastern European folk music conducted by Belá Bartók and Zoltan Kodaly as well as increasing recognition of refined musical developments in cultures outside the Western tradition, such as Indian classical music, had made Europeans and Americans aware of the use of quarter-tones in world music. Experimentalists, admired by those participating in modernist music circles of New York, had long shown interest in microtones. And New Yorkers had recently received news of Alois Habas’ compositions in quarter tones, available in score form but unperformable on available instruments.<sup>226</sup>

Reviews, articles, and advertisements in music periodical issues printed from 1924 to 1926 demonstrate the depth of this interest. During 1924, *Musical Advance*

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<sup>225</sup> A more detailed account of this history may be found in Solís Winkler, 93-95.

<sup>226</sup> Downes describes this music in the following article, Olin Downes, “Opera,” *New York Times*, 15 February 1925, 26.

published several articles about Moriz Stoehr's creation of a quarter-tone piano.<sup>227</sup> Half of the March 1925 issue of *Pro-Musica Quarterly* was dedicated to the subject of the quarter-tone and its possibilities for the contemporary composer, including an extensive article by Charles Ives.<sup>228</sup> The publication of the periodical issue followed a lecture on 8 February 1925 about quarter-tones in Chickering Hall by E. Robert Schmitz, the director of *Pro-Musica*, and a concert of quarter-tone music on 14 February in Aeolian Hall, featuring quarter-tone compositions by Ives and Hans Barth.<sup>229</sup>

Perhaps because Carrillo's *Sonido 13* music offered new ideas about the composition of microtonal music, New Yorkers showed intense interest in Carrillo's *Sonido 13* compositional method long before the composer's visit to their city. The *Musical Advance*, a publication that had heralded Carrillo's arrival to New York in 1914, was the first to share *Sonido 13* with New Yorkers. In May 1923, just months after the publication of *Pláticas Musicales*, the magazine printed a translated version of the *Sonido 13* chapter, dedicating nearly an entire issue to Carrillo's article. A postscript to the version of the article printed in *Pláticas Musicales* indicates that Carrillo had guaranteed *Musical Advance* the right to publish the material first.<sup>230</sup>

The February 1925 concert of *Sonido 13* music in Mexico City also attracted attention from New York publications, leading to two series of articles explaining Carrillo's theory to interested readers of *Musical America* and the *Musical*

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<sup>227</sup> "When the Curtain Rises," *Musical Advance*, September 1924, 18; W.V.A., "The American Quarter-Tone Piano," *Musical Advance*, November 1924, 18.

<sup>228</sup> Charles Ives, "Some Quarter-Tone Data," *Pro-Musica Quarterly*, March 1925, 24.

<sup>229</sup> Advertisement, *Pro-Musica Quarterly*, March 1925, 43.

<sup>230</sup> *Pláticas Musicales*, (1923) 274.

*Advance*.<sup>231</sup> Among the most significant articles was one printed in *Musical America* describing Carrillo's invented notational system, probably the first detailed explanation of his notational method before the writing of *Pre-Sonido Trece* in 1926.<sup>232</sup>

In early 1925, Carrillo announced his intention to move to New York through articles published in the Mexico City press.<sup>233</sup> Numerous plans for performances followed, many documented in the *Sonido 13* periodical. In August 1925, Carrillo wrote of plans to write a symphony for a large orchestra and a Cello Concerto in 16<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> tones.<sup>234</sup> As evidence of his progress, he printed the first page of the symphony on the cover of *Sonido 13*,<sup>235</sup> using the invented notation described in *Musical America*. According to an article in *Sonido 13*, Carrillo intended to premiere the symphony in New York.<sup>236</sup> A few months later the composer relayed a request from the Pan-American Union in Washington, D.C. for the organization of a concert of microtonal *Sonido 13* music to be transmitted by radio in October.<sup>237</sup> U.S. "Grupos 13" formed and requested that the composer arrange opportunities for the members to learn about his compositional methods and music. Such writers suggested that Carrillo publish his magazine in multiple languages and send instructors to the U.S. to

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<sup>231</sup> William Spier, "Advanced Musicians in Mexico Use Quarter-Tones and New Notation," *Musical America*, 4 April 1925, 9; Carrillo, "Music Without Tones and Semitones," *The Musical Advance*, June 1925, 1; William Spier, "Mexican Composer Proposes New Quarter-Tone Notation," *Musical America*, 15 August 1925, 18; "Sixteenth Tones Radiate from Whole Tones Through the Prism of Carrillo," *Musical America*, 6 February 1926, 43; Carrillo, "History and Mystery of 13<sup>th</sup> Sound," *Musical Advance*, May 1926, 3; Carrillo, "Is the Epoch of the New World in Sight?" *Musical Advance*, November 1926, 4.

<sup>232</sup> Carrillo wrote the text in 1926 but it was not published until 1930.

<sup>233</sup> These articles were reprinted in *Sonido 13*. "El Sonido 13 Recorre el Mundo," *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 11 (15 June 1925): 3.

<sup>234</sup> Cover, *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 15-16 (August 1925).

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>236</sup> Reprint of article in *El Universal Gráfico*, *Ibid.*, 11-13.

<sup>237</sup> "Continental," *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 19 and 20 (October 1925): 13.

teach others how to play microtones.<sup>238</sup> Some of these performance plans were alluded to in articles for the *Musical Advance*<sup>239</sup> and *Musical America*.<sup>240</sup> The attention from New York publications was noted in the Mexico City press, resulting in articles in *El Universal Gráfico* and *El Universal* that were then re-printed in *Sonido 13*.<sup>241</sup>

### *Preparing for Sonata Casi Fantasía in New York*

The announced plans to offer New York premieres of a microtonal symphony and cello concerto were never realized. The final draft of the symphony was not completed until 1930 and that of the Cello Concerto in 1945;<sup>242</sup> neither was performed in New York City. Carrillo refused the opportunity proffered by the Pan-American Union almost immediately because he did not have time to recruit and train a group of musicians by the proposed concert date.<sup>243</sup>

Shortly after Carrillo arrived in New York in January 1926, the League of Composers commissioned a work from him for performance in one of their concerts, resulting in the premiere of Carrillo's *Sonata Casi Fantasía* in March 1926.<sup>244</sup> In less than three months, Carrillo recruited a small group of performers [Example 4-5], trained them to play new microtonal instruments, and composed the *Sonata*. In his

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<sup>238</sup> *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 8 (3 April 1925): 14-15.

<sup>239</sup> Carrillo, "Music Without Tones and Semitones," *Musical Advance*, June 1925, 3.

<sup>240</sup> William Spier, "Mexican Composer Proposes New Quarter-Tone Notation," *Musical America*, 15 August 1925, 18.

<sup>241</sup> From *El Universal Gráfico*, "El Señor D. Luis C. Ortiz," *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 8 (3 April 1925): 8; from *El Universal*, "El Sonido 13 Recorre el Mundo," *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 11 (15 June 1925): 3-4.

<sup>242</sup> Omar Hernández-Hidalgo, *Catálogo integral del archivo Julián Carrillo* (San Luis Potosí: Editorial Ponciano Arraiga, 2000).

<sup>243</sup> "Continental," *El Sonido 13* 2, no. 19 and 20 (October 1925): 13.

<sup>244</sup> Carrillo recounts this chronology in his autobiography, *Testimonio de una vida* (San Luis Potosí: Comité Organizador, 1994) 234.

autobiography, Carrillo remembered writing the work in a “few days”<sup>245</sup> and recalled that the musicians had met for forty-eight rehearsals, each one three hours long.<sup>246</sup>



Example 4-5: The inscription at the left is in the composer’s hand. It reads: “First ‘Grupo 13’ of New York that performed Julián Carrillo’s Sonata Casi Fantasia in 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 16<sup>th</sup> tones in Town Hall, 13 March 1926; the first group to do so in the world.” Emil Mix holds the *octavina* and Margarita Rein stands next to the *arpacitera*. Permission to use the photo granted by Carmen Viramontes in behalf of the Archivo Julián Carrillo.

Although he had initially planned to offer performances of several works, *Sonata Casi Fantasia* was the only work by Carrillo played that evening. The composer used the rest of his allotted time to offer a brief lecture and demonstration about Sonido 13, assisted by the performing musicians, and to repeat the work, allowing audience members another chance to observe the microtonal techniques. *Sonata Casi Fantasia* was preceded by Schoenberg’s wind quintet (op. 26) and

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

followed by Emerson Whithorne's *Saturday's Child* and Ernest Toch's *Tanz-Suite*.

The program was released to New York newspapers at least a week before the concert, leading to preview articles in the press.<sup>247</sup>

### *Sonata Casi Fantasia*

*Sonata Casi Fantasia*, like the *Preludio* composed several years earlier, reveals a combination of traditional and radical compositional techniques. The microtonal scales and timbres were new, exhibited upon a set of instruments created to perform Sonido 13 music, including a microtonal horn and an altered bass called an octavina [Example 4-5]. The form and harmony were not as innovative as the melodies, but instead were based upon traditional tonal practices.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> E.g., "New Native and European Compositions to Be Heard," *NYT*, 7 March 1926, sec. x, 6.

<sup>248</sup> Carrillo admired and idolized Beethoven, promoting Beethoven's works in Mexico throughout his career as a conductor. However, although the title, *Sonata Casi Fantasia* recalls the two piano sonatas by Beethoven labeled "quasi una fantasia," (Op. 27, no. 1 and 2), the Beethoven works do not appear to have served as models for the *Sonata Casi Fantasia*.

Handwritten musical score for cello solo, featuring five staves of music. The score includes dynamic markings such as *Solo*, *p*, *mf*, *all*, and *lento*. There are also articulation marks and a sequence of numbers (99, 91, 90, 89, 88, 87, 86, 85, 84, 83, 82, 81, 80) written below the final staff. A handwritten note at the bottom right reads: (1) Este número indígena 16<sup>avos</sup> de tono.

Example 4-6: Cello solo passage between two movements of *Sonata Casi Fantasia*. Permission use excerpts of the autograph score granted by Carmen Viramontes in behalf of the Archivo Julián Carrillo.

As in *Preludio*, it was in scalar passages like the one found in example 4-6 through which Carrillo most ably presented the innovations of *Sonido 13*. Such passages not only demonstrated the various new tones found in the microtonal scales of *Sonido 13*, but they also exhibited the new timbres of Carrillo’s invented instruments. Realizing that the most avant-garde aspects to *Sonata Casi Fantasia* were found in the melodies and timbres it presented, Carrillo wrote in the program notes for the League concert that the purpose of the work was, “to illustrate the possibilities which the development of the instruments themselves offer to the composers of the future ...”<sup>249</sup>

<sup>249</sup> League of Composers Program, 14 March 1926, Scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

In addition, during a demonstration preceding the performance, the composer urged listeners to pay close attention to the melodies of the work.<sup>250</sup> Accordingly, favorable New York reviewers found the scales to be the most valuable aspect of Carrillo's work. In her article for the *New York Evening Post*, Olga Samaroff noted that:

the demonstrations of the new scales by single instruments were so interesting. . . that I did not even attempt to find form or significance in the work from the point of view of composition. Good, bad, or indifferent, it certainly presented a musical experiment that was extremely interesting.<sup>251</sup>

As in *Preludio*, Carrillo struggled to create a harmonic language amenable to the use of microtones. Olin Downes observed, "There is very little harmony—a few combinations of quarter-tones—and this is very suggestive—but the net result was the charting of a certain field of experiment rather than an achievement of artistic significance." Much of the harmonic movement is in parallel thirds—with one note a quarter-tone higher or lower than normal. In the first thematic section of the work [Example 4-7], the monotony of this approach is mitigated by a little counter melody, also moving in parallel thirds. The larger-scale harmonic motion apparent in this passage is derived from tonal procedures, elaborating a G-major/minor chord, which arrives in the third measure of the example.

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<sup>250</sup> Carrillo's lecture is described in, Olga Samaroff, "Music," *New York Evening Post*, 15 March 1926, 13.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

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A

Handwritten musical score for the first half of the first thematic section of Sonata Casi Fantasia. The score is written on two systems of staves. The first system includes staves for Violin I (Vn I), Violin II (Vn II), Cello (Cl), Viola (Vla), Clarinet (Cl), and Bassoon (Fg). The second system includes staves for Violoncello (Vcl), Viola (Vla), Clarinet (Cl), Bassoon (Fg), and Bass (Cb). The music is in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The score is marked with a large 'A' at the beginning of the first system.

Example 4-7: The first half of the first thematic section of *Sonata Casi Fantasia*.

Everywhere, Carrillo combined innovative new scales with third-based harmonies grounded in the tonal system. Even the most adventurous sections of the work demonstrated this combination. The music at rehearsal section K [Example 4-8], falls at the end of the development section and can sound extremely avant-garde. The most radical sounds come from the microtonal glissandi of the *arpacitera* and the slow moving microtonal scale in the *octavina*. Yet, despite the unique timbres and tones of the *arpacitera* and *octavina*, the compositional approach of this section is similar to that found elsewhere. At first the microtonal scales are supported by block chords, played by the strings and the horn. Then the cello and horn break away to exchange variations of the first theme, only to be interrupted by a riotous scalar passage in the upper strings, drowning out the melody. Throughout, microtonal scales and glissandi are combined with block chords. The only significant difference in the harmonies presented by this passage from the harmonies found in *Preludio* and other parts of *Sonata Casi Fantasia* is the growing harmonic tension between the violin and guitar, which spell clashing chords in the second system. But this dissonance is resolved in the next few measures when a series of ternary block chords sequence to E.

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The image shows a handwritten musical score on a single page, numbered '12' in the top right corner. The score is arranged in a system with five staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled: V (Violin), Vn (Viola), C (Cello), A (Double Bass), and Vn (a guitar-like staff, possibly a double bass or electric guitar). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The guitar-like staff features a fretboard diagram with numbers 26, 24, 22, 20, 18, 16, 14, 12, 10, #7, 6, 4, 2, 0, 4, 2. The score is written in a cursive, handwritten style.

Example 4-8: One of the most experimental passages occurs after rehearsal K.

The adherence to the strictures of sonata form, the application of Baroque-style sequences, and the use of tertiary harmony demonstrate the conservativeness of Carrillo's approach in *Sonata Casi Fantasia*. However, as the composer recognized, the work sounded radical because it introduced new timbres and melodic formulations to audiences. Furthermore, it presented a new type of microtonal music to a modernist public curious about the applicability of microtones in contemporary music, generating enormous interest among critics and concert-goers.

#### *Reception of Sonata Casi Fantasia*

Numerous critics attended and reported on the 13 March 1926 League concert. Reviews appeared in several periodicals including the *New York Times*, *New York Telegram*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *New York Evening Post*, and *New York Sun*.<sup>252</sup> Nearly every critic, from the conservative W.J. Henderson to the modernist Pitts Sanborn professed interest in Carrillo's theory and devoted significant space to *Sonata Casi Fantasia* in their reviews of the concert. Reviewers in New York were far more inclined than their Mexican counterparts to view experimentation with microtones in a positive light; however, with few exceptions, New York critics were dissatisfied with Carrillo's music.

Those most approving, such as Sanborn and Olga Samaroff, went to great pains to excuse the perceived structural and harmonic flaws in the composition. For example, Sanborn confessed that, "The sonata consists largely of scale passages and glissandi, sometimes fascinating in color and cadence, at other times unduly suggestive of normal music played more or less out of tune." But, in the next sentence

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<sup>252</sup> See Appendix D.

he cautioned, “However there is no underrating the importance of Mr. Carrillo’s chosen task, whether it is destined radically to influence the future or not.”<sup>253</sup> Other critics did not offer such excuses for Carrillo and his music, judging it to be “naïve and tentative”<sup>254</sup> and “an exhibition of chromaticism and nothing more.”<sup>255</sup>

Although the reception of *Sonata Casi Fantasia* had been mixed, Carrillo found the excitement about Sonido 13 encouraging and he eagerly shared the news of his successes with his more skeptical colleagues in Mexico City through the Mexican press. Upon arriving in New York, Carrillo wrote a letter to the editor of *El Universal*, informing him of the formation of a “Grupo 13” in the city and of plans to premiere a work with the League of Composers. The letter was subsequently printed in the newspaper. A few weeks later, following the concert, a shortened and translated version of Olin Downes’ review was printed in *El Universal*.<sup>256</sup> Another *El Universal* article summarized the reviews printed in various New York periodicals.<sup>257</sup> The excerpts of reviews printed in *El Universal* were among the most positive evaluations of Carrillo’s work. Months later, the composer printed similar excerpts in a special issue of the *Sonido 13* magazine, the only issue to be printed entirely in English [Example 4-9].

Perhaps the greatest encouragement came from someone who did not even attend the League concert—Leopold Stokowski. Shortly following the concert of

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<sup>253</sup> Pitts Sanborn, “The ‘New’ in Music,” *New York Telegram*, [n.d.]. Scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>254</sup> “Composers’ League Demonstrates New Conception in Music,” *New York Herald Tribune*, 14 March 1926, sec. 1, 22.

<sup>255</sup> W.J. Henderson, “Demonstrate New Musical Scale,” *New York Sun*, 15 March 1926, 19.

<sup>256</sup> “El Maestro Carrillo Explicó en Nueva York su Teoría del Sonido Trece,” *El Universal*, [n.d.] March 1926. Scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>257</sup> “La Prensa Musical Elogía a Julián Carrillo,” *El Universal*, 25 April 1926. Scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

*Sonata Casi Fantasia*, Stokowski requested an interview with Carrillo and his “Grupo 13.”<sup>258</sup> After studying the music and hearing a performance and demonstration, Stokowski requested that Carrillo write a composition that could be accompanied by the Philadelphia Orchestra in whole and half tones. This request led to a new arrangement of *Sonata Casi Fantasia* for orchestra and chamber group which Carrillo titled *Concertino*. Stokowski made plans to premiere the work in the spring of 1927.



Example 4-9: The first page of the only English-language issue of *El Sonido 13* that Carrillo would publish. Unlike the other issues of the magazine, which range between twenty and twenty-five pages in length, this issue is four pages. Permission to include a photograph of the publication granted by Carmen Viramontes in behalf of the Archivo Julián Carrillo.

<sup>258</sup> Carrillo recalled the meeting in *Testimonio de una vida*, 237.

*After Sonata Casi Fantasia: Writings in New York*

Assured of a Sonido 13 performance with the Philadelphia Orchestra and encouraged by the reception of his *Sonata Casi Fantasia*, Carrillo remained in New York during the year between the League concert in March 1926 and the Philadelphia Orchestra performances in March 1927. A few months after the League concert, Carrillo distributed the first English language *Sonido 13* magazine. More like a pamphlet than a periodical, the magazine was just four pages long and frankly promotional in content. It contained one article introducing Sonido 13, a reprint of excerpts from reviews of the March 1926 concert, and an open letter by Carrillo to the editors of *Le Ménestrel* in response to a series of articles printed in that publication the previous January.<sup>259</sup> The review excerpts creatively hid the hesitations expressed by most critics, splicing sentences with no ellipses or other indications of editing.

The following three issues of the *Sonido 13* magazine were bilingual, for the most part written in Spanish by Carrillo and others, and translated by Mary Lindsey-Oliver into English.<sup>260</sup> The bilingual issues are between twenty and twenty-five pages in length—much larger than the single four-page English language issue. Although the same length as the earlier Spanish language *Sonido 13* magazines, they have about half the information, because space is allotted to the translations. Each bilingual issue contained one significant theoretical article, usually excerpted from Carrillo's previously published theoretical treatises.

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<sup>259</sup> E.C. Grassi, "Reconstruire," *Le Ménestrel*, 22 Jan. 1926, 34; E.C. Grassi, "Reconstruire," *Le Ménestrel*, 29 Jan. 1926, 45. Although the editors of *Le Ménestrel* never printed Carrillo's letters, they did include a short notice about the League of Composers' concert [see Maurice Léna, "États-Unis," *Le Ménestrel* 26 March 1926, 152].

<sup>260</sup> Copies of the *Sonido 13* magazine can be found in the Carrillo Archive and the Biblioteca of CENIDIM. Carrillo's followers published additional magazines under similar titles, but these seem to be the last magazine publications by the composer under this title.

The first bilingual edition, dated 13 October 1926, was an expanded version of the small English-language issue mentioned above. It included extensive excerpts from newspaper reviews of the League concert, and a reprint of the open letter to *Le Ménestrel* that Carrillo had first printed in the English language magazine. Of primary interest in the 13 October issue are the advertisements for three business ventures, each related to Carrillo's mission to propagandize on behalf of microtonal compositional techniques. In the first advertisement, the "Grupo 13," managed by bassist Emil Mix, announced their willingness to work-for-hire as an ensemble, claiming a specialty in all kinds of microtonal music. Another advertisement promoted a musical academy giving instruction in microtonal music and non-microtonal masterworks. The third advertisement was for the magazine itself and it appended a new subtitle to the publication—"The Herald of America's Musical Culture"—borrowing Pan-American language from the profile article about Carrillo printed in *Century Magazine* in 1915.<sup>261</sup>

While the advertisements found in the October issue give some indication of the activities Carrillo wished to embark upon in New York and how he hoped those activities would be regarded, the theoretical writings found in the November and January issues demonstrate how Carrillo wished to convey the tenets of Sonido 13 to a new audience. The 13 November issue provided an analysis of ways Sonido 13 might assist contemporary composers of all genres, broadening the appeal of the theory beyond those interested in microtonal music. The 13 January 1927 issue's

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<sup>261</sup> María Cristina Mena, "Julián Carrillo: The Herald of a Musical Monroe Doctrine," *The Century Magazine*, March 1915, 753. For more information about this article and its significance, see Chapter 1.

theoretical article provided further justification for the creation of a new system of composition and notation.

The promotional language in the Sonido 13 treatises and the magazines published in the U.S. give some indication of the image Carrillo wished to cultivate in New York. In both Mexican and U.S. publications Carrillo frequently referred to the “revolutionary” aspects of “Sonido 13.”<sup>262</sup> Such references appear to reflect Carrillo’s desire to ally his inventions with the political, social, and cultural changes of the Mexican Revolution. However, the word “revolutionary” has a double meaning—in this context it also refers to Carrillo’s attempts to link his theory to the broader modernist movement. Words such as “progress”<sup>263</sup> or “advance”<sup>264</sup> are frequently found in Carrillo’s writings. Although Carrillo’s claims of nationalism and modernism were linked in his promotional material, only the experimentalist language resonated with New York critics and journalists.

### *Theoretical Treatises*

While in New York, Carrillo wrote two theoretical books that explained aspects of Sonido 13—*Pre-Sonido 13* and *Teoría Lógica de la Música*—and began a third, *Las Leyes de Metamorfosis Musicales*. Although they were not available until several years later, these books indicate some of the principal theoretical problems absorbing the composer during the late 1920s. *Pre-Sonido 13*, written around 1926

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<sup>262</sup> “El Sonido Num. 13 – Algunos Antecedentes,” *Pláticas Musicales* (México: Julián Carrillo, 1923) 225-274; “The Thirteenth Sound,” *Musical Advance*, May 1923, 1; “Teoría del Sonido 13,” *El Universal*, 17 Sept. 1924, sec. 1, p. 4.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*

and published in 1930 offers, “a general rectification of the musical system now in use, and . . . the first fully developed music theory and logical notation for equal temperament.”<sup>265</sup> It does not explore the tenets of the Sonido 13 compositional technique; rather it explains the inherent problems, as Carrillo perceived them, in current musical practices. Although problems with existing practices in temperament and notation had absorbed Carrillo since at least 1911, when he proposed alternate note spellings at a musical congress in Rome, *Pre-Sonido 13* is the first text in which Carrillo formally presented these ideas as antecedents to his microtonal compositional techniques.

*Teoría Lógica de la Música*,<sup>266</sup> is an expanded version of his early theoretical articles about *Sonido 13*. It offers a more complete description of Carrillo’s notational system, including its applicability to microtonal music, and a description of the tones and scales employed in his microtonal music. By 1927, when Carrillo wrote *Teoría Lógica de la Música*, he had already presented ideas for a new notation in *Musical America*<sup>267</sup> and alluded to the creation of a new notational system in the program notes for the League concert. However, although instances of composition using numeric notation occurred in *Sonata Casi Fantasía*, it is important to note that as of this date, Carrillo had not used the notation in a systematic way. The reasons were probably practical: numeric notation proved difficult for accomplished musicians to follow, as it was substantially different from common practice.

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<sup>265</sup> Carrillo, *Pre-Sonido 13*, México: Privately Published, 1930.

<sup>266</sup> Carrillo, *Teoría lógica de la música*, México: Privately Published, 1938.

<sup>267</sup> See “Mexican Composer Proposes New Quarter-Tone Notation,” *Musical America*, 15 August 1925, 18.

*Leyes de Metamorfosis musicales and the composition of Concertino*

It was a different, but equally practical concern that motivated Carrillo to write a third book in New York, *Leyes de Metamorfosis musicales*.<sup>268</sup> In that book, Carrillo explained the technique of metamorphosis whereby the composer exercises systematic mathematical manipulation of the numerical spelling of a note to arrive at a transformation of a musical line. For example, as demonstrated in example 4-2, if one had a quarter-tone piece with C as tonic, then the numerical spellings would be as follows: C=0, C+1/4=4, C#=8, C+3/4=12, D=16, etc. Using “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” the original first phrase’s numeric spelling of the melody would be 0, 0, 56, 56, 72, 72, 56. If one wanted to metamorphose by half, one would merely divide the numbers by 2: 0, 0, 28, 28, 36, 36, 28 leading to a melody that sounds quite a bit different: C, C, D+3/4, D+3/4, E+1/2, E+1/2, D+3/4.

In *Leyes de Metamorfosis musicales*, Carrillo frequently alludes to his use of metamorphosis in *Concertino*. For example, he states:

Use of metamorphose to the double can be heard in my orchestral ‘*Concertino*,’ mentioned previously. In this work, soloists use quarter-tones, 8<sup>th</sup>-tones, and 16<sup>th</sup>-tones. In the orchestral accompaniment, the quarter tones are metamorphosed to the double for the orchestra which accompanies on a semitonal basis.<sup>269</sup>

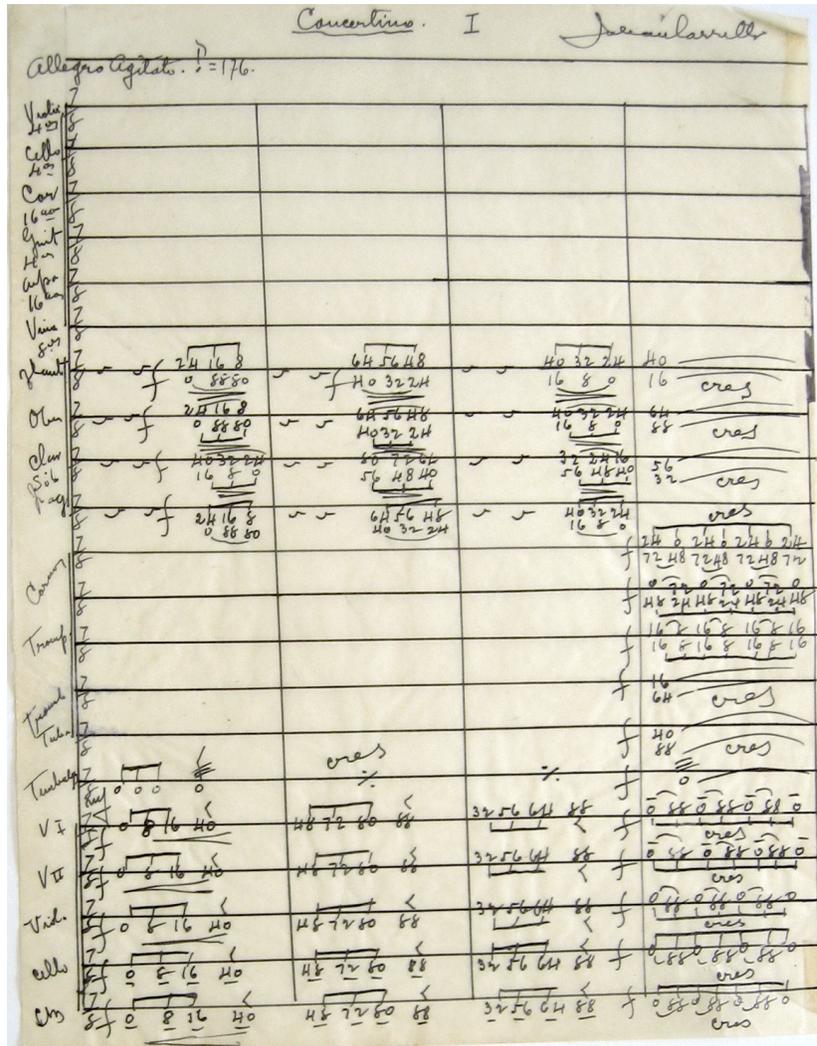
No specific examples are provided in the document, but his use of the technique is found in the very first line of *Concertino*, where a metamorphosed version of the initial theme was played in the orchestra part [Example 4-10]. The

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<sup>268</sup> Carrillo, *Leyes de Metamorfosis musicales* (México: Privately Published, 1949).

<sup>269</sup> Ibid., Translation in Bellamy, 414.

theme retains its identity by maintaining the same rhythm and a similar tonal orientation.<sup>270</sup>



Example 4-10: Comparison of this example from the beginning of the *Concertino* with example 4-5, from the beginning of the *Sonata* demonstrates the practical application of Carrillo's metamorphosis technique. Permission to reprint an excerpt of the score granted by Carmen Viramontes in behalf of the Archivo Julián Carrillo. Addition permission granted by the current publishers, Carl Fischer, in behalf of Jobert.

<sup>270</sup> The notation in the earliest extant manuscript in the Carrillo archives is the new, numeric notation; there is some indication that the score used in performance was in altered traditional notation.

Metamorphosis was just one of several techniques employed in the new arrangement of *Concertino*. Metamorphosis to the double provided a limited solution, only assisting the re-composition of sections in quarter-tones—smaller divisions remained too small after doubling to be played by traditionally tuned instruments. As a result, highly microtonal sections, such as the passage reproduced as example 4-6, were often changed beyond recognition. Meanwhile, microtonal solo passages were copied microtone-for-microtone from one score to the other. The resulting piece is one that sounds far more tonal than its predecessor. Using metamorphosis, many quarter-tone sections were literally converted into tonal equivalents. Highly microtonal sections were re-composed, decreasing the importance of microtonal passages to the structure of the piece. Only solos and decorative passages were retained in their entirety, pushing the role of the microtone further into the foreground.

#### *After Sonata Casi Fantasia: Other Compositions*

In addition to converting *Sonata Casi Fantasia* into the orchestral *Concertino*, Carrillo wrote at least two string quartets while in New York. Both works are more conservative than the experimental *Sonata Casi Fantasia*. The Atonal Quartet, dedicated to Debussy, does not employ quarter-tones; rather it demonstrates Carrillo's familiarity with the styles common in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century music. *2 Bosquejos*, alternatively titled *2 Baluceos* and perhaps better known by the titles of the two movements "Meditación" and "En Secreto," is a short, restrained composition, demonstrating Carrillo's facility in writing quarter-tone music for strings. In these works the microtones serve two purposes almost exclusively: they are included in

scalar passages, adding a feeling of super-chromaticism, and they are used as leading tones. Most notes receiving any harmonic, agogic, or melodic emphasis belong to the traditional pitch collection and establish a dominant tonal system. As in many of Carrillo's works for strings, *2 Bosquejos* includes experimental gestures outside the Sonido 13 approach, asking the performers to play using difficult extended techniques such as harmonics and open strings.<sup>271</sup>

Neither *2 Bosquejos* nor the Atonal Quartet was performed in New York while Carrillo was living there. It is possible that *2 Bosquejos* was performed in Philadelphia after the composer left the U.S. A note held in the Carrillo archive, written in the composer's hand and dated 1951, records the performance of the quartet on 7 December 1928, by the "Cuartetto de Filadelfia."<sup>272</sup> An issue of the *Sonido 13* magazine printed in June 1928, announces plans by the "classical quartet of Philadelphia" to perform *2 Bosquejos*, but includes no performance date.<sup>273</sup> If the performance occurred in early December 1928, as Carrillo recalled in the 1951 note, it was not noted in the principal Philadelphia newspapers.

### *Reception of Concertino*

While *2 Bosquejos* and the Atonal Quartet were composed and, in one case, possibly performed with little fanfare, a flurry of press surrounded the world premiere of Carrillo's *Concertino*. Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra performed the *Concertino* three times—twice at the Music Academy in Philadelphia (3 and 4 March

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<sup>271</sup> For a deeper analysis of "Medetación" and "En Secreto," see Ricardo Miranda, "Romantiscismo y contradicción en la obra de Julián Carrillo," *Heterofonía* 129 (July-December 2003): 67-80.

<sup>272</sup> Autograph score, *2 Balbucesos*, Carrillo Score Archive, Carrillo Archive.

<sup>273</sup> "Carnegie Hall, Nueva York: Orquesta de Filadelfia dirigida por Leopold Stokowski," *Sonido 13*, 13 June 1928, 22-31. [privately published by *El Comite de los 13, Pro-Julián Carrillo*.]

1927) and once at Carnegie Hall (8 March 1927). Collectively these performances generated enormous publicity for Carrillo and his music. Reviews appeared in nearly every major paper published in Philadelphia and New York. Stokowski, already admired among the U.S. musical elite, lent his support to Sonido 13 through an informational leaflet distributed at every performance. After explaining the microtone's natural placement in the evolution of music history, Stokowski turned to the Carrillo work:

I have studied this music with Mr. Carrillo and find that its inner construction is true to itself . . . beneath an apparent complexity lies simplicity and a fabric of well-balanced tone-relation. Personally I must make a great effort of mental and oral concentration in listening to it, or I overlook much of its subtlety of tone combination. Mr. Carrillo claims no more for it than that it is an experiment and an attempt at a new departure and it is in that sense that we present it to the public. It is a voyage to an unknown land of infinitely rich new possibilities, which so far have been very little developed . . . a land which asks the friendly interest of the Old World of music because it has sprung from it, just as the culture of our New World has sprung from that of the Old.<sup>274</sup>

The information in the leaflet was supplemented by a demonstration of the microtonal scales and the instruments performing them, which preceded the performance of *Concertino*. Both the leaflet and the demonstration were frequently alluded to in reviews of the concert. Although New York critics often mentioned their familiarity with the theory through the League concert, it appears that Stokowski's implicit endorsement of Sonido 13 spurred many critics, otherwise disinclined to value the work, to listen to and write about the *Concertino*.

Perhaps as a consequence of Stokowski's endorsement, reviews of the Philadelphia Orchestra performances were numerous and lengthy. Carrillo and his

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<sup>274</sup> Leopold Stokowski, "Quarter-Tones," Program insert for Philadelphia Orchestra concerts, March 2, 4, and 8, c. 5, v. IV, exp. 40, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

music were the primary focus of the reviews; most gave extensive explanations of the compositional methods and instruments employed. Although fewer critics disputed the value of Carrillo's experimental approach in *Concertino*, the evaluation of his music remained similar to that rendered after the League performance: it did not live up to expectations.

Leonard Liebling wrote for the majority when he stated, "The present reviewer also concentrated manfully, and almost until it hurt, but truth compels the admission that he failed to discern a great deal of value or beauty, either in the sound or meaning of the music."<sup>275</sup> Although Liebling's review was extensive, like other critics he spent very little time evaluating the work, "The composition itself," he went on to write, "lean in content, being experimental, need not engage criticism."<sup>276</sup> Instead, most reviewers concentrated on the innovations found in the work, only writing one or two sentences about the quality of the composition.

The Philadelphia Orchestra concert in Carnegie Hall prompted the first (and only) major article about Carrillo and his music in *La Prensa*, the principal Spanish-language paper of New York. The author described the long and loud applause accorded *Concertino* and the lines of well-wishers greeting the composer during intermission. Missing from the throng, according to the author, were the Mexican supporters commonly observed by reporters for the paper at concerts featuring Mexican performers. "We don't remember seeing one Mexican," the reviewer recalled: "The commentaries from the short reception [at intermission] and from the

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<sup>275</sup> Leonard Liebling, "New Style Music by Mexican Tone," *New York American*, 9 March 1927, scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

critics in the press the next day, deserve to be heard by those jealous individuals who undervalue (or scorn) Carrillo in his native country.”<sup>277</sup>

Only one of the examined reviews noted the thematic similarities between *Sonata Casi Fantasia* and *Concertino*.<sup>278</sup> Even New York critics, who frequently compared the two performances, did not describe the *Concertino* as an arrangement of the *Sonata*. While Carrillo openly admitted the relationship between the pieces in his *Sonido 13* magazine and subsequent writings, Stokowski did not draw attention to the relationship between the two works in his program notes. As the performances were a year apart, it is unlikely critics would have remembered the themes sufficiently to describe the similarities and differences of their treatment in the works. Yet the absence of this sort of analysis, common in reviews of Stokowski’s arrangements for orchestra and of Segovia’s arrangements for the guitar, underlines the superior importance the avant-garde aspects of Carrillo’s work held for critics and audiences. Rather than offering formal and technical analyses, articles about Carrillo’s music concentrated on the unfamiliar: strange-looking and sounding instruments, the invented notation, and, of course, the microtonal filigree.

#### *Carrillo and New York from 1928 to 1932*

Two significant events in Carrillo’s career attracted attention from the New York press during the years between 1928 and 1932, after Carrillo returned to Mexico City: the recording of his *Preludio a Colón* by the Havana “Grupo 13” in 1928 and Stokowski’s participation in a concert of microtonal music in Mexico City in 1931.

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<sup>277</sup> José Miguel Bejarano, “De Musica: Nueva York escucha el ‘Sonido Trece,’” *La Prensa* [n.d.], scrapbooks, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>278</sup> Marion Bauer, “Music in New York,” *Musical Leader*, 17 March 1927, 6.

The formation of a “Grupo 13” in Havana, Cuba was an enormous boon to Carrillo and his compositional techniques. The group was led by Angel Reyes, who also composed works using the Sonido 13 technique. It performed Sonido 13 music in Havana during the late 1920s and early 1930s. In January and February of 1930, Carrillo and Reyes brought the group to New York where they gave frequent demonstrations of microtonal music and occasional chamber concerts. These performances, unlike those given by the League or the Philadelphia Orchestra, seem to have been held in apartments or music studios and open to a select, invited audience. Small notices about the demonstrations appeared in several music periodicals.<sup>279</sup>

The demonstrations were probably intended to help the group promote their recording of *Preludio a Colón*, which had recently become available in the U.S. This was the first phonograph recording of Carrillo’s *Sonido 13* music. *Disques*, a little magazine written for collectors of classical music recordings, gave the *Sonido 13* record a long and positive review that quoted extensively from reviews of the 1926 and 1927 concerts.<sup>280</sup> The recording was re-issued in 1939, prompting another review in *American Music Lover*.<sup>281</sup> *Preludio a Colón* became the best known of Carrillo’s works, perhaps made more accessible through this recording and those that followed. After the publication of Carrillo’s score in Henry Cowell’s *New Music Quarterly*

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<sup>279</sup> Marion and Flora Bauer, “Music in New York,” *Musical Leader*, 13 February 1930, 8; “Thirteen Sound Shown” *Musical America*, 10 February 1930, 40; “Artists Everywhere,” *Musical Courier*, 22 February 1930, 40.

<sup>280</sup> “Music of the Future,” *Disques* 1, no. 3 (May 1930): 105.

<sup>281</sup> “Record Notes and Reviews,” *The American Music Lover* 5, no. 7 (Nov. 1939): 254-264.

*Editions* in 1944,<sup>282</sup> it was possible to follow Carrillo's notation along with the recording.

*Stokowski in Mexico, 1931*

Stokowski made his first visit to Mexico in January 1931. During the trip he conducted the Mexico City "Grupo 13" in a performance of Carrillo's "Fantasía Sonido 13." News of Stokowski's planned trip first appeared in Mexican newspapers in mid-December, prompting Carrillo to write the conductor:

As I know of your interest in everything meaning progress in Music, I will be extremely pleased, in the event you carry out your trip, to offer you a concert with a special program with my works . . . I am just waiting to confirm the news of your trip, which I heartily desire to be true, to begin preparing the Mexican public to welcome you as you deserve . . .<sup>283</sup>

Over the following weeks, Stokowski agreed to conduct the concert, and Carrillo fulfilled his promise, writing letters to officials in the Mexican government asking that Stokowski be awarded various titles and honors. In early January, Carrillo wrote Stokowski again:

I am very pleased to learn that your coming to Mexico is a fact. I feel [it] to be my duty in this occasion to demonstrate to you with everything within my power, my appreciation for your kind interest in my new music I am trying to put through in the world.

Mexican newspapers have published a suggestion I have made to the Secretary of Public Education, to the President of the National University, and to the favor of the city asking them to extend to you, on your visit here, the highest honors the representatives of the Mexican culture and the city can offer and to which you are justly entitled. This suggestion has been published by important papers of

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<sup>282</sup> Carrillo, Julián, "Preludio a Cristobal Colón," *New Music* 17, no. 3 (April 1944).

<sup>283</sup> Carrillo to Stokowski, 18 Dec. 1930, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

Mexico such as *El Universal*, *El Universal Gráfico*, *El Nacional Revolutionario*, and others. . .<sup>284</sup>

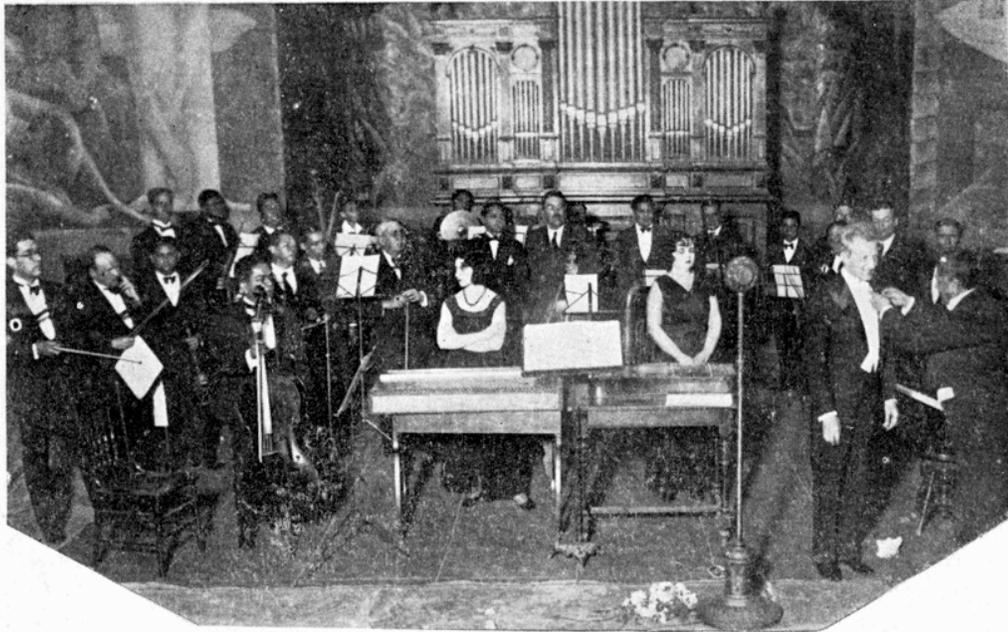
In return Stokowski was kind to Carrillo during his visit. He rehearsed numerous times with the Grupo Sonido 13, often mentioning his participation to Mexico City reporters and singing the praises of Carrillo and his compositional method. Stokowski's praise was enormously important to Carrillo who created postcards of a picture of himself bestowing a medal on Stokowski [Example 4-11]. To this day, the manuscript copy of the work Stokowski conducted, *Fantasia Sonido 13* contains a note written in Carrillo's hand, "Using this score, Leopold Stokowski directed the Sonido 13 Orchestra of Mexico City . . ."<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Carrillo to Stokowski, 5 Jan. 1931, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City.

<sup>285</sup> Carrillo, "Fantasia Sonido 13" in *La música de Mexico* 3, no. 3, ed. by Julio Estrada (Mexico: UNAM, 1988).

MEXICO. PEQUEÑA SINFONICA "SONIDO 13" 2-I DE 1931.



Julián Carrillo condecorando a Leopoldo Stokowski.

Example 4-11: Carrillo made these postcards to commemorate the Mexico City Grupo Sonido 13's performance with Stokowski and the medal Carrillo bestowed upon the conductor. Permission to use the photo granted by Carmen Viramontes in behalf of the Archivo Julián Carrillo.

However, despite Carrillo's excitement and pride at performing with Stokowski, the performance with the Mexico City Grupo 13 was not the principal reason for Stokowski's visit. The trip was arranged by Frances Flynn Paine, president of the Mexican Arts Association, a New York organization formed to advance the spread of Mexican culture. She had been promoting Chávez's ballets for several years and had been unable to find opportunities to premiere these works in the U.S.<sup>286</sup> One purpose of the trip was to persuade Stokowski to premiere Chávez's ballet music with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Probably under her guidance, Stokowski had telegraphed Chávez in December 1930, asking if Stokowski might guest conduct the

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<sup>286</sup> For more information about this topic, see Chapters 4 and 5.

Orquesta Sinfónica de México (OSM).<sup>287</sup> That request was granted and plans for the performance unfolded in a series of telegrams and letters to follow.<sup>288</sup>

Chávez, like Carrillo, made arrangements to honor and fete the conductor when he came to town. Both men advocated on Stokowski's behalf in the Mexico City press; their well-known antipathy for one another seemed to spur a competition as each attempted to bestow greater hospitality, generosity, and honorifics than the other. By the time Stokowski arrived in Mexico, there were plans for two performances, one 24 January with the OSM and another 1 February with the "Grupo 13" of Mexico City. Arrangements had been made to grant the conductor the title of Guest of Honor of the City of Mexico, and honorary director of the National Conservatory and the OSM. During his visit, a devastating earthquake in Oaxaca prompted the creation of a second benefit concert with the OSM on 1 February, which was followed by the previously planned concert with the Grupo Sonido 13. Carrillo and Stokowski turned this concert into a benefit event as well.

Perhaps as a result of the composers' activities on Stokowski's behalf, an article about the conductor appeared in *El Universal* and *El Excelsior* nearly every day of his stay in Mexico City (January 20 - February 2). In *El Universal* alone, at least seventeen major articles discussed Stokowski or the performances he conducted during the trip. Several of these articles began on the front page of the paper, but, despite their size, very of them examined Stokowski's activities with both Mexican composers and performing groups. Interviews, often conducted with one of the

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<sup>287</sup> This correspondence can be found in the AGN. Stokowski to Chávez, 20 Dec. 1930, c. 11, v. III, exp. 93, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN. Printed in Spanish translation in: *Epistolario selecto de Carlos Chávez*, edited by Gloria Carmona (México: FCE, 1989).

<sup>288</sup> Letters and telegrams from Dec. 1930 – Jan. 1931, c. 11, v. III, exp. 93, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

composers present, were usually limited to either Stokowski's involvement with the OSM or the Grupo 13. Even in reviews of the two February 1<sup>st</sup> concerts, beginning hours apart, critics writing about one performance virtually ignored the existence of the other, reflecting the continuing divide between the adherents of Chávez and those of Carrillo.

The few accounts of Stokowski's travels printed in the U.S. press also treated his performances with the Grupo 13 and the OSM separately. For example, Marian Tyler, in an article for the *New York Times*, described Chávez's music and Stokowski's plans to conduct the OSM, but wrote nothing about Carrillo.<sup>289</sup> Months later, an account of the Grupo 13 performance appeared in the paper, with no attempt made to link the two events.<sup>290</sup> Similarly, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* printed a photograph of the conductor with Carrillo, without any indication in the caption of other performance plans.<sup>291</sup> Altogether, the attention paid Stokowski's first visit to Mexico in the U.S. press was scant, far less than the attention he received from Mexican writers and critics.

During the next few years, it appeared that Chávez's 1931 campaign to woo Stokowski had been far more successful than Carrillo's similar efforts. When the conductor returned to Mexico a year later, he publicized the upcoming performance of Chávez's *H.P.* with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Opera.<sup>292</sup> The friendship between Chávez and Stokowski was cemented during the preparations for that premiere; many subsequent performances of Chávez's music with the Philadelphia

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<sup>289</sup> Marian Tyler, "Native Mexican Art," *NYT*, 1 February 1931, 8.

<sup>290</sup> "Friends of Music Decade," *NYT*, 5 April 1931, 110.

<sup>291</sup> "Medal for Stokowski," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8 Feb. 1931, sec. B, p. 18. The picture printed was a cropped form of the photo found on the postcard reproduced above.

<sup>292</sup> See Chapters 4 and 5.

Orchestra followed, most conducted by the composer. In 1937, the music critic Leonard Loreau wrote Stokowski from Paris to request help finding performances for Carrillo's music. Evangeline, Stokowski's wife, who had accompanied Leopold on his trips to Mexico,<sup>293</sup> forwarded the letter to Chávez, attaching a note, "I have just received this letter. I do not even know who Julián Carrillo is nor Leonard Loreau..."<sup>294</sup>

Although Evangeline Stokowski, newly married to Leopold at the time of the *Concertino* performances, did not remember Carrillo, others within the New York music community did, despite rapidly declining attention toward Sonido 13 music in the U.S. press. Chávez's friends, including Aaron Copland<sup>295</sup> and Edgar Varèse,<sup>296</sup> questioned Chávez about his compatriot's activities. In one letter about the upcoming plans for the Pan-American Association of Composers, Varèse asked, seemingly referring to an earlier conversation, "How do you feel toward Carrillo? Would it not be better to have him with us than against?"<sup>297</sup> No written responses to such inquiries have been found within the holdings at the *Archivo General de la Nación*, in Mexico City, and the New York Public Library. However, given the antipathy between the two men, it is unlikely that Chávez raced to promote Carrillo and his music.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Oliver Daniel, *Stokowski: A Counterpoint of View* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1982) 277.

<sup>294</sup> Evangeline Stokowski to Chávez, 2 Feb. 1937, c. 11, v. II, exp. 86, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>295</sup> Copland to Chávez, 17 Jan. 1929, Correspondence, Folder 13, Chávez Collection, NYPL.

<sup>296</sup> Varèse to Chávez, 8 Feb. 1926 and 3 Feb. 1928, Correspondence, Folder 18, Chávez Collection, NYPL

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Leonora Saavedra recalls seeing correspondence from Varèse to Chávez among the AGN holdings in which the French composer described Carrillo's music as not very "sincere." Author's correspondence with Saavedra, 24 April 2008.

As for Leopold Stokowski, the conductor did not participate in a performance of Carrillo's music for a decade following the arrival of Loreau's letter. However, in 1948, following a meeting in New York in 1947, Carrillo and Stokowski began to correspond once again.<sup>299</sup> Responding to inquiries about a new work that might accommodate a tonal orchestra, Carrillo sent the conductor *Horizontes*. This work was performed in several U.S. cities during 1951 and 1952. In 1960, after receiving encouragement from Stokowski, Carrillo composed *Balbuces* for 16<sup>th</sup> tone piano, which was premiered in Houston, Texas.

#### *Carrillo's New York Legacy?*

During 1926 and 1927, Carrillo attracted more attention from the New York press than any other Mexican composer. However, he was unable to engage the attention of the New York music community during the years following his visit. The attraction to Sonido 13 was part of a larger interest in microtonal approaches to composition within that community. Carrillo's music was appealing to such audiences, because it offered them the opportunity to hear microtonal works—a rarity in New York, where such works were more frequently discussed than performed. As a consequence, writers for music magazines and newspapers followed Carrillo's career, alerting their readers of his theoretical innovations and plans to share them.

A number of factors made it difficult for Carrillo to arouse interest in his music after he left New York. While critics and audiences believed that his theories were valuable, they did not think the same of his music, often writing that the theory would be best employed by other composers. The fate of Carrillo's Sonido 13 works

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<sup>299</sup> One letter documenting this meeting is, Carrillo to Stokowski, 3 Dec. 1948, Carrillo Archive.

was further cemented by the very aspects that New York audiences and critics praised—its musical advances. Attention toward the “new” was by definition short-lived as audiences became enamored of newer techniques and newer practitioners. By the time Carrillo was presenting work with more aesthetic appeal in the U.S., such as *2 Bosquejos* and the recording of *Preludio a Colón*, attention had moved elsewhere and the composer was unable to encourage a wide-spread evaluation that might have vaulted him back into the limelight.

Although considered a modernist composer by New York critics, Carrillo never became part of the inner-circle of modernist composers and patrons active in New York during the 1920s. The existing evidence indicates continuing friendships with some members of his “Grupo 13,” especially the bassist Emil Mix, and occasional correspondence with Leopold Stokowski. Unlike his compatriot Chávez, it appears Carrillo did not benefit from the influential patronage bestowed by Blanche Walton, Alma Wertheim, Claire Reis, and others. Nor was he able to maintain influential friendships with New York composers. The single performance with the League of Composers was not replicated with that group or any of the other small modernist performance groups. Without others to speak for him, Carrillo could not maintain interest in his music after leaving New York.

While the Latino expatriate community encouraged performances of Ponce’s music and provided Chávez with valuable New York connections, the community gave Carrillo very little support and attention, perhaps further impeding his U.S. career. Carrillo’s very public battle within the Mexican press probably foreclosed any access to goodwill within the expatriate community, as alluded to in the single article

about his work to appear in *La Prensa*. As a consequence Carrillo and Sonido 13 received scant attention from *La Prensa* and no known performances from Latino social or cultural organizations in New York. Carrillo's attempts within the mainstream New York press and the Sonido 13 magazine to portray his works and compositional method as a nationalist product of the Revolution or an embodiment of Pan-Americanism did not resonate with New York critics and audiences. The Revolutionary trope, while common in Carrillo's writing, rarely appears in the interpretations of New York critics, who saw the work as exclusively modernist.

Many within Mexico City's music community dismissed Carrillo's Sonido 13 compositional techniques before hearing his music, accusing the composer of departing from accepted scientific precepts and musical aesthetics. When, in 1925, Carrillo finally presented a concert of new works in Mexico City, very few newspapers reviewed the event. New York audiences, by contrast, were initially excited by the theoretical concepts presented in his early Sonido 13 writings. Yet when presented with examples of music using his experimental theory, critics agreed that Carrillo's theory offered possibilities best exploited by other composers. Because of the difficulties inherent in performance, New Yorkers were not exposed to the repeated and frequent hearings probably necessary to understand the Sonido 13 music and theory. Having failed to dazzle during the momentary opportunities offered by the League and Philadelphia performances, Carrillo was unable to create a significant following for his theories or music in New York for the next several decades.

## Chapter 5: Chávez's Early Years in New York, 1925-1931

Carlos Chávez was a central figure in musical life during the middle third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Effectively the leader of Mexican musical life from his first appointment as director of the *Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana* in 1928, at the age of 29, until his resignation from that position fifteen years later, Chávez also served as director of the National Conservatory (1928-1933), chief of the Department of Fine Arts (1933-1934), and held other government posts. Perhaps more importantly, Chavez composed music that would come to represent “mexicanidad” throughout the world. That style, which can be found in the early Aztec ballet, *El Fuego Nuevo* (1921), the mid-career *Xochipilli* (1940), and the emblematic *Sinfonía India* (1936), combines contemporary compositional techniques with primitivist rhythmic drive, placing an invented Aztec sound in an international modernist setting.

The composer regarded early visits to New York as pivotal to his career. Chávez's first trip began in December 1923 and lasted until March 1924, and the second began in September 1926 and lasted until July 1928. Both visits, undertaken when Chávez was 24 and 27 respectively, resulted in important performances of his music in New York. By the end of his second visit, Chávez had made significant contacts among modernist musicians, “Mexico Vogue” adherents, and leftist intellectuals.

His growing reputation in Mexico and his continued contacts with New York musicians, artists, and intellectuals served Chávez well. When he returned to the U.S. a third time in March 1932 to promote the Philadelphia Orchestra premiere of his ballet, *H.P.*, Chávez became the subject of numerous articles in the U.S. press and

began to develop a nationwide following. This performance and the press that accompanied it marked the true beginning of Chávez's U.S. career.

After 1932, Chávez became the principal representative of Mexican classical music for U.S. audiences, a status he retains to this day. Although Chávez was a controversial figure in Mexican musical life, he remained well-respected and even revered in the U.S. He returned many times to the United States, often as a guest conductor presenting his own music. When conducting, performing, or lecturing in the country, he was usually feted in the U.S. press. The enormity of Herbert Barrett's published clipping collection covering the years 1936 to 1950 attests to the composer's popularity in the U.S. in the years following the *H.P.* premiere.<sup>300</sup>

Accounts of Chávez's life and career inevitably include some reference to his first few trips to New York. General biographies such as those by Robert Parker<sup>301</sup> and Roberto García Morillo<sup>302</sup> highlight the most important performances and events of these early years. More focused articles and dissertations by Parker,<sup>303</sup> Leonora Saavedra,<sup>304</sup> and Antonio Saborit<sup>305</sup> provide additional details about Chávez's U.S. career during the 1920s and early 1930s. Parker chronicles Chávez's attempts to compose and find performances for his ballets. Saborit describes the disappointments Chávez faced while trying to build a career in New York, also focusing on the stage

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<sup>300</sup> Herbert Barrett, ed., *Carlos Chávez: North American Press* (New York: Herbert Barrett, 1950).

<sup>301</sup> Robert Parker, *Carlos Chávez: Mexico's Modern-Day Orpheus* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983).

<sup>302</sup> Roberto García Morillo, *Carlos Chávez: Vida y Obra* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960).

<sup>303</sup> Robert Parker, "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet: A Study in Persistence," *Choreography and Dance* 3-4 (1994): 81-88.

<sup>304</sup> Leonora Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001).

<sup>305</sup> Antonio Saborit, "Mexican Gaities: Chávez en la Babilonia de hierro" in *Diálogo de resplendores: Carlos Chávez y Silvestre Revueltas*, edited by Yael Bitrán and Ricardo Miranda (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura, 2002) 139-148.

works. Saavedra demonstrates the effects of Chávez's New York experience upon his Mexico City career and the identity he presented to both Mexican and U.S. audiences.

This chapter provides a more thorough account of Chávez's first two trips to New York City in an attempt to uncover some of the reasons why he and his works came to represent Mexican classical music to U.S. audiences. With that aim, the narrative here is as multi-faceted as possible: it describes public performances and their critical reception, private performances and the social interactions that surrounded them, and many of the embryonic plans for performances that were cancelled or simply fell apart. It also chronicles Chávez's non-performance activities in New York, including his published and unpublished writings of the period, the music analysis lessons he offered in his living room, and his active social life. Because of its scope, the chapter examines a wider array of compositional genres than Parker's article, spans a greater number of years than the article by Saborit, and, unlike Saavedra's work, focuses upon Chávez's U.S. career rather than his development as a composer and public figure.

The chapter can be divided into roughly four sections: the first chronicles Chávez's 1924 trip to New York, the second his activities in Mexico City between visits, the third his 1926-1928 trip to New York, and the fourth his activities in Mexico City upon returning in 1928. In the course of the narrative, the chapter reveals new information about Chávez's New York activities and re-examines previously known information in a new light. The greatest amount of space in the chapter is dedicated to Chávez's second trip to New York, as it is that trip that seems to have most directly resulted in the overwhelming success he encountered in the U.S. in later

years. Particular attention will be paid to Chávez's previously unexamined participation in the 1927 production of *Fiesta* by communist playwright Michael Gold. A thorough investigation of the early years of Chávez's friendship with composer Henry Cowell, which is widely recognized but usually deemphasized in biographies, is also included in this chapter. While acknowledging the importance of the 1926-1928 trip, this account also recognizes that Chávez's growing renown in Mexico City from 1925 to 1932 contributed to his U.S. success. As correspondence demonstrates,<sup>306</sup> Chávez made a concerted effort to share his Mexico City triumphs with his New York friends, thereby insuring that his rising status at home would be noted in New York artistic circles.

#### *Chávez's First New York Visit*

In 1922, when Chávez embarked on his first journey outside Mexico, he was searching for a community of like-minded modernists. Through a handful of concerts featuring his own compositions, Chávez had become a reputed modernist in Mexico City. Hoping to be able to publish and perform his works, Chávez traveled to Europe and then, after briefly returning to Mexico City, to New York. Chávez found that European musical life did not resonate with his own experience. In a letter to Aaron Copland written years later, Chávez noted:

European musicians are of the worst kind: conductors, pianists, violinists, singers and so on are mere 'prima donna' minded people—

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<sup>306</sup> Chávez to Cowell, 25 October 1928, Dane Rudyar to Chávez, 24 February 1928; Richard Buhling to Chávez, 13 August 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35; Blanche Walton to Chávez, 5 October 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 37; Francisco Agea to Chávez, 6 October 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN: "Los prospectos y periódicos se los he enseñada a todos los amigos y todos se han interesado mucho: los Quintanilla, Anita, Cumpson, McPhee. A otros gentes que he visto no se los he enseñado porque no los he tenido a la mano, pero les he platicado largamente acerca la organización, etc."

they are very important to themselves . . . We must not accept to be in the hands of foreign conductors and interpreters whose mind and heart (if they happen to have any) is far away of the spirit and culture of this new world.<sup>307</sup>

In contrast, Chávez found that New York offered him a vibrant modernist musical life with a “new world” sensibility. Once in New York, Chávez found his way to writer José Juan Tablada, a Mexican writer living in the city and a member of the expatriate Mexican community participating in the “Mexico Vogue.” Tablada wrote “Nueva York de Día y de Noche,” an influential column in *El Universal* and ran a bookstore in New York that became a meeting place for Mexican expatriates. He was responsible for establishing New York followings for the work of Miguel Covarrubias and “Tata Nacho”. Among Tablada’s connections was the composer Edgard Varése, the head of the International Composers’ Guild (ICG) and one of the most public faces of modern music in New York. In 1921 Varése composed *Offrandes*, setting Tablada’s poem “La Croix du sud.”<sup>308</sup>

Tablada introduced Chávez to Varése, and Varése arranged a premiere of Chávez’s *Otros Tres Exágonos* under the auspices of the ICG, 8 February 1925. It was the first significant performance of Chávez’s music in the United States. *Otros Tres Exágonos* was performed last on a program including works by Béla Bartók, Henry Cowell, Carlos Salzedo, Anton Webern, and William Grant Still.<sup>309</sup>

The three songs that make up *Otros Tres Exágonos* are settings of poems by Carlos Pellicer, Chávez’s friend and contemporary. Along with *Tres Exágonos*, they

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<sup>307</sup> Chávez to Copland, as quoted in Howard Pollack, *Aaron Copland* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999) 222.

<sup>308</sup> For more about *Offrandes*, see Malcolm MacDonald, *Varése: Astronomer in Sound* (London: Kahn and Averill, 2003) 91-103.

<sup>309</sup> A copy of the complete program can be found in the Archivo Chávez, AGN: Programas E.U., c. 2, v. I, exp. 1; Programming statistics for the ICG can be found in R. Allen Lott, “New Music for New Ears’: The International Composers’ Guild” *JAMS* vol. 36, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 266-286.

form a six-song cycle of abstract poems about love. While the first three present romantic, idealized versions of love, the second three, performed for the ICG concert, deconstruct romantic utopias with surreal images of accidental disasters. Each of the three poems depicts an off-course journey. In the first, a ship crashes into the moon; in the second, the heart “mortgages sunsets” to create a life for itself; in the last poem, passengers on a cruise ship submit to the temptations of mermaids, abandoning their destination.

The song settings display experimental qualities often associated with the music performed for the ICG. The timbre alone is unique, tweaking the sound of the string quartet by substituting flute/piccolo and oboe/English horn for the violins and bassoon for the cello. Meanwhile the vocal line frequently forgoes its traditional prominence, fading into a supporting role. The melodies themselves are disjointed, reminiscent of Schoenberg’s expressionist approach in *Pierrot Lunaire*.

Yet the brilliance of the work is not embodied in the experimentation itself, but rather in the way Chávez employs such techniques to illuminate the Pellicer poems. The composer is particularly adept at musical representations of the physical motions Pellicer describes. For example, at the beginning of the second song, a repeated pattern in the instruments, particularly the oboe, appears to depict the mechanical sounds and motions of the crashing ship, while a static vocal line captures the steady but errant direction of the “mised” heart [Example 5-1].



had, “passed the ‘acid test’ and was applauded by no less than the ‘Guild’ along with [the music of] Erik Satie, Schoenberg, Casella, Varése.”<sup>312</sup>

The riotous applause described by Barreda, Varése, and Tablada, did not inspire an immediate embrace of the composer in the New York musical press. The concert was widely reviewed in the New York press, but critics did not dwell upon Chávez’s work.<sup>313</sup> To the contrary, some did not even hear it, because it was programmed last on a long program.<sup>314</sup> Among those that stayed to listen, many grouped it, without extended comment, with the other modernist works. Others devoted a few words to the composition, expressing distaste for the aesthetic found therein; for example, Ernest Newman called the work, “fifth-rate Poulenc.”<sup>315</sup>

#### *Ultra-modernism in Mexico*

After returning to Mexico, Chávez retained fond memories of the modernist music community of New York. He despaired when comparing it to that of Mexico City, writing to Varése:

the conditions of the fight [for modern music] in Mexico are horrible. I am the only one and I have to conquer a sea of resistance. Here a few have a clue that Debussy exists; they do not know Mussorgsky much less those who followed Debussy.

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<sup>312</sup> . . . a Chávez Ramírez, cuya obra musical ultra moderna pasó el ‘acid test’ y fue aplaudida nada menos que en el ‘Guild’ de Compositores Internationales, junto a Erick Satie y Shoemberg, Casella, Varése.” Tablada, “Nueva York de Día y de Noche,” *El Universal*, 31 May 1925, sec. 1, 3.

<sup>313</sup> Reviews included: Olin Downes, “Music,” *NYT*, 9 February 1925, 15; Lawrence Gilman, “Music,” *NYHT*, 9 February 1925, 11; W.J. Henderson, “Composers’ Guild Gives Concert,” *N.Y. Sun*, 9 February 1925, 13; Ernest Newman, “Music,” *New York Evening Post*, 9 February 1925, 15; “Those Modernists,” *Musical Courier*, 29 October 1925, 29 (extended quote from Newman writing for *London Sunday Times*); H.J., “‘First Time’ Numbers Sponsored by Guild,” *Musical America*, 14 February 1925, 9.

<sup>314</sup> Lawrence Gilman wrote, “The length of the concert prevented our waiting to hear Mr. Colin O’Moore sing “Three Hexagons,” by the Mexican composer Carlos Chávez . . . though a partial hearing at a rehearsal had made us eager to know them better,” *NYHT*, 9 Feb. 1925, 11.

<sup>315</sup> Ernest Newman, “Music,” *New York Evening Post*, 9 Feb. 1925, 15.

I have given only three concerts (I send you the programs) but there isn't any money, it isn't possible to play the chamber works that I like, *Octandre* and *Pierrot*. The public won't pay for that and there is no help from the state because of the horrible financial conditions of the Government.

For that reason it appears to me very important to continue the campaign in the press that I have initiated. After this article by Vuillermoz about Schoenberg, there will be (next Sunday) one that I wrote about you (it will be published with the caricature by Covarrubias).

For December I am preparing two piano solo concerts with two excellent piano students of mine, on which one will hear other works of Schoenberg, Stravinsky, "los seis," etc.

In this manner, I believe the public will be sufficiently prepared for the presentation of *Octandre* and *Pierrot*.<sup>316</sup>

The campaign for modern music in Mexico City that Chávez planned to wage was similar to Varèse's own modern music campaign in New York.<sup>317</sup> It was a three-pronged effort involving the creation of modernist compositions, performances of such works, and the distribution of informative publicity about the international modernist movement. Between 1924 and 1926, before Chávez's second visit to New York, the composer wrote articles about musical life for *El Universal*, *El Excelsior*, *El Globo*, *Revista de Revistas*, and *La Antorcha*.<sup>318</sup> From these articles, certain

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<sup>316</sup> "Es bien poco porque las condiciones de lucha en México son horribles. Yo soy el único y tengo que vencer un mar de resistencia. Aquí apenas tienen idea de que existe Debussy; no conocen a Moussorgsky ni mucho menos lo que sigue de Debussy./ He dado solamente tres conciertos (lo mando los programas) pero *no hay dinero*, no ha sido posible tocar las obras de conjunto que yo quiere, *Octandre* y el *Pierrot*. El público no paga esto y la ayuda oficial es nula por las pésimas condiciones financieras del Gobierno./ Por eso me pareció muy importante comenzar por la campaña de prensa que he iniciado. Después de ese artículo de Vuillermoz sobre Schonberg saldrá (el próximo domingo) uno que yo escribí acerca de usted (publicaré allí la caricatura de Covarrubias)./ Para diciembre preparo dos audiciones de piano solo con dos excelentes pianistas discípulos míos, en que haré oír otras obras de Schonberg de Stravinsky de 'le seis,' etc./ De esta manera creo que el público queda ya suficientemente preparado para la presentación de *Octandre* y *Pierrot*." Chávez to Varese, 20 Nov. 1924, c. 2, v. III, exp. 37, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>317</sup> For more about Varèse's campaign in NYC, see Carol Oja, *Making Music Modern* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>318</sup> For a list of articles see Roberto García Morillo, 230-237. For reprints of some of the articles see Chávez, *Obras* v. I and II, ed. by Gloria Carmona, (Mexico: El Colegio Nacional, 1997). For more

aesthetic leanings begin to emerge. As his letter to Varése's indicates, Chávez's principal concern appears to be the development of modern music in Mexico City. Specifically, Chávez wishes to make contemporary music familiar to Mexico City audiences and advocates for the cultivation of a school of contemporary Mexican composers independent from Europe.

In articles written for the modernist cause, Chávez routinely singled out certain composers and compositions for praise or disdain. At least two of Chávez's articles from this period launch attacks at Carrillo and his *Sonido 13* theories. Although possibly motivated by personal animosity, Chávez couches his reservations about *Sonido 13* in terms of the modernist cause. In his article "Importation in Mexico," Chávez finds *Sonido 13* music objectionable because it possesses neither the innovative qualities nor the independence from Europe that Chávez envisions for the Mexican modernist movement:

either we convert ourselves definitively into Europeans in the sense that we establish ourselves with them, that is to say Mexican life would be the same as European life, or we forge the basis of our nationality in such a form that we don't see ourselves in the imported things to which I have been referring in this lecture.

If we were more European, we would establish magnificent shipping lines like the ones between New York and the English ports, direct or wireless cable services, that would give us practical ways to better our daily life. In that case, short hair would have become stylish before, and in place of hearing, in 1924, simple chromatic scales in quarter tones as a grand novelty in Mexico, we would have heard from 1906 a musical work organized and complete using quarter tones and in 1920 the chamber music of Hába, also with quarter tones . . .<sup>319</sup>

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about Chávez's music journalism in Mexico, see Leonora Saavedra. "Los Escritos Periodísticos de Carlos Chávez," *Inter-American Music Review*, 10, no. 2 (Spring-Summer 1989): 77-91.

<sup>319</sup> "Y por eso yo llego a la siguiente conclusión: es preciso que México defina su situación: a nos convertimos definitivamente en europeos en el sentido de que nos fundamos con ellos, es decir que la vida Mexicana sea la misma vida europea, o forjamos las bases de nuestra nacionalidad en tal forma que no nos veamos en los lamentables casos de importación a que me he referido en el curso de esta

Chávez believed the music of Varése, on the other hand, modeled the sort of work Mexicans should create. One of Chávez's articles, as mentioned in the letter quoted above, was entirely devoted to a complementary analysis of Varése's work.<sup>320</sup> Another article mentioned Varése and his music alongside that of Stravinsky and Bartók, as work that should become better known in Mexico.<sup>321</sup>

In order to create the ideal music environment described in his articles, Chávez also cultivated the performance of modern music through the organization of concerts.<sup>322</sup> He produced two series of concerts at the Escuela Preparatoria, the first consisting of three concerts performed the late summer of 1924, and the second consisting of two concerts advertised as "Musica Nueva" in late 1925. Chávez's own music was featured prominently on every one of the concerts; however, he also introduced music by others entirely new to Mexico City audiences. Composers featured on these programs included Stravinsky, Falla, Debussy, Milhaud, Varése, Satie, and Poulenc. Although modernism is the most pervasive aesthetic apparent in the chamber concerts Chávez presented, and it is this aesthetic that is most frequently emphasized in reviews of the concerts, the first few programs also demonstrate Chávez's interest in cultivating a separate national musical identity. One program presented Chávez's *Imagen Mexicana*, a Romantic-style piano composition based

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plática./ Si fuéramos más europeos, se establecerían magníficas líneas de vapor como las entre Nueva York y los puertos ingleses, servicios cablegráficos directos, o inalámbricos, que nos proporcionarían medios prácticos para hacer vida común. Entoces, el pelo corto se hubiera puesto de moda antes y en lugar de oír en 1924 como una gran novedad en México, hubiéramos oído desde 1906 una obra musical organizada y completa sobre cuartos de tono y en 1920 la música sinfónica de cámara de Hába, también sobre cuartos de tono y en 1920 la música sinfónica de cámara de Hába, también sobre cuartos de tono . . ." Chávez, "La Importación en México," *La Antorcha*, 11 Oct. 1924, reprinted in *Obras I*, 51-61.

<sup>320</sup> Chávez, "Antecedents and Consequences," *Eolus*, January 1927, 12.

<sup>321</sup> Chávez, "México y la Música," *El Globo*, 25 Feb. 1925, reprinted in *Obras I*, 81-85.

<sup>322</sup> For more about Chávez's concert series see Saavedra, 137-156.

upon a *canción* melody. Another included three *canciones* by “Tata Nacho” and a series of Inca works found in the Rene D’Harnoncourt collection.

Last, but most importantly, Chávez continued to create his own compositions, constantly experimenting with new styles and sounds. In works such as *36* (1923), *H.P.* (4<sup>th</sup> movement, c.1926), and *Energía* (1925), Chávez tried to convey the sound and spirit of the modern machine. Chávez wrote three small *Sonatinas* (1924) for cello and piano; violin and piano; and solo piano that demonstrate experiments with sonority and form. The ballet *Los Cuatro Soles* (1925), also composed during this period, extends the exotic indianist aesthetic first explored in *El Fuego Nuevo* (1921).

#### *Chávez the modernist returns to New York*

Armed with a pile of new manuscript scores and experience as a critic and concert organizer, Chávez returned to New York in 1926. As in Mexico, many of Chávez’s activities in New York were related to the promotion of the modernist cause. Most of the works by Chávez performed in the U.S. from 1925 to 1932 were modern or ultra-modern in approach, without any overt reference to nationality. Such works included *Energía* and the Piano Sonata, each performed multiple times during the period in question. The short piano works “36,” “Fox,” “Blues,” and “Polígonos,” often programmed as *Four Mexican Pieces*, exhibited modernist musical experimentations.<sup>323</sup>

Yet there were early indications that the public identity Chávez would present in the U.S. during this second trip would be more nationalist than that presented

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<sup>323</sup> Despite the title, Saavedra has shown these works to be separate from Chávez’s interest in mexicanist composition. See Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others,” 136-174.

during the 1924 visit. The first Chávez work performed upon the composer's return to the U.S. was the "Dance of Men and Machines," which would become the fourth movement to the ballet *H.P.* It was presented at the ICG concert on 28 November 1926.<sup>324</sup>

Unlike the previously performed *Exágonos*, which contains no musical or poetic references to nationality, the score to "Dance of Men and Machines" exhibits a combination of modernist and nationalist compositional techniques, demonstrating Chávez's skill in both types of composition. The opening bars establish a harsh modernist machine aesthetic that pervades the entire movement. Often compared to Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231* (1923) and Sergey Prokofiev's *Le Pas d'acier* (1925-26), this sound was popular among New York modernists at the time, used most obviously by John Alden Carpenter in his ballet, *Skyscrapers* (1923-24). After a machine-inspired modernist beginning, Chávez introduced a melody, as a Mexican *son*, drowning out the sound of the machines. The interplay between 'mechanical' sections dominated by rhythmic repetition and more melodic consonant sections continues throughout the movement [Examples 5-2 and 5-3].



Example 5-2: Machine sounds from "Dance of Men and Machine" emphasizing a mechanical pull between duple and triple meters. Meas. 20-24. Piano reduction by author.

<sup>324</sup> ICG Program, 28 Nov. 1926, v. I, c. 2, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.



Example 5-3: Mexican melody from “Dance of Men and Machines,” meas. 34-38. Piano reduction by author.

In the program notes, written by the composer, Chávez explained the rationale behind the work and the use of modernist and nationalist music therein:

H.P. is the name of a ballet I am now finishing. The intention of this work is neither to describe mechanical processes nor to relate the spirit of the work to the aesthetics of machines.

*Horse Power* certainly makes one think of machines, but I do not consider them objectively except for the sake of the vitality they possess . . .

The ballet *H.P.* is made up of three tableaux which suggest objectively the life of all America. Yet both the visual work (setting and costumes) by Diego Rivera, as well as the music have their own proper and autonomous life.

The fragment of the work on this program is the *Danse of Men and Machines* from the third tableau. Indian tunes (*sones mariaches*) will be found in my music, not as a constructive base, but because all the conditions of their composition—form, sonority, etc.—by nature coincide with those in my own mind, inasmuch as both are products of the same origin.

I believe that in art the means of exteriorization used are distinct and proper to each manifestation of an individual mind and that, in so far as these manifestation coincide with the manifestations of the national or universal mind, their means of exteriorization will coincide or differ also.

Thus it happens that in this music of mine certain treatments of the strings, the lack of vibrato indispensable to the quality of the sound, the scraping bow, a certain insistence of the shrill instruments in their high registers, certain rhythms, simple and exhausting at the same time, certain deformations of a natural feeling for pure tonality, and the structural characteristics (horizontal rather than vertical) are some of the particularities which reveal the spirit of my country.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

The composition and the program notes accompanying it seem to show Chávez positioning himself as a nationalist, Vogue-inspired, exotic Mexican composer.<sup>326</sup> Yet there are also signs that Chávez felt ambivalent about an overtly nationalist identity. The exposed placement of the *sones* makes it clear that Chávez's use of these melodies was purposeful. However, in the notes, the composer appears to deny intention, claiming that such melodies are simply part of his music, because he is Mexican, rather than being placed in the music as an expression of *mexicanidad*. At the same time, Chávez wants to broaden the definition of *mexicanidad*; he asserts that the same nationalist identity found in the *sones* applies to extended techniques, dissonance, and writing for extreme ranges. Furthermore, Chávez implies, the exoticism here does not indicate a retreat from his previous ultra-modern stance. Rather, this 20<sup>th</sup>-century Mexican composer would like to be perceived as modern and nationalist—musically advanced and exotic.

If Chávez chose to submit this work to the ICG for performance, because he thought the nationalist elements of the work would appeal to a New York audience, he failed. The turn toward nationalism in “Dance of Men and Machines” did not effect a radical change in Chávez's reception by New York critics. As in the first performance of his music under the auspices of the ICG, Chávez's work was programmed at the end of a long concert, preventing some critics from staying to listen to it.<sup>327</sup> Most reviewers that remained to listen until the end of the program had

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<sup>326</sup> For a different analysis of these notes, see Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others,” 162-167.

<sup>327</sup> Reviews included: Lawrence Gilman, “New Music Given by Composers' Guild at Aeolian Hall,” *NYHT*, 29 November 1926, 13; W.J. Henderson, “Modern Works Given in Concert,” *Sun*, 29 February 1926, 24; Olga Samaroff, “Music,” *New York Evening Post*, 29 November 1926, 15; Leonard Liebling, “Futuristic Music at Two Concerts Cause of Wonder,” *New York American*, 29 November 1926, 7; Irving Weil, “Music: Guild and League Make the Week-end Lively with New Works,” *New York*

very little to say about “Dance of Men and Machines.” Among well-known New York critics, only Olin Downes, writing for the *New York Times*, reserved significant column space for “Dance of Men and Machines.” He drew particular attention to the elements that made this work distinct from others on the program:

The sounds are usually shrill and highly discordant: jangling out of the chamber orchestra come the mangled fragments of Mexican ditties, gone mad, as it were with the revolving age. . . . If Mr. Goosens, conducting the odd piece of Chávez had suddenly pirouetted and turned like a whirligig on his pedestal, it would not have been surprising.<sup>328</sup>

Although the review was not positive, observing that the audience “listened and laughed” to “a confounding mixture” of folk tunes and machine sounds, it emphasized the exoticism of the composer and the work.<sup>329</sup> However, despite its colorful and evocative language, Downes’ one-paragraph description did not garner widespread attention for Chávez and his music.

### *Fiesta Fiasco*

Following the performance of “Dance of Men and Machines” in November 1926, there were no significant public performances of Chávez’s music in New York until April 1928. Newly discovered evidence shows that during this period Chávez composed the incidental music to Michael Gold’s play, *Fiesta*, for the production of the work by the New Playwrights Theatre that was scheduled to take place in the

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*Evening Journal*, 29 November 1926, 27. Gilman and Liebling admitted they left early and did not hear Chávez’s work.

<sup>328</sup> Olin Downes, “Music: More of the Ultra-Moderns,” *NYT*, 29 November 1926, 16.

<sup>329</sup> In a continuation of their long-standing feud, Carrillo re-published portions of Downes’ review in his *Sonido 13* magazine.

spring of 1927.<sup>330</sup> Due to a series of disagreements, the performance was cancelled. Chávez described his role in the 1927 production of *Fiesta* in a letter to Alfonso Pruneda written in May 1927, after the decision not to perform the work had been made.<sup>331</sup>

In his letter, Chávez explained the inherent appeal of Gold's offer to work with the New Playwrights Theatre group. Several of the "radical revolutionary writers" forming the New Playwrights Theatre—Em Jo Basshe, John Dos Passos, Francis Edwards Paragoh, Michael Gold, and John Howard Lawson—had written acclaimed leftist theatre works that had been performed in New York. Three of them, Gold, Dos Passos, and Lawson, were also affiliated with *New Masses*, the principal Communist intellectual publication of New York. Gold was the chief editor for the publication. Chávez knew many of the New Playwrights Theatre founding members through his friend Egmont Arens, who was also an editor at *New Masses*.

*New Masses* was one of the most important outlets for "Mexico Vogue" sentiment, and it included many articles, photographs, and drawings depicting post-Revolutionary Mexican culture and governmental institutions in complementary terms. Chávez provided Pruneda an index of the articles and drawings with Mexican subjects that had appeared in the magazine. The index contained over twenty items and a reference indicating their location within the journal. "You will note by the dates," Chávez wrote Pruneda, "that there has not been one number of *New Masses* in which they did not speak in favor of Mexico and against North American imperialism

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<sup>330</sup> Correspondence alluding to this plan includes: Dos Passos to Chávez, 17 July 1927, c. 2, v. III, exp. 37, Varios Biográficos Archivo Chávez, AGN. Egmont Arens to Chávez, 5 May 1927; Mike Gold to Chávez, undated; Dos Passos to Chávez, undated; Chávez to Pruneda, 4 May 1927, c. 2, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>331</sup> Chávez to Pruneda, 4 May 1927, c. 2, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

. . .”<sup>332</sup> In the same letter, Chávez claimed that Gold had offered assurances that *Fiesta* would be in the same spirit as the articles about Mexico published in *New Masses*.

Chávez agreed to look at a script but said he would probably refuse the offer, citing a full schedule of composing music for his own projects. Upon viewing the script he became more inclined to refuse the commission. He felt that the script was “dangerous,” because the portrayal of the Indian was needlessly negative. Nonetheless, Gold was able to convince Chávez to arrange six or eight *canciones* for use in the *Fiesta* performance.

The New Playwrights hired Robert Milton, a well-known Broadway director, for their production. Milton, according to Chávez, “knew a lot about Broadway, and New York in general, but was completely ignorant about Mexico.”<sup>333</sup> As the date of the production neared, Chávez and Covarrubias began attending rehearsals. As directed for the New Playwrights Theatre, stereotyped images implied by the script were over-emphasized, presenting what Chávez and Covarrubias felt to be an unfair portrayal of their country and its people. Following a final dress rehearsal in front of an invited public, Chávez argued against the production of the work. The premiere was cancelled. During the weeks after the cancelled premiere, Chávez received a series of explanatory and apologetic notes from Gold,<sup>334</sup> Arens,<sup>335</sup> and Dos Passos.<sup>336</sup> Nonetheless, according to Chávez, the gossip mill was still churning.

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<sup>332</sup> “Ud. se dará cuenta por las fechas, no ha habido un número del “New Masses” en que no se hable en favor de México y en contra del imperialismo norte-americano . . .” Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> “nos dimos perfectamente cuenta de que Sr. Milton sabía mucho de Broadway y de Nueva York en general pero, ignoraba completamente México, sus circunstancias sus problemas, etc. etc. etc, y por razón misma de las obras “broadway” o de cualquiera otro carácter que ha dirigido toda su vida, no entendía lo que le decíamos.” Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> Mike Gold to Chávez, undated, c. 2, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

In May 1927, the same month he wrote Pruneda, Chávez sent a telegram to his friend Octavio Barreda asking him to help Chávez get a job at the Mexican consulate. Although, as he had told Gold, Chávez was working on a number of projects of his own, he had been unable to secure performances of his works. Meanwhile, Chávez's compatriot and sometime-rival, Julián Carrillo, was captivating the attention of the New York public with his microtonal *Concertino*, performed in Philadelphia and New York in March 1927. The *Fiesta* debacle worsened an already difficult situation for Chávez, sending the composer into what appears to have been an uncharacteristically depressed mood. Hearing that Octavio Barreda's brother had abandoned his post at the consulate, Chávez wrote:

Barreda, inform me whether the auxiliary position in Chicago formerly held by your brother remains vacant. I beg you insistently to consider me for this vacancy . . . Thank you very much for your support, which will permit me to stop depending any more on musical vicissitudes.”<sup>337</sup>

Chávez did not receive the post; the consulate informed him that it had already been filled.<sup>338</sup> By July 1927, gossip about the *Fiesta* debacle had quieted. Chávez wrote Dos Passos, “Your letter from May came to me opportunely and I thank you for the clarifications that it makes. This matter is now satisfactorily ended.”<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> Egmont Arens to Chávez, 5 May 1927, c. 2, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>336</sup> Dos Passos to Chávez, undated, c. 2, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>337</sup> “Barreda infórmame puesto auxiliar su hermano quedará vacante. [¿?]iendose Chicago suplicole (stet.) encarecidamente considerarme llenar dicha vacante . . . Agradeceriale much su apoyo que permitiriame no depender más vicisitudes musicales.” Telegram, Chávez to Mexican Consulate, 27 May 1928; Telegram, Consulate to Chávez, 28 May 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 37, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> Chávez to Dos Passos, 17 July 1927, c. 2, v. III, exp. 37, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

### *Non-Public Performances*

Although the year and a half between November 1926 and April 1928 must have been a bleak period for Chávez, the composer was slowly making a name for himself within the music community of New York. Perhaps Chávez's most fruitful endeavor of the period was the creation of a strong and broad network among members of the New York music community. He did this, in part, by actively participating in the thriving social life of 1920s New York.

To parties Chávez often brought a friend or two from the Mexican expatriate community—most frequently the artist Miguel Covarrubias,<sup>340</sup> the pianist Francisco Agea,<sup>341</sup> or the painter Rufino Tamayo.<sup>342</sup> Probably Chávez and his friends shared stories of Mexico and talked about their creative work. At such parties, Chávez was also able to meet musicians he admired and hear their compositions or performances. For example, through a Pro-Musica event at the home of Blanche Walton, he was introduced to Bartók and the violinist Joseph Szigeti.<sup>343</sup> At a party in the home of the Alma Wertheim, Chávez heard works by Marion Bauer and Roy Harris.<sup>344</sup> Egmont Arens, who had been involved with the plans to stage *Fiesta*, continued to be a good friend to Chávez, giving him free tickets to performances, inviting him to his home,

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<sup>340</sup> References to Chávez's habit of socializing with Covarrubias can be found in: Reis to Chávez, [n.d., 1928?], c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>341</sup> Numerous letters from Agea to Chávez indicate that they participated in the same social circle. *E.g.*: Agea to Chávez, 5 Nov. 1928; Agea to Chávez, 6 Oct. 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 36, Varios Biográficos Archivo Chávez, AGN; an invitation from Ruth Arens to Chávez instructs him to bring Agea as well: Arens to Chávez, [n.d. 1927?], c. 1, v. III, exp. 63, Correspondencia personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>342</sup> Tamayo, Chávez's roommate, was invited to, among other things, a dinner gathering at the home of William Grant Still: Still to Chávez, 14 Oct. 1926 and 26 Feb. 1927, c. 6, v. I, exp. 51, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>343</sup> The invitation can be found in the Chávez archive: Walton to Chávez, 5 Feb. [1927?] 11 a.m., c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>344</sup> The invitation can be found in the Chávez archive: Wertheim to Chávez, 9 Feb. [1927?] 8:30 p.m. c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

and, later, collaborating in a plan to perform Chávez's works with the People's Symphony Orchestra.<sup>345</sup>

Chávez also shared his music at New York social events. In a letter to his stepmother, Cowell reported that a Blanche Walton party held 19 March 1928 had featured Chávez playing his own compositions.<sup>346</sup> Archival research did not reveal any programs for these casual concerts, yet we can surmise that the composer played his recent works for piano, including the Sonatina, the small "Mexican Pieces," the Third Piano Sonata, and sections of his ballets, *El Fuego Nuevo*, *Los Cuatro Soles*, and *H.P.* A two-piano arrangement of *El Fuego Nuevo* dated 1921 (copyright 1925) suggests that Chávez and a performer-friend, most likely Agea, played the entirety of this ballet at social events they attended.

Both Walton and Wertheim went on to support Chávez in other ways. During the late 1920s, Walton campaigned for Cowell to publish Chávez's music in *New Music*. In 1930, Wertheim arranged for the publication of the Piano Sonatina with the publishing house she ran, Cos Cob Press.<sup>347</sup>

It appears that it was at parties or social events that the writer Paul Rosenfeld, and composers Aaron Copland and Henry Cowell first met Chávez. These three men became the composer's most ardent advocates within the New York artistic community, writing articles, finding performances, and arranging publication of his scores. The efforts of Rosenfeld, Copland, and Cowell brought significant attention to

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<sup>345</sup> The performance with the People's Symphony Orchestra would end up being cancelled as described in a letter held in the Chávez archive: Chávez to Cowell, 25 Oct. 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>346</sup> Henry Cowell to Olive Cowell, n.d., Box 18, Folder 25, Cowell Collection, NYPL.

<sup>347</sup> The correspondence about this publication is described in Oja, "Cos Cob Press and the American Composer," *Notes* 45, n. 2 (December 1988): 227-252.

Chávez and his music starting in 1928. Without these men or others like them, it is unlikely that Chávez would have been able to establish a career in the U.S.

### *Rosenfeld*

Rosenfeld's activities on behalf of Chávez are perhaps best known. Beginning in February 1927, he wrote about the composer in the *Dial*,<sup>348</sup> *Scribner Magazine*,<sup>349</sup> *The New Republic*,<sup>350</sup> and *Modern Music*<sup>351</sup> and included long profiles of the composer in his books, *By Way of Art*,<sup>352</sup> *An Hour with American Music*,<sup>353</sup> and *Discoveries of a Music Critic*.<sup>354</sup> His activities on behalf of Chávez extended beyond Rosenfeld's duties as a writer and critic. He also hosted a party to share Chávez's music,<sup>355</sup> and appears to have used any available opportunity to promote the young composer.

For Rosenfeld, the embrace of Chávez's music was part of a larger re-imagining of American identity. In December 1926, just a few months before his first article about the composer, Rosenfeld returned from a year's hiatus from his job as music critic for *The Dial*. His first column upon return included very little about musical life; instead it described an eye-opening cross-country trip by train, ostensibly taken during Rosenfeld's months of respite, "Evidently the westbound

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<sup>348</sup> Rosenfeld, "Musical Chronicle," *The Dial*, February 1927, 175.

<sup>349</sup> Rosenfeld, "New American Music," *Scribner's Magazine*, June 1931, 624.

<sup>350</sup> Rosenfeld, "American Premieres," *The New Republic*, 20 April 1932, 273.

<sup>351</sup> Rosenfeld, "American Composers VIII: Carlos Chávez," *Modern Music*, May-June 1932, 153.

<sup>352</sup> Rosenfeld, "The Americanism of Carlos Chávez" in *By Way of Art: Criticisms of Music, Literature, Painting, Sculpture, and the Dance* (New York: Coward McCann, 1928).

<sup>353</sup> Rosenfeld, "Carlos Chávez" in *An Hour with American Music* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1929).

<sup>354</sup> Rosenfeld, "Ives, Harris, Copland, Chávez, Reigger," in *Discoveries of a Music Critic* (New York: Harcourt-Brace, 1936).

<sup>355</sup> Described in: Chávez to Pruneda, 5 March 1928, c. 12, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

track led to a whole. . . . Strikingly new was a desert quilted of pink and poison-green patches, crumby slopes upholstered in dusty plucked velvet, livid convict hills branded across their villainous fronts.” In this environment, Rosenfeld explained, “lay the penetralia [*sic*] of the continent, the secret essence of America, the mysterious projection of a long dormant idea.”<sup>356</sup>

Articles about Chávez and his work, published in the months and years that followed, make clear Rosenfeld’s belief that the composer’s music was one embodiment of this “secret essence of America” found in the southwest, along the Mexican border. It is with this new definition of America in mind that Rosenfeld finds in Chávez’s music, “a buzzing, rustling, cackling quality that evokes the desert, the rattling of pods, the cackling of the redman in his dusty pueblos.”<sup>357</sup> Although neither the composer nor his Mexican audience would have summarized the varied landscape of their country with such a barren image,<sup>358</sup> Rosenfeld, anxious to create an exotic revision of American identity, saw in Chávez what he knew of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Rosenfeld had not traveled widely through the continent, but his definition of “America” was broad, encompassing Latin America as well as the U.S. In an article published in *Scribner’s Magazine* in June of 1931, Rosenfeld described Chávez’s music along with that of “a handful of composers scattered between Boston and Brazil,” including Heitor Villa-Lobos, Carl Ruggles, Roger Sessions, Aaron Copland,

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<sup>356</sup> Rosenfeld, “Musical Chronicle,” *The Dial*, December 1926, 529.

<sup>357</sup> Rosenfeld, “American Composers VIII: Carlos Chávez,” *Modern Music*, May-June 1932, 153.

<sup>358</sup> See Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001) 159-160.

Roy Harris, and Edgar Varése. Rosenfeld juxtaposed the music of these composers with that of the Europeans:

These original pieces compare favorably not only with the elder American music . . . They compare favorably with the contemporary European musical product. True, the American movement sports no masterly ability approaching Schoenberg's, no rhythmic invention approximating Stravinsky's, no fire and force proportionable [*sic*] to Bloch's. Scarcely one of the western composers shows the frequently careless but nonetheless healthy luxuriance of Milhaud, Hindemith, and several of their coevals. The new movement is still spotty and uncertain, only slowly gaining body and headway. . . But where the average European composer is excessively doctrinaire, the American is agreeably naïve. We only rarely find him, as even the best of his transatlantic fellows, arriving at the articulation of his idea by the circuitous route of theory. He is far more intuitive, expressing his coming world-feeling spontaneously. In this lies his advantage. For, spontaneity and naïveté in music is like grace in the spiritual life: the sign of strength, regeneration, and inspiration: and the sole satisfaction.<sup>359</sup>

### *Copland*

Like Rosenfeld, Copland wrote and advocated on behalf of Chávez. In addition, Copland organized one of the most important performances of Chávez's music in New York, and helped him make connections within the circle of composers and patrons associated with the League of Composers. Copland included Chávez's works in the first Copland-Sessions concert held in April 1928; it marked the first significant performance of Chávez's work since the November 1925 ICG concert. The program included the premiere of Chávez's third Sonata, dedicated to Copland, and the first performance where all three of Chávez's Sonatinas were played together. The works were performed at the middle and end of the program, insuring that even

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<sup>359</sup> Rosenfeld, "New American Music," *Scribner's Magazine*, June 1931, 624-632.

critics who could not stay until the end of the performance heard some of Chávez's music.

This concert was an enormous boon to Chávez's U.S. career. Finally, critics appeared to see some value in the work. A reviewer for the *New York Herald Tribune* called the Sonata "vigorous and forthright."<sup>360</sup> Winthrop P. Tyron, writing for the *Christian Science Monitor* observed, "[Chávez] represented the younger group of the advance guard—the practice squad of skirmishers—most praiseworthy, displaying caution and at the same time determination."<sup>361</sup> Downes also praised the work, describing the performance in typically vivid terms, "[Chávez] used Mexican Indian themes with primitive joy, but without softness or mercy. If he did not scalp, he tomahawked the keyboard . . ."<sup>362</sup>

In addition to providing Chávez the opportunity to premiere his Sonata and hear his Sonatinas performed, Copland promoted the composer and his music through an article published in *The New Republic* the very next week. Titled "Carlos Chávez—Mexican Composer" it cast Chávez as the harbinger of a new form of nationalist composition. Copland found the roots of Chávez's nationalist style in the short Piano Sonata:

[The Piano Sonata] is refreshing, original music with a kind of hard charm and a distinctly Mexican flavor. No Indian melodies are actually quoted in this 'Sonatina'—Chávez had begun to rethink the material so that only its essence remained. Here and there a recognizably Mexican turn of phrase can be discerned, but as a whole the folk element has been replaced by a more subtle sense of national characteristics. As Debussy and Ravel reflected the clarity, the delicacy, the wit and the formal design of the French spirit, so Chávez had learned to write music which caught the spirit of Mexico . . . Thus,

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<sup>360</sup> "Young Composer's Work Opens Concert Series," *NYHT*, 23 April 1928, 13.

<sup>361</sup> Winthrop P. Tyron, "Two American Modernists," *CSM*, 26 April 1928, 10.

<sup>362</sup> Olin Downes, "Music," *NYT*, 23 April 1928, 20.

single-handed he has created a tradition which no future Mexican composer can afford to ignore. If I stress this point, it is because I feel that no other composer who has used folk material—not even Béla Bartók or de Falla—has more successfully solved the problem of its complete amalgamation into an art-form.”<sup>363</sup>

In addition to viewing Chávez as a Mexican nationalist composer, Copland, like Rosenfeld, viewed Chávez as part of a Pan-nationalist program.<sup>364</sup> In the conclusion to his article for *The New Republic*, Copland wrote:

[Chávez] is one of the few American musicians about whom we can say that he is more than a reflection of Europe . . . We cannot, like Chávez, borrow from a rich, melodic source or lose ourselves in an ancient civilization, but we can be stimulated and instructed by his example.<sup>365</sup>

Copland’s promotion of Chávez and his music did not end with the 1928 Copland-Sessions concert and the subsequent profile article in *The New Republic*. He continued to include Chávez’s music in the concerts he organized, reference Chávez’s music in his writings, and help Chávez establish and maintain U.S. contacts. Copland also performed and lectured about Chávez’s music upon occasion.<sup>366</sup> Copland was especially influential in the League of Composers circle. It may have been through Copland that Chávez met Minna Lederman, the editor of *Modern Music*, and Claire Reis, the president of the League. These women were increasingly helpful to Chávez during the 1930s and 1940s. Copland also helped Chávez arrange the publication of his Piano Sonatina with Alma Wertheim’s Cos Cob Press. Correspondence indicates

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<sup>363</sup> Copland, “Carlos Chávez—Mexican Composer,” *The New Republic*, 2 May 1928, 322-323.

<sup>364</sup> Saavedra also discusses Chávez’s relationships with Rosenfeld and Copland, with particular attention to the varied definitions of “Mexican” that were applied. See Saavedra, “Of Selves and Others,” 136-174.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>366</sup> Program, Cleveland Museum of Art, “The Youngest Generation of American Composers,” lecture-recital by Aaron Copland, 27 January 1929; Program, Concert of American Contemporary Music, 16 December 1931, 8:15, Aeolian Hall; Program, “Concerts of Recorded Music,” 13 December [1928?], c. 3, v. 5, exp. 114, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

that Wertheim was consulting Copland about what to publish, and Copland was sending her Chávez's scores to consider.<sup>367</sup>

### *Cowell*

Cowell supported Chávez and his music through writings, concerts, and the publication of his scores. During the 1920s and early 1930s, Cowell's efforts to promote Chávez and his music were at least as vigorous as those exhibited by Rosenfeld and Copland. However, Cowell did not write as many long eloquent articles about the composer. Furthermore, he did not enjoy as deep or long-lasting a friendship with Chávez as Copland. Perhaps for these reasons, the Cowell-Chávez relationship has not been given the emphasis or attention it deserves.<sup>368</sup>

During the late 1920s, Cowell was responsible for organizing many of the smaller concerts in both California and New York that included works by Chávez. Just a month before the Copland-Sessions concert, Oscar Zeigler performed "36" at the New School concerts organized by Cowell in New York. Richard Buhling performed the Piano Sonatina on a New Music Society concert in San Francisco on 24 October 1928.<sup>369</sup> On the 27 November 1928 New Music Society concert, also held in San Francisco, Dorothy Minty and Marjorie Gear performed Chávez's Violin

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<sup>367</sup> This arrangement is described in: Chávez to Copland, 2 January 1929, c. 3, v. 5, exp. 114, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN. See also Oja, "Cos-Cob Press."

<sup>368</sup> Although Parker, Pollack, and Bergman Crist have each devoted an article to the Copland-Chávez relationship, to my knowledge no such article has analyzed the Cowell-Chávez friendship. In Chávez biographies by Parker and García Morrillo, Cowell receives scant attention; similarly, in the Cowell biography by Michael Hicks and the study of the *New Music* concerts and publications by Rita Mead, Chávez is rarely mentioned. A forthcoming Cowell biography by Joel Sachs may shed more light on the matter.

<sup>369</sup> Program reprinted in Rita Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI, 1981) 99-103.

Sonatina.<sup>370</sup> Cowell organized the initial concert of the Pan American Association of Composers, held in New York's Birchard Hall on 12 March 1929, which included Chávez's Piano Sonatina and 36.<sup>371</sup>

It is likely that Cowell introduced performers Richard Buhling, Winifred Hooke, Arthur Hardcastle, and Wesley Kuhnle to Chávez's music.<sup>372</sup> Many of these artists were based in the West and brought Chávez's music to new audiences in San Francisco and Los Angeles. It appears that Buhling was a particularly ardent advocate on behalf of Chávez; in letters to the composer, Buhling reported that, in addition to performing the Piano Sonatina with the Cowell's *New Music Society*, he "played it several times for small groups privately, in Carmel, in Los Angeles, in Berkeley, etc."<sup>373</sup>

Cowell also arranged for the publication of several of Chávez's scores through the *New Music Quarterly (NMQ)*, a periodical that printed and distributed scores by lesser-known avant-garde composers—scores that would not be accepted by more traditional presses. *NMQ* first published a Chávez score in 1928, the Violin Sonatina, which marked the first publication of Chávez's music in the U.S. Other publications followed including "36" in 1930, the Piano Sonata in 1933, and Seven Pieces for Piano in 1936.

When Cowell and Varése formed the Pan American Association of Composers in 1928, Chávez was considered a critical member of the group. Initially,

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid., 103-105

<sup>371</sup> A list of concert dates and repertoire is provided in Dean Root, "The Pan American Association of Composers," *Anuario Interamericano de Investigación Musical* 8 (1972): 49-70.

<sup>372</sup> Evidence of Cowell's promotion of Chávez's music to various performers can be found in: Cowell to Chávez, no date; Cowell to Chávez, 26 April 1931; Kuhnle to Cowell, forwarded to Chávez, 15 October 1929, c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>373</sup> Buhling to Chávez, 16 March 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

the organization appointed Chávez one of the Vice-Presidents and consulted him frequently. Together Cowell and Chávez planned to publish a bilingual music periodical, as an outlet for the PAAC.<sup>374</sup> As a Vice-President of the PAAC, Chávez issued invitations to composers throughout the Western Hemisphere to join their cause. In the weeks that followed, Chávez became disheartened at the response among Latin American composers, many of whom declined the invitation to submit manuscripts for performance. Despite this response, the PAAC leadership made a resolution to move ahead without widespread support, only performing the works of those who had agreed to participate, and severely limiting the amount of Latin American music on the programs. Chávez was dismayed at this turn of events and wrote a formal letter of dissent to the PAAC leadership.<sup>375</sup>

In November 1928, Cowell wrote to Ives that Chávez had resigned from the PAAC because of “disinterest.”<sup>376</sup> Although Chávez’s name remained on the stationary and concert programs, his involvement with the organization declined. Nonetheless, Cowell resolved that Chávez’s music should be represented on PAAC concerts. Cowell wrote numerous letters to Chávez begging him to continue to submit new works to the PAAC.<sup>377</sup> As a consequence of Cowell’s efforts, Chávez’s music was performed through the PAAC at their concerts in New York and abroad.

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<sup>374</sup> Initial plans may be found in: Henry Cowell to Olive Cowell, 2 February 1928, Box 18, Folder 24, Cowell Collection, NYPL.

<sup>375</sup> Chávez to PAAC composers, 12 April 1928, c. 5, v. V, exp. 81, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>376</sup> Quoted in Mead, 106. To my knowledge, there is no evidence of a formal resignation on Chávez’s part, but given the recent conflict about Latin American composers in the PAAC programs, Cowell’s account to Ives seems logical.

<sup>377</sup> See, for example, a letter from Cowell to Chávez, 11 February 1931, “I am sorry you have not time to send me your score, as I wished very much to present it. The Pan-Americans present three chamber orchestra concerts in New York this season . . . I dislike intensely to leave you out of these programs – perhaps we may present your “Sonatina,” as it is the only available work.” c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

Despite conflict about the PAAC, the idea of a bilingual journal about modern music continued to interest both Chávez and Cowell, as demonstrated by several letters exchanged about the topic.<sup>378</sup> Understandably, given Chávez's reservations about participation in the PAAC, after a few months the prospective journal was no longer considered to be a PAAC outlet. Less understandably, neither Chávez nor Cowell seemed able to finalize decisions about the content, funding, and editorial responsibilities—each frequently assuming that the other was willing to commit the majority of the time, energy, and monetary capital required.<sup>379</sup> These crossed-wires fated the journal to fail; years later the Pan American Union, under the leadership of Cowell's good friend, Charles Seeger, would undertake a similar project, creating the *Pan American Union Bulletin*.<sup>380</sup>

Just a month after Copland's article appeared in *The New Republic*, Cowell published his own feature article about Chávez in *Pro-Musica Quarterly*.<sup>381</sup> Later in the summer Chávez was featured in an article by Cowell for *Aesthete Magazine*.<sup>382</sup> The interpretation of Chávez's music presented in these articles is quite different from that presented by Copland and Rosenfeld.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> These letters are found in AGN and NYPL collections: Chávez to Cowell, 13 February 1933; Cowell to Chávez, 21 February 1933, *ibid.* Chávez to Cowell, 29 April 1932, Box 3, Folder 4; Henry Cowell to Olive Cowell, 2 February 1928, Box 18, Folder 24, Cowell Collection, NYPL.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>380</sup> Correspondence about the journal has been translated and made available. See Saavedra, "The Social Thought of Seeger and Chávez" in *Understanding Charles Seeger, Pioneer in American Musicology*, edited by Bell Yung and Helen Rees, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999. In the correspondence excerpted by Saavedra, it is clear that Seeger participated in the original plans for the bilingual journal and that Chávez was consulted extensively about the creation of the *Pan American Union Bulletin*.

<sup>381</sup> Cowell, "Carlos Chávez," *Pro-Musica Quarterly*, June 1928, 19-23.

<sup>382</sup> Cowell, "Four Little Known Modern Composers," *The Aesthete Magazine*, August 1928, c. 2, v. VI, exp. 107, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>383</sup> Although the statement seems to counter that of Copland in *The New Republic* (see footnote 349), it appears from a letter Cowell wrote to Chávez that the submission to *Pro-Musica* occurred before Cowell had read Copland's article: "I was delighted to see Aaron's article in *The New Republic* and, of

Chávez is a composer of music. He is also a Mexican; but although his music may have been somewhat influenced by his nationality, his claim to recognition as a composer is not based on his country, but upon the actual worth [of] his music itself. He does not seek to put forth works which are based on Mexican folk-themes, although he is an authority on them, but writes his own music, to be judged irrespective of nationality.<sup>384</sup>

*American Composers on American Music* (1933), a collection of essays edited by Cowell, includes an essay by Copland about Chávez that is very similar to Copland's previous writings about the composer. In the introduction to the book, Cowell classifies Chávez, along with the Cubans Alejandro García Caturla and Amadeo Roldán as one of the composers "who have developed indigenous materials or are especially interested in expressing some phase of the American spirit in their works."<sup>385</sup> The categorization in the *American Composers* introduction either expressed deference to Copland's point of view, or reflected a change in Cowell's interpretation of Chávez's music. It is also possible that Cowell reconsidered his interpretation in light of Chávez's attempts to compose nationalist Mexican music during the years between the publication of the article in *Pro-musica* (1928) and the publication of *American Composers* (1933).

In other articles published during the late 1920s, Cowell evaluated Chávez's music in purely modernist terms. For example, in the article for *Aesthete Magazine*,<sup>386</sup> Cowell examines the techniques Chávez employs in his composition, without any reference to Indianist programs or quotations of folk music. In an article for *Modern*

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course, heartily concur with his opinion of your high rank in American music. My article will appear (as far as I know) in the next *Pro-Musica* . . ." Cowell to Chávez, 11 May 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>384</sup> Cowell, "Carlos Chávez," *Pro-Musica Quarterly*, June 1928, 19.

<sup>385</sup> Cowell, ed., *American Composers on American Music* (New York: F. Ungar, 1962).

<sup>386</sup> Cowell, "Four Little Known Modern Composers," *The Aesthete Magazine*. August 1928, c. 2, v. VI, exp. 107, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

*Music* about terminology, Cowell used an example from Chávez's *Energía* to illustrate "contrapuntal polytonality."<sup>387</sup> Although Cowell pointed to Chávez's Aztec ballets as some of the composer's best work, he did not spend time analyzing these works or drawing parallels between the ballets and Chávez's non-programmatic work. In both 1928 articles, Cowell acknowledges the influence of Mexican culture upon Chávez's music while arguing that the technical aspects of the compositions are more important.

### *Lessons, Lectures, and Writings*

In addition to composing, socializing, and promoting his new work, Chávez taught and wrote several articles about music while in New York.<sup>388</sup> During February and March 1928, Chávez offered a music analysis class in the living room of his Greenwich Village apartment. In preparing his lectures he developed ideas about Mexican music and his own public identity that would resurface over the next few years in writings and interviews.

Chávez titled the first set of classes, intended to be half of a two-part course, "The Primitives." The lectures introduced students to music around the world beginning with the Middle East and ending with two classes about the Indians of the Americas. While a few early lectures were dedicated to basic analytical techniques, no lessons were devoted to classical music in the Western tradition.<sup>389</sup> This "world

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<sup>387</sup> Cowell, "New Terms for New Music," *Modern Music*, May-June 1928, 21.

<sup>388</sup> Chávez, "Antecedents and Consequences," *Eolus*, January 1927, 12; "Technique and Inner Form," *Modern Music*, May-June 1928, 28.

<sup>389</sup> Notes, c. 5, v. IV, exp. 43, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

music” approach was unusual for the time and positioned Chávez as an expert in the exotic.

Despite the global topics found in lecture notes for “The Primitives,” Chávez did not seem to encourage a nationalist interpretation of his music in the musical press during most of his stay in New York. His first two articles published in the U.S., “Antecedents and Consequences” (*Eolus*, 1927) and “Technique and Inner Form” (*Modern Music*, 1928), are modernist in approach. The first analyzes the music of Edgard Varése, and Varése’s place within music history.<sup>390</sup> The second studies the relationship between large-scale and small-scale forms within a composition.<sup>391</sup> It seems that for the 1928 article for *Modern Music*, Chávez purposely avoided writing about nationalist music; the request from *Modern Music* editor Minna Lederman was to write about “popular and serious music,”<sup>392</sup> an assignment that would have allowed ample discussion of Mexicanist approaches to composition. Instead, Chávez wrote the technical article described above, which contained no reference to nationality.

Chávez’s reaction to Lederman’s request might reflect the same ambivalence about nationalism in music that can be found in Chávez’s program notes for the ICG “Dance of Men and Machines” performance (November 1926), which was quoted at length in an earlier section.

The September 1928 issue of *Musical America* marked a significant change in Chávez’s presentation of his public identity. To the author of the large cover story article, Barthold Fles, Chávez took great pains to present himself as, foremost, an

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<sup>390</sup> Chávez, “Antecedents and Consequences,” *Eolus*, January 1927, 12.

<sup>391</sup> Chávez, “Technique and Inner Form,” *Modern Music*, May-June 1928, 28.

<sup>392</sup> Minna Lederman to Chávez, 15 April (1928?), c. 2, v. III, exp. 37, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

exotic Mexican. When comparing his own music to that of the “average Latin American,” Chávez observed:

This contemporary music in France and Germany, and that from Russia, sounds logical coming from those countries in their present condition. But when I turned to my own composing again, it was like going out of doors, away from European civilization. Twice a year, at home in Mexico City, my family went to the country . . . In this way I often was able to observe and study primitive Indian festivals and this is the life that burns in my mind.<sup>393</sup>

Similarly, the third article of Chávez’s published in the U.S., “The Two Persons,”<sup>394</sup> demonstrates a departure from the resolutely cerebral and modernist stance found in previous writings. Instead of treating compositional techniques, as in his previous articles for *Eolus* and *Modern Music*, Chávez analyzed the relationship between a composer and his audience, probably as a reflection of his new job as conductor of the *OSM* in Mexico City.

Starting sometime in the spring of 1927,<sup>395</sup> Chávez began to generate ideas for a book proposal. Chávez’s articles for *Eolus*, *Modern Music*, and *Musical Quarterly*, cited above, and his lecture notes for “The Primitives”<sup>396</sup> formed the core material for an early book outline, probably created in 1927 or 1928. In the initial plans for the book all of its three sections were closely modeled on his New York lectures. As in his New York analysis course, the first part of the book adapted information from articles that had been published in the U.S. and Mexico.<sup>397</sup> The second part concerned the artist and his public, borrowing heavily from the article for *Musical Quarterly*.

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<sup>393</sup> Chávez quoted in Barthold Fles, “Chávez Lights New Music With Old Fires,” *Musical America*, 15 September 1928, 1.

<sup>394</sup> Chávez, “The Two Persons,” *Musical Quarterly* 15, n. 2 (April 1929): 153-159.

<sup>395</sup> The first mention of the book found in the Chávez correspondence: Chávez to Pruneda, 4 May 1927, c. 12, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>396</sup> The lectures are found in: Notes, c. 5, v. IV, exp. 43, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>397</sup> A list of Chávez’s articles published in Mexico may be found in García Morillo; the articles Chávez published in U.S. periodicals have been cited above.

The last section included various chapters about Mexican music, including a significant portion about Mexican Indian music and borrowing from his lecture notes for “The Primitives”.<sup>398</sup>

Chávez presented his ideas to several friends in New York before returning to Mexico in the summer of 1928. The book is loosely described in correspondence as being about “Indian music” or “Mexican music,” although even the earliest outlines seem to include material outside this general topic. Alma Wertheim expressed ambivalence about the book, writing Chávez, “somehow this is not the time for that book for you—something is being forced.”<sup>399</sup> Paul Rosenfeld was more encouraging, recommending the book to Helen Black of the publishing house Coward-McCann.<sup>400</sup>

Although he never published the book, Chávez’s notes show that over the next several years, he often returned to the book idea, writing and editing many outlines, revising prose, and thinking of ways to include ideas from his articles and lectures in the book. Subsequent plans also included significant material from his articles and lectures in Mexico City. Later versions placed less emphasis on this topic and more emphasis upon Chávez’s new professional activities such as his work with the *Orquesta Sinfónica de México* and his teaching in the National Conservatory. At some point, perhaps under the impression that the book would have a better reception in the U.S., Chávez hired a translator; English-language versions of several chapters survive in the Chávez archive.

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<sup>398</sup> Notes, caja 5, v. III, exp. 25, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>399</sup> Wertheim to Chávez, 6 April 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>400</sup> The recommendation is mentioned in: Black to Chávez, 25 May 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

## *Ballets*

Several of the Chávez profile articles by Rosenfeld, Copland, and Cowell referred to Chávez's Aztec ballets as among his best and most innovative works. Nonetheless, following the cancellation of *Fiesta*, the composer could not seem to arrange performances for any of his stage works, including the Aztec ballets. In addition to promoting his three ballets- *El Fuego Nuevo*, *Los Cuatro Soles*, *H.P.* – two of which were complete— Chávez participated in the early planning stages of many productions that were never realized.<sup>401</sup> Among the proposed projects detailed in correspondence and preserved notes are: a puppet play titled “Love’s Dilemma,”<sup>402</sup> an unidentified “Chaplin Style” production,<sup>403</sup> and two ballets: “The White Prince”<sup>404</sup> and “La Mulata de Córdoba.”<sup>405</sup> Chávez’s most frequent collaborators in these stage projects were his close friends, the painter Agustín Lazo, the sketch artist Miguel Covarrubias, and the writer Octavio Barreda. Barreda, the author of “Love’s Dilemma” submitted several scripts and scenarios to Chávez hoping to pique the composer’s interest in collaboration. The surviving scripts include a plan for an

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<sup>401</sup> For more about Chávez’s stage works during this period see: Robert Parker, “Carlos Chávez and the Ballet” and Antonio Saborit, “Mexican Gaities.” Parker and Saborit make reference to some of the same documents in their articles, but I have found it easiest and clearest to cite the primary source that I have also examined.

<sup>402</sup> Draft scenario, c. 5, v. III, exp. 35, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>403</sup> Cited in: Covarrubias to Chávez, 20 July 1927, c. 3, v. V, exp. 119, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>404</sup> Cited in: Lazo to Chávez, [n.d.], c. 7, v. III, exp. 81 Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>405</sup> Cited in: Lazo to Chávez, 22 July 1925, c. 7, v. III, exp. 81, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

untitled Piñata ballet,<sup>406</sup> a loose outline titled, “La adoración de los Reyes,” and a third plan titled, “Judas: Escenas del Sábado de la Gloria.”<sup>407</sup>

Numerous people and organizations were approached to investigate the feasibility of producing these various projects. Irene Lewisohn of the Neighborhood Playhouse considered productions of “Love’s Dilemma” and *Los Cuatro Soles*.<sup>408</sup> Lazo approached Cocteau about the production of “La Mulata de Córdoba.”<sup>409</sup> Chávez corresponded with the conductor Goosens about performances of *Los Cuatro Soles*, “Love’s Dilemma,” and *H.P.*<sup>410</sup> Chávez also wrote the dancer Adolph Bolm about possible performances of “The White Prince” and *Los Cuatro Soles*.<sup>411</sup> Despite these attempts, no one agreed to stage any of the proposed works.

Probably in the late summer or early fall of 1927, Frances Flynn Paine became Chávez’s manager with the express purpose of arranging productions of *El Fuego Nuevo*, *Los Cuatro Soles*, or *H.P.* She came very close to setting up a performance of *El Fuego Nuevo*.<sup>412</sup> The performance was to occur in conjunction with an exhibit of Mexican art at the Art Center in New York, which Paine was also managing.<sup>413</sup> After Paine and Chávez agreed to cover most of the production costs, S.L. Rothafel, the

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<sup>406</sup> It is possible that Barreda’s idea of dancing fruit outlined in the Piñata ballet proposal was incorporated into the production of *H.P.* in 1932.

<sup>407</sup> Found in: Barreda to Chávez, 5 August 1924 and 28 June (1926?), c. 2, v. IV, exp. 33, Correspondencia Personal; Notes, c. 5, v. III, exp. 35, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>408</sup> Her responses to Chávez’s are found in the AGN: request Lewisohn to Chávez, 29 March 1927 and undated, c. 7, v. IV, exp. 101, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Lewisohn to Chávez, undated, c. 2, V. III, exp. 37, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>409</sup> Described in: Lazo to Chávez, 22 July 1925, c. 7, v. III, exp. 81, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>410</sup> Request found in: Chávez to Goosens, 21 Sept. 1927, c. 10, v. V, exp. 129, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>411</sup> Documented in: Chávez to Pruneda, undated, c. 12, v. III, exp. 73, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Bolm to Chávez, 26 Oct. 1926 and 19 March 1926, c. 2, V. IV, exp. 72, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>412</sup> Parker describes Paine’s relationship with Chávez and her work as Chávez’s manager in more detail in “Chávez and the Ballet.”

<sup>413</sup> Delpar, 136-137.

owner of the Roxy Theatre, indicated that his theatre would host the event, signing a contract in July 1927 to produce the ballet by the end of the year. With this understanding, Chávez and Paine began collecting the native instruments called for in the score, including a large, expensive shipment of whistles and gourds. Over the subsequent weeks, Rothafel changed his mind, making increasingly stringent demands on the performance and finally canceling it altogether. Paine's threats to sue Rothafel were futile; he was resolved to forgo the performance and Paine learned, upon consulting a lawyer, that Rothafel's case was incontestable.

The Art Center exhibit of Mexican folk art occurred in 1928. The same year ceramic displays created from Augustín Lazo's designs for *El Fuego Nuevo* were displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, plans for the performance of *El Fuego Nuevo* were temporarily abandoned. When Chávez returned to Mexico City in the summer of 1928, not one of the stage works had been produced and there were no viable plans for productions in New York theatres or concert hall.

#### *Chávez Returns to Mexico City, 1928-1932*

Upon returning to Mexico City after his first trip to New York, Chávez displayed an increased interest in promoting modernist music; upon returning from his second trip to New York, Chávez displayed an increased interest in infusing Mexican modernist music with indianist nationalist references. Moreover, after 1928 Chávez had a greater platform from which to advance his various causes. Prestigious appointments as director of the Orquesta Sinfonica Mexicana and the National Conservatory gave him ample opportunities to shape the musical repertoire and

aesthetic of Mexico City. Once again, Chávez advanced his agenda in Mexico through composition, performance, and publicity.

During the summer of 1928, Chávez was appointed director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana. Although a minor organization at the time, Chávez immediately initiated a series of reforms to professionalize the orchestra, and the group quickly grew in prestige. The repertoire for the season, selected by Chávez and the orchestra's Board of Advisors, included works by Varése, Stravinsky, Debussy, and Carpenter, signaling the orchestra's willingness to perform avant-garde works.<sup>414</sup> The programs also listed several performances of nationalist works by Mexican composers, including Chávez's *El Fuego Nuevo*, Ponce's *Chapultepec*, and José Rolón's *El Festín de los Enanos*.<sup>415</sup>

In October 1928, Chávez gave a series of eight lectures for the Extension Department of the National University. Several of these appeared to have been adapted from his living room analysis classes in New York, including lectures about the music of China, Native Americans, and Mexican music. The last two lectures, part of a section on "Contemporary Music" reflected the knowledge he had gained while in New York. One lecture was devoted entirely to jazz and another analyzed the work of Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and Copland.<sup>416</sup>

In December 1928, Chávez was appointed director of the National Conservatory and instituted sweeping reforms. He redesigned the composition curriculum to reflect his own self-taught approach, encouraging students to create

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<sup>414</sup> For an analysis of the orchestra's repertoire see Francisco Agea, *21 Años de la Orquesta Sinfónica de México* (Mexico: OSM, 1948).

<sup>415</sup> Ibid.

<sup>416</sup> Programs and notes for these lectures can be found in: Notes, c. 5, v. IV, exp. 44, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

their own individual approaches to the art. Chávez also reshaped the research branch of the curriculum to emphasize popular indigenous music and musical innovation.<sup>417</sup>

Articles by Chávez published in *El Universal* during this period demonstrate an increased concern for the problems facing Mexican musical institutions and a curiosity about nationalism in Mexican music. For example in 1929 and 1930, three of the ten articles by Chávez published in *El Universal* presented the activities of the National Conservatory and Chávez's plans for its development: "Una nueva actividad del Conservatorio Nacional" (6 Sept. 1929), "El Conservatorio en 1929" (5 Jan. 1930), and "El Conservatorio Nacional y la música en México" (27 Sept. 1930).<sup>418</sup> Two additional articles addressed related topics; in "México no necesita doctores ni bachilleres en música" (25 June 1929) and "La música, la Universidad y el Estado" (3 July 1929), Chávez presented his view of an ongoing student strike at the Conservatory.<sup>419</sup> With the exception of "El monumento a Debussy" (17 August 1929), the other articles Chávez published that year in *El Universal* contained analysis of the popular music of Mexico.<sup>420</sup>

Chávez also composed during these years, completing two small piano works "Polígonos" and "Unidad," the Sonata for Four Horns, the Second String Quartet, *Tierra Mojada*, and *H.P.*<sup>421</sup> Nonetheless, Chávez's pace of composition slowed because his time was consumed by other professional activities. Despite his efforts to promote the creation and collection of the national music of Mexico, Chávez's own

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<sup>417</sup> A full description of Chávez's innovations may be found in Parker, *Modern Day Orpheus*.

<sup>418</sup> A complete list of the articles Chávez published in Mexico, along with full citations can be found in Roberto Garcia Morillo, 230-237. For reprints of some of the articles see Chávez, *Obras I*.

<sup>419</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>420</sup> Leonora Saavedra. "Los Escritos Periodísticos de Carlos Chávez."

<sup>421</sup> Parker, *Modern Day Orpheus*.

compositions from the period reflect a mix of approaches. Only *H.P.* has a nationalist program and a populist approach. The other works, especially *Polígonos* and *Unidad*, are modernist abstractions.

### *Chávez's Reputation in New York, 1928-1932*

At the same time Chávez was cultivating modernist and mexicanist music in Mexico City, his reputation was growing in New York, aided by his increased prominence in Mexico City. Whereas there were three significant performances of Chávez's music during his two-year residency in the city, there were numerous performances during the years that followed. For example, the Pan American Association of Composers included Chávez's works on concerts given 12 March 1929, 21 April 1930, 11 June 1931, and 16 February 1932.<sup>422</sup> Similarly, the Copland-Sessions concerts included Chávez's works in concerts held on 17 June 1929, 16 March 1930, and 16 December 1931.<sup>423</sup> Meanwhile performer friends, including Buhling, Cumpson, Hardcastle, Leach, and Kuhnle continued to perform Chávez's works on their recitals.<sup>424</sup>

Chávez's increasingly warm relationship with Claire Reis of the League of Composers also demonstrates his growing popularity among New York modernists.

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<sup>422</sup> A list of PAAC concerts and repertoire is found in Dean Root, "PAAC, 1928-1934."

<sup>423</sup> A list of Copland-Sessions concerts and repertoire is found in Oja, "The Copland-Sessions Concerts and Their Reception in the Contemporary Press," *The Musical Quarterly* 65, n. 2 (April 1979): 212-229.

<sup>424</sup> Programs and description of concerts found in: Buhling to Chávez, 16 March 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos Program, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Beethoven Association, 13 April [n.d.], c. 4, v. III, exp. 35, Programas Actuaciones, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Cowell to Chávez, 26 April 1931, c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia, Archivo Chávez, AGN; "Mexican Sonata on Program," *DePauw University*, April 1933, c. 5, v. I, exp. 6, Prensa Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Program, Leach and Sheffeld, 24 October 1929, c. 4, v. III, exp. 35, Programas Actuaciones, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Kuhnle to Cowell, forwarded to Chávez, 15 October 1929, c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

In an early letter dated 8 February 1927, Reis asked Chávez to send her scores, wanting to forward them to the composer's committee so they might consider a work for performance.<sup>425</sup> No performance resulted from this exchange. During his 1928 interview with Barthold Fles for the *Musical America* cover story,<sup>426</sup> Chávez expressed the hope that the League might produce his ballet, *Los Cuatro Soles*. However, a few weeks later, Reis wrote to Chávez to inform him that the League could not stage it.<sup>427</sup>

A different air pervades correspondence with Reis a few years later. The League requested a composition from Chávez for performance in the 1929/1930 season; after negotiations about which work might be best,<sup>428</sup> the League presented the *Mexican Pieces* for piano in their 2 February 1930 concert.<sup>429</sup> That concert represented the first performance of Chávez's work at a League concert. In March 1930, Reis wrote Chávez to ask him if he might be persuaded to submit a work for a competition of ballet compositions.<sup>430</sup> Chávez agreed but quickly became distracted with his duties in Mexico City and failed to submit his entry by the deadline. In December 1930, Reis began to plan a concert of Latin American music, asking Chávez to help select the compositions to be performed and to submit one of his own

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<sup>425</sup> Reis to Chávez, 8 February 1927, c. 10, v. III, exp. 81, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>426</sup> Barthold Fles, "Chávez Lights New Music With Old Fires," *Musical America*, 15 September 1928, I.

<sup>427</sup> Reis to Chávez, 10 October 1928, c. 10, v. III, exp. 81, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>428</sup> The negotiations may be found in: Reis to Chávez, 3 Dec. 1928; Chávez to Reis, 16 Nov. 1928; Reis to Chávez, 5 Nov. 1928, c. 7, v. III, exp. 85, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>429</sup> Program, League, 2 Feb. 1930, c. 4, v. III, exp. 35. Programas Actuaciones, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>430</sup> Her request and the exchange that followed are documented in: Chávez to Reis, 6 March 1930; Reis to Chávez, 23 April 1930; Chávez to Reis, 18 September 1930; Reis to Chávez, 25 September 1930, c. 7, v. III, exp. 85, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

works for performance.<sup>431</sup> Using the information Chávez gave her, Reis created a League performance of Latin American works in March 1932.

The continued advocacy of Chávez's New York friends, especially Rosenfeld, Copland, and Cowell, were critical to Chávez's growing reputation in the city after his departure. However, their enthusiasm for the composer, and the positive response they received from producers and audiences were surely related to Chávez's growing prominence in Mexico's musical life. Most of Chávez's friends heard of his appointment as director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana and head of the National Conservatory, informed through the composer's letters or by word of mouth. Chávez distributed prospecti of the first few seasons liberally, enlisting the help of his former student, Francisco Agea, who was still living in New York City.<sup>432</sup> The prospecti for the OSM excited New York modernists anxious to see a large symphony orchestra integrating avant-garde works into their repertory.<sup>433</sup>

Chávez's plans for the OSM and the National Conservatory also made it clear that he could and would return the many favors bestowed upon him by U.S.

colleagues. In the first few seasons, Chávez performed works by those who had arranged performances of his music in the U.S.—Cowell, Copland, and Varése.

Compositions by Copland and Varése were also included in a series of chamber

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<sup>431</sup> Reis to Chávez, 19 December 1930, 16 January 1931, 30 November 1931, c. 7, v. III, exp. 85, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>432</sup> Francisco Agea to Chávez, 6 October 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Varios Biográficos, Archivo Chávez, AGN: "Los prospectos y periódicos se los he enseñada a todos los amigos y todos se han interesado mucho: los Quintanilla, Anita, Cumpson, McPhee. A otros gentes que he visto no se los he enseñado porque no los he tenido a la mano, pero les he platicado largamente acerca la organización, etc."

<sup>433</sup> Evidence that these plans were shared can be found in: Chávez to Cowell, 25 October 1928; Dane Rudyar to Chávez, 24 February 1928; Richard Buhling to Chávez, 13 August 1928, all in c. 2, v. III, exp. 35, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Blanche Walton to Chávez, 5 October 1928, c. 2, v. III, exp. 37, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

concerts Chávez organized at the conservatory in 1930.<sup>434</sup> Several New Yorkers who had been kind to the young composer were listed on OSM stationary, programs, and publicity material as honorary board members including: Claire Reis, Aaron Copland, Paul Rosenfeld, E. Robert Schmitz, and Edgar Varése. Observing the exchange of favors between Chávez and his U.S. friends, Cowell wrote to his father:

... anything we do for Chávez will come back to us in Mexican connections; he is to play my *synfonetta* this fall with his orchestra in Mexico City, and my concerto later also promises to arrange [*sic*] for solo recitals there for me and also in Guadalajara; also he arranged to have me write for *Ulises*, the great Mexican cultural paper . . .<sup>435</sup>

By sharing his ongoing Mexico City projects with members of his influential New York network, Chávez was able to increase his New York reputation even while absent from the city. Friends and associates gladly worked on his behalf, knowing that, should they ever decide to cultivate a Mexico City audience, Chávez would help them in turn. Meanwhile, Chávez demonstrated his willingness to exchange favors by including works by New York composers on his Mexico City programs and by shaping the Honorary Board of the OSM to reflect his connections in New York.

### *Chávez in New York before 1932*

This chapter represents an examination of Chávez's activities in New York between 1925 and 1932. Although Chávez scholars have long recognized the importance of Chávez's early New York visits to his career, and several studies of the period exist, this chapter introduces new information and reinterprets previously

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<sup>434</sup> Programs, 24 June 1930, 1 July 1930, c. 5, v. 1, exp. 8, OSM Prensa, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>435</sup> Henry Cowell to Harry Cowell, n.d., Folder 25, Cowell Collection, NYPL. *Ulises* was a well-known small literary magazine edited by Salvador Novo and Xavier Villarrutía, who were friends of Chávez.

known evidence. Chávez's participation in the cancelled 1927 production of *Fiesta* has not been included in previous accounts of his 1926-1928 New York visit. Yet it is an important event, explaining the desperation found in Chávez's correspondence of the period and indicating the extent of his involvement with leftist intellectuals participating in the "Mexico Vogue" through their articles in *New Masses* and play productions with the New Playwrights Theatre. Chávez's friendship with Henry Cowell is widely acknowledged by scholars, but it is little studied. Although Copland and Rosenfeld are considered more influential figures in Chávez's career, the evidence presented here demonstrates that, at least during the earliest phase of Chávez's U.S. career, Cowell's efforts to disseminate Chávez's music were as grand and as effective as those exerted by Copland and Rosenfeld.

Understandably, most histories about Chávez's career from 1928 to 1932 concentrate on his activities in Mexico City. However, even though these were critical years in Chávez's Mexican career, they also informed the creation of his U.S. career. Narratives concentrating on Chávez's Mexico City activities during 1928-1932 tend to emphasize the ways his New York experiences shaped his response to new appointments and responsibilities but ignore the ways Chávez was using his new prestige in Mexico City to bolster his New York reputation. This account uses correspondence to demonstrate that the influence flowed both south and north; just as Chávez's New York experiences shaped his approach toward performance and composition in Mexico City, Chávez's Mexico City appointments increased his New York reputation.

The discoveries and insights presented in this chapter show the true breadth and diversity in Chávez's New York network, formed during the mid-1920s and maintained and cultivated from Mexico City during the ensuing years. The network and reputation Chávez formed in New York during the 1920s served as a foundation upon which he built his U.S. career. Without such a foundation, the performance of *H.P.* probably would have only elicited momentary excitement; with it, Chávez was able to use *H.P.* as a vehicle to launch a long and successful U.S. career.

## Chapter 6: *H.P.* and Chávez in U.S. Musical Life after 1932

On 31 March 1932 the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philadelphia Grand Opera premiered Carlos Chávez's ballet, *H.P.* The performance and the press attention surrounding it represented a turning point in Chávez's U.S. career. The Chávez works performed in the U.S. during previous years were chamber pieces presented at modern music concert series with relatively small audiences. Numerous attempts to arrange for the presentation of longer works, especially his ballets, at venues that would allow for large audiences had been unsuccessful. That changed with the premiere of *H.P.*, which was the first time one of Chávez's ballets was presented in a large orchestral hall in the U.S. Furthermore the audience had been courted through local newspapers—such as the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *New York Times*—as well as newspapers across the U.S. The attention newspaper writers and editors gave the premiere far exceeded any notice given Chávez and his compositions during the previous decade; over 65 articles about the event appeared in 35 different publications.<sup>436</sup>

Although many Philadelphia and New York reviewers despaired at what they perceived as flaws in the performance, these critical evaluations did not reach most U.S. readers, who were more likely to see the pre-performance publicity, read about the politically appealing aspects of the scenario, and digest post-performance accounts describing the prestigious audience. Thus, despite serious reservations from some critics about the value of *H.P.*, the publicity surrounding the work helped Chávez become a fixture in U.S. musical life. After the premiere, Chávez often

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<sup>436</sup> See Appendix F for a list of articles and reviews about *H.P.*

served as an informal cultural ambassador for Mexico during a period when U.S.-Latin American ties were being strengthened.

The work in question was the least “Aztec” of Chávez’s early ballets. Whereas the plots of *El Fuego Nuevo* and *Los Cuatro Soles* presented stories from Aztec mythology, *H.P.* presented a vague plot about U.S.- Latin American economic and cultural interdependence, with no specific references in the scenario to Aztec culture. The central figure in the ballet was “H.P., the man,” costumed to look like a piece of jointed machinery. Accompanied by a four-movement ballet-symphony “H.P., the man” traveled from a northern, modernist environment (first movement) to Latin America (movements two and three) and then returned to the north (movement four).

Fellow collaborators in this endeavor were Leopold Stokowski, who conducted the work, Diego Rivera, who designed the sets and costumes, and Catherine Littlefield, who provided the choreography. By 1932 Stokowski and Rivera were familiar to U.S. audiences, whereas Littlefield was less well-known. Stokowski, a genius at publicity and performance, had directed the Philadelphia Orchestra for a little less than twenty years at the time of the *H.P.* premiere. He became known for his interest in artistic experimentation, serving as a conduit between the new modernist aesthetic and general symphonic audiences.<sup>437</sup>

The previous year Stokowski had collaborated with the League of Composers and the Philadelphia Grand Opera<sup>438</sup> to present the U.S. premieres of Alban Berg’s *Wozzeck*, Igor Stravinsky’s *Oedipus Rex*, and Prokofiev’s *Le Pas d’Acier*, attracting

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<sup>437</sup> Oliver Daniel, *Stokowski: A Counterpoint of View* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1982).

<sup>438</sup> The Philadelphia Grand Opera participated only in the production of *Wozzeck*.

audiences from Philadelphia, New York, and other areas as well. Although concerts featuring the Stravinsky and Prokofiev works were performed in both New York and Philadelphia, for the *Wozzeck* premiere, audience members from New York had to travel to Philadelphia if they wanted to see the performance. And, according to press reports, they did; W.J. Henderson wrote that, “a special train went hence to convey New Yorkers to the scene of action.”<sup>439</sup> Interest was so great that Stokowski arranged another performance of *Wozzeck*, this time at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City.

Unlike Stokowski, Rivera was not a permanent fixture in Philadelphia public life but he was, at that time, a *cause célèbre* in the U.S. When *H.P.* premiered, Rivera had just finished a large one-man show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City that had been widely reviewed and lauded in the national press.<sup>440</sup> Before the New York show, Rivera had completed several murals in California; these works had also been examined and reviewed in the New York press.<sup>441</sup>

Of the three, Littlefield possesses the least recognizable name today. Nevertheless she may have been slightly more familiar to Philadelphians and New Yorkers of the time. She had worked as a Ziegfeld dancer during the 1920s. Subsequently she served as the premiere danseuse and ballet director for the

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<sup>439</sup> As quoted in Daniel, 263.

<sup>440</sup> Examples include, “Rivera Here Ready for Painting,” *NYT*, 15 November 1931, 31; Edward Alden Jewell, “Art: Work of Mexicans Exhibited,” *NYT*, 17 November 1931, 30; Edward Allen Jewell, “Art: An Impressive Exhibition,” *NYT*, 22 December 1931, 28; Edward Allen Jewell, “An Artists Sees Mexico,” *New York Times*, 27 December 1931, 100; “Rivera—Greatest Mexican Painter,” *Literary Digest*, 23 January 1932, 12-14.

<sup>441</sup> See, “Art Out of Town,” *NYT*, 30 Nov. 1930, sec. x, 12; “Art Centre of the World,” *NYT*, 19 July 1931.

Philadelphia Grand Opera. She was married to Philip Leidy, a prominent Philadelphia attorney. *H.P.* represented the first time her choreography was presented in public.<sup>442</sup>

With Stokowski, Rivera, Littlefield, Chávez, and their friends publicizing the premiere, the performance was bound to attract a great deal of attention. Indeed, although torrential rains plagued Philadelphia the day of the performance, the concert hall was full. Despite the enthusiasm apparent in the press before the premiere, most critics agreed that the performance itself was a disappointment, revealing the hurried preparations of the composer and orchestra, the inexperience of the choreographer, and the lack of consensus among the collaborating parties.

During the 1930s, Chávez assumed increasingly prominent guest-conductor roles, usually directing performances of his own works. Meanwhile, he retained his position of importance in Mexico as leader of the Orquesta Sinfónica de México (OSM) and director/professor at the National Conservatory. His U.S. performances and innovative programming and teaching in Mexico received attention in the U.S. press.<sup>443</sup> Very quickly, Chávez became the principal representative of Mexican music in the U.S. After establishing a reputation in both countries, he stood in an ideal position to cultivate U.S.-Mexico cultural exchange, a project he promoted vigorously, partly through the maintenance of U.S. friends and contacts.

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<sup>442</sup> For more information about Littlefield see Nancy Brooks Schmitz, "A Profile of Catherine Littlefield," Ph.D. Diss., Temple University, 1986.

<sup>443</sup> For reviews of Chávez's concerts in the U.S., see Herbert Weinstock, ed., *Carlos Chávez: North American Press, 1936-1950* (New York: Herbert Barrett, 1950). Examples include, "Music in Mexico," *NYT*, 26 August 1934, sec. x, 5; "Chávez's New Symphony," *NYT*, 7 October 1934, sec. x, 7; Elgin Groseclose, "New Music in Mexico," *NYT*, 28 July 1935, sec. x, 5; "Mexican Composers," *NYT*, 26 January 1936, sec. x, 7; Verna Arvey, "Mexico's Significance in Present Day Music," *Etude*, February 1936, 79; Elgin Groseclose, "Mexico's Artistic Development," *NYT*, 8 November 1936, sec. x, 7; "Mexico's Orchestra," *NYT*, 23 May 1937, 167; Oliver Daniel, "Down to Mexico," *Etude* 58, no. 3 (March 1940): 150-151, 198; Verna Carleton Millan, "Latin America Draws Record Audiences from United States," *Musical Courier*, 1 October 1941, 1; Charles Poore, "Music in Mexico," *The Musician*, September 1941, 140.

Previous accounts of the *H.P.* premiere have concentrated on reviews of the performance, the creation of the score, and on the roles of Stokowski, Rivera, and Littlefield. Robert Stevenson's article about Chávez in the U.S. press includes a section about the reception of *H.P.*<sup>444</sup> The articles cited are among the most useful but they do not represent all the views expressed. Robert Parker's article about Chávez's compositions for the ballet<sup>445</sup> describes the plans leading to the performance and many of the critical reactions after the performance but does not examine the many non-critical articles printed before and after the premiere. In their biographies, both Parker and Roberto García Morillo analyze the score to *H.P.* and Chávez's compositional process, leaving aside much of the critical reception history.<sup>446</sup> Oliver Daniel,<sup>447</sup> Jeffrey Belnap,<sup>448</sup> and Nancy Brooks Schmitz<sup>449</sup> have written about the roles of Stokowski, Rivera, and Littlefield (respectively), but none establish the importance of the performance to Chávez's career.

This chapter offers a more comprehensive examination of the press coverage surrounding the premiere than those offered in articles by Stevenson and Parker; a more multi-faceted narrative than those presented in major Chávez biographies; and an account more focused on Chávez than those presented by Daniel, Belnap, or Brooks Schmitz. It describes many aspects of the performance, beginning with the initial plans formulated during Stokowski's 1931 trip to Mexico and ending with a summary of Chávez's career during the decade following the *H.P.* premiere, showing

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<sup>444</sup> Stevenson, "Carlos Chávez: Visto por la prensa E.U.," *Heterofonía* 73 (1981): 3-11.

<sup>445</sup> Parker, "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet: A Study in Persistence," *Dance Chronicle* 8, no.s 3 and 4 (1994): 179-210.

<sup>446</sup> Parker, *Carlos Chávez: Mexico's Modern-Day Orpheus* (Boston, Mass.: Twayne Publishers, 1983); García Morillo, *Carlos Chávez: Vida y Obra* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960).

<sup>447</sup> Oliver Daniel, *Stokowski: A Counterpoint of View* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1982).

<sup>448</sup> Jeffrey Belnap, "Diego Rivera's Greater America," *Cultural Critique* 63 (Spring 2006): 61-98.

<sup>449</sup> Nancy Brooks Schmitz, "A Profile of Catherine Littlefield," Ph.D. Diss., Temple University, 1986.

how Chávez and his music enhanced cultural relationships between the U.S. and Mexico. In-between it analyzes newspaper articles and notices about Chávez and *H.P.* printed before the performance, details the flaws critics found in the performance itself, and examines reviews and articles about *H.P.* published after the performance. Most importantly, the chapter demonstrates how the *H.P.* premiere positioned Chávez to embark on an enormously successful U.S. career.

### *Plans and Preparations*

Initial plans for the premiere of *H.P.* were made in the summer of 1931 during Leopold Stokowski's first trip to Mexico. A few months earlier, Frances Flynn Paine, acting as Chávez's manager, had persuaded Stokowski to join a group from the Mexican Arts Association on a trip to Mexico in 1931. While in Mexico, Paine introduced Stokowski to Chávez;<sup>450</sup> during their meetings, Stokowski heard material from Chávez's ballets, *El Fuego Nuevo*, *Los Cuatro Soles*, and *H.P.* Stokowski made tentative plans to stage one of the ballets through a collaboration between the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philadelphia Grand Opera. It would be the second cooperative endeavor between the organizations—the U.S. premiere of *Wozzeck*, which occurred during the previous season, had been the first.

Although it appears that Stokowski may have briefly considered one of the more "Aztec" ballets,<sup>451</sup> a few months after returning to the U.S., he conferred with Paine, and together they decided that *H.P.* would be the most suitable work for the

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<sup>450</sup> Stokowski was the subject of many newspaper articles while in Mexico; see Chapter 4 for a description of Stokowski's interactions with the press in Mexico.

<sup>451</sup> See Daniel, 281-282.

occasion.<sup>452</sup> The *H.P.* score and scenario offered two elements that were probably appealing to Stokowski: modernism and exoticism. The conductor had demonstrated a predilection for both aesthetic traits in his programming.<sup>453</sup> One supposes that *H.P.* had particular appeal to Paine as well, for the proposed production involved one of her favorite Mexican artists—Diego Rivera—as a costume and scenery designer. However, when Chávez asked her to explain her preference for *H.P.*, Paine alluded to the exoticism of the scenario and the involvement of Rivera but did not state her reasons directly:

We think *H.P.* best because it has an international character and the whole thing will be such an agreeable surprise to the public. I am very anxious to show as many sides of the Mexican culture as possible and the theme, music, and décor of *H.P.* is perfect.<sup>454</sup>

Although Chávez does not offer his opinion in the extant correspondence, one imagines that the choice of *H.P.* ran contrary to his own preferences. After all, the scores to *El Fuego Nuevo* or *Los Cuatro Soles* were complete, whereas the *H.P.* score required a significant amount of work to finish. Upon receiving Paine's letter, Chávez, in addition to his duties with the OSM and the Conservatory, was faced with the enormous task of writing and revising his ambitious and incomplete symphonic-ballet. According to biographer García Morillo, at this point the first and fourth movements had been written, and Chávez had generated ideas for the second and third movements, composing the sections marked *Danza ágil* and *Sandunga* in

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<sup>452</sup> Evidence of these discussions may be found in, Chávez to Paine, 20 March 1931; Paine to Chávez, 6 April 1931; Paine to Chávez, 1 May 1931, c. 9, vol. III, exp. 82, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN. See Parker, "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet," *Dance Chronicle*, 8 (1985).

<sup>453</sup> For an account of Stokowski's programming habits see, Daniel.

<sup>454</sup> Paine to Chávez, 1 May 1931, c. 9, vol. III, exp. 82, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

1926.<sup>455</sup> However, these “southern” movements remained incomplete until very shortly before the performance.<sup>456</sup> The second movement appears to have been particularly problematic. When the OSM performed the work in symphonic form in December 1931, it played the first, third, and fourth movements—the second was not yet finished.<sup>457</sup> Anxious correspondence among Paine, Stokowski, and Chávez dating from the first months of 1932 indicates that the second movement was not sent to Stokowski until February because the composer had not yet completed the orchestration.<sup>458</sup>

Writing after the premiere, Chávez’s friend and champion Paul Rosenfeld blamed this urgency and lack of preparation for the apparent flaws in the score and performance:

Indeed, for all its beauties, the ballet in several respects gives evidence of a process of composition hesitantly protracted over a period of six or seven years. And it would seem the part of a critical intelligence not to have let as gifted and creative a composer as Chávez make his first appearance before the musical public with this particular work in its present state, and to have postponed its production until it was finished once and for all, and perfectly finished.<sup>459</sup>

### *Pre-Concert Publicity*

The publicity efforts for *H.P.* were multi-faceted, targeting those interested in both modernist and Mexicanist expression in music, dance, and plastic arts.

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<sup>455</sup> García Morillo, 47-48.

<sup>456</sup> For further investigation see García Morillo and Parker, “Chávez and the Ballet.”

<sup>457</sup> García Morillo and Parker both describe this concert.

<sup>458</sup> Such letters include, Paine to Chávez, 6 February 1932, c. 9, v. III, exp. 82, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN; Paine to Chávez, 6 February 1932; Chávez to Stokowski, 6 January 1932; Stokowski to Chávez, 7 January 1932, c. 11, v. III, exp. 93, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN. See also Parker, “Chávez and the Ballet.”

<sup>459</sup> Rosenfeld, “American Premieres,” *The New Republic*, 20 April 1932, 274.

Stokowski appears to have been at the helm of these efforts, leading a publicity campaign worthy of the gala event he had in mind. He began making press announcements about the premiere in mid-January 1932 nearly three months before the concert. This first announcement was reported in Philadelphia,<sup>460</sup> New York,<sup>461</sup> and Mexico City<sup>462</sup> newspapers. Shortly following it, the Pennsylvania Museum of Art opened an exhibit of Diego Rivera's work. Rivera's sketches for the *H.P.* costumes and sets were featured in the exhibit.<sup>463</sup> As Stokowski planned his second trip to Mexico to research Mexican culture for the production of *H.P.*, Mexico City newspapers chronicled his every move, telling readers about his travels and production plans; their interest continued through and after the premiere.<sup>464</sup> When Stokowski returned to the U.S. in mid-February, newspapers throughout the U.S. published articles about the research trip and the planned performance of *H.P.*<sup>465</sup> Meanwhile Chávez's circle of friends began to plan social and musical events around the premiere as well. By March, prominent Philadelphia families had placed

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<sup>460</sup> Announcements published in Philadelphia include, "Plan Ballet Premiere," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 January 1932; "Stokowski will Conduct Ballet's World Premiere," *Philadelphia Morning Public Ledger*, 18 January 1932, "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>461</sup> Notices published in New York include, "To Give Mexican Ballet," *NYT*, 18 January 1932, "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>462</sup> Announcements in Mexican newspapers include, "Stokowski to Conduct Mexican Ballet," *El Universal*, 19 January 1932; "World Premiere of Mexican Ballet at Philadelphia," *Excelsior*, 18 January 1932, "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN. Several of these announcements were published on English language pages, which catered to the U.S. expatriate population, in Spanish language newspapers.

<sup>463</sup> Descriptions of the exhibit may be found in, Philip N. Youtz, "Diego Rivera," *Bulletin of the Pennsylvania Museum* 27, no. 146 (February 1932): 101-103; Dorothy Grafly, "Art," *Morning Public Ledger*, 4 February 1932.

<sup>464</sup> Such articles include, "Leopoldo Stokowski Salió para Mexico," *El Universal*, 19 January 1932; "Ha Salido Para Mexico el Maestro Stokowski," *Excelsior*, 19 January 1932; "El Eminente Músico Leopoldo Stokowski Llegó Ayer a Veracruz," *El Universal*, 8 February 1932; "Salió para Michoacan el Maestro Stokowski," *Excelsior*, 9 February 1932, "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>465</sup> Examples include, "Stokowski Back for Premiere of Mexican Ballet," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, 1 March 1932; "Stokowski Returning, Likes Mexican Music," *NYT*, 17 February 1932; *Bridgeport Post*, 12 February 1932; *St. Cloud, Minnesota Times*, 12 February 1932, "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

announcements in local newspapers notifying the public of social gatherings scheduled to take place before, during, and after the performance, making *H.P.* a society event, as well as a cultural outing.

Over fifty articles about the premiere were published in the U.S. press in advance of the performance. One two-paragraph notice, likely pulled from a press release or wire report, appeared in at least ten different newspapers.<sup>466</sup> That notice announced Stokowski's recent return from Mexico; it emphasized his interactions with native populations and the exotic aspects of his travels. The theme of authentic exoticism was highlighted in several longer articles about the work. A headline in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* informed readers that "Stokowski 'went primitive' and Dipped into Communism to Get Atmosphere for *H.P.*"<sup>467</sup> In the article, Stokowski informed readers that he had studied ancient native dance and music practices of the Mexican Indians. Perhaps to emphasize *H.P.*'s exotic appeal, Stokowski programmed Ravel's *Spanish Hour* to complete the March 31st program. Stokowski's attempts to draw attention to aspects of the planned performance were enhanced by the frequent publication of Rivera's costume sketches, which included depictions of tropical fruit, mermaids, and sailors.

There were other avenues through which modernist audiences may have found out about and become excited about the upcoming *H.P.* premiere. Performances of Chávez's chamber works timed to occur shortly before the premiere allowed those

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<sup>466</sup> Example, "Stokowski in Mexico for Opera Atmosphere," Greenville, Ohio *Advocate*, 10 February 1932. Similar articles appeared in newspapers around the country. "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>467</sup> "Stokowski 'went Primitive' and Dipped into Communism to Get Atmosphere for 'H.P.,'" *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1 March 1932, "H.P. 1926-1932," c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

attending to become more familiar with his music. The concerts were arranged through Chávez's connections within the New York music community, especially the circle around the League of Composers. In cooperation with Chávez, Claire Reis, the president of the League of Composers, planned a concert of Latin American music for 6 March 1932, just a few weeks before the premiere of *H.P.*<sup>468</sup> The program featured Chávez's *Sonatina for Violin and Piano* and was reviewed in East-Coast newspapers and magazines.<sup>469</sup>

Reis also notified the conductor Alexander Smallens that Chávez would be in New York and Philadelphia during the weeks leading up to the premiere of *H.P.* Smallens remembered meeting the Mexican composer through Alma Wertheim, during one of the many private concerts she held in her home. He wrote Chávez requesting the composer's participation in a chamber concert to be held in Philadelphia.<sup>470</sup> Chávez performed his own *Sonatina for Piano* 14 March 1932 in Philadelphia. This performance was reviewed widely in the Philadelphia newspapers and some New York music periodicals.<sup>471</sup>

While Reis and Smallens arranged ancillary concerts of Chávez's music to augment his reputation, Minna Lederman, editor of *Modern Music*, the official magazine of the League, published a boat set design and a coconut costume design,

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<sup>468</sup> Some of the plans for this concert may be found in, Claire Reis to Chávez, 19 Dec. 1930; Chávez to Reis, 7 January 1931, "League of Composers," c. 8, v. I, exp. 85, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>469</sup> Reviews include, "League to Give A Pan-American Program," *NYHT*, 28 February 1932, sec. VII, p. 7; H.H. "Music in Review," *NYT*, 7 March 1932, 20; F.D.F., "Composers' League Gives Works from 7 Countries," *NYHT*, 7 March 1932, 11; C., "New York's Round of Concerts and Recitals: League of Composers," *Musical America*, 25 March 1932, 26.

<sup>470</sup> Alexander Smallens to Chávez, 21 February 1932, "1932 Correspondencia General," c. 2, v. I, exp. 74, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>471</sup> Examples include, "Chamber Concert," *CSM*, 26 March 1932, 7; Samuel L. Laclar, "Music," *Public Ledger*, 15 March 1932, 11; E.F. "Music Group Gives 'Modern' Program," *Philadelphia Record*, 18 March 1932, 12; "Philadelphia Hears Premieres of Works by Antheil and Chávez," *Musical America*, 25 March 1932, 27.

created by Rivera for the *H.P.* production, in the March-April issue of the magazine. For the May-June issue, she arranged for Paul Rosenfeld to write a profile article of Chávez which was accompanied by a Rivera sketch of Chávez. Marc Blitzstein wrote a review of the *H.P.* performance for the same issue. Lederman sent Chávez increasingly insistent letters during March, requesting that he sit down for an interview with Rosenfeld.<sup>472</sup> In the end, Chávez was unable to give Lederman all the material she requested. Nonetheless, *Modern Music* published the planned sketches and article in addition to a review of the performance, giving Chávez and the *H.P.* premiere a relatively large amount of space.

The Pan American Association of Composers also aided the *H.P.* publicity effort. On February 16, Nicolas Slonimsky led a concert under the auspices of the PAAC at the New School of Social Research that included Chávez's *Energía* as well as works by Henry Cowell, Carl Ruggles, Amadeo Roldán, Charles Ives, and Adolf Weiss. During much of February and March, similar concerts were performed in cities throughout Europe.<sup>473</sup> Notices about the PAAC concerts appeared in New York newspapers and periodicals throughout the spring.<sup>474</sup>

Meanwhile Copland solidified plans for the first Yaddo festival, to be held in April and May of 1932. A notice printed in late March announced plans to program Chávez's music alongside that of George Antheil, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, Roger

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<sup>472</sup> For example, Lederman to Chávez, 2 February 1932; 10 March 1932; undated, c. 7, v. III, exp. 84, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>473</sup> Concerts were held in Berlin, Vienna, Prague, and Budapest. See Carlos Salzedo "The American Left Wing," *Eolus*, April 1932, 9-29.

<sup>474</sup> These notices include, "Activities of Musicians Here and Afield," *NYT*, 7 February 1932, sec. x, 7; Paul Stefan, "Vienna Applauds Concert of Works by Modern Pan-American Composers," *Musical America*, 25 March 1932, 25; "Berliners Hear American Music under Slonimsky," *NYHT*, 27 March 1932, sec. VII, 7; "Pan-American Program Given in Viennese Hall," *NYHT*, 3 April 1932, sec. VII, 8.

Sessions, and Virgil Thomson.<sup>475</sup> On Sunday, 27 March 1932, Chávez's name appeared in three different articles printed on the first music page of the *New York Herald Tribune*: one about the Yaddo festival, another about the PAAC concert in Berlin, and a third announcing the upcoming performance of *H.P.*<sup>476</sup>

Although much of the publicity propagated by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra emphasized the "exoticism" of the subject matter of the ballet and its authors, modernists such as Rosenfeld also perceived the *H.P.* premiere as part of Stokowski's effort to promote contemporary music.<sup>477</sup> In his review of the performance, Rosenfeld noted that Stokowski had programmed *H.P.* as only the first in a series of little known modernist compositions performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra within a short, two-week period. The day after the premiere of *H.P.*, the Philadelphia Orchestra offered a program consisting of works by U.S. contemporary composers, many of them premieres, which was broadcast by radio throughout the country.<sup>478</sup> A few days later they gave the U.S. premiere of Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*.<sup>479</sup>

Those with little or no interest in music, dance, or visual art may have been drawn to the *H.P.* premiere through publicity, given the many society events that were held in conjunction with the premiere. The society pages of the *Philadelphia*

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<sup>475</sup> "American Composers Will Meet at Yaddo to Give and Discuss New Works." *NYHT*, 27 March 1932, sec. VII, 7.

<sup>476</sup> "Berliners Hear American Music Under Slonimsky," "Chávez's Mexican Ballet, H.P. to be Given in Philadelphia," "American Composers Will Meet at Yaddo to Give and Discuss New Works," *NYHT*, 27 March 1932, sec. VII, 7.

<sup>477</sup> For the full review see, Rosenfeld, "American Premieres," *The New Republic*, 20 April 1932, 274.

<sup>478</sup> Reviews of this concert include, Paul Rosenfeld, "American Premieres," *The New Republic*, 20 April 1932, 273; Linton Martin, "Stokowski Defends Modern Musicians," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 3 April 1932, 13; Samuel L. Laclar, "Music," *Public Ledger*, 2 April 1932, 4.

<sup>479</sup> Preview articles include, "American Premiere by the Orchestra," *Public Ledger*, 3 April 1932, 11; "Stokowski to Lead 'Gurrelieder' in American Premiere," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 3 April 1932, 8; Lawrence Gilman, "Schoenberg's Unique Cantata to be Sung," *NYHT*, 3 April 1932, sec. VII, 7.

*Evening Public Ledger* listed several events. For example, Chávez met with those lucky enough to be invited to the home of Baron and Baroness Rodolphe M. D. Schauensee several days before the performance.<sup>480</sup> The day of the performance the Samuel Woodward family held a dinner in celebration of the premiere.<sup>481</sup> Ms. Edward Curtis Bok, the patron of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and society members Mrs. Biddle,<sup>482</sup> and Miss Anna M. Reed and Miss Emma Ross, held gatherings in their boxes at the opera house where the ballet was performed.<sup>483</sup> Even audience members without an invitation to one of the many gatherings could be assured to see and be seen by the elite of Philadelphia and New York.

### *The Performance*

The publicity for *H.P.* was undeniably successful, attracting a large, eager audience to the premiere. By 27 March 1932, just a few days before the performance, John Martin of the *New York Times* was urging his readers to, “rush off to Philadelphia rejoicing.”<sup>484</sup> Meanwhile, those intending to attend the performance were stymied; Alma Wertheim telegraphed Chávez in a panic, “Can you get two seats for me Thursday evening? Box office has none left.”<sup>485</sup> A writer for the

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<sup>480</sup> A notice may be found in, *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, 21 March 1932. “H.P. 1926-1932,” c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>481</sup> A notice may be found in, *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, 22 March 1932. “H.P. 1926-1932,” c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>482</sup> No first name is given in the notice. It is presumed that the “Mrs. Biddle” mentioned married into the Biddle family, prominent Philadelphians descended from William Biddle (1630-1712) and Sarah Kemp (1634-1709).

<sup>483</sup> Notices for these social events can be found in, *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, 24 March 1932, 27 March 1932. “H.P. 1926-1932,” c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>484</sup> John Martin, “The Dance: A Mexican Ballet,” *NYT*, 27 March 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>485</sup> Wertheim to Chávez, 25 March 1932, c. 2, v. I, exp. 74, Correspondencia OSM, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

*Christian Science Monitor* reported that 2,000 applications for tickets had been returned.<sup>486</sup>

Although it was stormy the night of the premiere, those able to secure tickets braved weather and traffic to attend the performance. Audience members included the rich and famous of Philadelphia and New York. *New York Times* dance critic John Martin observed, “The audience consisted not only of Philadelphians . . . but also of more than a Pullman car full of pilgrims from New York and less formal delegations from other cities.”<sup>487</sup> Audience members included the John D. Rockefellers, Mary Louise Curtis Bok, George Antheil, and Mexican Ambassador José Manuel Puig Casauranc, accompanied by his wife and Frances Flynn Paine.<sup>488</sup>

In the end, it is clear that the publicity and anticipatory excitement led to unreasonably high expectations. Catherine Littlefield had never choreographed an entire ballet. Diego Rivera was absorbed with other high paying commissions. The score had been finished only weeks before the premiere, preventing extensive editing and rehearsal time. The general consensus by local cultural critics and society writers was that, “It was more of a sensation before it began than after it was over.”<sup>489</sup> Although there was general applause, resulting in several tableaux after the conclusion of the performance, one critic saw many audience members quietly gathering their things and walking out of the hall.<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> “Carlos Chávez’s Mexican Ballet,” *CSM*, 9 April 1932.

<sup>487</sup> Martin, “The Dance: A Handicap Event,” *NYT*, 10 April 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>488</sup> References to the society members in attendance may be found in, Robert Reiss, “‘H.P. Presentation is Swell Occasion but Lacks Timely Proletarian Touch,’” *Philadelphia Record*, 1 April 1932, 11; Harry L. Hewes, “Brilliant Throng Deifies Rain for ‘H.P.’ World Premiere,” *Public Ledger*, 1 April 1932, 1.

<sup>489</sup> Robert Reiss, “‘H.P. Presentation is Swell Occasion but Lacks Timely Proletarian Touch,’” *Philadelphia Record*, 1 April 1932, 11.

<sup>490</sup> Henry C. Beck, “‘H.P.’ Makes Premiere Here with a Bang as Sparkplugs Go Into a Song and Dance,” *Philadelphia Record*, 1 April 1932, 1.

One can understand the experience of the performance by examining its source material, including the score, programs, and detailed reviews by Marc Blitzstein for *Modern Music*<sup>491</sup> and John Martin for the *New York Times*.<sup>492</sup> Examination of this material reveals that, in addition to occasional flaws in the music, design and choreography, a general lack of consensus among the personnel as to the purpose and direction of the ballet resulted in a confused and confusing performance.

The lack of consensus is apparent from examination of the various descriptions of the work the collaborators provided. A souvenir program book printed three descriptions of the work: one by Chávez, another by Rivera, and a third by Philip Leidy, Littlefield's husband, who had been entrusted with the program notes by the Orchestra. The very first summary of the ballet to be presented to the public was by Stokowski and printed in *Musical America* months before the premiere.<sup>493</sup> These notes emphasized the narrative arch of the work, describing it as a journey from north to south and back again.

The program notes written by Philip Leidy were available to all those at the performance. They were printed in both the small Orchestra playbill and in the larger souvenir version. These notes revealed a different emphasis, perhaps representing the views of his wife, the choreographer. While the travel was implied in the sub-headings affixed to the movements—"Dance of the Man, H.P.," "A Cargo Ship at Sea . . .," "A Ship in the Tropics," and "The City of Industry"—it was not the focus of Leidy's notes. Rather Leidy thought the ballet expressed an idealistic vision of cooperation:

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<sup>491</sup> Blitzstein "Forecast and Review," *Modern Music*, May-June 1932, 164-166.

<sup>492</sup> Martin, "The Dance: A Handicap Event," *NYT*, 10 April 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>493</sup> Quoted in Daniel, 283-284.

The Ballet H.P. symbolizes the relations of the Northern Regions with those of the Tropics, and shows their inter-relationships . . . The Ballet depicts the fact that the North needs the Tropics, just as the Tropics need the machinery of the North, and attempts to harmonize the result.<sup>494</sup>

Only the “souvenir” version of the program contained notes by Chávez and Rivera—probably among the greatest clues to the creators’ conceptions. Chávez avoids the idea of “inter-relationship,” instead claiming to present “expressions that are natural to our daily life.” The combination of Northern and Southern music, he explains, is merely a reflection of reality, “Groups of people of diverse characters and regions, North and South, mingle constantly in the grand ferment of this, our American Continent.”<sup>495</sup> Rivera’s concept, as presented in the program, is even more abstract than that presented by Chávez, “H.P. is not an exposition of ideas or propaganda for or against this or that point of view, but the unfolding of plastic and musical incidents whose theme is in accord with the rhythm of our aspirations, interests, and the necessities of our social existence.”<sup>496</sup>

Collectively the notes leave the listener rudderless; they present an abstract idea imperfectly agreed upon by the authors and producers of the work. While all of the notes refer to a combination of aesthetic influences from North and South America, it is uncertain whether these forces are in conflict, perfect agreement, or floating about in a Pan-American ambiance. Moreover, the disagreements in program notes seemingly reflected real misunderstandings in conception.

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<sup>494</sup> H.P. Program, c. 4, v. III, exp. 34, Programas Actuaciones, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>495</sup> H.P. Souvenir Program, c. 4, v. III, exp. 34, Programas Actuaciones, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

As the work unfolded, the score, scenario, choreography, and costuming furthered the confusions presented in the program notes. From the descriptions provided by Martin, Blitzstein, and others, it appears that each movement seemed to offer different problems to audience members. The first movement established the general spirit of disagreement. Chávez subtitled *H.P.* a “symphonic-ballet” and the opening movement is, as would be expected, written in a loose sonata form. The scenario describes the movement as a conflict between “H.P., the man,” ostensibly represented through the modern music, and “unknown forces surrounding him which he seeks to subdue.”<sup>497</sup>

The description in the scenario implies two oppositional thematic areas and, in keeping with this impression, Chávez presents two very distinct sonic worlds at the outset of the first movement. The first, “modern” area is characterized by a mechanical rhythmic drive and dissonant crashes between mobile, repetitive parts. A melody struggles to emerge but is routinely drowned by a noisy, dissonant orchestra. Finally, the orchestra quiets and a trumpet shouts the second theme, a tune closely related to the melodic snatches emerging from the din of the modernist section [Example 6-1]. While the first thematic section is governed by inexorable rhythmic patterns, often presented through a duple time signature, the second theme flows freely between time signatures and duple-triple patterns.

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<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

Piccolo  
 Flute 1 + 2  
 Oboe 1 + 2  
 English Horn  
 Clarinet in E♭  
 Clarinet in B♭ 1  
 Bassoon 1 + 2  
 Bassoon  
 Trumpet in B♭ 2 + 3  
 Trombone 1 + 2

This system shows the first three measures of the music. The Piccolo, Flute 1 + 2, Oboe 1 + 2, English Horn, Clarinet in E♭, Clarinet in B♭ 1, Bassoon 1 + 2, and Bassoon parts are active in the first two measures. The Trumpet in B♭ 2 + 3 and Trombone 1 + 2 parts enter in the third measure with a full Mexican melody. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 in the third measure.



Picc.  
 Fl. 1 + 2  
 Ob. 1 + 2  
 Eng. Hn.  
 E♭ Cl.  
 Cl. 1  
 Bsn. 1 + 2  
 Bsn.  
 Tpt. 2 + 3  
 Tbn. 1 + 2

This system shows the next three measures of the music. The Piccolo, Flute 1 + 2, Oboe 1 + 2, English Horn, Clarinet in E♭, Clarinet 1, Bassoon 1 + 2, and Bassoon parts are active in the first two measures. The Trumpet 2 + 3 and Trombone 1 + 2 parts continue their melody. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4 in the third measure.

Example 6-1: In first movement of *H.P.*, the trumpet introduces full Mexican melody into a modernist context, shown here in the fourth measure of the example.

The score does not make it clear whether “H.P., the man’s” attempt to conquest “unknown forces” was successful. Because Chávez did not establish separate tonal areas to distinguish between the thematic areas, the recapitulation does not definitively mark the triumph of one thematic area over another, leaving the trajectory of the ballet’s plot unclear. Furthermore, most of the last thirty seconds of the movement present a rousing collective restatement of the melodic second theme. Only the last few measures depart, presenting a more abstract, although still tonal, descending pattern followed by a loud, jarring, tutti concluding chord [Example 6-2].

The image shows a musical score for five string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The music is in 3/4 time. The score consists of five staves. The first three staves (Violin I, Violin II, and Viola) play a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet of eighth notes. The Violoncello and Double Bass staves are mostly silent, with the Double Bass playing a few notes at the end. The score concludes with a final chord in the strings.

Example 6-2: The chord at the end of the first movement is shown here in the strings. In the full score, all the instruments play together, excepting the double bass and the percussion. An E pedal tone in the double bass sustains into the next movement.

Rivera did not sharpen the supposed dichotomy between “H.P., the man” and the “unknown forces” around him through the costuming. The coils and joints on the “H.P., the man” costume, supposedly meant to evoke machinery parts, also recall drawings of Pre-Columbian Native Americans—a frequent subject in Rivera’s art. To make matters worse, Rivera’s sketch of the costume, probably among those on

display at the Parkway museum, depicted the dancer in a wide “primitive” stance [Example 6-3].<sup>498</sup>



Example 6-3: Rivera, Diego (1866-1957), *The Man*, costume design for the ballet (*Horsepower*). 1927. Watercolor and pencil on paper, 20 7/8 x 29 3/8". Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller to the Museum of Modern Art. Image used courtesy Art Resource, the Museum of Modern Art, and Banco de México (in behalf of the estate of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo).

In the first movement the cognitive dissonances created by the disunities of the score and scenario with the costuming were made worse by the forceful dominance of the musical element. Martin wrote:

Nowhere is this musical top-heaviness more detrimental to the production as a whole than in the opening scenes which, according to the program, is danced by the man, H.P., ‘in the plenitude of his intellect, sentiments and physical powers.’ This plenitude seems

<sup>498</sup> For additional analysis of Rivera’s visual contributions, including his reliance and references to earlier works, see Belnap, 85-86.

inordinately slight when it is embodied in one human figure while an orchestra of 114 pieces looses intricate mazes of sound. H.P. would have to be embodied in a very active ensemble, or preferably appear as a hypothetical pervading essence, to match the music.<sup>499</sup>

The second movement suffered from a different set of flaws. The last movement to be written, it was certainly composed with the Philadelphia premiere in mind. By the dictates of symphonic form, it is slow and lyrical. According to the synopsis, it depicts a “Cargo Ship at Sea Symbolizing the Commerce Between the North and South.” Despite the indication of “northern” music in the subtitle, this movement, like the third, exclusively explores ‘southern’ dance themes; here the music presents a *dance agile* and a tango. Unfortunately, the movement demonstrates some of Chávez’s weaknesses as a composer. As Blitzstein observed, “Since Chávez’s music is hard, not soft, literal, brutal and unperfumed, we were offered the paradox of a ‘Southern’ composer dealing most successfully with the ‘Northern’ aspects of his theme.”<sup>500</sup>

The most obvious problems in the second movement occur in the transitions between sections. Although each section has a distinct melodic and rhythmic identity, there is very little attempt to move seamlessly from one theme to another. The change from the *dance agile* to the tango is abrupt and the shift from the tango to the conclusion is mitigated by a wandering, inconsequential interlude. References to the first movement, heard in the first and last sections, add to the coherence of the work as a whole but do little to bind the long second movement together.

The deficiencies of the score were amplified by the lack of rehearsal time, leading Martin to remark, “The theme of the dance is excellent, but its development

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<sup>499</sup> Martin, “The Dance: A Handicap Event,” *NYT*, 10 April 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>500</sup> Blitzstein “Forecast and Review,” *Modern Music*, May-June 1932, 164-166.

leads nowhere. A ragged performance made it impossible to tell whether the intention was to move the dancers in canon or whether they were merely off-beat some of the time.”<sup>501</sup> The synopsis indicates that by the end of the scene, “all are swept by the frantic pleasures of the rhythm, syncopation, and dance,” but, according to Martin, “nothing appears but confusion.”<sup>502</sup>

In the third movement, there is a change in tempo and mood as the composer evokes a “Ship in the Tropics.” Although the subtitle to the movement does not indicate locale, it seems clear from score and costumes that Chávez and Rivera had agreed this section of the ballet would specifically refer to Mexico. Rivera, for his part, decided to depict the Tehuantepec Indians so commonly idealized in his paintings. Chávez, meanwhile, used widely known Mexican folk dance patterns, including a zandunga and huapango, to situate the movement in Mexico. In January, Littlefield traveled to Mexico to learn about Mexican dancing, probably in anticipation of having to choreograph just such a scene. In concept, the third movement provided the ideal platform to display Chávez’s knowledge of Mexican folk music, Rivera’s expertise in Tehuana culture, and Littlefield’s research in Mexican dance. Understandably, part of the excitement about the premiere revolved around Rivera’s drawings for this movement’s costumes; his evocative depictions of Mexican fruit costumes were widely reprinted in the press before the performance.<sup>503</sup>

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<sup>501</sup> Martin, “The Dance: A Handicap Event,” *NYT*, 10 April 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>503</sup> Examples of these drawings were published in the following contemporary periodicals and newspapers, Rivera, “The Coconut” and “On the Boat” [sketches] *Modern Music*, March-April 1932, inside cover and 14; “Banana” and “The Sugar Cane” [sketches] *Philadelphia Morning Public Ledger*, 27 March 1932, 11.

However it appears from descriptions that a series of basic misunderstandings between Rivera and Littlefield led to disaster. Frida Kahlo, Rivera's wife, wrote to a friend:

It turned out to be a *porquería* . . . not because of the music or the decorations, but because there was a crowd of insipid blonds pretending to be Indians from Tehuantepec and when they had to dance the *zandunga* they looked as if they had lead instead of blood. To sum up, a pure total *cochinada* [piggery].<sup>504</sup>

Blitzstein, perhaps less inclined to view Rivera's work in a positive light, noted:

[Rivera's] costumes were good in their way, the way of the mummers parade; enormous papier-maché pineapples, cocoanuts, bananas, and palm trees peopled the stage . . . They took up so much room that the logical choreographic plan should have been modeled on the simple *défilé*; instead of which, everybody was made to dance, the Big Fish got in the way of the Grand Pineapple, and the stage was invariably messy and ugly to look at.<sup>505</sup>

In the final movement Chávez, as might be expected, returned to the thematic ideas and material found at the beginning. This music, already familiar to some modernist audiences from the performance with the International Composers' Guild [ICG] in 1926, once again juxtaposed "northern" and "southern" themes [Examples 6-4 and 6-5]. The modernist sections of this movement reflected Chávez's interest in machines, apparent in other modernist works such as Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231*, Sergei Prokofiev's *Pas d'acier*, and John Alden Carpenter's *Skyscrapers*. Chávez used the idea in several other works written in the mid-1920s, including *Energía* and *36*. This aspect to the fourth movement struck Martin as outmoded, "Imitations of

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<sup>504</sup> As quoted in, Parker, "Chávez and the Ballet," 192.

<sup>505</sup> Blitzstein "Forecast and Review," *Modern Music*, May-June 1932, 164-166.

machinery and labor have become a bit common and more than a bit unconvincing.”<sup>506</sup>



Example 6-4: The Northern Music of Movement IV, measures 20-24, piano reduction by author.



Example 6-5: The Southern music of Movement IV, measures 34-41, piano reduction by author.

The dance themes of the second and third movements seem to indicate strongly that the “southern” music of *H.P.* is Latin American. While the scenario certainly suggests that the oppositional “North” presented in the first movement is the U.S., the national identity is made explicit in the fourth movement when Chávez quotes the melody to “The Streets of New York,” a well-known tune at the time.<sup>507</sup> Much like Satie in *Parade*, he dedicates one section to the “American Girl,” but rather than the pigtailed grown-child of the French ballet, the *H.P.* girl is a prohibition-era flapper. Moments of southern melody occur but, in stark contrast to the first movement, these moments are overwhelmed by the relentless mechanistic northern sections. Whereas movement one ambiguously ended with a melodic southern section punctuated by a jarring final chord, the last measures of the fourth

<sup>506</sup> Martin, “The Dance: A Handicap Event,” *NYT*, 10 April 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>507</sup> For an explanation of how this melody is used see, Parker, *Carlos Chávez: Modern Day Orpheus* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1983) 108-110.

movement are entirely absorbed with northern sounds. The image conveyed by the music is one of domination or rejection of southern melody, and by implication, the fruits and plants dancing through the third movement.

The general synopsis, describing the choreography, characterizes this movement as one not of domination, but of synthesis, perhaps out of a desire to placate the “northern” audience in attendance:

The North with its skyscrapers, machinery, and mechanical activity. Man collects the raw materials of the earth: gold, silver, cotton, tobacco, and the machinery which enables him to dominate his surroundings, and satisfy his desire and needs. The world at work, dominated by the stock-ticker, denoting increasing wealth. Mankind’s struggle for its welfare revolts against mere material values, reverting to an insatiable desire for the natural products of the earth. Men and raw materials dance and blend into the rhythm of *H.P.* as the Ballet ends.<sup>508</sup>

### *Local Reception*

Blitzstein and Martin were among those offering the most reasoned, detailed criticism of the *H.P.* performance. Both men appear to have wanted to like the ballet; Martin promoted the premiere in an article printed March 27<sup>509</sup> and Blitzstein prefaced his remarks with an admission that, “The most important aspect of *H.P.* is its music (and its composer)—luckily since the music came off with the most honor.”<sup>510</sup> Other critics seemingly came to the performance with the sort of negative preconceptions that prevented objective responses.

Those predisposed to dislike modernisms predictably complained about the musical aesthetic of the performance. Henry C. Beck wrote two reviews for the

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<sup>508</sup> *H.P. Program*, c. 4, v. III, exp. 34, Programas Actuaciones, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>509</sup> John Martin, “The Dance: A Mexican Ballet,” *NYT*, 27 March 1932, sec. X, 11.

<sup>510</sup> Blitzstein “Forecast and Review,” *Modern Music*, May-June 1932, 164-166.

*Philadelphia Record*, one in a high-brow voice and the other low-brow, in recognition of the widespread interest in the premiere. In both guises, however, he implied that the music was unpleasant, noisome, and violated the conventions of good taste.<sup>511</sup>

Meanwhile the writer for the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* objected to the work on political grounds, finding the anti-capitalist implications offensive:

Chávez, as Prokofiev did in ‘Age of Steel,’ has mistaken the ‘machine age’ for an age of robots. Without grasping the drama and vitality of life in our time, without recognizing the heartbeats of the millions who make up this critical period in civilization, such works cannot advance beyond the stage of curiosities, inane and lifeless.<sup>512</sup>

### *Broader U.S. Reception*

Much of the broader U.S. public was not exposed to the specific and pointed criticisms found in New York and Philadelphia newspapers and specialist magazines such as *Modern Music*. Other publications, such as the *L.A. Times*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Time Magazine*, and *Town and Country*, published more general articles announcing the significance of the premiere and focusing on the outlines of the scenario.<sup>513</sup> Such publications hardly presented the performance as a disaster. Rather, the presence of a large, distinguished audience at an event featuring work by Chávez, Rivera, Littlefield, and Stokowski merited attention and accolades for its cache, regardless of the quality of performance.

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<sup>511</sup> See Henry C. Beck, “‘H.P.’ Makes Premiere Here with a Bang as Sparkplugs Go Into a Song and Dance,” *Philadelphia Record*, 1 April 1932, 1; Beck C. Henry, “Mexican Music Outdoes Russians as Agent of Bedlam; Grace in Pistons Hard to Find,” *Philadelphia Record*, 1 April 1932, 1.

<sup>512</sup> “Ballet, ‘H.P.’ an Artless Spectacle,” *The Evening Bulletin*, 1 April 1932, 28.

<sup>513</sup> These articles include, “First Performance Given of ‘Horse Power’ Ballet,” *LA Times*, 3 April 1932, sec. B, 14; “Carlos Chávez’s Mexican Ballet,” *CSM*, 9 April 1932, 6; “Music,” *Time*, 11 April 1932, 28; H.J. Whigham, “Music and Musicians,” *Town and Country*, 15 April 1932, “H.P. 1926-1932,” c. 2, v. I, exp. 2, Escritos, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

Paul Rosenfeld's article for *The New Republic* was one of the few written for a national readership to offer a detailed description of the premiere. Although Rosenfeld, Chávez's greatest champion in the U.S. press during this period, agreed that the performance of *H.P.* may have been ill-advised, his ringing endorsement of the composer and claim of Chávez's "growing power" softened any barbs.<sup>514</sup>

The article appearing in *Time Magazine* was more representative of the national press about *H.P.* In this article, the author described Stokowski's travel to Mexico and the plot, dancing, and scenery for the ballet. A one-paragraph description of the music was not complementary, but it was buried toward the end of the article and given far less prominence than Stokowski, Rivera, and their attempts at inter-cultural exchange.

Similarly, although Harry L. Hewes had reviewed the production for the *Philadelphia Ledger*, he offered little in the way of critical commentary in his article for the *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*. Much of the second article was absorbed with describing the personalities involved, the preparations undertaken for the performance, and the audience attending the performance itself. The article quoted heavily from the program notes by Rivera and Chávez found in the souvenir booklet available at the premiere. The few quotes from reviews that were included were hardly representative—each presented a positive sentence removed from a more tempered context.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Paul Rosenfeld, "American Premieres," *The New Republic*, 20 April 1932, 273-274.

<sup>515</sup> Harry L. Hewes, "The Mexican Ballet-Symphony, *H.P.*," *Pan American Bulletin*, June 1932, 421.

*After H.P.*

Because most readers were exposed to the less critical articles published in *Time*, *The New Republic*, *Town and Country*, *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* or the small pre-performance notices published in newspapers throughout the country, the *H.P.* premiere enhanced Chávez's career, despite any reservations about the composer from New York and Philadelphia music critics. In fact, after the *H.P.* premiere, Chávez became an important part of musical life in the U.S. and a highly visible figure in the cultural press of the era.

A series of significant performances in the mid-1930s cemented Chávez's position as a prominent figure in U.S. musical life. On 28 January 1936, Chávez conducted a concert for CBS radio that included two works by students, *U Kayil Chaac* by Daniel Ayala and *El Venado* by Luis Sandi, in addition to his own composition, *Sinfonía India*. The performance marked the U.S. premiere of all three works and Chávez's first performance as a conductor in the U.S. as well. *Sinfonía India* became Chávez's best-known work in the U.S., one still considered synonymous with his style.

Building upon his successes with *H.P.* and the CBS broadcast, in March 1936, Chávez began his career as a guest conductor in the U.S. He made his New York debut with the WPA Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra in March 1936; by the end of the month, he had also performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra; two weeks later he led the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO). At concerts with both the Philadelphia Orchestra and the BSO, Chávez presented yet another of his own symphonic compositions unknown to U.S. audiences—the *Sinfonía de Antígona*. Perhaps in

remembrance of the premiere several years earlier, in Philadelphia Chávez also conducted two movements from *H.P.*

The next season, Chávez led the New York Philharmonic in six concerts, also performing with the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra and the Coolidge Ensemble of Washington, D.C. At many of these concerts, the orchestra played sections of *H.P.*, probably the selections from the first, second, and third movements that now make up the *H.P. Suite*. Newspaper and magazine critics wrote about these concerts with zeal, often praising Chávez's skill as both a conductor and composer.<sup>516</sup>

During the 1930s, Chávez became the most prominent representative of Mexican classical music in the U.S.; most scholars agree that during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chávez, along with Alberto Ginastera and Heitor Villa-Lobos, became one of three Latin American composers recognizable to the U.S. public. Whereas during the 1920s Chávez received approximately the same amount of attention in the press as Ponce and Carrillo, during the 1930s his reputation in the U.S. quickly overshadowed those of other Mexican composers. Chávez used his position to promote those with aesthetics closely allied with his own, especially his students and protégés. With Chávez's help, U.S. audiences became familiar with the music of Silvestre Revueltas, Blas Galindo, Daniel Ayala, and Luis Sandi.

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<sup>516</sup> Many of the relevant newspapers clipping were reprinted in, Herbert Weinstock, ed., *Carlos Chávez: North American Press, 1936-1950* (New York: Herbert Barrett, 1950).

*Chávez as Informal Cultural Ambassador*

Chávez furthered the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration's "Good Neighbor Policy"<sup>517</sup> by organizing concerts of U.S. modern music in Mexico and performing Mexican modern music in the U.S. As director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de México, Chávez programmed and conducted modernist music by composers from both the U.S. and Mexico. The Orchestra became a tourist attraction in Mexico City, especially for U.S. tourists; some estimate that at times one-fifth the audience at any given concert was from the U.S.<sup>518</sup>

Starting in 1934, Chávez became involved in Herbert Herring's Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, which led a yearly summer seminar for interested U.S. citizens in Cuernavaca, Mexico.<sup>519</sup> For at least the next three years, Chávez was featured as a speaker in the seminars and led performances of the OSM which those enrolled in the seminar attended. In 1937, Chávez organized the Pan-American Festival of Music, funded by the Coolidge Foundation and the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America.<sup>520</sup> It was held from the 13th to the 24th of July in Mexico City. The festival featured performances of music from throughout the Americas, including works by Roger Sessions, John Alden Carpenter, José María Castro, Manuel M. Ponce, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Luis Sandi, Daniel Ayala, Walter

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<sup>517</sup> "Good Neighbor" was a term employed by the Roosevelt Administration to refer to a policy of non-intervention in Latin America. Although primarily a political and economic policy, there was a strong cultural component, which gradually gained force during the 1930s and probably culminated in the early 1940s. That cultural component consisted of formal cultural exchange, brokered by Nelson Rockefeller's Office of Inter-American Affairs, and the encouragement of less formal exchange through propaganda. A summary of various aspects to the policy may be found in Peter H. Smith, "Mr. Roosevelt's Neighborhood" in *Talons of the Eagle*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 63-86.

<sup>518</sup> Parker, *Mexico's Modern-Day Orpheus*, 9.

<sup>519</sup> Programs and advertisements for these seminars may be found in Series 7, Weinstock Collection, NYPL.

<sup>520</sup> A description may be found in "Pan-American Festival Lists," *NYT*, 13 July 1937, 177.

Piston, Edward B. Hill, Candelario Huízar, Manuel de Falla, Aaron Copland, Jacobo Fischer, Silvestre Revueltas, Amadeo Roldán, and, of course, Carlos Chávez.<sup>521</sup>

Jacobo Fischer won the chamber music composition competition held in conjunction with the festival. The events were publicized in both the U.S. and Mexico; in New York WJZ broadcast selections from the performances.<sup>522</sup>

A few years later, in 1940, Chávez programmed music for the Modern Museum of Art's exhibit on Mexican art, funded by Nelson D. Rockefeller, who also headed the Office of Inter-American Affairs for the U.S. government.<sup>523</sup> These concerts, possibly the most famous concerts of Chávez's career, included his own "imagined Aztec music," *Xochipili-Macuilxochitl*, as well as Blas Galindo's *Sones Mariachi*, and Luis Sandi's *Yaqui Music*. The program was created to demonstrate the history and variety of Mexican music; to accomplish this goal Chávez worked with Herbert Weinstock to create a lavish program explaining the history of Mexican music as Chávez perceived it. Selections from the concert were released on record within the year.

Perhaps Chávez's most influential contributions to U.S.-Mexican exchange of the late 1930s and 1940s occurred outside the public eye. That is, Chávez's many close friendships with U.S. composers continued to flourish and these friendships not only encouraged Chávez's many trips to the U.S., but also encouraged musicians in the U.S. to look toward Mexico and Latin American for inspiration and performance opportunities. Among those most influenced were five people featured prominently

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<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

<sup>522</sup> The broadcast was listed in, "Today on the Radio," *NYT*, 20 July 1937, 21.

<sup>523</sup> The program, which included a brief history of Mexican music and detailed program notes was widely distributed and may be found in many libraries. Herbert Weinstock and Carlos Chávez, *Mexican Music: Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1940)

elsewhere in this dissertation: Edgard Varèse, Henry Cowell, Nicolas Slonimsky, Leopold Stokowski, and Aaron Copland. The first three were closely associated with the Pan American Association of Composers; Stokowski and Copland got to know Chávez early in his U.S. career outside the PAAC and maintained long-term friendships with the composer. Each friendship represents a different avenue through which Chávez participated in U.S. musical life.

Varèse was interested in Latin American culture before meeting Chávez in the mid-1930s and cultivated friendships with many Latin American musicians, artists, and intellectuals. Nonetheless, because of their friendship Varèse and Chávez were able to cooperate in their efforts to encourage cultural exchange. After beginning the PAAC in 1927, Varèse moved to Paris, where he befriended the Cuban writer and music critic Alejo Carpentier.<sup>524</sup> Together they worked on an enormous musical project provisionally titled, “The One All Alone” that was never realized. Before returning to the U.S. in 1933, Varèse thought about first moving to Mexico, eventually declining an invitation from Diego Rivera to stay at one of the artist’s homes.<sup>525</sup> Upon returning to the U.S. Varèse renewed his activity in the PAAC<sup>526</sup> and began to develop a music section for the Society of Friends of Mexico.<sup>527</sup> In 1934 he completed the composition of *Ecuatorial*, a setting of passages from the *Popul Vuh*, the sacred text of the Maya.

As noted earlier, Chávez’s friendship with Henry Cowell continued through the 1930s and 1940s as well. During the 1930s, the PAAC continued to perform

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<sup>524</sup> An extensive account of Varèse’s return to Paris and his activities while there can be found in Malcolm MacDonald, *Varèse: Astronomer in Sound* (London: Kahn and Averill, 2003) 213-241.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>526</sup> Carlos Salzedo to Henry Cowell, 8 Jan. 1934, Folder 29, Box 9, Cowell Collection, NYPL.

<sup>527</sup> Varèse to Chávez, 8 April 1935, Folder 17, Chávez Collection, NYPL.

Chávez's music and *New Music* printed several of Chávez's scores. After Cowell visited Cuba in 1931 to perform his *Concerto* with Pedro San Juan's orchestra, he excitedly described his reception in a letter to Chávez:

I have just returned from Cuba, the first time in a Spanish-speaking country and found much of charm. I was very surprised at the extreme enthusiasm which greeted my *Concerto* . . . I was wondering if you would consider playing it with your Orchestra? I would be delighted to play it, at a fee which would be the price of a [rail] ticket from Los Angeles and return. I could arrange to go to Mexico City, which I am crazy to visit, anytime after this April.<sup>528</sup>

Subsequently, Cowell wrote Chávez many times about possible plans to visit Mexico, often with the thought of applying for a travel grant or scholarship.<sup>529</sup> These plans never came to fruition; the extant correspondence in the New York Public Library and the *Archivo General de la Nación* seems to indicate that most of Cowell's plans to visit Mexico or South America were no longer pursued after he was sent to prison in 1936. Nonetheless, while incarcerated, Cowell studied the Spanish language, asking if he might write Chávez in Spanish.<sup>530</sup>

It appears that Nicolas Slonimsky was introduced to Latin American music through his performances with the PAAC. He frequently conducted Chávez's *Energía* at such events.<sup>531</sup> Slonimsky's most significant contributions to U.S.-Mexico exchange occurred several years later when he embarked on a tour of Latin America in 1941. In each city, Slonimsky gave a lecture-recital and collected music manuscripts for inclusion in the Fleischer Collection of the Free Library in

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<sup>528</sup> Cowell to Chávez, 2 Jan. 1931, c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>529</sup> See, for example: Cowell to Chávez, 13 Aug. 1935, 30 May 1936, c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>530</sup> Cowell to Chávez, 26 Nov. 1936, 17 Feb. 1937, c. 3, v. II, exp. 48, Correspondencia Personal, Archivo Chávez, AGN.

<sup>531</sup> A list of PAAC programs and performance dates may be found in Dean Root, "The Pan-American Association of Composers," *Anuario Interamericano de Inverstigacion Musical* 8 (1972): 62-66.

Philadelphia. In most cities, including Mexico City, his recitals were promoted and reviewed.<sup>532</sup> Before and after his tour, Slonimsky wrote several articles for the *Christian Science Monitor* about his Latin American music.<sup>533</sup> These columns, along with the other material collected, became the basis for *Music of Latin America*, which remains one of the few English-language surveys about 20<sup>th</sup>-century Latin American music.<sup>534</sup>

Partly as a result of his friendships with Carrillo and Chávez, Stokowski became enamored of Mexican culture and music, making several trips to the country and frequently conducting music by Mexican composers. While at the helm of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Stokowski conducted the music of all three composers studied in the dissertation. Stokowski frequently made plans to collaborate with Chávez; projects described in correspondence include embryonic plans for a music festival in Mexico City featuring Stokowski as a conductor, and the beginnings of a joint Hollywood project.<sup>535</sup> Chávez advised Stokowski to program Ponce's *Chapultepec* in 1934 and Chávez began his conducting career in the U.S. when he led Stokowski's Philadelphia Orchestra in 1936. For his part, Stokowski continued to educate himself about Mexican music, recording Revueltas' *Sensamaya* in 1947 and performing Carrillo's *Horizontes* in 1952.<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>532</sup> The Slonimsky Collection in the Library of Congress contains many programs and newspaper reviews from Slonimsky's trip.

<sup>533</sup> See, Slonimsky, "Music in Colombia," *CSM*, 20 September 1938, 12; Slonimsky, "Modern Peruvian Composers," *CSM*, 24 August 1940, 12; Slonimsky, "Modern Argentine Composers," *CSM*, 11 January 1941, 6; Slonimsky, "The Folklore of Latin America," *CSM*, 18 July 1942, sec. B, 5; Slonimsky, "Whence the Dance in Latin America?" *CSM*, 8 May 1943, sec. B, 4.

<sup>534</sup> Slonimsky, *Music of Latin America* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1972).

<sup>535</sup> These project ideas are described in Parker, Carlos Chávez y la música para el cine," *Heterofonía* 17, no. 1 (January-March 1984): 13-27.

<sup>536</sup> A more complete account of Stokowski's programming habits may be found in Daniel.

In 1944, Stokowski returned to Mexico to conduct a concert with Chávez's OSM; unfortunately, while there he became embroiled in an argument with Ponce.<sup>537</sup> During the course of an early rehearsal, Stokowski was enraged to find that the score prepared for him of Ponce's *La Mort* was incomplete. Somehow the ensuing discussion made clear that Stokowski blamed Ponce for the state of the score. Such an insult directed toward one of Mexico's best-loved composers was considered insupportable by the musicians in the Orchestra and the Mexico City press, and elicited a series of printed denouncements. Apologies eventually healed the rift between Stokowski and Ponce, but Mexican critics never again expressed the same ardor for Stokowski found in earlier reviews and articles.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Stokowski also became interested in South American culture and music. Around 1939, he conceived of a grand Latin American tour with an orchestra of young musicians, forming the All-American Youth Orchestra. This group traveled to South America in 1940, performing in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Trinidad, and the Dominican Republic.<sup>538</sup> The repertoire was constructed to exhibit young talent in the United States, and included Johannes Brahms' Fourth Symphony, Manuel de Falla's "Ritual Fire Dance" from *El Amor Brujo*, Maurice Ravel's *Bolero*, Igor Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite*, as well as an arrangement of the U.S. National Anthem. In Brazil, the Orchestra performed Hector Villa-Lobos's *Mômoprecóce*.

It appears from correspondence that Chávez's most enduring and influential friendship with a U.S. musician was the one he enjoyed with Aaron Copland. The

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<sup>537</sup> This argument is described in Miranda, *Manuel M. Ponce: Ensayo Sobre su Vida y Obra* (Mexico: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998) 87-88.

<sup>538</sup> An account of the tour provided in Daniel, 403-411

projects they participated in together are so numerous and the depth of the exchange between the two men so expansive that it would require at least one article to explore the extent of the relationship and its influence on each man's career.<sup>539</sup> Copland visited Mexico for the first time in 1932, beginning composition on *El Salón México* while there. Other Latin American-themed works followed *El Salón México*, including *Danzón Cubano*, "Three Latin-American Sketches," and "Las Agachadas."

Copland returned to Mexico several times during the 1930s and 1940s, making a government sponsored stop in 1941 as part of his Latin American tour, while serving as a cultural attaché for Nelson Rockefeller's Committee of Inter-American Affairs. Through his various administrative projects in the U.S., Copland provided a forum for Chávez's music to be heard and understood. Previous chapters have described Copland's programming of Chávez's music through the Copland-Sessions concerts and the Yaddo festival, and his encouragement of the programming of Chávez's music under the auspices of the League of Composers. Copland also provided opportunities for Chávez to propagate his ideas through *Modern Music*, cooperating with Minna Lederman in a project to publish a column about "Inter-American Music."<sup>540</sup> It is likely Copland also suggested Chávez as a speaker for the Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard University.<sup>541</sup> Most importantly, as the friendship matured, Copland regarded Chávez as an intellectual and musical equal,

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<sup>539</sup> See Howard Pollack, "Más que Buenos Vecinos: La Amistad de Aaron Copland con Carlos Chávez y Silvestre Revueltas," in *Diálogo de Respoandores* edited by Yael Bitrán and Ricardo Miranda (Mexico: INBA, 2002): 149-158; Robert Parker, "Copland y Chávez: Compañeros de Lucha," *Pauta* 8, no. 31 (July- Sept. 1989): 5-22; Elizabeth Crist, "Aaron Copland and the Popular Front," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* vol. 56/2 (Summer 2003): 409-465.

<sup>540</sup> See, for example, 6 Oct. 1994, Copland to Lederman, Morelos, Mexico, Copland Collection, LC.

<sup>541</sup> Parker, "Compañeros de Lucha," 11-12.

participating in an exchange of scores, advice, and honest opinions that lasted until the end of Chávez's life.

The relationships described here are only part of Chávez's constantly expanding and changing U.S. network. Chávez continued to participate in U.S. musical life in a personal way even during the 1930s and 1940s when his Mexican career was at its busiest. Even after this period, Chávez remained active in U.S. musical life. He worked as a guest conductor until near the end of his life, eventually conducting most of the major U.S. symphony orchestras. Late in life, Chávez held a series of visiting professorships, including a position at the University of California in 1966. Following a disagreement with the musicians' union of the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico in 1973, Chávez relocated to New York where he lived until his death in 1978.

## Conclusions

This dissertation examines the performances of works by and activities of three prominent early 20<sup>th</sup> century Mexican composers—Manuel M. Ponce, Julián Carrillo, and Carlos Chávez—in New York, from 1925 to 1932. These subjects are of particular interest because, during this period, New York was the cultural capital of the U.S., and home of influential communities of modernists and Mexican expatriates. In addition, the period directly precedes the premiere of Chávez’s ballet, *H.P.* with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, which transformed Chávez’s career and made him the most well-known Mexican composer in the U.S.

The first chapter reviews the relevant primary and secondary material. Although the central period of study is 1925 to 1932, Chapter 2 describes elements of musical life in New York during an earlier period, illustrating the existence of performances of Mexican music there from 1910 to 1925. Evidence of Mexican music performance in the U.S. is scarce in mainstream English-language periodicals, but we know from studies by John Koegel<sup>542</sup> and others that a vibrant recording and publishing industry brought Mexican musicians to New York during the 1910s. In addition, the Spanish language newspaper *La Prensa* presents new evidence of performances of Mexican music within New York’s Latino community.

Within this period, the performances of Carrillo’s American Symphony Orchestra in 1915 and Ponce’s piano recital in 1916 are of particular interest. Unlike

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<sup>542</sup> John Koegel, “Compositores Mexicanos y Cubanos en Nueva York, c. 1880 – 1920,” *Historia Mexicana* 56, no. 2 (October-December 2006): 533-602 and “Del Rancho Grande y a través del Río Grande: Músicos mexicanos en Hollywood y en la vida musical norteamericana, 1910-1940,” *Heterofonía* 128 (Jan.-June 2003): 101-130.

most performances of Mexican music in New York at the time, the singular performances by Carrillo and Ponce occurred in one of the major concert halls and were reviewed in mainstream English language newspapers. Yet New York critics offered mixed reviews of Carrillo's orchestra and negative evaluations of Ponce's piano recital. Reviews indicate that members of Carrillo's American Symphony Orchestra were unprepared for the concert. Promised money from a wealthy patron did not materialize and Carrillo struggled to find funding to keep the organization afloat. Despite his best efforts, the American Symphony Orchestra did not give any subsequent performances.

Ponce fared even more poorly than Carrillo; although Ponce had received great acclaim for piano recitals performed in Mexico and Cuba, critics disliked his New York concert. His performance occurred two weeks after Pancho Villa invaded Columbus, New Mexico, leading to anti-Mexican front-page articles in New York newspapers. Ponce's planned recital was more nationalistic in content than Carrillo's concert with the American Symphony Orchestra; the repertoire included Mexican *canciones* and larger works based on *canciones*. Publicity for Ponce's recital, distributed before Villa's invasion, was not withdrawn or edited in the days leading up to the performance. It advertised the Mexican music in his program, made obvious through titles such as *Mexican Rhapsody* or *Mexican Ballade*. The negative reviews that followed the concert alluded to the composer's disfavored nationality. It is almost certain that evaluations of Ponce's recital were influenced by anti-Mexican sentiments.

By 1925, the Revolution had ended, the negative stories about Mexico had largely disappeared from the front pages of U.S. newspapers, and participants in the “Mexico Vogue” were fostering displays of Mexican culture in U.S. cities. In this new environment, New York critics viewed Ponce’s music in a more positive light. Three case studies presented in Chapter 3 illustrate the various contexts in which Ponce’s music was performed and evaluated. The first is that of Clarita Sánchez, a Mexican soprano who included Ponce’s music in her recitals as an expression of national identity. The second case study is that of Jascha Heifetz, who created the now famous violin arrangement of Ponce’s “Estrellita” in what appears to have been a tribute to Mexican culture, which Heifetz admired. Last, but certainly not least, are the recitals of Andrés Segovia. Unlike the other performances examined, these recitals do not appear to be related to the Vogue, but rather to Segovia’s personal admiration for Ponce and his music.

The evidence cited above indicates that Ponce’s music was a part of New York’s musical life during the late 1920s; yet Chapter 3 represents the first examination of these performances and their critical reception. Moreover, the chapter adds to Ponce’s biography by emphasizing the momentary and circumstantial nature of the negative critical reception accorded Ponce’s 1916 recital in New York. When the critical receptions toward Ponce’s music in 1916 and, for example, 1926, are juxtaposed, the increased acceptance of Mexican nationalist music in New York’s musical life is brought to light.

While Ponce’s music benefited from New Yorkers’ increased interest in Mexican culture, New York critics and audiences were drawn to Carrillo and his

music because of the growing interest in modernist music around 1925. As examined in Chapter 4, Carrillo's microtonal music, written using a method the composer created, called *Sonido 13*, attracted a great deal of attention in the New York press during the 1920s. Although there were only two notable performances of Carrillo's music during the period of study—the League of Composers presentation of the *Sonata Casi Fantasia* in March 1926 and the Philadelphia Orchestra performance of the *Concertino* in March 1927—articles about Carrillo, his works, and his theories appeared both before and after the performances in a wide range of publications. Carrillo lived in New York from 1926 to 1928, and while there he refined his theory, published three additional volumes of his periodical (also titled *Sonido 13*), and encouraged the composition of microtonal music.

Other recent biographical studies have focused on Carrillo's participation in musical life in Mexico and Europe. Chapter 4 is the first to offer a systematic evaluation of Carrillo's activities in New York during the 1920s. Thus, it adds to his biography and explores one facet of New York's affection for microtonal music, and, more broadly, modernist innovation of any type.

Despite their prominence as Mexican composers and despite the performances of their music in New York during the 1920s, neither Ponce nor Carrillo became well-known figures there. Performances of Ponce's music continued after the period of study, but his works never received the concentrated listening and examination required for an enduring legacy in the U.S. Carrillo was able to attract an enormous amount of attention before and during his stay in New York but once he left, interest declined precipitously.

Chávez, unlike his compatriots, was able to create and maintain a lasting legacy for his music in New York. The last two chapters of the dissertation consist of a re-examination of Chávez's early career in the U.S. in an attempt to reveal some of the reasons for his success. Chapter 5 focuses on Chávez's first two trips to New York, a short four-month visit starting in December 1923 and a longer two-year visit beginning in 1926. Building upon the studies of others, including Leonora Saavedra,<sup>543</sup> Robert Parker,<sup>544</sup> and Antonio Saborit,<sup>545</sup> I show that these were difficult years for Chávez but that, ultimately, he made a series of critical contacts and friends in the music, expatriate, and intellectual communities of New York. These relationships led to early performances of his music with the International Composers' Guild, the Copland Sessions Concerts, the Pan American Association of Composers, and the League of Composers. The narrative presented in Chapter 5 presents many salient details absent from other accounts, focusing on Chávez's relationship with the left-wing intelligentsia associated with *New Masses*, his friendship with Henry Cowell, and Chávez's participation in the Pan American Association of Composers.

Chapter 6 concentrates on the first large-scale performance of Chávez's work in the U.S. and then offers a brief summary of the career that followed it. Leopold

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<sup>543</sup> E.g. Leonora Saavedra, "Of Selves and Others: Historiography, Ideology, and the Politics of Modern Mexican Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001) and "Carlos Chávez y la construcción de una alteridad estratégica" in *Diálogo de resplendores: Carlos Chávez y Silvestre Revueltas*, edited by Yael Bitrán and Ricardo Miranda (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura, 2002): 125-136.

<sup>544</sup> E.g. Robert Parker, *Carlos Chávez: Mexico's Modern-Day Orpheus* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983) and "Carlos Chávez and the Ballet: A Study in Persistence," *Choreography and Dance* 3-4 (1994): 81-88.

<sup>545</sup> Antonio Saborit, "Mexican Gaities: Chávez en la Babilonia de hierro" in *Diálogo de resplendores: Carlos Chávez y Silvestre Revueltas*, edited by Yael Bitrán and Ricardo Miranda (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura, 2002) 139-148.

Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra and Philadelphia Grand Opera premiered Chávez's ballet, *H.P.* in March 1932. The performance was notable in many respects, including the collaboration of Diego Rivera as set and costume designer, the then-young Philadelphia Grand Opera company, and the selection of Catherine Littlefield, a neophyte choreographer. Of primary interest to this study is the fact that *H.P.* was the first of Chávez's ballets to be presented in the U.S. and the first of his works to be presented by a major U.S. symphony orchestra to a large and distinguished audience. The *H.P.* premiere received an enormous amount of attention in the U.S. press both before and after the performance.<sup>546</sup> Critics generally concurred that there were significant flaws. Yet music historians seem to agree that the *H.P.* premiere marked a turning point in Chávez's career, making his name known nationwide in the U.S.

What might explain the contradiction between the immediate critical reception of *H.P.* and the legacy it left? One explanation lies in the preparations Chávez had made far in advance of the performance; during his first two visits to New York he had developed a circle of loyal friends and listeners who were willing to overlook one inadequately presented performance of his music. Perhaps equally importantly, the articles available to readers outside the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan areas were not negative reviews but previews or summaries of the ballet that contained little judgment on the performance. Those unfamiliar with Chávez and his music before *H.P.* might have read about the premiere in the national press, but the articles available to such readers indicated that the composer had contributed to an "exotic," high-profile performance rather than a problematic, uneven ballet performance.

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<sup>546</sup> See Appendix F for a list of articles.

Chávez used the contacts he had formed and the media attention afforded *H.P.* to continue to develop his U.S. career. Following the *H.P.* premiere there were a number of significant performances featuring Chávez as a conductor directing his own music. Over the next twenty years he would lead most of the major U.S. symphony orchestras. Such performances were invariably reviewed in local newspapers. Chávez continued to foster U.S.- Mexico exchange by participating in several formal and informal exchanges, including organizing a Pan-American Festival in Mexico City and hosting a number of U.S. composers and artists in Mexico.

Indisputably, Chávez's talents as a composer, conductor, administrator, and writer enabled and furthered his U.S. career. A comparison of his early U.S. career with the U.S. careers of Ponce and Carrillo around the same time, however, reveals some of the reasons for Chávez's fame in the U.S. Chávez's music reached U.S. audiences at an opportune time for Latin American composition here. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the "Mexico Vogue" encouraged performances of Mexican music; a few years later, during the late 1930s and 1940s, the "Good Neighbor" policy formalized an existing spirit of inter-American cooperation. Similarly, modernism flourished in New York, encouraging a studied approach to innovation that came naturally to Chávez.

Yet, as the studies of Ponce and Carrillo demonstrated, creation of an enduring U.S. career required more than momentary association with popular aesthetic trends. Chávez, however, was gifted with a third advantage: a talent for creating and maintaining enduring friendships. Through his friends, Chávez became personally invested in U.S. musical life and U.S.-Mexico cultural exchange,

participating in and influencing the institutions, social environment, and performances in the U.S. music community. Thus Chávez became the principle representative of Mexican music in the U.S. by recognizing the current aesthetic trends, by channeling his endeavors as a composer and performer in a way that represented those trends, and by becoming a member of the U.S. music community.

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In some senses the narratives presented in this dissertation are individual ones, belonging to the biographies of three distinct composers who shared little besides nationality. Neither the three composers nor those who performed their work formed a cohesive community in New York. The composers were not tied together by a shared aesthetic—most of Ponce’s music presented in New York was *canción* based or conservative guitar music, Carrillo’s music was microtonal, and Chávez’s music related to trends found in French modernism. Critics did not group the composers together in their reviews or in their evaluations of musical life in New York. It appears few musicians or critics of the time linked these three composers and their music together.

Yet it would be a mistake to see the events and interactions described here as isolated from one another or from the larger historical narrative. All three composers confronted the changes occurring in Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary Mexico in their music. Ponce sought to present a Mexican national identity through his *canciones*. Carrillo wanted to “revolutionize” musical thought via *Sonido 13*. Chávez searched for a way in which Mexican composers might join the modernist movement,

echoing the “modernization” of Mexico City following the Revolution.

When performed in New York, their music shared a specific historical moment influenced by the “Mexico Vogue,” modernism, and New York’s musical coming of age. Furthermore, because Ponce and Carrillo’s legacies in New York did not extend far beyond 1932, all the three narratives presented here culminate with Chávez’s success in the U.S. after the premiere of *H.P.* Over the next few years it would become apparent that the New York moment Ponce, Carrillo, and Chávez shared during the 1920s did not continued through subsequent decades. Chávez exercised such prominence and power within the New York music community that his influence discouraged the presentations of diverse Mexican musical aesthetics of the late 1920s detailed in this dissertation.

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It is hoped that future research will build upon and intersect with this study. Several forthcoming dissertations and books offer information related to that presented herein. Soon to be completed dissertations by Jennifer Campbell and Emily Ansari, explore, in part, U.S. musical diplomacy in Latin America during the Good Neighbor and Cold War periods respectively. Carol Hess is working on a book about U.S.-Latin American musical exchange, which describes U.S. perceptions of several Latin American composers, including Chávez. Alejandro Madrid intends to expand Carrillo reception history with a study of Carrillo’s interactions with critics in Mexico. Stephanie Stallings, a graduate student at the University of Florida, is engaged in dissertation research about the Pan American Association of Composers. Research by Ricardo Miranda, Leonora Saavedra, Gloria Carmona, Roberto Kolb,

John Koegel, Robert Parker, and others, continues to add to our knowledge about Mexican composers, including their activities and critical receptions in the U.S.

Many paths for additional research exist which are related to the findings presented in this dissertation. Recently scholars have expressed a great deal of interest in U.S.-Latin American cultural diplomacy during and after the late 1930s, as described above. However, informal cultural diplomacy, brokered through immigrant communities, expatriate communities, and other interested parties within the U.S., existed long before WWII. Some of that activity is described in this dissertation and in various article-length studies, but the topic would benefit from additional examination.

No study of Mexican classical music during the 20th century would be complete without examination of a figure absent from this dissertation: Silvestre Revueltas. While there were very few performances of Revueltas's music in the U.S. before 1932—thus his exclusion in this study—during the next two decades, he became well-known there. A study of the critical reception of his music in the U.S. during those years is much needed and would necessarily build upon the information presented in this dissertation.

Although recent research has delved more deeply into many segments of New York musical life, more work in this area remains as well. Mexican composers were not the only foreigners trying to participate in musical life in New York. Many others came to participate in the publishing, performing, and cultural opportunities offered by the city during the early 20th century. Andrés Segovia, for example, is mentioned within this dissertation because of his close relationship with Ponce and his frequent

performances of Ponce's music. Yet, although he is an important figure in his own right and his early performances exposed audiences to a technique of guitar playing unknown in the U.S., no study focuses on his U.S. performances and their critical reception. Many studies of musical life in New York examine the most avant-garde composers, performers, and societies. These are critical elements to the musical environment there at the time, but other, more conservative artists like Segovia deserve attention, in order to gain a more balanced view of New York musical life.

Additional studies of Mexican music in other culturally significant U.S. cities, particularly Los Angeles and Chicago, are needed. In Los Angeles, the circle of musicians and composers participating in Henry Cowell's New Music Society led a modernist movement distinct from that found in New York, although, as mentioned earlier, there were continuing links between musicians in the two cities. At the same time vibrant Chicano, Mexican expatriate, and Latino communities formed a large part of the Los Angeles population. Mexican and Mexican-American musicians typically included Los Angeles in their touring schedules. The movie industry in Hollywood was engaged in developing audiences in Latin America during the early 20th century and it brought many artists, including musicians, to Los Angeles to participate in Spanish-language projects. While in the city, these musicians would perform and participate in musical life there. John Koegel has investigated the activities of some Latin American musicians in Los Angeles, but more examination of the intersections between the modernist movement and Latin American cultural life in Los Angeles during the early 20th century is needed.

Chicago is traditionally viewed as a more conservative, less modernist musical environment. However, like New York and Los Angeles, it had the resources to create and maintain a thriving musical life, and it was the most important cultural center in the middle of the country. It also had a very active and engaged Latin American population, amidst a diverse but segmented society. A study of Latin American composers and musicians in Chicago would reveal a great deal about the musical culture in that city and serve as a counterpoint to studies of that in Los Angeles and New York.

## **Appendix A: Selected Reviews of Clarita Sánchez's Recitals in New York**

19 April 1925, Carnegie Hall, NYC [not a solo concert]

"New York Concerts." *Musical Courier*, 23 April 1925, 33.

23 May 1925, International House, NYC

"Clara Elena Sánchez Heard in Concert at International House." *Musical America*, 30 May 1925, 35.

"Sociedades Hispanas." *La Prensa*, 26 May 1925, 5.

16 November 1925, Aeolian Hall, NYC

"Clara Sánchez, Mexican Soprano, Gives Recital." *New York Herald Tribune*, 17 November 1925, 17.

"Young Mexican Soprano in Successful Debut." *New York Sun*, 17 November 1925, 27.

16 January 1926, Pan-American Union, Washington, D.C. [not a solo concert]

"Washington, D.C." *Musical Courier*, 11 February 1926, 51.

24 March 1926, Aeolian Hall, NYC

"Clarita Sánchez Returns." *New York Times*, 25 March 1926, 20.

"Miss Sánchez, Mexican Soprano, Pleases." *New York Sun*, 25 March 1926, 29.

"New York Concerts." *Musical Courier*, 1 April 1926, 17.

"News of Concerts and Recitals." *Musical America*, 5 April 1926, 22.

2 November 1926, Aeolian Hall, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. "De Música." *La Prensa*, 4 November 1926, 7.

"Clarita Sánchez Sings." *New York Times*, 3 November 1926, 21.

“Miss Sánchez’s Singing Delights Large Audience.” *New York Sun*, 3 November 1926, 22.

“New York Concerts.” *Musical Courier*, 11 November 1926, 18.

13 February 1927, Times Square Theatre, NYC

“Señorita Sánchez, Mexican Soprano, Sings.” *New York Sun*, 14 February 1927, 23.

“Spanish Song Recital.” *New York Times*, 14 February 1927, 14.

19 February 1928, Gallo Theatre, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. “De Música.” *La Prensa*, 20 February 1928, 4.

“Clarita Sánchez Sings at Gallo Theater.” *New York Sun*, 20 February 1928, 17.

“Reports of New York Concerts.” *Musical Courier*, 23 February 1928, 25.

“New York Concerts and Opera: Spanish Night by Sánchez.” *Musical America*, 3 March 1928, 31.

20 January 1932, Waldorf-Astoria, NYC [not a solo concert]

“Mid-Season Brings Many Concerts to New York: Escudero in Waldorf Musicale.” *Musical America*, 10 February 1932, 23.

April 30, 1932, Roerich Hall, NYC

“Music Week.” *Musical Courier*, 7 May 1932, 24.

“Clarita Sánchez Aclamada en su Recital.” *La Prensa*, 2 May 1932, 3.

## **Appendix B: Jascha Heifetz: Performances in Mexico, Selected Reviews, and Performances of “Estrellita” in New York<sup>547</sup>**

### Performances in Mexico:

24 November 1927, 8:45 p.m., Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City

27 November 1927, 11 a.m., Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City

30 November 1927, 8:45 p.m., Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City

2 December 1927, 8:45 p.m., Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City

4 December 1927, 11 a.m., Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City

6 December 1927, 9 p.m., Teatro Degollado, Guadalajara

9 December 1927, 8:45 p.m., Esperanza Iris, Mexico City

11 December 1927, 11 a.m., Esperanza Iris, Mexico City [1st performance of “Estrellita”]

13 December 1927, 8 p.m. Teatro Independencia, Monterrey

### Selected Reviews of Concerts in Mexico City (and related articles):

Barajas, Manuel. “Crónicas Musicales,” *El Universal*, 25 Nov. 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Crónicas Musicales,” *El Universal*, 28 Nov. 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Crónicas Musicales,” *El Universal*, 2 Dec. 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Crónicas Musicales,” *El Universal*, 3 Dec. 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Crónicas Musicales,” *El Universal*, 5 Dec. 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. “Jascha Heifetz Habla a ‘El Universal,’” *El Universal*, 25 Nov. 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. “El mago del violín, Jascha Heifetz, llegó a la Capital,” *El Universal*, Mexico City, 24 Nov. 1927.

Barros Sierra, José. “Nuestras Entrevistas con Heifetz, El Mago del Violín,” *El Universal Ilustrado*, 1 Dec. 1927.

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<sup>547</sup> Performance dates and article citations can be found in the Jascha Heifetz Collection at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

- Casares Mz. De A., Manuel. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 28 Nov. 1927.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 2 Dec. 1927.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 3 Dec. 1927.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 5 Dec. 1927.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 10 Dec. 1927.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 12 Dec. 1927.
- De Caprian, Alfonso. "Excélsior entrevista a Heifetz, el notable violinista Ruso que está proximo a llegar a Mexico," *El Excélsior*, 4 Nov. 1927.
- Domínguez Portas, A. "Crónicas Musicales," *El Excélsior*, 26 Nov. 1927.
- Gonzales Peña, Carlos. "Oyendo a Heifetz," *El Universal*, 4 Dec. 1927.
- "Jascha Heifetz, Trotamundos y Continuator de Paganini," *Revista de Revistas*, 20 Nov. 1927.
- "La Proxima visita a México de Jascha Heifetz," *El Excélsior*, 10 Nov. 1927.
- Najar, Mario. "Jascha Heifetz, el violinista maravilloso," *Revista de Revistas*, 7 Dec. 1927.
- Ortiz de Montellano, Bernardo. "La Cultura Musical en Mexico," *El Universal*, [n.d.]
- Pingüino, "Comentarios de Buen Humor," *El Excélsior*, 8 Dec. 1927.
- Rosales, Hernan. "J.Heifetz posee un violin construido en 1742, que vale más de \$100,000," *El Universal*, 6 Dec. 1927.
- Ruíz, R. Saucedo. "Tópicos Musicales," *Arte*, 1 Dec. 1927.
- Sordine. "Jascha Heifetz, el Mago," *Rotográfico*, 30 Nov. 1927.
- "Vendrá a México el más notable joven violinista del mundo—Jascha Heifetz," *El Universal* [n.d.] Nov. 1927.

Selected U.S. Programs Including "Estrellita":

27 January 1928, 8:15 p.m., Milwaukee, Wis.

29 January 1928, 3 p.m., Carnegie Hall, New York City [repeated]

5 February 1928, 8:30 p.m., Stanley Music Club, Philadelphia, PA

7 February 1928, Mrs. Wilson-Greene's Concerts, Washington, D.C.  
11 February 1928, Thursday Morning Music Club, Roanoke, VA  
18 March 1928, 3:30 p.m., Symphony Hall, Boston, MA [on program and repeated as  
encore]  
28 March 1928, 8:15 p.m. New London, CT  
20 April 1928, Irem Temple, Willkes-Barre, PA  
4 January 1929, 8:15 p.m., Mizpah Auditorium, Syracuse, NY  
9 January 1929, 8:30 p.m., New Music Hall, Cleveland, OH  
18 January 1929, Fulton Opera House, Lancaster, PA  
22 January 1929, Tuesday Musical Club, Akron, OH  
26 January 1929, 2:30 p.m., Carnegie Hall, New York City [Encore]  
27 February 1929, Hotel Statler Ballroom, Boston Morning Musicales  
18 April 1929, 8:15 p.m., Chromatic Concerts Music Hall, Troy, NY  
6 March 1929, Lyric Theatre, Knoxville, TN  
4 April 1929, Fair Park Auditorium, Dallas, TX  
14 April 1929, 2:45 p.m., Curram Theatre, S.F., CA

## **Appendix C: Segovia's Concerts in New York and Selected Reviews, 1928-1932.**

### 8 January 1928, Town Hall, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. "Teatrales: Andrés Segovia entusiasma a una numerosa audiencia en el Town Hall." *La Prensa*, 10 January 1928, 5.

Downs, Olin. "Music." *New York Times*, 9 January 1928, 21.

Gilman, Lawrence. "Guitar Recital by a Great Musician: Mr. Segovia's Debut." *New York Herald Tribune*, 9 January 1928, 15.

### 11 January 1928, Town Hall, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. "Segovia Triunfa de Nuevo." *La Prensa*, 12 January 1928, 6.

W., M. "Segovia Thrills Large Audience with His Guitar." *New York Herald Tribune*, 12 January 1928, 25

"New York Concerts." *Musical Courier*, 12 January 1928, 24.

"Segovia Again Charms." *New York Times*, 12 January 1928, 24.

### 22 January 1928, Musical Forum Concert, Guild Theatre, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. "De Música: El Encanto Español." *La Prensa*, 23 January 1928, 6.

Downs, Olin. "Music." *New York Times*, 23 January 1928, 18.

E., F.Q. "Segovia with the Forum." *Musical America*, 28 January 1928, 22.

"New York Concerts." *Musical Courier*, 26 January 1928, 26.

### 29 January 1928, Gallo Theatre, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. "De Música: Otro triunfo de Andrés Segovia en su recital de ayer." *La Prensa*, 30 January 1928, 7.

"New York Concerts." *Musical Courier*, 2 February 1928, 32.

"Segovia Amazes by Mastery of Guitar." *New York Herald Tribune*, 30 January 1928, 8.

4 February 1928, Town Hall, NYC

“El arte genial y al inspiración del guitarrista Andrés Segovia obtienen Nuevo y resonante triunfo en B’way.” *La Prensa*, 6 February 1928, 3.

“New York Concerts.” *Musical Courier*, 9 February 1928, 26.

15 February 1928, Town Hall, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. “Despedida del guitarrista Andrés Segovia.” *La Prensa*, 16 February 1928, 4.

“Reports of New York Concerts.” *Musical Courier*, 23 February 1928, 12.

29 December 1929, Town Hall, NYC

“Teatrales.” *La Prensa*, 31 December 1928, 5.

6 January 1929, Town Hall, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. “De Música.” *La Prensa*, 7 January 1929, 5.

15 January 1929, Town Hall, NYC

“De Música.” *La Prensa*, 16 January 1929, 5.

19 January 1930, Town Hall, NYC

Perkins, Francis D. “Harold Bauer is Soloist with Music Friends.” *New York Herald Tribune*, 20 January 1930, 11.

“Segovia Recalled 16 Times by Audience.” *New York Times*, 20 January 1930, 16.

9 February 1930, Town Hall, NYC

Downs, Olin. “Andrés Segovia Plays.” *New York Times*, 10 February 1930, 21.

18 January 1931, Town Hall, NYC

Brock, Helen Ten. “Teatrales.” *La Prensa*, 19 January 1931, 5.

“Andres Segovia Plays at Town Hall.” *New York Sun*, 19 January 1931, 30.

“First Segovia Recital.” *New York Evening Post*, 17 January 1931, sec. D, p. 4.

B., J.D. “Segovia Heard in Recital.” *New York Herald Tribune*, 19 January 1931, 10.

“New York Concerts.” *Musical Courier*, 24 January 1931, 40.

8 February 1931, Town Hall, NYC

“Andrés Segovia Guitarist Heard in Last Recital.” *New York Sun*, 9 February 1931, 17.

“Before the N.Y. Public.” *Musical Courier*, 21 February 1931, 16.

“Segovia Stirs Audience.” *New York Times*, 9 February 1931, 24.

P., F.D. “Segovia in Final Recital,” *New York Herald Tribune*, 9 February 1931, 13.

## **Appendix D: Select Articles about Julián Carrillo and Sonido 13 Published in New York, 1925-1932**

### General Articles about Sonido 13:

- Carrillo, Julián. "The Thirteenth Sound." *The Musical Advance*, May 1923, 1.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Music Without Tones and Semitones." *The Musical Advance*, June 1925, 1.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "History and Mystery of 13<sup>th</sup> Sound," *Musical Advance*, May 1926, 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Is the Epoch of the New World in Sight?" *Musical Advance*, November 1926, 4.
- "Sixteenth Tones Radiate from Whole Tones Through the Prism of Carrillo." *Musical America*, 6 February 1926, 43.
- Spier, William. "Mexican Composer Proposes New Quarter-Tone Notation." *Musical America*, 15 August 1925, 18.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Advanced Musicians in Mexico Use Quarter-Tones and New Notation." *Musical America*, 4 April 1925, 9.

### Articles Previewing League Performance:

- "Eighth-Tone Sonata and New Whithorne Cycle to be Given in League of Composers' Concert." *Musical America*, 6 March 1926, 40.
- "Fractional Tone Music, An Experiment at the League of Composers' Concert." *Musical Courier*, 4 March 1926, 25.
- "New Native and European Compositions to Be Heard." *New York Times*, 7 March 1926, sec. x, p. 6.

### Articles Reviewing League Performance:

- "Composers' League Demonstrates New Conception in Music." *New York Herald Tribune*, 14 March 1926, 22.

Chotzinoff, Samuel. "Music." *New York World*\*

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\* Carrillo preserved clippings of most of the articles listed here in his files, Carrillo Archive, Mexico City. Unfortunately, for a few clippings full citations were not given and were not found elsewhere. Articles not marked have been identified in online and microfilmed copies of the periodical in question.

Downes, Olin. "Music." *New York Times*, 14 March 1926, 29.

Henderson, W.J. "Demonstrate New Musical Scale." *New York Sun*, 15 March 1926, 19.

Samaroff, Olga. "Music." *New York Evening Post*, 15 March 1926, 13.

Sanborn, Pitts. "The 'New' in Music." *New York Telegram*,\*

Thompson, Oscar. "Quarter, Eighth and Sixteenth Tones Heard at Concert of Modern Music." *Musical America*, 20 March 1926, 4.

Articles Published Between Performances:

"Sixteenth Tones in the 'Music of the Future.'" *The Literary Digest*, 27 November 1926.

Fitch, Geraldine. "No Sharps! No Flats! No Notes at All!" *New York American*, 7 Feb. 1927.

"Orchestral Plans of Current Week." *New York Herald Tribune*, 6 March 1927, sec. vi, p. 12.

"With the Orchestras." *New York Times*, 6 March 1927, sec. x, p. 12.

Reviews of Philadelphia Orchestra Performances:

Bejarano, José Miguel. "De Musica: Nueva York escucha el 'Sonido Trece.'" *La Prensa* [n.d].\*

Bauer, Marion and Flora. "Music in New York." *Musical Leader*, 17 March 1927, 6.

"Carrillo Splits Musical Tones into Sixteenths." *New York Review*, 26 March 1927.

Craven, H.T. "Stokowski Presents 'Thirteenth Sound.'" *Musical America*, 12 March 1927, 23.

Downes, Olin. "Music." *New York Times*, 9 March 1927, 28.

Gilman, Lawrence. "Music." *New York Herald Tribune*, 9 March 1927, 17.

Henderson, W.J. "Carrillo's Concertino Presented." *New York Sun*, 9 March 1927, 17.

Henderson, W.J. "Music and Musicians." March 1927\*

Hogan, Agnes Gordon. "Worthwhile Music Talk." *The Philadelphia Record*, 9 March 1927, 7.

Liebling, Leonard. "New Style Music by Mexican Tone." *New York American*, 9 March 1927, 19.

Martin, Linton. "Stokowski Shows Brand New Tones." *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 5 March 1927, 7.

"Philadelphia Symphony." *Musical Courier*, 17 March 1927, 12.

Samaroff, Olga. "Music." *New York Evening Post*, 9 March 1927, 6.

"Success of Carrillo's Works Here Stirs Mexican Pride." *New York Herald Tribune*, [10 March 1927?]\*

After Carrillo Left New York (March 1927-1932):

"Artists Everywhere." *Musical Courier*, 22 February 1930, 40.

Bauer, Marion and Flora. "Music in New York." *Musical Leader*, 13 February 1930, 8.

Benitz, Nena. "Havana Hears '13<sup>th</sup> Sound.'" *Musical America*, 20 October 1928, 13.

Dalton, Sydney. Review of Six Preludes for Piano by Julian Carrillo. 24 March 1928, 29.

"Friends of Music Decade." *New York Times*, 5 April 1931, 110.

"Medal for Stokowski." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8 February 1931, sec. b, p. 18.  
[Photograph]

"Music of the Future." *Disques* 1, no. 3 (May 1930): 105.

"Quarter Tones." *Musical Courier*, 24 August 1929, 24.

"Thirteen Sound Shown." *Musical America*, 10 February 1930, 40.

## Appendix E: Chávez's Friends and Associates

**Copland, Aaron (1900-1990)** – U.S. composer associated with the modernist movement during the 1920s and with musical representations of Americana during the 1930s and 1940s. Within the modernist movement he was an organizational force. At various times he served on the *Modern Music* board, ran the Copland-Sessions concerts, and organized the summer Yaddo Festivals. Copland and Chávez enjoyed a warm, platonic, enduring friendship dating from the late 1920s through Chavez's death in 1978.

**Covarrubias, Miguel “Chamaco” (1904-1957)** – Mexican visual artist primarily remembered for his illustrations. After gaining some notice for caricatures of the Mexican artistic elite, Covarrubias moved to New York City in 1923, while still a teenager. There, with the help of José Juan Tablada and Carl Van Vechten, Covarrubias quickly became part of U.S. cultural life. During the 1920s and 1930s his caricatures of famous personalities were printed in *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue*, and the *New Yorker*. Covarrubias also became a representative of Mexican culture in New York. In a formal capacity he collaborated with “Tata Nacho” to create the famous tableau “Rancho Mexicana” for the *Garrick Gaieties*. In private, Covarrubias was a sociable man who often talked about Mexican life to non-Mexicans in his circle. He was good friends with Chávez; the two men collaborated on several unrealized stage productions, attended parties together, and participated in the ill-fated *Fiesta* production of 1927.

**Cowell, Henry (1897-1965)** – U.S. composer associated with the “ultra-modernists” of the 1920s, especially those participating in the International

Composers Guild. As a young man, Cowell became well known in the U.S. and Europe for his avant-garde experimentations, including performing some of his own compositions by climbing under the piano lid in order and running his hand across the strings, most famously in *The Aeolian Harp* (1923). Many composers admired his ideas about composition set forth in *New Musical Resources* (1930). During the 1920s and early 1930s, Cowell spent most of the year in California, where he ran the *New Music Society* and printed the *New Music Editions*. For several months, he would travel to New York, where he lectured and ran a concert series for the New School of Social Research. In 1928 Cowell helped found the *Pan American Association of Composers*, which he ran, essentially by himself, through the early 1930s.

**Dos Passos, John (1896-1970)** – U.S. novelist, poet, and playwright most famous for his works about American life in the 1920s. Although he would later reject Communism, during early 1920s Dos Passos was a familiar figure in Communist circles. He was an active participant in the New Playwrights Theatre and wrote for *New Masses*. During most of 1926, Dos Passos lived in Mexico City. When he returned to New York in March 1927, he wrote three articles about Mexican culture for *New Masses*, including one describing the political function of Diego Rivera's murals.

**Fernandez Esperón, Ignacio “Tata Nacho” (1894-1968)** - Mexican popular music composer best known for the *canciones*: "*Adiós mi chaparrita*," "*La borrachita*," "*Nunca, nunca, nunca*," "*Así es mi tierra*," "*Otra vez*." and "*Abre tus ojos*." While living in New York to study music in the 1920s, “Tata Nacho”

became closely associated with the “Vogue.” He was part of Tablada’s inner circle, collaborated with Covarrubias on the *Garrick Gaieties* tableau, “Rancho Mexicana,” and worked as music editor for *Mexican Folkways*, where he published a few of his own *canciones*.

**Gold, Michael (1894-1967)** – Author and playwright best known for his novel, *Jews Without Money* (1930) and his numerous columns for left-wing publications. In 1917 Gold moved to Mexico, fleeing the draft for World War I. When he returned in 1920, he became an associate editor of *The Liberator*. A few years later he founded *New Masses* with his friend John Sloan. *New Masses* became a critical part of the leftist wing of the “Vogue” movement, publishing numerous articles about Mexico’s culture and economy. Writers and artists published in *New Masses* during Gold’s tenure included prominent “Vogue” participants Carlton Beal, John Dos Passos, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Xavier Guerrero. Gold was also a founding member of The New Playwright’s Theatre, a leftist theatre cooperative. He wrote two full-length plays for production with The New Playwrights Theatre, *Fiesta* and *Hoboken Blues*, as well as a number of one-act plays for the Provincetown Players. His most famous contributions to the theatre were probably his mass recitations including “The Strange Funeral in Braddock,” “Strike,” and “Vanzetti in the Death House.”

**D’Harnoncourt, Rene (1901-1968)** – Most famous for his tenure as director of the Museum of Modern Art (1944-1968), D’Harnoncourt began his career as a curator and art scholar during the 1920s, after his family had relocated from Austria to Mexico. Among his first important art shows was a collection of folk art which was

first displayed in Mexico City, before traveling to New York in 1930 for exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. While in Mexico, Chávez became acquainted with D'Harnoncourt and his collection, particularly a set of Peruvian folk songs thought to be some of the earliest Native songs available. Chávez programmed these songs numerous times and it appears that they influenced his own Indianist compositions. By 1933, D'Harnoncourt had permanently re-located to the U.S. where he hosted the radio program "Art in America," and taught at Sarah Lawrence College and The New School for Social Research before becoming affiliated with MoMA.

**Lederman, Minna (1896-1995)** – Editor of *Modern Music*, the official magazine of the League of Composers. In this role, Lederman encouraged some of the best composer-authors of her generation and the next, including Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland, Paul Bowles, Marc Blitzstein, and John Cage. During the 1930s and 1940s, a column titled "Inter-American Review" presented news about musical life throughout the Americas, especially in Mexico, where Lederman could rely on information through Chavez's students. Although the readership of the magazine was small, the dialogue initiated in its pages resonated throughout the New York musical press, often initiating further commentary in the *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Musical America*, and *Musical Courier*.

**Milton, Robert (1885-1956)** – Broadway and Hollywood producer, stage director, and occasional writer. Milton began his stage career as an actor but he quickly became a producer, first for Broadway productions and later for Hollywood films. In 1927, The Playwright's Theatre hired him to direct their production of Michael Gold's *Fiesta*. By that point, Milton had worked in Broadway for nearly

twenty years, enjoying success with such plays as, *Oh Lady, Lady* (1918), *The Charm School* (1920), and *Dark Angel* (1925). His Broadway career continued many years after the production of *Fiesta* fell apart; he went on to produce *The Marriage Bed* (1929) and *Here Come the Clowns* (1938).

**Paine, Frances Flynn (-1962)** – Art dealer and Mexicanist closely associated with John D. and Abigail Aldrich Rockefeller. She helped organize an exhibit of Mexican folk art in mid-March of 1928 that was originally planned to coincide with a staging of Chavez's *El Fuego Nuevo* in the Roxy Theatre. While the production plans for *El Fuego Nuevo* were halted, the exhibit was a success and traveled to various cities in the U.S. and Canada. In 1930 she incorporated the Mexican Arts Association for the purpose of promoting Mexican culture in the U.S. It was on a trip organized by the Association that Paine was able to introduce Stokowski and Chavez, thus initiating plans for the *H.P.* premiere in March 1932.

**Pellicer, Carlos (1899-1977)** – Mexican surrealist writer and close childhood friend of Chávez now remembered for his collections of poetry. Together, the then-teenage Pellicer and Chávez worked on the literary journal *Gladios*. Later Pellicer served as a diplomat, professor, and museum director. He provided the lyrics to a handful of Chavez's works including *Seis Exágonos* and "The Reaper."

**Pruneda, Alfonso (1879-1957)** – Mexican medical doctor and academic. As a boy, Pruneda studied piano performance and was poised for a career as a concert artist. However when he found himself orphaned, he turned toward a more lucrative career, becoming a medical doctor. After practicing medicine for a few years, Pruneda became a professor, eventually fulfilling the post of rector at the Universidad

Nacional de México (1924-1928). While rector, Pruneda administered a stipend given to Chávez for his studies in New York. Later, after leaving his position, Pruneda served on the board of the orchestra Chávez directed, the Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana.

**Reis, Claire (1888-1978)** –Although an accomplished pianist in her own right, Reis’s legacy lies in her organizational efforts on behalf of modern music in New York. In 1911 she established the People’s Music League, a charity organization providing free concerts to the New York immigrant community. By the 1920s, she had turned her attention to composers, rather than audiences, becoming Executive Director of the ICG in 1922. When the League of Composers split off from the ICG in 1923, she became Executive Director of the new organization. Never paid for her activities, nonetheless leadership of the League became Reis’s full-time occupation. The first League concert to feature one of Chavez’s compositions was in 1930. After that, Reis advocated on behalf of Chavez, arranging a concert of Latin American music to coincide with the *H.P.* premiere.

**Rivera, Diego (1886-1957)** –The best known of the Mexican muralists working in the years following the Revolution. His murals presented images that celebrated workers and indigenous people for their roles in Mexican history. It is possible that Chávez’s early Aztec ballets were inspired, at least in part, by Rivera’s indianist murals. By the early 1930s, Rivera had developed an impressive network of patrons and clients in the U.S. as well as in Mexico. Such people collected sketches, arranged for shows, and commissioned small, expensive portraits as well as less-

profitable mural projects. *H.P.* was one of the projects from this period; Rivera designed the sets and costumes for the production.

**Rosenfeld, Paul (1890-1946)** – a journalist and critic known for his music commentaries. His articles were published in *The Dial*, *The New Republic*, *Vanity Fair Magazine*, *Modern Music*, *The Nation*, and *Seven Arts*. Although by the end of his life Rosenfeld had become disenchanted with the modernist movement, during the 1920s and early 1930s, he was one of the greatest proponents of modernism. Rosenfeld's mission was to build up an American musical identity that might counter that of Europe. He was particularly entranced with Chávez's music and the promise of Pan-American cooperation it seemed to offer. Rosenfeld promoted Chávez and his music through articles and social events.

**Tablada, José Juan (1871-1945)** – Author, poet, and critic known for introducing the Japanese Haiku form to the Spanish language. As a young man, Tablada established himself as a modernist poet, founding the magazine *La Revista Moderna*. A trip to Japan in 1900 inspired a life-long fascination with Japanese culture. Because he collaborated with Victoriano Huerta during his brief rise to power (February 1913-July 1914), Tablada was forced to leave the country after Huerta was overthrown; like many other Mexicans of his generation, Tablada expatriated to New York. Pardoned by Carranza, he returned to Mexico and briefly served as a diplomat in Columbia and Venezuela. By 1920, he was back in New York where he ran a salon for Mexican expatriates and wrote a column for *El Universal*, "Nueva York de Dia y de Noche." Tablada led a movement to improve the image of Mexicans abroad through the promotion talented young Mexican artists. Chávez, along with visual

artist Miguel Covarrubias and musician “Tata Nacho,” were among those aided by Tablada’s efforts.

**Varése, Edgard (1883-1965)** – Composer closely associated with the musical vanguard of New York. Although there was a growing Modernist movement in New York before Varése’s arrival in December 1915, over the next ten years, he became one of the most visible and vocal personalities involved. In 1921 he and Carlos Salzedo formed the International Composer’s Guild in order to present first performances of contemporary works to New York audiences. That same year, Varése wrote *Offrandes*, which included a setting of French-language poems by Chilean writer Vicente Huidobro and Mexican writer José Juan Tablada. After disbanding the ICG in 1927 and forming the Pan-American Association of Composers early the next year, Varése returned to France, where he lived until 1933. While in France Varése befriended the Cuban writer, poet, and music critic Alejo Carpentier, collaborating with him on a large composition provisionally titled “The One All Alone,” which was never completed. Upon returning to the U.S., Varése renewed his involvement with PAAC and began to work with the Society of the Friends of Mexico. During that same period he composed *Ecuatorial* (for bass voice and chamber ensemble), a setting of a prayer from the *Popul Vuh*, the sacred text of the Maya.

**Walton, Blanche (1871-1963)** – Patron associated with the “ultra-modernists.” Probably the most accomplished pianists among the women patrons of her generation, Walton was not as wealthy as Claire Reis or Alma Wertheim. However, she owned a large home that she used to house composers and run a

musical salon. Enabled by Walton's generosity, composers such as Henry Cowell, Charles Seeger, Carl Ruggles, and Ruth Crawford could afford to travel to the city, enjoy the musical life there, perhaps even work there, and return to their homes elsewhere in the country. Moreover, private concerts held in her home would often launch a young modernist's career, as prominent members of the modernist community were sure to attend.

**Wertheim, Alma (1887-1953)** – Founder of the Cos Cob Press and patron supporting new music organizations, such as the ICG and the League, and individual composers, including Copland and many of his friends. Cos Cob Press proved to be an outlet for contemporary composers who could not convince traditional music-publishing houses to print their work. Composers in their catalogue included Roy Harris, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, Virgil Thomson, and, of course, Copland. Chávez's Piano Sonatina was one of the first works to be published by the press. It was among the most frequently performed of Chávez's works in New York during the late 1920s.

## Appendix F: Articles and Reviews about Carlos Chávez's *Horsepower* in 1932<sup>548</sup>

### Pre-Performance Articles, 1932 Premiere:

"Plan Ballet Premiere," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 January 1932.

"Stokowski will Conduct Ballet's World Premiere," *Philadelphia Morning Public Ledger*, 18 January 1932.

"To Give Mexican Ballet," *New York Times*, 18 January 1932.

"World Premiere of Mex Ballet at Philadelphia," *Excelsior*, 18 January 1932

"Estreno de una Obra Mexicana en Filadelfia," *Excelsior*, 19 January 1932.

"Ha Salido Para Mexico el Maestro Stokowski," *Excelsior*, 19 January 1932.

"Leopoldo Stokowski Salió para Mexico," *El Universal*, 19 January 1932.

"Stokowski to Conduct Mexican Ballet," *El Universal*, 19 January 1932.

"Philadelphia Premiere," *Musical Digest* (January 1932) 34.

"Settings and Costumes for Mexican Ballet 'H.P.' Placed on Exhibition Here," *Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger*, 3 February 1932.

Dorothy Grafly, "Art," *Morning Public Ledger*, 4 February 1932.

"Activities of Musicians Here and Abroad," *NYT*, 7 February 1932.

"El Eminente Músico Leopoldo Stokowski Llegó Ayer a Veracruz," *El Universal*, 8 February 1932.

"Salió para Michoacan el Maestro Stokowski," *Excelsior*, 9 February 1932.

"Stokowski Will Direct New Operas," Trenton, *NJ Times*, 9 February 1932.

"Stokowski in Mexico for Opera Atmosphere," Greenville, Ohio *Advocate*, 10 February 1932. [Similar articles printed in newspapers around the country]

"Stokowski Studies Dance," *Philadelphia Morning Public Ledger*, 13 February 1932

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