

## **ABSTRACT**

The present DMA Document explores the life and work of Costa Rican composer Mario Alfagüell (born 1948) over five chapters. Chapters one to three place the composer in a historical/cultural context and chapters four and five explore the compositional approaches of the composer. Chapter one presents a historical overview of music in Central America; chapter two presents the history of academic music in Costa Rica; chapter three presents the biography of the composer; chapter four describes his compositional techniques; and chapter five presents an analysis of three piano works. This document includes two appendixes. Appendix A presents an interview with the composer and appendix B shows the music scores used for the analyses in chapter five.

**THE MUSICAL STYLE OF MARIO ALFAGÜELL**

**by**

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## THE MUSICAL STYLE OF MARIO ALFAGÜELL

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To God, my wife, Won Yong Lee; and my son, José Daniel Quesada

## VITA

José Pablo Quesada, pianist and pedagogue, is the Director of Operations for PianoTexas International Academy and Festival. He is currently a Doctoral Candidate in Piano Performance with cognate in Music Theory at Texas Christian University (TCU). Mr. Quesada combines his studies with a busy teaching schedule at TCU and National University of Costa Rica.

The unusual beginning of his piano career has been a great surprise for many audiences starting his very first lessons at the age of 16. After earning his BM in Piano Performance and Pedagogy, he moved to Fort Worth to pursue a MM in Piano Performance with full scholarship with Dr. Tamas Ungar at TCU.

Mr. Quesada is also an international active Concert Pianist. His debut with the Millennium Orchestra (Guatemala) performing Mozart's D-minor Concerto, opened the door for many other future engagements with orchestras in Latin-America including: Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra (Venezuela), Venezuela National Philharmonic Orchestra, El Salvador National Symphony Orchestra, Funza Wind Symphony (Colombia), National University Symphony Orchestra (Costa Rica), Cartago Symphony Orchestra (Costa Rica), and Heredia Symphony Orchestra (Costa Rica).

During his short artistic career, Quesada has performed numerous solo recitals and Master Classes in USA, Italy, France, Hungary, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic among others. He has been invited to perform twice at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and also has been an active interpreter of new music, performing and recording the world premiere of several compositions for piano and orchestra, piano solo and chamber music.

Mr. Quesada has been awarded with several international piano competitions and awards such as the American Protégé International Strings and Piano Competition, Bradshaw & Buono International Piano Competition, Piano Texas International Academy and Festival, PKL Honors Audition Competition, Piano Competition for Ibero-American Pianists, *Schlern International Music Festival* (Italy), F. Howard and Mary D. Walsh Graduate Piano Scholarship, and the Judith Solomon Award in Vocal Accompanying.

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## INTRODUCTION

It was an evening on a week-day when I decided to go to a concert at the National Theater in Costa Rica. The occasion was the world premiere of the first concerto for piano and orchestra written by composer Mario Alfagüell. I was a teenager and I was just getting started as a serious piano student at the major school of music in the country. I did not know what to expect; I did not know the composer and I was only familiar with the concertos of Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky. When I entered the hall, I found an unusual setting: the piano was on the left side of the stage and the chairs for the orchestra on the right. The chairs for the orchestra were small in number and in an unusual semi-circle position. When the lights went down the musicians walked to the stage. I saw the pianist, the strings, two clarinetists, a flutist, and when I was expecting to see the rest of the orchestra four guitarists came in. The concert began and the music sounded different from what I had expected. Not knowing what to think, I looked around for reactions. People I did not know were listening with admiration, but my classmate musicians were showing signs of disapproval. At the end of the concert I walked out speechless from the concert hall due to the unusual experience. I met my former piano teacher at the concert, and with excitement he told me, “This is the best work ever written by a Costa Rican composer, but I know it may be difficult for you to digest.” I realized then that I needed further studies to comprehend Alfagüell’s music.

The previous description is a typical reaction of the audience every time Mario Alfagüell presents his compositions. Listeners with more eclectic taste or with fewer expectations for the tonal tradition tend to marvel more on the unusual features of the musical style of the composer. The academic listeners educated on a rigid tonal tradition usually react against Alfagüell’s

compositional approaches due to its many differences, such as the use of non-tertian harmonies, non-metrical rhythms, and non-standard melodic lines.

Even today, with full access to the major pitfalls in the history of music criticism, we still find musicians who judge a composition based on their own parameters. We forget that “revolutionary composers” are an important part of music history and that they did not compose works with the purpose of finding approval; instead, they committed themselves to a conscious effort to move the history of music forward.

Through the history of western music, one can identify several composers who were transcendental or revolutionary; their personalities stood out among thousands of others musicians. One can find two types of composers: those who broke the rules (revolutionary) and those who mastered a specific style. Examples of the first type of composers are Monteverdi, Beethoven, Debussy, and Schoenberg, to name a few. Examples of the second type of composers include Josquin des Prez, Mozart, or Chopin among others. Today, no one ignores the major contributions of revolutionary composers; however, tension and rejection among the most conservative circles surrounded them as they developed their musical aesthetics.

Alfagüell is no different from any of the revolutionary composers mentioned above. As stated by Dr. Carmen Méndez (Director of the School of Music at the National University of Costa Rica) in her dissertation “Gestos de Ruptura en la Música Contemporánea Centroamericana,” Alfagüell is an example of musical innovation in Central America caused by the exposure to external influences as well as a constant research for a personal musical style.<sup>1</sup> Alfagüell’s musical innovations have been a point of criticism among the most conservative

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<sup>1</sup> Carmen María Méndez. “Gestos de ruptura en la música contemporánea centroamericana: Los cascos de Joaquín Orellana en Guatemala, Mario Alfagüell en Costa Rica y Arturo Corrales en El Salvador.” (PhD diss., Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, 2009), v-vii.

musicians in the country. When scholars asked Alfagüell about his music being a complete “innovation,” he confidently answered:

I think YES... my works can be considered as innovative because I have not yet heard any other music that sounds like it... what I am doing has a series of differences, which I needed to build and elaborate. (Unless otherwise stated, all translations are by this author).<sup>2</sup>

Despite the musical controversy that Alfagüell’s works generate, he has gained international acclaim in certain countries. The German newspaper *Badische Zeitung* presented a review on his work “Button,” Op. 48, in 2003:

A shocking composition for an *a capella* vocal ensemble, which from a small material achieves the most elevated expression and leaves creatively abundant rooms for the performer’s improvisation. The piece does not end, it gets lost in a whisper and the silence exhorts to the audience: STOP THE WAR: *non finis*.<sup>3</sup>

The Spanish composer Fernando Palacios describes Alfagüell’s music as follows:

The metamorphosis that Alfagüell prints in his themes ... goes through an interesting symphonic form, free and coherent, searching for a balance between the tonality, modality and atonality; pulsation, aleatority and minimalism; naive and complex; and offers references and games of combinations that are aligned with the international contemporary composition.... It is music with overwhelming logic, written with brio and clear control of time and form.<sup>4</sup>

Similar to other composers, an appreciation of Alfagüell’s music of is achieved by placing him in the appropriate context. While listening or analyzing his musical compositions, one must consider Alfagüell’s philosophical view, which states that composers have the right to create music in any way they want and according to any tradition, aesthetics, or style.

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<sup>2</sup> Méndez, “Gestos de ruptura en la música contemporánea centroamericana: Los cascos de Joaquín Orellana en Guatemala, Mario Alfagüell en Costa Rica y Arturo Corrales en El Salvador,” 94.

<sup>3</sup> Mario Alfagüell, *Estudios, Corales, Intermezzos y Apendices-Op.143* (Heredia: Editorial Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, 2005), 119.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## **DISCOURSE ON THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC**

The “Alfagüell phenomenon” is an important and complex aspect of the academic musical environment in Costa Rica. His musical output suggests that he has probably the largest body of works ever written by a Costa Rican composer. Even further, it suggests that he has the largest number of pieces in the world written for piano left-hand. The most important contribution of Alfagüell to the musical world is the creation of a new system of music composition, which includes new compositional techniques, new genres, and new advancements in music notation. Every argument presented in this document supports the statement that Alfagüell is an important composer from Costa Rica; nevertheless, a significant number of people from his country still believe in ignoring his legacy and consequentially scholars have published little about his life or work.

Reactions in favor or against Alfagüell’s music vary from “this is the best composition ever written by a Costa Rican composer” to “even a kindergarten student can write music better than him.” Through a careful examination of responses from the majority of people that react against his music, one might conclude that they belong to a rigid tonal tradition and that they do not have reasonable musical arguments to explain why they dislike his music. Reactions against Alfagüell’s musical style usually reflect a lack of understanding in the listener rather than a conscious dislike for his compositions.

This author did not write the present document with the intention of convincing readers to like or dislike the music of the composer; instead, I intend to provide as many tools as possible with which one might listen to and appreciate this music within a contextual framework.

## CHAPTER ONE

### MUSIC IN CENTRAL AMERICA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Music in Central America exhibits three primary musical influences: Indigenous, Afro-Caribbean, and European. Mario Alfagüell composes in the European style; therefore, this chapter will concentrate on the development of European music throughout the history of Central America. However, to more broadly frame an understanding of musical context in Central America, this chapter will also cover Indigenous and Afro-Caribbean musical traditions.

#### **Indigenous Music in Central America**

Today, Central America consists of seven countries: Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. Before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the region in 1524, the Mayas, builders of one of the most renowned ancient civilizations, occupied part of Central America.<sup>5</sup> The geographical extent of the ancient Mayan civilization comprised southern Mexico (current states of Chiapas, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo), Belize, Guatemala, the north of El Salvador, and the northwest side of Honduras.<sup>6</sup> Smaller indigenous tribes from different larger civilizations also occupied Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

The Mayan civilization comprised several small kingdoms: Quiche, Cackchiquel, Ixil, Kekchi, Mam, Pokoman and Tzutujil. The writings of the ancient Mayan civilization, such as *The Annals of the Cakchiquels (Los Anales de los Cakchiqueles)* and *The Book of Counsel (Quiche Popol Vuh)* not only show us their history and their myths, but also their artistic

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<sup>5</sup> Linda O'Brien-Rothe, "Guatemala," in *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, ed. Dale A. Olsen, and Daniel E. Sheehy et al. (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 175-187.

<sup>6</sup> Michael D. Coe. *The Maya* (New York: Dante Reed, 1999), 31.

creations. Through these sources we can be certain that for the Mayans music, as was true for other ancient civilizations, had a ritual function. However, the conquistadors destroyed a majority of the sources that contained information about Mayan culture when they (the conquistadors) took possession of the new land. Today, we have some understanding of the general features of Mayan musical practice through archaeological evidence, the written testimony of early Spanish missionaries, and the Amerindians language.

**Some of the common features of indigenous music in the American continent include:**

- The association of specific songs or musical performances with agricultural and hunting cycles.
- The gradual addition of simultaneous performances during long ritual ceremonies. These ceremonies, religious or secular in nature could last for many days or weeks.
- Musical structures that were very melodic with few phrases that repeated many times. These repetitions often coincided with a ritual act or dance pattern. Percussion instruments often organized those phrases with a strong pulse.
- Metrical combinations that was not static.
- Rare use of harmony unless influenced by European tradition.<sup>7</sup>

**Indigenous Musical Instruments:**

The Tzutujil (a Mayan tribe) classify musical instruments in two categories: male and female. Female instruments, which represent the surface of the earth according to the Tzutujil's cosmos, are those that musicians strike or pluck. Male instruments are those that musicians blow. The Tzutujil relate these with the world of spirits under the earth and above the sky. The Tzutujil performed most of their music with wind instruments, percussion and the human voice.

Instruments used include:

- Drums made from the skin of wild animals such as deer or jaguar.
- Shakers made from gourds containing shells or seeds (antecedents of modern maracas).
- Rasps made from serrated gourds or hollow sticks (antecedent of güiro).

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<sup>7</sup> Linda O'Brien-Rothe, "Guatemala," in *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, ed. Dale A. Olsen, and Daniel E. Sheehy et al. (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 175-187.

- Conch shells, clay whistles, and ocarinas.
- Flutes made from different materials such as cane, wood, bone, etc.

The Tzutujil did not use string instruments as part of their musical practice; Europeans later introduced string instruments to Tzutujil civilization.<sup>8</sup>

Contemporary musicians from Mexico and Central America still use several instruments of pre-colonial origin, such as the *huehuetl* single-headed drum, the *teponaztli* (in Mexico),<sup>9</sup> the *tunkul* (in Guatemala), the slit drum, and the African-derived marimba, which remains popular in Guatemala and Costa Rica.<sup>10</sup> African slaves probably introduced Guatemalan marimbas during the early colonial period. Other pre-colonial instruments include the *ocarina* (mostly a zoomorphic instrument made of clay with several holes on the surface); it can produce from two to seven definite pitches, and several indefinite pitches), the *silbato* (like an *ocarina* but with a higher frequency; most *silbatos* can produce only one pitch), the *sonaja* (a homemade rattle made out of different materials), and the *tambor* (a drum made out of clay and different animal skins).<sup>11</sup> All other instruments in use are derived from the European tradition, especially string instruments such as the violin, the *vihuela* and all the guitar family instruments such as *jarana*, *requinto*, and *guitarrón*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel E. Sheehy, "Mexico," in *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, ed. Dale A. Olsen, and Daniel E. Sheehy et al. (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 2000), 148-173.

<sup>10</sup> Linda O'Brien-Rothe, "Guatemala," 175-187.

<sup>11</sup> Jorge Luis Acevedo. *La música en las reservas indígenas de Costa Rica* (San José: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 1986), 31-46.

<sup>12</sup> Linda O'Brien-Rothe, "Guatemala," 175-187.

## Indigenous Music in Costa Rica

Costa Rica is located in the southern part of Central America, between Nicaragua and Panama, at the edge of two pre-Columbian areas: Mesoamerica (from Mexico to northern-east Costa Rica), and Isthmo-Colombia (from the eastern part of Honduras to the northern part of Colombia). Indigenous tribes in Costa Rica do not belong to a single ancient civilization. Some groups, such as the *Chorotegas* (in the current province of Guanacaste), belong to the Mesoamerican area with some roots in the Mayan civilization. Other groups, such as the *Malekus, Bribries, and Cabécares*, have roots in the *Chibchan* tradition of the Isthmo-Colombia area.<sup>13</sup>

Ethnographers consider the *Bribries* population, located in the southeast part of Costa Rica, to be one of the groups with the strongest preservation of the *Chibchan* heritage. Approximately 12,000 *Bribries* live isolated from the rest of the country, which allows them to preserve their language, religion, and cultural traditions.<sup>14</sup> Music from the *Bribri* tribes has been a point of interest for many composers in Costa Rica who seek indigenous elements such as unique and exotic sonorities.

Several composers in Costa Rica have transcribed indigenous music into modern notation. The following analysis focuses on the specific transcription of an indigenous song by Mario Alfaguéll. Musicologists understand that transcription can alter the original tune to better fit a traditional European scheme. Consequently, any analysis must be understood relative to potential changes to the original due to lack of authoritative recording or first-hand experience of

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<sup>13</sup> Jorge Luis Acevedo. *La música en las reservas indígenas de Costa Rica* (San José: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 1986), 15-30.

<sup>14</sup> Lewis, M. Paul (ed.), 2009. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Sixteenth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/16>.

performance. Musical example 1.1 is an original *Bribri* song transcribed by Mario Alfagüell, and used as the primary musical material for many of his compositions.



Musical Example 1.1: Indian Bribri Song Transcribed by Mario Alfagüell<sup>15</sup>

The Spanish title *Canto Indígena Bribri* means “Indigenous Bribri Chant.” The title suggests a possible text omitted in the transcription. Alfagüell’s score does not clearly indicate the purpose or function of this composition; however, some possibilities according to the *Bribri* tradition include the *awá* song (a shamanic song with healing power through a connection to the “spiritual world”); the work song (a song that indigenous people use while working on specific jobs such as cooking, harvest pickup, and laundry among others); the social song (a semi-improvised song sung during social meetings); the lullaby songs (a warm and delicate song for sleepy babies); and the historical song (a narrative song with historical and cultural content). The songs bear no signs of authorship, which makes sense since most *Bribri* people believe gods or

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<sup>15</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Sonatina, Op. 238,” score, 2010, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

spirits living in nature composed them long ago. As is true in most cultures, indigenous people preserve their music through the oral tradition from generation to generation.<sup>16</sup>

The scoring suggests a monophonic vocal timbre, but one can assume a musician improvised an instrumental accompaniment under the melody. The accompaniment used two types of possible instruments: wind or percussion instruments. *Bribries* typically use a *tambor* for the accompaniment. It is also common to have multiple singers in the performance of the song.<sup>17</sup>

Even though this transcription presents a consistent metric signature of triple simple meter (3/4), several moments on the score suggest the possibility of a non-metrical organization: the constant changes of metric signatures from measures one to three (5/4, 4/4, 3/4) and the use of proportional notation after measure 11 (see chapter four for more information about proportional notation in the music of Mario Alfagüell). Since most indigenous songs had a certain purpose (healing, cooking, and sleeping among others), singers repeated songs several times until they achieved the specific purpose.<sup>18</sup> Through improvisation, the composition's metrical emphasis and rhythm become flexible and can change as phrases are repeated.

The way Alfagüell wrote the rhythms and meters of this song is a clear example of how transcriptions alter the original composition to better fit a European standard. One can also find such case in tonality. The accidentals of the melodic line, as well as the initial and ending pitches, suggest F-sharp major with a harmonic progression that alternates the tonic chord (I) with a subdominant chord in mode mixture (iv). Several elements, however, call into question the role F-sharp major as tonic in the traditional, European sense. First, musicians performed *bribri* songs by ear, which calls into question the concepts of equal temperament and definite

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<sup>16</sup> Jorge Luis Acevedo. *La música en las reservas indígenas de Costa Rica*, 47-120.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

itches. *Bribri* singers may have resorted to microtones, indefinite pitches or just intervals which, for a modern ear, will sound as “out of tune.” Second, an alternation between tonic and subdominant chords does not clearly establish a single tonic. The F-sharp major and B minor chords are tonic and subdominant in the key of F-sharp major, and at the same time they are dominant and tonic in the key of B-minor. Third, the song lacks any type of dominant or leading-tone functionality in the key of F-sharp major. Fourth, the song uses only four pitches of the F-sharp major scale and the addition of a D natural, which does not belong to the key.

An alternative to the F-sharp major key for this composition is an F-sharp pitch-centered piece built on a pentatonic scale with the following pattern of intervals: M3-h-w-h-M3. The Costa Rican composer and musicologist Jorge Luis Acevedo provides in his book *La música en las reservas indígenas de Costa Rica* (“Music in the Indian Reservations of Costa Rica”) a catalogue of 88 different pentatonic scales used by different indigenous tribes in the country. Acevedo labeled this particular scale as pentatonic scale No. 92.<sup>19</sup> The most interesting feature of this scale, and probably the reason why Alfagüell felt attracted to it, is the palindromic component of the series of intervals, as shown in example 1.2. The transcription shows no sign that Alfagüell was aware of the palindrome in the original scale. However, he was clearly aware of the palindrome in the complementary scale which he built with the pitches not used in the pentatonic scale No. 92 (See Chapter Four for more information about scales and complementary scales).

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

a) Pentatonic Scale No. 92.

b) Complementary Scale as used by Alfagüell

Musical Example 1.2: Pentatonic Scale No. 92 and its Complementary Scale

In terms of structure, this *Bribri* song displays three short prominent melodic phrases, as shown in the first line of Musical Example 1.3. The first appears in mm. 1-2 and presents an arpeggiation of an F-sharp major chord with a pitch range of C#4 to A#4. The first phrase also presents an ascending and descending motion with a climax on a 2:7 ratio. This author defines climax as a high point suggested by the highest pitch in combination with agogic accent. This melodic analysis uses ratios to identify the exact location of a climax in a specific phrase. Ratios identify the length in beats of phrases (second number) and the beat in where the climax occurs (first number). For example, a 2:7 ratio expresses that a climax occurs on the second beat of a seven-beat phrase. Ratios are significant because they identify repeated patterns for melodic organization. In this composition, ratios identify a climax on the second beat of every phrase. The second phrase appears in mm. 3-4 and presents an arpeggiation of a B minor chord, with a pitch range of F#4 to D5, and with a C# passing note between D5 and B4. The second phrase presents a descending motion with a climax on a 2:5 ratio. The third phrase, which is similar to

the first phrase, appears in mm. 5-6 and presents an arpeggiation of an F-sharp major chord, in ascending and descending motion, and a climax on a 2:6 ratio. The rest of the musical phrases consist on repetitions of and variations on the same initial phrases. For example, phrases four (mm. 7-8) and six (mm. 11-12) are variations of phrase two; and phrases five (mm. 9-10) and seven (m13) are repetitions of phrase three.

**Musical Example 1.3: The Musical Phrases of the *Bribri* song**

One can understand the overall form of this composition in two ways as shown in Chart 1.1. First, as a variation form in which the first phrase, which functions as an introduction, is followed by three repetitions of the theme that combine the second and third phrases in the following way: **Introduction** (mm. 1-2), **A** (mm. 3-6), **A'** (mm. 7-11), and **A''** (mm. 11-13). Second, as a sectional binary form in which the A section goes from mm. 1-6 and the B section goes from mm. 7-12. A variation form for this composition is easy to identify; however, we need further information to justify the binary form. First, a long three-beat rest exists between measures six and seven, which is unusual for a composition that rarely uses rests or that they are relatively short. Second, the two sections of the binary form; both A and B sections are six-

measures long. Finally, both A and B sections end not only with a clear F-sharp pitch but also with the same motivic idea.

a) The *Bribri* song as a variation form

The musical score for 'The Bribri song as a variation form' consists of three staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Intro' and 'A'. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first measure is in 5/4 time, followed by a 4/4 measure, and then a 3/4 measure. The second staff is labeled 'A'' and the third staff is labeled 'A'''. Both the second and third staves continue the melodic line from the first staff, with the third staff ending with a double bar line.

b) The *Bribri* song as a binary form

The musical score for 'The Bribri song as a binary form' consists of three staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'A' and is divided into three sections: 'a', 'b', and 'c'. The second staff is labeled 'B' and is divided into three sections: 'b'' and 'c'. The third staff is divided into two sections: 'b''' and 'c''. The notation is identical to the variation form above, but the sections are labeled to show the binary structure.

Chart 1.1: The Form of the *Bribri* Song

## African Music Influence in Central America

The Afro-Caribbean population arrived in Central America as part of the European colonization in the Americas at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The crew of most European vessels coming to the new continent brought with them a significant number of Afro-Caribbean slaves. Even though Afro-Caribbean population settled mostly in the Caribbean islands, massive migrations to Central America occurred on several occasions throughout history because of working opportunities and the pursuit of a better life.<sup>20</sup>

The Afro-Caribbean population settled along the Atlantic coast of Central America where governmental policies contributed to the isolation of these people. The Costa Rican province of Limón holds the largest number of Afro-Caribbean population. Originally from Jamaica, a large proportion of current Afro-Caribbean residents of Limón moved there to work on the construction of a railroad during the late nineteenth century. After the conclusion of the railroad project, many Jamaican immigrants remained. The government of Costa Rica did not recognize these people as citizens until the mid-twentieth century. Since the government prohibited travel for these people outside the province of Limón, they remained isolated on the coast leading to the strong preservation of cultural traditions in this area.<sup>21</sup>

The current Afro-Caribbean population of Central America comes from different backgrounds and one cannot accurately describe one set of cultural norms. One can, however, observe some common features through their musical style.

**Some of the common features of Afro-Caribbean music in the Western Hemisphere follow:**

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<sup>20</sup>Ben Patersen, Michael Bahnmler, Jared Johnson, and Athena Petersen, *A Story about the Garifuna*, Directed by Ben Patersen (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Communication Department Production, 2012), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXb2p2WgHxI>.

<sup>21</sup> Anonymous, "Raices del Afrocaribeño," on Costa Rica Way's official website, accessed April 12, 2015, <http://www.costaricaway.info/caribbean-way/reportajes/historia/raices-del-afrocariben%CC%83o/>.

- The use of several percussion instruments, specially drums, each of them performing a unique rhythmic pattern.
- The interaction between a soloist and a group of singers through the repetition of short melodic phrases.
- A close connection between music and dance.<sup>22</sup>

### **Afro-Caribbean Musical Instruments**

Afro-Caribbean music uses two major timbres: percussion instruments and human voice. One can divide African percussion instruments in three categories: membranophones, idiophones and corpophones. A membranophone is a percussion instrument that produces sound on the skin of an animal stretched over a rigid support such as the hollow trunk of a tree. The most popular membranophone is a family of drums usually played by hand. Performers usually use drums of different sizes and frequencies in a single composition. An idiophone is a percussion instrument that produces sound by the vibration of the entire body of the instrument. Some examples of idiophones in Afro-Caribbean music are the rattle (made out of the hard shell of a fruit and filled-in with small seeds or stones) or the tortoiseshell performed with a mallet. A corpophone is the use of a part of the human body to produce a percussive sound. The most common examples of a corpophonic instrument are handclapping and foot stomping.<sup>23</sup>

### **Music in the *Garífuna* Culture**

The *Garífunas* are one of the largest and most important Afro-Caribbean populations of Central America. They arrived on the island of Saint Vincent during the early sixteenth century. Due to several social and political conditions, they migrated to different regions. Today

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<sup>22</sup> Linda O'Brien-Rothe, "Guatemala," 187-188.

<sup>23</sup> Linda O'Brien-Rothe, "Guatemala," 177-183.

*Garífunas* reside on the Atlantic coasts of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the United States.<sup>24</sup>

The following musical example of *Garífuna* music comes from the *Lebeha* Drumming Center in Hopkins Village, Belize. No score is available, so, the description that follows is based upon aural analysis of an audio/video recording. In the video, the *Lebeha* drummers, who comprise four musicians, performed the composition “Don’t Cry.” Four tenor voices, one *Garaón primera* (tenor hand drum), one *Garaón segunda* (bass hand drum), two *sísaras* (rattle), and two tortoiseshells create the timbre for this piece. This composition is classified as *Hungu Hungu*; however, this term refers more precisely to a rhythmic pattern instead of a musical genre. For the purpose of this document, the genre is a song with instrumental accompaniment in *Hungu Hungu* style. The composition uses a triple simple meter with an approximate tempo of a quarter-note equaling 190. Pitches in this piece suggest E-major with a possible modulation to D-major at the end of the composition (since the *Lebeha* Drummers performed this piece by ear and since the modulation occurs after a percussion interlude, it was not possible to determine whether the modulation was intentional or accidental). The recording did not provide further information about the name of the composer or its date.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ben Patersen, Michael Bahnmler, Jared Johnson, and Athena Petersen, *A Story about the Garífuna*, directed by Ben Patersen (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Communication Department Production, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> “Lebeha Drummers: Garífuna Music from Belize,” YouTube video, 4:22, posted by “innovadotmu,” April 05, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfCxb9VSnaQ>.

a) Phrase a

Musical notation for Phrase a, measures 1-7. The notation is in bass clef, 3/4 time, and F# major. It begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 190. The melody starts with a skip from E4 to E5, followed by three consecutive descending patterns in stepwise motion: Pattern 1 from E5 to C#5 in mm. 1-2, Pattern 2 from E5 to B4 in m. 3 (a skip from D5 to B4 interrupted the stepwise motion), and Pattern 3 from E5 to G#4 in mm. 4-7.

b) Phrase b

Musical notation for Phrase b, measures 1-7. The notation is in bass clef, 3/4 time, and F# major. It begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 190. The melody starts with a repeated rhythmic pattern on B4 that eventually leads to A4 in m. 2; “Phrase b” continues with an ascending movement from B4 to C#5 followed by a descending movement in stepwise from C#5 to G#4 in mm. 4-5; finally, “Phrase b” ends with a clear

c) Phrase c

Musical notation for Phrase c, measures 1-7. The notation is in bass clef, 3/4 time, and F# major. It begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 190. The melody consists of a series of eighth notes, starting with a skip from E4 to E5, followed by a series of descending eighth notes: E5, D5, C#5, B4, A4, G#4, F#4, E4.

**Musical Example 1.4: The Three Melodic Phrases of “Don’t Cry”**

As shown in musical example 1.4, “Don’t Cry” presents three prominent melodic phrases. “Phrase a” starts with a skip from E4 to E5 followed by three consecutive descending patterns in stepwise motion: Pattern 1 from E5 to C#5 in mm. 1-2, Pattern 2 from E5 to B4 in m. 3 (a skip from D5 to B4 interrupted the stepwise motion), and Pattern 3 from E5 to G#4 in mm. 4-7. “Phrase b” starts with a repeated rhythmic pattern on B4 that eventually leads to A4 in m. 2; “Phrase b” continues with an ascending movement from B4 to C#5 followed by a descending movement in stepwise from C#5 to G#4 in mm. 4-5; finally, “Phrase b” ends with a clear

descending movement from C#5 to G#4 with the following distinctive features: first a repeated rhythmic pattern on C#5 that resembles the beginning of the phrase and then a skip from B4 to G#4 that interrupts the stepwise motion. “Phrase c” is a complex of two sub-phrases organized as antecedent and consequent. Sub phrase c1 starts with an alternation between F#5 and G#5, it continues with a descent from F#5 to E5, and it ends with another descent in stepwise motion from G#5 to E5 (a temporary skip between G#5 and B5 interrupted the final descent). Sub phrase c2 is similar to sub phrase c1 but with a different ending; a descent in stepwise motion from E5 to C#5 followed by an ascent in stepwise motion from C#5 to E5 substituted the final descent from G#5 to E5.

An important aspect of this composition is the responsorial use of texture in which a soloist always starts each phrase and the choir (4 male tenor singers) ends it. The responses also allow for a very limited use of counterpoint in which a second voice joins the melody. The song contains two types of secondary lines: a pedal point holding the tonic pitch (E) and a second line moving in parallel thirds either above or below the melody. When the second voice does not join the melody, the choir sings the tune in unison.

Texture is an important aspect to analyze in this composition. At first, we can perceive homophony as the most prominent texture; however, one cannot ignore the independent character of each percussion instrument. The best way to describe this texture is as heterophony or as polyrhythmic layering in which the simultaneous performance of four rhythmic patterns takes place. Musical Example 1.5 shows the basic *Hungu Hungu* pattern in addition to its modified version performed by the *Garaón segunda* in this composition. Rhythmic durations on the third line of the staff represent open tones performed with the upper part of the palm at the edge of the head of the drum. Rhythmic durations on the first space of the staff represent base

tones performed with an open hand in the middle of the head of the drum. The original *Hungu Hungu* rhythm simply emphasizes the triple meter component of the pattern;<sup>26</sup> however, the modified version switches the accent from the first to the second beat every other measure.<sup>27</sup>

a) Original *Hungu Hungu* Pattern



b) Modified *Hungu Hungu* Pattern



**Musical Example 1.5: The *Hungu Hungu* Pattern**

On top of the basic *Hungu Hungu* pattern, the other three instruments perform other rhythmic patterns, as shown in Musical Example 1.6. At first, the *Garaón primera* performs the *llamado*, which is an introduction that gives the cue to the other three musicians; then the *Garaón primera* performs a pattern that clearly supports the rhythm of the *Garaón segunda*; finally the *Garaón primera* uses his rhythmic pattern to generate a series of improvisations that builds tension against the *Garaón segunda*. One of the techniques that the *Garaón primera* uses to build tension against the *Garaón segunda* is the *hemiola*, which produces polymeter. The other two instruments, the *sísara* and the set of tortoiseshells, follow the same idea of using a

<sup>26</sup> Ronald Raymond McDonald, “How to Play the Hungu Hungu – with Warasa,” YouTube video, 6:49, posted by “Warasa Garifuna Drum School,” April 30, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DC\\_uV9qySpc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DC_uV9qySpc).

<sup>27</sup> Ben Patersen, Michael Bahnmilller, Jared Johnson, and Athena Petersen, *A Story about the Garifuna*, directed by Ben Patersen (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Communication Department Production, 2012).

pattern that supports the *Hungu Hungu* rhythm as the basis for a series of improvisations that generate tension against the *Garaón segunda*<sup>28</sup>.

a) Rhythmic pattern of the *Garaón primera*



a.1) Example of a *hemiola* as used by the *Garaón primera*



b) Rhythmic pattern of the *sísara*



c) Rhythmic pattern of the set of turtle shells

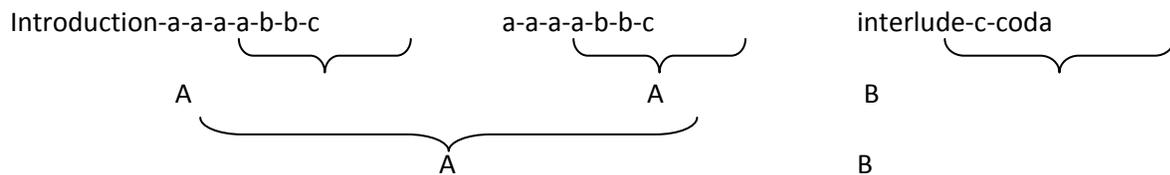


Musical Example 1.6: The Different Rhythmic Patterns of “Don’t Cry”

This piece presents a binary form with an introduction and a coda as shown in Chart 1.2. The A section presents a clear symmetrical organization. This section features four presentations of “Phrase a”, two presentations of “Phrase b”, and one presentation of “Phrase c”. “Phrase c” presents an antecedent/consequent structure and it does not interrupt the symmetrical organization. The B section contrasts the A section with a more flexible structure. It starts with an instrumental interlude featuring percussion improvisation and it concludes with a coda featuring vocal improvisation. Improvisatory sections are important in this composition. They

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

are as equally long as the non-improvisatory sections. One can find improvisations in the introduction, interlude, and coda.



**Chart 1.2: The Form of “Don’t Cry”**

### **European Music Influence in Central America**

The arrival of Christopher Columbus to Central America in 1502 marked the beginning of Spanish colonization, the major turning point in the music history of the region. As previously mentioned, pre-Columbian Central America was home to several indigenous tribes with their distinct musical traditions. Starting in the sixteenth century, Spanish conquistadors forced the indigenous population of Central America to adopt the Spanish culture as their own; since then, the music history of the region followed the major trends of European music history. The following section will present examples of Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth-Century music styles in Central America with a series of stylistic analyses.

#### **The Renaissance Style in Central America**

After the arrival of the conquistadors and until the independence from Spain (1821), Central America belonged to the political unit known as the *Audiencia de Guatemala*, which included the territory extending from Chiapas, Mexico, to Costa Rica. When the early missionaries came to Mexico and Central America, they realized that music was a very important aspect of the lives of native people, so they used music as a tool to evangelize them. The

following quotation of the Bishop of Mexico City demonstrates the importance of music in the conversion of the natives to Christianity:

Experience teaches us how much the Indians are edified by our sacred music for they are great lovers of music, and the clergyman who hear their confessions tells us that they are converted more by music than by preaching, and we see them come from distant regions to hear it, and desire to learn it.<sup>29</sup>

As a result of the important place music held in the evangelization of the indigenous people, musical instruction was instituted and further influenced the diffusion of Western European musical practices all over the new continent. Many of the missionaries themselves became composers and music pedagogues and began the musical training of natives through the singing of Christian songs. The natives soon incorporated many of the European musical traditions and acquired the technical skills to compose their own music and play a variety of instruments. Some of the natives who became accomplished composers are Don Hernando Franco (1532-1585), a Cacique musician at the Mexico City Cathedral; Andrés Martínez, a Zapotec native in Oaxaca (Mexico); and Juan Mathias (1618-1667), the first native musician to become a chapel master (Oaxaca cathedral).

As in Europe, musical activities revolved around the church. Medieval plainchant and Renaissance polyphony were imported from the old world, especially from Spain, where between 1525 and 1600 composers such as Cristóbal de Morales (1500-1553), Francisco Guerrero (1528-1599), and Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611) were masters of the style. Composers Pedro de Gante (1480-1572), Juan Navarro (1550-1610), Hernando Franco, and Juan Xuárez emigrated from Spain to the new world, bringing the new European style with them.

This “new world” polyphony learned from the innovation and development of Venetian multiple choirs (*cori spezzati*) and the spacious design of the colonial cathedrals facilitated the

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<sup>29</sup>Mark Brill. *Music of Latin America and the Caribbean* (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2010), 28-58.

adoption of the style. The most important polychoral composers were Juan de Araújo (1646-1712, Spanish chapel master of Lima Cathedral), Antonio de Salazar (1650-1715, Mexican composer at Mexico City Cathedral) and Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla (1590-1664, Spanish chapel master of Puebla Cathedral).<sup>30</sup>

The most important secular genre during the colonial time was the *villancico*, a vocal song that originated in medieval Spain. These songs were semireligious, nonliturgical, and sung in vernacular languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, or native dialects. A villancico could be in the free folk style or in the solemn strict style of the Renaissance counterpoint. A manuscript at Oaxaca cathedral contains more than 250 villancicos written by Gaspar Fernandes (1566-1629) between 1609 and 1620; many of those villancicos had popular regional and dance elements. Mexican poet Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz (1648/51-1695) wrote the texts for the most famous villancicos in the region. Several Mexican composers, including Antonio Salazar and José de Loaysa y Agurto (1625-1695), set her texts into music.

In Latin American churches, the villancico had an important function, especially during Christmas celebrations; therefore, many church composers, also composed villancicos. Perhaps the most performed are the eight cycles of Christmas villancicos by Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla (1590-1664). By the seventeenth century, the villancico had become a more established form, usually consisting of an initial refrain (*estribillo*) sung by the choir, followed by a stanza (*copla*) sung by a soloist or group of soloists. Today, most people in Latin America consider villancicos as Christmas carols.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

Spanish composer Hernando Franco worked in the cathedrals of Guatemala and Mexico City. His *Magnificat Quinti Toni* (Musical Example 1.7) belongs to *The Franco Codex*, a collection of 16 *Magnificats* using each of the *Magnificat* canticle tones as *cantus firmus*.<sup>32</sup> Franco uses the Renaissance style in several of his compositions; however, the *Magnificat Quinti Toni* has the following unique characteristics of the High Renaissance Style:

- Texture: a careful blend between imitative polyphony and homophony in which points of imitation begin each musical section and composers reserve homophony for special words.
- Melody: based on a paraphrase of Gregorian chant. It uses a middle range series of pitches never going too high or low.
- Timbre: a four-part mixed *a capella* choir.
- Rhythm/Meter: simple meters and fluid rhythms without sharp accents and in a *moderato* tempo.
- Dynamics: no dynamic indications.
- Mode: F Lydian (church modes)

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The Soprano part begins with a whole rest followed by a half note 'A', a quarter note 'ni', a half note 'ma', a quarter note 'me', and a half note 'a'. The Alto part begins with a whole rest followed by a half note 'A', a quarter note 'ni', and a half note 'ma'. The Tenor part begins with a whole rest followed by a half note 'A', a quarter note 'ni', a half note 'ma', a quarter note 'me', and a half note 'a'. The Bass part begins with a whole rest followed by a half note 'A', a quarter note 'ni', a half note 'ma', a quarter note 'me', and a half note 'a'. The lyrics are: A - ni - ma me - a Do - - A - ni - ma A - ni - ma me - a Do - mi - num, [a - ni - ma me -

Musical Example 1.7: *Magnificat Quinti Toni* from *The Franco Codex* by Hernando Franco<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Alice Ray Catalyne, Mark Brill. "Franco, Hernando." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed December 24, 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/10132>.

<sup>33</sup>Hernando Franco, *The Franco Codex of the Cathedral of Mexico*, ed. Steven Barwick (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), 75.

## **The Baroque Style in Central America**

Owing to economic growth in Central America, companies imported new musical instruments and this opened a new door to the development of the instrumental music in the American continent. By 1580, many Central American cathedrals had organs and their orchestras had numerous instruments such as oboes, trumpets, horns, cornets, sackbuts, violins, and flutes. Other instruments that were also popular include orlos (a kind of oboe), fifes, harps, guitars, mandolins, jabelas (Moroccan flutes), dulcians (bassoons), rabeles (rebecs), chirimia (oboe-like) and vihuelas.<sup>34</sup>

Around 1600, Europe was experiencing a dramatic change with the introduction of opera, instrumental chamber music, and the concertato style. However, European musicians introduce these new styles slowly to America, due to the conservatism of the Spanish colonial administration, which felt that any change could endanger control over the colonial life. Thus, Latin American composers continued the Renaissance compositional approach one more century, exploring further possibilities of modality, counterpoint and polyphony. The colonial music that continued to develop combined musical elements of the natives, Mestizo and African styles, with the ongoing use of Renaissance approach.<sup>35</sup>

By the eighteenth century, Italian composers who had immigrated to the American continent introduced the Baroque opera, the *concertato* style, and many of the important

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<sup>34</sup> Mark Brill. *Music of Latin America and the Caribbean* , 28-58.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

compositions of great Italian composers such as Vivaldi, Pergolesi, and Corelli. In Central America, the Italian Ignacio Jerusalem became the chapel-master in Mexico City.<sup>36</sup>

In Spain, the *zarzuela* was the traditional opera genre that developed in the court of King Philip IV in the 1650s. The *zarzuela* often included spoken dialogues and its subject matter ranged from serious drama and tragedy to comedy. Pedro Calderón de la Barca was the most important dramatist of the time and Juan de Hidalgo was the first great *zarzuela* composer. Spanish composers introduced the *zarzuela* during the second half of the eighteenth century in Central America and it often competed with Italian operas.<sup>37</sup>

The first two operas composed in the American continent during this period were: *La Púrpura de la Rosa* (1701) by Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco (1644-1728) and *La Partenope* (1711, premiere) by Manuel Zumaya (chapel master in Mexico City). Torrejón y Velasco was a Spanish composer and organist who moved to Peru in 1667 and became the chapel-master at the Cathedral of Lima. He became famous through his polychoral villancicos. Zumaya (1678-1755), was one of the most important composers during the colonial period. His distinguished works include *Celebren*, *Publiquen* (polychoral) and *Angelicas Milicias* (orchestra and choir).<sup>38</sup>

Zumaya, born in Mexico City in 1678, worked in the Cathedrals of Mexico City and Oaxaca. He composed pieces in the Renaissance style and others in the Baroque styles. Zumaya composed *Si Ya Aquella Nave* in 1716, in Oaxaca Cathedral. The work is subtitled as “*Cantada for Saint Peter*” and it is an example of a villancico.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Russell, Craig H.. "Zumaya, Manuel de." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed December 23, 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/31064>.

*Si Ya Aquella Nave* (Musical Example 1.8) is divided in six movements: I. Prelude, II. Recitative, III. Aria, IV. Recitative, V. Aria, and VI. Recitative. The fact that we have a strict alternation between recitatives and arias is already a clear indication of the late Baroque style but we can also look at the third movement (III. Aria) to identify the following stylistic features:

- Rhythm: highly regular rhythms (sometimes called “motor rhythm”); it consists of very active, consistent and repetitive rhythmic patterns.
- Dynamics: no dynamic indications; dynamic changes are the result of changes in timbre and texture.
- Timbre: consists of a solo singer with an instrumental accompaniment based on bowed strings and continuo.
- Melody: complex and virtuosic melodies with multiple twists and turns.
- Key and mode: F major, reinforced by functional tonality.
- Texture: a combination of imitative and non-imitative polyphony for the instrumental passages, and monody for the vocal passages.
- Form: Da Capo Aria; it also uses the ritornello principle.
- Ornaments: improvised on the “Da Capo” section.
- Expression: a single affect for the entire aria.

III. Aria  
(*Prosegue, prosegue, al mismo correr*) Si ya a aquella nave 5

Andante

65

74

74

74

Pro - si - gue, pro-si - gue, al m e - mo co - rre, pro - si - gue, pro-si - gue, al

**Musical Example 1.8: Aria from the Villancico *Si ya aquella nave* by Manuel de Zumaya<sup>40</sup>**

<sup>40</sup> Manuel de Zumaya, “Si Ya Aquella Nave,” score, 1716, ed. José Hilario Miramontes Petrucci Music Library, [http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/4/47/IMSLP176658-WIMA.9453-Si\\_ya\\_aquella\\_nave.pdf](http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/4/47/IMSLP176658-WIMA.9453-Si_ya_aquella_nave.pdf).

## The Classical Style in Central America

The new philosophical ideas associated with the European Enlightenment and the declining power and wealth of the Spanish Empire gave birth to the independence of the American territories. The Enlightenment ideas of equality and individual freedom inspired many questions regarding slavery and the absolute monarchy of Spain. Consequently, the Criollos started demanding their freedom and between 1810 and 1821 many territories became independent from Spain. In the context of the independence movement, the power of the Catholic Church and the dominance of sacred music started declining. Thus, a new aesthetic evolution began by the end of the eighteenth century. The Classical style of clarity, symmetrical phrases and homophony (melody and accompaniment) exemplified in composers such as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven made its way to the American territory and influenced the works of many American composers, such as Esteban Salas y Castro (1725-1803), José de Orejón y Aparicio (1706-1765), and José Eulalio Samayoa (1780-1866).<sup>41</sup>

Samayoa was a composer, singer, cellist, conductor, and writer from Guatemala. His musical style shows clear influences of the Viennese classical style. In 1834, Samayoa composed *Symphony No. 7 in E-flat major "Jiquilisco"* (Musical Example 1.9) in four movements: I. Allegro, II. Andante, III. Minuetto, and IV. Finale.<sup>42</sup> We can look at the first movement in order to identify typical stylistic elements of the classical period:

- Rhythm: flexible with consistent rhythmic changes throughout the movement.
- Dynamics: the addition of basic dynamic indications as well as the use of broader scope of dynamics.

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<sup>41</sup> Mark Brill. *Music of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 28-58.

<sup>42</sup> Igor de Gandarias, "El Repertorio Nacional de Música: Antología Anotada de Música Guatemalteca de los Siglos XVIII y XIX" (paper, Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, 2001), 21-28, <http://digi.usac.edu.gt/bvirtual/informes/cultura/INF-1999-016.pdf>

- Timbre: a small classical orchestra comprising: violins I, violins II, violas, cellos/basses, oboes, and horns.
- Form: Sonata
- Articulations: very specific and basic articulation markings such as the two-note slur among others.

José Eulalio Samayoa  
Partitura: Dieter Lehnhoff

**I. Allegro** (♩ = 120)

The first system of the score shows the following parts and dynamics:

- Oboes: *f*
- Trompa en Fa: *f*
- Violin I: *f* (with a trill *tr* and *p* marking)
- Violin II: *f* (with a *p* marking)
- Viola: *f* (with a *p* marking)
- Violonchelo: *f* (with a *p* marking)
- Contrabajo: *f* (with a *p* marking)

The second system, starting at measure 5, shows the following parts:

- Ob.: Rest
- Tmpa. Fa: Rest
- Vln. I: *p* (with a trill *tr*)
- Vln. II: *p*
- Vla.: *p*
- Vc.: *p*
- Cb.: *p*

Musical Example 1.9: *Allegro* from *Symphony No. 7 in E-flat major* "Jiquilisco" by Samayoa<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> José Eulalio Samayoa, "Sinfonía No. 7," score, 1834, ed. Dieter Lehnhoff, Dieter Lehnhoff Personal Library.

## The Romantic Era in Central America

After the independence of Central America from Spain in 1821, the new countries of the region found ways to develop their economies with the purpose of seeking inclusion to a modern world. European citizens set the standard for modernism, and upper classes commonly proved their status by imitating the European style of living. The end of the nineteenth century saw the building of concert halls, the importation of musical instruments such as the piano, and the inclusion of Romantic music in the lifestyle of upper-class families. A group of young musicians, trained in foreign institutions, set the goal of developing spaces for the creation and performance of academic music. Some of the most important composers of the time were Alejandro Monestel (1865-1950), José Joaquín Vargas Calvo (1871-1956), and Julio Fonseca (1885-1950).<sup>44</sup>

Alejandro Monestel was one of the most productive composers during the first half of the twentieth century in Costa Rica. His musical style represents the romantic period of Central America. The work *Tendresse* (Musical Example 1.10) is a short character piece for piano that belongs to the collection *Álbum para Piano*. One can identify the romantic style in this composition through the following stylistic elements:

- Rhythm: flexible and with the use of *Rubato*.
- Melody: expressive and with a wide pitch range.
- Harmony: rich and expressive becoming and becoming very chromatic in the middle section.
- Timbre: piano solo
- Form: small ternary form.
- Musical expression: based on extra musical concept which, in this case, portrays the meaning of the word tenderness?
- Thematic unity: both the A and B sections share similar rhythmic motives that unify the whole composition.

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<sup>44</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)* (San José: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 2004), 163-204.

Musical Example 1.10: *Tendresse* from *Álbum para piano* by Alejandro Monestel<sup>45</sup>

The new economic growth that started in the nineteenth century led to the establishment of important academic institutions such as the Conservatorio Nacional de Música, currently known as the Escuela de Artes Musicales in Costa Rica. These institutions provided the opportunity for young musicians to pursue a professional career in music composition and led to an active and dynamic interaction between local composers and major compositional trends in

<sup>45</sup> Alejandro Monestel, “Tendresse” in *Álbum para Piano*, score, ed. Walter Morales, Biblioteca Virtual de Música José Campabadal. <http://laretreta.net/biblioteca/monestel-2.pdf>.

the world.<sup>46</sup> Currently, Central America is experiencing an important growth of music composers representing different styles of the twentieth century such as serialism, primitivism, chance music, and electronic music. Some of the most important composers are Bernal Flores (born 1937), Benjamin Gutierrez (born 1937), Mario Alfagüell (born 1948), Marvin Camacho (born 1966), and Eddie Mora (born 1965).<sup>47</sup>

Mora is one of the most important violinists, composers, and conductors from Costa Rica; his musical output represents different styles of the twentieth century. His work *Perestroika in D* has many minimalist features. The work (Musical Example 1.11) is part of a short suite of character pieces called *Troika para la Mano Izquierda* composed in 2014. One can use this composition to identify the following stylistic features:

- Rhythm: very repetitive rhythmic patterns.
- Harmony: tertian harmonies with added notes. Secundal harmonies are added at the end.
- Melody: when a melodic line appears it is usually very short and repetitive.
- Dynamics: very clear and pronounced dynamic changes. They tend to portray an overall acoustic effect.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Tania Vicente, “Biografías de Compositores Costarricenses Contemporáneos” (paper, Universidad de Costa Rica, 2009), 21-81. Accessed January 1, 2015. <http://bellasartes.ucr.ac.cr/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/biografias-compositores-contemporaneos-de-costa-rica1.pdf>.

*muy feliz y contento*

*ff*

*pp*

*Ped.*

Musical Example 1.11: *Perestroika in D* from *Troika para la mano izquierda* by Eddie Mora<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Eddie Mora, “Perestroika in D,” score, 2014, Eddie Mora Personal Library.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ACADEMIC MUSIC IN COSTA RICA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Musicians from Central America currently consider Costa Rica one of the most active cultural centers of the region. Every year, several arts organizations in the country, funded mostly by the government, coordinate several concert series and diverse independent music productions. The National Theater is the most important concert venue, with three established series that present over three hundred productions per year. The National Symphony Orchestra, the Heredia Symphony Orchestra, and various community bands are the most active ensembles. Their performances are well attended. Different educational institutions, such as the University of Costa Rica, the National University of Costa Rica, and the National Music Center, also contribute to the musical life presenting student and faculty recital series. Costa Rica has one of the most diverse groups of modern music composers in Central America, who take part in national and international events.

All of these activities stem from a chain of events that began in the nineteenth century. The present chapter will explore these events as well as the most important institutions, organizations, and composers in the history of Costa Rican music.

#### **Music during the Early Nineteenth Century**

Academic music in Costa Rica started to flourish by the end of the nineteenth century. Before then, we can only discuss about the music of indigenes and Spanish colonists, which had a more religious and military purpose. During the early nineteenth century, music development depended directly on Spanish colonists who came to the new territories. In Spain, most of the musical activities were centered in the Catholic churches. Therefore, the majority of the musical

activities in Costa Rica accompanied Catholic Church festivities, masses, and funerals. The most common military band activities during this period were parties of important patrons.<sup>49</sup>

Costa Rica did not have symphony orchestras during the nineteenth century. Instead, the military band was the principle large ensemble. These bands performed arrangements of opera themes and dance music such as waltzes. Band music served the musical needs of Costa Rican people. Major cities held band concerts at parks where everybody was welcome to enjoy and socialize. Two important band directors of the time were: Manuel María Gutiérrez (1829-1887) and Rafael Chávez Torres (1839-1907).<sup>50</sup>

Around the mid-nineteenth century, many families started to have at least one instrument in their houses. They started considering music a pleasant hobby, but had no ambitions as to serious art making. This situation was understandable since there were no serious academic institutions that offered musical education. Costa Rica did not have enough time or space for fostering the development of art; it had more serious and urgent problems to face during the nineteenth century. The two most important were the fight in 1856 against William Walker (North American filibuster who wanted to rule over Central America during the mid-nineteenth century) for its freedom and enormous financial debts for railroad and road constructions.<sup>51</sup>

William Walker became a threat for Central America when he arrived to Nicaragua in 1855. His goal was to take over the control of the territory, as part of the United States territorial acquisition, and to put citizens into slavery. The Costa Rican response to this threat was a war

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<sup>49</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)* (San José: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 2004), 25-42.

<sup>50</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 43-66.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

that resulted in several years of political and cultural instability.<sup>52</sup> This instability had a negative impact in the development of solid music institutions since military actions and the economic interest of an elite class ruled over this period of the Costa Rican history. During that time, Costa Ricans considered musician's living standard below the middle class because their low income only allowed them to live very modestly. A musician's life meant that one had to have many different jobs; a musician had to play an instrument in a band, he had to participate in church musical activities, and finally he had to teach in order to make a living.<sup>53</sup>

### **Music during the Late Nineteenth Century**

Around 1840, after Costa Rica won its independence from Spain in 1821 it became part of the international market due to its coffee exportation. The economy started improving and soon created a major turning point for Costa Rican music. Due to economic improvement, Costa Ricans imported new musical instruments and music scores. Many visiting musicians came from Europe and started giving private music instructions. Among the foreign music pedagogues who came to Costa Rica were Spanish pianist Pantaleón Zamacois, German pianist Vicente Lachner (1840-1876), Italian pianist Pedro Visoni (died 1880), Spanish organist Eladio Osama (died 1914), and music director Olinto Metti, who taught composition to such important Costa Rican musicians as Manuel María Gutiérrez and Rafael Chávez. As a result of this private teaching, another group of musicians, mostly from the elite class, started to appear in the society.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Christopher Minster. "The Biography of William Walker." *Latin American History*. Accessed March 23, 2015. <http://latinamericanhistory.about.com/od/historyofcentralamerica/a/wwalker.htm>

<sup>53</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 43-66.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

The arrival of foreign musicians improved the average level of local performers because they became involved in the development of programs for music education. Such was the case of Pantaleón Zamacois, who opened a vocal music school and taught piano privately; Vicente Lachner, who offered voice and piano lessons; Olinto Metti, who proposed a music education project to the Government of Costa Rica; and Eladio Osama, who offered a new method for a music literacy program.<sup>55</sup>

In 1878, the priest Luis Gamero (died 1933) came to the country and developed an intense musical environment in the city of Cartago (the capital of Costa Rica at that time) with José Campabadal (1849-1905), who had arrived two years earlier. Campabadal was disappointed with the levels of many musicians so he established a public music school in order to improve this condition. Campabadal and Gamero also organized several concert series in the city of Cartago, featuring mostly zarzuelas. These efforts were the first organized and effective steps in the development of a musical education that, in turn, gave rise to a new generation of musicians active at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>56</sup>

Some of these musicians active during the nineteenth century were Manuel María Gutiérrez, Pilar Jiménez, and Rafael Chávez Torres.

**Manuel María Gutiérrez** (1829-1887) was one of the most important musicians of the nineteenth century; he composed the Costa Rican national anthem and was the General Director of Bandas de la República (a government department that oversees all the state bands in the

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

country). Gutierrez's other important compositions are *Marcha Santa Rosa* and the waltz *El Palacio*.<sup>57</sup>

**Pilar Jiménez** (1835-1922) was one of the most active musicians of his time. He played cello, violin, double bass, piano, and guitar. He also learned how to sing, compose, copy music, build instruments, and tune pianos. He worked primarily as a choirmaster and vocal instructor in public schools as well as a private teacher. He was also an active performer in the major Costa Rican music ensembles of the late nineteenth century.<sup>58</sup>

**Rafael Chavez Torres** (1839-1907) became famous for his funeral march, *El Duelo de la Patria*. Different ensembles performed this piece at the funeral of three European monarchs: Alfonso XII of Spain (1885), President Carnot of France (1894) and Queen Victoria of England. In Costa Rica *El Duelo de la Patria* now has a more religious meaning. Musicians perform this composition during Good Friday, the Santo Sepulcro processions, as well as during government funerals. Chavez wrote this composition in 1882 inspired by the death of President Tomás Guardia (1831-1882).<sup>59</sup>

Most of the musical creations during the nineteenth century, such as *El Duelo de la Patria* (Musical Example 2.1), share the following features:

- They are small-scale genres such as marches, waltzes, or mazurkas; most are compositions for bands, small orchestras and chamber groups.

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<sup>57</sup> "Manuel María Gutiérrez Flores," on Comunidad Educativa de Centroamérica y República Dominicana's official website, accessed April 13, 2015, [http://www.ceducar.info/ceducar/recursos/biblioteca-virtual/bio-MANUEL\\_MARIA\\_GUTIERREZ\\_FLORES.pdf](http://www.ceducar.info/ceducar/recursos/biblioteca-virtual/bio-MANUEL_MARIA_GUTIERREZ_FLORES.pdf).

<sup>58</sup> "Fundador," on Escuela Pilar Jimenez Solis's official website, accessed January 1, 2015, <http://escuelapilarjimenezsolis.org/fundador.html>.

<sup>59</sup> Ligia María Rosales Chacón, "Rafael Chávez Torres." *Archivo Histórico Musical* (2014). Accessed April 13, 2015. <http://archivomusical.ucr.ac.cr/catalogo/autores/jose-campabadal-calvet>.

- The majority of pieces in the vocal genres were monophonic, except for those written by Alejandro Monestel (1865-1950); sacred genres such as masses and cantatas were prevalent in the late nineteenth century.
- The style is traditionally tonality.



Musical Example 2.1: *El Duelo de la Patria* by Rafael Chávez Torres<sup>60</sup>

Operas became very popular during the nineteenth century. This gave birth to small orchestras and choirs. In the beginning, most of the orchestras consisted of some wind instruments, piano, some strings, and sometimes percussion instruments.<sup>61</sup> The popularity of opera performances also led to the construction of theaters; private organizations built the very

<sup>60</sup> Rafael Chávez Torres, “El Duelo de la Patria”, score, copied by Rafael Barrantes, Biblioteca Virtual de Música <http://archivomusical.ucr.ac.cr/catalogo/autores/rafael-chavez-torres>.

<sup>61</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 163-204.

first theater in 1837, the second in 1846, and many other theaters during the nineteenth century. The Costa Rican government built and inaugurated the National Theater later in 1897.<sup>62</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, Costa Rica continued importing foreign musicians, but also started sending students, including Alejandro Monestel and Julio Fonseca (1885-1950), to other countries, especially to Belgium, for their musical development. These students eventually returned and this naturally gave rise to the creation of the National Music School and curriculum. The National Music School, founded in 1890, concentrated on teaching almost all orchestral instruments and voice. In the music literacy area, it offered only solfeggio and basic theory rudiments. Even with the creation of the National Music School, music education extended up to the middle school level and not beyond. The National Music School, which was a governmental institution, lasted only for a short time. However, this project continued as a private institution called the Santa Cecilia Music School, where many important Costa Rican music pedagogues started teaching, among them Alfredo Morales (1879-1963), José Daniel Zúñiga (1889-1981), and Emilio León (1877-1948).<sup>63</sup>

### **Music during the Early Twentieth Century**

Composers active during the first half of the twentieth century include Alejandro Monestel (1865-1950), Julio Fonseca (1885-1950), José Joaquín Vargas Calvo (1871-1956), Ismael Cardona (1877-1969), José Daniel Zúñiga (1889-1981), José Castro Carazo (1898-1982),

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<sup>62</sup> Fischel Volio, Astrid. *El Teatro Nacional de Costa Rica: Su Historia*, summarized by Yanina Rovinski. San José: Editorial Teatro Nacional, accessed April 13, 2015, [http://tnwebdata.cloudapp.net/repositorio/detail/281875\\_resumen\\_historia\\_teatro\\_nacional\\_costarica.pdf](http://tnwebdata.cloudapp.net/repositorio/detail/281875_resumen_historia_teatro_nacional_costarica.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 163-204.

Julio Mata (1899-1969), Dolores Castegnaro Castelani (1900-1979), Alcides Prado Quesada (1900-1969), Mariano Herrera Solís (1902-1969), and Carlos Enrique Vargas (1919-1998).<sup>64</sup>

The first important Costa Rican composer in academic music was probably **Alejandro Monestel** (1865-1950). He wrote a significant repertoire of sacred music, such as masses, requiems and cantatas, which are part of an important cycle of works about Jesus Christ: *El Nacimiento de Nuestro Señor, La Vida de Nuestro Señor, La Pasión y Muerte de Nuestro Señor*, among other compositions. Important music publishers, such as Carl Fischer Inc., G. Schirmer, and Hamilton S. Gordon, published most of his compositions. Monestel also wrote many short choral works, some chamber music, and pieces for piano and organ. His music belongs to the tonal tradition. He began his studies with Pilar Jiménez, Eladio Osama, and José Campabadal. He continued his studies in the Conservatory of Brussels and returned to Costa Rica in 1885. Later, he became the director of the National Music School and later co-founded the Santa Cecilia Music School.<sup>65</sup>

Another important composer was **Julio Fonseca** (1885-1950), known for his romantic and impressionistic styles. His music output consists of around 205 compositions and the Cultural Ministry of Costa Rica edited and published them. He wrote five masses, two cantatas, and many sacred songs; he was one of the few who wrote for symphony orchestra and he based his famous *Gran Fantasia Sinfónica* on themes from national composers and folklore. His *Suite Tropical* is one of his best examples of Costa Rican orchestral music in the style of impressionism. Compositions written by Fonseca are essentially tonal, with refined traditional

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Zamira Barquero "Alejandro Monestel Zamora." *Archivo Histórico Musical* (1998). Accessed April 13, 2015. <http://archivomusical.ucr.ac.cr/catalogo/autores/alejandro-monestel-zamora>.

harmony. The overall repertoire includes orchestral music, choral music, chamber music, popular music, band music, and significant number of piano music.<sup>66</sup>

One of the most important musicians during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was **José Joaquín Vargas Calvo** (1871-1956). He was a pianist, composer, music teacher, and co-founder of several music schools (National School of Music and Santa Cecilia School of Music). He studied music with his aunt Salvadora Calvo de Blanco, then with Jesús Nuñez, and later with Alejandro Monestel. Finally he continued his studies at the Metropolitan Conservatory of New York. His lifetime philosophy, to encourage a taste for academic music, led him to found several arts organizations and to develop several music education programs. One of his most important achievements was his appointment as General Inspector of Music between 1907 and 1927. His primary job was to supervise all music teachers in the country and to travel to Europe and the United States with the purpose of identifying new pedagogical methods.<sup>67</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century, some Costa Rican composers, such as Monestel, Fonseca and Vargas Calvo, aspired to become serious artists. After studying abroad, most of them returned to Costa Rica in order to develop and improve the level of musical culture in the country. Some musicians, however, did not feel that they had enough support from the government to enrich the musical environment. Many of them eventually left the country; a problem that plagues the music establishment in Costa Rica to this day.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Ekaterina Chatski “Julio Fonseca Gutiérrez.” *Archivo Histórico Musical* (2012). Accessed April 13, 2015. <http://archivomusical.ucr.ac.cr/catalogo/autores/julio-fonseca-gutierrez>.

<sup>67</sup> Ana Isabel Vargas Dengo “José Joaquín Vargas Calvo.” *Archivo Histórico Musical* (2016). Accessed December 30, 2014. <http://archivomusical.ucr.ac.cr/catalogo/autores/jose-joaquin-vargas-calvo>.

<sup>68</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 163-204.

During this challenging period, Costa Rica needed to reinforce its national identity, especially through music. All schools included “singing,” or voice class, as part of their curriculum. Music instructors taught songs that reinforced their moral and civic values. Another important aspect of the national identity was the incorporation and adoption of Guanacaste rhythm (a province in the Northwest of Costa Rica) as the nation’s national rhythm (1920). The majority of music from Guanacaste in 1920 has a combination of simple triple and compound duple meters; however, Costa Rican composers did not create a significant instrumental repertoire using these national musical elements, but instead wrote songs for schools and new band music repertoire. The performances of these new works allowed the music of Guanacaste to become a part of the national folklore.<sup>69</sup>

The predominant style of music presented in the halls and theaters was basically tonal music from the Common-practice period. The audiences and musicians only heard the music of the past. The country had few professionally trained musicians. Except for Monestel, Fonseca and a few others who had studied abroad; most were wandering and working with primitive harmonies and rudimental technical tools. During the first half of the twentieth century, a new type of art organization emerged. These “music associations” were created by professional musicians with the purpose of promoting classical music through professional concert series and educational programs. Among the most important music associations were Sociedad Santa Cecilia, Sociedad Filarmónica Josefina, Asociación Musical de Costa Rica, and Asociación de Cultura Musical. In 1934, the most important musicians of the country founded the Asociación de Cultura Musical. With approximately 150 members, this organization became the most successful and influential music association of the twentieth century. Some of the most important achievements of the Asociación de Cultura Musical were the organization of regular concert

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<sup>69</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 205-248.

series, the building of a music library, the founding of the National Music Conservatory, and the creation of the National Symphony Orchestra.<sup>70</sup>

Asociación de Cultura Musical founded the National Symphony Orchestra in 1940 with the collaboration of the Uruguayan conductor, Hugo Mariani (born 1899) and the violinist Alfredo Serrano (dates not available). They were able to recruit many instrumentalists. String players came mostly from the Santa Cecilia Music School, and Mariani and Serrano selected the wind players from different bands around the country. After several rehearsals, the National Symphony Orchestra made its debut at the National Theater in the same year. The first Costa Rican conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra was Carlos Enrique Vargas Méndez (1919-1998) son of José Joaquín Vargas Calvo.<sup>71</sup>

Vargas was a pianist, organist, composer, conductor, and music teacher. He began to study music with his brother Jorge Vargas Méndez and his father. He then continued studies in Europe majoring in different areas: piano at the Royal Conservatory of Music Santa Cecilia (Rome, Italy), organ and Gregorian chant at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music (Rome, Italy), and orchestral conducting at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik (Munich, Germany). Vargas worked as a concert pianist and as a music teacher in several institutions such as Escuela de Música Santa Cecilia and Colegio de Señoritas in San José. As a composer, he wrote music for different performing forces such as symphony orchestra, chamber music, piano, and voice. Scholars have dubbed him the first Costa Rican composer to ever write a symphony and a piano concerto (Musical Example 2.2).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> María Clara Vargas, *De las fanfarrias a las salas de concierto: Música en Costa Rica (1840-1940)*, 163-204.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Tania Vicente, “Biografías de Compositores Costarricenses Contemporáneos,” 21-81.

Musical Example 2.2: *Concierto para Piano y Orquesta, Op. 13* by Carlos Enrique Vargas<sup>73</sup>

In 1942, Rafael Ángel Calderón Guardia (1900-1970), former President of Costa Rica, provided support to found the National Music Conservatory, a project proposed by the Asociación de Cultura Musical. This institution first tried to adopt the European model of music education but soon abandoned when the Conservatory became a school within the University of Costa Rica.<sup>74</sup> The foundation of the National Music Conservatory and the creation of the composition program marked a major turning point in the development of composers in the second half of the twentieth century. Composers had for the very first time an official music

<sup>73</sup> Manuel Matarrita, “An Analytical Study of Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 13, by Costa Rican Composer Carlos Enrique Vargas” (doctorate’s thesis, LSU, 2004), 62, [http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-06302004-182749/unrestricted/Matarrita\\_thesis.pdf](http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-06302004-182749/unrestricted/Matarrita_thesis.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> “Historia de la Escuela de Artes Musicales,” on Escuela de Artes Musicales’s official website, accessed April 13, 2015, <http://artemusicales.ucr.ac.cr/acerca-de-nosotros/historia-de-la-escuela-de-artes-musicales/>.

institution offering programs in music composition. Two major composers, responsible for the development of the composition program at the National Music Conservatory, are Bernal Flores Zeller (1937) and Benjamín Gutierrez Sáenz. (1937).

**Bernal Flores Zeller** is a composer, musicologist, and music teacher. He began his musical studies with Carlos Enrique Vargas. Later he moved to Rochester, New York, to pursue Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees in music composition at the Eastman School of Music. After his return to Costa Rica, he became the chair of the Composition and Musicology Department at the Escuela de Artes Musicales (University of Costa Rica) and a music teacher at the Conservatorio Castella. He based his musical idiom on Howard Hanson's theory of the dodecaphonic scale. Among his important compositions are: the opera *The Land of Heart's Desire*; the *Pentaphonic Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*; *Symphony No. 1*; and the *Concerto for Piano, Percussion and Orchestra*.<sup>75</sup>

**Benjamín Gutierrez Sáenz** is a composer, pianist, and music teacher. He comes from a musical family that includes his great grandfather Pilar Jiménez. Gutiérrez studied piano at the National Conservatory of Music in Costa Rica and composition at the National Conservatory of Music in Guatemala, the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and the Instituto Latinoamericano de Estudios Musicales Torcuato Di Tella in Argentina with Alberto Ginastera. After his return to Costa Rica, Gutiérrez became a professor of composition at the Escuela de Artes Musicales (University of Costa Rica) and a music teacher at the Conservatorio Castella. His most important compositions include the opera *Marianela* (1957); *Concerto for Clarinet and*

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<sup>75</sup> Tania Vicente, "Biografías de Compositores Costarricenses Contemporáneos," 21-81.

*Orchestra* (1958); *Preludio Sinfónico* (1961); *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (1963); and *Variaciones Concertantes for Piano and Orchestra* (1969).<sup>76</sup>

Flores and Gutiérrez, changed the path of music composition in Costa Rica. On one hand, they broke the romantic tradition of the early twentieth century by introducing a more contemporary musical idiom. On the other hand, they taught and trained almost all the major composers who are currently active in Costa Rica. Musical Example 2.3 shows the new musical idiom brought by Gutiérrez. In *Danza de la Pena Negra* it is possible to identify certain elements that do not belong to the romantic tradition such as quartal harmonies, ostinato patterns, and a more percussive use of the piano.

The image shows a musical score for 'Danza de la Pena Negra' by Benjamín Gutiérrez. The score is in 3/4 time and marked 'Allegro energico'. It features a piano accompaniment with a prominent ostinato pattern in the right hand and a more melodic line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'mf stacc.', 'mp sempre stacc.', and 'f'. There are also fingering numbers (1-5) and accents throughout the piece.

Musical Example 2.3: *Danza de la Pena Negra* by Benjamín Gutiérrez<sup>77</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Juan Pablo Andrade, "Costa Rica Composer Benjamín Gutiérrez and his Piano Works." (doctorate's dissertation, UNCG, 2008), 157, <http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/umi-uncg-1669.pdf>

## Music during the Late Twentieth Century

Between 1940 and 1949, a series of events changed the political system in Costa Rica. The motivation behind those changes was to establish a government body that would support the average citizen instead of the elite class. Changes started with the Social Guarantees created by Rafael Angel Calderón Guardia in 1940, and culminated with the foundation of the Second Republic guided by José Figueres Ferrer in 1948. These political events lead to more government involvement in the development of music with positive results in the future.

The Conservatorio Castella was founded in 1953. The National Music Conservatory had solved the need to provide professional music education for college musicians; however, no institutions were providing a solid foundation for precollege students. Conservatorio Castella, despite its name, is a government-built elementary, middle, and high school for all the arts. Since the opening of the Conservatorio Castella, an interesting connection has existed between that institution and the National Music Conservatory. Music students would normally start their music education at Conservatorio Castella, then pursue a bachelor's degree at the National Music Conservatory, and later continue their music education at a foreign institution. Several faculty members, such as Bernal Flores and Benjamín Gutiérrez, established this connection by teaching in both institutions. Among the composers who followed this path are: Marvin Camacho Villegas (born 1966), Carlos José Castro Mora (born 1963), Luis Diego Herra (born 1952), Eddie Mora (born 1965), William Porras (born 1956) and Allen Torres Castillo (born 1955). Other important composers who partially followed this path by studying in only one institution are Mario Alfagüell (born 1948), Otto Castro Solano (born 1972), and Carlos Escalante Macaya

(born 1968). A unique case of an important Costa Rican composer who did not study in either of these institutions is Alejandro Cardona Ducas (born 1959).<sup>78</sup>

In 1962, the Asociación Sinfónica de Heredia founded one of the most important music ensembles of Costa Rica, the Orquesta Sinfónica Municipal de Heredia, which was created as a traditional chamber orchestra. German Alvarado conducted the orchestra for forty years. The ensemble adopted a new vision in 2003 with its new conductor Eddie Mora. Today, Orquesta Sinfónica Municipal de Heredia is an ensemble of young performers committed to the performance of contemporary Latin American music. The orchestra presents six concerts annually featuring many world premieres. The orchestra also produces an annual CD with a selection of the best compositions of that season.

The 1970s were a period of important changes in the music history of the country. In 1970, the Costa Rican government created the Ministerio de Cultura, Juventud, y Deportes, and for the first time an official government entity worked for the development of music and the arts. In 1972 the National Symphony Orchestra, now under the administration of the Ministerio, opened the Instituto Nacional de Musica. In 1974, the National University of Costa Rica, founded in 1973, created its new School of Music. Finally, in 1975, the National Music Conservatory established a pre-college program called Etapa Basica and also defined a new program for the university level in order to offer a Bachelor and *Licenciatura* (before Master's) degrees. With this transformation, the conservatory changed its name to Escuela de Artes Musicales of the Universidad de Costa Rica, today the most important university in the country.

By 1991, Jordy Anitch (faculty member of the National University of Costa Rica) founded the first Festival de Música Credomatic with its annual presentation of major international artists throughout the country. In 1994, a group of Russian teachers founded the

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<sup>78</sup> Tania Vicente, "Biografías de Compositores Costarricenses Contemporáneos," 21-81.

Instituto Superior de Artes to provide a high quality piano performance training for the School of Music of the National University of Costa Rica. Both institutions are perhaps the first examples of successful private involvement in the development of music in Costa Rica.

### **Music during the Twenty First Century**

Without doubt, the musical life of Costa Rica is constantly evolving. The private sector is more involved in the development of music through the opening of small music schools throughout the country. Organizations created during the nineteenth century are developing new programs in order to engage a broader audience. The efforts of music lovers as well as teachers, performers, and composers, have led to a significant number of new performing venues and music productions. The Sistema Nacional de Educación Musical (2002), modeling El Sistema from Venezuela, and the Orquesta Sinfónica Municipal de Cartago (2008) are the most recent additions to the Music scene.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MARIO ALFAGÜELL: BIOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW<sup>79</sup>

Mario Alfaro Güell (Mario Alfagüell) is a Costa Rican composer, pianist, and pedagogue. Alfagüell is currently a professor in the musicology department at the National University of Costa Rica in Heredia, Costa Rica. The catalog of his compositions, from 1969 onward, consists of more than three hundred opus numbers. This catalog includes music from a variety of genres including music written for the theater. Mario Alfagüell has become one of the most productive and active composers in the music history of Costa Rica. The present chapter summarizes the most important events in the musical journey of the composer.

#### Early Life

Mario Alfagüell was born on April 27, 1948, in San José, Costa Rica, into a family with a very religious orientation. His great uncle, Monseñor Rubén Odio Herrera, was the archbishop of San José. His uncle, Carlos Joaquín Alfaro Odio, was a well-respected theology professor at the Costa Rica Central Seminary. Alfagüell's first contact with music occurred when he served as an altar boy in Catholic masses for the archbishop. He had the opportunity to experience the central role of the church in sponsoring and promoting the arts. As an altar boy, Alfagüell had the opportunity to listen to Gregorian chant as well as music for choir, and organ.

When Alfagüell reached the appropriate age, his parents enrolled him in the La Salle School, which is an institution that offers high-quality general education for elementary, middle, and high school students. Under the administration of the Lasallian Brothers, La Salle School became well-known for its educational programs based on strong Catholic principles. During his

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<sup>79</sup> Mario Alfagüell, interview by José Pablo Quesada, August 14 and 20, 2014.

childhood years, Alfagüell joined the choir of the school. The director of the choir, Alcides Prado Quesada, quickly recognized his musical talent and selected him as the soloist for the vocal ensemble. As part of the choir, he had the opportunity to sing such pieces as *O bone Jesus* by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594), *The Brindisi* from *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901), and *Mattinata* by Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857-1919). La Salle School also gave him the opportunity to continue experiencing Gregorian chants, which the Lasallian Brothers sang during the Catholic masses held at the school. On a regular basis, Alfagüell went to the chapel of the school to play Gregorian chants by ear on the harmonium. One day a Lasallian Brother showed him the musical score of a chant so that he could learn how composers wrote them. Around the same time, Alfagüell developed an interest in architecture. Following his dream of becoming a professional architect, he started to draw sketches as well as analyzing the design of every house and building around his neighborhood. Unfortunately, Alfagüell's dream was thwarted when he discovered that there was no architecture school in Costa Rica.

Luis Carlos Trejos Escalante, the father of Costa Rican singer Aurelia Trejos, encouraged Alfagüell's love for academic music. Trejos was knowledgeable in music, literature, and art. Almost every day Alfagüell went to his house to talk about culture, read poetry, and listen to the music of Beethoven, Stravinsky, and Debussy. He also learned how to play the piano at a basic level and soon began to analyze the music of Debussy as well as some selected pieces by Beethoven.

### **Studies at the University of Costa Rica**

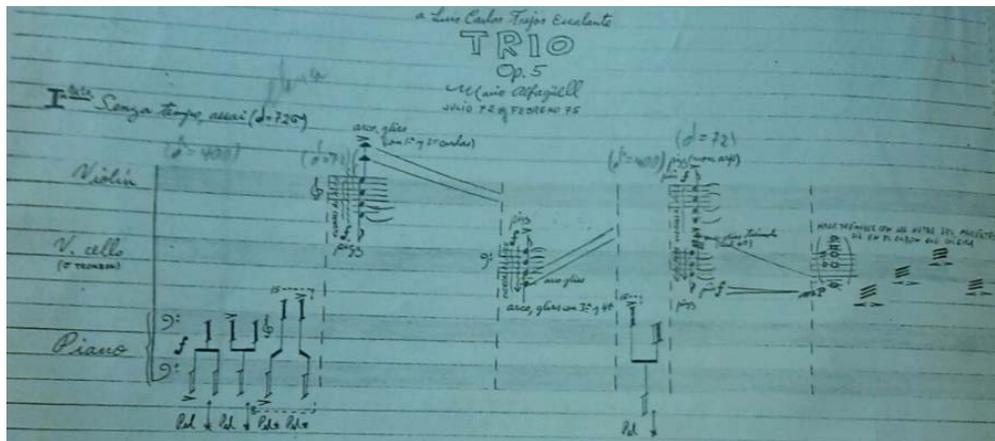
In 1966, after studying general studies and theater for a year at the University of Costa Rica (UCR), Alfagüell entered the National Conservatory of Music to study piano and composition

with such important pedagogues as María Clara Cullell (1931-1933) and Benjamín Gutiérrez. While still a theater student, Alfagüell had the opportunity to study music appreciation with Carlos Enrique Vargas (1919-1998). Then, as music major, he studied acoustics with Bernal Flores. Without any prior formal education in composition, Alfagüell started to write music almost immediately after hearing his former teacher, Gutiérrez, talk about aleatoric music. Alfagüell studied for ten years at the National Conservatory of Music. He also participated in several composition seminars, among them, the Carlos Chaves composition workshop in Mexico, where he worked with Héctor Quintanar in 1972.

During his college years, Alfagüell became close to Vargas who was then the principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra. He became an unofficial assistant to Vargas by regularly attending orchestra rehearsals. Alfagüell was in charge of getting the orchestra parts on the music stands as well as putting them back into the library. After orchestra rehearsals, Alfagüell normally went to Vargas's house to talk about music-related topics, to listen to music, and on some occasions to play some of his newly written compositions. Alfagüell described Carlos Enrique as a very strict formal educator who always encouraged him to follow the traditional music training provided by music conservatories. In appreciation for his work with the orchestra, Vargas gave Alfagüell several music scores and recordings.

Alfagüell considers the time he spent at the University of Costa Rica as the first period of his musical creativity. An autodidactic and experimental approach to musical writing characterized this period. The most important pieces from this period include *Coral Figurado*, Op. 1 for two male singers, trumpet, violin, and electric bass (1969); *Preludio, Fuga y Postludio*, Op. 3 for four instruments (1971); *Homenaje a Beethoven*, Op. 4 for piano (1970); *Piano Trio*, Op. 5 (1972-75,

Musical Example 3.1); *Cantata Navideña Latinoamericana*, Op. 6 for choir (1976); and *Preludio, Villancico y Coral*, Op. 7 for choir (1976).<sup>80</sup>



Musical Example 3.1: *Piano Trio*, Op. 5<sup>81</sup>

### Studies at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik (Freiburg, Germany)

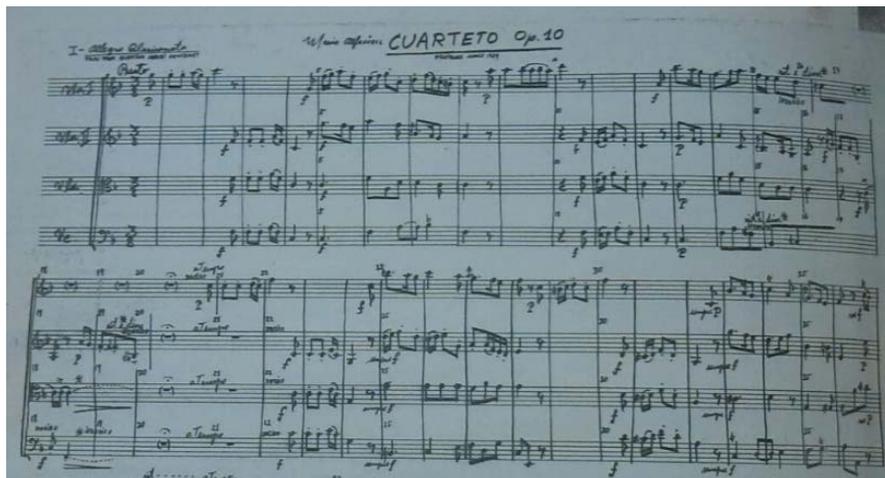
From 1976 through 1980, Alfagüell studied composition in Europe. During this period, he took summer courses in Santiago de Compostela (Spain) with Rodolfo Halffter (1900-1987) and in Granada with Carmelo Bernaola (1929-2002). He also entered the master's program in composition at the *Staatliche Hochschule für Musik* in Freiburg, Germany, with the Swiss composer Klaus Huber (born 1924), the British composer Brian Ferneyhough (born 1943), and their assistant Arturo Tamayo (born 1946). During his time in Europe, Alfagüell met many important avant-garde personalities such as Luigi Nono (1924-1990), Vinko Globokar (born 1934), Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007), Hans Werner Henze (1926-2012), and Heinz Holliger (born 1939). He also studied Gregorian chant and music of antiquity with Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta (born 1939) and Eugene Cardine (1905-1988) and married Carmen

<sup>80</sup> Méndez, "Gestos de ruptura en la música contemporánea centroamericana: Los cascos de Joaquín Orellana en Guatemala, Mario Alfagüell en Costa Rica y Arturo Corrales en El Salvador," 321–333.

<sup>81</sup> Mario Alfagüell, "Piano Trio, Op. 5," score, 1972-75, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

Méndez, who is currently the director of the School of Music at the National University of Costa Rica and a major authority in the field of music education.

Ironically, in light of personal and artistic growth, Alfagüell’s compositional production was quite limited during his years in Europe. Culture shock contributed to this lack of productivity, as Alfagüell found himself reevaluating of European and Latin American cultures. Under the guidance of Huber, his compositional approaches changed to a more formal and methodical approach. Alfagüell’s use of both intuitive and the methodical approaches generated some confusion reflected in his musical output. The most important pieces he wrote during this time, which Alfagüell considers his second period of music composition, are *Ofertorio*, Op. 8a for three singers (1978); *Ocho Montepulcianones*, Op. 9 for choir (1978); and *Cuartetos de Arcos*, Op. 10 (1979, Musical Example 3.2).<sup>82</sup>



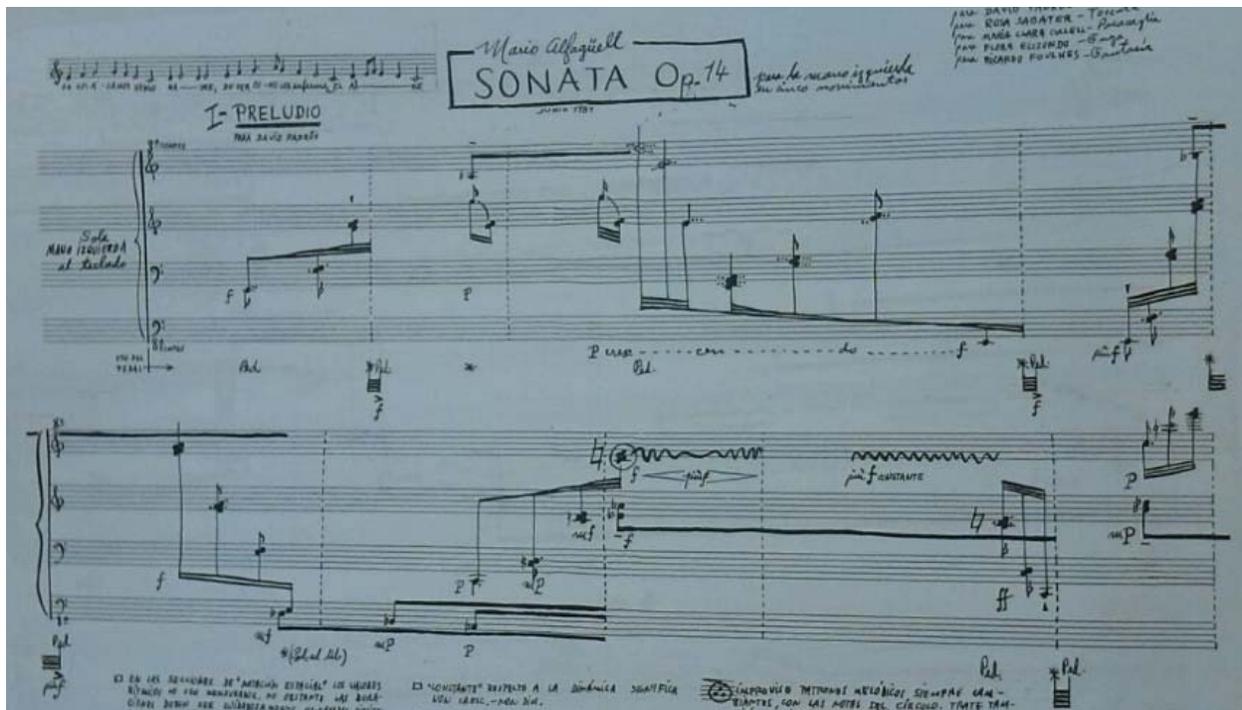
**Musical Example 3.2: *Cuarteto de Arcos*, Op. 10<sup>83</sup>**

<sup>82</sup> Méndez, “Gestos de ruptura en la música contemporánea centroamericana: Los cascos de Joaquín Orellana en Guatemala, Mario Alfagüell en Costa Rica y Arturo Corrales en El Salvador,” 321–333.

<sup>83</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Cuarteto de Arcos, Op. 10,” score, 1979, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

## The Return to Costa Rica

In 1980, Alfagüell returned to Costa Rica and began teaching composition and music history at the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and the National University of Costa Rica (UNA). He also received invitations from international universities and conservatories in Germany, Switzerland, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Nicaragua, Perú and the United States to serve as guest composer and pedagogue. The knowledge he acquired in Europe finally produced a significant amount of works during the 1980s. For example, in 1982, he wrote ten compositions, many as he had written between 1969 and 1979. Alfagüell considers his return to Costa Rica as his third period of music composition. One of the major innovations in Alfagüell 's compositional approach was the development of the System of Numerical Series, which allowed him to compose music based on the series of intervals of several folk tunes (see Chapter four). Some compositions from this period include: *Sonata para la Mano Izquierda*, Op. 14 for piano (1982, Musical Example 3.3); *Episodios Sinfónicos*, Op. 19 for orchestra (1982); *Cuarteto para Arcos*, Op. 20 for string quartet (1982); *Cocorí*, Op. 30, a ballet in two acts (1987); and *Misa I, "Poliecuménica,"* Op. 31 (1988). Alfagüell's music did not receive a warm welcome from audiences there. Several music personalities considered Alfagüell's music compositions "too avant-garde" and this criticism resulted in the exclusion of his work from the most important performing venues of the country. Despite this, his compositions won the most prestigious awards, including Premio *Áncora* (1975), *Premio Nacional de Composición Musical J. Aquileo Echeverría* (in two occasions, in 1982 and 2001), and *Premio Jorge Volio en Artes* (First Prize on two occasions, in 1984 and 2002). *Diálogo Guerrero Místico*, Op. 15 received an award from TRIMALCA (Latin American and Caribbean Music Rostrum) in Rio de Janeiro (1985).



Musical Example 3.3: *Sonata para la Mano Izquierda, Op. 14*<sup>84</sup>

### The Fourth Period of Music Composition

Alfagüell defines his third period of music composition as overly formal and complex. Through the use of basic mathematic calculations, he took his System of Numerical Series to an extreme. As a result, Alfagüell looked for a simpler approach, which would allow for a more flexible and intuitive use of the system. Alfagüell cannot recall exactly when he changed his approach. However, one can identify a change in Alfagüell’s compositional style during the late twentieth century using the following pieces of evidence: a statement by the composer expressing that the third period of music compositions lasted for about ten to fifteen years, an increase in the quantity of compositions per year, an obsession for composing single genres in a short period of time, and an increase in the variety of unconventional genres.

<sup>84</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Sonata Para la Mano Izquierda, Op. 14,” score, 1982, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

Chart 3.1 represents the number of compositions Alfagüell wrote per year from 1969 to 2009. From the chart, we can see the quantity of pieces significantly increase in 1982 as the result of his studies in Europe (1976-1980). We can also see an explosion of Alfagüell’s music production during the first decade of the twenty-first century. There is also an increase in musical output during the late eighties and the early nineties. Years with an asterisk represent examples of the obsessive writing of a single genre, such as music for choir (1991), symphonies (2003), and concertos (2006). Years with a double asterisk represent the composition of participatory works, which are examples of unconventional genres.

1969:1	1970:1	1971:1	1972:0	1973:0	1974:0	1975:1	1976:2	1977:0	1978:2
1979:3	1980:1	1981:2	1982:10	1983:1	1984:2	1985:2	1986:1	1987:3	1988:2
1989:4**	1990:3	1991:7*	1992:5	1993:2	1994:2	1995:3	1996:1	1997:1	1998:2
1999:1	2000:5	2001:7*	2002:3	2003:9*	2004:9	2005:15	2006:12*	2007:9	2008:12**
2009:9*									

**Chart 3.1: Number of compositions per year by Mario Alfagüell<sup>85</sup>**

Based on this chart, one can assume that the timeframe from 1989 to 1992 is the period when Alfagüell first used the new style due to an increase in the number of pieces, the composition of the first participatory work in 1989 (*Sinfonía Vocal y Participativa*, Op. 40), and the emphasis on the composition of vocal genres in 1991. However, the decrease in the number of compositions from 1993 to 1999 suggests that the new style did not flourish, perhaps due in part to the simultaneous use of the old style. Some of the most important works of the fourth period of music composition are *Concierto para Piano y Orquesta*, Op. 131a for piano and chamber orchestra, *Estudios, Corales, Intermezos, y Apéndices*, Op. 143 for piano (Musical Example 3.4); *31 Piezas*, Op. 154 for piano (2004); and *Fábula del Bosque*, Op. 173 (2006).

<sup>85</sup> Méndez, “Gestos de ruptura en la música contemporánea centroamericana: Los cascos de Joaquín Orellana en Guatemala, Mario Alfagüell en Costa Rica y Arturo Corrales en El Salvador,” 321–333.



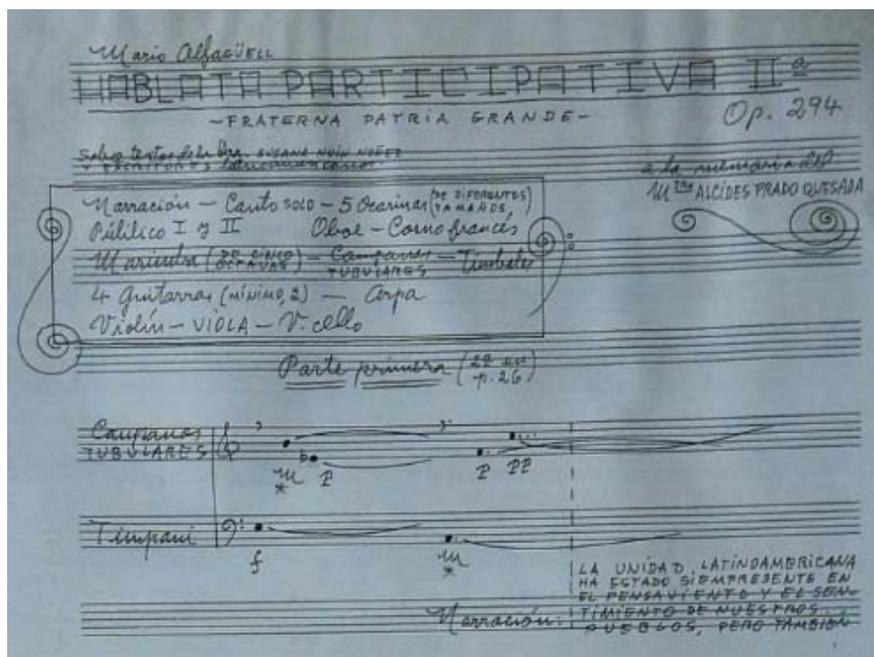
Musical Example 3.4: *Estudio No. 17, from Estudios, Corales, Intermezzos, y Apéndices, Op. 143*<sup>86</sup>

### The Fifth Period of Music Composition

A controversial topic of discussion emerged in 2014 between Alfagüell and his wife Dr. Carmen Méndez about whether the composer is currently in a fifth period of music composition. He argues that he is not in a different period because of his current desire to change his compositional style. According to the composer, since he has not found that change yet, he cannot be in a new period of music composition. However, Méndez, in her article “La unidad latinoamericana en el imaginario musical de Mario Alfagüell: *Hablata Participativa Ila, Opus 294. Fraterna Patria Grande*” (“The Latin American unit in the musical imagination of Mario Alfagüell: *Hablata Participativa Ila, Op. 294. Fraterna Patria Grande*”), argues that Alfagüell is already in his next compositional period. Méndez bases her arguments on the book *Sobre el Estilo Tardío: Música y Literatura a Contracorriente* by Edward W. Said, which makes reference to general descriptions of the late compositional period of several composers.

<sup>86</sup> Alfagüell, *Estudios, Corales, Intermezzos y Apéndices-Op.143*, 45.

According to Méndez, Alfagüell’s latest compositional period features the culmination of his compositional freedom, in which the need for a specific musical product goes beyond current trends including standard compositional methods, the use of technology, and a pursuit of self-promotion.



Musical Example 3.5: *Hablata Participativa IIa*, Op. 294<sup>87</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Habla Participativa IIa, Op. 294,” score, 2014, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE COMPOSITIONAL APPROACHES OF MARIO ALFAGÜELL

When Mario Alfagüell moved away from tonality during the 1970s, he accomplished a series of innovations that differentiated him from his colleagues. His musical explorations went beyond simple stylistic changes as he: developed an original compositional system using folk songs in nontraditional ways; used basic numerical series to achieve unexpected sonorities; developed a system of musical notation with new symbols based on graphics as well as rhythmic tables with unconventional symbols; invented new genres, such as the *Hablata Participativa*, and experimented with unique timbre combinations. Alfagüell used humor, traditional elements, lyricism, drama, and chance. All this resulted in an usual and surprising catalogue of compositions. The following chapter will discuss some of Alfagüell's aforementioned compositional approaches in detail.

#### **Genres and Instrumentation**

Alfagüell's musical output consists of more than three hundred opus numbers, combining traditional with nontraditional genres. The catalog of Alfagüell's works, compiled by his wife, divides his musical output into seven categories: dramatic music, orchestra music, chamber music, choral music, vocal music, piano music, and organ music. Chart 4.1 provides examples of traditional and non-traditional genres in Alfagüell's catalog of works.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Méndez, "Gestos de ruptura en la música contemporánea centroamericana: Los cascos de Joaquín Orellana en Guatemala, Mario Alfagüell en Costa Rica y Arturo Corrales en El Salvador," 321–333.

Categories	Traditional Genres	Nontraditional Genres
Dramatic music	Ballet ( <i>Cocorí</i> , Op. 30), Zarzuela ( <i>Operativo TN...T</i> , Op. 88), and Opera ( <i>Fábula del bosque</i> , Op. 173)	N/A
Orchestral music	Symphony ( <i>Sinfonía</i> , Op. 160), Solo Concerto ( <i>Concierto para la Mano Izquierda y Orquesta</i> , Op. 154), and Concerto Grosso ( <i>Concierto Grosso</i> , Op. 181)	Vocal Symphony ( <i>Sinfonía Coral Morazán</i> , Op. 57) Participatory Symphony ( <i>Sinfonía Participativa sobre Textos de Omar Dengo</i> , Op. 202.), and Symphonic Tale ( <i>Mo</i> , Op. 120).
Choral Music	Oratorio ( <i>Oratorio</i> , Opus 164), Cantata ( <i>Cantata Navideña Latinoamericana</i> , Op. 6), Motet ( <i>Motete</i> , Op. 58), Mass ( <i>Misa I, "Poliecuménica"</i> , Op. 31), and Canon ( <i>Once Cánones</i> , Op. 32).	Choral Suites ( <i>Suite Cocoralí</i> , Op. 29), Intervalic Etudes ( <i>Siete Estudios Interválicos para Irene</i> , Op. 53), Prayers ( <i>Once Oraciones</i> , Op. 62), and Hablata ( <i>Hablata Participativa Ila</i> , Opus 294).
Chamber Music	String Quartet ( <i>Cuarteto para arcos</i> , Op. 10) and Piano Trio ( <i>Trío</i> , Op. 5).	Dialogue ( <i>Diálogo Guerrero Místico</i> , Op. 15), Structures ( <i>Cinco Estructuras de Temporal</i> , Op. 58), Portraits ( <i>Dos Retratos de José Martí</i> , Op. 71 <sup>a</sup> ), and TríOpus ( <i>TríOpus 146</i> , Op. 146).
Vocal music	Songs ( <i>Canción para voz y piano</i> , Op. 111 <sup>a</sup> ) and Anthems ( <i>Himno a las Escuelas Asociadas de la UNESCO</i> , Op. 175).	N/A

Piano music	Sonatas ( <i>Sonata para la Mano Izquierda</i> , Op. 14), Inventions ( <i>Siete Invenciones para la Mano Izquierda</i> , Op. 16), Waltz ( <i>Siete Valses</i> Corrientes, Op. 17), <i>Etudes</i> (95 <i>Estudios de Temporal</i> , Op. 59), and Character Pieces ( <i>31 Piezas</i> , Op. 154).	N/A
Organ music	Unknown	Meditations ( <i>30 Meditaciones</i> , Op. 66).

**Chart 4.1: Traditional and Nontraditional Genres in Alfagiell’s Catalogue of Works**

Alfagiell also wrote compositions for traditional and nontraditional timbres. Chart 4.2 provides examples of traditional and nontraditional instrumentations in Alfagiell’s catalog of works.

**a) Traditional Timbres**

<b>Work</b>	<b>Instrumentation</b>
<i>Sinfonía</i> , Op. 160	Symphony orchestra
<i>Cuarteto para Arcos</i> , Op. 10	String quartet
<i>Misa I, “Poliecuménica”</i> , Op. 31	Mixed choir
<i>Canción</i> , Op. 111 <sup>a</sup>	Voice and piano
<i>Sonata</i> , Op. 29	Piano

**b) Nontraditional Timbres**

<b>Work</b>	<b>Instrumentation</b>
<i>Concierto para Piano y Orquesta</i> , Op. 131	Piano, flute, two clarinets, four or more guitars, and strings.
<i>Sinfonía Participativa sobre Textos de Omar Dengo</i> , Op. 202	Male narrator, mezzo-soprano, <i>falsetto</i> baritone, audience I, II and III, oboe, English horn, bass clarinet, French horn, trumpet, trombone, harp, string quartet, and five percussionists (marimba, bells, glockenspiel, tam-tam, güiro, ocean drum, <i>piano chocho</i> and 3 timpanis).
<i>Hablata Participativa Ila</i> , Op. 294.	Narrator, audience I and II, ocarina, oboe, French horn, marimba, tubular bells, timpani, guitars, harp, violin, viola, cello, and two conductors.

**Chart 4.2: Traditional and Nontraditional Timbres in Alfagüell’s Catalogue of Works**

**Indeterminacy in music**

Indeterminacy in music, sometimes called “aleatory” or “chance music,” describes a musical style of the twentieth century that uses a certain degree of randomness in the compositional process or in the performance of a music composition. One can divide indeterminacy in music into three types: aleatory composition, mobile-form composition, and indeterminate notation.<sup>89</sup> In “aleatory composition,” composers use indeterminacy during the

<sup>89</sup> Paul Griffiths, “Aleatory.” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.* (Oxford University Press), accessed December 6, 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/00509>.

compositional process to produce a conventional fixed-score; in this case, the composer uses indeterminacy to establish certain musical elements such as pitch, rhythm, or dynamics. In “mobile-form composition,” performers use indeterminacy to decide the order of events during the performance of a work; in this case, the score is based on a series of isolated musical phrases without any fixed order. In “indeterminate notation,” composers use indeterminacy through graphic notation to indicate indefinite pitches, rhythms, or dynamics among other musical elements. Alfagüell uses two types of indeterminacy for his music: aleatory composition and indeterminate notation.

The German theorist Werner Meyer-Eppe introduced the term “aleatory” in 1950 to classify a style of music composition that appeared after World War II. Prominent composers of aleatoric music are Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007), Witold Lutoslawski (1913-1994), and John Cage (1912-1992).<sup>90</sup> However, a certain degree of indeterminacy was always present in different periods of the history of western music. For example, during the Middle Ages, the early *neumatic* notation indicated approximations of pitches and rhythms. During the Baroque period, figured bass notation indicated an approximate accompaniment. In the Classical period, the *cadenza* represented a full section of indeterminacy.

### **The System of Numerical Series**

During his third compositional period (1980-1999), Alfagüell, who had just returned from Europe, developed a new system for music creation. Scholars call this the System of

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

Numerical Series.<sup>91</sup> Alfagüell used the system to compose almost his entire catalog of works.

One can divide this system into three stages: the selection of the preexistent melody, the establishment of the series, and the application of the series.

### The Selection of the Preexistent Melody

The System of Numerical Series is based on the identification and isolation of melodic intervals from a preexistent melody. The goal of this stage from the method is to select a melody for the series. Although Alfagüell's music features mostly Costa Rican popular tunes, his system can be applied to any type of melody. To illustrate this point, this chapter will apply the System of Numerical Series to the tune *Ah, vous dirai-je maman* as used by Mozart in his *Twelve Variations on "Ah, vous dirai-je maman,"* K.265 (Musical Example 4.1).



Musical Example 4.1: The theme from *Twelve Variations on "Ah, vous dirai-je maman,"* K.265 by Mozart<sup>92</sup>

### The Establishment of the Numerical Series

Alfagüell establishes the Numerical Series through a careful selection of melodic intervals from the preexistent melody. To establish a Numerical Series, the composer follows

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<sup>91</sup> Carmen Méndez, "La Unidad Latinoamericana en el Imaginario Musical de Mario Alfagüell: 'Hablatra Participativa Ila Opus 294. Fraterna Patria Grande'" (Working Paper, Escuela de Música, Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, Heredia, 2014).

<sup>92</sup>Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Ah! vous dirai-je, Maman," score, 1780-82, ed. Louis Köhler and Adolf Ruthardt, *Variationen für Pianoforte solo* Petrucci Music Library, [http://burrito.whatbox.ca:15263/imglnks/usimg/5/57/IMSLP40557-PMLP55775-Mozart\\_Variationen\\_fuer\\_Pianoforte\\_solo\\_Peters\\_6695\\_No\\_3\\_Ah\\_Vous\\_direz\\_je\\_maman.pdf](http://burrito.whatbox.ca:15263/imglnks/usimg/5/57/IMSLP40557-PMLP55775-Mozart_Variationen_fuer_Pianoforte_solo_Peters_6695_No_3_Ah_Vous_direz_je_maman.pdf).

four steps: first, the identification of all melodic intervals; second, the selection of one interval of a kind in order of appearance; third, the conversion from interval names to half-step numbers; and fourth, the establishment of the numerical series. Musical Example 4.2 shows how Alfagüell might use the four steps in the first part of the *Ah, vous dirai-je maman* theme. For Musical Example 4.2, this author uses the following abbreviations: unison (U), perfect fifth (P5), major second (M2), minor second (m2), and major third (M3).

**Step One**

U P5 U M2 U M2 U M2 U m2 U M2 U M2 M3

The musical notation for Step One consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, a 2/4 time signature, and a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic marking. The melody in the treble clef is: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass line in the bass clef is: C3, G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1, C1. Above the treble staff, interval labels are placed above the notes: U (C-D), P5 (D-E), U (E-F), M2 (F-G), U (G-A), M2 (A-B), U (B-C), m2 (C-B), U (B-A), M2 (A-G), U (G-F), M2 (F-E), M3 (E-D).

**Step Two**

U P5 M2 m2 M3

The musical notation for Step Two is identical to Step One. The selected interval labels above the treble staff are: U (C-D), P5 (D-E), M2 (F-G), m2 (C-B), and M3 (E-D).

**Step Three**

0 7 2 1 4

The musical notation for Step Three is identical to Step One. The numerical series labels above the treble staff are: 0 (C-D), 7 (D-E), 2 (F-G), 1 (C-B), and 4 (E-D).

**Step Four**

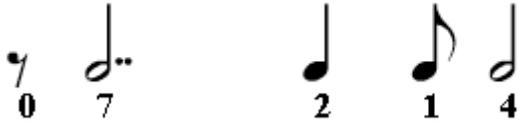
**Numerical Series= 0-7-2-1-4**

**Musical Example 4.2: The establishment of the Numerical Series in *Ah, vous dirai-je maman***

## The Application of the Series

Once composers establish the series, they can use it to determine diverse musical elements within a musical composition. The possibilities are immense, limited only by the imagination of the composer. Musical Example 4.3 presents three possible uses of the series in rhythm, timbre, and form. Musical Example 4.3a uses the series to adjust rhythmic values based on eighth notes; Musical Example 4.3b uses the series to select a specific number of instruments per section, and Musical Example 4.3c uses the series to select a specific number of measures per section.

### Musical Example 4.3a (Rhythm)



### Musical Example 4.3b (Timbre)

	-Violin -Viola -Cello -Double Bass -Clarinet -Oboe -Flute	-Violin -Viola	-Violin	-Violin -Viola -Cello -Double Bass
<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>

### Musical Example 4.3c (Form)

No introduction	First Theme (seven measures)	Transition (two measures)	Second Theme (one measure)	Closing Theme (four measures)
<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>

### Musical Example 4.3: Three musical uses of the Numerical Series

Alfagüell mostly uses popular tunes from Costa Rica for the establishment of the numerical series. Some of the popular tunes used by the composer are *Los Pollitos Dicen*, *Temporal Cerrao sin Dulce ni Cacao*, by Emilia Prieto (1902-1986), and the *Bribri* song

described in Chapter One. Musical Example 4.4 shows the numerical series for the Costa Rican tune *El Torito*. Alfagüell used such tune to compose *Arboleda*, Op. 154.

CON ALFAGÜELL MANDO  
**EL TORITO**  
(CANTO Y DANZA MUY POPULAR)  
Autor desconocido

**Numerical Series: 5-(0)-2-1-4-3-7-9**

**Musical Example 4.4: The Numerical Series of *El Torito***<sup>93</sup>

Musical Example 4.5 shows some of the applications of the series in *Arboleda*, Op. 154. Example 4.5a shows a set of pitches based on the series; example 4.5b shows proportional rhythms using a selection of numbers from the series; and example 4.5c shows a grouping of pitches based on some of the numbers from the series.

<sup>93</sup> Anonymous, “El Torito,” score, Foro Costa Rica, <http://www.forcostarica.org/2011/09/el-torito-musica-tipica-costarricense.html> p://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/stable/3435987.

4.5a Pitches based on the series

4.5b Rhythms based on the series

4.5c Number of pitches based on the series

Musical Example 4.5: Alfagüell's Application of the Series in *Arboleda*, Op. 154.

**Variations to the Series**

Alfagüell did not design the System of Numerical Series to be a strict and rigid compositional technique; instead, he meant for it to be a tool to explore unusual forms of music organization. The system allows a certain degree of changes to the series with the purpose of expanding its possibilities. The most common variations to the series are:

- Summation: the creation of a new numerical series by adding a common factor to all numbers of the original series.

- Subtraction: the creation of a new numerical series by subtracting a common factor to all numbers of the original series.
- Fragmentation: the use of a segment of the series.
- Inversion: the creation of a new numerical series by inverting the intervals of the original series.
- Retrograde: the use of a series in reverse order.
- Omission: the skipping of certain members of the series.

### Scales

Alfagüell structures his music through the control of the chromatic aggregate. As a result, an important aspect of the compositional approach of the composer is the formation of scales based on the preexistent melody. Alfagüell creates two types of scales: the melodic-based scale and the complementary scale. The melodic-based scale contains all pitches that the preexistent melody uses. The complementary scale contains all pitches that the preexistent melody does not use, completing the chromatic scale. To create a melodic-based scale, one can use the following steps: the identification of all pitches from the preexistent melody, the selection of one pitch class of a kind in order of appearance, and the reorganization of the pitches in standard scale format. Since the purpose of the melodic-based scale is to create an inventory of pitch classes, there is no need to define a clear association to a tonic or a specific series of intervals. Musical Example 4.6 shows the creation of a melodic-based scale from the tune *Ah, vous dirai-je maman*.

a) Step One

C C G G A A G G F F E E D D E C

b) Step Two

Musical notation for Step Two, showing a melodic-based scale in 2/4 time. The scale is written in treble and bass clefs. The notes are C, G, A, F, E, D. The notes are marked with their respective letter names above the staff. The piece is marked *mf*.

c) Step Three

Musical notation for Step Three, showing a chromatic scale in treble clef. The notes are C, D, E, F, G, A. The notes are marked with their respective letter names above the staff.

Musical Example 4.6: Melodic-based scale from the tune *Ah, vous dirai-je maman*.

To create a complementary scale, one can use the following steps: the writing of a chromatic scale and the removal of the pitches used by the melodic-based scale. Musical Example 4.7 shows the creation of a complementary scale from the tune *Ah, vous dirai-je maman*.

a) Step One

Musical notation for Step One, showing a chromatic scale in treble clef. The notes are C, C#, D, D#, E, E#, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#. The notes are marked with their respective letter names and sharps above the staff.

a) Step Two

Musical notation for Step Two, showing the complementary scale in treble clef. The notes are C#, D, D#, E, E#, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#. The notes are marked with their respective letter names and sharps above the staff.

Musical Example 4.7: Complementary scale from the tune *Ah, vous dirai-je maman*.

Melodic-based and complementary scales serve the purpose of producing different coloristic effects. For instance, in a specific section, composers use melodies and harmonies based on pitches from the melodic-based scale, while a contrasting section can use melodies and harmonies based on pitches from the complementary scale. Composers can also use both scales simultaneously. For instance, the melody of a single composition can use pitches from the melodic-based scale while the accompaniment can use pitches from the complementary scale. Finally, the interaction between melodic-based and complementary scales can also help to achieve a structural goal.

### **Musical Cryptography**

Musical cryptography is a compositional method in which composers encode a text or a message using musical means. The history of musical cryptography goes back at least to the fifteenth century.<sup>94</sup> One can find two types of techniques: the use of musical symbolism within a composition and the spelling of words through musical notes. In some compositions, Alfagüell uses the spelling of words through musical notes in substitution for the preexistent melody.

The very basic application of spelling words is through the association between the alphabet and the German music notation system that allows composers to spell letters “A” to “H” from the alphabet. Probably the most popular example is the BACH motive (Bb-A-C-B) used by several composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), Franz Liszt (1811-1886), and Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). The major limitation of this method is the representation of letters beyond “H.” Some composers proposed several solutions to the problem. Robert

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<sup>94</sup> Eric Sams states in his article that the earliest example of musical cryptography is the fifteenth century manuscript *Rule for Carrying on a Secret Correspondence by Cipher* that shows how to assign musical notes to specific letters.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

Schumann (1810-1856) and Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)<sup>96</sup> used the German music notation system to represent the letter “S” with an E-flat due to its association with the German name for that pitch (*Es*). Also, Schumann and Johannes Brahms (1833- 1897) used the German music notation system in combination with the French music notation system (*solmization*) to group several letters together. Robert Schumann used pitch A-flat to group letters “A” and “S,” based on the German music notation system, for the word “*asch*” (Ab-C-B). Johannes Brahms used pitch G-sharp to group letters “G,” “I,” and “S,” based on the German music notation system, and pitch A to group letters “L” and “A,” based on the French music notation system, for the word Gisela (G#-E-A). Despite the efforts of Schumann and Brahms, it was still not possible to represent all the letters from the alphabet.<sup>97</sup>

In 1909, the French composer Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) solved the problem by establishing a new system of musical cryptography used to spell the word “Haydn” (Chart 4.3). In his system Ravel created a pattern of seven pitches repeated several times throughout the alphabet based on the German music notation system (A-G). In an alphabet of twenty-six letters, the pattern of seven pitches repeats three times in its complete form (starting on letters “A,” “H” and “O”) and a fourth time in an incomplete form (starting on letter “V”). Ravel used his system to assign pitches to the letters “Y” and “N” of the word HAYDN (Musical Example 4.8); however, he still used the German notation system to assign pitches to letters “H,” “A,” and “D.”

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<sup>96</sup> The SCHA motive was represented as Eb-C-B-A by Schumann in *Carnaval* Op. 9 and the DSCH motive was represented as D-Eb-C-B by Shostakovich in several of his compositions. Both examples attempted to spell the last names of the composers.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

Cycle 1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cycle 2	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Cycle 3	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Cycle 4	V	W	X	Y	Z		

Chart 4.3: The system of music cryptography used by Maurice Ravel



Musical Example 4.8: *Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn* by Maurice Ravel<sup>98</sup>

Finally some composers encoded the entire alphabet using musical notation based on personal ideals. Michael Haydn (1737-1806) represented the entire alphabet using a chromatic scale from G2 to B3; Arthur Honegger (1892-1955) encoded the alphabet by combining the German music notation system with a chromatic scale and some enharmonic notes; and Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) encoded the alphabet with pitches, register designation and rhythmic durations (Musical Example 4.9).



Michael Haydn

<sup>98</sup> Maurice Ravel, *Menuet sur le nom d'Haydn*, (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1986 ).

Arthur Honegger

The image shows two staves of music in treble clef. The first staff contains the letters A through N, and the second staff contains O through Z. Each letter is positioned below a specific note on the staff, representing a musical alphabet.

Oliver Messiaen

The image shows three staves of music. The first staff is in treble clef and contains letters A through J. The second staff is in bass clef and contains letters K through Q. The third staff is in treble clef and contains letters R through Z. Each letter is positioned below a specific note on the staff, representing a musical alphabet.

**Musical Example 4.9: Music representation of the alphabet by Michael Haydn, Honegger, and Messiaen<sup>99</sup>**

The music cryptography of Mario Alfagüell consists on a combination of different notation systems, the interval classification of American composer Howard Hanson (1896-1981), and associations among the letters of the Spanish alphabet. Alfagüell also uses the German music notation system, the English/American notation system, the movable *do* system, the fixed *do* system, and the *solmization* system of Guido d’Arezzo (995-1033). The German music notation system assigns a pitch to eight letters of the alphabet (A-H). The English/American system provides an alternative option for letter B (pitch B-flat according to the German music notation system and pitch B according to the English/American notation system). The fixed *do* system assigns pitches to six other letters from the Spanish alphabet (D, I, L, M, R, and S). In

<sup>99</sup> Eric Sams. "Cryptography, musical." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.* Oxford University Press, accessed December 22, 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/06915>.

this case, Alfagüell does not use the system to group letters together (as used by Brahms); he uses it to represent any of the letters that the pitch-name is using. For instance, pitch “do” can represent letters “D” or “O.” The movable *do* system adds “ti” as an option. In this particular case, it assigns B natural to letters “T” and “I.” Similar to the movable *do* system, the Guidonian *solmization* system adds “ut” to the list using the same parameters as the movable and fixed *do* systems.

This way, Alfagüell represents sixteen of the twenty-seven letters of the Spanish alphabet through the combination of the different music notation systems and the rest of the letters through Hanson’s interval classification and through personal associations using the Spanish alphabet. Hanson, in his book *Harmonic Materials of Modern Music*, classified intervals in six categories: perfect fifth or fourth (p), major third or minor sixth (m), minor third or major sixth (n), major second or minor seventh (s), minor second or major seventh (d), and augmented fourth or diminished fifth (t).<sup>100</sup> Alfagüell includes the letters representing intervals (P, M, N, S, D, and T) as part of his musical cryptogram. In this case, Hanson’s interval classification represents intervals above or below the previous musical note. For example, if a word uses letter “A” followed by letter “P,” letter “A” represents pitch A and letter “P” represents a fifth or fourth above or below A. Hanson’s interval classification adds two new letters to the list (“N” and “P”) in addition to new possible interpretations for letters previously established by other systems. Alfagüell represents the remaining nine letters using the Spanish alphabet. In Spanish, letters “C,” “K,” and “Q” sometimes sound similar; therefore, they can substitute each other in a musical cryptogram. Alfagüell considers words using letters “K” or “Q” as words using letter “C.” Other relations among letters are: “B” and “V”; “C,” “S,” and “Z”; “I” and “Y”; and “U”

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<sup>100</sup>Howard Hanson, *Harmonic Materials of Modern Music* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Inc., 1960), 7-16.

and “W.” Letters “J”, “Ñ” and “X” have a more subjective interpretation. Letter “Ñ” is associated with letter “N”; letter “X” with letter “S”; and letter “J” with letters “H” or “G”<sup>101</sup>.

An important feature of Alfaguell’s cypher is the flexibility of the system that allows a single letter to be represented by multiple pitches. For example, he represents letter “D” either with pitch D (based on the German notation system), pitch C (based on the fixed *do* system), or as a minor second or major seventh above or below the previous pitch (based on Hanson’s interval classification). Chart 4.4 shows all the possible interpretations of the letters of the Spanish alphabet.

Letter	Pitch	System
<b>A</b>	A	German notation system
<b>B</b>	B or Bb	English/America and German notation systems
<b>C</b>	C	English and German names for pitch C
<b>D</b>	C, D, a minor second, or a major seventh	Fixed <i>do</i> system, German notation system, and the interval classification of Howard Hanson.
<b>E</b>	E or D	German notation system and movable <i>do</i> system
<b>F</b>	F	German notation system
<b>G</b>	G	German notation system
<b>H</b>	B	German notation system
<b>I</b>	E or B	Fixed <i>do</i> and movable <i>do</i> systems
<b>J</b>	G or H	Personal association with letters “G” and “H”
<b>K</b>	C	Personal association with letter “C”
<b>L</b>	A or G	Fixed <i>do</i> system
<b>M</b>	E, major third or minor sixth	Fixed <i>do</i> system and the interval classification of Howard Hanson
<b>N</b>	Minor third or minor sixth	Interval classification of Howard Hanson
<b>Ñ</b>	Minor third or minor sixth	Personal association with letter “N”
<b>O</b>	C or G	Fixed <i>do</i> system
<b>P</b>	Perfect fifth or fourth	Interval classification of Howard Hanson
<b>Q</b>	C	Personal association with letter “C”
<b>R</b>	D	Fixed <i>do</i> system
<b>S</b>	B or G	Fixed <i>do</i> system
<b>T</b>	C, B, augmented	<i>Solmization</i> system of Guido d’Arezzo, movable <i>do</i> system, and

<sup>101</sup> If the English alphabet is used, the Spanish pronunciation for “j” is equivalent as the English pronunciation of “h”. Also, letters “g” and “j” are pronounced similarly in some English words.

	fourth or diminished fifth	the interval classification of Howard Hanson
<b>U</b>	C	<i>Solmization</i> system of Guido d' Arezzo
<b>V</b>	B or Bb	Personal association with letter "B"
<b>W</b>	C	Personal association with letter "U"
<b>X</b>	B or G	Personal association with letter "S"
<b>Y</b>	E or B	Personal association with letter "I"
<b>Z</b>	B or G	Personal association with letter "S"

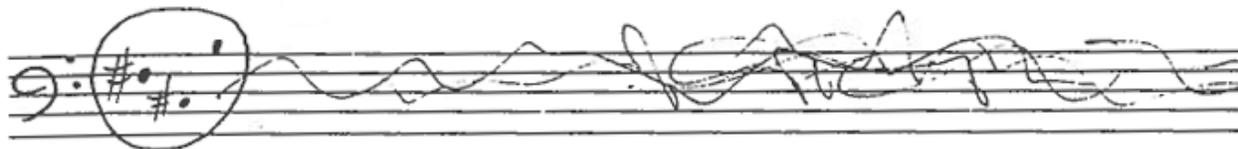
Chart 4.4: Musical cryptogram of Mario Alfagüell

### Rhythm and Meter

The understanding of rhythm and meter in Alfagüell's music has always been a major challenge for traditional musicians, due to its use of unconventional symbols. The composer divides rhythmic notation into three categories: ametric, metric, and proportional.

#### **Ametric Rhythms**

Alfagüell represents ametric rhythms through the use of graphic notation. He substitutes standard symbols representing meter and rhythmic values by drawings that represent non-metrical organizations (Musical Example 4.10).



Musical Example 4.10: Excerpt from *Diferencia VII* of the *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>102</sup>

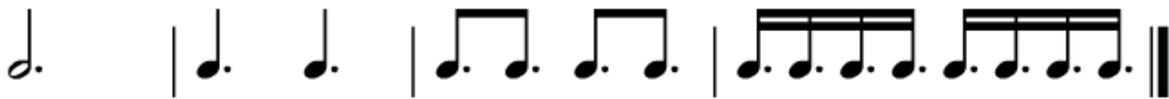
#### **Metric Rhythms**

Alfagüell represents metric rhythms by the use of traditional rhythmic symbols in unconventional ways. Through the analysis of works by Debussy or Stravinsky, Alfagüell came

<sup>102</sup> Mario Alfagüell, "Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260," score, 2011, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

to the conclusion that those composers did not write certain rhythms appropriately. According to Alfagüell, when a composer switches from duple simple to duple compound or from duple simple to triple simple, it normally requires the use of a “grouplet” or a change in metric signature. Alfagüell solves this situation with a more frequent use of dotted rhythmic values.<sup>103</sup> Musical Example 4.11 represents duple simple, duple compound, and triple simple meters without the use of grouplets or changes in metric signatures.

a) **Duple Simple Meter**



b) **Duple Compound Meter**



c) **Triple Simple Meter**



**Musical Example 4.11: Simple Duple, Compound Duple, and Simple Triple meter relationship<sup>104</sup>**

The basic principles of rhythmic notation presented in Musical Example 4.11 led Alfagüell to the exploration of more complex metric relationships. For instance, Musical Example 4.12 shows the relationship between an asymmetrical triple meter and a duple simple meter developed from a double dotted half note. Alfagüell used such relationship in a single composition allowing him to switch between both meters without recurring to any change in metric signature.

<sup>103</sup> Mario Alfagüell, interview by José Pablo Quesada, August 14 and 20, 2014.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

a) Asymmetrical Triple Meter



b) Symmetric Duple Simple Meter



Musical Example 4.12: Asymmetric Triple and Symmetric Duple meter relationship

The experimentation with rhythmic notation also led Alfagüell to use unconventional rhythmic symbols to notate specific rhythmic values for his compositions. Musical Example 4.13 shows three examples. Examples “a” and “c” represent rhythmic values with five subdivisions and Example “b” represents a way to notate triple compound meter. If performers encounter any of those symbols in a composition, like in Example 4.11d, they must follow the durational values that the composer previously assigned.



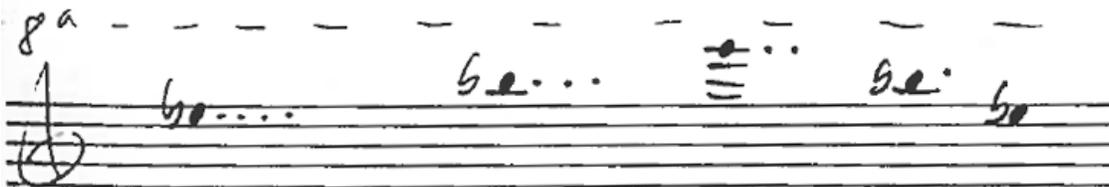
Musical Example 4.13: Other rhythmic symbols used by Mario Alfagüell<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260,” score, 2011, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

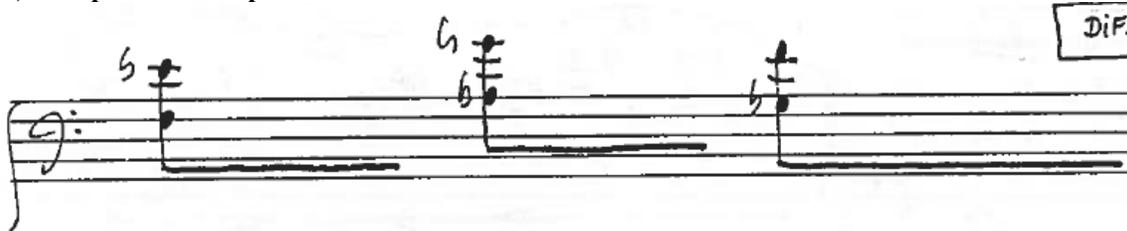
## Proportional Rhythms

Proportional rhythmic notation is a system that assigns rhythmic durational values to ametric music organizations. As shown in Musical Example 4.14, the composer uses two types of proportional notation: dotted rhythmic notation, and proportional graphic notation. Dotted rhythmic notation generates rhythms based on the addition of dots to the note heads of the traditional rhythmic notation system. Proportional notation generates rhythms by the length and positioning of graphic notation.

### a) Dotted Rhythmic Notation<sup>106</sup>



### b) Proportional Graphic Notation<sup>107</sup>



Musical Example 4.14: Proportional notation used in *Arboleda* Op. 154

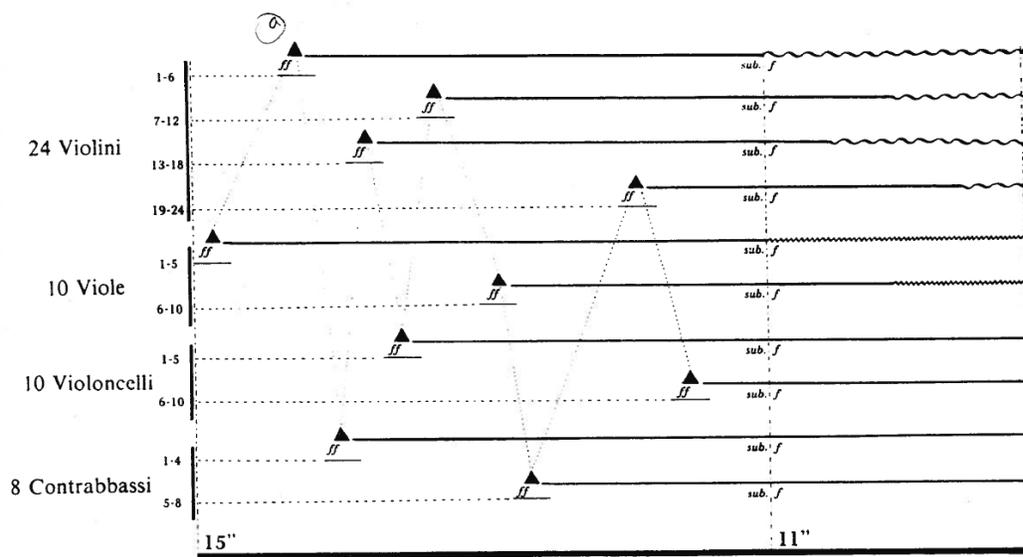
## Graphic Notation

Around 1950, several composers of the new *avant-garde* trend developed new systems of music notation based on the representation of sounds through graphic symbols different from the standard notation system used in the common practice period. Graphic notation is a useful tool

<sup>106</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Arboleda, Op. 154,” score, 2008, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

<sup>107</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260,” score, 2011, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

for chance because it opens the possibility for multiple interpretations of a single composition. Graphic notation is also useful for electronic and sound-mass music. Examples of graphic notation exist extensively through the works of many composers in the second half of the twentieth century. For example, in 1960 the Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki (born 1933) composed the piece *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* with a series of graphic symbols representing different aural effects (Musical Example 4.15).<sup>108</sup>



**Musical Example 4.15:** *Threnody for the victims of Hiroshima* by Krzysztof Penderecki<sup>109</sup>

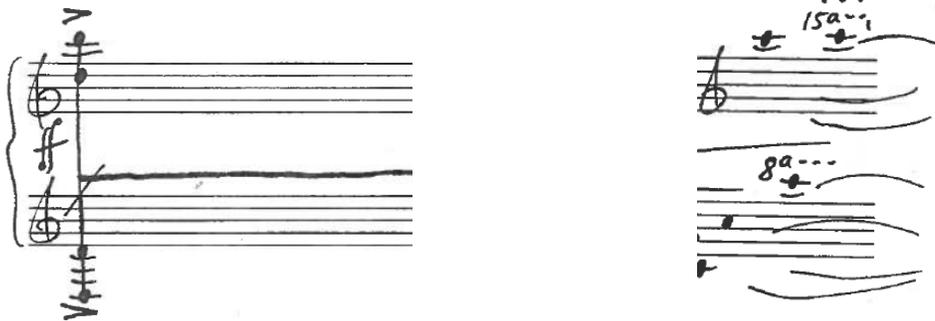
Similar to Penderecki, graphic notation exists extensively throughout Alfgüell's musical output, and he uses it to determine an approximate texture or melodic contour. The following paragraphs will describe the most common graphing techniques used by the composer.

<sup>108</sup> Anthony Pryer, "graphic notation." *The Oxford Companion to Music*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed April 14, 2015, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e3008>

<sup>109</sup> Krzysztof Penderecki, *Threnody for the victims of Hiroshima*, (Florida: Deshon Music, Inc. & PWM Editions, 1961).



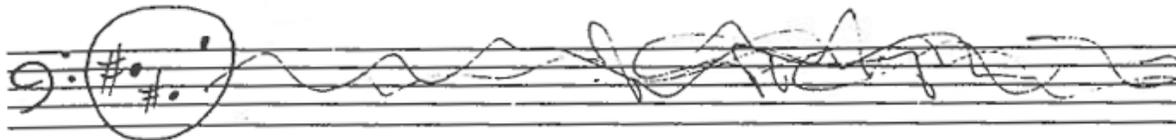
line and he sustains arpeggiations using slurs connected to each individual pitch (Musical Example 4.18).



**Musical Example 4.18: Sustention**<sup>112</sup>

### **Irregular Lines**

Alfagüell uses irregular lines when a selection of pitches indicates rhythmic and dynamic improvisation (Musical Example 4.19). The overall goal of this notation is to express in sounds the irregular activity of the graph.



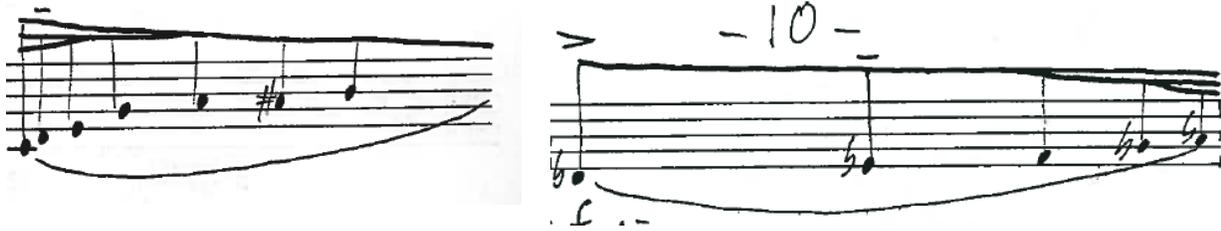
**Musical Example 4.19: Irregular Lines**<sup>113</sup>

### **Temporary Accelerandos and Ritardandos**

Alfagüell, indicates temporary accelerandos and ritardandos by the addition of multiple lines on the stems of a given note indicating faster or slower durational values (Musical Example 4.20). This type of notation, which is not exclusive to Alfagüell’s music, affects the selected group of pitches but not the overall tempo of the piece.

<sup>112</sup> Mario Alfagüell, *Estudios, Corales, Intermezzos y Apendices-Op.143*, (Heredia: Editorial Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, 2005).

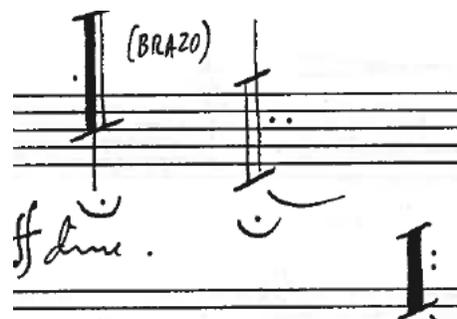
<sup>113</sup> Mario Alfagüell, “Arboleda, Op. 154,” score, 2008, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.



**Musical Example 4.20: Temporary Accelerandos and Ritardandos<sup>114</sup>**

### **Tone cluster**

Alfagüell identifies tone clusters with a long vertical line between two horizontal lines. One can classify tone clusters according to their quality and height (Musical Example 4.21). Quality classification describes tone clusters on white keys, black keys, or both. Filled symbols represent clusters on black keys, unfilled symbols represent clusters on white keys, and half-filled symbols represent clusters on both black and white keys. The height of the symbol indicates the range of the cluster. The lowest horizontal line indicates the initial pitch and the highest horizontal line indicates the ending pitch of the cluster.



**Musical Example 4.21: Tone Cluster Symbols<sup>115</sup>**

### **The Performance Stage**

An important aspect of Alfagüell's compositional approach is the actual performance. For Alfagüell, the performer is more of a co-composer of the work than simply a performer. He

<sup>114</sup> Mario Alfagüell, "Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260," score, 2011, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

<sup>115</sup> Mario Alfagüell, "Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260," score, 2011, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

intends for musicians to improvise his compositions on stage rather than memorizing and performing them in a standard academic way. According to the composer, performers have the freedom to interpret his music using their own parameters, including a personal interpretation of the graphic notation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS OF THE MUSIC OF MARIO ALFAGÜELL

The overall goal for this chapter is to look at the work of Mario Alfagüell from a theoretical perspective. This author uses a single analytical method (the control of the chromatic aggregate) to analyze three piano compositions: *Estudio No. 17*, Op. 143; *Arboleda*, Op. 154; and *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260. This chapter will first explain the basic principles of the control of the aggregate, and then analyze each composition.

#### **The Control of the Chromatic Aggregate**

Whether referring to a twelve-tone composition by Arnold Schoenberg or a symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven, an analysis of the control of the chromatic aggregate addresses the same questions: how do composers complete the chromatic scale in a single composition, and what relevance does the completion of the aggregate have in a piece of music. This author bases the present analytical approach on the principles that Henry Burnett and Shaugn O'Donnell presents in their article "Linear Ordering of the Chromatic Aggregate in Classical Symphonic Music."<sup>116</sup> This chapter will explain those principles through the analysis of *Prelude in C major* from Johann Sebastian Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* book one.

An analysis of the control of the chromatic aggregate does not determine whether a composer uses all pitches from the chromatic scale or not, since Burnett and O'Donnell assume that composers always complete the chromatic scale in every composition. This type of analysis

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<sup>116</sup> Henry Burnett and Shaugn O'Donnell, "Linear Ordering of the Chromatic Aggregate in Classical Symphonic Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 18, no. 1 (1996): 22-50.

identifies the places in which and methods whereby composers complete the chromatic scale and how such completion articulates structure.<sup>117</sup>

This analytical method consists first in the identification of the seven diatonic pitches and then in the recognition of the five chromatic pitches in order of appearance. Burnett and O'Donnell identify such pitches using stems connected to a higher vertical line. Composers usually complete the chromatic aggregate using two major techniques: the 5/7 cycle and the 1/11 cycle. The 5/7 cycle completes the chromatic scale in two stages: the presentation of the seven pitches of the diatonic scale and the presentation of the five chromatic pitches through a series based on the circle of fifths. The basic series of chromatic pitches uses the following pattern in any key: #4-#1-#5-#2-b7. In the case of C major, the pattern is F#-C#-G#-D#-Bb. The appearance of the first accidental determines the order of the series. Thus, if the first chromatic pitch is F#, the composition will present the original order; however, if the first chromatic pitch is Bb the pattern will be Bb-F#-C#-G#-D#.<sup>118</sup>

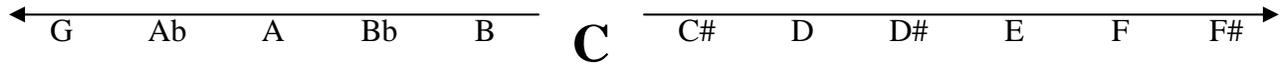
The 1/11 cycle completes the chromatic aggregate with a descending chromatic scale, an ascending chromatic scale, or a combination of both. In this case, the chromatic aggregate is not necessarily related with the appearance of the first accidental. Instead, the aggregate is related to an initial chromatic motive, a dramatic modulation, or a relevant transitional passage, among other places. When the 1/11 cycle appears as an ascending or descending chromatic scale, the starting point of the cycle establishes the initial and concluding pitches for the aggregate. Then, the composer completes the aggregate by presenting all pitches from the scale in chromatic order. When the 1/11 cycle combines ascending and descending scales, the composer expands a center pitch with two chromatic scales in contrary motion. Burnett and O'Donnell consider such

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

chromatic expansion a single scale and not as two separate scales; therefore, composers complete the aggregate combining the pitches from both chromatic scales in contrary motions, as shown in Chart 5.1.<sup>119</sup>



**Chart 5.1: The 1/11 cycle combining two chromatic scales in contrary motion**

Bach completes the chromatic aggregate in *Prelude in C major* by using the two methods mentioned above: the 5/7 cycle and the 1/11 cycle. Bach presents the first stage of the 5/7 cycle (Musical Example 5.1) with the establishment of the C major key (mm 1-3). The first accidental (#F) in measure six establishes the order of chromatic pitches (F#-C#-G#-D#-Bb). Bach presents C# in measure 12, G# (Ab) in measure 14, D# (Eb) in measure 22, and Bb in measure 32. Up to this point, it is necessary to ignore the two presentations of pitch class Bb in measures 12 and 20, since they are part of the 1/11 cycle.

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

1 2 3 4 5 6

7

3

8

6

9

9 10

12

15

Musical Example 5.1: The 5/7 Cycles of *Prelude in C major* by Johann Sebastian Bach<sup>120</sup>

This prelude also presents two 1/11 cycles that combine an ascending and a descending chromatic scale. The first cycle (Musical Example 5.2) starts with the initial half-step motive (C-B) of measures 1-3 in the bass line. The top voice restates the same motive in measures 10 to 11. The expansion of the initial motive starts in measures 12 with pitches B $\flat$  downwards and C $\sharp$

<sup>120</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach, *Praeludium I*, ed. Adolf Ruthard, Carl Czerny, and Franz Kroll, *Das wohltemperierte Klavier I*, BWV 846-869, ser. 1 (Leipzig: Edition Peters, 1937).

upwards. The expansion continues in measure 13 with pitches A downwards and a D upwards. Measures 14 and 15 present two descending chromatic pitches (A $\flat$  and G). Through octave transfer, the G from measure 15 moves an octave lower in measure 18, and then it eventually moves to F $\sharp$  in measure 22. While F $\sharp$  appears in measure 22, the expansion continues with pitch E $\flat$  in the top voice. Also through octave transfer, the F $\sharp$  from measure 22 moves to F on the tenor line in measure 23, and the composer completes the chromatic scale when E $\flat$  (m 22) and F (m 23) move to E in measure 25.

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece, likely a study or exercise. It consists of six systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The music is in G major and 3/4 time. The right hand plays a continuous eighth-note pattern, while the left hand plays a chromatic scale. Measure numbers 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. Fingerings are marked with numbers 1-5. A performance instruction '(1685 - 1750)' is written above the first system.

Musical Example 5.2: The first 1/11 Cycle of *Prelude in C major* by Johann Sebastian Bach<sup>121</sup>

The second cycle starts with pitch C# in measure 12. The expansion begins in measure 13 with pitch D and measure 15 with pitch C. Through octave transfer, pitch C moves to pitch B in measure 18 and then a descending chromatic scale occurs from B to G in the following measures: B (m. 18), Bb (m. 20), A (m. 21), Ab (m. 23), and G (m. 24). Pitch class D from measure 13 appears in the tenor line in measure 27. A new expansion principle appears in measure 28 with pitches Eb in the tenor and F# in the soprano. The composer completes the chromatic scale by moving the tenor line to E in measure 29 and the soprano line to F in measure 30.

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

Musical Example 5.3: The second 1/11 Cycle of *Prelude in C major* by Johann Sebastian Bach<sup>122</sup>

In terms of structure, the careful control of the chromatic aggregate emphasizes the different sections marked by the harmonic and tonal contents. The first important section is the

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

establishment of the key (mm. 1-4) in which the 5/7 cycle presents the seven pitches of the chromatic scale and the first 1/11 cycle presents the initial 1-2 motive. The next important section is the modulation to G major (mm. 6-12), in which both cycles support the structure. The 5/7 cycle presents its first chromatic pitch (m. 6) marking the first cadence in the new key area and emphasizing the beginning of the transitional section. The first 1/11 cycle presents the restatement of the 1-2 motive (mm. 10-11) that marks a solid arrival to G major.

The following section is the return to C major (mm. 12-19), in which all cycles work together. The 5/7 cycle presents its second chromatic pitch, marking the beginning of the retransition (m. 12), and its third chromatic pitch marking the return to C major (m. 14). The first 1/11 cycle begins the expansion of the chromatic scale in measure 12 (3-4-5-6), also marking the beginning of the transition; and it presents its seventh chromatic pitch emphasizing the return to C major (m. 14). The second 1/11 cycle also reinforces the transition and the arrival to C major with its 1-2-3 presentation; however, the second 1/11 cycle supports C major in a different way: while the 5/7 cycle and the first 1/11 cycle support the leading-tone chord, the 1/11 cycle supports the tonic. The presentation of the fourth chromatic pitch in the second 1/11 cycle also emphasizes the arrival to C major in measure 18 with support of the dominant chord.

The next section starts in mm. 20-24 and features an arrival to F major (m. 21) and to G major (measure 24). The second 1/11 cycle supports the beginning of this section while the 5/7 cycle and the first 1/11 cycle support the climactic point in measures 22-23.

The following section starts with the beginning of the pedal point in measure 24 and ends with its resolution in measure 32, another climactic point of the prelude. The eighth chromatic pitch from the second 1/11 cycle marks the beginning of the pedal point, while the completion of the chromatic scale of the 5/7 cycle marks its resolution. The completion of the first 1/11 cycle

marks a premature return to C major in measure 25, and the completion of the second 1/11 cycle (mm. 28-30) marks the beginning of a false final cadence. After the completion of the 5/7 cycle, the last section (mm. 32-35) starts with the climax in measure 32, continues with a brief tonicization of F major (m. 33), and ends with the final return to C major (m. 35).

Based on the previous analysis, we can arrive at two conclusions:

- Bach controlled the chromatic aggregate by setting a standard set of pitches and then by contrasting such standard with the aggregate of chromatic pitches.
- The first presentation of each of the chromatic pitches appears in important moments of the composition, providing clear articulation of form and structure.

### **Estudio No. 17, Op. 143**

Control of the chromatic aggregate is a fundamental aspect of the compositional approach of Mario Alfagüell; however, since the musical aesthetic of the composer differs from the tonal tradition, one should expect changes in methodology. This author bases variations in the control of the chromatic aggregate on two principles: the setting of different ways to standardize the initial set of pitches, and new patterning or logic behind the aggregate of the chromatic pitches. These two principles need further investigation in order to generalize recurrent patterns in methodology.

*Estudio No. 17* is part of a large anthology of works entitled *Estudios, Corales, Intermezos y Apéndices* Op. 143. The anthology comprises nineteenth *etudes*, five chorales, nine *intermezzos*, and ten appendixes by the composer. Alfagüell based the collection of forty-three compositions on the preexistent Costa Rican folk song *Temporal Cerrao sin Dulce ni Cacao*. Musical Example 5.4 shows the tune and its numerical series: 2-1-(0)-4-3-7-5). The numerical series presents all the intervals of the melody in addition to two extra numbers: seven (which

represents the interval between the last and the first pitch of the tune) and five (which represents the total number of original intervals from the tune). The number zero is in brackets since the composer considers it an optional number.

Emilia Prieto: "ROMANZAS TICO-MESETERAS"

(2 1 (0) 4 3 -7 5-)

Musical Example 5.4: The song *Temporal Cerrao sin Dulce ni Cacao* by Emilia Prieto and its numerical series<sup>123</sup>

Musical Example 5.5 shows the melodic-based and the complementary scales.

a) Melodic-based scale

b) Complementary scale

Musical Example 5.5: Melodic-based and complementary scales from *Temporal Cerrao sin Dulce ni Cacao*

<sup>123</sup> Mario Alfagüell, *Estudios, Corales, Intermezzos y Apendices-Op.143*, (Heredia: Editorial Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, 2005).

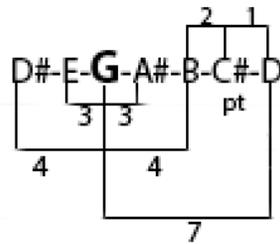
*Estudio No. 17* presents a binary form in which each section completes the chromatic scale once. The first portion of the A section (Musical Example 5.6) presents a standard set of seven pitches according to the following logic: the composer expands pitch center G upwards and downwards according to the first five numbers of the series. The expansion starts with number three (A#) followed by number four (B) above G. Then it continues with number three (E) and number four (D#) below G. Finally the expansion ends upwards with number six (C# which is not part of the series) and number seven (D).

ESTUDIO 17. ~~XXIV~~ para JOSE M. BORSE ONDARRA SRA. y DAN.

The image shows five systems of handwritten musical notation, numbered 1 through 5. Each system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef).  
 System 1: Treble clef, one note on G4. Bass clef, one note on G3. 'etc.' and dashed lines follow.  
 System 2: Treble clef, one note on A#4. Bass clef, one note on A#3. 'etc.' and dashed lines follow.  
 System 3: Treble clef, one note on B4. Bass clef, one note on B3. 'etc.' and dashed lines follow.  
 System 4: Treble clef, one note on C#5. Bass clef, one note on C#4. 'etc.' and dashed lines follow.  
 System 5: Treble clef, one note on D5. Bass clef, one note on D4. 'etc.' and dashed lines follow.

**Musical Example 5.6: The initial set of seven pitches from *Estudio No. 17, Op. 143*<sup>124</sup>**

Chart 5.2 presents two possible explanations for the use of a number six above G: first as a “passing tone” between number four (B) and number seven (D) and second as a localized presentation of numbers two and one from the series starting from pitch B.

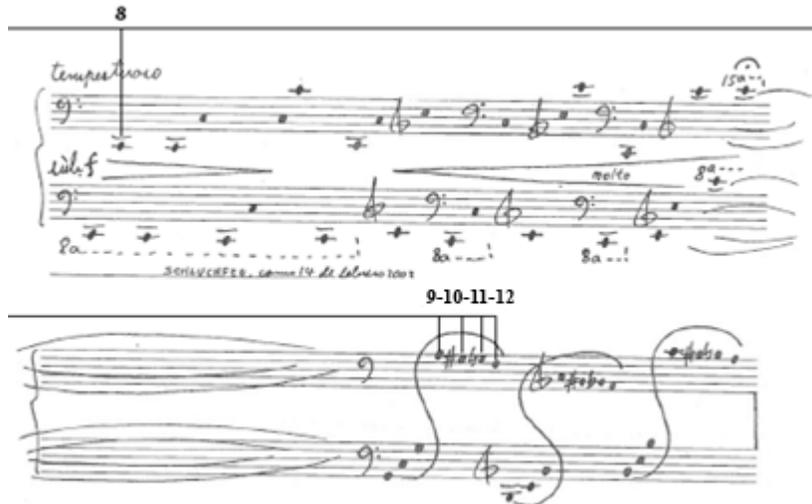


**Chart 5.2: The explanation of pitch class C# according to the numerical series**

Two musical events (Musical Example 5.7) divide the rest of the A section. The first event presents the first chromatic pitch (C). The second event completes the chromatic scale in the following order: A-G#-Gb-F. The last five pitches of the chromatic aggregate continue with the idea of expanding pitch center G upwards and downwards according to the numerical series. The last pitch we have before the two events occurred was D, which is number seven above G.

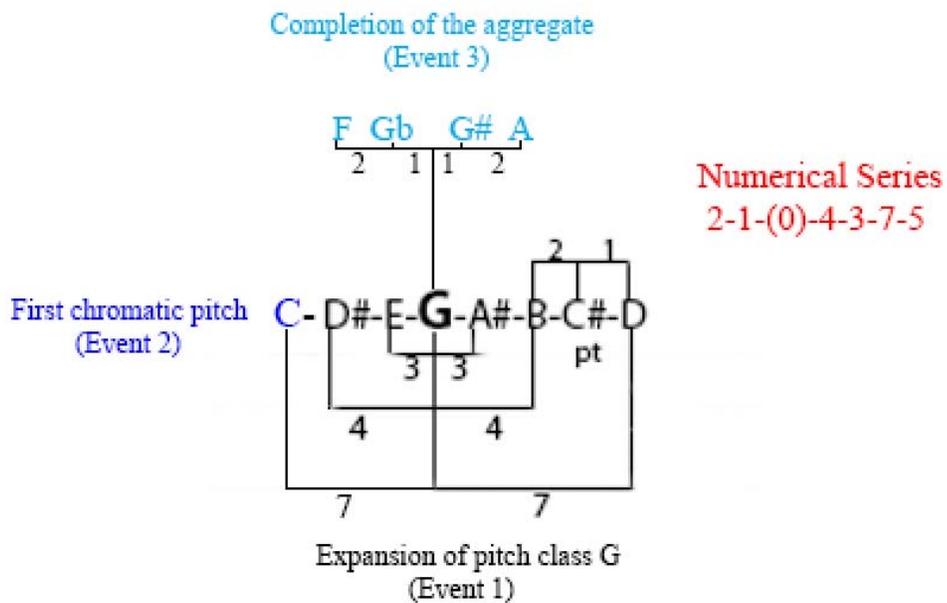
<sup>124</sup> Mario Alfagüell, *Estudios, Corales, Intermezzos y Apendices-Op.143*, (Heredia: Editorial Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, 2005).

Then the composer presents pitch C, number seven below G. Finally the composer presents a palindrome based on the first two numbers of the numerical series (2-1-G-1-2) using pitch classes A, G#, Gb, and F.



**Musical Example 5.7:** The completion of the first chromatic scale in *Estudio No. 17, Op. 143*<sup>125</sup>

Chart 5.3 summarizes the overall series of events that occurs in the A section of this composition.



**Chart 5.3:** The A section from *Etude No. 17, 143*

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

The B section presents D as a new pitch center and starts with the same palindromic organization that concludes the A section. One can better explain this moment with set theory in which the ending of the A Section and the beginning of the B Section present a (0,1,3,4) set. The first set of four pitches is contrasted by seven chromatic pitches in the following event. The composer completes the chromatic aggregate with the presentation of pitch center D in the next event.

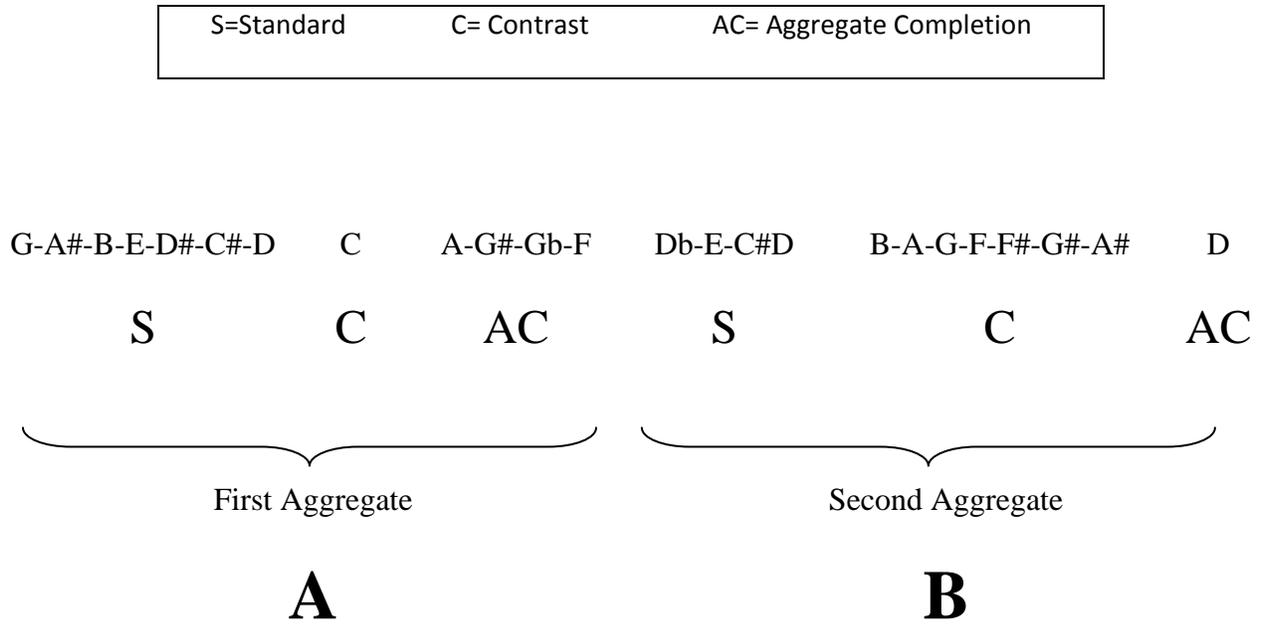
The musical score consists of four systems of staves. The first system is labeled with measures 1, 2, 3, and 4. The treble clef contains notes G#4, A4, B4, and C5. The bass clef contains notes F#3, G3, and A3. The second system is labeled with measures 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. The treble clef contains notes G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, and F#5. The bass clef contains notes F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, and E4. The third system is labeled with measure 12. The treble clef contains notes G#4, A4, B4, and C5. The bass clef contains notes F#3, G3, and A3. The fourth system is empty.

**Musical Example 5.8: The second chromatic aggregate of *Estudio No. 17*, Op. 143<sup>126</sup>**

In this composition, control of the chromatic aggregate has an important role in the articulation of form, as shown in Chart 5.4. First, each of the two chromatic aggregates marks the

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

beginning and ending of a section. The first seven pitches from the A section and the first four pitches from the B section set the standard. The following pitch from the A section and the following seven pitches from the B section emphasize a contrasting event. Finally, the completion of the aggregate marks the ending of the section and the piece.



**Chart 5.4: The form of *Etude No. 17*, 143**

**Arboleda, Op. 154**

*Arboleda*, Op. 154, is part of a collection of 31 character pieces with descriptive titles about nature. The preexistent melody for this piece is an anonymous Costa Rican folk tune entitled *El Torito*. Musical Example 5.9 shows both the tune and its numerical series: 5-(0)-2-1-4-3-7-9. Musical Example 5.10 shows the melodic-based and the complementary scale. The

composer did not provide the numerical series for this piece; thus, for this analysis, it is unknown if the composer added extra numbers to the series or not.

CON MI GUITARRA A MANO

**EL TORITO**  
(CANTO Y DANZA MUY POPULAR)

Autor desconocido

Musical Example 5.9: Costa Rican folk tune “El Torito” by unknown composer<sup>127</sup>

a) Melodic-based scale

b) Complementary scale

Musical Example 5.10: Melodic-based and complementary scales from *El Torito*

<sup>127</sup> Anonymous, “El Torito,” score, Foro Costa Rica, <http://www.forcostarica.org/2011/09/el-torito-musica-tipica-costarricense.html> p://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/stable/3435987.

*Arboleda* presents a more complex binary form with: an A section, a varied repetition of the A section (A'), the B section, and a coda. In this composition, Alfagüell completes five chromatic scales. As shown in Chart 5.5, the A section begins with pitch class C followed by a series of notes based on the numerical series. The standard set of pitches uses the following six pitches from the chromatic aggregate, as shown in Musical Example 5.11:

5   2   1   4   3   7   9  
**C - G - F - E - C - A - D - F**

Chart 5.5: The standard set of pitches from *Arboleda*, Op. 154

Musical Example 5.11: The first six pitches from the chromatic aggregate<sup>128</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Mario Alfagüell, "Arboleda, Op. 154," score, 2008, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

Alfagüell presents chromatic pitches Ab, Eb, and Bb as part of another series of pitches also based on the numerical series (Chart 5.6). In this particular case, the composer implies the initial pitch class C. Finally, the composer concludes the A section with the presentation of the tenth chromatic pitch (F#) as a sustained pitch (Musical Example 5.12).

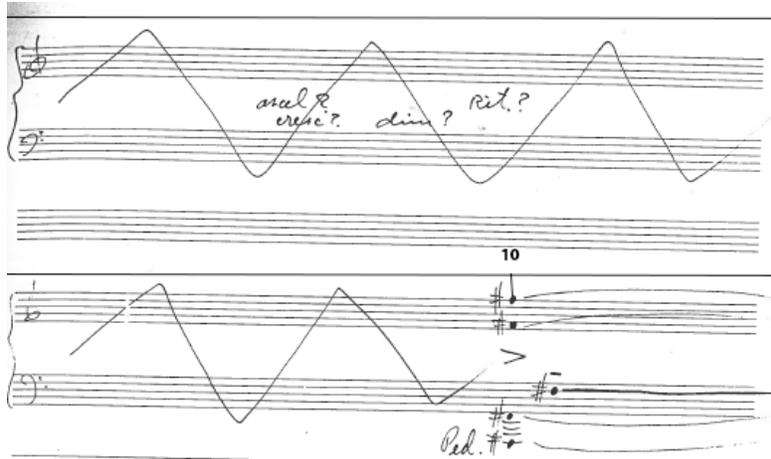
5   2   1   4   3   7   9

(C) - F - G - Ab - C - Eb - Bb - G

**Chart 5.6: The contrasting set of pitches from *Arboleda*, Op. 154**

The image shows a handwritten musical score for piano accompaniment, consisting of four systems of staves. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals. Key features include:

- System 1:** Starts with a treble clef and a common time signature. It contains a melodic line with dotted rhythms and a bass line with a similar rhythmic pattern. The instruction "con Ped." is written below the first few notes. The system ends with a large triangle and the word "etc." written above it.
- System 2:** Continues the melodic and bass lines. The instruction "con Ped. sempre" is written below the notes.
- System 3:** Features a large number "7" above the staff. The instruction "sempre con Ped." is written below the notes.
- System 4:** Features a large number "9" above the staff. The instruction "con Ped. sempre" is written below the notes. The system ends with a large triangle and the word "etc." written above it.

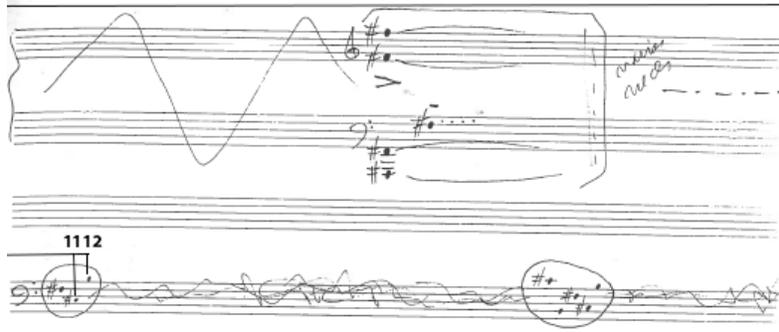


**Musical Example 5.12: The following four pitches from the chromatic aggregate<sup>129</sup>**

The previous section, which is divided into three musical events, repeats immediately after its first presentation, but in a different order. The composer presents the second set of pitches before the first, but still presents the sustained F# as the third event marking the ending of the A' section.

The first chromatic scale is completed at the beginning of the B section with pitch classes C# and B. The musical event that completes the first aggregate uses the first three numbers of the numerical series: Pitch C# is a five below F# and pitch B is a two below C# (in this case, the composer presents pitch class B an octave higher). Besides marking the ending of the first aggregate, this musical event also marks the beginning of the second aggregate with the same pitch classes.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.



**Musical Example 5.13: The completion and beginning of the first and second chromatic aggregates<sup>130</sup>**

The B section presents a musical quotation of two phrases from *El Torito*: phrases one (mm. 1-8) and two (mm. 9-12). The B section also presents the completion of two chromatic scales (one for each musical quotation). The first aggregate starts with pitches C#, B, and F# as an accompanying figure. Then the first musical quotation adds five additional pitches in the following order: G-C-D-E-F. The remaining pitches from the chromatic aggregate (A-G#-Eb-Bb) contrasts the five pitches from the tune.

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

Handwritten musical score for Musical Example 5.14. The score is organized into seven systems of staves. The first system features a treble clef staff with a circled chord and a circled chord with notes 1, 2, and 3 above it. The second system shows a bass clef staff with notes 4, 5, and 6 above it. The third system features a treble clef staff with notes 7 and 8 above it. The fourth system shows a treble clef staff with a 'loc' marking above it. The fifth system features a treble clef staff with a circled chord and notes 9, 10, 11, and 12 above it. The sixth system shows a bass clef staff with notes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 above it.

Musical Example 5.14: The completion of the second chromatic aggregate<sup>131</sup>

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

The third chromatic scale starts with the same musical figure that concluded the second chromatic scale, but an octave lower. It begins with pitches A, G#, Eb, and Bb. The musical quotation of the second phrase from *El Torito* presents six additional pitches from the aggregate in the following order: F#, G, B, C, D, and E. The composer completes the aggregate by adding pitch classes F and Db as part of the closing event of the B section.

Musical Example 5.15: The completion of the third chromatic aggregate<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

Alfagüell presents the fourth chromatic scale in the coda. It starts with pitches Eb, Bb, G#, and A, the same set of pitches that began the third chromatic scale. The composer adds two additional pitches (F and Db) in the following event, which completes the chromatic scale with the addition of the rest of the pitches in the following order: C-D-E-B-G-F#. After the completion of the aggregate, the coda ends with the same sonority that began the fourth chromatic scale.

Musical Example 5.16: The completion of the fourth chromatic aggregate<sup>133</sup>

In this piece, control of the chromatic aggregate articulates the form in the following way. The completion of the first aggregate articulates the ending of the A section and the beginning of the B section. The following two aggregates articulate the two musical quotations in the B section. The last aggregate articulates the coda. A more careful analysis suggests that every new pitch from the aggregate articulates an inner structure in each section. For instance, in the A and A' sections, the composer articulates each event with a new chromatic pitch. In the first aggregate of the B section, the *El Torito* tune contrasts the initial set of three pitches with five

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

chromatic pitches. In the second aggregate of the B section, the second part of the *El Torito* tune contrasts the initial set of four pitches with six pitches. Finally, in the coda, the composer contrasts the initial set of pitches with two and then with six pitches in the following events.

**Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260**

The work *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260, is a chaconne with nineteen variations (*diferencias*) written in December of 2011. For this composition, Alfagüell used a different approach, due to the nature of the variation form. The completion of the chromatic scale does not provide important information about the overall structure of the piece since one must expect such completion in every variation. The most important aspect of this composition lies in the different ways the composer completes the aggregate in each variation..

*Chacona para la Mano Derecha* is based on a musical cryptogram of the name Won Yong Lee. Musical Example 5.17 shows the cryptogram with its numerical series, the melodic-based, and the complementary scales.

a) Musical cryptogram and the numerical series

<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>				
W	o	n	Y	o	n	g	L	e	e

b) Melodic-based scale



c) Complementary scale



**Musical Example 5.17: Musical cryptogram, melodic-based and complementary scales, and the numerical series from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260**

**The Theme**

Alfagüell presents the theme by taking a single pitch class from the musical cryptogram in the following order of appearance: C-G-Bb-B-D-A-E. The composer gradually presents each of the seven pitches in a chord until it produces a tone cluster. The theme is one of the sections in which the composer does not complete the chromatic aggregate.

Musical Example 5.18: The Theme from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>134</sup>

### Diferencia I

Alfagüell completes the first chromatic scale in the first variation. Identifying the aggregate in order of appearance does not provide an accurate description of this variation; instead, one must trace how the composer presents the seven pitches from the theme (black numbers) and the five chromatic pitches (red numbers). Alfagüell presents the theme in groups of two pitches and in retrograde form; in this particular case, every group of two notes presents a new pitch from the retrograde and an old pitch from the previous group. For instance, Diferencia I starts with pitches D and E from the retrograde; then, E remains for the second group while A is added. This pattern repeats itself for the entire variation. Chart 5.7a shows the theme in its

<sup>134</sup> Mario Alfagüell, "Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260," score, 2011, Mario Alfagüell Personal Library.

original and retrograde forms. Chart 5.7b shows the grouping of two pitches that Alfagüell used for Diferencia I. The composer presents the five chromatic pitches one by one in order of appearance according to the complementary scale; Alfagüell presents the set of chromatic pitches twice: first in its original form and then in retrograde.

Theme in retrograde

Complementary scale in retrograde

Musical Example 5.19: Diferencia I from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

a) The Theme in its Original and Retrograde Forms



b) The Grouping of Pitches for Diferencia I

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6	Group 7	Group 8	Group 9
D-E	E-A	A-G	G-D	D-C	C-B	B-Bb	Bb-G	G-C

Chart 5.7: The use of the retrograde form in Diferencia I

**Diferencia II**

The second variation follows an idea similar to the first. In this case, the composer presents the theme in groups of three pitches and the complementary scale in groups of two pitches. Variation two presents the theme in its original form, and the composer only removed the initial repeated pitch C. He presents the complementary scale twice in its original (C#-D#-F-Gb-A#) and retrograde forms.

Musical Example 5.20: Diferencia II from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>136</sup>

### Diferencia III

The third variation continues the same pattern of variations one and two. In this case, Alfagüell presents the theme in groups of four pitches in retrograde form and the complementary scale in groups of three pitches in original and retrograde forms. The composer removed no repeated pitches in this variation.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

Theme in retrograde

Complementary scale in retrograde

Musical Example 5.21: *Diferencia III* from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>137</sup>

**Diferencia IV**

In essence, the fourth variation continues the same pattern of variations one to three; however, the identification of missing pitches, as well as the recognition of the original and retrograde forms, are more complex to generalize. Alfagüell presents the theme in four blocks of five pitches each. The first block presents pitches G to D of the original form without the initial pitch C. The second block presents pitches Bb, B, C, D, and A. The third block presents pitches B to A. The last block presents pitches D to C in the retrograde form and removes the second presentation of pitch class D. The composer presents the complementary scale in four groups of four pitches each. The first group presents pitches Gb to C# (Db) from the retrograde form. The second group presents pitches D# (Eb) to Ab from the original form. The third and fourth groups present pitches Ab to D# (Eb) from the retrograde form.

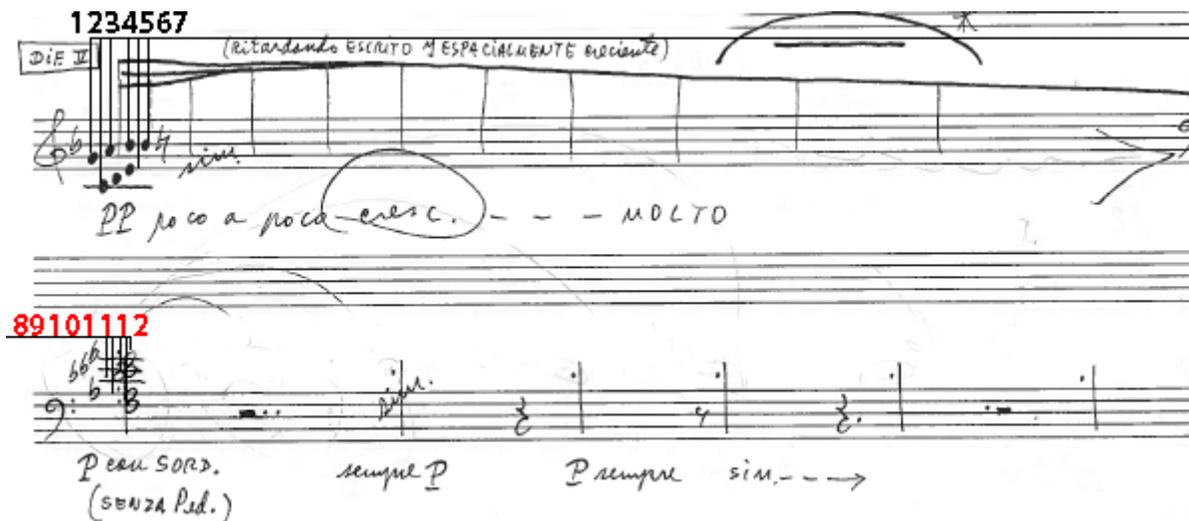
<sup>137</sup> Ibid.



Musical Example 5.22: Diferencia IV from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>138</sup>

### Diferencia V

The fifth variation is the culmination of the pattern used thus far. Alfagüell presents the theme in a single block of seven pitches and the complementary scale in a single block of five pitches.



Musical Example 5.23: Diferencia V from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>139</sup>

### Diferencia VI

The sixth variation presents a significant contrast compared to the other five variations. First, Alfagüell switches from graphic to rhythmic notation. Second, the complementary scale seems to have a more melodic role than before. Variation six presents a top voice based on the complementary scale and a bottom voice based on the melodic-based scale which is, in essence,

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

the theme. Allfagiell presents all five pitches from the complementary scale during the first three measures of the variation. He also presents the first four pitches from the melodic-based scale in measure one. He then, presents two additional pitches in measure eight. Finally, Alfagiell completes the aggregate in measure ten with a scale exchange between voices.

Handwritten musical score for "Diferencia VI" from "Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260". The score is written on grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs). It includes various musical notations such as dynamics (Silb. ff, Ped., p), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions like "Vacío" and "Racimos o CLUSTERS en teclas NEGRAS, BLANCAS y AMBAS puestas, respectivamente". Measure numbers 1 through 12 are indicated at the top, with measures 8, 10, and 11 highlighted in red. A box labeled "DIF. VII" is present in the lower section of the score. The bottom of the score shows some scribbled-out notation.

Musical Example 5.24: Diferencia VI from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>140</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.



and the second in its original form (5-3-1-2-7). Both sections of the eighth variation are accompanied by a tone cluster in the background.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for 'Diferencia VIII' from 'Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260'. The score is organized into three systems. The top system features a piano part with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part contains notes numbered 1-7, 8-12, and 5. The bass clef part contains notes numbered 7, 2, 1, 3, 5. The middle system shows a piano part with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part has notes numbered 7, 2, 1, 3, 5. The bass clef part has notes numbered 5, 3, 1, 2, 7. The bottom system shows a piano part with a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part has notes numbered 5, 3, 1, 2, 7. The bass clef part has notes numbered 5, 3, 1, 2, 7. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (pp, f), articulation (acc), and performance instructions (poco rall, legg.).

Musical Example 5.26: Diferencia VIII from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>142</sup>

### Diferencia IX

In the ninth variation, Allfagüell completes the chromatic aggregate in coordination with the numerical series. The composer presents the complementary scale in the lowest voice, as an accompanying figure, and the melodic-based scale in the top voice twice according to the

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

numerical series. He divides the presentation of the melodic-based scale into five sections. The first section presents six pitches from the scale and the second section completes the first presentation of the melodic-based scale. The third section presents four pitches from the scale and the fourth section completes the second presentation of the melodic-based scale. The fifth and last section concludes the variation with six pitches from the melodic-based scale. The composer represents the numerical series as blocks of intervals. The first section presents blocks of parallel fourths (5), the second section parallel minor thirds (3), the third section parallel minor seconds (1), the fourth section parallel major seconds (2), and the last section parallel fifths (7).

Musical Example 5.27: Diferencia IX from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>143</sup>

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

## Diferencia X

Alfagüell divides the tenth variation into three sections: the presentation of pitches F and Gb from the complementary scale, the completion of the complementary scale through a series of tremolos, and a series of blocks of intervals based on the complementary scale. The composer also presents the melodic-based scale through the second and third sections in retrogrades. He elides the ending of the melodic-based scale to the beginning of the eleventh variation.

Musical Example 5.28: Diferencia X from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>144</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

## Diferencia XI

Alfagüell presents the eleventh variation through three main musical lines. The lowest voice presents the melodic-based scale by first starting on C and then jumping to B in order to continue as a retrograde scale. The composer presents the complementary scale through the top and middle voices in blocks of intervals.

Musical Example 5.29: Diferencia XI from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>145</sup>

## Diferencia XII

The twelfth variation is one of those moments when the composer does not clearly complete the aggregate. The variation starts with pitch C, which belongs to the melodic-based scale. Then it continues as a retrograde scale in groups of two pitches. The complementary scale begins in blocks of two pitches starting with Gb and F. The composer completes the

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

complementary scale but not the melodic-based scale. The composer apparently completes the aggregate through a series of tone clusters that end the variation.

The musical score is handwritten and consists of four systems of staves. The first system is labeled with measure numbers 1, 8, and 9. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The notation includes various dynamics such as *pp misterioso*, *P*, and *f*. There are also performance instructions like *MISTERIO sempre* and *(BRAZO)*. The second system is labeled with measure numbers 2, 10, and 11. The third system is labeled with measure numbers 4 and 12. The fourth system is labeled with measure numbers 5, 6, and 7. The notation includes various dynamics such as *pp sempre*, *f*, and *pp*. There are also performance instructions like *Sole. f line.* and *(BRAZO)*. The score features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines with many accidentals and ties.

Musical Example 5.30: Diferencia XII from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>146</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

## Diferencia XIII and XIV

Variations thirteen and fourteen present a higher degree of complexity compared to the other variations. Alfagüell presents three layers of sound. Layer one (tenor line) presents the theme in its original form (Diferencia XIII) and then in retrograde form (Diferencia XIV). Layer two (alto line) presents the complementary scale served multiple times in its original and retrograde forms. Layer three (the outer voices) presents a paraphrase of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* by Claude Debussy. Variation XIV ends with a homophonic texture using harmonies mostly based on the numbers five and seven from the numerical series.

The image shows a musical score for 'Diferencia XIII and XIV'. At the top, there is a small snippet of Debussy's music with the instruction 'p doux et expressif'. Below this, a chromatic scale is shown with notes: C#, B, A#, A, G#, G, A, B, C, C#, B, A#, A, G#, G. Numerical series are written below the notes: 8 1, 9 2, 10 3, 11 4, 12, 5, 6, 7, 6, 5. The main score consists of two systems of handwritten musical notation. The first system is labeled 'DIF. XIII' and 'pp VARIABLE'. The second system is labeled 'DIF. XIV'. The notes in the second system are annotated with numerical series: 6, 12, 11 5, 10, 9 4, 8 3, 2, 1. At the bottom of the second system, there is a blue numerical series: 7 5 7 5 7 5 5&3.

Musical Example 5.31: Diferencia XII from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>147</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

## Diferencia XV

The fifteenth variation completes the aggregate through several sets of four pitches combining the theme with the complementary scale. For instance in the first set, Alfagüell combines pitches C and G from the theme with pitches Gb and Ab from the complementary scale. In the second set, Alfagüell combines pitches G and Bb from the theme with pitches F and Gb from the complementary scale. The composer applies the same technique for the following sets: set three [(A#-B)-(Eb-F)], set four [(B-D)-(C#-Eb)], and set five [(D-A)-(Db-F)]. Finally, Alfagüell completes the aggregate with pitch E from the theme combined with pitches Gb and Ab from the complementary scale.

Musical Example 5.32: Diferencia XV from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

## Diferencia XVI

Alfagüell presents the chromatic aggregate in variation sixteen through a series of chords. The composer presents the theme in the middle voice in retrograde and he removed the repeated pitches D, G, and C from the theme. He also presents the complementary scale in the outer voices in groups of two pitches. The composer presents the five pitches of the complementary scale in the first three chords and presents the complementary scale, mostly in retrograde, in the rest of the harmonies.

The musical score for Diferencia XVI is presented in four systems. The first system contains measures 8, 9, 10, and 11. The second system contains measures 12 and 3. The third system contains measures 5 and 6. The fourth system contains measure 7 and a section labeled 'DIF. XVII' with 'espresso' and '(LOCO)' markings. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Musical Example 5.33: Diferencia XVI from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>149</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

## Diferencia XVII

Alfagüell divides the seventeenth variation into two sections. Section one presents the theme in the top voice and the complementary scale as an accompanying figure in the lowest voice. Alfagüell presents the theme in its original form without repeated pitches. The composer presents the complementary scale in its original form as well as in retrograde. The second section presents the melodic-based scale in its original form and the complementary scale twice: first in retrograde and then in its original form.

Musical Example 5.34: Diferencia XVII from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>150</sup>

## Diferencias XVIII and XIX

The last two variations present a significant change compared to the rest of the composition. Both variations present only pitches from the melodic-based scale and, thus, do not

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

complete the aggregate. The eighteenth variation presents the melodic-based scale in groups of two pitches and in retrograde form. The nineteenth variation presents the melodic-based scale in two groups: first a tone cluster based on pitches G to D; and then pitches A, E, and C from the theme separately.

**Musical Example 5.35: Diferencias XVIII and XIX from *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260<sup>151</sup>**

In this composition, Mario Alfagüell uses a variety musical materials such as the theme, the melodic-based scale, the complementary scale, and the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. He also uses a variety of techniques to present those materials such as different types of harmonies,

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

textures, or music notation systems. Chart 5.8 describes the musical materials and the technique that the composer used in each variation.

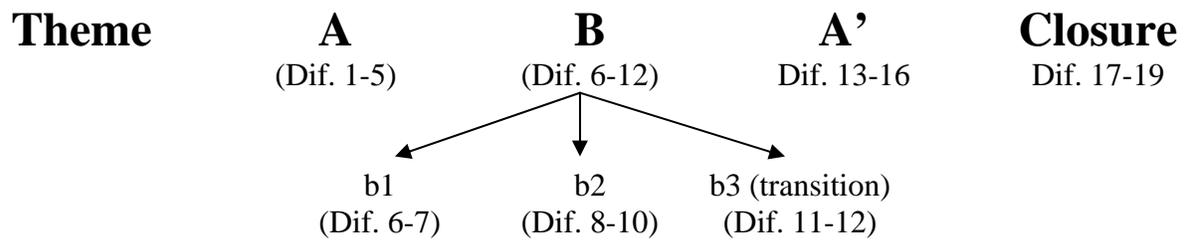
<b>Variation</b>	<b>Technique</b>	<b>Musical Material</b>
Theme	Gradual addition of pitches from the theme until it forms a tone cluster.	Theme: original form
Diferencia 1	The juxtaposition of the theme and the complementary scale. The composer presents the theme in harmonic intervals and the complementary scale in single pitches.	Theme (T): retrograde Complementary scale (CS): original form and retrograde
Diferencia 2	The juxtaposition of the theme and the complementary scale. The composer presents the theme in chords with three pitches and the complementary scale in melodic intervals.	T: original form CS: original form and retrograde.
Diferencia 3	The juxtaposition of the theme and the complementary scale. The composer presents the theme in chords with four pitches and the complementary scale in arpeggios with three pitches.	T: retrograde CS: original form and retrograde
Diferencia 4	The juxtaposition of the theme and the complementary scale. The composer presents the theme in chords with five pitches and the complementary scale in arpeggios with four pitches.	T: original form CS: original form and retrograde
Diferencia 5	The composer presents the theme in one chord with seven pitches and the complementary scale in another chord with five pitches	T: as pitch classes for a chord. CS: as pitch classes for a chord
Diferencia 6	The juxtaposition of the melodic-based and the complementary scales. They both form two melodic lines that use rhythmic notation and non-imitative polyphony.	Melodic-based scale (MBS): retrograde CS: as pitch classes for a melody
Diferencia 7	The combination of three music notations in a melody and accompaniment texture. The accompaniment uses graphic notation, the melodic-based scale uses proportional notation, and the complementary scale uses rhythmic notation.	MBS: retrograde CS: original form
Diferencia 8	The composer presents the melodic-based and the complementary scales as scales. He also presents the numerical series in harmonic intervals.	MBS: retrograde CS: original form Numerical Series (NS): original form and retrograde.
Diferencia 9	The juxtaposition of the melodic-based scale, the complementary scale, and the numerical	MBS: as pitch classes for a line CS: original form

	series. The composer presents the complementary scale as an ascending scale and the melodic-based scale as harmonic intervals based on the numerical series.	NS: original form
Diferencia 10	The juxtaposition of the melodic-based scale, the complementary scale, and the numerical series. The composer presents the melodic-based scale as a descending scale and the complementary scale in harmonic intervals based on the numerical series. The composer does not present the complementary scale or the numerical series in order.	MBS: retrograde CS: as pitch classes NS: as numbers
Diferencia 11	The juxtaposition of the melodic-based and the complementary scales. The composer presents the melodic-based scale as a descending scale except for pitch classes C and Bb. The composer presents the complementary scale as harmonic intervals.	MBS: retrograde CS: as pitch classes for a melody
Diferencia 12	The juxtaposition of the melodic-based and the complementary scales. The composer presents the melodic-based scale as an incomplete descending scale except for pitch classes C and Bb. The composer presents the complementary scale in harmonic intervals. The composer completes the melodic-based scale with tone clusters.	MBS: retrograde (incomplete) CS: original form (incomplete)
Diferencia 13	The juxtaposition of the theme, the complementary scale, and the Debussy prelude in a polyphonic four-part texture. The composer presents the theme and the complementary scales in the inner voices. The composer presents the Debussy prelude in the outer voices using the “hocket” technique.	T: original form CS: original form and retrograde Debussy Prelude (DP): original form
Diferencia 14	The juxtaposition of the theme, the complementary scale, and the Debussy prelude in a polyphonic four-part texture. The composer presents the theme and the complementary scales in the inner voices. The composer presents the Debussy prelude in the outer voices using the “hocket” technique. The composer concludes the variation with chords based on numbers 5 and 7 from the Numerical Series.	T: retrograde CS: original form and retrograde DP: original form NS: as numbers for chords
Diferencia 15	The composer combines pitches from the theme and the melodic-based scale to form arpeggios, chords, and melodic lines.	T: original form CS: original form and retrograde

Diferencia 16	The composer juxtaposes the theme and the complementary scale with a series of chord with three pitches.	T: retrograde CS: original form and retrograde
Diferencia 17	The composer first presents the theme accompanied by the complementary scale. Then he presents the melodic-based and the complimentary scales as scales.	T: original form MBS: original form CS: original form and retrograde
Diferencia 18	The composer presents the melodic-based scale in harmonic intervals.	MBS: retrograde
Diferencia 19	The composer presents the theme first as a chord with five pitches, then as a melodic interval, and finally as single pitch.	T: original form

**Chart 5.8: Summary of techniques and musical materials per variation**

In this composition, Alfagüell presents an overall structure through the grouping of several variations, as shown in Chart 5.9. After Alfagüell presents the theme, the composer presents four main sections. Alfagüell differentiates each section using specific thematic materials and compositional techniques. The A and A' sections use the theme in its original or retrograde forms; the B section uses the melodic-based scale in retrograde instead of theme; and the closure combines the theme with the melodic-based scale. The common factor between variations belonging to the B section is the melodic-based scale; however, Alfagüell divides the B section in three subsections. B1 features a combination of different music notation systems; b2 features harmonic intervals based on the Numerical Series, and b3 features a transitional section with the absence of the numerical series and the incomplete presentation of the melodic-based and the complementary scales.



**Chart 5.9: The overall structure of *Chacona para la Mano Derecha*, Op. 260**

## CONCLUSIONS

Due to its three main influences (African, Indigenous, and European), Central American music is rich in its variety of styles. Compositions belonging to any of those traditions present clear and distinctive features. For instance, music with African origin uses multiple drums in addition to the human voice in a responsorial way. Music with indigenous heritage is monophonic, non-metrical, and has a connection to the spiritual world. Finally, music from the European tradition mirrors the major trends of western music but at a delay of thirty to fifty years. Music from the central region of Costa Rica is closer to the European musical practice than to any other tradition.

Music in Costa Rica has changed dramatically during the past two centuries. The general musical environment of the country improved during the second half of the nineteenth century with the arrival of foreign musicians who taught younger generations how to perform and appreciate academic music. In consequence, new generations of musicians made constant efforts to promote academic music. This culminated in the foundation of solid music institutions such as the National Music Conservatory and National Symphony Orchestra. Those institutions eventually led to the development of professional musicians such as, Mario Alfagüell.

Scholars consider Alfagüell one of the most productive, yet controversial, composers of Costa Rica. Alfagüell grew up exposed to several musical trends different from the tonal tradition. This exposure eventually grew into an inner urgency to find a unique and personal approach for music composition. One can find some of Alfagüell's personal approaches in the early stages of his compositional life; however, most of them appeared after his return to Costa Rica, from Germany, in 1980. Some of his principal approaches are the System of Numerical Series, a new approach for rhythm and meter, and the use of graphic notation.

Four, or possibly five, apparent compositional periods divide Alfagüell's musical journey. An informal, autodidactic, and experimental way of composing music characterizes the first period (1969-1976). Personal growth and change to a more formal way for music composition characterize the second period (1976-1980). The third period (1980-1999 approximately) features a development of his later compositional style and a more complex use of the system of numerical series. The fourth period (2000-2013 approximately) presents a turn to a simpler use of his system of numerical series. And if he indeed is in his fifth period (2014-present), it is characterized by a more retrospective approach.

Alfagüell's musical style is different from other musical practices in Costa Rica. Some people categorize his musical output as "illogical." Different analytical methods, such as the control of the chromatic aggregate, help in the understanding of his compositions. The control of the chromatic aggregate is a compositional technique as well as an analytical approach that explores how composers present all pitches from the chromatic scale in a single composition. The control of the chromatic aggregate functions through the establishment of a standard sonority, while and the rest of the chromatic pitches contrast such a standard. Control of the chromatic aggregate is one of the main compositional approaches of Alfagüell. His standard sonority usually derives from a preexistent melody and its numerical series. The contrast is usually created through the use of the complementary scale. In Alfagüell's compositions, the presentation of contrasting pitches is fundamental point for the articulation of structure and the completion of the chromatic aggregate normally marks the ending of important sections. I wrote this dissertation with the purpose of documenting the significant amount of credibility that Alfagüell has as a composer. This study also serves as a response to the needs of those

listeners who claim to not understand his musical style or whom very emphatically express that his compositions have little musical coherence.

Originally this document consisted of two sections: a historical study that placed the composer in context and a theoretical examination that explained his musical style. The original structure had five chapters; however, interesting turns occurred throughout the writing process. What at the beginning was a brief historical overview of music in Latin America ended up as a study of musical diversity in the region. This came about as the result of a combination of historical research and a series of stylistic analyses.

Another major turn occurred in the biographical overview of the composer, which was originally intended as a brief informative section with the purpose of introducing the composer to the reader. As a result of the interview with the composer presented in appendix one, the biographical overview now assists to explain why the style of the composer is unique. This chapter also serves to trace specific periods of Alfagüell's music compositions.

The last major turn occurred during the writing of the last chapter. In the beginning, the control of the aggregate became the analytical method for three works. However, through the reading of the article "Linear Ordering of the Chromatic Aggregate in Classical Symphonic Music" by Henry Burnett and Shaugn O'Donnell, I discovered a deeper application of the control of the aggregate. Such application not only provided a specific way of designing diagrams for the analysis, but it also provided valuable information on the use of this technique in the context of tonal tradition.

### **Further Studies**

The present document explores different areas related to music in Latin America. Chapters from this investigation run from a historical overview of Latin American music to a detailed analysis of works by Alfagüell. Researching the history of music in Central America presents a musicological challenge due to the lack of documentation. It becomes an even bigger challenge when investigating a non-western music tradition such as Afro-Caribbean or indigenous music. Musicologists need to devote time and effort on expanding knowledge about the music diversity of the region.

A similar situation exists concerning the history of music in Costa Rica as well as the biographical overview of the composer. Currently, scholars have compiled only a limited number of sources that describe in detail a narrow timeframe in the music history of the country. Musicologists need to further explore specific periods of Costa Rica's music history. Biographical information of composers in Costa Rica is mostly limited to short résumés written by composers. The creation of a large body of detailed biographies in this area of study is far from completion.

The second portion of this document represents a more complex challenge. Chapter four, "The Musical Approaches of Alfagüell," provides a general description of the composer's various musical techniques; however, this chapter should expand its content into a textbook or a treatise. The last chapter of this document presents issues that exhibit the greatest need for further exploration. A significant number of Alfagüell's works are left unexplored in this investigation and, those examined, were done using a single analytical method. Theorists should apply the control of the chromatic aggregate in the rest of the catalog of works and explore other

analytical methods. Eventually, it is suggested that theorists should systemize a paradigmatic analysis in order provide a more comprehensive study of Alfagüell's music.

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## APPENDIX A

### AN INTERVIEW WITH MARIO ALFAGÜELL

The following interview took place at the School of Music of the National University of Costa Rica on Thursday August 14<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday August 20<sup>th</sup> of 2014. The interview consisted of seven pre-prepared questions about the life and the musical views of Mario Alfagüell; however, throughout the conversation, this author extended it to nine questions. The interview lasted three hours and ten minutes and this author recorded it digitally. This appendix presents a summary of the most important ideas presented by the composer (unless otherwise stated, all translations are by this author).

#### **1. What was your relationship with music during your childhood? What inspired and encouraged you to study music?**

“I was raised in a Catholic family in which everyone was proud that our great uncle, Monseñor Rubén Odio Herrera, was the archbishop of San José. Also my uncle, Carlos Joaquín Alfaro Odio, was a very important theology professor at the Costa Rican Seminary. I also grew up in a neighborhood near the Apostolic Nunciature. Surrounded by a very religious environment it was not uncommon for us to actively participate in masses and processions as altar boys for the archbishop. This gave me the opportunity to participate in official Catholic trips, which exposed me to the pomp and extravagance of music and art in the context of the Catholic Church. The Catholic mass was very traditional at that time; it was performed in Latin and it had an important use of music, theatre and art in general. The music combined Gregorian chant with compositions for organ and choir. Around the same time I also developed an interest in architecture; however, during my high school junior year, I had to find another field of study after

discovering that there was no architecture school in Costa Rica. This new field became music.

My interest in music was partially encouraged by Luis Carlos Trejos Escalante, father of Costa Rican singer Aurelia Trejos. Luis Carlos was a very knowledgeable man about the arts and we spent many hours daily reading poetry, talking about culture, and listening to the music of Beethoven, Stravinsky, and Debussy. I also learned how to play the piano and eventually I started to analyze several compositions by myself such as *Claire de Lune*, *La Fille Aux Cheveux de Lin*, and *La Cathédrale Engloutie* by Debussy or the *Largo e Mesto* from *Piano Sonata*, Op. 10 No.3 by Beethoven.

The time I spent at La Salle High School was also very important for the development of my musical interest. I was the soloist of the choir conducted by musician Alcides Prado who also taught me various music rudiments. I had the opportunity to sing several compositions such as *The Brindisi* from Verdi's *La Traviata* or *Mattinata* by Ruggero Leoncavallo. I also spent several hours at the school's chapel playing by ear Gregorian Chants that the Lasallian Brothers sang during services. Eventually one of the Lasallian Brothers showed me a score so that I could examine the music."

**2. You mentioned that three of your main interests were music, drawing, and architecture. Do you think this influenced your decision to use graphic notation?**

"Those interests not only encouraged the use of graphic notation but other approaches as well, such as the use of spatial notation. Structure is also important in my compositional method and I believe it has to do with my inner architect. When my former teacher, Benjamín Gutiérrez, showed me an aleatoric composition for the first time, I got so fascinated with the concept that I started composing immediately. He did

not show me any examples of graphic notation but I was already aware of that option through my personal research. Music education was very different than today; it used to be more open. Students were able to walk in and out from a classroom and no one cared if they were enrolled or not. This was the case for international institutions as well. I studied 10 years at the University of Costa Rica, but I spent most of the time traveling. I traveled to Mexico, South America, and Central America. I went to listen to orchestra rehearsals, lectures, and to discover new music compositions. Those trips were an awakening experience for me since I was not aware of all the wonderful possibilities that Latin America offered. In part that is the reason why my musical path is different from that of others. I was very much aware of what was happening in the world as well as of all the limitations of Costa Rica. When Benjamín Gutiérrez showed that aleatoric piece to everyone, I recognized immediately that it did not catch the attention of my classmates. Very soon I accepted the fact that I had to walk by myself a path that was very common in other countries but not in mine.”

**3. How was your musical experience at the University of Costa Rica? Who were the most influential teachers? Which of your compositions were the most important at that time?**

“Reading *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* by Robert Craft gave me the authority to take a different learning approach. Stravinsky said that he would have never been able to earn a doctorate degree. He valued more the focus and creativity on those topics that really interested him rather than perusing traditional conservatory training. Formal education was always questionable for me. I was the type of student who was very engaged only in those classes that I found interesting and useful for my personal

growth. For example, during my college years, I took music appreciation with Carlos Enrique Vargas, who treated me in a very special way. At that time, he was the principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra and I became his unofficial assistant. He took me to orchestra rehearsals and to his home, where I learned about several music-related topics. I organized orchestral parts, we talked about music, I listened to several of his compositions, and he provided me with different music materials, such as scores and recordings. Despite the fact that he was a very strict teacher who seriously valued traditional formal education, I always felt his support and encouragement for my musical growth. Another important personality at the National Conservatory was Bernal Flores. He was the first Costa Rican citizen ever to earn a doctorate degree in music. He came with a wide variety of new musical concepts that, on one hand, I found interesting but, on the other hand, produced desperation in some of his students due to the concept's extreme formalism. His contribution to the general musical environment through the principles of Howard Hanson and his ear training methods were undoubtable. Some of my musical approaches as well as my compositions were influenced by his "obsession" with extreme systematization of things. Among my most important compositions of that period I can mention: *Trio*, Op. 5 (a composition with graphic notation all the way through), *Heptágono* (a very curious composition that develops structures based on the number seven), and *Homenaje a Beethoven*."

#### **4. Why did you decide to study in Germany and not in another country?**

"I grew up with an admiration for German music, especially Beethoven's and Bach's and I thought it was a country that could provide me a good music education. At that time, my house was next to the Embassy of Germany and I constantly asked for

scholarships in music. Before going to Germany I went to a compositional seminar in Santiago de Compostela in Spain. At the seminar, I heard from some students that Freiburg was a good city for compositional studies under the baton of Professor Klaus Huber, Brian Ferneyhough, and their assistant Arturo Tamayo. I had more interest in studying in Germany than in other countries for several reasons, among them the fact that it provides a lot of opportunities to musicians. One day I decided to talk to this group of teachers and fortunately I was admitted to the *Staatliche Hochschule für Musik* for their graduate program. Another situation that impacted my decision to go to Germany was the fact that my wife, Carmen Méndez, was also admitted to the Music Education program.”

**5. Can you provide a brief summary of experiences in Germany including some of your most important music compositions?**

“The four years I spent in Germany were somehow problematic due to the cultural shock. In Costa Rica people sold the illusion that Europe was the most advanced continent of the world. It was shocking for me to discover that Europe also had ignorant people, injustices, and a lot of flaws in their political system. This was certainly an awakening experience for me. On one hand, I was experiencing the best of the European culture; but on the other hand, I was identifying the best of my country’s culture. This situation helped me develop a sense of nationalism as well as a rediscovering of the value of Latin American cultures. During that time, Europeans were very welcoming to Latin American citizens due to their sympathy for our efforts to dissolve political dictatorships. I remember a dinner I had with Klaus Huber and Arturo Tamayo where we talked about several topics related to Latin America. At that same reunion, they explained to me the

admission process for the school that consisted of writing the exposition of a Fugue, harmonic dictation, and analysis among other tasks. Klaus Huber's studio had ten German students and ten international students; I was the only student from Latin America.

Composing music at that time was very difficult due to the cultural shock and the complex compositional approaches that I was learning. Music education was very interesting in Freiburg; on one hand, teachers had an interest for very complex compositional methods, but on the other hand, they provided freedom for personal research of exotic musical elements. The combination of these two, freedom in the context of a clear structure, is one of the most distinctive features of my music. Among the most important compositions of that period I can mention *Ofertorio*, Op. 8; and a string quartet that was part of my final project. The cultural life was extremely rich in Germany. I was amazed by the quantity and quality of the concerts in Freiburg and the surrounding areas. The same was the case for other arts. Those aspects that you did not learn in a classroom setting you ended up learning by going to concerts, museums, and conferences, among other activities. The fact that Europe is a very small region also helped the attendance of major events. On one day, you could be listening to a Wagner Opera in Donaueschingen and on the next day you were listening to *The Coronation of Poppea* in Zürich. The school of music was related to the university in a very special way. On one hand, we were allowed to use their facilities but, on the other hand, it was an independent entity that provided a lot of administrative and teaching freedom.”

**6. The general perception of your output is that you have a very personal compositional style. How did you reach that style? Which composers influenced you in the development of that style?**

“This is a very interesting question because I am not a musician who doesn’t like music. On the contrary, I listen to music all day every day. For example, if the day is sunny I could listen to all Beethoven’s symphonies during the morning. If the day is cloudy, I may listen to all Sibelius’s symphonies instead. During the evenings, I almost only listen to chamber or evocative music. Every day I try to create a special connection between the music I am listening to and the weather. This experience affects my mood and it isolates me from unnecessary noise. I started my compositional journey by doing arrangements of popular songs, such as *Marea Baja* by Ronnie Aldrich, *Quiet Village* by Les Baxter, or the National Anthem of Costa Rica. The arrangements consisted of creating orchestral transcriptions of the pieces as well as filling in the harmonies with as many aggregate notes as possible. Due to my deeper study of Debussy, I was very interested in experimenting with the sonorities of ninths or elevenths. Early in my compositional career I was convinced that the style of Debussy was the only valid way to compose music. Another composer for whom I found admiration was Beethoven. Sometimes I did not know which composer I admired the most, Beethoven or Debussy. Some of my favorite compositions by Beethoven are *Symphony No. 3 “Eroica”*, *Symphony No. 9*, *Piano Sonatas Op. 90* and *Op. 111*. Besides Debussy and Beethoven, I found myself attracted to the work of different composers such as: Gregorian chants performed by the Lasallian Brothers; *O Bone Jesu* (Palestrina); *Missa Nostre Dame* (Machaut); *Symphony of Psalms*, *Les Noces*, *Canticum Sacrum*, and *Rite of Spring*

(Stravinsky); *Carmina Burana and Opera Antigona* (Orff); and *Mini Tocatas* (Bernal Flores) among other compositions. As you can see, I was originally exposed to other principles different to the tonal tradition.

Drama has also been a tremendous influence on my music. My attraction to theatrical productions got me to the point of wanting to study drama for a year at the University of Costa Rica. I always loved the idea of walking on stage for a music concert in a similar way actors walk on stage for a drama production. To give you an example, when I heard about some of the ideas of John Cage, I wanted to compose a concert for whistle tea maker and orchestra. While the orchestra is playing, the soloist heats up the whistle tea maker. Once the tea maker starts sounding, the soloist puts it in and out of the tea maker so that different sounds appear at different times. At the end of the concert the soloist makes tea or coffee and enjoys it with the orchestra musicians.”

- 7. I am going to mention four distinctive elements of your compositional style: rhythmic notations based on dotted values, graphic notation, spatial notation, and the numerical system. Would you mind sharing with us where you got those ideas?**

“I am not entirely sure where I got those ideas. For instance in the case of the rhythmic notation I remember noticing that in some works by Debussy such as *Les Collines d’Anacapri*, the composer switched from binary to ternary meters as well as from simple to compound rhythms in a very practical way. However, in other works by the same Debussy or Stravinsky the rhythmic notation was not very clear due to the use of grouplets. Therefore, I developed an idea of writing rhythmic values in the most practical, cleanest, and flexible way. Just as a matter of example, one day I realized that if

I have a measure of seven eighth notes I can group them into a rhythmic value of a double dotted half note. This discovery allowed me to create simple rhythms by dividing the double dotted half note into two double dotted quarter notes. Therefore, my conclusion was that I can easily switch from a 7/8 meter to a 2/double dotted quarter note in a single composition.

In the case of graphic notation, Benjamín Gutiérrez, who had just returned from Argentina, told me that composers were using that type of music notation. With my inner desire of becoming an architect, I spent all my life drawing things and I felt immediately attracted to that concept. In my opinion, the use of graphic notation has nothing to do with the pitch component. It has to do with the rhythmic aspect of music. A long time ago, composers used to say that there was nothing else that could be done with the tonal system. Today I say the same thing with the traditional rhythmic system. All the possibilities of rhythmic notation were already used by several composers during different time periods and the only aspect we have left is the exploration of non-metrical organizations. Besides what I learned from Benjamín Gutiérrez, part of my graphic notation inventory comes from principles by Penderecki. As far as the spatial notation is concerned I do not know where I got the idea. Once I learned the basic principles of graphic notation, I had to find my own way of writing things so that it could satisfy my musical needs. The use of spatial notation comes from my need to include principles of art and architecture into music.

The use of the numerical system is probably stemming from the principles I learned from Bernal Flores and my own experimentation with chord inversions. One of my obsessions in music is to grab a specific sonority and to present it in as many ways as

possible. I remember that one day when I was working on a tribute to Isaac Felipe Azofeifa (Costa Rican poet who appointed me as a music appreciation teacher at the University of Costa Rica) I discovered the possibility of juxtaposing three open fifths apart from each other by a half-step (E-B, C-G, Ab-Eb); I also realized that it was possible to reorganize them in several shapes including an hexatonic scale of half-steps and minor thirds. It was somewhere along that experimentation that I realized that it was very interesting to play around with the intervals of certain compositions.”

- 8. Your wife Carmen Méndez told me that both of you were reading a book about the late compositional periods of several composers. She also believes that you are currently in your late period of music composition. Are there any compositional periods in your musical journey? Are you in your late period of music composition?**

“When I read about those concepts I actually questioned myself if I am in a late period of music composition or if I am still in the same period I have been working on since several years ago. Before Germany I was very autodidactic in my learning process. During that period, I was already working on aleatoric techniques as well as on the experimentation of intervals but I never had any compositional lessons. During my years in Germany, I focused more on compositional techniques; however, I was not able to compose much. My compositional approach also became more tonal and it included quotations from music literature. Upon my return to Costa Rica, I became very productive; for example, in 1982 I presented ten new compositions in which two of them (*Sonata para la mano izquierda* Op. 14 and *Episodios Sinfónicos*, Op. 19) were awarded with the National Prize J. Aquileo Echeverría. During that period, I was very influenced

by my years in Germany and I became very formal in my compositional approach. That was also the time when I discovered my numerical system of music composition. Finally my compositional techniques became simpler, more flexible, and more intuitive. In that period I basically got rid of unnecessary complexity in my compositional skills and I became more improvisatory in my approach.

I don't think I am in a late period of music composition because I have been working for several years with the same system. I am also currently experiencing the desire to find something new. Since I want to change my compositional style, and I haven't found that change yet, I don't think I am in a new period of music composition. Some of the works from the first period are: *Homenaje a Beethoven* and *Trio*, Op. 5. From my second period I can mention the *Offertory*, Op. 8 and the string quartet. From my third period I should mention the *Sonata para la Mano Izquierda*, Op. 14 and *Episodios Sinfónicos*, Op. 19. Finally from my current period I can mention any of the participatory works which allows audiences to participate in the performance.”

**9. What projects or compositions are you working on at this moment?**

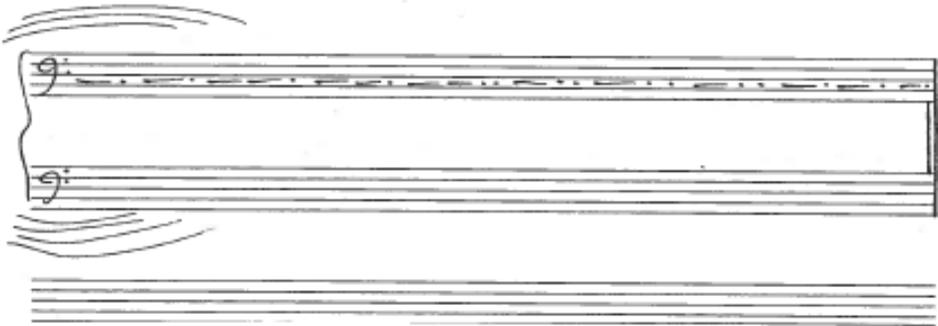
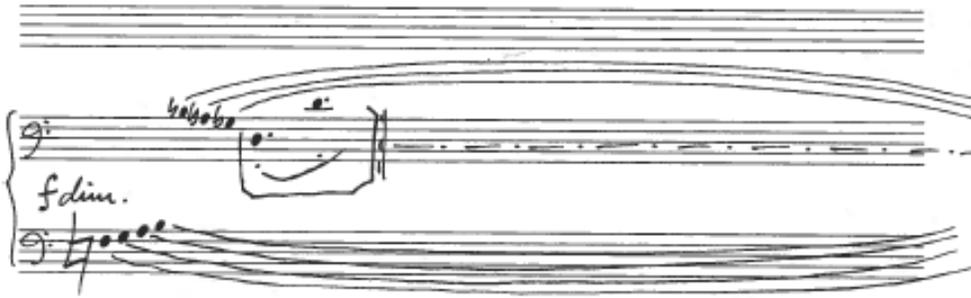
“This year we are celebrating 200 years of the birth of Juan Rafael Mora Porras (Costa Rican historical hero) and there are a lot of investigations going on about him. A friend of mine, Armando Vargas Araya (Costa Rican journalist, writer, and politician), gave me a document that is a scenic poem called *Don Juanito Mora entre el Olvido y la Leyenda* written by an Argentinian poet whose wife is from Costa Rica. For the past two months, I have been working on a musical setting of that poem which will become my ninth opera. In my spare time, I also composed the *Sonatina para la Mano Izquierda*, Op.

313, for the daughter of Adrian Zamora (staff member of the National University). I also have a long list of unfinished compositions that I work on occasionally. Soon I will start my sixteenth piano concerto dedicated to you.”

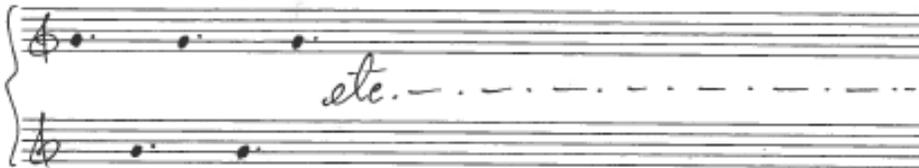
APPENDIX B

MUSIC SCORES OF MARIO ALFAGÜELL

*Estudio 17, Op. 143*



ESTUDIO 17. ~~XXIV~~ para JOSÉ M. DORRÉ ONDARRA, SRA. y FAM.



Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. The top staff has a treble clef and a sharp sign. The bottom staff has a bass clef and a sharp sign. The word "etc." is written in the center with a dashed line extending to the right.

Two empty musical staves.

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. The top staff has a treble clef and two sharp signs. The bottom staff has a bass clef and one sharp sign. The word "etc." is written in the center with a dashed line extending to the right.

Two empty musical staves.

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. The top staff has a treble clef and two sharp signs. The bottom staff has a bass clef and two sharp signs. The word "etc." is written in the center with a dashed line extending to the right.

Two empty musical staves.

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. The top staff has a treble clef and three sharp signs. The bottom staff has a bass clef and three sharp signs. The word "etc." is written in the center with a dashed line extending to the right.

Two empty musical staves.

etc. —————

etc. —————

*tempustoso*

*cresc.* *molto* *8a...* *15a...* *8a...* *8a...* *8a...*

SCHLICHTER, anno 14 de februarii 1803

*affabre* *affabre* *affabre*

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The treble clef staff contains two notes with a sharp sign (#) above them. The bass clef staff contains three notes with a flat sign (b) below them. The word "sile." is written above the treble staff, and "P" is written below it. The word "etc." is written above the treble staff, followed by a dashed line. The system concludes with two empty staves.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The treble clef staff has a circled ending consisting of four notes. The bass clef staff contains a dashed line. The system concludes with two empty staves.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. On the left, there is a violin part with a treble clef and a double bar line. The piano part consists of two staves. The upper staff has two notes with a sharp sign (#) above them, and the word "PP" is written below. The lower staff has one note with a flat sign (b) below it. The word "etc." is written above the upper staff, followed by a dashed line. The system concludes with two empty staves.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, consisting of two empty staves with a double bar line at the end. The system concludes with two empty staves.

Arboleda, Op. 154

ARBOLEDA <sup>21 años Clifac-Vera</sup>  
- 6<sup>o</sup> CUADERNO - Op. 154 sube

A I

PIANO *f*

*con Ped. sempre*

*sempre con Ped.*

*con Ped. sempre*

132 *sem-*

Handwritten musical notation for the first system. The treble clef staff contains a sequence of notes with a large triangle symbol above the final notes. The bass clef staff contains notes. The instruction *-pre can Ped.* is written below the bass staff. The word *etc.* is written above the treble staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system. The treble clef staff features a large triangle symbol. The bass clef staff contains notes. The instruction *can Ped. sempre* is written below the bass staff. A Roman numeral *II* is written above the treble staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system. The treble clef staff contains notes with a triangle symbol above. The bass clef staff contains notes. The instruction *sempre can Ped.* is written below the bass staff.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system. The treble clef staff contains notes with a triangle symbol above. The bass clef staff contains notes. The instruction *can Ped. sempre* is written below the bass staff. The number **133** is written below the bass staff.

FAMOS

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. A wavy line is drawn across the staves. The text "asal & cresc? dim? rit.?" is written in the center of the staves.

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. A wavy line is drawn across the staves. On the right side, there is a marking "Ped." with a pedal symbol (a triangle with a vertical line) above it.

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. The top staff contains notes: *ga*, *se...*, *ba...*, *ga*, *ga*, *ba...*. The bottom staff contains notes: *ga*, *se...*. The dynamic marking *pp* is written in the middle. The instruction *sempre con Ped.* is written below the staves.

Handwritten musical notation on a grand staff. The top staff contains notes: *ga*, *ba...*, *ba...*, *ga*, *ba*, *ba...*, *ga*, *ga*, *ba*. The bottom staff contains notes: *ga*, *ba...*, *ba...*.

-- ga -->

con Ped. sempre

-- ga -->

etc

-- ga -->

LOCO

sempre con Ped.





LUMINOSO <sup>XI</sup>

pa - - - - -

#tr

XII

ca - - - - -

cau sord

ca - - - - -

u

P

pp

LUMINOSO XIII

pa - - - - -

f

P dolce

XIV

tr

tr

*senza P dolce*

XV  
 -fa --> p  
 SENZA Ped. p  
 con SORD. Pa -->

Pa -->

Pa -->
   
 M. piano Confession  
 Op. 154  
 libe  
 K. 14 de Set. 2004

Chacona para la Mano Derecha, Op. 260

Mario Castagnoli

**CHAICONA** para la mano derecha Op. 260  
con 19 diferencias

para WON YONG LEE

PIANO  
mano  
derecha

8<sup>a</sup> →

*molto cresc.*

*sempre ff*

*ff Ped.* →

8<sup>a</sup> →

*sempre ff*

*SEM Pedal* →

8<sup>a</sup> →

*sempre ff*

*Ped. SEMPRE* →

*pp cresc. - - - - MOLTO*

8<sup>a</sup> →

*ff sempre*

*Ped.* →

*sempre ff*

8<sup>a</sup> →

*Ped.* →

DIFERENCIA I

-2-

(LOCO) *f* *meu*  
*sem Pa ED.* → *f* *meu*

*f* *meu* *MOLTO* *Sib. PP*  
*ped. sempre* →

*f* *meu* *MOLTO*  
*ped.* → *immutabile*

*Sib. PP* *ped.* → *P* *PP*

DIFER. II

*P* *PP* *PP* *f*

*P* *PP* *P* *PP*

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. The notation includes a dynamic marking 'f' and a fermata over a group of notes.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. It includes dynamic markings 'f' and 'mf dim.', and a fermata over a group of notes.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. It includes dynamic markings 'f' and 'mf dim.', and a fermata over a group of notes.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. It includes dynamic markings 'p dim.', 'mf dim.', and 'f dim.', and a fermata over a group of notes.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. It includes dynamic markings 'pp poco a poco cresc.' and 'molto', and a long fermata over the entire staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. It includes dynamic markings 'poco sord. (suona Pd.)', 'sempre p', and 'p sempre sim.', and a long fermata over the entire staff.

.d = 

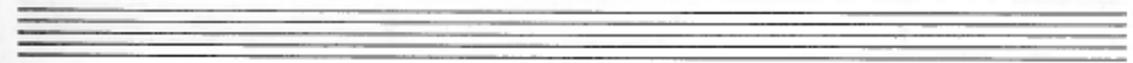
\* fermata larga: LAS FIGURACIONES se mantienen CONTINUAS en MOVIMIENTO

- 3 -



Handwritten musical score for piano. The system includes:

- A treble clef staff with a first finger (I) fingering and a dynamic marking of *pp*.
- A bass clef staff with a first finger (I) fingering and a dynamic marking of *p*.
- A grand staff section with a **Sil. ff** marking and a **Ped.** (pedal) instruction. Below the grand staff, it says "(SENZA Bord.)".
- A handwritten note: "(\*) Racimos o CLUSTERS en teclas NEGRAS BLANCAS, AMBAS juntas, respectivamente".
- A box labeled **Dif. VI** with the instruction *apreciando*.
- A large handwritten word "Vacío" is written across the middle of the system.



Handwritten musical score for piano, labeled **Dif. VII**. The system includes:

- A treble clef staff with a triplet of notes.
- A bass clef staff with a triplet of notes and a large, dense scribble of ink covering the lower portion of the staff.
- A grand staff section with a large, dense scribble of ink covering the upper portion of the staff.
- Below the grand staff, there are some handwritten notes and a *pp* dynamic marking.



**DIF. X**

*dim.*

*furia sempre*

*Sib. furioso*

*con Ped.* →

*stann*

*Sib. 1 VARIABLE*

*dim.*

**DIF. XI**

*tranquilo*

*dim.*

Handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of six systems of staves. The notation includes various dynamics, articulations, and performance instructions.

**System 1:** Features a treble clef staff with notes and a box labeled "DIP. XII". The bass clef staff has a dynamic marking of *pp misterioso*. Pedal markings include *P 8a*, *ped.*, and *5000?*.

**System 2:** Continues the melodic line in the treble clef with *pp misterioso* and *pp tempo* markings. The bass clef staff has a *sempr. ED.* marking.

**System 3:** Shows a large melodic phrase in the treble clef with *sempr. pp* and *MISTERIOSO* markings. The bass clef staff has a *f* marking.

**System 4:** Features a *Sil. f line.* instruction and a *(BRAZO)* marking. The bass clef staff has a *pp* marking.

**System 5:** Includes a *(caca)* marking in the bass clef staff.

**System 6:** Continues the piece with various dynamics and articulations.





trágico! DIF. XVII



