

# **NEW** (old) **MUSIC**

## **Intercontextual Compositional Methodologies**

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# ABSTRACT

It would be more than reductive to say that art is not created in a vacuum. Simply said, all art exists in a context, and said context includes medium, genre, style, and idiom, amongst other things. In the realm of Western music, much insight has been given regarding quotation, and less so regarding subtler applications of stylistic, generic, and idiomatic thought in composition.

So, if all music exists in a specific context, how can composers creatively account for context in their compositions? This research seeks to answer this question by outlining methodologies via analysis of relevant works. Given the background and musical focus of the researcher, this research predominantly focuses on musical works that adapt or interact with Latin-American folkloric music and traditions, with many works dealing specifically with Venezuelan and Cuban folklore.



# INTRODUCTION

## Motivations

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Before delving deeper into the research, I thought it best to follow the recommendation of my peers and take a moment to outline my motivations in writing this paper and in composing with folkloric materials. I did not initially believe this section necessary, but I now feel that it is indispensable towards understanding and appreciating the rest of this paper. As such, I will ask the reader to allow me to speak more colloquially in this section, given its deeply personal nature.

I will begin with my connection to Venezuela. I am Venezuelan. I was born in Caracas in 1999, to a Venezuelan mother and a Cuban father. I am also white, like 43.6 percent of the Venezuelan population, according to the 2014 national census. On my father's side, I come from a line of immigrants: my great-grandfather was a Spanish Republican farmer, and left his small town in Leon for Cuba as the Nationalists approached; his son (my grandfather) was a field worker in eastern Cuba, who planned to leave to Spain with his pregnant wife (my grandmother) and one-year-old son (my father), only to be abandoned in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela when the ship captain did not want to risk a birth on the voyage; and my father moved our family to Miami three years after the Bolivarian Revolution.

On my mother's side, I have family from across Venezuela: my grandmother was from the island of Margarita, and my grandfather is from Guayana, his mother was from the Llanos, and his father was from Bolivar. While my father's family has only known exile and displacement, my mother's family was a veritable panorama of Venezuelan culture. With the crisis in Venezuela, little of my family remains within Venezuela, but back in 2003, we were the only ones in Miami. This meant that growing up in Miami, my family life was deeply

Venezuelan, with occasional injections of Cuban traditions from my father's extended family, which was decently well established in Miami by then.

As a white Venezuelan growing up in the United States, I benefited from the privilege my skin tone affords. With light brown hair and no trace of a Spanish accent, I could easily pass for non-Hispanic. That did not mean that I have not been othered as a result of my family roots. In my house we only spoke Spanish; this had the consequence that I was unable to say my name with an American accent for years. The vast majority of my teachers and peers could not pronounce it the Spanish way (it invariably ended up as mahr-TEEN), and when I tried to say it the American way, it would take about four tries before they would understand (even then, my fifth grade teacher called me "Harrison" for a month, until I worked up the courage to correct her).

Every morning, I would shower and get ready for school, followed by a Venezuelan breakfast of either *arepas* (savory cornmeal "sandwiches" with various fillings) or *empanadas* (fried cornmeal turnovers). And every day, without fail, I would have the girl sitting in front of me sniff the air, smell the traces of annatto and corn, and tell me that I smelled bad. At five years old, I was tasked with drawing a flag of where I was from, and I drew the Venezuelan flag, only to have my teacher chide me, calling me silly: according to her, I was white and had no accent, so I "really was never that Venezuelan anyway." Years later, when taking high-level Spanish classes designed for Spanish speakers, my predominantly Cuban-American classmates would point out that they could not understand a word I said whenever I'd speak, despite my having top marks. They said, with a thick Cuban drawl, that it was because of my weird accent.

Moving to the Netherlands in 2017, I initially believed that I would have a bit of a respite from these moments. That changed when, at a party, a total stranger called me "spicy" when I said I was from Venezuela. Many, many times, I have had people ask why my accent

in English is so good, only to say that I'm "not really Venezuelan" when I explained I was raised in Miami. Sometimes, I will tell someone I am Venezuelan, only for an onlooker to interject that I'm lying, and I'm actually American. When I speak with Spaniards, however, it appears I am *too* Venezuelan, and I have often been asked to repeat what I say, only this time "in Christian." Speaking in a soft imitation of a Colombian accent becomes necessity if I want to communicate in Spanish.

I would be lying if I said that this casual dismissal or even denial of my identity did not feed into my musical investment in Venezuelan and Latin-American culture. But the truth is, the main reason my music is steeped in a Venezuelan musical vernacular is because this is the music I have always listened to. Since I have memory, the music at home was *merengue caraqueño*, *joropo*, *guaguancó*, and *salsa*. In Christmas, it was *aguinaldos*, *parrandas*, and *gaitas* in lieu of Crosby and carols; in May, it was *fulías*, *puntos*, and *décimas*; in June, *sangreos*, *sirenas*, *tambores*, and *golpes*; on Sundays in church, it was the parts of the Mass set to *guarachas* and *bambucos*; on birthdays, it was the seemingly interminable stream of verses that was *Ay que noche tan preciosa* with a quick *gringo* "Happy Birthday" as a coda. Though my skin tone does not comply with European expectations of Venezuelan-ness, my environment has always been and will always be Venezuelan, just as I will always be Venezuelan. As such, I will do as all composers do and take inspiration from my musical environment.

Beyond this affirmation of identity, I am also motivated to work with Venezuelan folklore as a means of preservation. The current crisis in Venezuela has led to a significant amount of political, economic, and social instability. Even in the limited scope of this research, the repercussions of this instability have been felt: the Discography section of the Venezuelan Center for Cultural Diversity website, in which several important sources for this research can be found, has frequently been down and thus inaccessible, occasionally for days

at a time. It is because of this, as well as the ongoing Venezuelan refugee crisis (the largest recorded in the Americas) and recent episodes of violence against native groups, that, by incorporating Venezuelan folkloric traditions, I can preserve them in my music and make them known outside of the country.

These motivations also apply to this research, and it is my hope that in documenting my musical sources, they will not only be preserved but also be propagated. As many of these sources are from marginalized communities, I will also make mention of the current challenges these communities face, be they economic, social, political, or cultural, and providing relevant sources where the reader, if interested in learning more or in contributing aid, can approach, even if it is outside of the immediate relevance to this research. Though this is not typical of traditional academic research, I believe this is absolutely vital, as recognition of both creative origins and current creators is an important component of equitable discourse regarding postcolonial art.

## **Outline**

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The objective of this paper, as previously mentioned, is to present several methodologies for composing intercontextual works, that is, works that are meant to be presented in a fundamentally different context or contexts than its sources or influences. For the sake of academic focus in what can be an immensely broad topic, the research will primarily center around intercontextuality between Latin-American folkloric sources and European new music presentations.

In order to describe these methodologies clearly, I will begin by defining some essential terms and systems that will aid in explaining the compositional methodologies. Perhaps most notably of these terms and systems is an adaptation of Emerson's system of musical discourse for the acoustic medium. From there, I will analyze two relevant works by other composers: *Sensemayá* by Silvestre Revueltas and *Danzón no. 2* by Arturo Márquez.

Each offers insight into how intercontextual methodologies may be realized. Following this, I will analyze two of my own works: *Pregones al Bautista* and *Dialogues of the Southern Lakeshore*. Each has been selected for their focus on intercontextuality as well as for their distinct methodology. Finally, I will present my personal conclusions and provide a very loose framework for how other composers may expand upon the catalogued methodologies to develop their own.

## Defining Terms

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### Mimesis

Given its use since the Classical period, it is no mystery that mimesis has acquired a variety of different meanings throughout history. Deriving from the Greek word “to imitate,” mimesis finds early usage as a term in artistic criticism, and we find Plato relating it to artistic imitation as opposed to *diegesis*, “narrative;” with time, mimesis was limited to the scope of literary criticism from its previously broader artistic scope.<sup>1</sup> In his *Poetics*, Aristotle also speaks of mimesis, which he describes as the imitation of nature. But it is important to understand that mimesis within Classical discourse encompassed more than simple imitation, and, depending on the context in which it is employed, could be translated as “‘imitate,’ ‘represent,’ ‘indicate,’ ‘suggest,’ [or] ‘express,’” as “all of these can be referred to the single notion of making or doing something which resembles something else.”<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most well-known modern usage of mimesis in artistic criticism is in Erich Auerbach’s aptly-named *Mimesis*, an analysis of Western literature from *The Odyssey* to the twentieth century. Auerbach defines mimesis as a means of describing how reality is

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<sup>1</sup> Halliwell, Stephen (2021). “The Shifting Problems of Mimesis in Plato” in *Platonic Mimesis Revisited*. J. Pfefferkorn & A. Spinelli, eds. Academia Verlag.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle (1968). *Poetics*. Translated by D. W. Lucas, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

represented in literature, accounting for historical, syntactic, and semantic decisions in each text to build a chronicle of sorts.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps more relevant to this paper, though no less brilliant than the aforementioned sources, is Simon Emmerson's usage of mimesis in *The Language of Electroacoustic Music*. In the chapter "The Relation of Language to Materials," Emmerson describes mimesis as such:

In my discussion of music, I would like to use the term "mimesis" to denote the imitation not only of nature but also of aspects of human culture not usually associated directly with musical material. Some aspects of mimesis are unconsciously passed on by a culture while others are consciously appropriated and used by the artist. Conscious and unconscious aspects are not sealed off from one another, of course, and a two-way exchange is evident over a period of time.<sup>4</sup>

Here we see traces of the Greek perspective, with Emmerson's mention of imitation of nature, but most notable is his extension of the term to human culture, as well as his separation of conscious and unconscious mimesis. Emmerson will become relevant again in the upcoming description of systems.

From these sources, I have arrived at a working definition of mimesis similar to Emmerson's, with one notable difference: I *include* human culture that is associated with musical material. This inclusion is due to the fundamentally different media in Emmerson's work and mine: while Emmerson operates in the electroacoustic field, where all sound can effectively be reproduced without "adulteration," I primarily operate in the acoustic field, where any aural imitation is implicitly processed or changed by a musician or performer.

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<sup>3</sup> Auerbach, Erich (2013). *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Translated by Willard R. Trask, Princeton University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Emmerson, Simon (1986). "The Relation of Language to Materials." *The Language of Electroacoustic Music*. Macmillan, London, pp. 17-40.

Given this disparity, musical material can undergo mimesis, so long as it is distant enough from the context of its performer. As such, for the purposes of this paper, I will use mimesis to denote the imitation of nature, of implicitly nonmusical aspects of human culture, and of musical human culture from a context significantly different from that of the imitative work.

## Context and Intercontextuality

Perhaps it is wise next to discuss context and derived terms. Perhaps most simply, context is “the frame that supports [a focal event] and provides resources for its appropriate interpretation.”<sup>5</sup> This “frame” includes physical factors (the geographical location of the event, the immediate space in which it occurs, who or what creates the event, etc.), temporal factors (when the event occurred, when the event was *intended* to occur, what events influenced the occurrence of this event), and social factors (who witnesses the event, what the event is trying to convey), among others.

From a strictly musical perspective, this means that the context of a performance encompasses every aspect of the performance outside the performance itself. Take, for instance, Beethoven’s benefit concert at Theater an der Wien in late 1808. It is important to account for the immediate environment around the performance (the date of 22 December 1808, the four-hour duration of the concert, large size and non-central location of the venue,<sup>6</sup> the frigid temperatures, the unprepared musicians) as well as for less immediately evident or tangible factors (the social backgrounds of the audience,<sup>7</sup> the musical scene of early nineteenth-century Vienna, the aftermath of the War of the Fourth Coalition and Napoleonic

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<sup>5</sup> Goodwin, Charles; Duranti, Alessandro, eds. (1992) “Rethinking context: an introduction.” *Rethinking context: Language as an interactive phenomenon*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 1–42.

<sup>6</sup> Pohl, Carl Ferdinand (2009). “Schikaneder, Emmanuel.” *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by George Grove, vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

<sup>7</sup> Kahn, Robert S (2010). *Beethoven and the Grosse Fuge Music, Meaning, and Beethoven's Most Difficult Work*. Scarecrow Press.

dominance over Europe) when describing the concert's context. All of these factors contribute to the concert's success: because of the difficulties surrounding the concert's production (not limited to last-minute substitutions, insufficient rehearsals, and the aforementioned cold weather), a significant part of the audience was filled with *aficionados* of Beethoven's music, which led to several positive accounts of what otherwise was the dismal premiere<sup>8</sup> of Beethoven's (and perhaps Western music's) most famous symphony: the Fifth.

The relevance of context is thus clear, and from this conclusion it can be extrapolated that a fundamental change in context fundamentally changes the art. Merely "transplanting" music from its initial context to one that is significantly different severs the music from a component that is vital to understanding it. Thus, it is clear that this act of severing a music from its initial context weakens its art and, when "transplanting" or appropriating the musics of marginalized peoples, contributes to the marginalizing of its creators.<sup>9</sup>

The question that arises, thus, is as follows: how can composers write music that is influenced from musics of a fundamentally different context to the work in question? The answer lies in intercontextuality. Intercontextuality pertains, as the name suggests, to that which exists or moves between contexts. An intercontextual compositional methodology is one that accounts for the contexts of a composition's source musics in order to create a composition for a distinct context without erasing the context of the sources. With an intercontextual approach, a composer can avoid this "transplant" or appropriation of musical material by making decisions specifically in light of the contextual change.

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<sup>8</sup> Gallagher, David (15 Nov. 2011). "Beethoven's Marathon Concert ... Recreated on Radio 3." *Radio 3 Blog*, BBC, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/radio3/2011/11/beethovens-marathon-concert-re.shtml>.

<sup>9</sup> Wernitznig, Dagmar (Jan. 2008). "Europe's Indians, Indians in Europe: European Perceptions and Appropriations of Native American Cultures from Pocahontas to the Present." *American Literature*, vol. 80, no. 1, p. 192., <https://doi.org/10.1215/00029831-80-1-192-a>.



## Folklore

Before describing the system for analyzing intercontextuality, it is necessary to define folklore. Perhaps the broadest definition would describe folklore as the rituals and traditions borne of the interactions between a community and their context, with “community” being any group with a shared identity. In the sphere of music, folklore can often have characteristics such as anonymity of author or an oral tradition of instruction, but these characteristics are resulting rather than defining: not all folk music is anonymous, not all anonymous music is folkloric; not all folk music is passed down orally, not all orally-transmitted music is folkloric.

Given that this definition is my own, and primarily informed by empirical information rather than academic consensus, I will give some examples of folk musics that comply with this definition, if not to prove the definition, then to demonstrate its acceptability for the scope of this paper.

Klezmer, by my definition, would be a folk music: it pertains to the ritual or traditional interactions of Ashkenazic Jewish communities with their context, which includes their Jewish faith, their geographic roots in Eastern Europe, their differing degrees of marginalization from gentile society, their interactions with nearby marginalized communities such as the Romani, and their Yiddish language. Klezmer itself comes from the Hebrew *k’lei zemer*, meaning “musical instrument,”<sup>10</sup> which eventually came to refer to the musicians who play klezmer. Klezmer was traditionally performed at social gatherings, especially weddings.<sup>11</sup> This specific link to the social rituals of the community evidences the folkloric nature of klezmer.

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<sup>10</sup> Mazor, Yaacov; Seroussi, Edwin (1990). "Towards a Hasidic Lexicon of Music". *Orbis Musicae*. pp. 118–143.

<sup>11</sup> Beregovsky, Moishe (1982). "4. Jewish Instrumental Folk Music" in *Old Jewish folk music: the collections and writings of Moshe Beregovski*. Slobin, Mark, ed. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA. pp. 530–48.

On the other side of the world, we have the *cantos de pilón* in the Island of Margarita in Venezuela. The *canto de pilón* is a work song, accompanying the labor of making cornmeal, historically assigned to women of the household. Usually performed in the late hours of the afternoon, two women would pound grains of corn in a large pestle with thick, wooden mortars (Figure 1). A tiring process, the women must additionally alternate their strikes in order to be most effective. The *canto de pilón* helps to coordinate this labor: each woman sings a pitch as she strikes, and over the rhythm of the mortars and their singing, they alternate singing more complex verses,



**Fig. 1** Two women mortaring cornmeal on the road to Guarenas (Ramón y Rivera 31)

which often reflect on the monotony of the activity and on the incidents of everyday life in the town.<sup>12</sup> The *cantos de pilón*, therefore, fit into the definition of folklore in the following ways: the community of *morena* (brown, of mixed Native, African, and European descent) women in Margarita traditionally sing *cantos de pilón* in order to enjoy and better execute the task of grinding or mortaring cornmeal, an immediate physical aspect of their context. For more information on the music of communities in Margarita and Venezuela as a whole, see Appendices 1 and 3.

## **A System for Analyzing Intercontextuality**

It is important to go over how I will go about analyzing the works and authors covered in this paper. To my knowledge, there is no widely-accepted system for analyzing intercontextual works, but there are relevant systems that, while not immediately dealing with intercontextuality, provide schemes that may be adapted for the purposes of this research.

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<sup>12</sup> Ramón y Rivera, Luis Felipe (1990). *La Musica Folklórica De Venezuela*. 3rd ed. Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores. pp. 30-32.

Most notably, I will be adapting elements of Emerson's scheme for describing musical discourse and James Tenney's scheme of form as present in his work *Form in 20th Century Music*.

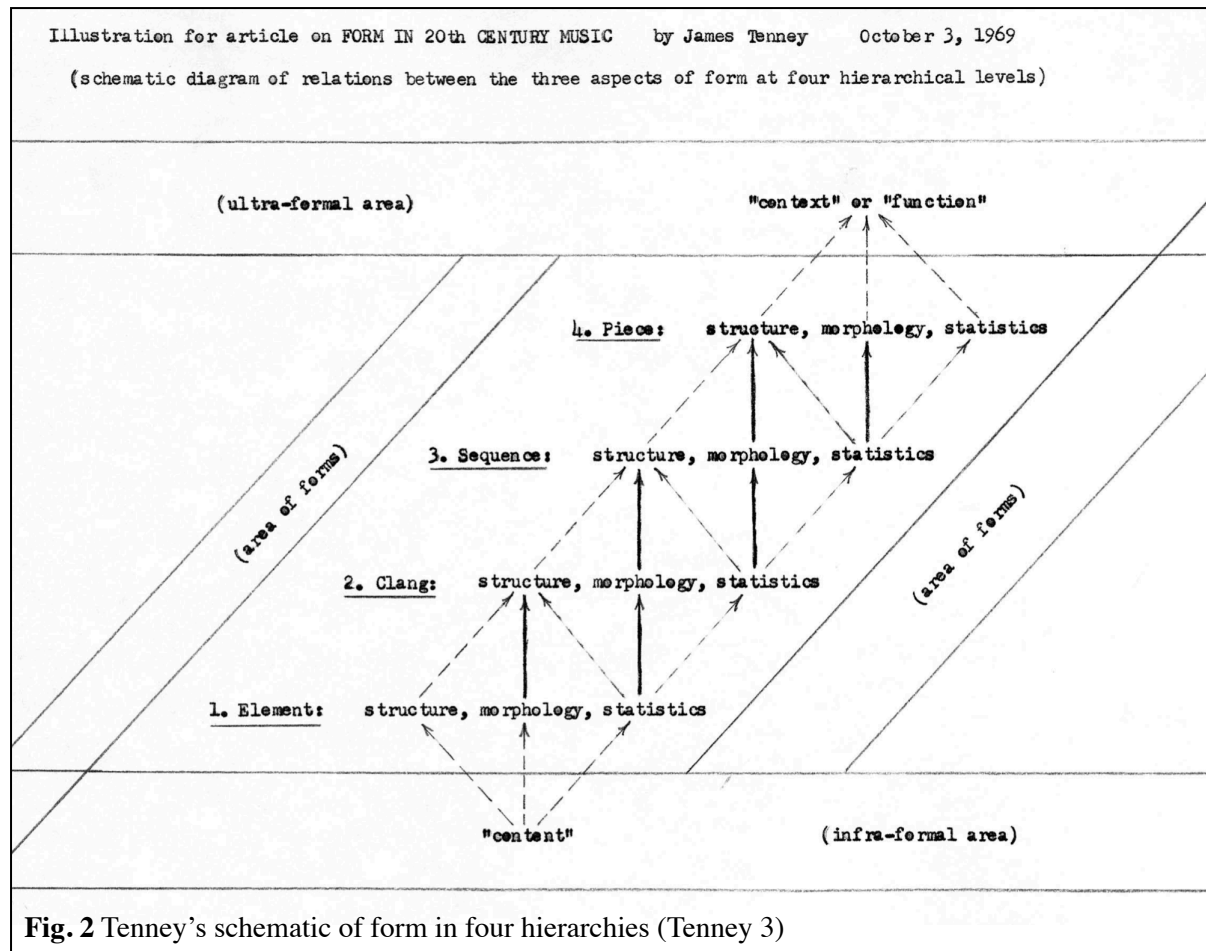
## Tenney's Form

In *Form in 20th Century Music*, James Tenney outlines a system for analyzing new music based on a hierarchical approach to form. Tenney describes form as having at least two implicit levels of organization “(‘whole’ and ‘part’), and usually more than two (since relations between sound-configurations that are themselves parts of the larger whole must involve the internal structure of each configuration, and thus subordinate ‘parts of parts’).”<sup>13</sup>

Though he accepts that there is potential for more depending on the work, Tenney enumerates four hierarchical levels to form, each with a morphological, structural, and statistical aspect to form: the “Element” level, encompassing the parameters of timbre, noise, pitch sets, and tuning; the “Clang” level, encompassing the parameter of rhythm and meter; the “Sequence” level, composed of groups of clangs and the relationship between them, thus dealing with aspects of the more colloquial meaning of “structure;” and the “Piece” or “large-form” level, dealing with the complex formal interactions of sequences and how the piece emerges from those relations and interactions (Tenney pp. 4-11). Each hierarchical level is composed of the units of the level beneath it, and each higher level's structure depends on the morphological aspect or “shape” of the level beneath it, and each higher level's shape depends on the statistical properties of the level beneath it; this relationship is the foundation for Tenney's thesis: that, given the musical innovations of the twentieth century, “it is no longer necessary to treat form and content as fundamentally different things” (Tenney 2).

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<sup>13</sup>Tenney, James (2017, original 1969-1970). “Form in Twentieth-Century Music.” *University of Illinois Press*, <https://doi.org/10.5406/illinois/9780252038723.003.0006>.



Tenney's formal schematic (represented in Figure 2) is useful to this research given its flexibility; this very flexibility will allow for the comparison of entirely different musical traditions whilst avoiding the ethical quandary of conforming a musical genre or style to an analytical mold designed for an entirely different field of study. That being said, it is important to recognize that the schematic Tenney made was built in like of the new music of the 20th century, and, though purposefully flexible, was made flexible with these ideas in mind. For that reason, it will occasionally be necessary to treat the schematic in more abstract terms than Tenney may have originally intended, but those will be mentioned when applicable.

## Emmerson's Model of Musical Discourse

Emmerson's model is intended to deal with "the possible relation of the sounds to associated or evoked images in the mind of the listener" in electroacoustic music (Emmerson 17). To describe and elaborate on this possible relation, he outlines a spectrum of this evocation with two axes on which musical material can fall.

The first of these axes has two extremes: mimetic discourse and aural discourse. As mentioned before, Emmerson uses mimesis to describe sound objects that imitate or are taken from nature or human culture not directly associated with music, and distinguishes between timbral mimesis (which imitates the color of natural sound) and syntactic mimesis (which imitates the relationships between events, e.g. "speech rhythms") (Emmerson 17-18). In contrast to this mimetic discourse, Emmerson presents aural discourse, which pertains to abstract, non-evocative sounds (Emmerson 19).

The second axis pertains to syntax, with the (ambiguously worded) extremes of abstract and abstracted syntax. It appears that Emmerson defines abstract syntax as one that is (significantly) independent from the material of a work, with abstracted syntax referring to one that emerges *from* the musical material. He exemplifies this duality with mention of "elektronische Musik" and "musique concrete," and with the American "divide between the legacy of serialism from Europe and the freer approach of many younger composers" (Emmerson 23).

Though poignant and useful in its own right, Emmerson's system will not be directly applied as is in this research. The focus on electroacoustic music makes translating his ideas to an acoustic medium, and to folklore, challenging. One tool he does provide that will be quite valuable, however, is the aural-mimetic spectrum. This spectrum will serve as a sort of sliding scale from which the musical similarity between final compositional material and its musical sources can be compared.

Suppose musical material A' is derived or is influenced by musical material A. If an aspect of A' —be it melodic, harmonic, timbral, rhythmic, structural, or contextual—is exactly the same as an aspect of A, then A' can be described as very or entirely mimetic in that aspect. If an aspect of A' is significantly different from A, but can still be described as evoking A or having a “vibe” (to use a colloquial term) like A, then that aspect of A' can be described as distantly mimetic or significantly aural. If an aspect of A' is completely different from A, then A' can be described as not mimetic, or entirely aural. When dealing with genres, styles, and idioms rather than direct quotations, it is likely that almost all musical material in an intercontextual composition will fall within the spectrum rather than on the extremes.

## Scope

The benefit of only implementing the “discourse” axis of Emmerson’s grid or spectrum is that it allows for the seamless integration into Tenney’s formal scheme. Now, each hierarchy of form can be mimetically analyzed or understood, and as such, it becomes possible to analyze intercontextual aspects of pieces more deeply. Each subsequent analysis will cover the mimetic influences in each scale of form in relation to the specific influences of the work. Furthermore, attention will be given to the context of the work in question and of its influences, as it is this change in contexts that makes the works intercontextual in the first place.

## A Final (Opening) Note on “Good” Intercontextuality

The post-global scope of new music makes it near (if not) impossible to find a concurrent framework for good art opposed to bad. Rather than impose artistic judgment, therefore, I would like to approach the question of what constitutes “good” intercontextuality from a personal perspective, in line with the personal focus of the paper. For me, a good or successful methodology for intercontextual composition will result in a work that:

- Cannot easily be described as belonging to a single musical genre or style,

- Reveals or preserves some but not all identifiable generic, stylistic, or idiomatic parameters of its influences, and, perhaps most subjectively,
- Is (mostly) musically congruent with the context in which it is performed.

With that being said, let us begin.

# Old-ish (*new*) Music

## *Twentieth-Century Approaches to Intercontextuality*

### ***Sensemayá***

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In 1934, Afro-Cuban poet Nicolás Guillén published the poem “Sensemayá: canto para matar una culebra,” as part of the collection of seventeen poems called *West Indies, Ltd.* Three years later, Mexican composer Silvestre Revueltas completes his first version of *Sensemayá*, a work for orchestra (revised for larger orchestra a year later) inspired by Guillén’s poem. On the surface, Revueltas’s work is a straightforward, programmatic adaptation of Guillén’s poem to a musical medium, conveying a ritualistic tone similar to what Guillén conveys. Deeper inspection, however, reveals a profoundly intercontextual methodology, in which Revueltas not only appears to account for the contextual change from Guillén’s poem, but also in the different contexts influencing Guillén’s original poem, itself an intercontextual work. Revueltas’ skillful incorporation of Guillén’s poem into his symphonic work differentiates it from those of his Mexican contemporaries and reveals stylistic and generic influences from Guillén, without making the work feel out-of-place in the orchestral concert hall of the twentieth century.

### **Guillén and Revueltas**

Before analyzing Revueltas’s work, it is essential to comprehend the history of these two artists and their works. Both were already creatively active for years before meeting, but it was one important commonality that brought them together: their engagement in leftist politics.<sup>14</sup> By May 1936, Revueltas was the head of the Liga de Escritores y Artistas Revolucionarios (League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists), or LEAR, an organization

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<sup>14</sup> Azuela, Alicia (1993). “El Machete and Frente a Frente: Art Committed to Social Justice in Mexico.” *Art Journal*, vol. 52, no. 1, p. 82., <https://doi.org/10.2307/777306>.



seeking “to restore diplomatic relations between Mexico and Soviet Russia, promote true culture for the masses, legalize the Communist Party, and raise class-consciousness of the revolutionary proletariat” (Azuela 85-86).

Similarly, Guillén focused much of his poetry on racial and social injustices, advocating for “black poetry” in poems,<sup>1516</sup> and in the magazines and newspapers he published (Augier 158-159). It was under these conditions that, when LEAR organized the Congreso de Guadalajara in 1937 in opposition to the Francoist faction of the Spanish Civil War, Guillén found himself attending (Zambrano 4). There, these two met and would solidify their bonds in Spain, as both were in LEAR’s delegation to the Congress of Valencia, sent to show solidarity with the Second Republic and their war effort. Eugenia Revueltas, daughter of Silvestre Revueltas, affirms that it was in Spain that Guillén first recited “Sensemayá” for her father.<sup>17</sup> One might assume, then, that Revueltas’s inspiration for his eponymous work came from this very interaction.

## Song for Killing a Snake

It is also worth exploring the poem to gain a critical understanding of Guillén’s poetic voice. The poem is subtitled “Canción para matar una culebra” [Song to Kill a Snake] (147), and is written primarily in Spanish with certain words and phrases of African origin. These two points, coupled with its call-and-response form, make the poem suggest a sort of Afro-Cuban traditional religious ritual, though the poem itself does not actually convey one. This allusion

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<sup>15</sup> Augier, Angel (1965). *Nicolas Guillén: Estudio Biográfico-Crítico*. Universidad Central de las Villas.

<sup>16</sup> Zambrano, Helga. (2014) “Reimagining the Poetic and Musical Translation of ‘Sensemayá.’” *Ethnomusicology Review*, no. 19, University of California Los Angeles.

<sup>17</sup> Revueltas, Silvestre, and Rosaura Revueltas (1989). *Silvestre Revueltas, Por El Mismo: Apuntes Autobiográficos, Diarios, Correspondencia y Otros Escritos De Un Gran Musico*. Ediciones Era, p. 30.

is reinforced by Elsy M. Gallardo-Díaz, who elaborates on the African loanwords in the poem's text:<sup>18</sup>

Besides the title “Sensemayá,” the *estribillo* [refrain] —¡Mayombe—bombe—mayombé!— also carries strong ritual connotations. Although these ideophones have been widely dismissed as *jitanjáforas* [nonsensical words], ... the word “mayombe” is of Bantu origin, and refers to the name of an area north of the Zaire River, specifically the region that was formerly known as the French Congo along the coast. Most significantly, it is also the name of the Cuban sect Palo Monte (Regla Conga) or Palo Mayombe, and actually signifies black magic and its associated practices and sacrificial rituals. Additionally, the practitioners (paleros) of said religion — specifically the priests, sorcerers, or ritual doctors— are called *mayomberos*, a word derived from the term “*mayombé*.” Finally, according to Thomas F. Anderson, the word “bombe” is “an invocation of the *majá*, the Cuban boa that is held sacred by every Afro-Cuban religion and cult,” which is “the guardian...of the *mayombero*” and “is present (either in body or spirit) at *plantes* [Abakuá rituals and ceremonies], *bembés* [religious feasts], *toques* [ceremonies with batá drums], and other similar celebrations.” (98)

It is clear, therefore, that Guillén was attempting to evoke the rituals of the mayomberos and other Afro-Cuban folk religious groups on the island, even though the poem does not describe or pertain to any particular ritual of these communities.<sup>19</sup> If Guillén’s “Sensemayá” were placed on the mimetic-aural spectrum with respect to its sources in *palo* and *abakuá*, it could be described as falling close to the middle: the influences of the work are quite clear, but the work is distinct enough from them in form to be far from completely mimetic.

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<sup>18</sup> Gallardo-Díaz, Elsy M. (2016) “Afro-Caribbean Stylistic Elements as Topics in the Music of Silvestre Revueltas.” *JMU Scholarly Commons*.

<sup>19</sup> For examples of Afro-Cuban religious music, see Appendices 1 and 3

More interesting is the intercontextuality between Guillén and his sources. The rites of the three largest Afro-Cuban folk religions incorporated percussion and rhythm throughout their ceremonies, with the Yoruba-descended Lucumí faith (also known as *santería* or the *regla de Ocha*) including specific rhythmic patterns for specific *Orishas* (gods).<sup>20</sup> Guillén is limited by the poetic medium in being able to convey the percussive aspect of a ceremony like this. It is by using the previously mentioned words (if not nonsensically, out of context to their original meaning) in the *estribillo* (“refrain”) that Guillén captures this aspect. In terms of isochrony—the way in which languages divide temporal units— Spanish can be described as a syllable-timed language, that is, that the theoretical duration of each syllable in Spanish is equal.<sup>21</sup> This equal timing allows for the stressed syllables to create patterns of accents over a verse. With the repetition of the mayombe-bombe-mayombé motif, Guillén effectively approximates a rhythmic ostinato at the start of the poem.<sup>22</sup> Though separate contextually from the Afro-Cuban religious influences of the poem, Guillén clearly evokes them in his writing.

## The Second (and Third) *Sensemayá*

Reflecting upon his early efforts in composition, Silvestre Revueltas recounts a moment where a teacher mentioned his similarities towards Debussy. He elaborates that “having encountered someone who had already given form to my new world, caused great conflict in me which resulted in inaction, as I resolved never to compose, without creating my own language” (Revueltas 1989:30). This quote, albeit unintentionally, is insightful to this analysis, as it outlines how he adapted Guillén’s source: rather than traditionally setting the

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<sup>20</sup> Hagedorn, Katherine J. (2001). *Divine Utterances: The Performance of Afro-Cuban Santería*. Smithsonian Institution Press.

<sup>21</sup> Nespor, Marina, et al (28 Apr. 2011). “Stress-Timed vs. Syllable-Timed Languages.” *The Blackwell Companion to Phonology*, pp. 1–13., <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444335262.wbctp0048>.

<sup>22</sup> For a recording of Nicolás Guillén reciting “Sensemayá,” see Appendix 3

poem, Revueltas translates it into his own musical language (Zambrano 78). This act of “translation” into Revueltas’ created musical language may also suggest a sort of intercontextual forethought, one that bears analyzing.

When discussing intercontextuality, it can be useful to compare the contexts of a source influence to the final work directly, as shown in Figure 3 below:<sup>23</sup>

Contextual parameter	Guillén’s “Sensemayá”	Revueltas’ Sensemayá (1938)
Artistic Medium	Poetry	Seventeen minute piece for complete orchestra, including folkloric and Cuban percussion instruments (xylophone, claves, raspador, maracas, gourd, and small “Indian” drum). Based on an older version for chamber orchestra from 1937 (Garland 181)
Occasion (significant dates for art in question)	Published in <i>West Indies Ltd.</i> in 1934	Premiered in concert on December 15th, 1938 (Mangum)
Location (or relevant analogue)	Self-published in Cuba, in a collection of poems	Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City (Mangum)
Audience	Cubans and Hispanophones, followers of <i>Afrocubanismo</i> movement	Mexican audiences, orchestral music audiences, followers of Revueltas’ work in the concert hall and on film (Mangum)
Function (ritual or traditional, and how the work is meant to be appreciated)	No specific ritual or traditional function, though the work strongly alludes to Afro-Cuban traditional religious rituals. It could be said that the poem is meant to be listened to or read.	No specific ritual or traditional function. It could be said that the piece is meant to be listened to.
Climate (political or social)	Published month after the coup of reformist president Ramón Grau by general Fulgencio Batista, ending the “Presidency of One Hundred Days”	Written as the tide of the Spanish Civil War turns against the Republican government and for the Falange. “Aztec Renaissance” in full swing

**Fig. 3** Contextual comparison of the two “Sensemayás”

Looking at this comparison, there are some evident contextual disparities, most notably that of medium: Guillén works in the written poetic medium, while Revueltas composes a

<sup>23</sup> Mangum, John. “Sensemayá (Silvestre Revueltas).” *LA Phil*, <https://www.laphil.com/musicdb/pieces/5013/sensemaya>. Accessed 31 March 2023

symphonic work. This is perhaps the most relevant contextual shift, and in it lies the key to Revueltas' methodology. A poem communicates through language, written or spoken; as such, it has the possibility to communicate semantic ideas clearly and (comparatively) unambiguously to the audience. From a specifically aural perspective, music can only achieve the same levels of unambiguous semantic communication by having a singer, narrator, or otherwise vocal performer employ language. Nowadays, there are other ways of "unambiguous" communication in the musical sphere, such as with images in multimedia or with recordings of recognizable sounds, but Revueltas forgoes all of these methods—be it out of choice or technological limitations—and instead works only with acoustic instruments. This choice of instrumentation means that any attempt of semantic communication on Revueltas' part will be ambiguous, and as such, an essential artistic dimension of Guillén's poem will be lost.

Here is where the brilliance in Revueltas' methodology becomes clear. While unable to represent the semantics of the poem directly, Revueltas embeds the rhythms and the inflections of the text of the poem into his *Sensemayá*.<sup>24</sup> It is worth mentioning that several of these examples will include excerpts of Revueltas' manuscripts of the earlier 1937 chamber

**Fig. 4** “Mayombe” motif in the 1937 manuscript, above, and the 1938 score, below (Garland 182).

<sup>24</sup> Garland, Peter (1991). *In Search of Silvestre Revueltas*. 1st ed., Soundings Press, pp. 149–90.

version, even if the 1938 version is the principal subject of this section, given that this earlier version includes several illuminating annotations by the composer. The first noticeable instance of these can be seen in Figure 4. In the second bar of rehearsal number 11, we see a unison pattern in the string section that repeats three times (Revueltas 1949).<sup>25</sup> An identical passage in the 1937 manuscript has the words “mayome-bombe-mayombé” written underneath. Given that the notes in the pattern are the same as the syllables in the phrase, that both are initially performed thrice, and that the accent marks in the score correspond with the stressed syllables, it is evident that the pattern Revueltas has written closely follows the rhythm of the text. Figure 5 highlights a similar instance a short time later in the score, this time of the phrase “la culebra tiene los ojos de vidrio,” or the fourth line of the poem (Revueltas 1949:no. 13 mm. 3-4):

**Fig. 5** “Ojos de vidrio” motif in the 1937 manuscript, above, and the 1938 score, below (Garland 184).

Several more examples of this technique permeate the work, some of which will be referenced later, but I think it is worthwhile to begin analyzing how Revueltas accounts for intercontextuality. Though Tenney’s system does not apply as neatly to poetry as to music, I

<sup>25</sup> Revueltas, Silvestre (1949). *Sensemayá, for Orchestra*. G. Schirmer, Inc. pp. 7–25. Originally published 1938.

will attempt to define hierarchical levels analogous to the musical ones he outlines: suppose, then, that the elemental level corresponds to language, morphology, and word choice; the clang level corresponds to lines, rhythm, syntax, and meter; the sequential level corresponds to stanzas and semantics; and the highest level corresponds to the large-form of the poem. With this scheme in mind, a direct comparison between Revueltas and Guillén can be made, and thus an aural-mimetic analysis becomes possible.

## Analyzing *Sensemayá*

It has been mentioned previously how the first important methodological choice made by Revueltas was that of solely working with (acoustic) instruments. If the elemental level of a poem deals specifically with language, morphology, and words, then Revueltas deciding against any voices in *Sensemayá* can be interpreted as a decision at the elemental level of form. Thus, *Sensemayá's* elemental level can be interpreted as entirely aural in relation to Guillén's poem.

It was also demonstrated how Revueltas uses speech rhythms to create motives throughout the course of the work. These speech rhythms often fit perfectly with lines from Guillén's poem, such as lines 1 and 4. Though the motives do not express complete thoughts or directly replicate the sounds of Guillén's lines, the closeness in rhythm to the poem helps to evoke some of the syntactical linguistic relations present in the poem, such as ritualistic chanting ("mayombe" motif, Revueltas 1949:no. 11 mm. 2-4), statements ("ojos de vidrio" motif, Revueltas 1949:no. 13 mm. 3-4), exclamations ("Sensemayá;dale ya!" motif, Revueltas 1949:no. 42 mm. 4-5), and *pregones* or improvised calls ("*pregones*" motif, Revueltas 1949:no. 24 mm. 3-4). As such, though not entirely mimetic, the clang level of *Sensemayá* can be described as significantly mimetic in relation to Guillén's poem.

At the sequential level, it has been observed already how certain moments in the piece directly mirror stanzas of the poem, specifically, the initial sequence of three "mayombe"

**Fig. 6** “*pregones*” sequence, as shown in the interaction between trumpets and trombones, from rehearsal no. 24 to the downbeat of rehearsal no. 25 (Revueltas 1949)

motives followed by the “ojos de vidrio” rendition a few bars later. There are, however, more occasions where entire stanzas are musically rendered in the work; most striking of these occurs from rehearsal number 24 to 25, as shown in Figure 6:

Musically, this section features a call-and-response between longer phrases in the brass and orchestral hits on the downbeat preceded by sixteenth-note triplets. This call-and-response section parallels a similar call-and-response section—or *pregones*, as they are known in Cuban music—in the poem, namely, the fifth stanza. Closer inspection, furthermore, reveals

that the syllabic structure of the *pregones* stanza (Figure 7) perfectly matches the rhythms of the sequence;<sup>26</sup> each stressed syllable falls on a downbeat, and the division between the longer calls and shorter responses is clearly represented in the music.

1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	Meter: 8
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>	/	la	cul	<b><u>EB</u></b>	ra	Accent Stress: 4 / 3
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>						Accent Stress: 4
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>	/	con	sus	<b><u>OJ</u></b>	os	Accent Stress: 4 / 3
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>						Accent Stress: 4
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>	/	con	sus	<b><u>LEN</u></b>	gua,	Accent Stress: 4 / 3
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>						Accent Stress: 4
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>	/	con	su	<b><u>BO</u></b>	ca,	Accent Stress: 4 / 3
Sen	se	ma	<b><u>YA!</u></b>						Accent Stress: 4

**Fig. 7** Syllabic breakdown of fifth stanza (Zambrano 93). Stressed syllables are bolded and underlined.

<sup>26</sup> Zambrano, Helga. (2014) “Reimagining the Poetic and Musical Translation of ‘Sensemayá.’” *Ethnomusicology Review*, no. 19, University of California Los Angeles.



Though these poem-derived sequences are present throughout the work and (mostly) introduced in the same order as the poem, most sequences in the work are not directly imitative of the poem. The sequential level of *Sensemaya*, therefore, could be described as squarely between mimetic and aural: though some (perceivably important) sequences are identifiably mimetic, most are aurally constructed, albeit incorporating mimetic clangs.

Before analyzing the large-form level, it is worthwhile to discuss important musical material that has yet to be mentioned, which evidences Revueltas' other musical influences. Perhaps most significant is the ostinato (Figure 8) and, by extension, the predominant 7/8 meter of the piece. Garland (184), Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon<sup>27</sup> and Charles Hoag<sup>28</sup> attribute words from the text to these ostinato patterns (Figure 9). This linking of the ostinati to speech is tenuous at best, however. For one thing, Garland's description of the opening percussion pattern as "sen-se-ma-yá" places the stressed syllable on the least stable beat

**Fig. 8** Ostinato patterns. The instruments assigned are the first to play them, as these patterns are played in different instrumental configurations over the course of the piece

of the phrase. This may have been a conscious choice by Revueltas, but it is different from just about any other speech rhythm clang in the work, which overwhelmingly place stressed syllables on downbeats. As for Hoag's proposed textual rendition, it bases an elision of the first vowel in "mayombe-bombe-mayombé" on the assumption that Guillén, when first reciting the poem to Revueltas, employed it. This proposition, beyond being entirely

<sup>27</sup> Zohn-Muldoon, Ricardo (1998). "The Song of the Snake: Silvestre Revueltas' 'Sensemaya.'" *Latin American Music Review / Revista De Música Latinoamericana*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 133–159., <https://doi.org/10.2307/779988>.

<sup>28</sup> Hoag, Charles K (1987). "Sensemaya: a Chant for Killing a Snake." *Latin American Music Review*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 172–184.

circumstantial, fails to account for the fact that this elision is not natural in Cuban Spanish whatsoever, nor is there any evidence of Guillén employing it in the recordings of his recitations; if anything, the clarity of his enunciation is remarkable. Another point against these ostinati being based on speech rhythm, is that their

repetition dilutes the perception of the rhythms as speech-like. Whereas other text-based sequences in the piece follow a speech-like rhythmic contour with pauses between lines and phrases, the ostinati are perpetually looping.

Perhaps these patterns were inspired by words or phrases from the text, but forcing a textual connection distracts from the ostinato's more relevant quality, which is its connection to Afro-Cuban rhythms and the *clave*. *Sensemayá* was not Revueletas' first work inspired by Guillén, and some earlier works, such as *Caminando*, were specifically influenced by Cuban popular and folk music (Gallardo-Diaz 6). As such, Revueletas would be undoubtedly familiar with the concept of the *clave* rhythm, which serves as a rhythmic tool for temporal organization, a sort of structural key pattern. With the inclusion of claves (the instrument that typically plays the eponymous rhythmic pattern) in the instrumentation of the work, it is not out of the question to interpret these repeating patterns as a sort of guide or skeleton for the rhythmical phrasing of sequences over the course of the piece. More relevant, though, is that these patterns, though not present in Cuban music, evoke the rhythmic structures and hierarchies of Cuban popular and folk music, meaning that their inclusion in *Sensemayá* is significantly mimetic of Cuban music.

The image shows a musical score for a percussion ensemble and a vocal line. The percussion instruments listed are Bass Cl., Gong, 2 Tom-Toms, and Bass Dr. The tempo is marked as 100. The time signature is 7/8. The vocal line is written in a staff with a key signature of one flat and is labeled with the lyrics "(Sen-se- ma- yá Sen- se- ma- yá Sen- se- ma- yá)". The percussion line is also written in a staff with a key signature of one flat and is labeled with the lyrics "(Myombe-bombe-mayombé)".

**Fig. 9** Garland's proposed textual influence for the percussion ostinato, above (184), and Hoag's proposition for the bass ostinato, below.

The Afro-Cuban musical influence in Revueltas' work is natural, given its importance in Guillén's poem. But what of the melodic, harmonic, and timbral material in *Sensemayá*? These components are quite distinct from the instrumentation of Afro-Cuban folk music, where percussion and voices tend to predominate, and with some genres including bass and piano in important roles. There is, however, a strong resemblance in these parameters to the music of Stravinsky and Revueltas' contemporaries. Given that the contexts of Stravinsky and other contemporary Mexican composers were quite similar to that of Revueltas, however, this research will not delve too deeply into these aspects, as it is primarily concerned with intercontextual influences and approaches. I will merely touch on these influences by pointing out that *Sensemayá* bears a lot of attested harmonic, tonal, and timbral similarities to works in Stravinsky's earlier Russian period, and specifically to *Le sacre du printemps* (Hoag).

The influence of contemporary Mexican composers in *Sensemayá*, however, is interesting, since it opens up a possible connection to Mexican indigenous music. This influence is exemplified in Carlos Chávez, an emblematic composer in the so-called "Aztec Renaissance."<sup>29</sup> Though his motivations for and approach to working with indigenous materials is questionable from a present-day perspective,<sup>30</sup> Chávez extensively incorporated indigenous musical material into his works, treating them as a fundamental part of Mexican national identity and culture (Béhague 31). This link between pre-Columbian civilizations and cultures and modern Mexican identity was a concept developed in the decades following the Mexican Revolution (Béhague 31), and was still very much present in the Mexican musical scene at the time *Sensemayá* was written.

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<sup>29</sup> Béhague, Gerard (2006). "Indianism in Latin American Art-Music Composition of the 1920s to 1940s: Case Studies from Mexico, Peru, and Brazil." *Latin American Music Review*, vol. 27, no. 1. pp. 28–37., <https://doi.org/10.1353/lat.2006.0016>.

<sup>30</sup> Cassell, Holly (2015). "Us as the Other: Refuting Nationalism through Locus of Enunciation in Carlos Chávez's *Sinfonía India*." *Harmonia*, no. 13, University of North Texas

Though Revueltas did not explicitly describe *Sensemayá* as influenced by indigenous musical traditions—in fact, Garland describes nationalistic elements as “the least important aspects” of Revueltas’ oeuvre in general (146)—there are two points that might validate this supposition. The first of these comes from the relationship between Revueltas and Chávez himself. Though falling out later in life, Chávez and Revueltas worked closely for several years, with Chávez hiring Revueltas as assistant conductor of the Orquesta Sinfónica de México and as a violin and composition professor at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música (Garland 151-152). It should come as no surprise, then, that the musics of both share significant similarities; what is noteworthy, however, is similarities between Chávez’s quotations of indigenous material and Revueltas’ melodic material in *Sensemayá*. Figure 10, for instance, compares a Huichol traditional melody<sup>31</sup> as quoted by Chávez in his *Sinfonía India*,<sup>32</sup> and an excerpt of *Sensemayá*.

**Fig. 10** the first theme of *Sinfonía India*, above, described by Chávez as a folk melody of the Huichol natives of Nayarit (Chávez no. 9). Below, two bars before rehearsal number 27 in *Sensemayá* (Revueltas 1949).

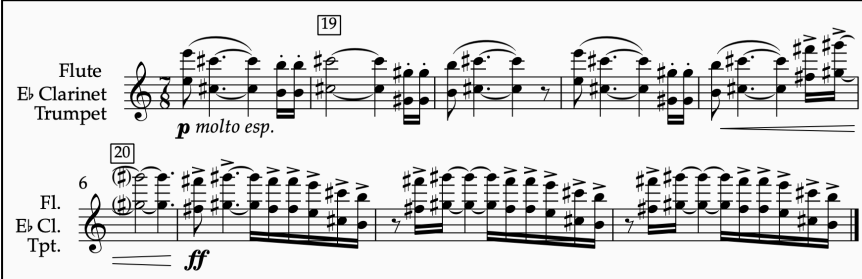
<sup>31</sup> More information on the Huichol peoples of Mexico can be found in Appendix 1.

<sup>32</sup> Chávez, Carlos. (1950) *Sinfonía India*. G. Schirmer, Inc. pp. 9–10.

There are evident musical similarities between the lines in the double reeds and trumpets in *Sensemayá*, and the Huchol line: both deal exclusively with binary rhythmic values (short and long durations, with long being twice the length of the short), both incorporate a significant amount of repeated notes, and both have lines that move primarily by steps or by thirds.

These similitudes alone, however, do not signify that Revueltas is consciously influenced by indigenous musics. What does provide evidence to this influence, however, is the contrast of *Sensemayá* to Revueltas' preceding works for the concert hall. Works such as *Caminando* (1937), *Janitzio* (1933) and the *Homenaje a Federico García Lorca* (1936) feature the intrusion of popular and folkloric musics—Cuban *son* in *Caminando*, *son jarocho* in *Janitzio*, *mariachi* in the *Homenaje*— into an otherwise modernist-adjacent panorama (Garland 172). Other works, such as the *Danza Geométrica* (1934) reveal a comprehensively modernist melodic, harmonic, and not-quite-tonal landscape. In this context, *Sensemayá* is quite the outlier; with its harmonic and textural similitudes to *Le Sacre* and its pentatonic countermelodies (Figure 11), the work takes on a primordial tone that evokes an ancient or strange ritual. This tone

is similar, in fact, to Revueltas' score for the film *La noche de los mayas* (1939), or "The Night of the Mayans,"



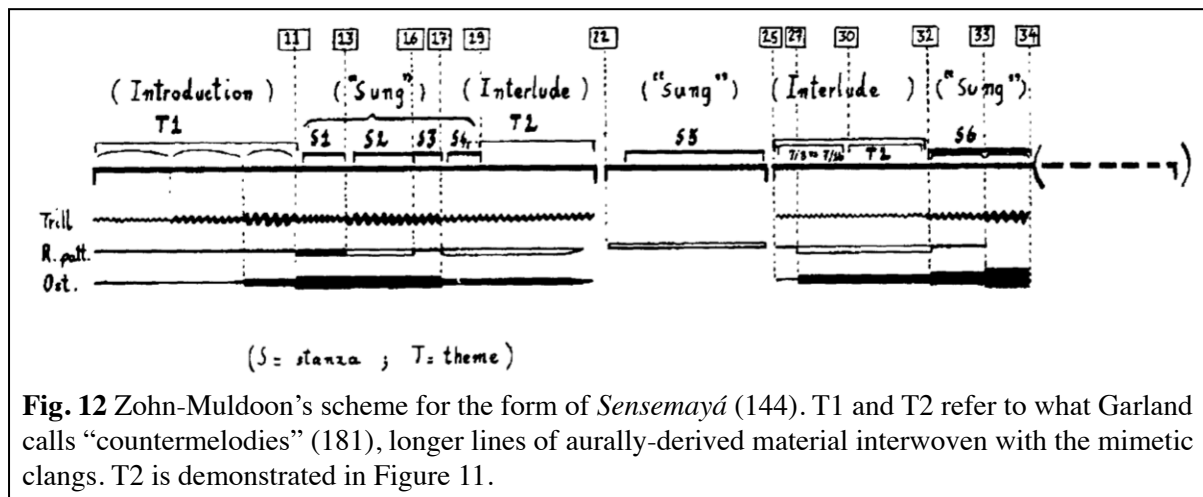
**Fig. 11** Countermelody played by the winds, later to be repeated in various instrumental configurations over the course of the work (Revueltas 1949:no. 18 m. 4 - no. 20 m. 4).

a work explicitly

associated with pre-Columbian civilizations and cultures. It is this contrast from his previous works, and these similarities to Chávez's indigenous quotations and *La noche de los mayas*, that strongly suggests Revueltas' cognizance and intentional evocation of indigenous

Mexican musics. Therefore, it is possible to describe aspects of Revueltas' elemental, clang, and harmonic writing as distantly mimetic in relation to indigenous traditional and folkloric musics.

Having established these other influences, it is possible to analyze Revueltas' large-form and *Sensemayá* as a whole in regards to intercontextuality. Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon describes Revueltas' form as essentially parallel to that of the poem, with the addition of "interludes" separating "sung"<sup>33</sup> sections of the poem (Zohn-Muldoon 144). Figure 12 contains Zohn-Muldoon's formal scheme for *Sensemayá* (144), evidencing how the piece is realized in three large sections based around stanzas of the poem.



**Fig. 12** Zohn-Muldoon's scheme for the form of *Sensemayá* (144). T1 and T2 refer to what Garland calls "countermelodies" (181), longer lines of aurally-derived material interwoven with the mimetic clangs. T2 is demonstrated in Figure 11.

Zohn-Muldoon goes on to argue that Revueltas' form and use of instrumental aurally-derived sequences to enclose the "sung" sequences suggests a cinematic approach to the piece, creating a narrative out of the ritual of Guillén's poem (144). From there, he describes the piece as a conflict between opposing forces of good (the human "sung" material) and evil (the snake to be killed) (Zohn-Muldoon 147). This duality is tenuous, however. Because the piece is tonally consistent, even more so than the comparable Stravinsky's *Le Sacre*, the piece is marked by a semantic ambiguity that cannot easily be divided in two, much less into "good"

<sup>33</sup> The use of the word "sung" to describe sections of Guillén's text is in reference to the alternate title of the poem, "Song to Kill a Snake." Zohn-Muldoon's work is perhaps the most comprehensive formal analysis of *Sensemayá*, greatly expanding on Garland's earlier analysis.

and “evil.”<sup>34</sup> For one to assign a good-evil duality to the work, it seems a foreknowledge of Guillén’s poem is necessary, as the poem presents a possibly binary conflict much more clearly than the piece. As such, while Zohn-Muldoon’s conclusions seem unlikely, it is clear that *Revueltas* builds upon the form established by Guillén and significantly expands on it, meaning that the large-form of *Sensemayá* can be described as intermediately mimetic in relation to the source poem.

Having analyzed each hierarchical level of *Sensemayá* on the mimetic-aural spectrum, it is now possible to describe *Revueltas*’ intercontextual methodology. Faced with a change in medium, as well as with a significant shift in social and cultural climate from Cuba to Mexico, *Revueltas* embeds the poem into the work in a variety of ways, most notably in the rhythms of several notable clangs and the development of climactic sequences. He also approaches several elemental, sequential, and large-formal parameters with the intention of evoking the focus of Guillén’s poem: an old, violent ritual, likely alien to a significant amount of the audience, that also celebrates the ancient cultural traditions of groups marginalized by their societies. He draws from Afro-Cuban and indigenous Mexican musics to aid in this evocation, without quoting or directly composing in the style of said musics. He also alludes to contemporary European methodologies of incorporating folkloric materials in his harmonic language and orchestration, effectively bringing the piece a bit closer to the concert hall tradition. What results is a gestalt work, greater than the sum of all its parts. The traces of its influences are palpable, and the piece does not easily fit into generic or stylistic categorizations, yet it does not feel out of place in the context of concert hall music from the 1930s.

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<sup>34</sup> This ambiguity is especially prescient regarding *Revueltas*’ context. Though modernism had long been part of the Mexican compositional scene (as evidenced by Chávez), the ubiquity of traditional tonal relations should not be understated. Garland attests to the influence of Copland in the period (146), and even within *Revueltas*’ own oeuvre, *Sensemayá* represents a marked distancing from traditional tonal schemes. As such, for *Revueltas* to attempt to communicate good and evil clearly in a harmonic vernacular more unfamiliar to his audience seems highly unlikely.

## ***Danzón no. 2***

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Written in 1994, Arturo Márquez's *Danzón no. 2* offers an interesting juxtaposition to *Sensemayá*, especially with regards to intercontextuality. Despite being written almost sixty years apart, the two works share several similarities: both take influence from Cuban musics, both works are less than ten minutes long and written for full orchestras, and both gained the attention of international audiences more than a decade after their composition.<sup>35</sup> There are also important distinctions, however, between the two works. Most glaring of these is perhaps the significantly different contexts of their primary influences: whereas *Sensemayá* draws from the eponymous poem by Guillén, which itself draws from Afro-Cuban folk religions and their musical traditions, *Danzón no. 2* draws from the *danzón*, a Cuban ballroom dance exported to the Veracruz region of Mexico.

### **The Anglofrancohispanoafrocubano<sup>36</sup> Roots of *Danzón***

Before the development of the *son*, the *danzón* held the position of the most ubiquitous and popular Cuban dance genre.<sup>37</sup> As with many Latin-American musical genres, the *danzón* is the result of the confluence of European and African musics.<sup>38</sup> Evidence of this can be found in the *danzón*'s predecessors in Cuban music, the *danza* and, by extension, the *contradanza*. The *contradanza* shares a name with a Spanish dance (which in turn descends from the French *contredanse*, which itself in turn comes from the English "country dance"). The

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<sup>35</sup>As Garland mentions, *Sensemayá* received its first international performance in New York decades after its Mexican premiere in 1938. Regarding *Danzón no. 2*, a cursory search on Spotify reveals that the two earliest non-Mexican recordings on the platform are from the Singapore Symphony Orchestra's 2004 single and from the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra's 2008 album *Fiesta!* Curiously enough, the latter album was my first introduction to both pieces.

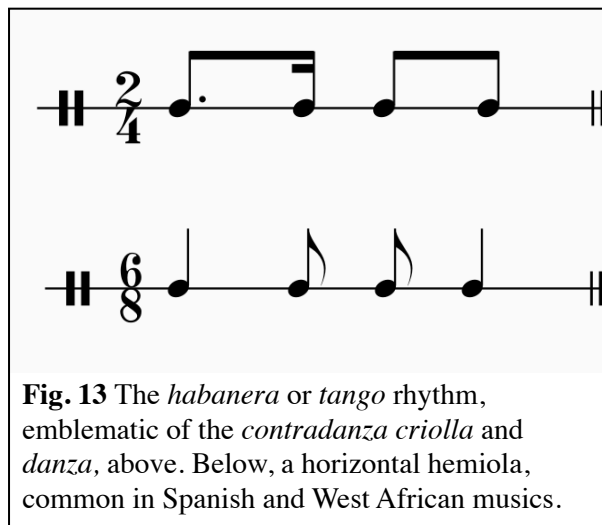
<sup>36</sup>Quote attributed to Cuban musicologist Natalio Galán. Sourced from Peter Manuel's *Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean*.

<sup>37</sup>Rodríguez Ruidíaz, Armando. (2019) "La Metodología De Los 'Complejos Genéricos' y El Análisis De La Música Popular Cubana Autóctona." *Academia.edu*. p. 14

<sup>38</sup>Though this understanding of the history of *danzón* is widely accepted by the scholarly community, it is worth noting that some, like Hettie Malcolmson, have criticized its dependance on unverifiable earlier sources, and its later ascribing of stylistic and generic innovations to individuals.



Cuban *contradanza*, or *contradanza criolla* as it is often called, however, differentiates itself from its European antecedents by the inclusion of the *habanera* rhythm (Figure 13). The *habanera* rhythm, furthermore, is a horizontal hemiola that has been completely binarized, a development in line with other Afro-Cuban styles (Rodríguez Ruidíaz 13). The *danza* is borne less from musical innovation on the *contradanza*, but from its partner dance style, a shift away from the *contradanza*'s group dance.



As the *contradanza* and *danza* developed over the course of the nineteenth century, Cuban composers continued differentiating these endemic variants of otherwise European dances, laying the groundwork for the *danzón* with development of stylistic staples of the genre such as the *cinquillo* rhythm and the first allusions to a *clave*.<sup>39</sup>

Figure 14 contains an excerpt of Ernesto Lecuona's *Danza Lucumí*, exemplar of both of these developments.

**Fig. 14** First three lines of Lecuona's *Danza Lucumí*. The rhythmic pattern in the bass staff on the odd-numbered bars is an example of the *cinquillo*. Note how the rhythm of the melodic line is rarely syncopated with the left-hand ostinato, implying the latter's role as *clave*.

<sup>39</sup> Mauleón-Santana, Rebeca. (1999) *101 Montunos*, Sher Music Co., Petaluma, CA. pp. 20–28.

## The *Danzón* in Context

Before elaborating on the contextual characteristics of *danzón*, it bears mentioning that *danzón* does not truly exist as a generic monolith; rather, throughout its “reign” as the “monarch of Cuban popular music” (Rodríguez Ruidíaz 14), *danzón* influenced and was influenced by a variety of other Cuban genres and styles. These influences will be explored, but it should be understood that despite undergoing innovations, *danzón* remained identifiably distinct.

Unlike its precursors, the *danzón* was created by an individual, with the first piece of the genre commonly agreed to be Miguel Faílde’s *Las alturas de Simpson*,<sup>40</sup> written in 1879. This work retains a significant amount of the European influences of the *contradanza*, whilst also incorporating important Afro-Cuban elements, notably in the percussion. The Afro-Cuban heritage of the *danzón* can be observed in the original context for which they were composed, as well as in the composer; Faílde was Afro-Cuban. He describes this context in his recollection that “in Matanzas at this time [Carnival] there was a kind of group dance for twenty couples who carried bows and flowers... its moves were adapted to the tempo of the habanera, which we took over for the *danzón*.”<sup>41</sup> The scene that Faílde describes is highly reminiscent of the Afro-Cuban *comparsas*, part of the celebrations of Carnival.

Over its long history, one of the most identifiable components of *danzón* is its form. Early *danzones* featured a rondo form of ABACAD, a reflection of its choreography; the A sections would not feature dance, but rather introductions and mingling of the dancers (Malcolmson 267). Following José Urfé’s 1910 innovation in *El Bombín de Barreto*, a

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<sup>40</sup> Malcolmson contests this point, citing Sánchez de Fuentes and Orovio in that they “concur that Faílde Pérez wrote the first *danzones* in the 1870s, several years before the first ‘officially’ sanctioned *danzón* [*Las alturas de Simpson*]” (267).

<sup>41</sup> Castillo Faílde, Osvalde. (1964) *Miguel Faílde: creador musical del Danzón*. Havana. Editorial Consejo Nacional de Cultura. p. 85

*danzón* with an ABACADAE form, the last being a *montuno*<sup>42</sup> section, *danzones* began incorporating an ABACAD form, with the D section being a *montuno* (Malcolmson 267). Over time, this ABACAD form became the simpler ABCD, preserving the *montuno* D section.

It is worth elaborating on the instrumentation of *danzón*, as it is an important distinguishing factor to its generic antecedents. The *danzón* was originally performed by *orquestas típicas*, or “typical orchestras,” which were predominantly composed by wind instruments. Faílde’s own *típica*, for instance, featured an original configuration of two clarinets, cornet, trombone, ophicleide, two violins,



**Fig. 15** Photograph of the *típica* Orquesta la Flor de Cuba

güiro (a Cuban gourd-scraper), timpani, and contrabass. In the early decades of the 20th century, the *típica* was supplanted by the *charanga francesa* as the predominant ensemble of *danzón* (Malcolmson 268). The *charanga* contains a smaller wind section than the *típica* and introduces the flute and piccolo, as well as the piano.

While the *charanga* remains a prominent instrumental configuration for the *danzón* and its derivatives, there is one final instrumental development to mention. By the 1940s, saxophones, trumpets, and trombones were reintegrated into *danzón* ensembles. Malcolmson attributes this to influence from American popular music (268), which is felt beyond the instrumentation. *Danzones* began incorporating jazz harmonic voicings and improvised solos, and one innovative *charanga*, Arcaño y sus Maravillas, is credited with developing a new genre, *mambo*, from these American and European musical influences.

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<sup>42</sup> *montuno* is a formal section typical of another Cuban genre, the *son*. The *montuno* features brassy interjections, over a rhythmic groove following the *clave*. Given differences in instrumentation (compare the *son*’s bongos, claves, and maracas to the *danzón*’s güiro and timpani), the unique rhythmic style of the *son* was not directly inserted into the *danzón*; this discrepancy would give way to the later development of the *mambo* section, and later the *mambo* genre itself.

It was also around this period that *mambo*, and by extension *danzón*, ensembles were gaining popularity in Mexico. It is there that Dámaso Pérez Prado, perhaps the most well known *mambo* composer and contested creator of the genre (Malcolmson 268), recorded a significant amount of his works. Though it is difficult to track exactly when the *danzón* began grabbing the attention of the Mexican public (most notably in the region of Veracruz), it is evident by its instrumentation, which is a predominantly wind-based ensemble with the inclusion of saxophones known as a *danzonera*, that it was a predominantly 20th-century development.

As it is this Mexican style of *danzón* that inspired Márquez's series of *danzones*, it will be the primary focus of the contextual discussion. The artistic medium is musical and acoustic, with the music performed by *danzonera* ensembles. The *danzón* does not have a fixed occasion for which it is performed, though individual *danzones* may be written with the intention to be premiered on specific dates (as is the case with the commission for *Las alturas de Simpson*). Often, *danzones* are performed in public events outside in plazas around Veracruz. They may similarly be performed in halls, but as it is a group dance, sufficient space for the audience to dance is an important consideration regarding location. The audience of *danzón* in Mexico is (as might be expected), largely Mexican, though it has taken root as a folkloric expression primarily in Veracruz. In its heyday, it was enjoyed by people of various ages and social class; nowadays, its audience is shrinking, as it no longer holds the cultural spotlight but has developed into folklore, but it still retains some popularity in Veracruz. *Danzón* styles can also be found in Mexico City and Oaxaca.

## As We Say in Venezuela, *Deseos no Preñan*<sup>43</sup>

In early months of 1994, Márquez is commissioned by the Orquesta Filarmónica de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (OFUNAM); these early months also featured the Zapatista (EZLN) uprising in Chiapas, as a protest to the enactment of NAFTA. For twelve days, the EZLN and government forces clashed, resulting in approximately three hundred deaths and a hundred thousand-strong protest in Mexico City in response to the government's brutal crackdown.<sup>44</sup> It is in light of these events that Márquez describes *Danzón no. 2* as representing his hope for social reform and indigenous justice in Mexico via the EZLN.<sup>45</sup> *Danzón no. 2* premiered on March 5th, 1994, in the Sala Nezahualcóyotl of the UNAM. The piece, product of the commission by OFUNAM, ostensibly inspired and supporting the Zapatista quest for indigenous justice, is a ten-minute orchestral work performed for a seated audience, artistically drawing primarily from a Cuban dance genre taken root in Veracruz.

Without even analyzing the work, there is an evident contextual ambiguity around *Danzón no. 2*. The piece titles itself after a dance genre, but the occasion and environment in which it is presented makes it impossible to dance. The composer attributes a political motivation to the work, yet it is noticeably absent of any cultural, social, political, or economic connection to this political motivation: the musical influence of *Danzón no. 2* is neither endemic to Mexico, nor culturally indigenous, nor significantly pertaining to marginalized groups, nor tied to revolutionary thought whatsoever.

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<sup>43</sup> A Venezuelan idiom that literally translates as “Wishes do not impregnate.” Used to signify that it is not enough to desire something for it to manifest.

<sup>44</sup> Mentinis, Mihalis (2006). *Zapatistas: The Chiapas Revolt and What It Means For Radical Politics*. Pluto Press.

<sup>45</sup> Vargas, Ángel (2014). “Danzón Número 2 Cumple 20 Años: Es Una Obra De Empuje y Esperanza.” *La Jornada*, Periódico La Jornada, <https://www.jornada.com.mx/2014/03/10/cultura/a07n1cul>.

Here, a problem arises regarding the established system for analyzing intercontextual works; while the system demonstrates how a composition accounts for the different contexts of the sources and the product, it cannot account for *intended* contextual elements that the composer does not make manifest in the piece whatsoever. As such, the intercontextual analysis of *Danzón no. 2* will not focus on Márquez ostensible sociopolitical intentions, though they will be revisited in the conclusion. Instead, focus will be placed specifically on how the generic influence of the *danzón* is incorporated and realized in the work.

### The *Danzón* according to Márquez

When approaching *Danzón no. 2* intercontextually, one question immediately comes to mind: is *Danzón no. 2*, actually a *danzón*? Beginning by analyzing the elemental formal level, there appear to be several similitudes that affirm this question. The instrumentation of the orchestra could be interpreted as a simple expansion of that of the *danzonera* or the mid-century *charangas*, as all these feature strings, piano, woodwinds, brass, and a percussion section with güiros and timpani. Of course, the magnitude of this “expansion” is significant; what originally could easily be a ten-piece ensemble has been replaced by a configuration that requires at least forty musicians. Furthermore, the inclusion of claves in the percussion section, an instrument typical of Cuban *son* but not *danzón*, hints at a trend that will underlie each level of this analysis: Márquez appears to incorporate Cuban folkloric elements that are not themselves usual of *danzón* into his work. The pitch system of the work, however, which is strongly rooted in traditional tonality, is completely in line with *danzón*.<sup>46</sup> From these comparisons, we can conclude that *Danzón no. 2* is significantly mimetic of *danzón*.

On the clang formal level, *Danzón no. 2* bears additional similarities to its eponymous generic influence. From the first bars, both the *cinquillo* and the *clave* are made explicit in the

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<sup>46</sup> See Appendices 1 and 3 for recordings of and additional information on exemplary *danzones*.

**Fig. 16** Opening bars of *Danzón no. 2*. Notice the *cinquillo* pattern in the even-numbered bars of the violins and violas, as well as the 2-3 *son clave* pattern played in the percussion.

claves and string section (Figure 16).<sup>47</sup> The *cinquillo* and *clave* are present in some capacity in almost all of the clangs of the piece, and when they are not, they are strongly implied, as is demonstrated in Figure 17. It also bears stressing just how idiomatically Márquez constructs clangs. Compare the clang he introduces in bar 52 and develops until bar 74 to any exemplary *montuno* (Figure 18), like that of Abelardo

**Fig. 17** Notice how the melody in the oboe follows the long-short-long-short-long pattern of the *cinquillo* in the 6/8 bars, though the meter changes obscure the *tresillo* macrorhythm of the *cinquillo* (Márquez mm. 19-23)

Valdés' *Almendra* (Figure 19). The homophonic syncopated hits in the strings outlining half-

**Fig. 18** The *montuno*-like clang in *Danzón no. 2* (Márquez mm. 66-71)

diminished and minor seventh chords, juxtaposed with the leaping clangs in the winds, all repeating or “vamping” as the work mounts in intensity, all of that is perfectly congruent with the style of the

*danzón*, without specifically quoting an existing one. Given the stylistic congruency between

<sup>47</sup> Márquez, Arturo (2010). *Danzón No. 2 for Orchestra*. Peermusic.

<p>Montuno/Mambo</p> <p>flz.</p> <p>Flute</p> <p>Strings</p> <p>Piano</p> <p>Contrabass</p> <p>pizz</p>	<p>Str.</p> <p>Pno.</p> <p><b>Fig. 19</b> Transcription of the <i>montuno</i> from Orquesta Aragón's recording of <i>Almendra</i>, left, and variation on the <i>montuno</i>, right.</p>
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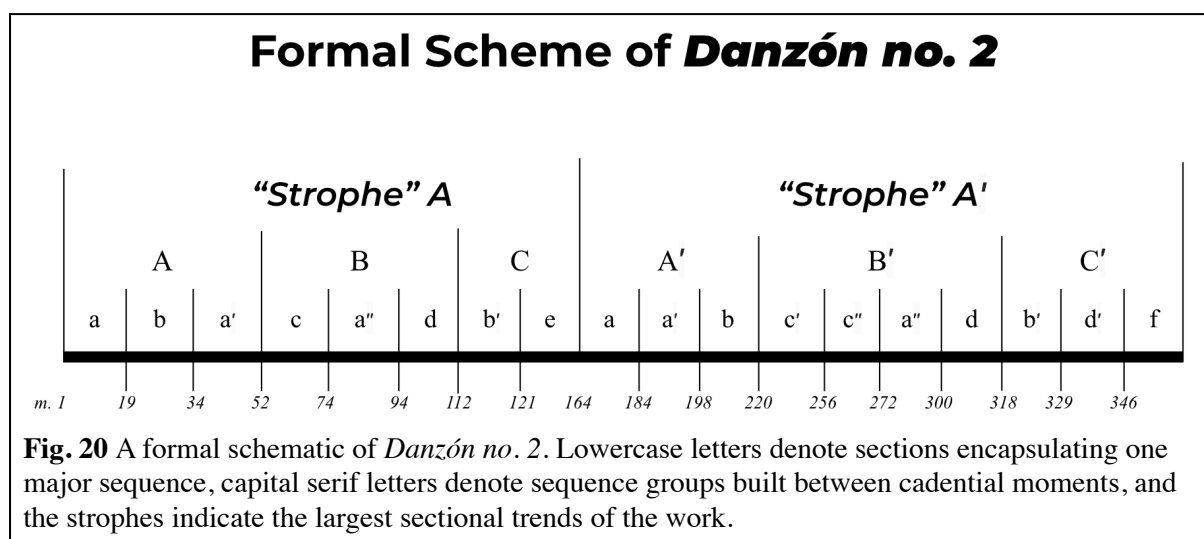
the clangs of *Danzón no. 2* and those of the *danzón* genre, it is within reason to describe the clang formal level of *Danzón no. 2* as extremely if not entirely mimetic in regards to *danzón*.

I would like to interject here and highlight a change in how I evaluate mimesis from the analysis of *Sensemayá*. Whereas Revueltas was working with a single work as the primary influence for his composition, Márquez is working with an entire musical genre as a primary influence. It is therefore difficult to describe when he is entirely mimetic, since, as I mentioned before, there is no singular parameter that *every danzón* shares. As such, to limit a description of Márquez's work as "entirely mimetic" to direct quotation, as outlined in my initial discussion of system, is misleading; if Márquez were quoting directly, then the work he quotes would be the discussed influence rather than its genre. It is for this reason that I will use the qualification of "entirely mimetic" to describe when a specific parameter fits the stylistic or archetypal characteristics of an influential genre so completely or perfectly that, in isolation, it would be indistinguishable from equivalent parameters of works of said genre.

Continuing to the formal level of sequence, it is no surprise to find once again extensive similarities between Márquez's work and the generic staples of *danzón*. The melodic sequences of the work are tonal, featuring stepwise motion with the occasional leaping clangs (as with the aforementioned oboe melody). Márquez employs neighbor groups extensively in his initial melodic sequence, and when it is reiterated, it is orchestrated in thirds by the wind (Márquez m. 34). This is very typical of *típica* and *danzonera* orchestration, as can be found in *Las alturas de Simpson* and in other exemplary *danzones*



such as *Juarez*. In fact, the stepwise descending cadence set to the *cinquillo* rhythm seen in bars 33, 51, and 162, is a well-established cadential formula in Mexican *danzones*, clearly present in *Juarez*, for instance. It is tempting to describe the sequential formal level as entirely mimetic, but there are important if subtle deviations from the *danzón* style. Perhaps most significantly is the length of the sequences themselves: their flowing nature over long harmonic progressions that feature modulations and chromaticism make them more akin to the Romantic sequences than those of *danzón*. Take, for instance, the opening sequence of the work: the melody in the clarinet lasts until bar 20, as opposed to the typical sixteen-bar form of a *danzón*'s A section.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Márquez's beautifully clear contrapuntal passages suggest a European orchestral source rather than *danzón*, as they are highly atypical. These reasons support the conclusion that the sequence formal level of *Danzón no. 2* is significantly yet not entirely mimetic in relation to *danzón*.



So far, the formal analysis has revealed a high level of mimesis in the work. It is in the highest large-form level, however, that much of the aural characteristics of the work are uncovered. Put simply, Márquez's *Danzón no. 2* does not follow the traditional *danzón* form.

<sup>48</sup> It is worth noting that this section is built on a simple i-iv-V harmonic formula, lasting two bars and repeating over the duration. This may be another moment of generic confusion on Márquez's part, as this type of short harmonic formula is much more typical of *son* than of *danzón*.

Instead of the expected ABACAD rondo form or its ABCD variant, the piece has a large strophic form consisting of an A section with an A' repetition (Figure 20). Each individual strophe, however, could be interpreted as an abstracted *danzón* form. A closer look at the sequential progression of the first strophe reveals an aba'ca''db'e form, which can in turn be abstracted into an ABACADE form, not unlike the common *danzón* ABACAD. The first strophe's "e" section, moreover, contains a groove in the percussion and ostinati in the orchestra on a G<sup>7</sup> harmonic pedal, which makes it very suggestive of a *montuno* section (Márquez mm. 121-164).

This abstraction could be misleading, however, since Márquez connects the sequences very seamlessly, which is very different from the clear demarcations present in *danzones*. Grouping the sequences by following cadential moments (sudden textural changes, tempo changes, harmonic cadences, modulations) grants a higher-level division of the strophes into an ABC form, which is much more dissimilar to the *danzón* form. Thus, the large-formal level of *Danzón no. 2* can be described as significantly aural in relation to *danzón*.

## An Appeal for Clarity

Having completed the analysis of the formal levels of *Danzón no. 2*, I am drawn again to my initial question: is *Danzón no. 2*, actually a *danzón*? A synthesis of the mimetic-aural analysis of each level leads me to the personal conclusion that *Danzón no. 2* is very mimetic in just about every aspect of its composition. But the differences in instrumentation, form, and Márquez's extensive employment of Western Classical harmonic techniques suggest a negative aspect to the question, at least from this purely musical perspective. As *Sensemayá* comes together as a unique musical gestalt distinct yet reminiscent to Guillén's poem and the Afro-Cuban and indigenous musical influences, the parts of *Danzón no. 2* come together to an ambiguous result, one that seems to almost perpetually ooze the sound of *danzón*, without ever really feeling that it is a *danzón*. By that same stroke, *Danzón no. 2* feels consistent with

the well-tread path of composers in Latin-America thrusting folklore into metropolitan concert halls in a rote appeal to nationalism, without actually feeling like it *belongs* in the concert hall.

It is worthwhile, then, reflecting on the work's intercontextuality. Why does the work feel out of place in the concert hall? The simplest answer that comes to mind is that *Danzón no. 2* is *too* mimetic: its similarities to *danzón* spark a desire to appreciate it as *danzón* is appreciated, with dance, in groups, in open spaces. The context in which it is presented, however, undermines this appreciation, because the layout of concert halls are not built for group dances, just as they do not encourage socialization or any additional participation of the audience beyond tacit, cultured appreciation.

This line of thought, naturally, demands an appeal for clarity. How did the Zapatista Uprising *actually* influence this piece? Nothing in the composition or the context in which it was presented suggests any association with this event. Was Márquez trying to write a *danzón*, or was it an homage to the genre? The highly mimetic nature of the work suggests a *pastiche* at best, though I would like to think Márquez did not seek to diminish the source genre. Altogether, what was Márquez even attempting to achieve with the work? The work's congruency with the generic characteristics of *danzón* suggests that a significant amount of musical thought went into the work, but the product is weakened by its contextual ambiguity, rendering any explicit or implicit intention by the composer weaker as a result.

A look into Márquez's other "*danzónes*" is useful in clarifying and answering some of these questions. *Danzón no. 1* is a work written for chamber ensemble, entirely in a 5/4 meter. *Danzón no. 4* is, again, for chamber ensemble, with an atypical *clave* pattern granting it a novel quality. *Danzón no. 8* appears to be an homage to Ravel's *Bolero* with its gradual instrumental crescendo and its major Phrygian modality. Sufficient to say that Márquez does not appear to intend to accurately convey Mexican or Cuban *danzón* in his body of work;

rather, it appears each is centered around a unique musical exploration. In that musical context, the decisions he took in composing *Danzón no. 2* feel less baffling.

To conclude on the intercontextual analysis of the work, it appears clear that there is a lot of *Danzón no. 2* that is wanting. The piece does not pass the guidelines for “good” intercontextuality: the work can almost definitively be classified as *danzón*, it is obviously influenced by the *danzón* genre, and it does not feel like it belongs in the concert hall environment in which it is presented.

# New-ish (*new*) Music

## *Personal Forays into Intercontextual Compositions and Methodologies*

Having covered relevant historical examples, I will continue by delving into some of my own intercontextual compositions and the methodologies I adopted in the approach. The two works I will focus on in this section are *Pregones al Bautista* and *Dialogues of the Southern Lakeshore*, written in 2020 and 2022 respectively. Both take influence from Afro-Venezuelan musical traditions, but from distinct regional traditions. Both, furthermore, are not limited to one exclusive source, nor do they share the same artistic objectives. Without further ado, I will begin.

### ***Pregones al Bautista***

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*Pregones al Bautista* was written in 2020 for the Orkest de Ereprijs Young Composer's Meeting. The conditions of the Meeting involved composing a three- to five-minute piece for Orkest de Ereprijs—an atypical wind ensemble with two flutes, clarinet, two saxophones, trumpet, horn, two trombones, tuba, piano, electric guitar, electric bass, and percussion—as well as two to five singers. The work would be premiered on the last day of the Meeting, in late February or early March, and three composers would receive prizes based on their compositions.

At the time, I was in the midst of the third year of my Bachelor's, and I was witnessing the beginnings of my career as a composer in the Netherlands. As such, I opted to treat the Young Composer's Meeting as an introduction to the wider Dutch new music community. It was in light of this spirit of introduction that I chose the *cantos de sirena* and the ceremonies of Saint John the Baptist (*San Juan Bautista*) as the primary influence for the piece.

## Saint John's Day

The “festive cycle around the devotion and worship towards Saint John the Baptist”<sup>49</sup> is, along with the Christmas and New Year's cycle, one of the most emblematic and widespread cultural celebrations in Venezuela. Principally located in the populous Central Region of the country (including the states of Yaracuy, Carabobo, Aragua, Miranda, La Guaira, and the northern regions of Guárico), the cycles are rooted in 17th-century Afro-Venezuelan religious practices.<sup>50</sup> Though the ceremonies and their music have spread to important urban centers such as Caracas with the rise of the oil industry,<sup>51</sup> local *sanjuaneros*, or the groups that organize these events, treat these rituals as a “symbol of cultural resistance and freedom, and as a means to remember their ancestors as slaves” (Amaiz 3).

In practice, this cycle of festivities is highly decentralized, resulting in a highly diverse musical and cultural panorama, with each locality and ensemble conducting the rituals in their own unique way. A consequence of this is that the festivities can begin as early as May and, depending on the locality in question, may last until the 16th of July, on the day of the Virgin of Carmel (*la Virgen del Carmen*). But the epicenter of almost all of these celebrations is on the 23rd and 24th of June, the Eve and Day of the Baptist. Beginning with vespers the night of the 23rd, an idol of the Saint is taken from the *casa* (“house”) where he is

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<sup>49</sup> “UNESCO - Festive Cycle around the Devotion and Worship towards Saint John the Baptist.” *Intangible Cultural Heritage*, <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/festive-cycle-around-the-devotion-and-worship-towards-saint-john-the-baptist-01682?RL=01682>.

<sup>50</sup> Unlike previously mentioned Afro-Cuban religious movements, religion in Afro-Venezuelan communities is, for the most part, much closer to Catholicism than African religions; this can be observed in the fact that San Juan, the saint with the most important devotion in these communities, cannot be directly tied to any figure from sub-Saharan African religions. Of course, syncretism is uncovered in the ceremonies and rituals of these communities around Catholic holidays. The prominent exceptions to Catholic religious dominance in these communities is in the cult of Maria Lionza and the three potencies, which is tied to the Afro-indigenous syncretism of historical maroon communities, and the cult of Saint Benedict, which will be explored later.

<sup>51</sup> Amaiz, George (2021). “Festive Cycle around the Devotion and Worship towards Saint John the Baptist.” *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Nomination file no. 01682.

guarded, paraded around town, baptized in the river, and taken back to town to continue the festivities.<sup>52</sup>

These ceremonies include a variety of musical genres, including the *canto de sirena*, *décima*, *sangueo*, *tonada de sirena*, *tambor*, *luango*, *guaraña*, and *malembe*, depending on the locality in which they are performed. Though more information on the musical nuances of these styles can be found in Appendix 1, it is worth discussing the *canto de sirena* and the style of *tambor* from Barlovento (also known as *culo'e puya*) further.

## Song of the Siren

Canto de sirena literally translates as “siren’s song,” which may be an apt description of its ceremonial role. At the beginning of the Saint’s journey to the river to be baptized, he must be awoken or serenaded with cantos de sirena, verses lauding the saints and asking something of the Baptist.<sup>53</sup> A *canto de sirena* is sung by one singer without accompaniment, and has four verses, usually octosyllabic and improvised. There is a specific *canto de sirena* that inspired *Pregones al Bautista*, made popular by Soledad Bravo in her 1974 album *Cantos de Venezuela* and performed by artists such as Betsayda Machado, shown below in Figure 21.

<i>Despierta, San Juan, despierta</i>	“Wake up, Saint John, wake up”
<i>(Despierta si estás dormido)</i>	(“Wake up if you’re asleep”)
<i>De este sueño tan profundo</i>	“From this deep dream”
<i>Que te viene a visitar</i>	“Because the jealousy of the world”
<i>La celosía del mundo</i>	“Is coming to visit you”

**Fig. 21** A well-known *canto de sirena*, left, with its translation, right.

<sup>52</sup> Limardo, José, director (1985). *Encuentro Con / Tambores De Venezuela: San Juan I: Aragua, Carabobo y Yaracuy Parte 1*. Fundación Bigott, YouTube, 27 Feb. 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvGBLEwuiqY&ab\\_channel=Fundaci%C3%B3nBigott](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvGBLEwuiqY&ab_channel=Fundaci%C3%B3nBigott). Accessed 7 Apr. 2023.

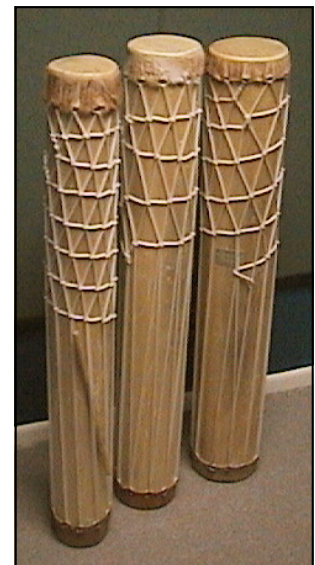
<sup>53</sup> Araujo, David, et al., directors. *SANGUEO - Le Voy a Mi Tierra Channel - Capítulo 3 - 1era Temporada 2018*. Performance by Alexander Devies, *Le Voy a Mi Tierra Channel*, YouTube, 19 Aug. 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXlyP6GY7tg&t=142s&ab\\_channel=LeVoyaMiTierraChannel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXlyP6GY7tg&t=142s&ab_channel=LeVoyaMiTierraChannel). Accessed 9 Apr. 2023.

This is the first *canto de sirena* I heard growing up at home, and I found it resonated strongly with what I wanted to convey in the work, so I used it as one of my intercontextual influences.

*Cantos de sirena* go on to be sung throughout the course of the ceremonies, often as a means of providing breaks for the musicians in the ensemble to engage in the festivities. They are also localized mostly to the western half of the *sanjuanero* sphere, made up of the states of Aragua, Yaracuy, and Carabobo. The *tambor* that we will explore next corresponds to the eastern sphere, and does not directly coincide with the *canto de sirena*.

### ***Culo'e puya***

Across Venezuela, the musical genres of the festivities of Saint John the Baptist generally fall into three camps: unaccompanied improvised verse (*canto de sirena*, *décima*); slower-paced songs with usually sacred verse and ritual dance (*sangueo*, *malembe*); and faster-paced songs with sacred or secular verse, freer dance, and a high degree of improvisation on drums (*tambor*, *tonadas barloventañas*, *luango*). In the localities of Mendoza, San Juan de Curiepe, and Tacarigua, all within the region of Barlovento, there is an endemic style of *tambor* called *tambor redondo* (“round drum”) or *culo'e puya*,<sup>54</sup> which features a battery of three long, round drums played in a complex polyrhythmic groove.<sup>55</sup>



**Fig. 22** From left to right, the *prima*, *cruzao*, and *pujao* drums of *culo'e puya*. Unlike *rumba*, the primary soloist in *culo'e puya* is the *pujao*, the lowest drum.

<sup>54</sup> Limardo, José, director (1985). *Encuentro Con / Tambores De Venezuela: San Juan: Tacarigua, Guatire y Naiguatá Parte 2*. Fundación Bigott, YouTube, 28 Feb. 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2KLCaspZJk&t=971s&ab\\_channel=Fundaci%C3%B3nBigott](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2KLCaspZJk&t=971s&ab_channel=Fundaci%C3%B3nBigott). Accessed 5 Apr. 2023.

<sup>55</sup> Mayo, Willy, director. *Willy Mayo Tambores Culo e' Puya De Curiepe*. Willy Mayo, YouTube, 3 Oct. 2015, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpfpVUSjGJI&ab\\_channel=WillyMayoC.A.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpfpVUSjGJI&ab_channel=WillyMayoC.A.) Accessed 9 Apr. 2023.



**Fig. 23** Basic rhythmic pattern of *culo'e puya* from Curiepe (transcribed from Mayo 2'15"). Notes above the line are mallet strikes, below are hand strikes. Cross noteheads are sidesticks, normal noteheads open tones, and plus symbols are muted strikes on the drumhead.

When I was composing this piece, I was in the midst of my personal investigations into the musical nuances of *tambor*, and I was particularly intrigued with the rhythmic patterns and form of *culo'e puya* (Figure 23). It was primarily for this reason—and the fact that it is very similar to the *tambor* and *fulías* played in Caracas, which were mainstays of the festivities in my home—that I selected this source as another important

influence in *Pregones al Bautista*.

Tambor	Context	Content
Location:	On the town church, through its streets (Where?) In Afro-Venezuelan communities → San Millán, Puerto Cabello, Carabobo → San Juan de Curiepe, Barlovento → Verano, Yaracuy → El Guare in Aragua	Piece: 3 sections that go attacca straight into following tambor opening section or "versos" Sequence: soloist improvises phrase   clarin responds w/ fixed response   "tranco"   soloist improvises preán   clarin responds w/ fixed response   "golpe"   tacet (aside from interjection).
Occasion:	The night of San Juan, after the Saint has been baptized [preceded by <i>samano</i> , and <i>cantos de sirena</i> before that]	Clans: 4 bars of the "Versos rhythm" → metamorphic edging on isobiphonic → equal length, heterophonic, often begin w/ identical vocalizations 4 bars of the "Tranco rhythm" → soloist improvises preán   clarin responds w/ fixed response   "tranco"   soloist improvises preán   clarin responds w/ fixed response   "golpe"   tacet (aside from interjection).
Audience:	The people of the town who hear it (To Whom?) every year. Likely know the words to some, if not all, the <i>tambor</i>	May consist of either "Versos" or "Tranco" pattern - Tempo is slightly faster - More embellishments - 3/4 feel - more open strikes in drum
Medium:	Singer (soloist), Chorus (Who?) Percussion section: Cumaco, Pallo, Palor, Charasca → improvises <i>pregones</i> or <i>calle</i> provide bass drums, provide, clave Soloist in golpe scraper	Elements: - Percussion follows written patterns w/ relatively few embellishments - 4/4 feel, few open sounds in drum
Function:	To excite the crowd and get people dancing (Why?) after the baptism of the Saint.	

**Versos Rhythm ("San Millán")**

**Golpe "Tranco" ("San Millán")**

Note: the feel is not entirely binarized, and is sometimes described in 12/8

**Fig. 25** Mapped out schematics of *tambor*, specifically, the San Millán style. Though different from *culo'e puya*, it may serve to provide some insight on the genre's general trends.

The general form of *tambor* consists of three sections, an initial *versos* or *destrancao* (“verse”) section, the *tranco* (“stuck”) section, and the *golpe* (“strike”) section (Limardo I:8’15”). The *versos* is a call and response between the lead singer and the chorus; the singer begins by singing the chorus, and then recites or improvises verses equal in duration to the chorus. The percussion performs a groove underneath, without much improvisation. After a certain amount of verses, the singer signals the beginning of the *tranco* with a change in the general melodic structure of his phrase. In the *tranco*, the call and response continues, only that there is a significant diminution in the durations of both (usually by a fourth). The drums typically change to a shorter pattern as well, but this is not necessarily true in all styles, such as *culo’e puya* (Limardo II:25’20”); what is consistent throughout the genre, however, is a slight increase in tempo and more improvisation in the percussion. Finally, the *golpe* is a section without singing featuring significant improvisation in the percussion. *Culo’e puya*, unlike other *tambores*, lacks a *golpe* section, and instead goes from the *tranco* of one *tambor* to the beginning of another by a simple change in singers. The new singer sings the new chorus, and the next *tambor* begins.

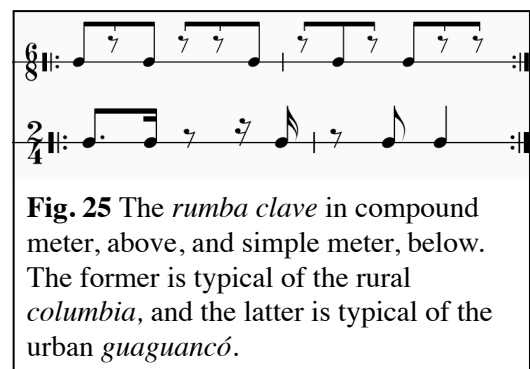
## The Cuban component

Over the course of writing the piece, I was faced with the reality of its context. This is a piece that is meant to be performed once, that is representative of me as a composer, and it will be performed by an ensemble altogether unfamiliar with Venezuelan sources to an audience equally unfamiliar. I did some investigation, however, and noticed that the percussionist of the ensemble had significant experience performing Cuban musics such as *salsa*, *danzón*, *mambo*, *cha cha chá*, and, most importantly, *rumba*. I also had the fortune to have worked previously with the lead singer for the project, Georgi Sztojanov, and knew of his experience with experimental singing as well as with Balkan folk musics. These fortuitous musical connections led me to building a clearer intention of the piece, not as a representation of the

*canto de sirena* or *sanjuanero* traditions, but as a personal musical representation of a composer, with deep personal connections to Cuban and Venezuelan musics, and his declaration to the Netherlands that he's arrived.

The Cuban music with the biggest influence in the work is *rumba*.<sup>56</sup> Historically understood as a “complex” of folk genres (Rodríguez Ruidíaz 1), *rumba* encompasses a collection of rural and urban Afro-Cuban secular genres that feature a percussion battery of claves, *catá*, *chekeré*, three “congas” (as they are known in the west), and singers. The *rumba* *clave* is a specific *clave* named after the complex

(Figure 25), as it is present in many, but not all, of its genres.<sup>57</sup> Unlike *danzón*, *rumba*'s evolution cannot simply be described as a linear generic progression. Instead, *rumba* comes from the confluence of the musics of several Afro-Cuban



ethnic groups, such as the Lucumí (*toque de batá*), Arará, and Abacua,<sup>58</sup> facilitated by the abolition of slavery in 1886 and subsequent loosened restrictions to Afro-Cuban religious and cultural practices (Rodríguez Ruidíaz 10).

Of the three principal styles of *rumba*, those being *guaguancó*, *yambú*, and *columbia*, I will primarily focus on *guaguancó* due to its relevance to *Pregones al Bautista*. *Guaguancó* is a fast urban *rumba* in simple meter that follows the *rumba* *clave*. The percussion groove is built on this *clave*, played by the claves as an obbligato. In this obligatory function, the claves

<sup>56</sup> Not to be confused with the North American “rhumba” ballroom dance or its derivatives.

<sup>57</sup> The generic exception is *yambú*, which uses the *son* *clave*, which has the third strike played a sixteenth-note earlier in 2/4 or an eighth-note earlier in 6/8. Curiously enough, *yambú* is colloquially believed to be the oldest extant *rumba* genre, which, if true, could point to the *rumba* *clave*'s evolution from the *son* *clave*.

<sup>58</sup> Crook, Larry (1982). “A Musical Analysis of the Cuban Rumba.” *Latin American Music Review / Revista De Música Latinoamericana*, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 92., <https://doi.org/10.2307/780245>.

are accompanied by the *catá* or *guagua* (Cuban Spanish for “bus”), an instrument made of two sticks striking wood, which plays a sort of bell pattern that follows the accent pattern set by the *clave*, and the *chekeré*, a gourd wrapped in beads that serves as a shaker marking downbeats.<sup>59</sup> The drum battery usually involves three single-headed staved drums (though these may be replaced or played along with *cajas*, or boxes) colloquially known in the West as *congas*, though in *rumba*, each has a name and function. The lowest is called the *salidor* or *tumba*; the middle-tuned is the *tres golpes*, *dos tres*, or *conga*; and the highest is the *quinto*. Both the *salidor* and *tres golpes* play with significant freedom, within the task of building the *contra-clave* (“against-clave”), which is the rhythm that is half a period out of sync with the *clave*’s accent pattern. The *quinto* is the main improvising performer of the ensemble, often responding to the singer’s musical gestures or the dancers’ movements. Altogether, the groove of *guaguancó* is approximated in Figure 26 (Crook 99).

**Fig. 26** Scheme of a typical Havana *guaguancó*. Cross noteheads are soft slaps, downbow is a bass tone, and normal noteheads are open tones. Note the *tresillo* in the lower drums in the second bar.

The form of *guaguancó* is binary, with a brief introduction called the *diana*, where the lead singer vocalizes, outlining the pitch system of the *guaguancó* (Crook 95). The first part features verses, without any call and response, and may be sung by one or two singers in homophony. The second part is the call and response, featuring

<sup>59</sup> The *chekeré* shares its name with an identical Yoruba instrument (shekere), evidencing the West African roots of *rumba*.

improvised verses by the lead singer against a fixed response. The transitions between sections usually involve vocalizations by the lead singer.

## ***Cantos de pilón***

There is one additional notable influence to *Pregones al Bautista*, and that would be the work song in Venezuela, with specific attention to the *canto de pilón*. I have already elaborated the context and nature of these songs in the “Folklore” section of the Introduction, but to recapitulate, the *canto de pilón* is a work song that accompanies the labor of pounding corn into cornmeal.

Since both *rumba* and *tambor* involve the singers participating in the percussive scheme of the music by playing the *catá*, claves, maracas, and *chekeré*, I wanted the singers at the Meeting to engage similarly with the rhythmic material. The only issue was that none had a background in performing complex rhythmic lines on percussion instruments and singing at the same time. As such, I opted to emulate the simple yet striking setup of the *canto de pilón* by gifting each singer minus the solo tenor a thick wooden dowel to strike their podium.

## **Building *Pregones***

Having established these as my main influences for *Pregones al Bautista*, I set to work adapting and integrating them into the piece, accounting for the intercontextuality. The first artistic decision was to accept that the drastic contextual difference of the piece from its influences would fundamentally change the product, even if it was completely identical to the source material, as unlikely as that might be. From there, I set to enumerating which characteristics of the influences might even be accurately conveyed. I determined that the singers could be trusted to pronounce Venezuelan Spanish with relative accuracy, that Georgi could be trusted to approximate the quality of Afro-Cuban or Afro-Venezuelan singing, and that the percussionist would certainly have experience performing *guaguancó*. For the

singers, I provided instructions on the IPA of the pronunciation, as well as recordings to listen to in order to approximate the timbre; in the end, it was necessary to record myself singing the material and work closely with them in sectionals to make it work, so in hindsight, this assumption may have been an overestimation. For the percussion, I simply wrote out the patterns and gave stylistic cues where pertinent.

Having made a basic outline for which parameters could and would be treated as mimetically as possible, I began constructing the overall form of the work. I eventually settled on a through-composed form, grouped around six stanzas of four lines each:

<i>Cuando yo al santo le canto Me acompaña to'a la tierra Pa' ver si estos pregones El Santo nos los oyera</i>	"When I sing to the saint The whole earth accompanies me To see if the saint will hear These proclamations"
<i>Óyeme San Juan Bautista Te voy a pedir un favor Que me aclares la garganta Para cantarte mejor</i>	"Hear me, Saint John the Baptist I will ask of you a favor That you clear my throat To sing better for you"
<i>Se quedó el Santo dormido Viendo las aguas correr A las orillas de un río Y a la sombra de un laurel</i>	"The Saint fell asleep Watching the waters flow At the banks of a river And the shade of a laurel tree"
<i>Repiquen esos pilones No dejen de repicar Que este santo flojo Vamo'a levantar</i>	"Strike with the <i>pilones</i> Don't stop your striking 'Cause we will wake up This lazy Saint"
<i>Si sigo con culo'e puya Me mataran por ladrón Vamos al canto'e sirena Y acabar con el folclor</i>	"If I keep on with <i>culo'e puya</i> I'll be killed for a thief Let's go to the <i>canto'e sirena</i> And finish with the folklore"
<i>Despierta San Juan, despierta (Despierta si estas dormido) De este sueño tan profundo Que te viene a visitar La celosía del mundo</i>	"Wake, Saint John, awake (Awake if you're asleep) From this deep slumber Because the jealousy of the world Is coming to visit you"

The general form of the piece follows four sections: the opening two stanzas, serving as an introduction to the singer and ritual and the first supplication to the Saint; the third stanza, for the realization that the Saint is asleep; the fourth and fifth stanzas, declaring the intention to

wake the Saint; and the sixth stanza, a final direct call to the Saint to wake. Though there is no specific form to *cantos de sirena* beyond the four lines, the piece's adherence to these four-line stanzas keeps it from being a completely aural large-form, making it mostly aural with respect to the *cantos de sirena*.

From the large-form, I would like to step back to the lowest, elemental level, to reflect how the work was composed. In this scale, I decided to work within a pitch system that was weakly tonal, but perhaps the most important element was the choice to explore the percussive and timbral capabilities of the winds. I decided that, since the influences mostly feature large percussion ensembles and I was only working with one dedicated percussionist, that I would treat the winds as if they *were* a percussion battery. This decision greatly informed the texture of the first section (Figure 27), as well as of the third section and the end of the fourth.

On a similar note, I treat the singers less as an ensemble, and more as a musical extension to the voice of the tenor soloist; in several

The image shows a musical score for woodwinds, specifically a four-staff system. The notation includes various extended techniques indicated by labels and symbols: 'jet whistle', 'tongue-ram', 'keyclicks', 'slap tongue', 'imitate open sound on congas', 'sempre staccato', 'mp', 'f', and 'slap tongue + keyclick'. The score is written in a rhythmic style with many triplets and staccato markings, creating a percussive texture. The word 'MAR' is visible in the top right corner of the score area.

**Fig. 27** Opening groove in the woodwinds, using extended techniques to imitate a sort of percussive battery (*Pregones* mm. 3-7)

moments in the work, the singers whisper, echo, and harmonically reinforce what the tenor is singing. This principle of timbral imitation with instruments that cannot effectively replicate the timbre of the source makes the elemental level of the work intermediately mimetic.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> It is worth noting that the theory or concept could be understood as highly mimetic, but to maintain consistency with the analytical limitations of previous examples, I will focus on the practical aural-mimetic quality of a parameter or level.

**Fig. 28** The “mother groove” of the woodwind percussion. Notice the *clave* and bell pattern on the bottom two staves.

Having decided on how to approach the winds and timbre of the overall work, I began building the clangs. The first section of the work, built on the “wind percussion,” has the woodwinds and higher brass following a basic polyrhythmic groove (Figure 28). The groove is original in that it does not occur in any specific folkloric tradition, but I took care to build it around the compound-meter *rumba clave*. This groove fades in the beginning of the second section, and is gradually supplanted by a *guaguancó*

groove in the congas, with the trumpet and French horn slapping their mouthpieces to the rhythm of a hocket outlining the *guaguancó catá* pattern.

The groove builds until the third section, where the *guaguancó* is suddenly replaced by a *culo’e puya* groove in the woodwinds, piano, congas, and electric bass. This is less of an exact representation of the *culo’e puya* groove than the *guaguancó* in the second section was, but it is still noticeably similar in how the percussionist plays the fills, and in the polyrhythmic compound feel.

Regarding the clangs of the singers, it is notably different from *cantos de sirena* in that it is not truly free, but completely notated. Perhaps the most mimetic moments in the singers’ clangs is in the third and fourth sections. The third section sees the tenor perform “improvisations” (Figure 29) with a melodic and rhythmic cadence very similar to, if not completely congruent, the archetypal calls of *culo’e puya* (Figure 30). The fourth section, furthermore, is, despite not being “truly” free, effectively conveying a natural cadence for a *canto de sirena*. Perhaps the only atypical factor of the clangs in the fourth section is that it is not only one singer, not to mention harmonically complex in relation to the solo *canto*. I



would describe the clang level of *Pregones al Bautista* as significantly mimetic of the *cantos de sirena* in the last section, significantly mimetic of *guaguancó* in the second section, and intermediately mimetic of *culo'e puya* in the third section, with an overall intermediate to significant mimetic quality in relation to all of the influences over the course of the piece.

**Fig. 29** Choir in section 3. Notice the cadence of the tenor's call (2nd staff from bottom) and how it is built around an initial vocalization and a line of a longer improvised stanza (*Pregones* 77-80).

**Fig. 30** An excerpt of the *culo'e puya Rajuñao* as performed by Un solo Pueblo (Appendix 3). Note the similarities in structure and cadence of the soloist compared to the third section of *Pregones* (Figure 29).

The sequential level of the composition is interesting, in that it becomes increasingly mimetic over the course of the piece. The first section, with its wind percussion playing the invented groove and the banging of the dowels by the singers, conveys the feel

of Afro-Venezuelan and Afro-Cuban folk musics, without actually directly employing material derived or indistinguishable from these influences. As such, I would describe it as distantly mimetic or mostly aural. The second section, with its shushing interruption and sparse texture that gradually fills, begins with distant traces of *guaguancó* and *rumba*; the melodic sequence in the baritone, alto, alto flute, and bass clarinet beginning in bar 53 is written very similarly to how a verse may be sung in two voices in *guaguancó*. The interjections of the tenor over the *guaguancó* groove played by the percussionist (*Pregones*

m. 61) is clearly evocative of a verse section in *guaguancó*, with the *quinto* fills represented as hits by the low winds and piano.

The shift to the third section, which maintains the value of the eighth-note as it goes from 4/4 to 6/8, is striking in that it is reminiscent both of the beginning of the call and response in *guaguancó* and of the *tranco* in *culo'e puya*. The diminution and responses by the choir make this sensation possible, and the sudden shift to the *culo'e puya* groove strengthens it further. From the sequences of the third section, clearly mimetic of *culo'e puya*, the fourth section's unison singing makes it undoubtedly a *canto de sirena*. The increasing mimetic quality of each subsequent sequence is meant to grant the work a sense of progression and arrival, starting from a nebulous beginning into an ending intensely folkloric. To conclude, I would describe the sequential level of the whole piece as intermediately mimetic, though describing this progression is perhaps the most accurate representation of this level.

*Pregones al Bautista* might be described, overall, as an intermediately mimetic piece, yet it directly quotes its sources at several points. Perhaps the reason it can employ direct quotations and not necessarily be felt as significantly mimetic lies in the juxtaposition of different sources. Regarding this point, *Pregones al Bautista* and *Sensemayá* have common ground, placing them closer in their intercontextual methodologies than *Danzon no. 2*, for instance. With the caveat that any objective judgment of one's own work is an exercise in futility, I will confess that I believe *Pregones al Bautista* succeeds as an intercontextual piece: it cannot be easily placed into any one genre, it alludes and evokes aspects of its influences without presenting them completely, and it still feels that it belongs in the context in which it is presented.

## ***Dialogues of the Southern Lakeshore***

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In late 2021, I participated in a project at the Conservatoire with the New European Ensemble. Tasked with writing a 2-minute piece as an introduction, I decided to focus on one musical aspect that I had been exploring, that of characterization of performers. Essentially, I wrote a brief scenario for five musicians, focused on the “conversation” between a clarinet and a trumpet, only that the trumpet and clarinet were both given “character sheets” describing their personalities and personal history. Out of fun, I called the clarinet *Cachicamo* (“armadillo”) and the trumpet *Morrocoy* (“tortoise”) as a reflection of a Venezuelan saying that is especially unintelligible for foreigners: *cachicamo le dice al morrocoy conchu’o* (“the armadillo tells the tortoise they have a shell”). Luckily, I was selected to write a longer piece, so I chose to further elaborate these folkloric characterizations and localize the drama to the region of the southern coast of Lake Maracaibo, taking influence from local folk musics to build the piece.

### **Gibraltar, Bobures, and Palmarito**

The greater region of Lake Maracaibo is notable in Venezuela for its strong regional identity. The state of Zulia, which mostly envelopes the lake, is famous in Venezuela for its different dialect, its cultural closeness to the ABC islands and the Colombian Caribbean, and its unique musical traditions. Most notable of these is the *gaita* complex, which consists of music written for and performed in the winter holidays. In Maracaibo, the *gaita de furro* has become the sound of Christmas for the entire country. In the locality of Santa Lucía and the Perijá Mountain Range, there is the *gaita de Santa Lucía* (with a Feast Day on the 13th of December) and the *gaita perijanera*, and most importantly for our purposes, on the southern lakeshore, there is the *gaita de tambora*.

The region of the southern lakeshore was a lucrative economic area in the colonial period,<sup>61</sup> due to its sugarcane and cacao industries. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the region had been supplanted by the port of Maracaibo

**Fig. 31** The region of the southern shore of Lake Maracaibo (Suárez 2003:11).



in economic development and importance, leading to a slow decline (Suárez 2003:9-10).<sup>62</sup> The descendants that inhabit these regions; specifically the towns of Gibraltar, Bobures, and Palmarito; are predominantly Afro-Venezuelan; and, unlike the vast majority of the Afro-Venezuelan community, they practice an organized Afro-descended folk religion known as the cult of Ajé or San Benito (“Saint Benedict”).

The cult is an important part of life for the communities of the southern lakeshore. Suárez describes the significance of the ceremonies on the Saint’s feast day as follows:

*Durante todo el año, en las poblaciones antes mencionadas, se ejecutan toques de chimbángueles como pago de promesa a San Benito. El devoto cumple ante el santo organizándole un toque de chimbángueles –algunas veces transcurren años antes de que pueda pagar la deuda sagrada–, y cuando al fin sus posibilidades económicas lo permiten, adquiere todos los alimentos y bebidas con las que son agasajados los capitanes, músicos y devotos que asisten a la ceremonia. De no hacerlo, el peticionario se arriesga a ser castigado, y si acaso llegara a morir sin saldar la*

<sup>61</sup> Suárez, Carlos. (2003) *Los Chimbángueles De San Benito*. Fundación De Etnomusicología y Folklore (FUNDEF).

<sup>62</sup> As it stands nowadays, the towns in the regions are so economically deprived, they can barely cover expenses for religious ceremonies (Suárez 2003:10).

*deuda, existe la convicción de que vagará como alma en pena espantando a los vivos con sus lamentos* (2003:12).

“Throughout the year, in the aforementioned communities, sessions of *chimbángueles* are performed as payment of the promises to San Benito. The devout fulfill their promises before the saint by organizing performances of *chimbángueles*—sometimes years go in between being able to pay the holy debt—and when, at last, the economic circumstances allow, they acquire all of the food and drinks with which the captains, musicians, and devotees who attend the ceremony are gifted. Without doing this, the petitioner is at risk of being punished, and, if perhaps they die without sating the debt, they are certain they will wander as a spirit scaring the living with their laments.”

The *chimbángueles* in question are musical ceremonies invoking the Saint, and they are the primary musical material from which the secular *gaita de tambora* is descended. Composed of several parts, the *chimbánguele* involve a convocation of the townspeople (*cantica*), an invocation of the Saint (*chocho*), the departure of the Saint from the temple (*Ajé*), the journey of the Saint to the cemetery to bless the souls of deceased devotees (*misericordia* and *san gongorongome vaya*), the journey back to the temple (*chimbanglero vaya*), and the return of the Saint to the temple (*chocho* and *Ajé*) (Suárez 2003:13). Each of these sections is characterized by subtle difference in the rhythms and melodies (the *chimbangleros* play seven drums, maracas, and overtone flutes).<sup>63</sup>

Given the high amount of improvisation and the highly heterophonic relation between several of the drums of *chimbánguele*, I have yet to encounter a fully representative transcription of the groove, but in Figure 32 I attempt an approximation of the general relation of the high drums (the *hembras*) and the low drums (the *machos*). Some

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<sup>63</sup> García, Carlos, director. (1987) *Encuentro Con l Tambores De Venezuela: El Aporte Africano*. YouTube, Fundación Bigott. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljxEdT4SSIA&t=1603s&ab\\_channel=Fundaci%C3%B3nBigott](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljxEdT4SSIA&t=1603s&ab_channel=Fundaci%C3%B3nBigott). Accessed 6 Apr. 2023.

characteristics of the genre, however, involve the subdivisions ebbing between simple and compound and the strong feel of the final upbeat. These characteristics are preserved in the derivative genre of the *chimbánguele*, the *gaita de tambora*, albeit with a simpler instrumentation and clearer rhythmic and melodic lines.

The *gaita de tambora* is not specifically tied to

any holy festivities in the communities of the region, but it may still be heard in sacred ceremonies (Suárez 2003:13), and, though it has spread across Zulia and Venezuela, is still strongly linked with the image and worship of San Benito. Due to my experience with performing Venezuelan folkloric music, I was very familiar with the *gaita de tambora* at the time I was composing *Dialogues*, having arranged and written a few myself. It was partially because of this that I chose to center the narrative of the work in the southern lakeshore area, but another reason was because of my explorations of the musical traditions of the Wayúu people.

## Putting the Wayúu in “Guajira”

The state of Zulia is home to some of the largest indigenous communities in Venezuela, including the Perijá, Yukpa, and Wayúu peoples of the Guajira peninsula. The Wayúu people have a rich musical tradition, involving singing as well as instruments like the jaw harp, reedless flute, and the *sawawa* reed flute. For the Wayúu, the sound of wind instruments is often associated with crying or weeping, and depending on the register and manner of

The figure displays four musical staves, each representing a different type of *chimbánguele* drum. The staves are labeled on the left: Requinta, Respondón, Medio golpe, and Mayor. Each staff begins with a 2/4 time signature. The Requinta staff shows a rhythmic pattern with two measures, each containing a quarter note followed by an eighth note, with a '7' below the notes. The Respondón staff shows a similar pattern with a '7' below. The Medio golpe staff shows a pattern with a '6' below. The Mayor staff shows a pattern with a '6' below. The transcription uses standard musical notation with notes, rests, and bar lines.

**Fig. 32** Transcription of the four types of *chimbánguele* drums, as demonstrated by Martín Villalobos of Grupo Candela (García 16'20").

playing, songs can focus around the weeping of specific people or animals in specific situations.<sup>64</sup>

In the weeks before the initial project with the New European Ensemble, I was exploring the Venezuelan Center for Cultural Diversity's online catalog of folkloric and field recordings, and I found a recording of a Wayúu *sawawa* player titled "Nirone Kiarruh Moroish," which is translated as "song that alludes to the *cachicamo*, who cries because he cannot find his hole." Not only was this image especially evocative and in line with my plan for the piece, but it was a beautiful snippet of music from a community that has been marginalized for centuries.<sup>65</sup> As such, I decided to include it as an influence in the work, and to build the piece around the experiences and daily life of some of the marginalized communities of Zulía and their cultural wealth.

## Writing *Dialogues*

Once again, I was faced with a drastic contextual shift between my influences and the piece: *Dialogues* would premiere on the last day of the Hague Spring Festival 2022, performed by musicians with no knowledge or training in the folklore of these communities, for an audience completely unfamiliar with these same traditions. So once again, I began by accounting for the intercontextuality and set realistic expectations of how precisely *any* of the material could be replicated. I came to the conclusion that, given my experiences in the project, the ensemble is quite skilled and is realistically capable of realizing complex unfamiliar musical material, so long as it is properly notated and they are given sufficient time to rehearse it.

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<sup>64</sup> Irady, Benito. "De La Sierra a La Península: Música De La Etnias Yukpa Y Wayúu." *Colección Discográfica*, Centro De Diversidad Cultural, <http://www.diversidadcultural.gob.ve/venezuela-plural/coleccion-discografica/de-la-sierra-a-la-peninsula-musica-de-la-etnias-yukpa-y>.

<sup>65</sup> It is unfortunate, then, that the performer is not named, nor is there more information available on the site beyond this. Even the initial date of recording seems to be forgotten, as I cannot find it written anywhere. From the rest of the albums on the webpage, though, I would place the time of recording in the 70s or 80s.

Of course, with the limitations of clarinet, trumpet, piano, violin, and cello, it would be impossible to reproduce any part of the timbral characteristics of *chimbánguele* or *gaita de tambora*. The clarinet, however, could emulate and convey the gestures of the Wayúu *sawawa* quite easily. So, the ideas for the characters began forming. The clarinet was Tío Cachicamo<sup>66</sup>—self-centered, rude, mercurial—and the trumpet was Tío Morrocoy—placating, loyal, soft-spoken, which left the other three musicians as the band of *chimbangleros* that wanders around town. At the time, I recalled a Venezuelan folk tale that I read as a child<sup>67</sup> about how the “tiger” got his spots.<sup>68</sup> Tío Tigre, a proud brute, encountered Tío Fuego (“Uncle Fire”) in the forest one day and ate him to

## CHARACTER SHEET

### (Performance Notes)

#### Cachicamo

- Played by Clarinet
- You are an armadillo
- You have a big personality
- You were engaged to Jennifer/Yenifer, but she dumped you
- Now you're sad and looking for a place to live
- You're look down on Tío Morrocoy because you think he's dumb and because he has a dumb shell on his dumb back, not like yours, which is cool
- The text is merely a reference to the plot, it is not meant to be sung or spoken whatsoever

#### Fuego

- Played by Violin
- You are the literal embodiment of fire
- You're pretty chill personality-wise, though
- You've spent most of the ceremonies playing with the *chimbangleros* (band), with the saint and Tigre
- When Tigre tries to eat you, you burn him and cover his bright silky fur in coarse black scorch marks
- The text is merely a reference to the plot, it is not meant to be sung or spoken

#### Morrocoy

- Played by Trumpet
- You are a tortoise/land turtle
- You're slow, but steady, a kind friend
- You're friends with Tío Cachicamo, though he's often a little mean towards you
- Your talking sounds surprisingly like a trumpet singing and playing, and your steps sound like slap tongue
- Singing is not notated specifically, player should follow notated contour and use any pitch that is comfortable
- The text is merely a reference to the plot, it is not meant to be sung or spoken whatsoever

#### Tigre

- Played by Cello
- You are a tiger
- You think you're the best around
- You've spent most of the ceremonies playing with the *chimbangleros* (band), with the saint and Fuego
- You try to eat Fuego to show him you're boss, and you end up burnt
- The text is merely a reference to the plot, it is not meant to be sung or spoken

**Fig. 33** The first of two character sheets for *Dialogues*. The intention is to give the performers a brief overview of the personalities and story of their “characters.”

<sup>66</sup> In Venezuelan folktales and parables, characters are traditionally referred to as Uncle [Animal], or Tío [Animal]. This to me suggests an African origin, given the similitude to Br'er Rabbit in the American South, and in the fact that tricksters often triumph over brute force in these stories.

<sup>67</sup> I mention this due to the fact that I have been unable to locate it since.

<sup>68</sup> The vigilant observer will note that tigers are not native to the Americas. In Latin-America, *tigre* can mean “jaguar” as well as the standard “tiger.”



show his superiority. Naturally, his long silver mane and fur became red, shriveled, and marked with spots, for no matter his strength, he could never eat fire without getting burned.

From this story, I built the characters of the cello—arrogant, brutish Tío Tigre—and the violin—playful, mischievous Tío Fuego. This left the character of the piano, who I made San Benito himself, and framed the ten-minute work as a series of vignettes around town on the day San Benito comes to celebrate. Overall, the piece would have six episodes: the first, an argument between Tío Cachicamo and Tío Morrocoy as the *chimbangleros* pass them by; the second, an intermission of the *chimbangleros* where Tío Fuego plays confidently; the third, Tío Tigre’s angry (and doomed) attempt to eat Tío Fuego; the fourth, Tío Tigre’s bitter, painful departure from the *chimbangleros*; the fifth, Tío Cachicamo’s soliloquy in the rain, crying because he cannot find his old hole since it flooded; and the sixth, where each character makes final supplications to San Benito.

Given the narrative-driven nature of the large-form, I would hesitate to describe it as mimetic. There is, however, an element of continuity throughout the work, which is in the rhythmic clangs of the *gaita de tambora*. The *chimbangleros* are performing a stripped-down version of the groove of the *gaita de tambora* in the first, second, fourth, and sixth movement, as is demonstrated in Figure 34.<sup>69</sup> Given its repetition, its weaving in and out of

**Fig. 34** The rhythm of the “Chimbangleros” in the first movement of *Dialogues*, left (mm. 24-26), and a scheme of the groove of a *gaita de tambora*, right.

<sup>69</sup> Though the *gaita de tambora* is not part of the *chimbánguele* ceremonies, it is a secular rhythm that was developed by *chimbangleros*. My incorporation of the *gaita de tambora* rhythm into the piece is meant to evoke the intensely (and incessantly) rhythmical nature of *chimbánguele*. Recordings of *chimbánguele* can be found in Appendix 3.

the piece, and its association with the *chimbangleros*, I would make the case that *Dialogues* is slightly to intermediately mimetic in the large-form level regarding *chimbánguele*.

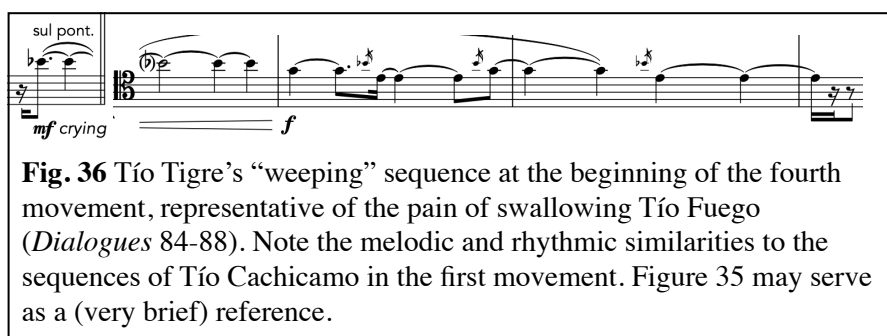
Regarding the sequence formal level, *Dialogues* varies in the aural-mimetic spectrum depending on the performer. In order to further characterize each musician, they are limited to a set style of playing; Tío Tigre (the cellist), for instance, could be described as mimetic for their similitudes in the first two movements to the rhythmic counterpoint of the *tamborito* and *tambor mayor* in the *gaita de tambora* (Figure 34). After he fights with Tío Fuego and is burned and kicked out of the group, however, their “sound” changes from the earlier pizzicato to over-pressure with the bow and altissimo sul ponticello lines.

When discussing the aural-mimetic qualification of the sequences in *Dialogues*, it is important to note that the most significant influence is from the Wayúu musical tradition. With the disclaimer that I am not deeply familiar with all of the nuances of the music of the Wayúu, I will say that the aforementioned field recordings of Benito Irady were an important influence on this work (see Footnote 64). Of the ten recordings published in “De la Sierra a la Península,” two are musical conversations between two characters (Irady 12 and 17), three are musical depictions of weeping (Irady 13, 15, and 18), and the final one is a musical farewell to *arijuna* (non-tribespeople) guests (Irady 19). These thematic influences are present throughout *Dialogues*. Already in the first and third movements we see the primary musical material framed as a conversation or interaction between

**Fig. 35** An excerpt of Tío Cachicamo’s (top staff) and Tío Morrocoy’s (bottom staves) dialogue in the first movement (mm. 12-13). Notice the text beneath both sequences; Tío Morrocoy is answering Cachicamo’s earlier sentence that “Jennifer dumped him” with “Oh, that’s a shame,” and Cachicamo responds with “Yeah, and now I must find a new hole, as my last one flooded.”

two characters, with the first movement having the sequences in the clarinet and trumpet tied

to literal phrases (Figure 35). The theme of weeping can be observed in the clarinet's (Tío Cachicamo's) sequences throughout the entire work, given that they are technically significantly mimetic of the *sawawa* recording “Nirone Kiarruh Moroish” (Irady 15), which is itself a musical depiction of a cachicamo weeping because it cannot find its hole. Tío Tigre,



furthermore, quotes the sequences of Tío Cachicamo in the fourth movement, conveying his weeping in the aftermath of his painful conflict with Tío Fuego (Figure 36). Finally, the final movement is constructed entirely around the imminent departure of Saint Benito. It bears mentioning, however, that, excluding Cachicamo's “weeping,” each of these themes is evoked musically with techniques completely different from those of the Wayúu. As such, I would describe the sequence formal level of *Dialogues* as intermediately mimetic rather than fully mimetic of the Wayúu sources.

The clang formal level reveals some stronger mimetic tendencies. Altogether, the clangs of the *chimbangleros* are strongly mimetic, given their closeness to the groove of *gaita de tambora* (Figure 34). It is also worth mentioning that Tío Cachicamo and Tío Morrocoy both have parts based around speech rhythms in the first movement, and that all characters minus San Benito have completely free speech rhythms—that is, without rhythmic notation—in the last movement. Of course, given that none of these speech rhythms are directly based on the influences, they are mostly if not completely aural material in the piece. As such, accounting for the *chimbangleros* and the gestures of Tío Cachicamo—which are significantly mimetic of the *sawawa* technique—it would not be unreasonable to describe the

clang formal level as slightly mimetic in relation to the Wayúu influence, and intermediately mimetic in relation to the *gaita de tambora* influence.

Synthesizing these aural-mimetic evaluations of each level reveals a piece that could overall be described as intermediately mimetic. What does that communicate regarding its quality as an intercontextual work? Following the pattern of results, it would not be far-fetched to say that the work benefits from the whole of it not being significantly mimetic of a single influence.<sup>70</sup> It could also be conjectured that the work, like *Sensemayá* and *Pregones al Bautista*, benefits from the inclusion of several important influences as opposed to a single primary influence. Personally, I would say that *Dialogues of the Southern Lakeshore* cannot be easily described as a specific genre, style, or idiom; that it reveals some but not all of the characteristics of its influences; and that it still manages to belong in the context in which it was performed. That being said, I believe *Pregones al Bautista* and *Sensemayá* both have significant strengths that this work didn't have. I am of the opinion, for instance, that a slightly more mimetic approach regarding large-form would have strengthened the piece, and that perhaps the characters made the music too binding; in truth, the influences in each instrument all feel a little too divided than how they should've been.

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<sup>70</sup> Of course, if it is not mimetic whatsoever, is it really an intercontextual composition?

# CONCLUSIONS

## Introduction

With these four works that have been explored, it becomes easier to visualize what intercontextual composition is. Even with the diverse examples explored in this research, certain methodological trends can be pointed out. Comparing *Sensemayá* and *Pregones al Bautista*, however, it is clear that any holistic or universal methodology of intercontextual composing will remain elusive, and rightfully so; the most interesting aspect of intercontextual compositions is precisely how they manage to synthesize influences into something that feels new, and designing a universal methodology for this will likely lead to creative stagnation. That being said, I would like to outline a personal approach to employ going forward, in order to explore intercontextuality more consciously.

## A Methodology of Questions

In *Sensemayá*, Revueltas adopts an intercontextual approach, with the primary contextual distinction between source and influence is in medium. His methodology, as a result, is mostly concerned with the mimetic application of the poem into a non-literary medium. Given that the lack of a way to literally convey the meaning of the poem will naturally obscure the connection to it, Revueltas is able to take a highly mimetic approach to the material of the work without running the risk of it feeling too transparently similar to the source.

In *Danzón no. 2*, Márquez is faced with the intercontextuality of his piece and its influence, the *danzón* genre. Unlike Revueltas, Márquez is dealing with musical influences; as such, without the barrier of medium, *Danzón no. 2* and *danzón* are perceivably closer contextually. The primary distinction between source and piece is in the environment,

function, and audience of the performance. Márquez opts for a highly mimetic approach, but, given the closeness in medium between source and product, this ultimately weakens the composition. *Danzón no. 2* comes off as an “enlightened” *danzón* that cannot be performed or appreciated in the ways *danzón* demands; it is antithetical to the well-known artistic principle that form follows function.

*Pregones al Bautista* represents a departure from the previous two intercontextual examples in that it has more than one primary influence. Though the three primary influences —*cantos de sirena*, *culo’e puya*, and *guaguancó*—all inhabit essentially the same medium as the product and are distinct in their location, occasion, function, and audience, they are also contextually distinct from each other regarding these same parameters, albeit to different amounts. In *Pregones*, I adopt an approach that is mimetic of each source, but not consistently so. This allows the work to be perceived less as a replication or imitation of any of the sources and more as a synthesis of these sources enabled by the piece’s new context. This is in line with my intention for the work: it is meant to represent my arrival in a new context, bringing with me my Cuban and Venezuelan roots and building from them something new.

*Dialogues of the Southern Lakeshore* once again deals with a multitude of primary influences, each of a musical medium. Though the contextual distinctions between the piece and its influences are similar to those of *Pregones*, the methodology employed is significantly different. Rather than adopting a highly mimetic approach for each influence, I adopted a more aural approach overall. By building characters out of each musician, I was able to approach them musically individually, making some characters like Tío Cachicamo significantly more mimetic than others, like the highly aural Tío Morrocoy. This “compartmentalization” of mimesis allows for the piece to evoke and convey influences without making the work feel as if it is any one of the influences.

Given the diverse intercontextual methods employed within this paper alone, perhaps the best way to outline how to approach intercontextual composition is to highlight questions that will necessarily come up in the process. Some vital questions that a composer should ask themselves include the following:

- What is the specific context that I am writing for?
  - Do I intend for my work to be performed once at one specific event, or many times in the future?
- Which primary influences would I be interested in applying to the piece?<sup>71</sup>
  - What are the contexts of those influences?
- How can I transform/embed/hide/allude to/quote my influences in my composition?

With these fundamental questions asked and answered, there should be enough of a working outline for how to build the composition, but these questions should constantly be revisited and reevaluated, especially the last one. The composer should challenge themselves to come up with as many creative answers to the last question; Revueltas' *Sensemaya* demonstrates that even intercontextuality between distinct media is not only possible, but a potentially fulfilling and interesting approach to take.

On matters of personal taste, reflecting on the findings of this paper, I would argue some basic guidelines towards successful methodologies:

- Composers should aim for one formal level (but not all) to be significantly mimetic. This is, of course, a matter of taste, but limiting mimesis to primarily one aspect of the piece helps to distinguish it from its influences without obscuring them entirely.
- Composers should aim to have several primary influences for any one piece. When two or more influences are extensively employed in a composition, it helps prevent

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<sup>71</sup> Márquez presents a valuable lesson in building a piece around one genre in specific, and the musical quagmire that can result from such an endeavor.

the work from feeling too similar to any one influence. Of course, with influences that are very contextually distant from the source (with a significantly different medium, for example), this issue may be a minor or irrelevant concern, as is the case with *Sensemayá*.

- Composers should select influences that can help further their intentions with the piece. Once again, I am forced to bring up Márquez. The influences of *Danzón* did not correlate to Márquez's explicit intentions with the work as solidarity to the Zapatistas.
- That being said, when working with sources created by or belonging to marginalized groups, composers should seriously consider why using these sources is important to them. If it is, then they should aim to be as equitable and open as possible with the sources' creators. This means, *at the very minimum*, citing and attributing sources clearly and accurately.

## **Things to Improve**

It is worthwhile to take a moment and reflect on what can and should be improved, if this research is expanded upon. For one, it is important to remember that intercontextuality is at the *center* of these compositions and their methodologies. In this research, I feel I may have placed too much emphasis on the analytical perspective, especially regarding the aural-mimetic spectrum and the Tenney formal hierarchies schematics. This is but one tool to approach and understand intercontextual works, but it is by no means representative or perfect. As it stands, the system cannot, by itself, draw conclusions on the quality of the art in general. With more time, I would be happy to revise the system to focus more on intercontextuality.

Another point to improve and refine is the element of social praxis. As a composer who works with folkloric material, often of marginalized groups, it would be worthwhile to



elaborate more in the future on the role that sociocultural factors play in intercontextual works. Given the present system, it was literally impossible for me to comment on Márquez's ostensible dedication of *Danzón no. 2* to the Zapatista Movement, given that he took no steps to including that in his music. That should be a major failing on the composer's part, but it ends up being a footnote at most if the analytical system cannot address it.

## **Final Thoughts**

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It is difficult to convey why intercontextuality is at the center of my thoughts. Perhaps it is a result of the lifelong disconnect between my identity and cultural upbringing, and my immediate surroundings. I often speak of my “invisible” or “imagined homeland,” a way of describing how the images and materials and stories that underpin my everyday life are foreign to the context in which I exist, but it does not stop me from imagining and remembering and *feeling* them. My homeland to me is functionally invisible; I cannot see it and I cannot feel it, and friends that have left that homeland more recently bring news on how much more of it has vanished. But to me, it is *real*, palpable, visceral, enduring so long as my kith and I are here to remember it.

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# APPENDIX 1

## *Additional Information on Folklore and Folk Musics*

This first Appendix may seem irrelevant to the research at first glance. Much of the folkloric material pertinent to the works discussed was covered in the research. Why is it necessary to delve even deeper into musics and cultures that are likely unknown to the vast majority of readers? That is *exactly* why this Appendix is worthwhile and necessary. It is my belief that one of the effective ways of challenging the Eurocentrism present in the new music community is by promoting investigation and awareness of musics from outside the European tradition. It is my hope that the curious and committed reader approach this Appendix as an exposition of likely unfamiliar yet undeniably beautiful musical and cultural traditions. I will name active musicians and ensembles from the communities involved wherever possible, and if there are any specific challenges a community is currently facing, I will provide sources where further information can be found, along with means of helping wherever possible. Without further ado, I will begin.

## 1.1 Mexico

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### 1.1.1 The Huichol, or Wixárika, People

The Huichols are an indigenous people that live in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range of northwestern Mexico. They speak an Uto-Aztecan language<sup>72</sup> closely related to Cora, and their endonym is *wixárika* (“the people”). Going forward, I will refer to the Huichol as the Wixárika.

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<sup>72</sup> Hale, Kenneth L. (1965). “Huichol Syntax.” *American Anthropologist*, vol. 67, no. 5, pp. 1340–1341., <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1965.67.5.02a00560>.

The Wixárika are notable for preserving their pre-Hispanic culture “with little significant modification.”<sup>73</sup> Their religious life revolves around three ceremonial substances: deer, corn, and peyote (Yurchenco 17). The latter is a hallucinogenic cactus that is consumed ceremonially by many Mexican indigenous communities, though most of these groups do not assign peyote the ritual significance the Wixárika do (Yurchenco 18). As the Wixárika do not inhabit a region where peyote grows, they engage in yearly pilgrimages to obtain the sacred drug. Regarding the music of the Wixárika, I quote Yurchenco:

They [the Wixárika] live a richly ceremonial life in which music is a major factor, for without the beautiful singing of the native priest, the gods (maraconi) would turn a deaf ear to petitions for good health and abundant crops. The Huichols spend six months of every year in celebration. Each fiesta is preceded by all-night singing. The dance performed on the following day is sometimes accompanied by a drum but frequently by singing only. Music also figures significantly in secular life; both men and women compose little ditties on everyday topics, and the young men spend their leisure playing a tiny fiddle (17).

The music of the Wixárika is beyond my area of expertise, but I am familiar with some Wixárika traditional music groups that can serve as an excellent foray into their folk music. First, I recommend the ensemble Sembradores de Esperanza (“planters of hope”), specifically their aptly-named album *Música Huichol*. Though I am unclear on the specific contexts of the pieces in the album, the use of the Wixárika language and what appears to be the tiny violin mentioned by Yurchenco suggests a folkloric authenticity of the material. The album can be accessed on Spotify via [this link](#) or on Youtube via [this link](#). I also recommend the album

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<sup>73</sup> Yurchenco, Henrietta (1963). “Survivals of Pre-Hispanic Music in New Mexico.” *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 15–18., <https://doi.org/10.2307/836229>.

*Música y Canto Ceremonial Huichol*. It is attributed to “Cantos Huicholes,” and is also sung in Wixárika and involves sequences and instruments similar to those Yurchenco mentions.

Currently, The Wixárika are in conflict with the First Majestic Silver Company, a Canadian mining company that has purchased a significant amount of land on Cerro Quemado, a sacred Wixárika site, for open pit mining. This region is an UNESCO protected area, and though some concessions were granted by the company to Wixárika groups in 2012, though the Wixárika Regional Council argues that this is insufficient. More information regarding the conflict can be found at [this address](#).<sup>74</sup> I would also like to use this platform to raise awareness to “El Vuelo del Venado Azul” (“the flight of the blue deer”), a charity fundraising effort to bring potable water to the Wixárika town of San José del Bajío, where water is currently scarce and difficult to obtain. More information can be found at [this link](#).

### 1.1.2 Veracruz and its *danzoneros*

Brought from Cuba, *danzón* is today an emblematic musical style of the city of Veracruz. This, however, was not always the case: as recently as 1980, *danzón* was at risk of disappearing, due to an aging population of musicians and dancers.<sup>75</sup> Since 1987, efforts have been made to preserve and revitalize the *danzón* of Veracruz, including the founding of the Centro Nacional de Investigación y Difusión del Danzón A.C (“National Center for the Investigation and Diffusion of Danzón A.C.”), or CNIDDAC for short. This organization has organized a number of forums, meetings, and national competitions, all centered on *danzón*. Though growth is gradual, *danzón* survives in Veracruz to date. If any reader is interested on delving deeper into Mexican *danzón*, I recommend visiting the CNIDDAC webpage at <http://>

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<sup>74</sup> Unfortunately, there does not seem to be more readily available information regarding this conflict past 2012.

<sup>75</sup> Flores, Danytza. “El Danzón, Tan Veracruzano Como Cubano.” *El Sol De Orizaba | Noticias Locales, Policiacas, Sobre México, Veracruz y El Mundo*, El Sol De Orizaba, 8 Aug. 2021, <https://www.elsoldeorizaba.com.mx/local/el-danzon-a-140-anos-tan-veracruzano-como-cubano-miguel-angel-zamudio-abdala-director-del-centro-nacional-de-investigacion-y-difusion-del-danzon-7058583.html>.

[www.danzon.com.mx/index.html](http://www.danzon.com.mx/index.html), or listening to the recordings of Danzonera 3 Generaciones, the associated ensemble of CNIDDAC.

## 1.2 Cuba

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### 1.2.1 Afro-Cubans

As with just about all of the former territory of Spanish Empire in America, race remains a nuanced if not complicated issue. In a 2012 census, only around 36 percent of the Cuban population identified as black or “of color” (that is, *mestizo/a*, *mulato/a*, *zambo/a*, groups of mixed racial descent).<sup>76</sup> However, it is common for independent and international sources to dispute this figure,<sup>77</sup> with many claiming higher numbers of Afro-descended Cubans.

These discrepancies can be attributed to the historical and lingering racial inequality on the island, and the systems that enforced these inequalities. The first workforce of Spanish Cuba was, under the *encomienda* system, primarily composed of the indigenous Taíno. This was a system of forced labor akin to medieval feudal serfdom, tying natives to land they worked for a Spanish lord. With the Spaniards came plague, and the vast, vast majority of indigenous people perished by the mid-sixteenth century. The demand for labor saw the beginnings of African slavery in Cuba, as with the rest of the Caribbean.

The transformation of Cuba into a slave society, however, occurred in the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution. In her book *Freedom’s Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution*, Ada Ferrer chronicles how the collapse of Saint Domingue—France’s “pearl of

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<sup>76</sup> A copy of this census can be accessed via the Wayback Machine at [this link](http://www.danzon.com.mx/index.html).

<sup>77</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20130821113550/http://www.miamiherald.com/multimedia/news/afrolatin/part4/index.html>. This is an archived link of a Miami Herald article from 2007, an exposé on Cuban racial inequality and tension in the years since Castro’s proclamation of Cuba as a “raceless society.” The article makes mention of a University of Miami study that estimated a whopping 62 percent of Cubans were Afro-descended, but I have not been able to locate said study. In any case, a very interesting read.

the Antilles”—with the Haitian Revolution paved the way for the planter class of Cuba to supplant them as the world’s largest sugar producer.<sup>78</sup>

Cuba, however, never saw a proportion of slaves to Europeans as high as Haiti’s, and with a larger urban slave population, many blacks were able to purchase their freedom.<sup>79</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century, Afro-Cubans dominated the urban labor sectors, and free blacks accounted for 39 percent of the non-white population of the island. The continuation of Cuba’s participation in the international slave trade until the 1880s (well after the Spanish government’s prohibition of the trade in 1820)<sup>80</sup> meant an influx of Africans significantly after other American colonies and former colonies. It is perhaps for this reason that Afro-Cubans, like Afro-Brazilians (whose nation only banned the slave trade in 1850), have retained more African cultural, linguistic, and religious practices than most other Afro-Latin communities.

Afro-Cubans can trace their origins to ethnic groups like the Yoruba (present-day Nigera, Benin, and Togo), Akan (present-day Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Togo), Arará (region of the former Kingdom of Dahomey), Kongo (present-day Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, northern Angola, and southwest Gabon), Igbo (present-day Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea), Carabalí (southern Nigeria and Western Cameroon; also known as the Efik), Mandinka (present-day Mali, the Gambia, and Guinea), Kissi (present-day Libera and Sierra Leone), Fula (present-day Nigeria, Senegal, and Guinea), and the Makua (present-day Mozambique and Tanzania).<sup>81</sup> The predominant

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<sup>78</sup> Ferrer, Ada (2016). *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution*. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>79</sup> Klein, Herbert S. (1967). *Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba*. University of Chicago Press, p. 196.

<sup>80</sup> Tikkanen, Amy et al. “Sugarcane and the Growth of Slavery.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/place/Cuba/Sugarcane-and-the-growth-of-slavery>.

<sup>81</sup> I got this from Wikipedia.

religious and linguistic Afro-Cuban groups, however, are the Lucumí (*santería* or *toque de batá*, with a Yoruba-derived language), the Congo (*palo monte* or *mayombe*, with a liturgical Kongo-Spanish creole language called *Habla Congo*), and the Abakuá (also called *Ñañiguismo*, with a liturgical language that is poorly studied due to the secrecy of the religious society). Each of these religious groups or societies have unique complex rites which typically incorporate sacred musics and dances; I will briefly cover some of the defining aspects of these musical traditions.

### 1.2.2 *Santería* and its *toques de santos*

*Santería*, also known as the *Regla Lucumí* (as I will call it going forward), features the worship of a pantheon of deities known as the *orichas* or *ochas*. The *orichas* trace their origins to the deities of Yoruba religion known as *Orishas*, but the realities of Spanish colonial rule led to the syncretism of *orichas* with Catholic saints (hence the name *santería*, which comes from the Spanish *santo* “saint”). Some of the *orichas* are consistently associated with specific saints, such as Babalú Ayé with Saint Lazarus, both associated with healing of illnesses, and Changó with Saint Barbara, both associated with lightning and explosions,<sup>82</sup> whilst others have more ambiguous associations, such as Elegguá, who can alternatively be associated with the Holy Infant of Atocha, Saint Martín of Porres, or Saint Anthony of Padua.

The *toques de santo* constitutes perhaps the most emblematic aspect of Lucumí ritual life; these ceremonies involve performance of rhythms and chants associated with specific *orichas* as a means of summoning them to the ceremony. The *orichas* then possess members of the ceremonies and offer blessings and healings. The primary



**Fig. 37** *Batá* drums carved by Harold Muñiz. From left to right, the *okónkolo*, *iyá*, and *itólele*. Photo by Kenneth Ritchards, reproduced here for scholastic purposes.

<sup>82</sup> An example of the latter’s syncretism is evidence in Celina and Reutilio’s son “Santa Barbara (Que Viva Changó),” which can be heard on Spotify via [this link](#).

instruments in the *toques de santos* are the *batá* drums (Figure 37), which are three hourglass-shaped double-headed drums of varying sizes.<sup>83</sup> The drumheads on each *batá* are of different sizes, with one larger and the other smaller. The specific drums are named *iyá*, *itótele*, and *okónkolo*, from largest to smallest.

**Fig. 38** One of the *toques* of Elegguá. Note the improvised (albeit notated here) “conversation” between the *itótele* and the *iyá*. A recording of this pattern can be found [here](#) as performed by Giraldo Rodríguez y sus Tambores Batá.

Each *oricha* has one or more rhythms and chants unique to them. Figure 38 outlines the basic rhythmic pattern of one of the *toques* of Elegguá,<sup>84</sup> *oricha* of roads and beginnings. Each *oricha* has a specific function and role in the ceremony. To continue with the example of Elegguá, his role as the *oricha* of roads and beginnings leads to his natural placement at the beginning of the *toque* ceremonies. Oftentimes, his chants involve an invocation, and the phrase *moyugba al oricha*, which can be loosely translated to “greetings to the *oricha*.”

Though there are several groups that exclusively perform *batá*, such as Giraldo Rodríguez y sus Tambores Batá mentioned in Figure 38, it is very common for non-sacred Cuban ensembles and musicians to perform works with elements of *toques* and *batá*, or even

<sup>83</sup> The *batá* drums have a Hornbostel-Sachs classification of 211.242.12

<sup>84</sup> Goldschmidt, J., et al. *PercussionTutor*. Percussiontutor.com, 2018.

to perform parts of or entire Lucumí *toque* cycles. Some stellar examples of this include the *a cappella* rendition of a *Canto a Eleggua* by the soul group Sexto Sentido; the Rumberos de Cuba cover of *Errante*, which is exemplary of the *batarrumba* style (that is, *rumba* involving *batá* drums); and the *Canto a Changó* by the defunct Venezuelan folkloric ensemble Grupo Madera. As such, the *toques de batá* occupy an important space in the Afro-Cuban identity, and are performed even by non-practitioners of the *Regla Lucumí*.

### 1.2.3 Palo and the Reglas de Congo

Compared to the predominance of *santero* traditions in the wider Cuban identity, the *Reglas de Congo* occupies a significantly smaller space. Unlike the *Regla Lucumí*, the *Reglas de Congo* is dualistic, recognizing Nzambi, a creator diety, and Ngombe, a negative diety. Much of the worship revolves around the *nganga*, a cauldron-like vessel typically made of metal or clay in which sticks and human bones are deposited. These deposits are known as *nfumbe*, and their presence in the *nganga* symbolize the presence of a spirit of the deceased within the *nganga*. *Nganga* can alternatively be designed for good or bad deeds, and depending on which, it is either baptized or not. The spirit within the *nganga* is made the servant of the practitioner that owns the *nganga*, and the spirit is fed and nurtured with blood from animal sacrifices.

I would like to revise my earlier mention that the *Reglas de Congo* involves music in some ritualistic capacity, as I cannot find evidence of this. What I can attest to, however, is that the *Reglas de Congo* are loosely associated to Kongo-Cuban genres of *palo*, *yuka*, *makuta*, *centella*, and *lucero*. This is evidenced by the employment of the *Habla Congo* creole language



**Fig. 39** From left to right, the *caja*, *mula*, and *cachimbo* of *palo* music. Screenshot of a [video](#) published by and featuring Elio Villafranca performing *yuka*. Reproduced for educational purposes.



in both the *Reglas* and these genres (which I will henceforth group under the label of “*palo* music”). *Palo* music involves three large single-headed drums constructed out of thick logs called the *caja*, *mula*, and *cachimbo* (Figure 39), from lowest- to highest-pitched (Goldschmidt 59). Many recordings, however, will substitute these drums with the three conga configuration of *rumba*. The genres of *palo* music may or may not feature singing.

I am not familiar with any groups exclusively dedicated to performing *palo* music—a testament to the music’s comparative obscurity—but several Afro-Cuban ensembles have recorded albums of *palo* music, such as *Llama lo Congo* by Luca Brandoli y Grupo Barrancón and *Cantos de Congos y Paleros* by Grupo Abbilona.

#### 1.2.4 *Rumba* and its *rumberos*

*Rumba* occupies an important place in the Afro-Cuban identity. Perhaps more than any other folk genre, almost all of which owe some part of their development to Afro-Cubans, *rumba* is especially representative and beloved in the Afro-Cuban community.<sup>85</sup> As mentioned previously, the *rumba* can trace a significant amount of its developments to African traditions and Afro-Cuban religions; the bell patterns in *rumba* are at times identical to West African ones (compare the opening bell pattern of *Columbia Cubana* of the groundbreaking *rumba* group Muñequitos de Matanzas to the *Akonodey* pattern recorded in Ghana by Smithsonian Folkways), and the instrumental, formal, and rhythmic similarities between *guaguancó* and *kpanlogo* developed in 1960s Ghana. Despite this, *rumba* is uniquely Cuban as a generic complex, and is not bound to one specific black ethnicity or society within Cuban, which is why it is emblematic of *all* Afro-Cubans, in a sense.

*Rumba* has existed in some form or another at least since the early twentieth century, but it was in the 1960s that the genre acquired an explosion of domestic and even

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<sup>85</sup> Payne Daniel, Yvonne (1991). “Changing Values in Cuban Rumba, a Lower Class Black Dance Appropriated by the Cuban Revolution.” *Dance Research Journal*, vol. 23, no. 2, p. 1, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1478752>.

international attention. In this explosion, there is one group that is perhaps most significant: the Muñequitos de Matanzas. Their early recordings were very popular within Cuba and, with help from the Revolutionary government itself, helped spread *rumba* beyond the urban Afro-Cuban communities (called *solares*) where it had developed. This national attention led to other *rumbero* groups to gain popularity; notable among these is Los Papines, almost equal in notoriety at the time as the Muñequitos. With these two groups, furthermore, the regional differences in *rumba* become clearer: compare *La Gitana*, a Matanzas-style *guaguancó* released by the Muñequitos in their 1960 album *Guaguancó Matancero*, to *Los Barrios*, a Havana-style *guaguancó* released by Los Papines in their 1963 album *Fantasía en Ritmo*.

This national attention to *rumba*, however, allowed for significant stylistic fusions and innovations. Notable of these are *batá-rumba*, a fusion of *toque de batá* and *rumba* developed in the late 70s by the ensemble AfroCuba de Matanzas (listen to [this recording](#) for an example of the style), and *guarapachangueo*, a rhythmic outgrowth of the regional varieties of *guaguancó* developed by the López family, also known as “los Chinitos” (exemplified by [this recording](#) by Reinaldo López. *Rumba* also provided an important influence to *songo* and, by extension, *timba*, both of which are considered to be “salsa” music that developed in post-Revolution Cuba in parallel to the *salsa* music in New York. Whilst the *salsa* music of New York and the greater Latin-American world can be understood as a stylistic evolution of the *son montuno*, the rhythmic components of *songo* and *timba* are much closer to *rumba* than *son*, evidenced by their extensive employment of the *rumba* clave as opposed to the *son* clave. For the curious reader, Alaín Pérez’s album *ADN* provides a fantastic example to current strains of *timba* (the music video for the first song of which can be found [here](#)), and the album *Con un Poco de Songo* by the Puerto Rican group Batacumbele (*La Piyé* from the album is a humorous yet informative recomposition of the American minstrel song “Oh Susanna” in a style of *songo* heavily influenced by *guaguancó*).

## 1.3 Venezuela

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### 1.3.1 The Wayúu

The Wayúu (also known as *Guajiros*) of the Guajira Pensisula in present-day Colombia and Venezuela are an indigenous ethnic group renowned for their weaving. Part of the Arawak language family, the Wayúu were viewed similarly to the Arawak of the islands by the Spanish: as foes. The Wayúu have a history of resistance and rebellion against the Spanish well into the eighteenth century, being the only indigenous group in Colombia to adopt both firearms and horses.<sup>86</sup> Eventually, however, the group was subjugated and largely converted to Christianity.

The Wayúu nowadays face severe socioeconomic challenges, part of which stem from their historic and enduring isolation from Venezuelan and Colombian society, part of which stem from the current crisis in Venezuela. The northern border between Colombia and Venezuela is the site of the ongoing Catatumbo campaign, a four-sided military conflict between the EPL, ELN, FARC dissidents, and the Colombian Army that began in 2018. In the midst of violence and intense crisis, Wayúu communities and their way of life is threatened, but organizations such as [The Wayuu Taya Foundation](#) are working on providing aid to the Wayúu. Their website can be accessed by clicking the foundation name above.

### 1.3.2 Afro-Venezuelans

Though they constitute are a significantly smaller group proportionally and quantitatively than Afro-Cubans, Afro-Venezuelans have developed unique cultural expressions that are a vibrant and accepted part of national identity. Before the discovery and tapping of oil deposits in the early twentieth century, the Venezuelan economy was primarily agricultural, with important products including cacao, coffee, cattle, sugar, and tobacco. Many of these

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<sup>86</sup> Barrera Monroy, Eduardo. “La Rebelión Guajira De 1769 : Algunas Constantes De La Cultura Wayuu y Razones De Su Pervivencia.” *Biblioteca Virtual*, Banco De La República En Colombia, 2017, <https://www.banrepcultural.org/biblioteca-virtual>.

products employed plantation systems similar to those in Cuba and other parts of the Caribbean, inevitably leading to the use of African slave labor, but never on the scale seen in Haiti or even Cuba. As such, only 2.8 percent of the modern Venezuelan population describes itself as “black” (though response bias is worth mentioning in this scenario as well),<sup>87</sup> as opposed to a 51.6 percent majority *mestizo* population (mixed white, black, and indigenous) and a 42 percent white population. The predominantly *mestizo* (or, as is more typical of the Venezuelan lexicon, *moreno*) population, combined with the large white population of diverse ancestry,<sup>88</sup> has contributed to a national narrative of ethnic homogeneity (Purcell and Evason). This same narrative has created a cultural reality where local folkloric traditions can obtain national attention, propagation, and respect;<sup>89</sup> Venezuelans speak of the diversity of their country, but that diversity is fundamentally Venezuelan. As a result, most of the folkloric ensembles and musicians in the country will build repertoires that actively include folk musics from localities and communities all over the country.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that this national discourse is not truly representative of the reality of race in Venezuela: even with the social mobility that petroleum and democracy offered in the later half of the twentieth century, Afro-Venezuelans and indigenous Venezuelans historically have been disproportionately poorer than white Venezuelans (Purcell and Evason). With the ongoing crisis and collapse of the Venezuelan middle class, however, the economic stratifications of race are weakening.

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<sup>87</sup> Purcell, Imogen, and Nina Evason (2019). “Venezuelan Culture - Core Concepts.” *Cultural Atlas*, Cultural Atlas, <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/venezuelan-culture/venezuelan-culture-core-concepts>.

<sup>88</sup> Venezuela underwent significant waves of immigration from Italy, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and the Middle East in the twentieth century, leading to (Purcell and Evason).

<sup>89</sup> Perhaps the most notable example of this phenomenon is in the *gaita de furro*, a Christmastime folk genre from Maracaibo. Maracaibo and Zulia, the state to which it belongs, have a deeply regional identity (evidenced by the number of autonomist and secessionist movements in the region over history), and *gaitas* will often exclusively focus on regional themes, yet *gaitas* are perhaps the most emblematic music of Christmas across the country, at times competing or supplanting local Christmas traditions.

I will continue with forays into Afro-Venezuelan cultural expressions. First, it is worthwhile to group Afro-Venezuelan communities into regional groups. Perhaps the simplest way to divide these groups is thusly: Barlovento, comprising communities in the Barlovento region of the state of Miranda and the surroundings of Altagracia del Orituco in the state of Guárico; La Guaira, comprising communities in the state of Vargas; the Central region, comprising coastal and rural communities in the states of Aragua, Carabobo, and Yaracuy; the Central-Western region, comprising communities in the states of Lara and Falcón, particularly in the localities of El Tocuyo, Curarigua, Carora, and La Vela; the Southern Lakeshore, comprising communities along the southern shores of Lake Maracaibo in the states of Zulia and Mérida, specifically the communities of San Benito, Santa María, Bobures, Gibraltar, and Palmarito; the Eastern region, comprising the communities surrounding Yaguaraparo in the state of Sucre and communities on the island of Margarita; and Guayana, comprising the communities of El Callao, Tumeremo, and Guasipati. Of these regions, I will focus on Barlovento and the Central region, given their otherwise lack of coverage in the research and their cultural importance to Venezuelan identity overall.

### 1.3.3 Barlovento

With its deep ties to cacao cultivation, the region of Barlovento is host to a variety of unique Afro-Venezuelan cultural traditions. I have already covered what is perhaps the most famous, that being *culo'e puya* of Curiepe, but there remain many more to cover.

It is perhaps best to continue with the folklore associated with the festivities of Saint John the Baptist. With the same essential ensemble of *tambores redondos* of *culo'e puya*, there are some subtle formal variations in the distinct localities. Compare, for instance, the *tambor* of the town of Mendoza, as performed [here](#) by the folkloric supergroup Vasallos del Sol, to that of Curiepe, specifically, the recording of *Rajuñao* by Un Solo Pueblo: notice the slightly different rhythmic patterns in the *tambores redondos* and the use of long held notes

instead of a quicker, vocalized refrain. These *tambores* with long held notes are often called *sirenas* or *tonadas* in Barlovento. Another local development can be found in Tacarigua, where the *pujao* or *macho* has been replaced by a Western-style field drum (Limardo II 9'15"-10'35").<sup>90</sup>

The *culo'e puya* ensemble has a simpler counterpart called the *quitiplás*. The *quitiplás* is an instrumental configuration of four bamboo segments of varying thickness performed by three players. The thinnest two bamboo segments are played by one player, and are usually called the *prima*. The bamboo of middling thickness is the *cruzao*, and usually serves as the primary soloist in *quitiplás*. The thickest bamboo segment is called the *pujao*. The *quitiplás* are played by striking them perpendicularly against a hard surface, oftentimes a floor or sidewalk, and combining muffled and open strikes (the *prima* player will strike the segments together rather than muffling the strikes).<sup>91</sup> An excellent example of *quitiplás* is *Bocón* as performed by Belen Palacios, Heide, and Chucho García. The *bocón* ("big-mouth") is a specific sort of *sirena* that involves the fixed response in the choir of "*bo-cón, bo-cón, bo-cón.*" Just as the specific rhythmic patterns of *culo'e puya* vary subtly from locality to locality, so does *quitiplás* as well.

Beyond these instrumental ensemble, there is the *mina*, a massive drum carved from a guava tree's trunk that is used to perform *tonadas de mina*.<sup>92</sup> The *mina* is usually suspended so that the bottom rests on the ground, but the drumhead is elevated close to the performer's head, placing it at a non-right angle to the ground. One player will play the drumhead with mallets, another will play a smaller drum perpendicular to the ground called the *curbeta*, and

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<sup>90</sup> The *tambores redondos* of *culo'e puya* have their roots in the drums of the Kongo region (García). Compare to the *palo* drums, which are also of Kongo origin.

<sup>91</sup> Suárez, Javier E., director. *Ritmos Afrovenezolanos IV (Quitiplás De Curiepe)*. YouTube, YouTube, 18 Mar. 2021, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdnFaFqNAyI&ab\\_channel=JavierE.Su%C3%A1rez](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdnFaFqNAyI&ab_channel=JavierE.Su%C3%A1rez). Accessed 20 Apr. 2023.

<sup>92</sup> The origins of the *mina* can be traced to the Mina, or Gen, people of present-day Benin and Togo.

the rest of the players will strike the body of the *mina* with mallets. An example of a *tonada de mina* can be heard [here](#), as performed by the Community of Barlovento. Unlike the *culo'e puya* and *quitiplás*, the *tonadas de mina* are performed in simple binary time rather than compound binary time.

Beyond the ceremonies of the Baptist, the other endemic folkloric genre of the Afro-Venezuelan communities of Barlovento is the *fulía*, performed for the ceremonies of the *Cruz de Mayo*, or “Crosses of May.” The *fulía* has similar rhythmic patterns to *culo'e puya*, although more binarized than the clear compound feel of the *tambor*, and it features an ensemble of *tamboritos* (battery of shorter *tambores redondos*) and *cuatro*, the four-stringed guitar of Venezuela and the official national instrument. Perhaps the most significant difference between *culo'e puya* and *fulía* is that *fulías* are never accompanied by dance, out of respect for the Cross.<sup>93</sup> The ceremonies of the Crosses of May see the *fulías* interrupted by *décimas*, improvised poetic recitations praising the Holy Cross in a ten-line octosyllabic form, in a similar way that the *cantos de sirena* interrupt *sangueos* in the Central region San Juan ritual. Perhaps the most prolific ensemble with regards to the *fulía* is Un Solo Pueblo, who recorded classic *fulías* and helped popularize the genre across Venezuela as a secular form. Some exemplary *fulías* include *Adiós Mujer*, *Maria Paleta*, and *Gallo Pinto*, all recorded by Un Solo Pueblo.<sup>94</sup> An example of a more traditionally-set *fulía* can be found in *Carmela* by Venezuelan folk singer Lilia Vera; here, the patterns of the *tamboritos* can be clearly heard.

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<sup>93</sup> Araujo, David, et al., directors. *Fulía Central - Le Voy a MI Tierra Channel - Capítulo 5 - 1era Temporada 2018*. *Le Voy a Mi Tierra Channel*, YouTube, 16 Sept. 2018, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SKZB6Wsj9Y&t=361s&ab\\_channel=LeVoyaMiTierraChannel](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SKZB6Wsj9Y&t=361s&ab_channel=LeVoyaMiTierraChannel).

<sup>94</sup> It bears mentioning that, in eastern Venezuela, there is a genre by the same name, also performed in the ceremonies of the May Cross. This eastern *fulía*, however, is much closer to Spanish and Canarian traditions, as opposed to the Afro-Venezuelan *fulía* of Barlovento.

Perhaps the most impactful ensemble to come from the region of Barlovento recently is the Parranda del Clavo, led by Betsayda Machado, and composed exclusively of inhabitants from the town of El Clavo. Like most Venezuelan cultural ensembles, they are not limited to genres from Barlovento in their repertoire, and their focus on protesting the economic and social situation of the country has further elevated them to a national cultural symbol. Their album *Loe Loa (Rural Recordings under the Mango Tree)* is a heartrendingly beautiful testimony to how folklore still remains an important part of the national discourse.

### 1.3.4 The Central Region

Cacao may rule in Barlovento, but in Central region of Venezuela, sugar is king. Although never at the scale of production as Cuba, the states of Aragua, Carabobo, and Yaracuy continue to host an important sugar industry, and in the colonial period, the demand for slave labor led to the influx of African slaves. The descendants of these slaves developed what has come to represent the archetype of Venezuelan *tambor*<sup>95</sup> and the ceremonies of the Baptist.

The most immediately striking difference between the *tambores* of the Central region and those of Barlovento is in the instrumentation. Though both styles are built on vocal and percussion ensembles, instead of the parity of the three *tambores redondos*, the Central *tambor* has a battery composed of the *cumaco*, a drum essentially identical to the mina, but played sitting on it, as it is laid down parallel to the ground; the *clarín* or *paila*, a cylindrical drum played between the legs, with a sound and technique reminiscent to a djembe; the *palos* or “sticks,” which serve as mallets played on the body of the *cumaco*; and the *charrasca*, a metal scraper similar to the Cuban guiro.

The rhythm of Central *tambor* features greater local variation than that of *culo’e puya* given its greater geographical spread and the greater isolation of many of these communities

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<sup>95</sup> In the localities of Yaracuy, *tambor* is called *luango*, but is instrumentally, rhythmically, and formally congruent with the wider genre, and as such will be included in discussions of *tambor*.



from one another, and as such cannot easily be represented by a single transcription. In Figure 25, however, I did include a transcription of the rhythmic patterns of the San Millán style of *tambor*, named after the locality near Puerto Cabello, Carabobo, that developed it, and with this representation, some of the stylistic trends of the wider Central *tambor* can be uncovered. For one thing, it is significantly closer to a binary feel than *culo'e puya* is, without completely feeling binarized.<sup>96</sup> For another, the timbral differences between the drums are reinforced with more clearly demarcated musical roles; only the *paila* ever features significant improvisation, at the exclusion of the larger and clumsier *cumaco*. Formally, there are also musical differences to be uncovered, including the prevalence of longer calls and responses, and the inclusion of the *golpe*, a section without singing that follows a *trancao* and involves frenetic improvised lines by the *paila*.

Beyond the *tambor*, the Afro-Venezuelan music of the Central region features two more endemic genres: the aforementioned *canto de sirena*, an unaccompanied song to the Saint in the midst of the ceremonies, and the *sanguero*. Slower than the *tambor*, the *sanguero* features essentially the same ensemble, and exhibits an even greater amount of local varieties. What is consistent about the *sanguero*, however, is its overtly religious theming and function. Whilst the *tambor* is essentially a secular genre that may be performed in sacral occasions, the *sanguero* is specifically correlated to a part of the ceremonies. This part is the parading of the Saint through the town: the icon of the Saint is carried by a dancer, who swings it about in the procession; in the meantime, other dancers fly colorful flags, essentially serving as a color guard to the Saint. As such, colors and flags are often referenced in the lyrics of *sangueros* (see *Pajarillo de Siete Colores* performed by Francisco Pacheco, or *Banderas de Mil Colores* by Grupo Yara).

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<sup>96</sup> An interesting comparison to this feel can be found in the Afro-Peruvian genre of *festejo*, exemplified [here](#).

The Central Afro-Venezuelan musical tradition has achieved prominence in the national discourse given the origin of several important ensembles in this region. Un Solo Pueblo, a watershed ensemble in the performance and dispersion of Afro-Venezuelan culture, was founded by Francisco Pacheco, who came from the state of Aragua. Later, the group that championed *tambor* and made the genre a household name across the country, Tambor Urbano, performed primarily in the Central style, and often would feature arrangements of non-Central folk music for the Central ensemble and styles. In recent decades, there has also been efforts by Central *tambor* ensembles like Huracán de Fuego and Herencia to connect *tambor* to the music of the wider African diaspora, with specific focus on *rumba*. Prominent contemporary Central *tambor* ensembles include Huracán de Fuego, Cuero Tranco, and Herencia.

# APPENDIX 2

## *Scores and Reproductions of relevant works*

### **2.1 Scores for *Sensemayá* and *Danzón no. 2***

Given the fact that two of the main scores used are not currently in the public domain, I feel uncomfortable reproducing them in their entirety in this research, even under the protection of the inherently transformative nature of this research. As such, I will reproduce only my scores in this section. I will also provide links to download them as pdfs in the Research Catalogue.

In lieu of a full .pdf of the scores for *Sensemayá* and *Danzón no. 2*, I have linked in Appendix 3 and the Media Repository of the Research Catalogue two YouTube videos of these works with images of the score corresponding to each section, or “score-follower” videos. These can be useful tools for the analysis of these works while bypassing the problematic elements of readily releasing entire works by other composers for free without their consent.

## 2.2 “Sensemayá: canto para matar una culebra”

Below is Guillén’s poem, “Sensemayá,” along with an English translation by Willis Knapp

Jones:<sup>97</sup>

### *Sensemayá*

*canto para matar una culebra*

by Nicolás Guillén

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

La culebra tiene los ojos de vidrio;  
la culebra viene y se enreda en un palo;  
con sus ojos de vidrio, en un palo;  
con sus ojos do vidrio.  
La culebra camina sin patas;  
la culebra se esconde en la yerba;  
caminando se esconde en la yerba,  
caminando sin patas.

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

Tú le das con el hacha, y se muere:  
¡dale ya!  
¡No le des con el pie, que te muerde,  
no le des con el pie, que se va!

Sensemayá, la culebra,  
sensemayá,  
Sensemayá, con sus ojos,  
sensemayá.  
Sensemayá, con su lengua,  
sensemayá.  
Sensemayá, con su boca,  
sensemayá.

¡La culebra muerta no puede comer;  
la culebra muerta no puede silbar;  
no puede caminar,  
no puede correr!  
¡La culebra muerta no puede mirar;  
la culebra muerta no puede beber;  
no puede respirar,  
no puede morder!

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, la culebra . . .  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, no se mueve . . .  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, Za culebra . . .  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, se murió!

### *Sensemayá*

*(Chant to kill a snake)*

translated by Willis Knapp Jones

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!

The snake has eyes of glass;  
The snake coils on a stick;  
With his eyes of glass on a stick,  
With his eyes of glass.  
The snake can move without feet;  
The snake can hide in the grass;  
Crawling he hides in the grass,  
Moving without feet.

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombe!

Hit him with an ax and he dies;  
Hit him! Go on, hit him!  
Don’t hit him with your foot or he’ll bite;  
Don’t hit him with your foot, or he’ll get away.

Sensemayá, the snake,  
sensemayá.  
Sensemayá, with his eyes,  
sensemayá.  
Sensemayá, with his tongue,  
sensemayá.  
Sensemayá, with his mouth,  
sensemayá.

The dead snake cannot eat;  
the dead snake cannot hiss;  
he cannot move,  
he cannot run!  
The dead snake cannot look;  
the dead snake cannot drink;  
he cannot breathe,  
he cannot bite.

¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, the snake . . .  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, does not move . . .  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, the snake . . .  
¡Mayombe-bombe-mayombé!  
Sensemayá, he died!

<sup>97</sup> Guillén, Nicolás. “Sensemayá: Canto Para Matar Una Culebra.” *Spanish-American Literature in Translation*, translated by Willis Knapp Jones, Ungar, New York, NY, 1963.

## ***2.3 Pregones al Bautista***

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*Pregones al Bautista* is available for download from the Research Catalogue, but it may also be accessed via the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g-sFE6nvMxz3XT4hK1kBUtizoSC5F9bA/view?usp=sharing>

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## ***2.4 DIALOGUES of the Southern Lakeshore***

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*DIALOGUES of the Southern Lakeshore* is available for download from the Research Catalogue, but it may also be accessed via the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EJQ1xIMKXKfUEqQETsgITpTmFjeC-FEB/view?usp=sharing>

# APPENDIX 3

## *Audiovisual Materials*

All of the audiovisual material in this appendix is also accessible through the Research Catalogue, but I have included links below in case they are necessary.

### 3.1 Audio Material

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This section will be organized around the sections of the thesis, in order ease referencing.

#### 3.1.1 Introduction

**3.1.1.1** <http://www.diversidadcultural.gob.ve/venezuela-plural/coleccion-discografica/musica-y-cantos-de-la-tierra-de-gracia>

This is a link to an album published on the Center for Cultural Diversity webpage of the Venezuelan government called *Música y Cantos de la Tierra de Gracia*. The album catalogues a variety of folk musics from Eastern Venezuela, which includes the Island of Margarita. Number 2 of the audio files is a field recording of a *canto de pilón*.

**3.1.1.2** <https://open.spotify.com/album/6sZwMYB4C3DI69Oy9o6Qez>

This is a link to an album published on Spotify, specifically, *Early Recordings 1987-1989* of the Chicago Klezmer Ensemble. This is an exemplary album of the Klezmer Revival of the 1970s and 1980s, where klezmer became an affirmation of identity for many Jewish musicians in the United States.

#### 3.1.2 Sensemayá

**3.1.2.1** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAo35AhaMJ8&ab\\_channel=ManuelRodr%C3%ADguezRiva](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAo35AhaMJ8&ab_channel=ManuelRodr%C3%ADguezRiva)

This is a link to a recording of “Sensemayá: canto para matar una culebra,” ostensibly recited by Nicolás Guillén himself. I say ostensibly as I find it

impossible to actually verify it is him, aside from comparing the voice to other (admittedly unverified) recordings of the poet, so I advise the reader take this example with many grains of salt.

**3.1.2.2** <https://open.spotify.com/album/7jlaPNCoIrhdjFa094b0wJ>

This is a link to the album *Toques y Cantos de Santos Vol. 1* by Grupo Folklórico de Cuba. The album serves as a catalogue of the specific chants and rhythms associated with the saints or *orichas* in Santería. Here, Elegba is used to name Elegguá.

**3.1.2.3** <https://open.spotify.com/album/1RoBgaMTgcmC4HdrOCHOEx>

This is a link to the album *Cantos de Congos y Paleros* by Grupo Abbilona. It is a catalogue of the genres and styles associated with and performed by Afro-Cubans of the *Regla de Congo*.

**3.1.2.4** <https://open.spotify.com/track/4jbRomCJd6g411vGxmc10Z?si=fa28990b1d8e4e5b>

This is a link to the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra's 2008 recording of *Sensemayá* in their album *Fiesta!* It is my personally favorite rendition of the work. This, like most recordings of Revueltas's piece, is of the well-known orchestral second version.

### **3.1.3 *Danzón no. 2***

**3.1.3.1** [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy\\_noc\\_OW6wxRqrDTREoKAscNJih24Ry5gGs](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_noc_OW6wxRqrDTREoKAscNJih24Ry5gGs)

This is a link to the album *Música Huichol* by Sembradores de Esperanza. It is a prevalent and beautiful example of the musical traditions of the Huichol or Wixárika people of Mexico.

**3.1.3.2** <https://open.spotify.com/album/6ORzGjl9SDKqGycb7z0dP3>

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy\\_lSPZI89j9rB5Q4RO-VFK0zd5xtK63961Q](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_lSPZI89j9rB5Q4RO-VFK0zd5xtK63961Q)

This is a link to the album *Música y Canto Ceremonial Huichol* by Cantos Huicholes. Another excellent example of Wixárika musical traditions.

**3.1.3.3** <https://open.spotify.com/album/7iTdK32piaILYWi1huvTsz?si=YmjkiL5VQ-KzZuy2cdxG4g>

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy\\_19wm7FoU3PR8-jk8s\\_wdQgrfPYBObkQbk](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_19wm7FoU3PR8-jk8s_wdQgrfPYBObkQbk)

This is a link to the album *The Cuban Danzón: It's Ancestors and Descendents* produced by Andrew Schloss for Smithsonian Folkways. It features historic arrangements and settings of Cuban *danzón*, an invaluable resource for tracing its history and development.

**3.1.3.4** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLDh6CuXo3M&ab\\_channel=FrankFern%C3%A1ndez-Topic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLDh6CuXo3M&ab_channel=FrankFern%C3%A1ndez-Topic)

This is a link to the *contradanza* “Los Tres Golpes” by Cuban composer Ignacio Cervantes. The *contradanza* was a predecessor to the *danzón*.

**3.1.3.5** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-SFq9El\\_wg&ab\\_channel=ErnestoLecuona-Topic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-SFq9El_wg&ab_channel=ErnestoLecuona-Topic)

This is a link to the *contradanza* “Danza Lucumí” by Cuban composer Ernesto Lecuona. Note the *cinquillo* and implied *clave* structure set by the bass ostinato.

**3.1.3.6** <https://open.spotify.com/track/7GbK3f9cwrDzNorVym0Dg1?si=e7823af570e54cb4>

This is a link to the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra’s 2008 recording of *Danzón no. 2* in their album *Fiesta!* Note a slight deviation from the score in



the use of congas performing the *marcha* pattern typical of *son* in the last bars of the piece.

**3.1.3.7** <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFXt82i89LFWu36nqkug2vNlTkij1pd2l>

This is a link to a YouTube playlists of the other seven *danzones* Márquez wrote. Not official, but useful.

### **3.1.4 *Pregones al Bautista***

**3.1.4.1** <https://open.spotify.com/track/3II4OwkGGU8Jp1IjZ1M1Oa?si=fd72bab3378e4f72>

<https://youtu.be/rOz0gN7hbKI>

This is a link to the *culo'e puyas* “Rajuñao/Jinca/Guacamaya/Juliana” by Venezuelan folk ensemble Un Solo Pueblo. As it features several of *culo'e puyas* back to back, it serves to demonstrate the larger patterns of the ceremony.

**3.1.4.2** <https://open.spotify.com/track/24TQ6XpLtlkZnEoKt4Pbku?si=2c277a7fb7bf4aaf>

[https://youtu.be/flmaQK2Nx\\_w](https://youtu.be/flmaQK2Nx_w)

This is a link to some *cantos de sirena* recorded by Venezuelan folk ensemble Vasallos de Venezuela. It is an especially fantastic example, as it features just how much a *canto de sirena* can vary from performer to performer.

**3.1.4.3** <https://open.spotify.com/album/0lOt2GY7XmkAi4Gf5NTuYP>

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy\\_k2a2C8bmo\\_p9UztVDYTDGg1G8UBGI1THQs](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_k2a2C8bmo_p9UztVDYTDGg1G8UBGI1THQs)

These are links to a collection of field recordings of Venezuelan *tambor*, *sanguero*, *canto de sirena* and more. It is special in its dependence on

musicians from specific localities like San Millán, rather than professional ensembles that perform many Venezuelan folk musics.

**3.1.4.4** <https://open.spotify.com/album/1B3kwWVo0g16iNAacK3sNu?si=IXZrtg7WSxueukn5Uf55dg>  
[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy\\_IUFGBJQjjBAIrwnkyCdE6MOC11eSIQyG0](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_IUFGBJQjjBAIrwnkyCdE6MOC11eSIQyG0)

These are links to the album *Guaguancó Callejero* by Rumberos de Cuba. This album was my first profound encounter with Cuban *rumba*, and it a stellar musical work. It features several arrangements of popular Spanish-language songs, like “Guaguancó Callejero,” “Sabor a Mi,” and “Errante,” in the genres of *rumba*.

**3.1.4.5** <https://on.soundcloud.com/NedHp>

Live Recording of *Pregones al Bautista* from the 2020 Ereprijs Young Composer’s Meeting.

### **3.1.5 DIALOGUES of the Southern Lakeshore**

**3.1.5.1** <http://www.diversidadcultural.gob.ve/venezuela-plural/coleccion-discografica/de-la-sierra-a-la-peninsula-musica-de-la-etnias-yukpa-y>

This is a link to an album published on the Center for Cultural Diversity webpage of the Venezuelan government called *De La Sierra a la Península: música de la etnias Yukpa y Wayúu*. The album consists of field recordings of two indigenous ethnic groups from the northwest of Venezuela: the Yukpa and the Wayúu. Number 15 of the audio files is the recording of a *sawawa* that is described as the “song of a *cachicamo* crying because it cannot find its hole,” which was the primary inspiration for the role and music of the Clarinet in *Dialogues*.

**3.1.5.2** <https://open.spotify.com/album/6RhjcYOLyN2cqgcj5ZhQPZ?si=ySYoj2jRSjO4BUuj7nL2ww>

[https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy\\_mxRL-9-XB4Zjen4CBIJrj1dQWLCUT3FZw](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=OLAK5uy_mxRL-9-XB4Zjen4CBIJrj1dQWLCUT3FZw)

These are links to a compilation published by Smithsonian Folkways called *Venezuela: Afro-Venezuelan Music, Vols. 1 & 2*. Tracks 3-8 are field recordings of each part of the *chimbánguele* ceremonies as performed by *chimbangleros* from Bobures. The other tracks of the album are examples of unique Afro-Venezuelan traditions as performed by locals, and include such styles as the previously discussed *culo'e puya*, *sirenas*, *tonada de mina*, *quitiplás*, and *fulía*, but also styles such as the *tamunangue* from the Central-Western Afro-Venezuelan communities, *joropo barloventeño*, and *parranda*, all of which I do not cover but are exceedingly interesting folkloric expressions.

**3.1.5.3** <https://youtu.be/Lz8BaPesueM>

This is a link to the *gaita de tambora* “A San Benito” by prolific Venezuelan folk musician Francisco Pacheco. Notice the instrumental similarities to *chimbánguele*, as well as the comparatively clearer rhythmic counterpoint.

**3.1.5.4** <https://on.soundcloud.com/xmMu8>

This is a link to the recordings of *DIALOGUES of the Southern Lakeshore* from its premiere.

## 3.2 Video Material

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### 3.2.1 Links to score-following videos

**3.2.1.1** <https://youtu.be/aJxd0nIY1oA>

A score-follower for the second version of *Sensemayá*. Performance is by the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein.

**3.2.1.2** <https://youtu.be/rGTtFSy3Hzs>

A score-follower for the first, chamber version of *Sensemayá*. Performance is by the Ebony Band Amsterdam. Note the different meters, melodic rhythms, and textures from the more famous later version. Here, the speech rhythms taken from the text are significantly more obvious.

**3.2.1.3** <https://youtu.be/rGTtFSy3Hzs>

A score-follower for the first, chamber version of *Sensemayá*. Performance is by the Ebony Band Amsterdam. Note the different meters, melodic rhythms, and textures from the more famous later version. Here, the speech rhythms taken from the text are significantly more obvious.

**3.2.1.4** <https://youtu.be/PKQCv2IKODM>

A score-follower for the first, chamber version of *Sensemayá*. Performance is by the Ebony Band Amsterdam. Note the different meters, melodic rhythms, and textures from the more famous later version. Here, the speech rhythms taken from the text are significantly more obvious.

**3.2.2 Links to folkloric video resources****3.2.2.1** <https://youtu.be/YvGBLEwuiqY>

The first part of a two-part TV documentary on Venezuelan traditions on the day of Saint John by Fundación Bigott. Perhaps the most in-depth catalogue on Venezuelan folkloric music included in this paper, with its only caveat being that it is completely in Spanish.

**3.2.2.2** <https://youtu.be/I2KLCaspZJk>

The second part of a two-part TV documentary on Venezuelan traditions on the day of Saint John by Fundación Bigott. Perhaps the most in-depth

catalogue on Venezuelan folkloric music included in this paper, with its only caveat being that it is completely in Spanish.

### 3.2.2.3 <https://youtu.be/ljxEdT4SSIA>

Another documentary by Fundación Bigott, this time focused on the African cultural contribution to Venezuelan music. Also an excellent resource, with in-depth elaborations on *chimbánguele* and *gaita de tambora*.

### 3.2.2.4 <https://youtu.be/gF5Z-ZjIWzI>

An excerpt of a live performance by los Rumberos de Cuba, specifically of a *guaguancó*.

### 3.2.2.5 <https://youtu.be/Uru2cUR6njo>

An excerpt of a live performance of a *toque de batá* of Elegguá. A useful example to see how the drums are played, if not to showcase context.

### 3.2.2.6 <https://youtu.be/eEqna6zuASo>

A performance of *cantos de sirena* and a *tambor*, staged but imitating how the saint is usually sung to at the beginning of the ceremonies for the Baptist. Useful for context, and good music nonetheless.

## 3.2.3 Recordings of Personal Pieces

### 3.2.3.1 <https://youtu.be/jn2sX78n91I>

Video recording of the first movement of *Dialogues* from its premiere in the Spring Festival 2022.

### 3.2.3.2 <https://youtu.be/9LKTCptr198>

Video recording of the second, third, and fourth movements of *Dialogues* from its premiere in the Spring Festival 2022.

**3.2.3.3** <https://youtu.be/6BiA2nBzPOg>

Video recording of the fifth movement of *Dialogues* from its premiere in the Spring Festival 2022.

**3.2.3.4** <https://youtu.be/TmCAaGsuo9k>

Video recording of the sixth movement of *Dialogues* from its premiere in the Spring Festival 2022.