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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Fleeing Franco's Spain: Carlos Surinach and Leonardo Balada in the United States
(1950–75)

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Music

by

Robert J. Wahl

August 2016

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Walter A. Clark, Chairperson

Dr. Byron Adams

Dr. Leonora Saavedra

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The Dissertation of Robert J. Wahl is approved:

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the music faculty at the University of California, Riverside, for sharing their expertise in Ibero-American and twentieth-century music with me throughout my studies and the dissertation writing process. I am particularly grateful for Byron Adams and Leonora Saavedra generously giving their time and insight to help me contextualize my work within the broader landscape of twentieth-century music. I would also like to thank Walter Clark, my advisor and dissertation chair, whose encouragement, breadth of knowledge, and attention to detail helped to shape this dissertation into what it is. He is a true role model.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the generous financial support of several sources. The Manolito Pinazo Memorial Award helped to fund my archival research in New York and Pittsburgh, and the Maxwell H. Gluck Fellowship provided several years of support while studying in Riverside. Graduate Division also supported me with multiple travel grants, enabling me to share my research at conferences across the country.

Members of the Pacific-Southwest and Northern California chapters of the American Musicological Society were particularly valuable in offering substantial commentary on early versions of what are now chapters in this dissertation.

I also would like to thank Bob Kosovsky and the rest of the staff at the NYPL's Music Division for helping me to navigate several collections and access sources that were otherwise unavailable. The staff at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh and the Carnegie Mellon University Library were also helpful in locating archival materials on

both Surinach and Balada. A significant portion of this dissertation was based on an interview I conducted with Leonardo Balada, who was gracious enough to spend time with me discussing his music and career.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their continuous support. Without them, none of this would have been possible.

To my family, friends, and loving wife

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Fleeing Franco's Spain: Carlos Surinach and Leonardo Balada in the United States
(1950–75)

by

Robert J. Wahl

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Music
University of California, Riverside, August 2016
Dr. Walter A. Clark, Chairperson

As a result of Francisco Franco overthrowing the young republican government during the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), countless citizens fled their home country in search of personal security and economic prosperity. Significantly, many of these expatriates were artists and musicians who eventually made their way to the United States, where they achieved celebrity status as dancers, singers, instrumentalists, and composers. This dissertation examines the lives and works of two such composers.

In the 1950s, Carlos Surinach (1915–97) and Leonardo Balada (b. 1933) came to the United States by way of New York City. Although both men were from Barcelona, their music and careers followed different trajectories. Surinach is often best remembered for his collaborations with choreographers of modern dance, such as Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Pearl Lang, and Alvin Ailey; however, his contributions to

dance constitute only a portion of his creative output and were often adapted from his concert works, as choreographers found the rhythm and drama of his music appealing. Surinach's style often exhibits a deliberate use of flamenco idioms and is examined in three of his most important flamenco-inspired works: *Ritmo Jondo* (1952), *Sinfonietta Flamenca* (1954), and *Flamenco Cyclothymia* (1966). This dissertation also presents new biographical details regarding Surinach's education and conducting career in Europe, the impact of his lover Ramón Puigcerver Bel on his career, and his work in the film and television industries.

Whereas Surinach maintained a consistent style throughout his career, Balada recognized the advantages of experimenting with new techniques, which he has done with great success. This dissertation examines three of Balada's works from his self-described second period, which began in the mid-1960s. For ten years, Balada moved away from tonality in order to explore new timbres, textures, rhythms, and avant-garde techniques that led to three of his most important works: *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King* (1968), *María Sabina* (1969), and *Steel Symphony* (1972). All three pieces have been recorded and widely performed, and they mark the beginning of a decades-long career as both professor and composer.

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INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Civil War (1936–39) is one of the most important events in Spanish history. Rebel forces, in a violent overthrow of the young Spanish Republic, dragged the country into a brutal fight that spelled tragedy for citizens and soldiers alike. The seemingly simple division between Republican and Nationalist forces was not so simple: communists, anarchists, loyalists, royalists, republicans, and monarchists were but a few of the participants who fought and died for their cause. Compounding the complexity of this civil war were foreign sponsors who supplied medicine, combatants, military advisers, equipment, and munitions in exchange for minerals rights, gold, or allegiance.¹ Significant to the topic of Spanish composers working in the United States is not necessarily the events that followed the war, but the events that took place during the two years and eight months that scarred the Spanish landscape and psyche. This dissertation is not a reexamination of Franco's policies or their effects on music in the country. Instead, it will examine the life and music of composers Carlos Surinach and Leonardo Balada, who, like so many other artists, left Spain in search of economic prosperity and personal freedom following the consolidation of the dictatorship. However, unlike the other expatriate composers who settled across Europe or in Latin America, these two found new lives in the United States.

1. For additional information and background on the Spanish Civil War see Antony Beevor, *The Spanish Civil War: The Battle for Spain* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006); Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War, Revised* (New York: Modern Library, 2001); and Richard Rhodes, *Hell and Good Company: The Spanish Civil War and the World It Made* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015).

In July of 1936, General Francisco Franco contacted the German foreign ministry to request support for his rebellion, but he was quickly denied by the German government.² Franco had better luck by rerouting his request through Nazi channels, as Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess was notified and personally delivered the message on July 25th to Hitler, who was in Bayreuth at the time attending a performance of *Die Walküre* at the Wagner Festival. Hermann Goering, Hitler's air marshal and eventual second in command, testified during his Nuremberg trial that during this meeting he urged Hitler to "give support under all circumstances, firstly, in order to prevent the further spread of communism in that theater and, secondly, to test my young Luftwaffe at this opportunity in this or that technical respect."³ While Hitler was interested in preventing the spread of communism, historian Richard Rhodes suggests Hitler saw the Spanish war as a way to distract France and England from Germany's rearmament and secure the resources necessary to carry it out, namely Spain's iron ore, mercury, and pyrites.⁴ The result of this meeting spelled disaster for Spanish civilians and Republican troops.

The political, civil, and artistic ramifications of the Spanish Civil War have been well documented. Though the war did not consume the entire continent as the impending Second World War would a few years later, it did capture the attention of all the key players. Anti-fascist sympathizers felt particularly connected to the tragedies that befell

2. Richard Rhodes, *Hell and Good Company*, 8.

3. *Ibid.*, 9

4. *Ibid.*

both sides of the conflict, especially the non-combatant civilians, and documented the Spanish plight in paintings, writings, and poetry. Carlos Surinach and Leonardo Balada were born eighteen years apart (1915 and 1933, respectively), and both experienced the war from Barcelona, albeit from different perspectives—soldier and child refugee. Both composers found their way to the United States in the 1950s but deny any political justifications for leaving Spain. However, their experiences and comments about the war, Franco, and economic hardships in Spain suggest otherwise.

Carlos Surinach was 21 years old when the Nationalist rebellion first erupted on the streets of Barcelona in July of 1936, but prior to the Nationalist-led coup, he had enjoyed a rather typical childhood in the Catalan capital. Remarkably, artistic life in Barcelona was never entirely snuffed out as a result of the war, but it was greatly diminished. Surinach continued attending concerts and performances whenever possible, and in the evening, after his light military service, he studied scores at the piano. As the years passed on, however, it became evident to Surinach that he would not be able to get the education he desired by staying in Barcelona and that conditions for creative exchange with fellow Spaniards and leading international figures were unlikely to improve—a premonition that turned out to be true. Following the Nationalist occupation of Barcelona in January of 1939 and Franco declaring the end of the Civil War on April 1, musical activity throughout the country reached a new low.⁵

5. Walter Aaron Clark and William Craig Krause, *Federico Moreno Torroba: A Musical Life in Three Acts* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 137.

Following his studies in Spain and Germany (1939–44), Surinach spent a few years conducting across Europe before he decided to leave the continent for Quito, Ecuador in an effort to establish his career. However, his plans changed, and he found himself working to create a life in the United States, where his first concert appearance in 1952 introduced the country to his flamenco stylings that permeate much of his music.

Surinach enjoyed a lucrative career in the United States that was deeply entwined with the world of modern dance. Until his passing in 1997, Surinach collaborated with top choreographers such as Martha Graham, Pearl Lang, Alvin Ailey, Robert Joffrey, and others in what many have considered to be a highly successful career in the world of dance. His concert works also enjoyed great success both in the United States and abroad, even back home in Spain, and he maintained a prominent presence in the television industry, composing background music for commercials, educational films, and programs on CBS, like the Walter Cronkite Show. Perhaps most notably, he wrote the background music for the first NBC color peacock logo, which aired from 1956 to 62. In all of Surinach’s music, there is a certain theatricality that he attributed to inspiration from classical theater: “I insist very much to communicate . . . if possible, I would like to compose music the way the classical playwrights wrote plays. They wrote for the people, playing with their emotions to impress them theatrically.”⁶

6. Broadcast Music Inc., “In the Press: Carlos Surinach,” *BMI the Many Worlds of Music*, April 1968, 7.

1 NBC - Peacock

1st. HARP M.M. ♩ = 120 NBC - Peacock Surinach

1st. FLUTE or PICCOLO M.M. ♩ = 120 NBC - Peacock Surinach

5 *legatissimo* *f. cresc.*

II

1 1 2 *legatissimo* *f. cresc.* *f. cresc.*

f. cresc.

Fig. 1: Score for the first NBC peacock logo in color (1957).⁷

7. Carlos Surinach, "Score for NBC Color Peacock" (NBC, 1957), Box 28/2 (NBC - Peacock), BMI Surinach.

While Surinach succeeded in playing upon audience emotions by manipulating flamenco-inspired techniques, a young Leonardo Balada arrived to New York in 1956 in pursuit of academic and intellectual freedom. Balada was also from Barcelona, but his experiences contrast with those of Surinach, as do the qualities of his music. Balada was raised by atheist and Leftist parents under the Catholic and far-right rule of Franco. The conflicts between the Balada family's political beliefs and the state affected the kind of composer their son would grow to be.

As a young man, Balada viewed Franco's repressive government and his violent ascent to power as that which was wrong with the world. An important period in his early life was when his family forced to flee their home in order to escape the terror bombings conducted by the German and Italian air forces and subsequent food shortages throughout the area. By the time the Civil War and World War II were over, Balada was eager for the chance to leave Spain but had little hope for such an opportunity, due to being from a working-class family of tailors.

Through a chance opportunity, Balada was able to leave Spain to study in New York beginning in 1956, where he found twelve-tone music to be boring and too intellectual, while the music of the "post-Webern crowd" lacked "drama, sensuality, emotional impact, and theatricality."⁸ Following a series of internationally successful

8. Leonardo Balada, A Conversation with Bruce Duffie, Radio, April 1998, <http://www.bruceduffie.com/balada.html>.

works, Balada began teaching at Carnegie Mellon University in 1970 and has reflected on the political significance of his works:

I would say that once it is written, it is important that some of my works—works like *Torquemada* or *Guernica*—present statements which I feel very strongly about. To me, it's a contribution towards these ideas that I involve on these subject matters that I cannot contribute otherwise except with my music. If I was a different individual, instead of writing *Guernica* maybe I would have done "Revolution Against Franco," but I couldn't do that, so I did a symphonic poem. If I been alive and had the power or the leadership necessary, I would vote against the Inquisition. But I couldn't do that, so I wrote a cantata for that. I'm doing my things which I feel very strongly about in my heart, and hopefully it has a mission as well.⁹

Spanish composers employing autochthonous musical idioms, such as those derived from flamenco music, is nothing new. Prior to Surinach and Balada arriving in the United States, prominent Spanish composers such as Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909), Enrique Granados (1867–1916), Manuel da Falla (1876–1946), Joaquín Turina (1882–1902), and Federico Moreno Torroba (1891–82) looked to the rich traditions of flamenco music that originated with the Roma people (also called *Gitanos* in Spain and known colloquially as Gypsies). The lives of these composers and their music have been thoroughly documented and closely analyzed to illustrate the various ways in which each composer uniquely incorporated elements of flamenco.¹⁰ While Surinach and Balada both continue in this rich tradition of employing Spanish and flamenco devices, their

9. Ibid.

10. See Walter Aaron Clark and William Craig Krause, *Federico Moreno Torroba: A Musical Life in Three Acts* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Walter Aaron Clark, *Enrique Granados: Poet of the Piano* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Carol A. Hess, *Manuel de Falla and Modernism in Spain, 1898-1936* (University of Chicago Press, 2001).

music is a unique product of time and context. These expatriate composers transformed many of the same devices other have used by incorporating new tonal palettes and other compositional techniques that were unknown to those of earlier generations. As a result, the music of Surinach and Balada represents an important chapter in the music of both Spain and the United States and is deserving of closer examination.

Although Surinach and Balada faced no immediate threat from the Franco government when they choose to leave the country, their decisions to leave directly resulted from the unfavorable economic, political, and cultural climate in Spain at the time. The physical destruction from the Civil War and Franco's policies threatened their economic prosperity and personal security, as both desired to establish themselves in a thriving cultural capital and both belonged to groups that were frequently persecuted by the Franco government: liberals, atheists, and in the case of Surinach, homosexuals.

Spanish-speaking artists in the United States during twentieth century have often been grouped together under the broad category of "Latin," and there are many great resources that document the profound impact these singers, dancers, and instrumentalists have had on cultural life in the United States.¹¹ Unfortunately, there are few resources that focus exclusively on artists who emigrated from Spain, and this includes Surinach and Balada.

11. An important example of this scholarship includes John Storm Roberts' *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Further separating Surinach and Balada from other émigré musicians at this time is the fact that both are composers. Although their fellow Spanish composer Gustavo Durán (1906–69) also fled to the United States, where he earned citizenship in 1942, the remaining years of his life were dedicated to diplomacy rather than composition. As a result, Surinach and Balada are the only two composers of any significance to establish a life-long composing career in the United States.

Despite the prominence of both composers on the national and international stages, very little has been documented about either. This dissertation reassembles many of the extant biographical details on Surinach by examining primary sources from his personal archive that is housed at the New York Public Library. Conflicting details about his life and career, especially those pertaining to biographical and compositional chronologies, are common in the sources that do include him, such as encyclopedia entries and dance-related books that mention him in relation to his ballet music. Victoria Cavia Naya has compiled a partial catalog of his dance works and written a general introduction to his style, and some of Surinach’s instrumental works are mentioned in several dissertations and theses focused on larger collections of works.¹² Substantial

12. Victoria Cavia Naya, “La música para danza de Carlos Suriñach,” *Cairon: Revista de ciencias de la danza*, no. 3 (1997): 21–38, “Carlos Suriñach: Figura y aproximación estilística,” *Revista de Musicología* 20, no. 1 (1997): 689–702, and “Música y músicos españoles en Estados Unidos: 1950-1960,” in *Joaquín Rodrigo y Federico Sopeña en la música española de los años cincuenta*, ed. Javier Suárez-Pajares (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, Seminario Interdisciplinario de Teoría y Estética Musical Glares, 2008), 55–79.

analyses on all of his works remain to be conducted, with the exception of his songs that have been addressed in two DMA dissertations and an MA thesis.¹³

Much of what has been said about scholarship on Surinach also applies to the life and work of Balada. Despite his decades-long career as a composer and teacher in the United States, little has been written on him. Spanish scholars have recently taken an interest in Balada, but apart from biographical and contextual details, nothing has been written that examines his music and his significance in the history of music in the United States and Spain.¹⁴

Though both composers spent the remainder of their careers in the United States, this dissertation ends with the death of Franco in 1975. Surinach and Balada maintained their connection with friends and family back home through frequent trips for personal and professional purposes, but Balada has perhaps best summarized their unique position:

I suppose the fact that I'm away from there [Spain] makes me feel much closer than if I was there. My commitment to historical events or even social situations that existed in the history of my country—my former country of Spain—really is reflected in my music and in my subject matters as well. I do feel very sorry

13. See Patricia G. Poor, "The Songs of Carlos Surinach" (MM thesis, Ball State University, 1979), in WorldCat, <http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/9613613>; Esperanza Alvarez-Erviti, "An Analytical Discussion of Three Piano Works by Carlos Surinach" (DMA diss., University of Miami, 1985); Maureen A. Simpson, "Carlos Surinach: A Performer's Guide to His Five Song Cycles" (DMA diss., University of South Carolina, 1998), in WorldCat, <http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/40166789>.

14. See Marta Cureses de la Vega, "El compositor Leonardo Balada. De Barcelona a Pittsburgh," *Cuadernos de Música Iberoamericana* 7 (1999): 235–48, Fernando Anaya Gámez, *Homenaje a Leonardo Balada* (Málaga: Orquesta Filarmónica de Málaga, 2012), and Juan Francisco de Dios Hernández, *Leonardo Balada: La mirada oceánica* (Madrid: Editorial Alpuerto, 2012).

about Spain and my family which is there and my friends. I love America, too, but two countries are in my life now.¹⁵

15. Carlos Surinach, A Conversation with Bruce Duffie, Phone, 1987, <http://www.bruceduffie.com/surinach2.html>.

CHAPTER 1: Carlos Surinach (1915–97)

Carlos Surinach was born in Barcelona on March 4, 1915, but by his mid-thirties he decided to establish his career on the other side of the Atlantic because he was a man who knew what he wanted most in life: artistic freedom, economic opportunity, and a life free from persecution. Events during the 1930s and 40s turned Europe upside down for many artists who were struggling just to survive, and having worked in Spain, Germany, and France, Surinach decided to strike out in search of new opportunities. As with many artists, it was a combination of hard work and chance encounters that allowed Surinach to climb the cultural ladder when he finally moved to the United States in 1950.

As well traveled and roundly educated as Surinach was when he arrived to New York City, his musical training had begun at home. His mother, Ascención Wrokovna, was of Austro-Polish ancestry but was born in Madrid, where Surinach boasts that she won first prize in piano at the Royal Conservatory.¹ It was his mother who also introduced him to concert music by taking him to shows at the Gran Teatro del Liceo in Barcelona, which included both opera and ballet performances.² The time he spent with his mother at the theater was influential for the composer he would grow to be:

Through the ballets I became for the first time acquainted with symphonic music (we didn't go to concerts). All was for me a riot. The amoral fat Isoldes (with splendid voices though) cheating their kings and the beautiful Diaghilev dancers

1. Carlos Surinach to David Ewen, "Autobiographical Information," Letter, (1979), Box 9/11 (Ewen, David 1979), BMI Surinach.

2. Ibid.

(without voice) whose charisma described the powerful music were certainly not to be put together with teachings of the Catholic priests at the school.³

Meanwhile, Surinach's father, Luis, was Catalan and a stockbroker by trade and did not nurture his youngest son's musical development in the same way as his wife. However, Luis did allow him to continue his studies in music so long as they did not impede progress in his other subjects.⁴ This was not a problem for Surinach, who maintained good marks through high school, even while attending advanced music classes.

Surinach's formal education began at the age of fourteen when he entered elementary school in Barcelona at the Colegio de los Escolapios in 1921, where he remained through high school graduation in 1933, and in 1925 he entered the José Caminals Academy of Music, whose eponymous founder was a pupil of Enrique Granados. Caminals instructed Surinach in theory and piano and awarded him certificates for each in 1934 and 1935, respectively. Those years leading to the Spanish Civil War held a special place in Surinach's memory:

From 1929 to 1936 Spain was an exciting country. It was the time when de Falla, Ortega y Gasset, Turina, Unamuno, Picasso (he often made short escapes from Paris to Barcelona) and García-Lorca were in full activity. There was also good classical theatre; and Rachmaninoff, Rubinstein, Stravinsky, Richard Strauss, Furtwaengler, Prokofiev and Knappertsbush among others, were all performing visitors. Casals was the conductor of his orchestra and [it] was not difficult hear Hugo Balzer or Otto Klemperer at the Gran Teatro del Liceo conducting Wagner.

3. Ibid.

4. Surinach had only one sibling, also named Luis, who was older by nine years and was business oriented like their father. Carlos Surinach, interview by Kathy Matheson, Cassette, February 27, 1979, Streaming - Transcript available: *MGZMT 3-434, NYPL.

Yet, something was wrong in the air, and a couple of month after the world premiere of Alban Berg’s Violin Concerto (Barcelona 1936), the civil war began.⁵

Although the time he spent with Caminals was fruitful and helped him to emerge as “a good pianist and an excellent theorist,” his real training in composition began when he entered the Barcelona Municipal Conservatory.⁶

The image shows a Spanish birth certificate form titled "CERTIFICACIÓN EN EXTRACTO DE ACTA DE NACIMIENTO". At the top, there are several stamps and a handwritten number "764". The form is filled with handwritten information: "Don ENRIQUE DEL CASTILLO YUEBITA" as the Juez Municipal, "Barcelona" as the province, and "Carlos Surinach Brocona" as the name of the child. The child was born in "Barcelona" on the "cuatro" (4th) day of "Mars" (March) of the year "mil novecientos quince" (1915). The parents are listed as "Luis" and "Ascension". The date of the certificate is "Barcelona, a 19 de febrero de 1946". There are two signatures and a stamp at the bottom right. A table at the bottom left shows fees: "Derechos" (2.40 pts.), "Busca (Art. 3º. Arancel 28-V-922)" (0 pts.), "Suplidos" (0 pts.), and a "TOTAL" of 2.40 pts. The bottom of the form includes the text "MODELO OFICIAL aprobado por Orden de 24 de enero de 1944, para la expedición de las certificaciones de todos los Registros civiles. No tendrá eficacia legal las que desde 1º de abril de 1944 se usen en otros impresos o otro papel." and "PRECIO DE ESTE IMPRESO: 1,50 PESETAS".

Fig. 2: Certified extract of Carlos Surinach’s birth certificate.⁷

5. Carlos Surinach to David Ewen, (1979).

6. Ibid.

7. “Certified Extract of Surinach’s Birth Certificate,” February 1946, Box 7, BMI Surinach.

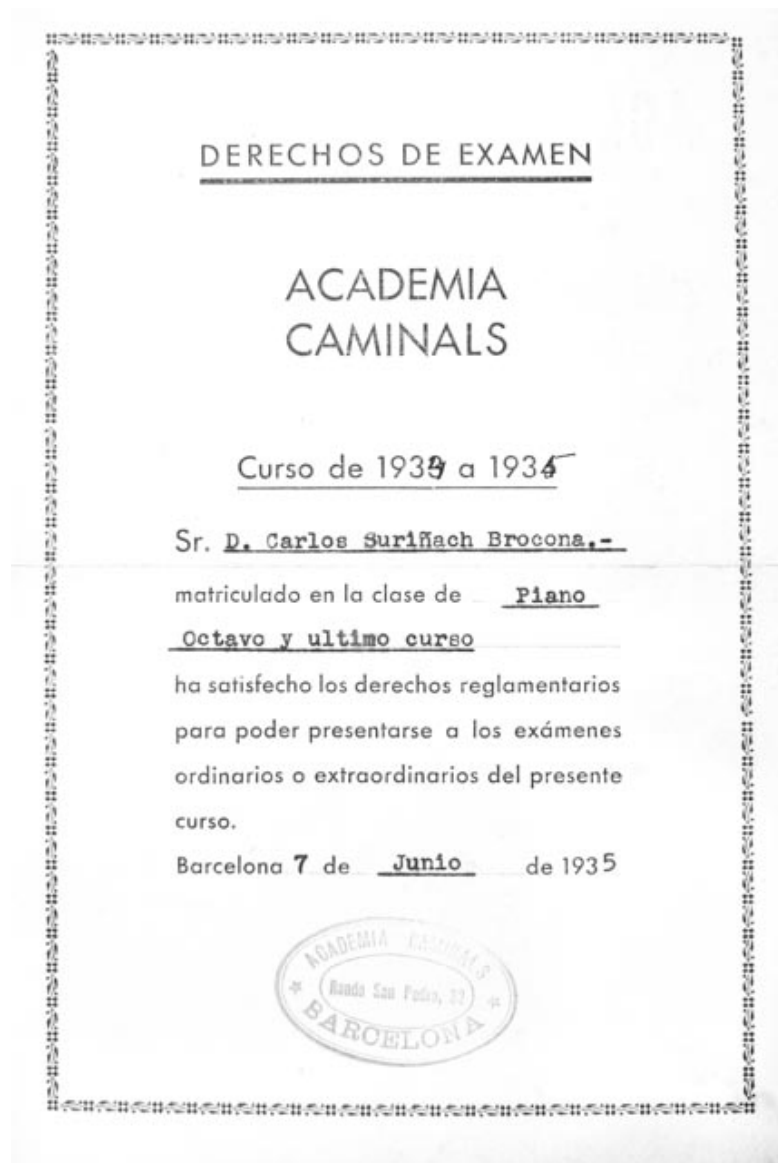


Fig. 3: Surinach's final exam certificate from the José Caminals academy.⁸

Surinach spent the next several years at the conservatory (1935–39) learning the foundations of musical composition from Enric Morera (1865–1942), a highly regarded

8. José Caminals, "Derechos de Examen: Academia Caminals," June 7, 1935, Box 14, BMI Surinach.

composer and the director of the Municipal Conservatory. When Surinach began private studies in composition there, Morera became a mentor to him, but the years they spent together were greatly affected by the outbreak of the Civil War in July of 1936, as less than a year after the war began Surinach was drafted into the Republican army.⁹ Despite initially being assigned to the infantry branch of the army, Morera and Surinach's father were able to secure an administrative position for him for the duration of the war, which Franco declared over on April 1, 1939. Surinach, his brother, and his father were cleared of charges by the Franco regime because they were deemed to have committed no civil crimes, and even h Morera, despite his politically charged *Hymn to Catalonia*, was left free.¹⁰

9. El Secretario J. Roig to Carlos Surinach, "Draft Notice from Republican Government," March 25, 1937, Box 14, BMI Surinach; "On the 31st of the month, at 10am, you should present yourself before Recruitment Office No. 25 of this city, located in Puerta de la Paz (Military Dependents Building), to be assigned to the active corps, Infantry Branch. Be advised that in not presenting yourself before said authority, on the day and hour indicated, you will be considered a rebel."; Surinach later declared that he never claimed membership with any political group but described his father as a leftwing member of the Constitutional Liberty Party of Spain, which was a political group that dissolved by 1880 after its formation in 1872 and subsequent dissolution split in 1874, following the ascension of King Alfonso XII. The right-wing faction joined the Conservative Party (loyal to the monarchy) and the left-wing faction joined the Liberal Party (loyal to the constitution of 1869).

10. Carlos Surinach to David Ewen, (1979).

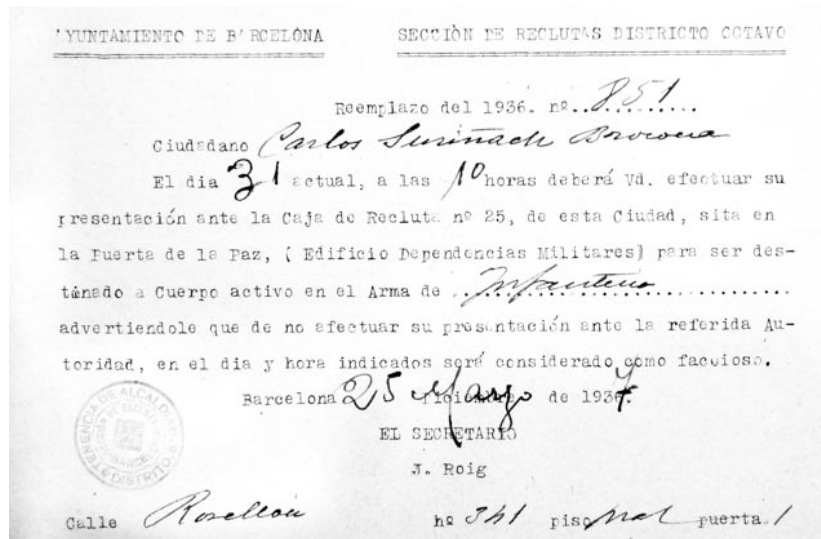


Fig. 4: Draft notice from the Republican government to Surinach (March 25, 1937).

The two years that Surinach spent in the military were not entirely detrimental to his studies with Morera, but they certainly did not help. Fortunately, Surinach was able to go home each night and “devour at the piano any orchestral work [he] could find.”¹¹ His lessons with Morera often had to be conducted by mail, but Morera still had much to offer him, especially after the war was over.¹² By 1939, Surinach recognized a decline in Spanish culture that had taken place, particularly with regards to music, due to many prominent composers fleeing the country prior to Franco assuming power. Surinach described those who remained or later returned as following after Manuel de Falla in

11. Carlos Surinach to David Ewen, (1979).

12. Carlos Surinach to Guggenheim Committee, “Second Application: Important Statement,” Letter, (1964), Box 12/11, BMI Surinach.

style, but despite having an excellent aesthetic direction, “their technical means were scarce and their output small.”¹³ To Surinach, this signaled a warning to his own aesthetic direction, which was leaning heavily toward chromaticism and atonality.¹⁴ A testament to these chromatic tendencies are his tonal and folkish *Tres Canciones (Three Songs of Spain)*, based on the texts of Federico García Lorca (1898–36) and Antonio Machado (1875–1939), which he composed in 1939 without Morera’s knowledge.¹⁵

A significant moment for the young composer was the opportunity to meet Manuel da Falla, who was on his way out of the country. Surinach recalled, “I was anxious to meet him and I did (not without preparing some of my pages for him to see). This was not the best moment to meet a composer who was going to submit himself to voluntary exile in Argentina. Nevertheless, he praised my songs and liked the rest.”¹⁶ Falla’s encouragement affirmed his decision to change course from the path to chromaticism and atonality.

Morera served as a mediator between Surinach and important musicians he felt the aspiring young composer should meet, such as Falla. Surinach recognized the prospects for receiving the education he desired or establishing a successful career at

13. Carlos Surinach to David Ewen, (1979).

14. Ibid.

15. Lorca and Machado were two of the most popular Spanish poets during the first half of the twentieth century. Their deaths during the Civil War cemented their place in the poetry canon, and Lorca’s execution by the Franco regime for his homosexuality added another layer of significance.

16. Ibid.

home in Spain were limited, and though he had previously considered utilizing German compositional techniques in his own works, the possibility of going there to study had never occurred to him. After Franco took over, passport restrictions were enforced to prevent travel to non-friendly countries, which severely limited Surinach's options for studying abroad. In 1939, however, the possibility of leaving Spain developed when he was introduced to the German composer and conductor Hugo Balzer (1894–1987), who was visiting from Düsseldorf on a conducting engagement. Balzer was so impressed with the compositional sketches Surinach showed him when they met that he offered the young man an opportunity to come and study with him at the Robert Schumann Conservatory back in Düsseldorf, which was fortunately located within a country Franco deemed to be friendly.

By the time Surinach met with Balzer, he had completed his studies with Morera by earning certificates in harmony, counterpoint, fugue, and orchestration. Surinach's prospects were beginning to improve after three grueling years of civil war, but it was apparent to him that the rest of the continent was teetering on the brink of war, which naturally cast a shadow on his decision to leave for Germany. He did recognize that if he were to stay in Spain he would be under totalitarian rule, and he believed that Spain would likely support Germany should war break out. This realization helped sway him to leave, and to help ease concern for traveling to Nazi Germany, Surinach recalled that Morera suggested that the war would be short-lived: "Hitler will collapse—he said—Germany will survive, and if you go, the top musical education you will get there, will be

yours forever.”¹⁷ The plan worked, and by November of 1939 Surinach was in Düsseldorf studying at the Robert Schumann Conservatory under Professor Balzer, to prepare for admission to the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin.



Fig. 5: Surinach’s identification card while studying at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin.¹⁸

By 1939, the Nazi Party had already acquired an international reputation for violence against marginalized groups. Many, including Surinach, speculated that if war

17. Ibid.

18. “Surinach’s Prussian Academy of Arts ID Card with Semester Stamps (Recto),” n.d., Box 14, BMI Surinach.

were to erupt between Germany and other countries, it would be short—nothing like the Great War or that which Surinach had just endured. Though artistic life in Berlin was not the same as it had been before the war, it was still a large improvement over the conditions Surinach left behind in Spain.

The Second World War had already begun. I had no longer to go to France or to a free Austria. Italy was under the same regime as Germany and for musical training not so attractive. The Spanish government, moreover, refused all passports to non-friendly nations. The only foreign opportunity open to me was the invitation of Mr. Balzer. I was 24 and not satisfied with my limited local training. The war might be long, and even Spain might join in at the side of the Germans to pay them their previous help. If I remained in Spain, I would be in a totalitarian area anyway. So my option was to go to Germany. I know that I was not going to meet there Toscanini nor Hindemith, but my chances to receive a good musical education were excellent.¹⁹

In a 1964 application for a Guggenheim award, Surinach made perfectly clear his political affiliations:

In Germany I tried to learn all I could in the field of music. I left on the day following the end of my last semester. I never belonged there to any political party, nor had I previously in Spain. . . . As my hope, since the Spanish civil war, was always to become a citizen of a democratic country, I became an American citizen on March 3rd, 1959, as soon as the law gave me chance.²⁰

Thirty years later, in a phone interview with classical-music radio host Robert Sherman, Surinach reaffirmed his predicament and political stance:

It's hard to explain, but as a Spaniard I did not feel any connection to the Nazis. Remember, Franco was not all that different. I had been a soldier with the Liberals against Franco, but he occupied Barcelona and that was the end of the

19. Carlos Surinach to Guggenheim Committee, (1954).

20. Carlos Surinach to Guggenheim Committee, "Second Application," Letter, (1964), Box 12/11, BMI Surinach.

civil war. The feeling was that the Falangists [Spanish Fascists] and the Nazis were trying to do the same thing, the main difference being that Spain was not at war while Germany was devouring Europe. We were very upset about all that was going on, and when America got into the war and started bombing Berlin, I decided to go back to Spain.²¹

While Surinach's decision to enter Nazi Germany in pursuit of education could be perceived as being in poor taste, it must be tempered by an understanding that Surinach himself would have faced persecution for his homosexuality, had it been revealed, whether he stayed in Spain or studied in Germany. That Surinach would benefit from the Nazi Party sponsoring and controlling Germany's music life at this time perhaps leaves a blemish on his education; however, some distinction between German music history and crimes committed by Hitler should be made.

During the next five years, Surinach studied with some of the most respected composers and instructors in the world. He traveled first to Düsseldorf, where he began studies at the *Oberklasse* of the Robert Schumann Conservatory in 1939 under the guidance of Hugo Balzer, whose job over the next three years was to prepare Surinach for entrance to the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin and to help cover the cost of Surinach's education, Balzer assisted in securing an Alexander von Humbolt fellowship for him. Surinach was with Balzer until 1942, but before he began studies at the Prussian Academy in the fall of that year, he also studied conducting over the summer with Eugen Papst at the State Academy for Music in Cologne to earn a conducting certificate.

21. Robert Sherman, "Liner Notes to *Carlos Surinach: Ritmo Jondo*" (New World Records 80505, 1996).

As a result of the ongoing war, many cities in Germany were becoming increasingly dangerous, and Berlin was no exception. Despite the risk, Surinach entered the Prussian Academy with special distinction and began his studies with Max Trapp in 1942, which was well after the first air raids on Berlin. The program at the Prussian Academy required artists to complete three major works that would each receive a proper public performance. The pieces that Surinach wrote for this program include his *Sonatina for Piano*, *Quartet for Piano and Strings*, and *Sinfonia-Passacaglia* (Symphony No. 1). These three works all contain what he suggests to be his first attempt at using flamenco scales, albeit unconsciously. Surinach admits that Trapp played a significant role in helping him to find his mature style:

“Forget all you know—Trapp said—and use only your intuition; and if the intuition is against the rules, forget the rules.” Yet, he made me conscious of the lines needed to reach the total form of a movement. “Your conclusions or points of rest in your music are very dramatic—he added—but they kill the continuity and make the form periodical. Be careful!” He definitely changed my musical mind from the novicehood to professionalism. He also gave me the willpower to control detail while drawing impulses and musical actions. In other words, he taught me how to give a work the final touch.²²

While at the Prussian Academy, Surinach took several master classes in composition with Richard Strauss, but the circumstances of the war prevented the Academy from premiering his three compositions, so by the spring of 1944 he had completed his certificate and was ready to leave Berlin.

22. Carlos Surinach to David Ewen, (1979).

By the time Surinach left Berlin in May of 1944, the Americans had already begun their first bombing missions over the German capital. Eager to leave the country and escape his second experience of aerial bombing, Surinach left for Spain the day after his last semester and found his way back to Barcelona. Upon returning home to Barcelona, Surinach was immediately hired as a backstage conductor at the Gran Teatro del Liceo, which allowed him to gain valuable experience and to find work with other symphony orchestras, such as the Barcelona Philharmonic Orchestra. Confidence in his music was not a problem for Surinach, so he frequently included the works he had written while attending the Prussian Academy on programs that he conducted, which helped to establish his reputation as both a fine conductor and a composer. While he recognized the important work other composers such as Xavier Montsalvatge and Joaquín Rodrigo were doing in Spain, he was only concerned with developing his own Spanish sound:

I—more Spanish in soul than ever—was also doing my own thing. I was now aware of the Flamenco scale (as instinctive discovery, not as an invention). . . . My aim of writing new Spanish music more primitive and more advanced at once, was set. All impressionism was dismissed, it was elemental, sophisticated with guitar intervals as harmonic basis of the Flamenco scales, homophonic, polyphonic and with motoric stamina. I was ready to write much more. All I needed was time and money.²³

He found both of these when he arrived to New York at the end of 1950 and continued his pursuit of “elevating” flamenco music to the concert stage, but it was not until Surinach lived in Paris between 1947 and 1950 that he formalized his compositional aesthetic, one that would bring so much success in the United States. Despite his

23. Ibid.

intentions to become a professional composer, his conducting career was taking off instead, and over the next several years he would only compose two new works: the ballet *Montecarlo* (1945) and his Second Symphony (1949).²⁴

In light of easing border restrictions and new opportunities abroad, Surinach left for Paris in 1947, where he remained until 1950. Although this was a period of very little creativity, Surinach was incredibly busy with conducting engagements across Europe. He promptly found work in Paris as a guest conductor with the Lamoureux Orchestra, the Orchestra Nationale Paris, and the Orchestre Radio-Symphonique. Elsewhere in Europe he conducted the Royal Conservatory Orchestra in Liège, Belgium (1949) and the Philharmonic Orchestra in Lisbon, Portugal (1946–47). He also found work in Madrid with the National Orchestra (1947–48) and the Arbós Orchestra (1947–50). Even during the next decade, when his career as a composer began to take off, he continued to conduct all across Europe and recorded about fifty works for the record labels MGM, Columbia, and Montilla.

24. *El Mozo que casó con mujer brava* (*The Wild Woman's Grooms*) is a third piece from this period listed in his catalog of works as composed in 1947 and premiered in Barcelona at the Gran Teatre del Liceo Opera House on January 13, 1948. This is an opera in one act for small orchestra, double quartet of mixed voices, chorus, and dancers. See Carlos Surinach, "Works by Carlos Surinach Written for the Stage" n.d., Box 7/(Information of fourteen stage works by Carlos Surinach), BMI Surinach.

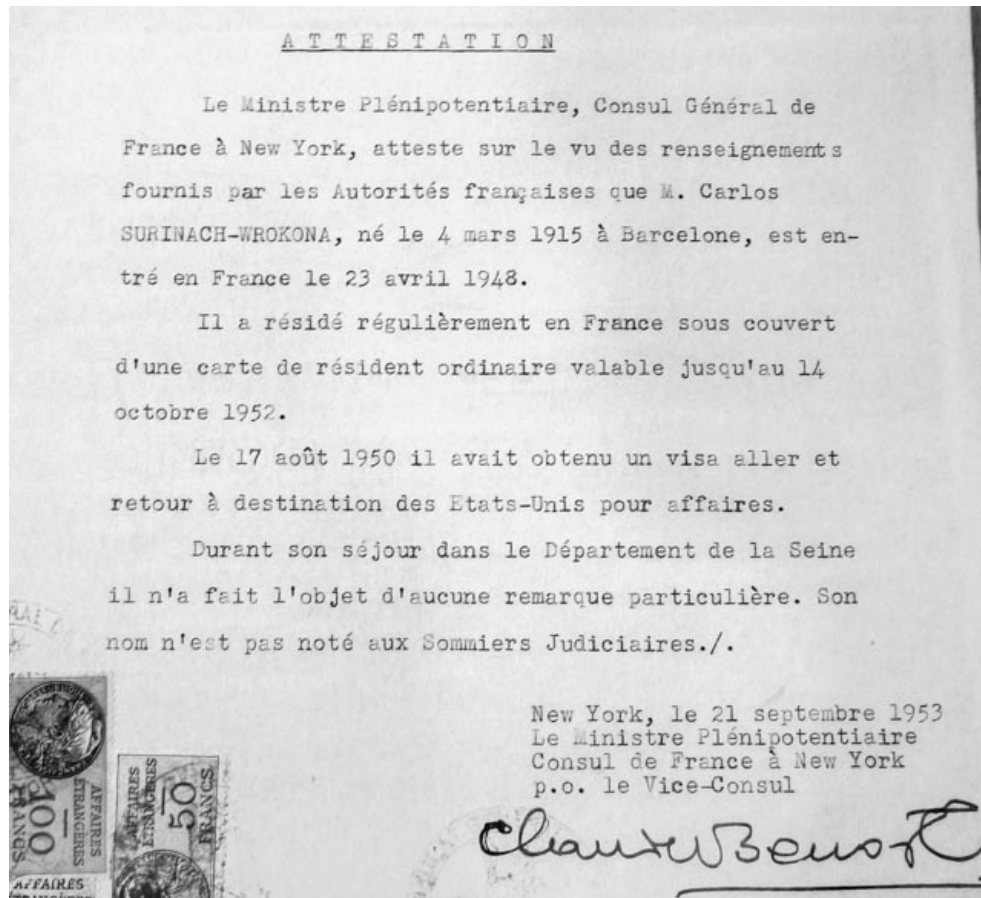


Fig. 6: Letter from the French consul confirming Surinach's legal status and the dates he was in France.²⁵

Details surrounding the years Surinach spent living in France are sparse, but it is clear that this time was important to him as a young artist beginning to make his own way. During the time he spent living in Paris, he made friends with several people who undoubtedly influenced him as an artist: Francis Poulenc (1899–1963), George Auric (1899–1983), Henri Sauguet (1901–89), Arthur Honegger (1892–1955), and Olivier

25. Le Ministre Plénipotentiaire, Consul Général de France à New York, "Attestation," Letter, (September 21, 1953), Box 14, BMI Surinach.

Messiaen (1908–92), to name a few. This was also the time when his lover Ramón Puigcerver Bel (1920–90), whom he met in 1945, first moved from Spain to travel with Surinach and work as his personal assistant.²⁶ In addition to working as Surinach’s assistant, Ramón was also his musical copyist for the next several decades, but due to the immigration process and temporary visas, he frequently had to leave the United States until he earned his citizenship in the 1960s.²⁷ Until that time, however, Ramón was required to leave the country when his visa could no longer be extended, so he often returned to France, where he stayed with their friend Francis Poulenc (Fig. 8).²⁸

The way in which Surinach came to build a career in the United States was more happenstance than deliberation. He left France in August of 1950 in order to take a one-year conducting position with an orchestra in Quito, Ecuador, but on his way from Europe he had a twenty-nine day transit visa that allowed him to stay in the United

26. Ramón was born in Barcelona to parents who owned a business selling fish in the local market. Growing up, he assisted in the family business, attended school, and later worked in a clothing store selling the latest styles. Late in 1938 he was drafted into the Republican army, but his family managed to help him escape and hide until the war was over a few months later. After the war, he worked in the fraud department of the Catalan electric company until he opened his own antique store shortly thereafter. Ramón met Surinach in 1945 and was offered a small job of copying some music, which he particularly enjoyed, having excellent penmanship and basic music literacy. By 1949 Ramón agreed to move to Paris as Surinach’s assistant. Their relationship was always kept formal in paperwork, as over the years they kept many business contracts between themselves, owned neighboring apartments, and had separate travel accommodations. For more information see Ramón Puigcerver Bel, “Antecedentes de Ramon Puigcerver Bel,” Letter, (n.d.), Box 2/(Documento en poder de Gustavo Durán), BMI Surinach; and Carlos Surinach to Immigration and Naturalization Service, “Testimony,” Letter, (October 20, 1954), Box 2/11 (Bard College), BMI Surinach.

27. Ramón was briefly married to Jean Houloose, a well-known dancer of the time, and their marriage was likely conducted only to assist Ramón in acquiring citizenship. See Jean Houloose Puigcerver, “Birth Certificate Request for Husband’s Citizenship,” Letter, (January 6, 1960), Box 2, BMI Surinach.

28. Ramón lists Poulenc’s address on many official documents.

States, during which time he was in New York and managed to find remunerative work thanks to contacts he had through his publisher. The odd jobs he picked up included writing commercial music and jingles for television networks (NBC and CBS) and advertising agencies (BDDO and Young & Rubicam), which paid well enough for him to cancel his planned trip to Quito and apply for a one-year visa to stay in the United States. Before his transit visa expired, he went to Montreal to apply for the extended visa, which he received.

AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT, made in Paris, France, on april 30th, 1954,
between Carlos Surinach, residing at 440 East 59th Street, City
of New York, and Ramon Puigcerve, residing at 5, rue de Medicis
c/o M. Poulenc, Paris, France;

Witnesseth:

Whereas the parties hereto represent and warrant that
they heretofore are executing this contract the day of the date
above, wherein the aforesaid Carlos Surinach employs Ramon Puig-
cerve as a musical copyist and music arranger for a period of
5 months from the day of his next arrival in the United States.
THEREFOR IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Mr. Ramon Puigcerve will receive from Carlos Surinach
from the day of his arrival in the United States, the amount
of 40.00 U. S. dollars for 36 hours per week plus a bonus of
5% on ^{his} net profits, during a period of 5 months. Carlos Sur-
inach will pay to Mr. Puigcerve his way back to the country of
his permanent residence and after this perid of 5 months, on
a transatlantic stinship in tourist class.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto set their
hands and seals the day and year first above written

Carlos Surinach L. S.

Ramon Puigcerve L. S.

Fig. 7: Formal agreement between Surinach and Ramón, which they frequently updated during their time together. Ramón lists the address of Francis Poulenc on many of his official documents.²⁹

29. Carlos Surinach and Ramón Puigcerve Bel, "Agreement," Contract, (April 30, 1954), Box 2/11 (Bard College), BMI Surinach.

Writing music for television proved to be a major source of income for Surinach from the time he arrived to the United States. By composing background music for commercials, television programs, and short films, Surinach was able to experiment with a variety of different styles while earning money and establishing professional connections. Some of his most notable compositions in these genres include music for The Coca-Cola Company, the American Heart Association, Elektra Films, U.S. Steel, NBC-TV, and CBS-TV (Figs. 9, 10). Works he wrote for television networks include music for the first NBC peacock logo in color, background music for several episodes of the Walter Cronkite Show, and even animated children's programs. CBS television also commissioned and broadcast the premiere of several of his works, such as the ballet *David and Bath-Sheba* (1960), *Cantata of St. John (Cantata de San Juan)* (1962), a choral piece titled *Songs of the Soul* (1964), and *Via Crucis* (1972). These commissions paid well, but it was not long after he arrived in late 1950 that he also established himself in the art-music scene of New York City.

The first opportunity he had for one of his works to be performed in the United States was in March of 1952 at the Museum of Modern Art. Peggy Glanville-Hicks was a junior board member at the museum and helped to arrange a program celebrating "Spanish music and the Hispanic influence," on which Surinach's *Tres cantos Bereberes* received its world premiere.³⁰ The success of his piece at this concert prompted

30. "Spanish Music, and the Hispanic Influence" (Concert Program, MoMA, March 10, 1952), Box 10/5,

Glanville-Hicks to commission another work from him for an upcoming concert of “music for percussion” to be held in May of that year.³¹ At this second concert, Surinach conducted his own piece, *Ritmo Jondo*, and all of the other works programmed. The reception of this work, which will be discussed in chapter 2, and its adaption for modern dance in collaboration with choreographers Doris Humphrey (1895–1958) and José Limón (1908–72) brought international attention to Surinach for his energetic and flamenco-inspired music. Over the next three decades, he had an remarkably successful career working with nearly every major choreographer of modern dance.³²

ASSIGNMENT OF ALL RIGHTS

UPA PICTURES, INC.
60 East 56th Street, NYC 22

September 4, 1956

~~United Productions of America
4440 Leiside Drive
Pasadena, California~~

Gentlemen:

musical track

Reference is made to that ~~script~~ titled for the COCA-COLA PICTURE, hereby sold by me to you for the sum of \$325 including copying receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, which I shall hereinafter refer to as the "work." The term "work" shall be deemed to include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following elements: title, themes (literary and musical), forms, formulae, incidents, treatment, action, story, dialogue, ideas, plots, phrases, slogans, catch-words, characters, characterizations, names and trade names now contained therein as well as such elements as may at any time hereafter be added or incorporated therein.

I hereby assign and transfer to you forever all rights of any and every kind whatsoever

Fig. 8: Contract with UPA Pictures regarding a piece written for The Coca-Cola Company in 1956.³³

BMI Surinach.

31. “Music for Percussion” (Concert Program, MoMA, May 6, 1952), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

32. For more information on Surinach’s ballets see Victoria Cavia Naya, “La Música Para Danza de Carlos Suriñach,” *Cairon: Revista de Ciencias de La Danza*, no. 3 (January 1, 1997): 21–38.

33. Carlos Surinach to UPA Pictures, Inc., “Assignment of All Rights,” Letter, (September 4, 1956), Box 7, BMI Surinach.

Carlos Surinach
440 East 59th Street
New York 22, New York
Tel: Murray Hill 8-4754

March 14th, 1957

To
Elektra Film Productions, Inc.
16 East 52nd Street
New York 22, New York
Att: Mr. Abe Liss

| | |
|---|-----------|
| For the complete selling of the music composed by me with destination to illustrate the NBC-TV Peacock symbol, produced by Elektra Film Productions, Inc. | \$ 500.00 |
| Copying expenses paid on Feb. 12th, 1957 as per bill included <i>7 pages @ \$1.50 each</i> | \$ 10.50 |
| Copying expenses paid on March 7th, 1957 as per bill included <i>13 pages @ \$2.10 each</i> | \$ 27.50 |
| Blue-prints expenses paid on March 7th, 1957 as per bill included | \$ 2.37 |
| <hr/> | |
| TOTAL | \$ 540.37 |

Fig. 9: Expense report to Elektra films for the music to the first color peacock logo for NBC-TV.³⁴

At the same time as his career was taking off with television and dance, he continued to write symphonic works. In 1953 he was commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra, under a Rockefeller grant, to write his *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, which will be

34. Carlos Surinach to Elektra Films, "Expense Report for Music to NBC Peacock," Letter, (March 14, 1957), Box 9/9 (Elektra Film Productions Inc.), BMI Surinach.

discussed in chapter 3. This piece was a success by any measure and confirmed all of the positive things critics had written about his style. The Louisville Orchestra even commissioned a second piece in 1956 titled *Feria Mágica*, which Surinach described as “an overture written with a strongly percussive style turning the strings into an enormous guitar.”³⁵ The drama and Spanish flare that he purposefully developed did not go unappreciated by audiences and were among the things they enjoyed most about his music. It was around this time that he was approached by the heirs of Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909) to help finish orchestrating a piece begun nearly thirty years earlier.

One of Albéniz’s most popular works is *Iberia* (1905–09), a twelve-piece suite for piano that paints a sonic picture of various locations throughout Spain.³⁶ Following Albéniz’s untimely death, his family commissioned Enrique Fernandez Arbós (1863–1939) to arrange the suite for orchestra, five of which he completed by 1928.³⁷ Nearly three decades later, the family approached Surinach to complete those pieces which Arbós did not finish. Surinach orchestrated the remaining seven pieces in 1956, and they were premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Eugene Ormandy.

35. Carlos Surinach, “List of Works by Carlos Surinach for Symphony Orchestra,” n.d., Box 7/1 (Biography and List of Works), BMI Surinach.

36. Walter Aaron Clark, “*Iberia* 1905–1909,” in *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 220–67.

37. Those arranged by Arbós include *Evocación*, *El puerto*, *Triana*, *El Albaicín*, and *Fête-dieu à Seville*. Surinach completed the remaining seven: *Almería*, *El Polo*, *Eritana*, *Jerez*, *Lavapiés*, *Málaga*, and *Rodeña*.

By the end of the 1950s, Surinach had built a strong reputation for himself within the United States and even became a naturalized citizen on March 2, 1959.³⁸ Commissions and royalty checks continued to come in at such a steady rate that he claimed to have never needed to write anything that was not by request.³⁹ This sometimes meant composing works for accordion, guitar, voice, or any variety of ensembles, which took him across the country from California to Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, and many places in between. He continued his whirlwind schedule of conducting, recording, and composing well into his retirement in the early 1980s, and he even did a bit of teaching at Bard College (1961), Carnegie Tech (1966–67), and Queens College in New York (1974–76) during the little free time he had; however, he described teaching as absorbing his brain, time, and everything he had.⁴⁰ With a lifetime of traveling the world as a conductor and composer, Surinach earned many distinctions, including the Golden Key of the City of San Juan, Puerto Rico (1962), The Arnold Bax Society’s Medal for Non-Commonwealth Composers (London, 1967); the JFK American Heritage Award (1974); a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (1980); and

38. “Certificate of Naturalization” (The United States of America, March 2, 1959), Box 14, BMI Surinach.

39. Carlos Surinach, interview by Bruce Duffie, Phone, February 15, 1987, <http://www.bruceduffie.com/surinach2.html>

40. Ibid.

the highest honor from Spain, Knight Commander in the Order of Isabella I of Castile (Spain, 1972).⁴¹

Even in his retirement Surinach remained active in musical society, but by the 1980s, he was ready to slow things down a bit and find ways to keep the money he worked so hard to earn over the years. Like so many other retirees in search of lower taxes, he left New York and moved down to Florida, where he settled in a small community named Kendall that is just outside of Miami. It was at this time that Ramón's failing health and mental instability caused him to renounce his United States citizenship, sell his apartment, and move back to Barcelona, which left Surinach alone for the remaining years of his life even while he continued to look out for Ramón's financial and physical well-being on the other side of the Atlantic. When living in Florida, Surinach connected with the music department at the University of Miami and was active with an annual musical event called Festival Miami. By 1987, however, he felt compelled to return to New York.

Surinach did move back north, but he instead settled instead in New Haven, CT, which was close enough to the city for him to take the train in whenever he desired. Ramón passed away in 1990, and Surinach remained in New Haven until his own death on November 12, 1997. The legacy of recordings and compositions he left is an

41. "Awards Box," n.d., Box 5, BMI Surinach; and Livingston L. Biddle, Jr. to Carlos Surinach, "National Endowment for the Arts," Letter, (December 17, 1980), Box 13/10 (National Endowment for the Arts), BMI Surinach.

important contribution to the music of both the United States and Spain, and the full reach of his career has only just begun to be uncovered.

CHAPTER 2: *Ritmo Jondo* (1952)

Background

Shortly after Surinach's arrival to New York at the end of 1950 he received his first commission in the United States. Musician, composer, and concert organizer Peggy Glanville-Hicks was a member of the junior board at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City, and she approached Carlos to write a work for the New Music Society concert series that she and the other junior board members were organizing. The concert in which Surinach's work appeared was titled "Spanish music, and the Hispanic influence," presented on March 10, 1952 and featured the renowned Basque harpist Nicanor Zabaleta, who performed several pieces on the program that were written or arranged for harp, including music by Surinach.¹

Surinach's appearance on this MoMA program marks the first time his name is listed on a concert program in the US, and though he had already proved himself in Europe as a composer and conductor of vitality and charisma, this concert initiated him into the world of modern music in New York as someone worthy of praise and recommendations.² His piece, *Tres cantos bereberes*, was written for a small chamber ensemble of flute, oboe, clarinet, viola, cello, and harp that captivated the audience and

1. The capitalization of this concert title has been duplicated from the program; see "Music for Percussion" (Concert Program, Museum of Modern Art, May 6, 1952), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

2. "Unidentified biography and program notes for *Tres cantos bereberes* and *Ritmo Jondo* after 1953 ballet," Box 16, BMI Surinach.

critics alike with original melodies and Surinach's spirited conducting. His first performance at MoMA inspired composer, critic, and later friend Virgil Thomson to describe Surinach as "the most distinguished novelty" of the concert. Thomson praised the Catalan as a skilled writer, performer, and musician of marked personality whose "technical powers are mature and expert." His musical personality, as usual, was also commented upon:

That personality, at least in this work, seems to be deeply poetic, warm in feeling, gracious, imaginative, a lover of delicate adjustments. A certain originality is surely there, too, for his music did not sound like anybody's standard product.³

The *Musical Courier* described *Tres cantos bereberes* as possessing "strong individuality," and the *New York Times* recalled the piece as "scored most winningly and cleanly" with Surinach taking the borrowed "Arabic-Moorish" elements and making them his own through his musical expressiveness.⁴ The success of *Tres cantos bereberes* was only the beginning of Surinach's career in the US, as it unlocked the door for his first major success that was only weeks away.

The warm reception that Surinach enjoyed with *Tres cantos bereberes* earned him another commission through Glanville-Hicks for MoMA, but this time there were specific requirements. The next concert Surinach presented on was held Tuesday, May 6,

3. Thomson, "New Music Society."

4. P.R., "Spanish Program Presented Here: New Music Society's Concert Includes Glanville-Hicks Harp Sonata, Paul Bowles Songs," *New York Times*, March 11, 1952, 10/5, BMI Surinach; "New Music Society Concert," *The Musical Courier*, April 1, 1952, 10/5, BMI Surinach.

1952 and specifically tasked the composers with foregrounding percussionists.⁵ The MoMA-sponsored concert did not preclude works with melodic or harmonic content, but it was designed as an opportunity to showcase the talent of percussionists, who are often most likely to be heard during performance but simultaneously overshadowed by other instrumentalists.⁶ Included on the program were several composers well known to New York audiences: William Russell (*March Suite* - 1937), Virgil Thomson (*Five Phrases from Song of Solomon* - 1926), Peggy Glanville-Hicks (*Sonata for Piano and Percussion* - 1951), Henry Cowell (*Ostinato Pianissimo* - 1934), Elliott Carter (*Suite for Timpani* - 1950), and Paul Bowles (*Music for a Farce* - 1938). Recognizing the success of *Tres cantos bereberes* with its Spanish theme, Surinach's next work, *Ritmo Jondo*, also presented audiences with a flavor of Spain and Gypsy rhythms.⁷

Literally translated, the title *Ritmo Jondo* means deep or profound rhythm and is a reference to the *canto grande* or *jondo* (deep song) of the Spanish flamenco tradition. The *cante jondo* is the most difficult *cante* to perform and is considered to have derived from religious and folk songs from centuries past before it developed into "a more generalized lament of life" to become the "original expression of flamenco."⁸ The

5. Museum of Modern Art, "Concert Program: Music for Percussion," May 6, 1952, 16, BMI Surinach.

6. See list of percussionists on the program.

7. The word Gypsy is a colloquial term for the Roma people. It is currently a charged term that has many negative connotations, but it was commonly used within the context of flamenco music, especially during the time Carlos Surinach was actively composing.

8. Donn E. Pohren, *The Art of Flamenco* (Madrid: Society of Spanish Studies, 1972), 48.

confluence of disparate cultures from the Middle East, Africa, and Europe that arrived to Spain from the eighth century were likely contributing factors as well. Whether or not Surinach believed his New York audience understood what title referred to, it is clear that the piece is based on Spanish and flamenco idioms. The individual movements of *Ritmo Jondo* are “Bulerias,” “Ritual,” and “Garrotin,” all of which reference a different flamenco *palo* (the ballet version was extended to include “Tres jaleos,” “Danza Chica,” “Bulerias,” “Rituales,” “Saeta,” “Danza Grande,” and “Garrotin”).⁹ Within flamenco music, the word *palo* is translated to mean suit of cards, as it is used as a way to classify different flamenco styles into categories based on rhythm, mode, lyrical content, or other characteristics. “Bulerias,” “Saeta” (originally titled “Ritual”), and “Garrotin” are different palos with their own characteristics that will be discussed later during the analysis of *Ritmo Jondo*.¹⁰

Surinach scored the piece for clarinet, trumpet, tamburo, timpani, xylophone, and hand clappers, who were drawn from composers and volunteers at the original performance. The hand clapping was included not necessarily as a way to evoke elements of flamenco but rather to incorporate a new sound inspired by his time in Paris:

9. The flamenco palos of bulerías and garrotín are traditionally spelled with an accent, but Surinach does not use them in the printed score. Spanish title conventions would also dictate that only the first word of the ballet title *Ritmo Jondo* or individual movements should be capitalized. Both of these changes are likely due to Surinach’s music being published by the United States publisher Associated Music Publishers (AMP) who set the titles. For this dissertation, the movements of this ballet will be spelled and capitalized according to the printed score and proper punctuation will be applied to all other foreign words.

10. “Music for Percussion” (Concert Program, Museum of Modern Art, May 6, 1952), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

“. . . [hand clappers] should not affect the work as a folkish addition, but they should contribute as a percussion ingredient to blend human odds to the music.”¹¹ At its most fundamental, the music is described as

. . . merely Spanish Gipsy, and the Flamenco ideas are emphasized to an almost animal primitivism where the sensuous feelings should keep their purity without being disturbed by any other musical technique than the one emanated from the patterns involved. There is paganism too; because Spanish Gypsies [*sic*] in a strange blend of superstition with Catholicism, believe that the terrene symbolism of life and earth is mainly pagan.¹²

Despite most critics having little positive to say about this percussion-themed concert, Surinach was consistently the only composer praised in reviews. Jay Harrison, writing for the *New York Herald Tribune*, commented the following day on the concert in general and Surinach specifically. “Last night’s percussion concert at the Museum of Modern Art had about it the quality of a dinner consisting entirely of hors d’oeuvres and desserts. There was no meat to it, and very little nourishment. Carlos Surinach’s ‘*Ritmo Jondo*,’ and it alone, provided the only substantial fare.”¹³ Harrison elaborated on his description of *Ritmo Jondo* by trying to capture the mood of the piece through metaphors such of poetry or atmosphere.

“*Ritmo Jondo*” is folkish, stylish and snappy as a fall breeze. Based as it [*sic*] on diatonic themes, it provides no stumbling block for the ear, and the natural rhythmic exuberance of Spanish music offers myriad points of contact for the percussionists, who are called upon to underline rhythmic cadences at every turn.

11. “Surinach biography and program notes for *Tres Cantos Bereberes* and *Ritmo Jondo* by an unknown author, written sometime after the 1953 premiere of the ballet,” n.d., 16, BMI Surinach.

12. *Ibid.*;

13. Jay S. Harrison, “Music for Percussion: Museum of Modern Art,” *New York Herald Tribune*, May 7, 1952, sec. Concert and Recital, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Original Version Envelope), BMI Surinach.

It is, moreover, a work brimming with poetry. One movement evokes Flamenco passion, another a quiet night. And through it all the beating of hand-clappers suggest the fall of rain. Evocations aside, however, “*Ritmo Jondo*” stands as a whole simply because it uses its percussion resources to emphasize music whose beauties lie elsewhere. The percussion itself is harnessed to a bases resting on the imitative play of the two wind instruments, and thus the ear is never allowed to great weary of sounds produced by a striking.

The same glowing review did not apply to all composers on the program like Glanville-Hicks or Cowell. Harrison even went so far as to describe Glanville-Hicks sonata as driving the “this reviewer to the point where he imagined himself imprisoned inside a gigantic mechanical clock.”¹⁴

Harrison’s review was not alone in praising Surinach above all others, as the *New York Times* also found Surinach’s work to be of unique and high quality, but they instead focused on the humanity of the work, as mentioned in the program cited notes above:

The latest and by far the most brilliant was *Ritmo Jondo*, composed this year by Carlos Surinach. . . . The use of the sound of the human hand clapping out distinct rhythm patterns, which were carefully integrated with the work as a whole, was one of the piece’s finest strokes. It gave a sense of humanity that was oddly moving. And as in others of Surinach’s works, the sophisticated and the primitive were so perfectly fused that one felt one was listening to a voice that was new and yet at the same time ancient.¹⁵

The human quality of the piece stood in contrast to the mechanical monotony of Henry Cowell’s *Ostinato Pianissimo*, which was inspired by gamelan traditions. The fresh, relatively short (three movements totaling about six minutes), and melodic qualities of

14. Ibid.

15. P.R., “Clap Your Hands - It’s Part of Music,” *NY Times*, May 7, 1952, sec. Amusements, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Original Version Envelope), BMI Surinach.

Ritmo Jondo made it an easily accessible piece for the audience and one that critics could easily praise.

The enthusiasm for Surinach's latest work stood in stark contrast to the tepid or even cold reception that the other composers received. Being that the program was constructed as one that would showcase the talent of percussionists, one reviewer described it as a "novel affair" and noted that "much of the concert didn't sound like music at all."¹⁶ Of the seven works on the program, only three appeared to have any appeal to the reviewer: Thomson, Bowles, and Surinach. Surinach's work stood out from the rest as "a new work . . . far and away the most engaging composition of the evening - the clarinet and trumpet carry gay themes of a Spanish nature while two percussion players, abetted by some hand clappers, create a good deal of turbulence." Another critic found Virgil Thomson's piece, with its setting of five biblical pieces set to single percussion, to be forced, as the percussion only provided "a pulsation in the background."¹⁷ Paul Bowles relied too much on trumpet, clarinet, and piano (as did Surinach). William Russell's *March Suite* was found to be "excessively naive . . . [in] which he approaches absolute zero in both musical ideas and technical imagination," and Glanville-Hicks' Sonata for Piano and Percussion suffered from "faulty acoustical planning, so that the texture is lumpy and does not often coalesce into a persuasive total

16. "Musical Events: Making Themselves Heard," *Unknown*, May 1952, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Original Version Envelope), BMI.

17. S.C., "Music for Percussion: Museum of Modern Art, May 6," *Unknown*, 1952, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Original Version Envelope), BMI.

sound. . . . Not out of her top draw material, suggests Bedouins-in-the-desert and rush-hour-in-Hong-Kong traditions.” Henry Cowell’s *Ostinato Pianissimo* was once again heard as a type of “imitation Balinese gamelan music,” and Elliot Carter’s Suite for Timpani was “unconvincing as musical structure because timpani figures alone cannot indicate successfully what is the beginning, what the middle and what the end of a succession of strokes and bangs.” Surinach’s *Ritmo Jondo*, however, was warmly received and presented to readers as the gem of the concert.

By far the best piece of the seven in the list was Carlos Surinach’s *Ritmo Jondo*. It was written not to approve any thesis about the self-reliance of percussion instruments but to present evocative bits of Spanish color through resources that include a trumpet, a clarinet, a piano, and a xylophone as well as instruments of vaguer or non-existent pitch. Melodic ideas, delightful and clear ones, share the focus of attention with rhythmic and sonorous ones, and the scoring is the work of a craftsman who anticipates accurately the sonorous results of the textural combinations he employs.

Fortunately for Surinach, critics were not the only ones in the audience at MoMA, and they were certainly not the only ones to find *Ritmo Jondo* appealing. Composers and choreographers of modern dance congratulated Surinach on such a successful piece, thus signaling the beginning of what would become one of his most enduring works. Surinach recalled the evening of the premiere in an interview with Kathy Matheson and described the significance of this work had for his career in the U.S.¹⁸

The audience of this 1952 concert included some of the most influential people in the spheres of modern dance, music, and patronage, many of whom Surinach would later

18. Carlos Surinach, interview by Kathy Matheson, Cassette, February 27, 1979, Streaming - Transcript available: *MGZMT 3-434, NYPL.

collaborate with or establish personal relationships. Noted choreographers Martha Graham, George Balanchine, Doris Humphrey, and José Limón were present as were composers such as Aaron Copland and Samuel Barber. Perhaps most importantly was the presence of Bathsheba de Rothschild, one of the premiere patrons of the arts and, more specifically, dance music. Though unknown to Surinach at the time, she would eventually play a significant hand in the financing of his works for adaptation into ballets both domestically and abroad. Whatever the reason so many prominent figures were present at this MoMA concert remains of little consequence because what really matters was *Ritmo Jondo* was a resounding success, and this audience was so moved by the piece that they insisted upon a repeat performance the same night.¹⁹

Following the concert premiere of *Ritmo Jondo*, Surinach was visited by Rothschild, Humphrey, and Limón in his apartment located on the east side of Manhattan near the Queensboro Bridge, which was conveniently just a few blocks from Lincoln Center, MoMA, and Broadway.²⁰ The purpose of this meeting was to congratulate Surinach on the success of his piece and to discuss the possibility of adapting the work into a ballet for Broadway. Humphrey, whom Surinach described as “so kind” and “a very nice animal,” was in the audience at the premiere, and according to Surinach, she

19. Ibid.

20. 440 E 59th St New York, NY 10022. Surinach lived at this apartment from the time he moved to New York in late 1950 until he moved to Miami in 1986. Surinach seems proud of the fact that he never changed apartments for the duration of his career in NY (Matheson p. 8). He and his partner Ramon had adjacent units.

already had ideas working as to how she would like to set dance to the score.²¹ At the time, Humphrey served as the artistic director of the José Limón Dance Company that was established in 1946 by her star pupil, José Limón. Mexican-born Limón would be the star male dancer of *Ritmo Jondo*, but according to Surinach, during this meeting Limón was deferential to the authority of Humphrey and sat in near silence.

José would say absolutely nothing. Is very remarkable, José, who is such a good choreographer, that he would be absolutely a lamb—L-A-M-B—against Doris Humphrey when she would direct him how to move. Both of them were fascinating people, and also Bethsabée de Rothschild. . . . The ideas were all by Doris Humphrey who was the choreographer, period; and José Limón only would interpret or put those ideas in a visionary way and that was phenomenally well done.²²

In less than a year's time, this visionary duo produced a ballet that was well received by audiences and critics for both its musical and choreographic content. This time it was not just Surinach's music that elevated the piece above his contemporaries but the dance, music, and costume together captured the imagination of audiences by giving them a glimpse into the world of what they perceived to be flamenco lifestyle.

Neatly arranged into three movements each of roughly two minutes duration, the piece seems to have lent itself naturally to the creative mind of Humphrey, who arrived to Surinach's apartment having already developed a potential theme and titles for each of the three acts: "Of Men," "Of Women," and "Of Meeting and Parting." The collaboration was remembered by Surinach as a mutual partnership between himself and

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

Humphrey with each of the two consulting the other or looking for insight as to how the music and dance could best work together. The only incident that Surinach mentioned was a dispute between the two over the nature of a cadenza Surinach included for a virtuoso performer but Humphrey objected to. They quickly came to an agreement as to how to resolve their difference of opinion, and she was appreciative of his willingness to concede some artistic control.²³

Modern dance was a new genre that Surinach admittedly had no knowledge of prior to collaborating with Humphrey and Limón. His childhood in Spain and his training in France and Germany familiarized him with the conventions of classical ballet, and the movements of modern dance were entirely new to Surinach, but they eventually captured his imagination.

When I saw the first rehearsal, to tell you the truth my taste, having been educated in Paris before, was very reluctant to those things, to those body contortions and this different way of dancing. Only in my mind it came back that when I had been a student in Germany there was a school called Rolf [Rudolf] von Laban, and I had seen some operas in Berlin with the dance parts of those operas choreographed by von Laban. So there I remembered that it might be more important, the modern dance, than as my superficial supposition emanating from Paris. . . .

I am not so easy now. I think sometimes the ballet is a little unreal, but it is a beautiful thing. Don't think I underestimate ballet. But sometimes with those established positions, it suggests to you that there is not so much freedom.²⁴

Surinach's change of heart regarding the validity of modern dance was a savvy business decision as well because *Ritmo Jondo* was only the first of what would be a series of

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

modern dance collaborations with preeminent choreographers such as Martha Graham, Robert Joffrey, and Pearl Lang.

Surinach cites two reasons for agreeing to collaborate on a ballet version of *Ritmo Jondo*: money and ambition.²⁵ As a composer in his mid-thirties who recently immigrated to the United States, and admittedly knew nothing of modern dance, these factors would constitute two of the strongest forces at play. Surinach was responsible for providing an income for himself as well as earning enough to cover the expenses, including an additional apartment, for his assistant and partner, Ramón. Fortunately, Surinach found that in the United States, unlike Europe, ambition was not a quality one should feel compelled to conceal. “It’s a sin to name the word ambition in Europe, but here it’s a good thing. And I was very glad when I found out that it was not a strange thing to refer to ambition.”²⁶ This characteristic was essential for anyone aspiring to work as a conductor or composer in the United States or Europe. For Surinach to have made an impact on the New York music scene within his first decade of arrival is impressive and can only be attributed to his natural ambition.

From concept to premiere, *Ritmo Jondo* took less than one year to finish and opened at the Broadway Alvin Theatre in New York on April 15, 1953. The ballet was commissioned as part of a Martha Graham-José Limón season sponsored by the Bethsabée de Rothschild Foundation for Arts & Sciences. Reviews published the

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

following day capture how Surinach's efforts to expand the score from a brief work of six minutes in length for clarinet, trumpet, and percussion to a full length ballet of more than twenty minutes for small orchestra were rewarded with positive comments from critics in the worlds of both dance and music. Miles Kastendieck, writing for the *New York Journal-American*, noted the music was enthusiastically received by the audience, and Frances Herridge with the *New York Post* found Surinach's music to "exude drama."²⁷ *High Fidelity* magazine reviewed *Ritmo Jondo* but focused instead on the exotic appeal of the music by this "extremely adroit, original, and learned composer."²⁸ The United States was fascinated with Spanish and flamenco culture at this time, as evidenced through the rise in popularity of flamenco and Spanish artists such as Carlos Montoya, the Romero family, and Sabicas, amongst other. The mysterious nature of the Gypsy people in Surinach's music was reinforced in part by printed stereotypes such as that found in *High Fidelity's* review of *Ritmo Jondo* that used specific descriptors to convey the primitive, sensual, and seductive quality that consumers expected from Spanish compositions. "It has all the usual folk elements—immense rhythmic propulsion, overwhelming animal lustiness, and a barbed fierce edge—all reinforced, made sharper,

27. Miles Kastendieck, "'Deep Rhythm' Adeptly Done," *New York Journal-American*, April 16, 1953, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Ballet Envelope), BMI Surinach; Frances Herridge, "Humphrey-Limon Night at the Alvin," *New York Post*, April 16, 1953, sec. The Dance, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Ballet Envelope), BMI Surinach.

28. F.A., "Surinach: *Ritmo Jondo; Tientos; Tres Cantos Bereberes*," *High Fidelity*, February 1956, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Ballet Envelope), BMI Surinach.

spicier, and more incandescent by virtue of the purity and simplicity with which these elements are handled.”²⁹

The sound of Surinach’s score did not escape the attention of noted dance critic Walter Terry either, as he found the score to be an “enormously exciting composition, for it not only offers listening pleasure but it also provides the dance with a musical base, guide and impetus which could not be more perfect.”³⁰ The compatibility of Surinach’s music for modern dance is a quality that audiences quickly realized. Douglas Watt, writing for *The New Yorker*, described to readers that “although the festival is exclusively concerned with the modern dance, there was nothing abstruse or confusing about any of the works I saw. The novelty of the evening was the première of a ballet called ‘Deep Rhythm,’ created by Doris Humphrey and set in Spain. . . . A stunning piece, it moved to some strikingly appropriate music by Carlos Surinach, who conducted it.”³¹

In each of these movements, Doris Humphrey emphasized the distinction between sexes as separate beings but also emphasized their moments of “tender union.”³² There is no explicit narrative or incident for the dance, but there is focus on the individual through isolation of the male and female, and the change in accent, tension, and “total behavior

29. Ibid.

30. Walter Terry, “American Dance: Male and Female,” *New York Herald Tribune*, April 16, 1953, sec. Dance, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Ballet Envelope), BMI Surinach.

31. Douglas Watt, *The New Yorker*, April 25, 1953, 8/(*Ritmo Jondo* Ballet Envelope), BMI Surinach.

32. “Surinach biography and program notes for *Tres Cantos Bereberes* and *Ritmo Jondo* by an unknown author, written sometime after the 1953 premiere of the ballet,” n.d., 16, BMI Surinach.

which emerge when the two are brought together; all born in Miss Humphrey imagination towards the musical patterns of the work.”³³ Humphrey’s work with *Ritmo Jondo* may have served as inspiration for Alvin Ailey’s ballet ten years later, *Feast of Ashes*, that also used *Ritmo Jondo* as the musical foundation.

Analysis

Carlos Surinach drew inspiration for *Ritmo Jondo* from various *palos* of flamenco music that he suggests have origins in Spanish “*gitano*” sources. *Palo* may be literally translated to mean a suit of cards, but it applies to flamenco music in that a *palo* helps listeners to recognize or classify a piece being performed by identifying a set of common characteristics to each, such as rhythm, mode, and melodic motifs, amongst other musical qualities. Without proper explanation, the concept of *palos* would have likely been lost on members of the MoMA audience, but that would not take away from their enjoyment of the music, as was evident by the positive reception. Though there were no program notes that accompanied the piece in its original three movement configuration, the title of each section made it clear to audience members that they were to hear something of Spanish influence.³⁴ (The premiere performance was conducted by Surinach and likely included a brief explanation of the musical origins of the piece.) Surinach did eventually write notes for each movement (“Bulerias,” “Saeta,” and “Garrotin”) when the piece was

33. Ibid.

34. “Music for Percussion” (Concert Program, Museum of Modern Art, May 6, 1952), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

published in its original form by AMP in 1952. Similar notes were also included in an arrangement for concert band, also published by AMP, in 1967. The extended ballet version from 1953, however, lacked any such explanation, as it only had one line in the program simply clarifying an asterisk prefixing the title *Ritmo Jondo*: “Music based on songs and dances of Spanish gypsies.”³⁵

The preface to the first published edition of *Ritmo Jondo*, in its original form, contains a brief description of each movement, though the descriptions are more encyclopedic in nature in that they address more of the visual and historical attributes of each palo than the music. Bulerías, for example, is described as “a gay, fast, Flamenco dance, improvisatory in character, with shifting rhythms.”³⁶ The bulerías does have more specific rhythmic characteristics that Surinach successfully emulated with his small ensemble (Example 2.1). While technically correct, this description could just as easily apply to several other common palos. The description continues: “The dancer punctuates the guitar and vocal accompaniment with heel-stamping and finger-snapping, while the onlookers interject rhythmic hand-clapping and shouts to spur the dancer on.” Surinach’s *bulerías* does not include guitar, voice, heel-stamping, finger-snapping, or shouts, but it does make use of hand-clapping. This description gave the audience at least

35. “American Dance” (Concert Program, The Playbill for The Alvin Theatre, April 15, 1953), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

36. Carlos Surinach, *Ritmo Jondo (Flamenco): Ballet for Chamber Orchestra* (New York: Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1959), preface.

a vague sense of what they are about to hear, which is, after all, the purpose of program notes.



Example 2.1: Typical *bulerías* rhythm.

“Tres jaleos”

By the time *Ritmo Jondo* was expanded and ready for stage in the spring of 1953, Surinach had added four new movements to the ballet, which brought the length of the performance to just over twenty minutes. The original three movements of “Bulerias,” “Saeta,” and “Garrotin” remained in that order, but they were interspersed with new material also possessing flamenco qualities. “Bulerias” was replaced as the opening with a new movement called “Tres jaleos” and was followed by “Danza Chica.” These two new movements, along with “Bulerias,” comprised the first act of the ballet subtitled “Of men.” This act featured three male dancers depicting various aspects of manhood through their movement; and José Limón, of course, starred as the lead dancer during the premiere.

The title of the new opening movement, “Tres jaleos,” derives from the Spanish verb *jaleo*, meaning to encourage or urge on. Within the context of flamenco, this can be done through the shouts of audience members, but it would not be conducive to the ballet setting for the audience to shout while José Limón and his troupe danced to the

rhythmic complexities of Surinach's score.³⁷ If Surinach could not use the title in its literal sense, he found another way to capture the emotive cries one might hear during a performance in a Spanish flamenco club (or *tablaó*). In addition to the literal translation of *jaleo*, however, flamenco performers also encourage each other by snapping their fingers, clapping, and rapping their knuckles on the table top. All of these techniques can be easily appropriated by composers who want to allude to the sound of flamenco music.

Though "Tres jaleos" is a new addition to the score, Surinach incorporated it successfully by maintaining many of the rhythmic elements heard in the original. The ballet now begins with an unyielding *allegro* tempo that Surinach strengthens through increasing rhythmic complexity and shifting the music between various polyrhythms and tuplet configurations in both the melodic and rhythmic parts. Since Surinach maintained the same number of simultaneous melodic voices (two) as the original version, the simplicity of the orchestration makes these tuplet shifts successful. Even though Surinach expanded the orchestral force to fifteen parts from the original five, his technique remained the same: a single melody foregrounded against a counter-melody serving as rhythmic emphasis and harmonic support. Most often, Surinach grouped the wind and string instruments in unison but set the groups in opposition with each other melodically. This is heard at the beginning of "Tres jaleos" in the flute, oboe, and B-

37. Phrases of *jaleo* can include *ezo!*; *ezoé!*; *arsa!*; *olé!*; *que sabe!*; *toma!*; *toma que te toma!*. Robin Totton, *Song of the Outcasts: An Introduction to Flamenco* (Amadeus Press, 2003), 193.

flatsclarinet playing in octave and unison against the strings playing countermelody and rhythmic accompaniment.

In keeping true to the spirit of the original 1952 setting of *Ritmo Jondo*, Surinach did include the use of *palmas* in this movement like the original “Bulerias,” “Saeta,” and “Garrotin.” The clapping only appears three times as simple rhythmic doubling of the triplet eighth-note xylophone part, which alternates between perfect fifths and tritones. The clapping and xylophone create additional rhythmic interest through polyrhythms by working against the trombone and percussion that are often moving in straight eighth-notes or triplet quarter notes. The appearance of these three clapping sections also coincides with the three *jaleos* Surinach alludes to in the title of the movement. Rather than shouts of encouragement, knuckles on the table, or finger snapping, the audience is treated with three polyrhythmic sections of *palmas* set against the timpani steadily maintaining the duple meter.

Rhythmic complexity was not the only characteristic Surinach borrowed from flamenco and the original *Ritmo Jondo*. Pervasive voice doubling in the expanded fifteen-voice ensemble creates a thick, buzzing timbre, though the fast, complex rhythms and chromatic scalar runs are also prominent (at times the chromatic doubling causes the ensemble to play slightly out of tune and is clearly heard beginning at rehearsal 2 even with Surinach at the conductor’s podium on the 1955 recording).³⁸ The first melody is heard in the winds and ends at rehearsal 2 when the strings, clarinet, and bassoon take

38. *Ritmo Jondo Flamencan Ballet; Tientos; Tres Cantos Bereberes*, LP (United States: M-G-M, 1955).

over playing a series of sixteenth-note scalar patterns based predominately on parallel tritones. The expected result would be a seven-measure run of dissonance, however it is lessened by having the scales set in unison across six instruments and distributed over two octaves. The harsh dissonance of seconds and tritones is reduced by the wash of sound created by the six instruments going momentarily out of tune. The final result is a momentary loss of clarity from the resultant quarter tones that are a remarkably close approximation to the vocal inflection of flamenco song, *cante flamenco*.

The image shows a musical score for Rehearsal 2, consisting of six staves for different instruments: Clarinet in Bb, Bassoon, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Double Bass. The music is in 3/4 time and features a series of sixteenth-note scalar patterns across two octaves. The Clarinet and Bassoon parts are marked with 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'arco sordo'. The Violin I and Violin II parts are marked with 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and 'arco sordo'. The Viola part is marked with 'pp' and 'arco sordo'. The Double Bass part is marked with 'mp'. The score is numbered '2' in a box at the top left.

Example 2.2: Rehearsal 2 illustrates the loss of clarity with parallel tritones doubled across octaves.

The most common devices that Surinach used to write the melody include modal changes and symmetrical scales, particularly the octatonic scale. The piece begins on B with an empty key signature and quickly becomes chromatic by changing between C-sharp and E-flat on ascent and C natural and E natural on descent. The most distinct interval in this movement is the minor third between B natural and D natural that is enharmonically equivalent to the augmented second typical of flamenco music. The leap

between B and D in the melody is often resolved back to the central tone of B by descending through C-sharp. The answer to the melody beginning at rehearsal 2 is constructed by using the octatonic scale and setting instruments in parallel fourths, including tritones (Example 2.2). Again, the effect of this passage is that of extreme dissonance lessened by rate at which these parallel intervals are played in sixteenth notes across multiple octaves.

Changes in tempo are frequent in this ballet, though few instances of *accelerando* or metric modulations take place. Instead the transition between melodic statements propel the music forward through elaborate tuplet shifts that progress from duplets to triplets, quadruplets, and even quintuplets (Example 2.3). The immediate succession of these tuplets creates a sense of acceleration in the music despite the tempo remaining constant. Surinach emphasized this rhythmic drive by using polyrhythms such as two against three, three against five, and three against four, all of which are in set in duple 2/4 meter. In a similar effect to the change in tuplets, Surinach's use of polyrhythms creates the allusion of more activity without changing the tempo for instrumentalists and dancers alike (Example 2.4).

Example 2.3: Measures leading to rehearsal 15 illustrates how Surinach divided the beat to increase the rate of notes without changing tempo, which is a common technique in this piece and many of his others. This progression is played in unison and octaves in the winds and strings.

The image displays a musical score for Rehearsal 12, spanning measures 12 to 19. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with the following parts from top to bottom: Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Trumpet (C Tpt.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (D.B.). The key signature is one flat (B♭ major or D minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic throughout. Rhythmic complexity is achieved through cross-rhythms, with various note values (eighths, sixteens, and triplets) and rests. The woodwinds and strings play intricate patterns, often with slurs and accents. The brass parts (C Tpt., Vln. I, Vln. II) have rests in the first two measures before entering. The Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass parts are marked 'arco' (arco). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 2.4: Rehearsal 12 illustrates some of the rhythmic complexity created by cross-rhythms in multiple parts.

While the rhythmic components of this movement are lively and fluid, the dynamics of the piece, however, remain mostly static. Surinach maintains a loud *fortissimo* dynamic after the first statement of the melody until the end of the movement, so changes in dynamic are created mostly through changes in orchestration, such as

rehearsal 11 with the percussion and low strings playing an eighth-note pattern while the rest of the ensemble is *tacet* (Example 2.5). This allows Surinach to focus listener attention on the trumpet and high strings when the melody is reintroduced. “Tres jaleos” is a loud movement with most of the written dynamic changes coming from a shift between *forte* and *fortissimo*, such as the climax at rehearsal 14 (Example 2.6). This climax also marks the highest point in the movement with the piccolo and clarinet playing in unison on F-sharp⁷ over a triplet figure that is similar to what is heard throughout the movement.

The harmonic devices that Surinach used for this movement are difficult to pin down upon first reading or hearing. The ballet opens with the melody in the woodwinds playing B and the strings plucking a single eighth-note in fourths and fifths to sound E-A-D-B-G. The combination of these tones does not immediately suggest any tonal center or tertian harmony since this opening chord is structured around fourths with a root of B, but it is likely no coincidence that these also represent the open strings on the guitar (E-A-D-G-B-E). While this may not be recognizable to the audience as evoking the sound of the flamenco guitar, it becomes apparent through analysis and serves as a compositional foundation upon which Surinach can base this movement: fourths. Since this piece is reliant on modal changes in the melody, more so than harmonic progressions, there few moments in which more than two or more different pitches sound simultaneously. The exception to the limited instances of two-voice polyphony is when the initial accompaniment punctuates the melody and emphasizes the down beat by plucking E-A-D-B-G every other measure. The same harmonic punctuation helps to outline the

melodic structure of the sixteen-bar phrase and follows a section of harmonic developments that explore rhythmic intricacies and the extreme dissonances possible within quartal harmony, tritones.

The image displays a musical score for Rehearsal 11, marked with a Roman numeral 'II' in a box at the top left. The score is arranged in a system of staves for various instruments. The instruments listed on the left are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bass Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hn.), Trumpet (C Tpt.), Trombone (Tbn.), Timpani (Timp.), Xylophone (Xyl.), Cymbal (c.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vc.), and Double Bass (D.B.). The score is divided into four measures. In the first measure, most instruments have a single note with an accent (>) and a fermata. In the second measure, the instruments are mostly silent. In the third measure, the Bassoon, C Trumpet, Trombone, Timpani, and Viola play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In the fourth measure, the C Trumpet, Violin I, Violin II, and Viola play a complex rhythmic pattern with accents and a fermata. Dynamics are indicated by *ff* (fortissimo) for the Bassoon, C Trumpet, Trombone, Timpani, and Viola in the first measure, and *f* (forte) for the C Trumpet, Violin I, Violin II, and Viola in the third and fourth measures. The score also includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and articulation marks.

Example 2.5: Rehearsal 11 illustrates how Surinach reduces the instrumentation to refocus the listener's attention through a change in dynamics.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 14, marked with a box containing the number '14'. It features four staves: Piccolo (Picc.), Oboe (Ob.), B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), and C Trumpet (C Tpt.). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The Piccolo part starts with a high F# and includes a triplet of eighth notes and a quintuplet of eighth notes. The Oboe, B♭ Clarinet, and C Trumpet parts follow a similar rhythmic pattern with triplet and quintuplet markings. Dynamic markings of *ff* (fortissimo) are present in the Piccolo and B♭ Clarinet parts.

Example 2.6: The climax of “Tres jaleos” features tuplet shifts and a high F-sharp in the piccolo at rehearsal 14.

“Danza chica”

Likely a play on the light form of flamenco known as *chico*, a term that can describe song, dance, or guitar playing, the title “Danza chica” is a reference to the character or mood of this movement implying a small or light quality.³⁹ The character of this section, however, does not open with a light or small quality.

To create a clear contrast to the preceding “Tres jaleos,” Surinach used a few simple devices. The performance indication of *L'istesso tempo (poco meno mosso)* confirms that this movement should start less forcefully than “Tres jaleos,” which concluded with a diminuendo in the solo trumpet. “Danza chica” begins with a slight slowing of the tempo, but beat of the preceding duple meter is maintained in the triple 6/8 meter through metric modulation. This sets up the movement to open with the low

39. Pohren (1972), 44.

strings playing a slow, steady, and staccato rhythm in 6/8 to give the music a motoric quality (Example 2.5). This theme is stated in the viola and cello at *piano* dynamic and is punctuated by the double bass playing *pizzicato* on the off beats to create a seamless pattern of eighth-notes that is interrupted periodically with moments of hemiola. This solemn theme appears six times in this movement and even returns throughout the ballet in the second act of “Rituales” and later in “Saeta” as well.

This movement really only comprises two melodies. This movement, like “Tres jaleos,” is structured around symmetrical scales and quartal harmony. From the beginning, the melody changes between notes available in the octatonic scale beginning on C and emphasizes the tritone that appears between D-flat and G. The hemiola at rehearsal 17 is an important figure for this movement, as it marks the end of the four bar phrases and is repeated several times on different pitches (Example 2.7). With every appearance of scalar runs between statements of the melody, Surinach includes octatonicism. This is particularly evident at rehearsal 23, which starts on C and ascends to B-double-flat played in octaves across the strings and winds (Example 2.8). Syncopation, irregular rhythms, and symmetrical scales are the foundation of this movement, which Surinach combines to create a feeling of motion and unrest, similar to “Tres jaleos.” The sense of unrest and use of octatonicism appears in the five other movements as well.

Example 2.7: Opening measures of “Danza Chica,” near rehearsal 17, present hemiola and the contrasting mood of this movement..

Example 2.8: Rehearsal 23 shows Surinach’s use of symmetrical scales. Here the half-whole octatonic scale is presented in the flute, oboe, clarinet, and violins, which play in octaves starting on D as the viola and cello begin in parallel a fourth below on A.

Interspersing each of the melodic sections, Surinach wrote rhythmically active sections that explores octatonicism and tritones. The change in instrumentation with each new section creates new timbres that help the music stay fresh for listeners while making the most of the limited melodic content in this movement. That is not to say that the music directly repeats with each restatement. In fact the rhythm in the supporting instruments becomes more complex with each of the five statements of the main melody

before the climax and introduction of a second theme leading to rehearsal 30 (Example 2.9). This rhythmic complexity contributes to the tension that is resolved only with the introduction of the second theme. Eventually, however, the original theme is reintroduced for the final time at rehearsal 30 but set in opposition with the second theme.

Example 2.9: The syncopated melody in the bassoon is countered by a steady sixteenth-note pattern in the accompaniment at rehearsal 28. The flute in this section is doubled by the oboe and xylophone, and the bassoon melody is also heard in the strings and French horn.

The first melody was written in a way that drives the music forward despite a tempo and meter change that did slow the beat. The syncopated rhythm of the string melody in the compound 6/8 meter accents beat numbers one and four to give the impression that the piece begins with duple organization. However, the melody alternates beats one, three, and five between the instruments, simultaneously giving it a triple feel. The resultant hemiola becomes more apparent by the end of four bar phrase when the viola and cello have six eighth-notes accented only on beats one and four. This syncopation is an important element in this piece not just for musical interest but for dance as well. Leading to the restatement of the melody in the bassoon, Surinach used syncopation to effectively stumble the music almost to a halt at rehearsal 20 with the low strings and percussion putting the brakes on the music before the more pensive first theme is reintroduced (Example 2.10).

Example 2.10: Note the syncopated bass line at rehearsal 20 with the change in frequency of bass notes as the motion slows to begin the first section again (doubled voicings are not shown).

The alternation between duple and triple meter is not the only technique Surinach used to create rhythmic interest, as he continued to develop ideas introduced in the first movement, “Tres jaleos,” as well. The appearance of tuplet shifts in the second movement is not surprising since the accelerating effect this simple technique creates is effective and works in contrast to the syncopation Surinach uses to slow the music. Both of these devices manipulate the feel of the music without changing tempo. The 6/8 meter also allows Surinach to vary between slow two or three and even six or twelve beat measures without the need for manipulating the beat through tuplets. Surinach exploits this meter thoroughly throughout the movement. By introducing various tuplets, however, the complexity of the music is increased. By rehearsal 27, Surinach begins increasing the flow of the music leading into the second theme at rehearsal 28 (Example 2.11). The beat is divided successively into two, three, four, five, and six divisions and repeats a second time to introduce the return of a familiar melody.



Example 2.11: Simple division of the beat changes to irrational rhythms with tuplets in the string section at rehearsal 27.

Surinach brings the opening melody of “Tres jaleos” back at rehearsal 28, and it is immediately recognizable despite one major change: the melody is augmented to roughly half the speed of the original setting. Surinach achieved this augmentation by once again employing duplets to slow the music without affecting the tempo. The last statement of the “Danza chica” melody appears at rehearsal 30 and is introduced and closed with the accelerating tuplets that increasingly divide the duple meter from two to seven beats per measure.

“Bulerias”

As with the original setting of “Bulerias,” this new arrangement continues to utilize the same orchestration of B-flat clarinet, trumpet (now in C rather than Bb), and xylophone serving as melodic instruments. The percussionist on the xylophone also plays the Spanish tamburo, which Surinach notes is “a large Tambourine without jingles. A Military Drum without snares would be its closest approximation in sound.”⁴⁰ The orchestration of the arrangement for ballet is not as limited as the original because there

40. Carlos Surinach, *Ritmo Jondo*, Original (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1952), preface.

are now nine instrumentalists in addition to the three hand clappers. The sound of this piece is, in fact, very similar to the description that Surinach provides in the preface of published non-ballet editions to familiarize audiences with the flamenco palo on which this movement is based. There were no program notes for the original performance of *Ritmo Jondo* at MoMA nor at the 1953 Broadway premiere of the ballet at the Alvin Theatre. The ballet program only listed the titles of the ballet movements (“Of Men,” “Of Women,” “Of Meeting and Parting”) and an asterisk clarifying that the music is “based on songs and dances of Spanish gypsies.”⁴¹ Fortunately, the preface to the published original score provides a brief description of each palo.

This third movement is based on the *bulerías palo* that Surinach describes as “a gay, fast, Flamenco dance, improvisatory in character, with shifting rhythms. The dancer punctuates the guitar and vocal accompaniment with heel-stamping and finger-snapping, while the onlookers interject rhythmic hand-clapping and shouts to spur the dancer on.”⁴² Those interjections of hand-clapping and shouts are the same *jaleos* discussed in the opening movement “Tres jaleos.” While this description of the *bulerías* is technically correct, it is incomplete in that it is superficial and does not provide readers, or listeners, with an understanding of the rhythmic and harmonic intricacies of the *palo*.

41. “Original Program for *Ritmo Jondo* as Ballet” (The Playbill for The Alvin Theatre, April 15, 1953), 16, BMI Surinach.

42. Carlos Surinach, *Ritmo Jondo*, Original (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1952), preface.

Flamenco scholar Donn E. Pohren describes the *bulerías*, with its “machine-gun-like clip,” as one of the most popular *palos* of the twentieth century, but one that is also the most abused in its loose interpretation.⁴³ The *bulerías* is an incredibly flexible form in that it can be adapted to suit any song, mood, or key so long as the rhythm remains central. *Bulerías* shares the same twelve-count *compás* (rhythmic pattern) as the *soleares* and *alegrías* that stresses beats 3, 6, 8, 10, and 12 (1, 2, **3**, 4, 5, **6**, 7, **8**, 9, **10**, 11, **12**).⁴⁴ On a simple level, this pattern outlines two measures of 6/8 meter and alternates between groupings of two or three beats to create hemiola, a common rhythmic device in flamenco music and heard in “Danza chica” as well. The pattern is not always fixed, and during performance the *compás* may be altered to stress only some of the beats, even to the point of it being unrecognizable. For Surinach’s interpretation, the latter is almost entirely the case.

The energy of the *bulerías* is present from the entrance of the solo trumpet right at measure one, and the straight mute on the trumpet in “Bulerias” helps to emphasize the clear, staccato rhythm of the *compás*. It also helps listeners to distinguish the interplay between the clarinet and trumpet as they exchange the melody in canon. The *allegro* tempo and 3/8 meter combine with the extended eighth-note runs to create a forceful melody that is felt more in triplets with a single downbeat than three distinct beats per measure. The melody is limited primarily to the trumpet and clarinet, but the xylophone

43. Pohren (2005), 181.

44. Totton, 104.

does take over for a few measures at rehearsals 34 and 40 when the trumpet and clarinet are *tacet*. The melody is eight measures long and is repeated in the clarinet a perfect fourth below the trumpet's original statement. By the end of clarinet melody the *compás* of the *bulerías* is heard clearly for the first time, though it is hinted at by the trumpet at rehearsal 31 (Example 2.12). The *compás*, however, is not the only compositional device on which Surinach based this melody.



Example 2.12: The *compás* pattern of *bulerías* is heard in the clarinet five measures after rehearsal 31.

As with the previous movements, the melody of “Bulerias” uses symmetrical scales to create melodic interest. The first appearance of such scale comes as the clarinet finishes its statement of the melody at rehearsal 31 and outline a whole-tone scale. Descending from D, the clarinet moves through C, Bb, Ab, F-sharp, E, and arrives back to D, an octave below where it began. Similar to “Tres jaleos” and “Danza chica” that precede, “Bulerias” features a repeated motive of alternating perfect fifths and tritones that occur naturally when using this scale. Rehearsal 34 initiates twelve measures of such alternation following each statement of the melody, which coincides with every transitional section. Instruments from the percussion section, specifically the xylophone and tympani, are most often the instruments to play this motive because it provides both rhythmic foundation and support for the melody.

The movement begins *forte* and maintains a limited dynamic range for the rest of the movement, only changing between *fortissimo* and *mezzo forte* on occasion. The *fortissimo* dynamic continues nearly unabated through the end of the piece even but rises at rehearsal 46 to an exaggerated *fff* climax.

“Rituales”

The fourth movement, “Rituales,” begins the second act of the ballet as the women enter the stage and are introduced by a slower and more pensive setting than the energetic opening of *jaleos* and *bulerías* performed by the male cast. The start of this movement has a familiar sound to it, as it begins with a restatement of the motor rhythm relying on fifths and tritones that began “Danza chica” (Example 2.13). Though this movement begins the same as “Danza Chica,” it is not a direct repetition because Surinach uses a new melody that could be described as more effeminate in character with the oboe solo. This movement, while sounding new, is really the result of building upon old material by adding new elements. Surinach effectively created a sense of motion in the music by once again using progressively complex triplets to create the feeling of acceleration without really changing tempo. At rehearsal 49, the oboe and French horn play in parallel fourths and progress through one note per beat, counting the 6/8 meter in compound duple, to two, three, four, and five even notes per beat. Variations of this pattern appear throughout the movement to great effect and are combined with melodic and rhythmic ideas that Surinach also borrows from previous areas.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (D.B.). The score is divided into two sections: "Bulerias" and "Rituales".

- "Bulerias" (Measures 1-4):**
 - Vla.:** Starts with a *p* dynamic, then *sf* accents on notes. Dynamics include *p*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*.
 - Vc.:** Starts with a *p* dynamic, then *sf* accents. Dynamics include *p*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*.
 - D.B.:** Starts with a *f* dynamic and *pizz.* (pizzicato). Dynamics include *f*, *sf*, *sf*.
- "Rituales" (Measures 5-8):**
 - Vla.:** Starts with a *p* dynamic, then *sf* accents. Dynamics include *p*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*.
 - Vc.:** Starts with a *p* dynamic, then *sf* accents. Dynamics include *p*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*.
 - D.B.:** Starts with a *f* dynamic and *pizz.* (pizzicato). Dynamics include *f*, *sf*, *sf*.

Additional markings include *sord.* (sordina) and *sul pont.* (sul ponticello) for the Viola and Violoncello in the "Rituales" section.

Example 2.13: Comparison of the opening measures in “Danza chica” and “Rituales.”

Though “Rituales” is the shortest of the seven movements and features many of the compositional techniques Surinach previously employed throughout the ballet, it possesses some of the most strikingly lyrical melodies of the piece. The oboe begins the movement at a *piano* dynamic and a performance indication of *dolce* as it leaps from a slow dotted quarter note on E up a minor sixth to another dotted quarter on C. What follows this leap would have been quite familiar to audiences in 1953 as a musical signifier of Spain. The fast dip between B and A at rehearsal 48 is a major second played like a lower-mordent and is reminiscent of the second movement in Joaquin Rodrigo’s guitar masterpiece, *Concierto de Aranjuez* (1939). Whereas Rodrigo’s music remains tonal, Surinach’s moves quickly into octatonic scales and tritones. Despite using chromaticism and dissonant intervals, the melody of “Rituales” sounds consonant, even with the French horn sustaining a minor second from the oboe melody and the piccolo a tritone plus octave above (Example 2.14). Surinach’s ability here to draw out a consonant, legato melody from such dissonant accompaniment is unmatched elsewhere in the ballet.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 48, starting at measure 49. The score includes parts for Piccolo (Picc.), Oboe (Ob.), French Horn (Hn.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Double Bass (D.B.). The Oboe part features a melodic line with dynamics such as *p dolce* and *p*, and performance instructions like *sord.* and *sul pont.*. The French Horn part has dynamics like *p dolce* and *intenso*. The Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass parts provide a dissonant accompaniment with various dynamics and performance instructions like *f*, *pizz.*, and *(senza sord.)*.

Example 2.14: Rehearsal 48 features a lyrical melody in the solo oboe over dissonant accompaniment in the piccolo and French horn.

To maintain the solemn and subdued aesthetic, Surinach used only winds and strings in this movement, with the exception of French horn. There is no percussion or hand-clapping, violins are used sparingly but never with the melody, and the viola has only one statement of the melody but placed in its lower, weightier range. The effect of this solemn movement is that of the *cante jondo* in flamenco, an incredibly somber song that originated without accompaniment to express the anguish and sorrow the Spanish Gypsy community has endured.⁴⁵ It becomes clear at rehearsal 50 that Surinach is imitating flamenco singers when the melody is performed in canon by the flute, solo viola, and solo cello. The performance instructions of *cantando*, *naturale*, and *dolce* appear at the entrance of each instrument as well as *legato* and *intenso* when the melody repeats a single note several times (Example 2.15). The contour of this melody further

45. Also known as *cante grande* and can encompass palos such as the *soleá*, *toná*, *martinete*, *siguiriya*, and *carcelera*.

suggests the natural inflection of flamenco singers by imitating the way in which singers frequently embellish a melody, especially a *jondo* melody, and often moves chromatically. Surinach chose to structure the chromaticism of this melody around octatonicism rather than the microtones that come so naturally to flamenco singers in this *jondo* or *grande* form.



Example 2.15: The expressive marking in the melody near rehearsal 51 suggests vocal-like lyricism.

The *jondo* melody that Surinach emulates in this movement is manipulated by the bassoon and double bass that enter at rehearsal 52. These instruments play the modified melody in unison beginning on B with the rest of the ensemble sounding F and D above to create a diminished triad, which contains a naturally occurring tritone between B and F. This diminished chord reappears often and helps the double bass and bassoon build tension. The movement concludes by immediately restating the melody, and will be heard again when the next movement begins. “Rituales” ends with parallel octatonic scales descending into the even slower processional movement based on the *saeta*, an additional flamenco *palo*.

“Saeta”

The last dance in the second act, “Of Women,” is set to the movement titled “Saeta,” after the flamenco *palo* of the same name. The *saeta* is a song commonly

associated with the Spanish Holy Week, *Semana Santa*, which culminates with the celebration of Easter. *Saeta* can also be literally translated to mean “arrow,” which is suiting due to the song’s piercingly emotional effect on those who witness its performance. Most often the *saeta* is performed without any sort of accompaniment, as a musical expression of the anguish experienced during the Passion of Christ. During *Semana Santa*, in Spain and in other predominately Catholic regions, religious parades take place in the streets. These processions consist of various religious brotherhoods carrying scenes of Christ’s final moments as part of their religious penance. The solemn procession can be interrupted by *saeteros* who feel moved to sing a *saeta* for the image of Christ. The dance “Of Women” begins in a similar fashion with a single female processing in a solemn march from one side of the stage to the other while the timpani and tamburo beat out a march-like pattern in duple meter that immediately sets the scene of this movement as being linked to a procession.

The *saeta* is evoked beginning with the B-flat clarinet melody that is unadorned except for the C trumpet playing *pianissimo* as a countermelody (Example 2.16). Similar to the *saetas* performed during Holy Week, the melody of this *saeta* is also chromatic, melismatic, and for several measures totally unaccompanied by the rest of the ensemble. For ten measures, the tamburo and timpani seem to stop the procession, and the audience is treated to the expressive sound of the *saeta* melody. During Holy Week, processions are often brought to a halt when someone sings a *saeta* to the passing displays. Surinach stops the procession in a similar fashion by halting the percussion at various times during this movement.

Example 2.16: The slow *legato* melody in the clarinet and trumpet at rehearsal 54 reflects the character of a *saeta*.

The melody of this *saeta* is first heard at the conclusion of “Rituales” in the bassoon following rehearsal 53. It is similar to the main melody of “Rituales” that begins with an ascending minor-sixth leap that leads to a lower mordent-like dip on a major second, however, this new melody is reduced in scale and expressive capacity. Rather than a leap of a sixth, Surinach moves only a major second. And where “Rituales” had a major-second embellishment, this *saeta* uses only a minor second. The result is a melody that is more constrained and reserved than anything to appear in the ballet. The reduction in range reflects the penitent mood of the *saeta* and Christ’s suffering.

Beginning with the clarinet and trumpet solo at rehearsal 55, Surinach brings back the whole-tone scale as a melodic device. The clarinet plays a whole-tone scale over the range of an octave and a half while the trumpet sustains a pedal tone on E. This dissonant melody reflects the emotion and the dissonance of the *saeta*, which frequently exhibits quarter-tones inflections. However, Surinach increased the dissonance of this section by bringing back one of the more common devices of this ballet. The trumpet is set in parallel tritones against the clarinet playing the same melody. The effect of two whole-tone scales set a tritone apart is effective for expressing the unsettled yet captivating effect of hearing someone perform a *saeta*. The ametrical quality of the *saeta*

is also depicted by Surinach's once again changing how beats are grouped. As the melody progresses to the climax an eleventh higher than where it began, the perceived tempo increased by shifting through beat divisions from two to five at the climax, where it begins a three-octave descent.

The second melody, introduced at rehearsal 57, is voiced by the bassoon and flute in octaves over a changing meter of 5/8 and 3/4 that alternates every measure (Example 2.17). The rhythm of this melody is arranged in a fashion that suggests hemiola, but there is a single eighth-note missing from the first group of three eighth-notes. That missing eighth-note, due to the unusual 5/8 meter, creates the perception of movement but is markedly unstable. However, the instability of the rhythm is countered by the *legato* and conjunct character of the melody. In contrast to the opening section, the supporting rhythm is not sounded by percussion but by the strings playing a delicate *pizzicato* at a *pianissimo* dynamic. The result of this softened rhythmic section is a melody that can also be played very quietly to focus the listener's attention.

57

Fl.

Vln. I

pizz. sord.

pp

sf

p

sf

p

Example 2.17: Alternating meters at rehearsal 57 create instability against a *legato* melody.

A rare change of form takes shape in this second melody. The middle movement of “*Saeta*” is one of the few places in *Ritmo Jondo* where a definitive change from

modality to tonality takes place. The second melody is set in what could either be C minor or still modal in G Phrygian. With the rhythmic accompaniment alternating between the notes C and G, the melody weaves around three flats, ending phrases on either G or C. Given that the melody begins and ends on G, this melody is in G Phrygian, though it does not have the raised B natural that would suggest the Andalusian mode common to flamenco. The elusiveness of a tonal center and obscuring the sense of meter is in line with the rest of this piece based on symmetrical scales.

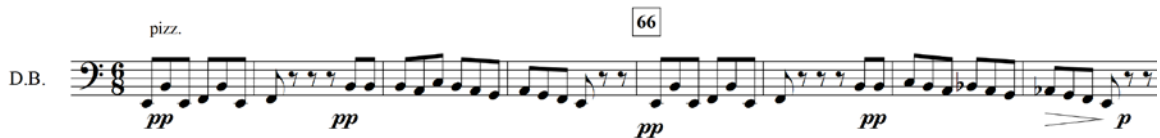
The second melody is stated twice in “*Saeta*” and ends each time with a few measures based on the octatonic scale beginning on G, with a half step to Ab. The entire movement is symmetrically designed in ternary form with the first and second half each containing a statement of both melodies: ABBA. The piece ends as it began with two instruments playing the melodic lines and the percussion section beating out the duple march rhythm.

“Danza grande”

To mark the beginning of the last act and provide a sense of symmetry, Surinach returns to an *allegro* tempo (*Allegro ma non tanto*) with the start of “Danza Grande.” This contrasts the slower movements of “Rituales” and “*Saeta*” danced exclusively by women. The first time the male dancers appeared on stage during was to the music of “Danza Chica,” after the first act “Tres jaleos.” In the final act of the ballet, the men return once again, but this time they are not alone, as they are accompanied by their female counterparts with a walking-bass melody in the bassoon, cello, and double bass.

This last act, “Of Meeting and Parting,” brings the men and women together on stage, with Surinach combining the characteristics of the masculine and feminine acts that preceded it. Doris Humphrey took advantage of the diverse character in this movement to “[evoke] tremendous dramatic power through . . . the shifts in accent, in tension, in total behavior which emerge” when the men and women are brought together.⁴⁶

Like the earlier “Danza chica” movement, “Danza grande” is a reference to the *grande palos* of flamenco. The label *grande* implies that the character or mood of the music will be more serious than that of the lighter *chico* forms. According to Surinach’s naming conventions, this sixth movement, “Danza Grande,” should be of a more profound character than the third, “Danza Chica.” The melodic foundation of this movement, while interesting on the levels of contour and rhythm, does begin with a more profound character than the first act, but it is actually a return to ideas that Surinach explored in previous movements (Example 2.18).



Example 2.18: Rehearsal 66 illustrates the rhythmic foundation of “Danza chica” (doubled in the cello and bassoon) that references earlier movements with alternating fifths and fourths.

The first melody in “Danza grande” is set in the low strings, cello and double bass, and the bassoon. Surinach uses these low instruments in steady, *staccato* eighth-

46. “Surinach biography and program notes for *Tres Cantos Bereberes* and *Ritmo Jondo* by an unknown author, written sometime after the 1953 ballet was completed,” n.d., 16, BMI Surinach.

notes to explore different ways of alternating between perfect fifths and tritones. The combination of the steady eighth-note pattern, marked *pianissimo*, creates a heavy, “grande” mood in the initial moments of this movement. This matches the character of the title, and it also helps to transition from the more solemn movements, “Rituales” and “*Saeta*,” that precede. A similar melody appears in all of the other earlier movements, with the exception of “*Saeta*.” Though it is not always presented as the main melody, the alternating fifth and tritone pattern is a major component of those other movements, and it now serves as the opening and closing melodic ideas of this movement. However, fifths and tritones are not the only melodic devices used in this opening, as the melody freely transitions in and out of sections in modality as well.

Phrygian mode is an essential component of flamenco music, particularly the use of Phrygian with a raised third scale degree to give it an Andalusian sound. Surinach often uses Phrygian mode throughout this ballet, and it once again appears in the opening of “*Danza Grande*.” Following the introduction with the alternating tritone and fifth pattern, the melody moves into a descending diatonic line from B down to E without the raised third scale degree. The Phrygian mode is further emphasized as the melody moves through an entire octave from E to E, but at times it is mixed with B-flat and A-flat to give greater downward thrust as it descends to the final E. This E Phrygian melody is repeated again, but in the upper winds, before a new melody is introduced at rehearsal 70 lifting the movement from the “grande” mood and bringing it into a spirited *fortissimo* conclusion.

The solemn opening is contrasted by a faster and louder section still based on E but now in Dorian mode. This new melody is played by the trombone and French horn and is set over a string section quickly bowing repeated eighth-notes on either F or G for the entire section. Once the French horn and trombone complete an entire statement of the melody, it is repeated by the winds and trumpet. Despite opening with new material, “Danza chica” really serves as a reminder to listeners of the various melodies and motives that have appeared so far. Though Surinach successfully crafted what sounds to be a fresh movement, many of the remaining sections in “Danza chica” simply revisit existing ideas.

Surinach references “Bulerias” next with the trumpets and flute playing the fortissimo triplet melody at rehearsal 73 (Example 2.19). This section is simply another version of the alternating-fourth-and-fifth motive but combined with extended octatonic runs in the woodwind and string sections that lead to a section of *accelerando* and tuplet shifts at the fermata. None of the techniques Surinach uses are new, but he did craft a melody with a fresh sound by subtly manipulating some of the previous ones. The legato melody of “Rituales” makes a reappearance starting at rehearsal 78, though it is eventually buried beneath the activity of other motives like the shifting triplets in the oboe and viola (Example 2.20).

Example 2.19: Comparison and outline of traditional *bulerías compás* at 73 and earlier in “Bulerias.” The melody in the trumpet at rehearsal 73 is doubled by the flute and imitated by the clarinet and French horn in canon.

Example 2.20: Rehearsals 76 and 78 depict Surinach’s recycling of rhythmic themes, such as tuplet shifts, in “Danza Grande.” The rhythm at 76 is doubled in all melodic instruments.

Until the end of this movement, the melody from “Rituales” is repeated throughout the orchestra, but the music begins to slow as rhythmic activity is reduced through instrument doubling. The music also begins to slow with more instruments sustaining longer and longer notes while the melody continues above unchanged. Surinach concludes the movement by once again using tuplet shifts that successively divide the beat into two to six, and increasing the dynamics level to *fortississimo*. The effect of all this is a more *grande* sound than “Rituales” and “Saeta.”

“Garrotin”

The ballet erupts into a fiery finale with the start of the final movement, “Garrotin.” Beginning without break from “Danza Grande,” “Garrotin” continues the *fortississimo* dynamic and increases the tempo to a *vivace* duple meter. The drama and passion of this piece are brought to full effect with forceful rhythms and incessant sixteenth-note melodies. This piece is based on the flamenco *palo* called *garrotín*, in a lively duple meter and in a major key. “Garrotin” displays most of these characteristics as the music pushes to its inevitable conclusion.

Opening with an A-minor chord orchestrated across the entire ensemble, the xylophone begins a melodic run based on E Phrygian (Example 2.21). This melody moves stepwise as it progressively descends through a full octave with each successive scale degree accented on beat one of each measure. Along with the descending melody, Surinach drives the music forward by using syncopation in the percussion and accompanying trumpet and clarinet. These instruments emphasize the downbeat to draw the listener’s ear to the next note in the descending melodic pattern. This fourteen-measure melody appears throughout the movement with slight variations, the first of which arrives at rehearsal 83.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for xylophone. The top staff is marked 'Vivace' and the bottom staff is marked 'fff'. Both staves begin with a descending melodic line in the first measure, characterized by open note heads, which is identified in the text as an E Phrygian scale. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns and rests.

Example 2.21: A descending E Phrygian melodic pattern is illustrated by the open note heads in the opening measure of “Garrotin.” This scale is prominent throughout this movement.

The second statement of the melody is placed in the piccolo and clarinet, with a new countermelody in the oboe and trumpet. The strings continue the same syncopated rhythm but now with harmonies realized to create the effect of a V-I progression, with the tonic landing on the downbeat. It is the countermelody in the trumpet and oboe that is of most interest in this section. Surinach once again uses octatonicism to disguise the tonal center of this section, but the chromatic octatonic melody and the diatonic original melody converge by rehearsal 84 to end on an A-minor chord, but the clarinet and trumpet continue the octatonic melody as a transition back to the opening melody of the xylophone.

The second theme of this movement begins at a rehearsal 88 with the clarinet and trumpet once again playing an octatonic theme over the syncopated accompaniment. The trumpet and clarinet eventually exchange two-measure sixteenth-note patterns that also contribute to the driving impulse of this movement (Example 2.22). The exchange occurs every other measure as the increasingly forceful section draws to a close before the original melody returns for another variation in the xylophone. Surinach utilizes all of these flamenco techniques to spur the ballet to the finale. Octatonicism, variation,

syncopation, timbral contrast, modal shifts, and rhythmic exchange are some of the devices that Surinach used in this ballet, and all make an appearance in this last movement.

Example 2.22: The two-measure sixteenth-note pattern creates a driving impulse at rehearsal 91. These three patterns are doubled across the entire orchestra to create a markedly driving rhythm.

The *garrotín* is an energetic *palo* and so is Surinach’s “Garrotin” from the start. Beginning *fortississimo* and only briefly going below *forte*, the music drives to what could serve as both climax and conclusion before the fermata at rehearsal 96. With the orchestra once again reaching a crescendo and the French horn directed to play with the bell up, “Garrotin” suddenly breaks from the loud, *vivace* sound to a non-melodic *piano* section that recalls the second act, “Of Women.” The march-like pattern played by the tamburo, xylophone, and pizzicato cello takes the listeners back to feminine dances of “Rituales” and “Saeta” once more before the ballet concludes. The dramatic contrast between these sections is typical of Surinach’s flamenco-based music, and after the five measures of the march theme, the music snaps back to life as if it had never stopped. One

last variation on the main theme appears before the last grace note to E in the piccolo, oboe, and clarinet takes us back to the “Bulerias.”

Conclusion

As a recent immigrant to the United States, Surinach faced many challenges in trying to establish his career, but the immediate success of *Ritmo Jondo* in 1952 at MoMA brought his name and work to the attention of the most important composers, choreographers, and patrons in the country. The relatively simple texture and low degree of difficulty of this piece enabled Surinach to easily rework and expand it for a variety of ensembles, with each version enjoying a long concert life. While many aspects of *Ritmo Jondo* were inspired by various elements of flamenco music, Surinach never intended it to be a literal transposition. The harmonies, rhythms, and melodies that he borrowed from flamenco served as the foundation upon which he crafted this piece, but it is highly original due to the extensive use of modern devices, such as symmetrical scales. The identity that formed around Surinach was that of a colorful and dramatic Spaniard who brought the exotic sounds of flamenco to the concert stage, and he did nothing to dispel those notions. In fact, he perpetuated them through program notes, the titles of his works, and ambiguous replies during interviews. *Ritmo Jondo* was one of Surinach’s first compositions written in the United States, and it has served as one of his most enduring and representative as well. The success of this small piece led to fruitful collaborations and important opportunities.

CHAPTER 3: *Sinfonietta Flamenca* (1954)

Background

Between 1953 and 1958, the Rockefeller Foundation partnered with the Louisville Orchestra to undertake a momentous commissioning and recording project. It also happened to be a project that Surinach was quick to capitalize on. As part of a grant solicited by the mayor of Louisville, Charles R. Farnsley, the Rockefeller Foundation awarded a total of \$500,000 to the Louisville Orchestra to commission, premiere, and record new works by composers from around the world. This award also stipulated that composers should be chosen from not only professionals but those in varying stages of their career, particularly students.¹ The Rockefeller grant provided enough money to commission forty-six new works each year and cover the cost of recording that music to twelve records. These recordings were made by Columbia Records and were distributed on a subscription service coordinated through the Louisville Philharmonic Society. Between the forty-six concerts performed each year and the recording subscriptions, the commissioning project was intended to become self-sustaining, though less-than-optimal audience turnout and a low number of record subscriptions meant the project would not last. The project did, however, bring national and international recognition to the

1. As noted by Carole Birkhead, the money for the grant was to be distributed annually over four years beginning with \$200,000 in 1954, followed by \$125,000, \$60,000, and \$10,000. The program was intended to be self-supporting, but it was clear by 1957 that this would not be the case. The Rockefeller Foundation provided an additional last payment of \$100,000; much of the background information on the Louisville grant in this section is found in Birkhead's thesis project: Carole C. Birkhead, "The History of the Orchestra in Louisville" (MA Thesis, University of Louisville, 1977).

Louisville Orchestra as a champion of modern music. The commissioned recordings were also played across the United States and Europe, which brought notoriety to the composers.

The stipulations for the grant included specifying the number of works to be commissioned each year, how many times these works were to be performed following the premiere, how many records would be made, and the stature of composers chosen. Each piece was played four times during consecutive weeks and recorded only after it had been performed four times. This meant that a total of four pieces were recorded each month, but the annual total was reduced from forty-eight to forty-six in order to give the orchestra time off. Twelve of the pieces each year were to be written by students (paid \$500 each and conducted by concert master Sidney Harth), and at least one-third of the composers were to be from outside the United States (each paid \$1,000 and also conducted by Robert Whitney). The opportunity for composers writing across many different styles to have their music heard by new audiences was great, and through reviews of the concerts and recordings, a sense of Surinach's place in this period can be found.

Surinach's *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was the second piece performed by the Louisville Orchestra under the Rockefeller grant. Fresh off the success of *Ritmo Jondo*, in both orchestral and ballet formats, and the orchestral work *Tientos* (1953), the Louisville commission was an opportunity for Surinach to bring his music to audiences beyond the limits of New York City. Though Surinach had earned a reputation for himself as a conductor and composer in Europe, by 1954 he had only been in the United

States for three years and had remained fairly unknown outside of the music circles of New York City. The Louisville project was his chance to reach a significantly wider audience.

Programmed alongside three other works previously commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra (two of which were pre-Rockefeller), *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was the third piece played on January 9th, 1954.² French composer Darius Milhaud's *Kentuckiana* (1949) opened the evening and was followed by the first piece commissioned through the Rockefeller grant, which was the second performance of Viennese composer Ernst Toch's *Notturmo*. Concluding the program was the American composer Peter Mennin with his Sixth Symphony (1953). Surinach was on an international and diverse program with excellent music; however, critics once again noted that his music stole the show.

The program notes that Surinach wrote for the concert gave the audience a sense of what was to come and helped to distinguish the piece from others on the program. Milhaud's *Kentuckiana* was also based on folk music, but it was not meant to be necessarily anything exotic for the Louisville audience, as Milhaud crafted the piece based on twenty tunes that were likely familiar to those in attendance. The program notes for Toch's *Notturmo* and Mennin's symphony did not have the descriptive flair of

2. "Louisville Orchestra Public Readings of Its Commissions" (Concert Program, Louisville, KY, January 9, 1954), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

Surinach's, which was claimed to be based on music from the south of Spain and featured "terrifying intensity and deep meditation."³ Before the music even began, audiences were likely eager to hear not just the premiere of Surinach's new work but the sound of flamenco.

The South of Spain, has always been the source of the greatest wealth of native music. This wealth concentrates most in the Flamenco style with its terrifying intensity and deep meditation.

But Spanish composers have not delved into it too much. Their refinements went mainly to the standard process. No one has ever made a single concession to the Spanish flamboyance if this was not in accordance to the rules.

Thus this 'Sinfonietta Flamenca' should have a maximum of flamenco style and a minimum of conventionalism; or, in any case, the integration of the style should never be less important than the traditional academicism, even if this would be of a modern and abstract mastery.⁴

As with *Ritmo Jondo* at the Museum of Modern Art, *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was hailed by critics as the piece of the night. Surinach's music stood apart from the others, both aesthetically and culturally. William Mootz reviewed the concert the next morning in Louisville's own *The Courier-Journal* and recognized that Surinach's music was indeed quite different from what consumers of modern music had been accustomed to.⁵ Mootz recognized that part of the intrigue of this work and the composer was the connection to Spain and flamenco sources. Critics writing on Surinach's music cannot

3. "Public Readings of Its Commissions" (Concert Program, Louisville, KY, January 9, 1954), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

4. Ibid.

5. William Mootz, "Matinee Concert Features Spaniard's Colorful Symphony," *The Courier-Journal*, January 10, 1954, Sunday Morning edition, sec. 1, Box 8 (Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope), BMI Surinach.

refrain from using adjectives such as passionate, proud, colorful, or flamboyant to describe the composer and his music. The music and its backstory combine to create an idealized image of an exotic Spanish music based on Gypsy folk music “that all foreigners find so intriguing.”⁶ This was surely foreign to the Louisville crowd and certainly more exotic than Milhaud’s *Kentuckiana*.

Mootz confirmed that *Sinfonietta Flamenca* received the largest ovation of the performance and informed readers that Surinach was recalled to the stage several times to acknowledge applause in the Columbia Auditorium.

From the very outset, the symphony bristles with Spanish Rhythms that throughout gave the piece its distinctive character. Brilliant orchestral colors are ever a part of its make-up, and the work is punctuated with percussive effects that, because of their infinite variety, never diminish in interest.

The first movement introduces a resplendent, flamboyant mood that is maintained through most of the piece. From the second movement, which is quieter but no less intense, comes to mind a sensuous duet from viola and oboe. The third movement is a lilting dance, and the fourth brings the work to an end in an outburst of barbaric splendor.⁷

The performance described by Mootz was the first public reading of *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, which likely explains his acknowledgment of the tension in the orchestra during some of the more intricate rhythmic sections. Despite the unpolished character of some areas, Mootz was not alone in immediately recognizing that Surinach’s work was destined for success.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

In typical fashion, a review from January 11th described the piece as “brilliant” before pronouncing that the “short symphony, punctuated by passionate Spanish rhythms, is destined for popularity.”⁸ The Spanish character of the music was easily identified by audiences as being different from that to which they were accustomed, even if they could not readily identify its origins. This was something Surinach was surely aware of, as evidenced in the descriptions of his music in the program notes. Surinach’s self-exoticizing and tonal approach to music won favor with audiences in part by letting reviewers do the work for him.

The composition is the first the orchestra has commissioned from a native Spaniard. Surinach has infused his work with bright colors and fetching melody – the kind that is expected to find great favor with record collectors.⁹

In yet another review from the January premiere, Norman Shavin recognized Surinach’s Spanish tinge along with the immediate success of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* and its value to record collectors.

Up came a dazzling Spanish-flavored piece, full of melodic excitement—one that seems destined to gain instant popularity on records the moment it is pressed. It has been the talk of the Louisville music devotees all week long and they look forward with anticipation to its second playing this coming Saturday at Columbia Auditorium.

Robert Whitney, conductor of the Louisville orchestra, prods in a word of caution. Not all of the new pieces, by a long shot, he reminded this reporter in an interview, will meet with such popular response.

8. “Orchestra’s 2nd Matinee Offers Flamenco Rhythm,” January 11, 1954, Box 8 (*Sinfonietta Flamenca* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

9. *Ibid.*

But he does see in this one number alone (Carlos Surinach's "Sinfonietta Flamenca") proof of the wisdom of the Rockefeller grant concerts. How many of the 40 works which will be world premiered (is there such a word?) here this year will hit the so called "jackpot," Whitney doesn't pretend to know.¹⁰

Shavin realized the significance of the Rockefeller grant for preserving these new works and helping to spread the music to new audiences around the world. *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was recorded on LP records along with forty-five other pieces in 1954, which Shavin notes will have intrinsic appeal to collectors of LPs and patrons of Hi-Fi recordings.

Surinach's *Sinfonietta Flamenca* eventually garnered national attention when Mootz wrote on the Rockefeller commissions in *Musical America*.¹¹ In the same article as Toch's *Notturmo*, Surinach's music captured half of the article, whereas Toch received only two sentences. The Rockefeller grant was widely discussed by musical audiences around the world, both composers and patrons, which helped to reinforce Surinach's identity in Europe and further establish himself in the United States. As Mootz attests, Surinach's music was indeed different from many other contemporary composers surely contributed to his appeal.

The work is strikingly different from the contemporary music we have been hearing in Louisville during the past few years. From the outset, it bristles with rhythms that give it an unmistakably Spanish flavor. Brilliant orchestral colors

10. Norman Shavin, "Louisville Hits One Musical Jackpot," *The Louisville Times*, January 1954, Box 8 (Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope), BMI Surinach.

11. William Mootz, "Many Premieres Presented by Louisville Orchestra in Double Series," *Musical America*, January 15, 1954, Box 8 (Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope), BMI Surinach.

are ever a part of its make-up, and the work is punctuated with percussive effects that, because of their infinite variety, never diminish in interest.¹²

A year into the Rockefeller grant, *Time Magazine* summarized the success of the program in January 1955. Unfortunately, the record subscriptions did not meet expectations, as only 300 of the hoped for 1000 subscriptions were sold. The annual cost of the subscription was \$65 for twelve LPs, which may have contributed to the underwhelming sales. However, radio stations bought the records, which meant that a large audience heard Surinach's music, possibly for the first time. Stations across the United States broadcast the new works, as well as the BBC in England and many other networks in Europe. The *Time Magazine* article offers an apt summary of the year and includes a special mention of Surinach's *Sinfonietta Flamenca*.

But if the Louisville plan is financially in the red, it is musically well in the black. Forty-six new works have been introduced and several have already been performed elsewhere. A few were standouts, e.g., Luigi Dallapiccola's haunting, emotional Variations for Orchestra, Henry Cowell's gentle Symphony No. 11, Carlos Surinach's vivid *Sinfonietta Flamenca*. The overall quality is higher than critics dared hope.¹³

Surinach was never one to let fate dictate the success or failure of his music, so in typical fashion, Surinach took his works on tour. Utilizing his connections in Barcelona, where he had worked previously as a conductor for the Gran Teatro del Liceo, Surinach embarked on a concert tour of Spain in 1954. On March 30, Surinach led the Orquesta

12. Ibid.

13. "Music," *Time Magazine*, January 24, 1955, Box 8 (*Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope*), BMI Surinach.

Sinfónica del Gran Teatro Liceo through a program including Beethoven, Prokofiev, Enrique Casals, William Schuman, and his own *Sinfonietta Flamenca*.¹⁴ This concert was reviewed by *La Vanguardia Española* on April 2nd and praised Surinach as both conductor and composer. Described as having strong and intelligent orchestration, *Sinfonietta Flamenca* won the approval of Spanish audiences for its elegant and inspired design.¹⁵ The year 1954 hardly marked the end of Surinach's success with this piece.

Unlike many other contemporary works that received only single performances, Surinach's *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was picked up by other orchestras across the United States and abroad. In 1955, the Philadelphia Orchestra performed the piece in front of an audience estimated to be between twelve and fourteen thousand in size.¹⁶ As the last of three free public concerts produced by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Eugene Ormandy, Surinach's work opened the program and was praised for its success.

[*Sinfonietta Flamenca* was] a provocative composition very modern in conception with its strange melodies, dissonant chords and fascinating gypsy rhythms. The Catalan composer, who now lives in New York, was present to receive due acclaim from both conductor and the audience. He will have the distinction of having this work included in the programs to be played in Spain.¹⁷

14. Concert Program (Gran Teatro del Liceo, March 30, 1954), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

15. "Musica, teatro y cine," *La Vanguardia Española*, April 2, 1954, Box 8 (*Sinfonietta Flamenca* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

16. Marion Kelley, "Orchestra and Ballet Hailed by Thousands," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 14, 1955, Morning edition, Box 8 (*Sinfonietta Flamenca* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

17. Concert Program (The Philadelphia Orchestra, May 13, 1955), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

The piece also did well in Europe where it was performed by the Berlin Philharmonic, the Orchestre Nationale de la Radiodiffusion Française, the Symphonies of Madrid and Barcelona, as well in England and with the North German Radio Orchestra in Hamburg and the Bavarian Radio Orchestra in Munich.¹⁸

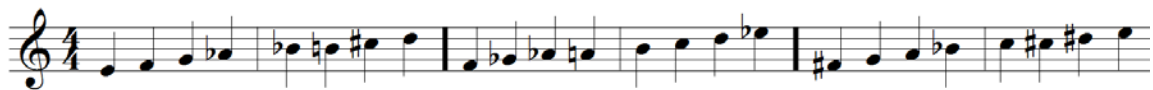
Critics were correct in assuming the piece would endure, and two years later Henry Cowell praised the piece in *The Music Quarterly*, describing it as the most brilliant orchestral work to come out of the Louisville commissions.¹⁹ Cowell began his review by using descriptors similar to those of other reviewers, e.g., glowing, fervent, fiery, and frenetic color, but he went further to discuss the compositional techniques Surinach used through a bit of musical analysis.

As is typical of those introducing a new audience to the music of Surinach, Cowell describes Surinach as a native of Barcelona but immediately affirms states his German credentials (training in Düsseldorf, Cologne, and Berlin). Surinach repeatedly describes himself as German-trained but subscribing more to French aesthetics. This, as Cowell is quick to note, results in Surinach's music having clear structure and form yet still possessing a character typical of "French Impressionism" and Spanish verve. What remains distinctly Spanish, Cowell claims, is Surinach's implementation of the octatonic scale, as seen in *Ritmo Jondo* and now *Sinfonietta Flamenca*.

18. "The Manhattan Orchestra" (Concert Program, April 14, 1959), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

19. Henry Cowell, "Current Chronicle," *The Musical Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (April 1, 1955): 223–43.

The octatonic scale, according to Surinach, is quite common to flamenco music. In reality, though, modal scales such as a Phrygian and its variations are far more common. By employing these symmetrical scales, Cowell suggests that Surinach’s music is neither consonant nor dissonant, but rather that it creates a “harmonic ‘effect’ of characteristic color.”²⁰ According to Cowell, the octatonic scale allows a sense of cadence and tonality, which is clearly heard in this piece. The listener’s ear is never left without a sense of direction, which contributes to the accessibility of the music mentioned by Cowell. Rather than resorting to imitation of harmonic progressions common to flamenco guitar, Cowell cites Surinach as utilizing various modes and, at times, simultaneously combining them for moments of polymodality. Surinach used this same octatonic technique in *Ritmo Jondo* to create tension while still maintaining a sense of tonality.



Example 3.1: Three half-whole octatonic scales are used in *Sinfonietta Flamenca* (E, F, F-sharp).

In addition to symmetrical scales, Cowell directs listeners to another flamenco idiom that Surinach introduces in *Sinfonietta Flamenca*. Familiar to any flamenco

20. Ibid.

aficionado is “the passionately reiterated note peculiar to the Gipsy manner.”²¹ Surinach emphasizes this melodic device across the entire orchestra for extra dramatic effect. The significance of the repeated note is derived from what would begin as only decoration until it becomes “germane to the melodic themes.”²² The result of Surinach’s efforts to capture the sound and drama of flamenco music in the classical orchestra, Cowell writes, is music that “goes directly to the historical mainstream of melody and rhythm as sources for very skilled and sophisticated development, the result of which pleases and excites the layman, for it is not abstruse; yet it offers plenty to provoke interest in the most erudite musician.”²³

Audiences clearly enjoyed Surinach’s music, as evidenced by sustained record sales, concert performances, and positive reviews even a decade after premiere. As the 1950s progressed, *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was performed by more and more orchestras across the United States and even in Europe. Surinach’s reputation as a composer of accessible works, unlike many of his contemporaries, helped to secure a place for his music on the programs of major orchestras. As mentioned, Eugene Ormandy programmed *Sinfonietta Flamenca* in 1955 alongside Grieg and Bizet.²⁴ Surinach and Ormandy would develop their working relationship over the years with Ormandy even

21. Ibid., 224.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., 224–5.

24. “The Philadelphia Orchestra” (Concert Program, May 13, 1955), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

conducting the recording of Albéniz's *Iberia* suite in 1956 that Surinach helped to complete. Surinach's reputation slowly but surely expanded beyond the major metropolitan of New York City and Philadelphia to capture the attention of the entire U.S.

Despite a favorable reception of the first Louisville performance, the New York premiere of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* did not take place until 1959. Under the direction of Emerson Buckley at the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium of the New York Metropolitan Museum, *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, with its consonant harmonies and lively rhythms, pleased audiences alongside Cowell's *Variations*.²⁵ Perhaps drawing inspiration from Cowell's 1955 article, the *Musical Courier* connected Surinach's style with his French studies in describing it as an "example of present day post-impressionism, but with a strong Spanish flavor."²⁶ The dramatic restraint that Surinach demonstrates in this piece, often attributed to his formal training in Germany, did not go unnoticed by reviewers, as the "deft, witty, and wholly delightful *Sinfonietta* transmutes Spanish idioms into fresh sounds and patterns, and the composer has the taste never to overextend his ideas."²⁷ *The New York Times* made note of his modern technique and calculated design. "Mr. Surinach

25. "The Manhattan Orchestra" (Concert Program, New York, April 14, 1959), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

26. C.E.R., "Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium," *Musical Courier*, July 1959, Box 8 (*Sinfonietta Flamenca* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

27. *Ibid.*

packed his material into a concentrated four movements; and while his orchestration and harmonies are traditional, the writing is unmistakably of our period.”²⁸

28. Harold C. Schonberg, “5 Modern Works Heard at Concert: Contemporary Music Group, Manhattan School Present Program in Art Museum,” *The New York Times*, April 15, 1959, Box 8 (*Sinfonietta Flamenca* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

THE LOUISVILLE ORCHESTRA

Robert Whitney, Conductor

in

PUBLIC READINGS

of its

COMMISSIONS

SECOND SATURDAY MATINEE

COLUMBIA AUDITORIUM

January 9, 1954

** 3:00 P.M.

Fig. 10: Program for the premiere of *Sinfonietta Flamenca*.²⁹

Through the 1960s, the popularity of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* continued in both concert and recorded formats. *The Hartford Times* best summarized the place of Surinach's music in the twentieth-century canon:

Sinfonietta Flamenca . . . [is] something contemporary that is not designed to scare anyone away from 20th Century music. . . .

In fact, I almost had the impression I was listening to Manuel de Falla and Ravel, rather than a product of this generation. However, Surinach has written a structurally well-organized piece that captures the impassioned, frenetic quality of the flamenco heritage. It made a very effective opener for the concert.³⁰

Whether Boston, Hartford, New York, Louisville, or London, it did not matter where Surinach's music was performed; his French and German training were almost always mentioned, and his Spanish flare always drew the interest of critics and audience alike.³¹

29. "Louisville Orchestra Public Readings of Its Commissions" (Concert Program, Louisville, KY, January 9, 1954), Box 16, BMI Surinach.

30. George W. Stowe, "Hanson Symphony Soloist," *The Hartford Times*, January 18, 1968, sec. 5D, Box 8 (Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope), BMI Surinach.

31. Most of Surinach's reviews and program notes mention his Spanish birth and Gypsy evocations. A review of an MGM record in the *Boston Globe* is a prime example: "Surinach's music is Flamencan gypsy and Moorish folk in flavor. It is colorful and you can almost visualize gypsy dancing to it." See George W. Stowe, "Hanson Symphony Soloist," *Hartford Times*, January 18, 1968, sec. 5D, Box 8 (Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope), BMI Surinach; and "Symphony and Hanson in Mozart," *Hartford Courant*, January 18, 1968, Box 8 (Sinfonietta Flamenca Envelope), BMI Surinach.

Analysis

This analysis is based on the Associated Music Publishers (AMP) score published in 1955 with a dedication to The Louisville Orchestra and commission attribution listed as The Louisville Philharmonic Society, Inc. The diminutive title of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* does not strictly refer to the duration of this piece but rather the size of the orchestra. Surinach scored *Sinfonietta Flamenca* for a small orchestra comprising pairs of flutes, oboes, B-flat clarinets, bassoons, and C trumpets. To maintain a full, rich sound and to balance the string section (including harp), four horns in F, three trombones, and a tuba compose the remainder of the brass section. The score also calls for two percussionists who alternate between the timpani, xylophone, tam-tam, and drums. The resulting orchestration is a group capable of achieving regular use of *fortissimo* dynamics while also performing intricate rhythmic figures that are often performed in unison across the entire ensemble. The rhythmic foundation of this symphony is one of the primary ways that Surinach establishes a connection to flamenco music.

Movement I: *Vivo grazioso*

The drama of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* begins immediately with a *fortissimo* opening that outlines a progression of i-vii⁷-i Phrygian mode on F-sharp. By beginning the piece in this mode, Surinach reinforced the flamenco character demanded by the title. The tempo marking of *Vivo grazioso* propels the music through a brief introduction that emphasizes rhythmic vigor with a strong down-beat featuring a motive based on the i-

vii⁷-i progression that began the piece. This introduction continues until the Surinach introduces the first theme at rehearsal 2.

As with *Ritmo Jondo*, Surinach set many of the melodies in *Sinfonietta Flamenca* in unison or octave and doubled the voicings across two or more instruments. The first melody is introduced rehearsal 2 and is in the oboe, English horns, and viola. This melody is based on a repeated C-sharp that is embellished with grace notes and triplet rhythmic patterns that are set against the steady duple accompaniment. The repeated C-sharp is heard before rehearsal 2, but it is overpowered by the accompaniment until the other instruments are silent and only the horns and low strings remain. This motive recurs throughout the movement, such as at rehearsal 6, and signifies flamenco to listeners. The melody is remarkably similar to the repeated notes often heard in flamenco *cante jondo* (“deep song”) performances, and it serves as a recurring melodic idea throughout this movement. This iteration is characteristic of flamenco deep song, like a reciting tone of a chant (see example 3.3). As tuneful and lyrical as the melody may be, the resulting harmonic support is incredibly dissonant.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Piccolo (Picc.), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), and Oboe (Ob.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. A box with the number '2' is placed above the Piccolo staff to indicate rehearsal 2. The Piccolo part features a melodic line with grace notes and triplet patterns. The Flute 2 part plays a similar melodic line, marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The Oboe part plays a steady accompaniment of repeated notes, marked with a forte (f) dynamic and the instruction 'sempre f'. The score includes various musical notations such as grace notes, triplets, and dynamic markings.

Example 3.2: Note the repeated C-sharp in the oboe, which is doubled by the English horn and violas as the rest of the ensemble falls tacet at rehearsal 2.

Contributing to the sharp dissonance of this section is Surinach's use of tone clusters. A slight variation on the tone cluster of F-sharp, G-sharp, B, C-sharp is played by the four horns during this first statement of the melody at rehearsal 2, and it is heard a second time when the piccolo, trumpets, and violins repeat the melody. The restatement is mostly direct repetition, with the oboe and English horn shifting to play accompanying melodic figures. The result of this change in orchestration is a fuller sound that is further enhanced when the music rises to a *fortissimo* dynamic. At this point, the full brass section sounds B, C, and G-flat before the cluster expands to B-flat, B, C-sharp, F, G. The basis for this dissonance is the C-sharp half-whole octatonic scale rather than a modal foundation that one might expect in a flamenco piece. This small, dissonant climax quickly yields to a more rhythmically based section, but Surinach uses these dissonant clusters as an effective means of creating tension and interest in the music. At rehearsal 5, Surinach brings the music to the brief climax that is immediately resolved to the delicate sound of violin, harp, and upper winds.



Example 3.3: Three transpositions of the half-whole octatonic scale used in *Sinfonietta Flamenca*.



Example 3.4: Rehearsal 5 foregrounds Surinach’s use of octatonic scales over modes as the music ascends to a climax in both register and dynamic. This scale is prominent in the strings and winds and reappears throughout this movement at rehearsals 11, 12, 13, 16.

Like *Ritmo Jondo* before it, *Sinfonietta Flamenca* is a mixture of flamenco elements and modern compositional techniques, such as Surinach’s decision to use the octatonic scale, which affects most aspects of this composition. Henry Cowell cited Surinach’s preference for the symmetrical octatonic scale in his 1955 *Music Quarterly* article, but he failed to correct Surinach on his assertion that the scale is an important element of flamenco. Though this symmetrical scale is versatile, with three unique transpositions, it is not something that flamenco artists would have used in the 1950s. Perhaps as a compromise, Surinach crafted his flamenco pieces with a mixture of traditional and modern scales. Traditional use of flamenco modes does not come through clearly either. The presence of F-sharp Phrygian in this movement is the traditional natural Phrygian, but it lacks a raised third scale degree (A-sharp) that would give it the Andalusian flamenco sound. That his use of flamenco elements may not be authentic is beside the point because up until this point there was also no such thing as a flamenco symphony.

The dissonant accompaniment heard at rehearsal 5 returns again at rehearsal 16. This time, however, the complexity and the dissonance are increased with the entire brass

and string sections playing variations on the octatonic scale that prominently includes intervals of seconds and tritones. As before, the pitches that Surinach chose are from one of the three transpositions of the half-whole octatonic scale. The first chord outlined by the horns includes the pitches C-sharp, G, E, B-flat that are enharmonic equivalents of notes from the half-whole scale in C-natural. As the music grows louder, Surinach simultaneously expands this accompaniment to more instruments but maintains the same pitch selection and does not change transposition of the scale (see Example 3.5).

Working through the first transposition of the scale from C-sharp, the horns rise to *fortissimo* on C-sharp, D, G, B as the music returns to a more tonally based Am7 chord. This minor chord serves as a tonal transition back to the i-vii⁷-i chord progression that began the piece. However, nowhere in the movement is it clearer that the C-sharp half-whole scale is the primary basis than the climax immediately preceding rehearsal 25.

Example 3.5: The melodic run leading to the climax at rehearsal 25 clearly outlines the half-whole octatonic scale based on C-sharp. The voicing of violin I is mirrored by the other strings and upper winds.

The melody leading to the climax at the close of this movement is set in the upper winds and string to give it an even more striking effect. The melody is clearly based on the notes of the C-sharp octatonic scale, which are seen in the first violin part that plays a two-octave scale from C#4 to C#6. All other melodic parts play some variation of the scale while the brass change from their simple eighth-note divisions of the beat to

sustained half notes that are tied across three measures. The harmonic support from the brass is also rooted in the octatonic scale: C-sharp (D-flat), F, and A-flat. With the final statement of this scale, the movement returns to the first theme to conclude with one last statement of the melody in the oboe, English horn, and clarinets.

Episodes between moments of tension are scalar runs based on the whole-half octatonic scale with different rhythmic variations. Like many points in *Ritmo Jondo*, Surinach manipulates the tempo of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* without actually changing it. Beginning with the first melody, but particularly at rehearsal 6, Surinach proportionally increases the number of notes per beat by cycling the duple meter through groups of two, three, four, and five notes per beat (Example 3.6). Surinach combines this changing division of the beat with the repeated note, typically C-sharp, and the dissonant cluster of B, G, A-flat, to create what sounds like improvisatory vocal embellishments. The fluid rhythm and tempo changes coupled with the emphasized C-sharp evoke flamenco *cante*.



Example 3.6: Note the similarities in rhythmic shifts between *Ritmo Jondo* and *Sinfonietta Flamenca*. This rhythm is played in unison by the upper winds, French horns, and second violin, and it appears at rehearsals 6 and 9.

This movement incorporates several musical devices that help to establish an improvisatory, flamenco-like aesthetic. Most notably is Surinach's use of elaborate scalar runs that verge on the edge of tonality. The dramatic vocal melismas of flamenco

music are often not based in tonality and are microtonal in character. By using the octatonic scale, Surinach is able to take the music far enough from tonality for it to sound exotic without losing a sense of direction. All of the melodic episodes utilize the C-sharp octatonic scale in a fast, rhythmically varied manner, and the melodic fluidity and spontaneity created by this sounds improvisatory and based in flamenco without needing to rely on *palos*, as he did with *Ritmo Jondo*.

Movement II: *Andantino*

Marking a strong contrast to the fast and loud first movement, Surinach begins the second movement by smoothly transitioning the full orchestra down from *fortissimo* to only the oboe, English horn, and clarinets as they declare one last statement of the theme. The reduction in the orchestra and the fermata over the final C-sharp of the first movement both quiet and slow the music in preparation for the *andantino* melody in the clarinet and harp that opens the second movement.

The sound of the harp as it plays arpeggios around the tonal center of E-flat is exotic, yet it also sounds familiar to listeners by suggesting the guitar. The key signature of this movement indicates three flats, and the movement from E-flat as the opening and closing notes suggests that this may be in E-flat major. However, the accidentals of F-flat, C-flat, and D-flat throughout the first section indicate this is not the case. The opening sounds familiar because, like the first movement, it is modal rather than tonal. Specifically, this movement is in the Phrygian mode, but unlike the first movement, it has the raised third scale degree. The raised G-natural from G-flat and prominence of E-flat

take this section from what could be read as E-flat major to Phrygian mode on E-flat with the raised third. By altering the G-flat, Surinach evokes what is known as the Andalusian mode, which is common to flamenco music, and the resulting augmented second between F-flat and G-natural signals something exotic to listeners.

The image shows a musical score for harp (Hp.) in 6/8 time, marked 'Andantino'. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The right hand (treble clef) plays a melodic line starting on E-flat, with a raised third (G-natural). The left hand (bass clef) plays arpeggios with a forte (sf) dynamic. The score consists of five measures.

Example 3.7: At the beginning of movement two, note the raised third scale degree (G) of Phrygian mode on E-flat in the harp.

Though Surinach employed many of the same techniques that he used in the previous movement, he crafted a delicate melody that forces the listener to focus on only two things: mode and rhythm. Inspired by symphonic tradition, Surinach wrote a slow second movement to develop rhythmic ideas introduced in the first movement and explore the sound of the Andalusian mode. Surinach immediately captures the listener's attention with the harp playing at a *piano* dynamic, and the delicate sound of the arpeggios in the harp, accompanied by only the first clarinet, demands focus and internalization of the Phrygian mode. Only after this sound is established, an allusion to flamenco guitar and singer, does Surinach shift the listener's focus to rhythm, but even the rhythm is not complicated beyond that which has already been heard. The piccolo joins the clarinet in unison on a repeated G \flat 5 at rehearsal 26 while moving through the same metric divisions seen in the first movement (Example 3.8). After a single statement

of this rhythmic motive, the piccolo is removed and the clarinet sustains A-flat and F as it fades to *pianissimo* and leaves the harp to continue its arpeggios solo. Surinach created another striking contrast with the change between the first and second sections, moving from a very quiet harp solo to *fortissimo* winds and strings that continue to outline the same Phrygian on E-flat with a raised third scale degree.

Example 3.8: Rehearsal 29 brings the same division of the beat previously heard in the first movement, which is featured prominently throughout *Ritmo Jondo*.

The opening arpeggio theme appears again at the close of this movement to give it a clearly defined ternary form, and the restatement at rehearsal 35 is an exact recapitulation of what the first section. Surinach continues to emphasize the raised G-natural, but now he sets it in the viola and oboe. The melodic content remains mostly unchanged, since the basic rhythmic ideas persist with only minor changes in how the beat is divided, to create a sense of forward movement. The conclusion brings the viola and oboe playing in octaves to finish with a final statement in the Andalusian mode on E-flat Phrygian. The final chord is played in harmonics on the strings and sounds an open fifth comprising E-flat and B-flat, to give a final sense of rest through one of the few examples of a consonant cadence in this movement. What happens between these

sections of modality and consonance, however, is founded primarily on rhythmic and dramatic interest.

Throughout this movement, Surinach maintains a clear division of the beat by writing the 6/8 meter with accents on the first and fourth eighth notes of most measures. This same division applies to rehearsal 31, when the meter changes to 4/4 with the subdivision of each beat continuing to divide into two eighth notes. As a result of the persistent rhythm, Surinach draws the listener's focus to the Andalusian mode, which is now set in the strings, brass, and winds, by making the rhythm a simple backdrop for the melodic content. Over the consonant Andalusian mode in the winds and strings, the brass, particularly the trumpets, repeat an accelerating tuplet motive that ends leading into rehearsal 30 on a the strikingly dissonant chord written as E, G-sharp, B, F, drawn from the E half-whole octatonic scale that is enharmonically close Andalusian mode in E-flat.

While the scale names E-flat Andalusian and E half-whole octatonic suggest the pitch content of each is radically different, they in fact share much in common. Surinach used this attribute to develop a new harmonic vocabulary that would have been unavailable with only one mode. The half-whole scale on E is one of the three possible transpositions of this scale based on E-flat, and when compared side by side, the Andalusian and E half-whole share six pitches.

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <u>E Phrygian (Andalusian)</u> | E | F | G | Ab | Bb | Cb | Db | D |
| <u>E half-whole Octatonic</u> | Eb | Fb | G | Ab | Bb | Cb | Db | Eb |

Example 3.9: Note the similarities in pitch content between the Phrygian mode on E with a raised-third scale degree (Andalusian mode) and E half-whole octatonic, which is the second transposition of E-flat half-whole octatonic.

Surinach used these closely related scales to select the pitches for the cadence leading to rehearsal 30, but to slow the machine-like drive created by the consistent sixteenth-notes, Surinach changed to eighth notes and syncopated the rhythm by removing the downbeat from alternate measures (Example 3.10). This effectively cut the tempo in half. Before the music comes to a grinding halt, however, Surinach changed the meter to 4/4 and used a new accompaniment in the horns and clarinet to maintain the steady eighth-note pattern through the rest of this section until the return of the first theme that is based on E-flat half-whole tone scale and its various transpositions. The harmony in this section is dissonant, but it is lessened by the way Surinach orchestrated only the clarinet and horns to play the accompaniment, at a *piano* dynamic. The result is an interesting accompaniment that allowed Surinach to explore variations on the vocal-like phrases of a repeated pitch, such as the flute and English horn at rehearsal 32. The English horn, flute, and violin trade overlapping and increasingly complex statements of this idea as the music builds to the climax at rehearsal 34 at a *fortissimo* dynamic.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 30, marked with a box containing the number '30'. The score is written for four instruments: E. Hn. (English Horn), B♭ Cl. 1 (Bass Clarinet 1), Hn. 1 (French Horn 1), and Xyl. (Xylophone). The E. Hn. part starts with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with a *ff* dynamic. The B♭ Cl. 1 part also starts with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with a *ff* dynamic. The Hn. 1 part starts with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with a *mf* dynamic, then a series of eighth notes with a *ff* dynamic. The Xyl. part starts with a rest, followed by a series of eighth notes with a *ff* dynamic. The score is in 4/4 time and features a dramatic change in rhythm at rehearsal 30, with the clarinet and horns playing a steady eighth-note pattern.

Example 3.10: Note the dramatic change in rhythm between sections at rehearsal 30. The clarinet is doubled by two bassoons and strings, the English horn by the second clarinet, and French horn by all brass. Percussion enters at rehearsal 30.

Movement III: Allegro ma non troppo

The third movement of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* is one of the most active in terms of rhythm and melody. Surinach immediately introduces a syncopated motive that marks a powerful contrast to the tranquility at the close of the previous movement. Whereas movement two was slow, lyrical, and quiet, this third movement opens *allegro ma non troppo* at a *fortissimo* dynamic. Though it is written in triple meter it is not immediately apparent due to the extensive use of syncopation already in the first theme. Instead of feeling all three beats of the meter, the feel of three beats is spread across two measures, resulting from accents falling on every other beat. This pattern suggests two within three.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: B♭ Clarinet 1 and Timpani. The title above the staff is "Allegro ma non troppo". The B♭ Clarinet 1 part is in treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a *ff* dynamic and features a syncopated melody with accents on the second and fourth beats of the first measure, and the first and third beats of the second measure. The Timpani part is in bass clef with a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a *f* dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents on the second and fourth beats of the first measure, and the first and third beats of the second measure. The overall effect is a sense of two beats within a three-beat measure.

Example 3.11: Syncopation in the opening measures of movement III augments the triple meter across two measures.

Surinach manipulates the meter throughout the movement and often repeats rhythmic figures, but he is able to maintain a sense of freshness by changing the melodic content with variations of the same E-flat half-whole octatonic scale that was the basis of the previous movements. The way in which Surinach manipulates the octatonic scale in this movement is different from the others because of the primary way in which he sets this scale in opposition to itself. The first is seen at rehearsal 38 with the bassoons and violas starting on F-sharp and ascending a minor sixth to D while the rest of the winds

and strings descend from either E-flat or A. The resulting dissonant harmonies are only possible with the use of this scale. The initial triad of E-flat–F-sharp–A is enharmonically equivalent to a D-sharp diminished chord and is followed by a sequence of alternating tritones and diminished triads.

Example 3.12: Rehearsal 38 is an example of the extreme dissonance Surinach evokes by juxtaposing ascending and descending E-flat half-whole octatonic scales.

The result of this arrangement is a dissonant passage that strives for resolution three measures later. However, as restful as the subsequent cadence seems, taken outside of this context the cadence would not normally serve as a basis of tonal stability or rest. The diminished chords and tritones lead to what sounds like a G triad with an added fourth (C-natural), but instability permeates from the simultaneous sounding of B-natural and B-flat. This combination of pitches is not possible in tonal scales or even the E-flat half-whole octatonic scale on which Surinach has otherwise based this movement. Surinach therefore derived this set of pitches by combining two transpositions of the octatonic scale, as G, Bb, B, and D are all found in only one iteration with C present in either of the remaining two. This scalar run is repeated at rehearsal 39 but expanded in duration and range to two octaves. The harmonic possibilities from freely moving

between these scales allow Surinach the ability to create dissonances that reflect the improvisatory and chromatic sound of traditional flamenco. The flamenco elements are far less overt in this piece than *Ritmo Jondo*, but the drama is preserved through dissonance and actively changing rhythms.

Noteworthy in this movement are the rate and manner in which Surinach introduces new sections. Each section in this movement is represented by a unique sound that Surinach cultivated through non-traditional instrument pairings or choosing instruments that stand in marked contrast to the preceding section. Piccolo with bassoon, brass and strings, viola and bassoon, or even individual instruments such as harp, xylophone, or clarinet are some of the primary examples. Each of these instruments or combinations of them help to elicit a sense of spontaneity even when much of the harmonic material has already been used. The lively, legato wind- and string-based opening changes at rehearsal 40 into a disjunct, staccato melody in the upper winds (piccolo and first clarinet) supported by the bassoon and violas. This new pairing and the performance indications mark a distinct break from the beginning, and it sounds fresh despite the piccolo and clarinet playing a transposition of the same half-whole octatonic scale, now based on F. Surinach does, however, introduce the familiar Phrygian scale with a raised third scale degree (now also in F) that results in a familiar harmony but features new rhythms and orchestration. This section lasts only twelve measures before another timbre is introduced to accompany a new theme in the harp at rehearsal 41.

Surinach continues freely combining the different half-whole octatonic transpositions in the harp and other accompanying instruments throughout this

movement. The F transposition is used in creating ascending and descending patterns in opposition, set in quadruple meter to be played several times. At the fourth statement, however, the violas enter with an opposing pattern on E. The result, as previously heard at rehearsals 38 and 39, is dissonance due to minor seconds prevailing throughout. Not only does this section present harmonic dissonance, but rhythmic as well. The meter change at rehearsal 41 is a smooth transition with the even eighth-note pattern that emphasizes beats one and three, but when the violas enter along with the bassoons and clarinets they introduce a triple-meter rhythm by placing emphasis on beats one, three, and two. This anticipates the meter changing back to triple after only six measures in common time. The harp is the most important instrument at this point because listeners immediately focus on it, and at the next rehearsal, Surinach gives the harp an extended arpeggio that is the essence of the exotic sound that the half-whole octatonic scale and flamenco represent.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 41, marked with a box containing the number '41'. It consists of three staves: Bsn. 1 (Bassoon 1), Hp. (Harp), and Vc. (Viola). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The Bsn. 1 staff begins with a rest, followed by a double bar line and a change to a 3/4 time signature. The Hp. staff starts with a *mf* dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. The Vc. staff starts with a *mf* dynamic and a *sord.* marking. The score shows a complex rhythmic interplay between the instruments, with the harp and viola playing eighth-note patterns while the bassoon plays a more complex, syncopated pattern.

Example 3.13: Rehearsal 41 is the only section in common time and conflicts with the viola, bassoon, and clarinets that compete with triple groupings.

Beginning at rehearsal 42, the harp plays a series of pitches that are neither entirely from the half-whole octatonic scale nor the related Phrygian mode. Much of the movement up to this point has been in the octatonic scale from E, with some melodic portions in the contrasting F Phrygian with or without a raised third. Surinach set the harp in a gray area between these tonal centers because the harp plays a series of pitches that suspend any sense of harmonic center, especially when countered by the violins playing the octatonic scale in E. The harp continues to play tonally ambiguous arpeggios over two octaves from A4 to A6.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 42. It consists of two staves: Harp (Hp.) and Violin I (Vln. I). The Harp part is in the upper staff, starting with a box containing the number 42 and a dynamic marking of *8^{va}*. The melody is marked *dim.* and consists of a series of eighth notes. The Violin I part is in the lower staff, also starting with a box containing the number 42. It is marked *senza sord.* and *mf*. The rhythm is a steady eighth-note pattern. The dynamics for the Violin I part are *mf*, *dim.*, *fp*, *mp*, *fp*, and *p*.

Example 3.14: The sense of a tonal center is suspended at rehearsal 42 with the harp and violin borrowing from multiple modes.

The sequence of pitches chosen for the harp is not entirely from any of the octatonic or Phrygian modes that Surinach uses, but it is closely related to both Phrygian on F with the raised third and the F octatonic scale with only one semitone distinguishing the two. This maintains unity while helping to create a sense of melodic interest because the intervals of these pitches, when taken in order, do not match any typical scale without alteration: m2, M3, m2, M2, m2, m2. This temporary suspension of tonality is smoothly

transitioned as the xylophone continues the melodic ascent begun with the harp. This transition moves directly into the half-whole E-octatonic scale with a dramatic *crescendo* to *fortissimo* that marks the start of another repeat of the opening motive.

The real drama of this movement, however, begins with the first section that emphasizes the brass. Beginning with an anacrusis quarter note into rehearsal 46, the trombones and French horns are firmly rooted in the half-whole octatonic scale on F when they play a steady quarter-note melody that alternates between groups of four and six while the winds, strings, and trumpet repeat material from rehearsal 40. What was the primary melody now serves as a counter-melody to the *tenuto* brass, whose melody becomes more driving with each restatement until the tension seems to climax at rehearsal 48 with the brass at a *fortissimo* dynamic and the strings and oboes playing octatonic scales. Before Surinach breaks the tension of this section for something entirely contrasting, the rhythmic motive repeated here from rehearsal 40 alternates every other measure against the sustained brass tones. The result is a syncopated section that is unable to get back onto the beat before it completely loses time at rehearsal 49, when the brass switch into a triplet pattern.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Horn 1 (Hn. 1) and Trumpet 1 (C Tpt. 1). The Horn 1 part is written in treble clef, 3/4 time, and begins with a forte (f) dynamic. It plays a steady quarter-note melody in the E-octatonic scale on F. The Trumpet 1 part is also in treble clef, 3/4 time, and begins with a forte (f) dynamic. It plays a syncopated rhythmic pattern. The rehearsal mark 46 is indicated above the Horn 1 staff.

Example 3.15: Four horns, three trombones, and the tuba double the above horn melody. Despite triple meter, this melody is in four.

Following this loud, driving brass sections is a contrasting clarinet melody at *mezzo-piano*, expressively marked *cantando*. Supporting the clarinet are the third and fourth French horns playing G-sharp (C-sharp concert pitch) and alternating half notes with triplet quarter notes, which, despite the steady alternating pattern in the harp and percussion, obscure the beat. The brass struggle to revive the previous section by reintroducing loud, sustained, dissonant intervals, however, they fail to develop and collapse from consonance to dissonance.

The movement finishes after the third and final chord in the brass that outlines a fully diminished B⁷. As with the brass previously attempting to revive an unfinished section, the winds now alternate with fragments of the first melody that began the movement and seven notes of the E-flat half-whole octatonic scale. The three-note motive is repeated three times following rehearsal 53, and each restatement is presented an octave lower until the bassoons and horn are all that remains, with the timpani playing an alternating pattern on the beat until even that begins to lose steam and the entire orchestra is tacet, except bassoon, horn, and timpani at *ppp*. The percussion section, especially the tamburo, brings the movement to a dramatic conclusion by slowing the ensemble ahead of the extended silence at the final *fermata*.

Movement IV: *Presto agitato*

This final movement of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* is a dramatic departure from the preceding because of the way in which Surinach presents a new musical character to complement the flamenco quality that dominated the rest of the piece. After Surinach

dissipated the energy of the third movement through an extended *diminuendo* and reduction in instrumentation, the fourth movement revitalizes the piece by building syncopated rhythmic patterns in the percussion and winds that emphasize the downbeat. Surinach explores several ways of manipulating these rhythms to develop contrasting themes, but the most radical departure in musical character was created by the way in which Surinach chose to emphasize the rhythmic and dynamic vigor of flamenco-based rhythmic sections by contrasting them with consonant, sinuous melodies, such as the entrance of the solo French horn at rehearsal 58 and the *legato* violin at rehearsal 59.

Surinach organized this movement around alternating sections of rhythmic and melodic content, and as expected, the form of this movement is readily apparent. By keeping the form simple, Surinach was free to explore various instrumental combinations and timbres. The resultant variety of sound prevents the A-A-B structure from becoming tiresome or seemingly repetitious, while maintaining the drama and theatricality Surinach aspired to create in his music. The most radical departure from the other movements, as mentioned, is the emphasis he placed on melodic themes throughout. However, rhythm is still the most dominant element.

The tempo *presto agitato* immediately indicates to listeners that this section will contrast with the conclusion of the preceding movement. Whereas Surinach drew listeners into a sense of finality in the last section with the extended *diminuendo* and *ritardando* created by removing instruments and sustaining notes, the finale begins with *pizzicato* strings and timpani, accented by the brass section on each downbeat. As the music grows from a *mezzo-piano* dynamic to *forte* in the first three measures, the 3/8

meter of this section provides a platform on which Surinach created a syncopated theme to reestablish momentum. Similar to how he used syncopation to bring the music to a stumbling halt at the conclusion of the first movement, he now uses it to help the music stagger back to life with the added element of *hemiola*. The rhythmic drive of this movement is persistent from the beginning through to the end with the alternating 3/8 and 3/4 meters emphasized through near-constant eighth-note patterns that are always present in at least one instrument. Though the rhythms in most of the piece are primarily steady patterns of sixteenth and eighth notes, Surinach creates syncopation and contrast through off-beat accents and disjunct melodic lines.

One of the first instances in which Surinach manipulated the metric regularity of the 3/8 time signatures is heard at rehearsal 56. Notably, this is also the only section in the entire piece in which Surinach specified “solo string quartet” on the score—this quartet does expand to a quintet with the addition of a third violin at rehearsal 58. Though the strings are reduced to the standard quartet ensemble of two violins, one viola, and one cello, they are not the only instruments playing. While the second violin, viola, and cello sustain a steady eighth-note pattern based on a half-whole octatonic scale, the first violin performs a constant sixteenth-note pattern that alternates between accent or rest on the downbeat of each measure. The result is a syncopated section that contrasts with the next *legato* section, beginning at rehearsal 58.

56

Vln. I solo *mf*

Vln. II solo

Vla. solo *mf*

Vc. solo *pizz. mf*

Example 3.16: Note the steady 3/8 pattern in the accompaniment and the accented or silent downbeats in the first violin of the solo string quartet at rehearsal 56.

Rhythm is the primary element around which Surinach constructed this movement. With each departure from a rhythmic idea, another theme is introduced or returned. His use of syncopation and hemiola is combined with disjunct and dissonant melodic lines to stress the distinction between clearly defined sections. At rehearsal 61, for example, the preceding melodic lines are replaced by a pattern of alternating fourths and tritones in the flute, harp, and timpani. This section features series of eighth notes that accent either every third note or every other note to reinforce the hemiola that permeates this movement. This section continues with what sounds like a triplet pattern, until a time signature changes to 3/4 at rehearsal 65 that coincides with the melody becoming more disjunct and the syncopation more pronounced. Surinach returns to this same hemiola pattern at rehearsal 74 and combines it with one of his favorite devices, shifting through tuplet patterns, which is quite pronounced in the piccolo. Through rehearsal 85 the meter remains in 3/8, and in the accompaniment the rhythms are derived

from divisions of the beat. The only section of significant rhythmic interest is the brass melody beginning at rehearsal 77, which will be discussed shortly.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 65, featuring two staves: Flute 1 (Fl. 1) and Piccolo (Picc.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The Flute 1 part begins with a dynamic marking of *ff* and a *sf* marking. The Piccolo part has rests for the first two measures, followed by a triplet of eighth notes marked *fff* in the third measure. The score includes various rhythmic notations such as accents, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Example 3.17: The syncopated rhythm at 65 and tuplet shifts are two of the most common rhythmic motifs that Surinach employs in this piece.

Coinciding with each change in rhythm, which also signifies a new section, is a new melodic idea. Most often Surinach relied on several fragmented rhythmic ideas that either overlap or are set in sequence. Following the syncopated and staccato rhythmic opening of the movement, rehearsal 56 marks the introduction of five different melodic ideas, each of which is set in a different instrument. The solo string quartet at rehearsal 56 introduces the first melodic idea and accompaniment in a driving rhythm. Based on the half-whole octatonic scale primarily centered on F-sharp, the string quartet sets the harmonic foundation for the rest of the orchestra. The oboe and piccolo enter with a disjunct melody also based on the same half-whole octatonic scale, to contrast and help prepare for the English- and French-horn melody at rehearsal 58, marked *non legato ma cantando* (non-legato but singing). This singing melody, along with the third violin and first flute at rehearsal 59, offers the most consonant and conjunct melody of the entire movement, even though it relies on the same harmonic foundation as many of the other sections. Surinach brought this melody back for a second statement at rehearsal 69, but

he paired the French horns with oboe and clarinet, resulting in a very subtle timbral change.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 58. It includes staves for E. Hn., Hn. I, Timp., Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., and Vc. The French Horns (E. Hn. and Hn. I) play a conjunct melodic line in a 3/8 time signature, marked *mf* and *non legato ma cantando*. The Solo String Quintet (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vln. III, Vla., and Vc.) provides accompaniment, with Vln. I marked *cantando* and *mf*, and Vc. marked *mf*. The score is in a key with two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/8 time signature.

Example 3.18: Despite being based on the half-whole octatonic scale with dissonant accompaniment, the conjunct melodic lines in the French and English horns at rehearsal 58 create one of the most consonant sections of this movement.

Between statements of this melodic content heard at rehearsals 58 and 69 are some of the disjunct and heavily syncopated sections previously addressed. For these contrasting sections, Surinach moved away from the consonant, single melodic lines to juxtapose several conjunct but dissonant ideas, such as the trumpets, French horn, and oboe that play in fourths at rehearsal 62. Their dissonant lines are also derived from the F-sharp half-whole octatonic scale, and the parallel fourths in this section stress the natural dissonance of the scale. Restatements of this same melody, but set in the flute, oboe, and clarinet, play over the opening syncopated eighth-note pattern and appear less

dissonant than when the brass play, due to the rhythmic accompaniment performed by a reduced orchestra. Through to the end of the piece, Surinach combines most of the rhythmic and melodic devices he used throughout the rest of the piece, e.g., shifting tuplet patterns, hemiola, alternating fourths and fifths in the accompaniment, and contrasting dynamic sections. Characteristic of Surinach's music, *Sinfonietta Flamenca* ends with a dramatic melodic development and *furioso* conclusion.

Surinach set the final melody at rehearsal 77 in the brass (French horns, trumpet, and trombone) and English horn, with a performance indication of *hervortretend* (marked or emphasized) and at a *fortissimo* dynamic. The melody is not complex, but it does stand over the rest of the orchestra that, for the most part, is playing the syncopated rhythmic pattern that opens the piece and is used throughout. This melody is chromatic and based around D, but it rises a minor ninth to E-flat by the climax at rehearsal 84. Though the melody is highly chromatic, it is mostly conjunct, which helps to create an overall consonant effect. Surinach used syncopation heavily through this last melody to create additional forward momentum when combined with an ascending melodic line. As mentioned, in this last section Surinach brought back many of the compositional devices he used in the rest of the piece. One of his most frequently used devices is the shifting tuplet pattern, which he employed in the melody leading into rehearsal 83. The meter through the end of the piece remains in 3/8, but while the rest of the orchestra continues to play nearly constant eighth and sixteenth notes, Surinach distinguished the melody by changing to duplets and quadruplets to build tension and lead to the climax at rehearsal 84 on E-flat in the brass. The climax at a *ffff* dynamic is not, however, based on

the half-whole octatonic scale. It is instead the result of juxtaposing two tone clusters an augmented second apart: D-flat, D, E-flat and F-sharp, G, G-sharp. These notes can also be arranged to create three pairs of perfect fourths that are each a half-step apart, as fourths appear prominently throughout this piece and other works by Surinach: C-sharp (D-flat), F-sharp; D, G; E-flat, A-flat.

The accompaniment in this final section is also chromatic, but it, too, is limited in range and moves in conjunct motion. Although the violins and violas perform diminished triads and seventh chords, they do not sound as dissonant as could be expected because of the rapid harmonic rhythm. The violins and violas perform steady sixteenth notes, whereas the rest of the accompaniment progresses at an eighth-note pace. The result is an accompaniment that creates rhythmic drive in support of the ascending melody. Following one measure of total silence, the accompaniment returns with familiar eighth- and sixteenth-note patterns, while the horns sound tritones and major thirds. Surinach used a loud *fff* dynamic and sustained dissonance to prepare for the final perfect fifth on D and A in the high winds, trumpet, and harp. The drama of the piece subsides as instruments drop out or *diminuendo* until the music fades to silence.

The image shows a musical score for rehearsal 77, marked with a box containing the number 77. The score is for five parts: H.F. 1st. 2nd., H.F. 3rd. 4th., C Tpt. 1st. 2nd., 3 Tbns., and Timp. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The music features a common syncopated rhythm across all parts. Dynamic markings include 'hervortretend', 'ff', and 'p'. The Timp. part has a series of 'sf' and 'f' markings.

Example 3.19: The opening measures of the final melody at rehearsal 77 are based on the same half-whole scale as the rest of the movement and are supported by a common syncopated rhythm that runs throughout.

Conclusion

The success of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* came at an important moment not only in Surinach's career but also in the history twentieth-century American music. The new works commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra, supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, represent a flourish in American musical culture that has yet to be repeated in the following six decades. With the Louisville Orchestra premiering and recording hundreds of new works by some of the most well-known composers of the time, modern music in the United States enjoyed a period of unparalleled notoriety. That Surinach's *Sinfonietta Flamenca* was the second piece premiered and recorded under this new program is important, as it set a precedent for the caliber of works to follow and established a positive working relationship between Surinach and the orchestra, who would later record some of his other pieces. With this small symphony, Surinach

continued his tradition of blending folk and art genres into a single and easy-to-follow piece. Although he did not rely as heavily on traditional flamenco devices in *Sinfonietta Flamenca* as he did with *Ritmo Jondo*, those elements that he did keep, such as the Andalusian Phrygian mode, were mostly applied according to his own standards rather than strictly adhering to the flamenco *palos*. Nonetheless, a flamenco character permeates the work, which enjoyed commercial success with both recordings and concert performances for many years.

CHAPTER 4: *Flamenco Cyclothymia* (1966)

Background

The years following the premiere of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* were a period of great activity and opportunity for Surinach. His collaboration with Doris Humphrey and José Limón on the stage adaptation of *Ritmo Jondo* initiated a series of high-profile commissions and premieres that reached both coasts of the United States and several European countries. Commissions from modern-dance choreographers offered Surinach steady work and additional notoriety within artistic circles, and by working with well-known figures such as Martha Graham (*Embattled Garden*, 1958; *Acrobats of God*, 1960), John Butler (*La sibila*, 1959; *David and Bath-Sheba*, 1960), Norman Morrice (*La hazaña*, 1959), and Pearl Lang (*Apasionada*, 1961), Surinach managed to further establish himself as a composer of stature. Ballet was not, however, the only genre in which he composed during the decade following *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, as his output for the concert stage actually increased and ranged from symphonic works to concertos, songs, television music, and even solo instrumental pieces for guitar and accordion. As prolific as his catalog from this period may be, composing was not his only creative outlet.

Surinach maintained an active conducting and recording career throughout the 1950s and 1960s and regularly traveled between the United States and Europe. Opportunities to conduct new music allowed Surinach to program many of his own works on concerts, which helped to solidify his reputation as a premier composer on both

continents. During his career in the US, regular work with various recording studios led to an extensive catalog of works that conducted.¹ The relationships Surinach established with several important conductors over the years led not only to important insights into his own music, but also opportunities for commissions. While working with Robert Whitney during the premiere and subsequent recordings of *Sinfonietta Flamenca* (1954) and *Feria Mágica* (1956) (both performed by the Louisville Orchestra under the Rockefeller Grant), Surinach and his music were introduced to the orchestra's concert master and assistant conductor, Sidney Harth.

The recordings and performances of both *Sinfonietta* and *Feria* enjoyed their due popularity, and Surinach quickly moved on to his next projects. The reputation he earned as a composer and conductor from these and other works, such as his ballets, also unlocked opportunities for him in the United States within academia. Often mentioned in publisher biographies and interviews are his brief stints at Carnegie Tech and Queens College (New York); however, his first appointment has remained unmentioned, yet it was an important step on the path to later positions and commissions.² For the 1960–61 academic year, Surinach was on the faculty at Bard College and was recruited by Clair Leonard.³ Though he was only on faculty for one year, giving private lessons as a

1. Carlos Surinach, interview by Bruce Duffie, Phone, February 15, 1987, <http://www.bruceduffie.com/surinach2.html>.

2. Ibid.; Alexander M. Cardieri, "Carlos Surinach: The Man and His Music," 1977, Box 1/5 (Old Letters), BMI Surinach.

3. Clair Leonard to Carlos Surinach, "Regarding Prospect of Teaching at Bard College," Letter, (April 25,

composition instructor, this position likely assisted in helping him to acquire his subsequent academic appointments. And his appointment at Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon) five years later marked the re-convergence of Surinach and Harth.

The young violinist Sidney Harth was poised to enter the world stage as a soloist by the mid-1950s. Following the premiere of *Feria Mágica* (1956), on which he served as concertmaster, Harth became the first American to place in the top three of Poland's Wieniawski Violin Competition. In 1957 and in the midst of the Cold War, Harth tied for the second place Laureate Prize with David Oistrakh, a Soviet violinist.⁴ This competition launched his career as a soloist, conductor, and concertmaster traveling across the United States and around the world. In addition to his extensive career as a professional musician, he also held several appointments at various colleges in the United States that included a seventeen-year tenure at Yale University and as a conducting instructor at several other schools: Mannes College of Music in New York, University of Texas in Houston, and the University of Connecticut in Hartford.⁵ In 1962, however, he was appointed to the permanently endowed Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Music

1960), Box 20/1 (Queens College 1974–1976), BMI Surinach; K. Brent Woodruff to Carlos Surinach, “Bard College Acting President Discussing Surinach’s Appointment,” Letter, (April 19, 1960), Box 2/11 (Bard College), BMI Surinach.

4. Andrew Druckenbrod, “Obituary: Sidney Harth - Accomplished Concertmaster, Conductor and Teacher,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, accessed May 14, 2016, <http://www.post-gazette.com/news/obituaries/2011/02/16/Obituary-Sidney-Harth-Accomplished-concertmaster-conductor-and-teacher/stories/201102160254>.

5. “Sidney Harth’s Obituary,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, accessed May 14, 2016, <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/postgazette/obituary.aspx?n=sidney-harth&pid=148655648>.

position at Carnegie Tech, where he served as the head of the music department and remained until 1973. After only a few years into his tenure in Pittsburgh, his path crossed once again with Surinach.

Pittsburgh was Surinach's second home during the 1966–67 academic year, which coincided with the middle of Harth's own tenure there.⁶ During this year, Surinach worked as a visiting professor of composition at Carnegie Tech, where he had access to a capable orchestra and talented faculty. The prospect of writing and having a new work performed was valuable, and Surinach capitalized on his position and connections by composing a violin concerto dedicated to none other than Sidney Harth. The piece is dated September 1966 in the original score, and its premiere on October 25, 1966, only a few weeks into the school year, suggests that Surinach and Harth had been in communication about the piece prior to his arrival. Unfortunately, no record of this discussion has been located.⁷ The topic of this piece, of course, was flamenco inspired, and it was given a properly evocative title, *Flamenco Cyclothymia*.

While this piece may not have been Surinach's most popular or enduring work, it represents the zenith of his writing for violin. *Flamenco Cyclothymia* premiered at Carnegie Hall in New York as part of the diamond jubilee seventy-fifth concert season and was programmed alongside works by a diverse group of composers spanning several

6. Sidney Harth, "Arts and Lecture Series Presents Sidney Harth Violinist" (Concert Program, Western Washington State College, January 30, 1967), Box 17, BMI Surinach.

7. Carlos Surinach, *Flamenco Cyclothymia: For Violin and Piano with Dedication to Sidney Harth* (Independent Music Publishers, 1966).

eras: Vivaldi, Ben-haim, Beethoven, Schumann, Fawick, and Paganini. The piece *Toccata Brutale* (“Butterflies”) on the program was by Thomas Fawick, who was an American inventor, composer, and resident of Cleveland (Harth’s hometown). This piece, also a concert premiere that evening and recorded the same year by Harth, complemented Surinach’s flamenco-inspired work.⁸

8. Sidney Harth et al., *Musicale 1966*, LP ([S.L.]: Pride, 1966), <http://www.worldcat.org/title/musicale-1966/oclc/8564368>.

SIDNEY HARTH
VIOLINIST

CARNEGIE HALL • OCTOBER 25, 1966
TUESDAY EVENING AT 8:30

PROGRAM
BROOKS SMITH at the Steinway

I.

Sonata in A Major VIVALDI
 Prelude a Capriccio (Presto)
 Corrente (Allegro)
 Adagio—Giga (Allegro Vivace)

II.

Sonata in G for Solo Violin BEN-HAIM
 Allegro Energico
 Lento e Sotto Voce
 Molto Allegro

III.

Sonata No. 9, Op. 47 for violin and piano BEETHOVEN
 Adagio Sostenuto—Presto
 Andante con Variazioni
 Finale (Presto)

INTERMISSION

IV.

Flamenco Cyclothymia SURINACH
 (World Premiere)

V.

a) Prophetic Bird SCHUMANN
 b) Toccata Giocosa for solo violin FAWICK
 (Concert premiere)
 c) "La Clochette" PAGANINI

Tickets: Orchestra \$4.00; Dress Circle \$3.00; Balcony \$2.50; \$2.00
 1st Tier Loge Seats \$4.00; 2d Tier Loge Seats \$3.50 (Tax included)
 Tickets at Carnegie Hall Box Office or Mail Orders to
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Fig. 11: Program from the premiere of *Flamenco Cyclothymia* at Carnegie Hall.⁹

9. Concert Program (Carnegie Hall, NY, October 25, 1966), Box 17, BMI Surinach.

Surinach's *Flamenco Cyclothymia* immediately drew audience attention with its position immediately following intermission and its title suggesting Spain and violent swings of emotion between elation and depression. The term cyclothymia is, and was in 1966, an outdated term in psychiatry to describe a mental state similar to that of bipolar disorder.¹⁰ The description Surinach wrote for the piece in his catalog of works is of similar character, as he described it as "One single fluctuating movement."¹¹ Though the title implied the drama and theatricality that Surinach often sought to evoke in his music, some critics found it to be lacking. Allen Hughes, writing for *The New York Times* the day after the concert, described Harth's performance as technically impeccable but lacking warmth and emotion to move the heart, which may have affected his impression of Surinach's work:

The new Surinach work is an effective showpiece with lots of double-stops and other difficult passages mostly of conventional nature. It served its purpose well but revealed little of the composer's musical personality.¹²

Not every critic, however, agreed with Hughes's assessment of Surinach's latest work. Miles Kastendieck, writing for the short-lived *New York World Journal Tribune*, was familiar with Surinach's music and had previously written reviews for both *Ritmo*

10. "Cyclothymia," *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed May 19, 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/cyclothymia.

11. Carlos Surinach, "BMI Catalog: Works by Carlos Surinach for Solo Instruments and for Voice, with or without Piano Accompaniment," n.d., Box 7/1 (Biography and List of Works), BMI Surinach.

12. Allen Hughes, "Music: Each Note in Place: Sidney Harth, Violinist, Plays at Carnegie," *New York Times*, October 26, 1966, Box 8/(*Flamenco Cyclothymia* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

Jondo and *Sinfonietta Flamenca*. His opinion of the piece was more favorable than that of Hughes:

The Surinach [piece] should appeal immediately to every violinist looking for a brilliant, colorful, showy piece. It tests skill in periodic concentration on one note as well as technical tricks that put a violinist on the spot. Its flamenco flavor exerts the customary come-on, while its acoustical effects fulfill all contemporary requirements with some excitement thrown in for good measure.

Though Beethoven's Sonata No. 9 was deemed the highlight of the program and Paganini's "La Clochette" ("La Campanella") an incredible performance, *Flamenco Cyclothymia* did find critical favor over the years, even as far away as Tel Aviv.¹³ However, it took another twenty-seven years for the piece to be recorded. Pianist Pablo Zinger and violinist Israel Chorberg recorded *Flamenco Cyclothymia* on an album by the Bronx Arts Ensemble dedicated to the music of Carlos Surinach for the New World Records label.¹⁴ Album notes by John W. Freeman, associate editor of *Opera News* and board chairman for the ensemble, and album reviews describe the allusion to guitar arpeggios on the piano and an evocation of pseudo- and "Spanish Gypsy violin style" similar to that of Pablo Sarasate. As with *Ritmo Jondo* and *Sinfonietta Flamenca* before, Surinach stressed repeated, vocal-like pitches, but this time it was focused on the violin.¹⁵

13. Benjamin Bar-am, "Violinist with Personality," January 28, 1972, Box 8/(*Flamenco Cyclothymia* Envelope), BMI Surinach.

14. Chorberg, Israel, Pablo Zinger, and Bronx Arts Ensemble. *Doppio Concertino; Flamenco Cyclothymia; Concerto for String Orchestra; Piano Quartet*. CD. Vol. 80428-2. New York, NY: New World Records, 1993.

15. John W. Freeman, "Album notes for *Doppio Concertino*"; Walter Aaron Clark, review of *Doppio Concertino, Flamenco Cyclothymia, Concerto for String Orchestra, and Piano Quartet*, by Carlos Surinach, *American Music* 13, no. 2 (July 1, 1995): 254-55.

Analysis

With *Flamenco Cyclothymia*, Surinach's tendency to diverge from tonality, but not totally abandon it, continued. This piece embodied his compositional philosophy that he described as having pursued just prior to meeting with Falla and beginning his studies in Germany. Though he never abandoned tonality like many of his contemporaries, he did develop techniques that enabled him to expand his tonal palette by refining his use of harmonic devices beyond tertian harmony. As we heard in *Ritmo Jondo* and *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, Surinach was not averse to dissonance or chromatic harmonies, as they opened the door to new and exotic sounds that he found especially appealing. In constructing the harmonic foundation of *Flamenco Cyclothymia*, Surinach employed quartal harmonies to a degree far beyond that of his previous works. The results are decidedly dissonant, but the piece never loses direction due to the construction of melodic phrases and a forceful rhythmic foundation.

Perhaps the most essential component of this composition is rhythm. Much like the two previously discussed works, rhythm is the foundation upon which all other elements are constructed, as the listener's focus is immediately drawn to the 9/8 meter. Throughout most of the piece, the 9/8 meter comprises a group of three eighth notes followed by three pairs of eighth notes (3+2+2+2) and is even clarified in the score with vertical lines to orient the performers. The result of this construction is syncopation that creates a sense of unrest to propel the music forward even when one or both instruments rest or sustain a tone. This rhythmic grouping permeates nearly the entire piece, with the exception of four measures at rehearsal 23, when the meter changes briefly to 5/8.

However, the underlying rhythm remains intact, as Surinach kept an abbreviated 3+2 grouping to effectively accelerate the rhythmic drive to the conclusion.



Example 4.1: The fundamental groupings in this additive meter.

Although the meter and principle rhythmic structure (3+2+2+2) serve for the entire length of the piece, Surinach maintains rhythmic interest through embellishment and further subdivisions of the beat. Despite the simplicity and regularity of the rhythm on the page, the ear is more entertained than the eye. This rhythm is similar to the *compás* (guiding rhythmic structure) of the flamenco *palo bulerías*, which Surinach used in several sections of *Ritmo Jondo*. The principle rhythm of *Flamenco Cyclothymia* can be derived from the *bulerías* 3+3+2+2+2 rhythm by leaving out the first three beats. The result is a more syncopated and irregular rhythm.

The opening measures in the piano outline the principle rhythm and explore its progressive divisions through the first rehearsal. By moving the piano accompaniment through this series of progressively shorter groupings, Surinach was able to create a sense of acceleration without changing the tempo in a similar fashion to the progressively faster tuplets he used in *Ritmo Jondo* and *Sinfonietta Flamenca*. This structured development allows the violinist to execute difficult passages filled with chromaticism, double and triple stops, and hemiola, as the music builds to solo-violin passages.



Example 4.2: Typical rhythmic groupings Surinach used through *Flamenco Cyclothymia*.



Example 4.3: The piano accompaniment maintains the foundational rhythm throughout but varies it with further subdivisions, as seen at measure 13.

As mentioned, Surinach also embellished the rhythm at times. Most commonly he accomplished this by adding triplet sixteenth notes to the violin melody. In some passages, however, particularly those designed to imitate vocal inflection, Surinach also employed quintuplet thirty-second notes, such as those heard in the second violin solo at rehearsal 7. Interestingly, Surinach did not shift the music from duplet to triplet, quadruplet, and so on, as it is one of the most common rhythmic devices in several of his other flamenco-based pieces. Apart from the few passages that do use tuplets, the remainder of the piece is constructed with simple rhythmic divisions that result in sixteenth, eighth, quarter, dotted-quarter, and dotted-half notes only; nowhere did Surinach use a dotted duration that the 9/8 meter does not evenly divide into. The regularity of the meter and rhythms provides stability to the piece despite the construction

of the 9/8 meter (3+2+2+2) that frequently creates syncopation. In addition to metric division, Surinach also used accent stress the regular downbeat.



Example 4.4: Typical embellishments in this piece include triplets and quintuplets.

In order to create contrast and theatricality deserving of the descriptor *cyclothymia*, Surinach used different timbres, textures, and dynamics to engage the audience as the violin moves in and out of vocal-inspired sections. For most of the piece, Surinach maintained a dynamic within the range of *forte* and *fortissimo*. Because the piece is only for two instruments, the subtle changes in dynamic that Surinach tightly controlled result in dramatic changes during performance; however, these subtleties may not be readily apparent when viewing the score. For example, the instances of rapid *diminuendo* at rehearsal 4 in both the violin and piano create moments of intensely fluctuating energy. Even more so, perhaps, are the *crescendos* and *diminuendos* in the solo-violin sections, particularly those with a performance indication of *cantando*. Typically, Surinach used moments of extreme dynamic contrast to engage the listener before developing new melodic content.

Example 4.5: Surinach tightly controlled the dynamics in many areas of this piece, such as at four measures after rehearsal 4.

From beginning to end, Surinach was explicit in his performance instructions. The opening performance indication of *ossesso e deciso* (obsessed and decided) could also apply to the way in which he crafted this piece. With each contrasting section, Surinach noted precisely how the section should be performed, sometimes down to each measure or beat. For example, the opening measures in the piano are to be played *marcato*, which are immediately contrasted by *maractissimo* in the violin before a final measure in the piano returns *come prima*. Within the first measures of the opening violin solo, Surinach changed from two measures marked *poco rubato cantando* back to *tempo giusto*, with measured tremolo markings for the duration of the solo. Because Surinach intended this to be a virtuosic piece, performers must account for the rapid changes in tempo and performance technique, including alternating beats of *pizzicato secco* and *arco*. The most striking sections of the piece, however, are those with the designation *cantando*.



Example 4.6: As with dynamics, Surinach also prescribed exact performance indications as well.

Within the solo-violin passages of this piece, Surinach created a vocal-like quality by loosely imitating the melodic contours of flamenco song. Similar to passages discussed in both *Ritmo Jondo* and *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, Surinach wrote melodies that iterate upon a single pitch or embellish around a central tone. At rehearsal 5, for instance, while the piano sustains a major-second diad comprising C-sharp and D-sharp, the violin assumes the melody while moving in double-stops. Upon repeating the pitch B-natural three times in octave double stops, the melody progresses through a conjunct wave-like melody in simple eighth- or quarter-note durations. At the end of the first phrase at rehearsal 5, Surinach even inserted a breath mark to ensure that the performer will allow the melody to breathe as though it were sung. The vocal quality of the solo literally becomes more marked in the measures before rehearsal 6.



Example 4.7: Surinach wrote many of the violin melodic lines in imitation of vocal melodies.

The tension and drama of the piece begin to rise at rehearsal 6 while the piano plays strict rhythmic accompaniment at a *fortissimo* dynamic and the violin plays an

extended eight-measure trill on B⁴ followed by B⁵. This extended trill is another device that Surinach used to evoke flamenco song. The quavering around a single pitch with dissonant, quartal harmony results in a predictably dissonant passage with a sustained melody that directly corresponds to microtonality, which is common in flamenco song. The same microtonal effect is heard again at rehearsal 9. Here the piano continues to play the same 3+2+2+2 rhythmic accompaniment but with added triplet embellishments in the right hand. The violin reenters on B-natural again after a few measures of rest, but rather than sustaining the pitch through tremolo, Surinach paired the violin melody to the underlying rhythmic grouping. The most interesting sections, however, are those in which the violin and piano work together to emulate guitar and voice.

The image displays a musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Piano (Pno.) in two systems. The first system shows the Violin part with a sustained B-natural note, marked with dynamics *p* and *ff*. The Piano part features a 3+2+2+2 rhythmic accompaniment with triplet embellishments in the right hand, marked with dynamics *f* and *sf*. The second system shows the Violin part with a melody marked with *sf*. The Piano part continues with the same rhythmic accompaniment, marked with dynamics *cresc.* and *sf*.

Example 4.8: Note the sustained B-natural that shifts to the same rhythm as the accompaniment.

Though *Flamenco Cyclothymia* was written for only two instruments, Surinach was able to evoke a wide variety of textures and timbres. Significantly, the sounds he was able to coax from the instruments share many similarities with guitar and vocal-performances techniques in flamenco. Following the violin solo mentioned above at rehearsal 7, the violin begins wide arpeggios primarily around G major triads that are designed to elicit the guitar in the minds of listeners. These arpeggios continue until the violin begins a chromatic ascent to A-flat, with chromatic neighboring tones serving as quintuplet embellishments (see example 4.3). Moreover, Surinach set the violin and piano in rhythmic parity at rehearsal 10 to emphasize rolled chords in both instruments, which continue together until the violin returns to a single melodic line. This time, however, Surinach did not leave the violin to play unaccompanied, as the piano now supports the vocal-like melodic line with rolled chords that are reminiscent of the *rasgueado* (strummed) guitar technique common to flamenco music. The combination of vocal line in the violin and accompaniment in the piano is both obvious and essential to the character of this piece. Throughout, Surinach gave the violin a performance indication similar to *cantando* and supported it with simple rhythms and complex harmonies. The result, whether or not it was apparent to audiences, captured this element of flamenco performance.

The image shows a musical score for Violin and Piano. The Violin part (Vln.) is written in a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a melodic line marked *mf* and *(più cresc.)*, featuring a *quasi trillo* (trill-like) figure. The dynamics increase to *f*. The piece concludes with a *vibrando* (vibrato) effect. The Piano part (Pno.) is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs). It features sharp, staccato chords marked *sf* (sforzando) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Example 4.9: The accompaniment at rehearsal 11 is similar to that of the *rasgueado* guitar technique common in flamenco music.

Despite Surinach having written this piece to showcase the violin, it is really the guitar that comes to mind when listening to and analyzing the piece. Surinach extensively used a variety of guitar techniques, such as those already mentioned, e.g., *punteado* (plucking), *arpeggio*, *tremolo*. The *rasgueado* technique is immediately apparent in the several sections that Surinach instructs the violin to play *secco* (*pizzicato*) on quadruple stops, which is typically performed by plucking the strings in a rolling, consecutive fashion. At rehearsal 20, for example, the violin and piano exchange rhythmic chord progressions to create interest through both syncopation and hemiola (3+2+2+2). The performance practice for *pizzicato* quadruple stops on violin is to strum the strings from low to high with the thumb. The effect, especially in combination with the piano's sharp *staccato* articulation, is strikingly similar to the same *rasgueado* technique on flamenco guitar. Closing out this section, Surinach once again returned the violin back to *arpeggios* ahead of the final push to the end.

What is perhaps the most significant change in Surinach's representation of flamenco since *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, ten years earlier, is the harmonic language he used in *Flamenco Cyclothymia*. Many of Surinach's works were written to capture the essence of flamenco music by borrowing various idioms, such as rhythm, modes, and inflection. As heard in *Ritmo Jondo*, some of his earliest works were derived from or emphasized flamenco *palos*. These *palos* provided rhythmic, harmonic, and melodic material that Surinach then crafted his piece from. Subsequently, Surinach previously used Phrygian mode, especially with an ascending raised third scale degree that is common to many flamenco forms. In addition to Phrygian mode, and its Andalusian variation, Surinach also incorporated symmetrical scales, particularly the half-whole octatonic, as what he described as the flamenco scales. In *Flamenco Cyclothymia*, however, Surinach did not use Phrygian mode but rather relied on those symmetrical scales.

Most of the melodic lines in this piece are exceedingly chromatic and rarely coincide with a single transposition of the half-whole octatonic scale. Within the first scalar run in the violin, for example, Surinach juxtaposed such scales to create a highly dissonant melodic line that prevents listeners from discerning where it leads and where it will end. One of the clearest examples of this scale comes near the end of the piece at rehearsal 23. In the descending final piano scale, Surinach set a half-whole octatonic scale that ranges more than three octaves. This scale is played in both hands set an octave apart and serves to lead back into the first theme of the piece. While the half-whole octatonic scale was one of Surinach's favorite devices when composing flamenco-inspired music, it does not constitute the only tool he used.

Vln.

Example 4.10: Surinach created this scale by juxtaposing different half-whole octatonic scales with the opening measures.

Pno.

Example 4.11: The final descending scale in the piano is based on the half-whole octatonic scale.

As mentioned, Surinach did not use traditional tertian harmonies to craft melodic lines in this piece. He also did not use tertian harmony to construct the accompaniment and related harmonies. Similar to moments in both *Ritmo Jondo* and *Sinfonietta Flamenca*, Surinach used quartal/quintal harmonies. However, unlike his previous works, *Flamenco Cyclothymia* is substantially based on this alternative harmonic system. From the opening motive in the piano to the double stops in the second violin phrase, many of the intervals throughout this piece are derived from the different variations on the interval of a fourth: tritone, perfect, and diminished. The opening piano motive is the most important motive in this piece, as it occurs in nearly every section, and the first three eighth notes of the 3+2+2+2 pattern outline G, C, D-flat, E, and A, which can all be related by fourths. Though the following chord is G-flat major in first inversion, Surinach emphasized the fourths by orchestrating perfect fourths as both the lowest and

highest intervals. This chord is also sufficiently unstable so as to prevent the listener from feeling a sense of rest, and this motive repeats twice more before landing on another quartal-based chord. Whereas the G-flat major chord was previously sustained, now Surinach constructed a chord in fourths based on C, which includes both perfect fourths and tritones. This dissonant harmony is sustained by the piano for nearly three full measures while the violin begins the opening scale based on the half-whole octatonic scale previously mentioned.



Example 4.12: The opening chords and primary harmonic motive are constructed with quartal intervals.

Flamenco Cyclothymia is a dramatic departure from Surinach's earlier flamenco styles. Though he no longer relied on *palos* or the Phrygian mode to evoke a Spanish flamenco sound, he successfully captured many other elements. In doing so, Surinach either refined or developed new devices such as extended *arpeggio* and *pizzicato* sections in the violin, as well as iterating a single tone to accompaniment that was styled after flamenco guitar. By rapidly shifting textures, dynamic, and performance techniques, Surinach achieved the violent swings of emotion implied in the title, and this piece not

only serves as one of his most sophisticated interpretations of flamenco, but also the height of his compositional technique for violin.

Conclusion

When teaching at Carnegie Tech during the 1966–67 academic year, Surinach premiered one of his most technically challenging violin works, which was written for his colleague and friend Sidney Harth. Although he has written several concertos and works for solo instruments, *Flamenco Cyclothymia* is the most overtly flamenco in character, and the flamenco devices, e.g., scalar passages, repeated tones, and arpeggios, are evident throughout. Harth was one of the best violinists in the world, and his reputation as such helped to bring attention and credibility to Surinach's work. Even though *Flamenco Cyclothymia* features some of his most sophisticated interpretations of flamenco idioms, there is a lack of variety in portions of the piece that can make it sound contrived, which some critics did find out of character for the composer. Nonetheless, this piece is a significant work in Surinach's catalog and is representative of his style and compositional maturity.

CHAPTER 5: Leonardo Balada (b. 1933)

Leonardo Balada and Carlos Surinach were born only eighteen years apart in the same Spanish city, Barcelona, but their childhoods could not have been more different. Balada was born September 22, 1933, and was still a toddler when the war officially began in July of 1936. The next three years of his life were spent coping with the effects of air raids and street conflict, which had a profound effect upon the young child. Whereas Surinach was in his mid-twenties when the war ended, Balada was still just a child, and he was not able to leave Spain as Surinach did. As a result, all he knew was repression under Francisco Franco's totalitarian government. Although both men eventually found their way to the United States in the 1950s, they, and their music, could hardly be more different.¹

Balada was born into a working class family of tailors with political beliefs on the extreme left, which was particularly dangerous in light of Franco's vindictive post-war policies. His father, Josep, was an atheist and former anarchist in a country renowned for its religious convictions and leader, who had just fought to overthrow a republican government that was defended in part by communists and anarchists. Leonardo's parents, Josep and Llúcia, were married in a civil ceremony, rather than religious, and gave their firstborn son a secular name, Nardo. Despite the subversive opinions and non-

1. Portions of the following chapter were gleaned from an interview I conducted with Balada on March 31, 2015, but I must give special thanks to Juan Francisco de Dios Hernández for his excellent biographical work in *Leonardo Balada: la mirada oceánica* (Madrid: Editorial Alpuerto, 2012). Additional information regarding Balada's style and a survey of compositions can be found in Marta Cureses de la Vega, "El compositor Leonardo Balada. De Barcelona a Pittsburgh," *Cuadernos de música iberoamericana* 7 (1999): 235–48.

traditional views his family held, they mostly stayed out of trouble with the Franco government. One exception, however, came when Nardo began his military service at the age of twenty and his captain recognized that his birth name was not Catholic. Fortunately, he presented Balada with an opportunity to modify it to Leonardo, which he did.

Balada received his initial musical training in Spain was at the Conservatorio del Liceo in Barcelona, where he earned what he describes as the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. His father encouraged him to study music, as a child, so that he could have an appreciation for it and be able to distinguish between the good (opera and Beethoven) and bad (popular music). But the plan was for Leonardo to work as a tailor to carry on the family tradition. Living and studying in Barcelona during the 1950s gave Balada the opportunity to stay current with trends in music and art, and it also brought opportunities he would have likely missed had he lived in a smaller city. One such life-changing moment came while working in his father's shop after graduating from the conservatory. One of his father's clients was a local music critic who had a cousin living and teaching piano in New York, Jean Redd. The client asked Balada what he would like to do for a living, and Balada replied that he would like to be a composer. This set the wheels in motion to acquire all the necessary government clearances and funding Balada would need to leave Spain and study music in New York.

Balada left on March 3, 1956, and arrived in the United States, eager to begin his studies. Jean Redd offered his home to the young man and helped direct him to the Manhattan School of Music, where he was a piano instructor. The biggest challenge

Balada faced was the language barrier he encountered by speaking very little English, which greatly affected his studies in classroom settings. By the end of his first year in New York, Balada was discouraged and considered returning home to Spain, but New York offered some similarities to Barcelona in that it was a cultural capital, and there was always the possibility of encountering a well-known artist, as was the case for Balada. Part of what helped him decide to stay in New York was meeting so many Spanish expatriates, whom he would come know personally and who would influence his growth as an artist. Some of these figures included Andrés Segovia, Salvador Dalí, José Camilo Cela, and Joaquín Rodrigo, among others.

Balada left the Manhattan School of Music after one year and enrolled in the New York College of Music, where he studied composition with conductor and composer Siegfried Landau (1921–2007), a German Jew who was exiled from Nazi Germany. He spent only one year with Landau, as he did with all of his teachers, but found him to be a very nice man and a good pedagogue. Upon graduating from New York College of Music in 1958, he was faced with the difficult decision of figuring out what his next step should be. One option was to return home to Barcelona, but his parents were struggling economically and could not afford to lose the American dollars he was sending them. The only logical option, Balada decided, was to try and stay in the United States.

For the next two years, Balada was enrolled in the composition program at the Juilliard School, where some of Balada's classmates at the time included Philip Glass, Steve Reich, and Peter Schickele (P.D.Q. Bach). His instructor during the first year was Bernard Wagenaar (1894–1971), but he was more influenced by his second professor,

Vincent Persichetti (1915–87). Balada remembers Persichetti as an exceptional teacher, one who was not swayed by fads. Persichetti was known to take a student’s musical personality and natural talents and develop them, which is how he guided Balada. Before he graduated from Juilliard in 1960, Balada also had the chance to study with Aaron Copland at Tanglewood, which was an important opportunity because they would meet again just a few years later. Copland would even write a general letter of recommendation for him.

Balada learned a lot while at Juilliard and matured greatly as a composer, but there was one thing that was not sitting well with him. The aesthetic at Juilliard and in Balada’s own music leaned heavily toward a conservative style, but he was not convinced by serial techniques on the other end of the spectrum:

I'm the son a father who is an anarchist, in the good sense of the word. He was anti-war, anti-smoking. I don't want to be an old-fashioned guy. I want to be contemporary. I didn't want to get into the twelve-tone stuff because, to me, twelve-tone was intellectual. It had no passion. It had no rhythm. It had nothing to identify, so I had to find something.²

Inspiration was not hard to find in New York, and Balada took in what he saw around him, especially for works by artists such as Salvador Dalí, Pablo Picasso, and Robert Rauschenberg. Abstract expressionism was a style that particularly spoke to Balada and had a strong influence on the development of what he describes as his second stylistic period.

2. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, Balada moved away from his conservative style to apply the lines and geometries that he saw in art galleries to his music. The first piece he wrote in this new avant-garde style was an orchestral work titled *Geometrías No. 1* (1966), which premiered at the Festival Barcelona under the direction of José María Franco Gil. It was not long after *Geometrías No. 1* that he wrote another orchestral work inspired by a painting. Picasso was an important artist to Balada, and his works had a profound impact on the composer. Drawing inspiration from Picasso's famous painting entitled *Guernica* (1937), Balada crafted a sonic interpretation of the tragic event. Balada's own *Guernica* (1966) brought him international attention when it was premiered by the New Orleans Philharmonic under Warner Torkanowsky, and it has since remained part of the twentieth-century canon.

In this new avant-garde style that lasted nearly a decade, Balada found his musical voice and composed some of his most important works. In 1968 he paid tribute to the late Martin Luther King, Jr., in his piece titled *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King*, which freely uses dissonance but also gives a hint to his third period that emphasizes ethnic elements in music. This piece is discussed in chapter 6. Two years later he collaborated with Camilo José Cela, winner of the 1989 Nobel Prize in Literature, on a large work for narrator, chorus, and orchestra titled *María Sabina* (1969), based on the fictitious execution of a real-life Mexican mushroom shaman named María Sabina. This "tragifonía" (symphonic tragedy) was well received during the world premiere in New York but stirred controversy with its performance in Spain. It is examined in chapter 7. Balada began a professorship in composition at Carnegie Mellon in 1970 and

wrote a piece that reflects the power, noise, and chaos of steel mills in the Pittsburgh area, appropriately entitled *Steel Symphony* (1972). This piece has remained one of his most popular works, has been recorded on several occasions, and is the basis of chapter 8.

Balada began to move away from atonal and avant-garde techniques in the mid-1970s by returning to melody and incorporating additional folk elements into his music. This change is first heard in his homages to Casals and Sarasate, which are both for orchestra and were written in 1975. Balada has been prolific throughout his entire career and has written several symphonies, operas, and concertos that have been enthusiastically received at premieres around the world. His variety of source material has ranged from the explorations of Christopher Columbus to the exploits of Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata, Irish and American folk tunes, and even the music of Isaac Albéniz. The importance of his contributions as both a composer and instructor in the United States over the last half century cannot be overstated though they may still be underappreciated.

CHAPTER 6: *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King (1968)*

Background

The mid-1960s marked a dramatic change in Balada's compositional style, initiating what many critics, and Balada himself, have described as his second period. His *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King (1968)* epitomizes this shift and is one of his first pieces on a topic that was directly inspired by his experience in the United States. It was not only the artistic climate in New York that was different from his childhood home back in Barcelona, but also the racial climate. Although Balada viewed of the United States as model country when he was coming of age in Franco's Spain, a sense of disappointment and confusion crept in as he grew older. Despite the United States having helped defeat the Nazis in the Second World War, Balada was disappointed by the way in which African Americans continued to be harshly treated.¹ He recognized prejudice at home in Spain, particularly with regards to Gypsy communities, and he believed the United States should not tolerate or perpetuate such behavior. As it happened, one of the first things he did upon arriving to the United States was date a young African American woman, which he recalled as earning him many strange looks.² Balada's personal convictions, particularly those with respect to racial equality, have always been strong and are the basis for his symphony in honor of Martin

1. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

2. Ibid.; Juan Francisco de Dios Hernández, *Leonardo Balada: la mirada oceánica* (Madrid: Editorial Alpuerto, 2012), 154.

Luther King, Jr., whom he actually once met but who was assassinated shortly before Balada began to compose the piece.

Amongst the many odd jobs that Balada worked to support himself when studying in New York was an organist position at St. Francis de Sales, off Lexington Ave. This seemingly minor position proved to be significant for bringing together Balada's various dimensions as a composer and person of conviction. One of the women whom he directed in the church chorus was Helen L. Phillips, who, in 1947, was the first African American woman to sing at the Metropolitan Opera.³ Phillips and Balada became friends through their work together at St. Francis de Sales, and in 1967 she presented Balada with an opportunity that would shape his career. Phillips convinced Balada to attend a speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., and due to her stature as a renowned singer, Phillips was able to arrange for Balada to meet King.⁴ Shaking hands with the reverend invigorated Balada's passion for racial equality and provided the inspiration for his next major work.

About the same time as King's assassination in April of 1968, Balada received a commission from the musical director of Spanish National Radio for a symphonic work.⁵ Balada instantly knew what he wanted the piece to be about, but it took a good deal of

3. Ibid., 154; Interview with composer, March 31, 2015; Michael S. Schmidt, "Helen L. Phillips, 85; Soprano Broke Race Barriers," *The New York Times*, August 12, 2005, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html>.

4. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

5. Dios Hernández, *Leonardo Balada*, 154–55.

consideration to figure out how he would combine the disparate elements he had in mind into a single unified work. Balada felt it was an appropriate challenge to combine modern techniques in a way that would adequately pay tribute to King's legacy, and to do this, Balada had to look beyond his academic training and search for new sounds and source material that he could use to convey the struggles and aspirations of King and the African American community in the United States. Once again, his personal relationships and life experience helped to guide him in the right direction.

One of the most important jobs Balada held during this period was serving as the director of the music program for the United Nations International School. In this position he gained valuable experience in the classroom and in administration, which helped to prepare him for the professorship at Carnegie Mellon he would take up by the end of the decade. By working in the multi-cultural environment of the international school, Balada was introduced to a diverse group of students and colleagues who influenced his music, particularly his *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King* that he was now beginning. As mentioned, one of the challenges Balada faced was finding a way for his eclectic tastes to converge into a unified piece. Synthesizers and other electronic instruments were important to Balada, but he was determined to include sounds and materials that best reflected the plight of African Americans in the United States, from its founding to the present. One of his African American colleagues at the international school offered Balada some African rhythms to use in the symphony, which

he included in the final movement of the piece (“Triumph”) to evoke a celebratory mood.⁶ However, the entire piece does not convey this sentiment.

One thing that struck Balada upon moving to New York was the presence of homeless people and beggars on the streets, particularly African Americans. In an effort to incorporate the sound of these street performers into his symphony in a way that would pay homage to the work of one of the greatest civil-rights leaders, Balada wrote a fiddle part that includes the performance instructions “metal strings not required. The instrument must sound like that of a beggar in the street, insecure & out of tune.”⁷ This part is one of the most important in the symphony, but it was also one of the most difficult for orchestras to play correctly during initial performances because it was written intentionally to sound out of tune and amateurish. Professional violinists were reluctant to play the part as instructed, so to get around their sense of perfectionism, Balada reassigned the part from the first violin to someone in the back. By doing this, he took pressure off of the concertmaster concerned with maintaining their image, and it concealed the source of the sound within the orchestra, so nobody would know who was playing.⁸ With this minor change, the part was played correctly and Balada had the sound he wanted.

6. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

7. Leonardo Balada, *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King* (Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.: General Music Pub. Co., 1974).

8. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

When composing this symphony, Balada did not intentionally write a piece that depicts the history of African Americans in the United States in a chronological manner; however, many listeners have been convinced otherwise, and even he has begun describing it as such in album notes. During the first recording session with the Orquesta Sinfónica de la RTV Española in 1999, the engineer suggested some descriptive titles to Balada for the four sections of the work, which Balada felt conformed with his overall idea.⁹ The four titles, “Opresión” (oppression), “Cadenas” (chains), “Visión” (vision), and “Triunfo” (triumph), do coincide with the struggles of African Americans in the United States, and they correlate with the drama conveyed in each section. There were no subtitles for each movement prior to the first recording, but critics picked up on the storyline of the symphony and highlighted this aspect in an effort to guide listeners as to how they could approach the decidedly modern piece.

By the time the work was premiered by the RTV Orchestra in Madrid on June 21, 1969, Balada’s symphonic work *Guernica* had become internationally successful within only two years. Unfortunately, his *Sinfonía en negro* did not have the same extra-musical associations as *Guernica*, so to compensate for this lack of artistic grounding and prepare audiences for some of the challenges of listening to this piece, many critics used descriptive language and clever analogies to describe the music to their readers. Writing for *The Times-Picayune* in New Orleans, where both *Guernica* and *Sinfonía en negro* were premiered in the United States, Frank Gagnard placed the piece in both historical

9. Ibid.

and cultural contexts. Most of his review, however, was devoted to interpreting what he heard and assigning meaning to the sounds:

The four-section Sinfonia draws startled attention and historic references with simulated shipcracks [*sic*] and the actual (and here over-amplified) sound of dragging chain.

These “sound effects” are set, bulletin-like, in a field of dry and ominous sonorities, few of them arrived at through traditional 19th-century musical methods. Violence flares, as it did and does in life, and there are some exotic percussion passages that may represent a cultural heritage.¹⁰

While the New Orleans Philharmonic, under the direction of Warner Torkanowski, premiered both *Guernica* and *Sinfonía en negro* in the United States, it was the Spanish RTV orchestra, with conductor Enrique García Asensio, that widely toured the symphony throughout the United States and Mexico.

In 1971, the critics in New York felt similarly to those in both Spain and New Orleans regarding the character and the artistic merit of the symphony. There was also a great deal of excitement surrounding the historical significance of the piece and the distinctly modern techniques Balada used. However, some critics, such as Donal Henahan with *The New York Times*, felt that Balada’s artistic identity in the piece was a bit mixed:

[*Sinfonía en negro*] left an impression of definite talent in its first New York performance, but it is a peculiarly mixed piece in style. It began ultramodern fashion with Ligeti-like drones, Xenakis-like glissandos and imaginative variety of other modish effects. Then, as if in flight from present, it went back through long Bartókian sections that recalled “The Miraculous Mandarin” and ended with a bongo-led dance that could have been composed by Gottschalk.¹¹

10. Frank Gagnard, “On the Square: New Balada,” *The Times-Picayune*, May 14, 1970, sec. 5.

11. Donal Henahan, “Music: Spanish Style,” *The New York Times*, October 12, 1971, Clippings, NYPL.

The comparisons that Henahan drew between Balada and other composers accurately describe the style of this piece. At the time of writing, Balada was in the midst of an aesthetic shift, as by the mid-1960s he began to move away from his conservative upbringing to experiment with the sonic possibilities avant-garde composers were then exploring, such as new techniques and instruments, particularly with electronics. The unique place of *Sinfonía en negro* in Balada's catalog derives from the fact that it does not fit entirely into what he and others have described as his ultramodern second period, which falls between his conservative and avant-garde-ethnic periods. Instead, the symphony anticipates the multi-culturalism that would come to influence much of his work from the mid-1970s onward. His *Homage to Sarasate* and *Homage to Casals*, both from 1975, are two of the earliest pieces in his third period, and both use ethnic and folk song as source material.¹²

Much like his *Steel Symphony* (1972) and other symphonic works, the orchestral forces in *Sinfonía en negro* can “annihilate” audiences.¹³ However, it is the small details in orchestration that are most often discussed, as Balada's penchant for finding and translating a particular sound does not escape audiences. Gagnard comments that, like *Guernica* before, this symphony “should be more rewarding and more revealing with

12. Leonardo Balada, *Symphony No. 4 ('Lausanne'); Persistencias - Sinfonía Concertante; Sinfonía en Negro - Homenajae a Martin Luther King; Cumbres - A Short Symphony for Band*, CD (Albany Records, 2002).

13. Peter Eliot Stone, “He Writes for the Audience, but on His Own Terms: Balada's Music,” *The New York Times*, November 21, 1982, sec. Arts and Leisure.

additional hearings.”¹⁴ *The New York Post* also suggests that this may be Balada’s greatest strength:

[*Sinfonía en negro*] is skillful and imaginative, especially in its treatment of the string and percussion choirs. The score is rebellious in intent rather than eulogistic. We hear the whiplash, the clang of chains, and the syncopations of musical Africa. There is an uncertain violin solo which brings momentary poignancy.¹⁵

Due to the variety and degree of these devices, it was necessary in 1970 for conductor Warner Torkanowsky to introduce the piece and explain to the audience what they were about to hear. By giving a “mini-lecture on the most unusual characteristics of the new music,” Torkanowsky helped to quell any alternative or negative interpretations of the symphony.¹⁶ Although his pre-concert lesson may have aided in the initial reception, not all critics were convinced, and some recent album reviews have taken exception to the variety and appropriateness of Balada’s diverse set of techniques.

Donal Henahan noted for readers that the lack of focus in the symphony may actually have worked to Balada’s advantage:

[*Sinfonía en negro*] included such picturesque if not very subtle ideas as whiplashes and rattled chains. In spite of a few dull stretches and gaucheries, however, the work kept one wondering what it was up to, and that is rare enough to deserve mentioning.¹⁷

14. Gagnard, “On the Square.”

15. *The New York Post*, October 11, 1971, Clippings, NYPL.

16. Gagnard, “On the Square.”

17. Henahan, Donal. “Music: Spanish Style.” *The New York Times*. October 12, 1971. Balada Clippings. NYPL.

More recently, a review of the 2012 recording by the Málaga Philharmonic Orchestra describes the true purpose of Balada's varied techniques and non-traditional musical forms: "[Balada] achieves his compositional goals by dramatically staging certain feelings or states of being, rather than a development of themes or more traditional means of establishing narrative."¹⁸ The *American Record Guide* also found his experiments in sound to be one of the most fascinating qualities of this piece: "It should be said that the music is nothing if not entertaining and Balada's penchant for gutsy noises and aggressive activity is not dull."¹⁹ Nonetheless, *Sinfonía en negro*, along with the *Steel Symphony*, has been one of Balada's most widely recorded and performed works.

Analysis

Balada has maintained that he writes music for things he feels strongly about, and in 1969 he felt strongly about the African American struggle for civil rights and the possibilities that come with using electronic instruments in large-scale compositions. As a result, an homage to Martin Luther King, Jr., provided the thematic material upon which Balada experimented with textures and sounds that he derived from synthesizers and other instruments he was experimenting with at the time. Each of his experimental components, such as tone clusters and various percussive effects, plays a major role in his *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King* and carried over to his later works

18. George Adams, "Newest Music II," *American Record Guide*, June 2014.

19. D. Moore, "Guide to Records," *American Record Guide*, May 2003, p. 69.

like the *Steel Symphony* and *María Sabina*. On the surface, the juxtaposition of African musical elements and avant-garde techniques seems incongruous, but the way in which Balada developed the symphony to express the history of African Americans in the United States helps to reconcile the two.

The instrumentation in this piece is that of a traditional symphony orchestra, with the exception of an added fiddle player, but the percussion section is where Balada explored a wide variety of sounds through the inclusion of non-traditional objects used for their percussive properties. The extended techniques and large selection of percussion instruments were fashionable at the time, which is partly the reason why Balada included so many.²⁰ As with his *Steel Symphony* and *María Sabina*, Balada's performance instructions are explicit in describing how he wants specific instruments to sound and what effect they should produce, but part of what distinguishes this score from his later works is the lack of a symbols page that clarifies the meaning of the various notational symbols used throughout. Instead, Balada included handwritten instructions below each symbol when it appears, such as at rehearsal 1 below the string section: “*Slow motion *arco ponti*. Should produce a squeak.”

Movement I: “Opresión”

While there is no programmatic narrative for the symphony, the four continuous movements do provide a sense of musical and dramatic development. From the opening

20. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

measure constructed with polyrhythms, striking dissonances, and a *fortissimo* dynamic, Balada set the stage for the first movement that was later subtitled “Opresión” (oppression). This movement is about contrast, which Balada creates by alternating between extremes in dynamics, timbre, and rhythm in opposing sections to leave listeners unsure as to what will come next. After the opening burst of bright, *staccato*, and rapid sound from the winds, horns, and percussion, he shifts to an entirely different aesthetic. The strings dominate most of this movement with muted and sustained harmonies that are derived from tone clusters, but Balada often orchestrates these in unison and octaves, which helps to reduce the dissonance.

The chaotic opening was inspired by Balada’s experimentation with electronic instruments and is continued, although contrasted, by the slow-moving string section that he uses to provide a harmonic foundation throughout the piece.²¹ While exploring the timbral possibilities of contrasting registers and extended techniques in the string section, Balada uses a series of suspensions to drive the music forward. This forward momentum is partially derived by the shift from the half and whole notes of the *lento* ($\text{♩} = 60$) meter to steady eighth-note rhythms, as heard at rehearsal 3, coinciding with the introduction of the whip and suspended gong. The string section also serves as a link between interrupting aleatoric episodes and rhythmically based percussion sections.

21. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

The image shows a page of a musical score for rehearsal 3, marked with a circled '3' in the top left. The score is arranged in several staves:

- Flute I & II:** Features a melodic line with a 'tubo' marking and a dynamic of *ppp*.
- Large Susp. Cymbal:** Plays sustained notes with a dynamic of *ppp*.
- Whip (Inting):** Plays a rhythmic pattern with a dynamic of *ff*.
- Vlns I & II:** Violin parts with dynamics ranging from *mppp* to *mp*. Includes instructions like '(no trem.)' and '(con trem.)'.
- Vlas. (Viola):** Part with dynamics from *pp* to *mp*. Includes 'senza sord.' and 'Div. a 2' markings.
- Vcls. (Violoncello):** Part with dynamics from *pp* to *mp*. Includes 'senza sord.' and 'Div. a 2' markings.
- Cbs. (Contrabasso):** Part with dynamics from *pp* to *mp*. Includes 'senza sord.' and 'Div. a 2' markings.

The score is filled with musical notation, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings, indicating a transition from sustained notes to steady eighth notes in the strings.

Example 6.1: Balada changes the strings from sustained half and whole notes to steady eighth notes in order to propel the music forward at rehearsal 3.

The increasing instability created by syncopated rhythms in the winds and horns leading to rehearsal 10 is reduced by the reappearance of the strings. However, Balada instructs them to slowly *glissando* over several measures from a note of their choosing, which is not as stable or consonant as the suspensions previously used. Although the strings reestablish a sense of stability, Balada increases the frequency of interrupting notes in the brass and winds at the same time as the frequency of downward *glissandos* in

the strings increases. This eventually breaks from the established 4/4 meter and begins the next movement *senza tempo*.

The image shows a musical score for a string and brass section. The instruments listed are Horns I and II, Trumpets I and II, Trombones I and II, Tuba, Snare Drum (sn. off), Piano, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The score is in 4/4 time. The string section (Violins I and II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass) is marked *mp* and features downward glissandos starting at rehearsal 11. The brass section (Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, and Tuba) is marked *p* and features syncopated rhythms. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, and *spicc.*. A triangle symbol is used to indicate a glissando, with the instruction "slow descending gliss. ad lib." and "gliss. lentos descendentes ad lib." below it. The page number "13" is also present.

Example 6.2: Note the downward *glissandos* in the string section against the syncopated brass following rehearsal 11.

Many of the aleatoric devices that Balada uses in this piece are common in his other works from this period. While he does give the performers and conductors some leeway as to what they can play, Balada ultimately controls the overall sound of the symphony. Moments such as the downward *glissandos* at rehearsal 11 or the repeated notes at rehearsal 7 allow performers to choose the rate at which they play or repeat a given motivic cell, but the pitches they are allowed to choose from are strictly Balada's.

“Opresión” anticipates the important role that rhythm will play later in the symphony, particularly movement four (“Triunfo”). During rehearsals 5 and 6, Balada assigns a steady rhythmic pattern to the tom-tom that works in contrast to patterns in the rest of the orchestra. The tom-tom rhythm is based on triplet eighth-note figures that frequently subdivide into sixteenth notes to work against the sextuplets and septuplets in the rest of the orchestra. This syncopation, created by accents on the offbeat, establishes a sense of spontaneity for listeners, which Balada further explores through additional polyrhythmic elements in the final movement.

7 ← as fast as poss. 4" → 8" → PRESTO ♩ = 180

Fls I, II
Obs I, II
Cls I, II
Bns I, II
Hms I, II
Tpts I, II, III
Trbs I, II
3 Tom-Toms
S. Drum
M.s. cym.
Wood block
Vibraph.
Whip
Pno/te
Vlins I, II
Vlas
Vlcs
Cbs

ff
as fast as poss.
tan rápido como se pueda
as fast as poss.
very hard mallets
tan rápido como se pueda
Xyl
wood block
very hard mallets
Play strings - imitating the strings of the orchestra
mp Imitese las Cuerdas de la Orqui. con las cuerdas del piano
Spiccatissimo (off string)
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp

4
4
4
4

4" → 8" →

Spiccatissimo as fast as poss. using given notes, but not playing twice in a row any of them.
 © Spiccatissimo tan rápido como se pueda usando notas dadas sin repetir consecutivamente ninguna de ellas.

Example 6.3: At rehearsal 7, Balada horizontally distributes tone clusters while giving performers the freedom to play the pattern as fast as possible.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for rehearsal 6, featuring complex polyrhythmic patterns. The score is organized into several systems of staves:

- Woodwinds:** Flutes I & II, Oboes I & II, Bass Clarinet, and Bsn. I & II. The woodwinds play intricate patterns with various articulations and dynamics, including *pp* and *p*. Some parts feature sextuplets and septuplets.
- Brass:** Horns, Trumpets I, II, & III, and Trombones I & II. The brass parts include sustained notes and rhythmic figures, with dynamics ranging from *pp* to *mp*.
- Percussion:** Tom-Toms, Xyl., and Percussion (Pn). The Tom-Toms play a triplet pattern, while the Percussion part includes *strings cuerdas* and *Pedal* markings.
- Strings:** Violins I & II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The string parts are marked with *seca sord.* and *sul pontic.* and include dynamic markings like *ff* and *nv*.

A rehearsal mark '6' is placed in a box at the top of the score, indicating the start of the rehearsal. The notation is dense and detailed, showing the composer's intent for the polyrhythmic development.

Example 6.4: The polyrhythms leading to rehearsal 6 created by the triplet pattern in the tom-toms against the sextuplet and septuplet rhythms in the winds will be fully developed by the end of the symphony.

Movement II: “Cadenas”

Without interruption, the second movement begins at rehearsal 12 and is officially underway following the gong at conductor cue V, just before rehearsal 13. In the first movement, Balada introduced extended techniques and motives that he develops in the rest of the symphony, and in the second movement he introduces two new sounds: the fiddle and chains. These sounds are featured prominently to reflect the struggle of African Americans throughout the history of the United States, and the way in which he uses them emphasizes the non-traditional aspects of this piece. However, despite the new instruments and expanded use of aleatoric and extended techniques, the second movement offers little in the way of thematic development.

Balada does not use the percussion section for rhythmic emphasis during this movement, as he did in the first. Instead, he heavily relies on the strings that continue to sustain tone clusters to support the rest of the orchestra. By sustaining these clusters at a *piano* dynamic, the cello and bass create a backdrop for the first appearance of the chains, which is used at the discretion of the performer with either a dragging or striking motion against the ground. The chains were initially too quiet for the audience to hear, which is why the score includes instructions to amplify its sound. However, the amplification drew complaints from some critics, who felt they were over amplified for some of the first performances. Regardless of whether or not the chains were at the right level, they do not appear again in this piece, which is what inspired the sound engineer and Balada to agree on the title of this movement, “Cadenas.”

Fls
 Obs
 Cl. I
 Bass Cl
 Bns I
 Bns II
 Hns I
 Hns II
 Tpts I
 Tpts II
 Tpts III
 Trbns I
 Trbns II
 Jingles (cascabeles)
 S. Cymbals medium
 S. Cymbals large
 Chain
 Vibraphone
 Fiddle
 Vlns I
 Vlns II
 Vla
 Vlc
 Cbs

The score is handwritten and includes various performance markings such as dynamics (mp, mf, f, p, sim.), articulation (accents, slurs), and techniques (slow gliss., Ped., l.v.). The Chain part is represented by a continuous, textured line. The Fiddle part begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The Vibraphone part includes a 'slow gliss.' and 'Ped.' markings. The Jingles and S. Cymbals parts feature rhythmic patterns and 'l.v.' markings. The woodwind and brass parts have rests for most of the duration, with some activity in the later measures.

Example 6.5: The chains sound for the duration of the fiddle part, as seen here following rehearsal 16.

The other important instrument in this movement is the violin played in the manner of a fiddle, which also does not reappear in the rest of the symphony. Balada intended this part to sound like what a beggar on the streets of New York might play, so he wrote purposeful irregularities into both the rhythm and melody. The fiddle portion is relatively simple and includes multiple sustained notes and arpeggios across open the strings, and despite no particular melodic direction, it is the most consonant part of this symphony. The accompaniment for the fiddle is sparse, and when it is present it is often at a low dynamic or sustaining notes in unison or octaves as the fiddle plays whole notes to create an original sound in this movement.

Beginning with the clarinet in the measures leading to rehearsal 18, the movement grows louder and the rhythms more forceful with additional wind and brass instruments playing regular quarter notes on the downbeat. By rehearsal 18, Balada removes the fiddle, and the upper winds and strings alternate quarter notes on and off the beat. While the winds and strings establish the pulse, the sleigh bells play a quintuplet pattern, and the chains become louder and more frequent with each measure. The percussion section grows louder and more irregular, and the rest of the orchestra becomes rhythmically stable, with the strings shifting to sustained harmonics that gradually *glissando* between notes Balada specifies. The tempo also accelerates from *lento* to *presto* at rehearsal 19 but immediately returns only eight measures later to end the movement. Overall, however, in terms of dramatic or musical development, very little takes place in this movement.

Movement III: “Visión”

Following the quiet conclusion of “Cadenas,” the third movement explodes with energy that Balada sustains nearly to the end of the symphony. The rhythmic impetus is the defining quality of this movement, and it begins with the first violins at rehearsal 21 playing *marcato* sixteenth notes. The rest of the string section follows in close succession by playing nearly identical parts that are based on a fully chromatic scale that mostly moves in conjunct motion. With each additional instrument that enters playing the same rhythm, the sound grows louder and the scales more forceful. Balada relies mostly on the contrasting timbres from different instruments to maintain listener interest, which he executes in a variety of ways.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the beginning of Movement III, "Visión". The score is written for a full orchestra and includes the following parts: Bsnns I & II, Wood blk., Tom-tom, Timpani, Pnafte (Piano and Forte), Vlns I, Vlns II, and Vlas (Violoncello). The tempo is marked "Piu mosso" with a metronome marking of quarter note = 104. A rehearsal mark "21" is placed above the first violin staff. The score begins with a 3/4 time signature, which changes to 4/4 at rehearsal 21. The first violin part starts with a *marcato* sixteenth-note figure. The wood block and timpani parts provide a rhythmic accompaniment. The piano part is marked *mp* and *pizz* (pizzicato). The string parts (Vlns I, Vlns II, and Vlas) enter with a chromatic scale in sixteenth notes, starting at rehearsal 21. The score includes various dynamics such as *mp*, *mf*, *p*, *f*, and *marcato*.

Example 6.7: The opening rhythmic motive for the violins in the third movement, “Visión,” is begun with the straight sixteenth and eighth notes.

At rehearsal 23, for example, Balada shifts the focus from the strings to the brass, winds, and percussion that play syncopated interjections beginning in unison on C. This section maintains the steady pulse begun earlier, but it becomes more dissonant as Balada changes the intervals from unison to minor seconds between parts as he alternates the eighth-note interjections between instruments. The result is an unpredictable motive that prevents listeners from anticipating which direction the music will go or which instrument will play next. At the same time as he strengthens the dissonance Balada also increases the dynamic and the rate of notes through an extended *crescendo* and by reintroducing the strings with quintuplets.

Balada further emphasizes the rhythm leading to rehearsal 31 with a meter change from 4/4 to 5/4 that is quickly followed by 10/8 with a 3+2+3+2 eighth-note foundation. The bassoons and horns immediately begin a pattern of alternating quarter and dotted-quarter notes in a descending line that is supported by the string section dividing a tone cluster between the four parts to play in eighth-note groupings. The effect of this pattern is similar to the sound of a slowly moving locomotive pulling away from a stop, driving yet uneven. This idea is reinforced with the flute, oboe, clarinet, and trumpets playing extremely high *fortissimo* notes that sound like a train whistle. The dissonant intervals in these parts are amplified by the high register and syncopation as they play at a progressively faster rate. By rehearsal 35, however, the train has derailed, and the movement returns to a *lento* tempo with only the strings sustaining at a low dynamic.

23

The score for rehearsal 23 shows the following parts and markings:

- Picc.**: *mp*, *f*
- Fl. I**: *mp*, *f*
- Obs. I/II**: *mp*, *f*
- Cls. I/II**: *mp*, *f*
- Bns. I/II**: *f*
- Tpts. I/II/III**: *senza sord.*, *p*, *f*
- Tbs. I/II**: *(senza sord.) p*, *(senza sord.) f*
- Tuba**: *p*, *f*
- Tom, Tom, M, Lg**: *f*
- S. Drum**: *f*
- Xyl.**: *mf*
- Vlins I**: *tutti Div. naturale*, *f*
- Vlins II**: *Div. naturale*, *f*
- Vlas**: *Div. naturale*, *f*
- Vles**: *Div. naturale*, *f*
- Cbs**: *f*

Example 6.8: At Rehearsal 23, Balada removes the steady sixteenth-note foundation in the strings and replaces it with an equally driving but syncopated motive in the brass and winds.

Piu mosso $\text{♩} = 152 (3+2+3+2)$

33

Fls I
Fls II
Fls III
Obs I
Obs II
Obs III
Cls I
Cls II
Cls III
Bns I
Bns II
Bns III
Hns I
Hns II
Tpts I
Tpts II
Tpts III
Trbs.
Tuba
S. Drum
Gong
Xyl.
Tom-Tom (Small, Medium, Large)
Whip
Proffes
Vlns I
Vlns II
Vlas
Vlcs
Cbs

Example 6.9: The locomotive theme begins at rehearsal 33 with a meter change to 10/8 and the high winds creating the dissonant sound of a whistle.

The final movement is less dissonant and chaotic than the third, so in the last measures Balada slows things down. The radical change at rehearsal 35 allows listeners to catch up and focus on the consonance in the low strings that move in and out of unison on E. By using tied notes over several measures and *fermatas* to emphasize dynamic changes, Balada adequately dissipates the energy created in the previous section, which allows the final movement to begin with little more than conga and bongo drums.

Movement IV: “Triunfo”

With a celebratory mood and relatively consonant motives, this brief movement stands in stark contrast to the dissonant and unpredictable sections that precede it. The final movement is aptly titled “Triunfo” (triumph), and by reintroducing instruments in close succession that build upon the opening rhythms in the two drums, Balada creates tension and drama as the symphony pushes toward a celebratory conclusion. The entire movement is derived from the opening rhythms, first presented in the conga drum and bongos, which Balada was given by an African American colleague at the United Nations international school.²² By setting these two rhythms in opposition, Balada created a polyrhythmic backdrop upon which he constructed the primary melodic content in the strings and brass.

22. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

Più mosso $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 104$
 37

Bass Cl.
 Conga Drum
 Bongos
 Vlns I
 Vlns II
 Vlas.
 Vlcs
 Cbs

Example 6.10: The opening rhythms in the conga and bongo drums persist through the entire movement and are later reinforced by the rest of the orchestra.

The string section in this last movement plays a variety of important roles that range from rhythm to melody, and it is the first instrument family to enter after the bongo and conga introduce the rhythmic motive. Balada uses multiple bowing techniques to emphasize the fundamental rhythm, and all of the strings are assigned *col legno* (striking with the back of the bow) quarter notes on beats 1, 3, and 4 in the 4/4 meter. This percussive effect supports the drums and complements the syncopated accents by the horns and trumpets that begin a few measures later. While the violins and violas continue with *pizzicato* quarter notes leading to rehearsal 39, the cellos and basses actively change technique on each beat they play by alternating between *spiccato* (light bouncing),

ponticello (close to the bridge), and *gettato* (*jeté*—throwing or rapid bouncing).²³ These techniques help to keep the rhythm light, but the violins begin a *legato* motive that finishes with sustained octaves.

The image shows a page of a musical score, numbered 39 in a box at the top right. The score is for a string quartet and includes percussion parts. The instruments listed on the left are: Hns (Horns I and II), Tpts (Trumpets I, II, and III), Tpbs (Trombones I and II), Conga Drm. (Conga Drum), Bongos, Tambourine, Timpani, Vlns I (Violin I), Vlns II (Violin II), Vla. (Viola), Vlcs (Violoncello), and Cbs (Contrabasso). The string parts (Vlns I, Vlns II, Vla., Vlcs, Cbs) are heavily annotated with performance techniques: *pizz.* (pizzicato), *spicc.* (spiccato), *pontic.* (ponticello), *pont.* (ponte), *gettato*, and *gett.* (gettato). The percussion parts include Conga Drum, Bongos, Tambourine, and Timpani. The score is written in a common time signature and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and dynamics.

Example 6.11: The various string techniques are used to emphasize the principal rhythms and create timbral interest for the listener.

To bring this triumphant movement to a close, Balada uses the conga-drum rhythm in the brass section to create a small fanfare. This brass motive begins relatively

23. Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 167.

consonant, based on triads, but with each repetition the dissonance is slightly increased in both the fanfare motive and the accompaniment. The brass double the rhythm of the percussion and gradually ascend in register to parallel the rise in dynamic and tempo, while the winds and strings provide embellishment. By the time the last measure arrives, Balada has the entire orchestra playing a variation on the opening rhythm and has raised the ensemble to a *fortissimo* dynamic on a final A-major chord. The piano, however, is the only instrument that sustains beyond the last *fermata*. Although the final chord is one of the few moments in this symphony that is derived from tertian harmony, the piano sustains an incredibly large and dense tone cluster that quickly overpowers any consonance from the A-minor chord.

The image shows a musical score for a brass and percussion section. The brass section includes Horns (Hns) I and II, Trumpets (Tpts) I, II, and III, Trumpets (Trbs) I and II, and Tuba. The percussion section includes Conga/Drum (Conga/Drum), Bongos, and Timpani. The strings section includes Violins (Vlns) I and II, Violas (Vlas), Violoncellos (Vlcs), and Contrabasses (Cbs). The score is in 4/4 time and features a brass fanfare starting at measure 4. The fanfare is marked with a large 'S' for sforzando and 'senza sord.' (without mutes). The percussion section features a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 4, marked with a large 'T' for timpani and 'pp sub.' (pianissimo subito). The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *pp* (pianissimo). Performance instructions include '(open)' for the horns, 'senza sord.' for the brass, and 'pp sub.' for the percussion. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 4. A large '4' is written above the staff for the brass and percussion sections. A double bar line is also present at the end of measure 4. A double bar line is also present at the end of measure 4. A double bar line is also present at the end of measure 4.

Example 6.12: The brass fanfare doubles the rhythm in the percussion section and reinforces the celebratory mood of this last movement.

The image displays a page of a musical score for the final chord of a symphony. The score is arranged in systems, with each system containing multiple staves for different instruments. The instruments listed on the left side of the score are:

- Fls I & II (Flutes)
- Obs I & II (Oboes)
- Cl I & II (Clarinets)
- Bn I (Bassoon)
- Corbn (Cor Anglais)
- Hns I & II (Horns)
- Tpts I, II, III (Trumpets)
- Ttrbs I & II (Trumpets/Bassoons)
- Tuba
- Conga Dnm (Conga and Drum)
- Gong
- Timpani
- Pnafte (Piano Forte)
- Vlms I & II (Violins)
- Vlas (Viola)
- Vlcs (Violoncello)
- Cbs (Cello)

The score shows a progression of dynamics from piano (*p*) to fortissimo (*ff*). The final chord is characterized by tertian harmony, but it is sustained as a tone cluster. The piano is the last instrument heard, indicated by a dashed line and the label "Ped." at the end of its staff. The score also includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 6.13: The final chord of the symphony is constructed with tertian harmony, but with a sustained tone cluster, the piano is the last instrument heard.

Conclusion

Beginning in the mid-1960s, Balada's compositional style shifted from a conservative tonal approach to an avant-garde and ultramodern technique that explored new timbres, instruments, and harmonies. Some of his most important works from this period include *Guernica* (1966), *Sinfonía en negro: Homenaje a Martin Luther King* (1968), *María Sabina* (1969), *Steel Symphony* (1972), and *No-Res* (1974). His *Sinfonía en negro* is particularly important because it anticipated changes in his style that would take place in the mid-1970s, which reflect his third period that he labels as his avant-garde-ethnic style. Balada has never claimed to be a political composer, but he is inspired by things about which he feels strongly, such as the bombing of innocent civilians, significant loss of life during wartime, or the African American struggle for civil rights in the United States. Writing the *Sinfonía en negro* challenged him to think beyond the abstractions of war and chaos to find a way to pay homage to the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr. By using devices such as whips, chains, polyrhythms, and membranophones that are intimately associated with the history of African Americans in the United States, Balada planted the seed for his avant-garde-ethnic style that he would develop after first honoring the city of Pittsburgh and a Mexican shaman.

CHAPTER 7: *María Sabina* (1969)

Background

Shortly before Balada moved from New York to begin teaching as a professor of composition at Carnegie Mellon, he had a major work premiered at Carnegie Hall on April 17, 1970. The piece was titled *María Sabina*, after the eponymous mushroom shaman of Mexico, and represents Balada's first theatrical work. This piece was also the result of a collaboration with the eminent Spanish poet, playwright, and novelist Camilo José Cela (1916–2002), who wrote the libretto.¹ By the time *María Sabina* was recorded by the Louisville Orchestra and Chorus, under the direction of Jorge Mester, the piece underwent a dramatic transformation from a work of more than ninety minutes in length to a final form of less than forty.² Unlike the revision process, the phases of creation and development presented major challenges for the creative pair.

During the 1960s, the popularity of hallucinogens was on the rise in the United States, particularly within hippie communities. A peculiar cultural phenomenon during

1. Camilo José Cela y Trulock was a Spanish novelist, short-story writer, and essayist who was associated with the artists from the generation of 1936. Cela's works, such as *The Family of Pascual* (1942) and *The Hive* (1951), are celebrated in both English- and Spanish-speaking regions. His writings were expelled from the Press Association of Spain under Franco's rule, but he later won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1989. For additional biographical and contextual information see Lucile C. Charlebois, *Understanding Camilo José Cela*, *Understanding Modern European and Latin American Literature* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998).

2. *María Sabina: Tragifonía (A Symphonic Tragedy) for Narrators, Chorus, and Orchestra*, vol. LS-726 (Louisville, KY: Louisville Orchestra, 1972).

this period was the development of communities who sought psychedelic mushrooms in the remote regions of Oaxaca, Mexico, following the publication of one man's experience consuming these powerful fungi. In May of 1957, the Vice President of J.P. Morgan & Co. published an article in *Life* magazine about his decades-long journey around the world studying the ways in which different cultures regard and use mushrooms.³ Part of R. Gordon Wasson's journey was fueled by a desire to locate secret mushrooms rumored to be found somewhere in Mexico that would enable those who consumed them to see visions and be transported to another realm. In the Mixteca region of Mexico, Wasson eventually located the fabled mushrooms and also found a practitioner willing to bring foreigners into a religious ceremony to partake in the experience.

Wasson was brought to the Mazatec shamans María Sabina and her daughter to join in the celebration of Holy Communion through a syncretic ceremony that combined elements of Catholicism and indigenous practices. María's name was changed to Eva Mendez in Wasson's article in an effort to protect her identity and the location of the mushrooms from those who may seek to exploit these natural resources or the community that welcomed him. Wasson described the effects of the mushrooms he consumed over several nights during his stay in such vivid and enthusiastic detail that many readers were inspired to try for themselves.

It was not long before the location of village was discovered and soon exploited by outsiders. The resultant cultural phenomenon of mushroom experimentation was

3. R. Gordon Wasson, "Seeking the Magic Mushroom," *Life*, May 13, 1957.

reported in *The New York Times* in an article by David Ryan titled “Hippies Flocking to Mexico for Mushroom ‘Trips.’”⁴ The article included testimony of those who traveled to Mexico to live in the wilderness and consume the wild mushrooms:

David, from San Francisco, put the mushroom craving this way: “The Difference between LSD and the magic mushrooms is the difference between a stale hamburger and a T-bone steak.

In the City you suffer paranoia when you are on a trip—you always fear being busted while you are high. Here the mountains protect you, you are away from the squares and the trips are good.

The fascination with mind-altering plants and substances only increased over the next decade as the hippie culture in the United States grew in size and became more widely associated with an emerging drug culture that permeated many aspects of society, especially popular culture. Marijuana, LSD, and mushrooms were some of the preferred drugs during this time, but peyote consumption and awareness of other powerful substances grew in popularity when Carlos Castaneda’s best-selling books on his psychedelic experiences hit the market in the early 1970s.⁵ It was in this context that Cela developed his own story of María Sabina. However, Cela was introduced in the late

4. David Ryan, “Hippies Flocking to Mexico for Mushroom ‘Trips,’” *The New York Times*, July 23, 1970, Clippings, NYPL.

5. Carlos Castaneda (1925–98) was an anthropologist who studied at UCLA and published several books based on his fieldwork experience with Native American shamanism in northern Mexico. His books and career were founded upon the teachings of a half-Yaqui man named Don Juan Matus, who incorporated psychotropic plants into his lessons. Many aspects of Castaneda’s writings have been contested as fiction, but his books sold millions of copies over several decades and had a profound impact on American culture.

1950s to the world of psychedelic mushrooms through fellow poet Robert Graves, who was a close personal friend of R. Gordon Wasson.⁶

Balada first encountered Cela at NYU in 1966, where Cela was giving a lecture.⁷ Balada recalls that he was impressed by Cela and approached the author after his presentation to ask for tips on writing text for a cantata he was currently working on.⁸ To Balada's surprise, Cela replied, "zapatero a tus zapatos" (shoemaker, stick to your shoes) and offered to write a libretto for him. Over the next two summers, Balada traveled with his then-wife Monica to Mallorca, Spain, to visit Cela at his home and collaborate on the piece.⁹

As an artistic personality, Cela was a force to reckon with. Balada described Cela as a typical masculine Spaniard with a dictator mentality, even comparing his personality to that of the guitarist Andrés Segovia.¹⁰ This clash of personality between the two

6. For background on the relationship between Wasson and Graves see Michael Pharand, "The Mythophile and the Mycophile: Robert Graves and R. Gordon Wasson," *Gravesiana: The Journal of the Robert Graves Society* 1, no. 2 (December 1996): 205–15; "Robert Graves with Camilo Jose Cela, 1966 (Cela's 50th Birthday): Robert Graves Malahat Review Photographs" (Photograph), Robert Graves collection (SC050), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Victoria, accessed June 1, 2016, <http://contentdm.library.uvic.ca/cdm/ref/collection/collection34/id/19>.

7. For additional background on the collaborative process between Cela and Balada see Juan Francisco de Dios Hernández, *Leonardo Balada: la mirada oceánica* (Madrid: Editorial Alpuerto, 2012); *ibid.*, 161.

8. Previously unpublished information regarding *María Sabina* was gleaned from an interview with the composer conducted on March 31, 2015.

9. The enthusiasm and energy of Balada's first wife, Monica McCormack, served as a muse for Cela's writing during their visits to Mallorca. The piece is dedicated to her; Dios Hernández, 161–76.

10. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

affected their collaborative process, as Cela wrote more and more text and was unwilling to relent, despite Balada's protests. By the time the piece was finished, Balada felt the music had to move too quickly to accommodate the amount of text Cela wanted to incorporate. This prevented Balada from doing justice to the text in a manner he felt appropriate. In recalling his work with Cela, Balada generalized his sentiments on the collaborative process between composer and librettist: "Playwrights know nothing about music and they are in the way all the time." Shortly before the piece was completed, Balada received an invitation from the Spanish Society of America to present the piece in a ninety-minute format at Carnegie Hall.¹¹

The announcement poster for the premiere concert at Carnegie Hall on April 17, 1970, included brief biographies of both Balada and Cela, as well as a short summary of the story and a blurb on each artist's creative processes:

Cela's text was written with attention to eyewitness accounts and photographs of rites performed by Mariá Sabina and recreates her incantations on the basis of transcriptions of her voice. Leonardo Balada's score, in the contemporary vein, underlines the tension of this symphonic tragedy which moves inexorably toward the sacrificial death of Mariá Sabina.¹²

Certainly, Cela took creative liberties with Mariá Sabina's biography by condemning her to death in the drama. Unlike the real-life Sabina, who was often looked upon as a folk heroine by her peers and foreigners, the fictitious version was viewed with fear and disdain by those in her community, which led to her execution for practicing witchcraft.

11. Pat Orvis, "*Mariá Sabina*," Press Announcement, (April 3, 1970), Clippings, NYPL.

12. "*Mariá Sabina*" (Announcement Poster, Carnegie Hall, NY, April 17, 1970), Clippings, NYPL.

Much to the regret of both Balada and Cela, initial reception of the piece was tepid because *María Sabina* was in an odd place between theater and oratorio. By losing the argument with Cela over how much text was appropriate for the piece, Balada's disproportionate musical contribution was overlooked or lamented by critics, who cited it as a drawback to the work.¹³ Prior to the premiere, Balada voiced concern over the static staging, which *The New York Times* also noted and told readers the piece "could just as easily be considered an oratorio."¹⁴ An article by Allen Hughes in *The New York Times* went even further by denying any attempts by Balada to support the text:

This is not essentially a musical work at all. The townspeople's response to Maria are sung, but the choral sections are relatively few and are brief. Mr. Balada has put some kind of musical continuity under most of Maria's monologues, but the strength of the work remains literary. This strength was apparent, even though the performance was in Spanish.¹⁵

Other reviewers felt similarly:

It is perhaps more theater than music; it received a markedly theater-oriented premiere in Carnegie Hall on April 17, though its European premiere will be an operatic one. . . . It was the theatrical orientation that was "Maria Sabina's" only drawback. Not that there was too much drama . . . but there was not enough music. . . . The fact that the text was in Spanish (this reviewer recognized only two words: "Estados Unidos" and "marijuana") contributed to the seeming overabundance of speech with relation to music. The Madrid reviewers will

13. Peter Frank, "Music: Maria Sabina and Alban Berg," *Columbia Spectator*, April 27, 1970.

14. Raymond Ericson, "A Novel Week for Choruses," *The New York Times*, April 17, 1970, sec. D, Clippings, NYPL.

15. Allen Hughes, "Mexican Cult of 'Maria Sabina' Is a Poetic Premiere at Carnegie," *New York Times*, April 18, 1970.

therefore, I trust, like “Maria Sabina” even more than I did—unless they can’t recognize strong musical and theatrical talent.¹⁶

In October 1970, *The Pittsburgh Press* also described that the piece as being problematic because it was not suited for theater or the concert hall.¹⁷ Aside from staging, however, reception for the New York premiere was favorable.

Balada conducted the opening performances in both New York and Madrid, and playing the lead of María Sabina was a local Puerto Rican actress, María Soledad Romero. Critics were impressed by Romero’s acting and the drama she conveyed through Cela’s text. Allen Hughes with *The New York Times* remarked on her physical performance as well as her spoken: “She galvanized attention with an interpretation so filled with movement and action that she might have been executing a choreographed dance. She was not flailing the air mindlessly; every movement made sense, both dramatically and pictorially.”¹⁸

For critics, it was the corporeality of Romero’s performance that seemed to carry the initial performances:

Despite her immense and over-abundant part, Maria Soledad Romero did nothing short of a tour de force job with the key role of the symphonic tragedy. Throwing herself bodily into the text, Miss Romero shook, sneered, gyrated, shrieked, gesticulated, and generally freaked out as any true drug-cult priestess, about to

16. Frank, “Music: Maria.”

17. Carl Apone, “Drug Commune Queen Heroine of CMU Prof’s ‘Maria Sabina,’” *The Pittsburgh Press*, October 25, 1970, sec. 6, Clippings, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

18. Allen Hughes, “Mexican Cult.”

face unwanted death, would. The text, by the noted Spanish writer Jose Cela, felt and sounded overwhelming in *Miss Romero's Hands*.¹⁹

While the acting, libretto, and music were judged favorably as individual elements, there were problems during performances in both New York and Madrid.

Balada staged this piece with Sabina positioned on an elevated platform above the stage and orchestra to allow for better projection by Romero, easier cueing between her and the orchestra, and enhanced visibility for the audience. The results were mixed, with some reviewers describing a lack of continuity between the music and actors:

“According to Leonardo Balada, composer and conductor for the work, the impression [of disunity] was caused by the failure of Maria Soledad Romero, playing the role of Maria Sabina, and the orchestra to properly coordinate at all times.”²⁰ Balada recognized the communication problem between the performers after the premiere, but it was not solved before the production was taken to Spain, where Cela's text was more closely scrutinized than in the United States.

Although critics in the United States predicted a successful Spanish premiere, they could hardly have been more off. Contributing to the difficult Spanish opening was a myriad of unfortunate scenarios. Similar to the Carnegie Hall performance, the music and acting fell out of alignment, but this was not due entirely to lack of cueing or musicianship. The Spanish premiere was held at the Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid, which Balada noted was typically patronized by a more conservative crowd than other

19. Frank, “Music: Maria.”

20. Ibid.

venues. As a result, the audience was dismayed by Cela's text, which was loaded with vulgarities, profanity, blasphemies, and insults against politicians and the government that were unlikely to have been grasped by American audiences. The shock of the text and the avant-garde compositional techniques caused the audience to protest during the performance.

Upon his return to the United States, Balada described the event in an interview with Carl Apone of *The Pittsburgh Press*:

There was shouting and yelling behind me to stop the performance, but I didn't even turn my head to acknowledge the tumult. . . . The avant garde crowd and critics went wild over the work. Those whose tastes run to conservative operas didn't like it.²¹

Due to the rebellious crowd, Balada was forced to stop the performance twice for about five minutes. As mentioned, he did not acknowledge the crowd during either of those pauses and was able to complete the performance. Following the conclusion of the performance, Balada noted that Cela refused to stand and bow for the audience. Minor changes were made to the piece for the second night, and everything went well. The opening flop in Spain did, however, provide Balada an opportunity to take complete artistic control of the piece. After the disastrous opening night, Balada asked Cela what they should do with the piece. Cela retorted, "Do whatever you feel like."²²

21. Carl Apone, "Drug Commune."

22. Personal interview with composer.

Balada seized the opportunity to revise the work, but not before the piece was performed for a more symphonically oriented audience. He recalled the second venue with more enthusiasm: “The next month the work was presented in Madrid’s symphony hall and there it was unanimously acclaimed. Symphony people are more open-minded than opera people, who didn’t like it because it lacked pretty melodies.”²³ Looking back on the events in both New York and Spain, Balada jokes that the audience in New York was maybe just better mannered.²⁴

After Balada returned to the United States, he traveled to Tanglewood, where he encountered the conductor Jorge Mester, who had premiered and recorded Balada’s *Guernica* a few years earlier to great acclaim. During this meeting, Mester inquired about Balada’s most recent work, *María Sabina*. With Mester was the conductor Laszlo Varga, who expressed interest in possibly performing *María Sabina* with the San Francisco State Orchestra, where he worked as the orchestra director. Balada had brought a recording of the piece and presented it to both Mester and Varga in its entirety. On the spot, however, Balada decided to present a reduced version to them the next day, so he left to edit and cut portions from the reel-to-reel tape.

With Cela’s permission to do as he pleased, the changes that Balada made to the piece were rather dramatic. He did not change any of the orchestration or music, but he removed entire sections. The form in which the piece premiered was roughly ninety-

23. Carl Apone, “Drug Commune.”

24. Personal interview with composer.

minutes long, but the current version is less than half of that. Both recordings of the piece are under forty minutes, and the missing sections are easily identified in the score by the large jumps between rehearsal numbers. After cutting out what he felt to be non-essential segments, he was left with only “the important points.”²⁵ Laszlo was enthusiastic about this shorter version and agreed to give the premiere with his orchestra, which went smoothly.

Under the direction of Jorge Mester, *María Sabina* was recorded on February 5, 1973, with the Louisville Orchestra and Chorus supporting América Dunham as lead. The recording was described as “superb” in an issue of *Stereo Review* and has been reissued in digital format.²⁶ This is the same label under which Mester recorded Balada’s *Guernica* in 1968, and it is also the same version of the score General Mills published in 1972. Since that time, recordings and performances of *María Sabina* have enjoyed critical reception in both the United States and Spain, and the dramatic plot of *María Sabina* has even been staged as a ballet in 1976, with choreography by Nicolas Petrov. It was danced by the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre at Heinz Hall.

Analysis

As a “symphonic tragedy,” *María Sabina* presents a variety of challenges to listeners and performers. In writing this piece, Balada’s guiding principle was to serve

25. Ibid.

26. P.K., “Recording of Special Merit - Balada: *María Sabina, A Symphonic Tragedy for Narrators, Chorus, and Orchestra*,” *Stereo Review*, November 1973, Clippings, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

the text by using any and all compositional techniques he felt appropriate. The result is an extremely complex work that assimilates many techniques of the 1960s and moves freely between tonality, atonality, aleatoric devices, timbral experimentation, and extended techniques. The reduced score, in three acts, will be discussed in this analysis, which offers insight as to how Balada originally intended the music to operate with the plot of the drama. Likewise, this arrangement also provides listeners with a clear sense of the form and progression of the drama.

To create the new sounds and develop the power of the drama, Balada used large orchestral and choral forces. This stands in contrast to the small cast that comprises a single crier (*pregonero*), sheriff (*alguacil*), executioner/hangman (*verdugo*), and María Sabina. Balada's directions in the score recommend the SATB chorus to have a minimum of twenty performers per section, and he prescribes them to be arranged antiphonally in a semi-circle around the back of the stage: soprano–tenor–alto–bass, when viewed from left to right. Balada used this arrangement to great effect in various sections of the piece to create what some reviewers have aptly described as *klangfarbenmelodie*.²⁷ Balada used this same technique in instrumental sections as well. The orchestra, while conventional in many respects, is interesting for the exhaustive list of percussion instruments Balada included. Balada mentioned that percussion was fashionable when he composed this piece, and he used such a variety of instruments

27. Peter Frank, "Music: Maria Sabina and Alban Berg," *Columbia Spectator*, April 27, 1970.

because he looking for new sounds.²⁸ The complete list of instruments can be found below in Figure 6.

In addition to the creative instrumental combinations and performance techniques in this piece, Balada also developed unique symbols to instruct performers on how he intended certain passages to be performed because several sections incorporate aleatoric and microtonal elements, which Balada clarified with a chart.

28. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

MARIA SABINA

Instructions and notes relative to performance:

Speakers (Recitadores): Pregonero, Maria Sabina, Alguacil, Verdugo

Chorus (Coro): Sopranos, Tenors, Altos, Basses: minimum of 20 voices per section; each section is separated antiphonally.

Instruments

2 Flutes (2nd doubles piccolo)
 2 Oboes (2nd doubles English horn)
 2 Clarinets in Bb (2nd doubles Bass Clarinet)
 2 Bassoons
 2 French Horns in F
 3 Trumpets in C
 1 Trombone with F attachment
 1 Bass Trombone or II tenor with F attachm't.
 Tuba

4 Percussion Players:
 (The Instruments preceded by II are played by
 (one player placed opposite the other three)

Triangle
 3 Suspended Cymbals (small, medium, large)
 2 Medium Hand cymbals
 Large Gong
 Glockenspiel
 Xylophone
 Vibraphone
 5 Temple blocks
 2 Maracas
 4 Bongos
 3 Tom-Tom (small, medium, large)
 Snare drum
 Bass drum
 2 Timpani (high and low E)
 Sleighbells on a table, played with Xylo. mallets

Musical Saw
 Whip

II 3 Suspended cymbals (sm., med., lge.)
 II 5 Temple blocks
 1 Player: II 2 Maracas
 II Wood block
 II Snare drum
 II 2 Timpani (high & low E)

Electric Bass Guitar
 1 Player: Accordion, Piano, Organ
 * 1 Fiddler (see footnote next page)
 Violins I
 Violins II
 Violas
 Violoncellos
 Contrabasses

2 Flautas (2a dobla con Flautin)
 2 Oboes (2o dobla con corno Ingles)
 2 Clarinetes en Si^b (2o dobla Cl. Bajo)
 2 Fagotes
 2 Trompas en Fa
 3 Trompetas en Do
 Trombon (tenor con extension)
 Trombon Bajo (o 2do tenor con ext.)
 Tuba

4 Percussionistas:
 (Los instrumentos precedidos de II son
 (tocados por un musico situado en oposi-
 (cion a los otras tres percusionistas.)

Triangulo
 3 Platillos suspendidos (Pequeño, Mediano, Grande)
 2 Platillos de mano mediano
 Tam-Tam grande
 Glockenspiel
 Xilofono
 Vibráfono
 5 Temple blocks
 2 Maracas
 4 Bongos
 3 Tom-Tom (Pequeño, Mediano, Grande)
 Redoblante con cuerdas)
 Bombo
 2 Timbales (agudo y grave)
 Cascabeles sobre una mesa, tocados con bajuctas de Xilofono

Serrucho
 Latigo
 II 3 Platillos suspendidos (Pequeño, Mediano, Grande)
 II 5 Temple Blocks
 1 musico: II 2 Maracas
 II Woodblock
 II Redoblante con cuerdas
 II 2 Timbales (agudo y grave)

Guitarra, Contrabajo eléctrica

1 musico: Acordeón, Piano, Organo
 *1 Fiddler
 Violines I
 Violines II
 Violas
 Violoncelos
 Contrabajos

PLACEMENT OF FORCES



*The four choral sections are separated antiphonally.
 La cuatro secciones del coro separadas antifonalmente.

**Ideally, Maria should be on a scaffold, elevated above the orchestra and chorus. On a less dramatic setting, she could stand beside the conductor.
 Idealmente, Maria Sabina deberia estar sobre un cadalso elevado por encima del coro y la orquesta. Sin embargo, en producciones menos dramatizadas, podria estar al lado del director, a la manera de solista.

Fig. 12: Orchestration page from the 1972 edition of *María Sabina*.

SYMBOLS

















-  { Cues indicated by the conductor with the equivalent number of fingers.
Son entradas indicados por el director con los dedos.
-  { Gliss. ad lib descending only on indicated strings.
Gliss. ad lib solo descendientes, sobre la cuerda indicada.
-  { Slow oscillations 1/4 or 1/2 tone above and below given note.
Oscilaciones lentas de 1/4 o 1/2 tono por encima y debajo de la nota dada.
-  { Slow harmonics gliss. ad lib above and below given note.
Gliss. lentos con armonicos por encima y debajo de la nota originaria.
-  { Descending always and constantly, from highest to lowest, fast as possible.
Descendiendo siempre y constantemente, del agudo al grave, tan rapido /
como se pueda.
-  { Chromatic ascending repeatedly, as fast as possible, from given note to/
highest possible.
Ascensión cromatica que se repite sucesivamente, desde la nota dada /
a la mas aguda posible.
-  { Gliss. ascending repeatedly, as fast as possible, from given note to/
highest possible.
Gliss. ascendientes que se repiten sucesivamente, desde la nota dada /
a la mas aguda posible.
-  { A choice of notes within the given ones, including 1/4 tones, but changing/
them constantly.
Libre elección de las notas comprendidas, incluyendo 1/4 de tonos, /
pero que deben cambiarse constantemente.
-  { Constant repetitions of the notes between double bars.
Constante repetición de las notas.
-  { Slow arco, pressing hard to create a squeak.
Poco arco, con presion, produciendo un chirrido.
-  { For Chorus, indicates spoken words. Its position within the stave indicates /
high or low pitch.
En el Coro, indica hablando, cuya tesitura se determina por su posición /
aguda o grave en el pentagrama.
-  { the highest possible.
Lo mas agudo posible.
-  { Simultaneity
Simultaneidad
-  { Between two notes = gliss.
Entre dos notas = gliss.
-  { Between two instruments, indicates to be played in succession.
Entre instrumentos, indica que deben tocarse en sucesión.
-  { Very fast.
Muy rapido
-  { Cue with the fist by the conductor.
Entrada con el puno por le director.
- *Fiddler: Metal strings not required. Could be a conventional violin so long as it sounds like that of a beggar in the street, insecure and out of tune.
- *Fiddler: Este tipo de violin puede ser un violin convencional con tal que suene como el de un mendigo en la calle, es decir, racolante y desafinado.
- Note: Piccolo, clarinets, Bass clarinet, English horn, French horns, Bass Guitar, Timpani, and Contrabasses not written in real sound.
- Nota: Flautin, clarinetes, Cl. bajo, Corno Ingles, Trompas, guitarra, timbales, Contrabajos no estan escritos en sonidos reales.

Fig. 13: Symbol key page from the 1972 edition of *María Sabina*.

Act I

The cacophony that begins the first act is a prelude to the chaos leading to Sabina's execution at the end of the piece. The martial snare-drum rolls are reinforced by the French horns, trumpets, trombones, and tubas that play repeated rhythmic figures on the pitch E. While Balada set all of the brass on the same pitch, the consonance is obfuscated by the rapid change in instruments and dynamic. Additionally, the organ plays a tone cluster chosen by the musician for the first three beats. This rhythmically driven section in 4/4 meter resolves to roughly fifteen seconds (as indicated in the score) of *senza tempo* marked by the time signature S/T. The shift from tonality in the figures at measure 7 contrasts with the single sustained pitches of the surrounding sections. During this fifteen seconds of no meter, Balada assigned a different rhythmic figure and set of pitches to each instrument. While he specifically chose the pitches for each part, how many times each one played is left to the individual performers. Throughout this piece Balada yields some creative license to the performers, but he keeps them within prescribed bounds.

One of the most interesting sounds to appear in this piece is the musical saw. Following the musical introduction, the crier (*pregonero*) recites a brief biography of María Sabina and enumerates the reasons she will be executed. While the crier is proclaiming the charges against Sabina, Balada provides a melodic contour for the musical saw to *ad lib* over the next three sections of his speech. Balada brings the musical saw back at the end of the third act during Sabina's final speech.

At the same time as the saw first appears, the organ and various percussion instruments rhythmically punctuate its delicate and ethereal sound. In the organ, Balada sets tone clusters that move in contrary motion between the left and right hands, while the pedal remains mostly static on G or A. Leading to rehearsal 2, the musical saw is replaced by additional tone clusters in the organ, chosen by the performer, and rapidly repeated notes in the strings, which are directed to be performed *secco* and *sul ponticello*. This change in instrumentation and rhythm helps to drive the final verse of the crier that will soon be taken over by the morbid excitement of the townspeople, clamoring for death.

I and II

Los siguientes acorde ad lib., no muy frecuentes alternando libremente su orden y dinamica

Organ

Pedal.

Example 7.1: Tone clusters that are repeated in the organ are followed by freely chosen and sustained clusters during Sabina's speech.

Through the next section, the melodic line in the soprano section is based on extremely close harmonies, which are a recurring device Balada uses throughout this piece. Balada explains that for sections such as this, he begins the singers in unison

because it helps them to more easily locate their initial pitch.²⁹ Once the sopranos begin in unison on E, they immediately diverge into a series of chromatic seconds and thirds. This is accompanied by the string section that continues its rhythmic motive, also based on seconds, and it enhances the tension and nervous excitement of the crowd with several measures of descending *glissandi*.

In anticipation of María Sabina's first on-stage appearance, Balada increased the number of instruments and vocalists. The addition of the winds and brass does not help to create a sense of unity in the piece; instead, it contributes to the frenetic atmosphere in which the chorus proclaims its excitement to see Sabina's feet swing from the hangman's rope. Like the violins and sopranos before, the basses, tenors, and altos enter in unison, but they move chromatically and operate within a very limited range, which yield to the cello and bass slowly oscillating a quarter or semi-tone around a low E. The violins and violas sustain harmonics on a dense tone cluster that chromatically spans nearly a full octave, from G³–G⁴. The delicate yet sharp tone of the string section serves as the harmonic foundation on which Sabina begins her first set of proclamations.

29. Ibid.

Sopranos
 Tenors
 Altos
 Basses
 Vlins. I
 Vlins. II
 Vlas.
 Vcls.
 C. Bs.

-ri - a Sa - bi - na
 -ri - a Sa - bi - na
 -ri - a Sa - bi - na
 -ri - a Sa - bi - na
 -ri - a Sa - bi - na
 -ri - a Sa - bi - na

Senza Sord. Div. á 4
 Senza Sord. Div. á 3
 Senza Sord. Div. á 3
 ff
 f
 p
 mp
 mp

X Slow oscillation 1/4 or 1/2 tone above and below given note
 Oscilaciones lentas de 1/4 ó 1/2 tono por encima y debajo de la nota dada.

Example 7.2: Tone clusters are also used with harmonics in the strings at rehearsal 6.

Upon Sabina's entrance, time is again suspended with the *senza tempo* marking. As she begins to list all of the things she is or has, e.g., no teeth, indecency, fetid breath, six teats like bitches, her spoken text is supported by the harmonics and vibrato of the strings and is accented by the bassoon, trombone, and timpani playing alternating figures, as cued by the conductor. Balada continues to give some control to the performers by assigning *ad lib glissandi* and aleatoric patterns that the conductor cues. Once Sabina is roughly a third of the way into her proclamations, however, Balada reinstates regular 4/4 meter. Sabina begins each of her statements with "*soy una mujer*" ("I am a woman"), so Balada reintroduces the chorus speaking the word "*soy*" ("I") in the order of bass,

soprano, alto, tenor. This pattern is initiated by a leader in each section, but it does not create a sense of metric regularity because Balada indicates with an in-score explanation that the sections should lose their order and collapse back into disarray.

As the tension grows with each of Sabina's statements, Balada shapes the accompaniment to complement the rise and fall of dramatic tension. Beginning with the string section, the accompaniment moves chromatically and is often based on tone clusters that move in parallel motion, such as the string section at rehearsal 11. The way in which Balada deploys dynamics throughout this act reflects the control he seeks to maintain in the orchestra and contributes to the way in which the audience perceives the drama. Each new section of this act introduces a new timbre or sound to contrast the previous until rehearsal 15 begins the final push to the end. At rehearsal 15, Balada brings all of the instrumental sections into the music and sets them against one another in both rhythm and harmony. Each of the instrument groups plays chromatic lines in either triplets or eighth notes. The resulting chromaticism, with hemiola, builds the tension until it is released at rehearsal 16, when the orchestra and chorus fall silent and Sabina recites her final line.

The image shows a musical score for four violins. The first four staves are for the violins, and the fifth staff is for the woodwinds. Each violin staff begins with a glissando (labeled 'Gliss.') leading to an octave sign (8va). Following this, the violins play a triplet pattern of eighth notes. The dynamic marking 'mp' (mezzo-piano) is indicated for the first measure of the triplet pattern in each violin part. The woodwind staff is mostly empty, with some notes visible in the lower register.

Example 7.3: Following *glissandi*, the four violin lines begin a triplet pattern created from tone clusters at rehearsal 11.

Act II

The second act contrasts with the first in several important ways, but the two share many of the same elements. Whereas the beginning of the first often moved freely or without a strong rhythmic impulse, throughout the entire second act, the rhythmic drive is incessant. Though the violins begin with sustained whole notes that are once again derived from a tone cluster, the *lento* 4/4 meter is easily discerned as the movement progresses. The slow harmonic progression and alternating conjunct movement relieve some of the inherent dissonance. The rhythmic pulse and consonance in the opening measures forecast the elements around which this act will be centered.

LENTO
♩ = 60

(28)

The image shows a page of a musical score for strings and double bass. At the top left, it is marked 'LENTO' with a tempo of 60 beats per minute. A rehearsal mark '(28)' is circled. The score includes parts for Violins I (Vls. I), Violins II (Vls. II), Violas (Vlas.), Violas (Vlcs.), and Double Bass (C. Bs.). The string parts are characterized by sustained, slowly changing harmonies with chromatic lines. Dynamics include *sf*, *marc.*, and *sf marc.*. The double bass part is marked *sf marc. sempre*. The score is in 4/4 time.

Example 7.4: Note the slow harmonic movement in the strings at the beginning of act two.

Whereas the strings begin this act with sustained, slowly changing harmonies, the brass enter more forcefully with pronounced rhythmic drive. Beginning at rehearsal 29, Balada sets the French horns, trumpets, trombones, and tuba in contrast to the string section. Though the *fortissimo* dynamic in the strings is more forceful on the page than the *forte* dynamic of the brass, the former does not overpower the latter. In fact, the *staccato* motives in the brass reinforce the strong rhythm of this entire section. Balada constructed the chromatic lines in these repeated brass motives in pairs that move in parallel motion but in opposition to the other instruments. As a result, the music sounds active, but at the same time it has no sense of direction.

The image shows a musical score for a brass section. It consists of seven staves: two for Horns (Hns.), three for Trumpets (Tpts.), two for Trombones (Trbs.), and one for Tuba. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The score begins with a dynamic marking of *f* (forte). The Horns part features a melodic line with some grace notes. The Trumpets, Trombones, and Tuba parts are characterized by staccato (stacc.) markings and rhythmic patterns, including sextuplets and triplets. The Tuba part has a triplet of eighth notes. The score is divided into two measures by a vertical bar line.

Example 7.5: Following rehearsal 29, the brass section returns and begins to reemphasize rhythm.

By rehearsal 30, Balada sustains the activity in the brass section and reinforces it with the string section. However, the rhythms in the string section are derived from quintuplet and sextuplet patterns, which breaks the rhythmic unity previously established. Adding to the rhythmic confusion are Balada’s instructions for the percussion to play “descending always and constantly, from highest to lowest, fast as possible” and “improvisation, fast and irregular in rhythm” at rehearsal 30. This chaotic sound collapses and returns to a simple string motive that moves slowly in conjunct quarter notes.

To prepare for Sabina’s return, Balada reestablishes the rhythm that will sustain to nearly the end of the act. Instruments are gradually reintroduced as the strings play long,

descending *glissandi*, tremolos, and intentionally microtonal vibratos. At rehearsal 35, the sopranos reappear to taunt Sabina, call her names, and share their excitement to see the hangman carry out his duties. To create an appropriately dissonant sound for this morbid scene, Balada wrote the soprano line to move primarily in seconds and minor thirds. Once again, to aid the vocalists in finding their pitch, the melodies begin in unison but immediately diverge with one group staying on the same pitch while the others move around. Though the meter is briefly suspended while the sopranos sing *a capella*, this is the first time the hemiola appears that will permeate the remainder of the act.

Example 7.6: At rehearsal 35, the soprano line begins in unison and moves into seconds and thirds while accenting groups of two or three eighth notes.

As the rhythm drives this movement toward Sabina’s return, Balada adds instruments working in opposition to emphasize the alternating patterns of two and three. This pattern is clearly seen in the accent marks and bracketing in the string section, as the sopranos perform syncopated, spoken lines at rehearsal 37. For Balada, spoken sections are used strategically for their unique timbre: “The rhythm of spoken language is so sharp and dramatic that nothing can equal it. I use it rhythmically like a percussive

instrument, like *pizzicati* in the strings.”³⁰ Pitch becomes less important through this section, with both the voice and strings emphasizing rhythm more than pitch content. Balada instructs the strings to play the triad assigned to each instrument up to a quarter tone away from what is written. The choice of pitch is left to the performers, but they are to play according to the indicated rhythm. These sections are contrasted with interspersed *glissandi*, tremolos, and sustained vocal pitches on the rolled consonant “r.” The final measures leading to Sabina’s appearance see the string section return to *arco* bowing while continuing to alternate patterns of two and three within a disjunct melody.

The climax of each act coincides with Sabina’s speech, and in this act she calls everyone and everything to listen to what she will soon declare. In spite of her impending execution, she lists the reasons for which she laughs in the face of the townspeople. In this final section, Balada continues the syncopated hemiola that he initiated with the string section but expands it by interspersing brass and winds, punctuating this combination with various accents in the percussion section. The dramatic and rhythmic tension builds with more instruments playing simultaneously, which also serve to increase the overall dynamic. This section comes to a small climax at rehearsal 46.5 with the conclusion of Sabina’s opening speech, which is ends with an extended, chromatic, descending *glissando* orchestrated across the entire ensemble.

30. Peter Eliot Stone, “He Writes for The Audience, but On His Own Terms: Balada’s Music,” *The New York Times*, November 21, 1982, sec. Arts and Leisure.

Balada immediately restores the rhythm at rehearsal 54, but it is now set in 7/8, which results in syncopation that is stressed by dissonant microtonal accompaniment in the strings, chromatic lines in the brass, and the repeated *glissandi* in the of the chorus and orchestra.³¹

The image displays a musical score for rehearsal 37. It features a vocal line at the top with lyrics in Spanish and English. The lyrics are: "as vie-je-ci-tas im-pe-di-das no po-drán col-gar-se de los pies de Ma-ri-a Sa-go el ai-re Sa-bi-na Ma-ri-a abra-za col-gar-". The English translation below is: "1 titless bitches, sinless witches, You can not get hold of the two feet of Maria Sa-man, the last time, Sa-bi-na Ma-ri-a em-bra-ces get hold". The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mp*, and *mf*. Below the vocal line, there are five staves for string instruments: two violins, viola, cello, and bass. Each string staff has a *mf* dynamic marking and a *Spiccato* or *cmo* articulation marking. The string accompaniment consists of rhythmic patterns with accents.

Example 7.7: Two violins, viola, cello, and bass support the dissonant whispers of the sopranos and altos with hemiola at rehearsal 37.

31. Due to the changes Balada made to the original score, this version has large gaps between rehearsal numbers, such as the skip from 46.5 to 54.

42 (f) 46 3/4 chromatic, legato

chromatic, legato *pp*

chromatic, legato *pp*

chromatic, legato *pp*

chromatic, legato *pp*

chromatic, legato *pp*

(f) *pp*

(f) gliss. *pp*

gliss. *pp*

Flutter, chromatic *pp*

Flutter, chromatic *pp*

Flutter, chromatic *pp*

gliss. *pp*

(f) *pp*

gliss. *pp*

(a Timpani descending gliss, constantly, nothing both at the same time) *pp*

(f) *pp*

(f) (Sul E) gliss. *pp*

(Sul A) gliss. *pp*

gliss. *pp*

gliss. *pp*

gliss. *pp*

(f) *pp*

Example 7.8: Balada set descending *glissandi* are set in all instruments to create extreme dissonance.

At rehearsal 57, Balada restores the meter to duple 2/2, but the rhythms remain syncopated. At this point, most of the orchestra is active, but each instrument family has a mixture of triplets and eighth notes that are accented on the offbeat. While the instruments play these intricate rhythms, the chorus maintains the spoken text in steady recitation on the beat but returns to pitched notation at rehearsal 66, when they vocalize on the interjection “ay” in response to Sabina’s statements. These vocalizations lead into an *a capella* section near the end of the movement that opens with the limited accompaniment for the chorus and features slow-moving lines that begin in unison and expand into seconds and thirds. By rehearsal 69 all accompaniment is removed and the chorus begins one of the most consonant sections of the work.

Throughout *María Sabina*, religious overtones permeate both the music and text. It is difficult to overlook the religious tropes that appear in the music, despite Balada’s open atheism and insistence that religion had no influence on his creative process. The orchestration with soloists and the chorus serving as the crowd (*turba*) is remarkably similar to Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*. Cela’s text even invokes Christian icons by calling upon the sacred heart of Christ, the heart of the mother of Christ, and God in heaven, which all appear in the final act before Sabina is executed despite her claims to be pure and without blemish. Musically, Balada uses *a capella* vocal sections and the organ, which both have long histories in the church. It is difficult to listen to this piece without noticing the similarities between Balada’s *María Sabina* and music composed for the church.

Example 7.9: At rehearsal 60, the chorus returns to consonant *a capella* orchestration.

Act III

The final act begins with a *legato* melody in the strings that moves in and out of dissonance. Balada scores this in a fashion similar to the vocal sections in act two that begin in unison but separate into seconds and minor thirds. The melodic intervals are often tritones or seconds, which eliminate a sense of direction that tertian harmony would otherwise suggest. This brief interlude in the string section leads back to *staccato* spoken text that alternates syllables between vocal sections. By doing this, Balada makes use of the separation between the groups on the stage and cycles the text through them by placing one syllable in each section moving from low to high, i.e., bass–tenor–alto–soprano. The effect is similar to that of *klangfarbenmelodie* pioneered by Schoenberg,

which breaks apart a melodic line by separating each note into a different instrument to emphasize tone color as one of the primary structural elements in a composition.³²

The image shows a musical score for four vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The score is divided into four measures. The lyrics are written in Spanish and English. The dynamics are marked with *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The lyrics are: "que él a Ma-ri-a Sa-bi-na que ta pa-ra en nuestros pa-ra en nuestros mos go a bi mos pa- ne co- cer- la mand man that bi mand vide dy to cook it di du que Ma-ri-a Sa-bi-na di re car pa-ra en nuestros de- hang her Ma-ri-a Sa-bi-na de- di- bo- for us to cook it Pe ver hor bi Pe se su co- cer- la We the choke bi We you her to cook it".

Example 7.10: The melody at rehearsal 92 is distributed across the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass lines modeled on *klangfarbenmelodie*.

With each of Sabina’s statements declaiming everything that she is, and the crowd responding “we know,” Balada writes more dissonance into the accompaniment. In doing so, the rhythm also becomes more regular as well, as heard at rehearsal 121. Here, the winds, brass, and strings all have repeated eighth- and quarter-note figures that do not change pitch. Balada creates dramatic tension with these static figures by overlapping them to create varying degrees of dissonance and by changing the dynamics from *forte* to

32. Julian Rushton, “Klangfarbenmelodie,” *Grove Music Online*, n.d.

pianissimo as they overlap. This tension continues to build as the rhythms transform into more complex, disjunct figures. At rehearsal 124, the chorus returns to a contrasting, *a capella* setting.

124 *Meno mosso* 68
 ♩ = 72-76

Sopranos
 4
 4
p
 Pa-ra que su es-tru-en-do
 Ring loud so the racket clanging

Tenors
f
 Dis-pa-rad
 Ring the bells

Altos
f
 Dis-pa-rad
 Ring the bells
p subito
 co-he-tes
 the bells

Basses
 4
 4
p
 pa-ra que su es-tru-en-do
 Ring loud so the racket clanging

Vlcs.
pp

C. Bs.
pp

Example 7.11: The chorus returns to *a capella* at rehearsal 124.

As with the second act, the *a capella* now returns to consonance. Although the melodic lines move chromatically, many of the harmonies begin in unison and move chromatically in thirds. This creates a mixture of dissonance and consonance, but as a whole, the section sounds consonant when framed by the harmonically and rhythmically

dissonant sections that precede and follow. This orchestration introduces Sabina's first section in this act, whereupon she calls out to God, Christ, the Most Blessed Mother, and all the things that cleanse her. As she speaks, however, the chorus becomes more dissonant, and the instrumental accompaniment also becomes more dissonant, disjunct, and syncopated. By the time Sabina finishes, the chorus has regressed to alternating syllables and regular rhythms to announce the arrival of the sheriff and hangman for Sabina's execution.

At rehearsal 134, Sabina makes her final statements and resigns herself to her fate. Calling upon the Lord and all that cleanses her, her statements are interrupted with chaotic accompaniment in the piccolo, flute, oboe, clarinet, horns, trumpets, and xylophone. Balada removed the time signature again and gave those instruments repeated figures that range from five to seven notes. These overlapping rhythms sound even more chaotic due to the dissonant intervals between each part. This frantic sound interjected between Sabina's words is perhaps a reflection of her inner turmoil that conflicts with the calm, self-assured statements she is making. Following her last words, the crowd calls upon the executioner to carry out his work.

With the arrival of the hangman at rehearsal 137, Balada introduces the fiddle and accordion that *ad lib* a pattern of notes he assigned. According to the performance instructions at the beginning of the score, the fiddle melody is intended to be performed slightly out of tune, and the *senza tempo* indication creates additional irregularities in the rhythm. The seven notes in the fiddle pattern are derived from a tone cluster spanning G-sharp to D-flat, which yields six distinct tones. Portions of this section move in and out of 6/8 and 3/4 meter, which enables the bongos to play hemiola to keep the piece moving forward. At the moment the hangman asks Sabina for forgiveness and gives his final countdown, all instruments fall silent; however, the orchestra and chorus promptly return. The instruments all enter on high notes and are paired in minor seconds, while the organ sustains various tone clusters. The chorus enters with unpitched notes on the consonants “goe” and “j” with instructions to imitate the sound of vomiting. This continues until the chorus begins to alternate the syllables Ma-rí-a Sa-bi-na in succession while increasing both frequency and dynamic until the final syllable is held out and the orchestra falls silent.

Musical score for SATB chorus, Example 7.13. The score shows four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with lyrics and dynamic markings. The lyrics are "Ma - ri - a Sa - bi - na Ma - ri - a Sa - bi - na Ma - ri - a Sa - bi - na". Dynamics range from *(pp)* to *ff*. The word "Secco" is written above the second staff.

Example 7.13: The SATB chorus grows louder and stronger as it chants María Sabina's name at the end.

Conclusion

Balada's collaboration with Camilo José Cela on the symphonic tragedy *María Sabina* resulted in a major success on both sides of the Atlantic for the young professor. The story of María Sabina and her magic mushrooms had been well known in the United States since the late 1950s, and by the time the piece premiered in 1970, the fascination

with psychedelic substances and hippie culture had reached new heights. While the vulgar content of Cela's libretto stirred controversy overseas, his text supplied the dramatic framework upon which Balada hung an equally moving musical tapestry. To accommodate the large amount of Sabina's freely spoken text, Balada had to yield some control to the conductor, who cued the ensemble's progression according to the pace of actress playing Sabina. Having previously used devices such as *senza tempo* meter and *ad lib* performance indications, Balada aptly merged the pace of the music with the drama after he assumed full control of the work following the Spanish premiere. With *María Sabina*, Balada continued to forgo melody by relying on tone clusters, aleatoric devices, and timbral changes to structure the piece, propel the drama, and maintain listener interest. This was Balada's first theatrical work, and he has since composed several operas following his return to melody in the mid-1970s. *María Sabina* remains one of his most important collaborations and represents an important milestone in the composer's catalog.

CHAPTER 8: *Steel Symphony* (1972)

Background

One of the most significant pieces in Balada's catalog was written in honor of his adopted hometown, Pittsburgh, PA. For decades, Pittsburgh served as an economic hub for the northeastern United States, but more importantly, the city had been the heart of iron and steel production since the early 1800s. The steel mills defined the physical characteristics of the city (including a notoriously thick cloud of pollution), and the lifestyle of the steel workers and philanthropists shaped the intangible: a commitment to the arts, education, and hard work. This was the environment in which Balada arrived in 1970 to assume his role as a professor of composition at Carnegie Mellon University, which was recently renamed from Carnegie Tech.

It was not long before Balada was taken with the lifestyle and people of his new town. Having traveled throughout the United States and lived in New York since 1956, Balada found Pittsburgh to be a welcome change, describing the people as friendly, unlike most American cities.¹ Although he arrived to work in the world of academia, Balada recognized the important role the steel mills continued to play with respect to the town's identity. "When I came, it was smoky as hell. . . . Damn that's a place to work there. That's not easy. It's tough and dirty and messy."² In addition to the filthy

1. Margie Fusco, "Symphony May Tour Balada Composition," *The Revere*, January 31, 1973, Clippings, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

2. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

working conditions and the air pollutants produced by the mills, significant noise pollution flooded the surrounding areas, emitted by the machinery and manufacturing processes housed within. The cacophony of metallic clanging and coal-powered equipment inspired Balada to write a symphonic work that would “reflect on the sonorities of the steel foundries in a sophisticated way.”³

In an effort to internalize the complicated sound of his subject, Balada visited a number of steel mills in the area to listen and take note of what he heard. Loitering around these plants, however, did bring unwanted attention to the composer, who was stopped by a security guard to ensure he was not causing trouble.⁴ After explaining that he did not intend to steal any cars and that he was actually conducting research for a symphony he planned to compose, the guard’s demeanor changed:

A security guard came over and asked me what I was doing there. He looked me up and down like I was suspicious. But when I explained to him that I was researching for a symphony I was writing, he was very pleased and happy. The people in Pittsburgh all seem nice that way.⁵

This encounter eventually led to U.S. Steel giving Balada tours of several mills to see and hear steel production up close.

3. “Leonardo Balada” (Press Document, Carnegie-Mellon University, n.d.), Clippings, NYPL.

4. Margie Fusco, “Symphony May Tour”; Carl Apone, “Mills Inspire ‘Steel Symphony,’” *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 25, 1976, Clippings, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

5. Fusco, “Symphony May Tour.”

Balada realized that many of the sounds he heard in the steel mills were suited to the aesthetics of modern music. The variety of rhythms and noises emanating from inside the mills was readily adaptable to the percussion and brass sections of the orchestra, which he did with ease. Balada described the development process and visiting the mills as “[serving] the same purpose as a painter visiting and sketching a landscape he wished to paint.”⁶ He continued, “While I wanted the sounds of the mills to serve as material for my symphony, I did not try to copy exactly the sounds I heard. If I wished to record the sounds exactly, a tape recorder would have been better.”⁷ By manipulating and adapting the sounds he heard, Balada strove to “suggest the steel mill” with “the overall structure of the work suggest[ing] the [entire] steel operation.”⁸ In the album notes of the 2010 Jesús López-Cobos recording, Balada described his experience:

Each factory seemed to have its own rhythm and vibrations. The variety of metric pulsations was of special interest for my project. Noises of all kinds—whirling dynamos, buzzing saws, rivet guns, drilling machines—startled my musical imagination and I drew a variety of motivic material from them.⁹

Whereas *Sinfonía en negro* and his other compositions before the mid-1960s were rooted in tonality, or at least maintained a loose connection with it, his *Steel Symphony* is devoid of such foundations. Writing for *The New York Times*, Peter Eliot Stone

6. Carl Apone, “Mills Inspire ‘Steel Symphony.’”

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Leonardo Balada, “Symphony No. 6, Concerto for 3 Cellos and Orchestra, *Steel Symphony*” (Album Notes, 2014), Naxos 8.573298, http://www.naxos.com/catalogue/item.asp?item_code=8.573298.

described Balada's compositional philosophy as happily blending all the modern techniques "with more traditional sounds to result in something different and fresh."¹⁰ Many of his works, especially those written after the *Steel Symphony*, balance both old and new by combining "folk song and triads, clusters, textures, timbres, [and] dissonances heard in works by Varèse, Xenakis, Ligeti and Pendercki."¹¹ Balada confirms that by the middle of the 1960s he no longer wanted to write melodies, because he wants his music to be more than just interesting—he wants it to be passionate and emotional.¹² As a result, rhythm, texture, and color are placed in the foreground of his pieces. Despite the lack of melody and tonality in this piece and "no matter what his style or technique, [Balada] is never interested in complexity for its own sake, or in the fads and fashions of the moment. His medium is music, but his [material] concerns the recognizable and ineluctable elements of human feelings and perceptions."¹³

Recognizing that audiences of the 1970s would not universally accept his avant-garde style, Balada urged concertgoers to listen with an open mind, as there is always some type of experimentation they may enjoy.¹⁴ This was particularly true, he added,

10. Peter Eliot Stone, "He Writes for The Audience, but On His Own Terms: Balada's Music," *The New York Times*, November 21, 1982, sec. Arts and Leisure.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

13. "Leonardo Balada" (Press Document, Carnegie-Mellon University, n.d.), Clippings, NYPL.

14. Fusco, "Symphony May Tour."

with rhythm, which dominates the *Steel Symphony*. Polyrhythms are prominent throughout and emphasize the impersonal and “heavily moving masses of dissonant sounds” that could be heard as “almost static, like a big sculpture.”¹⁵

The length of this piece also helped listeners to digest the mass of sound they heard. Though Balada is clear that his *Steel Symphony* intended to tell a story, the single-movement work, lasting less than twenty minutes, presents listeners with an aural transcription of the milling process:

This is not, however, a programmatic work where in one section you can identify a train going through the mill, or the sounds of sizzling steel. Nor can you hear the songs of the steel workers. There is no melody at all. This is not a tone poem. This is purely a taking of the noises from the mill and shaping them into something poetical and dramatic.¹⁶

Instead, Balada relied on the “textural construction, the rhythmical patterns, [to] make this a very dramatic piece.”¹⁷

From the opening clash of sound that results from the orchestra appearing to tune their instruments, it is apparent to listeners there will be no melody in this piece. Balada argues that this may not necessarily be a bad thing by citing the positive reception of *María Sabina*, which premiered just two years earlier:

Melody can be either good or bad. The fact that a work has or doesn't have melody has no bearing on its quality or even its reception by the public. One of

15. Leonardo Balada, “*Steel Symphony*” (Album Notes, 2014).

16. Carl Apone, “Mills Inspire ‘Steel Symphony.’”

17. Ibid.

my works, 'Maria Sabina', received a standing ovation here, at the Kennedy Center, and in San Francisco, and it has no melodies.¹⁸

His non-committal stance regarding melody became more apparent as the decade progressed, which may have helped to avoid limiting himself to a single style.

Commenting on the current state of melody in composition, Balada noted:

We are in an evolving process where it is not yet clear what is happening to melodies. In the future I expect them to be there, though not in the traditional manner. The dilemma is that most people can write nice melodies if they try hard enough. . . . But the melodies of contemporary composers seem not as interesting. So composers would rather do without them rather than do something and not do it well.¹⁹

Eventually, Balada brought tonality back into his works and even began writing his first opera before the decade was over.

The lack of melody in the *Steel Symphony* did not prevent audiences from enjoying it, especially Pittsburghers. Balada claims, to his surprise, that all the people in attendance at the premiere loved the piece. This included "all the people from the steel mills and even all the old ladies."²⁰ The head of U.S. Steel approached Balada after the performance and told him that he would have paid him to write the piece had he known it would turn out as it did. This particularly struck the composer because he was unable to

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

secure funding to write the piece, and the lack of artistic funding in the United States has always been a point of soreness for Balada:

In Europe the composer is treated with respect and the foundations are anxious to help pay for creative output. Europeans would not think very well of a big American city which refused to help a composer.²¹

Despite the challenges Balada faced in writing this piece without funding, it was a success, and newspaper reviews support Balada's claim that "even the most unmusical people love it" when it is performed live.

Following the January 14, 1973, premiere, critics from New York and Pittsburgh agreed that the piece was a success. *The Pittsburgh Press* described Balada as writing with vigor to produce a piece that is well orchestrated and put together "with style," and this "original bold work" also advanced "his reputation as an important composer."²²

Relating the *Steel Symphony* to another one of his works, *Sinfonía en negro*, *The New York Times* commented on his use of large orchestral forces that are capable of annihilating an audience. It was not until 1987, however, that the piece was first recorded, under the direction of Lorin Maazel. But even a decade removed from the premiere, it was still appreciated for its complexity and sophistication.²³ The *Steel Symphony* earned Balada the ASCAP award for a piece of "unique prestige value" for the

21. Carl Apone, "Mills Inspire 'Steel Symphony.'"

22. "Steel Symphony," *The Pittsburgh Press*, January 13, 1973, Clippings, NYPL.

23. Bill Zakariasen, "Sounds: American Revolutions," *Daily News*, April 16, 1987, Clippings, NYPL.

fifth consecutive year, and it was even adapted for ballet by Nicolas Petrov as part of the Pittsburgh Ballet's 1975 season.²⁴

Analysis

As recognized by reviewers, the experimental sounds and the subject of industry in Balada's *Steel Symphony* share attributes with works by Futurist composers of the 1920s. However, Balada wrote this piece and manipulated the orchestra in distinctly modern ways. The Russian composer Alexander Mosolov (1900–973) wrote the ballet suite *Steel* in 1927, and it had a first movement titled "The Iron Foundry." This movement has many elements in common with Balada's symphony, but the two are radically different in both style and sound. Whereas Mosolov's piece remained grounded in tonality, Balada was uninhibited by the strictures of tradition and cultural expectations. Mosolov's piece also moves homorhythmically for significant portions, while the *Steel Symphony* is derived predominately from polyrhythms. From start to finish, Balada's fascination with electronic instruments and timbre is evident in the notation and instrumental combinations that he used to craft this decidedly modern work.

One of the primary challenges Balada faced when writing this piece was finding percussion instruments to best evoke the sounds he heard when visiting various steel mill in the Pittsburgh area. Looking at the instrumentation in this piece gives us insight as to the wide variety and complexity of those source sounds. Balada made it very clear that

24. Robert Croan, "Composer Adapts Work to Ballet," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 6, 1975, Clippings, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

this symphony was not intended to be an exact imitation of what he heard in the mills, as a tape recorder could do a better job of both capture and replay. Instead, Balada experimented with standard percussion instruments and supplemented them with items used in the milling process: anvils, sheets of metal, and hammers. Non-traditional items were also used, such as brake drums from a car, a garbage-can lid, a penny whistle, and even a siren, amongst others (Fig. 15). The combination of these various idiophones and other sound effects helped Balada to establish the complex and chaotic setting he intended to reflect.

During specific moments of the premiere performance, a microphone and speaker were used to feed what the orchestra played back into the concert hall. This was not designed to simply amplify what the musicians were playing but to add an additional layer to the already complex texture. Directions in the score specify that the electronic feedback should be delayed between one and two seconds to create an echo effect that strengthens the sound of the orchestra and simultaneously blurs the sound's point of origin. Unfortunately, the amplification system was too much trouble for many stage managers, so Balada decided to eliminate it because there is not much difference without it.²⁵ As a result, no amplification or feedback were used for any of the recordings.

25. Interview with composer, March 31, 2015.

| Instrumentation | Optional Additional Instruments |
|---|--|
| 2 Flutes Piccolo | 3rd Flute |
| 2 Oboes | 3rd Oboe |
| 2 Clarinets in Bb | 3rd Clarinet in Bb |
| 2 Bassoons Contrabassoon | 3rd Bassoon |
| 4 Horns in F | 5th & 6th Horns in F |
| 3 Trumpets in C | 4th Trumpet in C |
| 2 Trombones Bass Trombone Tuba | 3rd Trombone |
| Timpani (3) | |
| Percussion (3 Players) | (4th Percussion Player – plays only passages marked "Ex") |
| Chimes | |
| Xylophone | 2 Maracas |
| Vibraphone (If possible, electronically amplified, with fuzz) | Ratchet |
| 4 Suspended Cymbals: small, medium, 2 large | Claves |
| 2 Tam-Tams: small, large | Slapstick |
| 4 Cowbells (2 optional) | Wood Block |
| 2 Brake Drums Anvil: high | 5 Temple Blocks A big piece of wood (hammered to sound with echo) |
| Thunder Sheet | 3 Bowls |
| Steel Piece (optional) | 3 Tom-Toms: small, medium, large |
| Garbage Can Lid (optional) | Tambourine (optional) |
| Piano | 4 Snare Drums: Soprano, 2 Alto, Tenor |
| Strings | Bass Drum |
| | High Whistle (Penny Whistle) |
| | Siren |

If possible, when indicated in the score, use an amplified (AMP) playback of the live performance through speakers around the hall with a 1 to 2 second delay to create an echo effect.

Fig. 14: Note the variety of percussion instruments on the orchestration page.

The special notation symbols that preface the work are essential to decrypting the enigmatic score. Many performance details are left to the discretion of the performers, which is why Balada needed to use specific markings to indicate how and what he wanted them to play. As with *María Sabina*, portions of the score contain aleatoric devices related to pitch, repetition, or duration, but Balada always maintains control by allowing musicians to only choose from a limited pool of options. The same limitations

apply to the conductor, who advances the performance according to his own design by relying on the approximate duration specified for each section. The conductor does this by counting and cueing each section with the left hand while the right hand indicates the meter and tempo.

General Symbols





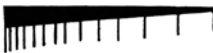







| | |
|---|---|
|  | Free fluctuation around original note, irregular and uneven |
|  | Even and slow oscillation |
|  | Between two instruments indicates immediate succession |
|  | Rallentando from fast to slow |
|  | Accelerando and rallentando |
|  | Play notes within the rectangle (including microtones) but changing them constantly |
|  | As fast as possible |
|  | Play at the same time |
|  | Sound continues |
|  | End of sound |
|  | Approximate end of sound |
|  | Very high, ad lib. |

Fig. 15: Selection of performance symbols used in *Steel Symphony*.

STEEL SYMPHONY

Leonardo Balada

Director aparece en podio
Conductor appears on podium

Wood winds tuning up
Madera afina

Orquesta afina
Orchestra is tuning

Metal afina
Brass tuning up

Cuerdas afinan
Strings tuning up

shifting notes every 3-6"

alternando notas cada 3-6"

no shifting notes

sin alternar notas

Thunder sheet

Large Tauxian

Div. 4

Ves. sord.

Div. 4

pp poco

pp poco

Example 8.1: Opening measures illustrate the unison and octaves used to imitate the sound of an orchestra tuning.

Balada uses a typical ensemble in this percussion-driven symphony, but he opens the piece in a highly unusual way. Much like Karl Weigl's (1881–49) Fifth Symphony, the "Apocalyptic," Balada's *Steel Symphony* begins with what sounds like the orchestra tuning.²⁶ While each of these pieces begins by imitating the standard tuning procedure, the *Steel Symphony* does not have an oboe lead the rest of the orchestra. Instead, Balada

26. Weigl was an Austrian Jew who fled to the United States upon the outbreak of the Second World War, and he composed his Fifth Symphony in 1945, with a dedication to President Roosevelt. However, the piece was not premiered until after his passing, when Leopold Stokowski conducted it in 1968.

set the winds, strings, and brass to begin simultaneously and resolve first to A in unison and octaves followed by two sustained chords based on major thirds and perfect fourths. These instances are the only moments of consonance in this symphony, and even the perfect fourths at conductor cue IV are undermined by the cellos and basses softly playing two adjacent tone clusters at a *pianissimo* dynamic. The remainder of the piece is structured around rhythm and timbre.

The variety of extended techniques and compositional devices that Balada uses in this symphony is in line with the general trends of the time. Even though the expression of many elements is determined at the time of each performance, Balada maintains control of the form and general character. By specifying the repeated melodic and rhythmic cells for each instrument family, Balada shapes the sound by manipulating other elements, such as dynamics, by adding and removing instruments. While each performance will vary the number of times each pattern is performed, the general aesthetic is uniform. For extended periods, only one or two instruments may change at a time when the rest of the orchestra sustains a specific rhythmic or melodic pattern. This can be heard at rehearsal 2, where the horns, low strings, and trombones enter in relatively close succession, while the percussion, winds, and upper strings sustain patterns that were begun earlier. In fact, most sections such as this are interrupted by a dramatic change in character that typically includes abruptly ceasing all repeated patterns, followed by a densely chromatic series of notes in rapid succession.

4- (2) ← ca 20"

Fls. II
Picc. (4)

Cor. I, II

Clon.

Hrn. I, II
Hrn. III, IV (4)

Tpts. (4)

I, II
Tbs.
Bas. Tbs. (4)

Timp. (4)

Tam-Tam (4)

Vibr. (4)

B. Dr. (4)

L. T. Tom. (4)

L. S. Gl. (4)

Vns. I, II
Vns. (4)

Vcs. Div. A3
Sza. Sord. (4)

Cbs. (4)

Dynamic markings: *cresc.*, *a*, *mf*, *pp*, *f*, *pass.*, *mp*, *f*

Performance instructions: *(take off sord. little by little)*, *Sza. sord.*, *(♩ = ca. 120)*

Example 8.2: Note the approximate durations indicated above the score and the subtle changes in instrumentation Balada uses to control the texture.

The image displays a complex musical score for a section of a symphony. At the top, there are two horizontal arrows indicating durations: one labeled '2" (1) - 1/2" (2)' and another labeled '3" - 4" (6)'. Below these are six numbered vertical arrows (1) through (6) pointing down to specific measures. The score consists of several staves: a top staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat; a staff for 'poco ANP' with a tempo marking '♩ = ca 120' and a 'Ped.' instruction; a staff for '(Gong)'; a staff for '(B.Dr.)'; a staff for 'Pnofte'; and a group of five string staves (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses) with various performance markings like 'pizz', 'coll. bat.', and 'arco'. The bottom of the score has three numbered vertical arrows (3, 4, 5) pointing to specific measures. The overall notation is dense and includes many dynamic markings and performance directions.

Example 8.3: *Balada* frequently closes sections by changing to rapid scalar runs or rhythmic patterns, such as heard at rehearsal 3.

The sounds produced in a steel mill are not musically organized, and they can fluctuate in duration, tempo, and dynamic according to the changing needs of production. To capture this and distill it for a symphony orchestra, Balada relied upon intricate polyrhythmic figures to convey the sense of organized disorder. At rehearsal 10, for example, the percussion, piano, and strings compete against one another with conflicting rhythmic figures that are not metrically organized and vary between triplets and quintuplets. The performance instructions in the score make it clear that patterns in the different instruments should not be purposefully grouped into uniform rhythmic patterns.

Instead, at rehearsal 11, Balada specifies that “the cut offs should not happen at once” and “the rhythm should not be steady” [emphasis in original]. The result is a heavily syncopated section, but as is often the case, one rhythmic pattern begins to stand out over the rest until the sound forms around a single pulse.

Many of the sounds Balada heard while touring steel mills are not easily reproduced by a symphony orchestra, which is why he utilized extended techniques and a variety of non-traditional percussion instruments. With these instruments and techniques at his disposal, Balada explicitly describes for performers the sounds he wants various instruments to produce. At rehearsal 11, the strings and piano each have special symbols above their parts and a detailed description of the sound they are to produce when using a specific technique. The cellos are directed to pull strings over the ridge of the fingerboard while sustaining a low G-sharp, to produce a drilling effect. This is followed by rapidly sliding a finger up the back of the instrument to produce a metallic squeaking sound. The violins, meanwhile, use harmonics to unevenly and inaccurately *glissando* between two notes in a repeated downward motion. Lastly, the pianist reaches inside the instrument to pluck alternating pedal tones and unspecified pitches in the treble clef on a quarter-note rhythm. By combining these techniques with the rhythmic and melodic content of the other instruments, Balada creates an atonal yet cohesive texture that complements the other sections of the piece through similar texture and rhythm.

(d=60)

cond. stops beating. If he starts again it will apply to sfz only (J=112).
 El director deja de llevar compas. Si reanuda, será para cuerdas (J=112)

mp p *sotto voce*

(Cuerdas pizc)

mp

d=ca 112 *fast* *fast*

arco *fast* *fast*

Vns I *solo* *arco* *vz* *p* *vz*

Vns II *solo* *arco* *p*

Vas. *solo* *arco* *v* *p* *pizz* *p*

(harm.) *fast* *fast*

others should come slowly. rtd, cond. can beat for sfz. only. VCs. Never comp. para cuerdas. wood). ara que suene a madera.

but broken ad lib. as to avoid sameness. acto, sino variado ad lib.

solo *arco* *p*

Cbs. *2 soli* *pizz* *p* *2 soli* *pi* *p*

Example 8.4: The polyrhythms and subsequent syncopation at rehearsal 10 prevent a regular pulse from being established.

Although brass and percussion dominate most of this piece, with syncopated, atonal, and *forte* motives, the strings play an important role in uniting the distinct sections of the symphony. One such example is heard at rehearsal 16. Here, the strings begin a rhythmic pattern that is based on eighth and sixteenth notes moving in mostly homorhythmic octaves and unison. Despite this section not having a tonal center, it establishes a melodic contour that creates a sense of buoyancy, thus standing in contrast to the rest of the symphony, which is heavy and pounding. Each statement by the strings concludes with a rapid, descending passage with pitch content and speed determined by each instrumentalist. This effect contrasts with the slight sense of consonance resulting from the unison passages that precede it eventually yielding to the horns and trombones that respond with a loud and syncopated motive.

The moment of greatest tension in the symphony begins with the climax at rehearsal 34. As Juan Francisco de Dios Hernández points out, Balada needed a way to regroup the orchestra after the brass play a chromatic scalar run with a *senza tempo* marking when the rest of the ensemble has an *accelerando* marking against a steady percussion section.²⁷ This gives way to a polyrhythmic finale with a foundation in the timpani that divides the 10/8 meter into uneven eighth-note groups (3+2+3+2). By emphasizing the timpani's metric regularity, Balada brings the chaotically loud and dissonant machine to a slow halt. Though individual instruments continue to play

27. Juan Francisco de Dios Hernández, *Leonardo Balada: la mirada oceánica* (Madrid: Editorial Alpuerto, 2012), 191–2.

rhythmic figures as fast as possible, the underlying pulse begins to take over as Balada slowly removes instruments after lowering their dynamic. What is left by the end of rehearsal 37 is the sound of a steel mill gradually shutting down production into permanent silence.

46

Div. *pp* *ff*

Unis. *pp* *ff*

Unis. *pp* *ff*

Unis. *f* *mf* *cresc.* *ff* *pp*

pp *pp*

ff *pp*

pp

pp

Example 8.6: At rehearsal 16, Balada alternates between homorhythmic sections and passages played as fast as possible on freely chosen notes.

Conclusion

The lack of melody in many of Balada's works from his second period did not prevent favorable reception, and his *Steel Symphony* was no exception. Inspired by the industry of his adopted hometown, Balada crafted this symphony to capture the mechanized fury of steel mills in the Pittsburgh area by utilizing the full power of the symphony orchestra and an impressive list of non-traditional percussion instruments. Although his works from this period lack melodic and harmonic content, rhythm and drama remained of utmost importance. In the *Steel Symphony*, Balada used the entire orchestra as if it were a single machine comprising many different parts that move at different rates but gradually harmonize into a single force upon the dramatic conclusion. This symphony is well known and has become one of his most recognizable works. By 1975, Balada had returned to tonality, but his *Steel Symphony* continues to be performed.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I have examined several works by two prolific Spanish composers who came to the United States in the 1950s in search of artistic freedom and economic opportunity. Carlos Surinach and Leonardo Balada could hardly be more distinct in their compositional aesthetics, yet both composers were both able to enjoy a successful career lasting several decades. The works in this study are representative of the individual styles of Surinach and Balada between the years 1950 and 1975, and they contribute to the increasing diversity of music in the United States during this period. While I have presented analyses and historical background for some of their most popular pieces from this era, each of their catalogs contains additional works that deserve closer examination. The success of these two composers is also a reflection of a larger twentieth-century phenomenon of Spanish musicians achieving fame in the United States, which is an important development in the history of both countries.

The biographical details of Carlos Surinach's life have yet to be synthesized into a complete picture, due in large part to the reserved nature of the man. Apart from the specifics related to his conducting and recording activity across Europe, the years Surinach spent in France remain to be revealed. As a young man in his thirties and in the early stages of a professional music career, the details as to where he lived and socialized and the extent of personal relationships with artists like Francis Poulenc, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Messiaen, and Jean Cocteau are of great interest. This lapse in information is likely due to his closely guarded personal

relationships and private life being distinct from the flamboyant persona that audiences were presented through his music and carefully written marketing materials.

While Surinach has long been associated with concert and stage works, little is known of his contribution to film and television music in the United States. Writing music for film was his first source of income when he arrived, but this important detail is rarely mentioned. Having written music for The Coca-Cola Company and even the first color NBC peacock logo (1957), his work was indirectly known by millions in the United States. An exhaustive list of his music for film could be developed to provide an in-depth stylistic comparison between his concert and commercial works.

At the time of Surinach's arrival to New York City in the early 1950s, the United States was at the forefront of modern dance, and many of the most important choreographers in the world resided in New York and commissioned music from composers of equal stature. Surinach was able to quickly assimilate into this elite group, and as a result, his music was used in more than fifteen ballets within his first two decades in the United States, which has made his name well known within this community. Having worked with choreographers such as Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, José Limón, Robert Joffrey, John Butler, Antonio Soler, Norman Morrice, Pearl Lang, and George Skibine, Surinach's music has been performed around the world, and his name is now intimately associated with modern dance. Many of his ballets have been cataloged and described in relation to the choreography, but an in-depth study of these works has yet to be undertaken.

Surinach and Balada both taught composition at various universities, and even the same university, but Balada was the only one who made a career of it. The cultural context in which he matured as a composer and the financial security that comes with tenured employment allowed Balada to explore radically new aesthetics and re-define himself as a composer over a period of several decades. Significantly, a large portion of his artistic maturation and creative output has taken place while guiding the next generation of composers to find their own voice. The people with whom he collaborated in the 1960s and 1970s, e.g., Salvador Dalí and Camilo José Cela, and the culturally relevant topics on which he composed helped to distinguish Balada from other composers on both sides of the Atlantic. But unlike Surinach, whose creative output sharply declined due to health and personal reasons in his mid-sixties, Balada has continued to compose and teach well into his eighties. Although the scope of this dissertation is primarily limited to the years 1950–75, Balada has since written several operas, symphonies, and concertos that were premiered by major orchestras, opera companies, and soloists across the United States, most of which have yet to be examined in a serious way.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Surinach's and Balada's careers are the social, political, and artistic connections they fostered in the United States, including composers, artists, choreographers, conductors, and musicians from a variety of countries. Most importantly, however, are those relationships and collaborations with fellow Spaniards who danced, sang, discussed, inspired, and performed their music. The cultural contributions of Spanish musicians in the United States during the twentieth

century has only begun to be explored, but having worked with and written for notable artists, such as Andrés Segovia (1893–1987), Alicia de Larrocha (1923–2009), Narciso Yepes (1927–97), Victoria de los Ángeles (1929–2005), and Ángel Romero (b. 1946), Surinach and Balada are central to this movement.

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