

Ernesto Lecuona - Andalucía Suite

Ernesto Lecuona (1895-1963) was a Cuban composer of worldwide fame and also a virtuoso pianist. His 600-plus compositions, largely in a Cuban vein, include his *Andalucía Suite*, composed in 1928 for piano. In this composition, he paints a musical portrait of Andalucía, a picturesque region of southern Spain.

Although this work is not strictly “Cuban,” it has a fully developed Latin flavor. The work is arranged for orchestra by Gordon Jenkins in six movements without a break. Each depicts places or people of Andalucía: Andalucía, Córdoba, Guadalquivir, Alhambra, Gitanerías, and Malagueña.

David Bugli - Gira por México

Gira por México (Tour of Mexico), subtitled A Journey with Local Dances was composed by David Bugli (b. 1950) and is premiered in today’s concert. The work is a medley of five Mexican dances, each representing different states of Mexico - Veracruz, Michoacán, Colima, and Zacatecas - with brief transitions from one dance to another.

A brief introduction opens the work, followed by the dances: *La Yerbabuena*, *El Huateque*, *Jarabe Michoacáno*, *El Pitayero*, and finally *El Gallito*.

Brenno Blauth - Concertino para oboé e cordas

Brenno Blauth (1931-1993) was a Brazilian composer who studied music in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and in Rio de Janeiro. In Rio de Janeiro, he founded the “Movimento Musical Renovador” (Musical Renewal Movement), an initiative to introduce lesser-known composers to the general public through concerts and radio programs in various cities. His first compositional phase had a nationalistic character, using elements of folklore. He experimented with different techniques, then returned to traditional forms with an original interpretation.

Brenno Blauth produced a large body of compositions. Some present partial ideas, allowing the performers’ choices and decisions to complete the development. Others, including the *Concertino para oboé e cordas* (Concertino For Oboe and Strings), composed in 1962, are well formed and developed.

The early 1960s marked a Brazilian musical revival of nationalism, and Blauth’s *Concertino* played an important part in this process. Blauth’s compositions are now heard throughout the world.

Camille Saint-Saëns - Allegro Appassionato, Op. 43

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) wrote two versions of *Allegro appassionato*, *op. 43*, in 1875: for cello and orchestra and for cello and piano. His bibliography includes at least 443 catalogued works for a wide variety of genres. He is best known for the opera *Samson and Delilah* and other works including *Carnival of the Animals* and the Symphony No. 3 (Organ Symphony).

The *Allegro appassionato for cello and orchestra* is less well known. It is a

charming, late-Romantic work, typical of the style of that era, and features the virtuoso solo cello.

Georges Bizet - Carmen Suite No. 1

George Bizet's (1838-1875) *Carmen Suite No. 1* is one of two suites taken from his 1875 opera *Carmen*. Both suites were compiled posthumously by Bizet's friend Ernest Guiraud, and adhere closely to the original orchestration. Suite No. 1 was published in 1882. Each of the suites consists of six selections. They have been performed as stand-alone concert repertoire and recorded many times. The *Carmen Suite No. 1*'s short Prélude introduces the ominous theme associated with Carmen and her fate. This leads to the Aragonaise - festive music from the final act of the opera. The lyrical Intermezzo (the Prelude to Act III) features woodwind melodies. It is followed by the Séguedille, a Castilian folksong from Act I. Les dragons d'Alcala (The Dragoons of Alcala), the Prelude to Act II, parodies a military march. The rousing finale of the suite, Les Toréadors is the Introduction to Act I of the opera.

Juan Arozamena Sanchez - Las Chiapanecas

Las Chiapanecas (The Women of Chiapas) is a traditional melody from the Mexican state of Chiapas that has acquired status of an informal anthem of that state. The composer of the *Chiapanecas* melody is uncertain, but was most likely the Mexican musician Bulmaro Lopez Fernandez, a native of Chiapas, who was inspired by Chiapan women's traditional attire.

Juan Arozamena Sanchez (1899-1926) frequently performed the melody and later added the lyrics that was used in performances by others, including Nat King Cole.

Performers later added choreography to be danced by women wearing traditional dress.

José Luis Elizando - Estampas Mexicanas

José Elizando (b. 1972) is a Mexican composer whose considerable output includes symphonic, choral, and chamber music. He received his training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and at Harvard University. In addition to his music education, he was trained as an electrical engineer at MIT. His first composition for orchestra, *Estampas Mexicanas* (Mexican Snapshots), was premiered in an outdoor concert by the San Jose Symphony Orchestra in 1996. It was enthusiastically received by an audience of about 25,000 with a standing ovation.

Estampas Mexicanas is a three movement suite for orchestra featuring Mexican folk elements in a style akin to the nationalistic compositions of the beginning of the twentieth century. It is inspired by the rhythmic vitality of the music of Carlos Chávez, the ritualistic mysticism of Silvestre Revueltas, and the lyric melodies of Manuel M. Ponce. Each movement can be identified with a particular stage in the process of the search for a national language seen in Mexican music at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The first movement, Ferial, is a festive parade of simple, colorful, folk-like tunes and Latin rhythms woven into a tapestry of western European textures. It relates to

music written after the Mexican Revolution of 1910 when composers, who had been writing in the European salon-music styles favored at the time, started to borrow folk musical elements to spice up their compositions.

The second movement, *Danza del Pájaro Sagrado*, presents an Aztec ritual invocation of a bird god. The bird god is represented by the solo piccolo and, near the end of the movement, by bird whistles. It corresponds to the reactionary movement that sought national identity in the music of the Mexican native tribes, consciously avoiding European influence. Notable is the use of 7/8 meter throughout the movement.

The third movement, *Teotlalli*, attempts to synthesize the European, native-Indian and mestizo sounds introduced in the previous movements. It even presents the movement's main motive in a symphonic version of the Mexican mariachi-band sound. This movement corresponds to the reconciliation of the indigenous and pro-European factions that eventually came about in Mexico, creating a more genuine musical idiom that better represented the mixed cultural heritage of the Mexican people.
