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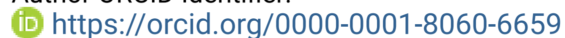
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Dr. Lance Brunner, Director of Graduate Studies

VIOLA MUSIC WRITTEN BY COSTA RICAN COMPOSERS:
ANALYSIS OF THREE COMPOSITIONAL TRENDS IN COSTA RICA

DMA Project

A DMA project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the College of Fine Arts
at the University of Kentucky

By

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Lexington, Kentucky

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and

Mr. Benjamin Karp, Professor of Cello Performance

Lexington, Kentucky

2022

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ABSTRACT OF DMA PROJECT

VIOLA MUSIC WRITTEN BY COSTA RICAN COMPOSERS:
Analysis of Three Compositional Trends in Costa Rica

What could come from a country that just this past year celebrated 200 years of independence that was only discovered in 1502 and was under the yoke of the Spanish Empire for over 300 hundred years? What contribution to the art music community could this third-world country, Costa Rica, bring to the table? Specifically, what contributions could Costa Rica make to the viola repertoire, which status as a soloistic instrument was raised only 100 or so years ago? How could a small country contribute to the repertoire of this often-forgotten instrument? To answer these questions, I have embarked on research of viola art music written by Costa Rican composers that show essential characteristics of the music essence in the country. These great works not only represent a maturity in the development of the art music in Costa Rica, but they are also technically and artistically challenging for the instrument. The three pieces analyzed are *Preludio and Inversion for Viola Solo* by Eddie Mora, *Trio Concertante for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano* by Sergio Delgado, and *Kérwá for Viola Solo* by Carlos Castro. These represent the cultural diversity that the country encapsulates as they incorporate art music, popular folk music, and indigenous folk music as inspirational trends in their composition.

KEYWORDS: Viola Music, Latin American Music, Costa Rican Composers, Indigenous Music, Bribri

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3/10/2022
Date

VIOLA MUSIC WRITTEN BY COSTA RICAN COMPOSERS:
Analysis of Three Compositional Trends in Costa Rica

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3/10/2022
Date

DEDICATION

To *Lita,*
for being my prayer warrior.
In memory of Tita,
for always being proud of me.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There is no job done alone; there is always an array of helpers behind a successful person; this research paper is no exception. First, I want to thank my viola teacher, Dr. Tze-Ying Wu, whose help and guidance have been invaluable. She is not only an extraordinary teacher but a great scholar and person. Next, I wish to thank Edmundo Ramirez for his valuable support during this research. He is a fantastic performer with a great willingness to help others grow and learn. Special thanks to all the composers for allowing me to share their pieces and for providing information for my research. Also, Maria Clara Vargas Cullel, a great scholar of Costa Rican music, who helped navigate through the literature available. Thank you to all the members of my Doctoral Committee for your support and advice.

Finally, I want to thank my family for their words of encouragement, advice, and constant prayers. To my dad who I sent on a run many times to find material only available in Costa Rica. Thank you to my friends, who have become my family in this foreign country. And to God, for being my most faithful companion through all this process.

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PART I

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

As violists, we are in constant search of new music. Since the viola has been mainly considered a chamber or orchestra instrument, its soloistic repertoire is not as extensive as the violin or cello. The Italian *viola* (Fr. vielle; Ger. Fidel) as a general term had many meanings in the early history of the bowed string instrument before becoming the term to describe the "middle child" of the violin family.[1] In the middle of the 1500s, the term was used to describe any fiddle. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, composers would often use the term to describe different parts or voices in the score, like *alto viola* and *tenor viola*; therefore, ensembles would often use between two to four viola parts.[2] This also led to the building of many violas of different sizes and colors to adjust to the demands. When the string quartet and orchestra instrumentation were standardized to two violins, one viola, one cello, and one bass section (when applicable), the number of violas needed was reduced considerably, and the making of them virtually stopped until almost the late nineteenth century.[3]

As seen before, the viola from its beginnings has been considered a chamber rather than a soloistic instrument. However, there are a few examples in the repertoire since the Baroque period that showcase the viola. Some of the first composers to take notice of the instrument were G. P. Telemann, with his Viola Concerto in G major TWV

[1] David D. Boyden and Ann M. Woodward, "Viola," *Grove Music Online*, 2001. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.ezproxy.uky.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000029438.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

51:G9, and J. S. Bach with his Brandenburg Concerto no. 6 in B-flat major, BWV 1051. There are some Baroque transcriptions like the Six Suites for Cello BWV 1007-1012 and the Three Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord BWV 1027-1029, both written by J.S. Bach. From the classical period, some examples include the F. A. Hoffmeister *Viola Concerto* in D major, a few viola concertos by Carl Stamitz, and the most beautiful of all, the *Sinfonia Concertante* for Violin and Viola in E-flat major K364 by W. A. Mozart. During the Romantic period, some beautiful works were written for the instrument, like Robert Schumann Märchenbilder *Op. 113* and Johannes Brahms' Two *Viola Sonatas Opus 120*.[4] There is also the *Arpeggione Sonata* by Franz Schubert, but since arpeggione is not an available instrument anymore, the viola or cello transcriptions are the most common version of this work.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, three influential performers placed the viola on the map as a soloistic instrument. These were Lionel Tertis, Paul Hindemith, and William Primrose. Due to their incredible performance skills, composers started to write works to perform on the viola. Paul Hindemith, as he was also a prolific composer, contributed to the repertoire by writing many viola sonatas, solo works, and viola concertos; among them is the beautiful *Der Schwanendreher* for Viola and Small Orchestra. William Walton dedicated his *Viola Concerto* to Tertis, and it was first performed by Paul Hindemith.[5] And Primrose commissioned the Béla Bartok *Viola Concerto*, which includes the most important and challenging viola works. In 1919 three major works for the instrument were written. Two were the product of the Berkshire

[4] They were first composed for Clarinet, but the composer also transcribed the work for Viola; therefore, violists also claim the compositions as their own.
[5] David M. Bynog, *Notes for Violist: A Guide to the Repertoire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 306.

Festival Competition sponsored by the Coolidge Foundation for the arts[6]. The *Sonata for Viola and Piano* by Rebecca Clarke and Ernest Bloch's *Suite for Viola and Piano* shared first prize, surprising the public with a prominent woman composer and two new outstanding pieces for the viola. Also written at the beginning of that year was Hindemith's *Viola Sonata*, Op. 11 no. 4, and was his first foray into the viola repertoire.[7] After these works, more composers started noticing the instrument and writing more for it.

Though the viola repertoire has grown and keeps increasing, the options are still limited. Since the past cannot be changed, we violists look to the present and the future to find new repertoire. Therefore, a study like this may be of great value for any violist looking for new pieces that are fresh, engaging, and challenging. The purpose of this research is to share with my viola peers some impressive new works written by composers from my birth country, Costa Rica.

As a summary of what is to come, the second chapter presents an overview of the music history in Costa Rica from what we know of the pre-colonial time to the current developments of art music and education in the country. The third chapter discusses three Costa Rican compositional trends from which composers draw inspiration: Western European Art Music, Popular Folk Music, and Indigenous Folk Music. Although there may be other categories, these three are most pertinent to my research in the pieces analyzed in the following chapters.

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[6] Bynog, *Notes for Violist*, 99.
[7] Bynog, *Notes for Violist*, 136.

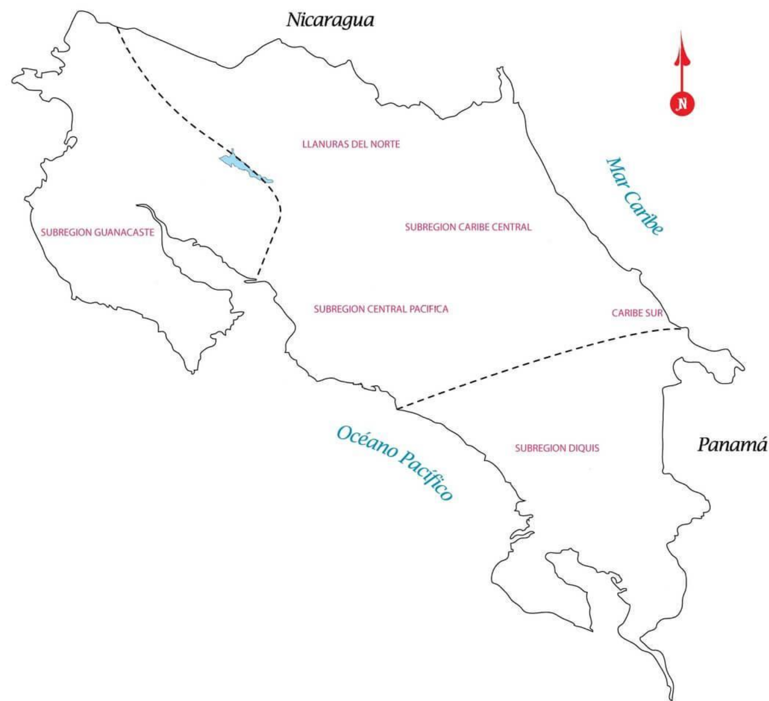
The fourth chapter is divided into three sections, one for each piece analyzed. These sections include information about the composer, an analysis of the music, and a discussion of pertinent performance practices. This will provide information for future performers and researchers of these works. Finally, the conclusion ties all the threads together and offers suggestions for possible research topics for future investigations.

In addition, this research means to showcase the abilities of Costa Rican composers to create extraordinary music. I also hope to encourage other musicians to explore music written by Latin American composers, since the repertoire is extensive, yet the number of performers willing to play this music is narrow.

CHAPTER 2. MUSIC HISTORY OF COSTA RICA

In October 1502, during his fourth trip to the New World, Christopher Columbus set foot on the Caribbean shore of Costa Rica. His ships ported in what was called Cariarí. Here the Spanish did not find highly developed societies like the Mayan, Incan, or Aztecs, but rather simple native people dedicated to fishing, agriculture, and hunting for survival. Modern archeologists divide Costa Rica into three zones: Archeological Region of Gran Nicoya, Central Archeological Region, and Archeological Region Gran Chiriquí.[8]

Image 2.1 Archeological Map of Costa Rica



Map from the National Museum of Costa Rica[9]

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[8]Francisco Corrales, "Historia Profunda," Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, accessed February 18, 2022. https://www.museocostarica.go.cr/divulgacion/articulos-educativos/arqueologia/historia-profunda/#iLightbox[hprofunda]/1.

[9] Francisco Corrales, "Historia Profunda."

From the beginning, the purpose of colonization was to eradicate the customs of the indigenous colonies and replace them with the European customs — in the case of Latin America, primarily with the Spanish culture. This included religion, social norms, language, and musical traditions. That is why we speak Spanish in Costa Rica and not Bribri, Cabecar, or Chorotega. It is also the reason Catholicism is the official religion of the Republic, rather than worshiping the god *Sibö* (from the Bri-Bri religious traditions and myths). In the case of music, as an essential part of entertainment in any society, the changes were evident.

The 1500s were devoted to conquering new land. Confrontations between the indigenous and the Spanish were intense. However, while putting up strong resistance, the indigenous people could not defeat the better-armed Spanish conquerors who took over the territory. The few surviving natives fled into the mountains.[10] The Spanish language and religion were imposed over the conquered territory. It was calculated that when the Spanish arrived in Costa Rica, the indigenous population was around 400,000.[11] However, Costa Rica, not being as rich in gold and other resources as the Spanish expected, was not exploited as other countries were. Consequently, people started to leave or die from one of the many diseases, and the ones that stayed lived in extreme poverty.

[10] Currently, some of the largest concentrations of indigenous groups (Cabécar and Bribri) are in the depths of Talamanca Mountain, one of the largest and tallest mountains in Costa Rica. Due to the isolation provided by the mountain, they have been able to keep and pass along some of their ancient customs.
[11] Wendy Kramer, et al., "La Conquista Española de Centroamérica," in *Historia General de Centroamérica: El Regimen Colonial, Tomo 2*, ed. Julio Pinto Soria, (Madrid: Ediciones Siruela, 1993), 80.

Instead of increasing, the general population diminished to 69,875 people by 1569.[12] By the year 1611, the indigenous population was reduced by 89.74% with numbers down to 7,168 people.[13] Beside the conquering process, the insertion of new diseases and the lack of economic resources in the country reduced the existing population and discouraged explorers to come to the country. The conquerors that stayed worked the land, and their production was mostly to survive. Entertainment options were narrow, and any music production was mostly limited to special celebrations at the church.

The following century was better for this small colony. Three important cities were established during this time: Villa Vieja (now Heredia); Villa Nueva de la Boca del Monte (San Jose), and Villa Hermosa o La Lajuela (Alajuela).[14] With the capital, which at that time was Cartago, Costa Rica had the four major cities still important today. Musically, this century was similar to the one before since musical productions were still centered around the church. However, the Spanish conquerors noticed the indigenous people's particular interest in their music. Bernal Flores explains it in the following way:

> Knowing the Spanish the attraction that music had for the Indians, from the earliest times of the conquest and then during the colony, they put the indigenous people to sing and taught them to play the instruments brought from Europe, as a way to interest them in the Catholic worship.[15]

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[12] Wendy Kramer, et al., "La Conquista Española de Centroamérica," 80.
[13] Claudia Quiros, *Historia de Costa Rica*, vol. 1, *La Era de la Encomienda* (San Jose: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 1990), 131.
[14] Flores, *La Música en Costa Rica,* 33.
[15] Flores, *La Música en Costa Rica*, 33.

This led to the conversion of many indigenous people to Catholicism and the inclusion of many of their instruments into the ceremonial activities of the church. In an inventory done at the Orosi Church in 1785, the church had one violon, one marimba, three violins, two guitars, one clarion, and two chirimías.[16] This combination of instruments and cultures marked the final means of colonization as the last of the territory finally became the domain of the Spanish Empire.[17]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population of Costa Rica was no more than 50,000 people.[18] They were isolated geographically and culturally from the rest of the world. However, its society lived in peace, cultivating from the land as the primary source of income. Differently from Mexico, whose fight for independence lasted a decade, Central America peacefully received its independence from Spain in 1821. After being part of the short-lived Mexican Empire and then the United Provinces of Central America, Costa Rica finally became a Republic in 1848.[19] While the shedding of blood from civil wars, dictatorships, and military innervations was the theme in the rest of Central America, Costa Rica was investing in building its democracy, education, and economy.

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[16] Similar to a shawm or clarinet, the chirimia was a folk instrument played in most areas of Spain and the New World but has become increasingly rare. It consists of a long wood hollow stick with ten holes: "The wide dispersion of the chirimía in Latin America probably results from the Spanish colonial church policy of promoting native chirimía and recorder performance as a means to promote Christianity" (John Schechter and Henry Stobart, "Chirimía," *Grove Music Online*. Accessed 21 February 2022. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.ezproxy.uky.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000046956).

[17] Flores, *La Música en Costa Rica*, 33.

[18] Flores, *La Música en Costa Rica*, 39.

[19] *Britannica Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Independence of Costa Rica." Accessed February 9, 2022. https://www.britannica.com/place/Costa-Rica/Independence.

Music and entertainment, however, were not part of the Costa Rican identity just yet. Military bands were present since the colony, yet these did not have more than ten musicians and their performance capabilities were amateur at best.[20] After independence, there were some governmental efforts to invest in the military bands. In 1845, due to the insistence of the Spanish musician José Marínez, the government emitted the decree LXIII, which established the institution of *Direccion General de Bandas* (General Direction of Bands).[21] However, there was hardly any budget designated to this musical ensemble, and the rickety state of the military bands did not improve until 1860s. Finally, in 1866 military bands obtained better financial aid from the government, truly establishing the position of *Director de Bandas* and trusting Manuel Maria Gutierrez to take this small *fanfarrias* and transform them into more professional bands.[22] This was the first musical institution fully sponsored by the government. Beside their military duties, members were required to play at the most important events of the towns, becoming an important source of entertainment. Though bands are not related to the militia anymore, their concerts still are a significant part of popular entertainments to this day as they often perform at different town's parks and amphitheaters.[23]

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[20] In 1766, there was a Royal Decree that raised the salary of the military musicians (Maria Clara Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto: Musica en Costa Rica (1840-1940)* (San Jose: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 2004), 33-34).

[21] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 35.

[22] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 39.

[23] After the dismantling of the militia in 1945, bands became part of the police department. However, in the 1960s they started to become independent entities. Finally, in 1972, with the creation of the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports, they became part of the General Directorate of Culture (Maria Clara Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico: Música en Costa Rica (1940-2010), in *Música Academica Costarricense: Del Presente al Pasado Cercano*," ed. Ekarerina Chatski (San Jose: Universidad de Costa Rica, Facultad de Bellas Artes, 2012), 42.)

The exportation of coffee in the 1840s placed Costa Rica on the map and rocketed its economy. As the country's economic development continued, the government invested more in infrastructure, like the railroad (1871) and electrical power grid (1884). There were also more means for entertainment. Plans to build the National Theater began in 1887 after the Mora Theater was destroyed by an earthquake.[24] The interest in vocal productions brought lyrical companies into the country in the 1850s.[25] Wealthy people from the metropolitan area were the major consumers of this music. They were also the ones with the means to import musical instruments. Records show that the first piano was brought to the country in 1835 and the first organs were installed in Catholic churches in the 1820s. The availability of these instruments allowed the artistic quality of music to rise, and many important works written by European composers were first introduced to the country on these instruments.[26]

Though there was an interest in music as an entertainment source, the country had no musical schooling available. Realizing this deficiency, many international musicians coming with the lyric companies saw an opportunity and stayed in the country to teach private music lessons. The resulting amateur — or "aficionado" — musicians organized their own vocal and instrumental ensemble, or what Bernal Flores called "orquestas incompletas" (incomplete orchestras).[27] These groups dissolved as quickly as they were formed due to the lack of formal music education for its members. Private lessons

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[24] Maritza Cartín, "Teatro Mora: El Primer Teatro de San Jose," Mi Costa Rica de Antaño, October 5, 2017, https://micostaricadeantano.com/2017/10/05/teatro-mora-construccion/.
[25] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 48.
[26] Flores, *La Música en Costa Rica*, 42.
[27] Flores, *La Música en Costa Rica*, 42.

together with the military bands were the only available music education in the country until the 1890s.[28]

Though the tradition of band concerts was established in the mid-nineteenth century, the first National Symphony Orchestra was not formed until 1926. After many disappointments and the lack financial support, the orchestra was dissolved a year later. It was not until 1940 that National Symphonic Orchestra[29] was established thanks to the violinist Héctor Reyes and the enthusiasm of the First Lady of the Republic at the time, Ivonne Clays.[30] During the first few years, the orchestra was supported financially by various private funds, and by1943 it finally received the first financial support from the government. For many years this ensemble belonged to the Ministry of Public Educationand still struggled with financial issues.[31] Its members were mostly amateur musicians. The little funds to pay the musicians forced them to have other jobs to support their families. Hence, the repertoire performed was limited.

In 1970, under the third government of Jose Figueres Ferrer, the *Ministerio de Cultura y Juventud* (Ministry of Culture and Youth) was established, and the orchestra became part of it. With the emblematic phrase "¿Para qué tractores sin violines?" (Why tractors without violins?), a "musical revolution" started in the hands of the vice minister Guido Sáens.[32] There are mixed feelings about this "revolution" since most national

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[28] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 51.
[29] It was first called *Orquesta Nacional* and in 1942 it performed the first concert as the *Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional*, the name that it is kept today (Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 21).
[30] Maria Clara Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico: Música en Costa Rica (1940-2010)," in *Música Academica Costarricense: Del Presente al Pasado Cercano*, ed. Ekarerina Chatski (San Jose: Editorial Universidad de Costa Rica, 2012), 20.
[31] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 20.
[32] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 35.

musicians playing in the orchestra were fired and replaced by foreign performers with formal education and experience.

The second phase of this reform was the formation of the Youth Symphony Orchestra in 1972. The Costa Rican scholar Maria Clara Vargas Cullel describes it this way:

> Long lines of children and adolescents were formed waiting to take the admission test for this eminently practical music school, whose main objective was to form relay teams for the National Symphony Orchestra.[33]

Only eight years after, due to the difficult financial situation of the country in the 1880s, many foreign musicians left the country, and the newly educated national musicians occupied the empty chairs.

The third and fourth phase that consolidated this musical reform were the formations of the *Coro Sinfónico* in 1974 and the *Compañia Lírica Nacional* in 1980. These four institutions (Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional, Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil, Coro Sifónico, and Compania Lírica Nacional) became independent from the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports in 2003 to form their own entity, *Centro Nacional de la Música* (National Center of Music). [34] In 2007 another musical institution was created: the Sistema Nacional de Educacion Musical or SINEM (National System of Musical Education), which I discuss later in this project. [35]

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[33] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 36.
[34] Currently its name has changed to Ministry of Culture and Youth.
[35] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 37.

The first attempt to create a music school in Costa Rica was in 1890, when the first National Conservatory of Music was founded by the government to educate musicians to create a symphonic orchestra. Unfortunately, due to lack of funds and faculty division, this music school only lasted until 1894.[36] That same year, Alejandro Monestel, last director of the National Conservatory of Music, started the Santa Cecilia Music School.[37] Its model operandi, and even many of the teachers and students, were the same as at the National Conservatory. However, it did not receive any funding from the government, but it supported itself from the students' tuition and the help of the community. The school started in San Jose and later open a second school in Heredia, using mostly the same teachers for both schools.[38] For 63 years this music school was responsible for educating the best musicians in the country at the time, including the ones that formed the first (1926) and second (1940) national orchestra. In 1956 the school closed its doors. However, the music education panorama of the country had been changed thanks to this institution.

In 1941 the Music Culture Association with the support of Luis Demetrio Tinoco (Secretary of Public Education), presented to the congress the initiative to start a second National Music Conservatory. After the project was approved, the National Conservatory of Music opened its doors in March of 1942.[39] Two years later, it merged with the

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[36] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 182.
[37] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 183
[38] Vargas, *De las Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 185
[39] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 22.

Faculty of Fine Arts of the newly formed Universidad de Costa Rica,[40] union that still strong until today.

Another fine institution created in the mid-nineteenth century was the *Conservatory del Castella* (Castella Conservatory). This was established in 1953 by the visionary Arnoldo Herrera Gonzalez, who, thanks to an inheritance left by Carlos Millet de Castella, was able to start the *Conservatory del Castella* project.[41] Its beginning was small but thanks to the dedication of Herrera, the conservatory was accredited by the Ministry of Education, allowing their students to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts. The first class graduated in 1970. The curriculum of the conservatory incorporates music, art, theater, and dance with academic classes from kindergarten until high school. This schooling system has educated some of the best artists in the country, as a matter of fact, all the composers discussed later in this thesis are alumni of the Castella Conservatory.

Another national institution that teaches music is the Music School at the Universidad Nacional in Heredia, which has offered classes since 1974.[42] The Instituto National de Música was merged with the Universidad Estatal a Distancia in 1997 to create a bachelor's in music performance degree.[43] Finally, the newest musical institution established in 2007 is the SINEM (Sistema Nacional de Escuelas Musicales).[44] Similar to El Sistema in Venezuela, this program establishes music schools all around the country

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[40] "Historia de la Facultad de Artes," Facultad de Artes de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Accessed November 22, 2021. http://artes.ucr.ac.cr/fa/.
[41] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 24.
[42] "Escuela de Musica," Centro de Investigacion, Docencia y Extension Cultura. Accessed November 22, 2021. http://www.cidea.una.ac.cr/musica/95-escuela-de-musica/184-historia-escuela-de-musica.
[43] "Instituto Nacional de Musica," Sicultura. Accessed November 22, 2021. https://si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/instituto-nacional-de-la-musica.html.
[44] "Historia del SINEM," SINEM. Accessed November 22, 2021. https://sinem.go.cr/quienes-somos/historia-del-sinem.

with the purpose of offering high-quality music education to children and adolescents from areas of social risk as well as to population of rural areas.[45] These institutions, and the ones mentioned before, are responsible for educating the musicians employed in different ensembles in the country. Currently, instead of a single orchestra, the country has the Heredia Orchestra, the Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the University of Costa Rica, to mention a few. These orchestras foment the performance of Costa Rican and Latin American composers, constantly bringing fresh new music to the public.

More specifically to composition, Costa Rica has had great composers in the past, like Alejandro Monestel (1865-1950), Julio Fonseca (1885-1950), Julio Mata (1899-1969), Carlos Enrique Vargas (1919-1998), and Rocio Sanz (1934-1993), among others. However, the current music scene of the country is diverse and rich in stylistic crossovers. In the Costa Rican classical repertoire one can find Rock Operas like Carlos Castro's *La Chunga* to more traditional symphonies like Carlos Guzman's *Sinfonia de los Volcanes* (Symphony of Volcanos). There are also examples of atonal music, like Bernal Flores' *Siete Tocatas* for piano, and aleatory music, like in *Cuadros para Orquesta* by Luis Diego Herra. Regardless of the style, Costa Rican composers are breaking barriers to create music that represents what it means to be "Ticos."[46] The quality of this music is starting to gain international recognition as its notes are resonating in music halls worldwide.

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[45] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 44.

[46] This is what Costa Ricans are called due to their constant use of the diminutive "tico" or "tica" for as many adjectives as possible. For example, they do not say "chiquito" (small); they say "chiqui<u>tico</u>" or "chiquititico." The more "ti" before the final "tico" they add, the more authentic it is.

Beside classical music, Costa Rica has a variety of popular and folk music, which I discuss in the next chapter, as well as an active pop music scene with genres like rock and jazz as the most common.

Finally, I want to conclude this chapter by recognizing the work that many musicians in and outside of the country are doing to promote Costa Rican music and its research. The first book about Costa Rican Music History came in the 1970s and was written by Bernal Flores; now multiple books on the matter are available. Scholars like Maria Clara Vargas Cullel, Tania Vicente, Ekaterina Chatski, and Gerardo Duarte, to mention a few, have made their lives' work bringing out of the dark facts about our music history. The work done by Zamira Barquero and her research team at the *Archivo Historico Musical* (Historic Musical Archive) is extraordinary. They collect, catalogue, and constantly research music scores written by Costa Rican composers and make those scores available to the public.

There are also groups of performers and conductors that program Costa Rican music into their concert to create awareness about the artistic outcome in the county and to support contemporary composers. Among them are Eddie Mora with the Heredia Symphony Orchestra and the National Symphony orchestra, and their efforts to record Latin American music. Luis Diego Herra and Alejandro Gutierrez with the Universidad de Costa Rica Symphony Orchestra and the many ensembles they had conducted.

From the 1980s, chamber music became one the most active spaces of academic music in the country.[47] Therefore, chamber ensembles like *Quinteto Miravalles*,

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[47] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 40.

Trombones de Costa Rica, *Ensemble Universitario Contemporaneo de la Universidad de Costa Rica*, *Duo Mora-Duarte*, among others, are regularly scheduling contemporary music.

More specific to the viola, it is worth mentioning the work that Edmundo Ramirez, Costa Rican violist with an amazing international career, has done to encourage composers to write for the instrument. After solidifying his international performance career, Ramirez searched for music from his native country to perform during his tours. It was then that he rediscovered the *Concierto para Viola y Orchestra Sobre un Canto Bribri* by Benjamin Gutierrez and performed it with the National Symphony Orchestra in 2010.[48] He has also worked with Carlos Castro in pieces like *Sonata de La Luna* for viola and string orchestra, *Kerwa* the viola solo and string quartet versions, *Duo Concertante* for Violin, Viola and Orchestra, among many other works. Dr. Susan Campos Fonseca wrote for Ramirez *Espino Blanco* for viola d'amore and electronics and *Desierto* from *Moonwatchers no. 1* for Soprano, viola d'amore and electronics noise.[49]

As an avid promoter of Costa Rican music, Ramirez organized the project *SoundArt: From Costa Rica to NYC*, which features "rarely heard music by composers from Costa Rica, including Susan Campos-Fonseca, Rocío Sanz Quirós, Pilar Aguilar, Valeria Bregón, Edmundo Ramírez, and Carlos José Castro Mora."[50] This concert was performed by the Bleecker String Quartet, of whom Ramirez is a founding member,

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[48] He has also performed this work in Russia with the Vronezh Philharmonic and with other ensembles in the United States.

[49] Edmundo Ramirez, "My performing premieres and revivals of Costa Rican Compositions for the Viola and the Viola d'amore," *Edmundo Ramirez* (Blog), February 17, 2020. https://edmundoramirez.com/blogs/.

[50] "SoundArt: From Costa Rica to NYC," AS/COA, accessed February 25, 2022, https://www.as-coa.org/events/soundart-costa-rica-nyc.

Carlos Castro, and other colleagues of Ramirez. One of his string quartet goals is to perform and premiere works by Latin American composers.

This chapter is just a summary of a more complex journey that the Costa Rican Music scene has gone through and is still riding on. This present study does not mean to extenuate the topic, but to serve as an introduction for more advance research.

CHAPTER 3. MUSIC PANORAMA IN COSTA RICA

There are three categories in contemporary taxonomy that divide music into folk, art, and popular. This study explores these categories from a Costa Rican perspective, more specifically in compositions written for the viola. The discussions of the cultural and musical elements included in this chapter will be illustrative in the analysis of the musical examples in the next chapter.

3.1 Art Music

The term “Art Music” is mainly used by many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Euro-Americans to define music based on the musical system employed by European composers.[51] This has been categorized as a “high-class” music form written and listened to by erudite audiences. Though this terminology is changing due to the overlapping of many music forms and systems, this term will be used in my research to refer to music based mainly on the Western musical language.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Western culture has heavily influenced Costa Rican music and culture since colonization. Indigenous music was almost completely eradicated or adapted. Consequently, Costa Rican music, from academic to folk, is greatly influenced by Western musical language. Even the early “cancioneros,” mainly for educational purposes, were composed in the European style.[52] Consequently, what we call folk music today is the result of a mixture of cultures portrayed by music.

[51] Denise Von Glahn and Michael Broyles, “Art Music,” *Grove Music Online*. Accessed October 4, 2021.

[52] A book with songs.

3.2 Popular Folk Music

When one looks at the concept of folk music, the definitions vary, and the discussion regarding what it entails often becomes a heated argument. However, for the purpose of this paper, we will define folk music as a "type of traditional and generally rural music that originally was passed down through families and other small social groups."[53] In contrast with 'art music,' which serves the purpose of aesthetic enjoyment, folk music is connected to social entertainment, as it is often used in communal festivities. It lives in the oral tradition, and it is usually performed by amateur musicians. During the end of the nineteenth century, this concept was associated with the rising nationalistic tendencies of the pre-World War II panorama, as it was often used as political propaganda. In the twenty-first century, the rise of technology (recordings. radio, television, and the internet) brought another color to the music scene by creating another type of music: urban popular music.[54] The nationalistic and preservation movements, now in the hands of learned musicians, poets, and scholars, have spurred an artistic revival in an attempt to collect the shattered identity resulting from the war.

In Latin America, whose identity has been wiped out since colonization, the idea to establish its own identity resounded in the minds of many intellectuals. Nationalistic movements like Latino Americanism and Pan-Americanism started to arise in the twentieth century. As a result, musicians, poets, and scholars turned into their countries' folklore and their everyday life for inspiration. In Costa Rica, two trends often overlap with art music: popular folk music post-colonization and indigenous folk music.

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[53] Bruno Nettl, "Folk Music," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, December 3, 2020. Accessed November 1, 2021.
[54] Ibid.

Costa Rican popular folk music has various genres that change from region to region. On numerous occasions, genre names are interchangeable, increasing the difficulty of finding one correct definition for a specific style. This is the most known music but the least researched. However, I will attempt to define some terms to set the parameters of my analysis of Sergio Delgado's piece presented in the next chapter.

When talking about folk music, the country is often divided into three areas: *Guanacasteca* (from Guanacaste), from the Central Valley, the Afro-Caribena (from Limon).[55] The most well-known folk music, often erroneously considered the only significant source of Costa Rican folk music, is from the area of Guanacaste. In 1927, the government sent a group of musicians from the capital to Guanacaste to study its folk music in a pursuit to strengthen Costa Rican nationalistic identity. Their findings were published in three books: *Primer Folleto de Musica Nacional* (1920 and 1934), *Musica Criolla* (1935). Though the booklets were advertised as having music from all over the country, most music was from Guanacaste.[56]

The culture in the province of Guanacaste is rich and varied. It is the land of the *pampa*, *sabaneros*, beautiful beaches, and volcanos. There, the European white, indigenous, and black communities have lived together for centuries, and, as it would be expected, their cultures mixed to create a new one. Of the three elements that make music—melody, harmony, and rhythm—it is the last one that had the most changes in

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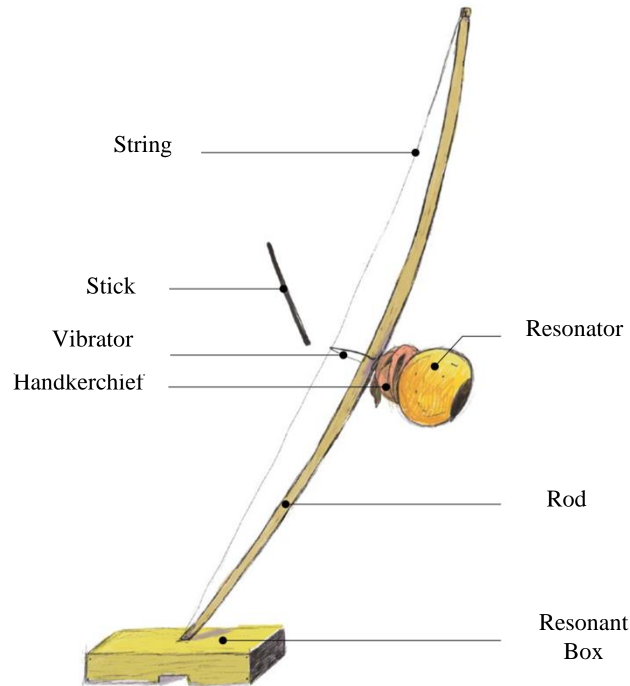
[55] Vargas, "Un Escenario Caleidoscópico," 51.
[56] Vargas, *De Fanfarrias a las Salas de Concierto*, 237.

Guanacaste.[57] Most likely this is due to the percussive nature of the instrumentation used in this area, whose main melodic instruments are the guitar, the marimba, the *quijongo*.[58]

Image 3.2.1 Quijongo



European dances influenced by the Chorotega indigenous groups and the African slaves—brought since the 1600s by the European conquerors —created the music we hear today in Guanacaste.[59] In the streets and parties, you would hear a Spanish *jota*, for example, but with some rhythmic variations like emphasis in the weak beats, typical of

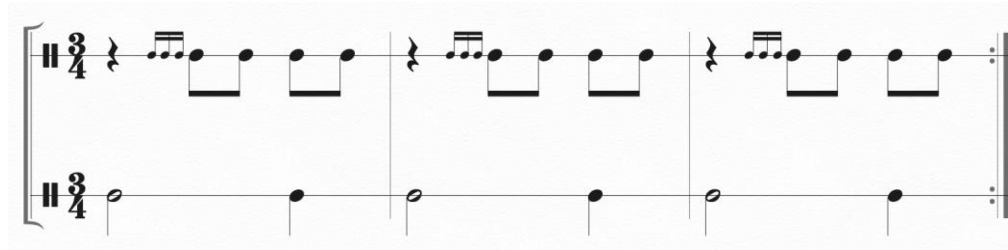
[57] Gerardo Duarte, "Desde la Pura Cepa: Una Revision de los Ritmos Tradicionales Guanacastecos del Siglo XX," *Herencia* 15, no. 2 (2003): 32.

[58] The *quijongo* is antique indigenous instrument made with a long rod, one string, a resonance box, and a resonator. It is played by hitting the string with a stick. The string is tuned at a perfect 4th production of the melodic motion 5-1, though there is not specific pitch this is tuned to.

[59] In Costa Rica from 1607 to 1824, approximately 2,480 enslaved Black people were distributed among Cartago, Alajuela, Guanacaste, and San Jose. In 1824, slavery was condemned in all of Central America. However, it was not until 1850 that all black people were free to live their lives like any other Costa Rica citizen (Pedro R. Gutierrez, "La Esclavitud en Costa Rica," *El Mundo CR*, August 15, 2021. Accessed October 25, 2021. https://www.elmundo.cr/opinion/la-esclavitud-en-costa-rica/).

African music. Observe in Ex. 3.2.1 a standard rhythmic pattern of the Spanish *jota* and in Ex. 3.2.2 the transformed version used in Guanacaste:

Ex. 3.2.1 Spanish *Jota* Rhythmic Pattern.[60]



Ex. 3.2.2 Guanacaste *Jota* Rhythmic Pattern.[61]

The amalgam of cultures created many other rhythms and song types like the *danza*, *punto*, *contradanza*, *tambito*, *parrandera*, *pasillo*, and *corridos*, among others. The *parrandera* is music that is danced in the *parrandas.*[62] It has a fast and festive character, which is why it is often called “espanta perros” (dog chaser), “levanta polvos” (dust raiser), “arranca escobas” (broom braker), and “levanta muertos” (dead awakers). Within this style are the fast and happy jotas in 3/8 and 3/4, fast *danzas* in 2/4,

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[60] Miguel Gutierrez, *Jota (Ritmo 1)*, September 20, 2008, from YouTube, Video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPKfOp-UCZU.

[61] Raziel Acevedo, “Entre el Pasado y el Presente se Construye la Cultura Tradicional de Guanacaste,” in *Cartografias Sonoras del Tambito al Algoritmo... Una Aproximacion a la Musica en Costa Rica*, ed. Otto Castro (San Jose: Ediciones Perro Azul, 2008), 34

[62] *Parrandas* are social events where the people go do dance and have fun (Jorge Luis Acevedo, “Parrandera,” in Diccionario de la Música Española e Hispanoamericana, 2001).

contradanza with a slow and fast sections, and other fast dances like the *son* and *punto*.[63] Often, two rhythms are played together in different sections of the songs or simultaneously; the mixture depends on the type of festivity. For example, in the *mascaradas* and *topes,* the common variety is *jota-danza*, while in the *corridas de toros,* the *danza-punto* combination is used more often.[64] These are generally played by a *filarmonicas* (town's band) or by the *cimarronas* (amateur musicians). Instruments include some brass instruments, bass drum, snare drum, and cymbals. Below are two examples of types of *parrandera rhythmic patterns*.

Ex. 3.2.3 Two patterns of *Parranderas* Rhythmic Pattern.[65]

Pattern 1

Pattern 2

Originally from the Antilles Islands, the *punto* is highly representative of Cuban music and identity. One of the most significant differences between the Costa Rican and

[63] Jorge Luis Acevedo, "Parrandera," in Diccionario de la Música Española e Hispanoamericana, 2001.
[64] Andres Saborio, "La Música Folclórica Costarricense," *Acta Académica* 17, November 1995, 42. http://revista.uaca.ac.cr/index.php/actas/article/view/848.
[65] Raziel Acevedo, "Entre el Pasado y el Presente se Construye la Cultura Tradicional de Guanacaste," 34-35.

Cuban *punto* is that the "décimas" in Cuba are sung, but in Costa Rica, the music stops, and a "bomba" is said, ending with an "¡Uyuyui bajura!" [66] However, they are both outputs for the population to express themselves in a joking or festive manner. The Costa Rica *punto* has been established as the National Folk Dance. Finally, the *son* in $\frac{6}{8}$ is not used as often since it started to be played with the *pasillo* rhythm.[67]

The *pasillo* is thought to have arrived in Costa Rica by the end of the nineteenth century with Colombian or Panamanian immigrants. It can be written in 3/4 or 6/8. The first one is more vocal, influenced by the Colombian *bambuco*; the second is exclusively instrumentals due to its fast and rigid tempo.[68] There are many variations of the *pasillo* rhythm, but these are three of the most common ones:

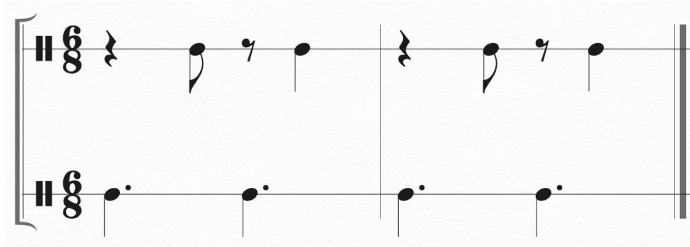
Ex. 3.2.4 Variations of *Pasillo* Rhythm Pattern.[69]

The *tambito* is normally in $\frac{6}{8}$ and is considered one of the most iconic rhythms in the country. Its origin is unknown, but it is thought to have come from an old Spanish

[66] A *bomba* is similar to a limerick, which express daily aspects of life in Guanacaste. They can be funny, Romantic, naughty, derogatory, or defiant. The meaning of the word is 'bomb' or 'firecracker' because they end with a punchline comparable to those sounds.
[67] Gerardo Duarte, "Desde la Pura Cepa," 42.
[68] Raziel Acevedo, "Entre el Pasado y el Presente se Construye la Cultura Tradicional de Guanacaste," 37.
[69] Ibid.

dance.[70] The term's meaning derives from the word *tambo*, a hunt where Incas and later cattle workers could rest from their journeys.[71] Below is an example of the emblematic *tambito*.

Ex. 3.2.5 Tambito Rhythm Pattern.[72]



There is so much more to discuss about Guanacaste's music and traditions, but for the purpose of this study, these four rhythms are the most important.

Regarding the other regions, the music of the Central Valley area has more of a European musical influence, with the Jota, the Mazurka, the Valz, and the Polka, all representative of the "high class" society of Cartago and San Jose. A genre born in this area was the "Aire National," a slow song with lyrics of love for the country.[73] Other genres like *tambito*, *pasillo*, *corridos*, etc. are also heard in the Central Valley.

The largest concentration of African descendants is in the Caribbean region. This area is full of beautiful beaches, banana plantations, good food, and extraordinary music. From here comes the exotic music of the *calypso* (established as a National Cultural

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[70] Saborio, "La Música Folclórica Costarricense," 43.
[71] Esteban Rodriguez, "Géneros Musicales Costarricenses," Dirección Regional de Educación Alajuela, February 9, 2018. https://www.drea.co.cr/musica/géneros-musicales-costarricenses.
[72] Rico Stover, *Latin American Guitar Guide*, (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications, 1995), 52.
[73] Rodriguez, "Generos Musicales Costarricenses."

Patrimony), *sinkit*, *son*, and *comparsas*, as well as common genres found throughout the Caribbean, such as gospel, jazz, soul, hip-hop, reggae, and socca. The biggest festivity in Limon is the Carnaval, celebrated each year on the twelfth of October to commemorate the arrival of Christopher Columbus to Costa Rica. People from all over the country go to Limon to celebrate, try Caribbean food, and listen to good music.

Popular folklore in Costa Rica, as stated before, has a wide variety of influences. However, it is the people who decide what becomes folklore, what expresses their identity, and what makes any "Tico" in another country have their heart beat slower with nostalgia. By incorporating this type of music into academic or art music, Costa Rican composers are demonstrating their national pride and making their music, to a certain extent, more approachable to the people.

3.3 Indigenous Folk Music

Though the Costa Rican indigenous population is not large, this small country is composed of various indigenous cultures. Among them are the *Guatuso*, *Bribri*, *Cabecar*, and *Boruca*, whose languages and some traditions are still active, and the *Huetar*, whose language is dead.[74] According to the Costa Rican 2010 Census, there were approximately 35,943 people who identify as indigenous and live in one of the 24 territories designated to indigenous population.[75] However, for this study and the later analysis of the piece

[74] Adolfo Constenla Umaña, *Poesia Tradicional Indigena Costarricense*, (San Jose: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 1996), 3.

[75] Instituto Nacional de Estatistica y Census. *Censo. 2011. Población total en territorios indígenas por autoidentificación a la etnia indígena y habla de alguna lengua indígena, según pueblo y territorio indígena*. Costa Rica: 2011. https://www.inec.cr/social/grupos-etnicos-raciales.

Kérwá by Carlos Castro, I will only focus on the *Bribri* indigenous group, which has the largest population in the country.

The musical culture of these indigenous groups was and still is very primitive; nevertheless, it represents an integral part of their life. Music is used in religious rites, for medicinal purposes, and during celebrations (which include a lot of alcohol and dancing), as well as in everyday activities like hunting, cooking, and raising the children.[76] With the Bribri being a hierarchal society, one can observe how even in the action of making music they kept their societal norms. The verb 'to sing' in the general form does not exist but is classified and named depending on who engages in the action and its use. As Dr. Adolfo Constenla Umaña explains it:

> Bribri [language] does not have a general term for the type of verb 'cantar' in Spanish or *ulá* 'to say singing or in a recitative style' in the other Costa Rican indigenous language, Guatuso. […] the traditional bribri culture was not only not interested, but it was not convenient for them to have seen as the same activity types, those which they assigned completely different social functions some of which were of restricted access, in some cases, by sex, and others, by clan hierarchy.[77]

By having different words for the same action, the Bribri maintained their hierarchal restrictions and kept the population in order. These are some of the forms of the verb *to sing* in the Bribri language: *stsö̀k, jtsö̀k, tsö̀k, tsö̀k, stséitsök*.

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[76] Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo describes a ritual he saw in a plaza in Nicoya, Guanacaste, where the Chorotega indigenous danced to the god of the Cacaqualt or cacao. He describes the Chorotegas dancing around a large stick placed in the plaza, singing, and drinking until they fell to the ground.

[77] Adolfo Constenla Umaña, *Poesia Bribri de lo Cotiniano: 37 Cantos de Afecto, Devoción, Trabajo, y Entretenimiento*, (San José, CR: Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica, 2006), 14.

The musical instruments used by the Bribri people were primitive and made with simple materials, but when the materials allowed, they were beautifully decorated. There is no record of chordophones; however, some idiophones like drums made with wood, armadillo shell, large batons with rattles, and maracas have been found. In the category of membranophones, there is evidence of wooden drums with a patch on top. Lastly, in the aerophones category, there are some reed whistles and other instruments similar to the pan flute as well as any whistle built from shells, seeds, or even animal bones.[78]

Although we do not know how music might have sounded before colonization, some melodies have been passed down through generations and are sung still today. However, while it is uncertain how much those melodies have been modified through time and Western influences, some general characteristics can be traced from the music that has survived until now. According to the Costa Rican anthropologist Dr. Laura Cervantes Gamboa, Bribri's music is exclusively vocal (with occasionally percussion instruments in some dances), monophonic, and does not use any chordophones. More specifically, the songs use the normal singing voice (meaning it does not use any special voice techniques), and the performer's tessiture typically does not exceed a fifth. These are usually built with no more than three to six notes, having the semitone as is the minimum melodic unit.[79] This explains why many of their melodic instruments only have up to six holes. It is important to know that when using five notes, these are not organized

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[78] Laura Cervantes Gamboa, "Información Básica Acerca de la Música Tradicional Indígena de Costa Rica," *Káñina* 19, no 1 (1995): 161.

[79] Cervantes Gamboa, "Información Básica Acerca de la Música Tradicional Indígena de Costa Rica," 162.

in the traditional Western pentatonic scales, but they are random notes without an established scale system. Regarding rhythm, the pulse tends to be free but measurable.

Another aspect that the Bribris have been very particular to pass through generations is their religion. Without exhausting the topic, let me present an overall view of their most important religious beliefs. They are polytheists; however, their main god is Sibö, the creator of the earth and the universe. Sula or Originator (female) is the god in charge of creating humans. The legend says that, with the authorization of Sibö, Sula selects some colors, each representing a human characteristic or talent, and mixes them in a pool. From this mixture, humans come out into the world with their destiny predisposed. If humans fulfill the purpose for which they were created, their soul will return to Sula after death and live happily in paradise. This explains the significant number of songs dedicated to worshiping and praising Sula.

Ancient Costa Rican culture, specifically music and poetry, was not deeply studied until the twentieth century. That said, there are older accounts that record some of the indigenous customs by the colonial chroniclers. However, these are only chronicles of the events and not proper research of their culture. Even the earliest twentieth-century studies were limited, and some have been discredited by more recent research.[80]

A significant contribution to this field of study is the research done by Costa Rican anthropologist Dr. Laura Cervantes Gamboa and the linguist Dr. Adolfo Constenla Umaña.[81] Some of Dr. Cervantes's articles have been cited in this research, as she

[80] Constenla Umaña, *Poesia Bribri de lo Cotiniano: 37 Cantos de Afecto, Devoción, Trabajo, y Entretenimiento*, 3.
[81] These are not the only important researchers of indigenous culture in the country, however, for the purpose of this study, these two have been the most helpful.

outlines some important aspects of the Bribri culture. Dr. Constenla's books focus on indigenous poetry in the original language; they often contain a Spanish translation, a linguistic analysis of the Bribri words, and a short commentary of each poem. Since poetry and music are connected in the Bribri culture, his studies, though not focused on music, shed light on what indigenous music sounds like. His book *Poesia Bribri de lo Cotidiano* (*Bribri Daily Poetry*) provides analyses of 37 poems/songs and a CD with autochthonous singers. Though the study centers on linguistic analysis rather than ethnomusicological, having something concrete on Bribri's music is an excellent contribution to the field of music.

The piece *Kérwá* is based mainly on three songs from this book. These are the songs and a brief description of each (you can read the English translation in Appendix 1):

1. *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala* (Sleep Little Baby), track 10: [82] This is a lullaby sung by a caregiver, probably a grandmother, to a child. As often happens in Bribri's lullabies, the baby is consoled for their mother's departure. Constenla says, "A particular element of this composition and its main theme is the exaltation of work as an element of assigned destiny."[83] The mother has left and will not return until the sunset as this was the destiny assigned to her from the formation of her being by *Sula*. The lyrics reflect some of the customs of the Bribri and even paint a picture of their living environment.

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[82] Constenla Umaña, *Poesia Bribri de lo Cotiniano: 37 Cantos de Afecto, Devoción, Trabajo, y Entretenimiento*, 61.
[83] Ibid, 62.

2. *À s-tàyëlapala* (O Ladies), track 11: [84] Here, lyrics talk about the temporary stage of our existence and the inevitability of going back to *Sula* or the Originator (female). With this song, the singer is lecturing her daughters about the short duration of human life versus the prevalence of nature while they are all grinding corn.[85] She talks about how someday she will die and things will pass, but the millstone or Kérwá will last forever. Here *Kérwá* acquires the double meaning of millstone as well as the eternal quality of the gods. It is from this song that the piece to be analyzed in Chapter Four obtained its name.
3. *À iröla Iröla* (O Northern Hawk), track 4:[86] This is a woman's love song that compares her husband with a northern hawk, whom she is willing to follow wherever he goes. Comparing men with prey birds is a typical image in Bribri culture.[87] This song is fascinating since, though at the beginning follows the general characteristics mentioned above, the middle section of the piece has a peculiar rhythm that Carlos Castro explores extensively in *Kérwá*.

Understanding the synopsis of these songs will help us decipher the piece *Kérwá* in Chapter Four. If possible, find the book and listen to the tracks, as this will help make a more authentic interpretation of the piece. Though this book is helpful, there is a pertinent need for a deeper ethnomusicological study and perhaps an approximate transcription of this music. Regardless, there is no doubt of this book's contribution as it served as an inspiration to write *Kérwá*.

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[84] Ibid, 63.
[85] Ibid, 65.
[86] Ibid, 46.
[87] Ibid, 48.

Conclusion

After this brief introduction to some of the major trends in Costa Rican music and culture, one can imagine that the country has a vast cultural variety regardless of its size. There is, however, a fourth inspirational source (and possibly more) that I have not included in this chapter, which is the nature world. There are some examples of this in the instrumental repertoire, like Carlos Guzman's *Sinfonia de Los Volcanes*; however, I could not find an example that portrays the viola as a predominant or soloistic instrument. Consequently, I have decided to not include it in this paper. Yet, more research can be done on the topic, as it could be a fascinating investigation. After discussing art, popular folk, and indigenous folk music, we will explore how current Costa Rican composers are using these three musical trends to create thoughtful and beautiful music for the viola in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF THREE PIECES FOR VIOLA

This chapter contains an example of the three musical trends discussed in the previous chapter. The pieces analyzed are *Preludio e Invension for Viola Solo* by Eddie Mora, *Sinfonia Concertante for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano* by Sergio Delgado, and *Kérwá for Viola Solo* by Carlos Castro. Each section contains a biography of the composer, the analysis of the piece, and some performance suggestions.

4.1 Preludio e Invension for Viola Solo by Eddie Mora

4.1.1 Biography

Eddie Mora was born on February 23, 1965, in San Jose, Costa Rica. His musical studies started at the Castella Conservatory and continued at the University of Costa Rica, where he studied violin and composition. At the age of eighteen, he moved to Russia to study violin at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow where he obtained a Bachelors in violin performance in 1888 and a Masters in 1992.[88] There, he expanded his musical horizon with classes on theory, counterpoint, chamber music, and he took advantage of any opportunity to absorb Russian music and culture. During his ten years in Russia, Mora met his wife, the pianist and music scholar Ekaterina Chatski. She is an avid researcher of Costa Rican music and often premiers her husband's works for piano.

During his time in Russia, though his focus was the violin, Mora took private composition lessons with Yuri Vorontsov for three years. He also studied with Benjamin

[88] Tania Vicente, "Biografías de Compositores Costarricenses Contemporáneos," in *Música Academica Costarricense: Del presente al Pasado Cercano*, ed. Ekaterina Chatski (San Jose: Editorial Universidad de Costa Rica, 2012), 317.

Gutierrez and Luis Diego Herra, both influential Costa Rican composers and professors at the University of Costa Rica.

Ever since his return to Costa Rica, Mora has been very active in the country's artistic scene, first as a violin teacher and then as Dean of the School of Arts at the University of Costa Rica from 2007 to 2015.[89] He has also helped found important ensembles and research institutes that foment contemporary art and music as they are: the Institute for Artistic Investigations, Musical Composition Seminary, and the Contemporary University Ensemble, all hosted by the University of Costa Rica.[90]

As a composer, Mora has won many important national awards, such as the "Carlos Enrique Vargas" National Prize in Orchestral Conducting, "Aquileo J. Echeverría" National Prize of Composition, the "ACAM" Prize, and the "Áncora" Music Prize. He also has been nominated four times for the Latin Grammy awards as a composer and conductor (2014, 2017, 2018, 2020) and won the Grammy for "Best Classical Music Album" in 2018 for his work with the National Symphony Orchestra.[91] The winner album is the second one of a collection of "*Musica de Compositores Costarricenses*" (Music by Costa Rican Composers). It included music from Carlos Enrique Vargas, William Porras, Carlos Jose Castro, and Alejandro Cardona.

Regarding his musical composition style, Eddie Mora is significantly influenced by Western music styles and the environment in which he resides. According to Ekaterina Chatski, Mora has two compositional periods the first one from 1995-2000 and the

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[89] Ibid.
[90] Eddie Mora, "Biografia," *Eddie Mora*. Accessed September 22, 2021. http://eddiemora.com/es/biografia/.
[91] Ibid.

second from 2000 until today. During the first period, he uses classical forms as defined structures (suite, prelude and fugue, theme and variations, ternary and sonata form, among others), various harmonic languages, and uses two musical tendencies: popular folk and art music.[92] Some musical examples of this period are the *Suite Ausencia* for wind band, piano, and percussion; *Dialogos, Temas con Variaciones* for soprano, saxophone, and percussion; *Preludio y Danza* for clarinet/violin, contrabass, piano, and percussion; and the piece I analyze in this chapter, *Preludio e Invension* for violin/viola solo, among many others.

In the second period, his focus shifted to the exploration of sonorities and dynamics, use of minimal material, and use of dramaturgical principals to build his music.[93] Through this music, Mora has the "explicit desire to stablish communication with the listener, with the purpose of expressing specific content."[94] Some musical examples of this period are *Silencio V* (2007) for violin solo, wind ensemble, piano, harp, and percussion; *Ofrenda* (2017) for symphonic orchestra, *Texturas* (2009) for percussion ensemble and electric bass, etc. His music has been published by Editorial Periferia (Barcelona, Spain), the Revista Casa de las Américas (Cuba), and the Editorial de la Universidad de Costa Rica.[95]

Some of his compositions for the viola include *Sul*a for viola and piano solo, strings, and percussion; *Bocetos a Yolanda* for violin, viola, cello, and piano; *Silencio III*

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[92] Ekaterina Chatski, "Rutas Para Explorar Los Elementos Estilísticos del Lenguaje Musical de un Compositor," in *Música Academica Costarricense: Del presente al Pasado Cercano*, ed. Ekaterina Chatski (San Jose: Editorial Universidad de Costa Rica, 2012), 208.
[93] Ibid., 213.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Vicente, "Biografías de Compositores Costarricenses Contemporáneos," 317.

for violin, viola, cello, and trombone/French horn; *Transparencia* for viola and piano; *Preludio y Fuga* for viola/bassoon and piano; *Oyeme con tus Ojos* for Viola and Guitar, and *Preludio e Invencion* for violin/viola solo.

4.1.2 Analysis

4.1.2.1 Preludio

This piece was originally composed for violin, but upon a request from a Russian friend of the composer, the violist Mijail Bereznistky, Mora transcribed the work for the viola. Bereznistky recorded the piece in 2002, and it was included in the album "Musica de Cuerdas" by Eddie Mora.[96]

Historically, the prelude was an introductory piece that precedes other short works: fugues, allemandes in suites, or other instrumental music. These pieces are connected by a mode or key and sometimes even by some melodic or rhythmic material. The prelude is mainly an instrumental form. It was originally improvised, but later became a composed form keeping the improvisatory feeling.[97] In this work the prelude introduces an invention. However, pairing these two was not done in the Baroque period, but it is rather a twentieth-century practice.

Though the structure of the prelude tends to be free, as it should sound like an improvisation, some structure can be found in this *Preludio*.

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[96] You can find this recording at: the Preludio https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ldg4FDd2TlU, and the Invension https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceC2W9l_JzY.
[97] David Ledbetter and Howard Ferguson, "Prelude," *Grove Music Online*, accessed September 23, 2021. https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000043302.

Diagram 4.1.1 *Preludio*, Structural Analysis

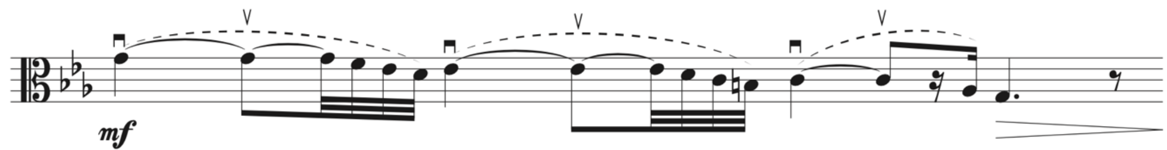
Section	Intro	A	Fantasy	B	Coda
Melodic Material	C x14 Theme C x14	Variation 1	D♭ C B	Variation 2	Triplets G/D (V6/4)
Accomp.		Basso Continuo		Basso Continuo	

The *Preludio* starts with the expressive marking *Lento y Doloroso* (Slow and Painful). The introduction begins with fourteen C pitches divided into two sets of seven, followed by a melodic theme with the direction to play *tristemente* (sadly), ending with two more sets of seven-repeated Cs. Though the key signature suggests C minor, the piece does not follow tonal harmonic conventions, but it uses all twelve tones freely. Nonetheless, the constant use of the C pitch throughout the work creates centricity around this pitch.

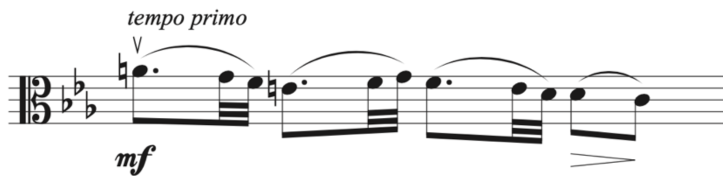
Two variations derive from the theme presented in the introduction (Ex. 4.1.1): the first one is used in the A section (Ex. 4.1.2), and the second one (Ex. 4.1.3) is the main theme in the B section. Variation 1 relates to the theme melodically with a slight change of rhythm and elongation of the thematic material; and the second variation, though the relationship is not as predominant as in the first variation, the rhythmic pattern of having the first note longer followed by a succession of shorter ones is kept. Also, some of the melodic contour, like the descending motion toward the end of the melody, is also used.

Ex. 4.1.1 *Preludio,* Melodic Theme.

Ex. 4.1.2 *Preludio,* Melodic Variation 1.



Ex. 4.1.3 *Preludio,* Melodic Variation 2.



In section A, the first variation of the theme is used similarly as the one used by J.S. Bach Andante from the *Violin Sonata No.2*, BWV 1003, and Igor Stravinsky's *Elegy for Viola/Violin Solo*, in which a constantly moving bass line accompanies the melody. This texture is kept for the rest of the prelude.

Ex. 4.1.4 *Preludio,* Variation 1 Setting.

Harmonically, it is interesting to observe the relentless interplay between pitch C and its surrounding dissonances. Observe, for example, how this is especially portraited in the fantasy-like middle section (Ex. 4.1.5).

Ex. 4.1.5 *Preludio,* Fantasy Section.

After this dissonant interlude, the harmony of the B section is more consonant, starting the second variation with a major sixth. However, the dissonance reappears not long after, closing this section with a double stop of C and D flat. Though the Coda does not continue this battle around the C pitch, the triplet motive plays with dissonances resolving into consonants.

The *Preludio* concludes with a G/D double-stop, as a possible 6/4 inversion of the dominant of C minor that "resolves" on the *attaca* of the *Inversion*. The fourth created by

the second inversion of the "chord" and the omission of the third produces a harmonic and emotional openness that successfully concludes such a sad and dramatic prelude. This witty way of glimpsing over tonal harmony is characteristic of neoclassical music.

4.1.2.2 Invension

According to Kent Kennan in his book *Counterpoint*, an invention is "a short contrapuntal work centered around the development of one or two motives."[98] These motives are then transformed through sequences, imitation, repetition, alteration, and inversions - all tools most often used by Baroque composers to develop their ideas.[99] In other words, an invention is where "imagination and never-failing freshness combine with an astonishing economy of means" creates a world of possibilities.[100]

Structurally, the Baroque invention has (1) an exposition, which contains the motive and countermotive (if any), followed by an episode; (2) the development is where the material is transformed through the contrapuntal techniques listed above; and (3) the recapitulation or return is where the motive is brought back to the tonic. In Mora's *Invención*, this structure is greatly expanded, having more similarities with sonata form than with a Baroque invention. Some characteristics of sonata form found in the invention are the repeat sign for the exposition and the lengthy development. However, the recapitulation is shorter than the exposition and it introduces some new material, having a never-ending developmental rather than a feeling of closure to it. Furthermore, there are no secondary or closing themes.

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[98] Kent Kennan, *Counterpoint* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1999), 126.
[99] Harold Owen, *Modal and Tonal Counterpoint: From Josquin to Stravinsky* (New York: Schimer Books, 1992), 204.
[100] Kennan, *Counterpoint*, 126.

Another structural formal possibility is rounded binary, more commonly seen in the dance movements of the suite than in an invention. This option fits the repeat sign at the end of the A section, the developmental qualities of the B section, and the shorter return of the A with some developmental characteristics. From this point of view, the form would look like this:

Diagram 4.1.2 *Inversion*, Structural Analysis

Section	A	B	A^1
Thematic material	Theme (3 motives)	Develops all motives	Theme – Develop. – Coda
Pitch Centricity	C - G	G - Varies - G	C - G - C

The theme of the invention presents another whole set of analytical probabilities. Suppose one analyzes the first seven measures of this invention by the standards of Baroque counterpoint. In that case, it will look like: one measure motive, another measure of countermotive, imitation at the octave, and an episode, which introduces new rhythmic material that will be extensively used in the development. See the example below:

Ex. 4.1.6 *Invension,* Theme Analysis 1.

However, these seven measures have a unity more congruent with a fugal subject or the theme of a dance movement. Consequently, it will be treated as a theme in this analysis.

Another interesting anomaly is that the integrity of the material presented in the theme is kept more rhythmically than melodically. Meaning that though the melodic contour of the theme is in constant change, the rhythmic content is what connects the piece. From this viewpoint, these seven measures can be broken into three rhythmic motives, which the composer inventively develops throughout the work.

Ex. 4.1.7 *Invension,* Theme Analysis 2.

RM1 RM2

RM3

*RM = Rhythmic Motive

After the theme presentation, measures 8-22 are a long episode in which the RM1 melodic contour changes, RM2 is shortened, and RM3 is expanded. In measure 23, the theme is presented again, this time centered on A flat instead of C. For the rest of the exposition, the composer continues to develop the material as well as inserts new ideas.

The development, or B section, starts with the first four measures of the theme inverted and centered on G. The motives most developed in this section are RM2 and RM3. Harmonically, it is harder to feel pitch centricity since chromaticism is favored and half-step motion is emphasized. Regarding the instrument’s technique, this part is

difficult and flashy. Consistent double stops, position shifts, and string crossings make the last section of the development exciting to perform and listen to. Finally, the development closes with the RM2 in double stops on intervals of octaves and tenth played at the instrument's upper register.[101]

After the triumphant closing of the development, the recapitulation brings the theme back to center on the C pitch again. However, the recapitulation is not identical to the exposition. After presenting the seven-measures theme, the composer introduces some new and technically difficult material that, once again, shows off the performer's dexterity.

Following this short episode, there is a false attempt to bring back the theme now centered on G. However, the composer develops all the rhythmic motives one last time. A small four-measure coda brings this great contrapuntal exercise to an end, having the violist sweat through some striking octaves one last time.

Though this invention does not strictly follow all Baroque counterpoint rules, it demonstrates the wittiness and skillfulness of the composer as he transforms and develops ideas in a modern, harmonic language.

4.1.3 Performance Practice

Technically, the piece requires an advanced set of technical skills to be performed. There is the constant use of double stops, string crossing, complex position shifts, as well as a few extensions and artificial harmonics. The fact that the composer is an accomplished violinist is a double-edged sword. On one hand, he knows the instrument's capabilities; therefore, his writing is highly complex; on the other hand, and

[101] See Score 1 in Appendix 2.

for the same reason, his writing is also idiomatic. Since I performed this piece, I will share some suggestions that could help while learning it.

Understanding the piece's structure helps the performer deliver a more successful interpretation. In the *Invención*, for example, the fact that the theme's structure is longer than a typical invention allows the performer to create more extended phrasing and not fall into a fractioned interpretation, which can lead to losing the attention of the audience. This also determines the choice of tempo, bowing, articulation, the contact point of the bow, and even fingerings.[102] The same can be said for the *Preludio*. Since the tempo is slower, understanding that there are sections within the form helps the performer give a better flow to the piece.

Since the piece was originally written for the violin, there are a few passages that are more difficult on the viola. Therefore, I will share my suggestions for some of those problems. I have taken some of these suggestions from the Mijail Bereznistky recording, which was approved by the composer. For example, at the coda of the *Preludio*, some double stops require a large extension on the left hand (see below).

Ex. 4.1.8 *Preludio,* Coda as written.

calmo

p

[102] Though the composer suggests eighth-note equal 160, the tempo can be changed depending on the performer's dexterity and the quality of the instrument.

This extension in the violin is possible, but in the viola, its difficulty depends on the instrument's size and the performer's hand. More than the extension itself, what makes this passage even more complicated is the different weight on the left-hand fingers between the bottom note and the top note (the bottom note is played with the string completely down against the fingerboard, while in the top note, being a harmonic, the finger is lightly placed on the string without pressing down). Again, this by itself is not impossible, but having the extension and the difference on weight between two fingers makes it nearly impossible for people with small hands. Therefore, I suggest eliminating the extension and playing the harmonics as shown in the excerpt below. This is in fact what Bereznistky did as well.

Ex. 4.1.9 *Preludio,* Coda Performance Suggestion.

Other editing has to do with bowings that work for the violin but not for the viola. For example, in measures 38 to 41 it is better to break the slur into two-plus-one instead of one slur of three notes. Then, the broken octaves can start down-bow, making it easier for the C string to speak clearly. This is an idea that I also heard in the Bereznistky recording.

Ex. 4.1.10 *Invension,* Excerpt mm. 38-41.

Original

poco a poco cresc.

poco sost.

Performance Suggestion

poco a poco cresc.

poco sost.

The same can be applied for measures 117-120.

There are a couple of other changes that Bereznistky did which I did not use in my performance. For example, he removed some octaves in the last four measures of the piece. This might have been the composer's choice or both of their decisions when they collaborated in the transcription; however, since the original transcription was misplaced, we do not know. Observe the example below:

Ex. 4.1.11 *Invension,* Excerpt mm. 153-End.

Original

a tempo

p

ff

Performed by Bereznistky

a tempo

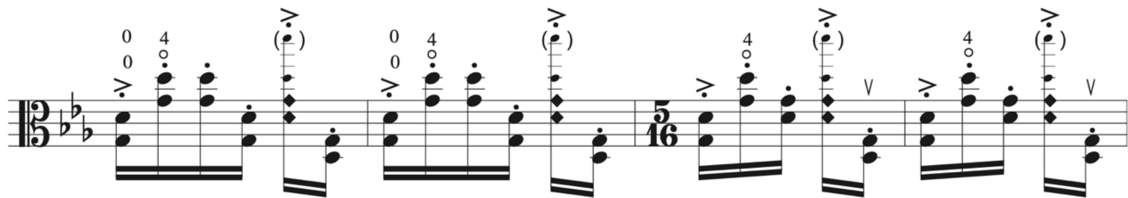
p

ff

Regardless of the few editing differences, the Bereznistky recording is of great value as he worked with the composer to prepare for this recording. I also believe my transcription of the violin score is valuable as we can see the original intent of the composer and try to, with the fewest changes, play as closely to that as our instrument allows us.

Finally, one practice suggestion for a passage that is difficult for the viola to sound clear is in measures 133-137. Here the double stops harmonics need to be played right next to the bridge with a fast bow; however, the low open strings must be executed towards the middle contact point and slower bow speed.

Ex. 4.1.12 *Invension,* Excerpt mm. 133-136



That quick change of contact point and bow speed, though challenging, makes each note sound crisp and clear.

4.1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this *Preludio e Invención* does not only demonstrates the Western influences in Costa Rican music, but it also reflects the craftmanship and wittiness of the composer's writing. This piece uses various interesting techniques (like double stops harmonics, tenths in the upper register, basso continue while playing the melody, among others), expanding the violist's abilities and contributing to the addition of new material to the viola repertoire.

Finally, though one can argue that the extensive use of syncopations and accents are inspired by Latin American music (which at some level might be true since no composer is an island), personally I believe the composer is more inspired by neoclassic tendencies and Russian influences. I hear more Shostakovich and Stravinsky than Costa Rican. Perhaps, his years in Moscow had a larger impact on the composer's first period than Costa Rican music.

4.2 *Música Concertante for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano* by Sergio Delgado

4.2.1 Biography

Sergio Delgado is a young Costa Rican performer, teacher, and composer. He started his studies at the Conservatory of Castella and later obtained his bachelor's degree in Clarinet Performance at the University of Costa Rica, studying under Dr. Yamileth Pérez. As a composer, he has studied under the tutelage of Benjamin Gutierrez and Alejandro Cardona.[103] He is an active orchestra performer in Costa Rica, playing with orchestras like the University of Costa Rica Symphony Orchestra and the Heredia Symphony Orchestra. With these, he has had the opportunity to perform various new works written by Latin American composers. He currently teaches clarinet, theory, composition, and piano at multiple schools associated with the Sistema Nacional de Escuelas Musicales (SINEM).

Born on February 22, 1993, this young composer's work has been performed all over the globe. With constant commissions for new works, his compositional output is extensive, even at his young age. His work has been recorded by many ensembles

[103] "Sergio Delgado," Fresh Inc Festival. Accessed November 2, 2021, https://freshincfestival.com/sergio-delgado-2/.

internationally, such as Arcano String Quartet (*Impromtus a Silverstre Revueltas*), Acuarimantica Trio (*Música Concertante para Clarinete, Viola, y Piano*), among others. The quality of his compositional output granted him the National Prize of Music in Composition in Costa Rica in 2019 for his work *Nocturnos a Debravo* for chamber ensemble, inspired by the revolutionary Costa Rican poet Jorge Debravo.[104] The compositional elements that earned him the prize were the rich harmonic language that created a mystic and visceral atmosphere congruent with the poet's writing, the inventive orchestration, and the effective use of timbre and sonorities to communicate his ideas.[105]

4.2.2 Analysis

Música Concertante for clarinet, viola, and piano was written in 2012 (when the composer was only 19 years old) and revised in 2016. Because the composer is an accomplished clarinetist, this instrument part is technically demanding. The viola scoring does not stay behind, as it explores some extended techniques and challenging sections. It was the piece's demanding technique that delayed its performance until 2018, when the Colombian trio *Acuarimántica* included the work in one of their albums. The piece was later performed by Katherine Breeden (clarinet), Priscilla Soto (viola), and Dr. Jacob Coleman (piano) at the Singletary Performing Arts Center at the University of Kentucky on November 14, 2020. This was the second performance of the piece and its United States premiere.

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[104] The ensemble instrumentation is one violin, one viola, one cello, alto flute, English horn, soprano saxophone, bass clarinet, marimba, and harp.

[105] "Profesor de música del Sinem recibe Premio Nacional de Música 2019," *Ministerio de Cultura y Juventud*, February 6, 2020. https://mcj.go.cr/sala-de-prensa/noticias/profesor-de-musica-del-sinem-recibe-premio-nacional-de-musica-2019.

This work is a through-composed composition, but there are three distinct sections: *Moderato giocosso, Largo,* and *Scherzando*. These can be heard as both a ternary form and a loose sonata form. I have decided to analyze it as three separate sections with similar melodic material but different individual characters.

The opening *Moderato giocosso* section mainly explores the clarinet and viola timbres, with the piano commenting and enhancing the dialogue. This section contains most of the thematic material used on the rest of the piece. Observe, for example, the first theme introduced in unison by the clarinet and viola.

Ex. 4.2.1 *Música Concertante*, First theme.

This theme is used multiple times during the piece. For each repetition, the composer uses different compositional techniques to transform the melody. For example, in measures 71-86, this theme is used as a fugal subject; it is first given to the piano, then clarinet, and lastly the viola, with the clarinet and viola then playing in unison. Several other transformations occur in the *Scherzando*, in which part of this theme is used in diminution as the basis for the cadential section between the clarinet and the piano. It is also used to build the first theme of the Scherzando. But perhaps one of the most fascinating transformations occur in mm. 214-217. Here, part of this theme is set in tango style, with the viola playing it in augmentation while the piano and clarinet reaffirm the

tango setting. The emphasis of the piano left hand on the first, fourth, and seventh eighth notes is often found in tangos by Astor Piazzolla (see score in Appendix 2, Score 2).

The second theme is based on the *tambito* rhythm, the stamp of Costa Rican folklore. Here, this backbone rhythm is elevated to a thematic idea due to its melodic qualities and significant use throughout the piece. The rhythm first appears in measures 40-43, and it is written in diminution compared to how it usually occurs (see Ex. 4.2.4). As the passage continues, the rhythm is transformed, sometimes only keeping its essence. However, through the placement of notes and accents, one can still hear the *tambito*. Observe below some of the variations I have found of Delgado's use of the *tambito* rhythm (Ex. 2.4).

Ex. 4.2.2 *Música Concertante,* Piano Part mm. 40-43.

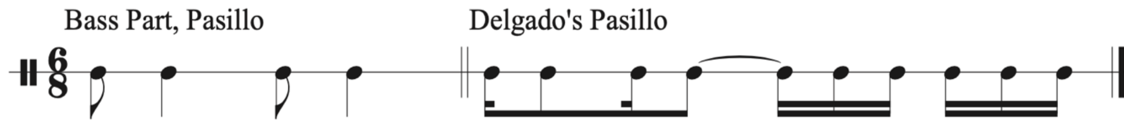
Ex. 4.2.3 *Música Concertante,* Viola Part mm. 98-99.

Ex. 4.2.4 *Música Concertante,* Clarinet Part mm 106-110.

The third theme (mm. 61-66) also has a strong rhythmic profile. Here, the composer uses the Costa Rican rhythm of *pasillo*. The melody in the viola and clarinet uses this rhythm in diminution. One measure after the piano plays a variation of the *parrandera* rhythm, which accentuates beats 3 and 5, emphasizing a hemiola in $\frac{3}{4}$.

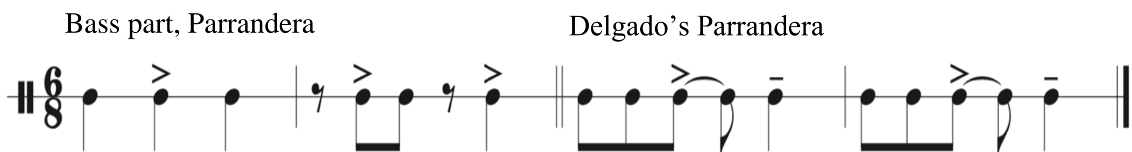
Ex. 4.2.5 *Música Concertante,* Pasillo and Parrandera.

Ex. 4.2.6 *Música Concertante,* Pasillo Variations.



(You can observe the complete pasillo rhythm in Chapter 3, Ex. 3.2.4.)

Ex. 4.2.7 *Música Concertante,* Parrandera Variations.



The next section is full of hemiolas and syncopations, which perpetuates the dance feeling characteristic of the piece.

The rhythmic unit in Ex. 4.2.6 is often used in the piano accompaniment as well. For example, in mm. 78-80, the composer uses this rhythm in the accompaniment while the viola plays Theme 1. This happens on various occasions and in many different combinations. In fact, the reuse and transformation of material throughout the piece is very complex, showing the craftsmanship and creativity of the composer.

Another interesting setting of the second theme happens in mm. 95-100 (see score 2 in Appendix 2). Here, the viola plays the second theme as the piano's left-hand plays a common tango accompaniment. However, the magic happens three measures after, when the composer juxtaposes a variation of the *tambito* rhythm in the viola, theme 2 in the piano's right hand, and a tango accompaniment on the left-hand, as the clarinet plays with the half-step motion established in theme 1. The result is four individual lines of equal importance, the relevance of which is established through the dynamics.

The rest of the *Moderato giocoso* develops these three ideas in so many artistic ways that one separate investigation could be made of this section alone. However, the diagram below offers a summary of these transformations, providing a glimpse into the composer's ideas.

Diagram 4.2.1 *Música Concertante*, *Moderato giocoso* Form.

Section	A					B			
Subsection	a		b		c	Development			
Theme	T 1	Trans	T 2	Trans	T 3	T1	New	T3	All Themes
Measures	1-22	23-39	40-55	56-60	61-70	70-86	87-94	95-105	106-127
Style						Fugato	Slower	Tango	Juxtaposition

The *Largo* section is more pensive and anguished. It develops the first theme in various inventive ways and uses some rhythmical qualities of the other two themes. This section starts with all voices intertwined, hardly ever moving together, and avoiding any sense of beat. As the movement progresses, the different voices become busier, but the despair character is still maintained. Something surprising happens near the end of the movement (mm. 162-164): a new variation of theme 1 is introduced. This version is almost identical to the one used in the *Scherzando*, connecting both sections. As the intensity builds up, the voices start coming together to finally shout a last cry of despair. Through the climax (mm. 160-169), the piano plays constant eighth-note octaves, sounding like bells counting the minutes until the anguish ends. The movement concludes with a dying diminuendo that disappears into silence.

The *Scherzando* starts with a cadenza-like section between the piano and the clarinet. Here the first theme is once again transformed and compressed, emphasizing a hemiola of 3/4 against two measures of 3/8.

Ex. 4.2.8 *Música Concertante, Scherzando* mm. 173-180.

In measures 190-197, the first theme variation presented in mm. 162-164 reappears. But this is extended and imbued with a happier character. Besides the geniality of transforming the first theme, this movement is an amalgam of Latin American popular music such as cumbia, tango, and salon music with a flare of Costa Rican folk elements.

Diagram 4.2.2 *Sinfonia Concertante, Scherzando* Form.

Section	Intro	A	B	A	C	A	D		Coda
Theme	Cadenza	T1 var.	Trans	T1	Trans	T1 var.	Trans		
Measures	173-189	190-197	198-213	214-231	232-241	242-272	273-278	279-287	288-end
Style	Cl & Pno		Tango Elements	Tango elong.	Cumbia	Música de Salon		Pasillo	

As Diagram 4.2.2 shows, the *Scherzando* is a loose rondo form. However, instead of introducing new material, the couplets work more as transitional sections between different settings of the first theme.

Observe the excerpt below as an example of the multiple dance rhythms the composer uses in the *Scherzando*.

Ex. 4.2.9 *Sinfonia Concertante,* Latin American Crossover Styles.

Here an essence of *cumbia* can be felt in the piano's left-hand part, which is modeled from a common bass line in *cumbia*. Meanwhile, the viola and clarinet interchange running notes in a complex contrapuntal dialogue. Though melodically distinct from *cumbia*, this section has a dance feeling due to the accented patterns. Together with the piano part, they create an intricate modern *cumbia*.

Another fascinating crossover of styles happens in mm. 242-272 (see Appendix 2, Score 2, p. 100), where the composer combines waltz like sections with gypsy sounding scales. This resembles the *Música de Salon* (Hall Music) heard in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Costa Rica. The whole movement is like a party, where different dances are played during an evening of entertainment. After the sorrowful second movement, the *Scherzando* reminds me of the resilience of the Latino to whom there is no anguish that a good *baile* (dance night) cannot cure.

As the composer describes, the piece "consists of sounds and inexhaustible voices that are transformed and mixed through a rhapsodic and fantastic discourse." [106] Perhaps,

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[106] Sergio Delgado, *Program notes*. (Shared by the composer)

this is the discourse of life's happy, sad, and unpredictable moments. One thing is true, the analysis presented above serves as only an introduction to a fascinating piece that is technically challenging, open to a variety of interpretations, and reflects skillful chamber collaboration.

4.2.3 Performance Practice

Ever since Mozart's first usage of this instrumental combination in his "Kegelstatt" Trio in E-flat major, K.498, the challenges that this chamber group presents are well known. Both instruments have a largely distinct mechanism of producing sound; hence, it can be challenging to blend the tones and match articulations. To help the issue of color, the composer intentionally chooses the clarinet in A rather than the most common B flat (as is used by Mozrt in the *Kegelstatt*), because its darker tone blends better with the viola.[107] Regardless, it is important to spend time discussing articulations and phrasing. Phrasing must be closely connected to the clarinetist's breathing capabilities, and the viola needs to adjust the bowings and phrasing to the clarinetist's breathing capabilities.

The composer's ability to create a diverse pallet of colors can be heard throughout the piece. For example, at the beginning of the work (see Ex. 4.2.1), Delgado uses only the viola and clarinet playing in unison. Here, the timbre of the viola with the clarinet creates a new color; therefore, it is important that breath and bowings, vibrato, and phrasing are synchronized to better achieve the desired new tone. To add to the mysticism that this first theme presents, I would recommend playing with non-vibrato, so

[107] Conversation with Sergio Delgado, Facebook Messenger, February 23, 2022.

the sound is colder, as a chilly sunrise. As the theme continues, add vibrato, for example, in measure 5 when the piano comes in. This is of course a performance choice, which I found effective.

From this same passage (mm 1-10), observe the difference in dynamics. Though both instruments have the melody, the composer indicates that the clarinet must sound louder. This brings up the second performance challenge: balance. Often, Delgado juxtaposes melodies that seem of equal importance. However, he is also very specific with the dynamics, thereby indicating the hierarchy of the layers. It is of utmost importance to follow the dynamics provided, know which is the main layer, and be willing to adjust the sound as needed.

As stated in the analysis, Delgado extensively uses Latin American dance rhythms, especially from Costa Rica. These are full of syncopations and off-beat accents. Understanding these rhythms and how the composer uses them will enrich the performance experience and create a more expressive interpretation.

4.2.4 Conclusion

Although there is more to this piece than can be discussed here, the examples discussed in this section supports my initial thesis statement regarding the inclusion of popular folk rhythms into the work. I find this piece exceedingly fascinating, with something new to discover every time I look at it. There is a surprise around every corner and food for any curious mind in this work. If given the opportunity, listen to more music from this young composer, the product of a country that, after avid efforts to create artistic opportunities and advance music education, is generating extraordinary artists.

4.3 *Kérwá for Viola Solo* by Carlos Castro

4.3.1 Biography

Carlos Castro was born in 1963 in Costa Rica. During his childhood and early teenage years, his family lived in England. There, his interest in music started when his siblings wanted to start a rock band. In an interview with the Costa Rican newspaper *La Nacion*, he reveals that the guitar was not his choice: it was in fact the only instrument left when it came his turn to choose.[108] When his family returned to their native country, Castro continued his musical studies at the Castella Conservatory starting at the age of fourteen. There he helped form an ensemble with Eddie Mora, Mario Ulloa, Jaime Gamboa, and others, all currently influential musicians in Costa Rica.[109] He continued his musical studies at the University of Costa Rica, where he graduated with a Master of Arts in Composition.[110] He also studied at the Inter-American Center for Instrumental Studies. His composition teachers include Benjamín Gutiérrez, Rand Steiger, Blas Emilio Atehortúa, Leo Brouwer, David Vayo, and Bernal Flores.[111]

Castro's innovative compositions have garnered him many national and international prizes, such as the National Prize of Music Carlos Enrique Vargas, the Aquileo Cheverria Prize, and a Latin Grammy in the category of Best Composer of Contemporary Classical Music (2008). The Grammy-winning piece was the *Concierto*

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[108] Jorge A. Mora, "Carlos Castro, el multiganador de premios que conoció la guitarra por azar," *La Nacion*, April 25, 2018. https://www.nacion.com/viva/cultura/carlos-castro-el-multiganador-de-premios-que/MR46MQTV2RBWFHOBO2DZYRUWMI/story/.

[109] Mora, "Carlos Castro, el multiganador de premios que conoció la guitarra por azar."

[110] Carlos Castro, "Biografia," Carlos Jose Castro. Accessed September 30, 2021. http://carlosjosecastro.com/biografia/.

[111] "Castro, Carlos Jose," Productions d'Oz. Accessed September 28, 2021. https://productionsdoz.com/nos-artistes/castro-carlos-jose?lg=en_US.

del Sol for Guitar Solo and Orchestra, which was included in the album *Concierto del Sol, Sonata de la Luna.*[112] In 2017, the Latin Grammy-winning album for Best Classical Music Album, *Música de Compositores Costarricenses Vol.II,* included one of his pieces. This album features the viola with the *Sonata de la Luna for Viola and Orchestra* performed by Winnie Camila Berg at the viola and the National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica.

Castro's writing is a heterogeneous mixture of many styles. He describes himself as a "musical omnivore" who takes from everywhere to make his own dialect.[113] In his compositional catalogue, one can find the rock opera *La Chunga*, a more neo-Romantic piece like the *Sonata de La Luna* (as aforementioned), and more contemporary classical music such as *Silencio* for acapella choir. Besides borrowing from other musical styles, his compositional signature is also filled with literature and mysticism; hence he is often called "El Mago" (the Magician). Pieces like *Concierto del Sol* and *Sonata de la Luna* are based on the symbolism of Tarot cards.

Another characteristic of Castro's style is his economic writing and the clarity of the ideas he wants to convey to the listener. In his universal view of music and the world, he believes that a work should "transcend to different parallel realities or universes."[114] He often uses a compositional technique called *re-composition*, in which a musical idea is used in more than one piece. According to the composer, this allows him "to explore all

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[112] This album was recorded by Philharmonic Orchestra of Costa Rica directed by Eddie Mora and the Heredia Symphony Orchestra directed by Marvin Araya. The album features guitar soloists from Costa Rica, like Mario Ulloa and Oscar Jimenez Fernandez. Carlos Castro was competing with Jorge Liderman, Roberto Valera, Aurelio de la Vega, and Sergio Assad; he shared the first prize with Sergio Assad.
[113] Castro, "Biografia."
[114] Edmundo Ramirez, "Carlos Castro's Music for the Viola #1, 'Serenata de la Luna' for Viola and String Orchestra," *Edmundo Ramirez* (Blog), July 29, 2015. https://edmundoramirez.com/blogs/.

the expressive possibilities of the musical material."[115] However, this compositional technique is not new as it has been used in the past by many composers — among them, J.S. Bach, who often rewrites a work for another instrument.[116] *Kérwá* is an example of this technique, as Castro has three pieces that use the same thematic material: the Guitar Quartet and Orchestra version, a String Quartet version, and a Solo Viola version. Another example is *Sonata de la Luna*, for which he wrote a Guitar solo and Orchestra version, a Clarinet solo and Orchestra version, and a Viola Solo and Orchestra version.[117]

The renowned violist and close friend of the composer Edmundo Ramirez describes Castro's work in the following manner:

> The most interesting characteristic that makes Carlos Castro one of the most important composers in Costa Rican History is that in his music we can hear the flavor of Costa Rican Music in their different manifestations. We can hear the traditional and folkloric music, the dramatic music, styles of modern music, characteristic harmonies of the Latin-American Guitar and other influences such as Latin Jazz and popular music. These flavors presented in Carlos' music exits not as borrowed music materials or philosophical arguments or new doctrines of music art that result in a synthetic work of music; but instead, an organic Musical Universe of ideas that flows from an internalized creativity mind. [118]

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[115] Ramirez, "Carlos Castro's Music for the Viola #1, 'Serenata de la Luna' for Viola and String Orchestra."

[116] J.S. Bach has many examples of re-composing a piece. An example is the Violin Sonata no. 2 in A minor BWV 1003, which the composer transcribed to Harpsichord as Sonata in D minor BWV 964. This is the same way J.S. Bach transcribes his Cello Solo Suite no. 5 in C minor BWV 1001 to lute as Suite in G minor BWV 995. There are many other examples of this in literature, especially before and during the Baroque period. However, some of Carlos Castro changes between the three version are more complex than J.S. Bach transcriptions, as we will observe later in my analysis.

[117] In an interview with *La Nación* (Costa Rican newspaper), the composer mentions the viola version being his favorite version. According to the composer, the "The viola is the instrument that better fit the piece, as it is the darkest among the strings."

[118] Edmundo Ramirez, "Carlos Castro's Music for the Viola #2, *Kérwá for Viola Sola*," *Edmundo Ramirez* (blog), February 18, 2020. https://edmundoramirez.com/blogs/.

This organic musical universe that Ramirez describes will be seen in the analysis of the piece *Kérwá for Viola Sola* and in its counterparts: the Guitar and Orchestra and the String Quartet versions.

4.3.2 Analysis

This work for viola solo is based on melodies collected by Dr. Adolfo Constenla Umaña in his book *Poesia Bribri de lo Cotidiano*. Castro first encountered this book while taking a class at the University of Costa Rica. As he heard the songs and read the Spanish translations of the poems, it sparked his curiosity, and he decided to transcribe some of the songs he later used in the piece *Kérwá*. In the score, the composer specified that the work is mainly based on the lullaby *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala* (Sleep Little Baby) sung by Natalia Gabb. However, as we will see in this analysis, he also draws inspiration from other songs in the book.

As Bartok did with his ethnomusicological study of Hungarian folk music, Carlos Castro did not copy the melodies presented in the book mentioned above, but he studied the general traits and used them in *Kérwá*. For example, observe the lullaby *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala,* which I have transcribed to the best of my abilities and compared to those characteristics mentioned in Chapter 2.

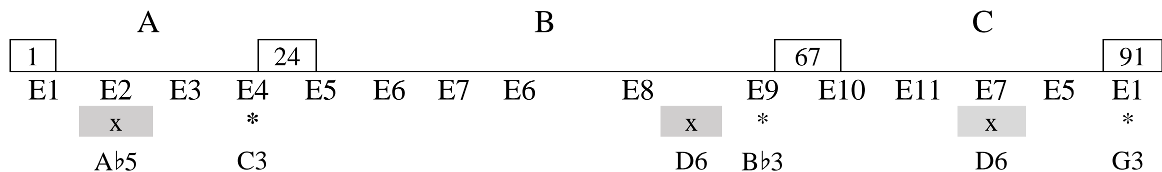
Ex. 4.3.1 *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala,* Transcription.

This melody shares some of the same characteristics with many of the songs in the book. For example, notice how it (1) starts with a *glissando* to the highest note of the

phrase, (2) continues with the melody descending, (3) stops in the middle with a recitative-like section, (4) keeps descending, and (5) concludes in a low note. Though not true for every song, these characteristics can be heard in most of them, especially those sung by *Doña* Natalia Gabb.[119]

It is interesting to observe how Carlos Castro takes these characteristics and makes them his own. For example, he uses the melodic directionality to build many of the episodes and the overall structure of each section.[120] More specifically, he takes the idea of building towards the highest pitch and ending the sections on a lower pitch. Let me elaborate. The piece is in ABC ternary form.[121] Each section climaxes at a high pitch and ends on a low pitch. Observe the following diagram, which is divided into sections and episodes. It also shows the highest pitch of the episode where the climax happens and the lowest note when the section ends.

Diagram 4.3.1 *Kérwá*, Structural Analysis.



E = Episode x = climax * = end of section and lowest note

[119] As a form of respect in Latin America we add 'Doña' (female) or 'Don' (male) before their first name just as English uses Mrs. and Mr. Therefore, I will use these terms as signs of respect.

[120] The piece in general is very fractional, meaning that it is composed by small sections of different lengths. These sections are not always thematic, since they are not developed during rest of the piece; therefore, I have decided to call them episodes rather than themes.

[121] One can argue an ABA or even a loose sonata form since some of the episodes from the beginning are brought back in the last section. However, two of those themes are from the B section and they are brought back in backward order. Another reason why I chose ABC labeling is, at the beginning of C new material is introduced. This led me to believe that this is a new section rather than the return to an old one. Yet, as often in music theory, there is more than one way to analyze a piece.

As indicated in Diagram 4.3.1, section A climaxes at measures 9-11 at the repeated high A♭5 and concludes with a low C3. Section B peaks at measures 54-55; the excitement continues to episode 9, which concludes the section on a B flat 3. Finally, the section C highpoint is at the return of episode 7 (m. 77), with a double melodic line that alternates pitches in the sixth and third octaves. Though not the loudest, this episode has a certain sense of solemnity that makes it special and serves as a transition for the return of episodes 5 and 1. Finally, the piece ends on a G3, proving my observation that the composer uses the melodic contour of the indigenous songs in the structure of the piece.

Though this might seem like a superfluous detail, it can be of great help when interpreting the piece. As shown in the diagram above, the piece is built on episode, like "Legos." Due to the episodic nature of the work, it can easily sound fragmented. By knowing when the climatic events happen, the performer can carefully plan colors, dynamics, and even endurance. This will create a more congruent interpretation that will better serve the piece's narrative.

Regarding each section and its content, let us start by taking a closer look at section A.

Ex 4.3.2 *Kérwá*, Excerpt mm. 1-17.

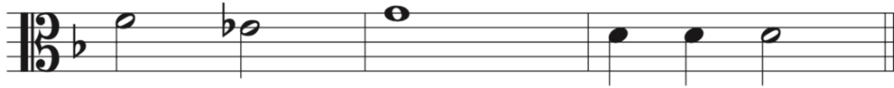
The first episode (mm 1-5) starts with *À s-tàyëlapala* (O Lady) rather with *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala*, which is not used until episode 3 (mm. 14-18). Perhaps the spirituality of the first one fits better with the opening, since the lyrics, as mentioned in Chapter 3, talk about the everlasting quality (*Kérwá*) of the gods and the return to *Sulá*, among other things. It is also fitting that this is the song where the name of the piece came from since the entire piece represents the journey of the composer's life through the eyes of the Bribri. The piece's opening sounds like a horn calling to initiate a ritual. The quarter-note rest at the beginning adds intensity as the performer inhales deeply to start the piece.

The second episode (mm 6-13) is set in the Lydian mode. Starting with a soft non-vibrato sound, the phrase raises in pitch and dynamic. As the phrase moves, the bow gradually travels to *ponticello*, changing the sound from a softly mystical to a cold-fantastic tone within a few measures. Observe the recitative-like section at the top of the phrase on A♭5; by now, the bow is full *ponticello* producing a sound more akin to an electric guitar than to a viola. This color is maintained for the next couple of measures until the sound suddenly changes to a “halo-like” warmer tone (mm. 12-13). Notice how within the first seventeen measures the composer explores at least three to four different colors, using not only indigenous-like sounds but also taking from other genres like rock and roll (mm. 9-11). This is just one of the many examples in which the composer mixes different genres to create his own style. Episode 3 finally uses the lullaby *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala* before returning to the sound effects of the magical discourse. In the last episode of this section, the magical sound returns. Starting with *ponticello* in the first two measures and continuing with a series of arpeggiated chromatic passages, this episode concludes section A’s fantastic discourse.

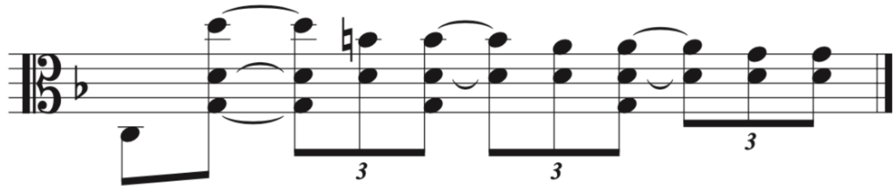
Section B is largely built on three themes or motives: one rhythmic, another melodic, and the third combines both rhythmic and melodic. Except for episodes 7 and 9, all other episodes in section B have some combination of these three motives.

Ex. 4.3.3 *Kérwá*, Section B, Motive 1.

Ex. 4.3.4 *Kérwá*, Section B, Motive 2.

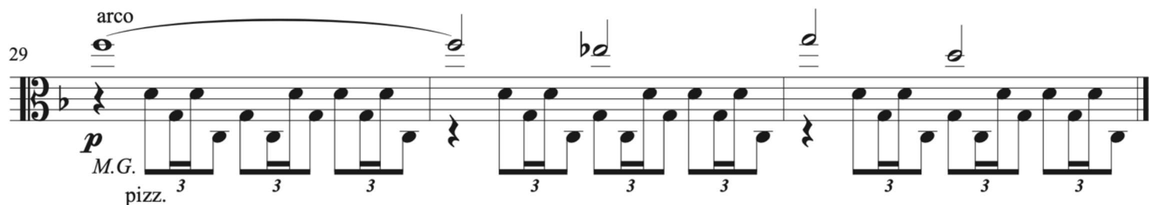


Ex. 4.3.5 *Kérwá*, Section B, Motive 3.



The first motive comes from the song *À Iröla Iröla* (O Northern Hawk). In the recording, the rhythm is a bit lazier than it looks in the score. The accents the composer writes come from open vowels in the lyrics, making those notes seem louder. This motive is first introduced in measure 25, and episode 5 uses it interchangeably with a short passage that resembles the lullaby in episode 3. The next episode (6) juxtaposes motives 2 and 1 in a very interesting setting for the viola: motive 2 is played on the A string with the bow, while the left hand plays motive 1 with *pizzicato* whole holding the notes played with the bow.

Ex. 4.3.6 *Kérwá*, Juxtaposition of motive 1 & 2.



The second motive is set in two more ways: one in quadruple stops with the melody on the bass (characteristic of guitar playing), and the other one in the upper

register of the viola in octaves. Though this setting is difficult for the viola, the misty color obtained from playing up in the fingerboard creates a fascinating effect.

Ex. 4.3.7 *Kérwá*, Motive 2 Settings.

The longest episode of the piece (episode 8) interchanges motives 1 and 3. Here, two other characteristics found in the indigenous songs are used: non-metrical feeling and extension of the music to fit the lyrics (sometimes creating the recitative sections talked about earlier). The constant syncopation and use of rhythms that cannot be captured in notation characterize these songs. The composer tries to achieve this timeless feeling by avoiding changing pitches on the beat and constantly changing meters. No two phrases use the same pitch or rhythm; just like in their indigenous counterpart, there are only similarities. Observe the three presentations of motive 2 that happen in episode 8 and how it is extended:

Ex. 4.3.8 *Kérwá*, Motive 3 Settings.

This third motive is based on the lullaby *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala*. In this setting, the composer extends the motive as it is reinstated: m. 46 is four quarter-note beats, m. 50 is 5.5 beats, and mm 55-56. are 6.5 beats. This reflects the indigenous trait of fitting more lyrics to a melody.

In general, the change of meter and constant avoidance of the downbeat are important aspects to keep in mind when performing this piece. The rhythm must be correct if one wants to keep the piece's authenticity, but the phrasing cannot be governed by it. The performer must keep a consistent beat while creating a free pulse feeling. This is another innovative way that the composer writes in the style of indigenous music.

In the other two episodes (7 & 9), episode 7 is the most different of all since it interchanges a melody in the bass played *pizzicato* with another one in the soprano played with the bow. There are more than two octaves between these two melodies, hence, shifting and switching from *arco* to *pizzicato* creates a continuity issue that must be

resolved by the performer, as usual, with practice and good technique. Finally, episode 9 combines many small themes that resemble the ones used before. This concludes the B section.

The mysticism returns in section C, with the sound created by *tremolo* played *sul ponticello* and *pianissimo* in episode 10, and the *sul tasto* canonic setting of motive 2 in episode 11. What happens next is very interesting: the composer brings back some themes from the previous section but in retrograde. First, episode 7, but both voices are bowed; then, motive 1 is set three times; finally, a shorter version of episode 1 ecstatically finishes the succession of memories. As measure 81 puts an end to the ecstasy of the previous measures, a series of double stop harmonics landing on an open G string put an end to the mystical journey this piece has taken us through. The fantastic discourse is the main event, as technique is used to create all the effects needed to make sure the story is correctly told.

4.3.3 Between Pieces

As mentioned before, there are two other versions of *Kérwá*. The first version was written for Four Guitars and Orchestra; the second is the first movement of String Quartet no. 1 *El Canto de Awá,* written for and dedicated to Bleecker String Quartet. The last version for Viola Solo was commissioned and dedicated to Edmundo Ramirez.

There are more differences between the first and second versions than the last two. The episodes in the first version are used in a different order; however, all three pieces use the same thematic material. In the first version, some common traits of the

concerto form are present, like the double statement of the first theme, among others.[122] It is also interesting how the composer creates different colors with a more expanded instrumental pallet. Observe, for example, the setting of episode 7 (measure 15-18), in the example below:

Ex. 4.3.9 *Kérwá for Four Guitars and Orchestra*, mm 15-18.

Here a version of the indigenous melody is played by the trumpet in augmentation, while the bassoon and clarinet play the melody used as episode 7 in the viola solo version displayed by three beats. The contrapuntal color created here enhances the melody in the soprano voice as well as the dialogue between instruments.

Since the piece was originally written for four guitars as soloistic instruments, many idiomatic passages for guitar do not come as natural in the viola. For example, quadruple stops and multilinear passages are common in a harmonic instrument like the

[122] In the case of the concerto, I feel more comfortable calling the melodic material themes, as they are treated as such in this version.

guitar; however, it requires more advanced technique in the viola — for example, episodes 6, 7, and 11, to mention a few.

The last two versions are identical regarding the order in which the events happen. However, it is easier to create harmonies in the string quartet as well as there are better possibilities to use a canonic juxtaposition of thematic material. For example, observe the first few measures of the string quartet version shown below.

Ex. 4.3.10 *Canto del Awa, First movement 'Kérwá,'* mm. 1-9.

The first episode is set in quartal/quintal harmony and each entrance of the second episode is displaced by a measure. These compositional techniques are less viable in a solo version than multiple instrumental versions. However, it helps to study these other

versions and discover the differences between them, as these can shed light on the original intent of the composer.

4.3.4 Character Analysis

As mentioned before, the piece is in three parts — ABC. Each section is a stage of life according to the Bribri culture. Section A is the beginning of life. The opening horn of episode 1 introduces *Sulá*, the originator, as she approaches the pool of life to mix up the colors of our character. In the second episode, the magic happens; the mysterious character that starts the episode grows into a burst of sound. After the bright colors of the *ponticello* stop, a halo-like short melody finishes the phrase. The lullaby's notes in episode three announce the birth of the new human. As the baby opens his eyes, he cannot make sense of what is happening; the shapes are confusing, so is the last episode. There is no melody or directionality but a continuation of effects that concludes the magical world of this first section.

Section B is more earthy. The main rhythmic unit (motive 1) that connects the whole section comes from a more earthy topic: love. The constant use of motive 2, as an outline of the lullaby used in section A, is a reminder of the magical world from where this human comes. Since his destiny has been sealed from before birth, the different settings of that second motive represent the fulfillment of his future as he goes through the various stages of life. The texture created in episode 6 is foggy as if the vapors of the earth are coming out after a rainy day in the Caribbean. Next, the party starts as motive 1 is used more intensively and interchanged with motive three. In the ecstasy of the

Bulikalök dance and the drinking of *chicha,* episode 9 is conceived, putting an end to this section and probably the life of this individual as well.[123]

Some new colors are explored in the last section as the composer writes a series of melodies with indications a *tremolo*, *sul ponticello,* and *pianissimo*. These sounds return us to the supernatural world, perhaps back to *Sulá*. The next episode (11) explores some picturesque pastel colors formed by the interwinding of two different melodies and the sonorities created from the harmonies. This contrapuntal passage is challenging to execute, but the *sul tasto'*s intimate sound and that third voice that appears when two notes are in perfect harmony are almost ethereal. This person was created, born, lived a life, and now in its return to Sulá and transition to the afterworld, memories of his life begin to appear. From the last memories, like the rain in the mountains (episode 7) and falling in love and celebrating (episode 5), to the announcement of *Sulá* and the creation of his being, this last section brings him back to the beginning, where it all started. A series of double-stop-glissando harmonics ensure the final transition to paradise, and with that, the piece comes to an end.

This is my interpretation of the story, which I developed through research and my imagination. It helped me unify the whole piece. As I tried to create a magical world with my sound, the audience was engaged, travelling the journey alongside me.

4.3.5 Performance Practice

In general, this piece is full of colors and imagery. The performer's job is to discover these and use the available techniques to bring them out. With the help of

[123] A type of alcohol made with fermented corn, yuca, or some other cereals or roots.

Edmundo Ramirez, the composer understands the instrument's color possibilities and uses them to explore sonorities that support the storyline. However, since the composer is a guitar player, some of the writing is not idiomatic, meaning the notes are doable but technically challenging. The use of difficult quadruple stops (episodes 6 and 9) — two types of textures being played simultaneously (ex. Episodes 7 and 11) — makes the pieces playable only for advanced performers with a developed technique to solve those puzzling passages.

Though the technical difficulties are plenty, there is one passage that I had to make some performance decisions and slightly alter what was written. Observe the excerpt below of episode 11 (mm. 76-78) with my fingerings.

Ex. 4.3.11 *Kérwá*, Episode 11.

Measure 77 is not nearly as difficult as measure 79; however, some extensions are used between 4th and 3rd positions. The repetition at the octave is the hardest. Here, the double stop between E flat and G could be played together; however, depending on the performer's hand and viola size, the passage, as it is written, might be impossible to play. Each performer then decides whether use the extension or release the E flat to shift and

play the G. However, since the passage must be played *sul tasto* and *piano*, the finger movement should be as seamless as possible.

Besides the problematic fingering, this passage also presents a challenge for the bow. In string instruments, when playing high on the fingerboard, the string loses resistance, so the bow must move closer to the bridge to compensate. In the case of this passage, the left hand is playing in the middle high register of the viola (3rd and 4th position) while the *sul tasto* indication is asking to play on top of the fingerboard. This contradiction makes the sound very delicate and easy to break. Therefore, my suggestion here is to practice the lines separately first with full sound; once the left hand is solid, find a contact point that creates a light sound, this might not be *sul tasto* per se, but it can sound like it.

While preparing this piece, one of the most challenging aspects I encountered was creating the different colors it required. For example, only in section A (see Ex. 4.3.2) are there at least six changes of colors. The color can change even within one technical indication depending on the passage. For example, the *sul ponticello* in episode 2 differs from the one in episode 10.

Ex. 4.3.12 *Kérwá*, Episode 2.

Ex. 4.2.13 *Kérwá*, Episode 10.

In Ex. 4.3.12, the *ponticello* is visceral, imitating an electric guitar. While in Ex. 4.3.13, the same technique indication is more ethereal and mystical, fitting the fantastic discourse of the piece.

Like these examples, the performer must explore as many colors as the instrument can produce. I encourage anyone who wants to play this piece to play with different contact points, bow speeds, angles, and weight, as well as various types of fingerings and vibrato speeds. Experiment with as many combinations as possible. Know the instrument and its capabilities. This exercise will only help open a world of possibilities and expand the performer's color pallet.

4.3.6 Conclusion

Though the use of the indigenous culture here is significant, other influences can be traced in this piece. Since the composer is a multitalented person (as he is also a writer, performer and composer of jazz and rock, and believer in mysticism), one might expect those elements to be included in his writing. More than a story about the Bribris, the composer uses the mysticism of indigenous music as the medium to tell the story of his life's journey. Our job as performers is to bring that journey to life for the audience.

As a matter of conclusion, I would like to discuss an ongoing heated conversation in the media over the last few years: *cultural appropriation*. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "cultural appropriation takes place when members of a majority group adopt cultural elements of a minority group in an exploitative, disrespectful, or stereotypical way."[124] From this point of view, we could discuss that the piece *Kérwá* represents an example of cultural appropriation, as the composer takes the culture of a minority group and — combined with other musical styles — uses it to create his piece.

One of the biggest arguments against cultural appropriation is the claim that artists who engage in the process will produce flawed works. This is what James O. Young calls the *aesthetic handicap theses.*[125] He argues that artists "who appropriate content from other cultures do not necessarily suffer from aesthetic flaws.[126]" In the case of *Kérwá*, the composer did, in my opinion, like Bartok (who after an ethnomusicological

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[124] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "What Is Cultural Appropriation?" Accessed February 28, 2022. https://www.britannica.com/story/what-is-cultural-appropriation.
[125] James O. Young, "Art, Authenticity and Appropriation," *Frontiers of Philosophy in China* 1, no. 3 (2006), 455. https://www.jstor.org/stable/30209982.
[126] Ibid.

study of folk music), created his own musical language based on his findings. Would we say then that Bartok was engaged in cultural appropriation? Perhaps, however, in my opinion he did not.

There is another interesting theory or concept that I believe is more appropriate to use with contemporary art music: *cross-cultural music making*. This term, however, has had a negative connotation since it has been seen in the context of "European colonialism, in relation to concepts of civilization, missionary movements, exoticism, and later in the context of –the industrially marketed– world music,"[127] However, Jin-Ah Kim argues that due to the large use of genre crossovers by active musicians, this concept comprises a cultural interaction in music rather than cultural appropriation.[128] He explains that "for composers and musicians in Europe, turning to 'cross-cultural music' is a personal decision, whereas for composers and musicians in other cultural regions it is a social necessity."[129] In my opinion, Carlos Castro, rather than taking appropriation of a culture that was not his own, was responding to an admiration of the Bribri culture with music. In this way, he is writing an homage or tribute to the Bribri culture and thus, creating a 'cross-cultural' work and not partaking of cultural appropriation.

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[127] Jin-Ah Kim, "Cross-Cultural Music Making: Concepts, Conditions and Perspectives," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 48, no. 1 (2017), 24. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44259473.
[128] Kim, "Cross-Cultural Music Making," 21.
[129] Kim, "Cross-Cultural Music Making," 26.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

As observed in this research, Costa Rican music has come a long way since the country's beginnings. This small country is producing compelling music worth international attention, performance, and praise. This research was not meant to be exhaustive; it has been my intention to present the topics as concisely as possible to direct and inspire interest in the music of my country and serve other musicians in their understanding and interpretation of this music. The references and resources used here and the material presented can serve as steppingstones to more research about various aspects that were not delved deeper into.

But my journey through this topic was not in a straight line. My initial idea was to create a catalogue of viola music written by Latin American composers. When I presented the idea to my viola professor and the other members of the doctoral committee, they suggested, in their wisdom, that I narrow the topic. One of them said to do it about my country, however, and I am embarrassed to say this, I was not satisfied with the idea. I thought I was not going to find anything worth studying. Yet the idea of studying Latin American music was still my goal. My wide research continued but the work was overwhelming, since there are not many resources available, specially online. I wanted to do all Latin American music for my chamber recital.[130] It was then that I discovered Sergio Delgado and his *Música Concertante* for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano.[131]

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[130] At the end I included Mozart "Kegelstatt" Trio in E-flat major, K.498, as a way to persuade other musicians to play with me.

[131] I found this piece and the *Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano* by J. G. Ripper in an article written by the Colombian violist Karen Correa Suarez (Karen J. Correa Suazrez, "Repertorio Latinoamericano Para Clarinete, Viola y Piano: Catalogo Con Comentarios," *Ricerare*, no. 10 (2018): 55-82).

I was intrigued by the fact that he uses popular folk rhythms from Costa Rica, so I contacted the composer, and he gave me that piece and everything he had written for the viola. It was then I started to take an interest in Costa Rican Art music.

For my last solo recital, I contacted Eddie Mora and he sent me some music. I was interested in the *Preludio e Invension*, but he had misplaced the viola version, so he sent me the violin part. I then continued to make a transcription of the work, which you can find in Appendix 2. Transcribing the piece gave me another perspective on the work, which only enriched my performance experience. It also helped me understand the piece better when making my own editorial decisions to better fit the instrument. After these two pieces I realized the quality of the output coming from this small country.

Finally, for *Kérwá* for Viola Solo by Carlos Castro, it was Edmundo Ramirez who introduced me to the piece. After performing two beautiful and masterfully created pieces by Costa Rican artists, I was convinced that there were many more treasures to be discovered. In my first interview with Sergio Delgado, we talked for two hours about composers and performers, catching up on the musical gossip of the country and finding that we had more people in common that we thought, and that we might have crossed paths many times but never actually met. He mentioned Ramirez in passing, but since there are not many violists with an international career and even fewer from Costa Rica, I decided to contact Edmundo. I was not expecting such a warm and supportive individual. He shared many of the works dedicated to him by Costa Rican composers and provided me with help along the way. He gave me a lesson on *Kérwá* and told me about his work with the composer during the piece. Also, the blogs on his website provided an interesting insight into my research. When he sent me the pieces he had from Carlos

Castro, there was something about *Kérwá* that I found magical. The fact that it was based on Bribri music intrigued my curious mind; I was hooked.

Through the process of research, I learned more about my culture than in nineteen years living in my country. This raised many questions in my mind: what are we teaching the children at our schools regarding Costa Rican music? Why did I never learn about the Bribri culture when I was at school? Why wasn't Costa Rican music part of the curriculum when I was studying at the University of Costa Rica? Why was I never interested in music from my country until I stumbled into it? These things make me think that the preconceptions about Latin American culture and music are so rooted within our population that we cannot see the treasures we hide. For years, I admired European music, and I still do, but I also thought of it as superior to anything that came from the old continent, disregarding what was so close to me. The more I study Latin American music, the more I am at awe with what I find. It is my goal to continue my research to, hopefully someday, make available a database where other musicians can find resources to investigate and perform Latin American music.

Throughout my research I also found a shortage of literature in certain areas of study and topics that would be interesting to research further — the first being resources availability. There have been many books and articles that I just recently came across that could have been exceedingly helpful at the start of my research. There were also many sources that I had to jump through hoops, including asking my dad to run some errands for me in Costa Rica, to acquire or that I could never get ahold of. Though that is true for a lot of investigations, it would be of great help and even encourage more research if there were a research guide into Costa Rican music. Major composers from Latin

America, like Heitor Villa-Lobos, Alberto Ginastera, and Silvestre Revueltas, have research guides. Why not one about Costa Rican Music?

Also, more research is needed on Costa Rican popular folk music. The limited scholarly research available and the inconsistencies between sources make this topic hard to study and write about. It does not help when some terms can be used interchangeably to describe different genres; at the same time, one genre can be named differently depending on the area it is used. Also, because this type of music is often played by amateur musicians, the misinterpretation and mixture of rhythms is a common practice. Therefore, there is constant development of new variants of a genre. As explained in Chapter Three, the use of this type of folk music is greatly influenced by the environment it is used in. For example, the mixture of styles is not the same when serenading a beautiful girl than when playing in a "corrida de toros," a "tope," or a communal party. The genre and, therefore, the combinations are different. This constant evolution of the genres as they adapt to different regions, performers, and situations is an issue when trying to systematically analyze and categorize this music. However, and because of this, an ethnomusicological study on this topic would be fascinating, as the researcher would be dealing not only with music but also with Costa Rican culture.

Another musical topic that has been limitedly studied is indigenous folk music. Much of the research thus far is from an anthropological and linguistic perspective. The indigenous language and poetry studies by Dr. Adolfo Constenla Umaña are a rich source. Since Bribri poetry is always sung, Dr. Constenla Umaña's research on the topic has been valuable for musicians. However, more needs to be done from an ethnomusicological view. Another important researcher is Dr. Laura Cervantes Gamboa.

Many of her publications are the beginning of ethnomusicological research on the music of the indigenous people in Costa Rica. Articles like "Observaciones Etnomusicologicas Acerca de Tres Cantos Cabecares," published in *Estudio de Linguistica Chibcha*, or her articles printed in *Káñina*, such as "Los Géneros Musicales Bribris: Aspectos Sociolingüisticos de su Ejecucion" and "Informacion Básica Acerca de la Musica Tradicional Indigena de Costa Rica," are excellent resources. However, the pool of scholarly research is still small, and there is space for more knowledge to be discovered.

Continuing from the influence of indigenous culture in Costa Rica's art music, another fascinating investigation could be regarding indigenous cultural elements found in Costa Rican art music in general. The research presented here is limited to viola music and, more specifically, what one composer did in one specific piece; however, there are more musical works inspired by indigenous culture. For example, Eddie Mora's pieces *Ye' Sule'* (for wind ensemble, harp, piano, and percussion), *Sula'* (for viola & piano solos, strings and percussion), or Marvin Camacho Villegas' pieces *Lamento Bribri* (for soprano, flute, guitar, and violoncello) and *Meditacion Bribri* (for contrabass), or Benjamin Gutierrez's *Viola Concerto 'Sobre un Canto Bribri'* (for Viola Solo and Orchestra), to mention a few. What elements of indigenous music are used, and how do composers utilize them? What resources did they use, and how could these pieces be relevant to the art music repertoire? A study to answer these and more questions would be appealing not only for their cultural and musical content to performers and scholars, but also for the spreading of Latin American culture worldwide.

Also, I believe more research could be done into *Música Concertante* by Sergio Delgado. My research in this thesis is only the tip of the iceberg of this fascinating piece.

A deeper study into the piece's harmonic, rhythmic, and ensemble content would be helpful to knowing and understanding what young composers in Costa Rica are doing and to assisting other composers with some writing techniques. Connected to this topic, another fascinating study could be done regarding chamber music from Costa Rica. This topic has started to be unveiled on a recent study by Maria Clara Cullel in her unpublished book, *La Música Instrumental en el Teatro Nacional: Desde 1897 hasta 2007*. Her book explores all the music played in the National Theater of Costa Rica over the span of 110 years.

As a final thought, I want to point out the great talent of Latin American musicians, artists, and intellectuals working continually to create new material. There is great talent in these third-world countries, but their music is often undiscovered or dismissed because of its origin. A prevailing view is that if it is not Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, or Brahms, it is not worth playing or listening to. I confess that I too have been guilty of this narrow-minded attitude. However, we forget that some composers that we now believe geniuses were criticized for their music, and many of their pieces were not played until after they were dead. When Beethoven wrote his *Grosse Fugue* for String Quartet, op. 133, listeners considered it too long, complicated, and dull. However, now it is considered a masterpiece. Even J.S. Bach was forgotten for many years until Mendelssohn started to schedule Bach's music in the concerts he conducted. By no means am I comparing Costa Rican composers with Beethoven or Bach (since I feel it is fruitless to compare composers), but as it often happens in the arts, creators are not esteemed during their own time. Therefore, I would like to encourage readers to explore

new music, support rising artists, and research the music you play. There is so much to discover, nothing to lose, and possibly much to gain.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. INDIGENOUS POEM TRANSLATIONS

POEM 1: Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala

Bè̈bë́la, ba-kapö́wa̱la.	Little girl, Sleep
Mì̱wöla mi̱’tkela ka̱nè̱labalök.	Mommy is leaving now to work
E’ ta̱ se’ à̱ta̱la se’ chö́wela a̱.	and we are staying in our house.
Dàtske̱ne̱ mì̱ka̱, ká̱la tánwa̱la tsipá.	They will come back when the horizon turns green.
E’ ta̱la ie’pala dótkene̱la, ka̱nè̱labaléwa̱la ñî̱ë.	Then they will come now after working hard all day long,
E’ ta̱ e’ di’ wa ie’pa dë́ka̱.	
Se’ mi̱’tkela i-itö̀ ki̱, íyila mú̱k i̱-a̱ ñà̱nó̱wala.	

POEM 2: À stàyëlapala

À s-tàyëlapala,
ká ñírke sarûrû,
tala sa-mi'tkela,
kèrwa dirwala ta inúkla inúk.

Ká wéjkela ta kë̀
ch-ku' tkë'rsela íe,
e' tala a' tala
ya-siéstsőkla ká i' ki.

Kèrwa dirwala
we'ìnala e' ta.
Kála di'ë̀la,
tàtsië̀me
bö'tsië̀me
di'ë̀me.

Ye'la míatkenela
ye' Sulé ká ska.
E' ta tàyëlapala
a' tala ká i' ki ye' siéstsőkla.

O Ladies!

the day dawns clear

and we are going now

to play and pay with the stone that never dies.

Someday not more

I will be here

and you will stay

crying for me in this world.

The millstone

then will stay abandoned here,

and in the place will be only water,

it will disturb only,

Indian rubber tree alone,

POEM 3: À iröla iröla

À irőla irőla,
ye' míña be' ta.

O northern hawk, northern hawk,
I will go with you!

Wé be' mírö,
e' ye' mírö.

Wherever you go,
there I will go.

Wé be' chö̀rö,
e' ye' chö̀rö.

Wherever you arrive,
there I will arrive.

Ye' míña be' ta
lő ñási wàkök.

I will go with you,
like a modest buzzard.

Ye' míña be' ta,
dayë̀ jkö sö̀ jkö.

I will go with you,
to the shore of the sea, to the edge of the savannah

Wé be' chö̀rö,
e' ye' chö̀rö.
Ye' míña be' ta.

APPENDIX 2. MUSIC SCORES

SCORE 1: Preludio e Invension by Eddie Mora

Viola

Preludio

Eddie Mora

Lento y doloroso

f p mf *tristemente*

rit. f p

mf

mp

mp

librement

rit.

pp

tempo primo

mf

pp

f

pp

calmo

ff

p

rit. expressivo

attaca

p

Invención

♪=160

f

sost.

a tempo

p

4

poco a poco cresc.

a tempo

poco sost.

poco rall.

a tempo

cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

poco a poco cresc.

6

p

mf

f

più f

sost.

meno

poco sost.

ff

rall.

tempo primo

sost.

molto sost.

a tempo

SCORE 2: Música Concertante by Sergio Delgado.

Score

Música Concertante

para Clarinete, Viola y Piano

Sergio Delgado Rodríguez
n.1993

Moderato e giocoso (♩. = c. 62)

Clarinet in A

Viola

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

San José, Costa Rica (2012, rev.2016)

2 | A | Música Concertante

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

rit.

a tempo

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

pizz.

B

col legno

pizz.

arco

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

C

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

p *f* *mf* *pp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *p*

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

mp *f* *p* *mf* *mf* *f* *p* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *fp* *mf* *f* *mf* *f* *f* *ff*

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

D

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

E

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

pizz.
arco
rit.
Meno mosso

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

accel.

Moderato e giocoso (♩. = c. 62)

pizz.

F

arco

109

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

112

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

115

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

G

117

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

120

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

124

A Cl.

subito p

Vla.

subito p

Pno.

rit.

Largo ♪ = 72

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

H

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

I

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

J

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

rit.

a tempo

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

rit.

Scherzando (♩. = c. 72)

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

190 *a tempo*

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

mp *f* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

196

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

p *mp* (♪=♪) *f* *mf* *p* tr

K

201

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

mf *mp*

206

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

f *mf* *mf* *mp*

210

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

f *mf* *mf* *mp*

213

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

ff *p* *mp* *mf* *pp*

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

L

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

M

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

Vla.

Pno.

A Cl.

rit.

Vla.

Pno.

Presto

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

p mf f ff mp

A Cl.
Vla.
Pno.

f mf mp ff rit. sfz

SCORE 3: Kérwá by Carlos Castro.

A Edmundo Ramírez

Kérwá*

para viola sola

Utiliza el canto de cuna bribri: *Bëbëla. ba-kapowala*
obtenido de Doña Natalia Gabb
recopilado y grabado por Adolfo Constela Umaña**

Carlos José Castro

gradualmente a - *sul pont.*

ord.

sul pont.

ord.

**Umaña Constela, Adolfo. Poesía Bribri de lo cotidiano.
Editorial UCR. San José. Costa Rica 2006

*En la cultura Bribri: nombre que adquiere la divinidad al ser cantada en lengua ritual.

©ACAM

Kérwá

pizz. arco
p mf
pizz. arco
f p M.G. pizz.
arco
mp
pizz. arco pizz. arco
f p f p f
pizz. arco pizz. arco
p f p f
pizz. arco pizz. arco
p f p f
pizz. arco
p f
arco
mp
ff

2

ff

sul pont.

pp

sul tasto

p

ord.

mf

pizz.

mp

arco

f

ppp

4

3

PART II
RECITALS AND PROGRAM NOTES

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

PRESENTS

Priscilla Soto

In a DMA Viola First Recital

with Nathan Stites, Piano

APRIL 28, 2019

NILES GALLERY

4:30 pm

*Note: Latecomers will be seated at intermission

Program

Suite no. 5 in C Minor, BWV 1011 (1720/21) — J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Prelude
Allemande
Courante
Sarabande
Gavotte I & II
Gigue

Sonata no. 2 in E flat major, Opus 120 (1894) — J. Brahms (1833-1897)

Allegro amabile
Allegro appassionato
Andante con moto - Allegro

INTERMISSION

Der Schwanendreher — Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

I. "Zwischen Berg und Tiefem Tal"
II. "Nun laube, Lindlein laude"
III. Variantionen: "Seid ihr nicht der Schwanendreher"

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each set/piece and have cell phones on silent. As a courtesy to performers and other audience members, please turn off and put away all electronic devices. The use of recording and photographic equipment is permitted only by approved University personnel. No food or drink is permitted in this performance venue. We ask that you remain seated throughout the performance and, if you must exit, that you wait until applause.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Musical Arts in 2019. Priscilla Soto is a student of Dr. Wendy K. Yate.

Thank you all for your support showed by attending my first DMA recital. Best!

Program Notes

Cello Suite no. 5 in C minor (trans. Viola), J.S. Bach

Little is known about the origins of this work. There is no autographed manuscript from the composer, only copies by his wife Anna Magdalena and other students of the composer. However, it is believed that these were composed in 1720/21 when Bach was Kapellmeister at Cöthen (1717-23). Each suite consists of a prelude follow by five dances. Though the dance movements follow a two-part structure, meter, and names of the dances, they are highly transformed following an Italian tradition of mixing suite elements with sonata style.

The suite performed today is very different from the other five suites. It was written in scordatura,* which means the instrument was tuned differently (C-G-D-G rather than C-G-D-A) to give it a different color and sonority. It was also written in a more French overture style rather than Italian like the other suites. This can be noticed in the extensive use of dotted rhythms thought the suite.

The prelude was an introduction or call to dance, with fast and difficult passages to show the performance dexterity. However, for this prelude, Bach writes a slower introduction followed by a fugue more commonly seen in French overtures.

Allemande is a German dance with an arpeggiated, serious, and complex harmonic structure that gives a mood of contentment through order and tranquility. Here Bach masterfully combines elements of French rhythmic patterns with Italian Corelli virtuosic writing.

Courante is the French for ‘running’ or ‘flowing.’ It has a feeling of hope. In the case of this suite, the motivic development also encourages a sense of yearning, yet an optimistic mood.

Sarabande was brought from Latin American to Spain where it was banned due to its lively and sensuous nature. Bach’s treatment of the dance is merely structural (keeping the emphasis on the second beat). The simple melodic and rhythmic structure gives this movement a more intimate and solemn character.

Gavottes 1 & 2 are very contrasting dances. The first one is more dance-like, placing two rather than four beats per bar. The second gavotte flows almost in perpetual motion. The effect of these dances is jubilation.

Gigue is a British Isles dance meaning ‘frolic’ or ‘leap.’ Personally, I think this gigue has the most rustic feeling of all the dances with a satirical yet innocent mood. It resembles a fast-Irish tune with nothing serious, only great eagerness and agility.

*Tuning for this performance is (C-G-D-A)

Sonata no. 2 in E flat major, Opus 120, Johannes Brahms

This warm lyric piece is part of a set of sonatas written in the last years of the composer’s life. Thinking that his composition years were coming to an end, Brahms was completing some unfinished works and burning the rest. However, after attending a concert by the German clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, he was inspired to write this set of sonatas. Originally written for clarinet, Brahms decided to adapt the work for viola and take advantage of the warm and rich tones of the instrument.

As Brahms' last chamber music piece, this sonata shows the composer's ability to masterfully combine elements of the Romantic and classical periods. The first movement starts with no introduction but with the viola playing an expressive melody with the piano underneath supporting the melodic contour of the viola. During the entire movement, the viola and piano interact by commenting, completing, or interrupting each other's sentences.

This dialogue continues on the *Allegro appassionato*. With an ABA form, the A section introduces a passionate melody in the difficult key of E flat minor. This section ends with a quiet, solemn melody that perfectly transitions to the B section. The *Sostenuto* has a choral church-like mood in the key of B major. The key relations between sections, as far from each other as they are, transition masterfully, making the piece feel almost seamless.

The last movement is a set of theme and variations based on a folk tune. The theme and first four variations are set in an *andante con moto* tempo. In the first variation, the piano is half-beat behind the viola, almost like they are calmly chasing each other. Variation 2 has more of a dialogue-comment quality between the instruments, which is continued by the third variation. Though the composer does not change tempos in the third variation, his fast note writing makes it feel like he did. The fourth variation (personally my favorite) avoids the downbeat, which gives an ethereal feeling with no real sense of tempo. This is interrupted by a drastic change of tempo in the fifth variation that, even though it seems to lose momentum in the sixth and last variation, regains strength at the end of the piece to create a fantastic and majestic ending.

***Der Schwanendreher*, Paul Hindemith.**

Paul Hindemith's life was between wars. After surviving WW1 as a soldier, Hindemith could not foresee another war, especially one that would attack him so close to home since his wife was Jewish. The regime was starting to take control of every living situation, including music. Jewish musicians were fired, and music was being controlled for political propaganda. As a result of his internal battle between politics and art, Hindemith wrote the opera *Mathis der Maler* (*Matthias the Painter*), where the painter Matthias deals with the same dilemma that Hindemith was going through, with the outcome that being true to art was more important than any political standpoint. This opera received great opposition from the Nazi party. Consequently, a lot of Hindemith's music was banned. The composer then turned to the rest of the world for performances of his works.

During this time, *Der Schwanendreher*, a work for viola solo and small ensemble, was written as an opportunity to emigrate out of Germany to perform this work. This concerto is based on four medieval German folk songs. The work first starts with a viola solo introducing the first folk song, "Zwischen Berg und tiefem Tal," which translates:

Between mountain and deep valley
There runs an open road:
He who does not like his sweetheart,
Must let it go.

The second theme in the first movement is more march-like, and it is used to continue the Swan Turner adventure stories. The movement ends with the return of the folk tune in the viola as a combination of nostalgia, impotence, and anger.

The second movement has an ABA form that uses two folk songs in contrasting settings. The first A is an intimated setting of viola and harp duet playing the tune *Nun laube, Lindlein, laube*, follow by a recitative between the viola and winds in a choral Gregorian chant style.

Now shed your leaves, little linden!
I cannot bear it any longer:
I have lost my love,
I have such a mournful day.

Section B presents the second folk song in a playful fugal style. These contrasting sections (intimate-pensive and naïve-playful) represent the irony of what the composer was going through in his life: mourning the loss of his Fatherland, Germany.

The cuckoo sat on the fence,
It rained a lot, and it got wet.
Cuckoo, cuckoo!
Then came the sunshine,
So the cuckoo was cute and fine.
Cuckoo, cuckoo!
Then it swung its wings
And flew away over the lake.
Cuckoo, cuckoo!

Finally, the last movement is a theme and variation of the folk song "Seid ihr nicht der Schwanendreher?"

Are you not the swan-turner?
Are you not the man himself?
Then turn me the swan,
So that I can believe it.
And if you do not turn me the swan,
Then you are not the swan-turner.
Turn me the swan!

In this movement, the composer is trying to portrait himself as the swan-turner, as if he was saying, "I can take control of my story, of my life, of my art." He expressed this with eleven variations that end the concerto with the whole orchestra in unison. Though

one might think this is a simplistic way of finishing such a meaningful majestic piece, for me, it is a way of saying “let’s all come together in unison no matter what our current situation is.” However, aside from any political implications this work might have, it is a beautiful masterpiece that knits together the antique with the most avant-garde musical writing of the time.

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Priscilla Soto

In a DMA Chamber Music Recital

with Katherine Breeden, Clarinet

Stanley Cheng-Hao Kuo, Violin

Dr. Jacob Coleman, Piano

Saturday, November 14, 2020

Singletary Recital Hall

7:00 pm

*Note: Latecomers will be seated at intermission

Program

Trio in E flat major for Clarinet, Viola and Piano	W.A. Mozart
"Kegelstatt Trio" KV 498 (1786)	(1756-1791)
I. Andante	
II. Menuetto	
III. Rondeaux (Allegretto)	
Duo for Violin and Viola (1946)	Heitor Villa-Lobos
I. Allegro	(1887-1959)
II. Adagio	
III. Allegro agitato	
Música Concertante para Clarinete, Viola y Piano (2012)	Sergio Delgado
Moderato giocoso, Largo, Scherzando	(1993)
Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano (2007)	J.G. Ripper
Andante expressivo	(1958)

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each set/piece and have cell phones on silent. As a courtesy to performers and other audience members, please turn off and put away all electronic devices. The use of recording and photographic equipment is permitted only by approved University personnel. No food or drink is permitted in this performance venue. We ask that you remain seated throughout the performance and, if you must exit, that you wait until applause.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Music Arts in Viola Performance. Priscilla Soto is a student of Dr. Tze-Ying Wu.

Program Notes

Trio in E-flat for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, K. 498 (“Kegelstatt”) by W. A. Mozart

One cannot talk about the clarinet, viola, and piano trios without talking about Mozart’s *Kegelstatt*. The clarinet was a new instrument at the time, and it had not been long added to the orchestra. Yet Mozart’s inclusion of the instrument in the chamber music scene with this trio and the Clarinet Quintet, and portraying it as a solo instrument in the Clarinet Concerto, helped increase its popularity. The beautiful colors created by combining these instruments inspired later Romantic composers like Schumann and Bruch to write for the same combination. Undoubtedly, it was also an inspiration to the composers of the trios played later in this program.

The trio was dedicated to the von Jacquin family, of which Mozart was a teacher and friend. Its first performance was at this family’s home. Interestingly, the close friendship between the composer and this family is even portrayed in the choice of the key signature, since it is believed that E-flat major is Mozart’s choice to represent close friendship in his later chamber music works. Another interesting fact is that the German word *Kegelsttat* means “a place where skittles are played,” and the work portrays just that. It breaks from standard rules of classical form, and the order in the movements is just an example of that. Instead of starting with an allegro, it begins with an *Adagio* and continues with a *Menuetto* and *Trio*, rather than a slow second movement. Like many of Mozart’s music, this trio is fun, light, and playful, just like playing skittles on a beautiful summer afternoon.

The *Adagio* has an interesting feature — the *gruppetto* (turn) used in the first theme and developed through the movement. The second theme is more playful yet operatic and expressive. The *Menuetto* is short, and the trio is a contrapuntal masterpiece without becoming too complex. Each voice has its own independence, yet they complement each other without being overwhelmingly complicated. As lines are added and material is developed, beauty in simplicity is the primary goal.

Finally, the last movement is a seven-part rondo. The structure is AB-AC-AD-A, and though the couplet (A) is repeated four times, Mozart always manages to bring it back a little differently; consequently, the theme is constantly developing. Each of the other sections has a life of their own. The B section (in B-flat major) is characterized by the complexity, almost concerto-like, of the piano part. In contrast, the C section is in C minor, and its main theme, presented by the viola, is interluded by a contrasting lyrical melody in the piano. Continuing, it is time for the viola to show off with a cadenza-like passage that transitions back to the return of the A section. Finally, the D section is in A flat major, and is contained within repeated bars. To close the movement, the A section is developed one last time.

Duo for Violin and Viola by Heitor Villa-Lobos

Heitor Villa-Lobos was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1887 into a middle-class family. His father, a librarian, was an amateur musician who planted the love for music in his son. Young Villa-Lobos recalls his father taking him to the opera rehearsal and orchestra concerts, as well as ever-constant pop-up quizzes about identifying the genre, style, character, and origin of a composition. However, Villa-Lobos's true love for music was in the popular idioms of his native city. It wasn't until his father died in 1899 that the

composer immersed himself into music by playing in *chorões*.[132] Without formal training, the streets of Brazil became Villa-Lobos' music school. Throughout his life, the composer was an avid educator and researcher of Brazilian folk music. Traveling around the country, he could recollect many folk tunes that he compiled into many pedagogical collections. This journey embedded in the composer a folk language style that he transformed into art music that was then and now being performed worldwide.

The Duet performed tonight is a compilation of different styles of *choros*. It is like the composer is painting pictures of memories from his trips to the Brazilian countryside. The first movement (*Allegro*) starts with an *ostinato* in the violin and a melodic line in the viola, resembling the two-voices texture of the flute and guitar commonly used in the *choros*. Runs and trills in the violin, painting birds swirling around, interrupts the *ostinato*. However, the *ostinato* melodic contour and rhythmic structure compile the motivic material developed throughout the movement. Another texture typical of the *choros* is the Gregorian-like homophonic texture, which resembles the ones written in Villa-Lobos' *Choros 3* (*Picapau*). These combinations of fifth and thirds can be found in the first and the last movements. The second section of the first movement is very contrapuntal, with one instrument completing and interrupting the other's line. After returning to the first section, the movement ends with the emblematic

[132] Refers to the groups that play *choro* music. The word "choro" in Portuguese means "to cry." However, it also refers to a type of Brazilian folk music that has fast and happy rhythms, syncopations, small modulations, and is full of counterpoint. The *Choros* resulted from a mixture of several music genres like polka, schottische, waltz, mazurka, and habanera, and is combined with African rhythms like *lundu* and *batuque*, as well as the infamous Brazilian samba. The typical instrumentation includes flute, guitar, and cavaquinho (a small chordophone with four strings). The rhythm section consists of a 6-string guitar, 7-string guitar (playing bass lines) and light percussion, such as a pandeiro.

ostinato material in both instruments, stating, "this is what the whole movement is about."

The second movement (*Adagio*) is of utmost beauty. The picture painted here is similar to the one in *Choros no. 6* (written for full orchestra), where a rhythmic *ostinato* is played by Brazilian percussion instruments while the flute has a melodic line. In this case, the violin plays the *ostinato* while the viola plays an improvisatory-like melody. Just like this *choro*, the duet resembles the dry desert landscape of northeastern Brazil. The middle sections intertwine the two instruments' melodic material, just like two lovers' conversations. After a climatic end of this section, the *ostinato quasi* percussive motive comes back, this time in the viola while the violin sings its heart out.

The last movement (*Allegro agitato*) plays with the habanera rhythm, found not only in *choros* but also in tango and many other Latin American music styles. Here the melodic and rhythmic lines between the two instruments are constantly fighting. It is difficult to discern who has the main role. As with the other movements, the middle section contrasts with the rest. It has a form of its own (ABA) in which the outer material is very rhythmic and heroic, while the middle part resembles the Gregorian chant texture of the first movement. The duet concludes with a tempest of scales going in opposite directions, like the wind in the desert.

This piece was dedicated to Paullina d'Ambrosio, violinist and pedagogue from Brazil. Being a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, Villa-Lobos undoubtedly had no restraints writing a virtuoso part for the violin. The use of the entire fingerboard through fast runs, double stops, and more technical challenges are just some *virtuosi* writing you will hear today, not only in the violin, but in the viola as well.

There is an inexplicable duality between beautiful memories and sadness in this work. Could the composer be thinking of pre-war memories while living in the sad reality of a post-war world? Maybe. Undoubtedly, there is beauty in the memories that Villa-Lobos shares with us in this piece.

Música Concertante para Clarinete, Viola, y Piano by Sergio Delgado

Sergio Delgado is a young Costa Rican performer, teacher, and composer. His music career was forged in the Conservatory of Castella and the University of Costa Rica, where he obtained his bachelor's degree in Clarinet Performance. His varied catalog of orchestral and chamber music has been performed worldwide. The quality of his output granted him the National Price of Music in Composition in Costa Rica in 2019 for his work *Nocturnos a Debravo,* inspired by the revolutionary Costa Rican poet Jorge Debravo.

The piece performed today was written in 2012 (when the composer was only 19 years old) and revised in 2016. Being the composer a clarinetist himself, the clarinet part in this work is very technically demanding. The viola scoring does not stay behind, as it explores some extended techniques and technically challenging sections. The difficulty of the piece delayed its performance until 2018, when the Colombian trio *Acuarimántica* asked for it to be included in one of their CD recordings. The performance today is the second time the piece has been played as well as its United States premiere.

Though the piece is one movement, three sections can be distinguished: *Moderato giocosso, Largo,* and *Scherzando*. These sections are connected through the development of the melodic material introduced by the viola and clarinet duet at the beginning of the

piece. The *Moderato giocosso* section explores the colors between the clarinet and viola, having the piano commenting and enhancing the dialogue. It also portraits a rhythm found in Costa Rican folk music called *tambito*. It is interesting to hear how the *tambito* is developed and transformed, from a backbone rhythm into melody and more, showing the innovated wit of the composer.

The *largo* section has a more pensive and anguish character. All voices are intertwined and hardly ever move together. As the intensity builds up, the voices start coming together to finally shout a last cry of despair. The piano keeps a constant 8th note octaves through the climax as if they were bells counting the minutes when the anguish will end. The movement concludes with a dying *diminuendo* that disappears into silence. In the *Scherzando*, the sun rises, and the despair disappears. The beginning is *cadenza* between the piano and the clarinet. The first theme in the *Allegro giocoso* reappears in the viola but on a happier note. Some rhythms and melodic contours suggest different Latin American popular music like salsa and tango with a flare of Costa Rican folk. The whole movement is more like a party. Like a good Latino, there is no anguish that a *salsa* dance cannot cure!

As the composer describes it, this piece “consists of sounds and inexhaustible voices that are transformed and mixed through a rhapsodic and fantastic discourse.” Perhaps that discourse is life’s happy, sad, and unpredictable moments.

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano by João Guilherme Ripper

João Guilherme Ripper is a Brazilian composer born in 1959 in Rio de Janeiro. As a child, he was called into music by writing poetry and finding himself adding music

to his poems. Consequently, he learned to play an instrument, starting with the guitar and then piano. He studied composition and conducting at the School of Music of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, where he received his master's degree. He later obtained his doctoral degree from the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. After working as a conductor and composer in the US for three years, he returned to Brazil in 1997, where he worked at his alma mater, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Since 2004 he has been director of the Sala Cecilia Meireles Concert Hall in Rio de Janeiro.

Ripper's outcome as a composer is extensive. It includes nine operas (to which he writes his librettos), several symphonies, and chamber and solo works. This piece in particular was written in 2007 and premiered in October of that year at the Sala Cecilia Meireles in Rio Janeiro, Brazil. It was later recorded at the Loyd Ultan Recital Hall, the University of Minnesota by John Anderson (clarinet), Korey Konkol (viola), and Tim Lovelance (piano) as part of their album *Music from South America*.

This trio is a sonata-form one-movement composition featuring two main contrasting themes. The first theme presented by the viola at the beginning was inspired by Brahms' Viola/Clarinet sonatas. Its thick texture and lyricism are contrasted by the second theme, whose character has more of a folky-Irish-like feeling to it. In the development, the composer manages to combine and transform both themes as well as introduce some new material. In the recapitulation, another theme is suggested and later used and developed to wrap up the work. In a nutshell, this trio combines lyricism with folk and rustic materials innovatively and interestingly to portrait simply beautiful music.

Thanks…

I want to thank the wonderful musicians who played with me tonight, whom for weeks have diligently learned their music and rehearsed with me. They have become not only colleagues, but also friends. Thank you!

Thank you to my amazing teacher, who is so patient. Her advice and support in the process of putting this recital together have been incredible. Thank you, Dr. Wu!

To my friends and church family who have come from far and the ones that are watching online, know that your prayers, words of encouragement, and support have sustained me through stressful times. Thank you all!

And finally, thanks to my family. Though they are far, they always support me through prayers, calls, and in any way they can possibly think of. I am extremely blessed to have them in my life. Love you!

Thanks to God, for allowing me to still make music in these difficult times. Nowadays, this is not a given, and it's a privilege to do music in a group and to share it live with all of you.

Thank you all for coming!

"So long as the human spirit thrives on this planet, music in some living form will accompany and sustain it"

Aaron Copland

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Priscilla Soto

In a DMA 2 Viola Recital

with Dr. Jacob Coleman, Piano

Sunday, May 2nd, 2021

Singletary Recital Hall

7:00 pm

*Note: Latecomers will be seated at intermission

Program

Suite for Cello Solo no. 4 in E flat major, BWV 1010	J.S. Bach
Prelude	(1685-1750)
Allemande	
Courante	
Sarabande	
Boureé I & II	
Gigue	
Élégie	Igor Stravinsky
	(1882-1971)
Preludio e Invension	Eddie Mora
	(1965)
Marchënbilder for Viola and Piano, Op. 133	Robert Schumann
I. Nitcht schnell	(1810-1856)
II. Lenhaft	
III. Rasch	
IV. Langsam, mit melancholischem Ausdruck	

With Dr. Jacob Coleman, piano

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This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Music Arts in Viola Performance. Priscilla Soto is a student of Dr. Tze-Ying Wu.

Program Notes

Suite for Cello Solo no. 4 in E Flat Major by J.S. Bach.

The J.S. Bach 6 Suites, though originally written for cello solo, are transcribed and often performed by the viola as well. Though the exact year in which these were written is unknown, it is believed that he wrote them sometime between 1717 and 1720, after the completion of the *Sonatas* and *Partitas* for violin solo. Another interesting fact about these suites is that there is no autograph manuscript; therefore, text editions are based on Anna Magdalena's copy from 1730 and other early copies and editions.

As common in all suites, these start with a Prelude, which is intended to serve as a call for the dancers to get ready and show the performer's technical dexterity. They are free in form and style. In the case of this suite, the Prelude first part is a progression of broken chords written in consistent eighth-notes rhythm. The second part of the prelude is more improvisatory, with fast sixteenth-notes runs interwoven with eighth note broken chords sections. Interestingly, some of the chord progressions used in the Prelude are later used in the dances, particularly in the *Allemande* and *Courante*. The *Allemande* is a German dance usually written in half time and is more serious in character. This is followed by the *Courante*, a French dance that means running or flowing like a river; hence, its performance must reflect a feeling of ease and continuity.

After two fast movements, the *Sarabande* beauty and slow tempo create a contrast before continuing to two more fast movements. This dace was originally from Latin American, brought to Europe by the Spanish in the 1500s. It was prohibited for a while for its sensual and syncopated nature; however, it was later slowed down and eventually

accepted as appropriate. What is unique about this dance is the emphasis on the second beat rather than the first, like the other dances. However, even more interesting, Bach expands the concept and creates directionality not towards the second beat but the second measure. This is not kept throughout the movement, but is interchanged with the traditional emphasis on the second beat.

Following the beautiful *Sarabande* is the *Boureé*. This is a French folk dance in half time which structure consists of *Boureé I & II* in an ABA form. It is a more rustic dance than the previous ones. In the second *Boureé*, for example, one can almost hear the sound of shoes hitting the floor since the emphasis on certain beats is evident with the double stops. The last dance is the *Gigue*, an English/Irish dance typically in 3/8 or 6/8; however, this particular *Gigue* is in 12/8 with some emphasis on beats one and seven. This is a fun and fast movement in which its rustic folk elements jump out of the page to create an image of dancers frolicking around the dance floor.

This *Suite no. 4* is another example of J.S. Bach's skill in writing counterpoint for a solo instrument in a beautiful and successful way. We find a Bach that, though follows contrapuntal and harmonic rules of the time, also finds ways to break the pattern and introduce new approaches to well-established forms, as is in the case of the *Sarabande* in this suite.

Elegy for Viola Solo by Igor Stravinsky.

This Elegy was written in memory of the violinist Alphone Onnou, founder and performer of the Pro Arte Quartet in 1912, who died in 1940. The piece was requested by the violist of the quartet, Germain Prévost; and the agreement of the request was accepted

as an apology from Stravinsky to Prévost. The story is fascinating and borderline music gossip. Apparently, the new first violinist of the Pro Arte Quartet had bad-mouthed Prévost to Stravinsky, who then repeated the comments to Nadia Boulanger. A year later, she asked Prévost to take her to Onnou's resting place. Prévost asked her if they could read through some music together in memory of their beloved friend, but Boulanger put him off. Finally, after they visited the cemetery, she agreed to play some Brahms with him, and to her surprise, his playing was beautiful. To him she said, "You play well… Stravinsky told me that you couldn't play anymore." The request of the piece was detailed in a letter between Boulanger and Stravinsky, in which, in a few words, she guilted him into writing the piece as an apology to Prévost.

Regardless of why this piece came to be, the work is a contrapuntal masterpiece. This work is Stravinsky's only contribution to the solo string repertoire and his only piece written for viola. Though the composer's fascination with counterpoint started at a young age, here the issue goes beyond contrapuntal writing. The problem relies on how to write a fully two-voiced work for a single melodic instrument, an issue that Stravinsky skillfully resolves.

The piece is in ABA form, in which the A section serves as a slower prelude/postlude to the main contrapuntal event in section B. The first part is centered on C minor; however, a mixture of consonance and dissonance creates an aura of mourning. The middle section is a fugue in two voices. The subject is presented in the lower register of the viola, and as the second statement follows, the subject is placed in the middle register. Each time the subject is presented, it goes higher in pitch, and the writing is more complex. The last time the subject is used, it is presented in *stretto* a measure apart;

however, the second subject is inverted. Somehow, Stravinsky manages to keep both entries of the subjects true for the most part, concluding the B section with five ascending chords. The return of the A is almost identical except for the last few measures close to the end. Some of the strongest dissonances are found in the last two measures, which resolves a minor third apart and pianissimo in the last two notes.

Beyond the amusing contrapuntal writing, the piece is almost philosophical. It is about life, with its pleasant and despair moments. It finishes how it started, with a minor third, as if one completing the circle of life. Well says the popular saying, "We start with nothing and end up with nothing." Phrases ending in a question or inconclusive answers represent everyday life. The dissonances are never truly resolved until the end when the consonant chord is finally played, almost not audible. Not everything in the piece is darkness and mourning. There are moments of calmness, happiness, and almost euphoria, but these are presented almost like a memory… a memory of the great person once was.

Preludio e Invension by Eddie Mora

Eddie Mora is a Costa Rican composer born in 1965. He started his musical studies in violin and composition at the Conservatorio Castella and the Universidad de Costa Rica. He later continued his studies at the Tchaikovsky State Conservatory in Moscow for almost ten years. After moving back to Costa Rica, Mora taught at the University of Costa Rica, where he later served as dean of the School of Arts. He is currently the artistic director of the Orchestra Sinfónica de Heredia and guest conductor at the National Symphonic Orchestra of Costa Rica. He is also an active performer and advocate of Latin American contemporary music, creating many ensembles dedicated to performing this type of music. As a composer, Mora has been the recipient of many

national cultural and music awards given by the Cultural Ministry of Costa Rica and the winner of a Latin Grammy for "Best Classical Musical Album" in 2017 with the National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica. His international career as a composer is extensive, with his works played worldwide. He has composed more than a thousand works, making him one of the most prolific Costa Rican composers.

The piece played tonight was written in 2003, originally for violin and transcribed by the composer for viola upon a friend's request. The first movement is "Lento y doloroso" (Slow and painful) and gravitates around C minor. Its introduction starts with an open "C" string played fourteen times, split into two seven-note phrases, each time softer. These open "Cs" give a sense of reverence and anguish as if they were drums played before a funeral or execution. The next melodic material is even more painful with gestures resembling a mournful cry, each descending to return to the fourteen "C" notes. The A section combines the melodic material of the introduction with a constant eight-note basso continuo similar to the J.S. Bach *Adagio* from the *Sonata for Violin Solo no. 2.* This is kept throughout the rest of the prelude, interchanging melody between voices and creating dissonance and resolutions that indicate the pain intended in the composition. After a short *cadential* material, the B section moves faster, and the bass line is busier. The Prelude ends with an 'attaca' indication to the *Invension*.

The *Invension* is still centered in C minor, but its centricity is not as evident as in the prelude. The character is more upbeat with metric changes between 3/8, 2/8, and 5/16 and often uses *hemiolas*. Mora uses a similar approach in structure and material as J.S. Bach inventions, using rounded binary as the overall structure. Though this is not a tonal piece, the elements of tone centricity are those of traditional harmony. The A section is

centered in C minor, and the B section on G. Finally, almost all of the movement revolves around three rhythmic motives. The constant development of these motives shows the artistry of the composer. One of the most exciting and challenging sections for the viola is before returning to A; here, Mora writes a cadenza-like section that ends in tenth in the upper register. He then artistically reintroduces A with an almost V-I harmonic motion. Some new material is introduced, but the thematic material is similar to the first A section. The piece finishes with a short coda that creates the momentum for a whole tone scale octave, ending with an exciting and almost frantic closing.

Marchenbilder (Fairy-Tale Pictures) for Viola and piano, Op. 133 by Robert Schumann

This work was written in 1851, just a year after Schubert took the municipal music director position in Düsseldorf, Germany. The composer had been experiencing mental health and anxiety issues since the 1830s, but his mental state has gotten worse after an exhausting year of work. Consequently, it is impressive that this work was composed in a period of four days while the composer was dealing with the stress from work and anxiety. It is believed that Schumann based this composition on a poem written by Louis du Rieux, which he got in a letter that Rieux wrote to him, suggesting that the poem would go well with the Maestro's music. Though there is no certainty of the influence that the letter could have on the composer, some similarities can be found between the poem and the music

I. Nitcht schnell

During our childhood, magical fairy tales
explains the actions of spirits

and we cheer or wail… (Laments)

The magic starts in the viola's first melody. As the poem says, there is a mix of mystery (the actions of spirits) and a duality that I cannot explain whether it is "cheer or wail." The second theme, first introduced by the piano, emphasizes the word "lament" presented in the poem's first stanza. This draws close to the composer's heart since his struggle with anxiety and depression has left him worried about his state of mind. In the middle section, this lament motif is developed in a complex, almost spiral dialogue between the piano and the viola. The movement finishes with the returning of the main melody and small coda.

II. Lenhaft

This is the one movement that differs the most from the poem. It does talk about a warrior, but the picture painted in the music is more about a journey. If my imagination runs wild, it would be something like a handsome prince galloping in his horse to rescue the princess. During the journey, his attention is drawn to the beautiful singing of the birds and the peasant crossing the street with a huge mama pig and her piglets. Finally, the prince continues his journey to the castle as he disappears into the forest.

III. Rasch

It is war! The prince finally gets to the castle, but he discovers that horrendous creatures guard the princess. Maybe it's a dragon, perhaps a witch; the music here is intense. The viola playing fast sextuplets in the lower register in pianissimo gives the sense that something is not right; something terrible is about to happen. Flashes of danger approach with the sudden crescendos and diminuendos. The mystery is disrupted by a striking

melody played by the viola while the piano takes over the running notes from the beginning.

The middle section is all about the funny sidekick; here, the melodic material is played by the piano while the viola accompanies. The melody is funky and bouncy. This is interrupted by chords in the viola announcing that danger is coming again. The material from the beginning returns, and the battle starts again. The last melodic material in the coda gives a sense of victory, but whose — the prince or the monster? All of this is encapsulated into a rondo form.

IV. Langsam, mit melancholischem Ausdruck

The prince won! This is the happy ending to the love story. The movement starts with a duet between the viola and piano. What is interesting is that though the piano plays at a higher pitch than the viola, both instruments have the melody; no one should be louder than the other; both are equals. The piano takes over a new theme in the middle section, with the viola commenting with soft *arpeggio*s. After a few measures, the viola joins the piano with one of the most beautiful melodies of the entire piece. The whole movement structure is centered on this short melody since all the themes around it are structured to create a thematic palindrome. The piano retakes the melody that starts the B second and the viola accompanies again. Finally, section A returns, and the movement is concluded. This calm and beautiful movement finishes the entire work, as if saying love can trump it all.

The poem is more about the love between two people that, for some reason, are prohibited from being together, so their love is like a fairytale. Wasn't this Robert and

Clara Schumann's love story? As in many other works, she was his muse and their love, his inspiration.

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
PRESENTS

PRISCILLA SOTO

In a DMA LECTURE VIOLA Recital

When Contemporary Music meets Costa Rican Indigenous Culture:
A look into the piece Kérwá for Viola Solo by Carlos Castro

November 11, 2021

NILES GALLERY

11:30 am

Program

Introduction

Who is Carlos Castro?

The Bribris

<u>Musical Examples:</u>

1. *Bëbëla, ba-kapöwala (Baby Sleep)*
2. *À s-tàyëlapala (Oh Mademoiselle)*
3. *À iröla Iröla (Oh Northern Haw*

"Poesia Bribri de lo Cotidiano" by Adolfo Constenla Umaña

Analysis of Kérwá

Performance:

Kérwá for Viola Solo — Carlos Castro (1963)

Conclusion & Questions

For recording purposes, please hold applause until after each set/piece and have cell phones on silent. As a courtesy to performers and other audience members, please turn off and put away all electronic devices. The use of recording and photographic equipment is permitted only by approved University personnel. No food or drink is permitted in this performance venue. We ask that you remain seated throughout the performance and, if you must exit, that you wait until applause.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctorate in Musical Arts. Priscilla Soto is a student of Dr. Tze-Ying Wu.

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EDUCATION

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Sept. 2010 – Aug. 2015	**Director of Delicata String Quartet**
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