

RAMOS CHAVEZ, GUADALUPE. D.M.A. Bridging Identities: Solo Oboe and Chamber Works by Mexican Composers. (2023)
Directed by Dr. Mary Ashley Barret. 201 pp.

- I. Solo Recital: Saturday, October 17, 2020, 5:30 p.m, Tew Recital Hall. *Oboe Concerto: Rondo Pastorale, Finale (Scherzo)* (Ralph Vaughan Williams); *Obsession* (Makoto Shinohara); *Brokenvention* (Alyssa Morris); *Spell Song* (Toshio Hosokawa); *Italian Dance* (Madeleine Dring).
- II. Solo Recital: Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 7:30 p.m, Tew Recital Hall. *Sueños de Crisálida* (Allesandra Vargas), *Oboe Concerto in a minor, RV 461* (Antonio Vivaldi), *Oboe Concerto: Allegro Moderato quasi Pastorale, Adagio* (David Mullikin); *Summer Song* (Miguel del Águila).
- III. Solo Recital: Sunday, April 24, 2022, 11:30 a.m, Tew Recital Hall. *Al filo del agua* (Maria Granillo); *Night Windows: Anger, Nostalgia* (Thea Musgrave); *Boca abajo* (Francisco Cortés-Álvarez); *Parking Violation: 42nd Street and Queens Boulevard, West Broadway & Franklin Street, 42nd Street & Greenpoint Avenue, 96th Street & Broadway, 42nd Street & 47th Avenue* (Mark Mellits); *Danza de Mediodía* (Arturo Márquez).
- IV. D.M.A Research Project. BRIDGING IDENTITIES: SOLO OBOE AND CHAMBER WORKS BY MEXICAN COMPOSERS, (2023). The purpose of this project was to make known various oboe solo and chamber works by Mexican composers and to establish the beginnings of a communications network between oboists and these same composers. For each of the ten pieces in the dissertation a performance analysis was conducted and a playing level assigned. Composers were introduced via biographies and transcribed interviews. The following questions were

addressed in this project. How many pieces for the oboe by Mexican composers exist? Is there a resource to search for these compositions other than a blind internet search? How do I obtain the music for these pieces? What oboe techniques are needed to perform these pieces? As the project was conducted and pieces compiled, other than two albums dedicated to oboe works by Mexican composers, Carmen Thierry's *Oboemia: Música Mexicana para Oboe Solo* and Jonathan Thompson's *Tollan: Mexican Works for the Oboe*, three other resources were found. Two of these are student theses which also focused on oboe works by Mexican composers, Alejandra Odgers' *La Música de Cámara Para Oboe Escrita En La Segunda Mitad Del Siglo XX*, and Mireya Pérez Fernández's *Música Mexicana Inédita Para Oboe. Grabación Digital, Comentarios Analíticos Y Partituras*. The third resource is a catalog of Mexican oboe works, *Catalog of Mexican Oboe Music*, compiled by oboist Jonathan Thompson. However, since the theses were discovered in the middle of the project and the catalog was only acquired towards the end of the project, all pieces included in the dissertation were found in two albums mentioned above or via individual internet searches. Music was obtained mostly by contacting the composers directly; only five out of ten pieces were procured in separate publishing websites. There are a variety of extended oboe techniques needed for these pieces as well. These include glissandi, pitch bending, quarter tones and micro tones, flutter tonguing, multiphonics, tremolos, and double tonguing.

BRIDGING IDENTITIES: SOLO OBOE AND CHAMBER WORKS BY MEXICAN
COMPOSERS

by

Guadalupe Ramos Chavez

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Approved by

Dr. Mary Ashley Barret
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APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Guadalupe Ramos Chavez has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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I've had many teachers throughout my long years of music schooling but I would not be where I am without my first band teacher, Michael Phenicie. Phen, I don't think I can express how much your support meant when I was first starting out, and how much it still means now. Thank you Phen, you took a tiny little Mexican girl squawking out her very first note on the oboe and made her believe she could be a musician when she grew up.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

As a Mexican-American oboist, born and raised in the US by immigrant Mexican parents, I have navigated my musical career seeing very little of my Mexican identity represented in the music I play. Identity can be a very tricky thing. What makes me Mexican? Is it my brown skin even though I was born in the US? Is it the fact that I speak Spanish, even though it's always been a bit rustier than my English? Can I even claim a Mexican identity when the only memories I have of Mexico are Christmas visits to family once every few years? To me, my identity has always been caught between two worlds, never quite enough of each, never quite belonging to either.

This belonging to two worlds is something that I have recently come to realize parallels my exact feelings as a Mexican-American oboist in the world of classical music. For a long time this was not a problem I ever thought about. As I advanced through my formal music training I, like many oboists, was taught via, and performed, mainly standard oboe repertoire—a repertoire that is composed in large part by western European composers. This was the norm and not something I questioned. However, as I advanced from degree to degree this lack of diversity became readily apparent. It wouldn't be until the second year of my master's that I performed an oboe work by a Mexican composer. It was at that moment I realized I had long thought about my identity as a classical musician and my Mexican identity as two completely separate things, and for the first time, those two identities seemed to be overlapping. Now, as I complete my doctoral degree I can safely say that the world of classical music and aspects of my Mexican identity are not as distinct as I first thought they were, nor should they be. This very personal realization came full circle during my final DMA graduate Recital, where I not only performed

three of the pieces listed in the project, but also performed while dressed in traditional Mexican clothing. More information on that personal musical journey and how it relates to this project can be found in Appendix D.

There has been much conversation in today's classical music world about decolonizing not only music studies at large, but also repertoire canons within specific studios. It was a topic I first came into contact with when I began my doctoral oboe studies in 2019 and one that I kept engaging with as I completed my post baccalaureate certificate in ethnomusicology in 2022. Decolonizing music studies is the process by which the colonial aspects of music education are firstly acknowledged, then interrogated, and finally addressed with solutions. According to Loren Kajikawa, one of these persistent colonial aspects is the "system that privileges the music of white European and American male composers and tends to exclude the music of almost everyone else."¹ This norm was so pervasive within my early music studies that it took me years to even question it.

In oboe repertoire this norm can be seen in its long focus on Western art music primarily created by European composers. And while this original focus can be understood, considering the oboe's history within Western art music, presently, with composers of all different nationalities and musical backgrounds composing music for the instrument, this focus on *only* Western or European composers should no longer be the case. As such, this document will address this by compiling works of specifically Mexican composers, of which there is a marked lack in standard oboe repertoire, a lack aided first by the seeming scarcity of such pieces, and

¹ Loren Kajikawa, "The Possessive Investment in Classical Music: Confronting Legacies of White Supremacy in U.S Schools and Departments of Music," in *Seeing Race Again: Countering Colorblindness across the Disciplines*, ed. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Luke Charles Harris, Daniel Martinez HoSang, and George Lipsitz, (University of California Press, 2005), 156-157, accessed March 8, 2023, Proquest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=5609526>.

second the challenge it can take to find and purchase these pieces. The project will also go beyond the “token gestures that celebrate diversity” in classical music by not just presenting these pieces alone, but also by focusing as much on their composers and the context they bring to their pieces, as the piece itself.²

However, while this dissertation was imagined specifically as an avenue to help decolonize and diversify oboe repertoire, with the project’s focus on primarily *classical* oboe music, through a different lens it can also be seen as a colonizing gesture. Although many of these Mexican composers were trained as classical composers, and therefore as western art music composers, by nature of being *Mexican* composers they are already engaging with classical music in a way that can be seen as inherently decolonizing. The fact that many of the project’s composers draw inspiration from their heritage and culture and specifically choose to imbue that within their music adds another layer of this. As I interviewed these composers, it was clear that there didn’t seem to be a separation between Mexican and composer or classical musician, two identities that took me until this project to merge. To now say that these Mexican composers, by nature of being classical musicians, are inherently engaging in the colonizing nature of western art music with no nuance allowed as to *how* they engage with this music is to erase part of their identities.

Problem Statement

At the start of this project only two albums dedicated to wholly Mexican oboe pieces, *Oboemia: Música Mexicana para Oboe Solo*, recorded by Mexican oboist Carmen Thierry at the

² Loren Kajikawa. “The Possessive Investment in Classical Music: Confronting Legacies of White Supremacy in U.S Schools and Departments of Music.” In *Seeing Race Again: Countering Colorblindness across the Disciplines*, ed. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Luke Charles Harris, Daniel Martinez HoSang, and George Lipsitz, (University of California Press, 2005), 156, accessed March 8, 2023, Proquest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=5609526>.

Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, and *Tollan: Mexican Works for the Oboe*, recorded by Mexican-American oboist Jonathan Thompson, were found. Beyond these two resources, there seemed to be no other dedicated databases or research tools for discovering specifically Mexican works. Even using resources like [*The Institute for Composer Diversity*](#) or [*Cayambis Music Press for Latin American Classical Sheet Music*](#) yielded only a very small amount of music. The result of this was a seeming scarcity of Mexican works for the oboe. However, as the project progressed three other dedicated resources were discovered. These resources, two theses and a dedicated catalog are discussed in Status of Related Research.

With the above problems in mind, this study will directly answer four questions:

- 1) How many pieces for oboe by Mexican composers exist?
- 2) Is there a resource to search for these compositions other than a blind internet search?
- 3) How does one obtain these pieces?
- 4) What oboe techniques are needed to perform these pieces?

For the purposes of this project, I define music for the oboe as music written for the modern oboe as used in classical music. Mexican composers will be defined as anybody born in Mexico or born out of Mexico but with Mexican heritage. As such, while I was born and raised in the US, because of my Mexican heritage I still consider myself Mexican. My specifically Mexican-American identity does not erase or diminish that. The pieces themselves are either for oboe solo, oboe with varied accompaniment, and chamber works that include the oboe in some way. Chamber works are defined as pieces for oboe and at least one other instrument and up to a chamber orchestra. Any piece fitting the criteria above will be considered an oboe work by a Mexican composer.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this project is to create a resource that not only compiles Mexican oboe works but also provides the beginnings of a network of communication with the composers of these pieces. This will be achieved by compiling a selection of Mexican compositions that include oboe, each with its own performance focused analyses, and adding to this composer biographies and composer interviews. The analyses and composer interviews will add valuable context to each piece and act as a performance resource for relatively unknown works.

Interviews will also provide a direct line of communication with living Mexican composers and begin building a network that I will take with me into my performance and teaching career. In this way the world of Mexican oboe music goes beyond just the sheet music and becomes a world made up of living composers, composers that in turn make up a rich world of Mexican classical music. This project will be ongoing throughout my oboe career.

Altogether, this dissertation aims to become a resource for any performer or teacher who wants to explore music outside of current colonial standard repertoire. In this way this project can become a useful reference and tool for decentering current standard oboe repertoire and in doing so help decenter this music in the overall higher education music curriculum.

This document is further divided into six chapters. The first is an introduction into the project itself. The second contains brief composer biographies of each composer, along with contact information. The third contains the list of works gathered, along with brief performance analyses for each. The fourth includes transcripts of composer interviews. The fifth is a conclusion where the original four questions posed are answered. The sixth is a bibliography of any and all sources used in discovering pieces, purchasing pieces, analyzing pieces, as well as sources used in compiling composer biographies. The project ends with a section of appendices.

Limitations and Delimitations

The selection of pieces included in the project were limited to what I could find by way of personal research, mainly through internet searches and word of mouth via other oboe professors, composers, and performers. An analysis of each piece will be included, but it will be a general and brief performance analysis and will not be exhaustive beyond that. While a language barrier between Spanish speaking Mexican composers and non-Spanish speaking oboists might limit communication between the two, being bilingual myself, I am able to communicate in both English and Spanish as required. English translations of composer interviews conducted in Spanish will be provided.

Procedures

Works List:

While the original proposal listed fifteen works that would be purchased and incorporated into this document, found in Appendix A, the actual pieces used were limited to ten pieces and eight composers. This decision was based primarily on the availability of the sheet music. Additionally, while online resources such as the [Composers Diversity Collective](#), the [Institute for Composer Diversity](#), [La Red de Compositoras Latinoamericanas](#), [Living Music Database](#), and [Cayambis Music Press](#) were consulted, individual internet searches on each Mexican composer found within those databases was often necessary. Although these composers were listed in the databases, a full list of their works were not. As such, separate searches to see if each composer had written for oboe, were necessitated.

Because of this, the works and composers that were included in this document are as follows:

Solo Oboe:

Boca abajo (2019) - Francisco Cortés-Álvarez (b.1983)

Llama de Vela (1995) - María Granillo (b. 1962)

Semelíami (1996) - Alejandra Odgers (b.1967)

Upingos (1957) - Carlos Chávez (1899-1978)

Oboe solo and Accompaniment

Al filo del agua (2020) - María Granillo (b. 1962)

La Voz del Viento (2008) - Jorge Calleja (b.1971)

Chamber Group:

Danza de Mediodía (1997) - Arturo Márquez (b.1950) Wind Quintet

Maderaire (2016) - Leticia Armijo (b.1961) Quartet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, and Bassoon

Puzzle-Tocas (2000) - Gabriela Ortiz (b.1964) Wind Quintet

Serpientes y Escaleras (2012) - María Granillo (b.1962) Quartet for Flute, Oboe, Cello and Piano

As more research was conducted for the project, various other sources of information for both composers and pieces were found. The [Sociedad de Autores y Compositores de México](#) (SACM)—a society much like The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP)—has a website with an extensive [database](#) of member biographies. It includes many Mexican composers. Additionally, while project pieces had long been finalized by then, during composer interviews the composers themselves provided information on additional composers and oboe pieces.

Analyses:

Performance analyses of all works listed were conducted. Composer interviews also helped inform these analyses.

Composer Interviews:

Composer interviews were conducted with three out of the eight composers in the project. They include Alejandra Odgers, Jorge Calleja, and Leticia Armijo. Each was contacted via email and social media. The interview itself accomplished two main goals. The first, to present these composers as living people who oboists and teachers alike can contact. The second to aid in the larger project goal of diversifying oboe studies by providing oboe repertoire options beyond standard western canon. However, in order for this decentering to truly take place beyond the tokenism of simply including diverse music, it is important that context surrounding this music is also given. These interviews provided that context by showcasing the composers, who are indeed part of that context, as much as their music.

Language Requirement

All interviews were conducted in Spanish and via Zoom towards the end of 2022. The interviews were recorded, transcribed in the original Spanish, and then translated into English. While certain questions were specific to each composer, overall seven general questions were asked.

- 1) General biographical information.
- 2) What turned you to music? What turned you to composition?
- 3) How would you describe your own music style?
- 4) What inspired you to write this piece? Was there a specific event or idea? Was it a commission?

5) Is there anything specific you would like to say to the interpreter of your piece? Is there a specific emotion you want invoked or conveyed?

6) How was/is your experience as a Mexican composer?

7) Contact information such as websites, emails, etc.

Outline of Document

I. Introduction

- a. Introduction to the project and its goals including how I have navigated my Mexican-American identity with my identity as a western classical music, literature review, and limitations and delimitations.

II. Composer Biographies

- a. Brief biography of each composer including contact information.

III. Performance Analyses

- a. Performance analyses of each piece including the difficulty level of each piece, the oboe techniques required for each piece, the range, and other relevant information conveyed about the piece in composer interviews.

IV. Composer Interviews

- a. Summaries of composer answers to specific interview questions. The full Spanish transcription and full English translation are included in Appendices B and C.

V. Conclusion

VI. Bibliography

VII. Appendices

Status of Related Research

Carmen Thierry's *Oboemia: Música Mexicana para Oboe Solo* album is a 2011 compilation of specifically Mexican composed solo pieces for the oboe, performed by Thierry. Likewise *Tollan: Mexican Works for Oboe*, a 2020 album by oboist Jonathan Thompson, is a compilation of works for the oboe and, in one track, also english horn.

Two other theses compiling oboe works by Mexican composers were also found. The first thesis was found while interviewing project composer Alejandra Odgers. Her 1997 thesis, [*La Música Mexicana De Cámara Para Oboe Escrita En La Segunda Mitad Del Siglo XX*](#), or *Mexican Chamber Music for Oboe Written in the Second Half of Twentieth Century*, is a very extensive compilation of Mexican solo and chamber works, listing over 140 pieces. For a large portion of these works, she briefly describes each, lists its difficulty, and offers other general commentary of note to a possible interpreter. While she mentions in the document that she spoke and interviewed around eighty composers, she does not go beyond listing their names along with their pieces. As included in the thesis title, Odgers' project was limited to oboe works in the twentieth century. Odgers also states in her thesis that many of her composers were discovered in the *Diccionario de compositores mexicanos de música de concierto, Siglo XX, Tomo I (A-H)*, compiled by Eduardo Soto Millán. This book, along with the following volume that was published after Odgers had completed her thesis, *Diccionario de compositores mexicanos de música de concierto, Siglo XX, Tomo II (I-Z)*, will also prove to be a valuable resource in this project's future.

The second thesis is Mireya Pérez Fernández's 2001, [*Música Mexicana Inédita Para Oboe. Grabación Digital, Comentarios Analíticos Y Partituras*](#), or *Unpublished Mexican Music for the Oboe. Digital Recording, Analytic Commentary and Pieces*. In her thesis, Fernández

chooses to focus on only seven oboe works which she felt were both worthy of being made known and also “representative of the distinct musical trends that characterize the Mexican oboe repertoire during the second half of the twentieth century.”³ The thesis also includes a CD of Fernández playing each work. Fernández lists a brief biography for each composer and an analysis of each piece. The sheet music for each work is also included. Although Fernández mentions in her introduction that she spoke to each composer about their pieces and that this contact was helpful in informing her own interpretation of each work she does not include any details of her communication with the composers. While these two theses would have been excellent resources to find oboe works for this project they were only found once the final pieces for the project had already been selected.

As I reached the end stages of my project, yet another resource for Mexican oboe works was found. Jonathan Thompson’s 2022 [Catalog of Mexican Oboe Music](#) includes works for solo oboe, oboe and accompaniment, concerti, and chamber music for up to ten players. The catalog itself is a searchable PDF in which Thompson alphabetically lists Mexican composers, their oboe works, instrumentation for each piece, and also links available recordings or cites albums in which these pieces can be heard. While a database similar to Thompson’s catalog is one of this dissertation’s future goals, I nonetheless believe that this dissertation, and the resulting database it would help form, is distinct enough to add onto this newly discovered resource of Mexican oboe works. This dissertation not only lists composers and their works but also provides a performer’s analysis of each piece, a difficulty rating, information on how to purchase the piece,

³ Mireya Pérez Fernández, “Música Mexicana Inédita Para Oboe. Grabación Digital, Comentarios Analíticos Y Partituras,” (Thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2001), 3, accessed February 18, 2023, <http://132.248.9.195/pd2001/295544/295544.pdf>.

an interview with the composer, and composer biographies in which composer contact information is also provided.

CHAPTER II: COMPOSER BIOGRAPHIES

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the composers included in the project in a more personal and in-depth way. In turn, it's highlighted that these composers are living people instead of just names on a page of sheet music. Interviews will also provide direct insight into the creation and performance of some of the pieces included in the project which can provide valuable information for possible performers. Each composer is also asked to provide contact information by which teachers and oboists could contact them.

All together the information presented in this chapter directly helps this project's goal of decentering music by only European or American composers by not just adding "diverse" pieces into the oboe repertoire but by engaging in the context in which these pieces exist and were written. The composers themselves, their experiences as specifically Mexican composers, their Mexican heritage and culture that many of them cite as a specific inspiration for their music, and the world of Mexican classical music at large all form part of that context. The pieces in the project do not just exist by themselves, they are instead part of a rich world of Mexican classical music. By interviewing composers and by asking them to share these experiences I hope to share this rich world with any oboist or educators reading these interviews.

Leticia Armijo

Leticia Armijo is a feminist composer, director, cultural educator, and musicologist.⁴ Born in 1961, Armijo's love for music was a family inheritance.⁵ Her mother, Leticia Torres

⁴ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 152-153. Leticia Armijo, "Leticia Armijo." Leticia Armijo (website), accessed January 12, 2023. <https://leticiarmijo.com/>.

⁵ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 154. Leticia Armijo, *Maderaire: Para flauta, oboe, clarinete y fagot*, El Colectivo Mujeres en la Música A.C, 2016.

Contreras, was the daughter of Gonzalo Torres, one of the original members of the *Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán*.⁶ He was a field worker and a talented musician who played the “guitarrón, violin, guitarra, vihuela, and sang”.⁷ Armijo’s father, Sergio Armijo, a pediatric surgeon by trade, was also very musical.⁸ He played both accordion and guitar, and Armijo states that her very first music lessons came from him.⁹ Armijo’s mother would often sing and improvise multiple voice parts, and Armijo believes her penchant for composition came from her.¹⁰ Her grandmother on her father’s side was also a very fine singer.¹¹ Armijo states that because of all this musical influence she “...had traditional music running through my veins since I was three or four. I didn’t talk, I sang!”.¹² Her first musical lessons outside of her family were from a guitar teacher that was originally hired for her brother.¹³ However, her brother showed no interest in music,

⁶ Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán is a Mexican mariachi group formed in Tecalitlán, Jalisco in 1897. They are one of Mexico’s most famous and longest running Mariachi groups, as they are still active today. They have collaborated with many of Mexico’s most famous singers and recorded for more than 200 movies, many during Mexico’s Golden Age of cinema.

Los Angeles Times, “Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán celebra 125 años con una gira y próximo disco,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 26, 2022, accessed February 7, 2023, <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/entretenimiento/articulo/2022-02-26/mariachi-vargas-de-tecalitlan-celebra-125-anos-con-una-gira-y-proximo-disco>.

Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán, “Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán,” Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán (website), accessed February 7, 2023, <https://vargasmariachi.com/>.

Mary-Lee Mulholland, “Jalisco Is Mexico: Race and Class in the Encuentro Internacional del Mariachi y la Charrería in Guadalajara, Mexico (1994-2003),” *Journal of American Folklore* 134, no. 533 (Summer 2021): 292-318, 317, accessed February 7, 2023.

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2629432388/fulltextPDF/940FA192CEE44816PQ/1?accountid=14604>.

SACM, “Leticia Armijo,” SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/27976>.

⁷ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 154.

SACM, “Leticia Armijo,” SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/27976>.

⁸ SACM, “Leticia Armijo,” SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/27976>.

Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 154.

⁹ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 154.

¹⁰ Ibid, 165.

¹¹ Ibid, 154.

¹² Ibid, 155.

¹³ Ibid.

and the teacher was transferred to Armijo instead.¹⁴ Her love of music only grew from there, especially that of traditional Latin American music.¹⁵ In 1973 she began to attend a *secundaria*, about the equivalent of a US junior high school, for Spanish refugees, the Luis Vives Institute.¹⁶ There she was exposed to Chilean and Argentinian traditional music through the diverse student body that also attended.¹⁷ Because of this early exposure to both Mexican and Latin American traditional music at large, Armijo quoted, “while you got to school and they teach you folklore from the chalkboard, well in my life I was playing it instead...living and composing [it].”¹⁸

As an instrumentalist, Armijo was also very talented. When she was young she would play entire guitar concerts she would hear on the radio by ear.¹⁹ In a funny anecdote she states, “I would take out a guitar exercise, and because the CD player was half a step sharp, I would take it up half a step sharp. And it turns out it was a half a step flat!”²⁰ She also states she was quite the talented violinist during her first degree as well.²¹ It was with her parents' blessing that Armijo began seriously studying music, however, her parents' support would be short-lived.²² Towards the beginning of her studies, Armijo’s father died, and the piano for which he had given the down payment had to be returned.²³ About two years later, Armijo’s mother also passed away from cancer.²⁴ With her brother and her now orphans, she states that she “had to work like a

¹⁴ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 155.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid, 157.

²² Ibid, 156.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

wretch to be able to keep studying for my career.”²⁵ Regardless, she persevered and completed first her degree in composition, violin, and guitar at the *Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM* (National School of Music of UNAM) in 1992.²⁶ In 1997 she completed her *licenciatura* in composition, with honors, at the *Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM*.²⁷ She obtained her Master’s degree in Management and Promotion of Music in Society in 2003 from the *Universidad Autónoma de Madrid* (Autonomous University of Madrid) as well as her doctorate in the History and Sciences of Music (musicology) *cum laude* in 2007.²⁸

As seen in the various degrees Armijo has obtained, she does not only compose. She formed the collective *El Colectivo de Mujeres en la Música A.C* (The Collective of Women in Music A.C) and its sister program, *ComuArte* in 1994.²⁹ The music collective was created with the specific goal of letting music by women composers be shared and known.³⁰ *ComuArte* shares a similar goal with not only music but also the visual arts, dance, cinematography, and literature as well.³¹ As a musicologist, Armijo is a specialist in the works of women of the twentieth and twenty-first century, soundscapes as well as architectural landscapes, identity, and gender.³² Because of this, she states that her music draws inspiration from these topics most of all.³³ She is also the director of *Yolotli*, an all-female choir founded in 2007 and made up of indigenous

²⁵ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 156.

²⁶ Leticia Armijo, “Formación,” Leticia Armijo (website), accessed January 9, 2023, <https://leticiarmijo.com/formacion/>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ ComuArte, “Quienes somos,” ComuArte (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://comuarte.org/acerca/>.

³⁰ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 152.

³¹ ComuArte, “Quienes somos,” ComuArte (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://comuarte.org/acerca/>.

Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 152.

³² Ibid, 152-153.

³³ Ibid, 153.

Mexican women who sing in indigenous languages in danger of becoming extinct.³⁴ *Yolotli*'s goal is to “preserve the languages and musical traditions of the indigenous communities of Mexico.”³⁵ They sing in languages ranging from “náhuatl, purépecha, tsotsil, kumiai-kiliwa, triqui, seri, zapoteco, mayo, tojolwinik, otik, and pápago.”³⁶ For this choir specifically, and for the indigenous communities of Mexico that Armijo has worked with, she has developed a musical educational method in these indigenous languages.³⁷ Within this method she takes musical themes in their original languages but then arranges them and embellishes them so that they are at a beginner, intermediate, and advanced level.³⁸

Armijo is a composer whose music draws from many aspects of her life, her feminism, her social activism, her musicology, her interest in Latin American folklore and her interest in the indigenous communities of Mexico. As I gathered both researching and interviewing her, her feminism is especially important to her. It seems like it specifically led to her research into the topic of Mexican women in music and eventually led to the creation of *El Colectivo de Mujeres en la Música A.C.* In order to fully understand Armijo's music, it is necessary to understand Armijo as a composer and the context of the life in which her pieces were written as well.

More information about Armijo can be found at her website www.leticiarmijo.com as well as *ComuArte*'s website www.comuarte.org. Information about her indigenous women's

³⁴ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 153.

Leticia Armijo, “Quienes somos,” Yolotlis (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://www.yolotlis.org/quienes-somos>.

³⁵ Leticia Armijo, “Quienes somos,” Yolotlis (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://www.yolotlis.org/quienes-somos>.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Leticia Armijo, zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 153, 165.

³⁸ Ibid, 165.

Leticia Armijo, “Quienes somos,” Yolotlis (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://www.yolotlis.org/quienes-somos>.

choir, *Yolotli*, can be found at www.yolotlis.org. Inquiries about her music and about purchasing **Maderaire** specifically can be sent to the email comuarteinternacional@gmail.com. Her music can be listened to on [YouTube](#) as well as [Spotify](#). *ComuArte's* music can also be listened to on [YouTube](#).

Jorge Calleja

Illustration 1 - Jorge Calleja



Jorge Calleja was born in Mexico City in 1971.³⁹ He first began to delve into music in his last year of *secundaria* where he started to learn guitar.⁴⁰ In the end, his love for the guitar brought him to the Yamaha Music School, where he took guitar lessons from Carlos Laguna, who, in Calleja's own words, "is one of the best guitarists that Mexico has had."⁴¹ It was Laguna who initially encouraged him to pursue a career in music.⁴² Calleja took Laguna's words to heart and took the entrance exam for *La Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM*, although as an oboist and not a guitarist, as Laguna had also advised him that the guitar program was entirely too competitive.⁴³ Laguna's advice was to be accepted in another instrument and eventually switch over to guitar.⁴⁴ It would prove fruitful advice as Calleja was accepted as an oboist and placed under the tutelage of Carmen Thierry.⁴⁵ Thierry would go on to give Calleja advice of her own. Calleja states that Thierry would often "ask me to write oboe exercises, which I composed. So the professor said, hey, because she knew I wanted to switch to guitar and had observed my creativity. Instead of guitar, why don't you switch to composition?"⁴⁶ That's exactly what Calleja did and he eventually graduated with a degree in composition.⁴⁷

Calleja also explains that he has studies completed within ethnomusicology. "I have done masters studies in ethnomusicology, I didn't graduate in it, I won't, but I did finish my studies."⁴⁸ He states that in Mexico, a career in composition goes hand in hand with the study of

³⁹Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 174.

⁴⁰Ibid, 174-175.

⁴¹Ibid, 175.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid, 174.

⁴⁸Ibid.

ethnomusicology, and it was through ethnomusicology that he also began to discover traditional Mexican music.⁴⁹ Of his own musical style he quotes, “To speak of my musical work is to speak of the *mestizo* process and fusion. Throughout my musical career, I have walked many different paths trying to find myself, and I have always arrived at the same place.”⁵⁰ He is adamant in the opinion that popular music, be it pop, rock, folk, or metal, has just as much worth as academic classical music, stating “It’s always believed that classical music is like the more ‘plus’ and the popular music is below that. Which is not the case, they have different languages and different forms of making music.”⁵¹ He adds that it is his belief that “...a lot of composers don’t dare—because of prejudice—accept that other music fills them too.”⁵² Calleja puts his own ideal into action, being part of two very different musical groups, Etnokam and Gallina Negra (Black Chicken).⁵³

Etnokam is a trio made up of flute, guitar, and cello that Calleja shares is about seven years old.⁵⁴ Calleja is the artistic director as well as guitarist for the group, and their sound can be described as an “academic hybrid” group featuring minimalism and jazz.⁵⁵ Calleja’s other group, the band Gallina Negra, was founded in 1994 during Calleja’s time in the *bachillerato*—about

⁴⁹ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 176.

⁵⁰ Jorge Calleja, “Jorge Calleja,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://jorgecalleja.musicaneo.com/>.

⁵¹ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 180.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Jorge Calleja, “Bandas,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://sites.google.com/view/jorgecalleja-compositor/bandas?authuser=0>.

⁵⁴ Jorge Calleja, “Bandas,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://sites.google.com/view/jorgecalleja-compositor/bandas?authuser=0>.

Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 177.

⁵⁵ Jorge Calleja, “Bandas,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://sites.google.com/view/jorgecalleja-compositor/bandas?authuser=0>.

Jorge Calleja, “Bio,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://sites.google.com/view/jorgecalleja-compositor/bio?authuser=0>.

Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 177.

the equivalent of a US high school—and it has even more variety in its discography.⁵⁶ They play progressive rock, jazz, folk, and even metal.⁵⁷ When it comes to composing for these two very different ensembles, Calleja states that while “it’s the same creative effort” one nonetheless finds that “the challenges are also different because you have to comprehend a new language.”⁵⁸ Of Gallina Negra specifically, Calleja mentions that he feels a brotherhood of sorts because they formed so young and have known each for their entire lives.⁵⁹ He states that people know them specifically for their versatility, “We always conserve the group’s style but we have variability and the people know us for that.”⁶⁰ He mentions that he also had a third group at one point, Chilaquiles Verdes (Green Chilaquiles), where he played the *leona*, “an instrument of the regions of *son jarocho*, that functions like a bass but it’s like a big guitar [with] four strings.”⁶¹

Of his great musical influences, Calleja mentions some western classical composers, such as Vivaldi and Ravel, but he also mentions Mexican composers like Silvestre Revueltas and Carlos Chávez.⁶² Upon meeting them, Calleja states that they “filled [him] completely.”⁶³ And yet Calleja also says that his biggest influences don’t come from academic composers, but rather popular music artists.⁶⁴ He lists The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, and The Who as

⁵⁶ Jorge Calleja, “Bio,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://sites.google.com/view/jorgecalleja-compositor/bio?authuser=0>.

Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 176-177.

⁵⁷ Jorge Calleja, “Bio,” Jorge Calleja (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://sites.google.com/view/jorgecalleja-compositor/bio?authuser=0>.

Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 177.

⁵⁸ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 176.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 176-177.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 177

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

the four “greats” who have marked him.⁶⁵ Pink Floyd he also mentions as having “a very special place.”⁶⁶ Apart from bands, he also names Silvio Rodríguez, a Latin American artist who Calleja quotes as “extremely complex and complete, both for his poetry as well as his music.”⁶⁷ From Spain he states that poet and musician Paxti Andion’s “lyrics also impacted me in a primordial way in the first years of my development.”⁶⁸

Jorge Calleja is a very versatile composer whose music, as he mentioned, looks “into a lot of different languages.”⁶⁹ Traditional Mexican music, popular music, jazz, and especially rock are all languages that influence him. This versatility can be well seen in the types of music he writes even just for Etnokam and Gallina Negra. More information about Jorge Calleja can be found at his main [website](#), which is in Spanish, and a secondary [website](#) which is in English. His email address is jorgecalleja.compositor@gmail.com. His music can be listened to via [bandcamp](#), [Spotify](#), and [YouTube](#). Sheet music for **La Voz del Viento** can be purchased via [Score Exchange](#). He is also active on the social media sites [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Carlos Chávez

Carlos Chávez (1899-1978) is among one of Mexico’s most well-known and prolific composers.⁷⁰ Beyond composition, Chávez was also a conservatory director, orchestra director, musical educator, cultural educator, and always worked towards the goal of sharing music and art with all peoples, not just the most privileged.⁷¹ His parents, Juvencia Ramírez and Agustín

⁶⁵ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 177.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 178.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 177.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 177-178.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 176.

⁷⁰ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

⁷¹ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

Chávez, were not musicians themselves and Chávez “had no formal composition lessons, preferring to learn by analyzing music of the great masters” such as Beethoven, Wagner, and Debussy.⁷² Although Manuel Ponce, another notable Mexican composer, was one of his teachers from 1910-1914, it was only as a piano instructor.⁷³ Despite this, it was at the piano that he first began dabbling in composition.⁷⁴

Chávez grew up during the time of the Mexican revolution, after which Mexico was eager to claim a national identity, one that dug back and looked into non-western, pre-colonial Mexican culture.⁷⁵ Music was one of the things used to forge this new identity and Chávez was one of the first composers to “enunciate this new nationalism” in his music.⁷⁶ As such, some of his music took great influence from Mexico’s indigenous cultures.⁷⁷ Chávez would also go on to become the director of the *Conservatorio Nacional de Música* (National Conservatory of Music) in 1928.⁷⁸ Notable students of Chávez in the conservatory include the Mexican composers

Gobierno de México, “Carlos Chávez, compositor de una enorme riqueza,” Gobierno de México (website), accessed January 9, 2023, <https://www.gob.mx/cultura/prensa/carlos-chavez-compositor-de-una-enorme-riqueza>.

⁷² Robert L Parker, *Carlos Chávez: A Guide to Research*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 3.
Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

⁷³ Robert L Parker, *Carlos Chávez: A Guide to Research*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 3.

⁷⁵ López, Rick. A. “Nation Formation, Popular Art, and the Search for a Mexican Aesthetic,” in *Crafting Mexico: Intellectuals, artisans, and the state after the revolution*, (Durham NC: Duke University, 2010), 15, accessed February 20, 2023, Duke University Press Books. <https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.1215/9780822391739-001>.

Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

⁷⁶ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

⁷⁷ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

Robert L Parker, *Carlos Chávez: A Guide to Research*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 6-7.

⁷⁸ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

Silvestre Revueltas and Mario Lavista.⁷⁹ Chávez became the director of the *Orquesta Sinfónica de México* (Symphonic Orchestra of Mexico) in 1928, a position he would occupy for twenty-one years.⁸⁰ The *Orquesta Sinfónica de México* was Mexico’s first “permanent symphony orchestra,” and under Chávez leadership, it would help popularize all genres of symphonic works in Mexico “including 82 premieres by Mexican composers.”⁸¹ In line with Chávez’s goal of making music accessible to all, Chávez would “[organize] concerts for workers and for children in addition to the regular subscription concerts, and took the orchestra into the Mexican provinces, bringing orchestral music to many audiences for the first time.”⁸² Chávez was also the first director of the *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura*, a governmental agency dedicated to “stimulating artistic production, promoting the diffusion of the arts, and organizing artistic education” in Mexico.⁸³

Much more can be said about Carlos Chávez who was such a significant figure in Mexican classical music that *El Centro Nacional de Investigación e Información Musical Carlos Chávez* (CENIDIM) (The National Center of Musical Investigation and Information Carlos

⁷⁹ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

Robert L Parker, *Carlos Chávez: A Guide to Research*, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 3.

⁸⁰ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

⁸¹ Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

Ricardo Miranda, “‘The heartbeat of an intense life’: Mexican Music and Carlos Chávez’s Orquesta Sinfónica de México, 1928-1948,” in *Carlos Chávez and His World*, edited by Leonora Saavedra, (Princeton University Press, 2015), 46, accessed February 20, 2023, Proquest Ebook Central. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/lib/uncg/detail.action?docID=2045925>.

⁸² Robert L. Parker, “Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua),” *Grove Music Online*, accessed January 9, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.05495>.

⁸³ Gobierno de México, “Creación del INBAL,” Gobierno de México (website), accessed March 16, 2023, <https://inba.gob.mx/ConoceInba>.

Gobierno de México, “Misión, Visión, y Objetivos,” Gobierno de México (website), accessed March 16, 2023, <https://inba.gob.mx/ConoceInba/Misioninba>.

Chávez) was named in honor of him.⁸⁴ CENIDIM, a branch of the *Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura*, is dedicated to the “collecting, conservation, study, analysis, and of Mexican music.”⁸⁵ Because of Chávez’s importance in the world of Mexican classical music there are many sources of information on the composer. Some of these include the *Gobierno de México*’s (Government of Mexico) web page, [Carlos Chávez, compositor de una enorme riqueza](#), the Grove article “[Chávez \(y Ramírez\), Carlos \(Antonio de Padua\)](#)” as well as numerous books. Among these books are *Carlos Chávez*, *Carlos Chávez: A Guide to Research*, also by Robert L. Parker and the anthology *Carlos Chávez and His World* edited by Leonora Saavedra. Chávez does not have a dedicated website and his music can be found for purchase scattered on various different sheet music websites. **Upingos** can be found specifically at [Wise Music Classical](#).

Francisco Cortés-Álvarez

Composer Francisco Cortés-Álvarez was born 1983 in Mexico⁸⁶ He pursued a composition degree at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM).⁸⁷ One of his professors was composer Gabriela Ortiz.⁸⁸ He later obtained both his master’s and doctorate degrees at the University of Indiana.⁸⁹ There he was both an adjunct professor and the director of

⁸⁴ CENIDIM, “¿Quiénes somos?,” CENIDIM (website), accessed March 16, 2023, <https://cenidim.inba.gob.mx/>.

⁸⁵ Gobierno de México, “Cenidim del INBAL, 47 años de estudiar y documentar la música en México,” Gobierno de México (website), accessed March 16, 2023, <https://www.gob.mx/cultura/prensa/cenidim-del-inbal-47-anos-de-estudiar-y-documentar-la-musica-en-mexico#:~:text=El%20Centro%20Nacional%20de%20Investigaci%C3%B3n%20fue%20creado%20por%20decreto%20el,y%20primer%20director%20del%20INBAL.>

⁸⁶ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Biography,” Francisco Cortés-Álvarez (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://franciscocortes.com/biography>.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Charla Musical con Francisco Cortés,” Música En México (YouTube), accessed March 18, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJTDo_cOioc.

⁸⁹ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Biography,” Francisco Cortés-Álvarez (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://franciscocortes.com/biography>.

the Latin American Music Ensembles.⁹⁰ Cortés-Álvarez states in an interview that a pianola, or a player piano, that his mother inherited before he was born, was the instrument that first sparked his interest in music.⁹¹ His parents would later enroll him in piano lessons, and at eight years old he was already beginning to compose.⁹²

Cortés-Álvarez shared in a 2021 interview that who you are as a “creator” varies at different stages of your life, but always depends on things like “where you come from, what music you like, who gave you classes, [and] what we are listening to.”⁹³ He goes on to say that he considers himself a composer who leans towards the post-modern in that he will take influence from *anything*, any musical period or genre as well any influence that is extra-musical.⁹⁴ He takes these influences, “mixes their significance, mixes their elements, to create...symbols and with them a new meaning within the piece.”⁹⁵ He composes his works to “develop bit by bit, for the materials to generate tension, to go higher, to keep growing and then become smaller.”⁹⁶ In a 2020 interview with *Reforma*, a Mexican newspaper, about a then upcoming premier with the LA Philharmonic, Cortés-Álvarez quotes, “I like for music to be eclectic, to have a bit of social critique, but, at the same time, that it also have a bit of an ironic or satirical character.”⁹⁷ He mentioned that he is not so much a tonal composer as his music is

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Conversando con Francisco Cortés. Albor,” AmigosOFUNAM, (YouTube), accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MXLk6FcGNI>.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Charla Musical con Francisco Cortés,” Música En México (YouTube), accessed March 18, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJTDo_cOioc.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Bucio, Erika P., “Conquista Conquista Cortés Álvarez a LA Phil,” Reforma (Ciudad de México), July 28, 2021, accessed February 19, 2023.

https://www.reforma.com/aplicacioneslibre/preacceso/articulo/default.aspx?_rval=1&urlredirect=https://www.refor

heavily chromatic and tends to be very angular.⁹⁸ He names composers Gabriela Ortiz, Silvestre Revueltas, and Mario Lavista as large influences.⁹⁹

Of his compositional method for commissioned pieces he states, “I like to plan the piece before I begin composing, to have an idea of what I want to say, if it’s going to be fast or slow, if it’s going to be a part that’s very dramatic or brilliant; those types of things. I wouldn’t feel comfortable just launching that first idea and seeing where it leads me. I like having a clearer idea than that.”¹⁰⁰ He shares that he often spends several weeks to a month just thinking about a piece and what it should contain before he ever starts to compose it.¹⁰¹ From there he sits down at a piano and sketches some ideas, vocalizes others, and jots these down.¹⁰² Finally, he begins to seriously compose.¹⁰³

Cortés-Álvarez founded the composition program at the *Escuela de Bellas Artes de la Universidad Panamericana* (The School of Fine Arts of the Pan-American University).¹⁰⁴ He is also a composition and analysis professor at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM).¹⁰⁵ More information about him can be found at his personal website,

[ma.com/conquista-cortes-alvarez-a-la-phil/ar2229652?referer=--7d616165662f3a3a6262623b727a7a7279703b767a783a-](https://www.franciscocortes.com/conquista-cortes-alvarez-a-la-phil/ar2229652?referer=--7d616165662f3a3a6262623b727a7a7279703b767a783a-)

⁹⁸ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Charla Musical con Francisco Cortés,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed March 18, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJTDo_cOioc.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Bucio, Erika P., “Conquista Conquista Cortés Álvarez a LA Phil,” *Reforma* (Ciudad de México), July 28, 2021, accessed February 19, 2023, https://www.reforma.com/aplicacioneslibre/preacceso/articulo/default.aspx?_rval=1&urlredirect=https://www.reforma.com/conquista-cortes-alvarez-a-la-phil/ar2229652?referer=--7d616165662f3a3a6262623b727a7a7279703b767a783a-

¹⁰¹ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Conversando con Francisco Cortés. Albor,” *AmigosOFUNAM*, (YouTube), accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MXLk6FcGNI>.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Biography.” *Francisco Cortés-Álvarez* (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://franciscocortes.com/biography>.

¹⁰⁵ Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, “Biography.” *Francisco Cortés-Álvarez* (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://franciscocortes.com/biography>.

www.franciscocortes.com where one can keep up to date with his upcoming events and concerts. He also lists his complete works [here](#). To purchase or ask about his music, including **Boca abajo**, you can email him at cortes.alvarez@gmail.com. He is also found on Instagram at [franciscocortesalvarez](#). His music can be listened to on [YouTube](#), [Spotify](#), and [Soundcloud](#).

María Granillo

María Granillo, born 1962 in Torreón, Coahuila, began composing in primary school as a game, thanks to her music teacher Mario Stern, who was a composer.¹⁰⁶ At age seven she began to study guitar.¹⁰⁷ Granillo also took an interest in traditional Mexican music at the time and credits this to the fact that around the 70s in Mexico, there was a resurgence of interest in folkloric music as it was seen as a sort of “protest music.”¹⁰⁸ Granillo states that one of her most important figures in music was her piano teacher, Silvia Ortega de Tort, whom she credits for “exercising an influence in my understanding of this art [of music], and motivating more than anything, my profound emotional closeness to music.”¹⁰⁹

Her works involve “the relationships between musical creation, natural phenomena, mythology, and human emotion.”¹¹⁰ She has an “eclectic language,” one that is “lyric and expressive in its musical poetry” and that “at all moments favors a strong and free expression

¹⁰⁶ Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creación musical de México*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 2001), 165, 167.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 167.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 168

¹¹⁰ María Granillo, “Dra. María del Consuelo Granillo González Compositora,” UNAM (website), accessed January 11, 2023,

https://www.posgrado.unam.mx/musica/div/docentes/personal_docente/granilloGonzalez.html.

UNAM, “Cátedra Márquez | Conferencia | Compositoras y su música | María Granillo,” Cultura UNAM (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://musica.unam.mx/calendario/evento/11678/>.

that comes from a rich musical imagination.”¹¹¹ This “eclectic language” and other inspirations can certainly be heard in the variety of music she composes. *In principio erat verbum* is a piece for voice and drum inspired by the concept of creation of the four elements, water, earth, fire, and air via the voice.¹¹² *Resonancia magnética* by contrast is a piece for violin and piano inspired by Granillo’s frightening experience of having MRI studies done.¹¹³ The piece certainly conveys heart racing anxiety. One can hear it in the shrill high notes of the violin, in the wild interplay between the piano and violin, and even in the deceptively calmer sections that nonetheless still set the listener’s teeth on edge. Even in the pieces included in the project this variety can be seen: **Al filo del agua**, a tonal, melody driven piece, contrasted to **Llama de Vela** a work leaning towards the contemporary. Of her composition methods, Granillo states that she first likes finalizing the idea or argument that her work will contain before beginning to compose.¹¹⁴ After the idea has been finalized, she then picks what instrumentation and language she feels best helps convey that idea.¹¹⁵

Granillo completed a degree in composition at the *Escuela Nacional de Música de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM) with professor Federico Ibarra.¹¹⁶ There

¹¹¹ UNAM, “Cátedra Márquez | Conferencia | Compositoras y su música | María Granillo,” Cultura UNAM (website), accessed January 11, 2023, <https://musica.unam.mx/calendario/evento/11678/>.

¹¹² LIMME, “In principio erat verbum, María Granillo – Pilar Flores,” LIMME – FAM (website), accessed March 10, 2023, <https://limmefamus.wordpress.com/2019/12/08/in-principio-erat-verbum-maria-granillo-pilar-flores/>.

¹¹³ Judith Amador Tello, “La compositora María Granillo estrena mundialmente su Concierto para Arpa,” *Proceso* (Ciudad de México), November 15, 2022, accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.proceso.com.mx/cultura/2022/11/15/la-compositora-maria-granillo-estrena-mundialmente-su-concierto-para-arpa-297045.html>.

¹¹⁴ Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creación musical de México*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 2001), 170.

¹¹⁵ Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creación musical de México*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 2001), 170.

¹¹⁶ María Granillo, “Dra. María del Consuelo Granillo González Compositora,” UNAM (website), accessed January 11, 2023, https://www.posgrado.unam.mx/musica/div/docentes/personal_docente/granilloGonzalez.html.

she also studied with Mario Lavista, Julio Estrada and Daniel Catan, professors Granillo states are “responsible for the formation of composers of my generation, as to a greater or lesser degree, many of the young composers active presently, were in their classes.”¹¹⁷ She completed her master’s in Electroacoustic music at the University of York, and her doctorate in composition at the University of British Columbia.¹¹⁸ She currently teaches at the *Universidad Autonoma de Mexico de la UNAM*.¹¹⁹ She is also included in the ranks of the *Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte in Mexico* (National System of Art Creators in Mexico), a national group which “has the end goal of fomenting and supporting individual artistic creation within adequate conditions, as well as contributing to the increase the cultural heritage of Mexico.”¹²⁰

More information on Granillo can be found at her UNAM faculty [page](#). Her music can be listened to on [YouTube](#) as well as [Spotify](#). **Llama de Vela** can be heard specifically on Carmen Thierry’s album, *Oboemias: Musica Mexicana para Oboe Solo*, available on [YouTube](#) and [Spotify](#). **Serpientes y Escaleras** can be listened to also on [YouTube](#) and [Spotify](#). To enquire about her music she can be reached via her email, gragoma@hotmail.com.

Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creacion musical de Mexico*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Direccion General de Publicaciones, 2001), 168.

¹¹⁷ Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creacion musical de Mexico*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Direccion General de Publicaciones, 2001), 168.

¹¹⁸ Mara Granillo, “Dra. Mara del Consuelo Granillo Gonzalez Compositora,” UNAM (website), accessed January 11, 2023,

https://www.posgrado.unam.mx/musica/div/docentes/personal_docente/granilloGonzalez.html.

Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creacion musical de Mexico*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Direccion General de Publicaciones, 2001), 165.

¹¹⁹ Mara Granillo, “Dra. Mara del Consuelo Granillo Gonzalez Compositora,” UNAM (website), accessed January 11, 2023,

https://www.posgrado.unam.mx/musica/div/docentes/personal_docente/granilloGonzalez.html.

¹²⁰ Clara Meierovich, *Mujeres en la creacion musical de Mexico*, (Mexico D.F: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Direccion General de Publicaciones, 2001), 165.

Gobierno de Mexico, “Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte,” Gobierno de Mexico (website), accessed February 19, 2023, <https://www.gob.mx/cultura/acciones-y-programas/sistema-nacional-de-creadores-de-arte>.

Arturo Márquez

Arturo Márquez, full name Jesús Márquez Navarro, was born in 1950 in Álamos, Sonora and is the son of Aurora Navarro and Arturo Márquez.¹²¹ His father, a carpenter, was also a Mariachi who played the violin.¹²² His love for music started young. In fact, he states “My mother said that I cried in her womb just a day before she gave birth to me [as] my father serenaded her.”¹²³ Thanks to his father, he would grow up listening to a large variety of traditional Mexican music including, “Mariachi music, walses, polkas, [and] chotises.”¹²⁴ His family moved to Los Angeles when Márquez was twelve and at fourteen he finally started to study music in earnest; he states his late start was because his mother did not want him to be a musician.¹²⁵ He quotes, “my father was a Mariachi, on the weekdays he would get home late and, well, my mother didn’t want me to dedicate myself to that, to have that type of life.”¹²⁶

He first studied violin, trombone, and tuba, but it wasn’t until he was sixteen that he began studying piano.¹²⁷ The piano was originally brought in for Márquez’s sisters; but when

¹²¹ Arturo Márquez, “Aquí con Javier Solórzano - Jesús Arturo Márquez Navarro (14/06/2019),” Canal Once (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/zi8Z8QjlvT4>.

SACM, “Arturo Márquez Navarro,” SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/24942>.

¹²² Arturo Márquez, “Arturo Marquez,” Arturo Marquez (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <http://www.arturomarquez.org/>.

¹²³ Arturo Márquez, “Aquí con Javier Solórzano - Jesús Arturo Márquez Navarro (14/06/2019),” Canal Once (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/zi8Z8QjlvT4>.

¹²⁴ Arturo Márquez, “Arturo Marquez,” Arturo Marquez (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <http://www.arturomarquez.org/>.

¹²⁵ Arturo Márquez, “Conoce a Arturo Márquez,” Daniela Salgado (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/ngRYI5i0gCM>.

SACM, “Arturo Márquez Navarro,” SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/24942>.

¹²⁶ Arturo Márquez, “Conoce a Arturo Márquez,” Daniela Salgado (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/ngRYI5i0gCM>.

¹²⁷ Arturo Márquez, “Arturo Marquez,” Arturo Marquez (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <http://www.arturomarquez.org/>.

they didn't show an interest in it, Márquez himself took it up.¹²⁸ It was the piano—as he mentions, a very practical instrument for composition—that would eventually lead him down the path of a composer.¹²⁹ In 1970 he finally entered *El Conservatorio Nacional de Música de la Ciudad de México* (The National Conservatory of Music of Mexico City), but he states that at the time his dream was to be a pianist.¹³⁰ He applied to the conservatory as a pianist but was denied, and he started a musical education degree instead.¹³¹ He shares, “in reality since that first year of study I didn't dedicate myself to a music education career, I dedicated myself instead to studying piano, to studying theory materials like harmony, solfege... and I was heading towards what I wanted to do.”¹³² In 1979 he and his then wife, harpist Lilia Tamayo, were given a grant to study in France, where he again took an exam to enter the National Conservatory of Music of Paris and was also denied.¹³³ He did not let that setback stop him however, as he was still able to audit courses such as orchestration and contemporary composition with conservatory professors such as Jacques Castérède.¹³⁴ Although he was studying contemporary composition with Castérède,

¹²⁸ Arturo Márquez, “Entrevista de RT Arturo Márquez,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/aXC7h07Wnpw>.

¹²⁹ Arturo Márquez, “La Hora Nacional - Arturo Márquez,” *La Hora Nacional Oficial* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/MFZRW1WPVpc>.

¹³⁰ Arturo Márquez, “Entrevista de RT Arturo Márquez,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/aXC7h07Wnpw>.

SACM, “Arturo Márquez Navarro,” SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/24942>.

¹³¹ Arturo Márquez, “Entrevista de RT Arturo Márquez,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/aXC7h07Wnpw>.

¹³² Arturo Márquez, “Entrevista de RT Arturo Márquez,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/aXC7h07Wnpw>.

¹³³ Arturo Márquez, “Entrevista de RT Arturo Márquez,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/aXC7h07Wnpw>.

Arturo Márquez, “Conoce a Arturo Márquez,” Daniela Salgado (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/ngRYI5i0gCM>.

¹³⁴ Arturo Márquez, “Entrevista de RT Arturo Márquez,” *Música En México* (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/aXC7h07Wnpw>.

Arturo Márquez, “Conoce a Arturo Márquez,” Daniela Salgado (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/ngRYI5i0gCM>.

he states that he would also bring him more melodic exercises and that Castérède would tell him that it would be in those exercises that he'd find his own style.¹³⁵ He would eventually go on to obtain his Master's degree at the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles in 1988.¹³⁶

Of his own music Márquez states, "Every piece I compose always has to do with my own experiences...and that's what gives each [piece] its own weight, its own personality. In my case I'm using a series of teachings I've had in my life to find myself, to have my own language."¹³⁷ In this way each piece of music by Márquez is a "type of biography."¹³⁸ Of his time in America, Márquez states that Jazz and Rock were also a big influence.¹³⁹ The time he takes for each piece varies. For example, *Danzón no.8* took him six years to compose, whereas other pieces can sometimes take him only months to a week.¹⁴⁰

In Márquez we once again see a strong inspiration in traditional Mexican music, one that began quite young, much like other composers in the project, as we'll see later on. This inspiration is directly reflected in project piece **Danza de Mediodía**. More information about Márquez can be found at his website, www.arturomarquez.org, his profile on the *Sociedad de Autores y Compositores de México's* (SACM) (Society of Authors and Composers of Mexico) [website](#), his profile at the *Gobierno de México's* [website](#), and his profile at *Música en México's*

SACM, "Arturo Márquez Navarro," SACM (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.sacm.org.mx/Informa/Biografia/24942>.

¹³⁵ Arturo Márquez, "Aquí con Javier Solórzano - Jesús Arturo Márquez Navarro (14/06/2019)," Canal Once (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/zi8Z8QjvT4>.

¹³⁶ Gobierno de México, "Arturo Márquez Navarro," Gobierno de México (website), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://www.gob.mx/sep/acciones-y-programas/arturo-marquez-navarro>.

¹³⁷ Arturo Márquez, "Conoce a Arturo Márquez," Daniela Salgado (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/ngRYI5i0gCM>.

¹³⁸ Arturo Márquez, "Aquí con Javier Solórzano - Jesús Arturo Márquez Navarro (14/06/2019)," Canal Once (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/zi8Z8QjvT4>.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Arturo Márquez, "Aquí con Javier Solórzano - Jesús Arturo Márquez Navarro (14/06/2019)," Canal Once (YouTube), accessed January 12, 2023, <https://youtu.be/zi8Z8QjvT4>.

(Music in Mexico) [website](#). He also has a Twitter [@ArturoMrquezNa1](#), but it does not seem to be very active as his last post was in 2021. He has various online interviews accessible through YouTube, “[Conoce a Arturo Márquez.](#)”, “[Entrevista de RT a Arturo Márquz](#)”, “[Aqui con Javier Solórzano - Jesús Arturo Márquez Navarro \(14/06/2019\)](#)”, “[La Hora Nacional - Arturo Márquez](#)”, and “[Conversando con Cristina Pacheco - Arturo Márquez y Natalia Arroyo \(25/09/2015\)](#)”. **Danza de Mediodía** can be purchased at [Trevco Music](#) and Márquez’s music in general can be listened to on [Spotify](#).

Alejandra Odgers

Illustration 2 - Alejandra Odgers



Alejandra Odgers was born in Mexico City and it was there that she began her musical studies at the young age of eight.¹⁴¹ According to the composer, it was “a bit by chance” that she came to study music.¹⁴² When she was young, she as well as her two sisters, were enrolled into a beginning arts program where one could take various arts courses such as gymnastics, music, painting, and traditional Mexican dance.¹⁴³ Her two sisters enrolled in gymnastics, painting, dance, and music.¹⁴⁴ Odgers, however, only wanted to enroll in the first three and not music.¹⁴⁵ It was her mother who convinced her to take music as well.¹⁴⁶ It was all for good as Odgers ended up absolutely loving it. She studied there for three years, during which she seriously began to think about music as a career choice.¹⁴⁷

She obtained a double degree in oboe and composition at *La Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM*.¹⁴⁸ One of her primary instructors at the time was Mario Lavista, who offered a course called Técnica y Cultura Musical (Technique and Culture in Music) in which Odgers “discover[ed] the world of composition”.¹⁴⁹ It was from this course that Odgers decided to double major in composition as well.¹⁵⁰ Odgers marks Lavista as a great influence on her as a composer and one who Odgers followed all across Mexico to be able to attend his classes.¹⁵¹ She states that Lavista was the type of teacher that helped his students be better composers, but only

¹⁴¹ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 184.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Alejandra Odgers, *Semeljami*, Québec: Canadian Music Centre.

¹⁴⁹ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 184.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 184-185.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 187.

depending on what the students wanted for their own music, he didn't force any of them to conform to a certain style.¹⁵² Some of her other instructors included Arturo Márquez, whom Odgers also marks as a strong influence, and Humberto Hernández Medrano, who Odgers names as the instructor who provided her a solid base in traditional harmony and counterpoint.¹⁵³

Odgers went on to obtain her master's degree in composition at the University of Montreal and would later obtain her doctorate in composition there as well.¹⁵⁴ During her master's she studied with José Evangelista as well as Alan Belkin.¹⁵⁵ She states that much like Lavista, Evangelista also had a very open mind and would often encourage her to attend concerts by a variety of composers, depending on what Odgers herself was compositionally interested in at the time.¹⁵⁶ Odgers credits Alan Belkin and his orchestration class as her reason for staying to obtain her doctorate as well as being a strong influence over how she writes for orchestra.¹⁵⁷ She quotes from a class with Belkin, "I took a seminar of orchestration with a teacher who's called Alan Belkin. It was an orchestration class that to me was a revelation—let me tell you, in that class it was like I discovered the third dimension in my ears. As if before I composed in two dimensions, just flat, and with him, it was like I discovered perspective."¹⁵⁸ Belkin helped her "better the form of pieces, the structure, and to really work with orchestration. But he left me complete freedom when it came to language, what I wanted to do, etcetera."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 193.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 187.

¹⁵⁴ Alejandra Odgers, *Semelíami*, Québec: Canadian Music Centre.

¹⁵⁵ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 187.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 193.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 187.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 193.

Odgers describes her own style of composition as one that is dependent on what she is currently trying to express or say for any given piece.¹⁶⁰ She mentions, “throughout my education, I practiced a bit of everything. I wrote atonal, twelve-tone, modal, tonal, and electroacoustic pieces. And what I feel is that, depending on what we want to compose at a given moment in a piece, well, it’s going to be the technique, or the color, or the language, or the instruments that we are going to utilize. There are some [composers] for which maybe electroacoustics is what lends itself best, in other cases it’s going to be something very tonal, in other cases something atonal.”¹⁶¹ In this way, Odgers does not seem to let herself be pigeonholed into one certain compositional style, technique, or genre. She also states that her music is also a sort of “*mestizaje* of different cultures,” specifically of Western art music and usually traditional Mexican music—although she’s also incorporated Cuban, Celtic, and Abaneki influences, among others.¹⁶² Overall, Odgers states that, “depending on what I want to say at any given moment in a piece, well a lot of the time it’s going to be the techniques, or the palette of colors, that I use to write my music.”¹⁶³ Yet while Odgers does not let herself be pigeonhole when it comes to language or techniques, it seems that taking inspiration from aspects of traditional Mexican music remains a constant throughout many of her pieces. **Semelíami** is one such inspired piece among many other pieces.

Odgers currently resides in Canada, where she is an active composer.¹⁶⁴ She can be contacted via email at aleodgers@yahoo.ca and more information about her can be found at her

¹⁶⁰ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 185-186.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 185.

¹⁶² Ibid, 185-186.

¹⁶³ Ibid, 186.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 193.

[website](#) (audio warning). Much of her music, including **Semelíami**, is available for perusal and purchase at the [Canadian Music Centre](#), a website dedicated to “supporting, preserving and celebrating the works of Canadian composers since 1959.”¹⁶⁵ The site can be a bit tricky to navigate, but searching for “Alejandra Odgers” in the top right corner search bar should then lead you to a second search page. Once there, again type “Alejandra Odgers” in the basic search box towards the bottom of the page and it should take you to a list of her works.

Gabriela Ortiz

Ortiz was born in Mexico City in 1964 to Rubén Ortiz Fernández and María Elena Torres Alcarás.¹⁶⁶ She grew up in a very musical family, one where her father would listen to both classical and traditional Mexican music.¹⁶⁷ He was also a member—along with his wife—of the folk group *Los Folkloristas*, an ensemble “founded in 1966 to preserve and record the traditional music of Mexico and Latin America.”¹⁶⁸ Ortiz quotes in an interview, “I was very lucky because it was very common in my house to wake up listening to you know, the fifth symphony by Beethoven and then start playing the mariachi music and all of that is part of my childhood.”¹⁶⁹ However, Ortiz states that her family’s—and therefore her own—love of music began with her grandfather, who was also coincidentally a doctor to Pancho Villa during the Mexican

¹⁶⁵ Canadian Music Centre, “CMC,” Canadian Music Centre (website), accessed December 25, 2022, <https://cmccanada.org/>.

¹⁶⁶ Gabriela Ortiz, “Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by the Secretaría de Cultura de México (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgx9OWze0_s.

¹⁶⁷ Gabriela Ortiz, “Meet Composer Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by Boosey & Hawkes (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, s <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0>.

¹⁶⁸ Gabriela Ortiz, “Bio,” Gabriela Ortiz (website), accessed January 10, 2023, <https://www.gabrielaortiz.com/index.php?idioma=en&p=1>.

¹⁶⁹ Gabriela Ortiz, “Meet Composer Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by Boosey & Hawkes (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0>.

Revolution.¹⁷⁰ Her grandfather, of Spanish origin, studied medicine at Georgetown University and while there had the opportunity to attend a concert conducted by Mahler in New York.¹⁷¹ His love for concert music was born there and it was a love he'd pass on to his son, Ortiz's father.¹⁷² It was Ortiz's mother, however, who would suggest to her that she learn to play the piano, and it was there that her classical music education began.¹⁷³

Ortiz obtained her degree in composition at the *Escuela Nacional de Música*, where “she [was] a disciple of Federico Ibarra and Mario Lavista.”¹⁷⁴ It was in a workshop offered by Lavista where Ortiz discovered that she loved composing music.¹⁷⁵ She completed her Ph.D in electroacoustic music at The City University in London.¹⁷⁶ She lists Bartok and Stravinsky as some of the biggest influences in her work.¹⁷⁷ Bartok specifically, she says, opened her eyes to rhythmic complexity.¹⁷⁸ Ortiz also danced flamenco and she cites dance as a big influence in her music and in the way she writes her music.¹⁷⁹ Ortiz quotes “I need to feel what I'm doing, physically speaking. It's not only something that is rational, music is also about emotion and that

¹⁷⁰ Gabriela Ortiz, “Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by the Secretaría de Cultura de México (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgx9OWze0_s.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Gabriela Ortiz, “Meet Composer Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by Boosey & Hawkes (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0>.

¹⁷⁴ Gabriela Ortiz, “Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by the Secretaría de Cultura de México (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgx9OWze0_s.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Gabriela Ortiz, “Bio,” Gabriela Ortiz (website), accessed January 10, 2023, <https://www.gabrielaortiz.com/index.php?idioma=en&p=1>.

¹⁷⁷ Gabriela Ortiz, “Meet Composer Gabriela Ortiz,” interview by Boosey & Hawkes (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0>.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

part of that is when you dance, when you play, I mean...when I'm improvising on the piano and I'm trying to get a new idea I need to feel that physically speaking, feel that in my fingers."¹⁸⁰

General information about Ortiz as well as a catalog of her works can be found at her website www.gabrielaortiz.com. She can also be found on Twitter [@GOrtizcompser](https://twitter.com/GOrtizcompser). Her music can be purchased exclusively through [Boosey & Hawkes](https://www.booseyandhawkes.com). Other accessible online interviews include an English interview by Boosey & Hawkes via YouTube, "[Meet Composer Gabriela Ortiz](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0)", and a Spanish interview through the *Secretaría de Cultura de México* (Office of Culture of Mexico), "[Gabriela Ortiz](https://www.scribd.com/document/688888888/Gabriela-Ortiz)". There is also a lecture given by Ortiz for *El Colegio Nacional* (The National College) titled, "[Lección inaugural de Gabriela Ortiz | Ceremonia de ingreso a El Colegio Nacional](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0)".

Conclusions

One of the details that stands out among the project composers is that many draw inspiration from Mexican traditional music and folklore. Each interviewed composer, Leticia Armijo, Jorge Calleja, and Alejandra Odgers, explicitly stated as such. Armijo shared that during her schooling she was immersed in Latin America folk music. Calleja stated that during his higher music studies the study of ethnomusicology went hand in hand with his composition degree and that because of that he also delved into traditional Mexican music. Odgers explicitly stated that her music draws from Mexican traditional music and that **Semelíami** is one such piece. Odgers was also adamant in studying with professors who not only recognized this influence but also actively encouraged it. While I did not have the opportunity to speak with all the composers included in the project, even with the outside information gathered for their

¹⁸⁰ Gabriela Ortiz, "Meet Composer Gabriela Ortiz," interview by Boosey & Hawkes (YouTube), accessed January 10, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6EfyH10qm0>.

biographies, many of it in the form of other interviews, this influence of traditional Mexican music and heritage was also clear. Ortiz mentions growing up in a household where it was common to listen to both Beethoven and traditional Mexican music. Márquez mentions similar childhood memories of his father, a mariachi musician. Granillo's inspiration for **Al filo del agua**, while not musical, was still inspired by a novel of the same name by Mexican author Agustín Yáñez. An interesting point can be seen then, in that many of these composers knew early on in their schooling that their Mexican identity was important within their musical identity as well, something that for me took many years to realize. Beyond this common thread however, each composer also recounted unique life experiences with individual perspectives for their music and different experiences as Mexican composers.

CHAPTER III: MUSIC PERFORMANCE ANALYSES

Each piece in the project is given a performance analysis divided into two sections. The first section is a short snapshot of information. This snapshot includes a difficulty rating, the range of the piece, the length of the pieces in minutes, and briefly describes each piece and what types of techniques or oboe skills it requires. After this snapshot, the second section is a more in-depth description of the piece. I describe what playing the piece will require of an oboist, add in any information given by the composer about the piece, and detail things such as how to achieve required extended as well as point the reader to useful resources like instructional YouTube videos.

The difficulty rating system is divided into five levels, 1-Beginner, 2-Intermediate, 3-High School, 4-College, and 5-Advanced/Graduate. The system is described in more detail below where a criteria list for each level is given. The purpose of the rating system is so that both oboists and educators can quickly find a piece suitable for their own or their student's level of playing. References used to help build this criteria list include the Colorado Department of Education's [High School Smart Music Difficulty Correlations](#), ABRSM's (The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music) [oboe syllabus](#), SHAR music's own [difficulty criteria](#), as well as speaking to music educator Amalia Medina.

To obtain this project's rating system I looked through each of the listed references and cataloged what specific criteria, such as rhythms, keys, time signature, meter, range, and technical ability required, each reference used to build their difficulty levels. SHAR's difficulty rating only gave a basic summary of their grades, describing what each grade would generally ask of their string players. In ABRSM's oboe syllabus, which is divided into eight grades, I specifically looked at both the way they categorized known oboe pieces per grade, as well as

how they categorized sight reading per grade. The Colorado Department of Education's criteria, while providing criteria for instrumental and choir literature, nonetheless gave a very useful breakdown of criteria such as meter, tempo, rhythms, and dynamics, per difficulty level. They also included individual instrument range per level. Referencing the three resources, I first picked what major criteria I would use for my own difficulty levels and then as an oboist decided how to organize that criteria into specific levels. I double checked some decisions with educator Medina and her experience with younger music students and finally arrived at my own rating system.

While any difficulty rating system is in the end subjective to whoever created it, I do believe that these resources, the help of a practicing music educator, and ultimately my own experience as an oboist have helped create a useful rating system by which other oboists can sort through this project's works.

The difficulty rating system is as follows:

Difficulty 1 – Piece is appropriate beginner level students

- Meter: Simple meters such as, 4/4, 3/4, 2/4.
- Key: Bb, F, C, G, D, a, e, d
- Range: F4-F5
- Rhythms: Simple rhythms such as quarter notes, half notes, whole notes, dotted half notes, dotted quarter notes, and eighth notes.
- Tempo: More sedate tempos like andante and moderato.
- Endurance: Short pieces in a comfortable range that will not overly tax the embouchure.
Good for beginners barely building up an embouchure.

Difficulty 2 – Piece is appropriate for intermediate level students

- Meter: Some more complex simple meters such as 3/8 and adding in some compound meters such as 6/8.
- Key: Eb, A, c, g, b
- Range: D4-D6
- Extended techniques: Tremolos.
- Rhythms: Sixteenth notes, triplets, simple tied rhythms.
- Tempo: Moving into faster and slower like Largo and Allegretto.
- Endurance: Moderate length, starting to venture into the upper range and so requiring a higher degree of embouchure strength.

Difficulty 3 – Piece is appropriate for high school level students

- Meter: More complex simple and compound meters such as 5/4, 9/4, 12/8, 3/2, and 4/2.
- Key: Ab, Db, E, B, f, b flat minor, f#, c#
- Range: Bb3-D6
- Extended Techniques: Simple pitch bending, glissandi, and harmonics.
- Rhythm: Thirty second notes and some syncopation.
- Tempo: Tempos that require subdivision like Lento, and faster tempos that might require cut time like Allegro and Vivace
- Endurance: Entire movements of multi movement pieces, embouchure flexibility both in the lower and upper registers, and embouchure strength in both registers.

Difficulty 4 – Piece is appropriate for college level students

- Meter: Mixed meters such as 6/8 + 3/4 and pieces which continuously change meters.

- Keys: All major and minor keys, including pieces in which the key is ambiguous or outside of major/minor. Atonal pieces.
- Range: Bb3-G6
- Extended Techniques: Double tonguing, flutter tonguing, multiphonics, quarter tones and microtones.
- Rhythm: Complex rhythms and syncopations.
- Tempo: All tempos
- Endurance: Solo pieces with very little rests, entire concertos, full length recitals where embouchure flexibility is needed in the entire range of the oboe.

Difficulty 5 – Piece is appropriate for advanced level oboists and graduate level students

- Meters: Complex mixed meters, obscure meters such as 15/16, and/or pieces which rapidly and continuously change meters.
- Key: All keys.
- Range: Entire oboe range including altissimo pitches above G6. Difficult lyrical and technical passages in the extreme low and high ranges.
- Extended Techniques: All of the oboe's extended techniques including those already mentioned, used extensively and/or continuously.
- Rhythm: Very complex rhythms and syncopations.
- Tempo: All tempos, including extremes.
- Endurance: The same criteria stated in Difficulty 4 plus adding in pieces which require an exaggerated endurance.

While the criteria for each level provides general guidelines for each level, as always, exceptions can be made. For example, if a piece goes slightly above or below the suggested

range for Difficulty 3 but still falls mostly within its other criteria, it can still be rated as Difficulty 3.

Unaccompanied Oboe Solo

Boca abajo (2019) - Francisco Cortés-Álvarez

Level: 5

Range: B3-G5

Duration: 10 min

Boca abajo, or *Face down*, is a demanding piece in all aspects of oboe playing. It requires high levels of technique, endurance, musicality, as well as frequent use of some of the oboe's extended techniques. These include glissandi and pitch bending, quarter tones and microtones, flutter tonguing, and multiphonics. It is an atonal piece that makes use of constant chromaticism and is set at the aptly termed *Frenzied* tempo of quarter note equals 152. Constant meter changes only add to its technical difficulty, switching constantly between different compound and simple meters.

More Details:

While **Boca abajo** makes good use of all four extended techniques mentioned earlier, the most called upon are multiphonics. There are six different multiphonics used in the piece and Cortés-Álvarez has numbered them to match the fingerings specified in Libby Van-Cleve's book *Oboe Unbound: Contemporary Techniques*.¹⁸¹ Cortés-Álvarez notes that while he has specified

¹⁸¹ Libby Van Cleve is an oboist well known for her contemporary music performance. Her book *Oboe Unbound: Contemporary Techniques* serves as a resource for many of the oboe's contemporary and extended techniques. In her book she explains each technique, describes how to produce them, and provides picture examples of the techniques in actual music. It is a wonderful resource for anything oboe and contemporary.

Libby Van Cleve, "About," Libby Van Cleve (website), accessed February 6, 2023, <http://libbyvancleve.com/>.

Libby Van Cleve, *Oboe Unbound: Contemporary Techniques*, (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), ProQuest Ebook Central.

certain multiphonics, the performer is free to make changes for ease of playability and performance. Multiphonic fingerings may also slightly vary based on the oboist's reed, oboe model, and personal preference. Regardless of chosen fingerings, the oboist will need to become very well versed in these six multiphonics. Memorizing fingerings as well as embouchure pressure and reed placement for each will be tremendously helpful as a number of multiphonics are often placed in quick succession as well as within fast technical runs. Two great introduction videos to oboe multiphonics, one by oboist Laura Adkins and the other by oboist Danny Cruz, can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Apart from multiphonics, glissandi and pitch bending are the second most called upon extended technique. Cortés-Álvarez writes these mostly above the A5 register of the oboe. All are downward pitch bends, which facilitates their playing; however, he often writes specific glissandi that span over two or three notes. Single note downward pitch bends are often achieved via loosening of the embouchure or minutely pulling the reed out of the mouth. Glissandi that span several notes, however, can require a more exaggerated embouchure manipulation as well as the very slow depressing of keys, so that noticeable pitch bending between notes can be heard. The pitch bends and glissandi in **Boca abajo** are further complicated in that many of the starting pitches for these are often quarter tones and microtones. These will often require alternate fingerings, for which Libby Van-Cleve's book is once again a wonderful resource. It provides not only a reference chart for the alternate accidentals that Cortés-Álvarez uses to indicate these quarter and microtones, but also provides fingerings for some of them. Apart from Van-Cleve's book, I do recommend that the player experiment with their own alternate fingerings, as these can be affected based on the player's reed and oboe model. I found that for ease of playing, some of these microtones, within the context of the piece, are easier to achieve via reed and

embouchure manipulation, rather than alternate fingerings. Other great resources for the oboe's extended techniques are Peter Veale's *The Techniques of Oboe Playing* and Leonora Saavedra's *El Oboe Contemporaneo*.¹⁸² Some demonstrations for pitch bending and glissandi can be found [here](#), by oboist Angela Lickiss and [here](#) by oboist Colin Maier.

The last extended technique which Cortés-Álvarez employs is flutter tonguing, and it is used sparingly. While flutter tonguing can traditionally be achieved via rolling one's tongue in an R sound while playing, a similar effect can also be achieved by growling with the back of the tongue, as well as with the middle of the tongue. Oboe professor Jacqueline Leclair gives a wonderful tutorial [here](#) on how to achieve growling with the middle of the tongue. Oboist Laura Adkins gives a great tutorial [here](#) on how to achieve flutter tonguing by growling. Flutter tonguing with the middle of the tongue will generally give the oboist a bit more flexibility with the technique, growling less so, and rolling one's Rs even less than that as rolling one's R's involves changing both the air and embouchure to an extent. Nonetheless, it is still a viable way to achieve the technique and another tutorial by Colin Maier can be found [here](#). However, if the player finds these techniques difficult to achieve (as I did) there is one last technique that can mimic flutter tonguing. This involves singing or humming while playing. To achieve a flutter tongue effect, the oboist must hum one half step above or below the note for which flutter tonguing is written. This produces a discordant effect which mimics flutter tonguing. An introduction to singing while playing by Laura Adkins can be found [here](#). All three techniques can be used, but which is chosen will depend solely on the preference of the player.

¹⁸² Peter Veale, Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, Wolfgang Motz, Thomas Hummel, *The Technique of Oboe Playing*, (Germany: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vöetterle GmbH & Co. KG., 1994).

Leonora Saavedra, "El Oboe Contemporaneo," in *Nuevas Técnicas Instrumentales*, edited by Mario Lavista, 52-71, (Mexico: CENIDIM, 1989), INBA Digital, accessed February 17, 2023, <http://inbadigital.bellasartes.gob.mx:8080/jspui/handle/11271/856>.

Boca abajo is a piece that makes use of almost the entire range of the oboe, with long segments situated firmly in the higher register. At ten minutes of constant play time, with only a few short rests and fermatta breaks, it is a *very* endurance heavy piece. This is compounded not only by the length and range of the piece but by the embouchure manipulation that is used for the extended techniques as well.

Boca abajo can be purchased by contacting composer Francisco Cortés-Álvarez at cortes.alvarez@gmail.com.

Upingos (1957) – Carlos Chávez

Level: 2

Range: C4-Bb5

Duration: 2 minutes

Upingos is a short solo oboe piece, and while it is not overly technical, it relies instead on long phrases to assemble its haunting melody. It requires good breath support, not only to last through the long phrases, but to manage intonation as the melody fluctuates between the higher and lower range. Because of the piece's range as well as the need for continuous playing with little breaks, the endurance required can be taxing for beginning oboists. However, its low technical demand can be a learning opportunity for younger students to explore musicality beyond just playing the notes on a page. There is ample opportunity within the piece to use vibrato, phrasing, dynamics, and color changes to add one's own musicality to the melody.

More details:

Upingos' form can be divided into three sections, ABA'. The first A section, which starts in 3/8, introduces the main melody of the piece. The B section contains entirely new musical material, switching from the haunting melody of the A section to a more upbeat and energetic

melody in 2/4. The A' section returns to 3/8 and can be heard as a very condensed A. It begins with a repeat of the first A phrase note for note and ends with a repeat of the ending phrase of A note for note. The piece is also in A Phrygian and can be used as a good first exploration into musical modes.

Upingos can be purchased at [Trevco Music](#).

Llama de Vela (1995) - María Granillo

Level: 4

Range: Bb3-F#6

Duration: 4-5 minutes

Llama de Vela, translating to *Candle Flame*, is as ephemeral and sometimes dancelike as a live candle flame would be. It begins at a slow quarter note equals 40 but the piece does call for 16th, 32nd, and 64th note runs, making the mental *subdivision* of the tempo down to the eighth note a necessity. The piece does call for triplet eighths at times, during which feeling the big beat might be easier. As such, the ability to switch between subdivision and the big beat is very helpful throughout. The piece also calls for tremolos as well as agility in the upper range of the oboe and good support in the lower range.

More details:

The piece is split into three sections, each divided by rests with fermatas over it. The first section, as mentioned, begins at quarter note equals 40, but towards the end slowly *accelerandos* with repetitive 16th note figures. It continues until abruptly resuming the original tempo along with some similar material from the beginning. The second section takes a new tempo, quarter note equals 64, and a somewhat more angular, pecky melody, almost like a fluttering flame. Grace notes are used quite often and they make some of the syncopation particularly tricky. After

a *gran pausa*, the original tempo returns in the last section. While the material is not explicitly copied from the first section, it is nonetheless reminiscent of it.

The range of the piece is also quite large, the highest note being an F#6 and the lowest note being a Bb3. Agility in the higher notes from G5 up to F#6 will be needed, as many 16th note and 32nd note runs are placed in that range. The slow tempo does help the oboist, but familiarity of fingerings within that range will be the most helpful. The piece goes down to a C4 at the very last bar, where a whole note with a fermata begins at *piano*, crescendos, and then dies away to nothing. It is very much like a candle flame that, having reached the end of its wick, gives one last burst of light before slowly dying away to nothing. Solid support is needed for the low C4 as it's very easy to crack a note that low starting at *piano*. The same danger of cracking is also present as one crescendos and diminuendos. Tremolos are the only extended technique that **Llama de Vela** calls for, and only three out of the five are somewhat awkward fingerings. All can be found in Libby Van Cleve's *Oboe Unbound: contemporary techniques*.

Llama de Vela can be purchased by contacting composer María Granillo at gragoma@hotmail.com.

Semelíami (1996) – Alejandra Odgers

Level: 4

Range: Bb3-Eb6

Duration: 5 min

Semelíami, Tema y variaciones para oboe solo, or *Semelíami, Theme and variations for oboe solo* is a solo oboe work written as a *passacaglia* in a 6/8+3/4 mixed meter. In the

indigenous language of the *Raramuri*¹⁸³ people, *semeliami* means “music that will be danced to.”¹⁸⁴ As the *passacaglia*¹⁸⁵ is a form that has been used for both street and courtly dances, **Semeliami** is a very apt title. The work is in somewhat of an invented scale, as Odgers states that she wanted it to be neither major or minor by having a “sharp *fa* but flat *si*.”¹⁸⁶ It has twelve different variations of the original theme. The first few variations are not rhythmically complex and make much musical use of extended rests. As the inner variations are reached, rhythmic complexity is amped up as more and more notes are added to each variation. As the piece nears its end the variations once again thin out until the original theme is heard one last time.

More details:

Semeliami has its origins as a compositional exercise given to Odgers by her then composition teacher, Horacio Uribe.¹⁸⁷ The fact that the piece is also in 6/8+3/4 mixed meter was a deliberate choice by the composer in order to include a rhythm of Mexican *sones*, a type of traditional Mexican music.¹⁸⁸ The composer states in her program notes that she had two ideas

¹⁸³ The *Raramuri*, are a group of indigenous peoples located in Chihuahua, México, specifically in the mountain range Sierra Madre Occidental. The *Raramuri* are well known for their amazing athleticism in long distance running. In fact, the word *raramuri* itself is derived from *rara*, meaning foot and *muri*, meaning to run.

Daniel. E Lieberman, Mickey Mahaffey, Silvino Cubesare Quimare, Nicholas B. Holowka, Ian J. Wallace, and Aaron L. Baggish, “Running in Tarahumara (Rarámuri) Culture: Persistence Hunting, Footracing, Dancing, Work, and the Fallacy of the Athletic Savage,” *Current Anthropology* 61, no. 3 (June 2020): 356-379, accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/708810>.

Gobierno de México, “Etnografía del pueblo tarahumara (ráramuri),” Gobierno de México (website), Accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.gob.mx/inpi/articulos/etnografia-del-pueblo-tarahumara-raramuri>.

¹⁸⁴ Alejandra Odgers, *Semeliami*, Québec: Canadian Music Centre.

¹⁸⁵ The *passacaglia* was originally a dance music. In Spain it was an animated dance but in France it was considered a courtly dance. Eventually, and in today’s music, a *passacaglia* became a musical form consisting of a theme and variations over an ostinato bass in a 3/4 time.

Alexander Silbiger, “Passacaglia (It.; Fr. *passacaille*; Ger. *passacalia*; It. *passacaglio*, *passagallo*, *passacagli*, *passacaglie*; Sp. *pasacalle*, *passacalle*), *Grove Music Online*, accessed December 20, 2022, <https://doi-org.libproxy.uncg.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.21024>.

Britannica, “passacaglia,” Britannica (website), accessed December 20, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/passacaglia-musical-form-and-dance>.

¹⁸⁶ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 188-189.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 188.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 189-190.

while writing the piece, the first being “that of a snake charmer, the image of the awakening snake in the basket, that goes out, dance[s] and returns to its basket,” and the second being the “idea of the two-way journey between meditation, dance and return to meditation.”¹⁸⁹ Both ideas reflect **Semelíami**'s construction very well.

As with all *passacaglias*, **Semelíami** begins with a theme, in this case it is a very slow moving bass line in the mid range of the oboe. Because there are a large number of rests within the first theme, as well as the following couple of variations, emphasis must be placed on accurate internal counting. This is also something stressed by the composer, in her own words, “...for me it was very important to have that [6/8+3/4] combination since the beginning, to feel it, for the rhythm to be internal since the beginning and little by little it becomes clearer to the listener. But it is implicit since the first presentation of the theme.”¹⁹⁰ As the variations progress and more and more embellishments are added, the counting becomes somewhat easier as the rests between the melody continues to shorten. However, it is not until variation seven that the full “dance” is finally heard. Because of this, variations seven through eight call for the most technical agility. Accurate and fast fingers are needed here as the variation becomes an energetic dance in perpetual motion with very little rests. Variation eight specifically requires good intonation, breath support, and fast fingers as it jumps from the lower range of the oboe to the higher and vice versa. In variation nine, the dance seems to lose some of its urgency as the snake returns to the basket or as one returns to meditation. The piece ends after variation eleven, returning once more to the original theme.

Semelíami can be purchased at the [Canadian Music Centre](#).

¹⁸⁹ Alejandra Odgers, *Semelíami*, Québec: Canadian Music Centre.

¹⁹⁰ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 190.

Oboe Solo and Accompaniment

Al filo del agua (2020) – María Granillo

Level: 4

Ranges:

Mvm 1: E4-Eb6

Mvm 2: Db4-F6

Mvm 3: D#4-Eb6

Duration: 11 min

Al filo del agua, loosely translated into *At the edge of the water*, is a three movement piece for oboe and piano accompaniment. The first movement *cuatro insomnias*, or *four insomniacs*, is a somewhat dreamy movement, requiring both agility for 16th notes runs as well as lyrical musicality for the overall mood of the movement. The second movement, *canicas*, or *marbles*, is much more metrical and rhythmically driven. Written in 3/8 and 5/8 meters it requires good rhythmic stability with the pianist. The third movement, *las campanas de Gabriel*, or *Gabriel's [church] bells*, switches moods between mournfully slow quarter notes and frantically energetic 16th note runs and accented 8th note bell tones.

More details:

Al filo del agua was inspired by the novel of the same name by Mexican author Agustín Yáñez. Each movement is titled after an aspect of the book. *Cuatro insomnias* refers to the four main characters of the book, who begin their story unable to sleep.¹⁹¹ *Canicas* is titled after a chapter in the book of the same name, “where the lives of the characters are compared to

¹⁹¹ María Granillo, e-mail to author, March 10, 2022.

marbles, that move erratically.”¹⁹² *Las campanas de Gabriel* is named after a character from the novel, “a young church ringer,” who “expresses his despair at the departure of his beloved,” by “ringing the church bells madly.”¹⁹³ In Granillo’s own words she states, “I did not try to portray the novel. I was only inspired by it, and wanted to create a sound metaphor of some of the ideas behind the novel.”¹⁹⁴

While the piece is not a direct representation of the book or characters, you can still hear the title and novel inspirations within each movement. *Cuatro insomnios*, with its dreamy atmosphere, lull the listener into that not quite awake but definitely not asleep state of the truly exhausted. In *Canicas*, one can practically hear marbles bouncing against each other with its staccato melody and compound meter. *Las campanas de Gabriel* starts with the long, somewhat mournful sound of church bells, only for it to quickly devolve into Gabriel’s frantic peals of desperation. Granillo does, however, encourage the player to come up with their own interpretation of the music as well.¹⁹⁵

Of the three movements *canicas* is perhaps the most demanding in agility. It switches often between 3/8, 5/8, and a singular 4/8 measure. This, along with its running staccato eighth note melody and repeated grace notes, can make it somewhat tricky to accurately coordinate fingers and tongue. *Cuatro insomnios* on the other hand, is a movement in which the oboist is free to impart their own personal musical touches. While its recurring chromatic sixteenth note runs still call for technical accuracy, overall it is a movement that benefits from subtle and personal musical touches. The oboist can experiment with pushing and pulling time, dynamics,

¹⁹² María Granillo, e-mail to author, March 10, 2022.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

stretching phrases, and so on. *Las campanas de Gabriel* is the only movement that shifts mood quite dramatically within the movement. As mentioned, it begins at a very slow tempo with even slower slurred quarter and whole note motifs. This changes to an animated 6/8, with an active, somewhat dramatic melody composed of chromatic sixteenth note runs. This then transforms into a happier, folklike dance tune, which once leads rapidly into a dramatic finish.

Al filo del agua can be purchased by contacting composer María Granillo at gragoma@hotmail.com.

La Voz del Viento (2008) – Jorge Calleja

Level: 4

Range: Eb4-Eb6

Duration: 10 minutes

Instrumentation: Oboe and Electronics

La Voz del Viento is a piece for oboe and accompanying electronic track written specifically for the oboist Carmen Thierry. The electronic track is accessed via Jorge Calleja's [bandcamp](#), where it can be played live on the website or purchased and downloaded.¹⁹⁶ The piece requires pitch-bending, multiphonics, flutter tonguing, and double tonguing. While **La Voz del Viento** does not require extreme technical agility, the use of flutter tonguing and double tonguing towards the end of the piece can nonetheless make the oboe line somewhat challenging. For any oboist wishing to delve into electronic music, **La Voz del Viento** is a wonderful first pick as the score is clear and easy to follow and not too difficult to align with the electronic track.

¹⁹⁶ Jorge Calleja, "La voz del viento," Bandcamp, accessed December 12, 2020, <https://jorgecalleja.bandcamp.com/track/la-voz-del-viento>.

More details:

La Voz del Viento's title in English translates to *The Voice of the Wind*, and the ethereal track and improvisational sounding oboe line reflects this well. The electronic track consists of a steady stream of dreamy synths, droning strings, a selection of string percussion, disembodied wordless singing that Calleja marks in the score specifically as *the voice of the wind*, a child singing, and what sounds like whispered poetry. Through an interview with the composer, I came to find that the child that one hears is actually Thierry's young daughter.¹⁹⁷ Calleja had asked Thierry for recordings of her to add into the electronic track.¹⁹⁸ Against the track, the oboe provides an almost conversational counterpoint. The oboe line, while giving an air of improvisation, nonetheless does have to align with the electronic track at times, and in order to make this easier, the track is written into the oboists' part as well. The oboe line weaves in and out of the track, mimicking it at some points, continuing melodic and rhythmic fragments in others or even playing completely different musical material.

As stated, the piece calls for a few oboe extended techniques, pitch-bending, multiphonics, flutter tonguing, and double tonguing. A total of three different multiphonic notes are notated, as well as a few occasions of pitch bending up to another note. The ending of the piece requires flutter tonguing as well as double tonguing in order to achieve the composer's desired effect. Some helpful YouTube videos about double tonguing include Melissa Feilhauer's [video](#), Jackie Leclair's [video](#), and a [video](#) in which Titus Underwood, Frank Rosenwein and Dana Sundet all speak about their experience learning and using double tonguing.

¹⁹⁷ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 178.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

While **La Voz del Viento**'s oboe line is not overly technically difficult, staying mostly in the oboe's mid range and only extending up to an Eb6, because of its sometimes repetitive nature, the challenge for the oboist then becomes making their part come alive musically. While Calleja does mark some dynamics and articulation, much of its musical direction must come from the player themselves.

La Voz del Viento can be purchased at [Score Exchange](#).

Chamber

Danza de Mediodía (1997) – Arturo Márquez

Level: 4

Range: Eb4-D6

Duration: 10 min

Instrumentation: Woodwind Quintet, traditional instrumentation

This quintet is an energetic one movement piece that lives up to its name. The title translates to *Dance of Noon*, and there are sections within the piece that certainly give the impression of a very lively dance. Yet between these, there are sections of a much calmer, but just as impassioned, melody. The energetic sections provide the oboist with a technical challenge, especially as some involve rather tricky and repetitive fingerings. The calmer sections provide a lyrical challenge, in that it's up to the oboist to provide their own musical direction and flare. The main challenge as a chamber ensemble is to keep the piece rhythmically tight as a group.

More details:

The piece is one single continuous movement; however, because of the regular tempo and mood changes mentioned, it can easily be divided into six distinct sections. Each new section is

preceded by an often rather long *ritardando* or *accelerando* into a new tempo. The melody line within these sections is usually passed in quick fragments that shift from instrument to instrument until the new section has been reached. Because of this, communication within the ensemble is extremely important.

Each section is accompanied by a switch of the current instrument, or in some cases instruments, that carries the melody. For example, the piece begins with a melody in the oboe that is then passed on to the flute, all while the bassoon is providing a countermelody. From there the melody is fragmented between the flute, oboe, and clarinet, with the horn adding to the countermelody with the bassoon. This all finally arrives at the first section change, *Con fuoco*. There the melody is given to the flute and oboe together. The lead gets passed to the clarinet and horn and then back to oboe and clarinet before starting a new slower section where the oboe takes the lead once again with a sultry melody, which then gets passed to the bassoon. The next section the horn trades a solo back and forth with the bassoon amid a rhythmic ostinato in the flute, oboe, and clarinet as well as the horn and bassoon when they are not in the lead. A section later the clarinet begins with its own sultry solo, with the bassoon providing a countermelody. The solo then gets passed onto the flute. The entire piece is built like this, with various pairs of instruments sharing the melody and lead voice.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this quintet is the ability to keep it rhythmically tight. This is difficult not only because of the tempo changes and the fragmentation of melody between the instruments, but also because of some of the piece's syncopated rhythmic ostinatos. These ostinatos are, like much of the piece, fragmented between groups of instruments. Because of the fragmentation, it can be difficult to keep the rhythm accurate as well as keep the tempo steady throughout. The oboe fingerings for the rhythmic ostinato are especially tricky, requiring either a

Left F or a Forked F, whatever is the most comfortable for the oboist. For this reason, the oboe part can be both a technical challenge in the more active sections and a musical challenge in the slower sections.

Danza de Mediodía can be purchased at [Trevco Music](#).

Maderaire (2016) – Leticia Armijo

Level: 4

Range: E4-C#6

Duration: 4.5-5 min

Instrumentation: Woodwind Quartet, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon

Maderaire is a work dedicated to the woodwind quartet *Maderaire*, from which the piece takes its name.¹⁹⁹ While at first glance **Maderaire** might seem a somewhat easy piece, it is anything but. While **Maderaire's** difficulty isn't overtly noticeable—there are for the most part no sections which require extreme technical agility—it's the tonal language, with its many modulations, that poses its own challenge.

More details:

Maderaire begins with a dreamy theme played by solo clarinet that is eventually passed to the oboe and then flute. The bassoon accompanies all with simple harmonic support. This dreamy atmosphere continues throughout and it's only aided by the fact that the piece never firmly settles into any one key. The work modulates four times in as many minutes and it can leave the player feeling unmoored, but not in any way that is unsettling. The opening 4/4 section, as well as the closing 4/4 section are the hazy, sepia glow of a dream, that moment right before

¹⁹⁹ Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 152, 168.

you fall asleep, where one's last few conscious thoughts aren't bound by reality's rules. Once the piece reaches its first modulation, it's as if you've finally fully fallen asleep and the dream becomes more active. This feeling is emphasized by the 12/8 meter change that follows quickly after the modulation. The music becomes more energetic, bouncier, as if the dream is in full swing now. This modulation, however, presents the piece's main difficulty as settling within each new key can prove to be a challenging group effort. Constant listening and adjustment to one's fellow players will be needed.

A musical climax is reached towards the middle of the 12/8 section, where the flute and oboe progress into a series of rapid triplet eighth note runs. This is also the oboe's more challenging technical part. Because the key signature contains four sharps, some of the runs can be awkward. Slow practice here will be very helpful. The tension of this climax seems to bleed out as the piece continues, heading into yet another modulation that is accompanied by a return into the original 4/4 meter. This closing section brings back both the opening theme and with it the dreamy, lethargic quality of the opening section. The work ends on a somewhat triumphant note—a wakeup call to bring us out of the dream that is **Maderaire**—that builds up to a fortissimo chord held in all instruments.

Maderaire can be purchased by contacting composer Leticia Armijo at comuarteinternacional@gmail.com.

Puzzle-Tocas (2000) – Gabriela Ortiz

Level: 5

Range: D4-F6

Duration: 10 min

Instrumentation: Woodwind Quintet, traditional instrumentation, piccolo needed

As an atonal quintet, **Puzzle-Tocas** presents players with many challenges. Among these are keeping tightly together as an ensemble when rhythmically complex lines are fragmented between instruments, the use of constantly changing, and sometimes obscure, meters, and to make the quintet come alive musically. The piece also calls for oboe flutter tonguing and harmonics.

More details:

In Ortiz's own words the work's, "construction obeys an imaginary game of introspective puzzle in which through mixing, overlapping and constant transformation of fragments from my previous works I create a heterogenic musical discourse whose element of contrast plays a crucial role in the piece's structural development."²⁰⁰ The description as a puzzle of musical fragments is certainly fitting, as each part seems to tightly interlock, with little to absolutely no space for rhythmic or timing error. When one part has a sixteenth note rest, another part fills that in. In this way, **Puzzle-Tocas** is in constant rhythmic motion. Alternatively, when instruments do share the same musical fragments, these fragments are often rhythmically complex. Care must be taken to play together as well as with the same style, articulation, etc. To add to this difficulty, the piece regularly changes meters, employing both simple and compound, as well as some not often seen like 6/16, 11/16, and 16/16. It briefly uses the extended techniques of flutter tonguing and harmonics. Useful demonstrations on producing oboe harmonics are Aaron Hill's [video](#) and Angenla Lickiss' [video](#). More information on harmonics as well as a downloadable PDF chart of fingerings can be found at oboist Sarah Hamilton's website [Oboehelp](#).

²⁰⁰ Gabriela Ortiz, "Puzzle-Tocas," Gabriela Ortiz (website), accessed November 1, 2021, <http://gabrielaortiz.com/index.php?idioma=en&p=2&tipo=chamber&obra=28>.

Due to all of the above, **Puzzle-Tocas** is a piece in which communication within the ensemble is particularly important. A thorough understanding of how each instrumental line fits in with the rest of the ensemble is also crucial. This can be challenging, because while **Puzzle-Tocas** does have contrasting sections in which more melodic fragments are heard and traded off to different instruments, overall it is not a melody focused work. These small, usually slower sections of melody seem to function more as audible and technical breaks between the chaos of puzzle fragments that make up the rest of the work.

Puzzle-Tocas can be purchased at [Boosey & Hawkes](#).

Serpientes y Escaleras (2012) – María Granillo

Level: 4

Range: C#4-Eb6

Duration: 7 min

Instrumentation: Mixed Quartet, Flute, Oboe, Cello, Piano

Serpientes y Escaleras, translated to *Snakes and Ladders* is a short, melody driven quartet. The title seems to also be a reference to the board game, which I can remember playing throughout my childhood. In the quartet the flute and oboe often receive the spotlight, trading the melody between them. While the cello and piano often provide harmonic support, they too share the melody at points. The range required of the oboist is quite large and rhythmic syncopations along with meter changes add onto technical difficulty. Tremolos and glissandi are also required of the oboist. One of the difficulties as an ensemble is achieving a blend of sound.

More Details:

The piece is not overly difficult, but there are points in the oboe part which can still be challenging. The oboe part begins in the low D4 register at *piano*, dropping further to C#4, and

later on extending up to Eb6. Continuous meter changes, from simple to compound meter is also called for. Moments of rhythmic syncopation between different instrument combinations are also heard. At times the flute and oboe trade off eighth note downbeats and offbeats, other times the oboe and piano play a duple rhythm against cello triplets, and yet other times the cello plays harmonic 32nd note runs against the piano's eighth note triplets. There are only two extended techniques called for, tremolos and glissandi. While the piece does call for quite a few tremolos they are, for the most part, easily achieved. Only one requires an alternate fingering, the tremolo D5-B4, and it can be found in *Oboe Unbound*. There are only three glissandi called for F#5-F5, which can be achieved by slowly lowering the second and third fingers of the right hand, G#5-F#5 which involved slowly lowering the F# key, and C5-Bb4 which involved slowly lowering the second finger of the left hand.

Beyond these, the biggest difficulty will be the ensemble blend. Being a mixed quintet of very different instruments, care will need to be taken to create a unified sound, especially as the melody is woven through all parts. Articulation will be especially important as all instruments in the ensemble have vastly different mechanisms for starting and ending a note.

Serpientes y Escaleras can be purchased by contacting composer María Granillo at gragoma@hotmail.com.

CHAPTER IV: COMPOSER INTERVIEWS

The purpose of the composer interview is to not only inform composer biographies but also to give helpful context surrounding the pieces included in the project. In this way these pieces do not exist in a vacuum, instead they are situated into the rich world of Mexican classical music in which they were written. The interview also makes each composer come alive as more than just a name on a page. They become a instead a living musician whose experiences inform their pieces, often in a very personal manner. Interviews also helped inform work analyses as composers were asked about their specific work included in the project.

Project composers were contacted via email or through social media. The project was explained as well as the purpose of the interview and what it would entail. In the end, three out of the eight project composers agreed to an interview: Leticia Armijo, Jorge Calleja and Alejandra Odgers. Dates for each interview, all in late Fall of 2022, were agreed upon based on the availability of both myself and the composers. Interviews were conducted through Zoom and all were recorded in order to later transcribe and then translate. While the full Spanish transcription and full English translation are available in Appendices B and C, for this chapter, the original seven questions are listed and a summary of composer responses to each is provided.

Leticia Armijo

Wednesday December 28, 2022, 12 PM Central Standard Time. Both the composer and I were in Mexico, but in different areas.

1) General biographical information.

Answered in depth in chapter two composer biography.

2) What turned you to music? What turned you to composition?

Armijo's family was a very musical family. Her father, a pediatric surgeon at *El Hospital de Peralvillo* (The Hospital of Peralvillo) and director of the *Centro Medico La Raza* (Medical Center La Raza) was also a guitarist and played the accordion.²⁰¹ Her mother who often sang and would improvise separate voice parts—Armijo states that this is where she thinks her composing originally came from—was also the daughter of one of the original members of *Mariachi Vargas of Tecalitlán*.²⁰² Her grandfather, a mariachi and field worker, played the violin, *vihuela*, contrabass, and also sang.²⁰³ Armijo states that her grandmothers also sang and that she therefore is “a musician going back one, two, three or four generations.”²⁰⁴ Because of her family, she was exposed to traditional Mexican music from childhood, stating, “I didn't talk, I sang!”²⁰⁵

Armijo began her formal music education via a guitar teacher first hired for her brother, however as her brother had no interest in music, the teacher was transferred to her.²⁰⁶ Outside of lessons Armijo would continue her own studies by figuring out entire guitar pieces by ear.²⁰⁷ She shares that although she had perfect pitch she didn't know much about music theory yet.²⁰⁸ It seems like her original instructor was not the best as she mentions that before entering the conservatory her “musical education was very lousy.”²⁰⁹ Both of Armijo's parents unfortunately passed during her higher music education studies, her father towards the beginning of her studies

²⁰¹ Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 154.

²⁰² Ibid, 154, 165.

²⁰³ Ibid, 154.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 155.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

and her mother two years later.²¹⁰ Because of this, Armijo had to work in order to be able to attend school, and although she also studied the piano and the violin—stating that she could have been an orchestral violinist—she ultimately decided to devote what little study time she had to composition.²¹¹

3) How would you describe your own music style?

Armijo began answering this question by first describing musicological trends. She shared,

Well, first of all, if we place ourselves in what is the music of the second half of the twentieth century and the new millennium, we can find that most documented sources only serve up to the eighties, nineties, and the end of the new millennium. It's very few publications that really analyze what are the musicological tendencies, and above all the aesthetic tendencies, of the composers of the twentieth century...the documented sources don't even have all this influence from the eighties, of the social movements, of folklore, of militancy, of being a militant woman composer. And of all these influences that come from the exiled [musicians in Mexico] as well.²¹²

With that context Armijo goes on to say that she conducted an “analysis of Mexican music of the twentieth century, the end of the twenty-first century and the new millennium and...Mexican woman composers...their musics, and of their aesthetics.”²¹³ Armijo shares that according to her findings, towards the end of the new millennium, there were two major branches that most Mexican composers gravitated to in their music, that of complexity and that of simplicity.²¹⁴ Examples of the music that lean towards complexity include music with extended techniques and twelve-tone music.²¹⁵ In contrast, the other trend leads back to tonality,

²¹⁰ Ibid, 156.

²¹¹ Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 157.

²¹² Ibid, 160-161.

²¹³ Ibid, 161.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

but one that is “an expanded tonality that we can call *pan*-tonality, as coined by the researcher and musicologist Rudolph Reti.”²¹⁶ Armijo herself is firmly in the camp of pan-tonality.²¹⁷ She explains that her music style has a “lyrical vein”, one that can be very well heard in **Maderaire**.²¹⁸ And she stuck to this style despite challenges she faced at *La Escuela Nacional de Música* when, according to Armijo, the path of complexity was what was expected of a composer.²¹⁹ She shares, “you had to compose the most frightening things, the most horrible, the most atonal, the most twelve-tone. There wasn’t any questioning of this, you simply had to follow those techniques.”²²⁰

Within her “lyrical vein” Armijo also mentions the influence of traditional Mexican music and Latin American folk music.²²¹ It was during her time at the Instituto Luis Vives—an institute for Spanish refugees that she began attending around 1973—and through the diverse student body that attended, that Armijo was exposed to the traditional music of many different areas of Latin America.²²² In this way, Armijo did not learn folklore “from the chalkboard,” but instead was actively immersed in it.²²³ She also specifically states that within her use of traditional Mexican music is a “reclaiming of indigenous languages” via her formation of the indigenous all women's choir *Yolotli*.²²⁴ *Yolotli* sings works in Mexican indigenous languages in

²¹⁶ Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 161.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 162.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 163.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid, 155, 163.

²²² Ibid, 155.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid, 153, 163.

danger of becoming extinct.²²⁵ Armijo has also won a national award in electroacoustic music, and she cites it as a specialty as well.²²⁶

4) What inspired you to write this piece? Was there a specific event or idea? Was it a commission?

While **Maderaire** was not a commission, it was written for a then just starting woodwind quartet of the same name founded by clarinetist Dr. Alejandro Moreno.²²⁷ Although the piece is not “complex” in that it doesn’t use extended techniques or other such contemporary techniques, its use of an “expanding tonality” that often modulates is what poses a challenge.²²⁸ Armijo states, “my music has a level of complexity in the sense that its use of tonality isn’t a traditional one.”²²⁹

5) Is there anything specific you would like to say to the interpreter of your piece? Is there a specific emotion you want invoked or conveyed?

One of Armijo’s intentions with the piece was “to get close to you, to touch your heart.”²³⁰ To the interpreter specifically, Armijo shares that the rhythm of the piece—a Latin American rhythm—should not be heavy and monotonous, rather it should be light and somewhat accented.²³¹ She specifically asks that “each phrase is felt organically” and “that [the interpreter] be *very* musical as they play the piece.”²³²

²²⁵ Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 153.

²²⁶ Ibid, 160-161.

²²⁷ Ibid, 151, 167.

²²⁸ Ibid, 168.

²²⁹ Ibid, 168.

²³⁰ Ibid, 169.

²³¹ Ibid, 168-169.

²³² Ibid, 169-170.

6) How was/is your experience as a Mexican composer?

Armijo shares that although she is from Mexico she has oftentimes felt like an exile there as she has faced much discrimination from “groups in power.”²³³ Because of her specific use of language, she has often felt discriminated against as a composer, stating that many see her as a composer who only writes, “easy stuff.”²³⁴ She shared, “There are *a priori* notes against my music...they say, oh well, it just looks like a little orchestral song. Yeah? Well I’ve never heard of *a little song* that passes through nineteen different tonalities.”²³⁵

Armijo has led a life of a militant feminist giving her support in Mexico to the feminist movement, the lesbian movement, and participating in some of the first marches against assault.²³⁶ In music specifically, she mentions the “*dearth* that exists when it comes to women composers”²³⁷ During her time working in CENIDIM, a Mexican center of music investigation, Armijo states that although “women composers [came] in and their works would be played...when I looked at the music history books, the women weren’t there.”²³⁸ The need to investigate this led Armijo to her thesis at the *Escuela Nacional de Música* as well as eventually leading to her form a collective for women in music.²³⁹

Armijo profiles herself as a “social fighter” and because of this she’s often found herself rushing off to defend something only to find that she is the only one to do so.²⁴⁰ For this and

²³³ Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 170.

²³⁴ Ibid, 166, 170.

²³⁵ Ibid, 168-169.

²³⁶ Ibid, 154.

²³⁷ Ibid, 171.

²³⁸ Ibid, 158.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 158, 171.

other reasons Armijo states, “I feel so exiled because I feel like I’ve lived a marginalization.”²⁴¹ But while Armijo has experienced this marginalization she shares that there are others who support her, “fortunately there’s this counterpart...where there is a strong support...but it’s people like me, people who don’t have power, who don’t have riches, or property...I mean people like me are the people who support me.”²⁴²

Having studied in Spain for a time, Armijo also recounts the discrimination towards Mexicans she experienced there.²⁴³ There was such a “dearth of information about Mexicans” that it inspired her to write her thesis on Graciela Agudelo, a Mexican composer.²⁴⁴

7) Contact information such as websites, emails, etc.

Leticia Armijo can be reached at comuarteinternacional@gmail.com. One can enquire about her pieces through that email as well. Her personal website can be found [here](#), *ComuArte*’s website [here](#), and *Yolotli*’s website [here](#).

Jorge Calleja

Thursday November 17, 2022, 1 PM Central Standard Time. Calleja was in Mexico and I was in the US.

1) General biographical information.

Answered in depth in chapter two composer biography.

²⁴¹ Ibid, 171.

²⁴² Leticia Armijo, Zoom interview by author, December 28, 2023, English translation, 171-172.

²⁴³ Ibid, 156, 170.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 156.

2) What turned you to music? What turned you to composition?

During Calleja's time in *secundaria*, he enrolled in a technical, electronic focused, course of study.²⁴⁵ He also learned to play the guitar and his study of the instrument would run parallel to his study of electronics as he moved up the *bachillerato*.²⁴⁶ Calleja would eventually enroll in the Yamaha Music School where he would study guitar with Juan Carlos Laguna.²⁴⁷ It was Laguna who told Calleja to consider a career in music.²⁴⁸ Before that, Calleja admits that the possibility of studying music had never occurred to him.²⁴⁹ Laguna, however, also advised Calleja to take the entrance exam for another instrument other than guitar as it was a highly competitive program.²⁵⁰ Once in the music program he could then switch to guitar.²⁵¹ Calleja followed his advice and was admitted into music school as an oboist and student of oboe professor Carmen Thierry.²⁵² Calleja recalls that "professor Carmen Thierry would ask me for oboe exercise, which I composed."²⁵³ Thierry, seeing Calleja's ability to compose and knowing that he eventually wanted to switch programs, asked if he'd considered switching to composition instead.²⁵⁴ Calleja ended up doing exactly that.²⁵⁵ Calleja also mentions that he never left the technical aspect of his studies behind but instead brought them into his music, citing that he also works within recording and production.²⁵⁶

²⁴⁵ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 175.

²⁴⁶ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 175.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

3) How would you describe your own music style?

When asked about how Calleja is part of two very different musical ensembles, Etnokam an “academic music hybrid” and Gallina Negra which plays a variety of genres ranging from progressive rock to jazz, Calleja responds by listing some of his influences.²⁵⁷ Calleja mentions that rock “has always been something I’ve identified with,” listing bands such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, The Who, and Pink Floyd.²⁵⁸ Once he began studying composition, Calleja states that the field of ethnomusicology went along with it, and because of that, he was exposed to traditional Mexican music as well.²⁵⁹ Calleja shares that “it’s the same effort to make a rock piece than it is to make a work for orchestra, or a jazz piece—it’s the same creative effort.”²⁶⁰ Ultimately, Calleja states, “Jazz, rock, progressive rock, traditional Mexican music...when it comes to composing, well all these things surge up and my music ends up having shades of various things, yes? Of many musical styles.”²⁶¹

4) What inspired you to write this piece? Was there a specific event or idea? Was it a commission?

La Voz del Viento was written for Carmen Thierry and her album *Oboemia: Música Mexicana para Oboe Solo*.²⁶² Calleja shares, “thinking specifically about the professor—at the moment her daughter was a little girl and I asked her to record the girl’s voice. She sent me the recording and I started from there.”²⁶³ Carmen’s daughter then became *la voz del viento* that can

²⁵⁷ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 176.

²⁵⁸ Ibid, 176, 178.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, 176.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid, 178.

²⁶³ Ibid.

be heard in the actual work. Calleja “wanted to represent in *La Voz del Viento* precisely that ethereal moment where the voices of...her daughter, mixed together.”²⁶⁴ Calleja states that the piece itself is very “oneiric...until there comes a point where you wake from that dream.”²⁶⁵

5) Is there anything specific you would like to say to the interpreter of your piece? Is there a specific emotion you want invoked or conveyed?

Calleja shares, “basically the oboe part at the beginning is like imagining that you are in a forest and that you have your instrument and that you’re being inspired a bit by the ancestors. So the sound of the oboe takes on a bit of indigeneity, we could say. Indigenous in its loneliness, in its interior, in its solitude. And bit by bit the sounds of the instruments start to enter the dream, yeah? That can help the interpretation.”²⁶⁶

6) How was/is your experience as a Mexican composer?

Calleja mentions that he’s experienced a certain sort of prejudice against music other than classical music while studying.²⁶⁷ He states, “[if] I suddenly played some popular themes, well then, people look at you and say that that’s not music and a series of prejudices that I think still persist today.”²⁶⁸ He shares, “It’s always believed that classical music is the more ‘plus’ and popular music is below that. Which is not the case, they have different languages and different forms of making music.”²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴ Jorge Calleja, Zoom interview by author, November 17, 2022, English translation, 178.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 181.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 180-181.

7) Contact information such as websites, emails, etc.

Jorge Calleja can be contacted via email at jorgecalleja.compositor@gmail.com. His website can be found [here](#).

Alejandra Odgers

Friday November 11, 2022, 9 AM Eastern Standard Time. Composer was in Canada and I was in the US.

1) General biographical information

Answered in depth in chapter two composer biography.

2) What turned you to music? What turned you to composition?

In her own words Odgers began studying music “a bit by chance.”²⁷⁰ When Odgers was young her mother enrolled her and her two sisters into a program that gave children classes in arts subjects.²⁷¹ The program was arranged such that after paying registration, children were allowed to take however many courses they desired.²⁷² As such, Odgers and her sisters enrolled in “gymnastics, painting [and] regional dance.”²⁷³ Her sisters, however, had enrolled in one extra class, music.²⁷⁴ While Odgers originally had no desire to join them, in the end her mother convinced her to at least try it out, assuring her if she truly didn’t like it she could always just quit.²⁷⁵ The class had a choir and also percussion instruments and she loved it and after finishing three years with the program—during which she attended many concerts by *La Orquesta Filarmónica de la UNAM* (OFUNAM) (The Philharmonic Orchestra of UNAM)—she began to

²⁷⁰ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 184.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

seriously think about a career in music.²⁷⁶ When her grandmother moved just down the block from her and brought with her a piano, Odgers began studying piano as well, eventually starting piano lessons.²⁷⁷ Eventually she “took the admissions exam to enroll in a...professional school of music” and as she first studied piano, she missed playing in a group as she’d done as a child.²⁷⁸ Odgers’ school had an orchestra that would often tour and she mentioned all of her friends were members.²⁷⁹ Because of this Odgers decided that she needed to play an instrument that was included in the orchestra, she picked the oboe and began an oboe degree as well.²⁸⁰

Odgers’ interest in composition was born when she took the class *Técnica y Cultura Musical*, or Musical Technique and Culture, offered by Mario Lavista.²⁸¹ Odgers states, “for me it was like discovering the world of composition. Seeing how a piece could be composed, how composers could write a piece of music.”²⁸² From there she decided to double major in both oboe and composition.²⁸³ Lavista was a very influential instructor for her, one that she “followed for years to take classes with” in different institutions.²⁸⁴ Another instructor who had a heavy influence during her doctoral studies was Alan Belkin.²⁸⁵ Belkin marked the way Odgers composes orchestral works and she states that with him it was “like I discovered the third

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 184.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid, 184-185.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 187.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

dimension in my ears. As if before I composed in two dimensions, just flat, and with him, it was like I discovered perspective.”²⁸⁶

3) How would you describe your own music style?

Odgers states that her style is not any one specific genre or sound, rather her style is one that picks and chooses among various techniques, colors, languages, and instruments for what exactly will best convey or express what she wants to say with a certain piece.²⁸⁷ She gives a specific example of this when she explains her entry into a competition in which she had to compose a piece that paid homage to the victims of the 1985 Mexico earthquake.²⁸⁸ Because the piece dealt with something that caused so much tragedy Odgers felt it was not appropriate to make a work that was “tonal, modal, agreeable, etcetera.”²⁸⁹ Instead she chose a language that was dissonant, atonal, and that used clusters.²⁹⁰ However, Odgers states that the second part of the piece deals more with hope and consolation and therefore she chose more tonal techniques for it.²⁹¹ All in all, Odgers says, “it depends on what [I] want to express at any given moment, that will be the techniques or the language that I will utilize.”²⁹²

Odgers also reveals some self-reflection and analysis of her work during her doctoral studies. She mentions that an exercise during her studies was one in which she was supposed to find her own voice in her pieces.²⁹³ This then turned into “a search of identity” as according to

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 185-186.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, 186.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid, 185.

Odgers, “composing has a lot to do with who you are.”²⁹⁴ Odgers found that her work was “a synthesis, or a mix, a *mestizaje*²⁹⁵ of different cultures.”²⁹⁶ For Odgers, this mix is of Western classical music and traditional music—especially traditional music of Mexico.²⁹⁷ The Western classical influence is present in the instruments she uses, in the ensembles she composes for such as orchestral pieces, and in the fact she writes pieces that “will be listened to in a music hall.”²⁹⁸ The influence of traditional Mexican music can be heard in her use of certain rhythms and in certain pieces her use of woodwind instruments.²⁹⁹ This influence can clearly be heard in **Semelíami**, from its name to its rhythms. However, Odgers also states that she does not only draw influence from traditional Mexican music, but from many other music traditions as well.³⁰⁰ These include, Celtic traditions, Cuban rhythms, Hindu dance rhythms, Indonesian gamelan, and recently, Abaneki traditions as well.³⁰¹

4) What inspired you to write this piece? Was there a specific event or idea? Was it a commission?

Semelíami began as a composition assignment at *La Escuela Nacional de Música* by Odgers’ then new composition instructor Horacio Uribe.³⁰² Odgers states that the original

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ *Mestizo* and its derivative *mestizaje* are words that can mean different things to different people. In colonial Mexico, *mestizo* meant a person born of Spanish and indigenous parents. In post-revolutionary Mexico, *mestizo* meaning was shifted and it instead became a Mexican national identity (although mostly to the detriment of Mexico’s indigenous communities). In this context *mestizaje* is taken to mean a mix of different cultures.

Eugenia Iturriaga, Olivia Gall, Diego Morales and Jimena Rodríguez, *Mestizaje y racismo en México*, Consejo Nacional para Prevenir la Discriminación, 2021, accessed March 18, 2023, https://www.conapred.org.mx/documentos_cedoc/Mestizaje_Racismo_Mexico_WEB.%20Ax.pdf.

²⁹⁶ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 185-186.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid, 186.

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 185, 195.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, 186, 195-196.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid, 188.

assignment was a piece for solo instrument and, being an oboist herself, Odgers quickly picked the oboe.³⁰³ Uribe then mentioned that it was to be eight minutes long and Odgers', knowing firsthand the endurance limitations of the oboe, knew that her piece had to be one with a lot of rests.³⁰⁴ In this way the oboist did not have to play non-stop for eight minutes straight but would have ample opportunity to rest their lips.³⁰⁵ Odgers specifically mentioned that during her career as an oboist she'd run into many pieces which were "anti-oboist, or not idiomatic at all for the oboe."³⁰⁶ Because of this, she set out to compose a piece that really took into the consideration the oboists who would eventually play it.³⁰⁷

With this idea in place, Odgers settled on **Semelfami** being a theme and variations, a *passacaglia* where the original theme was built by adding in notes to each subsequent variation.³⁰⁸ As she began composing the piece two other ideas came to mind.³⁰⁹ She states, "this idea blossomed...this idea of a meditation and a dance...we're tranquil, we're calm, meditating, and bit by bit our spirit begins to awaken, to dance, to move around a lot, to be very active [and] bit by bit we return to that calm again, to that state of...meditation."³¹⁰ Her second idea was that of the oboist as a snake charmer who charms a snake out of its basket to dance, and then charms it back into its basket.³¹¹ After having heard the piece played Odgers states that "in a more philosophical manner" it was also like "life itself."³¹² Life "surges forward, we do a lot of things

³⁰³ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 188.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 189.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid.

and then we return to that state of calm, or of disappearance.”³¹³ Odgers adds, “One appears and then disappears.”³¹⁴

5) Is there anything specific you would like to say to the interpreter of your piece?

Odgers’ states that although her original inspiration for the piece had been one of meditation and dance that the oboist need not follow it, “it doesn’t matter what idea or what image inspires you. The idea is to make something that you enjoy.”³¹⁵ The piece should just be enjoyed both by the oboist and the listener.³¹⁶ **Semelíami** does not have a specified tempo because different oboists will be able to play it at different speeds and as long as they are still able to make the piece musical, then their tempo is perfectly fine.³¹⁷ Odgers also mentions that although the piece begins with a lot of silence, there still exists “a musical line from the beginning,” and the oboist should try to not have those first few notes sound too isolated.³¹⁸ To combat this, she suggests the oboist might “lengthen those first notes a bit...maybe make them a little longer so that [the] line settles.”³¹⁹

Semelíami is a piece that is in a 6/8+3/4 mixed meter, and this was a deliberate choice by the composer.³²⁰ Odgers chose this specific mixed meter because it is the meter that many *sones*, a type of Mexican traditional music, are written in.³²¹ Because of this, even though the piece begins with much rests, Odgers states that the oboist “does have to be conscious of [the rhythm]

³¹³ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 189.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid, 190.

³¹⁶ Ibid, 190-191.

³¹⁷ Ibid, 191.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid, 189-190.

³²¹ Ibid.

from the beginning. Even though they are only playing that single note, they need to know that they are going toward that mixed rhythm”³²² Odgers shares that some interpreters, not familiar with the rhythm, have suggested that she “write it all in 6/8 and just put in accents.”³²³ But to Odgers, because of the traditional use of this rhythm and because she specifically envisioned that the more technical middle variations would have this rhythmic feel, it is important that the mixed rhythm be present since the beginning, even if at the beginning the oboist is the only one that knows it’s there.³²⁴

6) How was/is your experience as a Mexican composer?

For Odgers, the importance and influence of music other than Western classical tradition—especially that of Mexican traditional music—within her classical music studies was something she stubbornly stuck to, despite some opposition during those same studies.³²⁵ She recounts an incident in which a European composer gave a class at *La Escuela Nacional de Música*.³²⁶ A Cuban composer presented a piece, a choral work that was a *rumba*, which Odgers loved.³²⁷ After the Cuban composer presented it was then a European composer’s turn and the first thing he said was “Oh, you remember what the Cuban teacher said? Well forget it all, that’s not music.”³²⁸ Odgers states that that moment really marked her and made her question what type of music was important to her.³²⁹ She questioned “what type of music moves you? With what music do you identify? More with this music that has Latin roots and also uses elements of

³²² Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 190.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid, 194.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Ibid.

Western music but that has its roots here? Or this music that's a bit more abstract, that they tell you *has* to be a certain way, that if you don't compose this way then your music is not valid."³³⁰ From then Odgers knew what type of music she identified more with and as such, her "roots are very important to me."³³¹ Part of this was an interest in the pre-colonial music of indigenous Mexico.³³² Odgers studied this music and although much of it is lost, there "are certain codices or recollections, from the colonizers themselves, that talked about this music."³³³ Odgers states that it's important for her to use aspects of this music that still exist, for example, precisely the 3/4+6/8 rhythm present in **Semelíami**.³³⁴ Another aspect is the fact that many of the pieces she's written are for woodwinds or percussion, since she mentioned that pre-colonial indigenous music did not use strings.³³⁵ She also adds that her music is more rhythmically driven rather than atmospheric or harmony driven.³³⁶

Moving to Canada for her doctoral studies at the University of Montreal and eventually settling down in Canada were other moments in which Odgers re-explored identity. During her studies she questioned herself,

about who you are...where you are from, and what are the good and not so good things from the place you come from. And also, what are the similarities and what are the differences of the place you come to. Of course, there are things that I value and still value from Mexico and from Mexican music that are still present in my music...On the other hand, arriving at a new place, there are some things that you begin to adopt.³³⁷

³³⁰ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 194.

³³¹ Ibid, 194.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid, 195.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

Much like she'd mentioned of her music, she herself "end[ed] up being a bit of that mix."³³⁸ She shares that as a Mexican composer coming to live in Canada there was certainly a feeling of being known as the *Mexican* composer.³³⁹ However, this was never looked down upon and she slowly came to be adopted as "the Quebec composer, or the Canadian composer, or Mexican-Canadian."³⁴⁰ In fact, she feels like this mix of identities is actually seen as a good thing, one "that makes you interesting, that makes you different from the rest but in a good sense."³⁴¹ Her experience in Canada has therefore been one of much open-mindedness and acceptance.³⁴² During her doctoral studies specifically she states that there was "a big, big, big open mindedness, even among the composition professors there is a big variety when it comes to methods of composing, how you approach music, etcetera."³⁴³

7) Contact information such as websites, emails, etc.

Alejandra Odgers can be reached via email at aleodgers@yahoo.com. Her works can be found at the [Canadian Music Centre](#). More information about her can be found at her [website](#) (audio warning), which can be translated into English, Spanish, and French.

³³⁸ Alejandra Odgers, Zoom interview by author, November 11, 2022, English translation, 195.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid, 195.

³⁴¹ Ibid, 195.

³⁴² Ibid, 193, 195.

³⁴³ Ibid, 193.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

As I completed my dissertation I found that not only were the composers eager to share about themselves and their work but that they were also very appreciative of the goal of this project. They agreed that disseminating Mexican music to a larger audience and also spotlighting its composers is important, and this gave me further proof that this topic is one that should be pursued both now and in the future. Now, I find myself going back to the original research questions posed at the beginning of the document. As this project draws to its conclusion, I have found that I am thankfully able to answer them all.

1. How many pieces for the oboe by Mexican composers exist?

Pieces for the oboe by Mexican composers definitely exist, as evidenced by this entire project and the different resources that informed it. Odgers' thesis alone listed over 140 works and I estimate that Thompson's catalog lists well over 450. As I recall beginning to study *Marsias* and my initial thoughts as to why it was only in my master's that I first ran into a piece by a Mexican composer, I can remember thinking that a possible scarcity of such works could have been one of the reasons. It is now with great happiness that I can say there is clearly no shortage of works for the oboe by Mexican composers.

These resources, as well as this dissertation, directly address an obstacle barring oboe music by Mexican composers from being played. While there is much of this music, it was oftentimes hard to find. At the beginning of this project, I did not know of a way to search for these pieces other than through a blind internet search. This contributed to the seeming scarcity. Now, with resources found that are dedicated to specifically this type of music, finding it suddenly becomes much easier. This makes it more accessible to anybody looking for music outside of the traditional oboe canon.

2. Is there a resource to search for these compositions other than a blind internet search?

Carmen Thierry's *Oboemia: Música Mexicana para Oboe Solo* and Jonathan Thompson's *Tollan: Mexican Works for the Oboe*, two albums dedicated to Mexican oboe works, were the only two resources found dedicated to specifically Mexican oboe works when this project was started. As such many composers were found via those two albums or via a blind internet search. Once I had the names of these Mexican composers I would then scour the internet to see if they had a dedicated website or a catalog of works that would let me know if they'd written for the oboe. This was a long and somewhat convoluted process.

Further into the project, three other resources dedicated to Mexican oboe works were discovered. Alejandra Odgers' *La Música de Cámara Para Oboe Escrita En La Segunda Mitad Del Siglo XX*, and Mireya Pérez Fernández's *Música Mexicana Inédita Para Oboe. Grabación Digital, Comentarios Analíticos Y Partituras* are two theses dedicated to oboe works by Mexican composers. Additionally, towards the very end of the project, Jonathan Thompson's 2022 *Catalog of Mexican Oboe Works*, a lengthy catalog dedicated to specifically oboe solo and chamber works written by Mexican composers, was also found.

3. How does one obtain these pieces?

When it came to acquiring the music for this project, it was a mix of purchasing it from scattered publishing sites and contacting the composers directly. There were five works of the total ten, Odger's, Ortiz's, Chávez's, and Márquez's, that were found via music publishing sites. As for the rest of the music, it could only be purchased by contacting the composer. For non-Spanish speaking oboists, navigating some composers' websites or even contacting these composers can be made difficult because of the language barrier. As for the pricing—while I can

only comment on the works purchased for this project specifically—I can say that it was very reasonable, with the two most expensive pieces only being \$30 USD.

At the moment, I believe that obtaining these works poses yet another obstacle in these pieces becoming a part of common oboe repertoire. While *many* pieces for the oboe by Mexican composers exist, it is often still difficult to obtain them. This can be seen in the difficulties I faced obtaining some of the project’s music. I addressed this problem in this project by detailing and linking where I purchased each piece of music, whether it was by publishing site or by contacting a composer, so that it was clear to potential performers.

4. What oboe techniques are needed to perform these pieces?

The oboe techniques required to play the pieces included in the project range in difficulty from simple to complex techniques. Although there were only four works of the ten that required extended techniques—**Boca abajo**, **Llama de Vela**, **La Voz del Viento**, and **Puzzle-Tocas**—almost the entire spectrum of the oboe’s extended techniques were called for between them. These included, multiphonics, flutter tonguing, pitch bending, quarter tones and microtones, glissandi, pitch bending, double tonguing, and tremolos. Beyond extended techniques, the mix of pieces also called for lyrical melodic playing, fast technical playing, high register and low register playing, embouchure endurance, dynamic control in extreme registers, pieces that required personal musical decisions such as the pushing and pulling of time, and pieces that required strict adherence to meter and tempo. As such, I found that the works in this project form a very varied pool of oboe works, and due to this variety, can function as great pedagogical tools for the growing oboist. Among them, teachers and oboists can find pieces with which to engage and work on specific oboe skills. And while at the moment, the difficulty level of the pieces included in the project are mostly between college level players and advanced or professional

players, I am certain that as I discover more pieces, works more appropriate for beginners or intermediate level players will also be found. In this way, I'm certain there will be a Mexican oboe piece for just about any criteria needed by any oboist.

Statement of Further Research

While this document was limited to only ten pieces and eight composers, it is a project I wish to continue far past the end of my doctoral degree. My first goal is to create a shareable document much like Thompson's catalog, in which I continue to add more composers and more pieces as I find them. My ultimate goal past this dissertation is to create a dedicated website database where anyone can go to specifically search for oboe pieces by Mexican composers. To this end there were some aspects of this project that would benefit from further research. The main one is the way oboe works were found. As mentioned, works were primarily found via two albums and blind internet searches. As experienced within my composer interviews, word of mouth seems to be a great way to obtain knowledge of other works as well. Many of the composers I interviewed had suggestions of other composers I could contact. The theses that were found centering on Mexican oboe works are a wonderful resource to fill in oboe works composed during the second half of the twentieth century, as will both volumes of the *Diccionario de compositores mexicanos de música de concierto, Siglo XX*, compiled by Eduardo Soto Millán. Thompson's catalog will be an excellent resource for both works of the twentieth century and more recent works.

The second aspect that could be improved is finding contact information for these composers. While this information was mainly found via personal websites or university websites there were a few composers personal contact information was not shared anywhere. To get in touch with them I had to ask organizations they were affiliated with or ask other

composers within the project. Word of mouth once again seems one of the best ways to obtain this information.

As for the website I have in mind, beyond just a catalog of works and much like this dissertation, I also want to include difficulty ratings, composer interviews, composer contact information, and very importantly a way to purchase each piece. My goal is not just to share the pieces, but also share the world they are a part of, which includes composers and their life experiences. This will be a resource that will constantly be updating so that it is always as current to new pieces and composers as it can be. It may at first take the shape of a shareable file, like a google doc, that can be shared directly to oboists and professors but eventually, a website where works can be searched for by author, piece, instrumentation, etc., will be created. As is the overall goal of this project, I want this to be a readily available resource for oboists and professors alike to be able to search for works outside the traditional oboe canon. In this way oboe repertoire can continue becoming more and more diverse into the future.

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APPENDIX A: ORIGINAL PROPOSED WORKS LIST

Solo Oboe:

Boca abajo (2019) - Francisco Cortés-Álvarez (b.1983)

Canción del Arlequín - Antonio Navarro (b.1958)

Far Over the Misty Mountain (2017) - Laura Schwendinger (b.1962)

Horizon II - Rosa Guraieb

La Voz del Viento - Jorge Calleja

Semelíami (1996) - Alejandra Odgers (b.1967)

Tensión Tranquila I for oboe and Electronics (2020) - Javier Torres Maldonado (b.1968)

Upingos (1957) - Carlos Chávez (1899-1978)

Chamber Group:

Danza de Mediodía - Arturo Márquez (b.1950) Wind Quintet

Maderaire (2016) - Leticia Armijo (b.1961) Quartet for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, and Bassoon

Luna (2020) - Laura Schwendinger (b.1962) Oboe and English Horn

Puzzle-Tocas (2000) - Gabriela Ortiz (b.1964) Wind Quintet

Ricercare de Camara III (1994) - Juan Trigos (b. 1965) Wind Quintet

Trio (for oboe, bassoon and piano) - Rosa Guraieb (1931-2014)

Serpientes y Escaleras (2012) - María Granillo (b.1962) Flute, Oboe, Cello and Piano

Woodwind Trio Op. 43 (2000) - Eugenio Toussaint (1954-2011)

APPENDIX B: FULL SPANISH INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

Leticia Armijo

Miércoles, 28 de Diciembre de 2022, 12:00 PM, Hora Estándar Central. Tanto la compositora como yo estábamos en México pero en diferentes áreas.

A: Entonces Lupita Ramos.

L: Si, Guadalupe pero siempre voy por Lupita.

A: Si, si mejor. Entonces, aquí lo voy a anotar, Lupita Ramos.

L: Y soy oboísta, así que veo esta obra por parte también de oboísta.

A: Ah! Más bien lo ves como una obra para oboe, no?

L: Mhmm, si.

Bueno pues, nomas tambien para explicarle un poco lo que va ser la entrevista, nomas es algo medio—sencilla la entrevista le voy a preguntar sobre información biográfica, al igual de información de la pieza—perdón es que en diferentes partes tiene diferente nombre como se llama?

A: Eh, la obra? Bueno es que hace mucho en lo que no la veo déjame nada más ver aquí—

L: En una parte se me hace que dice es *Madeiraira* y en otra *Maderaire* así que no se cual es bien.

A: Ah-ha, déjame ver...

L: Mhmm.

A: Ahorita te digo cual es el nombre real de la obra—y bueno primero cuéntame entonces por qué tu interés en esta obra?

L: Bueno...ya cuando—ahorita estoy estudiando para mi doctorado, pero la idea para este proyecto empezó cuando yo estaba en mi maestría, que era la primera vez—cuando estaba en mi maestría—que toque una pieza para oboe de un compositor Mexicano. Y de allí me puse a pensar bueno ya estoy en la escuela por unos seis años y esta es la primera vez en mi vida que he tocado una obra de oboe de un compositor Mexicano, hasta entonces ni sabía que habían. Y entonces—

A: Claro, me permites un minuto tengo una llamada urgente permítame—

L: Está bien.

A: —un minuto.

[toma llamada]

A: Bueno es que entre mis actividades también soy gestora cultural, entonces tengo siempre llamadas urgentes de...pues de trámites y cosas que hay que hacer para—

L: Mhmm.

A: Con mi misión. Eh, bueno entonces mira te voy a dar el nombre exacto porque como te decía pues este grupo de *Maderei* es, eh—en realidad yo le puse así porque...

L: Mhmm.

A: Bueno déjame buscarlo, *Made...*

L: Si.

A: Es un grupo—*Madereira* se llama—

L: Bueno.

A: Es un grupo que aquí te lo voy a poner—no, no es este, discúlpame.

L: Mhmm.

A: Es que...haber, haber, Alejandro...

Bueno, entonces, él hizo un grupo, y entonces yo le dediqué a él...esta obra al grupo. Porque era un grupo que estaba empezando etcétera, entonces por eso...le puse así. Pero el nombre es *Maderaire...*

L: Mhmm.

A: *Maderaire*, le voy a poner—te lo voy a mandar porque luego como tenemos distintas pronunciaciones del español.

L: [ríe] Si.

A: No me vas a entender. Entonces ahí te lo...ahí está.

[manda nombre en chat]

L: [ríe] Gracias. Bueno [suena el nombre] *Ma-de-raire*. Bueno, gracias.

A: Si.

L: Bueno en qué estábamos, ah sí! Le estaba explicando un poco...y bueno pues, en la maestría es cuando primero toque una obra por compositor Mexicano. Y eso me quedo. Como que me quede pensando en eso. En que—en música clásica Mexicana y música para el oboe específicamente de compositores Mexicanos o Mexicanas. Y ya cuando entré a mi doctorado ya me dijeron que tenía que hacer un proyecto para mi disertación y pensé que por qué no esto? Recolectar obras para oboe, sean obras solo, o de cámara, para oboe de compositores y compositoras Mexicanas. Y eso es lo que ahorita, lo que estoy haciendo, y por eso me encontré esta pieza.

A: Si, que bueno que la encontraste.

L: Mhmm. Y bueno pues, ahora ya para comenzar bien la entrevista, si se pudiera por favor introducir. Su nombre y cualquier otro detalle que quiera compartir de lo que esta haciendo ahorita, sea en música o no en música, lo que usted quiera compartir.

A: Bueno, mira, yo soy Leticia Armijo, soy compositora Mexicana...feminista. También soy directora de un festival de música y mujeres que se realiza desde 1997 a la fecha. Festival de mujeres en el arte, pues, que al principio empezó con música, pero tenemos el área de literatura, de danza, de artes visuales, de cinematografía, tenemos nuestra agencia de noticias. Es un colectivo grande que también tiene su representación en Estados Unidos, en España, y en Cuba. Tuvimos en Chile, pero no cuajo. Y entonces con este colectivo pues lo que hago es dar a conocer la obra de las compositoras porque yo, aunque me titule en la facultad de música de la UNAM como compositora, también tengo una rama de investigación. También soy musicóloga. Me gradué años más tarde, me hice el doctorado en historias y ciencias de la música—que es musicología—para investigar la obra musical de las mujeres. Soy especialista en la obra de las mujeres—de las compositoras del siglo veinte, del siglo veintiuno. Y también en el paisaje sonoro y arquitectónico y en identidad, son como mis temas de investigación.

Entonces mis obras pues no son, así nada más una obra—normalmente los compositores tienen una temática, a lo mejor tienen un plan armónico—piensan mucho en esas cosas pero—pero yo lo pienso desde la musicología, que es como que cruzar también el momento histórica que estamos viviendo—

L: Mhmm.

A:—el panorama histórico de la música Mexicana. Y también tengo una faceta—que mi vida tiene varias facetas. También he hecho música para tratar enfermedades frecuentes, porque mi papá era médico. Entonces aprendí mucho de medicina y uno de sus amigos, el doctor Salvador Capistran Alvarado, cuando yo estaba haciendo el doctorado me dijo, “Oye, porque no hacemos un proyecto de investigación para crear música, pues para curar las enfermedades frecuentes?”

L: Mhmm.

A: El doctor Salvador Capistran es un doctor que ya no vive pero que hizo todo los—es un investigador que hizo todo lo que—las reglas de operación del sector salud en México...

L: Oh, wow!

A:...en los setentas, ochentas.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y también él es acupunturista y estudió medicina China en Europa—digo en China. Entonces tiene también una visión un poco mágica y esotérica del poder de la voz, de los mantras. Entonces, digamos, y en la carrera de musicología que yo estudié también había una especialidad de musicología sistemática...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...para ver cuales son los efectos de la música en el cuerpo, no? Entonces pues yo estaba clavadísimas en eso y él también entonces hicimos una colección discográfica que se llama *El Arte de La Sanación*. Y con esa—

L: Wow.

A: Si, entonces hemos hecho varias cosas para, para trabajar esto. Entonces mis obras también tienen algunos rasgos dependiendo de lo que voy a trabajar.

L: Mhmm.

A: O algunos son la reivindicación, no? Por ejemplo, la estructura muchas veces utiliza los estudios de género porque soy especialista en estudios musicales de género...

L: Mhmm.

A:..y de las mujeres. Entonces muchas veces ahora indico causas, pero también la estructura, y las partes más íntimas de la música están...impregnadas de esto, no? En cuanto a lo que tienen que ver con...con, con digamos con... el lenguaje, también no es cualquier cosa. Como soy especialista también en el tema de identidad pues yo misma desmenuzó mis obras. Acabo de escribir un libro para demostrar científicamente a través del análisis musical cuales son los elementos estéticos de la música—cual es la identidad de mi propia música. Entonces pues con eso también tengo varios libros, varias investigaciones. Pertenezco al Sistema Nacional de Investigadores hasta el día de hoy. Y doy clases en la facultad de ingeniería de la Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y dentro de esta universidad, además de realizar estos congresos de mujeres en la música, pues también hicimos un congreso internacional—he pertenecido a varios grupos de investigación interdisciplinarios. Como por ejemplo *Las Mujeres y el Quijote* y hice un concierto para guitarra sobre el tema de *Las Mujeres y el Quijote*. Otro sobre identidad—y hice también una—un grupo de—que está relacionado—más bien *participe* y lo dirige la doctora Begoña Lolo. Es una musicóloga *muy, muy* destacada en España, de música—en el campo de la musicología. Y participé en un grupo que ella creó para hablar sobre la música en las independencias de toda América.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y bueno también soy directora del ensamble coral, *Yolotli*, el grupo de coro de mujeres de los pueblos indígenas de México. Entonces, pues, hago música para rescatar las lenguas indígenas en vías de extinción. Tengo un método de educación musical en lenguas indígenas.

L: Ay, que bonito.

A: Son 64 lenguas indígenas...

L: Ay-ya-yay.

A: ...nosotras cantamos en diez lenguas indígenas, atendiendo pues las que se están perdiendo. Y tenemos un espectáculo muy muy taquillero. Hace unos meses estuvimos en el Auditorio Nacional de Madrid, y precisamente en este auditorio nacional de Madrid nos—hicimos una gira en Madrid y el coro tuvo muchísimo éxito—lleno total. Y eso es, pues realmente muy, muy exitoso entonces—

Mis obras, también tengo muchas obras sinfónicas que han sido tocadas por orquestas sinfónicas de México, de Cuba, en Chile también han sido tocadas, en España, mi obra sinfónica. Y pues tengo también allí una ópera sobre textos de Federico García Lorca que espero que se estrene algún día. Entonces también tengo el proyecto de viajar a Nueva York en estos—pues ya que pase el frío porque está haciendo muchísimo frío.

L: Si, y luego en Nueva York más.

A: No, entonces voy a esperar a que el clima mejore para poder ir yo a—precisamente a presentar esta ópera sobre textos de Federico García Lorca.

L: Mhmm.

A: No se si con esto puedo resumir, son muchas las facetas de la historia de mi vida porque también soy una militante del movimiento feminista desde los años—soy *pionera* del movimiento feminista. Y también del movimiento lésbico en México, de las primeras revueltas, y aunque no pertenezco yo a estos movimientos si soy una de las que impulsó en que en México existan derechos—

L: Ay, qué bueno.

A: Y también la primera marcha en contra de la violación pues, y las primeras marchas para defender el derecho al aborto, pues en estas marchas también participe. Y al partido comunista, o sea también tengo una, pues una veta de luchadora social muy muy extensa.

L: Mhmm. Bueno pues y si tengo más preguntas sobre eh...feminismo y también el tema de la mujer en la música pero ahorita vamos a llegar a eso—por ahorita nomas le quería también preguntar cómo empezó—decidió estudiar música? Y de música se ve que se fue a muchas otras áreas en música pero también en eso—así que cómo fue eso?

A: Mira, yo soy hija de un médico cirujano que era director del Centro Médico La Raza y trabajaba también en el hospital pediátrica privado—digo en el—en un hospital pediátrico en El Hospital de Peralvillo. Un hospital en donde llegaban niños, pues, con graves lesiones, apuñalados, o sea víctimas de mucha violencia...

L: Si.

A: Que en México hay muchísima violencia. Y desde entonces existe la violencia ahorita es más visible pero siempre ha existido la violencia y la injusticia. Y la cuestión es que mi padre también era comunista—él tocaba el acordeón, tocaba guitarra, y mis primeras lecciones me las dio el. Pero mi madre era hija de un campesino que era—era uno de los violinistas del Mariachis

Vargas de Tecalitlán. Porque el mariachi es un grupo—son grupos que originalmente están ligados a lo que es la siembra, a la cosecha.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Eran trabajadores campesinos que tocaban—tocaban *sones* y él tocaba el violín, tocaba la vihuela, tocaba el contrabajo, cantaba. Y entonces dirás que esta mezcla, mis abuelas también por parte de mi padre cantaban a varias voces, siempre muy afinadas. Entonces quiere decir que yo soy pues una, por lo menos de una, dos, tres, de tres o cuatro generaciones de músicos.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero la música tradicional yo la traía en las venas yo tocaba desde desde los cuatro años yo cantaba, no hablaba, yo cantaba! [ríe]

Entonces cantaba canciones y mi papá, pues, vio que tenía talento y él siempre me componía acordeoncito, desde chiquita...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...me tuvieron que poner a mi el maestro de guitarra! Originalmente se lo pusieron a mi hermano, pero pues, mi hermano por fortuna no tenía mucho interés en la música. Él es arqueólogo.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y pues yo le seguí, tocando música de oído, tocaba cualquier instrumento que me pusieran enfrente. Tocaba percusiones, también pues cuando ya entre a la prepa pues aprendí todos—me tocaba a mi estar en un—primero estude en las escuelas públicas pero en los años 73 mas o menos que fueron los golpes de estado en latino América yo me cambie a un colegio de refugiados Españoles que es el Instituto Luis Vives. Y pues allí llegaron Chilenos, Argentinos, pero traían también sus músicas.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces escuche mucha música folclórica y allí también—ah por la música folclórica hizo que hubiera una revitalización también de la música tradicional Mexicana, y de las lenguas indígenas. Entonces digamos que, toda la parte del—o sea yo estudié—mientras que tú vas a la escuela y te enseñan el folclor desde el pizarrón pues yo más bien estaba en la vida, tocando—

L: Lo estaba viviendo. Si.

A: Viviendo y componiendo y yo—la verdad es que era muy virtuosa, muchos de mis amigos me decían, oye, pues es que—

Por ejemplo, una de las cosas que hice en la—es que sacaba de oído los conciertos completos de guitarra.

L: Ay-ya-yay.

A: [ríe] Sacaba por ejemplo un estudio de guitarra, y como el tocadiscos estaba medio tono mas arriba, lo sacaba medio tono mas arriba, [ríe] y resulta que era medio tono más abajo, no!

L: Aha!

A: Entonces imagínate qué grado de complejidad? Entonces, pues, yo tenía el oído absoluto, aunque no tenía todavía la asociación de las notas, porque si me pusieron el maestro de guitarra...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...pero había muchas cosas que yo no comprendía, no? Que por qué la guitarra tenía seis cuerdas y el pentagrama cinco? Y había una pésima educación musical, entonces por eso entré al conservatorio.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pasaron muchos años para que yo me diera cuenta de que realmente tenía una muy mala educación musical. Y por eso es que me interesé en la pedagogía musical y en crear un método de educación musical en lenguas indígenas. Entonces escribí este método, pero también me inspire en mis propias investigaciones sobre la compositora Mexicana Graciela Agudelo ahorita estoy por publicar un libro sobre ella. Ya falleció. Pero hice mi tesis sobre ella porque cuando llegué a España y me di cuenta la discriminación que había hacia los Mexicanos—yo al principio iba a trabajar la figura de María Teresa Prieto, una exiliada Española que vivió en México. Pero cuando vi este vacío de información en torno a los propios Mexicanos dije, no.

L: Mhmm.

A: Me agarre a Graciela Agudelo, que todavía vivía, ella revisó todo este trabajo—ya falleció...hace poquito, en el 2018 falleció, y bueno, estamos por sacar ese trabajo. Bueno no se si conteste tu pregunta—

L: No, si, si.

A: Pero eh—pero si, después ya llegué a la carrera y me exigieron el piano y allí me costo mucho trabajo el piano, porque pues todo lo que era cuerda y percusión era siempre hacia—pero ya cuando me cambiaron la perspectiva—y también la vida me cambió la perspectiva porque originalmente mi papá ya que entramos a la carrera—yo a mi carrera de música y mi hermano a arqueología, fallece mi papá—

L: Mmm.

A:—y entonces el piano que él había dado el enganche lo tuvimos que devolver. Entonces eso atoro muchísimo mi carrera porque tuve que estudiar [ríe] en los pianos de la escuela. Levantarme a las cinco de la mañana para estudiar de siete a ocho y media...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...nueve, yirme a trabajar—o sea entonces tuve que trabajar—o sea una vida que al principio estaba como miel sobre hojuelas con el apoyo de la familia—de pronto nos quedamos huérfanos

porque también mi mamá falleció a los dos años después de cáncer. Y entonces allí tienes a los pobre hermanos sacando adelante la vida y sin piano, trabajando, entonces digamos que en ese momento, digamos que del plato a la boca se cae la sopa. Y pues me tuve que poner a trabajar como desgraciada [ríe] para poder sacar adelante mi carrera.

L: Si.

A: Pero bueno creo que estas cosas te hacen...ser más fuerte, no? Digamos que es una de las grandezas también de lo que es...el regalo que te da la pobreza. [ríe] No?

L: Si.

A: Si es lo que te digo, no? Si porque bueno yo tenía para comer, pero pues tenía una situación muy limitada, no?

L: Mhmm.

A: Muy limitada. Y tenía mi tiempo de estudio muy limitado. También estudiaba violín, yo también soy violinista. Y yo podría haber sido violinista de la orquesta pero yo quería ser compositora y el poco tiempo que tenía para estudiar pues se lo dedique a la composición porque también podría haber sido violinista, tenía mucho talento para hacerlo. Y también toco muy bien la guitarra, en fin, tenía—y canto! [ríe] Entonces—

L: Lo hace todo! Si.

A:—he estudiado todas las áreas.

L: Si. Bueno y unas de las áreas también que estaba leyendo que usted de verdad se interesa mucho es el tema de *la mujer Mexicana en la música*, y el feminismo, y el estudio del género. Como pasó eso? Fue mientras estudiaba, o siempre tenía un interés en eso, o...?

A: Bueno yo desde chiquita me di cuenta de que aunque mi papá me apoyaba y todo pues íbamos a casa de mis abuelos y mi abuelo le daba—los daban 50 pesos, 10 para las niñas y 20 para Ricardo.

L: Mmm.

A: Nosotras teníamos que hacer el quehacer y mi hermano con mi abuelo rascándose la cabeza sentado. Cuando pusieron un maestro de guitarra era para Ricardo, entonces yo la verdad decía es que no, no puede ser! O sea solamente tiene dos huevos y un pito. No puede ser que por eso él tenga una situación superior a nosotras. Entonces tuve muchas fricciones con mi hermano.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pobrecito pero él también—y además es que mi hermano era—lloraba de todo—yo lo tenía que defender del—

L: [ríe]

A: [ríe]—cuando le pegaban en la calle. Yo lo defendía! Porque además yo estudié artes marciales.

L: Ay-ya-yay.

A: Entonces, incluso en la calle, una vez a mi papá, íbamos en el coche y mi papá le mentó la madre a un señor y se bajó—mi papá era muy chiquito, era más chiquito que yo. Y entonces los bajamos del coche y cuando vio el señor mi papá y Ricardo se metieron corriendo al super. [ríe]

L: [ríe]

A: Y yo allá con el señor, “Oiga usted hijo de la chingada!” Yo los defendía a ellos, entonces siempre yo tuve una—yo tenía como la necesidad de defender a los demás.

L: Mhmm.

A: Yo me sabía más fuerte. Y desde mi mamá, no? Si mi papá la maltrataba yo defendía a mi mamá. Entonces tenía yo una, un perfil de defensora de los derechos humanos. De hecho, de chiquita creé un club que era el Club de Niñas Lomerosa porque pues era todo El Club de Toby, no? Entonces yo hice el club de niñas, [ríe] verdad? Dábamos el grito de la independencia...

L: Aww.

A: Era muy chistoso la verdad. Y también ya en la primaria, pues mi mamá y mi papá nos contaban de los niños que dejaban abandonados en el hospital, y entonces yo organizaba todas las niñas, y la maestra, y a toda la escuela...

L: Mhmm.

A:...para llevar ropa. Ropa y juguetes y pasteles a los niños abandonados.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces, pues, se han hecho estudios y se ha visto que este perfil de luchador social es algo que traes desde chiquito, no?

L: Mhmm.

A: De hecho, me iban a dar una beca que se llama—de Ashoka, una asociación internacional, que no beca a las asociaciones si no al leader, porque el leader es el que hace—

L: Mhmm.

A: Lo han comprobado, es el que hace los movimientos. No es—las asociaciones muchas veces funcionan—pero es el líder el que hace todo el trabajo negro. Entonces pues en ese sentido, si tengo este perfil. Y bueno cuando yo empecé a trabajar, precisamente porque me había quedado huérfana, yo trabajé en el centro de investigación Carlos Chávez, el CENIDIM, que es un centro de investigación muy importante en México de música, de Bellas Artes. Y yo veía que entraban

compositoras y que se tocaban obras, y veía que en los programas habían obras, pero cuando veía los libros de historia de la música no estaban las mujeres.

L: Mmm.

A: Entonces yo dije no, es que yo tengo que investigar esto. Porque no están las mujeres? Y pues entonces allí, desde que empecé mi carrera, quería yo demostrar cuales eran las razones por las cuales las mujeres no estaban en las fuentes documentales referenciadas.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Entonces yo hice la primera tesis, y digamos que soy la pionera, tanto de los movimientos de mujeres en la música a nivel en México, porque, aunque hay compositoras, no había un colectivo. Y esta idea del colectivo de mujeres en la música, es una idea que a mi me viene de mi militancia feminista, digo desde que yo era militante del partido comunista, de defender lo colectivo por encima de lo personal.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y cuando estuve en el feminismo también, de hablar de lo colectivo, de lo que es lo, digamos, lo personal, que también es político...

L: Mhmm.

A: Y de defender lo colectivo. Digo bueno yo voy a—yo quiero que mis obras se toquen, pero no voy sola, soy yo y el colectivo.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces intérpretes, investigadoras, se vieron beneficiadas de esta situación. Gracias a mi labor como directora, porque decimos cual colectivo? Pues no, fue Leticia Armijo, que estaba lidereando el colectivo.

L: Mhmm.

A: Por lo cual se—por ejemplo, la primera directora de orquesta que en México fue directora de orquesta, yo la traje! Se publicaron las obras porque yo insistí.

L: Mhmm.

A: Se pusieron en las orquestas porque yo fui con el montón de obras. No fueron todas fui yo! [ríe] Aunque iba de forma colectiva...

L: Si.

A: Fui yo. Fui la pionera en el movimiento de las mujeres en la música. Y además también fui yo la que recibió todos los golpes de los grupos de poder...

L: Si.

A: ...de las escuelas, hasta el momento todavía tengo un juicio porque me corrieron de la Escuela Nacional de Música. Los machos finalmente triunfaron.

L: Mmm.

A: Y después de 21 años de trabajo, y hasta la fecha eso no se ha resuelto. Entonces, digo, cuando me hacen ese tipo de cosas yo soy muy feliz porque, me va mejor! Quien sabe cómo le hago, pero siempre hay algo...

L: Si.

A:..digo, “Ay! Pues quiere decir que va a pasar algo buenísimo!” Y si me contrató La Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, Conacyt me dio una beca para irme a estudiar al extranjero. O sea pude—siempre ay como esta parte bella...

L: Mhmm.

A: Y reconoce el talento, y reconoce también al trabajo que he hecho yo como profesora de música, como gestora cultural, etcétera, con todas estas facetas que les—es que en realidad les causa mucha envidia! [ríe] Ver que tengo premio—soy premio nacional de música electroacústica y de lo americana dos veces lo recibí. Soy premio nacional de música sinfónica, soy—pertenezco al Sistema Nacional de Investigadores, entonces pues eso a ellos, no, les cuela muchísimo.

L: Mhmm.

A: En una escuela en donde tengo el grado académico más alto de toda la escuela, no?

L: Si.

A: Y entonces, pues, de todas maneras, tengo que conseguir justicia, eh?

L: Pues, si.

A: Pero bueno, Lupita, no sé si hasta allí—eso fue mi acercamiento hacia las mujeres...

L: Mhmm.

A: Y después otra vez de la musicología, demostrar científicamente si la música de las mujeres tenía—había—existía una razón, o no, para que estuviera ausente de las fuentes.

L: Mmm, mhmm. Bueno. Y entonces la musicología vino como, en todo eso también, en lo que quería estudiar de la mujer y de la mujer en música?

A: Claro, porque tú dices bueno tu eres mujer, eres música, y eres militante, pero necesitas los fundamentos históricos, científicos—y sobre todo científicos...

L: Mhmm.

A: ..para demostrar que lo que estás diciendo es cierto, porque tu puedes decir lo que quieras...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...pero hay que demostrarlo.

L: Si, si, si.

A: Entonces, pues, a través de la historiografía, del análisis musical, y del testimonio de las propias compositoras, de las fuentes documentales. O sea, utilizas todas las herramientas de la musicología y bueno por eso es que mí—tanto mi tesis de licenciatura fue mención honorífica, igual que mi examen, tuve que presentar también examen con obras de, desde obras de solos, dúos, cuartetos, quintetos, música sinfónica, coros, y percusiones, y también una tesis que fue mención honorífica. Y desde luego cuando fue el doctorado me dio la mención *cum laude* por mi trabajo de Graciela Agudelo, fue muy brillante.

L: Mhmm. Bueno, muchas gracias por eso. Y ahora moviéndonos poquito a su música en general. Cómo describiría su propio estilo musical? O cree que tiene uno...o que?

A: Bueno mira, primero que nada, si nosotros nos ubicamos en lo que es la música de la segunda mitad del siglo veinte y el nuevo milenio, podemos encontrar que la mayoría de las fuentes documentales pues solamente atiende pues, hasta los años 80s, 90s, y finales del nuevo milenio y son muy pocas publicaciones las que analizan realmente cuales son las tendencias musicológicas, y sobre todo estéticas—

L: Mhmm.

A:—de los compositores y las compositoras de principios del siglo veinte. Entonces abordando este contexto, como yo te decía, ni siquiera están las fuentes documentales toda esta influencia de los años 80, de los movimientos sociales, del folclór, del—

L: Mhmm.

A:—de la militancia, de ser una compositora militante. Y de todas estas influencias que vienen también de los exilios, no? Entonces en este sentido, digo, si yo—yo hice un análisis de la música Mexicana del siglo veinte, al final del siglo veinte y del nuevo milenio. Y dentro de esa, también hice un análisis de las compositoras Mexicanas, y de sus músicas, y de sus estéticas.

L: Mhmm.

A: Para poder presentar a la compositora Graciela Agudelo y también para poderme presentar yo como una compositora. Entonces, en resumidas cuentas, esto ya lo hacen con más profundidad en mis libros...

L: Mhmm.

A: Tú puedes ubicar que a finales del nuevo milenio, al principios de este, hay pues dos grandes corrientes. Una que va hacia la sencillez, la mayoría de los compositores van hacia esta nueva corriente. Y otros, *muy* poquitos, hacia la nueva complejidad, representada por la música dodecafónica, por las, eh...como se llaman estas, técnicas extendidas, etcétera, etcétera.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero son muy poquitos los que se van a esta nueva complejidad, en tanto que la mayoría *aunque* manejan también las técnicas y las nuevas tecnologías como la informática musical, la música electroacústica, están como regresando a la tonalidad. No?

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Pero a la tonalidad no vista desde la dominante tónica, si no una tonalidad expandida que podríamos llamar, se llama *pan*-tonalidad, según el investigador y también musicólogo Rudolph Reti.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Entonces, dependiendo de la obra, en este contexto, pues yo también conozco las nuevas técnicas, tengo obras *muy*, muy contemporáneas...

L: Mhmm.

A: Electroacústicas—soy especialista en música electroacústica y, te digo, tengo un premio en música electroacústica. Con la voz trabajó muchísimo, es muy interesante también trabajo con la voz. Y en ese hay que profundizar después porque si merece profundizarse el trabajo que he hecho con la voz humana.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y las técnicas extendidas y la música electroacústica. Y entonces, si vemos esto, y el paisaje sonoro, también la importancia del paisaje sonoro, soy una de las primeras que después de la—lo que paso, digamos, a finales de la década de los 60s, los principios de los 70s—es que todos los compositores, muchos trajeron, muchos exiliados trajeron las técnicas contemporáneas dodecafónicas, bitonales, pan-tonales, el uso también de las nuevas tecnologías, pero, digamos que, los nuevos compositores de la música Mexicana adoptaron todas esas técnicas.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y llego un momento en que hubo como una especie de ruptura con el público porque ya llegó un momento donde ese era el lenguaje oficial, y quien no siguiera el lenguaje oficial, pues, era mal visto, no?

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Entonces cuando yo llegue a la Escuela Nacional de Música había que componer lo más espantoso que tu pudieras, lo más horrible, lo más atonal, lo más dodecafónico. No había ningún cuestionamiento simplemente tenías que seguir las técnicas.

L: Mmm, mhmm

A: Entonces yo me resistí. Dije yo quiero seguir el camino de la música, de la historia de la música, y además porque yo tenía una vena lírica muy—tengo una, digamos, si tengo una vena lírica que es talento, soy muy talentosa, y tenía yo una serie de melodías tradicionales. Entonces, pues, me ponían—en vez de ponerme diez me ponían ocho. Entonces en un concierto que hice unas variaciones para piano sobre un tema original, sobre un tema de *danzón*.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Y Arturo Márquez fue a ese concierto y me felicitó, y presente la versión para piano, el me felicitó y dos años después creó su propio *danzón*, verdad?

L: Ah-ha.

A: Que es famoso, y yo tengo mis variaciones para orquesta sobre un tema original, pero fui la *primera* que dijo hay que retomar, hay que reconstruir, hay que...reajustar, y bueno a mi lo que más coraje me dio es que después me decían, “Es que tú eres alumna de Arturo Márquez,” es que yo no soy alumna de Arturo Márquez! Que Arturo Márquez se haya inspirado en *mi* música, no es mi problema.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y eso hasta lo he dicho muchas veces en el, [ríe] en las notas de—en la prensa, salió publicado porque, aunque no hay un reconocimiento de que realmente esta nueva tendencia del *danzón* tan famoso y los *danzones* de Márquez—pues se inició conmigo—

L: Mhmm.

A: Yo fui primero que él. No?

L: Sí.

A: Y hay un premio Arturo Márquez, y hay un concurso Arturo Márquez en donde solo los hombres han ganado. Ha ganado una mujer en nosecuántos años. Yo voy a crear otro—bueno yo tengo mi propio festival de mis encuentros internacionales de Iberoamericanos.

L: Mhmm

A: Pero también voy a crear un nuevo festival, porque además es—se elige—fíjate el patriarcado se elige como el PME, [ríe] la figura es él. *Él es* Arturo Márquez, el concurso Arturo Márquez, se tocan sus obras y las del los—y las del que ganó.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces fíjate cómo es un culto a la—pues realmente a la personalidad, un invisibilización de las que contribuimos a que él hiciera ese *danzón*. [ríe] Verdad?

L: Mhmm.

A: Y pues también una invisibilización de las mujeres. Entonces a diferencia de lo que es el colectivo que crea un foro en donde participamos todas, se tocan las obras de todas, digamos que hay una diferencia muy grande. Entonces dentro del estilo musical pues mi música tiene esta vena lírica, pero también como viaje a Japón, y viví en Japón, y viví en España, tengo una influencia de muchos países...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...y de esta vida militante. Entonces ya analizando mi música, también pues fui...educada por refugiados españoles. Entonces tengo una vena española y una vena—soy—yo me siento como exiliada.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y...si tu analizas mi música, pues te das cuenta de que dentro de mi música y de los análisis de mis obras, hay muchos elementos de la música tradicional Mexicana, de la música que trajeron los exiliados. Pero hay una reelaboración del discurso, de las lenguas indígenas, una reivindicación de las lenguas indígenas, de la música electroacústica, de las nuevas tecnologías.

Entonces en realidad pasa lo que es muy importante que es finalmente lo que yo he demostrado en mis libros que es que la música, el nacionalismo Mexicano que en un principio define como lo nacional, lo propio, lo que hay en el país, se rompe. Y entonces, empezamos a existir compositores como yo, compositoras como yo, en donde también se rompen las fronteras y hay un exilio, por eso también, por los medios de comunicación, el internet nos permite acceder a muchas músicas.

L: Mhmm.

A: También mi práctica de yoga, todo lo que es la voz, el trabajo con la voz. Y entonces, yo realmente soy una compositora ecléctica que utiliza las músicas de otros países, mi identidad no es una identidad Mexicana.

L: Mmmm.

A: Es una identidad Latinoamericana.

L: Mhmm.

A: Hispano—hispana, digamos, me siento como una exiliada.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero mi música tiene todas estas—en mi música convergen todos estos elementos.

L: Mmm. Y si, hablé un poco de su trabajo para obras de voz, y si le quería preguntar sobre eso, porque en su catálogo estaba viendo que ha escrito mucho para voz y más para coro femenino. Y también me interesó un poco que dijo que tiene—hace obras para lenguas que están en peligro de extinción.

A: Así es, pues precisamente el método de educación musical está hecho para las mujeres porque aquí en México las comunidades indígenas como en Chiapas está prohibido que las mujeres canten.

L: Ah!

A: No pueden cantar. Si, hay países en donde no pueden cantar las mujeres, no pueden componer porque las matan. En algunos países del Islam, y eso no, no pueden—además las matan, las meten a la cárcel y las, las emparedan, entonces no pueden hacerlo. Entonces yo dije, yo tengo

que reivindicar las voces de las mujeres y estas obras son para coro femenino. Porque, en los encuentros Internacionales Iberoamericanos de Mujeres en el Arte...

L: Mhmm.

A:...son encuentros temáticos. Entonces uno de estos encuentros se llamó *El Arte de Las Mujeres como Agente de Cambio de Desarrollo Social*. Y el planteamiento era, bueno, yo no voy a esperar a que el presidente le dé de comer a los indígenas para demostrar que a través del arte y la cultura, las personas—unos pueden mejorar su calidad de vida. Entonces nos internamos en una de estas comunidades indígenas de tejedoras...

L: Mhmm.

A:...de Chiapas—es una historia mucho más larga—y entonces allí creamos un coro con ellas, pero trabajamos multidisciplinariamente con pintura, con artes visuales, yo trabaje con ellas la música. Y entonces ellas nos enseñaron sus lenguas y canciones en lenguas—en sus lenguas—y fue allí donde surgió el proyecto de rescatar estas lenguas indígenas.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces ya me fui a otras comunidades que, pues, que tienen menos hablantes, y entonces hice este repertorio, tanto para coro mixto, pero dándole prioridad al coro—a las mujeres.

L: Mhmm.

A: Para que las mujeres tuvieran un espacio porque—mira en un coro normalmente—por ejemplo, en Cuba en vez de—hay una calle, hay una ciudad donde no hay una calle, pero ellos prefieren, “no pues sabes que, vamos a...en vez de hacer una calle vamos a poner un coro”.

“Oye, pero por qué?”

“Pues es que el coro, se van a cui— [ríe] se van a cuidar entre ellos, y la calle pues nadie, no se van a cuidar”

L: [ríe]

A: Pues gastan en el coro. [ríe]

L: [rie]

A: Y se crean unos lazos de unión y de solidaridad muy buenos.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y entonces, y lo demostramos con Chiapas, no? Estas eran tejedoras que todo el tiempo están tejiendo entonces tienen—[imita tejer y eleva los hombros hasta el cuello]—no tienen cuello, eh. Pero cuando empezaron a ser danza y a cantar, [baja los hombros, se endereza y adopta un aura de confianza] se convirtieron en otras mujeres. Entonces la música que yo he—he retomado temas en lenguas originarias, pero después he arropado esas con arreglos que tienen diferente grado de dificultad para que sean el ejemplo la educación media, básica, y superior. Y ya lo estoy

logrando porque ya la Secretaría de Educación Pública de México ya, por lo menos me pidió dos de mis obras que se van a publicar en los nuevos libros de texto gratuito.

L: Que bueno.

A: Si, entonces eso es con los coros, y otra cosa con la voz es que siempre me a gustado cantar desde niña he oído las voces y siempre—mi mamá cantaba y inventaba otra voz y otra voz entonces yo para mi inventar—yo creo que de allí me vino lo de componer.

L: Mhmm.

A: De estar inventando otras voces distintas, pero también tuve un contacto con una técnica que se llama Roy Hart de—en donde se demuestra que la voz no está en la garganta, si no es producto de todo, de todo el cuerpo. Entonces hay una técnica en donde utilizas todo el cuerpo para la creación sonora.

L: Mmmm.

A: Que se llama el Roy Hart Teatro.

L: Mmm, se me hace que he oído de eso, tengo—una de mis compañeras de cuarto era cantante y se me hace que había hablado de eso. Pero no me acuerdo muy bien.

A: Es una técnica muy interesante y yo tuve la fortuna de estudiar con uno de los discípulos del que creó esa técnica.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces, pues tengo como que de fuente de primera mano...y he desarrollado, y le he metido cosas a esta técnica del Roy Hart.

L: Bueno—

A: De la que te hablaré después porque si no, es otra hora más. [ríe]

L: [ríe] Bueno, entonces usted, que haiga a lo mejor otro compositor o compositora o un profesor que tuvo, una profesora que tuvo que creer que haiga—la ha inspirado mucho a usted? O otro artista, o haiga influido mucho como piensa en su música, o como escribe su música?

A: Pues no, en realidad no, la técnica de Roy Hart me influyó muchísimo para cambiar mi concepto de música—la música electroacústica me influyó muchísimo.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero, realmente te voy a decir que yo soy mi propia profesora porque tuve muchos profesores misóginos.

L: Mmm.

A: Que me pusieron piedras en el camino, que me decían, “No, tu no puedes componer un cuarteto de cuerdas. No. Las mujeres no componen cuartetos de cuerdas.” El maestro de violín que me dijo que me dedicara a otra cosa porque, pues, prefería darle clases a un niño.

L: Mmm.

A: Y también, los grupos de poder que cuando fue mi examen me querían quitar la mención honorífica por el lenguaje que yo utilizaba, por introducir elementos de música tradicional dentro de mis obras. Entonces, digamos, que yo he ido contra corriente, no? Soy una compositora feminista y, digamos que, realmente a quien mas admiro es a mi misma por tener la resistencia [ríe] de poder, de poder seguir adelante...

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero no nada más a mi, sino a aquellas mujeres que han hecho lo mismo, como Fanny Mendelssohn, que a pesar de todo siguió componiendo, Clara Schumann, todos esos ejemplos de mujeres valientes y guerreras que se han sobrepuesto, no? Entonces, tal vez digamos, que las figuras que más me han inspirado son las feministas inglesas, no? Por ejemplo... mujeres que se han sobrepuesto como la Esperanza Pulido que fue la mujer que escribió aquí, el primer libro sobre mujeres en la música lo hizo Esperancita Pulido. Creó la revista *Heterofonía*. Una mujer con una personalidad muy parecida a la mía. [ríe] Ella, por ejemplo, hacía su revista y escribía artículos y les ponía otro nombre porque no había quien escribiera. [ríe] Entonces, dice—me cuenta una amiga que tenía una oficina donde decía,

[finge contestar un teléfono]

“Ah si, ahorita le contesta, ahorita le habla espera un segundo.”

[se quita el teléfono y lo vuelve a acercar y usando una voz más profunda contesta]

“Bueno.” [ríe] ...

L: [ríe]

A: Entonces muchas veces yo he tenido que hacer esos—muchos papeles, doble, triple, jornada de trabajo—para poder salir adelante.

L: Mhmm. Bueno, y entonces ahora moviéndonos a, *Maderaire* en específico. Dijo que la dedicó a un grupo, entonces fue una comisión o nomás usted la dedicó a ese grupo?

A: Realmente, no fue una comisión porque no me pagaron por hacerlo. Se la dedique a este grupo que lo fundó el Dr. Alejandro Moreno que es un clarinetista muy, muy, destacado.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y les dedique la obra, no? Para—porque además es, el es muy solidario, el en todos los encuentros de mujeres, el toca. Toca obras de mujeres, les pide a las mujeres que toquen. Ha creado—fue director del Conservatorio de Hidalgo—y les ha pedido a las mujeres que ellas por favor compongan para el encuentro. Entonces, si ha creado movimiento el, él ha creado—él es—él es como un feminista es—digamos, mi grupo no es un grupo de mujeres, si no también

participan hombres como el que nos han apoyado. Entonces por eso le dedique esta obra en donde, originalmente, tenemos aquí, pues, está hecha para oboe, flauta, clarinete, y fagot.

L: Mhmm.

A: Si—

L: Bueno y que—

A: —cuatro.

L: Que más los puede decir de esta obra? Se inspiró en algo, o que es la historia pues de *Maderaire*?

A: Si, bueno, además de—nomás que tengo que acordarme que es *Maderaire*. [ríe] Déjame nada más poner aquí el—para acordarme, oír el audio, porque si, es que tengo muchas obras...[ríe]

L: [ríe]

A;...y entonces, no...luego no se ni que escribí.

L: [ríe]

A: Entonces nomas déjame...

L: Si.

A: Déjame ponerle play. Aquí lo tenemos. Aquí está.

[escucha la obra]

A: Okay! Si te fijas, bueno, está allí el uso de los cromatismos.

L: Mhmm.

A: [canta las partes y el ritmo] *Ta-tacataca-tam, ta-tacataca-tam*. Pues, es *Taam-ta-tam-ta-tacataca, Taam-ta-tam-ta*—allí luego, luego sientes el ritmo latinoamericano, no? Como—

L: Si.

A: Un poco como tango, no? Es como un tango. Entonces, pues, realmente la intención es explorar aquí las—mira, es que pasa una cosa, los compositores contemporáneos pues muchas veces espera—se espera que, qué pues toquen cosas nuevas, con técnicas extendidas y de pronto les pones esto, y dicen “A qué fácil!” Cual fácil! No está nada fácil!

L: Si.

A: Son muy—mi obra es super modulante.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces, al rato tienes a la orquesta completa padeciendo porque no saben tocar, no saben tocar lo que es la expansión de la tonalidad porque ellos creen, “ah, esto no es nada.” Pues, se

creen que es dominante, tónica, tónica, dominante, y subdominante, y el relativo, cuando mucho el relativo.

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero aquí no, aquí hay una expansión de la tonalidad, esto es muy cromática y muy modulante.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y no está en ninguna tonalidad en realidad, todo el tiempo estoy modulando, y modulando, y modulando, entonces no, a veces no sabes ni—[ríe] pobrecitos los hago sufrir mucho porque luego, pues no están acostumbrados a tocar bien y entonces tocan mal. Entonces mi música es compleja—tienen un grado de complejidad, en el sentido del manejo de la tonalidad no es un manejo tradicional, no?

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Porque normalmente dicen tonal, y ay es que, la tonal— es romántica. Cual romántica? O sea, [ríe] asómate un poquito a lo que es el lenguaje.

L: Mhmm

A: Yo creo que actualmente hace falta mucho escribir libros de teoría, o leer, o tener información para que los músicos como yo no tengan etiquetas superficiales, no? Hay notas apriorísticas en contra de mi música, [ríe] actualmente. Hay muchas de compositores—más bien de...por eso es que también hemos creado una corriente que se llama musicología de guerrilla porque hay notas en contra de lo que yo escribo, porque tengo talento, porque tengo un oído musical melódico, y dicen, “ay pues, parece una cancioncita orquestada.” Si? Pues yo nunca he visto una *cancioncita* que pase por 19 tonalidades. [ríe]

L: Si.

A: [ríe] Entonces, esa es una de las características...el cromatismo...y esa es una pieza corta, realmente no tiene otro movimiento.

L: Mhmm

A: Les pensaba escribir algo más, pero muchas veces me agarran las prisas y ya no puedo seguir. Pero bueno, no sé si tienes otra pregunta en cuanto el lenguaje es eso. Y la estructura normalmente yo creo que es una—son estructuras simples y la vida—y además mi intención es acercarme a ti, tocarte el corazón. Hay partes en la obra...

L: Mhmm.

A: Que tu sientes ay, así como que, a lo mejor vas a llorar o sientes, sientes—*sientes*.

L: Mmm.

A: Entonces, ahorita estaba arreglando una de mis obras del—de mis primeras obras y dice, melancólico, con emoción. Entonces eso es algo que yo quiero recuperar, la emoción humana. Lo que sientes. Qué *sientes*, no?

L: Mhmm. Mhmm.

A: Y hacer que el otro sienta, utilizando lugares comunes, pero de una forma muy personal, no? En donde tu dices, “ay pues esto como que me recuerda a la tonalidad pero no tanto, pero ay, siento como que me dan ganas de llorar allí.” No?

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces—o me emociona, o me—y a la gente normal, [ríe] no a los músicos. A la gente normal le gusta mucho mi música—también a él, a este grupo, a Alejandro le gusta mucho mi música, pero si, les doy la sorpresa.

L: [ríe] Bueno, entonces creo que ya dijo esto pero entonces habría algo que—especifico que le quiera decir al intérprete de su, de su pieza, o los intérpretes en esta ocasión.

A: Si bueno desde luego, que esto, hay que...interpretarlo con un pulso que no sea un pulso, [canta la parte pesada y monótona] pa-papapa-paaa, pa-pa—

[canta la parte más ligera y con un ritmo más acentuado]

Ta-taratara-raaaa, tan-taratara-raaaa, tan-taratara-raaaa. En donde se sienta orgánicamente cada frase, no?

L: Mhmm.

A: Muchas veces tocas con esta sensación física porque hay muchos músicos que no tienen incorporado la musicalidad con lo que están tocando, no? Entonces esa es mi recomendación, que sean *muy* musicales al tocar la obra, no?

L: Bueno. Bueno, entonces mi última pregunta que también ya creo que en varias ocasiones como que ya la ha—ya ha respondido a eso. Pero mi última pregunta era sobre su experiencia como compositora Mexicana. Porque mi experiencia mía—o hice esta parte—este proyecto por dos razones, casi—dos razones. La primera, ya le he contado que pase pues muchos años, estudios, sin de verdad pensar o saber que había música para mi instrumento de compositores o compositoras Mexicanas. Y con este proyecto quiero que mas gente sepa que estas piezas existen y que estas obras existen y que se puedan estudiar mas porque ahorita, ahorita pues en el sistema donde yo estudie como que no se ve tanto. Aunque ya si se empieza a poner más diversa el repertorio, pero no—todavía tenemos un largo camino para eso.

Pero la segunda razón era un poco más personal. Y era porque yo, como música clásica y como mujer Mexicana—música clásica y mujer Mexicana—no me veía mucho en la música que yo estudiaba. Y a veces como que sentía un poco de origen diferente en mis estudios y especialmente en la población donde yo estudiaba. Muchas veces era la única de origen diferente, pues, no de los Estados Unidos, porque yo vivo allá. Y entonces ahora le quería preguntar a usted como ha sido su experiencia como compositora Mexicana? Tal vez ha sido

diferente como usted estudió en México, y vive en México, a lo mejor es muy diferente a la mía porque yo vivo allá en los Estados Unidos.

A: Bueno mira cuando estuve en España, te digo, que la discriminación si era tal que, que por eso es que me fui al tema...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...latinoamericano porque dices es que no puede ser, no?

L: Mhmm.

A: Y entonces, y también te digo yo tengo esta...digamos, al nivel identitario me siento como una exiliada, no? Y soy muy sensible a lo que es la discriminación, en concreto, no? Entonces...si la pregunta en concreto es...? Como me siento como compositora, si me siento como exiliada pero aquí en México me siento como exiliada. Porque la discriminación por parte de los grupos de poder...

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A:...porque bueno a mi se me hecho a la yugular todo el medio musical. Fueron pocas las personas que me apoyaron en el grupo—digo como compositora, y sobre todo—como lenguaje. “Ah, allí la que escribe *chun-tata*, la que escribe lo fácil, no?”

L: Mhmm.

A: Y fíjate que pasó algo interesante. Había una clase en donde, pues, el compositor más [toma una mirada altiva] acá, los que componían acá. [señala con la mano alto] Y tocaron una escala y le decían haber, por favor, canta esta escala menor? No sabían cantar una escala menor. Entonces...

L: Bueno...

A: Bueno, ni siquiera la reconocían. No sabían lo que era una escala menor, ni una escala mayor. O sea, ni lo que era una escala.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces date cuenta del vacío de información, del *hueco* que existe en torno a lo que son las compositoras y también me a tocado que yo me voy como punta de lanza a defender algo y a la hora volteo y no hay nadie y estoy yo, la loca, *la loca*—

L: Mhmm.

A: Y todo los demás se hacen, [hace cara de inocente] “ay”, para qué, para estar—se mimetizan con el grupo de poder. Me ha pasado con muchas compositoras.

L: Mhmm.

A: Que, pues, que he defendido y promovido y que a la hora de tener problemas no meten un dedo por mí. Y a la hora de promover—o sea yo promuevo su obra, pero ellas jamás me invitan a

su—a sus—hay una competencia y no te invitan. Entonces en ese sentido yo creo—por eso me siento tan exiliada porque yo siento que he vivido una marginación por parte de un grupo, de un grupo oscuro de mediocres, que han—que además se han servido con la cuchara grande en las instituciones de México. Tu sabes que Carlos Prieto, además de ganar una fortuna, y haber sido director de La Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional más de quince años, es parte del Sistema Nacional de Creadores... Y pues, yo que sé—no sé para él no compone nada. O tu de cuando te das cuenta que ganan el Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Artes...por solamente promoverse a sí mismo. Estando dentro de los grupos de poder.

L: Mhmm.

A: Entonces resulta de que para que te den el premio nacional, necesitas ser un desgraciado que no ha hecho nada por nadie y promoverte solamente a ti mismo. [ríe]

L: Mhmm.

A: Y entonces, esos son los méritos de los premios nacionales? A Gabriela Ortiz, que es una compositora más joven que yo—

L: Mhmm.

A:—a la que se le promovió—yo le promoví obra, promoví que se le tocaran—firmó una carta para que me corrieran de La Escuela Nacional de Música, porque *yo tenía mis grupitos* de mujeres. [ríe] Entonces, realmente pues sí, si he padecido mucho esto. Pero, te digo, por fortuna está ésta contraparte, no? En donde si hay un apoyo fuerte por parte de un—y yo creo que es mayoritario, no?

L: Mhmm.

A: Pero es gente como yo, gente que no tiene poder, gente que no tiene las riquezas, ni las propiedades, ni [ríe] o sea gente como yo es la que me apoya. Entonces si creo que he creado un movimiento muy interesante, muy bonito, y que desde luego ojalá que algún día les podemos arrebatarse el poder a estos grupos. Y que se haga justicia para quienes hemos dedicado nuestra vida a este—a estos movimientos.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y yo lo que te recomiendo a ti pues es que le echas ganas a tu, a tu trabajo y que des a conocer la música de las compositoras, nosotras tenemos contacto con muchas de ellas.

L: Si, en algún tiempo me puede dar esa información de contacto porque si he estado encontrando compositoras, pero menos que a los compositores y me gustaría poder hablar con más, con más compositoras. Ahorita, pues, estoy buscando música específicamente para el oboe pero aunque no hayan escrito para el oboe también, nomás, saber quiénes son esas compositoras.

A: Mira, realmente si te voy a recomendar a una compositora, que es oboísta! [ríe] Entonces, digamos, que ella, son palabras mayores porque te va a dar una edición muy de ella. Ella está—ella está en el colectivo.

L: Mhmm.

A: Se llama Alejandra Odgers, si quieres—

L: Ya la entrevistaste a ella.

A: Ah! Que bueno.

L: Si.

A: Si, ella también está en el colectivo, no se te hablo lo del colectivo porque a veces no dicen que están en el colectivo porque les da miedo que también las vayan a marginar.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Entonces, pues, a veces no lo mencionan. Eh, Claudia Reillas, no se si ya la entrevistaste?

L: No, a ella no.

A: Te la voy a mandar el contacto de Claudia Reillas porque ella también ha hecho música para oboe. Entonces, si se me ocurre alguno más pues te lo pongo en el chat, no?

L: Si.

A: Claudia Reillas. Para, para que tu les, pues, establezcas el contacto con ellas.

L: Mhmm. Y bueno pues, ya la última pregunta sería información de contacto de usted para si alguien le quiere hablar, o comprar su música, o cosas así. Cómo la podrían contactar a usted?

A: Bueno, mira, yo tengo mi página de internet...déjame aquí...chatear. Que es www.leticiarmiyo.com. Y hay puedes—tengo también la página de www.yolotlis.org.

L: Mhmm.

A: Y la página de mi asociación es www.comuarte.org. Y para solicitar alguna de mis obras, siempre son precios muy económicos, pero si trato de que, aunque sea algo simbólico nos den algo porque, es que es mucho trabajo, y no puede ser que no—tenemos que comer también.

L: Si, si.

A: Entonces es, comuarteinternacional@gmail.com.

L: Bueno.

A: Allí está, esos son los contactos a través de los cuales me pueden localizar.

L: Y bueno, eso era todo lo que tenía para usted, entonces, otra vez muchas gracias por, por—

A: Oye, pues muchas gracias y cuando tengas algo escrito me lo mandas por favor.

L: Si! Yo se lo mando. Gracias!

A: Bueno, felicidades Lupita, que estés bien.

L: Igualmente.

A: Hasta luego.

L: Adiós.

A: Adiós.

Jorge Calleja

Jueves 17 de Noviembre de 2022, 1 PM, Hora Estándar Central. Calleja estaba en México y yo en California.

L: Se me hace que ya está.

C: Okay.

L: Bueno pues, por favor puede repetir...

C: Claro.

L:...la información.

C: Bueno mi nombre es Jorge Calleja, soy compositor Mexicano, nací en la Ciudad de México en 1971. Me formé en la Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM donde concluí mi licenciatura en composición. Tengo estudios de maestría en etnomusicología no estoy titulado en ello, ya no lo haré, pero bueno si concluí los estudios. Qué estoy haciendo ahorita? Bueno ahorita tengo en puerta—ahorita estoy terminando una obra para trompeta y piano que será estrenada el próximo año en enero. Y para el 2023 tengo varios...encomiendas, tengo—acabo de hacer ganador del Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte, para lo cual voy a hacer una ópera rock, y va hacer una—

L: Ooh!

C: — música de fusión.

L: Ah-ha.

C: También es probable que haga la música para una película animada...y en fin, bueno, hay bastante. Trabajo con mi grupo de rock, tenemos en puerta la grabación de un disco, de un nuevo álbum, y bueno presentaciones en vivo y ese tipo de cosas. O sea, si va estar bastante—con bastante trabajo el próximo año.

L: Si así se oye, pero eso es bueno. Bueno pues, mi primer pregunta en general era como usted decidió estudiar música y como decidió hacerla su carrera?

C: Claro. Inicialmente en lo que aquí se le llama la secundaria—creo que allá es high school...

L: Si, se me hace que si.

C: Había un curso técnico, o una rama técnica, que era electrónica. Entonces yo entre en la electrónica me gustaba mucho...descomponer—bueno abrir radios, televisiones, todo eso. Entonces después ingrese al bachillerato, también en el área de la electrónica. Pero justo en el bachillerato, y incluso al final del año de la secundaria yo aprendí a tocar la guitarra. Entonces en el bachillerato me gustaba mucho tocar la guitarra y me junté con algunos compañeros para

formar un grupo. De tal suerte que empecé como una especie de competencia paralela entre lo que era la electrónica—

L: Mhmm.

C:k—y la música. Al final la necesidad de seguir profundizando en el instrumento me hizo llegar a la...a Yamaha, a la escuela de música de Yamaha.

L: Oh!

C: Donde conocí a Juan Carlos Laguna, que es uno de los mejores guitarristas que ha tenido México. En aquel tiempo él daba clases allí de guitarra eléctrica. Él me observo y me dijo, “oye pues, tú tienes como habilidades, por qué no entras a estudiar música?” En ese momento yo no sabía que existían las escuelas de música ni al caso, o sea, yo vivía en otra esfera, en otro mundo. Total que así lo hice, e...ingrese, bueno hice el examen, pero la recomendación también de Juan Carlos era de que no entrara yo a guitarra porque era muy competido ese instrumento.

L: Mhmm.

C: Guitarra, piano, y canto es—siempre ha sido lo más competido. Dice, “entra a otro instrumento, y después pues, te cambias.” Así que, yo hice examen para oboe. Entonces, allí los maestros sinodales me observaron, vieron que tenía posibilidades y me aceptaron. Entonces estuve cursando un año de oboe con la maestra Carmen Thierry.

L: Oh! Aha.

C: Y la maestra Carmen Thierry me pedía pues ejercicios para el oboe, los cuales yo componía. Entonces la maestra me dijo, “oye pues”—porque ella sabía que yo me quería cambiar a guitarra.

L: Mhmm.

C: “Porque no en lugar de guitarra te cambias a composición?” Observando mi creatividad—y entonces pues así lo hice. Preparé unas piezas de composición, me observaron los sinodales y me aceptaron el cambio, y a partir de allí ya llegue. Bueno y comento lo de la ingeniería porque nunca he dejado la parte de la ingeniería, de tal suerte que, lo que es la producción musical, el estudio de grabación, y todo eso que es la parte técnica siempre lo he llevado de manera paralela. Y digamos que de alguna forma todas mis producciones discográficas las he hecho de manera personal.

L: Mhmm.

C: Así fue.

L: Bueno pues, usted es el segundo compositor que e—con quien he hablado que también estudió oboe pero no se quedó—más con la...composición.

C: Ya, así fue. Quien es otro compositor—

L: El oboe es un poco difícil, un poco frustrante.

C: [ríe]

L: Brincamos a su música—

C: —te escuche un poco como—

L: No se escucha?

C: Si, si, si, ya, ya.

L: Yendo adelante pues a su música, estaba leyendo unas de las biografías que tiene en su sitio web y dice que es el director artístico del ensamble Etnokam y mas aparte tiene una banda—la Gallina Negra? Y se ve que usted compone y toca en muchos estilos de música y en muchas—tiene mucha variedad pues, en lo que hace. Cómo fue que así se desarrolló su carrera? Porque veo que el Etnokam es una híbrida de música académica y la Gallina Negra es más—se me hace que decía que era progressive rock y jazz y todo eso.

C: Bueno, como te comentaba desde el bachillerato que formé este grupo, pues básicamente lo que es el rock siempre ha sido como con lo que me he identificado, no? Desde mi juventud grupos como Los Beatles, Rolling Stone, Led Zeppelin, todo esas—rock clásico fue así como parte de mí, de mis criterios musicales. Ya cuando empecé a estudiar música clásica, académica, pues bueno fui ampliando como mi formación ahora en el campo de lo académico.

L: Mhmm.

C: Sin embargo, aquí en México en la carrera de composición uno lleva la asignatura de etnomusicología.

L: Mmm.

C: Y a partir de la etnomusicología me fui vinculando mucho con lo que es la música tradicional de México.

L: Mhmm.

C: Entonces todo eso siempre ha sido como parte de mi composición. En todos los aspectos, yo creo que como compositor...es tan...representa el mismo esfuerzo hacer un rock que hacer una obra para orquesta que hacer una obra de jazz—o sea el esfuerzo creativo es el mismo—

L: Mhmm.

C: Y los retos también son diferentes porque tienes que comprender el nuevo lenguaje.

L: Mhmm.

C: Entonces siempre me he estado como vinculando con muchos lenguajes, no? El jazz, el rock, el rock progresivo, la música tradicional Mexicana. Entonces a la hora de componer pues siempre surgen todas estas cosas y lo que resulta—mi música que resulta tiene como varios tintes de varias cosas, no? De varios estilos musicales.

L: Mhmm, entonces usted cree que, se influyen pues todas esas diferentes—pues diferentes estilos que usted escribe—o diferentes—una pieza para Etnokam, comparada a una pieza para Gallina—una obra para Gallina Negra, se influyen o piensa muy separado en cada obra que...que...

C: Digamos que el esfuerzo creativo es el mismo, pero si piensas como en tus compañeros...y un poco en lo que quieras representar. En el caso de Gallina Negra que es un grupo de rock fusión, o de rock progresivo, que tengo justo desde aquellos años, estamos hablando desde 1990, 1994—

L: Mhmm.

C: Y que aún sigue vigente pues es un grupo con el cual me siento muy hermanado porque los conozco de toda la vida y entonces, tenemos esa apertura para cualquier cosa, no? Entonces de pronto se nos, se nos...se nos da la gana tocar música folclórica, o de pronto jazz, de pronto rock, heavy metal, lo que sea, entonces es como muy versátil. Siempre conserva como el estilo del grupo, pero, tenemos esa variabilidad y la gente aquí los ubica de esa forma.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

C: En el caso del Etnokam, es un ensamble que formé—yo creo que ya tiene como siete años, más o menos. Pues es un trío porque tenía allí algunas piecitas para guitarra y flauta, después ingrese el violoncello, y es un trío que de pronto me gusto el—la sonoridad que tiene ese ensamble, y pues con ellos he sacado dos discos, no? Dos álbumes. También tuve un grupo de son jarocho que se llamó Chilaquiles Verdes, en donde allí tocaba yo la leona que es un instrumento de la región del son jarocho que es como un bajo pero—hace las funciones del bajo pero es como una guitarra grande, cuatro cuerdas. Y bueno el caso es que, en todos estos ensambles, a diferencia de varios compositores que conozco, pues no nada más hago la composición, si no me involucro tocando.

L: Mhmm.

C: Entonces para mí eso es importante porque creo que eso se perdió en alguna parte de la historia. Porque en la antigüedad pues los músicos que tocaban también componían, y los que componían también tocaban, no? Entonces, como que esa parte de pronto ubo una separación y ya los intelectuales eran los compositores que jamás tocaban nada, y los intérpretes—yo creo que debe de existir como ese ejercicio en ambas partes no? El instrumentista, de pronto, aunque no haga composiciones complejas pues si debe de echar mano a su labor creativa y lo mismo el compositor, pues de pronto si estar tocando y enfrentarse al público tocando.

L: Hay algún compositor, o profesor, o otra banda, otros cantantes, que siente que a usted lo haya influido mucho en cómo se desarrolló en compositor? O ha habido muchos, o...?

C: Si ha habido bastantes, y de todo tipo. Por ejemplo, en la música académica, pues definitivamente han pasada por mi vena muchos compositores, Vivaldi, Ravel en su orquestación, pero particularmente los compositores Mexicanos como Silvestre Revueltas, Carlos Chávez, cuando yo los conocí, ya fue así como que me llenaron completamente, no? Entonces particularmente ellos. Pero yo creo que mi mayor influencia no radica en la música

académica, si no en la música popular. Y de la música popular, hablando del rock, como ya lo menciono, estos tres grandes, o cuatro, grandes que son Los Beatles, Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, y The Who, así me marcaron.

L: Mhmm, si.

C: Y de la parte latinoamericana, sin duda, Silvio Rodríguez, para mí es un artista extremadamente complejo y completo, tanto por su poesía como por su música. Entonces me parece así fundamental—fue el parte aguas. Silvio Rodríguez, para mí, está metido en las venas en todo momento. Y en España, Patxi Andion, también otro poeta que hace música, en donde su lírica también me impactó de manera primordial en mis primeros años de formación. Entonces digamos que esos son los grandes que me han influenciado.

L: Mhmm.

C: A bueno! Ya aparte, el rock progresivo, Pink Floyd es así como que lo tengo en un lugar muy especial.

L: Mhm, mhmm. Si, otra vez, mientras estaba leyendo un poco de usted, si sabía que tenía—hacía mucho en muchas áreas de música, y eso siento que a veces no es—en muchos compositores pues, siento que ellos dicen “a voy hacer música de arte, académica, y eso es como todo lo que voy a hacer” y como que no se... se interesan más en otras—en otros estilos de música. Y cuando estaba leyendo pues, que usted hacía un poco de todo— I was like, a que bueno, porque si se ve que no hay tantos compositores de música clásica, o académica, como la queremos llamar, que también pueden ir a diferentes—componer diferentes, pues estilos, o genres, o géneros.

Ahora, bueno pues. Ahora, hablando específicamente de *La Voz del Viento* que es la pieza con la que lo encontré a usted. Como se desarrolló *La Voz del Viento*? Quien lo inspiró o fue algún evento o a lo mejor es una comisión, o como pues vino a hacer *La Voz del Viento*?

C: Pues aquí fue una invitación de la maestra Carmen Thierry porque ella obtuvo un apoyo, o una beca, para hacer una producción discográfica en BAMF. Entonces ella tenía que hacer este álbum con piezas de compositores Mexicanos y me pidió una obra. Entonces yo ya pensando específicamente en la maestra, en aquel momento su hija estaba chiquitita entonces yo le pedí que me grabara algunas...que me grabara la niña, las voces de la niña. Entonces ya me mando como las grabaciones y de allí empecé. Quise representar en *La Voz del Viento* pues justamente un momento etéreo en donde se fundían allí las voces de...de esta niña, de su hija. Y entonces fui desarrollando como esta parte, un poco onírica, o sea de los sueños, hasta llegar a un punto en donde despiertas de ese sueño, no? Entonces fue un poquito así lo de *La Voz del Viento*.

L: Y cuando la empezó ya sabía que iba hacer una pieza con cinta, o era, eso era algo que quería Carmen Thierry o era algo que—eso pues le gustaba a usted, y nomas decidí.

C: Si, yo—creo que yo decidí que fuera con cinta y oboe. Sí, sí, sí. Así es.

L: Bueno. Y si le iba a preguntar de qué—de dónde venían las partes que se oía como poesía o cantando y ya lo explico. Hay algo que le quiera decir a los intérpretes de su pieza, a lo mejor

algo que ha notado mientras lo tocan o nomas algo que quiera compartir pues de su pieza a los que la van a interpretar?

C: Pues sí, básicamente la parte del oboe al principio es como...como imaginarse que están en un bosque y que tienen su instrumento y que están inspirados un poco en los ancestros. Entonces allí las sonoridades del oboe un poquito es como retomar o pensar que es una especie de, de...pues de indígena puede ser quo lo pueda decir así. Indígena en su soledad, en su interior, en su intimidad.

L: Mhmm.

C: Y que poco a poco con los sonidos del instrumento van adentrándose en el sueño, no? Un poquito...eso puede ayudar a la interpretación.

L: Okay, okay. Otra vez hablando de la cinta como fue el componer esa cinta, y como decidí—o sea, por que son dos partes pues una parte el oboe y la parte de la cinta y se—lo compuso lado a lado, o a lo mejor mas la cinta y luego compuso la parte del oboe, o la parte del oboe y a eso le agrego la cinta?

C: Sí pues se va trabajando digamos de manera paralela. Recuerdo que primero hice los primeros sonidos de lo electroacústico. Que lo cual básicamente está integrado pues sonidos del ambiente y algunos sintetizadores. Y después empecé a bosquejar los temas del oboe, y después ya van corriendo paralelo. Al final...fui tratando de llegar a un clímax sonoro.

L: Mhmm.

C: Y es donde ya el oboe tiene estos...trémolos y cosas, no?

L: Mhmm.

C: Esa parte final...recuerdo que agarré un arco de violín y empecé como a hacer el *batuto*, y aparte de algunas grabaciones del *batuto* hice ya toda la—el entramado del final, si.

L: También creo que, lo encontré pues con *La Voz del Viento*, porque—específicamente porque estaba escuchando el álbum que hizo Carmen Thierry, y de allí la encontré y me encanto. Pero también, se me hace que acaba—o tiene otra pieza también para oboe, no?

C: Si tengo otra pieza que justamente ayer se volvió a tocar. Es una pieza que se llama *Cascabel*. Esa fue un encargo de Jonathan Thompson.

L: Mmm.

C: Un oboísta que vive, me parece por el área de Texas. No lo ubico bien. Y este muchacho, justo también escucho *La Voz del Viento*—

L: Uh-huh.

C: Y me contacto. Incluso después vino a México a conocerme y me encargó la pieza.

L: Mmm.

C: Y hice esa pieza, *Cascabel* que un poco también habla de una serpiente de cascabel. El cascabel—la serpiente al final de su cola tiene este como cascabel que suena. Y de allí lo que me imagine—tengo varios temas que me imagino como, en un ritual chamánico, de los indígenas de México, que están en esta repetición constante de oraciones y que eso los ayuda como a conectarse con las divinidades. Entonces en esta pieza de *Cascabel* un poco también recreé esa parte...con esa conexión espiritual y sobre todo esta cuestión de la repetición—como la conecto mucho con el *minimalismo* que yo utilizo—

L: Mmm, mhmm.

C: —entonces tiene esa vinculación, sí.

L: Usted había dicho que había estudiado el oboe, pero finalmente no lo—no siguió con el? Eso es lo que entendí.

C: No, nunca me compré mi oboe.

L: Mmm, a bueno.

C: Me lo prestaron en la escuela y después que cambié, ya perdí la oportunidad de tocarlo. De pronto en algún momento lo quise retomar, pero no, no me daba el tiempo. Es un instrumento bastante difícil, bastante bonito, pero si requiere allí toda su atención.

L: Si, si, si. Entonces cómo ha sido componer para el oboe? En las dos piezas, fueron específicamente para oboístas así que, hubo mucha colaboración entre usted y el oboísta? Especialmente como eran comisiones.

C: Ya, pues sobre todo en la primera pieza, y anteriormente pues si—me he asesorado con la maestra Carmen Thierry. Me ha enseñado las técnicas extendidas y de esas sesiones que tuve con ella pues retomé algunas cosas. Entonces he tenido esa fortuna de tener ese acercamiento con la maestra que me ha auxiliado en esa parte, no?

L: Bueno. Bueno pues, alguna otra cosa que quiera compartir de su música o *De la Voz del Viento* o de su—o más de su biografía?

C: Pues nada que...pues me da mucho gusto que músicos como tú quieran como retomar y tener lazos más fuertes con las raíces de México y las raíces digamos latinas, como le llaman allá.

L: Mhmm.

C: Creo que es importante...pues seguir teniendo esos peldaños cada vez más fuertes para que los dos pueblos, el norte americano y el latinoamericano, pues tengan, pues esos vínculos fuertes, no? Porque al final pues somos unos mismos, somos una misma raza, no hay divisiones. Desafortunadamente tanto allá como aquí hay pues temas de clasismo y de racismo que siguen permaneciendo y que debemos de procurar borrarlos, no?

L: Mhmm.

C: Y en la música también se da yo lo quise comentar hace ratito, pues desde el término “música clásica”, ya estamos como, teniendo esas actitudes clasistas, no?

L: Si, si.

C: Entonces yo creo que muchos compositores no se atreven por prejuicios a aceptar que las otras músicas también los llenan.

L: Si.

C: No?

L: Si.

C: Entonces a veces justo eso que tú dices, el compositor clásico como que nomas hace clásico. Pero igual un poquito es porque no quieren romper esa barrera que socialmente existe, no?

L: Mhmm.

C: Siempre se cree que la música clásica es como lo más “plus” y las músicas populares son—están abajo de ello. Cosa que no es así, son lenguajes diferentes y formas de hacer música diferentes. Eso es lo que yo podría agregar. Y bueno pues, yo te felicito y espero que tu trabajo tenga una repercusión importante...y que no los compartas no, en algún momento lo puedas venir a presentar acá.

L: Si, cuando lo termine ya de escribir, se lo entregó a la escuela y en la escuela siempre debe de estar en el sitio web de mi universidad. Siempre va a estar accesible a quien quiera. Pero ahorita que usted estaba hablando pues de lo que estaba hablando, si era otra pregunta que le tenía para usted, que a lo mejor si es un poco más personal, así que, lo que quiera responder, nomás lo que quiera decir.

Pero, mis razones para hacer estas tesis, son parte—una parte es hacer más accesibles estas piezas de compositores Mexicanos y que gente sepa que existen, por eso mismo. Por qué yo estudiando el oboe no fue hasta mi maestría que finalmente toqué una pieza por un compositor Mexicano y no fue hasta mi maestría que ya me empecé a pensar “bueno, hay música clásica de México, hay compositores Mexicanos, porque he estado estudiando mi oboe por cinco o seis años y no—nunca me había topado ni sabía que habían compositores Mexicanos.” Y yo como—yo tenía mi identidad de mujer Mexicana y mi identidad de música clásica y nunca se—nunca sentía que las dos se unían, y hasta eso fue—hasta mi maestría que finalmente dije “bueno, si hay música clásica de México” y por eso quiero ser este proyecto para que otra gente sepa y para que las—el repertorio estándar del oboe que crezca que no nomas sea piezas que hemos estudiado por años y años y años pero que hay piezas nuevas de compositores nuevos que también podemos tocar. Y eso es parte pues que yo siempre me he sentido un poco diferente pues como en mis estudios aquí en música clásica, muchas veces soy una de las únicas de origen diferente, o Mexicana, o lo que sea. Entonces eso le iba a preguntar a usted, siendo—haber nacido en México y estudiado en México y allí es donde hace su música a lo mejor tiene una diferente experiencia a la mía, o a lo mejor—pues estoy curiosa de su experiencia como compositor Mexicano en este fil de música clásica, que si a veces hay mucho clasismo.

C: Si, pues eso. Y se da desde que uno está estudiando, no? Bueno al menos a mí me tocó que cuando yo estudiaba, si de pronto tocaba algunos temas populares pues ya la gente te miraba y te

decía, que eso no era música y serie de prejuicios que aún creo que persisten. Pero bueno, pues uno está haciendo lo que uno hace y la música pues se difundirá de manera propia. Y pues bueno la invitación está aquí, si estaría muy bien que cuando terminaras tu trabajo en algún momento tuvieras la oportunidad de venir a México y mostrarlo. Pues yo lo que te pudiera ofrecer es tal vez un espacio en la facultad de música con el maestro Roberto Kolb que justo esta semana es la temporada del festival de oboe entonces puede ser, puede ser que el próximo año en el festival de oboe pues, pues puedas tocar y presentar tu trabajo.

L: Eso me encantaría! Tener la oportunidad de presentar en México, porque no se me ha—no es algo que se me ha—que ha ocurrido por allá. Pero eso me encantaría, sería algo muy bonito.

C: Así es.

L: Y bueno pues, ya con—la última pregunta que le quería preguntar es nomas información de contacto de usted, si lo quiere mandar después o puede decirlo aquí también, acabó las dos cosas todavía tengo que... escribir pues todo lo que hablamos aquí. Pero nomas información de contacto si tiene un sitio web o correos electrónicos donde otros oboístas o otros profesores pueden contactarlo a usted para adquirir su música.

C: Claro. Tengo un sitio web que se llama jorgecalleja.com.mx, esa es la página, digamos, que la estoy terminando. Después, lo que son las redes, Facebook, Instagram, me pueden encontrar como Jorge Calleja compositor. Mi correo electrónico es jorgecalleja.compositor@gmail.com. Y mi música la pueden escuchar tanto en Bandcamp como Spotify y todas estas de streaming, igual como Jorge Calleja.

L: Bueno. Bueno pues eso era todo lo que tenía para usted otra vez si quiere agregar algo más o quiera hablar de otra cosa, todavía tenemos tiempo, pero si ya también usted ya ha dicho lo que quiere decir ya también podemos terminar.

C: Pues sí, pues te agradezco la atención, la invitación, y la—que los compartas pues tu trabajo. Te agradezco mucho.

L: Yeah, a usted yo también le agradezco de aceptar hacer esta entrevista.

C: Muy bien.

L: Muy bien, muchas gracias y ya voy a parar la grabación y ya, voy a—

Alejandra Odgers

Viernes 11 de Noviembre de 2022, 9 AM, Hora Estándar del Este. Odgers estaba en Canadá y yo en California.

L: Ya, se me hace ya empezó. Perfecto. Bueno pues, muchas gracias por aceptar esta entrevista y aceptar ser parte de este proyecto.

O: Con todo gusto.

L: Bueno pues, queremos empezar ya. Básicamente esta entrevista va hacer nomas un poco de biografía para poder tener más información de usted biográfica para el proyecto, más aparte hablar de Semilfami y su música en general, también.

O: Mhm, muy bien.

L: Estaba leyendo su tesis de usted, y se me parece que van a ser un poco similares las razones también porque hizo—escribió su tesis—a la que yo también empecé a escribir la mía.

O: Aha, si—

L: Este—

O: Hay cosas que cambian pero hay cosas que no, entonces sigue siendo importante.

L: Exactamente, mientras estaba leyendo sus razones y sus preguntas y por—las razones pues que empezó a escribir su tesis casi son iguales a las mías. Si me di cuenta en mi maestría, era la primera, la primera vez que había tocado una obra escrita por un compositor Mexicano, así que de allí empecé a pensar, bueno he estado estudiando tantos años—

O: Tal vez haya más!

L: Exacto, exacto! Bueno pues antes, también, de empezar si le quiero decir que hablo español, pero fui criada y nacida—nacida y criada—en los estados unidos, así que a veces siento que me explico un poco mejor en inglés. Así si está bien con usted, a veces siento que voy a tener que decir unas cosas en inglés, pero usted—

O: Está bien, no hay problema. Yo también podría tratar en inglés, pero ahí me voy atorar más, entonces va a salir más fluido en español.

L: Eso está bien, lo entiendo perfectamente, pero a veces como que se me traban unas palabras. Pero lo entiendo perfectamente.

O: No hay problema.

L: Bueno pues. Entonces, empezando si se quiere introducir, nomas su nombre y algo que quiera, decir de usted misma.

O: Bueno mi nombre es Alejandra Odgers Ortiz, nací en la Ciudad de México. Empecé a estudiar música un poco por azar, cuando era chica, como a los ocho años empecé a tocar—a tomar un curso de iniciación musical. Era con el Sistema, bueno Micropauta, que se parece un poco al Orf, entonces instrumentos de percusión, canta de coro. Y a partir de entonces bueno me enamoré de la música, y seguí por diferentes caminos.

L: Bueno, eso era mi segunda pregunta. Le iba a preguntar cómo empezó a estudiar la música, y como decidió seguirla como carrera?

O: Bueno, si entro un poquito más en detalle. Les comentaba que fue, el azar un poco el que me acerco a la música. Hay un anécdota un poco chistosa, nosotros de chicas—tengo una, bueno tengo dos hermanas, pero con una de mis hermanas que me llevo un año, queríamos tomar clases de gimnasia. Esta era la época donde todas las niñas querían, a lo mejor hacer gimnasia como Nadia Comaneci etcétera. Entonces estamos buscando una clase de gimnasia y mi mamá encontró un lugar donde daban clases para niños. Y cuando uno pagaba la inscripción, costaba lo mismo si uno se inscribía a una sola clase o a dos, o a tres, o a diez. Entonces, bueno nos inscribimos a clase de gimnasia de pintura, de baile regional, y mis hermanas habían decidido meterse a música. Y yo no. Pero mi ama me comentó, bueno, porque no te inscribes también, tus hermanas van a ir y si no te gusta pues la dejas. Entonces realmente fue eso él, bueno el motivo, me inscribí a la clase de música. Y pues me encanto. Finalmente dejamos la gimnasia porque la gimnasia, bueno como estaba dada no nos interesaba mucho. Y seguimos con las clases de baile, de música, y pintura. Entonces después, estuvimos tocando ahí en—había un coro en esta clase de música, y se tocaban instrumentos de percusión. Uno de ellos fue la marimba, o el xilófono, entonces era así como el instrumento consentido.

Estuve allí durante tres cuatro años y al terminar pues yo quería seguir estudiando música, empezaba a ir a los conciertos también de la OFUNAM en México todos los domingos. Y empezaba como, a pensar en la posibilidad de dedicarme a la música, de ser músico etcétera. Primero me inscribí a una clase de percusión en la Escuela Nacional de Música pero fue un poco decepcionante la clase. Tal vez por el maestro y un poquito el contexto, pero en ese entonces, mi abuelita que tenía un piano se cambió a vivir a una cuadra de nuestra casa y entonces empecé a estudiar el piano. Tres años después, me inscribí en, para—bueno primero en las clases particulares de piano. Tres años después hice un examen de admisión para entrar a una escuela digamos ya como, profesional de música.

Y ahí en esta escuela había una orquesta sinfónica. Y entonces para mí, como que yo extrañaba el tocar en grupo. El tocar, así como en la orquesta infantil, y entonces busque el empezar estudiar otro instrumento que pudiera tocar en orquesta, porque yo me sentía en mis clases de piano muy aislada. Yo tocaba mis piezas solita, todavía no tenía el suficiente nivel, tal vez, para hacer más música de cámara. Y la orquesta pues estaban todos mis amigos, se iban de gira, además se me hacía súper atractivo entonces dije no, yo tengo que estudiar un instrumento que toque en la orquesta. Y pues buscando qué instrumento me llamaba la atención más o me gustaba, pues decidí el oboe, y entonces empecé a estudiar oboe. Finalmente, me inscribí también digamos de manera profesional a la carrera de, como oboísta.

Entonces termine esta carrera y mientras tanto en todas esas—mientras tomaba esas clases lleve una clase de—se llamaba Técnica y Cultura Musical—pero básicamente era una clase de análisis con el compositor Mario Lavista. Y entonces en esas clases, como que para mí fue el descubrir todo el mundo de la composición, el ver cómo se puede componer una obra. Como hacen los compositores para escribir una obra, y a partir de entonces decidí también empezar las clases de composición. Entonces en un momento dado estuve, pues, tomando clases de piano, de oboe, de composición más todas las clases teóricas. Estuve buscando a los maestros que me interesaban, en este caso bueno fue con Mario Lavista, etcetera. Entonces estuve en tres escuelas, en El Conservatorio, en La Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM, y en la escuela Vida y Movimiento en la sala Ollin Yoliztli. Y entonces recorriendo a México para poder tomar todas esas clases. Entonces finalmente termine la carrera como oboísta, como compositora y, más adelante, viaje a Montreal para hacer una Maestría. Ya fue finalmente en composición, que es a lo que me dedico realmente, y un doctorado. Entonces estoy viviendo ahora aquí en Canadá, en Montreal, y bueno, pues, eso es el recorrido hasta ahora.

L: Bueno, y si, otra de las preguntas que le iba a preguntar era porque decidió hacer las dos carreras en oboe y en composición. Pero, como ya, mas o menos me la—

O: Voy adelantándome!

L: Si no pero está bien—

O: Bueno digamos, el oboe fue realmente porque quería tocar más en grupo, hacer música de cámara, o tocar en una orquesta. Lo hice un poco, si llegue a tocar en algunos—en algunos ensambles. Tuve algunas experiencias, poquitas, con orquesta. Pero realmente fue al empezar a componer, que...que me...me encanto. Y pues ya fue realmente el camino que seguí. Todavía cada vez digo, ay voy a sacar mi oboe, ay voy a tocar pero, por lo pronto no he practicado mucho oboe. Te todos formas si estando aquí en Quebec, en Canadá, quería seguir haciendo música, entonces de hecho la alternativa que encontré que me resultó más fácil fue estar en un coro. Entonces he estado desde el dos mil ocho, en general hasta prácticamente ahora, con la pandemia interrumpió un poco el coro. Pero he estado digamos cantando en un coro para tener esa práctica viva de hacer música.

L: No si, si. Si, bueno pues, ahora mi tercer pregunta, es cómo usted describiría su propio estilo musical.

O: Eso está más difícil.

L: Es un poco más.

O: Depende un poco de la pieza. O sea, yo lo que e sentido—sí puedo decirte algo pero mira, de manera general lo que yo considero es que como compositores tenemos que, conocer un poco todo, o sea, digamos de las técnicas—de las cosas que están a nuestro alcance para poder expresarnos musicalmente o sonoramente. Entonces, si a lo largo de mi, de mi educación, digamos, pues practique un poquito de todo, llegue hacer piezas incluso atonales, dodecafónicas, modales, tonales, electroacústicas también. Y yo lo que siento es que dependiendo de lo que queremos componer en un momento determinado en una pieza, pues va ser la técnica o el color,

o el lenguaje, o los instrumentos que vamos a utilizar. Ahí algunas para las que a lo mejor la electroacústico es lo que se presta mejor, en otros casos va hacer algo pues muy tonal, en otros casos algo atonal etcétera.

Sin embargo, digamos si—mira cuando realicé mi doctorado unos de los, pues de los ejercicios desde eso—encontrar un poco cual es tu camino, cuál es tu voz, cual es tu manera de componer. Y entonces un poco analizando las obras que había hecho y mis intereses y, bueno, mi vida también. O sea, quien soy yo? El componer tiene mucho que ver con quien es uno, digo que es así un poco una—una búsqueda un poco de identidad—quien soy y de donde vengo y a donde voy etcétera. Y entonces en toda esta reflexión, de lo que fui descubriendo es que en mi música, hay mucho como de una síntesis, o una...sí, una síntesis o una mezcla, un mestizaje también de diferentes culturas. Entonces por un lado desde luego está la música occidental, de arte o clásica o como le queramos llamar. Es claro que está en mi formación, en mi manera de componer, los instrumentos que utilizó, el hecho de componer para que sea una música que vamos a escuchar en una sala de conciertos. El tipo de obras de conciertos, obra para orquesta sinfónica, a veces tema con variaciones, etcétera. Entonces, hay mucho de la cultura occidental, digamos que heredamos. Pero también muchas de mis obras...utilizó músicas tradicionales, muchas veces de México, por razones obvias. Pero también ha habido algo a veces de ritmos cubanos o de música de origen más Celta. O incluso en algunas piezas—mientras realice estudios aquí tomé un curso de gamelán, entonces de pronto en algunos llega a ver algo. Llegue a tomar en algún momento también clases de danza Hindú entonces también ciertos colores, ciertos ritmos—entonces llegó a tomar elementos de música tradicionales de diferentes lugares. Ya viviendo también ahora aquí en Quebec, también he estado en contacto con una mujer Abenaki que me ha enseñado mucho, bueno de su cosmogonía pero de sus obras de sus canciones que he utilizado también en algunas de mis obras. Entonces yo creo que hay, en muchas de mis obras, esa mezcla un poco de elementos de músicas tradicionales, y de la música occidental. Entonces dependiendo de que quiero decir en una obra en un momento dado, pues muchas veces va a hacer—van hacer las técnicas o la paleta—de colores o de técnicas que utilizo para realizar mi música.

L: Entonces, lo que yo estoy entendiendo ahorita entonces es—es menos la técnicas que va a usar si no donde toma la inspiración de...lo que quiere ser una cierta pieza—

O: Si, digamos que—yo no voy a tener una prioridad—mi música es de esta manera y todas mis piezas las voy a hacer con estas técnicas, sino más bien, dependiendo de la obra que voy a realizar, van a hacer las técnicas que utilizo. Voy a darte un ejemplo muy concreto.

En un momento dado, había un concurso para componer una pieza en homenaje a las víctimas de los terremotos que hubo en México en 1985 donde miles de personas fallecieron. Pues me pregunté qué clase de obra voy a hacer, en este homenaje? Bueno, considere en ese momento que había una parte importante que tenía que ser pues, la representación un poco de todo el—la tragedia, del dolor, de la desesperación, de pues todos los sentimientos que vivimos por los temblores no, y todas las muertes que hubo, etcétera. Entonces, no podía ser una música pues tonal, modal, agradable, etcétera. Entonces es una obra, realmente, donde hay—el mismo poema que escogí dice, “Esto es un grito.” Entonces tenía que ser así, muy, muy disonante...completamente, bueno, atonal si quieres, donde hay clusters, música digamos más

disonante. Pero después la segunda parte de la pieza quería hacer como una—el acercarse a buscar un momento más de paz, o de consolación, de calma. Y entonces sí, no tuve ningún problema en que hubiera un acorde tonal, mayor, unas quintas. Entonces, realmente depende de lo que quieres expresar en un momento dado, pues van a hacer las técnicas o el lenguaje que voy a utilizar.

L: Mencionó que estudió con Mario Lavista, y obvio tuvo más profesores y maestros. Usted piensa que hay uno—o un maestro o a lo mejor otro compositor—que toma más inspiración de ellos o cree que ellos influyeron mucho su estilo o su—o como, cómo decide su obras?

O: Tuve... bueno tuve la fortuna o desgracia—quién sabe cómo la vamos a llamar—de que muchas veces hay gente que estudia con un compositor y de principio a fin es como tu maestro. En música se da mucho que tienes un maestro—también de instrumento—y muchas veces estudiaste—

L: Años y años.

O: —siete años, ocho años con el mismo maestro.

L: Si, si.

O: Y a veces hay recorridos en los que uno acaba cambiando mucho. Entonces, precisamente porque estuve en diferentes escuelas y a veces por las circunstancias que—pues estas con un maestro y se fue el maestro de la escuela y entonces tienes que cambiar. Entonces, yo estuve estudiando con varios maestros. Sí definitivamente Mario Lavista fue una persona que me marcó, yo creo que en muchos y yo, estudié composición, fue pues por él, por sus clases, por que conocí allí el análisis. Y fue alguien a quien yo seguí durante años para tomar clases con él. De hecho por eso recorrí todas las escuelas creo de música de la Ciudad de México, porque en un momento dado daba clases en El Conservatorio, en un momento dado estuvo en El Centro de las Artes, en creo que era La Escuela Superior de Música—entonces, a donde estaba él, iba yo. Y daba clases de composición, o en un taller de composición, pero también daba clases de análisis, o de música del siglo veinte, o diferentes. Entonces lo estuve siguiendo a él, muchísimo, entonces sí, definitivamente fue alguien que marcó mucho mi... mi formación, pero no fue el único.

En La Escuela Nacional de Música tuve la oportunidad de estudiar también con Arturo Márquez. Con él también estuve trabajando un año, y fue un año también importante. Y digamos, fue un año con él pero después cuando estuve trabajando en el centro multimedia del Centro Nacional de las Artes estuve también en contacto con él. Entonces digamos que fueron varios años que estuvimos en contacto, aunque oficialmente fueron solo, un solo año de clases. Por otro lado, también hubo un maestro con el que tomé clase particulares que se llama Humberto Hernández Medrano. Con él fueron realmente más la parte académica tradicional—clases de armonía, de contrapunto intensivas. También pues es una parte de mi formación, a lo mejor no una influencia tan grande en cuanto a búsquedas de nuevos lenguajes—o eso—pero si la base sólida de buenas clases de armonía y contrapunto fueron con él.

Y ya estando aquí en Montreal estudié con dos maestros. La Maestría la realicé con José Evangelista, que también, pues, manejo mi camino. Y finalmente si me quede a ser el doctorado acá fue porque durante la Maestría tomé un seminario de Orquestación con un maestro que se llama Alan Belkin, que fue una orquesta de orquestación que para mí fue una revelación—les digo que fue en esa clase como si descubriera la tercera dimensión en mis oídos. Como si antes estuviera componiendo en dos direcciones, nomás plano, y con él así como que descubrir la perspectiva, no? Entonces, decidí quedarme a hacer el doctorado para trabajar obras de orquesta con él. Entonces, también, definitivamente—últimamente he compuesto mucho para orquesta—y definitivamente es el trabajo con Alan Belkin que...ha influenciado mucho tal vez mi manera de componer, o mi habilidad para componer sobre todo las obras con orquesta.

L: Hablando de Mario Lavista, su obra *Marsias* fue la primera pieza que toque por un compositor Mexicano y era nomás porque mi maestro quería—mi profesor al tiempo de oboe, Kevin Vigneau—quería que tocara algo contemporáneo porque nunca había tocado algo así.

O: Uh-huh.

L: Por eso me dijo que empezara a estudiar esa obra.

O: Ah-ha.

L: De allí nació—yo marco pues ese momento que de allí nació todo este proyecto, desde mi maestría.

O: Mario tuvo también a varias generaciones de alumnos. Una de ellas es Mariana Villanueva y tiene una obra para oboe, timbales, y bombo, no se si la conoces?

L: No pero sí me gustaría.

O: Esa fue la que yo toque para mi fin de—mi examen de fin de licenciatura de oboe. También es una obra muy interesante luego te pasare el dato, si no—

L: Si por favor, me encantaría.

O: Debe de estar por allí en mis tesis, pero sí, de Mariana Villanueva, ahorita se me fue el nombre pero, al ratito me acuerdo.

L: Ahora, volviéndonos a la obra con la que la encontré—porque fue Semelíami. Que inspiró entonces a Semelíami? O algubo un evento o una idea que inspiró esa pieza?

O: Te platicó de esta obra. Otros de los maestros que tuve, bueno cuando estuve con Arturo Márquez y él se fue de La Escuela Nacional de Música me quedé sin maestro y contrataron a otro compositor que es Horacio Uribe. Y con él estuve también un año trabajando. Y el en un momento dado lo que nos dijo es, bueno, vamos a empezar por que escribas una obra para un instrumento solo. Tu escoges cual, y pues yo ya había escogido el oboe porque era, como oboísta dije, a pues la voy a—voy a componer mi primer pieza para oboe. Bueno de hecho ya había compuesto una obra para oboe solo que se llama *Monólogo*. Pero, me dijo entonces que compusiera una obra para instrumento solo. Pero, de pronto me dijo ay, pero yo quiero que sea una obra como de ocho minutos. Y yo dije, ocho minutos para oboe solo? Pobre oboísta se va a

quedar sin labios, no? Y aparte si tocas sin acompañamiento, o sea que todo el tiempo tiene que estar tocando, dije, no, o sea no, no, no. Digo ocho minutos yo creo que no, va a hacer mas como de seis. Entonces lo que dije es bueno, si tiene que ser una obra para oboe solo tan larga, tiene que ver mucho silencio. Entonces mi idea fue, voy a hacer un tema que tenga muchos silencios, y poco a poco—va a hacer como un tema con variaciones—y entonces, poco a poco voy a ir agregando notas, agregando notas, hasta llegar a un punto culminante, digamos, más virtuoso. Y después poco a poco voy a ir quitando, pues para darle chanza al pobre oboísta de que respire, de que se le descansen los labios, etcétera, y que realmente tenga sentido porque no puede un oboísta tocar ocho minutos sin parar solo, entonces, no, yo tengo que ser esta pieza así. Y de hecho esa fue la—

L: Y todos los oboístas del mundo le dan gracias por hacer esto.

O: [ríe] Si, si, y de hecho, bueno, en ese momento había compositora pero también oboísta. Realmente estaba tocando mucho, entonces me quejaba yo mucho de algunas obras de compositores que yo sentía que eran completamente anti oboísticas, o nada idiomáticas para el oboe. O con frases muy largas que no dejan respirar, que no dejan descansar, etcétera. Y entonces dije, no, no mi pieza tiene que estar realmente pensando en un oboísta, en las características al final de cuentas del oboe, y afortunadamente pues las conocía bien. Entonces, así surgió esta obra. Y, digamos, una vez que pensé en esta idea empecé a componer la pieza. Tenía la idea, bueno, me inventé un poquito mi escala. No quería que fuera ni mayor ni menor. Entonces, hice allí una mezcla entre—bueno, tengo *fa* sostenido pero tengo *si* bemol—hacer una escala inventada, si queremos. Digo, no tanto porque es parte un poco del sistema tonal pero que no fuera claramente mayor o menor. Entonces inventé este tema, este primer tema, y la idea era, bueno, hacer las variaciones, o una especie como de *passacaglia* o *chacón* donde tenemos algo y vamos agregando notas, pero la base es la misma. Entonces, cada dos compases la nota va a hacer la misma que encontramos todo a lo largo de la pieza. Después, bueno, surgió un poquito esta idea de, ya sea, como la meditación y la danza me imagine como que estamos tranquilos en calma como meditando y poco a poco nosotros, o nuestro espíritu digamos, empieza como a despertarse, a bailar, a moverse mucho, a tener mucha actividad, y poco a poco regresar a la calma nuevamente y a ese estado de, como de meditación, si así queremos pensarlo. Y la otra imagen que tenía, era, como la de un encantador de serpientes, y aparte bueno el sonido del oboe mucha veces remite a—

L: Si, si.

O: A esos tocadores de—encantadores de serpientes. Entonces era también esa idea de que bueno a lo mejor el que está tocando—el oboísta—empieza a despertar a la serpiente que va a salir de la canasta, va a bailar y después, bueno, la regresa tranquilamente a su cesto. Entonces, esas eran las dos imágenes que tuve al componer esta pieza. Más adelante ya después de haberla tocado, escuchado, etcétera, como que de una manera un poco más filosófica, si queremos, me lo imagine un poco también como...un poco como la vida misma, no? Surge, hacemos muchas cosas y después bueno regresamos a ese estado de calma o desaparición digamos. Aparece y desaparece uno...bueno un poquito esta idea. Bueno, esa es la idea de Semelíami.

L: Entonces, en tus notas de programa en la pieza si dice que Semelíami es una palabra de los *rarámuri*.

O: Mmhm.

L: Entonces, el nombre vino al final o al comienzo o en medio de componer esta...?

O: Hacia el final. Digamos que estaba—había compuesto la pieza, me la llevaba imaginado ya como esta danza. Era de mi ideas originales era eso, como la meditación, la danza y regreso—y estaba buscando algún nombre para mi pieza y...tengo un conocido, mi cuñado. Era—bueno es—etnomusicólogo y antropólogo y el estudia precisamente los pueblos indígenas del norte de México. Entonces buscando nombres que también—bueno a varias de mis piezas les e dado nombre, digamos, en palabras o en lenguas indígenas. Esa fue de las primeras, entonces fue tal vez la primera con la que empecé esta serie de títulos en idiomas—sí lenguajes tradicionales, digamos, de lenguas indígenas. Entonces él me sugirió, porqué les digo, “A ver, necesito un nombre como de algo que puede ser danza, o baile, etcétera.” Bueno estaba dándoles diferentes ideas, y entonces me dijo “Ah, pues, ay esta palabra, *semelíami*,” que quiere decir, como música—pero es una música para ser bailada, no. Y pues me gusto aparte mucho la palabra, como el sonido de *semelíami*. Entonces ya, de que la—me la sugirió dije, okay, perfecto ese—ese es el nombre de mi pieza.

L: Algo que yo también—me gusta mucho de su pieza es que está en—no se como se dice en español—en compás mixto?

O: Ah-ha—

L: En inglés es *mixed meter*—ah bueno pues! Piezas que son así a mí me encantan mucho porque me gusta como suenan y cómo se sienten. Eso usted lo decidió casi al empezar la pieza, o como vino usar eso?

O: Si—bueno creo—ya fue hace muchos años! Pero, mi idea de hacer—esta idea de que fuera una danza, de que empezamos con calma y vaya una danza en el centro—mucho de la música tradicional Mexicana, digamos los sones, o una parte de los sones, están escritos así en ese compás combinado de seis octavos y tres cuartos. Entonces, allí sí, mi recorrido en mis clases de danza— de baile tradicional cuando era niña también, me marcaron mucho en ese sentido. Entonces, pues si, el ritmo *tara ta tara ta, tan tan tan, tara*—yo dije ah, pues eso va a hacer lo que va a tocar mi variación, digamos, compleja del centro, va a tener este ritmo. Pero, entonces mi decisión fue, desde el principio voy a tener ese compás mixto y aunque al principio hay una sola nota, y el oyente no va a—no está escuchando ese ritmo implícito—el oboísta si tiene que tener conciencia desde el principio—aunque está tocando una sola nota saber que se va hacia ese ritmo compuesto de seis octavos y tres cuartos. Entonces sí, desde el principio tenía esa idea clara de que iba hacer una danza con ese ritmo combinado tradicional Mexicano, y que iba a irlo introduciendo, pues poco a poco, en conforme van empezando a entrar las notas empezamos a entender que hay ese ritmo de base.

L: Si.

O: De hecho, parte de los problemas que he tenido a veces con ciertos intérpretes que no conocen el, digamos el son a la música tradicional Mexicana, es que no entiende porqué desde el principio de la pieza pongo los dos compases si no tiene sentido al principio. O a veces me sugerían, escríbelo todo en seis octavos y simplemente pones los acentos de la otra manera pero...para mí como que era muy importante el tener esa combinación desde el principio, y de hecho sentirla no, que esté interna desde el principio y poco a poco se va haciendo más patente para el escucha—pero está implícita desde la primera—desde la presentación del tema.

L: Y eso es algo de su obra que a mi me encanto, que—como que poco a poco se viene el—*the listener* pues, el que se está oyendo tocar—

O: Va construyendo.

L: Ah-ha. Va construyendo ese compás, eso me encanto. Pues me encanta su pieza.

O: [ríe] Muchas gracias!

L: Bueno, hay algo específico que quiera decirle al intérprete que a lo mejor sin, no—algo específico que quiere que el intérprete que...

O: Comunicar—

L: Déjeme decir esto en ingles

O: Ah-ha.

L: Si esta bien. Is there something specific you would like to say to oboists—to convey what the piece is—or is there a specific emotion or is there just anything you would like to say to any person who's playing your piece? (Hay algo específico que le gustaría decir a los oboístas—para explicar de qué se trata la pieza—o hay alguna emoción específica, o algo que le gustaría decir a cualquier persona que esté tocando su pieza?)

O: Yo diría que como...bueno como danza, digamos, y como una pieza—ya se que la pensemos como una música para ser bailada, o ir de la meditación, a la danza, y regresar a la meditación—no importa en que, bueno como qué idea o que imagen sea la que nos inspira. La idea sería de hacer algo, algo que se disfrute. O sea, yo quisiera que la disfruten a la hora de tocarla que no la sufran. Yo ahí debo de confesar que como oboísta no soy tan virtuoso como algunos de los que ya la han tocado. Entonces, digamos, a veces la parte del tempo—no definí un tempo porque dije bueno tal vez alguien la puede tocar más rápido que lo que yo soy capaz, pero yo no podía tocar digamos, las variaciones intermedias a lo mejor rapidísimo. Entonces, ciertas respiraciones justamente que me decían—hace unos días hubo un oboísta que me decía, “ay, la respiración que está allí en la variación es obligatoria o no?” Y le digo, “bueno no, podría ponerla entre paréntesis porque *yo* la necesitaba, pero si ustedes no la necesitan, pues no.” Simplemente es una sugerencia de—se puede respirar allí si quieren, pero no es necesaria. De hecho, yo me sorprendí mucho de la velocidad con la que algunos oboístas la tocan, para mí era muy rápida pero bueno, si funciona, funciona. Para mi, la idea, la indicación, de que—pues tocarlo tan rápido mientras sea musical, mientras lo sientan coherente está bien. Entonces simplemente para mi es una pieza en la que deben de disfrutar que no es una pieza de sufrimiento. No deben de hacer sufrir al

escucha que digan, ay se va a morir allí porque se está poniendo rojo, no tiene donde respirar, simplemente una pieza pues, que se debe de disfrutar. Puede ser virtuoso si lo quieren, si así lo sienten si va con su personalidad, pero también puede ser una obra más calmada, más sin... sin esta parte—las variaciones intermedias de cualquier manera van a hacer un poco virtuosas, pero no tiene que ser—no es concurso de velocidad tampoco, no? Entonces sería nada más eso creo.

L: Bueno pues—

O: El pensar si en ese ritmo, digamos, de principio a fin. Y tal vez las primeras variaciones, para los que la toquen muy lento como yo, a veces... el tratar de que no sean sonidos aislados, sino tratar de que pese todo el silencio. Hay una línea musical desde el principio—a veces, a lo mejor hay que alargar un poquito esas primeras notas, esas negras con punto, a lo mejor hacerlas más largas para que se sienta un poquito esa línea, pero que lo piensen—o sea, cada tema es como, si, la línea completa aunque haiga mucho silencio.

L: Si, mi maestra siempre dice que el silencio tiene que ser parte de la música—no nomas es silencio, es parte de la música.

O: Si. Si, si, y imaginar, o sea, desde que están tocando una nota llega el silencio pero, ay viene la otra, no.

L: Mhmm, mhmm. Hay una otra cosa que quiere decir sobre su obra? O ya? [ríe]

O: Pues, creo que ya, lo único que podría agregar es que en algún momento—bueno la hice para oboe después me imaginé que podía ser también para corno inglés entonces había esa versión. Y después estando aquí en Quebec, algunos amigos clarinetistas me pidieron que haya—entonces existe la versión para clarinete y después para clarinete bajo que incluso se grabó ya en un par de discos. Entonces, la versión original es para oboe, pero existen todas estas otras versiones. Tal vez, comparando la versión por ejemplo de clarinete bajo, pues, se pueden hacer *pianos* más...

L: Si.

O: Más exagerados.

L: Si, si.

O: Y tal vez para ellos es un poco más fácil la parte virtuosa, sufren menos con la respiración, pero si el color y el carácter, original digamos, pues, era realmente pensado para el oboe.

L: Bueno—

O: Sería todo. [ríe]

L: Volviendo otra vez más como a tópicos de—creo que de biografía. Había dicho que es pues de México, nació en México, allí hizo su, um—

O: Hasta la licenciatura.

L: Cómo fue irse de México y ir a estudiar a diferente lugar y fue diferente, como, el mundo de música que estudió en México? Como se comparaba con el mundo que tuvo que ir a estudiar en Montreal—

O: En Canadá—si en Montreal. Uh-huh.

L: Uh-huh.

O: De hecho yo estudié—entonces mi, digamos, mi carrera hasta las dos licenciaturas que termine, que fue en oboe y en composición en México. Y siempre había tenido, como la curiosidad de salir a estudiar fuera. Mi hermana ya había salido a estudiar a París, en su área. Y como que sí, siempre me llamaba la atención, la idea de salir a estudiar fuera. Pero no, bueno, al principio cuando termine la carrera y todo no se dio, digamos, situaciones un poco de la vida. Pero también fue un poco azares del destino que me llevaron finalmente a salir a estudiar fuera. Por un lado, en esa época en México cuando yo termine no existían estudios de Maestría, en México, no había en donde estudiarlos. Ya al final cuando salí, empezaba a ver una Maestría en Jalapa, pero en la Ciudad de México no había nada. Entonces, la idea de seguir los estudios, de seguir aprendiendo, pues tenía uno que salir fuera. Entonces, el hecho de a donde ir es lo que fue un poco azaroso.

Tal vez, en México lo que más se conocía era la idea de salir a estudiar a Europa, pero a lo largo de mis estudios había tenido algunos—encuentros con unos maestros—y no estaba yo tan convencida de ir a Europa. Por un lado, si hice en algún momento un—como un examen de admisión, si queremos—en Londres para estudiar, y era más música electroacústica. Yo trabajé en el centro multimedia, del Centro Nacional de las Artes un año, y había estado familiarizado con las computadoras, los sonidos—entonces dije, bueno pues puede ser una idea. Me habían aceptado, pero en ese momento tenía yo un novio que también pensaba ir allá, pero con él, bueno, no funcionó la idea de ir a Londres. Y entonces bueno, decidimos bueno, pues no vamos allá, los quedamos aquí. Por otro lado yo había conocido un maestro también en México de composición que—bueno Europeo—y la impresión que a mí me dio es que era un medio un poco cerrado. Como que era ciertas escuelas, y bueno, si vas a componer con tal maestro, o sea se compone de tal manera y no tenía uno mucha libertad.

L: Mhmm.

O: Y eso en general yo lo había oído en diferentes escuelas en Europa, también en Francia, en el...no, hay que componer más cierta música de cierto estilo, o a pegarse a ciertas corrientes. No estaba yo muy convencida de si eso era lo que quería. Y realmente por afaz del destino, en un momento dado...yo rompí la relación que tenía con este novio, y en un momento dado regresamos y me dijo, “a pero yo tengo el plan de ir a estudiar a Montreal. Si, a ir a estudiar, allí hay una carrera que me interesa, pues yo voy.” Dije, bueno, pues okay, voy averiguar yo también y vamos, no. Entonces averigüé en Montreal que había y una amiga conocida me puso en contacto con otra compositora que estaba estudiando en la Universidad de Montreal. Y su maestro era precisamente José Evangelista, que es de origen Español, y entonces bueno, resultó muy fácil el contacto, porque bueno, pues por el idioma de entrada eso ayudaba. Y él me dijo bueno, mándame tus obras y veremos qué podemos hacer. Entonces le mande mis obras y me

dijo sí, me daría mucho gusto trabajar contigo pero hay que hacer todo el proceso, digamos, oficial, entonces manda tus documentos, manda tu solicitud y menciona allí que ya estuviste en contacto conmigo y me van a enviar tu candidatura y pues veremos, no. Entonces, pues, lo mandé y si me aceptaron, entonces en ese momento ya yo rompí mi relación con este novio definitivamente. Pero dije bueno, ya tengo la aceptación que hago, voy o no voy? Y bueno, decidí que sí, que desde luego este era un proyecto que me interesaba a mí, y una cosa que me gustó muchísimo de aquí es que a diferencia de lo que yo había escuchado de Europa—de que es muy, hay que seguir la escuela y la manera de componer es esta—aquí hay una, digamos, tiene la ventaja y la desventaja tal vez, bueno la característica de que no tenía una tradición de...

L: De años, sí.

O: De años como en Europa. Y es un lugar en Montreal donde hay mucha inmigración, de todas partes del mundo, entonces la gente está muy abierta a ver qué pasa en otros lados, a diferentes maneras de componer. Y más bien hay como mucha curiosidad de que es lo que estás haciendo tú, cuál es tu manera, etcétera. Una gran, gran, gran apertura, e incluso entre los maestros de composición hay una gran variedad respecto a sus maneras de componer, de abordar la composición, etcétera. Entonces, me encantó la manera de trabajar con José Evangelista. Al igual que digamos, con Mario Lavista, unas de las grandes ventajas es que te ayudan a que tu música sea mejor según lo que tú estás proponiendo, pero no te obligan a que tu música tiene que ser de tal manera, o de tal otra. Entonces uno puede encontrar realmente cuál es su camino, cuál es tu camino. Y entonces pues con José pude trabajar así, es alguien que me daba mucha información sobre, “ah te interesa esto, pues porque no vas a ver las obras de tal, tal, tal otros compositores que han hecho algo parecido, o que pueden hacer algo que a lo mejor te interesa, etcétera.” Entonces fue muy rico.

Y cuando me quedé a estudiar con Alan Belkin realmente eran—bueno trabajamos la orquesta—era alguien que me ayudaba mucho a mejorar, bueno la forma de las piezas, como la estructura, y a trabajar realmente con la orquestación. Pero dejándome completa libertad respecto a el lenguaje, lo que yo quería hacer, etcétera. Es algo que, si disfrute, aprecie, y sigo disfrutando mucho de aquí, que realmente podemos ir a conciertos *muy* variados. O sea, puedes ir a conciertos de música, bueno, contemporánea, compositores vivos que puede ser tonal, puede ser atonal, puede ser electroacústica—hay de todo. Y hay como mucho respecto, y mucha apertura, a todo tipo de maneras de componer. Bueno pues, eso fue, y bueno ya para decir porque sigo yo aquí— mientras realicé mis estudios, conocí a mi pareja, y él es de aquí. Y entonces bueno en un momento dado cuando yo iba a terminar mi doctorado— todo ver la posibilidad de que hacemos, los vamos a México, nos quedamos acá, y bueno finalmente resultaba más fácil el quedarse aquí que yo ya estaba adaptada a este medio y, bueno, por eso ya llevo veinte años por acá.

L: Bueno pues, esta siguiente pregunta, creo que es un poco más personal, así que...nomás conteste a lo quiera. Pero, una de las razones que empecé a hacer mi tesis, mi dissertation pues, era parte porque si quiero que más personas sean expuestas a esta música, porque sí existe, nomás es que a veces es un poco trabajoso encontrarla, aunque existe. Entonces eso era una parte, que quiero que gente tenga un lugar donde pueda ir allí y encontrar música específicamente de compositores Mexicanos. Y la otra parte era porque, hasta mi maestría—

como le dije fui nacida aquí, pero mis padres siempre me—creciendo siempre me decían nunca te olvides de tus raíces, y tu cultura, tú eres Mexicana, vas a hablar español. No vamos a dejar, aunque vivas aquí en los Estados Unidos, te olvides de tus raíces. Y entonces, no fue coma hasta mi maestría que empecé a pensar que—como que mi identidad como mujer Mexicana también está incluida en mi identidad de música clásica. Porque nunca me había visto mucho en la música que yo estudiaba, ni en mis compañeros. Muchas veces era una de las únicas, personas pues de México—

O: De origen diferente.

L: Ah-huh, de origen diferente. Usted a... nos sé cómo preguntar esto, si puede en—

O: En inglés está bien.

L: Bueno pues. Have you felt that at any point in your career as a composer—specifically as a woman Mexican composer? Or has your experience been different? Or maybe you've never even thought about it like that, considering you did your first degrees in Mexico. I guess it's an open question to whatever you want to answer. (En algún momento de su carrera como compositora, ha sentido eso? Específicamente como compositora mexicana? O ha sido diferente su experiencia? O tal vez nunca lo haya pensado de esa forma, considerando que estudio su primer título en México. Supongo que es una pregunta abierta a lo que quiera responder.)

O: Yo creo que sí—bueno una de las cosas que...que también de cierta manera me marcaron, cuando yo estaba estudiando—empezando a estudiar composición—pues, sí, estos maestros que venían a veces a dar clases a La Escuela Nacional de Música, que venían de fuera, que venían de Europa. Digamos que, bueno viví las circunstancias de ver a veces la cerrazón de...de algunos de ellos. De decir no, la música—o sea, escuchar algo, supuestamente digamos con cierta apertura, es decir, ah no vamos—vengan a exponer su música—vamos a traer música de otras gentes que quieran proponer. Pero cada vez que se presentaba algo, a veces desacreditarlo por completo, diciendo eso no es música, no. Bueno, me paso con la mía, pero paso con un compositor Cubano que llegó a presentar su obra. Entonces presentó una pieza coral que era una rumba, maravillosa—bueno a mí me encantó, como que tenía esa raíz de música clásica pero al mismo tiempo tradicional. Y al final de haber presentado y todo, a la clase siguiente el maestro que venía de Europa diciendo ,“ah, se acuerdan lo que dijo el maestro Cubano? Bueno olvídenlo todo eso no es música.”

L: Ah!

O: Entonces fue tan radical, que para mí sí fue muy claro el decir, okay—aguas, no? Tu quién eres, o sea, quieres componer música—qué música es la que te mueve a ti? Con qué música te identificas? Más con esta música que tiene unas raíces latinas y que está usando elementos de la música occidental pero que tiene sus raíces aquí. O, esta música un poco más abstracta, que te dicen que *tiene* que ser la música de esta manera, y si no compones de esta manera no es música y no es válida. Entonces, digamos, que el vivir eso fue, un poco traumatizante, tal vez, pero al mismo tiempo muy afortunado porque—entonces desde esos primeros años de mi formación, para mí fue muy claro el decir, bueno, para mi es claro que esta música que me habían

presentado tiene su valor, y me identifico más con esa. Entonces si en Europa la van a menospreciar, pues a lo mejor no es el lugar a donde yo quiero ir, o a lo mejor, por lo menos no con ese tipo de personas, si—ir a estudiar. Entonces me interesa más otro tipo de acercamiento. Entonces, tal vez desde esos momentos para mí era claro que no—para mí eran muy importantes mis raíces, antes de estudiar o paralelamente a estudiar música—yo en algún momento dado había empezado también a estudiar historia... historia con la idea de especializarme en la historia del arte, y más enfocada en la música. Acabé dejándolo, porque bueno aun para los maestros de historia del arte que tuve—muchas veces la música no era arte, sino que lo que enseñaban de historia del arte iba a ser pintura, escultura, a lo mejor arquitectura, ya hasta allí. Entonces bueno, acabe dejando eso, pero yo sí, me acerque a estudiar mucho sobre la música prehispánica en México. Es un poco difícil porque no hay muchos documentos, mucho de la música se perdió porque era muy cercana a toda la cosmogonía de los pueblos indígenas, y entonces pues los colonizadores no querían que siguiera sonando esa música si era muy relacionada con las creencias de las naciones. Pero, bueno, no quiere decir que no había. Había y era super, super, super importante. Entonces, bueno, sí había ciertas fuentes de los instrumentos que existían. Hay ciertos códices o ciertos relatos, incluso los colonizadores que hablaban sobre la música. Entonces yo investigué mucho sobre todo esto, y para mí era una tragedia que se hubiera perdido parte de esa música, pero a la vez el darse cuenta que nuestra música tradicional Mexicana—o folclórica, si quieres—hay mucho de esos orígenes de esa música original de aquí. Y entonces para mí era...era muy importante rescatar pues esos—ese ritmo de tres cuartos seis octavos, toda esa riqueza—pues lo que se pudiera porque hay cosas que bueno, ni modo se perdió esa música, pero hay cosas que siguen un poco presentes.

El hecho de que no había instrumentos de cuerda entonces todos los instrumentos de aliento y de percusión—entonces no es raro que los conciertos que yo he escrito hasta ahora pues son instrumentos de aliento o marimba, o etcétera. Entonces ese gusto por una música muy rítmica en el que el ritmo es importante, no voy a buscar tanto atmósferas o contrastes de ciertas sonoridades—o ciertas características, incluso armónicas de la música. Como que no me llaman tanto a mí—no digo que no sean válidas, o sea, habrá muchos compositores que las usen y me parecen maravillosas—pero en el momento en el que yo trabajo mis piezas hay otro tipo de cosas que me atraen más, como la parte rítmica, y es con los que yo desarrollo. Pero ya me hice bolas, ya no se ni cual era la pregunta.

Entonces, digamos que, si había una cierta consciencia de decir, yo quiero buscar en esas raíces Mexicanas, indígenas, de nuestro folclor, o algo que me va a...a alimentar el tipo de música que yo compongo. Y luego, bueno, cuando uno sale a vivir fuera, evidentemente pues...digamos, uno se cuestiona mucho sobre la identidad, sobre quien es uno, de donde viene, y cuáles son las cosas buenas, las cosas no tan buenas del lugar de dónde vienes. Y también, cuáles son las similitudes, y cuáles son las diferencias con respecto al lugar al que llegas. Desde luego, hay muchas cosas que yo valoraba y sigo valorando de México y de la música Mexicana que estarán presentes en mi música, y en mi manera de ver, de componer, de escuchar, de bailar. Y por otro lado, al llegar a otro lugar pues también hay cosas que uno empieza a adoptar. Pues uno acaba haciendo también un poquito esa mezcla. Ahora en el momento en el que tu llegas y vas a presentar—o en la universidad que yo llegaba y voy a componer, voy a presentar mi pieza, pues todo el mundo si

te está viendo un poco como, ah, esta es la Mexicana, no? Ya ahorita, después de muchos años, y que bueno ya tengo la doble nacionalidad etcétera, pues si aquí también te adoptan como, bueno es la compositora Quebeca, o la compositora Canadiense, o Mexicana o Canadiense. Pero si, a lo mejor te ven como un poquito todavía como, bueno tienes esos dos colores. Aquí, afortunadamente en Canadá, siento que se ve como una calidad, como algo bueno que te hace interesante que te hace a lo mejor diferente a los demás, pero en un sentido positivo.

L: Mmhmm.

O: Entonces digamos que no vas—no sufrí, digamos, el que me vieran como “ah, es Mexicana y entonces va a hacer algo despectivo,” sino más bien con curiosidad y como algo positivo, de que “ah, bueno a ver que va a presentar,” y “ah si, mira que interesante.” Entonces, digamos que no tuve conflicto en poder componer la música que yo quería, y el que se viera mal por mi origen—sino al revés, como algo a lo mejor interesante y positivo. Y por otro lado, también el aprender a integrarte y a vivir aquí—pues ahora una pieza que se acaba de estrenar mía, tanto en México como aquí, es una fantasía hibernal...en la que describo más los paisajes nevados, con más calma de aquí, etcétera. Entonces bueno, también ya en mi música hay algo, que es mío, que es propio, que viene de mis experiencias de lo que he vivido, pero de lo que he vivido aquí. Entonces, pues seguramente hay esa mezcla también de culturas que, pues, es parte de mi vida y seguramente es parte de mi música.

L: Bueno, gracias. Ahora, una última cosa que quiera agregar—estas eran casi todas mis preguntas—antes de preguntarle por información de contacto. Pero si hay algo que quiera agregar usted que no le pregunte, o algo que nomás quiera...

O: Pues creo que no, solamente qué, pues qué bueno que estás haciendo—digo felicidades por este trabajo, porque como dices, el motivo de hacerlo fueron similares a los míos—

L: Muy similares.

O: —creí que era muy importante, y aunque a veces no tiene impacto inmediato, si poco a poco—bueno mira, varios años después y va haciéndose cadenita. Y si yo creo que es importante que se conozcan esas obras, digo si están. Habrán unas muy valiosas, o a lo mejor no tanto, pero bueno si no se conocen, si no se tocan, pues no podemos saberlo. Entonces, pues sí, ojalá y sirva para que haiga mas difusión, para que se toquen mas, y bueno, se puedan grabar, y alcancen a—a que más gente, también el público, que las conozca. Pues, que bueno, felicidades...

L: Gracias.

O: Por tu trabajo.

L: Mi objetivo después de hacer mi tesis es hacer—aunque sea un Google doc, o un documento pues, que se pueda mandar a quien quiera, que allí este una lista de música, y como comprarla, como adquirirla. Y en un entonces quiero ver si puedo hacer un sitio web donde pueden ir todos. Pero eso sería ya en el futuro.

O: Ojalá, ojalá. [ríe]

L: Bueno pues, ya lo último que le quería preguntar y no se si a lo mejor me lo quiere mandar después o aquí nomás. Preguntarle por información de contacto, como la pueden contactar a usted si alguien se interesa en su música o quiere comprar su música. Pero no se si eso lo quiera hacer aquí o más adelante.

O: Puede ser las dos cosas. Mi correo—digo si este video permanece mucho tiempo, esperemos que siga siendo el mismo, pero veremos—es aleodgers@yahoo.ca. Entonces en ese correo, bueno me pueden escribir, me pueden contactar y bueno, allí podremos establecer contacto, intercambio, según la información que busquen. Y si no, mis partituras se encuentran, prácticamente todas, en El Centro de Música Canadiense. Es un centro que hace la difusión de la música, no es un editorial como tal, pero sí en su página pueden ver por compositor que obras están allí y comprarlas o rentarlas, según lo que sea. Algunas pueden ser en formato papel o pueden ser en PDF, entonces, pues sería en El Centro de Música Canadiense, pueden escribir en inglés o en francés, o incluso en español. Y bueno, allí se pueden comprar la música.

L: Bueno, tenía una última pregunta, y ya se me fue mientras me estaba contestando esta.

O: Mi correo—página? Bueno hay una pagina de internet también, si buscan “Alejandra Odgers compositora” me van a encontrar también. Allá hay una página donde está también mi catálogo y algo de información.

L: Ya me acordé! Mencionó que había escrito otra obra para oboe más aparte de *Semelíami* esa está en circulación o la vende o—

O: Si, también está allí en El Centro de Música Canadiense. De hecho, se llama *Monólogo*, y esa fue la primera pieza digamos más oficial que compuse. Antes había compuesto dos variaciones, no—dos invenciones, las dos para piano, un para dos voces y una para tres voces, pero eran invenciones que trataban un poquito de imitar el lenguaje de Bach, entonces como las invenciones de Bach. Pero digamos la primera pieza que compuse de manera ya completamente libre fue *Monólogo* que es una pieza para oboe en tres movimientos. Entonces esa si se encuentra en El Centro de Música Canadiense.

L: La buscaré entonces, porque nomas conocía a *Semelíami*, pero bueno pues—

O: Muy bien.

L: Eso es todo lo que tenía para usted, otra vez muchas gracias por aceptar ser parte de esto y darme esta entrevista.

O: No pues con todo gusto y mucha suerte, que tengas toda la información que necesitas y que se pueda difundir. Si sería bueno—a lo mejor te pediré también si se puede consultar por internet después tu tesis, o el catálogo o lo que sea. A lo mejor también yo en mi página podré poner algo de información y sobre todo mandárselos, pues si a los oboístas, para que aprovechen y conozcan esta música.

L: Si, cuanto lo entregue a mi escuela debe de ser siempre accesible por ellos—pero si se lo mando cuando ya esté todo hecho.

O: Muy bien.

L: Bueno pues...

O: Pues gracias Lupita y pues mucha suerte!

L: Muchas gracias y gracias otra vez por la entrevista y por la plática.

O: De que, hay seguimos en contacto.

L: Bueno.

O: Hasta luego.

APPENDIX C: FULL ENGLISH INTERVIEW TRANSLATIONS

Leticia Armijo

Wednesday December 28, 2022, 12 PM Central Standard Time. Both the composer and I were in Mexico at the time, but in different areas.

A: So, Lupita Ramos.

L: Yes, Guadalupe but I always go by Lupita.

A: Yeah, yeah that's better. I'll write that here, Lupita Ramos.

L: And I'm an oboist, so I look at this piece from the point of view of an oboist.

A: Ah! So you look at it like a piece for oboe, yeah?

L: Mhmm, yes.

Well then, just to explain a bit how this interview is going to go, it's a simple interview, I'm going to ask you for biographical information as well as information of your piece—sorry it's just that in different places it has a different name, what is it called?

A: Eh, the piece? Well it's been a long while since I haven't looked at it, let me just see here—

L: In one place I think it says *Madereira* and in another...*Madeaire* so I don't know which one is right.

A: Ah-ha, let me see...

L: Mhmm.

A: I'll tell you which is the real name of the piece—well, first tell me why are you interested in this piece?

L: Well right now I'm working on my doctorate but the idea for this project started when I was in my master's. It was the first time that I played a piece for oboe by a Mexican composer. And from there I began thinking, I've been in school for some six years and this is the first time in my life that I've played a piece for oboe by a Mexican composer, up till then I didn't even know there were any. And so—

A: Yes, can you give me a minute I have an urgent call, if you could give me—

L: That's fine.

A:—a minute.

[takes call]

A: Well it's just that amid my activities I'm also a cultural educator and so there's always urgent calls having to do with procedures and other things that we have to do for—

L: Mhmm.

A: For my mission. Well I'm going to tell you the exact name because like I was telling you, this group *Maderei* is—in reality I titled it like that because...

L: Mhmm.

A: Well let me look for it, *Made*...

L: Yes.

A: It's a group—*Madereira* it's called—

L: Yeah.

A: They're a group that I'll put here for you—no, no it's not this one, my apologies.

L: Mhmm.

A: It's just...let's see, let's see, Alejandro...

Well, he created a group, and so I dedicated to him...I dedicated this piece to the group. Because it was a group that was just starting, etcetera. So because of that I titled it like this. But the name is *Maderaire*...

L: Mhmm.

A: *Maderaire*, I'm going to put—I'm going to send it to you since we have different pronunciations of Spanish.

L: [laughs] Yeah.

A: You're not going to understand me. So there it is.

[sends name through chat]

L: [laughs] Thank you. Well [sounds out name] *Ma-de-raire*. Thank you.

A: Yes.

L: Well where were we, ah yes! I was explaining a bit...and well, it was in my masters that I first played a piece by a Mexican composer. And that stayed with me. Like I stayed thinking about it. In Mexican classical music and music for the oboe specifically by Mexican composers. And when I started my doctorate they told me you have to do a project for your dissertation and I thought why not this? To collect pieces for the oboe, be they solo or chamber works, by Mexican composers. And that's what I'm doing now, and that's why I found this piece.

A: Yes, well it's good that you found it.

L: Mhmm. And well, now to start the interview, if you could please introduce yourself. Your name and whatever other details you want to share about what you are doing now, be it in music or not in music, whatever you would like to share.

A: Well, I am Leticia Armijo, I'm a Mexican, feminist composer. I'm also the director of a women and music festival that's been happening since 1997 to date. A festival of women in art, at first we started with just music, but we have an area in literature, dance, the visual arts, cinematography, and we have our news agency. It's a large collective that also has its representation in the United States, in Spain, and in Cuba. We had one in Chile, but it didn't stick. And so what I do with this collective is let these works by women composers be known because while I graduated from UNAM as a composer I also have an investigative branch. I'm also a musicologist. I graduated years later but I did my doctorates in the history and science of music—which is musicology—to investigate works by women composers. I'm a specialist in the works of women—of the women composers of the twentieth century, of the twenty-first century. And also of soundscape and architectural landscape and in identity, those are my topics of investigation.

So my works aren't just another work—normally composers have a theme, or maybe a harmonic plan—they think a lot about these things—but I think about it coming from musicology. It's also like, crossing this historic moment that we're living—

L: Mhmm.

A:—the historic panorama of Mexican music. And I also have a facet—my life has various facets. I've also made music to treat frequent illnesses because my dad was a doctor. And so I learned a lot about medicine and one of his friends, doctor Salvador Capistran Alvarado, when I was doing my doctorates said to me, hey, why don't we do an investigative project to create music to treat frequent illnesses?

L: Mhmm.

A: Doctor Salvador Capistran is a doctor that is no longer living but that made all the—he was a researcher that made all of the operational rules in the health sector of Mexico...

L: Oh wow!

A:...in the seventies, eighties.

L: Mhmm.

A: He was also an acupuncturist and he studied Chinese medicine in Europe—I mean in China. So he has a vision that's a bit magical and esoteric of the power of the voice, of mantras. In the musicology program that I studied there was also a specialty of systematic musicology...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...to see what were the effects of music on the body, yeah? So I was very interested in that, and he was as well, so we made a discographic collection that's called *El Arte de la Sanación* (The Art of Healing). And with that—

L: Wow.

A: Yes, so, we've done a lot of work with that. So my pieces also have some traits depending on what it is I'm going to work.

L: Mhmm.

A: Or some of it is reclaiming, yeah? For example, the structure a lot of the time utilizes gender studies because I'm a specialist in the musical studies of gender...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...and of women. So a lot of the time I indicate a cause now, but the structure as well, and the most intimate parts of the music are...impregnated with this, yeah? As for what they have to do with...language, it's not just any old thing. Because I'm a specialist in the topic of identity as well I analyze my own works. I just wrote a book to demonstrate scientifically, through music analysis, what are the aesthetic elements of my music—what is the identity of my own music. So with this I have various books, various investigations. I belong to the *Sistema Nacional de Investigadores (National System of Researchers)* to this day. And I give classes in the engineering faculty in the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro (the Autonomous University of Querétaro).

L: Mhmm.

A: And in that university besides realizing these conferences of women in music, we also did a national conference. I've belonged to various investigative interdisciplinary groups. Like for example *Las Mujeres y el Quijote (Women and the Quixote)*. I did a guitar concert for the theme *Las Mujeres y el Quijote*. Another for identity. I also *participated* in a group directed by the doctor Begoña Lolo directs. She's a *very, very* prominent musicologist in Spain—in the field of musicology. And I participated in the group that she created to talk about the music in the independencies of all the Americas.

L: Mhmm.

A: And well, I'm also the director of the choral ensemble *Yolotli*, a choral group made up women from the indigenous communities of Mexico. So, I make music to rescue indigenous languages in danger of going extinct. I have an educational method in these indigenous languages.

L: Oh, how great.

A: It's sixty-four indigenous languages...

L: Oh, wow.

A: ...we sing in ten indigenous languages, attending to the ones that are being lost. And we have a show that's a hit. A few months ago we were in the Auditorio Nacional de Madrid (National Auditorium of Madrid) and precisely in that auditorium—we did a tour in Madrid and the choir was very successful, a full house. And it's well, really very, very successful so—

My works. I also have a lot of symphonic works that have been played by symphonies from Mexico, from Cuba, they've also been played in Chile, in Spain. And well I also have an opera based on texts by Federico García Lorca that I hope will be premiered one day. So I also have the project of traveling to New York in these—well once the cold passes because it's very cold.

L: Yes, and then in New York even more.

A: Yeah, so I'm going to wait for the weather to get better so I can go— precisely to present this opera based on texts by Federico García Lorca.

L: Mhmm.

A: There are a lot of facets to the story of my life because I'm also a militant of the feminist movement since the years—I'm a *pioneer* of the feminist movement. And also the lesbian movement in Mexico—of the first revolts—and even though I don't belong to these movements I am one of the ones that pushed for Mexico to have rights—

L: Oh, that's very good.

A: And also the first march against assault as well, and the first marches to defend the right to abortion. I also participated in these marches. And the communist party. So I have a very extensive streak of being a social justice fighter.

L: Mhmm. Good, well, I do have some questions about your feminism and also the topic of women in music but we'll get to that. For now I just wanted to ask how did you decide to study music? And from music it looks like you went to a lot of other areas in music—how did that happen?

A: Look, I'm the daughter of a surgeon that was the director of the Centro Medico La Raza (the Medical Center La Raza) and he also worked in a private pediatric hospital—I mean in the pediatric hospital El Hospital de Peralvillo (The Hospital of Peralvillo). A hospital where children arrived, well, with grave wounds, stabbed, victims of a lot of violence.

L: Yeah.

A: In Mexico there is a lot of violence. And it has existed since then just now it's more visible, but violence and injustice have always existed. And the point is that my father was also a communist—he played the accordion, he played the guitar, and he gave me my first lessons. But my mother was the daughter of a field worker who was—he was one of the violinists of *Mariachi Vargas of Tecalitlán*. Because the mariachi are groups that originally are tied with field work, with the harvest.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: They were field workers who played *sones* and he played violin, he played the vihuela, he played the contrabass, he sang. And so this mix—my grandmothers, on my dad's side sang various voice parts, always very in tune. So this means that I am a musician going back one, two, three or four generations.

L: Mhmm.

A: But I had traditional music running through my veins since I was three or four. I sang, I didn't talk, I sang! [laughs]

So I sang songs and my dad, well, he saw that I had talent and he always composed little songs for me on the accordion. Since I was little...

L: Mhmm.

A:...they had to get me a guitar teacher! Originally the teacher was for my brother, but well, fortunately my brother didn't have much interest in music. He's an archeologist.

L: Mhmm.

A: And well I kept with it, playing music by ear, I played whatever instrument you put in front of me. I played percussion and when I started high school well I learned all—first I studied in the public school but around the year '73, which was when the Latin American coups happened I switched to a college for Spanish refugees, the Instituto Luis Vives (Luis Vives Institute). Chileans and Argentinians would arrive there and they brought with them their music.

L: Mhmm.

A: I listened to a lot of folk music and there I also...ah, because of the folk music there was a revitalization of traditional Mexican music too and of indigenous languages. And so I studied—while you go to school and they teach you folklore from the chalkboard, well in my life I was playing it instead—

L: You were living it. Yeah.

A: Living and composing and I—the truth is that I was very virtuous, a lot of my friends would tell me, hey, well it's that—

For example, one of the things I did is that I would play entire guitar concerts by ear.

L: Oh, wow.

A: [laughs] I would take out a guitar exercise, and because the CD player was half a step sharp, I would take it up half a step sharp. [laughs] And it turns out I was half a step flat!

L: Aha!

A: And so imagine that level of complexity. I had perfect pitch, although I didn't have the note associations yet, because they did get me a guitar teacher...

L: Mhmm.

A:...but there was a lot of things I didn't understand, yeah? Why did the guitar have six strings and the staff five? The musical education was very lousy, so that's why I entered the conservatory.

L: Mhmm.

A: A lot of years passed before I figured out that I really had a lousy musical education. And that's why I'm interested in musical pedagogy and in creating an educational method in indigenous languages. So I wrote this method, but I was also inspired by my own investigations of the Mexican composer Graciela Agudelo. I'm about to publish a book about her. She's passed away. But I did my thesis on her when I arrived in Spain and I realized the discrimination that existed towards Mexicans—and at first I was going to work on María Teresa Prieto, an exiled Spaniard who lived in Mexico. But when I saw this dearth of information about Mexicans I said no.

L: Mhmm.

A: I held onto Graciela Agudelo, who still lived. She checked all of my work—she passed away not long ago in 2018 and well, we're about to publish that work. Well I don't know if I answered your question.

L: No, yes, yes.

A: But yes, after I arrived at my music career and they demanded the piano of me, and the piano was a lot of work for me, because everything that was strings or percussion was always—but when they changed my perspective—and life changed my perspective as well because originally my dad, when we started our careers—me in my music career and my brother in archeology, my dad died—

L: Mmm.

A:—and so we had to return the piano that he'd given the down payment for. So that set back my career a lot because I had to study [laughs] on the pianos at the school. Wake up at five or six in the morning to study from seven until eight thirty...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...nine, and then go to work, I had to work. It was a life that at first was like honey over corn flakes³⁴⁴ with the support of family—but suddenly we ended up orphans because my mom also passed away two years later from cancer. And so there you have the poor siblings, getting on with their life without a piano and working. So in that moment, we'll say that the food fell from your plate to your mouth.³⁴⁵ I had to work like a wretch [laughs] to be able to keep studying for my career.

L: Yeah.

A: But well, these things make you...make you stronger, right? It's one of the good things of the...the gift that poverty gives you. [laughs] Right?

³⁴⁴ A saying that means life was very happy.

³⁴⁵ A saying that means something didn't go the way you thought it would, usually for the worst.

L: Yes.

A: Let me tell you. Because I had food to eat, but I was in a very limited situation, right?

L: Mhmm.

A: Very limited. And my study time was very limited. I also studied violin, I'm also a violinist. And I could have been an orchestral violinist but I wanted to be a composer and the little time I had left to study well I dedicated it to composition, but I could have also been a violinist, I had a lot of talent for it. And I also play guitar very well, in short, I had—and I sing! [laughs] So—

L: You do it all! Yes.

A:—I've studied all areas.

L: Yes. Well one of the areas that I was reading you are very interested in is the topic of *The Mexican Woman in Music*, and feminism, and gender studies. How did that come about? Was it while you were studying, or did you always have an interest in it, or...?

A: Well, since I was little I realized that even though my dad supported me and all we would go to my grandparents house and my grandfather would give us fifty pesos, ten for the girls and twenty for Ricardo.

L: Mmm.

A: We had to do the chores and my brother and grandfather would be in the living room sitting down and scratching their heads. When they got us a guitar teacher it was for Ricardo, and really I said no, no, no it can't be! He just has two balls and a dick. That can't be the reason that his situation is superior to ours. So I had a lot of friction with my brother.

L: Mhmm.

A: Poor him—and besides my brother was—he cried for everything. I had to defend him—

L: [laughs]

A: [laughs]—when they would hit him in the street. I defended him! Because I also studied martial arts.

L: Dang.

A: Even in the street. My dad one time, we were in the car and my dad cussed out another man and the man got out of their car. My dad was very short, he was shorter than I am. So we got out of the car and when my dad and Ricardo saw the man they ran into a supermarket. [laughs]

L: [laughs]

A: And there I was with the man, “hey you, you son of a bitch!” I defended them, so I always had like this necessity to defend others.

L: Mhmm.

A: I knew I was stronger. And since my mom, really. If my dad mistreated her I defended my mom. So I had a type of profile for defending human rights. In fact, when I was little I created a club, *El Club de Niñas Lomermosa* (Club of Lomermosa Girls) because it was all about *El Club de Toby* (The Toby Club), yeah? So I made the club for girls [laughs] right? We would give the cry of independence...

L: Aww.

A: It was funny really. And in elementary school, my mom and dad would tell us about the kids that they would abandon at the hospital and so I would organize all the girls, and the teacher, and the whole school...

L: Mhmm.

A:...to bring them clothes. Clothes and toys and cakes for the abandoned kids.

L: Mhmm.

A: So, studies have been done and it shows that that profile of being a social fighter is something you have since you are little, yeah?

L: Mhmm.

A: In fact, they were going to give me a scholarship from Ashoka, an international association, that doesn't grant the scholarship to the group but to the leader because it's the leader who—

L: Mhmm.

A: They've proved it, it's the leader who makes movements. It's not—the group works—but it's the leader that does all the dirty work. So, in that sense, I do have that profile.

And well, when I first started to work, precisely because I was left an orphan, I worked in the center for investigations of Carlos Chávez, the CENIDIM. It is a very important center for music investigation in Mexico, in *Bellas Artes*. And I would see that women composers would come in and their works would be played, their works were in programs, but when I looked at the music history books the women weren't there.

L: Mmm.

A: So I said, no, I have to investigate this. Why aren't the women there? So, since I began my career, I wanted to show the reasons that women weren't in the referenced documentary sources.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: So I wrote my first thesis—and we'll say that I'm a pioneer in the women in music movements in Mexico, because while there were women composers, there wasn't a collective. And this idea of a collective of women in music, it's an idea that comes from my feminist militancy. I mean, since I was a militant in the communist party, defending the collective over the personal.

L: Mhmm.

A: And when I was in the feminist movement, speaking about the collective over the personal, which is also political...

L: Mhmm.

A:...and about defending the collective. Well, I want my works to be played, but I don't go alone, it's me and the collective.

L: Mhmm.

A: So interpreters, researchers, were benefited by this situation. Thanks to my labor as director, because we say what collective? Well no, it was Leticia Armijo that is leading the collective.

L: Mhmm.

A: Which is why—for example the first women orchestral director in Mexico, she was orchestral director, I brought her! The works were published because I insisted.

L: Mhmm.

A: They were played by the orchestras because I went with a bunch of works. It wasn't all, it was me! [laughs] Even though I went as part of the collective...

L: Yes.

A: It was me. I was the pioneer in the women in music movement. And besides, I was the one who received all the blows by the groups in power...

L: Yes.

A:...from the schools, until this very moment I have a trial pending because they fired me from the *Escuela Nacional de Música*. The misogynist men finally triumphed.

L: Mmm.

A: And after twenty-one years of work. And to this day it hasn't been resolved. So, I mean, when those types of things happen I'm very happy because it goes better for me! Who knows how I do it, but there's always...

L: Yeah.

A:...I say, "Oh! Well this means that something great is going to happen!" And yes I was hired at *La Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro* (The Autonomous University of Queretaro), *Conacyt* (*Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología*) (National Council of Science and Technology) gave me a grant to study abroad. I mean—there's always like this beautiful part...

L: Mhmm.

A: And it recognizes talent, and it recognizes as well all the work I've done as a music professor, as a cultural educator, etcetera, with all these facets that—it's just that in reality it causes them a

lot of envy! [laughs] Seeing that I have an award—I won a national award of electroacoustic music, and twice I received the the Americas. I won the national award of symphonic music—I belong to the *Sistema Nacional de Investigadores*, and so it really grates on them.

L: Mhmm.

A: In a school where I have the highest teaching status in the entire school, right?

L: Yeah.

A: And so, well, in any case I still have to get justice, yeah?

L: Well, yes.

A: But well, Lupita, I don't know if up to there—that was my approach to the topic of women.

L: Mhmm.

A: And after with musicology, to demonstrate scientifically if there existed a reason, or not, for the music of women to be absent from the documented sources.

L: Mmm, mhmm. And so musicology came from all of that as well, in what you wanted to study of women and of women in music?

A: Of course, because you say, well you're a women, you're a musician, and you're a militant, but you need the history fundamentals, the scientific fundamentals—especially the scientific...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...to be able to demonstrate that what you are saying is true. Because you can say whatever you like...

L: Mhmm.

A:...but you have to prove it.

L: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

A: So, through historiography, music analysis, the testimony of women composers themselves, and from documented sources. You utilize all of musicology's tools and that's why my—both my bachelor's thesis and final exam was given honors. I had to present a final exam with works ranging from solos, duos, quartets, quintets, symphonic music, choir, and percussion. And of course, when it was my doctorate I was given *cum laude* for my work on Graciela Agudelo, it was very brilliant.

L: Mhmm. Well, thank you for that. And now moving a bit to your music in general. How would you describe your own musical style? Or do you think you have one?

A: Well, first of all, if we place ourselves in what is the music of the second half of the twentieth century and the new millennium, we can find that most of the documented sources only serve up

to the eighties, nineties, and the end of the new millennium. It's very few publications that really analyze what are the musicological tendencies, and above all the aesthetic tendencies—

L: Mhmm.

A:—of the composers of the twentieth century. So, addressing this context, the documented sources don't even have all this influence from the eighties, of the social movements, of folklore, of—

L: Mhmm.

A:—of militancy, of being a militant woman composer. And of all these influences that come from the exiled as well, yeah? And so in this sense if I did an analysis of Mexican music of the twentieth century, the end of the twenty-first century and the new millennium, and in all of that I also did an analysis of Mexican woman composers, and of their musics, and of their aesthetics.

L: Mhmm.

A: To be able to present to the composer Graciela Agudelo and to be able to present myself as a composer as well. In short, this is explained in more depth in my books...

L: Mhmm.

A: You can find that at the end of the new millennium, the beginning of this one, there are two big trends. One that goes towards simplicity, most composers go towards this new trend. And others, *very* little, go towards the new complexity, represented by twelve-tone music, by the uh...what are they called, extended techniques, etcetera, etcetera.

L: Mhmm.

A: But they're very few who go towards this new complexity. So in the majority, *even though* they also use the techniques and new technologies like computer music, electroacoustic music, they're like coming back to tonality. Right?

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: But a tonality not seen since the dominant tonic, instead an expanded tonality that we can call *pan*-tonality, as coined by the researcher and musicologist Rudolph Reti.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: So, depending on the piece, in this context, well I also know the new techniques, I have works that are *very*, *very* contemporary...

L: Mhmm.

A: I'm a specialist in electroacoustic music and I have an award in electroacoustic music. I work a lot with the voice, and it's also very interesting. And in that we can go more in depth later because it's worth going in depth into the work that I've done with the human voice.

L: Mhmm.

A: And extended techniques, and electroacoustic music. So, if we look at that—and soundscape, the importance of soundscape—I’m one of the first after the—

What happened towards the end of the sixties, the beginning of the seventies—is that all the composers, a lot of the exiled composers brought the contemporary techniques of twelve-tone, bitonality, pan-tonality, the use of the new technologies as well, but the new composers of Mexican music adopted these techniques.

L: Mhmm.

A: And then at a certain point there was a type of rupture with the public because there came a moment where that was the official language, and whoever didn’t follow that language, well, he was wasn’t well looked at.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: So, when I arrived at the *Escuela Nacional de Música* you had to compose the most frightening thing, the most horrible, the most atonal, the most twelve-tone. There wasn’t any questioning of this, you simply had to follow those techniques.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: So I resisted. I said I want to follow the path of music, of the history of music, and also because I had a very lyrical vein—that is talent. I’m very talented and I had a series of traditional melodies. So, they’d score me—instead of a ten they’d give me an eight³⁴⁶. So at a concert where I wrote some variations for piano based on an original theme, based on a theme of *danzon*.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: And Arturo Márquez went to that concert and he congratulated me. I presented the version for piano, he congratulated me and two years later he created his own *danzon*, right?

L: Ah-ha.

A: It’s famous, and I have my variations for orchestra on an original theme, but I was the *first* that said we have to retake, we have to reconstruct, we have to...readjust, and well, what makes me angry is that after they’d say, “Oh you’re a student of Arturo Márquez”. I am not a student of Arturo Márquez! That Arturo Márquez was inspired by *my* music is not my problem.

L: Mhmm.

A: And I’ve said that many times in the [laughs] in the press. This is published because there is no recognition that really this new tendency of the *danzon* that’s so famous and the *danzones* of Márquez—well it started with me—

L: Mhmm.

³⁴⁶ In Mexico grades are given on a 10-1 scale instead of an A-F scale.

A: I was the first one. Yeah?

L: Yeah.

A: And there's an Arturo Márquez award, and there's an Arturo Márquez contest where only men have won. Only one woman has won in I don't even know how many years. I'm going to create another—well I have my own festival of my own international Ibero-American conferences.

L: Mhmm.

A: But I'm also going to create a new festival because it's chosen like the PME [laughs] the figure is *him—he is* Arturo Márquez, the Arturo Márquez contest, they play his works and the works of who won.

L: Mhmm.

A: So, look at how it's like a cult to the—well really to the personality, and the erasing of who contributed to him writing that *danzón*. [laughs] Right?

L: Mhmm.

A: And, and well, also the erasing of women in general. So, unlike the collective that creates a forum where all women participate, everybody's works are played, there is a big difference. So, in terms of musical style my music has this, this lyrical vein. But I also traveled to Japan, and I lived in Japan, and I lived in Spain. I have influences from many countries...

L: Mhmm.

A: ...and from my militant life. So analyzing my music—I was also educated by Spanish refugees. So I have this Spanish vein, and a vein—I feel like an exile.

L: Mhmm.

A: And if you analyze my music, well you realize that within my music and the analyses of my works, there's a lot of elements of traditional Mexican music and of the music that the exiles brought with them. But there's a reworking of the discourse, of indigenous languages—a reclaiming of indigenous languages—of electroacoustic music, of the new technologies. So, really, something very important happens, which is what I've finally shown in my books. That in music, Mexican nationalism—that at first defined the national and what exists in the country—breaks. And so composers like me begin to exist, and barriers are broken and there is an exile—but through media—and the internet permits us access to many types of music.

L: Mhmm.

A: My yoga practice as well, all that has to do with the voice, with my work with the voice. And so, really, I'm a very eclectic composer that utilizes the music of other countries. My identity is not a Mexican identity.

L: Mmmm.

A: It's a Latin American identity.

L: Mhmm.

A: A Hispanic identity, we'll say, I feel like an exile.

L: Mhmm.

A: But my music has all these—all these elements converge in my music.

L: Mmm. And yes, you spoke a bit about your work for voice and I did want to ask you about that because in your catalog I saw that you wrote a lot for voice and even more for female voice. And I'm also interested in how you said you have works in languages that are in danger of extinction.

A: That's right, well the education method is made precisely for women because here in Mexico in indigenous communities like Chiapas women are prohibited from singing.

L: Oh!

A: They can't sing. Yes, there are countries where women can't sing, they can't compose because they'll be killed. In some countries of Islam they can't—they'll kill them, they throw them in jail and they wall them up. So they can't do it. So I said, I have to reclaim women's voices and these works are for women's choir. Because in my international conferences of Women in Art of Ibero-Americans...

L: Mhmm.

A:...they're thematic conferences. So, one of these conferences was called *El Arte de Las Mujeres como Agente de Cambio de Desarrollo Social* (The Art of Women as Agents of Social Change and Development). And the approach was, well, I'm not going to wait until the president gives the indigenous people food to eat to demonstrate that through art and culture people—people can better their quality of life. So we went to live in one of these indigenous communities of weavers...

L: Mhmm.

A:...in Chiapas—it's a much longer story than this. So we created a choir with them but we took a multidisciplinary approach with painting, visual art—I worked music with them. And so they showed us their language and their songs in their language and it was there that this project of rescuing these indigenous languages bloomed.

L: Mhmm.

A: So I went to other communities where there are less speakers and I made this repertoire, for mixed choir as well, but giving priority to the choir—to women.

L: Mhmm.

A: So that women would have a space because—look in a regular choir—for example, in Cuba instead of—there’s a street, there’s a city where they don’t have a street. They preferred, “well, you know what instead of building a street let’s make a choir.”

“Hey, well why?”

“Well because the choir will—[laughs] the choir will take care of each other, and the street, well nobody will take care of each other.”

L: [laughs]

A: They spend on the choir. [laughs]

L: [laughs]

A: And great bonds of union and solidarity are created.

L: Mhmm.

A: And I demonstrated this with Chiapas, right? These were weavers who spend the entire time weaving so they have—[mimics weaving and hikes shoulders up to neck]—they don’t have a neck. But when they began to dance and sing [brings down shoulders, straightens up, and gains an aura of confidence] they turned into different women. So, I’ve taken themes in their original languages but then I’ve embellished them so they have different grades of difficulty. So that they’ll be an example of intermediate, beginner, and advanced level. And I’m achieving it because the *Secretaría de Educación Pública de México* (Secretary of Public Education of Mexico) has asked me for two of my works that will be published in the new free textbooks.

L: Oh good.

A: Yes, so that’s with the choirs, the other thing with voice is that I’ve always liked to sing. Since I was a little girl I would listen to voices and I always—my mom would sing and would make up another part and another part and so to me making these up—I think that’s where I got my composing from.

L: Mhmm.

A: From inventing different voice parts, but I also had contact with this technique that’s called Roy Hart—where it’s shown that the voice isn’t produced in the throat, rather it’s a product of the whole body. So there’s a technique where you use your whole body for sound creation.

L: Mmmm.

A: That’s called the Roy Hart Theatre.

L: Mmm, I think I’ve heard of it. One of my roommates was a singer and I think I heard her talking about it. But I don’t remember very well.

A: It’s a very interesting technique and I had the fortune of being able to study with one of the disciples of the man who invented this technique.

L: Mhmm.

A: So, well I have a first hand source...and I've developed it and other things to this Roy Hart technique.

L: Well—

A: Of which I'll speak to you later because if not it'll be another hour. [laughs]

L: Is there another composer or a professor that you've had that you believe has inspired you a lot? Or another artist? Or has influenced how you think about music or how you write your music?

A: Well no, in reality the Roy Hart technique really influenced me in changing my concept of music—electroacoustic music also influenced me a lot.

L: Mhmm.

A: But, really let me tell you, I've been my own professor because I had a lot of misogynist professors.

L: Mmm.

A: Who put rocks in my path and who told me, “No, you can't compose a string quartet. No. Women can't compose string quartets.” The violin teacher who told me to dedicate myself to something else because, well, he preferred to give lessons to a boy.

L: Mmm.

A: And also, the groups in power that when it came time for my final exam wanted to take away my honors because of the language that I utilized, because I introduced elements of traditional music into my pieces. So, I've run against the current, yeah? I'm a feminist composer and really who I most admire is myself, for being able to resist [laughs] for being able to keep moving forward...

L: Mhmm.

A: But not just myself, but those women who've done the same, like Fanny Mendelssohn who despite everything kept composing. Clara Schumann, all these examples of brave, fighting, women who've overcome, right? So we can say the figures that most inspire me are the English feminists. For example, women who've overcome like Esperanza Pulido, who was the first woman in Mexico to write a book on women in music, Esperanzita³⁴⁷ Pulido did that. She created the magazine *Heterofonía*. A woman with a personality very similar to mine. [laughs] For example, she created a magazine and she would write articles and would put a different author's name because there was no one else to write for it. [laughs] So—a friend of mine says she used to have an office where she would go,

³⁴⁷ Diminutive of the name Esperanza, used as an endearment.

[mimics picking up a phone]

“Oh yes, she’ll be with you shortly, she’ll be with you in a moment.”

[takes phone away and then brings it close again and uses a deeper voice]

“Hello?”

[laughs]

L: [laughs]

A: So I’ve had to do that many times—write a lot of papers, work double, triple shifts—to be able to keep moving forward.

L: Mhmm. And now moving onto *Maderaire* specifically. You said that you had dedicated it to a group, so was it a commission, or did you just dedicate it to the group?

A: Really it wasn’t a commission because they didn’t pay me to write it. I dedicated it to this group that was founded by Dr. Alejandro Moreno, who is a very, very outstanding clarinetist.

L: Mhmm.

A: I dedicated the work to them. Because he’s very supportive, he plays in all the women’s conferences. He plays women’s pieces; he asks women to play. He was the director of the *Conservatorio de Hidalgo* (Hidalgo Conservatory)—and he asked women to please compose for the conference. So, he’s created movement—he’s like a feminist. My group is not just a group for women, men like him who’ve supported us participate as well. So that’s why I dedicated this work that’s originally written for oboe, flute, clarinet, and bassoon.

L: Mhmm.

A: Yes—

L: Well and what—

A:—four.

L: What else can you tell us about this piece? Was it inspired by something, or what’s the story of *Maderaire*?

A: I just have to remember what *Maderaire* is. [laughs] Let me just play it here to remember—listen to the audio because I have a lot of pieces...[laughs]

L: [laughs]

A:...and so no...I don’t even remember what I’ve written.

L: [laughs]

A: So let me just...

L: Yeah.

A: Let me just push play. There we have it. Here it is.

[listens to piece]

A: Okay! If you look, well, the use of chromaticism is there.

L: Mhmm.

A: [sings the parts and the rhythm] *Ta-tacataca-tam, ta-tacataca-tam*. Well, it's *Taam-ta-tam-ta-tacataca, Taam-ta-tam-ta*—you feel the Latin American rhythm right away, right?

L: Yeah.

A: A bit like tango, right? It's like a tango. So, really the intention is to explore the—look a lot of the time it's expected that contemporary composers play new things with extended techniques and suddenly you put this in front of them and they say, “oh how easy!” What's easy! It's not easy at all!

L: Yeah.

A: My works modulate a lot.

L: Mhmm.

A: So, later you have the entire orchestra suffering because they don't know how to play, they don't know how to play an expanding tonality because they think, “oh, this is nothing.” Well, they think it's dominant, tonic, tonic, and dominant, and subdominant, and the relative—at most the relative

L: Mhmm.

A: But here it's not—there's an expanding tonality here, this is very chromatic and modulates a lot.

L: Mhmm.

A: And it's not in any tonality really. It's modulating all the time, and modulating, and modulating. [laughs] Poor musicians I make them suffer a lot but then, well, they're not accustomed to playing this well and they play it badly. So my music has a level of complexity in the sense that its use of tonality isn't a traditional one, yeah?

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A: Because normally they say tonal, and oh it's tonal—it's romantic. What romanticism? I mean [laugh] look a bit at what the language is.

L: Mhmm.

A: Actually, I think that nowadays what's missing are books about music theory, or having information about it so that musicians like me don't get this superficial label, yeah? There are *a priori* notes against my music [laughs] There's a lot of it from composers—that's why we've

also created a trend called guerilla musicology, because there's notes against what I write—because I have talent and because I have a melodic ear—and they say, “oh well, it just looks like a little orchestral song.” Yeah? Well I've never heard of a *little song* that passes through nineteen different tonalities. [laughs]

L: Yeah.

A: [laughs] So, that's one of the characteristics...the chromaticism...and it's really a short piece, it doesn't have another movement.

L: Mhmm.

A: I thought about writing more, but a lot of the times I get caught in a hurry and I can't continue. But anyway, I don't know if you have another question concerning language, but that's the language. And normally the structure I think it's a simple structure. And besides my intention is to get close to you, to touch your heart. There's parts in the piece...

L: Mhmm.

A: That you feel oh, it's like—maybe you're going to cry or you feel—*you feel*.

L: Mmm.

A: Right now I was just arranging one of my first pieces and it says, melancholic, with emotion. So it's something that I want to recover, human emotion. What you feel. What do *you feel*, right?

L: Mhmm. Mhmm.

A: To make a person feel, utilizing common moments, but in a very personal manner. Where you say, “oh well this reminds me of tonality but not a lot, but oh, I feel like I want to cry here.” Right?

L: Mhmm.

A: Or it makes me excited—and normal people [laughs] not musicians. Normal people really like my music. This group and Alejandro really like my music, but yes, I do surprise them.

L: [laughs] Well, I think you already said this but is there something specific that you'd like to say to the interpreter of your piece? Or the interpreters on this occasion.

A: Yes, well of course, you have to interpret it with a pulse that's not [sings part heavily and monotone] pa-papapa-paaa, pa-pa—

[sings part lightly and with an accented rhythm]

Ta-taratara-raaaa, tan-taratara-raaaa, tan-taratara-raaaa. Where each phrase is felt organically, yes?

L: Mhmm.

A: A lot of the time you play with this physical sensation because there's a lot of musicians that don't have that incorporated musicality of what they're playing, right? So that's my recommendation, that they be *very* musical as they play the piece, yeah?

L: Good. Well, so my last question I think you've also already answered on various occasions. But my last question concerns your experience as a Mexican woman composer. Because my experience—I made this project for two reasons, really. The first, I already told you I spent many years without thinking or knowing about music for my instrument by Mexican composers. And with this project I want more people to know that these pieces exist and that these works exist and that they be studied more because right now in the system in which I studied you don't see them. Though the repertoire is starting to become more diverse—there's still a long way for it to go. But the second reason is a bit more personal. And it was because, as a classical musician and as a Mexican woman, I didn't see myself much in the music that I studied. And sometimes, in my studies, I felt a bit from a different origin, especially among the population that I studied with. A lot of the time I was the only one from someplace different, not from the US—because I live over there. And so I want to ask you now, how has your experience been as a Mexican woman composer? Maybe it's been different because you studied in Mexico, and live in Mexico. Maybe it's very different from mine because I live over there in the United States.

A: Well look, when I was in Spain, let me tell you, the discrimination was such that it was the reason that I went over to the...

L: Mhmm.

A:...Latin American topic, because you say this can't be.

L: Mhmm.

A: And so, at the identity level, I feel like an exile, right? I'm very sensitive towards discrimination. So if the question, specifically, is...how do I feel as a composer, yes I do feel like an exile—but here in Mexico I feel like an exile. Because the discrimination done by the groups in power...

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A:...because well, the entire musical world has gone for my jugular. It was very few people who supported me in the group—as a composer and overall in language. “Oh, there goes the one that writes *chun-tata*, who writes easy stuff.”

L: Mhmm.

A: And look, something interesting happened. There was a class where the composer that was the most [takes on a haughty look] over here, of the ones that composed over here. [puts hand up high] And they played them a scale and they told them, please sing a minor scale? They didn't know how to sing a minor scale. So...

L: Well...

A: Well they didn't even recognize it. They didn't know what a minor scale was, not even a major scale. I mean not even what a scale is.

L: Mhmm.

A: So take a look at the lack of information, at the *dearth* that exists when it comes to women composers. And it's also happened to me that I go hurtling like a spear point³⁴⁸ to go defend something and then I turn around and there's nobody else and there I am, the crazy woman—the *crazy woman*—

L: Mhmm.

A: And everybody else goes, [makes an innocent face], "oh." They ingratiate themselves within the groups in power. It's happened to me with a lot of women composers.

L: Mhmm.

A: That I've defended and promoted and when push comes to shove they don't lift a finger for me. And when it comes to promoting—I mean, I promote their works but they never invite me to their—there's a competition and they don't invite you. So in that sense I feel—that's why I feel so exiled because I feel like I've lived a marginalization by this group, by a dark group of mediocre people, who have also served themselves from the big spoon³⁴⁹ of the Mexican institutions. You know Carlos Prieto, besides earning a fortune and being the director of *La Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional* (National Symphonic Orchestra) more than fifteen years, is also part of the *Sistema Nacional de Creadores*... And well, I don't know—he doesn't compose anything. Or when you realize that they win the *Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Artes*, (National Award for Science and Art) for only promoting themselves. Being within those groups of power.

L: Mhmm.

A: So it turns out that in order to give you the national award you need to be a wretched person that hasn't done anything for anybody else and only promotes yourself. [laughs]

L: Mhmm.

A: And so, those are the merits of the national award? Gabriela Ortiz, a composer who's younger than I am—

L: Mhmm.

A: I promoted her work, promoted that it be played—she signed a letter so that I'd be fired from *La Escuela Nacional de Música*, because I had my *little groups* of women. [laughs] So, really well yes, I've suffered this a lot. But fortunately there's this counterpart, yeah? Where there is a strong support via—I think it's the majority, yeah?

³⁴⁸ A saying that means you are the first one to go defend something

³⁴⁹ A saying meaning that you serve yourself before anybody else. You only watch out for yourself.

L: Mhmm.

A: But it's people like me, people who don't have power, who don't have riches, or property, or [laughs] I mean people like me are the people who support me. So I do think that I've created a very interesting movement, very beautiful, and of course I hope that one day we can wrest the power away from these groups. And that justice is had for those of us who've dedicated our lives to these movements.

L: Mhmm.

A: And what I can recommend for you is that you give your work your all and that you make the music of women composers known, we have contact here with a lot of them.

L: Yes, at some...at some point if you could pass along contact information because I have been finding women composers, but less than men, and I'd like to talk to more women composers. At the moment, well, I'm looking for music specifically for the oboe but even if they haven't written for oboe, just knowing who these composers are.

A: Look, I'm going to recommend you a composer, who is an oboist! [laughs] So, we can say that she, well they're large words³⁵⁰ because she's going to give you an explanation that's all her. She's in the collective.

L: Mhmm.

A: Her name is Alejandra Odgers, if you like—

L: I interviewed her already.

A: Oh! Oh good.

L: Yeah.

A: Yes, she's also in the collective. I don't know if she spoke to you about the collective, sometimes they don't say they're in it because they're scared they'll be marginalized.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

A; So, sometimes they don't mention it. Uh, Claudia Reillas, I don't know if you've interviewed her?

L: No, not her.

A: I'm going to send you contact information for Claudia Raillas because she's also made music for oboe. So, if another one comes to mind I'll put it in the chat, yeah?

L: Yeah.

³⁵⁰ Saying that implies Odgers knows better about herself than Armijo so she'd be able to give a better explanation of herself.

A: Claudia Raillas. So that, so that you establish contact with them.

L: Mhmm. And well, the last question would be about your contact information, if somebody wanted to talk to you, or buy your music, stuff like that. How could they contact you?

A: Well, look, I have my website, let me just put it in the chat. It's www.leticiarmijo.com I also have the website www.yolotlis.org.

L: Mhmm.

A: And the page that is most associated with me is www.comuarte.org. And to ask for one of my pieces, they always have very reasonable prices, but I try to have something given to us even if it's a symbolic sum because it's a lot of work and it can't be that they don't—we have to eat too.

L: Yes, yeah.

A: So it's comuarteinternacional@gmail.com.

L: Good.

A: There they are, those are the places you can find me.

L: And well, that was everything I had for you, so, again thank you so much for—

A: Hey, well thank you and when you have something written please send it to me.

A: Yes! I'll send it to you. Thanks!

A: Good, congratulations Lupita, stay well.

L: Likewise.

A: Goodbye.

L: Bye.

A: Bye.

Jorge Calleja

Thursday November 17, 2022, 1 PM Central Standard Time. Calleja was in Mexico and I was in California.

The beginning of this interview was accidentally not recorded but the question posed was:

If you could please introduce yourself. Your name and whatever other details you want to share about what you are doing now, be it in music or not in music, whatever you would like to share.

Interview starts below.

L: I think it's good now.

C: Okay.

L: Well, if you could please repeat...

C: Of course.

L:...the information.

C: Well, my name is Jorge Calleja, I'm a Mexican composer, I was born in Mexico City in 1971. I was trained in the *Escuela Nacional de Música de la UNAM* where I completed my *licenciatura* in composition. I have done masters studies in ethnomusicology, I didn't graduate in it, I won't, but I did finish my studies. What am I doing now? I'm currently finishing a piece for trumpet and piano that will be premiered next year in January. For 2023 I have various commissions—recently I was the winner of the *Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte* (National System for Creators of Art) for which I'm going to composer a rock opera, and it's going to be—

L: Ooh!

C: —a fusion type music.

L: Ah-ha.

C: I'll also probably write the music for an animated film...so there's a lot of work, at the end of it all. I also work with my rock band and we have a CD recording coming up, a new album, live shows and those types of things. So there's going to be a lot of work next year.

L: That's what it sounds like, but that's good. Well, my first question, how did you decide to study music and how did you decide to make it your career?

C: Of course. Initially, in what is called the *secundaria* here—I think over there it's high school...

L: Yes, I think so.

C: There was a technical course, or a technical branch, of electronics. So I started in electronics and I really liked to...dismantle—well open up radios and televisions and all that. And afterwards, I enrolled in the *bachillerato* also in the electronics area. But it was in the *bachillerato*, and actually in the final year of the *secundaria*, that I learned how to play guitar. And so in the *bachillerato* I really liked to play guitar and I got together with a few classmates to form a group. As luck would have it, I started a type of parallel competition between what was electronics and music. In the end, the need to delve further into the instrument made me come to the Yamaha music school.

L: Oh!

C: Where I met Juan Carlos Laguna, who is one of the best guitarists that Mexico has had. At the time he taught electric guitar classes there. He observed me and said, “hey, you have ability, why don’t you study music?” At the time I didn’t know that music schools existed, I lived in a different circle, a different world. In sum, I took the exam, but Juan Carlos’ recommendation was that I didn’t enter as a guitarist because it was a very competitive instrument.

L: Mhmm.

C: Guitar, piano, and voice—they’ve always been the most competitive. He said, “enroll in another instrument and after you’ll change.” The exam judges observed me, saw that I had potential, and accepted me. So I studied oboe for a year with the professor Carmen Thierry.

L: Oh! Aha.

C: And the professor Carmen Thierry would ask me for oboe exercises, which I composed. So the professor said, “hey, well,”—because she knew I wanted to switch to guitar.

L: Mhmm.

C: And had observed my creativity, “instead of guitar, why don’t you switch to composition?” And then, well, that’s what I did. I prepared some compositions, the exam judges observed me and they accepted the change, and from then, well, I’m here now. I mentioned engineering because I’ve never left it behind. As luck would have it, music production, the recording studio, and all of that technical aspect, I’ve always run with it in a parallel way. In some form, all of my record productions, I’ve made them all personally.

L: Mhmm.

C: That’s how it went.

L: Well, you are the second composer who I’ve spoken to who also studied oboe but stayed with composition.

C: Yeah, that’s how it went. Who was the other composer—

L: The oboe is a bit difficult, a bit frustrating.

C: [laughs]

L: Jumping to your music—

C:—you sound a bit—

L: You can't hear me?

C: Yes, yes, yes, now yes.

L: Going forward to your music, I was reading one of the biographies on your website and it says that you are the artistic director of the ensemble, Etnokam, and apart from that you have a band—Gallina Negra? It looks like you compose and play in a lot of musical styles—you have a lot of variety in what you do. How was it that your career developed this way? Because I see that Etnokam is an academic music hybrid and Gallina Negra is more progressive rock and jazz and all that.

C: Well, like I told you, it was in the *bachillerato* that I formed this group. Basically, rock has always been what I've identified with, yeah? Since my youth groups like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Led Zepellin—classic rock was a part of me, of my musical criteria. When I started studying classical music—academic music—well I began expanding my studies now in the academic field.

L: Mhmm.

C: However, here in Mexico the study of composition has with it the study of ethnomusicology.

L: Mmm.

C: And via ethnomusicology I began looking a lot into what is the traditional music of Mexico.

L: Mhmm.

C: So all of that has always been a part of my composition. In all aspects, I think as a composer...it's...it's the same effort to make a rock piece than it is to make a work for orchestra, or a jazz piece—it's the same creative effort.

L: Mhmm.

C: And the challenges are also different because you have to comprehend a new language.

L: Mhmm.

C: So I have always looked into a lot of different languages, yeah? Jazz, rock, progressive rock, traditional Mexican music. So when it comes to composing, well all these things surge up and my music ends up having shades of various things, yes? Of many musical styles.

L: Mhmm, so do you think that all these different things influence each other— these different styles that you write. A piece for Etnokam, compared to a piece for Gallina— do they influence each other or do you think very separately for each piece?

C: We'll say that the creative effort is the same, but yes for pieces you think about your musician and a bit about what you want to represent. In the case of Gallina Negra—which is a rock fusion

group, or progressive rock—who's been together since those early years, we're talking 1990, 1994—

L: Mhmm.

C: And who is still active, well it's a group that I feel a brotherhood with because I've known them my whole life. We have that open mind for whatever, yeah? And so suddenly we feel like playing folk music or jazz, rock, heavy metal, whatever. So it's very versatile. We always conserve the group's style but we have variability and people know us for that.

L: Mmm, mhmm.

C: In Etnokam's case it's an ensemble I formed—I think it's around 7 years old, around there. Well it's a trio that has a few pieces for guitar and flute—the cello was added after. It's a trio that I suddenly liked the sound of and I've put out two CDs with them. Two albums. I also had a group of *son jarocho* that was called Chilaquiles Verdes in which I played the *leona*, an instrument of the region of *son jarocho* that functions like a bass but it's like a big guitar with four strings. And well, the case is that in all these ensembles, unlike a lot of composers that I know, I don't just compose, I'm also involved with performing.

L: Mhmm.

C: For me that's important because I think that somewhere along history that was lost. Because in the past, well, musicians that played also composed, and those who composed also played. And suddenly there was a separation and the intellectuals were the composers who never played anything and the interpreters were—I believe there should exist an exercise of both things, yes? The instrumentalist should, even if they don't create complex compositions, well they should try and exercise that creative labor, and the same goes for the composer who should also perform and face an audience performing.

L: Is there a composer, or professor, or another band, another singer, who you think have influenced how you developed as a composer?

C: Yes there's been a lot, and of all types. For example, in academic music, a lot of composers have definitely passed through my vein, Vivaldi, Ravel in his orchestration, but particularly the Mexican composers like Silvestre Revueltas, Carlos Chávez. When I met them, it was like they filled me completely, yeah? And so particularly them. But I think that my biggest influence doesn't come from academic music, but in popular music. Speaking of rock, like I've already mentioned, these big three or four greats who are The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, and the Who, they marked me.

L: Mhmm, yeah.

C: And from the Latin American side, without a doubt, Silvio Rodríguez. For me is an artist who is extremely complex and complete, both for his poetry as well as his music. And so for me he's fundamental—he was the watershed. Silvio Rodríguez, is in my veins at all times. And in Spain Patxi Andion, another poet who makes music, whose lyrics impacted me in a primordial way in

the first years of my development. And so we'll say that those were the greats who have influenced me.

L: Mhmm.

C: Oh yeah! And apart from that, progressive rock, I hold Pink Floyd in a very special place.

L: Mhmm, mhmm. Yes, again, while I was reading about you, I saw you did a lot in different areas of music and I feel like sometimes that's not—I feel like a lot of composers say, "oh I'm going to compose art music, academic music and that's all I'm going to do." They don't really...they aren't interested in other styles of music. And when I was reading that you did a bit of everything—I was like oh good, because it does seem like there is not a lot of composers of classical music, or academic music, however we want to call it, who can also go into different styles. Compose different styles, or genres.

Now, talking specifically about *La Voz del Viento*, which is the piece that I found you with. How did *La Voz del Viento* develop? Who inspired it? Or was it an event or maybe a commission? How did *La Voz del Viento* come to be?

C: Well it was an invitation from the professor Carmen Thierry who was given a grant to make an album by BAMF. She had to make an album with pieces by Mexican composers and she asked me for a piece. So, thinking specifically about the professor—at that moment her daughter was very little and I asked her to record the girl's voice. She sent me the recordings and I started there. I wanted to represent in *La Voz del Viento* precisely that ethereal moment where the voices of this girl, of her daughter, mixed together. So I started developing this part, a bit oneiric—so relating to dreams—until there comes a point where you wake from that dream, yeah? So *La Voz del Viento* is a bit like that.

L: And when you started did you already know you were going to make a piece with tape or was it something that Carmen Thierry wanted or something that you liked so you just decided.

C: Yes, I think I was the one who decided that it was going to be tape and oboe. Yes, yes, yes. That's right.

L: Yes. And I was going to ask what—where the parts that sounded like poetry or singing came from and you already explained. Is there anything you'd like to say to the interpreters of your piece? Maybe something that you've noticed while they play or just something that you want to share about your piece to those that are going to interpret it?

C: Well yes, basically the oboe part at the beginning is like...like imagining that you're in a forest and that you have your instrument and that you're being inspired a bit by the ancestors. So the sounds of the oboe take on a bit of...of indigeneity, if I could say it like that. Indigenous in its loneliness, in its interior, in its solitude.

L: Mhmm.

C: And bit by bit the sounds of the instrument start to enter the dream, yeah? That can help the interpretation.

L: Okay, okay. Again, talking about the tape, how was it composing the tape? Because it's two parts, one part is the oboe—did you compose them side by side, or maybe the tape first and then you composed the oboe part, or the oboe part and then you added the tape?

C: Yes, well, you work them in a parallel manner. I remember that I first made the first electroacoustic sounds. Which basically integrated ambient sounds and some synthesizers. And then I started to sketch the oboe themes, and after they ran parallel. In the end...I was trying to reach a climax of sonority.

L: Mhmm.

C: And it's where the oboe has these...these tremolos and other things, no?

L: Mhmm.

C: That final part...I remember that I grabbed a violin bow and I started doing like *battuto* and from a few *battuto* recordings I made the framework for the end, yes.

L: Also, well I found you with *La Voz del Viento* specifically because I was listening to the album that Carmen Thierry made, I found it there and I loved it. But I think you have another piece for oboe, yes?

C: Yes I have another piece that was just performed again yesterday. This piece is called *Cascabel*. It was a commission for Jonathan Thompson.

L: Mmm.

C: An oboist who lives, I think, around Texas. I can't place it well. And this young man, he actually also listened to *La Voz del Viento*—

L: Uh-huh.

C: And he contacted me. In fact, he came to Mexico to meet me and commissioned the piece.

L: Mmm.

C: And I made this piece, *Cascabel* that speaks a bit about the rattlesnake. The rattlesnake—the snake at the end of its tale has like a rattle that sounds. And from there what I imagined—I have various themes that I imagine are like, a shamanic ritual of the indigenous people of Mexico, who are in this constant repetition of prayers that help them connect with the divinities. So in this piece, *Cascabel*, I recreate this part a bit—with that spiritual connection and over all this question of repetition—I connect it a lot with my *minimalism* I use—

L: Mmm, mhmm.

C: —and so it has that link, yes.

L: You had said before that you had studied the oboe, but in the end you didn't—you didn't keep going with it? That's what I understood.

C: No, I never bought my oboe.

L: Mmm, alright.

C: My school let me borrow it and after I switched I lost the opportunity to play it. At one moment I wanted to resume it but no, I didn't have the time. It's quite a difficult instrument, very beautiful, but it does require all your attention.

L: Yes, yes, yes. So, how was it composing for the oboe? In both pieces, they were specifically for oboists so was there a lot of collaboration between you? Especially since they were commissions.

C: Yes, well especially in the first piece. Carmen Thierry advised me. She showed me the oboe's extended techniques and from those sessions that I had with her I remembered a few things. So I was fortunate to have that closeness with the professor who helped me with that part.

L: Yes. Well then, anything else you wanted to share about your music or *La Voz del Viento* or from your biography?

C: Well nothing that—well I'm very glad that musicians like you want to reclaim and have stronger bonds with your Mexican roots, and your Latin roots, as they say over there.

L: Mhmm.

C: I think it's important to continue making bigger and bigger steps so that both *pueblos*, the north American and the Latin American, have these strong bonds, yeah? Because at the end of it all we are all one, we are the same people, there are no divisions. Unfortunately—here as well as there—there's themes of classism and racism that remain and that we need to try and erase.

L: Mhmm.

C: And it happens in music too. I wanted to comment on it a little bit ago. Even the term “classical music” we're already like, having classist attitudes, right?

L: Yeah, yeah.

C: And so I think that a lot of composers don't dare—because of prejudice—accept that other music fills them too.

L: Yeah.

C: No?

L: Yeah.

C: And so sometimes, yeah exactly what you said, the classical composer only makes classical. But it's also a bit because they don't want to break that social barrier, yeah?

L: Mhmm.

C: It's always believed that classical music is like the more “plus” and popular music is below that. Which is not the case, they have different languages and different forms of making music.

That's what I could add. And well, I congratulate you and I hope that your work has important effects, that you'll share it, and that at some point you can come and present it here.

L: Yeah, when I finish writing it I'll turn it into the school and it should always be on my university's website. It's always going to be available. But now that you were talking about what you were talking about, I had another question for you—that is maybe a bit more personal so only answer what you want.

My reasons for writing this dissertation are in one part to make these works by Mexican composers more accessible, for people to know they exist. Because studying the oboe it wasn't until my masters that I finally played a piece by a Mexican composer and it wasn't until then that I began to think, "hey, there's Mexican classical music, there's Mexican composers. Why have I been studying my oboe for five or six year and I haven't ever bumped into Mexican composers, or even knew they existed?" And I had my identity as a Mexican woman and my identity as a classical musician and it never felt like they ever came together. It wasn't until my masters that I finally said, "hey, there's classical music from Mexico," and that's why I want to do this project, so other people know and so the standard repertoire of the oboe grows. That it's no longer just these pieces that we've studied for years and years and years—but that there's new pieces by new composers that we can also play.

I've always felt a bit different studying classical music here, a lot of the time I've been the only person of a different origin, or Mexican, or what have you. And so I was going to ask you that, having been born in Mexico and studied in Mexico and having made your career there, maybe your experience is different than mine. I'm curious about your experience as a Mexican composer in this field of classical music in which, yeah, sometimes there's a lot of classicism.

C: Yes, well that. And it's there since one begins studying, yeah? Well, at least I experienced it while I studied. If I suddenly played some popular themes, well then, people look at you and say that that's not music and a series of prejudices that I think still persist today. But well, you do what you do and the music will spread in its own way. And well the invitation is there, it would be great if when you finish your work, if at some point you had the opportunity to come to Mexico to show it. Well, what I could offer you is perhaps a space here in the music faculty with the professor Roberto Kolb—just this week is the time of the oboe festival and so it could be that next year during the oboe festival you could play and present your work.

L: I'd love that! To have the opportunity to present in Mexico, because it's not something that's happened yet. But I'd love to, it'd be something wonderful.

C: Yes.

L: And well, with that—the last question I had was just your contact information. If you want to send it to me after or you can say it here too as I still have to finish writing up what we talked about here. But just contact information, if you have a website or an email where other oboists or professors can contact you to get a hold of your music.

C: Of course. I have a website that's called jorgecalleja.com.mx, that's the page, and I'm finishing it up. What's the social medias, Facebook, Instagram, you can find me there as, Jorge

Calleja composer. My email is jorgecalleja.compositor@gmail.com. And my music you can listen to on Bandcamp and Spotify and all those streaming sites, also as Jorge Calleja.

L: Great. Great well that's all I had for you today, if you want to add anything else, or wanted to talk about anything else we still have time, but if you've also said what you wanted to say we can also finish up.

C: Well I appreciate the attention and the invitation and the—you are sharing your work with us. I appreciate that a lot.

L: Yeah, and I also appreciate you accepting to do this interview.

C: Very well.

L: Very well, thank you. I'm going to stop recording.

Alejandra Odgers

Friday November 11, 2022, 9 AM Eastern Standard Time. Odgers was in Canada and I was in California.

L: Alright I think it started. Perfect. Well, thank you so much for accepting this interview and accepting being a part of this project.

O: Gladly.

L: Alright, lets start. Basically, this interview will be a little bit of biography, to have more of your biographical information for the project, as well as to talk about *Semelíami* and your music in general.

O: Yes, very good.

L: I read your thesis and I think your reasons for writing your thesis are a little similar to the reasons that I also began to write mine.

O: Ah, yes.

L: Um—

O: There are things that change but others that don't, so it keeps being important.

L: Exactly, while I was reading your reasons and your questions—the reasons you started writing your thesis are almost the same as mine. Yes, I realized in my master's that it was the first time I had played a piece written by a Mexican composer, so from there I started thinking, I've been studying for years—

O: Maybe there's more!

L: Exactly, exactly! Alright, before starting, I do want to let you know that I speak Spanish but I was born and raised in the United States, so I feel like—I express myself a little better in English. So, if it's alright with you, I feel like sometimes I will have to say some things in English, but you—

O: That's fine, no problem. I can also try in English, but I will get stuck a bit there, it'll be more fluid in Spanish.

L: That's fine, I understand it perfectly, but sometimes some of my words get jammed. But I understand it perfectly.

O: No problem.

L: Alright. To start, if you'd like to introduce yourself, just your name and anything else you'd like to say about yourself.

O: Alright, my name is Alejandra Odgers Ortiz, I was born in Mexico City. I began studying music a bit by chance. When I was a little girl, around eight, I began to take an introductory music course. It was with the Micropauta system, that is similar to Orf, so percussion instruments, choir. Since then, I fell in love with music, and I continued it through different paths.

L: Alright, that was also my second question. I was going to ask how you started to study music, and how you decided to follow it as a career.

O: Alright, I'll go into a little bit more detail. I'd said it was a bit by chance that I began in music. There's a funny anecdote about it. I have two sisters but one of my sisters, who is older by a year—we wanted to take gymnastic classes. This was the time in which all the girls wanted to be gymnasts like Nadia Comaneci, etcetera. So, we were looking for a gymnastics class and my mom found a place where they were giving kid's classes. And when you paid for registration, it cost the same if you signed up for just one class, or two, or three. So, we registered for classes in gymnastics, painting, regional dancing, and my sisters had decided to take music too. I hadn't. But my mom commented, well, why don't you register as well. Your sisters are going and if you don't like it then you can quit. So, that was really the motive. I registered for the music class and I loved it. Finally, we left gymnastics because how it was taught didn't really interest us much. And we continued with dance, music, and painting class. So we played in that class. There was a choir in it and percussion instruments were also played. One of them was the marimba, or the xylophone, it was like the favored instrument.

I stayed in the class for three years, and once it finished I wanted to keep studying music. I had started going to OFUNAM concerts in Mexico every Sunday and I started to think about the possibility of dedicating myself to music—to be a musician, etcetera. First, I registered for a percussion class in *La Escuela Nacional de Music*, but it was a bit disappointing. Maybe it was the teacher, or the content a bit, but at the time my grandma—who had a piano—had just moved to live a block away from our house, so I started studying piano. Three years later I registered—well first in piano lessons. Three years later I took the admissions exam to enroll in a school, a professional school of music.

And in that school there was a symphony orchestra. And so for me, I missed playing in a group, playing like in the youth orchestra. So I looked for another instrument I could study that could play in the orchestra, because I felt very isolated in my piano lessons. I played all my pieces alone, as I still wasn't quite at the level to play chamber music. All my friends were in the orchestra, they would go on tour which was super attractive to me, so I said no—I have to study an instrument that plays in the orchestra. And so, looking for what instrument called to me, or that I liked more, I decided on the oboe, and so I began studying the oboe. Finally, I registered for a professional career in oboe too.

So I finished this career and while I was in I took a class called *Técnica y Cultura Musical*—basically it was an analysis class with the composer Mario Lavista. So, in those classes—for me it was like discovering the world of composition. Seeing how a piece could be composed, how composers could write a piece of music, and from then on I decided to also begin composition

classes. So at one point I was taking piano lessons, oboe lessons, composition lessons, as well as all my theory classes. I was looking for professors who interested me—in this case it was Mario Lavista, etcetera. So, I was in three schools, *El Conservatorio* (The Conservatory), in *La Escuela Nacional de Musica de la UNAM*, and in the *Vida y Movimiento* school in the *Ollin Yoliztli Hall*. And I traveled Mexico to be able to take all these classes. So, finally I finished my degree as an oboist, as a composer, and later on I traveled to Montreal for my Masters. And it was finally in composition—to which I dedicate myself to actually—and a doctorate. And so, I currently live here in Canada, in Montreal, and well, that's the journey so far.

L: Well, yes, another of the questions I was going to ask was why you decided to complete both the degrees in oboe and in composition. But, well you've basically—

O: I'm getting ahead!

L: Yes, but that's fine—!

O: Well, the oboe was really because I wanted to play more in a group—play chamber music or play in an orchestra. I did end up playing in some ensembles. I had a few experiences in orchestra. But really it was composing that I loved. And it was really that path that I followed. I still say all the time, oh I'm going to take out my oboe, I'm going to play, but at the moment I haven't practiced much oboe. Regardless, living here in Quebec, in Canada, I still wanted to make music, and so the easier alternative I found was a choir. I've been with the choir since 2008 until practically now—the pandemic interrupted the choir a bit. But I've been singing in a choir to keep up that live experience of making music.

L: No yes, yes. So, now my third question—is how would you describe your own musical style?

O: This is more difficult.

L: A little bit.

O: It depends a bit on the piece. What I have felt—look, in general, what I think is that as composers we have to know a bit of everything, of all the techniques within our reach to be able to express ourselves musically or sonorously. Throughout my education, I practiced a bit of everything. I wrote atonal, twelve-tone, modal, tonal, and electroacoustic pieces. And what I feel is that, depending on what we want to compose at a given moment in a piece, well, it's going to be the technique, or the color, or the language, or the instruments that we are going to utilize. There are some for which maybe electroacoustics is what lends itself best, in other cases it's going to be something very tonal, in other cases something atonal, etcetera.

However—look when I was completing my doctorate, one of the exercises then was to find what is your path, what is your voice, what is your manner of composing. And so it was a bit of analyzing the works that I'd written and my interests and, well, my life as well. Like, who am I? Composing has a lot to do with who you are—it's a bit of a search of identity—who am I and where am I going and where am I from, etcetera. And so, in all that reflection, what I began to discover was that in my music, there is a lot of like a synthesis, a...yes, a synthesis, or a mix, a *mestizaje* of different cultures. And so, on one side there is Western music, art music, or classical

music, however we'd like to call it. It's clear that it is in my formation, in my manner of composing, in the instruments I utilize, in the act of composing music that we will listened to in a music hall. In the type of pieces—concert pieces, pieces for symphony orchestra, sometimes theme and variations, etcetera. So, there is a lot of Western culture that we inherited. But also, many of my pieces...I use traditional music, a lot of the time from Mexico, for obvious reasons. But there has also been some Cuban rhythm, or music of Celtic origin. While I studied here I took a class in gamelan, and so in some pieces there is some of that. I also took classes in Hindu dance, and so certain colors, certain rhythms—so I end up taking elements of traditional music from different places. Living here now in Quebec, I've also met an Abeneki woman who has shown me much of well, their cosmogony—of their works and their songs—that I have also used in some of my own works. And so I think that in much of my works, there is that mix of traditional musical elements and of Western musical elements. So, depending on what I want to say at any given moment in a piece, well a lot of the time it's going to be the techniques, or the palette of colors, that I use to write my music.

L: So, what I'm understanding right now is it's less the techniques that you are going to use, than it is where you are taking inspiration from...what a certain piece wants to be—

O: Yes, I'm not going to have the priority of, my music is this way and I'm going to compose all my pieces with these techniques. Rather, depending on the piece I'm going to write, those are the techniques I'm going to use. I'm going to give you a very concrete example.

At a certain point there was a competition to compose a piece in homage to the victims of the earthquakes that happened in Mexico in 1985, where millions of people died. Well, I asked myself what type of work was I going to create in this homage? Well, I thought in that moment that there was an important part that had to be well, the representation of all the—the tragedy, of the pain, of the desperation, of all the emotions that we felt because of the earthquakes, and all the deaths that occurred, etcetera. And so, I couldn't make a work that was tonal, modal, agreeable, etcetera. So it's really a work where there's—the poem that I chose says, "This is a scream." So it had to be like that, very, very dissonant...completely, well, atonal if you will. Where there are clusters—music that's more, shall we say, dissonant. But then the second part of the piece wants to be like—getting closer to finding a moment of peace, of consolation, of calm. So yeah, I didn't have any problem with there being a chord that was tonal, major, some fifths. And so, really, it depends on what you want to express at any given moment, that will be the techniques or the language that I will utilize.

L: You mentioned that you studied with Mario Lavista, and you obviously had more teachers and professors. Do you think that there is one professor, or maybe another composer, who you took the most inspiration from? Do you think that they influenced your style?

O: I had—well the fortune or misfortune, who knows what we should call it. A lot of the time there's people who study with only one composer and from the beginning to the end that's your professor. In music that happens a lot, you have one professor, instrumental professors as well, and a lot of the time you study—

L: Years and years.

O:—seven, eight years with the same professor.

L: Yes, yes.

O: And sometimes there are paths in which one ends up changing a lot. So, precisely because I attended different schools, and sometimes because of the circumstance of—well, you study with a professor and the professor left the school and now you have to change. So, I studied with various teachers. Yes, definitively, Mario Lavista was a person who left their mark— I think in myself and many others. I studied composition because of him, because of his classes, because there I came to know music analysis. And he was somebody I followed for years to take classes with. In fact, that's why I was in all the schools of Mexico City, because at one point he gave classes in *El Conservatorio*, at one point he was at *El Centro de las Artes* (Center of the Arts), and I think in *La Escuela Superior de Música* (The Higher Music School). So, where he went, I went. He gave composition classes, or a workshops in composition, but he also gave analysis classes, or music of the twentieth century, or other different classes. So, I followed him a lot. So yeah, he was definitely somebody who influenced me quite a lot but he wasn't the only one.

In the *Escuela Nacional de Música*, I had the opportunity to also study with Arturo Márquez. I worked with him for a year and it was also an important year. It was a year with him but after, when I worked in the multimedia center of the *Centro Nacional de las Artes* (National Center of the Arts), I was also in contact with him. So it was many years that we worked together though officially it was only one year of classes. On the other hand, I also took private lessons from a teacher called Humberto Hernández Medrano. With him it was really the more traditional academic part—classes on harmony, intensive counterpoint. He was also a part of my shaping, maybe not such a big influence when it came to the search for new languages or anything like that, but yes, my solid base of harmony and counterpoint classes were with him.

And here in Montreal I studied with two teachers. My masters I completed with José Evangelista, who directed my path. And finally, if I stayed to do my doctorate here it was because during my masters, I took a seminar of orchestration with a teacher called Alan Belkin. It was an orchestration class that to me was a revelation—let me tell you, in that class it was like I discovered the third dimension in my ears. As if before I composed in two dimensions, just flat, and with him, it was like I discovered perspective. So, I decided to stay and do the doctorate to work orchestration pieces with him. Lately I've composed a lot for orchestra and it's definitely the work with Alan Belkin that has influenced my manner of composing—or my ability to compose over all—orchestral works.

L: Speaking of Mario Lavista, his work *Marsias* was the first piece that I played that was by a Mexican composer and it was only because my professor of oboe at the time, Kevin Vigneau, wanted me to play something contemporary because I had never played something like that.

O: Uh-huh.

L: That was why he told me to start studying the piece.

O: Uh-huh.

L: From there—well I mark that as the moment that the idea for this project was born, since my masters.

O: Mario also had various generations of students. One of them is Mariana Villanueva and she has a piece for oboe, timbales, and drum. I don't know if you know it?

L: No, but I'd like to.

O: It was what I played for my final exam of my bachelor's. It's also a very interesting work, I can pass the details to you later, if not—

L: Yes please, I'd love to.

O: It should be there in my thesis, but yes, Mariana Villanueva, the name escapes me right now but I'll remember it later.

L: Now, returning to the work that I found you with—because it was *Semelíami*. What inspired *Semelíami*? Or was there an event or an idea that inspired this piece?

O: I'll talk to you about this piece. Another of the teachers that I had—well when I was with Arturo Márquez and he left *La Escuela Nacional de Música* I was left without a teacher and they hired another composer, Horacio Uribe. I also worked with him for a year. At one point what he told us was, well, we're going to start by writing a piece for a solo instrument. You pick which one. And I picked the oboe because, as an oboist I said, I'll compose my first piece for oboe. Well, in fact I had already written a piece for solo oboe called *Monólogo*, but he told me to compose a work for solo instrument. Then he suddenly said, oh, but I want it to be an eight minute work. And I said, eight minutes for solo oboe? Poor oboist is going to be left without lips. And apart from that if you play without accompaniment, so that you're playing the whole time—I said no, like no, no, no, no. I mean, eight minutes I don't think so, it's going to be more like six. So what I said was, if it has to be such a lengthy work for oboe, there has to be a lot of silence. And my idea was, I'm going to make a theme that has a lot of silences—it's going to be a theme and variations—and bit by bit I'll be adding notes, adding notes, until we reach a high point, a more virtuous point. And then, bit by bit I'll take notes away, to give the oboist a chance to breathe, to rest their lips, etcetera so that it really makes sense because an oboist can't play alone eight minutes without stopping, so no, I have to write the work like this. And, in fact that was the—

L: And all the oboists of the world thank you for that.

O: [laughs] Yes, yes, and in fact, well in that moment I was a composer but also an oboist. Really, I was playing a lot, and I would complain a lot about pieces by composers that I felt were completely anti-oboist, or not idiomatic at all for the oboe. With too long phrases that don't let you breathe, that don't let you rest, etcetera. And so I said no my piece has to really be thinking about the oboist, in the characteristics of the oboe, and fortunately I knew those quite well. So, this piece came from that. And once I thought of this idea I began to compose the piece.

I had the idea—well I invented my scale a bit. I didn't want it to be major or minor. So, I did a mix between—I have sharp *fa*, but flat *si*—creating an imaginary scale, if we will. I mean, not

entirely because it is part of the tonal system, but that it not clearly be major or minor. So I invented this first theme and the idea was to create the variations, a type of *passacaglia* or *chaconne* where we have something and we keep adding notes but the base is the same. So, throughout the whole piece, every two measures, the note will be the exact same. Afterwards, this idea blossomed a bit, this idea of a meditation and a dance—like we're tranquil, we're calm, meditating, and bit by bit our spirit begins to awaken, to dance, to move around a lot, to be very active. And bit by bit we return to that calm again, to that state of like meditation if we want to think of it like that. And the other image I had was like a snake charmer, a lot of the time the oboe sound conjures that image of—

L: Yeah, yeah.

O: Snake charmers. So it was also this idea of, well maybe the oboist begins to awaken the snake that's emerging from the basket, it will dance and then, will return calmly to its basket. Those were the two images I had when I composed the piece. Later on and after having played it, heard it, etcetera, in a more philosophical manner, if you will, I also imagined it a bit like life itself, no? It surges forward, we do a lot of things and then we return to that state of calm, or of disappearance, we'll say. One appears and then disappears...a bit of this idea.

L: So, in the program notes of the piece it says that *Semelíami* is a word of the *rarámuri*.

O: Mmhmm.

L: So, the name came at the end or at the beginning or the middle of composing this—?

O: Towards the end. I had composed the piece imagining that dance. That was one of my original ideas, like meditation, the dance and the return—and I was looking for a name for my piece. I know somebody, my brother in law. He was—well is—an ethnomusicologist and an anthropologist and he studies precisely the indigenous people in the North of Mexico. So looking for names that also—well, I've given many of my pieces titles that are in indigenous languages. This was one of the firsts so maybe it was the first with which I started this series of titles in different languages—yes traditional languages, indigenous languages. So he suggested—because I'd said, “look I need a name, something that could be dance, or dances,” etcetera. I was giving him different ideas, and he said, “oh, well, there is this word *semelíami*,” that means, like music—but it's a music that is meant for dancing. And I really like the word itself too, like the sound of *semelíami*. He suggested it, I said, okay, perfect this—this is the name of my piece.

L: Something that I also really like from your piece is that it is in—I don't know how to say it in Spanish—in *compas mixto*?

O: Ah-ha—

L: In English it's mixed meter—oh great! I really love pieces like that because I just like how it sounds and how it feels. Did you decide to use it at the beginning of the piece, or how did you come to use that?

O: Yes— well I think—it's been many years! This idea that it would be a dance, that we start calm and a dance will be in the middle—a lot of traditional Mexican music, the *sones*, or a part

of the *sones*, are written in that meter of 6/8 + 3/4. So, my time in my traditional dance classes when I was little, they stayed with me in that sense. So, yes, the rhythm *tara ta tara ta tan tan tan, tara*—I said, that's what's going to happen in my complex variation in the middle, it's going to have that rhythm. So, my decision was, I'll have this mixed meter since the beginning—even though in the beginning there is only one note, and the listener isn't listening to that implicit rhythm—the oboist does have to be conscious of it from the beginning. Even though they are only playing a single note, they need to know that they are going toward that mixed rhythm of 6/8 + 3/4. So yes, I had the clear idea that it was going to be a dance with that combined traditional Mexican rhythm since the beginning and that I was going to introduce it little by little. As the notes start to fill in we start to understand that that rhythm is the base.

L: Yes.

O: In fact, part of the problems that I've had sometimes with certain interpreters of my piece that aren't familiar with Mexican traditional music is that they don't get why I put the two meters in since the beginning of the piece. Or sometimes they've suggested that I write it all in 6/8 and just put in accents but...for me it was very important to have that combination since the beginning, to feel it, for the rhythm to be internal since the beginning and little by little it becomes clearer to the listener. But it is implicit since the first presentation of the theme.

L: And that was something that I loved about your piece—that little by little it becomes—the listener, whoever is listening to you play—

O: It starts coming together.

L: Ah-ha. The meter starts coming together, I loved it. Well I love your piece.

O: [laughs] Thank you!

L: Alright, is there anything specific you would like to say to an interpreter that maybe—something specific that you want the interpreter to...

O: Communicate—

L: Let me say this in english.

O: Ah-hah.

L: Yes, good. [In English] Is there something specific you would like to say to oboists—or is there a specific emotion—or is there just anything you would like to say to any person who's playing your piece?

O: I'd say that, well like a dance, and like a piece—we think about it like music to be danced to or going from meditation, to dance, and back to meditation—it doesn't matter what idea or what image inspires you. The idea is to make something that you enjoy. I want you to enjoy it at the time you play it, not suffer it. I do have to confess here that as an oboist I am not such a virtuoso as some that have played the piece. So, sometimes the tempo—I didn't define a tempo because I said to myself, well maybe somebody else can play it faster than I can, I couldn't play the middle variations super-fast. So, about some breath marks they've actually just told me—two days ago

there was an oboist that said, “oh, is the breath mark in this variation obligatory?” And I said, “well no, it can be a breath mark in parenthesis because *I* needed it but if you don’t need it then no.” It’s simply a suggestion, you can breathe there if you want, but it’s not necessary. In fact, I’ve been very surprised at the speed that some oboists play it at. For me it’d be too fast but if it works it works. For me, the idea that you can play it fast as long as it’s still musical, as long as it’s still coherent, is fine. So, simply, it’s a piece that should be enjoyed, it’s not a piece of suffering. It shouldn’t make the listener suffer and have them say, oh they’re going to die they’re turning red, they don’t have anywhere to breathe, simply a piece that should be enjoyed. It can sound very virtuosic if you want, if you feel like that goes with your personality, but it can also be a much calmer work without that part—the middle variations will be a bit virtuosic either way but they don’t have to be—it’s not a speed challenge either, right? So, I think that’d be it.

L: Alright—

O: To think about that rhythm from beginning to end. And maybe those first variations, for whoever plays it very slow like me—try to make it so that the sounds aren’t isolated, instead try for the rests to have weight. There is a musical line from the beginning—maybe you have to lengthen those first notes a bit, those dotted quarter notes, or maybe make them a little longer so that line settles, but you should think every theme is a complete line even though there is a lot of silence.

L: Yes, my professor always says that the silence has to be part of the music—it’s not just silence but part of the music.

O: Yes. Yes, yes, and to imagine—from when they start playing a note silence is there come but the next note is coming, yeah?

L: Mhmm, mhmm. Is there anything else you would like to say about your piece? Or is that it? [laughs]

O: Well, I think that’s it, the only thing I could add is that at some point—well I wrote the piece for oboe but then I did think it could also be for english horn, so there is that version. After, once I was here in Quebec, some clarinetist friends asked me for—so the clarinet version came to be. And after the versions for bass clarinet, that has even been recorded in a couple of CDs. So the original version is for oboe but other versions do exist. Maybe, comparing the bass clarinet version to all the other versions, well, they can make *pianos* more...

L: Yeah.

O: More exaggerated.

L: Yeah, yeah.

O: And maybe for them the more virtuosic part is a bit easier, they don’t suffer as much in breathing, but the original color and the character was really thought for the oboe.

L: Alright—

O: That would be it. [laughs]

L: Returning to, I believe, biographical topics. You said you are from Mexico, you were born in Mexico, and you completed your um...

O: Up until my *licenciatura*.

L: How was it leaving Mexico and going to study in a different place? Was the world of music different there than what you studied in Mexico? How did it compare with the world of music that you studied in, um, Montreal—

O: In Canada—yes in Montreal. Uh-huh.

L: Uh-huh.

O: In fact I studied up to my two *licenciaturas*, which were in oboe and composition, in Mexico. And I had always had the curiosity of studying abroad. My sister had gone to study in Paris in her area. And yes, it had always called to my attention, this idea of studying abroad. But, well, at the beginning when I had finished my *licenciatura* it didn't happen—life happens. But it was a bit of a twist of fate that led me to finally studying abroad. On one side, when I finished my studies in Mexico, on the one hand it was a time in Mexico where there master's programs didn't exist, there was nowhere to complete one. By the time I left a master's program had started in Jalapa, but in Mexico City there was nothing. So, to keep studying, to keep learning, well you had to go abroad. So, where to go ended up being a bit random.

In Mexico, what was most known was this idea of going to study in Europe, but during my studies I had had some encounters with some of the teachers and I wasn't very convinced of going to Europe. On the one hand, yes at some point I had completed like an admissions exam in London to study. It was more electroacoustic music. I had worked in the multimedia center at the *Centro Nacional de las Artes* for a year and I was familiar with the computers, the sounds—so I said, well it's an idea. I'd been accepted, but at that point I had a boyfriend who was also thinking about going, but for him the idea of going to London didn't work out. So, well, we won't go there, we'll stay here. On the other hand, I had met a teacher, a composition teacher in Mexico—a European teacher—and the impression that they gave me was that it was a bit of a closed medium. Like there were certain schools, and if you're going to compose with a certain teacher then you compose in a certain way and you wouldn't have much liberty.

L: Mhmm.

O: And I had heard that about different schools in Europe in general, also in France, in...that you have to compose certain music in a certain way or stick to certain trends. I wasn't very convinced that that was what I wanted. And really it was fate that at that moment...I broke up with that boyfriend and then later on we got back together and he told me, "oh, I have this plan to go study in Montreal, there's a program there that interests me, and I'm going." I said well, okay, I'm going to investigate as well and we'll go. So I looked into Montreal and I found out what they offered and a friend put me in contact with another composer that was studying at the University of Montreal. And her teacher was José Evangelista, who is of Spanish origin, and so it was very easy to get in contact with him because the language helped a lot. He told me, send me your works and we'll see what we can do. So I sent him my works and he told me, yes, I'd be glad to

work with you but we have to go through the official process. Send your documents, send your application and mention in it that you've already talked to me and they'll send me your candidacy and we'll see from there. So, I sent it and they accepted me and at that point I broke up with my boyfriend definitively. But I said well, I have the acceptance, what do I do? Do I go? Do I not go? I decided that yes, this was a project that interested me. And one of the things that I really liked about it here is that compared to what I had heard from Europe—that you have to follow your school and the way you compose is this one—here one of the advantages or disadvantages maybe, is that there isn't a tradition that's been around for...

L: For years, yeah.

O: For years like in Europe. Montreal is a place where there is a lot of immigration, from all over the world, and so people are very open to seeing what's going on in other places—to these different ways of composing. Rather there is like, a lot of curiosity about what you're doing, what is your method, etcetera. A big, big, big open mindedness, even among the composition professors there is a big variety when it comes to methods of composing, how you approach composing, etcetera. So I loved working with José Evangelista. Like Mario Lavista, one of the biggest advantages is that they help you make your music better based on what you are proposing, they don't force you into making your music this way or that way. So one can really find their own way, your own way. And so with José I was able to work like this, he was someone who always shared with me, "oh you like this, why don't you go and listen to this, and this, and these other composers who do something similar, or that do something that maybe interests you." So it was very rich.

And when I stayed to study with Alan Belkin it really was—well we worked the orchestra—he was someone who really helped me better the form of pieces, the structure, and to really work with orchestration. But he left me complete freedom when it came to language, what I wanted to do, etcetera. It was something that I really enjoyed, appreciated, and keep enjoying about here, that you can go to *very* varied concerts. Like, you can go to a music concert that's contemporary, living composers, that can be tonal, or atonal, or electroacoustic—there's a bit of everything. And there is a lot of respect, a lot of open-mindedness, to all types of composers. And to talk about why I stayed here—while I was studying I met my partner and he's from here. And well, when I finished my doctorate—what do we do, do we go to Mexico? Do we stay here? And finally it was easier to stay here where I was already adapted, and well, I've been here for twenty years.

L: Alright, well, this next question I think is a bit more personal, so... only answer what you want to answer. But, one of the reasons that I began to write my dissertation was partly because I do want more people to know about this music because it does exist, it's just a bit hard to find sometimes but it exists. So, that was a part of it, that I want people to have a place where they can go and find music by specifically Mexican composers. And the other part was that it wasn't until my masters—like I said, I was born here and growing up my parents always told me don't forget your roots or your culture, you are Mexican, you're going to speak Spanish. Even though you live here in the United States we aren't going to let you forget about your roots. And so it wasn't until my masters that I began to think that—that my identity as a Mexican woman also

included my identity as a classical musician. Because I had never seen myself very much in what I studied. A lot of the time I was one of the only people who was, well from Mexico—

O: Of a different origin.

L: Uh-huh, of a different origin. Have you...I don't know how to ask this, if I could ask in—

O: In English is fine.

L: Alright. [In English] Have you felt that at any point in your career as a composer—specifically as a woman Mexican composer? Or has your experience been different? Or maybe you've never even thought about it like that, considering you did your first degrees in Mexico? I guess it's an open question to whatever you want to answer.

O: I think yes— one of the things that marked me, in a way, when I first began studying composition—yes, these teachers that would give classes sometimes at La Escuela Nacional de Música, that would come from abroad, from Europe. Well, I did experience the closed-mindedness of some of them. Of them listening to something with an open mind supposedly. Come show us your music, we're going to show music by different people that you propose. But every time that something was presented, they'd completely discredit it sometimes, saying this isn't music, no. Well it happened with my music, but it happened with a Cuban composer who presented his own piece. He presented a choral piece that was a marvelous *rumba*—well I loved it, it had that root of classical music but at the same time of traditional music. And after having presented it and all, in the next class the teacher who'd come from Europe said, “Oh, you remember what the Cuban teacher said? Well forget it all, that's not music.”

L: Oh!

O: And so it was so radical that to me it was clear that—watch out, yeah? Who are you? You want to compose music—what type of music moves you? With what music do you identify? More with this music that has latin roots and also uses elements of western music but that has its roots here. Or this music that's a bit more abstract, that they tell you *has* to be a certain way, that if you don't compose this way then your music is not valid. So, having lived that, well it was a bit traumatizing but at the same time very fortunate because—since my formative years it was very clear to me that the music they'd presented has worth and that I identify more with it. And so if in Europe they are going to belittle it, well maybe that's not the place I want to go, or at least not go study with that type of person. I'm interested in another type of approach.

So, perhaps it was clear to me since then that my roots are very important to me, before my studies, or parallel to my music studies—at one point I had also begun to study history with the idea of specializing in art history and then further focused on music. I ended up leaving it because the art teachers that I had—a lot of the time music wasn't art, so what they showed was the history of painting, sculpture, maybe architecture, and that was it. And so I ended up leaving it. But yes, I studied a lot about the pre-Hispanic music of Mexico. It's a bit difficult because there's not much documentation, much of the music was lost because it was very close to the cosmogony of the indigenous peoples and so the colonizers didn't want that music if it was too related to the beliefs of the people. But that's not to say that that music didn't exist. It existed, it

was super, super, super important. There were some references to the instruments that existed. There are certain codices or recollections, from the colonizers themselves, that talked about this music. So I investigated that a lot and for me it was a tragedy that part of that music was lost but at the same time I came to realize that our traditional Mexican music—or folkloric music if you will—has a lot of that original music in its own origin. And so for me it was very important to rescue those rhythms of 3/4 + 6/8, all the richness of music. Well, what could be rescued because there is some music that is lost but there are some aspects that remain a bit present.

The fact that there were no string instruments and all the instruments were woodwinds or percussion—so it's not strange that the works that I have written up to now are well, woodwinds, or marimba, etcetera. That love of very rhythmic music where rhythm is very important—I'm not going to look much for atmospheres or certain contrast of sounds or certain characteristics including certain harmonies. It doesn't call my attention as much—I'm not saying they're not valid, there's a lot of composers who use them and I think they are wonderful but at the moment that I'm working my pieces, there are other types of things that attract me more, like the rhythmic aspect, and those are what I use to build my music. But I've mixed myself up, I don't even know what the question was.

So yes, there was a certain conscious aspect of, I want to look into the indigenous Mexican roots of our folklore, or for something that's going to feed the type of music that I compose. And so when I left to go live out of the country well...you question yourself a lot about identity, about who you are, of where you are from, and what are the good and the not so good things from the place you come from. And also, what are the similarities and what are the differences of the place you come to. Of course, there are things that I valued and still value from Mexico and from Mexican music that are still present in my music and in my way of seeing, of composing, of listening, of dancing. And on the other hand, arriving at a new place, there are also some things that you begin to adopt. So you end up being a bit of that mix yourself. Now, in the moment that you arrive and get to present—at the university that I arrived at to compose and to present my pieces—well everyone does look at you a bit like, oh well she's the Mexican. And now, after many years and after obtaining double nationality, etcetera, well yes, they adopt you here as the Quebec composer, or the Canadian composer, or Mexican-Canadian. But yes maybe they still look at you a bit like, well you have those two sides. Fortunately here in Canada, I feel like that is looked at as a good quality, like something good, that makes you interesting, that makes you different from the rest but in a good sense.

L: Mhmm.

O: S I didn't—suffer, from people looking at me like “oh, it's the Mexican, she's going to make something bad,” instead it was something positive like “oh, well let's see what she presents,” and, “oh look, how interesting.” So I didn't have trouble composing the music that I wanted to, or that it would look bad because of my origin—instead it was the opposite, it was seen as something interesting and positive. On the other hand, living and learning how to integrate here—well a piece of mine has just premiered here and in Mexico. It's a snowy fantasy where I describe the calm snowy landscapes here, etcetera. And so there's something of mine in my

music now that comes from the experiences I've lived, but that I've lived here. So, there's definitely that mix of cultures that's part of my life, and so it's definitely part of my music.

L: Well, thank you. Now, one last thing that I wanted to add before I asked you for your contact information. But is there anything you want to add that I didn't ask, or anything that you would like too...

O: Well, I don't think so, just that it's a good thing you're doing this—congratulations for this work, because as you said, the reason for doing this are similar to my own—

L: Very similar.

O: I think it's very important and even though sometimes it doesn't have an immediate impact, little by little—well, years later and it's still adding a link in the chain. And yes I think it's important that the works become known, since they exist. There may be some that are very valuable, and some not so much, but if they aren't known, if they aren't played, well then we can't know. And so, yes, I hope there's more diffusion, and that they are played more, and recorded, and that they reach more people so the public can know them too. So, yeah, congratulations...

L: Thanks.

O: For your work.

L: My goal, after finishing my dissertation, is to make—even if it's just a google doc, or a document that can be shared with whoever—a list of music and how to buy it. And then I want to see if I can make a website where everybody can go. But that will be in the future.

O: Hopefully, hopefully. [laugh]

L: Alright well, the last thing I wanted to ask—though I don't know if maybe you'll want to send it later instead. Ask you for contact information, how someone can get in contact with you if they are interested in your music or want to purchase your music. But I don't know if you want to do that here or later on.

O: I can do both. My email—I mean if this video stays around a long time we'll hope it stays the same—is aleodgers@yahoo.com. So that's the email and well they can get in contact and we can get in contact and can interchange information depending on what they are looking for. And if not they can find works, practically all of them, at The Canadian Music Center. It's a repository, not an editorial per se, but yes on their website they can see works by composer and buy them or rent them. Some are in paper format or they can also be in PDF. So yes The Canadian Music Center, they can write in English or French or even Spanish. And yes, they can buy music there.

L: Well, I had one last question but it slipped my mind while you answered this one.

O: My email—my website? Well there's a web page as well, if you look up “Alejandra Odgers composer” you'll find me there too. It's a website with my catalog and some other information.

L: Oh I remembered! You mentioned that you wrote another oboe piece besides *Semelíami*, is this also in circulation or being sold or—

O: Yes, it's there at The Canadian Music Center as well. In fact it's called *Monologo* and it was my first, let's say, official piece that I composed. Before that I had composed two variations, no—two inventions, both for piano, one for two parts and another for three—but they were inventions that tried to emulate the style of Bach, like the Bach inventions. But the first piece that I composed in a completely free manner was *Monologo*, that is a piece for oboe in three movements. So yes, you can find it at The Canadian Music Center.

L: I'll look for it then, because I only know of *Semelíami*, but yes—

O: Very well.

L: That was everything I had for you, again thank you very much for accepting being part of this project and granting me an interview.

O: No, well, gladly, and good luck, I hope that you get all the information that you need and that it can be spread. It would be good—if I can also ask if your dissertation will be able to be found on the internet afterwards, or the catalog. Maybe on my website I can also put some information about it and most importantly send it to oboists so that they can take advantage of it and get to know this music.

L: Yes, when I turn it into my university it should always be accessible through them—but yes I'll send it once it's all done.

O: Very good.

L: Well then...

O: Well thank you Lupita and good luck!

L: Thank you very much and thank you again for the interview and for the talk.

O: No problem, we'll stay in contact.

L: Great.

O: Goodbye.

APPENDIX D: PERSONAL JOURNEY

Regardless of the impact to oboe repertoire this project has in the future, it has already had an immediate impact on me personally both as a musician and as a Mexican woman. I was able to get closer to my heritage and culture, *through* the music I study, in a way that I had previously thought wasn't possible. It was a bridging of two identities, that of classical musician and that of Mexican woman, that I believe has made me stronger in both. And this feeling was something that I could put into play as a musician right away. For my final DMA recital in 2022, I not only played three of the pieces included in the project, **Al filo del agua** (world premier), **Boca abajo**, and **Danza de Mediodía**, but I also performed dressed in *purepecha* traditional wear. The *purepecha* are the indigenous community from whom my family is descended.

Illustration D3 - Traditional Wear



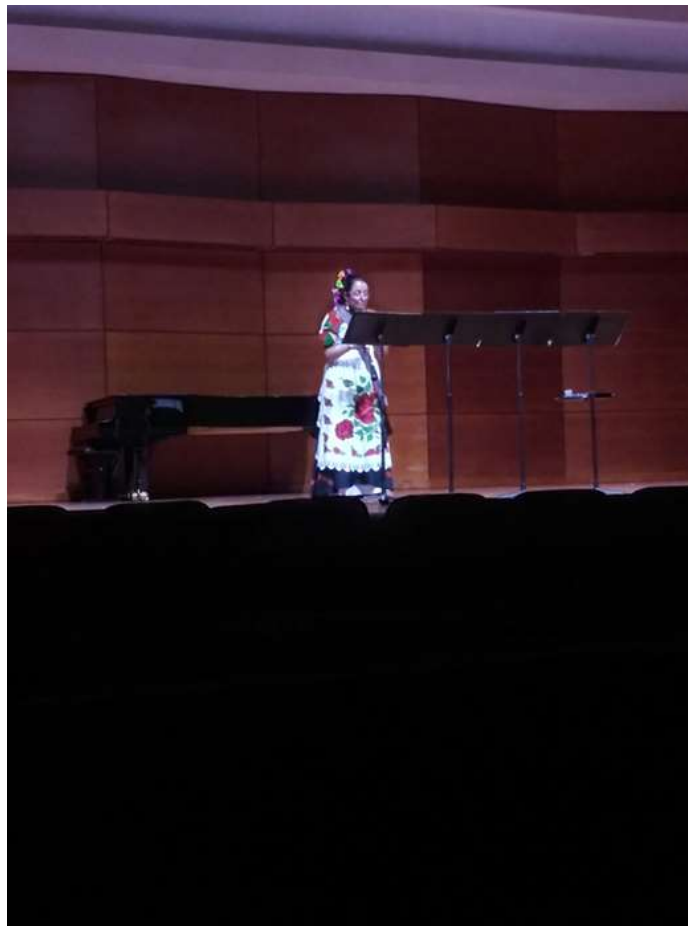
I was able to involve my family in my music in a way that I'd never been able to before as well. The *mandil*, the apron I wear with roses on it, was cross-stitched by hand, by my mother. Two of my *tías*, my *tía* Aurora—who is a traditional folkloric dancer and who regularly wears outfits like the one I wore—and my *tía* Lupe helped me purchase my dress directly from a *purepecha* craftswoman in Mexico.

Illustration D4 - My Parents and I



Both my mom and dad, who have often felt like outsiders in the atmosphere of a classical music recital, were able to feel more a part of the recital itself. As parents who were adamant that I never forget my culture or heritage, despite having been raised in the US, they were particularly proud that I wanted to display that heritage during one of the most important moments of my music studies.

Illustration D5 - Graduate Recital



In the end, this recital was the culmination of a years long answer to the question I had timidly asked myself way back in 2019. Can my Mexican identity exist in harmony with my identity as a classical musician? The answer is yes. For the first time in my musical career these two identities merged in very visible ways. I played music written by Mexican composers and

wore the traditional clothing of my people for one of the final milestones of my doctoral degree. I now have this knowledge that there is a space for me, as I am, both a Mexican woman and as a Mexican classical musician, where before I'd thought that being a classical musician always involved leaving part of my Mexican identity at the door. In the end, this project, beyond just completing a dissertation, was really about finding a part of myself.