

The Adventures of Latin American Music in the Sixties: Gilbert Chase, Alberto Ginastera, and the Fellows of Buenos Aires' Latin American Center for Advanced Musical Studies¹

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Buenos Aires, June 2017



Working Paper Series (Number 2017.1)

¹ The first version of this text was presented during the “The Worlds of Latin American Music in the 20th Century” colloquium at The University of Chicago, organized by the Center for Latin American Studies, April 18, 2017. It is important to me to give many thanks to Romina Dezillio and Pablo Jaureguiberry for your collaboration in this. English version and for all your important opinions.

Abstract

The term “Latin America” emerged around the middle of the nineteenth century with the intention of indicating or stimulating a cultural, social, and geographical link. Since the late nineteenth century, the terms Pan American or Pan Americanism were forged from an expansionist political strategy in order to obtain commercial advantages for the United States. At the beginning of the 1960s, after the Cuban Revolution, the Alliance for Progress helped to blur some of the region’s individualities, and Pan Americanism seemed to impose itself on Latin Americanism. In this socio-political context, between 1963 and 1971, the Latin American Center of Advanced Musical Studies (CLAEM) of the Torcuato Di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires gathered Latin American fellows to train in advanced techniques of composition. This training engendered awareness of the similarities and differences that existed between the realities of each composer. Peer exchange coexisted with positions on the qualities that American or Latin American music should have by the personalities who taught in the CLAEM. Faced with institutional expectations and influential composers, the young composers outlined different solutions to the problem of putting into practice a musical avant-garde combined with elements of identity.

Through traces present in various writings and musical productions, this work aims to show the multiplicity of proposals intended to define what Latin American music was or should have been during the 1960s. In the field of so-called “art music,” the Latin American quality was contingent on the expectations and wishes of the recipients and producers of the music. In this sense, I will explain how writings (books, articles, and letters), mainly by Gilbert Chase and Alberto Ginastera, created a construct of Latin American music and to what extent musical works responded to those models.

Introduction

If we were to think about music in 1960s Argentina, we should first define the kind of music to which we are referring. Are we talking about “art music,” folk music, or “popular music?” These three musical areas were shaped by musical traditions and by the international cultural industry. Considering the state of current musical studies, I will restrict myself to what happened in the city of Buenos Aires around so-called “art music.” Despite the fact that the object of my study is an institution called Latin American Center for Advanced Musical Studies (Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales, CLAEM), it is not easy to circumscribe it to a single city, country, or geographical region.

My aim is to present various proposals that intended to define what Latin American music was or should have been during the '60s. As a social practice, the Latin American quality of “art music” was subject to the expectations and desires of the audience and producers of this music. In this sense, I intend to show how a series of writings (letters, books, and journal articles) about musical production participated in the construction of the “Latin American music” category around 1960 and to what extent musical works responded to those proposals. The general approach is strongly related to cultural history combined with conceptual tools from literary criticism and linguistics, such as reception theory and discourse analysis.² The sources I have worked with come mainly from the Archives of the Torcuato Di Tella Institute, including sound recordings of the activities carried out in the auditorium of the Di Tella Institute between 1963 and 1970. In the first part I describe what CLAEM was and what activities it developed. Next, I discuss some notions around Latin American music that existed at the beginning of the '60s. To conclude, I indicate how some of these ideas were embodied in musical works.

What was CLAEM?

The Latin American Center for Advanced Musical Studies (CLAEM) was one of three art centers of the Torcuato Di Tella Institute and operated between 1962 and 1971 in Buenos Aires.³ Guido and Torcuato (Jr.) Di Tella created the Institute, known as “the Di Tella,” in 1958. This philanthropic entity was the first in Argentina to introduce a model from the United States: a

²Some principal authors are Burke (1991, 1997), Jauss (1970), Zenck (1980), Benveniste (1966), Amossy (2000), and Maingueneau (2002).

³ The other centers were the Visual Art Center (Centro de Artes Visuales, CAV) and the Audio-Visual Experimental Center (Centro de Experimentación Audiovisual, CEA).

private institution that promotes research in social sciences and artistic disciplines without public funds. Among the three art centers, CLAEM was the only one that undertook regular pedagogical activities that were independent from the programs of the Di Tella Institute.⁴

At the beginning of 1958, the Rockefeller Foundation offered Argentine composer Alberto Ginastera the opportunity to create an institution dedicated to retraining Latin American musicians in contemporary music techniques. After many attempts, the Di Tella Institute agreed to host the project mainly supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. As I said earlier, CLAEM's first activities began in 1962,⁵ with the aim of awarding biannual scholarships to composers from all over Latin America to practice the most advanced musical trends of the time. Ginastera's goal was to give young composers a chance to create music without economic constraints and to relate to some of the most important musical and intellectual figures: from Olivier Messiaen and Aaron Copland to Iannis Xenakis, Luigi Nono, Earle Brown, and Umberto Eco. Thus, about 50 composers were in Buenos Aires during the 1960s and CLAEM created important links between them.⁶ Like the other art centers, CLAEM made possible the emergence of an artistic practice that can be characterized as neo-avant-garde. These musical productions were in touch with their contemporaries in the metropolitan centers of cultural influence: central European countries and the United States, mainly New York. Today, most of the major Latin American composers were once CLAEM fellows.⁷

Proposals on musical creation in Latin America

By the 1950s in Latin America, and primarily in Buenos Aires, the ideas of the Spanish musicologist Adolfo Salazar (1890–1958) were well known and had an important reception among intellectuals and music creators.⁸ Salazar, a republican Spanish music critic exiled in Mexico, proposed the need to use elements that allowed social identification in musical creations beyond obvious references to folklore or popular music. This proposal, which can be synthesized as *national* rather than *nationalistic* music, arose with the intention of removing the fascist

⁴ John King (1985) provides detailed information about the Torcuato Di Tella Institute activities.

⁵ On June 7, 1962, Alberto Ginastera wrote his first letter to John P. Harrison from his CLAEM office (Di Tella Archives, CLAEM Section, Box 14).

⁶ Composers came from Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, and the United States. For a complete list of fellows see Vázquez (2011b).

⁷ Various scholars have conducted research on CLAEM, including: Novoa (2009, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2014), Herrera (2011, 2013), and Vázquez (2008, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2013, 2015).

⁸ About the spread of Adolfo Salazar's ideas in Argentina, see Dellmans (2015).

political implications of the term nationalism and with an aesthetic stance in favor of a neoclassicism similar to the one used by Manuel de Falla in *Concerto* [for harpsichord] (1926) or *El retablo del maese Pedro* (1923). The aesthetic and political choice that Salazar elaborated throughout his production was adopted by a large number of Argentine composers, during the '40s and '50s, to create a modern national music without crude allusions to traditional or popular music. The aspirations of these composers stood far from a nostalgic romantic nationalism linked with popular expressions.⁹ In these terms, it was not simple to differentiate what music was national or nationalistic, nor was it easy to determine through the elements that the music put in play whether the works and their authors were linked to a more or less democratic stance.¹⁰

This happened mainly in Latin America, but in the United States a similar position emerged. According to the musicologist Carol Hess, nationalist music was viewed with distrust because it was associated with German National Socialism during World War II and, during the Cold War, with communism and Soviet Socialist Realism (Hess 2013: 5-6). Due to local disputes in Latin American countries and the United States's global geopolitical objectives, the presence of autochthonous references in music was a field of artistic and political dispute in the '50s and '60s—an issue that has reemerged today.¹¹

By the end of 1958, *Revista Musical Chilena* number 61 gathered a set of three articles that addressed the interests and concerns of Latin American composers. Two texts, written by composers Juan Orrego Salas and Aurelio de la Vega, are opinion essays that arose from a group of music festivals held in Caracas, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and Washington. A third article, “Towards an American Consciousness in Music,”¹² is an epilogue taken from the *Introducción a la música contemporánea americana* by Gilbert Chase, published a few months earlier in Buenos Aires. Articles by Orrego Salas and Vega agree on the need to forge ties between Latin American composers and the Americas and to stop taking Europe as a model; in turn, they argue that Europe should recognize the uniqueness of musical life in Latin America. Vega's text particularly emphasizes a colonial point of view. In the article he claimed in an exaggerated way

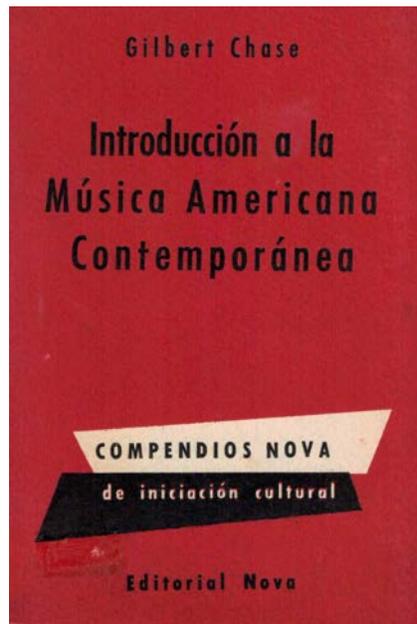
⁹ About this particular topic, see Dellmans (2015: 108).

¹⁰ In Argentina, according to Dellmans (2015) some intellectuals and artists who reused the ideas that Salazar had proposed for Spanish fascism were against (to a greater or lesser extent) the government of Juan Perón. On the relationship between Perón's government and fascism, consult Halperín Donghi (1994).

¹¹ I refer to the incorporation of different ethnic musical references that some art music composers have used in recent years. A paradigmatic case is the Argentine composer Osvaldo Golijov (b. 1960).

¹² Original title in Spanish: “Hacia una conciencia americana en la música.”

that the United States should be considered the new model for art music updating. Indirectly, the two texts make an appeal for the need to create a commercial circuit for the performance of Latin American repertory. After the success of the first Washington Inter-American Music Festival,¹³ where most performed works were commissioned (by payment), the United States become the Promised Land for musicians and composers.



Although Salazar's paradoxical ideas about a national music with universal characteristics tacitly fly over the texts of Orrego Salas and Vega, in Chase's book these ideas appear in an explicit way especially in the section dedicated to Argentine composers.¹⁴ There, Chase presents Ginastera as a model of an "allusive or subjective nationalism."¹⁵ In addition, exoticism plays an important role when valuing works; Chase privileged compositions with native Latin American references over creations with a greater degree of abstraction.¹⁶ The organization of the book also reflects a neocolonial attitude. In respective chapters, Chase grouped countries according to

¹³ The first Washington Inter-American Music Festival was held April 18–20, 1958.

¹⁴ Chase (1958a: 92-94). In these pages Chase contrasts the categories of "nationalistic" and "national." In addition, paraphrasing Salazar, he proposes the notions of "descriptive nationalism" and "allusive nationalism."

¹⁵ *Ídem* 96. Throughout this book Chase never mentions Adolfo Salazar, but he knew Salazar's production very well. Chase's early works were dedicated to the music in Spain (Chase 1941) and, later, he reviewed several of Salazar's books, including *La música en la sociedad europea* (México, 1942) and *La música de España: la música en la cultura española* (Buenos Aires, 1953). Chase was the American cultural attaché in Lima and Buenos Aires from 1951 to 1955.

¹⁶ In the section devoted to Chile, where most composers were not interested in working with vernacular elements, Chase subtly emphasized the nativism of Pedro Humberto Allende and Carlos Isamit over the rest of the composers closest to "universal" art music (1958a: 74–79).

their position in the international market and not by the characteristics of their musical productions. This grouping, with slight differences, is the one used today by international corporations: the United States; Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean; the Andean countries; Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay; and finally Brazil. In this way, Chase brings together diverse musical realities like those of Chile and Bolivia or Paraguay and Argentina.¹⁷ In his conclusions, Chase insists on the idea that “music has to express, in one way or another, the national character of the culture in which it is born and lives and whose historical roots it nourishes” (1958a: 126), where “Americanism” is a facet of “Universalism” (1958a: 119), understood as Western, and not only European, culture.

The imposition of some kind of extra musical reference took on new impulses after the Cuban Revolution of 1959, the hardening of the Cold War, and the establishment of the Alliance for Progress in 1961. These were the conceptual and political-economic settings in which CLAEM and its activity took place.

Expectations for the creation of CLAEM

The expectations raised before the creation of CLAEM contrasted with the first developed musical activities and objectives that Ginastera had in mind. For the Rockefeller Foundation, according to a 1962 report, “the center’s training program will draw heavily on indigenous Latin American music, which has strongly influenced the work of composers such as Villa-Lobos, Chavez and Ginastera.”¹⁸ While this vision was published in the local press, a series of articles and interviews with Ginastera indicated that the intention of the center “will be to provide an orientation to modern music in Latin America” and Ginastera himself indicated that “the Time of folklore has passed, even for the refined and spiritualized folklore of Bartók...” and he added “of course the composers will retain their national characteristics, but that is another thing.”¹⁹ Although Ginastera did not clarify the “other thing” that made composers “national,”

¹⁷ Strangely, in an article published in mid-1958, Chase calls attention to the risk of homogenizing a region as diverse as Latin America. Unlike the book published in Buenos Aires, the article makes a grouping of countries much more coherent from a sociological point of view and in relation to musical production (Chase 1958b).

¹⁸ *Rockefeller Foundation Grants*, vol. XIII, number 4, Fourth Quarter, 1962: 6. Evidently, by 1962 the figures of Chavez, Villa-Lobos, and Ginastera were already the representation of “Latin American music” in the United States. Similar information can be found in the Rockefeller Foundation *Annual Report for 1962*: 103.

¹⁹ “Declaraciones de A. Ginastera,” *La Nación*, March 14, 1962.

today it is evident that his statements did not match the pedagogical objective that the members of the Rockefeller Foundation had imagined²⁰.

Ginastera's first musical successes were linked to folklore, which help to create part of the expectations horizon of Buenos Aires musical criticism. The critical reviews of CLAEM concerts indicate a bad reception of the avant-garde proposals of some of the works presented. The resistance with which the CLAEM concerts were generally received tells us that the aesthetic direction chosen by young composers was not what those critics meant by "Latin American music."

"Towards an American aesthetic"

As indicated above, during the 10 years that CLAEM operated, Ginastera invited composers and theorists to dictate lessons and lectures to the fellows. In 1964, one of the guests was the American musicologist Gilbert Chase. The broad correspondence between Ginastera and Chase shows their friendship, and the agreements and the differences between them concerning how they regarded musical representation on the American continent. Ginastera proposed that Chase hold a series of lectures on "Towards an American aesthetic" and that the cycle of presentations revolve around the topic of his book *Introduction to Contemporary American Music*. When Chase sent the subject for each lecture, which virtually reproduced the structure of the book but focused exclusively on music produced in the United States, Ginastera flatly rejected the proposal and observed:

You understood the word 'American' as we understand the word *estadounidense* [of the United States]. In speaking of an American aesthetic, I was taking into account the whole continent from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. [...] You must include fifty percent of Latin American subject and highlight everything from the Mayan and Aztec ruins to the present musical generation of North and South America.²¹

The tone of the letter is strangely severe considering the highly diplomatic style that Ginastera generally used. In a previous letter to Chase the Argentinian composer had based his position on the idea that the fellows were "perhaps too influenced by European experiments."²² Later, Ginastera indicated that their purpose "...is to insist to the fellows about the need to know and

²⁰ Another aspect of this topic can be found in Vázquez (2011c).

²¹ Letter from Ginastera to Chase, March 16, 1964 (Archivos Di Tella).

²² Letter from Ginastera to Chase, November 25, 1963 (Archivos Di Tella).

study the possibilities that America [the whole continent] can give to the contemporary artist.”²³ Chase agreed to include information on Latin American music production in his lectures,²⁴ and Ginastera responded insisting that he had to cover the entire American continent, from prehistory to present times, because “although we can not plan for the future [of fellows], at least they will know where they are and have a clearer vision of the future.”²⁵

Unfortunately, the texts of Chase’s lectures are not in the Di Tella Archive,²⁶ but the titles (slightly modified from the original version) were: (1) Towards an American consciousness in art; (2) The great search (indigenous and nationalism); (3) American experience in art; (4) Spirit and form in American art; and (5) Possibilities of an American aesthetic.²⁷ In 1964 Chase was Director of the Inter-American Institute for Musical Research at Tulane University in New Orleans. He had previously served as a consultant to the Library of Congress and the Pan-American Union, and had also held the position of Cultural Affairs Officer in various embassies in Latin America and Europe. He had about four months to reformulate the themes of his lectures.²⁸ It is probable that, apart from including some other name or work in the list of Latin American music, his plan has not moved too far from the position he had established in his 1958 book: a “dialectical confrontation” between European tendencies and the “telluric expression” of Americanism, between “contemporary suitability and American idiosyncrasy.”²⁹

American, Pan-American and Latin American musical creation

Since the 1950s Ginastera had been interested in artistic production that, observing the European tradition from a distance, possesses continental features.³⁰ His strategy and pedagogical interest are evident in a 1952 lecture on “Music in the Americas”³¹ and in the 1964 course “Music of America.” In the course, Ginastera began by lecturing on “Introduction to the

²³ Letter from Ginastera to Chase, March 16, 1964 (Archivos Di Tella).

²⁴ Letter from Chase to Ginastera, April 2, 1964 (Archivos Di Tella).

²⁵ Letter from Ginastera to Chase, April 17, 1964 (Archivos Di Tella).

²⁶ A similar case is the lost Aaron Copland lectures. But Copland included his lectures at CLAEM as a final section of a new edition of *Our Music* in 1968.

²⁷ Letter from Chase to Ginastera, June 20, 1964 (Archivos Di Tella).

²⁸ Chase gave his lectures between August 5 and 25, 1964 (“Annual Report”, Archivos Di Tella).

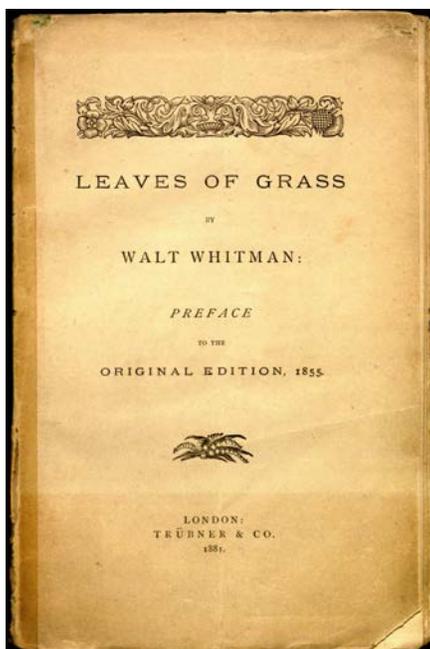
²⁹ Quotes from “Prologue” in Chase (1958a: 8–9).

³⁰ About the definition of terms like Americanism, Pan-Americanism and Latin Americanism, see Arpini (2004) and Croce (2009). About the relationship between music and the Pan American Union, I recommend Palomino (2015).

³¹ These lectures were held on September 16 and 23, 1952, in a 24-day lecture cycle called “La Música en la Cultura Occidental. La evolución de la música desde 1850 hasta nuestros días” in the “Sala Ricordi” hall, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

music of America,” and then other composers and musicologists talked about different countries of the continent.³² This course was held in October 1964 and apparently served as a complementary approach to the Chase lectures.

On the other hand, in two speeches given in 1963 during the inauguration of the building of the art centers of the Torcuato Di Tella Institute and the main CLAEM classroom, Ginastera made his position much more explicit. “The primitive America and that of the conquerors, that of the Andes and of Mato Grosso, that of the Pampas and Colorado, is not and can not be equal to Europe where society has developed slowly and where culture has something secular and definitive. [...] For us Europe must be the example and America the inspiration.”³³ In these two speeches Ginastera made reference to two creators of the continent. From Walt Whitman’s *Leaves of Grass* (1855–1891) he quoted verses referring to Europe, and from Joaquín Torres-García’s *Constructive Universalism: Contribution to the Unification of American Art and Culture* (1944) he mentioned the phrase “The voice of America calls us.”



³² The lecture cycle was organized by UNESCO and held on October 1 and November 5, 1964. In addition to Ginastera, the speakers were: Mario Kuri-Aldana (Music in Mexico), Miguel Ángel Rondano (Music in Venezuela), León Schidlovsky (Music in Chile), César Bolaños and Edgar Valcárcel (Music in Peru), Mesías Maiguashca (Music in Ecuador), Alberto Villalpando (Music in Bolivia), Blas Emilio Atehortúa (Music in Colombia), Marlos Nobre (Music in Brazil), Lauro Ayestarán (Music in Uruguay), and Gerardo Gandini (Music in the United States).

³³ “Homenaje a Heitor Villa-Lobos,” Ginastera’s speech at the opening of CLAEM’s “Villa-Lobos Classroom,” August 20, 1963 (Archivo Di Tella). Ginastera’s last words seem to paraphrase Alberto Williams’s statement: “The technique was given to us by France, the inspiration by the *payadores* [guacho singers] from Juárez” [original in Spanish: “la técnica nos las dio Francia, y la inspiración, los payadores de Juárez”] (Williams 1951: 19, quoted in Plesch 2013: 348).

Beyond this statement, how did Ginastera relate these ideas to musical practice? The simple answer is provided by one of his best works: the *Cantata para América mágica* (1961), where he uses the adaptation of a pre-Columbian text and, as the musicologist Malena Kuss has shown,³⁴ the ordering of the series of sounds and some formal aspects are derived from the Mayan calendar. But this was not the only initiative by which Ginastera attempted a synthesis between the European tradition and the “vital push” of the American continent.³⁵ Already in the *Overtura para el Fausto Criollo* (1943) or the *Variaciones concertantes* (1953), Ginastera used intertextual procedures to combine folkloric references of his authorship with works of the traditional European repertoire. In the 1960s, direct quotes or allusion to musical styles of the European musical tradition are placed in unusual contexts reinforcing the distance of observation. The *Violin concerto* (1963) has a formal organization, with its distribution in eleven parts, which is very far from the canon of works in three movements. In the tenth movement, characterized by the number of percussion instruments, the solo violin introduces references to the *Capricci* by Niccoló Paganini.³⁶

As for the production of the composers who transited CLAEM, whom we can technically call ‘Ginastera students,’ a significant number of works made a critical reading of the technical and aesthetic proposals from both Europe and the United States. This was mainly achieved by exploring somewhat marginal tendencies, such as the sonorous block composition of the “Polish School,” the work of Edgar Varèse, and the random proposals of American experimentalism. Not so much the teachers of the center but the CLAEM fellows put these proposals in question in informal meetings among themselves. The importance of CLAEM for Latin America was the opportunity to bring together composers with different socio-cultural realities, who shared a colonial past and, with different postures, who queried the relationship between artistic production and political commitment. Although describing the particularities of the procedures put into practice exceeds the limits of this presentation, I will indicate some characteristics.

³⁴ About Ginastera’s *Cantata para América mágica* op. 27, see Kuss (2000).

³⁵ The “vital push” and the enthusiasm on the American continent is mentioned in Ginastera’s “Prologue” (written in 1957) for the Spanish version of Chase’s book *America’s Music, from the Pilgrims to the Present* (1955).

³⁶ Although the use of materials or allusions to the music of other composers goes back at least to the European Renaissance, that type of resource always was realized within the same stylistic tradition. The paradigmatic model of collage or intertextuality in the twentieth century is *Sinfonia* (1968-69) by Luciano Berio, who puts in dialogue creations from different eras but in the same tradition. Ginastera created works with similar procedures (contrasting traditions and materials) 20 years earlier.

Even though the sound result is far from the work of Ginastera, Gerardo Gandini (his most important disciple) deepened the use of intertextuality and re-elaboration of works of the European past in unusual context.³⁷ Some CLAEM fellows resorted to using texts with strong regional references or political links: the work of the Peruvian avant-garde poet César Vallejo (César Bolaños and Blas Atehortúa), poems by Mario Benedetti (Coriún Aharonián), popular sayings (Enrique Rivera), or texts in Aboriginal languages (Marlos Nobre, Florencio Pozadas).³⁸ The relationship between the young composers and popular or folk music was somewhat distant or highly elaborate. Few works use elements that would be genuinely Latin American, in Chase's point of view. While other composers (such as Mariano Etkin or Graciela Paraskevaídis) achieved the impact generated by mass media music, the relationship between this reception and their work is highly abstract and difficult to justify perceptually or analytically.³⁹

Final Considerations

From the 1960s, the proposal to create a national or regional music with universal aspirations was gradually left aside and the musical production of Latin America tried to generate alternatives outside the impositions of the cultural industry and the canon of the musical tradition. Attempts to define music as Pan-American, American, or Latin American show both diplomatic and political tensions and interests not only related to institutions but to individual aspirations of the creators. Composers were motivated both by their creative interests and by their subsistence needs. We cannot forget the strong conditioning that a commission exerted on the final result of a work. Another similar conditioning implied the composers' aspiration to be published internationally.⁴⁰

As for the young composers of CLAEM, the ideas that mobilized them throughout the '60s crystallized during the 1970s and 1980s in social activities as well as in musical works and written production. An important activity was the Latin American Composition Course, held

³⁷ About Gandini's work see Corrado (2002) and Fessel (2014)

³⁸ These works are: *Intensidad y altura* (1964) by Bolaños, *Himno de tierra, amor y vida* (1967) by Atehortúa, *Que* (1969) by Aharonián, *Los refranes* (1966) by Rivera, *Ukrinmakrinkrin* (1964) by Nobre, and *Quinsa Arawis* (1967) by Pozadas.

³⁹ I mean the works *Entropías* (1965) by Etkin, and *magma* (1966–67) by Paraskevaídis. About these works and the relationship with the *mambos* by Pérez Prado, see Vázquez (2016).

⁴⁰ Aaron Copland is very clear on this point when talking about his own work and the influence of the commissions on the chosen aesthetic. See Alcaraz (1982: 86–87).

between 1971 and 1989 in a variety of small Latin American cities.⁴¹ The music of many composers began to arouse the interest of both performers and musicologists, and to be considered, in somewhat restricted areas, equal to their European and North American contemporaries.⁴²

To conclude, I have chosen to quote the reflections of the Argentine composer Mariano Etkin. At the beginning of a short essay, whose subtitle is “Latin America does not exist,” Etkin indicates:

Perhaps the interruption is the deepest mark of America (‘Latin’ or not) from which the ingrained ever-latent sentiment of a possible resurgence from scratch can be derived for good and ill. [... Moreover,] identity is also invented, based on a desire for belonging and a consequent choice of certain attributes (assumed or obvious) converted into values.⁴³

I hope I have contributed with this text to find new edges to the problem of the definition of belonging to a geographical region, ethnic group, or cultural reality. Because, paraphrasing Jorge Luis Borges, what we are is either determined by fate or it is only a mask.⁴⁴

⁴¹ About the Latin American Composition Courses, can see Aharonián (2007) and Cáceres (1989).

⁴² Some of these composers are Mesías Maiguashca, Gabriel Brnčić, Alcides Lanza, Mariano Etkin, Luis María Serra, Graciela Paraskevaídis, Eduardo Kusnir, and Coriún Aharonián.

⁴³ Original text: “Tal vez la interrupción sea la marca más profunda de América –‘latina’ o no–, de la que puede derivarse, para bien y para mal, el arraigado sentimiento siempre latente de un posible recomenzar desde cero. [... Por otra parte], la identidad también es inventada, a partir de un deseo de pertenencia y de una consecuente elección de determinados atributos –supuestos o evidentes– convertidos en valores” (Etkin 2014).

⁴⁴ Based on a sentence from “El escritor argentino y la tradición” (1953) by Jorge Luis Borges, quoted in Etkin (2014: 196): “... no debemos concretarnos a lo argentino para ser argentinos: porque o ser argentino es una fatalidad y, en ese caso lo seremos de cualquier modo, o ser argentino será una mera afectación, una máscara.”

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