

Itamar

REVISTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN MUSICAL: TERRITORIOS PARA EL ARTE



AÑO 2021

7

 Facultat de Filosofia i Ciències de l'Educació



VNIVERSITAT
DE VALÈNCIA

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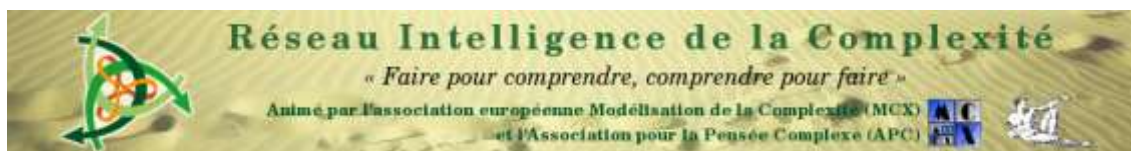
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Territorios para la conversación

Meeting with José Lezcano

Reynaldo Fernández Manzano
Andalusian Music Documentation Center
International University of Andalusia

José Lezcano creates sound universes from the six strings of the guitar, and although he also studied piano and double bass, the guitar has played a central role in his life. Among the various places in which he has developed his activity, Havana, where he was born in 1960, will have a special importance; Miami, where as a child he began his guitar studies; Maryland; South Carolina, where he expanded and continued; Florida, where he received his doctorate, and Keene University, where he teaches since 1991 to the present. He has received numerous international awards and mentions along his career.

Lezcano seeks his roots in tradition, but not in local elements but in the universal history of guitar and music, from classical forms to Latin American, African American, jazz, or broken chords and flamenco dissonances.

We talk with a great teacher, performer, composer and researcher, in the same order that he likes to use to define himself.

The beginnings of training are always a place of memory and somehow mark the future. Please, tell me about your beginnings in the musical world.

Began guitar lessons with Jose Costa in Miami, Florida, at 12 years of age. Jose Costa, was a former student of Severino Lopez, a pioneer of the classical guitar in Cuba who had studied with Miguel Llobet. Private studies as a teengager with Juan Mercadal (Professor of Guitar, University of Miami). First public solo recital, hourlong, from memory, at age 13, included standard works such as Sor's Mozart variations, op. 9, and Frescobaldi's Aria con Variazioni. Yearly solo recitals while in high school. First guitarist to win concerto competition at Interlochen, Michigan, National Music Camp, 15 years old. Performed Adagio from Concierto de Aranjuez (Rodrigo) with World Youth Symphony (1975). Placed honorable mention at Interlochen with Villa-Lobos Concerto (1976). Played solo for visiting musical luminaries to Miami at ages 14 and 15 (Andre Segovia, Federico Moreno Torroba) who recognized talent and potential for a professional career. Maestro Torroba wrote a very warm letter that I used when I applied for a scholarship to Peabody Conservatory of Music (Baltimore, Maryland).

In high school, I also studied piano with Cuban pedagogue Ana Maria Bolet, a family member (her cousin was Jorge Bolet, the concert pianist). I learned to play some standard repertoire, and I have enough facility to play some standard repertoire, although not the virtuoso stuff. Chopin's Nocturne in Eb, Waltz in C-sharp minor, some movements from Bach's French & English Suites, a movement from Beethoven's Pathetique. I also use the piano to explore jazz

harmony (a book of Bill Evans transcriptions); learned some Ernesto Lecuona from Ms. Bolet (La Comparsa, Danza Lucumi). I am not a performing pianist but use it in my classroom work for demonstrations. Of course I use the piano in composition and to write sketches for various instrumental combinations which I then elaborate and expand.

I also played double-bass (not that well!) in a South Florida Youth Symphony (Carmen Nappo) and learned to love the orchestral repertoire, and improved my sight-reading and ability to follow a conductor. I also had the opportunity to play some concertos with this ensemble (Vivaldi D major, Castelnuovo-Tedesco). As a teenager I also played the Tedesco with the Miami Beach Symphony as winner of a young people's competition in South Florida.

Then came the University, new experiences, knowledge and experiences. From that stage, What would you highlight?

Bachelor's degree, Guitar Performance, 1981, Peabody Conservatory of Music. Studies with renowned guitar pedagogue, Aaron Shearer (who also taught Manuel Barrueco) at Peabody. Minored in piano.

Masters degree, 1983. University of South Carolina (Guitar Performance). Studies with Christopher Berg (Univ. of South Carolina).

Won first place in Music Teacher's National Association College Artist, National Guitar Competition (1982).

Ph.D. Music Theory, Florida State University (1991). Dissertation addressed Afro-Cuban Meter and Rhythm in Published vocal and choral works of Alejandro Garcia Caturla, and Amadeo Roldan. Has been frequently cited since then in theses and dissertations that address Afro-Cuban music, the avant-garde in Cuba of the 1930s, and these composers.

Regarding composition, regulated studies or self-taught?

No formal study with any composition teachers. Self-taught as a composer. My master's degree included many courses in counterpoint (Renaissance and Baroque), form and analysis, and music theory, including speculative twentieth-century music theory. I also studied Schenkerian analysis. I like to study scores; listen to recordings and youtubes. A colleague told me that I could learn about orchestration by pulling a score off the shelf to discover how composers achieve certain effects, colors. Of course I also have studied a number of orchestration treatises. I also find it useful to consult with performers of instruments to which I am writing.

The history of music is full of great names, but for a composer and performer there are always some who occupy a special place. In your case, which teachers have been the source of inspiration?

Leo Brouwer, Astor Piazzolla, George Gerswhin, Oliver Messiaen, Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Leonard Bernstein. The Spanish nationalist composers

(long list, Rodrigo, Falla, Albeniz, Granados, Mompou, Turina) whom I regard as a world treasure.

I am interested in composing “hybrid” music; that is, music that reflects classical techniques, facility and awareness of different compositional techniques and systems, but that is rooted in heritage, folkloric traditions, popular music, etc. and that is written primarily “by ear” and not in rigid adherence to any “system.” In particular, I strive to write music that is personal, warmly expressive, immediate in its impact on listeners, and that does not privilege “art music” over popular and folk music traditions.



José Lezcano. Guitarist

The guitar is a harmonic instrument, it allows you to perform melodies, chords and rhythms. You have used it as a concert performer and pedagogue, What has been its role in your work?

The guitar has influenced my work in terms of its characteristic textures, sonorities and tunings, even in works not composed for the guitar nor including it (examples: my Viola Concerto, and Tango-Overture for Strings). Many of my works do include the guitar, either solo or as part of a chamber group, or as solo instrument in a concerto. Certain chords associated with flamenco guitar, with dissonances formed by open strings, also play a role in my harmonic thinking. The guitar’s tuning in fourths has influenced my conceptions of melodic contour and harmony.

You are a benchmark in the field of teaching and pedagogy of guitar and music creation where you have developed quite innovative projects. Let's talk about this section.

My principal teaching career has been for the last 29 years at Keene State College (Keene, New Hampshire). When I arrived in 1991, my role was to teach and coordinate Music Theory and Sight-singing, and to teach guitar, direct the guitar orchestra, and teach & coordinate other guitar courses. I also introduced a first-year course in Latin American music and founded a Latin American ensemble. In recent years, since 2011, my teaching load has shifted to encompass other courses in the guitar curriculum, which I continue to coordinate; and courses in Latin American Music, offered to music majors, music minors, and the general student population. In the guitar curriculum, I teach applied guitar lessons to students majoring in guitar performance:

- Students majoring in music education with guitar as their principal or secondary instrument
- Students majoring in music technology, music composition, or pursuing the BA degree, for whom the guitar is their principal or secondary instrument
- Students minoring in music
- Students not yet music majors / minors but considering this track; they can take guitar lessons for college credit, but not for credit towards a music degree until they first pass a formal audition

All of the music on the Latin American concerts is arranged and scored by myself, using tunes collected from my fieldwork, or from song collections in my personal library. I have a small budget for the ensemble and have invited professional guest artists to play solo sets and to collaborate with the student groups. Some recent artists include the Alturas Duo (Carlos Boltes, charango & viola, and Scott Hill, guitar); Franziska Huhn, harp professor at Longy, New England Conservatory, and other Boston-area colleges and conservatories; and the acclaimed Duo Martin (Eduardo Martin, Composer-guitarist, and Galy Martin, guitar), from Havana, Cuba.

Since 1993, I have annually taught a course I designed, titled "Latin American Music Survey," a survey of folkloric and art music from the area. The course includes a performance component and attracts a student enrollment of various majors in addition to music majors. Students learn to play Andean panpipes and present traditional music in a public concert. I also have offered Latin American Music ensemble as a separate, one-credit course. A few years ago I updated the course as IAMU 112, Latin American Music as part of the College's ISP program, and introduced a new 300-level course, Latin American Music, Society & Culture (IAMU 312). IAMU 312 adopts a topics-oriented view towards four distinct Latin American music cultures (Mariachi, Andean, Dominican Merengue, and Brazilian Samba and Northeast regional musics), through the lens of regionalism, nationalism, globalism, gender issues, economics, and outlaw subcultures. It also includes an ensemble component (Andean Panpipes). The courses that I introduced and offered in Latin American music were the first World-Music courses taught at Keene State College, and the Latin American Ensemble is at the moment the only World-Music ensemble offering in the Music curriculum, attracting a mixed population of students from the general population and music majors.

My service function includes keeping inventories of these instruments (guitars, charangos, panpipes, Andean wind and percussion instruments), overseeing maintenance, and checking them out to students. I also coordinate and schedule the guitar juries each semester. In the past 10 years, I have also coordinated a bi-annual Guitar Festival. The festival provides an opportunity for high school students to learn and play in a large guitar orchestra, along with Keene State students; to receive lessons and clinics with myself, colleagues at Keene State, and international and national colleagues that I invite, using a small budget and additional funds from other offices on campus. The festival plays an important role in building visibility and recruiting students to our programs.



José Lezcano, Barcelona Festival of Song, 2015

We cannot forget your research activity, from your doctoral thesis to your presence in congresses, conferences-concerts, or the field work you did in Ecuador and Peru in the 90's on traditional music.

2018 International Animamusic Congresso de Organologia, in Caldas de Reinha, Portugal, July 7, 2018; “The Guitar in Spain: Musical Reflections of a Turbulent History”. Lecture recital included complete works and excerpts from 500 years of Spanish guitar repertory, contextualizing the guitar as an instrument that reflects the main currents of Spain's turbulent history, including the Inquisition, the Peninsular Wars, the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), and how composers were affected, exiled, or silenced.

1999 Fulbright Lecture Research-Award, Ecuador (Summer). Fieldwork in Cayambe, Ecuador, researching guitar scordatura, playing techniques, and

ritual performance among Indigenas and Mestizos celebrating San Pedro festival (Summer solstice celebration with Precolumbian origins). I have presented my research at conferences including the College Music Society, and as a public scholar throughout New Hampshire, for the New Hampshire Humanities Council, in two lectureconcerts: *The Guitar and the Devil: Music, Magic, and Ritual among Indigenas and Mestizos in the Northern Andean Zone*, and *The Guitar in Latin America: Continuities, Changes, and Bi-Cultural Strumming*.

1994 Whiting Foundation Grant to study Andean Folkloric Guitar in Ecuador and Peru. I interviewed folk musicians in Peguche; made field recordings of rehearsals and ritual performances leading up to Inti Raymi and San Pedro Festival. In Peru I interviewed acclaimed folk guitar virtuoso and arranger, Raul Garcia Zarate.

Regarding the lecture-performance “The Guitar in Spain”: An inspiration for this talk, was my sabbatical residence in Tarragona during Spring 2015. I exchanged apartments with a Catalan colleague, Rosa Tamarit of the Universidad Rovira y Virgili. Rosa is a soprano and musicologist and teaches in the Department of the History of Art there. I had an appointment as a Visiting Professor at Rovira & Virgili, but I mostly explored the region, saw historical sites and museums related to episodes in Spanish History, including Roman times, the Peninsular Wars, and the Guerra Civil. Of course the issue of Catalan Independence, the aftermath of the War, was in the background of many conversations with colleagues. Very fascinating!

Folklore and traditional music have been a source of inspiration since the vihuelists of the sixteenth century, through the baroque, classical music, romantics, nationalists and also since postmodernity, new looks are made towards the music of oral tradition. It’s also an important element for your compositions.

I would say that folklore has played a role in many of my compositions. Here are some examples:

In *Sonatina Tropical*, I use notated, improvisational-type melodies for the flute, over a rhythmic & harmonic ostinato, typical of Cuban *son*.

In *Rumba-Son* from *Diarios* (for guitar, flute, and bassoon), I structure the movement in the style of a rumba, that is, with an introductory “Diana”, in which the rhythmic motifs and cross-rhythms are introduced, then the guitar settles into an ostinato in sixteenth-notes, and the flute and bassoon play melodies in parallel intervals “Verso”, followed by a call-and-response section (“Montuno”) in which a repeated refrain in the guitar is interrupted by improvisational-styled excursions by flute and bassoon. The flute repeats a typical *son guaguancó* rhythmic pattern to begin the movement.

Andean Fiestas from *Diarios* is based on a folk-tune from Peru, *Ojos Azules*, with variations. A middle section features minimalist passages in the style of Glass or Reich, before returning to a reprise of the first section.

The third movement of my first Guitar Concerto (nominated for two Grammys) is entitled Ecuadorean Landscapes and features two folk tunes, the well-known Longuita, and a sanjuanito I collected during fieldwork in Ecuador, as part of the orchestral tutti. Later on in the movement there is a call-and-response between the guitar and the orchestra, using pentatonic, bluesy motives from the black keys of the piano, against quartal harmonies on the white keys (!). The guitar and first violin are notated in five flats, and the rest of the strings in C major. (At the first rehearsal, the concertmaster thought this was a typographical error and didn't believe it would sound good!). My idea was to unite the pentatonic language of Ecuador (Andean music) with that of North America (the blues).

In the third movement of my "Key West Suite" for guitar duo, the principal theme is a twelve-bar blues with a Cuban-style accompaniment. This theme is the A section of a rondo form. The theme is also elaborated in a fugato section.

Poemas Concertantes uses the Argentine "Milonga" rhythm in the first movement.

Specifically, the African element has largely shaped the America's oral traditional music, both North and South. How has it affected your music?

I would qualify by calling it the Afro-Cuban influence in my music, which includes such characteristics as (a) rhythmic cells like tresillo and quintillo, (b) melodic passages based on pentatonicism, (c) Call-and-response forms & syncopated, improvised- sounding melodies over ostinato accompaniments, (d) the anticipated bass in bass parts (as described by scholar Robin Moore). In this pattern, the bass-line in a bar is typically as follows:

4/4 time: dotted quarter, dotted quarter, quarter-note or the following: dotted quarter-rest, dotted quarter-note, quarter-note.

Where the last quarter-note of the bar anticipates the change of harmony in the next bar. Also, this last quarter-note is frequently tied to the first beat of the next bar.

This is also related to an African rhythmic device known as "silent downbeat," referenced in my article: "Afro-Cuban Rhythmical and Metrical Elements in Selected Songs of Alejandro Garcia Caturla and Amadeo Roldan". Latin American Music Review 12.2 (Fall/Winter 1991), 173-186.

And also in my doctoral dissertation: "Afro-Cuban Rhythmic and Metric Elements in the Published Choral and Solo Vocal Works of Alejandro Garcia Caturla and Amadeo Roldan". 1991. Ph.D. Dissertation, The Florida State University.

Also significant in my work is the Cuban bolero, as a nostalgic and essentially lyrical, expressive genre, flavored also by the typical melodic formulae and

harmonic complexities of so called “Filin” music, of the 1950s. So the Bolero makes an appearance as a slow movement in my Viola Concerto: in my Cuban Sketches (for two flutes and guitar, although performers on youtube play it in many ingenious combinations); and in the slow movement of my Key West Suite for guitar duo.

A great reference in this crossbreeding of popular music and new creation in Latin America has been Astor Piazzolla. What is his reflection on your work?

Yes, I can hear his influence in my Tango-Overture for String Orchestra; the use of the tresillo rhythmic cell (dotted quarter, dotted quarter, quarter-note) is a structural motif in the overall rhythm. Also in the first movement of Poemas Concertantes for flute, guitar, and orchestra. Astor Piazzolla is a particular hero of mine in that he found a way to circumvent the emphasis on astringent, dissonant music of extraordinary rhythmic complexity that was the dominant language of classical music of the Academy, in mid-century compositional practice, and to incorporate his national heritage (the Tango and Milonga), the influence of improvised music, jazz harmonies, and sophisticated harmonic practice, in his very appealing, exciting, and expressive works for a variety of genres and ensembles.

Cuba has been a very significant place of musical and dance creation, both in music popular as in the so-called “urban” and the “classical”. I would like you to tell us your vision of the music scene in Cuba, its strengths and difficulties.

My opinion about music and musical culture in Cuba is informed by my readings about the subject, from academic journals and popular journalism, but most importantly by personal experience and observations. I have participated both as composer and concert guitarist, by invitation, in important international music festivals in Havana, in recent years (2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018). What I have been able to observe and hear is the following:

(a) An amazingly high level of musicianship, among instrumentalists of many types, both in terms of technical fluency and virtuosity, tone, and lyrical intensity. As a guitarist, I am especially aware of this in terms of the guitar, having observed numerous guitar ensembles (especially the one directed by Jesus Ortega), guitar soloists, and soloists with orchestra. The most outstanding of these soloists could shine on any international concert stage, and in fact, many do, such as Duo contrastes, or Duo Martin, and some of the younger talents who are phenomenal.

(b) There is an emphasis on training young talent at the earliest opportunities, and this training appears to be very structured and systematic. Some of the very young guitarists I heard were already playing at a mature level that would exceed university and conservatory guitar students in the US. Also, the training is not confined to Havana, as I heard many fine guitar soloists and ensembles from provincial cities at the Havana festivals I attended.

(c) There appeared to me to be a high degree of camaraderie among the musicians, and genuine warmth and encouragement. I don't doubt that there are competitive instincts, but it would be out of place for these instincts to be expressed through rudeness, or gestures, or "faint praise" as is sometimes found in the United States. There appears a lack of the cut-throat instinct, albeit expressed semi-humorously or sarcastically, that I have encountered in American high education. Of course, I don't find this cut-throated ambience at other international festivals that I have attended, either.

(d) I do know that Cuban musicians, without expressing it verbally, strive and dream of performing and teaching internationally, and many do brilliantly, and these opportunities are facilitated or made available by decision-makers in the cultural bureaucracy. But I was expecting to hear more expressions of Marxist ideology, and there was truly an absence of this political speech or of any compositions with an ideological perspective at the festivals I attended.

(e) There is appreciation and support for a large array of contemporary music styles, from neo-romantic, tonally based compositions with references to popular and/or folk music, to the most avant-garde and spiky compositions that are being composed or are now part of a standard repertory (such as Leo Brouwer's works from the 1970s). For example, Guido Lopez-Gavilan, in some prepared remarks at a festival I attended, noted that contemporary music will never be popular music (and that's OK!). He said that not with any condescension towards popular music, which is revered in Cuba and is of course Cuba's best-known contribution to world culture, but as a statement of fact.

(f) Ordinary Cubans that I have spoken with make clear that they appreciate a number of things about the Revolution. Access to free medical care and high-quality education (especially in the arts), from primary through university, is a laudable achievement. The health care system should in my opinion not be compared to what is available in the US or Europe, but to other Latin American countries. (In the any event, universal access to health care in the United States still seems a far-off pipe-dream, and even mentioning it to many people brings charges of "socialism" or "communism"). Cubans will sometimes speak of how things were before "the triumph of the revolution," and refer to hardships in that time as well.

(g) Most Cubans will tell you they have, for example, cousins in New Jersey or Miami that emigrated long ago, and they know that living in the United States can be a struggle; i.e. long hours, uncertain employment, expensive housing and private transportation, and expensive health insurance. Cuba has difficulties such as frequent power outages or break-downs in plumbing or the water supply; shortages of basic food and consumer items; inadequate or crowded housing; and general scarcity. For musicians, this can manifest itself in difficulties with access to quality instruments, strings, scores, etc. Many Cubans are quite computer and internet literate and can find free and pirated scores and recordings on the internet. Of course, internet access is spotty and expensive relative to the small official salaries.

(h) I have known Cuban expatriate musicians who spoke of their difficulties in being allowed by the Cuban government to unite their families, leaving children behind with relatives, for example. And to preserve their visas, they were subject to a 50 percent tax on their out-of-country salaries.

Flamenco music, which was formed in the 19th century from an earlier mixture of Moorish music, the black slaves songs and the crossbreeds of Latin America with the traditional hispanic sonos, has developed his own repertoire for guitar with the typical flamenco cadence and with broken chords, dissonances when playing chords on higher frets with some strings at the air, using the instrument melodically and at the same time as a rhythmic percussion box. What is your vision of flamenco?

In my observation, flamenco music, and flamenco guitarists in particular, represent a kind of base-level virtuosity and command of traditional forms that is awe-inspiring. My impression is that most flamenco guitarists develop these skills “in the street”, so to speak, and the training is more akin to how jazz performers learn in the United States, by listening to recordings, observation, family traditions, and other home-grown methods. Of course there is a high level of both structured and unstructured (i.e. self-taught) pedagogy that results in this highly complex folk-music and art-music that is so quintessentially Spanish. I am of course in awe, as are most classical guitarists that I know, of the virtuosity and soulfulness contained in the performances of Paco de Lucia, Sabicas, Paco Peña, Vicente Amigo, Tomatito, etc. The Spanish composers that I most admire, indeed idolize, were able to take flamenco and fuse it with the best traditions of classical European music. So we have Albéniz, Granados, Falla, Rodrigo, Turina, Torroba, and the list goes on and on.

Pedagogue, performer, composer and researcher, they witness a wide vital activity.

There was a colleague, many years ago, to whom I described my activities, and said, “you know, any one of those things, by itself, would be a career”. I have always preferred to pursue multiple tracks, with the greatest concentrations of my efforts on teaching, performing, composing, and research, in that order. By necessity and choice, the business of teaching in the highly bureaucratic environment of a college music department, occupies a great deal of my time, nine months of the year. Lesson plans, curriculum-design, grading, meetings, and juries are time-consuming as we all know who work in academia. I practice, rehearse, and perform all year as I receive invitations to play concerts & festivals, and in summer months and winter breaks I have more time for projects such as compositions or learning new repertoire. I have not been involved in research as much as I was in the 1990s when I was doing fieldwork in Ecuador and Peru, but recently I become interested in Spanish history, especially the Civil War and the aftermath. I developed a lecture-performance entitled “The Guitar in Spain: Reflections of a Turbulent History” where I play compositions by composers who were affected by the Inquisition, the Peninsular (Napoleonic) Wars, the War of 1898 with the United States, and the Civil War. I

have given this lecture-presentation in Portugal at the Animamusic Congress; for the New Hampshire Humanities Council Fair; and for the Hingham Public Library.

Recent compositions include the first movement of a concerto for flute and strings (“From the Garden to the Staircase”); Recollections for English Horn and Guitar, Sojourners Double Concerto for flute, guitar, and string orchestra. Recollections and Sojourners have been published by Cayambis, which has also published Postcards for flute and piano, and Tango-Overture for String Orchestra.

At present, What new projects are you working on?

During the quarantine & lockdown due to Covid-19, I composed some short guitar pieces I call “Etudes in time of Coronavirus.” They are as follows:

Homage to Ravel

Homage to Barrios

Homage to Bill Evans

Homage to Tarrega

I have recorded these for a forthcoming solo guitar CD that will also include works by Spanish and Latin American composers, and music by Bach and Scarlatti.

I have also been in contact with Maestra Joann Falletta, conductor of the Buffalo Symphony, who admires my work and has recorded it (she is a performing classical guitarist as well), and proposed a sabbatical project to compose a work for the Symphony. She wrote a letter inviting me to compose a Double Concerto for double-bass soloists, string orchestra, harp, and percussion to be premiered by them in the 2022 season. I am very excited by this invitation and I have started to compose some sketches for this work.

Maestra Falletta has also selected my “Tango-Overture” to conduct with the student orchestra at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

I am also working with Dr. Patricia Caicedo, soprano and musicologist, to complete an edition of my song cycles that I have composed and premiered with Patricia for the Barcelona Festival of Song, over the past 12 years or so. These include “Canciones de Nostalgia”, “Canciones de Lluvia”, “Canciones de Ausencia” (on poetry by Patricia), and “Canciones de Café” (on poetry by Catalan poet Santiago Montubbio).

In the last month (December 2020), I gave my talk, “The Guitar in Latin America”, on Zoom for the Conway Public Library, and edited a pre-recorded video of myself playing works and examples from the lecture, and uploaded it to YouTube.

We have started this meeting with the memory of the beginnings, I would like to conclude with your family and musical memories.

There are other musicians in my family. My mother had a beautiful singing voice, and studied at the Escuela de Artes Dramaticos in Havana, but was persuaded by her parents to study for her Doctorado en Pedagogia, so she could have a practical career as school-teacher. In the US she taught Spanish in Catholic high schools in Queens and Ft. Lauderdale for over 30 years before retiring. My brother Gustavo was a talented and accomplished professional harmonica-player & songwriter, and was a founding member of Miami Sound Machine and Gloria Estefan; later did recording and concert work with the BeeGees. He composed the title-track for the MSM album, "Eyes of Innocence". He also taught at Gratigny Elementary School in Miami for 27 years before passing away suddenly in 2014. Gustavo was a living encyclopedia of everything related to Blues music, Rock and Roll, Pop music, and had a very large LP, cassette, and CD collection of every kind of music, including classical music and jazz. He was very loved in the Miami blues and pop music community and his funeral was a gathering and homage of these colleagues who came out to pay their respects.

When I was growing up, I heard stories of another relative, Panchito Oramas, a celebrated tres and guitar player in Cuba. I mentioned his name when I was performing in Havana in 2018 at the International Guitar Festival Identidades, and somebody told me that he made recordings in the 1950s and was well-known. On my father's side, we had cousins among the Bolets who were professional musicians, most notably concert pianist Jorge Bolet, who had a major performing and recording career and taught at Curtis, and Alberto Bolet, who was an orchestral conductor and was principal conductor of the Long Beach Symphony. He had also conducted the Havana Philharmonic before emigrating to the United States.

Thank you very much, José Lezcano, for sharing with all of us your experiences, creations, and your great love for music.



Postcards
I. Entre dos mundos

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the piece 'Entre dos mundos' from the 'Postcards' collection by José Lezcano. The score is arranged in three systems, each with two staves: the top staff for the flute (Fl.) and the bottom staff for the piano (pno.). The first system is in 3/4 time, the second in 7/16 time, and the third in 4/8 time. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte). The handwriting is clear and professional, typical of a composer's manuscript.

José Lezcano, manuscrito fragment of the Poscards for flute and piano, composed in 1998 (revised 2016). Premiered in New York City by Lisa Hansen and Max Lifchitz, as part of Composers Now Festival (Feb. 28, 2017) and North-South Consonance Festival. Three movements (Entre dos mundos, Una tarde de agosto, Mambo jambo).
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