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Volume II

*Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the Requirements for the degree Doctor in Philosophy in Composition

by

Joshua Eliecer Rodriguez

2015
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Volume I

“Tiemble y estalle la fiesta:” Toward Understanding Alberto Ginastera’s Musical Language in the Final Decade of his Neo-expressionist Phase Through Analysis of the Cello Concerto No. 2 with a Focus on Symmetrical Structures and Symbolism

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Volume II

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

by

Joshua Eliecer Rodriguez

Doctor of Philosophy in Composition

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor David Lefkowitz, Co-Chair

Professor Ian Krouse, Co-Chair

This dissertation offers the first critical analysis of Alberto Ginastera's Cello Concerto No. 2 opus 50 (1980-81). It looks at the context of the work’s creation (as a ten-year anniversary gift to his wife, cellist Aurora Natola), and explores the use of allusion, of symmetrical structures, and of its synthesis of musical polarities. While Ginastera's compositional approach is rigorous and logical, it is apparent that extra-musical influences play an important role in
illuminating the work’s musical decisions, embedded symbolism, and contextual significance. The author explores five people who may have influenced the Ginastera’s personal and artistic aesthetics: wives Mercedes de Toro and Aurora Natola, cellist Pablo Casals, and composers Béla Bartók and Olivier Messiaen. Chapter One introduces the topic and explains the scope and methodology; Chapter Two illuminates the concerto’s various non-musical influences and references; Chapter Three presents a musical theoretical analysis; Chapter Four discusses the work’s various interpretive possibilities and significance: each with the purpose of a more integrated understanding of Ginastera’s late style – in particular of the Concerto’s structural and thematic coherence.

_Concerto for Piano and Orchestra_ (2015) is an original work by Joshua Rodriguez that incorporates large and small-scale symmetrical structures; the Concerto’s structure is, itself, an “interrupted palindrome”. Newly composed music, which works in retrograde similarly to the second movement of _Ginastera’s Cello Concerto No. 2_, is “interrupted” by an outside source of music – Claude Goudimel’s harmonization of Louis Bourgeois's melody for Psalm 8 (Genevan Psalter, 1542). Its first appearance alludes (in its orchestration) to the “guiding star” from Ives’s Fourth Symphony; this truncated, retrograde appearance of Psalm 8 (played by a small ensemble in the back of the orchestra) is later “incarnate” within the musical world of the Concerto, played by the clarinet and first chair strings, with musical echoes sounding throughout the rest of the work. It is a multi-sectional, single movement work with a performances time of approximately 24 minutes.
The dissertation of Joshua Eliecer Rodriguez is approved.

Mitchell Morris

Walter Ponce

David Lefkowitz, Committee Co-Chair

Ian Krouse, Committee Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015
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### VITA

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Chapter One: Introduction, Scope, and Methodology

As the most prolific Argentine classical composer of the 20th century, Alberto Ginastera’s music spans all genres from solo and chamber works to symphonic and opera, in addition to eleven film scores, four of which won awards. His work, which spans over four decades, reflects a penchant for dramatic, highly sophisticated musical landscapes combining South American folk idioms and post-tonal harmonies with avant-garde techniques.

Nearly thirty years after his death, Ginastera’s music continues to grow in popularity. Ginastera scholarship, however, has not received as much attention, which has resulted in a more limited body of specialized secondary literature.\(^1\) Much of the musical analysis is based on the composer’s own writing, which is chronicled in the press and some essays. Moreover, Ginastera scholarship is based largely on contemporary sources, written in the 1950-60’s.\(^2\) While the absence of research on such an important composer was addressed in several important theoretical and musicological dissertations in the early 1990’s and 2000’s,\(^3\) much is yet to be


\(^2\) Deborah Schwartz-Kates, “The Correspondence of Alberto Ginastera at the Library of Congress,” *Notes*: 68, no. 2 (2011): 285. According to leading Ginastera scholar Maria Schwartz-Kates, “One of the biggest problems that confronts Ginastera researchers is the lack of a full-length critical biography. Although the Argentine scholar, Pola Suárez Urtubey, authored two life-and-works studies of the composer during the late 1960s and early 1970s, they focused primarily on Ginastera’s compositional aesthetics, as mediated by the composer’s own perspectives.” Another reason for the lack of a comprehensive biography in spite of Ginastera’s meticulous record keeping concerns the political and personal turmoil surrounding his departure from Argentina to Geneva in the late 1960’s, and his failed attempts to recover much of these records around the time of his divorce.

discovered about the music itself, its reception and significance, and in particular, about works belonging to the final decade of his life.

Correspondence and personal life

Perhaps another reason for the lack of Ginastera scholarship is due to his move from Argentina to Switzerland in 1971 after the traumatic break-up of his first marriage: very little personal correspondence is available for study. Indeed, even the largest collection of existing letters and sketches – in Basel, Switzerland at the Paul Sacher Stiftung – has received limited critical analysis. Despite Ginastera’s own writings and publications, little is known about his personal life and beliefs; the oftentimes paradoxical themes – from the dark sexual explorations of his operas, to the Roman Catholic devotion of his sacred choral music, and his fascination with nature and surrealism – present a complex picture and raise many questions. The paradox continues: upon meeting Ginastera, people familiar with his often extroverted music and bold dramatic themes were surprised to find a private, introverted gentleman.

Periodization and Stylistic Categorization

The initial periodization and stylistic categorization of Ginastera’s works has also proven problematic. In an extensive interview with Pola Suarez-Urtubey in 1967, Ginastera himself grouped his music into three periods: "Objective Nationalism" (1934–1948) during which his music maintains close ties to Argentine folksongs and traditional approaches to melody, rhythm, and harmony; "Subjective Nationalism" (1948–1958) during which folk elements are present but more fully assimilated into a personal language; and "Neo-Expressionism" (1958–1983) at which
point only traces of recognizably folk elements are present and the music instead reflects heavy use of serial and avant-garde procedures.

Diverging interests in Third Phase

Under further scrutiny however, this third phase reveals diverging concerns. While his third period, which he labeled “neo-expressionism,” is said to bear folk elements only in essence, several of his later works contain the following titles, *Cantata para America magica* (1960), *Popul Vuh: The Creation of the Mayan World* (1975-83), and *Puneña No. 2* (1976). Much has been said about *gauchito* and indigenous elements in his early works, very little has been said about the primitivism in his late period. Ginastera scholar Michelle Tabor suggests the “Neo Expressionist” phase features three trends – abstraction, primitivism, and what seems like a reprise of subjective nationalism. This return is nostalgic and suggests a final synthesis in Ginastera’s oeuvre; the *Cello Concerto No. 2*, one of his very last works, seems to belong to this final synthesis in which post-tonal, avant-garde techniques and pentatonic folksongs co-exist.

In one of his final interviews, Ginastera modified his previous tri-partite assessment; “I think there are not three, but two [periods]. The first I would call tonal and polytonal. Then a second period where I used atonality.” This view, however, focuses on only one aspect of his works – pitch organization – and may reflect Ginastera’s point of departure and compositional approach in dealing with sonic materials more than the compositions as a whole. He switches from pitch organization to extra-musical influence saying, “But at the moment I am evolving

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...going back to the primitive America of the Mayas, the Aztecs, and the Incas...This influence in my music I feel as not folkloric, but ...as a kind of metaphysical inspiration. In a way, what I have done is a reconstitution of the transcendental aspect of the ancient pre-Columbian world.”

This interest in pre-Columbian subject matter is obvious in several late works that bear exotic titles, but not entirely; the Guitar Sonata, Cello Sonata and Second Cello Concerto bear standard “absolute music” titles, yet feature Indigenous South American dance rhythms by allusion as well as direct reference.

Continued presence of folk music

Ginastera’s relationship to folk music throughout his life is complicated. As early as 1962, he said, “The time for folklore has passed...even for the sophisticated and spiritualized folklore of a Bartók. Of course, composers still keep their national characteristics; that is something else. A good composer always has his own personality and that is formed culturally and spiritually, by his society.” These comments complicate scholars’ understanding of indigenous elements in Ginastera’s later works and raise questions regarding their continued appearance. While Ginastera’s early music was overtly nationalist in its folk-music references, as his style matured, indigenous elements seemed to be replaced by an emphasis on European avant-garde techniques.

While traveling abroad, he became aware of the condescending attitude of European composers toward South American musicians and felt irritated with those who would pigeonhole

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6 Schwartz-Kates, Alberto Ginastera, 42.

him as a folk music composer. In private, he was even more adamant. “I want it to be clear that I neither make folk music nor a musicological reconstitution. (‘To hell with the folklore’ used to say Mendelssohn and I repeated the same thing a while ago in an article),” he said in 1979.8 Was Ginastera trying to minimize the importance of South American folk music as a result of his peer’s criticism? Was this a reaction to Argentina’s political betrayal and censure of his music in the late 1960’s? The composer’s relocation to Switzerland in 1971 seems to underscore his discontent with Latin America’s artistic environment; not only had he placed himself physically in a European country but his own music during this period also reflected an international flavor. The Cello Concerto No. 2, which he began composing shortly after the time of this statement in 1979, bears an “absolute music” title, yet maintains close ties to the Gaucho malambo and Quechuan karnavalito, placing this work at the heart of Ginastera’s complex relationship with folk music.

While a detailed discussion of folk music in Ginastera’s late music is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I will explore these musical intricacies as related to the Cello Concerto No. 2, in Chapter Two and Three. Furthermore, I will show how Ginastera’s approach to folk music had gradually changed, moving from the re-creation of his “Objective Nationalism” period (1934–1948) to allusion and “metaphysical inspiration” in what scholars are now referring to as his “Final Synthesis” (1971-1983).

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Symbolism and allusion

Even as Ginastera honed his avant-garde technique, he “increasingly referred to classical masterworks to consolidate his ties with the concert music tradition.” These references, found in his scores and program notes, include the Paganini caprices (in his Violin Concerto, 1963), the Schubert Winterreise (in his cantata, Milena, 1971), the Beethoven Ninth Symphony and Chopin Bb Minor Piano Sonata (Second Piano Concerto, 1972), and the Andante from the Brahms Bb Major Piano Concerto (Second Cello Concerto, 1981). Along with Ginastera’s growing tendency toward self-quotation, these practices “entwine the historical legacy within his own works in a compelling musical synthesis of the past and present.” Ginastera Scholar Deborah Schwartz-Kates says that there is significant evidence suggesting that Ginastera’s late works bear hidden coded references to his second wife, cellist Aurora Natola, resembling Alban Berg’s allusions to Hanna Fuchs in the Lyric Suite. Schwartz-Kates writes, “During his last ten years, Ginastera imbued his music with an even deeper symbolism, as he entwined his late cello pieces with love themes from his operas and related compositions…scholars have much to learn about this intricate thematic network and the role that symbolism played in Ginastera’s works.” The significance of the Cello Concerto No. 2 as a ten-year anniversary gift, the rich symbolism of its musical allusions and poetic epithets, its intricate compositional structure, and its synthesis of folk music with avant-garde compositional techniques, makes it of particular interest for both theoretical and musicological analysis.

9 Schwartz-Kates, Alberto Ginastera, 38.

10 Schwartz-Kates, Alberto Ginastera, 38.

Five Significant People in Ginastera’s life

Over the course of his life (1916-1983), many important figures shaped Ginastera’s personal and musical aesthetic, among them his two wives Mercedes de Toro and Aurora Natola, and Pablo Casals, Béla Bartók, and Olivier Messiaen. With the exception of that with Bartók, very little scholarship has explored these relationships and their musical implications. Below and in Chapter 2 I explore how these influences might be traced in the Second Cello Concerto, and even how the work’s celebratory narrative bears the imprint of these relationships. Further investigation may also illuminate Ginastera’s specific artistic values during the final decade of his life.12

Mercedes de Toro

Scholars’ limited knowledge and understanding about Ginastera’s private life is underscored by the lack of a critical full-length biography. Little is known about his first marriage to Mercedes de Toro, but the three-year creative silence caused by their separation, emphasizes her importance to him. The recently published memoirs of the composer’s daughter, Georgina Ginastera, indicate that their union was also an artistic partnership.13 Mercedes collaborated with Alberto on several projects including Cantata para América Mágica (1960) and second opera Bomarzo (1966-67); the composer acknowledged his gratitude for her ongoing artistic contribution in the dedication of his first opera, Don Rodrigo (1963-64), “to my wife,

12 The implications of such explorations are outside the scope of this dissertation, but will be occasionally brought into our conversation regarding Cello Concerto No. 2.

companion and collaborator."\textsuperscript{14} The breakup of their marriage in 1969 devastated Ginastera, plunging him into depression and loneliness.

Aurora Natola

During this emotionally and artistically difficult time, Alberto reconnected with cellist Aurora Natola. Their marriage in 1971 proved to be a personal and artistic rebirth for the composer. He moved to Switzerland, and his music took on a new lyricism, re-engaging South American themes in a final synthesis of European avant-garde techniques, atonality, and pentatonic elements. In particular, the Ginastera-Natola collaboration resulted in a body of compelling music for the cello.

Pablo Casals

By the 1970’s, Ginastera’s circle of friends included many celebrated artists, and in particular cellists, including Mstislav Rostropovich and Pablo Casals. It was Casals who re-awakened Ginastera’s interest in his Catalan roots, prompting Ginastera to request that his name be pronounced with the “soft g” sound reflecting this heritage. Ginastera even wrote a large orchestral work, \textit{Glosses sobre temes de Pau Casals},\textsuperscript{15} around several of Casals’ Catalan themes in memory of Casals. Moreover, it was the Casals Festival that lured the composer to Puerto Rico in 1978 – a place that he later depicted musically in the \textit{Second Cello Concerto}. That Ginastera used Casals’s Catalan themes and depicted frogs from Puerto Rico underscores Casals’s important to Ginastera.

\textsuperscript{14} Score for \textit{Don Rodrigo} published by Boosey & Hawkes.

\textsuperscript{15} Pau is Pablo in Catalan; this is one of the few works that Ginastera entitled in a language other than English, Spanish, or Italian.
Béla Bartók

Béla Bartók has long been acknowledged as a primary influence on Ginastera’s musical aesthetic, but much is yet to be explored concerning the lessons Ginastera learned from the Hungarian master. At the time of his Guggenheim grant in 1946, following the composer’s death, Ginastera authored an article on Bartok reception in New York. This article illuminates Ginastera’s musical aesthetic values: from the assimilation of native elements, to the flexible treatment of rhythm, bold harmonic orientation, and the desire to resist the rigid compositional schools that had taken root. In 1981, just as Ginastera completed the *Second Cello Concerto*, he acknowledged his debt to Bartók in an oft-quoted article “Homage to Béla Bartók.” Research into the musical materials of the *Second Cello Concerto* reveals striking similarities between the second movement scherzo and the scherzo from Bartók’s *Fourth String Quartet*. Is this a musical homage, and if so, what might be its significance? I will explore these issues in Chapter Two and Three.

Olivier Messiaen

While Bartók’s influence has been addressed, Ginastera’s relationship to Olivier Messiaen has been practically ignored. It is unclear when they first met, but in 1963, when Ginastera became director of CLAEM (Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales) at the Di Tella Institute in Argentina, Messiaen was the first European composer to visit. He and his wife, pianist Yvonne Loriod, stayed in Buenos Aires for nearly a month, teaching and performing. Very little correspondence is available for study, and that which is available has


received limited critical analysis. This relationship may prove to be important in understanding Ginastera’s music because like Messiaen, Ginastera’s music is laden with symbolism and extra-musical allusions; however, unlike Messiaen, who elaborated on the symbolism and extra-musical influences embedded in his music, Ginastera was more private about each work’s interpretation. Both composers’ interests overlap in two observable ways: their love of nature and interest in symmetrical structures – both present in the *Cello Concerto No. 2*. I will discuss these elements in Chapter Two and Three.

Except for discussions of nationalism in Ginastera’s music, very little scholarship has explored how other extra-musical considerations like religion and literature may have shaped his oeuvre. All of Ginastera’s choral works are based on religious texts and reinforce his interest in Biblical drama. Did Ginastera share Messiaen’s Roman Catholic interest, albeit on a more private level? Did their friendship rekindle an interest in spiritual matters long dormant? And if Ginastera held private religious beliefs, how might these affect the way we interpret works that do not bear religious titles? At the time of Ginastera’s death, he had begun work on a religious opera, *Barrabas*. One can only wonder: had he lived to complete a fourth opera, might it have shared similarities with Messiaen’s religious opera, *St. Francis of Assisi*? Furthermore, how might Messiaen have been influenced by his interactions with Ginastera and Latin American culture?

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18 Tim King’s dissertation argues that the location of the sacred choral works in his compositional output may indicate a very personal element to them; the first choral work – *Salmo 150* – was his dissertation piece, the second – *Hieremiae prophetiae lamentations* (1946) – came during a time of temporary exile from his own country, and the last – *Turbae ad passionem gregorianam* (1975) – after an ugly divorce.

19 Latin American birdsong became part of the fabric of Messiaen’s *Coleurs de la Cité céleste* (1963), *Et especto resurrectionem mortuorum* (1964), and *La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (1965-69).
While this document is not intended to fully explore their relationship, it will engage Messiaen’s influence peripherally, as applicable to this analysis of the *Concerto* – in particular, regarding the role of symbolism and of symmetrical structures that became central to Ginastera’s music. The role of symbolism, such as Ginastera’s use of the *guitar chord*,\(^{20}\) had always been a crucial part of his ability to conjure the magical South American landscapes of his early work, but by the 1970’s, his use of symbolism had matured into a complex web of self-quotation and allusion bringing religious, indigenous, literary, and international elements into conversation. His fascination with symmetry is typically attributed to Bartók, Berg, and Dallapiccola,\(^ {21}\) but in light of Ginastera’s admiration of Messiaen, there is room to consider the French composer’s role in reinforcing Ginastera’s fascination with symmetry and symbolism in musical drama.

**Cello Concerto No. 2, op. 50**

The *Second Cello Concerto* was Ginastera’s final work for the cello and features some of his most sophisticated writing for the instrument. The dramatic, dialogical nature of the concerto (between soloist and ensemble) prompts compelling questions of narrative, place, and voice, especially when one considers the composer’s own European exile at that time. Understanding this work is crucial to understanding the direction that Ginastera had taken in his final decade with its synthesis of atonality, pentatonicism, and extra-musical considerations.

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\(^{20}\) The *guitar chord* is formed by playing the open strings of the guitar (E – A – D – G – B – E) which, when re-ordered, corresponds to the Argentine pentatonic scale (E – G – A – B – D – E).

Two compositions

Ginastera was no foreigner to the idea of creating more than one work from the same material, although usually it is entitled as such (e.g. Sinfonia de “Don Rodrigo” and Music from Bomarzo). The Second Cello Concerto is a different matter: Ginastera orchestrates two previously composed movements from his Cello Sonata, and added two new movements and a cadenza based on new material and in addition to elements from the first movement of the Cello Sonata. In Ginastera’s lengthy 1967 interview with Pola Suárez Urtubey, he states:

“It is the birth of the work which is often difficult and arduous for it is not easy to cement what we have imagined abstractly. Once I have completed this task, the job of orchestration (in the case of symphonic works) is like a game, since in writing the music, the orchestration has been forming as well. This work is purely technical, almost mechanical, and is like a blessing to be finally united to a work after having spent so much time focused on a speculative aspect.”

The way that Ginastera borrowed musical material from the sonata, the piano accompaniment may be considered as an orchestral reduction. Therefore, while there are no available sketches of Cello Concerto No. 2 for theoretical discussion, the sketches for the Cello Sonata may serve as a helpful tool in the analytical process.

First critical analysis

The aim of this dissertation is to offer the first critical analysis of the Cello Concerto No. 2. This analysis is in two parts: first, an exploration of the work in its historical and aesthetic context, and second, an analysis of the musical structures and elements within the piece itself. While Ginastera’s compositional approach is rigorous and logical, it is apparent that extra-

musical influences must also be considered. Chapter Two will consider the various non-musical influences in the conceptual creation of the piece. I will explore these connections through analysis of select unpublished correspondence in addition to the recently published memoirs of Georgina Ginastera, the composer’s daughter. Chapter Three will to present a theoretical analysis of the *Second Cello Concerto*. In addition to producing arc diagrams and charts to illuminate the work’s structural and thematic coherence, I intend to use some set theory in my analysis in order to better understand his approach to musical architecture and motivic development. Analysis will focus on Ginastera’s synthesis of atonal and pentatonic elements as well as the importance of symmetrical structures in the larger narrative of the *Concerto* in order to work toward an integrated understanding of Ginastera’s late style. Chapter Four will summarize my analysis of the *Concerto*’s background and musical material, and discuss the work’s possible interpretations.
“In the unanimous opinion of the critics, the works for cello created by the Natola-Ginastera team of that time are a ‘hymn to hope and love, an energetic response to pessimism.’ They are the Love Poems [later entitled Serenata, with poems by Pablo Neruda] for baritone and chamber orchestra (1973), the first Concerto for Cello and Orchestra (rev. 1978), the Second Concerto for Cello (1981) and the Sonata for Cello and Piano (1981) …we see that precisely in the instrumental compositions of the 1970’s the maestro came closer than ever to realizing his ideal of what is beautiful.”

While Ginastera’s early success came through orchestral and piano music, and then through his three dramatic operas, his passion for lyricism, rhythmic drive, European avant-garde techniques, and the pentatonic and quartal sonorities derived from the symbolic “guitar chord”, finds its final synthesis in his cello music; inspired by his muse, cellist Aurora Natola, these works are personally and analytically important. In a sense, the cello became Ginastera’s guitar; it afforded many guitar-like possibilities like strumming and plucking, which characterized his earlier folk-influenced music (“Objective Nationalism”), but also has the intensity of bowed strings which he favored in later compositions (“Subjective Nationalism” and “Neo-Expressionism”). During the last two decades (1963-83) of his life, Ginastera exploited the possibilities of the cello more than any other instrument. These works include the Cello Concerto No. 1 (1968, rev. 1978), Concerto per corde (1968), String Quartet No. 3 (1973), Serenata

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The *Cello Concerto No. 2* is Ginastera’s last and largest work for cello. The dedication “to my beloved Aurora,” his companion and collaborator during the final years of his life, compounds the work’s personal significance to Ginastera. For all its significance, the *Cello Concerto No. 2* has not received critical attention or close analysis. In order to better understand the symbolic nature of its symmetrical structures and nostalgic tone – to be discussed in Chapter Three – it is crucial to understand the personal and historical background in which it was conceived. Each movement seems to function as homage to the various influences on Ginastera’s music. Having suffered a three year period of creative silence (1969-71), this work (1980-81) is as much a celebration of ten years of restored creativity, as it is a ten-year anniversary gift to his wife Aurora. This chapter will explore five people whose influence seems to be directly or indirectly present in Ginastera’s final concerto: Mercedes de Toro, Aurora Natola, Pau Casals, Béla Bartók, and Olivier Messiaen.

**Mercedes and Aurora: Two Romances**

To comprehend the significance of the *Second Cello Concerto*’s dedication to his second wife Aurora Natola, it is important to have a basic understanding of the years leading up to the work’s creation, and in particular of his first marriage to Mercedes De Toro. Little is known about Ginastera’s first marriage, but in the recently published memoirs of Georgina Ginastera, his daughter, she indicates that their union was also an artistic partnership.²⁴ Mercedes assisted

²⁴ Scalisi, *De Padre a Hija*, 176.
Alberto in compiling and adapting the Pre-Columbian poetry\(^{25}\) used in *Cantata para América Mágica* (1960), and he recognized her ongoing artistic contributions in the dedication of his first opera, *Don Rodrigo* (1963-64), “to my wife, companion and collaborator.”\(^{26}\) Together, they regularly hosted large parties for music students\(^{27}\) and colleagues in their home – the most illustrious guest being Igor Stravinsky, who visited Argentina in 1960.\(^{28}\)

**Collaboration turning sour**

When Ginastera became director of CLAEM (Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales) in 1963, he moved his composition studio from home to the school where he spent most of his time. As his international career progressed, Mercedes’ role as his assistant and collaborator diminished. This estrangement and feeling of uselessness resulted in bitter discussions and marital tensions.\(^{29}\) According to Georgina, this collaboration turned particularly sour when Ginastera embarked on his second opera; it was Mercedes’ idea to adapt Manuel Mujica Lainez’ novel *Bomarzo* into an opera, and she spent a significant amount of time laying the groundwork for the first draft of the libretto. Unfortunately, she “was left with two options: to fight with Manuco [the author] for her place as co-librettist, or resign herself to what finally happened, the division of the rights only between [Ginastera] and Manuco.”\(^{30}\)

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\(^{25}\) On the title page of *Cantata para America Magica*, she is credited as poet. “Poems by Mercedes de Toro inspired by ancient Pre-Columbian texts” published by Boosey & Hawkes.

\(^{26}\) Score for *Don Rodrigo* published by Boosey & Hawkes.

\(^{27}\) His students included Astor Piazzolla and Gerardo Gandini.

\(^{28}\) Scalisi, 127.

\(^{29}\) Scalisi, 171.

\(^{30}\) Scalisi, 177.
leading up to this second opera (*Bomarzo*, 1966-67), Georgina claims that their relationship, once “spiritual, passionate, impetuous”\(^{31}\) degenerated into jealousy and bitterness.\(^{32}\)

**Other conflicts**

These personal (and professional) conflicts were aggravated by the change in political climate in Argentina in the late 1960’s. The Revolución Argentina prompted by the Onganía coup d’état of 1966 and subsequent dictatorship seemed to attack everyone from hippies and rock ‘n’ roll musicians to university professors, scientists, and other intellectuals. *Bomarzo* was banned days before its premiere in Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, for its apparent obsession with “sex, violence, and hallucination,”\(^{33}\) prompting Ginastera to retaliate by prohibiting any performance of his music in state-funded artistic events. The Di Tella Institute and CLAEM began to struggle financially, and Ginastera watched in horror as his life’s work was quickly dismantled. Even his daughter, Georgina, was arrested and briefly imprisoned one night along with director Jaime Jaimes and a group of actors – the result of the government’s hunt for communists and purge of “immorality.”\(^{34}\)

Furthermore, Ginastera’s son, Alexander was having severe health problems. Stuart Pope, Ginastera’s publisher at Boosey and Hawkes, recollects the Ginasteras’ visit to Dartmouth

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\(^{31}\) Scalisi, 171.

\(^{32}\) These memoirs may be somewhat slanted, but at the moment offer the only published account of the breakup of Ginastera’s first marriage by a relative.


\(^{34}\) Scalisi, 189.
College in 1968 saying, “They were at Dartmouth together, but there was a tense atmosphere apparent to those of us who were close to them. Alberto and I were able to find the time for a number of strolls through the woods, during which he unburdened himself...because of Alex’s condition, Mercedes was forced to fly back to Buenos Aires, but Alberto stayed for awhile.”

Change

By 1970, Ginastera had weathered the effects of the Argentine ban on Bomarzo (1967), of his failed marriage (he and Mercedes de Toro separated in 1969), and of his mother’s death (1969). The provincial prodigy, whose early music celebrated the idealized Argentine gaucho, now embraced the abrasive surrealist quality of the European post-war avant-garde. Abroad, he found himself in the company of the brightest names in world of classical concert music, but he was lonely and depressed, enduring the rejection of his beloved Argentina and the stress of a creative silence, which was stretching into years.

Meeting Aurora

This context – of familial brokenness and international recognition – underscores the significance of his re-acquaintance with Swiss-Argentine cellist Aurora Natola in 1971. In a letter to Ralph Shapey at the University of Chicago the following year, Ginastera wrote, “…my wife, Aurora Natola, is a famous cellist and a lovely person who returned the joy of life and creation to me.” “Seeing each other and liking each other was instantaneous…” wrote Aurora to one of her friends, “you know Alberto’s life perfectly well and have known mine as well to

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36 Scalisi, 236.

37 Ginastera to Ralph Shapey, March 1, 1972 (PSS).
realize the extraordinary part that destiny has played in our lives and how the appropriate moment came to pull us out…from our solitary and painful lives, to join us on a journey of light and hope…” Interestingly enough, Alberto had met Aurora nearly twenty years prior. In 1979, he wrote, “By one of those strange coincidences which many times occur, I won the first contest dedicated to composition with my String Quartet no 1, opus 22 (1948) and my wife Aurora won the first one dedicated to the interpreters in 1949.” He continues with characteristic humor, “For the award concert, she asked me – at the time when she was very respectfully calling me ‘Maestro,’ which, of course does not happen anymore now, if I could compose a work since the Argentine repertoire was very poor for cello. I thus composed the Pampeana no 2, op 21.” This work, composed in ten days, was premiered by Aurora on May 8th, 1950.

**Mutual benefit**

The Ginastera-Natola collaboration was mutually beneficial on multiple levels: Alberto made her the sole performer of his cello concertos. Ginastera took so much interest in her as his musical partner that he even recommended wardrobe changes to improve her image as a performing artist. She benefited from his connections in the music world, and he was freed from a three-year period of writer’s block. They were married in a private ceremony a few months after meeting in 1971 and settled in Geneva, Switzerland following the wedding. While this move seemed to offer Ginastera the opportunity to leave behind the tortured memories of his life in Buenos Aires, this was not to be. He became nostalgic for Argentina, prompting another stylistic shift – one heralding a return to Argentine themes.

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38 Scalisi, 251.

39 Composer’s note in score for *Pampeana No. 2* (written in 1979) published by Boosey & Hawkes.
Ginastera’s gratitude to Aurora is expressed throughout his subsequent compositions, many in which the cello plays a central role in the narrative. In Serenata (1973-74) for example, “his ardent references to Aurora could not be more explicit, as he draws upon the solo cello part to represent the female poetic protagonist – an association iconically reinforced by Aurora’s performance at the premiere.”\(^{40}\) His appreciation continued, perhaps with a determination not to repeat the mistakes of his first marriage, as he found creative ways of acknowledging her even in works not specifically for cello. Ginastera alludes to Aurora in his religious passion, Turbae ad passionem gregorianam (1974) through the Easter hymn “Aurora lucis rutilat” as well his work for organ Variazioni e Toccata sopra ‘Aurora lucis rutilat’ (1980).\(^{41}\)

Mercedes’s death

Mercedes died in 1979. His daughter recounts her surprise at receiving a distressed phone call from her father. “We had the most heartbreaking conversation that I could have imagined. I had never seen him weep before and his sorrow was so afflicted and bereaved that I could not find the words to comfort him…one would have thought that [Mercedes’ death] would have been to the contrary…”\(^{42}\) Alberto had not spoken to his wife in many years yet he felt this loss keenly, perhaps even regretfully. Mercedes’ death, however, released him from this tumultuous chapter of his life; the following year, he began to write his Cello Sonata and his Second Cello Concerto.

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\(^{40}\) Schwartz-Kates, \textit{Alberto Ginastera}, 18.

\(^{41}\) This large-scale choral work may also be representative of renewed interest in spiritual matters. In a letter to Julius Rudel on Feb. 13, 1974, Ginastera says, “The difference between this and other Passions which are songs of death, mine will be a [song] of life as it begins with the coming into Jerusalem and ends with the Resurrection. San Marcos already said it: [‘He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living…’].” Mark 12:27 (King James Version)

\(^{42}\) Scalisi, 256.
This close artistic collaboration with Aurora became the catalyst for some of his greatest works and brought him into closer communication with many celebrated cellists, including Pablo Casals.

**Pablo Casals: Puerto Rico and *Glosses***

“Many things drew me to Casals: his personality; his great qualities as an artist and as a man for whom freedom was the essential element in all of life: the long friendship that existed between him and my wife Aurora, one of his most devoted disciples; the enthusiasm he showed for my works…”

This list of qualities attributed to Casals says much about what Ginastera valued in life and in friendship. Taken from the score of *Glosses sobre temes de Pau Casals* (1976), this is one of the composer’s warmest dedications and, for Ginastera, who claimed always to write original music, this work is an anomaly. Therein lies the significance of Casals’ friendship. Ginastera continues describing an “almost photographic, recollection of Casals sitting on the beach of San Juan [Puerto Rico] with his inseparable umbrella, looking at the sea beyond the horizon…”

Ginastera greatly admired Casals, forty years his senior, and seems to have enjoyed a close friendship during Casals’ final years. In the early 1970’s, both men found themselves living a life in exile from their native countries. Both were experiencing a time of apparent marital peace and musical accomplishment, having settled in their wives’ home countries: Casals in Puerto Rico, and Ginastera in Switzerland. Both shared a love for folk music and for nature. This explains the

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43 Composer’s note to the score *Glosses Sobre Temes de Pau Casals* published by Boosey & Hawkes.

44 Composer’s note to the score *Glosses Sobre Temes de Pau Casals* published by Boosey & Hawkes.
openly nostalgic, even sentimental, tone of the work’s dedication – also a diversion from the norm for an introverted composer who was private about his feelings.

Casals’ influence

As previously mentioned, it was Casals who re-awakened Ginastera’s interest in his Catalan roots. This prompted Ginastera to request that his name be pronounced with the “soft g” sound reflecting this heritage. *Glosses sobre temes de Pau Casals* (which Ginastera entitled in Catalan), written for string ensemble (1976), and later re-written for full orchestra (1977), is one of the few works which Ginastera builds around another composer’s music. The work features “evocations of the *Estrofas de amor*," which emulates the *sardanas* (the national dance of Catalonia, albeit rhythmically intensified by Ginastera), and quotes the Catalan *Cant dell Ocells* immortalized by Casals. Both versions were premiered at the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico – a place that he musically depicts in the third movement of the *Cello Concerto No. 2*. Ginastera was a proponent of Casals’s music, and after the cellist’s death, Ginastera kept in touch with Casals’s wife, even recommending that she catalogue his works so they might be enjoyed worldwide and she might benefit from the extra income.

45 The name Ginastera comes from the Catalan “ginesta” or “broom flower” – a symbol of Catalonia.

46 Composer’s note to the score *Glosses Sobre Temes de Pau Casals* published by Boosey & Hawkes.

Puerto Rico

For both the Ginasteras and the Casals, Puerto Rico represented a joyous place of music-making and of educating the next generation of musicians. Ginastera’s loyalty to Casals even after his death is reflected in his investment in the Casals Festival. Upon attending the Festival in 1978 for the premiere of the orchestral version of *Glosses*, Ginastera openly praised the festival and underscored its global significance. “It is truly an honor for us for various reasons. First, because Aurora was one of the maestro’s exemplary disciples and for the friendship which connected us for various decades…the Festival Casals is an event that has put Puerto Rico on the highest musical level in our times…”48 While this was a political gesture on Ginastera’s part – an attempt to use his reputation as a Latin American composer to placate the criticism which the European festival faced from local musicians who felt excluded – it is still evidence of the personal significance of Pau Casals, the Festival Casals, and by extension, Puerto Rico.

Aurora performed Ginastera’s recently revised *Cello Concerto No. 1* to great acclaim, and Julius Rudel, who premiered all three of Ginastera’s operas, also premiered *Glosses* at the Festival. Thus, Puerto Rico is the location of many wonderful memories for Ginastera, both of successful premieres and of collegial camaraderie. It is then less surprising to find a musical depiction of Puerto Rico in Ginastera’s *Cello Concerto No. 2*.

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48 Interview from an unidentified press source, June 14, 1978 (PSS).
Béla Bartók: Allegro Barbaro and the Fourth String Quartet

Ginastera’s debt to Argentina’s folk music is undeniable, yet the more time he spent abroad, the more his own music grew away from the immediate folk music connection which marked the music of his first creative period toward a personal cosmopolitan synthesis. Unlike that of the nationalist composers that preceded him, while reveling in the idioms of South American folk music, Ginastera’s music rarely attempted to recreate styles. It seemed logical to test the influence of South America’s folk music, but he claimed, “the simplicity of its harmonization, the elementary innocence of its elaboration, the lack of strong structural development, were not suited to the future [he] dreamed of as a composer.”

Recalling his Bartókian inspiration

Ginastera recalls hearing Béla Bartók’s Allegro Barbaro at age fifteen, which lit his imagination, saying, Bartók “filled in all the gaps I felt in my conception of forging a national music. The rhythmic strength…the feverish excitement produced by the repeated primitive themes…the construction of the melody from cells and repetition of parts of those cells; the impression that a new kind of pianism appeared here…its main changes being in the percussive element and new fingerings: all these aspects captivated me…” And this is evident throughout his oeuvre. After hearing the Allegro barbaro, Ginastera searched for other new piano works and orchestral scores, but blamed Nazism, then expanding in Europe for the difficulty of obtaining

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scores of contemporary music in Argentina. Perhaps this was in his favor, as he was then forced to create from impressions rather than theoretical study.

Fourth String Quartet

While there is no documentation of Ginastera ever referring to the *Second Cello Concerto*’s second movement as an homage to Bartók, there is strong musical and circumstantial evidence to support such a claim. First, there are numerous musical incidents throughout the concerto that mimic events and techniques present in the *Fourth String Quartet’s* scherzo. This includes the movement’s principal four-note motif (which appears to be based on a four-note motif found in Bartók’s scherzo), orchestration techniques, and emphasis on symmetrical structures. I will explore these musical connections in detail in Chapter Three. Secondly, in 1981, Ginastera published his famous article entitled, “Homage to Béla Bartók,” presumably written earlier that year or the year prior while he was working on the concerto. As he evaluated his own career and that of the Hungarian master, he may have considered musical allusion to be another appropriate means of honoring his musical role model. For Ginastera, who had begun to weave quotations and allusions from Classical and Romantic composers, including Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms, in his own music, it is reasonable to consider his doing so in the *Cello Concerto No. 2*.

However, unlike the Brahms melody (quoted in the first movement of *Cello Concerto No. 2*), which Ginastera intends the listener to discover, there is no such indication concerning Ginastera, “Homage to Béla Bartók,” 3-5.
the second movement’s connection to Bartók.\textsuperscript{52} Ginastera’s program notes are not exhaustive, and typically address the most central musical elements. The allusion to Bartók is a veiled homage. It is possible that Ginastera heard the \textit{Fourth String Quartet}, perhaps even studied it, and recognizing the potential of further developing an idea that Bartók had introduced, realized these gestures in his own scherzo. In 1977, when asked by Julius Rudel for descriptive information about Barrabas – his next proposed opera – Ginastera responded, “As far as ‘Barrabas’ is concerned… It is an opera in which I am putting many illusions.”\textsuperscript{53} This is most likely a misspelling of “allusions,” and if so, this letter affirms the growing role of allusion in his music and his attempt to “entwine the historical legacy within his own works…”\textsuperscript{54} The veiled presence of Bartók in the \textit{Cello Concerto No. 2} affirms the notion that Ginastera “imbued his music with an even deeper symbolism, as he entwined his late cello pieces with love themes from his operas and related compositions,” and may contribute to scholars’ understand of the “intricate thematic network and the role that symbolism played in Ginastera’s works.”\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{Olivier Messiaen: Palindromes and Nocturnal Landscapes}

While Béla Bartók has been acknowledged as a primary influence, little scholarship has explored Ginastera’s friendship with Messiaen and the possible musical connections they might share. In 1963, the Olivier and Yvonne Messiaen traveled to Argentina to teach at the Di Tella

\textsuperscript{52} Neither does Ginastera mention his allusion to the truncated opera theme from his own \textit{Don Rodrigo}, dedicated to Mercedes, and later used in his \textit{String Quartet No. 3} – which also appears modified in the \textit{Cello Concerto No. 2}.

\textsuperscript{53} Ginastera to conductor Julius Rudel, May 28, 1977 (PSS).

\textsuperscript{54} Schwartz-Kates, \textit{Alberto Ginastera}, 38.

\textsuperscript{55} Schwartz-Kates, \textit{Alberto Ginastera}, 39.
Institute which Ginastera founded. Their month-long visit to Argentina was certainly one to remember. According to Yvonne Loriod’s journal, their plane overshot the short runway and landed in the grass. The Messiaen’s then had to travel nearly seventy miles along River Plate estuary before arriving in Buenos Aires. There, Messiaen taught a course on Greek and Hindu rhythms and Loriod taught a group of pianists. Several of the Institute’s concerts featured Messiaen’s music from portions of his *Vingt Regards*, to *Vision de l’Amen* and *Oiseaux exotiques*. Between these lessons, concerts, and press conferences, Messiaen visited an Argentine “estancia” and wrote down several South American birdsongs that he incorporated into subsequent works. If Ginastera’s fascination with symmetrical structures and use of palindromes increased during this time, might this suggest Messiaen’s influence?

Success in France

In 1966, Ginastera traveled to Paris, as a guest of the French government and possibly visited Messiaen. Ginastera’s stay in France was cut short when he left early to oversee rehearsals for the New York premiere of Don Rodrigo. The personal and professional importance of France continued, however, and Ginastera returned several times. In a 1974 letter to conductor Julius Rudel, Ginastera exclaims “Aurora obtained great public and press successes. So did I with my [first cello] concerto, but what especially moved me in Paris was that the most important French composers were present at the concert and came afterwards to a huge party.


57 *Couleurs de la Cité céleste* (1963), *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum* (1964), and *La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (1965-69) each incorporate South American birdsongs.

Amongst them were Messiaen, Jolivet, Dutilleux, Constant. Some friends of mine told me that it was quite impossible to see them all together, and this is why I felt so honoured.”

Birthday Letter

Unfortunately, very little is known about the Messiaen-Ginastera relationship, and the fragmentary correspondence available to scholars has received limited attention. The few letters available, however, reveal Ginastera’s admiration and appreciation for the French composer. In 1978, Messiaen received a long, nostalgic letter from Ginastera for his seventieth birthday. There is nothing casual about this letter, and the tone is one of highest respect and admiration, with a note of friendship toward the end when he calls him “Cher Olivier.”

Alberto recalls hearing Messiaen playing the organ at La Trinité in Paris, and the “pleasant moments we spent together in Buenos Aires during your stay at Instituto di Tella.” Ginastera continues saying, “It was a real honor for me to count on your cooperation as the first visiting professor at CLAEM.” After thanking Messiaen for his role in shaping a new generation of Latin American composers, Ginastera then describes a recent concert he’d attended in Geneva featuring Messiaen’s Quatuor pour la fin du temps, saying, “It was an interpretation of a high purity and of rare perfection. The emotional impact was profound and ended with Aurora, like many others, in tears.” Ginastera continues, “And now, dear Olivier, as the Italians say: Bon lavoro! When we go to Paris, we'll

59 Ginastera to conductor Julius Rudel, February 13, 1974 (PSS).

60 Sylvie Vanhoozer. Email message to author, March 20, 2015. “The tone: Highest respect and admiration. Very "French" in the formality, not just the "vous" but also the proper use of the language: nothing casual in this letter. The only mark of some sort of friendship comes out at the end when he calls him "Cher Olivier". The first name basis means friendship, but the "vous" indicates still a respectful distance. Obviously quite learned and has a tone of higher social standing…the verb tenses are OK, although there are mistakes which appear to be typos, which might make it look confusing.”
call on you to personally hand you our small gift…Aurora and I are very pleased to send you and Yvonne our warm friendship.”

Other letters

Unfortunately, scholars do not know how Messiaen responded to this particular letter, but we know they stayed in communication. Five years later, the Ginasteras met the Messiaens during their visit in Geneva for the premiere of Turangalila. Ginastera wrote. “Dear Olivier, we are pleased, Aurora and I, to know you and Ivonne will come to Geneva. During the Diorama of Cartamarvine Music, you are the guest of honor and we expect you both very excitedly…I was wondering if you could not reserve the evening of Tuesday 19…for a dinner with some musician friends. It would be a great honor for us to receive you at home…” Messiaen’s response the next month was friendly but not as encouraging as Ginastera would have liked,

“Dear friend, thank you very much for your affectionate letter. We are rehearsing the orchestra in Geneva, all day, from May 16 to 20, including the May 19 rehearsals from 2:30-10:30p! with a short break in the middle and the Turangalila concert…Yvonne and I set off again the next day…[to the United States]. As you see, it is impossible for us to dine with you…during our brief stay in

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61 Ginastera to Olivier Messiaen, Dec. 12, 1978 (PSS).

62 Sylvie Vanhoozer. Email message to author, March 23, 2015. “In this exchange, Ginestera has switched from the formal "vous" to the "tu", indicative of a growing familiarity, also reinforced by the term "affectueuses salutations". Messiaen is just as friendly, particularly thankful for his friend’s affectionate letter. He is sorry that they are so totally booked up while in Geneva that they will not be able to join them for that dinner, or any other dinner, but he is particularly happy that they will see each other at the concert - which appears to be the only possible meeting." However, Ginastera may have committed a cross-cultural faux pas of being too familiar with the French. While his tone is effervescent and has progressed from the formal "vous" to the informal, affectionate "tu", Messiaen himself still uses "vous" and signs with "amitiés", leaving out the "affectionately". Ginestera has twice called him by his first name, and Messiaen, while addressing him as "Very dear friend", does not use his first name, Alberto. Is this a cultural faux pas or is Messiaen trying to maintain a formal tone? These may be some of the questions scholars need to address in deciphering the Ginastera-Messiaen relationship.

63 Ginastera to Olivier Messiaen April 6, 1981 (PSS).
Geneva. We are sorry. Anyway, we will certainly see you at the concert on 20 May, which I am particularly pleased."  

Similarities

Ginastera and Messiaen had much in common. Both shared a high respect and musical debt to Bartók and Debussy, an affinity for exotic percussion, and blended high modernist avant-garde techniques with quasi-Romantic lyrical sensibilities. Both wrote a large quantity of music to be premiered by their wives. Both lived in the city but spent large amounts of time in the country nurturing their fascination and love of nature. Each regularly devoted portions of their works to musically describing real and imagined places – often with a surrealist, psychological bent.

Tree Frog

Ginastera’s choice to emulate the sounds of the Puerto Rican coqui (tree frog) in the third movement of his Second Cello Concerto – Nottilucente – has Messiaen-like overtones. First, its placement as a musically independent ensemble – played by the xylophone and solo violin – solidifies our understanding of this musical gesture as a separate layer in the musical landscape, a recurring trope in Messiaen’s œuvre. Secondly, its appearance in a sensuous, atmospheric movement, recalls the Jardin du Sommeil d’amour, the sixth movement of Turangalila-Symphonie. The song of the tree frog, among other creatures, floats above the lovers’ nocturnal embrace, similar to the birdsong that hovers independently above Messiaen’s lovers. Thirdly, the cyclical planing of the string clusters in mm. 65-97 of Ginastera’s third movement is similar to

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64 Messiaen to Alberto Ginastera, May 10, 1981 (PSS).
that of the palindromic string chords of Turangalila’s sixth movement. Furthermore, the French poetic epithet for the third movement, “The night shines with stars and straw turns to gold. He dreams of her whom he adores.” affirms Ginastera’s view of this movement as a multi-layered narrative.

Symmetrical structures to different ends

Furthermore, they both shared an interest in symmetrical structures. As early as the Quatuor pour la fin du temps (1941), Messiaen had employed cyclical, palindromic structures in his music. Their philosophical intention in using palindromes, however, seems (and sounds) different especially when comparing the Quatuor pour la fin du temps and the Cello Concerto No. 2. Whereas Messiaen manipulated symmetrical rhythms specifically to blur the music’s pulse and, by extension, the listener’s perception of time, Ginastera’s layering of repetitious or cyclical symmetrical figures generally maintains a strong sense of tempo. Even the dazzling palindromic textures which color the canvas of the Cello Concerto No. 2 typically appear as ostinatos building toward an observable teleological fulfillment within the piece. In this way, Ginastera’s music reflects an earth-bound quality and corporeal embodiment, which is different from Messiaen’s use of palindromes for spiritual “out-of-body” ecstasy.

In a theological interpretation, Cello Concerto No. 2 seems to be concerned with “incarnation” – the spirit acquiring a body for communion with other embodied creatures (a Christian truth which Messiaen also explored). The famous Brahms melody, which hovers over

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65 These lines were written by the 20th century French surrealist poet Apollinaire, which Ginastera includes in the score.

Concerto’s first movement, is eventually incarnate in the cello. This is may be another way in which Ginastera wove Aurora’s significance into the musical fabric of his tenth anniversary gift – she brought him out of a prolonged creative silence, giving form to his musical ideals. Much like the Brahms melody, Ginastera’s musical ideals would be brought to life by Aurora’s playing, beyond his own lifetime.

The relationship between Messiaen and Ginastera, their shared musical interests, personal experiences, Roman Catholic heritage, and in particular, Ginastera’s admiring tone toward the French composer, raise questions which cannot be answered in this dissertation. Analysis of the Cello Concerto No. 2, however, provides an opportunity to explore the ways in which Messiaen might have influenced Ginastera’s work.

Conclusion

The tapestry of influences suggested by the Cello Concerto No. 2 undoubtedly extends beyond Mercedes de Toro, Aurora Natola, Pablo Casals, Béla Bartók, and Olivier Messiaen – the people explored in this chapter – but these seem to be the extra-musical influences which help us make most sense of Ginastera’s last concerto. Even an opaque view of the musical symbolism in the Concerto, and the fragmentary correspondence to which scholars have access reveals the Concerto to be a celebration of restored creativity and artistic homage. Chapter Three will explore these connections in greater detail as present in the musical score, with a specific focus on Ginastera’s synthesis of musical polarities and use of symmetrical structures.
Chapter Three: Analysis of *Cello Concerto No. 2* (1980-81) with a focus on symmetrical structures and symbolism.

In the *Cello Concerto No. 2*, Ginastera presents his audience with a compelling, democratic evocation: a compilation of competing sonic languages. My analysis will focus on synthesis within the musical parameters of melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre. The first and second engage with pentatonic (Argentine folk music) and atonal (European twelve-tone music) polarities; the third deals with the implications of the work’s contrasting approach to rhythm – specifically in its use of fully notated rhythms and aleatoric sections; the fourth, illuminates the ways in which Ginastera combines both traditional pitched music and avant-garde, non-pitched noise.

In the first two parameters (melody, harmony), one system or polarity does not ultimately triumph over the other; there appears to be a synthesis or coexistence of elements. Ginastera embraces the tension which this causes and appropriates each element for expressive purposes. With the latter two parameters (rhythm, timbre), equality is less pronounced; Ginastera ultimately favors order (represented by fully notated rhythms) over chaos (aleatoric elements), and traditional music (pitch-specific material) over avant-garde techniques (extended instrumental techniques, noise), but this does not mean that they are absent. Extended techniques, aleatoricism, and “noise” are a crucial part of the fabric of this concerto; I argue that these elements are ultimately subservient to a dramatic narrative; Ginastera manages these competing materials with an emphasis on symmetrical sonic structures throughout the concerto.
In the opening six measures of the *Second Cello Concerto*, Ginastera unfolds an important 15-pitch, 9-pitch-class collection (Bb – E – G# – D – F – G – A – C – Eb – F – G – Bb – E – G# – D, see Ex. 1) which functions as a microcosm for the entire concerto, containing the principal melodic, harmonic, and temporal motifs and foreshadowing the work’s formal structure. Understanding the intervallic relationships within this microcosm is crucial to understanding the parameters of the work’s internal conflict and coherence. Brimming with atonal and pentatonic possibilities, this microcosm reveals Ginastera’s personal synthesis of the European classical tradition with South American folk music.

Ex. 1. Mov. I, mm. 1-6, Symmetrical microcosm (F# – D# – C# [025] absent)

Since the influence of the microcosm on the work is most evident in the first movement (which was newly composed), Part I of this chapter will illustrate how the microcosm affects the musical parameters of melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre/orchestration on the concerto. Part II will explore the effect of the microcosm on the first movement of the *Concerto*, and Part III will discuss the microcosm’s connections with movements II-IV. My analysis will illuminate the structural and thematic coherence of *Cello Concerto* No. 2, and demonstrate how the various extra-musical concerns discussed in Chapter Two may have shaped Ginastera’s last concerto— all with an eye toward a hermeneutic reading.
Part I – The Microcosm

Melody in the Microcosm

The first and most obvious quality of the microcosm is that this fifteen-note melody begins and ends with the same four pitch-classes (Bb – E – G# – D, see Ex. 1a) – a symmetrical whole-tone collection [0268]. The second characteristic is that the inner seven pitches are also symmetrical (F – G – A – C – Eb – F – G, [0246]). The result is a completely symmetrical microcosm revolving around a central pitch – C natural.

Two competing motifs

Melodically, the microcosm opens with two competing motifs: the first, a four-note motif (Bb – E – G# – D, [0268]) that I shall refer to as the Tritonal motif (TT), is played by the harp – a reference to the guitar (and could be said to revolve around an absent F#); played by the Bb clarinet, the second is a contrasting five-note motif (D – F – G – A – C, [0247] revolving around G natural), which I shall refer to as the Pentatonic motif (P, see Ex. 2).

Ex. 2. Symmetrical TT an P revolving around central pitches

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67 In musical theory analysis, T is typically the abbreviation for “transposition”, however, since this dissertation is less concerned with transposition, TT will refer to the four-note Tritonal motif that is developed throughout.
This is followed by a one note expansion of P (D – F – G – A – C – Eb) in the celesta in m. 5, labeled P’ (a variant of P). Inclusion of Eb is a departure from the pentatonic scale that sharpens the pentatonic motif with a triton. This highlights two governing concepts for this concerto: first, an emphasis on symmetrical structures at cellular and structural levels, and second, a sense of continual musical development. Throughout the entire concerto, Ginastera will employ and alter the ideas present in this embryonic opening melody.

This expansion is repeated by a fragment of P (Eb – F – G) plus the reiteration of the first motif TT (Bb – E – G# – D) in the F horn, as a seven note collection which we shall call TT’ (a variant of TT). The result is a series of musical phrases that begins and ends with the tritone and features both pentatonic and expanded musical motifs inside (TT – P – P’ – TT’). The contrast between tritonal and pentatonic sonorities becomes the principal source of tension in this concerto.

Although inner and outer pitch collections are symmetrical, each is contrasting in its intervallic qualities and musical implications, reinforcing the work’s underlying dialogue. Ginastera’s particular orchestration of these pitches, played by four different instruments, further divides this microcosm into four separate pitch collections. These pitch collections reveal the principal source of dramatic tension to be unfolded and resolved throughout the concerto. The result is both a local dialogue within each movement, and a large-scale formal plan spanning all four movements.
Harmony in the Microcosm

Harmonically, this microcosm unfolds in two ascending arpeggios representing a chromatically altered version of Ginastera’s trademark guitar chord (E – A – D – G – B – E, see Ex. 3). In earlier works, such as the Danza del Viejo Boyero from Danzas Argentinas (1937) and Variaciones Concertantes (1953), Ginastera uses the guitar’s quartal sonorities (found in the open strings) as both a source of musical material and as a recurring structural feature.68 As his style matured, the symbolic arpeggiating of the guitar strings became the context for presenting any important pitch relationships, expanded to include chromatic and microtonal intervals.69

Ex. 3, guitar chord (open strings) and condensed guitar strings (pentatonic scale)

Tritonal and Pentatonic vertical harmonies

In addition to TT and P as melodic cells, Ginastera’s emphasis on internal pitch coherence is underscored by the vertical use of the same materials. Each melodic phrase in the opening microcosm foreshadows the kinds of harmonies that Ginastera will use throughout the concerto. The tension between tritone and pentatonic sonorities, which characterizes the melodies, also permeates the vertical harmonic language; the E dominant seventh sonority with a

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69 Ginastera’s First Cello Concerto employs a quartetone version of the Gaucho guitar chord in the work’s conclusion.
lowered fifth, which TT [0268] seems to imply, contrasts with the d minor seventh sonority of P [02479] (see Ex. 4). Within a tonal framework (to which Ginastera often alludes even in atonal works), these two chords could represent dominant and pre-dominant chords of A. Note that Ginastera builds the third movement serenade around A making it an important structural pitch (this is also the first letter of his name and of his wife’s name, Aurora, to whom the work is dedicated.70

Ex. 4. Mov. I, mm. 1-6, tonal chords around “A”

Ginastera’s treatment of harmony in the *Concerto* is semitonal, with a tendency toward a shifting pitch centricity. Along with this emphasis on specific structural pitches throughout, Ginastera continues to employ an additive process that often culminates in total twelve-tone chromatic saturation at the end of a musical gesture or section. In mm. 1-6, the opening melody sings over a Bb pedal, the first of many pedals used throughout the concerto. These pedal points may be as simple as a single note supporting a melody or as complex as the nine-note pitch collections (sustained or as ostinato) used to underscore a particular pitch centricity or to increase tension at cadential moments.

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70 Ginastera is no stranger to embedding symbolism in his works, an aspect of Ginastera study which has only recently been explored from the recurring Gaucho guitar chord, self-quotation, and quoting other composers. The letter “A” may be symbolic of both Alberto and Aurora, contributing to our understanding of this work as an anniversary gift.
Rhythm in the Microcosm

Throughout the concerto, important pitches are highlighted by their extended durations, and the expanding principle that governs the melodic unfolding of pitches in the microcosm also extends to the way in which musical gestures increase or decrease in perceived speed. For example, the first movement is set in common time (4/4), but the first four pitches of the microcosm unfold as a quintuplet of quarters with a rest as the first beat (see Ex. 3). The second phrase unfolds as a sextuplet of quarters beginning with a rest, the third phrase a septuplet of quarters also begun with a rest. As expected, the fourth phrase contains seven eighth notes beginning with an eighth note rest. This gives the aural impression of a gradual increase in speed. This increase in speed, while continuous, is somewhat concealed, however, by the fermatas placed on the last note of each group. The increased duration of these notes is not arbitrary. The placement of fermatas functions to highlight four important pitches (D – C – Eb – D, [013], see Ex. 5). These are the first notes of a “famous cello theme by a great composer of the past century, whose identity should be discovered by the listener…” writes Ginastera in the work’s preface.71 He refers to the cello melody of the third movement of Brahms’ *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No 2* embedded in the orchestral fabric of the first movement, ultimately materializing in the cello; my analysis shows the genesis of this important motif, however, can be traced back to the microcosm before its appearance as part of the Brahms melody.

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71 Composer’s note in the score to *Cello Concerto No. 2* published by Boosey and Hawkes
Ex. 5. Mov. I, mm. 3-6, accelerating rhythm in the microcosm (fermatas illuminate the Brahms melody [013], example reflects orchestration as appearing in score)

Pedal tones and ostinatos

The microcosm’s fermatas also foreshadow Ginastera’s use of pedal tones throughout as a means of establishing successive areas of centricity. Each of the concerto’s movements begins and ends with a pedal tone of some sort. As with the microcosm’s opening Bb, sustained by the contrabass, pedal points may appear as a single note above or below the moving parts. Or, as will occur later in the concerto, the function of a pedal may be filled by the ostinatos – layered rhythms occupying a particular sonic space. In either case, pedal points and ostinatos ground both consonant and dissonant movement, creating a sense of place and by extension a heightened sense of movement when absent.

Aleatoric v. fully notated rhythms

For Ginastera, composition was “an act of faith, of affirmation” which seeks to express “the balance between the real, visible world and the invisible, imaginary world; a harmony between chaos and order, a proportion between the human dimension and the divine.” Ginastera’s emphasis on the triumph of order over chaos becomes apparent in his careful use of aleatoric rhythms, and preference for fully notated rhythms even when the effect is one of colorful chaos. I will unpack the implications of this approach later in this chapter.

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Timbre & Orchestration in the Microcosm

The Second Cello Concerto is Ginastera’s sixth and last concerto. The opening measures of each of Ginastera’s concertos introduce a highly unique orchestral profile, which suggests the concerto’s musical concerns. In the Harp Concerto (1965, rev. 1968), Ginastera’s first concerto for soloist and orchestra,73 the orchestra’s introduction mimics the arpeggios of the harp, and the harp’s entrance sounds like that of a South American troubadour singing with accompaniment, a dynamic maintained throughout. The Piano Concerto No. 1 (1961), opens with a brief, ominous, fully orchestral wail ascending to the skies, promptly answered by a stark percussive descending solo piano line. The Violin Concerto (1963), opens with a cadenza for the soloist, followed by a series of “studies” exploring the intricacies of the symmetrical row which holds this work together. His Cello Concerto No. 1 (1968, rev. 1978) opens with six contrabasses intoning a low chromatic cluster over which the contrabassoon chants the twelve-tone row to be developed throughout the work. The Piano Concerto No. 2, opens with the ascending chromatically altered strains of Ginastera’s trademark guitar chord in the piano; comparable to the tortured brushstrokes of an expressionist painting, each of these notes is sustained by the strings and quickly followed by contrasting orchestral and soloist sound masses.

His final concerto

In the Cello Concerto No. 2 (1980-81), the first sounds of the harp over a quiet Bb contrabass pedal, followed by the clarinet, celesta, and horn (see Ex. 5), also indicate an important feature of this concerto: it’s exploration of chamber-music-like textures. While chamber-music moments within the orchestral concerto are not unique to this concerto – the

73 His first known concerto was his Concerto argentino for piano and orchestra (1935), which Barbara Nissmann eventually recorded alongside his official First and Second Piano Concertos, but Ginastera later withdrew this work.
Cello Concerto No. 1 features an extended cello, clarinet, horn trio at its core – the dramatic arch of the Cello Concerto No. 2 (especially in the first and fourth movements), is that of chamber ensembles – duets to sextets – which coalesce into bold orchestral colors. Furthermore, some of the soloing instruments (in addition to the cello) seem to serve a symbolic purpose within the concerto’s narrative – in particular the horn (first movement; possibly representing Brahms and/or the musical ideal) and piano (fourth movement; the raucous duet with the cello). Ginastera played the piano, and in the context of this work as a tenth-year anniversary gift, it is reasonable to interpret the composer’s choice to include an extended, intricate piano part in the climactic fourth movement, as symbolic of the Ginastera-Natola union.

Pitch-centric music v. avant-garde extended techniques

Another polarity that Ginastera engages in this concerto, and other works, is that of traditional pitch-centric music and avant-garde extended techniques. Ginastera does not shy from using extended instrumental techniques as an extension of the timbral palate, including gestures distorting the sound that an instrument is typically required to produce in traditional classical music. Isolated, these gestures (e.g. indeterminate “notes,” non-pitched slides) might sound like meaningless noise, however, when placed in the context of the concerto’s dramatic narrative amidst traditional classical music gestures (e.g. traditional scales, accented pitches), the inclusion of noise expands a work’s sonic palate. Ginastera’s pervasive, calculated use of avant-garde instrumental techniques illustrates his aesthetic views on order and chaos in composition. I will discuss this further in Part II and III, particularly in relation to the second movement, which makes ample use of “noisy” extended instrumental techniques as part of the concerto’s dramatic narrative.
Part II – The Effect of the Microcosm in the First Movement

Movement I – Metamorfosi di un tema

“Aurora, je viens a toi avec ce chant né de la brume.”74 – August Martin

In the first movement, Ginastera’s treatment of the opening melody is a series of four variations that he refers to by the Italian metamorfosi. These variations essentially prefigure the moods to be explored throughout the work and, “like the four cardinal points at the hour of dawn” are intended to appear as “metamorphoses of colors from shadows to light.”75 These variations foreshadow many of the moods to be explored by the Concerto.

Structurally, the first movement can be divided into five parts: Introduction (microcosm) in mm. 1-6 and Prima metamorfosi (A section) is a lyrical, nocturnal section marked Sognando (mm. 7-46) that also foreshadows the mood of the third movement. The Secondo metamorfosi (B section), a brisk ascending octatonic melody (mm. 47-133) marked Allegro, foreshadows the second movement’s veiled malambo.76 After a brief recitative (m. 134), the Terza metamorfosi (A’ section) marked Adagio, returns to the nocturnal lyricism of the first variation (mm.135-66). Finally, the Quarta metamorfosi (B’) marked Luminoso (mm. 167-93), is characterized by with a

74 “Dawn, I come to you with this song born of the mist.” Each movement of the Second Cello Concerto bears a unique poetic epithet. It appears that Ginastera’s interest in French poet August Martin runs deep. According to Deborah Schwatz-Kates (email to author, Nov. 18, 2014), in Ginastera’s possessions were several anthologies and a copy of Martin’s obituary as appeared in the Journal de Genève, Samedi Littéraire (date illegible). This obit included one of Martin’s poems from Les Nuits Claires (Lausanne: Bonnard, 1941) entitled, “Aurore.” From this, Ginastera borrowed the opening line, “Je viens à toi ce chant né de la brume/Dawn, I come to you with this song born of the mist” as the epithet to the first movement. This haunting, somewhat surrealist poem fits well with the moody lyrical opening of the first movement.

75 Ginastera’s description of the movement as published in the score’s “Composer’s Note”.

76 There is room for debate as to the rhythm Ginastera is alluding to which could be the Malambo or Gato - both Argentine folk music styles with which Ginastera engaged in his own work.
quickly arpeggiating figure leading to a dynamic collision of pentatonic and atonal elements in the movement’s concluding climax (mm. 178-88).

The first pitch of the entire work – Bb – is an important “home” pitch, returning as a pedal toward the end of the first variation in mm. 29-31, and beginning of the second variation in m. 47. This pitch however eventually moves to E natural, a tritone away, underscoring the tension between tritonal and pentatonic musical materials.

In addition to the covert reference to the Brahms cello melody in the microcosm, Ginastera structures his first movement in four parts and places the Brahms cello theme in the third metamorfosi, mirroring the location of the cello solo in the Third movement of Brahms’s Piano Concerto No. 2. This also anticipates Ginastera’s placement of his own lyrical cello serenade – in the third movement. Moreover, the details of each variation provide fascinating insight into Ginastera’s own twelve-tone use of “developing variation.” The next paragraphs will explore these themes in greater detail.

Prima metamorfosi – Atonality and Pentatonicism

The opening fifteen-note melody (TT – P – P’ – TT’) ascends over a Bb pedal to the final D natural preparing for the cello’s first pitch, C natural. A recurring cadential device in Ginastera’s oeuvre, upper and lower neighbor tones (Bb and D in this case) are a post-tonal equivalent to tonal music’s dominant V chord. The cello then enters at pianissimo on the

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instrument’s lowest string C and ascends with a transposed statement of the opening TT and P motifs (up a whole tone) to a languishing three note descending motif\(^ {78}\) in mm. 7-10 (see Ex. 6). Ex. 6. Mov. I, mm.7-10, Theme I

Qualities of the Love Motif

This three-note set (D – C – Bb [024], which I will refer to as the Love Motif), originating from the microcosm’s pentatonic collection, is accompanied by descending arpeggios in the clarinet and bass clarinet which clearly replicate the microcosm TT and P motifs (and rhythmic acceleration). This Love Motif reappears at several important moments throughout the work as a unifying motif.

Accompaniment to the Love Motif

In accompaniment to the Love Motif, the clarinet completes a mirror presentation of the TT motif by playing G# - E – Bb in response to the cello’s D, immediately repeated by a four note descent from the cello’s C, beginning on A, followed by the microcosm’s absent pitches (F# - C# - B, see Ex. 6). These absent pitches form a unique collection [027] corresponding to tonal music’s important I – II – V progression. The pentatonic elements embedded into this atonal

\(^{78}\) The microcosm’s first (Bb), middle (C natural), and final pitch (D natural), also illuminate (in ascending order) the Love motif (D – C – Bb).
melody soften its initial dissonant intervals. This is followed by another four-note figure beginning on Ab, outlining another important collection [0136]. This variation of P foreshadows both the Brahms quote in the first movement and the third movement’s love theme. The final portion of the clarinet accompaniment echoes the TT motif by playing E – C – F# in response to the cello’s Bb. In this way, the melodic accompaniment (mm. 9-10) represents an altered version of the microcosm (TT – P – P’ –TT’) underneath the Love Motif (in the cello).

The harp’s accompanimental chords in mm. 9-10 present the first vertical version of the ascending cello notes [024] transposed down a fifth (Eb – F – G), followed by what appears to be its three-note expansion [023469] played by harp and celesta. This six-note pitch collection is a combination of whole tone [0246] and diminished seventh [0369], which will become the basis for the [0247] “guitar chords” in m. 11. However, a closer look at the context of this chord also reveals an important organizing principle – the cumulative use of all twelve pitches. All twelve pitches accumulate in the ninth measure’s melody and harmony (D – G# – E – Bb – G – F – Eb – C – A – F# – C# – B) and their order recalls the motifs of the microcosm. The process is repeated in m. 10 albeit in a different order (C – Ab – D – B – A – Bb – F – G – E – F# – D# – C#). The chromatic saturation, often appearing as tritonal and pentatonic melodies and harmonies, becomes the principal source of harmonic tension in this concerto.
First appearance of the strings and the *gaucho* guitar

The first appearance of accompanimental strings, in m. 11, is particularly striking for two reasons. First, the strings’ pizzicato seems to be an extension of the harp’s music in m. 9 emulating the folk associations of the guitar.\(^{79}\) Secondly, they clearly reference the opening pitch collections, alternating between pentatonic and whole tone sonorities. Over a B natural pedal, the first chord [0247] is a subset of P [02479] (and of [023469]), and the second [0136] is a subset of P’ [023579] (and of [023469]). The third guitar “strum” is a transposition of TT [0268], and the fourth is its contracted variant [0246] (again also a subset of [023469]) into the other whole-tone tetrachord (see Ex. 7a). The pedal is dissonant to the first three pizzicato chords, but when added to the fourth chord, it continues TT’s whole tone concern [02468] and is even voiced in such a way as to directly allude to TT’s alternation between tritone and major third. The final “strum” in this group (m. 12) returns to a transposition of [0136]. These “guitar strums,” orchestrated as pizzicatos in the strings, occur several times throughout the first movement serving as unifying structural events in mm. 11, 47, 75, 101, 145.\(^{80}\) Furthermore, the first ensemble sound of *arco* strings, following the *pizzicato* “strums” affirms the microcosm’s influence by alluding to its tritonal and pentatonic harmonies and mimicking their symmetrical order (see Ex. 7b).

Ex. 7. a) Mov. I, mm. 11-12, string pizz. (guitar strums) b) Mov. I, mm. 13-14, arco

\(^{79}\) *Variaciones Concertantes* (1953) and the *Harp Concerto* (1965).

\(^{80}\) The orchestrated “guitar strums” in mm. 11-12, reappear in mm. 48-51 accompanying the ascending octatonic permutation of T. This time they are alternated six or seven-note chords clearly referencing T; first [013689] then [013469] then a transposition of the first collection, followed by an exact repetition of the first. A smaller version occurs in mm. 75-76 near the midpoint of the variation clearly referencing P; first [0247], then a transposition of the same, followed by T [0268] transposed up a major third from the original. A symmetrical contraction of T [0246] appears in the harp accompaniment in mm. 77-78, as the cello begins its wild ascent toward the second variation’s orchestral, canonical tutti in mm. 83-88. As mentioned before, this is followed by a return of the octatonic ascending scale first and descending string glissandos (C# – B – F# – D# [0247]). These glissandos are then followed by a pizzicato alternation between whole tone [0246] and semitone [0123] collections in mm. 101-4 and the octatonic melody (whose lowest notes outline the first notes of the Brahms melody [013]).
Four-note chords loosely based on TT and P

The appearance of altered TT and P – the principal musical motifs being developed – continues in the cello and accompaniment throughout the first movement, albeit more loosely. In mm. 21-24, the strings play eight-note chromatic clusters orchestrationally divided into two groups of four pitches. The first, played by the first violins, is a half diminished seventh chord ([0258] which could be seen as an altered TT, E moves down a semitone to Eb) over the second violins playing a fully diminished seventh chord ([0369] interlocking tritons a minor third apart). Both are four-note chords with an altered pitch reminiscent of TT. In mm. 23-28, these chords trade sonic spaces and are further altered.

Dissolving into silence

In mm. 35-36, all twelve pitches appear stacked as three interlocking units of TT [0268] in chromatic saturation, a common occurrence at Ginastera’s cadential moments. This chromatic saturation continues into the first of several controlled aleatoric moments of the concerto (mm. 37-40), featuring the percussion, harp, and celesta, playing around the cellos embellishments of F#. Both the cello and accompanying strings end the section with a slide up to an indeterminate nonharmonic sound. This recurring means of ending a sentence or section (mm. 40, 82, 166, 179) is an interesting choice for a work that seems to attempt reconciliation between the sonic
polarities (e.g. atonal v. pentatonic, aleatoric v. fully notated, pitched v. non-pitched). The Prima metamorfosi moves through opposing musical materials and returns to the opening pitch Bb, in m. 29, ultimately dissolving into un-pitched noise and finally silence.

Concluding mirror

The silence is broken by the first appearance of the octatonic ascending cello line that characterizes the Secondo metamorfosi (mm. 41-44). The notes on which these octatonic fragments begin also reveal fascinating connections to the microcosm. In mm. 41-43, the fragments underscore a prolongation of B followed by a reference to T in m. 44 (B – F – A – Eb) finally landing on C in m. 45. This melody is echoed by the winds and percussion before coalescing into the first orchestral tutti section of the work (mm. 45-46). The orchestral tutti section that concludes the first variation includes a palindrome and clear allusion to the opening order of pitch collections ([TT – P – P’ – TT’] see Ex. 8). Found in mm. 45-46, this symmetrical collection of twenty-four notes revolves around what would be E quarter-tone sharp. This symmetrical structure represents an expansion of the embryonic microcosm from nine to twelve notes. The expanded microcosm’s location at the conclusion of the first variation, performed by the orchestra, is the first in a series of similar structural markers throughout the first movement.

Ex. 8. Mov. I, mm. 45-46, tutti (w/embedded mirror)
Secondo metamorfosi - Octatonicism

In the Secondo metamorfosi (m. 47), Ginastera contracts the microcosm’s opening four-note motif (Bb – E – G# – D [0268] TT intervals: 6 – 4 – 6), converting it into a symmetrical octatonic motif (A – B – C – D [0235] contracted intervals: 2 – 1 – 2), also foreshadowing the harmonic palate of the second movement. This ascending figure is repeated at the tritone (Eb – F – F# – G#) The resulting octatonic scale, harkens back to Ginastera’s early influences, specifically Bartók. This brisk ascending eight-note scale, which first appeared in fragments at the conclusion of the Prima metamorfosi in m. 41-44, becomes the second principal theme of the first movement (see Ex. 9a-b).

Ex. 9. a) Mov. I, mm. 47-53, Theme II – octatonic (w/embedded Brahms melody)

Ex. 9. b) Original Brahms melody, Piano Concerto No. 2, Mov. III, mm. 1-2

Ginastera uses the first seven notes (transposed at the tritone)
Transpositions of the second metamorfosi

A close examination of this melody (mm. 47-51) reveals an important, albeit hidden connection to both the microcosm and the musical material of the Terza metamorfosi: the Brahms melody [013] (which I shall refer to as B), is embedded in the start of each ascending scale, and echoed in the end of each scale. In the microcosm, Ginastera highlighted B by placing fermatas; in the Secondo metamorfosi, the importance of the final note is underscored by doubling these notes in the glockenspiel (see Ex. 7a-b).\(^1\)

A contrasting passage occurs in m. 52 where the octatonic scales are exchanged for a series of arpeggios. This change leaves aside the major seventh transpositions of the Brahms melody (at the beginning and ending of the scale) but keeps the notes (doubled by the glockenspiel) at both the beginning and ending of each arpeggio in m. 52. Interestingly, the change in accents occurs when Ginastera presents a seven-note version of the Brahms melody, both dispelling any doubts regarding his intention to quote Brahms, and revealing his keen understanding of Brahms’ melody and of its integral musical sense. While the first three notes are pitch set [013], the following four notes are pitch set [0235] (octatonic), which Ginastera had already presented as the second variation on TT in m. 47. Which came first, Brahms’ seven-note melody or Ginastera’s compression of TT? The answer is not important; moments like these in

\(^1\) The Boosey & Hawkes score appears to have a mistake in the Glockenspiel part which plays G\# – F\# – A – F\# instead of G\# – F\# – A – G\# as played by the cello. Ginastera’s intention for this to be the first appearance of the Brahms melody is further clarified by the glockenspiel’s subsequent notes which accurately map back to the first seven notes of Brahms’ melody transposed up a tritone (G\# – F\# – A – G\# – F\# – E – D\#). Stuart Pope, Ginastera’s editor, friend, and liaison at Boosey & Hawkes writes, “Alberto was a tinkerer; he never did like having his final "say" in regard to his score. He rarely changed a note, but he was constantly rethinking the dynamics and octave transpositions, sometimes the instrumentation. My frequent pleadings with him to pass over a production copy were received with a remark such as, "I am not Mozart." It is for this reason that at the time of his death so many of his works, which have become well known and frequently performed, were still not available in print and on sale.” From - Pope, W. Stuart. “The Composer-Publisher Relationship: Chronicle of a Friendship.” Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana 6, no. 1 (1985): 97-107. Pope, 98.
which musical materials develop seamlessly are a testament to the internal coherence to which Ginastera was devoted.

The next permutation of TT is in m. 58 where it appears as accompaniment to the cello. TT [0268] is compressed to (G – G# – B – Bb [0134]) aurally sounding as a half step, minor third, and half step, again a symmetrical figure. Ginastera layers these cycling pitches at four different speeds. This example of a textural pedal point is orchestrated with the flutes playing quintuplets, the oboes triplets, while the clarinets play sixteenths. This marks the first tutti section of the Secondo metamorfosi mm. 58-65. Beneath these symmetrical cycles, the violins play quasi-symmetrical sixteenth notes, and the cellos double the bassoons playing TT, played as a symmetrical rhythmic ascent from D to F# and back (D – Ab – C – F# – C – Ab – D). This is followed, in mm. 59-60, by an ascending variation that could be seen as TT without C natural (D – G# – F# – G# – D) in the double bass. Because it was common for double basses at this time to have a low C string, this decision to repeat a truncated TT (without C) seems to be a matter of meter rather than of technological restriction.

Brahms’s Ghost

The apparitions of Brahms melody continue, appearing next in the horn in mm. 67-74. This appearance isn’t merely an echo of the first. While the thin, high pitch of the glockenspiel may have eluded even the most attentive ears, the bold though subdued tones of the horn clearly reflect the materializing of the apparition. This brings Brahms’s ghost closer to the soloist through the horn, an important instrument in Brahms’s own concerto.
Six-part canon

While much of the first movement’s reference to the microcosm has been focused on permutations of TT, such as the harp notes in m. 77, the trombones and trumpets, in mm. 79-80, recall P’ [023579], transposed up a perfect fifth. This motif spawns a six-note melody in mm. 83-88, [014679] which could also be partitioned in half as two sets [025]. Ginastera unfolds this three-octave ascension as a six-part canon (in the winds) at the unison – another recurring compositional device throughout the concerto. When all voices have been introduced, resounding all six original pitches as a vertical [014679], the canon’s intervallic shape is repeated, creating a brilliant symmetrical moment lasting four measures (mm. 85-88). In mm. 83-88, below the canon, the bass notes in the harp, cellos, and double basses play a palindrome, followed by [0257], a subset of P, its contraction [0236], and a diminished seventh [0369] made to look like a variant of TT (see Ex. 10).
This canon (and the soloist reiterating the tritone in mm. 89-90) is followed by a fascinating moment combining symmetry and traditional pitch prolongation at a cadence. The bass line, in mm. 91-92, descends from E to E by means of a repetition of [013], separated by a triton (in the first movement, paired tritones seem to function as a references to TT). Above, a minor third transposition of the previous canon is truncated as the cello re-enters playing its lowest double stop (C – G, see Ex. 11).

Ex. 11, Mov. I, mm. 91-93, prolongation of E
Allusion to the Love Motif

Ginastera’s transpositions of the ascending octatonic scale are directly linked to important melodies. Similar to the transpositions of the octatonic melody that outlined B [013], the first notes of the cello in m. 97 outline the Love motif (D – C – Bb [024]) from the opening cello melody (mm. 9-10). This theme is undetectable to most listeners, but it reveals the depth of coherent detail and integrity to which Ginastera binds his music (see Ex. 12).

Ex. 12, Mov. I, mm. 97-99, Octatonic melody outlining Love motif

![Love Motif](image)

Extended technique related to the microcosm and Bartók

Even Ginastera’s use of extended technique is bound to the microcosm. In mm. 97-99, the string glissandi begin on pitches (C# – B – F# – D# [0247]) then (C – A – G – F [0247]) both subsets of P [02479]. This is followed by (D – G# – E – Bb [0268]) which is an exact retrograde of the movements first four notes (TT, see Ex. 13a). This gesture is also transformed later in the movement by the Brahms melody. Considering the significant influence of Bartók, Ginastera's treatment of these glissandi seems to mimic Bartók’s use of glissandi in the *Fourth String Quartet* (see Ex. 13b). A more complete discussion of Bartók’s influence will take place in my analysis of the second movement, which seems to be built on a theme borrowed from Bartók’s *Quartet*. 
Ex. 13, a) Mov. I, mm. 97-99, glissandi outlining [0257] and TT [0268]

Ex. 13, b) Bartók, *Fourth String Quartet*, Mov. II, mm. 136-39
Symmetrical structures continue

The first movement’s variations continue to mirror the microcosm’s emphasis on expanding symmetrical structures. In mm. 105-108, as the second variation heads toward its conclusion, the composer’s intention – to connect both micro and macro-level structures to the symmetry of the microcosm – is evident; in the cello’s descending octatonic melody, the first pitch of each measure corresponds to a symmetrical expansion of the movement’s principal motif (TT). Originally (Bb – E – G# – D [0268]), the major third that separated the tritones is expanded to a perfect fifth (A – D# – Ab – D [0167]).

Chromatic saturation and Brahms’s ghost

A particularly creative use of the chromatic saturation through layered ostinatos occurs in mm. 116-23, where the strings are layered with first violins playing (G# – E – B – G# [037]) a fragment of P, and the second violins playing (G – Db – Bb – G [036]) a fragment of TT. The violas play (C – Ab – Eb – A [0147]) a fragment of TT, and the cellos (A – D – F – A [037]) a fragment of P, thus outlining the inversion of microcosm’s phrase order (P – TT – TT – P). Brahms’s ghost reappears in mm. 119-22, this time imbedded in the intervallic shifts of four horns surrounded by a twelve-tone string texture. This chromatic saturation is the first of two gestures by which Ginastera indicates the conclusion of the Seconde metamorfosi. The second occurs by surrounding the final pitch (A) in mm. 124-33, this time with minor thirds (F# below, C above). The opening Bb moves to the concluding A, and the cello, which began on C in the Prima metamorfosi, returns to C (in m. 131).
Brahms’s ghost in the recitative

The quiet conclusion of the Secondo metamorfosi gives way to a ten-measure cello recitative section marking the middle of the movement. In the recitative section (m. 134), the rhythmic profile of the Brahms melody accompanies three expanding phrases, the first (A – G# – G – F# [0123]) a semi-tone version of the work’s opening pitches (Bb – E – G# – D [0268]), the second is a symmetrical expansion (semitone – tritone – semitone, F – E – Bb – B [0167]). The third phrase is contracted back to a semi-tone set (C# – D – Eb – C [0123]) at which point all twelve pitches have been played, and the cello reiterates Eb before playing TT (C – Gb – Bb – E [0268] transposed up a whole step from the original.

Terza metamorfosi – Atonality, Pentatonicism, and Brahms

At long last in mm.135-38, the Brahms melody, which has haunted the first two metamorfosi, is incarnate in the cello. There is no way to ignore the romantic affection that Ginastera displays in passages like this. The tortured yearning of Brahms’s melody finds resonance in the cello; the symbolic potential of this gesture suggests an autobiographical interpretation: that Ginastera's fragmented motifs, fractured ideals, and fascination with the classical tradition are given vitality by cellist Aurora Natola (I will deepen this discussion in Chapter 4). However, Ginastera’s integration of this theme along with the synthesis of pentatonic and atonal materials (which first appeared separately in the microcosm) is so thoroughly organic, that the Brahms melody is not underscored as a quotation. B, while neither pentatonic nor atonal,
appears as a logical apotheosis of the preceding material. This integration continues in the *Terza metamorfosi* with an emphasis on B [013], which permeates the accompaniment.

**Recurring Love Motif**

In mm. 139-40, the cello recapitulates the languishing three-note descent of the Love Motif (D – C – Bb [024]) roughly marking the Golden section (.618) of the first movement (.618). Accompanying this melody are multiple sets [024] and its semitone contraction [012]. An eleven-note cluster orchestrated as thirds and tritones, appears in the string pizzicatos. The absent pitch – F natural – is played by the cello and followed by a tritone ascent to B natural. The large pizzicato chord collapses into a seven-note chord [012678] orchestrated as fourths, and is followed by arco strings playing major seconds – another way in which Ginastera’s orchestration reflects the expansion and contraction of the microcosm (see Ex. 14).

Ex. 14, Mov. I, mm. 145-47, expanding and contracting intervals
The influence of B on glissandi

The affect of B [013] on the music of the *Terza metamorfosi* is particularly explicit in the shift it causes within the previously discussed [0247] glissandi (in mm. 97-99). In mm. 147-50, when similar glissandi return (over a pedal Eb), the collection is changed to [0347] (see Ex. 15).\(^2\) B [013], from the Brahms quotation, therefore acts as an outside force that affects the intervallic content of the third variation. The tremolo glissandi [0347] are followed by an important tightly controlled aleatoric section in the winds and percussion.

Ex. 15, tremolo glissandi affected by B [013], [0247] becomes [0347]

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\(^2\) There seems to be an error in m. 149: a missing accidental (flat) on the low B (in cellos and clarinets) marking it as a B-flat and maintaining a consistent [0347] throughout this passage.
Aleatoric rhythms as accompaniment

Ginastera had experimented with aleatoric elements in previous works but preferred the use of aleatoric elements as accompaniment to a specifically notated melody as in mm. 151-58. The horns in mm. 155-158 play [024] but are soon wooed into playing [013]. As the aleatoric accompaniment concludes, the cello rises from a low C natural, playing TT, then P, and three apparently “free” notes that finally ascend to a high Eb in m. 160.

Third metamorfosi conclusion

As the Terza metamorfosi winds down, nearly all the strings join on the cello’s Eb and sustain it while Ginastera adds two notes (every two beats) changing the unison into a three-note cluster, then five notes, seven notes, nine notes, then eleven notes. The twelfth pitch – A natural, a tritone from Eb and first interval of TT – appears in m. 163 as a pedal. Throughout this additive process, the strings have ascended by half step until reaching Db in the soprano voice – over the A natural – highlighting the major third, the second interval of TT. In m. 166, the solo cello finds its way to a low Db as well (from Eb) intimating the lover’s surprisingly bright major-third harmonization of A. In this way, Ginastera alludes to the four-note motif at the structural level around which the variations are built; this also positions the cello a semitone from the first cello pitch of the Prima and Quarta metamorfosi – C natural. Upon arriving at these final pitches, the string ensemble slides up to an indeterminate nonharmonic sound, fading into silence.
**Quarta metamorfosi – Collision of Polarities and Synthesis**

The *Quarta metamorfosi* is perhaps the most straightforward of the variations. In m. 167, Ginastera contracts the work’s opening four notes (Bb – E – G# – D [0268]), to the open strings of the cello (C – G – D – A [0257]). These four notes undergo fourteen changes over a pedal C beginning with two transpositions of the open string set (C – G – D - Bb [0247]) and (C – Ab – Eb – Bb [0247]). This is expanded in m. 170 (C – G – Eb – B [0148], and again in m. 171 (C – Ab – Eb – B [0347]). Essentially the next variations – mm. 172-79 [0236], [0247], [0246], [0146], [0156], [0136], [0157], [0136], [0236], [0126], are a gradual shift from the dominant presence of fifths to that of tritones. In light of what appears to be a struggle to synthesize pentatonicism and atonality, this shift could be viewed as the temporary disintegration of pentatonicism.

The tension is heightened by the steady eleven-note ascent of the highest pitch in the cello arpeggios. The pitches move by semitone or whole-tone through ten pitches of a largely chromatic scale from A to B. When divided into groups of four, an important numerical grouping for this work as a whole, the result is three groups (A – Bb – B – C# [0124] outlining a major third), (D – Eb – E – F [0123] outlining a minor third), and (Gb – G – A – B [0135] outlining a perfect fourth).

**Microcosm’s influence on intervals and orchestration**

Accompanying this ascent, the low strings double the cello notes, and the violins begin playing two whole-tone tetrachords in m. 171. Orchestralized as harmonics, these whole-tone tetrachords (A – B – C# – D# [0246] and E – F# – G# – A# [0246]) create a chromatic haze, which is also a vertical symmetrical figure. This is replaced in mm. 175-77 by pointilistic
tremoloing harmonics. The first eight harmonics (m. 175) and appear as two tetrachords, (B – F – F# – G# [0136]) and (D# – D – C – A [0136], each within a tritone. The next eight harmonics result in two different tetrachords (C – D – A – Bb [0135]) and (Ab – Db – G – Eb [0157]) each within a perfect interval reflecting a semitone contraction. The next eight harmonics result in two different tetrachords (C – D – A – Bb [0135]) and (Ab – Db – G – Eb [0157]), each within a perfect interval reflecting a semitone contraction. The next eight harmonics result in two different tetrachords (D – E – D# – F# [0124]) and (A – C# – G – B [0246]), again a semitonal contraction and expansion. What is striking about these chords – and what most reveals the influence of the microcosm – is their orchestration, which reveals a progression from thirds (mm. 171-74), to tritones and thirds (m. 175), to seconds (m. 176), back to thirds (m. 177), then finally major seconds mixed with fourths (.m 178-79, see Ex. 16). The strings eventually coalesce into a unison pentatonic melody, which collides with an atonal background in m. 180.

Ex. 16, intervallic expansion/contraction

(reduction = pitches notated two octaves lower than in score, rhythms simplified)

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83 These could also be counted as grouped in each instrument, resulting in (B – F – F# – C [0167], G# – D – D# – A [0167].
Overlapping with the cello’s ninth variation of TT’, the orchestra collects strength with the bass clarinet and bassoons playing a four-note ascending figure (C – Eb – Gb – Ab [0258]) in m. 175, followed by the clarinets (Bb – Db – F – A [0148]) and flutes (B – D – E – G [0358]) in mm. 176-77. What is striking about these pitches is their shift from tritonal to pentatonic emphasis. As the fourteenth cello variation [0126], perhaps the most dissonant, ascends to an “indeterminate non-harmonic double stop, the highest possible on the instrument,”84 the winds and low strings recapitulate an altered (perhaps completed) version of the microcosm. The ascending three-note sets are stated four times creating a symmetrical twelve-note mirror, an expansion of the microcosm – first (C – D – F# [026]), then (G# – A# – C# [025]), then, (E – G – A [025]), then (B – Eb – F [026], see Ex. 17). Embedded in this twelve-note scale are overlapping statements of TT [028]. The first is (C – F# – A# – E), the second is (C# – G – B – F). The remaining notes (D – Eb – G# – A [0167]) represent a contraction of TT. The nine-note microcosm with which the first movement opens is now complete as a twelve-tone mirror (see Ex. 17). This search for completion and appearance of “complete” twelve-tone mirrors (after the opening measures’ 9-pitch class collection) is a crucial component in the Concerto’s dramatic narrative.

84 See score, 13.
Ex. 17, Mov. I, mm. 178-79, Twelve-tone mirror

Dramatic collision of Pentatonicism and Atonality

As the cello dissolves into the tutti section’s ascending mirror, the movement reaches its apotheosis in mm. 180-88. Here the microcosm’s dramatic tension between atonal and pentatonic music is incarnate in the pentatonic melody which appears to triumph against the atonal accompaniment. Doubled in three octaves, the entire string section is accompanied by the winds in proclamation of an expansive pentatonic melody. In competition with this melody are the brass playing sforzando eight-note chords in mm. 180-88 (see Ex. 18). These chords are orchestrated in three parts, underscoring a progression from pentatonic to tritonal: the trumpets play [025] moving to [024] to the tritonal [026]; the trombones below move from [036] to [024] to [026]; and the horns play a minor third [03] which increases the stringent dissonance of

\[ D\# \rightarrow E \rightarrow G \]

\[ C\# \rightarrow G \rightarrow B \rightarrow F \]

There appear to be a few errors in the score in the third trombone and tuba parts in m. 180, for which I am offering some possible corrections. Both parts have a printed Db resulting in a [036] figure (Db – E – G), but if it is to match the orchestrated trumpets above and the sequence of chords that follows, it should be a D natural (D – E – G [025]). If it is, in fact, a Db, it augments the dissonance between the G in the melody creating a tritonal tension between melody and accompaniment, but loses the continuity that Ginastera seems to have set up.
these chords while also outlining the symmetrical [024]. This is an important structural moment for the entire work as it marks a third of the entire concerto.

The pentatonic melody provides cathartic release to a movement, which while lyrical, maintains a tritonal tension throughout. This pentatonic melody, which appears to triumph, however, reaches for its highest note at m. 183. This reach is that of a tritone (C – F#) and in doing so falls apart, drowned in a twelve-tone aleatoric sound mass, the largest and loudest of the first half of the concerto. As this sound mass fades, the low strings play a verticalization of TT (m. 189). This time however, E is in the bass indicating a tritonal journey from the opening Bb down to E. The cello re-enters, ascending from its lowest C#, through two subsets of P [0247] and [0247] and TT [0268] to E natural. The final arpeggio, while mimicking the symmetry of TT, is actually a subset of P [024] (a pitch collection recurring horizontally and vertically throughout the concerto). The soloist plays P while the accompaniment plays TT. The unifying pitch, E natural, is both the lowest and highest pitch at the movement’s conclusion that fades into silence.

Ex. 18, Mov. I, mm. 180-82, collision of pentatonic and semitonal music
Part III – Ghosts in the Concerto:

The Microcosm’s Effect on Movements II – IV

Analysis of the microcosm’s influence on the first movement is both sufficient illustration of Ginastera’s ability to maintain thematic coherence by means of the developing variation principal, and presents the reader with a fascinating work that integrates atonal and pentatonic materials. The force of the first movement’s microcosm, however, is felt in subsequent movements as well, resulting in a work of coherence, in spite of the work’s genesis as a “reworking of the Cello Sonata with a newly composed first movement.”86 While each movement develops its own dramatic arch, the microcosm clearly sets up a particular expectation and unique set of governing principles uniting all four movements. Each movement reflects the microcosm’s possibilities uniquely and has a distinct melodic, harmonic, rhythmic profile. The following paragraphs will illustrate both how each movement reflects the microcosm’s theoretical constructs, and illustrates how each movement contributes to the concerto’s large-scale dramatic arch.

Second Movement – Scherzo sfuggevole

“‘!Esa brisa reciente en el espacio esbelto!’” - Luis Cernuda

Formally, the second movement, with its introduction (mm. 1-70) and large-scale palindrome (mm. 71-279), is the most straightforward. What becomes particularly fascinating is its use of palindromes within a palindrome. There are three non-retrogradable melodic structures (mm. 87-8, 101-2, 127-8) in the first half of the movement’s “concertante” structure, which

86 Schwartz-Kates, Alberto Ginastera, 87.
extends from m. 71-167. This is followed by an aleatoric section in mm. 167-179 which is itself palindromic in its layering of cyclical, often seven-note figures. When this tri-partite aleatoric section is completed, the entire movement, with exception of the introduction, is played backwards.

Noise in the second movement

The second movement presents the listener with another intriguing example of Ginastera's ability to appropriate “noise” to a dramatic end. After the movement's introduction, the cello plays a lonely pizzicato on the instrument's low D (mm. 71-80). By requiring the soloist to glissando up a minor third, this gesture brings the cello near the edge of pitch by incorporating indeterminate sounds and microtonal pitches between notated pitches; this foreshadows a four-part gesture in mm. 93-102, which requires the soloist to use extended technique (see Ex. 19a-d).

Ex. 19  a) Mov. II, mm. 93-96, gettato (bouncing) bowing

Ex. 19  b) Mov. II, mm. 97-98, glissandi
In the first element (immediately following the first embedded palindrome in mm. 86-7) the cello, in mm. 93-96, is instructed to play a series of repeated notes *gettato* (Italian for “thrown”, the equivalent of the French “jété”). The result is a percussive pitched sound that incorporates more un-pitched noise than the more common *staccato*. The amount of noise is increased by the second element: a double stopped *glissando gettato* which the performer is instructed to then glissando up to the highest indeterminate non-harmonic sounds possible on the instrument. This violent gesture is followed by the third element: a screeching section marked *arco, dietro il pont* (Italian for “bow behind the bridge”), followed by a *glissando* on harmonics. These colorful gestures (and many others) are developed throughout by the soloist and orchestra giving the second movement its elusive quality.

Amidst retrograded melodies, harmonies, and rhythms, the smaller palindromic structures return unchanged. With minimal means, Ginastera creates an energetic movement that feigns the catharsis of traditional melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic progressions (which are not intended to be heard in retrograde). The smaller embedded palindromes re-appear untouched, like fixed
moments existing outside the march of time. This movement first appears in the *Cello Sonata* as large-scale non-retrogradable movement without an introduction; the introduction was added later, presumably to balance out the large-scale narrative of the large concerto. The hushed but tense second movement introduction marks the first Golden section of the entire *Concerto* (.382), which will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

*Cello Sonata* Sketches

Unfortunately, there are no compositional sketches available for the *Second Cello Concerto*, but there are a few sketches available for the *Cello Sonata*.87 These sketches provide scholars with insight into Ginastera compositional process, and the finished concerto illuminates how a finished chamber work was then orchestrated. Ginastera typically wrote a shortscore version of his works, working out theoretical issues in the process, before orchestrating them. My analysis will focus on two revealing measures taken from the *Cello Sonata* sketches88 and will note the important changes which took place, and the ultimate synthesis found in the fully orchestrated concert (see Ex. 20a-b).

87 Located at the Paul Sacher Stiftung (PSS), Basel, Switzerland.

88 These measures are taken from sketches at Paul Sacher Stiftung (microfilm 120-0355)
Ex. 20, a) *Cello Sonata*, Mov. III, mm. 74-77

Analysis of the sketches reveals several important concerns for Ginastera. First, the sketches reveal his treatment and manipulation of particular pitch collections, in this case [013]. The original sketches reveal a disjunct line with a major sixth descent in the cello (G – B) in mm.
74-75, followed by a fifth ascent between Bb and F in mm. 75-76, and a leap down of a major tenth in the cello (E – C) in mm. 76-77 (see Ex. 20a). Instead of an ascending line, Ginastera opts for a smoother descending line, (G – A) in mm. 74-75, followed by a fourth descent between G# and D# in mm. 75-76, and a step down in the cello (D – C) in mm. 76-77, in preparation for the longer ascent in mm. 77-80.

Second, while these sketches show that Ginastera’s original conception of the movement was one with an emphasis on symmetry, it also shows compositional choices that heightened the harmonic tension at the expense of strict symmetry – changes which resulted in a more nuanced musical expression (see Ex. 20a-b). This was accomplished by replacing the accompanimental [024] and [012] percussive accents, to an arpeggiated progression of shifting pitch collections made up of a quartal chord [027], followed by two semitone iterations [012], [012], and a [013] figure in counterpoint with the cello melody. Symmetry is still present however because the [012] arpeggios maintain a mirror-like symmetry in spite of their transpositional difference (C – B – C#, E – D – D#, intervalically appearing as 1 – 2 – 3 – 2 – 1).

Third, Ginastera underscores the shifting harmonies by arpeggiating the chords. The result is a much brighter orchestration and intensifies the passage’s rhythmic profile and momentum. Both steady ascents and intervallic expansions, which characterize mm. 77-84, along with the percussive piano accompaniment are musically heightened by Ginastera’s arpeggiated orchestration of mm. 75-76. In the transition from chamber music to orchestra, Ginastera hints at his original orchestration by underscoring the wind arpeggios with chordal
string accents. Even a brief analysis of two measures supports and contextualizes Ginastera’s words on the compositional process.

“It is the birth of the work which is often difficult and arduous for it is not easy to cement what we have imagined abstractly. Once I have completed this task, the job of orchestration (in the case of symphonic works) is like a game, since in writing the music, the orchestration has been forming as well. This work is purely technical, almost mechanical, and is like a blessing to be finally united to a mechanical process after having spent so much time focused on a speculative aspect.”

Bartók’s Ghost

As Brahms’s ghost hovers over the first movement and ultimately materializes in the lyrical cello serenade of the third variation, another specter – Bartók – haunts the second movement scherzo. While it is no secret that Ginastera greatly admired the Hungarian master, the second movement seems to move beyond acknowledged influence, and become homage. Evidence of Bartók’s continued influence on Ginastera well into his final years, appears in the form of an 1981, oft-quoted publication in which Ginastera describes his first encounter with Bartók’s music. Furthermore, analysis of the concerto gives reason to believe that Ginastera not only employs many similar compositional devices but also based his principal motivic ideas (see Ex. 21a-c) on the scherzo of Bartók’s Fourth String Quartet. Both scherzos are in 6/8, and both works share similar orchestral and theoretical devices of which perhaps the most obvious is their emphasis on symmetrical structures (in particular in their similar treatment of four-note

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89 Suarez Urtubey, Alberto Ginastera, 11.

90 Ginastera, “Homage to Béla Bartók.”

91 While the idea of a palindromic movement can be traced back to Berg’s Lyric Suite (1925-26), which seems to have also influenced Bartók, who wrote his Fourth String Quartet in 1928 (both of which Ginastera was certainly aware). However, there seems to be a much stronger Bartókian influence in the Concerto’s motivic material.
To further clarify this connection, I have created a chart and illustrations for comparing these shared ideas (see Ex. 21a-c).

**Fig. 1, Fourth String Quartet and Concerto Comparison Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bartók – Mov. II, Scherzo</th>
<th>Ginastera – Mov. II, Scherzo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mov. II, mm. 136-145, glissandos highlight important pitch collections</td>
<td>Mov. I, mm. 97-99, glissandos highlight important pitch collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mov. II, marked <em>Prestissimo, con sordino</em> and maintains a subdued tension throughout</td>
<td>Mov. II, marked <em>Presto, come un soffio</em>; to be “performed in the strictest pianissimo”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mov. II, mm. 62-67, four-note cell (C# – D# – D – E) see Ex. 11</td>
<td>Mov. II, mm. 6-9, four-note cell (C – D – Db – Eb) can be traced to the microcosm (as a contracted version of T) but also appears in the string quartet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mov. II, mm. 188-192, the accompaniment (2 vlns, cello) is an exact palindrome</td>
<td>Mov. II, Introduction aside, the entire movement is a large-scale palindrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The accompaniment in the first violin and cello is that of two tritones [0369]</td>
<td>Mov. I-II, TT [0268] is also composed of two tritonal figures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Ex. 21, a) Bartók *String Quartet No. 4*, Mov. II, mm. 62-5

Ex. 21, b) *Concerto*, Mov. II, mm. 6-9

Ex. 21, c) *Concerto*, Mov. II, mm. 123-126, (intervallic expansion)

These similarities seem to indicate Ginastera’s choice to explore symmetrical structures throughout his concerto may have been specifically inspired by Bartók’s *Fourth String Quartet*. While *Allegro Barbaro* stirred Ginastera’s imagination, it appears that he studied the *Quartet* as he explored the expressive potential of symmetrical figures for his *Concerto*. This is another way in which Ginastera wove references to the classical canon into the fabric of his own music; furthermore, it is an example of how Ginastera’s late works continued to find inspiration in Europe, even as they reveal renewed interest in the folk influences of the Americas. Ginastera’s
“Polychromatic [game] of tones and timbres” is as much a “musical kaleidoscope”\textsuperscript{93} of influences as it is of orchestral color.

\textbf{Third Movement – Nottilucente}

\begin{quote}
“La unit s’étoile et la paille se dore
Il sone a cell qu’il adore.” - Apollinaire
\end{quote}

In some works, such as \textit{Cantata para la America Magica} and \textit{Popul Vuh}, Ginastera’s musical landscapes are mythological places belonging to idealized Pre-Columbian places. In the \textit{Cello Concerto No. 2} however, the musical landscape in the third movement is extended to describe a specific location: Puerto Rico. Here, an A natural pedal functions as the starting point for cellist Aurora’s romantic serenade, and an Eb pedal, a tritone away, concludes the movement’s nocturnal soundscape.

This movement, a reworking of the second movement of the \textit{Cello Sonata}, abounds in symmetrical structures, which continue to find their genesis in the microcosm, albeit perhaps not as obviously as in the second movement. In a work which has already shown itself laden with symbolism, it is not a stretch to speculate the significance of this movement’s important pitch center – A. The movement opens with the double basses playing a high A, with winds and strings decorating this pitch with contracted version of TT [0123] in contrary motion. The result is a nocturnal haze perhaps alluding to the evening song of crickets interspersed with the sounds of the \textit{coqui} (tree frog). The fourteen-measure introduction concludes with a twelve-note

\textsuperscript{93} Composer’s note in score to \textit{Cello Concerto No. 2}. 

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descending symmetrical mirror (split into two six-note collections [013469]) in canon with itself played by the winds and harp from A to C (see Ex. 22).

Ex. 22, Mov. III, mm. 10-14, Twelve-tone mirror

Serenata: Nocturnal Sensuality in Puerto Rico

Sprinkled throughout the introduction and first measures of the cello serenade, is the song of the *coqui* – the Puerto Rican tree frog, “that minute and musical nocturnal creature from Puerto Rico”⁹⁴ – played by the xylophone and concert master in mm. 4-9 (see Ex. 23). Unlike Messiaen, whose musical landscapes are full of stylized birdsongs, which he specified by name, Ginastera’s landscapes don’t typically explore the songs of a specific creature. The presence of the *coqui* locates this movement’s inspiration in a particular place and time – Puerto Rico at night. Ginastera, having visited the island in 1978 for the acclaimed premiere of his orchestral version of *Glosses sobre temes de Pau Casals* at the Casals Festival, was familiar with this sound. This was a fruitful time for the composer: his three year creative silence had faded into the past, his music was being celebrated around the world, and the camaraderie and artistic fruitfulness of his second marriage had brought him personal peace. As such, this movement seems to be a musical tribute to specific memories and events. The nocturnal sensuality evoked, echoes that of Messiaen’s *Jardin du Sommeil d’amour* - the sixth movement of *Turangalîla* - in which the lovers are intoxicated in each other’s embrace, beneath the song of the birds.

⁹⁴ Composer’s note in score to *Cello Concerto No. 2*. 

77
The A natural pedal tone of the introduction gives way to a six-note pedal chord ([013469] a vertical repetition of previous descending melody) in mm. 15-18 and 21-23, voiced as an altered, non-functional C dominant 13th over which the cello enters with A natural. The cello decorates A natural by way of a series of expanding three-note sets in mm. 16-17, first [014], then [015], then [016]. This final set together with the following four notes (D – B – G# – F#) recalls the first half of the descending mirror [013469]; this order (A – Eb – Eb – A) again reflects the symmetrical obsession of the microcosm (TT – P – P’ – TT’) and affirms a tritonal conflict between A and Eb.

Further mirrored symmetries surface when considering the last three pitches (B – G# – F#) of the previous descending line (m. 17) along with the next three (F# – G# – B, m. 18) in the ascending tuplet around A natural – also a retrograde inversion mirror. Other retrograde inversion mirrors appear in the soloist’s embellishments in mm. 23-24; the first is an expansion of the tritone (A – Ab – F – E – Eb [01256] / Bb – A – Ab – F – E [01256]), the second, an expansion of the pentatonic scale (F# – B – C# – A [0247]), again underscoring the works overall tension between atonal and pentatonic materials. There does not appear to be a strict
procedure controlling when and where these mirrors occur, but this movement is filled with these sorts of musical mirrors in both melodic and accompanimental roles.

In mm. 26-27 and 29-30, the opening string embellishments [0123] around A, are reorganized and become the principal melody, reminiscent of the first movement’s Brahms melody [013] and languishing Love Motif [024]. This melody (E – F – D – Eb [0123]) is palindromic in rhythm and intervallic content, semitone – minor third – semitone, and in resolving to a C natural, outline the major third descent (E – D – C) of the Love Motif first heard in mm. 9-10 of the first movement; furthermore, the accelerating descending figures that accompany this recall the first movement (see Ex. 24).

Ex. 24, Mov. III, mm. 26-28

The song of tree frogs affects the entire string ensemble in mm. 40-44, in its sliding trill accompaniment to a brief trio section between the oboe, clarinet, and horn. Reminiscent of the trio notturnale at the center of the scherzo of Cello Concerto No. 1, which Aurora performed to great acclaim at the Festival Casals, this moment recapitulates the movement’s opening four pitches transposed down a tritone (Eb – C – A – F#). After some decorations, the clarinet plays it again transposed up a semitone (D – B – Ab – F). Above, the oboe alternates between subsets
[016], [012], [026], concluding with [014] on Eb. Both clarinet lines function atonally but the horn line below initially hints at pentatonicism in m. 42 (G – A – C [025]) and the Love Motif (whole steps, E – F# – G# [024]) but ultimately succumbs to the semitonal set [012]. The cello returns in mm. 47-50, embellishing D natural, followed by a moment that, orchestrationally and harmonically, recalls the Love Motif in Mov. I (mm. 9-10), albeit now playing a lyrical melody which could be seen as a mirror inversion of the Brahms cello theme of the first movement.

Three pitches (D – D# – F# [014]), leading up to the inverted Brahms theme in m. 51, are of particular interest for they are the final pitches of Ginastera’s setting of the word, “Amor” in his String Quartet No. 3 (1978). This quartet, like Schoenberg’s String Quartet No. 2 (1908), includes a part for soprano. The third movement’s sensuous setting of an erotic Federico Garcia Lorca poem, underscores the erotic nature of the concerto’s third movement. In the Cello Sonata, Ginastera had quoted both ascending exclamations (Eb – Gb – A – Bb [0147]) and (B – C# – D – F [0236]) in m. 13 of the second movement, Adagio appassionato (see Ex. 25).95

Ex. 25, Cello Sonata, Mov. II, mm. 13-14

Ex. 25, Cello Sonata, Mov. II, mm. 13-14

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95 Malena Kuss, “Ginastera’s Cello Sonata,” Tempo, New Series, no. 132 (Mar., 1980), 41-42. Kuss suggests that these pitches are referring to Ginastera’s first opera, Don Rodrigo, where they are associated with various manifestations of love.
In the concerto however, only three notes remain in m. 50 (see Ex. 26). These romantic outbursts, however, are not missing from the concerto; they have been moved, truncated, and reworked into a different ascending figure (see Ex. 27), appearing in the strings in mm. 38-39, (C# - E – G – Ab [0147]), (C – D – F – A [0358]), and (B – A# – D# – F# [0158]) leading to a brief dramatic trio (hn/ob/cl), reminiscent of the trio notturnale (hn/hp/vlc), at the center of his first Cello Concerto.

Ex. 26, Cello Concerto No. 2, Mov. III, mm. 50-51

Ex. 27, Cello Concerto No. 2, Mov. III, mm. 38-39, reworked “Amor” [0147]

As the inverted Brahms figure returns in mm. 51-52, the accelerating, descending accompaniment in the clarinet recalls mm. 9-10 of the first movement; this moment also marks the beginning of the Golden section (.618) of the entire concerto. Moments later, the orchestra
intones the Love Motif transposed up a half step (mm. 57-58), concluding the Golden section and leading to the third movement’s quiet end (see Fig. 2, concerto arc diagram).

Fig. 2, *Concerto* arc diagram

As the movement comes to a close, the tree frog’s major seventh leap, originally E – F, becomes the pedal tone, transposed to down a semitone Eb – D, over which the cello sings its final serenade.\(^{96}\) As the cello reaches its final pitch, C natural, Ginastera slowly subtracts pitches from the closing nine-note string chord, creating a subtractive, ascending “guitar chord” gesture. Much like the ending of the first *Cello Concerto*, the cello clings to its high C and slowly fades into the cadenza.

\(^{96}\) Whereas Messiaen’s birds in *Turangalîla Symphonie* remain as a separate musical and narrative layer, Ginastera employs the frogs’ seventh leap interval in the ensemble, in this case the low strings.
Cadenza

The cadenza while giving the appearance of freedom and improvisation (as one would expect from Ginastera) is no less organized. The centrality of symmetrical structures continues. Recalling the third movement’s lyrical decoration of A – representing Aurora and/or Alberto – it is not difficult to imagine the significance of the cadenza’s equally decorated opening pitch, G for Ginastera. The first descent is a ten-pitch retrograde inversion mirror (Eb – C – A – F# – E [01369], then C# – B – G# – F – D [01369]).

The seventh phrase in the cadenza is taken directly from the seventh phrase in the Cello Sonata’s second movement, and consists of three symmetrical structures. The first two are five-note and six-note palindromic pyramids, and the third can be split into three parts – another retrograde inversion mirror (C# – E – F – A# – B / D – D# – G# – A – C), two fragments of TT [016] and [026], followed by a four-note Bartókian variant of TT [0167].

Formally, the first half of the cadenza centers shifts its pitch centricity from G, D, G, C#, C, back to G. The second half of the cadenza begins with a guitar-like strumming of the cello with pizzicato glissandi, and is built around the cello’s open strings (A – D – G – C). After several appearances of a truncated P (Bb – Db – Eb – Gb, also a palindrome), the cello foreshadows the fourth movement’s Karnavalito,97 playing col legno – a fitting effect anticipating a movement expressing unbridled, primeval joy.

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97 Karnavalito is typically spelled with a “C” (Carnavalito), but I will use the spelling as appears in the score (in Italian).
Fourth Movement – Finale rustico

“The folk elements which resurfaced in Ginastera’s later years are not as specifically Argentine, as they are Latin American. Speaking at the Madrid premiere of the Cello Concerto No. 2, the sixty-seven year-old composer, living in Switzerland, said, “I feel not only Argentine, but Hispano-American in the total sense of the word.”\(^98\) Much of his late music, in particular, attests to the truth of this statement. By the 1960’s, the presence of specifically gaucho folk music had been nearly replaced by a greater interest in the indigenous myths and cultures of the Americas from the Mayan culture in Popul Vuh (1975), to the Andean Aymará in Piano Sonata No. 2 (1981) and Puneña No. 2 (1976). The latter, written for Rostropovich, in celebration of Paul Sacher’s seventieth birthday, has two movements: Harawi (referring to the Andean love song) and Wayno\(^99\) Karnaavalito (referring to two Andean Dances). It is the vigorous rhythmic quality of the second movement dance that he would revisit in the final movement of the Second Cello Concerto.

The explosively grand Finale rustico that concludes this thirty-three minute concerto is driven by the exuberant energy of the Karnaavalito rhythm. Possibly the least overtly concerned with symmetry, this movement’s themes however, find their roots in the opening. For example, appearing in mm. 22-29, the long notes of the principal melody (Bb – Db – Eb – Gb [0358]), outline a symmetrical fragment of the pentatonic scale (see Ex. 28). Embedded in each ascending phrase of the first principal theme, is also a tritone: first between E – Bb, then G – Db. Perhaps, this is coincidental as the first three pitches of the melody (C – E – G) are repeated as a sort of


\(^{99}\) Similar to the spelling of Karnaavalito with a “K”, Ginastera spells Huayno as Wayno, and this is the spelling used in Alberto Ginastera: A Research and Information Guide.
pedal tone, however Ginastera’s focus on symmetrical, pentatonic, and atonal elements in this melody, is reinforced by the final phrase in m. 29, which highlights what could be seen as reference to P’ (Bb – Db – Eb – Gb [0358]) followed by TT’ (Ab – B – D – F [0369]). The tension of pentatonic and atonal elements, throughout the concerto, finds synthesis in their continual use of symmetry to balance and stabilize their presence.

Ex. 28, Mov. IV, mm. 22-29, Theme I

Symmetrical structures appear throughout the orchestration of the final movement from the accompanimental bassoon riffs in mm. 47-50, and the repetitious arpeggios of in the piano and harp at mm. 62-68. This continues with the clarinets in mm. 98-101, and flutes in mm. 112-116, and then in the guitar-like arpeggiating of the low strings in mm. 148-55. Throughout this movement, symmetrical ostinato function as a counterpart to the percussion’s asymmetrical Karnavalito rhythms (see Ex. 29).
Ex. 29, Mov. IV, mm. 148-59, Theme II (in cello)
These layered rhythms are the accompaniment to the second principal theme (see Ex. 27), which begins in m. 148 and extends to m. 186. This second theme, reminiscent of his setting of the Canto para la Partida de los Guerreros (Song for the Warriors’ Departure) in Cantata para America magica, is built around a prolongation of a series of fourths (E – A – E – B – F# – E – B), which, in close position are also a palindrome (E – F# – A – B [0257]). These embellishments feature a couple of symmetrical moments as well, particularly in mm. 154-55 (E – D – C# – B), and the semitone grace notes around B (C – B – A#). These, however, seem secondary in a melody that is more concerned with modality than symmetry. In this movement, this shifting modal quality represents an expansion of pentatonicism, with the melody dwelling on the pentatonic scale and embellishments implying Phrygian (mm. 154) or Aeolian modes (mm. 163). Shortly before the end, in m. 209, the cellos and double basses iterated a symmetrical descending scale (F# – E – Eb – Db [0235]) toward C.

Unlike the previous movements that are based on the Cello Sonata (Mov. 2-3), in which Ginastera uses the piano sparingly, the Finale rustico retains most of the original piano accompaniment from the Sonata resulting in a movement that sounds like a double concerto. The chamber-like quality of this duet within the orchestral fabric crowns the concerto’s celebration of conjugal love and leads to its rousing conclusion.

The work’s final chord (C – Db – F# – G – Ab [01267]) is orchestrated in such a way as to suggest C. Missing a third, it is neither major nor minor; C is decorated with Db, an upper semitone, and G is surrounded by half step neighbor tones (F#, Ab). This concluding chord, however violent, sounds resolved – a fitting conclusion to a work whose tension was created by a tapestry of pentatonic and atonal elements throughout. This ending – an open fifth decorated by tritones and a lowered sixth scale degree – suggests a Ginasterian sense of an ending in which
the clarity and strength of a perfect interval borrowed, from the pentatonic scale, is sharpened by the semi-tonal additions.

Ex. 28, Mov. IV, m. 211, final chord

![Musical notation](image)

Within this work, the union or integrated coexistence of musical opposites takes place within melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and timbral polarities; there does not seem to be a triumph of a particular system or polarity over another. Ginastera’s preoccupation with developing a synthesis of competing sonic languages results in a sustained tension throughout the *Cello Concerto No. 2*. Ginastera embraces this tension and appropriates each element for expressive purposes in a dramatic musical narrative further enriched with quotation, allusion, and extra-musical symbolism. I will summarize my conclusions and discuss the work’s possible interpretations in Chapter Four.
Chapter Four: “Tiemble y estalle la fiesta.” Order and chaos in Ginastera’s final concerto: exploring the various interpretive possibilities and significance of the Cello Concerto No. 2.

“I believe that the creative act itself is in the beginning, an act of faith, of affirmation, thus it has, for the artist, the vital and unquestionable importance of a metaphysical truth...It is a testimony or affirmation which he expresses sometimes in simplicity and humility, other times with power and audacity, but always with the moving language of one who seeks the balance between the real, visible world and the invisible, imaginary world; a harmony between chaos and order, a proportion between the human dimension and the divine.”

– Alberto Ginastera

This statement essentially contains Ginastera’s public artistic confession. These philosophical polarities, which he seems to have held throughout his life, reflect a deep humanism informed by cultural Roman Catholicism. The composer’s work and inner musical tensions are to be seen as an “act of faith, or affirmation” and as such are neither purely human, nor divine, yet carry the “vital and unquestionable importance of a metaphysical truth.”

Order v. Chaos

The contrast of the “real, visible world” with the “imaginary world” parallels Ginastera’s view of chaos as the domain of humanity, and order as that of God. These dualisms are dramatized, particularly in his later music, which pits dissonant chromatic clusters and chaotic aleatoric moments against fully notated pentatonic music. Ginastera was distressed, however, by the possibility that the formal structure of his work might be distorted by indeterminacy, feeling

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100 Suarez Uturbey, Alberto Ginastera, 9.
that if a conductor could get it wrong, it must be the composer’s fault. “The problem lies with...the conductor being left with the decision as to when to cue in and out the various sections of the orchestra playing the totally written down portions...the conductor failed to comprehend his task and the study lost all its meaning...” This prompted revisions and a gradual drift away from his own aleatoric experiments in the late 1960’s. Ginastera seems to have corrected this in Cello Concerto No. 2; while it has aleatoric sections, these are tightly controlled in duration and location, often appearing as accompaniment to a clearly notated melody (as in mm. 151-58 of the first movement’s Terza metamorfosi). The collision of avant-garde and traditional styles doesn’t necessarily result in the triumph of one over another, but in their co-existence and subordination to dramatic narratives.

Always exploring new sounds, Ginastera, however, was cautious with his approach to avant-garde techniques, always requiring that his sound masses and extended instrumental techniques have musical significance by placing them within the larger framework of classical dramatic dialogue.

“I don’t like to speak of the avant-garde – I speak of music, good music of young musicians...I have...very particular ideas on composition, on teaching and on the function of the [Di Tella Institute]. I believe that, at this moment, young composers are preoccupied too much with technique and experimentalism. Obviously an artist must have technique; he must be able to transcend technique.”

Ginastera’s use of avant-garde and post-tonal pitch techniques within traditional forms imbues what he considered “noise” (extended techniques and indeterminacy) with musical

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101 Pope, “The Composer-Publisher Relationship,” 100.

102 Pope, 92.

significance and meaning, and avoiding its use in the service of what Stravinsky called, the “disorder and...violent appetites with the purpose of causing sensation at any cost.”

Throughout the concerto, both soloist and ensemble often resolve their most dissonant music by ascending to an indeterminate non-harmonic sound. Ginastera’s gesture from notated pitches to noise seems to illustrate, dramatically, a loss of control on the part of the musicians. However, this gesture’s recurring intentional ascent into nothing-ness, also takes a hallmark of extended technique – noise – and imbues it with musical meaning in the context of a dramatic narrative.

In 1979, as Ginastera prepared to work on the Cello Concerto No. 2, he wrote flutist Paula Robinson saying, “I am annoyed by the pointillism used through the registers of the flute [in contemporary music]. I prefer a constructed and solid music containing what I call the transcendental message. All the rest has no sense for me and the improvisation, the fortuitous [the casual or unplanned], the automatism and the other "isms" do not interest me at all.” In the collision of organized sound with aleatoricism (or improvisation), order trumps chaos, but Ginastera’s solution is found through synthesis.

Harmonic Polarities

In the Cello Concerto No. 2, pentatonicism and semitonality are pitted against each other, but as the final chord depicts, the aural conflict is resolved by a compilation (or synthesis) of contrasting languages. Regarding pure folk music, Ginastera was critical, saying the “simplicity of its harmonization, the elementary innocence of its elaboration, the lack of strong structural

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104 Suárez Urtubey, Alberto Ginastera, 10. Ginastera quotes Stravinsky.
105 Ginastera to flautist Paula Robinson, March 13, 1979 (PSS).
development, were not suited to the future I dreamed of as a composer.”

Ginastera sharpened South American folk music with twelve-tone chromaticism, and, in the *Concerto*, these competing elements are stabilized by their submission to the microcosm’s “balanced” symmetry.

The overwhelming preoccupation with symmetrical structures in the first three movements and cadenza is balanced by the repetitious asymmetrical rhythm of the *Finale rustico*. The intellectual clarity and logical outworking of the microcosm on the first movements seems nearly abandoned in the final movement in favor of a primitive feverish dance. This celebratory conclusion to the cello concerto does not mock the intellectual pretensions of its opening measures rather it seems to be a triumphal response: a primal, boisterous joy in response to the intellectual gymnastics and elegant lyricism of the first three movements.

A hermeneutic reading of this work

The synthesis of competing musical languages in the *Cello Concerto No. 2* can be interpreted as a personal and professional autobiographical narrative; Ginastera’s personal life was broken even as his career entered the international stage – a progression mirrored in his own musical language which changed from Latin American folk-influenced pentatonicism to the European avant-garde and twelve-tone serialism which was in vogue. His mid-life, three-year creative silence threatened to destroy his career; renewed companionship with Aurora undoubtedly provided him with a second chance, and with this came a musical renaissance. This re-birth came not in the preference or rejection of a particular melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, or timbral techniques, but a renewed celebration of their unique expressive capacities. As Ginastera

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entered the final decade of his life, his artistic aesthetic stood firm against the supremacy (and safety) of a single system and embraced the tension of opposites. The concerto’s final chord – an open fifth decorated by tritones and a lowered sixth scale degree – strengthens this interpretation.

Furthermore, the “incomplete” opening microcosm and appearance of subsequent “complete” twelve-tone mirrors suggest a narrative of yearning. The microcosm (mm. 1-6) doesn’t appear to be a fragment, but as the work progresses, Ginastera’s process of progressive chromatic saturation (often as a precursor to the conclude of a phrase or section) is extended to the microcosm. The microcosm’s absent pitches (F# – D# – C# [025]), seem to imply pentatonicism; for Ginastera, whose later works seem to return (in some ways) to the aesthetics of his Subjective Nationalist Period (1948-58), this inclusion of pentatonicism within a twelve-tone context, again suggests an autobiographical narrative.

Symbolism

The rich symbolic tapestry – of quotation and allusion – throughout this work also suggests a highly personal narrative: a sophisticated combination of self-quotation (Don Rodrigo), direct quotation (Brahms), and allusion to a musical model (Bartók), to a specific geographic location (Puerto Rico), to indigenous rhythms (malambo, karnavalito), and to his muse (Aurora). Furthermore, each movement’s poetic epithets “alluding to the “sonorous, expressive and formal climate”¹⁰⁷ (with which I engaged peripherally) reference a life-long love

¹⁰⁷ Composer’s note in score to Cello Concerto No. 2 published by Boosey & Hawkes.
of literature and learning. This tapestry of multi-layered symbolism in word and music recalls important influences spanning his entire life and reflects his ongoing passion for classical music, education, and the Americas. *Cello Concerto No. 2* may be interpreted as a celebration of restored communion – a festival to freedom, love, and human creativity.

Artistic ambassador of a new humanism

How did Ginastera view his own participation in Western classical art? “I tell my pupils that I am talking about a new humanism; not an art dedicated to an elite, but modern and advanced, yet at the same time for a larger public.” Quotes like these raise questions regarding his musical aesthetic, his politics as musical ambassador for Argentina, and his position as spokesperson for the arts throughout the Americas. In light of the controlled chaos of some of his music, further exploration of his reflections on order and chaos, music and noise, form, freedom, and improvisation may be important. Through its unique synthesis of musical polarities, integral organization, and controlled aleatoricism, *Cello Concerto No. 2* seems to fulfills his criteria for a modern and advanced music, which he believed would also communicate powerfully to a larger public.

In a century of exponential scientific progress and massive ideological cultural shifts, Ginastera believed that the classical arts were relevant in that they have the potential to reflect the contemporary conflict and search for meaning – that, for the artist, creative expression had the vital and unquestionable importance of a metaphysical truth. Whether it was bitonal, serial,

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108 The poetic epithets for each movement borrow from August Martin and Apollinaire (France), Luis Cernuda (Spain), and Pablo Neruda (Chile).

avant-garde, or a synthesis of twentieth century techniques, Ginastera studied and deftly applied the latest techniques to his own style, bringing them to the service of musical expression. Consequently, Ginastera’s music bears the imprint of the changing times yet maintains a uniquely personal voice.
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Volume II

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

by

Joshua Eliecer Rodriguez

2015
**Instrumentation**

Flute 1-2  
Oboe 1-2  
Clarinet in Bb 1-2  
Alto Sax  
Tenor Sax  
Bassoon 1-2  

Horn in F 1-2  
Trumpet in Bb 1-3  
Trombone 1-2  
Tuba  

Timpani  

Percussion 1  
  Glockenspiel  
  Hi/low Congas  

Percussion 2  
  Tam Tam  
  Tambourine  
  Lg. Crash Cymbals  

Percussion 3  
  Vibraphone (w/bow)  
  Bongos  
  Sus. Cymbals (w/brushes)  
  Lg. Djembe  

Percussion 4  
  Crotales (two octaves)  
  Marimba (4 1/3 octaves)  
  Tenor Drum  
  Maracas or Lg. Wooden Shaker  
  Bass Drum  

Harp  

Solo Piano  

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello  
Double Bass
Rodriguez' Piano Concerto - Arc diagram
(interrupted palindrome)

Psalm 8
Ives's "guiding star"
overlap

Psalm 8
"Incarnation"
overlap

© Analysis by Joshua Rodriguez
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

Tempo I - Cascading  \( \frac{\text{q}}{\text{c.}} = 120 \)

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe 1

Oboe 2

Clarinet in Bb 1

Clarinet in Bb 2

Alto Sax.

Tenor Sax.

Bassoon 1-2

Horn in F 1

Horn in F 2

Trumpet in Bb 1-2

Trumpet in Bb 3

Trombone 1-2

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Percussion 3

Percussion 4

Solo Piano

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

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Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

1. Tutti

2. Flute

3. Violin

4. Cello

5. Bassoon

6. Horn

7. Trumpet

8. Trombone

9. Timpani

10. Piano

11. Harp

12. Percussion

13. Strings

14. Woodwinds

15. Brass

16. Horns

17. Timpani

18. Strings

19. Woodwinds

20. Brass
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

Tempo IV - Slowly \( \frac{\text{C. 60}}{\text{Tempo IV - Slowly} \quad \text{C. 60}} \)

Tempo IV - Slowly \( \frac{\text{C. 60}}{\text{Tempo IV - Slowly} \quad \text{C. 60}} \)
Tempo VI - Adagio \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{c. 60}} \)

A. Sx.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Pno.

Wood Chimes

Lg. Tam-Tam

Solo

Mysterious

Vibes - Bow

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra


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Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

Tempo IV - Slowly \( \frac{q}{c} \approx 60 \)

Piano

Violin

Viola

Cello

D.B.

Timpani

Horn

Trumpet

Tuba

Flute

Clarinet

Oboe

Bassoon

156
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Tempo VII - Meditative \( \dot{=} c. 98 \)
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

Tempo II - Allegro Urbano $= \frac{\text{c. 102}}{f}$

Tempo II - Allegro Urbano $= \frac{\text{c. 102}}{f}$
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra

Picc.

Fl.

Oboe 1

Oboe 2

E-flat Clarinet 1

E-flat Clarinet 2

Bassoon

Tuba

Timpani

J. Strauss
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
Concerto for Piano and Orchestra