LA SUITE CUBANA: CREATIVE INTERSECTIONS WITH CUBAN MUSICAL FORMS

ROLAND HUNTER

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ABSTRACT

The objective for this thesis is to compose a three-part suite and to provide an in-depth analysis of the musical content. The music is written based on the synthesis of traditional Cuban forms and stylistic features with Modernist and other musical ideas from the Western Art Music tradition. The traditional Cuban forms used as the basis for this work are the contradanza and danzón, with the third part of the suite, entitled "Fantasía," heavily informed by the aesthetics of the Afro-Cuban *batá* drum repertoire mixed with these same, mostly Modernist, compositional methods. The compositional mosaic conceived from these disparate influences is outlined in the written analysis.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my first music teacher, guitarist and composer Ben Heywood.

Ben exposed me as an impressionable adolescent to the beauty of the life led in pursuit of musical growth and integrity in his role as a performer, composer and teacher. He opened doors for me to previously unknown worlds of music. For this I will always be grateful to him.

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My wife Barbara Ward provided a valued "second ear" during the writing of the music herein and I am deeply indebted to her for her unwavering support for this undertaking. I also want to thank my parents, Perry and Joan Hunter and my brother, Dr. Christopher Hunter, who are always supportive and encouraging of my musical interests.

I am grateful to master percussionist Reimundo Sosa for many years of instruction in the fine art of *batá* drumming. To the illustrator and Spanish instructor par excellence, Cristina Juarrero de Varona, I also wish to express my gratitude. I would like to acknowledge Tere Tilban-Rios as well, for all of her practical assistance in helping to bring this project to fruition.

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INTRODUCTION

My aim for this thesis is to write a suite of music based on the Cuban forms of the contradanza and danzón, as well as a work inspired by the Afro-Cuban *batá* repertoire. These idioms provide compositional templates from which to branch out and write creative music. My aim is to honor these traditional genres, which I deeply respect, while trying to avoid resorting to clichéd repetition or mere copying of the superficial surface details and well-used language of these established forms. For the composition of these pieces I draw on many years of serious study of the music of the batá drums and other aspects of Cuban music, paired with much research and study of Western Art music. The question of musical authenticity could naturally be raised surrounding my composition of these pieces, which draw on many musical traits from Cuban music. I would cite ethnomusicologist Margaret Kartomi's view that all musical genres are constantly evolving and in a constant process of change and interaction with external influences. Her belief is that a pure, authentic music does not actually exist. My treatment of Cuban musical elements, some borrowed from sacred music, was done with the utmost respect for Afro-Cuban culture and with the goal of a creative, artistic result.

The Cuban contradanza has been played in Cuba since the end of the eighteenth-century.² My piece, "Contradanza," draws inspiration from the form and style of the European dance suites, the milieu from which the contradanza descends. These European

¹ Margaret J. Kartomi, "The Processes and Results of Musical Culture Contact: A Discussion of Terminology and Concepts," in *Ethnomusicology: Journal of the Society for Ethnomusicology* Vol. 25, no. 2 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Society for Ethnomusicology, Inc., May 1981), 230.

² Helio Orovio, *Cuban Music From A to Z* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 58.

elements mixed with African-influenced syncopations and percussion in Cuba, thereby constituting the classic Cuban contradanza.

Writing this piece, I remained conscious of my idioms' historical roots and my choice of musical vocabulary reflects these. There are no "extended" harmonies, bitonality, polychords, or other trappings of the Modernist musical language, which permeate the other two pieces; "Contradanza" provides an opportunity to experiment more with triadic, modal textures and to engage with more contrapuntal procedures. The short fugue comprising the middle section of the form follows the conventions of Baroque fugal contrapuntal procedures.

The danzón, which forms the second part of the suite, is inspired by Claude Debussy (1862-1918), specifically his "La Soirée dans Grenade," a solo piano work from *Estampes*, (1903). There is an interweaving of recognizable aspects of the traditional danzón, such as its formal structure, characteristic rhythms, instrumentation and stylistic elements, with compositional attributes more associated with Modernist composers such as Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) and Bela Bartók (1881-1945), as well as the aforementioned proto-Modernist, Debussy.

The third part of the suite does not follow the pattern of a predetermined musical form, hence its name, "Fantasía." It does, however, borrow recognizably from the rhythmic, formal and stylistic liturgy of Afro-Cuban rumba and, primarily, Cuban *batá* drum practices. These uniquely Afro-Cuban elements are, like in the other parts of the suite, fused with many techniques associated largely with early twentieth-century concert music.

³ Robert P. Morgan, ed., *Anthology of Twentieth-Century Music* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1992), 1-6.

I hope to show in the proceeding analysis of this suite that I succeed in producing music rich in creative content, expressing my own unique perspective on the union of these contrasting musical territories.

CHAPTER 1

THE CUBAN CONTRADANZA

The contradanza, (or contredanse), was a well-established dance form with the aristocracy and rising middle-class in France, England and Spain by the end of the eighteenth-century. Written in a simple AABB binary form, the A and B sections were eight bars each, making a total of thirty-two bars with the repeats. (This form is often reduced in commentaries to AB binary form and I will follow this practice in my analysis). The entire form could be repeated multiple times and a "caller," or lead dancer would direct the changing order of steps the dancers used. Latin music scholar John Santos commented on how political events in what is now Haiti played an important role in establishing the contradanza's importance in Cuba: "As a result of the 1791 slave uprising and revolution in Santo Domingo, a great number of French colonists and slaves came to Oriente, the easternmost province on the island of Cuba. With this wave of immigrants came the contradanza."

As the contradanza began to be played and danced by the slaves of African-descent and freed slaves, a creolization of this European genre began to take place;8 Afro-Cuban

⁴ Peter Manuel, *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 32.

⁵ Salomón Gadles Milkowski, *Ignacio Cervantes y la Danza en Cuba*, (La Habana: Publicaciones de la Oficina del Historiador de la Cuidad de La Habana, 2013), 37.

⁶ Frances Barulich, "Habanera: 1.The Dance," *The New Grove dictionary of music and musicians*, (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 2001), accessed March 2, 2016. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/

⁷ John Santos, liner notes, *The Cuban Danzón: Its Ancestors and Descendants*, Folkways Records, FE 4066. 1982, digital download.

⁸ Peter Manuel, *Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 55.

rhythmic cells began to be added to the contradanza, while the simple binary AB form remained intact. The first known contradanza to have been written in Cuba, "San Pascual Bailón," was published anonymously in 1803.⁹

While listening to recordings of some of the classic contradanzas, I encountered "La Suavecita," by Cuban composer Manuel Saumell, (1818-1870). I became enamoured with Saumell's piece and "La Suavecita" provides the primary creative impetus to compose my contradanza. "La Suavecita" is an example of the less common 6/8 contradanza; most contradanzas were composed in a quick 2/4 time signature. 11 Musicologist Salomón Milkowski suggests that the 6/8 contradanzas are representative of the lingering influence of the Spanish contradanzas -- because in Spain it was common to write these dances in 6/8. 12 Compound meter contradanzas declined in popularity in Cuba as the form gradually became more creolized; Cuban composers were superimposing African-influenced syncopations on the form, and found composing in 2/4 more amenable to their rhythmic tastes. 13 "La Suavecita" provides a good example of Saumell's tendency to vacillate between the phrasing of 3/4 and 6/8 within his 6/8 compositions. This metric ambiguity and the frequency of hemiolas and displaced accents in 6/8 Cuban contradanzas point to the influence of the Afro-Cuban aesthetic in this creole genre.14

I choose to write "Contradanza" in a 6/8, rather than 3/4, meter to reflect the

⁹ Orovio, Cuban Music from A to Z, 58.

¹⁰ Axivil Criollo, "La Suavecita," video clip, posted June 20, 2010, accessed December 18, 2015, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuaKqEZcez0.

¹¹ Santos, liner notes, *The Cuban Danzón*, 3.

¹² Milkowski, *Ignacio Cervantes*, 44.

¹³ Milkowski, *Ignacio Cervantes*, 45.

¹⁴ Milkowski, *Ignacio Cervantes*, 46.

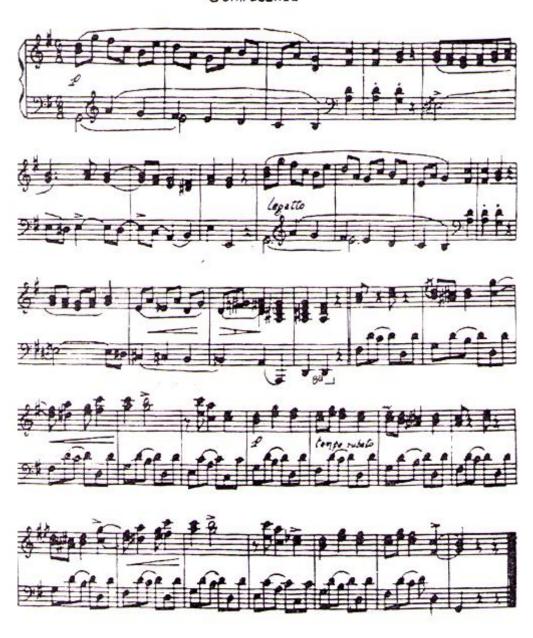
traditional Cuban notational practice for this type of triple meter dance. My composition also purposefully reflects the aforementioned metrical ambiguity between 6/8 and 3/4, which is found in the classic contradanzas of Saumell. Fig. 1.1, the published music for "La Suavecita," reveals this metric ambiguity: note the right hand could be considered entirely as 3/4 material. The left hand shows a 6/8 bias only from m.17 to the end, which constitutes the B section.

Fig. 1.1. "La Suavecita," by Manuel Saumell. 15

a la Sto Do Morio Josefo Herrera de O'Farril

La Suavecita

Contradanza



 $^{^{15}}$ Music example from: Milkowski, $Ignacio\ Cervantes,\ 171.$

Contradanza: Sections A and B

I choose to use woodwinds and strings with light percussion in my arrangement to produce a sound reminiscent of the *orquesta tipica* instrumentation which would have performed contradanzas in Cuba in the nineteenth-century. ¹⁶ Brass instruments were also common in *orquesta tipica* groups, however the limited size of the group that I wrote for allows for the intimate chamber ensemble sound I am seeking.

In keeping with the fairly simple harmonic content of traditional Cuban contradanzas, I wrote the harmony of my piece employing mostly tertian, triadic, structures. Melodically, there is an emphasis on notes belonging to the triadic underpinnings of the harmony throughout. The A sections begin with an E^b lydian melodic/harmonic orientation and conclude with a deceptive cadence from the B^b major V triad, m. 6, to the relative minor of E^b major: C minor, (vi), in m. 7.

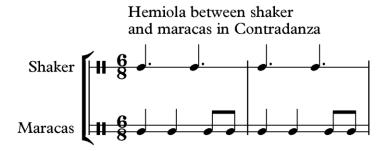
The texture for the A and B sections is homophonic. The piano plays an Alberti bassline¹⁷-inspired arpeggio accompaniment to the A sections, contributing to their "classical" sound. The B sections are more rhythmic, with a lot of syncopation in the melody and accompaniment. There is a hemiola feeling produced throughout the B section, as the maracas play an implied 3/4 part, superposed with the dotted quarter notes outlining the 6/8 main-beats in the shaker part (see Fig. 1.2).

¹⁶ Orovio, Cuban Music from A to Z, 156.

¹⁷ David Fuller, "Alberti Bass," *Oxford Music Online* (New York: Oxford University press, 2007), accessed January 19, 2016. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca

Fuller defines Alberti bass as: "Left-hand accompaniment figure in keyboard music consisting of broken triads whose notes are played in the order: lowest, highest, middle, highest, and taking its name from Domenico Alberti (c1710–1746)."

Fig. 1.2.



I emulated Saumell's dualistic formal tendency in my composition; he favors a European Classically influenced 3/4 sound in the A sections of his contradanzas, with the B parts sounding more syncopated and Afro-Cuban influenced. The B sections of my composition contain anticipations in both the bass and piano parts. An example of this is the anticipated bass note A, on the last eighth note of m. 23, (see score). In the piano, the G minor chord on the last eighth note of m. 16 is also anticipated and at m. 17, anticipations and melodic 10ths are used to smoothly connect the harmonies and give the music some "swing" (see fig. 1.3).

Fig. 1.3.



Examples of the numerous syncopations in the melody of the B sections would include the E^b3 in m. 20 and the B^b4 in m. 22.

¹⁸ Milkowski, *Ignacio Cervantes*, 45.

Formal Considerations

Peter Manuel credits the Cuban musicologist Alejo Carpentier as having stated that minuets appeared alongside contradanzas at social functions in Cuba in the early 1800s. Along similar lines, in describing Ignacio Cervantes' contradanza No. 36, "Cortesana," Mikowsky describes this work as "almost European... resembling a movement from a Baroque suite." This gave me the idea to emphasize this similarity to baroque forms in my conception of the large formal design of "Contradanza."

The short 32-bar AB form of the classic contradanza is a useful unit to repeat many times for dancers, however, in order to produce a longer form, I was inspired by the model of the minuet, the direct predecessor to the contradanza, (or contredanse), in the dances of Western Europe circa the eighteenth, continuing into the early nineteenth, centuries.²¹ I use the formal model of the minuet from a baroque dance suite as an inspiration in the composition of a longer form contradanza.

In a minuet, ordinarily after the first binary AB form, (which is the same as an entire traditional contradanza), there would be a central trio section, also in binary AB form. I decided, in the interest of formal variety, to adapt my original plan of adhering to minuet form and include a baroque fugue in this central part of the form. The decision to write a *three*-voice fugue is my oblique reference to the standard "trio" format of this central section in classic minuet design. The homophony of the opening sections contrasts with the contrapuntal texture in the middle of the work.

¹⁹ Peter Manuel, Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean, 52.

²⁰ Milkowski, *Ignacio Cervantes*, 72.

²¹ Peter Manuel, *Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean*, 5.

Fugue and Final AB Section

The middle section of "Contradanza" changes in meter to 12/8 and follows the standard design of a short baroque fugue. The proceeding Fig. 1.4 provides a complete analysis of the construction of this fugue. Refer to Appendix A for a legend outlining all abbreviations used, and definitions of the specialized terms.²² The fugue begins its Exposition in B^b minor, the dominant minor of the key of the contradanza as a whole. It modulates in the Middle Section briefly to the sub-tonic ^bVII, (A^b major), before returning to the home key of B^b minor for the Final Section. The fugue ends with a 4-3 suspension resolving to B^b major, the parallel major tonic, an example of a tierce de *Picardy*, ²³ (Picardy third). This B^b major tonic chord then leads smoothly to the recapitulation of the AB material, as it becomes a pivot chord, representing the temporary tonic of the fugue section, and V in the destination key of E^b major. The inclusion of the 12/8 bell pattern, ubiquitous in the performance of Afro-Cuban music, provides an interesting and surprising juxtaposition to the Baroque fugal texture. The main subject and counter-subject are written intentionally to harmonize rhythmically with the 12/8 pattern supplied by the bell.

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My two main sources for information on the Baroque fugal language, (terms and definitions), are: Elizabeth Colpitts, "Part Three: Analyzing and Writing Fugues," in *Understanding Counterpoint*, (Burnaby, B.C.: Sardis Studio Publications, 2013), 210-283.

Art of Counterpoint, "The Fugue," video clip, posted March 18, 2011, accessed Feb. 23, 2016. YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-qjwNshB10

²³ Julian Rushton, "Tierce de Picardy" *Grove Music Online*, (Oxford University Press, 2007). http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/.

Rushton defines the *tierce de Picardy* as: "The raised third degree of the tonic chord, when it is used for the ending of a movement or composition in a minor mode in order to give the ending a greater sense of finality. ...It was commonly used in the 16th century and throughout the Baroque era and was regarded by some writers as standard.

All the melodic voices are autonomous, and this contrapuntal emphasis is maintained until near the end, in m. 53; here there is a pedal-point in the bass and some arpeggiated figures. Although these arpeggiations are counter-productive to the integrity of the independent lines, they help to increase the dramatic tension as the fugue draws near its close. Measures 57-60 provide a brief bridge back to the recapitulation. There is a repetition of the ABA themes from mm. 61 to 84, which leads to the Coda at mm. 85-91.

Fig. 1.4.



Contradanza: Coda

There is a stylistic shift in the coda section, a more Renaissance-inspired sound. One of the techniques applied to achieve this sound is the renewed emphasis on the contrapuntal movement of the voices. The voices all have their own melodic integrity and there are cadences contained here which are derived from this horizontal rather than vertical emphasis, such as those described below.

There is an example of the "landini cadence" in measure 87, (See Fig. 1.5, mm. 86 to 87). This cadence evolved historically as a result of the desire to "decorate" cadences moving from the interval of a major 6th between the outside voices by contrary motion to the octave.²⁴ Instead of the movement of the top voice by step from the major 6th to the P8, there is the addition of an "escape tone" which, following the major 6th, creates a perfect 5th with the bass, and then leaps a third to the octave resolution. Hence, there are major 6th, to perfect 5th, to perfect octave intervals defined between the outside voices, with the bass resolving by half step, (in my example from A^b to G). Also note, the second voice C in m. 86 ascends a whole step to D in m. 87. This linear option added melodic variety to horizontally based cadences in compositions by composers such as Francesco Landini²⁵ (1325-1397).

The use of dyads, (especially at cadential points), consisting solely of a bare root and fifth, instead of triads, also conjure Early Music associations; ²⁶ examples are the G5

²⁴ Margot Schulter, "What is a Landini cadence?" accessed Jan 13, 2016, http://www.medieval.org/emfaq/harmony/landini.html

25 Margot Schulter, "What is a Landini cadence?"

²⁶ Todd M. McComb, "Chord Structure in Medieval Music" accessed Jan. 14, 2016, http://www.medieval.org/emfag/harmony/chords.html

dyad in m. 87 which forms a half-cadence, and the E^b5 dyad ending the piece in m. 90. The parallel perfect fourths in mm. 87-88, (Fig. 1.5) also contribute to this more "antique" sound.

The final cadence in the piece is a lydian cadence, 27 consisting of the resolution by contrary motion of the top voice from F downward by whole tone to E^b , $(\hat{2} \text{ to } \hat{1})$ with the bass providing a leading tone motion of $\hat{7}$ to $\hat{1}$; the middle voice provides the distinctive "lydian sonority" of A^{\natural} resolving by semitone to B^b , (# $\hat{4}$ to $\hat{5}$). The final simultaneity consists of a bare root and fifth dyad, ending the piece with a Renaissance-style resolution on the E^b tonic.

There is also rhythmic interest in the coda. From the start at measure 85, augmentation is in evidence, with the suggestion of 3/2 meter. This shift to a half-note cross-rhythm supported by all the melodic instruments, as well as the shaker part, is superposed against the maracas' 3/4 rhythm. The half-note emphasis becomes "official" in bar 89 when there is a one bar change to 2/2 time. The overall augmentation and the resultant feeling that the music is slowing down, is further exaggerated by the ritardando in m. 89. The piece concludes with a sustained E^b dyad in the last two bars at mm. 90-91.

Liquidation is a term used by composer Arnold Schoenberg wherein a melody is reduced to its simplest "bare bones" at the end of a piece of music. In Schoenberg's words: "Liquidation consists in gradually eliminating characteristic features, until only un-characteristic ones remain, which no longer demand a continuation. Often only

Note: This cadence is sometimes referred to as a "Double leading-tone cadence."

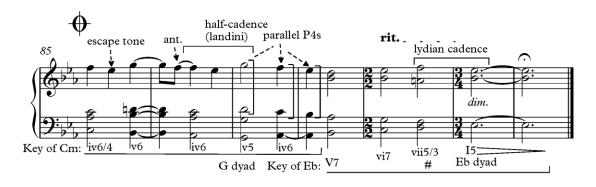
15

²⁷ Don Michael Randel, "Cadence" in *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, Fourth Edition. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 130.

residues remain, which have little in common with the basic motive."²⁸ The simple, reductionist sound of the coda could be construed as an example of this liquidation procedure used to effectively end a piece of music.

Fig. 1.5.

Coda from "Contradanza."



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 $^{^{28}}$ Arnold Schoenberg, Fundamentals of Musical Composition (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1967), 58.

CHAPTER 2

DANZÓN VIVO

"Danzón Vivo," translated as "Danzón Lives," is the title for the second part of my suite. The intended suggestion is that the danzón form may be an older style, but there is still much potential for compelling and novel compositional ideas in this genre. The Cuban danzón evolved to suit dancers' changing tastes in Cuba as a more sensual and slower tempo offspring of the contradanza.²⁹ The new style begins to appear in Cuba in the final decades of the 1800s. In their book devoted to the history and development of the danzón, Alejandro Madrid and Robin Moore state: "Conventional narratives in popular literature suggest that Miguel Faílde's performance of "Las Alturas de Simpson" at the Club de Matanzas on January 1, 1879, represented the birth of the danzón as a distinct musical form."³⁰

One aspect of this new style is the increased number of thematically differing sections; instead of the binary AB form of the contradanza, three or four contrasting sections are now common. Following this example, "Danzón Vivo" is based on an ABACAD formal arrangement, typical for a traditional danzón. The instrumentation of "Danzón Vivo" resembles closely that of a *charanga*, the standard danzón format, consisting of: strings, flute and clarinet with timbales and güiro for percussion. The trumpet is a non-traditional addition to the *charanga* in my piece.

²⁹ John Santos, liner notes, *The Cuban Danzón*, 3.

³⁰ Alejandro L. Madrid and Robin D. Moore, *Danzón: Circum-Caribbean Dialogues in Music and Dance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 36.

³¹ Helio Orovio. *Cuban Music From A to Z.* 51.

Tradition also influenced my arrangement; I follow the standard pattern of having the "A" sections feature a flute melody followed by a string-oriented "B" section.³² The heavily African-influenced *son* style, originally from eastern Cuba, has a noticeable presence in this genre, particularly in the C and D sections of the form, and this disposition is reflected in my composition.³³

The *baqueteo* rhythm, which is a signature of the opening sections of any piece in the danzón style, is played here at the start in octaves on the piano instead of on the güiro and timbales. Re-orchestrations to unexpected instrumental parts are in evidence throughout my suite to help give the music a "fresh" sound, while still alluding to traditional characteristics. The low dyad cluster in the left hand of the piano is meant to imitate the sound of the low timbale drum part in the *baqueteo* rhythm. This imitation of low drums using left hand, low-pitched piano clusters, was an idea I got from listening to the 1st movement of Bartok's piano suite, *Out of Doors*, "With Drums and Pipes." In this movement, Bartok makes consistent use of this technique.

³² Helio Orovio, *Cuban Music From A to Z*, 65.

³³ John Santos, liner notes, *The Cuban Danzón*, 3.

³⁴ Bela Bartok, *Out of Doors: Five Piano Pieces* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1954).

³⁵ David Cooper, *Béla Bartók* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 211, accessed 17 January, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

Fig. 2.1.

Baqueteo rhythm mm. 1-18 Danzón Vivó



Claude Debussy's "La Soirée dans Grenade" From his piano work *Estampes II*, provides inspiration for "Danzón Vivo" in a number of ways:

1. Debussy uses scales differing from the common major or minor diatonic collections. Heard prominently in "La Soirée dans Grenade," is the whole tone scale. The whole tone scale built on D is used for the melody to the A sections of "Danzón Vivo." Pitch-classes: D E F# G# A# C D.

The scale used for the melodic content of the B section of my piece, played over a static F pedal in the bass, is the same "Arabic scale" Debussy uses to conjure an ambience of Moorish Spain, in "La Soirée dans Grenade." Pitch-classes: F G^b A B^b C D^b E F.

2. In his piano work, Debussy uses left-hand octaves to play a *habanera* rhythm. This was the source of my idea to transpose the danzón's *baqueteo* rhythm to left-hand octaves played by the piano.

³⁶ Robert P. Morgan, ed., Anthology of Twentieth-Century Music. 1-6.

³⁷ E. Robert Schmitz, *The Piano Works of Claude Debussy* (New York: Dover Publications, 1966), 28.

- 3. Debussy's use of pedal points and long stretches of harmonically-static tonal centers in "La Soirée dans Grenade," is an effective method of establishing key centers without necessitating the use of circle of fifths cadential patterns. ³⁸ I modeled much of the harmonic character of my piece on this system.
- 4. The harmonic technique of "planing"³⁹ is a technique appearing frequently in Debussy's piece, as well as in "Danzón Vivo." Planing describes repeating parallel chordal structures. These simultaneities may be "diatonic," consisting solely of members of a given scale, or "real," involving the exact transposition of the sonority; the latter end up incorporating non-diatonic member notes. In Danzón Vivo, I use mostly *real planing* when harmonizing a top-voice melodic line, as I desire a more chromatic, less diatonic sound for these passages.

The two-bar figure from mm. 11-12, appearing first here as a call and response between clarinet and muted trumpet, undergoes variation and returns numerous times during the piece. I will refer to it as the "transition figure," as one of its main functions is to facilitate changes from one section to another without the use of a standard cadential pattern. The transition figure recurs harmonized in parallel major thirds in mm. 19-20. Later, the figure receives the aforementioned Debussy-inspired *real planing* technique in mm. 29-30, consisting of first inversion dominant seventh chords (over the bass F pedalpoint). In mm. 39-40 the figure recurs as parallel augmented seventh chords, and in mm. 49-50 it is treated as the same parallel major thirds as mm. 19-20, derived from the same

³⁸ Robert P. Morgan, ed., Anthology of Twentieth-Century Music, 7.

³⁹ Stefan Kostka, *Materials and Techniques of Twentieth-Century Music* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1990), 90.

whole-tone scale, except this time over an A^b tonal center. At mm. 73-74 the figure manifests itself as parallel major seventh chords with a flatted 5th. The frequent recurrence of this motive, almost refrain-like, is also used to provide a sense of continuity through the sections of changing thematic material. The transition figure is used to end the work at mm. 104-105, this time clothed in the garb of *real planing*, minor 6/9 voicings over a B pedal tone.

Fig. 2.2a.

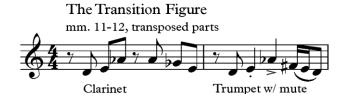
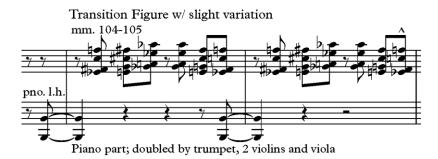


Fig. 2.2b.



Violin 2's syncopated pizzicato part (beginning in m. 13) is percussive and meant to imitate the cross-sticking rhythmic patterns which timbale players use in tandem with their primary *baqueteo* rhythm, (represented here by the piano). Violin 2 continues this "cross-sticking" figure, now transposed to F, in the first part of the B section (m. 23).

Section B begins at m. 23 with a lyrical melody played by the 1st violin highlighting the previously mentioned Arabic scale in an F tonality. Musical momentum is then increased as the violins and viola begin spinning out a linear sixteenth-note figure in unison and octaves, which, through the accents in the score, is first heard grouped in five sixteenth-notes (m. 33), then four sixteenths in mm. 35-36, and finally a three-note sixteenth-note grouping (mm. 37-38). The increase in rhythmic density from the preceding lyrical material, gradual diminution in motive lengths, combined with the arrival on the highest pitch, C, in the final three-note grouping phrase (m. 38) is structured with the aim of building up to a zenith of intensity and excitement in this section of the piece.

This string soli part, (Appendix B), uses intervallic cells taken from the distinctive sound of the Arabic scale-- which generates all the melodic material used for the B section, (mm. 23-40), whether in pure or fragmented form. The main distinguishing characteristics of this scale are the preponderance of four half steps and the two non-western sounding augmented 2^{nds}, (See figure 2.3). In figures 2.4a and 2.4b one can see how melodic cells engendering aspects of this heptatonic pitch-sets' unique flavour are extracted from the scale. These cells are then transposed (mostly by major 2^{nds}) producing a result much like a linear version of the *real planing* harmonic technique discussed earlier in the chapter. The fruit of this process is a chromatic, non-diatonic sound superposed over the F tonal center.

Fig. 2.3:

Interval collection for the Arabic scale



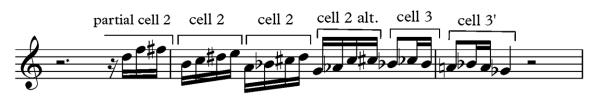
Fig. 2.4a:

Intervallic cells derived from the Arabic scale, transposed: mm. 32-34, "Danzón Vivo."



Fig. 2.4b.

mm. 34-36, "Danzón Vivo."



With the return of the A section at m. 43, we hear the same whole-tone flute melody, this time over an A^b pedal point. In this re-orchestrated A section, the *baqueteo* rhythm is now performed by the güiro and timbales; all the instruments now play their more traditional parts in the *charanga* ensemble.

The ensemble arpeggio figure in m. 51 is a different transitional figure. It is a common-type melodic phrase, which could appear in the arrangement of a typical *son* or salsa group. Here it evokes the *son* style and firmly establishes the A tonal center of the

proceeding section, C, beginning at m. 52. The C and D sections of a traditional danzón contain the more Afro-Cuban styled elements, as they do here in my composition. This historically came from the addition of *son*-style sections at the end of the earliest, more European-sounding, danzones. ⁴⁰ In section C, (mm. 52-74), I want to avoid writing a standard piano montuno-based vamp section and play with the listeners' stylistic expectations. The piano part contains half-step intervals in its voicings to add a bit of dissonance to the texture of what would traditionally be a triadic, tertian part and there is an element of bi-tonality overall in section C, which I will outline below.

Starting with the entrance of the violin in m. 53 and continuing through the trumpet melody, section C superposes "C" mixolydian melodic material over the "A" mixolydian piano/bass accompaniment to achieve a darker, slightly more dissonant bitonal sound than what would be the standard approach of having a fairly pure A mixolydian sound in a straight-ahead son or salsa arrangement. These parts then reverse, as the piano montuno implies A Phrygian, (same notes as C mixolydian), and the melodic parts play pure A mixolydian starting at m. 64. The main difference between the similar tonalities of the two parts is the juxtaposition of Bbs in one part against B naturals in the other. (b9s against \$\psi 9s\$ in the jazz vocabulary).

The trumpet part ending section C, starting in the anacrusis to bar 72, superimposes a B major tonality over the A7^{b9} of the accompaniment. The B major figure is transposed thematic material from the beginning of section C. This is followed by an entrance of the "transition figure" which leads to the final repetition of A.

⁴⁰ John Santos, liner notes, *The Cuban Danzón*, 2-3.

⁴¹ This darker sound can be attributed to C mixolydian's B^b key signature, being separated by three cycles in the "darkening" direction of flats in the circle of fifths from the two sharp A mixolydian, (same as D major).

At m. 75, the last A section, the flute melody is played without variation from its previous incarnations. There is considerable variation in the accompanying parts, however. These variations draw inspiration from Stravinsky, particularly from his "Russian" style, and especially his *The Rite of Spring* (1913)⁴², from his first creative period of 1908-1920.⁴³ The general impression that I wanted to give in this section was one of the music becoming frenetic and barely hanging on to its sense of order and control. In the trumpet part there is a D-note repeated motive beginning in measure 76. The D is repeated in five consecutive 16th notes, initially starting on the beat. This motive is constantly changing its location within the meter and is also displaced at the level of the 16th note, so that it begins on different 16th note subdivisions. This is meant to give a slightly unbalanced and unpredictable effect. The clarinet part starting in m. 75 is an upward glissando outlining the interval of a tritone, playing an unpredictable "game of chase" with the repeated-note trumpet part, with which it alternates. The güiro part, in m. 75, after initially continuing its *baqueteo* rhythm, breaks off into a rhythm of quarter-note triplets grouped in fours starting in the second half of m. 76. Part of the inspiration for this cross-rhythmic güiro part and the layering of the various instrumental parts in this last A section was a discussion by Leonard Bernstein of Stravinsky's treatment of rhythm in the tableau "Procession of the Sage" from *The Rite of Spring*. 44

The piano, the two violins, and the viola function as a unit in their harmonic accompaniment to this final repetition of A (mm. 75-83). Their planed chordal structures

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⁴² Igor Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2000).

⁴³ Bryan R. Simms, *Music of the Twentieth Century: Style and Structure* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 213.

⁴⁴ Leonard Bernstein, *The Unanswered Question: Part 6 The Poetry of Earth*, 1973. (Video Lecture, 1st 90 minutes), posted April 8, 2011, accessed January 29, 2016. YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWeQXTnv xU

are based on two simultaneous augmented chords one half-step apart⁴⁵; one augmented triad is played by the piano, and one by the three strings. These harmonies can be considered derived from the combination of the two possible whole-tone scales. Hence, in their step-wise moving figuration, the combined parts are consistently drawing on all 12 notes of the chromatic scale! This occurs over a D tonal center in the bass.

Piano
Pizzicato
Pizzicato
Pizzicato
Pizzicato
Pizzicato

Fig. 2.5. "Danzón Vivo," mm. 75-83.

 $^{^{45}}$ Note: One of the pair of augmented triads must be considered in inversion in order to see the half-step relationship; eg. For the first pair in Fig 2.5: B aug. over $A^{\#}$ aug., 2^{nd} inversion. (enharmonically spelled).

After building a progressively more active and layered rhythmic texture through the various sections of this piece, the impetus for the final D section of the work (mm. 84-103) is to relax this heightening of the textural complexity in the work and to release into the joyful, "grooving" aspects with the aim of making the listener want to dance. One common thread of all the Cuban genres that I have drawn inspiration from in the suite is that they are all intended for dancing and I hope that this aspect of the music is especially apparent in section D. My chief inspiration here is the more recent recordings by Cuban charanga dynasty Orquesta Aragón, hailing from Havana. I try to capture the flavour, or sabor, with which this band plays its infectious son grooves.

Section D is based on a repeating 4 measure harmonic pattern, which has changed modally from the D whole-tone sound of the previous section to a clear D minor tonality. The lead melody here is the trumpet; whose phrases are answered by the clarinet in a call and response manner meant to be reminiscent of the energetic *coro*, or refrain section at the conclusion of a *son* arrangement. The piece ends with a short coda; the final instance of the transitional figure in mm. 104-105, this time appearing over a B pedal in the bass. The tonal regions appearing in "Danzón Vivo" constitute a symmetrical division of the octave into four parts. The tonal centers include: D, F, A^b, A, and B. The A major tonality appears in addition to this minor third-based axis of symmetry, in order to provide a clear dominant-tonic cadence to arrive at the D tonic for the final repetition of the A section at m. 75.

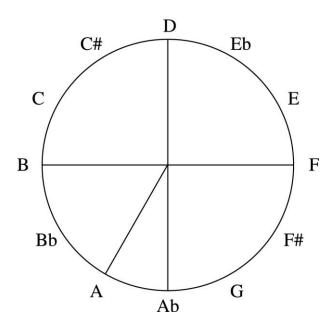
My interest in symmetrical structures in tonal relations, as well as in symmetrical scalar sets, (such as the whole-tone and octatonic scales, (the latter is discussed in the

⁴⁶Orovio, Cuban Music from A to Z, 58.

"Fantasía" analysis)), is an outgrowth of my admiration for Modernist, early twentieth-century musical aesthetics. The pull towards these symmetrical elements during this time is one of the indicators of the breakdown of the functional tonal relations engendered in the asymmetrically-based scales of the common-practice period. In the older system every scale degree played a role in the highly organized mechanics of chord progressions. Typically determined musical elements do not provide as strong a pull to a single tonal center, but instead, these separate tonal centers function with greater autonomy. This was one of the steps in the path towards a musical environment with twelve equally important chromatic pitches.

Fig. 2.6.

Tonal Regions in Danzón Vivo



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⁴⁷ Elliot Antokoletz and Paolo Susanni, *Music and Twentieth-Century Tonality: Harmonic Progression Based on Modality and the Interval Cycles* (New York, London: Routledge, 2012), 66-67.

⁴⁸ Antokoletz and Susanni, *Music and Twentieth-Century Tonality*, xii, xiv.

CHAPTER 3

FANTASÍA

I remember being in the audience for a batá performance during a toque de santo, (religious ceremony of the Afro-Cuban Santería faith); the bataleros, singer, and congregation of dancers all seemed to experience a profound moment of communion during a highly energetic, intense, few minutes. The interaction, and powerful groove made by the three-drum battery, especially the strength and excitement created by the sound of the largest drumhead of the *iyá*, (the biggest, lead-drum), made a singular impression on me. I felt very strongly at that moment that I wanted to write a piece for orchestral instruments and see if I could replicate some of the excitement, power and intensity, of the performance that I was witnessing, which consisted of just three drummers and a few singers. "Fantasía" is the offspring of this and other explorations into *Lucumi*, (the descendants of Yoruba slaves brought to Cuba), ⁴⁹ musical traditions. The title, "Fantasía," refers to the freedom with which the form of this piece is constructed. Unlike the other two pieces in the suite, "Fantasía" is not based on the model of an established Cuban popular dance form, but is a freely composed piece used as a vehicle to express my affinity for the African-inspired elements in Cuban folkloric music, which, needless to say, has its own rich dance component as well.

⁴⁹ Kenneth Schweitzer, "Afro-Cuban *Batá* Drum Aesthetics: Developing Individual and Group Technique, Sound, and Identity," PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 2003. http://hdl.handle.net/1903/55

Of central interest to me are the stylistic characteristics of the *batá* drum repertoire. Like the other two works in the suite, these Afro-Cuban characteristics are mixed with elements from European concert music. From the Western Art Music perspective, Modernist composers such as Igor Stravinsky, Bela Bartók and Aaron Copland (1900-1990), form the main inspiration.

The introduction, (rehearsal letter A, mm. 1-8), is in imitation of a short rezo, or Afro-Cuban prayer, performed in a contemplative and fairly free rhythmic style.⁵⁰ The pulse is consistent, but the meter changes nearly every bar to capture a more open, spontaneous, rhythmic feeling. As a point of interest, the sleigh bells appearing in the score during this introduction and periodically later on in the piece, are meant to echo the sound of the chaguoro⁵¹, or ritual bells hung from the $iy\acute{a}$, which ring sympathetically when the player strikes the drum; sometimes the batalero shakes the drum vigorously to produce their ringing.

At letter B, the harmony is pandiatonic.⁵² The term pandiatonic signifies to me a tonal approach where all the notes in a given pitch-collection are available to harmonize

⁵⁰ Robin Moore and Elizabeth Sayre, "An Afro-Cuban *Batá* Piece for Obatalá, King of the White Cloth," in *Analytical Studies in World Music*, Michael Tenzer, (ed.), (Oxford: Oxford University Press & University Press, 2006), 128.

⁵¹ Robin Moore and Elizabeth Sayre, *Analytical Studies in World Music*, 123.

⁵² Alison Latham, "Pandiatonicism," in *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), accessed February 4, 2016, *Oxford Music Online*. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca

Here is an excerpt from the article cited above to further clarify the meaning of the term *pandiatonicism:* "A term coined by Nicolas Slonimsky, in his book *Music since 1900* (1938). He defined it as follows:

Pandiatonicism is the technique of free use of all seven degrees of the diatonic scale, melodically, harmonically, or contrapuntally. Wide intervallic skips are employed, and component voices enjoy complete independence, while the sense of tonality is very strong due to the absence of chromatics."

with each other without concern for creating functional harmonic progressions. The bass is another melodic line and is not merely providing a root for the chords. I conceived of the harmony as a "wash" of E^b minor, composed without regard for functionally identifiable chords. There is a mostly tertian texture with some harmonic clusters and all the pitch material is diatonic to the E^b Aeolian mode, until the rising bass line in mm. 17-18 which introduces some chromatic passing tones, which help prepare the next section, where chromatic voice leading is of paramount importance.

Two inspirations for this pandiatonic approach are Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Suite*, ⁵³ particularly the transition to "Shaker Song," ⁵⁴ and pieces from the Neo-Classical period of Stravinsky, ⁵⁵ such as the piano collection *Les Cinq Doigts*. ⁵⁶ In Fig. 3.1, the "Larghetto" from *Les Cinq Doigts* (1920) provides a clear example of pandiatonicism. The "E" tonal center is asserted by repetition, and non-cadential means. There is a lack of functional harmonic progression and the pitch content is almost exclusively limited to pitches diatonic to the G major/E minor key signature. ⁵⁷

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⁵³ Aaron Copland, *Appalachian Spring Suite* (*version for 13 Instruments*) (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1972), accessed February 5, 2016, http://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/749706.

⁵⁴ Aaron Copland, "Meno Mosso," in *Appalachian Spring Suite*, 55.

⁵⁵ Stravinsky's Neo-Classical, is the "middle period" referred to by Bryan Simms as occurring between the years of about 1920 to the early 1950's: "... less experimental, more international than Russian, and more concerned with stylistic continuity and tradition." Bryan R. Simms, *Music of the Twentieth Century: Style and Structure*, 213.

⁵⁶ Igor Stravinsky, "Larghetto." In *Les Cinq Doigts: 8 Mélodies Très Faciles Sur 5 Notes.* (J. & W. Chester, 1921.) Accessed February 5, 2016. http://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/458133.

Note: Dr. Michael Adducci's course site from the San Jose State University's Music Department provided valuable information related to my understanding of *pandiatonicism*, and made me aware of the two music examples sited. URL: http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/madduci/4A/4A.htm

⁵⁷ Michael Adducci, course site for Music Theory 4A, San Jose State University, accessed March 2, 2015, http://www.sisu.edu/faculty/madduci/4A/4A.htm.

Fig. 3.1.



Also at letter B, there is rhythmic borrowing from the *batá* repertoire. The *tresillo* rhythm is an important rhythmic cell in Afro-Cuban based music. For example, it makes up half of the rhythmic content of one cycle of son clave (see Fig. 3.2a) and many bass lines in Cuban popular music incorporate it⁵⁸:

Fig. 3.2a tresillo rhythm

Fig. 3.2b double time tresillo as in the viola and cello rhythm from "Fantasía." rehearsal letter B





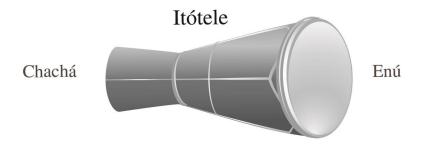
We can find examples of the use of this rhythmic cell in the music of the *batá* drums. ⁵⁹ Before proceeding to any musical analysis dealing with the *batá*, I feel a discussion about the physical characteristics of the *batá* drums themselves and my notational practices would be helpful.

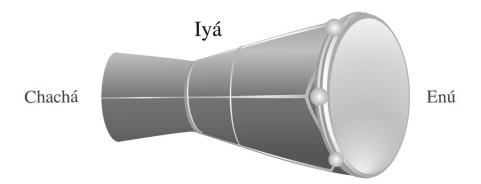
⁵⁸ David Peñalosa, *The Clave Matrix* (Redway, California: Bembe Books, 2012), 40.

⁵⁹ See the *iya* "aviso" part for the *Orisha Ogún* in: Michael Spiro and Justin Hill, *Roadmap for the Oru del Igbodu (Oru Seco)*, (www.CuBraz.com, 2011), 9.

Fig. 3.3.







My method of notation for the *batá*, (see Fig. 3.4), is largely based on the system used by Robin Moore and Elizabeth Sayre in their chapter on *batá* drumming from the book: *Analytical Studies in World Music*.⁶⁰

It is important to note that the smaller $cha\ ch\acute{a}$ head on all of the drums produces a high, dry, slap sound. The larger $en\acute{u}$ heads produce open tones or muffs, (a muff is produced by pushing the hand into the membrane while striking the drum. This raises the pitch slightly and yields a less clear, slightly "muffled" tone). The pitches represented in Fig. 3.4 are approximations to show the generalized melodic contours produced by the three drums, the type of note-head visually indicates the tendency towards more discernable, versus indistinguishable, pitch content of the various articulations.

Fig. 3.4.



The *itótole* drum part in the *batá* rhythm for *Changó* combines the *tresillo* rhythm with another displaced *tresillo* starting on beat 2 of the bar. At letter B in "Fantasía," I chose to transpose this rhythm to pizzicato strings, conceiving their role in

⁶⁰ Robin Moore and Elizabeth Sayre, *Analytical Studies in World Music*, 136.

⁶¹ For a detailed theoretical discussion and transcribed drum part for this *batá* rhythm, see: David Peñalosa, *The Clave Matrix*, 72.

the texture as primarily percussive. Violins 1&2 imitate the *cha chá* part of the *itótele* from *Changó*, (this is the displaced *tresillo* rhythm), while at the same time the viola and cello play the *itótele enú* part, also from *Changó*, (the non-displaced *tresillo*). From a comparison of Fig. 3.5a and 3.5b, one can clearly see my transposition to the string parts of the basic melodic contour occurring in the original *batá* rhythm. The "muff" stroke on the *enú* of the *itótole* raises the pitch roughly a half step, and this characteristic was mirrored in the melodic content of the viola and cello parts.

Fig. 3.5a

Itotole part: road 2, Chango 1st note of displaced tresillo itotole cha cha itotole enu 1st note of tresillo

Fig. 3.5b

Ist note of displaced tresillo viola & cello

After the harmonic stasis of rehearsal letter B, I want the music at letter C to provide some active harmonic movement. I thought the amalgam of chromatic voice leading material based on Wagner's iconic "Prelude" to *Tristan and Isolde* ⁶² with elements from Cuban rumba could make a surprising and interesting pairing. (There is an element of humor involved in the decision to realize this pairing, too). As one can see from the excerpt provided below, I start with the basic motif, the famous "Tristan chord" in F minor, ending with a half cadence on C7 (mm. 19-20). ⁶³ The same material is then transposed up a major third (in a chromatic mediant relation), to A minor, and finally, in B minor, we see the following progression: V7/V to i⁴₃ to V₇.

This whole series of chromatic, unresolved cadences, eventually leads to the desired goal of resolution on the B tonal center of the next section, letter D, in m. 25.

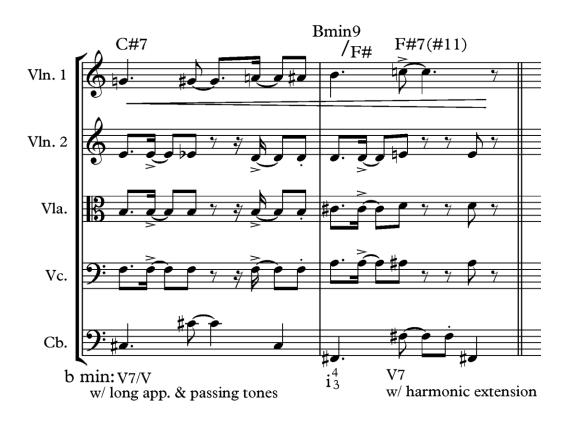
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⁶² Richard Wagner, "Prelude and Isoldens Liebestod," From *Tristan Und Isolde* (London: E. Eulenburg), [19--].

⁶³ The symbol "Fr+⁶" refers to the French augmented 6th chord. As this is a simultaneity derived from counterpoint and not from the application of chords, I have followed the traditional practice of not labeling the bars containing the Fr+⁶ with chord symbols such as "D^b7." Different interpretations of Wagner's complex chromatic voice leading process are possible.

Fig. 3.6.





There are rhythms taken from the phraseology of the *quinto* parts from Cuban rumba at rehearsal letters B and C. The *quinto* is the smallest, highest pitched conga drum in a rumba group. In traditional rumba styles, this drum's role in the ensemble is freer, and more improvisational than the other drum parts.⁶⁴ The *quinto* player reacts to, and engages in dialogues with the dancers.⁶⁵

The interdependent snare drum and bass drum fills during rehearsal letter C, (and also those heard previously at letter B), are imitations of the kinds of "licks" that *quinto* players in rumba groups play. One interesting approach to generating these kinds of fills is the use of rhythmic displacement. This is in the same vein as the simultaneous tresillo/displaced tresillo of the *itótole* part discussed in Fig. 3.5a.

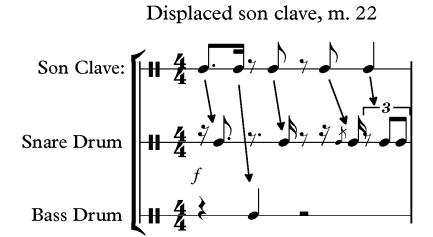
The phrase played by the snare and bass drum combination at m. 22 consists of the one measure, (sixteenth-note based), son clave rhythmic pattern displaced by one subdivision. This displaced part is a rhythmic idea which Latin music scholar David Peñalosa considers the "generative form" of the fundamental rhythmic parts played by the *quinto* player in rumba *guaguancó*:⁶⁶

64 Peter Manuel, *Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music From Rumba to Reggae* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 25.

⁶⁵ Yvonne Daniel, *Rumba: Dance and Social Change in Contemporary Cuba* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 69.

⁶⁶ David Peñalosa, *The Clave Matrix*, 196.

Fig. 3.7.



The first part of rehearsal letter D consists of a register-skipping, syncopated melody inspired by Aaron Copland's important Modernist work, *Piano Variations*, ⁶⁷ (1932). The inspiration I took from Copland's work was rhythmic and textural. I wanted to imitate the additive meter-type sound of his *Variations*, the percussive approach to the piano writing, and also the large leaps in the texture—often a result of the octave displacement of pitches from his thematic material. ⁶⁸ I responded to the forcefulness and strength in the Copland work, with its low octave jabs and dissonant secundal harmony. These techniques give Copland's piece a disjunct, angular, and thoroughly unsentimental impact, contributing to its close association with the Modernist credo of early twentieth century music. ⁶⁹ I strive for these kinds of effects in this part of my piece as well.

⁶⁷ Aaron Copland, *Piano Variations* (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1956).

⁶⁸ The Teaching Company/Great Courses, *Copland-Piano Variations*, accessed July 2, 2016, Kanopy streaming video http://yorku.kanopystreaming.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca

⁶⁹ David Kennard, "Chapter 2," in *Keeping Score: Aaron Copland and the American Sound*, (San Francisco Symphony, 2006), Mpeg-4 video file, purchased from iTunes, Feb. 13, 2016.

The pitch content of the entirety of letter D consists of notes taken from the B half-whole octatonic scale (see Fig. 3.8). This scale provides many options to the composer wanting to create using a palette of colors different to, yet not entirely divorced from, the diatonic major/minor possibilities associated with the functional tonal system. The octatonic scale is a symmetrical pitch-set, pregnant with intervallic variety, but also yielding many of the traditional tonal system's recognizable tertian combinations, such as major and minor triads and minor, dominant, and diminished seventh chords.⁷⁰

Fig. 3.8.

B half-whole octatonic scale



The second half of D contains an obvious homage to Stravinsky and "The Augurs of Spring" from *The Rite of Spring;* 71 this occurs at mm. 39-42. Here there is a succession of asymmetrically accented eighth notes in the repetitive chord played by the strings, grouped in 2's and 3's. The chord here is derived from the same B half-whole octatonic scale.

There is a conscious effort on my part to harmonize these accented groupings within the common dualistic conventions of clave, ⁷² (and the clave *is* being sounded here

⁷⁰ An outline of some of the intervallic/harmonic resources of the octatonic scale is contained in the book: Jim Hall, *Exploring Jazz Guitar* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing, 1990), 18-21.

⁷¹ Igor Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring*.

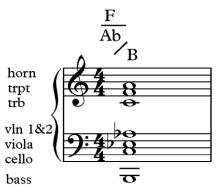
⁷² By "dualistic conventions of clave," I mean a bar of syncopated, rhythmic instability, followed by a bar of relative rhythmic stability, (or vice-versa).

See: Kenneth Schweitzer, *The Artistry of Afro-Cuban Batá Drumming: Aesthetics, Bonding, and Creativity* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013). 146.

too, by the instrument of the same name). Later, the rhythmic accents remain the same as those of mm. 39-42, while the texture is varied. Another B octatonic chord is presented in stark, syncopated "shots" at mm. 43-46, with an interesting feature -- it is a polychord, consisting of an F triad played over an A^b triad, over the B tonal center in the bass.

Fig. 3.9.

Polychord from mm. 43-46 "Fantasía."



There is a brief metric modulation to 12/8 meter in mm. 47-48. I feel this interpolation of triple meter provides a surprising way of varying the theme, but also serves to anticipate the change to 12/8 at letter E, making this change feel more organic to the composition. From letter E to the end of the piece, there is a primary focus on the influence of the *batá* drum aesthetic on the music. The aforementioned meter change to 12/8 occurs at letter E (m. 51). A nascent dominant-tonic relationship also becomes apparent; the B tonal center of letter D moves by a fifth to the E minor tonal environment of letter E. This cadential movement and change of meter initiate a textural shift, as pizzicato strings, piano, bass and French horn commence their *batá-like* instrumental roles.

Dr. Kenneth Schweitzer (2003) elucidates the concept of the different functional layers operating in the rhythms of the *batá* (see quote below). This allows for a more emic manner of listening to the ensemble -- understanding the hierarchy of distinct roles played by the different drum heads in this multi-faceted musical setting. I have utilized Schweitzer's method of separating out into parts the more time-keeping oriented aspects, as contrasted with the more melodically-oriented parts. This is to be understood as an aesthetic tendency, not an absolute; as noted by Robin Moore and Elizabeth Sayre in their chapter from Analytical Studies in World Music, part of the joy of listening to the rich rhythms of these drums can be the experience of perceiving the different rhythmic layers in constantly shifting, subtly different ways. 73 This is analogous to the different perspectives afforded the viewer by Cubist paintings. Schweitzer outlines the general roles of the various drumheads in the following manner: "In summary, of the six drumheads that constitute the batá ensemble; three (enú of the okónkolo, chachá of the okónkolo and chachá of the itótele) serve a metronomic function as they provide forward momentum and rhythmic drive; two (enú of the itótele and enú of the iyá) carry the melodic interest; and one (*chachá* of the *iyá*) shifts between these two roles."⁷⁴

The *toque*, or rhythm, which provides the inspiration for mm. 51-76, is known as $\tilde{n}ongo$. In the following musical examples I show this common *batá* rhythm in its constituent layers, and then show the instrumental parts I derived from these:⁷⁵

⁷³ Robin Moore and Elizabeth Sayre, *Analytical Studies in World Music*, 126.

⁷⁴ Kenneth Schweitzer, "Afro-Cuban *Batá* Drum Aesthetics," 189.

⁷⁵ For an in-depth study of the *toque ñongo*, see: Kenneth Schweitzer, *The Artistry of Afro-Cuban Batá Drumming*, Chapters 6 and 7.

Fig. 3.10a: Note the descending melodic contour.



Fig. 3.10b.



Fig. 3.11a.

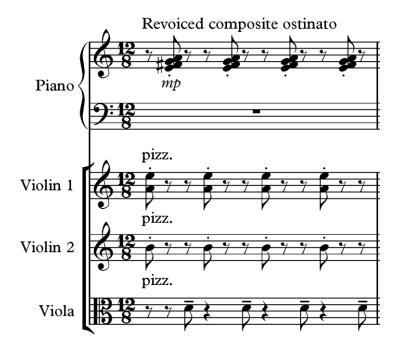


Fig. 3.11b



With careful attention, the listener will hear how in "Fantasía" the repetitive flow of these parts is sometimes varied with call and response phrases, in imitation of this intrinsic characteristic of *batá* performance. These "conversations" take place when the bass "calls" to the french horn. The bass represents the *enú* of the *iyá*, while the french horn represents the *enú* of the *itótele*. As noted from Schweitzer above, these are the two primary "talking drums" in a *batá* ensemble, (and specifically, the larger *enú* batter-head of both the *itótole* and *iyá* are the "talking drum-*heads*," as the *cha chas* on both drums tend to fulfill the role of marking time and, in the case of the *iyá*, occasionally providing accentuations within the ensemble). The first of these notated conversations takes place between the bass and French horn parts in m. 57:

Fig. 3.12.



⁷⁶ Kenneth Schweitzer, *The Artistry of Afro-Cuban Batá Drumming*, 147-148.

I chose to give the oboe a prominent melodic role in these *batá*-inspired sections because its timbre reminds me a bit of the nasal-inflected sound of the lead singer, the *apkwon*, in a *Santería* ceremony, such as the famous Lázaro Ros (1905-2005), who epitomized this style of vocal performance. Letter E begins with an oboe statement of a lyrical, pentatonic theme. Contained within the compass of a minor 10th, and purposefully reminiscent of a vocal melody, this was my attempt to imitate the types of African-influenced melodies making up the liturgy of songs sung in homage to the *Orishas* at religious events. The melody is delivered in a half-time 12/8 feeling against the dense texture of the quick 12/8 meter, first in an ensemble-plus-soloist setting by the oboe, and then harmonized in 11ths between the trumpet and trombone.

After initially representing the texture of a *batá* ensemble using only non-percussion instruments, at letter F the full fury of the percussion section is unleashed in the arrangement. The *enú* of the *iyá* is represented by the timpani. The tempo at F increases. There is no single *Orisha* rhythm forming the basis of the parts here, but I was thinking of the fastest, most exciting rhythms, like those for *Yemaya*, ⁷⁸ and *Changó*. ⁷⁹ Starting at the anacrusis to m. 99, (letter G), the unison oboe and flute alternate quick call and response phrases with the chorus of winds, in imitation of what happens at the climax of a vocal performance in the *Santería* faith between the *apkwon* and the chorus. The scalar material for this call and response section is an E dorian, colored with an added A[#]. The A[#] is not perceived as a passing note in the melodic line, but can be heard as a pitch

⁷⁷ For an exemplary recording, including vocals by Lázaro Ros and with biographical information written in the liner notes, see: Conjunto Folklorico Nacional de Cuba, *Musica Yoruba*, Redway, CA: Bembe Records, 2010-2, 1996, compact disc.

⁷⁸ Michael Spiro and Justin Hill, *Roadmap for the Oru del Igbodu (Oru Seco)*, score, 53-59.

⁷⁹ Michael Spiro and Justin Hill, *Roadmap for the Oru del Igbodu (Oru Seco)*, score, 39-46.

borrowed from a parallel modal source, here the E half-whole octatonic scale. The inspiration for this kind of scalar superposition came from Bartók's experimentation with combining different modes starting from the same fundamental root, his idea of polymodal chromaticism.⁸⁰

Fig. 3.13.

Overlapping scale segments mm. 99-105 octatonic dorian dorian

The work's conclusion, meant to surprise the listener, consists of a 12-tone row repeated twice; the phrases are shared between solo voices as they are rapidly passed from instrument to instrument, *klangfarbenmelodie*⁸¹ style.

The twentieth-century French composer Olivier Messiaen concludes his movement "Terribilis est locus iste," from his work, *The Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (1965-69),⁸² with three dramatic chords containing all twelve-notes of the chromatic scale respectively.⁸³ This provided the inspiration for the "all-pitch chord" which ends "Fantasía" in m.109. Some experimentation was required to find a

⁸⁰ David Cooper, *Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 73-74.

⁸¹ Klangfarbenmelodie is translated from German as "sound-color melody." Schoenberg describes this as a melody made from a series of shifting timbres:

Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony* translated by Roy E. Carter, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 421-422.

⁸² Olivier Messiaen, La Transfiguration De Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ: Pour Choeur Mixte, 7 Solistes Instrumentaux, Et Un Très Grand Orchestre. Paris: A. Leduc, 1972.

⁸³ Alex Ross, *The Rest Is Noise* (New York: Picador, 2007), 493-494.

"workable" voicing. Eschewing the sound of a closely-voiced cluster chord, I spread the voices out over a large range and thereby avoided a sonority dense with too many dissonant close intervals between the notes. This yields a chord providing a strong, dramatic finish to the piece, without being too cacophonous (See Fig. 3.15).

Fig. 3.14.

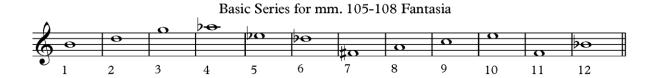


Fig. 3.15.

12-note chord from m. 109 Fantasia



CONCLUSIONS

Many possibilities exist for new treatments of traditional music. My work represents one personal take on the rich creolized musical world of Cuba, combined with Modernist and other musical aesthetics from the Western Art Music tradition. The music written for *La Suite Cubana* was an attempt to pay tribute to both these sources of inspiration. I strove for a balance between honoring the integrity of the musical styles and forms in which I was writing, and creative play with tradition.

Staying conscious of my position as a foreigner writing music inspired by Cuban music was an important distinction for me; I allowed myself a great deal of flexibility and freedom when approaching well-established forms and Afro-Cuban based aesthetics, as I considered myself to be writing fantasies on these Cuban forms rather than strictly following the forms themselves. This seemed the most respectful attitude to adopt to facilitate personal expression without pretending to create "legitimate" Cuban music. I hope to continue this type of project in the future, as I believe there is a great deal of compelling music which can be created from the creative play between these musical genres.

Avenues of future investigation to continue this work would include a closer examination of Cuban composers with a Modernist bent, some of whom have already explored similar cross-pollinations such as: Leo Brouwer, Carlos Fariñas and Alejandro García Caturla. The jazz pianist/composer David Virelles is currently carrying out compelling experimentations with these types of musical influences as well.

I also believe that a deeper experimentation with music less confined to strict metrical regularity necessitating a more elastic treatment of the important rhythmic principle of clave would be very much in line with the modernist aesthetic and could be a fertile source for the creation of rich, sophisticated music and would provide an interesting continuation of the music presented here.

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La Suite Cubana:

- I. Contradanza
- II. Danzón Vivo
- III. Fantasía

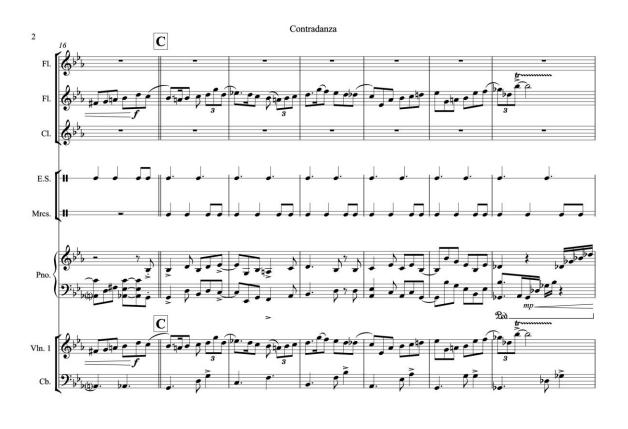
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La Suite Cubana





























II. Danzón Vivo



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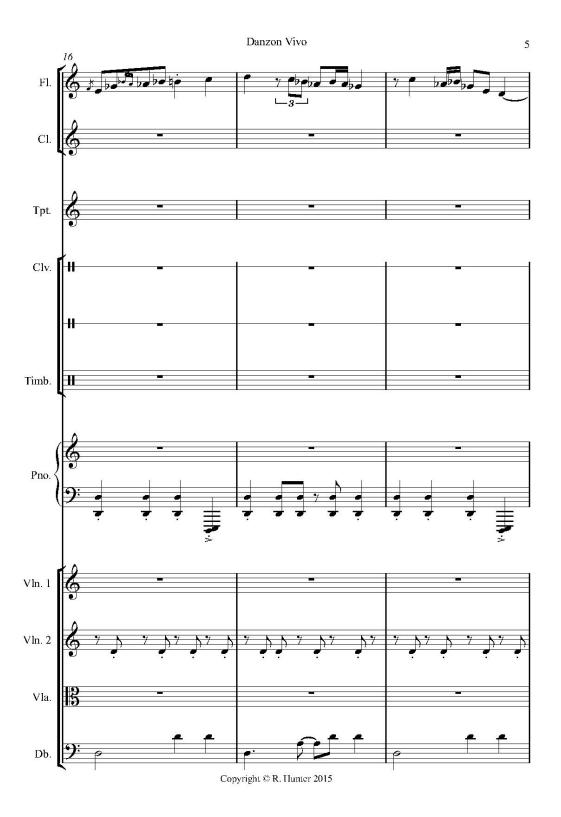


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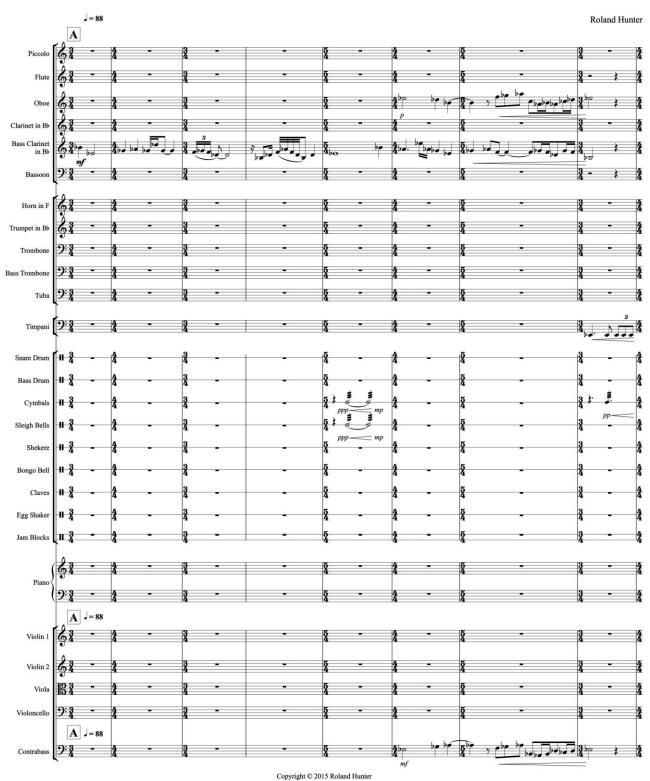




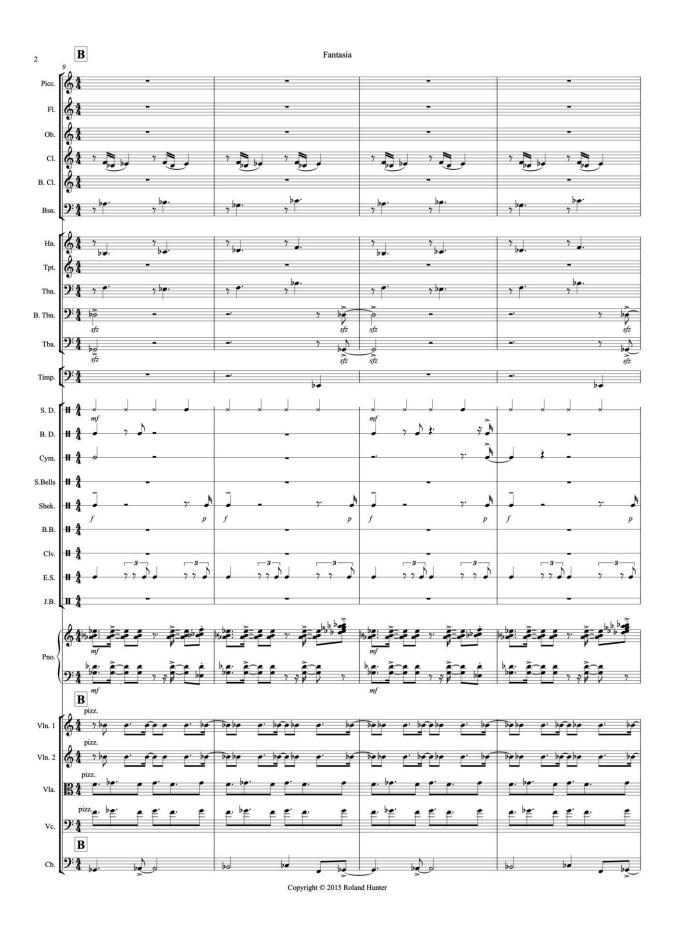




Full Score III. Fantasía

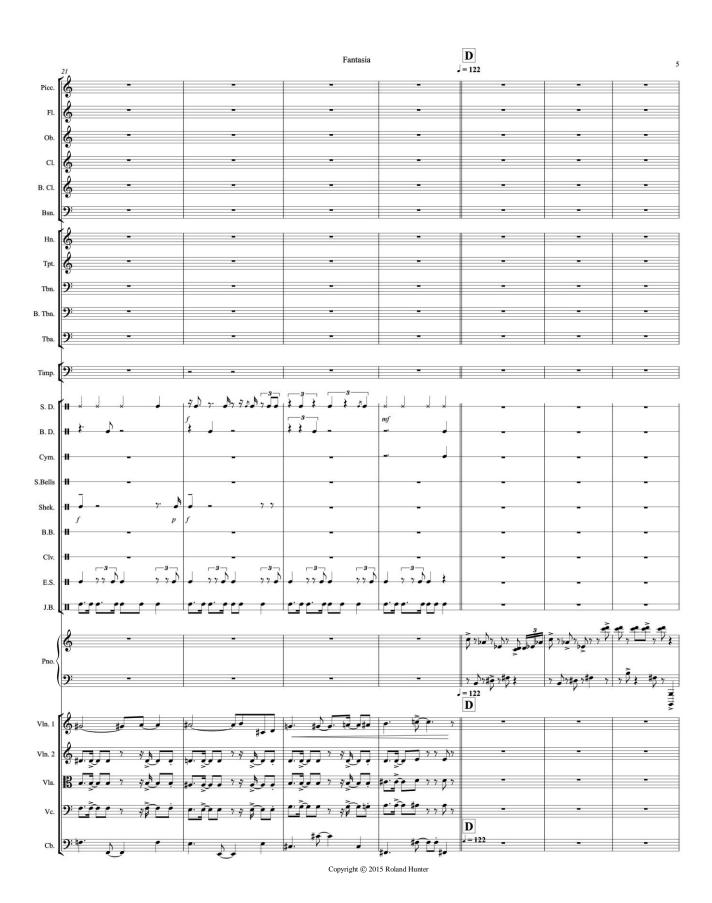


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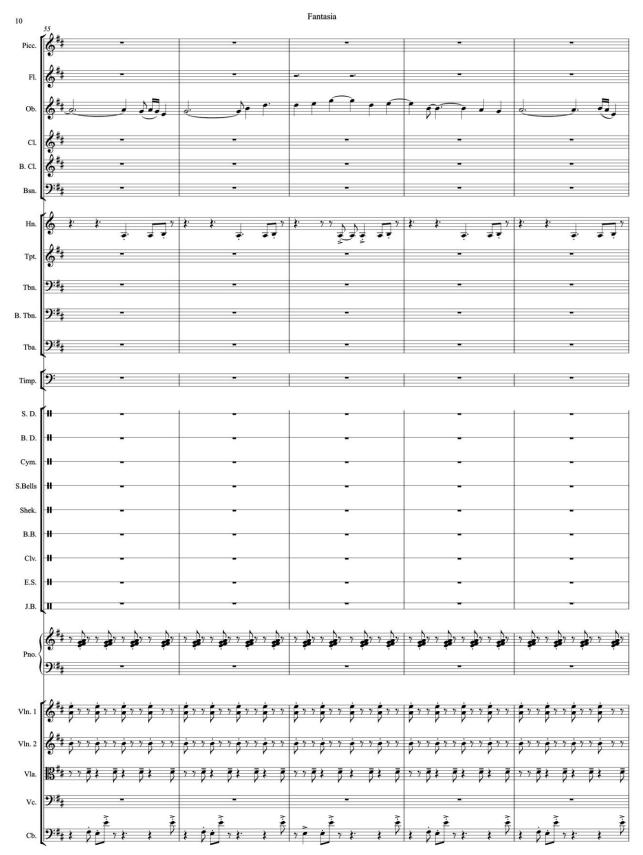


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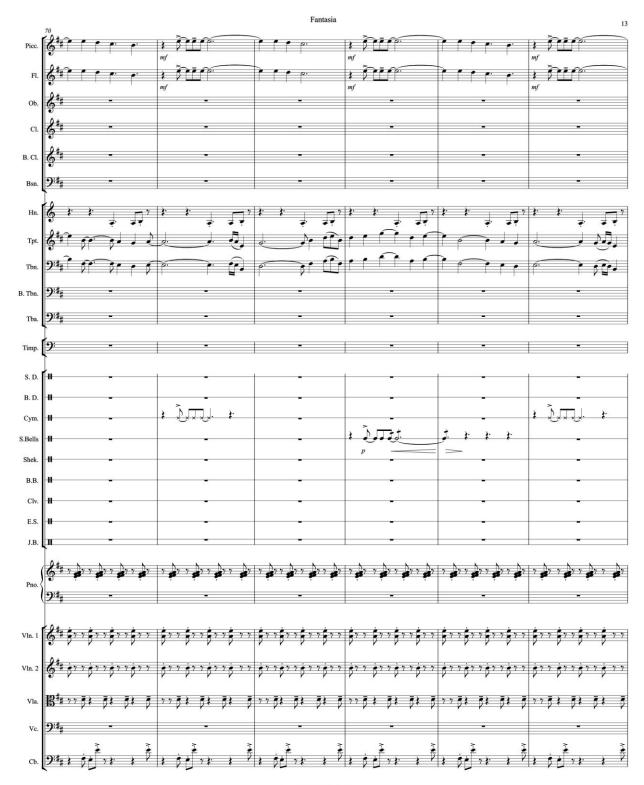
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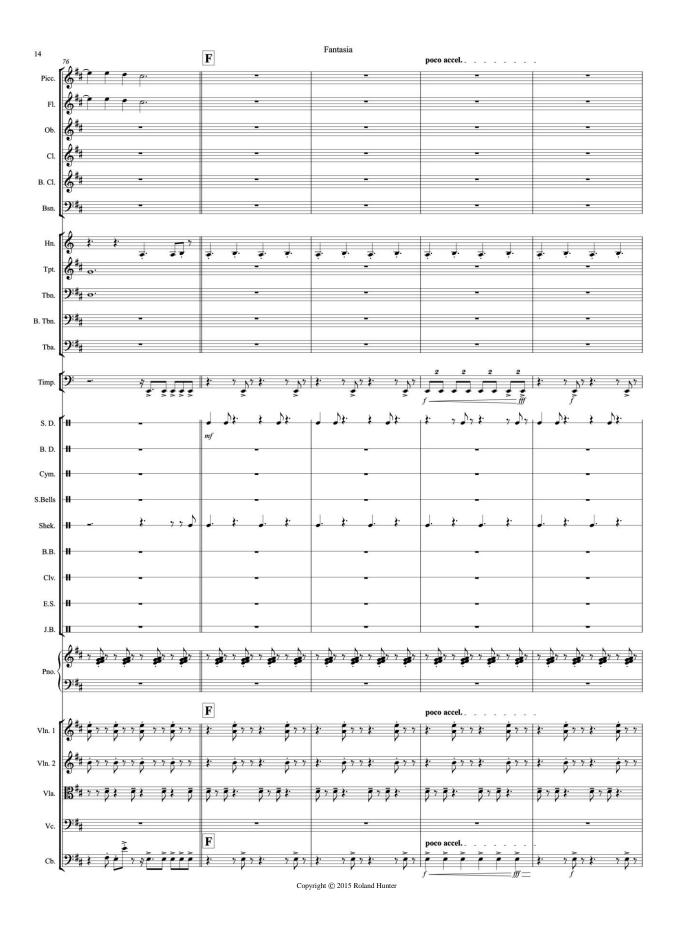
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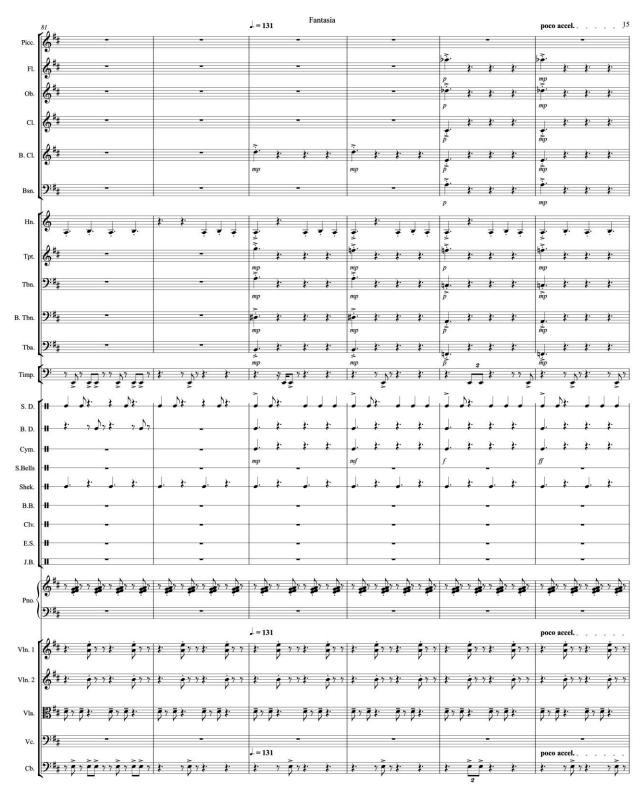


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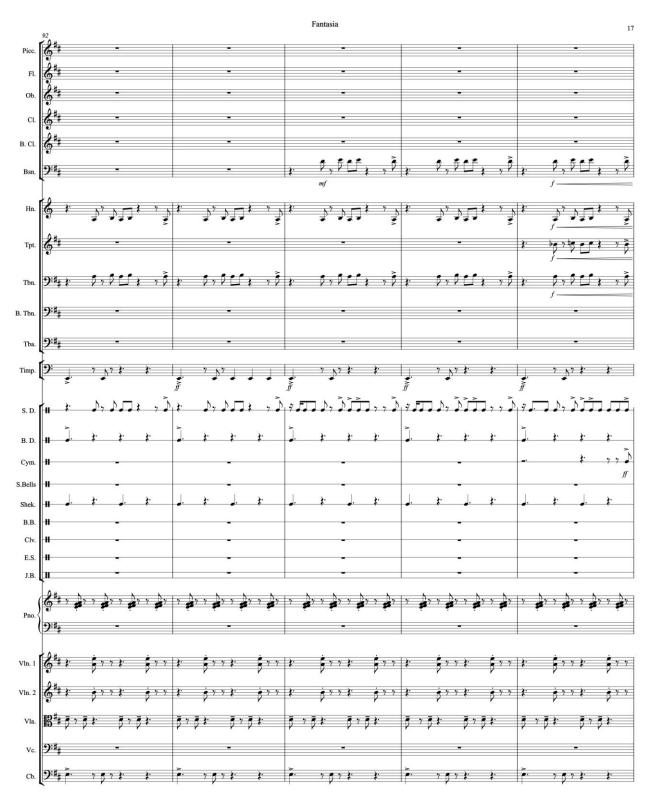




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APPENDIX B

THE FUGUE: KEY WORDS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Exposition. The initial presentation of the main theme of the fugue, consecutively, in all voices.

S. Subject. The main theme of the fugue in its home tonality.

Motive. A short melodic cell, which can be recycled throughout a work in order to provide unity.

Codetta. Also referred to as a *link*; a short passage used to join together the statements of the subject and answer in a fugue; can refer to more than one contrapuntal part occurring at a time.

CS. Counter-subject. A part played at the same time as the subject, (or answer). There have to be at least two repetitions for the melodic line to be considered a countersubject. There can be more than one countersubject in a given fugue -- ("Contradanza" has two).

RA. Real Answer. The repetition of the fugal subject in the key of the dominant. A *real answer* is an exact transposition of the subject; a *tonal answer* is an inexact transposition, as it has had melodic alterations.

Middle Section. After the "exposing" of the theme in the exposition, the middle section is freer and usually involves some modulations.

Episode. A joining section, like a codetta, only longer.

ME. Middle Entry. The appearance of the subject, sometimes in a different key, in the middle section.

Stretto. The "narrowing" of the entrances of the subjects and or answers, so that the subject is heard in another voice before the first iteration is complete. Used to create excitement. Stretti can be *complete* or *incomplete* depending on whether they involve entrances from all the voices in the fugue, which would be complete, or not -- (incomplete).

Final Section. The last section of a fugue, involving a return to the tonic key. A coda may follow the final section.

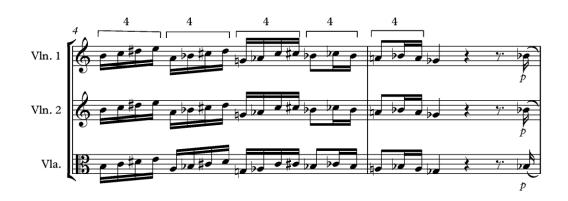
Tierce de Picardy. The ending of a minor piece in its parallel major key.

APPENDIX C

Fig. 6.1

Danzon Vivo String Soli: mm. 32-38.







APPENDIX D

PIANO MONTUNOS: "DANZÓN VIVO"

Fig. 7.1a: Piano montuno implying A mixolydian.



Fig. 7.1b: Piano montuno implying A phrygian (43).

