Eduardo Herrera

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Philanthropy, Latin Americanism, and Avant-garde Music

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For Adriana

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Acknowledgments

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now that we are all adults, and that is a wonderful thing. Hermann Cuervo, Clara Guerrero, Andres Paz, and María Alejandra Cuervo have been sincerely encouraging, and I could not have wished for a better family-in-law. In our house, Ney and Gusy have been the best pets I could have ever hoped for, except for the night when Gusy accidentally scratched my face, requiring me to have a beard for the rest of my life. Regardless, those two cats have spent more time with me than nearly any other living creature, and I love them very much.

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Eduardo Herrera
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

INTRODUCTION

Elite Art Worlds

IN 2011, I ATTENDED the fiftieth-anniversary celebration of the creation of the *Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales* (CLAEM; Latin American Center for Advanced Musical Studies) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The event was by all accounts an absolute success. Seeing composers reunite with their cohorts to celebrate the anniversary of a crucial moment in their professional formation was an unforgettable experience. These composers, representing multiple Latin American countries, had exchanged letters, then emails, for the last four or five decades. They had programmed, studied, and taught one another's music and had maintained professional and personal ties throughout their lives. As an outsider, a historian watching the people I write about share stories in 1960s Buenos Aires about their musical and non-musical adventures, with an overall sense of camaraderie, I was strongly affected. At the time I had been studying the history of CLAEM for about six years, and had maintained personal communications with most of them. But I had failed to realize the strength of the social ties that had been created among these composers. It was then perhaps when I fully understood that the legacy of CLAEM was not simply having educated and perfected the techniques of over fifty of the most important Latin American composers of the second half of the twentieth century. More than that, CLAEM had brought them together to a place where they could share ideas, get to know one another, and create a special bonding that led to the most significant generation of composers from the region.

The event was based on a relatively harmless lie. CLAEM had started its activities only in May 1962, but the organizers had seen the opportunity to get the funding necessary for the event, and with the uncertainty of political changes and clientelistic networks that often are attached to such monies, they decided to go ahead and ignore the slight historical discrepancy. "Also," said Eduardo Kusnir, one of the

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composers organizing the event, "we are only getting older."[1] This was sadly premonitory. Between that moment, and the day I write this introduction, many of my key interlocutors in creating a broad scope view on CLAEM have passed away. It is in their memory, and in honor of those who are still with us, that I write this book.

CLAEM was created in 1962 with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Torcuato Di Tella Institute as a graduate center for studies in Western art-music composition. During the next decade, CLAEM offered two-year fellowships to a total of fifty-four young Latin American composers for intensive study with local, North American, and European teachers, such as Olivier Messiaen, Aaron Copland, Iannis Xenakis, Gerardo Gandini, Luigi Dallapiccola, Riccardo Malipiero, Francisco Kröpfl, Vladimir Ussachevsky, and Luigi Nono. The extended length of the fellowships allowed students to deeply engage with contemporary compositional techniques and works and to create lifelong networks of colleagues at a regional level not seen before among Latin American composers.[2] By the time of its closing in 1971, CLAEM had become an epicenter for the embrace, articulation, and resignification of avant-garde musical practices in Latin America and had launched the careers of a large group of composers who would simply be known as "la generación del CLAEM" (the CLAEM generation).

This book combines oral histories, ethnographic research, and archival sources to reveal CLAEM as a meeting point of US and Argentine philanthropy, local experiences in transnational currents of artistic experimentation and innovation, and regional discourses of musical Latin Americanism. The significance of this monograph goes beyond situating the crucial yet undocumented role of CLAEM in the history of Latin America's art music.[3] The presence of internationally recognized

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[1] Eduardo Kusnir, interview by author, Buenos Aires, June 16, 2011.

[2] Previous significant interaction in events such as the Berkshire Summer Festival, the Caracas Festival of Latin American Music, and the Inter-American Music Festival were notable, but none had the time depth provided by two years of group work.

[3] No comprehensive monographic study in English or Spanish covers this crucial historical moment, and very little musicological historiography in the United States and Europe concerns the extensive, creative, and active classical musical life throughout Latin America during the second half of the twentieth century. In Spanish, the first book to partially discuss CLAEM was John King's *El Di Tella y el desarrollo cultural argentino en la década del sesenta*, but as the author himself noticed in the 2007 edition of his text, a musicological account of the center still remained to be written. A more recent volume compiled by Castiñeira de Dios (including my own contribution), as well as articles by Hernán Vázquez on the reception and impact of the first generations of fellowship holders, have filled some of the gaps, but like King's book, these articles are available only in Spanish and have accessed sources only in Buenos Aires. Two important primary sources resulted from the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of CLAEM: a compilation of interviews to former fellows of CLAEM edited by Hernán Vázquez and the facsimile reproduction of part of Alberto Ginastera's correspondence curated by Laura Novoa. See John King, *El Di Tella y el desarrollo cultural argentino en la década del sesenta* (Buenos Aires: Asunto Impreso, 2007, reprint from 1985); José Luis Castiñeira de Dios, ed., *La música en el Di Tella: Resonancias de la modernidad* (Buenos Aires: Secretaría de Cultura, Presidencia de la Nación, Argentina, 2011); Hernán G. Vázquez, "Música de jovenes compositores de América: La actividad del *Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales del Instituto Torcuato Di Tella de 1961 a 1966 y su representación en la prensa*," (MM thesis, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, 2008); Hernán G. Vázquez, "Alberto Ginastera, el surgimiento del CLAEM, la producción musical de los primeros

composers at CLAEM contributes to the destabilization of narratives of art music that place Latin America on the peripheries of that tradition. The regional scope of CLAEM brings to the foreground a large number of composers from a multitude of countries, thus continuing the expansion of US scholarship on twentieth-century Central and South American art music.[4] Steering away from master narratives and composer-centric historiography, it is the center—not Alberto Ginastera, CLAEM's director, as a composer—that becomes the articulatory node of this narrative.[5] Three themes frame this study and aim to establish a conversation with broader topics in the humanities and social sciences: philanthropy as manifested from the United States and Argentina, the embrace of avant-garde and experimental practices, and the emergence of a discourse of musical Latin Americanism.

PHILANTHROPY AS CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

In this book, CLAEM becomes a case for studying philanthropy as cultural diplomacy, illuminating the relationships between elite groups in Argentina and the United States, larger issues in foreign policy, specific overlaps of public and private interests, and beliefs about what can be accomplished by funding the arts.[6] United States cultural diplomacy, understood as "the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding,"[7] is most often thought of as being generated from governmental actors,

becarios y su representación en el campo musical de Buenos Aires," *Revista argentina de musicología* 10 (2009): 137–93; Hernán G. Vázquez, ed., *Conversaciones en torno al CLAEM: Entrevistas a compositores becarios del Centro Latinoamericanos de Altos Estudios Musicales del Instituto Torcuato Di Tella* (Buenos Aires: Instituto Nacional de Musicología "Carlos Vega," 2015); and Laura Novoa, ed., *Ginastera en el Instituto Di Tella: Correspondencia 1958–1970* (Buenos Aires: Biblioteca Nacional, 2011b).

[4] See also Alejandro Madrid, *In Search of Julián Carrillo and "Sonido 13"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015) and Ana Alonso-Minutti, *Mario Lavista and Musical Cosmopolitanism in Late Twentieth-Century Mexico* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming), and Alejandro L. Madrid, *Sounds of the Modern Nation: Music, Culture, and Ideas in Post-revolutionary Mexico* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008).

[5] Ginastera's work and biography have been carefully studied in, among others, Malena Kuss, "Ginastera (1916–1983): La trayectoria de un método," *Revista argentina de musicología* 14 (2013): 15–52; Deborah Schwartz-Kates, "The Correspondence of Alberto Ginastera at the Library of Congress," *Notes* 68, no. 2 (2011): 282–312; Deborah Schwartz-Kates, *Alberto Ginastera: A Research and Information Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Erick Carballo, "De la pampa al cielo: The Development of Tonality in the Compositional Language of Alberto Ginastera" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2006); and Pola Suárez Urtubey, *Alberto Ginastera en 5 movimientos* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Víctor Lerú, 1972). See also works by Buch, Hess, Novoa, Payne, and Vázquez cited elsewhere in this work.

[6] Throughout this book, I use cultural diplomacy as a branch of public diplomacy. Following Justin Hart, I see diplomacy as just one aspect of an expanded conception of foreign policy, which is in turn "one (rapidly shrinking) part of U.S. 'foreign relations.'" Justin Hart, *Empire of Ideas: The Origins of Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 13.

[7] Milton C. Cummings, Jr., *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey* (Washington, DC: Center for Arts and Culture, 2003), 1.

including formal diplomats, the Department of State, or governmental agencies such as the United States Information Agency (USIA) or the Office of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA).[8] Richard Arndt argues that if "cultural relations grow naturally and organically, without government intervention," then "cultural diplomacy can only be said to take place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flow to advance national interests."[9] CLAEM's case contradicts Arndt's conclusions by bringing to the foreground the work of non-governmental diplomacy and the messy complexity of the public-private divide as experienced by individuals participating in philanthropy as it actually exists. The commitment to this project was intimately tied to Cold War political ideas, and this association blurred the lines among philanthropy, cultural diplomacy, foreign policy, and private interests. For better understanding of this complexity, this book builds upon and dialogues with the last two decades of scholarship on public diplomacy by exploring instances in which music articulates foreign relations and expands the diplomatic realm, in this case by looking outside of government and into the private sector.[10]

By focusing on Latin America, this work complements and adds to the study of narratives about music diplomacy, Pan Americanism, and Inter-American relations. So far, most of these narratives have centered on what Justin Hart calls a first phase of US public diplomacy (1936–1953), in which Latin America often served as an early laboratory to test practices that the United States would later use worldwide.[11] In what could be described as a second phase, CLAEM's case foregrounds the directions that cultural diplomacy—hand in hand with philanthropy—took during the late 1950s and 1960s. This diplomatic moment was no longer framed by the US Good Neighbor policy, but by the establishment and demise of the Alliance for Progress,

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Richard T. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2005), xviii.

[10] See Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015); Emily Abrams Ansari, "'Masters of the President's Music': Cold War Composers and the United States Government," (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2010), and Emily Abrams Ansari, *The Sound of a Superpower: Musical Americanism and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[11] Hart, *Empire of Ideas*, 3. See Carol A. Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor: Music, Difference, and the Pan American Dream* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013b); Gisela Cramer and Ursula Prutsch, eds., *¡Américas unidas! Nelson A. Rockefeller's Office of Inter-American Affairs (1940–46)* (Madrid: Iberoamericana Vervuert, 2012); and Jennifer Campbell, "Shaping Solidarity: Music, Diplomacy, and Inter-American Relations, 1936–1946" (PhD diss., University of Connecticut, 2010). Also important in understanding the direction that the Rockefeller Foundation's support for music took after CLAEM is Michael Sy Uy, "The Recorded Anthology of American Music and the Rockefeller Foundation: Expertise, Deliberation, and Commemoration in the Bicentennial Celebrations," *American Music* 35, no. 1 (2017): 75–93.