INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®
NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI
RICE UNIVERSITY

The Orchestral Music of Tania León

by

Bethany Louise Harvey

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Master of Music

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

[Signatures and names of committee members]

Houston, Texas

January, 2002
ABSTRACT

The Orchestral Music of Tania León

BY

BETHANY LOUISE HARVEY

A biographical sketch describing Tania León's musical education and activities introduces the study, which focuses on elements of León's compositional style. Her style is marked by colorful orchestration and rhythmic complexity. Eight orchestral scores by León will be examined here to reveal these traits. The conclusion to the study explores Jacques Barzun's idea of program music relative to León's orchestral music.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. Introduction.................................................................................. 1

II. General and Stylistic Concerns.................................................. 7

III. Tones......................................................................................... 11

IV. Concerto Criollo....................................................................... 21

V. Batá.......................................................................................... 29

VI. Kabiosile................................................................................... 36

VII. Carabalí.................................................................................... 42

VIII. Para Viola y Orquesta............................................................... 50

IX. Horizons.................................................................................... 58

X. Desde......................................................................................... 65

XI. Contradictions and Conclusions: Tania León in Context.......... 75

Bibliography..................................................................................... 78
I. INTRODUCTION

Tania Justina León, the only daughter of Oscar León de los Mederos and Dora Ferrán was born in Havana, Cuba, on May 14, 1943.\(^1\) She is of French, Spanish, Chinese, African, and Cuban descent. The first of her family to study music\(^2\) or attend college, León displayed a vivid intellectual curiosity about music at an early age. When she was a young child (three or four years old) León developed a fondness for classical music. Family members and friends would gather around the radio to listen to mambos and boleros, but young León would toddle over to the radio and change the station to hear classical music.\(^3\) Her grandmother, Rosa Julia de los Mederos, became León's earliest musical mentor, enrolling her in lessons at the Carlos Alfredo Peyrellade Conservatory.

León continued to study at the Peyrellade Conservatory until the early sixties. She received a B. A. in solfège and theory in 1961, and a B. A. in piano in 1963. Students at the conservatory studied traditional classical composers as well as Cuban and Latin American composers. The Conservatory was heavily influenced by French teaching methods. The curriculum emphasized solfège and score reading, which were traditionally important elements of the curriculum at the Paris Conservatoire.

In 1963, León entered the National Conservatory in Havana where she completed a master's degree in music education. During her last year at the conservatory, León

---


\(^2\)Although León was the first in her family to study music, she was not the first to take an active interest in it. While a teenager, she and her brother created a vocal performing group with friends that lived nearby. León wrote a few pieces for the ensemble, which was her first experience with composition.

\(^3\) Tania León, Personal communication, May 9, 2001.
began composing seriously for the first time. She also served as an accompanist for student recitals. One particular classmate of León’s, Paquito D’Rivera (who is now a Grammy-winning composer, saxophonist and clarinetist) performed a classical recital with León and played her bossa nova, Ciego Reto, as an encore. Her nonmusical studies at Havana University finished off León’s Cuban education. At the advice of her parents, León studied accounting and business administration there. She received her degrees in these disciplines in 1965. This gave León a little bit of security; she could still pursue music, but had other skills to utilize if needed.

Influenced by her French training at the Peyrrellade Conservatory, León thought that Paris would be the next logical step in her musical training. In 1967, León acquired a free plane ticket on a “Freedom Flight” to Miami. The free ticket was a result of a lottery set up by the Catholic Church. This turn of circumstance, she then thought, was the first step in her journey to Europe. But León never made it there. Planning to stay in New York just briefly enough to network with musicians and earn some money, León quickly put down roots, made important connections with the Dance Theater of Harlem, and entered New York University.

Despite speaking only a few words of English at the time\footnote{Tania León, Pre-concert lecture Desde, Carnegie Hall, March 18, 2001. She humorously notes that when she first entered the United States, the only words she knew were “yes,” “no,” and “María” (from the popularity of West Side Story). León also recounts a story in which she was pulled into a passionate student protest at New York University shortly after the death of Martin Luther King. The students began chanting loudly and León asked a friend, “What are they saying?” He replied to her, “Don’t worry. Just yell whatever you want along with them.”}, León was experienced and talented enough to secure a position as an accompanist for the Dance Theater of Harlem. Often León improvised pieces in the dance company’s rehearsals and chose the tone of the improvised music based on the choreography that Arthur Mitchell, the dance
instructor of the theater, developed. In 1970, Mitchell persuaded León to go to work on her first orchestral piece, *Tones* for the dance company. While working with the Dance Theater of Harlem, León founded a music school and an orchestra to be affiliated with the organization. León composed four more ballets for the dance company before leaving in 1983: *The Beloved* (1972), *Haiku* (1973), *Dougla* (1974), and *Belé* (1975). These pieces are scored for chamber ensembles. In addition, *Haiku* also uses computer-generated sounds.

Soon after León arrived in New York she was accepted into New York University. Upon entering the university she studied piano with Vladimir Padwa. At the end of her first semester of studies with him, he asked her to do some composition exercises. Seeing her aptitude for it, he arranged for León to begin composition lessons with Ursula Mamlok, who also taught at the university. Mamlok was León’s first and only formal composition teacher. As her studies with Mamlok continued, León’s focus began to shift gradually toward composition. However, León still had an active performing life. While at New York University, León concertized as a pianist with the New York College Orchestra, the New York University Orchestra, and the Buffalo Symphony Orchestra. After completing a Master’s degree in composition (1973) at New York University, León began a doctorate in acoustics, but her blooming professional life kept her from completing it.

In the years immediately following the end of her formal education, León had a number of diverse musical experiences. She was involved with musical theater and in

---

5Mamlok’s education, influences and compositional style will be addressed briefly in the next chapter of the study.
1978 served as the music director for *The Wiz* and *Godspell*. The previous year León, along with Julius Eastman and Talib Rasul Hakim, founded the Brooklyn Philharmonic Community Concert series. In conjunction with this weekly series, León prepared programs and conducted concerts. This concert series grew out of a summer outreach program to present the work of minority musicians to the Brooklyn community. In 1978, León studied conducting at Tanglewood and was coached by Seiji Ozawa and Leonard Bernstein.

León’s most current activities have been equally diverse. In 1985, León joined the faculty of Brooklyn College where she has held the title Full Professor since 1993. She has most recently been awarded a Claire and Leonard Tow Professorship for 2000-02. In addition to her duties at Brooklyn College, León also has had a number of visiting professorships, among these the Karel Husa Visiting Professor of Composition at Ithaca College and Visiting Professor of Composition at Yale. She has also had several residencies, including the post of Resident Composer at the Lincoln Center Institute (1985), Visiting Lecturer at Harvard University (1993), and Composer in Residence/New Music Advisor with the New York Philharmonic (1993-1997). In 1999, León received an honorary doctorate from Colgate University.

An important project León was involved with recently was the Sonidos de las Americas Festival, which lasted from 1993 to 1998. With Dennis Russell Davies, the music director of the American Composers Orchestra, León developed this yearly series of concerts and master classes. Each year the festival focused on one particular country in Latin America (Brazil one year, Argentina the next, etc.). León commented upon the

---

*Godspell* opened off-Broadway in 1971. Its official Broadway production (which León directed near its close) was in 1976.
need for a festival that connects United States composers with Latin American composers in an interview.

When Villa-Lobos was alive, he would be back and forth here, and he would have these relationships with Bernstein and Copland and you know, these were old-boy relationships. So, [this is] the reason why Bernstein write [sic] those songs in West Side Story or why Copland wrote Danzón Cubano. They had a relationship with the activities and the composers and the musical entities of Cuba. None of that seemed to be that strong when we began this project and this is one of the things that the festival tried to correct.... These entities, which are from the same hemisphere, need to talk to each other, whether they agree or disagree with the music that they are writing.  

León’s first opera, Scourge of Hyacinths, was finished in 1994. Based on a BBC radio play by Nigerian author and Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka, the work has had several important performances. The first was its premiere at the Munich Biennale in 1994. The second was a series of eleven performances in Geneva in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights during the summer of 1999. The story is allegorical and tells of a political prisoner in an unspecified country. The prisoner’s mother (Tiatin) also plays a pivotal role in the plot.

As León’s career continues, more interesting musical activities will be added to this list. Already León is making her way into the teaching canon; her Kabiosile appears in the twentieth-century section of Joseph Kerman’s music appreciation text, Listen. Although much can be said about Tania León, the primary focus in this study is an analysis of her eight orchestral pieces. In an introduction to the analyses, I will briefly outline two major characteristics of León’s orchestral style. First, I will discuss her characteristically colorful orchestration that seems to be influenced, at least in part, by Webern’s pointillism and the style of her only composition teacher, Ursula Mamlok.

---

7 http://www.newmusicbox.org/first-person/aue99/interview.html. The website is titled New Music Box. It is a web magazine published monthly by the American Music Center focusing on new music. The quote is taken from an extensive interview that Frank Oteri conducted with León in the August 1999 issue.
León uses instruments not to craft beautiful melodies, but rather to explore the unique timbres that they can create. In addition, León uses a wide variety of percussion instruments, some of which lie outside standard orchestral usage. Descriptive information about unfamiliar instruments will be given in footnotes to the instrumentation supplied at the beginning of each analysis. Second, I will also explore León's use of rhythm. The rhythms León uses in her compositions are often complex, and she uses them to unify her musical material.

In the conclusion, I will attempt to place León in context musically and historically by focusing on the trend of eclecticism in late twentieth-century music, showing how León's music is an important manifestation of that trend. A clear problem presents itself here: how does one know objectively which works are important or representative when they are new? It is difficult to make defining judgments of a work initially, but perhaps it is easier to discuss important characteristics of late-twentieth-century pieces.
II. GENERAL AND STYLISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

León's orchestral pieces range in date from *Tones*, composed in 1970, to *Desde*, completed just this year. The scores analyzed here are all in C and supplied by León's primary publisher, Peer Music. The discussion will be confined mostly to León's works scored for full orchestra. The exception in this group is *Tones*, which is a ballet scored for chamber orchestra. It is important to include this, León's earliest work, with the later pieces to cover the length of León's orchestral composing career.\(^8\)

In a discussion of León's works a few issues should be considered. First, there must be an understanding of León's distinctive pointillism in orchestration that seems to be influenced, at least in part, by Anton Webern's pointillist orchestration. León is familiar with the varied tone colors each instrument produces and uses them in various ways to create a colorful palette of sound. She makes great use of special effects such as pizzicatos, muted instruments, and glissandos. Also present in León's works are quick changes in dynamic levels that produce flashes of sound in the orchestral texture. León's characteristic orchestration is also an expression of the influence of Ursula Mamlok with whom León studied at New York University. Mamlok's style is characterized by serial technique, a wide variety of tone colors, and an emphasis on lyricism. Mamlok initially

studied with George Szell in the early- to mid-forties at Mannes College. He trained his students conservatively, leaving them to learn about modern music on their own.

Eventually Mamlok learned about Schoenberg, and serial and twelve-tone technique through studies with Roger Sessions. She incorporated these techniques into her personal aesthetic of expressive introspection to create a distinct style. This philosophy of internalizing musical techniques and flavoring them with one’s own musical values is something that Mamlok has seemed to pass on to León.10

Another important aspect of León’s orchestration is percussion. Going beyond the traditional orchestral percussion instruments (e.g., timpani, bass drum, and snare drum), León uses instruments associated with jazz, Latin American dance bands, traditional African people groups, and Asian culture.

Another important aspect in León’s music is her use of rhythm. León often uses complex rhythms in her compositions. Syncopation and use of cross-rhythms are mainstays of her style. Often León writes several different beat divisions against each other (e.g., triplets against septuplets, sixteenths against quintuplets, etc.). This may be


10I would like to mention another mentoring relationship between women composers here. Florence Price (1888-1953) taught piano and composition to Margaret Bonds (1913-1972) during the first half of the twentieth century. Both women were African-American and flourished in Chicago. I am unsure whether León is familiar with these composers, but in some sense, I believe León is the musical heir of these composers. León shares an interesting similarity with her predecessors. Like Price and Bonds, León was in a mentoring relationship with a woman composer. Perhaps this helped to strengthen her confidence in the field she was pursuing and has contributed to success. It is difficult to tell. In the sources I have encountered, she rarely talks about her studies with Mamlok. In a recent communication, she reminded me that although she had only one formal composition teacher, she did a great deal of score study and therefore had studied with not only Mamlok, but the masters. It is interesting to note how León downplays her studies with her former teacher. Further studies may explore the significant sociological implications behind León’s relationship with Mamlok. Marcia Citron in *Gender and the Musical Canon*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 61-64 discusses the significance of the mother-daughter bond in the development of women composers. In addition, the “mother-daughter” mentoring relationships that happen between women in music are also significant.
somewhat difficult to coordinate in orchestral settings and adds a challenging element to León's pieces. Rhythm is the most significant unifying element in León's music. Since melody is virtually nonexistent, especially in the later pieces, one has to look to other aspects of her composition for coherence in her music. Various rhythmic motives are introduced and developed during the course of each work that propels the musical motion. While timbral change is the main source of contrast, the use of recurring rhythmic elements is the main source of stability.

Most of the emphasis in the analysis will be on describing the tone colors and rhythms León uses in her orchestral music. Often I will focus on discrete events rather than the overall form of a piece. León's style lends itself better to this type of analysis. Rather than a homogenous, blended landscape, León's music resembles much more a brilliant collage of varying colors and images.
III. TONES

Description: Ballet for Chamber Orchestra

Duration: 18 minutes

Commissioned by: Dance Theater of Harlem

Premiered: First movement, January 8, 1971; Entire work, summer 1973

Instrumentation:

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

Clarinet in B-flat

Horn in F

Trombone

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion

Cymbals, Wood block, Tom tom, Xylophone, Vibraphone, Campanello

Solo Piano

Strings

Campanello is an alternate name for hand bells.
*Tones* is León’s first orchestral foray and, arguably, the work that began León’s career as a serious composer. While she was working as the rehearsal pianist for the Dance Theater of Harlem, Arthur Mitchell persuaded León to write a new piece for the choreography he was creating. León had recently begun composition studies with Ursula Mamlok and was eager to try out her new skills by writing an orchestral piece. The first movement of *Tones* premiered at the Dance Theater of Harlem’s New York debut performance at the Guggenheim Museum. The entire work was performed two and a half years later during the 1973 American Dance Festival.

The circumstances surrounding composition of the work began patterns that still continue in León’s work. First, this piece and all of León’s orchestral works are commissions. Performing orchestral music is expensive, and time-consuming and, as a result, does not happen readily. Perhaps in writing only for commissions León is assured that her music will not only be performed, but that an audience will hear it. Second, in terms of style, rhythm is an essential element in this work. Notable elements in the first two movements are the slower rhythms and lyrical phrasing in the woodwinds and brass that contrast with the quicker rhythms and syncopation of the piano and strings. In the final movement, rhythm is the driving element of the music. The note values are quick, and syncopation prevails. León’s affinity for sevenths and seconds can also be seen here.

This work is a piece for piano and orchestra in three movements. Written for chamber orchestra, *Tones* is scored for performing forces somewhat smaller than León’s later works. León omits flutes and oboes from the first movement, bassoons, and trumpets from the entire piece.
Tones opens with a one-beat fortissimo chord played in the opening measure by the strings, piano, percussion and clarinet. León quickly uses dynamic contrast; the fourth beat of the measure is quiet. Triplet subdivisions of the beat dominate this opening section. A soft clarinet solo is the focal point of the first four measures. After the first four measures there is a double bar that clears the way for the movement proper to begin. After the pause, there is a meter change in the fifth bar from 4/4 to 6/4 in the orchestra, 6/8 in the piano solo. This is characteristic of León; her compositions are filled with metric changes. Also, in the fifth measure, a lyrical clarinet melody begins and is accompanied by the strings and piano. In the clarinet line there are subtle, gradual dynamics marked to aid in phrasing (Example 1).

EXAMPLE 1 (mm. 5-11):

In León’s later works we see much less of this; dynamics are more abrupt and the homophonic texture is abandoned in favor of a greater focus on tone color. In m. 7, the original time signature, 4/4, returns. In the opening measures, the basses hold a pedal F, which helps to define F as a tonal center. The center briefly shifts to G in the fifth measure. As the clarinet solo line continues, the strings and piano shift between duple
and triple divisions of the beat in the accompaniment. The clarinet periodically pauses for a few measures while the rhythmic figures in the strings continue. The horn enters at m. 35 with slower note values than the rest of the orchestra. Its function here is to support the busy accompaniment in the strings and the melody in the clarinet. The piano has a four measure solo beginning in measure 64; the rest of the orchestra is silent. The jazzy rhythm heard here is accompanied by chromatic melodic motion (Example 2).

EXAMPLE 2 (mm. 64-67):

![Music notation]

TONES
© 1970 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The clarinet re-enters at the end of 67 for a quick scalar flourish. Beginning in m. 69, the strings and piano dominate the texture playing unison, syncopated rhythms. At the same time, the percussion has running sixteenth notes interspersed with triplet quarter-eighth rhythms (Example 3).
EXAMPLE 3 (mm. 69-72):

As the violins continue this new rhythmic pattern, the piano brings back material from its solo a few measures before. The clarinet makes an appearance once again in m. 76 with lyrical lines marked *cantabile*. A fermata halts the activity of the music at m. 94. After five measures of transitional material, the horn takes up a lyrical line while the trombone, percussion, piano and lower strings play supportive roles (Example 4).
The clarinet returns in m. 107, taking over the lyrical line from the horn. As the first movement draws to a close, the horn and the clarinet continue the lyrical lines over the rest of the orchestra, sometimes separately, sometimes together. At measure 131 the first tempo indication is marked, an accelerando that continues to the end of the movement to dramatically finish the movement.

The second movement is considerably quieter than the first. Again, no tempo indication is given. The opening meter is 4/4. It begins with a tetra chord held over a B-flat in the piano (Example 5a). The timpani enters in the second measure with a roll; the trombone, strings and woodwinds enter in the third measure with a slightly chromatic melody interspersed with quarter rests (Example 5b).
EXAMPLE 5a (mm. 1-3):

EXAMPLE 5b (mm. 3-4)

Unlike the first movement, the entire woodwind section is used in this movement. Similar to the first movement, the upper woodwinds have a slurred, lyrical melody while the percussion has running sixteenth notes; simultaneously the strings have quicker, syncopated rhythms (Example 6).
EXAMPLE 6 (mm. 5-8):

TONES
© 1970 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

In measure 16, the strings have a scalar passage of sixteenth notes marked *cantabile*. The sixteenth rhythm is passed on to the piano for the following few measures (Example 7).
In m. 23 León uses pizzicatos and staccato markings for a timbral change. In m. 39, the strings join the woodwinds in their lyrical line. The lower strings, piano, and percussion continue their more rhythmic accompaniment patterns. At m. 116, the time signature changes to 6/8; the music is rhythmic and marked staccato here. Sets of quarter note triplets in the woodwinds, piano, and strings push the second movement to its conclusion. The movement ends on a B minor seventh chord.

The finale of the work has considerably more rhythmic drive than the first two movements. It begins with woodwinds and percussion only. The woodwinds have a three sixteenth note pickup to the second measure. The piano follows in m. 5 with continuously rising eighth notes. The strings are first heard at m. 9 with figures similar to the opening woodwind rhythm. Dotted eighth sixteenth note rhythms can be found in the viola, cello, and bass in mm. 9-19. With this rhythm, the lower strings play a supporting role to the violins, piano, and woodwinds. It is noteworthy that this movement shows a greater
occurrence of similar rhythms across instrument families. The first two movements are not so nearly motivically unified as the third. The primary recurring motive is a triplet eighth rest followed by a triplet sixteenth and a quarter note. This appears in various guises throughout the movement (Example 8a-8d).

EXAMPLE 8a (mm. 22-23):

![Piano staff notation]

TONES
© 1970 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 8b (mm. 46-47):

![2 Flutes and Piano staff notation]

TONES
© 1970 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
EXAMPLE 8c (mm. 58-60):

TONES
© 1970 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 8d (mm. 107-109):

TONES
© 1970 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

There is a considerable amount of antiphonal writing between the piano and orchestra. Throughout the movement, the piano has three- or four-measure solos, which are answered by an orchestral section. This practice underscores the concerto quality of the work.

As the piece draws to a close, there is a final appearance of the main motive three measures from the end (m.161). In the same measure, a passage of chromatic running
sixteenth notes appears first in piano and is passed to the woodwinds a measure later.

The piano is alone one last time on the downbeat of the final measure. The rest of the orchestra joins in on the second beat with a polychord sonority with notes common to the keys C, F and A. The timpani has the last word of the piece playing an F on the final upbeat.
IV. **CONCERTO CRIOLLO**

Description: Concerto for piano and timpani in three movements

Commissioned by: Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra

Duration: 20 minutes

Instrumentation:

2 Flutes (Second Flute doubles on Piccolo)

2 Oboes

2 B-flat Clarinets

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

4 Trumpets in C

3 Trombones

Percussion

  - Bass drum, Slap stick

  - Suspended cymbal

  - 4 Tom-toms

Timpani Solo

Piano Solo

Strings
León adheres to the traditional concerto form here. *Concerto Criollo* is the only piece where she uses this particular convention. The piano is the dominant solo instrument in this work; the timpani, while it intermittently has some important figures, generally plays a more supportive role. The word *criollo* in the title (or Creole) is related to colonialism. It refers to something that is indigenous to a country (especially countries in the Western hemisphere), but has a mixture of influences from the indigenous people, the colonizing nation, and other groups who may have settled in the country. León uses this title because of the amalgamation of musical influences that color the concerto.

The opening tempo is set at dotted quarter note equals 76. There are no sudden tempo changes in this movement. All of the tempo changes here are made gradually by means of *rallentando*, *ritard*, *meno mosso*, and the flexible *ad lib* sections in the piano solo part. The meter of the movement is 12/8, but, as per León's style, meter changes occur frequently throughout the movement. Although, León chiefly chooses to write in an atonal style, there are a few interesting tonal events in this movement. I would hesitate to say that there is any solid tonality because of the abundance of chromaticism, but there are several important tonal centers. A key signature of four flats begins the work, which reinforces the first tonal center heard in the work, A-flat. In measure 16, the key signature changes to three sharps but the tonal center changes to E. In measure nineteen, the key signature returns to four flats for another five measures, but it is difficult to determine the tonal center for that particular group of measures. In m.24, the signature changes again to two sharps. The tonal center moves from E in m. 24 to D in 25 to C-sharp in m. 26. The balance of the movement after m. 32 has no key signature. The descent of the tonal centers continues in m. 32 (B natural) and 33 (B-flat). A
becomes the dominant tonal center from m. 35 until 43. In m. 44, the center moves to C for several measures until a ritard brings us into m. 54. A cadenza-like passage begins here in the solo piano, but there is no tonal focus until m. 64 when D emerges. At measure 80, there is a shift to C that lasts two measures. The music begins to center around F in m. 94 and stays there until m. 102. From 102 until the end of the movement, the piece remains centered on A.

Throughout the movement there is a wide range of dynamics: from pp to fff. Dynamics often occur suddenly (e.g., the largest dynamic contrast is found in measure 104—fff at the beginning of the measure in the piano, p in the strings). León also makes great use of the subito marking for contrast. Also in this movement, León frequently uses long and short glissandos in the strings, brass, woodwinds, and timpani. Pizzicato is used quite frequently in the string section for an added tone color. The primary rhythmic motive seen in this motive is four sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note. This rhythm makes its first appearance in the initial measure (Example 9a) and is repeated many times in various guises throughout the movement (Examples 9b-9d):

EXAMPLE 9a (mm.1-3 piano):

CONCERTO CRIOLLO
© 1980 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
EXAMPLE 9b (mm.10-11 brass):

CONCERTO CRIOLLO
© 1980 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 9c (mm. 74-76 violins and violas):

CONCERTO CRIOLLO
© 1980 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
EXAMPLE 9d (m. 100 woodwinds):

The first movement ends quietly with pizzicatos in the lowest strings, the piano holding a single, low register B, and the timpani playing the last quiet note (A) of the movement.

There is no specific indication of tempo in the second movement. As the term *rubato* indicates, the tempo here is free and flexible. There are *rallentando* and *ritard* sections offset by *a tempo* markings, but these are the most specific tempo considerations in this movement. As in the first movement, there are frequent meter changes here. León uses the compound meters 6/8 and 9/8 as well as the simple meters 2/4 and 4/4. In the first two measures, no key signature is used. To introduce the movement, a pyramid
chord is built in the strings. First, the cellos and lower (divisi) violas enter on a B-flat and F respectively. The upper violas follow with an F at the octave preceded by the violins. The seconds enter first with a D and a harmonic on C; the first violins enter with an E followed by a harmonic on A.

EXAMPLE 10 (mm. 1-3):

CONCERTO CRIOLO
© 1980 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
In the third measure, a key signature of three sharps (the pervading key signature in this movement) is introduced. In m. 127, the original key signature (no sharps or flats) returns for a section that seems to have an inflection of A minor. Throughout the rest of the movement, the key signature changes several times. In addition to three sharps and no key signature, León uses four flats and three flats. The tonal center shifts from A to E over the course of the movement. The dynamics in the *Andante rubato* range from *ppp* to *mf*. In contrast to the abrupt changes in volume heard in the first movement, the quieter dynamics of the second movement are achieved more gradually. This sense of repose in the second movement provides a nice sense of balance. León uses trills and glissandos in the woodwinds and pizzicatos and harmonics in the strings to create interesting tone colors. A recurring rhythmic motive, a thirty-second note quintuplet, occurs in the flutes and oboes. This figure serves as an obbligato to the piano solo and the lyrical string melody.

**EXAMPLE 11a (mm.127-131):**

*CONCERTO CRIOLLO*
© 1980 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
As in the *Allegro moderato*, the timpani plays a single, quiet note to close the movement.

The finale has the most vigorous tempo in the entire piece (quarter note equals 92-104). Tempo changes are achieved gradually by means of *rallentando*, *meno mosso*, *accelerando*, and *piu mosso* indications. León continues to use varied meters in this piece. Most of the meters she employs in the finale are simple meters: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 6/4 and 7/4. The only compound meter in the piece, 3/8, is only used once—in m. 231. It is a transitional measure that bridges a passage where the violins have quick figures
against the accompanying lower strings to a passage where the roles are reversed: the lower strings have quick scalar figures against supportive tremolos in the bass. Here too in this movement one sees the first use of asymmetrical meters in the work. The meters 5/4 and 7/4 are used quite frequently in the finale. There is no key signature for the first two measures, but the beginning tonal center is F. In the third measure is a signature of four flats. In m. 226, the tonal center shifts to D-flat. It shifts again to B-flat in m. 232, to G in m. 241, and to A in m. 245. The original key signature (no sharps or flats) also returns in m. 245. A strong presence of F returns in the last half of m. 261, but I am not certain whether we could say the tonal center is there or not. Perhaps it is only used here to reinforce the dominant sound of A. In any case, the A tonal center returns when the signature changes to three sharps in m. 282. The natural signature returns in m. 290. A one flat signature appears in 291, but it immediately changes to the natural key signature in the following measure. The F tonal center re-emerges in m. 296 to set up a solid finish to the piece. The piece is drawn to its rousing end by a dramatic crescendo to fff and concludes on a tutti F. Similar to the opening movement, the dynamics heard in the finale cover a wide range, from pp to fff. However, unlike the first movement, they are achieved gradually; León uses no subito indications in this movement. Muted strings, pizzicatos, tremolos, glissandos, string harmonics, bass drum and timpani rolls, suspended cymbal rolls are all tone colors León utilizes to create a vibrant finale.
V. BATÁ

Description: Orchestral work in one movement

Duration: 6 minutes

Commissioned by: Bay Area Women’s Philharmonic

Dedicated to: Oscar León de los Mederos, the composer’s father

Premiered: March 16, 1985, Bay Area Women’s Philharmonic, JoAnn Faletta conducting

Instrumentation:

2 Flutes (Second Flute doubles on Piccolo)

2 Oboes (Second Oboe doubles on English Horn)

2 Clarinets in B-flat

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

4 Trumpets in B-flat

2 Trombones

Percussion 1

Sleigh bells, Castanets, Snare drum, 2 Bongos, 2 Tom-toms, Crotales,

Bass drum with cymbal, Maracas, Vibraphone

Percussion 2

Crash cymbals, Maracas, Anvil, 2 Timbales, Suspended cymbal, Marimba,

Crotales

Harp

Piano/Celesta

Strings
Batá is a work in one movement. It is the shortest of León's orchestral pieces, but perhaps her most successful; there are two recordings available for it.  

Batá is one of León's more personal compositions. The piccolo motive that opens Batá is the main unifying element in the piece. It represents León's childhood memory of her father whistling in the doorway when he came home each day. Although León uses the piccolo prominently in other compositions, she carefully reminded me in an email that they are not all representative of her father's whistle; the sound of the piccolo is simply a tone color she enjoys using. The piece is also held together by percussion figures inspired by the drumming tradition of the Yoruba people in West Africa. In a pre-concert lecture, León described an experience that she had with her father shortly before his death. When she visited Cuba shortly after her move to the United States, León and her father went to see batá drummers performing in a nearby village. León equates hearing these drums to a kind of spiritual experience--one that impacted her deeply.

As in all of the pieces discussed here, Batá contains variable meters and tempos throughout the piece. Often these changes occur suddenly. While many tempo changes may only last a few measures, the overall tempo vacillates between fast and slow from the beginning to m. 122. Quick changes in dynamics are also heard here. As mentioned above, Batá opens with a piccolo solo that represents the whistle of León's father. This motive is the main unifying element in the piece. Different versions of the motive appear in various places throughout the work (Example 12a-12c). In Example 12b, the motive is taken up by the flute and oboe before the piccolo plays it again.

---

14 Tania León, Pre-concert lecture, Carnegie Hall, New York City, March 18, 2001.
EXAMPLE 12a (mm. 1-6):

Grave \(^{4/8}\)

Piccolo

BATÁ
© 1985 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 12b (mm. 31-33):

Piccolo
Flute 2
Oboe 1

BATÁ
© 1985 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 12c (mm. 99-100):

Stringendo

Piccolo
Flute 2

BATÁ
© 1985 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
The string section enters in the second measure playing harmonics. León uses the marking *Grave* here to indicate a slow tempo in the beginning. As the piece continues, the orchestral texture thickens and the volume quickly rises to a *forte* dynamic level on the downbeat of m. 7. León scores sextuplets against quintuplets, sixteenths and a syncopated figure (Example 13a). This sort of rhythmic complexity is common in León’s music. Similar passages are seen in mm. 14 (Example 13b) and 57 (Example 13c).

EXAMPLE 13a (m. 7)
The orchestral texture remains "busy" throughout Batá; there are many aural events taking place within a given measure. A section marked by quick shifts in affect begins in m. 102. The beginning of the section is marked Adagio espressivo, lirico. The woodwinds have arpeggiated quintuplets and sextuplets in that measure, beginning at a forte dynamic level, but they decrease in volume as the measure ends. They are joined in the following two measures by the violins in a cross-rhythm figure that is comprised of duple and triple subdivisions. In m. 105 comes the first contrast in the section. The tempo immediately changes to Subito ritmico for two measures. With this change, the trumpets, trombone, tuba and percussion enter responding to the woodwinds and strings. The Adagio lyric section returns in m. 107 just for a measure. Again, the woodwinds and strings have unison rhythms, but not the same cross-rhythm as in the previous section. In this passages, León scores steady triplets, which lead to the (subito) quicker section in the next measure. The change from the Adagio to the Ritmico section happens once more; however, this time it is more gradual. A poco accelerando begins in m. 115 and leading to m. 122.

Sempre ritmico is marked in m. 122, resulting in a considerably brighter tempo than before. This marks a new section in the piece. Beginning in m. 137, there are two opposing cross-rhythms found in the orchestra. In this passage, the strings play broken chords in running eighth notes, with accents on various parts of the beat. Simultaneously, the percussion (cowbell and Tom-tom) has syncopations resulting from tied notes and eighth notes interspersed with varying lengths of rests. The percussion does not have the same accents as the strings, which results in a bit of rhythmic dissonance between the two sections (Example 14).
EXAMPLE 14 (mm. 142-44)

Gradually other sections join the texture, the entire orchestra being employed in m.155. The piccolo motive is heard once more in the final measure, quietly fading away.
VI. KABIOSILE

Description: Piano concerto in one movement

Duration: 6-8 minutes

Commissioned by: Commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra

Dedicated to: José León

Premiered: December 6, 1988, American Composers Orchestra, Dennis Russell Davies, conductor, Ursula Oppens, piano

Instrumentation:

2 Flutes (First Flute doubles on piccolo)

2 Oboes (Second Oboe doubles on English Horn)

2 Clarinets in B-flat

2 Bassoons (Second Bassoon doubles on Contrabassoon)

4 Horns in F

3 Trumpets in B-flat

3 Trombones

Timpani

Percussion 1

Bass drum with cymbal, Castanets, Agogo\textsuperscript{15}, Bells, 2 Clay drums (high, low Arabian hand drums)\textsuperscript{16}, 2 Bongos (high, low)

Percussion 2

\textsuperscript{15}The agogo is a struck bell from used by the Yoruba, Igalal and Edo people groups in Nigeria. Agogos are used for social dances and important rituals. Some makeshift versions of the instrument are played by striking a hoe blade with a heavy nail or a glass bottle.

\textsuperscript{16}Clay drums (darabuccas or Arabian hand drums) are traditionally made with baked clay molded into a half hourglass shape. The head of the drum is made with sheepskin, which is tightened by strings. These drums range from four to eighteen inches in height and three to twelve inches in diameter. The characteristic sound that the clay drums produce is a short, low pitched, upward rising glissando.
4 Tom-toms, Snare drum, Roto-tom (C-sharp), Marimba
Solo Piano
Strings

*Kabiosile* is the only one of León's pieces to be discussed in a textbook. As mentioned in the introduction, this work appears in the third and fourth editions of *Listen*. The piece is also included with the anthology of recordings that accompanies the text. Curious about this choice, I contacted Joseph Kerman, asking him what his rationale was for including the piece in *Listen*. Here is his response:

[Kabiosile was included] obviously because I was impressed by the piece and thought it would "teach" well—that is, if I were still teaching I could imagine making it interesting to students, and illustrative of certain aspects of contemporary music (in this case, influence of non-Western musics). I feel concerto-like pieces work well for beginning students—more to listen for than in a symphony, for example. Also, the firms conduct market research indicating that instructors want music by women composers, and I am in strong sympathy with that wish, though I would never include music I don't believe in....Since *Listen* first came out in 1972 I have changed the late chapters systematically edition by edition to include at least one piece written close to the time of publication, including music by little known composers: Douglas Leedy, Daniel Lentz. Give [sic] students the idea music is still happening. *Kabiosile*, written in 1988, was pretty close to the date of our 1996 edition and we kept it in the next one too.  

*Kabiosile* is named for the African god of thunder, lightening and fire. *Kabiosile* is also known in Cuban mythology. The stormy mood and often-thick texture of the work recreate the power and intensity of this strong legendary character. *Kabiosile* is a piano concerto in one movement. The piece begins with a cadenza, a series of ascending arpeggios with the highest note often marked with a fermata (Example 15). There are no bar lines in this opening section. Although this passage is marked *ad libitum*, León indicates a tempo of a quarter note equals 108-112. These ascending arpeggios recur throughout the work often in free, *ad libitum* sections. Present in these solo passages are

---

a fair amount of sevenths and seconds. Improvisatory and introspective, the sound of these passages bears a resemblance to jazz piano solos by recent artists such as Keith Jarrett.

EXAMPLE 15 (m. 1)

![Musical notation]

KABIOSILE
© 1988 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The orchestra begins to enter at the end of the sixth measure. The trumpets enter first with a syncopated figure followed by the lower woodwinds, trombones, horns and strings. These figures are marked by subito forte and forte-piano dynamics and a number of accents. At the pickup to m. 14, a textural pyramid begins first in the strings in the timpani adding the brass and woodwinds the next measure. This sets up the next piano solo; it begins with a sextuplet at the end of measure 14. The orchestra re-enters at measure 16. A few measures later, there is an interesting cross-rhythm with the orchestra against the piano. The orchestra has triplet divisions in this section while the piano most often has divisions of seven (Example 16).
Example 16 (mm. 23-24)

Another *ad libitum* section happens at 28. *Subito forte* is marked on the highest notes of each arpeggio. Again, there is an abundance of seconds and sevenths. This short, three-measure section is also to be repeated (Example 17).
An interesting effect occurs in m. 33. The upward rising arpeggiation that is the defining characteristic of the piano solos is taken up by the woodwinds and strings. As the arpeggio rises, it is passed from the lowest to the highest members of each section. Although these arpeggios have melodic and harmonic implications, of equal interest here is the change in timbre within the measure (Example 18).
A slower section begins in m. 50. It begins with the piano alone. The internal divisions of the beat shift from duple to triple and quintuple. The piano is again improvisatory and creates a calming affect to contrast with the fiery material heard before. When the orchestra enters, the texture is sparse. Here the orchestra is simply an accompaniment to the piano, rather than a competitor with it. After a gradual *accelerando*, the original tempo (quarter note equal 116-120) returns in m. 89. The rhythmic complexity, the rising arpeggio motives, and sudden dynamic changes continue as the music builds dramatically to the end of the work. The last note is an accented *fortissimo* D-sharp played by the piano alone.
VII. CARABALÍ

Description: Orchestral work in one movement

Duration: 17 minutes

Commissioned by: Cincinnati Symphony

Dedicated to: Yordanka León, the composer’s niece

Premiered: January 17, 1992 Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Jesús Lopez-Cobos conducting

Instrumentation:

3 Flutes (Third Flute doubles on piccolo)

2 Oboes

English Horn

2 Clarinets in B-flat

2 Bassoons

Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F

3 Trumpets in B flat

3 Trombones

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion 1

Timbales\textsuperscript{19}, Marimba, Snare drum, Wind chime, Wood sticks,

Vibraphone, 1 Roto tom\textsuperscript{20} (tuned to F)

\textsuperscript{19}Timbales are a pair of single-headed, cylindrical drums associated with Latin American dance bands. These instruments can be pitched and the heads of the two drums are often tuned some significant
Percussion 2

Zurdo\textsuperscript{21}, Bass drum, Clay drums, Slit drum\textsuperscript{22}, Chain (on metal plank), 3

Tom-toms, Snare drum, Cowbell, Castanet (mounted), Bamboo chime\textsuperscript{23},

Suspended cymbal (18")

Percussion 3

2 Bongos, Cabasa\textsuperscript{24}, Pedal bass drum, Guiro\textsuperscript{25} (mounted), Sizzle cymbal,

Talking drum\textsuperscript{26}, Metal chimes, Tam-tam, Hi-hat, Glockenspiel, 2 Agogos

Harp

Piano/Celesta

Strings

interval apart. They are played with wooden sticks and have a bright, ringing sound. It is noteworthy that
in French timbales, connotes timpani. The instrument described here is called \textit{timbale creole} or \textit{creole} in
French.

\textsuperscript{21}Roto-toms are a set of small single-headed drums with a shallow shell. They are usually
grouped together in sets of seven and have a range of three and a half octaves. Each drum has a compass of
an octave and can be tuned by rotating a spindle attached to it. Peter Maxwell Davies has used them often
in his works in place of timpani. An American percussionist and composer, Michael Colgrass, invented
roto-toms in the 1960s.

\textsuperscript{22}The zurdo is a large Peruvian drum.

\textsuperscript{23}Slit drums are a group of idiophones that are pitched. Not literal drums, they were traditionally
used for communication between tribes in Africa where tonal languages are prevalent. They vary in size
from the smallish woodblock to instruments that are made from entire tree trunks. The two sides of the slit
are carved, each to a different thickness, to produce different tones.

\textsuperscript{24}Thought that its woody rattle sound would scare away evil spirirs, bamboo chimes were used
in Asian households as door chimes. These instruments are made up of small bunches of bamboo rods
suspended by string and attached to a bar that is nearly a foot long.

\textsuperscript{25}The cabasa (alternately: cabaza, cabaça, afoxe, afôche, afuche and gourd rattle) is a hollow,
round, or pear-shaped gourd covered with a net of beads. It is frequently used in Brazilian samba music.
The gourd can be large or small, and it usually has a somewhat ridged surface. Modern versions of the
instrument have been made with a wooden wheel covered with a mesh of metal beads attached to a handle.
These instruments produce a rolling, gravelly sound.

\textsuperscript{26}The guiro (also guiro, guero or rape) is traditionally made from a gourd and also can be heard in
Brazilian samba music. The gourd is serrated to form a series of notches. Sound is produced when a
scraper (made of metal or wood) sweeps across the notches. A characteristic scratchy, middle pitched
sound is associated with this instrument. Guiros are typically a little over a foot long. Traditional guiros
are thin on one end, broad on the other, and painted with bright colors. A noteworthy usage of the guiro is
in "Cortège du Sage" from \textit{Rite of Spring}. Varèse also uses the instrument in his \textit{Ionisation}.

\textsuperscript{26}Talking drums are a specific kind of slit drum found in both African and Asian cultures. These
instruments are also known as squeeze drums and hourglass drums. The drum is widest nearest the heads
and narrows toward the center. It is played with the hand or a hook-like stick. The drum is held under one
arm and the pitch changes by squeezing the narrow middle part of the drum.
Carabali is named for a group of men who inhabited the Calabar region of the Congo in Nigeria during the slave trade. Rather than face a life of oppression, these men hid in the thick forest where they knew they would face death. Carabali is marked by sudden and frequent changes in tempo, meter and affect. This piece maintains an energetic pace throughout. In Carabali, León scores for a wide range of percussion instruments that are not commonly heard in traditional orchestral settings. Many of these instruments are connected with Cuban and African musical cultures.

Carabali is a work in one movement. León uses an interesting metrical technique in the piece that she uses again later in Horizons and Desde. There are sections marked "regardless of beat," which are given separate metronome markings from the rest of the orchestra. Although these passages are written in line with the rest of the score, they may not line up directly with the orchestra and are not intended to. These passages occur toward the middle of Carabali in the oboe, trumpet and piano (Example 22a-22c).

EXAMPLE 19a Oboe (m. 168):

CARABALÍ
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
EXAMPLE 19b Trumpet (mm. 170-73):

Carabalí
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 19c Piano (mm. 170-73)

Carabalí
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The opening is marked Deciso; a quarter note equals 96. Sforzando accented sixteenth notes occur throughout the opening of Carabalí. After a section characterized
by loud dynamics and thick textures, in m. 24 the orchestra rests while the timpani plays alone. The slit drum, low woodwinds and low strings join the timpani in m. 29.

Beginning in m. 58 and continuing to m. 61, the horns change quickly between open and stopped bells. The rhythm seen here prefigures the rhythm heard a measure later in the strings and four measures later in the woodwinds (Example 22).

EXAMPLE 20 (mm. 58-60)

CARABALÍ
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

At a few points in the piece, León writes improvisatory, rhythmically complex solos. They often have many grace notes, and in spite of their rhythmic complexity are intended to be quite lyrical (Example 21a-21b).
EXAMPLE 21a (mm. 71-72)

In m.190, the violas have glissando on the G-string, quickly playing various notes on the harmonics of that string. Above it, the violins have high harmonics that glissando down to a low pizzicato (Example 22). This occurs again two measures later.
EXAMPLE 22 (mm. 189-190)

Repeating cells of musical material occur in the piano and harp in measure 218.

There are wide leaps in this passage and it is marked *dolce cantabile*. Like the first set of examples for this work, these passages are marked at a different tempo than the rest of the orchestra (Example 23).

EXAMPLE 23 (m. 218)

As the piece draws to a close, the trumpets periodically emerge heroically in fanfare-like passages. These musical gestures represent the heroism of the Carabalí men.
In the final appearance of the fanfare, the three trumpets slowly die away (Example 24a-24c).

EXAMPLE 24a (mm. 291-295)

CARABALÍ
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 24b (m. 320)

CARABALÍ
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
EXAMPLE 24c (m. 328)

CARABALÍ
© 1991 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
VIII. PARA VIOLA Y ORQUESTA

Description: Viola concerto in three continuous movements

Duration: 18 minutes

Commissioned by: The Grant Park Music Festival, Women’s Philharmonic, Queens Symphony, and Chamber Symphony of Princeton

Premiered: July 29, 1994, Grant Park Symphony Orchestra

Dedicated to: Ethel Leginska, United States based English pianist, composer, and conductor

Instrumentation:

2 Flutes (Second Flute doubles on piccolo and Alto Flute)
2 Oboes (Second Oboe doubles on English Horn)
2 Clarinets in B-flat (Second Clarinet doubles on Bass Clarinet)
2 Bassoons (Second Bassoon doubles on Contrabassoon)
2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in B-flat
Trombones
Timpani
Percussion

Marimba, Vibraphone, Tom tom, High hat, Sizzle cymbal, Frame drum, Log drum

27“Orquesta” has a double meaning here. First, it literally refers to the performing forces that accompany the soloist, the traditional classical orchestra. It can also refer to orquesta music, vernacular music heard in Latin American dance halls.

28Frame drums are instruments with one or two heads stretched over a frame or hoop. They can be found in Indian, Asian and Native American cultures. Larger types of the frame drum are often beaten with a stick. Smaller frame drums are played by hand. In the Middle East, women often play frame drums.
Celesta/Harpsichord

Solo Viola

Strings

Para Viola y Orquesta is León’s only work for a stringed instrument and orchestra. Rozanna Weinberger premiered the concerto, which was drawn from the violist’s personal musical roots. The work has jazz and cantor-like sounds, types of music that have influenced Weinberger throughout her career.\textsuperscript{30} As in Concerto Criollo, León organizes this piece into the traditional three-movement concerto form. However, here she does not follow the fast-slow-fast arrangement of the traditional concerto. The first movement is slow and quiet, while the second alternates between passages of calm and energetic flurries of sound. The final movement, rushed and hurried, is filled with technical virtuosity.

The first movement is marked Lento, sempre rubato. The opening sonority is a C minor chord against a B minor seventh, which is quietly held by the woodwinds, brass and percussion (timpani and marimba). Against this backdrop of sound, the viola enters in the third measure. The quality of the solo is improvisatory with wide leaps and quick flourishes. In the beginning of the movement, the orchestra violas (divisi) have the most interesting line in the orchestra. León writes ascending harmonics followed by wide leaps with harmonics (Example 28). It is interesting that León allows the viola section to

\textsuperscript{29}Log drums are instruments that are carved out of large tree trunks and were used traditionally as signaling drums in Africa. This instrument is made from a log that is hollowed and sealed off at each end with wooden stoppers or plates. Most often log drum are cylindrical, but often they are trough-shaped. Ginastera includes these unique instruments in his Cantata para America Magica.

be an integral part of the opening section rather than having it support the solo instrument.

EXAMPLE 25 (mm. 8-10)

![Musical notation]

The long held notes from the beginning continue throughout the first movement. These accompanying notes often fade away to *niente* before a series of rests. The upward rising, then leaping viola harmonics return in m. 41. The viola quietly ends the movement on a long held G.

The second movement begins with the viola alone. The orchestra enters in the second measure with sextuplets played against quintuplets. The solo viola responds with quick arpeggiated then scalar flourishes. A virtuosic passage happens in measure 87 where the soloist has thirty-second sextuplets with double stops. León uses cross-rhythms here accenting the last note of the sextuplet (which is tied to the first sextuplet of the following beat) on beats three and five (Example 26).
A section marked *Tempo libero (sempre rubato)* begins in measure 133. The held note notation from the first movement returns. This serves as an accompaniment to the solo viola. Here the solo viola has virtuosic double and triple stops in this uninhibited passage. León uses graduated beaming to indicate a minor accelerando in the solo viola (Example 27).
EXAMPLE 27 (mm. 134-137):

Para Viola y Orquesta
© 1995 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The new tempo, the held note orchestral accompaniment and the free viola solo continue to the end of the movement. The solo viola ends the movement with an ascending scalar passage up to a harmonic G (Example 28).
As in the second movement, the finale of the concerto begins with the viola alone. This opening solo has triple stops, wide leaps and syncopation. León’s characteristic rhythmic complexity is present in this movement. In one passage, the woodwinds have quintuplets against syncopated sixteenths and triplets (Example 33).
EXAMPLE 29 (mm. 201-203)

PARA VIOLA Y ORQUESTA
© 1995 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

Similar to the first movement, the violas and cellos have scalar passages on harmonics. Measure 213 begins a new section marked Ritmico. There is considerably more rhythmic drive here. In addition, there are similar rhythms throughout instrument families (Example 30).
EXAMPLE 30 (mm. 213-214)
The solo viola has continuous sixteenth notes in this passage with intermittent double stops. The orchestral texture soon thins out; the brass and woodwinds are left playing long, held notes, which are accented upon their attack, whose release is followed by an accented, staccato sixteenth. A fermata at m. 241 halts the drive of the sixteenth notes in the viola solo. The orchestra re-enters, only for a measure, at m. 242. The viola begins its furious sixteenth note passage again in m. 244. The orchestra halts again and the viola begins its cadenza at m. 258 while the marimba has a roll that decrescendos to niente. The cadenza is marked by virtuosic triple and quadruple stops, syncopation, quintuplets and graduated beaming (Example 31).

EXAMPLE 31 (mm. 267-269)

![Example 31 illustration]

PARA VIOLA Y ORQUESTA
© 1995 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The viola begins the previously heard sixteenth note figure in m. 274 and the orchestra re-enters on the final beat of that measure. The final push to the end of the piece comes from the viola, which plays its continuous sixteenth note line. The sixteenth notes are taken up once more by the orchestra and crescendo powerfully to the end.
IX. **HORIZONS**

Description: Orchestral work in one movement

Duration: 12 minutes

Commissioned by: The Hammoniale-Festival der Frauen 1999

Dedicated to: Irmgard Schleier and in memory of Philippa Schuyler

Premiered: July 2, 1999, NDR\textsuperscript{31} Symphony Orchestra, Peter Ruzica conducting

Instrumentation:

- 2 Flutes (Second Flute doubles on Piccolo)
- 2 Oboes (Second Oboe doubles on English Horn)
- 2 Clarinets in B-flat
- 1 Bass Clarinet
- 2 Bassoons
- 4 Horns in F
- 3 Trumpets in B-flat
- Tenor Trombone
- Bass Trombone
- Tuba
- Timpani
- Percussion 1
  - Pitched Roto-toms, Tom-toms, Snare Drum, Bongos, Vibraphone,
  - Marimba

---

\textsuperscript{31}This is the Norddeutscher Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra, which is located in Hamburg.
Percussion 2

Timbale, Suspended Cymbal, Tam-tam, Medium Tom-tom, Bass Drum,
Snare Drum, Bongos
Harp
Piano
Strings

The work is dedicated to Irmgard Schleier, the director of the Hammoniale-
Festival der Frauen. The work is also dedicated to the memory of Philippa Schuyler, an
accomplished pianist, composer, and writer.\textsuperscript{32} Schuyler was best known as a piano
prodigy and the daughter of African-American journalist, George Schuyler and white
artist and journalist Josephine Cogdell. She began playing the piano at the age of three.
Schuyler began composing at a very young age, and she begun making public
performances shortly thereafter. At age 11, Schuyler began touring and she had written
over a hundred piano pieces by the time she turned 13. The New York Philharmonic
performed her most celebrated work, “Manhattan Nocturne,” in 1944.\textsuperscript{33} She performed
in over eighty countries, and gave command performances for Ethiopia’s Emperor Haile
Selassie and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium. She briefly toured in Europe as Felipa
Monterro, changing her name to conceal her parentage. In the sixties, Schuyler published
five books about her life and travels. Shortly before her untimely death in 1967, Schuyler
had begun a career as a news correspondent and had published articles in several

\textsuperscript{32} A interesting account of Schuyler’s life and career appears in Kathryn M. Talalay, “Philippa
\textsuperscript{33} Other pieces by Schuyler include \textit{Sleepy Hollow Sketches} (1945–6), \textit{Rhapsody of Youth} (1948)
and \textit{Nile Fantasy} (1965). These pieces along with Schuyler’s other manuscripts are housed at the
Schomberg Center in New York.
languages. She died tragically at the age of 35 in a helicopter crash during the Vietnam War while attempting to rescue Catholic schoolchildren from a war zone. In addition to its premiere, Horizons was performed at the Tanglewood music festival last year.34

Horizons begins quietly with a ppp tremolo in the cellos. The clarinet and oboe follow with long held notes, which set the somewhat reflective tone of the work. The tempo in the beginning is slow, between a quarter note equals 64 and 68. In the opening measure, the bass intermittently plays a single sixteenth note marked pizzicato. This adds an interesting color to the texture. Cadenza-like sextuplets with grace notes mark the entrance of the second oboe into the orchestra. The woodwinds hold most of the musical interest in the piece and passages similar to this occur in the woodwind section throughout Horizons (Example 36a-36d).

EXAMPLE 32a (m. 5)

HORIZONS
© 1999 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

EXAMPLE 32b (mm. 86-88)

HORIZONS
© 1999 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The flurry of woodwind activity continues throughout the beginning of the piece, accompanied by string tremolos and vibraphone rolls. A new section begins at m. 22, marked *Poco più mosso*. There are many grace notes, *glissandos* and quick thirty-second note arpeggiated passages. Measure 28 is marked *Senza misura* and the flutes have a short, cadenza-like moment there. The first and second flute move in contrary motion to each other, then the first flute leads the way to the next measure (Example 33).

EXAMPLE 33 (mm. 27-29)

HORIZONS
© 1999 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
In measure 48, there is a special kind of *glissando* notation that León will use later in *Desde*. The first and last notes of the glissando are notated with exact rhythmic values. However, the middle notes of the *glissando* are elided with a diagonal line (Example 38).

**EXAMPLE 34 (mm. 48-49)**

Several measures later the *Senza misura* marking returns, this time in the percussion section. The timpani and Tom-toms (pitched) play well-accented figures here, which are marked *rubato*. León also uses graduated beaming here to indicate quick *accelerandos* and *ritardandos* (Example 35).
EXAMPLE 35 (m. 75)

HORIZONS
© 1999 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The piano enters in m. 76 with a small cell of musical material that is repeated at quarter note equals 98. As in Carabali, this tempo does not match the tempo of the rest of the orchestra, and the piano is not expected to line up aurally with the orchestra as it does in the score. León uses harmonics in the piccolo against quick leaping tremolos in the upper strings in m. 94 (Example 36). This sets up a new section with similar rhythms throughout the orchestra.
Più mosso, recitativo is marked at 152. Sixteenth triplets are heard in the brass and woodwind quintuplets are added in m. 154. This section continues until m. 162 where the horns, trombones, and tuba enter with syncopation that is a transition to the Molto libero section at m. 164. Here the woodwinds return with free, cadenza-like passages accompanied by string tremolos. A florid clarinet solo ends this section. A brighter tempo (Allegro) begins at m. 175 and continues to m. 196, which is marked meno mosso
e rubato, poco rall. al fine. The mood here is calm and introspective. A clarinet solo marked by wide leaps and grace notes solemnly ends the piece (Example 37).

EXAMPLE 37 (mm. 204-207)

HORIZONS
© 1999 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher
X. *DESDE*

Description: Orchestral work in one movement

Duration: 20 minutes

Commissioned by: The American Composers Orchestra

Dedicated to: Dennis Russell Davies and the American Composers Orchestra

Premiered: March 18, 2001, American Composers Orchestra, Dante Anzolini, conducting

Instrumentation:

- 3 Flutes (Second and Third Flute double Piccolo)
- 2 Oboes (Second Oboe doubles English Horn)
- 2 Clarinets in B-flat
- Bass Clarinet
- 2 Bassoons
- 4 Horns in F
- 3 Trumpets in B-flat (First Trumpet doubles Trumpet in D)
- 2 Tenor Trombones
- Bass Trombone
- Tuba
- Timpani
- Percussion 1
  - Bass Drum, Roto-Toms, Bongos, Tom-toms, Sizzle Cymbal,
  - Glockenspiel, Crotales
- Percussion 2
Tom-toms, Snare drum, Bongos, Castanets, Cowbell, Maracas, Cymbal, Vibraphone

Percussion 3
Bass drum, Congas, Timbales, Log drum, Cymbals, Marimba

Harp

Piano (doubles Celesta)

Strings

*Desde* is a Spanish preposition meaning "from" or "since." León calls her most recent work "very personal" and equates writing this piece with walking down the streets of New York City with the sounds from her youth integrated into the external sounds she hears.\(^{35}\) The tempo markings in this piece are considerably slower than her other orchestral works because of the more reflective tone of the piece. Much of the writing here is antiphonal and instrument families are used together to produce contrast. León confines the instruments to their traditional families and uses them in nontraditional ways. This varies from the orchestration technique of Mahler or Ravel, who often orchestrated based on timbre alone and used nontraditional combinations of instruments. In the beginning the percussion is pitted against the rest of the orchestra. At other times in the work, León uses the woodwind choir to contrast with the brass. Overall, the instrument families function together.

The opening measures of *Desde* are scored for percussion only. Beginning with a burst of sound, this opening passage is loud, and comprised mostly of sixteenth notes with intermittent grace notes and accents. On the pickup to the fourth measure, the brass

and celesta enter. The celesta plays a quick descending set of thirty-second notes followed by grace notes and holds a B-flat, E, F chord. There are several forte-piano dynamic markings in this opening section. They mainly occur on longer notes, producing a bell-tone effect. The basses have a long glissando at mm. 6 and 7. The clarinets follow with scalar passages marked with small crescendos and diminuendos. Another burst of percussion happens in m. 10, but is much shorter than the opening. Cluster chords in the piano and a grand pause follow it. The oboe has a free cadenza-like section. León indicates this by writing a series of notes; the first and last of which are beamed and have stems. The notes that lie between them are only notated by note heads (Example 38).

EXAMPLE 38 (mm. 11-13):

Steady sixteenth notes and quintuplets in the harp are heard in the next section. Each note is accented and León calls for gradual, “hairpin” dynamics here. Against this are syncopated and accented notes in the trumpets and strings. The flute and piccolo have running, arpeggio-like, thirty-second notes. These passages lead into a unique, somewhat
aleatoric notation that León uses throughout the piece (Example 39). The curved line indicates the contour of the line. The passage is marked *spiccato glissando*, which means León wishes the notes to be quick, but separated. Measure 15 begins a three measure series of upward rising glissandos in the string section. León notates the exact pitch for the first and last notes of the glissando; the middle notes are beamed and have stems, but no pitch is specified (Example 39). A diagonal line connects the pitches at the beginning and end of the glissando. At m. 85, this notation returns.

EXAMPLE 39 (m. 13)

Muted brass sonorities add a new color to the texture a few measures later. The brass section begins to dominate the texture at measure 20. The brass has long held notes marked $fp$, again creating a bell-tone effect similar to the beginning of the piece. In each
voice part of the brass choir. The bell tone effect happens at different times producing quick timbral shifts in the texture. The brass section holds and embellishes a chord in this passage (Example 40).

EXAMPLE 40 (m. 20)

A decided contrast happens when the upper woodwinds have a flourish in m. 23. The same brass material as above returns a couple of measures later. The woodwind flourishes return in m. 27. Once again, the brass choir embellishment and prolongation of the E-flat minor seventh chord returns, this time with a difference. The trumpets alternate between open and closed bells. In m. 53, León uses tempo in an interesting way. While the upper woodwinds have a repeating section at eighth note equals 110, the rest of the orchestra remains at the opening tempo (Example 41). This interesting event recurs at measure 59.
EXAMPLE 41 (m. 53)

At m. 69 staggered entrances in the woodwinds marked *mezzo forte-piano* lead to a flutter tonguing passage with staggered articulation, grace notes and accents (Example 42).
EXAMPLE 42 (mm. 69-72)

A new section begins in m. 99 marked *Poco più mosso e ritmico*. León uses a new aleatoric marking here. The exact notes in this notation are unspecified, but a group of note stems at varying heights indicating relative pitch are beamed together (Example 43).
The tempo marking changes again at m. 114. It is marked *Poco meno* here. The English horn, strings and vibraphone only play in this section. The lower strings have a cluster chord that is rearticulated on off beats, and the upper strings have muted thirty-second note scalar passages. Tremolos from the vibraphone add color to the texture while English horn has a somewhat free passage. All of the pitches here are notated, but the duration of each note is approximate. In this section, León also uses an interesting method of beaming often seen in twentieth-century music to indicate *accelerandos* and *ritardandos* (example 44). This notation is seen in the trumpet a few measures later.
León indicates a bow scratching sound in the score in mm. 132 through 133 and again at m. 203 through 204. She notates this effect with a long horizontal line drawn through a series of accents (Example 45). In the first passage where it appears, this marking is found only in the cellos as they increase in volume from *mezzo forte* to *fortissimo*. When the marking appears again, the violas, cellos, and basses are playing syncopated rhythms and making a dramatic crescendo from *mezzo piano* to triple *forte*. 
EXAMPLE 45 (m. 132-133)

The brass section comes together with a unison rhythm at measure 143. The pitches played here form chords whose sonorities resemble altered augmented sixth chords. In each measure, the chords start on off beats and crescendo to the final accented note of the measure (Example 46). Similar passages follow in the woodwinds and strings.
EXAMPLE 46 (m. 143-145)

DESDE
© 2001 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

The following section marked *Adagietto dolce e molto tranquillo* has long, syncopated note values and glissandos in the strings against the woodwinds. Again, the woodwinds have notated pitches with unspecified rhythmic values. This adds an unpredictable tone color to the texture. The tempo dissonance returns in m. 166 where the woodwinds have a tempo of eighth note equals 110, while the strings continue at quarter note equals 48. The *Adagietto* tempo and affect returns suddenly at m. 179, which is
followed by syncopated dotted quarter sixteenth figures in the strings. A *senza mizura* section begins in the flute section at m. 193 (the first and second flutes play piccolo here). As in the cello part earlier in the piece, León indicates accelerandos and ritardandos with graduated beaming notation. The entire woodwind section and the strings begin a *senza mizura* section at m. 208. This contrasts with m. 210, which is exactly in tempo. The *senza mizura* marking returns two measures later and sets up the final section of the work.

A one-measure percussion *soli* opens this new section. A quicker tempo (dotted quarter equals 104-108) and similar rhythms in the woodwinds, brass, strings and piano usher in a marked character change in the latter part of piece. León uses orchestration that resembles hocket between different instrument families here in this rhythmically focused passage (Example 47).
In this section, the cello holds a D natural for four measures. The piano plays running eighth notes (the meter is 6/8) on white note cluster chords. The activity breaks in m. 240 to make way for another cadenza-like percussion section. The orchestra returns with its hocket figures and again the percussion interrupts at m. 253. The orchestra reenters before the final percussion soli at m. 266. Quintuple and sextuple divisions of
the beat, grace notes, and accents as well as gradual increases in volume characterize the percussion *soli* sections (Example 48).

**EXAMPLE 48 (m. 266)**

---

*DESDE*
© 2001 Peer Music Company
Used By Permission of the Publisher

A *molto rallentando* slows the pace the music to *Lento*. A cymbal roll is played while the viola holds a D natural. The cymbal finishes the roll as the cellos begin an expressive, lyrical melody. As the piece draws to its conclusion, the violas and cellos gradually withdraw from the texture, leaving only two violas and a solo cello to quietly finish the piece.

---

36León has handwritten a correction in the score after the *Lento* marking, *"doloroso e molto espressivo."* This gives a greater indication of the final mood of the piece.
XI. CONTRADICTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS: TANIA LEÓN IN CONTEXT

Jacques Barzun, in the article, "The Meaning of Meaning in Music: Berlioz Once More," argues that, all music is programmatic. That is, each piece of music carries a series of outside parameters that govern the way it is composed and perceived. Barzun says text, form, and what he calls a "hidden program" among the constructs that impact the outcome and the understanding of a piece of music. He takes a general approach: program music is literally music that is controlled and understood by any extra-musical means. Barzun argues that true programmatic elements are purely musical; program notes and evocative titles (most often thought to be the elements that make music programmatic) merely "encircle a work" or create a setting for it. Although Barzun's over-generalized definition of program may not be entirely practical, it is provocative and can be applied to a discussion of León's music. In this discussion, I will use the traditional concept of program music in tandem with Barzun's definition.

Most applicable to my concern here, León's orchestral music, is Barzun's idea of a hidden program. Barzun describes a hidden program as the consistent emotional response from an audience elicited by composers whether it is dramatic, joyful, or mournful. These responses are social constructs, and people from a particular culture respond similarly to certain musical effects. The hidden program is always the same in

---
37Jacques Barzun, "The Meaning of Meaning in Music: Berlioz Once More," Musical Quarterly 66 (January 1980): 1-20. Barzun says the impetus for the article was a colleague who simplistically remarked that Berlioz' music was always "about something." Essentially, his point in this essay is to prove that all music is "about something."
38For example, there is a clear difference between the funeral marches of Beethoven or Mahler and those played in New Orleans. The different types of music produce different affects (two distinctly different programs for the same type of ceremony) resulting from two different approaches to death in each culture. The phenomenon of bi-culturalism muddies the waters a little; I suppose classical musicians from
León's music: she is a classical Cuban musician longing for home. Her use of cross-rhythms and percussion in the traditional classical orchestra consistently (yet indirectly) communicates this idea.

León conveys her program via evocative titles or verbal explanations and by the hidden program perceived by her audience. Her continued use of these vying notions of program goes against the ambivalence León has when describing her position as a musician, her creative process, and her cultural identity. This ambivalence is the way in which León resists being a cultural, sexual, national, or racial Other in the classical music establishment. The music most often performed in the twentieth century was that of dead, white, European men. As León does not fit this description, she seeks to subdue her differences in order to smooth her career path.

Titles, dedications, and program notes are external ways that León seeks to direct a listener away from her usual program of Cuban nostalgia to something new. Often these extra-musical associations have a connection to the hidden program. In Batá, for example, there are no major stylistic changes from her other pieces, but in it she tells a colorful story of her youth (from child to young professional). This makes the piece much more accessible and easier to understand. It seems as though this sort of "marketing" could have made Batá León's most recorded piece. Another of León's more successful pieces, Kabiosile, has a connection to an African (and Afro-Cuban) god of thunder. However, there is nothing in the music itself that is inherently any stormier than her other pieces. What is most interesting about León's titles is that they provide autobiographical information. One could construct a single-sentence biography based

New Orleans have learned to respond to both types of funeral music in the same manner or can adjust to each music's meaning when it is heard.
upon them and their associations alone: The *Tones* (musical career) of my *Horizons* (opportunities in America) have been somewhat stormy (*Kabiosile*), but my strong, independent heritage (*Carabali*), my love for my family (*Batá*), my multi-faceted culture (*Criollo*), and my eclectic musical background (*Orquesta*) have taken me from (*Desde*) my childhood in Cuba to a successful artistic career.

León's career is at its midpoint. It is likely she will continue to compose in large forms (orchestral and opera) as well as chamber forms. León is at once conservative and avant-garde. Even the most creative aleatoric elements she uses were pioneered half a century ago. Her atonal language is over a century old. What is new about León is her eclecticism. Moving beyond the primitivism of the late nineteenth century, eclecticism represents art that comes from more pluralistic world. Because the world is smaller and communication has become easier, it is therefore more common for people to become familiar with and interested in cultures other than their own. Not a technique, but more of a philosophy, eclecticism has emerged as the most original musical style of the late twentieth century.

Eclecticism can be defined in two ways: first, pieces that are derived from several sources of preexisting material and second, pieces that utilize several different musical styles, whether it be different style periods, different ethnic musics, etc. The third movement of Berio’s *Sinfonia* is a clear example of the first type of eclecticism. This movement with quotes from Mahler’s Third Symphony, *La Valse, La Mer*, and the writing of Samuel Beckett is a swirling collage of sound. It, however, does confine itself to references from western culture. The orchestral pieces discussed in this study show the other side of eclecticism. It is interesting that this type of eclecticism has grown up
parallel to the discipline of ethnomusicology. This type of eclecticism most often is more personal than the first. As mentioned above, León allows her Cuban heritage to come through in the music that she writes, but still uses conventions of classical music to do so.

León's (incomplete) biography, the study of her works, and her placement within late twentieth century trends all serve to inform the reader of the complex issues surrounding the life and career of the composer. The complexities so often found in her music reflect the complexities in her career where she must negotiate the space between her identity as an Afro-Cuban woman and her professional life. This complexity is what makes up León's distinct musical style and the true program this style conveys.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Ficher, Miguel, Martha Furman Schleifer, John M. Furman, eds. "Tania León." Latin


http://www.americancomposers.org/bios.htm


http://www.casaninja.com/christi/academic/wp2.html

http://www.newmusicbox.org/first-person/aug99/interview.html

http://www.nysca.org/tania.html

http://www.ohio.com/bj/fun/cover/102397.html

http://www.yale.edu/oham/excerpts.html#leon


_____ ° Personal communication. May 9, 2001.


Rabinowitz, Peter J. “Society for New Music: Women Composers.” High Fidelity/


