

América Salvaje

Instrumentation

Flute 1 / ocarina 1 / water whistle 1
Flute 2 (also Piccolo) / ocarina 2 / water whistle 2
Oboe 1 / ocarina 3 / water whistle 3
Oboe 2 / ocarina 4 / water whistle 4
Clarinet in Bb 1 / ocarina 5 / water whistle 5
Clarinet in Bb 2 / ocarina 6 / water whistle 6
Bassoon 1 / ocarina 7 / water whistle 7
Bassoon 2 / ocarina 8 / water whistle 8
Horn in F 1 / pututo 4
Horn in F 2 / pututo 5
Horn in F 3 / pututo 6
Trumpet in Bb 1 / pututo 1
Trumpet in Bb 2 / pututo 2
Trumpet in Bb 3 / pututo 3
Trombone 1 / pututo 7
Trombone 2 / pututo 8
Bass Trombone / pututo 9
Tuba / pututo 10
Percussion 1: Glockenspiel, Tom-toms (high, low and Floor Tom)
Percussion 2: Tubular Bells, Wood Blocks (high and low), Triangle, Suspended Cymbal, Tam-tam
Percussion 3: Tam-tam, Marimba (4 octaves)
Percussion 4: Crotales (C'-B'), Suspended Cymbal, Güiro, Gran Cassa
Piano
Strings

América Salvaje, symphonic poem. Published by Filarmonika.
Duration: 14 minutes.

This composition originated as a commission from the Minister of Education of Peru, Javier Sota Nadal, on the occasion of the inauguration of the National Library in March 2006. I was convinced that the occasion called for the use of a musical genre with strong links to literature, thus I decided to base my piece upon the poem "Blasón" by José Santos Chocano. The result is a symphonic poem that aims at reflecting Peru's multicultural roots with the same clarity and strength as the original text.

América Salvaje travels across several sonic landscapes of diverse origin in which Andean and European instruments are used. Each section surpasses the previous one in energy and so the whole piece constitutes a permanent crescendo whose culmination is only achieved in the very last section. This piece -in which millenary Andean instruments, contemporary techniques, Afro-Peruvian folklore and modal/tonal harmonies converge, is an ambitious attempt to reflect the richness and complexity of Peruvian musical heritage.

The first sound in the piece is produced by the pututo, an Andean ceremonial instrument that was used to summon the people to events of great relevance, and, generally, of ritual character. In the same way, the pututos are used here to summon the people to an event of historic importance, the opening of an essential cultural institution, the National Library of Peru.

This piece was premiered on March 27, 2006 by the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer himself. Among those present were Alejandro Toledo, President of Peru; Javier Sota Nadal, Minister of Education and Sinesio López, Director of the National Library.

Jimmy López © 2007

Blasón¹

Soy el cantor de América autóctono y salvaje: mi lira tiene un alma, mi canto un ideal. Mi verso no se mece colgado de un ramaje con vaivén pausado de hamaca tropical...

Cuando me siento inca, le rindo vasallaje al Sol, que me da el cetro de su poder real; cuando me siento hispano y evoco el coloniaje parecen mis estrofas trompetas de cristal.

Mi fantasía viene de un abolengo moro: los Andes son de plata, pero el león, de oro, y las dos castas fundo con épico fragor.

La sangre es española e incaico es el latido; y de no ser Poeta, quizá yo hubiera sido un blanco aventurero o un indio emperador.

Blasón (Coat of Arms)²

I am the singer of America, indigenous and wild my lyre has a soul, my song an ideal. My verse does not rock with the slow swing of a hanging tropical hammock...

When I feel Inca, I render vasallage to the Sun, which gives me the sceptre of its royal power; when I feel Hispanic and evoke colonial times my verses seem like crystal trumpets.

My fantasy comes from a Moorish lineage: the Andes are made of silver, but the lion, of gold, and the two castes I melt with epic heat.

The blood is Spanish and Inca is the heart-beat; and had I not been a Poet, perhaps I would have been an adventurous white man or an Indian emperor.

¹ José Santos Chocano (Lima-Peru, 1867-1935)

² Free English translation by Jimmy López