

**CULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS:
Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America**



**Kolb Neuhaus, Roberto (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México):
“Exotic birds, awkwardly scattered and generally spluttering: Silvestre
Revueltas vis-a-vis US Pan-Americanism”**

Abstract:

According to reception theory, change of context adds as much meaning to a work of art as it may take away. This is all the more so in the case of music, since, as opposed to that of figurative expression, its meaning is naturally elusive and multiple, and hence marvelously pliable when captured by the pen of historians and critics or verbalized by audiences after a concert. A composer may consequently disregard the issue of meaning reception entirely, assuming and accepting that his authorial purport cannot and will not be grasped. Then again, he/she may go out of his way to prepare his listeners by verbally or otherwise establishing a context, leading them in a specific semantic direction. Or, recognizing that reception follows needs of its own in a specific cultural realm, he/she may choose to capitalize on such needs by means of a strategy that can, but need not be related to compositional intent. US Pan Americanism during the thirties looked south of the border aiming to find not only the usual exotic difference, but also a modern likeness that would justify its brotherly goal. Mexican writers such as Tablada, painters such as Rivera, and composers such as Chávez en Revueltas, where aware of such political and cultural strivings and made strategic use of such expectations. The present paper examines in this light the reception of Revueltas’s early avant-gardist musical constructs among US audiences, critics and composers.

How to Cite this Paper:

Kolb Neuhaus, Roberto. “Exotic birds, awkwardly scattered and generally spluttering: Silvestre Revueltas vis-à-vis US Pan-Americanism.” Paper presented at the Latin American Music Center’s Fiftieth Anniversary Conference “Cultural Counterpoints: Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America,” Indiana University, Bloomington, 2011. Available from *IUScholarWorks* (<https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/15512>); accessed [Date Accessed].

Editorial Disclaimer:

This paper/abstract was presented at the Latin American Music Center’s Fiftieth-Anniversary Conference titled “Cultural Counterpoints: Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America,” Indiana University, Bloomington, October 19-23, 2011, and was accepted on the basis of its abstract, which was peer-reviewed. This paper is presented as submitted by the author, who has authorized its dissemination through *IUScholarWorks*.