

Staging who we are: Reflections on myth, intertextuality and construction of identity in Gabriela Ortiz' electroacoustic opera 'Unicamente la Verdad'

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Abstract

A visible tendency in current Latin American composers in the construction of the libretti for their operas, is the exploration of local stories in their own language. Myth, pop culture and folk traditions are some of the most common sources for the majority of these plots. The libretti of some new works, such as the opera 'Unicamente la Verdad' by the Mexican composer Gabriela Ortiz, are entirely based on a variety of quotations from various sources, each one with a particular version of the same account. Inspired in the story told in the Mexican corrido *Contrabando y Traición* by *los Tigres del Norte*, the libretto of Ortiz' opera also includes quotations from other sources such as *La Alarma* (tabloid), newspaper articles, broadcast news from *TV Azteca*, and a research book. In the same way, musical quotations from other *corridos* as well as digitally processed recordings, articulate the musical content of this composition.

Through the analysis of the ways in which multiple sonic and textual sources coexist in *Unicamente la Verdad*, this paper will explore the process in which the relationships between myth, intertextuality, and pop culture take part in the construction of cultural identity.

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César Leal was born in Bogotá (Colombia). Currently he is ABD in the Ph.D. program. His interest in both research on and performance of contemporary music has led him to work as the Music Director of the LACNM (Latin American Center of New Music) for the last two years. He has participated in the Contemporary Music Festival in Nanterre Conservatoire (France) in January 2006, and was a finalist in the Second International Conducting Workshop of the Bogotá Philharmonic Orchestra in August 2006. César was also invited to the International Contemporary Music Festival of Lima (Perú) in November 2006. He produced the CD Project "Lexico Series," a compendium of contemporary pieces by representative composers from Latin America. In 2009, César participated in the International festival of Electroacoustic music *En Tiempo Real: Nuevos Espacios Sonoros*, in which he conducted and presented a paper on contemporary Electroacoustic opera. He has a B.M. in performance from Javeriana University in Bogotá and an M.M. in Instrumental Conducting from Florida International University.