

Musical avant-garde in Peru since 1950

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Abstract

The musical avant-garde has different characteristics in Latin America than in Europe and North America. This is partly due to its history of colonization and the multicultural and unequal societies that this condition created. Composers of the region have been searching for an expression of their own identities. An important part of this process has been the use of native and popular music elements in art music, independently of techniques and styles. Latin American avant-garde include an early use of dodecaphony, serialism and electronic music since the first decades of the 20th century. It also includes, however, the study and use of native musics. The situation was not the same in the diverse countries. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Uruguay and Venezuela had a more active art music life. In Peru, modernist techniques arrived in the late 1930s, brought by European teachers. The so-called Generation of the 50s was the first to participate in the avant-garde movements in Peru and abroad. Their music includes in many cases elements of traditional or popular musics, combining them with the new techniques in an open, inclusive manner, and as a way of searching local, national or continental identities. This paper looks at the Peruvian avant-garde from a point of view that takes into account the constructing of identities through music in a multicultural society, including cross-cultural composition as a major strategy, and considering the particular historical and socio-economic reality in which the music is born, revealing Peruvian avant-garde's particular features. The methodology concentrates in searching these elements in analysis but also in composers' opinions and in the works' critical reception. It relates also Peruvian avant-garde movement to a broader music history context.

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Clara Petrozzi (Peru, 1965) studied violin, architecture and Suzuki pedagogy in Lima. She played viola in chamber music groups and youth orchestras, directed the viola group of the Camerata de Lima and was involved in the organization of International Music Festivals. She moved to Finland in 1990, where she studied viola, Suzuki pedagogy and Musicology, receiving her PhD degree in 2009 at the University of Helsinki. In her research, she has focused in Peruvian art music. She is also active as a violin and viola teacher, viola player and composer.