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Concert Fantasy on “Pajaro Campana”

This concert fantasy is based on the South American folk tune, “*Pajaro Campana*.” In Latin and South American cultures, this piece is arguably what the harp is known for, as the tradition of playing the Paraguayan harp is rich across practically every country. This staple tune, however, has primarily remained in these Latinx cultures, and remains somewhat unexplored in Western traditions. I was introduced to this piece by my father at a young age, and I learned the basic approaches of how one can play this tune from Alfredo Rolando Ortiz’s book, “*Latin American Harps - History, Music, and Techniques*.” As I have grown older, I have felt compelled and inspired to bring this tune from my own cultural background and share it with others. The melody is so distinctly lively, and full of the energy that one can find in the colorful cultures of South America.

My approach to putting together this concert fantasy focuses on blending traditional elements of this melody and my own twist on the theme, into a work that showcases all of the harp’s capabilities as a culturally diverse solo instrument. The opening half of the work pulls on what I consider to be the must-haves of the melody and what South American harpists frequently play. The left hand maintains the steady beats, while the right hand imitates the bird’s iconic melody. In a notion to standard harp writing, there is a short cadenza that showcases the harp’s lyrical and virtuosic capabilities. The final section is my own twist on the folk tune, as the melody is transformed over a new tango rhythm.

Notes on Execution

The harps frequently used in South America are referred as Paraguayan harps, and their unique construction gives them a timbre similar to a guitar. The body of the instrument is quite wide and deep in the lower registers, giving the last two octaves on the harp a sound similar to that of a *guitarrón*. In contrast, the body of the harp in the upper registers is much shallower and slimmer, giving the upper octaves a bright, brilliant sound. Latinx harpists frequently play with their nails, another aspect of their technique that makes the harp sound like a guitar. This concert fantasy is written for a pedal harp - this is not intended to be played with the nails, as pedal harp tension and spacing are vastly different from the Paraguayan harps.

All of the left hand octaves should be played in an open, flat handed position. Doing so will create the distinct clarity found in South American music, as playing all of the octaves in an open-handed position would create a muddier bass. I recommend using a technique from Sr. Ortiz’s book for the right hand glissandi - muffled glissandi are created by playing the second finger and third finger a third apart, with the second first playing the glissandi, while the third finger lightly graces over the strings. In effect, you are almost immediately muffling the strings you are playing. This technique is most effective at measure 84 (and similar glissandi), and will add a level of authenticity to the performance.

To the player - I hope that this piece enables you to explore and experience the unique joy of Latin American music - have fun with it, and enjoy!

Juan Riveros

Concert Fantasy on "Pajaro Campana"

arr. Juan Riveros

Traditional

Slowly, gradually accelerando to tempo

A tempo

Harp

Hrp.

Hrp.

Hrp.

Hrp.

41

Hrp.

47

Hrp.

52

Hrp.

55

Hrp.

60

Hrp.