

Listening Guide – Mexico and Spain Concert – November 19, 2022
DuPage Symphony Orchestra

“In musical terms, the great expressive power of indigenous art lies in its rhythmic vitality, in the freedom and scope of its scales and modes, in the richness of the sonorous instrumental element, in the simplicity and purity of its melodies, and in its moral condition.”

Carlos Chávez
(1899-1978)

Title: Sinfonía India

Composed in 1936, *Sinfonía india* is the second of Chávez’s six symphonies. In a single movement employing irregular meters, cross-rhythms, syncopations, quartal harmonies, and native percussion instruments such as *teponaxtles* (log drums), the *jicara de agua* (water gourd), *grijutian* (string of deer hooves), and *tlapan huehuetl* (large tubular drum), Chavez utilizes indigenous music traditions to create a vibrant and compelling tonal tribute to the musical heritage of northern Mexico.

Recording: La Orquesta Filarmónica de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
 Eduardo Mata, conductor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWFS6-LR7Q4>

Compositional Structure: Introduction Theme A Theme B Theme C Finale

Time Stamp	Musical Elements	Instruments
0:38	Set at a <i>Vivo</i> tempo, the first of three vibrant motives is immediately introduced within a sequence of rapidly changing irregular meters.	Viola, Cello, Clarinet & Bassoon
0:45	The first of two brilliant trumpet calls sounds the second motif, which is followed by the energetic third motif in the woodwinds	Trumpet; Woodwinds
1:09	A brief percussion interlude consisting of indigenous Mexican instruments serves as a transition to the opening statement of the first principal theme (Theme A).	Timpani, Rattles, Indian Hand Drum & Tlapan huehuetl
1:15	Theme A, a rhythmic dance-like melody derived from the traditions of the Huicholes people of Narayit, is presented within a framework of triple and duple meters.	Violins & Oboe
1:56	A spirited but metrically complex passage built on fragments derived from the opening Introductory motif brings the Theme A section to a close.	Full Orchestra
2:45	A solo voice suddenly stands in dramatic contrast with an expressive, song-like melody reminiscent of those from the Yaqui tribe of Sonora that is the second principal theme (Theme B).	E-flat & B-flat Clarinet with Jicara de aqua
3:21	Opening with gentle enhancements by flute and additional percussion colors, the second statement of Theme B is joined by violins and a background of cross-rhythm percussion ostinatos. Gradually the enchanting melody evolves into a resonant full orchestra presentation before fading into a new tonality and harmonic structure.	Bassoon & muted Trumpet with Flute & Strings; Full Orchestra
4:21	The third principal theme (Theme C), a somber and soulful pentatonic melody also linked to the Sonora region, is introduced by solo flute and horn accompanied by harp and muted brass in quartal harmony. With the start of the second phrase counter lines to the melody appear, initially by the bassoon and then followed by the trumpet.	Flute & Horn with Harp & muted Brass; Bassoon & Trumpet

5:52	Through the layering of instrumental voices, the addition of tribal drumming patterns, and the timbre of the teponaxtles, Chávez gradually intensifies Theme C. A climactic unison statement is followed by an <i>accelerando</i> into an unexpected return of Theme A.	Full Orchestra with Teponaxtles & Tlapan huehuetl
7:18	The earlier passage derived from the opening motif appears once again, but this time serving as a bridge to a reprise of Theme B. This reprise evolves into a return of all three introductory motives which leads to the start of the high-spirited Finale.	Oboe & Clarinet; Full Orchestra
9:52	The Seri people of Tiburon Island are the inspirational source of a vibrant and driving theme in 6/8 meter that serves as the basis for the Finale. As he has done throughout the piece, Chávez chooses to display and preserve this final cultural artifact through the addition of timbres and dynamics rather than through thematic, rhythmic, or harmonic variations.	Clarinet, Trumpet, & Strings with Guiro & Teponaxtles
10:48	As the instrumentation expands and the energy intensifies through multiple repetitions, cross-rhythm ostinatos in the percussion are once again introduced. The interplay of compound triple and simple duple rhythms creates an exciting and powerful Finale to Carlos Chávez's second symphony.	Full Orchestra