

Montgomery Philharmonic

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Montgomery Philharmonic 2013 - 2014 Concert Season – A Confluence of Culture Music of North America – February 27, 2014

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Arturo Márquez – Danzón No. 2 (1994)

This piece puts Márquez in a group of the four most important composers from Mexico – José Pablo Moncayo, Carlos Chávez, Silvestre Revueltas, and, of course, Arturo Márquez. The work was commissioned for the National Autonomous University of Mexico’s Philharmonic Orchestra and was debuted in 1994. It features solo sections for piano, violin, trumpet, and clarinet. The rhythmic quality of the piece is at the center of the composition; accents shift throughout the piece making it feel as if the tempo is shifting when, in reality, the accents are doing this work.

The danzón has its roots in a Cuban dance form and is also a very important part of folklore in the Mexican state of Veracruz. The Golden Age of the danzón was the 1940’s, when it was very popular in the ballrooms and dance halls of Mexico.

In 2009, a movie was made using this piece as the background for the subject of danzón. In the movie, Márquez makes a cameo appearance as the pianist in the dance hall orchestra.

Márquez’ danzóns are now being used not only in film, but also on stage with ballets.

About Arturo Márquez

Arturo Márquez is a Mexican composer of orchestra music who incorporates musical forms and styles of his native Mexico into his compositions. He is the only one of nine children in his family who became a musician, although his father played in a mariachi band and his paternal grandfather was a Mexican folksinger. His family immigrated to La Puente, California, during his middle school years at which time Márquez began learning to play the trombone. As a high school student, he added the violin to his list of instruments. He had started playing the piano in Sonora, Mexico, before his family moved to the United States, so continued his piano study when he moved to La Puente. At age 16, Márquez began to compose. When it was time to go to college, he decided to go back to Mexico, where he studied composition at the Mexican Music Conservatory. After completing his studies there, he was awarded a scholarship to study composition in Paris with Jacques Castérède. Later, Márquez was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in the United States. He completed his Master of Music degree in composition at the California Institute of the Arts, where he studied with Morton Subotnik, Mel Powell, Luck Mosko, and James Newton.

Márquez fuses Mexican nationalistic styles with classical composition techniques to create music that is exciting and dynamic to the public. He composes not only for the symphony orchestra, but also writes music for solo instruments, chamber music, and film.

- **Born:** December 20, 1950, Álamos, Mexico
- **Education:** California Institute of the Arts
- **Songs:** Danzón No. 2, Conga del Fuego
- **Parents:** Arturo Márquez, Aurora Márquez Navarro
- **Nominations:** Ariel Award for Best Original Score
- **Film music credits:** : A Portrait of Diego: The Revolutionary Gaze, Two Crimes

Instrumentation – 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns in F, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, claves, snare drum, guiro, suspended cymbal, 3 tom-toms, bass drum (3 players), piano, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, double bass.

Artifact – [Making of DANZON No2](#)


1. El Danzón Según Márquez - Márquez
2. From the New World - Jean-Pascal Hamelin & Youth Orchestra of the Americas
3. Fiesta - Gustavo Dudamel & Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela

1. Danz__n No. 2
2. Dudamel - Discoveries