



Debra Greschner

**Caicedo, Patricia.** *The Latin American Art Song: Sounds of the Imagined Nations.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019. Paper, xix, 165 pp., \$39.99. ISBN 978-1-4985-8164-6. [www.rowman.com](http://www.rowman.com)

Patricia Caicedo is a fervent advocate for Latin American song, as both performer and author. In this volume, available in both Spanish and English, Caicedo considers the social and historical context of the Latin American art song and offers a view of the genre that is both panoramic and nuanced. The volume is not comprehensive; instead, it presents the background for Latin American song and identifies composers whose songs represent transitional or transformational points in the evolution of the genre. The author offers both musical and social perspective for the repertoire by framing the discussion within the topics of identity and nationalism.

Caicedo begins with an analysis of musical nationalism. The term, which arose in the nineteenth century, is

used to describe music from outside the traditional European centers. As the Latin American colonies achieved independence, the descriptor was applied to the music of the New World. The author explores the concept of identity and shared cultural values as the basis of nationalism. She opines that if nationalism is viewed as an aesthetic-sociocultural movement, it is possible to differentiate between music of national style and nationalistic music. Caicedo also cites the research of anthropologist Partha Chatterjee who explains that emerging nations, in their attempt to reach the level of the Eurocentric model, often submerge their unique qualities and instead aspire to imitate models that are hostile to them. An additional level of disparity often exists because the dominant group within the emerging nation becomes the builder of the national image.

Caicedo uses this refined perspective of nationalism to illuminate notable composers and movements in the evolution of Latin American art song. She explains that the genre is well suited to express nationalist ideals because it is accessible, intimate, and employs text; furthermore, when composers select texts by Latin American poets, the impact of the latter characteristic is intensified. The author focuses on the art songs of six countries: Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Peru, Bolivia, and Venezuela. Each repertoire represents a different approach to nationalism during the early twentieth century. There is also a discussion of three composers, Alberto Ginastera (1916–1983), Carlos Guastavino (1912–2000), and Jaime León (1921–2015), all of whom made significant, yet diverse, contributions to the genre after 1940.

A native of Colombia, Caicedo has lived in the United States and currently resides in Spain. She draws upon these experiences to offer a profoundly personal perspective, using the construction of her own identity as an entrée to the connection between the development of song and the evolution of identity and nationalism in Latin America. Caicedo also muses about the digital age, observing that it has made people “simultaneously isolated and connected to the world” (xviii). These words, penned before the Covid pandemic, are particularly prescient. She argues that mobility, multilocality, and access to technology have led contemporary composers to embrace musical transnationalism.

The author is an avid collector and performer of Latin American art song. Her interest in the repertoire encompasses the musicological and social context of the genre, as well as its performance practice. In the final chapter of the volume, she compares the performance of art song to that of folk and popular song, and proposes innovations that would expand the appeal of the former.

Caicedo is a singer, medical doctor, musicologist, and founder of the Barcelona Festival of Song. The breadth of her training and experience is reflected in her previous publications, which include *Spanish Diction for Singers: A Practical Guide for the Pronunciation of the Peninsular and American Spanish* (Barcelona: Mundo Arts Publications, 2020; reviewed in *Journal of Singing* 77, no. 1 [September/October 2020]: 122–123), *We Are What We Listen To: The Impact of Music on Individual and Social Health* (New York: Mundo Arts Publications, 2021; reviewed in *Journal of Singing* 78, no. 4 [March/

April 2022]: 537), and annotated compilations of Latin American vocal music. This volume is an enticing introduction to Latin American song that encourages readers to rethink the concept of nationalism in an increasing transnational world. It is highly recommended.

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**Alderson, Richard and Ann.** *A New Handbook for Singers and Teachers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020, 328 pp. E-book ISBN 978-0190920449, \$15.65; Paper ISBN 978-0190920456, \$41.95. [www.global.oup.com](http://www.global.oup.com)

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This voice pedagogy textbook is intentionally bipartite. In the introduction, authors Richard and Ann Alderson provide the rationale for this dual focus: the purpose of the book is to offer simultaneous instruction to singers and teachers of singing. Pupil and pedagogue alike need information about the voice and how it works. However, voice teachers also need to know how to impart this knowledge to their students. Alderson and Alderson opted for parallel construction to address the needs of both groups and intentionally include redundancies by discussing topics in both sections.

The first section, entitled “How to Sing,” is intended for both student and teacher. It contains chapters devoted to the foundational principles of voice instruction, including respiration, phonation, resonance, and articulation. The authors offer an accessible explanation of formants, vowel unification and equalization, and vowel modification for both male and female voices. Another chapter offers a cogent overview of registers and registration. Each chapter contains diagrams, illustrations, and exercises.

The second part of the book, “How to Teach Singing,” begins with an overview of the basic concepts of voice pedagogy. Teachers must be able to impart clear guidance about the anatomic and physiologic aspects of the vocal mechanism, and the authors offer advice about how to prepare and present such tutelage. The section also discusses factors to consider when selecting repertoire, how to structure lessons, physical aspects of the teaching studio, and what to do if the student is not making progress. The chapters are broadly correlated to those of the first. In this section, however, topics are viewed through a pedagogic lens, and teaching methodologies are included. The final chapters are devoted to teaching young changing voices and teaching the aging voice.

Richard Alderson is Professor Emeritus of Voice and Opera at Northwestern University, and Ann Alderson is a professional singer, voice teacher, and conductor. They have co-authored a useful book that is intended to supplement, not replace, voice lessons. While it is possible to trace pedagogic influences (the detailed instructions for the creation of vowel modification charts are surely a nod to Berton Coffin), the overall approach is mainstream. Singers and their teachers will welcome the organization of the volume, and instructors of voice pedagogy classes may find this an appealing textbook option.



Nandhu Radhakrishnan

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## GUEST REVIEW

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**Woo, Peak.** *Stroboscopy and High-Speed Imaging of the Vocal Function*, 2nd edition. San Diego: Plural Publishing Inc., 2022, 437 pp. Cloth, \$299.95. ISBN 978-1-63550-236-7. [www.pluralpublishing.com](http://www.pluralpublishing.com)

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This is another noteworthy release by Plural Publishing. In this comprehensive textbook, Peak Woo, MD focuses on stroboscopy and high-speed imaging of voice production regarding basic science and laryngeal disorders. Its predecessor, *Stroboscopy*, by the same author in 2010, can now be replaced with this second edition that introduces a chapter dedicated to high-speed imaging of the larynx that is becoming prevalent in the research of voice production. The volume also contains elaborate details quoting current research on imaging techniques, enhanced images, and a spectacular array of video files via a companion website hosted by the publisher. The foreword is penned by the author's professional friend and collaborator, Thomas Murry, MD, who is an equally accomplished voice scientist, researcher, and clinician.

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