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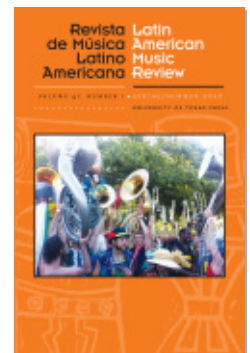
The Latin American Art Song: Sounds of the Imagined Nations

by Patricia Caicedo (review)

Celeste Dolores Mann

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impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff in 2016 and to a political climate that has been compared by Brazil's left wing and students to the military putsch of 1964 and the dictatorship that followed.

This pleasant and deceptively small book, 165 pages of in-depth commentaries and astute analytical views, will bring poetic delight to Tropicália fans and neophytes of Brazilian music alike, with a rich combination of historical and philosophical references. Sovik gives us an intimate view on the special link between Gal and Caetano, Tropicália and bossa nova, and also the relationships, both personal and cultural, that build legendary art movements.

ELISABETH BLIN
University of Arizona

PATRICIA CAICEDO. *The Latin American Art Song: Sounds of the Imagined Nations.* New York: Lexington Books, 2018. 188 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-4985-8162-2.

The Latin American Art Song: Sounds of the Imagined Nations was written specifically with interpreters of art song in mind, and its approach contributes analysis, historical and musicological information, and a section on performance practice. Such a publication is definitely needed, as it begins to fill a void in the fields of classical music, world music, and musicology. As the author, Dr. Patricia Caicedo, explains in her introduction, little, if any, attention is given to art song from Latin America in music programs and conservatories around the world. There are a few publications in English that catalog art song or classical music from Latin America, and some articles, dissertations, and volumes mostly written in Spanish and Portuguese that treat specific composers, movements, or regions or countries. *The Latin American Art Song* is unique in its quest to examine the social, historical, and musical characteristics of art song in more than twenty countries of Latin America in one volume and to offer practical instruction in their interpretation.

Caicedo has a long résumé, which qualifies her to attempt such a task. First and foremost she has both a master's degree and a doctorate in musicology from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Caicedo has also authored articles and books on Latin American art song. As a practicing musician, she began with a degree in piano and music theory from the Conservatory of Tolima in Colombia. Over the years she has given lecture-recitals around the world in different universities and venues, and she claims to have a personal collection of approximately 2,500 Latin American art songs. She is the founder and director of the Barcelona Festival of

Song, a summer training program for singers that features Latin American and Iberian art song. The festival has been in existence for fifteen years and, along with her CDs and publications, has exposed many singers and audiences to the genre. Caicedo's energy and initiative have been relentless in getting this music into the hands and throats of singers trained in opera and "classical" vocal performance (see her website at <http://www.patriciacaicedo.com>).

In a clear writing style, Caicedo contextualizes the composers and songs from the region in terms of the search for national identities. She explores the origins and tensions resulting from colonization and independence and subsequent problems that developed between the three major ethnic groups: Indigenous, European, and African. Although Spain and Portugal were the mother countries of most of the colonies in Latin America, many of the elite class were influenced by French culture and Italian music. In terms of art music, either instrumental or vocal, neither Spain nor Portugal had much to offer in comparison with Italy or France. Unfortunately, Indigenous and African peoples and cultures were not valued appropriately in the formation of these nations, even though they make up a considerable amount of the population and *mestizaje* (racial mix) is prominent in most of them. During colonial times, and for centuries afterward, these groups were looked down on, and there was a concerted effort by the elites to ignore their musical influences.

Caicedo appraises national anthems from Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil, and she also investigates the imitation of Italian opera by Antônio Carlos Gomes (Brazil) and Melosio Morales (Mexico). She critiques European artistic values in musical salons of the nineteenth century in Latin America. There are few operas from Spain or Portugal even though Spain does have a zarzuela (operetta) tradition, which has influenced music in Latin America. In terms of art song, there is a robust centuries-long tradition in Spain, while Brazil inherited the *modinha* from Portugal. However, Caicedo explains that the German, French, and Italian languages dominated art song performance and study. It was only in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that composers in Latin America began to set music to local poetry written in Spanish. Caicedo acknowledges that Brazilian composers were writing songs in Portuguese in the early nineteenth century.

Later, Caicedo analyzes artistic movements in different countries in the early twentieth century that sought to define a national aesthetic, like the Semana de Arte Moderna (Modern Art Week) in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1922. Continuing the nationalist theme, she highlights some composers from 1940 and beyond. To conclude her historical analysis, Caicedo devotes a chapter to transnationalism, or the "dissolution of borders," in which she cites interviews that she completed with living composers, who

may or may not believe their music to represent or reflect anything about their native countries.

Chapter 5, “Performance Practice of Latin American Art Song,” speaks directly to the performing artist. Here Caicedo expands on aspects of performance practice, including the adoption of folkloric and popular songs alongside art songs in concerts and recitals. She details throughout the book the overlap between these three genres—how folklore and popular song influenced art song and some composers and performers—and in the final chapter she offers guidelines on how to identify and utilize them in a recital or concert. In this concluding chapter she applies the musicological research and theory to actual singing and performance. The author draws on all her knowledge and experience to impart tips on how to innovatively render these songs so that they embody their cultures and entice their audiences—not just in terms of language and vocal production but also in terms of body movement, gesture, and visual aids or scenery.

As previously mentioned, Caicedo interviewed living composers in her research. In addition, she scrutinizes both the text and the musical score of the pieces. She does not provide ancillary materials in the form of CDs or DVDs, but she does provide links to online performances and audio samples. The book includes an extensive bibliography of written texts, chapter notes, and a discography. In short, the text is well researched and accomplishes its goal: “The ultimate end of this work is to reproduce the sensation and reality of multiple layers, discourses, and sounds that overlap and in the end construct a whole” (6).

The Latin American Art Song is a groundbreaking volume in the art song genre and potentially a useful reference publication for singers and coaches who currently perform this music or would like to. I can also imagine it being employed in courses on art song, art song in Spanish, Latin American vocal music, and vocal music in Spanish, or a musicology course on Latin American or world music. It might have been useful to incorporate, in an appendix, a list of composers or a list of the catalogs that already exist of these songs. Though not her purpose, it would give the independent interpreter a preliminary road map of how to locate this repertoire and would name some of the composers not mentioned in the body of the book.

CELESTE DOLORES MANN

Drexel University