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RELOJERÍAS SENSIBLES BY JUAN TRIGOS – A PERFORMANCE GUIDE

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RELOJERÍAS SENSIBLES BY JUAN TRIGOS – A PERFORMANCE GUIDE

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the
College of Fine Arts
at the University of Kentucky

By
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2023

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

RELOJERÍAS SENSIBLES BY JUAN TRIGOS – A PERFORMANCE GUIDE

This dissertation provides insights into the compositional style of the Mexican composer Juan Trigos (b. 1965) and his brand-new work for solo guitar: *Relojerías Sensibles* (2022). Included in this document is a brief biography of the composer, commentaries about other of his works, as well as a description of his musical concept: Abstract Folklore. The main purpose of this research is to introduce the reader to Trigos' artistic universe as well as provide a performance guide that may facilitate the understanding and learning process of his new solo piece. In addition, the first two appendices are dedicated to a catalog of Trigos' works featuring guitar and an interview containing a variety of questions about his life, musical philosophy, and the new piece.

KEYWORDS: Juan Trigos, Abstract Folklore, Twenty-First Century Music, Classical Guitar.

Geraldo Leite da Costa Neto

04/30/2023

Date

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DEDICATION

To Paulo, Arlene, and Vinícius.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Juan Trigos is a Mexican born composer and conductor. His vast catalogue of compositions can be separated into two fundamental categories: vocal music (opera and sacred) and instrumental music (with a predisposition to the concertante forms). His compositional language is informed by a creative concept he refers to as Abstract Folklore, a process in which various literary and vernacular musical traditions are abstracted and assimilated into a modern compositional rhetoric.¹

I had the unique opportunity to listen to his works for the first time at a guitar festival in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. My now professor and mentor, Dr. Dieter Hennings, performed on that evening two pieces by Trigos: *Partita* (2007) and *Twelve Variations and Fugue on the Folía de España* (2015). After that concert, I applied to the graduate program at the University of Kentucky to study with Dr. Hennings.

Over the first year of the DMA program, I decided to learn the five-movement tour de force *Partita*, a composition which lasts for approximately twenty-three minutes. Fortunately, I was later able to work on this piece with the composer himself during a brief stay for a concert in Miami, Florida. To this present day, I have studied all the more recent solo guitar works by Juan Trigos, those which includes: *Partita*, *Twelve Variations and*

1. Juan Trigos, “Biography,” Juan Trigos, Promusint, accessed August 10th, 2022, <https://promusint.com/juantrigos/wp/home/>.

Fugue on the Folia de España, and the brand new piece commissioned and dedicated to me: *Relojerías Sensibles* (2022).

1.2 Description of the Problem

Juan Trigos has composed over sixty original compositions, many of which are characterized by their long duration and multifactorial complexity. The genres of his compositions range from opera, symphony, string quartet, solo guitar, as well as many ensemble works of idiosyncratic instrumentation. As a conductor Trigos has incessantly premiered, promoted, and recorded a vast number of twentieth and twenty-first century works. He has recorded numerous albums featuring the music of Carlos Jiménez Mabarak, Víctor Rasgado, Jesús Villaseñor, Zohn-Muldoon (finalist for 2011 Pulitzer Prize), Sánchez-Gutiérrez, Carlos Chávez, Rubén Somoza, in addition to his own compositions. As a pedagogue Trigos has conducted workshops, seminars, masterclasses, festivals and symposiums in Europe, United States, Canada, Costa Rica, and Mexico. He also held the chair of main professor of composition, analysis and orchestration at the Instituto Cardenal Miranda and the University of Guanajuato.² More recently, Trigos worked as a guest professor at the Schwob School of Music during the fall of 2022.

The subject of this dissertation is to construct a performance guide for *Relojerías Sensibles*, a brand-new addition to the guitar repertory. A performance guide of this work will be of immense benefit to anyone attempting to understand the formal procedures that generate the piece. This research will approach the work from an analytical standpoint, contextualizing form, melodic and harmonic music material, as well as practical fingering

². Trigos, "Biography."

suggestions for specific excerpts of the piece. The composition also contains an extensive number of extended techniques which will be listed and described in a catalogued lexicon.

Although a notable and relevant composer, there are only a few academic works examining the music of Juan Trigos. Hopefully, this document will serve to motivate players to perform music filled with such complex and rich aesthetic ideas.

1.3 Review of Literature

To collect a bibliography that revolves around Trigos' works can be a great challenge due to the lack of existing academic publications focusing on the composer. Other than a handful of published dissertations and theses, there are valuable unpublished documents about the composer and his music. Luckily, there are a substantial number of academic documents related to the instructor of Juan Trigos, the Italian composer Franco Donatoni. Donatoni's relevance as an important pedagogue of composition in Italy and Europe is evinced by a list of many distinguished students such as Luca Francesconi, Esa Pekka-Salonen, Luca Cori, and of course Juan Trigos. The literature connected to Donatoni has proven helpful to understanding Trigos' development as a musician and to discover which traits of Donatoni's procedures can be found in his music.

In the thesis, "A Mexican Postmodernist Vision Grounded on Structuralism: The Cases of Juan Trigos' *Cuarteto da Do* (1988) and Victor Rasgado's *Rayo Nocturnal* (1989)," Dr. Alejandro L. Madrid-Gonzalez brilliantly traces the origins of the first piece that Trigos wrote under the mentorship of Donatoni, *Quartetto da Do*. He discusses the properties of postmodern language and how that relates to the field of music. Madrid-Gonzalez also elucidates the revolutionary thoughts of Franco Donatoni and his influence

on Trigos' and Rasgado's works. This thesis offers a solid musical analysis of *Cuartetto da Do*, as it also exposes the differences between Donatoni's and Trigos' musical works.

On "A Recording and Performance Guide Featuring Three Commissioned Compositions for Clarinet by Mexican Composers," doctoral research paper by Dr. Vincent Robert Dominguez, there is a discussion about the major musical elements that compose Trigos' *Conversiones* (2019), for clarinet and piano. Some of the mentioned characteristics are the use of the concept of primary pulsation, the realization of the prepared piano, non-idiomatic elements that are contained in the piece, as well solutions for the most intricate passages encountered throughout the work. This document is focused on the factual problematics of translating the piece from score to sound, therefore, not containing an in-depth theory analysis of the work.

Written by Dr. Pablo José Gomez Cano, "Modern Guitar Techniques; a view of History, Convergence of Musical Traditions and Contemporary Works (A Guide for Composers and Guitarists)," provides an understanding and cataloguing of guitar techniques used within the practice of the instrument. The examples range from a wide spectrum of playing norms: traditional classical guitar, Spanish flamenco, North American and Latin American styles, as well Chinese and Japanese musical elements that are found within the literary canon of works written for guitar. This dissertation shows the development of guitar techniques through pieces from a vast array of aesthetics, those which contributed to the evolution of the instrument. Within this frame of reference, Juan Trigos' *Ricercare VI* is listed. The piece distinguishes itself by the constant evocation of concepts that combine Spanish flamenco and Mexican popular music heritage. Throughout

this present research, a similar listing and description of techniques in *Relojerías Sensibles* will also be catalogued.

In the article “Who's Pulling the Strings? Michael Gorodecki Introduces the Music of Franco Donatoni,” Gorodecki and Donatoni show a collection of thoughts that reveal the primordial procedures in Donatoni’s music. The article discusses Bartók’s and Cage’s influence on Donatoni, the impact of the Darmstadt school on his work, the principle of *rilettura*, as well the musical “codes” and their relation to serial and post-serial techniques. Moreover, this article reveals Donatoni’s philosophical and perhaps, “spiritual” side of music creation.

Written by Bradley D. Decker, “Preserving the Fragment: Franco Donatoni's Late Chamber Music” is an intricate yet fascinating article that analyzes *Refrain* (1986) by Donatoni. Referring to “Who's Pulling the Strings? Michael Gorodecki Introduces the Music of Franco Donatoni,” the author mentions a list of characteristics of Bartók’s compositional procedures, these, enumerated by Donatoni himself in Gorodecki’s article: “(1) cellular exposition and organism growth; (2) growth without development, conservation of the fragment; (3) juxtaposition of organisms; mutation, not evolution; and (4) stasis of pulsations, continuity of tone, "night" atmosphere, noises, murmurings, vibrations like moving timbres in an immobile space.”³ The analysis of *Refrain* reveals through Donatonian “codes” the connection between Bartók’s compositional process, and the result of these elements reached by the compositional procedures of Donatoni. This

3. Michael Gorodecki and Franco Donatoni, “Who's Pulling the Strings? Michael Gorodecki Introduces the Music of Franco Donatoni,” *The Musical Times* Vol. 134, No. 1803 (May 1993): 246.

could be a major fact to understand Trigos music, which although highly influenced by the Donatoni's procedures, still differs in its style and aesthetics.

In the research paper, "Towards an Understanding of Juan Trigos Solo Guitar Partita", Dr. Dieter Hennings summarizes the primary elements that composes Trigos' music. The paper exposes the main characteristics of *Partita*, describing the use of variation and rereading that depart from the second movement of the work. Through a solid discourse, the author identifies and shows the influential practice of Donatoni's *rilettura* and *codici* which are present in Trigos's work. There is a vast number of examples that portray the elements of Abstract Folklore in the mentioned piece: primary pulsation, strong polyphonic and polyrhythmic texture, as well an obsession from bell like sonorities that come from Trigos' operas, such as the beginning of *DeCachetitoRaspado*. Writing specifically about guitar components of the piece, Hennings talks about the use of *scordatura* (the sixth string is tuned from the usual E to C), the employment of this type of tuning is of rare occurrence within the repertoire of the instrument and produces a very particular type of resonance that sustains the work. Of special note is the use planing (as in Debussy's music), which is pervasive throughout the entire work.

In the doctoral research paper, "*12 Variaciones y Fuga Sobre La folia de Espana* by Juan Trigos, an Edition and Commentary," Dr. Eric Singh exposes the reader to the connection between Manuel Maria Ponce's *20 Diferencias Sobre la Folia de España y Fuga* and the *Twelve Variations and Fugue on the Folia de España* by Juan Trigos. This document discusses the genesis of the work, its structure, as well the "codes" and "glossas" that are the primary components which integrate the piece. The reader is introduced to the procedure of *rilettura*, as it plays a huge part in understanding how the piece was

developed. Although the paper is of an analytical nature, it also contains suggestions for guitar fingerings based on carefully designed musical criteria planned by Singh himself.

1.4 Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this research is to create a performance guide for *Relojerías Sensibles*. The guide will focus on analyzing and discussing the best practical solutions to the most intricate parts of the work, elucidating the overall structure of the piece, contributing to different fingerings, and connecting the traits of *Relojerías Sensibles* to other works by Trigos. Ideally, this will lead prospective performers to an informed and solid rendition of the piece based on the intentions of the composer. It is my hope to enlarge the academic literature concerning Juan Trigos by describing his life, music, compositional procedures, related work, as well as the concept of Abstract Folklore.

1.5 Methodology

The primary source of data for this research is the composer himself. Hence, the transcript of my interview with Trigos is listed in the appendix of this document. My dialogue with Trigos allowed me to clarify how Donatoni influences his music, to which extent his *codici* is applicable to his works, and how that affects the piece in question. After analyzing the piece and identifying its major challenges, a performance guide was developed. This guide offers solutions to the technical problems of the more intricate passages that require special care while learning the work. The compilation of this information allows greater accessibility for a guitarist to the language and style of *Relojerías Sensibles*. Aside from the interview and analysis of the piece itself, considerable

attention is given to the composer's biography, music style, and my own ideas pertaining to the work.

CHAPTER 2. BIOGRAPHY

2.1 Biography and Early Career

Born in 1965, Juan Trigos began his studies at the *Conservatorio Nacional de Musica* in his hometown of Mexico City. Afterwards, he studied sacred music at the *Instituto de Liturgia Musica y Arte Cadernal Miranda* and later Gregorian chant and ancient polyphony at the *Pontificio Instituto de Música Sacra* in Rome. According to Trigos, he was immersed in a more cosmopolitan milieu once he attended the *Conservatorio di Musica Giuseppe Verdi* in Milan under the tutelage of Nicolò Castiglioni (1932-1996). Shortly after he became an assistant to the Italian maestro Franco Donatoni (1927-2000), an outstanding composer and pedagogue who had a profound influence on Trigos. More specifically, Donatoni's rigor of internal structure, care for pulse, and the act of *rilettura* (rereading musical material) are all inserted into Trigos' works in one way or another:

A figure much more important to me, without reducing that of Castiglioni, was Franco Donatoni. He represents to me the internal structure intended as rigor of writing. Above all I care about him about pulse and rereading. Rereading not only in the sense of technique but the concept of reading understood as a spiritual position towards art, which means having a continuous vision of oneself in different times under different points of view, it is self-reflection. This was one of the most important lessons of Donatoni, which for me was a kind of musical father or guardian music very important in my training as an artist, beyond it he was also a great friend.⁴

⁴. Andrea Aguzzi, "Interview with Juan Trigos by Andrea Aguzzi (January 2010)," NeuGuitars, May 31, 2016, accessed August 10th, 2022, <https://neuguitars.com/2015/10/27/interview-with-juan-trigos-by-andrea-aguzzi-january-2010/>.

Trigos uses the term Abstract Folklore to describe his musical language. Implied in this concept is a process in which Trigos manipulates a variety of preexisting musical elements which are recontextualized into a more modern rhetoric:

The search for a personal musical language has led him to a concept he refers to as Abstract Folklore — A process in which he abstracts and assimilate various literary and vernacular musical traditions into a modern compositional rhetoric. Abstract Folklore includes creations in several genres such as Ballet, Opera, Cantata and Chamber Music. It also proposes a unique way to approach the Concerto and Symphony forms.⁵

The characteristics of Abstract Folklore are primarily based on primordial musical elements. Trigos' music is depicted through a meaningful and rooted aesthetic, one which constitutes the use of the primary pulsation (*tempus primus*), exploration of resonance, obsessive use of polyrhythms and polyphony, and the use of these components as linked events that contrast with each other by different levels of density and duration. In his creative process there is a proclivity for the use of large formal structures, and his works often feature a variety of percussive techniques as well as percussive instruments.⁶

Juan Trigos has composed over sixty pieces for a variety of instruments, ensembles, and formations. He considers his most relevant work to be his symphonies, operas, cantatas concertantes, concertos, and guitar music. The idiosyncratic nature of Trigos' musical language finds clear expression in his guitar compositions, which offer a unique and challenging addition to the guitar repertory.⁷

5. Trigos, "Biography."

6. Aguzzi, "Interview."

2.2 Works for the Guitar

On “A Treatise Upon a Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration”, the composer Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) asserts that writing for the guitar is not an easy task, that is, one should either play or study the instrument before trying to write music for it. In his opinion, it is “almost impossible to write well for the guitar without being a player on the instrument. The majority of composers who employ it, are, however, far from knowing its powers; and therefore they frequently assign it things to play, of excessive difficulty, of little sonorousness, and little effect.”⁸ Accordingly, in order to write well for the guitar one should aim to enhance the distinctive strengths of the instrument.

Within the limitations naturally imposed by the instrument, a composer should find ways to express themselves not only through the musical material, but to think about the sonorous qualities which are possible of the instrument and expressed idiomatically through it. With that said, it is impressive that Trigos can exploit so many particularities of an instrument of which he has little technical mastery. In fact, I know from my conversations with the composer that it is a great challenge for him to write for the instrument. To compensate for his lack of technical ability, Trigos has obsessively and compulsively studied the great works of the guitar repertoire.

Growing up in Mexico Trigos was exposed to a variety of guitar playing styles. In fact, the guitar was his first instrument because his father was an amateur player. He never

7. Trigos, "Biography."

8. Hector Berlioz, *A Treatise upon Modern Instrumentation and Orchestration: Op. 10*, Second Edition (London: Novello & Co., 1858), 67.

attempted, though, to master the traditional skills necessary for a professional concert guitarist. As a young musician he switched to the piano as his main instrument, but he never lost his deep affection for the guitar:

My love for the guitar, probably comes directly from my father because he played it and it was this my first acquaintance with her. It's in my soul forever. Then, we must say that in my country, Mexico, there are many types, modes and styles of playing it...There are the classical guitar, the requinto, the Jarocho, the marana, the Guitarrón, the tiples, the cuatro, the tres, the vihuela, those built specifically for the performance of virtuosity, what we are called guitarras de golpe (guitars hit), which are those that develop rhythm, etc.⁹

Juan Trigos has written a collection of works of a magnitude and complexity seldom seen in the history of the instrument. In fact, his compositions for guitar are not restrained to solo works only, but also an extensive catalogue of pieces that feature the instrument in a variety of formations. For example, the guitar is present in his operas *DeChachetitoRaspado* and *El Divino Narciso*, four guitar concertos, a guitar quartet, guitar and flute, guitar and percussion, and paired with a consort of other instruments (such as *Cuartetto da Do* and *Sax Sin Aliento*).

2.3 Abstract Folklore

Every great composer has an internal search for their own singular voice. Juan Trigos spent decades exploring musical idiosyncrasies that would later be synthesized into the concept he calls Abstract Folklore. The intention behind Abstract Folklore is that of an amalgamation of ideas, concepts, and archetypes that are absorbed and reread by Trigos

⁹. Aguzzi, "Interview."

through his own aesthetic lens. It is the extraction of pre-established material which mutates into something different:

Folklore is understood as attachment to the earth, as the purity of the music material and the primary expression without contamination. It has everything to do with passion, sensitivity and delight in music, with tradition and avant-garde simultaneously. The word *folklore* is used instead of *popular* because in my opinion it better reflects this notion, but above all, to differentiate it from commercial and entertainment.

Some of the principles behind Abstract Folklore are elements as primary pulsation (understood as *Tempus Primus* or *Tactus*), resonance, the interrelation of polyrhythmic/polyphonic musical events and segments of different density and duration, as well as the *rilettura* (rereading). This concept refers to the idea of looking at the same material from different perspectives, a way of seeing oneself from various angles. In other words, the perennial attitude of reflection in feeling and thinking. The procedures and codes that emerge from this conception are used to transform and manipulate original musical materials, or taken from other sources, to create music with its own voice.

Abstract Folklore includes inventions in various genres such as Opera, Cantatas, as well as a unique proposal in the way of approaching the Concerto and Symphony forms. In both trends there is also a very definite taste for instrumental sets of large number – using atypical combinations and not –, characterized by the almost hypertrophic use of percussion, which have a predominant structural role.

With the term Abstract Folklore I do not intend to create a school or aesthetic trend, it simply better describes what I am and my artistic interest. What is important to me is not the term itself, but rather the musical invention and personal contribution.¹⁰

Although the formal elements of Abstract Folklore can be of a more subjective nature, it is important to describe how certain aesthetic principles allow us to understand Trigos' creative process. For instance, pulsation is fundamental to his music, in that it allows him explore fluctuations in rhythm, tempo, as well as a general sense of stability and instability within the music itself:

The pulsation in my music is a fundamental component and is part of the concept that I call Abstract Folklore. I understand it as *tempus primus* or *tactus*. In addition to using the regular pulsation, I also use the irregular one and alter it by

¹⁰. Juan Trigos, email message to author, January 1, 2023.

increasing, decreasing, accelerating and decelerating the values, using fixed and temporary metric modulations. For this I adopt traditional conversions such as time signature changes. For example, from 4/4 to 5/8 or to 6/8 (eighth = eighth) and conversions such as eighth of a quintuplet = eighth, or eighth of a triplet = eighth, which is nothing more than a metronome change. As an example of the acceleration/deceleration procedure of the primary pulse (*tactus*), I can mention the 4th movement of my piece *Pulsación y Resonancias* for piano and percussion. Here the pulse is perceived as unstable, thanks to the use of irregular figures (triplets, quintuplets, etc.) alternating with regular ones (eighths and sixteenths notes), combined with the game of groups of four pitches and the cowbell and wood block that are who give the idea of irregular tempo. The effect is like dizziness and pulse instability.

Another type of treatment of the pulsation that I usually use, is the use of various rhythmic values of unity within any phrase (long or short) in different voices, such as quarter notes against dotted quarter notes and their respective syncopations or quarter notes against a rhythmic pattern in 5/8 as unit value. Likewise, various types of subdivisions and the notion of polyrhythm/polyphony that derives in gears or interlocking of musical segments with different density and duration and that play a very important role in the form. As an example of these interlocking segments, I can quote the end of the 3rd movement of my “Symphony no. 1”.¹¹

The illusory effect of change of tempo in the fourth movement of *Pulsación y Resonancias* is a rather straightforward and clear illustration of how Trigos manipulates our perception of the *tactus* by the combination of note values of different divisions and subdivisions set in contrast with each other. The figure below shows the first three measures of the piece which display the interchange between quintuplets and sextuplets, later followed by eighth notes. There is also a constant displacement of the reference of the

¹¹. Juan Trigos, email message to author, January 1, 2023.

downbeat by the accents that highlight certain notes which are sustained throughout the texture.

1 Wood Block
1 Cha-cha Cow bell
5 Tom-toms

L. hand = Soft Yarn Mallets
M. izq. = Baquetas de fieltro suaves

Cassa Pedale

pp sempre
♩ = 80
Ben distinta sempre la note accentuate dolce

Piano

pp sempre
mf
pp
mf

→ segue

Figure 1 - *Pulsación y Resonancias*, mov. IV, mm. 1-3.

Trigos' use of folklore is akin to the ideas once presented by the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók (1881-1945) during the early twentieth century. In the article "The Influence of Peasant Music on Modern Music" Bartók explains that music can be incorporated into contemporary works through three different methods: quotation, imitation, and absorption.¹² The difference between Bartók's and Trigos' approach on these ideas relies essentially in the fact that Trigos' music departs from an intuitive and organic exposition of these elements that naturally occurred throughout all his life. Bartók on other hand was exposed to this type of music in his early twenties which turned him to become a field researcher that registered and collected folk songs from many countries in

¹². Béla Bartók, "The Influence of Peasant Music on Modern Music," *Tempo*, No. 14 (1950): 19-24, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0040298200043138>.

Europe. In order to be able to incorporate this music to its own Bartók believed that “the effects of peasant music cannot be deep and permanent unless the music is studied in the country as part of a life shared with the peasants.”¹³ Although his method slightly differs from the more intuitive approach of Trigos, both composers had to internalize and experience folklore in order to better understand how to develop their music from the sounds that surrounded them.

While trying to encapsulate a generalized meaning of Abstract Folklore can become a rather difficult task, it is helpful to understand the formal principles of an individual composer like Trigos. The assimilation of the world through his subjective lens is precisely what makes his abstractions so unique. It is a type of art in which even the unacquainted will be surprised by its freshness and imagination. Even though he has consistently made use of the same tools and procedures to accomplish all his musical works, Trigos constantly reinvents his own creative process.

13. Béla Bartók, 20.

CHAPTER 3. *RELOJERÍAS SENSIBLES*

3.1 *Relojerías Sensibles* - Lexicon of Guitar Effects

Relojerías Sensibles is a work that contains a plethora of guitar techniques that are both common and uncommon within the history of the instrument. Due to that, I would like to propose a list of the guitar effects that are present in this piece as well as a concise explanation of how one should approach those. Even though some of these are self-explanatory, I believe that my personal insights might be helpful to prospective performers.

3.1.1 *Tambour/Tambora*

“Traditionally used in both flamenco and classical guitar, the *tambour* (also called *tambor* or *tambora* and abbreviated as *tamb.*) technique, derives its name from the Spanish *tambor* for drum, whose sound it was intended to emulate.”¹⁴ Most often it is executed with the right-hand thumb radial side hitting the strings close to the bridge. The use of other fingers of the right-hand are also possible for the implementation of this technique.

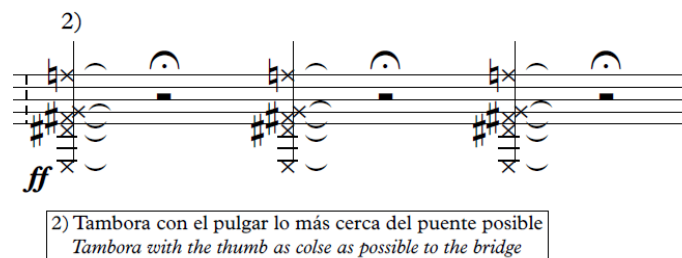


Figure 2 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 2.

¹⁴ Seth F. Josel and Ming Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing* (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co, 2014), 154-155.

3.1.2 *Pizzicato Bartók/Snap Pizzicato*

“The *Bartók* or *snap pizzicato* is an especially strong pizzicato action. One of the earliest instances of the *Bartók pizzicato* can be found in Tomás Damas’s composition *La Macarena* (1867), a piece for solo guitar.”¹⁵ This technique can be produced in different ways. In the first method, the player places the thumb/index finger of the right hand underneath the chosen string, pulling it upwards and releasing so that the string snaps against the fretboard of the guitar. The second way is to pinch the string with both thumb and index fingers, pulling the string vertically and releasing, creating then, the snap against the fretboard. This second method tends to result in a sound with sharper attack.

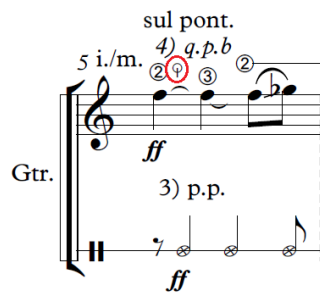


Figure 3 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 5.

3.1.3 *Quasi Pizzicato Bartók*

An intermediary between *pizzicato Bartók* and “ordinary sound”. One must try to achieve the sound of the *snap pizzicato* by pulling the strings upwards as much as possible.

¹⁵ Seth F. Josel and Ming Tsao, *The Techniques of Guitar Playing* (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co, 2014), 82.

A subtle effect never seen in any other piece for guitar. It can be described as a “unsuccessful” *pizzicato Bartók* due to the contextual percussive activity of the piece.

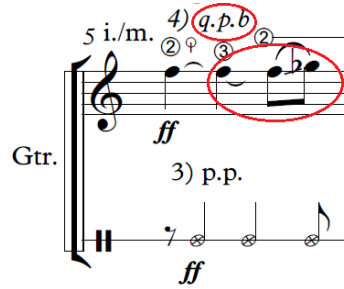


Figure 4 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 5.

3.1.4 Percussion

Percussive sounds produced by hitting the board with the thumb: “p.p.” (thumb close to the bridge), “p.c.” (thumb on the center), “p.t.” (thumb on the board “*tastiera*”).

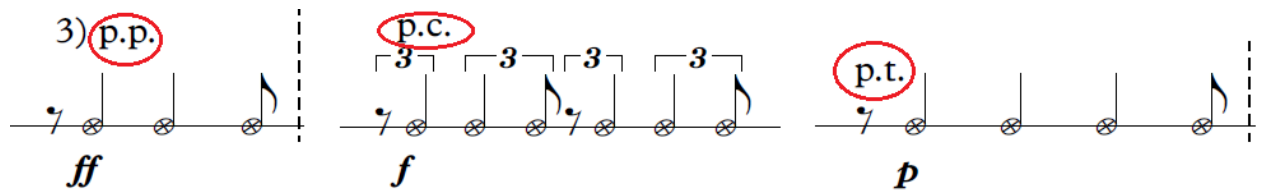


Figure 5 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 5.

Knock on the soundboard (lid) below the sound hole with the middle and ring fingers (or the index).



Figure 6 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 76.

1. Knock on the soundboard (lid) under the sound hole at the lower left corner (alternating index and middle fingers).

2. Knock with all fingers of the left hand on the lower left side.
3. Knock with all the fingers of the right hand on the right side.

126

Gtr.

poco rall.

mp

p.c.

molto

1) Golpe sobre la tapa debajo de la boca en el extremo inferior izquierdo alternando los dedos índice y medio
Knock on the lid under the mouth at the lower left corner, alternating index and middle fingers.

2) Golpe con todos los dedos de la mano izquierda sobre el aro inferior izquierdo / Knock with all the fingers of the left hand on the lower left side.

3) Golpe con todos los dedos de la mano derecha sobre el aro derecho / Knock with all the fingers of the right hand on the right side.

Figure 7 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 126.

3.1.5 Campanella (“bell-like”)

“A term particularly associated with stringed instruments such as the Baroque guitar, theorbo, lute, and modern guitar. A passage in which adjacent or repeated notes are drawn from different courses so that they may continue to sound when the following note is struck.”¹⁶

ff

5

Figure 8 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 18.

¹⁶ David Ledbetter, "Campanella," in Grove Music Online, ed. Deane Root, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.2273515>.

3.1.6 Harmonic Towards the Board

Harmonic with a simultaneous knock/hit on the soundboard (lid). To be performed with the index or middle finger. It is performed by pressing the fingertip on the string and pulling it down towards the soundboard.

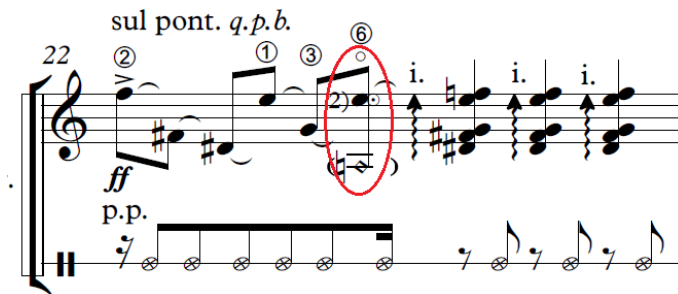


Figure 9 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 22.

3.1.7 Palm/Slap *Tambora*

Tambora with the palm of the right hand as close as possible to the bridge.

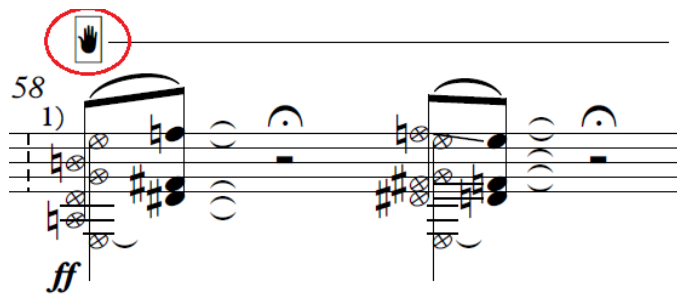


Figure 10 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 58.

3.1.8 *Rasgueado*/Azote (Lash)

In *rasgueado* technique, the fingers hit the strings with the outer side of your fingernails during downstrokes, the thumb with the outside of its fingernail during an upstroke. The movement is fast and percussive, originating from a bent, fist-like

position of the fingers whereby the fingernails of i, m, a and c lightly touch the palm of the hand. After the attack, the fingers are stretched at each joint.¹⁷

Azote translates as lash. It is a very articulated rasgueado that differs from the most traditional technique by its speed and power.

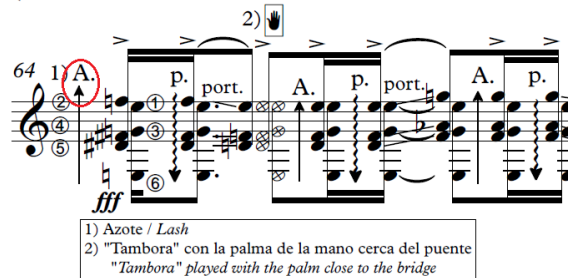


Figure 11 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 64.

3.1.9 Left-Hand Solo Tapping

Left-hand tapping is a guitar technique where the player articulates a fretted note by sharply bringing a finger down onto the fingerboard, resulting in the projection of that specific note.

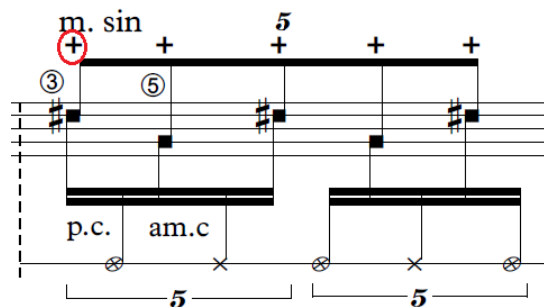


Figure 12 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 87.

17. Hubert Käppel, *The Bible of Classical Guitar Technique*, (Berlin: AMA Verlag, 2016), 169.

3.1.10 Strumming Between Nut and Pegs

It is a strumming on the strings within the area located between the nut and the pegs (to be performed with a chosen finger of the right hand). This effect is identical to the one used by the Argentinean composer Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) in his *Sonata Op. 47*.

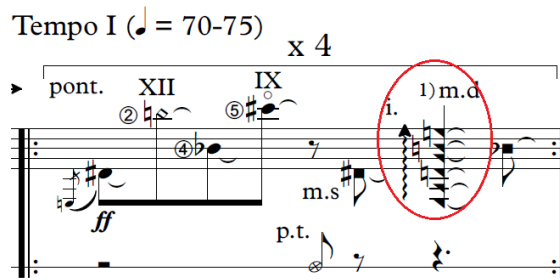


Figure 13 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 144.

3.1.11 Flam

“A flam (or flam accent) is a drum rudiment wherein a drummer strikes a grace note just a split second before striking the primary stroke.”¹⁸In guitar, that happens by a quick alternation between a hit on the lower to the upper part of the body of the instrument (or vice-versa).

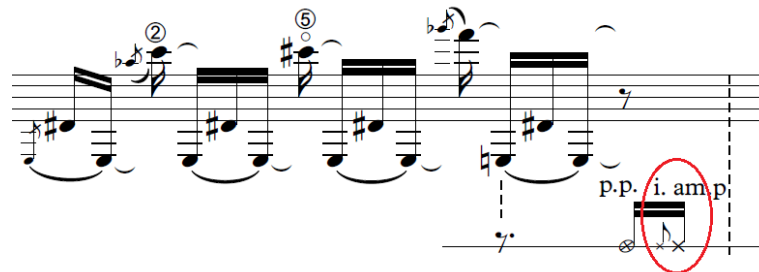


Figure 14 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 145.

18. T. Dennis Brown, “Rudiments,” in Grove Music Online, ed. Deane L Root, accessed January 13, 2023, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.J389400>.

3.2 *Relojerías Sensibles* - Performance Guide

Relojerías Sensibles is a solo guitar work written by Juan Trigos with a length of approximately sixteen minutes. This piece was commissioned by Geraldo Costa Neto in 2021 and finished in the spring of 2022. The work is composed of multiple sections that are structurally dependent on the number twelve. The number is a direct abstraction from the twelve-hour clock, and as the title suggests the entire piece revolves around the particularities of a mechanical/analog clock. *Relojerías Sensibles*, which can be roughly translated as “Sensible Clockmaking,” evokes the idea of an object that is somehow alive, a self-aware clock with feelings. It possesses consciousness, and for this reason, it suffers.

As previously stated, Trigos was hugely influenced by Donatoni’s practices, and therefore his music relies to a great extent on the Donatonian concept of *rilettura*. At the core of this idea, the composer can manipulate already existent musical material by utilizing a set of “rules.” According to Hennings:

Franco Donatoni cultivated in Trigos the principle of *rilettura*, by which a previously written section of music is “reread” and varied either through new articulation, a new element added, an existent element taken away or multiplied, all depending through which *code* is subjected to. This code is nothing but a very subjective and malleable set of rules to which previous material is subjected to in order to produce new musical material.¹⁹

Relojerías Sensibles omits all time signatures in the written score. In this scenario, the composer guides the performer to read the piece through the reference of its primary pulsation. The different subdivisions and note groupings which are present in the piece

19. Dieter Hennings. “Towards an Understanding of Juan Trigos’s Solo Guitar Partita,” (unpublished manuscript, 2009, Eastman School of Music), typescript.

meet at a point of alignment through this primary pulse. Although the work has something which could be commonly seen as traditional measures, these are not enumerated. Due to the expansive characteristic of the piece, some of these “measures” can take more than two lines to end. This attribute is related to the abstraction of the twelve hours of the clock face that informs the formal structure of the piece. Taking this into consideration, the composer did provide a version of the score in which he numbered the measures of the piece in order to facilitate analysis of selected passages of the work with conciseness and clearness.

To best understand how the piece was built, the following table summarizes the overall form of the work:

Table 3.1

A1	B1	Coda 1	A2	B2	Coda 2	A3	B3	A4	Coda 3
----	----	--------	----	----	--------	----	----	----	--------

This table demonstrates how the applied elements which generate the overall form of the piece are the procedural result of Donatoni’s *rilettura*. For example, multiple instances of A’s and B’s act as contrasting sections which are transformed by the *codici* as the piece expands from its internal logic.

The main material²⁰ for *Relojerías Sensibles* bases itself around a single chord (circled in red): E \flat 2 D \sharp 3 F \sharp 3 G \flat 3 E \flat 4 F \flat 4. This chord is created by a sequence of minor second intervals which are derived from the open strings of the guitar (standard tuning).

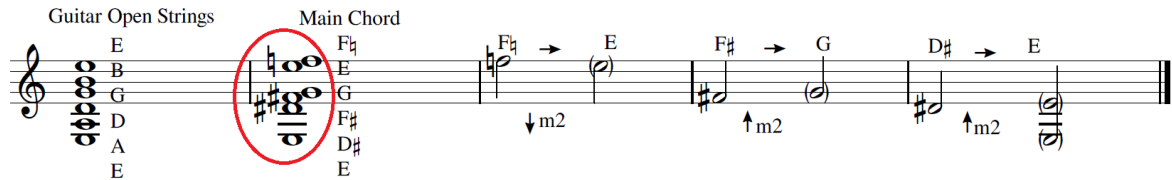


Figure 15 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, main chord.

At the beginning of the piece, we have this chord separated in two singular parts: D \sharp 3, F \sharp 3, F \flat 4; and, E \flat 2, G \flat 3.²¹ The musical statement is articulated by sustained quarter notes which are followed by quarter rests, simulating the idea of a clock-like rhythm. Each repetition is followed by a *fermata*, which are purposely marked by the composer to be of rather long and unexpected durations. Immediately following, we have the same chord (with E \flat 4 omitted) played with a *tambora* effect. All of these elements are present in the first measures of the piece:

A1 Senza rigore ♩ = 100 c.a.
molto sul pont. e non arpeggiato

Guitarra

1) En esta sección los calderones deberán ser de duración variable, más bien largos y siempre diferentes uno del otro.
In this section the fermatas should be of variable duration, rather long and different from each other.

2) Tambora con el pulgar lo más cerca del puente posible
Tambora with the thumb as close as possible to the bridge

Figure 16 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 1-2.

²⁰. “Material” refers to Donatoni’s term indicating “musical material” referring to a constructive way of building a piece of music in which all the written music constitutes aspects of a material that is developed upon to build a composition.

²¹. The E \flat 4 is omitted but it will appear once the material is restated, more specifically, the chord is showed in its integrity at measure 19, played as a *tambora*.

The following figure displays an example of a *rilettura* of the previous musical material. In measure 3, the initial chord appears once more, but this time with a melodic appoggiatura that makes itself present in each of the three notes of the chord. This sequence is closed with the same chord and *tambora* effect of measure 2.

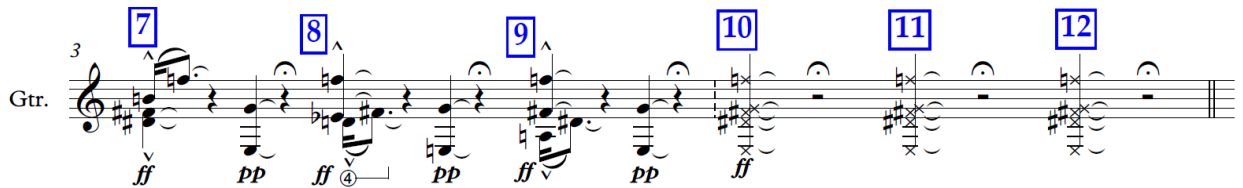


Figure 17 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 3-4.

The above examples exhibit a distinct pattern that can be divided into twelve “cells” which are the abstract representation of a clock. These twelve cells serve as the fundamental sequential pattern throughout the entire work and are key to understanding the musical procedures and transformations derived from Donatoni’s *rilettura*. The significance of this sequential clock-like pattern becomes clear in the illustrated formal analysis made by the composer below:

A1 Senza rigore ♩ = 100 c.a.
1 molto sul pont. e non arpeggiato
 ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

Guitarra

1) En esta sección los calderones deberán ser de duración variable, más bien largos y siempre diferentes uno del otro.
 In this section the fermatas should be of variable duration, rather long and different from each other.

2) Tambora con el pulgar lo más cerca del puente posible
 Tambora with the thumb as close as possible to the bridge

Gtr.

Figure 18 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 1-4.

As the A1 sequence ends, we are now introduced to new musical material. The following sequence, the B1 section, is longer and has its own peculiar characteristics. Starting at measure 5, the section makes use of the very same pitch-classes (enharmonically) listed in the original chord, with a few exceptions such as the grace notes A3 and B4 on measures 16 and 17, respectively. This section consists of a constant melodic line which is accompanied by an incessant percussion from beginning to end. The right hand has the complex function of creating a varied palette of sound colors as well to employ a particular exotic technique named *quasi pizzicato Bartók*.

3) Golpe sobre la tapa (arriba de la boca) con el pulgar: p.p. = pulgar cerca del puente p. c. = pulgar al centro p. t. = pulgar cerca del diapason ("tastiera").
 Knock on the lid (above the mouth) with the thumb: p.p. = with thumb close to the bridge p. c. = thumb on the centre p. t. = thumb on the board ("tastiera").
 4) "Quasi Pizz. Bartok". Ejecutar jalando la cuerda lo más posible para imitar este efecto
 "Quasi Pizzicato Bartok". Pull the string as much as possible in order to imitate this effect

Figure 19 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 5-9.

In brief, we can list eight types of sonorities that are present in this passage. Firstly, the commonly seen ponticello, ordinary, and tasto; secondly, the *pizzicato Bartók* and *quasi pizzicato Bartók*. The percussion is indicated to be played with thumb in three different areas of the guitar, hence producing three distinct sonorities. This percussive vocabulary is established at the beginning of the piece and recurs throughout. Proper execution of the percussive effects is indispensable to a successful performance.

Due to the complex percussive elements of the piece, the composer divided the musical material into two staves. Therefore, when percussion is introduced the score allows

us a clearer perception of the rhythms through a double-layered perspective. This excerpt of the piece contains quarter notes, eighth-notes, triplets, sixteenth notes, quintuplets, as well as dotted quarter notes. There is a constant interchange between symmetric and asymmetric time signatures which range from a varied lexicon of meters both simple and compound. At measures 11 and 12, we have an interesting example of the primary pulsation set into play with a variety of note values which are subdivided. The different note value groupings distort the sense of the unity of the beat. One can perceive that from the quintuplets on measure 11 to the dotted quarter notes on measure 12. This same concept is applied at the measure right after, in which an uneven grouping of two quarter notes and one eighth note is displayed.

Figure 20 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 10-13.

The disruption of the beat through either fixed or temporary metric modulations as well as the displacement of the beat by using changing note values are a common rhythmical procedure in Trigos' music. On the second movement of his earlier guitar work, *Partita*, we see a temporary metric modulation that takes place through the acceleration of the beat. The quarter note becomes a dotted eighth note which results in a faster beat (circled in blue). In *Relojerías Sensibles* these are implied through the different subdivisions which

are written down on the score. Therefore, even if the pulse it is not changing there is a constant illusion that it could be.



Figure 21 - *Partita*, mov. II, mm. 43-44.

To play B1 effectively, I make use of a strategy in which I designate selected fingers of the right-hand to a certain type of sound color. For instance, I use the thumb and index together in order to play the standard *pizzicato Bartók* and only the index finger for the *quasi pizzicato Bartók* effect. Because the hand will inevitably be jumping around due to the percussive movements that are followed by the plucked notes, consistent use of fingers allows for greater stabilization of the right hand. For unisons which are played on two different strings with an ordinary sound, I assign the middle and index to their own string (this may change depending on the passage). This method facilitates memorization of the piece and the type of sound color desired for each passage.

The formal analysis of Trigos emphasizes the twelve cells that structure this section, again reaffirming the clock abstraction as a generative principle. It is also the first time we hear a short *coda*. This structural complement will reappear during different stages of the work. To illustrate these points, B1 is shown in the figure below.

B1 A tempo ♩ = 70-75

1 sul pont. 2 ord. 3 sul pont. 4 ord. vib. molto 5 sul pont.

5 i./m. 4) q.p.b. 3 simile 3 q.p.b. 2 3 p. 5 q.p.b.

Gtr. 3) p.p. f f ff mp ff

3) Golpe sobre la tapa (arriba de la boca) con el pulgar: p.p. = pulgar cerca del puente p. c. = pulgar al centro p. t. = pulgar cerca del diapasón ("tastiera").
 Knock on the lid (above the mouth) with the thumb: p.p. = with thumb close to the bridge p. c. = thumb on the centre p. t. = thumb on the board ("tastiera").
 4) "Quasi Pizz. Bartok". Ejecutar jalando la cuerda lo más posible para imitar este efecto
 "Quasi Pizzicato Bartok". Pull the string as much as possible in order to imitate this effect

6 sul tasto vib. molto 7 ord. vib. molto 8 sul tasto vib. molto 9 sul pont.

10 p dolce p.t. p mp p dolce p ff p.p.

1. vib. tutte le corde il più possibile 12 CODA 1

14 ord. 11 sul pont. 12 sul tasto 13 sul pont. vib. molto poco accel.

1 p. 3 2 simile 4 q.p.b. 5 m. i. 2 3 mf non dim

Gtr. p.c. p.p. p.t. p

Figure 22 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 5-17.

A2 (m. 18) is created from the very same source material shown in the initial chord from A1 (m. 1). At the second cell/hour of the clock this same chord returns ornamented with notes a minor second below the original D3, again an example of *rilletura*.

A2 Senza rigore ♩ = 100 c.a

18 1 molto sul pont. 2 3

ff pp ff pp ff pp

Figure 23 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 18.

In the first version of the score this passage featured slurs that connected D3 and C#3 on the fifth string (circled in red).

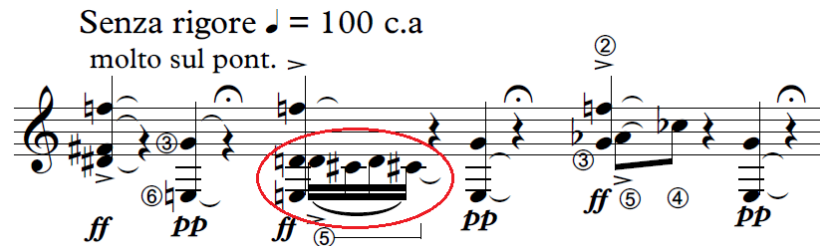


Figure 24 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 18.

In conversation with the composer it was decided that it would be better to have this passage played as *campanella* (as shown previously) to fully utilize the acoustic characteristics of the instrument.

In the final version of the score the clash of the minor seconds accomplishes a set of musical and practical necessities. Firstly, the minor seconds now resonate together and are akin to the sonorities of the original chord. Secondly, the *campanella* makes the passage easier to play because rather than relying solely on the left-hand slurs to play all of the notes, the performer can pluck the sixteenth notes with the right hand following the initial slur. The only-slurs approach often sounds inaccurate due to its natural practical challenges, therefore a combination between slurs and right-hand plucking seems optimal. Thirdly, the *campanella* allows the guitar to sound louder due to the articulation of an additional string which accomplishes the *fortissimo* as written by Trigos. The same successive pattern of slur and *campanella* will occur again at the beginning of measure 20, allowing the guitar to sustain these notes for longer as indicated by Trigos.

The *tamboras* on measures 19 and 21 should be played with the thumb striking the strings as close as possible to the bridge. Trigos makes use of the harmonic technique of strict/chromatic planing in this excerpt, a method in which the notes of a specific chord ascend or descend in parallel motion.²² This technique was popularized by the French composer Claude Debussy and was later famously utilized by the Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos in many of his guitar pieces.

A2

2 Senza rigore ♩ = 100 c.a.

18 **1** molto sul pont. **2** **3** **4** **5** **6**

Gtr. *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp*

20 **7** come prima **8** **9** **10** **11** **12**

Gtr. *ff* *pp* *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

1) Gliss si possibile, sino sólo el ligado.
Gliss if possible, otherwise just slured.

Figure 25 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 18-21.

For the end of the A2 section I would like to suggest a fingering for the chord on measure 20, cell number 9. This chord contains a *portamento* from its lowest note and can be quite a challenge to play if one tries to execute the *portamento* with finger 1 from C3 to Eb3. Due to that, I suggest that one creates a “sound illusion” by doing a *portamento* with finger 1 from C3 to D3 and then apply a slur with finger 2 in order to articulate the Eb3.

9

Figure 26 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 20.

22. Stefan M. Kostka, Dorothy Payne, and Almén Byron, *Tonal Harmony: With an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music*, Seventh Edition (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2013), 472.

there is space for variance and interpretation on these specific excerpts, the note value symbol first shown in measure 23 is clear: these are notes that are to be played in a slow to fast fashion (or vice-versa when the symbol is reversed).

The tone color for both the melodic notes written on the upper staff and the percussive sounds change frequently during this section, utilizing the three types of sonorities mentioned during the B1 section of the work. Importantly, changes in meter happen throughout this excerpt even though time signatures are not indicated. One must be always attentive to the continual changes between simple and compound meter.

B2 A tempo ♩ = 70-75

1 sul pont. *q. p. b.*

2 ord. *f*

3 simile sul pont. *q. p. b.*

4 ord. vib. molto *mp*

5 sul. pont. *q. p. b.*

molto

2) Armónico con golpe simultáneo sobre la tapa. Ejecutarlo con el índice (o medio). Se realiza haciendo presión con la yema del dedo sobre la cuerda y disparandola hacia abajo contra la tapa.
 Harmonic with a simultaneous knock on the lid. To be performed it with the index (or middle) finger. It is performed by pressing the fingertip on the string and pulling it down at the lid.

Figure 28 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 22-33.

Figure 29 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 34-40.

Section B2 demonstrates the abstraction of a clock face as a formal and compositional principle, with each hour assigned a set of intervals primarily based upon minor seconds. These chords are initially arpeggiated and then played as blocks. This dynamic between arpeggiation, blocked chords, percussion and unisons results in a rather odd way of playing the guitar. As a traditional rule, the right hand should always be over the strings, but to effectively perform this section the hand must be highly mobile over the entire body of the guitar and therefore very unstable.

In measure 41 the composer makes use of a plethora of the natural harmonics of the guitar. The melodic contour and natural sustain of the harmonics reveal a deeper polyphonic structure within the work which will recur later in the piece through means of *rilettura*. This voice is highlighted in the following example:

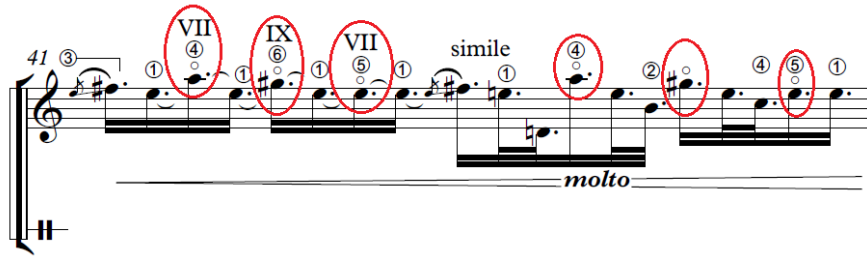


Figure 30 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 41.

The left-hand stretches at this point are of an awkward nature. For instance, in measure 43 the left-hand index finger needs to be prepared to both play the C#3 on string five as well as mute string four to avoid the D3 from ringing. In contrast, the right hand strums down the chord, articulates the grace note A3 that ornaments C#3, and performs percussion throughout.

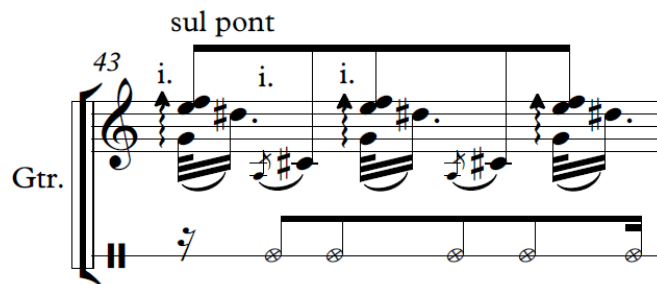


Figure 31 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 43.

Contrasting tone colors and dynamics signal the shifts of the cells/hours of the clock and their change of gears. As a formal procedure, they unify the work in the sense that not only harmonic and rhythmic changes create the whole of a section, but their designated palette of colors are characteristic to each cell/hour of the clock. The *coda* in this section brings us back to the beginning by reciting the pitches of the original chord from A1, measure 1.

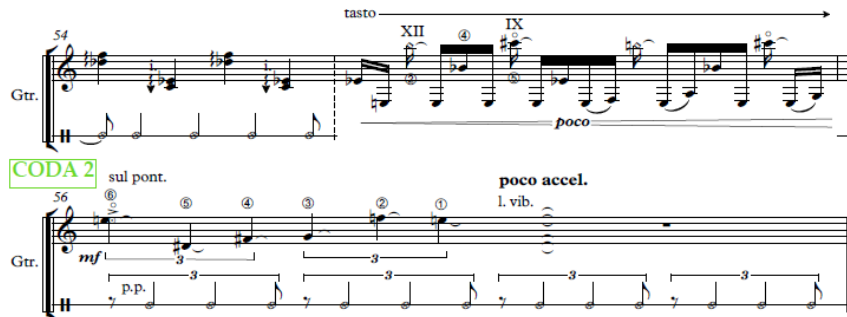


Figure 32 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 54-56.

I would like to suggest a change of fingerings for two excerpts of section B2. In measure 52, the index finger acts as a guiding finger facilitating the passage as it also connects the upper voice which is articulated by the A \natural 4 to the B \flat 4. The harmonic on fret IX reproduces the same pitch as fret IV, but now achievable without a large stretch for the left hand. Lastly, the “+” signals that the F \sharp 3 is to be articulated by the left-hand only.

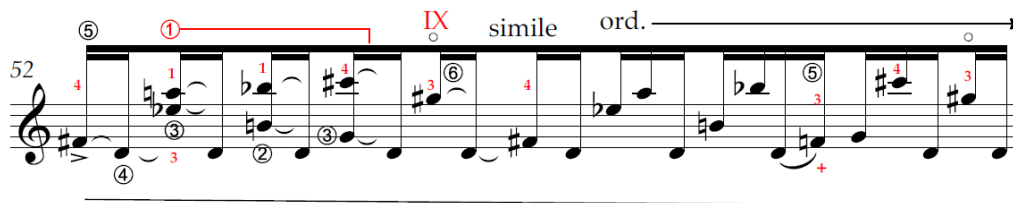


Figure 33 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 52.

Executing measure 55 in first position is easier due to the fast interchange between voices on the upper register and the bass line that contains notes such as F3, A3 and G3. Trigos asks the player to perform this passage with a dark *tasto* sound, which the guitar naturally achieves when playing notes in the first position. For the harmonics at fret XII the optimal choice is to play them with the right hand only, the two harmonics on fret IV are also facilitated by the natural predisposition of the instrument having more tension on the string on that specific part of the neck, which as a result produces a louder pitch. This passage is rather tricky and requires a lot of slow practice and patience, but despite that the musical result is magical.

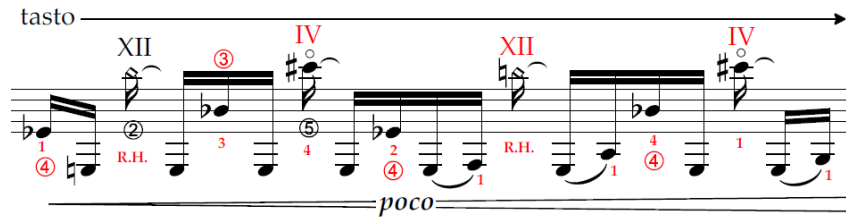


Figure 34 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 55.

Section A3 (m. 57) expands and stretches the same musical vocabulary in A1. Each figuration contains the contrast of two dynamics: *fortissimo* and *piano*, which creates a rhetorical dialogue by means of permutations. The section is divided into arpeggiated chords and slurred notes followed by a fermata of a variable time length. This excerpt takes advantage of the natural acoustic resources of the guitar and my fingering suggestions are intended to maximize the *campanella* effect of these arpeggios. Since some notes will be impossible to sustain, I have taken into consideration which ones are fundamental to retain the sonorous function of the chord.

4 A3

1 Senza rigore ♩ = 100 c.a.
molto sul pont. l. vib. tutte le corde il più poss. 2

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *p*

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a sequence of chords and notes. Above the staff, the Roman numerals XII, IV, XII, and IV are written in red. Below the staff, the word 'poco' is written in red. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in red circles. The right hand (R.H.) is indicated by 'R.H.' in red. The sequence of chords and notes is as follows: XII (fingering 1, 2, 3, 4), IV (fingering 3, 4, 5), XII (fingering 1, 2, 3, 4), IV (fingering 1, 2, 3, 4), XII (fingering 1, 2, 3, 4), IV (fingering 1, 2, 3, 4).

Figure 35 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 57.

It is also important to note that some of the slurred patterns have been altered to a hybrid slur/*campanella* setting, thus allowing the notes to resonate more as well as obviating the technical challenges imposed by the only-slurs approach. This hybrid setup is repeated in several of the same types of figurations such as the one shown below.

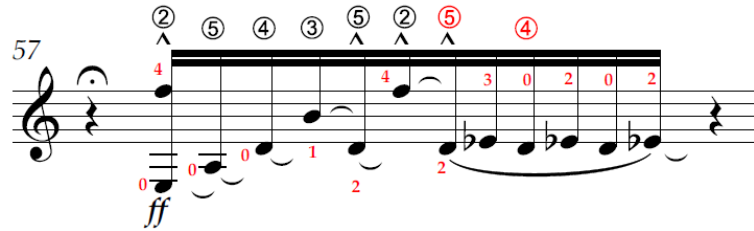


Figure 36 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 57.

This passage also introduces another guitar effect to the lexicon of techniques in this work: the *tambora slap*. This technique is similarly utilized in the fourth movement of *Partita*:

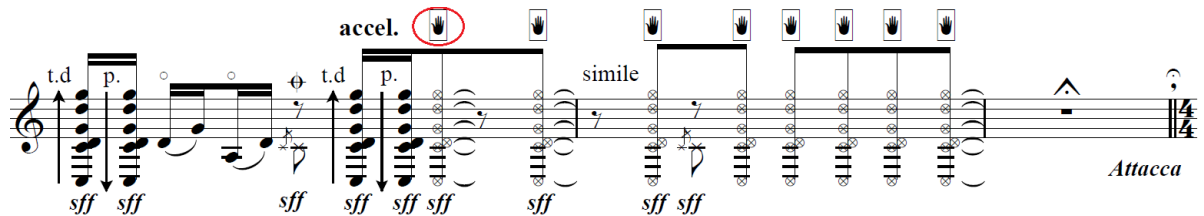


Figure 37 - *Partita*, mov. IV, mm. 95-97.

As said previously, the *tambora* chords are a *rilettura* of the initial musical material in A1, measure 2 (cell/hour 4). Therefore, it is no coincidence that this very same clock hour is indicated as *tambora* in A3, measure 58 (cell/hour 4). Trigos develops the original musical material by means of *rilettura*, always expanding the original cells which were introduced earlier. This is exemplified in the figure below:

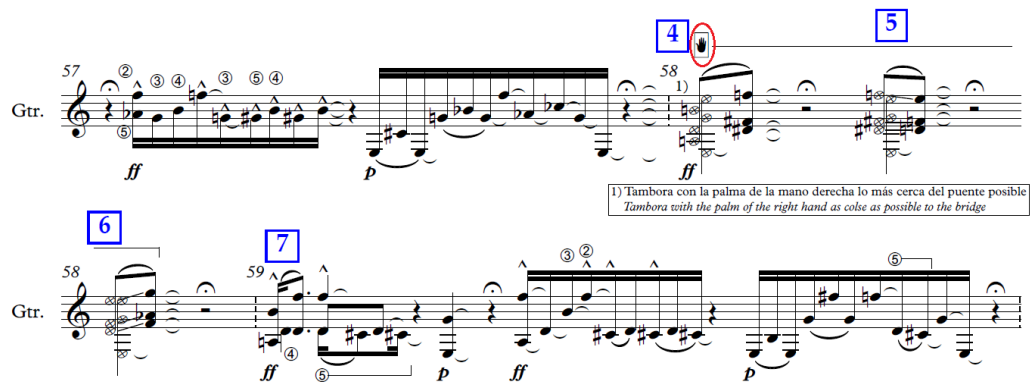


Figure 38 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 57-59.

4

A3

1 Senza rigore $\text{♩} = 100 \text{ c.a.}$
molto sul pont.

57

Grtr.

2

3

4

5

6

7

58

59

Grtr.

1 Tambora con la palma de la mano derecha lo más cerca del puente posible
Tambora with the palm of the right hand as close as possible to the bridge

60

Grtr.

8

ff

3

4

1 2 0 2

p

ff

4

0 0 1 4

2 3 0 3

p

5

4

1 2 2

60

Grtr.

9

ff

3

5

4

p

ff

1

3

0 0 0 0

1 2 0 3

0 3

60

Grtr.

10

p

3

1

3

4

1

61

ff

11

12

61

Grtr.

41

As the name of the following section suggests, B3 is created out of the previous B1 and B2 sections. In fact, the way that the musical material evolves can be traced as a non-stop progressive evolution from the inner elements that were introduced at the beginning of the work. In this portion of the piece (m. 62), we see a return of the sequential unisons that appear through the open strings, fretted notes, and natural harmonics. Following this we have the same sort of musical figuration in which the loose notation asks the performer to create an *accelerando* from a sequence of eighth notes that are both articulated by the right hand and slurred by the left hand. The chords of measure 64, which are taken from the original chord in A1, are another example of planing within the work. The *azote* (lash) *rasgueado* and the percussion accompaniment are both present in this section, but this time with the percussion spaced out between measures.

B3

A tempo ♩ = 70-75
sul pont. *q.p.b.*

62 **1**

Gtr.

fff

un po' meno ————— *molto*

breve

64 1) A. 2)

fff

1) Azote / Lash
2) "Tambora" con la palma de la mano cerca del puente
"Tambora" played with the palm close to the bridge

p.p

66 **2** ord.

Gtr.

f

breve

Figure 41 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 62-67.

Measure 68 employs a new chord (E2, A2, G#3, E4 doubled, F#4) which is used as a transposable shape for the following measures. This chord appears in triplets and often has the strong beat displaced from the downbeat. The standard technique with the thumb is the best choice to execute *tambora* in this passage.

3) Rasqueado con todos los dedos / *Rasqueado with all the fingers*
 4) Tambora con el pulgar lo más cerca del puente posible / *Tambora with the thumb as close as possible to the bridge*

Figure 42 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 68-71.

From measure 70 on we have the very same structure as measure 66 with some mild alterations. This type of occurrence in which the musical elements appear to be the same but have slightly altered rhythms, added notes, and other harmonic structures is also part of Trigos' *rilettura* of the initial material provided in B3 (m. 62).

Another axiomatic characteristic of this work is how the *accelerandos* and *rallentandos* are also used to connect the sequential structures of the piece. For example, from B1 to A2 there is an *accelerando* that serves as a bridge to the proposed tempo in the following section (A2). These agogics are built to smooth the transitions between sections and create a sense of overall unity. This element is also featured at the *coda* of B2 to achieve the indicated tempo at A3. In measure 74 there is a *rallentando* that smooths the transition from structure to structure by means of agogic (circled in blue). In measure 75 Trigos applies strict planing to the chord and continues to use percussive elements within a variety of rhythmic cells.

Figure 43 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 72-75.

The following transition (measures 75 to 77) is subject to the *accelerando* that leads the musical material to return to *Tempo I* (the same from B1, m. 5). The newly introduced percussive sound indicated by the “x” is nothing more than a knock/hit on the soundboard below the hole with the middle and ring fingers of the right hand. As the color of the notes are progressively altered by the change of the musical structures, the percussion also features this same element. Lastly, I strongly suggest one play the *pizzicato Bartók* in measure 77 with the index finger only which gives the player more time to complete the transition between percussive hits and the harmonic with the hit towards the soundboard

(lid). The blend between change of color, dynamic, and tempo, make itself present as it is showed in the figure below.

The musical score for guitar (Gtr.) spans measures 75 to 82. It features several tempo and dynamic markings:

- Measure 75:** Starts with a tempo marking of *Tempo I* (♩ = 70-75). Above the staff, there is a marking *poco accel.* and *ord. vib. molto*. Below the staff, there are fingerings (i., i., i., i.) and a marking **) am.c*.
- Measure 76:** Continues with *ord. vib. molto* and *p.c.* below the staff.
- Measure 77:** Features a *fff* dynamic marking and *p.p. am.p.* below the staff.
- Measure 78:** Includes a box with instructions: **) Golpe sobre la tapa (abajo de la boca) con los dedos medio y anular (o con el índice). Al igual que con el dedo pulgar: c= centro, p=punto, t=diapasón (tastiera). Knock on the lid (below the mouth) with the middle and ring fingers (or the index). As with the thumb: c= center, p=bridge, t=fingerboard (tastiera).*
- Measure 79:** Starts with a tempo marking of *Un po' meno mosso* (♩ = 66 c.a.). Above the staff, there is a marking *sul. pont.* and *sul tasto vib. molto*. Below the staff, there is a *molto* marking and *p dolce*.
- Measure 80:** Continues with *sul tasto vib. molto* and *mp* below the staff.
- Measure 81:** Features a *poco accel.* marking and *sul tasto vib. molto* above the staff. Below the staff, there is a *mp* marking and *p.c.*.
- Measure 82:** Ends with a tempo marking of *Tempo I* (♩ = 70-75) and *ord. vib. m.* above the staff. Below the staff, there is a *mp* marking and *p.c.*.

Figure 44 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 75-82.

Measure 81 is a *rilettura* of B3 (m. 64), though this time there is a dramatic change of mood, dynamic, and tone color. This short passage is entirely based on chords that are transposed by strict planing. The percussion complements the texture and the *accelerando*

builds to the return of *Tempo I* at measure 82. This section is one of the hardest and most intricate of the entire work. It is completely expansive in the way that it treats its material and at some points extremely challenging to play at the indicated tempo. The constant quintuplets are also of a rather complex nature, written as eighth and sixteenth-notes quintuplets (circled in blue). This section also features a large use of episodic percussive and left-hand slurs to articulate the notes on the fretboard. In measure 86 these episodes are separated by quintuplets that emulate the same harmonic vocabulary in B2 (m. 38).

7

83

Gtr.

84

Gtr.

1. vib. toute le corde

86

IV

m. sin

p.c. am.c

89

Gtr.

IV

m. sin

Figure 45 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 83-91.

Lastly, a *rilettura* of measures 86, 88, and 90 is expressed in measures 92, 94, and 94. Trigos complements this musical passage by the addition of the note E4 in a continuum pattern of sixteenth notes which are overlapped by the melodic contour of the previous measures:

The musical score for measures 86-91 of 'Relojerías Sensibles' is presented. The score is written for guitar (Gtr.) and piano (p.c. and am.c.). Measures 86, 88, and 90 are circled in blue. The score includes various musical notations such as fingerings (3, 4, 5, 6), articulation marks (+), and dynamic markings (mp). The piano part features a continuum pattern of sixteenth notes overlapped by the melodic contour of the previous measures.

Figure 46 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 86-91.

The musical score for measures 92-97 of 'Relojerías Sensibles' is presented. The score is written for guitar (Gtr.) and piano (p.c. and am.c.). Measures 92, 94, and 96 are circled in blue. The score includes various musical notations such as fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), articulation marks (+), and dynamic markings (mp). The piano part features a continuum pattern of sixteenth notes overlapped by the melodic contour of the previous measures.

Figure 47 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 92-97.

Cell/hour 7 of section B3 is elongated until it transitions to cell/hour 8 (m. 98):

8 **poco rall.** 8 Un po' meno mosso ♩ = 66 (♩. = 88)

ord. → sul tasto vib. molto

97 Gtr. p.c. am.c. 5 5 p dolce p.t. p. port. port. port. port.

99 Gtr. sul tasto → ord. VII IX p

Figure 48 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 97-100.

To play measure 98 successfully, I highly recommend one to execute the upper notes by “sweeping” them with the index finger (or any other finger that allows one to play it as accurately as possible). In this way, the performer will play the bass line with the thumb while the thirty-second notes will be articulated by the index finger. This method allows one to have enough time to play the previous percussive part while also articulating the thirty-second notes without having to prepare the right-hand fingers on the strings beforehand.

8 **poco rall.** 8 Un po' meno mosso ♩ = 66 (♩. = 88)

ord. → sul tasto vib. molto

97 Gtr. p.c. am.c. 5 5 p dolce p.t. p. port. port. port. port. simile port.

99 Gtr. sul tasto → ord. VII IX p

Figure 49 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 97-98.

The following passages (circled in blue in figure 50) are clearly based on material found in B2 (m. 41).

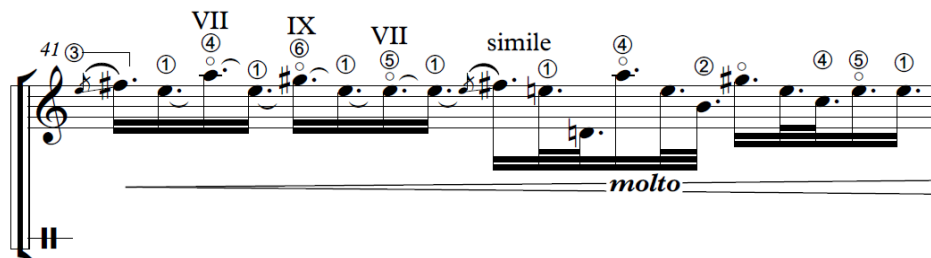


Figure 50 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 41.

These passages are nothing more than an expanded or contracted *rilettura* of the original pattern in measure 41. Due to the constant melodic fragmentation as well as the varied percussive patterns this section is rather complex to memorize.

Figure 51 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 99-113.

The following structures at measure 112 are an amalgamation of ideas previously presented in several different parts of the work. The first chords that open this portion of the piece are treated with strict planing and are rhythmically identical to those in B3 (m. 64). Though less evident, the structures in measure 121 are all based on the previous material of B2 (m. 38).

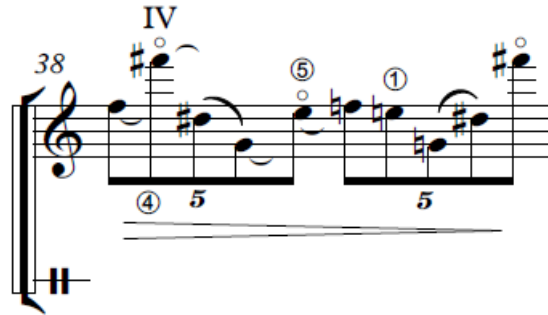


Figure 52 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, m. 38.

The collection of notes of this quintuplet (m. 38) forms the skeleton that the following section builds upon. As in the previous parts, we find the same sequential schema between elements of a “x” material (circled in blue) followed by a contrasting “y” material (circled in green).

The figure shows three staves of music. The top staff is for measures 113-115, with a 't.d.' (tutti) marking at measure 113. The middle staff is for measures 116-118, with a 'Gtr.' (guitar) marking at measure 116. The bottom staff is for measures 119-120. Various musical notations are present, including dynamics like 'p.p.', 'am.p.', 'p.', 'A.', and 'sempre fff'. Circled elements in blue and green highlight specific musical materials as described in the text.

Figure 53 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 113-120.

In the following excerpt, Trigos writes figurations based on the melodic material of the quintuplets of measure 38 by altering the rhythm and making use of slurs and harmonics (circled in blue). Percussive episodes which make use of the same pitch collection (oftentimes spelled enharmonically) follow directly after.

121

123

124

Gtr.

126

Gtr.

poco rall.

10 Un po' meno mosso (♩ = 66)
ord. molto vib.

1) Golpe sobre la tapa debajo de la boca en el extremo inferior izquierdo alternando los dedos índice y medio
Knock on the lid under the mouth at the lower left corner, alternating index and middle fingers.

2) Golpe con todos los dedos de la mano izquierda sobre el aro inferior izquierdo / Knock with all the fingers of the left hand on the lower left side.

3) Golpe con todos los dedos de la mano derecha sobre el aro derecho / Knock with all the fingers of the right hand on the right side.

Figure 54 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 121-128.

The repeated percussive patterns in measures 126 and 127 signal a new change of gear that happens at measure 128. This shift of gear from *Tempo I* to *Un po' meno mosso* is recurrent and it relates to the idea of a material that is reread through different perspectives.

In B3 (m. 131) we have a significant change of mood that situates us in an intimate moment of the piece. Metaphorically, it is as if the clock is being rebuilt by utilizing pitches and structures that are analogous to B2, measures 48 and 49 (circled in blue).

Figure 55 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 45-51.

Measure 131 must have a clear and well-planned fingering choice in order to maximize the effect of the notes that should be sustained. The combination of sustained notes on the fretboard joined with natural harmonics increase the already challenging nature of this passage. Due to the asymmetric characteristics of each group of notes, one must always be attentive to maintain a consistent and steady pulse. Since the time signatures are not written in this piece, I suggest using the value of the eighth note at 140-150 bpm as a reference. This entire passage features a progressive and long crescendo, a dynamic which complements the increasing division and subdivision of rhythmic cells. I have written down my own fingering suggestions from measures 131 to 133 for optimal playability:

129 i. i. simile ord. poco accel.

Tempo I (♩ = 70-75)

131 sul pont. VII IX VII XII 132 IX XII IX

133 VII XII 134 XII IX

135 q.p.b. VII 11 P.p. am.p. fff

Figure 56 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 129-136.

The following passages (mm. 137-141) are extremely agitated due to the constant shifts between a percussive and *quasi pizzicato* Bartók style of playing. This same sequence also incorporates the harmonic with index finger towards the soundboard technique, which by no means facilitates the task of keeping the right hand in a still and relaxed position. Although the piece becomes more “playable” during the *pesante* with a sequence of *pizzicati* Bartók, it returns to the same type of agitated figurations after the solo percussion

sections from measures 139 and 140. The two portions circled in blue are analogous to each other and allude to previous musical material:

The image displays a musical score for guitar, specifically measures 137 through 141 of the piece 'Relojerías Sensibles'. The score is written for guitar (Gtr.) and consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 137 to 140, and the second system covers measures 140 to 141. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 6. The score includes various tempo and dynamic markings: 'q.p.b.' (quasi piano, benedito), 'Pesante poco rall.' (heavy, slightly slowing down), 'A tempo' (return to tempo), 'poco rall.' (slightly slowing down), and 'molto' (very). A 'sul pont. q.p.b.' marking is also present. Two portions of the score are circled in blue: measures 137-140 in the first system and measures 140-141 in the second system. These circled portions are analogous to each other and allude to previous musical material.

Figure 57 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 137-141.

At measure 142 Trigos uses a chord shape that is parallelly transposed repeatedly. This time the performer should aim for a *dolcissimo piano* sound by playing *sul tasto*. The percussion features the same *piano* dynamic and a color sound achieved by hitting the soundboard close to the neck. At measure 143 the same chord is played articulating the thirds that compose it on every two beats. I recommend using the “a” finger to play those upper thirds.

Trigos creates an ostinato-like figure by using the open sixth string E2 and the D#3 on that same string. There are slight differences between the entrances of this ostinato which is written both with the E2 as a grace note and as a thirty-second note. Percussion is also reread and varied both through the rhythm as well as the addition of flams. These flams are quite common to Trigos' music and are similar to the ones found in the fourth and fifth movements of the *Partita*:

*) Apagar las cuerdas con la palma de la mano mientras se da el golpe.
 Stop strings resonance with the right hand palm while fingers strikes the lid.

**) Tambora con la palma de la mano cerca del puente.
 "Tambora" played with the palm near to the bridge.

Figure 60 - *Partita*, mov. IV, mm. 46-47.

The figure of the ostinato is punctuated by notes over three octaves above the E2. Since the ostinato (m. 145, circled in blue) always ends on the sixth open string, it allows the guitar to sustain this note while the player executes the higher pitches. This structure can be seen in the figure below:

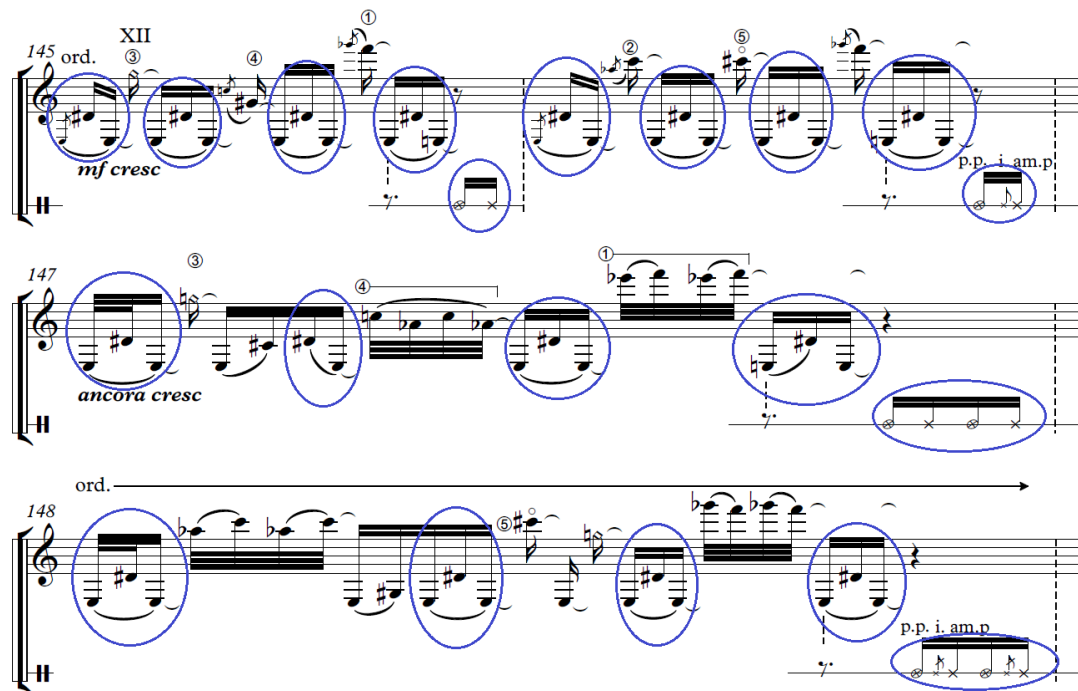


Figure 61 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 145-148.

The following excerpt at measure 149 is similar to the one at measure 144. In addition, Trigos incorporates a more active percussive set that includes the left-hand unplucked articulation with the right-hand strumming above the nut. The end of this section prepares the following one by the *poco accelerando* that is written at the final percussive gesture.

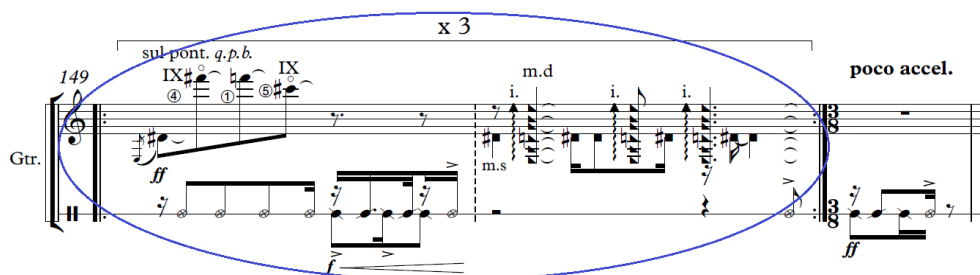


Figure 62 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 149-151.

Section A4 (m. 152), as the name suggests, is a *rilettura* of the initial material in A1 (m. 1). As we have already seen in sections A2 (m. 18) and A3 (m. 57) the earlier cells were progressively expanded and elongated by means of permutation. A4 presents us with

musical characteristics of elevated virtuosity which leads us to the grand finale of the piece. The abstraction of the twelve hours of the clock remains ubiquitous as is made clear in the formal analysis provided by the composer. Although complex both technically and musically, there are ways to facilitate the performance of this passage as well as to highlight the hidden polyphony.

The following figure delineates a persistent dialogue between the elements of an implied polyphonic structure derived from A1 (circled in red) that is set in contrast with the often-asymmetric number of sixteenth notes. This section is considerably extended and features slap *tamboras* (circled in blue) as well as a new slurred pattern that is generated from the open strings of the guitar and the primordial chord (circled in green). This new pattern is idiomatic to the instrument and is transposed by strict planing. Lastly, there are three layouts of a group of notes (circled in yellow) that are akin to the slurred notes in A3 (m. 57).

Measure 168 shows us the longest melodic structure of the piece in which all the notes are grouped under a single beam. This passage is rather challenging and requires a lot of control from both left and right hand. The accurate articulation of the constant slurs is difficult for the left hand and the right hand needs to employ preparation on the bass strings frequently. The performer must preserve the previously set tempo while making sure one will be able to increase in both speed and intensity as the phrase reaches its end. Again, this *accelerando* serves as a way to gradually achieve the following tempo of measure 169 which is 12 bpm faster in relation to the previous speed of the quarter note at measure 152 (approximately 100 bpm).

12 **A4**

1 **1** Più mosso $\text{♩} = 100 \text{ c.a.}$

152 ord. *ff* *p come un eco* *sul tasto* **2** ord. *ff* *più volte*

155 *p* *sul tasto* *ff*

156 ord. *ff* *p* *sul tasto*

157 *ff* *sul pont.* **4** **5**

159 *ff* *ord.* *più volte*

162 *p* *sul tasto* **8** ord. *ff*

164 *più volte* *p* *sul tasto*

166 ord. *ff* *più volte* 168

168 *p* *sul tasto* *poco accel.* *sul tasto* *molto*

Figure 63 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 152-168.

To achieve maximum contrast between dynamics and the implied polyphonic texture, I highly recommend the following fingering alterations:

A4

12 Più mosso $\text{♩} = 100 \text{ c.a.}$

152 ord. **1** *ff* *IX sul tasto* *p come un eco* **2** *ord.* *più volte* *(for shift) 3 2*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

155 **3** *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *III*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

156 **4** *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

157 **5** *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

159 **6** *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

162 **prepare finger 4 on 4th string* **7** *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

164 *più volte* **8** *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

166 *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

168 *ord.* *ff* *p* *ff* *IX sul tasto* *2 3 2 1 1*

Gtr. *ff* *p* *ff*

poco accel. *sul tasto* *molto*

Figure 64 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 152-168.

The last page of the work is of a frantic nature. The energy built up from the beginning of section A4 is found here at its apex. The main challenges of this excerpt are the combinations of slurred arpeggios, *slap tamboras*, and percussive sounds which are used in sequence. The energetic climax occurs at the *furioso* and is followed immediately by a *precipitando* that forces the player to execute the arpeggios and slurs in a hostile manner. This excerpt concludes with a succession of percussive sounds and slap *tamboras* that are displayed in eighth and sixteenth notes with a *crescendo molto*.

10 Più mosso ♩ = 112 c.a.

11

12 Furioso

precipitando

molto

breve

Figure 65 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 169-171.

Measure 172 marks the final coda which starts with a *rilettura* of musical elements previously seen in sections such as B2 (m. 22) and B3 (m. 62). After the agitated E4 unisons (m. 173, circled in blue), the original chord appears to conclude the piece (m. 174). This excerpt is indicated to be played all *rasgueado* and as loud as possible (*tutta forza*). The

original chord is transposed throughout the fretboard with a varied number of rhythmical cells which are accompanied by percussive flams of a continuous and obsessive nature. The piece emulates a dying clock by alternating between quarter notes that are played as chord and percussion all with a progressive and slow *rallentando*.

CODA 3 - GENERAL

Ancora più mosso ♩ = 132 c.a.
sul pont.

Original chord **Tutta forza**

1 **rall.** 2 3 simile 4 5 6 7 8 9 simile 10 11 12

molto rall.

segue dim e rall.

molto

Miami, Florida
January 16, 2022

Figure 66 - *Relojerías Sensibles*, mm. 172-178.

The twelve-hour abstraction remains the focal point that informs the inner structure of the work. The final percussive gesture features a lower pitch that comes from the thumb hitting the upper area of the soundboard and a higher one that is produced by the fingers hitting below the sound hole. This higher pitch can be better achieved by making use of the fingernails while hitting the soundboard with the middle and ring fingers. The last chord

is sustained by the natural resonances of the guitar from the final percussive sounds, thus emulating a clock-like sonority. The ticking sounds fade away as the tempo slows and the dynamic approaches silence in the final *fermata* which concludes the piece.

CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION

Research based on music performance has a certain degree of freedom and flexibility due to the many subjective ideas regarding the philosophy of music. My objective in this document is to find the best way of expressing the written music as well as the vision of the composer. Despite that, it is inevitable that I will develop my own perspective on this piece as a performer. This affirmation does not mean that I altered the piece at my own will, but rather that I have taken the liberty of understanding how I could best achieve the vision of the composer through my own awareness of the technical limitations of the guitar, and more specifically, my own limits as a player.

The thoughts and views provided in the performance guide are the fruit of a slow and patient process of working through this piece. In fact, certain fingerings and approaches to excerpts of the work were of a probationary nature for long months before I finally came to a final decision. Although oftentimes I could find easier solutions for a passage, I have always relied on how I listened to the piece in my mind. This mental projection is in opposition to the “intuitive approach” which concedes to the fingers and their limitations the fate of how the music will be reproduced. Therefore, these decisions are based on an inner projection of how I hear the music rather than a simple approach to only executing the notes of the piece.

This performance guide was helpful since it forced me to not only try to apply those indications in my way of playing the piece, but also to think critically about the most challenging characteristics of each section. The guide also offers Trigos’ insights on how the twelve hours abstraction served to formulate the work. My most impactful insight of the piece itself is how Trigos approaches Franco Donatoni’s *rilettura*. It is clear to me that

his music does not sound or even attempts to sound like Donatoni's. Despite that, he does make use of *codici* to create material that is later expanded and permuted in many ways. The main characteristics of Abstract Folklore such as primary pulsation, strong polyphonic structures, and percussive elements are all present in this work. In this sense, *Relojerías Sensibles* is not only a piece of art that comes to life through the ideas and procedures of Donatoni, but as an amalgamation of Trigos' Mexican music heritage in combination with decades of learning through his applications of these "codes" in his own personal terms.

In addition, I would like to point out that the birth of *Relojerías Sensibles* leads one to an optimistic view of the future regarding which type of music and repertoire we cultivate to become the legacy of this instrument. It is infrequent to have a successful non-guitar composer that not only writes so well for the guitar, but that also gives so much time of his own daily work and vitality to write a piece of this magnitude and intensity. With this work, Trigos opens up an alternative path for the guitar, in opposition to the numerous poorly inspired pieces written by composers communicating little beyond their own culture of consumerism and ephemeral traits.

Relojerías Sensibles is a piece that encapsulates a traditional rhetorical development through the combination of vernacular characteristics that are inherently associated with the instrument and its folk origins. The musical language of the work portrays a landscape of feelings and thoughts that are of a sophisticated nature, recreating art through means of abstractions and the transformations of established ideas. The hypnotizing sonorities of *Relojerías Sensibles* are a result of centuries of traditions active in the mind of Trigos. The piece successfully achieves its purpose by culturally elevating the status of the guitar and exposing the very best of Mexican music to the world.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Juan Trigos' List of Works Featuring Guitar

OPERAS

2020 - *El Divino Narciso*

Instrumentation: 3 sopranos, mezzosoprano, countertenor mezzo, tenor, baritone; mixed chorus (small and large); instruments on stage: 3 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba; consort (3 recorders, 3 percussions, 2 guitars, harp, harpsichord/harmonium, piano, 2 stands of violas, 1 stand of cellos and 1 double bass); and orchestra.

Language: Spanish

Duration: 85'

2008 - *Ella-Miau*

Instrumentation: soprano, alto sax (in Eb), percussion, electric guitar, and piano (also electric piano* and accordion*).

* These instruments are optional and may be played by the same performer (pianist)

Language: Spanish

Duration: 50'

2004 - *DeCachetitoRaspado* (Orchestral Version)

Instrumentation: soprano, mezzosoprano, tenor, baritone; actors (optional): 2 women and 2 men; mixed chorus; instruments on stage: flute (also piccolo and alto flute, one performer), clarinet, alto sax (also soprano and baritone saxes), 2 percussions, 3 guitars

(Requinto jarocho or ordinary requinto played with plectrum, jarana or baroque guitar, ordinary acoustic guitar), harp, piano; and orchestra.

Language: Spanish

Duration: 104'

1999 (Rev. 2007) – *DeCachetitoRaspado* (Chamber Version)

Instrumentation: soprano, mezzosoprano, tenor, baritone; actors (optional): 2 women and 2 men; optional mixed chorus (8 to 16); ensemble on stage: 1 flute in C (also piccolo and alto flute, one performer), 1 clarinet in B flat, 1 alto sax (also soprano and baritone saxes, one performer), 1 trombone, 2 percussions, guitar, harp, and piano.

Language: Spanish

Duration: 96'

ORCHESTRA

2010 – *Symphony No. 2* (Chamber Version)

Instrumentation: 1 flute (also piccolo), oboe (also English horn), 2 clarinets in B flat (second also bass clarinet in B flat), bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, 3 percussionists, guitar, harpsichord, piano, and strings.

Duration: 22'

CONCERTOS

2010 – *Concerto for Four Guitars and Orchestra*

For four guitars and orchestra.

Duration: 22'

2006 – *Guitar Concerto N.2 “Hispano”*

For guitars and orchestra (obbligati: harp, harpsichord, piano).

Duration: 34'

2001 – *Concerto for Four Guitars and Four Groups of Instruments (Original Version)*

Group I: guitar quartet (amplified); Group II: percussions, drums, electric piano, and double bass (amplified); Group III: vibraphone, marimba, harpsichord, and harp; Group IV: 5 saxophones; Group V: 5 trumpets.

Duration: 22'

1999 – *Guitar Concerto N.1 “Ricercare VI”*

For guitar and ensemble/chamber orchestra.

Duration: 14'

SOLO VOICES AND CHORUS WORKS ORCHESTRA/ENSEMBLE

2011 - *Cantata N.3 “Phos Hilaron” (Original Chamber Version)*

Cantata in four movements for soprano, mezzo; obbligato flute; boy chorus (optional), mixed chorus; ensemble: 1 clarinet in B (also bass clarinet), 1 horn, 1 percussion, guitar, harp, piano, electric piano, organ or harmonium.

Duration: 34'

1990 (Rev. 2001) – *Cantata N.1 “Magnificat Guadalupano”*

Cantata for solo soprano, tenor, baritone, and guitar; mixed choir; and orchestra.

Duration: 55'

ENSEMBLE

2020 – *Ricercare de Cámara VII*

For guitar and percussion.

Duration: 16'

2018 – *Sonata for Alto Flute and Guitar*

For alto flute and guitar.

Duration: 11'

2009 - *Guitar Quartet*

For four guitars.

Duration: 20'

1988 (Rev. 2007) – *Quartetto da Do*

For clarinet, sax, guitar, and bongo.

Duration: 14'

1988 - *Sax Sin Aliento*

For solo alto sax and five performers: flute (also piccolo), trumpet, percussion, guitar, and piano.

Duration: 11'

ENSEMBLE WITH VOICE

2021 – *Variazioni Concertanti*

For soprano and ensemble. Ensemble: flute (also piccolo and flute in G), oboe, clarinet, bassoon, percussion, harp, guitar, violin, and cello.

Duration: 19'

2020 – *Comentario No. 3 “Solo Venimos a Dormir” (from Cantata Concertante N. 1 “Magnificat Guadalupano”)*

Version for soprano and guitar

Duration: 8'

1991 – *Liguero (from the chamber opera DeCachetitoRaspado)*

Version for mezzo and six performers; ensemble: flute (also piccolo and alto flute), clarinet in B flat (also bass clarinet), baritone sax (also soprano), 1 percussion, guitar, and piano.

Duration: 7'

1989 – *Comentario No. 2 (from Cantata Concertante N. 1 “Magnificat Guadalupano”)*

Version for soprano, flute, and guitar.

Duration: 3'

SOLOS

2022 - *Relojerías Sensibles*

For solo guitar

Duration: 16'

2015 – *Twelve Variations and Fugue on the Folia de España*

For solo guitar.

Duration: 25'

2007 – *Partita*

For solo guitar.

Duration: 23'

1989 - *Homenaje a Manuel M. Ponce*

For solo guitar.

Duration: 7'

1 - What does music mean to you? Did the meaning of it evolved or changed through time?

Juan: Music is everything to me. I don't remember exactly how I was when I decided to be a musician, but music was already there. So, you know, it is like your mother, your father. They are always there. You don't really realize they are there, but they are, so you feel their presence. The decision to be a musician came very early, I was probably about nine years old or so when I decided that. Of course, when I told my mother I wanted to be a musician she did not take it very seriously. I was serious about it though. The only one who understood that was my father, because he's an artist too. He said: "are you serious about this thing?", and I said: "absolutely." He saw it in my eyes, or whatever, I don't know. It was the way I talked to him or something, he helped me a lot to make the decision. It made it easier for me. But the thing is, I remember all this admiration about composers and musicians. I used to look at their pictures for hours. Many composers, not just one. Of course, my first love was Beethoven, and it still is. I remember looking at them with passion and adoration. At that time, I did not have any education in music. I was probably about five or six years old, it was not the era of CDs yet, but I remember to listen to music on the LPs and the radio. I must also say that I really love music in all its forms and expressions: folk music, pop music, salsa music, etc. Classical music though, is the one I prefer the most.

²³. Juan Trigos in discussion with the author, September 24, 2022.

2 - Your father is a writer, your brother is a painter, and you are a musician. Your family seems to be very artistic since the beginning. Tell us a little bit about your childhood and your teenage years.

Juan: My father is a very important piece in my career. He is a writer, but he also studied music. In fact, he composed a couple of pieces, these which are not bad at all. He says that he doesn't have a good ear for music, but I disagree with that. I mean, he is very able to compose music, but he says that he's much better with the writing. One thing for sure is that he is a fantastic artist. He is a very deep, sincere, and unique man.

Literature was always present in my house all my life. There were books in the bathroom, in the kitchen, literally everywhere. And I think it's still there. So, you go to my father's house and there will be books filling every single possible space. I remember his friends, these which I miss very much. All crazy people, you know...but all of them, very passionate about art in general. Painters, writers, poets, musicians, and above that, the love for music in my father, which is so strong. My father plays the guitar. Actually, my love for the guitar probably comes from him because that was the first instrument I had nearby. I don't remember exactly, but I think that it was the first instrument I heard, before any other.

About my grandfather, he was not a musician. But he had an amazing memory. He remembered poetry in an incredible way. He was a music lover, with a particular taste for classical music. He did not only like opera, but all other types of music, such as the zarzuelas and popular songs. He was a true musical lover.

My brother is a painter, and he received that “thing” in a different manner. It is strange because he became a painter completely out of the blue. He was not thinking about that. In fact, he was in the United States for an exchange program, you know, that type of thing where you go to the school and teach Spanish, then they teach you English or something like that. One day he went to a painting class, and he started to paint. And you know, everybody said: “Wow! This is great. Really great. This is amazing.” And he said: “Well, I really don't know, because that is my first painting.” And then he became a painter like that. He is way funnier than me in many ways. Talent is talent. He was probably about sixteen or seventeen years old by that time, and then he became a painter.

And of course, my father, as I told you, was a very important piece in the equation. He was never forced to do anything, so, he was not the traditional type of person who would say: “you need to do that, or you must do that.” It was just about love and loving the arts. For example, you know that there are certain parents that would force their children to eat certain types of things. In retrospect, he did a very clever thing to us. He would say: “you don't want to eat? That is fine, you can eat whatever you like, but this is not a restaurant, so you stand up and prepare whatever you would like to eat.” His relationship with food was akin to art. The way he would eat was fantastic. For him, it was the same as consuming music and art in general. He was very capable of being passionate about everything he loved and expressed himself through these mediums. The way he communicated his passions for these topics was really important for me and my siblings.

3 - You had several music professors through your journey towards becoming a better composer. Tell us about some of the more important figures which influenced you.

Juan: My father was my first teacher. He taught me solfege and some principles about composition. Then, I went to the national conservatory in Mexico City where I had Guillermo Noriega as a harmony professor, by that time, I had heard some of his compositions, and I remember to be very interested in it. In an academic way, José Suárez was the one who taught me counterpoint, the traditional counterpoint. I think that those fundamentals were very important for me to be ready for the next steps in my music education. Due to this strong foundation, I felt that it was easier to start my studies in Europe. I had a very traditional education, and that was good for me. Jesus Villaseñor was also a really important figure to me. I believe he was part of the second generation of Carlos Chávez composition workshop, which was very famous. I think he opened my eyes to modernity a little bit more (this probably happened during that period of 82' or 83'). He is a very prolific composer, he has composed something like, fifty symphonies, I don't know, I don't remember exactly...but it must be almost fifty or something like that. He is in his eighties nowadays. After that, I went to Rome, Italy to complete my education. One of the most important teachers I had there was probably Domenico Bartolucci, which was the conductor of the famous Capella Sistina Choir. He was an amazing musician. I studied *basso continuo* with him, learning then how to read the harmony written in that manner on the keyboard. He was an expert in ancient music, especially the music of Palestrina. A truly amazing musician.

After that, I went to Milano, where I learned the very last important things. For this period, I would say that first I learned a lot from the teachings of Niccolò Castiglioni at the “Giuseppe Verdi” conservatory in Milan. And lastly, after finishing school, I learned a lot from Franco Donatoni, which is the person whom I own the “musical structure”. I heard

his music because a friend of mine asked me if I knew Donatoni. I knew his name, but I had never listened to his music. At that time, it was not like today, you know. Nowadays you can literally find anything you want to listen to on Youtube, for example. In those days you had to find cassette tapes or get the CD. But you know, as a student no one had money to buy CDs, they were a new thing that started in the late eighties/early nineties, it was very expensive to buy CDs. Well, the thing is, I listened to his music, and I said: “Wow!” I was amazed about his compositions. I looked for him and asked him to teach me, and so, he became my teacher. We developed a friendship that lasted for a long time. Which also resulted in bringing him to Mexico to make a music festival.

In my opinion, all the teachers are important, not necessarily just the composition teachers, because everything has to do with your education and your internal structure. But I think that I own Donatoni for the “structure”, the most present structure in my music in a certain way.

4 – Could you talk about Abstract Folklore? The beginning of it, its characteristics and how deeply it is rooted in your music.

Juan: I coined this term because it describes better what I am doing. I don't want to create a school or to have followers, or something like that. Abstract folklore is part of what my music is, but not everything, because music is always something more. So, the term doesn't contain everything, but it describes my music a little bit better. It helps to understand what I'm doing. The folklore can be interpreted in many ways. I chose the word “folklore” instead of “popular” because that is more attached to the earth, to purity, to distinguish it from the commercial stuff. So, it is the purity of the material and the purity of the

music itself. No commercial stuff or entertainment. In addition to that, I must say that I don't have anything against entertainment, but I just don't do that. These things are completely different. What I want to say is: every musician has his own tradition, not necessarily just the tradition of the country you live. For example, when I was a kid, it was inevitable going out and ending up listening to all the mess outside. You could hear rock, mariachis, all the folkloristic groups, the people singing in the street. You know, it is like Brazil...it is impossible to be away from that. Also, at home I had contemporary music, Indian music, Chinese music, because my father is a music lover. And all of that got inside of me. Folklore, in my own words, has everything to do with what I do. It's all the music that becomes you. It's a kind of assimilation, that which gets inside of you and then is brought back in a different manner. It has everything to do with the emotion, expression, and all the filters you have inside.

For example, when I sing *La Cucaracha* (from the written score), it should sound really straight and squared (Juan sings). No Mexican though, sings in that way. There is always some anticipation. Like all the folklore in Brazil, all the syncopation you are so used to. I don't translate the sound like an imitation, but I feel that original material, and I transform it in a natural way. Inside me...but together with Beethoven, you see, because it's all inside me. The purity of Beethoven's music and the purity of the folk, the real folk music. From the music of Veracruz to all the Indian music. All the music I ever heard.

Of course, we can say that you are always more exposed to some type of music than others, and you know a certain kind of music better than the other, but it still is very important the assimilation, the internal assimilation of that music.

Geraldo: So, it is a process in which you assimilate all these elements that we've been talking about. You put that inside of you, and through your own process (which is unique, as each person is unique), you put that out there in a different way, in your own way.

Juan: Yeah, something like that. It is very important though, the manner in which I received that material. It is the purity of the material. That's why I call it folklore, because it's really attached to the earth or to the principal emotions. I could describe it a little better, I could say: Abstract Sacred Folklore, because there is a ritualistic element to it, which is really important too. I don't belong to any church, even though I was educated as Catholic (as almost every Mexican, and I imagine, Brazilian as well)...you take the *Virgen de Guadalupe* for instance, it is the mother of Christ, but it is not, at the same time. Yes and no. It is something else, because the *Tonantzin*, so, the mother of the Mexicans. All these deep things in Mexico are very important to me, and although I don't belong to any church I am very interested in these topics.

5 - Could you provide examples of characteristics of Abstract Folklore in some of your pieces?

Juan: You know, as I said, I told you, it's not that orthodox thing, but all my music has to do with that. You can pick, for example, the symphonies. If you take the end of the third movement of the first symphony, it's like an animal. It's very like a monster or something. It's all energy. I didn't take any folkloristic melody or anything like that, but it is the impulse (Juan sings). It is loud, scary, if you like. It has these things, but very passionate at the same time. Well, you know, it's difficult to describe music. I don't follow a story or things like that, but it has all those emotions, very primitive in a certain way. Stravinsky's

Rite of Spring for instance, is a wild thing. I couldn't say where that comes from now, but it is wild.

Take *Partita* (for solo guitar), the partita is the sister/mother of the suite. We are talking about dances. Which dances I chose for it? None. When we speak about suite we have in mind the allemande, courante, bourrée, giga, the ancient dances. I took the idea of the dances, but in my own way, in an abstract way. You can dance to those pieces, but what's the name of the dance? One, two, three, four, five. Derived from the original material created by me. The second and the four movements are the same. The first, third and fifth are parallel. The even and the odds. The original material comes from the *Ricercare I*, then I composed the *Ricercare IV* for double-bass and directly from the bass, I took the material for the fifth movement of *Partita*. That is the teaching of Donatoni, we call it *riletura* (rereading), or in another words, reinterpretation of the same material. It is a way to watch the same thing through different lenses. It can be understood as many ways to watch yourself, to understand yourself by watching those materials. This “articulated material” is transformed into another thing, that which is similar to the original, but the path you take this time is completely different. If you listen to the *Ricercare IV*, you will find some similarities with the elements shown in the fifth movement of *Partita*, but the swing of the piece is completely different. *Ricercare I*, *Triple Concerto*, *Double-bass Concerto*, *Ricercare IV*, *Ricercare V* (which is *Symphony No. 4*) and *Partita*, contain the same material. If I did not tell you this, you probably wouldn't know. The treatment of the material is completely different, it is just a pretext.

Probably the most interesting of it is the learning from Donatoni. To watch and create from almost anything, new music. He used to say, if you are blocked and you cannot compose, take Bach. It's always a good model, and he did it many times.

6 - How does your compositional process work?

Juan: That's a difficult one. Depends on the piece. For example, when I use text like in a cantata, or a mass, it is important to me to understand the text beforehand. For example, there was a lot of work to determine the text I would use for the cantata *Magnificat Guadalupano*. For this piece, I took texts from ancient Mexican Aztec poets and comments of the text from the Old and New Testament of the Bible, along with that, the stories of apparitions of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the *Nican Mopohua* (this is a book by Antonio Valeriano). In order to understand that it is important to read a lot. Not just the text itself (many times), but about the text you are working on.

There is the part where you choose the text, then the understanding of it, and later, the process. Then, I start to work on the metrics of the text, but you see, it is something that happens in tandem with the creation of the music material. The musical material comes to me, I build two different things, the Spanish thing, and the Indian thing. And then, I work with the pronunciation of the words, these which contain the intrinsic rhythm inside of them. And then I build all the music in that way. Regarding the words, one must follow the natural inflection within them, it is possible to either expand or compress the duration and how the words are spoken.

As for the sonority of the piece, I couldn't say, because that is something which is inside you. I was working on this piece for a long time, and nothing was working for me. That was until the moment I said *virgencita*, which is really Indian-like, and then it came to me like a blow. All the materials I was working on were thrown away and I built a completely new thing.

Some people don't believe in inspiration. But I do believe in inspiration. I do believe in talent. So of course, if you don't work on the talent, it does not work at all. You need to be disciplined and work every day. It took a lot of time to build that piece, its length is probably fifty minutes or even more. I chose this piece to tell you all of this because the structure of that piece changed everything in me.

Then you also have of course, the other kind, which is the text for the operas. Departing from my father's text, which is really unique, is an assonant text, which means that it is not metrically squared, although it can sound like that. There's this other thing, which is the Mexican way to speak, more precisely the way to speak from Mexico City, which is singing like, you can notice the accent, the slang, which can be actually present all around the world in many forms. All those elements are very important in the language.

In other hand, when I use abstract things, in this case, no text. *Symphony* for instance, it is just a musical form, more abstract. The suite, the idea of the dances. A concerto for guitar such as the *Ricercare VI*; what is the form of *Ricercare* after all? Well, we all know, it is probably the mother of the fugue, due to the present imitation. *Ricercare* in Italian means "to search". It is an ancient thing, but a new thing in the way of researching and

investigating those elements. The way you investigate, how you do that, means that every piece has a different optic.

If we take the first concerto for guitar, the *Ricercare VI*. It has this virtuosistic style, the recreation of the Spanish heritage, but from my own point of view, in my own way. (Juan sing's the guitar motive), it is abstract, it does not sound Spanish-like. It does and it does not. The guitar arrives in Mexico, from Spain, through Arab people. In Spain, they use what is called *cantos de ida y vuelta*, that which means "singing back and forward". You give something to me, and I give it back to you with an addition. I like that idea a lot, it has everything to do with the folklore in the concept we were speaking before. It is a very abstract piece, but at the same time it belongs to the *concerto grosso* tradition more than the "normal" concerto, because the guitar is the principal instrument who plays with everybody else. The idea of solo/tutti. It is not the "normal" concerto such as my *Concerto No. 2, Hispano*, this one is closer to the modern concept of concerto. *Ricercare VI* is more about chamber combinations with the guitar. As you can see, there is no story behind it, no programmatic element. That which is impossible to do it with theater, in which you need to match the music with the story.

The process to create music for the guitar is very different from let's say, the *Magnificat Guadalupano*. Of course, when you are composing there are certain things you repeat. You can recognize your own traits, but the process is always different. With the abstract forms such as the *ricercare*, symphony, or the suite, one can take some elements and ideas, but that is all very abstract, so you don't follow a structure. I mean, there are people who follow a structure, I would not include myself as one of them necessarily.

7 - Can your music be descriptive in any sense?

Juan: Well, I wouldn't say descriptive. It depends on the piece. Your piece for instance, *Relojerías Sensibles*, the title gives you context, but at the same time it is very abstract. You told me: clocks can sound creepy sometimes. And yes, they can. They are also very nostalgic. But I am not following a narrative or a horror story of sorts. But it is scary, to be scared is good.

Geraldo: It does sound scary. I like it.

Juan: My father produces a unique style of horror literature in a certain way, and it's inside of all of us in the family. But, for example, I don't follow a story in that piece, just the “sensation”. The idea of the clock brings me several thoughts. Nowadays no one is using clocks anymore. Well, it's often used just for aesthetics. If you have an old clock on the wall, it's because it's beautiful, or the “Big Ben” in London, etc.

The idea of having a clock is nostalgic in one way and creepy at the same time. There is all this sensibility that revolves around them, as well as the perfection of the machinery which makes everything work in a perfect manner. If the machine is broken, something else happens, because it suffers and it feels. So, it is not a machine anymore in that sense. It is the idea behind it. But there is just a sensation. That's why I structured the piece around the twelve hours of the clock. It's an abstract way to put it. It is not a description of the clock. It is more of a sensation of it. It's about sensibility, but it has the idea of the clock. I wouldn't say it's a description.

Particularly, this title is a rare case for me. If you observe my music, I don't use titles that are “complicated” except for when I use text. For example, *Ella-Miau* is named after the play, because the play is called that way. For *DeCachetitoRaspado*, you also have the text. On the other hand I have *Ricercare I, II, III, IV, V. Symphony I, II, III, IV, V. Quartet I, II...etc.* This is all more abstract. Your piece though, is different. I almost never use titles like that for instrumental works.

8 - Would you say that some of your music can be guitar like even though it is not written for the guitar?

Juan: Well, you know, music can be translated in many ways. When I write for the guitar, I have specific ideas which are idiomatic to the instrument.

So, for example, if you take the beginning of my *Twelve Variations and Fugue on the Folía de España*, I could add some things and I could play it in a harpsichord, but the sound would not be the same. The way it sounds on the guitar is completely different. In a manner, it is idiomatic and written for the guitar. If I added a harpsichord it could be fantastic, but without the guitar it would not be that great.

Let me try to put it in a different way. When I wrote the fugue it was great, and I was very happy playing it on the piano. But it did not work at all on the guitar. So, I wrote it again because it did not work. I have that version somewhere, I don't know where, but I have it.

When you think about orchestra you are not thinking about the piano. Yes, sometimes you orchestrate something that comes from the piano. Like in the old-fashioned way, but you know, generally I don't think that way.

9 - How would you describe your music in terms of harmonic language? Modal, tonal, atonal, etc.

Juan: It depends on the piece, of course. I don't use functions as seen in functional harmony. There are some of my pieces that use that to recall the tradition, but I don't think that way. I would say that it is more modal than tonal, not necessarily because I make use of the modal modes, but indeed, because of the way I think, that which is closer from the modal idea. The attractions are important to me, the pivot notes. Some notes are more important than others. I would call it, as Donatoni used to say: non-functional diatonism. My music is not very chromatic (although that depends on the piece, of course), it has a lot of serial principles in the structure. Such as the structure in panels, fragments that are reread in many different ways, or other techniques I also use. In terms of harmony, it is really complex but very simple at the same time. The principle often comes from three or more notes, these which I build the harmony from that sound.

So, for example, we were talking about the *Ricercare VI* (Juan sings the melodic motive of the piece), it is all about that, all the chords come from there. And the other important thing is, in the case of this piece, there are four chords (or four basis cells, if you like), the cells for instance, can start as three notes, such as an ornament, and then it becomes a chord, to later become a bigger chord. But it is all the same idea.

I don't think in terms of harmony, like in the traditional sense. Sometimes I use more chords. Sometimes I use a few, these with different origins or nature. In that sense, contrasting chords, which I often build things with very easy and simple things.

10 - Talk about Donatoni's concept of *rilettura* and how you approach it in your music.

Juan: As said previously, *rilettura* means rereading. It is a very sophisticated procedure which can be similar to the variation, in a certain manner. In a deeper sense, in the way I use it (and learned it from Donatoni), it is a way to be able to constantly watch yourself. You see, you don't have many ideas, you have some ideas. *Rilettura* allows you to rework those ideas. So, the concept of presenting the same ideas in different ways is a way to always be able to observe yourself. It brings the sense of watching yourself in the deepest way you can. It allows you to analyze your own ideas and to reconsider them, in different manners. Of course, there is a technique behind it. Despite that, the closest concept I can relate it to would be as this very sophisticated way to create variation.

11 - How do your solo guitar pieces differ from each other?

Juan: I am glad you asked that. *Homenaje a Ponce* was the first piece I wrote for solo guitar. You know, I had tried it before, but I would never finish the pieces I started. Writing for the guitar is hard, and I am not a guitar player. Nowadays I understand the instrument way more than before. I mean, everybody knows the basic chords...I have learned some *rasgueos* from songs that my father used to play, music from the streets, that type of thing regarding folk and whatnot.

Of course, I cannot play as fast as you, or the guys from Veracruz. But I was able to learn how it works within the instrument. Writing *Homenaje a Ponce* was really hard for me, so I took the guitar in my hands to be able to do it. Without the guitar that would be impossible for me.

So, I often place my hands on the instrument and try different things. I observe what works and what does not work. I remember that I corrected a few things after the first performance of the piece, but you know, there was not anything impossible in there. I corrected some slurs and fingering positions, which string to use, etc. After that I believe that the next piece that features the guitar was *Sax Sin Aliento*, that is a piece for sax and ensemble that also contains a guitar part. The third piece was *Cuartetto da Do*, later, I wrote the *Magnificat Guadalupano*, which also makes use of the guitar. I really love the instrument. It is a really...you know, there is something there. This probably comes from my father; it is something unconscious to me. It is noticeable though that I use the guitar in many different pieces. My second symphony also has guitar in it. There is also a new piece I wrote in which I use the guitar, but this time, played by a percussionist.

I don't think of myself as a solo instrument composer. I mean, I was not, or at least I thought that. But with the guitar, it just becomes something incredible, I really don't know why. It is probably Dieter (Hennings) fault. I think that the first piece he played by me was the *Ricercare VI*, after that, he disturbed me in every possible way asking me to write a short encore piece for solo guitar. I think he did that for two years; I mean, I don't remember. Every day...you know Dieter: do it, do it, do it. Finally, in 2007, I was in my father's house in Miami to spend the holidays and I asked him if I could use his guitar to write the encore piece for Dieter. I got his guitar and the first thing I did was to try out some scordatura, I tried the E-flat on the sixth string...and they said: no, why don't you try C? And out of nothing, I built the first chord of the whole piece, in fact, I used that chord by the end of the piece. You know, it appears throughout the entire work, but it is either expanded or compressed at certain times. Then I said: well, this is great! So, I started to write and write

and write...the thing becomes a twenty-three-minute piece. By that time, I did not say a thing to anyone, I just sent it to Dieter when the piece was finished. I probably started the work when it was June or July, and I believe I sent it to Dieter around December or so. So...silence. For two weeks. No message from him at all. And after that he says: are you out of your mind?!

The first version of *Partita* was not completely finished, it was better than a draft (I needed to check some *rasgueados* and other things), but Dieter explained to me that some things I wrote there were not possible to be played, as a few chords, and other things like that. My process with the guitar is complicated, *Homenaje a Ponce* and *Partita* have a radical difference between each other. *Partita* is a wild piece, in a certain manner, in that sense, it is closer to pieces such as the *Symphony No. I*, Not necessarily in terms of harmony, but the way you need to play it. You should know that because you play it very well. It is a wild piece. The *Twelve Variations and Fugue on the Folía de España* is a more sophisticated piece in a certain sense, it is less showoff, still really difficult, but completely different. I did not plan that, I just let things flow and that was the result of it. In the *Partita* you have the idea of the dances, different dances, but all those dances come from the same material and become something else. The *Twelve Variations and Fugue on the Folía de España* was a homage to Manuel Ponce because I admire him and love his own variations on the *Folía de España* theme.

Your piece is completely different approach though. You mentioned you wanted some polyrhythmical elements, so a lot of this piece comes from this idea. I would not say that

it is an experimental piece, because I don't believe in experiments without music. I have experimented though, with many things in the way to play the guitar for this specific piece.

How can I put that? It is like the symphonies by Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven. You see, every symphony has something different to propose. All the great composers of symphony, such as Sibelius, Mahler, Shostakovich, all create something different. Of course, you do recognize the composer, but every piece has something to propose. That same idea is present in guitar pieces too. It is easy to repeat yourself, it is not necessarily conscious. When Dieter came with the project for the folia, there was this specific idea behind it, so it grew out of that. When you mentioned the polyrhythms, I tried to please you in that sense, but that does not mean it was necessarily what you expected. I could have come with a *Partita II* for instance, but for sure, it would be very different from the first one. Otherwise, it does not make sense to me.

12 - Writing a piece for solo guitar must be completely different from writing a work for guitar and ensemble. Tell us about your experience writing works in which the guitar is part of the ensemble.

Juan: I prefer big ensembles, not necessarily orchestra. In this case I am talking about bigger groups such as fifteen musicians or more. In a certain way I think my music is better in this format, probably because I am a conductor, I don't know for sure. I feel much better working with bigger groups. I have a few pieces for solo piano, but that is not the thing I prefer to do. With the guitar in particular, it grows and grows, so it is a really good thing. By now I have three big pieces for solo guitar, the guitar quartet, and three concertos for the instrument (two for solo guitar and one for four guitars and orchestra). Regarding the

solo pieces, I am always trying to make them idiomatic to the instrument, to make them work and sound well because the guitar is a really difficult instrument to write. In the piano you can play either with your fingers or arms, and you know, everything will sound well. On the guitar it is just not like that. You really need to love the instrument.

When I use it in the ensemble it is just like any instrument, which contains its own specific color. I love the idea of guitar and piano, which is not very common. I know that many composers would hate this idea, but for me, it all depends on how you approach it. I mean, there are many instruments that fit so well to the guitar. I have used harpsichord and guitar in my symphony, I have used it with voices in the *Magnificat Guadalupano*, in my operas, particularly in *DeCachetitoRaspado*. I have used electric guitar in *Ella-Miau*, but that is a completely different thing, I don't consider it to be the same as the traditional acoustic instrument.

In this context, it can be really complicated to write for the guitar, you always need to calculate the balance between everything. You can use amplification, which is fine, but sometimes I just don't want to use that.

13 – How did you first envision *Relojerías Sensibles*? Did the piece change or surprise you in any way while you were writing it?

Juan: More than surprised. You see, I build the piece step by step. I did not have like a big inspiration and suddenly wrote everything down. I mean, I have done that with a few pieces, but for this one, it was more like discovering it every day. For example, the first ideas I had were very wrong, that sometimes happens to me. I took a path, and that did not

work for me. My wife said: it is nice, don't waste it. But I said: okay, I will use it in a different work, but I won't use it in this piece. So, I went in the opposite direction, and then it worked. When you work for a while, the idea comes, after adding some things to it, you need to go back to the beginning to fix everything.

I started with the idea of something mechanical, but sensitive, in this case, something which is broken. After that, it became to me the idea of the clock, of the machinery inside, which is perfect but at the same time is not (due to it being sensitive). If you feel, you are going to suffer, so that is the idea behind it all. You have twelve chords (or twelve cells, call as you want it). You have A and B. You have the same material, which is treated in different ways throughout the piece. The end is the beginning. When I was working on the piece and I said *Relojerias*, everything changed, because it produced in me a different sensation inside. That changed the music, and it changed the structure of it. I used to have four chords at the beginning, but as soon as I thought about the clock, I changed it to twelve immediately. Due to that, there are twelve "situations" in there. As you can see from my brief analysis, one bar becomes two or three as the piece goes on, always expanding that material in different ways. It is a process of growing from a single idea, from a single "bell". The other thing was the application of the polyrhythms, which for this piece was used in a really specific way, as similar to the analogy of the internal pieces of a clock. You can listen to the click of a clock, but inside it, there are many other movements. I was trying to recreate that in some manner. That was one of the ideas. It is not necessarily about description, but it is about the feeling of it. That is all present in the many percussive sounds I have written there. This combination of percussion and notes is almost as this game of the clock. It is just a pretext for everything.

14 – What came first: the piece or its title?

Juan: Together. I started to work with the idea of the machine, and when I discovered the clock, everything matched. I like this title a lot, I don't know how it sounds in English, but it sounds great in Spanish.

15 - How would you define the form and structure of *Relojerías Sensibles*?

Juan: It has its own form. It is divided into two materials. One is more machine-like than the other one, but you can still hear the clicking of the clock in it. You have twelve chords that progressively grow internally. Although the unity of the piece comes from those clicks of the clock, there are several types of clicks there. So, you get these twelve chords, which are repeated in different ways with a growing element added to it. All the chords use the same pitches in a different way, at the beginning you just have a few notes from that chord, these which appear together with percussion, creating that entire texture. In a certain way, it is a very serial way of thinking, I say that because every element is repeated in a formal way. The growing of the original cell has everything to do with these things.

16 - Why *Relojerías Sensibles* omits time signatures?

Juan: There are many reasons. It is already mechanical in a certain way, so the feeling of using a bar distorts me a little. In a certain way there is some “freedom”, but of course, you are not free in any sense. You are guided by the rhythm because you have the metronome and the metrical conversions. So, in a way, there is no metrical dictator, which allows you to be free from that. I used that in many other pieces...in the folias for instance, the second

variation does not have time signatures written down. It is all about that one big phrase, so not having the time signature kind of helps with that thought.

Geraldo: That makes a lot of sense to me, at the beginning it was really hard to deal with that. But I could get used to it pretty quickly.

Juan: Yes, you can get used to that pretty quickly. In some ways, it becomes an important part of the piece to think about it in this way.

17 - How *rilettura* is applied in *Relojerías Sensibles*?

Juan: It is all *rillletura*. Again, it is a sophisticated way to create variations. Not in the traditional way. In *Relojerías* is more about extending sonorities, I would say.

18 – Did *hemofiction* play a role in the development of *Relojerías Sensibles*?

Juan: My father coined that term. *Hemo* means blood in Greek, so, it is the fiction of the blood. It has to do with horror, heritage, conscious/unconscious, all approached in a very unique way. Of course, I am his son, but it is curious, the feeling that I have is that is almost as if I had written those books. It is something very deep, and I think my brother has the same sensation. It is a crazy thing. I would not call *Relojerías Sensibles* *hemofiction*, but it has to do with those things. I do have the *hemofiction* operas, in that case, it comes from that aesthetic, I am making use of the text. In the case of *DeCachetitoRaspado*, we named it as a *comic-hemofiction* opera. It is not comic in the American way, it is more comic in the Greek way. But yes, all of this has a lot to do with my father, particularly when I use the text. The sacred and the blood are really close, in this sense.

19 – Were there any problems or perhaps specific challenges that you have encountered while writing *Relojerías Sensibles*?

Juan: All sorts of problems. You can have an idea in your mind, but you need to make sure that it will work. By that time, I sent you a draft to check certain things, I tried those things by myself, so I thought: if I can do it, I am sure Geraldo can do it too. But just to be sure, I sent it to you. Everything was a challenge in this work. The way that I approached the guitar was completely different from what I had done before. I don't believe in experimentalism, but I can say it has some experimental things, those, in service to the music, not the opposite.

20 - Which would be the main characteristics of *Abstract Folklore* in *Relojerías Sensibles*?

Juan: The filters. The abstraction of the idea of the clock, of the scary and sensitive clock, it is an abstraction of that. In a very simple way. That comes with all the feelings one has and those transformations inside of me. I use the folklore in that way, it is about the purity of the material. The material itself talks, or that idea talks to me, and then I make the reflection on those ideas, which happens through assimilation.

21 – Did you discover new possibilities of exploring the guitar while writing this work?

Juan: Absolutely, but you should be the one to tell me that. I never wrote a piece like that, so all the polyphony that comes from this technique is completely different. I don't know how other guitar players will face it since you need to approach the guitar in a completely different form.

Geraldo: In my opinion, in order to play the piece, I had to reconsider how to play guitar. In a certain way it is almost as if I was doing “wrong” things all the time to successfully perform it. There are so many different effects such as the *slap tambora*; the harmonic which the player must hit the soundboard (within the same motion) with a sort of rest stroke with the index finger. This harmonic itself already contrasts a lot with all the other standard natural harmonics present in the piece. There is also all that idea of always playing percussion with the thumb as your other fingers are playing something else on the strings, that which makes things really hard if you need to use your thumb to play on the strings, when in fact most of the time that thumb is still recovering from the movement of hitting the body of the instrument.

22 – This piece is a huge addition to the guitar repertoire and the legacy of the instrument. Do you have plans to continue supporting the guitar in the sense of writing more works for it?

Juan: Absolutely. For me, the guitar is this thing which grows and grows more and more. I have a new commission for solo guitar which I need to start in February (of 2023), as well as another commission for a work for two guitars. I also have plans to write another big piece for Dieter, something like a symphony for solo guitar (you know Dieter, right?). There is this thing in which the idea of the pieces for guitar are kind of always short in length. I don’t say that because I want to necessarily write long pieces for the instrument, but there seems to be something blocking the way for the guitar to get bigger and ambitious pieces from different composers. Ponce for instance is an exception, he wrote longer pieces

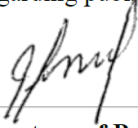
for the guitar, which of course we always refer to his *20 Diferencias Sobre la Folía de España y Fuga* as an example of that.

APPENDIX 3. Juan Trigos' Copyright Permission Agreement

Juan Trigos | *Relojerías Sensibles, Partita and Pulsación y Resonancias*

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Signature of Participant

Juan Trigos

Printed Name of Participant

April 16, 2023

Date

DMA RECITALS

RECITAL. 1

Suite No. 2 “Siegfried” *

Benoît Albert
(b.1969)

- I. Prelude
- II. Allemande
- III. Courante
- IV. Sarabande
- V. Danses de l'étrange
- VI. Gigue

Sonata para guitarra

Antonio José
(1902-1936)

- I. Allegro Moderato
- II. Minueto
- III. Pavana Triste
- IV. Final

Aquarelle

Sérgio Assad
(b.1952)

- I. Divertimento
- II. Valseana
- III. Preludio e Toccata

*USA Premiere

RECITAL. 2

Shining River (2007)

Shafer Mahoney (1968-)

Geraldo Costa Neto (Guitar) and Carrie Matheny (Flute)

The Two (2015)

Anthony Korf (1951-)

I.

II.

III.

IV.

V.

VI.

Geraldo Costa Neto and Dieter Hennings (Guitars)

Quartetto da Do (2007)

Juan Trigos (1965-)

Geraldo Costa Neto (Guitar), Chase Miller (Clarinet), Jonathan McIntyre (Saxophone),
Austin Shoupe (Bongo)

Double Concerto “Hommage à Liège” (1985)

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)

Geraldo Costa Neto, Felipe Magdaleno and Dieter Hennings (Guitars)

RECITAL. 3

Abstract: This lecture recital is a performance guide for the new solo guitar piece written by the Mexican composer Juan Trigos. “*Relojerías Sensibles*” (2022), is an idiosyncratic work with circa of sixteen minutes that features several elements present in Trigos’ earlier compositions. This presentation will contextualize Juan Trigos journey as a composer, with a predominant focus on his works for guitar. The concept of *rilettura* (rereading), coined then by the Italian composer and pedagogue Franco Donatoni will be a key factor to understand the compositional tradition inherited by Trigos and how that applies to his musical language.

Premiere:

“*Relojerías Sensibles*” (2022) by Juan Trigos (b. 1965)

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