

THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Variaciones Concertantes by Alberto Ginastera Listening Map

Using The SPCO's [Concert Library](#), follow along with the **timestamps** below to enjoy Ginastera's piece composed in 1953 in a theme and variations style.



The composer talks about his inspiration and the structure of his piece in this composer note:

“These variations have a subjective Argentine character. Instead of using folkloristic material, I try to achieve an Argentine atmosphere through the employment of my own thematic and rhythmic elements. The work begins with an original theme followed by eleven variations, each one reflecting the distinctive character of the instrument featured. All the instruments of the orchestra are treated soloistically. Some variations belong to the decorative, ornamental or elaborative type, others are written in the contemporary manner of metamorphosis, which consists of taking elements of the main theme and evolving from it new material.”

*-Alberto Ginastera
(born in Buenos Aires, Argentina)*

Instrumentation: VIOLINS, VIOLAS, CELLOS, BASSES, HARP, PICCOLO, FLUTES, CLARINETS, BASSOON, HORNS, TRUMPET, TROMBONE, TIMPANI

 **Questions for reflection (to be completed after following Listening Map on reverse):**

What instrument wasn't featured with a special solo section? _____

What did you notice about the two iterations of the opening theme (first played by the cello/harp **0-2:30** and second played by the bass/harp **19:25-21:30**)? How did the change in instrument change the mood and impact of the theme? _____

The final section of the piece is a boisterous dance that includes all instruments. The “punchy” repetitive notes sound a bit like a foot stomping on the ground. The swirling melody plays a bit like a game of tag around the orchestra-being passed from one instrument to the next starting at **22:42**. The music is based on a dance traditional to Ginastera's home country Argentina. Close your eyes and listen to **22:42-25:11** and imagine what the *Malambo* dance might look like.

Listening Map: *Variciones Concertantes* by Alberto Ginastera



Check out this piece on [The SPCO's Concert Library](https://www.thespco.org/concert-library) and follow along with the below timestamps.



Describe what you hear (examples provided) with adjectives, imagery or emotions on the **lines** provided:

Original Theme: Cello and Harp (slow, expressive) **0-2:30**

Variation 1: Strings (melancholy, blurry) **2:30-4:25**

Variation 2: Flute (playful, chasing) **4:42-5:24**

Variation 3: Clarinet (lively, taunting, showcases range and personality of Clarinet) **5:41-7:37**

Variation 4: Viola (dramatic, expressive) **8:35-10:45**

Variation 5: Oboe and Bassoon (imitation like a canon between two instruments) **11:01-13:45**

Variation 6: Trumpet and Trombone (rhythmic punctuated banter) **13:48-14:27**

Variation 7: Violin (weaving in circles, showing off) **14:27-15:40**

Variation 8: Horn (calm, leisurely, unhurried) **15:55-18:08**

Variation 9: Winds and Brass Interlude **18:09-19:23**

Reprise Theme: Bass and Harp (slow, expressive reprise of the theme) **19:25-21:30**

Variation 10: ALL featured *Malambo* (Dance performed by men in Argentina) **21:36- 25:11**

THE SAINT PAUL
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA

Variaciones Concertantes by Alberto Ginastera
Footwork Finale

Using The SPCO's [Concert Library](#), follow along with the time stamps below to explore Ginastera's piece composed in 1953 in a theme and variations style.

Focus on the last section of the piece (24 minutes in total) where all instruments are featured in a dance-like section modeled after the dance *Malambo*. The *Malambo* is a traditional dance of Argentina performed by men. The rhythmic nature of the dance focuses around quick footwork and tapping and dancers are dressed in traditional gaucho (South American horsemen) attire.



Check out some of these videos to get an idea of what a dance like this would look like:

<https://video.link/w/4t1mb>

Malambo Festival in Laborde: <https://video.link/w/3u1mb>

After watching the above video examples...

What do you notice about this dance?



Example of a *Malambo* dancer wearing traditional gaucho outfit.



21:36- 25:11 : This final section of the piece features “punchy” repeated notes which mimic the stomping and foot tapping that is distinctive of *Malambo* dancers.



22:42: What do you notice about the layering of the theme? Listen for the way the swirling melody plays a bit like a game of tag around the orchestra-being passed from one instrument to the next.



Write or draw the order of the instruments passing this melody:



Stomp your feet with the repetitive rhythms and use your hands with a cloth napkin or tissue to **swirl** above along with the melody.

 thespco.org/music

This packet is free to download for personal use.
Document and images © The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra 2020
© The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. All rights reserved.

THE SAINT PAUL
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA