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Walter Burle Marx's cello concerto

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WALTER BURLE MARX'S *CELLO CONCERTO*

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

in

The School of Music

by

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Preface

In the course of my research, I visited Walter Burle Marx's daughter Leonora Cohen in Corvallis, OR. Looking through boxes of Burle Marx's documents and letters, which she kindly showed me, I could not help but notice the many copies of the text, "What I Believe," by Albert Einstein. There were typed copies, copies handwritten by Burle Marx (Figure 1), copies in English and in Portuguese. Leonora Cohen told me that her father had discovered this text around the time it was published (1930). By that time he was starting his life as a young adult, had just finished his intense and extensive musical training in Europe, and had arrived in Brazil to start his career as a conductor. According to Cohen, Einstein's text inspired both Burle Marx and his brother, friend and confidant, Roberto Burle Marx.¹

I include Einstein's "What I Believe" here in its entirety because the philosophies included in this text guided Burle Marx throughout his life.

Albert Einstein's "What I Believe."² (First published by the *Forum* magazine in October, 1930):

1. Strange is our situation here upon earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose.
2. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that man is here for the sake of other men—above all for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy.

¹ Roberto Burle Marx, a landscape architect, is considered one of the greatest artists of Brazil.

² Albert Einstein, "What I Believe," *Forum*, October, 1930, 193-194.

- Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellowmen, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received. My peace of mind is often troubled by the depressing sense that I have borrowed too heavily from the work of other men.
3. I do not believe we can have any freedom at all in the philosophical sense, for we act not only under external compulsion but also by inner necessity. Schopenhauer's saying— "A man can surely do what he wills to do, but he cannot determine what he wills"—impressed itself upon me in youth and has always consoled me when I have witnessed or suffered life's hardships. This conviction is a perpetual breeder of tolerance, for it does not allow us to take ourselves or others too seriously; it makes rather for a sense of humor.
 4. To ponder interminably over the reason for one's own existence or the meaning of life in general seems to me, from an objective point of view, to be sheer folly. And yet everyone holds certain ideals by which he guides his aspiration and his judgment. The ideals which have always shone before me and filled me with the joy of living are goodness, beauty, and truth. To make a goal of comfort or happiness has never appealed to me; a system of ethics built on this basis would be sufficient only for a herd of cattle.
 5. Without the sense of collaborating with like-minded beings in the pursuit of the ever unattainable in art and scientific research, my life would have been empty. Ever since childhood I have scorned the commonplace limits so often set upon human ambition. Possessions, outward success, publicity, luxury—to me these have always been contemptible. I believe that a simple and unassuming manner of life is best for everyone, best both for the body and the mind.
 6. My passionate interest in social justice and social responsibility has always stood in curious contrast to a marked lack of desire for direct association with men and women. I am a horse for single harness, not cut out for tandem or team work. I have never belonged wholeheartedly to country or state, to my circle of friends, or even to my own family. These ties have always been accompanied by a vague aloofness, and the wish to withdraw into myself increases with the years.
 7. Such isolation is sometimes bitter, but I do not regret being cut off from the understanding and sympathy of other men. I lose something by it, to be sure, but I am compensated for it in being rendered independent of the customs, opinions, and prejudices of others, and am not tempted to rest my peace of mind upon such shifting foundations.
 8. My political ideal is democracy. Everyone should be respected as an individual, but no one idolized. It is an irony of fate that I should have been

- showered with so much uncalled for and unmerited admiration and esteem. Perhaps this adulation springs from the unfulfilled wish of the multitude to comprehend the few ideas which I, with my weak powers, have advanced.
9. Full well do I know that in order to attain any definite goal it is imperative that one person should do the thinking and commanding and carry most of the responsibility. But those who are led should not be driven, and they should be allowed to choose their leader. It seems to me that the distinctions separating the social classes are false; in the last analysis they rest on force. I am convinced that degeneracy follows every autocratic system of violence, for violence inevitably attracts moral inferiors. Time has proved that illustrious tyrants are succeeded by scoundrels.
 10. For this reason I have always been passionately opposed to such regimes as exist in Russia and Italy today. The thing which has discredited the European forms of democracy is not the basic theory of democracy itself, which some say is at fault, but the instability of our political leadership, as well as the impersonal character of party alignments.
 11. I believe that those in the United States have hit upon the right idea. A President is chosen for a reasonable length of time and enough power is given him to acquit himself properly of his responsibilities. In the German Government, on the other hand, I like the state's more extensive care of the individual when he is ill or unemployed. What is truly valuable in our bustle of life is not the nation, I should say, but the creative and impressionable individuality, the personality—he who produces the noble and sublime while the common herd remains dull in thought and insensible in feeling.
 12. This subject brings me to that vilest offspring of the herd mind—the odious militia. The man who enjoys marching in line and file to the strains of music falls below my contempt; he received his great brain by mistake—the spinal cord would have been amply sufficient. This heroism at command, this senseless violence, this accursed bombast of patriotism—how intensely I despise them! War is low and despicable, and I had rather be smitten to shreds than participate in such doings.
 13. Such a stain on humanity should be erased without delay. I think well enough of human nature to believe that it would have been wiped out long ago had not the common sense of nations been systematically corrupted through school and press for business and political reasons.
 14. The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed. This insight into the mystery of life, coupled though it be with fear, has also given rise to religion. To know that what is impenetrable to us

really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms— this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religiousness. In this sense, and in this sense only, I belong in the ranks of devoutly religious men.

15. I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modeled after our own—a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty. Neither can I believe that the individual survives the death of his body, although feeble souls harbor such thoughts through fear or ridiculous egotism. It is enough for me to contemplate the mystery of conscious life perpetuating itself through all eternity, to reflect upon the marvelous structure of the universe which we can dimly perceive, and to try humbly to comprehend even an infinitesimal part of the intelligence manifested in nature.

Many of the questions that I had as I started my research seemed answered in Einstein's text. One question was: Why did Burle Marx move to the US in 1935 instead of remaining in Brazil, where he had just arrived from Europe? In paragraph 8, Einstein writes: "My political ideal is democracy." By the time Burle Marx had left Brazil, the country was under a turbulent dictatorship disguised as a democratic government. The rise of anti-Semitic politics in Europe made it impossible for Burle Marx, as well as many other artists and intellectuals to remain on that continent. In the 10th and 11th paragraphs Einstein mentions various governments and countries, and suggests that, at the time, the US had a better relationship between its government and citizens: "I believe that those in the US have hit upon the right idea." Burle Marx had experienced living in both Brazil and Europe. Einstein's words might have been a source of advice on where to go next just as the physicist himself left Europe for the US in 1933.

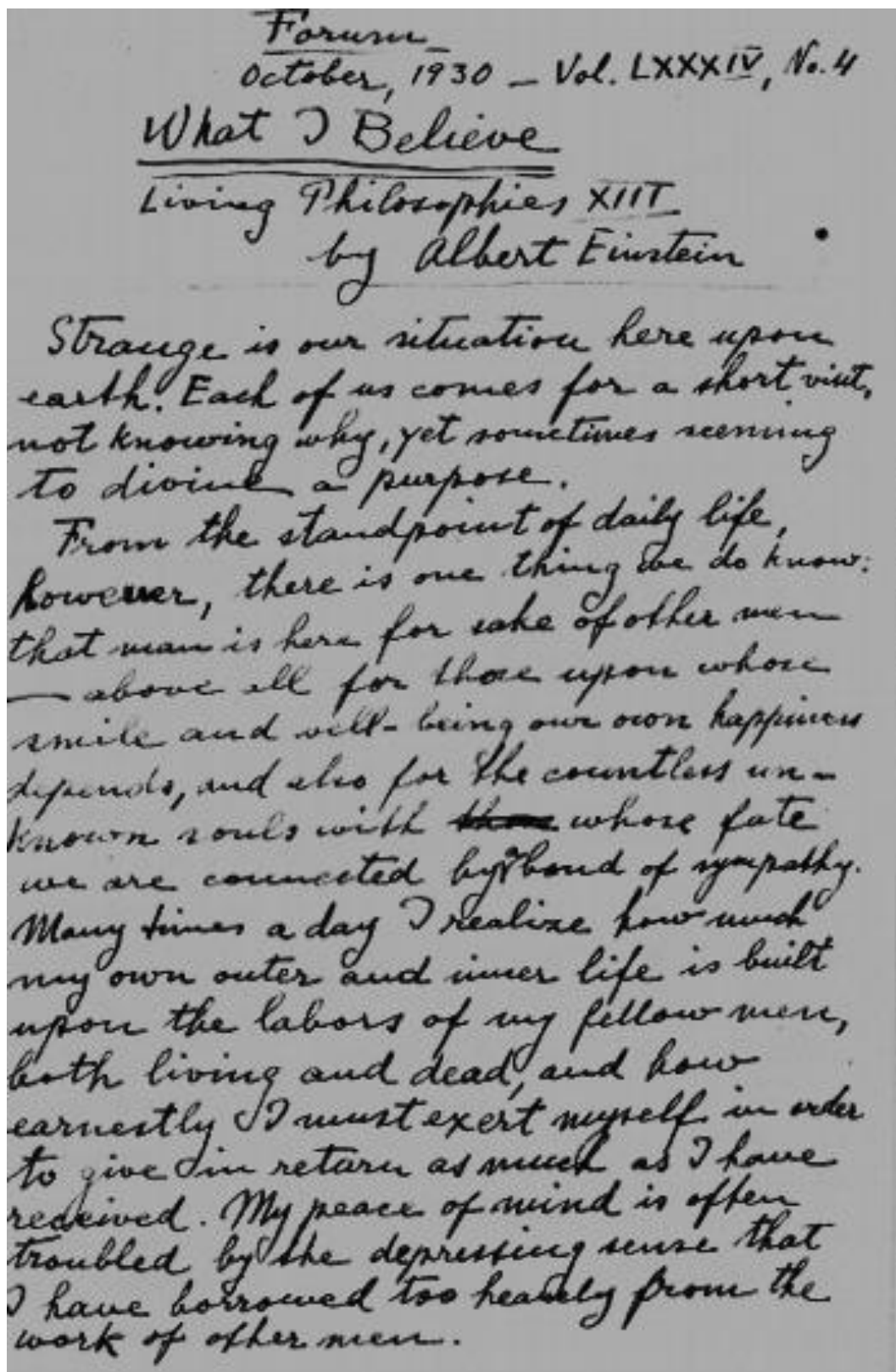


Figure 1. "What I Believe," by Albert Einstein. Copy handwritten by Burle Marx.

Another question I posed could be answered by this text: Why, after achieving so much publicity and influence as a young adult, did Burle Marx leave all this behind around the 1950s, dedicating himself primarily to composition, without regard for any public acclaim? In the 5th paragraph Einstein remarked: “Ever since childhood I have scorned the commonplace limits so often set upon human ambition. Possessions, outward success, publicity, luxury—to me these have always been contemptible. I believe that a simple and unassuming manner of life is best for everyone, best both for the body and the mind.” Considering the possibility that Einstein was one of Burle Marx’s personal heroes, this paragraph would explain why Burle Marx might not care for any personal acclaim after achieving so much influence as pianist and conductor, the result of which caused him to lose contact with the media during the last half of his life for no apparent reason, as we will see in his biography.

There lie strong connections between Einstein’s philosophies and the *Violoncello Concerto*. First, the relevant coincidence between Burle Marx’s marking in the score where it reads *Misterioso* (see figure 6 on page 27) at the very beginning of the piece, and Einstein’s 14th paragraph: “The most beautiful thing we can experience is the **mysterious**. It is the source of all true art and science.” The *Violoncello Concerto*, as we can see in Burle Marx’s own words about the piece, depicts the author’s deep concerns

about the future of humankind, threatened by the armaments race.³ The time that Burle Marx composed the *Violoncello Concerto* (1984), the threat of a nuclear war was a reality. Perhaps he was feeling that the perpetuation of the human race was at stake with the possibility of a nuclear war. I think that what Burle Marx was depicting in his *Violoncello Concerto* with the marking (*Misterioso*) could be expressed by Einstein's words (15th paragraph): "It is enough for me to contemplate the mystery of conscious life perpetuating itself through all eternity..."

Second, Einstein and Burle Marx use the same term in describing the war. In Einstein's 12th paragraph we read: "This subject brings me to that vilest offspring of the herd mind—the odious militia... This heroism at command, this **senseless** violence... War is low and despicable..." In the text written by Burle Marx about his *Violoncello Concerto*⁴ it says: "I've survived my eightieth birthday. I remember wars since 1911. I try to see the whole world situation as objectively as possible. I can't help but think of the madness: this **senseless** world armaments race that can only lead to disaster... These concerns are reflected in my *Violoncello Concerto*."⁵ Thus, Burle Marx was following the example of his hero, Einstein, protesting against war.

In an interview with Cohen (on September 6, 2012), she mentioned that Burle Marx spoke of music as a universal language that creates ties among people. In the

³ See chapter 3 for further discussion

⁴ See chapter 3 for further discussion.

⁵ Walter Burle Marx, "Violoncello Concerto," (Fleisher Collection at the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1982).

second paragraph in Einstein's text we read: "From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that man is here for the sake of other men." Burle Marx's belief that music can create ties among different kinds of people suggests he completely agreed with Einstein's thought, and Burle Marx's manifestation of that belief might be seen in his efforts to conduct European music in the Americas and vice versa. Burle Marx, as a conductor, introduced and performed the music of Pan-American composers in Europe, the classical European repertoire in the Americas, and Latin American music in the US.

As a composer, evident in his words about the *Violoncello Concerto*, he also used his talent to protest against war. In a letter to his brother Sigi who lived in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil,⁶ Burle Marx wrote: "this is the real key to longevity—always to want to produce and do something that might be useful for my **fellow man**." And in Einstein's text, paragraph 2 reads: "Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my **fellowmen**, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received."

Thus, Einstein's essay would inspire and guide Burle Marx's actions during his adult life.

⁶ Walter to Sigi, Philadelphia, September 17, 1979, family archives in Corvallis, OR.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Preface.....	iii
Abstract.....	xii
Chapter 1 A Brief Biography of Walter Burle Marx.....	1
1.1 Burle Marx, Composer.....	12
1.2 The <i>Violoncello Concerto</i> Years	14
Chapter 2 <i>Violoncello Concerto</i> Analysis	23
Bibliography	71
Appendix 1 – Permission Letter.....	73
Vita	74

Abstract

Brazilian pianist, conductor, and composer Walter Burle Marx (1902-1990) is an important musical personality from Brazil whose works and contributions to the introduction of Latin American concert music throughout the world have yet to be fully recognized.

In addition to providing a brief biography of Walter Burle Marx, this monograph focuses on his *Violoncello Concerto*. The concerto is dated 1984, and dedicated to his cellist daughter, Madalena. It was premiered in July 18th, 2006 by cellist Dennis Parker in Brasília (Brazil), with the *Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional*, conducted by João Guilherme Ripper. I was introduced to this piece when the LSU Orchestra performed it in 2009 while I was in my first year at this institution as a DMA candidate. My cello Professor, Dennis Parker, played the work, and I had the privilege of being part of the orchestra on this occasion. The writing for the cello is virtuosic, the orchestration brilliant and creative; the themes and lines are based on the principles of counterpoint, and as a whole the piece has a well-founded formal organization. This monograph analyzes the piece and discusses its most important compositional and stylistic characteristics. The *Violoncello Concerto* is still largely unknown by audiences around the world; however, a first recording is forthcoming, with the LSU Symphony, Carlos Riazuelo conducting, and Dennis Parker as soloist.

Chapter 1 A Brief Biography of Walter Burle Marx⁷

Walter Burle Marx (1902-1990) is considered one of the most important musical personalities Brazil produced in the 20th century. He was a pianist, conductor, and composer. He was also a musical activist and champion of South American music and composers. He had a career as a virtuoso pianist, conducted many of the great orchestras of the world, and founded the most important orchestra in Brazil of his time. He composed numerous works, among them four symphonies, many choral pieces, chamber music pieces, pieces for solo guitar, a cello concerto, and two concertinos for piano and orchestra, among other works and arrangements for orchestra.

Burle Marx was born in São Paulo on July 23, 1902, and died in Akron, Ohio, on December 28, 1990. His father was a Jewish entrepreneur from Trier, Germany, who came to Brazil in 1896. His mother was from an old Brazilian family in Olinda, Pernambuco. Burle Marx was the eldest of six children (four boys and two girls), and like his brothers and sisters, learned music from a young age, as well as many different languages. The Burle Marx family home was a cultural center, with musicians, artists and intellectuals from Brazil and abroad visiting frequently. Pianist Arthur Rubinstein visited the family four times during the years 1917 and 1918.

⁷ All information given in this section was taken from the article "Rediscovering Walter Burle Marx: Brazilian Musician of 'Pure Gold'," by Leonora Cohen. This article was published in *Latin American Music Review*, by the University of Texas Press, Austin. Cohen's article is the only existing comprehensive biography of Walter Burle Marx.

Burle Marx started to learn piano from his mother at age seven, and also took lessons with Luigi Chiaffarelli for eight months, whose School of Piano was important in Brazil. Chiaffarelli was the teacher of Guiomar Novaes, one of the great pianists of the twentieth century. At age eleven Burle Marx began lessons with Brazilian pianist and composer Henrique Oswald, and was known as a child prodigy. He started his concertizing career at age ten in 1913, in São Paulo. His major debut was in Rio, in 1914, with many publications commenting positively about the concert before and after the event. He played many concerts in Rio, São Paulo, and Recife in 1919. His studies continued in Europe between 1921 and 1929, when the Burle Marx family moved to Berlin to take advantage of the cultural life for their children. In 1922 Burle Marx took piano lessons with Heinrich Barth, Arthur Rubinstein's teacher, at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. In 1924 he studied with Tobias Matthay, at the Royal Academy of Music in London and, after returning to Berlin, studied piano with James Kwast (1924-1926), who enjoyed great fame in Germany. From 1925 to 1926 Burle Marx played several concerts in Germany, France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, and Austria.

Burle Marx studied orchestration and instrumentation in Berlin from 1926 to 1928, with E. N. von Reznicek, an Austrian composer of Czech descent. Reznicek is well known for his opera overture *Donna Dianna*, and was considered a master in orchestration. From 1928 to 1929 Burle Marx finished the complete theoretical and practical course in conducting in the Basel conservatory in Switzerland, with Felix

Weingartner. Weingartner was respected as an interpreter of Beethoven and Mahler and a major conductor of orchestras in Vienna, Berlin, and Munich.

Burle Marx returned to Rio de Janeiro in 1930, and in Brazil began his conducting career in May of that year with pianist Alexander Brailowski as a soloist. Burle Marx conducted more concerts in the same year, with soloists Bidu Sayão, Guiomar Novaes, Tomás Terán, and Pery Machado. He was acclaimed as “the best conductor South America has ever produced” in an interview given by the Italian impresario Walter Mocchi for the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, in December 1930. Brazil did not have a permanent orchestra at the time, only amateur orchestras such as the *Sociedade de Concertos Sinfônicos* (Society for Symphonic Concerts). Burle Marx founded the *Orquestra Filarmônica do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro Philharmonic) and gave the first concert on May 18, 1931. The concert premiered Henrique Oswald’s *Andante com Variações* for piano and orchestra, and the program featured Iso Elinson as soloist. The orchestra’s season comprised ten concerts including famous soloists such as Souza Lima, Tomás Terán, Arthur Rubinstein, and Guiomar Novaes. The orchestra premiered several works of Brazilian composers, and also several premieres for Brazil from the classical repertoire, Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* among them.

Brazilian musicologist Luís Heitor wrote about Burle Marx in the book *Música e Músicos do Brasil* (*Music and Musicians from Brazil*), published in 1950: “Burle Marx was an indispensable man, in this musical sector, for his luminous capacity to organize and

coordinate through his shining prestige and his young artistic authority.”⁸ About the *Orquestra Filarmônica*, Heitor wrote:

Walter Burle Marx...gifted Rio de Janeiro with a truly magnificent orchestra, obtaining the greatest musical victory in the musical life of Brazil. An orchestra that had nerves and muscles; that was not limited to execute with perfection, but interpret, animate and make alive the musical works given to his care . . . He elevated the *Orquestra Filarmônica* to the greatest level of perfection possible.⁹

The orchestra had a short existence of fifty-three concerts in three years, from 1931 to 1933. During this time, 143 works were played, twenty-one of those by Brazilian composers, twenty-six world premieres, and sixty Brazil premieres.

Heitor Villa-Lobos, the most influential Brazilian composer to date, said that the *Orquestra Filarmônica* was the best orchestra Rio de Janeiro ever had. The orchestra disbanded, however, for a number of reasons, the absence of support from the government an important one. Also, because Burle Marx wanted the better players he could find for his orchestra, he hired some of them from other Brazilian states, causing many musicians from Rio to be dissatisfied with him. Another factor influencing the orchestra’s demise undoubtedly was the prejudice against Burle Marx’s European education and his Jewish ancestry. Those problems created animosity towards him and made his situation as conductor of the orchestra untenable.

However, during the short existence of the orchestra, Burle Marx became internationally known as a conductor, and in 1931 he conducted several concerts in

⁸ Heitor 1950, 352.

⁹ Ibid., 360.

Santiago, Chile, featuring the music of the Americas in addition to standard repertoire. He also conducted at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires in 1933, performing Latin American music. In 1933, he recorded his own work, *Fantasy on the Brazilian National Anthem*, with the State Orchestra in Berlin, and in 1934, as guest conductor, he worked with the Hamburg, Munich, and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras, performing Brazilian and South American works. He guest conducted compositions by his teacher Reznicek with the Berlin Philharmonic, and on September 7, 1934, a radio concert transmitted worldwide celebrated the Brazilian “Dia da Pátria.” Critics of German newspapers wrote favorably about Burle Marx’s conducting. The *Hamburger Zeitung am Mittag* critic wrote: “A conductor of this caliber makes us imagine Rio de Janeiro as a great musical metropolis.”¹⁰ In Berlin, the *Der Angriff* critic wrote: “Burle Marx even shamed many German conductors.”¹¹

In spite of his success in Europe as conductor, it was too dangerous for an individual of Jewish descent to live there at the time, and Burle Marx had to leave. On September 29, 1934, he embarked on the *Graf Zeppelin* and traveled to Brazil on a memorable voyage. His return to Brazil was largely celebrated in the newspapers, with the *Associação Brasileira de Música* holding a banquet in his honor and calling him a

¹⁰ “Música: Burle Marx,” *A Nação* (Rio de Janeiro), 29 June 1934.

¹¹ “A Viagem de Walter Burle Marx a Alemanha.” *O Journal do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro), 12 December 1934.

“magnificent ambassador” of Brazilian music.¹² There was a concert on October 13, 1934 sponsored by the *Cultura Artística* at the Teatro Municipal. The program was Tchaikovsky’s *Fifth Symphony*, Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Russian Easter Festival Overture*, Liadov’s *Baba Yaga and Kikimora*, and Bortkiewicz’s *Concerto, Opus 16*, with Tomás Terán at the piano.

Since he could not continue to live in Europe, and as in Brazil his orchestra disbanded for lack of political support, Burle Marx moved to the US in 1935. For a time he lived there as a guest of the Brazilian Ambassador in Washington, DC, Oswaldo Aranha. Burle Marx later would dedicate his *Pater Noster* to Aranha’s daughter, Dedé. In the period from 1935 to 1942, Burle Marx was a guest conductor for the New York Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, DC, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, and others.

Burle Marx championed the music of Latin America at every opportunity. His conductor’s signature was “to bring the works of South American composers before the public.”¹³ In 1935, he conducted the National Symphony Orchestra at two Watergate concerts on August 11 and 14. In those concerts, he performed for their first time in the US works by Brazilian composers Carlos Gomes (*Il Guarany*), Nepomuceno (*O Garatuja*), Mignone (*Suíte Brasileira*), Oswald (*Bébé s’endort*), and J. J. Castro of Argentina

¹² “A Próxima Chegada do Maestro Burle Marx.” *O Radical* (Rio de Janeiro), 3 October 1934.

¹³ “Marx Brings Latin Color to Watergate Symphony. South American Works to be Played Here for First Time; Duo- pianists and Operatic Baritone to Feature Programs.” *Washington Post*, 11 August 1935.

(*Suite Infantil*). He also performed the *Second Indian Suite* by Edward McDowell and pieces from the standard repertoire to large audiences.

In 1939 he was chosen by the Brazilian government to be the Music Director for the Brazilian Pavilion for the World's Fair in New York. On this occasion, his US premieres included several works of Villa-Lobos: *Choros No's. 4, 7, 8 and 10* and the *Bachianas Brasileiras No's. 1 and 5*, the latter performed by Bidú Sayão, as well as *Rudepoema*, performed by Arthur Rubinstein, along with works by Camargo Guarnieri and Francisco Mignone. Burle Marx conducted the two major Brazilian concerts with the New York Philharmonic at the World's Fair Music Hall on May 4 and May 9, 1939. The music critic for the *New York Herald Tribune* described Walter's conducting at the Fair: "He is a musician of exceptional sensibilities and taste and one who knows how to obtain from his players exactly the tonal texture demanded by the music in hand."¹⁴ A critic from the *New York Sun* wrote: "When the total of impressions yielded by the international musical events at the World's Fair is eventually weighed it is probable that the Brazilian programs directed by Burle Marx will be remembered with especial vividness."¹⁵ The second concert at the World's Fair, on May 9, was held during a storm, but despite the rain, a sizeable audience attended. Critic Miles Kastendieck, from

¹⁴ Jerome D. Bohm, "Philharmonic is heard under Brazil Auspices," *New York Herald- Tribune*, 11 May 1939.

¹⁵ Irving Kolodin, "Marx Leads Music by Brazilians," *New York Sun*, 10 May 1939.

the *Brooklyn Eagle*, wrote that “Brazil has, and is producing music today that merits cultivation on the part of North American audiences.”¹⁶

Burle Marx conducted the National Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, July 30, 1939 for the Watergate Sunset Symphonies at the Potomac Watergate. There were approximately 10,000 people in attendance, with “almost the entire Latin American diplomatic corps present [...] as a tribute to the man who, more than anyone else, has made his continent’s music known to the world.”¹⁷ Burle Marx again competed with the weather, for half of the concert was held during a thunderstorm with strong rain. The *Washington Evening Star* published a note saying that “In spite the storm, the concert was outstanding in every respect.”¹⁸

In August of the same year Burle Marx conducted the Cleveland Orchestra in two concerts at the Public Hall. In May, 1940 he conducted the New York Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall as part of the *Famous Conductor* series for the New York City Work Projects Administration. On this occasion, he conducted two of his own works, the *Fantastic Episode* and his orchestral transcription of the Bach *Chaconne*, together with Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony. In October of that year he also programmed and

¹⁶ Miles Kastendieck, “Brazilian Concert Conducted by Marx: Second Program Brings Forth Another Important Work of Villa-Lobos; Choral Sections Sung by Schola Cantorum,” *Brooklyn Eagle*, 10 May 1939.

¹⁷ “Latin Diplomats Will Attend Sunset Concert,” *Washington Post*, 30 July 1939.

¹⁸ Alice Eversman, “Symphony Audience Braves Rain and is Well Rewarded: Burle Marx Gives New Interpretation to Cesar Franck; Soloists Score,” *Washington Evening Star*, 31 July 1939: B. 1, B18.

conducted six concerts for the Festival of Brazilian Music, connected to the Portinari painting exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

In 1941 he was invited to conduct the Detroit Symphony on November 13 and 14, premiering his own work, *Theme, Variations, and Passacaglia*. He also conducted his orchestral version of Bach's *Chaconne*, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 1*, and three pieces for orchestra by Villa-Lobos: *Trenzinho*, and two *Bachianas*. The *Detroit Free Press* wrote that he was capable of getting a gorgeous performance from the orchestra.¹⁹

In 1942 Burle Marx conducted the NBC Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall on May 30 and June 6, performing Villa-Lobos and Wagner. The concert was broadcast to over 400 stations in North America, as well as to Brazil and other parts of the world.

Brazilian publicity at the time celebrated North American critical praise for Burle Marx's conducting and compositions. Some writers remarked that he had introduced Brazilian music to North America, promoting works of Brazilian composers and Brazilian soloists. Burle Marx's place in the music world seemed to be assured; however, some factors changed his career as a conductor.

Since 1932 (while still in Europe) Burle Marx had also dedicated himself to composing. In 1939 he married Fannie Forman, an American, and decided to reside in the US. In 1944 he had a serious injury to his shoulder, which forced him to discontinue his career as a conductor. He started to devote himself entirely to composition. Over the

¹⁹ J. D. Callaghan, "Latin Music Stirrs Heart of Detroit," *Detroit Free Press*, 14 November 1941.

years, however, with exercises he regained the movements of his shoulder, and eventually accepted an appointment from the Brazilian government as Artistic Director at the Opera of Rio de Janeiro, at the Teatro Municipal. But the position ended with a change of political parties in 1949 and, in an interview from 1950 in the Brazilian newspaper *A Noite*, Villa-Lobos stated that “Walter Burle Marx, after trying vainly to do something about organizing music in Rio, was obliged to return to the United States without realizing his dream of having a great orchestra of our own capable of interpreting great music.”²⁰

Burle Marx conducted for the last time in 1975 at age 73, in Brazil, at the Teatro Municipal and at the Sala Cecília Meireles. The program included his orchestral version of Bach’s *Chaconne*, which he had premiered in the Teatro Municipal in 1932, and his *Third Symphony, Impressions of Macumba*, also premiered in the same theater in 1956.

As an activist and promoter of South American music, Burle Marx founded the Orquestra Filarmônica in Rio in 1931, and began the tradition of young people’s concerts in Brazil, creating the first conducting course for the National School of Music in Rio, in 1932. Throughout his career, he helped to bring the classical works to Brazil and the music of Latin American composers to the US and Europe. Newspapers in the US published his philosophy: “Music is the universal language. The people of one

²⁰ Heitor Villa-Lobos, “Burle Marx Found the Path That Others Did Not Find,” *A Noite* (Rio de Janeiro), 14 December 1950.

country who begin to appreciate and feel the music of another nation not only lose their jealousies, but learn to trust and honor their neighbors.”²¹

Musical America had published many articles on music of South America after the 1939 World’s fair in New York. The Brazilian composers mentioned were Villa-Lobos, Burle Marx, Oscar Lorenzo Fernandez, Francisco Mignone, Francisco Braga, and João Gomes de Araújo. The journal also mentioned the importance of Burle Marx in presenting these composers, otherwise unknown in North America before the 1939 World’s Fair.

Along with Villa-Lobos and other composers, Burle Marx founded, in 1945, the Academia Brasileira de Música (Brazilian Music Academy), to promote Brazilian Music, collect biographical information, create a library of music, and provide support to Brazilian musicians and composers.

After 1939 radio stations across the US broadcasted programs from Burle Marx’s concerts, such as the World’s Fair concerts, the concerts with the National Symphony Orchestra, and the festival of Brazilian Music at the Museum of Modern Art. Burle Marx also created a Monday evening program on WQXR in New York called *Brazilian Concert*, which was broadcasted in 1939 from July to October. For this program, Burle Marx brought in performers, such as Noemi Bittencourt and Elsie Houston, and various works and recordings introducing music from Brazil. In 1943, on the program *Musical*

²¹ Burle Marx, “Musical Reciprocity between the Americas Urged,” *Musical America*, 59, no. 11 (June 1939): 34.

Treasures of the Americas, he delivered twenty-eight talks in Portuguese over the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) for broadcasts to Brazil and South America.

1.1 Burle Marx, Composer

Burle Marx started composing seriously in 1932, creating over eighty works including symphonies, concertos, works for solo guitar, chamber music, an operetta, and numerous songs. After returning to the US from Brazil in 1949, he lived with his family (wife and two daughters) in the Catskill Mountains of New York on a quiet farm near Arkville. The family moved to Philadelphia in 1952. Burle Marx taught piano, theory, and composition at the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia from 1952 to 1977.

Burle Marx dedicated himself to composing, which was his passion, in his spare time. His main inspiration came from Brazilian folk melodies and rhythms. During his residence in North America he became fascinated with the history of the United States, composing songs for the holidays and commemorative pieces. Right before his death in 1990 he was working on a cantata based on the U.S. Constitution. Early works were religious and patriotic pieces, which he conducted in the period between 1932 and 1940. These were mainly orthodox works, and required advanced technique. However, Burle Marx's academic style had changed after the World's Fair in 1939 when he conducted his *Fantastic Episode*, which is permeated with Brazilian flavors.

Burle Marx composed four symphonies, and was proud to say they were completely different from each other. The first symphony (1945) is called *A Tone Poem in Homage to Bach*. His second symphony, *Brasiliana*, was completed in 1950 and performed in Rio that same year. Villa-Lobos commented on the work: “Burle Marx discovered the road that others did not find... We feel the music of Brazil in the structure of his work, in a universal syncretism. This is his great originality... Burle Marx knows his technique thoroughly. In his work there are elements, very well used in the score. In this symphony, nothing has been forgotten, neither rhythmic, melodic, nor contrapuntal elements, and making good use of typical, popular, very Brazilian flavors.”²² Burle Marx’s third symphony, *Impressions of Macumba*, was completed in 1956 and dedicated to his brother, Roberto. The symphony premiered in 1956, at the Teatro Municipal in Rio, and was later performed in 1993 by the Akron Symphony Orchestra. The *Fourth Symphony for Chamber Orchestra*, dated 1973, premiered in 1975, performed by the Little Orchestra Society of Philadelphia, and was also performed in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1980, by the Orquesta Sinfonica de Venezuela.

Later in life, Burle Marx’s music was also performed by members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Huntingdon Trio, the New Philadelphia Quartet, the Audubon Quartet, and the Concerto Soloists. The Burle Marx Music Society, founded by Eugene Rausa in 1987, organized several concerts to promote his music, together

²² Villa-Lobos, “Burle Marx Found the Path That Others Did Not Find,” *A Noite* (Rio de Janeiro), 14 December 1950.

with the music of other Brazilian composers. On February 14, 1988, Burle Marx was awarded the Philadelphia Medallion for outstanding individuals in the arts. After his death, on December 28, 1990, a concert in his memory was organized at the Settlement Music School where he had taught for twenty-five years. Mayor Wilson Goode proclaimed April 13, 1991 as “Burle Marx Day” in the City of Philadelphia.

1.2 The *Violoncello Concerto* Years²³

This section re-creates the events in Burle Marx’s life around the time he wrote the *Violoncello Concerto*, which is dated 1982-84. In 1982 Burle Marx was 80 years old and had been retired from his job at the Settlement School since 1977. His wife, Fannie, had died in 1971. In an interview with his daughter Leonora (September 7, 2012), she said that Burle Marx’s wife would do all the work at home, so he could concentrate fully on his compositions. Fannie would organize his material and type the letters dictated by him to orchestras and organizations in hopes of gaining performances of his music. She would also type and act as family scribe and secretary, keeping copies of all correspondences. In a letter to friends dated from 1972 Burle Marx expressed his grief and his difficulty in adapting to his new life, after Fannie’s death.

For some reason, the letters from the period between 1982-84 could not be found, although many letters from the years 1979 and 1980 can give an idea of his life at the

²³ The research informing in this section is a collection of interviews with members of Burle Marx’s family, and friends; letters written to and by him, a facsimile of a score, and a photograph found in the family archives in Corvallis, OR.

time. In a letter dated September 17, 1979, to his brother Sigi, Burle Marx expresses his feelings about death, family, and also about some new projects.



Figure 2. Burle Marx at the time he composed the *Violoncello Concerto*.

In a letter dated September 10, 1979, Burle Marx wrote to his brother Roberto about a memorable trip he made with friends to visit his daughter's family:

Saturday morning I was picked up by Bottany Bill and Ina and we drove for the Labor Day to Leonora's place in the country. They were waiting for us in front of the house and Max [Burle Marx's grandson, age 3 at the time] looks radiant. He is developing incredibly. His vocabulary is of a boy of 12 years old [...] Elizabeth Fannie [Burle Marx's granddaughter, at the time a newborn] knows people already and smiles a great deal. To be with Bottany Bill in the woods is always an experience [...] Bill discovered wonderful edible mushrooms, and was explaining about all the wonderful ferns that were there. The only thing that Leonora did not like was when he brought a little snake near her.

1342 Westmoreland Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19140
Feb. 29, 1972

Querido Rudi, Bernadette, e Peri,

I am the most disorganized person in this world. Now comes the preparation of the income taxes and this year it will be even more difficult for me. I miss Fannie every instant of the day. She knew how to make my life easier and she guessed my needs. But this is life, and we have to conform with it and make the trolley car go (fazer o bonde andar). I am at present suffering from birth pains and orchestrating the last four pages of my symphony. But even after concluding it, there is still very much to be done in putting in all the dynamics and interpretation signs. The performance at Marlboro that I was hoping for failed, as Serkin told me they are not doing any orchestral work at the present. They ~~will~~ only have an orchestra for Casale, and the students prefer to do pure chamber music. Anyway, I will find other performance possibilities and will let you know about it soon.

I am putting my life in order here, and from next season on, I will work a little less. If no performance is in sight for this summer, (it would be a great effort to have all the parts done by then and correct them in time) I'm planning to leave in June for Europe, and spend 6 weeks between Switzerland, Germany, and France, before going to London in the middle of July to meet Roberto for the one-man exhibition he will have there in July. Then I plan to go to Brazil with him and spend from the beginning of August and the month of September in Rio or if I have some concerts any other place, before returning to this country. That means I will have been four months away from Philadelphia. As soon as I have this mastodon out of my mind, I will write to Kurt Lange in Montevideo to see if I can visit you and try to articulate a program that would be of interest for Montevideo.

You three have left a vacuum here in Philadelphia, and I can only say that I miss you very much. The girls are well. Madalena is planning to go to Yale University this summer and probably stay there to get her "masters" degree, so that she can teach at a university and devote herself to chamber music, which is at her heart. Leonora changed jobs in September, and is a coordinator of ~~of~~ early childhood programs in two districts of Philadelphia, and has to work with over 100 schools. She is very satisfied with the new job that is much more challenging. Besides that, she is planning a trip to Brazil for the end of July, where she will take 25 to 30 teachers, holding a seminar for them, so that this trip can be tax deductible. The provisional itinerary will take them in 4 weeks to Manaus, Brasilia, Belo Horizonte, Ouro Preto, Congonhas, Sao Paulo, Iguassu Falls, Rio (9 days), and Bahia (7 days). For a vacation she is planning to go now on March 24th to Portugal for a week with Madalena. There they will have a car and travel through that country. I declined the invitation as it is too much for this "old man" here.

I hope pretty soon to write again, as soon as this symphonic load drops from my body. Thank you very much for the letter of January 25th. I hope you had occasion to see Roberto and visit the Sitio while you were in Rio. Beijos e abraços para vocês, tres.
Do velho amigo,

Walter

Figure 3. Letter to friends dated February 29, 1972

September 17, 1979

Querido Sieg,

Your letter of the 6th of September just reached me today(it was postmarked the 10th of Sept.). Curiously I also thought of our parents on that date. It is a generation that is gone, and we are already the substitutes for it. In six years more I will reach the age when my father died. In eleven more years I will reach my mother's age. I myself am quite prepared when the time comes to quit this world. Anyway I am fighting against this inevitable by taking care of my health and the most important thing is to remain busy and try to leave some music for posterity. This is the real key to longevity - always to want to produce and do something that might be useful for my fellow man. My life here is very monotonous as I ~~don't~~ do not go out and since about five or six weeks ago I am doing a quatuor for ancient instruments. I do not want to be traveling - always leaving some unfinished business. When I left Brazil on April 15th because of a request of Leonor's to be here when Elizabeth Fannie was to be born. As I had not concluded the corrections of my quartet and also ~~the~~ the last touches of my concertino it took me about 6 to 8 weeks to get involved again with my work. Both things out of my way I suddenly was involved with a new work. If my concert in Sao Paulo would have taken place in November I would naturally have come for that event. At that time they demanded my score and orchestral parts and I would like to see that they are not lost. Please find out how you can get them back if the concert does not take place.

Another point is that there are many possibilities here that have more chances than looking for concerts in Brazil and I might give you interesting news shortly.

Kadalena seems to be getting more accustomed to Caracas. I spent Labor Day weekend with Leonora, Bottany Bill and Ina. The children are developing beautifully. I spent last weekend with Don and Ann Louise but chess I have no companions. I hope you receive your magazines from now on (I continued to get a few copies after Anna Cecilia left). With regards to everyone.

Love and affection from your brother *Reijo*

Figure 4. Letter to his brother Sieg dated September 17, 1979

In a letter to his friend Curt Lange, Uruguayan musicologist, dated October 1, 1979, Burle Marx expresses his love for the family and his willingness to keep composing and promoting his music:

I am incorrigible in respect to my correspondence and since my wife passed away almost 8 years ago too many letters have gone without answers. [...] I think since I last wrote you I was planning to perform my 4th Symphony in Rio and do the premier at my brother's estate. I got passage from the Brazilian government and the minister of education approved it but I could not find an orchestra in Rio. [...] Therefore I resolved that from now on I will not try to force an engagement.

What I accomplished in between was I completed a string quartet that I had sent (2 movements only) to the Villa-Lobos competition of 1977.²⁴ The Moscow quartet selected it for competition. In the end they did not appear and the ambassador told me that one of the members was sick [...] In the meantime we had the first performance, November 8, 1978 in Washington by the Audubon Quartet—an excellent ensemble of young people. After the performance I still made many changes which I finally cleaned up and corrected both the score and parts. It will probably be played in Brazil by the same quartet (which won the Villa-Lobos prize in 1977). [...]

I was again bitten by a new bug and I am working on a Quatuor for Ancient Instruments (harpsichord, viola da gamba, viola d'amour and recorder – with various instruments of this family). [...]

My daughter Leonora that you met here has now two children—a boy, Max, a little over 3 years and now a little girl, Elizabeth Fannie, born 5 months ago. She has taken a Sabbatical this year and is getting her doctorate. Madalena, whom I think you met when she was in Belo Horizonte, is now in Caracas working as the principal cellist in the orchestra of the same city.

In Rio the place of my brother [Roberto] will be transformed (by and by) into a foundation. He must have been just in Europe for the inauguration of a garden he did in Geneva for the new United Nations building. Another garden is being discussed in Washington for the Pan American Union. Also a one man show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York for 1981.

²⁴ String Quartet no. 1, in B flat "An Ode to Beethoven."

The year 1979 was important to Burle Marx's career as a composer. In a letter dated November 12, 1979, addressed to his brother Sigi, Burle Marx is excited about new projects:

The great news is that my new work, the quatuor for ancient instruments, which is not even finished, has been accepted for its premiere on April 14, 1980 by the Society of Ancient Instruments. It will be played in the opening concert of its yearly festival. [...]

I hear from Madalena that my Fourth Symphony will be performed in Caracas, probably in May. The performance should be a very good one as they have an excellent harpsichord player and they will import a recorder player, Scott Martin Kosofsky, an old friend of mine who will also perform in my quatuor. As you see things are changing a little bit and I have other irons in the fire. Hopefully before I leave for Brazil I will have other important news to tell you.

In another letter to Curt Lange dated November 19, 1979, Burle Marx explains his process of creating a score, in this case, the *Quatuor for Ancient Instruments*:

Thirteen more pages to conclude that means 26 pages that I must first write in blue pencil and then copy over in black ink. Beside many corrections for the first 33 pages which I also must finish. This writing with ink and sitting in certain position is a very hard effort for me as I have problems with my back.

The following example (Figure 5) shows a sketch of Burle Marx's orchestral piece *Festive Music* (1970) in process. The blue inked notes will be written over in permanent black ink.

In 1979, eight years after the death of his wife, at age 77 Burle Marx was regaining strength to continue composing and promoting his own music. Part of this new strength came from his satisfaction of being part of a growing family, with a new grandson and granddaughter. He was also proud of the older members of the family:

Roberto with his projects; Leonora, who had become a loving mother and was having a successful career; and Madalena, who enjoyed a successful career as a cellist. With this new strength, he was able to continue composing, to make the actual scores by himself, even if in a painful process, as he described in his letter, to find places for his music to be performed, and to travel long distances to visit family in Brazil and to hear his music performed.

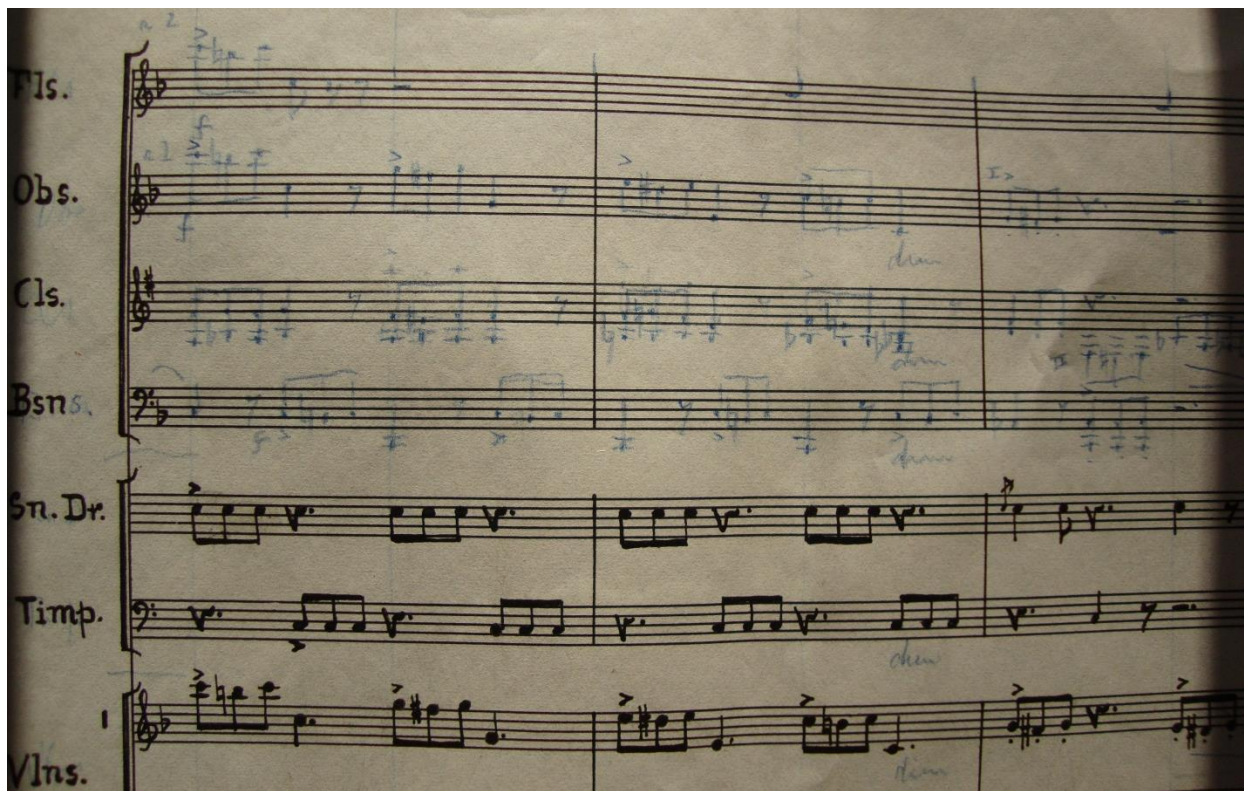


Figure 5. Burle Marx, *Festive Music* (1970), sketch.

Some letters survive from the year 1980, one of which, from Luiz Paulo Sampaio, artistic director of the Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Municipal do Rio de Janeiro, is dated April 13, 1980. It is an official letter in Portuguese asking Burle Marx to choose an “important work” of his own to be played with the orchestra.

A letter written from Burle Marx in Portuguese (dated May 3, 1980) to José Mauro, a friend who was helping him promote his own music in Brazil, tells us that Burle Marx was recently in New York to meet Eduardo Marturete from Caracas, who, as Burle Marx states, “will conduct my *4th Symphony* in its first premiere on July 12 and 13. On the 13th a videotape will be made containing the Symphony and an interview with me.”

The letter continues:

The performance promises to be first class, since they accepted my suggestion to hire Mr. Scott-Martin Kosofsky from Boston who is currently the biggest interpreter on the recorder. A student of his will come especially from London to play the second recorder. [...] I will be in Caracas in July 1 to 15 [...]

Miécio [Polish-American pianist Mieczslaw Horszowski] will play my Concertino [...] It seems that the Curtis Institute of Music is willing to broadcast this concert on TV [...]

The Audubon Quartet who won in 1977 the Concurso do Museu Villa-Lobos [Villa-Lobos Competition] will be part of the Festival de Música de Câmara in João Pessoa in July, and in the same period they will play in Campos de Jordão on the 18th where they will execute my string quartet “Uma Óde à Beethoven.” [...] They would very much like to record my string quartet, but for this they would need about 4 thousand dollars for the costs of the recording process. The recording label is the Orion from California and it has a great distribution. Would it be possible to find this amount among the musical entities in there? [...] Would it be possible to promote a concert in Rio in the first days of August for this quartet to play my “Óde à Beethoven” in its first premiere? My “Quatour” for ancient instruments was premiered on the 21st of April being well accepted by the players and the public. [...] I already answer the letter from Mr. Sampaio proposing my “Tríptico Sinfônico” to be premiered in Rio. I appreciate your help and we will see if everything is going to work as we planned.

The composition of the *Violoncello Concerto* is part of this new phase in Burle Marx’s life, in which he was regaining strength and exposing himself more to

audiences. He likely was proud of his accomplishments, for his music was being played in different parts of the Americas, new interpreters were interested in his music, and institutions were interested in interviewing him and promoting his music. By the time he composed the *Violoncello Concerto*, he probably already knew that his daughter Madalena was expecting her first child, and this must have been a great incentive for him to compose an important work dedicated to his beloved daughter.

James Ryon, who had become Burle Marx's son-in-law (married to Madalena), confirmed in a conversation on October 9, 2012, that in the years 1982-84 Burle Marx spent most of his time in his apartment in Philadelphia composing. The composer traveled to Brazil once a year to visit his family, and Ryon believes that the *Violoncello Concerto* was composed in a few short months. According to Ryon, Burle Marx composed all of his music at the piano, and orchestrated later. Burle Marx continued his composing career until shortly before his death in 1990.

Chapter 2 *Violoncello Concerto* Analysis

In the archives of the Burle Marx family one CD contains a recording of an open rehearsal and informal performance of the *Violoncello Concerto* (written in 1982-84) from 1985 by The Little Orchestra Society of Philadelphia. Cellist Lloyd Smith, a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra at the time, is the soloist. This recording registers the first time the *Violoncello Concerto* was ever played. The orchestra rehearse some critical points (for example, the end of the cadenza); and after that there is an entire run-through of the piece. During the run-through someone in the orchestra passionately sings the oboe part, probably because the oboist missed the session that night. It is inspiring to listen to this recording and imagine the members of The Little Orchestra Society congregating in order to bring life to a new work by their friend, Burle Marx (then 83 years old).

A brief text written by Burle Marx, found in the original score, is read at the beginning of the recording.²⁵

I've survived my eightieth birthday. I remember wars since 1911. I try to see the whole world situation as objectively as possible. I can't help but think of the madness: this senseless world armaments race that can only lead to disaster, the many hundreds of millions of people worldwide starving to death, and the tortures that have plagued humanity for so many thousands of years. These concerns are reflected in my *Violoncello Concerto*.

Out of a "Misterioso," the main theme, "Appassionato," is exposed by the soloist. It contains the impulsive moments that furnished great incentive throughout the work. Then come eight measures, a "Zwischensatz" [German for "parenthesis"] giving the cellist a chance to demonstrate the majesty of the instrument. When

²⁵ Walter Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, Fleisher Collection at the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1982.

the main theme returns it is played by the orchestra. The “Zwischensatz” returns in a different key that leads into the second theme, “Espressivo.” It returns to the main theme for a short development. At its conclusion it enters into a “Misterioso a piacere,” that introduces the second movement, “Meditation.” Meditation means to think: Something is very much out of order in the world today.

The third movement, “March of our Era,” reflects the destructive and insane progress in the world armaments race. The main theme here is composed around the design of the first movement’s main theme. As this third movement progresses, the atmosphere becomes increasingly maddening and satanic, until we make the transition to the finale with a “Cantabile,” a fleeting moment of hope for mankind. It leads into the coda, of which the last sixteen measures again give in to the insane march... this cancer of humanity, this armaments race.

“...Let us agree that we will tell our countrymen, all of our allies, all human beings, that we will work to have end to this nuclear horror that now hovers as a cloud over all humankind.” (From a speech by John Kenneth Galbraith in 1980).

The *Violoncello Concerto* is approximately twenty-two minutes long. The instrumentation of the orchestra is: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in A, 2 bassons, 2 horns in F, 1 trumpet in C, 1 trombone, timpani, and percussion. Percussion consists of suspended cymbal, snare drum, anvil, bass drum, snare drum (without snares), field drum (without snares), cymbals, tambourine, temple block (large), 3 temple blocks (different sizes) and strings.

For the remainder of this chapter I make use of interviews with Burle Marx’s eldest daughter Leonora Cohen Madalena, his younger daughter Madalena Burle Marx, and the cellist who premiered the piece, Dennis Parker.

Burle Marx's daughter, Madalena, who is also the cellist to whom the *Violoncello Concerto* was dedicated, said in an interview that her father was inspired by the Saint-Saëns *Cello Concerto in A minor* while composing his own concerto, and that he particularly enjoyed Saint-Saëns' concerto.²⁶ Both concertos have no pause between movements, and themes from different movements allude to one another. In the same interview Madalena remarked that at the exact time her father had finished his *Violoncello Concerto*, and the score was arriving at her home in Caracas by mail, she was giving birth to her first child. Thus, the *Violoncello Concerto* was presented by Burle Marx to Madalena on the occasion of the birth of her first child, September 11, 1982.

Madalena later would ask for another cadenza for the work, as she said in the interview, because the first version is unplayable.²⁷ Burle Marx composed a second version of the cadenza for three cellos: the soloist thus playing together with the first stand of the cello section. In 1984 a third and final version was completed for two cellos, the soloist performing together with the orchestra's principal cellist.

Dennis Parker, who would perform the work on many occasions, described how he came into contact with Madalena and was given the piece:

Madalena had moved to Baton Rouge around the year 2000, and quickly became a great friend. She knew that I was always traveling back and forth to Brazil, where her father was from, and so she asked me if I would be interested in trying to promote this piece, as well as other works of his, back in his country. I, of course, was honored, and delighted that she

²⁶ September 6, 2012.

²⁷ Ibid.

thought enough of me to give me this gift, probably one of the most extraordinary gifts I have ever received in my life, so, soon after, I began looking for opportunities to play it down there. The official world premiere of this piece was in Brasília in 2006 with the *Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional*, conducted by João Ripper, a composer and conductor from Rio de Janeiro, who is also the director of *Sala Cecília Meireles*. Subsequently, other performance opportunities arouse in Brazil, and elsewhere, but that was the beginning.²⁸

About the *Violoncello Concerto* itself, Dennis Parker said in the same interview:

First of all, Burle Marx's musical language is unique. He is a highly educated composer, fully aware of the trends and the styles of the 20th century. In spite of this he maintained a passionate, romantic and mostly tonal approach to composition, employing his own quirky use of harmony, which I can only liken to perhaps someone like Hindemith, or Milhaud. The piece itself has many programmatic aspects to it. Written during the cold war its subtext is about the threat of nuclear war so includes marches and battles and is replete with moods, colors, and techniques that I have not encountered in other cello concertos. There is a strong European tradition in his use of counterpoint, and structure. It is a very textured and exciting work to perform.

Because we were the first performers of this piece, we had to make some executive decisions regarding phrasing, articulation, dynamics, etc. He often wrote *cantabile*, *dolce*, *espressivo*, but did not always use slurs to connect the notes, so the extent to which certain phrases should be legato was sometimes left to our discretion. The trumpet, for example, is often used to allude to a military stile, and although it does not have *staccato* markings on it [m. 295], it is something of a call to service in some ways. [...] There is a responsibility when you go through a new score that has not been played before, to try to be faithful to what you see.

In music examples of the *Violoncello Concerto* I use the piano reduction copied by Burle Marx himself.²⁹

²⁸ Dennis Parker, interview held at LSU, January 9, 2013.

²⁹ I decided not to use the orchestra score to save space and to display the examples more objectively. A recording, available for free at the Burle Marx Music Society website (burlemarx.org), was

The concerto begins with a short introduction of 3 bars, marked *Misterioso*. The pedal on E (no third included in the key of E) in the first two bars cadences beginning at m. 3 on the dominant of Bb, to A minor in m. 4. The music of the first three bars is marked *pianissimo*, with lower strings (cb, vlc, vla) used in their lower registers, an ambiguous tonality and direction, with chromatically changing intervals, producing the effect of a murmur that grows in tension and dynamics for three bars, reaching the cadence in bar 4. At m. 3 the double basses play the descending line (E-D-C-Bb), moving to A minor at m. 4. The descending fourth and ascending whole-step motive presented in the opening (at the end m. 4, second beat of m. 2, and second beat of m. 3) remains throughout the whole piece, in different variations.

At m. 4, marked *Appassionato*, the cello solo presents a six-bar melody in A minor, also flirting with C major. The melody is also marked *forte* and begins with ascending diatonic intervals, defining the tonality in A minor and contrasting with the orchestra's chromaticism and descending bass line of the introduction. This section of the opening theme is very majestic, heroic, presenting the cello soloist as protagonist.

The orchestral introduction perhaps represents Burle Marx's fears of the Cold War, the presence of a mysterious threat, and the first solo entrance of "the protagonist" expressing the feelings contained in the words of John Kenneth Galbraith, as quoted by Burle Marx: "Let us agree that we will tell our countrymen, all of our allies, all human

performed by the Louisiana State University Orchestra in 2009, with Carlos Riazuelo conducting, and Dennis Parker as soloist.

beings, that we will work to have end to this nuclear horror that now hovers as a cloud over all humankind."



Figure 6. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, opening.

Measures 9 and 10 are similar to the orchestral introduction (mm. 1-3); this time the key is A minor instead of E minor, with the addition of descending chords in flutes and violins at m. 9, over the A pedal played by the contrabasses. These chords recur in variation throughout the concerto. Also, a melismatic figure at m. 10 resembles the figure played by the clarinet in m. 3. The descending chords and melismas sound similar to a cry, or a resigned sigh. As Burle Marx wrote: "In the *Misterioso*, the main theme, the *Appassionato* that is exposed by the soloist, it contains the impulsive moments that furnish great anxiety throughout the work." The first ten measures of the piece, then, contain practically all thematic and motivic elements recurrent throughout the piece in different variations.



Figure 7. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 6-10.

At m. 11 the music has moved to E major, where the soloist begins what the composer called the *Zwischensatz* when he wrote: “giving the cellist a chance to demonstrate the majesty of the instrument.” The orchestral accompaniment is chorale-like, with unpredictable chromatic harmonies. The cello melody ascends higher in every measure, as if attempting to disconnect itself from the darkness presented by the lower strings. Measures 11-14 could be interpreted as expressing dark and existential questions posed by the protagonist. The march-like melody may represent concerns about the future of war.



Figure 8. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 11-14.

Measures 15-18 perhaps express the predictions in response to those questions; for instance, a chromatic line of sixteenth notes meanders. The predictions are as dark as the questions, and answers for such dark questions are not easy. The prognosis includes great losses and difficult conditions for humanity.



Figure 9. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm.15-18.

At mm. 18-19, a cadence moves from the E dominant chord to A minor, where the main theme is stated by the orchestra (mm. 19-23). In mm. 23-30 the cello plays a similar figure as in mm. 11-18, this time a half step higher (F major), increasing the tension. The composer wrote: "When the main theme returns it is played by the orchestra [m. 19]. The 'Zwischensatz' returns in a different key [m. 23] that leads into the second theme, 'Espressivo' [m. 33]."



Figure 10. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 19-26.

In mm. 31 and 32 the violins play a variation of the soloist's "Zwischensatz" (earlier in mm. 11 and 19), with the rhythm reversed. The rhythm of the first two beats of this figure is now augmented so that the melody of the second theme begins at m. 33, creating a smooth transition between the themes. The cadence in m. 33 begins with the dominant of E minor (m. 32). The second theme begins in m. 33, the principal viola playing a duet with the soloist, and the cello section accompanying in triplets. The harmony in this section is much simpler, and the melody much more lyrical. The *Espressivo* is very nostalgic, longing perhaps for past happier days.



Figure

11. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 27-36.

In m. 44 the soloist extends the triplets from the accompaniment for three measures while driving towards the cadence in m. 47, where the descending-fourth motive found in the *Misterioso* returns.



Figure 12. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 37-44.

A long transition ensues (mm. 47-70), at end of which the second movement begins, marked *Meditation*. This transition is a free dialog between soloist and orchestra. The harmony moves from E minor (m. 47) to E major (m. 51), passing through a tritonal chordal relationship—Bb-major on the last beat of bar 50 going to E major tonic—in mm. 50 and 51. From here a pedal on E sounds until m. 62, where the harmony moves to the key of C# major. At m. 61 a sequence of chords moves from the E seventh chord to the Ab seventh chord, then to the D seventh chord (m. 62), arriving in the key of C# major on the second beat of m. 62. This transition gives an erratic sense, as if the protagonist were looking for something that cannot be found.



Figure 13. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 45-55.

Beginning at m. 59, the soloist plays quintuplets for the first time, and the music is improvisatory-like. The tritone relationship between chords returns in m. 62, this time between the C# seventh chord and G-major chord. The music is unpredictable and erratic, as if the protagonist is lost in thought and does not know which way to go.

The musical score for Burle Marx's Violoncello Concerto, measures 56-66, is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 56-59) begins with a cello part marked *pp legatiss. a piacere* and *Misterioso*. The second system (measures 60-62) features a tempo change to *Molto meno mosso* and the instruction *via sord.*. The third system (measures 63-66) includes *Vel. div.* and *Timo*. The score is written for cello and double bass, with a key signature of G# minor (three sharps). Measure numbers 56, 60, and 66 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

Figure 14. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 56-66.

There is a pedal on G# until a fermata at m. 69, where the horns, oboe and flute arpeggiate perfect 5ths and 4ths (D#, A#, D#, G#, D#) over the G#-minor chord, marking the end of the first movement. These perfect intervals, together with the parallel 5ths in m. 65 lend a strong religious feeling to the music, because they refer to the organum

style from the Catholic Church, preparing the entrance of the *Meditation*, and suggesting that the protagonist is praying for help.

The *Meditation* marking at m. 70 represents the beginning of the second movement, which is lyrical, in a slow tempo, with an insistent pulse of quarter notes. The tonality is C# minor. Burle Marx wrote: “Meditation means to think: Something is very much out of order in the world today.” The beginning of the melody in the second movement is derived from the solo part in m. 8, where the rhythm remains the same, and the melody is similar.

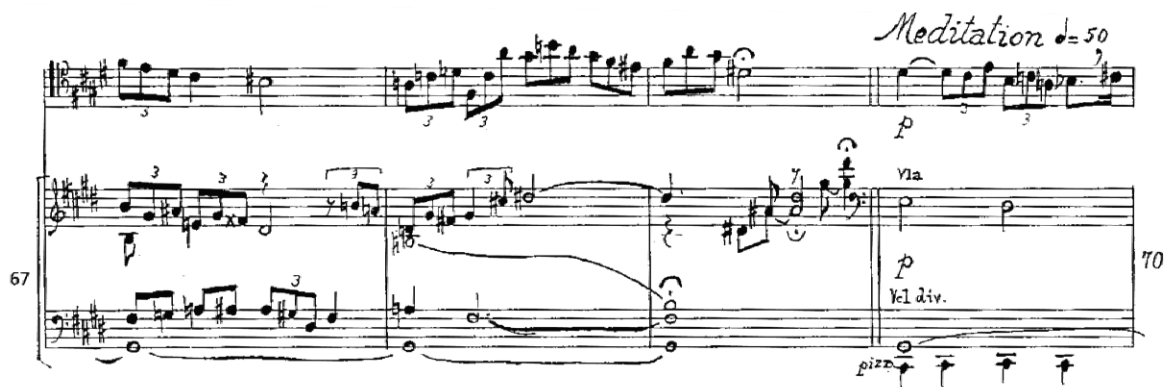


Figure 15. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 67-70.

At m. 78 the orchestra repeats the *Meditation* theme, this time in the subdominant, F# minor, building tension.



Figure 16. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 71-79.

At m. 83 the solo cello interrupts the orchestra's phrase in the middle, playing the *Zwischensatz* figure, as if recalling the dark existential questions, but soon returns to the *Meditation* theme at m. 86, again in C# minor. In mm. 90 and 91 the orchestra takes the melody to its climax and plays the last two measures as if agreeing with the protagonist, while also preparing the entrance of a new theme. This theme (beginning at m. 92) is derived from the *Zwischensatz* motive, and is similar to the first movement's second theme, combining its dotted-rhythm figure with the triplet figure. In A major, the new theme expresses a great release of tension. This melody is the most warm and lyrical moment in the whole piece.

80

83

84

88

89

92

93

96

mp

pp

p (dolce)

Ob. pizz.

Figure 17. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 80-96.

At m. 98 the chords from m. 9 return, this time played by flutes and clarinets, increasing the feeling of a “nuclear horror that now hovers as a cloud over all humankind.” The music here perhaps describes the feeling of uncertainty caused by the “cloud of horror.”

At m. 100 a muted trumpet evokes the military figure from m. 7, with snare drums echoing with a military rhythm. This quiet moment is preparing the listener for the march, which begins several measures later. The double-dotted rhythm now evoking the military style is a rhythmic variation of the earlier slow figures of the cello section (mm. 1 and 2) in the *Misterioso* section.

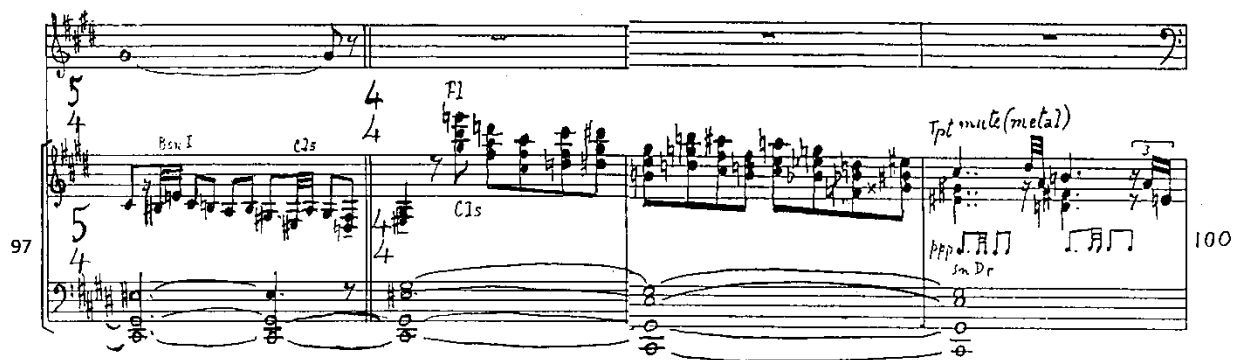


Figure 18. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 97-100.

At m. 101 the solo cello starts a transition to the *March of Our Era*. The transition is heroic, reminiscent of the *Don Quixote* fighting windmills of Strauss. Again, the passage might express the protagonist’s anger with the world situation, and his fight against the feeling of uncertainty caused by the “cloud of horror.”



Figure 19. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 101-109.

Burle Marx wrote: "The third movement, 'March of our Era,' reflects the destructive and insane progress in the world armaments race. The main theme here is composed around the design of the first movement's main theme." The *March* begins in A minor at m. 111, with strings, bass drum, snare drum, anvil, trombone, trumpet,

horns and bassoons for two measures (111-112) then two measures (113-114) with snare drums, bassoons, clarinets and oboe. The *March* is military-like, but there is also a pathetic element to it, as if the war itself were laughing at humanity. Some similarity exists between mm. 111-114 and mm. 1-3, especially because both the descending line in the basses arrives at A minor.



Figure 20. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 110-112.

In mm 115-119 the violins play a breathless, running-triplet figure marked *staccato*, oscillating between A minor and D minor. This running of unpredictable melodic patterns on triplets represents, as Burle Marx described, the “destructive and insane progress in the world armaments race.”



Figure 21. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 113-117.

The soloist enters at m. 120, also playing triplets, its melody resembling the main theme of the first movement, at m. 4. The phrase has four measures, and again the protagonist almost sounds angry, trying to fight alone against the forces of the inexorable march. The solo part consists of a fast arpeggiation through the harmonic material beginning at m. 4.

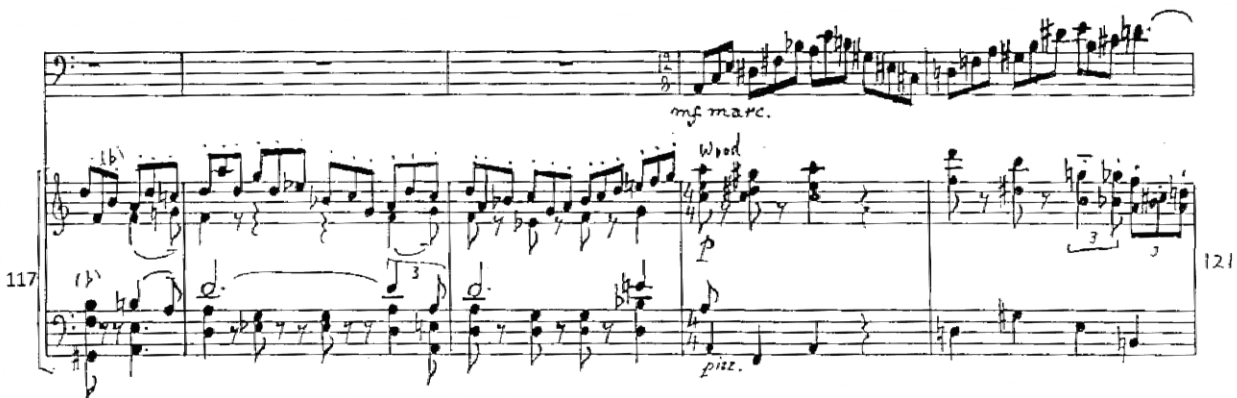


Figure 22. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 117-121.

From mm. 124-126 the soloist plays aggressive chords and *marcato* triplets, contrasting the triplets of the oboist, as if the two were disagreeing.



Figure 23. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 122-126.

In m. 127 the protagonist is swallowed up by the orchestra's *crescendo* in eighth-note and quarter-note triplets. The harmony in m. 127 passes through the B major chord, and an orchestral crescendo reaches into the next measure (128), where the soloist retakes the same theme of m. 120, but this time in E minor. Mm. 128-135 are very similar to mm. 120-127, but in different tonalities (the first in A minor, and the latter in E minor), with the soloist playing the melody a fifth higher, increasing in tension and despair.

The image displays a musical score for measures 126 through 135 of Burle Marx's Violoncello Concerto. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system covers measures 126 to 130, and the second system covers measures 131 to 135. Each system consists of a soloist part (top staff) and an orchestral part (bottom staff). The soloist part features a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamic markings, while the orchestral part provides a harmonic and rhythmic foundation. The key signature changes from E minor in measure 126 to A minor in measure 131. The tempo and mood are indicated by the notation and the overall structure of the music.

Figure 24. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 126-135.

Measures 136-139 form a transition to m. 140, where the *March* starts again with the same material as m. 111. The rhythmic counterpoint used in m. 136 between the soloist and the orchestra will be used again later in m. 157.



Figure 25. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 136-139.

Mm. 140-156 are almost identical to mm. 111-127, although with some differences in order to increase tension. In m. 140, the composer included an ascending line, marked tremolo, in the flutes, and the bassoons have an elaborated version of the bass line. In m. 142, the oboes play a slightly different line from the parallel passage at m. 113.

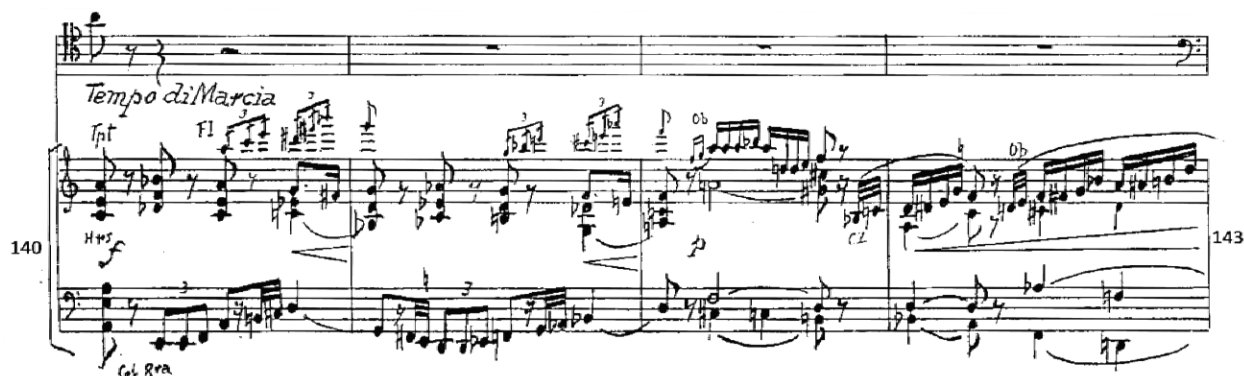


Figure 26. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 140-143.

In m. 156, the solo part is again obscured by the orchestra, and this time the cadence arrives in G minor (m. 157), where new material begins.

The image shows a page of a musical score for Burle Marx's Violoncello Concerto, measures 144-156. The score is written for a soloist (violin) and an orchestra (piano). The tempo is marked 'Vivace'. The key signature is G minor. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'fpp', 'pizz.', and 'fz marc.'. The measure numbers 144, 148, 149, 152, 153, and 156 are indicated at the beginning and end of the staves.

Figure 27. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 144-156.

In m. 157 the music is in G minor, and the dancing rhythm encountered is derived from the rhythmic counterpoint between the soloist and orchestra in m. 136. The oboe comments at the end of the soloist's 4-measure phrase (m. 160), as if laughing at the efforts of the protagonist.



Figure 28. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 157-160.

Measures 161 to 164 are similar to the previous four measures, but this time in the key of D minor, with the soloist transposed a 5th higher, increasing the tension. This time the flute comments in m. 164.



Figure 29. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 161-164.

In m. 165 the solo cello begins a transition of four measures. The soloist plays mainly eighth notes (in a 12/8 measure), with counterpoint melodies in the oboe (mm. 165-167) and flute (mm. 167-169). During these four measures (165-168) the solo part mostly spells out triads or arpeggios in the middle and lower registers, as if the protagonist was arguing violently, while suspended notes of harmony appear in the

oboe or the flute melody, in a higher register, as if whining. The harmonic rhythm is faster (one chord per beat), and mostly chromatic, until arriving at the orchestral interlude at m. 169.



Figure 30. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 165-168.

The orchestral interlude happens from mm. 169 to 183. About this section, Dennis Parker said: “In some moments I even hear Berlioz. There is a section in this piece where the trumpets, horns, everybody is pounding away at their notes, and the movement of their voices, and their rhythmic elements and harmonic elements, are reminiscent of *Sinfonie Fantastique*.”³⁰

The trumpet’s accented four-note motive in m. 169 is a rhythmic variation of the solo part at m. 157. This four-note motive appears during the entire orchestral interlude, an intense and expressive section of the work. The orchestration is powerful, giving great depth to the feeling of desperation.

³⁰ January 9, 2013.



Figure 31. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 169-178.

As Burle Marx wrote: "As this third movement progresses, the atmosphere becomes increasingly maddening and satanic..." The texture becomes denser at every measure, with all voices going in unpredictable directions, representing the madness of the *March*.



Figure 32. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 179-183.

In m. 184 the solo cello interrupts the orchestral interlude, playing a virtuosic ascending passage of only one measure to prepare the re-entrance of material presented by the orchestra at the beginning of the *March* (m. 111).



Figure 33. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 184-186.

The solo part continues to develop, sounding each time more desperate.

Figure 34. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 187-197.

In mm. 207 and 208 the heroic motive characterized by the descending forth from m. 4 comes back. In m. 210 the transition to the *cantabile* begins.

About this transition, Dennis Parker said:

The transition that preceded the *cantabile* section is a meandering cello line in search of a harmonic resolution. It is cast above an E natural pedal point, but arpeggiates through many harmonies before finally cadencing in A Major. The melodic line in the cello is almost 12 tone, as few pitches get repeated enough to suggest where he might be heading in the melodic line. Within the *cantabile* section, he cleverly re-harmonizes the theme to create surprises, occasionally accenting certain changed notes as if to say "it's not what you thought, is it?"³¹

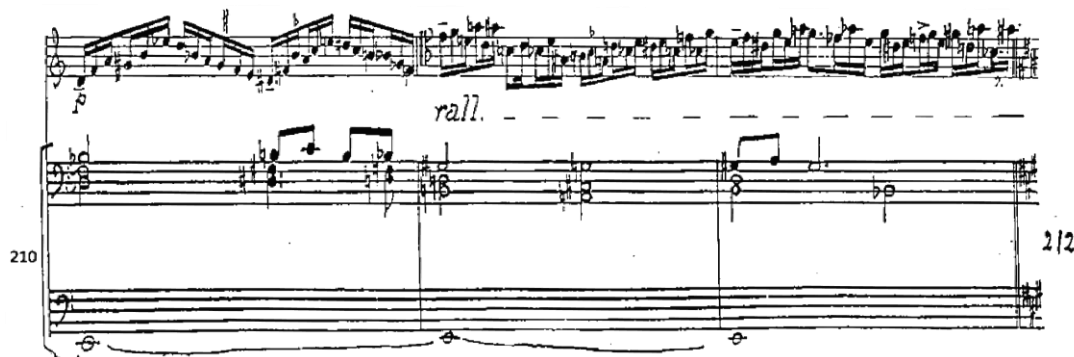


Figure 36. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 210-212.

The *cantabile* begins at m. 213. Burle Marx wrote: "we make the transition to the finale with a 'Cantabile,' a fleeting moment of hope for mankind." The *cantabile* melody is in A major/minor, and is similar to the first solo entrance at m. 4. At m. 215 the melody repeats itself with different notes.

The *cantabile* is composed of a theme of eight bars (mm. 213-220) in A major/minor, and three variations. The *cantabile* theme is derived from that of m. 4, also based on triplets. Each variation is played faster than the previous one. The *cantabile* theme is played by the soloist accompanied by solo viola and principal cellist counterpoint melodies, and another cello and one bass provide bass lines (double bass

³¹ Dennis Parker, interview held at LSU, January 9, 2013.

in *pizzicato*). The *cantabile* is slower in tempo (*poco meno mosso*) from the previous tempo (*vivace*), and is also marked *piano*, creating a tender and calmer parenthesis inside the *March*.

Cantabile, molto meno mosso

The musical score consists of two systems of staves. The first system (measures 213-216) shows the cello (Vcl) and violin (Vla) parts. The cello part has a melodic line with triplets and slurs, while the violin part provides a harmonic accompaniment. The second system (measures 215-220) continues the melodic development in the cello part, with the violin part continuing its accompaniment. The score is marked with various musical notations including triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Figure 37. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 213-220.

In the first variation (mm. 221-228; *poco più mosso*) the solo part presents the varied triplet melody, against the orchestra's eighth-note accompaniment, marked *staccato, pianissimo*. At mm. 223 and 227 chromatic accented triplets appear in the solo part, giving a sudden feel of desperation to the melody. These two groups of four notes

(F-E-G-F# in m. 223 and Gb-F-Ab-G in m. 227) represent the BACH motive.³² In her interview, Madalena Burle Marx said that besides the *Violoncello Concerto*, her father used the BACH motive as homage to J. S. Bach in many other works, such as his pieces for guitar, the *Sambatango de Concerto*, the *4th Symphony*, and the orchestral piece, *Festive Music*.³³



Figure 38. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 221-228.

In the second variation (mm. 229-236; *ancora più*), the solo part moves in eighth notes, marked *staccato*, copying the orchestral accompaniment of the eight previous

³² The BACH motive is a group of four notes: B, A, C, and B natural (H, in German musical nomenclature) which refers to the last name of the composer J. S. Bach. J. S. Bach used this group of four notes himself in several compositions.

³³ September 6, 2012.

measures. The orchestration thickens, with clarinets and bassoons joining the *staccato* eighth-note accompaniment.

The image displays a musical score for measures 229 through 236 of Burle Marx's Violoncello Concerto. The score is arranged in three staves: Violoncello (top), Viola (middle), and Bassoon (bottom). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo/mood is marked 'agitato'. The score shows a dense, rhythmic texture with many eighth and sixteenth notes. Measure numbers 229, 232, 233, and 236 are indicated at the beginning and end of the staves. The text 'Ancora piu' is written above the first staff.

Figure 39. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 229-236.

In the final variation (mm. 237-244; *vivace*) before the cadenza, the solo part appears in triplets again. A crescendo follows, also in the orchestration, with timpani, trombones, horns, bassoons, clarinets and flute joining the strings. The BACH motive reappears at m. 239 in the solo part and echoed by the orchestra (viola and bassoon) at m. 240.



Figure 40. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 237-244.

At m. 245 the *Largo* begins, with an orchestral introduction to the cadenza of four measures. No break appears before the cadenza; instead the orchestra fades out until the *tacet* at m. 252. The BACH motive also appears in the first violins at m. 245 and 246 (*largo*), in dotted-quarter notes and eighth notes, and in the solo part as double-stops at mm. 246 and 247, in quarter and half notes. The tonality is A major, with many chromatic notes in the inner voices. Measure 249 starts with a pedal C, continuing until m. 256. The harmony is highly chromatic. The BACH motive appears beginning at the last beat of m. 249 and m. 250 in the top voice. At m. 252 the top voice displays the *March*'s three-note motive (A-Bb-A). At m. 253 the BACH motive reappears in the top voice, this time beginning in the note Eb.



Figure 41. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 245-253.

To be faithful to Burle Marx's original conception of the *Violoncello Concerto*, I examine the first version of the cadenza, even being unplayable by a single cello. The sequence of events of the three versions is the same. The original cadenza also represents the protagonist's interior monologue, which might be more convincing if performed by a single musician. The BACH motive is repeated in the cadenza several times, together with the first three notes of the *March* motive from m. 111 (A-Bb-A) in different variations and transpositions.

At m. 255 and 256 the *March* motive appears once again in the top line, beginning with F and G respectively. There is a cadence between mm. 258 and 259 from D major (last three notes of 258) to G major (first beat of 259). Measures 259 and 260 are mostly

in G major/minor. In beats one and three at mm. 259 and 260, the top line contains the *March* motive.



Figure 42. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 254-259.

Measure 261 is in A minor, with the *March* motive on the top line in the first three beats. Measure 262 is in C major/minor, where the *March* motive appears on the top line also. In m. 263 the pedal on G begins and lasts until m. 265. The BACH motive appears in the top line of m. 263 with the notes Eb-D-F-E.



Figure 43. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 260-263.

In mm. 264 and 265 the BACH motive appears two times, in one inner voice beginning on the first beat of m. 264 in its original position, and in the top voice

beginning at the third beat of m. 264 (Ab-G-Bb-A). A pedal in C begins at m. 267, lasting for three measures.).



Figure 44. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 264-267.

In m. 268 the BACH motive appears in the top line, in the first note of each beat. In m. 270 the pedal on B begins, lasting four measures and, in m. 270, the BACH motive appears in the top line, beginning on the second note (A#); it also appears in m. 271, again beginning on the second note (C#). At m. 275 the BACH motive appears in the first four notes of the top line (D-C#-E-D#).



Figure 45. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 268-270.

After a fermata in m. 276 on an E suspended-dominant chord with a flatted 9th, at m. 277 a progression of chromatically descending chords arrives in E major at m. 278.

The pedal on E major continues to the end of the cadenza at mm. 280/281 with a cadence from the E dominant chord to A major/minor.

Figure 46. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 271-280.

At m. 281 the orchestra resumes the *March* in A major/minor with the trumpet playing the military rhythm from m. 7, and a return of the melodic material from m. 8. The BACH motive appears in the strings, with basses, cellos and violas playing the notes D-C#-E-D#, and violins playing F-E-G-F#. The BACH motive reappears in m. 283 in basses and cellos, with the notes Gb-F-Ab-G.



Figure 47. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 281-283.

At m. 284 the basses and cellos intone the pedal on E, and the solo cello enters with an ascending, chromatic passage marked *tremolo*, arriving at a F at the third beat of m. 285, which represents the flatted 9th of the E-dominant chord, creating great harmonic expressivity. The orchestra responds with a series of chords over the E pedal (mm. 285 and 286), arriving at a cadence to A major with the *cantabile* melody played by the orchestra beginning at m. 287.



Figure 48. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 283-286.

From mm. 287 to 290, the first violins play the *cantabile* theme for the last time, with strings, solo cello, timpani, horns and bassoons accompanying. This is an intense moment of the work, where all voices are in agreement.



Figure 49. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 287-290.

Beginning at m. 291 the soloist pauses, and the whole orchestra engages in playing the final four measures of the *cantabile* theme. At m. 295 the *Misterioso* returns, this time with solo trumpet playing a bugle call for two measures, and solo flute answering with a legato melody that prepares for the cadence at m. 299, where the finale begins (*doppio movimento*).



Figure 50. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 291-294.

The finale is an epilogue constructed of themes and motives from the entire concerto. The orchestral introduction to the epilogue contains the *cantabile* theme, but this time appearing in quarter notes instead of triplets. At m. 301 and 302 the solo cello begins with this material in triplets.



Figure 51. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 295-302.

At mm. 303 and 304 the orchestra echoes the solo part, using quarter notes and triplets. At m. 305 the solo cello repeats the material of the *March* (m. 120) in triplets, but develops into something different with quarter notes (m. 306).



Figure 52. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 303-306.

The solo part at mm. 307 and 308 is similar to the orchestral introduction to the finale (mm. 299 and 300). At mm. 309 and 310 the solo part explores the *cantabile*

melody again, reaching a deceptive cadence from the E-dominant chord to F major at m. 311.



Figure 53. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 307-310.

Continuing with the epilogue, Burle Marx re-exhibits various elements of the piece. Measure 311 recalls one of the variations from the *cantabile* theme (m. 299); measure 315 recalls the chords from mm. 98 and 99, at the end of the *Meditation*.



Figure 54. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 311-314.

The *cantabile* theme reappears at mm. 317 to 319, again based on a variation from m. 299, and mm. 321 and 322 are again derived from chords in mm. 98 and 99.



Figure 55. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 315-322.

At m. 323 the solo cello takes up the quarter notes again, changing to triplets at m. 329, and sixteenth notes at m. 331, creating an effect of rising anxiety.



Figure 56. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 323-326.

This section comprises a fantasia over the *cantabile* melody.

Figure 57 shows a musical score for Burle Marx's *Violoncello Concerto*, measures 327-334. The score is in 3/4 time. The top system (measures 327-330) features a cello part with various ornaments and dynamics, including *cresc.* and *f marc.*. The bottom system (measures 331-334) features a piano accompaniment with woodwinds and strings, marked *mp poco marc.* and *slr p*.

Figure 57. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 327-334.

At m. 338 and 340 the flutes and clarinets return to sonorities from mm. 98 and 99, alternating with m. 339 in quarter-note rhythm.

Figure 58 shows a musical score for Burle Marx's *Violoncello Concerto*, measures 335-338. The score is in 3/4 time. The top system (measures 335-338) features a cello part with various ornaments and dynamics, including *più largamente* and *Etwas Breiter*. The bottom system (measures 339-338) features a piano accompaniment with woodwinds and strings, marked *p sub.* and *F1*.

Figure 58. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 327-338.

At m. 341 the cello solo reaches its apotheosis, playing the higher notes of the concerto in a sixteenth-note scale.



Figure 59. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 339-342.

After this, the fantasia continues with the large ensemble growing in orchestration and dynamics, “swallowing” the cello solo.

Figure 60. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 343-350.

The dotted rhythm of the march gradually becomes more audible, and the major tonality fades away as the piece approaches its end, the abruptness of which is indicated in the last four measures by the marking *crescendo al fine, senza ritardare ne affretare*. As Burle Marx wrote: "...the last sixteen measures again give in to the insane march... this cancer of humanity, this armaments race."

The image displays a musical score for Burle Marx's Violoncello Concerto, specifically measures 351 through 360. The score is presented in three systems, each consisting of two staves. The first system (measures 351-354) shows a complex, rhythmic melody in the upper staff and a more rhythmic, dotted pattern in the lower staff. The second system (measures 355-357) continues the melodic line with various ornaments and a more complex rhythmic pattern in the lower staff. The third system (measures 358-360) shows a final, intense melodic phrase in the upper staff and a highly rhythmic, dotted pattern in the lower staff. The score is marked with various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 61. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 351-360.

Dennis Parker commented about the end of the *Violoncello Concerto*:

At the end of the concerto Burle Marx basically runs the piece right off a cliff. He writes *senza ritardare ne affretare*, because of course, when you are marching, you don't slow down, you go forward. It is one of the most exciting endings of a cello concerto that I know of, because the cello gets consumed by the orchestra. Burle Marx certainly was aware that this would happen. He was a master of orchestration, and fully sensitive to the delicate dynamic balances of a cello vs. an orchestra. The piece ends in such a manner, than one can assume that the cello (protagonist) has joined the forces. This would be the more positive assumption. One way or the other he is trying to demonstrate the sentiment, paranoia, fear, and suspicions of that era. I don't believe that his final statement in this work is one of defeat, but rather of defiance.³⁴

cresc. al Fine, senza ritardare ne affretare

361 365

V: 5:42
VI: 22:42
VII: 9:42
VIII: 22:44

Figure 62. Burle Marx, *Violoncello Concerto*, mm. 361-365

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Burle Marx, through his *Violoncello Concerto*, was protesting against the war because he wanted a better world for his growing family and for his fellowmen. He truly believed that his efforts to produce something useful to humanity was not only

³⁴ January 9, 2013.

important, but was also the key to a long and happy life for those who dedicate themselves to a greater good.

I hope that with this dissertation I am able to put some light over the life and works of this great composer who deserves more attention. I put myself available for further discussion, and for sharing the little material that I have about him.

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Appendix – Permission Letter

Cohen, LeoNora Apr 11, 2013

to me

Hi Pedro,

Of course you have permission to use the musical examples of the Cello
Concerto.

Warmly,

Nora

Vita

From Porto Alegre, Brazil, Pedro Augusto Huff holds a Master's degree from the University of Tennessee, and a Bachelor's degree from the Escola de Música e Belas Artes do Paraná (Brazil). He has an active career as a cellist in Brazil and in the United States. Pedro Augusto Huff frequently plays his own compositions for solo cello in recitals.

Pedro Augusto Huff and his wife, violinist Paula Bujes, have played together in several chamber music recitals. He is concluding his Doctor in Musical Arts program at Louisiana State University, under the supervision of Dennis Parker. Pedro Augusto Huff is currently dedicating himself to his dissertation about the Brazilian composer Walter Burle Marx and his Cello Concerto, and will conclude his Doctor in Musical Arts program at Louisiana State University in May, 2013.