



"Chinampa y trajinera" by Enrico Chapela to be Performed by the Mexico City Philharmonic and OFUNAM

In an interview with Publimetro, musician and composer Enrico Chapela shared how he began his journey in music during high school and how he progressed to have his work performed by countless orchestras around the world.

"I started playing guitar in a workshop at Colegio Madrid, and that's where I discovered I had a natural ability for music. Before that, I had never felt particularly good at anything. In the '90s, I started with metal, then got into Latin jazz, and eventually also explored Arabic music."

After finishing his studies in guitar and composition, Chapela realized that what he was truly passionate about was composing, not so much performing.

The Mexico City-born composer explained that as a child, he listened to classical music thanks to his father, who took him to OFUNAM concerts. "The orchestra fascinated me, and I was always attracted to the figure of the conductor and the rituals that accompany the performances. When I started studying composition, I found composers who mixed the energy of metal with the richness of classical music, such as Stravinsky, Revueltas, and Bartók."

According to Chapela, orchestral music offered him a broader palette of timbres, contrasts, and emotions than metal, which allowed him to find a path for what he was looking for. "As a classical music composer, I found an institutional career path that doesn't exist in other genres like metal, where musicians compose their own music and there's no room for external composers."

His first orchestral commission came in 2003 with the Carlos Chávez Orchestra, thanks to a Young Creators grant, where Enrico Chapela was recommended by Gabriela Ortiz for a specific commission for that orchestra. "It has been a gradual process that requires a lot of perseverance. It's a long road, almost like an ultramarathon where what matters is consistency, not rapid progress."

Chinampa y trajinera

This is the first time one of Chapela's pieces will be performed on two dates so close together. The Mexico City Philharmonic will play it on February 15 and 16, and then the UNAM Philharmonic will do so on March 1 and 2, 2025.

This piece was a commission from the Mannheim Orchestra in Germany, which asked him for something with a Mexican flair. "I wanted to do something that reflected the folklore of Mexico City, but I couldn't find a specific style from the capital. So, I decided to get my

inspiration from the cultural diversity that can be heard in places like Xochimilco, where on a *trajinera* ride, you can hear a mix of music from different regions of Mexico."

This is how "Chinampa y trajinera" reflects this mix through the concept of the *chinampas*, which are these artificial islands used in agriculture since pre-Hispanic times. The concept is based on an imaginary journey through Xochimilco, with its *chinampas* represented by musical themes that vary as the listener approaches each one. Additionally, different elements of Mexican folklore are introduced, such as marimbas, harps, and mariachis.

Finally, Enrico Chapela announced that for 2026, he will participate in a collaboration among several US orchestras, which will include a joint work for cello where he will represent the Latino community. He has also been invited to compose for the cultural events of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, which will take place in Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

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