

The Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra (OFCM) presents a new version of Rotor, by Enrico Chapela

Mexican musician Enrico Chapela Barba (1974) discovered that academic composers had a similar energy to heavy metal groups. For example, Igor Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring", Silvestre Revueltas' symphonic poem "Sensemayá", or Béla Bartók's string quartets. In tribute to this reminiscent movement, which he was part of with his electric guitar in a band several decades ago, the audience will hear "Rotor", a piece written by Chapela and performed by the Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra (OFCM) this weekend at the Ollin Yoliztli Cultural Center. In an interview, he mentions the experiment by Finnish cellists Apocalyptica, who adapted Metallica songs to string quartets on their first album. "I discovered that not only could a similar energy be transferred, but it also had many more possibilities for creating contrasts, so that it wasn't always very energetic, but could also slow down and have more tranquil textures and less rhythmic ones."

This Saturday and Sunday's concerts with the Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra (OFCM) will feature Diego Nasar as guest conductor, in a program that includes works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Georgina Derbez, on a journey through contemporary Mexican music with leaps into classicism and romanticism. Rotor is the name of one of the metal bands in which a very young Enrico performed on stage. "I discovered the guitar in middle school, and I began to study it seriously from high school onwards," he recalls. His learning process was divided between an acoustic and an electric guitar. Later, he formed a band called Profecía, which gained some recognition, but over time evolved in style and transformed into Rotor. When he realized that the classical music field would allow him to dedicate himself fully to writing music without having to be a performer, and knowing that his bandmates were amateurs with different life interests, he decided to choose a professional path with orchestras of 80 musicians under the baton of a conductor.

I distanced myself from metal because it was very uncontrasted, always intense. I like it, but not always. I prefer the orchestral field; my dad used to take me to the UNAM Orchestra (Ofunam) to listen to Beethoven when I was a kid. He adds: "In these times, with the internet, you have virtual access to all the styles humanity has invented. Restricting yourself to just one is ridiculous. What interests me is the emotional effect, which is the purpose of music - to listen to a sound that makes you feel. Many styles achieve a similar effect. At first, I loved music that was energetic and very rhythmic, which is why I got into metal. But there are also authors in the orchestral world or Arabic music where the energy is fantastic. Basically, I use the tools I've learned from other styles; if it works, I incorporate it."

This weekend's presentation of Rotor is a new interpretation of the work that premiered in 2017 at the Nezahualcóyotl Hall, which was commissioned by the Minería Symphony Orchestra with Carlos Miguel Prieto. I wasn't very satisfied with my score, I had pending improvements, mainly to the middle part, which is slow, and the ending is completely new. When Eckart Preu, director of the Long Beach Orchestra in

California and the Portland Symphony in Maine, informed me last year that they would perform Rotor on both coasts of the United States, and that they would also make a recording in Portland, the Mexican composer conceived it as the ideal moment to make adjustments to improve the work. The 11-minute piece is available on digital platforms as part of the album *Máscaras: Music from México*, along with pieces by Arturo Márquez and Ana Lara.

This used to happen to me all the time; I was never fully satisfied with the scores on the day of the premiere, and I would wait for a new interpretation to correct the errors," he acknowledges. However, the pandemic period changed the dynamics, as the volume of commissions decreased. The industry is still recovering, and they are barely programming pieces that had been commissioned.

The decrease in workload has allowed me to review some works and be 99% satisfied from the premiere: I realized that it's a combination of having more experience and time, without having to compose against the clock. Rotor is dedicated to Pancho Guzmán, a childhood friend, a relationship that was strengthened through their shared passion for athletics and later through their time together in a metal band, one as a guitarist and the other as a vocalist. Currently, Francisco lives in Portland, so it was a surprise to arrive at the concert with the city's orchestra and discover his name in the program. The Mexico City Philharmonic Orchestra (OFCM) concerts will take place today at 6:00 PM and tomorrow at 12:30 PM, at the Silvestre Revueltas Hall of the Ollin Yoliztli.

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