



Contributions to history of the Symphony Orchestra Guatemalan National (1970- 2007) II

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DEVELOPMENT AND CRISIS IN THE ORCHESTRA STATE

Musicians and Directors

What has caused, on the one hand, the privatization of the few state orchestras in the world has been due to being considered as a **“burden on the state.”**

In a study carried out by the musicologist Hellmuth Schmutz on the phenomenon of the organization, formation and functioning of symphony orchestras (The Modern Orchestra, H. Schmutz, Edit. Praeger, Germany_) he proposes among its aspects:

The progressive development in societies of labor rights and excessive

demands by workers themselves involve the destruction of national institutions to give rise to privatization as a defense mechanism on the part of business and government leaders.

Such a problem in the eyes of the state and private institutions is considered for application to the labor system and musical institutions are not left out of it.

If we add to this in our country the gradual impoverishment of the population as a result of the 1976 earthquake, together with policies that attack and affect many institutions not considered **essential** which could be limited or privatized, we would have part of the critical situation that existed in the Nation.

The contradictory thing is that in the face of such crises and restrictions, the “*Maladada*” [which refers to **unfortunate**] idea of wanting to create a Ministry of Culture, apparently directed to art, but which in reality was a creation to support all those who were involved in politics, a prize to pay them such support, and which ended up leading to the shipwreck of the art supported by the state, which is its obligation to the detriment of excessively expanding what refers to ethnicities, completely annulling the purely art institutions in their support.

Here are some critical notes about the creation of this “entity” in 1986, and the opposition it found, even today, in the mouths of several columnists in the country’s newspapers:

“..... The Ministry of Culture was a political platform that *Isabel Prera* used; the majority of those interviewed by the press did not agree with its creation, saying “that in a poor country like ours it cannot afford to maintain ‘experiments’.” that have proven to be little functional and incapable of solving cultural problems ‘El Gráfico - Feb. 6, 1991)

An example of this is a series of articles written by several commentators on art and cultural and historical matters, in the magazine “*Crónica*” *Jorge Sierra* refers in an interview to several people involved, and points out in a statement by professor *Jorge Sarmientos* answering the following due to the insistence on asking him to resign, -- “-I am only going to finish my permit apart from *El Instituto Guatemalteco de Seguridad Social* [IGSS for its acronym in Spanish] and I will retire.....”

“They argue that we have not taught anything, you don't come to the orchestra to learn to play an instrument..... that's whay they studied for and they are supposed to be professional musicians...” (*Jorge Sarmientos, Crónica-June 1991*

A movement begins to be generated in the Orchestra while a number of criticisms arise from various sectors, both cultural and political, against the ministry in question.

Every day there were announcements, prohibitions, restrictions, offers, orders, suspension of rehearsals, due to the continuation of the bad light, the inadequate place to rehearse and a

number of problems not only for the orchestra, but for the population in general, which, of course, we as a population also suffered from.

On January 31, 1990, The *Carmen's* professor resigns from his position as chief conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra and if historical events have to be recorded with the coldness of reality, this moment is one of them.

With the impartiality that must exist when judging or observing the facts, we must recognize the situation in that some members of the orchestra were not very happy with the way things were going, since when group measures are taken through voting, with one more than half there is, the rest have to accept even if they do not agree with the decisions that are made.

As soon as *Del Carmen* retired, petty interests were at work that same day, as confessed by those in the orchestra who did not agree with the attitudes that were somehow imposed by a small group hiding behind the “majority.” That opinion is what prevailed at the time when a petition was prepared on sealed paper by a group of six or seven people requesting signatures to ask the ministry to bring in a foreign director.

This is also the moment in which I have to refer to my situation, which is somewhat annoying personally with respect to the orchestra, although considering that they were always respectful and attentive towards me, with the exceptions that were

always present in my case of 6 or 7 people. who definitely never liked me.

The reason and my great sin were that I wrote music, having completed my studies and graduated as an orchestra conductor, adding that if at first my performance conducting the first concerts with the orchestra was well received, then the continuity of them uninterrupted until 1990 , and having the friendship of the professors *Del Carmen* and *Sarmientos*, which was natural since they premiered almost all of my symphonic music and gave me the opportunity to conduct the ensemble in various seasons, both popular, as well as in the official symphonic seasons and in some extraordinary concerts, how could I not be grateful to them.

This is something that many of the professors forgot to whom the same conductors also gave the opportunity to perform as soloists in various seasons of the orchestra since the 60s. I do not want to mention names, because since the time of the 70s-80s, They were from the orchestra. *Ricardo del Carmen* and *Jorge Sarmientos*, on many occasions left me the responsibility of the orchestra, even rehearsing works that they had to conduct, when emergency problems arose and they had to appear in their capacity as directors in the ministerial institutions to resolve labor-administrative problems.

They state in the opinion of others... that the orchestra has declined for that reason... (The directors)

However, by “association”, and as the resentment of some against them grew, it also grew against me, something that some of my colleagues made clear to me. Thus, many imagined that I wanted the position of conductor, an idea that they put before my status as “their partner” as a member of the orchestra. This way of thinking gave rise to distrust and they never told me anything about their intentions towards the “changes” they intended, imagining that if I knew anything about it I would inform *Sarmientos*. However, the same ministry informed *Sarmientos* of the group’s request. It was known that a foreign director could not be appointed as they intended, for various reasons, the ministry in question did not have an item to pay a foreigner the amount it required, so the civil service office first had to consider the position for a Guatemalan if there was someone who could play it, and there was, although an unknown and inexperienced new member of the orchestra who called himself spokesperson for the ensemble said some time later that there were no orchestra conductors in Guatemala... so they wanted a foreigner to be hired?

What could be said was that it was not the entire orchestra that wanted a director who was not Guatemalan, it was due to many disagreements between the same group. I keep a note that they placed on my lectern, in which they told me that the movement was not against my person as one might believe because of the director’s position, which was sent to me anonymously because there could be retaliation against them, but that in time I would know the names of the people who gave me their support. I still keep that note.

From this I deduced that some people had me in their “sights” even though they knew that the note they had signed was already known to me, although I did not know its contents.

These regrettable and sad attitudes of some people reminded me of something similar that happened when I was not yet a member of the orchestra, so I did not have to participate in affecting the person I intended to harm and who was and is a friend of mine, the professor *Jorge Sarmientos* whom I would have considered to be disloyal.

According to what one person said before everyone, he had “coincidentally” learned of a request sent by Jorge Sarmientos to be appointed musical director of the Symphony Orchestra. With the demagogic system of coercion to sign those that belonged to those years as a whole, they sent it to the authorities to prevent them from giving Sarmientos such a position. Since I didn't have a place yet, I only found out about it later.

Barrientos relates a similar thing in his history of the Symphony Orchestra, when he refers to an incident with Andrés Archila.....

They state in the opinion of others... that the orchestra has declined for that reason... (the directors)

Such attitudes seemed to be a constant in some groups of people, and with that action I felt disappointed to feel that a group and a situation in which until that moment I had nothing to do with distrusted me, that is to say that they did not consider me part of the together since they discriminated against

me because of my friendship with *Sarmientos* and my performance in orchestral direction. Instead of making me angry, which would be the logical natural reaction, it made me sad.

But what is brewed in the dark always comes to light. The authorities at the time knew very well that they would not appoint a foreign director, both for the reasons mentioned regarding the civil service and the economic situation, as it was even about cutting expenses, which is why for which many positions had been frozen in various institutions, as well as because the civil service office, which was the one that decided matters related to positions, due to labor laws, required that any position that was filled would first have to be filled by Guatemalans, and in the country there were professional and experienced orchestra conductors who could cover it, although the blindness produced by the group's personal hatred denied it, as declared years later by someone who called himself the group's “spokesperson.”

The deep unrest against *Sarmientos* is the reason for interviews and articles being written in the media exposing the increasingly anarchic state of the orchestra. And for many of those who were aware of this orchestra-conductor incident, it already filled so much discomfort, as well as the government's indecision to solve the situation, which even went so far as to stop the season with foreign guests²⁶.

In August 1990, *Jorge Sarmientos* and



26 This discomfort reaches inconceivable dimensions. like the one in which the orchestra... refused to play a *Sarmiento* work that was already scheduled.

Enrique Anleu-Díaz were appointed as director and deputy director respectively of the ensemble.

However, in my case, I was not stimulated by the way things were working with such a problematic orchestra, not musically, since I never really had any discomfort in that aspect during the years and the concerts that I conducted the ensemble on multiple occasions annually from 1961 until that time. But, due to the situation at the time, with many already having a fixed idea regarding creating conflicts, even with the professor *Quintamar* having expressed to the Mexican guest conductor in those days that the group did not want to play, as part of a movement of the orchestra, so their performance was aborted with the irresponsibility and lack of respect that some of the members were showing, and preventing such a situation from happening to me, coincidentally another incident which had nothing to do with the management position arose in a rehearsal that *Sarmientos* had at that time, and during which a member of the strings, since at that time I was only rehearsing the string section, asked me, although politely, to please leave the rehearsal because they were going to talk among themselves. My behavior was then very annoying and I told him... Why can't I be in the session, am I not a member of the orchestra, or is it something related to me?... Nobody said anything until a crouching musician told me hypocritically. It's just that some don't want to play with you. ...I told him who...? No one said anything... then, very upset, I told them, aren't you the ones who don't? They're going to play with

me... I'm the one who doesn't lead a group like that, like yours!

I told the director... Professor Sarmientos give me all the absences you want, I'm leaving this orchestra!

This is how I resigned from the National Symphony Orchestra, and from the future new position in the direction of the orchestra that I had been notified of.

Except to say that those who were at that rehearsal were a string group, many were missing and there were no winds, percussion or the rest of the orchestra. A few hours after I was home and many called me, some asking for excuses for what the crouching musician said, although in reality they were not to blame, just as they called me wind masters and that they had not been faithfully rehearsing. I was calmer when they told me not to take it like that, and to return to the orchestra... I saw this advice in good faith, but given the situation of the orchestra and what I imagined would come, I had decided to retire from the set.

In 1991 the symphony orchestra suspended its rehearsals and carried out public protests for various reasons; among them being related to the direction of the ensemble and the seats that had previously been "frozen", this due to the "austerity" plan regarding the positions that the government considered "non-essential"

Given the lack of support for the direction of the orchestra, the directors of the orchestra resign, leaving the orchestral institution headless, **seeing the opportunity to eliminate the positions**

of director and deputy director of the group, it is carried out by the ministry, situation which persists to this day (May 2000).

The years 1991-1998

How difficult it is to try to be impartial when referring to a situation that can cause serious discomfort that affects both the relationships with others with whom one interacts daily or works in any of the fields of art. That has been verified, not in this case by me personally, but through the other colleagues, which does not leave me out, on the one hand, in that in some way and on more than one occasion, due to my inexperience, (issue that I believe happens most of the time individually), and when certain moments are not conducive to expressing that inexperience, recklessness and ardor that come together in the younger years, he does so. Unfortunately, impulses responding to a situation that occurs and not due to wanting to hurt or bother anyone, motivate people to give their opinion by confronting the environment, or not having any option when they are forced to be asked or required to take a position.

In this case, the option is to present verbatim and with documentary references this or that situation, problem, anecdotal, etc., in words expressed by the person responsible for expressing them. This, however, does not free anyone from the twisted or interested interpretations of those who read them, and who want to find other issues that the author did not even imagine.

In the Symphony Orchestra of the 40's, Situations arose that the members of it in those years (60-70) were unaware of, the same thing happened with the members that made up the orchestra in the period of the years 76-86, let alone in the last generations from 1995 to 2000. and from 2001 to 2006, that is, currently.

And one of the problems that were repeated due to the same dynamics and way of being of the music and different generations, was regarding the directors of the ensemble (*Barrientos cita, sic. 9*)

Since artistic groups were formed in Guatemala, musically and in relation to who directs an orchestra, at a certain point it becomes more of a problem of hierarchy and personal issues than of a purely musical nature.

Musical history in our country shows that during the years of the Progressive orchestra, differences, annoyances and resentments arose due to the provisions regarding the treatment of its members. After the revolution of 44's, the orchestra led by Andrés Archila was on an ascending scale, as the musicians remember, to the point of going out to South America in successful performances. However, at a certain point the same musicians who had been in agreement and satisfied with Archila, asked for his removal.

Years later the same or similar situation arises again.

Although I no longer appeared in the orchestra, a situation in which to justify

my work while I was arranging my retirement, it was arranged, commissioning me to do research on music for the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus.

Already in my role as “public” through the newspapers I found out about the problems, statements, opinions, and on many occasions I did not want to talk to the press, because when they did two or three interviews with me, some things were changed from what I expressed. So I better chose not to comment on the subject and follow the situation through the facts known through such means.

In such a way that those years that were of harsh criticism of the government for the situation in which they had the country, did their part in the matter of the Ministry of Culture and the Symphony Orchestra, the comments of many through articles in magazines and newspapers.

According to an interview in the magazine *Crónica* of June 28, 1991, it reports that “the discontent” (*in the Symphony*) expressed by the “president of the commission” - a member of the symphony for 16 years - stated that the situation has come from bad to worse, due to misguided management. The director has thought more about personal interests than about the entity itself. This is why there is discontent” We want a foreign direct that comes with new enthusiasm, and with new ideas. And may come to teach us and put on new works.” explaining the lack of enthusiasm of the public...? This is attributed to the fact that “Does profesor *Jorge Sarmientos* make the programming as he pleases and

whims...? Program works for which our public is not prepared. “**Extremely Avant-garde Works**” ...

There is a contradiction in that people previously stated that they want a foreign director to come and put on new works, and then criticize that they do not want *Sarmientos* because **he puts on avant-garde works**, (which is equivalent to them being new works...?)

Sarmientos, who is suspended by the IGSS due to an accident, has said: "Only that the IGSS lifts my suspension and I will present my resignation. I am no longer interested in waiting for next year. The offenses have reached such a point that I am no longer interested in waiting for another year. "I don't like being there. For three years I have been suffering from anarchy, indiscipline and malinchism."²⁷

Sierra continues in his article: - “On the possible presence of a foreign director *Sarmientos* expresses: “The law says that the director of the Orchestra must be Guatemalan. After professor *Ricardo del Carmen* retired I automatically became number one..... then referring to the decisions of the commission..... *Sarmientos* declares – “they have denied the right to *Rodrigo Asturias*, to *Enrique Anleu Díaz*, a very capable artist.



²⁷ In orchestras anywhere in the world, although the interviewee from the orchestra indicates “those of us who have had the opportunity to travel,” referring to itself, have realized how things are handled in other countries. debatable issue in that the sociocultural contexts are different. Now as for the conductors in any orchestra, (not in reference to the one in Guatemala). They are the ones who schedule the concerts and choose the works to execute. Well, without demeaning the musicians, their function is to fulfill their obligation to play what the conductor decides, since their knowledge and experience in this sense is above that of the members of the ensemble.

They must also recognize that “*Ricardo del Carmen and I, are not Markevitch or Boulez, but neither is the National Symphony Orchestra the Vienna Philharmonic*”²⁸.”

Rodrigo Asturias in the supplement “*Domingo (1990)*” stated in an interview in his own words that he had worked on a reform **project for the NSO** [*National Symphony Orchestra*] some time ago. The project, obviously, was not carried out and the orchestra still suffers from the same or worse limitations than two years ago (1988).

Regarding the question: - How did you propose the solutions **to solve the orchestra’s problem?**

In three ways, that is, how any problem is approached, the most radical was to create a new orchestra. The second solution, more of a compromise, consisted of creating a parallel orchestra that would have been something like an orchestra of the National Theater, and the third solution of a more conforming nature, which consisted of “repairing” the current Symphony Orchestra.

The project was in this sense also outside the reality of the environment, with a work plan of: 10 hours a day for six weeks....! which included conferences, seminars and technical courses, when the budget came into being at that time, it was in the phase of avoiding expenses. What's more, it was feared that the government, faced with the

situation of “Dissolution of the concert marimba of Bellas Artes made that a week ago (1990) the protest of the friends of art was heard ... at least, in a low voice. It is inexplicable how, in the name of austerity, the first to be sacrificed are the organizations and posts of historical transcendence... The fact is that, after the dissolution of the Marimba de Concierto, some observers suppose that the National Symphony Orchestra has also been placed on the list of expenses to be cut....

The reality of the moment was that the intention, a little meaningless in the opinion of those in the know, had as its sole objective to eliminate the positions of the directors... But knowing all the complexity of the economic factor and the legislation on hiring Guatemalans as it was logical and patriotic and not foreigners, much less the existence of an orchestra without a conductor, something that does not happen anywhere in the world, and which was what the interested parties claimed who, in the long run, would no longer be there when this situation of lack of direction was made the orchestra feel, as it actually happened.

On Friday, June 14, 1991, publications such as the following were made by the press.

The Symphony went out of tune

“They called a conference and denied entry to journalists.

After having been summoned to a press conference, in which they were to make



28 LA SINFÓNICA NACIONAL Y SUS NOTAS NEGRAS. Jorge Sierra, Revista Crónica. June 28, 1991.

public a delicate complaint related to the professor *Jorge Sarmientos*, the members of the National Symphony Orchestra refused to provide information to the press.

Apparently some member of the orchestra **made a mistake and thought** of a firmer stance on the part of its members, but when the press elements were present they were invited to leave the study room, and later **they were informed that everything had been resolved. been an outburst by one of its members”**.

(Prensa Libre - **June 1991**)

“Concert canceled due to NSO strike.

The fourth concert of the 47 season of the NSO scheduled for tomorrow, Thursday, was suspended by the Ministry of Culture and Sports due to the work strike announced by the musicians that make up that group. The general directorate of diffusion chaired by *Julia Vela* announced the decision and at the same time expressed its excuses to professor *Hector Quintanar* from Mexico who was to act as guest director....

..... The members of the symphony decided go on strike in a protest demonstration against director *Jorge Sarmientos*, alleging the need to promote reforms in the structure and functioning of the organization.....

(Prensa Libre - **June 19, 1991**)”

The orchestra’s activities were then suspended, which meant that there was no symphonic season that year, which was already scheduled, and a more offensive battle began in the media with wide-ranging criticism.

On August 22, 1991, *Rodrigo Asturias* wrote the following comment:

The Symphony should not have given a concert at the congress.

It was a big mistake that the National Symphony Orchestra came to Congress to offer a concert to ask for help from the Culture Commission, directed by a representative who, as Minister of Culture for four previous years, did not care about them, said yesterday the composer *Rodrigo Asturias*.

Adding what the members of the National Symphony did; It is as if a doctor had come to cure a patient who had not requested his services, instead of the interested party going to the clinic.

In addition to this, *Asturias* added, it is not possible that now the representative *Ana Isabel Prera*, president of the Culture commission, says that she will do something to benefit the group of excellent musicians, if for four years, when she held the position of Minister of Culture and Sports, did not worry about them and was what contributed to making the burden heavier for them and other more art groups.....

(continues) (Prensa Libre – **August 22, 1991**)

Among Guatemalans, the idiom "Troubled Waters, fisherman’s gain" is

widely used. This is brought up because in comments that were completely out of context as it appears in a local newspaper, the problem is again blamed on “professors desertion” and on the directors who are told that “they have already given all they had to give.....”.

At a certain point, the musicians themselves did not like the comments, because they said, If it is commented that the Orchestra is bad, because the good musicians have left looking for better horizons, (which obviously has nothing to do with the directors of the orchestra) then it means that those of us left here are the bad ones... Those of us who are not as fit as those who were.....

1992, *René Augusto Flores* writes several articles in *La Hora*, one of them titled **CRISIS EN LA SINFÓNICA**, in which he alludes to the figure of *Sarmientos* in the face of the problem of “coming to be in the eye of the Hurricane...!!! Another *chapín* musician has taken the podium at the *Champs Elysées Theater* in Paris, to conduct the centenary and famous *Pasdeloup* Orchestra? Who has triumphed in the main concert halls of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, Puerto Rico, United States, Israel?

But here - Guatemala of all the ingratitude and absurdities - now they even try to denigrate *Sarmientos*, to throw him out of his position like any incompetent janitor, **due to the work of people who don't even measure up to fill one's shoes....**

(*La Hora* – June 22, 1991.)

Don't we have orchestra conductors?

1992

In a press interview, a spokesperson for the group that currently controls the National Symphony Orchestra, stated bluntly that “in Guatemala there are no orchestra conductors,” an opinion that we consider frivolous, partial and inaccurate.

Let's see. Professors *Ricardo del Carmen* and *Jorge Sarmientos*, rectors of the NSO until their retirement, in different times and circumstances, fortunately they are still alive and well... ..

From *Jorge Sarmientos*... his two sons *Jorge* and *Igor* as the first developing in *Sao Paulo*, Brazil..... do we even count? with figures such as *Enrique Anleu Díaz* and *Felipe de J. Ortega*...

(*La Hora*- 1992).

May 31, 1992, in the *Domingo* supplement of *Prensa Libre*, an article by *Fernando Guillermo Poroj* appears. (P.S.) I transcribe it in its entirety, since it means a point of view from someone who tried to explain the matter a little more clearly, regarding the situation of the Symphony at that time:

“After that morning of October 20, 1944,” the revolutionary drums and bugles fell silent; the libertarian flags also stopped waving intensely. A new Guatemala emerged into the world.

The rotten structures of a State under the command of a dictatorship collapsed one by one to make way for new ones; symphonic music, for example, once militarized and conforming to the wishes of the system, will regain its brilliance.

In 1944 was marked a new musical path as the old “Progressive Orchestra”, founded by the professor *José Castañeda*, he became the National Symphony Orchestra under the tutelage of violinist *Andrés Archila*.

The first season of concerts opened new possibilities for national musicians and composers to present different musical works to Guatemalans.

The golden age of the orchestra was just beginning. However, it gradually aged: some musicians retired and others went to other countries.

A recent diagnosis of the Symphony Orchestra carried out by the Ministry of Culture showed a musical group on the verge of disappearing and musicians receiving salaries without playing.

Among other things, it was also learned that the group’s poor performance was due to the members confusing personal conflicts with their work and boycotting auditions to blame the director.

Things didn’t stop there; The capacity of the directors was seriously questioned and in addition, the manipulation that some directors did with the scholarships was denounced, allocating them only to their relatives and friends.

Let's get to know some interior details.

An orchestra that charges, but does not play.

According to musical expert *René Augusto Flores* in a recent publication, “what was the highest musical organization in Guatemala and pride for the country’s artistic culture, reaching levels of excellence in the Latin American field, fell into a coma a year ago, after appearing accumulated conflicts and problems, which culminated in the retirement of director *Jorge Sarmientos*”.

Since then, in mid-1991, until now (May 1992) the ensemble has remained in dormancy, except for two or three “concerts” of commitment and without a director, while administratively, the treasury continues to grant the heavy allocation that means its maintenance, giving rise to the unusual case of an orchestra that charges.... but it doesn’t play”

For the aforementioned expert, the Symphony Orchestra should disappear, after liquidating its labor liabilities, to start from scratch by structuring a new orchestral organization with a decent salary for the musicians and a capable conductor.

Flores’ proposal is valid, especially if we think about the conditions that the state maintains, not only the orchestra. Almost all cultural organizations are the same and that is demotivating.

We are not trying to justify the musicians' rebellion, but they earn less than a member of the orchestra than a policeman or a janitor and faced limitations such as having to rehearse in the conservatory without adequate conditions.

When professor *Ricardo del Carmen* stopped conducting the orchestra, professor *Jorge Sarmientos* took it over; and professor *Enrique Anleu Díaz* became the musical director at that time.

Some time later, **a group from the orchestra planned** a movement against the appointed conductors. There was a change of government and despite the creation of the Ministry of Culture, the problems continued. Did the criterion persist that there are no national values...?

The plot paid off: *Sarmientos* withdrew from the group and *Anleu-Díaz* took over the direction, but he soon gave up because of the other members of the group who insisted on having a foreign director. **René.**

Augusto Flores said that "the members" of the orchestra insisted that the director *David Rudge*, from Oklahoma State University, be hired, who since last year offered his services charging **Q.60,000.00 per season**. A "spokesman" for the group returned to the issue that the Ministry of Culture had hired Mr. *Rudge* to lead the Symphony as conductor guest.

Why are there no orchestra conductors in the country...?

Anleu-Díaz thinks that the orchestra must be transformed through a new organization that includes increased salaries and compliance with the regulations that govern any orchestra in search of raising the technical and economic level of the members.

According to former director *Anleu-Díaz*, the NSO would greatly benefit from bringing **in foreign guest conductors to conduct** (something that has always been done since the founding of the NSO during symphony seasons).

Does the spokesperson say that the orchestra has currently been **reorganized**?... As a result - it says that Congress declared the complex Cultural Heritage and the remaining musicians have felt motivated

Fernando Guillermo Poroj - **Happy prelude for a sad orchestra** - (*Domingo Magazine* - May 31 - 1992)

Regarding this article, another journalist *Carlos Sorlozy* (*Prensa Libre*) questions some points such as the one that refers to **groups that planned** the movements **against the Guatemalan directors**, which shows according to the columnist that more than trying to improve the orchestra in every way, there were interests that were not to benefit it. The fact that low salaries were protested and that *Rudge*, who is not even a medium figure at the head of the orchestral group as it turned out some time later, to be paid such an unrealistic sum, and the complicity of the Ministry of Culture knowing that in In Guatemala, **there are orchestra conductors** contradicting the group's spokesperson, but perhaps out of ignorance, in addition to being new to the group, he did not know.

Then about the fact that “**the orchestra has currently been reorganized**”. It was not done according to what a reorganization was as requested, but rather it was just internal changes with the same members that were there at the time.

In 1993, members of the Symphony Orchestra with their instruments protest in el Parque Central in front of the National Palace, the reason for the 2.5 million *quetzales* [*Currency of the country*] that correspond to it from a budget of more than 7 billion, as of November 28 of this year (1993). This institution had not received a single cent. On November 16 along with the *Ministerio de Finanzas*, they performed *Chopin's* Funeral. On march 26th they did it in the National Palace. (photo and note in *Prensa Libre*)

They state in the opinion of others... that the orchestra has declined for that reason... (the directors)

Flores refers to *La Hora* 1992 about the position of the musicians and directors, beginning it with a comment that refutes a new and young member of the orchestra who calls himself “the spokesperson of the orchestra”, beginning it with these words... “about the fact that in Guatemala there are no orchestra conductors...”

It could be said that first in view of the immaturity of the person who declares what was mentioned in the press, then in view of his lack of knowledge of the situation, combined, as several press commentators write, with the personal interest of many who, for a variety of reasons, do not want to two directors mentioned, and transferring such resentments to everything that sounds like

"Orchestra Director", because reasoning is clouded and blinded by passion and interest, causing other consequences, which were news in the media for quite some time.

Regarding the way in which they conceive the role of the conductor as “professional” musicians, most members do recognize it as indispensable and irreplaceable.

“They argue that we have not taught anything, nobody comes to the orchestra to learn how to play an instrument... that is what people studied for and they are supposed to be professional musicians...” (*Jorge Sarmientos*, *Cronica*- June 1991)

A, Salazar (La Contemporary Symphony Orchestra- ed. Praxis - Barcelona 1986) writes on a similar topic when he refers to symphonic ensembles:

“In a Symphony Orchestra people are not going to learn or improve on what they know, as they are supposed to have done it during the studies of their instrument before winning a place in a Symphony group, if people want to improve what they know to obtain an almost soloist quality, then they should study an instrumental improvement course with a pedagogue who will teach them to achieve that goal if they have the capacity to be a soloist, since not all orchestral musicians have the disposition for it, even if they are good orchestral musicians. lectern...”

Regarding the role of the director, its method and “experience, not learning” that is extracted from it by the musicians,

*is related to a variety of situations, unfortunately they are confused by the members (conductor's point of view) confuse music with other types of non-musical problems, or preferences (musician's point of view). Dictatorial manner on the part of the conductor: The German conductor **Von Karajan** was exposed to many of these situations, such as the case of bringing an instrumentalist to the orchestra, of course of optimal quality, but according to the musicians he did so, affecting the right of the instrumentalists of the woodwind register."* (Salazar; "The contemporary Symphony orchestra" -ed. Praxis, Barcelona).

Then comes the matter of comparisons and answers, of course!.... such musicians demand a director, due to ignorance, like that of the Vienna Philharmonic... The conductor says: for many reasons I am not like the conductor they say, but do the musicians who ask for it play like those of the Vienna Philharmonic either.....?

This seems to indicate that such problem positions exist and have existed in every Symphony orchestra. The orchestra in this sense is not really a way to improve personal technical aspects, since it is assumed that whoever is part of an orchestra has already acquired a degree of excellence and has what is essential to resolve technical difficulties with individual study. The fundamental objective is to become familiar by learning to play in a group, regardless of the composer and school that is performed. The technical improvement is

in relation to the orchestral difficulties. As a group, which presents each work, unify passages of sections and achieve balance in sound. They are some of the various aspects that many times the members of an ensemble do not perceive, concerned only with mastering the difficulties of a work on their instrument, so the role of the conductor is not defined, if the members of an orchestra do not know it or have learned to play through experience, they do not understand it, resulting in misunderstandings of the concept of what an orchestra conductor is.

Without wishing to question such positions...

In 1991 the symphony orchestra suspended its rehearsals and carried out public protests for various reasons, among them was that related to the direction of the ensemble. At the end of 1991, some positions of the orchestra's staff had previously been "frozen", due to the "austerity" plan regarding the positions that the government considered "non-essential."

Given the lack of support for the direction of the orchestra, the directors of the orchestra resign, leaving the orchestral institution headless, seeing the opportunity to eliminate the positions of director and deputy director of the ensemble, this is carried out by the ministry, a situation that persists to this day (May 2000).

The articles that appeared in the newspapers of those years show the discontent of the various sectors in this regard. The first thing that was formed in the aforementioned ministry were trade unions who, after problems that arose

between them and the authorities of the same, took on the task of denouncing (1991) that after five years of existence, there had been corruption, the ministry authorities declare that the allegations of corruption were clearly false. The Unionists take over the Ministry (El Gráfico, February 6, 1991) and they placed banners at its entrance, demanding points in their interest. Guatemalans, due to such onerous government spending, meant "the evil-born ministerial entity" and the majority are against its existence. (El Gráfico, February 1991)

1991 – 2000

There are reasons that it is difficult for many to accept in the stages of life and the struggle that the individual carries out in the middle, considering the time, due to the many achievements and changes that have arisen, is the best and that any new change it's going for bad.

For example, when one suffers a lot from the onslaught of work and it affects one personally, so one is reluctant to accept the transformations, but the new generations, the changes in the world and society, are forcing one to see this new reality.

It is part of the evolution of the human being, and it occurs precisely as the Darwinian theory²⁹ that species adapt or disappear, in another context, if the individual cannot adapt to the new conditions of the environment, then it has to leave it. That is the natural law and also



²⁹ Charles Darwin.

the socioeconomic aspect, which is why these transformations of the environment cannot be ignored and must be understood.

This is because during the years from 1990 to 2000, in the symphony orchestra, the last of the teachers who worked for so many years in the ensemble, the concertmaster *José Luis Avelar*, retired, leaving practically few exceptions, a generation completely oblivious to all the circumstances that had occurred in the orchestra from 1976 onwards. And in the period from 1991 to 1995, new ideas and transformations in the environment presented new approaches and new ways of facing the problems of the National Symphony Orchestra. The positions of Director and Deputy Director of the National Symphony Orchestra had disappeared, in other words, it was a headless orchestra in that sense. It had been achieved that the Congress of the Republic considered the complex as Cultural Heritage of the Nation and the board of this complex had a lot of weight since the 90s.

Five years since the issue of the direction of the Symphony Orchestra remained news seen from various angles, it continues to be written about by many. An overview that aims to show the situation of the orchestra after six years of lacking a regular conductor, is the subject of an article by *Williams de León*, published in the 16th century newspaper on Saturday, August 23, 1997.

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, A SHIP WITHOUT DIRECTION

Imagine one of the most prestigious orchestras of any country in the world,

yesterday and today, without a conductor: the Berlin Philharmonic without *Karajan*, for example, or the Philadelphia Symphony without *Ormandy*, or perhaps the New York without *Bernstein*. The NSO has been like this for five years.

Baton in hand

The conductor, that figure who stands on a podium in front of the orchestra and after greeting the audience turns his back and starts waving the baton he holds in one of his hands apparently without reason, must be a prepared professional, with advanced studies in **Orchestral Conducting, harmony, composition, and a series of knowledge that he acquires after many years of study**³⁰.

According to *Enrique Anleu-Díaz*, *Jorge Sarmientos* and *Fernando Sosa*, the director, among other of his functions, gives personality and character to the group in his charge, thanks to the knowledge of the different musical styles and techniques, the authors to perform, and their ability to unify all members into a uniform body.



30 In the case of the conductors who have had the Guatemala Symphony Orchestra, they have all met these requirements, *Andrés Archila* was an excellent violinist. He studied his instrument in Italy, and was assistant concertmaster of the Washington National Symphony Orchestra: *Ricardo del Carmen*, a brilliant pianist with studies of his instrument and orchestral conducting at Oberlin, USA and in Vienna with the renowned Austrian professor *Hans Swarowsky*, winner of the International Orchestra Conductor Award to Ditrini Mitropoulos in New York, assistant for a time as winner of the *Leonard Bernstein* contest. Choir director, and with plenty of experience in his field; *Jorge Sarmientos*. He graduated as a pianist from the Guatemala Conservatory, and as a professor of harmony and composition there. He studied in Paris with renowned professors such as *Boulanger*, one of the most renowned directors with performances in *Buenos Aires. México*, Japan, Central America, composers of the most important.

The conductor is also responsible for the performance and balance of the ensemble through the discipline and organization of the study and rehearsal Schedule

For the conductor, the orchestra is its musical instrument and is he responsible for making it sound properly.

In 1991, professor *Jorge Sarmientos* left his position as Musical and Artistic Director of the National Symphony Orchestra. Since then, the country's largest musical group has no director. In his opinion, as a result of this situation, the performance of the NSO has been declining. However, **some of its members consider that before appointing someone to the podium, it is necessary to improve the general conditions of the group.....**

All those interviewed agreed that the Ministry of Culture and Sports is responsible for deciding who will fill the position. *Enrique Anleu Díaz*, who served as assistant director of the Symphony, indicated that no agreement has ever been reached with the authorities of the Ministry, *because they have never shown any real interest in the arts.*

The interviewee explained that in the country there are musicians qualified to occupy that position, although he preferred not to name any. He only warned that the person chosen, in addition to his professional ability, must have the people skills necessary to get along with all the musicians, and thus achieve a successful performance. He added that, although in dictatorial systems the authorities are

imposed, this has never worked that way in the NSO. Ideally, the members should vote to decide who will take the podium.

Jorge Sarmientos differs with his counterpart. In his opinion, the musicians should not decide who occupies the podium,* although he recognized that the acceptance that the designated person has from the group will be reflected in the performance since the work is not done only by the person holding the baton.

Fernando Sosa Avila, principal bassoonist of the NSO, and a member of it for 20 years, pointed out that an orchestra without a conductor is like a body without a head. He explained that there have been a few attempts to fill that void, but without success. Currently the concertmaster is in charge, that is the procedure to follow when there is no director; temporarily. But this situation has already become eternal

According to *Sosa*, this has caused a decline in the technical performance of the musicians, because there is no obligatory effort in musical practice and performance.

Sarmientos argued that many problems faced by the symphony orchestra today are due to the absence of this figure. If someone wants to work without a director, it is because they lack professionalism. The musician with judgment knows that it is necessary to have someone to direct, since the success of the group depends on it.

He noted that the discipline manifested in the rehearsals is deficient since it is less than two hours a day. The international statutes indicate that there should be three hours a day and half an hour of rest.

Selfish Salaries

Sarmientos and *Anleu* agreed that the members of this national group must have a salary higher than what they are earning. For everything to go well, we must begin by assigning a fair salary to those who deserve it. Liquidate those who should not be there and rehire good musicians who have left due to the same problems (low salaries) pointed out the first one.

In this regard, he mentioned the salary earned by the members of the *El Salvador* Symphony Orchestra. In that country, the conductor earns the equivalent of US \$2,500 or more per month, the concertmaster receives US \$1,000. Of the rest of the members, the one who earns the least exceeds US \$700, while here in Guatemala each musician receives an average of US \$200.

If musicians must agree on something, it is to defend their salary rights. He added that the minimum wage at this time should be Q 3,000 for those who deserve it, he added.

Sosa Avila indicates that there is no point in bringing us the best director in the world, if we are here earning starvation wages. In this way the orchestra will not respond as it should.

Sarmientos added that they cannot bring in an international director because the funds they have are not enough to pay a national one. One of the second or third category* asks for a minimum of US \$5,000. Furthermore, here in the country, there is someone who directs.

An uncertain future

The majority of those interviewed, with the exception of *Anleu-Díaz*, agreed when saying that the orchestra has declined due to the absence of a regular conductor. ***

Sosa Ávila indicated that he sees the future of the orchestra very poorly. There are people who are choosing to retire or moving to other groups. We are coming on a downward curve.

Many of its members believe that they cannot dedicate themselves fully to the orchestra, because it does not allow them to live with dignity. *That is why some dedicate themselves to activities that have nothing to do with music to overcome their economic condition.*

The National Symphony Orchestra seems to be a ship adrift. If the necessary measures are not taken to solve its salary problems and a competent director is not appointed, this ship could founder.

A History of Directors

Anleu Díaz and *Sarmientos* remember the background of the National Symphony Orchestra, as well as the characters who have led it since its beginnings. In 1930, the professor *José Castañeda*, an internationally renowned musician, formed a group called **Ars Nova**, which General *Jorge Ubico* changed its name to the Progressive Orchestra.

Due to problems with the president, *Castañeda* chose to retire and was replaced by the Italian *Gastón Pellegrini*. On

November 15, 1944 - the year of the revolution - the group changed its name again, calling itself the National Symphony Orchestra, and the profesor *Andrés Archila* assumed its direction, but he left in 1959, because the Washington Symphony hired the services of he. The current president, *Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes*, then appointed the Spanish professor *José María Franco Gil*. (for three years)

The first and only pairing that has led the NSO was formed by *Ricardo del Carmen* - *Jorge Sarmientos*, who directed the group from 1982. When *Del Carmen* retired, *Sarmientos* was left in charge and later the institution received the appointment of *Anleu Díaz* as the new conductor, but he rejects him and resigns due to problems that have arisen within the Symphony. Shortly after, *Sarmientos* did the same, in 1991.

Since then, the NSO still does not have a director.

William de León

Diario 21st Century - Guatemala Saturday, August 23, 1997.

The previous extensive journalistic note is also accompanied by a clarification in the same newspaper from *Carlos Enrique Zea Flores*, Vice Minister of Culture and Sports, who indicates that he is aware of the economic and personnel problems of the Symphony Orchestra. In his opinion - these have been able to be overcome thanks to the effort and dedication of some people who

have taken a noble interest in this institution. *We are fully aware of the urgent need for a director for the NSO and we already have a couple of names of candidates to fill the titular position. He assured.*

He clarified that they must first legally expire a decree issued in 1995, which prevents hiring more staff. We are looking for a way to obtain a budget item that allows us to solve this shortfall, he said. The official regretted that an appropriate amount had not been contemplated so that the season of the highest national team could be completed satisfactorily this year.

In relation to the members' salaries, Zea expressed that he shares the opinion of the musicians, but we must be realistic and patient to solve this problem for everyone, even vice ministers. *I regret the situation, but unfortunately we have no where to get more resources for all those who work in art.*

He stressed that almost everyone deserves a better salary, but that we must be aware that we live in a poor country. If they increase, even by a minimum percentage, this translates into financial problems for the State, since it would represent debt, more taxes or making money without support, which in the end would mean more problems than solutions.

Regarding the artists who leave because they do not receive better remuneration, the Vice Minister expressed that: It is

regrettable but they are within their legitimate rights. Each person has the obligation to ensure their economic and intellectual improvement

21st Century Periódico - August 23, 1997.

* In this regard, when it is a philharmonic orchestra, it is the society that maintains it that governs matters of direction of soloists, works, but in a National ensemble the musicians do not command, they play, which is their duty (music and the orchestra is not a democracy, but a dictatorship, *Arturo Toscanini*-)

* See how they are measured categories in the directors already as such - by contacts, opportunities, contract decisions, since it is assumed that everyone has the capacity from the moment they publicly demonstrate it. In that sense, there are a large number of directors in the world, very good, sometimes extraordinary, who are completely unknown and have no one to promote them **commercially**. This is one of the ways of considering the categories of director in the capitalist world.

* * * Here the interviewer did not add the rest, The orchestra has not declined due to the lack of a principal conductor, it has (only) declined due to the lack of dedication to the work, disrespecting those who can condition together with the musicians to raise its quality, which is the conductor - now the part of the musician only he can respond, so obviously it is not the lack of the director, but the lack of guidance, experience in playing in an orchestra, and lack of orchestral discipline.

21st century

The beginning of the new century provoked throughout the Western world and even in the Eastern one, a countless number of emotions that were measured both in what this transition towards the year 2000 was like for those of us who had the experience of living between two chronologically different centuries, as all the anecdotes, fears, or optimism that it produced on a moral, religious, economic and other level.

Seeing and living at the turn of the century is an experience that is taken in different ways. The transition of the century is thought of as a **first impulse** that is like when one crosses the border from one's nation to the next for the first time. The impression that one has and believes that it will happen is that everything will change immediately, the air, the earth, the mountains, the trees, the animals are going to be different; The change is believed to be more radical if one speaks in another language, since the first thought that occurs to the individual is that even the animals already on that border only understand the language of their nation - (the latter has a logic not so wrong, since if an animal lives in an environment in which it is educated, for example: French language, it only understands this language when it is spoken to). But just like the change of a border it is a human, political circumstance, since the orography does not change. A volcano that is between two countries will not be different in its shape in one part and different in another, the trees that are on the slope and height of one country will not be different from those that are adjacent, on the same volcano on the other side. The same situation is the turn of the century, it

is more than anything a circumstance and a psychological sensation, since history and changes do not occur suddenly.

A similar thing happened in the arts in Guatemala, the changes technological developments had been taking place since previous decades, but a spring was needed, a circumstance that would make them useful to integrate them into the historical change of musical art. In this case, that "transition" that occurs from the stage of the 90s is sensitive with the new year 2000.

21st century February 7, 2000, the Periódico published a report by *Miriam de León* entitled "*EN BUSCA DE LA ARMONIA PERDIDA*" [In search of lost harmony], in which reference is made to the last years of the 90s already in the hands of the NSO's Board of Directors and according to the heading of said article, the members of said board request that the contract of its director, *Ricardo del Carmen*, no longer be renewed. According to this information, "*it emerged that in recent years internal discrepancies have arisen among its members, and situations difficult to handle for its leaders. In this environment, the auditions began to lose their usual harmony.*"

In 1990, professor Ricardo del Carmen had retired from the National Symphony Orchestra, a time when the situation became chaotic at "The Ministry of Culture, Art Institutions" a problem that had worsened in the NSO. After seven years of being away from the ensemble, he was again named Principal Conductor of the orchestra in 1997. According to León, it has several versions. Then writes – "Del

Carmen, who in 1997 was name regular director of the NSO (although he had retired in 1990, after 23 years of work) by the institution's board of directors; Del Carmen was retired from his position at the end of last year (1999). There are several versions of his departure. One of them indicates that the 1999 Board of Directors of the entity - headed by the president of the board - proposed to the Ministry of Culture and Sports that his contract not be renewed. This request was due to a specific reason, says the manager.

"The number of rehearsal hours, the programming that would be presented and the stage on which it would be performed. - These functions have been, since 1991, the faculty of steering group, which is selected by the 64 members of the group".

A second version – "provided by Néstor Arévalo, simply indicates that when the work commitment of the former person in charge of the baton expired, the Government no longer renewed it"..... Roldán in charge of public relations believes that – Del Carmen interfered with the development of the ensemble'. Systematically, he did not accept the programming presented by the Board of Directors. He wanted to decide everything, that's why, he asked to have complete authority in the decisions concerning the entity. Then he became musical and administrative director, but he could not manage one hundred percent institution, De León writes the version of the president of the 1999 council contrasts with that offered by Estuardo Cuestas Morales, Ex-Minister of Culture, who clarifies that, in effect, the members of the group sent him a

letter dated on november 30, 1999) in which they requested the removal of the director.

Ricardo del Carmen had access to that letter. On behalf of himself and the members of the NSO, Arévalo requested that he not be reappointed director in any way; In view of the situation of morass into which the institution had fallen, he said. ***Due to the content of that document and since the last thing a name loses is its dignity, I asked the high authorities of the ministry not to renew my contract, said del Carmen.***

The article continues: - According to several members of the NSO, the versions regarding the removal of Del Carmen are just one of the anomalous situations within the group. The master (Del Carmen) points out that he retired due to various circumstances, which he preferred not to reveal in the 21st century. Jorge Sarmientos, who directed the artistic institution between 1982 and 1991, did not want to grant an interview regarding the topic, although he acknowledged that there was a lot to talk about it.

Several members of the Symphony, who requested anonymity, explained that they prefer not to comment on the institution's problems, for fear of reprisals against them. His message was clear: ***If we speak out, as other colleagues have done, we risk losing the opportunity to be invited to participate as soloists in recitals, or being prohibited from being invited to conduct the orchestra.***

The difference between musicians and managers is another internal problem in the

NSO. Fielding Roldán clarifies that there are no artistic conflicts between them, although there are discrepancies on a personal level. **This is a very tangled world, he comments. In this heterogeneous microcosm, various groups coexist, formed based on the ages and tastes of the musicians. Everyone has their own objectives according to their personal interest. However, these discrepancies do not affect the Symphony's musical performance, he clarifies.**

However, the public relations specialist admits that there were discrepancies between the musicians and Ricardo del Carmen. **If he disliked someone, he behaved intransigent and intolerant. With that attitude, he managed to get the person to withdraw from the NSO. That began to generate a situation of annoyance among the other members of the group. Remembering.**

In the opinion of the musician and director Gilbert-Dyson... Sarmientos, the NSO's problems may lie in the lack of knowledge of the director's work. **- It is not known that our job at the head of a group does not only consist of "beating" and keeping time. It's something much deeper. Well, it implies great discipline and interpretation of the work, he indicates.**

The antagonism that can exist between the conductor and the musicians is what has caused the most damage to any symphony in the world, he points out. Furthermore, the members of the NSO have been radical in their determination not to

accept musical directors in the history of this entity, he says.

In the past, he adds, the polarization of opinions led the NSO to face economic problems and indiscipline among its members, as well as the lack of renewal of the repertoire. However, he recognizes that, with the Directive Congress, established in 1991, the administrative aspect of the entity was overhauled, the musical archive was updated and a salary increase was obtained for musicians.

Where is the NSO going then? **-At the moment, Council 2000 has a plan that began last week with a concert directed by Enrique Anleu-Díaz. He will be in charge of the baton for three months, and then he will hand it over to several guest musicians, among them which includes the American David Handel, the Mexican Enrique Patrón and the Englishman Peter Gilbert-Dyson...**

(Miriam de León – “En busca de la armonía perdida” – 21st century, Diario Monday, February 7, 2000).

A whole series of problems are still the issue in 2003 due to other circumstances. For some there is a trace of many things behind, which are described as the fault of the ministry, for others of the lack of authority and the creation of new decrees. Among the last topic, a decree was promulgated that “will regulate the integration and election of the Board of Directors of the NSOG [National Symphony Orchestra of Guatemala]

Journalist Jorge Sierra writes in “El periódico”, a comment which he titles “Las Truculencias de la Orquesta Sinfónica” -

In it he refers to the issue again of the orchestra in relation to programming, when he notes the following: ... What can be expected from this institution, if, for example, for the third time the composer's work has been disqualified and marginalized by some members of the orchestra..... The arguments for not programming it were "It's very difficult to play it, it's very ugly, and others" "that piece is going to drive us crazy2, the expression came from a few professor — seven already identified who for years have been fighting for power to impose their criteria and override the decisions of the council and, then, corrupt the destinies and purposes of the NSOG.

*The work had already been performed in El Salvador five years ago..... The value of this piece lies in the fact that it formulates the genre... (of the instrument) ...within a festive and light character, but treated under a process of fragmentation, repetition, superimposition, metric and timbral displacement. Work **that requires the participation of two Marimbas**. But for these wolves with the faces of angels, when they are on stage they seem that way - it means "a lot of work" I ask, - Sierra; the composer... Doesn't he have every right to be taken into account?*

Why do these small groups of philamonics arrogate to themselves the right to decide for the public what is good and what is not? Who has made them judges of the country's cultural values? Isn't the institution strongly obliged to disseminate national production? These trips, envy, pettiness, boycotts, intrigues, laziness and, furthermore, malinchismo, are not

something new in the NSOG, they have existed and have materialized in the disrespect and mockery of the professors Jorge Sarmientos Ricardo del Carmen (RIP) Andrés Archila, and stop counting; and that now seeks a way to harm the country's composers.

Let's hope that the new agreement gubernatorial, 372-2003, strengthen its board of directors and it seeks, from now on, the mechanisms to alleviate, once and for all, that gruesome and incomprehensible shadow that hangs over that so-called Cultural Heritage of Guatemala, NSOG.

Jorge Sierra, El Periódico 2003.

A later clarification from some of the orchestra's teachers states that it was not discrimination against the composer, but rather that in the symphony orchestra there is no *marimba*, much less two *marimbas* that carried the work.

New stage in the Symphony

The Boards of Directors of the Symphony Orchestra, since it was organized as a National Orchestra, were a group made up of the same members of the orchestra, elected by vote annually. It's role was to resolve the orchestra's internal problems, raise them with the management of the NSO or the competent authorities.

I remember that in many years problems arose that were later endemic, such as lighting, lecterns, the auditorium, or transportation when a trip was made. The board then mediated between the members

and the direction towards the higher authorities to resolve them, thus on one occasion when other institutions had interference in NSO concerts for sponsoring high-level soloists, and something arose regarding an extra payment, since the institution was private, the Board had a lot weight to make a decision for everyone.

However, many times the Board encountered opposition and lost strength before the same government authorities, since the 1992s, the board has decidedly been in charge of the organization and management of the orchestra's situation, and it is through This, made up of new and young elements, which in some way has given another aspect to the organization of the National Symphony Orchestra.

One of the first tasks that were given to the institution was to organize the concert season with the guest conductor *David Rudge* hired for the 1992 season. Then a change that is considerable and that must be recognized in the new organization is that which means the technology for carrying out desk work. The Japanese embassy, through the board of directors, makes a donation of computer equipment, instruments, and support in bringing Japanese soloists and conductors; director *Koishi Okumura* is invited for a time. According to information from the same group, this cooperation also translates into the arrival of important soloists, both Japanese and from other countries; *Handel* also comes as an advisor for a time.

It is moving forward according to the planned plan, hiring *Enrique Anleu Díaz* as director of the orchestra (2000), also according to schedule, the school, university and popular seasons have continued, and the departments, and even since the orchestra had not gone abroad for many years, it traveled to *Mexico (Tuxtla, Gutiérrez, and Tapachula)*, an opportunity in which I was fortunate enough to travel to conduct the two concerts with the ensemble as Associate Director.

A final note

Youth, divine treasure,

You're gone, never to return!

When I want to cry, I can't...

*And sometimes I cry without
wanting to...*

Rubén Dario.

This final note is written in a dimension that could be considered dual in nature depending on how you see it. I retired from the orchestra for known reasons; during the course of my retirement, for many reasons I could not be oblivious to what was happening to the ensemble, although purely as a spectator. Having belonged to our Symphony Orchestra for so many years within my roles as a violinist member and, on occasions and times, as its director, having gone through hardships of work, joys, moments of hilarity due to some situations, states of great emotion for the concerts or music that is fully enjoyed. Occasions to be deeply circumspect, to see how some of the group are leaving, others, of this world, to suddenly be aware that so many years have passed, to feel the changes in the environment! It is not something so easy to make them forget; more for those of us in the musical field. In the orchestra, or far from it, memories always come in a tumultuous relationship when we hear anywhere a symphony, a concert, a melody played by an orchestra, and that reminds us

that some time we played many of those notes. It's sad and it's happy to remember it.

With that accumulation of experiences and memories and although my contract in my position as director of the ensemble ended, I always remain active in music. That is why I point out the events that are already taking place in this current stage of the National Symphonic.

When the year 1996 came, the 3000 years of existence of Jerusalem were celebrated, the board of directors of the NSO, on that occasion, invited me to conduct such a concert, including some orchestrations that I made for the occasion. I want to express that for me it was extremely pleasant and satisfying, although I thought about it a little. I knew that in many ways there was a new spirit in the whole, whatever it was. More, as they say, "getting healthy", and because in my case, I am convinced that if there is in an orchestra; one... -just one... or more elements who don't like one very much, moreover, with the background that existed, it is totally impossible to achieve a good result and to be able to work. So I only made one request: - If there was that one who did not agree with me directing the orchestra, then I was grateful to them, but it would be very difficult to work, so I would not accept.

I understand that such a consultation was made and I felt very good that between the professor who were still there, and the recent elements, they did not have any annoyance with me, that gave me 20 years of optimism.

Later, although the orchestra no longer had a conductor, since the roles for that position were abolished, in 1997 The professor

Ricardo del Carmen was again appointed as conductor of the orchestra. That year I was again invited to conduct a concert of the season in August, as well as in 1998 I conducted the Symphony Orchestra in *Tapachula* and in *Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Mexico*, during a trip we made to that country. In this new return as conductor was Maestro *Ricardo del Carmen* until 1999, when he resigned. I was invited by the orchestra's board of directors to take charge of the National Symphony Orchestra in 2000, and remained in that position for five years until 2005, when my contract ended.

Starting the following year, foreign guest conductors were brought in to do the 2006 season, since currently (2007) the orchestra does not have a resident conductor or a rehearsal conductor.

Since the year that I served in the orchestra with the aforementioned position, I was able to feel the improvements that the group had achieved in things as essential as the means of transportation, an issue that demonstrated its importance when traveling within the republic and outside of it. There was orchestra material that was in a very bad state, and the management councils obtained the works in current editions, as well as new scores and parts of works that were not available in previous years. The participation of the embassies continued, so with this collaboration soloists were brought to participate in the symphonic seasons. One of the greatest satisfactions I had was appreciating high-quality soloists, already from the newest generation, children of the members of the last generations of the orchestra, and vanity be damned, these were my students in the

conservatory orchestra in orchestral practice class during the years it was under my direction, it was today their children who performed for the first time not only in Guatemala, but for my satisfaction, also as soloists under my direction. There are many names of them, today there are also musicians with a recognized career that I knew from the years they were in my orchestra at the conservatory, *José Mazariegos*, *Igor Sarmientos*, *Fiorella Solares*, who played as cellists in those early years, *Victor Manuel Barrientos*, *Estuardo Gómez*, *Osber Rodríguez*, *Guillermo López*, *Germán Ordoñez*, *Herbert Chávez*, *Pablo Toledo*, *Luis Lima*, *Miriam Dávila*, *Hector Castro*, *Luis Alberto Quezada*, (E&D) [Stands for Education and Development] *Cubur*, *Mario Cerón*, *Henry Raudales* who was my concertmaster in the orchestra, *Cecil Vidal* today in Belgium, *Adela* who played viola, well I don't remember them all.

A young element is currently making up the National Symphony Orchestra. They come from the national conservatory and they have begun their experience as is natural and has been the system in all parts of the world, practicing and becoming familiar with musical works and ensemble playing when they join chamber groups and student orchestras, before being prepared to submit to the compulsory competition that we have all undertaken and won to qualify for a place in the NSO. It is their time, the history of the group has been left behind for many, since by human nature the history of an institution begins each time with whoever

arrives, some know part of the path that the orchestra has traveled, recent young people do not. They have entered the orchestra with the desire and the first impulse that moves us all: to belong to a professional group and make music as their maximum goal, but they will have, as we have all had when being part of a group, to defend their interests., extramusical problems that they will have to face and resolve and that are the endemic evil of our countries: the lack of support from official institutions and the abandonment of all groups related to art.

The history of the orchestra is currently written day by day so that someone can pick it up and not lose such a relationship.

My intention is to contribute something that will serve in the future to those interested in the history of our orchestra. I have made the written notes with the best intentions, hoping that if there are difficult moments in its history they will be appreciated as required by the method historical, attached to the truth, no matter how painful or annoying it may be as in any work or document that is written, one must try to contain the passion when it comes to moments of exaltation by identification with them and that is the reason why in such situations it is better to stick to publicly known events and told by their protagonists, from their mouths and with their words. That has been one of the cares that must be taken so that whoever reads them judges them according to criteria that are not directed or qualified with the intention of identifying them by the writer.

I close these notes, giving to the same board of directors of the orchestra a brief, summarized history of the history of our National Symphony Orchestra taken from a hand program, which reminds the public of its background and history up to this date. I conclude in part this work.

New Guatemala of the Assumption
July 2007

National Symphony Orchestra

Cultural heritage

The National Symphony Orchestra of Guatemala has as its origin the 'Ars Nova Orchestra' founded by professor José Castañeda. In 1931, when General Jorge Ubico Castañeda became president, he invited his cousin José to have that orchestra become part of the Presidency to give them salaries. When Jorge Ubico changed the name to the Progressive Liberal Orchestra, José Castañeda did not agree and resigned.

In substitution they called the professor Gastón Pellegrini who served as director until October 20, 1944.

A group of young teachers of that time: Andrés Archila, Ricardo Castillo, Manuel Herrarte, José Arévalo Guerra (the last two great concert pianists) Manuel Antonio Gómez Samayoa, Enrique Torres and other important musicians requested the Presidential Triumvirate Jorge Toriello Garrido, Captain Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán and

Major Francisco Javier Arana, create the National Symphony Orchestra.

This is how this revolutionary Government Board decreed on November 14 the founding of the first musical ensemble with the name of the National Symphony Orchestra, naming professor Andrés Archila as its principal conductor and professor José Luis Abelar as violin concertmaster.

When the National Symphony Orchestra offered its first concert, in the old *Teatro Capitol*, the President elected by majority Doctor Juan José Arévalo attended, who was loudly applauded, then, on March 15, 1945, he took possession of the Presidency and ratified as an agreement Presidential with the corresponding regulations for the National Symphony Orchestra, which was supported in the ten years of revolutionary spring. Since then, its long-time Guatemalan directors were: Andrés Archila, José María Franco Gil, Ricardo del Carmen Ascencio, Jorge Alvaro Sarmientos and Enrique Anleu Díaz. Some others for a very short time.

The list of guest conductors and national and foreign soloists is to date quite extensive and includes names of renowned artists who, with their presence and experience, have left their mark on our greatest Guatemalan orchestral ensemble. Since 1991, as fair recognition of the work carried out for the benefit of Guatemalans, was declared “Cultural Heritage of the Nation”, by the Congress of the Republic with the aim of preserving it. Currently the orchestra has been under the direction of

the professor Enrique Anleu Díaz as Associate Director. (1999 – 2005)

New Guatemala of the Assumption,
July 2005

Attachments to the History of the National Symphony Orchestra

Reflections on Guatemalan Symphony music.

The orchestra is the instrument of the composer and the conductor, without it, it's like for the writer to write about some object that when the stroke is made is erased, or simply nothing can be written. Without an orchestra the composer cannot express his ideas in terms of instrumental forms. If having a small orchestral group already limits the performance of a certain type of music, without an orchestra there is not the slightest opportunity to imagine works that obtain a characteristic timbral richness typical of a symphony orchestra.

It is true that chamber music has its own laws, its particularities which, on the other hand, and worth the expression, would lose that characteristic inherent to an ensemble such as a quartet, a trio or a duo, which, once the parts are performed, by a symphony orchestra, instead of being enriched, they completely lose their meaning. A composer knows that, if he thinks of a violin concerto, a piano cannot replace that part, not even an instrument of the string family such as the viola or cello. Proof of this is that in the 90s some magnificent and valuable string instruments made recordings of, for example, César Franck's violin sonata transcribed for cello; but the sonata lost its charm, as it would be as if one of Brahms' sonatas for cello were played on the violin. Let's not say anymore that, in an orchestra, and although there will be criteria from the

listeners or the performers that they like all these transcriptions or "arrangements", a composer will definitely not, since his concept of chamber and symphonic music is clear and direct in these fields, in which it directly chooses one or the other for the destination of their works, according to the spirit or character of the aesthetic content.

This explains in itself the fact of the existence of a Symphony Orchestra and its role in musical development with symphonic forms. Insisting on such importance, without an ensemble of this nature we would not hear any symphony as it is, we would never have a concept of the way in which any work is heard live, distinguishing between the role and function that each instrument has within the whole. Conceive the dimension of the interpretation of certain passages at the discretion of a director who has studied the concept of the works, in short, enjoy symphonic music visually and aurally.

That is why an orchestra definitely has an importance in the culture and art of a nation, like a thermometer that measures, along with other cultural facts, the greatness of education in it.

But this instrument also has another relevant importance as it functions as a stimulus to increase the musical treasure of a country's own symphonic music, represented in its authors, who, by considering and having the opportunity to write works for such an ensemble, are also being an important seedbed

historical that promotes the production of local composers.

In the history of Guatemalan composition, the role that the formation and growth of musical groups have gradually developed as stimulants or means to write compositions is clear. During the early periods music was made for solo instruments, and gradually for small groups. As the city of Santiago de Guatemala grew and organized itself, the needs of its inhabitants grew along with it, and the spiritual part, both religious and profane, had the need to resort to the expressions for its dissemination and the performance of its rituals. of plastic, musical, literary art. Already in the new Guatemala of Asunción, art, like all the human manifestations of its inhabitants, became more complicated, in such a way that, with regard to music, a musical education was applied, and its most prominent representatives were concerned with teaching. and practice of this, giving us in the 19th century along with political emancipation, the creation of musical groups. As a result of the growth of cultural and artistic activity and encouraged by the government, beautiful theaters were erected, such as the *Teatro de Carrera*, later called *Nacional* and finally *Teatro Colón*, and together with the arrival of talented artists, opera, zarzuela and theater companies orced the formation and establishment of orchestras that could accompany soloists and opera singers.

Composers were always active, combining religion with social and cultural activities, such as the case of Eulalio Samayoa, a distinguished figure along with the Saenz

who composed works for the orchestral ensembles of the time, Samayoa is known as the first symphonist of Guatemala. During the last years of the 19th century, a symphony orchestra was formed, although it was short-lived; and then with José Castañeda who marks the stage of the creation of the current National Symphony Orchestra, which although it is the subject of these writings, we have not addressed it in the important function it has within Guatemalan musical creation.

It would not be possible, therefore, for Guatemalan orchestral music to have been written, without having a symphony orchestra, unless the composers, of which there are some cases, had been in Europe above all, or in some foreign country where they had produced works with the eagerness, hope, or opportunity to be able to execute in such places.

But, the fact that, starting in 1944, there was a formal orchestra, subsidized by the state and with a presidential decree that ensured its existence together with a direction of the *Bellas Artes*, led not only to the organization of rehearsals, concerts and symphonic seasons, but gave way to a vital event for musical art, the creation of an annual contest of sciences and arts where plastic, literary and musical creation was stimulated, constituting part of the prize, the performance of the works musicals by the national symphony orchestra. With this vision, composers produced rich symphonic works, emerging not only new names of authors, but also updated works and musical concepts.

Although composers from previous centuries were not forgotten, with the orchestral evolution the authors already within these new boundaries were concerned about being updated in aesthetic movements. When such an event was created in 1945, composers had more opportunity to disseminate their works from that moment on. , stimulating creation in scholarly music.

Two factors, however, were determinant, even with this stimulus of the contest and the existence of the Symphony Orchestra, they were on the one hand the one that referred to the taste of the director regarding the music of certain authors, and on the other hand that when they were foreign conductors or soloists, they did not know about Guatemalan composers and works. In order then for the works of national music to be disseminated, outside of the awardwinning works, it was considered that, as is done in other countries in which a foreign guest conductor is given as part of his performance to include a work of the country where it goes, the same idea was had when it comes to Guatemalan music. Professor Jorge Sarmientos was one of the promoters of the idea that the directors who came to perform would be given to choose a Guatemalan work to integrate into the concert they would direct. Such a logical measure allowed many new works by authors from the country to be released. However, after entering the 2000s, such a measure, although it has been followed, would be good if it were not lost, and that it were somewhat mandatory, so that the work of the National Symphony Orchestra in this first decade of the new century in its

function of protecting National music is effective, and that the phenomenon of “rediscovering” the names and works of composers from the 19th century to the present day does not occur again. Therefore, this measure must be maintained to publicize our musical heritage.

Another aspect that is very important in the musical environment is the one that refers to the interpretation of chamber music by different groups within the same orchestra. European orchestras being a good school, they usually perform works that have been conceived by the authors for 10 groups, 14 members, or works for the string, wind, brass or percussion section independently of playing the four instrumental families together.

About the Venues for the Groups Musicals

One of the ordeals for the ideal realization of the activities of a symphonic ensemble in Guatemala are the venues where concerts or recitals are held. The symphony orchestra in this case suffered from this problem from the beginning; they worked in conditions that were in no way appropriate to their functions and requirements. Places without adequate acoustics, ambient exterior fluids, lack of space, no furniture, sometimes illegible musical material, and along with this, terrible lighting, the latter affected, and still affects, the sense of sight from which, if not everyone suffers, a vast majority who have worked for years in bad light. Already in

the year 80, the situation was so critical that one of the big problems that the orchestra had in the national music conservatory, was the lack of adequate lighting. Many times when arriving at rehearsals one could see how bad the light was, worse the next day, until, reaching truly impossible moments, the orchestra refused to rehearse so that the authorities could take action on the matter. In those years, some IGSS technicians arrived to measure the lighting conditions, detecting it so poorly that they suggested not working in such a state, because we would end up: (literally) “blind.” With this opinion, a note was sent to the authorities demanding that the pertinent work be carried out to provide the conservatory’s auditorium with adequate lighting to be able to carry out the rehearsals. Something that was not achieved immediately, so the rehearsals were more than irregular.

Then the constant deterioration of the stage and the lunette, since the roof leaked when it rained, and it was such a problem that a rainy night meant that the stage would be covered in water the next day. This logically rotted the wood on the floor, then added to this was that the auditorium was rented for events that had nothing to do with music, as well as theater and ballet activities. For the sets, nails were inserted that were used to tie background panels or hang any object alluding to the scenes that were represented in the ballet or theater. The time came when it was no longer possible to rehearse in the conservatory, so to “fix” the center the orchestra was rehearsing in various, less suitable places.

For a time the largest halls were used in the same conservatory, but the entire orchestra could not fit, so it was rehearsed in sections, in an irregular manner. When the Miguel Ángel Asturias *Teatro Nacional* was inaugurated, the orchestra rehearsed, but only on the day of the concert, because the lights were very expensive, the spotlights had, according to those in charge of the hall, “a few hours of life.” There were some occasions when it was possible to rehearse for several days, with problems. For example, as the theater also held functions of another nature on Sunday, on Monday the lighting technicians rested, and it was a battle to get someone to light the stage, which was sometimes achieved an hour later by walking around all the offices looking for someone to light the stage. would authorize it

Another problem that the large hall of this *Teatro* had was the acoustics, even though they talked about it and wrote in an illustrative document about its specificities, the acoustics were actually very bad. Depending on where a listener was placed in the lunette, the boxes or above, some instruments could be heard, and others did not even sound, giving the impression to those watching the instrumentalists that some were only pretending to be playing but that they were playing. actually they didn’t. This made it necessary to make huge panels so that the sound would bounce back, pushing them each concert to the height of the curtains, since the void that existed behind the stage “swallowed” the sound. This was also an example of the unsuitability of the famous theater for rehearsals.

When the conservatory was finally refurbished, there was great relief in the orchestra to return to a better place. acoustics, and with the stage arranged, the lighting a little better and without problems to enter as it was the *Teatro Nacional*. The background of the stage and the walls were modified with another type of decoration, in which “acoustic panels” were said to have been used.

After these arrangements from the 80s, today (2007) the same problems return, poor lighting, the auditorium leaks, and there is already talk of “botching” the ceiling so that water does not seep in, since it has meant that in on certain occasions no activity can be carried out in it.

About the conductor.

A “commentator” totally unaware of what an orchestra, the conductor and the music are; all of this in the technical part and little or nothing in terms of the particularities and specificities of the musical art, he asked himself, what was the purpose of an orchestra conductor? If the musicians had the music to read it, which, according to him, I already had everything done, like a recipe, which you just had to start and it would “automatically” be working. This “idea” is generally still had by people who regularly attend concerts, the public, who are only interested in hearing the result already on stage, and who do not know the previous steps of preparing a concert.

If both physical parties, the conductor and the members of an orchestra, perform a number of rehearsals, say two weeks of

preparation with a symphony orchestra that is expert in “playing” its instruments, more unaware of matters that concern exclusively an orchestral conductor, such as in musical terms, “unifying passages, unifying arcades, balancing the sonority, accuracy in terms of attacks, phrases, a whole host of “effects”, short notes, long, ligated, accented, etc. the dictionary is very long, as well as what refers to “tempo”, dilating, prolonging, accelerating, sudden silences, or pauses, all of this performed by a number of 70 musicians, which is the that make up an orchestral ensemble, which cannot play alone, if not as the conductor’s instrument, which must be with mathematical accuracy regarding the value of each note, gives us a minimum idea of the function of a conductor orchestra, to this we must add, the elementary or deep knowledge about the instruments, orchestrating, transports of the different instruments, knowledge of the styles of the different periods and schools, knowledge of harmony, and of course, the interpretation within all this from each director. The version of the same symphony, let’s say *Beethoven’s* Fifth Symphony in C minor addressed by 15 conductors, is different for each one. Now let’s imagine that in a thousand conductors (which is of course a tiny number, if we do this in a census way), it means a thousand different versions.

For the public attending concerts, or those starting out in music, I will try to refer to some of these specificities. (See final notes p57).

Short Note

The concept of “short” in a group of instrumentalists has ways of being conceived. Generally in a four-beat 4/4 time signature, the value of each quarter note is one beat, that means “one beat” if we divide it into four by having a dot on the note which is the meaning of “short note,” Logically, it does not take four parts of such an extension of time, but much less, but each musician executes this criterion of “short” in a different way, for some in that scale of four, the 1st note can have a duration of half, (2 parts) or there can be three, in others, and the same 1 quarter in many more, in this case it is the director who determines according to his experience, knowledge and requirement of the work the exact duration for an entire section or the entire orchestra in the passage where the problem appears.

The extension of the *Calderón* differs in the versions of different directors, as well as the subsequent attack. Some conductors pause before timing the movement, while other concepts of such an idea immediately attack the tempo that follows. At this beginning there is already a problem to be clear about the movement of the baton with the right hand, and generally being carried away by the fast and logical análisis of form in a baton **tempo the two beats** marked in the key signature of the initial movement of the symphony.

2/4 ---- 1 1 1 1..... 1 1 1 1.....

2/4 ----- 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

On contemporary music in the Symphony Orchestra.

During the 1960s it was cultivated by a group of composers whom professor José Castañeda defined in a symphonic program commentary as follows, “...*The advanced music in Guatemala represented by Jorge Sarmientos, Joaquín Orellana and Enrique Anleu Díaz has been brought out of an outdated art towards contemporary trends by this group of composers.*”

...(NSO concert program) This had many repercussions in the musical history of Guatemala, since the expressions of random, electroacoustic, electronic music, serial, sound blocks, pointillist were approached indifferent works by the aforementioned authors, which meant on the other hand part of the use of an almost particular writing in each author, to be able to encrypt (fix) these musical forms, the staff then had in some way or traditional writing nothing more than to serve as a reference, since lines, numbers, squares, or signs unfamiliar to the traditionally trained musician, that is, “**a new musical language.**” This new aesthetic, which was already developing in other latitudes, was not known in Guatemala, although other currents such as French impressionism, dodecaphonism, polytonism, atonalism and other related currents were well known to José Castañeda, who even some of his students introduced us to their knowledge.

Although the above reference is a well-known aspect among scholars and those familiar with Guatemalan music of that decade and later years, the relation of this

has anecdotal and also very serious and worrisome aspects regarding the future of contemporary symphonic music in Guatemala.

Seen in a somewhat tolerant way by the composers because in that decade of the 60s, together with Guatemalan painting, the search and response to the socio-political and aesthetic environment was attempted.



As a comment we must consider the *tempis* of Toscanini, Bersntein, Richard Strawss, Karajan, Bruno Walter, Furtwangler, Swarousky..., etc. Berlin Philharmonic and its famous conductor sonorities of the orchestra by the instruments and instrumentalists, as well as making a brief analysis of the introduction with its *Calderón*.

* About it when it's an orchestra Philharmonic is the society that maintains it who governs matters of conducting soloists, works, but in a National ensemble the musicians do not command, they play which is their duty -(Arturo Toscanini, music and the orchestra is not a democracy, but a dictatorship, Toscanini)-

* See how the categories are measured in the Golea, A.- The adventure of music directors already as such - through contacts, opportunities, hiring decisions, since it is assumed that everyone has the capacity from the moment they publicly demonstrate it. In that sense there are a large number of directors in the world, very good, sometimes extraordinary, who are completely unknown and have no one to promote them **commercially**, this is one of the reasons for considering the categories of director in the capitalist world.

*** Here the interviewer did not add the rest: The orchestra has not declined due to the lack of a principal conductor (only) it has declined due to the lack of dedication to the work, lack of respect for those who can condition together with the musicians to raise their quality, because he is the director - so obviously it is not the conductor's fault, but the lack of guidance, experience in playing in an orchestra, and lack of orchestral discipline.

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Información Oral (varias personas)

Secretaría de la Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional (entrevista al Lic., Julio Morán Martinez)

Maestros de la OSN. (información anónima)



Announcement at the conservatory of Noe in a concert of the N.S.O



Ricardo del Carmen, principal director of the N.S.O.
(1967 – 1990)
(1967 – 1990)



The N.S.O. playing in the Republic of El Salvador.



David Handel
N.S.O. advisor



The N.S.O. in the 1980s



Enrique Anteu Díaz, Principal Director of the N.S.O. in the years 2000-2005



José María Franco Gil
N.S.O.
Spanish director, who was director of the N.S.O.
(1960 - 1962).



Ricardo del Carmen, director of the
N.S.O. in the 1980s.