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A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE PUERTO RICAN ART SONG AND ITS COMPOSERS

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2. Art song
3. Héctor Campos Parsi
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“GUÍÑALE AL SOL LA CABAÑA”:
A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE PUERTO RICAN ART SONG AND ITS COMPOSERS

BY

YARITZA Y. ZAYAS COLLET

SCHOLARLY ESSAY

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctoral Arts in Music
with a concentration in Performance and Literature
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2018

Urbana, Illinois

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ABSTRACT

Even though there is a fair amount of research about the Latin-American art song, the resources solely about the Puerto Rican art song are limited. This lack of resources has made it extremely difficult for those interested in finding information about the Puerto Rican art song in and out of the island, preventing this repertoire from being performed.

This research explores the available repertoire, its historical significance, and what nationalistic traces may or may not be found in the musical style of these composers. The objective of this paper is to create another source of information available to those interested in the Puerto Rican art song genre, and to add new material to the current body of knowledge. Fortunately, interest is growing thanks to a new wave of Puerto Rican singers completing their doctoral work in the United States, who are interested in exploring this topic in order to preserve it, expose it internationally, and give it the significance that it deserves. Available material on this subject has been gathered, and with it I present a historical survey of the Puerto Rican art song with a selection of six representative composers, a small catalogue of the songs that are available for research and performance at various libraries in Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rico National Archives and those that can be found directly through the composers.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I give my thanks to Prof. Stone, for rescuing me when I needed help, I will be forever grateful. To my doctoral committee, thanks for the lessons you taught me as they have shaped the way I teach others. Dr. Carrillo, thank you for all of your guidance during this research, and for giving me the encouragement that I needed to finish this degree, I listened to your counsel, because I want to grow old, (it sounds better in Spanish, I know).

To my dear Husband, thanks for the support, and for listening to everything that I had to say about the Puerto Rican art song, every single day for the past three years, you sir are a trooper and expert on this topic by now and should be recognized for it.

And to my dear Mother and Grandmother, my deepest thanks, I will never be able to repay everything that you have done for me. Thanks for believing in the little girl that once said that she wanted to be a singer, and for all of the sacrifices you endured to make sure that I was properly educated. Ustedes son mis más grandes maestros, todo lo que sé, lo sé gracias a ustedes.
To Salvador and Marina: learn from the past to shape your future.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................1

CHAPTER 2: THE PUERTO RICAN ART SONG ......................................................................6

CHAPTER 3: SIX REPRESENTATIVE COMPOSERS OF THE PUERTO RICAN ART SONG, SONGS AND POETRY ..................................................................................17

Monserrate Ferrer (1885-1966) ..................................................................................................18

Narciso Figueroa (1906-2004) .................................................................................................21

Héctor Campos Parsi (1922-1998) .........................................................................................24

Amaury Veray (1922-1995) .....................................................................................................27

Esther Alejandro (b.1947) .......................................................................................................31

Ernesto Cordero (b.1946) .......................................................................................................33

CONCLUSION ............................................................................................................................37

REFERENCES ..........................................................................................................................39

APPENDIX A: LUIS LLORÉNS TORRES BIOGRAPHY ..........................................................43

APPENDIX B: PUERTO RICAN ART SONG CATALOGUE ......................................................45

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS ....................................................................................54
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“When it comes to solo part-song there is little to deal with, historically in Latin America.” – Gilbert Chase

During the romantic period the art song as we know it was born. Thanks to the nationalistic movements of the time, composers went back to their roots looking for inspiration, for folkloric elements that they could incorporate into their music and for beautiful poetry in their languages for them to make art with. Thanks to the printing press, these songs became available to be enjoyed by everyone everywhere and some of these songs travelled the world, and made it all the way to the Americas, either by the hand of graduates returning home after completing their musical studies in Europe, or in performances by musicians visiting different cities on tour with their travelling companies. These new art songs were accepted favorably by the composers and performers of the Americas, and countries adapted the genre to fit their culture and made it their own. Puerto Rico was not the exception.

Even though there is a fair amount of research about Latin-American art song, the available resources solely about the Puerto Rican art song are limited. This lack of resources has made it extremely difficult for those interested in finding information about the Puerto Rican art song in and out of the island. As a consequence, this repertoire is under performed and under studied.

The importance of this research is to explore the available repertoire, its historical significance, the factors and characteristics that set them in the art song category, and what

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nationalistic traces can be found in the musical style of these composers if any. The objective of this essay is to create another source of information available to those interested in the Puerto Rican art song genre, and to add new material to the current body of knowledge.

But, before getting into the discussion about the Puerto Rican art song it is of some importance to discuss the art song genre in general and its components, for this will be beneficial in providing a basis from which to present and discuss the pieces that will be covered in the main body of this research.

So, what is the art song genre?

According to Barbara Meister in her book *An Introduction to the Art Song* the term indicates:

A song by a classical composer suitable for inclusion in a formal recital by a professional artist with a trained voice […] has a degree of intimacy that is seldom equaled in other kinds of music where the singer and accompanist must communicate to the audience the most subtle and evanescent emotions as expressed in the poem and music.

Even though this in itself could be used as the basis of an entire discussion, I think that it is still important to elaborate a little more on Meister’s view about the mention of the professional artist with a trained voice as the medium to present these songs. This quote gives the impression that the art song genre is supposed to be performed solely by a classically trained singer; while that is usually the norm, these pieces are meant to be performed and appreciated by anyone who can and wishes to. This type of commentary perpetuates the belief that genres like the art song or anything “classical” are for the elitists, and that what we know as pop music is what the rest of the population can enjoy. However, this art is for everyone who wishes to
indulge in it, not just trained singers; any amateur can present them in an informal space and they will still be art songs. And yes, there are and will be songs that only an experienced, trained singer will be able to perform due to the level of difficulty of the piece, but the art song repertoire is extensive and there will always be a song suitable for the amateur singer to perform.

In her book titled, *Art Song: Linking Poetry and Music*, Carol Kimball describes the term art song in a similar manner:

> Art song is another term for classical song, the result of a composer choosing an existing poem or section of prose and then setting it to music. Depending on its country of origin it might be called art song, *lied, mélodie, romanza, romanse*. Art songs are usually composed for voice and piano and sung by professional or trained voices.

The wording used to describe the art song genre in both of these quotes may be similar, but just the simple use of the word, usually in the description, makes a significant difference, making it feel welcoming to any non professional singer who stumbles onto that kind of literature.

Meister also mentions the relationship between the singer and the accompanist, which is key when presenting art songs. That “intimacy” is an essential aspect when performing this genre, as the piano does not merely serve as accompaniment as is typically the case; the pianist is another storyteller. Great examples of the piano being a storyteller are found in Schubert’s songs.
where he gives the piano an “active supporting voice”\(^2\) that aids in setting the scene. His

*Gretchen am Spinnrade* and *Erlkönig* are excellent examples of how he used the piano to aid in the scene setting and unifying stanzas. Who hasn’t felt their heart racing with the galloping of the horse that was being ferociously ridden by a desperate father trying to reach help in time for his delirious child lying at the brink of death with *Erlkönig*? Or the never-ending whir of a spinning wheel in an enclosed room as in *Gretchen*? In these pieces and in the art song repertoire in general, the voice and the piano have the same level of importance; both must work together to communicate the message or story presented in the poem through music, allowing the listener to experience the song as a whole and be transported to wherever the story intends him to.

Another characteristic of the art song is the importance of the quality of the poem. Kimball, in her book, *Song: A Guide to Art Song and Literature*, states that in an art song the “composer blends music and poetry in such a way that it is impossible to think of them apart. We do not hear poetry set to music, we hear a song.”

Donald Ivey\(^3\) successfully describes this relationship between the poetry and music in the following way:

Songs must not be thought of as either music or poetry but rather as an amalgam that shares significantly in both arts and is equally dependent upon both. It is possible to discuss the poetry, in form and content, and it is possible to discuss the music, in form and content. But in a truly successful song they function concurrently.

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The four most common forms of art song that have been described are the strophic song, the through-composed form, the modified strophic, and the binary or ternary form. The strophic song most closely resembles the structure of popular songs, in which the composer sets different verses while repeating the same music for each verse with no or minor changes. The through-composed form, which follows the structure of the poem, is also known as *durchkomponiert*. The music of this type of song is written following the text and reflecting the intention of the poet as faithfully as possible. In this form there is nearly no repetition of the music; ideally the music moves in accord with the poetry without reiterating the musical material. The modified strophic form combines the two mentioned above by repeating music while adapting to the changes in the text. While describing this form Kimball mentions that “to create interest, the composer often makes changes to the music that accompany each verse, these changes might be subtle or small or they may be substantial. A composer might change a key, the rhythm of the melodic line, or the piano figures to create variety.”\(^4\) The last form is the binary or ternary form. Binary divides the song into two parts AB, and ternary form divides it into three sections ABA. In this form, finding variations of the melody are possible. The form would then be classified as ABA’, AA’BB’ or, for ternary, ABA’. Kimball also mentions that “the ternary structure provides a nicely balanced formal design that allows a composer to vary the middle section and still bring back the opening section in an exact repeat, or with slight variations.”

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\(^4\) Ibid, p. 20
CHAPTER 2: THE PUERTO RICAN ART SONG

To better appreciate the Puerto Rican art song, a brief review of the history of Puerto Rico is essential, for this will help one to understand the nationalistic tendencies that are intrinsic to the genre. The documented history of Puerto Rico dates back to 1493 when Christopher Columbus came upon Borikén, an island inhabited by the Taínos. Because of the Island’s rich resources the Spaniards settled, colonized and subjugated its original habitants. The Taínos, strained by all the hard work began to perish; the Spaniards, in need of workers for the mines and fields, brought with them West African slaves to replace the Taínos as a work force.

The 400 years of rule under Spanish sovereignty are known as the Colonial Period. During this period the major influence in developing new music was brought from Spain, and the Aguinaldo (carols), décimas, pavana, gallarda and more were adopted. From its African ancestors Puerto Rico inherited its rhythm, and the bomba and plena were born. The Taíno music consisted of percussion instruments and voice, mostly used at the areyto. The Taíno and African cultures significantly influenced the Puerto Rican society; elements from these cultures are present not only in the music, but also in the language, food and physical traits. The amalgam of these three races is the pillar of the Puerto Rican culture; it is embroidered in the DNA, food, music, and pretty much every aspect of their lives.

5 Borikén is the Taíno name for Puerto Rico. The term Borikén is still used by Puerto Ricans to refer to the island and its natives, called Boricuas.
6 Local indigenous people of the island.
7 Ten-line stanza of poetry.
8 Ceremonies celebrated by the Taínos to announce the beginning of war, cure the sick, mourn the dead or to invoke various gods.
During the 19th century, the Puerto Rican Danza, mostly promoted by composer Juan Morel Campos, reached a peak point that opened the door to a more “classical” form of composition that represented the Puerto Rican culture. After the Spanish-American war ended in 1898, the United States of America invaded, and took control of the island.

The Puerto Rican art song made its first appearance during what we know as the romantic period of the island, which started around the 1840’s. In her pamphlet, *La Canción de arte en Puerto Rico* (The art song in Puerto Rico), Yvette Ortíz mentions that only three composers from this period left us works that, due to their intention and magnitude, can be classified in the art song category. They are José I. Quintón (1881-1925), Manuel G. Tavárez (1843-1883) and Felipe Gutierrez (1825-1900). Gutierrez’s music represents a more classical Italian style of composition. He wrote over 300 works in which he explored a variety of genres, including songs, operas, a zarzuela, and orchestral works. After returning from his brief studies in France, Tavárez brought with him a direct vision of the European romanticism, a passion for Chopin and an exalted devotion to his homeland.

Quintón lived during a difficult transitional period in the history of the country in which the change of currency created an economic depression that lasted for decades. While the former Spanish colony was adapting to a new cultural influence, the new government suspended and eliminated the subsidized musical activities of the island. This left many musicians without work and no other option than to leave the island. This also created a hardship for those who stayed.

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9 An amalgam of the Cuban habanera and the European contradanse, composers like Juan Morel Campos, Manuel Gregorio Tavárez and Carlos Padilla developed the danza to the genre it is today. A traditional danza consists of four parts: Introduction, three themes and a repetition of the first theme, almost all of the parts are repeated.

10 Ortiz, Yvette (Editor). *La Canción de Arte Puertorriqueña*. San Juan, Puerto Rico: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1975, p.2

María Luisa Muñoz, in her book, *La Música en Puerto Rico, Panorama Histórico-Cultural* (Music in Puerto Rico, Historic-Cultural Panorama), gives a description of the events that transpired in the island during this transitional period:

The separation of church and state dealt a mortal blow to the musician, due to the fact that till that moment the church was the true sponsor of their active and professional life. Whatever was European custom did not fit into the North American politics. With the unceasing discontinuation of public funds, orchestras, chamber groups and scholarships awarded to talented students to study abroad suddenly disappeared. So it seemed that the Puerto Rican musical life, barely beginning, was destined to vanish with the installation of this new government.¹²

As a consequence, this pause in the musical activity of the island was amplified, producing an unnecessary underestimation of all things regional. The efforts to reestablish normality were slow and difficult, but the fight to preserve the Puerto Rican culture was still strong and ongoing. These efforts to preserve and reestablish the musical activity in the island were not in vain, and slowly musical societies and groups were established, bringing once again a glimpse of hope for the musical future of Puerto Rico.

During the 1930’s a substantial number of trained musicians flourished in the Island, and a period of notable artistry began. Unfortunately, in terms of art song composition, not much was happening. Antonio S. Pedreira, in his article, *En torno a la Música*

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Puertorriqueña (About Puerto Rican Music), discusses the lack of composers and attributes this in part to government repression and economic collapse.

It is in the 1940’s that the art song makes its great appearance in Puerto Rico. A few composers in the past decades dabbled in art songs, but they were usually composed sporadically or to provide music lessons. It is during this period that the bulk of the Puerto Rican art song was composed, due to several factors that fostered the development of the genre. First, there was now a large strain of professionally trained singers on the Island, and second, the return of Puerto Rican composers who were studying abroad, such as Héctor Campos Parsi and Amaury Veray, added to the renaissance of an interest in everything autochthonous.

The legislative reconstruction in Puerto Rico after the WWII, and the establishment of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in 1952, encouraged the search for a national identity in all of the artistic branches of the Island. It also led to the creation of new governmental offices such as the Institute of Culture, the Puerto Rican Corporation for Public Dissemination (WIPR), the establishment of a music public school system, and the creation of the Puerto Rico Music Conservatory, cementing the path for the creation and distribution of numerous art works, including among these, art songs.

In her book, The Latin American Art Song: A Critical Anthology and Interpretative Guide for Singers, Patricia Caicedo states that the art song genre, either in Europe or America, goes hand in hand with the nationalistic movements, and Puerto Rico was not the exception. The evolution and development of the genre on the island is the result of the merging of poetical and musical elements of the Puerto Rican culture that were assimilated

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to the esthetic of European art song concepts. Ramón Arroyo Carrión, in his repertoire notes of the recording, *La Canción de Arte Puertorriqueña Vol.4*,\(^\text{14}\) states that this revival of the art song points towards the maturity of the composers that were now occupied with a genre that demands maximum discipline and responsibility.

Among the most prolific composers of the genre focusing on the development of a national music language, were Amaury Veray, Héctor Campos Parsi and Jack Délano. Of these three, it was Campos Parsi who most persistently cultivated the genre. The majority of his vocal works are based on local flavor as he incorporates the rhythm and melodic characteristics of folkloric and popular regional genres. In his songs, he employs a variety of regional genres, including the *seís, danza* and *bomba*\(^\text{15}\). His first incursions into the genre reflect a neoclassical style of composition clearly influenced by his mentors Aaron Copland and Nadia Boulanger. His musical settings of Juan Antonio Corretjer’s poems were first-rate and greatly influenced the poet’s view about music as a method to communicate, especially the art song. In one of his writings titled, “*Para que los pueblos canten*” (So that the people sing), Corretjer mentions the following:

> The setting of my poetry to music was initiated by Héctor Campos Parsi during the second half of the 50’s, when he set to music two sonnets from my book Tierra Nativa (Native Land). These were sonnets *XIX Soneto Insomne* (Insomnious sonnet) and *XV En la luz* (In the light) and the first verse of the *Tercer Canto de los Primeros Años* (Third Sung of the First’s Years). The


\(^\text{15}\) Puerto Rican dance originated in around the 17th century by West Africans and their descendants. In Bomba dancers take turn to challenge the drums, thus creating a dialog with their moves that the drummer has to answer.
Portuguese soprano María Justina de Aldrey sang them for the first time at the Ateneo; soon Puerto Rican soprano María Esther Robles recorded them for the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, in the album titled *Art Song* under the title *Tres Poemas de Juan Antonio Corretjer* (Three Poems by Juan Antonio Corretjer) in 1962. I thank the composer and performer for appreciating my poetry enough to set it to music and establish the art song as a modality of the Puerto Rican modern music.\(^{16}\)

The *Tres Poemas de Corretjer* songs provide an excellent example for clearly understanding the characteristics and the style of the Puerto Rican art song during that period. These three pieces delineate the nationalistic style of the composer, complementing eloquently the patriotic text of Corretjer through the use of folkloric elements.

Amaury Veray shows a devotion to the art song genre. This can be observed in a quote from one of his lectures at the Music Conservatory, thankfully documented by Brunilda García.

> “I remember that Amaury said to us, ladies and gentlemen, selling opera is nice, but what I need here is to set music to Puerto Rican poets and work on the national. That, for me was a command.”\(^{17}\)

Setting to music the work of Puerto Rican poets is one of the main points in the development of a national style of art song in Puerto Rico. In his compositions, Veray

\(^{16}\) Corretjer, Juan A. *Para que los pueblos canten*. Cooperación de Artes Gráficas. Guaynabo, Puerto Rico 1976, p.55-56

employs a romantic language, borrowing from the *copla*\(^{18}\) and *villancico*. His work stands out for its lyricism in the voice and the evocation of popular elements. Among his works we can find the cycle *Tres Canciones* (Three Songs), with text by Luis Palés Matos, and *Canto a Fili Mele* (Song to Fili Mele), a song almost like a cantata, also with text by Palés Matos.

Jack Délano a Ukrainian who embraced the Puerto Rican culture, dedicated a great part of his work to the art song. His style is characterized by his detailed interest in the voice and harmony. The piano part in his songs demands to be approached by an experienced pianist that is able to play the difficult passages of his songs with precision and control. His role as director of the cinematography division at the Department of Education permitted him to investigate and compile a great quantity of material that he vigorously and masterfully incorporated in his vocal and instrumental works. His most iconic songs are *Tres cancioncitas del mar* (Three songs from the sea) with text by Nimia Vicéns, Estér Feliciano Mendoza and Carmelina Vizcarrondo, and his cycle *Cuatro sones de la tierra* (Four songs of the earth), based on *Letras para música* (Lyrics for music) by Tomás Blanco. The *Cuatro sones* stand out due to the fact that their lyrics come from a series of poems explicitly written to be set to music. During this period, the poets of the island saw in the art song a method to publicize their work and reach a broader audience.

During this musical nationalistic period, which could be considered the *Golden Period* of the art song in Puerto Rico, the artistic community embraced with fervor the call to preserve everything that was truly Puerto Rican, broadcast it, and make it available not only to the public of the island, but internationally. For the art song, this was done through recitals, various composition competitions sponsored by the government, recordings, and print music. Donald

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\(^{18}\) Poetic form consisting of four verses, typically employed in Spanish song and literature.
Thompson describes in his book, *Music in Puerto Rico a Reader's Anthology*, the role that the government played in the growth of the arts during this time by saying:

Further changes occurred in the 1950’s, when the insular government, riding an unprecedented wave of economic progress and industrial development, first became heavily involved in the arts, in realms of policy and production as well as in sharply focused large-scale support and promotion.19

The newly founded Institute of Puerto Rican Culture was doing its best to preserve as much of the Puerto Rican culture as possible, while fomenting the creation of new works either by competitions, or sponsorship. This economic help from the government was necessary for the artistic progress of the island and opened many doors for artists that otherwise would not have been able to present their work and make it available for future generations.

The 60’s are the period of the late nationalists; among the composers of this decade we can find José Antunez, Ernesto Cordero, Rafael Aponte Ledée and Luis Antonio Ramírez who composed a cycle titled, *Nueve Cantos Antillanos* (Nine Antillean Songs), in which he explores the musical contact points between the music from Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

In 1966, the first Inter-American Arts Festival was celebrated in Puerto Rico. It was dedicated to Aaron Copland and helped to open doors for Puerto Rican composers and artists to be able to connect with the rest of the world, present their music, exchange ideas and

break the chains that insularism brought upon them. Puerto Rico was finally internationally recognized and the future looked bright for the coming generations.

Some late-nationalistic composers, such as, Francis Schwartz and Rafael Aponte Ledée adopted the use of a dodecaphonic technique of composition in their works as an escape route to a freer style of composition that fit into a more universal and contemporary aesthetic. During the 1970’s, after the introduction of an electronic laboratory at the University of Puerto Rico, the composers began experimenting with electronic music. The Great Encyclopedia of Puerto Rico, in its music volume, mentions that by 1975, Puerto Rican music was divided between two principal branches: the conservative, still associated with aspects of tonality and conventional instrumentation, and on the other hand, the avant-garde composers, disconnected from tonality and the conventionalisms of the past.20

In 1986 La Canción de Arte en Puerto Rico (The Art Song in Puerto Rico), a collection of songs by major Puerto Rican composers compiled by Carlos Vazquez, made its appearance. This collection includes 29 songs by 13 composers and covers three musical generations of Puerto Rican composers; the earliest song in the collection was composed in 1961 and the latest in 1985. As stated by Leonardo Egúrbida in the prologue section, this project was made to enrich the musical culture of Puerto Rico and also to promote and make these songs accessible for singers, instrumentalists, composers and historians. Besides songs for voice and piano, this collection includes songs for voice and guitar which, according to Egúrbida, “demonstrates the commitment of the National Association towards the members that are part of it and the community that it serves.” At the end of the prologue, Egúrbida mentions his desire of creating another collection like this one in the future or a revised

version of this one with added songs. That, however, was never completed or brought to light.

Unfortunately, the recorded history of the Puerto Rican Art song stops for a while, after the release of the collection mentioned above. The lack of interest in funding from the government towards musical programs and competitions took a toll on the artistic community of Puerto Rico, and the focus once again turned to the idea that, in order to prosper it was necessary to leave the island, thus leaving a great void in the artistic community of Puerto Rico. What was gained with the effort of our forefathers was now seen as things that always existed, and the urge to preserve them faded. The love for everything autochthonous was declining and it soon all became about European music once again.

In recent years, the library of the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico started digitalizing their *Puerto Rican Music Collection* and, thanks to the effort of students who deemed necessary the inclusion of Puerto Rican music in their curriculum, the institution added the requirement for students to add a Puerto Rican piece as part of their graduation recital, with the sole purpose of promoting the music and adding more opportunity for the young composers to be exposed. Thanks to this new rule many young composers have once again an outlet to present their works.

In 2016, mezzo-soprano Ilca López and pianist Diana Figueroa released *El Paisaje y su Sombra la canción de arte puertorriqueña* (The scenery and its shadow the Puerto Rican art song). This recording includes pieces from composers Leonardo Egúrbida, Héctor Campos Parsi, Roberto Sierra, Luis A. Ramírez, William Ortiz and Ernesto Cordero. And in print we have *Música Vocal con Sabor Caribeño* (Vocal music with Caribbean flair), a collection of songs by Ernesto Cordero, which includes songs for voice and piano, voice and guitar, songs for voice flute and guitar and some for voice and orchestra. This collection was recently released in 2018
by the Institute of Puerto Rican culture and it is a big comeback from the void of the past 20 years.

The present generation of Puerto Rican artists is showing an interest in the autochthonous, and an eagerness to work for the betterment of the island. They are creating outlets to perform and present new works, switching the focus to preserving and enriching the Puerto Rican culture.
CHAPTER 3: SIX REPRESENTATIVE COMPOSERS OF THE PUERTO RICAN ART SONG, SONGS AND POETRY

This chapter presents a selection of what I think is a fair representation of various art songs by Puerto Rican composers. I have selected a song from each of the composers mentioned in this chapter and have provided annotations of each of the songs to provide information that might serve as a guide for further investigation. The criteria for the selection of these songs were the following:

• songs must be representative of the overall work and style of the composer.
• songs have to be easily available to be requested for further investigation or performance.
• songs that have been recorded are preferred as this will serve as a musical guide while approaching the song either for investigation or performance.

The annotations will discuss what nationalistic elements can be found in the musical style of these composers and in the songs if any, their approach to the lyrics when setting them to music, and the harmonic language or any other relevant detail that should be mentioned. Given the variety and great number of composers it is not possible to mention them all, but this selection of six composers can serve as an example to better comprehend the way the art song was perceived and portrayed in Puerto Rico. With that in mind, let us begin chronologically.
Monserrate Ferrer (1885-1966)

Better known as “Monsita”, was a composer and pianist, born in San Juan, the 7th of January of 1885. Daughter of Don Gabriel Ferrer Hernández and Doña Monserrate Otero de Ferrer, at the age of six Monsita began her music and piano lessons with Rosa Sicardó, and perfected her skills with Ana Otero. It was during the time at the Piano Academy of Ana Otero that she began to feel the desire to create, and here she wrote her first compositions.

In 1913 Ferrer composed her first danza Ensueños de Gloria (Daydreams of Glory), awarded by the Society of Writers and Artists of Ponce. In 1914 she won first place once again in the contest with the danza Nocturno (Nocturn).

After traveling through Europe Monsita returned to Puerto Rico. Not satisfied with her technique, she started studies under the tutelage of Don Aristides Chavier who taught her fugue and counterpoint. According to Amaury Veray who wrote in his essay Monsita Ferrer, Sonatina Puertorriqueña para Canto y Esperanza, Ferrer “was the eternal student, always capable of finding guidance with many of her colleagues. Her restless and serene spirit is symbol of her constant artistic renovation”.

Monsita’s travels and studies provided her with a universal musical scope which can be seen in her composition Cuarteto de Cuerdas (String Quartet), a series of studies for piano, and her ambitious Diez Variaciones para piano sobre un tema de Aristides Chavier (Ten variations for piano on a theme by Aristides Chavier). But, that did not blind her to native idioms which led her to compose a series of Villancicos21 and Aguinaldos that nurture the Puerto Rican musical collection.

21 A Spanish part-song resembling the madrigal.
Monsita was the only woman of her period in Puerto Rico fully dedicated to composition. Before her, Carmen Aguayo, Anita Otero and Mercedes Arias (all from the 19th century) practiced composition as a secondary vocation. Chronologically, Monsita belongs to the post-romantic period of Puerto Rican music. “Her artistic production seemed balanced by two capital forces, the romanticism, and the modernist becoming of our music, which was the direct result of the change in sovereignty. Just like José I. Quintón, Ferrer is a transitional figure, who suffered with the historic responsibilities that, the destiny brings upon transitional figures”.  

**Amanecer**

Ferrer’s adaptation of this décima by Lloréns Torres is based on the dance form known as the *seis,* the prelude consists of an I-IV-V-V progression, common of various *seises* like the *Chorreao, Mariandá, Fajardeño* (see example 1) and *Andino.* This use of the *seis* serves as an excellent example of the nationalist traits that are an integral part of the Puerto Rican art song.

Ferrer successfully captures the images described by Lloréns portraying with the music the joyous and defiant characteristics of the poem. This joyous playfulness can be easily perceived by the appearance of the vocal line. Ferrer breaks the word *guña* (wink) by placing a

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23 This song is available to be requested at the Puerto Rican digital collection at the Amaury Veray library at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico.
24 The *seis* is a direct descendant from the musical genres that arrived to Puerto Rico from southern Spain at the end of the 17th century. *Seis* means six. The melodies and harmonies are simple and are traditionally accompanied by a guitar, cuatro and guiro.
silence in the middle of the word, resembling the sun winking to the cottage at sunrise. The vocal line ends in the same playful way by adding grace notes in the middle of the word *gallo* (rooster), thus resembling the singing of the rooster; the use of arpeggiation in the piano part insinuates the idea of a horse galloping at sunrise. Amanecer may not follow a classic art song pattern but is still without a doubt a valuable contribution to the Puerto Rican Art song repertoire.

Poem and translation

*Amanecer*

*Luis Lloréns Torres*

Guiñale al sol la cabaña.

El río es brazo que se pierde

*Dawn*

The cottage winks at the sun.

The river is an arm that fades

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25 The translations of the poems presented in this paper are by Yaritza Y. Zayas Collet
por entre la manga verde
que cuelga de la montaña.
El yerbazal se desbaña.
La luz baba la colina.
Y más que el veloz caballo,
hiere la paz campesina
la puñalada honda y fina
del cantío de mi gallo.

into the green sleeve
that hangs from the mountain.
The grassland is bathed.
The light drools over the hill.
And besides the swift horse,
the rural peace is disturbed by
the deep and fine stab of the
singing of my rooster.

Narciso Figueroa (1906-2004)

Pianist, composer and teacher, born in San Juan on October 31st of 1906. At the age of seven he began his music lessons with his parents, Don Jesús Figueroa and Doña Carmen Sanabria. By the age of ten Figueroa was playing piano and violin sonatas by Mozart and Beethoven in concerts with his brother José. At 15 Figueroa began studies at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Madrid where he studied piano and harmony. In Paris he studied at L’Ecole Normal de Paris under the tutelage of Alfred Cortot.

For many years he taught piano at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico and was a member alongside his brothers of the Quinteto Figueroa (Figueroa Quintet). As the official pianist of the quintet Narciso played concert tours in Europe, Latin America and the United States. Figueroa has a few published works, a few of which are included in El Cancionero de Puerto Rico (The Puerto Rican Song Book) published in 1959, a collection of songs based on Puerto Rican folklore. Figueroa is considered the “Father of the Modern danza”. He wrote an innumerable amount of danzas; many of those were submitted to the danza competition of the Institute of Culture and the Recreational Circle of San Germán and won numerous awards in this
Among his danzas we can find Añoranza (Longing), Danza negra para piano y voz (Black danza for piano and voice), Recuerdos (Memories), Me voy pa’ Niu Yol (I’m going to New York) among others. His art song repertoire includes Nana, El Canto de las Piedras (The song of the stones), Silencio (Silence), and Tres Poemas de José de Diego, among others.

Mi Rancho

Gustavo Batista, in the prologue of the disc Canciones de Arte por Narciso Figueroa, mentions that Figueroa decided to set these décimas to music after hearing them recited by a poet. Mi rancho is the third song of the collection titled Cuatro Décimas (Four Décimas) by Luis Lloréns Torres. This gem of a song is strongly influenced by the danza; elements of the danza that are present in this song are the prelude, which is written in the tradition of the paseo, the employment of a 2/4-meter, the most common meter used in this genre, and the constant use of triplets in the piano accompaniment.

Lloréns’s flirtatious text is a narrative of a young man content with his life, while being distracted at work, admiring his hut from afar and letting his mind wander by recollecting his amorous encounters on rainy days with the daughter of old Pancho. The sudden change in tempo during the postlude from andantino to tranquillo sets the scene for one of those amorous encounters. Figueroa makes use of the Le lo lai in the voice line at the postlude, adding another nationalist trait to the song; le lo lai can be interpreted as the joy felt by the character while being

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26 This song is available to be requested at the Amaury Veray library at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico. CPR 71.93 F476cu
27 Canciones de Arte por Narciso Figueroa, Elaine Arandes, soprano and Narciso Figueroa, piano. (Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, ICP/C-20 vol.III), vinyl recording.
28 Tonal introduction used to announce the beginning of a danza while providing time to the dancers to get in place for the number. The paseo usually consists of eight measures in a 2/4 meter.
29 Lyrical scat used by traditional jíbaro singers heard between stanzas of the sung décima.
in the company of his lover. This song characterized by its lyric phrases and beautiful melodies in both the voice and piano, and serves as an example of Figueroa’s gift for blending text and musical material.

Poem and translation

**Mi Rancho (1976)**

*Luis Lloréns Torres*

En el cafetal mi rancho
nido de pajitas parece,
que a viento y lluvia se mece
cual colgar de un gancho.

Con la hija del viejo Pancho
las lluvias son placenteras.
Porque al caer las goteras

---

**My Ranch**

From the coffee plantation my ranch
seems like a birds nest,
that rocks with the wind and rain
like hanging from a hook.

With old Pancho’s daughter
the rains are pleasant.
Because when the rain starts
ella se acuesta conmigo, she lays with me,
y me echa encima el abrigo and covers me with the coat
de su seno y sus caderas. of her breasts and her hips.

**Héctor Campos Parsi (1922-1998)**

Campos Parsi; musicologist, pianist, lecturer and concert music composer, was born in Ponce on October 1st, 1922. His first music teacher was Cecilia Muñoz de Negrón. After his studies at the University of Puerto Rico, from 1938 to 1944, Parsi transferred to the School of Medicine at the National University of Mexico in 1945, but he had to abandon his studies two years later due to his state of health.

Thanks to a scholarship from the Department of Public Instruction in 1947, he was able to enroll at the New England Conservatory in Boston under the tutelage of Francis Judd Cooke. In 1950 he briefly attended Yale University to study with Paul Hindemith, before moving to Paris. He also studied piano at the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood with Irving Fine, Olivier Messiaen and Aaron Copland. While in Paris, Campos Parsi studied music and composition under the tutelage of Nadia Boulanger from 1950 to 1954.

After his return to Puerto Rico in 1954, Campos Parsi occupied important positions in organizations that promulgated the music of the country. He taught piano at the Escuela Libre de Musica (Free School of Music) and composition at the Conservatory of Puerto Rico. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Center of Music in Washington, D.C. Parsi also worked as the director of the music program of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture from 1966 to 1981 and as cultural adviser for the Administration for the Promotion of the Arts and Culture between 1981 and 1983. In Puerto Rico he organized the Festival Inter-Americano de las Artes (Inter-American Arts Festival), the Festival de Música de Cámara de San Juan
(Chamber Music Festival of San Juan) and the Jornadas Musicales de America y España (Music Journeys of America and Spain).

Cirilo Toro Vargas mentions in his *Diccionario Biográfico de Compositores Puertorriqueños* that Campos Parsi is “considered the dean of the Puerto Rican composers. It is established that he was the first to break the barriers of insularism and impose equal footing with international composers from the historical moment that corresponded him to live”.


**Vida Criolla**31

Parsi’s *Puntos Cubanos* are based on four décimas written by Luis Lloréns Torres, which fuse Cuban and Puerto Rican elements. Jesús María Sanromá writes in the prologue of the album *Canción de Arte*, that the “guajiro”32 and the *jibaro*33 share a common Spanish heritage that is particularly manifested in the way of singing, and in the poetic meter in which the voice is

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31 This song is available to be requested at the Amaury Veray library at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico. CPR m1621 C3676 P86 1960
32 Cuban agricultural worker.
33 Term used to refer to people who live in the mountains of Puerto Rico.
expressed. In *Puntos Cubanos* Parsi musically recreates the purpose of the poet by fusing musical folkloric elements of both nations."

In *Vida Criolla*, Campos Parsi fuses the traditional Cuban *cinquillo*\(^\text{35}\), with the Puerto Rican *Aguinaldo*\(^\text{36}\). The first four measures of the song present us with the musical motive that is repeated throughout the song, either at the same pitch or transposed. The piano accompaniment of *Vida Criolla* is characterized by its rhythmic energy and playful nature. Similar to *Mi Rancho*, the character in this *décima* is listing the benefits of his rural life and enjoying the simplicity of it by focusing on being, and the pleasure of living without existential preoccupations that may affect his quality of life. The vocal line in *Vida Criolla* follows the playful mood established by the piano at the beginning, and even though the voice is in a high range, Campos Parsi sets the music in a way such that the vocal line can retain its spoken quality that is in perfect accord with the way the poet presents the character. Even though this song is short in duration, *Vida Criolla* serves as an excellent example of the detail that Parsi gave to each of his compositions, and how he made use of national elements in his works.

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34 *Canción de Arte*, María Esther Robles, soprano and Jesús María Sanromá, piano. (Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, ICP/C-4), vinyl recording.
35 Cuban rhythmic cell used in the *Contradanza* and *danzón*.
36 Folk genre traditionally played during the holiday season.
Poem and Translation

Vida Criolla (1957)  

*Luis Lloréns Torres*

Ay, qué lindo es mi bohío
y qué alegre es mi palmar
y qué fresco el platanar
de la orillita del río.
Qué sabroso es tener frío
y un buen cigarro encender.
Qué dicha no conocer
de letras ni astronomía.
Y qué buena la hembra mía
cuando se deja querer.

Creole Life

Ah, how pretty is my hut
and how happy my palm grove
and how cool is the plantation
at the edge of the river.
How delightful is to feel cold
and to light a good cigar.
How great to not know
of letters and astronomy.
And how good is my woman
when she lets herself be loved.

Amaury Veray (1922-1995)

Veray was born in Yauco June 14th, 1922. His first music lessons were under the tutelage of Doña Olimpia Morel and soon after with Emiliano Bacó Pasarell. At the age of 16 Veray composed his first pieces: *Canción de Cuna* (Lullaby) and *Estampa Fúnebre* (Funeral Print).

In 1943 he completed his Bachelor in Arts at the University of Puerto Rico. Soon after graduating he enlisted in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. After completing his military service, Veray enrolled at the New England Conservatory in Boston, where he obtained his degree in music, with a specialty in music theory, in 1949. In 1956, the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture awarded him the Pablo Casals scholarship and sent him to the Santa Cecilia
Academy in Rome, where he studied with Hildebrando Pizzetti. During his time in Rome Veray finished his two ballets. One was titled *La Encantada* (The Enchanted), based on a legend from his hometown, and the other one was inspired by a *plena*\(^{37}\) by composer Manuel Jiménez, *Cuando las Mujeres* (When the Women).

In Puerto Rico he dedicated himself to teaching and composing. He worked as a music teacher in Ponce, as the choir director at the Catholic University, and as an assistant at the Division of Community Education. Veray composed music for seven documentaries for the Division, one of which received the International Award in Venice. He also worked as the executive director of the musical archives of the Culture Institute of Puerto Rico and as a Professor at the Conservatory of Puerto Rico, where he taught composition, theory and music history of Puerto Rico.

Veray completed and published research about the history and personality of various Puerto Rican composers, among them Manuel G. Tavarez, José I. Quintón and Monsita Ferrer. His essay *Soledad y Plenitud* (Loneliness and Fullness, 1955), was awarded a prize by the Ateneo Puertorriqueño. He wrote incidental music for some theater plays such as *Blanca Nieves* (Snow White), *La Carreta* (The Cartwheel), *Cristal Roto en el Tiempo* (Cristal Broken in Time), and for the second production of *María Soledad*, a drama by Francisco Arriví.

Among his musical creations we find the piece, *El Niño de Aguadilla* (The Boy from Aguadilla, 1954), orchestra pieces such as *De Profundis* 1972; *Fantasia para Orquesta a la Memoria de Gilberto Concepción de Gracia* (Fantasy for Orchestra to the Memory of Gilberto

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\(^{37}\) The *plena* is a type of Puerto Rican folk music. It is characterized by its musical simplicity and the repetition of phrases, especially the chorus. Its lyrics are frequently a commentary sung about day-to-day topics. The *plena* is identified primarily with the coastal communities and regions of the island. The principal instruments used in the *plena* are the tambourines.
Cocepción de Gracia, 1969), and chamber works like *Dypticos para Piano y Percusión* (Diptychs for Piano and Percussion, 1963). One of his best-known works is the *Villancico Yaucano* (Carol from Yauco). He is considered along with Héctor Campos Parsi and Jack Delano, to be one of the founders of the Puerto Rican musical nationalism.

**Cansada en el alba***

Sanromá mentions that in his works for voice, Veray inclines towards the urban tradition, showing a preference for the romantic heritage of Puerto Rican music. This song is a fine example of Veray’s skill at creating intimate settings with his music. Veray shows his nationalistic traits by using the *aguinaldo* and religious music as the background of *Cansada en el alba*. He approaches these popular genres with tender lyricism, long melodic phrases and traditional harmony.

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38 This song is available to be requested at the Amaury Veray library at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico. CPR 83 V476ca
39 *Canción de Arte*, María Esther Robles, soprano and Jesús María Sanromá, piano. (Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, ICP/C-4), vinyl recording.
This song was composed in 1957 and dedicated to soprano María Esther Robles. The lyrics of this song were written by the composer himself, something not usual in the art song genre. Veray, in addition to being an accomplished composer, wrote and published various articles, essays and song lyrics. The poetic mood of *Cansada en el alba* is gentle and calm, as it recalls a tired Virgin Mary singing a lullaby to baby Jesus.

**Poem and Translation**

**Cansada en el alba (1953)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cansada en el alba de tanto esperar que mi niño santo se durmiera ya.</td>
<td>Tired at dawn after so much waiting for my holy child to fall asleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La noche estrellada perdiéndose está en la madrugada del Dios de bondad.</td>
<td>The starry night is losing itself in the dawn of the God of kindness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mi niño del alma te voy a dormir, reposa en mi seno tu amargo sufrir.</td>
<td>Boy of my soul I will put you to sleep, your bitter suffering rest in my bosom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucero brillante ocúltate ya, da paso a la estrella del Rey Celestial.</td>
<td>Bright star hide yourself already, make way for the Celestial King’s star.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucero del alba ocúltate ya, comienza hoy el día de la eternidad.</td>
<td>Bright morning star hide yourself already, today is eternity’s first day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Esther Alejandro** (b. 1947)

Esther Alejandro is a composer and arranger, born in New York of Puerto Rican parents on March 10th of 1947. When her family moved to Puerto Rico, Alejandro began her formal musical studies at the Escuela Libre de Música (Free School of Music). She studied composition in Los Angeles, California, graduated from the University of Puerto Rico with a degree in music, and was the first woman to graduate from the composition department at the Conservatory of Puerto Rico. In 1972 she attended the American School of Fine Arts in Fontainebleau, France where she developed additional composition skills under the tutelage of Nadia Boulanger.

Like many of her contemporary composers, her music was played at several music festivals in Puerto Rico. In 1980, she participated in the Second Biennial of Contemporary Musicians presenting her orchestral suite in four parts titled *El Zapatero Prodigioso* (The Prodigious Shoemaker). In 1981, Alejandro participated in the Tenth Latin American Concourse of Contemporary Music with the piece *Canción Puertorriqueña* (Puerto Rican Song) with text by Nicolás Guillén.

Alejandro’s music catalog includes, choral music, chamber music and songs. Among her compositions we can find: *Autobiografía de Trapo* (Autobiography of Rag) for orchestra, *Brilló una Estrella* (Shone a Star), a carol for choir and piano, *Día y Noche* (Day and Night) for voice and piano, *Cinco Canciones Gallegas* (Five Galician Songs) for voice and piano, *Hecatombe* (Hecatomb), musique concrète, *Pequeño Preludio* (Small Prelude) for piano, and *Popule Meus* for mixed choir, among others.
Amanecer\textsuperscript{40}

Alejandro’s approach to this \textit{décima} by Luis Lloréns Torres takes a different route than Ferrer’s. In her setting, Alejandro employs a modern language when approaching the text; in this song she makes use of hemiolas as a rhythmic ostinato, constantly utilizes perfect fifths, suspended chords, and fluctuates the meter from 6/8 to 3/4 throughout the song. Alejandro accommodates the text of this song in the context of the principal motive that she establishes in the prelude, but still carefully suited to words, rhythm and stress.

![Ex. 6](image)

Although the vocal line of this piece looks simple, it must be sung by a singer with experience due to the fact that there are few musical references in the piano accompaniment to help singers obtain their notes.

\textsuperscript{40} This song is available to be requested at the Puerto Rican digital collection at the Amaury Veray library at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico.
Poem and translation

Amanecer (1977)

Luis Lloréns Torres

Guíñale al sol la cabaña.
El río es brazo que se pierde
por entre la manga verde
que cuelga de la montaña.
El yerbazal se desbaña.
La luz babea la colina.
Y más que el veloz caballo,
hiere la paz campesina
la puñalada honda y fina
del cantío de mi gallo.

Dawn

The cottage winks at the sun.
The river is an arm that fades
into the green sleeve
that hangs from the mountain.
The grassland is bathed.
The light drools over the hill.
And besides the swift horse,
the rural peace is disturbed by
the deep and fine stab of the
singing of my rooster.

Ernesto Cordero (b.1946)

Ernesto Cordero a guitarist, pianist and composer was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico
August 9th, 1946. Cordero initiated his musical studies with professors Jorge Rubiano and
Ramón Molinary. In 1963 he began his studies at the Conservatory of Puerto Rico, where he
studied music theory. Cordero studied piano, harmony and solfeggio under the tutelage of
Narciso Figueroa, Amaury Veray, Carmelina Figueroa and Alfredo Romero. In New York he
studied composition with the Spanish born, Cuban composer Julián Orbón. Cordero received a
scholarship from the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture to study guitar with Regino Sainz de la
Masa, Jorge Ariza and Renata Tarragó in Spain. In 1970 Cordero obtained the title of Professor
of Guitar from the Royal Music Conservatory of Madrid, and in 1972, he attended the
International Course of Classic Guitar Improvement offered in Alessandria, Italy by Alirio Díaz.

That same year in Palermo, Sicily, Cordero obtained an honorable mention at the
*International Guitar Competition Fernando Sor*. Cordero is one of the most famous Puerto Rican
composers of guitar music. He has taught at the Philharmonic Roman Academy in Italy, the New
York Community College and the University of Puerto Rico. In addition, Cordero has presented
recitals in Italy, Greece, United States of America, Spain and Puerto Rico.

Among Cordero’s extensive body of work we can find: *El Carbonerito* (The
Carbonerito), *Concierto Antillano* (Antillean Concert, 1983), *Concierto Criollo para Cuatro*[^1] y
*Orquesta Sinfónica* (Creole Concert for Cuatro and Symphonic Orchestra), *Concierto Evocativo*
Antillana* (Antillean Suite, 1980), *Mis primeros Versos* (My First Verses), songs for voice and
José Campeche* (Fantasy for Guitar and Chamber Orchestra over Three Paintings from José
Campeche, 1975), and *Voz del Güiro* (The Voice of the Güiro, 1967), for voice and chamber
orchestra.

[^1]: Puerto Rico’s national instrument. String instrument mainly used in traditional Puerto Rican
music. The *cuatro* has five sets of double strings and the tune from first to fifth is G,D,A,E and
B.
**Madrugada**

As a guitarist, Cordero writes the accompaniment for the majority of his songs for guitar instead of the piano. The use of guitar as an accompaniment in art songs, provided new possibilities for those composers of guitar music interested in the genre, and served as a medium for the exploration of new and different sonorities. The setting of this song is comprised of lyrical vocal phrases, a fluid melodic line and rich harmonies in the accompaniment. Cordero succeeds in capturing the feelings of the character of this poem; the first verse, full of metaphoric images, is calm and lyrical, followed by an interlude that goes along the musical motive that was presented in the prelude. The second verse grows in intensity as the character remembers his loved one, and longs to be in the thoughts of his lover. When the poem mentions, “Ahora se estarian besando tu pensamiento y el mío” (Your thought and mine would already be kissing) the musical marking changes from moderato to lento and the voice is marked *a piacere*, as in declamatory mode, perfectly portraying the character’s hope and wishes of sharing the beautiful things in life with his love.

Cordero shows his nationalistic traits in *Madrugada* by recalling the *seis Mapeyé* while fusing it with the Andalusia cadence. With this fusion of the Andalusia cadence with the *seis Mapeyé*, Cordero finds the points of convergence between these styles of music, the *seis* as a genre being the Creole variant of the Andalusia Cadence.

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42 This song is available to be requested at the Puerto Rican digital collection at the Amaury Veray library at the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico.
43 The harmonic structure of the *Mapeyé* is different than that of the other seises. It is interpreted in a minor key and utilizes the *espinela décima* for the verse with ten eight syllable verses.
44 Chord progression comprised of four chords that descend stepwise *vi-V-IV-III* progression with respect to the major mode or *i-VII-VI-V* when in minor mode.
Poem and translation

Madrugada (1970)  

*Luis Lloréns Torres*

Ya está el lucero del alba  
encimita del palmar,  
como horquilla de cristal  
en el moño de una palma.  
Hacia él vuela mi alma,  
buscándote en el vacío.  
Si también de tu bohío  
lo estuvieras tú mirando,  
ahora se estarían besando  
tu pensamiento y el mío.

Dawn  

The morning star is already  
above my palm grove,  
like a glass ribbon  
on top of the palm.  
Towards it my soul flies,  
searching for you in the void.  
If from your hut  
you were also looking at it,  
your thought and mine  
would already be kissing.
CONCLUSION

The art song genre as we know it today in Puerto Rico was developed thanks to the nationalist movement. Historically, the bulk of Puerto Rican art song was composed during the late 1940’s and 50’s. Among the most prolific composers of the genre were Amaury Veray, Héctor Campos Parsi and Jack Délano. This group of composers focused on the development of a national musical language, and added to the renaissance of an interest in everything autochthonous in Puerto Rico. Setting to music the works of Puerto Rican poets was one of the main points in the development of a national style of art song in Puerto Rico. The legislative reconstruction in Puerto Rico, and the establishment of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in 1952, encouraged the search for a national identity in all of the artistic branches of the Island; the foundation of the Puerto Rico Music Conservatory strengthened the path for the creation and distribution of numerous art works, including, among these, art songs.

Thanks to the efforts made by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture during the 1960’s to preserve as much of the Puerto Rican culture as possible, while promoting the creation of new works either by competitions, or sponsorship during that period, we have today a detailed account of the musical timeline of Puerto Rico up until the 1980’s. Unfortunately, the recorded history of the Puerto Rican art song stopped for a while due to the lack of funding by the government. It is only now that there is a resurgence of interest in the Puerto Rican art song.

With the digitalization of the Puerto Rican musical collection of the library of the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico, much of the art song repertoire is now easily accessible and, in most cases, readable. Unfortunately, there is still a great quantity of songs resting in the archives of the composer’s descendants or avid collectors that is not accessible.
If by any chance the first reference that one finds when researching this topic is the book *A History of Song*, and one stumbles upon the quote that appears at the beginning of this scholarly essay by Gilbert Chase, one might take those words to be true and incorrectly informed, move on to another research area. Historically, there is most definitely material to deal with in Latin America, including Puerto Rico, when it comes to solo part-song.

The purpose of this research was to provide another source solely about the Puerto Rican art song that will prove beneficial to anyone interested in the history, poetry and composers of the Puerto Rican art song. It is my hope that this essay will open the path to more research that will produce new exposure and appreciation for the Puerto Rican art song, and will also serve as encouragement for young and future composers to add new songs to the repertoire. It is my deepest desire for Puerto Rican art songs to be recognized globally, and for them to be easily accessible in order to be appreciated by everyone. I urge professors and singers searching for new repertoire to look to the Puerto Rican art song, because what they will find are true gems.
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APPENDIX A: LUIS LLORÉNS TORRES BIOGRAPHY

Poet, essayist and journalist. Born on May 14, 1878, Luis Lloréns Torres grew up to become one of Puerto Rico's most renowned poets of the first half of the 20th century. After completing his secondary studies at the University of Barcelona and then earning his doctorate at the University of Granada, Lloréns Torres returned to Puerto Rico and entered the military in the ranks of politics, defending from that day, and till the end of his life, as reaction against the new regime, his ideals of independency.

He settled his family in the city of Ponce. It was in Ponce where Lloréns Torres would start his own law firm in collaboration with Miguel Guerra Mondragón and began to collaborate with the newspaper Lienzos del Solar, a collaboration that historians suggest produced some of the writer's best works. The poet also joined the Puerto Rican legislature, representing the municipality of Ponce from 1908 to 1910. Two years later, Lloréns Torres, along with Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón, Manuel Zeno Gandia, Eugenio Benitez Castaño, and Pedro Franceschi, founded the Independence party. That party was the first in the island's history to exclusively support independence for Puerto Rico. Though that party was short-lived, Lloréns Torres' literary influence was not.

During 1911 and 1913 the poet was going through a period of intense lyric production. It is here when he wrote the Canción de las Antillas (Antilles song), Velas épicas (Epic veils) and the compositions that would soon integrate the second part of Sonetos Sinfónicos, his second book of poems. The Canción de las Antillas received honorific mention at the Hispanic Poetry competition that the Revista Mundial (Global Magazine), of Paris, directed by Rubén Dario celebrated in 1913.
Lloréns love for his homeland lead him to a grand manifestation of his nationalist sentiment, motive for his arduous defense for the ideal of the political independence of Puerto Rico. He would continue to write and promote Puerto Rican independence until his death in 1944. Among Lloréns Torres works we can find thousands of compositions in various genres, from the cult and splendid poem, to the *decimal jibara* of intimate creole flavor.
APPENDIX B: PUERTO RICAN ART SONG CATALOGUE

This catalogue is divided in alphabetical order by composer. For the purpose of presenting songs that can be located to be used at performances or for research, the works that have been included in this catalogue are either published or located at the Amaury Veray library of the Music Conservatory of Puerto Rico, the National Archives of Puerto Rico or can be easily accessed contacting the composer. Those songs that are lost or that rest in the private library of relatives of the composers will not be included in this catalogue.

The information included in this catalogue is the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year of composition (if available)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
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Abbreviations:

- CMPR    Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico
- ICPRA   Archivo Nacional del Instituto de Cultura de Puerto Rico
- COMP    Song available through the composer
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<tr>
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<td>Clave para una obsesión</td>
<td>soprano- bassoon- piano</td>
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<td>La Jeringa de Minga</td>
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<td>Canción Tonta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calla niño, calla</td>
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<td>Cuando voy a la aldea</td>
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<td>Tres Canciones</td>
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<td>Si Hubiese Llovido</td>
<td>mezzo -piano-flute-clarinet</td>
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<td>Zarzamora con el tronco gris</td>
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## Cabrer, Carlos

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<td>Cuatro Puntos Cubanos</td>
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<td>Los Paréntesis</td>
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<td>Ave María</td>
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<td>En el Café</td>
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<td><em>Era mi dolor tan alto</em></td>
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**Delano, Jack**

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<td><em>Cuatro Sones de la Tierra</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cómo he de irme</td>
<td>soprano-piano-cello</td>
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<td><em>Dos canciones para Baritono</em></td>
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<td>La Oración de Jimena</td>
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<td>Nocturno</td>
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<td>Serenata Española</td>
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<td>Interrogaciones</td>
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<td>Amanecer</td>
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<td>El amor cautivo</td>
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<td>Dulzura</td>
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<td>The spirit of St. Louis</td>
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### Figueroa, Narciso

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<td>El Canto de las Piedras</td>
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<td>Friquitín</td>
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<td><em>La Sed del Agua</em></td>
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<td>Morales Matos, Guarionex</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Si el señor no edificare la casa</em></td>
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<td><em>Guakia Baba</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Nunca Vivió</em></td>
<td>tenor-piano</td>
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45 Carlos Lamboy can be contacted at: https://www.facebook.com/CarlosLamboyMusic/
46 Guarionex Morales Matos’s songs are available at: http://guarionexmoralesmatos.com/catalogue/compositions/
47 Johanny Navarro can be contacted at johannynavarro.com
**Ortiz Alvarado, William**

<table>
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<th>Composer</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
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<td><em>A Delicate Fire</em></td>
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<td><em>Canción nacida de lucha</em></td>
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<td>COMP</td>
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<td><em>Canto: 28 de Septiembre</em></td>
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<td><em>Ciclo de Canción de Lloréns Torres</em></td>
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<td><em>Pero aún más te quiero</em></td>
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**Pedreira, José Enrique**

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<td><em>San Juan que yo amo</em></td>
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48 William Ortiz Alvarado’s songs are available at: http://www.williamortiz.com/index.html
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<td><em>Yo no sé</em></td>
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</table>

### Veray, Amaury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Balada de los Reyes Magos</em></td>
<td>soprano-piano</td>
<td>ICPRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Cansada en el alba</em></td>
<td>soprano-piano</td>
<td>CMPR</td>
<td>1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Invitación</em></td>
<td>soprano-piano</td>
<td>ICPRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La rosa deshojada</em></td>
<td>tenor-piano-oboé</td>
<td>CMPR</td>
<td>1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Plegaria</em></td>
<td>soprano-piano</td>
<td>ICPRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sueño</em></td>
<td>soprano-piano</td>
<td>ICPRA</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aguinaldo</td>
<td>Carol. Folk genre traditionally played during the holiday season.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Areyto</td>
<td>Ceremonies celebrated by the <em>Tainos</em> to announce the beginning of war, cure the sick, mourn the dead or to invoke various gods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bomba</td>
<td>Puerto Rican dance originated in around the 17th century by West Africans and their descendants. In <em>bomba</em> dancers take turn to challenge</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the drums, thus creating a dialog with their moves that the drummer has to answer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borikén</td>
<td>Borikén is the <em>Taino</em> name for Puerto Rico. The term Borikén is still used by Puerto Ricans to refer to the island and its natives, called</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boricuas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cinquillo</td>
<td>Cuban rhythmic cell used in the <em>Contradanza</em> and <em>danzón</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copla</td>
<td>Poetic form consisting of four verses, typically employed in Spanish song and literature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuatro</td>
<td>Puerto Rico’s national instrument. String instrument mainly used in traditional Puerto Rican music. The <em>cuatro</em> has five sets of double</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>strings and the tune from first to fifth is G,D,A,E and B.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danza</td>
<td>An amalgam of the Cuban <em>habanera</em> and the European <em>contradanse</em>, composers like Juan Morel Campos, Manuel Gregorio Tavárez and Carlos Padilla</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>developed the <em>danza</em> to the genre it is today. A traditional <em>danza</em> consists of four parts: Introduction, three themes and a repetition of the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>first theme, almost all of the parts are repeated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Décimas</td>
<td>Ten-line stanza of poetry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guajiro</td>
<td>Cuban agricultural worker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jíbaro</td>
<td>Term used to refer to people who live in the mountains of Puerto Rico.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le lo lai</td>
<td>Lyrical scat used by traditional <em>jíbaro</em> singers heard between stanzas of the sung <em>décima</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paseo</td>
<td>Tonal introduction used to announce the beginning of a <em>danza</em> while providing time to the dancers to get in place for the number. The <em>paseo</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usually consists of eight measures in a 2/4 meter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plena</td>
<td>The <em>plena</em> is a type of Puerto Rican folk music. It is characterized by its musical simplicity and the repetition of phrases, especially the</td>
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<td>chorus. Its lyrics are frequently a commentary sung about day-to-day topics. The <em>plena</em> is identified primarily with the coastal communities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and regions of the island. The principal instruments used in the <em>plena</em> are the tambourines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seis</td>
<td>The <em>seis</em> is a direct descendant from the musical genres that arrived to Puerto Rico from southern Spain at the end of the 17th century. <em>Seis</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


means six. The melodies and harmonies are simple and are traditionally accompanied by a guitar, cuatro and guiro.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seis Mapeyé</th>
<th>The harmonic structure of the <em>Mapeyé</em> is different than that of the other <em>seises</em>. It is interpreted in a minor key and utilizes the <em>espinela décima</em> for the verse with ten eight syllable verses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taínos</td>
<td>Local indigenous people of the island now known as Puerto Rico.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Villancico</td>
<td>A Spanish part-song resembling the madrigal.</td>
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