

**Ana María Romano Gómez (1971) posdomingo 02.10.2016 (2016)**



**Ana María Romano G.** (\*1971) is a composer and sound artist. She works with acoustic and electroacoustic media and in interdisciplinary projects with dance, video, and performance. Her creative interests lie at the crossroads of gender, sound, technology, and the political dimension of creativity. Her work has been presented at festivals in Latin America, Europe, North America, and Asia and released on various internet labels. She is the coordinator of the feminist platform [En Tiempo Real](https://soundcloud.com/anamariaromano).

<https://soundcloud.com/anamariaromano>

*Eva: Ana María, your piece posdomingo 02.10.2016 was created in a very particular moment of recent Colombian history. Can you tell us something about how this is reflected in the music?*

**Ana María Romano G.:** As the title suggests, the work was composed just after Sunday, October 2, 2016, the day on which the approval of the peace agreement between the FARC guerrillas and the Colombian State was taken to a Referendum for its approval and legitimization. 50.4% of voters opted for No, while 49.7% did for Yes. Emotionally affected I reacted by creating this piece, the frustration was greater because the No campaign was full of lies, dishonesty and manipulation.

Some of the audio materials chosen for the work can be directly connected to the context of those days, such as the records of the popular demonstrations that took place the days following the Referendum and that were in favor of the Agreement, or file fragments of interviews and speeches by political leaders who were assassinated during the armed conflict. I also included evangelical songs because it was one of the religious groups that most opposed the agreement and whose pettiness against the agreement was delivering false information to the community.

In addition to that I worked with soundscapes that for me are more a way of situating myself in my daily environment: My city in the present and in the past, since all my life has developed in a country in conflict. I also included soundscapes from other cities, some of which I had visited and others belonged to Eva's life. Likewise, I decided to include our animal companions (Eva's cat and my dogs) because they give a dimension to life that makes it more friendly, affective and gives it new perspectives.

The assembly of the materials and their transformation was composed by linking them together and knowing that each material individually comes to life when they interconnect with each other, they acquire symbolic, rather than representative charges, which invites to open different paths in the course of each listening.

Some materials can be easily recognized in a sense they directly connect to the context of the work, however there are other materials that seem out of context. When they come into contact with the other materials they are resignified and create new contexts. This puts times, people, spaces, stories, places into dialogue... knowing that all my history is shaped by that other history.

*Eva: Do you consider it a political piece?*

**Ana María:** One of my creative interests has to do with the political dimension of art. I am interested in situating myself, because I am a person who is part of a context, who inhabits the world from different places. Our life is full of questions about our presence, about what affects us personally. My individuality has different dimensions: social, political, historical, erotic, spiritual, etc. and creativity and creation are places where they intersect. For all these reasons I consider it a political work.

*Eva: The piece appeared from a close collaboration between the two of us, which I enjoyed a lot. How important is this kind of collective process for you?*

Ana María: For me, this type of collaborative creative process is fundamental because it allows me to investigate creation from non-hegemonic, non-patriarchal, non-canonical, non-capitalist, non-colonial perspectives. Creating in collaboration is putting down structures and vertical relationships; it is allowing oneself to be permeated by another person without feeling fear or without doubting the capacities of each person involved because, on the contrary, they are strengthened in dialogue and in encounters; it is encouraging to believe in other ways of relating outside of configurations of power; it is to let go of the obsession with genius; it is allowing yourself the pleasure of building trust.

*Eva: What makes you a Colombian composer?*

Ana María: I don't have a clear answer. The division of the world into countries annoys me and it annoys me even more that these divisions entail excluding power relations and domination. I have often thought that we could imagine a good futures without countries or, if it is so difficult for us to do so, at least that they are porous and elastic borders. Many times I have thought that a good future could be built on porous and elastic borders. What I want to say is that my approach to the answer could be that my creation is influenced to a large extent by questions that are related to the territory in which I was born and have lived, Colombia, from different places: affective, social, political, environmental, artistic, spiritual, philosophical, historical, economical etc (actually there are almost always connections between these).

### **Carolina Noguera Palau (1978) Canto del ave negra (2018)**



**Carolina Noguera** (\*1978) is head of the composition department at the music department of the [Pontificia Universidad Javeriana](https://www.pontificiajaveriana.edu.co/) in Bogotá. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Musicology and a Master's degree and Doctorate in Composition from Birmingham City University. Her works have been performed in Europe and North and South America, and she has been awarded various prizes.

<https://www.carolinanoguera.com>

*Eva: Carolina, in your music you are interested in resignifying material from traditional/popular Colombian music. What exactly are you looking for? How are you dealing with the accordion in that particular context?*

**Carolina Noguera:** When I picture myself straying into a deep listening of traditional/popular music I immediately travel to my childhood, a moment before studying music. I remember diving myself into the sound, texture, brightness and deepness of the melodies and the landscapes. What I aim in that resignification is to inhabit once more that state of contemplation and the connection to that way of perceiving music, life, space, time and sound. Some time ago, when I was living in the UK, I thought I was nostalgic of my homeland. When I returned to Colombia, I realized there was no such thing, and the nostalgia became stronger and distressing. I've realized what I missed was not a place but a time, the childhood, despite how dreadful it might have been. That way of losing oneself when listening is what I seek, with no difference between kinds of sound or music or cultures, with no concepts or words or sense of values. A pre-language (or even pre-human) state.

The accordion is a tremendously powerful machine. It produces the most intense, deep and flamboyant sounds. Listening to it has helped me introduce into the state I look for, in which the direct association to Vallenato music melts away within a fascinating texture of intense sorrow and psychedelic color.

*Eva: Is there anything particular you want to communicate about your accordion piece?*

Carolina: *Canto del ave Negra* evokes a song from Vallenato music, [El Mochuelo](#), by Otto Serge and Rafael Ricardo. That song is about a trapped bird whose song is nostalgic for having lost its freedom. I've always had a very good connection with birds and fowls. And I figure I feel like the mochuelo often.

### **Carlos Andrés Rico (1986) *Nacido en el Valle, el Río y la Montaña* (2015)**



**Carlos Andrés Rico** (\*1986) studied composition in Bogotá and multimedia composition in Hamburg. His productions combine futuristic sounds with different world traditions, and his DJ sets move between ritual music and electric experimental sounds. His interest in exploring music's relationship to society is reflected in a Ph.D. thesis on artistic research. Since 2016, he has directed SELVA, the festival for experimental arts and music from Latin America in Hamburg.

<https://carlosandresrico.com/>

*Eva: Carlos, in your piece you make a kind of musical expedition to the beginnings of the Vallenato, which is a very popular music style in Colombia, with the accordion playing a major role. I explicitly asked you for such a piece with a reference to Vallenato music because I was curious how the audience in Colombia would react to it. Was it difficult to get the Vallenato as "street folklore" into a contemporary music context for a concert stage? how did you deal with this challenge?*

**Carlos Andrés Rico:** I did not find it difficult to bring elements of vallenato into the context of contemporary music, because I've done that before with other popular music styles, and in a way it's the transfer of musical elements from one context to another which characterizes me as a composer.

It was difficult, or rather time-consuming, to understand the Vallenato. Fortunately, I traveled to Colombia at the time, where I was able to collect enough study material, scores, recordings and lyrics, that would help me better understand the style of music. However, since the idea was not to compose a vallenato in its original form, I would say that the hardest part was finding an idea that would bring the piece to life.

*Eva: What role does the accordion play in your piece?*

Carlos: In this work, the role of the accordion is linked to my personal relationship with the Vallenato, which I have always associated with travel, with open spaces, rural areas. In these spaces the sound of the accordion (with the drum and the percussion instrument guacharaca) can be heard in the distance, at festivals of the neighboring village, in the passing bus or in the central square.

*Eva: You've been living in Germany for a long time. Are you still a "Colombian" composer?*

Carlos: I definitely consider myself a Colombian composer. That's exactly what I've been striving for ever since I arrived in Germany. Also, as time goes on, I feel more and more like a Latin American composer. My study material, on which my compositions are based, comes almost exclusively from the various cultural expressions, from the popular and traditional knowledge of Latin America.

*Eva: Is there anything else you want to say about the piece?*

Carlos: I would like to add that I was very very pleased that a European performer of contemporary music was interested in promoting the composition of a work that contains elements of a popular musical form from Latin America and that she included this work in her repertoire. That is still very rare.

### **Daniel Leguizamón (1979) signo a cambio (2022)**



**Daniel Leguizamón** (\*1979) studied composition and philosophy at the Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá. As a composer, performer, teacher, researcher, cultural manager, and editor, he is dedicated to contemporary and experimental practice in Colombia. He is a member of various experimental music ensembles, including the Bogotá Improvisers Orchestra, and is co-founder of the Círculo Colombiano de Música Contemporánea (CCMC).

<https://leguizamondaniel.wordpress.com/>

*Eva: Daniel, your piece approaches the accordion from a very particular perspective and leads to a special sound world. It is an intimate piece that plays with small details in the sound. What was your inspiration for this approach?*

Daniel Leguizamón: I'd say that, more than inspiration, it's a matter of intention. In general terms, I want to offer a shared experience of discovering and experiencing sound for all of us: listeners, performers, and myself. And I want this experience to be not only collective but also intimate. Of course, there were other intentions: for example, to explore the possible meanings for you and for the listeners, that the sounds may acquire by means of their disposition, the form and the structure, or even the title of the piece, or the words that suddenly appear towards the end of the work... That discovering and experiencing of sound is not only physical, but also metaphorical.

*Eva: The piece was conceptually inspired by two great Colombian artists, the painter Manuel Hernández and the poet León de Greiff. Is it a natural part of your Colombian identity as an artist to relate to important figures of your country's cultural background? How is this reflected in your music?*

Daniel: Yes. From my perspective, making music, and art in general, is not a question of expressing personal ideas or feelings to be listened to. It's a question of resonating with one another... like a slow, but profound, dialogue (which is not necessarily a verbal one) through space and time by the means of senses. And that's how we all become part of an aesthetic community. In the case of this piece, I found in the work of Hernández (with his exploration of the notion of sign) and Greiff (with his poem), important traces of that sound exploration. By mentioning and involving them in this work, I expect to recognize them, and to produce this dialogue. Nevertheless, though I do include references to Colombian poets, painters, philosophers, and so on, in many of my works, I do not intend to make them about those references: I aspire my music to be freely appreciated for whatever every person finds valuable. I like to think of my pieces as if they were windows to be filled with every kind of worlds by those who accept the invitation.

*Eva: I enjoyed our collaboration on your piece, we exchanged ideas and recordings during the process and - I think - we learned a lot from each other about music and that made it a better piece. How important is this kind of collective experience for your work in general?*

Daniel: I did enjoy the process of conceiving the piece with you. Not only because, as you say, it was a wonderful learning experience, but also because I consider collaboration a fundamental part of what we do as musicians. I'm afraid that understanding music the same way we understand language (where there is a message, a transmitter, a carrier, a receiver...) may result in



an impoverishment of what music itself may be. Rather, we should conceive music as a collective practice where, though there might be certain kinds of specialization and expertise, in the end it's all about us as a community: more like dancing, than like talking. And that perspective changes everything. I look for that collective experience as much as possible.

*Eva: What makes you a Colombian composer?*

Daniel: Hard question. I just couldn't avoid being Colombian: I was born and raised here. The thing is what to do with that not-asked-for situation. In my case: making it conscious and deliberate, by staying here, studying and having a life here, instead of leaving the country (which was kind of a big deal for my generation, in my context... at least 40% of my schoolmates, and maybe 70% of my university classmates live abroad). By teaching here, by making music here. Certainly, it's something which extends not only to the way I relate to music, but also to the ethical decision of trying to be an active part of this community. Nevertheless, I don't expect to make my music deliberately a reflection of any sort of a Colombian condition, nor any kind of cultural traces (as in the case of nationalist music); in fact, if there is something that I'd like to do about that, is to explore other ways to be in this world, being (in my case) Colombian.

### **Natalia Valencia Zuluaga (1976) Brother (2022)**



**Natalia Valencia Zuluaga** (\*1976) is from Medellín, where she studied composition at EAFIT University. Her compositional output includes music for small and large ensembles, as well as orchestral and electroacoustic works. She has also worked for video, theatre, and dance productions. Her works have been performed at numerous festivals in Colombia, Latin America, and Europe, and she is active as a curator for radio programs and podcasts.

<https://www.nataliavalencia.com/>

*Eva: Natalia, playing your piece feels very personal and intimate. Indeed, while we were working on the music together I had the feeling of getting to know you very well.*

*How important is this kind of personal dimension for your work and for this piece in particular?*

**Natalia Valencia:** Our work together was particularly intense and rewarding. I think this type of approach makes the creative processes very meaningful for the parties involved. For me it was a very important process. I had several challenges: the creation of a musical speech for an unusual solo instrument, making this speech in the instrument's own language, connecting this speech with the homage that I wanted to pay to a person and a literary detail and finally, creating a sound image loaded with symbolism.

Working so closely with you made the process smooth, free-flowing. There are obstacles that I go through as a composer in which I have to delete, or redo, or retake ideas. That's a part of the job where I'm on my own, so to speak. But there is the other one in which the existence of the co-worker makes a big difference. It's like having two aligned brains that help each other, that feed each other, that encourage each other, and little by little they don't have to say a word to know what the other wants or needs.

*Eva: How was your approach to the accordion for this piece?*

Natalia: Reading your book [„Composing for the Accordion“](#) was the first thing, it was essential to have it. It helped me to learn about the instrument, its technical functioning, its language. In

addition, the book has all this series of examples with the segment of the score and the audio that facilitate the approach. Simultaneously, I listened to quite a few accordion works, some segments I listened to over and over again. Then came the conversations with you, the recordings that you sent me and the possibilities that you suggested to me about an idea. In the process I had many doubts. The accordion, like any instrument, has technical and interpretative capacities and limits. It took me a long time to free myself from the frustration that these limits produced and turn them into opportunities. Sometimes I wanted to write down an idea related to a specific sound that I knew was technically impossible for the instrument. The limits of the instrument became my own limits, and between frustration and obsession I had to find solutions, ways to adapt an idea, mediate between the reality of the instrument and my desires. Some battles I lost but others I won. And I repeat, in this the exchange of recordings with you was fundamental.

*Eva: „Brother“ is a piece of music that creates acoustic spaces and plays with timbres and perspectives. Does this approach have some social (or even political?) relevance to you?*

Natalia: Absolutely. One of the greatest interests that I have as a composer is to create spaces or experiences in which empathy emerges through music. Making some changes in the traditional arrangement of the elements on stage, for example an empty stage that is only occupied by the conductor who leads towards the public, or an audience located on the stage while the musicians are off it, the appearance of a child who represents hope after a dense and heavy sound section. Small gestures that generate a change of position for those who listen and for those who interpret. I think that something can be generated there. We live embedded in societies and systems that need a higher level of empathy, more humanity. It occurs to me that gestures like these in music can generate change, another point of view, perspective, connection.

*Eva: Do you want to say something about the title of the piece?*

Natalia: This piece is dedicated to my brother Pipe who has been fundamental in my life. His love and kindness have kept me safe on this road.

The title also refers to a tree. In her book *Beloved*, Toni Morrison introduces us to a group of slaves who named a tree Brother. In the midst of a heartbreaking and recent history such as slavery, this powerful metaphor full of tenderness, beauty and humanity appears. The trees are also my brothers and sisters. With the title, I want to pay tribute to literature, resistance and tenderness, which - like my brother - kept me safe.

*Eva: Do you think there is something like a national „identity“ in contemporary Colombian music life?*

Natalia: I don't know if there is a national identity in the life of contemporary Colombian music. Our country is quite complex at every level. A country exuberant in its nature, dissimilar and diverse regions and populations, a multicolored culture, but one that has been traversed by a violent and very painful history. It's like seeing paradise after having gone through a war.

I think that there may be more sources of interest in composition in Colombia. Some composers express themselves more closely to folk music, others seek sound experimentation with or without discursive undertones, others position themselves on more political or social issues, some go hand in hand with other traditions.

### **Jorge Gregorio García Moncada (1975) Un amor, puro e incondicional... (2016)**



**Jorge Gregorio García Moncada** (\*1975) is a composer of electroacoustic music and professor at the Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá, where he focuses on various teaching and research activities. He is the founder and director of BLAST – Bogotá Los Andes Sound Theatre – a multi-channel sound system for performing electroacoustic and cross-media projects, and the SPECTRA music festival director.

<https://soundcloud.com/jorge-garcia>

*Eva: Jorge, listening to the voice of your mother telling her childhood memories of the Bogotazo in 1948 makes this a very personal piece. What is the role of the accordion in the piece and why did you chose the accordion?*

**Jorge Gregorio García Moncada:** The sound of the accordion brings very powerful emotions and memories from my childhood. I can recall moments where I would be playing around the house and far away, as a gloomy and diffused sonority, I would listen to my mother playing vales and traditional melodies on her accordion. The presence of the instrument in the piece is some sort of homage to my mother. The musical material of the piece is built out of the de-composition process of one of the vales I used to listen when child.

*Eva: Is it a natural urge for you as a Colombian artist to relate to your country's history (which still has an impact on today's society)?*

Jorge: Yes, absolutely. I tend to oscillate between the sense of being part of a modern globalized world and my personal navigation around some essential questions: What do I have to say in a musical, compositional sense, about me and my present day society? (especially in the societal, political, historical, cultural way) What is my role as a Colombian/Latin-American composer nowadays? Where am I looking for to find questions in order to relate my music to relevant local cultural references? What does "local" mean to me?

*Eva: Do you think there is something like a national identity in contemporary Colombian music life?*

Jorge: The huge diversity of styles and compositional approaches is typical for Colombian artists. That is quite related to what might refer to when mentioning "national identity". Though there is not such a thing, to me, as a one "Colombian" identity. Colombia is quite a pluralistic and multicultural geographical and political space. I reckon something that brings us composers together is the collective yet different sound of each other. The gigantic variety of techniques and styles in each of our expressions as composers, sound artist, performers...

*Eva: What makes YOU a Colombian composer?*

Jorge: When I write music I take the Colombian audience as first instance and I think of my musical writing as some sort of omni-wave expanding from the center. I diffuse the music to the national and international public (through the organization of concerts, festivals, academic and artistic activities in general). I observe the Colombian culture (history, rituals, societies, human groups, etc) in order to search for inspiration to write my music and to evoke national collective memories. This helps me (and maybe others?) to avoid to forget and loose memory.

*Eva: Is „memory“ something we should be more aware of in todays society (and also in art practice)?*

Jorge: From my very personal point of view: absolutely. Memory, either collective and/or personal (individual), is a tool to help us understand our roles in present day societies. It help us creating a sense of purpose and a sense of belonging.

*Eva: Is there anything else you want to communicate about this piece?*

Jorge: Although the spoken word takes an important role in the proposed musical discourse in the piece, understanding what is being said is not necessarily the crucial key to "understand" the piece. I think you do not necessarily need to understand the meaning of the text in order to appreciate it. Such as sometimes in poetry, for example, you can allow yourself to be moved by the sound of the words, by the sound-world built up around the narratives. Let yourself, your personal memories, build imaginary worlds out of the sounds you hear from the piece, as it usually happens when you read a book, look at a piece of art or a photograph...

*Eva: Many thanks everyone for sharing your ideas and your music!  
¡Gracias por compartir sus reflexiones y su música!*