The Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism

**Paraskevaídis, Graciela (1940)**



Graciela Paraskevaídis is a composer, musicologist and educator who lies between referents of Latin American music production. She was born and raised in the city of Buenos Aires, and has lived in Montevideo, Uruguay, since 1975. The influence of Paraskevaídis’ musical and theoretical work is far-reaching; her work has been disseminated in both Latin American and international spheres. Her compositions can be characterized by their expressive weight. They often employ a restricted set of sound materials and incorporate an expressive use of silence with non-mechanical reiteration processes. In addition to her roles as a music teacher and composer, Paraskevaídis is also an influential musicologist.

**Timeline of Life**

1940 1965 1968 1975 Currently

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Born Joined at CLAEM Studied in Europe Moved to Uruguay Teaches and composes

**Musical studies and career**

Paraskevaídis studied at the National Conservatory of Music ‘Carlos López Buchardo’ of Buenos Aires. There, she took lessons in composition and stimulation from Roberto Garcia Morillo. Between 1965 and 1966, she was a fellow at the Latin American Center for Advanced Musical Studies (CLAEM) at the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella. The exchanges she had with colleagues at the CLEAEM, helped Paraskevaídis to become intimately connected to the social realities of many Latin American countries, and her experiences and newfound knowledge influenced the way she approached their aesthetic production. Above all, Paraskevaídis recognises composers Iannis Xenakis and Gerardo Gandini as the figures that most significantly influenced her thinking while she studied at the CLAEM. Between 1968 and 1971, she studied with Wolfgang Fortner in the School of Music in Freiburg (Germany) after receiving a scholarship from the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). In 1984 she returned to Germany, taking up residence first in Berlin, then in Stuttgart in 1988, both times as a guest of the Artists in Residence Program, which she was invited to partake in by the Akademie Scholss Solitude.

Paraskevaídis was and continues to be extremely active in coordinating musical associations. Along with other Latin American composers, she organised and coordinated the Latin American Contemporary Music Courses that developed between 1975-1989. She was a founding member of News Music Core of Buenos Aires [*Núcleo Música Nueva de Buenos Aires*] and the Argentinian Society of Contemporary Music. Currently she is a member of New Music Core Montevideo [*Núcleo Música Nueva Montevideo*] and the Uruguayan Society of Contemporary Music.

Between 1985-92, Paraskevaídis taught at the School of Music in Montevideo. In addition to cultivating a strong teaching reputation in the private sphere, Paraskevaídis has developed an extensive body of work as musicologist. Her theoretical production ranges from musical analysis of current and traditional repertoire to historical writings on several Latin American themes. On top of the numerous essays and articles she has published, she is also author of the books *La obra sinfónica de Eduardo Fabini*(1992) and *Luis Campodónico, compositor*(2000). The journals her work has been published in include: *Musik Texte*, *Pauta,* *Revista Musical Chilena,* *Lulú*, *World New Music Magazine* and *Revista Argentina de Musicología*. Between 1990 and 2000 she was co-editor of the *World New Music Magazine* and in 2004 she created and co-edited the website [www.latinoamerica-musica.net](http://www.latinoamerica-musica.net) (dedicated to the dissemination of texts about contemporary Latin American music) with Max Nyffeler; she continues to serve as editor of the website. Paraskevaídis has translated many articles from German including Jean-Jacques Dünki’s book *Schönbergs Zeichen : Wege zur Interpretation seiner Klaviermusik* (*Los signos de Schoenberg*, Caracas, Monte Ávila, 2005). In 1994 the Munich Goethe Institute awarded her the Goethe Medal. In 2006 she received the Morosoli Prize (Uruguay).

**Production and characteristics of the works**

Paraskevaídis’ compositions have received numerous awards from the Argentine Association of Composers, the City of Buenos Aires and the Berlin Academy of Arts, among others, and have been performed in several countries in Latin America, North America, Asia and Europe. Both aesthetically and ethically, the author has considered herself linked to Edgar Varèse, Silvestre Revueltas and Luigi Nono. Paraskevaídis creates from the artisan work on the possibilities of sound as texture generator rather than using preset structures or abstract systems.

One element that characterises Paraskevaídis work is the innovative sound effects she produces through relatively conventional resources. Usually, her works are written for a small to medium set of instruments or *a cappella* voices. By constructing clusters and blocks of sound in the higher or lower pitches, Paraskevaídis creates microtonal sound worlds in which the musicians contribute to the spectral enrichment of the written composition. The *magma* series (a total of seven works, the majority written for wind instruments); *un lado, otro lado* (1984), for solo piano and *ático* (2006), for piccolo and sopranino recorder, are typical examples of the compositions described. Another important element in her work is the presence of highly concentrated sound material, economic and exhibited in repetition or recurrence. In turn, the explicit pulses create a non-evolutionary formal organization that remains disjointed as a result of strong contrasts in intensity, register or silence. This style is demonstrated in works such as *todavía no* (1979), for three flutes and three clarinets or *libres en el sonido presos en el sonido* (1997), for instrumental ensemble. The titles of the works present a stimulant symbolism and many of them come from poems by Juan Gelman. More recently, Paraskevaídis has composed works for members of the Experimental Orchestra of Native Instruments ([OEIN](http://www.oein.org), Bolivia), which was created and directed by Cergio Prudencio.

**Chronological list of works** ([scores](http://www.gp-magma.net/contacto.html))

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| **Work** | **Year** | **Instrumentation** | **Premiere** |
| *Cuarteto de cuerdas* | 1961 | String quartet | Buenos Aires, 06-24-1964 |
| *Música para orquesta* | 1962 | Symphonic Orchestra | Athens, 05-02-1966 |
| *Cinco piezas para piano* | 1964 | Piano | Buenos Aires, 06-25-1965 |
| *Parámetros* | 1965 | Piano, alto sax and percussion | Buenos Aires, 11-28-1965 |
| *Combinatoria II* | 1966 | Piano, trombone, percussion and tape | Buenos Aires, 09-07-1966 |
| *magma I* | 1967 | Brasswind nonet | Berlin, 11-17-1970 |
| *Subliminal I* | 1967 | Piano and tape | Puerto Rico, 03-08-1968 |
| *Con silencio vibrante* | 1967 | Clarinet and viola | Madrid, 12-12-1992 |
| *Combinatoria II* (2nd version) | 1968 | Piano, trombone, percussion and tape | Freiburg im Breisgau, 07-16-1968 |
| *Seis canciones españolas* (Lyrics by Miguel Hernández) | 1968 | Soprano and piano | Freiburg im Breisgau, 02-26-1969 |
| *Trio* | 1969 | Flute, clarinet and bassoon | Montevideo, 05-03-1969 |
| *magma II* | 1968 | Four trombones | Santo Domingo, 05-16-1969 |
| *"libertà va cercando…"* (Lyrics by Dante Alighieri) | 1969 | Mixed choir a cappella | Buenos Aires, 10-07-1971 |
| *Aphorismen* (Lyrics by Karl Kraus) | 1969 | Two actors, piano, percussion and tape | Freiburg im Breisgau, 02-25-1970 |
| *e desidero solo colori*  (Lyrics by Cesare Pavese) | 1969 | Female choir a cappella | Freiburg im Breisgau, 07-09-1970 |
| *mellonta tauta* | 1970 | Accordion | Freiburg im Breisgau, 12-17-1970 |
| *Schatten* (Lyrics by Karl Kraus) | 1970 | Soprano and baritone | Freiburg im Breisgau, 02-27-1984 |
| *Die Hand voller Stunden* | 1970 | Nine solo voices | Freiburg im Breisgau, 12-02-1984 |
| *Mozart* (Texts from W. A. Mozart's letters) | 1970-1972 | Actor and instrumental ensemble | Freiburg im Breisgau, 25-V-25-1973 |
| *Schattenreich* (Lyrics by Hans Magnus Enzensberger) | 1972 | Vocal quartet a cappella | Freiburg im Breisgau, 05-25-1973 |
| *Mozart* (2nd version, in Spanish) | 1974 | Actor and instrumental ensemble | Buenos Aires, 10-18-1976 |
| *magma III* | 1974 | Flute, trombone, violoncello and piano | Freiburg im Breisgau, 10-31-1979 |
| *magma IV* | 1974 | String quartet | Montevideo, 04-01-1981 |
| *huauqui* | 1975 | Electro-acoustic music | Buenos Aires, 10-15-1975 |
| *magma V* | 1977 | Four quenas | Montevideo, 06-06-1979 |
| *todavía no* | 1979 | Three flutes and three clarinets | Freiburg im Breisgau, 10-31-1979 |
| *magma VI* | 1979 | Two trumpets and two trombones | Bonn, 11-20-1979 |
| *y… es como todo* | 1981 | Two flutes, two clarinets, trumpet and horn | Montevideo, 06-09-1983 |
| *A entera revisación del público en general* | 1978-1981 | Electro-acoustic music | Montevideo, 11-24-1981 |
| *un lado, otro lado* | 1984 | Piano | Buenos Aires, 08-08-1984 |
| *más fuerza tiene* | 1984 | Clarinet | La Paz, 11-18-1986 |
| *magma VII* | 1984 | Fourteen wind instruments | Berlin, 12-02-1984 |
| *Tres piezas infantiles* | 1986 | Piano |  |
| *el grito en el cielo* | 1987 | Mixed choir a cappella | Santiago de Chile, 07-31-2002 |
| *dos piezas para pequeño conjunto* | 1989 | Oboe, clarinet, trumpet, claves and piano | Montevideo, 06-27-1990 |
| *sendas* | 1992 | Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, horn, trombone and piano | Freiburg im Breisgau, 10-30-1992 |
| *el nervio de Arnold* | 1992 | Guitar | Montevideo, 10-28-1992 |
| *"algún sonido de la vida"* | 1993 | Two oboes | Montevideo, 10-13-1993 |
| *nada* | 1993 | Soprano | Montevideo, 04-13-1994 |
| *ta* | 1994 | Flute, oboe, clarinet and piano | Freiburg im Breisgau, 06-23-1996 |
| *otra vez* | 1994 | Piano | Rosario, 04-01-1995 |
| *pero están (2nd version)* | 1997 | Flute, oboe and clarinet | Montevideo, 10-15-1997 |
| *No quiero oír ya más campanas* | 1995 | Fourteen wind instruments | Köln, 2-III-02-1996 |
| *dos piezas para oboe y piano* | 1995 | Oboe and piano | Montevideo, 10-25-1995 |
| *en abril* | 1996 | Piano | Buenos Aires, 10-12-1996 |
| *hacen así* | 1996 | Xylophone, wood block, gong and four claves | Montevideo, 09-18-1996 |
| *altibajos* | 1996 | Two double bass | Freiburg im Breisgau, 05-04-1999 |
| *…a hombros del ruiseñor* | 1997 | Piano | Santos, 08-19-1997 |
| *Alter Duft* | 1997 | Clarinet, guitar, mandolin, violin, viola and violoncello | Winterthur, 04-09-1998 |
| *libres en el sonido presos en el sonido* | 1997 | Flute, clarinet, piano, violin and violoncello | Köln, 11-19-1998 |
| *suono sogno* | 1998 | Violin | Solitude, 04-15-1998 |
| *discordia* | 1998 | Nine voices a capella | Köln, 11-01-1998 |
| *contra la ovidación* | 1998 | Piano | Montevideo, 25-25-1998 |
| *solos* | 1998 | Alto flute and guitar | Sucre, 14-14-1998 |
| *piezas de bolsillo* | 1999 | Four percussionists | La Plata, 09-09-1999 |
| *dos piezas para piano* | 2001 | Piano | Montevideo, 10-24-2001 |
| *…il remoto silenzio* | 2002 | Violoncello | Bremen, 11-16-2002 |
| *Soy de un país donde* | 2002 | Trumpet, horn, trombone and tuba | Stuttgart, 06-29-2006 |
| *Aruaru* | 2003 | Mezzo-soprano, clarinet, violin, violoncello and piano | Santiago de Chile, 01-13-2004 |
| *¿y si fuera cierto?* | 2003 | Alto flute, English horn and piano | Montevideo, 01-01-2004 |
| *"y allá andará según se dice"* | 2005 | Pinkillos, tarkas, sikus, two wankaras and claves | La Paz, 10-16-2005 |
| *tris* | 2005 | Oboe, bassoon and double bass | Freiburg, 5-19-2006 |
| *ático* | 2006 | Piccolo and sopranino recorder | Bremen, 11-23-2006 |
| *réplica* | 2007 | Harpsichord | Montevideo, 04-23-2008 |
| *cada cual* | 2010 | Piano four hands | La Paz, 06-28-2012 |
| *… bajo otros cielos…* | 2011 | Aerophones and percussion of the Bolivian highlands | La Paz, 05-21-2011 |

**Discography**

Monographic editions

*magma*, Tacuabé, T/E 26 CD, Uruguay, 1996.

*libres en el sonido*, Tacuabé, T/E 40 CD, Uruguay, 2003.

Editions that include his works (selection)

*Música nueva latinoamericana*, vol. 5. Tacuabé, T/E 11, Uruguay, 1978. LP.

*Compositores del Uruguay*, vol. 1. Tacuabé, T/E 17 K, Uruguay, 1987. Cassette.

*Compositores latino-americanos*, vol. 4. Echo, 295, Brasil, 1995. CD.

*Octandre*. Ars Musici, AM-1147-2, Alemania, 1996. CD.

*Festival für neue Musik*, Frau Musica, 001, Alemania, 1999.

*hacen así*, EUM, 2518-2, Uruguay, 2001.

*Orquesta Experimental de Instrumentos Nativo 3*, Kantvs, CA-067-2, Bolivia, 2004.

*Orquesta Experimental de Instrumentos Nativos. Concierto 25 aniversario*, Kantvs, CA-093-2, Bolivia, 2006.

*Neue Flötentöne live*, NRW, A0 3064, Alemania, 2008.

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