**Juan Carlos Paz (August 5th 1897-1901 – August 25th 1972) PHOTO**

Violeta Nigro-Giunta

**Introductory thumbnail definition**

Juan Carlos Paz was an Argentine composer, critic, writer, and self-described ‘compositional guide’ who played a key role in argentine contemporary music in the XXth century. Known for his rebellious and dissentious attitude towards traditional institutions and academia, advocate of avant-garde music all throughout his life, Paz was also a pioneer in the use of the twelve-tone technique in Latin America.

Paz was funder and member of groups such as Grupo Renovación (*Renovation Group)* and Asociación Nueva Música (*New Music Association),* both devoted to promoting and performing new music.

Paz wrote music for solo instruments, chamber music, orchestra and theatre, as well as film music. He published three important books dedicated to new music, three volumes containing his memoirs, and collaborated intensively with the press and magazines (*Crítica, Reconquista, Acción de Arte, La Protesta, La Campana de Palo, Argentina Libre,* among others) throughout his life.

**Life**

Son of Hegidio Paz Hermo, a Spanish man who among his many talents could play the piano and of María Clotilde Pimentel, who also played the piano and sang, Juan Carlos Paz got in touch with music at an early age through piano lessons. Towards 1910 he was a disciple of Alphonse Thibaud, at time director of the Thibaud-Piazzini Conservatory, and a few years later he began his piano studies with Roberto Neri.

However, it is not until he meets Pablo Castro, and through him José María and Juan José Castro as well as Luis Gianneo, that he begins studying analysis and composition with Constantino Gaito. He later studies with Eduardo Fornarini, who was a guide to all his generation. The visits of French conductor Ernest Ansermet in the twenties are also key in his education.

The year 1924 was important for two reasons. Firstly, because it was the year that Paz got in touch with the Martin Fierro group, thus meeting critics such as J. Artero, E. E. Bullrich and Luis Le-Bellot who introduced him to European avant-garde (Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Erik Satie and Igor Stravinsky). Secondly, because this is the year Juan Carlos Paz travels to Europe. He visits Madrid and then goes to Paris for a year, where he studies with Vincent D’Indy at the Schola Cantorum.

Back from Europe, in Buenos Aires, his music style begins to change, replacing a chromatic style highly influenced by Cesar Franck by a polychromatic style more influence by Stravinsky and Debussy. In 1929, together with musicians Juan José Castro, José María Castro, Jacobo Ficher, and Honorio Siccardi, Paz creates the Grupo Renovación (1929-1944), which opposed the Nationalist style of composition predominant in Buenos Aires at the time (characterized by the influence of Cesar Frank and whose leading figure was Alberto Williams). The group was driven by the necessity of premiering and publishing their works as well as promoting new music by European composers. Paz would later leave the group to create, in 1937, the Asociación Nueva Música, which had similar objectives (the promotion of new music).

It is during this period that he comes across twelve-tone music. He knows Schoenberg’s ideas through writings of Egen Wellesz, published in la Revue Musicale and begins to use the technique. Examples of this are works such as *Three Jazz Movements* **AUDIO** and the *Second Twelve-Tone Composition* **AUDIO**. In his music, he then begins to use series of structures (*Música 1946)* as well as the idea of a central canon (*Dédalus,* 1950 **AUDIO**), and later on, serialism in works such as *Continuidad* (1960 **AUDIO**), *Galaxia 64,* and *Concreción 1964.*

From 1957 to 1960 he works successfully as a composer of film music (notably in his collaborations in the films of Leopoldo Torre Nilsson). By the year 1965, Paz is able to replace composing for travelling. He gives lectures and attends premiers of his works in the United States, Venezuela and Europe. He dies in Buenos Aires in 1972.

**Complete list of books written by Juan Carlos Paz**

Paz, Juan Carlos (1955) *Introducción a la música de nuestro tiempo*, Buenos Aires: Sudamericana.

------ (1958) *Arnold Schönberg, o el fin de la era tonal*, Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión Ediciones.

------ (1959) *La música en los Estados Unidos*, México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

------ (1972) *Alturas, tensiones, ataques, intensidades (Memorias I)*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor.

------ (1987) *Alturas, tensiones, ataques, intensidades (Memorias II)*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor.

------ (1994) *Alturas, tensiones, ataques, intensidades (Memorias III)*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Flor.

**Complete list of musical works**

1. Music for solo instruments

Piano

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1921 | *Coral, e* |
| 1922 | *Tres piezas líricas* |
| 1923 | *Fantasía y fuga*, b |
| 1923 | *Fantasía* |
| 1923 | *Preludio, coral y fuga* |
| 1923 | *Piano Sonata nº 1*. |
| 1924/25 | *Four Fuges on a Theme Cuatro fugas sobre un tema* |
| 1925 | *Piano Sonata nº 2*. |
| 1925 | *Coral, F* |
| 1925/26 | *Dos leyendas* |
| 1926 | *Tres comentarios líricos a 'El cartero del rey'* (arr. ensemble, 1942). |
| 1927/29 | *Seis baladas* |
| 1928 | *Tema con transformaciones* |
| 1932 | *Tres invenciones a 2 voces* |
| 1932 | Op. 22. *Tres movimientos de jazz* |
| 1933 | *Sonatina para piano nº 3*. |
| 1935 | *Sonata para piano nº 3*. |
| 1936 | *Diez piezas sobre una serie dodecafónica* |
| 1936/37 | *Canciones y baladas* |
| 1937 | *Cinco piezas de carácter* |
| 1940 | *Junto al Parana* |
| 1945/47 | *Música 1946* |
| 1962/64 | *Núcleos* |

Voice and Piano

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1929 | *Abel* (Manuel Machado) |

Clarinet

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| --- | --- |
| 1936 | *Cuatro piezas* |

Violin

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1938 | *Cuarta composición dodecafónica* |

Percussion

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1953/54 | *Continuidad 1953* |

Organ

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1964 | *Galaxia 64* |

2. Works for orchestra

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1927 | *Canto de Navidad* (orquestada en 1930) |
| 1930 | *Movimiento sinfónico* |
| 1931 | *Tres piezas* |
| 1932 | *Concierto nº 1* |
| 1935 | *Concierto nº 2* |
| 1936 | *Passacaglia* |
| 1940 | *Música para orquesta: Preludio y fuga*. |
| 1944 | *Passacaglia* para cuerdas (rev. 1949). |
| 1952 | *Rítmica constante (ostinada)* |
| 1954 | *Seis superposiciones* |
| 1955 | *Transformaciones canónicas*, para orquesta. |
| 1955/56 | *Música para fagot, cuerdas y batería*. |
| 1960 | *Continuidad 1960* (1: Constantes, 2: Perspectivas, 3: Homenaje a Edgar Varése) |
| 1964 | *Música para piano y orquesta*. |

3. Chamber music

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1929 | *Tema y transformaciones*, flauta, oboe, 2 clarinete, b clarinete, 2 fagotes, 2 cornos y 2 trompetas. |
| 1930 | *Octeto*, fl, oboe, 2 fg, 2 cor, 2 trompetas. |
| 1930 | *Sonatina nº 1*, para clarinete y piano. |
| 1931 | *Sonata para violín y piano*. |
| 1932 | *Sonatina nº 2*, para fl y clarinete |
| 1934 | *Primera composición dodecafónica*, para fl, corno inglés, [vc](http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violonchelo) |
| 1934/35 | Op. 29.*Segunda composición dodecafónica* [1: Allegro, 2: Andante con transformaciones, 3: Animato], fl and pno. |
| 1936 | *Obertura*, para quinteto de vientos, cor, trompeta, trombón, trío de cuerdas, db |
| 1937 | *Primera composición en trío*, flauta, cl, fg |
| 1937 | *Tercera composición dodecafónica*, para clarinete y piano. |
| 1938 | *Cuarteto de cuerda nº 1* |
| 1938 | *Segunda composición en trío*, clarinete, saxo alto y trompeta. |
| 1940 | *Tercera composición en trío*, flauta, oboe, cl bajo o fagot (rev. 1945) |
| 1940/43 | *Cuarteto de cuerda nº 2* |
| 1942 | *Tres comentarios líricos a 'El cartero del rey'*, para flauta, oboe, clarinete, piano trío [arr. obra para piano] |
| 1943 | Op. 43. *Música para flauta, saxofón y piano* [I. Allegro moderato] |
| 1950/51 | Op. 46. *Dédalus 1950* para piano, flauta, clarinete, violín, violonchelo. |
| 1955 | *Tres contrapuntos*, para cl, trpt, trb, guitarra eléctrica, celesta y vc. |
| 1961 | *Invención*, para cuarteto de cuerda. |
| 1964 | *Concreción 1964*, flauta, clarinete, fg, cor, trompeta, trombón, tuba. |

4. Theatre Music

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| --- | --- |
| 1931 | Música para la obra teatral *Juliano Emperador* (H. Ibsen). |

5. Film Music

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1957 | *La casa del ángel* (de Leopoldo Torre Nilsson). |
| 1958 | *El secuestrador* (Leopoldo Torre Nilsson). |
| 1959 | *La caída*. (Leopoldo Torre Nilsson) |
| 1959 | *En la ardiente oscuridad*. (Daniel Tynaire) |
| 1959 | *Simiente humana,* Sergio Leonardo |
| 1960 | *Fin de fiesta*. Leopoldo Torre Nilsson. |

6. Undetermined

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1972 | *Seis eventos*, instrumental abierto. |

**References and further reading**

Corrado, Omar (2010) *Vanguardias al Sur: la música de Juan Carlos Paz. Buenos Aires (1897-1972),* La Habana: Editorial Casa de las Américas. (Latest work published on Juan Carlos Paz. Omar Corrado analyzes the evolution of his music language as well as his life)

------------------- (2010) *Música y modernidad en Buenos Aires (1920-1940),* Buenos Aires: Gourmet Musical Ediciones. (Analysis of the music entourage in Buenos Aires in the 1920-1940 period)

Romano, Jacobo (1976) *Vidas de Paz,* Buenos Aires: Ediciones Gai. (First biography published on Juan Carlos Paz, focusing vastly in personal details)

Scarabino, Guillermo (1999) *Cuaderno de estudio Nro. 3: El grupo Renovación (1929-1944) y la “Nueva Música” en la Argentina del siglo XX,* Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Universidad Católica Argentina. (Study on the Grupo Renovación, includes concert programs as well as a chronology of the group’s activities)

Zulueta, Jorge (1976), *La obra para piano de Juan Carlos Paz,* Buenos Aires: Ediciones Gai. (Zulueta, a pianist who premiered many of Paz’s works, offers a study of Juan Carlos Paz’s piano music)