

**CULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS:
Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America**



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“Alejandro Monestel and his Rhapsodies for Military Band: San José and New York”

Abstract:

The music for military band by composer Alejandro Monestel (1865-1950) was often performed in San José, capital of Costa Rica, according to various scholarly sources. The *Rapsodia Costarricense* (1935) and *Rapsodias Guanacastecas* N°1 and N°2 (1936, 37) were among the most popular works for military band by the composer. Although Monestel is known as one of the most published Central American composers, these works were never published before. The Rhapsodies were included in the programs offered by the Military Band of San José in the traditional recreos and retretas performed in the Parque Central. The United States Navy Band, in concerts organized by the Pan American Union performed the same works. Both scenarios helped to construct an idea of Costa Rica according to their own perspectives. In this paper, I explore both the motivations of Alejandro Monestel to compose the Rhapsodies for military band, and the reception of these works. Given the premiere of the Rhapsodies in San José, and in Washington D.C., I examine primary sources from different archives that preserve letters between Alejandro Monestel and, the National Broadcasting Company, the Unión Panamericana, and Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music. Considering Monestel’s traveling life --Costa Rica (origin), Belgium (school), New York (professional life), Costa Rica (back home)—I propose that in this circular trip, he traveled carrying values, ideas, and music to his three homes.

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Editorial Disclaimer:

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