

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



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**“Camelia’s truths in *Únicamente la verdad*: Narrative, History, and Musical  
Gesture”**

**Abstract:**

Gabriela Ortiz’s opera *Únicamente la verdad* (2008) was inspired by historical figures and events surrounding the narcocorrido “Contrabando y Traición” by Los Tigres del Norte. In reality as in the opera, the causal relationship between history and art is reversed; traditionally, the narcocorrido narrates and also possibly editorializes about events that have already occurred in the drug trade between the United States and Mexico. Ortiz’s opera instead presents a series of multiple and contradictory real-life events and characters that were generated by the fictional narrative in the narcocorrido.

These widely varying “truths”—in the midst of an opera whose title implies that we expect only one truth—underscore the social complexity of the drug trafficking problem, and open the conversation to include many truths in a broader narrative. My presentation explores how *Únicamente la verdad* projects such a plurality of truths from a musical perspective by exploring how particular musical gestures are presented in varying ways according to the “truth” that is being presented in each moment.

**How to Cite this Paper:**

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**Editorial Disclaimer:**

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