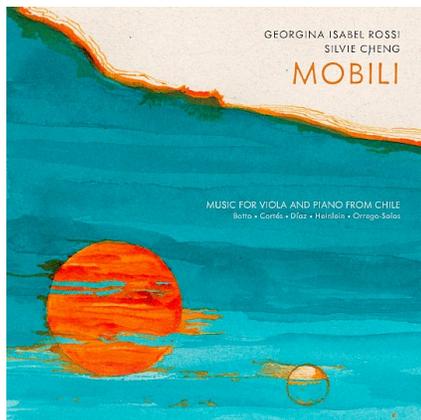


Georgina Isabel Rossi: **Mobili: Music for Viola and Piano from Chile**

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About

Violist Georgina Isabel Rossi and pianist Silvie Cheng release *Mobili*, an overview of Chilean repertoire featuring viola. Compiling six works by five composers, including five world-premiere recordings, the recording highlights the rich tapestry of influences that have shaped Chilean concert music, from European high modernism to Indigenous music of the Andean region.

Audio

#	Audio	Title/Composer(s)	Performer(s)	Time
01		¿Habr� alguien que en sus manos sostenga este caer? <i>Rafael D�az</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, viola	10:39
02		Al fondo de mi lejan�a se asoma tu casa <i>Rafael D�az</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, viola, Silvie Cheng, piano	6:02
03		Fantasia op.15 <i>Carlos Botto</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, viola, Silvie Cheng, piano	9:26
04		D�o "Do not go gentle" <i>Federico Heindl�</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, viola, Silvie Cheng, piano	9:48
05		Tololo <i>David Cort�s</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, Silvie Cheng	11:25
		Mobili op.63 <i>Juan Orrego-Salas</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, viola, Silvie Cheng, piano	
06		I. Flessibile		4:29
07		II. Discontinuo		2:50
08		III. Ricorrente		7:19
09		IV. Perpetuo		3:14
10		El Sampedrino <i>Carlos Guastavino</i>	Georgina Isabel Rossi, viola, Silvie Cheng, piano	3:49
			Total Time	69:01

[Notes](#) [Credits](#) [Artist Bios](#)

Violist Georgina Rossi and pianist Silvie Cheng's *Mobili* chronicles five decades of Chilean music for viola, reflecting a dichotomy of influences from Indigenous sources and cosmopolitan aesthetics grounded in mid-century European modernist sensibilities. The collection is given added weight by the passing of Juan Orrego-Salas, the composer of the title work, sixteen days prior to the first recording session. Rossi and Cheng have dedicated the album to his memory, a fitting homage to a man who was a lifelong ambassador for Chilean music in the United States.

Rafael D az' *¿Habr  alguien que en sus manos sostenga este caer?* (*Will There Be Someone Whose Hands Can Sustain This Falling?*) opens the program and is its only work for solo viola. Taking inspiration from ritual prayers of the Pewenche people of the central Andean region, the work embodies the pantheistic ethos of their way of life in which the natural world and the deity are fused. The viola is amplified with added reverberation to simulate playing alone in a mountainous terrain. The musical material alternates between melodic gestures derived from ethnomusicological fieldwork and violistic techniques that paint a meditative scene. D az' second work on the album, *Al fondo de mi lejan a se asoma tu casa* (*In the Depths of My Distance Your House Emerges*), is a simple sonic recollection of a childhood memory. D az came up with the comforting theme to whistle as he took his daily walk to school through a pampa filled with animals, some of whom had a specific interest in the contents of his lunch bag.

Carlos Botto Vallarino was a pivotal figure in the Chilean concert music community, nationally beloved as a pedagogue, scholar, and composer. A student of Luigi Dallapiccola in New York on a Guggenheim post-graduate fellowship, Botto's style reflects an affinity for character pieces and freely evolving structures. His *Fantasia* op. 15 opens with a brooding melody in the viola that is developed patiently, with supporting atmospheric piano chords that grow in intensity. Botto saves the most energetic music for the last minutes of the work, when a skittering dialogue develops between the instruments, broken up momentarily by expansive chords in the piano that recall sonorities from the somber opening.

Berlin-born, Buenos Aires raised Federico Heinlein spent the early part of his life between Argentina and Europe before settling permanently in Chile in 1940. Heinlein's music reflects a wealth of literary points of inspiration — the Dylan Thomas reference in the subtitle of his *Dúo* "*Do not go gentle*" is consistent with that component of his work. Heinlein's duo begins with taut declamatory phrases, displaying a discipline in its approach to motivic development that hearkens to late German romanticism. A lyrical second thematic area smooths the angular edges of the opening material. After a return of the opening, a virtuosic coda closes the work with fanfare.

David Cortés' *Tololo*, one of the two works on *Mobili* written within the last decade, is a musical homage to the Coquimbo Region north of Santiago where he grew up, and to the astronomical wonders one can discover in its night skies. Cortés establishes a metaphor between his treatment of material and the way a telescope obscures and reveals visual information when zooming in and out. Establishing the low C string of the viola as a central pitch, Cortés builds layers of activity and tension above it, with glissandi on double stops that create microtonal beatings, left hand pizzicati, and evocative trills. The piano shadows the viola's malleable gestures, subtly asserting the equal tempered framework around which the glissandi melt from pitch to pitch. The meditative quality of the work is broken briefly for a mischievous passage led by staccato scales in the piano about three quarters of the way through the work before we hear the opening material once again to bring the piece full circle.

Juan Orrego-Salas' four movement work *Mobili* is focused and economical. The thoughtful, deliberative music in the opening movement, "Flessibile," is occasionally interrupted by a forceful descending gesture in the piano. "Discontinuo" is more jagged, with playful interplay between the instruments. "Riccorrente" unfolds as a slow march, with an initial piano melody over delicate viola pizzicati growing more rhapsodic as the melody switches instruments. An extended viola solo passage contains the most poignantly expressive music in the work. The final movement, "Perpetuo," is vigorous and propulsive, closing this exceedingly well balanced work.

Included in the program as a bonus track is Argentine composer Carlos Gustavino's charming *El Sampedrino*, a touching encore that highlights Rossi and Cheng's elegant musical chemistry.

Mobili documents a rich repertoire for viola and piano from Chile, demonstrating not so much a national compositional style, but instead a constellation of influences from European modernism, to Chilean Indigenous music, to aspects of Chilean life and its landscape. Georgina Rossi's impeccable precision is matched by a penetrating expressivity, complemented beautifully by Silvie Cheng's sensitive performance in music that most often presents viola and piano as equal partners. *Mobili* is a warm and compelling invitation to discover more music from Chile, by these excellent composers from Chile and their forebears and successors.

– Dan Lippel

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International Society for Chilean Music (SIMUC)

Absolutely priceless. This first compilation of Chilean music for viola introduces, in the best possible way, five previously unrecorded works and a duo of extraordinary performers to the international recording stage. In many respects, the album is also a story of comings and goings between North and South America. Georgina Rossi is a young violist based in New York, but her roots go back to Santiago through her father, the famous clarinetist and luthier Luis Rossi, and her mother and first teacher, Penelope Knuth, who is originally from the Big Apple. Both Rossi and her mother obtained their Master's at the Juilliard School, separated by a distance of more than three decades, and both come together again in the dedication of the first work on this album—published by the American label New Focus Recordings and distributed by Naxos of America.

International Society for Chilean Music (SIMUC)

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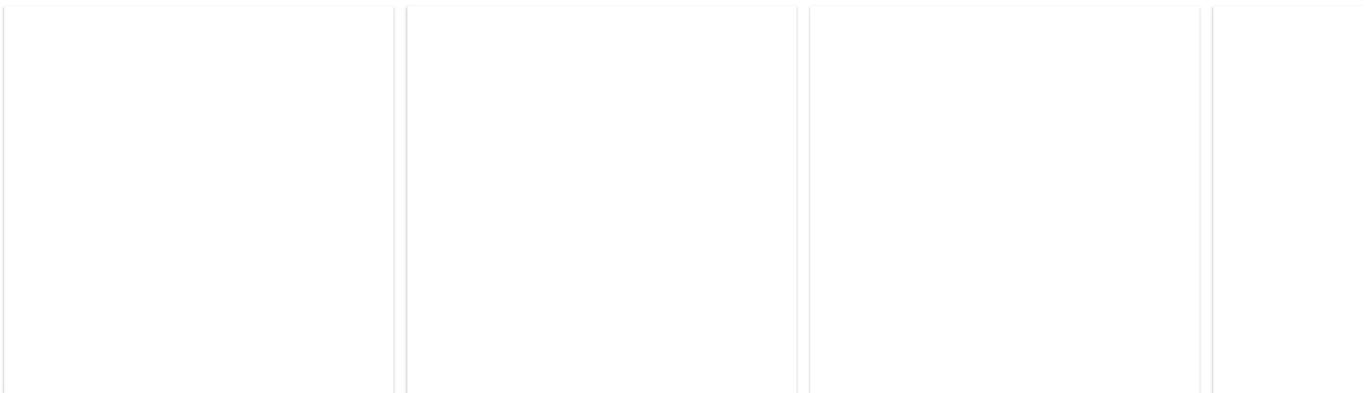
The Whole Note

¿Habr  alguien que en sus manos sostenga este caer? (Will There Be Someone Whose Hands Can Sustain This Falling?) (2009) by Rafael D az uses amplification to slide the viola through a wide, resonant sound space while meditating on fragments of Pewenche melodies. Here, Rossi shows off her ability to sustain a beautiful and expressive cantabile line while dexterously handling the widest intervals imposed by the score. This is the only work for solo viola on the album; all the other pieces add the sensitive and reliable presence of Chinese-Canadian pianist Silvie Cheng. The audio engineering by the experienced Ryan Streber is also excellent, with a subtle and pleasant reverb that enriches the first track without clouding the textures. Streber's expertise particularly graces Rafael D az's second piece, *En el fondo de mi distancia se asoma tu casa (In the Depths of My Distance Your House Emerges)* (2013), a melody of moving simplicity that sometimes seems like a meditation on a Chilean "tonada" in an environment close to sacred minimalism. The rest of the program does not offer connections with the vernacular music of Chile, although *Tololo* alludes to the famous observatory in the north of the country. It was premiered in 2011 by Penelope Knuth in its original format with a string orchestra, when its young composer, David Cort s (b. 1985), won the Luis Advis Competition. Rossi uses an arrangement for piano by Miguel F rias that gives a more pointillist vision of the incisive gestures that characterize the score. *Tololo's* astronomical allusions inspire the graphics soberly incorporated into the disc's bilingual and highly informative booklet: planets of different colors and textures created by Georgina Rossi herself. They are presented as hanging mobiles, alluding to another piece in the program: *Mobili* by Juan Orrego Salas (1919-2019).

The album was conceived in celebration of the hundredth birthday of this outstanding composer, based at Indiana University since 1961. Unfortunately, he passed away a few days before the recording of this album, which became a tribute to his life and work. *Mobili* (1967) is the only piece on the album previously recorded (by Kim Kashkashian no less, on an out-of-print record). It was dedicated to the Chilean violist of Spanish origin Manuel D az, who was studying in Indiana with Primrose. A few years later, D az settled permanently in the United States, together with his talented son Roberto, who also added this neoclassical work to his repertoire, the four movements of which complement one another as in a baroque sonata. *Perpetuo Finale* is the most propulsive section of the entire album, not far from Prokofiev's toccatas or Ginastera's malambos. The sudden contrast with a calm Pampean song by Argentine Carlos Guastavino, incorporated as a bonus track, is not out of place. The program is rounded out by two more works that oscillate between meditation and frank drama: the *Fantasia* by Carlos Botto (disciple of Orrego-Salas and Dallapiccola), a work premiered by Manuel D az in his graduation recital in 1962, and the *D o: Do Not Go Gentle* (1985) by Federico Heinlein, which sounds like a neo-romantic response to Dylan Thomas's famous poem "Do not go gentle into that good night."

– Felipe Elgueta Frontier, 9.30.2020

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