

BOSTON LANDMARKS ORCHESTRA

Summer Concert Series – Thursday, August 18, 2022

7PM – DCR Hatch Shell

Mendelssohn & Fabiola Méndez

Symphonic Folk

Boston Landmarks Orchestra
Christopher Wilkins, Music Director
Fabiola Méndez, *cuatro*

Cuban Overture

George Gershwin
(1898-1937)
orch. Lee Reynolds

L'Arlésienne (excerpts from the original version)

Georges Bizet
(1838-1875)

Prélude
Pastorale
Adagietto
Entr'acte
Farandole

Sinfonia india

Carlos Chávez
(1899-1978)

Seis Chorreo

Traditional
arr. Francisco Figueroa and
David Kempers

Fabiola Méndez, *cuatro*

INTERMISSION

Folksongs in Counterpoint

Florence Price
(1887-1953)

Calvary
Oh My Darlin' Clementine
Shortnin' Bread

Bomba pa' la diaspora

Fabiola Méndez
arr. David Kempers

Fabiola Méndez, *cuatro*

Aguinaldo Orocoveño

Traditional
arr. David Kempers

Fabiola Méndez, *cuatro & vocals*

Symphony No. 4 in A major, "Italian"

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Allegro vivace
Andante con moto
Con moto moderato
Saltarello: Presto

RUN TIME

This concert will run approximately **two hours** with a fifteen-minute intermission.

MUSIC DIRECTOR



CHRISTOPHER WILKINS was appointed Music Director of the Boston Landmarks Orchestra in the spring of 2011. Since then, he has expanded the orchestra's mission of making great music accessible to the whole community. He has also helped develop the orchestra's Breaking Down Barriers initiative, making accessibility a priority in all aspects of the orchestra's activities.

Mr. Wilkins also serves as Music Director of the Akron Symphony. As a guest conductor, Mr. Wilkins has appeared with many of the leading orchestras of the United States, including those of Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and San Francisco. Previously, Mr. Wilkins served as Music Director of the Orlando Philharmonic, the San Antonio Symphony, and the Colorado Springs Symphony.

He has served as associate conductor of the Utah Symphony, assisting Joseph Silverstein; assistant conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra under Christoph von Dohnányi; conducting assistant with the Oregon Symphony under James DePreist; and was a conducting fellow at Tanglewood. He was winner of the Seaver/NEA Award in 1992.

Born in Boston, Mr. Wilkins earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard College in 1978. He received his master of music degree at Yale University in 1981, and in 1979 attended the Hochschule der Künste in West Berlin as a recipient of the John Knowles Paine traveling fellowship. As an oboist, he performed with many ensembles in the Boston area, including the Berkshire Music Center Orchestra at Tanglewood, and the Boston Philharmonic under Benjamin Zander.

BOSTON LANDMARKS ORCHESTRA

First Violin

Greg Vitale, *Concertmaster*
Colin Davis
Aleksandra Labinska
Sarita Uranovsky
Michael Rosenbloom
Lisa Brooke

Second Violin

Paula Oakes, *Principal*
Sue Faux
Stacey Alden
Robert Curtis
Leah Zelnick

Viola

Kenneth Stalberg, *Principal*
Don Krishnaswami
Noriko Futagami
Sharon Bielek

Cello

Melanie Dyball *Acting Principal*
Patrick Owen
Eleanor Blake
Jackie Ludwig Selby

Bass

Robert Lynam, *Principal*
Kevin Green

Percussion

Robert Schulz, *Principal*
Gregory Simonds
Maria Finkelmeier

Harp

Hyunjung Choi, *Acting Principal*

Piano

Bonnie Anderson Rising

Flute

Lisa Hennessey, *Principal*
Iva Milch

Piccolo

Iva Milch

Oboe

Andrew Price, *Principal*
Alessandro Cirfici

English Horn

Alessandro Cirfici

Clarinet

Margo McGowan *Principal*
Kelli O'Conner

Bassoon

Ronald Harotunain, *Acting Principal*
Gregory Newton

Alto Saxophone

Kelli O'Conner

Horns

Kevin Owen, *Principal*
Whitacre Hill

Trumpet

Dana Oakes, *Principal*
Jesse Levine

Trombone

Hans Bohn, *Acting Principal*

Timpani

Jeffrey Fischer, *Principal*

Personnel Manager

Kevin Owen

Acting Librarian

Katie Nakanishi

Maestro Zone Conductor

Damali Willingham

GUEST ARTISTS

She was a student at the Hogar del Cuatro Puertorriqueño, the Humacao Musical Institute, the Antonio Paoli School of Music in Caguas, the Conservatorio de Artes del Caribe, and Berklee College of Music, where in 2018 she graduated as the first student to play the Puerto Rican cuatro as principal instrument.

Fabiola has participated in multiple recordings, including the Banco Popular Special Eco (2008), Fabiola Méndez



Photo Credit: Ally Schmaling

and Herencia Criolla (2009), Ready for Departure (2014), Cuatro Sinfónico (2019), Al Otro Lado Del Charco (2019), and Afrorriqueña (2021), the last three being cataloged as part of the best 20 productions of 2019 and 2021 consecutively, according to the National Foundation for Popular Culture.

Fabiola has had the opportunity to perform on many different stages. She has worked with organizations such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Celebrity Series of Boston, Agora Cultural Architects, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Puerto Rican Arts Alliance in Chicago, Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, among others. She has collaborated with artists such as: Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, Totó La

Momposina, Pedro Capó, Victoria Sanabria, Cucco Peña, Decimania de Puerto Rico, Eddie Palmieri, the Gran Combo de Puerto Rico, Rayos Gamma, Danny Rivera, Chicago Philharmonic, among many others.

In recent years, she's had the honor of receiving recognition such as the Quincy Jones Award, ambassador for the Puerto Rican Day Parade in NYC, a motion from the PR House of Representatives as the first cuatro player to graduate from Berklee, one of WBUR's The ARTery 25 artists by Boston's NPR news station in 2021, the Brother Thomas Fellowship, and the Whippoorwill Arts Fellowship.

Currently, Fabiola works as a cuatro player and singer-songwriter, presenting her original music projects inside and outside of Puerto Rico. Her artistic vision and original music focus on the exploration of her culture, her ancestry, and her identities. In addition, she works as a composer for children's animated series, including the PBS Kids shows Alma's Way and Work It Out Wombats, and HBO Max's Mecha Builders, produced by Sesame Street.

PODIUM NOTE

By Christopher Wilkins

There's so much about the cuatro that represents who Puerto Rico is, and Puerto Ricans are, and who I am.

Fabiola Méndez

Music carries its own genetic code. It reveals who we are, and where we come from. It holds the identities of entire communities.

And it has no respect for political boundaries. Music moves freely across borders, even when people cannot. The Caribbean is a perfect example. There, as political alliances and borders have shifted drastically over the centuries, the international sharing of music has been a constant. Over hundreds of years of musical give-and-take between key port cities in the New World—San Juan, Havana, Port-au-Prince, New Orleans, Miami, New York—it is often impossible to determine what started where, who gets the credit, and whose tradition it is.

Cuban popular music is especially syncretic, growing out of distinct West African, Spanish, and New World cultures. And it is among the world's most influential folk traditions. In the 1930s, the *danzón* and *rumba* exploded in popularity, most of all in New York City—**George Gershwin's** hometown, and the *de facto* home of "mambo mania." Gershwin visited Cuba on holiday in 1932. One of the hits he undoubtedly heard was "*Échale salsa*" ("Pour a little salsa," or "Spice it up a little") by Ignacio Piñeiro and his Septeto Nacional. Their performance is part of the origin story of *salsa* music, and can be seen in [historic footage from 1927](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MTH90weUZA) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MTH90weUZA>). Gershwin borrowed from the beginning of "*Échale salsa*" to create the first theme of his ***Cuban Overture***. The instrumental ensemble in that 1927 performance is a typical salsa combo: trumpet, guitar, *tres* (a small Cuban guitar with three strings—the Cuban analogue to the four-string *cuatro* played tonight by Fabiola Méndez), and a percussion battery of claves, maracas, and bongos. Gershwin's orchestration of the *Cuban Overture* is an expansion of that ensemble.

The second theme of the *Cuban Overture* derives from an even better-known source: "*La Paloma*" ("The Dove"). The song remains a standard today; in fact, it's the most recorded song in the Spanish language. Basque composer Sebastián Iradier composed "*La Paloma*" shortly after visiting Cuba sometime around 1860. He didn't live long enough to know how popular his song would eventually become. Gershwin highlights the theme by withholding the Cuban percussion instruments until the "*La Paloma*" tune appears for the first time. These are the

same percussion instruments Ignacio Piñero had in his 1927 septet: claves, maracas, and bongos. Their rhythm contains a *clave* beat: the five-note syncopated rhythm typical of Afro-Caribbean music. Gershwin has fun with the well-known melody: the violins play on their lowest open string, then ascend an octave to the next G; they hold that note for a full four seconds; then they rise rhythmically in a direct quotation of "*La Paloma*." In the languorous middle section of the work, he weaves new melodies together with such ease and pleasure, it is hard not to wonder what more symphonic gems Gershwin might have produced had he not succumbed to a brain tumor at the age of thirty-eight. With his astonishing gift for assimilating the sound and feel of almost any music, Gershwin succeeded—after only a two-week stay on the island—in capturing the essential style of Cuban *son*, the precursor to modern-day *salsa*. Initially, he called the work *Rumba*, but later changed it to *Cuban Overture*, a title he considered more appropriate for a "serious" orchestral work.

Most of us are familiar with **Georges Bizet's *L'Arlésienne***—or parts of it—even if we don't recognize the title (or dare pronounce it). The opening *March of the Three Kings* is ubiquitous at Christmastime. The *Farandole* is also a perennial holiday favorite, although in this orchestra, we identify it most strongly with Maestro Charles Ansbacher. He conducted the it on every concert in the summer of 2010, his final season with us.

Bizet composed the music in 1872, at the age of thirty-eight, for a play by Alphonse Daudet. The story revolves around a young man's infatuation with a character who never appears on stage: the Girl from Arles (in French: *L'Arlésienne*). The music provides emotional depth to the characters and lyric intensity to their relationships. But above all, it evokes the mood and beauty of the countryside: the Provence region of France. Bizet's original music has the character of folksong, but he also included three actual Provençal folk tunes to provide authentic local color.

The music audiences know so well is for large orchestra. But Bizet's original version calls for a theater orchestra of just twenty-six players. We perform five principal sections of the original score tonight. In lyricism, harmony, color, and musical imagination, Bizet's prodigious gifts are on full display in every bar. At its premiere, the play was a complete failure, while the music was an instant hit with nearly everyone.

The **Prélude** begins with woodwinds, piano, and strings performing the ***March of the Three Kings*** (Provençal: *La Marcho di Rèi*), which Bizet took from an 1864 collection of folk songs. The musicians play *fortissimo* and in unison—everyone on the same pitches and in the same octave—which guarantees the most robust sound possible. The theme now repeats four times: a gentle variation for woodwinds in four-part counterpoint; a crescendo in two separate phrases that builds in intensity through the use of snare drum and tremulous figures in the strings; a lilting variation for cello and horn; and finally, a robust reiteration of the march for the entire orchestra, this time richly harmonized. A brief transition leads to musical themes associated with the two brothers of the story. First comes L'Innocent, the younger brother of the infatuated one. L'Innocent suffers from arrested development, but he has a remarkably keen intuition. Bizet assigns this musical portrait to a wind instrument recently invented in Paris: the alto saxophone. Then comes the theme of Frédéri, the brother in love with the Girl from Arles. His tune begins with high violins, accompanied by piano, and soon opens out into a passionate utterance by the full orchestra, bringing the Prélude to a close.

The **Pastorale** helps establish the setting of Act II, a saltwater lagoon south of Arles known as *Étang de Vaccarès*. The full-throated refrain and swaying rhythms suggest a gathering of peasants by water's edge. An exchange between woodwinds, horn, and saxophone interrupts the mood, announcing something new: a brief piping tune in flute and English horn. The opening music returns. The gorgeous and much-loved **Adagietto** lends serenity and sweetness to the meeting of two elderly characters as they recall a love they shared long ago, though it is now a distant memory. The **Entr'acte** to Act III takes us to the family kitchen. Here, music for the stern and domineering mother alternates with mysterious strains of the simpleminded but insightful L'Innocent. Then, saxophone and horn unfurl a long-limbed theme of classic Bizet lyricism, sometimes referred to as his *Agnus dei*. The concluding **Farandole** is based on the traditional folk dance, *Danse des Chivau-Frus*. Its ebullience and drive are propelled by the continuous beating of the *tambourin provençale*, the region's signature long drum.

Carlos Chavez's *Sinfonía india* is one of a handful of canonical Mexican orchestral works. It holds a place in the cultural history of Mexico comparable to the murals of Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco, and the self-portraits of Frida Kahlo. It is the most prominent musical statement of the "Aztec Renaissance," a movement in post-Revolutionary Mexico taking inspiration from indigenous history, ideals, and expression. At the

same time, Chavez was part of a group of Pan-American composers who emerged between the world wars, seeking to establish a distinctly New World sound in concert music. Chavez and Copland developed an especially close artistic alliance. Chavez conducted the premiere of *Sinfonía india* in New York City in 1936.

Chavez uses indigenous melodies as source material in *Sinfonía india*, and includes several indigenous instruments in his percussion section, honoring both contemporary native peoples and Mexico's pre-Columbian past. "In musical terms, the great expressive power of indigenous art lies in its rhythmic variety," Chavez wrote, "in the freedom and scope of its scales and modes, in the richness of the sonorous instrumental element, in the simplicity and purity of its melodies, and in its moral condition."

The work opens with short Stravinskian patterns, setting up a call in the trumpet, answered by high woodwinds. This collage of melodic fragments leads to the first entrance of traditional Mexican percussion instruments, or, as Chavez notes, "their equivalents in common use": *Yacqui* drum (Indian drum); *Tenabari* (butterfly cocoons); *Grijutian* (deer hooves); and *Tlapan-huehuatl* (deep drum).

All of this is introductory. Now suddenly, without transition, oboes and first violins introduce the first main section. The melody is a vigorous dancing tune of the Cora people (from the present-day states of Nayarit and Jalisco). The Stravinskian motives return, reinforced by trumpet and trombone. A second main section begins with a lyrical solo in the high clarinet (clarinet in E-flat), playing a tune of Yacqui origin. Oboes, flutes, violins, and violas takes turns with this song of contentedness. Now the horn, high in its register, introduces an austere melody from Sonora. The music builds in volume and speed, providing a bridge back to the Cora dance, a transition that was lacking the first time. The music of the opening returns, and we can hear that the basic form of *Sinfonía india* to this point is palindromic: A-B-C-B-A.

Unexpectedly, high clarinet and muted trumpet initiate a quick dance of the Seri people (also of the Mexican state of Sonora), accompanied by *güiro* (scraped gourd) and repeating chords in the strings. Out of this new idea, Chavez creates a coda, steadily intensifying the music by adding layers: piccolo, brass, and indigenous percussion. Listeners have often compared the ending of *Sinfonía india*, with its wild energy and relentless drive—seemingly pushing the limits of human endurance—to the conclusion of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

Fabiola Méndez, the renowned Puerto Rican cuatro player, singer, and composer, performs with us tonight for the first time. She is gifted with stylistic versatility, infectious charisma, and jaw-dropping virtuosity. Her musical roots are in both Puerto Rico and Boston. Though still in her twenties, she is already a revered performer. Her recordings on the cuatro, a small guitar-like instrument typically outfitted with four strings (thus its name, from the Spanish word for "four"), have drawn raves and awards from around the world.

Ms. Méndez also has a deep love of working with young people. Tonight, we launch an extended partnership between Fabiola Méndez, the Boston Landmarks Orchestra, and the **Hyde Square Task Force** (<https://www.hydesquare.org/>) in Jamaica Plain. The mission of the Hyde Square Task Force is to "amplify the power, creativity, and voices of youth, connecting them to Afro-Latin culture and heritage so they can create a diverse, vibrant Latin Quarter, and build a just, equitable Boston." Our partnership builds on models the Landmarks Orchestra has developed in recent years with Camp Harbor View, Zumix, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston, the Yawkey Club, and the Mattapan Teen Center.

Beginning later this year, an extended residency of Fabiola Méndez and our musicians will enable a select group of students to co-create a work to be performed in the summer of 2023. The piece is likely to include these young composers as performers, as well as young dancers from the Hyde Square Task Force. Ms. Méndez will help the students express and refine their own musical ideas, then integrate their writing into a cohesive original work. She will work with the students, both virtually and in person, throughout the 2022–23 school year.

Landmarks is developing this program in collaboration with Ágora Cultural Architects (<https://www.culturalagora.com/>), a consulting group that increases Latinx cultural visibility through the arts. Through the leadership of Ágora's co-founder, Elsa Mosquera Sterenberg, the Orchestra will initiate community-based projects elsewhere in the Greater Boston area, including in neighborhoods rich in Afro-Latin culture and heritage.

Fabiola Méndez is deeply engaged with the neighborhoods of Boston. A newly released film, *Negrura* (<https://www.fabiolamendezmusic.com/negrura>), explores her work in Jamaica Plain's Hyde/Jackson Square

Fabiola Méndez's project "Negrura" (released in 2022) is an audiovisual storytelling experience that showcases the stories of Afro-Latinx folks from Boston's Latin Quarter Cultural District. The film aims to create spaces for conversations about colorism, anti-blackness, discrimination, and racism within our own Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latinx community. Music, at the core of the project, connects our voices to provide a space for self-reflection, support, and healing.

<https://www.fabiolamendezmusic.com/negrura>

While a student at Berklee College of Music, Méndez began to incorporate jazz styles into her performances: "I wanted to start improvising more, and I feel like jazz was sort of that way for me to get a different language to apply to the cuatro," she says. "A lot of cuatristas on the island will say, 'no, no, you only have to play traditional music. They actually don't approve of other styles being put into the cuatro. But coming here and studying with my Berklee instructor, John Baboian, was like, 'OK, look at all these things that you can do!' And he'd be like, 'well, can you do that on the cuatro?' And I'd be like, 'I think so, but that's never been done before!'"

She performs three works with the Landmarks Orchestra tonight: two Puerto Rican folk tunes, and one of her own creation. Here is her description of the first folk song, which we perform to close out the first half of the concert:

Aguinaldo Orocoveño

An *aguinaldo* is a gift. This is a folk piece from Puerto Rico that is traditionally played to start festivities, especially around the holidays (music symbolizing the gift musicians offer to their communities). This particular melody is from the center region of Puerto Rico, in a town called Orocovis—hence the title, *Aguinaldo Orocoveño*.

Following intermission, the strings of the Orchestra perform three miniatures by **Florence Price**, from her ***Five Folk Songs in Counterpoint***. Price was among the first to answer Dvořák's plea for composers in this country to create an authentic American sound using African American sources. She did so with contrapuntal skill (developed under George Chadwick at the New England Conservatory), melodic imagination, and the integration of folk music she remembered from her childhood in Arkansas. All three aspects shine in her sophisticated settings of the folk songs ***Calvary; My Darling Clementine; and Shortnin' Bread***.

Then, Fabiola Méndez returns to the stage for two pieces she describes this way:

Bomba pa' la diaspora

Bomba is a traditional dance and music style from Puerto Rico, first developed by enslaved peoples from Africa more than 400 years ago. *Bomba pa' la diaspora* is an original piece I wrote as a tribute to all those who identify as being part of any diaspora, exploring the rhythms of *Bomba* as they apply to melodic instruments.

Seis Chorreo

The *seis* is another traditional form of Puerto Rican folk music. There are more than one hundred and fifty variations of *seises* in Puerto Rico. Each one is characterized by a main melody, from which cuatristas take inspiration to improvise and create a variation of lines throughout the whole piece. The *Seis Chorreo* is one of the fastest *seises*, creating an opportunity for the cuatrista to play fast scales up and down the neck of the instrument, and for audiences to dance along.

[Maestro Zone and young dancers: take note!]

Every bar of **Felix Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 4, "Italian"** exudes freshness, confidence, and ease of expression. No one has ever explained to satisfaction why Mendelssohn himself remained displeased with the work to the end of his life. The writing comes across as effortless, though we know it was not. Nonetheless, its combination of Classical elegance and Romantic lyricism has proven irresistible to audiences since its first performance in London, under the composer's baton, in 1833.

The work has the feeling of folk-inspired music, though it's hard to put your finger on exactly why. Mendelssohn made a ten-month sojourn to Italy beginning in the fall of 1830, on the advice of a family friend, the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, no less. Certainly, his experience of ceremonies and festivals, regional

dances, and above all, the Italian countryside, inspired his work. He himself called it “my Italian symphony.” Looking back on his trip years later, he wrote, “The whole country had such a festive air that I felt as if I were a young prince making his entry.”

The first movement, *Allegro vivace*, opens with rapid-fire chords in the winds, and wind-in-the-face vigor. After two short bars, the violins unleash the first theme, familiar to moviegoers from the soundtrack to the 1979 film *Breaking Away*. There is astonishing variety in this extended melody: an opening three-note call; the call’s winding tail; a courtly figure; and a spiraling finish. Taken together, these elements spawn all the thematic material of the first main section of the movement. The graceful second subject comes as the bright sonority of strings gives way to the warm tone of clarinets and bassoons. The expression is still spirited, but more relaxed. This second theme has the effect of fresh material, but its rhythm comes from the courtly idea of the first theme. Everything we’ve just heard now repeats, but before it does, Mendelssohn fashions a lyrical idea out of the winding tail music. We will not hear this little tune again until shortly before the movement’s close. In the middle section—the development—the strings introduce a new, emphatic theme, quietly at first, then building in intensity through repetition. It meets a forceful reappearance of the “call” portion of the first subject. This is a hint of what is to come: in the final minutes of the movement—as the tempo speeds up—the emphatic theme and the call motive sound together. The entire first movement has a Mediterranean vitality about it. No description of it is more succinct than Mendelssohn’s own: “Blue sky in A major.”

The second movement, *Andante con moto*, draws inspiration from a procession Mendelssohn witnessed in Naples, or so it is supposed. Violas, oboe, and bassoon introduce a melancholy tune in two parts, each part echoed by violins. Underneath is the archaic sound of a walking bass line—a vestige of the Baroque era—suggesting the steady pace of a cortege. Clarinets brighten the mood, in a gesture the strings warmly welcome; the procession resumes. The shadowy texture and the atmosphere of religiosity might remind listeners of the mysterious duet of the Two Armed Men in Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*. The antique style also brings to mind one of Berlioz’s many witty observations about his friend Mendelssohn: “He is a little too fond of the dead.”

The dusky color of the second movement yields to a soft glow in the **third movement, *Con moto moderato***. The violins begin with an eloquent sentence, spun out over sixteen bars, affirmed by a falling scale in the winds. There is extraordinary grace in the line itself, and in the smooth connections between each of its phrases. Mendelssohn continues this half-sung, half-danced tune with the intuition of an improviser, extending a single melodic thought over the entire duration of the main section of the movement. If text were put to this song, it would speak of gratitude, fond memories, and untroubled love. The middle section of the movement honors classical conventions by featuring a small, contrasting instrumental group—a quartet of horns and bassoons—and a change of scene. The rhythms and instrumentation suggest the outdoors, and the aristocratic tradition of the hunt. When trumpets and drums enter as reinforcements, the music slips easily into military garb. Two deft transitional bars create a canon in the strings, which are all Mendelssohn needs to return us to the opening music—restated exactly—until a refashioning of the trio music brings the movement to a close.

The **finale, *Saltarello***, jumps into action with five powerful A-minor chords—intensified by trilling winds—and the characteristic rhythm of the Italian *saltarello*, literally a “leaping dance.” The speed—*Presto*—is the fastest of the conventional tempos. Mendelssohn entrusts the start of the main theme to a pair of flutes, the most agile of the woodwinds, who are well suited to performing this high-wire act with spit-fire precision. The flutes begin *piano*, but their pent-up energy gradually releases until trumpets and timpani mark a *fortissimo* arrival point. Descending lines in oboe and clarinet lead to a new quasi-martial theme in the strings, but the original *saltarello* rhythm is ever-present. With an ingenuity reminiscent of Mozart, that figure serves not as the main idea here, but as an accompaniment. The two themes—*saltarello* and martial—engage in a dialogue; the air clears; and a new theme emerges in the first violins. This is a Mendelssohnian *tarantella*, a folk dance from southern Italy, known throughout the world for its supposed benefits in warding off the effects of a tarantula bite. The entire movement is a masterclass in how to build and sustain musical energy. Thirty seconds before the movement’s close, the woodwinds give out the motto of the “call” from the first movement, but this time as a falling gesture rather than a rising one. This brief moment—a mirror image to the opening of the symphony—seems to offer a pleasingly symmetrical closing to the entire work. But clarinets and flutes sneak back in with the *saltarello* rhythm; surging timpani and strings rejoin with the *tarantella* figures; and the full orchestra hurls headlong into the final chords, reminiscent of those that began the movement. With this last exuberant gesture, Mendelssohn accomplishes that rarest of feats: closing a major-key symphony in the minor.

Text - Aguinaldo Orocoveño

Spanish

Puerto Rico eres
una hermosa flor
que baña en color
a todos sus seres.
Borinquen, si quieres
te doy mi poesía
que va por la vía
de mis sentimientos.
Eres brisa y viento
linda patria mía.

English

Puerto Rico you are
a beautiful flower
that bathes in color
all of its beings.
Borinquen, if you want
I'll give you my poetry
that goes along the way
of my feelings.
You are breeze and wind
beautiful homeland of mine.

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