

NAXOS

GINASTERA

Panambí • Estancia

(Complete Ballets)

Luis Gaeta, Narrator/Bass-baritone

London Symphony Orchestra • Gisèle Ben-Dor



Panambí (1937)

1	Claro de luna sobre el Paraná (Moonlight on the Paraná)	4:44
2	Fiesta indígena (Native festival)	0:26
3	Ronda de las doncellas (Girls' round dance)	1:23
4	Danza de los guerreros (Warriors' dance)	1:59
5	Escena (Scene)	2:43
6	Pantomima del amor eterno (Pantomime of eternal love) <i>with Kieran Moore, Oboe</i>	3:54
7	Canto de Guirahú (Guirahú's song) <i>with Paul Edmund-Davis, Flute</i>	3:22
8	El Hechicero se dirige hacia Guirahú; (The sorcerer approaches Guirahú); Aparecen las deidades del agua (The water sprites appear); El Hechicero se esconde (The sorcerer hides)	0:29
9	Juego de las deidades del agua (The water sprites play)	2:09
10	Reaparece el Hechicero (The sorcerer reappears); Los gritos del Hechicero (The Sorcerer's cries)	0:37
11	Inquietud de la tribu (The tribe is uneasy); Súplica de Panambí (Panambí's prayer) <i>with Andrew Marriner, Clarinet</i>	4:14
12	Invocación a los espíritus poderosos (Invocation to the spirits of power)	1:21
13	Danza del Hechicero (Dance of the Sorcerer)	2:10
14	El Hechicero habla (The Sorcerer speaks)	0:35
15	Lamento de las doncellas (The girls' lament) <i>with Janice Graham, Violin</i>	3:13
16	Aparición de Tupá (Tupá appears); Los guerreros amenazan al Hechicero (The warriors threaten the Sorcerer)	0:51
17	El Amanecer (Dawn)	5:01

39:10 Estancia (1941)

18	Cuadro I - El Amanecer; Introducción y Escena * (Scene I - Dawn; Introduction and Scene)	2:43
19	Pequeña Danza * (Little dance)	2:07
20	Cuadro II - La Mañana; Danza del trigo * (Scene II - Morning; Wheat Dance)	3:21
21	Los trabajadores agrícolas (The farm labourers)	2:53
22	Los peones de hacienda; Entrada de los caballitos (The cattlemen; Entry of the foals)	2:05
23	Los puebleros (The townfolk)	2:21
24	Cuadro III - La tarde; Triste pampeano * (Scene III - Afternoon; 'Triste' from the Pampas)	3:22
25	La doma (Rodeo)	2:02
26	Idilio crepuscular (Twilight idyll)	2:52
27	Cuadro IV - La Noche; Nocturno (Scene IV - Night; Nocturne)	4:21
28	Cuadro V - El Amanecer; Escena (Scene V - Dawn; Scene)	1:41
29	Danza final (Malambo) (Final Dance - Malambo)	3:32

* *with Luis Gaeta, Narrator/Bass-baritone*

Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983)

Panambí • Estancia

“My trip through South America has been fascinating. It has been like discovering a new continent”, wrote Aaron Copland to his old teacher Nadia Boulanger from Rio de Janeiro late in 1941, towards the end of an official cultural liaison trip that had taken in visits to see Santa Cruz in Chile, Chávez in Mexico, and Villa-Lobos in Brazil, besides concerts in most other South American states. “South America is in the process of becoming”, he exclaimed in his diary as he returned to New York, his head buzzing with the colourful sights and sounds of his “new continent”. Interestingly, he viewed the Latin American serious music scene as a series of “energetic men” (one in each country), working flat-out in environments generally antipathetic to their efforts.

The “energetic man” in Argentina was Alberto Ginastera, whom Copland met in Buenos Aires on 26th September 1941. Again, his diary: “There is a young composer here who is generally looked upon as the “white hope” of Argentine music. Alberto Ginastera would profit by contacts outside Argentina. He is looked upon with favor by all groups here, is presentable, modest almost to the timid degree, and will, no doubt, someday be an outstanding figure in Argentine music.” Copland and Ginastera struck up a close friendship, and after World War II, Copland arranged a fellowship in order that Ginastera could attend Tanglewood.

In marked contrast with the vast and sprawling catalogue of his Brazilian contemporary Villa-Lobos, Ginastera’s output remained small: fifty-five “opus numbers” and sixteen incidental and film scores. At the time of his meeting with Copland, Ginastera claimed only seven published works, and had already withdrawn or destroyed much juvenilia. Severely self-critical as a composer, Ginastera viewed his craft with the responsibility of an architect: “To compose, in my opinion, is to create an architecture, to formulate an order and set in values certain structures... In music, this architecture unfolds in time.”

One withdrawn (but subsequently reinstated)

composition, *Impresiones de la Puna* (1934) for flute and string quartet, shows Ginastera’s first exploration of his continent’s pre-Colombian heritage. The Puna is a bleak, rocky wasteland high in the Andes, the heart of the old Inca empire, and Ginastera’s brief, three-movement work evokes both the landscape, and its Amerindian musics. The following year Ginastera, eager to promote an authentically national voice in his work, began sketches for a ballet score which developed his interest in “primitivism” or “indianism”: *Panambí*, subtitled *Choreographic Legend*. It was this work, completed in 1937, that became Ginastera’s Opus 1, and was based on a romantic and supernatural legend of love and magic from the Guaraní Indians, a tribe from the headwaters of the Rio Paraná in northern Argentina. The scenario was drawn up by Felix L. Errico. Before a complete staging could be arranged, Juan José Castro conducted a suite of four dances on 27th November 1937 at the Teatro Colón under Castro.

Panambí has been dubbed a distillation of Ginastera’s major formative influences: Falla, Stravinsky, Debussy, and Bartók. Indeed, elements of each composer may be detected in the score. However, it is more helpful to view the ballet as a young man’s statement about his country’s heritage, and prototypical of much to come. The concept of a “sequence of dances”, for example, informs much of his output (including dance within his operas), and the primitivism and “indianism” of *Panambí* remained, in distilled and subjective form, through works such as *Ollantay* (1947) and *Puneña no.2* (1976) to the unfinished *Popol Vuh* (1975-83). *Panambí* also previews the elements of “magic” and “night” (particularly, *Invocación a los espíritus poderosos* and *Claro de luna sobre el Paraná*), preoccupations which later significantly coloured Ginastera’s work in sometimes abstract ways.

A further pattern is established by the polarization of the music between vigorous, rhythmic, and powerful showpieces (including, in *Panambí*, an array of

percussion – particularly impressive in dances such as *Danza del Hechicero*), and pastoral, impressionistic, and reflective music.

Panambí takes its place alongside the great “indianist” orchestral works of Latin America: *Sensemayá* of Revueltas (1938), *Sinfonía India* by Chávez (1935-6), and Villa-Lobos’s *Amazonas* (1917), and the success of *Panambí* (in its complete ballet version) resulted in national and municipal music prizes for Ginastera. In the year after its première he was approached for a further score by Lincoln Kirstein, the American ballet director, who at the time was in Latin America with his own company, the American Ballet Caravan. Kirstein founded the Caravan in 1936 as a platform for young American choreographers, with the aim of moving ballet away from classical Russian traditions. One of the company’s most significant productions had been *Billy the Kid* (1938), with music by Copland, which glorified life on the open prairies; it received several performances on the Caravan’s 1941 tour. Kirstein’s commission from Ginastera for a “Ballet in One Act and Five Scenes, based on Argentine country life” resulted in *Estancia* (1941). Kirstein planned to commission choreography from George Balanchine, and present the ballet in New York alongside new scores from Francisco Mignone (Brazil) and Domingo Santa Cruz (Chile).

The Caravan was suddenly disbanded after its Latin American tour, and Ginastera’s new work was abandoned. Its subsequent performing history mirrored that of *Panambí*: a concert performance of four dances by the Teatro Colón orchestra in May 1943 was tremendously successful, consolidating Ginastera’s growing reputation as Argentina’s leading composer, but the complete *Estancia* remained unperformed until 1952, when the ballet was staged at the Colón, with choreography by Michael Borowski, and sets by Dante Ortolani. The *Dances from Estancia* remain one of Ginastera’s most frequently performed works, but ballet productions are rare, and Gisele Ben-Dor’s current disc represents a recording première.

Estancia signifies a farm or cattle ranch,

particularly on the vast, grassy Argentine Pampas – a landscape which had profoundly affected Ginastera since boyhood. “Whenever I have crossed the Pampa or have lived in it for a time, my spirit felt itself inundated by changing impressions, now joyful, now melancholy, some full of euphoria and others replete with a profound tranquility, produced by its limitless immensity and by the transformation that the countryside undergoes in the course of a day.”

Historically the Pampas had always shaped the largely pastoral economy of Buenos Aires, but by the time of Ginastera’s birth, city life was encroaching on the old agrarian ways – soon to be symbolized by the pervasive throb of the tango. The mode of life of the famous Argentine *gaucho* (cowboy) was threatened, and he became increasingly repressed, symbolically homeless, wandering haunted and hunted on the vast plains – but consequently a hero. A rural-urban dichotomy opened, which made itself felt not only through politics, but in art and literature too. The great epic poem *Martin Fierro* (José Hernández, 1873) crystallized the life, the land, and the plight of the gaucho: its earthy language wonderfully evokes the eerie vastness of the plains, the gaucho’s life of hard labour, his few joys, his music and folklore, and his solitude. One year after Ginastera’s birth, Argentina’s future dictator Juan Domingo Perón graduated from military college: his father’s gift was *Martin Fierro*, already a classic, both as a document of socio-political manners, and as a brave evocation of landscape as life’s immutable backdrop.

“From my first contact with the Pampas”, wrote Ginastera, “there awakened in me the desire to write a work that would reflect these states of spirit”. *Panambí* had celebrated his country’s indianist folklore tradition: for his new ballet he chose the equally potent *gauchesco* tradition, in which the landscape itself would appear as “the veritable protagonist, imposing its influence upon the feelings of the characters”. It was thus with alacrity that Ginastera accepted Kirstein’s request for a ballet celebrating the “deep and bare beauty of the land” in music presenting various aspects of the activities of a

ranch during a day, “with a symbolic sense of continuity”. From the outset, Ginastera decided upon a close association with *Martin Fierro*.

In its depiction of the passage of one day, from dawn to dawn, Ginastera sets down in *Estancia* a structural prototype for many later works: musical representation of time’s inevitability, eternal cycle, and symmetry. *Estancia*’s dawn – morning – afternoon – night – dawn sequence was exactly repeated two years later in the “pampean” song cycle, *Las horas de una estancia* (1943), while the *Cantata para America Mágica* (1960) travels in six scenes from the world’s creation to its destruction, an idea again explored in *Popol Vuh*. The opera *Bommarzo* (1966-7) telescopes and distorts time by tracing one evil man’s misfortunes through a series of flashbacks at his death – a lifetime and a moment are superimposed on the opera’s real-time duration. It is also typical that *Estancia* should commence with *El Amanecer* (Dawn), the very tide of the final dance in *Panambí*. Ginastera was concerned as much with continuity through his output as symmetry within works.

Estancia’s time sequence is determined by the lines from *Martin Fierro* which tell poignantly of the gaucho’s day: crowing roosters and the coming of dawn, the work of the day, and the final warmth and succour of sleep in his woman’s arms, “ready to start the next day where you stopped the day before”. Hernández’s dawn evocation is recited during and between the dances of the first tableau, and a poetic reference to the “heavenly sorrow elicited by the throb of the gaucho’s *viguella* is underlined by musical allusion to the guitar’s open strings, forming characteristic chords upon which Ginastera drew throughout his composing career to symbolize the gaucho and his home, the Pampas.

Estancia’s action is organized into an essentially symmetrical, arch-like structure, simultaneously the timeless story of simple love, and a symbolic resolution of the aching Argentine rural-urban dichotomy. The opening and closing dawn tableaux flank a sequence of dances which set the scene (*Danza del trigo* and *Triste pampeano* both evoke open space and distant horizons),

and unfold the story of a city boy who observes and falls in love with a country maiden. Her initial disdain turns to admiration after he proves his skill in taming wild horses (although unspoken, the “jinglin’ spurs and squeak of straining leather” of Hernández are potently sensed); the coming of night brings romance, starlight, and then, inevitably, the new day.

Ginastera arranges his music in corresponding symmetry, with the horse-taming rodeo (*La doma*) and the twilight romance (*Idilio crepuscular*) as the central events, set as afternoon turns to evening. The two dawn scenes use versions of the same vital malambo-based material, while the central sequence of music is a brightly-coloured mosaic of dances evoking details of the activities of country folk and visitors from the town, carefully organized to end at the rodeo/romance. These dances are either in vigorous, “toccata” mood (again redolent of the typical gaucho dance, *malambo*), or are lyrical, pastoral, and reflective. The incursion of the townsfolk into the countryside (*Los puebleros*) is represented by a vigorous and spiky fugue. The night scene (*Nocturno*), with its reference to pampean nocturnal sounds, is the peaceful answer to the earlier *Danza del trigo*, which evoked the blowing grasses and grain fields in all their glowing day-time splendour: the ever-present spirit of *Martin Fierro* breaks through in sung texts lamenting the solitude of the gaucho – at the very moment when the city boy has found love.

In *Estancia*, Ginastera provided a truly integrated picture of pampean life, literature, and folklore. His score is a monument to a now vanished way of life, and to the spirit of *Martin Fierro*, “the unlucky gaucho, who has no one to call to, with no place of his own in all that space, and in all that darkness”.

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Conductor’s note

Growing up in Uruguay, I had learned by heart verses from José Hernández’s *Martin Fierro*. When I first heard Ginastera’s complete ballet *Estancia*, I was

moved by the inclusion of this poetry. It seemed absurd that the full ballet had been completely neglected, like so much worthwhile music from Latin countries. Another element in *Estancia* – the use of the guitar's open strings played by the piano, later used in the harp part in *Variaciones Concertantes*, which I also recorded – attracted me for a similar reason. As a self-taught guitarist, I grew up experiencing the centrality of this instrument in Latin American life. My laboriously-acquired mastery of the piano could never compete with the social success of this ambulant instrument. And in securing a narrator/singer with an authentic Argentinian style, it was finally possible to do justice to the full work as originally conceived by Ginastera.

It is interesting to compare the full ballets with their suite selections. In *Panambí, Danza de los guerreros*, I opted for the brilliant suite ending. *Invocación a los espíritus poderosos* is used entirely from the suite allowing the players greater rhythmic force and precision. In both instances, the suite versions seem to represent an improvement. In *Estancia's Los trabajadores agrícolas*, the percussion is omitted for sixteen bars in the original version. This provides a

respite after the constant percussive environment and enhances the chamber quality of the passage. The corresponding place in the suite has a full percussion complement. Opting for the original version in this case was a personal choice. The last movement of *Panambí, El Amanecer*, is performed here in the alternative version, i.e. with violas and/or trumpets instead of women's voices. It would seem that the addition of the voices – like the vocal elements in *Estancia* – may have been one reason for the music's neglect.

In the magnificent *Dawn*, hypnotic *Danza del Hechicero*, impressionistic *Juego de las deidades del agua*, virile *La doma*, lyric *Idilio crepuscular*, hallucinatory *La Noche*, or parody in *Los puebleros*, the profile of a distinct personality always emerges, whatever the musical influences on the young composer, just as with Stravinsky or Copland's variety of stylistic modes and experimentation. Furthermore, many of the essential qualities of Ginastera's later music are already foreshadowed in these first words.

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Luis Gaeta

Born in Buenos and qualified as an architect, Luis Gaeta has Italian citizenship. He studied at the Teatro Colón Instituto Superior de Arte, his teachers including Carlos Guichandut, and, in postgraduate courses, Gina Cigna and Margherita Wallmann. In 1981 he travelled to Florence to participate in Tito Gobbi's workshop. He was successful in a number of competitions, including the Fundación Teatro Colón 1979 and 1980, the 1979 International Wagner Institute and the 1980 Domenico Zipoli, sponsored by the Fondo Nacional de las Artes and the Italian embassy. The Verdi Association of Buenos Aires singled him out in 1984, and again in 1985 and 1989 as 'best baritone'. The Association of Music Critics of the Argentine honoured him in 1990 as the best Argentinian singer, and again in 1992 and 1995. In 1999 he was awarded the Konex Foundation Diploma of Merit. He has appeared in *Rigoletto*, *Pagliacci* and *Le nozze di Figaro* in Switzerland and Austria, in *Samson et Dalila*, and as Leporello and Scarpia in Palma de Mallorca. In the United States he has appeared in Ginastera's *Estancia* with the Santa Barbara Symphony. At the Teatro Colón he has undertaken many major rôles and has made concert appearances internationally with leading orchestras.

London Symphony Orchestra

The London Symphony Orchestra is widely considered to be among the top five orchestras in the world, on the strength of its performances alone, but there is much more to its work than concerts in concert-halls. Its many activities include an energetic and ground-breaking education and community programme, a record company, exciting work in the field of information technology, and much more. A hundred years after it was formed the orchestra still attracts the best players, many of whom have flourishing solo, chamber music or teaching careers alongside their orchestral work. The roster of soloists and conductors is second to none, starting with current Principal Conductor Sir Colin Davis, whose long association with the orchestra has reached a pinnacle of achievement over the last few years, with extraordinary concert performances and multi-award-winning recordings. Valery Gergiev takes over as Principal Conductor in January 2007, Daniel Harding joins Michael Tilson Thomas as Principal Guest Conductor in 2006, and Sir Colin Davis stays on as President, only the fifth in the Orchestra's entire history. LSO St Luke's, the UBS and LSO music education centre on Old Street, is expanding its artistic programme to include more BBC Radio 3 lunchtime chamber concerts, Asian Music Circuit promotions and UBS recitals with leading artists from diverse musical backgrounds. LSO Discovery is facilitating music education using new technology and building ever-stronger links with the local community and in Hackney and Islington schools. LSO Live is now the best-selling orchestral own-label in the world and is regularly No. 1 in the classical download charts on iTunes.

Gisele Ben-Dor

A formidable and incandescent presence on the podium, conductor Gisèle Ben-Dor has won high critical acclaim for her appearances as guest conductor with major orchestras and opera houses throughout the world and as Music Director of the Santa Barbara (CA) Symphony, of which she became Conductor Laureate in 2006. Although she is a master conductor of the established classics, as a Uruguayan by birth and upbringing she is a particularly persuasive champion of Latin American music, notably the works of Ginastera, Revueltas, Piazzolla, and Luis Bacalov, and is widely regarded as one of the world's most dedicated and idiomatic exponents of this repertoire on account of her many recordings and festivals. In demand internationally, Gisèle Ben-Dor has worked with the Rotterdam Philharmonic, Bern Symphony, Brabant Symphony, Jerusalem Symphony, Orchestre de Cannes as well as others in France, Israel and the United States. She has led the New York Philharmonic, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, English Chamber Orchestra, BBC NOW, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Pops, New World Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic, Houston Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande among many others in the United States, Europe, Australia, and Latin America. A former associate conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Gisèle Ben-Dor returned to the Philharmonic in 1999 to substitute for Daniele Gatti in a programme of Mahler and Beethoven, without a rehearsal or scores (a feat which she had accomplished earlier by stepping in at the last minute for Kurt Masur). On other occasions she has appeared with the Philharmonic in New York's Central Park before an estimated audience of 100,000. Some of her major performances of the music of Ginastera have included a new production and European première of Ginastera's last opera, *Beatriz Cenci* at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, to unanimous critical acclaim and Ginastera's *Turbae ad Passionem Gregorianam*, in Madrid, also a European première. In addition to a recording with the Santa Barbara Symphony of vocal music by Ginastera, featuring Plácido Domingo, Ana Maria Martinez and Virginia Tola in excerpts from Ginastera's first opera *Don Rodrigo*, her earlier recordings include Ginastera's *Variaciones Concertantes*, and the world première of both versions of the *Glosses on Themes of Pablo Casals*. Most recently she has released *The Soul of Tango*, including world premières of major works by Piazzolla and Luis Bacalov. Gisèle Ben-Dor also holds the position of Conductor Emerita of the Boston Pro-Arte Chamber Orchestra, a post to which she was elected exclusively by the musicians. Her talent was also recognised by Leonard Bernstein, with whom she shared the stage at Tanglewood and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival. A winner of the Bartók Prize of Hungarian Television, she has toured extensively in Eastern Europe. She made her conducting début with the Israel Philharmonic in Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, televised by the BBC throughout Europe. Born and raised in Uruguay of Polish parents, she studied at the Rubín Academy of Music in Tel-Aviv and the Yale School of Music, settling in the United States.

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8.557582

Playing Time
72:32

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Made in Canada

Booklet notes in English

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Much admired by Aaron Copland, the Argentine composer Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) is widely regarded as one of the most important and original South American composers of the 20th century. The two ballets featured on this recording belong to Ginastera's early period when he was eager to promote an authentically national voice in his work through the use of Argentine folk and popular elements. The exotically scored *Panambi* is based on a romantic and supernatural legend of love and magic from the Guaraní Indians, a tribe from the headwaters of the Rio Paraná in northern Argentina. *Estancia* (a farm or cattle ranch) is a powerful and passionate evocation of the vast and enigmatic Argentine pampas and the spirit of "the unlucky gaucho, who has no one to call to, with no place of his own in all that space, and in all that darkness".

WORLD PREMIERE
RECORDING

Alberto
GINASTERA
(1916-1983)

Panambi • Estancia
(Complete Ballets)

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|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| 1-17 | Panambi, Op. 1 (1937) | 39:10 |
| 18-29 | Estancia, Op. 8 (1941)* | 33:22 |

*Luis Gaeta, Narrator/Bass-baritone

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A complete track list can be found on page 2 of the booklet
Sung texts can be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/ginastera.htm

Previously released on Conifer Classics

*World première recording of the complete ballet

Recorded at Abbey Road Studios, London, on 23rd and 24th May, 1997

Producer: Michael Fine • Engineer: Simon Rhodes

Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd. • Booklet notes: Simon Wright and Gisèle Ben-Dor

Cover photograph: *Rancho* by Juan Hitters (www.juanhitters.com)