

Music Notes - Candombe

Candomblé – by Oscar Escalada

Three-part women's voices – SSATB:

Altos enter m. 25; Soprano 1 enter m. 33; Soprano 2 enter m. 49

Candombe is an Uruguayan drumming and dancing tradition with African origins and is an important part of Carnival celebrations. The word “candomblé,” (ending “blé” rather than “be”) actually refers to an Afro-Brazilian religious tradition. Learning about these two concepts from Juan Eduardo Wolf, Associate Professor in Ethnomusicology at the U of O and expert in Latin American Music and Dance, I now feel that the mixing of these terms is not appropriate. The “About this Piece” introduction in the music is quite incorrect, but it seems to clearly suggest that the composer, Oscar Escalada, who is from Argentina, was intending to write a Candombe. He uses the word “candombe” throughout the music with a few exceptions. Please change any candomblé to candombe, sometimes just domblé to dombe. (I am even going to change the title.)

Change candomblé to candombe, domblé to dombe:

Bass – m. 90, 92, 93, 94, 96, 106

SATB – m. 136 – 137

Trying to learn this piece by reading the music is very difficult. It is repetitious with small, subtle changes of pattern. I have broken down the structure of the piece and assigned a name to each of the variations of the main theme. After the 8-bar instrumental introduction, there are 16 “verses”, plus an ending. Start by numbering the verses – mark these in your score with a big number in a circle:

Verse 1 – m. 9

Verse 2 – m. 17

Verse 3 – m. 25

Verse 4 – m. 33

Verse 5 – m. 41

Verse 6 – m. 49

Verse 7 – m. 57

Verse 8 – m. 65

Verse 9 – m. 73

Verse 10 – m. 81

Verse 11 – m. 89

Verse 12 – m. 97

Verse 13 – m. 105

Verse 14 – m. 113

Verse 15 – m. 121

Verse 16 – m. 129 plus ending

