

PACHAMAMA SYMPHONY (2015)

Full version 20' 40 :

1. Huayno (Overture) 3'30 – 2. Tarqueada 3' – 3. Mohocenada 3'20 – 4. Sicuris 3'20
5. Suris 3'10 – 6. Kantus (Final) 4'20

Short version 11'10 :

Huayno (Overture) – 2. Mohocenada – 3 Kantus (Final)

An original work for concert band, the Pachamama Symphony takes its name from the goddess of the Earth of the ancient Incan empire. Representing fertility, generosity, and abundance in the Andean cosmogony, she remains particularly essential for the rural Bolivian population, which is dependent on the Earth's resources and, still living traditionally, devotes rituals and offerings to her to ensure its subsistence. Inspired by his numerous trips to Bolivia, the composer evokes the character of the indigenous musical forms of the people of the Altiplano with original themes of his own invention, remarkably orchestrated, each movement referring to a traditional Aymara dance.

Huayno is a dance typical of the Andes of the pre-Columbian era with a characteristic rhythm consisting of an accented beat followed by two short beats. With its incantatory nature underscored by the percussion, it reproduces the ostinato stamping of the dancers and their hieratic trances with the playing of the blown brass and abrasive, dissonant chords.

Framed by robust esoteric chords, *Tarqueada* is built around two themes of traditional essence in their modality, stated in a popular contrapuntal treatment between which are inserted whirling scales. This dance, which predates the cultivation of the potato, announces the rainy season.

Mohocenada, with the cooing accents of the long folk flutes, is organized around a melody first played by the pipes in unison before being repeated by groups of instruments, first in its entirety then by different rhythmic cells embellished by flutter tongues and which blend in canon in a joyous polyphony before the conclusion.

The ceremonial *Sicuris* takes up the name of the panpipes of the Bolivian and Peruvian Altiplano, whose originality consists in the collective play of the musicians who respond alternately on instruments tuned differently. The composer translates this particularity with an acoustic echo effect engendered by the melody's time-lag in canon, as well as by its polymodal exposition.

The most romantic movement of this symphony, *Suris* evokes, in subtle orchestration, the smooth motion of these eponymous ostriches of the Andes with a theme in the peaceful pentatonic scale emphasized by the suspensions and supports of the muted brass, briefly disturbed by the racing episodes of the keyboards and woodwinds.

A collective ritual circle dance from the pre-Columbian era, *Kantus* is made up of a single melodic theme repeated tirelessly over different rhythmic values, first in unison then doubled at the fourth and the third. The orchestration becomes progressively richer, a veiled reference to Ravel's *Boléro* with the final dissonant chord and ostinato support of the side drum.

Philippe Buchin

Translated by John Tyler Tuttle