

**LEEDS
ARTS RESEARCH
CENTRE**



**AN INVESTIGATION OF MID-
TWENTIETH-CENTURY RECORDING
TECHNIQUES AND AESTHETICS IN
LATIN MUSIC PERFORMANCE AND
PRODUCTION**

DR SUE MILLER

OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:
An Investigation of Mid-Twentieth-Century
Recording Techniques and Aesthetics in Latin
Music Performance and Production

Output Type:
Q - Digital or visual media

Year:
2018

Output allocation:
Ethnomusicology



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

Sue Miller was the lead investigator of this two-year interdisciplinary collaborative research project funded by the British Academy. Building on Miller's previous historical, ethnographic and performance work on Cuban and Latin music, the project aimed to find out more about Latin music's production history to provide a holistic narrative on Latin performance aesthetics and music production history. The project uncovered Latin music record production's hidden histories, bringing an important transnational genre (Cuban/Latin) into the historical narrative which has, to date, favoured Western Art Music. Miller wrote all the musical arrangements and the music was recorded by her band, Charanga del Norte (Miller is the lead soloist on flute and also the musical director). Miller performed and recorded nine audio tracks (five studio and four live takes in a live space), coordinated and co-produced five filmed documentaries of the recording process, and created a website for the project materials. Combining traditional academic research (ethnography, music history and analysis) with experimental archaeology methodologies, historically informed recording experiments were implemented to inform a better understanding of Latin sound aesthetics and musical change. The project involved devising experiments using a variety of methodologies including an 'experimental archaeology' approach to re-create the sounds of commercial mid-century studio recordings made in Havana and New York. The project was selected by the British Academy (through competition) for their Summer Showcase event in London 18-20 June 2020. Research outputs include nine audio recordings made in the studio and live spaces, documentation of the project (several documentary and music videos, a project website, photographs and text hosted on two websites), and two publications planned for 2022 and 2023. The project work was presented at conferences at the University of Surrey (2019) and at the University of Manchester/Royal Northern College of Music (2019).

DOUBLE- WEIGHTING STATEMENT

Sue Miller was the lead investigator of this two-year interdisciplinary collaborative research project funded by the British Academy. Miller's research output is a substantial multi-component output comprising: nine audio recordings made in the studio and live venues, several documentary and music videos, a project website, photography, and online texts, with two further publications planned for 2022 and 2023. The investigation uncovered a holistic narrative on Latin music performance through in-depth research drawing on ethnography, music history and analysis, experimental archaeology methodologies, and practice-as-research findings.



[F]or all the academic and anthropological research work done in the past 60+ years in the Latin Music field, very few have been successful in conveying the essence of their subject matter. Sue Miller's remarkable book does not only succeed in its comprehensive approach to introduce and educate both performing flutists and academicians to this wonderful music and its history, she captivates the reader through her passion, love and commitment to the genre...Sue Miller deserves the highest praise for a work of the highest caliber...I declare that Cuban Flute Style is brilliant and without precedent. The research work is thorough and meticulous. The historical narrative of the flute styles and its protagonists is comprehensive, consistent and most importantly, respectful of the music's tradition and filled with palpable affection. Her improvisation transcriptions and music samples from a wide selection of recordings (most of them commercially released) are accurate and accessible... Sue Miller has created a work that celebrates and guarantees the perpetuation of Charanga and its Cuban Flute Style Tradition for many generations to come. Its historical, cultural, and pedagogical value cannot be overstated.

Nestor Torres, ARSC Journal

Image: EP design by Johnathan Kendall (Vitamin k Design)

Photo: Courtesy of Evan Miller

Charanga
del Norte





Photos: Courtesy of Matthew Constantinou



Image: The Big Weekend,
Charanga del Norte

Photo: Courtesy of Claire Miller
and Evan Miller



Guillermo dancing to the band in the streets of Carlisle

Photo: Courtesy of Lakes Alive festival



The Big Weekend, Charanga del Norte

Photo: Courtesy of Claire Miller and Evan Miller



Images: Sue Miller

Photos: Courtesy of Guillermo Davis



Images: Sue Miller

Photos: Courtesy of Guillermo Davis



Images: Sue Miller

Photos: Courtesy of Rob Bowden



Sue Miller and Richard Egues
Cuban Flute Lesson



Sue Miller and Richard Egues (2001)
Photos: Courtesy of Sue Miller



Sue Miller and Eddy Zervigon
in Orquesta Broadway



Melquiades Fundora and Sue Miller 2007.

Photos: Courtesy of Sue Miller



Sue Miller with Amadito Valdes (Buena Vista Social Club)



Everything you wanted to know about the Cuban flute style. The history and evolution, biographies of the players and technical analysis and hints. This will keep me busy for a long time.

Mr. S. Raybould

Amazon Review, Cuban Flute Style by Sue Miller



Fantastic! Every sentence contains valuable information for someone studying Afro-Cuban flute music. Sue Miller has even included some very practical exercises for flutists who play Cuban style. The knowledge shared in this book is directly applicable to the study and performance of Cuban flute music.

As a flutist who has been working on this type of music for several years, I am still re-reading and studying this book. Sue Miller has re-ignited my passion for this genre.

Par Sylvia K Hansen

Amazon Review, Cuban Flute Style by Sue Miller

APPENDIX

REVIEWS & ARTICLES

Hettie Malcomstrom 'review of Cuban Flute Style', Journal of Ethnomusicology Forum
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17411912.2015.1050434>

Nestor Torres 'review of Cuban Flute Style', ARSC Journal, (Spring 2015) <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-462787835/cuban-flute-style-interpretation-and-improvisation>

Association of Recorded Sound Collections <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-462787835/cuban-flute-style-interpretation-and-improvisation>

CHARANGA DEL NORTE



Our Mam In Havana

(CHARANGA DEL NORTE)
www.charangadelnorte.com



Nearly a decade or so ago, I saw this outfit playing in the town square in Bolton, Lancashire. They really impressed me with their retro Cuban sounds, led by a front-line of massed violins (okay, then; four) and flute, laced with delicate but adept improvisations, and sounding totally authentic.

Things change, and so do bands, of course. Charanga Del Norte celebrates its tenth anniversary this year – and it's even better. Leader and flautist Sue Miller has studied with and learned from several of Cuba's top traditional charanga players, and it is evident in her playing; she handles the vocals too, with a sultry, breathy style that certainly suits the sound.

Her fellow musicians seem to have similarly absorbed the Cuban style, as though from birth, and the result is a bright, good-natured, very listenable and highly entertaining release. It really doesn't matter that it happens to come from over the other side of the Pennines – Havana, Yorkshire, anyone?

Norman Darwen

In academic journal reviews Miller's work has been described as 'pioneering' (Jazz Journal), and 'without precedent' (ARSC). Nestor Torres, renowned Cuban flute improviser based in Miami has also stated that the book's 'historical, cultural, and pedagogical value cannot be overstated.' Leading scholar in the field of Cuban music studies, Professor Robin Moore from the University of Texas, Austin, in the foreword to her first monograph Cuban Flute Style, commends her work for being 'exactly the sort of publication that is needed in the new millennium' as it 'provides important documentation of musical traditions whose influence can be seen not only in the Caribbean, but around the world.'

Similarly music press reviews of Sue's Charanga del Norte performances are described as 'top notch' (The Beat), 'superb' (Songlines), 'First class' (The Bridgewater Hall), and 'Outta sight' (Max Salazar, Latin Beat).



Peer-Reviewed Reader's Report Monograph 2 Improvising Sabor: Afro-Cuban Dance Music in New York (University Press of Mississippi, 2014)

Does the proposed book make a significant contribution to this field of study? If yes, in what way (e.g., different interpretations, previously unused sources, etc.)? Is the scholarship sound? Does the author cover the topic adequately? Please comment.

Yes. It contributes namely to the field of Cuban and Latin music performance studies, a field which is by no means extensive and for that reason alone warrants the publication of this book. As it claims, there are so little works that focus on the analysis of Cuban/Latin improvisation writ large. The author has accurately chosen the most significant and representative flutists of Cuban and Latin flute improvisation and aesthetics. It will set an important marker for others to follow as this field will surely grow as more students are exposed to books such as this one. The scholarship is sound, particularly as represented by the bibliography. And the analyses are also substantive, detailed, and insightful.



In her introduction, Miller makes the important point that although flute improvisation is at the core of popular Cuban dance music, there have been few academic studies on the subject of Cuban music that look at improvisation or ethnomusicology. Amongst many studies that deal with other aspects of the music, analysis of the music itself is the elephant in the room, says Miller. This, then, is a pioneering study.

John Robert Brown

Jazz Journal



Sue Miller's monograph on Cuban flute style will be of interest to ethnomusicologists and flautists alike. It is a clearly written, highly musical book that serves as both a guide to performance practice and an academic text. Miller brings together performance as a research technique, interviews with musicians, lessons with renowned flautists, and detailed and extensive transcription and analysis of recordings to create a 'musical archaeology' of creative processes, interpretation and improvisation in Cuban charanga flute performance.

Dr Hettie Malcomson

University of Southampton



Top-notch music from one of England's leading Latin combos and the only 100 percent genuine charanga and pachanga band in the land. They are making some fine music that stands up shoulder-to-shoulder proudly with the best charanga musicians still around today, like Orquesta Aragon.

The Beat



Superb UK-based salsa and charanga band.

Songlines

Inviting supporting acts to perform with legendary Cuban artists involved in the Buena Vista Social Club project is no easy matter, finding an outfit in the UK that can hold its own with a well informed audience makes the task all the more difficult... Bridgewater Hall has a reputation for authentic, first class music and Charanga make the grade.



“Charanga del Norte” (Charanga from the North) was set up in 1998 by the bandleader Sue Miller who studied Cuban flute improvisation with the legendary Richard Egües from Orquesta Aragón. They have toured the UK and performed at many venues including the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and The Barbican, London supporting Buena Vista Social Club’s Eliades Ochoa, Orquesta Aragon and Changui de Guantanamo. Recordings include tracks on the Avid and Union Square Records labels, and albums Our Mam in Havana, Look Back in Charanga and The Best of Charanga del Norte. They have just released a new recording ‘Atilana’. They play a mix of Cuban and New York charanga dance music from styles such as the Cuban son, danzon, mambo and chachacha to 1960s pachanga: “Latin music, but not as you may know it, this band are deliciously different and incredibly danceable”.

The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen



As the EP has only just been released without official launch as yet these will be forthcoming. I have an emailed response from the famous band leader of Orquesta Broadway and could be used with his permission:

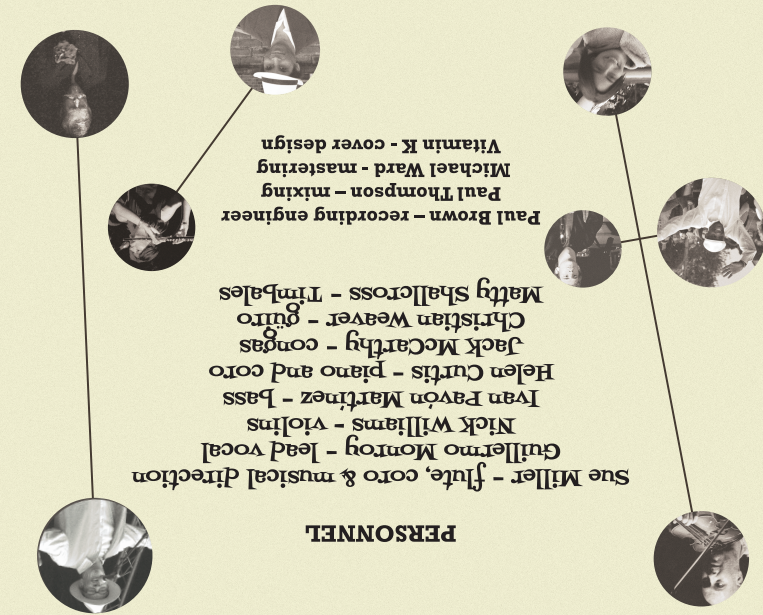
“el numero que mas me gusto es el primero Que Maravilloso de Ruddy Calzado, nunca lo habia oido y tiene tremendo swing y la flauta es maravillosa como dice la cancion”.

[The number I liked best is the first one ‘Que Maravilloso (how Marvellous!) by Rudy Calzado — I’ve not heard this before and its got a great swing and the flute is marvellous as the song says . . .]

Eddy Zervigón, flute player and Band Leader of Orquesta Broadway

Image: EP design by Johnathan Kendall (Vitamin k Design)

Photo: Courtesy of Evan Miller



track listing:
Que Maravilloso
 ©Rudy Calzado

Del Norte Pachanga
 Originally known as
 'Olga Pachanga'
 ©Nicholas Martínez

Jingle on Track 1 courtesy of Andy Harlow (né Andre Kahn) and Robert Heredia from WDNA Radio Show 'Fusion Latina,' Miami. Tracks arranged for Charanga del Norte by Sue Miller, Leeds, 2016.

Engineered and Mixed by Paul Brown, Paul Thompson and Michael Ward at Leeds Beckett University, School of Film, Music and Performing Arts, 2017.

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For more information on Charanga del Norte

- W** www.charangadelnorte.co.uk
- E** suem@charangadelnorte.co.uk
- T** 07957 244167

*"If you can't dance with them..
 you died last week"*
 - Al Angeloro, WBAI Radio / The Montano Sessions

Made in E.U

Charanga del Norte

Charanga time

CDNM000212



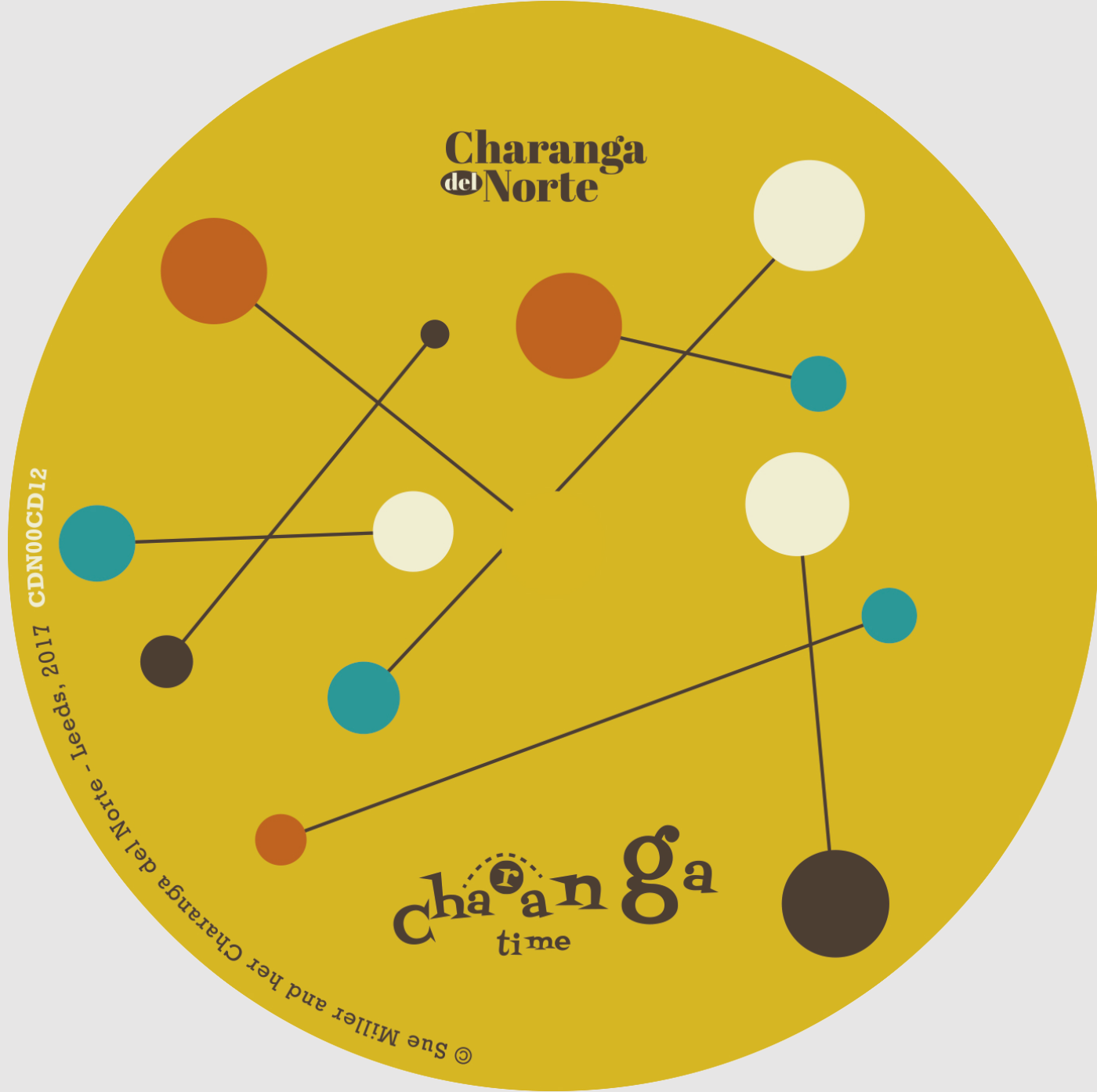


Image: EP design by Johnathan Kendall (Vitamin k Design)



Image: Cuban Flute Style, Interpretation and Improvisation, Scarecrow Press (2014)

Photo: Courtesy of Sue Miller

CHARANGA DEL NORTE



CHURCHILL COLLEGE CHAPEL
TUES NOV 22ND ; 7PM

"Latin music, but not as you may know it, this band are deliciously different and incredibly danceable"
The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen

CAMBRIDGE
INTERNATIONAL
JAZZ FESTIVAL
JAZZ
16-27 NOV
2016



 www.CAMBRIDGEJAZZFESTIVAL.INFO



Keywords:

Music

Improvisation

Music Analysis

Ethnomusicology

Performance

Funding Credits:

Leeds Beckett University

Key Dates:

2014: Monograph 1

2017: Recording and EP Launch

performance at Seven Arts (28 October)

2018/19: Monograph 2

Links:

<https://www.charangadelnorte.co.uk>

<https://www.charangasue.com>

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WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC

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