

SONO  
LUMINUS  
SL|Editions

# A S C E N S O

Santiago Cañón - Valencia



Damián Ponce de León (b. 1980)  
1. La Ruta de la Mariposa \* [11:52]

Jorge Humberto Pinzón Malagón (b. 1968)  
2. Mesonoxian \* [9:35]

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)  
3. Asturias (Leyenda) + [7:17]

Leonardo Federico Hoyos (b. 1973)  
4. Urban Rhapsody \* [5:59]

Santiago Cañón-Valencia (b. 1995)  
5. Ascenso Hacia lo Profundo \* [7:22]

Total Time: [42:09]

\* World Premiere Recording  
+ Transcribed by Cañón-Valencia

Ascenso is a collection of works that have, in one way or another, a direct connection to myself. I wanted to present an album that was a representation of my current self, not just as a cellist, but as an artist. My idea is that this is not a cellist's recording, or an album centered around the instrument, but rather a work that is meant to be experienced as you would a painting on a wall, whatever that may mean to you.

### **La ruta de la Mariposa**

La ruta de la mariposa (The Butterfly Route), a piece commissioned by the Banco de la República de Colombia to be premiered and recorded by Santiago Cañón-Valencia, owes its name to various circumstances that occurred during its conception. These fortuitous circumstances were: a conversation about the complex features of the flight of butterflies with Colombian dancer Federico Restrepo, the murder of an environmentalist leader who devoted his life to the protection of the Monarch butterflies in Mexico, and the appearance of a benign cyst in my thyroid gland that led me to discover the fact that the thyroid has the shape of a butterfly.

All these events, which occurred within a few months, made me feel like I was chasing the butterfly on its route or that maybe it was chasing me while I was conceiving the sound of the piece. Formally it is a cyclical piece with three contrasting sections that go back and forth and an intense coda that closes the cycle of the route.

(Notes from composer, Damián Ponce de León)

### **Mesonoxian**

Mesonoxian, (of or relating to midnight), is a fantasy for solo cello, which symbolizes the magnificence of the night as a creator of life and movement, of prodigious forms and structures that preserve great enigmas. It is related to sound phrases that reveal various states of mind, levels of consciousness or unconsciousness, audible landscapes belonging to the past or the future.

"It is the presence of an unknown ancestral voice whispering in our ear."

The melodic configuration unfolds in a circular and enveloping way along with other

adjacent sonorities that cover, shape and merge into a single ethereal atmosphere, as if the sound came from silence and darkness, peaceful and meditative.

This work was commissioned by and dedicated to cellist Santiago Cañón Valencia.

(Notes from composer, Jorge Humberto Pinzón Malagón)

### ***Asturias (Leyenda)***

Originally written for piano as the prelude to a three piece set called Chants d'Espagne

(Songs of Spain)

The piece starts with a flamenco style melody with an ever-present drive, which then transitions into a contrasting introspective section, rather reminiscent of an Andalusian Copla, depicting a musical dialogue between a singer and a guitar. The flamenco melody slowly comes back into full force and then leads into the final coda, one that feels solemn and almost hymn-like.

Like most people, I relate this piece more with the guitar than I do with the piano, more so because the guitar is a popular instrument in my family, and I became familiar with its repertoire as I grew up. I remember this piece being one of my favourites, and I decided to transcribe it for the cello.

### ***Urban Rhapsody***

Urban Rhapsody is the last in a trilogy of pieces for solo cello, which I dedicate to the great cellist Santiago Cañón Valencia, with whom I have worked on several occasions. I have been inspired by Bogotá, a city that contains multiple and indefinite cities within itself, a place which is "Heaven and Hell" altogether, where countless people coexist, and which is full of strong social, urban and, of course, musical contrasts. Urban Rhapsody thus proposes a story of a day in Bogotá.

I worked on this piece the following scordatura (A, D, F, B-flat) which gives a generous sonority to the cello, since the open strings sympathize with a great B major chord.

(Notes from composer, Leonardo Federico Hoyos)

### ***Ascenso Hacia lo Profundo***

When writing *Ascenso Hacia lo Profundo* (Ascent towards the depths), I wanted to ditch the stereotype of the cello being merely a melodic instrument and explore the idea of making something that felt more complete and immersive.

Borrowing inspiration from very contrasting genres of music both close and far from the classical spectrum, this is a piece that focuses on soundscapes, patterns, rhythm and colours in order to create a sonic journey for the listener.

(Notes from composer, Santiago Cañón Valencia)

I would like to thank Gwen Starker for believing in this project; none of this would have been possible without your vision! I'd also like to thank Elaine Martone and Gintas Norvila for bringing their beautiful craft into this album and for making the recording sessions a real breeze. To the whole team at Sono Luminus, thank you for giving this album a platform and for all your trust.

# A S C E N S O

Recorded in Plymouth Church, Shaker Heights, Ohio, USA on October 11-13, 2021

- > **Microphones:** Neumann TLM-170; DPA 4006 TL
- > **Recording, Editing and Mixing Engineer:** Gintas Norvila
- > **Noise Reduction Engineer:** Jennifer Nulsen
- > **Mastering Engineer:** Daniel Shores
- > **Recording Producer:** Elaine Martone, Sonarc Music
- > **Graphic Designer:** Joshua Frey
- > **Photography:** Angel Velázquez, Santiago Cañón-Valencia
- > **Executive Producer:** Gwen Starker, Collin J. Rae
- > **Special thanks** to Paul Holter, Plymouth Church



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