

March 27, 2025

Dear Friends of the Latin American Music Center,

It is a pleasure to continue presenting our series of newsletters spotlighting our collection, its composers, and their works. In this edition, we are pleased to share an insightful article by one of our esteemed visiting scholars, **Cristian Vega Martínez**. In this piece, he offers an in-depth exploration of **Vicente Emilio Sojo's *Cuarteto en Re* (1913)**, highlighting its significance and contributions to the Latin American musical landscape.

We hope you enjoy the article and gain a deeper understanding of this important work.

At the same time, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of our supporters and patrons. Your continued commitment to the LAMC makes it possible for us to preserve and promote the rich musical heritage of Latin America. We truly appreciate your enthusiasm and generosity.

God bless,

Gustavo Ahualli  
Director, Latin American Music Center

## **Venezuelan composer Vicente Emilio Sojo-Cuarteto en Re (1913)**

**Cristian Martinez Vega-Musicologist**



Vicente Emilio Sojo (1887–1974) stands as a monumental figure in Venezuelan music, celebrated for his multifaceted contributions as a composer, conductor, musicologist, and educator. Born on December 8, 1887, in Guatire, and passing away on August 11, 1974, in Caracas, Sojo's life was marked by an unwavering commitment to the cultivation and preservation of Venezuelan musical heritage and concert life. His musical journey commenced under the guidance of Régulo Rico in Guatire, later advancing under Primo Moschini in Caracas in 1910. Ascending to a pivotal role in 1921 as a music professor at the Escuela Nacional de Música—ultimately serving as its director from 1936—he shaped the careers of a generation of Venezuelan composers active from 1930 to 1960, including Carlos Figueredo, Alba Quintanilla, Ángel Sauce, Federico Ruiz Hurtado, and Ana Rugeles.

Vicente Emilio Sojo's role in co-founding the Orfeón Lamas and the Venezuelan Symphony Orchestra in 1930 was instrumental in sparking the creation of new works that significantly

contributed to Venezuela's musical landscape. After the 1930s, Sojo's focus shifted primarily toward his commitments at the music school and the orchestra, with less emphasis on composing. His compositions, influenced by classical music traditions yet firmly anchored in Venezuelan folk traditions, encompass a vast collection of traditional songs and guitar works that have become staples in the repertoire.

To preserve and promote his profound legacy, the Instituto Vicente Emilio Sojo was established in 1982, dedicating itself to musicological research and the promotion of Venezuelan music, including the publication of the *Revista Musical de Venezuela*. Among Sojo's notable works, the *Misa Cromática* (1922–1933) stands out, showcasing his skill in merging traditional forms with contemporary techniques. His works, rooted in traditional and folkloric music, demonstrate a deep commitment to Venezuela's musical heritage, highlighting an enduring imprint on the country's cultural identity.

This biography aims to spotlight Vicente Emilio Sojo's indelible impact on Venezuelan music, celebrating a legacy that continues to enrich the nation's cultural fabric.



## **Early Life and Formative Years**

Vicente Emilio Sojo was born on December 8, 1887, in Guatire, a town in the Miranda state of Venezuela. His family had a rich musical history, with his great-grandfather serving as Chapel Master. His musical heritage played a significant role in shaping Sojo's lifelong commitment to music. However, despite sharing his birthplace with the colonial priest Padre Sojo, there was no familial relation between them. Sojo was raised in humble conditions by his mother, a hardworking peasant. His formal education in music began at the age of nine under the tutelage of Professor Régulo Rico. In 1906, Sojo relocated to Caracas in pursuit of broader opportunities. There, he enrolled in the School of Music and Declamation, where he refined his performance skills and studied music theory and harmony under the guidance of esteemed mentors. Alongside his formal education, Sojo also undertook independent studies in the humanities, thereby expanding his cultural understanding.

In 1910, Vicente Emilio Sojo broadened his musical knowledge by enrolling in the Academia de Bellas Artes in Caracas. His musical journey progressed, and by 1915, he had made considerable progress in his musical studies. He received formal musical training in Caracas from Ignacio Bustamante in cello studies, Andrés Delgado Pardo in music theory, and Eduardo Richter in harmony. Regulo Rico (1878-1960), a Guatirean conductor and composer, also introduced to the performing of the Bombardino, an instrument that Sojo played as a member of the Union Filarmonica, a band conducted by Rico. In 1911, a pivotal moment arrived when Sojo debuted his composition, the "Himno a Bolívar," in an official contest. This marked the beginning of a prolific period of composition, including works for chamber music and musical theatre. Sojo then composed his D major string quartet in 1913 and the incidental music for "Festiva," a musical comedy by Domingo Martinez, in the following year, further expanding his reputation as a composer. In 1915, Sojo was appointed as the Maestro de Capilla of the San Francisco Church in Caracas.

In 1915, Vicente Emilio Sojo's appointment as Maestro de Capilla at the San Francisco Church in Caracas sparked his interest in religious music, a genre that would prominently feature in his repertoire. Concurrently, he taught music theory and solfege at the Escuela de Musica y Declamacion. By 1921, he became a Music Professor at the School of Music and Declamation, a position he held until 1935. This era was significant for Sojo's efforts in music education and



nurturing musical talent in Venezuela. His passion for preserving Venezuela's musical heritage led to the founding of the Orfeon Lamas in 1930, a choral group he conducted until its disbandment. Under his leadership, the Orfeón Lamas focused on celebrating and safeguarding the country's rich musical traditions. In 1928, he composed his first choral work (*Por la Cabra Rubia*), marking a critical step in his efforts to document and harmonise over 200 songs from Venezuela's folk and national repertoire.

## **Musical Career**

As his career as a composer progressed, Vicente Emilio Sojo went from being an emerging composer to assuming greater responsibility in the local musical scene by conducting the Orfeón Lamas and also contributing decisively to the creation of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela, sharing the direction of the latter with Vicente Martucci. His efficacy as a music director was soon noticed and praised. The Pan-American Union, an organisation founded in 1890 to promote cooperation between Latin American countries and the United States, wrote the following in a 1935 report on a performance by Sojo's students:

But nothing in the musical fare seems to have won the admiration of the people of Bogota and their guests more forcibly than the three recitals given by the Orfeón Lamas of Caracas, the renowned glee club directed by Vicente Emilio Sojo. The seventy members of this choral society —the men in formal attire and the young women in white evening gowns— interpreted their typical airs of their country bringing down the house with each number according to the enthusiastic account of the press.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to his role as a music teacher, Sojo had a significant influence on the preservation of Venezuelan music traditions. His commitment to the study and performance of folk music became more evident in 1927, when he began composing choral songs inspired by Venezuelan folklore. He dedicated himself to harmonising Venezuelan folklore of the nineteenth century in order to better preserve it, and played an important role in promoting this repertoire in concert. By the late 1930s, Sojo had expanded his focus on Venezuelan melodies to nursery rhymes, dance music and children's

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<sup>1</sup> Panorama: A Record of Inter-American Cultural Events Volumes 1-16. 1935. 7

songs, producing a collection for the country's public schools. This body of musical works, first published by the National Ministry of Education in 1940, was followed by similar collections by his composition students, further influencing the cultural landscape. It is this choice on the direction of musical work—one focused on indigenous or ethnocentric music—that must have guided the public taste and dialogue, especially in terms of defining the emphasis of musical nationalism within the musical scene of the Americas.

However, Sojo's emphasis on traditional folk songs and similar melodies was not without controversy. In 1929, he was the subject of an open letter entitled *Filosofía y música*, by Ángel Fuenmayor, in which he presented radical ideas and challenged Sojo to move away from traditional musical inspiration in favour of innovative approaches. The dispute between the two highlighted the dynamic and evolving nature of Venezuela's musical conversations during Sojo's time, highlighting his role in both defending and shaping the country's musical traditions. Fuenmayor encouraged Sojo to move away from the rules of scholastic treatises and to focus less on the analysis of the formal aspects of music. At the same time, he seems to recommend distancing oneself from popular music. Fuenmayor, convinced that music (especially Wagner's) was the only expression on earth for creating ethical and aesthetic forms of art through sound, drew on this belief to write this letter. The letter was intended to be read in a circle of music-loving friends, and not as a damning public scandal.... Fuenmayor's request to Sojo read as follows:

Let us love music; let us form study centres in groups of friends [...] and those of us who emphatically call ourselves musicians, without being aware of the transcendence and responsibility of such priesthood, make greater efforts every day to be worthy of that divine title. Let us love music, but true music; let us not confuse those street stepdaughters, loud in gambling dens and cafes, alcoholics and lustful, with sublime art [...] Free yourself from dead letter and the tyranny of scholastic treatises; worry less about the attire, stop analysing the fabric and lace and stitching and clasp; [...] which often conceals the mannequin, and dare to try my system; it does not require fasting, nor mutilating any organ, nor putting any text in your head, just a sustained intimate desire and an intense will to achieve it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Hugo, Quintana M.,. "Angel Fuenmayor, Wagnerianismo y Teosofia: Su Polémica Con Vicente Emilio Sojo." *Música Enclave* 5, no. 2 (05, 2011)

Presumably influenced by Wagnerianism and other philosophies of his time, Fuenmayor's radical ideas transcended traditional views of musical composition. Fuenmayor advocated for emphasising the importance of human virtue and inner philosophical conviction over traditional academic or theoretical frameworks. However, perhaps more like Eduard Hanslick, Sojo considered this to be a mistake and an illusion. He claimed that Wagner's music made a deep impression through its artistic prowess alone, without the need for philosophical interpretation. Regardless, Sojo advised on the dual nature of experiencing and philosophising music, distinguishing between two distinct approaches: analytical listening and a more mystical, intuitive experience. While Fuenmayor softened his position in later reports made by the press, acknowledging the validity of both analytical and mystical approaches to music, it is not explicitly known whether the two musicians ever reached a definitive resolution regarding their differing perspectives on music.

In any event, Vicente Emilio Sojo had a great influence on the main musical decisions in Caracas as a conductor and teacher. He was responsible for the notable move in 1938 to rename the Escuela de Musica y Declamacion to Escuela Superior de Musica Jose Angel Lamas—after the composer considered the to be the main representative of the classical period in colonial Venezuela. This name change was not only more focused on music and positioning the institution as the country's flagship classical music school, but also reflected a vision of connecting the musical traditions of the past with future generations. Recognising the need for structured educational pathways for composers, Sojo established the Chair of Composition at the Escuela Superior de Música José Ángel Lamas. This initiative marked a significant development, providing formal training and guidance to budding composers who, until then, had largely been left to their own devices. Sojo's foresight in formalising music studies underscored his commitment to cultivating a musical curriculum and identity in Venezuela. In 1944, the first group of composers who had studied under Vicente Emilio Sojo in the department he founded in 1936 at the José Ángel Lammas School of Music received their official diplomas.

As a composer, Vicente Emilio Sojo, alongside Juan Bautista Plaza and José Antonio Calcaño, often represented a transformative generation in the 1920s Venezuelan public music scene. Their music represented an era that marked a significant departure from traditional musical models, with Sojo and his contemporaries leading the charge towards innovation and dialogue. Sojo's compositions, such as the "Misa cromática", sparked debates about acceptable musical practices, especially in sacred music, due to their innovative techniques and daring musical expressions. Yet, his "Las Siete

"Palabras de Cristo en el Calvario," was performed at special religious services regularly, drawing significant publicity and commendation for its musical depth and structure. While Sojo's experimentation with a chromatic musical language was initially controversial, it gradually gained recognition as his music began to be performed more and being discussed more in the press. Sojo also completed "Misa Breve" between 1930 and 1933. In 1935, he composed "Missa a cappella" in honour of Santa Efigenia and his late wife. His notable works from this period include "La Noche," "La Carretera," "Rondel Matinal," and others.

Vicente Emilio Sojo's musical contributions spanned over several decades. Other works include the "Romanza sin palabras" in 1912, which marked the beginning of his prolific career. In 1914, he composed "Festiva" and "Tres motetes para la iglesia Santa Capilla," showcasing his interest in both secular and sacred music. In 1920, he composed "Obertura Treno," and in 1922, he continued his exploration of liturgical themes with "Ave María" (1922). His output continued with "Ocho responsorias y un Te Deum" in 1924 and "Palabras de Cristo en el Calvario" in 1925. Between 1926 and 1927, he composed "27 canciones de ayer," venturing into vocal music even more. His versatility was evident in his compositions "Por la Cabra Rubia" in 1928 and "Requiem In memoriam Patris Patriae" in 1929. In 1935, he composed a series of works including the aforementioned "Misa a capella," "La Noche," "La Carretera," "Rondel Matinal," and "Hondie nos Fulgebit Lux." From 1937 onwards, the composition of new works became less frequent due to his dedication to teaching, conducting and music criticism. His focus on children's music began in 1939 with "Tres canciones infantiles." The 1950s saw the introduction of "Tres piezas para guitarras" in 1952 and "Misa para Santa Cecilia" in 1953. In 1958 he had already composed "Diez canciones infantiles venezolanas", and later added to this repertoire "Nueve canciones infantiles", as well as "Pequeñas canturías y danzas venezolanas". Through these works, Sojo made a lasting impact on Venezuelan music, with compositions ranging from sacred pieces and instrumental works to songs that celebrate Venezuela's cultural heritage.

### **Political Leader and Artistic Fame**

A notable moment in Vicente Emilio Sojo's life outside his musical achievements occurred in 1945 when he became a founding member of Acción Democrática (Democratic Action), a centre-left political party. Established during World War II, the party championed democratic principles, social

justice, and civil liberties. It played a pivotal role in the successful overthrow of the government at the time. Sojo's involvement in politics underscored his commitment to broader societal issues beyond the sole promotion of music in society. He was a vocal critic of dictatorship, authoritarian rule, and the influence of fascist and totalitarian ideologies on artistic expression. Despite his political commitment, Sojo maintained respect for the independent political and philosophical beliefs of his students. In later years, Sojo was elected senator for several terms in Venezuela, and his followers and voters held him in high esteem as a cultural and social figure in the country. Arguably, Sojo is believed to have been elected as a senator out of sheer prestige, without ever campaigning for the position.

Sojo's dual role as a cultural figure and political activist was recognised by the Venezuelan conductor Felipe Izcaray, who highlighted Sojo's contribution to the promotion of democratic values and social progress alongside his advocacy of Venezuelan music. This period also saw an important development for the Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela: in 1946 the new government granted it a substantial subsidy, transforming it into a full-time professional orchestra. By then, his success was already known internationally as reported by none other than Time magazine, which wrote the following about a concert in its 3 November 1947 issue:

Caracas Municipal Theater began to clap and whistle. At 9:45 the red curtain finally went up. Tall, mustachioed old Maestro Vicente Emilio Sojo bowed from the podium, turned and led his 76 musicians in [...] Venezuela's national anthem [...] Forty years earlier he had gone to work as a Caracas cigar maker because "there wasn't enough music to make a living at it." Later, as a self-taught harmony teacher, then as director of Caracas' School of Music, he plugged for a place for the arts in national life [...] Elected to the Constituent Assembly as a supporter of President Rómulo Betancourt's Acción Democrática, he sold the Government on the idea that a good symphony orchestra would be good for the country. This year, with a \$300,000 Government subsidy, he imported 26 musicians from Italy, France, [and] Belgium. He raised salaries. He laid down a program of five two-hour rehearsals a week. Last week's concert, first of a series at popular prices (60¢-\$1.80), showed what could be done. Never had the works of Beethoven, Massenet and Moussorgsky sounded so sonorously in Caracas.

At intermission, flanked by members of his revolutionary Junta, President Betancourt hustled backstage to congratulate the maestro. Cried Betancourt: "Magnifico!"<sup>3</sup>

The influx of musicians to Venezuela, many of whom were Europeans fleeing the aftermath of World War II, provided Sojo with the resources to launch the National Composition Award in the country in the same year. Around this time, the National Composition Award was conceived as a competition for emerging composers, encouraging the creation of new Venezuelan classical music works. Sojo played a crucial role in organising the competition, ensuring that the winning pieces would be performed by the Orquesta Sinfónica Venezuela or other national ensembles in special concerts. This initiative was instrumental in celebrating Venezuelan composers' achievements and fostering the performance of innovative music within the country. Such precedent further solidified Sojo's legacy as a promoter of Venezuelan cultural and artistic development.

### Legacy and Final Years

Vicente Emilio Sojo's illustrious career came to an end, but his profound influence on Venezuelan music and culture remained undimmed, echoing through the corridors of time and history. In 1949, Sojo stepped down as Music Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Venezuela, entrusting the orchestra's future to more seasoned hands, yet his passion for conducting did not wane. He continued to lead sacred concerts on some occasions showcasing the works of Venezuelan composers well into the mid-1960s, a testament to his enduring commitment to Venezuela's musical heritage. Retiring from the directorship of the Conservatory in 1964 did not mark an end to Sojo's influence either; rather, he transitioned to an advisory role, continuing to shape the dynamics of musical education in Venezuela. His guidance extended beyond the boundaries of formal positions, and he was unwavering in the relentless pursuit to enrich the Venezuelan musical community for as long as he could.

Sojos also extended some time into the political arena, where his tenure as a senator for the Accion Democratica party highlighted him as both a cultural icon and an advocate for democratic values. His political involvement and contributions to Venezuelan music were recognized and revered, culminating in national mourning and tributes from various government sectors upon his passing on August 11, 1974. The legacy of Vicente Emilio Sojo as a conductor, composer, educator, and

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<sup>3</sup> *Time*. 'VENEZUELA: New Chords in Caracas'. 3 November 1947.  
<https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,779388,00.htm>

cultural leader is monumental. His dedication to elevating Venezuelan music, nurturing emerging talents, and preserving the nation's musical legacy has indelibly shaped the country's musical development.

In the history of Venezuelan culture, the story of Vicente Emilio Sojo stands as a beacon of dedication, creativity, and influence, marking the end of an era but also the enduring vibrancy of a legacy that transcends time. His unwavering commitment to fostering a rich musical heritage ensures that Vicente Emilio Sojo remains one of Venezuela's most venerable and influential musical figures, leaving a legacy that resonates through the ages. Sojo's death in 1974 was met with national mourning in Venezuela. His passing was front-page news in all Venezuelan newspapers, and he received honours from various branches of government. The outpouring of respect and recognition for Sojo underscored his significance not only in the cultural sphere but also in the political realm. Generations of musicians and composers continue to be inspired by his work, testament to his lasting impact, but they did not resort to modelling their works on his influence.

Guido Acuña was a student and biographer of Vicente Emilio Sojo. As part of the group of Sojo's students who sought to transcend the influence of their teacher, he had the following words to say about Sojo during an interview:

The greatest value of Sojo in the history of music in Venezuela is as an ethical guide, one of the aspects currently lacking in Western culture: a lack of ethical guides [...] The only thing I rebelled against him for was the ruthless criticism he exercised over us [...] when he wanted to complain because I did not present to him the works I was writing, the things I conceived, I told him no, 'master, I want to be myself, I don't want to continue being someone who depends on you. I want to emancipate myself and try to find myself [...]. I have reverence for Sojo's personality and for his image as our father and teacher. I pay tribute to him every time I have the opportunity, but this recognition of the father figure could not demand to bend one's own personality. My veneration did not go that far.<sup>4</sup>

Sojo's legacy transcends his myriad contributions to musical culture; he fundamentally reshaped how music is taught, appreciated, and discussed in Venezuela. His greatest achievement lies not in accolades or recognition but in his profound influence on students, whom he inspired to cultivate

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<sup>4</sup> Izcaray, Felipe. "The Legacy of Vicente Emilio Sojo: Nationalism in Twentieth-Century Venezuelan Orchestral Music." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1996. 220

independence and self-reliance. This empowerment enabled them to discover their unique artistic voices, steering some of them away from mere imitation towards creating distinctive musical identities. Sojo's high artistic standards and insightful criticism were not merely pedagogical regiments for some of his students, but became catalysts for innovation and personal growth, whether he intended them to be or not. By developing comprehensive curricula and enriching Venezuela's musical landscape, Sojo did more than teach; he transformed and ignited. His enduring legacy, built on relentless dedication and an unwavering passion for music, continues to resonate, making him a pivotal figure in shaping not just talents but the very essence of Venezuela's cultural identity.

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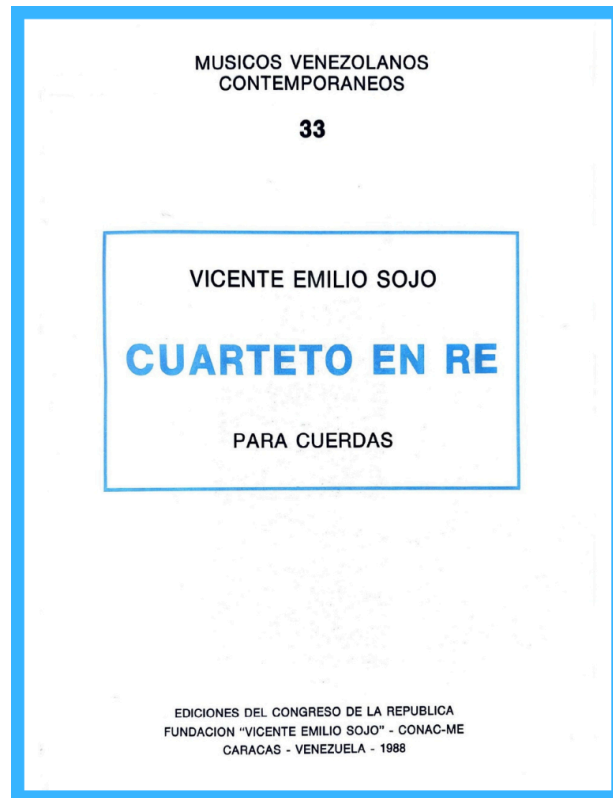
## Vicente Emilio Sojo- *Cuarteto en Re* (1913)

### Structure and Analysis

26-year-old Vicente Emilio Sojo composed his first string quartet at a time when nationalistic aesthetics were common among other composers such as Antonín Dvořák and, to a certain extent, Béla Bartók. Nevertheless, Sojo's quartet is rather traditional in its approach to form and harmony—opting to incorporate a Venezuelan stylistic character through rhythm (particularly in the joropo-like figuration of the first and last movements). The quartet follows the traditional



four-movement structure (fast-slow-dance-fast). It's also very conventional in its approach, with a sonata movement, a slow movement followed by a *minuet*, and finishing with a *rondo*. That Sojo chose these aesthetics for his quartet reflects an attachment to and continuation of the classical tradition of both the symphony and string quartet.



## Cuarteto en RE

## I Allegro

M.M. ♩ = 184

Vicente Emilio Sojo (1913)

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

4

Vi. I

Vi. II

Vla.

Vc.

### Movement I: Allegro (D major, Sonata Form)

The *Allegro* movement starts with a bold and festive main theme in D major, played by the first violin. This lively theme sets the cheerful tone of the movement. The composer adds a touch of virtuosity with techniques like slurred up-bow staccato and introduces fugue-like elements, with imitative passages woven into the sonata form. The other strings join in, creating a lively back-and-forth, with the viola echoing the first violin and the cello supporting the harmony by mirroring the second violin.

Commencing a string quartet with a fugato motif is perhaps not unprecedented. For example, Mendelssohn's *Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 13*, and Schumann's *String Quartet No. 1, Op. 41*, use such contrapuntal themes. Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* is already an early example, but Sojo's quartet is more overtly imitative in its approach to the first movement.

After the strong opening, the music moves on to a more lyrical second theme in A major (apparently an episodic sequence descending towards B minor). The development is more fugal and fragmented and is very expansive. The re-exposition is hurried after a long development and ends with a final coda in A major,

probably intended to be overtly loud, following the conventions of the Romantic era. Nevertheless, it ends with a humorous and very graceful soft pizzicato.

I. ALLEGRO Exposition (mm. 1–40) - Key: D Major → A Major (I-V)			
FORM	MEASURES	HARMONIC CENTER	COMMENTS
First Theme	1-8	D major (I)	Rhythmic and energetic themes are introduced in Violin I and echoed by the Viola. This is supported by an accompanying, counter subject-like line. The inner strings exhibit contrapuntal behavior, contributing to the overall texture.
Transition	8-20	<i>Modulating</i>	Starts a series of sequences that arrive at the dominant by fragmenting the first theme (in the second violin). The fragment of the first theme will become very prominent in the development section.

Secondary Theme	21-27~	A Major (V) - B minor (VI)	Lyrical and contrasting theme, with Violin I and Viola exchanging motifs. Accompanied by the second violin, who cements a chromatic modulation to B minor.
Development (mm. 41–97)			
<i>Harmonic Exploration (B Minor)</i>	27-34	<i>B minor (I) - F# Major (V with pedal point)</i>	The Harmony explores a brief tonicization to the relative minor (B Minor)
<i>Texture change and Fragmentation</i>	34-43	<i>B minor;</i>	Techniques employed here involve Chromatism, Theme Fragmentation, all within a fugal behaviour.
<i>Inverted counterpoint</i>	44-	<i>Modulating</i>	A fragment of the first theme is used in its inversion
<i>Inverted counterpoint</i>	66-78	<i>D minor - A Major</i>	Returning to the tonic with a more compressed fragmentation of the inverted theme.
<i>Retransition to re-exposition</i>	79-88	<i>G Major (IV) -A major (V)</i>	The path of harmonic language begins to stabilise towards the dominant key, with crescendos towards to highteen harmonic tensions.
<i>Transition</i>	88-92	<i>A Major</i>	<i>A moment showcasing staccato introduced in Violin 1 (measure 4)</i>
Recapitulation (mm. 92–end)			
First Theme (simulating a final entry in a fugue)	92-95	D major (I) - A Major (V)	No staccato but leaning to an interesting <i>portamento</i> .
Transition (in tonic)	95-96	<i>Modulating</i>	Much shorter than the first transition, introduced use of <i>portamento</i>
Secondary Theme (in tonic)	97-103	D major - A Major (V)	The second theme returns, but it's now heavily ornamented and divided between the 1st and 2nd violins.
CODA	103-end	A Major (V) - D Major (I)	Strong cadential patterns and final dynamic crescendo. It ends with an unexpectedly gracious piano section and pizzicati

## Movement II: Largo (G major)

The second movement is a Largo. After the unusual fugal first movement, the second is a conventional slow piece. It is an expressive movement that provides contrast to the energetic Allegro of the first movement. This movement is in ternary form (ABA') or a modified song form, typical for slow movements in classical string quartets.

II. Largo		
FORM	MEASURES	KEY
A (First Theme)	1-24	F major
<i>Transition</i>	17-30	<i>Brahmsian or Wagnerian sequence</i>
B (Contrasting Section)	30-49	<i>Modulating</i>
A' (First Theme in the cello)	50-end	F major

As with the first movement, the second movement features octaves in the violin and several slurred staccatos. The main melody (A section) is expressive and lyrical, played by the first violin, with the lower strings providing harmonic support. In the B section, the texture becomes lighter, and the harmony changes, incorporating some chromatic notes. Much of the harmonic language is reminiscent of late Romanticism, akin to Brahms, Schumann, and especially Wagner, with several harmonically tense sequences (such as measures 17–30).

### Movement III: Minuet & Trio

This third movement follows the Minuet and Trio form, a structure also commonly found in string quartets. The movement is structured as ABA (Minuet – Trio – Minuet da capo). Here, again, the first violin carries the main theme, characterized by strong rhythmic articulation and an emphasis on triple meter. Its texture is homophonic, with the lower strings providing harmonic support.

III. Minuetto & Trio		
FORM	MEASURES	KEY

Minuet (A)	1-48	A Major
Trio (B)	49-96	D major
Minuet (A')	1-48	A major

The minuet integrates some of the imitative aspects of the first movement, and the trio contrasts with a more dolce character. Overall, the movement maintains the character of a dance.

### **Movement IV: Rondo – Presto**

In the final movement, it can be said that Sojo presents a sonata-rondo form. The first violin introduces a lively theme with a very active accompaniment. The theme is characterized by repeated eighth-note and two sixteenth-note figurations with a strong drive to the dominant. The tempo is energetic but not overpowering in dynamics or texture.

While the first theme is mezzo forte, the theme's refrain is not only piano but also in a minor mode, leaving room for increased dynamics later in the movement. The exposition ends subtly in pizzicato, perhaps to build the listener's expectation of the development section, which fragments and introduces several textural changes to the form.

IV. Rondo – Presto			
FORM	MEASURES	KEY	COMMENTS
<i>Exposition</i>			
Refrain (A) exp	1-16	D Major	
Episode (B)	17-35	A Major	Arpeggiation in the violins
Refrain (A') exp	36-51	D Minor	Theme shared between the violins
Episode (C)	52-59	Modulatory	Based on sequences
Refrain (A'') exp	60-71	D Major	Graciously ending in a pizzicato

<i>Development (Variation of themes)</i>			
Developmental Episode (D)	72-137	G Major	Legatto, theme fragmentation, trill and grace note ornamentation, staccato, and more dynamic shifts ( <i>sfz</i> indications) add intensity.
<i>Re-Exposition (Return to the original themes)</i>			
Refrain (A) recap <i>Highly reminiscent of the first theme</i>	138-153	D Major	Serves as a recapitulation.
Episode (E)	153-161	D major - D minor	
Refrain (A') recap	162-169	B-flat major- G Minor	
Episode (F)	170-214	B flat, F major, C Major, – A Major	Expanding on the sequential and modulatory tendencies of Episode C
Refrain (A'') recap	214-238	D (I) - B Minor (ii) - A Major (V)	
Coda	238-end	D Major	Finally forte

The re-exposition section of this movement is undoubtedly the highlight of the show, featuring shifting tonal centers that evoke Schubert's characteristic playfulness and curiosity—particularly in the final episode before the coda. The contrast between refrains and episodes is prominently displayed in this section, with harmonic variation, chromaticism, and textural shifts. The return of the original themes is rendered more dramatic through the interventions of the inner strings and the incorporation of elements from the developmental section into the refrains.

The movement concludes in a bombastic manner, following a long-awaited forte and a surprising crescendo in bar 222, leading into an operatic coda. The final grand statement of the theme culminates with a robust perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in D major. The rhythmic drive is sustained throughout, culminating in an exciting conclusion. This quartet represents a significant endeavor to perpetuate the tradition of quartet writing while adhering to classical forms and principles.

**Cristian D. Martínez Vega**



**Cristian D. Martínez Vega** is a PhD candidate in Music History at the University of Auckland, with a master's degree in Musicology and Violin Performance from the University of Oklahoma. His professional background spans music, education, research, and technology, and he has worked in fields including digital marketing, metadata management, and academic research. Cristian has performed internationally, collaborated with orchestras and festivals, and is a member of the Society for American Musicology. Currently supported by the Marsden Fund of the Royal Society of New Zealand, he is researching private musical life in Europe (c.1790-1830). Cristian actively engages in music and society discussions and is always open to connecting with others.

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*Music from Sonus by Carlos Guastavino*

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