



Carlos Chávez's Los Angeles Connection

GILBERT CHASE CLIMAXES *The New Grove* (1980) six-column article on "Chávez (y Ramírez), Carlos (Antonio de Padua)" with the assurance that "Chávez's achievement established him as the leading Latin American composer of his generation." Nonetheless, Chase limits dated biographical detail in his article to Chávez's career in Mexico through 1952, plus the added notice that Chávez occupied the Charles Eliot Norton Lectureship of Poetry (not Chair of Poetics) at Harvard in 1958-1959. Failing to give dates, Chase lists Chávez's European decorations (*The New Grove*, IV, 186b)—all of which, however, were awarded him before 1953. According to Chase, Chávez visited Europe in the winter of 1922-1923 but not again until 1949—and then for "only two months." Nothing is said of Chávez's important post-1960 European conducting engagements, despite data in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 144./145. Lieferung (1972), 1431.

Concerning Chávez's ancestry—with which Chase begins *The New Grove* article—he writes: "From his maternal grandfather he inherited Indian blood, revealed in his features." However, Chase suppresses the much more transcendental fact that Chávez's paternal grandfather was the political hero José María Chávez (1812-1864), profiled in every Mexican encyclopedia (picture in *Enciclopedia de México*, II [1967], 1216). José María Chávez

stands in bronze in the principal plaza of Aguascalientes, where he governed pro Juárez and in defiance of Maximilian, until he had to refugee in the woods. He became a major guerrilla nuisance to the empire and eventually, a martyr and a hero of the Juárez cause.¹

Born to govern, Carlos Chávez sprang not from humble Indian stock but from Mexican political bluebloods. Boasting such ancestry, Carlos Chávez never needed training in the manners of the élite. Moreover, he already spoke and wrote perfect English during his first New York sojourn, December 1923 to March 1924. Only he among his Mexican musical contemporaries could appear on Society pages elegantly taking tea or its equivalent with those wealthy women who at mid-century ruled United States musical affairs.²

Roberto García Morillo's *Carlos Chávez vida y obra* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), the latest biographical source cited by Chase, conveniently synopsisizes events to 1956, the year that Chávez held his second Guggenheim fellowship (first in 1938). However, García Morillo himself failed to obtain the Guggenheim sought in his behalf by Chávez—so that he could write a sequel carrying events forward to the late 1970's (Chávez died at Mexico City August 2, 1978). Without a con-

¹Anita Renner, "Politics and Personalities: A very busy diplomat—now writing an opera," *The News Weekly* [Mexico City], Sunday, May 24, 1953, p. 513.

²See "Women," *Los Angeles Times*, March 14, 1952, Part III, p. 1.



venient *curriculum vitae* for Chávez's last two decades, either the encyclopedia writer must omit any specifics as does Chase, or he must laboriously glean data from such primary sources as will be cited throughout the remainder of the present article dealing with Chávez's Southern California activities and contacts.

Among Chávez's Southern California friends, none more effectively advanced his professional interests than did John Vincent (1902-1977). The power posts that enabled Vincent to do Chávez signal favors included: chairman of the Department of Music at UCLA (University of California at Los Angeles), July 1, 1948 to June 30, 1952; director of the Huntington Hartford Foundation at nearby Pacific Palisades from July 1, 1953 (acting director January 1 to July 1, 1953) to cessation of its activities as a creative artists' and musicians' retreat on September 15, 1965; music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony Society from February 1951 to January 28, 1956; chairman of the Editorial Board of *Affiliated Musicians*, Incorporated (publishers) from January 1953 to the firm's dissolution January 31, 1955. The favors that Vincent was able to do Chávez are documented in their extensive correspondence and in a clipping file efficiently assembled and classified by Dr. Craig Burwell Parker, distinguished Curator of the John Vincent Archive at UCLA. Dr. Parker's extraordinary personal kindness made possible the remainder of the present article.

1950

Their correspondence began when John Vincent, exercising his prerogatives as UCLA chairman, invited Chávez to spend part of the week of March 13-17, 1950, as paid guest of the UCLA Composers Council—giving a public lecture on "My Piano Music" March 14. On February 23, 1950 (Avenida Pirineos 775, Lomas de Chapultepec, stationery), Chávez replied to Vincent's wife, Ruth, thanking her for a cocktails invitation to their residence at 1024 Hilts Avenue, Los Angeles, 90024, Wednesday March 15, 5 to 7 p.m.

I received your kind letter of February 10. My wife and I are very happy to accept your kind invitation on the fifteenth of March. We had not planned to stay with friends, but at the Biltmore Hotel. Right now I am not thinking to invite anyone, but we will be delighted to meet you and your other guests. / Thanking you for your kind invitation, I am / Sincerely yours,

Carlos Chávez

1951

Urged by Chávez, Vincent and his family (Ruth, son John, and daughter Helen) spent July 1 to August 28, 1951, in Mexico. They based themselves "in an apartment at Avenida Los Alpes 564-A, Lomas de Chapultepec, Mexico City; one room, complete with piano furnished by Carlos Chávez, served as Vincent's composition studio."³ In late August, Chávez (then temporarily at Acapulco) sent Vincent a warm letter written in his own hand. After polite preliminaries, Chávez came to the point—the

³Craig Parker, "John Vincent (1902-1977): An Alabama Composer's Odyssey." UCLA Ph.D. dissertation, 1981, p. 144.

concert of his own works in March 1952 with the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony being offered him by Vincent.

Acapulco, Gro, August 22/51

Mr. John Vincent
México, D.F.

Dear John:

I am very happy that you have been taking advantage of your Mexican holiday, which on the other hand—Otilia [Chávez's wife] reports me—has not been so much so, since you have kept yourself busy working on your music and composition. / It is good you enjoyed Oaxaca. Do not miss Paricutin on your way back home. I myself have been working well and feeling better, but still I am not yet planning coming back to Mexico City. / I was very glad to know that you heard the Lenners playing my third Quartet. I am very pleased you liked it. It is good son John approved of it too. I hear your news about our prospective concert in Los Angeles. It is unfortunate March 18 is not possible. I shall have to make changes in my season here, rather difficult to do, but possible anyway. Therefore, so far as I am concerned, we can make March 11 definite.

Now, in regard to program, it is too bad we cannot include *Sinfonía India* and *Cuatro Soles*. Please give me some time to think this matter over and see what new proposition I can make to you counting on 26 players. / I hear with regret that you are leaving the 27th. It is too soon, and it is too bad, really, that we could not see much of each other during your stay in Mexico. / I hope you, Ruth and the children are well and happy and I am now beginning to look forward with pleasure to see you in Los Angeles in March. / With all best wishes I am always your friend

Carlos Chávez

1952

The program finally agreed on for Royce Hall, UCLA, March 11, 1952, began with Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 4*. The rest consisted of Los Angeles first performances of Chávez's *Concerto for Four Horns and Orchestra* (composed 1937-1938), *Prelude and Two Dances from Los Cuatro Soles* (1925), and a chamber orchestra version of the *Sinfonía India*. To make the visit more financially profitable for Chávez, Vincent arranged for a tie-in engagement as a guest of the UCLA Composers Council during the week before Chávez's Los Angeles Chamber Symphony Society concert. Continuing in the area another 19 days, Chávez guest-conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra Sunday evening, March 30, 1952, at Long Beach Municipal Auditorium Concert Hall. The Long Beach program consisted of Debussy's *Gigues*, Chávez's own *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, Viviane Bertalami soloist, and Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 4 in F minor*.

Some idea of what Chávez told budding composers on the Westwood campus comes to light in the following transcript of his UCLA lecture given March 6, 1952. Anyone reading the lecture senses at once Chávez's extreme tact, his refusal to criticize adversely the students' work or to imply in any way deficient training, and the contrast from what he required of his own Composition Workshop at the National Conservatory during the 1950's.



A work of art is the result of continuous effort in the same direction.

We have to use the procedure but we must be careful that the procedure does not use the composer. Perhaps it is necessary for a composer to know all the techniques. A composer should be able to compose as all other composers have composed. But after having been able to follow the procedures of other composers he should be able to find his own means of expressing himself. Technique serves only as a basis for the development of the individual composer. Composition is a speech—a way of expressing oneself, and we have to be careful that within the words we use we have all the necessary freedom to express ourselves.

There are many problems:

Technical problems of good training, good métier, involved harmonic problems, problems of form, and so on. But I think there is a far greater problem, and that is a problem of expressing oneself by expressing the life to which we belong. I wouldn't finish this session without telling you my impression, that within this country you composers have the responsibility of expressing not only yourselves but . . . [words lost]. The United States is a country known all over the world by its marvelous achievements in industry, commerce, and so on, and not yet as a country having an artistic culture. Now, when one comes to this country one sees that the development of artistic culture is really incredible. But you young composers have to think more in terms of your collectivity. After all, we belong to an era, an epoch which we have to express. There is nothing to be said about this except to be more attentive to whatever happens, to be more than a man of one's time, a man of one's soil. Of course, all of the attempts to bring folklore and jazz to composition are just as bad if they are the only means to get to them. This is not the solution of the problem. The solution is to get everything from everywhere. So if I can say something to you, that would be my advice: to receive influences from everywhere and to be ready to hear any voices that you can hear; and probably that will be the best way to approach the solution of this problem. But don't forget that after all, Debussy for instance is not just composer—he is a French composer. He never tried to be a French composer, but he is. Beethoven never tried to be a German composer, but he is. You have that goal to reach as the result of a life devoted entirely to the creation of music.

Closing comments:

This morning I had the privilege of listening to compositions of already-composers. This afternoon I have heard undergraduates—mostly just beginning to compose. And I am amazed at the high standards and to see how there is a general musical culture so great that you beginners attain this high level. It is really amazing, and I can assure you that nowhere in the world does one see such an encouraging situation.

You perhaps do not have enough perspective to see how well equipped you are in every respect, but mostly with regard to the direction you have from your masters. It is admirable, really, how you have all the elements in technical equipment, depth, orientation, and undoubtedly in matters of practical means (three flutes available, a wind quintet available, and so on). If I may insist in one point to you: no matter how well guided you are and no matter how well equipped in every respect you are, the problem lies in each individual. Composition is a matter of complete devotion. It is not a question of sacrifice; it is a matter of devotion. He who is a creative artist should feel his greatest contentment in realizing his work. Therefore, I see a little danger in the fact first stated, that you are too wealthy here. Let it not be a disadvantage for you. But remember that your greatness will not come from the outside, as it will come from your own inside. You are the one who has to work most. It is good, it is fine, it is a matter for great happiness to see how well directed you are. But remember you have to work, you have to realize yourselves (using "realize" in the Latin meaning). Surely you are proving to the world that there is a great deal of talent in this country. And in the near future we will see many great composers come out from this magnificent culture that is being furthered by the universities and especially by this great institution in which you are, and which I am having the honor of visiting.

The program notes which Chávez supplied for the Los Angeles Philharmonic performance of his Violin Concerto at Long Beach March 30, 1952, read as follows:

Carlos Chávez is Mexico's leading musician. As composer and administrator, he has exerted tremendous force in the revitalization of the musical life of Mexico. For several years he directed the National Conservatory of Music. He was head of the Department of Fine Arts of the Secretariat of Public Education. In 1928, Chávez founded the *Orquesta Sinfónica* and conducted it until 1949. Through his indefatigable research in the native Mexican and Indian folk-music, he has made monumental contributions to the cultural life of his country. He has conducted most of the major symphony orchestras in the United States and received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1938.

Chávez has evolved a musical style which is both racial and personal; which absorbs and subtly simulates national characteristics without mere obvious imitation. In this respect he ranks with Bartók and Falla in his ability to solve the problem of amalgamating folk-material into valid and convincing art forms. Both modernism and traditionalism have found their way into his music.

The brilliant *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* was commissioned by Viviane Bertalami. Chávez began work on it in 1947 and finished it toward the end of 1950. It was given its world premiere on February 29, 1952 by the *Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional* in Mexico City. Chávez conducted and Miss Bertalami was the soloist. During the composition of the work Chávez sent each section, as he finished it, to Miss Bertalami for her study and examination. Miss Bertalami writes, "I was able to endure this delayed process only because I believe that this *Violin Concerto* is destined to occupy a place of honor among the most important works in the violin concerto repertoire. It is well worth waiting when it is music like this." When the work was completed, Miss Bertalami went to Mexico City to discuss and settle all details of interpretation according to the composer's wishes.

The *Violin Concerto* is a work of ample proportions, scored for large orchestra, and requiring about forty minutes for performance. It is essentially melodic and affords the soloist excellent opportunity for violinistic virtuosity.

The form of the work is especially interesting. It is written in four sections—*Andante*, *Allegro*, *Largo*, and *Scherzo*—which are followed by the traditional cadenza. After this the entire work is recapitulated, the four sections appearing in reverse order. This is an unique formal device frequently used in literature, for example, Calderón's *Life Is a Dream*. There is no complete break between each of the sections so that the entire work is played without pause. The cadenza is extensive and constitutes a section in itself. In the recapitulation process Chávez makes substantial changes and modifications in the thematic material.

There are only two full orchestral *tuttis* in the concerto. The first of these occurs at the end of the *Allegro* and the second begins with the recapitulation of the *Scherzo* and continues halfway through the *Largo*. Here the motives appear in inverted form. In the second half of the *Largo*, the same motives are combined with their own inversions. Aside from these two *tuttis*, the solo violin dominates the entire work. There is considerable antiphonal playing between individual instruments and between groups of instruments.

1953

A year later, Vincent wrote Chávez a letter dated April 10, 1953, inviting him to conduct one of the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony concerts during the 1953-1954 season. Chávez replied with an affectionate letter dated April 14, 1953.



Dear John:

Thank you for your letter of the 10th. I will be delighted to accept your kind invitation to conduct one of your concerts next season. / I shall be available the latter part of November, that is to say, after the 15th or 20th. I have accepted an invitation to conduct some concerts in Italy in October and the first part of November. Although the arrangements have not yet been closed, I am holding that time for them. / It is fine to know that you have spoken with the American Art Quartet about the possibility of doing my String Quartet, possibly at the time I might be there conducting. Who are the members of that Quartet? / Ever since I was in Los Angeles last, with you, I promised Miss [Eudice] Shapiro to send her this work, and I did after I submitted the work to you for publication [by Affiliated Musicians, Inc., publishers].

Yes there are reliable copyists in Mexico, and very soon I will send to you 1 or 2 names, so that you can correspond with them. / Many thanks for remembering me, and all good wishes and love to you and Ruth from all in this house. / Always your friend

Carlos Chávez

Two weeks later, having not heard from Vincent, Chávez wrote suggesting a program and asking for a date change.

Dear John:

I hope you have received my letter of the 14th. Before I get your answer I want to communicate with you again in regard to the date of the concert. I had told you about my availability the latter part of November and, of course, I am holding this time for you. / An engagement for a concert of my works with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra has just been made definite for January 12, the first rehearsal being on the 8th. Therefore, it would suit me very well if my concert with you in Los Angeles should be as late as possible in December instead of November, because in this way I would be able to go directly from Los Angeles to Seattle. / I am just suggesting this, to see if it is possible to change the date. But I do not want to inconvenience you or upset your plans in the least. Please tell me in all frankness what you think. / As our arrangement is still in a tentative stage, nothing has been said of the program. However, I want to anticipate to you a proposition. If the idea of my playing solo is not acceptable, I will send another proposition. / With all good wishes and kindest greetings, I am / Always your friend

Carlos Chávez

P.S. DECCA has an L.P. recording of "La Hija de Cólquide" in the symphony version.

Chávez's proposed program sent with the foregoing letter reads: I. *Soli* for oboe, clarinet, trumpet, and bassoon II. *Suite from La Hija de Cólquide* (original version) III. *Toccata* for Percussion Instruments / Intermission / IV. *10 Preludes* for Piano Solo. Before May 9, Chávez had heard from Vincent and in reply wrote:

Dear John:

Just a little note to tell you that I received your letter of the 27th of April last and I accept with pleasure your kind invitation to conduct a concert with the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony in November, the fee being agreeable to me. / In my last letter, before I received yours of the 27th, I suggested the possibility of changing my date from November to December if that would be possible. But I want to confirm that if you cannot change it, November is agreeable with me. / I would like to hear from you on this matter and also on the program that I anticipated to you. / With kindest greetings, I am / Always your friend

Carlos Chávez



Vincent having vetoed Chávez's proposal that he close the program with his piano preludes, Chávez found himself obliged to suggest another program. In his letter of May 23, he wrote:

Dear John:

I have just received your telegram which I have answered by wire as follows: "PLEASE SET THE CONCERT DATE AS IS MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU EITHER NOVEMBER TWENTYFOURTH OR DECEMBER FIRST AS IT IS QUITE AGREEABLE TO ME IN BOTH CASES STOP I WILL SUBMIT PROGRAM AS SUGGESTED KINDEST GREETINGS."

You have kindly postponed the concert one week. However, as my concert in Seattle is in January, it really does not make much difference, as I would have to come back to Mexico City anyway in between. / In regard to the program I suggest the following: I. *Suite No. 2* for flute and string orchestra—BACH II. *L'Estro Armonico*, Concerto con due violini e violoncello obbligato—VIVALDI (Intermission) III. *Soli* for oboe, clarinet, trumpet, and bassoon—CHÁVEZ IV. *Suite from "La Hija de Cólquide"* (original version)—CHÁVEZ V. *Toccata* for Percussion Instruments.

The composition of the orchestra is indicated in detail in the enclosed paper. As you will see the total number of players required for the concert would be 23. I hope this is satisfactory, but otherwise please let me know. / With all good wishes and greetings to you and Ruth, I am / Always your friend

Carlos Chávez

Even so, Vincent (who knew his prospective audience) was not satisfied and on June 1 pleaded for still another program proposal. Chávez replied on June 6:

Dear John:

I have your letter of the 1st, and, accordingly, I would suggest the following program: I. *Suite for the Theatre*, Suite in Five Parts for Small Orchestra—COPLAND (Intermission) II. *Soli*—CHÁVEZ III. *Suite from "La Hija de Cólquide"*—CHÁVEZ IV. *Toccata* for Percussion Instruments—CHÁVEZ.

The composition of the orchestra for the whole program appears in the enclosed paper. / Since the Shapiro Quartet has been studying my work I have made up my mind to pass through Los Angeles on my way up to New York to have some rehearsing sessions with them and have a little visit with you and the Lesters [financial backers of the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony]. / I have therefore decided to leave Mexico City around June 24 to stay in Los Angeles 4 or 5 days. / I look forward with anticipation to see you and Ruth and with kindest greetings, I am / Always your friend

Carlos Chávez

P.S. I hope you will lend me the score of my Quartet I sent you, while I am there, to put down the last editing marks.

During their face-to-face conversations, Vincent prevailed upon Chávez to abandon his *Daughter of Colchis Suite* in favor of a new work. From Los Angeles Chávez travelled to New York and thence to Tanglewood. On July 25 he sent the following personally typed note from Hawthorne Hill, Lenox, Massachusetts.

Dear John and Ruth:

It was fine to have seen you and enjoyed your company. / I hope very much the program for December will be as last suggested by John, ending with a new work of mine. I will send you the



definite proposition for the program early in September. / I have settled my schedule for the remainder of the year and would not be able to stay at [2000 Rustic] Canyon [Road, address of the Huntington Hartford Foundation] as you so kindly mentioned and I had hoped, but I am eager to take advantage of your invitation at the first opportunity. / I have enjoyed [being] here and will be back in Mexico around August 20. / All good wishes, and love to you,

Carlos

Vincent wasted no time in replying to Chávez's Hawthorne Hill, Lenox, Massachusetts address. On July 29, he wrote a three-paragraph letter, in the first paragraph inviting Chávez to stay at his house (1024 Hilts Avenue, Los Angeles 90024) "at the time of your concert here before Christmas," in the second urging him to delay no longer in finalizing the program, and in the third proposing that Chávez join a galaxy of famous composers in writing a three-minute "jazz" piece for a forthcoming LP. "It is planned to have it all ready to record by November. We plan to ask Aaron, Roy, Virgil, Gail Kubik, Milhaud, and Piston."

With his usual tact, Chávez replied August 5 in another personally typed letter.

Dear John:

I have your kind letter of the 29th. I should like very much to do the jazz piece. However, as you know I am now engaged in the composition of an opera and also a Symphony for Strings, that I expect to premiere with you in December. / So, much as I regret not to be included in the jazz record, I like the idea of premiering my new Symphony with the Los Angeles Orchestra. / The program will be as follows: *Music for the Theatre*—COPLAND; *Soli*—CHÁVEZ; *Toccata for Percussion*—CHÁVEZ; *Symphony for Strings*—CHÁVEZ.

As you suggested, we shall have seven more players, that is to say 2 firsts, 2 seconds, 1 viola, 1 cello, and 1 double bass. These seven players would be then added to the 23 already considered. / I will take care of supplying the materials for my compositions. The Copland piece is to be obtained through Arrow Music Press in New York. There will be some charge for the rental of my materials, too, in the usual manner. / I shall be delighted to stay with you as you so kindly suggest. However, I cannot say anything definite until I come back home and set the plans. / With warmest greetings for you and Ruth I am always your friend,

Carlos

Vincent's next letter written August 10 still harps politely on the need for a program perfect in all aspects—opening with a short piece after which latecomers are seated, the first half lasting not more than 30 minutes, the total music in both halves not exceeding 70 minutes, contrast between numbers being the watchword. Chávez acceded to the request for a short opener with his five-minute Sarabanda for Strings from the *Daughter of Colchis* suite, listing (in his letter from Lenox of August 22⁴) the lengths of the other numbers thus: Copland's *Music for the Theatre*, 23 minutes; his

⁴Chávez's epic triumph of the 1953 summer, spent as guest composer at Tanglewood, came the closing night August 15 when Leonard Bernstein conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra in a wildly acclaimed performance of *Sinfonia India*. According to Howard Taubman, "Tanglewood Ends Annual Festival," *New York Times*, August 17, 1953: "The Chavez Symphony, which is as brilliant and imaginative as one of the great modern Mexican murals, had tremendous pace and color." Donald H. White—reviewing the summer season in "Tanglewood Concerts Spur Musical Revolution in America," *New Bedford* (Massachusetts) *Standard-Times*, August 23, 1953—rhapsodized on the "native sincerity, innocent of the quirks and morasses of so many 20th-century works" that made the *Sinfonia India* a glowing experience. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, August 22, the *Sinfonia India* "drew the biggest ovation of the series."

own *Soli*, *Toccata*, and *Symphony for Strings* after intermission as 7, 12, and 18 minutes. Continuing, he wrote as follows:

Please tell me if this program is satisfactory. / The *Symphony for Strings* is the work that I was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Foundation and will have its premiere on this occasion. While in Tanglewood I talked about this with Mrs. Koussevitzky and she said she would like very much to be present at the concert. I wonder whether you would write her about that. / In regard to the instrumentation enclosed please find a list with the total number of players. I had forgotten to mention that Music for the Theatre requires a piano, but it does not call for a saxophone. Kindly give me your agreement on this matter also. / At my return I found that Otilia and Juanita are not yet recovered and that they are still in the hospital—for a rest cure. Therefore my plans for the trip with or without them are still uncertain. I will let you know about this as soon as plans are laid. / With very warm greetings, I am / Always your friend

Carlos

cc: Ms. Olga Koussevitzky, Seranak, Lenox, Massachusetts

TOTAL NUMBER OF STRINGS: 4 I Violin, 4 II Violin, 3 Viola, 3 Violoncello, 2 Doublebass / 16 [players]. TOTAL NUMBER OF WINDS: 1 Flute (interchangeable with piccolo), 1 Oboe (interchangeable with English Horn), 1 Clarinet in B \flat (interchangeable with E \flat clarinet), 1 Bassoon, 2 Trumpets, 1 Trombone / 7 [players]. TOTAL NUMBER OF PLAYERS: Strings 16, Winds 7, Percussion 6, Piano 1 = 30.

The next day, August 23 [1953] (again from his Avenida Pirineos 775, Lomas de Chapultepec address), Chávez wrote Vincent another letter, this time saying that his wife and daughter would be sufficiently recovered to take the trip, provided that they could all travel and stay together in one of the Huntington Hartford Foundation bungalows.

Dr. John Vincent
 Huntington Hartford Foundation
 2000 Rustic Canyon Road
 Pacific Palisades, California

Dear John:

Yesterday I sent you a letter concerning matters of my concert next December. / Now in regard to your kind invitation to stay with you. We expect and hope that in a few weeks Otilia and Juanita will be completely recovered. By middle of November they would like to go with me to California and the change will surely be good for them. / In that case (I mean, if the three of us go together to California) I wonder whether we could stay at the Foundation, where I should like to plan to be working on my composition from November 23, 1953 to January 5, 1954. / What are the established provisions of the Foundation; does the invited composer stay there with the members of his family (two in this case) having the exclusive use of the Bungalow with meals for the entire family? Or is it only the use of the Bungalow? / I would love to hear from you about this so as to be able to make definite plans as soon as possible / With love for you both, I am / Always your friend

Carlos

Vincent replied that Huntington Hartford Foundation residency rules did not permit families, and permitted couples only when husband and wife each proposed creative projects.⁵ A larger problem arose when Warren C. Stewart, Consul at the

⁵Eric and Gertrude Zeisl (composer and librettist) resided jointly June 22 to September 22, 1957 and again June 26 to August 25, 1958; Nikolai Lopatnikoff, composer, and his wife, poet Sara Henderson Hay,



American Embassy in Mexico City wrote Vincent a three-paragraph letter dated October 19, 1953, stating that Chávez's visa had not yet been granted. By November 6 Vincent had submitted the necessary documentation, on which date Chávez wrote:

Dr. John Vincent, Music Director
The Los Angeles Chamber Symphony Society
Beverly Hills, California

Dear John:

I have just received your kind letter of November 3rd. I communicated immediately with the American Consulate and Mr. Stewart tells me that he will issue the visa. This afternoon I will go there to arrange all the details.

Now with regard to the rehearsals. As a matter of fact, a complete rehearsal for Soli is much needed, and as it is [for] a very small number of musicians the rehearsal can take place in a private house or perhaps in a studio at the Foundation. The rest of the rehearsals should be in Royce Hall. In this way, we can have the rehearsals each lasting 2½ hours as follows: 1st, Sarabanda and Symphony; 2nd, Music for the Theatre; 3rd, Toccata for Percussion; 4th, Soli; 5th, Dress Rehearsal. / The Sarabanda is part of the "Daughter of Colchis," a Symphonic Suite released by Decca DL 7512. On the cover of that recording there are ample references to the work. However, in spite of being for a Ballet, my music is really not program music and the Sarabanda is just a Sarabanda for Strings. / In regard to the Symphony I am sending some notes in the enclosed paper. / Naturally I want to hear the American Quartet play my work.

Here we all regret very much that Otilia and Juanita will not visit you this time and hope very much that you and your family will come back to Mexico and be our guests in Acapulco. We will talk more of this when we see you. / With love to you and Ruth, I am / Always your friend,

Carlos

The explanatory "paper" referred to in Chávez's November 6, 1953, letter gives the history of his 18-minute *Sinfonía No. 5 para Orquesta de Arcos*.

The Symphony No. 5 for bowed instruments was commissioned by the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress in Washington on September 24, 1952. / The work was sketched in July and August 1953, and written in its entirety during the month of September of the same year while the composer was living in Acapulco. The orchestral score was finished the following month. / The parts of the Symphony are: I. Allegro molto moderato; II. Lento; III. Allegro con brio. / No program was followed by the composer. The work rests on its purely musical values within the possibilities proper to the bowed instruments. / The form (in movements I and III) contains the essential elements of classical symphony patterns within a great freedom, but achieving real cohesion of form.⁹

John Vincent's acute business sense forewarned him that Chávez's request for 12½ hours rehearsal time costing \$1160 should be pared. In a memorandum attached to Chávez's letter of November 6, 1953, he therefore suggested only \$930 for rehearsals, divided thus: \$185 for the *Sarabanda and Symphony*, \$285 for Copland's *Music for the Theatre*, \$125 for the *Toccata and Soli*, \$335 for the dress rehearsal. To this,

resided jointly June 15 to August 31, 1959, and June 15 to September 4, 1960; composer Harrison Kerr and his wife, writer Jeanne McHugh, resided February 8 to June 22, 1960; George Perle and his wife Barbara Phillips, sculptor, resided July 15 to September 11, 1961. See Parker, "John Vincent," pp. 396-397.

⁹Vincent's program notes (under his own byline) for the December 1, 1953, Royce Hall UCLA concert repeated what Chávez had written, with only this slight restructuring of Chávez's last sentence: "The form of the work, particularly the first and last movements, contains the essential elements of the classical symphony patterns interpreted freely but without relinquishing clarity and cohesion which are the basic ideals of the classic aesthetic."

Vincent's budget added \$737 for the concert (30 players = 16 strings, 7 winds, 6 percussion, 1 piano). The Vincent total of \$1667 did not, of course, include hall, ticket, and program expense, nor Chávez's conductor's fee.

Chávez's pleasure with the success of the December 1, 1953, concert at Royce Hall, UCLA, soared still higher when Vincent—then also chairman of the Editorial Board of the Los Angeles publishing firm Affiliated Musicians, Inc. (endowed in January 1953 by John Bruecker, inventor of the Shavemaster razor)—would publish in 1954 both the *Symphony for Strings* and the *Toccata for Percussion* played at the Royce Hall concert. Grateful for these good deeds and expectant of more to come, Chávez elected to do Vincent a *quid pro quo* favor of nonpareil importance. On December 22, 1953, Chávez wrote conductor Robert Whitney of the Louisville Symphony⁷ this letter: "The outstanding talents of John Vincent as a composer are far from being fully used and appreciated. That is why I take the liberty of bringing his name to your attention as a possible recipient of a commission to write a symphony work for you. / You undoubtedly know his music, but anyway I am sending you a recent recording of his *String Quartet* [Contemporary Records, Inc., C2002 (April 1953)] on the cover of which, by the way, you will find an interesting short essay on him by Virgil Thomson."⁸

1954

Chávez's next letter to Vincent, dated January 22, 1954, discussed business matters in this more formal tone:

Dr. John Vincent
 Affiliated Musicians, Inc.
 8350 Melrose Avenue
 Los Angeles 46, California

Dear Dr. Vincent:

Mrs. David Hall, Musical Director, Mercury Record Corporation, 1733 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y., wrote to me last November before we had signed the *Toccata* for publication as follows:

"We at Mercury are seriously considering the possibility of recording your *Toccata* for Percussion. We would greatly appreciate it if you could send us the score and performing materials for perusal or inform us whether they can be obtained. We would also like to have access to a private or broadcast recording on tape or disc if such can be obtained. We are interested in the *Toccata* not only as part of a possible long playing recording featuring Latin-American music for chamber orchestra but also as a vehicle for high-fidelity recorded sound."

I have now communicated to Mr. Hall that you are the publishers of my *Toccata*. I thought also you might like to communicate with him. / I shall be glad if the *Toccata* is recorded. Aside from the technical problems of recording percussion instruments, the work would have to be rehearsed and prepared with utmost care before recording it. I would be glad to conduct the work for recording on a percentage basis. / With kind regards, I am, Yours sincerely

Carlos Chávez

⁷Chávez's *Sinfonía romántica*, composed on a Louisville commission, had been premiered at Louisville February 11, 1953.

⁸Craig Parker, "John Vincent," p. 159. In compliance with the Louisville commission forthcoming as a result of Chávez's recommendation, Vincent in 1954 composed his *Symphony in D* premiered at Louisville February 5, 1955. Recorded in 1957 by the Louisville Orchestra (Commission Series LOU 57-2) and in 1958 by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy (Columbia Masterworks ML 5263), Vincent's *Symphony in D* now forms the bedrock of his reputation.



On February 6, 1954, Chávez wrote Vincent at his home address (1024 Hilts Avenue): "Just a matter of information I would like to know if AMI [Affiliated Musicians, Inc.] is a member of ASCAP. I myself am a member of that organization. / Hoping to hear from you on this and very kind regards, I am, Always your friend, Carlos / P.S. I hope you received my various communications, personal and official, that I have sent to you recently."

Chávez next visited Los Angeles to conduct a Hollywood Bowl concert August 24, 1954. Accused of Communist Party membership or at least Communist sympathies, he was earlier that month threatened with visa cancellation. However, on August 16, 1954, *El Universal* (Mexico City), published (beginning on page one) a lengthy interview in which he assured the world at large that he had always been a Mexican Revolutionary but never a Communist or fellow traveler. He again visited Los Angeles, but for only a few hours, Columbus Day, 1954. An interview with picture published in the *Los Angeles Times*, Wednesday October 13, 1954, page 11, "Composer Chavez Here On Way North," included these paragraphs:

Composer-Conductor Carlos Chavez, Mexico's greatest musician, yesterday was in Los Angeles briefly on the way to fulfill an engagement with the Portland Symphony Orchestra in Portland, Oregon. Chavez was met when he stepped off a Pan American Airways liner at Los Angeles International Airport by Mrs. John Vincent, whose husband is professor of music at UCLA, and Music Publisher Emil Hilb [managing editor of Affiliated Musicians, Inc.]. The conductor, who had last August been denied a visa to enter the United States, waited patiently while Federal officers went through their immigration and customs checks, and emerged unruffled into California sunlight at the airport.

Chavez's visa troubles last August were ironed out in time for him to appear as guest conductor at the Hollywood Bowl on August 24. The U.S. Immigration Service declined to discuss the matter at the time, but Chavez sent a letter through government channels in which he denied that he is, or ever has been, a Communist. It was after this action that the visa was issued. / There was no such difficulty concerning the current trip to the United States. Of the previous trouble, he was reluctant to speak. / "It was all a misunderstanding, I think," he said mildly.

Due to spend but a few hours in Los Angeles before going to Portland, where he is to conduct two concerts Sunday and Monday, Chavez's schedule was pretty full, with a luncheon with Dr. and Mrs. Vincent, who have been his friends for several years, and a conference with his music publishers here. / Hilb, whose company will publish Chavez's "Sinfonia No. 5" within the next two weeks, said the composer was to make several final corrections in the score while he is here. The symphony is to be played by the Boston Symphony in 13 cities, within the next few months, the publisher said. / After the Portland engagement, Chavez said, he will return directly to Mexico City, where he is scheduled to conduct several concerts.*

1955

Chávez personally typed his next letter to Vincent dated February 24, 1955, from Acapulco.

*The *Los Angeles Times* again took notice of Chávez's *Sinfonia No. 5 for Strings* on Wednesday, January 29, 1969. Heading his review (Part IV, page 7) "Mexican Orchestra Plays at Pavilion," Martin Bernheimer wrote: [Luis Herrera de la Fuente's] "Programming the Chavez Fifth represented a triply sentimental gesture. The work received its world premiere in Los Angeles sixteen years ago (under the auspices of the now-defunct Chamber Symphony). It was conducted on that occasion by Chavez himself, who was the founder of the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional in 1949. And it is one of the relatively few works recorded by the orchestra for export purposes. / It is an ingratiating work, full of illuminating detail and surprise effects, constructed with a grateful eye for economy and reliant upon a superb command of contrapuntal procedures. The famous natural-harmonics ending of the slow movement is still a magical moment, and the Mexican instrumentalists made the most of it."



Dear John:

I am now in Acapulco working on my Opera, and I intend to remain here quite a while. / I was very happy to receive your greetings in a post card from the Beachcomber. Juanita and Howard were delighted to have seen you. / Rather often Emil Hilb and I correspond. You must be informed that our publications are not doing so bad. It is fine that you started that. Many thanks ever so much. / I hope your work is developing according to your plans, and you all are happy. / All good wishes and love to you and Ruth, and the children. Always your friend

Carlos

On Cinco de Mayo 1955, Chávez again wrote Vincent, now, however, from his home in Mexico City.

Dear John:

I came to town for a couple of days and found your scores of Symphony in D and Suite from the ballet Three Jacks. / I was very happy to have read such excellent music. I like the sense of form of the Symphony very much. I hope you get real good performances of both works, which you undoubtedly will. / I am looking forward to the occasion of seeing you in August. In the meanwhile all best wishes and my love to you and Ruth.

Carlos

With this letter Chávez enclosed the announcement of the baptism of his granddaughter Otilia that same day, May 5, in the aristocratic parish church of Santa Teresita del Niño Jesús, Lomas de Chapultepec.¹⁰ At this ceremony Chávez and his wife became godparents of their granddaughter born at Mexico City December 28, 1953, to their son, the architect Agustín Chávez, and Señora Inés M. de Chávez.

1956

Throughout the next several months Chávez continued working on his opera that was eventually to prove a fiasco. Nonetheless, he wrote Vincent the kind of optimistic letter always his wont when on July 21, 1956, he assured him: "Yes, my Opera is finished. It may probably be presented in New York in February. I am very happy about it. Next month I go to Buenos Aires for some concerts in the Teatro Colón. In October I have some concerts here, and in December in Cleveland. I am already working on a choral work for Guggenheim."

Vincent had an opportunity to repay Chávez for the Louisville commission when on August 8, 1956, he was invited by a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation executive to submit the titles of three twentieth-century masterpieces "which you think will be performed and valued one hundred years hence." Vincent nominated for his Number 1 choice Chávez's *Sinfonía India*. Immediately writing Chávez to announce that his lecture on *Sinfonía India* would be broadcast internationally, he asked for any aid that Chávez would care to give him. Chávez replied December 28, 1956.

Dear John:

It gave me as always a very great pleasure to have your letter of December 14 which I read upon my arrival from New York a few days ago. . . . You ask me for "any help" regarding the *Sinfonía India*, for your broadcast. First of all let me thank you for having chosen the work.

¹⁰The enclosed engraved announcement reads: "La niña Otilia Chávez nació en México, D.F., el día 28 de diciembre de 1953 siendo sus padres el Arq. Agustín Chávez y la Sra. Inés M. de Chávez. Fué bautizada en la Parroquia de Santa Teresita del Niño Jesús, Lomas de Chapultepec, D.F., el día 5 de mayo de 1955 siendo sus padrinos el Maestro Carlos Chávez y la Sra. Otilia O. de Chávez."



Second, enclosed please find some material which you can use as you see convenient. If there is anything else you think I can do, please let me know. / With my love for you and Ruth and the children, and all best wishes for the New Year, I am / Always your friend,

Carlos

Chavez's enclosure outlines the form of *Sinfonía India*. According to him, "All the elements of a Symphony exist in a condensed form. The Slow Movement appears in between the Exposition and the Recapitulation of the Allegro. The traditional tonal relationship is kept between the elements of the Allegro."¹¹ In the following synopsis of the form, Chávez enclosed in parentheses the various place-numbers of the G. Schirmer published study score.

Beginning Introduction B \flat ; (9) Allegro. Exposition: Main theme and development of same. Tonic (B \flat); (14) Bridge. Tonic to Subdominant; (27) Second theme and development of same. Subdominant (E \flat); (43) Slow Movement. Poco Lento, and development of same; (59) Allegro. Recapitulation: Main theme and development of same. Tonic (B \flat); (64) Bridge. Dominant to Tonic; (73) Second theme and development of same. Tonic (B \flat); (81) Coda of the Allegro (Using elements of the Introduction), Tonic (B \flat); (88) Finale, F (Dominant).

1957

Eleven months were to elapse before Vincent's lecture on the *Sinfonía India* was finally aired November 3, 1957. In the meantime, Chávez's long-heralded opera, *Panfilo and Lauretta*, had been mounted unsuccessfully May 9, 1957, at Columbia University, Howard Shanet conducting. Colin McPhee¹² expressed the prevailing opinion of *Panfilo and Lauretta* when he wrote Vincent June 30, 1957: "Heard Carlos' opera, and alas, alas, it was a devastating bore from start to finish. I love Carlos dearly, but when I think of it, I've been profoundly bored with his music over a period of thirty years, with one or two notable exceptions. He is intent on turning music into the deadeast of arts."

McPhee's chief "notable exception" was, of course, *Sinfonía India*—which he had been among the first critics to praise when it was premiered in 1936.¹³ Vincent wisely decided to forgo Chávez's own dry analysis of *Sinfonía India* in his Canadian broadcast and instead follow McPhee in stressing "Indian" character. According to Vincent's broadcast, *Sinfonía India* "is unique in the fact that it is the only successful symphony making use of authentic Indian melodies."¹⁴ No matter that later scholar-

¹¹"The traditional tonal relationship" would imply Second Theme in the dominant, rather than in the subdominant.

¹²McPhee lectured at UCLA December 12, 1956, on the topic "An American Composer in Bali." He held a residency at the Huntington Hartford Foundation in Pacific Palisades July 1, 1956 to January 1, 1957, and again from June 15 to September 7, 1962. See Parker, "John Vincent," pp. 148 (note 149), 382, and 405.

¹³Premiered over the air January 23, 1936, the *Sinfonía India* was composed in New York City. Chávez found the exposition first subject in a book at the New York Public Library, Konrad Theodor Preuss's *Die Nayarit-Expedition* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1912), p. 373. Not fluent in German, Chávez mistook the melody's source and either ignored or suppressed what its transcriber, Erich M. von Hornbostel, said about the melody's European character. A Cora Indian named Ascensión Diaz living at Jesús María sang the melody into Preuss's cylinders carried back to Berlin for Hornbostel to transcribe. See *Music in Aztec & Inca Territory* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), pp. 144-150. Colin McPhee glowingly reviewed the radio premiere of *Sinfonía India* in *Modern Music*, x111/3 (March-April, 1936), p. 42.

¹⁴Parker, p. 174, synthesizes Vincent's *Sinfonía India* broadcast lecture.

ship proved the Exposition main theme "betrays very strong European influences—in its intervals and in its metrical and formal organization. To go further: only its essentially European character explains how Chávez could so successfully have integrated it into a symphony written in New York City for an essentially European-minded music public."¹⁵

Chávez liked enormously Vincent's using his November 3, 1957, internationally broadcast lecture to categorize *Sinfonía India* as "No. 1" among twentieth-century works likely to be still played a hundred years hence. On December 2, 1957, he wrote this letter of appreciation:

Dear John:

I have just come back from a nearly three months concert tour in South America^[16] and found your letter of October 4 with your study of *Sinfonía India* attached. / It has given me a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction to read such a profound and complete essay on that work, the various aspects of the Symphony focused as only a thoroughly learned and imaginative musician and writer such as you could have done. / Your study is a perfect case of constructive criticism that will effectively help to place the work in whatever place it belongs. / Shall I say I thank you very much for having picked up this subject for your Canadian talk, and indeed for having sent it to me. / I would like to know if you would give your consent to quote from your essay when the occasion arises. / My tour went extremely well. I conducted concerts with the orchestras of Lima, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and Bogotá. It was quite agreeable. / All best to you and Ruth and the family, and warmest greetings from all of us.

Carlos

1958

Not content with honoring Chávez in his broadcast, Vincent next sought a 1958-1959 season engagement for Chávez conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Chávez replied January 14, 1958: "Thank you for thinking of me in regard to the Philharmonic situation. You know I shall always be happy to conduct that orchestra. / Soon I shall be leaving for New Orleans where I am conducting a concert on February 4, and then on to Buffalo where I will hold the Slee Professorship, consisting of some lecture-concerts and composition seminars. In March I shall have concerts in New York with the Symphony of the Air. So I will be up in the East for the remainder of the Winter and part of the Spring."

1960

In the summer of 1960 Chávez returned to conduct the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in a pair of concerts at Hollywood Bowl, Tuesday and Thursday nights,

¹⁵*Music in Aztec & Inca Territory*, p. 149.

¹⁶According to Chávez's August 22, 1957, letter to Vincent thanking him for concern over the fate of the Chávez family in the July 29 Mexico City earthquake, he flew to South America August 29 "for symphony appearances in Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, and Colombia. I shall be back at the end of October. At present I am working on a Cantata on Aeschylus's Prometheus." With this letter Chávez enclosed the printed program for three string orchestra concerts that he conducted August 6, 13, and 20, 1957.

Patronized by El Colegio Nacional, Calle de Luis González Obregón núm. 23, each of the concerts began at 8 p.m. with his introductory remarks. The first concert closed with Galindo's *Sinfonía Breve para Cuerdas* (Allegro moderato-Largo-Allegro con brio), the second consisted of Stravinsky's *Apollon Musagète* and *Concerto in D* for strings (1946, published 1947), the last consisted of Bartók's string *Divertimento* (1939, published 1940), and Chávez's *Sinfonía No. 5 para Orquesta de Arcos* premiered at Royce Hall, UCLA, December 1, 1953.



August 2 and 4. The Tuesday program contained his *Sinfonía No. 4 (Romántica)*¹⁷ and Copland's *El Salón México* flanked by Rossini's *William Tell Overture* and Jaime Laredo's performance of the Sibelius Violin Concerto. The Thursday concert began with the picture-postcard *La Bamba* from a Gerónimo Baqueiro Fóster *Suite Veracruzana* and continued with Villa-Lobos's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, No. 2* (Aldo Parisot, soloist), and *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* (Marni Nixon, soprano soloist), interluded with *Encantamiento y Zarabanda* from his own *La hija de Cólquide*¹⁸ (Ravel's *Bolero* concluded the second half). On July 20 Ruth Vincent wrote Chávez a letter apprising him of various social events being planned in his honor. He replied from his Lomas de Chapultepec address July 27:

Dear Ruth:

Just two words in haste. Thank you very much for your letter of July 20. It is most kind of you to have arranged that luncheon on Sunday [July 31] with so many dear friends. Yes, I would be delighted to hear from Alice Taylor [Executive Assistant to the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra], and also accept with pleasure the invitation to supper with the Heifetz's after the concert on August 2. / I think I can be free for cocktails on Wednesday with the Bloomfields. I have rehearsals with soloists that afternoon—with one at 4, and another at 4:30—but I hope to go afterwards. / With all the best, and looking forward to seeing you soon, / Always affectionately,

Carlos

1963

How little Chávez knew of Vincent's pre-1950 career comes to light in his letter dated February 14, 1963. In it, Chávez congratulated Vincent for taking up the baton: "I am so happy to know that you are now engaging in this new activity."

Ever eager to continue serving Chávez, Vincent wrote a three-paragraph letter dated August 26, 1963, to his Lomas de Chapultepec address, broaching the idea of a UCLA visiting faculty appointment.

Dear Carlos:

We are beginning a new plan, that of having distinguished composers visit UCLA as Regents Professors for a semester at a time. I am proposing your name as the first if I can get your permission and if you are available. The specific period is from February through June of 1964. This is a position carrying a salary of between eight and nine thousand dollars and is virtually composer-in-residence, with very little in the way of instruction being required. In addition to that, you can travel to any conducting engagements which might intervene. This is not an offer,

¹⁷Copied from a Chávez handout, Robert Turner's Program Notes, *Hollywood Bowl 30th Season Fifth Week, Aug. 2, 4, 6, 1960*, pp. 29-32, valuably analyze this symphony commissioned in 1952 by the Louisville Symphony, composed in December 1952 and January 1953, and premiered at Louisville February 11, 1953.

¹⁸Chávez authorized the following program note: "In 1943 Carlos Chávez received a commission from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation to compose a ballet for Martha Graham. The theme was to be taken from Greek mythology. 'I will probably change the action as we progress,' wrote Miss Graham: 'Please bear this in mind as you write.' The action was indeed changed—the whole Greek idea was in fact discarded, and the ballet, with Chávez's music became an entirely different creation known as *Dark Meadow*. The original orchestration, selected because of the stringency of ballet production, was a double quartet of strings and woodwinds. In 1947 Chávez transcribed the five scenes for full orchestra, retaining the original ballet title. These five movements are: Preludio, Encantamiento, Zarabanda, Peán, and Postludio."



at this time, since what I must do, if you are available, is to nominate you to the Regents, have them accept it, and then the invitation would presumably be extended through our Chancellor, Dr. Franklin Murphy. I am sure you understand. / It would be a great honor to have you and for those of us of your friends, it would be a tremendous pleasure. I do hope you will consider it, for we have had too little contact in recent years. / Ruth joins me in sending to you and Otilia our warmest greetings and best wishes always. / Sincerely yours,

Dr. John Vincent
Executive Director
[Huntington Hartford Foundation]

Written as usual during the years 1953–1965 on Huntington Hartford Foundation letterhead and signed “Dr.” and “Executive Director” to enhance Vincent’s aura of personal power, this letter holding out the prospect of a sinecure paying close to \$2000 monthly brought Chávez’s immediate assent. However, the appointment did not take effect until the Spring semester of 1966.

1965–1966

On August 5, 1965, now on 1024 Hilts Avenue letterhead (Foundation operations ceased September 15, 1965), Vincent sent Chávez a five-paragraph letter, the first paragraph of which read: “I am delighted that you are coming to U.C.L.A. This is a pleasure I have anticipated for a long time. I have kept your name on the list for several years and I am glad it has finally worked out.”

In the next three paragraphs he asked Chávez’s help in locating an orchestra for him to conduct in a “double-faced disc of my works.” Not slow in learning that Vincent’s Huntington Hartford power base had crumbled, that the once almighty no longer controlled any performing organizations, and that Vincent was now being “iced” by even his own university administration, Chávez did not respond to Vincent’s letter of August 5, 1965. Instead, he presciently contacted the conductor of the California Chamber Symphony Orchestra, Henri Temianka—who within a month after Chávez’s arrival at UCLA had him conduct at Royce Hall the very *Symphony No. 5 for Strings* world-premiered in Royce Hall December 1, 1953, while Vincent was still musical director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.¹⁹

1966–1974

The coldness of Chávez’s further relations with the now impotent Vincent needs no better documentation than the two last letters that he sent Vincent—both in reply to letters from the latter trying to light again fires that once burned brightly. On August 4, 1966, Chávez wrote this laconic note: “Thank you very much for your letter of July 27. Too bad to have missed you. / Hope that all is fine with you. / Cordially, Carlos Chávez.” At New Year’s 1968, Chávez sent him a mere printed “Feliz Año Carlos Chávez Enero 1.º de 1968.” During the next several years Chávez continued visiting

¹⁹In his *Los Angeles Times* review, Walter Arlen highly praised Chávez’s masterful conducting of “an electrifying piece. Its brooding ruminative undercurrent is never without excitement because new, unexpected sound combinations make a memorable impact (like the magic web of harmonics punctuating the slow movement) and because the wholly personal rhythmic patterns that propel the piece with unrelenting pull give it unceasing fascination.”



California.²⁰ But he did not again write "Mr." John Vincent until this curt letter dated January 15, 1974, at 20 West 64 Street, Apt. 42-S, New York, N.Y. 10023.

Mr. John Vincent
10457½ Ashton Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

Dear John:

Very happy to have your lines. How are you? What are you doing? I will be in New York all Winter and Spring at the above address. / Warmest greetings, / Carlos Chávez.

As it turned out, California State University, Long Beach, invited Chávez to spend the 1974 Spring term as artist-in-residence. On Sunday afternoon May 12, 1974, he conducted the Cal State Long Beach student orchestra in the passacaglia finale of his three-movement *Symphony No. 6*.²¹ On May 16, the Music Department and Committee on Cultural Affairs of Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, entertained Chávez with cocktails 5 to 7 p.m., at the Malone Art Gallery on that campus. Vincent obtained directions to the event.²² But the effort of attending proved worthless. Chávez shook his hand quickly and then immediately turned his back on him to start greeting other guests.

²⁰Chávez's "Discovery" Symphony was premiered at the 1969 Cabrillo (Aptos, California) Music Festival. He conducted all seven concerts of the 1970 Cabrillo Music Festival, August 21, 22, 28, 29 at 8:30 p.m., August 23 and 30 at 6:00 p.m., and August 29 at 2:00 p.m. The August 23 concert closed with a repeat of his "Discovery" Symphony, the August 30 concert with *Sinfonia India*. August 29 evening included his "madrigal-type" three nocturnes to texts by Keats, Shelley, and Byron (*Sonnet to Sleep. To the Moon. So We'll Go No More A-Roving*). That afternoon, María Teresa Rodríguez, pianist, played his *Invencción* that was premiered at New York April 11, 1959. He began the second half of the August 22 concert with Rodolfo Halffter's *Don Lindo de Almería Ballet Suite* (1935).

Recalled to conduct four of the six concerts programmed the weekends of August 18 and 25, 1972 during the tenth Cabrillo Music Festival, "Maestro Carlos Chavez in his third year as conductor and musical director" on Sunday evening August 20, 1972, offered Jazzy Dance from *H.P. Ballet-Symphony* (1926) and four dances from *Pirámide*. According to his program notes for the latter, "*Pirámide* is a ballet which depicts in successive short sketches the process from chaos to modern society. Played here is a group of short dances: Wind, Water, Earth, and Fire: each representing primitive rituals to the gods of the four natural elements." Saturday evening, August 26, he conducted a Beethoven-Wagner-Chávez (*Sinfonia Romántica*) concert. The 1972 festival closed Sunday evening August 27 at 6:00 p.m. with the world premiere of *Prometheus, cantata for chorus, soprano solo, and orchestra* (Oakland Symphony Chamber Chorus, Joseph Liebling, conductor). Chávez began *Prometheus* in 1956. The English text is a condensation from R.C. Trevelyan's translation of Aeschylus. Apart from Io (sung by Marian Marsh), the solo singers in the cantata are Hermes, Power, and Hephaistos. Chávez closed his program notes with this statement: "My music is simple, melodic, lyrical, and, obviously, is nothing but the musical image of the feelings awakened in me by the Aeschylus Prometheus, the forethinker, the 'kind god' who 'champions mankind,' who protects the feeble, and who, heroically, rebels against tyranny and injustice."

The 48-page Program Booklets for both eighth and tenth Cabrillo Music Festivals carrying him into the meagerly documented last stages of his career belong in any Chávez bibliography.

²¹Walter Arlen reviewing this concert in the *Los Angeles Times* of May 15, 1975 (iv:16) qualified Chávez's other duties on campus as "a graduate seminar in 20th-century music, a public lecture, and the dedication of the new Graduate Student Century Monday" (May 13). Chávez's *Symphony No. 6* commissioned by the New York Philharmonic for its opening season at Lincoln Center had not been played in Los Angeles. Arlen asked for "an overdue performance of the entire symphony." In contrast with New York premiere reviews, Arlen enthusiastically cheered the symphony finale, a passacaglia.

²²"I Bl. N of 1st on Main—Room 350—Park (Manchester Turn off; W. to Loyola)."