

ANTONIO J. MOLINA BEYOND AFFINITY

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Abstract

Antonio J. Molina is one of the most respected musicians and composers that this country has ever produced. His exposure to music at an early age laid the foundation for his career as a musician, composer, conductor and music educator, musicologist and writer. He not only mastered playing the violoncello but learned to play various Western and indigenous instruments as well. He was a prolific composer who was not afraid to experiment with new ideas and step out of the traditional to produce some of the most innovative works of his time. He was one of the first composers to combine ethnic/native instruments with Western instruments in his works and infuse Eastern modality with Western harmony. As a pioneer whose musical ideas set a trend for other composers to follow; he completed “the triumvirate of Filipino composers”, together with Nicanor Abelardo and Francisco Santiago, and led the first nationalistic movement in Philippine music (Martinez 343).

The Maestro’s early and wide exposure to various forms of performance media found him composing not only for violoncello, but also for orchestra, chamber, piano, violin, voice, theatre and choir. He was equally passionate about conducting, whether it be for orchestra, for choirs, or for operas. He was a generous composer, sometimes indulging the request of an organization or school with a song for hardly any