

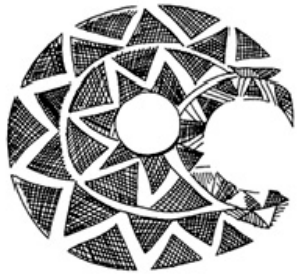


PICHIMUCHINA



*Nazca bird iconography*

*After the Great Fire destroyed the world, and before flying very far, the small bird Icanchu roamed the destroyed earth looking for the First Place. The place was unrecognizable but Icanchu's index finger found the spot. There he dug up the remains of the burn tree and beat it like a drum. Playing it with out ceasing, he sang to the sound of the dark drum and danced to its rhythms. When the new day dawned, a green shoot was born from the charred drum and then flowered as the First Tree, the Tree of Roads in the Center of the World. From its branches bloomed the forms of life that exist in the New World. (Mataco Mythology, Chaco, South America)*



*Mapuche culture iconography*

## HISTORY

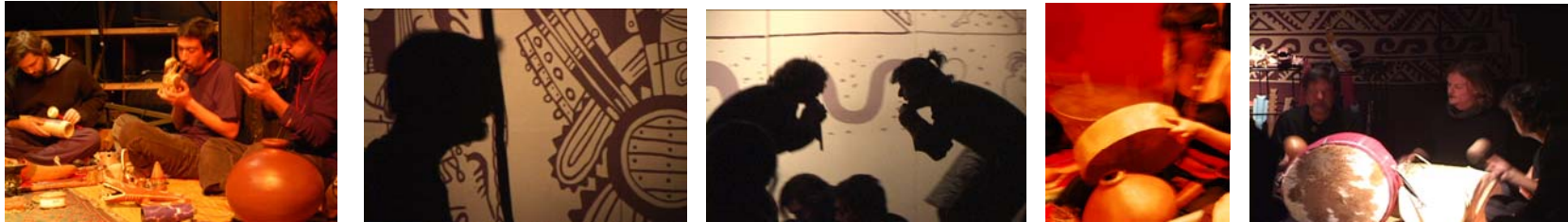
The origin of Pichimuchina is related to an academic research that José Pérez de Arce and Claudio Mercado have been developing in the last two decades on the subject of beliefs and aesthetic concepts linked to pre-Hispanic and ethnographic music. This adventure through this knowledge includes ethno-musicological and archaeo-organological research from different cultures of South America.

Parallel to their research work, these two musicians set out on a lengthy process of experimentation with hearing and sound, based on field work observations and various conceptualizations of music and its surrounding world. The search had been focused on vocal techniques and interpretations with a wide range of ethnographical musical instruments and archaeological replicas.

Chimuchina came to life in 1993. Since then, it has had different generations of musicians. Nowadays its initial conformation has changed, that's why the word "pichi" has been added to its name. "Pichi" means "little" in Mapuche language (Native indigenous of the south of Chile). Its present conformation is composed by eight musicians, in this occasion for this symposium we propose the participation of four of their integrants: Claudio Mercado and José Pérez de Arce (Principal researchers and directors) Christian Pino and Francisca Gili. (Representing the new generation of musicians.)

The new generations of "chimuchines" are young people that felt attracted to these topics through the workshops and publications of its directors. In their development they have experienced participation in ethnographical traditions and also have shared experiences of music improvisation in the "chimuchina" way of performing. All these experiences generated the re-foundation of Chimuchina in its new shape in the year 2007.

## CONCERT CONCEPT



The central concept behind Pichimuchina is the employment of music as a means of provoking an altered state of consciousness different to the way of thinking in every-day life. These practices develop a special kind of perception and accomplish a sensitive way to relate with the environment. The world of sound is meticulously explored, producing sound masses of great intensity and sounds on the borderline of human auditory perception by using polyphonies, musical complementarily, alternated melodies, simple and minimalist rhythms, all of which are musical and aesthetic concepts inherent to pre-Colombian and ethnographic music of America. Pichimuchina bases its compositions -of a contemporary and experimental nature- on aesthetic concepts of indigenous American music. Ethnographic and archaeological instruments, and others of its own creation are used for interpreting these compositions. The originality of its musical language and the quality of its performances transform each of Pichimuchina's concerts into a surprising and fascinating experience in which the audience is alternately moved, disconcerted and marveled, surrendering irresistibly to the succession of sensations produced by the sounds and movements of the musicians, complemented with projections of images designed with the inspiration on indigenous iconography.



*Pictures taken in different concerts of Pichimuchina.*

## WORKSHOP

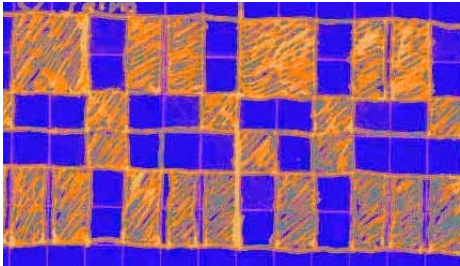
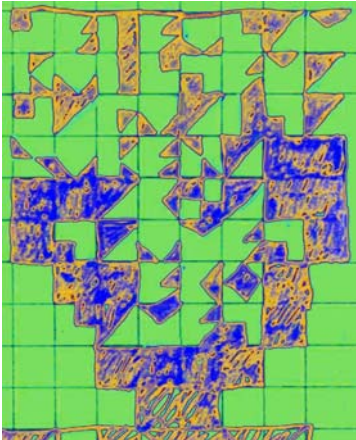
The main idea of the workshops of la Pichimuchina is to transmit the concepts that had been researched by its directors. In order to make their concerts they have developed original systems of scores based in archeological and ethnographic iconography. The idea is to get people involved in this dynamics and in the experience reached by this reinterpretation of this music. This issue is complemented with recompilation of traditional dynamics of music teaching inside indigenous communities.

The plan for the workshop is to integrate the people in this performing dynamic. First some concepts of this music are going to be explained and practice. Afterwards, a free experimentation of improvisation is going to be developed with the members of the group and with the participants of the workshop.



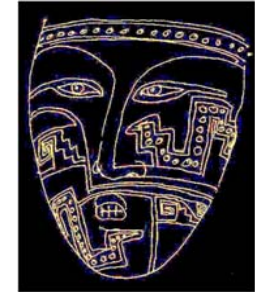
*Pictures taken during the "6th Symposium of the International Study Group on Music Archaeology".*

SOME SCORES



## CONCERTS:

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TAPE. 1993. Sala Fundación Andes. Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art. Ethnographic instruments from all over America, and meso-American archaeological replicas are used, and the fundamental concepts are the procession and split sound which have been studied in the “chino dances” of central Chile. The concert is a mythical journey carried out by the musicians in a canoe in which they sail across the universe in the midst of seven chemamules (Mapuche funerary sculptures). Millapol Gajardo and Martín Oyarzon were guest musicians.



LA CHIMUCHINA GOES TO CHAVIN. 1994. Sala Fundación Andes. Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art. Alternate playing, great harmonic masses, solos contrasting with families of instruments and a rigid score are used. This concert was born of Claudio Mercado's experience in Chavín de Huantar, the ceremonial and political centre of Chavín, mother culture of the Andes, which developed on the Peruvian sierra from the year 800 BC to the year 0. The staging employs Chavín graphic elements of great expressive wealth on which the later development of Andean graphics was based.

LA CHIMUCHINA. 1995. Sala Fundación Andes. Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art. Ethnographic instruments of South America are used. The concert is based on improvisations that have no predefined musical or scenographic structure. Staging is minimum and consists in a single candle in the middle of the room.

LA CHIMUCHINA. 1996. Main hall of the Museum of Contemporary Art. Instruments originating in the southern Andes (South of Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina), complementary aleatory music, split sound and great cross and independent harmonic and rhythmic masses, all of which are musical concepts inherent to the geographic area mentioned previously, are employed. The structure of this work allows for a high degree of improvisation carried out with intentions that are more than just musical. The graphic art which is employed is based on that of the peoples who lived -and live- in the Norte Chico (lower North), Central Chile and the Mapuche territories. The Scene design is Amercanda's and is built around an enormous structure of eucalyptus, cane and wire which is itself an instrument.

SACRED MUSIC AND DANCES OF TIBET.1996. Las Condes Cultural Institute. In August of this year, La Chimuchina was invited to participate in Sacred music and dances of Tibet performed at the Las Condes Cultural Institute by the Tibetan monks of the Gaden Shartse Monastery.

AUSTERLITZ. UTRECH. NETHERLANDS 1996. In September, La Chimuchina was invited by the Dutch group Flairck to give a concert at the Beauforthius chapel in Austerlitz, Netherlands.

FLANDERS FESTIVAL, BELGIUM. 1996 In September, La Chimuchina was invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile to participate in the Flanders Festival, Belgium.

LA LIGUACHI 1997. In November are invited by Museo de La Ligua to make a concert named Liguachi.

LA CHIMUCHINA EN LA NIEBLA 1997. In December are invited by the Universidad Austral de Valdivia giving a concert in the old fortress of Niebla at night, between canyons, fires and the Pacific ocean.

MUSICA SIN TON NI SON 1998. In December is given a concert based on improvised chimuchinesco introspections in the Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino, Santiago.

SONCHAPU 1999. On December is given a celebration concert for the birth of the CD Sonchapu at the Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino, Santiago.

ANIMALUMANO 2000. La Chimuchina gives a workshop to the Isabel Croxatto dance group to form the soundscape of the presentation Animalumano.

VALPARAISO 2001. On new year night, after the fireworks, La Chimuchina goes trough Valparaiso making a procession-concert by the narrow streets of the hills.



LA CHIMUCHINA GOES TO CHAN CHAN. 2005. Concert based in the experience of the directors of the Group in Chanchan, a city of the Moche Culture. This concert was developed with replicas of antique prehispanic instruments, accompanied with projections of pictures that showed the place.

MUSEO PRECOLOMBINO 2007. The first concert made by the new generation of "Chimuchina", developed in the museum planned by Marcos Perez de Arce and his idea of the need of a new generation of pichimuchines.

EARTHDANCE 2007. Presentation of la Pichimuchina in Earthdance festival, one weekend festival made in the countryside of Chile.

PICHIMUCHIMOCHÉ 2008. Presentation of la Pichimuchina in "Museo Precolombino" Based in Mochica iconography and the interpretation of it means. It was developed in an exhibition room with giant representations of these motives in wall paintings, with special planning of movement lights and dynamics spots for music interpretation.

LA CHIMUCHINA VA A BERLIN 2008. Presentation of José Pérez de Arce, Claudio Mercado and Francisca Gili in the Ethnological Museum of Berlin in the frame of the "6th Symposium of the International Study Group on Music Archaeology".

PICHIPARAKAS 2009. Presentation of la Pichimuchina with the Chilean performer Cecilia Vicuña. This presentation was developed with the projection of a stop motion movie made by Cecilia based in the iconography of an ancient textile of the Parakas Culture.

PICHIMUCHANGO MAREA ROJA 2009. Presentation of la Pichimuchina in "Museo Precolombino" where the music is inspired by the "Changos" cultures of fisherman that used to live in the north coast of Chile.

Contact: José Pérez de Arce      [jperezdearcea@gmail.com](mailto:jperezdearcea@gmail.com)  
                 Claudio Mercado      [cmercado@museoprecolombino.cl](mailto:cmercado@museoprecolombino.cl)

---