



Editor's Note

WALTER AARON CLARK
University of California, Riverside

Central America only surfaces in the news in connection with the many problems that beset the region, including political corruption, gang violence, poverty, and emigration. This creates a distorted view of its culture, especially in regard to music. Early in my career as a Latin Americanist, it became clear to me that there was a rich heritage of music in Central America, stretching from the modern era back through the colonial period to the epoch before the Conquest. Thus, I was always surprised and disappointed to discover that relatively little attention had been paid to this legacy by music scholars. Fortunately, that situation is now improving, and the current special issue of *Diagonal: An Ibero-American Music Review* is evidence of that.

This first-ever special issue of *Diagonal* was the inspiration of Dr. Bernard Gordillo, a leading authority on the music of Nicaragua who wrote a brilliant dissertation on that subject at the University of California, Riverside, under the expert guidance of Dr. Leonora Saavedra. Now a postdoctoral fellow at Yale, he continues his groundbreaking research on music, religion, and politics in Central America. He is the guest editor of this issue and fully responsible for pulling it together. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to him for having succeeded in assembling a remarkably diverse collection of outstanding articles by leading scholars. This is clearly a subject whose time has come, overdue though that arrival may be.