



### Program 033 Notes

**Alexandre Levy (BRA, 1890): *Suite brésilienne, IV, “Samba.”*** This movement is considered as the first decisive step towards musical nationalism in Brazil, and became during the early 20th century one of the most acclaimed pieces of the symphonic repertoire in that country. However, for his *samba*, which around that time was developing in rural areas along the Tietê River, the composer actually drew on two traditional tunes that were well-known at that time in São Paulo.

- São Paulo Symphony Orchestra / Roberto Minczuk. “Danças brasileiras,” BIS.

**Carlos Gomes (BRA, 1894): *Sonata para cordas, IV, “Rocking Horse.”*** Although we recognize Gomes for his successes in opera, the fact is that he also left a sizeable body of orchestral works and chamber music. One important example is his sonata for strings, which became known as “The Rocking Horse,” named after a favorite toy in Brazilian nurseries. In the final movement, which gives the work this name, the violins are heard in a rhythmic trotting motion.

- Solistas de Londrina. “Brazilian Images,” VMS.

**Heitor Villa-Lobos (BRA, 1940): *Mandu Çarará.*** In this work, Villa-Lobos establishes a contrast between the style of a sullen adult choir, which represents the Curupira, a mythological creature of Brazilian folklore, and the lightness of a frisky children’s choir, which sings a Nheengatu text—the language of some 3000 people that live in northwestern Brazil—that has a strongly onomatopoeic character. Frank Coleman described the work as “startling,” and that it “impresses by its boldness and vigor,” after it was performed at Tanglewood in 1949. In addition, in his review he provided a useful description that will help guide us through this work: “The chorus sings to syllables imitating Brazilian tongues, and even bark on occasion. The only word they pronounce is the dancer’s name, Mandu-çarará, intoned like a chant as the final triumphal dance begins.”

- Orquesta Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo / Isaac Karabtchevsky. “Heitor Villa-Lobos,” Naxos.

**Antônio Francisco Braga (BRA, 1898): *Jupyra, Act 1, Scene 1.*** Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1868, Braga studied at the Paris Conservatory, and later spent time in Germany and Italy. Composed in 1898, his opera *Jupyra* was premiered in Rio de Janeiro on October 7, 1900. Writing the next day in a local paper, Alfredo Angelo said, “there will be no date more memorable for national art than this one, on which Francisco Braga surprised and enraptured an entire auditorium, by yesterday presenting us his first opera, *Jupyra*, in two acts.”

- Orquesta de São Paulo / John Neschling. “Francisco Braga : Jupyra,” BIS.

**\*Henrique Oswald (BRA, 1901): *Ofelia, III, “Il genio della foresta.”*** Many 19th century composers, as well as many contemporaneous poets, found inspiration in Shakespeare’s character, Ophelia, who in *Hamlet* is marked by a tragic destiny and unrequited love. This five-song setting can be considered the most representative of Oswaldian production in the genre of song, both with regard to formal construction, as well as the confluence between accompaniment, melodic line and poetic text.

- Joyce de Souza, voice; Felipe Balieiro, piano. “None,” None.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1904): *Improviso, op. 27 no. 2.***

- Maria Ines Guimaraes, piano. “Nepomuceno : Piano Works,” Marco Polo.

**Oscar Lorenzo Fernández (BRA, 1930): *Reisado do Pastoreio, III, “Batuque.”*** In addition to his compositions, Fernández contributed to musical folklorism in Brazil as a conductor not only of his own works, but particularly those of Villa-Lobos. The syncopation of rural origin that is featured in this movement dates

back to Catholic popular festivals, especially Portuguese ones, that became mixed with religious traditions of African origin.

- Boston Pops Orchestra / Keith Lockhart. “The Latin Album,” BMG.

**\*Edson Beltrami (BRA, 2013): Fantasy No. 1.** This straightforward piece for sax quartet is built around two motives, the first of which reveals itself, through tonal and timbral resources, as having a slow but experimental character; the second, marked “giocoso,” is based on traditional Brazilian music, especially what the composer describes as cheap circus music.

- Quarteto de Saxofones SaxBrasil. “None,” None.

**Ronaldo Miranda (BRA, 1991): Variações sérias sobre um tema de Anacleto de Medeiros.** A graduate of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, in 1974 Miranda became the chief music critic for the *Jornal do Brasil*. Three years later, while still employed as a critic, he won a first prize in the chamber music category in a prestigious music competition. His variations, which are considered to be among some of his finest works, are based on a famous theme by Anacleto de Medeiros, who was one of the great leaders of Rio’s marching orchestras during the beginning of the 20th century.

- Kammerensemble Modern der Deutschen Oper Berlin. “Klang der Welt : Brasilien,” NCA.

**Heitor Villa-Lobos (BRA, 1953): Alvorada na Floresta.** Villa-Lobos himself provided the liner notes from the original 1954 recording of this piece. In these, he says, that this work “is written based in the same musical form used in Beethoven’s overtures, but with less thematic and developmental material. The themes of this work are original and they are treated in the scales of certain Brazilian indians.”

- Jena Philharmonic Orchestra / David Montgomery. “Orchestral Works,” Arte Nova.

**\*Fernando Oliveira (BRA, 2014): Gorjeios.** This work was written while the composer was in residence in Chile. Based on sound material recorded both in Chile and in Brazil, which later was used as a source of inspiration for thematic design and a process that can be called “non-literal transcription,” the musical idea is to evoke various scenes with a dynamic motion that relates to the patterns of speech. It was premiered that same year in Chile by the Aulos Flute Quartet.

- Cuarteto de Flautas Aulos. “None,” None.

**Mozart Camargo Guarnieri (BRA, 1931): Three Dances for Orchestra, II, “Dança selvagem.”** Yes, his real first name is Mozart. But finding it too pretentious, he inserted his mother’s maiden and began signing his name as M. Camargo Guarnieri. He wrote a large amount of music, including symphonies, concertos, cantatas, two opera, chamber music, many piano pieces and over fifty songs.

- Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra / Maximiliano Valdés. “Caramelos Latinos,” Naxos.

**Marlos Nobre (BRA, 2004): Kabbalah.** Nobre studied composition with H. J. Koellreutter and Camargo Guarnieri. Later, he pursued advanced studies at the Di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires alongside a number of internationally famous composers. In 1969, he went to study electronic music at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in New York. Although *Kabbalah* is inspired by the religious text of that same name, Nobre uses, almost literally, a song from the Xingu Indians for the first rhythmic section of the work.

- São Paulo Symphony Orchestra / Marin Alsop. “None,” None.

**\*Alexandre Travassos (BRA, 2013): Rapsodia Sefaradi.** In this work, the composer pays homage to the people and culture of the Sephardic Jews of Belém, Brazil (from whom he descends) through the use of four folkloric songs in the free form of a rhapsody. Although originally intended for the Americas Festival band, the work was actually premiered by the Symphonic Band of the State of São Paulo, which was conducted by Marcos Sadao. The North American premiere was performed by the Hope College Wind Ensemble on March 14, 2018, in Holland, Michigan.

- Symphonic Band of the State of São Paulo / Marcos Sadao. “None,” None.