



**Cayambis Institute for Latin American Studies in Music**  
**Latin American Classical Notes — Hosted by John L. Walker**  
**Program 042, April 24, 2022**

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1891): *Série brasileira, II. “Intermédio.”*** This composer’s extensive production reveals a great deal of eclecticism. In 1897, he presented a concert in Rio de Janeiro of some of his most recent symphonic works at that time, including the *Série brasileira*, which like Alexandre Levy’s *Suite Brésilienne* (1890), in that it became a standard in the repertoire of Brazilian concert music. In four movements, we’ll be listening to the second, and later, the fourth.

• Minas Gerais Philharmonic Orchestra / Fabio Mechetti. “Alberto Nepomuceno,” Naxos.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1895): *Au jardin des rêves.*** Rawlianne Riggs writes that Nepomuceno’s most prolific period as a songwriter was while he was in Paris during the mid 1890s. During this time, he composed 14 songs, including *Ora, dize-me a verdade* in 1894, and in 1895, *Au jardin des rêves*, with its text by Henri Piazza. She goes on to say that his songs in French reveal how comfortable the Brazilian composer was with the language of the French *mélodie*.

• Guilherme Goldberg, Alberto José Vieira Pacheco. “Canções,” Tratore.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1894): *Ora, dize-me a verdade.*** Composed in 1894, this is one of the first settings of Portuguese to music. Its text is by João de Deus. When it was first sung in Brazil, it provoked a controversy led by people who believed Italian to be the only suitable language for art song.

• André Vidal, tenor / Gisele Pires Mota, piano. “Luz e névoa,” CD Baby.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1904): *O Garatuja.*** One of Nepomuceno’s finest works of national character, this prelude is the only completed portion of a planned lyric comedy based on a 19th century novel by Brazilian lawyer and dramatist José de Alencar. (Who is the same author of text for Gomes’ *Il Guarany*). Its theme is that of a Brazilian *lundu*, which is a dance of African origin that was introduced to Brazil during the colonial period.

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

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1904): *Improviso, op. 27 no. 2.*** Written in 1904, *Improviso* was first performed by the composer in 1905 at the Club dos Diários in Rio. In style it suggests the influence of Schumann, a composer he much admired.

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

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1893): *Sinfonia em sol menor, I, Allegro com entusiasmo.*** After a number of years studying in Europe, in 1895 Nepomuceno returned to Brazil, where he began to organize what he called “popular concerts” on which a number of his works were performed. Although the author of a slim biography on Nepomuceno claims that this symphony was premiered as part of a concert that was organized on July 19, 1896, to commemorate the recent death of Carlos Antônio Gomes, this claim remains uncorroborated.

• Orquestra Sinfônica Municipal de Campinas / Benito Juárez. “None,” None.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1893): *Súite antiga, II, Aria.*** Nepomuceno’s *Súite antiga* was written in 1893 and published at the insistence of Edvard Grieg by his own publishers. The four movements of the suite, neo-classical in form, are perfect examples of the genre.

• Capella Bydgosciensis / José Maria Florêncio. “Classical Music from Brazil,” Dux.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1891), *String Quartet no. 3, “Brasileiro,” IV, Allegretto.*** Perhaps influenced by the nationalistic implications of the work’s subtitle, musicologist Gerard Béhague seems to find the designation rather incongruous, observing that the quartet reveals “only light nationalistic characteristics.”

Norton Dudeque, on the other hand, argues that Nepomuceno was strongly influenced by Beethoven and Brahms, and in support of this assertion cites numerous sections from the work's first movement that illustrate its relationship to a classically styled sonata form.

- Quarteto Carlos Gomes. "Alberto Nepomuceno," Selo Sesc.

**Alberto Nepomuceno (BRA, 1888): *Série brasileira, IV. "Batuque."*** This final movement of this Brazilian series, with its dark color and seriously snarling beats at the beginning that turn, little by little, into the sounds and rhythms of a double time movement, managed to become the most popular of the four.

- Minas Gerais Philharmonic Orchestra / Fabio Mechetti. "Alberto Nepomuceno," Naxos.

**José Serebrier (URU, 1955): *Pequeña música (complete)*.** This is one of Serebrier's most successful compositions, having been performed by wind groups around the world, including the New York Woodwind Quintet. Using a quite simple form, the young composer was already showing clear stylistic patterns. It has a somber lyrical line and a boyish humor where melodies abound.

- Australian Wind Virtuosi. "Music of José Serebrier," Phoenix.

**José Serebrier (URU, 1957): *Piano Sonata, I, Allegro molto vivace*.** Serebrier composed this piece while still a student at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. Although conceived in the classic three-movement form, the composer says that this sonata is anything but traditional.

- Nadya Shpachenko, piano. "Last Tango Before Sunrise," Reference.

**José Serebrier (URU, 1968): *Erótica*.** The title of this piece was suggested to the composer by some musician friends after hearing the work being performed. It's also intended to reflect the sensual, rather than sexual, nature of the composition. Although this was Serebrier's first serial composition, this aspect of the work is incidental to the other more experimental techniques found in this piece, such as asynchronous overlapping rhythms and contemporary wind techniques. The vocal line uses not text; rather, the vocalist is free to use whatever syllable suits her fancy.

- Carole Farley / Australian Wind Virtuosi. "The Music of José Serebrier," Phoenix.

**José Serebrier (URU, 1955): *Saxophone Quartet, II, "Dance."*** As a young composer, Serebrier was greatly enamored by the flexibility and sound of the saxophone, and wrote what is generally considered to be one of the best works written for the instrument.

- Australian Saxophone Quartet. "The Music of José Serebrier," Phoenix.

**José Serebrier (URU, 1965): *Seis por televisión*.** This music was inspired by the composer's association as music director for the 1965 production of several Shakespeare plays by the American Shakespeare Festival Theater in Stratford, Connecticut. This work was premiered by the Dorian Wind Quintet on March 23, 1975 at the Palacio de Minería in Mexico City. The composition's musical language is very appealing and accessible. Certain sections are highly reminiscent of other familiar compositions, such as the middle section of *Sunaloiroc* (*Coriolanus* backwards), which sounds strikingly familiar to the *Rite of Spring*.

- Australian Wind Virtuosi. "The Music of José Serebrier," Phoenix.

**José Serebrier (URU, 1960): *Fantasia for Strings*.** This work was originally composed as a string quartet on commission for the Harvard Musical Association, which included a premiere by members of the Boston Symphony. Declared a "veritable 1812 of string quartets," this appraisal must have inspired an editor at Peermusic, Serebrier's publisher, to suggest that a version be created for string orchestra. In describing the work, Serebrier says that there is a recurrent solo, sort of a devil's trill, which is purposely out of place.

- London Philharmonic Orchestra / J. Serebrier. "José Serebrier," Naxos.