2013

RECONSIDERING BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIONS IN CHOROS No. 5 AND BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS No.4 FOR PIANO BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

Paula Maria Lima Galama
University of Kentucky, paula.galama@gmail.com

Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation
Galama, Paula Maria Lima, "RECONSIDERING BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIONS IN CHOROS No. 5 AND BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS No.4 FOR PIANO BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS" (2013). Theses and Dissertations--Music. 16.
https://uknowledge.uky.edu/music_etds/16

This Doctoral Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Music at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations--Music by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.
STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained and attached hereto needed written permission statements(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine).

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless a preapproved embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student’s advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student’s dissertation including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

Paula Maria Lima Galama, Student

Dr. Irina Voro, Major Professor

Dr. Lance Brunner, Director of Graduate Studies
RECONSIDERING BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIONS IN
CHOROS No. 5 AND BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS No.4 FOR PIANO
BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS PROJECT

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor in Musical Arts in the
College of Fine Arts ~ University of Kentucky School of Music.

By
Paula Maria Lima Galama

Lexington, Kentucky

Co-Directors: Dr. Irina Voro, Professor of Piano
and Dr. Diana Hallman, Professor of Musicology

Lexington, Kentucky

2013

Copyright © Paula Maria Lima Galama 2013
ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

RECONSIDERING BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIONS IN
CHOROS No. 5 AND BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS No.4 FOR PIANO
BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

This study offers a reconsideration of the music of Villa-Lobos and its relationship to diverse musical expressions and musical syntheses in Brazil. Its primary purpose is to present a line of interpretative thought for Heitor Villa-Lobos’s piano compositions, emphasizing significant elements reflective of the folk and popular culture of Brazil that the composer integrates with stylistic features influenced by European art music traditions. It highlights Villa-Lobos’s adaptation of characteristic Brazilian dances, dance rhythms, melodies, direct quotations, and fragments of folk and popular tunes in Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira) and Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4 (Brazilian Bachianas no. 4). In the latter work, this study also considers the composer’s blend of Brazilian-based material with elements inspired by the work of Johann Sebastian Bach.

In addition to stylistic analyses, an examination of the composer’s influences, intentions, and methods is fundamental to this study. This exploration offers insights into Villa-Lobos’s piano music and clarifies possible misinterpretations generated by lack of information about the composer’s musical contexts and his desires to represent Brazilian culture in his music. This discussion is intended to provide a basis for performing or interpretive solutions to the musical (including rhythmic and technical) complexities created by the use of folk and popular ideas in this repertoire.

Divided into four chapters, this document begins with a brief overview of Villa-Lobos’s life and overall works in the first chapter. The second chapter contains a brief overview of the entire set of Choros with a focused examination of Choros no. 5. The third chapter discusses Villa-Lobos’s mixture of neoclassical and Brazilian elements within the set Bachianas Brasileiras, specifically no. 4, for piano. Descriptions and interpretations of the selected works are offered in the second and third chapters. The fourth chapter presents the conclusion of this research.
KEYWORDS: Brazilian Music, Villa-Lobos, Pianistic Interpretation, Alma Brasileira, Bachianas Brasileiras.

Paula Maria Lima Galama

Student’s signature

April 4, 2013

Date

Copyright © Paula Maria Lima Galama 2013
RECONSIDERING BRAZILIAN REPRESENTATIONS IN
CHOROS No. 5 AND BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS No.4 FOR PIANO
BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

By
Paula Maria Lima Galama

Dr. Irina Vorobieva
Co-Director of Dissertation

Dr. Diana Hallman
Co-Director of Dissertation

Dr. Lance Brunner
Director of Graduate Studies

April 4, 2013
Date

Copyright@Paula Maria Lima Galama 2013
To God, for He is my strength,
To my mother, for she is my inspiration,
To my family, for they are my pillars.
To Peter, for he is my light.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my many friends who made this endeavor possible: Tamara Bustamante, who kept her faith in me and helped finalized this research; my friends in Brazil, especially Antônio Cardoso, Helder Trefzger, and Gina Denise Barreto Soares, who were very instrumental in helping me moving forward. I also would like to thank Dr. Roger Flint for his encouragement.

I am truly grateful to my committee director, Dr. Irina Voro, for deeply transforming my view of piano interpretation and my relationship not only with the instrument, but also with music in general. I wish to extend my gratitude to the other members of my committee, especially Dr. Diana Hallman for her effort during the final process. My many thanks to Dr. Schuyler Robinson, who has been an inspiration to my learning, and Dr. Kevin Holm-Hudson and Dr. Erik Myrup, who were always willing to help and answer my questions. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Alice Christ for her willingness to be part of this committee.

Last but not least, it is more than a necessity for me to express my eternal gratitude to my husband Peter, to my family, and to my friends who helped me carry this challenge to the end. They truly have been the light on my path towards my goal.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ iii
Table of Contents ........................................................................................................... iv
List of Tables .................................................................................................................. vi
List Figures .................................................................................................................... vii

Part One - Reconsidering Brazilian Representation in *Choros No. 5* and *Bachianas Brasileiras No.4* for Piano by Heitor Villa-Lobos ..............................................................

Chapter One: Introduction ........................................................................................... 1
Chapter Two: Villa-Lobos’ Life and Work – a Brief Overview ........................................ 14
  The Early Years ............................................................................................................. 15
  His Youth and Journeys .............................................................................................. 16
  Villa-Lobos, the Composer ......................................................................................... 21
  1920-1930 – *Choros* ............................................................................................... 22
  1930-1945 – The Educator and the *Bachianas Brasileiras* ....................................... 25
  The Last Years ............................................................................................................ 29
  Periods of Composition ............................................................................................... 29

Chapter Three: *Choros no. 5- Alma Brasileira* (Brazilian Soul) ................................. 31

  *Choros*: An Introduction .......................................................................................... 31

  *Choros no. 5 – Alma Brasileira* (Brazilian Soul) - Interpretive Aspects .................. 38

  Rhythm, Harmony, and Melody .................................................................................. 40

Chapter Four: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* (Brazilian Bachianas no. 4) ............... 55

  *Bachianas*: Introduction ......................................................................................... 55

  *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* for piano ................................................................. 60

    I – *Prelúdio* (Introdução – Introduction)
      Thematic Material – “The Musical Offering of Villa-Lobos.” .............................. 60

    II – *Coral* (Canto do Sertão)
      Imagination .......................................................................................................... 71

    III – *Ária* (Cantiga)
      Brazilian Allusions: A Borrowed Tune and Related Images ............................. 79

    IV – *Dança* (Miudinho)
      Mood ...................................................................................................................... 89
Chapter Five: Conclusion......................................................................................... 100

Part Two – Program notes

  Program I – Solo Piano Recital........................................................................... 103
  Program II – Chamber Music Recital................................................................. 107
  Program III – Solo Piano Recital....................................................................... 110
  Program IV – Lecture-Recital............................................................................ 114

Bibliography........................................................................................................... 115

Bibliography for Program Notes........................................................................... 121

Vita.......................................................................................................................... 122
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Main features of *choro* style ........................................... 33
Table 2. *Choros*: explanatory chart ........................................... 35
Table 3 *Bachianas Brasileiras*: explanatory chart .......................... 58
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Theme of Choros no. 3. “Nozani-ná Orekuá.” ........................................ 35
Figure 2. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira) mm.1-3.......................... 41
Figure 3. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira) mm. 1-9.
Polyrhythmic, with layered syncopation............................................... 42
Figure 4. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira) mm. 13-17.............. 43
Figure 5. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira) mm. 23-24.............. 44
Figure 6. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira) mm. 26-27.............. 45
Figure 7. Villa-Lobos: Ciclo Brasileiro no. 3, Festa no Sertão,
mm. 131-134.......................................................................................... 45
Figure 8. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 30............... 46
Figure 9. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 34-35.......... 46
Figure 10. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 34-39......... 47
Figure 11. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 1-3............ 48
Figure 12. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 4-9............ 50
Figure 13. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 25-28......... 51
Figure 14. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 29-30......... 52
Figure 15. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 37-39......... 53
Figure 16. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 46-51......... 54
Figure 17. J.S. Bach: Thema Regium, from the Musical Offering .......... 61
Figure 18. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 1 ................................................................. 62
Figure 19. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 1-4............................................................... 62
Figure 20. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 1-17............................................................. 64
Figure 21. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 1-4............................................................... 65
Figure 22. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 13-14 .......................................................... 67
Figure 23. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 22-24........................................................... 68
Figure 24. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, Prelúdio
(Introdução), mm. 22-27........................................................... 69
Figure 25. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. I, mm. 37-41....... 70
Figure 26. Cândido Portinari – Enterro na Rede (Burial in the Hammock)
[1944]. Série “Os Retirantes” - Collection of the Assis Chateaubriand
Art Museum of São Paulo, Brazil.................................................. 73
Figure 27. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. II, Coral (Canto do
sertão), mm. 1-12........................................................................ 74
Figure 28. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt II, Coral (Canto do
sertão) mm. 47-61....................................................................... 75
Figure 29. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. II, Coral (Canto do
sertão), mm. 23-34....................................................................... 76
Figure 30. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. II, Coral (Canto do sertão), mm. 47-81................................................................. 77

Figure 31. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. II, Coral (Canto do sertão), mm. 71-79................................................................. 78

Figure 32. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. III, Ária (Cantiga), mm. 1-24.......................................................................... 81

Figure 33. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. III, Ária (Cantiga), mm. 31-40................................................................. 82

Figure 34. Cândido Portinari, Retirantes (Retirantes) [1944]. Série “Os Retirantes” - Collection of the Assis Chateaubriand Art Museum of São Paulo, Brazil ................................................................. 84

Figure 35. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. III, Ária (Cantiga), mm. 44-49................................................................. 85

Figure 36. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. III, Ária (Cantiga), mm. 69-80................................................................. 86

Figure 37. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras, no. 4*, mvt. III, Ária (Cantiga) mm. 117-122................................................................. 87

Figure 38. Villa-Lobos, *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*. Last four measures........... 88

Figure 39. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 10-24................................................................. 91

Figure 40. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras nº4*, mvt IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 29-36..................................................................... 92

Figure 41. Villa-Lobos, *Bachinhas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 49-55................................................................. 93

Figure 42. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 86-97................................................................. 94

Figure 43. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 126-133................................................................. 94

Figure 44. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 1-2 ................................................................. 95

Figure 45. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho). ................................................................. 96

Figure 46. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 1-4, orchestral score................................. 97

Figure 47. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 1-9................................................................. 97
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The music of Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) offers a fascinating perspective on Brazilian culture, a rich composite of traditions resulting from over 500 years of interactions among Portuguese, African, and indigenous populations. In its reflection of diverse influences, Villa-Lobos’s music embodies a broad genealogy and a wealth of culturally embedded sources and meanings. Villa-Lobos, since his earliest compositions, stands as the most important nationalistic composer in Brazil, and still is considered as such. Even in comparison with his nationalistic predecessors Alexandre Levy (1864-1892) and Alberto Nepomuceno (1864-1920), for instance, and with his successors Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993), and Cláudio Santoro (1919-1989), he still maintains his position of being the most relevant composer of Brazil. He developed a natural empathy with the culture of his country and deep affinities with his people and became increasingly interested in cultivating these affinities within music.

Among the most captivating traits of his music is the unique blending of Brazilian folk and popular material with elements of the European classical tradition. Villa-Lobos, as other nationalist composers, used the folk tunes, modes, rhythms, timbres, and instruments that fascinated him throughout his lifetime. Through the imaginative combination of these elements Villa-Lobos transformed the folk and popular musical heritage of his country within art music, including his work for piano. He also developed musical ideas from urban popular traditions, integrating them with elements of indigenous and rural music along with the styles and techniques of European art music, especially the music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Moreover, Villa-Lobos was strongly influenced by Russian composers, particularly Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), and by Claude Debussy (1862-1918), a composer he heard for the first time in 1911. As a member of a theater orchestra, he had the opportunity to play operas of Wagner (1813-1883) and Italian composers, especially Puccini (1858-1924). The influence of Edgar Varèse (1883-1965) can also be perceived later in his works.

Villa-Lobos was a controversial individual with a mercurial, multi-faceted personality. He could provoke reactions from admiration to retaliation without much
effort. He was often composing in noisy environments, with the radio on, and with children playing around. Nevertheless, he did not seem distracted by such activities, and likely absorbed many sounds from his surroundings. In his compositions, although the sound material is often divided in textural layers, the result is indivisible. His music is permeated by contrasts in intensity, timbres, textures, and mood. These contrasts, which correspond to disparate aspects of Brazilian culture as well as to sharp differences in his own personality, are presented in a range of dichotomies, which are particularly evident in the set of *Bachianas Brasileiras*.

Up until 1922, his piano compositions are very similar to the compositions of most of the contemporary Brazilian composers who remained under the influence of Debussy (1962-1918). In turning to folk and popular idioms, he drew upon his own experiences in the cafés of Rio de Janeiro as he experimented with musical elements representative of Brazilian culture. In the decades following 1922, Villa-Lobos’s piano compositions were characterized by this experimentation as well as tendencies towards neoclassicism, and neoromanticism, all in relation to the composer’s attempts to develop a new nationalist aesthetic.

As suggested above, it is not possible to study the works of Villa-Lobos without considering his nationalist views. The nationalism in Villa-Lobos’s music can be understood in relation to the descriptions of ethnomusicologist Gerard Béhague (1937-2005), who has defined “nationalism as a sociocultural and aesthetic movement.”¹ Béhague continues:

> Musical nationalism as an ideology, therefore, can and does take place outside the preconceived notion of a stylistic format. What seems to define it, therefore, is the whole complex of attitudes consciously expressed or not toward specific sets of cultural values, equally perceived by the transmitters and the receptors as possessing qualities of collective and individual identity.²

Villa-Lobos’s thoughts about and use of folk music correspond to Béhague’s views, rather than the strict distinctions between folk music in vernacular (oral traditions) and folk music in written traditions made by Charles Seeger (1886-1979), the American

---

² Ibid. 147.
musicologist. Villa-Lobos intended to give socio-cultural meaning to his music. Attempting to go beyond the integrations of folk music and secular music of his Brazilian nationalist contemporaries, Villa-Lobos wanted to transform folklore in secular music and wanted this folk heritage to be present in daily life and culture. He rejected the use of folk music sources in an exotic way; instead he was looking for a “decolonization” of both art and indigenous music in Brazil. For Villa-Lobos, this implied a leaving behind of the “colonized” label that had prevented sincere, effective integrations of cultural expression, bringing a new sense of discipline and redemption to his people through cultural syntheses in music.

The composer’s thoughts about Brazilian folk music were likely affected by changes within the artistic movement in Brazil during the 1920s. One noteworthy event of this movement was the festival of February 1922 in São Paulo known as The Week of Modern Art of 1922, which attempted to showcase modern Brazilian art. Important ideas about the underpinnings of this art were articulated by Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) in his Manifesto antropofágico (Anthropophagic Movement) of 1928, which questioned whether artists should create modern Brazilian art by returning to native cultures, or by acquiring and assimilating the tools and techniques of other cultures. The latter option was a justification for absorbing foreign artistic and musical experiences to fill the specific cultural needs and aesthetic values of that time. As Renato de Almeida (1895-1981), a Brazilian musicologist and folklorist, pointed out, the most common attempts to use folk material were merely direct quotations of tunes, far from the anthropophagic idea discussed by Oswald de Andrade; de Almeida claimed that it was necessary to express Brazilian reality, not only to reproduce what was popular. Connecting to Andrade’s ideas, Villa-Lobos sought to represent what was truly Brazilian through the transfiguration of varied indigenous and popular materials in his music throughout his life.

---

7 Mariz, Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra, 26.
Villa-Lobos did not incorporate folk or popular elements randomly. Rather, his music is carefully thought out, contrary to the idea of some scholars who considered Villa-Lobos to be a purely intuitive composer. Villa-Lobos was influenced by the cultural life of urban centers of Brazil, the people that he met within these centers (the chorões in Rio de Janeiro, for instance), and the popular and folk images and music he had come across during his trips to the different states in Brazil. He captured and pictured elements of diverse folk heritages in a unique way that made his composition seem more “national” than “exotic.” He drew from the rich rhythmic palette of Brazil, particularly the rhythms of folk music found in Northern regions, and in the state of Amazonas in the Northwest and the Northeastern states of Bahia, Pernambuco, and Ceará. In the Amazonas, the presence of indigenous people makes its folklore truly unique. The musical heritage, in these states, is characterized by the use of different scales such as hexachordal or pentatonic scales. The Mixolydian mode, primarily in its descending form, is also another important feature of the folk music of these regions.

Villa-Lobos often used the piano to begin writing his compositions. Some of his works were first conceived for piano and later orchestrated, such as the *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, although others were originally written for other instruments and then arranged for piano. For instance, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 2*, which is subtitled “The little Train of Caipira,” was transcribed by the composer for piano and cello, and *Choros no. 2* was later transcribed for piano solo. The piano was also the instrument he chose to keep a record of the folk tunes he liked. His *Guia Prático* for piano is literally a written record, or transcriptions, of folk material.

Despite the power and appeal of his compositions for the piano, Villa-Lobos was not a prodigious pianist himself. In 1912 he met the pianist Lucília Guimarães (1886-1966), whom he married in 1913. She helped the composer many times to adjust his ideas in producing a more pianistic approach.

Along with the piano Villa-Lobos liked to favor the guitar to begin working on a composition. The guitar was the instrument he often played with the chorões. From the piano came the idea of superposition of black and white keys as well as bitonalities used in some of his orchestral works. From the guitar came the ideas of adding arpeggios to

---

8 *Chorões* are musicians who play *choro* on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.
strong bass notes or lines, followed by chords into his compositions. Along with piano and guitar, Villa-Lobos could also play clarinet and cello; the cello, in fact, was his main instrument, along with the guitar.

Central to the interpretation of Villa-Lobos’s music is the understanding of distinctive characteristics that can only be found in Brazilian folk and popular music. In the interpretation of his piano works, a convincing performance depends on the pianist’s perception of how he used rhythmic patterns, special (often well-known) melodies, and technical complexities in his compositions. The pianist also needs to consider the problem of subjective interpretation, as he or she searches for the underlined meaning existing in any composition that cannot be transmitted by the musical notation. An accurate execution of the rhythms in the music of Villa-Lobos is especially fundamental to developing convincing interpretations. Rhythm is the musical foundation for the works of most Brazilian composers that use folk and popular tunes, especially considering the variety of rhythmic patterns within Brazilian musical heritage. It is essential to appreciate the rhythmic differences between the patterns of *choro* and *samba, valsa-rancho* and *modinha*, for example. These differences may often be very subtle. However, student and professional pianists alike need to undertake the arduous task of carefully representing all the varied nuances, contrasts, and references in the piano works of Villa-Lobos, as well as understanding their cultural foundations, in order to create effective interpretations.

The primary purpose of this research is to establish a line of interpretative thought for selected piano compositions of Villa-Lobos. A focus on the representative elements of Brazilian culture found in these works will guide the interpretation of the stylistic singularities found in his piano music. Attention will be drawn to Villa-Lobos’s stylization or adaptation of characteristic dances, dance rhythms, melodies, direct quotations and fragments of folk and popular tunes, as well as important aspects of the structure of these selected works.

Two of the largest sets of compositions by Villa-Lobos are good examples of the transfiguration of Brazilian material: *Choros* and *Bachianas Brasileiras*. Of these, *Choros*, is by far the most complex series. The set contains a total of sixteen
compositions, according to the catalogue published by the Villa-Lobos Museum, and comprises all types of ensembles as well as solo instruments. The variety of performing forces is exemplified in his *Choros no. 5 – Alma Brasileira (Brazilian Soul)* for solo piano, and *Choros no. 14* for large orchestra, band, and choirs. The set of *Choros* represents Villa-Lobos’s experience with the *chorões cariocas* and his attempt to create essential Brazilian music. *Chorões* is a term that refers to the performers of *choro*, musicians living in Rio de Janeiro who had migrated from the Northeastern and Northern parts of Brazil. It also designates a typical urban popular style that evolved from peculiar interpretations of nineteenth-century music in Brazil, such as *modinhas* and *lundús*. *Choros no. 5* is the only piece within the set written for piano, although Villa-Lobos used the piano in several of his *Choros*, and even as a solo instrument in *Choros no. 11*, for piano and orchestra. This work is full of Brazilian cultural expression and flavor, calling for extreme sentimentalism in performance.

*Choros* was written entirely before 1930. By this time, Villa-Lobos had already come to know much of the popular and folk music represented in this set through his journeys and life with the *chorões*. The list of the set of sixteen *Choros* as specified in the third edition of the official catalogue published in 1989 by the Villa-Lobos Museum is given below, with dates and places of composition (Rio de Janeiro is abbreviated as “RJ” and São Paulo as “SP”).

- *Choros Bis* (1928, ?)
- *Choros no. 1* (1920, RJ)
- *Choros no. 2* (1924, RJ)
- *Choros no. 3* (1925, SP)
- *Choros no. 4* (1926, RJ)

---

10 *Chorões cariocas* are musicians who performed *choro* specifically in Rio de Janeiro.
12 *Lundú* refers to singing and dancing that was very popular in Brazil during the eighteenth century, probably introduced in the Brazilian culture by slaves coming from Angola. It includes snapping of fingers and the characteristic “umbigadí” (belly-to-belly) movement. Mário de Andrade. *Dicionário Musical Brasileiro*. (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1989).
• Choros no. 5 (1925, ?)
• Choros no. 6 (1926, RJ)
• Choros no. 7 (1924, RJ)
• Choros no. 8 (1925, RJ)
• Choros no. 9 (1929, RJ)
• Choros no. 10 (1926, RJ)\(^{13}\)
• Choros no. 11 (1928, RJ)
• Choros no. 12 (1929, RJ)
• Choros no. 13 (1929, ?)
• Choros no. 14 (1928, ?)
• *Introdução aos Choros* (1929, RJ)\(^{14}\)

In the catalogue, first organized in 1965 by Villa-Lobos’s wife Arminda Neves d’Almeida (1912-1985), *Introdução aos Choros* is listed as the last piece, although it was originally composed to fit the set as an Introduction.

In composing his set of nine Bachianas from 1930 until 1945, Villa-Lobos turned to his favorite composer, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), following the tendency toward neoclassicism\(^ {15}\) *en vogue* in Europe and the Americas at the time. Villa-Lobos’s fascination with the music of Bach started when he was only eight years old, and he listened to his aunt play the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. During the time he wrote the *Bachianas* Villa-Lobos devoted himself to a deep study of the music of Bach, making several transcriptions of the German composer’s works. As noted by Béhague, “Villa-Lobos perceived clear affinities between certain contrapuntal textures and rhythmic procedures in Bach and those of certain aspects of Brazilian folk and popular music.”\(^ {16}\) It is generally accepted that Villa-Lobos considered Bach to be a “universal source,” and he believed in the idea of a deep relationship between themes and forms used by the German composer and Brazilian folklore. However, it is difficult to know the types of correlations

---

\(^ {13}\) Villa-Lobos wrote *Choros nº 10* based on a theme by Catulo da Paixão Cearense, a Brazilian poet.


\(^ {15}\) *Neoclassicism* is a stylistic classification that recalls and reworks traditions from the Baroque as well as Classical periods, either by following aesthetic characteristics or creating compositions based upon actual compositions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, preserving clarity and expressive detachment.

that he found between Bach and Brazilian folk music. Bach’s compositional methods inspired the titles of *Bachianas*. What comparable forms or musical elements Villa-Lobos perceived will probably never be entirely clear, but an analysis of the set of *Bachianas* can reveal some of these elements. According to Béhague:

> Several genres of Brazilian folk and popular instrumental music exhibit in their improvisatory nature a notable melodic independence, with themes frequently involving repeated and triadic or broken-chords figurations, and with strongly functional harmonic support. In addition, numerous dance and folksong genres partake of the typical rhythmic sense of Bach’s fast movements, especially in his instrumental works, based on a recurring pulsation (often in sixteenth-note notation) and numerous cross-rhythmic and syncopated layouts.\(^\text{17}\)

Although some researchers consider the *Bachianas* to be a step back in Villa-Lobos’ compositional style after the tremendous complexity he reached with the *Choros*, they are nevertheless unanimous in confirming the beauty of the *Bachianas* and their similarity with the music of Bach.

*Bachianas Brasileiras no.4* does not reflect the exuberance of some Villa-Lobos pieces for piano but it does demonstrate the composer’s attempt at neoclassical expression. This work and other pieces in the set are listed below with specific dates and places of composition, as well as the ensembles they were written for:

- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 1* (1930, RJ), for eight cellos.
- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 2* (1930, SP), for orchestra
- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 3* (1938, RJ) for piano and orchestra
- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* (1930 – 1941) for pianoforte, orchestrated in 1941.
- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 5* for soprano and cello ensemble.
- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 6* (1938), for flute and bassoon.
- *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7* (1942, RJ), for orchestra.
  - *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8* (1944, RJ), for orchestra.
  - *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9* (1945, NY), for string orchestra or choir *a cappella*.

\(^\text{17}\) Ibid.
Choros no. 5 and Bachianas Brasileiras (Brazilian Bachianas) no. 4 were chosen to be the subjects of this study. Within each specific set, these works include the use of urban popular ideas, folk melodies, varied modes and scales, special sound effects, and rhythms. The works are written in similar construction and structure based on *choro* elements that will be discussed in chapter two.

The methodology used to discuss these two selected piano works will include both contextualization and analysis of representative Brazilian styles, considering Villa-Lobos’s melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic treatment; his attempts to imitate sounds of nature specific to Brazil; and his use of particular types of rhythm, scales, and modes pertaining to Brazilian folk music. The peculiarities of music notation, which are essential to the comprehension of Villa-Lobos’s work, will be discussed as well. This study will attempt to guide the pianist or interpreter in perceiving non-notated elements that convey the “flavor” or spirit of the work, the flexibility of rhythms or polyrhythmic combinations, and the nuances of varied timbres.

In addition to stylistic analysis, an examination of the composer’s influences, intentions, and compositional methods will be fundamental to this study. This discussion will concentrate on the popular and folk material encountered in the works and will explore the cultural sources of this material, as well as the particular meanings that the composer may have conveyed in using these sources. Because a performer’s interpretation represents a creative partnership with the composer, Villa-Lobos’s own thoughts about his composition are important to the performer’s comprehension of interpretive intricacies. This study will attempt to make connections between the personal experiences of Villa-Lobos and the interpretative details in the music in an effort to guide the interpreter towards a performance more closely linked with the composer’s original conceptions and with the original compositional contexts.

Uncovering aspects of the composer’s creative process will go further than many earlier studies by giving insights into his transformation of familiar elements and to his own perceptions and interpretations, particularly those of Brazilian culture. A close look into the selected pieces will reveal elements used to represent Brazilian ideas and images that are hidden behind the music, as subliminal messages. These ideas represent Brazilian
life, people, and also nature as they confront and blend with elements of the composer’s classical music heritage – particularly the music of Bach in the set of Bachianas.

**Review of the Literature**

Much has been written about Villa-Lobos. There are more than forty biographies about him, and others are still being written. Most scholars consider the book written in Portuguese by Vasco Mariz\(^\text{18}\) (b. 1921) to be the first important piece of scholarly literature written about the composer and the first complete biography. This work was primarily written with information given by the composer himself, and the author revised his own work several times, correcting information, proving or refuting some of it. It became an important source about the life of Villa-Lobos. Another biographer is Lisa Peppercorn,\(^\text{19}\) who became an international expert on Villa-Lobos, publishing more than thirty articles about Villa-Lobos in several languages, analyzing various aspects of his life and works. The article of Suzanne Demarquez,\(^\text{20}\) who followed Villa-Lobos’s career personally in Paris, was to this research, but, the publications of two musicologists were even more fundamental to this study: those of Gerard Béhague\(^\text{21}\) and David P. Appleby\(^\text{22}\) (b.1925). Their impressive knowledge, along with their criticism, offered substantial and important information to support the line of thought in this document.

The theoretical foundations of this study will be based on the analysis given by these writers, among others. The historical contextualization of Villa-Lobos, as a leading figure of Brazilian music, is offered by the musicologist José Maria Neves\(^\text{23}\) (1943-2002) in his book *Música Contemporânea Brasileira*. Neves’ book chronicles contemporary Brazilian music, describing the evolution and the influences in Brazilian music, through


his historical point of view. José Miguel Wisnick24 (b.1948) and his book Côro dos Contrários provided a deep study about the “Week of 22,” mentioned above. Other writers, such as Bruno Kiefer25 (1923-1987), Roberto Duarte26 (b.1941), Luiz Paulo Horta27 (b.1943), and Willy Correa de Oliveira28 (b.1938), were important to complement the information about the life of Villa-Lobos and his place in the music history of Brazil. However, newer studies such as the sociological study of Villa-Lobos’ life written by Paulo Renato Guérios29 clarified some questions not previously understood or known about Villa-Lobos, providing a new perspective on the scope of the cultural and political scenario in Brazil during the life of Villa-Lobos.

Paulo de Tarso Salles30 describes the compositional process in Villa-Lobos’s music in general, identifying particular features through a deep analysis. Although the studies of Adhemar Nóbrega (1917-1979)31 about the Bachianas and Choros are not recent, they represent the first attempt in Brazil to study major works such as the sixteen Choros and the set of Bachianas Brasileiras, and are therefore very important in this research. There are a few studies written about the piano music of Villa-Lobos. Most of them are focused on the analysis of one piece, such as the research made by Sônia Rubinsky32 (b. 1957) about Rudepoema. Rubinsky’s document also offers a review of Villa-Lobos’s biography in addition to the analysis of Rudepoema. Souza Lima33 (1898-1982) gives an overview of the piano music of Villa-Lobos in his book, Comentários sobre a obra pianística de Villa-Lobos (Comments about the Pianistic Works of Villa-
Lobos), but the book does not offer additional information about interpretation or further analysis to help the interpreter.

More recently published authors have focused more on particular aspects of Villa-Lobos’s music and life but not particularly on his piano writing. Most of the recent studies deal with newer perspectives on his biography or compositional processes in general. Although some attempts to do this are being made, such as *Interpretação Musical: a dimensão recriadora da “comunicação poética”* by Marília Laboissière34 (no dates found) there is a lack of deeper studies on Villa-Lobos’ piano music, especially on the interpretation of his works.

It is important to emphasize the importance of the sources kept in the Villa-Lobos Museum, in Rio de Janeiro, which keeps the memory of Villa-Lobos alive through its publications, promotions of concerts and competitions, through the effort of people who work there. Although online sources are increasingly important in research, sources that I consulted contained highly derivative information on the composer. One exception is the catalogue of historical documents pertaining to the composer’s life and works available in the David P. Appleby Collection on Brazilian Music, contained within the Benson Latin American Collection at The University of Texas at Austin. To date, the best sources for research on life and work of Villa-Lobos are found in the Villa-Lobos Museum and the National Library in Brazil. Most, but not all, of the sources consulted for this research were written in Portuguese or translated into Portuguese. Publications about Villa-Lobos in English and other languages remain somewhat scarce.

**Organization of Study**

The structure of this document is divided into four chapters. A brief overview of Villa-Lobos’s life and overall works is presented in the first chapter since it is necessary to clarify some myths perpetuated in many biographies (often due to the composer’s own desire to be surrounded by mystery). An historical contextualization of Villa-Lobos is given with the purpose of exploring his nationalistic views. This will provide the

necessary understanding of the influences he had on Brazilian musical life, specifically after the 1920s. The interpretation of his music will not be accurate, or “historically informed,” without an observation of his use of folk and popular material and how he intended to mediate between folk and art music, reflecting the concept of anthropophagism preached by Oswald de Andrade. The short biography presented in this document does not attempt to provide a full study of Villa-Lobos’ life but to offer significant material to build a solid study of his works, especially the piano literature.

Choros no. 5 is one of Villa-Lobos’s best-known pieces written for piano. It presents several aspects found in Brazilian modern music. The second chapter is dedicated to the study of these aspects, with a brief overview of the characteristics of the entire set of Choros, emphasizing a connection between choro style and Villa-Lobos’s sixteen Choros.

The third chapter discusses the neoclassical elements used by Villa-Lobos through the analysis of Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, for piano. This chapter will cover Villa-Lobos’s approach to what he considered to be writing in “Bach’s manner.”

Aspects related to interpretation are also offered within the second and third chapters. It is the ultimate objective of this research to suggest strong bases for interpretive possibilities for the piano pieces studied here, particularly to aid pianists as they begin their own study of these works.

The fourth chapter, or conclusion, highlights the study’s central point about Villa-Lobos’ synthesis of diverse folk and urban popular musical elements with techniques and structural aspects of European art music in these selected pieces, the relationships between his musical approaches and important details of his life and cultural contexts, and suggested interpretative ideas.
CHAPTER TWO

Heitor Villa-Lobos’s Life and Work: A Brief Overview

According to the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), “the course of a historical personality’s life is a system of interactions in which the individual receives stimuli from the historical world, is molded by them and, then, in his turn, affects the historical world.” By the same token, one must study the biography or autobiography of an individual in order to gain insight into his personal ideas and values. Such is the case in the music of Heitor Villa-Lobos, whose compositions cannot be properly understood without use of his biography. Immensely helpful to the performer is awareness of the historical facts that influenced Villa-Lobos’s creativity, and how Villa-Lobos affected the music in Brazil during his lifetime.

Although Villa-Lobos did not write an autobiography, he invited his friend C. Paula Barros, a poet, painter, and musician to create his first biography. In O Romance de Villa-Lobos, Barros documented his life until 1948. This work is almost considered to be an autobiography because Barros transcribed stories and anecdotes that she heard directly from the composer, who had a tendency to create myths about himself and accept unquestionably the legends spread about him. He even seemed to enjoy the discussion generated by these myths and stories. One such fable surrounds the mystery of his birth date, which was finally revealed in 1948. This discovery will be discussed later in this chapter.

Because there are few documents to corroborate Villa-Lobos’s oral or written statements, researchers have sometimes doubted their accuracy. However, several of Villa-Lobos’s statements have significant importance toward understanding his personality and are therefore reproduced in this research. Villa-Lobos shared characteristics with the average Brazilian individual, especially the carioca (a native from the city of Rio de Janeiro). Gerard Béhague describes the features of a carioca when he writes: “Villa-Lobos’s personality, career, and creative output suggest certain

---

35 Wilhelm Dilthey in Gerard Béhague, Heitor Villa-Lobos; The Search for Brazil’s Musical Soul (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 1.
idiosyncrasies of the Brazilian, particularly *carioca*, temperament as a whole, such as loftiness, boastfulness, capriciousness or inconsistency, and flamboyance, on the one hand, and intuitiveness, spontaneity, singularity, charm, and sophistication, on the other.”

**The Early Years**

Villa-Lobos was born on March 5, 1887, at Rua Ipiranga, no. 7, in the neighborhood of Laranjeiras, Rio de Janeiro. As previously stated, his date of birth was questioned up until 1948. It appeared that he either did not know the date of his own birth with certainty, or he simply enjoyed seeing the controversy that had been raised in every work written about him. The mystery was unequivocally resolved when Vasco Mariz (b.1921), a Brazilian musicologist, discovered the records of the composer’s baptism at the Igreja de São José (Church of Saint Joseph), located at Rua da Misericórdia, in Rio de Janeiro.

Raul Villa-Lobos (1862-1899), father of Heitor Villa-Lobos, held a significant role in his son’s musical education. Villa-Lobos’s father not only taught him to play violoncello and clarinet but also gave to him the rare opportunity to listen to genuine Northeastern music at his friend Alberto Brandão’s house, where meetings with *seresteiros* and singers were frequently held.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the city of Rio de Janeiro witnessed very important events in the history of Brazil. Among these events were the abolition of slavery in 1888, and the advent of the republic in 1889. By then, Rio de Janeiro had become the capital of Brazil and a major cultural center. Migration from rural areas and immigration of foreigners continually blended new cultures within Brazil. Some typical popular musical genres and styles were being developed in Rio de Janeiro, such as the *maxixe*, *tango brasileiro*, *samba*, *choro*, and *modinha*. Contact with these

---

37 Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos, vx*.
39 *Seresteiros* are musicians who play the *seresta* (similar to *serenade*).
40 *Maxixe* is a traditional popular singing and dance in Brazil; it can be considered a fusion between habanera’ rhythm with polka and Afro-Portuguese syncopé.
41 *Tango brasileiro* can be understood as “habanera brasileira”.

15
popular musical genres led Villa-Lobos to develop a passion for folk and popular music. This passion drove him to develop his clarinet and guitar skills, even though his mother strongly opposed the idea of him becoming a musician and thus cavorting with chorões, who were considered “bohemians,” friends who would gather in bars or on the streets, to drink, talk, and play music. These influences would remain with Villa-Lobos for the rest of his life and would deeply affect his compositional choices.

Villa-Lobos’s mother, Noêmia Villa-Lobos (1859-1946), was a strong woman who faced the death of her husband, Raul Villa-Lobos, early in life. She singlehandedly raised all of her children after the loss of Raul in 1899. According to Vasco Mariz, over the course of six months, the Villa-Lobos family moved to the city of Sapucaia, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, and to Bicas and Cataguazes, both in the state of Minas Gerais. However, the information on Villa-Lobos’s catalogue of works only documents trips with the family to the state of Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro during 1892 and 1893 before the loss of his father. Mariz also believes that during this time Villa-Lobos began to experience the first impressions of rural music, even suggests that he was already collecting musical sources for his later compositions at the age of five.45 This theory, which the researcher Paulo Renato Guérios challenged, is questionable since Villa-Lobos could not possibly have acted as a serious musical collector or ethnographer at such a young age. However, the idea that these images, sounds, and symbols of his early years were encoded in his memory is not without reason.46

**His Youth and Journeys**

After the death of his father, Heitor Villa-Lobos became more acquainted with the musical culture of *serenaders*47 and *chorões* – musicians who performed the *choro* – and kept that connection throughout his life. As the researcher Gerard Béhague points out:

---

42 *Samba*: the most traditional definition of samba it is of a circle dance that evolved from *batuque*, *jongo* and *lundú*, from African origins. There are several types of samba such as *samba batido*, *samba-de-morro*, *samba do matuto*, etc.
43 *Choro* – see definition on page 30.
44 *Modinha* – see definition on page 42.
That music had a dancing repertory primarily instrumental, with ensembles of flutes, clarinets, ophicleides, trumpets, trombones, mandolins, guitars, and cavaquinhos (small four-string guitars of Portuguese origin), virtuosic soloists and contrapuntal renditions of schottisches, waltzes, quadrilles, mazurkas, and polkas. 48

Villa-Lobos began to frequently play with these musicians and share their companionship, although he preferred listening to their music rather than participating in it himself. The gathering place for this group was a bar called “O Cavaquinho de Ouro” (The Golden Cavaquinho), located at Rua Carioca, where they received invitations to play in many different locations, such as family houses, bars, theaters, and cinemas. His friendship with the chorões led Villa-Lobos to play with wonderful Brazilian musicians, such as Quincas Laranjeiras (Joaquim Francisco dos Santos, 1873-1935), Luís de Sousa (Joaquim Luís de Sousa, 1866-1920) and Luiz Gonzaga da Hora (no dates found), Anacleto de Medeiros (1866-1907), Macário (no dates found) and Irineu de Almeida (1890-1916), Zé do Cavaquinho (no dates found), Juca Kalut (José Lourenço Viana, 1857–1922), Spíndola (no dates found) and Felisberto Marques (no dates found). Their repertoire included works of Antônio Calado (1848-1880), Ernesto Nazareth (1863-1934), Viriato (1851-1883), and Luiz de Sousa.

The fact that many of these musicians were called by their nicknames, or sometimes only by their last or first names, makes impossible tracing their musical activities with complete accuracy. However, Villa-Lobos absorbed elements from this incredible source of cultural background, developing with these musicians a strong affinity that endured for his entire life. Therefore, information about Villa-Lobos’s companions is significant to this study, first, because these men can be identified as emigrants from Northern and Northeastern parts of Brazil; and second, because they influenced Villa-Lobos’s cultural development. In the two sets presented by this particular research, Choros and Bachianas, Villa-Lobos synthesizes the cultural background from both regions using folk and popular materials. An analysis of the character of these sets will clearly show the Northeastern and Northern Brazilian influence in these compositions. Sátiro Bilhar (1869-1927), an immigrant from Ceará who was also a chorão, Quincas Laranjeiras and João Pernambuco (1883-1947), both from Pernambuco state and acquainted with Villa-Lobos, and Catulo da Paixão Cearense

48 Ibid.
(1866-1946), who came to Rio de Janeiro from the state of Maranhão to become one of the most representative figures of the Brazilian culture, were individuals of strong folk background who influenced Villa-Lobos in many ways.

The city of Rio de Janeiro was a confluence of many Brazilian inner cultures. People used to refer to Rio as a *caldeirão cultural* (cultural caldron) to express what happened in the city by the end of the nineteenth century and into the first half of the twentieth century. Taking this metaphor into consideration, one can imagine the syncretism generated by the coexistence of such a variety of cultures. Central to this cultural mix were the bohemian *chorões* who worked during the day in public and military services and enjoyed playing *choro* during the night.\(^{49}\)

Villa-Lobos left his mother’s house at the age of sixteen to live with his aunt Zizinha (Leopoldina do Amaral). In this new setting, he had more freedom to be with the *chorões* and began to play violoncello in small orchestras to earn money. According to Villa-Lobos, he continued his violoncello lessons with Benno Niederberger.\(^{50}\) By this time, his compositions were not pretentious, but were instead all popular music: some polkas, *dobrados*, and schottisches. In 1905, at the age of eighteen, Villa-Lobos decided to leave Rio de Janeiro, though reason for this sudden move was unclear. Perhaps he was simply inspired by curiosity about the former lives of his fellow *choro* companions. After selling part of his father’s rare books collection, he set out for the Northeastern part of Brazil, in order to visit the states of Espírito Santo, Bahia, and Pernambuco. During these travels he became very impressed by the richness of the folklore. In the cities of Salvador and Recife, Villa-Lobos spent some time living in *engenhos*\(^{51}\) and farms of the countryside of Brazil. His first typical work came out shortly after his return. In *Cânticos Sertanejos* (1907) for flute, clarinet, and string quintet, Villa-Lobos attempted to reproduce the Brazilian musical environment by experimenting with technical processes that originated in regional music. Villa-Lobos’s second trip led him to Paranaguá, PR, in

---

\(^{49}\)To know more about them and how they lived, it is recommended to read the book “O choro: reminiscências dos chorões antigos” (*The choro: reminiscences of ancient chorões*) by Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto. Pinto was one of the *chorões* himself and left important documentation about the lifestyle of popular musicians in Rio de Janeiro during the beginning of the 20th Century. Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto, *O Choro: Reminiscências dos Chorões Antigos*. [1936] (Rio de Janeiro: MEC/Funarte, 1978).

\(^{50}\)Mariz, *Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra*, 56.

\(^{51}\) *Engenhos* were farms mainly dedicated to the production of sugar cane, using slavery as manpower.
1908, returning in 1909. There is only one document which acts as proof of this journey, which is a program from a concert in Paranaguá, PR, in 1908.

Many biographies about Villa-Lobos suggest that while traveling throughout Brazil, he began to collect folk tunes, but this claim has never been fully confirmed. Although his registers or catalogues of tunes were never found, the composer himself affirmed that he collected more than a thousand tunes. Villa-Lobos claimed that he was a member of the expedition of Cândido Rondon to the Amazon Forest, but his name is not listed among the participants. The chronology about the composer’s journeys is not clear; however there is proof of a third journey, which possibly started in 1911 or 1912 (the information about when Villa-Lobos left is controversial). There is also record of his participation in a concert program in Manaus, AM, in 1912. Villa-Lobos only began to write comments and letters about his trips in 1927, when he went to Paris for the second time.52

Villa-Lobos most likely return to the Northeastern part of Brazil in 1911, the same year as the expedition of Roquete Pinto. Little is known about what he did between 1909 and 1911. At this time he traveled, playing cello as a member of an operetta company directed by Luis Moreira. Villa-Lobos’s trip also appears to coincide with the trip made by Cândido Rondon (1865-1958), an explorer who organized many expeditions throughout Brazil. As mentioned previously Villa-Lobos’s name is not listed among the participants of any of these expeditions, but he possibly had the opportunity to talk extensively with some of the members and exchange information and ideas. Although his stay in Manaus, Amazonas State, is documented, the information about Villa-Lobos’s presence in the Amazon Forest is unconfirmed. Considering the poor means (and even absence) of contemporary transportation Villa-Lobos inplausibly ventured that far. However, in his Guia Prático, published almost thirty years later, Villa-Lobos incorporated many folk tunes from that region. The question remains whether Villa-Lobos collected those tunes himself or whether he studied them on the phonograms of an expedition made in 1911 by Roquete Pinto (1884-1954), a Brazilian explorer who traveled throughout Brazil collecting folk tunes and dances, among other information.

52Guérios, Villa-Lobos e o Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação, 60.
During this third trip, the operetta company trekked as far as Manaus. Unfortunately, on the journey back, the group experienced serious financial problems and finally dissolved in Recife, in the State of Pernambuco. No confirmation exists as to whether Villa-Lobos traveled this far with the company. The exact moment he left the company is not documented. After that period of time he went to São Paulo, Mato Grosso, and Goiás but no dates have been recorded for these excursions. Villa-Lobos had a vivid imagination, and Lisa Peppercorn writes that some of his trips may be just a product of his Wunschtraum—a dream of his wishes.

After Villa-Lobos left the operetta company, he started to perform with Romeu Donizetti (no dates found), a musician from Ceará. Playing cello, piano, guitar, and saxophone, the two musicians departed on an excursion to the states of the Northern and Northeastern regions of Brazil. Without sponsors or support, they earned money playing together in bars, theaters, and cinemas. The friendship with Donizetti is registered in most biographies about the composer.

During this final trip, when Heitor Villa-Lobos was in the state of Bahia, he listened to the music of Claude Debussy for the first time. From this period of Villa-Lobos’s life is the set of pieces titled Danças Características Africanas: Farrapós, Kankikis e Kankukús (1914/1915) for solo piano. This set of pieces also represents another unexplained factor in Villa-Lobos’s life. He wrote the set based on tunes he heard from the black people in Barbados. However, there are no records of Villa-Lobos staying in Barbados. Historian Vasco Mariz drew two hypotheses about this inexplicable encounter, if it ever happened. The first is that Villa-Lobos truly did travel to Barbados, in accordance with statements collected by the biographer. The second hypothesis is that Villa-Lobos listened to these tunes circulating among the workers from Barbados in the harbor of Belém, in the state of Pará, which is very close to the aforementioned islands. However, due to lack of evidence, neither of these hypotheses is conclusive.

Referring to the Danças Características Africanas in an interview with Lisa Peppercorn, Villa-Lobos explained: “These dances were inspired by themes from the music of the caripunas [sic] Indians in the state of Mato Grosso. Their ancestors were

---

53 Mariz, Heitor Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra, 62.
54 Guérios, Villa-Lobos e o Caminho Sinuoso da Predestinação, 25.
55 Mariz, Heitor Villa-Lobos, 64.
local Indians and immigrant black people.”

Peppercorn comments that this affirmation of Villa-Lobos may be one more figment of his imagination, since he could not identify where the themes were within the piece. Also, considering that the Caripunas tribe lives close to the Madeira River, it is unlikely that Villa-Lobos heard these themes, unless of course he studied them from another source. Béhague also did not find any evidence of caripuna material to verify the information provided by Villa-Lobos.

Again, there are different explanations of why the composition was based upon these themes. Though composed in 1914, Danças Características Africanas represents the most expressive work for piano from that period and the first attempt to use a specific rhythm pattern.

In 1912 Villa-Lobos composed Izaht, a four-act opera. Villa-Lobos turned to the study of classical and romantic composers. Wagner and Puccini strongly influenced him during this period, but Villa-Lobos himself said, “Every time I feel the influence of someone, I shake myself and jump out.”

Still, one publication about European art music of the 20th Century obviously held extreme importance to him: the “Cours de Composition Musicale” of Vincent d’Indy.

**Villa-Lobos, the Composer**

Heitor Villa-Lobos married Lucília Guimarães in 1913. They lived together for twenty-two years. Lucília not only taught Villa-Lobos how to play piano, but was also the performer to première many of his piano works. Moreover, she motivated and encouraged him to organize concerts to promote his music.

The official debut of Villa-Lobos as a composer happened on November 13, 1915, when he began a concert series of his own works at the Jornal do Comércio (Commerce Newspaper) hall. Three more recitals would follow in the same hall in 1917 and 1918.

At that time Villa-Lobos’s works displeased not only Oscar Guanabarino, one of his most ferocious critics, but also the musicians performing his works. According to Mariz:

---


In 1918, having received from the National Music Institute the invitation to present, at that learning establishment, a concert only with his works, he programmed the 1st Symphony and the symphonic poem Amazonas, newly composed and then with the title of Mirêmis. During the first rehearsal, the spalla stood up and said, supported by his colleagues in the orchestra, that Amazonas had neither feet nor head. In the second rehearsal, several players refused to play the symphony, which, incidentally, modern criticism finds little revolutionary work…

Nevertheless, the following years brought more recognition to the work of Villa-Lobos, especially abroad. In 1919, the Wagnerian Association of Buenos Aires performed one of his quartets, although the number and opus were not recorded. Also in September of 1919 Gino Marinuzzi (1882-1945) included the Adagio and the Scherzo from the 1st Symphony (1916) in his programs in Rio de Janeiro.

1920-1930 – Choros

Aside from his money-earning work, Villa-Lobos wrote his first Choros, Choros no. 1 in 1920. Two years later, a group of artists organized one of the most important cultural movements in the scenario of Brazil: The Week of Modern Art. The Semana de Arte Moderna de 1922 (Week of Modern Art of 1922) was a key chapter in the art history of Brazil and acted as a divider between traditionalism and modernism. It was the first attempt to reunite in one place painters, writers, poets, sculptors, and of course musicians, to show what had been done with modern and nationalistic ideas in Brazil. Villa-Lobos was the Brazilian composer chosen to take part at the Semana de Arte Moderna de 1922. He was invited by Graça Aranha (1868-1931) and Ronald de Carvalho (1893-1935), who were both part of the group of idealists who organized the movement. The pieces written by Villa-Lobos performed during the week were:

- On 02/13/1922: 2ª Sonata (1919) for cello and piano; 2ª Trio (1915) for violin, cello, and piano, from “Simples Coletânea;” Valsa Mística (1917) for piano and Rodante (1919) for piano; A fiandeira (The Spinner Girl) (1921) for piano; and Danças Africanas (1914/1915) for piano.

• On 02/15/1922: *O Ginete do Pierrozinho* (1920) for piano from “Carnaval das Crianças;” Festim *Pagão* (1919) for voice and piano; *Solidão (Solitude)* (1920) for voice and piano; *A Cascavel (The Rattlesnake)* (1915) for voice and piano; and 3º *Quartet Op. 59* (1916).

• On 02/17/1922: 3º *Trio* (1918) for violin, cello and piano; *Lune d’octobre* (1920) from “Historiettes” for voice and piano; *Eis a Vida [Voilá la vie]* (1921) from “Epigramas Irônicos e Sentimentais (Epigrammes Ironiques et Sentimentales);” *Jouis Sans Retard, Car Vite S’écoule la Vie* (1920) from “Historiettes” for voice and piano; 2º *Sonata* (1919) for cello and piano; *A Camponesa Cantadeira ( A Singing Country Girl)* (1916) from Suíte Floral for piano; *Num Berço Encantado* (1918) from Simples Coletânea for piano; *Dança Infernal [Bailado Infernal]* (1920), and *Quatuor* (1921) for women choir, flute, alto sax, celesta, and harp.

After the Week of Modern Art, Villa-Lobos’s life began to change. Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982), who met Villa-Lobos in 1918, together with Graça Aranha, convinced Carlos Guinle (1889-1956), one of the Brothers Guinle (Brazilian industrialists), to sponsor Villa-Lobos’ first trip to Paris. Artists and critics from Rio de Janeiro, including Oscar Guanabarino, started a movement to help Villa-Lobos in his first journey overseas. He left for Paris on June 30, 1923. Villa-Lobos used to say that, unlike other Brazilian artists, he was going to Paris not to improve his skills, but to show to the world what he had done. He became well known in Paris in less than a year. On May 3, 1924, he gave his first concert in Paris, with the help of the publisher Max Eschig (1872-1927).

Villa-Lobos was forced to return to Brazil in [October] 1924, when the grant from the Brazilian Government and the financial help of his sponsors ended. His return was marked by the deep impressions of works such as *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913), by Stravinsky. After initially leaving Brazil, Villa-Lobos had already thought of himself as a

---

60 According to the official catalogue published by the Villa-Lobos’ Museum, this piece was originally part of the second act of the opera Zoé, later extracted and transcribed for piano by the composer.

61 The exact information about his return to Brazil is controversial. Paulo Renato Guérios writes that Villa-Lobos returned to Brazil in September 1924 based on an interview given to Manuel Bandeira (1886-1968). David Appleby lists in the chronology for that year the month of October, 1924. However, the official catalogue of works published in 1989 states that Villa-Lobos returned to Brazil in 1925.
professional composer. His life after his return then became a daily effort to produce and present his works in an attempt to return to Paris, a feat which he accomplished in 1927. He lived at Place Saint Michel, no. 11, at the apartment of his sponsor, Carlos Guinle. Again, Arthur Rubinstein played an instrumental role in procuring financial help for Villa-Lobos, and they remained friends. Rubinstein also spread the works of Villa-Lobos throughout the world, and the pianist inspired the composer to write one of his most monumental works, *Rudepoema* (1921-1926).

During his stay in Paris, Villa-Lobos approached his fiscal situation with more caution. He started to teach lessons and work for the Max Eschig Editions to help maintain a longer stay. Although interest in Villa-Lobos’s work in Paris was growing, his financial life was still very difficult.

Meanwhile, in 1930, Brazil was about to face a revolution. Again financial problems force Villa-Lobos to return to Brazil. Villa-Lobos admitted to Vasco Mariz that he had written two more *Choros: no. 13* (1929) and *no. 14* (1928), and also *Prole do Bebê no. 3* (n.d.). In an attempt to minimize financial damage, he left them with the concierge of his apartment, but those works were never found and never performed. Although he tried to rewrite them later in his life, he was unable to complete them.

During his second trip, Villa-Lobos spent three years in Paris and was very productive during that time. France had the greatest impact in his works during the 1920s and 1930s. Through the course of his stay in Paris, Heitor Villa-Lobos composed important pieces like *Noneto* (1923). He returned to Paris on several occasions during his lifetime, with constant acclaim by the French critics and public. Although most of Villa-Lobos’s *Choros* were composed in Brazil, one of his greatest successes in France was the performance of his *Choros no. 10* (1926) (*Catulo da Paixão Cearense*) (1863-1946). Villa-Lobos entered into an original project with Sergei Diaghilev (1872-1929) to create a ballet using the *Cirandas no. 1* (1926) and the *Prole do Bebê no. 1* (1918). Due to the untimely death of Diaghilev the project was not completed. Serge Lifar (1905-1986) revived the project using Villa-Lobos’s *Choros no. 10* instead. It was acclaimed by the public during its première at the Salle Pleyel in 1935, performed by Serge Lifar.

---

62 The Revolution of 1930 ended the First Republic in Brazil with a *coup d’état*. Getúlio Vargas, then Governor of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, became the President in November 3, 1930.

During the years that followed, Villa-Lobos turned his efforts to another matter: education. This was an unexpected change, even for Villa-Lobos. When he returned to Brazil in 1930, he went directly to Recife, the capital of Pernambuco state, where he had scheduled two concerts, one for June 6th and the other for June 10th. From there Villa-Lobos traveled to São Paulo. When Villa-Lobos performed a final concert in São Paulo, he was in a critical situation because he had lost the support of the Guinle family, which drove him to concentrate his efforts on raising money, in addition to composing, so that he might one day return to Paris.

When the revolution began, Villa-Lobos perceived an opportunity to create a space for Brazilian art. In an article entitled “A difusão do ensino da música no Brasil,” (The diffusion of music teaching in Brazil), published in the newspaper Diário da Noite of December 30, 1930, Villa-Lobos explains his propositions very clearly, stating: “In accordance to my plan, the study of Brazilian music should be complete, starting with the harmony, through rhythm, melody, counterpoint, to reach the ethnic and even a certain philosophical foundation that characterizes it.”

At the end of 1930, Villa-Lobos became acquainted with the Interventor of the State of São Paulo, João Alberto Lins de Barros (1897-1955). Interventors, to explain the word, were substitutes of the state Governors, with limited power of action, reporting directly to the President Getúlio Vargas. Lins de Barros supported a musical tour in the State of São Paulo. Accompanying Villa-Lobos were pianists such as Guiomar Novaes (1894-1979); Antonieta Rudge (1885-1974); and Souza Lima (1898-1982), as a pianist, conductor, and a composer. Also with the group were Maurice Raskin (1906-1984), a Belgium violinist, and the singer Nair Duarte Nunes (no dates found). Villa-Lobos was accompanied by his wife, pianist Lucília Guimarães (1886-1966). She participated in all fifty-four concerts. During this artistic excursion, Villa-Lobos maintained his decision

---

65 Mariz, Heitor Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra, 108.
to move back to France. In February of 1931, he wrote to Arnaldo Guinle (1884-1963), saying that he would do his best to make a return voyage to Europe as soon as possible.66

At the end of the tour, which occurred between the months of January and April in 1931, Villa-Lobos proposed to the Interventor the idea of a civic exhortation67 with thousands of voices. His endeavor was supported by music teachers, choir conductors, and the press, which urged the population to participate by releasing times and dates for rehearsals. Villa-Lobos conducted a rehearsal himself on May 9th for a thousand people at the Municipal Theater of São Paulo. The place chosen for the concert was the Stadium of São Bento. According to the press, between twelve-thousand and fifteen-thousand people responded to Villa-Lobos’s call, and on May 24th the concert was finally performed. The success of this exhortation probably influenced Villa-Lobos’s decision to stay in Brazil and fully dedicate himself to implementing his educational ideas. Unfortunately, on July 31, 1931, João Alberto Lins de Barros left his position as Interventor of São Paulo state, and Villa-Lobos lost his primary means of support. On October 21, 1931, after two years in São Paulo, he performed his last concert. He returned to Rio de Janeiro without resources or prospects.

On February 1, 1932, the Technical and Administrative Service of Music and Choral Singing was created by the Municipal Government of Rio de Janeiro, subordinate to the General Directory of Education of the Federal District. Anísio Teixeira (1900-1971), who was the chief of the Education Service of the State of São Paulo, invited Villa-Lobos to become the director of the Service of Music and Choral Singing of the Federal District. Villa-Lobos’s idea of music education was not to teach music in the schools, but rather to inspire an interest in music among the youth of Brazil with the purpose of cultivating audiences for classical music:

Once it was decided the introduction of music teaching and choral singing in schools of Rio de Janeiro, his [Villa-Lobos] first task was to present to the general public and parents of students in particular, the reasons for the usefulness of this teaching, so that, in the concept of everyone, the music was imposed as indispensable necessity for education. Its main objective was to form a large public for concerts and not only teaching music.68

67 Civic exhortation was a choral group organized by Villa-Lobos. It included representatives of all of São Paulo social classes with nearly 12,000 voices.
68 Mariz, Heitor Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra, 144. My translation.
One must clarify that Villa-Lobos never had a political motivation or affiliation with the Estado Novo (New State) of President Getúlio Vargas. Their relationship was strictly professional; even ceremonial and distant. Villa-Lobos’s decision to accept the role of music educator was purely financial at first, since his life was never comfortable in that respect, and he was looking for a steady source of income. Villa-Lobos also realized that the government could sponsor his projects and, through the state, he could finally have the opportunity to generate and educate an audience about his music.⁶⁹

In September of 1933, the SEMA – Superintendence of Musical and Artistic Education – was created. Villa-Lobos was appointed its director and amplified his educational project by asking the Interventors of each state to consider mandatory music education within elementary schools. The desire for this implementation was explained by Villa-Lobos’s passion for children and his belief that music education was part of the overall development of a person.⁷⁰

In 1933, Villa-Lobos organized the Villa-Lobos Orchestra for the purpose of promoting music education, developing concepts of civics through artistic learning, and spreading and maintaining Brazilian culture. With this orchestra, he conducted the Brazil debut of Beethoven’s Missa Solemnis [1933].⁷¹ In December 30, 1935, in celebration of Bach’s 250th birth anniversary, he conducted Bach’ Mass in B minor with the Orfeão dos Professores.

None of these changes in Villa-Lobos’s life were simple. When Villa-Lobos left São Paulo because of the Constitutionalist Revolution, which did not accept the new government, he did not know what the future would hold for him. His sudden connection with the Vargas government in the field of education was something that he had not expected. Although he discussed his musical education plans with João Alberto Lins de Barros, he did not implement them in São Paulo. Certainly, the civic exhortation performance drew attention to Villa-Lobos, and he saw the opportunity to implement his educational ideas within the new government. Worth noting is that Villa-Lobos based his

---

⁷⁰ Ibid, 186.
⁷¹ No specific dates were found for this performance.
educational ideas on Francisco Braga’s (1868-1945) project of music education, which he had cited in 1931 in one of his articles.

1936 was a year of many dramatic changes for Villa-Lobos. He participated in the Prague Music Education Congress, even though he arrived in the Czech Republic after the closing of the Congress. Being very clever and articulate, Villa-Lobos organized a couple of meetings to demonstrate his methods and his ideas to the participants, who received them enthusiastically. The year of 1936 was also very tumultuous. On May 28th, Villa-Lobos wrote to his wife Lucília asking for a divorce. He had met Arminda Neves (1912-1985) in 1932 and started a new relationship permeated by a confused process of divorce.

Villa-Lobos always saw himself as a man of the people. He wanted traditions to continue in the memory of Brazilian people, and with that in mind he created and organized the “Sodade do cordão” in 1940, which was a carnival cordão. Villa-Lobos hoped to revive one the most representative aspects of the carnival in Rio de Janeiro. The “Sodade do cordão” followed the molds of the carnival from the beginning of the century and was entirely idealized by Villa-Lobos.

In the year of 1942, Villa-Lobos presented the world première of Bachianas Brasileiras nº 4 (1930/1941), Choros no. 6 (1926), Choros no. 9 (1929) and Choros no. 11(1928), the 3rd Suite do Descobrimento (1937), and Rudepoema (1932) for orchestra. Following these performances, his ideas for music education began to spread to other countries, leading Paraguay to adopt his methods.

Villa-Lobos left Brazil for his first trip to the United States in 1944. In 1945, he conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra with a program entirely dedicated to his own works. For that program he chose Choros no. 12 (1929), Rudepoema, and Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7 (Tocata and Fugue) (1942). During this year, Villa-Lobos also founded the Brazilian Academy of Music when he returned to Brazil. In 1946, he was awarded the annual prize of music by the Brazilian Institute of Education, Science, and Culture (from UNESCO).

---

72 Cordão is one of the oldest carnival traditions in the city of Rio de Janeiro. It is similar to a Carnival block.
73 Mariz, Heitor Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra, 51.
The Last Years

In 1948, Heitor Villa-Lobos was diagnosed with cancer. He was admitted to the Memorial Hospital in New York on July 9th and underwent his first surgery. Villa-Lobos fought the disease, enduring another surgery in 1952, which enabled him to work almost until his death. He died at 4:00 pm on November 17, 1959, in Rio de Janeiro, at the age of 72.

During his final years of life, Villa-Lobos received several tributes. In one of these tributes, he was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of New York. The document given to him by the University states that:

Heitor Villa-Lobos, eminent composer, is one of the most famous creative artists of our time. He enriched the lives of several generations of students and guides the destiny of many [of the] musical artists of the future. [With a] vibrant personality, [and] endowed with a communicative enthusiasm, his reputation extends worldwide as a brilliant creator of modern music. 74

He received this award on December 3, 1957, two years before his death. During this time, Villa-Lobos kept most of his musical activities within the city of New York. He worked consistently on the music for the movie “Green Mansions,” produced by Metro Goldwyn Mayer. To preserve and maintain the collections of Villa-Lobos’s works and to promote his music, President Juscelino Kubistchek (1902-1976) created the Villa-Lobos Museum on June 22, 1960 in Brazil. The museum was first directed by Villa-Lobos’s wife, Arminda Neves, until her death on August 5, 1985.

Periods of Composition

According to historian Adhemar Nóbrega, Heitor Villa-Lobos’s musical output can be divided in four periods. The first period spans from 1899 until his Suite popular brasileira for guitar, composed in 1912, when Villa-Lobos was still an apprentice. Villa-Lobos’s second period began in 1911, with his Piano Trio nº 1 (1911), and ended in 1920, with the composition of Carnaval das crianças brasileiras (1919-1920). Characterized by the search for his musical identity, this period encompasses several chamber works,

---

74 Mariz, Heitor Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra, 127. My translation.
such as *Quartets no. 1* (1915) to *no. 4* (1917), and solo compositions for piano, such as *Danças caracterísitcas africanas* and *A prole do bebê no. 1*, some of his most significant piano compositions. Several of his orchestral works also stem from this period, including the first four *Symphonies* (1916, 1917, 1919, and 1919, respectively) and the ballets *Amazonas* (1917) and *Uirapurú* (1917).

Villa-Lobos’s third period, from 1920 to 1929, is considered by Adhemar Nóbrega to be his mature period and the pinnacle of his creativity. This development can be observed in his *Noneto*, in his set of *Choros*, the *Serestas*, and the *Cirandas*. Finally, the last and longest period begins in 1930 and continues until his death, in 1959. It is marked mainly by the concretization of Villa-Lobos’s educational ideals. During this final period, Villa-Lobos wrote the set of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras*, and five *Concerts for piano* and orchestra (1945, 1948, 1952/1957, 1952, and 1954, respectively).

Villa-Lobos considered himself to be a man with a predestined mission. In a single chapter, one cannot possibly describe and cite all of the accomplishments made by this composer. Also impossible is locating every aspect that influenced his way of thinking. However, in the case of Heitor Villa-Lobos, the historian cannot dissociate the *man* from the *work*. Analyzing them separately would be a mistake, especially if the discussion about his work is deeply connected to his experiences as a man. As evidenced by his history, writings, and music, Villa-Lobos was a prolific artist whose vision fixed upon every aspect of life.
CHAPTER THREE

Choros No. 5 - Alma Brasileira (Brazilian Soul)

Choros: An Introduction

At the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, a new musical style became very popular in Rio de Janeiro: the choro. According to José Maria Neves, a well-known Brazilian scholar of the Choros of Villa-Lobos, choro is the most authentic manifestation of Brazilian popular music. It is an influential model that represents a “starting point” for the syntheses of diverse components of Brazilian music in technical and aesthetic ways. 75 This style originated from unique interpretations and mixtures of various European dance styles such as polkas, waltzes, schottisches, and mazurkas, 76 as well as popular Brazilian music. The Portuguese word used to name this style is derived from the verb chorar, which means “to cry” or “to weep.” In relation to the meaning of choro, the music either carries or conveys a sentimental character through the languid treatment of tempo and phrasing in performance. The word was initially linked to the musicians who developed this style: street performers, who had emigrated from northern and northeastern regions, were generally called chorões, “the one who cries,” or chorões cariocas, designating musicians of Rio de Janeiro. They often played on sidewalks in front of bars and squares, or in other places where they could easily gather.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, the term choro was applied to the music played by the choro ensembles, which were first composed of one or two guitars and a solo instrument (commonly, flute or clarinet). 77 As the ensembles gradually left the streets to instead perform in private homes, other instruments were included – the piano among them. Increasing popularity enabled the chorões to perform choro by invitation at home parties, outdoor gatherings, and in bars. Around 1920, these groups were hired to play in lobbies of movie theaters. During the early years of broadcast radio in the 1920s,

75 José Maria Neves, Villa-Lobos, o Choro e os Choros (São Paulo: Musicália S/A. Cultura Musical, 1977), 17.
77 Neves, Villa-Lobos, o Choro e os Choros, 19.
the *choro* ensembles offered its primary access to the Brazilian lower class, who could not afford radios.

The life style of the *chorões* (often referred to as *boêmios*, or bohemians, by local Brazilians) centered on singing, playing, drinking, and engaging in love affairs. Paulo Renato Guérios suggests that their lives followed the bohemian idea depicted by Henri Murger (1822-1861). Guérios states: “the bohemian ethics of *chorões* included at first glance the same elements of those Murger artists in Paris. But the roots show that they were of different ethics, not of the voluntary misery in search of beauty, but a hedonistic ethic that emerged in the midst of absolute necessity and poverty.”\(^\text{78}\)

As mentioned in earlier chapters, Villa-Lobos himself was a *chorão* and played with *choro* ensembles during his youth, maintaining the friendship of some fellow *chorões* until the end of his life. His acquaintance with the *chorões cariocas*, along with his travels throughout Brazil, offered him authentic material for his work. Until his death, Villa-Lobos carried with him the influence of *chorões* and the passion he had for Brazilian culture. This passion fueled a desire to express the musical soul of his country in his compositions, as he conveys in the following descriptions of the philosophy and ideals of a composer:

> Like the performing artist, the composer is frequently accused of a philosophy that can be expressed thus: I live for my art, everything else is of no interest to me. But what is this art if not an expression of humanity and of everything that refers to humanity ... There are three types of composers: those who write “paper-music” according to rules of fashion; those who write to be original and achieve something that others did not achieve and, finally, those who write music because they cannot live without it. Only this third category has value. These composers work toward the ideal, never toward a practical objective. And the artistic consciousness, which is a prerequisite for artistic freedom, imposes on them the duty of making the effort for finding the sincere expression not only of themselves but of humanity. To reach such an expression, the serious composer will have to study the musical heritage of his country, the geography and ethnography of his and other lands, the folklore of his country, either in its literary, poetic, and political aspect, or musical. Only in this matter can he understand the soul of the people. \(^\text{79}\)

Villa-Lobos’s compositional ideal never separated musical creativity from the musical heritage of his country. The close connection that he understood and sought between musical and cultural expression can be truly perceived in his *Choros*.


Villa-Lobos used the word *choro* for the first time in his *Suite Popular Brasileira* (1908-1912). Each movement within the suite carries the word as a complement to the dance-style it was written to represent: *Mazurka-choro* (1908), *Schottisch-choro* (1908), *Valsa-choro* (1912), *Gavota-choro* (1912), and *Chorinho* (compositional date unknown).

In the following decade, Villa-Lobos composed the set of sixteen *Choros* mostly in Rio de Janeiro, \(^80\) during the years that belong to Villa-Lobos’s mature third period (1920 to 1929), according to Adhemar Nóbrega. \(^81\) In this collection, Villa-Lobos applied elements from the *choros*, including simple themes and vibrant rhythms, along with modal scales, melodies, timbres, and rhythms from a variety of indigenous sources. All of these elements are masterfully executed in the *Choros* pieces, which are considered to be some of the most original compositions in Brazilian music of the twentieth century and a major achievement in the expression of the same.

The primary features of *choro* style that influenced Villa-Lobos’s *Choros*, are given in Table 1 below, along with basic performance specifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Main features of <em>choro</em> style.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Melody</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harmony</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^80\) *Choros* no. 9 and *Choros* no. 12 were written during a short visit to Brazil between August and October, 1929.

\(^81\) See Chapter One for discussion of his compositional periods.
Rhythm

Simple, but varied rhythmic patterns are based on folkloric or urban popular dances. Rhythmic patterns are often established in chordal accompaniment. Syncopation is common. The *choro* style presents polyrhythmic treatment.

Structure

The compositional structure of the *choro* pieces is commonly A-B-A, or A-B-A-C(trio or coda)-A.

Performance Practice

Performers often played with a mournful, languid, and sentimental character. Performers commonly improvised through varied treatment of melody, rhythm, and accompaniment.

Ensemble

Ensembles were essentially instrumental. Flute, guitar, and *cavaquinho* were common in early ensembles. Clarinet, saxophone, tambourine, trombone, and other instruments were added at the turn of the century.

Meter

The meter is commonly 2/4, 3/4, and less often in 4/4

Among musical sources other than the *choros*, Villa-Lobos used folkloric material from indigenous tribes, such as the theme of *Choros no. 3*: “Nozani-ná Orekuá,” from the “Perecis [sic]” indigenous tribe (see Figure 1). The composer adapted the theme from this folk song, which was recorded by Roquete Pinto in his 1911 expedition to Rondônia, and even transcribed the words himself in the edition of *Choros no. 3* (Max-Eschig – Paris). Originally, “Nozani-ná” was a lullaby song from the Tupi-guarani language, with no literal translation.

---

82 Neves, *Villa-Lobos, o Choro e os Choros*, 42.
Although the word *Choros* is a plural word in Portuguese, Villa-Lobos always used its plural form to designate each singular piece of this series. To remain faithful to Villa-Lobos’s titles, this study will refer to each *Choros* in its plural form. The following chart shows the composer’s designations as well as the instrumentation for each piece. It also highlights the use of the piano in specific works, including *Choros no. 5* (this chart maintains the order as published in the catalogue of the composer’s works, *Villa-Lobos, Sua Obra*).

Table 2. *Choros* – explanatory chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Choros</em></th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Date and place</th>
<th>Transcription/Arrangement by Villa-Lobos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Choros Bis</em></td>
<td>vl; vlc</td>
<td>1928 - ?</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Choros no. 1</em></td>
<td>guitar solo</td>
<td>1920 - RJ</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Choros no. 2</em></td>
<td>fl; cl</td>
<td>1924 - RJ</td>
<td>Piano (1924)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Choros no. 3</em></td>
<td>men’s choir; cl; fg; sax alto; 3 trp; trb</td>
<td>1925 - SP</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Picapau</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Choros no. 4</em></td>
<td>3 trp; trb</td>
<td>1926 - RJ</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 (continued)
| Choros no. 5  | Alma Brasileira | piano solo | 1925 - RJ | - |
| Choros no. 6  | Choro da Dança | orchestra | 1926 - RJ | - |
| Choros no. 7  | Settimino | fl; ob; cl; sax alto; fg; vl; vlc; tam-tam | 1924 - RJ | - |
| Choros no. 8  | orchestra (piano within ensemble) | 1925 - RJ | - |
| Choros no. 9  | orchestra | 1929 - RJ | Piano transcription |
| Choros no. 10 | Rasga o Coração | orchestra (piano within ensemble) | 1926 - RJ | - |
| Choros no. 11 | piano and orchestra | 1928 - RJ | 2 pianos |
| Choros no. 12 | orchestra (piano within ensemble) | 1929 - RJ | - |
| Choros no. 13 | 2 orchestras and band (scores never found) | 1929 - ? | - |
| Choros no. 14 | orchestra and band (scores never found) | 1928 - ? | - |
| Introdução aos Choros | guitar soloist and orchestra (piano within ensemble) | 1929 - RJ | - |

After transcribing Choros no. 2 for solo piano in 1924, Villa-Lobos included the piano in at least one ensemble of the series, with the exception of Choros no. 9 (see chart above). One cannot determine whether he used the instrument in Choros no. 13 and no. 14 because the scores have not been found. Choros no. 5 is the one piece of this set that Villa-Lobos composed for solo piano. In Choros no. 8, the composer includes two pianos within the full orchestra: one is employed as soloist, while the other is a prepared piano.

---

84 Villa-Lobos conceived the set to be performed entirely. Following his conception, the Introdução aos Choros should be performed first, closing the performance with Choros Bis.
used as a percussive instrument. The piano is treated with high virtuosity in Choros no. 11, for piano and orchestra. Brazilian pianist José Vieira Brandão (1822-1961) premiered the piece in 1942 in Rio de Janeiro. Although Choros no. 11 is dedicated to Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982), this famous pianist and great admirer of Villa-Lobos never had the chance to perform it.

Heitor Villa-Lobos was not the first composer to use the choro style as a model for piano compositions. Preceding him in utilizing choro style for the piano were composers Antônio Callado (1848-1880), Ernesto Nazareth (1863-1934), and Chiquinha Gonzaga (1847-1935), the last two of which were very well-trained pianists. Villa-Lobos, Callado, Nazareth, and Gonzaga all contributed to the increasing popularity of the piano in Brazil and the transference of choro style to the piano. These composers inspired Villa-Lobos, and according to Neves, similar compositional material and patterns of structure in their works also appear in Choros no. 5. However Villa-Lobos appears to have used the choro influence more conscientiously, exploring the style more deeply and blending it in technical ways that had heretofore never been attempted.

Villa-Lobos made his expressive intentions overt through the use of subtitles for certain pieces of the set, as is perhaps most clearly evidenced through his subtitle Alma Brasileira (Brazilian Soul) for Choros no. 5. The subtitle for Choros no. 8, O Choro da Dança (The Dance Choro), highlights the representation of the choro style, and the word “dança” corresponds to his depiction of the carnival of Rio de Janeiro. In the case of Choros no. 10, the subtitle Rasga o Coração, which could be roughly translated as “tearing someone’s heart apart,” refers to the sentimental tune composed by Catulo da Paixão Cearense that Villa-Lobos uses in the piece.

This introduction has provided a brief overview of Villa-Lobos’ Choros, but more importantly, it has also provided a general idea of the background of the chorões and their significance to the creation of the set, as well as specific uses of piano in the series. We will now examine a description of noteworthy features of Choros no. 5, with special consideration of its Brazilian elements and interpretations thereof, in relation to the composer’s conceptions and as insights for future performance.

---

85 Villa-Lobos’ use of prepared piano (the first time in Brazil) specifies paper between the strings and the hammers.
Choros no. 5 – Alma Brasileira (Brazilian Soul):
Significant Brazilian Features and Interpretive Aspects

Choros no. 5, which was dedicated to Arnaldo Guinle (1884-1963), appears to show a great similarity with the choro played in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, based on research that has been conducted on this style, as well as the composer’s own descriptions. In fact, among all sixteen Choros, Villa-Lobos thought that Choros no. 5 most accurately represented Brazilian music and culture. Among the important Brazilian features that he may have had in mind, it is impossible to isolate and analyze all of those that can serve as tools for meaningful interpretations of Choros no. 5. Therefore, basic elements of rhythm, melody, and harmony have been selected for a detailed analysis, while others will be only briefly noted.

According to Lisa Peppercorn, Choros no. 5 “is probably one of Villa-Lobos’ most expressive piano works.” Together with Choros no. 1, it is perhaps the closest work to the choro style, as Villa-Lobos himself suggested, and to Brazilian urban popular music. These connections have likely contributed to its establishment as an important piece in the repertoire of Brazilian pianists. Although the piece does not quote popular or folkloric themes, Villa-Lobos recreates the style of choro in a magnificent way. In this masterpiece one can almost “see” or certainly hear the young composer performing with the chorões in the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

When Villa-Lobos created the set, use of the piano was natural to him, since this instrument had – and still has – great influence on the development of urban popular music in Brazil, and Villa-Lobos obviously wanted to reflect its importance to this style. Its usage is also related to classical traditions, which were influential in South American cities.

As mentioned above, the choros composed by other Brazilian composers and the Choros of Villa-Lobos share many similarities. An example of similar approach is the

José Maria Neves, Villa-Lobos, o Choro e os Choros (São Paulo: Musicália S/A. Cultura Musical, 1977), 47.
Ibid. 48.
melodic treatment (see Table 1). The overall characteristics of Brazilian melody are the result of a continuous syncretism of varied musical influences that have neither been fully traced in the research on Villa-Lobos, nor that of other composers influenced by Brazilian folk and popular music. Based on my own study of Villa-Lobos’ music, as well as descriptions of Brazilian music by other scholars, I have found that Brazilian melody is generally lyrical and often notated and performed in a legato manner; it is commonly built on or supported by arpeggiated chords. Within Brazilian art music, the melody tends to be basically diatonic, unless the work, or a portion of the work, draws upon folk, popular urban, or indigenous material. In that case, modal scales are the foundation for the melody, and even a combination of diatonic and modal scales might be used. The melody can be both conjunct and disjunct, with the use of non-harmonic tones and chromaticism, and it can be displayed in the low register of the instrument. Melodic motives or patterns are often repeated, in sequence, or with variations of pitch or rhythm; these motives or patterns can follow the rhythmic pattern or can be combined in a melodic-rhythmic motive or pattern. In piano compositions based on the *choro*, including those of Villa-Lobos, many of these traits can be found. Melodically simple and lyrical phrases, which are Brazilian in character, are common in his works. The melodies are generally built over methodically organized, broken chords. The phrases can be full of virtuosity, and the melody is often played in the lower register of the instrument, with the rhythmic accompaniment in the right hand, as is typical of *choro*. Sometimes the melody is alternated between registers. Another *choro* characteristic is the alignment between important notes in the melody and the accompanying chords: either the melody is vertically aligned with the supporting chord, or the chord is rhythmically displaced following the melodic note.

*Choros no. 5* follows this treatment of melody, with a persistent rhythmic pattern accentuated by the use of triplets. Another element of *choro* style in the piece is the use of the bass as a strong foundation for the harmony, as well as a distinct melodic line in a polyphonic texture. In addition to specifying the key and harmonic construction, the chords also carry specific rhythmic patterns. Villa-Lobos enriches the style with parallel movement of triads and seventh chords, as well as complex harmonic blocks created by an aggregation of pitches or clusters, as will be discussed next in further detail.
Rhythm, Harmony, and Melody

The Choros represent a new form of musical composition in which are summarized the different modalities of Brazilian music, indigenous and popular, having as main elements Rhythm [sic] or any typical melody of popular character, which incidentally appears from time to time [,] always processed according to the author's personality. - Villa-Lobos.89

Even though the statement above is written as an explanatory note in the score of Choros no. 8, it can be applied to Choros no. 5. This statement clarifies that Villa-Lobos thought of the Choros as a new form or genre, not merely adaptations of a style, and that he viewed indigenous or popular rhythm and melody to lie at the center of the genre. It is evident that he used rhythm and melody, along with harmony, to achieve a representation of the essence of Brazilian music and culture through the Choros. As he believed, some rhythmic patterns can represent and be understood as a strong feature of a particular culture: just as Bantu rhythmic patterns are associated with particular African cultures or ethnic groups, samba rhythm patterns are directly linked to Brazilian culture.

As the composer himself suggested, rhythmic patterns are central to his musical language, sometimes determining the overall rhythmic structure. In Choros no. 5, the choro-based rhythm is one of the strongest elements to affect the mood, character, and flow of the music. In this and other pieces of the set, rhythmic patterns are often syncopated, as in Brazilian urban popular and folkloric music. This syncopation is a fundamental part of the rhythmic construction. The perception of the syncopation and its correct execution can be the key element to set the appropriate flavor of a performance.

---

As shown in Figure 2, Choros no. 5 begins with the bass note sustaining a low E while chords move in a series of syncopated patterns in the right hand. As suggested above, one of the typical characteristics of the choro influence in piano writing is the placement of the fundamental pitch of the chord in the bass, with other pitches presented in the right hand or in another voice. In the first two measures, the syncopation in the right hand establishes the rhythmic flavor of the piece and seems to recall the image of a guitar playing on the corner of a street in Rio de Janeiro. The top notes of the chords become an expressive sub-voice, a melancholic addition to the main idea. Villa-Lobos, despite the verticality of these chords, especially realizes the poetry of the choro through his beautiful ascending melody marked “dolente” (painful, expressive), suggesting that the interpreter should perform this melody with a sensitive use of rubato and with special attention to the syncopation, as well as the tenuto and dynamic markings. In these opening measures the composer captures the loose and unhurried character of the choro, as further implied by the tempo indication, Moderato.

90 This and all subsequent score excerpts in this chapter are drawn from The Piano Music of Heitor Villa-Lobos: A New Edition Revised and Edited by the Composer (New York, Consolidated Music Publishers, 1973,) unless otherwise specified.
In measure 3 (see Figure 3), the syncopated chords are transferred to the left hand. When this occurs, the main melody appears in the right hand and is accompanied by the previous chords (the main melody in Figure 3 is indicated by the large horizontal block in red, while the imitation or echo of melodic notes in the top notes of the accompanying chords is made clear by the small inner blocks in red). A change of emphasis is generated by the rhythmic pattern in the accompaniment, which gives the melody a sense of rubato, in part through the echo of the melodic note in the left-hand chords in measures 3 and 4. Although the melodic note is sustained in the right hand (as the “b” in measure 3), the sub-voice in the left-hand chords should still be heard in the syncope played under it. The crescendo in measure 4 emphasizes the sub-voice echoes. Also in Figure 3, the main melody is constructed over a series of syncopes allied to uneven triplets, which further emphasizes the melody’s choro character. The constancy of the rhythm, which is basically invariable, is another feature of choro that is demonstrated in Choros no. 5.
The significance of Villa-Lobos’ rhythmic construction, in this work and others, is underscored by Paulo de Tarso Salles, who states:

The rhythm, in much of Villalobian [sic] musical production, is a key element that coordinates various aspects concerning the structure of the composition. It naturally operates in conjunction with harmonic, textural and melodic factors, but definitely it is the key to the compositional assembly processes, as in the techniques of juxtaposition, superposition and symmetry breaking used by Villa-Lobos.\(^{91}\)

As perceived, the *ostinato*-like rhythmic patterns bind together all of the important elements in the composition, including melody and harmony, and becomes the most powerful tool for achieving a convincing performance of the piece.

Figure 4. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 13-17. Polyphony.

In the second part of the first section (section A, mm. 1-24) of this piece, which is in A-B-C-A form, there is an intensification of flow by the insertion of another rhythmic line, common to Brazilian popular music, in measure 13 (this rhythmic line is marked by the horizontal bracket in Figure 4). This right-hand pattern of sixteenths is supported by

---

broken chords in the left hand and includes pitches that sometimes emphasize the seventh of the chord: the highest notes of the line alternate between the weak and strong parts of the beats (see the vertical brackets in red in Figure 4). This alternation can be perceived clearly by observing the shifting stress of the G pitch in this second voice. Considering the alignment of sixteenth notes in this pattern with the chords in the left hand, the sense of syncopation is enhanced, and the melody is amplified by octaves in measure 15. The polyphonic and polyrhythmic treatment favors the sonorities of different instruments performing in this section: the listener may imagine a solo instrument playing the main melody in the first voice (from m. 14), another instrument performing the sixteenths, and the guitar emphasizing the low E, followed by the chords, as features of *choro* style.

As can be seen in Figure 5, a variant of this sixteenth-note pattern prepares the modulation, in measure 24, to E Major. In this modulation to section B, which begins in measure 25, the rhythm is maintained by the same pattern with the addition of the leading tone of E Major. The rhythmic idea in the left hand is now aligned harmonically with descending three-note segments (the first of which is indicated by the horizontal bracket in red in Figure 5) that together emphasize the E Major chord progression – $I_4^5$-$vi^5$-$I_4^5$-$I_2^2$-$vi^7$ – (indicated by the vertical brackets in red) that leads to the next section.

Figure 5. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 23-24. Modulation to E Major.

Figure 6 shows the rhythmic pattern of the left hand in the beginning of section B in the key of E Major. After the two bars of modulation, the rhythm gains more importance. Villa-Lobos repeatedly uses this type of rhythmic pattern, which is typical in
Brazilian music. He also incorporates it widely within *Choros no. 2* as well as in several of his compositions for piano (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 26-27. Left-hand rhythm.

In Figure 7 one may observe rhythmic similarities found in another work by Villa-Lobos. This short example is extracted from “Festa no Sertão” (“Feast in the Hinterland”), *no 3* from *Ciclo Brasileiro (Brazilian Cycle)*, a work for piano composed in 1937.

Figure 7. Villa-Lobos: *Ciclo Brasileiro no. 3*, “Festa no Sertão,” mm. 131-134.

The rhythmic pattern shown in Figure 8 leads to the third section of *Choros no. 5*, section C, which begins in measure 34. To some extent, the introduction of section C is already announced at measure 30 by the octaves in F#. Despite the change in section C to a strong, martial character with an even stronger accentuation created by the intensified dynamics, thick chordal voicing, and emphatic separation of the chords with rests, the rhythmic idea of the three chords in Figure 8 is very similar to that in the introduction to section C shown in Figure 9, although the chords type are different; moreover, the upper
pitches of the chords in both instances emphasize the same note: F sharp. Although the F natural in the left-hand chord of Figure 9 suggests another harmony, the bass note of the chord is F sharp and the upper note in the right hand is also F sharp, recalling the F sharp emphasized in the treble line in measure 30 (Figure 8). Villa-Lobos often added other pitches to the harmony, creating a sound block. Although the chord is a VII₆, the pitches of which fall on black piano keys on the piano, the composer added two other “white-key” pitches: F and G natural.

Figure 8. Villa-Lobos: Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira), mm. 29-30, in E Major.

In section C (see its beginning in Figure 10), the marcha-rancho is the dominant rhythm. Marcha-rancho is one of the favorite rhythms played during Carnival, along with samba. Originally, the first compositions that used marcha-rancho were written in 2/4 and with the common tempo of Moderato. Villa-Lobos writes this section in 4/4, but he specifies Movimento giusto di marcia, moderato, (see Figures 9 and 10). In this

---

92 The first marcha-rancho is Ô Abre-Alas (1899), a composition by Chiquinha Gonzaga.
section, Villa-Lobos incorporates the *marcha-rancho* into an indigenous-like rhythm that can be heard within the melody (Figure 10, in the red horizontal brackets) and maintains this rhythm for another 10 measures, after which he prepares the recapitulation of the first section (section A). He calls for an outlined melody, loudly singing, when he indicates *Le chant en dehors*.

Casa Vieira Machado (Vieira Machado House of Editors) presented two editions of *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)* in 1926. In this material, which can be found at the Villa-Lobos Museum, corrections made by the composer include a modification to this introduction (shown in Figure 9). Rather than the notation for the left hand to be played *in loco*, as seen in the two editions of 1926, the composer specified that it should be played an octave below.

Figure 10. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 34-39. Beginning of section C - *Marcha-rancho* as basic rhythmic pattern, with melody in brackets.

One peculiarity that affects the performance of this rhythmic pattern is the accent generated by the *sforzato* that sometimes occurs on the weak part of the beat. Another
A special element that must be considered is Villa-Lobos’s use of clusters or blocks of black over white keys, with a percussive effect, essential for creating the mood.

A character of melancholy seems to pervade the piece, as suggested by the Brazilian piano teacher Marília Laboissière (unknown dates), in her excellent study of the interpretation of this *Choros*. In fact, she emphasizes the unanimity of thought about the work’s emotional character by comparing the descriptions of four performers – Sônia Rubinsky (b.1957), Anna Stella Chic (1925-2009), Miguel Proença (b. 1939) and Murilo Santos (b. 1931) – who all assert that the overall character of the work’s beginning, from measures 1 to 11, carries a “melancholic, intimate and mournful mood [that] dictates the musical idea of the whole work.”

The initial key (E minor) accentuates the moodiness – and specifically the melody – of this piece, which seems to express sorrow and even anguish. The melody is built on a succession of three inverted minor chords followed by two major chords (Em-Am-Bm-C-D) within an Aeolian mode (natural minor scale), or a fragmentation of this mode or scale, as one can see in measures 1 to 3 in Figure 11. In this passage, one might poetically imagine a sliver of hope rising and then disappearing when, in the next bar, everything falls again to the low E. The interval of a minor second in the main melody in measure 3 can be understood as a sigh – perhaps of sadness or remorse – which will be repeated throughout *Choros no. 5*.

Figure 11. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 1-3. Minor chords followed by major chords.

---

The melody in this *Choros* cannot be associated with any specific urban popular or folk-like tune. It is not a quote, direct or indirect, of any known melody. However, it is deeply connected to the popular Brazilian spirit. Villa-Lobos’s thematic material is not confined to a single model, which means that in *Choros no. 5* we have elements that remind us of chorões on the street, the sounds of carnival, or even a melody of indigenous character. The melody in this *Choros* is very close to the *seresta* (a Brazilian serenade). In fact, the *choro* and *seresta* share stylistic traits, but are performed by different ensembles. While the *choro* is typically instrumental, the *seresta* calls for a singer. Both are very close to popular Brazilian music with the use of persistent rhythm, especially in the accompaniment. The rhythmic character is built over syncopated and uneven triplets. The melody follows the general contour of conjunct and disjunct motion, lyrical and legato phrases, repeated by simple transposition of the melodic motive. The melody typically can be heard as a flute or clarinet, or as in the *seresta*, a voice.

It is necessary to remember, as a key to the interpretation of this *Choros*, how the chorões lived, longing for the land and the loved ones that they had left behind, with melancholy and sadness. José Maria Neves emphasizes the relationship between the mournfulness and other expressions of the Brazilian people and Villa-Lobos’ melodies in the set of *Choros* as a whole:

The composer intended, with these works, to summarize the sensitivity of his people, making use of everything offered by the populário [sic] and the folklore of his country. His melodies seem sometimes to have the mournful tone of the popular song, the euphoria of the dances, sometimes the simple sweetness of children’s songs. They always keep close liaison with the singing of the mestizo in his freedom of movement in ways other than those of Western music and its strict symmetry.  

With Neves’s descriptions in mind, one might imagine that the melody of *Choros no. 5* symbolizes the Brazilian soul in such way that it can be associated with various emotional states evoked by the interpreter.

In his compositions Villa-Lobos tried to be as specific as he could in order to express what he wanted. For example, in his notation of the melody and rhythm in *Choros no. 5*, a proof of his precision is the specification of uneven triplets in measures 4-

---

9, which create cross-rhythms with the duple divisions in the left hand (see the triplets bracketed in red in Figure 12). The precision of these rhythmic contrasts requires precision in performance. However, the composer’s specificity in notating the rhythm exactly as he wished also adds to the sense of *rubato* and rhythmic unsteadiness, characteristic of *choro*. In section A and in its recapitulation, Villa-Lobos marked “*Lento*, with *rallentando*” at the end of the main phrase. This specification further suggests that the melody should be one of languid sadness, through pulling back from and moving toward the cadence. The composer also uses expressive markings such as *dolente* (dolorous), as mentioned above and *murmurando e ritmico* (whispering and rhythmic), which appear in the opening measures (see Figure 11).

Figure 12. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm 4-9. Uneven triplets.

Another feature of Brazilian popular music found in Villa-Lobos’s treatment is the repetition and transposition of short melodic motives, often set to similar rhythmic patterns. For example, the primary melodic motive in the E Major section, as shown in red brackets in Figure 13, is constructed on the varied repetition of the intervals of a minor third in the following measure (this sequence is repeated in measures 26-27). Like many composers of classical music, Villa-Lobos created continuity and change by
transposing and varying repeated motives, but he adds a particular flavor of Brazilian popular music (perhaps Afro-based popular music) through the emphatic repetition of short motives. These melodic motives are enhanced by the use of similar rhythms, and in this case, similar accentuation. The melody is constructed over chords in syncopation with a slight variation (see Figures 12 and 13). As seen in Figure 12, the accentuation is mainly over the downbeat and over the longest note of the uneven triplets.

Figure 13. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 25-28. Repetition of Short Melodic-Rhythmic Motive.

Villa-Lobos also uses exact repetition, or varied repetition, of other melodic or rhythmic patterns, as in the sixteenth-note pattern that forms the secondary line under the main melodic motive shown in Figure 13. The sixteenth-note repetition can be grouped in several ways, as a continual repetition of: 1) the pitches b’, d#’, c#’; 2) the pitches d#’, c#’, and b’ (beginning on the second sixteenth note of m. 26), or 3) a three-beat pattern of sixteenths (within 4/4) beginning with the b’ of measure 25. Each of these groupings of sixteenth-note repetition creates a shifting rhythmic layer within this passage. Regardless of the grouping of sixteenths, Villa-Lobos disrupts the pattern(s) at the end of measure 26,
beginning the pattern(s) anew in measure 27. This disruption allows the return to the octave (b’- b”) of the primary melodic motive on the downbeat of measure 27 and helps the performer to emphasize this octave by making arm movement easier.

Villa-Lobos interrupts the sixteenth-note pattern, or patterns, in a different manner in measure 30. To enhance his move to the last beat as he creates a change of mood, he suspends the pattern momentarily with a broken-chord flourish before moving to the sixteenth-note b’ (as indicated by the horizontal red line in Figure 14); this move to b’ echoes the accented b” of the upper voice, as a broken octave (b”-b’) is created. Again, the composer uses a variant of the main melodic motive in this measure, repeating the pitch f” in a similar rhythmic pattern as seen in measures 25-28. As he maintains the dotted-rhythm pattern of the left-hand chords, he adds melodic interest to the accented pitches at the top of the chords; he also includes dynamic nuances (including the off-beat \textit{sf} and sudden shift to \textit{p} marked with blue squares in Figure 14) and slows the tempo (marking “rall.” and “rit.” at the second and fourth beats). Without fully breaking the overall consistency of multiple motivic-rhythmic patterns in this passage, as shown in Figures 13 and 14, Villa-Lobos creates subtle variants, disruptions, and nuances to add interest and subtly change the color and direction of the music.

Figure 14. Villa-Lobos: \textit{Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)}, mm. 29-30. Disruption of 16th-note pattern and characteristic dynamic markings.

The alternation and superposition of blocks or clusters of black keys and those of white keys was previously acknowledged as one characteristic of Villa-Lobos’s writing for piano. In measures 37-39 of section C, as illustrated in Figure 15, he makes use of this
“physical” aspect of the keyboard, with the alternation of vii7 (d#-f#-a#-c#) in the right hand with the C Major chord in the left-hand. He uses similar alternations throughout this section and during the last transition before the recapitulation, in measures 70-74.

Figure 15. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 37-39. Section C - superposition of black and white keys.

The next example (Figure 16), presents a harmonic sub-section (mm. 46-64), used by Villa-Lobos to finalize his section C. The climax of the piece can be visualized in this small section, which is intensified through the use of polyrhythm between thickly voiced right- and left-hand chords. The composer creates the high point of the composition and section through the combination of several musical devices: 1) he “amplifies” the uneven triplets through the use of chords or more extensive use of octaves in the first four measures of the left hand (the triplets were given in single pitches or occasional octaves in previous measures); 2) as suggested above, he creates layers of syncopation within and between the hands; and 3) most importantly, he enhances the primary melodic motive with the heavy accents and rich sounds of thick chord voicing (rather than single pitches), moving to the dynamic climax of *fff* at measure 50 (as marked in the red square in Figure 16). At this dynamic peak, in a more dramatic context, Villa-Lobos sustains the high g natural (g””) of a variant of his melodic motive (here, a major third, g”-eb””, to minor second, eb”-d””) completing the motive as he trails off dynamically to begin to move towards the transition to section A. In this small sub-section, Villa-Lobos summarizes many of the elements he applied in this and other Brazilian-influenced *Choros*: the consistent repetition (with subtle variations) of rhythms or rhythmic patterns; the use and
varied repetition of simple melodies, sometimes in the form of short melodic or melodic-rhythmic motives; and the use of sustained bass notes and low melodic basses.

Figure 16. Villa-Lobos: *Choros no. 5 (Alma Brasileira)*, mm. 46-51. End of section C.

Within the set of *Choros*, according to Gerard Béhague, *Choros no. 5*, “represents the best portrayal of the distinctive serenading aspect of the popular *choro* style.”95 Its lyricism, along with its effective rhythmic pattern brings to the performance of Brazilian art music the popular performance practice that escapes from the rigidity of a regular time meter. In this piece, the most common elements of popular Brazilian music are synthesized. The features explored in this chapter provide a solid beginning for studying and preparing the performance of the piece, whether the performer is a student or professional.

CHAPTER FOUR

Bachianas Brasileiras no.4 (Brazilian Bachianas no.4)

Bachianas: Introduction

The oppositional moods in Villa-Lobos’s personality appear to be reflected in many of his works. Musical contrasts, including sharp distinctions of mood or affect, dynamics, such as sudden contrast between \( p \) and \( ff \), timbre, tempo, and duration (long-short pitches) permeate the set of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* (Brazilian Bachianas). For Paulo de Tarso Salles, however, such juxtapositions were related less to the composer’s personality than to the “dualities” (dualidades) found in Baroque music.

The music of Villa-Lobos, as many of his contemporaries, displays a certain correspondence with the dualities of the Baroque aesthetic, the alternation of ambivalence such as long-short, fast-slow, thick-thin, tutti-solo, just as we find in the music of Vivaldi.\(^96\)

Indeed, Villa-Lobos consciously identified with Baroque aesthetics and neoclassical trends of the early 20th century by structuring the *Bachianas Brasileiras* like Baroque suites and writing in what he considered to be the style of his favorite composer, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Villa-Lobos admired Bach, a composer he thought to be the most influential of all times. Villa-Lobos believed in an existing affinity between the music of Bach and melodic procedures, harmonic treatment, and instrumental counterpoint found in Brazilian popular music. He sought to reflect this affinity in his *Bachianas Brasileiras* (Brazilian Bachianas). Although he never specified the traits of this affinity, for him the connection was based on characteristics of people and nature. For Villa-Lobos, the music of Bach was an inexhaustible source of folklore, specifically connected to Bach’s Germanic heritage; however he also saw in Bach’s work the metaphor of a universal fountain, which represented not only one nation but rather a universal nation.\(^97\) Nevertheless, the *Bachianas Brasileiras*, while drawing inspiration from this Bachian fountain, takes on new particular characters because they reflect


Brazilian feelings, moods, behavior (including the composer’s own), and nature.\textsuperscript{98} Although there are disagreements in the literature about how \textit{Bachianas} is connected (or unrelated) to the music of Bach, some Baroque affinities are undeniable. Gerard Béhague wrote:

Intuitively, Villa-Lobos perceived clear affinities between certain contrapuntal textures and rhythmic procedures in Bach and those of certain aspects of Brazilian folk and popular music. The \textit{Bachianas} were not intended, however, as stylized renditions of the music of Bach but as an attempt to adapt to Brazilian music, with great freedom, certain baroque \textit{[sic]} harmonic and contrapuntal procedures. \textsuperscript{99}

In Villa-Lobos’s music there is a certain symbolism in the choices he made; to use specific instruments or well-known tunes, or to depict elements of nature. For instance, the instruments he selected as performing forces throughout both sets of \textit{Choros} and \textit{Bachianas} sometimes carry a personal significance: the guitar and cello, Villa-Lobos’s main instruments, were featured in several works, including \textit{Choros no. 1}, written for solo guitar, and \textit{Bachianas no. 1}, for Cello Ensemble. By learning how to play these instruments, Villa-Lobos experienced his first immersion in music. The guitar, a prevalent instrument in Brazil, could also be viewed as symbolic of its national culture as a whole. Adhemar Nóbrega emphasizes the “symbolic significance,”\textsuperscript{100} and this significance certainly relates to the sounds of nature, melodies, and rhythms that he heard during his journeys throughout Brazil.

Villa-Lobos did not reproduce recorded sounds of nature in his music, or quote folk tunes with exactitude but instead used them as basis for re-creation. As Stravinsky explains in the following passage (drawn from a translation of his \textit{Poétique musicale}), sounds of nature are often distinguished from music, and it is the composer who organizes and transforms these sounds into a coherent musical form:

These sounds of nature suggest to us a song, but still are not, in themselves, music... These sounds are promises of music, and it takes a human to register them: a man sensitive to the voices of nature, obviously, but who also feels the need to organize them, and who is

\textsuperscript{98} Gerard Béhague, \textit{Heitor Villa-Lobos; The Search for Brazil’s Musical Soul} (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 105.
\textsuperscript{99} Béhague, \textit{Heitor Villa-Lobos; The Search for Brazil’s Musical Soul}, 106.
This aptitude for transformation of raw materials, to which Stravinsky refers, was inherent in Villa-Lobos. He had the ability to use sounds originating from nature or other sources, as well as appealing tunes and rhythms, and transfigure them into organized musical structures representative of his country.

*Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* is a good example of Villa-Lobos’s mastery of transformation. This work differs from *Choros no. 5* not only in structure, but also in the manner in which he modifies melodies and rhythmic patterns based on Brazilian music. The main difference between *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* and *Choros no. 5* is the fact that *Choros no. 5* is a generalized expression of Brazilian culture, while *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* is a vivid portrait of specific groups of people and representative nature sounds, especially from the Northeastern part of Brazil. When composing the *Choros*, Villa-Lobos used large orchestras; he turned to a specific style of composition, and was not always concerned about tonality. With the *Bachianas*, he wrote for smaller ensembles, always taking the tonality in consideration, and the connection with Bach’s atmosphere. With *Choros*, he turned to the exuberance of Brazil, and with *Bachianas*, he turned to the essence of Brazilian people.

By the time Villa-Lobos began composing the *Bachianas*, he already had achieved a great success with *Choros* and had developed a new, complex process of composition. However, the composer maintains the same density and meaningfulness but with economy of means, carefully planned textures, and an expressive amount of Brazilian cultural elements represented in *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*. He juxtaposes his alterations of folk or indigenous elements with evocations of the musical atmosphere of Bach in the *Bachianas*, each of which is written for different ensembles. Because the composer believed in a strong correlation between Brazilian folk expression and Bachian “universalità,” these juxtapositions may have seemed less distinct to him than they might appear to present-day interpreters. Villa-Lobos made overt the Bachian-Brazilian contrast, or combination, in the two titles that he gave to each movement within the pieces

---

or suites of the Bachianas: one title in remembrance of Bachian or Baroque movements or dances – such as Coral or Giga; the other, a Brazilian title – such as Canto do Sertão. The exception is Bachianas no. 9, which is also the last one composed. He also uses common Bachian designations for both movements – Prelude and Fugue – without using a Brazilian title. Among several movements that he designates as fugues is the fourth movement of Bachianas no. 1, Fugue (Conversa – Chatting), in which Villa-Lobos uses fugal technique to paint a Brazilian image as he tries to represent a conversation between four chorões, according to the composer himself.

A brief overview of the set of Bachianas is provided in the chart below, which includes the Bachian and Brazilian movement titles as well as the specification of the use of the piano within each set. Note that Villa-Lobos transcribed four of his Bachianas either for either solo piano, two pianos, or for the instrument or voice with the piano (no. 1, 2, 3, and 5)

Table 3. Bachianas Brasileiras (Brazilian Bachianas) – explanatory charts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachiana</th>
<th>Bachian title</th>
<th>Brazilian title</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
<th>Date and place</th>
<th>Transcriptions/Arrangements by Villa-Lobos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. 1</td>
<td>Introdução (Introduction)</td>
<td>Embolada\textsuperscript{102}</td>
<td>Cello ensemble</td>
<td>1954 – RJ</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prelúdio (Prelude)</td>
<td>Modinha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuga (Fugue)</td>
<td>Conversa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 2</td>
<td>Prelúdio (Prelude)</td>
<td>O canto do Capadócio\textsuperscript{103}</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>1930 – SP</td>
<td>Cello and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aria (Aria)</td>
<td>O canto da nossa terra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cello and piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dança (Dance)</td>
<td>Lembrança do sertão\textsuperscript{104}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Piano solo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tocata</td>
<td>O trenzinho do caipira\textsuperscript{105}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cello and piano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 (continued)

\textsuperscript{102} Emboladas is the term that designates a poetic-musical process that occurs in various dances.
\textsuperscript{103} Capadócio is an adjective describing one who has canaille ways, a cheater, or impostor.
\textsuperscript{104} Sertão is the word applied to Brazilian arid regions, away from the coast. They are sparsely populated in the countryside of Brazil.
\textsuperscript{105} Caipira is the word that describes the inhabitant of the countryside or fields; a term referent to people with little education and rustic manners.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Prelude/Prelúdio</th>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Music Family</th>
<th>Year/Location</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ponçio/Ponteio</td>
<td>Piano and orchestra</td>
<td>1938 – RJ</td>
<td>2 pianos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fantasia/Devaneio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aria/Modinhas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tocata/Picapau</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Introdução/Prelúdio</td>
<td>Piano solo</td>
<td>1941 – RJ</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coral/Canto do Sertão</td>
<td></td>
<td>1941 – RJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aria/Cantiga</td>
<td></td>
<td>1935 – RJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dança/Miúinho</td>
<td></td>
<td>1930 – RJ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cantilena/Aria</td>
<td>Soprano solo and cello ensemble</td>
<td>1938 - ?</td>
<td>Canto and violão; Canto and piano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Martelo</td>
<td></td>
<td>1945 - ?</td>
<td>Canto and piano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Choro/Aria</td>
<td>Flute and bassoon</td>
<td>1938 - ?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fantasia</td>
<td>Allegro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ponteio/Prelúdio</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>1942 - RJ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giga/Quadrilha caipira</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tocata/Desafio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuga/Conversa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prelúdio</td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>1944 - RJ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aria/Modinhas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tocata/Catira Batida</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuga/Conversa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>String orchestra or choir a cappella</td>
<td>1945 – NY</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

106 Martelo can also be called a ‘desafio.’ It is essentially a poetic challenge.
Between 1930 and 1941, Villa-Lobos composed *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* for piano, with the first two movements written in 1941. He also orchestrated the four movements in 1941, according to the Villa-Lobos Museum catalogue. However, the dates of composition are controversial in literature. Vasco Mariz indicates that the work was composed from 1930 to 1936, and orchestrated in 1941. Alternatively, Adhemar Nóbrega gives 1930 as its date of composition, having its première in 1939, by pianist José Vieira Brandão.

*Bachianas no. 4* for piano represents the composer’s exceptional ability to convey an appealing musical idea behind the notes. Four topics will be discussed in the next chapters: 1) the construction of the piece over borrowed thematic material; 2) the imagination and intuition revealed in this work; 3) association of images, and 4) the overall mood of the piece. From the perspective of the performer, this discussion can aid in the process of interpretation of an individual movement or of all four movements.

I – Prelúdio (Introdução)

Thematic Material – “The Musical Offering of Villa-Lobos”

The “Musical Offering” could be an appropriate sub-title for Villa-Lobos’s *Prelúdio (Introdução)* (*Prelude [Introduction]*) because of the thematic similarities found between this first movement and J.S. Bach’s *Musical Offering* (*Musikalisches Opfer*), BWV 1079 – particularly the small motive that initiates Bach’s work, as well as the chromaticism existing in both pieces. David Appleby reinforces this idea when he states that “the Prelúdio is the most obviously baroque of the four movements and begins with a quotation of the principal theme in Bach’s *Musical Offering*, usually referred to as the ‘Royal Theme.’”

---

107 Mariz, *Villa-Lobos, o Homem e a Obra*, 181.
108 Nóbrega, *As Bachianas Brasileiras de Villa-Lobos*, 67. As it was not possible to locate a record of this performance, this research will accept the dates published by the Villa-Lobos Museum in his official catalogue of works, which are consistent with the dates mentioned in the published scores and demonstrated here in the previous chart of the *Bachianas*.
On the other hand, in his study of the *Bachianas*, Adhemar Nóbrega specifically claims that it is not possible to perceive any Bachian motives in the set or to assume that there are similarities between structures or adaptations of motives, contradicting the statement cited above by Appleby. Moreover, Nóbrega suggests that there are no similarities between Villa-Lobos’s movements and those of Bach. Despite these assertions by Nóbrega, the resemblance of ideas between Bach and Villa-Lobos is remarkable, especially at the beginning of the *Prelúdio (Introdução)*. Perhaps Villa-Lobos did not intend to fully use any specific themes or ideas by Bach, but similarities between the “Royal Theme” in the first measure of the *Prelúdio* and the first part of the theme used in Bach’s *Musical Offering* are clear.

Figure 17 shows the theme Bach used for the *Musical Offering*: the *Thema Regium*, “theme of the King,” which was presented to him by Frederick II of Prussia on the occasion of Bach’s invitation to Potsdam, in 1747. Figure 18 gives the first measure of the *Prelúdio (Introdução)*, in b minor. The first five pitches in the right hand, which correspond to the first five pitches of Bach’s theme, are bracketed. In comparison to the beginning of Bach’s theme, Villa-Lobos uses these first five pitches in diminution and changes the interval between the pitches four and five, marked with narrows, also dividing the idea in two voices.

Figure 17. J.S. Bach: *Thema Regium*, from the *Musical Offering*.
Villa-Lobos adapts the first five pitches of the *Thema Regium*, with the final 7th modified, and repeats this beautiful motive throughout the first section (section A, mm. 1-18). The initial pitch in measures 1-4 of the Prelúdio begins two different lines in soprano and alto voices, as we can see more fully in Figure 19. Villa-Lobos creates a sequence of seconds (major and minor) in the alto voice as a counter-melody to the main thematic outline in the soprano voice. Although a binary form would be more consistent with Baroque suites, one must emphasize that *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* was not intended to be written as suites but rather as a set of pieces resembling the atmosphere of Bach. The form of the *Prelúdio* (Prelude) is A (mm. 1-18), B (mm. 19-32), and C (mm 33-41).

---

110 All of the examples of the *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* for piano used in this chapter were taken from the scores found in Villa-Lobos: *O Piano e as Bachianas*. New Edition Revised by Sônia Rubinsky (São Paulo: Irmãos Vitale, 2009).
Although the two consecutive fourths - followed by the fifth - opening the bass line are not characteristic of Baroque counterpoint, Villa-Lobos built the bass line in these four measures in the manner of a Baroque “walking bass.” From measure 6 on, Villa-Lobos replaced this bass line by the descending melody first presented in the alto voice as basis of composition. The bass line is repeated throughout section A (mm 1-18) and section C (mm. 33-41). If one follows the sequence of pitches in the bass in a descending direction [(B-E-A-D-G)] it is possible to identify intervals of fifths and a harmonic progression that is suggestive of B minor (i-iv-VII-III-VI).

Another exception can be found in the third measure of Thema Regium, in which the last pitch serves as an anacrusis to the next measure. Villa-Lobos attached this anacrusis to the end of his motive in the beginning, and to complete the descending line in the alto voice. This can be noted in a comparison of the beginning of section A of the Prelúdio (Introdução) with the four initial measures of the Thema Regium, from Bach’s Musical Offering. Although there are similarities between the two themes, Villa-Lobos does not make any use of ricercare or fugal technique in this movement. Villa-Lobos’s borrowing and adaptation of this thematic material in the Prelúdio makes Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4 the piece within the set that most closely resembles the work of Bach.
Figure 20. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Prelúdio (Introdução)*, mvt. I, mm. 1-17.
As suggested above, the Baroque suite served as a model for the pieces within Villa-Lobos’s set, including Bachianas no. 4. As in the Baroque suite, each movement carries a predominant affect. In the Prelúdio, the mood is set by the key of b minor, which is established in a V-I cadence, in the bass line, in measures 4 and 5. Villa-Lobos’s choice of key may have been influenced by the use of a minor key in Bach’s Musical Offering, although c minor, rather than b minor. However, the composer also seems to suggest Aeolian mode: in the alto voice at the opening (see Fig. 21), Villa-Lobos uses a natural minor scale in which the seventh degree is not altered, which is consistent with Aeolian mode. Thus, the mood that the key helps to set may be connected to both Bachian and Brazilian expression.

The descending use of this modal scale, along with the half-cadence in measure 9, create a suspension - which is another feature of the use of modes in the Northeastern part of Brazil - with the melody ending in the dominant. As bracketed for clarification in Figure 20, this descending scale appears in octaves in the left hand in measures 6-9, which follows its appearance in descending single pitches in the alto voice in measures 1-4, as shown in Figure 21. The suspension in each measure, in the soprano voice of the last two pitches of the theme, in the soprano voice, also reaffirms this nostalgic mood.

Figure 21. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Prelúdio (Introdução), mvt. I, mm. 1-4. Descending modal scale.
A particular feature in the music of Northeastern Brazil is the use of hexachordal scales (six-note scales) as the basis for constructing themes. Another characteristic of mode (or modal) usage in Brazilian music is the ending of phrases on the third or fifth of the triad, as in measure 13. In the interpretation of this Bachiana, it is essential to perceive Villa-Lobos’s use of a modal scale, and to recognize a connection that he may have intended towards the music of Northeastern Brazil, where modal scales are very common. At the beginning of every measure (Fig. 20) there is an accent on the pitch B in the soprano and alto voices. After measure 6, Villa-Lobos used a modal scale in the left hand and a harmonic minor scale in the right hand. Under the scope of interpretation one may consider a construction that used key over a modal scale or simply a harmonic minor scale over a natural minor scale. This allows the interpreter to choose which one to emphasize more on repetitions.

The phrases are essentially 4-measures long, sometimes with a 1-measure extension, such as measure 5, which is a phrase extension that begins on retardation. Phrase extensions are consistent throughout Villa-Lobos’s Bachianas no. 4, Prelúdio (Introdução). The connections between phrases and larger sections are only one measure long but very expressive. They are often a restatement or confirmation of what was previously said, with similar designs but different meanings.

Beginning in measure 6, the second phrase is also based in one arpeggio that is a variant of the 5-note motive used in the first phrase. From measure 6 on, Villa-Lobos expanded the arpeggio in each new measure, adding common pitches to the chord and emphasizing the tonality. His use of varied repetition sometimes continues without the relief of a conclusive cadence, unlike the first phrase, which culminates solidly (Figure 20, m. 6). In measure 14, without a conclusive cadence, the first phrase starts again in a softer dynamic as it returns to the first idea, as shown in Figure 22. The theme returns and the breath marked between measure 13 and 14 accentuates the suspension and demarcates the ending of one phrase and the beginning of another.

---

112 de Souza, Contribuição Rítmico-modal do Canto Gregoriano para a Música Popular Brasileira, II.
113 Mário de Andrade, Ensaio Sobre a Música Brasileira, 3rd ed. (São Paulo: Martins / Brasília, INL, 1972), 84.
From the interpreter’s point of view, measure 13 has a sense of an inconclusive phrase, since it ends on a half cadence, and the composer asks for a breath when he marks the comma between phrases. The breath marked between these two measures, along with the decrescendo and the beginning of the repetition of the main idea, lends to these measures a different perspective, which the performer can enhance through an emphasis on voicing, variation in sound, and imagination.

Three of the elements discussed above are also important to consider during the interpretation of this prelude: the affect of the movement, in part conveyed by the key of b minor (possibly related to c minor of the Musical Offering); the modal scale, strongly representing the Brazilianess of the Northeastern part of the country; and the feature of having a dual sense of key and mode. This duality also represents a musical tension between folklore and art music.

Section B (mm.19-32) is marked by an extensive use of arpeggios still related to the Musical Offering, but this time, instead of keeping the bass moving in thirds, fourths and fifths, Villa-Lobos turns once more to Bach using a descending chromatic line resembling the second half of the Thema Regium, as shown in Figure 23.
In this second section, other features that are important for performers to notice are the series of intervals in the alto voice, right hand (marked in smaller blue brackets, Figure 24, beginning in m. 23), and the broken octaves in the middle clef. The series of intervals resembles the bass line of the first phrase, and can be considered a variant of it. The octaves enclosed in larger red brackets, starting with the enharmonic spelling of d# as eb at the pick-up to measure 24, repeat and overlap the chromatically descending line in half notes that begins in measure 22. This repetition of thematic material is an example of the “symmetry” that Paulo de Tarso Salles finds in Villa-Lobos’s music, mostly in his orchestral works. In his music symmetry can be understood as a starting point to choose and develop the form or structure as well as to give it a level of stability to be transfigured or transformed. These particular features are demonstrated in Figure 24.

Figure 24. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Prelúdio (Introdução)*, mvt. I, mm. 22-27. Descending chromatic line in octaves and the intervals in the alto voice.

For an interpreter difficulties arise in bringing out through performance all of the ideas that exist between Villa-Lobos’s compositions and Bach’s. The interpreter has the chance to emphasize one of the polyphonic lines during repetition, bringing out the similarity with Baroque music which calls for varied treatment in sequences or other repetitions. Attention to such details can enhance interpretation and highlight the Baroque or Bachian elements in Villa-Lobos’s *Bachianas*.

The last section, section C (mm 33-41), revives the theme amplified in all four basic musical parameters: duration, pitch (by adding octaves), timbre, and intensity. The climax of the movement arises at the end, when the pianist’s abilities are tested to the limit with the intensification of sound and dynamics and the use of large leaps. In this
climax, as throughout the movement, subliminal elements can contribute to singular interpretations.\textsuperscript{115}

Figure 25. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Prelúdio (Introdução)*, mvt. I, mm. 37-41. Last four measures with the amplification of the theme in octaves, in the left hand.

This first movement of *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* leaves no doubt about the similarities between “Bachian” motives in Villa-Lobos’s work. The features demonstrated so far are consistent with Villa-Lobos’s idea of exploring Bach’s atmosphere.

\textsuperscript{115} The subliminal elements in music performance are those not written in the score, such as mood, elements borrowed from an external source that have a singular representation, and the personal knowledge of the interpreter.
II – *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*

*Imagination*

The primary references to Bach in this movement are the title *Coral* (or *Chorale*), which alludes to a central genre in the oeuvre of this Baroque composer, as well the *chorale*-like writing that Villa-Lobos incorporates mainly in the last section. Although there is no precise connection between this movement and Bach’s *Chorale Preludes*, the texture and the indication to play like an organ in the last section are the references that connect Villa-Lobos to Bach. *Coral* starts with a simple series of chords that gradually expand toward the extreme ranges of the keyboard, providing a powerful sound created through simple harmonies.

Recognition of the Baroque adaptations in this and other movements of the *Bachianas* is crucial to an accurate understanding of Villa-Lobos’s intentions. Also important to the performer’s interpretation are intuition and imagination; just as they are necessary for composing, they are also necessary for interpretation. Picturing images that can be associated with the ideas that the interpreter wants to convey helps develop a convincing interpretation. Such a use of the imagination is key to performing this second movement, since it represents elements of nature not yet explored in the first piece of this *Bachiana*. These representative elements make *Coral* probably the most subjective movement within *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*.

Examples of personal images that an interpreter can bring to the music are those created by Nóbrega for this particular movement:

(…) this Coral is the bucolic evocation of the remote Brazilian landscape, geographically far away and lost in time, so undeveloped that we do not know if it still exists. Perhaps it is a fiction and only has existence in our sensibilities, as we listen to Villa-Lobos’s page: lying in his hammock, in the drowsy afternoon, a country person hears an aching sound, dull and passionless, almost indifferent, while the araponga dots the melody with his percussive voice… Stubborn creature…

This description of images presents what Nóbrega believes is the meaning of the second movement. It is undoubtelly a reflection of his personal background. Perhaps, with the

---

116 *Araponga* is a bird which produces a very high pitch, a *Bb*, similar to a hammer.
Bachian influence limited to chorale treatment, Nóbrega’s imagination is allowed a greater freedom than in other movements.

The performer’s interpretation can also be enriched by visual images, particularly paintings close in time and context to the composition. The performer might consider the series of portraits of life in Brazil, especially of the Northeast, produced by Cândido Portinari (1903-1962), a Brazilian painter who was Villa-Lobos’s contemporary. These portraits were painted during the same time that the set of Bachianas was composed. This series of portraits is called Retirantes (a word that can be translated as “emigrants”) and represents the life of the Northeastern residents of Brazil. The works of Villa-Lobos and Portinari are often connected as examples of art that captured the expression of Brazilian people with fidelity.\footnote{Christie’s Feature Archives, \url{http://www.christies.com/features/portinari-navio-negreiro-2377-1.aspx} (accessed July 31, 2012).} The composer and painter were both friends of Mário de Andrade and shared similar concerns about representing Brazil in modern art. Like Villa-Lobos, Portinari also lived in Paris from 1929 to the beginning of 1931.\footnote{Projeto Portinari, \url{http://portinari.org.br/psite/ppacervos/s_biogra.htm} (accessed March 23, 2011).}

In the development of the performer’s imaginative approach to this movement, Portinari’s drawings and paintings are particularly interesting as they offer a visual analogy to what Canto do Sertão may represent. Like Portinari’s painting, Villa-Lobos’s music also attempted to capture the moods and expressions associated with the Northeast. The analogy between this movement of Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4 and this specific Portinari’s painting is personal. Within the archive of Portinari’s work one may identify several paintings describing similar landscapes and people, with the same dilemma portrayed.
The painting in Figure 25 is entitled *Enterro na Rede (Burial in the Hammock)*, from 1944. It is an illustration of life in the arid *sertão* and the power of the Northeastern people. Representative elements of Brazilian culture found in Villa-Lobos’s movement can be perceived in this painting as well: the sad mood of the melody corresponds to the sadness reflected in the faces of the hammock-bearers; the religiousness of the people, perfectly represented by the organ-like sounds in the music, can also be sensed in the extended arms that display an impassioned, devout act of praying. The drama experienced in these people’s lives resonates within the piece and can be perceived while observing the dramatic mood that dominates the painting.

One particular sound reference in *Coral* that brings a Brazilian scene into the performer’s imagination is the singing of the *araponga*, a bird that lives throughout Brazil and is called “Hammer-bird” in different regions because its song resembles the repeating strikes of a hammer. In the Northeastern region, the bird is usually associated with
solitude, desert landscapes, and, commonly, a hint of despair, reminding the *sertanejo*\textsuperscript{120} where he is and how strong the sun is over his shoulder, killing his cattle, his animals, and drying his water. The aridity of the Sertão that is suggested by this symbol of nature is also conveyed in Portinari’s painting.

The listener may also perceive the importance Villa-Lobos wanted to give to the *araponga* song as it appears within the movement. Figure 27 shows how Villa-Lobos starts the piece, with the repeated, accented b flats that represent the “hammer-strikes” of the *araponga*; these appear in the upper register, rhythmically inserted between the chorale-like chords. In a way, the imaginative interpreter could view the contrast between the placid, chordally supported melody and the harsh interruptions of the bird sounds as a contrasting idea between the beauty of life and the difficulties that permeate it. The interpreter faces the challenge of creating the distinct timbres between the chorale melody and chords and the accented b flat, representing the *araponga*.

Figure 27. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, Coral (Canto do Sertão), mvt. II, mm. 1-12. The repeated b flats in the upper register represent the song of the *araponga*.

\textsuperscript{120}*Sertanejo* is an inhabitant of the Sertão.
The b flat is later amplified, first within an added single octave in the upper register in measures 47-50, then in double octaves in measures 56-58, as shown in Figure 28. The b flat becomes one of the most dramatic elements in this piece, leading later to a range of pitches that intensifies the dramatic mood in the organ-like section (mm. 71 to 92), which is section C within the ABC form of the movement.

Figure 28. Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Coral (Canto do Sertão), mvt. II, mm. 47-61. Amplification in octaves of the repeated b flats.

Villa-Lobos used two main melodic ideas in this second movement. As suggested above, the first main melody is presented in the soprano voice of the chorale setting (mm.
1 to 16), in two large phrases. These two phrases appear emphasized in the tenor voice, without any changes in the melody, beginning in measure 17 until measure 32, outside the opening (mm. 1 to 16) chorale section. During this second presentation, the movement of the melody is accompanied by a line in the upper voices built mainly on intervals of fourths (see Figure 29).

Figure 29. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, mvt. II, mm. 23-34. Second phrase of main melody accented in tenor voice (indicated by red line, mm. 25-32).

The second main melody, which begins in measure 33, in *f*, at the climax of a gradual crescendo, is reinforced by chords outlined with octave voicings. This second melody is expanded in the organ-like section, exploring the lower basses, the harmonics, and upper register.

One compositional artifice that Villa-Lobos explores in section C is the use of harmonics in the piano. He not only specifies the harmonics in notation, but he also explains how to play them. Thoses indications are: *como um órgão* (play like an organ)
and *afundar as teclas sem deixar bater os martelos nas cordas* (press the keys without striking the hammers on the strings). These indications emphasize how precise Villa-Lobos was in order to obtain the effects he wanted, giving exact directions to the interpreter. The harmonics, along with the composer’s specifications, can be seen in Figure 31. One must take into consideration that this movement was written in 1941, when such recourse (precise directions in Portuguese) was not common in Brazilian music.

Figure 30. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, mvt. II, mm. 47-81. Second main melody (harmonized), marked in red blocks.

Although Villa-Lobos had already achieved high intensity with the bass line built over intervals of fourths followed by fifths, insistently repeating b flats in higher range of
pitches, and thickly voiced chords accompanying his melodies this section, which begins in measure 71 is even more forceful, as suggested by Villa-Lobos’s marking of *Grandeoso* (see this marking in red in Figure 31). Moreover, his indications to *play like an organ* and *press the keys to the bottom without hammering the strings* were written to explain how to achieve organ-like sounds. The markings in blue indicate the second main melody, at a new sound level, and in an entirely new texture for the whole piece, highlighted by the contrasting timbres and dynamics of the harmonics. The chords indicated to sound as harmonics need to be played with the notes as written; otherwise, the performer will not achieve the desired effect.

Figure 31. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, Coral (Canto do Sertão), mvt. II, mm.71-79. Second main melody (harmonized) marked in blue; harmonics, with performance indications and expressive markings in red blocks.
Although there are indications of folkloric tunes being used in *Bachianas no. 4* in the literature about Villa-Lobos’s set, I was unable to identify any particular tune in this movement. Ermelinda Paz\(^\text{121}\) mentions the study made by Eurico Nogueira França,\(^\text{122}\) in which he points out three melodies from Brazilian folklore: *A maré encheu, Na corda da viola* and *Garibaldi foi à missa*. Although he mentions the themes, he does not indicate where they appear in the score. Villa-Lobos never discussed the use of any of these themes.

### III – *Ária (Cantiga)*

**Brazilian Allusions: A Borrowed Tune and Related Images**

The third movement, *Ária (Cantiga)*, is perhaps the most saturated with Northeastern references and mood. As the main melody of this “aria” or “song” movement, Villa-Lobos uses the tune most commonly known as “Ô mana deix’eu ir.” The words are probably from Gustavo Barroso (1888-1959), a lawyer, professor, folklorist, and writer (this information could not be confirmed). Some of his works were written under the pseudonym of João do Norte.\(^\text{123}\) In the literature about the origins of the tune, the melody is sometimes attributed to Villa-Lobos; some others refer to it as a Brazilian popular song under the title of Caicó. The repetition of the first words of the text in each phrase led to the preference for its alternate title. The Portuguese text of the tune is:

**Caicó**  
(João do Norte)

Ô mana deix’eu ir, ô mana eu vou só  
Ô mana deix’eu ir, pro sertão de caicó  
Ô mana deix’eu ir, ô mana eu vou só  
Ô mana deix’eu ir, pro sertão de Caicó

The translation of this text can be roughly understood as “oh sister let me go, oh sister I go alone; oh sister let me go, to Caicós’s sertão.” Nóbrega notes the composer’s use of the tune, as well as Vamos, Maruca in Dança (in recognizing these tunes, he contradicts another statement that he makes that there are no Brazilian motives in the set).\textsuperscript{124} Villa-Lobos labels this movement \textit{Ária} and \textit{Cantiga} because of its predominant lyrical aspect, which is originally a popular song or “cantiga” in Portuguese language.

Throughout this movement, written in ternary form and in f minor (continuing the use of minor keys in the \textit{Prelúdio} and \textit{Coral}), Villa-Lobos repeats the two main phrases of the borrowed melody, particularly the first phrase. At each repetition special attention is needed to execute the same tune with different nuances. There are several possibilities for doing this. The performer can change the timbre by using different touches or by changing dynamics. Alternatively, he or she can emphasize the left hand in order to slightly change the focus without disturbing the balance.

One interesting interpretive singularity of this movement is the absence of dynamic markings throughout almost the entire first section. The indications given by Villa-Lobos are largely restricted to accents and tempo markings. His most specific performance indications include the tenuto marks over the pitches of the melody, which begins its first phrase with the pick-up to measure 7, as well as the \textit{murmurando} (whispering) over the descending bass line in measure 10 (see Figure 32). Both indications suggest that Villa-Lobos wanted to draw attention to the tune that he borrows; the \textit{tenuto} marks instruct the performer to bring out the melody with clarity and solidity, while the expressive marking, \textit{murmurando}, calls for a soft, mysterious sound under the melody. The economy of markings that appear in the score give the interpreter freedom to choose how to achieve the ideal performance. However, the main focus remains on “singing” the melody, \textit{Ô mana deix’eu ir}, as well as maintaining the mood and ambience throughout the movement.

Following the six-measure introduction, the first phrase of the melody appears in measures 7-10, as noted above (also see Figure 32); Villa-Lobos then repeats it three times before moving to the second phrase (mm. 23-37). The beginning of the second

\textsuperscript{124} Nóbrega, \textit{As Bachianas de Villa-Lobos}, 16. My translation
phrase is marked with a narrow in Figure 32. This second phrase is repeated twice, as we can see in Figure 33 (second repetition of second phrase bracketed in red). The repetition is not varied from its first appearance.

Figure 32. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Ária (Cantiga)*, mvt. III, mm. 1-24. First phrase of melody (bracketed in red); chromaticism in introductory measures and in left hand (bracketed in blue).
This repeated second phrase leads to section B, beginning in measure 38 at the *Vivace* marking. The form (ABA) of this movement is more defined than in the first two movements. The repetitions of the melody in both sections, including variations of the melody in section B, demonstrate that Villa-Lobos wanted to highlight differentiation of timbres and voices, since the sections are highly polyphonic: section A, with the primary melody set against bass lines, and section B with aggregation of sounds, variations within the melody, and chromaticism. The main idea behind the repetitions of the melody and the chromaticism was to create dialogues between different voices. The frequent repetition, with infrequent changes in markings, may make the interpretation difficult, since he does not clearly suggest new approaches. Again, the interpreter needs to appeal to the imagination.

Villa-Lobos adds complexity to his melodically driven movement through the use of chromaticism, which also accentuates the Bachian character. Chromaticism can be perceived in the first four measures of the introduction (bracketed in blue in Figure 32), in a very dramatic chromatic movement that emphasizes the pitch f in each voice. The f
minor chord is the main chord used during section B, suffering alterations by aggregation of chromatic pitches, and major and minor seconds. It is possible to perceive a bi-tonality occurring in measure 45, such as in similar measures, in which the composer used C Major in the right hand and the seventh chord of g minor in the left hand. In this movement, the chromaticism also appears at the beginning of the descending line in the left-hand octaves in measures 10-12 (see bracketed in blue in Figure 32), and in repetitions of this line that Villa-Lobos uses under the recurring melodic phrases. A chromatic bass line will connect every repetition of two first and second phrases. This chromatic bass line does not return in the second section or section B.

Once more, Portinari’s paintings create images that may assist with the interpretation of the piece. _Retirantes_, the painting in the series with the same title, is illustrated in Figure 34 and the drama depicted in the painting is evident. As mentioned before, “Retirantes” is the common word in Portuguese to represent those emigrants who leave their lands searching for a better life. It is easy to comprehend the emigrants’ emotions and questions, as well as the predominant mood represented in the painting. These figures, seemingly an extended family, are leaving. Where are they going? What will they find? What are they feeling? They seem to have no hope, and a lack of hope is also suggested by the painting’s atmosphere. The stark landscape, the flying ravens, and the somber expressions on the faces (such as the gaping expression of the old man), and the skeletal body of the baby are all elements suggestive of hopelessness.

Similarly, the third movement of Bachianas alludes to a mood of darkness and bleakness, and to the conflicting emotions of such emigrants – particularly with its use of a tune whose words speak of a difficult departure from a loved one, “Oh, sister, let me go.” Villa-Lobos’s continuous repetition of the melodic phrase accompanying these subliminal words in section A intensifies the effect of the pleading of a departing traveler, as well as his reluctance to leave.

The selection of Portinari’s paintings that offer image associations was based on my personal identification with the artist’s work, as well as my own personal choices in developing interpretations of this movement and work. As mentioned before, both Portinari’s paintings and Villa-Lobos’s compositions depict Brazilian culture in a realistic way. This connection between both artists led to my choice of paintings. The
predominant affect or mood represented in the third movement of *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* is one of sadness infused with a sense of tragic drama and despair. The painting was chosen to deepen the interpretation of this dramatic effect, as it can be conveyed in the repetition of the melody and the chromaticism.

This very powerful image, painted by Portinari in 1944, may inspire the interpreter to perceive what Villa-Lobos wanted to paint with sounds. *Retirantes* sets the mood for the tragedy of poverty and emigration, still real in a few places of the Northeastern part of Brazil.

Figure 34: Cândido Portinari, *Retirantes* (*Emigrants*) (1944). Série “Os Retirantes” - Collection of the Assis Chateaubriand Art Museum of São Paulo, Brazil.
One characteristic commonly associated with the people of the Northeast is their strength. They are known to be brave fighters, and as such, have the ability to deal with hard, chaotic conditions of life without losing their joy of it. Villa-Lobos seems to convey this characterization through the treatment of the borrowed tune in section B. The rhythm in the left hand is constructed on the same rhythmic pattern already demonstrated in *Choros no. 5*. As shown in the example below (Figure 35), this rhythm and the melody in the right hand are incisive and percussive, creating density and tension that embody power and strength. This section leads to a more violent subsection, partially presented in Figure 36.

Figure 35. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Ária (Cantiga)*, mvt. III, mm. 44-49. The melody, presented in a more dramatic way in section B (blocked in red in the upper voices, mm. 46-49).

Although the tempo indication is *Vivace*, the second part of this section has a more dramatic mood than in section A (see Figure 36). The instability of the right-hand chords, created by adding dissonant intervals, such as major and minor seconds to the f minor chord, suggests a progressive and violent fight, characteristic of the struggles of the Northeastern people. Such intensity can be heard in the final measures of this section, from measure 69 to measure 80, with the accelerando (specified by the marking *stringendo*, as bracketed in red in Figure 36). A variation of the first phrase of the melody
can be heard in the left hand, in octaves. The last two systems before the re-exposition of section A, are characterized by the repeated triplets in the left hand, which creates a sense of desperation accentuated by the *stringendo*.

Figure 36: Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, Ária (Cantiga)*, mvt. III, mm. 69-80. End of section B.

This transition, marked in brackets in Figure 36, leads to the repetition of section A, with the return of the main tune in literal repetition until measure 112. In this 4-measure transition, beginning in measure 77, Villa-Lobos brought back, in the upper voice, the chromaticism used in the introduction descending alto voice. Every note of this
descending chromatic scale is marked, with the ending accentuated by a dominant-tonic interval in the upper voice (c-f).

The next section is an actual repetition of section A (mm. 81-122). Until measure 112, the repetitions are exactly the same: four repetitions of the first phrase and two repetitions of the second phrase. In contrast to the first section, the first phrase (with slight changes on the bass line) leads to a literal repetition of the introduction. The first four measures of the ending (mm. 116-119) are as equally dramatic as the introduction. In the last three measures (mm. 120-122) Villa-Lobos expanded the ending by adding non-chord tones, using resonances and altering the f minor chord with the use of natural pitches in the last measure.

Figure 37. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras, no. 4, Ária (Cantiga)*, mvt. III, mm. 117-122. End of movement.

Comparison of the ending of this movement with the ending of *Choros no. 5* (Figure 38) reveals similar approaches, such as a sustained bass note for more than one measure, resonances, sounds added to the chords, which may be dissonances, expanding the chord. These similarities can be observed when comparing Figure 37 with Figure 38.
According to Salles, this cadence type applied by Villa-Lobos “has a relationship… with a type used by Edgard Varèse, in which the final chord is marked by resonances and resulting sounds from various aggregate dissonances…”Salles calls this type of cadence a “varesian” cadence and it is not uncommon in Villa-Lobos’s music.

The composer’s own performance of the melodies of this movement and the following one, as described by Luís Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, offers insights into his interpretive expression and his relationship with the piano:

He [Villa-Lobos] ended up sitting down at the piano and performing that melodic line of modinha and aria, so pure, so naked, so full of grace in a way with unmatched rhythmic regularity, severe economy of colorful sound. The smallest affectation can disturb it; the slightest lack of dynamic. But the clumsy fingers of Villa-Lobos, who was not a pianist, obeyed as a platoon of royal guards on parade at the command of his interpretative intelligence, steady nerves transmitting this command. No precipitation. No imbalance. The weight of the fifth finger was always equal to the first.

This passage demonstrates some of Villa-Lobos’s personality at the piano. Although he was not a skillful pianist, he knew how to extract the sound and character he wanted from it. He could convey the message within this movement exactly the way it was supposed to be.

---

126 Modinha – see definition on page 5.
IV – Dança (Miudinho)
A Dance of Polyrhythms

This fourth movement is based on a dance called miudinho, as the title suggests. According to Mário de Andrade, miudinho is an individual dance widely performed during the nineteenth century in the ballrooms of the Brazilian bourgeoisie. Cámaras Cascudo (1898-1936), in his Dicionário do Folclore Brasileiro (Brazilian Folklore Dictionary) associates a dance step in the miudinho to one in the samba. Cascudos states: “I even had occasion to see, in Bahia, the women dance it [the step] in ‘sambas de roda,’ in a wondrous way. [They] moved forward as if they were dolls of spring, with the body still and an almost imperceptible movement of feet in a fast rhythm and always the same.” Key to this dance is the fast rhythms of the dancers’ feet, as Cascudo describes. What he does not suggest in his description are the varied rhythms and accents that were likely created between the dancers and the music accompanying them, which Villa-Lobos clearly tried to capture in this movement.

The overall form of Dança is ABCA’. Section A, (mm. 1-42), presents the main rhythmic pattern of the movement, which is a sixteenth-note pulse arranged in an ascending three-note broken-chord pattern in 2/4 (see Fig. 44). This pattern – which may reflect the quick, continual steps of the dancers’ feet – is consistent throughout the movement, but varied in its placement from right to left hand. The primary melody appears in this section, beginning in measure 11 in the left hand, above a sustained drone (see Fig. 39). Section B (mm. 43-88) brings the melody to the right hand in measure 49, with the sixteenth-note pattern in the left hand (see Fig. 41). In section C (mm. 89-140) Villa-Lobos creates his most complex use of polyrhythms and most powerful dynamic contrasts. Section A’ (mm. 141-195) is a repetition of section A with very few changes, which occur mainly at the end. Throughout each section, the composer’s use of polyrhythm enhances the character of the Brazilian dance. Along with the sixteenth-note

pulse, which Villa-Lobos specifies should be treated with rhythmic exactitude (see Fig. 44), polyrhythm acts as the movement’s main element.

Using the character and rhythms of the dance, Villa-Lobos moves from the longing and suffering expressed in the previous movements to a completely different mood. At the beginning of the movement, he establishes the key of C Major, a key often associated with simplicity and stability, which suggests the joyous nature of the miudinho with the indication *Muito animado (Molto animato)* (see Fig. 44). There is a suggestion of A minor on measure 14 with the sustained a-e drone and the transposition of the melody, but Villa-Lobos does not modulate in this movement, although he uses altered chords throughout the movement. In the score, there are only a few dynamic markings.

The primary melody (see Fig. 39) is taken from the popular song: “Vamos, Maruca,” which was collected in São Paulo by Villa-Lobos and included in the composer’s collection of popular children’s songs “Guia Prático,”131 as number 128.132

Unlike the melodic material of the three previous movements, this melody does not have any relation to Bach’s melodies or Northeastern Brazilian tunes. While in the previous movements Villa-Lobos seems to concentrate on a Northeastern mood, emphasizing the languid character associated with the region; in this fourth movement he moves his attention to the South. The tune that he borrows from the song is related to the popular character of the state of São Paulo, which was understood, in that time, as a simple, joyous character. The song’s text, which suggests the words of a rejected or ignored admirer or friend, can be roughly translated as follows:

*Vamos Maruca*

Vamos Maruca, vamos, Vamos pra Jundiaí!133
Com todos você vai, Só comigo não quer ir!
Let’s go Maruca, let’s go, Let’s go to Jundiaí!
With everyone you go, You only don’t go with me!

---

131 “Guia Prático” is a collection of 138 popular songs, mainly collected by Villa-Lobos and compiled in one volume.
133 Jundiaí is a city in the state of São Paulo.
This tune does represent certain innocence, and Villa-Lobos combines the simplicity found in the country-side of the state of São Paulo, which is represented in the tune, with the powerful polyrhythms of the *miudinho* – a dance common to this and other regions of Brazil. His change of perspective to the South is another peculiarity of this movement, as well as his combination of “pan-Brazilian” elements or symbols.

Figure 39: Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, *Dança (Miudinho)*, mm. 10-24. The primary melody presented in the left hand, blocked in red.

As shown in Figure 39, the main melody should be played broadly, loudly, and marcato, as noted by the indication *en dehors* and the accent markings, as well as implied by Villa-Lobos’s giving of the melody to the trombones in the orchestral version. The fingering suggested for the melody in Rubinsky’s edition is helpful in achieving a good quality of sound in the melody. Special attention should also be given to the melody’s syncopation. The dance-like rhythm in the right hand continues throughout the piece, with the same flow, but the performer needs to maintain a balance between this rhythmic pattern and the melody and its contrasting rhythms. The next example (Fig. 40) shows the composer’s consistency in writing accent marks. Until measure 28 he indicates accents
only for the melody and for the chords in *sforzato*. From measure 29, he writes accents to clarify his three-note pattern, when it is blended with the primary melody (in his orchestral version of 1941, Villa-Lobos divided the sixteenth-note pattern and main melody between first and second violins).

Figure 40: Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, *Dança (Miudinho)*, mm. 29-36. The primary melody and sixteenth-note pattern in the right hand.

![Musical notation](image)

While the ascending three-note patterns continue, the melody played by the second violins in the orchestral version appears in the second voice, this time emphasized by accents and longer note values (also in the orchestral version). This melody needs to be heard clearly when it is performed. The syncopation should be played in a marked manner in order to keep the same tempo and pulse for the entire melodic line.

In the next section, section B, from measure 43 on, the rhythmic pattern of sixteenths is transferred to the left hand (see Fig. 41). Here, the same aspects of interpretation should be taken into consideration, while noting that the accents fall on the main beats of duple meter, shifting from the emphasis on the first of three sixteenth notes, as shown in the measures in Figure 40.
Figure 41. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, *Dança (Miudinho)*, mm. 49-55. Primary melody (harmonized) in the right hand, with the sixteenth-note pattern in the left hand.

Now, the melody is presented in the right hand amplified by octaves and harmonic thirds. The accents in the left hand emphasize the strong rhythms of the dance. However, as suggested above, the most expressive point of the movement will occur in section C.

Section C best represents the character of this dance-inspired movement – conveyed through the strong contrast in rhythms in polyrhythmic passages and also through the wide range of accents and dynamic marks. As shown in Figure 46, Section C begins in measure 89 with a variation of the sixteenth-note pattern of ascending broken-chord divisions of three-notes in the left hand, in which Villa-Lobos moves in wider leaps than before, and with added seconds. Villa-Lobos also changes the accent marks to *tenuto* as he continues to indicate the precision of the duple meter that works against the naturally generated accent in the three-note left-hand line. Moreover, he writes an eight-note triplet figure in the right hand, beginning in measure 91, that creates further rhythmic complexity against the varied divisions of the left hand.
The character of the dance becomes stronger with sharply contrasting dynamics, shifting accents, and polyrhythmic treatment in measures 126 to 133 (see Fig. 43).

Figure 43. Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, *Dança (Miudinho)*, mm. 126-133. Section C: accents and dynamics.
Villa-Lobos also introduces a new melody in measure 91 of this section. Although it was not possible to determine if this melody is related to any folk song or popular tune, the melody does reinforce the character of the miudinho with the composer’s remarkable use of polyrhythm. In measure 112, this new melody lines up in sixteenths synchronized with the sixteenth-note pattern in broken thirds.

For this particular movement, several discrepancies in notation and expression markings can be found among different editions. The most commonly used edition of the Bachianas is the one published by Consolidated Music Publishers, Inc. However, this edition does not consider all of the markings made by the composer. The newer edition of Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, revised by the pianist Sonia Rubinsky, was published in 2009 by Irmãos Vitale Editors, Brazil. This edition, which is being used for all the examples in this study of Bachianas, includes the original marks found in the composer’s manuscripts and other editions that he revised.

Figure 44: Villa-Lobos, Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4, mvt. IV, Dança (Miudinho), mm. 1-2.

As is true of the phrase shown in Figure 44, Villa-Lobos always wrote tempo and expressive indications in Portuguese. However, in comparison to the specification given in the example, the edition published by Consolidated Music Publishers gives the indication Muito ritmado e animado. Although it carries a similar meaning, it is less emphatic about the precise rendering of rhythm. Another indication included in Rubinsky’s edition, transcribing what was given by the composer in the autograph manuscript, is shown in Figure 45.
Figure 45 Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, *Dança (Miudinho)*. This indication is given in a footnote on the first page of the fourth movement.

\[ \text{(\textgreater\textgreater)} \text{ o sinal } \textgreater \text{ é para ser mais marcado do que o sinal (\textless\textless)}. \]

The sign \textgreater needs to be more marked than the sign \textless (my translation).

This specification shown in Figure 45 demonstrates that Villa-Lobos did not want any confusion about these accent marks. He asks the interpreter to differentiate the *marcato* and the *tenuto* accents.

Although the movement is based on a continual sixteenth-note pulse, as said before, Villa-Lobos’s rhythmic organization in ascending broken chords of three notes gives the listener the illusion that the movement is faster than it actually is. In this initial section (section A), the pianist should be aware of the naturally recurring accents – as well as a secondary melody – that are generated by this alignment in the right hand (see Fig. 47). The lower notes in the broken-chord pattern can easily sound accentuated. Although Villa-Lobos does not write any accent for these notes, they clearly form a melodic line running at the base of the sixteenth notes, which is especially evident in the orchestra part of the same passage (see Fig. 46). In the orchestral version, the second violins double the lowest notes of the sixteenths of the first violins in a perfect rhythmic alignment. The sixteenth-note pattern establishes the movement and sets the pulse, which generates the feeling of syncopation against the main melody, in the left hand, beginning in measure 11 (see Fig. 39). The composer deliberately reinforces the dislocation of the beat in this initial passage, as can be seen more fully in Figure 47 from the beginning of the movement in the version for piano.
The piano version in the 2009 edition keeps the staccato marking, as shown in Figure 47, but omits the melodic line in the second violins, leaving the reinforcement of the line up to the pianist’s discretion. Although the piano version was composed first, the interpreter should consult the orchestra transcription, if available, in order to execute this passage in a manner that the composer intended.

In these passages the pianist’s touch needs to be solid and controlled to maintain the clarity and consistent pulse of the rhythm. The sixteenth-note melody shown in Figure 47 should be brought out, and the three-note groupings built on this melody should be played as distinct ascending lines, not as vague, blended accompanimental figures.

Figure 47: Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*, mvt. IV, *Dança (Miudinho)*, mm. 1-9. Beginning of Movement IV, with the first note of the ascending three-note pattern in sixteenths designated in red blocks.

---

As noted in the examples presented in this description of movement four, the attention of the pianist must be turned to precise renderings of polyrhythm, pulse, and accentuation. In the preface of the 2009 edition, Rubinsky gives important suggestions for the interpretation of Villa-Lobos’s music: she reminds the interpreter of the importance of carefully bringing out the composer’s complex rhythms and prominent melodies in a distinct balance of “sound levels.” Such reminders are particularly helpful for effective performances of Villa-Lobos’s piano works, and especially for the fourth movement of Bachinas Brasileiras no. 4. Rubinsky highlights the following:

a) clarity of sound levels, making Villa-Lobos an ideal composer for the development of polyphony, sound and rhythm;

b) clarity of polyrhythm, having in mind that Villa-Lobos often uses written rubatos, the polyrhythm must be absolutely accurate;

c) the use of accents (>) in a melody, in general, represents a cantabile phrase, in full evidence (en dehors).\(^{135}\)

As in much of Villa-Lobos’s writing, one of the strongest elements in this fourth movement is the composer’s use of rhythm. The syncopation within the sixteenth-note patterns that permeate the movement creates variety and vibrancy, especially when set against the syncopation or varied rhythms of the broad primary melody. The continual sixteenths can be possibly be related to the rhythmic treatment in some of the preludes in J.S. Bach’s Das Wohltemperirte Clavier (The Well-tempered Clavier), though the extensive syncopation and polyrhythms are more closely Brazilian in character.

It is with mastery that Villa-Lobos transforms a simple rhythmic pattern of sixteenth-notes, largely organized in a three-note ascending line, into a rich palette of polyrhythmic texture. The overall description of the form and its sections barely scratches the surface of the whole picture. Behind the bigger scenario lies an incredible rhythmic mixture hidden in small lines, transitions, and fragments of sentences. The polyrhythm is, with no doubt, the strongest feature to be considered and analyzed to respect the wish of the composer in performing this movement. The variety of accents and colors are not far from the other movements, considering the amount of elements he places in each of them. Although it is not possible to describe every detail that Villa-Lobos wrote in this fourth movement.

\(^{135}\) Sônia Rubinsky, preface in O Piano e as Bachianas (São Paulo: Irmãos Vitale, 2009), p. 2. Preface of score. Translated and adapted from Rubinsky.
movement, it is possible to sense the significance and vitality of its complex rhythmic structure and to once again recognize the composer’s ability to capture Brazilian culture and life through his music.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

The results of this research demonstrated that the interpretation of a musical composition can be enhanced when the interpreter considers the subjective knowledge surrounding a piece and applies this information to discover and highlight unique elements within the composition. When this knowledge is combined with a careful observation of the musical elements in the score, the performer expands the usual interpretation of a piece, allowing the pianist to create a more authentic performance. To exemplify that, this research approached some elements connected to interpretation within Villa-Lobos’s music, such as the comprehension of how the origins of the melody can influence the construction of the character of a piece; how the harmony can express feelings not written in the score but yet be related to the composer’s influences, as seen in *Choros no. 5, Alma Brasileira*; how a simple pitch could be so strong in representing an image of nature, as the Bb in the second movement of the *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*; and how the correct approach to the rhythm can transform a simple pattern into a colorful polyrhythm.

The main focus of this document is to present to the interpreters possibilities to understand more deeply the specific musical elements and notational details within a composition by Villa-Lobos, but also to look beyond what is written in his composition. To that end, the objects chosen to provide that information were Villa-Lobos’s *Choros no. 5* and *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4*. In addition, these pieces offered enough material to discuss the possibilities in a way that is valid to every piano composition.

Other pieces were cited as examples to corroborate the matter under discussion in each chapter, such as *Choros no. 8* and “Festa no Sertão” from *Ciclo Brasileiro no. 3*. Although it was outside the scope of this study to analyze every detail presented in the pieces chosen for this research, important elements were discussed in more depth, and these pieces were compared to the other pieces within the set that which each belong. A few suggestions were given to assist in future performances in the endeavors that pianists must endure to perform not only Villa-Lobos’s compositions accurately, but to some
degree every piece in the piano literature. For that matter, the main focus of this research relied on the study of Villa-Lobos chosen pieces.

The main conclusions of this research are:

1) The analysis of the interpretive aspects offered in this study can be applied to any of Villa-Lobos’s compositions, either for solo piano or for piano within ensembles, to assist the performer in achieving a clear and precise interpretation;

2) Through his markings in the score, his compositional ideas, and the use of the melodies, rhythms, and harmonic structures, Villa-Lobos was very specific as to the way he wanted the performer to interpret his pieces;

3) The study of the historical and social contexts involving Villa-Lobos should be a part of the interpretive analysis of the composer’s works due to his emphasis on promoting Brazilian folk culture;

4) Both *Choros no. 5* and *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* contain many elements of folk and urban popular music of Brazil derived mainly from dances and melodies from the Northeastern Regions. These elements include rhythmic organization, melodic differentiation, harmonic treatment, and mood associations, among others. In several compositions, Villa-Lobos used direct or indirect quotations of tunes: either folk, urban popular, or indigenous;

5) Villa-Lobos’s piano compositions allow the performer to improve his or her interpretive skills, and finally;

6) The analysis offered in Chapters Two and Three emphasize the similarities between the *choro* style and *Choros no. 5*, and the resemblances between *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4* and Bach’s music, both strongly connected by their roots.

Also, as a result of this research, several characteristics of Villa-Lobos’s personality and his works were rediscovered or understood from a different perspective. The discussion of musical and aesthetic features of the selected works for piano provided in this document have a personal interpretative view, all in relationship with the cultural background of Brazil.
My research exposed the lack of deeper studies that consider the life of Villa-Lobos within a social and political context and that question established myths about the composer, as well as a concentrated study on the piano inside the entire set of *Choros* and *Bachianas*. The transcriptions made by the composer deserve special attention since they attempt to condense orchestral texture while writing for piano, or vice-versa. Suggestions for further studies include the necessity to extend the research on Villa-Lobos’s piano music and the consideration of aspects of his compositions. Only through interpretations that strongly bind together, or “re-attach,” the music to diverse contexts and expressions within Brazilian culture can the true meanings of his music be revealed to performers, scholars, and listeners alike.
PART TWO
RECITAL PROGRAM NOTES

Program I
University of Kentucky – College of Fine Arts – School of Music
presents

Paula Galama – Pianist

Recital Hall
Singletary Center for the Arts
May, 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2008, 7:30 – Lexington, KY, USA

PROGRAM

Bach (1685-1759) 
Toccata in E minor BWV
I. 
II. Un poco Allegro
III. Adagio
IV. Fuga-Allegro

Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) 
Etude Tableaux Op 33 no. 2
Etude Tableaux Op 39 no. 5

\textit{~Intermission~}

Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) 
Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4
I. Prelude - Introduction
II. Coral - Canto do Sertão
III. Aria - Cantiga
IV. D"{a}nsa[sic]-Miudinho

Vieira Brandão (1911-2002) 
Estudo no. 1

Marlos Nobre (b.1939) 
Frevo

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the DMA Degree in Piano Performance. Ms. Galama is a student of Dr. Irina Voro.
Bach’s toccatas are the most well-known examples of the toccata form. The term “toccata” (from the Italian *toccare* or “to touch”) is originally applied to a virtuosity piece typically for a keyboard or plucked string instrument. The main feature of a toccata is fast-moving tempo, lightly fingered, with passages full of virtuosity that can include interludes or fugal sections. There are a total of seven toccatas written by Bach. They are early works dating from 1708-1710. Although the toccatas never had a rigid form, they are generally divided into four sections. The fugal section is usually bright and has two subjects. They are often preceded by a slow section and followed by an adagio section developing lyrical motifs. The last section is usually another fugal allegro using two subjects. Certain latitude is allowed to the interpreter of Bach’s Toccatas due to the conventionally understood performance practice of Baroque music.

The Etude-tableaux were the last works Rachmaninoff composed in Russia. They are organized in two sets: Opus 33 and Opus 39. The first set was composed between August and September of 1911 and premiered by Rachmaninoff on December 13, 1911, in Moscow. The second set, Opus 39, was composed between 1916 and 1917 and performed by Rachmaninoff in November 29, 1916, in Petrograd. Both sets were composed as “picture pieces” and each presents a pianistic problem typical of the etude. The two studies performed in this program are constructed under the ABA form and both include a coda section. Opus 33 no. 2 is written over major and minor chords, in a “nocturne-like” setting. Rachmaninoff makes use of a long and intense melodic line, built with an insistent arpeggiated figure in the left hand. It calls for endurance in the left hand of the interpreter as well as a search for different sonorities as it requires control over sound, velocity, and articulation. No. 5 of Opus 39 is one of the most popular Rachmaninoff etudes. It is also the largest one. It was inspired by Scriabin and contains a strong character in tempo Appassionato, *molto marcato*. Rapid repetitions of chords as well as contrapuntal themes on a thick texture represent some of the issues to be resolved in this Etude. Parallel to this, the interpreter needs to keep a full, sonorous and never harsh sound. As usual in Rachmaninoff compositions, there is a call for “bell-like” sonority throughout the entire piece.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) was born in Rio de Janeiro and is considered to be the most eminent composer of Brazil. Deeply connected to nationalism, his catalogue of
works is a reflection of his journeys, his search for an authentic Brazilian national music, and his consistent use of folkloric and urban popular material. Among his most expressive works is the set of *Bachianas Brasileiras*, which are nine suite-like pieces. *Bachianas Brasileiras* (Brazilian Bachianas) no. 4 was written between 1930 and 1941 in his attempt to write towards the neoclassical trend. Villa-Lobos honored his favorite composer by writing in what he considered to be the “manner” of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Villa-Lobos sought to reflect the affinity he believed existed between melodic procedures, harmonic treatment, and instrumental counterpoint found in Brazilian popular music and the music of Bach. Nevertheless, *Bachianas Brasileiras* has a strong semantic character attached to it because it reflects well Brazilian feelings, moods, behavior, and nature. Villa-Lobos gave to each piece two titles: a Brazilian title and a Bachian title. The first movement, “Prelude (Introduction)”, presents fragments of the *Musical Offering* by Bach in the first main melody, and also the chromaticism found in the second part of the *Thema Regium*, used by Bach is his *Musical Offering*. The second movement, “Coral (Canto do Sertão)” evokes the character of the people from the Northeast of Brazil. The third movement, “Aria (Cantiga)” is based on a Brazilian theme known as “Ô mana deix’eu ir,” also from Northeastern Brazil. “Dansa [sic] (Miudinho)” is a fast movement based on a popular theme: “Vamos, Maruca!” Miudinho is a dance step that belongs to samba.

José Vieira Brandão (1911-2002) was a Brazilian composer, pianist, conductor, and teacher. He became one of Villa-Lobos’s favorite Brazilian pianists and had the opportunity to première several of Villa-Lobos’s piano works, including the *Bachianas no. 3* for piano and orchestra. After that he became a strong collaborator of Villa-Lobos’s work. He also transcribed Villa-Lobos’s guitar Preludes to solo piano. He moved from Minas Gerais to Rio de Janeiro to continue his musical education at the age of eight years graduating with a gold medal in 1929. He worked in Villa-Lobos’s project of implementing music education in Brazil. In 1942, he premièred *Choros no. 11* in Rio de Janeiro and *Bachianas Brasileiras no. 3* in New York, both conducted by the composer. At the age of fifteen, he began writing in a national-romantic style. His *Etude no. 1* is a reflection of this style. Written in ABA form, with a coda, the first section is a fast movement with rhythmic intricacies. Section B shows a beautiful melody first presented
in a single line over a left hand that is written in a countermelody. The melody expands in chords, leading to the return to Section A, and ends with a powerful coda.

Marlos Nobre (b.1939) was born in Recife, a town that celebrates Carnival mainly with frevos, maracatus, and the caboclinhos. He grew up surrounded by this influence and later this would be reflected directly in his compositions. Deeply influenced by Debussy (1862-1918), Bártok (1881-1945), and Lutoslawiski (1913-1994), Nobre was a student of Hans-Joachim Koellreuter (1915-2005), Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993), Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983), Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992), Aaron Copland (1900-1990), and Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-1975). Frevo is a piece written over one of the most characteristic rhythms of Northeastern region of Brazil. It is a fast dance that requires endurance from the dancer. The word “frevo” is an alteration of the verb “ferver” which means “to boil it down.” The steps are usually combined with jumps, reminiscent of acrobatic movements. It belongs to the 4º Ciclo Nordestino, Opus 43, written in 1977, along with “Cantilena,” “Maracatu,” and “Ponteado.” Its theme consistently repeats throughout the piece in different textures and timbres also requiring endurance from the interpreter, using fast arms movements as well as strong persistent rhythmic use.
Program II
University of Kentucky – College of Fine Arts – School of Music
presents

Paula Galama – Pianist
Antônio Marcos Cardoso – Trumpetist

Memorial Hall
December, 6th, 2008, 7:30pm – Lexington, KY, USA

PROGRAM

Osvaldo Lacerda (1927-2011) Pequena Suite
   I. Dobrado
   II. Canção
   III. Final

José Alberto Kaplan (1935-2009) Sonata para Piano e Trompete
   I. Allegro
   II. Lento
   III. Rondó Allegro

~Intermission~

Osvaldo Lacerda (1927-2011) Invocação e Ponto
Duda (José Urcisino da Silva) (1935) Concertino para Trompete
   I. Allegro
   II. Canção
   III. Frevo

Duda (José Urcisino da Silva) (1935) Suite Recife
   I. Andreia (Baião)
   II. Mida (Canção)
   III. Dorinha (Isquenta muié)
   IV. Nadja (Aboio)
   V. Meyse (Frevo)

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the DMA Degree in Piano Performance. Ms. Galama is a student of Dr. Irina Voro.
Osvaldo Lacerda (1927-2011) began his studies at the age of nine years. In 1950, Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993) advised him to give up his career as a pianist and fully dedicate himself to composition, and encouraged him to have lessons with other composers. He then received a scholarship from the Guggenheim Foundation to have lessons with Aaron Copland (1900-1990) and Vittorio Giannini (1903-1966) in the United States between the years of 1966 and 1970. Lacerda served as consultant for the Sacred Music National Commission, and one of his accomplishments as such was the proposition to use Brazilian sacred music during the Catholic Church liturgy. Lacerda also became a professor at the Municipal Music School of São Paulo. His Suite for Trumpet and Piano is full of Brazilian flavor, reminiscent of the small bands that can be found throughout the countryside of Brazil, especially in the first movement, “Dobrado.” The second movement, “Canção,” presents a beautiful melody in perfect combination with the piano and trumpet. The fastest movement is the last, entitled “Final.” It has an ostensive rhythmic movement in pentatonic scale.

José Alberto Kaplan (b. 1935 in Rosario, Argentina – d. 2009, in João Pessoa, Brazil) was a pianist, teacher, composer, and conductor. He began his musical career as a pianist and mainly performed in Brazil and Argentina. In 1972, Kaplan formed a duo with pianist Gerardo Parente to disseminate Brazilian repertoire for this form of ensemble. He had a late start as composer, but left a catalogue of works close to 90 pieces encompassing several genres of compositions. The Sonata for Trumpet and Piano was influenced by composers such as Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) and Dimitri Schostakovich (1906-1975). Composed in 1987, it is different from the modal music in the northeastern part of Brazil because of the expanded tonality used in this piece as well as by the aforementioned composers. Both instruments, trumpet and piano, have equal importance, especially in the second and third movements.

Maestro Duda or Master Duda, José Ursicino da Silva was born in Goiana, a city in the country side of Pernambuco State, in December 23, 1935. At the age of eight, he began to study music, and by ten he was already a member of the “Saboeira” band and soon would write his first composition, the “Furacão” frevo (a Brazilian dance). Master Duda would eventually become one of the greatest conductors, composers, arrangers, and performers in Brazil, and especially of “frevo.” With an impressive background and a
genius in composition and arrangement, he even played oboe at the Recife’s Orchestra. His multiple talents led him to experiment with everything. He founded several “frevo” bands, which were often elected, during Carnival, as the best of the year. He had a successful career and great partnerships. In theater, he wrote the music for “Um Americano no Recife” (An American in Recife), directed by Graça Melo, and other plays directed by Lúcio Mauro and Wilson Valença. Duda was also the director of the music department of the TV News of Commerce and was later hired by the Bandeirantes TV, in São Paulo. He composed choros recorded by Severino Araújo and Oscar Milani, sambas recorded by Jamelão, music for Wind Quintet and Brass Quintet, band, and orchestra. He received the award for the best arrangement of popular Brazilian music in 1980, in a contest promoted by Globo TV, Shell, and the Brazilian Association of Records Producers.
Program III
University of Kentucky – College of Fine Arts – School of Music
presents

Paula Galama – Pianist

Recital Hall
Singletary Center for the Arts
November 24th, 2009, 7:30 – Lexington, KY, USA

PROGRAM

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Années de pèlerinage

Soneto del Petrarca 47 (1846)

Soneto del Petrarca 104 (1846)

Soneto del Petrarca 123 (1846)

Cláudio Santoro (1919-1989)

Paulistana no. 3 (1953)

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Impressões seresteiras, from Ciclo Brasileiro (1936)

-Intermission-

Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993)

Dansa Negra (1946)

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Choros no. 5 – “Alma Brasileira” (1925)

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Années de pèlerinage – 1st year

Switzerland - Vallée d’Obermann

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the DMA Degree in Piano Performance. Ms. Galama is a student of Dr. Irina Voro.
Franz Liszt’s (1811-1886) *Années de pelerinage* is a series of collections of pieces divided in three years: “Première année: Suisse,” “Deuxième année: Italie,” and “Troisiéme année.” The compositional style of Liszt is evident throughout this masterwork which contains virtuosistic treatment to sincerely moving emotional statements. It can be considered Liszt’s impressions of his journeys. The “Deuxième année – Italie” (“Second Year: Italy”) of *Années de Pelerinage* was composed between 1837 and 1849. The *Tre Sonetti del Petrarca* were composed ca. 1939-1946 and published in 1846. Like many other works published by Franz Liszt during the 1950s, the *Annés de pélerinage* are a revisitation of previous material. The performer faces the challenge of conveying such multiple layers of sensations and emotions. The pieces chosen for this program require creativity and insight, not to mention exceptional technique. “Vallée d’Obermann” is undoubtedly the most substantial piece in the collection. It was inspired by Senancour’s novel, which was read and annotated by Liszt and Marie d’Agoult. It contains a daring harmony and foreshadows Wagner in some ways.

Cláudio Santoro (1919-1989) was a Brazilian composer and conductor. He began his studies in violin and piano in Manaus, moving to Rio de Janeiro at the age of thirteen. A student of H.J. Koellreuter (1915-2005), he joined the Música Viva Group, along with composers such as Guerra-Peixe (1914-1993). Santoro embraced the dodecaphonic method of composition until 1943, when he turned to nationalism. In 1948, he moved to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979). Santoro was one of the founders of the Music Department of the University of Brasília (UnB). Between 1970 and 1978, he held the position of Professor of Conducting and Composition, Director of the Orchestra, and the Music Department of Heidelberg-Mannheim’s State Superior Music School, in Germany. *Paulistana no. 1* belongs to a set of seven pieces (*Paulistanas 1-9*). It requires controlled sound and exact rhythmic interpretation to convey its message of a bucolic and beautiful melody. This series is inspired by the rural folklore of São Paulo State.

“Impressões Seresteiras” (The impression of a serenade musician [sic])\(^{136}\) belongs to the *Brazilian Cycle*, which contains four movements: “Plantio do Caboclo,”

\(^{136}\)*http://www.villalobos.ca/ciclo-brasileiro* - The translation of the title was found in David P. Appleby’s site about Villa-Lobos.
“Impressões Seresteiras,” “Festa no Sertão,” and “Dança do Índio Branco.” The cycle was composed in 1936 and it was premièred in 1938 by Julieta Neves d’Almeida playing “Impressões Seresteiras” and “Dança do Índio Branco,” and in 1939 by José Vieira Brandão performing “Plantio do Caboclo” and “Festa no Sertão.” Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) was born in Rio de Janeiro and is considered to be the most eminent composer of Brazil. Deeply connected to nationalism, his catalogue of works is a reflection of his journeys, his search for an authentic Brazilian national music, and a consistent use of folkloric and urban popular material.

Mozart Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993) began to study at the São Paulo Conservatory in 1922. Later he moved to Paris and studied with Charles Koechlin (1867-1950) in 1938. Guarnieri composed symphonies, concertos, cantatas, operas, chamber music, almost two hundred pieces for piano, and over fifty songs. He is considered to be the most expressive figure in composition in Brazil after Villa-Lobos (1887-1959). Dança Negra was composed in 1946 and became one of his major works for piano. Along with Dança Selvagem (1931), it is considered to be representational formants of the Brazilian race, according to the composer himself. It offers levels of difficulty that vary from technique, artistic sound and rhythmic possibilities. It evokes the character of the African religion Candomblé.

Choros no. 5 “is probably one of Villa-Lobos most expressive piano works.”137 Together with Choros no. 1, it is perhaps the closest work to the choro genre, which Villa-Lobos used as model for this series. The Brazilian urban popular elements that Villa-Lobos wanted to convey are reflected very directly in this piece. The melody is simple and uses a persisting rhythm pattern that is accentuated by the use of triplets. The harmonic treatment uses parallel movement of triads and seventh chords, complex harmonic blocks by aggregation of pitches or clusters. The characteristics above made Choros no. 5 one of Villa-Lobos’s best representations of Brazilian nationalism. He does not use popular or folkloric themes in this piece. Villa-Lobos does, however, express the Brazilian atmosphere of choro in a magnificent way. In this masterpiece, it is possible to imagine Villa-Lobos back in his youth when, he was deeply involved in the popular music

in Rio de Janeiro; more specifically with the *chorões*. The possibilities of interpretation are very rich and diverse. Among all sixteen *Choros*, Villa-Lobos thought that *Choros nº 5* could symbolize and accurately represent the Brazilian culture. This representation, whether truly intentional or not, raises the piece to a level of importance within Brazilian pianistic literature. The work is expected to be part of any Brazilian pianist’s repertoire, not only because of its meaning inside the composer’s oeuvre but also because of the aspects of its construction.
Program IV

University of Kentucky – College of Fine Arts – School of Music
presents

Paula Galama – Lecture & Pianist

Recital Hall
Singletary Center for the Arts
April 6th, 2012, 7:30 – Lexington, KY, USA

PROGRAM

Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4 (Brazilian Bachianas no. 4): An Overview
by
Paula Galama

Villa-Lobos’s Life: An Overview

Villa-Lobos and the Bachianas Brasileiras (Brazilian Bachianas)

Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4 (Brazilian Bachianas no. 4)

Movement I – “Prelude (Introdução)”
Thematic material – The Musical Offering of Villa-Lobos

Movement II – Coral (Canto do Sertão)
Imagination

Movement III – Ária (Cantiga)
Image Association

Movement IV – Dança (Miudinho)
Mood

Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4 (Brasilian Bachianas no. 4) Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Paula Galama—pianist

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the DMA Degree in Piano Performance. Ms. Galama is a student of Dr. Irina Voro.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Academia Brasileira de Música (Brazilian Academy of Music Academy),
http://www.abmusica.org.br/

Appleby. David P. Collection on Brazilian Music, Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas at Austin. Documents, recordings, digitalized scores, and other materials, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utlac/00089/lac-00089.html


________. The Villa-Lobos Magazine. Updated studies, new records, and also documents and pictures. It can be also accessed through Red Deer Public Library. http://villa-lobos.blogspot.com/


Scores


Recordings


Secondary Sources


Academia Brasileira de Letras


BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR PROGRAM NOTES


Kaplan, José Alberto. A Teoria Intertextual Aplicada à Música. (Non published article).


VITA
Paula Maria Lima Galama

EDUCATION

1993-1999 Federal University of Rio de Janeiro: Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil
Master of Music, Piano Performance

1986-1992 FAMES - College of Music of Espírito Santo: Vitória, ES, Brazil
Bachelor of Music, Piano Performance

1984-1986 Brazilian Conservatory of Music: Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, Piano Performance

PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS HELD

1989-Present – Philharmonic Orchestra of Espírito Santo State, Vitória, Espírito Santo
Title: Violoncellist

1993-Present FAMES – College of Music of Espírito Santo: Vitória, ES, Brazil
Title: Professor of Music/Piano

2006-2008 University of Kentucky: Lexington, KY
Title: Teaching Assistant

1986-Present - Private Piano Studio – Paula Galama Piano Studio
Vila Velha/Vitória, Espírito Santo State
Title: Owner, Pianist, Teacher, Accompanist

SCHOLASTIC AND PROFESSIONAL HONORS

2008 Jean Marie McConnell Chrisman Memorial Piano Scholarship, University of Kentucky
2007 Nathaniel Patch Piano Scholarship, University of Kentucky
1997 College of Music of Espírito Santo, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil, First Prize, Best Interpreter of Brazilian Music
1991 III Lorenzo Fernandez National Piano Competition, Lorenzo Fernandez Conservatory of Music, Minas Gerais – Brazil, 3rd place
1987 College of Music of Espírito Santo, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil, Best Interpreter of Camargo Guarnieri
1987 College of Music of Espírito Santo, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil, Second Prize.
SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND PERFORMANCES

2011 Symphonic Concerts Series, Philharmonic Orchestra of Espírito Santo, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil, Carlos Gomes Theater: Performance of Rachmaninoff, 2nd Concerto for piano and orchestra
2011 Recitais Especiais, Duo Galama-Cardoso, at Agripina Hall of Bolshoi Theater School in Brazil, Joinville, Santa Catarina, Brazil: Chamber Music Recital – Trumpet and Piano
2011 Federal University of Goiânia, First Week of Trumpet: Chamber Music Recital – Charles Schlueter and Paula Galama
2011 1st Week of Scientific Research at FAMES College of Music: Chamber Music Recital – Trumpet and Piano – Duo Galama-Cardoso; Member of the Organization Council; Lecture: Bachianas Brasileiras nº 4 – “Prelude”
2010 3rd International Piano Festival of the City of Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil at FAMES College of Music, Vitória, Brazil: Chamber Music Recital – Trumpet and Piano Duo Galama-Cardoso; Organizer; Translator
2010 Thomas Jefferson House, Brasília, DF, Brazil: Chamber Music Recital - Duo Galama-Cardoso
2010 XX Congresso Anual da ANPPOM, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Goiânia, GO, Brazil: Chamber Music Recital – Duo Galama-Cardoso.
2009 UK SCFA – Lexington, Kentucky: Performance DMA Recital
2009 Pikeville College Guest Recital, Pikeville, Kentucky: Performer
2009 Campbellsville University Guest Recital, Campbellsville, Kentucky: Performer
2009 20th Century Brazilian Music for Trumpet and Piano - Tour’09 - Campbellsville University – KY: Chamber Music Recital – Duo Galama-Cardoso
2009 20th Century Brazilian Music for Trumpet and Piano - Tour’09 - Centre College - Danville, KY: Chamber Music Recital – Duo Galama-Cardoso
2009 20th Century Brazilian Music for Trumpet and Piano - Tour’09 - Pikeville, KY: Chamber Music Recital – Duo Galama-Cardoso
2009 20th Century Brazilian Music for Trumpet and Piano - Tour’09 - The University of Memphis - Memphis, TN: Chamber Music Recital – Duo Galama-Cardoso
2009 2nd International Piano Festival of the City of Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil at FAMES College of Music, Vitória, Brazil: Organizer. Translator.
2008 UK Memory Hall – Lexington, KY: DMA Chamber Music Recital – Duo Galama-Cardoso
2008 UK Recital Hall SCFA – Lexington, KY: Kyle Gann - Composer Portrait Concert, Chamber Music Recital
2008 UK Recital Hall SCFA – Lexington, KY: DMA Piano Recital
2008 UK University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble, Concert Hall, SCFA, Lexington, KY: Performance - David Maslanka Concert for Wind Ensemble and Piano.
2007 Chamber Music Orchestra of Espírito Santo, Carlos Gomes Theater, Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil: Performance of Haydn Concerto in A Major for Piano

2007 UK SCFA Recital Hall - Division - Honors Recital, Piano Performance

2007 Prague International Masterclasses, Jan Deyl Conservatory, Prague, Czech Republic: Performance of “Impressões Seresteiras” from Ciclo Brasileiro by Heitor Villa-Lobos

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS


2005 Paula Galama, “Como poderei falar de frutos?” in A GAZETA Newspaper, Vitória - ES, Brazil, August 17, 2005