

ÁPEIRON

GUITAR QUARTET

plays Brouwer & Villa-Lobos



LEO BROUWER

Leo Brouwer (1939) is one of the leading figures within 20th century guitar history. Born in Havana, Cuba, he pursued a career as a guitarist until the early 1980s before devoting himself entirely to composing due to an injury. The pieces presented on this disc can be traced back to minimalism, a style embraced by Brouwer in the 1980s. In *Paisaje cubano con rumba* written in 1985, the influences of Cuban folk music are made explicit. In the first part of the piece, which applies mutes to the guitar strings, is made to recall the sound of the marímbula, a sort of carillon. *Toccata*, published in 1994, has a more abstract and impersonal character, built from short, repeating rhythmic and melodic passages, including references and quotations from one of his previous compositions, *Danza Característica*.



HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

The first of 17 string quartets by **Heitor Villa-Lobos** (1887-1959) was given its first private performance in 1915 at the home of composer Homero Barreto. The writing is traditional with popular influences, using a deliberately simple language without the experiments of later works. Unlike a classical quartet, the structure is a suite in six parts that alternates slow and fast tempos with, different and contrasting characters, sometimes lyrical and dreamy or ironic and playful. The last movement "Saltando como um saci", refers to the Brazilian mythical figure of Saci-pererê, a kind of rainforest elf who leaps with his only leg, already appeared in the piano suite "Petizada" composed by Villa-Lobos in 1912.

The nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* written between 1930 and 1945 represent an encounter between the music of J. S. Bach and Brazilian popular music. For Villa-Lobos, Bach's music had the ability to speak to everyone regardless of nationality, a kind of global popular music thanks to the immediacy of its language. The first *Bachianas*, composed for an orchestra of cellos, was dedicated to Pablo Casals. As in the other *Bachianas*, each movement has two titles: a generic one (Introduction, Prelude, Fugue) and a specific Brazilian one. The subtitle of the first movement, *Embolada*, refers to a genre of folk song in which a text is recited rapidly, often on a repeated note. *Modinha* is a sentimental love song associated with parlour music and with influences from Italian opera. Villa-Lobos gave the final fugue the subtitle *Conversa*, specifying that its character is that of a musical conversation improvised by a group of chorões.



ÁPEIRON GUITAR QUARTET

Present on the music scene for more than fifteen years, the **Ápeiron Guitar Quartet** conducts its concert activity aimed at the discovery and disclosure of the original repertoire for four guitars, inspiring and motivating composers to write for this ensemble. In carrying out this project, the Quartet has established various collaborations including with Ivan Šuran, Marcos Vinicius, Desmond Clarke, Daniel Kessner and Paul Mortilla. In 2014 and 2015, as a quartet in residence, it premiered numerous pieces at the *highSCORE Festival* in Pavia in the presence of guests of honour Steven Mackey and Helmut Lachenmann.

The quartet has held concerts in Italy (Villa Manin di Passariano; International Festival "Nei sounds dei luoghi; Miramare Castle in Trieste; Mauro Giuliani Association Concert series "Enrico Mercatalli" in Gorizia, *highSCORE Festival* of Pavia, Festival "Nuovi Spazi Musicali" of Ascoli) and abroad (Croatia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Macedonia, Romania, Zambia). Furthermore, in 2013 the quartet took part in the XXVI Guitar Conference in Sanremo, Italy.

In 2006, their first CD "Ápeiron" was produced with music by York, Duarte, Brouwer, Laurent, Miletić, Rak and Bellinati. In 2010 they took part in the CD "Playing Marcos Vinicius" published by Sonitus. Their performances have been broadcast by various radio stations, including Rai Radio 3, Radio Beograd and Czech National Radio.

Leo Brouwer (1939)

1. Paisaje cubano con rumba [7:41]

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

String Quartet No. 1 *arr. Apeiron Guitar Quartet* [17:57]

2. I. Cantilena: Andante [2:03]
3. II. Brincadeira: Allegretto Scherzando [1:20]
4. III. Canto lírico: Moderato [4:08]
5. IV. Cançoneta: Andantino Quasi Allegretto [1:53]
6. V. Melancolia: Lento [5:27]
7. VI. Saltando como um Saci: Allegro [3:06]

Leo Brouwer

8. Toccata [3:08]

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1 *arr. Sérgio Abreu* [17:41]

9. I. Introduction (Embolada) [6:55]
10. II. Preludio (Modinha) [6:32]
11. III. Fugue (Conversa) [4:14]

Total Time: 46:31



Instruments:

Raffaele Pisano: Fabio Schmidt, 2017

Michele Ambrosi: Roberto De Miranda, 2008

Vlatko Bocevski: Roberto De Miranda, 2008

Vjekoslav Crnobori: Fabio Schmidt, 2017

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Producer and recording engineer: Vlatko Bocevski

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