

**NAXOS**  
THE MUSIC OF  
BRAZIL

José Antônio de  
**ALMEIDA  
PRADO**

Works for Violin  
and Cello

Emmanuele Baldini,  
Violin

Rafael Cesario,  
Cello



## About This Series

The series The Music of Brazil is part of the project *Brasil em Concerto*, developed by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to promote music by Brazilian composers dating back to the 18th century. Around 100 orchestral works from the 19th and 20th centuries will be recorded by the Minas Gerais Philharmonic Orchestra, the Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra and the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra. Further recordings of chamber and vocal music will gradually be added to this collection.

The works were selected according to their historical importance for Brazilian music and the existence of recordings. Most of the works recorded for the series have never had recordings available outside Brazil; many others will have their world premiere recordings. An important part of the project is the preparation of new or even first editions of the works to be recorded, many of which, despite their relevance, have only been available in the composer's manuscript. This work will be carried out by the Brazilian Academy of Music, by the Instituto Musica Brasilis and by musicologists working together with the orchestras.



### About The Scores

All works available from Academia Brasileira de Música ([www.abmusica.org.br](http://www.abmusica.org.br));  
requests at [edicoes.abm@abmusica.org.br](mailto:edicoes.abm@abmusica.org.br)

José Antônio de  
**ALMEIDA PRADO**  
(1943–2010)

**Le Livre magique de Xangô ('Shango's Magic Book') (1985)**

**15:42**

- |   |                            |      |
|---|----------------------------|------|
| 1 | I. Invocation I            | 0:43 |
| 2 | II. Manifestation de Xangô | 3:06 |
| 3 | III. Le Visage d'Iansã     | 2:11 |
| 4 | IV. Le Visage d'Obá        | 1:41 |
| 5 | V. Le Visage d'Oxum        | 2:26 |
| 6 | VI. Invocation II          | 0:39 |
| 7 | VII. Rituel                | 3:01 |
| 8 | VIII. Invocation III       | 0:23 |
| 9 | IX. Illumination           | 1:31 |

**Das Cirandas (1999)**

**10:46**

- |    |                         |      |
|----|-------------------------|------|
| 10 | No. 1. Allegro          | 3:07 |
| 11 | No. 2. Tema e variações | 3:42 |
| 12 | No. 3. Rondó: Scherzo   | 3:54 |

**As quatro estações ('The Four Seasons') (1983)**

**6:00**

- |    |                |      |
|----|----------------|------|
| 13 | I. Outono      | 2:10 |
| 14 | II. Inverno    | 1:57 |
| 15 | III. Primavera | 1:01 |
| 16 | IV. Verão      | 0:50 |

**Capriccio für Constança und Ana Luiza (1998)**

**1:53**

**Praeambulum (2004)**

**3:56**

**Solo Violin Sonata (2000)**

**19:28**

- |    |                       |      |
|----|-----------------------|------|
| 19 | I. Allegro intenso    | 8:16 |
| 20 | II. Scherzo intenso   | 6:37 |
| 21 | III. Adágio rapsódico | 1:45 |
| 22 | IV. Fugueta a 4 –     | 1:43 |
| 23 | V. Coral              | 1:05 |

## José Antônio de Almeida Prado (1943–2010)

### Works for Violin and Cello

One of the most prolific and creative Brazilian composers of the second half of the 20th century, Almeida Prado was a synaesthetic creator whose fertile mind found inspiration in everything, from the birdsong and verdant forests of his native country to a contemplation of the galaxies. Occasionally, he allowed himself to pursue a more conventional path, and turned instead to folk traditions.

The *Canto de Xangô* ('Song of Xangô') is an Afro-Brazilian melody included by musicologist Mário de Andrade (1893–1945) in his book *Ensaio sobre música brasileira* ('Essay on Brazilian Music', 1928). It was harmonised by such major Brazilian composers as Villa-Lobos (1887–1959) and Luciano Gallet (1893–1931), and Almeida Prado used it as the basis for his *14 Variations on an Afro-Brazilian theme 'Xangô'*, for solo piano, when he was still a student (1961).

Early works such as this reveal the clear influence of his then teacher, Camargo Guarnieri (1907–1993) – leading light of Brazil's nationalist school – who instilled Andrade's theories in his pupils. In 1965, however, Almeida Prado abandoned Guarnieri's teachings to embrace a language more in line with that of the European avant-garde of the time. This culminated in *Pequenos funerais cantantes*, a work that won First Prize at the inaugural Guanabara Music Festival in 1969, not only making his name in Brazil but also enabling him to move to Paris and work with Nadia Boulanger and Olivier Messiaen.

When he returned home from France, Almeida Prado incorporated the results of his Parisian studies into his most celebrated series of compositions, the *Cartas Celestes*, the earliest of which dates from 1974. *Le Livre magique de Xangô* ('Shango's Magic Book') is considered one of the foundational works of his final, postmodern phase, which saw him revise his idiom in eclectic style, increasingly using elements of modal and tonal music.

The work has a French title because it was commissioned by French cellist Barbara Grégoire, following a concert devoted entirely to works by Almeida Prado in Paris in December 1984. Dedicated to the performer 'avec amitié et admiration' ('with friendship and admiration'), and quickly completed in January 1985, the piece nevertheless remained unperformed until 2003, when it was premiered by violinist Maria Constança de Almeida Prado, the composer's daughter, and cellist Eduardo Bello.

Afro-Brazilian religiosity is a feature of Almeida Prado's final compositional phase, one that was particularly evident in 1985, when, as well as *Le Livre magique de Xango*, he wrote *Sinfonia dos Orixás* ('Symphony of the Orishas') for orchestra, *Livro de Oxóssi ou Cantos de Oxóssi* ('Book of Oshosi, or Songs of Oshosi') for flute quartet, and *Poesilúdio No. 12 – Noites de Iansã* ('Nights of Iansã') and *Sonata No. 5 'Omulú'*, both for solo piano.

The Roman Catholic Almeida Prado once stated in an interview, 'Afro-Brazilian religions offered me an aesthetic, not a mystical experience. I have no interest in them as acts of faith. I find the ritual side of Candomblé very beautiful – the clothes, the music, the obsessional rhythms, the drums, the very primitive connection with the earth.'

According to the Houaiss Dictionary, Shango is 'an orisha [spirit or deity] of the Yoruba religion, said to be the (legendary) fourth king of Oyo, in Nigeria, and god of thunder and lightning'. On the back cover of the score, the composer wrote these words: 'And suddenly, in the blue of the sky, a flash appeared, like an arrow of fire, and Shango shouted, "E mim me o tiçá. E mim, mim." He was a divinity!' Almeida Prado added an explanatory note to the effect that this was a Candomblé text, from the Shango ritual, and that the phrase cried out by the god consisted of 'African words used in Bahia in the rites performed by "children of the saints" [priests].'

Returning to the *Canto de Xangô* from Mário de Andrade's book, the composer here uses the violin and cello to evoke the particular characteristics of three more orishas, wives of Shango, who are mentioned by name in the score: Iansã (goddess of storms, lightning and the winds), Oba (goddess of turbulent waters) and Oshun (a river goddess).

In Almeida Prado's postmodern phase, anything was possible, including a return to the nationalism of his youth. So, for example, in *Das Cirandas* (1999), dedicated to 'two great artists and friends, Davi Vasconcelos Barreto and Pedro Vasconcelos Barreto', he seems to hark back to the teachings of Mário de Andrade and Camargo Guarnieri, taking folk tunes from various regions of Brazil as the basis for his work. In fact, he listed the origins of each melody: 'the *laiá* comes from Caxambu/Minas Gerais; the *ciranda* "As meninas da Europa", from Rio São Francisco/Bahia; the *ciranda* "Flor da China", from Itaperuna/Rio de Janeiro; the *ciranda* "Onde vai, morena?", from São Luiz/Maranhão; and all are taken from Iris Costa Novaes's book *Brincando de roda*, by Livraria Agir Editora, 1983.'

With his enormous talent for improvising, Almeida Prado was an exuberant virtuoso pianist, and always expressed himself most naturally on the piano. When it came to the violin, an important early inspiration was Natan Schwartzmann (1930–2020), who had studied with Ivan Galamian and Max Rostal, and went on to train generations of Brazilian violinists himself. But the composer's output for the instrument gained new impetus after his daughter Maria Constança established herself as one of Brazil's leading violinists. In 2000, Almeida Prado dedicated his lively *Violin Sonata* to her – as well as inventively exploring the instrument's potential, the work reveals a connection with the natural world common to several of his postmodern scores: the second movement, *Scherzo intenso*, also bears the indication *Paná-paná, borboletas azuis na Mata Atlântica* ('A cloud of blue butterflies in the Atlantic rainforest').

*The Four Seasons*, meanwhile, was commissioned by Funarte's National Music Institute as a mandatory work for the second National Young Performers of Brazilian Music Competition in 1984. Besides the obvious reference to Vivaldi, Almeida Prado also includes a brief quotation from Beethoven's '*Spring*' *Sonata*. Given that the piece was intended for young violinists, he designed each section as a study: *Autumn* (phrasing, long notes); *Winter* (effects: normal tremolo, tremolo sul ponticello, harmonics); *Spring* (arpeggios, scales and trills); *Summer* (chords, double- and triple-stopping).

If the *Capricho* for solo violin is lyrical in nature, rather than virtuosic, as its Paganinian title might suggest, *Praeambulum* takes us into the Baroque universe of Bach. In 2004, the eminent Brazilian cellist Antonio Meneses commissioned six different composers to write a short solo piece to serve as an introduction to one of Bach's *Six Cello Suites*. Almeida Prado's contribution was written as a prelude to *Suite No. 3 in C major, BWV 1009*. To quote the composer himself, 'It is based on C major, freely tonal, and the four notes in the name Bach appear from time to time: B flat, A, C, B natural. Some northeastern melismas pay tribute to Antonio Meneses' roots in Pernambuco. It ends on a dominant, with G major harmony, anticipating the opening of the Bach *Suite*.'

**Irineu Franco Perpetuo**

*Irineu Franco Perpetuo is a journalist and translator.*

*English translation: Susannah Howe*

## José Antônio de Almeida Prado (1943–2010)

### Obras para violino e violoncelo

Um dos mais prolíficos e criativos compositores brasileiros da segunda metade do século XX, Almeida Prado (1943-2010) era um autor sinestésico que podia buscar inspiração para sua mente fértil tanto na contemplação das galáxias quanto no canto dos pássaros e nas verdejantes selvas de seu país. Vez por outra, ele se permitia um caminho mais convencional, e voltava-se para o folclore.

O *Canto de Xangô* é uma melodia afro-brasileira incluída pelo musicólogo Mário de Andrade (1893-1945) em seu livro *Ensaio sobre música brasileira* (1928). Ela foi harmonizada por compositores brasileiros de relevância, como Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) e Luciano Gallet (1893-1931), e Almeida Prado, na juventude, tomou-a como base de suas *XIV Variações sobre um tema afro-brasileiro “Xangô”*, para piano solo, de 1961.

Na época, Prado seguia de forma disciplinada os ditames de seu professor Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993), chefe da escola nacionalista, que incutia em seus pupilos os postulados de Andrade. Em 1965, o jovem compositor abandonaria o cânone de Guarnieri e abraçaria uma linguagem mais próxima das vanguardas europeias da época, culminando em *Pequenos funerais cantantes*, obra laureada com o primeiro prêmio do I Festival de Música da Guanabara, em 1969, que não apenas lhe garantiria destaque no cenário brasileiro, como propiciaria ainda sua mudança para Paris, onde seria discípulo de Nadia Boulanger e Olivier Messiaen.

De volta ao Brasil, Almeida Prado sintetizou o aprendizado parisiense na sua mais celebrada série de composições: as *Cartas Celestes*, iniciadas em 1974. Considera-se *Le Livre Magique de Xangô* uma das obras fundadoras da última fase da produção do compositor, a pós-moderna, uma espécie de revisão eclética de sua linguagem, com incorporação crescente de elementos da música modal e tonal.

A obra tem título em francês porque foi encomendada, em dezembro de 1984, pela violoncelista francesa Bárbara Grégoire, após um concerto de obras de Almeida Prado em Paris. Dedicada à intérprete *avec amitié et admiration* (com amizade e admiração), e concluída rapidamente, em janeiro do ano seguinte, a peça, contudo, permaneceu engavetada até 2003, quando foi estreada pela violinista Maria Constança de Almeida Prado, filha do compositor, e pelo violoncelista Eduardo Bello.

A religiosidade afro-brasileira é uma marca dessa última fase de Almeida Prado, manifestando-se especialmente em 1985, quando, além de *O Livro Mágico de Xangô*, ele escreve *Sinfonia dos Orixás*, para orquestra sinfônica, *Livro de Oxóssi ou Cantos de Oxóssi*, para quarteto de flautas, o *Poesilúdio n.º 12 – Noites de Iansã*, para piano, e a *Sonata n.º 5 – “Omulú”*, também para piano.

De confissão católica, Prado afirmou, em entrevista: “O afro-brasileiro não foi uma experiência mística, mas estética. Não tenho interesse nessas religiões enquanto atos de fé. Acho muito bonito o ritual do Candomblé, as roupas, os temas, o obsessivo, os tambores, a ligação com a terra, muito primitiva”.

O Dicionário Houaiss explica que Xangô é “orixá iorubá dado como o quarto rei (lendário) de Oyo, na Nigéria, cuja epifania são os raios e trovões”. Na contracapa da partitura, o compositor escreve: “E de repente, no azul do céu, um clarão, como uma flecha de fogo, e Xangô gritou: *E mim me o tiçá. E mim, mim’*. Ele era uma divindade!” E explica, em nota: “texto do Candomblé, ritual de Xangô. Palavras africanas que são ditas na Bahia, nos rituais de ‘filhos de Santo’.”

Retomando o *Canto de Xangô* do livro de Mário de Andrade, o compositor aqui emprega os recursos de violino e violoncelo para evocarem as particularidades de mais três orixás, mulheres de Xangô, mencionadas expressamente na partitura: Iansã (encarnação das tempestades, raios e ventos), Obá (deusa das águas revoltas) e Oxum (das águas doces em geral).

Tudo poderia acontecer na fase pós-moderna de Almeida Prado – inclusive um regresso ao nacionalismo da juventude. Assim, no duo *Das Cirandas*, de 1999, dedicado “aos grandes artistas e amigos Davi Vasconcelos Barreto e Pedro Vasconcelos Barreto”, ele parece retomar a cartilha de Mário de Andrade e Camargo Guarnieri, baseando-se em melodias folclóricas de diversas regiões do Brasil. O autor chega ao ponto de indicar a origem de cada uma delas: “o tema *Iaiá* procede de Caxambu/MG; a ciranda *As meninas da Europa*, do Rio São Francisco/BA; a ciranda *Flor da China*, de Itaperuna/RJ; a ciranda *Onde vai, morena?*, de São Luiz/MA, todos retirados do livro *Brincando de roda*, de Iris Costa Novaes, Livraria Agir Editora, 1983”.

Com grande capacidade de improvisação, Almeida Prado era um exuberante virtuose do piano, e este sempre foi o instrumento ao qual se exprimiu com maior naturalidade. Ao violino, uma importante referência inicial foi Natan Schwartzmann (1930-2020), um discípulo de Ivan Galamian e Max Rostal, que formou gerações de violinistas brasileiros. Mas a produção do compositor para o instrumento ganhou novo impulso após sua filha Maria Constança se firmar como importante violinista profissional no Brasil. A ela, Almeida Prado dedicou, em 2000, a alentada *Sonata para violino solo* que, além de explorar criativamente os recursos do instrumento, revela a ligação com a natureza que marcaria várias de suas partituras da fase pós-moderna: o segundo movimento, *Scherzo intenso*, traz ainda a indicação *Paná-paná, borboletas azuis na Mata Atlântica*.

Já *As Quatro Estações* foram encomendadas pelo Instituto Nacional de Música da Funarte para o II Concurso Nacional Jovens Intérpretes de Música Brasileira, em 1984, como peça de confronto. Além da óbvia referência a Vivaldi, Almeida Prado não resiste a fazer uma breve citação da *Sonata Primavera*, de Beethoven. Dada a destinação da peça a jovens violinistas, ele concebeu cada uma de suas partes como um estudo. Assim temos: *Outono* (estudo de fraseado, notas longas); *Inverno* (estudo de efeitos: trêmulo normal, trêmulo *sul ponticello*, harmônicos); *Primavera* (estudo de arpejos, escalas e trinados); *Verão* (estudo de acordes e notas duplas e triplas).

Se o *Capricho* para violino solo soa muito mais como uma peça lírica do que como o virtuosismo que seu título paganiniano poderia indicar, *Praeambulum* é uma visita ao universo barroco de Bach. Em 2004, o destacado violoncelista brasileiro Antonio Meneses encomendou a seis compositores diferentes pequenas peças solistas para servirem como introdução a cada uma das seis suítes bachianas. A de Prado deveria anteceder a *Suíte No 3 em dó maior, BWV 1009*. Na descrição do próprio compositor: “É uma escrita em torno de dó maior, livremente tonal, e aparecem vez ou outra as quatro notas relativas ao nome de Bach: si bemol-lá-dó-si. Alguns melismas nordestinos homenageiam as raízes pernambucanas de Antonio Meneses. Termina numa dominante, com harmonia de sol maior, antecipando o início da *Suíte* de Bach”.

**Irineu Franco Perpetuo**

*Irineu Franco Perpetuo é jornalista e tradutor.*

## Emmanuele Baldini



Photo: Fernando Ruz

Emmanuele Baldini was born in Trieste, Italy. After studies in his hometown, he furthered his violin training in Geneva, Salzburg and Berlin, studying conducting with Isaac Karabtchevsky and Frank Shipway. From an early age, Baldini garnered prizes from countless international competitions, and has performed as a soloist or recitalist across the globe. He has performed in all the major European concert halls, in addition to those in Latin America and especially in Brazil, where he has lived since 2005. Following a highly successful career as a violinist, Baldini has embarked on new musical ventures as a conductor. He founded the Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo (OSESF) Quartet, and has collaborated with internationally renowned artists such as Maria João Pires, Jean-Philippe Collard and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet. Baldini has been concertmaster of the Orchestra del Teatro Comunale di Bologna, the Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala di Milano and the Orchestra del Teatro 'Giuseppe Verdi' di Trieste, and since 2005 has been concertmaster of the OSESF. He has also acted as guest concertmaster of the Orquestra Sinfônica de Galícia. As of 2017, he is the musical director of the Orquestra de Câmara de Valdivia in Chile. [www.emmanuelebaldini.com](http://www.emmanuelebaldini.com)

## Rafael Cesario



Photo: Paulo Rapoport Popó

Award-winning cellist Rafael Cesario studied at the University of São Paulo and the Conservatoire à rayonnement départemental du Val de Bièvre, Paris, where he was under the tutelage of Romain Garioud. He has also had masterclasses with Antonio Meneses, Alisa Weilerstein and Sol Gabetta, among many others. As a soloist, he has performed with numerous prestigious orchestras including the Paraná Symphony Orchestra, São Paulo Municipal Symphony Orchestra and the University of São Paulo Symphonic Orchestra. At the 2017 Trancoso Music Festival he appeared as a soloist and chamber musician alongside renowned musicians such as Mathieu Dufour and Andreas Wittmann. Over the last two years he has released three digital albums: *Um Outro Adeus* and *Meu Brasil* with André Mehmari, and *Beethoven Variations* with Marcos Aragoni. In 2022, Cesario joined the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra (OSESF) as guest first cello, including on a tour of the United States where he performed at Carnegie Hall. He is currently a member of the São Paulo City String Quartet.



José Antônio de Almeida Prado was one of the most prolific and creative Brazilian composers of the second half of the 20th century, finding inspiration in everything from the birdsong and forests of his native country to a contemplation of the galaxies. The evocative *Le Livre magique de Xangô* is considered a foundational work in Almeida Prado's final, eclectic postmodern phase, during which folk music also re-emerged in works such as *Das Cirandas*. The lively *Solo Violin Sonata* and lyrical *Capriccio* both explore the violin's full expressive potential, while *The Four Seasons* tests the skill of younger players.



José Antônio de  
**ALMEIDA PRADO**  
(1943–2010)

<b>1–9</b>	<b>Le Livre magique de Xangô</b> (‘Shango’s Magic Book’) (1985)*	<b>15:42</b>
<b>10–12</b>	<b>Das Cirandas</b> (1999)*	<b>10:46</b>
<b>13–16</b>	<b>As quatro estações</b> (‘The Four Seasons’) (1983)	<b>6:00</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Capriccio für Constança und Ana Luiza</b> (1998)*	<b>1:53</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Praeambulum</b> (2004)	<b>3:56</b>
<b>19–23</b>	<b>Solo Violin Sonata</b> (2000)*	<b>19:28</b>

**\*WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

**Emmanuele Baldini, Violin** **1–17** **19–23**

**Rafael Cesario, Cello** **1–12** **18**

**The series The Music of Brazil is an initiative of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.**

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet.

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