

NAXOS

Camargo
GUARNIERI
(1907-1993)

2 CDs

Piano Music • 1
Ponteios • Suite Mirim • Sonata
Max Barros, Piano



CD 1	64:48	CD 2	62:00
1 Dança Negra (1946)	3:28	Ponteios: Book IV (1956-1957)	20:29
2 Dança Brasileira (1928)	2:23	1 Ponteio 31: Triste	2:24
3 Dança Selvagem (1931)	1:55	2 Ponteio 32: Com alegria	1:14
Ponteios: Book I (1931-1935)	20:44	3 Ponteio 33: Queixoso	1:56
4 Ponteio 1: Calmo, com profunda saudade	2:00	4 Ponteio 34: Calmo e solene	4:12
5 Ponteio 2: Raivoso e ritmado	1:04	5 Ponteio 35: Dengoso	1:02
6 Ponteio 3: Dolente	2:31	6 Ponteio 36: Tristemente	2:45
7 Ponteio 4: Gingando	1:09	7 Ponteio 37: Com humor	1:15
8 Ponteio 5: Fatigado	2:39	8 Ponteio 38: Hesitante	2:43
9 Ponteio 6: Apaixonado	1:59	9 Ponteio 39: Dengoso	0:57
10 Ponteio 7: Contemplativo	2:42	10 Ponteio 40: Con moto	2:01
11 Ponteio 8: Angustioso	1:36	Ponteios: Book V (1958-1959)	20:06
12 Ponteio 9: Fervoroso	2:59	11 Ponteio 41: Tristemente	1:53
13 Ponteio 10: Animado	2:04	12 Ponteio 42: Dengoso, mas sem pressa	1:25
Ponteios: Book II (1947-1949)	18:12	13 Ponteio 43: Grandeoso	1:43
14 Ponteio 11: Triste	1:53	14 Ponteio 44: Desconsolado	1:47
15 Ponteio 12: Decidido	0:47	15 Ponteio 45: Com alegria	2:04
16 Ponteio 13: Saudoso	2:15	16 Ponteio 46: Íntimo	1:54
17 Ponteio 14: Confiante	2:07	17 Ponteio 47: Animado	1:58
18 Ponteio 15: Incisivo	1:08	18 Ponteio 48: Confidencial	2:23
19 Ponteio 16: Tranquilamente	1:32	19 Ponteio 49: Torturado	2:17
20 Ponteio 17: Alegre	0:59	20 Ponteio 50: Lentamente e triste	2:42
21 Ponteio 18: Nostálgico	2:18	Suite Mirim (1953)	5:31
22 Ponteio 19: Calmo	2:08	21 I. Ponteando	1:37
23 Ponteio 20: Vagroso	3:06	22 II. Tanguinho	1:23
Ponteios: Book III (1954-1955)	18:06	23 III. Modinha	1:19
24 Ponteio 21: Decidido	1:35	24 IV. Cirandinha	1:11
25 Ponteio 22: Triste	1:11	Sonata (1972)	15:54
26 Ponteio 23: Vigoroso	0:59	25 I. Tenso	4:00
27 Ponteio 24: Tranquilo	2:22	26 II. Amargurado	7:25
28 Ponteio 25: Esperto	0:43	27 III. Triunfante – Enérgico (Fuga a 3 partes)	
29 Ponteio 26: Calmo	3:04	– Triunfante	4:29
30 Ponteio 27: Cômico e expressivo	1:30		
31 Ponteio 28: Calmo e sentido	1:56		
32 Ponteio 29: Saudoso	2:14		
33 Ponteio 30: Sentido	2:32		

Mozart Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993): Piano Music • 1

Dança Negra • Dança Brasileira • Dança Selvagem • Ponteios • Suite Mirim • Sonata

Mozart Camargo Guarnieri is universally recognized as the most important Brazilian composer next to Villa-Lobos. His impact on the musical life of Brazil, as a composer, teacher, and conductor, can hardly be overestimated. Guarnieri influenced a new generation of nationalist composers for whom the use of folk material was not so much a compositional premise (as it had been earlier in the century) but rather one additional source of material that could be freely combined with elements derived from other musical traditions. This new approach lent their work an aura of universality colored by regionalism, combined with great sensitivity, inspiration, and compositional virtuosity. Guarnieri's piano music embodies his most distinctive stylistic features. As a consummate improviser on the piano, Guarnieri had an intuitive understanding of the instrument's technical and expressive capabilities, and many of his works for the piano reflect this sense of ease and intimacy, sometimes giving the impression that they were composed in a flash of instantaneous inspiration.

The three dances included on this recording are all based on elements from Brazilian folklore. However, rather than being strict representations of rhythmic and melodic features, the dances are more like suggestions of choreography and mood, as Guarnieri himself acknowledged. They were inspired by specific events and experiences in the life of the composer. The *Dança Brasileira*, composed in 1928, was inspired by the celebrations of the abolition of slavery in Brazil, which Guarnieri witnessed in the streets of his native city of Tietê, in the state of São Paulo. The piece is based on a highly suggestive samba rhythm, but not the urban version of samba (which eventually made its way into several genres of Brazilian popular music) but the traditional rural samba as practiced by the descendants of slaves in Brazil. The rhythmic ostinato is enlivened by a continuously shifting pattern of accents, while the melody is based on the mixolydian mode that is so common in Brazil's traditional music. The *Dança Selvagem* (1931)

incorporates a traditional rhythm that Guarnieri encountered in ethnographic recordings made by the Brazilian ethnomusicologist Roquete Pinto, documenting the practices of the populations in the heartlands of Brazil. The piece sustains a very high dynamic level throughout, creating a feeling of uncontrolled energy and frenzy that is made all the more striking by the persistence of the rhythmic design. Mário de Andrade, a major influence on the development of Guarnieri's nationalist aesthetics, singled out this piece as a turning-point in Guarnieri's individual style. The *Dança Negra* (1946) is one of the best known compositions for the piano in the Brazilian repertoire for this instrument, and undoubtedly one of Guarnieri's most beloved works. It was inspired by a Candomblé ceremony that Guarnieri attended in Salvador, Bahia, in the company of the writer Jorge Amado in 1937. According to Guarnieri, they went by taxi as far as the car could go and had to climb a steep hill on foot in order to get to the place where the ceremony was happening. As they climbed the hill, in silence and in total darkness, they could hear the distance sound of the drums, which became louder as they approached the "terreiro" (the house of worship in Candomblé) until it reached a frenetic climax. This explains the dynamic arc of the piece, which goes in a steady crescendo before fading out again. The rhythmic ostinato that supports the melody undergoes a process of extension, in that it stretches out progressively to break free from the confines of the bar line. The melodic phrase is presented no fewer than five times, but each of the expositions is varied in some way. The climax is reached during the fourth repetition of the melody, which is presented in octaves and supported by the most irregular of all the versions of the rhythmic pattern.

The *Suite Mirim* (1953) is one of four suites composed by Guarnieri inspired by the world of childhood. The word "mirim", in the Tupi dialect of the Brazilian Indians, means "little". Hence, the titles of the pieces are in the diminutive. Each of the pieces

represents a traditional Brazilian genre, two of them referring to dance genres (*Tanguinho* and *Cirandinha*) and two to melodic styles (*Ponteando* and *Modinha*). In some of them, especially in the last movement (*Cirandinha*) Guarneri reveals the influence of melodic patterns from northeastern Brazil, a region that provided several Brazilian composers with an inexhaustible source of rhythmic and melodic material.

The *Ponteios* are the genre most distinctly associated with Guarneri. He not only coined the term, but also composed a superbly varied collection of pieces in regard to styles, techniques, and references to the musical soul of Brazil. The word "*ponteio*" means a prelude in the practice of Brazilian traditional guitar players, by which they prepare and tune the guitar for the performance of a piece. This technique is common among several traditional musicians in Brazil, and in using the term as a genre in his collection of fifty *Ponteios*, Guarneri was making a direct reference to the notion of prelude that has such a long history in Western music. In many ways, Guarneri's *Ponteios* belong to the same kind of composition embodied in Chopin's *Preludes*. They are often monothematic, brief, and characterized by an enormous variety of mood, harmonic language, rhythmic patterns, and melodic inflections. They are often cast in a type of modified binary form: exposition of the material followed by a recapitulation that may or may not be varied. All the *Ponteios* have in common a certain internal rubato that is achieved through subtle inflections of tempo and supported by a network of astonishingly varied syncopated figurations. Harmonically, the *Ponteios* range from the purest diatonicism to bitonality and suggestions of atonality. The chords are chosen primarily for their coloristic value, with almost no regard for traditional harmonic syntax. Almost all of them are marked by a certain tonal ambivalence, a feature that

gives many of the *Ponteios* a nostalgic and melancholic character. Collectively, the *Ponteios* represent a musical anthology of the styles of Brazilian music, reflecting its character and expressive qualities in the context of musical jewels of highly individualized character. Guarneri composed the *Ponteios* over a period of thirty years, the last ones being concluded in 1959.

The *Sonata* (1972) is Guarneri's largest composition for the piano, and the only one in his output to be titled "Sonata". It is a late work, written when the composer was 65 years old. The reason why Guarneri chose the title "Sonata" for this work (as opposed to that of his eight "Sonatinas") was the nature and scope of the thematic material. In its contents and structure, the *Sonata* belongs with similar works by Bartók and Stravinsky, to name a few. Structurally and stylistically, it can be seen as a summary of Guarneri's musical personality. The slow movement was the first to be composed. It is quintessentially Guarnerian in its otherworldly atmosphere, vague structural outlines, and almost hypnotic melodies sustained over tempos that are extremely slow and almost static. The last movement, a fierce 3-voice fugue preceded by a violent introduction that recalls Stravinsky, is a veritable tour-de-force of contrapuntal writing, especially considering the asymmetric character of the theme. The influence of traditional black music can be heard in the first movement in the form of obsessive rhythmic patterns marked by irregular accents, but there is no direct reference to traditional music per se. Rather, as in many of his compositions, Guarneri suggests the elements of Brazil's traditional music without resorting to verbatim quotation.

James Melo
RILM Abstracts of Music Literature,
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Max Barros

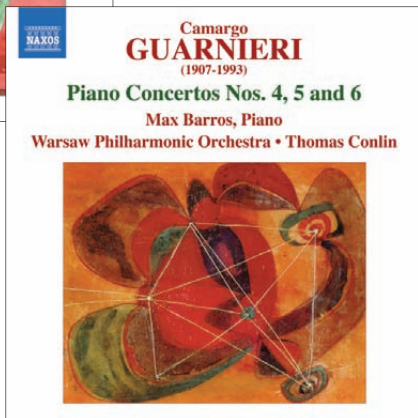


The pianist Max Barros was selected as Soloist of the Year in 1985 by the São Paulo Art Critics Association for his performance of Brahms's *Piano Concerto in D minor* with the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra. A dedicated champion of Brazilian music, he has given premières and recorded several works by some of Brazil's foremost composers, including the North American première of Ronaldo Miranda's *Concertino for Piano and Strings*, performed also in a tour of South America with the Virtuosi di Praga. His recordings of Guarneri's six piano concertos with conductor Thomas Conlin and the Warsaw Philharmonic won the Discovery Award from *Diapason* magazine. He is the founder and president of Ponteio Publishing Inc., a company devoted to the preservation and dissemination of Brazilian music. Born in California of Brazilian parents and raised in Brazil, since 1984 Max Barros has lived and taught in New York City, where he is co-artistic director of the Ensemble for the Romantic Century. He has collaborated with the American String Quartet, Enso String Quartet, Quartetto di Venezia, Biava String Quartet, Esher String Quartet, St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, and Ensemble Capriccio. A Steinway artist, his performances in America are frequently recorded for National Public Radio.

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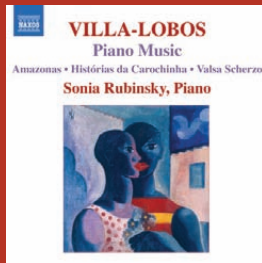
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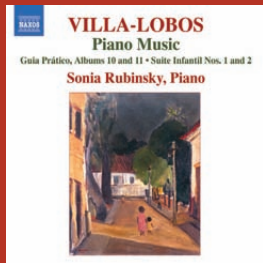
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Mozart Camargo Guarnieri was the most important Brazilian composer next to Villa-Lobos. Guarnieri's piano music embodies his most distinctive stylistic features. One of his most beloved works, the *Dança Negra* shares folk-music inspiration with the *Suite Mirim*. The *Ponteios* are characterized by an enormous variety of Brazilian music styles and moods, and the *Sonata* can be seen as a summary of Guarnieri's musical personality. Max Barros's "unfaltering brio and a complete command of the idiom" (*Gramophone*) can also be heard in Guarnieri's *Piano Concertos* (8.557666 and 8.557667).

Mozart Camargo GUARNIERI

(1907-1993)

Piano Music • 1

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14-23 <i>Ponteios: Book II</i> (1947-1949)	18:12		
24-33 <i>Ponteios: Book III</i> (1954-1955)	18:06		

Max Barros, Piano

This recording was made possible thanks to a generous gift from Sono and Victor Elmaleh.

A detailed track list can be found on page 2 of the booklet.

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Playing Time
2:06:48



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Booklet notes in English

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