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**RONALDO MIRANDA'S SOLO AND FOUR-HAND PIANO WORKS: THE  
EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE TOWARDS MUSICAL ECLECTICISM**

by

**Vitor Monteiro Duarte**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF EXAMPLES.....	7
ABSTRACT.....	10
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	11
1. Miranda in context.....	13
2. Miranda's piano works in context.....	14
CHAPTER TWO: OVERVIEW OF BRAZILIAN MUSIC DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.....	16
A. NATIONALISM	
1. The upcoming nationalism.....	16
2. Heitor Villa-Lobos, Mário de Andrade, and The Semana de Arte Moderna of 1922.....	20
B. INTERNATIONALISM VERSUS NATIONALISM	
1. Dodecaphonic movement in Brazil: Koellreutter and the <i>Grupo Música Viva</i> ...	24
2. Nationalism in retaliation: Guarnieri's Open Letter to Musicians and Music Critics of Brazil.....	26
C. The Post-Nationalistic generation: towards eclecticism.....	29
CHAPTER THREE: THE JOURNEY OF A COMPOSER: AN OVERVIEW OF MIRANDA'S LIFE AND WORKS.....	32
CHAPTER FOUR: RONALDO MIRANDA'S SOLO PIANO WORKS.....	37
A. SUITE #3 (1973).....	37
1. Allegro.....	37
2. Allegretto.....	41

**TABLE OF CONTENTS - Continued**

3. Lento.....	44
4. Allegro gracioso.....	45
<b>B. PRÓLOGO, DISCURSO E REFLEXÃO (1980).....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>C. TOCCATA (1982).....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>D. ESTRELA BRILHANTE (1984).....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>E. TRÊS MICRO-PEÇAS (2001).....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: MIRANDA’S WORKS FOR PIANO FOUR HANDS.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>A. TANGO (1993).....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>B. VARIAÇÕES SÉRIAS (1998).....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>A. THE EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE: MIRANDA’S PIANO WORKS OUTLINES FOUR DISTINCTIVE MUSICAL PERIODS.....</b>	<b>91</b>
1. First Period.....	91
2. Second Period.....	92
3. Third Period.....	94
4. Fourth Period.....	95
<b>B. THE MUSICAL LANGUAGE OF RONALDO MIRANDA: COMMON TRAITS THAT UNIFY HIS WORKS.....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>C. MIRANDA’S STANCE TOWARDS BRAZILIAN NATIONALISM: THE ‘ECLECTIC’ COMPOSER OF NATIONAL STYLE.....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>103</b>

## LIST OF EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1, Suite No. 3, Allegro (mm. 1-2).....	38
EXAMPLE 2, Suite No. 3, Allegro (mm. 23-24).....	38
EXAMPLE 3, Suite No. 3, Allegro (mm. 33-35).....	39
EXAMPLE 4, Suite No. 3, Allegro (mm. 48-49).....	39
EXAMPLE 5, Suite No. 3, Allegro (mm. 36-48).....	40
EXAMPLE 6, Suite No. 3, Allegro (mm. 7-8).....	40
EXAMPLE 7, Suite No. 3, Allegretto (mm. 1-2).....	42
EXAMPLE 8, Suite No. 3, Allegretto (m. 8 and m. 12).....	42
EXAMPLE 9, Suite No. 3, Allegretto (Theme 2).....	42
EXAMPLE 10, Suite No. 3, Allegretto (Chromatic Scale).....	43
EXAMPLE 11, Suite No. 3, Allegretto (Whole tone scale).....	43
EXAMPLE 12, Suite No. 3, Lento (First measure of Theme, Variations 1 and 2).....	44
EXAMPLE 13, Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso (Congada Rhythm) .....	45
EXAMPLE 14, Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso (Section A Theme 1).....	46
EXAMPLE 15, Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso (Section A Theme 1- cadence).....	46
EXAMPLE 16, Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso (Themes B1, B2 and B3 endings).....	47
EXAMPLE 17, Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso (Themes C1, C2 and C3 beginnings) .....	47
EXAMPLE 18, Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso (Final cadence).....	48
EXAMPLE 19, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Prólogo – beginning).....	49
EXAMPLE 20, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Prólogo – Meno Mosso beginning) .....	50
EXAMPLE 21, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Discurso – Motive 1, mm. 5-7).....	51
EXAMPLE 22, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Discurso – Motive 2, mm. 17-20).....	52
EXAMPLE 23, Gospel V-I (PAC).....	54
EXAMPLE 24, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Discurso – Transition to Motive 1 Mm. 26-28).....	54
EXAMPLE 25, Discurso (Section B, Climax, m. 44).....	54

### LIST OF EXAMPLES - Continued

EXAMPLE 26, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Section B Piazzolla's influence, mm. 51-52).....	55
EXAMPLE 27, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Section A' Restatement of Motive 1, mm. 65-67).....	55
EXAMPLE 28, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Section A' Restatement of Motive 2, mm. 77-80).....	55
EXAMPLE 29, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Reflexão, Subject Entries).....	56
EXAMPLE 30, Prólogo, discurso e reflexão (Reflexão, Developments of the First Aggregate).....	56
EXAMPLE 31, Toccata (Section A Theme 1, mm. 1-9).....	58
EXAMPLE 32, Toccata (Section A Closing Theme, mm. 28-30).....	59
EXAMPLE 33, Toccata (Section A Extension of Closing Theme, mm. 36-38).....	59
EXAMPLE 34, Toccata (Section B Theme 2 mm. 39-41).....	60
EXAMPLE 35, Toccata (Transition to Section A', mm. 68-70).....	60
EXAMPLE 36, Toccata (Section C Mm. 105, 108, and 110).....	62
EXAMPLE 37, Toccata (Section C Closing Extension, m. 114, and Transition, m. 118).....	62
EXAMPLE 38, Toccata (Final End, mm. 117-118).....	63
EXAMPLE 39, Estrela Brilhante (Introduction, mm. 1-7).....	65
EXAMPLE 40, Estrela Brilhante (An Outline of the Original Folk Tune) .....	66
EXAMPLE 41, Estrela Brilhante (Theme Part a, mm. 8-11).....	66
EXAMPLE 42, Estrela Brilhante (Theme Part b, mm. 16-17).....	67
EXAMPLE 43, Estrela Brilhante (Theme Part c, mm. 23-24).....	67
EXAMPLE 44, Estrela Brilhante (1 <sup>st</sup> Var. Introduction, m. 28).....	68
EXAMPLE 45, Estrela Brilhante (1 <sup>st</sup> Var. Theme, m. 35).....	69
EXAMPLE 46, Estrela Brilhante (1 <sup>st</sup> Var. Diminished progression M. 46).....	69
EXAMPLE 47, Estrela Brilhante (1 <sup>st</sup> Var. Climax in G, m. 50).....	69
EXAMPLE 48, Estrela Brilhante (2 <sup>nd</sup> Var. Theme, mm. 60-61).....	70
EXAMPLE 49, Estrela Brilhante (3 <sup>rd</sup> Var. Theme, m. 80).....	71
EXAMPLE 50, Estrela Brilhante (Transition mm. 104-105).....	71

## LIST OF EXAMPLES - Continued

EXAMPLE 51, Estrela Brilhante (4 <sup>th</sup> Var., mm. 128-131).....	72
EXAMPLE 52, Estrela Brilhante (Coda - Final PAC Cadence, mm. 173-177).....	72
EXAMPLE 53, Estrela Brilhante (Coda - Cadential Extension, mm. 183-184).....	73
EXAMPLE 54, Três Micro-Peças (I – Incisivo, mm. 1-2).....	75
EXAMPLE 55, Três Micro-Peças (I – Poco Più Mosso, Artificial Scale).....	75
EXAMPLE 56, Três Micro-Peças (I – Poco Più Mosso, m. 8-10).....	75
EXAMPLE 57, Três Micro-Peças (II – Lento, mm. 12-13).....	76
EXAMPLE 58, Três Micro-Peças (III – Lúdico Theme 1, mm. 1-4).....	77
EXAMPLE 59, Três Micro-Peças (III – Lúdico Theme 2, mm. 17-19).....	77
EXAMPLE 60, Três Micro-Peças (III – Lúdico, Section C, mm. 34-36).....	78
EXAMPLE 61, Três Micro-Peças (III – Lúdico, Section B', mm. 69-70).....	78
EXAMPLE 62, Três Micro-Peças (III – Lúdico, Final end, mm. 82-83).....	79
EXAMPLE 63, Tango (Octatonic Scale).....	81
EXAMPLE 64, Tango (mm. 1-6).....	81
EXAMPLE 65, Tango (Section A Second Part, mm. 23-24).....	83
EXAMPLE 66, Tango (Section B Second Part, mm. 72-75).....	84
EXAMPLE 67, Tango (Coda, mm. 154-155).....	85
EXAMPLE 68, Variações Sérias (Theme, mm. 1-4).....	87
EXAMPLE 69, Variações Sérias (I Variation, mm. 20-24).....	88
EXAMPLE 70, Variações Sérias (X Variation Final Cadence, mm. 260-264).....	90
EXAMPLE 71, Brazilian Folk Scales (Mixolydian Mode and Raised Fourth Scale).....	92
EXAMPLE 72, Toccata, m. 98 (Academic use of Tritone Fourth Chord).....	94
EXAMPLE 73, Toccata m. 21-24 (F# Dominant Preparation).....	97

## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to demonstrate that despite the stylistic eclecticism evident in the works for piano solo and four-hands by Ronaldo Miranda, his music is grounded upon a strong preference for Classical forms. Out of his seven pieces four piano solo, five are available in addition to his two pieces for piano four-hands. Miranda's eclecticism is apparent in the high diversity of musical experiments and language found in his output. His piano pieces are dispersed within the four periods subdividing his works. Tonal, atonal and neotonal are terms that the composer himself uses to describe his music. This evolution is seen in his solo piano works from the early language of his tonal Suite #3 (1973), to the atonal pieces "Prólogo, discurso e reflexão" (1980) and "Toccata" (1982), the neotonal language of his virtuoso "Estrela Brilhante" (1984), leading to the free atonalism of "Três Micro-Peças" (2001). Also included in this study are the "Tango" (1993), which was conceived out of the octatonic scale, and the tonal "Variações Sérias" (1998) for piano four hands.

In addition, this research demonstrates that Miranda reached a very distinctive musical style and is turning out to be among the leading active figures in contemporary Brazilian music. Even though Gerard Béhague described the term "eclectic" as a phenomenon that occurred in Latin American composers during the last decades of the twentieth century, it does not appear that Miranda consciously intended to write "nationalistic" music. Instead, his pieces seem to capture the essence of Brazilian national music without resorting to direct use of folk material.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to demonstrate that the stylistic eclecticism evident in the works for piano solo and four-hands by Ronaldo Miranda (b. 1948) is grounded upon a strong preference for Classical forms. Out of his seven pieces for piano solo, five are available.<sup>1</sup> Also included in his output are two pieces for piano four-hands. Ronaldo Miranda proves to be eclectic and versatile as a composer in many ways; he not only composed for piano but also for several ensembles and orchestra.<sup>2</sup> His compositional eclecticism is apparent in the high diversity of musical experiments and language found throughout his works. As explained in Gerard Béhague's book "*Music in Latin America: An Introduction*," this was a phenomenon that occurred among composers during the last decades of the twentieth century. Composers in Latin America broke the purely nationalistic trend and became more eclectic in their use of form and language as a way to reach a higher level of quality in their music and gain international acceptance.

Miranda's works are divided into four periods.<sup>3</sup> Tonal, atonal and neotonal are terms that the composer himself uses to describe his music.<sup>4</sup> This evolution is seen in his solo piano works from the early language of his tonal Suite #3 (1973), to the atonal pieces "Prólogo, discurso e reflexão" (1980) and "Toccata" (1982), the neotonal language

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<sup>1</sup> The composer has withheld the first two, presumably considered student works.

<sup>2</sup> Among his latest piece there is a symphony, *Sinfonia 2000*, premiéred in Teatro Municipal do Rio de Janeiro, 31 March 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, interview by Vitor Duarte, tape recording, 20 October 1999, Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

of his virtuoso “Estrela Brilhante” (1984), leading to the free atonalism of “Três Micro-Peças” (2001), also, in the musical experiments of his “Tango” (1993) and the tonal “Variações Sérias” (1998) for piano four hands. In addition, these pieces demonstrate that Miranda reached a very distinctive musical style and is turning out to be among the leading and active figures in contemporary Brazilian music.

Miranda was born in 1948 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.<sup>5</sup> Even though he only appeared in the musical scene in 1977, his diligence and perseverance attracted attention as a new and active composer on the rise. His music caught my attention because of its originality and technical difficulty. His way of writing harmony and melody based on major sevenths and fourth related chords is quite opposed to the more common use of the intrinsic, folk flavored mixolydian mode found in the northern part of Brazil. Miranda’s music sounds complete, fulfilled and brilliant in the context of Brazilian music. I remember the immediate success of his “Estrela Brilhante” after it was composed in 1984. His piano works are undoubtedly concert pieces.

Thorough material written about Miranda is scarce, although he is cited in many books. Ronaldo Miranda’s own dissertation opens a window to the composer’s thinking and is among the best sources.<sup>6</sup> There is another dissertation from Brazil by Harlei Raymundo,<sup>7</sup> and one in the USA by Vania Pimentel,<sup>8</sup> who included Miranda in her more

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<sup>5</sup> Vasco Mariz, *Historia da Musica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1994), 448.

<sup>6</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, “O Aproveitamento das formas tradicionais em linguagem musical contemporânea na composição de um concerto para piano e orquestra” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> Harlei Elbert Raymundo, “Uma postura interpretativa da obra “Estrela Brilhante” de Ronaldo Miranda” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1991).

<sup>8</sup> Vânia Pimentel, “The piano toccata by Brazilian composers of the twentieth century: a structural and interpretive analysis for performance” (Ph.D. diss., University of Houston, 1998).

general study of Brazilian Toccatas. In addition, José Maria Neves has researched much of the Brazilian contemporary music in his book “Contemporary Music in Brazil.” Nevertheless, we are still waiting for the newest edition of this book to be published, where it seems that Miranda is well covered. Nonetheless, musicians are increasingly interested studying his music.

### 1. Miranda in context

A brief study of twentieth century Brazilian music history is fundamental to understanding Miranda’s position in today’s music scene, and can be presented in very few words. By the time Miranda appeared in the music scene (1977), much of the twentieth century Brazilian music panorama was already delineated. It was during the last century that Brazilian musical esthetics was brought to life by major political-cultural events evolving into the many different ideas which culminated with the ascension, transformation, and discussion of nationalism.

Even though I believe nationalism to be a very ambiguous subject, many composers adopted it. This intellectual esthetic and philosophy served as guide to new dimensions in composition. According to Mário de Andrade in 1928,<sup>9</sup> national art in countries with major foreign cultural influences must pass through a process of definition into three distinctive stages: 1. the national thesis; 2. the national feeling; leading to 3. the unconscious nationality. Mário de Andrade, even though living in the first half of the last

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<sup>9</sup> Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio Sobre a Música Brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1972), 43.

century, was already dictating, and insisting, on the path Brazilian music should be taking to today's music, where Miranda stands.

## 2. Miranda's piano works in context

Out of his seven pieces for solo piano, the composer has withheld the first two, presumably considered student works. Even though his first two piano suites were discarded, the remaining five solo and two four-hand piano pieces available for this study allow for a clear comprehension of the evolution of Miranda's musical language. His piano works are dispersed within the four periods that subdivide his output. The musical analysis of these pieces evidences the continuous musical development that clearly defines his works into specific periods.

The study of form is a factor in my discussion since Ronaldo Miranda uses primarily traditional forms, mostly rondo sonata, fugue, and theme and variations. However, the study of language (melodic, harmonic, and textural) will also be emphasized. Being "eclectic," Miranda conceals in his music common traits that unify his works. According to his beliefs, the transition from the Baroque to the Classical period was indeed more striking than that of the Romantic to the twentieth century. As stated in his thesis,<sup>10</sup> in contrast to the Baroque style, Classical composers used a completely new conception of the form and language. By contrast, the major changes from nineteenth to

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<sup>10</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, "O Aproveitamento das formas tradicionais em linguagem musical contemporânea na composição de um concerto para piano e orquestra" (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1987).

the twentieth century happened more frequently in language since he and many composers kept using traditional forms.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER TWO

### OVERVIEW OF BRAZILIAN MUSIC DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

#### A. NATIONALISM

##### 1. The upcoming nationalism

The ascension of nationalism in Brazil was a slow, antagonistic process. According to Vasco Mariz,<sup>12</sup> to discuss Brazilian music of two centuries ago would be good subject for laughter. At that time, Brazil's erudite musical trends leaned towards European culture thus creating an obstacle to what would be inherent in Brazil's own nature. Many composers, while studying abroad, ignored the rich folk material found in Brazilian popular music. On the other hand, the public, constituted by the local society, would object to erudite music that made reference to any Brazilian folk or popular tune, stressing this way the distance between two kinds of music: the popular and the erudite.

As José Maria Neves<sup>13</sup> remarked,

A distinção entre arte popular e arte erudita de que falamos será agora marcante: de um lado a música do povo, que caminha para a nacionalização de seus elementos constitutivos e de suas formas, de outro a música erudita, primordialmente religiosa, que retoma com todo o vigor os grandes modelos europeus, sem maiores características nacionais.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Vasco Mariz, *Historia da Musica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1994), 33.

<sup>13</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 15.

<sup>14</sup> The distinction between popular art erudite art will be now astounding, on one side is the popular music that drives towards the nationalization of their constituting elements and their forms. On the other side is the erudite music, fundamentally religious, that recalls in full power the great European formal patterns, without greater national characteristics.

Nevertheless, a few composers attempted further explorations of musical nationalism. Antônio Carlos Gomes (1836-1896) was the first composer to consciously reveal nationalistic intentions by connecting to some of his works the major problematic issues of his country<sup>15</sup>. Although inspired by the Italian musical school, two of his most important operas were based on Brazilian subjects. The libretto of *Lo Schiavo* (1889) concerns slavery. However, the original plot, by Viscount Taunay (1843-1899), had a few changes. Originally, the action was based on eighteenth-century black slaves in a time when slavery's abolishment was an important issue culminating with the "Lei Áurea"<sup>16</sup> in 1888. Unfortunately, Gomes was forced by his Italian impresario to change the subject of the action from black slavery to Indians in the sixteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The libretto of *Il Guarani* (1870), premiered in Russia in 1879,<sup>18</sup> is among the first distinguished Brazilian literature. The plot, based on an Indian romance by José de Alencar (1829-1877), places this opera at the starting point of Brazilian nationalism.<sup>19</sup>

In 1869 the American pianist Louis Moreau Gottschalk enchanted the public in Rio de Janeiro with his famous *Grande Fantasia Triomphale Sur L'Hymne National Brésilien* (1869).<sup>20</sup> This renowned piano virtuoso, along with Liszt and Thalberg, was the ideal of all South American pianists.<sup>21</sup> His example of incorporating elements of musical folklore into a series of piano pieces, and writing concert paraphrases with elements of

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<sup>15</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 17.

<sup>16</sup> Brazilian law abolishing slavery.

<sup>17</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 17.

<sup>18</sup> José Penalva, *Carlos Gomes: O Compositor* (Campinas, S.P.: Papyrus, 1986), 20.

<sup>19</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 17.

<sup>20</sup> Vasco Mariz, *Historia da Musica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1994), 73.

<sup>21</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 11.

local folklore inspired other South American composers.<sup>22</sup> In Brazil, long before the appearance of the first works clearly connected to the nationalistic aesthetic, the diplomat and amateur musician Brasília Itiberê da Cunha (1846-1913) composed the first piece<sup>23</sup> to include a popular “southerner” theme. This piano fantasy entitled *A Sertaneja* (1869) has as the central theme the gaucho song *Balaio, meu bem, balaio*, much in vogue at that time, anticipating the development of piano music toward an increasingly nationalist expression. According to Tarasti,<sup>24</sup> *A Sertaneja* was perhaps inspired by Gottschalk’s visit.

Other composers contemporary to Itiberê such as Leopoldo Miguez (1850-1902), Glauco Velásquez (1884-1914), and Henrique Oswald (1852-1931) remained attached to European compositional norms and did not depict elements of folklore in their music. Nevertheless, Ernesto Nazareth (1863-1934) is an exception. It is difficult to categorize him as either a classical or popular composer since he was proficient in writing in both styles.<sup>25</sup> Nazareth was the father of the genre “Brazilian tango” which involves psychological expressiveness as much as actual dance-like character. It must not be confused with the Argentine tango or the Cuban habanera. As Brasília Itiberê (1896-1967) remarked,<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that *Estrela Brilhante* (1984) by Ronaldo Mirando is also a paraphrase on a Brazilian popular tune.

<sup>23</sup> The musicologist Bruno Kiefer points out that a “dance of blacks” entitled *A Cayumba* (1857) by Carlos Gomes preceded the famous *A Sertaneja* by Itiberê da Cunha. Mariz, *História da Música no Brasil*, 116.

<sup>24</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 11.

<sup>25</sup> Ernesto Nazareth belongs to that difficult to define zone for which the Argentine musicologist Carlos Vega has used the apt word “mesomusic.” Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 12.

<sup>26</sup> Brasília Itiberê, *Ernesto Nazareth na Música Brasileira*, (Rio de Janeiro: in boletim Latino Americano, tomo IV.

Imprimiu à rítmica incipiente das polcas e lundus um caráter tão preciso, sistematizando e enriquecendo-a com tão grande variedade de fórmulas, empregou nas suas composições uma ciência rítmica, uma beleza harmônica e uma tal riqueza melódica, que se tornou de fato o expoente máximo de nossa música popular e um autêntico precursor da música de caráter nacional.<sup>27</sup>

Alexandre Levy (1864-1892) and Alberto Nepomuceno (1864-1920) are considered the founders of serious Brazilian music.<sup>28</sup> Levy was the first to motivate composers for a study of all the musical genres in Brazil, later realized by Villa-Lobos. His music demonstrates that the inclusion of popular idioms were being taken into consideration. The last movement of his *Suite brésilienne* (1890) entitled *Samba*, is cited by Gerard Béhague as “the first decisive step toward musical nationalism in Brazil.”<sup>29</sup>

Finally, Alberto Nepomuceno is the last precursor of the Brazilian nationalism. Bruno Kiefer describes him as “the founder of Brazilian music.”<sup>30</sup> With a greater output and longer life than Levy’s (both were born in the same year), his most famous work is the symphonic suite *Série Brasileira*. The descriptive character of this suite might have influenced Villa-Lobos.<sup>31</sup> Nepomuceno is also regarded the first to have incorporated the Portuguese language into the Brazilian song repertoire. However, the European background which prevail in Nepomuceno’s and other composers’ musical training previous to Villa-Lobos did not bring a clear esthetic to the forthcoming national

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<sup>27</sup> The rhythm printed following the *polcas* and *lundus* gives the music a precise character and a magnificent richness. His use of the his rhythmic science, the harmonic beauty, and such a variety of melodies, lead him to be in fact the maximum of our popular music, and an authentic forerunner of our erudite music of national character.

<sup>28</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 21.

<sup>29</sup> Gerard Béhague, *The Beginnings of Musical Nationalism in Brazil*, Detroit Monographs in Musicology, no. 1 (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1971), 23.

<sup>30</sup> Bruno Kiefer, *história da Música Brasileira: Dos Primórdios ao Início do Século XX*, Série Luis Cosme, vol. 9 (Porto Alegre: Editora Movimento, 1976), 114.

<sup>31</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 22.

language. The folk material was still made available in all its richness, but the use of it did not progress beyond musical borrowings. Musical nationalism in Brazil arose only with the “Semana de Arte Moderna”<sup>32</sup> of 1922, and the upcoming modernism.

## 2. Villa-Lobos, Mário de Andrade, and The Semana de Arte Moderna of 1922

The Semana de Arte Moderna (week of modern art), held in the Teatro Municipal de São Paulo from 11 to 17 February 1922, the same year of the centenary of Brazil’s independence, marked the official arrival of the growing modernist movement in Brazil. According to Tarasti,<sup>33</sup> “surprisingly enough, in Latin America, modernism meant resistance to internationalism and a sort of reevaluation of provincialism and regionalism.” This Latin American phenomenon of liberation from stagnated European guardianship and academic romanticism and a return to the elements of folklore or native art occurred simultaneously in many countries during the 1920’s, in Brazil and Argentina, as well as in Mexico and Cuba.

The Week of Modern Art consisted of a series of three programs evolving art expositions (painting and sculpture), conferences on modern esthetics, poetry readings, and musical concerts. The shocking radicalism<sup>34</sup> and the new esthetic direction being taken by Brazilian artists resulted in many polemic debates covered by the press as well as a strong disapproval by the conservative public<sup>35</sup> that believed the only true culture

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<sup>32</sup> Week of Modern Art.

<sup>33</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 24.

<sup>34</sup> Artists attacked freely the geniality of Aleijadinho, a national symbol of Baroque architecture and sculpture, the music of Carlos Gomes, a national symbol of Brazilian erudite music; and other valued names on Brazilian literature.

was that which was imported from Europe. The week of modern art became famous, in fact, for being a scandal.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, it was during this week that the complete liberation from Europe's artistic trends was declared, culminating in the efforts of a whole generation of writers, painters, sculptors, and musicians.

Musically, the programming was, indeed, preponderantly Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959), aside from a few insertions of French piano pieces by Claude Debussy (1862-1918),<sup>37</sup> Eric Satie (1866-1925), and Francis Poulenc (1899-1963). There is no doubt that the music of Villa-Lobos clearly represented the ideas the modernists tried to promote,<sup>38</sup> under the leadership of the Brazilian musicologist Mário de Andrade (1893-1945), considered the "pope of modernism."

According to Gerard Béhague, Heitor Villa-Lobos has been acknowledged as the foremost Brazilian composer of the time.<sup>39</sup> He was the first Brazilian composer to travel abroad not to study, but instead, to show his works. During his youth (1905-1913), Villa-Lobos submitted himself to extensive traveling around Brazil's regions from north to

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<sup>35</sup> The conferences, readings, poetry recitations, and concerts elicited strong reactions from the public, whose lack of concentration and respect was not usual from the "habitues" in that theater. Irreverent comments and booing were constant elements during the week of modern art chronicle. Notwithstanding, the public reactions did not scare the artists, which on certain occasions, caused immediate retaliation from both sides. José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 36.

<sup>36</sup> After multiple disorders, finally, the police broke up the event, finding young people with boxes full of rotten eggs and potatoes to "crown" the organizers of the event. Not to mention somebody threw uric acid on Villa-Lobos' trio. Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 67.

<sup>37</sup> Astonishingly, almost unknown in Brazil at that time.

<sup>38</sup> Even though Villa-Lobos' pieces presented during the week of modern art prompted repercussion, they are still derived from his post-romantic period, thus, lacking the modernism present in some of his previously composed music, as for example, the ballet "Amazonas." José Miguel Wisnik remarks that these pieces did not represent Villa-Lobos' most avant-garde output. José Miguel Wisnik, *O Coro dos Contrários: A Música em torno da Semana de 22*. (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1977), 163.

<sup>39</sup> Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 1.

south searching and absorbing folk music, which later manifested itself in his own musical language.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, his interest in Rio de Janeiro's popular groups called *chorões* influenced him to compose in early years his idiosyncratic work "Choros," definitely a new genre of the urban folk expression of Brazil. According to Villa-Lobos,<sup>41</sup> the *choros* represents a new form of musical composition in which different modalities of the Brazilian Indian and popular music are synthesized, having as its principal elements rhythm and some typical melody of a popular nature, which appears in the work every now and then, always modified according to the personality of the composer. The meanings of *Choro*, in any case, have nothing to do with the etymology of the word. Indeed, the term *chorado* or *choro* refers to a certain way of feeling and performing the course of a melody, closely associated with the choro groups in Rio.<sup>42</sup> Villa-Lobos' *Choros* evince his complete adherence to nationalistic trends and perhaps most clearly realizes the esthetic program praised by Mário de Andrade.

Eight out of the twenty volumes that constitute the complete works of Mário de Andrade are related to music. His first significant work and probably the most important volume dealing with music, *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira* (1928), is supposed to be a guide to interrelations in Brazilian folk music. However, the sixty-three-page introduction of the book amuses the reader with a true manifesto that presents Andrade's strong

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<sup>40</sup> The vast experience acquired during these traveling years resulted into one of his most important works *O Guia Prático*, a collection of folk songs intended to be used for music education in schools.

<sup>41</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1987), 87.

<sup>42</sup> Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, *150 anos de música no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olímpio Editora, 1956), 144.

ideological position and dictatorial doctrine on Brazilian musical nationalism. In it, Mário de Andrade states that the consolidation of national art must pass through three distinctive stages: 1. the national thesis; 2. the national feeling; leading to 3. the unconscious nationality.<sup>43</sup> According to him, the national thesis period is fundamental for creating a national and necessary expression of a nationality (idealist nationalism).<sup>44</sup> To summarize, this period consists of the serious research and study of folk music, rejecting its utilization as a mere citation of an exotic element.<sup>45</sup> Hence, composers should seek an authentic national art found in the consciousness of the people, as well as to closely relate their works to the social political reality (conscious nationalism). Only in the last stage of art can artists feel sincere in their habits as well as in their convictions (unconscious nationality).

It was the music of Villa-Lobos that realized Andrade's leading ideas in the most complete and effective form. Mário de Andrade considered Villa-Lobos a genuine Brazilian.<sup>46</sup> For instance, Villa-Lobos is cited many times in Andrade's *Ensaio sobre a Música Brasileira* written six years after the Week of Modern Art. Even though the city of São Paulo challenged the cultural hegemony of Rio de Janeiro for the first time with that event, it was inviting the "carioca"<sup>47</sup> Villa-Lobos that completely fulfilled the *modernismo* paradigm. Notwithstanding the fact that the natural empathy and affinity

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<sup>43</sup> Mário de Andrade, *Ensaio Sobre a Música Brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editora, 1972), 43.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>45</sup> Thus, all the nationalism preceding Villa-Lobos, as experimented by Brasília Itiberê, Levy, and Nepomuceno, do not fit into this category.

<sup>46</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 43.

<sup>47</sup> A native of Rio de Janeiro.

with the popular culture in Villa-Lobos' musical language came on its own, before and without the need of the Semana de Arte Moderna of 1922.<sup>48</sup>

## B. NATIONALISM VERSUS INTERNATIONALISM

### 1. Dodecaphonic movement in Brazil: Koellreutter and the *Grupo Música Viva*

In the year of 1937 the German conductor and composer Hans Joachim Koellreutter (b.1915) immigrated to Brazil. Despite being the writer of the book entitled "*Terminologia de uma nova Estética da Música*,"<sup>49</sup> his musical output is rather scarce. Definitely, it is his work as a pedagogue that made a decisive contribution to the twentieth-century Brazilian music. Up to his arrival in Brazil, the works of Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951), Alban Berg (1874-1935), and Anton Webern (1883-1945) were almost unknown to most Brazilian composers.<sup>50</sup> Koellreutter introduced young Brazilian composers to avant-garde techniques of composition, especially serialism. As stated by Vasco Mariz,<sup>51</sup> Koellreutter's approach to teaching was based on a) freedom of expression; b) the development of each composer's individual personality; c) knowledge of all techniques of musical composition; and d) acquisition of a *métier* to satisfy the requirements of modern composition. Many of his students quickly achieved a national and international recognition. Among them are César Guerra Peixe (1914-1993), Cláudio

<sup>48</sup> Gilberto Mendes, *A Música* (São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva: 1975), 131.

<sup>49</sup> Terminology of the new Musical Aesthetic.

<sup>50</sup> It is true that the serialism movement spread in vogue in Europe mostly after 1940. However, the Brazilian composers that had the opportunity to travel abroad before the ascension of dodecaphonism and came into contact with this technique repudiated it considering it inexpressive. José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 81.

<sup>51</sup> Vasco Mariz, *Historia da Musica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1994), 294.

Santoro (1919-1989), Edino Krieger (b. 1928), Marlos Nobre (b. 1939), and the popular *bossa-nova* musician Antônio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994).

In 1939 in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Koellreutter and several major Brazilian musical personalities founded the *Grupo Música Viva* (Group for Living Music) favoring dodecaphony. The name and aim of the group was directly connected to the philosophy of Hermann Scherchen (1891-1966), Koellreutter's teacher in Germany. The group promoted concerts, lectures, radio programs, as well as publishing eleven volumes<sup>52</sup> of a magazine directed towards the defense of their techniques and aesthetic ideas. The group's philosophy is clearly defined in its manifesto of 1946. Clause ten, out of thirteen clauses, of the manifesto presents the position of the group towards musical nationalism:

MÚSICA VIVA acredita no poder da música como linguagem *substancial* como estágio na evolução artística de um povo, combate, por outro lado, o *falso* nacionalismo em música, isto é: aquele que exalta sentimentos de superioridade nacionalista na sua essência e estimula as tendências egocêntricas e individualistas que separam os homens, originando forças disruptivas.<sup>53</sup>

Thus, even though the group did not attack musical nationalism directly, it then declared its opposition to folkloristic nationalism. Also, Koellreutter teachings, although not clear in his premises, tended to impose serial techniques. Hence, many people viewed the major philosophy of the group as an anti-national campaign<sup>54</sup> and a challenge to Brazilian musical nationalism. Therefore, the musical aesthetics in Brazil were divided into a polarity of diverging ideas: nationalism versus internationalism. The years of 1950

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 295.

<sup>53</sup> MÚSICA VIVA believes in the power of music as a substantial language staged in art evolution of people, is against false nationalism, which primarily defends feelings of national superiority and stimulates egocentric and individualistic tendencies; these tendencies divide people and create destructive forces. Ibid, 301.

to 1954 were marked by a series of debates covered by the press culminating with the publication of Camargo Guarnieri's (1907-1993) "Carta Aberta aos Músicos e Críticos do Brasil" (Open Letter to Musicians and Music Critics of Brazil) in the major newspapers in the country. The group *Música Viva* disbanded in the late 1950's.

## 2. Nationalism in retaliation: Guarnieri's Open Letter to Musicians and Music Critics of Brazil

Mozart Camargo Guarnieri is considered by many to be the most important contemporary Brazilian composer.<sup>55</sup> The numerous piano pieces he wrote had immediate acceptance from most Brazilian pianists. His large piano output includes etudes, waltzes, eight sonatinas, a sonata, a toccata, *improvisos*, *momentos musicais*, a collection of fifty pieces in five albums entitled *Ponteios*,<sup>56</sup> and several characteristic "national" pieces such as urban dances (*toada*, *lundú*, etc.). Even though Guarnieri interrupted his compositional activities for a reevaluation of his style around 1960, he never abandoned nationalism as a musical aesthetic and ideology. Unlike Villa-Lobos, the musical nationalism presented in his music is characterized by indirect quotation of folk material (unconscious nationality). Guarnieri's melodies are praised for being imaginatively lyric, and his compositions are characterized by a strong craftsmanship in counterpoint and form. His students include major Brazilian composers such as Osvaldo Lacerda (b. 1927), Marlos Nobre (b. 1939), Aylton Escobar (b. 1943), and Almeida Prado (b. 1943).

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<sup>54</sup> Gerard Béhague, *Music in Latin America: an introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 279.

<sup>55</sup> Vasco Mariz, *Historia da Musica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1994), 275.

Guarnieri's aesthetic tutor was the nationalistic militant Mário de Andrade. Their first contact occurred in 1928, to discuss two piano pieces Guarnieri remitted to Andrade. Guarnieri obtained Andrade's immediate recognition as a composer unenthusiastic about the prevailing European academicism. Guarnieri trusted Andrade's criticism towards his music<sup>57</sup> during their lifelong friendship. After Andrade's death in 1945, nationalistic aesthetic continued onward through the leadership of Guarnieri.

Nevertheless, Guarnieri was opposed to the "free unlimited musical creation"<sup>58</sup> campaign praised by the *Grupo Música Viva*, which conforms, in fact, to Koellreutter's teachings and ideology. Undoubtedly, the dodecaphonism polemic gained strength publicly in Brazil after the publication of Guarnieri's "Carta Aberta aos Músicos e Críticos do Brasil" (Open Letter to Musicians and Music Critics of Brazil) in all major Brazilian newspapers in 1950. The letter, considered by many as a bizarre<sup>59</sup> document, reads:

Através deste documento, quero alertá-los sobre os enormes perigos que, neste momento, ameaçam profundamente a cultura musical brasileira...

Esses perigos provêm do fato de muitos dos nossos jovens compositores... estarem se deixando seduzir por falsas teorias progressistas da música, orientando a sua obra nascente num sentido contrário ao dos verdadeiros interesses da música brasileira.

Introduzido no Brasil há poucos anos. Por elementos oriundos de países onde se empobrece o folclore musical, o Dodecafonismo encontrou aqui ardorosa acolhida por parte de alguns espíritos desprevenidos...

Assim pois, o dodecafonismo...é uma expressão característica de uma política de degenerescência cultural, um ramo adventício...do Cosmopolitismo

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<sup>56</sup> "Ponteio" in Guarnieri's national language stands for preludes. Suggesting linear writing, it implies the melodic plucking of a string instrument. Belkiss Carneiro de Mendonça, *Camargo Guarnieri*, ed. Flávio Silva (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 2001), 402.

<sup>57</sup> Guarnieri mentions: "It was an unforgettable time." Guarnieri, letter, 11 February 1986.

<sup>58</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 121.

<sup>59</sup> Jorge Coli, *Camargo Guarnieri*, ed. Flávio Silva (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 2001), 25.

que nos ameaça com suas sombras deformantes e tem por objetivo oculto um lento e pernicioso trabalho de destruição do nosso caráter nacional... Isso constitui, além do mais, uma afronta à capacidade criadora, ao patriotismo e à inteligência dos músicos brasileiros...

O dodecafonismo é assim, de um ponto de vista mais geral, produto de culturas superadas...é química, é arquitetura, é matemática da música... mas não é música...

Que essa nossa pretensa música encontre adeptos no seio de civilizações e culturas decadentes, onde se exauem as fontes originais do folclore...vá lá! Mas que não encontre acolhida aqui, na América nativa e especialmente no Brasil, onde um povo novo e rico de poder criador tem todo um grandioso porvir nacional a construir com as próprias mãos!...O nosso país possui um folclore musical dos mais ricos do mundo, quase totalmente isnorado por muitos dos compositores brasileiros.

Afirmo, sem medo de errar, que o dodecafonismo jamais será compreendido pelo grande público porque ele é essencialmente cerebral, antipopular, antinacional e não tem nenhuma afinidade com a alma do povo....

Espero, entretanto, que os meus colegas compositores, intérpretes, regentes e críticos manifestem, agora, sinceramente, a sua autorizada opinião a propósito do assunto....<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> "Through this document I warn you of the great danger that threatens Brazilian musical culture lately...

This danger comes from the fact that many of our young composers...have let themselves be seduced by false progressive theories of music, orienting their works in the opposite direction from the true interests of Brazilian music.

Introduced in Brazil a few years ago, by individuals originally from countries where musical folklore has been impoverished for many years, Dodecaphonism was accepted here without any constraints by some candid young musicians...

Thus, dodecaphonism...is the outcome of a policy of cultural degeneracy, a branch of cosmopolitanism. It threatens us with its deforming shadows hiding its goal of a slow destruction of our national character.... This is an affront to the creativity, patriotism, and intelligence of Brazilian musicians...

Therefore, dodecaphonism is, in most instances, a product of former cultures.... It could be musical chemistry, architecture, mathematics...but definitely not music.

I claim that this pretentious music find followers in decadent civilizations and cultures, where the original sources of folklore are totally exhausted.... But not here in native America and especially in Brazil, where new people, rich in creative power, await a grandiose future to be constructed with our own hands.... Our country has one of the richest sources of folklore in the world. (Unfortunately, almost ignored by many Brazilian composers).

I affirm here, without any fear of being wrong, that dodecaphonism will never be comprehended by the great public, since it is essentially cerebral, anti-populist, and anti-national, and has no affinity with our people's soul....

I sincerely expect from my colleagues, composers, performers, conductors, and critics your authorized opinion regarding this subject." Camargo Guarnieri, *Camargo Guarnieri*, com. Flávio Silva (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 2001), 143.

Indeed, the feedback for Guarnieri's convocation of opinions came immediately. The outcome was an extraordinary interest in the musical scene. Due to its political-ideological nature, for the first time the press opened a music issue to the public. Calls to open debates, interviews, opinions, statements, and letters<sup>61</sup> were presented to the judgment and appreciation of the public. Several of Koellreutter students, including the prominent Cláudio Santoro and Guerra Peixe, abandoned their teacher's ideology. Others published articles in his defense. Nonetheless, Koellreutter is criticized for his attempts to impose foreign compositional processes on young Brazilian composers, but is acclaimed for bringing avant-garde compositional techniques from Europe. The *Grupo Música Viva* was, in fact, a major innovating movement in musical composition.<sup>62</sup> Nonetheless, this old ideological duality which originated in that time still remains a living issue brought into notice by a few people. After the Week of Modern Art of 1922, this was the second time Brazilian musicology faced a massive polemic.

### C. THE POST-NATIONALISTIC GENERATION: TOWARDS ECLECTICISM

Nationalistic movements in Latin America tended to lose strength after 1950's. Nonetheless, it was after 1960 that the consequences of many debates on musical aesthetics were radically felt once many nationalist composers prompted stylistic innovation. Indeed, the Dodecaphonic campaign opened new horizons to musical

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<sup>61</sup> Including Koellreutter's reply to Guarnieri's refusal to public debates in another open letter dated 28 December 1950.

<sup>62</sup> Gerard Béhague, *Music in Latin America: an introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 278.

compositions. Composers tended to reject its aesthetics as the only source of expression. Instead, they applied serialism freely in musical compositions. As stated by Béhague,<sup>63</sup> “Paradoxically, even some nationalist composers attempted to use the twelve-tone method, although they often misunderstood its stylistic implications, adopting it freely with a simplified technique and applying it to works of national inspiration if not style.”

Several Brazilian composers tended to choose an eclectic approach to musical composition. Notwithstanding this fact, even the nationalist Camargo Guarnieri, after being deeply interested in the music of Hindemith, Schönberg, and Berg, developed musically into a more complex style. As a result, his music tended towards the use of intricate harmonic structures by altering the tonal plans to the extent of losing precisely the tonality.<sup>64</sup> Nonetheless, Koellreutter’s reconciliation with Guarnieri happened in 1977 during a festival in a concert dedicated to them both.<sup>65</sup> In 1963 Cláudio Santoro returned to serialism after his nationalistic period in favor of a more profound stylistic transformation. Guerra Peixe adopted a unique style that incorporates both serial techniques and nationalism.

The musical scene differentiated into a variety of styles and a diversity of aesthetics. As explained in Gerard Béhague’s book “*Music in Latin America: An Introduction*,”<sup>66</sup> this was a phenomenon that occurred among composers during the last decades of the twentieth century. Composers in Latin America broke the purely

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>64</sup> Vasco Mariz, *Historia da Musica no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilização Brasileira, 1994), 285.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 298.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 286.

nationalistic trend and became more eclectic in their use of form and language as a way to reach a higher level of quality in their music and gain international acceptance.

Several avant-garde groups and music festivals emerged during 1960's. The most controversial of all, the *Grupo Música Nova*, represented by Gilberto Mendes (b. 1922), Rogério Duprat (b. 1932), and Willy Correa de Azevedo (b. 1939), called for total adherence to avant-garde aesthetic in the manifesto of 1963.<sup>67</sup> Influenced by Karlheinz Stockhausen (b. 1928) and John Cage (1912-1992), the group promoted experimental music such as *musique concrète* and mass-communication music. In 1971, the composers Edino Krieger, Guerra Peixe, Marlos Nobre, Aylton Escobar, and others formed the Brazilian Society of Contemporary Music in Rio de Janeiro. And, in Bahia State, the composer Ernst Widmer (1927-1990) formed the Bahian Group of composers.

At the present time, musical nationalism is almost extinct.<sup>68</sup> Brazilian music witnesses the ascension of independent composers affiliated with no groups. José de Antônio Almeida Prado (b. 1943) developed a highly personal musical language. Marlos Nobre defends his own musical aesthetics. Ronaldo Miranda reached a very distinctive musical style and is now among the leading figures in contemporary Brazilian music. Miranda reiterates that the major changes in the twentieth century music occurred more frequently in language, since he and many composers kept using traditional forms. Miranda's increasing output since 1977, his populism, and the ready acceptance of his music identify him as a very good example of today's Brazilian Contemporary music.

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<sup>67</sup> Gilberto Mendes, Rogério Duprat, et al., "Manifesto música nova," *Revista de Arte de Vanguarda Invenção*, No.3 (June 1963): 5-6.

<sup>68</sup> José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo: Ricordi, 1977), 194.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE JOURNEY OF A COMPOSER: AN OVERVIEW OF MIRANDA'S LIFE AND WORKS

The composer generously shared self-reflections with this writer on his evolution as a composer and on his works in the course of a taped interview conducted in October 1999 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. What follows below presents an overall panorama of the composer's output and his own division of his output to date into separate compositional periods.

Born in 1948 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Miranda completed his university studies in the School of Music of "UFRJ" (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) where he studied piano and composition. He also earned a diploma in journalism from the School of Communication, a degree obtained while he completed his degree in music. Later he devoted himself exclusively to music, beginning his activities in music as a music reviewer for the "Jornal do Brasil" (Rio).

He composed sporadically until the year of 1977. "This year was a landmark in my career," he said. This year he won the First Prize at the "Concurso Nacional de Composição para a II Bienal de Música Brasileira Contemporânea,"<sup>69</sup> with a piece for soprano and small ensemble (flute, piano, clarinet, cello, xylophone and vibraphone) called "Trajetória" (Path). As a result of this achievement, Miranda enjoyed for the first time the interest and admiration of both critics and performers. The enthusiasm,

motivation, and confidence gained at this time caused him to compose regularly from that day on, achieving other prizes along the way.

According to Miranda, his victory at the Biennial Competition in 1977 marked an important stage in his professional career as the start of his mature period. He was 29 years old at that time. He said he considered it appropriate to produce once he felt a composer gets maturity later in life. Some of his songs for voice and piano date back to 1969 when he was in his twenties. However, the composer considers these pieces “youthful works without the daring of contemporary language.” Another youthful work is his “Suite #3” for piano, written while a student in 1973 and published later in 1979. Nevertheless, it is only after 1977 that the works that the composer considers true expressions of his formed style were conceived. “Prólogo, discurso e reflexão” (1980) and the “Toccata” (1982) for piano evidence a much more developed writing style.

It appears that Miranda's self-imposed task with the “Trajetória” of 1977 was to explore and advance his musical language. His educational background in school was quite traditional, based on the study of harmony, counterpoint, and fugue. He has stated, “My background was very much traditional. I had difficulties understanding the musical language of my time. So, I listen to a lot of contemporary music.” Miranda resolved to achieve such understanding through a deep research and intensive exposure to twentieth century music. The result of this effort is evident in a series of free atonal compositions that span from 1977 to 1983. This group of works, in addition to “Trajetória,” include his flute trio “Öriens III” (1977), a piece selected to be performed at the World Music Days

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<sup>69</sup> National Competition of Composition for the II Biennial of Brazilian Contemporary Music.

(1983) in Aarhus, Denmark; a duet for violin and piano called “Recitativo, variações e fuga” (1980); the “Prólogo, discurso e reflexão” (1980) and the “Toccatina” (1982), both for piano solo; “Lúdica I” (1983) for solo clarinet; and his first “Piano Concerto” (1983).

He prefers to use pictorial and evocative titles according to what the musical sections suggest. The composer has explained that, for example, his “Prólogo, discurso e reflexão” is really a “recitative, toccatina and fugato.” These pictorial titles are a developmental move away from his school days. In fact, it may have been a self-protective move since, earlier, his “Recitativo, variações e fuga” received negative press as an antiquated bow to the past, criticizing his use of a fugue as a conventional form suitable only for student exercises. “The newspapers maliciously commented on my use of fugue as a musical form wondering how a composer could ever and still write a fugue, calling it a conventional form that had to be used only as exercises.”

Miranda has said that his bitonal “Piano Concerto” (1983) is written in a language grounded in the use of the piano together with percussion instruments such as Bartok did in his concertos. The use of toccata movement and “piano obbligato” are common elements. Similar technique was used in his “Concertino” for piano and string orchestra (1986).

The next stage in the evolution of Miranda's musical language appears in 1984 with his “Fantasia” for saxophone and piano. Here there is a marked turn in his musical language from atonal to neotonal. The composer states that he was already experimenting with neotonal harmonies before and during his atonal period in vocal and choral music. Some of these choral pieces written between 1978 and 1979 were nearly atonal. The new

tendency toward the use of tonal centers is evident in his next piece for piano, “Estrela Brilhante” (1984). The work was written for the “Organização dos Estados Americanos (OEA)”<sup>70</sup> as the result of a commission issued to several composers from Latin America to write a paraphrase on a theme that would represent their country for inclusion in a recording. Other composers from countries like Chile, Argentina and Venezuela were invited to join the project. The composers selected in Brazil were Camargo Guarnieri, Almeida Prado and Ronaldo Miranda. The result, “Estrela Brilhante,” was conceived in a neotonal language. The subtitle “Paráfrase sobre um tema popular brasileiro,”<sup>71</sup> according to the composer, refers to uninterrupted variations on a theme, very much like a fantasia.

The Concertino for piano and orchestra (1986) uses similar neotonal language that, in this writer's opinion, suggests the influence of Prokofieff, Bartok, some Brazilian composers like Guerra Peixe, and the Argentinean Piazzolla. In spite of the change from atonal to neotonal language, there are some musicians that find typical common elements in all his works, regardless of tonality. Common threads in Miranda's language include rhythm markings, phrase shape and length, indications of dramatic dynamics and agogic accents, expressive devices and note groupings.

Currently, Miranda feels he has fused all his previous explorations into one cohesive musical language. He dismisses "language in music" as a subject matter about which he no longer cares much. Certainly, language is not a primary concern to him.

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<sup>70</sup> Organization of American States

<sup>71</sup> Paraphrase on a Brazilian folk tune.

According to Miranda, a work can be "contemporary" through a variety of means such as the choice of instrumentation. Evidence of this is his particular interest in solo cello. He apparently believes that this instrument can be a good vehicle of contemporary musical expression. He wrote "Três momentos para Cello solo" (1986) and a trio for three cellos called "Reflexos" (1998). This trio, compared to other works, is meant to be of denser structure as well as more daring in language. Miranda points out that he is capable of, within a work, of effectively integrating a variety of techniques: pointillism, minimalism, neo-romanticism. His trio "Alternâncias" (1997) is named appropriately to indicate fluctuations from one musical style to another, defining Miranda's language as a fluid hybrid of many trends. His "Tango" for piano four-hands was conceived from the octatonic scale used by Stravinsky, Bartok, and Debussy. At the same time, the middle section of this piece is closer to a neotonal language, with slight traces of Piazzolla's influence.

Miranda's works now exhibit a mature, blended language all his own.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RONALDO MIRANDA'S SOLO PIANO WORKS

#### A. SUITE #3 (1973)

The composer has withheld the first two suites, presumably considered student works. Suite #3 for piano is a youthful work also written while a student in 1973, but published<sup>72</sup> later in 1979. Cast in a traditional Baroque suite instrumental form, Suite #3 consists of four dance-like movements all in the same key, contrasting in rhythm and character with a prevailing a tonal modal idiom and nationalistic character.

##### 1. Allegro

The ABA' form of the Allegro recalls the prelude of the Baroque suite with its free improvisational character. Sections A (mm. 1-28) and B (mm. 29-57) are contrasting in nature. Section A is stable melodically and harmonically due to its inherent modal character. Theme 1 (ex. 1) of section A is built on the Dorian mode. Basically, it outlines diatonic seventh chords made by moving fifths and fourths juxtaposed contrasting with the harmonically intriguing section B.

The transition to the next section (mm. 23-28) is marked by a change in harmony from d Dorian to D major even though the main outline of Theme 1 remains the same (ex. 2).

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<sup>72</sup> Edited by Irmãos Vitale Editores, Brazil.

Example 1. *Suite No. 3, Allegro* (mm. 1-2)  
Theme 1

Allegro  $\text{♩} = 144-152$   
*p* sem. ligur, um pouco stac.

Example 2. *Suite No. 3, Allegro* (mm. 23-24)

Transition to Section B

A.TEMPO  
*p*

After the prevailing 4/4 meter in section A, section B is entirely in 2/4 time. It begins with a *moderato* marking in the music followed by five introductory measures (mm. 29-33) setting the new rhythm and key before the developmental theme 2 is stated. Subsequently, Miranda introduces the rhythm of the northern folk Brazilian dance “congada.” Even though the *congada* rhythm is used in both first and second movements, it takes its actual dance form only in the last piece of the suite.

Theme 2 (ex. 3) is based on a two-measure scheme that progresses in sequences of two measures each, leading to the climax of the piece: the arrival at the dominant preparation (ex. 4, m. 48).

The path to the dominant preparation is made by a succession of seventh and ninth harmonies generating key instability. The harmonic sequences are freely manipulated to far distant keys without a main scheme. Usually, Brazilian composers follow two basic steps to distant key modulation: 1. By using a common tone<sup>73</sup> or 2. By using a chromatic half step.<sup>74</sup> Miranda's modulations in this suite tend to follow these two methods. Indeed, this modulation technique is a characteristic of the popular *bossa nova* music, in particular, Tom Jobim. It differs from the American jazz by its lack of harmonic formulas. Instead, Brazilian composers prefer to modulate according to what "sounds good" in their opinion. Example 5 summarizes the harmonic sequences leading to the dominant preparation. The added slurs in this example refer to modulations by chromatic semitones.

Example 3. *Suite No. 3, Allegro* (mm. 33-35)  
Theme 2 (mm. 34-35)

Example 4. *Suite No. 3, Allegro* (mm. 48-49)  
Dominant preparation

<sup>73</sup> To modulate by holding one note in common with the next chord. For example, holding the a in an a minor chord and moving the other notes to f# minor.

Example 5. *Suite No. 3, Allegro* (mm. 36-48)  
 Harmonic sequences leading to the dominant preparation

DM7 g|m c|dim9 b|m c|dim9 d|m FM9 e<sup>b</sup> g|m f|m FM7 A<sup>b</sup>M7 a|m7  
 m. 45 46 47 48

Miranda's compositional mastery in constructing structural and harmonic climaxes already are mature. For example, a four-note anacrusic segment found in section A (ex. 6) is used in theme 2 (see ex. 3, m. 34) and also, to build the climax of section B by expanding itself harmonically (see example 5, mm. 45-48). Another feature of the climax is the use of the main motive of theme 1 (see example 1 and 4).

Example 6. *Suite No. 3, Allegro* (mm. 7-8)  
 Four-note anacrusic segment

The dominant preparation is the main climax of the piece in dynamics. Following extensive arpeggios and chords, the climax dissolves itself into simple fifths leading to the return of theme 1 in section A' (mm. 58-80) and also prepares the way back to the Dorian mode.

<sup>74</sup> The modulation has at least one chromatic half step. For example, moving from D major to g# minor has a chromatic semitone from a to g# notes.

Miranda joined together, in this piece, two far polarities of harmonic settings: diatonicism and chromaticism. The well-balanced contrast between sections A and B makes this movement to be very special.

## 2. Allegretto

The AB/A'B' form of this piece recalls the binary forms used in the Baroque suites in a more developed manner. The simple binary form of a Baroque *allemande* constitutes section A leading to the dominant and section B, being a return to the tonic. Both sections are followed by repeat marks and one main theme is exposed. Miranda keeps the AB binary parameter, repeating it twice. In spite of that, the first AB (mm. 1-37) is a move to the dominant and the second (mm. 38-79) a modified return to the tonic. Moreover, Miranda introduces contrasting themes in both sections. Theme 1 is melodic and theme 2 rhythmic. Nonetheless, the sense of continuity in this piece corresponds to a Baroque *allemande*.

Theme 1 (mm. 1-11) (ex. 7) is developed out of the four-note anacrusic segment of the *Allegro* (see ex. 6). It subdivides into three parts corresponding to abb' (mm. 1-4, 5-8, and 9-11). Its concluding cell<sup>75</sup> expands and develops into a rhythmic repeated-note pattern (mm. 12-19) (ex.7) leading to section B theme 2 (mm. 20-37). At this point, besides introducing the new key, Miranda reintroduces the *congada* rhythm presented on the first movement of this suite. Miranda's technique of establishing the key and setting the rhythm before presenting a new theme was also used in the *Allegro* movement.

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<sup>75</sup> The theme is deprived of an ending cadence.

Example 7. *Suite No. 3, Allegretto* (mm. 1-2)  
Theme 1

Example 8. *Suite No. 3, Allegretto* (m. 8 and m. 12)  
Concluding cell of Theme 1 and transition

Theme 2 is subdivided into three parts: a, b, and c. Theme 2 a (mm. 20-27) dilates harmonically the rhythmic motive of the transition. Borrowed from theme 1 b, a progression of sixteenth notes that spans the interval of a sixth marks the beginning of the second b part (see ex. 10, mm. 28-32). Finally, ending on the modal dominant, theme 2 c (mm. 33-37) is characterized as a post-cadential extension made from the transition.

Example 9 shows the first measure of each part of theme 2.

Example 9. *Suite No. 3, Allegretto*  
Theme 2

The route back to the tonic has its major changes in section A' (mm. 38-79). Theme 1' (mm. 38-57) is expanded, inverted, and repeated twice. This time, the sixteenth-note figure progresses upward until it dissolves itself on whole tone scales. The transition (mm. 58-61) is cut in half balancing the section in number of measures. Theme 2' (mm. 62-79) is restated as a repeat in the tonic key without any changes.

Miranda used several different scales diversifying this *allegretto* movement. The diatonic linear motion on the top notes of section AB draws respectively from the Dorian and Aeolian modes. Indeed, despite the use of seventh chords, the melodic line is set entirely on white keys. Chromatic and whole tone scales are also featured. Theme 1 part b exposes a descending chromatic scale (ex. 10) in the bass setting up seventh harmonies. And, Example 11 features the use of the whole tone scale at the transition to theme 2 and on Theme 1 section B.

Example 10. *Suite No. 3, Allegretto*

Chromatic Scale

Example 11. *Suite No. 3, Allegretto*

Whole tone scale

### 3. Lento

With its theme (mm. 1-6) and two variations (mm. 7-12, 13-18) plus a repetition of the theme (mm. 20-26) at the end,<sup>76</sup> the *Lento* suggests an inner reminiscence of a Baroque *sarabande*. The simplicity of this movement apparently could not be greater, except for the context it takes in the entire Suite #3. Here, Miranda explores the ascendant portion of a melodic minor scale as the essence and basis for melody and chord formation. The insertion of a cadential C# within the key of D creates a leading tone clearly avoided in the movements before. Nevertheless, its cadential formulae are inserted in the next movement as a contrast to the Dorian mode. Example 12 demonstrates the ninth chord formation from the melodic minor scale as the main compositional pivot for the theme and variation construction. This is the only movement that is not in the Dorian mode.

Example 12. *Suite No. 3, Lento*  
First measure of Theme, Variations 1 and 2

The musical score for Example 12 consists of three measures of music. The first measure (M. 1) is marked *LENTO* with a tempo of quarter note = 40. The second measure (M. 7) is marked *MAS ANIMADO-STACCATO* with a tempo of quarter note = 72-76. The third measure (M. 13) is marked *ENÉRGICO*. The score shows the melodic line in the right hand and the bass line in the left hand, with various articulations and dynamics.

<sup>76</sup> A one measure transition (m. 19) is inserted before the restatement of the theme.

#### 4. Allegro gracioso

The sectional ABACA *rondo* form of this movement is shaped within the rhythmic format of a Brazilian *congada*<sup>77</sup> on the Dorian mode. The predominance of this syncopated Afro-Brazilian rhythm (ex. 13) evidences the inherent dance-like nationalistic character of this piece. As the last, this movement also recalls themes, material, scales and cells previously exposed.

#### Example 13. *Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso* *Congada Rhythm*



Section A reprises three times (mm. 1-13, 32-43, 60-77) being a little over extended at the Coda. Theme 1 is presented after a two-measure introduction stating the *congada* rhythm in the bass (ex. 14). In the Aeolian mode, the top notes of the theme draw a descending scale that, pitch-wise, outlines the correlation dominant-tonic (Aeolian-Dorian). The beginning harmony features an Amin7 chord against D in the bass. The theme also presents an energetic, clear cadence that differs from the beginning movements, which seems to end as if suggesting modal medieval music cadential endings. Example 15 reveals the shocking cadential C# as a leading tone as it was used

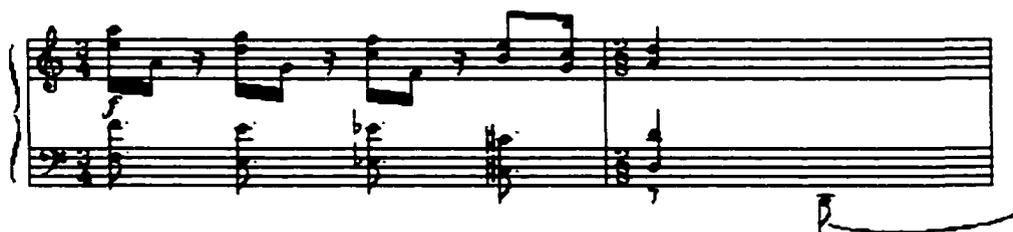
<sup>77</sup> The term *congada* originated from a dramatic dance that depicts an imaginary crowning of a king from Congo through music and dance. Basically, two main groups take part in the dance: the King of Congo, his son, a secretary, and a minister form the first party; and, the Queen Ginga, an ambassador, and a general form the second group. After a few introductory songs, a fight takes place: the ambassador attempts to kill the king, who is protected by his secretary and minister. Therefore, the king also attempts to kill the ambassador. However, ends up forgiving him. The king is then crowned and the feast is over. The *congada* dance is usually performed in homage to Saint Benedict and Our Lady of Rosary, protector of the slaves. The rhythm is similar to the Brazilian Northern *baião*.

earlier in the third movement. The ascended tension of the harmony strengthens the succeeding sense of relaxation, intensifying the sensation of an ending.

Example 14. *Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso*  
Section A Theme 1



Example 15. *Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso*  
Section A Theme 1- cadence



Section B (mm. 13-31) groups together three fragmentary themes (theme B1 mm. 13-16, B2 17-20, and B3 21-27) united by their descending nature, and a transition (mm. 28-33) that recalls the whole tone scale segment also in the transition of the second movement (see ex. 11 mm. 16-17). Themes B1 and B2 stay in the tonic key. Theme B3 leads to the dominant. It brings back the descending chromatic scale found in fifths (left hand) in the second movement, now in thirds (see ex. 8 m. 12). Example 16 presents the endings of each B theme. Note that the descent of a minor third at the endings of B1 and B2 is a characteristic of the Northern Brazilian folk music.

Example 16. *Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso*  
Themes B1, B2 and B3 endings

The musical score for Example 16 shows a piano (p) dynamic with a subito (s) marking. The measures shown are 16, 20, 27, and 28. The score is in 3/4 time and features a piano (p) dynamic with a subito (s) marking.

Three fragments, with the same characteristics of section B form section C, plus the repetition of the same transition. Theme C1 (mm. 44-47) is chordal and represents a climax in dynamics. Theme C2 (mm. 48-51) recalls the descending chromatic thirds of theme B3, also leading to the dominant. Fragment C3 (mm. 52-55) is a play with descending chromatic scales in fourths (right hand). Example 17 shows the beginning of each C theme.

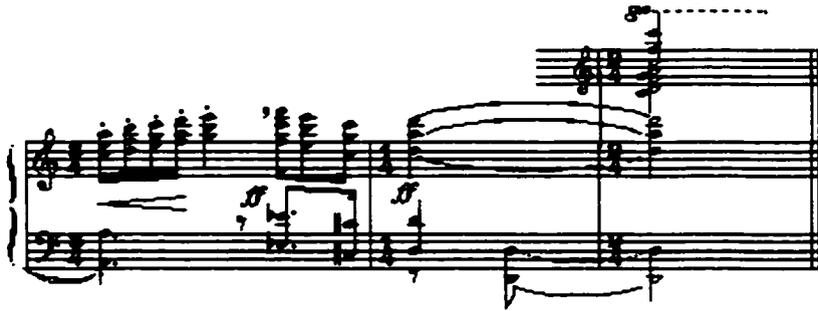
Example 17. *Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso*  
Themes C1, C2 and C3 beginnings

The musical score for Example 17 shows the beginnings of Themes C1, C2, and C3. The measures shown are 44, 48, and 52. The score is in 3/4 time and features a piano (p) dynamic.

Although not cyclic, all the movements in Miranda's suite #3 connect together via some common elements already analyzed. Furthermore, the suite demonstrates a judicious balance in number of measures. The first piece has 80 measures, the second 79, the slow third movement 25, and the last 77. Except for the *Lento*, cadences are weakened with the use of altered dominants or dominant substitutes in a modal character.

Only the fourth movement presents a unique fortissimo marking at the end. Also, the final chord reaffirms Miranda's preference for seventh chords exposing the seventh on the top notes (ex. 18).

Example 18. *Suite No. 3, Allegro gracioso*  
Final cadence



## B. PRÓLOGO, DISCURSO E REFLEXÃO (1980)

This piece marks a drastic evolution in Miranda's language. The nationalistic modal style of Suite #3 is completely abandoned in favor of atonality. This evolution resulted in a series of free atonal compositions that span from 1977 to 1983. Pitch-related content has been substituted for keys. Example 19 presents a clear view of Miranda's new language and the intervallic material used in this piece. In it, a tritone fourth chord<sup>78</sup> (F-B-E) is found on the first and third aggregates. Miranda uses this chord in several ways: alone and apart from related harmony, to set up tonal poles, or to build up other cluster-like chords as on the third aggregate. Moreover, this chord outlines a major

<sup>78</sup> A chord made up of an augmented and a perfect fourth.

seventh that inverted forms the interval of a minor second<sup>79</sup> which broadens Miranda's ways of using the tritone fourth chord via pulling gravitational appoggiaturas, chord movements, motive and cell formations. Indeed, tritone fourth chords and major seventh chords linked by pulling half steps are a constant characteristic in Miranda's atonal language. Example 19 also features a perfect fourth followed by a chromatic line found on the second aggregate that, like tritone fourth chords, is used extensively through variation procedures. Other features in Miranda's atonal language are the use of chromaticism and fourth chords within displaced octaves (see ex. 20) and, even though not presented in example 19, the ninth chord cannot be forgotten.

Example 19. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Prólogo – beginning

Miranda entitled this piece according to what the musical sections might suggest, concealing its overall form. Respectively, the pictorial and evocative title *prólogo*, *discurso e reflexão* corresponds to “recitative, toccatina and fugato” sections linked to each other.

<sup>79</sup> Not only forming leading tones, the minor seconds seem to have an inner gravitational pull that tends to be resolved on the next note. Notwithstanding that the great difference between the major and minor mode sense comes through seconds. The human brain understands the minor scale in many ways as a “unhappy” mode due to a greater number of pulling gravitational half steps within it than the major mode. Composers tend to be inspired deliberately by the many functions of minor seconds.

The *prólogo* evolves into five expanded measures dispensing with the use of metric bar lines. The tempo markings *Ad Libitum - Meno Mosso - Tempo I* indicates an inner ternary subdivision of the movement. The *Ad Libitum* initial tempo marking (ex. 19) evidences this recitative's (mm. 1-5) improvisational character. In the discourse of the recitative, the ascending beginning material (ex. 19) expands into descending segments covering all the extension of the piano landing on a C# in the lower bass. After a short transition, the *Meno Mosso* marking (ex. 20) sets the new section of the recitative. The fiery runs of the *Ad Libitum* are then replaced by a rather mysterious mood. As shown in example 20, this section recalls the gravitational Bb-Eb found on the top notes of the previous descending run. Looking at the left hand, we find an ambiguous duality of two half steps that tends to dominate chordal movements horizontally and vertically in this section. Example 20 also demonstrates Miranda's use of displaced chromaticism in the right hand. Next, *Tempo I* recalls the first and third aggregates of the beginning, and leads to the next movement.

Example 20. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
 Prólogo – *Meno Mosso* beginning

The *discurso* (mm. 5-87) begins with a *Con Moto* marking that sets up an uninterrupted toccata motion directed towards the end of the section. The recurrence of

the main motives outlines the ternary subdivision of the *discurso*, respectively, ABA' (mm. 5-33, 34-64, 65-87). The first A section also has a ternary subdivision (motive 1 - motive 2 - transition – motive 1). The first motive (ex. 21 mm. 5-7) contains several cells used to build other motives and harmony during the discourse of this movement.

Analyzing example 21 we find interrelated a minor second pattern in the bass (Eb-D), a three note chromatic figure (Eb-D-C#) that is recalled diatonically on the next measure (right hand), and a syncopated motive that has a rising minor second in its endings (right hand). This motive (ex. 21) is expanded sequentially upward leading to motive 2.

Example 21. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Discurso – Motive 1 Mm. 5-7

Con Moto ♩ 144 (leve, mas bem articulado, com obstinação)

Many features make motive 2 (ex. 22) very special. In this motive, Miranda uses the tritone fourth chords (right hand) to build up tonal poles. Indeed, the Eb-D correlation already used in motive 1 (ex. 21) is now expanded harmonically. Much used in the North American Gospel, a tritone fourth chord can be more simply analyzed as an extension of the characteristic gospel minor seventh. In a basic Gospel band formed by drums, bass and a piano or a Hammond organ, usually the drums set the rhythm, the bass plays moving bass lines, meanwhile the piano improvises freely on the patterns set by the bass. If the key of a gospel hymn is Eb major, the bass plays the lower Eb while the pianist

could improve on the chord by adding its minor seventh, third and thirteenth (the same as added sixth in jazz and gospel harmony). Consequently, the resulted chord would be as in measure 17 in the right hand (ex. 22). Intrinsically, Miranda seems to use this same gospel device, but omitting the lower bass note. Example 22 clearly evidences motive 2 in the tonal pole of Eb. In the same example, motive 2 is transposed to the tonal pole of D, beginning in measure 20.

Example 22. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Discurso – Motive 2 Mm. 17-20



Another harmonic feature similar to American Gospel and Jazz harmony is used in the transition (mm. 23-27) back to motive 1 (mm. 28-33). Example 23 shows a common resolution V7-I in a gospel manner. Example 24 demonstrates how Miranda's transition recalls the same harmonic pattern applied to a dominant-tonic resolution, however and again, without the "bass player." Next in order, Motive 1 is restated in the tonal pole of Eb and then in D, revealing the beginning Eb-D minor second in the bass, now expanded harmonically in the motive.

The developmental B section presents motive 3 built out of motive 1. The syncopated pattern and the minor second endings of motive 1 are used to expand motive 3 in opposite directions on the keyboard until it climaxes (ex. 25). Based on the hemiola rhythmic pattern of motive 1, this climax condenses the toccatina's first three measures

into one (compare with ex. 21). After a short transition, a new climax that covers the rest of Section B to the end of the movement begins to build up. Developed out of Motive 3, the use of chromatic fourths in upward movement and the use of hemiola recall Astor Piazzolla's influence in Miranda's music (ex. 26).

Continuing towards the climax, Section A' opens with the upward sequential motive 1 (mm. 65-76) strengthened by added fourths<sup>80</sup> and chromaticism (ex. 27). The missing correlated bass Eb-D of Motive 2 (mm. 77-82) is then introduced as part of a climax build-up. However, even though the missing Eb bass note finally appears, measures 77-78 of example 28 demonstrates a surprising move away from the Eb seventh chords. Motive B dissolves into a fiery Coda (mm. 83-86). Descending in nature, the Coda recalls the C# lower bass of the recitative in a much more aggressive manner via added dissonance such as tritones, sevenths and seconds.

The character marking *recolhido* expresses the calm, reflective moods of this last movement (*reflexão*), that is, indeed, a fugato (mm. 88-108). Basically, the subject is presented consecutively in the tenor and soprano, and, after an episode, in the alto and bass. The subject (mm. 88-90) first presented on the tenor (begins on F#) recalls intervallic material of the recitative such as major seventh leaps. Then, the soprano presents a real imitation of the subject a minor seventh up (begins on E) with a tenor countersubject (mm. 91-93) added. Following is a free improvisational episode (mm. 94-102). The harmonic settings of the episode based on chromatically moving major seconds, fourth and major seventh chords recall Bartok (such as in the last movement of

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<sup>80</sup> Notwithstanding that the first chord (m. 65) spells F-B-E-A-D.

his Suite opus 14). The re-entry of the subject (mm. 103-108) suggests a fugal stretto.

However, the entire subject is presented only in the alto (begins on A#). The stretto-like bass (begins on D) dissolves itself in chromatic harmonic settings. Example 29 features the subject entries as exclusively pitch wise evidencing the lack of key relationship.

Finally, a variant of the same beginning introductory aggregate of the recitative is used as bridge between each movement and to end the piece. Example 30 demonstrates how the tritone fourth chord (F-B-E) of the first aggregate (ex. 19) is modified on the transition to the fugato and conclusion.

Example 23. Gospel V-I (PAC)

Musical notation for Example 23, Gospel V-I (PAC). The notation shows a piano introduction with a V7 chord (Eb7) and a I chord (Eb7/b).

Example 24. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Discurso – Transition to Motive 1 Mm. 26-28

Musical notation for Example 24, *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*. It shows a piano introduction with a transition to Motive 1, marked with dynamics *mf* and *f*.

Example 25. *discurso*  
Section B, Climax M. 44

Musical notation for Example 25, *discurso*. It shows a piano introduction with a climax, marked with dynamics *sf*.

Example 26. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Section B Piazzolla's influence Mm. 51-52

*p* *crescendo pouco a pouco*

Example 27. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Section A' Restatement of Motive 1 Mm. 65-67

*ff* *com elegância*

Example 28. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
Section A' Restatement of Motive 2 Mm. 77-80

*ff*

Example 29. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
 Reflexão, Subject Entries

Example 30. *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*  
 Reflexão, Developments of the First Aggregate

### C. TOCCATA (1982)

The composer himself characterized the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão* and the *Toccata* as atonal pieces. However, the free atonal idiom of the *Toccata* reveals another stage in the evolution of Miranda's language. Unlike the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*, fourth and tritone fourth chords are used freely: juxtaposed or not, and whether or not they delineate tonal poles. Tonal ambiguity generated from the use of tritone fourth chords and theme transformations are strong characteristics of the *Toccata*.

The *Toccata* follows a rondo form ABACA. Section A (mm. 1-39) is divided into four characteristic inner sections: theme 1, transition, closing theme, and cadential extension. Theme 1 (mm. 1-24) subdivides into four transformed fragments. Example 31 features the first fragment of theme 1 (mm. 1-4) in octaves in the left hand as the main motive. The melodic contour of this fragment beginning on B and ending on the F# reveals a tonic-dominant tonal center in the key of B.

Unlike the previous piece, independent tritone fourth chords are presented melodically in the right hand. Measures 5-8 of example 31 feature theme 1's second fragment, made out of an inversion of the first. It moves sequentially downward. Every first downbeat of this fragment contains a tritone fourth chord harmonizing the melody. Example 31 also includes the beginning of theme 1's third fragment presented in the bass (mm. 9-13). It recalls the second fragment ambiguously transposed a minor second down beginning and ending on the Bb pitch.

Differing from the previous measures, an augmented ninth chord appears harmonizing this third fragment (ex. 31, m. 9), followed by a tritone fourth chord. In addition, the third fragment also includes an extra cadential measure breaking with the four-measure pattern of the first and second theme fragments. A measure scheme would be then represented as 4+4+4+1. The closing-like theme 1's fourth fragment (mm. 14-20) proceed shortened, and in sequences of a 2+2+3 pattern leading to the transition (mm. 21-28).

Example 31. *Toccata*  
Section A Theme 1 Mm. 1-9

The musical score for Example 31, Section A Theme 1, measures 1-9, is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 4, and the second system contains measures 5 through 9. The tempo is marked 'Energico e incisivo' with a metronome marking of quarter note = 144. The score is written for two staves per system, showing a complex rhythmic and harmonic structure.

The transition is subdivided into two parts. The first states a 6/4 F# major chord that clearly defines a dominant preparation (mm. 21-24) in the key of B. The second part (mm. 25-28) breaks into a descending cadential figure outlining fourth chords that interpolate the F#-B dominant-tonic tonal pole cadence eliding to the closing theme (mm. 28-34). Example 32 features the closing theme made out of theme 1's third fragment. Analyzing this example one observes an expansion of the augmented ninth and tritone fourth chords found in the right hand of m. 9 (ex. 31), respectively, positioned on the middle and top staff. The sudden bass change from B (m. 28) to Bb (m. 30) recalls not only measure 9, but also the overall ambiguous B/Bb tonal pole polarity of theme 1. Example 33 refers to the cadential extension (mm. 35-39) of the closing theme. Besides the B/Bb polarity, a recurring C# also seems to draw attention from the transition to the end of the section (see ex. 32 and 33) being the basis for the closing chord in measure 38.

Example 32. *Toccata*  
Section A Closing Theme Mm. 28-30

Example 33. *Toccata*  
Section A Extension of Closing Theme Mm. 36-38

A change of tempo to *Poco Meno Mosso* marks the beginning of Section B (mm. 40-65). Theme 2 (ex. 34) then presents a melodically modified transformation of theme 1's second fragment. And, at the same time, it recalls the same measure scheme of Section A. Theme 2 is repeated twice. First, theme 2 is stated on the top notes in the tonal pole of G#/G following the same 4+4+4+1 measure pattern of theme 1's first to third fragments, the extra measure being a weakening of the ascending climatic progression. The second statement of theme 2 proceeds on the tonal pole of C#/C in the bass. Like section A theme 1's fourth fragment, in sequences of (2+2)+3 measures. Nonetheless, the eight-measure transition and dominant preparation of section A is reduced to two

measures (mm. 62-63) of ascending artificial scales in section B, leading the theme to a cadenza-like extended measure “*como uma cadência*” (m. 64). This cadenza recalls the B/Bb polarity and the same cadential extension exposed in the previous section, as if it were a replacement of section A’s closing theme (ex. 33) though thematic transformation. Example 35 also shows the transition (mm. 68-75) back to section A’ (mm. 76-104) as a thematic transformation from the closing theme and its extension compressed together.

Example 34. *Toccata*  
Section B Theme 2 Mm. 39-41

Poco Meno Mosso ♩ = 132

*p*

M. 40

Example 35. *Toccata*  
Transition to Section A’ Mm. 68-70

Tempo I ♩ = 144

*p*

M. 70

Section A’ (mm. 76-104) differs from section A due to a few changes: theme 1’s fourth fragment and the transition to the closing theme are omitted. Instead, the one extra cadential measure of theme 1’s third fragment develops upward in sequences (mm. 87-90) modulating to the tonal pole G#/G. The transition is then replaced by a two-measure

cadenza that lands on a cluster. The closing theme and its extension (mm. 92-104) follow, but in the tonal pole of E.

The *Reflexivo* tempo marking reveals Section C (mm. 105-118) as a calm interlude within the *Toccata*. Made of two phrases, the first (mm. 105-109) marks a return from the tonal pole of E back to Bb/B. Tritone fourth chords are used within ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords (ex. 36 M. 105). Measure 108 of example 36 features the arrival at the tonal pole of Bb/B. The three-staff notation and the large distance between chords recall the fugato episode of the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*. Separating both phrases, Measure 110 of example 36 features a mysterious arpeggiated tritone fourth chord also used in the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão* (compare with ex. 30). Following, the second phrase (mm. 111-113) begins on the tonal pole of Eb and ends on Bb consolidating, together with the first phrase, the tonal pole ambiguity of E/Eb. Example 37 reveals the cadential extension (mm. 114-117) as a thematic transformation out of Section A closing theme. The same material (ex. 37 m. 118) is then used to build a long brilliant transition (mm. 118-143) leading the music to Section A'' (mm. 144-118).

Without any interruption, theme 1's first fragment appears out of the transition. The overall effect of few modifications transforms sections A'' into the coda of the *Toccata*. The cadential added measure of the theme's third fragment gains strength moving further to the opposite sides of the keyboard. Next, after a fermata on a rest, a *fortissimo* chord on the tonal pole of F# sounds, marking the dominant tonal pole. As in the transition of section A, descending fourths interpolate the dominant-tonic (F#-Bb/B) cadential pattern. Example 37 demonstrates the final measures to be a summary of the

*Toccata's* major closing components, that is, the recurring C# tone and the ambiguous Bb/B polarity.

Example 36. *Toccata*  
Section C Mm. 105, 108, and 110

Example 36. *Toccata*, Section C, measures 105, 108, and 110. The score is in 3/4 time and features a recurring C# tone and Bb/B polarity. The tempo is marked "Ritardando ( $\text{♩} = 84$ )". The score includes dynamics such as *pp*, *mf*, and *p*, and performance instructions like "pedal" and "sco". The key signature has one flat (Bb).

Example 37. *Toccata*  
Section C Closing Extension M. 114 and Transition M. 118

Example 37. *Toccata*, Section C Closing Extension M. 114 and Transition M. 118. The score is in 3/4 time and features a recurring C# tone and Bb/B polarity. The tempo is marked "Più Mosso ( $\text{♩} = 116$ )". The score includes dynamics such as *pp* and *Legno*. The key signature has one flat (Bb).

Example 38. *Toccata*  
Final End Mm. 117-118

D. ESTRELA BRILHANTE (1984)

Continuing through the evolution of his musical language, *Estrela Brilhante* belongs to Miranda's neotonal period.<sup>81</sup> Unlike the previous piano pieces, this work has tritone fourth chords used freely, joined together or separated by each other in distances of thirds, fourths and sixths, delineating melodies whether this forms tonal poles or not, and interacting with Miranda's preference for fourth, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords in a rotational tonal/modal idiom.

The work was written for the Organization of American States under a commission awarded to several composers of Latin America, setting the task of writing a paraphrase on a theme that could represent their country, to be included on a recording. Indeed, *Estrela Brilhante* is the only one of Miranda's piano pieces to contain a folk tune. The title<sup>82</sup> refers to a folk song used in an Afro Brazilian ritual called "macumba," that

<sup>81</sup> Musical tension varies not only through the distance between tonal poles, but also through the amount of dissonance contained in a chord. Hence, the combination of atonal plus tonal poles results in a neotonal language.

<sup>82</sup> The title's translation is "Brilliant (or bright) Star."

honors, through music and dance, the queen of the ocean, “Iemanjá,” who wears a bright star on her head, hence the title, “Brilliant Star.”

Miranda defines the subtitle “Paraphrase on a Brazilian theme” as uninterrupted variations on a theme<sup>83</sup> differing, this way, from the standard theme and variations in that the paraphrase evinces a fantasia-like form. Therefore, *Estrela Brilhante* consists of an introduction, a theme followed by four variations, and coda.

The piece begins with a brief introduction (mm. 1-7) that reappears modified several times in between variations (ex. 39). This introduction is also manipulated so that the initial simplicity gives way to virtuosic sections using the entire extent of the keyboard (ex. 50). Immediately, the rhythmic pattern of the theme is set. Also, there is plenty of melodic counterpoint consisting of chromatic lines moving up and down outlining major seventh chords (ex. 39). This counterpoint is recalled in the theme (see ex. 41 and 42 in the left hand). The harmonic analysis of the introduction reveals Miranda’s neotonal period. Observing the first beat of every measure, it is seen that these underline tonic and leading tone (dominant) sonorities.

The introduction would have approval of those favoring national music through the use of syncopated rhythm so often found in most Brazilian folk music genres. Usually, the syncopated rhythm shifts the accent to the weak beat. Nevertheless, not so in the performance of Brazilian music. The downbeat still gets the accent. Miranda underlines the stress on the downbeat by adding a slur over the first two notes of the syncopated group (ex. 39).

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<sup>83</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, interview by Vitor Duarte, tape recording, 20 October 1999, Rio de Janeiro.

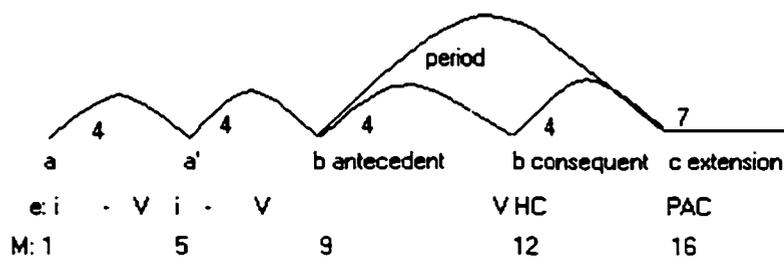
Example 39. *Estrela Brilhante*  
Introduction Mm. 1-7

The introduction (ex. 39) subdivides into two parts. The first part (mm. 1-4) actually consists of cells out of the theme. The first ascending line in the right hand anticipates the theme's "question" in its part "a" (compare with ex. 41). Accordingly, the descending line anticipates the first measure of the theme's answer in part "a." The stability of the music in the second part (mm. 5-7) is disrupted and becomes cadenza-like. This procedure will dominate throughout the piece.

The original folk theme on the Aeolian mode is subdivided into three parts: a, b, and c (mm. 8-15, 16-22, 23-27). Example 40<sup>84</sup> demonstrates an outline of the original folk tune. Part a (ex. 41) is a short motive (question and answer) that lands on the dominant. It repeats twice and lacks the downbeat. Part b (ex. 42) is more incisive with the presence of the downbeat. This central part of the theme contains a period made of

antecedent and consequent followed by a perfect authentic cadence. Part c (ex. 43) begins with an elision of part b. Part c is made entirely of reinforcements of the tonic. However, cadences are weakened due to the lack of the leading tone in the Aeolian mode. Miranda harmonized these cadences using v7 (dominant minor) chords (ex. 43).

**Example 40. *Estrela Brilhante***  
An Outline of the Original Folk Tune



**Example 41. *Estrela Brilhante***  
Theme Part a Mm. 8-11

<sup>84</sup> (HC: Half Cadence; PAC: Perfect Authentic Cadence).

Example 42. *Estrela Brilhante*  
Theme Part b Mm. 16-17



Example 43. *Estrela Brilhante*  
Theme Part c Mm. 23-24

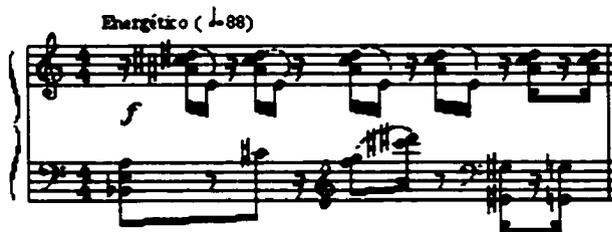


Ronaldo Miranda's approach to the original theme was simple, direct, and expressive. He preserved the main character of the original folk tune. The preparation of the perfect authentic cadence is followed by a *crescendo* to a *forte*, which continues during the entire c part (extension). However, Miranda reduces the seven measures of the extension to five. Furthermore, the final ending note in e minor is also omitted. Instead, the last measure of his theme is changed to a very dissonant cluster-like chord with a sudden move out of the tonic area. Using this device, Miranda leads the music immediately to the energetic toccata-like first variation without any interruption.

Contrasting in character and texture with the theme, the tempo marking *Energético* sets the first variation (mm. 28- 59) in a savage toccata-like movement as if the theme's "macumba" were replaced by black magic. This variation begins with an introduction (mm. 28-34) formed by two tritone chords joined together (ex. 44)

generating tonal ambiguity. The right hand displays the same chord as of measure 5 (ex. 39) juxtaposed with a Bb tritone chord in the left hand. The accent displacements formed by the sixteenth-note rhythmic pattern subdivided into groups of three are very common in Brazilian music. Example 44 is then reproduced in ascending half steps until it recalls, in measure 34, the original tonal pole of E9 found in measure 7 (ex. 39). Moving out of the theme's tonic area of E, the music proceeds, culminating with a further climax in G. Example 45 features the *Meno mosso* tempo marking indicating the entrance of the transformed theme made out of the inversion of the theme's minor third (measure 8, ex. 41). Progressions by minor third create diminished tonal poles recurring through out this variation (ex. 46). Fast passages interpolate the transformed theme that leads to a climax in the tonal pole of G (ex. 47) in measure 50. Following is a cadential extension that leads the climax back to a pianissimo. The next variation in the key of C major shows the dominant-tonic relation with the climax of the first variation as the dominant preparation and the beginning of the second variation as the tonic.

**Example 44. *Estrela Brilhante*  
1<sup>st</sup> Var. Introduction M. 28**



Example 45. *Estrela Brilhante*  
1<sup>st</sup> Var. Theme M. 35



Example 46. *Estrela Brilhante*  
1<sup>st</sup> Var. Diminished progression M. 46



Example 47. *Estrela Brilhante*  
1<sup>st</sup> Var. Climax in G M. 50



The *Lirico* marking sets the beginning of the second variation (mm. 60-79).

Clearly tonal, the slow movement of the melody and the harmony based on seventh, ninth, eleventh and lowered fifth dominant chords suggests *bossa nova* music, a popular genre. Subdivided in three parts, the first part (mm. 60-67) ends with a perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in C. The second part (mm. 68-75) begins and ends in Ab also with a perfect authentic cadence (PAC). The third part (mm. 76-79) is characterized by a vague

melodic dilution of the theme without a cadence. Example 48 demonstrates the theme as a variation of the descending melodic cell of measures 9 joined with the minor third fall of measure 8 (see example 41).

**Example 48. *Estrela Brilhante*  
2<sup>nd</sup> Var. Theme Mm. 60-61**



The *Fluente* tempo marking and the time signature indicating 5/4 (ex. 49) characterize the continuous rhythmic movement of the third variation (mm. 80-104) that is more complex melodically and harmonically than the others in a modal character. Example 49 shows the variation made out of the minor third descent of measure 8 (see example 41) already recurrent on the previous variation (see measure 61 of example 48). A modal character scale (E-F#-A-B-D-E) used in this variation can be understood as the result of the juxtaposition of two fourth chords (E-A-D and F#-B-E) found in measures 82-83. It also can be understood as a displacement of the pentatonic scale (D-E-F#-A-B). Examples of this device can be found melodically in measures 90-91 in A, measure 92 in B, and in measures 100-101 in E, and harmonically in measures 82-83, measure 84, and in measure 92-93 outlining ninth chords that recall measure 7 of the introduction (ex. 39).

Adding to the ternary subdivision of the main theme, Miranda includes a cadence between each part of this variation. The first part (mm. 80-86) begins with an eleventh

chord on the tonal pole of A (ex. 49). The second part (mm. 87-96) begins and ends in the tonal pole of B. The third part of this variation (mm. 97-104) begins in the tonal pole of E and ends in the tonal pole of A, eliding with the transition.

Example 49. *Estrela Brilhante*  
3<sup>rd</sup> Var. Theme M. 80

Flauta (♩ = 84)  
comando a linha de baixo  
pp p

A major virtuosic transition (mm. 104-128) interpolates between the third and fourth variation. Example 50 presents the beginning of the transition as an expansion of measure 6 of the introduction (see ex. 41). After a fortissimo climax in measure 118, the transition dissolves itself in sequences of diminished harmonies ending with the transitional ninth harmony (see measure 7 of example 41), this time used as a dominant-tonic relation being the tonic the beginning of the fourth variation in E.

Example 50. *Estrela Brilhante*  
Transition Mm. 104-105

p pp Allegro

The fourth variation (mm. 129-155) recalls the original theme and its ternary subdivision entirely in the tonal pole of B minor. The change of meter from 2/4 to 3/8 gives a lyric character to this variation (ex. 51). However, part “c” (mm. 143-155) is reproduced sequentially upward culminating with a fiery dominant preparation (mm. 155-166) under the composer’s marking *como uma cadência* (like a cadenza).

Example 51. *Estrela Brilhante*  
4<sup>th</sup> Var. Mm. 128-131

The cadenza-like sequences of B chords are then resolved in the coda (mm. 166-184). Beginning with the character marking *Eloqüente*, the coda is formed by different cadential figures in e minor. The theme is recalled in measures 169, 170, and 172.

Example 52 features the final tonal perfect authentic cadence (PAC) strengthened by dissonant tritone fourth chords. Following is a cadential extension (177-184) in e minor ninth that recalls the last measure of the transition, this time used to end the piece (ex. 53).

Example 52. *Estrela Brilhante*  
Coda - Final PAC Cadence Mm. 173-177

Example 53. *Estrela Brilhante*  
Coda - Cadential Extension Mm. 183-184

The musical score for Example 53, Coda - Cadential Extension, measures 183-184, is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 183-184, is marked 'A Tempo' and 'pp'. It features a piano introduction with a 'crescendo e ritardando' marking. The second system, measures 185-186, is marked 'a tempo' and 'pp'. It features a cadential extension with a 'deixar soar' marking.

E. TRÊS MICRO-PEÇAS (2001)

The *Três Micro-Peças* (Three Micro-Pieces, July 2001) are the most recently composed pieces by Miranda. Together with the four-hand piano pieces, the *Três Micro-Peças* represent Miranda's current style, although at the present time he dismisses compositional "language in music" as a subject about which he no longer cares much and which appears to be not a primary concern to him. Currently, Miranda feels he has fused all his previous explorations into one cohesive musical language that randomly integrates a variety of compositional techniques. While losing importance, fourth and tritone fourth chord based harmonies, melodies and texture are still used, however, within a lighter

texture than the previous solo pieces. Instead, harmonies and melodies made out of the octatonic and artificial scales seem to exist in a free atonality.

The length and nature of this work is well defined by the title “three micro-pieces.” It refers to three short pieces that contrasts in mood and character to be played in a row. Even though the composer did not cite it, the first movement appears to be a recitative, the second a nocturne, and the third a rondo.

*Incisivo* is the name and character given to the first piece (mm. 1-21) of the *Três Micro-Peças*. With a ternary subdivision, the recitative character of the first part (mm. 1-7) recalls the recitative of the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão*. Example 54 shows the same F-B-E tritone fourth chord used to begin the *Prólogo* (ex. 19). The *Poco Più Mosso* marks the second part (mm. 8-18) of the *Incisivo*. The pianistic idea is the martellato, ostinato technique followed by rhythmic hemiolas and the superposition of the white and black keys derived from the use of an artificial scale made from the juxtaposition of Bb and B major (ex. 55). The descending B-A#-Eb-D intervallic content based on two groups of half steps from the artificial scale (ex. 55) found in the beginning appoggiaturas of the *Poco Più Mosso* (ex. 56) will be recalled several times later in the piece. The third part of the *Incisivo* (mm. 19-21) brings back the recitative character of the first movement. In it, an extended measure marked *Ad Libitum* expands down the descending B-A#-Eb-D cell over the entire keyboard ending the piece on the lowest B.

Example 54. *Três Micro-Peças*

I - Incisivo Mm. 1-2

I - INCISIVO

Bem articulado ( $\text{♩} = 160$ )

Example 55. *Três Micro-Peças*

I – Poco Più Mosso, Artificial Scale

Example 56. *Três Micro-Peças*

I – Poco Più Mosso, M. 8-10

Poco Più Mosso ( $\text{♩} = 88$ )

*mp* Incisivo (sempre bem articulado)

The second movement *Lirico* (mm. 1-16) begins with a *Lento* marking.

Harmonies based on augmented seventh chords evoke an ethereal mood in this nocturne.

The predominance of a C# Major seventh chord defines a tonal pole in C#. Formally, this second movement is through composed. A two-measure introduction (the g pitch is inserted on the scale of ex. 55) followed by a theme with left-hand accompaniment that dissolves itself into cadential figures. The descending B-A#-Eb-D intervallic cell (ex. 55 and 56) is found concealed as part of the melody and harmony in several places. Example

56 shows the descending B-A#-Eb-D intervallic cell transposed and inverted to G-G#-D#-E, creating harmonies based on minor seconds within octaves (m. 12 of ex. 57) and moving up in the keyboard (m. 13 of ex. 57).

**Example 57. *Três Micro-Peças*  
II – Lento Mm. 12-13**

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score includes dynamics such as *p*, *pp*, and *poco cresc.*. The notation is dense, with many notes and accidentals, illustrating the complex intervallic structures mentioned in the text.

The *Burlesco* tempo marking sets the character of the third piece, *Lúdico*. The third movement consists of a series of characteristic theme appearances and their transformations based on the formal structure of a rondo. An outline of the form presented is ABCA' Coda. The themes are atonal in nature and spring up from a dissonant texture. Section A (mm. 1-17) presents theme 1 (ex. 58) with an outburst of cluster-like major seconds in a martellato style. Grouping together all the notes of Theme 1's measure 1 (ex. 58) reveals an artificial scale (B-C#-D#-F#-G#-A-B). Measure 1 also reveals half of a grouping from the octatonic scale (F#-G#-A-B) followed by a tritone fourth chord spelled melodically in the left hand (F#-C-F). Theme 1 is presented three times in regular measure groups of 4+4+8. However, tension increases in every statement being, at the third and last time, expanded sequentially upward revealing a complete octatonic scale (B-C-D-Eb-F-F#-G#-A-B).

Section B (mm. 17-25), with a *Meno Mosso* marking, exposes theme 2 (ex. 59) as the climax built in the previous section. While theme 1 seems to be in the tonal pole of B,

theme two begins in the tonal pole of F#, dominant of B. Feminine in nature, theme 2 contrasts with the previous theme. The martellato cluster-like texture of theme 1 is then replaced by clarity of harmony and non-accented rhythmic motion. A naive taste of bitonality is illustrated in measure 17 (ex. 58) where the F and C natural pitches in the right hand originate from a tritone fourth chord (F#-C-F) over F# Major generating a particularly beautiful sound effect.

Example 58. *Três Micro-Peças*  
III – Lúdico Theme 1 Mm. 1-4

III - Lúdico  
Burlasco (♩ = 152)

Example 59. *Três Micro-Peças*  
III – Lúdico Theme 2 Mm. 17-19

Meno Mosso (♩ = 132)

Beginning with a piano *súbito* and the *Ancora Meno* tempo marking, Section C (mm. 26-47) presents a developmental theme made out of theme 1. Its lullaby movement broken by martellato notes crossing hands and upward scales closely relates this theme to Prokofieff. Example 60 shows section C's theme already harmonically transformed by diminished harmonies and embellished with the octatonic scale. Like section A, the

theme is expanded sequentially upward increasing harmonic tension towards a tritone cluster-like grouping made from the octatonic scale (F-Gb-Ab-Bb-B). The marking *Como uma cadência* (mm. 48-52) follows, indicating a cadenza within the B octatonic scale that lands on the F pitch in the bass. Then, an upward scale leads the F pitch to the top B pitch of the beginning theme 1 section A' (mm. 53-68), consolidating this way, the fifth degree tritone relation typical of the octatonic scale.

Section A' (mm. 53-68) restates theme 1 without major changes. It progresses as expected until a surprising stop occurs in the rhythmic motion (ex. 61) marking the beginning of the Coda section (mm. 74-83). Theme 2 of section B is then recalled (mm. 69-73) (ex. 61), however, modified to fit into cadential patterns. Note that the tritone fourth chord F#-C-F (ex. 61), spelled enharmonically here, already stated in section B, expands harmonically, continuing throughout a fiery Coda (mm. 74-83) towards the end of the piece (ex. 62) in the tonal pole of F.

Example 60. *Três Micro-Peças*  
III – Lúdico, Section C Mm. 34-36



Example 61. *Três Micro-Peças*  
III – Lúdico, Section B' Mm. 69-70

Example 62. *Três Micro-Peças*  
III – Lúdico, Final end Mm. 82-83

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two staves, a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The piece concludes with a double bar line. Above the treble staff, there is a dynamic marking of *sf* (sforzando) and the word *seco* (dry). Above the bass staff, there is a dynamic marking of *sf*. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The final measure of the piece features a complex chord structure with multiple accidentals.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MIRANDA'S WORKS FOR PIANO FOUR HANDS

#### A. TANGO (1993)

As already mentioned before, Miranda's *Tango* for piano four-hands was conceived out of the octatonic scale used by Stravinsky, Bartok, and Debussy. At the same time, the middle section of this piece is closer to a neotonal language, with slight traces of Piazzolla's influence. Miranda stated:<sup>85</sup>

procurei dar à obra um certo brilho e uma certa rudeza bartokiana, que contrastam com o modo cantabile central, com reminiscências de Piazzolla, um dos reis do gênero. É a parte mais lírica e menos rude da peça. Entre a seção central e a reexposição, há uma grande e vigorosa retransição. No final, uma Coda literalmente explosiva...<sup>86</sup>

Composed in 1993, Miranda's *Tango* expands within an ABA' formal pattern followed by a Coda. Respectively, fast-slow-fast. Section A (mm. 1-69) is mainly developed out of two syncopated thematic motives: a rapid sixteenth-note-beginning motive (mm. 1-4), and a rhythmic motive (mm. 4-5) that unfolds a 3+3+2 beat pattern. Both motives are extensively transformed during the discourse of section A. To build the main motive (mm. 1-4 of ex. 64) Miranda divided the octatonic scale into two groups of four notes each (ex. 63), as these were a tetrachords of a diatonic scale. Letter A in example 63 refers to Miranda's free use of "octatonic tetrachords" joined together, creating in this way other artificial scales and segments. Example 64 features the first six

<sup>85</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, *Trajectoria*, RIOARTE digital RD020.

<sup>86</sup> "Concerning the *Tango*, I intended to portray a certain brilliance and harshness of sound so typical in Bartok's music, that, at the same time, contrasts with the lyrical central section affected with slight traces of

measures of the *Tango*. In it, the main motive illustrates Miranda's technique of developing variation, clearly exposing the use of three "octatonic tetrachords" (abc of ex. 63) joined together.

Example 63. *Tango*  
Octatonic Scale



Example 64. *Tango*  
Mm. 1-6

Energético (♩ = 120)

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Piazzolla, one of the kings of the *Tango* genre. There is an extensive, vigorous transition between the middle and the re-exposition sections. And finally, a literally explosive coda....”

The image shows a musical score for two pianos, labeled 'Pno. I' and 'Pno. II'. Each piano part consists of two staves. The score covers measures 4 and 5 of example 64. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as *ff* and *mf*. There are also some performance instructions like 'v' and 'v-v' above notes. A dashed line is drawn across the bottom of the Piano II section.

The theme's rhythmic motive (mm. 4 and 5 of ex. 64) outlines Miranda's preferred use of the tritone fourth chords which characterize his language after Suite #3. The content of measure 4 (ex. 64) outlines the same opening F-B-E tritone fourth chord used in the beginning of the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão* and the *Três Micro-peças*. Another example is the juxtaposition of the F-B-E together with the B-F-Bb tritone fourth chords in measure five (ex. 64).

Section A subdivides into three parts. The first part (mm. 1-22) presents the main theme (mm. 1-4 of ex. 64). Immediately after, a rhythmic motive is presented (mm. 4-6 of ex. 64) beginning a constant rhythmic and theme transformation instability that is typical of a transitional section. The music then advances to an ostinato-like climax (m. 15) that places a closing rhythmic idea in the bass (mm. 19-22) and leads to the next part of section A. The second part (mm. 23-38) of this section is clearly defined by rhythmic stability that contrasts with the previous part. Even though it does not present a theme,

the steady “Tango” rhythm, the clarity of a bass line setting up the tonal pole of C#, the character marking *Com élan*, and the expression marking *mezzo piano súbito* bring a contrasting, feminine, dance-like character to the music (ex. 65). The third and closing part (mm. 39-69) of section A is characterized by repetitions, rhythmic expansions, and sequences based on “octatonic tetrachord” groupings. The sixteenth-note rhythmic patterns of the expanded octatonic groupings are twice broken by surprising interpolations of dance-like tango figures. In sequence, the same closing rhythmic idea that leads the music to the second part of section A is also recalled to end this section. However, it dissolves into a playful octatonic grouping (B-Bb-Ab-G) repeated in several octave displacements. Its ending note in G and the beginning of section B in C minor suggests a dominant-tonic relation.

Example 65. *Tango*  
Section A Second Part Mm. 23-24

A brief transition (mm. 70-71) marked *Com expectativa* (with expectation) musically expresses its literal meaning before the next section begins. Section B (mm.

72-97) reveals a melancholic theme beginning in C minor (ex. 66). This neotonal section formed by squared phrases and clear harmony, lacks a perfect authentic cadence. Just a hint of it can be found in measure 91 in C#, but the lack of a rhythmic and melodic stop makes this imperfect cadence musically almost imperceptible. Example 66 illustrates a harmony progressively changed by a moving bass line, which, even though it lands on a G dominant, the cadence in this phrase is actually deceptive in Eb minor. And, although section B is through composed, the absence of a final cadence brings continuity to the larger form and leads the music to the next section.

Example 66. *Tango*  
Section B Second Part Mm. 72-75

An extensive, vigorous transition (mm. 97-127) taking place before section A' demonstrates Miranda's intriguing mastery and control of the form. It develops out of two main motives: the closing rhythmic idea presented in the bass (mm. 19-22) of section A's first part; and the repetitions, rhythmic expansions, and sequences based on "octatonic tetrachord" groupings of the third and closing part (mm. 39-69). Nonetheless,

unexpectedly, the main theme is inserted (mm. 108-110) in the middle of the transition confusing the listener as to its actual function. One might think this could be the entire return of section A' first part if the transition did not proceed regularly. Also, an expansion of the ostinato-like climax (m. 15) that leads the first to the second parts of section A take place (mm. 121-126) before the arrival of the second part material in section A' (mm. 127-153). Actually, the main theme material is displaced within the transition. The second and third parts of sections A' are then recalled.

New thematic material (ex. 67) begins a literally explosive coda (mm. 154-179). The triadic thematic material is sequentially developed in intervals of thirds. Example 67 reveals an indistinct harmony that outlines a C# augmented seventh chord. Later, this harmony changes into third relations following the keys of F-A-C major triads, ending with a move one half step up to a C# major triad, the final tonal pole.

Example 67. *Tango*  
Coda Mm. 154-155

The musical score for Example 67, Coda of *Tango*, measures 154-155, is presented for two pianos. The score is in 2/4 time and features a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) with the instruction "leve, mas bem articulado" (light, but well-articulated). The music consists of two measures. In the first measure, Piano I (treble clef) plays a series of chords with accents, while Piano II (bass clef) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. In the second measure, the piano parts continue with similar textures. The score shows two measures.

## B. VARIAÇÕES SÉRIAS (1998)

As cited by Miranda,<sup>87</sup> “the title *Variações Sérias* I borrowed from Felix Mendelssohn, whose homonymous solo piano work I simply worship. My *Variações Sérias*, written however for a woodwind quintet, pays tribute to Anacleto de Medeiros, whose ‘Scottish’ theme *Yara* serves as a point of departure for 10 well-diversified variations, which alternate between the lyrical and the playful, from the urban ‘modinha’ of Portuguese flavor, to the spirit of a ‘coreto’ band from Brazil’s interior.”

Miranda transcribed his *Variações Sérias* (Serious Variations) for piano four-hands in 1998. The work was originally written for a woodwind quintet in 1991. According to him, the title is only a reference to Mendelssohn’s work, because musically, the work has nothing to do with it. Actually, the *Variações Sérias* consists of a series of variations that interpolate the legato (lyrical) and the staccato (playful) touch. The antagonism of legato versus staccato in these variations brings a certain “playful” character to the piece that is also antagonistic to the title “serious.” Thus, the piece reveals Miranda’s musical sense of humor.

Even though this set of variations was written in 1991, the work is entirely tonal. There is no evidence of fourth and tritone-fourth chords; modal, octatonic or artificial scales; nor even atonal or neotonal language in this piece. Besides, it does not demonstrate any compositional devices used in the previously analyzed pieces, aside from Miranda’s craftsmanship in the art of counterpoint and variation. Surely, Miranda was never so close to the Classical forms and language in his piano music as in this piece.

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<sup>87</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, *Trajectoria*, RIOARTE digital RD020.

However, the staccato variations evince more harmonic liberty and a break with the symmetrical legato phrasing of the theme, bringing them closer to twentieth century compositional techniques. Maybe Miranda's intention in this piece was simply to write beautiful music.

The theme (mm. 1-19) presents a phrase group formed by two symmetrical phrases lacking the cadence plan of a period.<sup>88</sup> The theme is presented twice. Example 68 shows the first phrase of the theme presented in the soprano. The second time the tenor presents the theme, followed by a cadential extension. A measure scheme of the theme would be as follows: (4+4) + (4+4) + 3. The G major (VI) – F# major (V) - b minor (i) sequence of the cadential extension is later resumed to a German sixth – I ending cadential pattern in almost all the subsequent variations.

Example 68. *Variações Sérias*  
Theme Mm. 1-4

The musical score for Example 68, Theme Mm. 1-4, is presented for Piano I and Piano II. The tempo is marked "Com expressão (♩ = 66)". The score begins with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The first measure is marked *legato* and *mp*. The second measure is marked *mf*. The third measure is marked *mf*. The fourth measure is marked *mf*. The score is in 4/4 time and features a complex melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand.

<sup>88</sup> There is no half cadence between phrases, being both phrase endings in b minor.

The first variation *Allegro* (mm. 20-48) intercalates legato and staccato phrases. It begins with a three-measure staccato introduction (ex. 69) that recalls *The Ballet of Unhatched Chicks* of Mussorgsky's *Pictures of an Exhibition*. Several other variations are linked by very short transitions that recall this "playful" character in the piece. Even though the theme presents a very clear harmonic setting, Miranda often uses augmented sixth chords to make sudden moves out of the tonic area in the staccato variations, especially the German Sixth chord.

Example 69. *Variações Sérias*  
I Variation Mm. 20-24

The musical score for Example 69, Variation I, Mm. 20-24, is presented for two pianos (Pno. I and Pno. II). The tempo is marked 'Allegro (♩ = 144)'. The score begins with a three-measure staccato introduction. The first piano part (Pno. I) features a melodic line with staccato notes, while the second piano part (Pno. II) provides a harmonic accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf* and *cres.* (crescendo). The score concludes with a German Sixth chord in the final measure.

Both the second variation *Lírico* (mm. 51-69) in legato and the contrasting third variation *Obstinado* (mm. 73-80) in staccato touch are elided by short transitions that recall the harmonic sequence of the theme's cadential extension. In it, Italian and German sixth chords are present. Next, variation four *L'istesso tempo* (mm. 82-89) juxtaposes both the legato touch of the tenor's theme with the staccato runs borrowed from the previous variation. It ends in e minor.

The character marking *Sonhador* (dreamy) of the fifth variation (mm. 90-109), in C major, represents musically the free melodic-harmonic treatment given to the theme, already felt with the e minor ending of the previous variation. Conspicuous chromatic modulations, Neapolitan chords, third relations, and circle of fifth progressions mark the harmonic treatment of this variation, in a free improvisational character.

A longer transition of six measures modulates from C major back to the original key of b minor, eliding with variation six *Incisivo* (mm. 116-133), characterized by martellato technique and staccato touch. This variation marks the return of the formal harmonic pattern of the theme. Variation seven *Tranquilo* (mm. 133-146), in 5/4 time, explores the legato touch in a continuous lyric melody. Variation eight *Brilhante* (mm. 147-222) is longer than the others in number of measures. It actually follows the repetition of the main theme. It intercalates 3/8 and 5/8 time signatures in a joyous staccato scherzando in which Miranda explores chordal appoggiaturas. The theme's descending second phrase is varied into exciting ascendant sequences.

Differently from the others, a short transition that leads to variation nine *Apixonado* (mm. 225-243) unexpectedly modulates to d minor. Besides being the last slow tempo variation, sequential phrases following the circle of fifths recall the improvisational harmonic style of variation five. The last of the set, variation ten *Enérgico* (mm. 244-264), in 5/4 time, presents a very rhythmic transformation of the theme in staccato, martellato technique. Example 70 demonstrates how the cadential extension of the theme is varied into an exuberant ending. The insertion of a C major chord between the German sixth and the F# major (dominant) brings more excitement to

the ending. Measures 263 of example 70 shows the German sixth chord as a substitute for the dominant chord at the final imperfect authentic cadence.

Example 70. *Variações Sérias*  
X Variation Final Cadence Mm. 260-264

The musical score for Example 70, titled "Variações Sérias" (X Variation Final Cadence, measures 260-264), is written for two pianos (Pno. I and Pno. II). The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 260-263, and the second system covers measures 263-264. The music is characterized by dense, intricate textures, particularly in the right hand of both pianos, featuring rapid sixteenth and thirty-second note passages. The final cadence in measure 264 is marked with a German sixth chord (F#m7b9) in the right hand and a dominant chord (C7) in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like "f" and "ff".

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### A. THE EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE: MIRANDA'S PIANO WORKS OUTLINES FOUR DISTINCTIVE MUSICAL PERIODS

According to Chapter Three, the composer himself presented his own division of his output to date into separate compositional periods. Chapters Four and Five feature the musical analysis of Miranda's piano pieces, which reveals a constant evolution in the composer's language. Following a strong preference for Classical forms, Miranda's evolution of language solidifies in the uniqueness of harmonic compositional devices used to build every piece. Compositional experimentation is not only part of Miranda's musical vocabulary, besides clearly defining distinctive periods in his music, the unique compositional approach in each of his piano pieces also clearly defines him as an eclectic composer.

##### 1. First Period

Youthful works composed before 1977 characterize Miranda's first period. He composed only sporadically until then. Belonging to this period, Suite # 3 is rather simple compared to his mature works. Following the evolution of his language, Miranda's preference for major seventh chords is already felt drastically in this suite, later to consolidate in the tritone fourth chord; a variant of the major seventh chords. Even

though the suite has a nationalistic character, Miranda avoids the common minor sevenths of northern Brazilian folk style explored by many composers such as Marlos Nobre and Camargo Guarnieri. Example 71 shows the most common folk scales found in the music of Northern Brazil. But, if not the minor sevenths, the raised fourth interval does seem to attract Miranda's attention. Hints of the raised fourth scale can be found in the second movement of suite #3 in examples 9 measure 28, and 11, however, as a consequence of the modal character of the suite, together with the use of the whole tone scale. Suite #3 also features parallel fourths in all movements that later develops into his mature style.

**Example 71. *Brazilian Folk Scales*  
Mixolydian Mode and Raised Fourth Scale**



## 2. Second Period

Maturity, intense activity, pictorial titles, and a drastic evolution in musical language mark Miranda's second musical period, beginning in 1977 when the composer was 29 years old. Miranda's *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão* and the *Toccata* belong to this period. Miranda himself defined the style of this set of compositions as "free atonal." Particular to this period, and overlapping the next, is the manner in which Miranda

applies tritone fourth chords, always building a thick texture, and following a compositional evolution. According to Ludmila Ulehla,<sup>89</sup>

Because of the tonal ambiguity that fourth made chords contain, they are frequently used to gain a Modern effect that poses few harmonic problems. They fit so easy into many different areas....

Intervallic structures which are made up of a mixture of perfect fourth intervals and augmented fourths, or their enharmonic diminished fifths may be called "tritone fourths."

Any number of tritones may be included, but they must alternate between the perfect fourths if a duplication of pitch is to be prevented.... The additional tritones increase the harmonic tension.

Tonal ambiguity is as prevalent among tritone fourths as with perfect fourths. There is no single compelling tone that insists on a specific resolution of pitch, tritone notwithstanding. This "isolated" quality is the result of intervallic structures which defy any significant root tone. It leaves the entire effect of the movement to the melodic contour and the slight deviations in the vertical quality.

Omissions of some "middle" members do not affect the basic chord quality....

A tritone fourth may reflect a dominant quality, as the gap between the single tone and the upper arrangement may provide its own overtone which, if supported in the above group, will disclaim a fourth hierarchy.

The text cited above explains theoretically the sound quality approached by Miranda, and his use of tritone fourth chords. First, as well-explained in Chapter Four, the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão* presents tritone fourth based harmonies setting up tonal poles, but not functional dominants, once the use of this chord does not imply any functional tonality. Following a harmonic evolution in Miranda's language, the *Toccata* presents tritone fourth chords more freely used, whether setting up tonal poles or not. The tonal ambiguity generated by this chord is very well exemplified in Chapter Four. Example 31 demonstrates, from the beginning, tritone fourths being freely used to outline melody. However, example 72 demonstrates that Miranda still follows academic rules,

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<sup>89</sup> Ludmila Ulehla, *Contemporary Harmony*, (London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1966), 379.

mentioned in the above-cited text. This example features two tritone fourth chords separated in their distance by the interval of a perfect fourth. The next step of Miranda's harmonic evolution appears in the next period.

**Example 72. *Toccata* M. 98  
Academic use of Tritone Fourth Chord**



### 3. Third period

Miranda characterized the compositional style of his third period as neotonal. *Estrela Brilhante* belongs to this period. Not defined, but understood when reading the book "Twentieth-Century Music" by Eric Salzman,<sup>90</sup> neo-tonality means the return or substitution of functional tonality within modern twentieth-century compositional techniques. Neotonal composers extended the principle of free "dissonant" motion to produce "free association" forms which often avoid the natural and expected Classical phrase-motion. Example 52, in Chapter Four, demonstrates very well the neotonal style adopted by Miranda. In it, non-functional tritone fourth chords are used to increase

<sup>90</sup> Eric Salzman, *Twentieth-Century Music*, (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, 1988), 204-221.

tension, building a thick dissonant texture over a complete functional cadential pattern in the bass.

Following the evolution of language, the analysis of *Estrela Brilhante* in Chapter Four shows Miranda's free use of tritone fourth chords as underlying melodies or for building texture, juxtaposed with other tritone fourths. However, juxtapositions in intervals other than the strict perfect fourth between chords demonstrate that Miranda no longer cares for the academic rules. Indeed, Miranda joins together, in this period, all previous compositional devices used in his music, evincing his own mature language.

#### 4. Fourth Period

At the present time, the fourth period in Miranda's music is characterized by the consolidation of eclecticism. Belonging to this period is the *Três Micro-peças*, the *Tango* and the *Variações Sérias* for piano four-hands. Following this evolution, the analysis of these pieces in Chapters Four and Five demonstrates Miranda's new dimension and experiments in his compositional musical style. Fluctuating from one piece to another, and even in the same piece, atonal, neotonal, and tonal are terms for which Miranda no longer concerns himself in his compositions. As a result, Miranda's recent compositions present a high diversity of musical language. While the *Três Micro-peças* and the *Tango* show Miranda's experiments with the octatonic scale, the *Variações Sérias* are completely tonal and, at certain times, the harmonic sequences involving German sixth chords recall the music of Beethoven. Finally, tritone fourth based harmonies lose preference in favor of the octatonic scale and its diminished chord implications. Hence,

the musical texture appears lighter compared with Miranda's second and third period compositions.

## B. THE MUSICAL LANGUAGE OF RONALDO MIRANDA: COMMON TRAITS THAT UNIFY HIS WORKS

Despite all the musical experimentation through out his four periods, the musical style of Miranda unifies via some common elements typical in his music.

The presentation of a solid formal pattern seems to be a primary concern to Ronaldo Miranda, who does not hide his devotion to the Classical forms. All his piano pieces possess clearly defined formal structures, independent of any contemporary language used. As seen in the musical analysis of Chapters Four and Five, Miranda basically used recitatives, fugue, theme and variations, ABACA rondo, small binary and ternary (ABA') forms.

Following Classical traditions, sections are very well defined in Miranda's music. However, perfect authentic (dominant-tonic) cadences are, if not avoided, selected to close major sections. For example, Suite #3 presents mostly elided contrasting sections, in which none, a few, or substitutions of the authentic cadence are found, in spite of its modal character. The *Allegro* of this suite presents only two authentic cadences, both reveal altered dominants, one at the end of the dominant preparation, and at the end of the piece. The second piece of the suite, the *Allegretto*, does not present any authentic

cadence at all. A similar device is later used in the mature style of the *Tango*, which the authentic perfect cadence is reserved for the very end of the piece.

Nonetheless, cadences can be found in Miranda's atonal style. Slight traces of functional tonality are found in the atonal language of the *Toccata*. As shown in example 73, a dominant preparation in F#, to be resolved in the tonal pole of B (ex. 32), closes a major section. Miranda's atonal music conforms to the statements of Ulehla,<sup>91</sup> in which atonality literally means "without tonality." But what it should mean is "without a diatonic concept of tonality." Hence, the implication in atonal is that tonality exists either in a diatonic concept or not at all. Miranda's atonal language does not obliterate the tonal content. Coherence of tonal poles leading to the understanding of a form is well-defined in Miranda's music. A detailed analysis of the *Discurso*, the *Toccata*, and the *Burlesco*, in Chapter Four, demonstrates Miranda's craftsmanship in molding atonal form. Surely, Miranda's treatment of tonal poles and cadences bring continuity to the form.

Example 73. *Toccata* M. 21-24  
F# Dominant Preparation (within Miranda's atonal style)

Miranda's phrases tend to be sectional and fragmented, their endings usually made through a melodic and rhythmic stress on a strong beat. Metric and melodic changes often define phrases obscured, missing, or provided by deceptive cadences. The

overlapping of sections and phrases, found consistently in all Miranda's piano pieces since Suite #3, reached such maturity in the *Tango* that the overall effect suggests a through composed form. A theme dissolving into cadential patterns found in the second of the *Três Micro-peças* reveals a different procedure, but with the same "continuous" result: the impression that the theme does not end.

Continuous musical discourse is a strong characteristic in all Miranda's piano works. Indeed, his craftsmanship in developing variation and thematic transformation in both the motivic-thematic and metric-rhythmic dimensions in the *Toccata*, the *Tango*, and the *Variações Sérias* can be somewhat related to Brahms's "principle of developing variation"<sup>92</sup> influence.

Following the Classical forms, Miranda demonstrates mastery of both melodic and rhythmic elements. Themes are often sequenced and cut in half preparing climaxes or cadenzas. The meter is flexible according to what the melodic movement suggests. It can change many times inside a phrase, section or movement of a work. Extended measures without indication of meter are found in the recitatives, and inserted cadenzas.

All piano pieces provide clear climax points that are indicated with careful dynamic markings. However, pedal markings are only used in the case of special sound effects, as found at the end of the *Toccata*, the *Estrela Brilhante*, and in the first piece of the *Três Micro-peças*. Contrasts in dynamics and rhythmic movements between themes, sections, and movements are well-defined in Miranda's music. Also, Miranda is

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<sup>91</sup> Ludmila Ulehla, *Contemporary Harmony*, (London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1966), 484.

<sup>92</sup> Walter Frish, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 83-6.

concerned with the dimensions and coherence of joining movements in the same piece. For example, the fast movements of Suite #3 present about the same number of measures, respectively 80, 79, and 77. Also, only the end of the last piece of the suite presents a final *fortissimo* marking.

Frequent use of melodic counterpoint demonstrates the composer's comfort with traditional methods (Miranda is very aware that even Schoenberg left a posthumous method of composition completely based on the study of traditional forms).<sup>93</sup> The musical texture may vary independent of the use of counterpoint. Pieces from the second and third period exhibit a very thick texture due to Miranda's use of tritone fourth chords. However, his last piano piece, the *Três Micro-peças*, presents a much lighter texture that recalls Suite #3, though in a more advanced language.

Appearances of fast upward scales occur in the *Toccata* and the *Incisivo* of the *Três Micro-peças*. Also typical in Miranda's music are the use of artificial scales, tone clusters, and use of the whole extent of the keyboard in passages that many times are virtuosic, requiring performers to solve pianistic technical problems. Some typical figurations, and harmonic traits are also found among these pieces, such as the recurring tritone fourth chord found in the *Prólogo, discurso e reflexão* (ex. 19), the *Tango* (ex. 64), and the *Três Micro-peças* (ex. 54).

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<sup>93</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, "O Aproveitamento das formas tradicionais em linguagem musical contemporânea na composição de um concerto para piano e orquestra" (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1987).

Only Suite #3 is published. Other pieces are available only in manuscript form from the composer. The author mentioned to me during a private interview that he is reluctant to go through all the procedure necessary for obtaining a copyright.<sup>94</sup>

### C. MIRANDA'S STANCE TOWARDS BRAZILIAN NATIONALISM: THE 'ECLECTIC' COMPOSER OF NATIONAL STYLE

Once I asked Miranda if he considers himself a nationalistic composer. The answer was "it is not up to me to answer this question."

Many composers differentiate "nationalism" from "national style." The direct use of folk material incorporated into traditional style is regarded as nationalism. On the other hand, national style is reflected by the unconscious musical exposure of the composer's living background, without direct use of folklore. Nonetheless, Gerard Béhague<sup>95</sup> states that the meaning of nationalism continues to be perceived generally along the same lines as national styles.

The analysis of Miranda's Suite #3 in Chapter Four reveals certain folk elements, such as the rhythm of the syncopated Afro-Brazilian *congada*, introduced within Classical forms. Certainly, the insertion of this rhythm brings a dance-like nationalistic character to the piece. Thus, Suite #3 is the only piano piece in which it is possible to be sure that Miranda had nationalistic intentions.

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<sup>94</sup> Ronaldo Miranda, interview by Vitor Duarte, tape recording, 20 October 1999, Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>95</sup> Gerard Béhague, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1994), 145.

The atonal second period in Miranda's works is not only marked by a drastic evolution in his language, but by the complete omission of folk elements in his piano music. Obviously, the same does not happen in the neotonal *Estrela Brilhante*, for which the theme was borrowed from a Brazilian folk tune. However, the Aeolian mode of the *Estrela Brilhante* contradicts with the mixolydian, and raised fourth scale (ex. 71) to be expected if the composer's approach were nationalistic. Besides, the treatment Miranda gave to the theme evinces his own language. Also, traces of the Brazilian "bossa-nova" are found in the second variation of the piece. Perhaps, though it does not appear that Miranda consciously intended to write nationalistic music, the piece captures the essence of Brazilian national music.

Another stylistic 'switch of position' is seen in Miranda's fourth period. The *Variações Sérias* presents a rather 'Scottish' theme as point of departure. However, Miranda refers to the orchestration in this piece, before it was transcribed to piano four hands, as meant to recall a Brazilian 'coreto' band. The *Tango* reveals influence by Piazzolla, and also, the composer's own advanced language.

Finally, taking all of Miranda's stylistic changes into consideration, one can conclude that, as explained in Chapter Two, most living Brazilian composers, including Miranda, do not concern themselves anymore with the polemic between nationalism and other ideologies. Instead, composers, like Miranda, have been in search of a more eclectic musical aesthetic. However, I personally believe that all great composers wrote music that represents their country regardless of the ideology. And all of them wrote "national" music since the essence of a country or culture comes through music naturally via

elements of the background in which a composer lives. Melody, rhythm, timbre, and character are elements frequently unaffected by the form or language a composer uses, in a national style, as in Miranda's music.

Music is complex and ever changing. Already we have advanced into the twenty-first century. Any consideration of the new century's music must begin with a reminder that today's music is still written by composers born in the last century. We are still witness to their "post-modern" styles. Despite that, the music of tomorrow seems to be a mystery; indeed, musicologists can not predict it. Creating new forms is just one issue; many living composers adopt or manipulate the Classical forms, since they fit perfectly to what the human brain can assimilate musically. However, even after their immense musical output and experimentation, few of them manage to find an individual musical language such as Miranda's. To have studied his works in depth, with the invaluable input from the composer, has been inspiring, and this author strongly recommends to all performers to study the works of living composers for the deeper understanding of the music of our time.

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