

Piano Music of
Camargo Guarnieri
Martin Jones



Piano Music of
M. Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993)
Martin Jones, piano

1	Dansa Negra (1946 pub.1948) <i>Soturno</i> (Gloomy)	4:12
2	Improviso II <i>Lentamente</i>	2:53
3	Valsa No.2 (1935 pub.1962) <i>Preguiçoso</i> (Lazy)	2:48
4	Lundu (1935 pub.1947) <i>Con gioio</i>	2:49
5	Momento No.7 <i>Calmo e Tristonho</i>	1:59
6-8	Sonatina no.1 (1928 pub.1958)	7:12
	I <i>Molengamente, bem forma o canto</i> (Softly, song-like)	3:03
	II <i>Modinha. Ponteados e bem dengoso</i> (Pointed and sweet)	2:06
	III <i>Dança Bem depressa, muito ritmado e marcato</i> (Fast, rhythmic)	2:03
9	Toada Triste (1936 pub.1942)	2:34
10	Valsa No.4 (1943 pub.1962) <i>Calmo e saudoso</i> (Yearning)	2:43
11	Improviso IV <i>Saudoso</i>	1:59
12	Ponteios Vol.3 No.30 (pub. 1957) <i>Sentido</i> (Sentimental)	1:41
13	Ponteios Vol.4 No.37 (pub.1959) <i>Com humor</i>	1:13
14	Ponteios Vol.5 No.49 (pub.1961) <i>Torturado</i> (Passionate)	2:03
	‘Homenagem à Scriabin’	
15-17	Sonatina no.4 (1958)	11:02
	I <i>Com alegria</i> (Cheerful)	3:33
	II <i>Melancólico</i> (Sad)	2:55
	III <i>Gracioso</i> (Graceful)	4:34

18	Improviso III <i>Nostalgico</i>	2:05
19	“Chôro” Torturado (1930 pub.1947)	3:43
20	Valsa No.6 (1949 pub.1957) <i>Lento</i>	4:15
21	Improviso VI <i>Tristonho</i> (Unhappy)	1:33
22	Toada (1929) <i>Com muita saudade</i> (Longing)	3:28
23-25	Sonatina no.5 (1962)	8:27
	I <i>Com humor</i>	3:53
	II <i>Muito calmo, terno</i> (Tender)	1:33
	III <i>Com alegria, con espirito</i>	2:59
26	Improviso IX <i>Melancolico</i>	1:29
	Total playing time	70:21

Produced by Adrian Farmer
Recorded at Wyastone Concert Hall, Monmouth UK 2-3 September 2024
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The following article is drawn extensively from the PhD thesis submitted to Columbia University in 1971 by Sister Marion Verhaalen 'The solo piano music of Mignone and Guarneri'

Guarnieri's family originated in Sicily, his grandfather having emigrated to Brazil in 1895, as 'Guarneri', but arriving in his new homeland with an extra 'i' – the gift of a careless customs official. The family settled in Tiete, a small town some sixty-five miles northwest of São Paulo, where they ran a barber shop. In 1905 the composer's father, Miguel, then twenty-one, married Gessia Arruda Camargo Penteado. She was from a wealthy background, her family never totally reconciling to her choice of husband. He was a fair musician, performing on several instruments including piano and flute, and had a passion for Italian opera: his four sons – Camargo was the eldest, born in 1907 – were, each in turn, burdened with first names 'Mozart', 'Rossini', 'Bellini' and 'Verdi'. Camargo eventually dropped the name, retaining only the initial 'M' in deference to 'the master'. The household was busy – there were also six daughters – and culturally rich, including two future poets, a painter and a novelist.

Guarnieri's primary schooling was limited to two years. He learnt to read and write, but pursued no musical interest. His teenage years began with piano lessons, which encouraged his improvisation but not his formal accomplishments. His father, divining in his son a spark of musical creativity, relocated the family to São Paulo and found a more advanced piano tutor, at the same time adding violin and flute to his studies. Pressures to bring in money to support the family saw Guarnieri, at fourteen, in a music store demonstrating popular sheet-music on the piano. Here he found the time to become familiar with the keyboard works of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Mozart. At 5.30 pm each day he swapped the music store for the piano bench of a silent cinema, and then on to a cabaret until the small hours, sleeping only from 4 until 9 o'clock. In 1925 the family barber shop was sold and his father found paid employment, enabling Guarnieri to give up his punishing schedule and devote more time to serious musical studies. His teacher at this time was Antônio Sá Periera, who encouraged his composing. In 1926 the arrival in São Paulo of the Italian conductor Lamberto Baldi was announced. Baldi saw

something promising in the young man's compositions and agreed to take him as a pupil, telling his father "I hope I am the professor he needs and that he will be the student I expect him to be." During the five years of this relationship no payment was demanded. Guarnieri said in a 1969 interview "...my own composition was entirely free. He never put obstacles in my way; he would only check a passage and say, "I don't like this; correct it." Baldi insisted that his student play in his orchestra – all the keyboard instruments at daily rehearsals. In this way he experienced the contemporary works being introduced by Baldi at first hand.

In 1928 Guarnieri was introduced to the ardent critic, aesthete and nationalist, Mário de Andrade. Among his limited portfolio of compositions was the First Sonatina, which impressed Andrade. He arranged to school his new protégé in general culture, making good the limitations imposed by only two years primary education. In small groups they would study the books given to them, be challenged to discuss them, to put forth their own opinions, and defend them against Andrade's questioning. In 1957 Guarnieri expressed his opinion that it was Andrade who helped him discover his own way, "pointing with his prodigious intuition to a weak spot in a work which he heard, or disagreeing with an idea and being very critical in order to awaken in me the spirit of confidence in defence of my opinions." By 1931 Guarnieri emerged as a young man grounded in aesthetics, literature, history, and philosophy.

As early as 1928 Guarnieri also began teaching, being appointed a professor of piano at the Conservatory of Drama and Music, São Paulo, adding Baldi's class to his own when his master eventually left São Paulo for Buenos Aires. But the Getúlio Vargas Constitutional Revolution beginning in 1930 closed the schools for two years. Guarnieri lost his students, and perhaps worse, saw the cancellation of a scholarship for study in Europe. He put the hiatus to use by studying the compositions of Schoenberg, Haba, Berg and Hindemith ushering in a short period he described as "enamoration with atonalism", from which he had equally swiftly withdrawn by 1934: "I began to feel that my own personal sensibilities were not compatible with atonalism. I began to write works that were free of a sense of tonality, non-tonal rather than atonal. They have an indecisive tonality, neither major nor minor, not in C nor in D."

In 1935 Andrade persuaded the mayor of São Paulo to establish a Department of Culture. Guarnieri was prevailed upon to organize and conduct a mixed chorus, with the express purpose of stimulating the production of new choral music written in Portuguese. Along similar national lines, in 1937 he was sent as representative to the first Afro-Brazilian Conference in Bahia, during which time he collected Afro-Brazilian themes, creating a precious collection as well as providing material for his own compositions. Finally in 1938 the long-postponed grant to study in Europe was approved, thanks in part to the efforts of French pianist Alfred Cortot. He wrote of Guarnieri's music, "it made such an impression on me that I do not hesitate to declare that his work represents one of the most personal musical values of our era and also one of the most characteristic of the Brazilian genius."

In July 1938 Guarnieri arrived in Paris, by way of stop-overs in Italy and Germany. He entered the harmony class of Charles Koechlin, studied conducting with Francois Ruhlmann, conductor of the Paris Opera Orchestra, and made close connections with fellow composers, including Nadia Boulanger and Darius Milhaud. A few of his pieces were introduced in concert but in November 1939 war in Europe and political changes at home leading to the withdrawal of his funding found Guarnieri returning to Brazil. Here there was to be no grand welcome; others had filled his positions and there were no pupils. The National Conservatory of Panama reached out to him in 1942, offering a teaching post that was initially tempting. But the newspapers raised outraged concern; challenging Brazil to support its own creative artists. A second invitation provided the possibility of compromise: the Pan American Union asked him to visit the United States as a guest of the Department of State. Guarnieri had no regular sponsor, insufficient personal funds, and no time to raise money for such a trip. He turned to a wealthy directress, Senhora Esther Mesquita, whose elegant solution was to commission an orchestral work. The resulting *Abertura Concertante* was performed during the US tour, the composer himself conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Guarnieri's experience of the North American system of music education encouraged him to press for something similar in Brazil. Returning with his international reputation strengthened, he settled down to composition and the development of his own

composition class, through the various conservatories and universities with which he became closely associated in the following years. Guarnieri was a feature of the Brazilian musical scene, and of the political establishment; there were to be honorary doctorates, monetary awards, medals and plaques; he was a regular interviewee in journals and newspaper columns; there were festivals devoted entirely to his music; one such occurring in 1967 on his sixtieth birthday. He was an internationally welcomed competition jurist; supervising conductor of the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra; honorary president of the Brazilian Academy of Music, and ultimately served under Clóvis Salgado when he was Minister of Education for the Brazilian government, a post he held throughout the late 1950s.

Guarnieri was one of the most prolific and creative Brazilian composers, writing in all the major genres with a consistent and sustained concern for national musical expression. There are seven symphonies; multiple concertos for piano, and for violin; substantial and important collections of solo songs, choral and chamber works. There are two dramatic works: *Pedro Malazarte*, a comic opera with text by Andrade, and *Um homem só*, a lyric tragedy with text by Gianfrancesco Guarnieri. The solo piano music is properly considered to be amongst his most important. It is for the most part organised into series: Ten Valsas (1934-1958); Twenty Estudos (1949-1980s); Fifty Ponteios, in five volumes (1931-1959); Six Sonatinas (1928-1965); Ten Momentos (1980s). The Ponteios are the most representative of Guarnieri's 'Brazilian' style, they represent what one commentator has described as 'the musical soul of the people' (Ayrres de Andrade). The name is also uniquely the composer's invention: "I thought it would be better to use a word other than 'Prelude' to express this Brazilian character, so I wrote 'Ponteio' ... the word is actually derived from the Portuguese word 'pontear' which refers to the plucking technique used on the violão." The name stuck, and has been taken up by other composers for pieces of improvisatory character.

Guarnieri has suggested that the Sonatinas trace his development as a composer. It was the first Sonata, published in 1928, that brought him to public attention. His successful merging of a traditional sonata-allegro form with folk-forms and Brazilian musical terms served as a musical manifesto – at least that is the way it was received by

one commentator, who remarked of its “forcing the note of his deliberate nationalism.” The Fourth Sonatina seems, by contrast, to inhabit a less pressured, tranquil space: it is a joyful, playful work. The Fifth Sonatina was commissioned for a piano competition, it was one of the obligatory pieces, and appropriately for its function it is a more ‘classical’ work than its predecessors, demonstrating the composer’s ability to write a leaner, more intellectual, transparent and dissonant music.

The short individual pieces on this recording, the Valsas, Improvisos and Momentos show the sweeter side of Guarnieri’s musical language. The Waltz is a format in which every Brazilian composer has expressed his national character, making it almost a new distinctive format. Guarnieri’s Valsas share a minor key, and typically present internal melodies shared between the hands, and wreathed in chromatic modulations and decorations. Their mood is one of longing, now almost completely shorn of its dance character. The effect of all these pieces, many of them extreme miniatures, is of gentle nostalgia.

Adrian Farmer

This recital is organised into 3 groups, each containing a varied selection of short pieces, ending with a Sonatina. No chronological plan is implied, and given the often decades long gap between composition and publication none seemed relevant in the construction of the programme.

Released in the same 'Brazilian Composer Series'

by Martin Jones

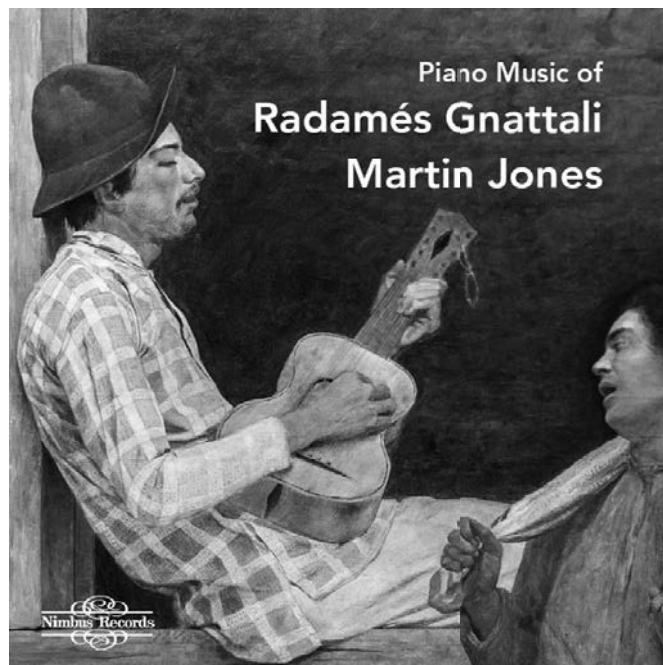
Piano Music of Francisco Mignone (1897-1986)

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|-------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Lenda sertaneja No. 8 (1938) |
| 2 | Cucumbizinho (1931) |
| 3 | Valse élégante (1931) |
| 4-5 | Iª Sonatina (1949) |
| 6 | Lenda sertaneja No. 6 (1931) |
| 7 | Serenada Humorística (1932) |
| 8 | Congada (1924/28) |
| 9-10 | IIª Sonatina (1949) |
| 11 | Lenda sertaneja No. 4 (1930) |
| 12 | Tango (1931) |
| 13-16 | Quatro peças Brasileiras (1930) |
| 17-18 | IIIª Sonatina (1949) |
| 19 | 1ª Valsa de esquina (1938) |
| 20 | Paulistana (1942) |
| 21-22 | IVª Sonatina (1949) |
| 23 | 12ª Valsa de esquina (1943) |



Playing time 67:34

Piano Music of Radamés Gnattali (1906-1988)

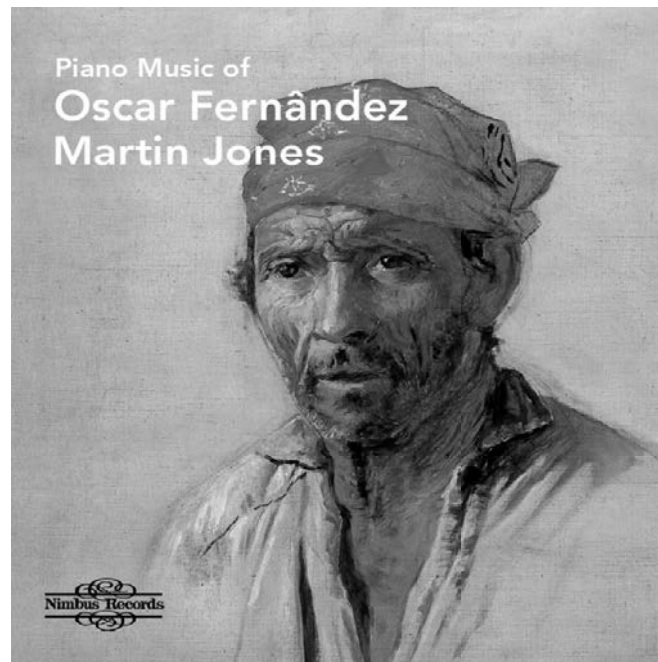


- 1 Negaceando. Chôro (1940s)
- 2 Perfumosa. Valsa (1940s)
- 3 Preludio amolecado (1940s)
- 4 Preludio No. 2. Paisagem (1930)
- 5-15 Valsas para piano (1945)
- 16-19 Exercicios para piano (1965)
- 20 Tocata (1944)
- 21 Manhosa. Chôro (1947)
- 22 Uma rosa para Pixinguinha (1964)
- 23-25 Ponteio, Roda e Baile (1931)
- 26 Canhoto. Chôro (1943)
- 27 Vaidoso no.2. Valsa (1963)
- 28 Alma Brasileira. (1930)
- 29-32 Rapsodia Brasileira (1930)
- 33 Vaidosa. Valsa (1940s)

Playing Time 67:18

Piano Music of Oscar Fernández (1897-1948)

- 1-2 Duas Miniaturas Op. 1 (1918)
- 3 Noturno Op. 3 (1919)
- 4 Arabesca Op. 5 (*before* 1920)
- 5-9 Preludios do crepusculo Op. 15 (1922)
- 10-12 Três Estudos. Em forma de Sonatina (1929)
- 13 Valsa Suburbana Op. 70 (1932)
- 14-16 Suite Brasileira No. 1 (1936)
- 17-19 Suite Brasileira No. 2 (1937-38)
- 20-22 Suite Brasileira No. 3 (1937-38)
- 23 Rêverie Op. 20 (1923)
- 24 Prelúdio Fantástico (1924)
- 25 Miragem (*before* 1920)
- Total playing time 66:46



Martin Jones has been one of Britain's most highly regarded solo pianists since first coming to international attention in 1968 when he received the Dame Myra Hess Award. The same year he made his London debut at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and his New York debut at Carnegie Hall, and ever since has been in demand for recitals and concerto performances in Europe, Russia, Australia, Canada, North & South America. He has made over 90 recordings with Nimbus Records exploring music that is not often played including the complete works of 18 composers. This year will see the release of 4 discs of newly discovered manuscripts of Daniel Jones. Also, together with Adrian Farmer, 3 discs of French music for 4 hands. During next year, as well as giving concerts, he will complete 3 discs of the first recordings of all the piano works of Elizabeth Lutyens for Resonus Records, and continue his American Piano Series with Volumes 6 & 7 for Prova Recordings which will include several new works especially written for him, and, for Nimbus a collection of Brazilian music by Mignone, Gnattali & Lorenzo-Fernandez.

