



César GUERRA-PEIXE

Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2 'Brasília'

Nonet



Goiânia Symphony Choir • Goiás Youth Symphony Choir
Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra • Neil Thomson

About This Series

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

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



About The Scores

Publisher: The estate of César Guerra-Peixe;
contact details available through the Brazilian Academy of Music (www.abmusica.org.br)

César Guerra-Peixe (1914–1993)

Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2 'Brasília' • Nonet

It's hard to think of any two works in the same genre, and by the same composer, that are as different from one another as the two symphonies by César Guerra-Peixe. In 1937, Guerra-Peixe was a young composer, writing in a neo-Classical style, with touches of nationalism – but this was the year in which Hans-Joachim Koellreutter arrived in Brazil from Germany (one of the many European artists who came to the Americas to escape the Nazi regime). Koellreutter soon founded the Música Viva group, introducing young Brazilian composers such as Claudio Santoro, Edino Krieger and Guerra-Peixe to, among other ideas, the principles of serialism.

Guerra-Peixe's relationship with twelve-note composition was intense and short-lived, a kind of youthful passion. After six years of devoting himself to writing serialist works, he abandoned Música Viva's ideals and embraced a nationalist aesthetic instead. His *First Symphony* and *Nonet*, however, date from his serialist years, and are two of the finest works produced by this movement in Brazil.

He began writing the *First Symphony* in December 1945 and completed it on 14 March 1946. The work was premiered later that year in London by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Maurice Miles. It was well received in Europe: the German conductor Hermann Scherchen, for example, performed it with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich for Radio Zurich in 1948. Indeed, Guerra-Peixe recalled Scherchen asking him a number of times when he planned on writing a second symphony, so impressed had he been with the *First*.

Symphony No. 1 is a short work, about 20 minutes in duration, and is written for condensed instrumental forces: single woodwind with the addition of a second clarinet, trumpet, timpani, piano and strings. This economy of means was a significant stylistic trait, probably stemming from Guerra-Peixe's work with radio orchestras, which were often of limited personnel.

The symphony's three movements follow a conventional fast–slow–fast pattern. The work is written entirely in twelve-note technique, and there is a variety of expression in the linear aspects of the series. The opening *Allegro* is based on two themes. The first of these is divided in turn into two motifs: the first is presented by the trumpet, the second by unison strings, and both are constructed from the series in its original form. There is a change of both character and tempo in the second theme, to some extent anticipating the more notable contrast introduced by the next movement. This second theme uses the retrograde series and is entrusted to the cello, which establishes a dialogue with the timpani.

In the second movement, *Largo*, the series is heard in its inverted form and the music explores more introspective sonorities. Changes in timbre are achieved by the introduction of auxiliary instruments and resources – cor anglais and celesta replace oboe and piano respectively, and the trumpet is muted for the greater part of the movement.

The third movement is divided into three sections, marked *Vivacissimo*, *Larghetto* and *Vivace*. The first, a kind of *scherzo*, is built on a process of derivation from the inverted series. The *Larghetto* functions as a transition, in which previously presented elements are reconfigured and, via a timpani solo, lead into the closing *Vivace*. Almost *fugato* in style, this section once again uses the series in its original form, albeit now transposed. The return to the original linear aspect of the series provides cohesion in terms of the work's structural organisation.

The most significant chamber work Guerra-Peixe composed during his serialist period is the *Nonet*. It was written in 1945, revised in 1947, and premiered – probably in the latter version – in 1948 on Radio Zurich, again under the baton of Hermann Scherchen. Cast in three movements, *Allegro*, *Lento* and *Vivace*, the *Nonet* is written for flute, clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, violin, viola, cello and piano. Employing a more austere serialism than the *First Symphony*, it lies at one of the extremes of Guerra-Peixe's stylistic spectrum, and (unlike the symphony) its athematic writing is free of any nationalist infiltration. The composer himself declared, 'in the *Nonet* I went so far as to never repeat a melodic or rhythmic idea'.

Guerra-Peixe's break with serialism was a very public process, at times verging on the litigious, with manifestos, open letters, debates and criticism of the former technique and his teacher, all avidly covered by the Brazilian press. From the 1950s until the end of his life, the composer enjoyed a stable and lasting relationship with nationalism, whose many fruits were to include his *Symphony No. 2*. Written more than a decade after Scherchen's enquiries and Guerra-Peixe's stylistic shift, it was ultimately created in response to a competition organised in 1960 by Brazil's Ministry of Education and Culture to celebrate the construction of Brasília, the country's new capital city. A prize of 500,000 cruzeiros was offered for the winning work, a very significant sum for the time – by way of comparison, this was the same amount that had been spent on building Catetinho, the temporary official residence of the president in Brasília.

The competition called for the composition of a nationalist symphony, for large orchestra, with or without choir, lasting between 30 and 45 minutes and entitled '*Sinfonia Brasília*'. The jury members were composers Francisco Mignone, Camargo Guarnieri and conductor Lamberto Baldi, who had been the young Guarnieri's teacher and mentor. In a surprise result, none of the candidates was awarded first prize. Instead, Guerra-Peixe's *Second Symphony*, Claudio Santoro's *Seventh* and José Guerra Vicente's *Third* were all said to have tied for second place, meaning no one was entitled to a share of the large cash prize. This seems to have been very frustrating for Guerra-Peixe, who recorded in his catalogue that the work had been 'disqualified', and never wrote another symphony. Curiously, Guarnieri had been planning to write his own 'Brasília' symphony since at least 1959. His appointment to the jury prevented him from submitting his own entry, but he did not abandon the project. He began writing his *Sinfonia Brasília* (his fourth symphony) before the results of the competition were announced, in October 1960, and completed it three years later.

Guerra-Peixe's *Symphony No. 2 'Brasília'* was premiered on 12 December 1963, at the Theatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro. Isaac Karabtchevsky was at the helm of the Orquestra Sinfônica Nacional and the composer himself was one of the first violins. The symphony was well received by the critics, winning significant prizes not only in 1963 but also in 1986. A programmatic work, it is divided into four movements, as follows:

I. O candango em sua terra ('The Worker in his Land') (*Allegro ma non troppo*)

II. Trabalho ('The Work') (*Presto*)

III. Elegia para o ausente ('Elegy for the Absent Friend') (*Andante*)

IV. Manhã de domingo – Tarde infantil – Desce a noite – Volta ao trabalho – Inauguração da cidade – Apoteose ('Sunday Morning – Children's Afternoon – Nightfall – Return to Work – Inauguration of the City – Apotheosis') (*Allegro con moto*)

Throughout the work, the choir plays a mainly timbral role – the incorporation of vocalises, onomatopoeia and children's rhymes results in material with a subtle semantic charge, adding to the symphony's programmatic character. The key moment comes in the fifth section of the final movement, *Inauguração da cidade*, in which the composer calls for a speaker to recite excerpts from the speech made by President Juscelino Kubitschek to the workers who had built Brasília. On this album, as in live performances of the work in Brazil, a recording of Kubitschek's speech is used, as a means of better evoking the origins of the symphony and the circumstances that inspired its composition.

The construction of Brasília marked a new phase in the development of Brazil as an independent nation, and the symphonies named after the city by Guerra-Peixe and his colleagues are a powerful record of the complex web of beliefs and motivations that guided countless Brazilians in their quest to conquer the heart of Brazil.

Marshal Gaiosio Pinto

English translation: Susannah Howe

César Guerra-Peixe (1914–1993)

Sinfonias 1 e 2 ‘Brasília’ • Noneto

É difícil pensar em um compositor com duas obras tão distintas do mesmo gênero quanto César Guerra-Peixe e suas duas sinfonias. Em 1937, Guerra-Peixe era um jovem compositor, escrevendo em estilo neoclássico, com tintas nacionais; é quando chega ao Brasil o alemão Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, um dos muitos artistas europeus que imigraram para o continente americano fugindo da Segunda Guerra Mundial. No Brasil, Koellreutter funda e lidera o grupo *Música Viva*, que agregava jovens compositores como Claudio Santoro, Edino Krieger e o próprio Guerra-Peixe. Entre muitas discussões, Koellreutter apresenta ao grupo os princípios do dodecafonismo.

A relação de Guerra-Peixe com o dodecafonismo é intensa e efêmera, como uma paixão de juventude. Após seis anos de dedicação e entrega, o compositor rompe com os ideais do *Música Viva* e se atira nos braços de uma nova estética, o Nacionalismo. A *Sinfonia nº 1* e o *Noneto* são frutos desse envolvimento do compositor com o pensamento serialista e estão entre o que de melhor se produziu nessa corrente no Brasil.

Guerra-Peixe iniciou a composição de sua Sinfonia nº 1 em dezembro de 1945, finalizando-a em 14 de março de 1946. A estreia se deu nesse mesmo ano, pela Orquestra Sinfônica da BBC de Londres, sob a regência de Maurice Miles. A obra obteve boa aceitação na Europa: o regente alemão Hermann Scherchen foi um grande entusiasta da obra, regendo-a com a Tonhalle-Orchester, para a Rádio de Zurique, em 1948. Guerra-Peixe recordava que Scherchen lhe perguntou várias vezes quando ele escreveria sua *Segunda Sinfonia*, tamanho o interesse que a Primeira lhe havia despertado.

A *Sinfonia nº 1* para pequena orquestra é uma obra concisa, no que diz respeito tanto à sua duração, de cerca de 20 minutos, quanto às forças instrumentais empregadas. A orquestra, efetivamente pequena, inclui madeiras solistas, com um segundo clarinete, além de um trompete, tímpanos, piano e cordas. Nessa obra nota-se um importante traço estilístico do compositor, a economia na configuração instrumental, qualidade advinda provavelmente do seu trabalho com orquestras de rádio, cujas efetivos eram frequentemente limitados.

São três movimentos, obedecendo ao tradicional contraste de andamentos. A obra é inteiramente dodecafônica e há uma variedade na expressão dos aspectos lineares da série. O *Allegro* inicial é estruturado a partir de dois temas. O primeiro deles, por sua vez, é dividido em dois motivos, o primeiro apresentado pelo trompete e o segundo pelas cordas em uníssono, ambos construídos com a série na sua forma original. No segundo tema, tanto o caráter quanto o andamento são alterados, de certa forma renunciando o contraste mais efetivo a ser trazido pelo próximo movimento. Esse segundo tema utiliza a série retrógrada e é confiado ao violoncelo, em diálogo monofônico com os tímpanos. No segundo movimento, *Largo*, a série é expressa em sua forma invertida, e há uma busca por sonoridades mais introspectivas. A modificação tímbrica se dá pelo uso de instrumentos e recursos auxiliares, com o corne inglês e a celesta substituindo o oboé e o piano, e o trompete permanecendo com surdina por quase todo o movimento. O terceiro movimento é dividido em três seções, *Vivacissimo*, *Larghetto* e *Vivace*. A primeira seção é um tipo de scherzo construído a partir de um processo de derivação da série invertida. O *Larghetto* funciona como uma transição, em que elementos previamente apresentados são reconfigurados e através de um solo de tímpanos conduzem ao *Vivace* da última seção. De estilo quase fugato, essa seção volta a utilizar a série em sua expressão original, ainda que agora transposta. O retorno ao aspecto linear original da série fornece um elemento de coesão para a organização estrutural da obra.

A obra de câmara mais significativa do período dodecafônico de Guerra-Peixe é o *Noneto*, escrito em 1945, revisado em 1947 e estreado provavelmente nessa versão em 1948, na Rádio de Zurique, novamente sob a direção de Hermann Scherchen. A obra é dividida em três movimentos, *Allegro*, *Lento* e *Vivace*, e é instrumentada para flauta, clarineta, fagote, trompete, trombone, piano, violino, viola e violoncelo. Composta em um dodecafonismo mais austero que o da *Sinfonia nº 1*, o *Noneto* se encontra em um extremo do espectro estilístico do autor. Diferentemente da *Sinfonia*, sua escrita atemática é isenta de qualquer infiltração nacionalista. O próprio compositor declarou que “no *Noneto* cheguei ao ponto de não repetir nunca uma idéia melódica ou rítmica.”

O rompimento de Guerra-Peixe com o dodecafonismo não foi pacífico e discreto, mas ruidoso, quase litigioso, em meio a manifestos, cartas abertas, debates, acusações à antiga técnica e ao seu mestre, tudo avidamente coberto pelos jornais da época. A partir da década de 1950 e até o fim da vida, o compositor terá uma relação estável e duradoura com o Nacionalismo, que, entre muitos frutos, trará à luz a *Sinfonia nº 2*. Escrita mais de dez anos depois dos apelos de Scherchen e da guinada estilística do compositor, a sua criação foi motivada pela realização de um concurso de composição promovido pelo Ministério da Educação e Cultura do Brasil em 1960 para celebrar a construção de Brasília, nova capital do país. Foi oferecido um prêmio de 500 mil cruzeiros para a obra vencedora, montante muito expressivo para a época – a título de comparação, o valor correspondia ao que foi gasto na construção do “Catetinho”, residência provisória do Presidente da República em Brasília. O concurso previa a composição de uma sinfonia, de caráter nacional, para grande orquestra, com ou sem coro, com duração entre 30 e 45 minutos, e intitulada “Sinfonia Brasília”. O júri era formado pelos compositores Francisco Mignone e Camargo Guarnieri, bem como o maestro Lamberto Baldi, professor e mentor de Guarnieri na juventude. O resultado surpreendeu a todos por não conceder o 1º lugar a nenhum dos candidatos. A *Segunda Sinfonia* de Guerra-Peixe, a *Sétima* de Claudio Santoro e a *Terceira* de José Guerra Vicente foram declaradas empatadas em 2º lugar, não fazendo jus, portanto, a nenhuma parcela do vultoso prêmio em dinheiro. O resultado parece ter sido muito frustrante para Guerra-Peixe, que registrou no seu catálogo que a obra “foi desclassificada” e nunca mais escreveu outra sinfonia. Curiosamente, Guarnieri planejava a criação de sua própria *Sinfonia Brasília* desde pelo menos 1959, quando soube da realização do concurso. Ao ser nomeado membro do júri, ele ficou impedido de se inscrever na competição, mas não abandonou o projeto da nova obra. A escrita de sua *Sinfonia Brasília* – a sua Quarta – é iniciada antes do anúncio do resultado do concurso, em outubro de 1960, e concluída três anos depois.

A *Sinfonia* de Guerra-Peixe foi estreada em 12 de dezembro de 1963, no Teatro Municipal do Rio de Janeiro, com a Orquestra Sinfônica Nacional, sob a regência de Isaac Karabtchevsky, com o próprio Guerra-Peixe integrando o naipe dos primeiros violinos. Desde então, a obra tem sido bem avaliada pela crítica, recebendo importantes prêmios em 1963 e 1986. A *Sinfonia* é dividida em quatro movimentos, construídos a partir do seguinte programa:

I. *O candango em sua terra (Allegro ma non troppo)*

II. *Trabalho (Presto)*

III. *Elegia para o ausente (Andante)*

IV. *Manhã de domingo – Tarde infantil – Desce a noite – Volta ao trabalho – Inauguração da cidade – Apoteose (Allegro con moto)*

O coro, ao longo de toda a obra, tem sobretudo função tímbrica: os vocalises, onomatopeias e parlendas resultam em um material de tênue carga semântica, que contribui para o caráter programático da obra. O ponto crucial de todo o programa é a quinta parte do quarto movimento, *Inauguração da cidade*, onde o compositor prevê a participação de um narrador recitando trechos do discurso do Presidente Juscelino Kubitschek aos operários que construíram Brasília. A presente gravação recorre a uma liberdade poética, empregada em execuções da obra no Brasil, ao substituir a participação do narrador por um trecho do discurso do dia da inauguração de Brasília, na voz do próprio Presidente, como forma de melhor evocar o momento da composição da sinfonia e as circunstâncias que a inspiraram.

A construção de Brasília marca uma nova fase no desenvolvimento do país e as *Sinfonias Brasília*s, de Guerra-Peixe e de seus colegas, são um poderoso registro da complexa rede de crenças e motivações que guiaram inúmeros brasileiros na sua conquista do coração do Brasil.

Marshal Gaioso Pinto

10 Hoje é domingo
Pé de cachimbo
Galo mosteiro
Pisou na areia
A areia é fina
que deu no sino
O sino é de prata
que deu na barata
A barata é de ouro
que deu no besouro
O besouro é valente
que deu no tenente
O tenente é mofino
que deu no menino...

*[Traditional Brazilian parlenda (nursery rhyme);
no translatable meaning.]*

Trecho do discurso do Presidente Juscelino Kubitschek na inauguração de Brasília, em 21 de abril de 1960:

Excerpt from President Juscelino Kubitschek's speech at the inauguration of Brasília on 21 April 1960 [a national holiday in Brazil, commemorating the execution in 1792 of Tiradentes, leader of the so-called 'inconfidentes', a group who supported independence from Portugal]

A data de hoje tornou-se duplamente histórica para o Brasil, porque à gloriosa evocação do passado junta-se agora a epopeia da construção desta nova capital que acabamos de inaugurar. Saudamos assim, a um só tempo, o passado e o futuro de nossa pátria, através de dois acontecimentos que se ligam no ideal comum que os animaram: o de fazer o Brasil afirmar-se como nação independente. O sonho dos inconfidentes de 1789 tem nessa realização de 1960 a sua etapa derradeira, pois agora encontra o Brasil o seu verdadeiro destino e poderá caminhar mais solidamente para a completa emancipação.

As of today, this date has a dual historical importance for Brazil, because it now commemorates not only a glorious moment in our past but also the epic feat of the construction of our new capital city, whose inauguration we are here to celebrate. We thus pay tribute to both our nation's past and its future, through two events linked by the shared ideal that inspired them: that of Brazilian independence. The dream of the 'inconfidentes' that began in 1789 has culminated here in 1960 – Brazil has found its true destiny and will be able to move confidently towards complete emancipation.

This excerpt has been provided by Rádio Senado.

Goiânia Symphony Choir



Founded in October 1999, the Goiânia Symphony Choir is the result of the merger of two previously existing groups: the Municipal Choir and the Camerata Vocal de Goiânia. It is part of the Goiânia Symphony Orchestra, maintained by the city hall of the capital of Goiás. Comprising professional singers, its repertoire is broad, ranging from a cappella choral works to great choral-symphonic works, always seeking to value Brazilian choral literature alongside international repertoire. The mission of the Goiânia Symphony Choir is to spread and promote choral music in the capital of Goiás, performing in theatres, schools and churches, among other venues. Throughout its history, the choir has collaborated with several orchestras, and has been led by renowned conductors such as Isaac Karabtchevsky, Neil Thomson, Abel Rocha, Benoît Fromanger and Fabio Zanon, among others. In recent years, the choir's focus has turned to a cappella repertoire of the 20th and 21st centuries, as well as performances of sacred works from different eras alongside orchestras.

Goiás Youth Symphony Choir



The Goiás Youth Symphony Choir, founded in June 2014, is one of the senior student ensembles run by the Escola do Futuro de Goiás em Artes Basileu França, a performing arts school based in the city of Goiânia. With a current membership of 53 young singers and under the leadership of conductor and artistic director Weber Assis, the choir has become a beacon of music education in the state of Goiás. It is one of the leading groups in Brazil's Midwest region providing training for young singers and preparing them for professional careers. Many of its former members now sing with prestigious choirs both at home (including the Osesp Choir and the chorus of the Teatro Municipal, São Paulo) and abroad (in the United States, Canada and Germany). The choir undertook its first international tour in 2018, with appearances at venues across Switzerland. It has performed some of the most demanding works of the choral-orchestral repertoire under the baton of conductors such as Neil Thomson, Sofi Jeannin, Benoît Fromanger, Emílio de César and Isaac Karabtchevsky.

Neil Thomson



Photo: Rafaella Pessoa

Neil Thomson (b. 1966) studied conducting at the Royal College of Music with Norman Del Mar and at Tanglewood summer school with Leonard Bernstein. He has been principal conductor and artistic director of the Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra since 2014, leading the orchestra to national prominence with its championing of Brazilian and contemporary repertoire. He also enjoys a busy international career working with all the major UK orchestras and the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra, São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra (Osesp), WDR Rundfunkorchester, Lahti Symphony Orchestra and the Romanian National Orchestra, among others. He has performed with many distinguished soloists including Dame Felicity Lott, Sir Thomas Allen, Sir James Galway, Nelson Freire, Jean Louis Steuerman and Antonio Meneses. From 1992 to 2006 he was professor of conducting at the Royal College of Music, London, the youngest person ever to hold this position. He was made an Honorary Member of the RCM in recognition of his services to the institution.

www.neilwthomson.com

Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo: Rafaella Pessoa



Since its creation in 1980 by the conductor Braz de Pina Filho, the Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra has committed itself to the democratisation of classical music in the Brazilian state of Goiás by placing particular emphasis on Brazilian music in its programmes. In 2012, the orchestra underwent a major restructure that ushered in its most fruitful and creative period and led to the appointment in 2014 of Neil Thomson as Principal Conductor and Artistic Director. Under Thomson's leadership the orchestra rapidly grew from its standing as an ensemble of local importance to one of national importance. Now widely regarded as one of the top three orchestras in Brazil, the Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra is known for its energetic and dynamic playing style and innovative approach to programming. The orchestra has given the South American premieres of Messiaen's *Des canyons aux étoiles*, Boulez's *Rituel in memoriam Bruno Maderna* and Nono's *Como una ola de fuerza y luz*. It is also engaged in a ten-year project to film the complete Haydn symphonies, 'Haydn no Cerrado'.

Manufacturer: Naxos Rights (Europe) Ltd, North Suite, 3rd Floor, Forum House, 41-51 Brighton Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 6YS, UK. www.naxos.com

Contact: Naxos Deutschland Musik & Video Vertriebs-GmbH, Gruber Str. 46b, DE-85586 Poing, Germany. info@naxos.de

César Guerra-Peixe's compact *First Symphony* and the colourful *Nonet* date from his years as part of the Música Viva group – a collective of young composers influenced by Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, the German composer and teacher who brought serial techniques to Brazil. Guerra-Peixe's relationship with serial composition was intense and short-lived, but both of these earlier pieces were admired internationally and remain two of the finest works produced by this movement. From the 1950s onwards, Guerra-Peixe turned to musical nationalism with many successes including his award-winning and eloquently programmatic *Second Symphony*.



César
GUERRA-PEIXE
(1914–1993)



Symphony No. 1
(1945–46)*

19:04

- 1 I. Allegro
- 2 II. Largo
- 3 III. Vivacissimo

7:33

4:35

6:44

Nonet (1945)*

11:36

- 4 I. Allegro
- 5 II. Lento
- 6 III. Vivace

4:19

3:10

3:55

*WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

Symphony No. 2 'Brasília'
(1960)

41:50

- 7 I. Allegro ma non troppo: O candango em sua terra – Tempo I: A caminho do Planalto – Moderato: Recordações que o acompanham – Chegada alegre 15:15
- 8 II. Presto: Trabalho 6:27
- 9 III. Andante: Elegia para o ausente 6:52
- 10 IV. Allegro con moto: Manhã de domingo – Allegretto: Tarde infantil – Andante: Desce a noite – Presto: Volta ao trabalho – Moderato: Inauguração da cidade – Allegro ma non troppo: Apoteose 12:53

Goiânia Symphony Choir 7 8 10 • Goiás Youth Symphony Choir 7 8 10

Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra

Neil Thomson

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

Recorded: 25–27 November 2017 at Centro Cultural Oscar Niemeyer, Goiânia, Brazil

Producer, engineer and editor: Ulrich Schneider • Booklet notes: Marshal Gaioso Pinto

Publisher: The estate of César Guerra-Peixe • The Goiás Philharmonic Orchestra is a body of the Goiás State Government, under the Department for Development and Innovation.

Cover: *Sol nascente* by Pablo Borges (b. 1994)

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