



South American Composers
Online and In Person Concert
Sunday, March 21, 2021, 3:00 p.m., Beethoven Club
Kelly Herrmann, flute
Benjamin Minden-Birkenmaier, guitar
Amy Burcham, narrator

Introduction to the Choro Tradition

www.beethovenclubmemphis.org/choro.html

Amy Burcham

Cochichando (“Whispering”) (1919)

Pixinguinha
(1897-1973)

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5, Cantilena (1938)

Heitor Villa-Lobos
(1887-1959)

Suite Buenos Aires (1995)

Máximo Diego Pujol
(b. 1957)

- I. Pompeya
- II. Palermo
- III. San Telmo
- IV. Microcentro

Vals No. 3, Op. 8 (1919)

Augustin Barrios
(1885-1944)

Sonatina Tropical (1998)

Jose Lezcano
(b. 1960)

- I. En Clave de son
- II. Cancion de Madrugada
- III. Samba-Finale

Composer Biographies

Alfredo da Rocha Viana, Jr., better known as Pixinguinha (1897 – 1973) is considered one of the greatest Brazilian composers of popular music. Pixinguinha was a composer, arranger, flautist, and saxophonist born in Rio de Janeiro. He introduced choro to a new audience and helped to popularize it as a uniquely Brazilian genre. Compared to the older chorões of the late 19th century from which he drew inspiration, Pixinguinha's compositions were more sophisticated in their use of harmony, rhythm and counterpoint, incorporating intricate melodic lines, fanfares, contrapuntal bass lines, and highly syncopated rhythms. Pixinguinha was one of the first band leaders to regularly include afro-Brazilian percussion instruments, such as the pandeiro and afoxé, that have now become standard in choro and samba music. His birthday is a national holiday in Brazil.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) was a Brazilian composer, conductor, cellist, and classical guitarist described as "the single most significant creative figure in 20th-century Brazilian art music". Villa-Lobos has become the best-known South American composer of all time. A prolific composer, he wrote numerous orchestral, chamber, instrumental and vocal works, totaling over 2000 works by his death in 1959. His music was influenced by both Brazilian folk music and by stylistic elements from the European classical tradition, as exemplified by his *Bachianas Brasileiras* (Brazilian Bachian-pieces) and his *Chôros*. His *Etudes* for classical guitar (1929) were dedicated to Andrés Segovia, while his 5 *Preludes* (1940) were dedicated to his spouse Arminda Neves d'Almeida, a.k.a. "Mindinha." Both are important works in the classical guitar repertory.

Máximo Diego Pujol (b. 1957) He was born in Buenos Aires and graduated from the Juan José Castro Provincial Conservatory. Pujol undertook his instrumental studies with Gaspar Navarro, Alfredo Vincente, Gascón and Horacio Ceballos, Abel Carlevaro, Liliana Ardissonne and Miguel Angel Girollet. He also studied harmony and composition under the guidance of Leónidas Arnedo and participated in master classes and seminars directed by Antonio de Raco, Abel Carlevaro, and Leo Brouwer. Pujol has been awarded numerous prizes in Argentina and international competitions. In 1989 he was awarded the Argentine Composers' Union prize as 'Best Composer of Classical Music'. His compositions reflect the influence of Ástor Piazzolla and similarly use the tango as a basic style.

Augustin Barrios (1885-1944) was a Paraguayan classical guitarist and composer who dedicated his life to music and writing poems. He composed more than 300 songs for which he would first write the lyrics and then the guitar accompaniment. Barrios was famed for his phenomenal performances, both live and on gramophone recordings. His works were largely late-Romantic in

are also adaptations of, or are influenced by, South American and Central American folk music. Very many of them are of a virtuosic nature. Barrios is still revered in Paraguay to this day, where he is seen as one of the greatest musicians of all time by many. John Williams has said of Barrios: "As a guitarist/composer, Barrios is the best of the lot, regardless of era. His music is better formed, it's more poetic, it's more everything! And it's more of all those things in a timeless way."

José Manuel Lezcano is a Cuban composer now Professor of Music at Keene State College, where he teaches guitar, directs the Guitar Orchestra and Latin Ensemble. He was twice nominated and a semifinalist for a Grammy for his work on the compact disk, "Remembrances/Recuerdos," in 2007 in two categories. A later release, "Crosscurrents," recorded on the North/South label, and featuring "Tango Overture" for string orchestra, was described as "a dance in a dream that sweeps away restrictions and sweeps away the dreamer." Selected two times as the New Hampshire Educators' Commissioned Composer, Lezcano is also a Fulbright scholar as well as the recipient of the KSC Distinguished Research Award. Lezcano earned degrees from Peabody Conservatory (BM), the University of South Carolina (MM) and Florida State University, where he received a terminal degree in music theory. Most recently, he received a 2016 Ewing Arts Award from the Keene Sentinel, in recognition of his distinguished career and contributions to the arts in the Monadnock region of New Hampshire.

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