

**ASPECTS OF INTERPRETATION AND IMPROVISATION
IN THE PERFORMANCE OF BRAZILIAN GUITAR MUSIC**

by

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Included with this submission:

- CD 1 – Audio Recording of Recital 1
- DVD 1 – Video recording of Recital 1
- CD 2 - Audio recording of Recital 2
- CD 3 – Comparative Examples and Audio Extracts

ABSTRACT

This research into Brazilian music in general, and *choro* guitar music in particular, focuses primarily on the various and contrasting ways in which the repertoire is interpreted by Brazilian *choro* musicians, classical guitarists and jazz guitarists. Socio-cultural traditions and conventions are also explored. An important facet of performance in the Brazilian tradition is improvisation. The appropriateness of various improvisational approaches, including those used in jazz, are discussed.

The research incorporates two 60-minute recitals, one of traditional Brazilian *choro* and the other of different Brazilian styles played in a jazz group setting, and these are central to the following exegesis.

STATEMENT

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I hereby give permission for these materials to be archived in the Barr Smith Library and the Elder Music Library, and give permission for the copying of the exegesis and the scores, subject to the usual copyright restrictions. The accompanying CDs and DVD may not be copied and must be listened to in Special Collections only.

Copies of audio and audiovisual recordings may be sought directly from the principal performer and author of the exegesis.

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1. Introduction

Issues and Perspectives

The widespread popularity of the guitar in Brazil has seen it exert a profound influence on the evolution of Brazilian popular music, albeit one that is not fully appreciated outside the country. Most Brazilian music familiar to people outside Brazil comes from two eras. The first is the so-called golden age of *samba* (and Latin American music in general) of the 1930s and 1940s, which produced musicians such as Carmen Miranda (1909-55) and Ary Barroso (1903-64). Subsequent to this is the *bossa nova* period of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Some Brazilian guitar music has also found its way into the western classical guitar repertoire, in particular in compositions by Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) and João Teixeira de Guimarães (1883-1947). There are, however, numerous lesser-known styles of music in Brazil that are yet to enjoy wider recognition.

Choro, which developed in Rio de Janeiro in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, can be regarded as a precursor to *samba*, rather like ragtime is to jazz. It is, however, a music that is continually evolving, and contemporary *choro* contains elements of *samba* and even jazz which have been absorbed over the last century. The purpose of this study, then, is to identify those practices which have been drawn from *choro* in its traditional context, and those which are more eclectic in origin. It does so by pursuing two principle areas of research. First, to survey and absorb performance practices and interpretation of Brazilian guitar styles, with particular emphasis on Brazilian *choro* music. Secondly, to apply those insights in the contemporary jazz group setting, which necessitates the consideration of elements such as instrumentation, harmony, improvisation and choice of repertoire.

It is argued here, in words and music, that the synthesis of these research foci constitutes an original contribution to our understanding of the Brazilian musical diaspora, whether practiced by Brazilian musicians in Brazil or elsewhere, or internationally by non-Brazilians. Locally, my professional and informal performances of *choro* music, in particular, have introduced the genre to Adelaide musicians and audiences, with the result that it has become increasingly well known. In keeping with a performance research degree, the present exegesis focuses on the two recital performances which demonstrate the extent to which the two research thrusts identified above have been assimilated in the contemporary performance context.

Of the two recitals themselves, the first features a *choro* repertoire, representative of a cross section of composers, styles and eras that demonstrates the rich diversity and nuances of the genre. The second recital consists of repertoire that covers a broad spectrum of Brazilian musical styles, and which lends itself to a performance in keeping with jazz performance practice. The group in this recital, consisting of jazz guitar, acoustic bass, percussion, woodwind and vocal, is a typical mainstream jazz line-up.

Each recital presented technical and interpretive challenges. These include becoming conversant with the Brazilian guitar styles that inform the *choro* style (for example *samba*, *baião*, *xaxado*, *bossa nova*). Once understood, the challenge was to master the traditional, conventional and contemporary performance practices underpinning the genre. The final challenge was to synthesise these with my extensive jazz experience in a way that delivers a successful, musically valid and engaging performance.

Broadly speaking, Brazilian guitar technique employs similar techniques to classical guitar, most obviously the use of right-hand fingering techniques. These techniques are vastly different from the standard jazz guitar approaches that I employ as a jazz guitarist, and mastering them was a new undertaking. It was clear from the outset of my research into the *choro* guitar repertoire that a regular regime of classical guitar practice involving everything from right-hand fingernail maintenance to scale practice, technique and repertoire were necessary to achieve my goals. This study of aspects of classical guitar technique was undertaken under the guidance of Australia's pre-eminent exponent of Brazilian guitar, Doug de Vries, who was also my principal adviser on repertoire and technique in general.

2. *Choro* in its historical and stylistic contexts

2.1 A background to Brazilian popular music and the development of *choro*

For five centuries Portuguese, African and indigenous rhythms, dances, harmonies and instruments have merged in Brazil, altering old styles and creating new forms of music.¹ The development of Brazilian popular music, and subsequently *choro*, was shaped by two predominant popular styles of the late 18th and early 19th centuries: the *modinha* and the *lundu* – the former from Europe, the latter from Africa. A lyrical, sentimental song, the *modinha* developed in Brazil during the 18th century from Portuguese roots, and was distinguished by the use of guitar, rather than piano, accompaniment. The Brazilian style of *modinha* was taken to Portugal in the late 1700s where it became popular in the Royal court and in Lisbon society in the form of *modinha de salão*, a more rigid form than its Brazilian contemporary.² The *modinha* of the upper class salon was usually associated with the piano, while the *modinha* of the ‘street’ was played by flute, guitar, and *cavaquinho* (a steel strung *ukelele*).

The *lundu*, on the other hand, was originally a dance brought by Bantu slaves from Angola to Brazil. The dance was originally thought by polite society to be rather too lascivious, although, as a musical form, the *lundu* eventually gained popularity among the white middle and upper classes. As with the *modinha*, the *lundu* of the salon was associated with the piano, while the ‘street’ version was performed by guitar and flute. Unlike the *modinha*, however, the *lundu* had strong African rhythmic elements, and in its dance form, was accompanied by percussion and drums in a similar way to *samba*. *Choro*, specifically, is a music that is intrinsic to Rio de Janeiro and developed as a result of the particular geographic, cultural and social circumstances of that city.

Brazilian popular music in the mid to late 19th century is linked to the artistic and cultural life that evolved in Rio de Janeiro during the Portuguese colonial era.³ European fashions and art filtered into the local culture, and under the patronage of King João, and his successor, Dom Pedro, artistic and musical life in Rio de Janeiro flourished.

¹ Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha, *The Brazilian Sound: Samba, Bossa Nova and the Popular Music of Brazil* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), p.19.

² Tamara Livingston-Isenhour and Thomas Garcia, *Choro: A social history of a Brazilian popular music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), p.23.

³ Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, pp.17-38.

Many European fashions were adopted in Brazil during this time, and popular European dances of the day, such as the waltz and the *polca*, were easily transplanted and readily taken up. The *polca* in particular became very popular in ‘café’ society in Rio. The adoption of the *polca* into Brazilian ‘street’ society saw musicians incorporate Afro-Brazilian rhythms that supported the movements of dancers. This stylistic fusion by local musicians of European *polca* and elements of African dance and music led to the development of new musical forms such as *polca-lundu*, the *maxixe* and eventually *choro*. The *maxixe* was a style of playing dance forms like *polca*.⁴ It is typically associated with a rondo form (ABACA), fast 16th note melodies in 2/4 time and with a syncopated accompaniment that retained the rhythmic fingerprint of the *lundu* (Figure 1). This fingerprint came later to characterize *choro* in particular, and Brazilian popular music in general.



Figure 1: The *lundu* rhythm

African instrumental and rhythmic sensibilities indeed played an important role in the development of Brazilian popular music, particularly after slavery was abolished in 1888. This in turn saw the incorporation of African percussion instruments, such as the *pandeiro* (tamborine), the *tamborim* (a small tamborine played with a stick), the *agogo* (double bells hit with a stick), the *cuica* (friction drum) and shakers, into the European styles fashionable at the time.

The *modinha*, *lundu* and *maxixe* all influenced the development of *choro*, which began to acquire its characteristic features by the 1880s. According to Alexandre Pinto (author of the book ‘*O Choro*’), the term ‘*choro*’ first referred merely to ‘a particularly Brazilian manner of interpreting *polcas*, *mazurkas*, waltzes and other styles. At this stage it did not yet exist as an authentic musical genre’.⁵ The *bandolim* player, Jacob do Bandolim, is more assertive; ‘we

⁴ At the height of its popularity the *maxixe* caused much moral outrage amongst respectable society in Rio de Janeiro and was deemed a vulgar dance associated with the lascivious behaviour of the lower classes. Despite these attitudes the *maxixe* remained popular and was gradually adopted by the middle and upper classes through stylized, less outrageous forms. The term *maxixe* was avoided in these circles, and many *maxixe* compositions were labeled ‘*tango brasileiro*’ to distance them from any lower class association. Respected composers such as Ernesto Nazaré popularized the *maxixe* in respectable society, and his works, often labeled *tango*, were commonly heard in the music theatres of Rio de Janeiro.

⁵ Alexandre G Pinto, *O Choro* (Funarte: MEC, 1978), p.34.

need to make clear that in (*sic*) that time, there wasn't *choro*; there was *choro* music. A polca was *choro*, Brazilian tango was *choro*, everything was *choro*'.⁶

Choro began to consolidate as a genre in the compositions of the established pianists Ernesto Nazaré (1863-1934) and Chiquinha Gonzaga (1847-1935), among others. However, it was not until the arrival on the scene of Alfredo da Rocha Vianna Júnior (1897-1973), known as Pixinguinha, that *choro* was truly consolidated as a musical form. His exquisite use of modulations, and the virtuosity of his improvised counterpoint led many people to claim that Pixinguinha was the Bach of *choro*.⁷ A flautist of extraordinary virtuosity, he was able to improvise for hours without stopping and his many wonderful compositions contribute greatly to the *choro* canon.

2.2 Characteristics of *choro*

Choro is essentially an acoustic music. A typical group might consist of 6 and 7-stringed guitars, *cavaquinho*, *bandolim* (Brazilian mandolin), *pandeiro* (similar to a tambourine) and a 'front line' of flute and/or clarinet. There may be variations on this format; for example, percussion (*tamborim*), saxophone or trombone may be added. *Choro* is in duple meter (2/4), and features a semiquaver melodic line that is often quite syncopated.

Choro form usually reflects one of the various kinds of rondo form that came to Brazil through traditional European music, and this is mostly represented in three parts: A, B, and C. The form will usually return to section A between each part, resulting in the form A-B-A-C-A (or sometimes AA-BB-A-CC-A or similar variations). In *choro*, any of these sections may be repeated and, indeed, improvised upon. Generally there is a distinct key for each one of the sections and, depending on whether the key is major or minor, the parts vary as follows:

Major key

Part A: tonic major (I), part B; relative minor (VI), part C; sub-dominant (IV).

Minor key

Part A: tonic minor (i), part B; relative major (III), C; tonic major (I).

⁶ Pedro Ramos, 'From Pixinguinha to Jacob do Bandolim: Choro in two decades of evolution (1930-1950)' << www.choroensemble.com >> Date accessed 24/8/06.

⁷ Bruce Gilman, 'Choro, chorinho, chorão', *Brazzil Magazine* << www.brazzil.com >> Date accessed 12/11/06.

The point to be emphasised here is that *choro* compositions often have an amazing richness that is reflected in surprising modulations that always come back to the starting key. Harmonic movement, via modulation and through unexpected chord inversions, is common.

2.3 Performance practice within the *choro* guitar repertoire

Choro owes its existence to the collaboration between musicians and composers who were conservatory-educated and those musicians who were educated on the streets. In Brazil during the 19th century, popular genres such as the *modinha* and the *lundu* existed both as ‘salon’ music for voice and piano, and as ‘street’ music that used guitars, flute and *cavaquinho*. In fact *choro* was, to a degree, able to straddle the divide between art (salon) music and popular (street) music, and often the distinction between the two rested on the choice of instrumentation and the context in which it was being performed.⁸ While *choro* existed across the social range, a divide between upper and lower class sensibilities, with regard to popular music in Brazil, prevailed until the 1930s.

From a cultural standpoint, the historical development of *choro*, and in particular the emergence of the guitar in the genre, is worth noting. Prior to the 1930s the guitar was looked down upon by the elite classes, and seen as a representation of low culture due to its association with ‘street’ music. The disdain for lower class culture by the upper class elite in Brazil during the 19th and early 20th century was due in part to racist attitudes and prejudice against blacks and poor immigrants. The upper classes endeavoured to maintain their status by rejecting popular culture and looked instead to France, in particular, as a cultural model. On one level, Brazilian society was somewhat divided, but even with this social divide there existed a high degree of exchange between popular culture and high culture. *Choro* groups performed in a variety of social contexts and styles that enabled a cross-fertilization of musical ideas that is, indeed, reflected in *choro* compositions.

On a musical level, artists and intellectuals expressed the desire for the realization of a distinctly Brazilian culture that was not dependent on Europe. This gave rise to the gradual acceptance by Brazilian society of popular culture that helped give *choro* a new status, along with *samba*, as the country’s national music.⁹

⁸ Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, pp.17-38.

⁹ Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, pp. 37-38.

Another significant factor contributing to the rise of popular music in Brazil was the political climate of the 1930s. The dictatorial leader, Getulio Vargas (who governed from 1937-45), presided over a period of repression, censorship and a reduction of civil liberties similar to that of fascist regimes in Europe at the time. Vargas used the power of radio as a tool in his efforts to glorify the nation and garner support for his nationalist projects. The radio program *Hora do Brasil* (The Brazil Hour), which radio stations across the country were obliged to broadcast, featured propaganda and news interspersed with Brazilian popular music; mainly *choro* and *samba*. This gave rise to a greater awareness of Brazilian popular music, and, in association with the rise in nationalistic sentiment, helped *choro* and *samba* attain a degree of respectability within the broader community.¹⁰ In this context the guitar itself assumed a more recognized place in the popular music of Brazil. This is particularly the case with *choro*, *samba* and later *bossa nova* of the late 1950s and early 1960s. What follows, then, is a case study which contrasts, what the literature commonly terms, ‘erudite’ (meaning ‘high-brow’) and ‘popular’ approaches to the performance of *choro*.

¹⁰ Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, pp. 99-100.

3. A comparison of two recorded performances of *Choro #1* (for solo guitar) by Heitor Villa-Lobos

The contrast between ‘high brow’ and ‘popular’ approaches to *choro* is evident in a comparison of performances recorded by the classical guitarist Gerald Garcia (1949-)¹¹ and the Australian guitarists, Doug de Vries (1959-) and Slava Grigorian (1976-).¹² Understanding the dynamics of these two approaches was integral to the structure and interpretations pursued in the performance recordings included in the current study.

Choro #1 (1920) is the first in a series of seventeen *choros* written by Villa-Lobos for a variety of instruments and classical ensembles. These were composed in a deliberate attempt to represent Brazilian popular music in a stylized European classical setting. In *Choro #1* he tried to portray the atmosphere of the popular musicians of Rio de Janeiro in a strongly syncopated piece for solo guitar.¹³

As Villa-Lobos himself says:

Being the *Choros* composed according to a special technical form, based on the sonorous manifestations of the habits and lifestyle of Brazilian natives, and on the psychological impressions brought about by certain extremely striking and original popular characters, the *Choros* no. 1 was intentionally written, as if it had been an instinctive production of the naive imagination of these popular musical characters, to serve as a simple starting point to be enlarged later in form, in technique, in structure, and in psychological cases, which contain all these styles of music. The main theme, the harmonies and modulations, although pure creation, are molded in rhythms and melodic fragments of the popular singers, popular guitarists such as Satiro Bilhar, and pianists such as Ernesto Nazareth, among others.¹⁴

The performance by Garcia, like other classical renditions, adheres closely to the written score (Figure 2) and is played very much in the classical tradition (CD 3, track 1).

Classical guitarists tend to emphasise the melody (for example, the fermata over the anacrusis in bars 1 and 17 in Figure 2) at the expense of the rhythmic integrity of *choro*. During the course of the current author’s analyses of performances of *Choro #1* by a number of classical guitarists, it has become apparent that their interpretations – although valid in their own right

¹¹ Gerald Garcia, *Brazilian Portrait*. CD (Naxos 8.550226, 1993).

¹² Doug De Vries, *Lantana Lovers*. CD (Editions DdV 603, 2004).

¹³ Eduardo Meirinhos, *Primary sources and editions of popular Suite brésilienne, Choros # 1, and Five preludes, by Heitor Villa-Lobos: A comparative survey of differences* (Miami: University of Florida, 1997), p.17.

¹⁴ Heitor Villa-Lobos, cited in Meirinhos, p.17.

– have distanced themselves from the rhythmical aspects of the traditional *choro*. The classical performances are all very similar, and tend to adhere to a narrow set of conventions with regard to interpretation. In sum, conventional classical interpretation favours melody at the expense of rhythm and tends to over-emphasise the perceived melodic shape of individual phrases, at the expense of a holistic rhythmic approach that might, for example, accompany a dance. With such little variation in this classical interpretation, Villa-Lobos' *Choro #1* has, in a sense, become 'frozen in time'.

Brazilian *choro* performance practice, on the other hand, is governed by a set of broader cultural conventions, which centre on group interaction, dance and spontaneity. These aspects of performance practice, combined with vision and technique, enable musicians to construct a performance that is a uniquely personal interpretation of a composer's original composition. The performing *choro* musician is almost bound by these conventions to incorporate originality, and improvisation therefore plays a key role. In Brazilian popular music, particularly that associated with dance, there is great freedom of interpretation. In respect of music scores, what is written is not always what is played. In other words, Villa-Lobos' intentions, as expressed in his score, reflect just one possible way of playing this piece. Practitioners of the Brazilian popular music tradition will inevitably depart from the composer's intent.¹⁵ This is evident in the recording by de Vries and Grigorian (CD 3, track 2), which differs significantly from that of Garcia.

¹⁵ A further illustration of this can be heard in the way Henrique Cazes' *choro* group plays *Choro # 1* (refer CD 3, track 3) <<beemp3.com>> Date accessed 8/9/2006.



In the latter recording the first obvious departure from the Villa-Lobos solo arrangement is the fact that it has been rearranged for duo. In this instance Grigorian is essentially playing the scored Villa-Lobos part and de Vries is playing a bass line accompaniment (known as a *baixaria*) on the 7-string guitar (Figure 3). De Vries has said that in this performance he and Grigorian were aiming to recreate the sound and feel of a traditional *choro* ‘group’, and to give a sense of the origins of the music and social environment from whence the piece is derived.¹⁷ Their version is more stylistically consistent with Brazilian performance practice because the *baixaria* played by the 7-string guitar is an intrinsic and integral part of traditional *choro* music. It helps provide a rhythmic impetus, not present in the Garcia solo performance, and implies the pulse that is present in Brazilian *choro*, usually provided by a *pandeiro*.

¹⁷ Private communication with the current author (10/10/06).

Choro #1

Villa-Lobos
7-string part by D.de Vries

7- String Guitar

A §

Gtr.

1.

Gtr.

2.

Gtr.

B

Fine

Gtr.

1.

Gtr.

2.

rall.

Figure 3: A transcription of the 7-string guitar part for *Choro #1* (A and B sections) as played by Doug de Vries¹⁸

¹⁸ Unpublished transcription by Doug de Vries. Used by permission.

The intention here is not to assert that one style of performance is superior to the other. Rather, while both are of a high artistic quality what really distinguishes them is the intangible quality of ‘Brazilian swing’, known as ‘*ginga*’ (pronounced ‘*zjinga*’), evident in the duo performance. This quality, often referred to as ‘feel’ or ‘groove’ in other genres, is similar to the concept of ‘swing’ in jazz. This aspect of *choro*, jazz (and other popular genres) cannot be notated accurately, and can only be interpreted through aural experience and understanding.

Recognition of the distinction between ‘high brow’ and ‘popular’ approaches to the performance of the *choro* and other Brazilian popular musics lay at the heart of the recital performances featured in this study. What follows is a commentary on the recitals, and the rationale behind them.

4 The Recitals

4.1 Overview

The two recitals were designed to present contrasting performances which display the outcomes of my primary research. The main aims of this research were to obtain a more complete understanding of traditional *choro* in its various settings, and to interpret Brazilian music in a jazz setting, reflecting the two main areas of my professional interest.

As was confirmed in Chapter Two, the stylistic influences on *choro* guitar over the history of the genre are considerable and diverse. Apart from early popular Brazilian musical forms, styles such as classical, flamenco and even jazz have had a significant influence on *choro* music. Brazilian guitar music more generally has, in turn, influenced the development during the twentieth century of both classical guitar and, to a lesser extent, jazz guitar. Exploitation of the three-cornered nexus of Brazilian guitar, classical guitar and jazz guitar forms the basis of my performances. The arrangements for the pieces in the recital repertoire are based on scores and ‘lead sheets’ (a notated melody underset with chord symbols) that come mostly from a variety of publications that I procured on a trip to Brazil in 2005. However recorded versions of the pieces, as well as experience of live performances by Brazilian musicians, are the main points of reference for the actual performances.

With regard to the recital performances themselves, a great deal of accompaniment was required on my part, and this role demanded much attention. Generally speaking, the solo pieces in the first recital are the pieces in which contrasts between Brazilian and classical guitar practice can be appreciated. The other pieces in the first recital are all traditional *choros*, which called for accompaniments that were sensitive to traditional performance practices such as one finds in Brazil itself. The second recital, in which I played a jazz guitar, featured sounds, harmony, structure and improvisational elements akin to jazz performance practice. Here the rationale was to marry the more traditional approach taken in the first recital with a contemporary approach to jazz, which has been forged over many years as a jazz performer.

There exists in jazz and Brazilian music a certain freedom with regard to rhythmical phrasing. In Brazilian music this freedom of phrasing is governed, however, by the *clave* rhythm (Figure 4) that is implicit in all Brazilian music, from *choro* and *samba*, to *bossa nova* and

Irrespective of the style being performed, a similar rhythmic interrelationship between melody and accompaniment infuses the bulk of the pieces played in the two recitals, selected details of which follow.

4.2 First Recital (CD 1)²⁰

The recital begins with the solo pieces and finishes with the complex guitar trio piece *Baião de Gude*. This varied repertoire required the use of 7-string guitar as well as the traditional 6-string instrument. The 7-string guitar, while commonly used by contemporary Brazilian guitarists in solo situations, was in my case used only in its traditional accompanying role. The performance displays four distinct guitar roles used in *choro* and its related styles. These four differing guitar settings in the first recital - solo, duo, trio and group - each had its own unique set of technical and interpretive challenges. *Choro* guitar is a multi-faceted genre that does not have a simple overriding premise or singular technique, and there are as many approaches and styles as there are practitioners.

4.2.1 Solo

The solo performances demanded great attention to overall interpretation, tone production, balance between the melody and accompaniment as well as rhythmical intensity. These were integral in producing a performance that maintained integrity to the ‘Brazilian’ style.

The four solo guitar pieces (CD 1, tracks 1, 2, 3 and 4) required the establishment of strong sound and rhythm from the outset. My persistent practice routine for these pieces gave good technical foundation that aimed to overcome any performance pressure that might occur. The arrangements of all three solo pieces were set. Curiously, I discovered, after becoming very familiar with the pieces, that the rigidity of the arrangement allowed me to concentrate on the subtleties of rhythm, musical dynamics and overall shape of the pieces, and that I had an amount of freedom to be spontaneous in these respects. Rather than rigidity of arrangement leading to a rigid performance, it has allowed some spontaneity to become incorporated into an evolving arrangement and performance of a piece.

²⁰ Owing to the fact that the first recital features some guitar duets, a DVD is also included (see Appendix A) so that the reader/examiner can distinguish the candidate’s performance from that of his duet partner.

The question of how to approach any given piece is best dealt with through a thorough knowledge of recordings of the well-known Brazilian guitarists. The practical role and use of the instrument, in both historical and contemporary contexts, is determined by performance practices that have developed over the last century. *Choro*, like jazz, is a genre that is, to a large degree, built on a standard repertoire that has evolved over time. Compositions by musicians such as Nazareth, Pixinguinha, Garoto (1915-55), and others, form the principal repertoire of *choro* and performing *choro* musicians must know a great deal of the standard repertoire by memory (much like jazz musicians are expected to know with the standard jazz repertoire). The informal nature of performance has facilitated transference of certain stylistic characteristics and performance techniques between musicians. These have, over time, become accepted practice. In recent years a reasonable abundance of musical scores has become available, mostly from Brazilian publications, and these serve as a great resource. However, as was shown in the case of *Choro #1*, what is written is not always what is played, and once again the reference to recordings was essential.

The first piece, *Choro Triste* (CD 1, track 2), by the Brazilian guitarist and composer Garoto, is played virtually as notated by the noted Brazilian guitarist, Paulo Bellinati (1950-), in his transcription of Garoto's early recording (Figure 6).²¹ The virtuoso guitarist Annibal Augusto Sardinha, known as 'Garoto' ('The Kid'), began his career in the early 1930s, recording and performing with the top Brazilian performers of the day, before spending some time in the USA, where he became aware of jazz music. Garoto, for his part, was the first guitarist to introduce sophisticated harmonies and progressions, similar to those found in jazz, in his many *choro*, *samba* and waltz compositions.

²¹ Paulo Bellinati, *The Guitar Works Of Garoto*, Volume 2 (San Francisco: GSP, 1995).

Choro Triste, written for solo guitar, is an example of a *choro* that might sit comfortably in either a classical or Brazilian setting. The solo rendition of *Choro Triste* presented in the first recital utilized some techniques that are similar to those found in classical guitar practice, such as the slight *rallentando* at bar 9, but in this performance I was careful to maintain a rhythmic continuity that reflects the *lundu* rhythm and which helps to give the performance a feeling of ‘Brazilian-ness’, or the aforementioned *ginga*. This rhythmic characteristic, implied in *Choro Triste*, becomes even more apparent and with the addition of *pandeiro* in the fourth piece, *Interrogando* (CD 1, track 4). *Choro Triste*, however, may be also be performed in many different ways with a variety of instrumentation, and like many *choros*, interpreted from a ‘lead sheet’ such as those prevalent in jazz (Figure 7 – refer also to CD 3, track 4. This is a recording of an informal performance of *Choro Triste* by the author and flautist Andy Bevan).

Tristezas de um violão

Garoto

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Figure 7: *Choro Triste (Tristeza de um Violão)* lead sheet ²³

²³ Irmãos Vitale (comp.). *O Melhor do Choro Brasileiro*, Volume 3 (São Paulo: Irmãos Vitale, 2002).

Interpretation is linked intimately with performance context, and variations on written arrangements, style and instrumentation may be many or few. In my solo performance of *Jorge do fusa* (CD 1, track 3) the Bellinati score (Figure 8) is basically adhered to, but with quite a few variations adapted from an interpretation of the same piece by the pre-eminent Brazilian guitarist, Raphael Rabello (1962-95).²⁴ These include, for example, chord alterations such as the A9 in bar 3 (played as an A7b5), subtle variations in chord voicing (the Dmaj9 in the first time bar is played as a D6/9 over F#), the use of scale and arpeggio lines instead of chords and even a slightly different chord progression than the original (See Bar 33, 1st time bar and bars 23 and 24 in the repeat of the **B** section in Figure 8). These types of variation of a piece are common in *choro* performance practice, and reinterpretation, even spontaneous, by a performer is welcomed.

²⁴ Raphael Rabello, *Lamentos do Morro*. CD (Acari B000BGFN9G, 2005).

Jorge do Fusa

(chôro)

Transcribed by
Paulo Bellinati

GAROTO
(Annibal Augusto Sardinha)

$\text{♩} = 60$

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GSP-61

Figure 8: *Jorge do Fusa* (A section)²⁵

²⁵ Bellinati, *The Guitar Works Of Garoto*, Volume 2.

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in 8/8 time, featuring a variety of rhythmic patterns and articulations. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into several systems, with measure numbers 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40 clearly marked. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and triplet markings. Above the staff, there are tempo or mood markings: $\phi 6$ (first system), $\phi 10$ (third system), and $\phi 6$ (fourth system). A repeat sign with first and second endings is present between measures 30 and 35. The section concludes with a Coda section starting at measure 35, marked with a Coda symbol and the word "Coda". The final measure is marked "Fine" and includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking.

Figure 8 (cont'd): *Jorge do Fusa* (B section)

The Bellinati transcriptions of Garoto come from a single set of recordings of Garoto, which serves as a ‘snapshot in time’. These transcriptions, since their publication in 1995, have been a reference point for many guitarists.²⁶ As with classical scores, however, there is a risk that this tends to be the only way in which the piece is subsequently performed and, as suggested previously, the piece may become ‘frozen in time’. Brazilian guitarists, very much like their jazz counterparts will arrange or re-arrange a piece (sometimes significantly) to their own taste. I have followed that practice.

I played the solo pieces with my own musical interpretation, and use of subtle changes in tempo and dynamics, to enable the piece to be brought to life in a way that reflects the romanticism, intimacy and rhythmic sensuality of Brazilian guitar music.

4.2.2 Duo

The duets performed with Alain Valodze in the first recital represent part of a *choro* repertoire that has been established by us over the past few years in a professional capacity. The five duets are all different in many respects, and each presented its own unique technical and stylistic challenges. The pieces; *Grauna*, *Uma Valsa e dois Amores*, *Odeon* and *Lamentos do Morro*, are all adaptations of scored solo guitar arrangements that have been arranged for duo by Valodze and myself. The fifth duet, *Lamentos*, is a popular *choro* ‘standard’ that is often included in the Brazilian performance repertoire. This piece differs from the other four duets because it does not originate from a specific guitar arrangement. Rather, it is performed in a way that is similar to jazz performance practice, whereby the melody is played to an accompaniment that may vary according at the performers’ discretion. Improvisation occurs at predetermined sections and plays a significant role in the overall piece.

With the exception of *Lamentos*, the approach taken in the duo pieces was very similar to the approach taken by De Vries and Grigorian in their rendition of *Choro #1*. Using solo guitar arrangements as the basis, the second guitar part was arranged to reflect the harmonic structure of each piece via the use of chordal accompaniment, counter-melodies and *baixarias*, while maintaining stylistic integrity. However, as with the solo pieces *Choro Triste #1* and *Jorge do Fusa*, the duet arrangements may contain some variations of the original or commonly used score. The duo setting gives rise to many appealing situations such as an

²⁶ Bellinati, *The Guitar Works Of Garoto*, Volume 2.

instrumental interplay that helps to create a vibrant and interesting performance, the chance to create one's own harmonic accompaniment, the possibility of improvisation and (not least) the provision of a strong rhythmical pulse. The contrasts between a solo and duet performance can be heard in two recorded versions of the piece, *Brazilierinho*; the solo performance was included in the first recital (CD 1, track 1) and the second, duet version is a previously recorded performance by Valodze and me (CD 3, track 5). In all the duets in the first recital the lead and accompanying roles of each guitarist varied from section to section and, indeed, these roles were shared evenly in each piece.

4.2.3 7-string guitar and the *baixaria* in a group setting

The group comprised 7-string guitar, *cavaquinho* and *pandiero/cajon*, which form the rhythm section with flute and *bandolim* as the lead instruments. The four pieces performed are all drawn from the standard *choro* repertoire.

The 7-string guitar, and its role as the bass instrument, is intrinsic to the traditional *choro* group and generally, in a *choro* performance, the 7-string player is improvising the *baixaria* part. The type of accompaniment is based on the rhythmical style of the piece, the harmony (or chord progression) and knowledge of the vocabulary associated with the *baixaria*. The *baixaria* is a counterpoint *obligato* line, played mostly in the bass register, that utilizes stepwise scalar runs, arpeggios and walking lines that reinforce the underlying beat.²⁷ Melodic and rhythmic figures, improvised contrapuntal melodies, riffs and pedal points are also included.

An example is the opening phrase of the piece, *E do que ha* (CD 1, track 10). In this piece the harmonic construction and movement are relatively unsophisticated, as is the case in most traditional *choro*. For the purpose of this particular recital performance the *baixaria* lines are, for the most part, contrived; not improvised. However, improvised variation of the lines occurs at some points.

With an understanding of the vocabulary of the *baixaria*, the 7-string player may improvise the bass line according to the chord changes. However, the contrapuntal nature of the *baixaria*

²⁷ See Michael Bevan, *The role of the guitar in Brazilian choro*. Unpublished paper presented at University of Adelaide, September 2006.

means that it cannot be considered independently of the melodic line. Variations in the melodic shape of arpeggios and scales, which relate to a set of chord changes, enable the improviser to create a melodic line best suited to a given situation (Figure 9).



Figure 9: Two variations on a *baixaria* in the opening 9 bars of *Edo do que ha*

In any musical context, the vibrancy of a performance depends to a large degree on the cohesiveness of the group that is performing. In *choro* this is very important, and the richness of a performance is not only achieved by the inventiveness, bravado and skill of those involved, but by the mutual support of each player. In any *choro* performance improvisation occurs constantly in many subtle ways.

4.2.4 Trio

Contemporary *choro* is a multi-faceted genre, and the trio piece *Baião de Gude* (CD 1, track 13), although not strictly a *choro*, was included in the recital to represent the broad nature of the contemporary Brazilian guitar repertoire. This piece displays the unity of rhythm in melody and accompaniment that is evident in *choro*, *samba* and Brazilian jazz described above. The piece was arranged to incorporate an open section where improvisation takes place on a repeated chord progression (Em9-Gm9-F#11b9-Am9), in a similar fashion to jazz improvisation. Once again melodic rhythm is important and the improviser must be careful to reflect the underlying *baião* rhythm in the improvised melodic line. (Figure 10)



Figure 10: *baião* rhythm and variations

4.3 Second Recital (CD 2)

The second recital covers a broad spectrum of Brazilian musical styles, and the pieces chosen lend themselves to an approach more in keeping with jazz performance practice. As noted earlier, the group in this recital, comprising jazz guitar, acoustic bass, percussion, woodwind and vocal, is a typical mainstream jazz line-up.

The characteristics that define each of the various styles presented in this recital are found in the rhythmic patterns that underpin the ‘groove’ of each piece. *Chamamé* is a style from the south of Brazil in triple time with a cross rhythm in duple time. This rhythmical interplay is common in African, Brazilian and jazz music. *Bebé* is a *baião*, a style that comes from the north east of Brazil. *Bela Nova* is a typical *choro* but with harmonic progressions more commonly found in jazz. *Assanhado* is a *choro* with a slightly ‘funky’ feel, and *Lôro* is a *xaxado*, a rhythm that has some similarities to *baião*. *Samba do Avião* is a ‘jazz samba’, while *Samba em Preludio* is a *samba canção*, or slow *samba* and *Chega de Saudade* a *bossa nova/samba*. The intention in this recital was to marry these stylistic characteristics with various elements of jazz improvisation, harmony and group interaction.

A primary focus of the jazz improviser is the construction of an interesting melodic line, and many devices such as chord substitution, chromaticism and poly-tonality are utilized in this pursuit. This, of course, is not to suggest that rhythm is neglected. Improvisation in Brazilian music sees exploration of the intrinsic rhythmic and melodic characteristics of a composition assume primary importance. The role of improvisation in Brazilian music can perhaps be best summed up by the words of the great *choro bandolim* player, Jacó do Bandolim (1918-1969):

I improvise when I interpret music. But I improvise not for the sake of improvising, but to augment the scale and sentiment of the composition. I am not completely tied to what the composer has done nor am I obliged to reproduce it exactly. I reproduce it in a manner that pleases me, in the way a painter reproduces nature that appears one way to everyone else and another way to himself. Thus, it is not the desire to improvise, to be original. It is rather the desire to encounter in musical phrases the richness in a composition, which, when it is well done, is subtle and refined in all its details, and that presents me with innumerable possibilities.²⁸

²⁸ Cited in Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, p. 4.

The improvisational approach taken throughout the second recital varied according to the inherent structure, rhythm and character of each piece.

In the piece *Chamamé* (CD 2, track 1), for example, the rhythm of the piece feels like it is alternating between 6/8 and 3/4 (Figure 11). The improvised section is a repeated two bar pattern of Dmin7 and G13 that incorporates this rhythm.



Figure 11: *Chamamé* rhythm pattern

This improvised solo (CD 2, track 1, 1:45), based on a G mixolydian scale, reflects this fundamental rhythm through the use of appropriate rhythmic vocabulary and variations (Figure 12). The solo begins with the guitar setting up the fundamental rhythm and then exploring further rhythmic possibilities and interaction with the percussion.

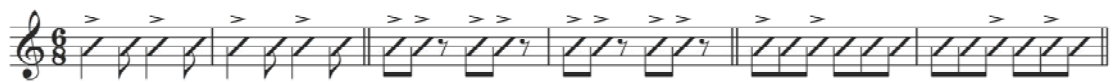


Figure 12: 6/8 rhythmic examples

The guitar solo in the piece *Chega de Saudade* (CD 2, track 8, 1:36) illustrates a slightly different approach. This solo displays some characteristics similar to those of a typical jazz ‘be-bop’ solo in the use of turns and embellishments in the 16th note melodic line, and the use of ‘ghost’ notes. However the fundamental *samba* pattern that underpins the rhythm of this piece (Figure 13) is reinforced with the use of rhythmic variations on the pattern. This is achieved with the use of chordal passages that intersperse the single note melodic line (CD 2, track 8, 2:15).



Figure 13: Rhythm guitar pattern for *Chega de Saudade*

This combination results in a style of improvised solo that is typical of the ‘jazz-samba’ style.²⁹

An intimate understanding of the rhythmic signatures of each of the chosen styles has been shown to be an important aspect of the improvisational performances featured in this study. Furthermore, an understanding of the style and rhythmical characteristics of each individual piece enables the improviser to make informed choices with regard to personal interpretation. In Brazilian music, just as in jazz, there exists a language consisting of certain standard vocabulary. What follows is a discussion of aspects of colloquial Brazilian rhythmic vocabulary and how these are reflected in the performance.

As in spoken language, fluency in a particular musical language requires intimate knowledge of the colloquialisms that exist therein. In ‘jazz swing’, for example, the interpretation of quavers is uneven, whereby the first of two quavers is longer than the second. This is usually notated as a dotted quaver with a semi-quaver, or a quaver triplet with the first two notes tied (Figure 14). The notated rhythm, however, only approximates the actual rhythm played.



Figure 14: The jazz ‘swing’ interpretation of quavers³⁰

Similarly, in Brazilian music the characteristic *lundu* rhythmic figure may be interpreted rather differently than written. The syncopated 16th notes tend to become quaver triplets; a variation which gives the beat a poly-rhythmic quality (Figure 15).



Figure 15: *Lundu* rhythm and quaver triplets³¹

This characteristic, and other variations, is evident in the first phrase of the guitar solo in *Bebé* (CD 2, Track 2. 2:44). The *lundu* pattern, as discussed earlier, forms the basis of many Brazilian rhythms, and in *Bebé*, which is in fact a *baião*, this pattern is prevalent. The opening

²⁹ This style was pioneered by the American saxophonist Stan Getz in his record ‘Jazz Samba’, which was the first major *bossa-nova* album on to appear on American jazz scene. Stan Getz, *Jazz Samba* LP (Verve V6-8432).

³⁰ Mario Seve, *Vocabulario do Choro* (São Paulo: Lumiar, 1999), p. 11.

³¹ Seve, p. 11.

phrase of the solo, a variation of the melody, reflects the underlying *baião* rhythm, while the variation of the *lundu* rhythm shown above (Figure 15) can be clearly observed in the 7th bar (Figure 16).³² This rhythmic approach is taken over the first section of the piece where an A pedal occurs. In contrast, the following section, which consists of a cyclical chord progression, lends itself to an approach similar in style that of a jazz solo where chord changes occur more rapidly. This involves a more consistent, and less syncopated semi-quaver pattern that outlines the chord changes.



Figure 16: First phrase of the author's solo in *Bebé*

As with jazz swing, the notation serves only as a rough guide and tends to mean different things to different people. Ultimately, 'capturing the feel' requires a combination of accenting, ghosting and an aural understanding gained through experience of the language of *choro*, *samba* and other Brazilian music styles.

4.3.1 Harmonic Interpretation

The nexus of Brazilian and jazz musical interpretation in this recital is not only a rhythmic one; harmonic interpretation also plays a part. As has been described above, the first recital sees the solo and duo pieces incorporate the use of chord substitution, melodic embellishment (often extending to the bass line), and the re-arrangement of form. The re-harmonization of an entire piece, such as is commonly found in contemporary jazz, was deemed stylistically inappropriate for the first recital.

As mentioned previously, the intention of the second recital was to marry Brazilian stylistic characteristics with various elements of jazz improvisation, harmony and group interaction. With this in mind, the harmonic arrangement of *Samba do Avião* (CD 2, track 6), from a recording of the song by the US based Brazilian jazz pianist Eliane Elias, was borrowed. This *bossa nova* standard, composed by Antonio Carlos Jobim (Figure 17), was substantially re-

³² See Variation 1, Figure 7. This rhythm is identical to that of the opening two bars of the guitar solo in *Bebé*.

harmonized by Elias, who included complex chords and progressions that transform the piece harmonically while nevertheless maintaining the essential rhythmic characteristics of the style (Figure 18).³³ The piece was modified further in performance through the inclusion of English lyrics, written by our vocalist Charmaine Jones.

The Elias arrangement requires the form to be played twice, with instrumental improvisation taking place in certain sections. The first eight bars of the piece begins with the same melody and chords as the original, but in the key of A major. At bar 21, however, the melody is restated a tone higher (B major), while the accompanying chord progression at this point (a variation on the original) begins a 5th higher than expected in the key of E major and resolves to C major (bar 27). Through a series of II-V progressions (from bar 31) the first section finishes on an A7 chord before unexpectedly moving to the key of C major for the second section (bar 47). From this point the form is repeated a minor third higher than the first section. These modulations occur in a way that does not in any way detract from the song, and the musical sentiment created here is consistent with that of the original composition by Jobim.

The approach I took when improvising in *Samba do Avião* was, as it was in other pieces in the recital, to reflect the melody and rhythmic characteristics of the piece. As described above, the use of chordal passages that intersperse the single note melodic line were used to help reinforce the rhythmic character of the piece. Even though elements of jazz improvisation such as chord substitution, chromaticism and poly-tonality may have been utilized in these pieces this was not the primary approach taken. The overall approach I took in the performance of Brazilian music in a jazz context in the second recital was the same as in the first recital: to reflect the romanticism, intimacy and rhythmic sensuality of Brazilian guitar music.

³³ Eliane Elias, *The Best of Eliane Elias Sings*. CD (Japan: Toshiba EMI B0009S8H30, 2005).

Figure 17: *Samba do Avião* by Antonio Carlos Jobim³⁴

³⁴ Almir Chediak (ed.), *Songbook Tom Jobim* (Sao Paulo: Lumiar Editora, 1994).

Samba do Avião

Intro (Vamp until Vox cue)
Amaj⁹/C[#]

Vox

5 Amaj⁹/C[#] Co⁷ Bm⁷ Co⁷(b13)

9 Amaj⁹/C[#] C[#]7^{#5} D⁶/9 G13b5

13 A^bm¹¹ E^b7^{#9} Am⁷ D⁹ A^bm⁷ D^b9

17 G^b11 G^b9^{#11} G^bm⁹ B¹³ Fma⁹/A Ema⁹/G[#]

21 Ema⁹/G[#] Go⁷b13 Am⁷ B^bo⁷

25 Bm⁷ B7+⁵ Dm⁷ D^b7 Cma¹³ Cmaj¹³ F¹³

29 C⁶/9 F¹³ Bm⁷ Em¹¹ E^bm¹¹ Dm¹¹ D^bm¹¹ Cm¹¹

33 Cm¹¹ F¹³ Bm⁷ E7^{#5b9} Am⁷ D13b9

37 Bm⁷ E7^{b9} G/A 3

43 A¹³ A¹³/E^b A¹³/E A¹³ A¹³/E^b A¹³ Dm⁷ G⁷ D^b7 Cma¹³

Figure 18: *Samba do Avião* re-harmonization by Eliane Elias ³⁵

³⁵ Transcribed by the author.

The second recital shows how the combination of musical elements (in particular rhythmic) from Brazilian music styles, as well as improvisational and harmonic approaches found in jazz can be successfully melded into a performance that acknowledges the traditions of both genres while maintaining a level of creative flexibility. The numerous lesser-known styles of music in Brazil, such as *baião*, *chamamé* and others performed here, lend themselves to interpretation by jazz musicians, just as the more widely known *bossa nova* and *samba* have done for over fifty years.

5. Conclusion

The embracement of the contrasts between the classical and popular interpretations of the *choro* genre, as well as the contrasts between jazz and Brazilian interpretations of Brazilian music, give the contemporary performer a broad base from which to proceed. The importance of improvisation and the role of rhythmic and melodic vocabulary in the contemporary performance context cannot be over-emphasised. It is clear, also, that a heightened awareness of the socio-cultural contexts of Brazilian music in general, and *choro* in particular is necessary in order to practice the art form in an authentic way: mere instrumental facility is not enough. This is clearly demonstrated in the two contrasting recitals.

Appendix A

CD 1 – Recital 1

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|--------|
| 1. | <i>Brasileirinho</i> | (2:53) |
| 2. | <i>Choro Triste</i> | (3:26) |
| 3. | <i>Jorge do Fusa</i> | (3:16) |
| 4. | <i>Interrogando</i> | (3:35) |
| 5. | <i>Lamentos</i> | (6:01) |
| 6. | <i>Grauna</i> | (3:59) |
| 7. | <i>Uma Valsa e Dois Amores</i> | (3:16) |
| 8. | <i>Odeon</i> | (3:56) |
| 9. | <i>Lamentos do Morro</i> | (7:32) |
| 10. | <i>E Do Que Ha</i> | (4:32) |
| 11. | <i>Cochichando</i> | (4:03) |
| 12. | <i>Assanhado</i> | (6:55) |
| 13. | <i>Andre de Sapato Novo</i> | (4:16) |
| 14. | <i>Baiao de Gude</i> | (5:15) |

CD 2 – Recital 2

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---------|
| 1. | <i>Chamame</i> | (4:12) |
| 2. | <i>Bebe</i> | (5:51) |
| 3. | <i>Bela Nova</i> | (10:14) |
| 4. | <i>Assanhado</i> | (6:20) |
| 5. | <i>Chega de Saudade</i> | (4:55) |
| 6. | <i>Loro</i> | (6:30) |
| 7. | <i>Samba do Avião</i> | (6:28) |
| 8. | <i>Samba em Preludio</i> | (5:31) |

CD 3 - Comparative Examples and Audio Extracts

1. *Choro #1* Gerald Garcia
2. *Choro #1* Doug de Vries and Slava Grigorian
3. *Choro #1* Henrique Cazes group
4. *Choro Triste* Mike Bevan and Andy Bevan
5. *Brasileirinho* Mike Bevan and Alain Valodze

DVD - Recital 1

The DVD is also included so that the reader/examiner can distinguish the candidate's performance from that of his duet partner.

1. *Brasileirinho* (2:53)
2. *Choro Triste* (3:26)
3. *Jorge do Fusa* (3:16)
4. *Interrogando* (3:35)
5. *Lamentos* (6:01)
6. *Grauna* (3:59)
7. *Uma Valsa e Dois Amores* (3:16)
8. *Odeon* (3:56)
9. *Lamentos do Morro* (7:32)
10. *E Do Que Ha* (4:32)
11. *Cochichando* (4:03)
12. *Assanhado* (6:55)
13. *Andre de Sapato Novo* (4:16)
14. *Baiao de Gude* (5:15)

Appendix B – Recital Programme notes

Programme notes for Recital 1

Performed and recorded at EMU, Elder Conservatorium, 5 December 2007

INTERPRETATION AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IN THE CHORO GUITAR REPERTOIRE

My research into Brazilian *choro* music in general, and *choro* guitar music in particular, focuses primarily on the various and contrasting ways in which the repertoire is performed and interpreted by *choro* musicians, classical guitarists, and jazz guitarists. An important facet of *choro* performance practice is improvisation, and much of my research has been concerned with comparisons of the various performance practices of *choro* musicians and jazz musicians, respectively. In this recital, the *choro* repertoire I have chosen represents a cross section of composers, styles and eras. The music is performed in solo, duo, trio and group settings, with the intention of demonstrating the rich diversity and nuances of the genre.

Mike Bevan, 5 December 2007

Brasileirinho Pernambuco (1883-1947)

This is a solo arrangement by Joao Pernambuco, who was a very important early composer of *choro* guitar music. The compositions of Pernambuco incorporate many rhythmic and harmonic aspects of a traditional *choro* ensemble, and his works also feature in the classical guitar repertoire. In this performance the original written part is basically adhered to, with some spontaneous variations.

Choro Triste #1 Garôto (1915-1955)

This piece, which translates as ‘Sad Choro #1’, is widely known and played by Brazilian guitarists. Annibal Augusto Sardinha, or ‘Garôto’ (‘The Kid’), as he was known, was a significant *choro* musician and composer who spent some time in the USA mixing with jazz musicians such as Duke Ellington and Art Tatum. Garôto was one of the first guitarists to introduce sophisticated harmonies and progressions, similar to those found in jazz, in his many *choro*, *samba* and *waltz* compositions. These stylistic innovations were subsequently influential in the development of the *bossa nova* style.

Jorge do Fusa Garôto

This is played very much like the original from Garôto transcribed by Paulo Bellinati, but based on a recording by the guitarist Raphael Rabello, where many chords substitutions and rhythmic variations have been made. The word ‘fusa’ means “32nd note” and refers to the whole-tone scale passage in the A section.

Interrogando Pernambuco

This piece, the title of which means ‘Questioning’, is played from the published score, with some variations taken from a recording by the incomparable Brazilian guitarist Raphael Rabello, who helped to re-invigorate and re-define *choro* guitar in the 1970s and ‘80s. The inherent rhythms in the piece are similar to the *pandeiro* rhythms that are common in *choro*. I have added a *pandeiro* to help reinforce this aspect.

Lamentos**Pixinguinha (1897-1973)**

This is a very well known piece by perhaps the foremost *choro* composer, Pixinguinha. Pixinguinha, through his compositions and groups, gave *choro* the form and sound that became the accepted standard. *Lamentos* is played in many different instrumental contexts and works very well when played as a duet, with some sections improvised in a way that is similar to a jazz interpretation.

Grauna**Pernambuco**

The grauna is a blackbird native to the northeast of Brazil, and is known for its strong melodic song. This *choro* is arranged for duo, with interludes between each section open to improvisation.

Uma Valsa e dois Amores**Reis (1916-1977)**

Dilermando Reis composed many pieces for guitar that became very popular in Brazil during his lifetime. His preference was for the traditional romantic Brazilian guitar styles such as *waltzes* and *choros*. This piece, ‘A Waltz and Two Loves’, is adapted for duet.

Odeon**Nazaré (1863-1934)**

Choro began to consolidate as a genre by the late 19th century in the compositions of the pianist Ernesto Nazaré (among others), and *Odeon* is one of his best-known pieces. This duo arrangement is inspired by a solo rendition recorded by Raphael Rabello.

Lamentos do Morro**Garôto**

This energetic *samba/choro*, the title of which refers to the *favelas* or poor districts of Rio, is one of Garôto’s better-known guitar pieces. The way in which this piece is played is similar once again to an interpretation by Rabello.

E do Que Ha**Americano (1900–1961)**

The title translates as ‘It is what it is’, and the style of the piece takes its inspiration from the traditional *choro* group format. A typical group might consist of 6 and 7-stringed guitars, *cavaquinho* (a steel strung *ukelele*), *bandolim* (Brazilian mandolin), *pandeiro* (similar to a tambourine) and a ‘front line’ of flute and/or clarinet.

Cochichando**Pixinguinha**

This piece, which translates as ‘Whispering’, is regarded as a *choro* standard and is tonight also played in the classic *choro* group style.

Assanhado**Bittencourt (1918-1969)**

Assanhado means ‘cheeky’, and is commonly played in a slightly ‘funky’ style by contemporary *choro* groups.

Andre de sapato novo**Correa (nd)**

‘Andre’s new shoes’ is a very lively piece, and the use of *fermata*, or pauses, create a sense of expectation.

Baião de Gude**Bellinati (1950-)**

Baião de Gude is a ‘*baião*’ originally written for soprano sax and instrumental ensemble (guitar, piano, bass, and drums). *Baião* was a very popular dance in the north east of Brazil during the 19th century, and subsequently it became a universally recognized Brazilian musical style. This performance adheres to the composer’s arrangement for guitar trio, with improvised solos occurring in some sections.

Associate Artists

Alain Valodze	guitar/cavaquinho
Dylan Woolcock	guitar/mandolin
Gilli Atkinson	percussion
Sharon Vicars	flute

Programme notes for Recital Two

Performed and recorded at EMU, Elder Conservatorium 11 December 2007

INTERPRETATION AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE IN THE CHORO AND BRAZILIAN GUITAR REPERTOIRE

My research into Brazilian *choro* music in general, and *choro* guitar music in particular, focuses primarily on the various and contrasting ways in which the repertoire is performed and interpreted by *choro* musicians, classical guitarists, and jazz guitarists. An important facet of *choro* performance practice is improvisation, and much of my research has been concerned with comparisons of the various performance practices of *choro* musicians and jazz musicians, respectively.

Choro music draws from many styles of Brazilian music, and within the *choro* diaspora jazz musicians from America, Europe, Japan and Australia have in recent times begun to interpret *choro* in a way that reflects their own stylistic nuance. This process is similar to the way in which *bossa nova* became popular with jazz musicians. In this, the second of my two recitals, I have chosen repertoire that comes from the broad repertoire of Brazilian music, and which lends itself to a performance in keeping with jazz performance practice. The group, consisting of jazz guitar, acoustic bass, percussion, woodwind and vocal, is a typical mainstream jazz line-up.

Chamamé

Costa (1980-)

Chamamé, a style from the south of Brazil, is in triple time with a cross rhythm of duple time. This rhythmical interplay is common in African, Brazilian and jazz music.

Bebé

Pascoal (1936-)

This piece, by the prolific Brazilian composer Hermeto Pascoal, is a *baião*, a style that comes from the north east of Brazil. The *baião* rhythm is very strong in the bass, while the melody reflects the parallel movement of the chords.

Bela Nova

De Vries (1960-)

This beautiful melody and chord progression by the pre-eminent Australian guitarist Doug de Vries marries the typical *choro* form and style with harmonic progressions more commonly found in jazz.

Assanhado

Bittencourt (1918-1969)

Assanhado means ‘cheeky’, and is commonly played in a slightly ‘funky’ style by contemporary *choro* groups.

Lôro

Gismonti (1947-)

Many of Egberto Gismonti’s compositions are included in the neo-*choro* repertoire alongside classics from Pixinguinha, Nazaré and Jacob do Bandolim. This piece is a *xaxado*, a rhythm that has some similarities to *baião*. *Lôro* is a piece that is played also by contemporary jazz musicians.

Samba do Avião**Jobim** (1927-1994)

This tune means ‘Song of the Jet’ and is one of Antonio Carlos Jobim’s best-known compositions. This arrangement is a re-harmonization by the US based Brazilian jazz pianist Elian Elias and is played in a ‘jazz samba’ style rather than in the original *bossa nova* style.

Samba em Preludio**Baden Powell** (1937-2000)

This gentle samba written by one of Brazil’s most influential guitarists, Baden Powell, is reminiscent of a Chopin prelude. The melody in the A section can be superimposed with the melody in the B section.

Chega de Saudade**Jobim**

The title means ‘enough of longing’, or as the English title suggests, ‘No more Blues’. The contemporary Brazilian guitarist, Maurício Carrilho, has said that all the best popular Brazilian music is *choro*. He suggests *Chega de Saudade*, the tune that marked the inauguration of *bossa nova*, is a *choro*, albeit a *choro* disguised as *bossa nova*. It is generally played in the style of *bossa nova*, but structurally it is a *choro*.

Associate Artists

Peter Dowdall	bass
Gilli Atkinson	percussion
Charmaine Jones	vocal
Jonathon Hunt	clarinet

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