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TIMBRANDO

Meridian Arts Ensemble



Recording session

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 CCS 11898 **Ear, Mind, I**
 CCS SA 23206 **Brink**

Jon Nelson trumpet
Brian McWhorter trumpet
Daniel Grabois horn
Benjamin Herrington trombone
Raymond Stewart tuba
John Ferrari drums



more information at www.meridianartsensemble.com

This is our ninth CD, and it is being released in the year of our twentieth anniversary. The CD is a travelogue of sorts, containing music we picked up on tour around Latin and South America and in the US. Several of the pieces on this disc were commissioned for our visit to the Subtropics Festival in Miami – a city that is a great cross-roads of Latin culture – in 1997. Other pieces we collected in foreign places or from friends we made in those places. We have brought all this music to our home base, New York, another cross-cultural gathering place. And now to listeners wherever they may be. *Timbrando* is Portuguese for ‘making a tone’ or ‘sounding’ (it is related to the word ‘timbre’).

Special thanks to Ambassador Donald Easum for his support over the years, and for his help in making this disc possible.

Ocho por Radio – Silvestre Revueltas (1899-1940), arr. Jon Nelson

Written in 1933, *Ocho por Radio* contains all the hallmarks of Revueltas' compositional style: rhythmic vigor, a Stravinskian harmonic language, and a distinctly Mexican folk flavor. The title translates roughly as "Eight on the Radio," and was originally written for eight players (yes, for a radio performance). In our version the forces are reduced to six players, yet the flavor of Mexico is still vital and ever-present.

– Daniel Grabois

Oblivion – Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992), arr. Raymond Stewart

Astor Piazzolla was undoubtedly the greatest tango composer of all time. A virtuoso bandoneon player, he single-handedly transformed traditional tango dance music into "nuevo tango," a mix of the traditional style with classical music and jazz. *Oblivion* was originally written for the soundtrack of the 1984 movie *Enrico IV* (Henry IV), but it has taken on a life of its own as a tremendously popular and beautiful Argentine ballad.

– Daniel Grabois

Caballito Nicollano – trad. Costa Rican, arr. Jon Nelson

Occasionally we go on a tour that is not just musically rewarding, but magical in some other way as well. Our trip to Costa Rica in 1997 was such a trip. Two of the people we met there became Meridian spouses. We saw monkeys in the wild. We ate an endless supply of fresh mangoes. We went on a catamaran trip with our audience to play a concert on the deserted Nicollan Peninsula, accessible only by boat. And we heard a group of marimba players, lined up playing on a single long, hand-made marimba, in the central square of the capital city, San Jose, outside our hotel. One of the pieces they played, and recorded on the cassette we bought, was *Caballito Nicollano*, or *The Cowboy from Nicolla*, the peninsula where we had performed. Our version is a testament to the joy of that trip and of traditional Costa Rican music.

– Daniel Grabois

Michelangelo Antonioni – Caetano Veloso (1942-), arr. Jaques Morelenbaum, adapted by Brian McWhorter

Caetano Veloso is a Brazilian singer and guitar player who began his career performing bossa nova. He later fused Brazilian pop with rock and roll, and his music became both more international and more socially aware. His leftist politics frequently earned him both enmity and censorship from the Brazilian government. *Michelangelo Antonioni* is taken from the soundtrack to the 2004 movie *Eros*, which was comprised of three short films by three different directors. Michelangelo Antonioni was the director and writer of the film from which this lush, seductive, and typically Brazilian music was drawn. Antonioni died as we were preparing to release this CD. Our version of this song is based on the original arrangement, by Jacques Morelenbaum.

– Daniel Grabois

Echo-Dimensions – Dafnis Prieto (1974-)

A native of Santa Clara, Cuba, New York based drummer, composer and percussionist Dafnis Prieto has been recognized as one of the most important young jazz drummers of today. He has received awards as a composer from Chamber Music America, was a Meet the Composer / Van Lier Fellowship Award Recipient, and has recently been commissioned by the Ethos Percussion Quartet and The Consortium for New Trumpet Music. His second solo CD *Absolute Quintet* was recently released on the Zoho label. He writes of *Echo-Dimensions* as follows: "*Echo-Dimensions* is a composition based on the sounds and textures that each instrument creates, becoming an echo in different dimensions, essentially the transformation and development of concise musical motives. The piece is not literally an imitation of the name itself, but a reflection of potential fluidity and juxtaposition of voices, and the rhythmic balance between sections. This compositional process is designed to give the piece a character of never ending momentum. This piece was commissioned for the MAE in 2006 by New Music @ ECU, with assistance from the State of North Carolina."

– Dafnis Prieto

Bachianas Brasileiras Nos. 1 (Prelude) and 5 (Aria) – Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959), arr. Raymond Stewart

Heitor Villa-Lobos' musical education occurred at a time in the early 20th Century when Brazilian culture was turning away from Europe, and beginning to look inward to its own native culture. Villa-Lobos himself underwent very little formal musical training, mostly learning about classical music by listening in from the top of the staircase when his father hosted evening concerts at home. He spent a decade making trips into Brazil's interior, learning folk music as he traveled (and concocting exaggerated tales of his exploits). He played cello, guitar and clarinet in street bands in Rio, and later joined the opera orchestra in that city as a cellist. His nine pieces comprising the set known as *Bachianas Brasileiras* fuse traditional Brazilian sounds with Bach-like counterpoint. *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1*, originally for "an orchestra of cellos," is a slow lamenting work. *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*, by far the best known of the set, was originally scored for 8 cellos and soprano. The solo soprano line is taken in the Meridian version by the horn and marimba playing in unison.

– Daniel Grabois

Saóko – Tania León (1943-)

Commissioned by the 1997 Subtropics Festival of Miami. Tania León, born in Cuba, a vital personality on today's music scene, is highly regarded as a composer and conductor recognized for her accomplishments as an educator and advisor to arts organizations. She has been the subject of profiles on ABC, CBS, CNN, PBS, Univision, Telemundo and independent films. Her honors include the New York Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award and awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She was New Music Advisor to Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic. She has been Visiting Lecturer at Harvard and Yale Universities, the University of Michigan, and the Musikschule in Hamburg. Tania León has taught at Brooklyn College since 1985. In 2006 she was named Distinguished Professor of the City University of New York. She explains the term "saoko:"

Saoko: The name given to a traditional mixed drink in Cuba, consisting of Rum or

Aguardiente with coconut water. Saoko also refers to an idiomatic expression in the Spanish speaking cultures of the Caribbean and Latin America.

Tiene Saoko!: It has great taste!

Tiene Saoko!: It has duende! (genius)

Tiene Saoko!: It has soul!

A work of grooves emerging from bursts of brief "continuo" (revolving) patterns evocative of a flavorful libation. As the sonic concoction swirls towards the end, the players literally let out a "saoko" celebratory toast.

– Tania León

En par de los levantes de la aurora – Ana Lara (1959-)

Ana Lara is a Mexican composer and promoter. She studied in Mexico City and Warsaw, Poland. Her main interest is exploring timbre and experiencing sound as a living force that embraces and transforms us. She explains her work: "The title *En par de los levantes de la aurora* derives from Solomon's verses in the Song of Songs and freely means, 'at the same time as the dawn.' I am insomniac, so often wake up before the day breaks. It has always surprised me that when it is still very dark outside, the birds begin singing loudly, only to fall silent again and then restart when dawn arrives. Going from darkness to light, from inner silence to outer sound, is the passage I take (don't we all?) every night and every day, and in a way this is what happens in this piece that was commissioned by the Subtropics Festival of Miami for my friends the Meridian Arts Ensemble, who played the premiere."

– Ana Lara

Timbrando – Hermeto Pascoal (1936-)

Hermeto Pascoal is one of Brazil's best known composer-performers. An extremely prolific and eclectic composer, Pascoal often incorporates elements of nature and folk styles into his pieces. His music is rooted in jazz; he came to the public's attention after

his appearance on several tracks of Miles Davis' "Live/Evil" album. He wrote *Timbrando* for Meridian's 1997 appearance at the Subtropics Festival in Miami, and the work features a lively vibraphone solo part.

– Daniel Grabois

Um a Zero – Pixinguinha (1897-1973) and Benedito Lacerda (1903-1958),

arr. Raymond Stewart

The Brazilian "choro" ("cry" or "lament") style arose in Rio de Janeiro in the late 19th Century as a mixture of yearning Portuguese melodies with West African rhythms. The style developed and changed through the first half of the 20th Century, and virtually died out by the 1960's, with the development of bossa nova. Choro music regained popularity in the late 1970's, and still has a strong following in Brazil today. Pixinguinha (born Alfredo da Rocha Vianna Filho) was the most important choro composer of all time. In the 1940's, after Pixinguinha's band folded, he became the tenor sax soloist in Benedito Lacerda's band. *Um a Zero* was written during this period and is therefore credited to both composers. "Um a Zero" means "One to Zero" – the score of a soccer game in which Brazil defeated Paraguay in an important match. This piece neither a "cry" nor "lament," but rather a bubbly upwelling of lighthearted pleasure.

– Daniel Grabois

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Michael Lavine

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The Netherlands

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Technical information

microphones

Bruel & Kjaer 4006, Schoeps

digital converters

DSD Super Audio / Meitnerdesign AD/DA

Pyramix Editing / Merging Technologies

speakers

Audio Lab, The Netherlands

amplifiers

van Medevoort, The Netherlands

cables

Van den Hul*

mixing board

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The INTEGRATION and The SECOND®

TIMBRANDO

Meridian Arts Ensemble

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 1 | Ocho por Radio by Silvestre Revueltas, arr. Jon Nelson | 5.20 |
| 2 | Oblivion by Astor Piazzolla, arr. Raymond Stewart | 4.08 |
| 3 | Caballito Nicoyano , Traditional Costa-Rican, arr. Jon Nelson | 2.12 |
| 4 | Michelangelo Antonioni by Caetano Veloso,
arr. by Jaques Morelenbaum, adapted by Brian McWhorter | 3.12 |
| 5 | Echo-Dimensions by Dafnis Prieto | 9.49 |
| 6 | Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5, Aria (Cantilena)
by Heitor Villa-Lobos, arr. Raymond Stewart | 5.40 |
| 7 | Saoko by Tania Leon | 2.52 |
| 8 | Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1 by Heitor Villa-Lobos,
arr. Raymond Stewart | 5.50 |
| 9 | En par de los levantes de la aurora by Ana Lara | 9.13 |
| 10 | Timbrando by Hermeto Pascoal | 3.57 |
| 11 | Um a Zero by Pixinguinha and Benedito Lacerda,
arr. Raymond Stewart | 2.21 |

total time:

Jon Nelson trumpet
Brian McWhorter trumpet
Daniel Grabois horn
Benjamin Herrington trombone
Raymond Stewart tuba
John Ferrari drums



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