

The Guitar in the Music of Claudio Santoro

The catalog of works by Claudio Santoro is vast, both in terms of instrumental formations and aesthetic diversity. Among symphonies, quartets, sonatas, songs, concertos, compositional techniques, and distinct phases, we have the privilege of having four pieces dedicated to the guitar: two *Preludes*, one *Study*, and the *Fantasia Sul América*.

In his book about Santoro, researcher Vasco Mariz mentions the different phases of the composer:

- Use of the twelve-tone technique;
- Transition period;
- Nationalistic orientation phase;
- Return to serialism and experiments with electroacoustic and aleatoric music.

The guitar pieces, all for solo guitar, belong to this last period. The two *Preludes* were composed in 1982 based on a commission from Turíbio Santos. Through his collection by the French publisher Max Eschig, Turíbio was at the time carrying out important work in promoting Brazilian music for the guitar, commissioning and publishing works by some of our greatest composers. The *Study*, written immediately afterward, was dedicated to Geraldo Ribeiro. The *Fantasia Sul América* was a challenging piece in the Jovens Intérpretes da Música Brasileira competition in Rio de Janeiro in 1983.

The transcriptions published here provide guitarists with an opportunity to explore other phases of Santoro's music. His preludes for piano, a format that is revisited throughout his career, originated in the second half of the 1940s and explore musical material that could easily be imagined on the guitar. Some harmonies even foreshadow what would be used in bossa nova. Interestingly, a certain period of Santoro's production coincides with the creation of a milestone in bossa nova. Tom Jobim, despite being a pianist, composed *Chega de Saudade* on the guitar, almost like a choro. Vinícius de Moraes added lyrics shortly afterward, just before resuming his diplomatic duties in Paris. It was there that Vinícius met Cláudio Santoro, who then had two of his preludes set to music by the poet. *Preludes* No. 1 and No. 2 (from the second series for piano) were titled "Ouve o Silêncio" and "Em Algum Lugar," respectively, and marked the beginning of

the series of Love Songs composed by Santoro with lyrics by Vinícius. In *Ouve o Silêncio*, the verse *Fala baixinho* already features one of Vinícius characteristic diminutives, as seen, for example, in *Chega de Saudade*. It may seem like an exaggeration, but perhaps the guitar has been close to Santoro's piano preludes from the beginning.

In an interview with professor and composer Raul do Valle in 1976 in Germany, Santoro said:

"I've always been like that; I've never been a composer who wrote something to be played exactly as he thought it should be. I've always let the interpreter recreate the work and add something of their own. I've always believed in that. And I'll tell you why, because I've been both an interpreter and a composer" (In SOUZA, 2003, p. 89).

Although this passage refers to interpretation, it wouldn't be difficult to imagine the same response encompassing the possibility of transcription. Santoro himself, in addition to transforming certain preludes into songs, transcribed a selection of them for orchestra. Some of his preludes sound so well on the guitar, share the same intimate character, and naturally lend themselves to the idiom of the instrument that it is as if Santoro had already written music for the guitar before 1982.

Just like the –. Santoro, Guarnieri, Lorenzo Fernández, Villa-Lobos, Mignone, Guerra-Peixe, they all wrote music dedicated to the world of children, but for piano. For some time now, I have been researching Brazilian children's pieces, and among those that caught my attention the most were these by Cláudio Santoro. It is a theme that is very present in the piano repertoire but is somewhat lacking in guitar music. It is something so intrinsically Brazilian, so ancestral, that it needs to be part of the guitar repertoire.

I would like to thank Alessandro Santoro for the opportunity to publish these transcriptions through Editora Savart, founded by his father. It is an honor for me. It is an initiative that certainly contributes to recording and promoting Brazilian music more and more.

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