

# Harpsichord & *fortepiano*

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# COMPOSING TOCCATA DE ROÇA FOR SOLO HARPSICHORD

by Calimerio Soares

## Introduction

Motivated by the successful premiere (and several further performances) of my piece *Cravocebalada* (1980), two years later I wrote *Toccata de Roça* (Peasant's Toccata, 1982). At that time, I was still seeking the aesthetic thread through which I could develop my composing. While both pieces were still written with conventional musical notation, it was imperative that less conventional textures and sounds for the harpsichord be articulated, although in accordance with the instrument's idiomatic nature. With both works, I had the idea of removing the harpsichord from its aristocratic pedestal and bringing it into our current time, through the use of a less intimate language, but also with a popular feature.

*Cravocebalada* (the title could also be: "A Ballade for the Harpsichord") had the main purpose of parodying the 200 years of music written for the instrument. The piece's eight sections could also be presented by a performer dressed up in a costume inspired by the eighteenth century. In the case of *Toccata de Roça*, the similarity of timbre between the ten string "viola" (a kind of Portuguese guitar with five double strings) and the harpsichord had motivated me to examine the art of two-part popular singing characteristic of central Brazil for the appropriate material for the composition of this work.

## "Canto" and "Contra canto"

Through the centuries, melodies performed in two parallel parts in thirds and sixths have been used systematically by composers in their most diverse works. This technique was used by Henry Purcell (1659-1695) in his wonderful airs "Fear no danger" (from the opera *Dido and Aeneas*) and "In vain the am'rous flute" (from the *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*).

It is in Brazilian folk music (Paz, 1989) that this technique finds considerable development. Its constant use in Brazilian popular country music is of great importance as a basic compositional technique. Musical speech is

basically developed through parallel thirds and sixths in these songs. Although few modulations<sup>1</sup> are found in this kind of music, it is important to note its sophisticated usage in some of these popular songs<sup>2</sup>.

## The melody

The melody for this piece is based on a sequence of parallel thirds in the manner of the *cantadores* (singers) of central Brazil. It develops the traditional eight measures, as in figure 1. In order to break the monotony of the melody played in parallel thirds, I amplify the interval to a major tenth, maintaining this interval relationship between the upper and the lower part (*canto* and *contra canto*) throughout the musical period, as shown in figure 2.

This interval amplification between either part (or voice) emphasizes the *country* character of the musical speech, and gives it a more sophisticated connotation in accordance with my own aesthetic. The suggested ornamentation in the score makes this more idiomatic for the instrument.

## Registration

For the performance of the piece, I suggest an instrument of two manuals, 8' and 4' stops plus a *lute* stop. However, the piece can also be performed on a single manual instrument with these stops.

## Form

The eight initial measures present the melody in parallel tenths, performed as a recitative. After a sequence of syncopated rhythms (which the player taps on the instrument) the piece begins to develop. [The introduction (section 1) returns at the end of the work.] Here is presented the dance rhythm upon which the work is based. This rhythm cell suggests the *Catira* (or *Cateretê*)<sup>3</sup>, a dance very popular in the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais (figure 3).

In section 2, melodic elements are varied along with the following section (3), accompanied by an *ostinato* rhythm played in the

bass, as in figure 4. Next follows a sequence of repeating chords based on fourths (E, A flat, B flat) of a percussive character, which alludes to clapping and stamping traditionally performed by dancers of the *catira*, as in figure 5.

Section 3 constitutes the central nucleus of the work, where elements derived from section 2 are also varied, as in figure 6. In order to

emphasize the musical period, I decided to repeat the full section using a *ritornello*. A short bridge (b. 119) prepares the return of section 1 to conclude the work.

The table presents a structural summary of the work:

RECITATIVE	Section 1 INTRODUCTION	Section 2 VARIATION	Section 3 3' (Section 2) (Percussion) (Variations of 2) (Percussion)	1' FINAL
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The *Recitative* is the main melodic element of the work. The *Introduction* emphasizes the dance rhythm in the entire work. Section 2 presents a varied melody from the recitative, preparing for section 3 (of percussive character), where once more the melody is varied. The return of the *Introduction* to conclude the work lends a sense of finality.



Fig. 1

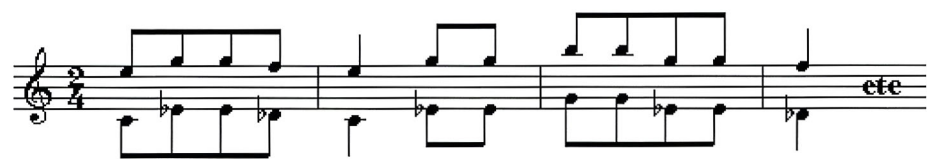


Fig. 2

9 Andante  $\text{♩} = 100$

*f*  $8' + 8' + 4'$

Fig. 3

25

Fig. 4

37

*p*  $4'$  off, only  $8'$  lute

Fig. 5

61

*mp*  $8'$  lute +  $4'$

Fig. 6

### Works Consulted

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- 1 Commonly: I, IV and V chords.
- 2 The Brazilian country music titled *O menino da porteira* (amongst other country songs of this kind) is a good example of the usage of canto and contra canto.
- 3 Catira (or Cateretê): Native Indian-Brazilian dance found in the States of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso and Goiás.

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# TOCCATA DE ROÇA

Calimerio Soares (1982)

Recitando calmamente  $\text{♩} = 40$

Harpisichord

*mp* 8' lute + 4'

5

rall. a) 

Andante  $\text{♩} = 100$

9 *f* 8' + 8' + 4'

13



- a) Bater o ritmo na madeira do instrumento, com ambas as mãos  
Knock the rhythm at the instrument's wood with both hands.

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Musical score for Harpsichord & fortepiano, measures 17-32. The score is written for two staves (treble and bass clef) and includes dynamic markings and articulation.

Measures 17-20: Treble clef features a melodic line with accents and slurs. Bass clef features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes. A dynamic marking *mp* is present in measure 18, followed by a box containing the text "8' lute + 4'".

Measures 21-24: Treble clef features a melodic line with accents and slurs. Bass clef features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

Measures 25-28: Treble clef features a melodic line with a long slur spanning measures 25 and 26. Bass clef features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

Measures 29-32: Treble clef features a melodic line with chords and single notes. Bass clef features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

33

Measures 33-36. Treble clef: Measure 33 has a half note chord (F4, A4, C5) with a fermata. Measure 34 has a half note chord (F4, A4, C5). Measure 35 has a half note chord (F4, A4, C5) with a fermata. Measure 36 has a half note chord (F4, A4, C5). Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, A3, C4).

37

*p* 4' off, only 8' lute

Measures 37-40. Treble clef: Rapid sixteenth-note pattern (F4, A4, C5, F4, A4, C5). Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, A3, C4).

41

8vb

Measures 41-44. Treble clef: Rapid sixteenth-note pattern (F4, A4, C5, F4, A4, C5). Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, A3, C4).

45

(8vb)

Measures 45-48. Treble clef: Rapid sixteenth-note pattern (F4, A4, C5, F4, A4, C5). Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, A3, C4).



49

(8<sup>vb</sup>) - (simile)

53

57

61

*mp* 8' lute + 4'



81

Measures 81-84. Treble clef: Chords (F4, C5) and (B4, C5) with eighth notes. Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, C4, F3, C4).

85

Measures 85-88. Treble clef: Chords (F4, C5) and (B4, C5) with eighth notes. Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, C4, F3, C4).

89

1 2

Measures 89-92. Treble clef: Chords (F4, C5) and (B4, C5) with eighth notes. Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, C4, F3, C4).

93

*p* 4' off, only 8' lute

Measures 93-96. Treble clef: Chords (F4, C5) and (B4, C5) with eighth notes. Bass clef: Steady eighth-note accompaniment (F3, C4, F3, C4).

97

8vb

101

(8vb)

105

(8vb)

109

(8vb)

113

allargando

117

lute off, prepare 8' + 8' + 4''

a tempo

*f*

121

125