

HEITOR VILLA - LOBOS (1887 - 1959)

STRING QUARTET NO. 5 'POPULAR'

Poco Andantino

Vivo e energico

Andantino. Tempo giusto e ben ritmato

Allegro

Villa - Lobos has become one of the best known and significant Latin American composers to date. He uniquely merged his native Brazilian folksongs and rhythms, with Western Classical Music elements.

Quartet No.5 (1931) openly quotes Brazilian folk music, which goes some way to explain its title '*Quarteto Popular No.1*' and why it is generally accepted to be the most accessible of his numerous string quartets.

The first movement is made up of seven sections of varying *tempi*, which Villa - Lobos expertly weaves together. The sections include the Brazilian round 'Fui ao Tororo, buscar água, não achei' set over an insistent rhythm - very reminiscent of Afro-Brazilian drumming - a haunting *modinha* (love song) and a simple melody accompanied by guitar-like plucking.

The second movement can be described as miraculous. The nursery tune 'Cai, cai balão' is quoted in dazzling fashion, accompanied by sparkling descending figures that sounds like peals of bells. This then transforms into a mournful melody in the violin parts, with a 'swirling' effect played by the viola and an insistent foot stamping tango rhythm portrayed by the 'cello.

The third movement opens with the instruments playing a melody in unison, which quickly turns into a joyous and celebratory theme, which is enhanced by the bell-like accompaniment of the violins.

The final movement is exciting and vigorous, with the percussive Afro-Brazilian drumming rhythms returning and the children's song 'Carneirinho, carneirão,' also being quoted.