



ANDRÉ MEHMARI is considered one of Brazil's most talented young musicians. His activities as pianist, composer, and arranger are highly regarded in both popular and classical music. As his compositions have been performed by leading Brazilian orchestras (OSESP) and chamber ensembles (São Paulo String Quartet), his career in jazz and Brazilian popular music has attained wide attention amongst Brazilians.

Born in 1977 in Niteroi (RJ), he began to study music with his mother at the age of five, and completed an organ course in the Conservatory of Ribeirao Preto (SP). At age ten, having taught himself jazz improvisation, he wrote his first compositions; and, at 15, while teaching organ in the Conservatory, he was invited to compose a method for keyboard beginners. The result was a 20-piece collection, a work greatly appreciated by young musicians and their teachers. Mehmari's precociousness as a composer and multi-instrumentalist was well documented by the media.

He began study at São Paulo State University (USP) in 1995 and, in the same year, won the University's competition for original Brazilian popular music (MPB). Two years later, the same honor was awarded to him for classical music. Both his performing schedule and composing activity grew busier as he began writing orchestral arrangements for major musical events in São Paulo. In 1998, he won the first national *Prêmio VISA de MPB* competition, the most important award for popular music in Brazil. The competition's prize is the recording of a new CD, which became Mehmari's first release and brought him concert opportunities throughout Brazil. Twelve CDs have followed, including *Lachrimae* in 2004, featuring two different piano trios and singer Mônica Salmaso. Its combination of newly arranged Brazilian MPB classics and Mehmari's own compositions created a portrait of the pianist's style and language.

A series of critically acclaimed recordings have followed including *Piano e Voz* (2006) with singer Ná Ozzetti, *Continua Amizade* (2007) with mandolin virtuoso Hamilton de Holanda, and *De Árvores e Valsas* (2008), devoted entirely to André's compositions. 2009 will bring the release of *Miramari*, a collaboration with clarinet master Gabriele Mirabassi.

In 2006, he won the *Carlos Gomes* award for classical music revelation of the year, and was appointed resident composer for the São Paulo State Wind Band. The following year the Pan American Games commissioned him to compose music based on Villa-Lobos, Jobim, and Chico Buarque for ceremonies at Rio de Janeiro's Maracanã Stadium to be performed by Sinfônica Brasileira. In 2008, he premiered his *Jazz Concerto* for piano trio and strings with Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo as well his double concerto for jazz piano, clarinet, and winds with clarinetist Gabriele Mirabassi and the São Paulo State Wind Band.

His active performing calendar includes his two trios, duos with singers Mônica Salmaso, Ná Ozzetti, mandolinist Hamilton de Holanda, and clarinetist Gabriele Mirabassi, and solo piano concerts. He made his U.S. premiere in the 2005 edition of Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, South Carolina, stunning the audience with his blend of musicality, virtuosity, and vitality. In 2008, he performed with Maria Schneider at the *Ouro Preto Jazz Festival* in Minas Gerais; and toured northeastern Brazil with Ivan Lins, playing works by Lins as well as his own compositions.

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