

The Villa-Lobos Event

LSO St Luke's

Jerwood Hall

7.30pm 16 May 2026



Villa-Lobos conducting 50,000 children at São Januário Football Stadium, 1940

Marcelo Bratke - piano
Camila Provenzalle - soprano
Finchley Children Music Group
Grace Rossiter - conductor
Mariannita Luzzati- film scenography

LSO ST LUKES

**BRITISH
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2025-26**

HHT THE HELEN HAMLYN TRUST

The Villa-Lobos Event

Programme

A Prole do Bebês n. 1

piano solo

Branquinha (A boneca de louça)
Moreninha (A boneca de massa)
Caboclinha (A boneca de barro)
Mulatinha (A boneca de borracha)
Negrinha (A boneca de pau)
Pobrezinha (A boneca de trapo)
A Bruxa (A boneca de pano)
O Polichinelo

Guia Prático

youth choir and piano

Ó Ciranda, Ó Cirandinha
Có Có Có
No Fundo do meu Quintal
Manquinha
A Maré Encheu
João Cambuete
Samba Lê lê
Ó Sim
A Velha que Tinha 9 Filhas
Rosa Amarela
Fui no Tororó
Viva o Carnaval

O Trenzinho do Caipira from Bachiana Brasileiras n. 2

youth choir and piano

4 Songs of the Amazon Forest

soprano, youth choir and piano

(arr. Abel Rocha)

Veleiros – Sailing Ships
Cair da Tarde – Twilight Song
Canção do Amor – Love Song
Melodia Sentimental – Sentimental Melody

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Programme notes



Composed in 1918, *A Prole do Bebê No. 1* remains one of the defining masterpieces of Brazilian musical modernism. The suite comprises eight character pieces for solo piano, each portraying a doll from an imaginary family of a baby, inspired by different ethnic and folkloric traditions and fashioned from distinct materials such as porcelain, clay and papier-mâché. Rich in colour, rhythmic vitality and imaginative sonorities, the work reveals Villa-Lobos's

unique ability to unite European pianistic traditions with the spirit of Brazilian folklore. Its international reputation was firmly established after the celebrated performance given by Arthur Rubinstein in 1922, which introduced the composer's bold musical language to audiences around the world.

Villa-Lobos's commitment to Brazilian cultural identity also found expression in the monumental *Guia Prático*, a vast anthology of 137 folk songs for children's choir and piano. Conceived during the 1940s, the collection represented both an anthropological survey and a musical map of Brazil, preserving melodies and traditions drawn from across the country. Through arrangements of remarkable originality and sensitivity, Villa-Lobos transformed popular and regional material into works of enduring artistic value. The collection became a cornerstone of Brazilian music education and remains one of the composer's most important contributions to the preservation of the nation's cultural memory.

Among Villa-Lobos's most beloved orchestral creations is *O Trenzinho do Caipira*, the famous toccata from *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2*. Lasting approximately five minutes, the piece evokes the atmosphere of the rural steam trains that once travelled through the Brazilian countryside. Rather than relying on literal musical illustration, Villa-Lobos creates this imagery through rhythmic propulsion, layered instrumental textures and an extraordinary sense of movement. Particularly striking are the closing sonorities, whose atmospheric harmonic effects anticipated techniques later explored by twentieth-century composers such as Giacinto Scelsi, Krzysztof Penderecki and György Ligeti. Villa-Lobos's late masterpiece *A Floresta do Amazonas* originated as a commission from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for the film *Green Mansions*, starring Audrey Hepburn and Anthony Perkins. Dissatisfied with the alterations made to his score during the film's production, Villa-Lobos later transformed the material into an independent symphonic suite. Although the film itself was unsuccessful, the disagreement with the studio ultimately led to the financing of a landmark 1959 recording conducted by the composer himself, featuring the legendary Brazilian soprano Bidu Sayão. The Four Songs extracted from this work would become some of Villa-Lobos's most cherished vocal compositions, later arranged for soprano and piano to conclude the multimedia concert *The Villa-Lobos Event*.

Marcelo Bratke

A multi-media concert conceived and performed by Marcelo Bratke celebrating Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos whose work was deeply inspired by childhood and the natural world.



Credit Romulo Fialdini

Marcelo Bratke began studying piano at 14 and made his debut two years later with the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra under Eleazar de Carvalho, receiving from the São Paulo Association of Art Critics (APCA) Revelation Award.

He made his European debut at the Salzburg Festival in 1988 and has since performed at coveted venues including Wigmore Hall, Carnegie Hall and Suntory Hall, collaborating with conductors such as Alexander Lazarev, Isaac Karabtchevsky, John Neschling, João Carlos Martins and Roberto Minczuk.

In 2008, he founded Camerata Brasil, an orchestra formed by young musicians from underprivileged communities in Brazil, which has toured internationally across Europe, Asia and the Americas. The ensemble has appeared at venues including Carnegie Hall, in performances dedicated to Heitor Villa-Lobos. His long-term engagement with Villa-Lobos is central to his work, most notably through the Villa-Lobos Worldwide Project, which encompasses the recording of the composer's complete solo piano works, alongside international performances and broadcast initiatives.

Alongside his performing career, Bratke works in radio and television. In 2017, he was awarded Brazil's Order of Cultural Merit.

Born with congenital cataracts and Amblyopia, which led to severely reduced vision in both eyes, he underwent surgery in Boston at the age of 44, gaining normal vision for the first time in his life.

www.marcelobratke.com

Camila Provenzalle

Soprano



The Brazilian-Italian soprano, born in São Paulo and residing in Zurich, Camila Provenzalle has sung with major orchestras and in important concert halls and opera houses around the world.

Camila has won prizes in various competitions, including the Neue Stimmen International Singing Competition in Germany, the Maria

Callas Competition in Brazil, and the Paris Opera Competition at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. She performed with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Paolo Carignani. She made her debut in France in 2017 as Countess Almaviva (*The Marriage of Figaro*) at the Toulon opera, the same year she sang Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* at the Teatro Real in Madrid.

In 2018 and 2019, she was regularly invited to perform with Plácido Domingo in concerts in Ljubljana, Strasbourg, Valencia, Boston, and Aarhus. Since then, Camila has interpreted various roles such as Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris; Hanna Glawari (*The Merry Widow*) at Teatro Municipal in São Paulo; Mariana Alcoforado in the world premiere of the Monodrama Opera Portuguese Letters by João Guilherme Ripper with OSESP at Sala São Paulo; Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) at the Garsington Opera Festival in London; Pamina (*The Magic Flute*) at the Teatro Solís in Montevideo and Palácio das Artes in Belo Horizonte; *Bachianas No. 5* (Villa-Lobos) with the K Ensemble in Dubai for the Cartier Foundation among others.

Camila Provenzalle recorded a CD with Alpha Classics, singing Villa-Lobos *Amazon Forest*, featuring illustrations by Sebastião Salgado and under the baton of Simone Menezes at the Zurich Opera House with the Philharmonia Zurich. She was acclaimed by international critics for her performances as Micaela (*Carmen*, Bizet) with the Opera North Company in England. She is recognized for her unique musicality also in the symphonic repertoire, having sung all of Mahler's symphonies, *Carmina Burana*, and many works by Beethoven, Mozart, Villa-Lobos, as well as contemporary composers like Edino Krieger and João Guilherme Ripper among others.

In 2022 and 2023, celebrating the 200th anniversary of Brazil's independence, she performed with the Villa-Lobos *Amazon Forest Suite* project in various countries with the Opera de Rouen, Santa Cecília Orchestra, Philharmonie de Paris, Barbican-British Symphony Orchestra, Sinfônica do Teatro, and Carnegie Hall.

Photo Keiny Andrade. <https://camilaprovenzalle.com>

Finchley Children's Music Group



Formed in 1958, Finchley Children's Music Group was established to give the first amateur performance of Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde*, and for most of its life has been the most celebrated children's choir of its kind in the UK. The singers of FCMG are regularly invited to take part in major choral works, performing frequently with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Crouch End Festival Chorus. Most recently performing in the Olivier Award winning *Dead Man Walking* for English National Opera.

Upcoming concerts include *A Night at The Opera* with Finchley Choral Society on 27 June [FORTHCOMING CONCERTS | finchley-choral](#) and *Sounds Sublime Festival* on 11 July [Sounds Sublime Choral Festival - The Sixteen](#). FCMG are delighted to be taking part in the Villa-Lobos event at LSO St Luke's which explores brand new repertoire and is FCMG's first ever performance in Portuguese.



Grace Rossiter

Grace is a choral conductor, composer and arranger. A champion of youth music, Grace has been Artistic Director of the Finchley Children's Music Group since 2001.



UnEarth at Barbican with BBC Symphony Orchestra & BBC Singers

Photo credit Mark Allan

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**www.fcmg.org.uk. nstagram: fcmg_choir
LinkedIn: Finchley Children's Music Group**

Mariannita Luzzati

Video scenographer



Born in São Paulo, of Italian parents who arrived in Brazil in the sixties, Mariannita spent her childhood between Milan and São Paulo. Her first contact with painting occurred in a self-taught way. She lived in a cultural environment, visiting museums and galleries since childhood, and her house was visited by artist Wesley Duke Lee and historian Pietro Maria Bardi, who became her mentors during her adolescence. The contact with these historical and contemporary environments played an important role in her artistic development.

From 1982 to 1983 Mariannita Luzzati attended the Istituto per l'Arte e il Restauro in Florence, Italy; and in the mid-1980s she studied with Carlos Fajardo, Carmela Gross and Evandro Carlos Jardim in São Paulo and held her first institutional exhibitions in the late 1980s, participating in important group shows in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Curitiba. In 1991 she received first prize at the Brazil National Art Salon and in 1994 she moved to London, alternating seasons in São Paulo. In this period her work gained recognition, showing in exhibitions and in the collections of art museums in Brazil and abroad, including the Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo; Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo; National Museum of Rio de Janeiro; House der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin; the Museum of London; the British Museum and the 22nd International Biennial of São Paulo.

In her recent works Mariannita Luzzati departs from her previous interest in landscape and the elementary forms associated with it: idyllic and contemplative. What can now be observed in the work are mountainous forms and human silhouettes, which could well be mountains in human format. "These images suggest that the viewer should contemplate and reflect on emptiness and silence, which for me is our greatest need today," says the artist.

In 2011 Mariannita Luzzati conceived and developed the Cinemúsica Project in collaboration with her husband, the pianist Marcelo Bratke - a project that was designed to bring multimedia performances to Brazilian prisons exploring the dialogue between music and moving images. Cinemúsica was performed in 10 penitentiaries of the State of São Paulo and Mariannita Luzzati produced and directed a documentary about the project. Since then, Cinemúsica has also been performed in important cultural institutions in Brazil and abroad. Among these are: the Southbank Center in London; Performing the World Festival in New York; Sarajevo Winter Festival; Sala São Paulo; Teatro da Paz in Belém and the Rio de Janeiro Opera Hall. The Cinemúsica Project was performed more than 60 times, receiving the Art of Touch Award at the Sarajevo Winter Festival.