



ADS

NOCTURNE

OTAKA • MEHMARI

Lucas Garcia Muramoto
Yu Nitahara

LUCAS GARCIA MURAMOTO Cello
YU NITAHARA Piano

Hisatada Otaka (1911-1951)

01 Nocturne 4:14

André Mehmari (1977)

Suíte Brasileira "For Antonio Meneses"

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| 02 | I. Prelúdio - Seresta | 2:16 |
| 03 | II. Choro - Canção | 4:14 |
| 04 | III. Frevo (Antonio no Frevo) | 2:17 |
| 05 | IV. Valsa Brasileira | 3:52 |
| 06 | V. Baião | 3:44 |

Total Timing: 20'37





FOREWORD

It's such a pleasure for me to discover for the first time these wonderful masterpieces of music by **André Mehmari** and **Hisatada Otaka**, but an even bigger joy is to hear them played by two very brilliant musicians, whom I've known for years, since they were very young, during their studies at the University Mozarteum.

If the ultimate goal of a teacher is to give all possible tools to students and share with them all the skills developed in our experience, in order to let them become independent, free and happy to express their own personalities, I couldn't be more enthusiastic and even surprised to listen to this recording, which kept me glued from the first to the last note, for the passion expressed and the extraordinary precision with which every moment was crafted, and which showcased a complete and coherent work by two already mature and accomplished artists.

The great melancholy, the liveliness of Brazilian dances, the subtle irony and the taste for instrumental play in Mehmari are irresistible and contagious, while the narrative and descriptive sense steeped in culture and tradition in Otaka is fascinating, in a perfect dialogue in which the breathing of the two musicians enters into perfect harmony and interaction.

I couldn't be happier to have been inspired and to have learnt something new from two young musicians for whom I have the utmost respect and trust!

Giovanni Gnocchi (Guadalajara, Mexico – April 2026)



ABOUT THE ALBUM

The idea for this recording took shape in 2025, marking the 130th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Brazil. That year, Yu Nitahara and I were invited by the Brazilian Society of Japanese Culture and Social Assistance (Bunkyo) in São Paulo to perform a commemorative concert, which gave special meaning to our collaboration that had begun years earlier in Salzburg, where we first met as music students.

Japan and Brazil lie almost on opposite sides of the planet, yet their histories are deeply intertwined — Brazil is home to the largest community of Japanese descendants in the world, numbering more than two million. In that spirit, Yu and I wanted our program to reflect that same sense of distance and closeness. The music of **Hisatada Otaka** and **André Mehmari** offered just such a meeting point: both composers engage with the European classical tradition while allowing their own cultural identities to remain unmistakably present.

Hisatada Otaka represents an early generation of Japanese composers who traveled to Europe in the twentieth century to study classical music. His style reflects a deep engagement with the Western tradition while retaining a distinctly Japanese musical language. I first encountered his *Nocturne* as a teenager while living in the countryside of Japan. At that time, before streaming services existed, I spent many afternoons cycling to public libraries and borrowing as many CDs as I could find, copying them to my computer so I could listen to them later. One of those recordings included Otaka's *Nocturne*. The piece fascinated me so much that I later performed it at a school "show your talent" concert, and it has remained part of my repertoire ever since.

Around that same time, as music was becoming a more serious part of my life, I learned that the Brazilian cellist **Antonio Meneses** would soon be performing in Tokyo. I wrote him an email, hoping simply to meet him during his visit, and he kindly agreed. That encounter became a turning point: he encouraged me to pursue my studies more seriously and eventually led me to move to Brazil, where I was able to experience my country's culture more directly.

It was through that same chain of events that I first encountered André Mehmari's *Suite Brasileira*. Meneses had just recorded the work with him, and I attended their concert in São Paulo presenting that album, where I also met André for the first time. Years later, after I had moved to Europe and founded Trio Callas, he became a natural choice when we were looking for a composer to write a new work for the ensemble. Since then, we have maintained a close artistic collaboration.

During our stay in São Paulo for this project, Yu and I encountered the remarkable presence of the Japanese-Brazilian community, which has been part of the country's cultural fabric for more than a century. For Yu, visiting Brazil for the first time, it was especially striking to discover that families bearing the name Nitahara — a surname rare even in Japan — had migrated to Brazil in the early twentieth century, turning the historical connection between the two countries into something unexpectedly personal.

In this sense, this album is the outcome of personal journeys. A piece I discovered many years ago in a library in the Japanese countryside now stands next to music written by a Brazilian composer with whom I later developed a real artistic relationship. Performed by a Japanese pianist and a Brazilian cellist, this program reflects the quiet ways in which music can connect distant places.

Lucas Garcia Muramoto (Salzburg, Austria – March 2026)

HISATADA OTAKA - NOCTURNE

Hisatada Otaka (1911–1951) was among the first Japanese musicians to seek advanced training in Europe. He studied composition and conducting in Vienna during the 1930s and appeared there as a conductor with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra as well as the Berlin Philharmonic — a remarkable achievement for a Japanese musician at the time.

He composed the *Nocturne* for cello and piano in 1942, shortly after returning to Japan. As noted by his son Atsutada Otaka, the work brings together elements drawn from Japanese musical material with the compositional grammar of Western classical music, creating a distinctive musical world.

The piece was written for the cellist Takashi Kurata, who had studied in Paris, premiered the work, and was both Otaka's brother-in-law and a close musical companion. A recollection by the composer's mother describes Kurata holding his cello beside Otaka while the piece was being written, immediately trying out the musical ideas as they emerged.





ANDRÉ MEHMARI - SUÍTE BRASILEIRA

Brazilian composer and pianist André Mehmari has developed a musical language that moves freely between classical composition, Brazilian musical traditions, and improvisation. A multi-instrumentalist as well, his curiosity for different musical worlds is reflected in the remarkable variety of instruments found in his studio — from a Japanese koto to a theremin.

Suite Brasileira reflects this approach. Written for cello and piano, the movements are inspired by musical traditions from different regions of Brazil — a country roughly the size of Europe. Elements associated with genres such as the "seresta", "choro", "frevo", "valsa brasileira", and "baião" are incorporated not as quotations or stylistic clichés, but as living musical references. Within this framework, Mehmari explores how these traditions can interact with the expressive possibilities of classical chamber music.

The suite became closely associated with the Brazilian cellist **Antonio Meneses**, whose collaboration with Mehmari helped bring the work to wider attention. The third movement, "Frevo" — often described as one of the fastest genres in Brazilian music — refers to the dances of Carnival in **Recife**, the hometown of Meneses. When performing the suite abroad, Meneses would often proudly introduce this movement to audiences, pointing out its connection to his city.



LUCAS GARCIA MURAMOTO

Lucas Garcia Muramoto was born in the countryside of São Paulo, Brazil, and grew up near Tokyo, Japan, where he began his first cello lessons. A prizewinner at international competitions in Salzburg and Paris, he was also recognized by the São Paulo State Government as one of Brazil's most outstanding young musicians.

He has performed in more than twenty countries across four continents, appearing in major venues such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Philharmonie in Berlin, and the Musikverein in Vienna, as well as festivals including the Chigiana Festival in Italy, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and the Rheingau Musik Festival in Germany, and Mozartwoche in Austria. As a chamber musician, he has performed alongside artists including Julian Prégardien, Kian Soltani, Jennifer Stumm, and Yura Lee.

Lucas made his solo debut performing Haydn's C major Concerto during the European tour of the Japan Youth Orchestra. He is currently a member of Camerata Salzburg, a founding member of Trio Callas, and the founder and artistic director of the chamber music festival apARTE in Rio de Janeiro.

He currently lives in Austria and studies at the Mozarteum University Salzburg under Enrico Bronzi. He was the last student of Antonio Meneses and has also been mentored by Mischa Maisky, Sol Gabetta, and Steven Isserlis.

YU NITAHARA

Yu Nitahara, born and raised in Fukuoka, Japan, is recognized for the refinement of his musical voice and the depth of his artistic sensitivity. He has received prizes at several distinguished international competitions, including the Santander, Mozart, Morocco Philharmonic, J. N. Hummel, and Viotti.

Equally active as a chamber musician, he was awarded First Prize at the Swedish International Duo Competition and received the Best Accompanist Prize in both the violin and cello categories at the Enescu International Competition.

Yu has appeared extensively throughout his native Japan as well as across Asia, Europe, and South America. His performances have brought him to renowned festivals such as the Gstaad Menuhin and the Schleswig-Holstein, and to leading venues including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Großer Saal of the Mozarteum in Salzburg. As a soloist, he has collaborated with orchestras including the RTVE Symphony Orchestra, the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, the Gstaad Menuhin Festival Orchestra, and so on.

He graduated with highest distinction from the Tokyo University of the Arts before continuing his studies at the Mozarteum University Salzburg under Prof. Pavel Gililov. Yu currently serves as Senior Lecturer at the Mozarteum University Salzburg while maintaining an active international performing career.





ADS Immersive Discrete Array



ADS specializes in high-resolution recordings and immersive formats. We select exceptional acoustic environments, such as concert halls and large venues, to capture the purity and depth of musical performance. These venues are our blank canvases, where music comes to life with clarity and authenticity. We use state-of-the-art technology and advanced multi-channel recording techniques, such as surround sound and immersive audio, to create three-dimensional soundscapes. Each recording is meticulously planned to preserve the spatiality, dynamics and nuances of the environment, resulting in an experience that not only reproduces sound, but also conveys emotion and artistic intent. Our goal is to make the listener feel as if they are at the center of the performance, enveloped by every note and silence. Our process is guided by a delicate balance: the proximity of the instruments and the spatiality. It is in this delicate balance that the real magic of recording takes place. As producers and engineers, we act as interpreters of the artistic vision, where each project is a unique work, shaped by the interaction between the artist, the environment and the technology. Unlike traditional formats that confine music to a fixed plane, immersive audio creates a sonic universe for the listener to explore, feel and interact with. Imagine being able to walk between instruments, feel the distance between each note, and feel the music moving around you. This is the promise of immersive audio: an experience that redefines what is possible in music reproduction, transforming the listener into an integral part of the work.

Gustavo Cândido

Recording producer, balance engineer & founder

LUCAS GARCIA MURAMOTO Cello
YU NITAHARA Piano

RECORDING PRODUCER & BALANCE ENGINEER Gustavo Cândido
ARTISTIC PRODUCTION Lucas Garcia Muramoto & Yu Nitahara
EDITING, MIX & MASTERING Gustavo Cândido
PIANO TECHNICIAN Djalma Carvalho
PRODUCED by ADS with partnership Estúdio Monteverdi

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LINER NOTES Lucas Garcia Muramoto
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Gustavo Cândido

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05-08 August 2025 by ADS | High Fidelity

ADS use for this recording Merging Technologies HAPI MKII Premium converters with preamps, Schoeps, Neumann and DPA microphones, Van Den Hul INTEGRATION HYBRID and VAN DAMME cables, RME ADI-2 PRO FS and Sennheiser HD600 for monitoring recording, REAPER and PYRAMIX workstation on Ravenna AoIP and Dynaudio Contour S series (main speakers) & Dynaudio Emit 20 (height speaker) for immersive monitoring in mastering room. **Original recording format in immersive 5.0.4-channel, 24 bit at 176.4 kHz** sampling rate and mastering for high definition DXD (Digital eXtreme Definition) and DSD (Direct Stream Digital) with Sigma Delta Modulators by Merging Technologies.

- Immersive discrete 5.0.4 format (Embedded audio 5.1.4 but no LFE channel)
- Dolby Atmos 5.0.4 format (Embedded audio 5.1.4 but no LFE channel)
- Auro 3D 5.0.4 format (Embedded audio 5.1.4 but no LFE channel)
- Surround 5.0 format (Embedded audio 5.1 but no LFE channel)



AURO^{3D}
AUDIO

Dolby Atmos

DSD
Direct Stream Digital