Performance Aspects of String Quartets
Number 12, 13 and 14 by Heitor Villa-Lobos

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PERFORMANCE ASPECTS OF STRING QUARTETS NUMBER 12, 13 AND 14

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A treatise submitted to the
College of Music
in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Music.

Degree Awarded:
Fall Semester, 2006.
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This treatise is lovingly dedicated to God: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is also dedicated in a very special way to my parents, Juan José and Lilia María, without whose nurture, encouragement, and support, it would have not been possible.
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ABSTRACT

Heitor Villa-Lobos was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1887 and died in the same city in 1959. He is considered one of the most important composers of the twentieth century and is the author of seventeen string quartets that were produced during each of the different periods of his career as a composer. The purpose of this treatise is to study String Quartets No. 12, 13 and 14 (which belong to Villa-Lobos’s late period) from different points of view such as form, texture, character, influences of Brazilian folk music and of other composers. It also provides some possible approaches to the performance of these works. Contributing to the number of available sources about Villa-Lobos’s string quartets and stimulating the performance of these works are also among the objectives of this treatise.

Each quartet is discussed in two chapters. One chapter deals with the piece making use of the Villa-Lobos literature, recordings by the composer of other of his works that may provide clues as to how to perform the piece in discussion and a careful study of the score from the performer’s point of view. The other chapter compares three different recordings of each of the quartets in study and discusses how each of the ensembles approached and solved the different performance aspects. The recordings compared are those of the Latin American Quartet, the Bessler-Reis Quartet and the Danubius Quartet.

Each chapter contains musical examples to help illustrate the passages that are discussed.
INTRODUCTION

Heitor Villa-Lobos was born on March 5, 1887 in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. As a child, he learned how to play the cello and the guitar. He also had the opportunity of getting to know many of the masterpieces of the classical repertoire, particularly the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, whom he regarded as the greatest composer who ever lived. An increasing interest in the music of his own country lead the young Villa-Lobos to become one of the street performers of the popular improvised serenades called Chôros.\(^1\) As a teenager he also traveled through Brazil and developed a deep knowledge both of its people and of their music, which fascinated him and became two of his main sources of inspiration. Villa-Lobos abandoned the National Institute of Music in Rio because he found the teaching too conventional and for the rest of his life remained an essentially self-taught composer.

In 1924, he traveled to France to present some of his music which had considerable success, and acquired a publishing contract with Max Eschig Editions. For the next twenty years, Paris became the center of his international activities.

During the Post Second World War years, he developed an intense musical relationship with the United States, which made New York the new center of his international activities. Villa-Lobos died on November 17, 1959 in Rio de Janeiro after a fourteen-year battle against cancer.

Villa-Lobos was the first composer from Latin America to create music that clearly reflected a non-European background and to achieve international status. Stravinsky, Messiaen, Rubinstein, Koussevitsky and Copland were among his friends and admirers.

Villa-Lobos’s output can be divided into three main periods. His trip to Paris in 1924 marks the end of his first period. The second goes from 1924 to 1945 and the third goes from the end of the Second World War to his death in 1959. His total output included twelve symphonies, nine Bachianas Brasileiras, fourteen Chôros, seventeen string quartets as well as a strong influence in the field of music education.

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The purpose of this treatise is to study String Quartets No. 12, 13 and 14 (which belong to Villa-Lobos’s late period) from different points of view such as form, texture, character, influences of Brazilian folk music and of other composers. It also intends to provide some possible approaches to the performance of these works. Contributing to the number of available sources about Villa-Lobos’s string quartets and stimulating the performance of these works are also among the objectives of this treatise.

Each piece is discussed in one chapter, making use of such important sources of information as the original manuscript, the printed score, other pieces by Villa-Lobos and by others that may have relevance to the quartet being discussed and a recording of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 9* for string orchestra conducted by Villa-Lobos’s himself. Other major sources have been the following books from the Villa-Lobos literature: *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works* by Eero Tarasti, *Os Quartetos de Cordas de Villa-Lobos (The String Quartets of Villa-Lobos)* by Arnaldo Estrella, the D.M.A. thesis “An Analytical Study of the Seventeen String Quartets of Heitor Villa-Lobos” by Virginia Farmer and *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil’s Musical Soul* by Gerard Béhague. String Quartets No. 12, 13 and 14 have been performed by the author of this treatise as a student, an experience that also informs this study.

The three recordings of each piece that are currently available on the market are compared and discussed in an independent chapter in order to study what approaches have been used by other performers of String Quartets No. 12, 13 and 14. These versions are by a Mexican quartet (the Latin American Quartet), a Hungarian quartet (the Danubius Quartet) and a Brazilian quartet (the Bessler-Reis Quartet). The comparisons are placed after the studies of each work in order to first give the reader an idea of what some of the performance aspects of each piece are.

The study of each quartet and the comparison of the three recordings have been put in separate chapters in order to fully take advantage of the richness of information provided by recordings that display extreme differences of school and of concept of the quartets. Another important reason is to preserve a sense of what is the author’s own approach to each piece. Making the comparisons separate chapters placed after the author’s study of each work also serves to give further validity to some of his points of view, which have
also been used by other performers. The comparisons also intend to provide the reader with other possible ways of performing String Quartets No. 12, 13 and 14 that differ from those proposed by the author.

String Quartet No. 12 was composed in 1950 during one of Villa-Lobos’s stays at the Memorial Hospital in New York where he was treated for his cancer. The piece is dedicated to “Mindinha”, the composer’s companion, and it was first performed in 1951 by the São Paulo Quartet. In his book, Tarasti implies that this piece is very simple when compared with the Quartets of Villa-Lobos’s middle-period and with String Quartet No. 11. According to Tarasti String Quartet No. 12 seems to represent a regression instead of a progress in the evolution of the composer’s quartet style.² This piece can thus be heard as a landmark in Villa-Lobos’s cycle of quartets as the starting point of a movement towards a more concise late period.

According to Tarasti, String Quartet No. 13 is important because it represents a moment when Villa-Lobos had already found and consolidated his late style of string quartet writing.³ It is also relevant to this study because due to the musical material and its treatment it poses very different performance aspects than those found in String Quartet No. 12. String Quartet No. 13 was composed in 1951 in Rio de Janeiro, first performed in 1953 and it is dedicated to the Municipal Quartet of São Paolo.

String Quartet No. 14 was composed in 1953 in Rio de Janeiro, is dedicated to the Stanley Quartet and was premiered in 1954. It was called “Quartet of the fourths”⁴ by the Brazilian scholar Arnaldo Estrella due to the opening of the first movement, which makes extensive use of this interval. The extensive use of one single interval as a unifying element is characteristic of this piece and shows a tendency to an increasingly concise style of writing in Villa-Lobos’s late string quartets.

³ Ibid.
CHAPTER 1
PERFORMANCE ASPECTS OF STRING QUARTET NO. 12

I- Alegro

As is typical in Villa-Lobos’s works from his late period, the first movement uses A-B-A ternary form. Each of the main sections of the first movement has thirty-two measures. Each of these sections is divided into two sixteen-measure subsections, which are divided into two eight-measure phrases. The eight-measure phrases are divided into two four-measure sub-phrases, many of which are divided into two two-measure units. After the last section there is a sixteen-measure coda. This concern with balance and symmetry of structure is one of the reasons why scholars and performers identify Villa-Lobos’s late period as neo-classical.\(^1\) The amazing thing is that with this very severe and symmetrical structure, Villa-Lobos avoids any feeling of predictability or rigidness. It is interesting to note that in the original manuscript, Villa-Lobos wrote Alegro instead of Allegro. The mixed use of musical terms in Italian and in Portuguese and even the Brazilianization of some Italian terms is characteristic of this manuscript and it is not found in the manuscripts of String Quartets Nos. 13 and 14. Perhaps Villa-Lobos wanted to emphasize the fact that there are strong nationalistic elements that go along with the neo-classical aspects of this piece.

In his book *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works*, the scholar Eero Tarasti points out something that is important to consider when performing String Quartet No. 12. Tarasti says that in this piece “the texture is considerably more complicated than in previous quartets and the sound lacks transparency.”\(^2\) In order to solve this lack of transparency, separate articulation either on or off the string may be used, particularly when dealing with imitative textures. Long notes that do not belong to the main melodic line may be played with a release in the sound. Respecting the full value of the rests becomes especially important in this piece in order to favor a clear texture.

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The first movement is an Alegro (Allegro in the printed score) and its opening provides a good example of the need for using separate articulations. In the first four measures we find a fugato section of energetic and vital character (see ex. 1.1). The use of such imitative textures is characteristic of Villa-Lobos’s late style. Also typical is the composer’s use of the instruments in pairs. Neither the score nor the manuscript have any markings to indicate the use of separate articulation during the first bars. When the same material is played at the beginning of the recapitulation (see ex. 1.2), the eighth-notes on the second measure after rehearsal number twelve have dots on them and are marked piano. The sixteenth-notes in the fourth measure after rehearsal number twelve have dots on them and are marked mezzo forte instead of forte as in the opening of the piece. These indications may be also used at the very opening of the piece in order to obtain a more transparent and clear texture.

The textural aspect becomes particularly important due to the fact that the first three notes of the subject of the first movement are used as the subject of the third movement and the sixteenth-notes of the subject are used as material for the fourth movement. In order to be able to make these musical connections in his or her mind, the listener needs to hear the material clearly when it is exposed. When separating the eighth-notes, it is important to lift weight from the bow so that the instruments can resonate. The sixteenth-notes are to be played détaché and forte, but not too heavily.

The use of separation in the first movement of String Quartet No. 12 can be further justified when listening to the way Villa-Lobos conducted the opening of the fugue in the first movement of Bachianas Brasilerias No. 9 in the recording he made in 1958 with the French Radio and Television Orchestra. The subject of the fugue is in 11/8 instead of 4/4 as in String Quartet Number 12, but the rhythmic material is similar (see ex. 1.3). This recording provides an example of how Villa-Lobos dealt with articulation in the opening of a fugue in one of his pieces for string instruments. Villa-Lobos made the orchestra play the sixteenth-notes détaché. The eighth-notes were played with a separation between them and with a quick unwritten diminuendo on each of them. The bow stroke is in between on and off the string.
In the sixth measure of the first movement of String Quartet Number 12 (see ex. 1.1) we find another typical feature of Villa-Lobos’s style: his use of *sesquiáltera*, or the superimposed or juxtaposed use of triplet and duplet rhythms, which is common in Latin American folk music.\(^4\) In order to better evoke the character of folk dance music in such passages, which are numerous in the quartet, it is necessary to keep a rigorous and steady tempo. This is confirmed by the Brazilian scholar Arnaldo Estrella in his book *The String Quartets of Villa-Lobos*. Estrella says that in those passages where the rhythmic element is predominant, Villa-Lobos liked a rigorous obedience to the values of the tempo and an exact reproduction of the metric elements.\(^5\)

The violins play a passage that makes use of triplets from rehearsal number one to three measures after rehearsal number one (see ex. 1.4). In the corresponding passage in the recapitulation, from rehearsal number thirteen to the third measure after rehearsal number thirteen, Villa-Lobos added accents in these triplets (see ex. 1.5). Respecting this difference in articulation is important, since it will result in a more energetic and intense recapitulation. This will help to keep the listener interested despite the fact that the first sixteen bars of the recapitulation are a transposed repeat of the first sixteen bars of the movement.

Villa-Lobos uses articulation in this Quartet to give more character to certain passages. The performers can take advantage of this in many ways: during the five measures before rehearsal number eight, Villa-Lobos uses the rhythmic material of the opening in an *ostinato* way that evokes a folk music rhythmic base (see ex. 1.6). In order to create the sensation of drums playing, a more vertical and percussive *staccato* may be used when playing this passage.

Another important performing aspect is that of tempo. The score has metronome markings for each movement. Nevertheless, these metronome indications are not present in the manuscript, so they should be considered just an approximation.

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\(^3\) Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Bachianas Brasileiras nos. 1, 2, 5 and 9*, Orchestre de la Radiodiffusion Française, Heitor Villa-Lobos, EMI CDH 7 61015 2.


The B section is marked meno. According to Estrella, it shows influence of the *Modinha*, which is a Portuguese and Brazilian art song that was cultivated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The word comes from *Moda* (fashion), and was a generic term for any song or melody. So a *Modinha* would be a little *Moda*. During the nineteenth century it was influenced by the aria from the Italian opera. Eventually it became a lyrical folksong that incarnated Brazilian romantic spirit. It is very important for the performer to understand the character of the *Modinha* since many of the slow sections and movements in this and in many of Villa-Lobos’s compositions are based on it. The central section of the first movement should have a lyrical, romantic and vocal character. Estrella says that in this kind of passage: “Villa-Lobos liked the performers to abandon themselves in lyrical expression; but he detested affected rubatos that compromised the nobility of the phrases. He also didn’t like freedoms that compromised the uniformity within a movement.” The texture in this section is one instrument playing the melody with an accompaniment in the other instruments. This is an important textural characteristic of the improvised instrumental serenades that inspired Villa-Lobos’s *Chôros*. The use of the previously mentioned texture calls for a feeling of improvisation that does not fall on those affected rubatti and exaggerated freedoms detested by Villa-Lobos. In order to achieve this, whoever has the melody may play every note for the maximum possible amount of time within the tempo in order to sing every note. There is room for rhythmic freedoms but they should be small.

Regarding places in the central section where the performers could take more freedoms, the two measures before rehearsal number ten are the culmination of the first half of this section (see ex. 1.7); therefore the first violin could take time on the triplet of the fourth beat of the second measure before rehearsal number ten, and on the descending triplets of one measure before rehearsal number ten. The second violin can take some time in the quintuplet in the fourth beat of the third measure before rehearsal number eleven (see ex. 1.8).  

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6 Estrella, *Os Quartetos*, 100.  
8 Estrella, *Os Quartetos*, 19.  
The first violin has the main melodic line, which is marked *mezzo forte* from rehearsal number eight to the seventh measure after rehearsal number eight (see ex. 1.9). The performer has to be careful of not getting too loud and heavy despite the fact that he is playing an emotional solo in a high register. As was mentioned before, for most of the B section of the first movement the texture is basically one instrument playing a solo *mezzo forte* and three instruments accompanying. The three accompanying instruments have to avoid going beyond their marked dynamic of *piano*. During the five measures before rehearsal number ten, an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the half-notes and a separation between them will help to produce a more transparent texture (see example 1.7).

At the first beat of rehearsal number ten Villa-Lobos wrote a quarter-note rest that separates the two halves of the central section (see ex. 1.7). The players must not do more than a quarter-note of silence since this would sound like the quarter-note rests with a *fermata* that separates the three main sections of the movement (see ex. 1.2 and 1.9). This would ruin Villa-Lobos’s intended effect of having long breaks only between the main sections of the movement.

A challenging moment in terms of ensemble is the *crescendo ed animando poco a poco*, which begins five measures before rehearsal number twelve (see ex. 1.10). The players have to be careful to perform it *poco a poco* (that is gradually) because if they do an *animando* too soon, the fourth measure before rehearsal number twelve is very likely not to be together. It is better to do the *animando* in the second and third measures after rehearsal number twelve.

**II- Andante melancólico**

Like the B section of the first movement, the second movement is based on a *Modinha*, so its character is lyrical and cantabile. The preference for a texture of one instrument playing the melody with three instruments accompanying suggests that there should be an improvisatory feeling when playing this movement. Vibrato is particularly important since it can add a lot of color and character. The vibrato should be very warm and expressive.
The form of the second movement is explained by Estrella as an A-B-A ternary form, in which the outer sections are preceded by a thirty-two-measure introduction.\textsuperscript{10} The introduction and the first section makes extensive use of an accompaniment, which is based on quarter-notes (see ex. 1.11). The performers have to avoid playing these quarter-notes too heavily. Each of the quarter-notes should have an unwritten quick \textit{diminuendo} and a small separation between them in order to clear the texture. The sextuplets can have small freedoms which may be attained by taking time in the first three notes so that the remaining three are faster. They may be played on an up-bow in order to give the phrase more direction.

Villa-Lobos wrote accents for the quarter-note triplets played by the violins and the viola from four measures before rehearsal number four to two measures before rehearsal number four (see ex. 1.12). According to Estrella, Villa-Lobos’s use of the accent sign can sometimes be disconcerting. Many times he used it to indicate that the notes are to be “sung deeply and individually” and not that the notes must have a percussive attack.\textsuperscript{11} The presence of \textit{sforzandi} on the quarter-notes played by the cello four measures before rehearsal number four and on the quarter-notes played by the violins on the first beat of one measure before rehearsal number four, calls for a real contrast between accent and \textit{sforzando}. Villa-Lobos marked a \textit{diminuendo} for the two quarter-notes with \textit{sforzando} played by the cello. In order to have contrast, the notes with accent may be played with a sustained sound and a fast attack as well as a very intense vibrato in order to achieve that “deeply sung” way of playing mentioned by Estrella.\textsuperscript{12} Regarding the “individual”\textsuperscript{13} treatment of these notes, a small separation between them will certainly make them more individual.

Perhaps due to the fact that many times Villa-Lobos wrote pauses between important sections of a movement and that he always marked beginnings and endings of a section within a movement with a double bar, the players may have a tendency to make a pause between one measure before rehearsal number four and rehearsal number four (see

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\textsuperscript{10} Estrella, \textit{Os Quartetos}, 101.
\textsuperscript{11} Estrella, \textit{Os Quartetos}, 19.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
example 1.12). Unfortunately this cuts the viola phrase, which begins at the quarter-note triplet one measure before number four. In this movement the introduction and the A section overlap, and there shouldn’t be a break between them.

In the next section, the tempo goes up from Andante melancólico to Andantino melancólico. The quarter-note triplets in the melody played by the viola have dashes on them, but separation or a diminuendo on each note are not in the character of this phrase therefore it should be played détaché and sostenuto. This can be confirmed by the recording of Bachianas Brasileiras No. 9 with Villa-Lobos conducting the French Radio and Television Orchestra. In the prelude, which is in a slow tempo, the viola section and later the solo viola play a melody in which some of the quarter-notes have dashes on them. Villa-Lobos made the violas play détaché and legato without any kind of diminuendo in the notes with dashes.

Villa-Lobos wrote a slur over the quarter-note triplets played by the violins and the cello in the three measures before rehearsal number five (see ex. 1.13). Eight measures before rehearsal number six he did the same in the viola melody (see Ex. 1.14). Despite the fact that we are dealing with the same rhythm and articulation, these two passages should not be treated in the same way. During the three measures before rehearsal number five the quarter note triplets played by the violins and cello are an accompaniment; therefore these notes should have an unwritten diminuendo and separation in order to highlight the melody. In the case of the melody played by the viola eight measures before rehearsal number six, the viola should simply articulate by using more bow pressure at the beginning of each note, but without any separation or release.

During the six measures before rehearsal number seven, the first violin plays the melody (see ex. 1.15). The accompaniment becomes more complex and during the long slurred notes of the melody there are some beautiful answers by the second violin that should be highlighted. In order to indicate so, Villa-Lobos wrote accents on them, which may be sung deeply and individually as in the four measures before rehearsal number four (see ex. 1.12)

14 Heitor Villa-Lobos, Bachianas Brasileiras nos. 1, 2, 5 and 9, Orchestre de la Radiodiffusion Française, Heitor Villa-Lobos, EMI CDH 7 61015 2.
The central section *Poco più mosso* is of a simple and childlike character. The way of playing should be light and not *sostenuto*. The notes with dots on them are to be played very off the string and short.

**III- Scherzo: Alegreto (Ligeiro)**

In the third movement, the printed score has the marking *Allegreto leggero*, while the original manuscript displays the title of *Scherzo* to which the composer added *Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. Therefore, the character of this movement should be joking, humorous and light. The *Scherzo* begins with a rhythmic and melodic motive, formed by the first three ascending notes of the main subject of the first movement. All four instruments imitate this motive while the cello provides a *pizzicato* accompaniment based on descending perfect fifths (see ex. 1.16). The sixteenth-notes are to be played very short, light and off the string. The cello’s *pizzicati* should be played softly and with an unwritten *diminuendo* during the four *pizzicato* eighth-notes in order to avoid covering the imitations of the main rhythmical motive. The cello’s *pizzicati* should nevertheless have enough presence to convey the intended guitar-like effect.\(^\text{15}\) The half-note played by the cello five measures before rehearsal number one, has a slur followed by a sixteenth-note rest, therefore the performer is to make sure to play the full value of the half-note but with an unwritten *diminuendo* in order to avoid covering the imitations that are taking place.

Four measures after rehearsal number one, there is a passage that uses an accompaniment based on repeated eighth-notes with accents in various places (see ex. 1.17). Estrella defines its character as “Percussive and barbarian.”\(^\text{16}\) The eighth-notes of the accompaniment are combined with the triplets of the cello main line and produce *sequíálera*. This gives the passage a very Latin American dance character.

Five measures before rehearsal number fourteen, the passage is repeated but with even more accents at unexpected places on the repeated eighth-notes. These measures have some resemblance and could be traced back to a famous passage of the orchestral literature, which also consists of repeated eighth-notes with accents at unexpected places.

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\(^{16}\) Estrella, *Os Quartetos*, 103.
and has also a percussive and barbarian character. This extract is at the beginning of the Dances of the Young Girls in the first part of Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring (see ex. 1.18).

In the Scherzo of Villa-Lobos’s Twelfth Quartet, with its light character the passage is marked *pianissimo*. This is nevertheless, an example of Villa-Lobos’s use of orchestral effects in his string quartets. In order to emphasize its orchestral and percussive character, the eighth-notes may be played on a down-bows, just like they appear in the score of Rite of Spring, but very short and light. When playing the previously mentioned passage in Villa-Lobos’s String Quartet No. 12, a string quartet may have a tendency to rush when playing the repeated eighth-notes. A possible solution is not to think at all about the accents while playing the unaccented eighth-notes. The players may become so excited by the coming accents that they may tend to anticipate them in their minds and therefore they may begin to rush.

Four measures before rehearsal number three a new dance element is introduced in the rhythmic texture. The viola and cello play scales in contrary motion using a rhythm that could be seen as a variation of the *Habanera* rhythm (see ex. 1.19). This *Habanera* figure and the first violin triplets are to be played off the string and very short. Villa-Lobos uses some of the same material but in a new way from rehearsal number five to eight measures after rehearsal number five (see ex. 1.20). Now the music is in cut time and there are repeated quarter-note triplets on the two violins marked *pianissimo* and *staccato*, which should be played very short and off the string. The triplets are superimposed to a new variation of the *Habanera* rhythm. But there is a new melodic element: the cello plays a melody in parallel fifths, a quotation of Villa-Lobos’s cantata *Mandú-Çárárá*. This melody has a mysterious and menacing character. Playing it with no vibrato makes it even more mysterious. Exaggerating the *crescendo-diminuendo* dynamics also helps to emphasize its character.

A new subject is introduced from rehearsal number eight to six measures after rehearsal number eight in the viola and cello (see ex. 1.21). The dotted half-notes of the melody are slurred, but playing them with separate bows will produce more volume and

more convincing accents. An unwritten *diminuendo* on each of these dotted half-notes and on the dotted quarter-notes will produce a more transparent texture.

Four measures before rehearsal number ten, the violins and viola begin a *legato cantabile dolce* phrase, but dropping the dynamic from *forte* to *mezzo forte*, will help to highlight the main line which is played by the cello (see ex. 1.22).

**IV- Alegro (ben ritmado)**

Estrella calls the fourth movement “the less full of ideas, the less dense and the less structural of this quartet.”¹⁹ In 1953, after a performance of String Quartet No. 12, the commentator of Musical America wrote the following about the fourth movement: “The closing Allegro is engagingly busy, until the second or third of its several codettas, each promising the end, make the remaining ones look superfluous.”²⁰ These comments suggest that the form of this movement is an issue. The form is a ternary A-B-A form with a twenty-one-measure *coda*. Nevertheless, Villa-Lobos’s use of long notes with *fermatas* at the ends of sections combined with the brevity of the sections and the habit of some performers of making a break whenever there is a double-bar, can make the movement sound fragmentary, like a lot of *codettas*. It is important therefore not to take too much time in the *fermatas* and it is particularly important not to separate between sections at all except before the recapitulation, where Villa-Lobos actually wrote a comma.

The demanding and virtuoso writing for the string instruments is one of the most challenging technical aspects in Villa-Lobos’s works in general.²¹ This aspect of his style is also present in String Quartet No. 12, which includes a use of long sections of melody in parallel fourths played by the same instrument. The eight measures after rehearsal number eight are a good example of this (see ex. 1.23). The tempo is fast and the texture is homorhythmic. The second violin plays ascending scales in parallel fourths while the cello plays descending scales in parallel fourths. This makes intonation a difficult

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¹⁹ Estrella, *Os Quartetos*, 104.
performance aspect. In an interview for *The Strad* magazine, the players of the Latin American Quartet speak about this kind of passages and they point out the need of revoicing some passages.\(^{22}\) The previously mentioned passage may be revoiced in a manner which has the advantage of making the instruments that play double stops play sixths instead of thirds and fourths (see ex. 1.24).

It is important to consider that this movement must have a relation to the three precedent movements and be a convincing ending to the piece. One way of doing this is by emphasizing Villa-Lobos’s use of loud sonorities within the string quartet medium.\(^{23}\) Nine measures before the end, using as many open strings and harmonics as possible in the cello part will favor these kinds of sonorities.

\(^{22}\) Smith, “Spicing up the Harmonies,” 27.
\(^{23}\) Estrella, *Os Quartetos*, 16.
Musical Examples for Chapter 1

Ex. 1.1. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From the beginning to two measures before rehearsal number one.
Ex. 1.2. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From rehearsal number twelve to five measures after rehearsal number twelve.

Ex. 1.3. Villa-Lobos: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 9*. *Fugue: Poco apressado*. From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number two.
Ex. 1.4. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: \textit{Alegro}. From rehearsal number one to three measures after rehearsal number one.

Ex. 1.5. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: \textit{Alegro}. From rehearsal number thirteen to three measures after rehearsal number thirteen.
Ex. 1.6. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From five measures before rehearsal number eight to one measure before rehearsal number eight.

Ex. 1.7. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From five measures before rehearsal number ten to rehearsal number ten.

Ex. 1.9. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From rehearsal number eight to seven measures after rehearsal number eight.

Ex. 1.10. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From five measures before rehearsal number twelve to one measure before rehearsal number twelve.
Ex. 1.11. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From the beginning to four measures before rehearsal number one.

Ex. 1.12. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From four measures before rehearsal number four to two measures after rehearsal number four.
Ex. 1.13. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From three measures before rehearsal number five to one measure after rehearsal number five.

Ex. 1.15. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From six measures before rehearsal number seven to one measure before rehearsal number seven.
String Quartet, No. 12
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Ex. 1.16. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro). From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number one.
Ex. 1.17. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From four measures after rehearsal number one to twelve measures after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 1.18. Stravinsky: The Rite of Spring. The Augurs of Spring: Dances of the Young Girls. *Tempo giusto*. From rehearsal number thirteen to one measure before rehearsal number fourteen.

Ex. 1.19. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From four measures before rehearsal number three to one measure before rehearsal number three.
Ex. 1.20. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From rehearsal number five to seven measures after rehearsal number five.
Ex. 1.21. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From rehearsal number eight to seven measures after rehearsal number eight.

Ex. 1.22. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From four measures before rehearsal number ten to two measures after rehearsal number ten.

From rehearsal number eight to seven measures after rehearsal number eight.


From rehearsal number eight to seven measures after rehearsal number eight (revoiced by Juan José Gutiérrez).

From one measure after rehearsal number thirteen to the end of the movement.
CHAPTER 2
A COMPARISON OF THREE RECORDINGS OF VILLA-LOBOS’S STRING QUARTET NO. 12

I- Alegro

The Bessler-Reis Quartet’s tempo is faithful to the metronome marking of the score: quarter-note equals one-hundred beats per minute. Regarding articulation, their general approach is as follows: the eighth-notes are played separated, *martelé* but not too short. There is a clear contrast between sixteenth-notes with dots on them, which are played off the string, and sixteenth-notes without dots on them, which are played *détaché*. The Danubius Quartet’s tempo is similar to that of the Bessler-Reis Quartet. The Danubius Quartet plays the eighth-notes separated, almost off the string and much shorter than the Bessler-Reis Quartet. The sixteenth-notes are played off the string whether they have dots on them or not. The Latin American Quartet plays with the slowest tempo of all three versions. Their tempo is approximately one hundred beats per minute. They play the eighth-notes very short and the sixteenth-notes off the string. Due to this, there is no contrast between sixteenth-notes with and without dots on them.

There is a certain lack of consistency in the way the Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the long notes during the first movement. For example: during the four measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 2.1), the first violinist Bernardo Bessler and the violist Marie-Christine Springuel play the half-notes with a slight separation between them and with an unwritten quick *diminuendo* on each half-note. At rehearsal number five, the half-notes are played with a sustained sound and without separation (see ex. 2.2). In general, the Bessler-Reis Quartet’s approach tends towards a sustained and *legato* sound in the longer notes and towards playing the short notes longer than the other two ensembles. In the two previously mentioned passages, the Latin American Quartet plays each of the half-notes with a quick unwritten *diminuendo*. The Danubius Quartet plays these passages with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each half-note and a separation between them.

The differences in articulation between the three versions have a deep effect on the resulting musical character of the first movement. The Latin American Quartet is perhaps...
the most energetic and their playing displays great nervous excitement. They owe this quality to their preference for short and separate articulations. These articulations involve more verticality on the bow-stroke and an active vibrato. They play the eighth-notes that appear from rehearsal number six to five measures after rehearsal number six with accent and with a vertical, almost scratchy, off the string bow stroke (see ex. 2.3). Sometimes they add accents that are not on the score or on the manuscript. At rehearsal number two, they attack the F-sharp with fast bow speed and a percussive bow stroke followed by a quick *diminuendo* (see ex. 2.1). At rehearsal number four, the violist Javier Montiel attacks the dotted half-note with an unwritten strong vertical accent (see ex. 2.4).

The Bessler-Reis Quartet uses separate articulations, but this ensemble tends to sustain the eighth-notes for a longer period of time than the other two quartets. The Bessler-Reis Quartet expresses an energetic character, but there is a much heavier quality in their sound. This heaviness is reinforced by their use of only one kind of vibrato combined with a general lack of use of short articulations. The version of the Danubius Quartet is the opposite of the Bessler-Reis Quartet. The Danubius Quartet plays with the lightest sound found in the three versions in this study. In general they play with a lot of elegance and avoid any kind of percussive or aggressive sound. They do so to such a degree that the listener may have the impression that in terms of character and style they approach Villa-Lobos’s piece as if it was a quartet by Haydn or Mozart. The Danubius Quartet’s way of playing tends to emphasize the European neoclassical refined aspect of the piece. Despite this, Cecilia Bodolai, the violist of the Danubius Quartet plays an unwritten accent on the dotted half-note at rehearsal number four (see example 2.4). After this measure, the Danubius Quartet makes a short break before the A tempo one measure after rehearsal number four.

During the central section, the rhythmic approaches of the Bessler-Reis and the Danubius Quartets are very similar since both ensembles tend towards a very steady and regular tempo. They also take the same rhythmic freedoms on the fourth beat of the second measure before rehearsal number ten and on the triplets of the first violin one measure before rehearsal number ten (see ex. 2.5). These passages are nevertheless an example of the previously mentioned difference of concepts of sound held by the two
ensembles. The Latin American Quartet plays the central section with the same lightness of sound as the Danubius Quartet, but they add to it much more rhythmic freedom, and a greater concern about color. Alvaro Bitrán, the cellist of the Latin American Quartet, takes some time in the fourth beat of one measure before rehearsal number nine (see ex. 2.6). He also makes an unwritten *glissando* from the E-natural to the D-natural at rehearsal number nine. Saúl Bitrán, the first violinist of the same ensemble, takes time on the triplet at the fourth beat of the third measure after rehearsal number nine (see ex. 2.7). He also takes time on the triplet at the fourth beat of the second measure before rehearsal number ten and then takes much more time than the other two first violinists on the triplets of one measure before rehearsal number ten (see ex. 2.5). Arón Bitrán, the second violinist of the Latin American Quartet, takes time on the quintuplet at the fourth beat of the third measure before rehearsal number eleven (see ex. 2.8). Apart from these freedoms there are many smaller ones, which create an almost improvisatory character. In general, the Latin American Quartet tends to exaggerate the *rallentandi* and other tempo markings more than the two other quartets.

Thanks to the clarity of texture achieved by the Latin American and the Danubius quartets it is obvious that the viola has the main line during the three measures before rehearsal number sixteen (see ex. 2.9). In the case of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, the fact that the cellist plays the whole-notes on this passage *forte* with a sustained sound makes the viola line less obvious to the listener.

The Bessler-Reis and the Danubius Quartets play at rehearsal number fifteen exactly as it appears in the score and manuscript, with the second violin, viola and cello playing the main motive of the first movement in octaves (see ex. 2.10). The Latin American Quartet removed the viola and cello in this measure and left the second violin to play alone against the slurred whole-note of the first violin.

**II- Andante melancólico**

The Danubius and Bessler-Reis Quartets have similar rhythmic approaches to this movement. In these two versions the tempo is exact and steady, without many freedoms. This is particularly evident in the sextuplets of the introduction. The Latin American
Quartet takes some rhythmic freedom in the sextuplets and their tempo of approximately forty-five beats per minute is the slowest of all three versions (see ex. 2.11). Both the Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets play the quarter-note accompaniment of the opening section of the second movement with a quick unwritten diminuendo on each quarter-note. The Danubius Quartet adds to this a separation between the quarter-notes while the Bessler-Reis Quartet makes virtually no separation. The Latin American Quartet plays the quarter-notes with an unwritten diminuendo and separation, but when the phrase becomes more intense, one measure after rehearsal number two, the quarter notes become longer and consequently there is not any separation at all between them until the fourth measure after rehearsal number two, when the dynamic and the intensity diminish (see ex. 2.12).

In terms of character, the Bessler-Reis and the Latin American Quartets convey a romantic, cantabile and expressive character. The first violinist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet achieves a particularly warm and expressive vibrato at the fifth, sixth and seventh measures before the end of the movement (see ex. 2.13). This ensemble has a general tendency to play with a bigger sound than the other two quartets. The Danubius Quartet is very expressive during the second movement, but their extremely exact and light way of playing, combined with their tendency to avoid any sort of aggressiveness on the accents and sforzandi, produces a character that is more classical than modern or romantic. It is particularly interesting to note that two measures before number three, Ilona Ribli, the cellist of the Danubius Quartet plays A-flat instead of the A-natural that is written in both score and manuscript (see ex. 2.14).

The Bessler-Reis and the Danubius Quartets play the quarter-note triplets that appear during the four measures before rehearsal number four, détaché with a lot of vibrato (see ex. 2.15). Both ensembles respect the crescendo-diminuendo markings, but the Danubius Quartet exaggerates them more while the Bessler-Reis Quartet exaggerates the sforzandi more. The Latin American Quartet plays these quarter-note triplets in a very different way, with fast bow speed at the beginning of each note, fast vibrato and separation between the quarter-notes. This way of playing makes the ensemble’s rendering of these measures very expressive and contrasting with the rest of the introduction. The Danubius
Quartet makes a big break between one measure before rehearsal number four and rehearsal number four. This break is not present in the other versions and cuts the viola phrase that begins on the quarter-note triplet one measure before rehearsal number four.

The violists from the three quartets play the melody that starts one measure after rehearsal number four, détaché and sostenuto. The Danubius Quartet achieves a clear dynamic contrast between the melody, which is marked forte, and the accompaniment, which is marked pianissimo. Six measures before rehearsal number seven; the Danubius Quartet achieves a clear texture and an appropriate balance (see ex. 2.16). The first violin is heard in the foreground, while the answers of the second violin are heard but with a softer dynamic that creates the sensation of a middleground. The viola and cello remain in the background. The Latin American Quartet also achieves this textural clarity during this passage, but in the answers of the second violin, the accented notes are played with an unwritten quick diminuendo and separation between them. This helps to create more contrast between foreground and middleground. In the version of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, the answers of the second violin are lost due to the fact that the cellist and violist play with a loud dynamic and a sustained sound.

In the central section, Poco più mosso, the cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the quarter-notes with an unwritten diminuendo on each of them and with a separation between them (see ex. 2.17). Eight measures after rehearsal number nine, he does not observe the marked piano dynamic and his line sounds as loud as the main line in the second violin. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the half-notes in the violins and the cello with a sustained sound from the sixth measure after number fifteen to the eighth measure after rehearsal number fifteen (see ex. 2.18). Because of this, it is possible to hear the four players, but the attention of the listener may not be drawn to the main melodic line which is played by the viola. The Latin American Quartet plays this section at a faster tempo than the Bessler-Reis Quartet. The players observe their marked dynamics and this helps to create a very clear texture. From the sixth measure after rehearsal number fifteen to the eighth measure after rehearsal number fifteen, the first violin’s sustained note is played piano. The half-notes of the second violin and cello are played with an unwritten diminuendo on each of them and with a separation between them. This takes the attention
of the listener directly to the viola line, in which the eighth-notes are played very short and off the string, creating a big contrast with the long notes of the other instruments. The Danubius Quartet’s approach to this passage is once again light and elegant. Six measures after rehearsal number fifteen the texture is clear thanks to the appropriate use of the dynamics: the first violinist plays *pianissimo*, the second violinist Adél Miklós and the cellist Ilona Ribli play *piano* with a quick unwritten *diminuendo* on each half-note, but without as much separation as in the version of the Latin American Quartet. The viola plays the eighth-notes much more separated, but *martelé* and longer than in the version of the Latin American Quartet.

The Danubius Quartet makes a separation between one measure before rehearsal number nineteen and rehearsal number nineteen (see ex. 2.19). This cuts the cello phrase that starts on the quarter-note triplet one measure before rehearsal number nineteen. During the triplets and eighth-notes that the second violinist, violist and cellist play from eight measures before the end to five measures before the end, the Danubius Quartet makes a very effective gradual *diminuendo* that is not marked, but anticipates the fact that the movement is about to end (see ex. 2.20). The eighth-note triplets and the eighth-notes are played on the string and separated. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays these notes off the string when they are triplets and on the string when they become eighth-notes. This ensemble also makes a slight *diminuendo* five measures before the end and the four last measures are almost inaudible. The Latin American Quartet plays this passage with a more aggressive off the string bow stroke and without the *diminuendo*.

**III- Scherzo: Alegreto (Ligeiro)**

In this movement, the three quartets play the sixteenth-notes with a short off the string articulation. The Latin American and Danubius Quartets play with a light sound. The Bessler-Reis Quartet in contrast plays with a much heavier sound.

The cellists of the Latin American and the Danubius Quartets play the main motive of the movement *mezzo forte* and lower their dynamic in the descending *pizzicato* perfect fifths in the two opening measures. The cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet plays these
pizzicati without lowering the dynamic and therefore his line interferes with the
imitations that are taking place in the two violins and the viola (see ex. 2.21).

Five measures before rehearsal number one, the three cellists shorten the half-note to
almost half its value. None of the cellists make a significant diminuendo on these notes.
At rehearsal number one, the cellist of the Danubius and the Latin American Quartets
play the accented notes with separation and an unwritten diminuendo (see ex. 2.22). The
cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet does not separate but does make some diminuendo. The
violinists of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, Bernardo and Michel Bessler, play with a much
heavier off the string bow-stroke than those of the two other quartets from rehearsal
number one to two measures after rehearsal number one (see ex. 2.23).

Four measures after rehearsal number one, the Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the eighth-
notes very short and off the string. The cello eighth-note triplets five and six measures
after rehearsal number one are played off the string, not too short and in the first of them
the cellist takes some time on the first note of the triplet, which gives the passage a more
lyrical character (see ex. 2.24). The accents are more horizontal than vertical and lyrical
in character. The Danubius Quartet plays in a similar way, but lighter and more
rhythmically exact. The Latin American Quartet plays the eighth-notes very short and off
the string. They play the accented notes with a more percussive attack, especially the
attacks of the dotted-half notes, the half-notes and the quarter-note of the third beat of the
tenth measure after rehearsal number one in the first violin. These notes are played with a
sustained sound and for their full value.

The Latin American Quartet is very effective in passing the main line from the first
violin and viola to the second violin and cello from the thirteenth measure after rehearsal
number one to the sixteenth measure after rehearsal number one (see ex. 2.25). This is
achieved by making an unwritten diminuendo in the long notes and by shortening their
value to a dotted quarter-note. The Danubius Quartet also achieves textural clarity in this
passage, but they make less diminuendo and less separation. The Bessler-Reis Quartet
sustains the sound in the long notes in this passage and does virtually no separations. The
Latin American and the Danubius Quartets make a crescendo during the sequence from
four measures before rehearsal number three to one measure before rehearsal number three. The Bessler-Reis Quartet does not make any crescendo in this passage.

The Latin American Quartet separates between the dotted half-notes played by the viola and cello as well as the dotted quarter-notes from rehearsal number eight to the sixth measure after rehearsal number eight (see ex. 2.26). Meanwhile, the quarter-notes of the first violin are played short, off the string and piano. The Danubius Quartet does not separate between the dotted half-notes, but they play them on separate bows. The Bessler-Reis Quartet makes a slight separation between the dotted half-notes.

At rehearsal number ten, the cellist of the Latin American Quartet makes a glissando from the G-natural eighth-note to the C-natural quarter-note (see ex. 2.27). This glissando is not in the score or the manuscript and does not appear in the other two versions.

In the version of the Danubius and the Latin American Quartets, there is a clear contrast between the staccato quarter-notes and the dashed quarter-notes that appear from six before rehearsal number eleven to three after rehearsal number eleven (see ex. 2.28). In the version of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, there is no contrast since in both cases the quarter-notes are played off the string.

The cellists of the Latin American and the Bessler-Reis Quartets make a separation between each of the phrases from the second measure after rehearsal number eleven to one measure before rehearsal number twelve (see ex. 2.29). They treat the passage as two two-bar phrases and an eleven-bar phrase. The cellist of the Danubius Quartet treats it as one four-bar phrase and one eleven-bar phrase.

**IV- Alegro (bem ritmado)**

The three ensembles make breaks after every double bar of this movement and the result is that the fourth movement sounds like fragments put together instead of one single movement. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays with the slowest tempo of the three versions. This tempo more or less sets a quarter-note as equal to one hundred beats per minute. They also play this movement lighter than the other movements.

At the first measure of the movement, the Bessler-Reis Quartet’s first violinist and cellist play détaché, while the two corresponding players in the Latin American Quartet
play off the string and very short (see ex. 2.30). The Danubius Quartet plays this passage off the string but with a longer bow stroke than the Latin American Quartet.

At the sixth and seventh measures before rehearsal number one, the first violinist and the cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet play the long note with a sustained sound and it is difficult to hear the second violin and the viola. Seven measures before rehearsal number one, in the three ensembles, the second and viola play their sixteenth-notes off the string, but the bow stroke of the Bessler-Reis Quartet is longer than those used by the other two ensembles. The half-notes of the second violin and viola are sustained in the three versions from five measures before rehearsal number one to one measure before rehearsal number one. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the sixteenth-notes that are not slurred with a détaché bow struck beginning at rehearsal number one (see ex. 2.31). The Latin American and the Danubius Quartets play them with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string.

Alceu Reis, the cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, sustains his half-notes and there is no separation between the half-note and the quarter-note from two measures after rehearsal number one until two measures before rehearsal number two (see ex. 2.32). The cellist of the Latin American Quartet plays the half-notes in this passage with an unwritten diminuendo on each of them but with no separation between them. The cellist of the Danubius Quartet plays these notes with separation but no diminuendo.

The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the quarter-note triplets with dots that appear seven measures before rehearsal number three in the violins on the string with separation (see ex. 2.33). These triplets are different from the triplets with dashes that the cello begins five measures before rehearsal number three, which have no separation but in which each note is articulated using more right arm weight in the attack of the note and making an unwritten diminuendo immediately afterwards.

One measure before rehearsal number three, the violist of the Danubius Quartet does not take much time on the dotted quarter-note fermata and plays it with a quick unwritten diminuendo. The violists of the Latin American and the Bessler-Reis Quartets take more time on this fermata. The violist of the Latin American Quartet does such a big diminuendo on the fermata that there is almost a break between the dotted quarter and the
eighth-note. The Bessler-Reis Quartet takes some time in the measure before the fermata in order to prepare it.

At rehearsal number three, the second violinists of the Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets play the accented quarter and eighth-notes détaché without any percussive attack. The violinist of the Latin American Quartet avoids any percussive accent, but he separates between the notes.

The Danubius Quartet plays the Poco meno section that begins at rehearsal number four with a very romantic and free feeling, but rhythmic freedoms are minor (see ex. 2.34). The Danubius and the Latin American Quartets are extremely careful to observe their dynamics in this section. One measure before rehearsal number five, the cellist of the Danubius Quartet takes some time before she attacks the first beat of rehearsal number five (see ex. 2.35). During the Poco meno section, this ensemble does not make any difference in the way of playing the eighth-notes with and without accents since all of them are played détaché. The Latin American Quartet makes a clear difference, since the first violinist plays his unaccented eighth-notes détaché and the cellist plays his accented eighth-notes on the seven measures before rehearsal number five on the string with separation between them. In the versions of the Danubius and the Latin American Quartets, the eighth-notes with dots on them are played separated and on the string. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays them off the string.

In general, the long notes have an unwritten diminuendo within pianissimo. Four measures before rehearsal number six, the violist and cellist of the Latin American Quartet play their quarter and eighth-notes long but off the string (see ex. 2.36).

The Danubius Quartet plays the triplets in the Alegro più mosso with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string (see ex. 2.37). The Latin American and the Bessler-Reis Quartets play them off the string, but the tempo of the Bessler-Reis Quartet is much slower. The three ensembles achieve a very clear texture when the second violin, the viola and the first violin consecutively take the main line during the passage that begins at rehearsal number seven (see ex. 2.38). However the Bessler-Reis Quartet’s texture is less clear since the first violin plays its syncopations at rehearsal number seven and one
measure after rehearsal number seven sustained and \textit{forte}. After this the texture becomes clearer.

The sixteenth-notes and triplets in the final \textit{Poco più mosso} are played by the Danubius Quartet off the string, but not too short (see ex. 2.39). The Danubius and the Latin American Quartets play the accented triplets short and off the string. These same notes are played on the string and \textit{détaché} by the Danubius Quartet. Three measures after rehearsal number twelve, none of the quartets achieves a feeling of textural clarity, but this is probably due to the way the music is written. The Bessler-Reis Quartet takes time in the fourth and fifth measures before the end in an effective and convincing manner (see ex. 2.40).
Musical Examples for Chapter 2

Ex. 2.1. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From rehearsal number two to three measures after rehearsal number two.

Ex. 2.2. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: Alegro. From rehearsal number five to one measure after rehearsal number five.
Ex. 2.3. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From rehearsal number six to four measures after rehearsal number six.

Ex. 2.4. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From one measure before rehearsal number four to one measure after rehearsal number four.
Ex. 2.5. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From five measures before rehearsal number ten to one measure after rehearsal number ten.

Ex. 2.6. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From one measure before rehearsal number nine to rehearsal number nine.

Ex. 2.7. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From rehearsal number nine to four measures after rehearsal number nine.
Ex. 2.8. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From rehearsal number ten to one measure before rehearsal number eleven.

Ex. 2.9. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From three measures before rehearsal number sixteen to one measure before rehearsal number sixteen.
Ex. 2.10. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. First movement: *Alegro*. From rehearsal number fifteen to two measures after rehearsal number fifteen.

Ex. 2.11. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From the beginning to four measures before rehearsal number one.

Ex. 2.13. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico.* From seven measures before the end to five measures before the end.

Ex. 2.15. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: Andante melancólico. From four measures before rehearsal number four to two measures after rehearsal number four.

Ex. 2.16. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: Andante melancólico. From six measures before rehearsal number seven to one measure before rehearsal number seven.

Ex. 2.18. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From ten measures before rehearsal number sixteen to five measures before rehearsal number sixteen.
Ex. 2.19. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From one measure before rehearsal number nineteen to two measures after rehearsal number nineteen.

Ex. 2.20. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Second movement: *Andante melancólico*. From eight measures before the end to five measures before the end.
Ex. 2.21. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number one.

Ex. 2.22. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From rehearsal number one to one measure after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 2.23. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro). From rehearsal number one to two measures after rehearsal number one.

Ex. 2.24. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro). From four measures after rehearsal number one to twelve measures after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 2.25. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From eleven measures before rehearsal number three to seven measures before rehearsal number three.

Ex. 2.26. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From rehearsal number eight to seven measures after rehearsal number eight.
Ex. 2.27. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From four measures before rehearsal number ten to two measures after rehearsal number ten.
Ex. 2.28. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From six measures before rehearsal number eleven to ten measures after rehearsal number eleven.
Ex. 2.29. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Third movement: *Scherzo, Alegreto (Ligeiro)*. From two measures after rehearsal number eleven to one measure before rehearsal number twelve.

Ex. 2.30. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado)*. From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number one.
Ex. 2.31. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado).* From rehearsal number one to four measures after rehearsal number one.

Ex. 2.32. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado).* From rehearsal number one to ten measures after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 2.33. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: Alegro (bem ritmado). From seven measures before rehearsal number three to one measure after rehearsal number three.
Ex. 2.34. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado)*. From rehearsal number four to three measures after rehearsal number four.

Ex. 2.35. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado)*. From two measures before rehearsal number five to one measure after rehearsal number five.
Ex. 2.36. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado)*. From four measures before rehearsal number six to one measure before rehearsal number six.

Ex. 2.37. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado)*. From rehearsal number eight to seven measures after rehearsal number eight.
Ex. 2.38. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado).* From rehearsal number seven to nine measures after rehearsal number seven.
Ex. 2.39. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado)*. From rehearsal number twelve to five measures after rehearsal number twelve.
Ex. 2.40. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 12. Fourth movement: *Alegro (bem ritmado).* From one measure after rehearsal number thirteen to the end of the movement.
CHAPTER 3
PERFORMANCE ASPECTS OF STRING QUARTET NO.13

I- Allegro non troppo

The Brazilian scholar Arnaldo Estrella explains the form of the first movement of String Quartet No. 13 as an A-B-A ternary form. He does not directly say so, but he implies it in his book about Villa-Lobos’s quartets when he says that in the first movement: “A central section, of vertical structure, presents more clear tonal characteristics.”¹ When Estrella mentions “A central section”,² he is referring to the thirty-two-measure section that begins at rehearsal number six, where Villa-Lobos makes use of homorhythmic texture (see ex. 3.1). Thinking of this section as the central section of an A-B-A form makes sense when this form is seen in the context of Villa-Lobos’s usual compositional procedures during his late period and of his whole production.³ Villa-Lobos constructed the central section of the first movement of String Quartet No. 13 with two sixteen-measure subsections in which the second is basically a transposed repeat of the first. This is similar to how the central section of the first movement of String Quartet No. 12 is constructed. The form of the first movement of String Quartet No. 13 could therefore be defined as an A section of sixty four measures which is divided into two thirty-two-measure subsections, a thirty-two-measure central section which is divided into two sixteen-measure subsections, and a recapitulation of the first half of the A section plus a ten-measure coda. The fact that Villa-Lobos did not include the second half of the A section in the recapitulation, but added a coda instead, is also consistent with his handling of the ternary A-B-A form in works of his late period such as the first movement of String Quartet No. 12.

It may be difficult to grasp the form of String Quartet No. 13 for the listener who is not familiar with the piece. This may be due to the fact that the triplet rhythm used within a homorhythmic texture is predominant in the second half of the A section, which begins at

² Ibid.
rehearsal number three (see ex. 3.2), as well as in the B section. Because of this, both sections may sound very similar. Although the triplet rhythm appears in the first half of the A section; it is not as predominant. This may create the impression that the second half of the A section and the B section form one single section. In this case, the listener could feel that the form just heard is an A-B-A ternary form where the first section is thirty-two measures long, the second is sixty-four measures long and is followed by a recapitulation of the thirty-two-measure A section plus a coda.

Villa-Lobos’s use of a fermata on the last note of the first half of the A section, plus the change of tempo from Allegro non troppo to Più mosso that happens between the two halves of the A section may contribute to create the sensation of two different thirty-two-measure sections instead of one sixty-four-measure A section (see ex. 3.2). One measure before the central Più mosso (one measure before rehearsal number six, (Ex. 3.1), there is a rallentando on the whole-note, which also creates the sensation of the ending of a section and the beginning of another. This rallentando is consistent with Estrella’s explanation of the Più mosso as the central section of the movement, but it may confuse a listener and make him think that this is a third section. If this was the case, then the listener may think that the form is an A-B-C-A form. After these considerations, it is logical to conclude that the form of this movement presents some ambiguities. The performers should be aware that one of the things that unifies the A section is the interval of a minor second. This interval appears three times in the subject of the fugato (see ex. 3.3) and it reappears from two measures after rehearsal number one until nine measures after rehearsal number one in the second violin and in the bottom part of the cello double stops (see ex. 3.4). It also appears at the beginning of the second half of the A section, from rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three in the descending triplets of the second violin, viola and cello (see. Ex 3.2).

In order to help the listener to get the correct feeling of the form, the performers have to help to make the intervallic connection between these passages. When playing the passage that begins two measures after rehearsal number one (see ex. 3.4), it makes sense to emphasize the two external voices of the homophonic texture since the minor second

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4 Estrella, Os Quartetos, 106.
interval is predominant in these voices. This interval may be also emphasized in the first violin part by playing with a louder dynamic the places in which minor seconds appear and give less importance to the other intervals. On the whole-notes that appear in the first violin from rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three (see ex. 3.2), the performer has to do a quick diminuendo after playing the sforzando in order to avoid interfering with the homophonic texture which is composed of descending minor seconds.

Regarding the opening fugato, the main performance aspect is to create a clear texture in which the entrances of the subject are emphasized and clearly heard. Observing the written dynamics, is the principal means to achieve this texture since the use of separate articulations is not in accordance with the character of this passage (see ex. 3.5). Instead the passage should be played legato in the slurred notes and détaché in the separate notes. Due to the need of playing very softly, the possibility of playing an unwritten diminuendo in some of the long notes is limited.

In this movement, Villa-Lobos used four different tempi. The opening is marked Allegro non troppo. The second half of the A section is marked Più mosso. The B section is marked Più mosso and at the recapitulation the tempo of the opening Allegro non troppo is retaken. This disposition of the tempi creates a tendency to a gradual increase of speed, followed by a sudden decrease of speed at the recapitulation. This may be used by the performers to create a feeling of increasing tension and a sense of a climax during the B section. It may also be used to create a sense of tempo unity between the two halves of the A section and a contrast of tempo with the central section. This can be achieved by playing the first Più mosso not much faster than the opening Allegro non troppo and by playing the B section at a considerably faster tempo.

In order to further clarify the musical form to the listener, the performers should avoid any break right before rehearsal number three (see ex. 3.2). Neither should they make a break before the a tempo that starts the second half of the B section four measures after rehearsal number seven (see ex. 3.6). The performers may make a break before the central Più mosso, which starts at rehearsal number six (see ex. 3.1) as well as before the recapitulation.
Villa-Lobos wrote dashes on all the eighth-notes of the triplets from rehearsal number six to three measures after rehearsal number six, at the opening of the B section (see ex. 3.1). These dashes provide an opportunity to create contrast of articulation between the A section, where the triplets have no dashes at all, and the B section where many of the triplets do. This brings up the issue of Villa-Lobos’s particular use of the articulation markings already mentioned in reference to String Quartet No. 12.\(^5\) In the A section, there are dashes on almost every note from three measures after rehearsal number one to eight measures after rehearsal number one (see ex. 3.4). Used within a homorhythmic texture with chromatic harmony, they seem to call for an intense way of playing every note without separation. From rehearsal number six to three measures after rehearsal number six, the dashes also appear within a homophonic texture, but the harmony is more diatonic (see ex. 3.1). Playing these triplets on the string but with separation and an unwritten *diminuendo* on each note, will give them a more light character, contrasting to the sustained triplets and dashed notes of the A section. The accents that appear from rehearsal number six to three measures after rehearsal number six happen just after triplets and therefore have a close association with them in the mind of the listener. These accents should be played as strong lyrical accents, without any vertical percussiveness. This will create even more contrast with the A section where there is no association whatsoever between triplets as thematic material and accents. To add more contrast, the *diminuendo* in the triplets in the second half of the A section for example those from rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three (see ex. 3.2), should have the character of a sigh. This can be achieved by exaggerating the *diminuendo* and by playing with an intense vibrato. In order to create even more contrast between the A and the B sections, the performers should also take advantage of the dark and intense color of the G-string of the violin and of the C-string of the viola and cello in the previously mentioned passage.

\(^5\) Ibid, 19.
II- Scherzo: Vivace

In both the score and manuscript the second movement is titled *Scherzo*. The tempo indication is *Vivace*. Therefore its character is supposed to be joking and lively. The metric is 6/8 in two. The eighth-notes are to be played off the string (see ex. 3.7). The *appoggiature* are to be played on the beat and the performer should be careful to notice that the accented note with the *appoggiatura* does not have a dot on it; therefore it should be slightly longer than the eighth-notes with a dot on them. This gives the opportunity of playing the accent with bow speed rather than with a vertical attack. It also allows the performer to use more bow on the accented notes.

The accented *sforzando* followed by *diminuendo* at rehearsal number two, should be played on a down bow (see ex. 3.8). The attack may have some verticality, but more important are bow speed and vibrato, both of which should be very fast. The *diminuendo* should be exaggerated. In this passage as well as in the rest of the movement, the performers should avoid heaviness and play with a light sound in order to create the necessary joking character.

In the four-bar phrase that starts at rehearsal number four, at the beginning of the *Poco più mosso*, observing the *subito piano* which appears three bars after rehearsal number four is very important in order to create the necessary joking character (see ex. 3.9). This measure should sound as an unexpected addition to the previous three measures and the performers may play a slight separation before it. It may also have the character of an echo, and therefore the *piano* dynamic should be exaggerated.

In passages such as the one at the second and third measures after rehearsal number seven (see ex. 3.10), where two instruments have long notes while the other two play the main material, the two players who have long notes should be careful to observe the *piano* after the *sforzando*, in order to avoid interfering with the other two who have a forte dynamic marking.

The performers may express the joking character of this movement from four measures before rehearsal number eight to three measures after rehearsal number eight (see ex. 3.11). In this passage, the huge contrast between the *piano* dynamic in the second violin and the viola and the *fortissimo* of the first violin and the cello is almost
incongruous. The players should prove this by playing a very soft piano and a very aggressive fortissimo, in which they may use vertical and percussive accents.

The players may take some time during the two measures before the Meno and make a short break before it, in order to create the sensation of the end of a section and the beginning of another (see ex. 3.12). During the central section, which begins at rehearsal number ten, the articulation should be legato and détaché. The players should be careful to follow the marked diminuendi from rehearsal number ten to two measures after rehearsal number ten. This will result in a clear texture where the motif presented by the cello and imitated by the three other instruments is clearly highlighted. A transition to the A section begins three measures after rehearsal number eleven (see ex. 3.13). This transition may be played with no vibrato from ten measures before rehearsal number twelve to six measures before rehearsal number twelve. Playing three quarter-notes per bow without separation but articulating with the weight of the right arm may help to create the desired color. Villa-Lobos anticipates the thematic material for the recapitulation from five measures before rehearsal number twelve until one measure before rehearsal number twelve. The eighth-notes that begin five measures before rehearsal number twelve may be played off the string in a similar manner to those that are found in the outer sections. This will create a feeling of anticipation of the recapitulation and a feeling of satisfaction and arrival when the subject of the recapitulation begins. Five measures before rehearsal number twelve, the viola and cello should play their marked piano dynamic in order to give preeminence to the first and second violins and therefore have a clear texture.

At rehearsal number twelve and one after rehearsal number twelve, Villa-Lobos wrote sforzandi and accents on the eighth-notes in the second violin, viola and cello parts. This is different from the exposition, where he wrote sforzando and accent only upon the eighth-note of the first measure. The eighth-notes in the second measure have accents without sforzandi. This is an example of Villa-Lobos’s use of different articulation markings when the same material is recapitulated. As in the case of the recapitulation of the first movement of String Quartet No. 12, the recapitulation of the second movement of String Quartet No. 13 is a transposition of the exposition with unchanged rhythm,
disposition of the parts and texture. This could create a feeling of monotony, which could be lessened by a more vigorous way of playing the eighth-notes. Therefore the articulation difference between exposition and recapitulation serves the music and should be observed.

The coda, which begins at rehearsal number nineteen, makes use of the intervallic material from the B section, and is also treated in an imitative way, but the tempo and the rhythm have been modified (see ex. 3.14). The quarter-note passage in the second violin, viola and cello that previously appeared three measures after rehearsal number eleven (see ex. 3.13), reappears six measures before rehearsal number twenty (see ex. 3.14). In this case, the first violin plays an ascending sequential line which is marked crescendo and which reaches its climax one measure after rehearsal number twenty. The accompanying quarter-notes may be played in a similar manner to those of the B section, without vibrato and with a neutral color with no crescendo. Once the crescendo starts four measures before rehearsal number twenty, the players may add vibrato.

III- Adagio

The first sixteen measures of the third movement seem to be influenced by French Impressionism in their rich harmony which includes chords of ninth and eleventh and in the use of harmonics as a color (see ex. 3.15). These harmonics should be played with a lot of fluctuations of dynamic and bow speed on each note. They should sound in a contrasting manner with the real notes. The accompanying quarter-notes in the second violin and viola make use of another variation of the triplet rhythm, which is one of the unifying factors in this quartet. They should be played in a metronomic manner in order to make this rhythm clear, with piano and not too much vibrato.

At rehearsal number one, the first violin begins an eight-bar phrase that moves between two very contrasting colors of this instrument: the brilliant high register and the darker color of the G-string (see ex. 3.16). The performer should be aware of this and emphasize both colors as much as possible. The first violinist should play with an intense vibrato and enough weight from rehearsal number one to two measures after rehearsal number one in order to produce a good sound, which is characteristic of the E string.
Then, three measures after rehearsal number one the register moves towards a more neutral color. This can be emphasized by using a less intense vibrato and by playing in a lighter manner. In the second half of the fourth bar after rehearsal number one, the characteristic color of the G-string reappears. Once again playing with enough weight and vibrato will let the instrument produce the most characteristic sound for this string.

In this movement, due to the 6/4 metric and to the strong impressionistic influences, the presence of *Modinha* elements is perhaps less evident than in other of Villa-Lobos’s slow movements. Nevertheless there is a scant but regular use of the dotted-quarter rhythm followed by an eighth-note, which is characteristic of other Villa-Lobos’s *Modinha* based passages. This rhythm is also present in the subject of the opening *fugato* of the first movement and constitutes a unifying factor within the piece. There is also a cantabile and nostalgic character in the third movement, which could be traced back to the *Modinha*. This justifies a way of playing which makes use of small rhythmic freedoms as well as a *legato* articulation and a passionate way of playing. The texture of three instruments accompanying and one playing the melody, as well as the triplet-based accompaniment, point to an influence of the *Chôro*, which further justifies the use of rhythmic freedom (see ex. 3.15).

In his book about Villa-Lobos’s music, Eero Tarasti says that: “In the slow movement flutelike tones are again used, while the main theme is exceptionally shapeless.” When he refers to the “exceptionally shapeless” theme, he is referring to the three-measure theme played by the cello from rehearsal number two to two measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 3.17). In this passage, the cellist plays totally alone. The two opening intervals of the theme: minor second and major sixth are reminiscent of the central section of the second movement with its minor second minor sixth or seventh intervals. Because of this, the two opening intervals of the theme of the third movement establish a link with the second movement. The ascending-descending melodic contour of the theme of the third movement, which includes a descending minor second interval, also

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7 Ibid, 60.
establishes a connection with the subject of the first movement, with its descending second minor interval. The abundance of descending minor seconds (five of them) establishes an intervallic link with the second half of the A section of the first movement. All this suggests that this theme is well planned and not shapeless at all as asserted by Tarasti. This is a perfect moment for some rhythmic freedom as well as for adding colors such as portamento or even a glissando that can make it more interesting. A portamento between the A-flat and the F-natural that appear on rehearsal number two may emphasize the major sixth interval and clarify the link with this interval in the central section and in the coda of the second movement. Taking some time on the B-flat and the A-natural two measures after rehearsal number two will emphasize the descending minor second intervals and clarify the connection with the descending minor seconds from rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three in the first movement.

It is extremely important to observe the written dynamics from seven measures before rehearsal number three until one measure after rehearsal number three since they help to highlight the entrances of the theme (see. Ex. 3.18). Despite the fact that the last marked dynamic was piano, it is also important to bring up the dynamic in the cello part two measures before rehearsal number three, when the cello plays an abbreviated version of the theme. It is necessary to lower the dynamic in the second violin, one measure before number three since this instrument plays a dotted whole-note that could interfere with the imitation of the theme that is played by the first violin.

Two measures after rehearsal number three, the imitative texture is suddenly interrupted and the four performers play a homophonic texture composed of half-notes. This is a very important moment since it offers great textural contrast with the preceding nine measures. Villa-Lobos emphasized this contrast with a change of articulation, which he indicated by writing dashes on the half-notes of this measure. Since the preceding imitative section was being played legato, the most contrasting articulation for two measures after rehearsal number three would be with separation between the notes. In the following measures Villa-Lobos seems to integrate some elements of the A section with some elements from the introduction. He repeats the first measure of the main theme of the A section that started on rehearsal number two; but now it is used with harmonies
built in thirds like the opening of the movement. This fragment of the main theme leads to a melodic line that is more in the mood of the eight measures after rehearsal number one than in the unstable chromatic character of the main theme of the A section.

During the three measures before rehearsal number four and on rehearsal number four, the first violin should make an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of its dotted half-notes, which are slurred to dotted quarter-notes or to half-notes (see ex. 3.19). This *diminuendo* will allow the second violin and viola parts to become the foreground of the texture during their quarter and eighth-notes. The second violin and viola should make an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the half and dotted half-notes and the first violin should take the main voice again during its eighth-notes.

The fifth and sixth beats of rehearsal number four are a good place to take some time due to the octave shift in the first violin and to the *crescendo to forte*, which marks an arrival to a major seventh C chord. One measure after rehearsal number four is also the beginning of a four-bar sequential phrase. Every measure from one measure after rehearsal number four to four measures after rehearsal number four has the same dynamic marking: *forte* followed by *diminuendo to pianissimo* or to *piano* in the case of *pianissimo* or to *piano* in the case of *forte*. It is important to observe this marking since it allows the performers to create the feeling that each measure is a step of an ascending sequence in which tension increases with each step.

Three measures before rehearsal number five, a nine-measure phrase begins, which includes the climax of the third movement (see ex. 3.20). During the three measures before rehearsal number five, the dashes should be played as horizontal but aggressive emphasis on the attack of each note. There should not be any separation between notes since the intended effect is of increasing tension, leading towards a culmination two measures after rehearsal number five. From rehearsal number five to five measures after rehearsal number five, the articulation should be *détaché* and *legato*. After the culmination of the phrase, in the first beat of two measures after rehearsal number five, the two violins play a descending triplet scale in the third and fourth measures after rehearsal number five. Playing an *accelerando* during this scale and gradually retaking
the tempo around the middle of four measures after rehearsal number five will create the effect of dissipating tension after the climax and of the end of a subsection.

The sixteen-measure *Più mosso* is the central section of the movement (see ex. 3.21). This section exhibits some characteristics that are found in Villa-Lobos’s *Modinha* based passages: a metric of 4/4, use of *sesquiáltera*, use of diatonic harmony and an abundance of the dotted quarter followed by eighth-note rhythm. The cello plays the first eight-measure phrase and it is accompanied by the three other instruments, which play the supporting harmony in homorhythmic texture. This texture also suggests an influence of the improvised serenades called *Chôros.* The cello should play with freedom and the accompaniment should be played very *piano* with the separation and unwritten *diminuendo* suggested by the dashes written on some of the notes.

Eight measures after rehearsal number seven, the violins and the viola take the main line (see ex. 3.22). Their parts bear no dashes until four measures before rehearsal number eight, and should be played *détaché* to establish a clear difference between accompaniment and thematic material.

Four measures before rehearsal number eight; the cello retakes the main line and the violins and viola parts become accompaniment. When this happens, they have dashes written on every note. These dashes should be played as it was previously mentioned, in order to provide an effective accompaniment for the melody.

**IV- Allegro vivace**

This movement is basically an A-B-A ternary form with a *coda*. It is very similar to the first movement from a formal perspective. Both movements have an A section divided in two halves that do not resemble each other too much. Both movements also have a B section that has common material with the A section. The performers have to be careful to clearly articulate the form, which can be achieved by playing pauses and *fermatas* only between the main sections of the movement. For example, in the final measure of the A section, one measure before rehearsal number five, the eighth-note rest

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has a fermata upon it that creates a long break between the A and the B sections (see ex. 3.23).

One measure before rehearsal number seven, which is the final bar of the central section, the dotted half-note has a fermata upon it, which creates the sensation of the end of a section (see ex. 3.24). Villa-Lobos did not write a break between the B section and the recapitulation, but playing one will further clarify the form. Apart from the two previously discussed places, there should not be any break between the subsections of the movement despite Villa-Lobos’s use of a double bar between them.

Eero Tarasti says that “the central subject of the last movement is surprisingly feeble.”¹⁰ Nevertheless the intervals of major and minor thirds in this subject establish a connection with the subject of the opening fugato of the first movement (see ex. 3.25). The use of sesquialtera in the three measures before rehearsal number one calls for the use of a steady and metronomic tempo in order to capture and express the dance-like feeling of the music (see ex. 3.26).¹¹

The texture is somewhat unclear from rehearsal number three to two measures after rehearsal number three (see ex. 3.27). It is obvious from the written dynamics in the score and manuscript that Villa-Lobos intended to highlight the second violin in these measures with the viola and cello in the middle ground and the first violin in the background. The second violin, which is marked forte, plays off the string sixteenth-notes in the middle register while the first violin, which is marked piano plays what appears to be the beginning of a cantabile legato line in the brilliant and characteristic high register of the violin. Because of this, if the first violinist plays too loud, attention will be drawn to his line. The viola and the cello double each other in thirds and may draw attention to them. In order to solve this, the first violin should play pianissimo instead of piano. The viola and cello should play mezzo piano instead of mezzo forte and they should play with separation and an unwritten diminuendo on each note.

The texture becomes clearer from three measures after rehearsal number three to rehearsal number four. The first violin plays its sixteenth-notes, which are in the high

¹⁰ Tarasti, Heitor Villa-Lobos, 317.
¹¹ Estrella, Os Quartetos, 19.
register, *legato* alternating with *staccato* off the string. Due to this, the first violin is clearly in the foreground. The three other instruments play a homophonic texture and should play *mezzo piano* instead of *piano* and with separation and an unwritten *diminuendo* on each note.

The texture is very clear from rehearsal number four to five measures after rehearsal number four, since the sixteenth-notes which form the main line are doubled by the two violins (see ex. 3.28). The viola and cello should play with separation and an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the quarter notes. Six measures after rehearsal number four, the cello takes the main line and the other three instruments should be careful to play the tied half-note *piano* with some release (see ex. 3.29). On the eighth and ninth measures after rehearsal number four, the viola takes the main line. Nine measures after rehearsal number four the cello joins the viola and they keep the main line until the end of the section one measure before rehearsal number five. When the cello joins the viola, the cellist should raise his written *piano* dynamic to *forte*. It is clear that the viola and cello have the main line since they double each other in octaves while the two violins are marked *piano* and double each other in thirds.

The central section of the movement has a comic character due to the use of accents on the first and second beats of many of the measures. Despite this, the players have to be careful to not get too heavy. The loudest written dynamic in this section is *forte* and it happens only on the very last note of the section (see ex. 3.30).

In the *coda*, the writing can cause the texture to become unclear from rehearsal number nine to eleven measures after rehearsal number nine (see. Ex. 3.31). The alternated eighth-note triplets and sixteenth-notes form the main line, which should therefore be in the foreground. The two violinists should play this line *forte* and drop the dynamic in the accompanying material, while the viola and cello play their *pizzicato* within the marked dynamic of *mezzo forte*. 

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Musical Examples for Chapter 3

Ex. 3.1. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From two measures before rehearsal number six to three measures after rehearsal number six.

Ex. 3.2. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From one measure before rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three.

Ex. 3.4. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From two measures after rehearsal number one to nine measures after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 3.6. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: Allegro non troppo. From three measures after rehearsal number seven to five measures after rehearsal number seven.


Ex. 3.9. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: *Scherzo, Vivace*. From rehearsal number four to three measures after rehearsal number four.

Ex. 3.11. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: Scherzo, Vivace. From four measures before rehearsal number eight to three measures after rehearsal number eight.
Ex. 3.13. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: Scherzo, Vivace. From three measures after rehearsal number eleven to one measure after rehearsal number twelve.
Ex. 3.15. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: *Adagio*. From the beginning to one measure after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 3.16. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From rehearsal number one to one measure before rehearsal number two.

Ex. 3.17. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From rehearsal number two to three measures after rehearsal number two.
**STRING QUARTET N°13 & STRING QUARTET N°14**

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Ex. 3.18. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: *Adagio*. From three measures after rehearsal number two to two measures after rehearsal number three.
Ex. 3.19. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: *Adagio*. From four measures before rehearsal number four to four measures after rehearsal number four.
Ex. 3.20. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: *Adagio*. From three measures before rehearsal number five to four measures after rehearsal number five.

Ex. 3.22. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From eight measures before rehearsal number eight to one measure before rehearsal number eight.
Ex. 3.23. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From two measures before rehearsal number five to one measure after rehearsal number five.

Ex. 3.24. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From one measure before rehearsal number seven to one measure after rehearsal number seven.

Ex. 3.26. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From three measures before rehearsal number one to rehearsal number one.
Ex. 3.27. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From rehearsal number three to six measures after rehearsal number three.

Ex. 3.28. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From rehearsal number four to five measures after rehearsal number four.
Ex. 3.29. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From six measures after rehearsal number four to nine measures after rehearsal number four.

Ex. 3.30. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From rehearsal number five to three measures after rehearsal number five.
Ex. 3.31. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From rehearsal number nine to eleven measures after rehearsal number nine.
CHAPTER 4
A COMPARISON OF THREE RECORDINGS OF STRING QUARTET NO. 13

I- Allegro non troppo

The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays at a tempo of quarter-note equals one-hundred-five beats per minute. This ensemble plays the opening ten measure fugato, legato and détaché with a sustained sound (see ex. 4.1). The cellist Alceu Reis does not make a significant diminuendo on the fourth measure of the movement and his line remains remarkably present through the first ten measures of the piece. The second violinist Michel Bessler drops the dynamic at the fifth measure of the movement. This is almost two measures before there actually is a written change of dynamic marked in his part. The violist Marie-Christine Springuel drops the dynamic on the seventh measure, where there is a diminuendo marked. The first violinist Bernardo Bessler keeps his marked mezzo forte. Thus, in the Bessler-Reis Quartet’s version there is a preponderance of first violin and cello in the opening fugato and a tendency to emphasize the entrances of the subject and to lower the dynamic once the subject is over.

The Latin American Quartet plays the opening fugato at a tempo of quarter-note equals around ninety-two beats per minute, which is a slower tempo than the one played by the Bessler-Reis Quartet. The Latin American Quartet plays the dynamics exactly as written, except during the two measures before rehearsal number one, where they make a crescendo. They play legato and détaché and make an unwritten diminuendo on each of the half-notes and quarter-notes that do not belong to the subject of the fugato. During the two measures before rehearsal number one, they make a crescendo.

The Danubius Quartet plays the opening fugato legato and détaché. They play at a tempo of quarter-note equals around ninety-six beats per minute. There are certain inconsistencies in the way they play. The cellist Ilona Ribli plays the first two bars of the movement with a slight unwritten diminuendo on each of the long notes. In the third and fourth measures, she plays the syncopations with diminuendo and separation (this is similar to what the cellist of the Latin American Quartet does in these same measures). Nevertheless, when the second violin enters with the subject of the fugato, there are no
and the syncopations are played totally *legato*. Despite this, the Danubius Quartet is very faithful to Villa-Lobos’s dynamic markings.

At rehearsal number one and one measure after rehearsal number one, Alvaro Bitrán, the cellist of the Latin American Quartet, plays each of the dotted half-notes that are slurred to an eighth-note, with a substantial and unwritten *diminuendo* (see ex. 4.2). The violinists Saúl and Arón Bitrán and the cellist Alvaro Bitrán, play with a sustained sound and *legato* from two measures after rehearsal number one until six measures before rehearsal number two, when the cello is part of a homorhythmic texture consisting of thematic material (see ex. 4.3). They play as if they were one instrument and the three voices are given the same importance. This happens also in the version of the Danubius Quartet in the same passage. The Bessler-Reis Quartet instead, gives priority to the second violin over the viola and cello. The cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the passage *sostenuto* and very *legato* and continues to play that way for most of the A section.

At rehearsal number one and one measure after rehearsal number one, Gyöngyvér Oláh, the first violinist of the Danubius Quartet plays an unwritten *diminuendo* on the quarter-note of the second beat, which is slurred to the first quarter-note of the quarter-note triplet. One measure after rehearsal number two the violinists of the three ensembles play the accent on the second half-note of the measure in a lyrical, horizontal and non-percussive way (see ex. 4.4). The Latin American Quartet’s accent in this measure is nevertheless the most evident from the three versions. The Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets play the eighth-note triplets and the sixteenth-notes *détaché* from four measures before rehearsal number three to one measure before rehearsal number three (see ex. 4.5). The Latin American Quartet plays them off the string. The Danubius Quartet makes an unwritten *crescendo* in the half-note with a *fermata* one measure before rehearsal number three. The Latin American Quartet attacks this note with a percussive accent that is not written in the manuscript or in the printed score.

The Bessler-Reis and the Latin American Quartets play the triplets that appear from rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three, without a very noticeable *diminuendo* (see ex. 4.6). The Danubius Quartet’s *diminuendo* is more
convincing. The most emphatic *diminuendo* happens two measures after rehearsal number three, probably because the three ensembles see it as the end of a three bar phrase. The whole-notes of the first violin, which accompany this passage, do not have much of a *diminuendo* in any of the three versions compared, but the violinists of the Bessler-Reis and the Danubius Quartets make a slight separation between them. The *sforzando* is more definite in the versions of the Latin American and the Danubius Quartets.

Among the three ensembles, the Latin American Quartet plays the *Più mosso* that begins at rehearsal number three with the fastest tempo. They also play the four measures after rehearsal number three with a feeling of going forward. This creates a feeling of expectation, which is fulfilled with the viola entrance two measures before rehearsal number four (see ex. 4.7).

Cecilia Bodolai, the violist of the Danubius Quartet, plays off the string from two measures before rehearsal number four until one measure before rehearsal number four. The violists of the Bessler-Reis and the Latin American Quartets play the scale two measures before rehearsal number four *détaché* and the eighth-notes one measure before rehearsal number four on the string and *martelé*. This creates a clear contrast between these eighth-notes and the ones in rehearsal number four, which are played off the string.

Despite the fact that there is a written *rallentando* one measure before rehearsal number six, the Latin American Quartet makes it on the second half of the two measures before rehearsal number six (see ex. 4.8). This is very effective, since the place where the *rallentando* is actually written is a whole-note played by the four instruments. This happens again two measures before rehearsal number nine. The Danubius Quartet makes a *rallentando* two before rehearsal number six, but it is subtle and slight.

In the second *Più mosso*, which begins at rehearsal number six, there is no contrast between the quarter-note triplets with dashes and the triplets without dashes. The Danubius Quartet plays this *Più mosso* clearly faster than the previous one and therefore succeeds in creating a certain feeling of increasing momentum and the impression of a new section. However, due to their very light and elegant approach they do not attain an emotional climax in this section of the first movement.
II- Scherzo: Vivace

The three quartets play the eighth-notes off the string. The Danubius Quartet begins at a tempo of dotted quarter-note equals one-hundred-twenty beats per minute. Despite this, their tempo is very flexible within the sections. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays at a very similar tempo, in which there are also fluctuations. In addition, in the Poco più mosso the Danubius Quartet plays noticeably faster, while the Bessler-Reis Quartet keeps practically the same tempo. The Latin American Quartet plays at an approximate tempo of dotted quarter-note equals one-hundred-thirty-eight beats per minute.

The Danubius Quartet phrases the contrary motion passages in the fifth and sixth measures before rehearsal number one and in the two measures before rehearsal number one by making a crescendo towards the accented eighth-note in the first beat of four measures before rehearsal number one and in the first beat of rehearsal number one (see ex. 4.9).

The three ensembles play the accents in a very similar manner. They are very light and when they happen on the repeated eighth-notes they are hardly noticeable. In the dotted quarter-notes, which appear four measures after rehearsal number one and again four measures before rehearsal number fourteen (see ex. 4.10), the three cellists play aggressive and vertical accents. They also add accents on the dotted quarter-notes in the fifth and sixth measures after rehearsal number one. The accented sforzandi are played mostly with fast bow speed at the beginning of the note followed by an unwritten diminuendo.

Sometimes a note of longer value than an eighth-note has an accent. For example at rehearsal number five in the second violin (see ex. 4.11) or in the third and fourth measures before rehearsal number six on the four instruments (see ex. 4.12). The Danubius Quartet plays these notes with an unwritten diminuendo on each of them and a separation between notes. The Latin American Quartet plays a horizontal lyrical accent without any diminuendo or separation. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays a lyrical, but more aggressive accent also without diminuendo or separation. One measure before rehearsal number seven, the Latin American Quartet takes some time and makes a small break before they attack the first beat of rehearsal number seven (see ex. 4.13).
The violists of the three quartets play each of the dotted quarter-notes with an unwritten *diminuendo* and a separation between them from the fourth to the seventh measures after rehearsal number seven, while the first and (later) the second violin play off the string (see ex. 4.14). In the accented dotted quarter-notes, which appear in the first and third measures before rehearsal number eight (see ex. 4.15), the three ensembles play aggressive accents. The Danubius and the Latin American Quartets play without any *diminuendo* on the dotted quarter-notes and the Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the least aggressive accents, which are followed by an unwritten *diminuendo*.

The Latin American Quartet makes an emphatic *ritardando* one measure before rehearsal number ten (see ex. 4.16). However this ensemble is very faithful to Villa-Lobos’s dynamic markings from rehearsal number ten to nine measures after rehearsal number ten.

Three measures after rehearsal number eleven the Latin American Quartet plays the quarter-notes *legato*, with a sustained sound and intense vibrato (see ex. 4.17). The Bessler-Reis and the Danubius Quartets play those same quarter-notes with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of them and with very little vibrato which produces a static character.

In the printed score, during the recapitulation, four measures before rehearsal number fourteen until two before, the dotted quarter-notes in the downbeats in the cello part have accents marked (see ex. 4.10). This differs from the corresponding passage in the exposition, where only the first measure of this passage has an accent on the downbeat. In the manuscript, the downbeat of the fourth measure before rehearsal number fourteen is the only accented place. The Danubius and the Latin American Quartets play accents in all the downbeats of these measures in both the exposition and recapitulation. The Bessler-Reis Quartet is ambiguous in the way they play these accents.

**III- Adagio**

The Latin American Quartet displays an intense and accurate sense of color during the third movement, with a dream and night-like character. The first violinist, Saúl Bitrán, plays the harmonics in the first eight measures of the movement with a slight *crescendo* and *diminuendo* on every note with a dash (see ex. 4.18). In these notes he uses bow
speed to accent the effect. In general he plays the harmonics flautando, with an airy sound. The real notes that begin six measures before rehearsal number one are played forte, legato with a sustained sound. The open strings and harmonics that appear two measures before rehearsal number one are treated with the previously mentioned effect. There is a big contrast between the harmonics and the real notes, which creates two very different colors. The achieved effect is as if the melody suddenly dissolved in the fifth measure of the movement and a new sonorous element appeared. Then, the melody re-appears three measures before rehearsal number one. A similar effect happens from two measures before rehearsal number one until rehearsal number one. Playing without vibrato the second violin and the viola attain a softer dynamic than that of the first violin. The cellist simply plays at a softer dynamic than all the rest and sustains the long notes with practically no vibrato. The first violinist plays each of the long notes with an unwritten diminuendo. During the same passage, the first violinist of the Danubius Quartet simply makes a separation between the harmonics without changing their dynamic. The result is less effective than the one achieved by the Latin American Quartet. Gyöngyvér Oláh, the first violinist of the Danubius Quartet plays the melody that starts six measures before rehearsal number one very legato, with a sustained sound. Oláh treats the open strings and harmonics two measures before rehearsal number one as real notes and not as harmonics. The second violinist, violist and cellist play with more vibrato than the instrumentalists of the Latin American Quartet. In terms of treatment of color, the violinist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet simply makes a slight separation between the harmonics. There is not much contrast between the harmonics and the real notes and as a result there is not much contrast of color. The cello line is more present than in the other two versions.

During rehearsal number one and one measure after rehearsal number one, the first violinist of the Latin American Quartet makes an unwritten diminuendo in the dotted half-note which is slurred to an eighth-note at rehearsal number one and to a quarter-note one measure after rehearsal number one (see ex. 4.19). He makes a slight separation after this note and therefore the four eighth-notes one measure after rehearsal number one sound like the beginning of a new one-and-a-half measure phrase. He also takes some
time between the second and third measures after rehearsal number one and in the last four eighth-notes of three measures after rehearsal number one. The first beat of the third measure after rehearsal number one seems to be treated as the beginning of a new one-and-a-half measure phrase. The second half of four measures after rehearsal number one is played as the beginning of a three-and-a-half measure phrase. During this section, the sound of the first violinist of the Latin American Quartet is very intense but never heavy despite the marked *forte* dynamic. The first violinists of the Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets do not make any unwritten *diminuendo* in the previously discussed passage. They take a much more straightforward approach when playing this section, which they treat as one eight-measure phrase.

Alvaro Bitrán, the cellist of the Latin American Quartet, plays from rehearsal number two to two measures after rehearsal number two *legato* (see ex. 4.20). There is a slight *portamento* between the C-sharp of rehearsal number two and the B-flat one measure after rehearsal number two. This B-flat is attacked with a certain emphasis, which is achieved with bow speed and vibrato. He also takes some time two measures after rehearsal number two in the B-flat and the A-natural. The cellist of the Latin American Quartet also observes the *diminuendo* that is marked on this measure. The cellist of the Danubius Quartet makes a slightly audible shift between the A-flat and the F-natural in rehearsal number two. After this, she simply plays in tempo. She also observes the *diminuendo* two measures after rehearsal number two. The cellist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet does not do any kind of *portamento* in these measures and he plays strictly in tempo.

The Latin American Quartet gives preeminence to whoever plays the quarter-note based theme from three measures after rehearsal number two to one measure after rehearsal number three (see ex. 4.21). This sense of texture is achieved mainly by observing the dynamics of *mezzo forte* in the melody and *piano* in the accompanying long notes. However, two measures before rehearsal number three, when the cello re-takes the melody, the cellist brings it to a *mezzo forte* dynamic. In this same measure, the accent in the viola part is treated as a lyrical and horizontal accent. One measure before rehearsal number three, the accent is done not only by the viola, but also by the cello in its A-flat.
At rehearsal number three, there is no accent marked in any of the parts, but the first violinist makes one on the first beat. The three half-notes with dashes which appear two measures after rehearsal number three are played with fast bow speed at the attack of each note and with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each note.

In terms of balance and dynamics, the Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets have a very similar approach to that of the Latin American Quartet from three measures after rehearsal number two to one measure after rehearsal number three. Nevertheless, in terms of articulation there are some differences: the accents are almost unnoticeable and they do not play any unwritten accents. Two measures after rehearsal number three, the Danubius Quartet makes a slight emphasis on the first beat of the measure, but apart from that the half-notes are played simply *legato*. The Bessler-Reis Quartet produces a fuller and slightly heavier tone than the other quartets.

The Latin American Quartet is very careful with the way they treat the texture from three measures before rehearsal number four until rehearsal number four (see ex. 4.22). During the dotted half-notes, which are slurred to dotted quarter-notes or to half-notes, the first violinist lowers the dynamic while the second violinist and the violist increase theirs in order to highlight their responses. Then, in the half-note and in the dotted half-notes, they decrease the dynamic and the first violin is again heard in the foreground. The Latin American Quartet also takes a lot of time in the three last eighth-notes of rehearsal number four. The *forte* followed by *diminuendo* and the *subito forte* in the next measure is effective and dramatic in this version, which makes the character passionate and emotional. The Danubius Quartet plays this section in a very different manner. The first violinist does not lower her dynamic in the dotted half-notes, which are slurred to dotted quarter-notes or to half-notes in the three measures before number four and therefore it remains in the foreground. The answers of the second violin and viola are audible but they remain in the middleground of the texture. The tempo remains steady at rehearsal number four and the *diminuendi* after the *forte* in the next measures are not as emphatic as in the version by the Latin American Quartet. The character achieved by the Danubius Quartet is serene and calm rather than passionate. The Bessler-Reis Quartet’s approach to this passage is in between that of the two previously mentioned quartets. The first
violinist does not lower the dynamic in the long notes in the four measures before rehearsal number four and the cello line is very present, nevertheless the answers played by the second violin and viola are clearly audible as an important melodic element. At rehearsal number four, the Bessler-Reis Quartet keeps the tempo steady and in the forte followed by a diminuendo they are convincing but they do not exaggerate as much as the Latin American Quartet. The character created by the Bessler-Reis Quartet is passionate but self-contained.

On the accented notes that appear during the three measures before rehearsal number five, the Latin American Quartet plays percussive attacks followed by a sustained sound (see ex. 4.23). One measure before rehearsal number five, the quarter-note in the first beat is shortened to about half its value. The dotted half-notes in the first violin are shortened from rehearsal number five to three measures after rehearsal number five. The long notes in the viola and cello, whether half-notes or dotted half-notes are also shortened and the eighth-notes and the triplets are played détaché. The Danubius Quartet plays each of the accented half-notes with some diminuendo and separation between them and the attacks are lyrical. The three quarter-notes one measure before rehearsal number five are played détaché without any noticeable accents. In terms of separations after long notes, this version is very similar to the one by the Latin American Quartet, but the character is serene. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the half-notes with a sustained sound and a slight separation between them. The accents are percussive, but less aggressive than those of the Latin American Quartet. At rehearsal number five, the eighth-notes are played détaché. One measure after rehearsal number five, the eighth-note triplets are played with a bow stroke which is in between on and off the string. In the next three measures the triplets are played off the string.

In the Più mosso section that begins at rehearsal number seven, the Latin American Quartet plays the accompanying homorythmic material, which is played by the violins and viola, with an unwritten diminuendo on each of the half or dotted quarter-notes and a slight separation between every note (see ex. 4.24). However, the material is played with a dynamic which is louder than the marked pianissimo and which tends to interfere with the cello melody. The Danubius Quartet plays the homorhythmic material with an
unwritten *diminuendo* on each note but without separation. They play with a softer dynamic than the Latin American Quartet and the accompaniment interferes less with the cello melody. When the notes of the homorhythmic accompaniment do not have dashes, they are played totally *legato* and *détaché*. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the homorhythmic material with a slight unwritten *diminuendo* and without separation. As in the case of the Latin American Quartet, the accompaniment is played loudly and it interferes with the cello melody.

**IV- Allegro vivace**

The cellist of the Latin American Quartet plays the first three measures of the fourth movement *legato* and *sostenuto* (see ex. 4.25). When the first violin takes the melody, the cellist plays each of the accompanying dotted quarter-notes with an unwritten *diminuendo*. The first violinist plays *legato* and *sostenuto* until three measures before rehearsal number one when along with the second violinist he plays the duplets off the string. The *pizzicatti* in the second violin and viola are played with a sonorous *forte* dynamic. The eighth-notes in rehearsal number one are played off the string. The quarter-notes with dashes in the fourth and sixth measures before rehearsal number two are played *détaché*, but the ones two measures before rehearsal number two have a slight separation between them.

The cellist and the first violinist of the Danubius Quartet also play the melody *legato* but in general they play lighter than the Latin American Quartet. When the first violin plays the melody, the cello makes a large unwritten *diminuendo* in the dotted quarter-notes. The *pizzicatti* in the second violin and viola are sonorous, but softer than those played by the Latin American Quartet. The duplets that appear during the three measures before rehearsal number one, as well as the eighth-notes with dots on them in rehearsal number one are played on the string (see ex. 4.26). The quarter-notes with dashes on them in the second, fourth and sixth measures before rehearsal number two have a separation between them. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays in a very similar way to the Danubius Quartet, but the quarter-notes with dashes upon them are played with an unwritten *diminuendo* instead of separation.
In the versions of the Bessler-Reis and of the Latin American Quartets, during the section that begins at rehearsal number three, there is a feeling of lack of textural clarity and therefore it is hard to tell what line or lines the performers want to emphasize (see ex. 4.27). The first violinist, violist and cellist play too loud for their marked piano and mezzo forte dynamics from rehearsal number three to two measures after number three. The first violin’s sixteenth-notes that form the main line are played off the string, while the other instruments play détaché, legato and too loud. In the sixteen measure subsection, which begins at rehearsal number four, the Latin American Quartet achieves a clearer texture thanks to the effective contrast of articulations between the two violins, viola and cello (see ex. 4.28). Seven measures after rehearsal number four, the violinists bring out their dotted eighth-note followed by sixteenth-note figure and then drop the dynamic in order to allow the violist to take the main line in the next measure (see ex. 4.29). The violist and cellist take the main line and do not play aggressive accents from that point until one measure before rehearsal number five. Three measures before rehearsal number five, the accented quarter-note triplets in the viola and cello parts have a separation between them (see ex. 4.30). The Danubius Quartet achieves a clearer texture than the Latin American and the Bessler-Reis Quartets in the two previously mentioned passages, and it is obvious that they are trying to highlight the sixteenth-notes, which are played off the string. The clarity of texture achieved by the Danubius Quartet is the result of a careful respect to the written dynamics and of playing the quarter-notes and the half-notes with a separation between them.

The Latin American Quartet plays the triplets off the string from rehearsal number five to seven measures after rehearsal number five. The accents are played making more of a horizontal emphasis on the notes rather than a vertical one. Eight measures after rehearsal number five, the articulation changes to legato and détaché which provides an effective contrast to the previous section (see ex. 4.31).

One measure before rehearsal number six, there is a separation between the quarter-notes. The sixteenth-notes, which appear four measures before rehearsal number seven, are played off the string with a slight ritenuto in the last four sixteenth-notes (see ex. 4.32). Four measures before rehearsal number seven there is a separation between the first
sixteenth-note of the measure, which is slurred to the previous quarter-note with the 
*sforzando*, and the rest of the sixteenth-notes. The Danubius Quartet takes a much faster 
tempo in this section. The approach is similar to that of the Latin American Quartet, but 
the sound is lighter from rehearsal number five to seven measures after rehearsal number 
five (see ex. 4.30 and 4.31). The Danubius Quartet plays with separation between the 
notes and with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the longer notes from eight measures 
after rehearsal number five until one measure before rehearsal number six. The achieved 
effect is of continuity of character with the previous eight measures. In the sixteenth-
notes, the approach is similar to that of the Latin American Quartet. The Bessler-Reis 
Quartet plays this section with a slower tempo than the one they used in the previous 
section. Their approach is very similar to the one performed by the Latin American 
Quartet, but they play the sixteenth-notes that start four measures before rehearsal number 
seven *détaché*.

Saúl Bitrán, the first violinist of the Latin American Quartet plays *forte* with a 
sustained sound from rehearsal number nine to two measures after rehearsal number nine 
(see ex. 4.33). This interferes with the main line, which is played by the second violin. 
After this, the texture becomes clearer and it is obvious that the main line is formed by 
the eighth-note triplets and the sixteenth-notes, which alternate between the violins. 
These notes have dots on them and are played off the string. The line without dots is 
played with a softer dynamic, with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the long notes and 
with separation between them.

The Danubius Quartet plays from rehearsal number nine to two measures after 
rehearsal number nine with presence, but softer than in the version of the Latin American 
Quartet. Adél Miklós, the second violinist of the Danubius Quartet, plays her line with a 
convincing *forte* which creates a clear texture. The secondary line is played with 
separation between the notes and with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the long notes. 
There is also an emphasis in the syncopations. The Bessler-Reis Quartet produces a very 
clear texture in this passage. They play the triplets, sixteenth-notes as well as the eighth-
notes of the secondary line off the string. The longer notes do not have any *diminuendo*. 
In the final section, which begins at rehearsal number ten, the Bessler-Reis Quartet shortens the quarter-notes that are part of the triplets (see ex. 4.34). The eighth-notes of the triplets are played off the string. The rest of the notes are played détaché and legato until one measure before rehearsal number eleven, when the sixteenth-notes of the first violin are played off the string (see ex. 4.35). From then on, the eighth-notes are played off the string except in the first violin melody that goes from rehearsal number eleven to three measures after rehearsal number eleven and in the final thirty-second note tremolo that starts four measures before the end. In the Più mosso which starts at rehearsal number ten, the Latin American Quartet also shortens the longer notes of the triplets and plays the eighth-notes off the string (see ex. 4.34). Seven measures after rehearsal number ten, everything is played legato, until two measures before rehearsal number eleven, where the eighth-notes in the second violin and viola are played off the string as well as the sixteenth-notes one measure before rehearsal number eleven (see ex. 4.35). At rehearsal number eleven, the first violin melody is played legato and détaché, while the eighth-note accompaniment is played off the string. Three measures after rehearsal number eleven until the end of the piece, every note in the four parts is played on the string except the two eighth-notes in the viola and cello seven measures before the end.

The Danubius Quartet does not shorten the longer notes of the triplets that start in rehearsal number ten and the eighth-notes of the triplets are played on the string (see ex. 4.34). Seven measures after rehearsal number ten, the notes are played legato and détaché with a sustained sound (see ex. 4.35). Two measures before rehearsal number eleven, the eighth-notes are played with a bow stroke which is in between on and off the string. This is also the case with the sixteenth-notes, which are played by the first violin one measure before rehearsal number eleven. The first violinist, Gyngyövér Oláh, plays legato and détaché, while the eighth-note accompaniment is played off the string from rehearsal number eleven to three measures after rehearsal number eleven. The eighth-notes are played on the string with a slight unwritten diminuendo from four measures after rehearsal number eleven until seven measures after rehearsal number eleven. After this point all the notes are played off the string until five measures before the end. Six measures before the end the tremoli are played on the string (see ex. 4.36).
Example 4.1. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number one.
Ex. 4.2. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From rehearsal number one to one measure after rehearsal number one.

Ex. 4.3. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From two measures after rehearsal number one to nine measures after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 4.4. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: Allegro non troppo. From rehearsal number two to two measures after rehearsal number two.

Ex. 4.5. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: Allegro non troppo. From four measures before rehearsal number three to one measure before rehearsal number three.
Ex. 4.6. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From one measure before rehearsal number three to four measures after rehearsal number three.

Ex. 4.7. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. First movement: *Allegro non troppo*. From two measures before rehearsal number four to rehearsal number four.
Ex. 4.8. Villa-Lobos String Quartet No. 13. First movement: Allegro non troppo. From two measures before rehearsal number six to three measures after rehearsal number six.

Ex. 4.9. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: Scherzo, Vivace. From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number one.
Ex. 4.10 a. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: Scherzo, Vivace. From four measures after rehearsal number one to six measures after rehearsal number one.

Ex. 4.10 b. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: Scherzo, Vivace. From four measures after rehearsal number thirteen to six measures after rehearsal number thirteen.
Ex. 4.11. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: *Scherzo, Vivace*. From rehearsal number five to one measure after rehearsal number five.


Ex. 4.15. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: *Scherzo, Vivace*. From four measures before rehearsal number eight to three measures after rehearsal number eight.

Ex. 4.17. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Second movement: Scherzo, Vivace. From three measures after rehearsal number eleven to one measure after rehearsal number twelve.
Ex. 4.18. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From the beginning to one measure after rehearsal number one.
Ex. 4.19. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From rehearsal number one to seven measures after rehearsal number one.

Ex. 4.20. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From rehearsal number two to two measures after rehearsal number two.
Ex. 4.21. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: Adagio. From seven measures before rehearsal number three to two measures after rehearsal number three.
Ex. 4.22. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: *Adagio*. From four measures before rehearsal number four to four measures after rehearsal number four.
Ex. 4.23. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Third movement: *Adagio*. From three measures before rehearsal number five to four measures after rehearsal number five.

Ex. 4.25. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: Allegro vivace. From the beginning to four measures before rehearsal number one.

Ex. 4.27. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: Allegro vivace. From rehearsal number three to six measures after rehearsal number three.
Ex. 4.28. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From rehearsal number four to five measures after rehearsal number four.

Ex. 4.29. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From six measures after rehearsal number four to nine measures after rehearsal number four.
Ex. 4.30. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: Allegro vivace. From three measures before rehearsal number five to three measures after rehearsal number five.

Ex. 4.31. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: Allegro vivace. From eight measures before rehearsal number six to rehearsal number six.
Ex. 4.32. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From four measures before rehearsal number seven to one measure before rehearsal number seven.
Ex. 4.33. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: Allegro vivace. From rehearsal number nine to eleven measures after rehearsal number nine.
Ex. 4.35. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 13. Fourth movement: *Allegro vivace*. From nine measures before rehearsal number eleven to seven measures after rehearsal number eleven.
CHAPTER 5
PERFORMANCE ASPECTS OF STRING QUARTET NO. 14

I- Allegro

According to Eero Tarasti, in his late style Villa-Lobos “throws nostalgic glances at lost youth.”\(^1\) From a compositional perspective, this could imply that in his late works Villa-Lobos uses elements or techniques of his earlier periods. The first measure of the first movement of String Quartet No. 14 is a good example of this (see ex. 5.1). This measure seems to display Villa-Lobos’s momentary return to the aesthetic of his Bachianas Brasileiras, in which he explored what he considered a relation or similarity between some elements in the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and in Brazilian folkloric music.\(^2\) In the Bachianas Brasileiras, Villa-Lobos displays a sense of “double-meaning” in which one musical passage may simultaneously be interpreted as a reference to Bach or to Brazilian folklore.

During the opening measure of String Quartet No. 14 a rhythmic motive composed of eighth-notes and sixteenth-notes is exposed. The melody is based on the perfect fourth interval and it has a descending contour. This passage, in its rhythm and melodic contour could be seen to allude to the opening of the Badinerie from Johann Sebastian Bach’s Suite in B minor for flute and orchestra which is quoted by Tarasti as an example of a passage by Bach that may be easily transformed into a Brazilian tune (see ex. 5.2).\(^3\) The perfect fourth interval may also allude to the open strings of the guitar. This quest for guitar effects in Villa-Lobos’s string quartets is pointed out by Farmer in reference to String Quartet No. 6.\(^4\)

The rhythm of the first measure of String Quartet No. 14, is present in some of Villa-Lobos’s earlier compositions such as his Nonetto from 1924 as part of a rhythmic base


\(^{2}\) Ibid, 171.

\(^{3}\) Ibid

played by percussion instruments. The different possible aspects of the passage may be emphasized in the way of performing the first movement of String Quartet No. 14. Playing off the string and with a light sound may evoke the character of the Badinerie in Bach’s B-minor suite. Making sure that there is an important amount of verticality in the bow stroke may be reminiscent of percussion instruments. The tempo should be very steady and it should be very clear in the minds of the performers before they begin playing. This may present a challenge since the line is divided between the four instruments and it occurs at the very beginning of the piece.

The second measure of the first movement involves eighth-note triplets and produces sesquiáltera by their juxtaposition to the first measure. It is important that the performers play the first and second measures in an exact manner that clearly differentiates between duplets and triplets.

At rehearsal number two, a homorhythmic passage begins, in which Villa-Lobos uses what is referred to by Farmer and Béhague as a variant of the Habanera rhythm (see ex. 5.3). The dance character of this passage is emphasized by the accents present in the two slurred eighth-notes. The first beat of the measure should not have an accent but a clear attack to provide a point of reference for the syncopation. The accents should involve a horizontal as well as a vertical emphasis. The two slurred eighth-notes should have an unwritten diminuendo. The short notes such as eighth-notes or eighth-note triplets may be played off the string. There is no specified dynamic for this passage, but the last written dynamic of forte may be used.

Several dance rhythms appear from rehearsal number three to nine measures after rehearsal number three (see ex. 5.4). The two violins play a variant of the Habanera rhythm as an accompaniment to a viola melody from rehearsal number three to three measures after rehearsal number three. In order to emphasize the dance character of this rhythm while producing a clear texture, the two violins should observe their written piano

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5 Tarasti, Heitor Villa-Lobos, 329.
dynamic as well as the dashes written on each note. The dashes may be interpreted to indicate that the violins should emphasize the beginning of each note and then make an unwritten *diminuendo* on each note and a separation between each note. The cello doesn’t have a written dynamic for this passage but it should play *pianissimo* and separate between each note. The second violin is marked *forte* and has the main line from four measures after rehearsal number three to nine measures after rehearsal number three. However, in the fifth and sixth measures after rehearsal number three the melody is composed of whole-notes while the most interesting part from a rhythmical point of view is in the first violin and the viola, whose parts form *sesquiáltera*. The second violin may drop the *forte* dynamic during these measures in order to highlight the *sesquiáltera*. The first violin may play the triplets with a bow stroke which is in between on and off the string and with a *piano* dynamic. The viola may play each of the dotted quarter-notes with an unwritten *diminuendo* and the eighth-note should be played off the string. The cello may play *pianissimo*. Nevertheless the quartet may make a *crescendo* towards the C chord on rehearsal number four.

In her study about Villa-Lobos’s String Quartets, Farmer speaks about “imitations of the responsorial practice of Afro-Brazilian singing”\(^9\) which are present in Villa-Lobos’s String Quartet No. 6, from 1938, where she says “a strong rhythmic figure in the viola and cello represents the solo part, followed by a contrasting answer representing the chorus in all four instruments.”\(^10\) In String Quartet No. 14, there is a similar passage which starts six measures before rehearsal number five and ends on rehearsal number five (see ex. 5.5). In this case, the first violin represents the solo part and the second violin, the viola and the cello represent the chorus. It is important that the performers know that this is the intended effect, so that they emphasize the question answer effect instead of treating this passage as a solo with accompaniment texture. There is another example of a texture that may be performed in the manner of an Afro-Brazilian-like antiphonal texture from three measures after rehearsal number seven to five measures after rehearsal number seven.

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\(^10\) Ibid.
The central section of the movement starts at the upbeat to rehearsal number seven (see ex. 5.6). There is no break between the A section and the B section and therefore it is particularly important that the tempo indication of *Meno* is respected in a very clear way in order to provide a noticeable contrast of tempi that provides the sensation of the start of a new section.

The B section opens with two measures of imitative texture where it is necessary to highlight the subject of the imitation which is composed of a rhythmic figure which includes three sixteenth-notes, a dotted eighth-note, a sixteenth-note and a quarter-note. After playing this figure, each player should lower the dynamic and play an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the quarter-notes.

Tarasti calls the “folkloristic allusions” in passages such as the one that begins two measures after rehearsal number fourteen “an exception to the late style” (see ex. 5.7).\(^{12}\) This presents another important performance aspect; Villa-Lobos’s early style alluded in a very direct way to the folklore of his country, while the late style does so in a more indirect manner. Tarasti says that “Villa-Lobos’s production as a whole reflects the change in Brazilian culture the transition from an agrarian society to the urbanized civilization of the industrial phase”.\(^{13}\) He adds that in his later work we can already imagine the cosmopolitan Rio paved with concrete.\(^{14}\) It is important that the performers keep this in mind and that they look for an appropriate balance between the international-cosmopolitan and the Brazilian-nationalistic aspects of the piece. It is important to emphasize the folkloric elements in Villa-Lobos’s late quartets in such a way that one experiences the Brazilian feeling, but not so much that the piece is transformed into a folkloric-like piece which Villa-Lobos did not have in mind.

\(^{11}\) Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos*, 318.
\(^{12}\) Ibid.
\(^{13}\) Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos*, 154.
\(^{14}\) Ibid.
II- Andante

As was mentioned before in reference to the subject of the first movement, Tarasti says that in his late style Villa-Lobos “throws glances at lost youth.” The second movement of String Quartet No. 14 could be seen as a good example of this feeling of nostalgia. The opening of the movement is a sixteen-bar fugato (see ex. 5.8). The subject of the fugato uses rhythms such as the dotted-quarter note followed by an eighth-note which are present in other of Villa-Lobos’s slow movements and which could be associated with the Modinha. However, the melody and the harmony are non-tonal and very chromatic. In this fugato the articulation is legato and textural clarity is to be achieved by means of dynamics despite the fact that the four instruments are marked mezzo piano.

The tempo is slow and the subject of the fugato is four measures long. This, in combination with Villa-Lobos’s choice of exposing the subject in successive entrances which creates a thin texture for a prolonged period of time, conveys a sense of loneliness and desolation. The character of this passage may be emphasized by not vibrating too much during this section and sometimes not vibrating at all. As the texture gets denser, this color may be gradually changed in favor of a richer tone with a wider vibrato.

An eight-measure phrase starts at rehearsal number two (see ex. 5.9). This phrase makes use of the previously mentioned Afro-Brazilian-like antiphonal effect between the two violins and the viola and cello, which should be of course emphasized. The harmony is diatonic and the character is lyrical and nostalgic. After this, the subject of the fugato reappears as an eight-measure phrase. The sforzandi in the eighth and ninth measures after rehearsal number two should be very aggressive in order to create more contrast with the lyrical passage that goes from rehearsal number two to seven measures after rehearsal number two. Playing aggressive sforzandi will reinforce the minor second interval between the lower note of the viola and the top note of the cello. Four measures before rehearsal number three the viola plays the subject of the opening of the fugato (see ex. 5.10). This phrase should be played in a way that is similar in character and color to the opening of the quartet.

15 Ibid.
During the B section, which starts at rehearsal number three, Villa-Lobos presents a melody that due to its ¾ metric, repetitive eighth-note accompaniment and tonal harmony sounds like a popular waltz-like tune (see ex. 5.11). Playing this passage with an expressive vibrato will provide contrast with the desolate character of the A section.

During the eight bars before rehearsal number six, a phrase that uses homophonic texture and that serves as a transition to the recapitulation is presented. The performers may play this phrase with a feeling of going forward until the rallentando (see ex. 5.12).

The form of this movement is an A-B-A ternary form. The outer sections are based on the chromatic phrase of desolate character and the B section is based on the tonal popular-style theme. In terms of character, there seems to be an emotional journey that goes back and forth from the desolation and loneliness of the main subject of the fugato in the A section to the nostalgic tonal, folk and popular allusions of the second half of the A and the B sections. Perhaps this movement summarizes Villa-Lobos’s inner journey from the desolation and loneliness of that concrete paved Rio of the 1950’s mentioned by Tarasti\(^{16}\) to the nostalgia for the agricultural and folkloric past of the Brazil of his youth.

**III- Scherzo**

The Scherzo should have a joking and humorous character, which comes from the rhythmic treatment of the first two measures in which there is a strong feeling of metric ambiguity. Villa-Lobos’s notation also indicates this indistinctness (see ex. 5.13). None of the instruments play the downbeat of the first measure. Because of this, during the first and second measures of the movement, the first and second violin part may give the feeling of a 7/8 metric, while the viola and cello may sound as if they were in 2/4. However, they may be also interpreted as a 4/4 measure. This is followed by a measure of quarter-note triplets which may sound like a 3/4 metric and finally in the fourth measure there is a clear 2/4 metric. The tone should be light and the marked mezzo forte dynamic should be observed.

When referring to the passage that goes from six measures after rehearsal number one to three measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 5.14), Tarasti says that the first

\(^{16}\) Ibid.
violin’s broken thirds recall a corresponding figuration in Moreninha (The Little Paper Doll) which is part of the first of Villa-Lobos’s suites for piano called Prolé do Bebé (The Baby’s Family) composed in 1918 (see ex. 5.15).\(^{17}\) In Moreninha, the sixteenth-note figuration of the left hand serves as an accompaniment for the right hand melody. In the edition of this work revised by the composer, the tempo indication is Animato molto marcato.\(^{18}\) The dynamic is piano with the indication sempre legato. The harmony changes every four sixteenth-notes and there is a dash on the first sixteenth-note of each group. Some of these indications may help to clarify the way the first violinist should play the similar passage in String Quartet No. 14. The performer should remember that like in Moreninha, despite the virtuoso character of the sixteenth-notes passage, they are an accompaniment. Therefore, the player should be careful of not going beyond the marked dynamic of mezzo forte. The articulation should be on the string with a clear détaché bow stroke on the separate notes that corresponds with the legato but marcato in Prolé do Bebé. The main element in this passage is the rhythmic ostinato played by the second violin, viola and cello. The repeated rhythm of this passage could be seen as a variation of the Habanera rhythm.\(^{19}\) The players should follow the marked dynamic of forte. The accents on every note are very important since they reinforce the dance-like character of the passage. The tempo should be steady. Playing each note on a down-bow with a vertical attack will result in a more percussion-like effect. It is also important to observe the written values of the notes as well as of the rests in order to create a transparent rhythmic texture. Villa-Lobos wrote this passage in 2/4, but the bars are placed in such way that indicates that he was thinking of a 4/4 measure, so the performers may experiment thinking in 4/4 rather than 2/4.

There is another example of an Afro-Brazilian-like antiphonal passage from seven measures before rehearsal number three to two measures before rehearsal number four (see ex. 5.16). The first violin represents the solo voice and the second viola and cello represent the chorus until four measures after rehearsal number three. From then on, the

\(^{17}\) Ibid, 318.
\(^{19}\) Béhague, Heitor Villa-Lobos, 71.
cello represents the solo voice and the violins and viola represent the chorus. Once again, the performers should be aware that they are supposed to answer to the solo voice and not accompany it.

The first violin plays two-bar phrases which make use of augmented intervals from rehearsal number five to seven measures after rehearsal number five (see ex. 5.17). Some of these phrases move within the interval of a perfect fourth. This gives these phrases an indigenous-like character. The character may be emphasized by playing the cello’s eighth-notes and eighth-note triplets which produce *sesquiáltera* with presence and off the string so that the rhythm is clearly understood.

A series of four four-measure phrases and one seven-measure phrase takes place from six measures before rehearsal number seven until seventeen measures after rehearsal number seven (see ex. 5.18). The character of these phrases is passionate and the articulation should be *legato* and *détaché.* There may be a small separation between each phrase. The two violins play in octave doubling and their tone should be full but without getting too heavy. The accented eighth-notes in the sixteenth and seventeenth measures after rehearsal number seven may be played on down bows.

**IV- Molto allegro**

The first phrase of the fourth movement is seven measures long. It goes from the first measure of the movement until four measures before rehearsal number one, when there is a harmonic arrival to a chord built on C (see ex. 5.19). Villa-Lobos wrote slurs in the viola and cello parts. These slurs go from the half-note in the second half of four measures before rehearsal number one to the first beat of three measures before rehearsal number one. The slurs clearly indicate that despite the fact that one phrase ended and one new phrase began, the composer didn’t want a break between them. The violins may play a small separation before attacking the first beat of three measures before rehearsal number one. The viola and cello may play a *diminuendo* in the slurred notes to create the feeling of a phrase ending and beginning. In general the eighth-notes should be played off the string and short.
The violins play an accompanying rhythmic figure in eighth-notes from two measures before rehearsal number one until rehearsal number one. This figure produces sesquiáltera by superimposition with the viola and cello. The quartet should play this kind of passages strictly in tempo in order to emphasize the sesquiáltera. The violinists may use a vertical off the string bow stroke in order to evoke percussion instruments as well as to make sure that the eighth-note rests are observed which will result in a clear texture. The violist and cellist may play a détaché stroke. They may play the dotted quarter-note with an unwritten diminuendo and they may do a small separation before the eighth-note, which should be played with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string and close to the frog.

It is important to respect the written dynamics in order to achieve textural clarity from six measures before rehearsal number two to rehearsal number three (see ex. 5.20). Six measures before rehearsal number two, the viola plays the main melodic line. It plays forte, but it does so in the middle register of the instrument, where it may be harder to project the sound. The violins play an accompaniment in which the piano dynamic should be respected. The half-notes and the quarter-notes notes should have an unwritten diminuendo. The eighth-notes should be played off the string. The cello plays a syncopated figure that is marked pianissimo. In this figure the eighth-notes should be played off the string and each of the quarter-notes which are slurred to an eighth-note should have an unwritten diminuendo.

At rehearsal number two, the second violin takes the main melodic line, which it keeps until four measures after rehearsal number two. The first violin plays a figure formed by eighth and sixteenth-notes. This figure should be played piano and the eighth-notes may be shortened. The viola has accents marked on the attack of the whole-notes. In these notes, the accents should be very aggressive, but after the attack the violist should drop the dynamic to pianissimo. The cellist should play the slurred whole-notes pianissimo.

During the first eight measures of the central section, which begins at rehearsal number five, the quartet plays an imitative section in which all the instruments have a mezzo forte dynamic marked (see ex. 5.21). Playing the subject of the imitation mezzo
forte and then dropping the dynamic to mezzo piano may result in a clearer texture which may make it easier to hear the entrances of the subject.

In the coda, at rehearsal number ten, a passage begins in which the two violins repeat a pattern of two sixteenth-notes followed by an eighth-note rest (see ex. 5.22). The effect of this passage should be that of one line played by one single instrument. In order to achieve the mentioned effect, the quartet should play at a steady tempo, the two instruments should play on the string using very little bow and they should attack every note from the string. The second violinist should anticipate each entrance in order to avoid being late.
Example 5.1. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From the beginning to one measure before rehearsal number one.

Ex. 5.3. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: *Allegro*. From rehearsal number two to two measures before rehearsal number three.
Ex. 5.4. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From one measure before rehearsal number three to two measures before rehearsal number four.
Ex. 5.5. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From six measures before rehearsal number five to two measures after rehearsal number five.
Ex. 5.6. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From one measure before rehearsal number seven to five measures after rehearsal number seven.
STRING QUARTET N°13 & STRING QUARTET N°14
Compositeur: Heitor VILLA-LOBOS
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Ex. 5.7. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From two measures after rehearsal number fourteen to five measures after rehearsal number fourteen.
Ex. 5.10. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. Second movement: *Andante*. From eight measures before rehearsal number three to one measure before rehearsal number three.
STRING QUARTET N°13 & STRING QUARTET N°14

Composer: Heitor VILLA-LOBOS
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Ex. 5.13. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. Third movement: *Scherzo*, *Vivace*. From the beginning to three measures before rehearsal number one.

Ex. 5.15. Villa-Lobos: Prolé do Bebé Suite No.1, “Moreninha.” From the beginning to measure number eight.

CHAPTER 6
A COMPARISON OF THREE RECORDINGS OF STRING QUARTET NO. 14

I- Allegro non troppo

The Latin American Quartet plays the eighth-notes and the sixteenth-notes, which appear at the first measure and which constitute the most characteristic rhythmic element of the main subject, with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string (see ex. 6.1). The eighth-note triplets at the second measure of the first movement are played off the string. At the third measure, the first violinist Saúl Bitrán and the cellist Alvaro Bitrán play legato and sostenuto, while the second violinist Arón Bitrán and the violist Javier Montiel continue to play the eighth-note triplets off the string. At the fourth measure, the four performers play legato. The first violinist and the cellist make an unwritten diminuendo on their slurred half-note, which makes it easier to listen to the second violinist and to the violist, who play the main line. At the fifth measure, the violist shortens his slurred half-note to a quarter-note. He also makes an unwritten diminuendo on this note. Four measures before rehearsal number one the cellist shortens his dotted half-note and plays it with an unwritten diminuendo. At the second and third measures before rehearsal number one, the first violinist plays his half-notes legato but with an unwritten diminuendo and with an emphasis on the attack of each note. Despite the fact that the four instruments are marked forte, the first violinist, the violist and the cellist soften their dynamics and therefore the viola’s main line is clearly in the foreground. When the viola and afterwards the cello play the main subject two measures before rehearsal number one, the players bring it out by playing louder.

The Danubius Quartet plays the eighth and the sixteenth-notes of the first measure; as well as the triplets in the second measure, with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string. There is separation and some verticality in the bow stroke, but each note is much longer than in the version of the Latin American Quartet. At the third measure of the movement, the second violinist Adél Miklós and the violist Cecilia Bodolai play their triplets with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string. Meanwhile, the first violinist Gyöngyvér Oláh and the cellist Ilona Ribli play legato and sostenuto. At this
measure, the texture achieved by the Danubius Quartet is not very clean due to the lack of short articulations and to the *sostenuto* of the half-notes. However, it is possible to some degree to hear the triplets, whether eighth-note or quarter-note triplets as the main line. The fourth measure is played totally *legato* and *sostenuto*. Once again the result is an unclear texture. At the fifth measure, the violist shortens the slurred half-note to a dotted quarter-note. This helps to draw attention towards the imitations of the motif of the main theme.

Four measures before rehearsal number one, the first violinist and the violist of the Danubius Quartet play their eighth-note triplets with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string. The cellist shortens her dotted half-note and the quarter-note and the fourth beat of the measure is played as a dotted eighth-note. Three measures before rehearsal number one, the first violinist plays each of the half-notes with an unwritten *diminuendo* and with a small separation. The second violinist plays the eighth-note triplets with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string. The violist and the cellist play their long notes in this measure *legato sostenuto*, but with a softer dynamic than their marked *forte*. When the violist and the cellist play the main motif, it is played more off the string that at the beginning.

The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the first measure *déchaké*. The most striking difference compared to the other two versions is how heavy the sound is. The eighth-note triplets in the second measure are played off the string. Another striking difference is that there is no break at all between the fourth and fifth measures of the movement, while the other two ensembles made a slight break between them. The Bessler-Reis Quartet phrases the fourth measure of the movement by making a *crescendo* on the half-note of the triplet at the third and fourth beats of this measure. This *crescendo* goes towards the first beat of the fifth measure. The other two ensembles make a *diminuendo* in this place which sounds like the ending of a four bar phrase. Another difference is that at the fifth measure, Marie-Christine Springuel, the violist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, plays the slurred half-note for its whole value and *sostenuto*. At the third and fourth measures before rehearsal number one, the cellist Alceu Reis plays *sostenuto*. The triplets in the violins and viola are played off the string and very heavy. At the second and third measures before rehearsal number
one, the first violinist Bernardo Bessler plays the half-notes *forte* with an unwritten *diminuendo* and with a very slight separation between them.

The Latin American Quartet plays each dotted quarter-note with an unwritten *diminuendo* and with a shortened value from rehearsal number two to three measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 6.2). The result is a separation before the accents on the two slurred eighth-notes. These accents are more horizontal than vertical but they have an aggressive character. The separate eighth-note and the eighth-note triplets are played with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string. At the third measure after rehearsal number two, the triplet is played off the string. After this, and until two measures before rehearsal number three, all the eighth-notes are played in this way. The Danubius Quartet plays all the section between rehearsal number two and one measure before rehearsal number three, much lighter than the Latin American Quartet. The Danubius Quartet’s approach regarding articulation is very similar to that of the Latin American Quartet, but it is less exaggerated and the accents are less aggressive. The Bessler-Reis Quartet’s approach is also similar but the unwritten *diminuendi* are much more subtle.

A very clear texture is achieved by The Latin American Quartet from one measure before rehearsal number three to one measure before rehearsal number four (see ex. 6.3). This is achieved by means of dynamics and articulation. During this passage, the cellist plays mainly long notes. The last marked dynamic for the cello was *forte*. This dynamic marking appeared at the beginning of the movement, but Alvaro Bitrán, the cellist of the Latin American Quartet, plays all the passage *pianissimo*. Despite his use of this very soft dynamic, he manages to play each note with an unwritten *diminuendo*. Javier Montiel, the violist of the Latin American Quartet, plays the melody that goes from rehearsal number three until three measures after rehearsal number three, *forte* with *legato* and *détaché* articulations on the slurred and separated notes respectively. The first and second violinists play this passage *piano* with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each note and separation between notes. Four measures after rehearsal number three, when the second violin takes the melody, the violist drops the dynamic to the marked *piano* and plays with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each note and separation between each note. The second
violinist plays the previously mentioned melody *forte sostenuto*. Two measures before rehearsal number four, the quartet makes an unwritten *crescendo* which leads towards a *forte* on the first beat of rehearsal number four. The approach of the Danubius Quartet is almost identical; except that one measure before rehearsal number three there is a big *crescendo* in the four instruments and that from rehearsal number three to three measures after rehearsal number three, the line played by the two violins is more present. The cello line becomes more present four measures before rehearsal number four. The Bessler-Reis Quartet’s approach is similar, but the cello line is more present in general and becomes even more present five measures before rehearsal number four.

The Latin American Quartet plays off the string the sixteenth and the eighth-notes as well as the eighth-note triplets that are part of the main line from one measure after rehearsal number four until rehearsal number five (see ex. 6.4). However, at the first and second measures after rehearsal number five, the first violinist plays *détaché* (see ex. 6.5). Three measures after rehearsal number five he plays the sixteenth-notes off the string, but four measures after rehearsal number five he plays them on the string. The sixteenth-notes are played off the string from rehearsal number six until one measure before rehearsal number seven (see ex. 6.6).

The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the sixteenth-notes which are part of the main melodic line *détaché*. The triplets that are part of the main line are played off the string. The sixteenth-notes are played off the string when they are part of the anthiphonal texture in measures like the seventh and eighth measures after rehearsal number four. The Danubius Quartet plays all the sixteenth, eighth-notes and eighth-note triplets of this section off the string.

At rehearsal number seven and one measure after rehearsal number seven, the first violinist and the violist of the Latin American Quartet play the quarter-notes with a separation between them and with an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of them (see ex. 6.7). This helps to clearly hear the entrances of the imitations. There is a big separation from three measures after rehearsal number seven until five measures after rehearsal number seven, between the dotted half-note which is slurred to an eighth-note and the separate eighth-note, which is played off the string. Six measures after rehearsal number seven, the
eighth-notes in the first violin, viola and cello are played very short and off the string. The
 eighth-note triplets at the second and third measures before rehearsal number eight are
 played on the string. But the eighth-note triplets that appear from rehearsal number eight
to four measures after rehearsal number eight are played with a bow stroke that is in
between on and off the string (see ex. 6.8). The Danubius Quartet’s approach is very
similar, but on the quarter-note triplets played by the first violin, viola and cello at the
third, fourth and fifth measures after number seven, they make a crescendo-diminuendo
on each measure. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays every short note on the string and in
general their style is much more sostenuto.

Six measures before rehearsal number nine, the first violinists of both the Latin
American and the Danubius Quartets make the phrase go forward by playing a crescendo
and by intensifying the vibrato towards the first beat of the next measure (see ex. 6.9).
The first violinist of the Bessler-Reis Quartet does not do this at all.

**II- Andante**

During the fugato section, which goes from the beginning of the movement to three
measures after rehearsal number one, the Latin American Quartet achieves a texture that
is very clear (see ex. 6.10). They achieve it mainly by playing the subject at its written
mezzo forte dynamic and slightly softening the dynamic after the subject is over in order
to highlight its subsequent entrances in the other voices. This is done despite the fact that
for the first twelve measures of the movement there is no other written dynamic than
mezzo forte. At rehearsal number one, the two violins and the viola have piano marked,
but they actually play pianissimo. They play legato and détaché with a light sound. The
Danubius Quartet has a similar approach except that at rehearsal number one, the two
violins and the viola, which have piano marked are more present and this interferes with
the entrance of the subject in the cello. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays this passage in the
same manner as the Danubius Quartet, but the second violin, viola and cello phrase the
subject differently: they make a crescendo on the third bar of the subject which gives the
phrase direction towards the first beat of the next measure. They also make a diminuendo
on the fourth bar of the subject. After this they play a softer dynamic.
The Latin American Quartet achieves a very clear texture from rehearsal number two to three measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 6.11). They emphasize the antiphonal effect of this passage, as well as the pairing of the instruments, by highlighting the eighth-note triplet melodic line on each pair of instruments. This creates a sense of dialogue between the two violins and the viola and cello. The two violins play their triplets *forte* instead of *mezzo forte* and then make an unwritten *diminuendo* on the slurred half-note. Thanks to this *diminuendo*, the triplets in the viola and cello are clearly audible. The viola and cello simply play *legato* and *sostenuto*. During the next measures, the Latin American Quartet plays some unwritten dynamics: three measures after rehearsal number two, there is a subtle *diminuendo*. Four measures after rehearsal number two, the Latin American Quartet plays a *crescendo* that reaches its loudest point on the first beat of the sixth measure after rehearsal number two. After this, there is a *diminuendo* that reaches its softest point at the end of the seventh measure after rehearsal number two. During this *diminuendo*, the players change the articulation from *détaché* to a soft *martelé*. This results in a clear feeling of an eight measure phrase that goes from rehearsal number two to seven measures after rehearsal number two. The Bessler-Reis Quartet has a similar approach to this passage, but their accents are less aggressive and the viola and cello play an unwritten *diminuendo* on the slurred quarter-notes during the four bars after rehearsal number two. Seven measures after rehearsal number two they keep the *détaché* bow-stroke.

The Danubius Quartet is less clear from rehearsal number two to three measures after rehearsal number two due to the lack of *diminuendo* on the long notes and to the extremely subtle accents. Nevertheless, it is also possible to get the sense of a dialogue in their performance of this passage. This ensemble simply plays in tempo without any added dynamics from four measures after rehearsal number two until seven measures after rehearsal number two. At rehearsal number three, the second violinist of the Latin American quartet plays the dotted eighth-note as a G-natural instead of A-natural (see ex. 6.12). Nevertheless the printed score and the original manuscript show an A-natural, which is respected by the Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets. The viola has *mezzo forte* marked in its accompaniment, but the violist of the Latin American Quartet plays
more of a *mezzo piano*, which puts the forte melody clearly in the foreground. In addition, two measures after rehearsal number three, in the same version, the second violin, the viola and later the cello have *piano* marked, but they play *pianissimo*. During the three measures before rehearsal number four, the first violinist takes some small rhythmic freedoms on the sixteenth-notes. The Latin American Quartet makes an unwritten gradual *crescendo* from rehearsal number four until the first beat of two measures before rehearsal number five (see ex. 6.13). The Danubius Quartet also achieves a clear and transparent texture in this passage, but their sense of a foreground, middleground and background is not as clear as that of the Latin American Quartet and it may be difficult for the listener to understand who has the main line. This ensemble doesn’t add any unwritten dynamics. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays this passage in a very similar way and suffers from the same lack of textural clarity.

In every measure between eight measures before rehearsal number six and one measure before rehearsal number six, the Latin American Quartet plays the eighth-note triplets with a bow stroke that is in between *détaché* and *martelé* (see ex. 6.14). There is an unwritten *diminuendo* on each of the two slurred eighth-notes of the triplet and there is a separation after them. The *rallentando* is big and the separate eighth-note of the triplet one measure before rehearsal number six sounds like a quarter-note played a tempo. The Danubius Quartet plays the eighth-notes of the triplet *détaché* and there is no unwritten *diminuendo* on the two slurred eighth-notes of the triplet and no separation after them. The *rallentando* is not as exaggerated as that of the Latin American Quartet. The Bessler-Reis Quartet also plays the eighth-note triplets *détaché* and there is no release on the two slurred eighth-notes, but there is a separation after them.

**III- Scherzo**

The Latin American Quartet plays at a tempo of around one hundred thirty-seven beats per minute. The eighth-notes are played very short and off the string (see ex. 6.15). The quarter-note triplet is played with a bow stroke that is in between *détaché* and *martelé* with horizontal accents. The *glissandi* are played with a very light character. The Danubius Quartet plays at a tempo of about one hundred forty-seven beats per minute.
They also play very light, but they make a crescendo on the ascending scales of the first and second measures of the movement. The quarter-note triplet on the third measure is played détaché without any unwritten diminuendo. On the ascending glissandi they play a crescendo which culminates on an accent. The Bessler-Reis Quartet’s version of this passage is similar, but is the slowest of the three with a tempo of about one-hundred-twenty-six beats per minute.

In the version of the Latin American Quartet, the sixteenth-notes that are played by the first violinist from six measures after rehearsal number one until three measures after rehearsal number two are totally on the string (see ex. 6.16). The eighth-notes in the accompanying part in the second violin and viola are played off the string. The cellist plays an unwritten diminuendo on each note and a separation between all the notes. In this version, this passage succeeds in giving the impression of a folk-music rhythmic base. The Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets play in a similar way but the sound of the Danubius Quartet is lighter.

The Latin American Quartet plays the eighth-note triplets off the string and the sixteenth-notes on the string détaché from four after rehearsal number two until two before rehearsal number four (see ex. 6.17). The Danubius Quartet plays the triplets with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string and the sixteenth-notes off the string. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the triplets very off the string and the sixteenth-notes détaché.

The written articulation and the dynamic markings of two sforzandi followed by a diminuendo and a quarter-note marked piano, two measures after rehearsal number four (see ex. 6.18), are played by the Latin American Quartet in an effective way. The second quarter-note of three measures after number four is shortened to an eighth-note. The same happens five measures after rehearsal number four. The Danubius Quartet does the same. The Bessler-Reis Quartet does not shorten the quarter-notes at the third and fifth measures after rehearsal number four so much as the other two ensembles.

The violinists and violist of the Latin American Quartet play legato from rehearsal number five to six measures after rehearsal number six (see ex. 6.19). The cellist plays the eighth-note triplets from rehearsal number five to seven measures after rehearsal
number five pianissimo and off the string. The quarter-notes are played short. The Danubius Quartet plays this passage in the same way. In the version of the Bessler-Reis Quartet the cello line has more presence from rehearsal number five to seven measures after rehearsal number five and the dance-like effect of the sesquialtera is more effective.

The Latin American and the Danubius Quartets treat the form as five four-measure phrases from six measures before rehearsal number seven until fourteen measures after rehearsal number seven (see ex. 6.20). They do this by playing a separation before each eighth-note triplet, which is the beginning of each phrase. The Bessler-Reis Quartet does not do these separations at all.

IV- Molto allegro

The Latin American Quartet plays the eighth-notes that appear in the two opening measures of the fourth movement off the string (see ex. 6.21). The triplets of the sixth measure are played détaché. They make a slight separation between the seventh and eighth measures of the movement. This separation indicates that the first phrase is a seven-bar phrase and that a new phrase begins in the eighth measure of the movement. This ensemble does this separation despite the fact that in the viola and cello part there is a slur from the half-note on the third and fourth beats of the seventh measure to the first quarter-note of the triplet in the eighth measure. The Danubius Quartet plays the triplets in the sixth measure with a bow stroke that is in between on and off the string and they do not separate between the seventh and eighth measures. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the triplet détaché and the two violins play a slight separation between the seventh and eight measures. The viola and cello play as written, without any separation and sustaining the slur that connects these measures.

The Latin American Quartet plays the eighth-notes short and off the string from three measures before rehearsal number one until seven measures before rehearsal number two. The quarter-note triplets in the viola and cello have some unwritten diminuendo on each note. The longer notes such as dotted quarter-notes and the slurred half-notes are played with an unwritten diminuendo and a separation between them. The Danubius and the Bessler-Reis Quartets play the eighth-notes off the string but not as short as the Latin
The longer notes are played without any dimuendo or separation between them.

The Latin American Quartet achieves a clear texture from six measures before rehearsal number two until seven measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 6.22). At the sixth measure before rehearsal number two the two violinists play pianissimo instead of the written piano dynamic. The violist plays the melody forte and the cellist plays a piano dynamic instead of the written pianissimo. Nevertheless the viola line is clearly in the foreground. The second violin plays the main line from rehearsal number two until three measures after rehearsal number two; the first violinist plays a piano dynamic. The cello is barely audible and the violist attacks each of the whole-notes with aggressive vertical accents. After this, he drops the dynamic to pianissimo. The cello takes the main line and plays forte from four measures after rehearsal number two to seven measures after rehearsal number two. The second violinist and the violist play aggressive accents but they do not drop the dynamic so much. The overall effect is of a crescendo that goes towards the first beat of eight measures after rehearsal number two.

In the version of the Danubius Quartet, six measures before rehearsal number two the cellist plays the syncopations too loud and they interfere with the viola melody. Nevertheless, the emphasis on these syncopations also creates an energetic dance-like effect. The cellist Ilona Ribli breaks the written slurs and plays accents with the violist Cecilia Bodolai at the beginning of each measure from rehearsal number two to three measures after rehearsal number two. They play a piano dynamic and the accents are not aggressive. Due to this it is possible to clearly hear the melody played by the second violin. The same happens when the cello takes the main line four measures after rehearsal number two.

In the version of the Bessler-Reis Quartet, from six measures before rehearsal number two to one measures before rehearsal number two, the two violinists play too loud and interfere with the viola main line. The first violinist Bernardo Bessler plays with too much presence from rehearsal number two to seven measures after rehearsal number two, and this interferes with the second violin and later with the cello when they play the main melodic line.
During the sixth and seventh measures after rehearsal number three, the Latin American Quartet plays an unwritten diminuendo which creates the impression of the end of an eight-measure phrase which started four measures after number three (see ex. 6.23). Four measures before rehearsal number four, this ensemble plays an unwritten crescendo that goes to the first beat of rehearsal number four and which conveys the impression of a four-bar phrase that started and ended (see ex. 6.24). The Danubius and Bessler-Reis Quartets just play their parts without any additional unwritten dynamics.

The two violinists of the Latin American Quartet play the sixteenth-notes détaché on the string from rehearsal number ten to three measures after rehearsal number ten (see ex. 6.25). They play with perfect synchronization and achieve the effect of one single instrument playing despite the fact that the line is divided between the two violins. During the last six measures of the piece, the two slurred notes of the eighth-note triplets are played with an unwritten diminuendo and a separation after them (see ex. 6.26). This recalls the way the slurred notes were played in the first movement from rehearsal number two to nine measures after rehearsal number two (see ex. 6.2). The Danubius Quartet also achieves the effect of one instrument playing from rehearsal number ten to three measures after rehearsal number ten (see ex. 6.25). During the last six measures of the fourth movement this ensemble does not make much diminuendo after the two slurred notes (see ex. 6.26). As usual, the sound of the Danubius Quartet is lighter than that of the Latin American Quartet. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays off the string the sixteenth-notes from rehearsal number ten to three measures after rehearsal number ten (see ex. 6.25). The effect is much more energetic and interesting than in the other two versions. The Bessler-Reis Quartet plays the last six bars of the movement on the string with some unwritten diminuendo in the two slurred eighth-notes (see ex. 6.26). The last note is played with a round and powerful sound.
Ex. 6.2. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From rehearsal number two to two measures before rehearsal number three.
Ex. 6.3. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: *Allegro*. From one measure before rehearsal number three to two measures before rehearsal number four.
Ex. 6.4. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: *Allegro*. From six measures before rehearsal number five to two measures after rehearsal number five.
Ex. 6.5. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: *Allegro*. From rehearsal number five to four measures after rehearsal number five.

Ex. 6.7. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From one measure before rehearsal number seven to seven measures after rehearsal number seven.
Ex. 6.8. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From five measures before rehearsal number eight to four measures after rehearsal number eight.

Ex. 6.9. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. First movement: Allegro. From six measures before rehearsal number nine to one measure before rehearsal number nine.
Ex. 6.15. Villa-Lobos: String Quartet No. 14. Third movement: *Scherzo*, *Vivace*. From the beginning to three measures before rehearsal number one.


CONCLUSION

One of the most challenging performance aspects of String Quartet No. 12, 13 and 14 is that of texture, since the writing is complex and scholars have pointed out that the sound lacks transparency. In order to solve this, the use of separate articulations whether on or off the string is recommended. Respecting the value of the rests also will favor a clear texture. Playing the notes that appear as part of imitative textures or of an accompaniment with separation between them and with a quick unwritten diminuendo on each note will help to produce a more transparent texture. In the case of passages of a legato cantabile type, it is important to respect the dynamics in order to create a sense of a foreground, middleground and background. Sometimes it may be necessary to increase or to lower the written dynamics of the lines in order to achieve a clear texture.

It is important to be aware of the Brazilian cultural context of the composer and to highlight the folk music influences. Passages that use sesquiáltera should be played with a steady tempo in order to emphasize the intended dance-like effect. The performers should be attentive to the fact that many of the slow movements and passages of Villa-Lobos’s string quartets are based on the Modinha and should be played with the lyrical, romantic and vocal character of this kind of folksong. The texture of one instrument playing the melody with an accompaniment in the other three instruments may point to an influence of the Chôro and may justify a use of rhythmic freedoms that give the music an improvisational feeling. Another important folk-based element is the imitation of the responsorial practice of Afro-Brazilian singing in which one instrument represents a soloist and the other three instruments answer as a chorus.

The performers should be very careful with the pauses that they make between the sections of a movement, since Villa-Lobos wrote rests between the sections in order to clarify the A-B-A ternary form of the piece. This form is characteristic of Villa-Lobos’s late period and can be found with different variants in every movement of the pieces in study. In the case of short movements such as the fourth movement of String Quartet No. 12, playing unwritten breaks may create a fragmentary impression in the listener instead of that of one single movement.
Villa-Lobos’s use of articulation markings is very particular, and sometimes the articulation indications that appear at the recapitulation of a passage do not appear at the exposition of the same passage. This seems to be intentional, and it helps to make the recapitulation more exciting and energetic. The accent sign in the context of a slow movement or passage is intended to mean something different from the same sign in a faster tempo. It may call for a sustained sound with a fast bow-speed at the attack, a very intense vibrato and separation between the notes. The separate notes with dashes on them that form part of a cantabile main melodic line may be played détaché and sostenuto. The slurred notes with dashes on them that form part of a main melodic line may be played with almost no separation between the notes, while in the context of an accompaniment they may call for more separation and articulation.

Of the three versions compared, the Latin American Quartet tends to favor the use of short articulations whether on or off the string when possible. This ensemble shows a wide spectrum of color possibilities thanks to their use of different kinds of articulations, dynamics, bow-speed, vibrato and tone. This makes their version energetic and vibrant and creates very clear textures. The Latin American Quartet plays in ways that emphasize the folk influences of the pieces in study; they play the passages that make use of sesquiáltera in a very steady and metronomic way and succeed in creating a dance-like feeling. Other times they take small rhythmic freedoms that create the improvisatory character needed in passages that are influenced by the Chôro or the Modinha. Rhythmic freedoms are also used by this ensemble to help clarify the form of the piece to the listener.

The Danubius Quartet tends to use a very refined and light sound that shows more concern with the Neo-Classical and European aspects of the piece rather than the Brazilian folkloric elements that are present in this work. This is particularly true of their rendering of String Quartet No. 12 in which they seem to deliberately avoid any kind of aggressiveness or percussiveness in the sound. This ensemble can be very expressive and take rhythmic freedoms in the slow movements or passages without distorting the flow of the music. However their tendency is to play with a steady tempo. There is also a self-
contained quality in the vibrato and tone of the *legato-cantabile* passages that makes this version very different from the other two. The Danubius Quartet displays a preference for short articulations which are nevertheless longer than those used by the Latin American Quartet. An important factor in the creation of clear textures in both ensembles is the use of unwritten *diminuendo* in the notes that are part of an accompaniment.

The Bessler-Reis Quartet’s general approach emphasizes richness and beauty of tone since in general they tend to play with a sustained sound. This is in part the result of their widespread preference for longer articulations than those used by the other two groups. This quartet plays with a dynamic range that tends to give equal importance to the four instruments of the ensemble. Unfortunately, transparency of sound and clarity of texture are not favored by this approach. This ensemble plays with a very steady tempo rather than with the use of many rhythmic freedoms and tends to use one kind of vibrato that gives a heavy quality to their performance.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Juan José Gutiérrez Canossa was born on June 18, 1973 in San José, Costa Rica. He began his musical studies when he was eight years old and he began studying the cello one year later. He received his Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance in 1996 from The School of Musical Arts of the University of Costa Rica. He received the Master of Music in Cello Performance degree from the Louisiana State University School of Music in 2002.

In 1997 he was a member of the cello section of the Orchestra of the North in Portugal and in 1998 he was appointed as cellist of the Quarteto Lusitano also in Portugal. With these two ensembles he toured extensively through Portugal and Spain. Mr. Gutiérrez has also played with the National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica, the National Symphony Orchestra of Honduras and with the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. He has also been principal cello of the Central America Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Gutiérrez performances as a soloist include recitals at the Enescu Museum in Bucharest, Romania and at the School of Musical Arts of the University of Costa Rica which was broadcast on national radio.

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