

legato of Mahler's "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen" (The world has lost track of me), a title and song eerily appropriate to our time. Before the end of both songs, the operatic Kaufmann almost shatters the lied framework. And yet, especially in the Wolf, the peak moment seems well prepared and dramatically logical—earned opulence. I'd guess that anyone with a pulse will be thrilled. —David J. Baker

## Paulo Szot: *Jardim Noturno*



CD Marun, piano. Texts, no translations.  
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**DESPITE HIS** prolific output of more than five hundred works, composer Claudio Santoro (1919–89) remains little known outside his native Brazil. Fortunately, his compatriots, baritone Paulo Szot and pianist Nahim Marun, have curated this two-disc set featuring a captivating array of songs and solo piano works by Santoro, who studied with Nadia Boulanger and was awarded the 1948 Lili Boulanger Memorial Prize by Stravinsky and Copland at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. With the exception of *Três Canções Populares* and two series titled *Canções de Amor*, the vocal works represented here remained unpublished until Marun unearthed them in the personal collection belonging to the composer's son. The three song cycles date from 1957 to 1959, and although they explore mostly unhappy love affairs, there's an easygoing, quasi-popular feel to them, as if Santoro were aware of—possibly even enjoyed—the self-dramatization they engender.

Szot's relaxed, liquid baritone exudes romance in the inviting "Luar de meu bem," the first of the *Three Popular Songs*, and his vibrant low notes pulsate with longing in the melancholy "Amor em lágrimas." Melting tone and an unforced falsetto on the high notes

lend vulnerability to the haunting "Ouve o silêncio," the first of the *Love Songs*, but later Szot unleashes the full robustness of his sound, acknowledging the power of the peculiar bond that arises from forbidden love. "Bem pior que a morte" shares an impressionistic darkness with the alluring title track, which opens the second series of love songs. Szot expresses the sadness in "Pregão da saudade" with exquisite, suspended soft high notes and coffee-grained low notes. The elusive "Alma perdida" is marked by a cry of longing, while "Em algum lugar" is notable for its determined optimism, longing for a sunnier place where love can flourish.

"Meu amor me disse adeus" is a gently doleful lament, and the languid habanera "Não te digo adeus" looks to the future, with dissonance signifying the bittersweet end of a relationship. The songs in *Tríptico* (1985) are unapologetically bleak and discordant, and even when the third, "O amante," stirs itself to one last hopeful plea, it settles finally into despair. Things lighten up in three settings of texts by Ari de Andrade, again from the 1950s. "Canção da fuga impossível" springs to life with percussive insistence, and the subtle dance rhythm underpinning "Irremediável canção" captures the sweetness of a moonlight encounter. "Levavas a madrugada" is even more exuberant.

The recording closes with a song from the composer's final year of life—a setting, curiously enough, of Goethe's "Wandlers Nachtlied." It's a minimalist farewell with a peaceful upward resolution on the last phrase, "Ruhst du auch," which Szot imbues with delicately floating tone. Szot is a superlative interpreter throughout, leaning into the emotional power of Santoro's fascinating songs without ever tipping into self-indulgence. Szot's tone is consistently rich and warm, with no evidence of strain at the extremes of his range. Marun, an anchored and expressive partner, shines in the solo piano works, which showcase a range of styles and moods. Standouts among these include the muscular, propulsive "Frevo," the piquant étude "Chôro" and the restlessly tormented "Toccata."

—Joanne Sydney Lessner