

# José White in Brazil, 1879–1889

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## I

ON SEPTEMBER 30, 1879, Rio de Janeiro's paramount newspaper announced the arrival of "the distinguished violinist José White, one of the honored members of the Paris Conservatoire and perhaps the most notable disciple of the celebrated Alard."<sup>1</sup> Although planned as a brief stay,<sup>2</sup> the Brazilian tour of the Cuban virtuoso José Silvestre de los Dolores White y Lafitte (*b.* Matanzas, Cuba, January 17, 1836; *d.* Paris, March 15, 1918)<sup>3</sup> lasted a decade—

<sup>1</sup>"o distincto violinista José White, um dos mais honrosos ornamentos do conservatorio de Pariz e talvez o discipulo mais notavel do celebre professor Allard." *Jornal do Commercio*, September 30, 1879. Jean Delphin Alard (1815–1888) taught at the Paris Conservatoire 1843 to 1875. Pablo de Sarasate (1844–1908) was Alard's most noted pupil.

<sup>2</sup>Contemporary reports in newspapers and periodicals confirm his intention. The *Revista Illustrada* of October 11, 1879, for instance, announced that "... violin prodigy M. White, while among us in passing, expects to receive great applause and something more from his concerts in the salon of our friends Arthur [Napoleão] & Miguez." ("Esse prodigio é o Sr. Withe [sic] que se acha entre nos de passagem e pretende colher muitas palmas e mais alguma coisa nos concertos que brevemente dará no salão dos nossos amigos Arthur & Miguez.")

<sup>3</sup>For biographical data concerning the African-descended José Silvestre de los Dolores White y Lafitte see James Monroe Trotter, *Music and Some Highly Musical People* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1881), 224–240 (extracts from a translation of White's "Biography, published in Paris in 1874 by Paul Dupont"); Maud Cuney Hare, *Negro Musicians and Their Music* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1936), 303–305; Otto Mayer-Serra, *Música y músicos de Latinoamérica*

during which interval, he participated intensively in the local musical life and played a crucial role in establishing at Rio de Janeiro a concert series reminiscent of those in European capitals. By favoring the German canon over the usual heterogeneous blend of operatic excerpts, dances from operettas, and virtuoso instrumental solo numbers regularly heard at local concerts, White largely helped change local musical taste.

Before reaching the Brazilian capital, White had toured the rest of the Western Hemisphere beginning with Mexico.<sup>4</sup> His appearances with the New York Philharmonic Society on December 11, 1875, and March 17, 1876, and with the Brooklyn Philharmonic

(México: Editorial Atlante, 1947), II, 1099–1100; Joaquín J. Argote, "White," *Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional* [Havana], 2d series, IV/2 (April–June, 1953): 80–99 [summary in Robert Stevenson, "Caribbean Music History. A Selective Annotated Bibliography with Musical Supplement," *Inter-American Music Review* IV/1 (Fall, 1981): 2–3]; Joaquín Pena and Higinio Anglés, *Diccionario de la música Labor* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, 1954), II, 2281; *Reimann MusikLexikon, Ergänzungsband, Personenteil L–Z*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus (Mainz: Schott, 1975), 905; Dominique-René de Lerma, *Black Composers Series* (Columbia Masterworks, M 33432, 1975), vol. 6, liner notes; and Eileen Southern, *Biographical Dictionary of Afro-American and African Musicians* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 400.

<sup>4</sup>White resided in Paris until 1873, when he returned to Cuba. For José Martí's reviews of his Mexican performances see "Musical Silhouettes Drawn by José Martí," pages 21–25 of this *Inter-American Music Review* issue.

Society on January 15, 1876,<sup>5</sup> were enthusiastically endorsed by critics. According to the January 8, 1876, number of *Dwight's Journal of Music*, xxxv/20, page 159:

At the second concert of the New York Philharmonic society, at the Academy of Music on Saturday evening, Dec. 11 [1875] . . . thoroughly delightful and inspiring was the violin playing of the solo performer, Mr. Joseph White, who performed Mendelssohn's Concerto in E, and the Ciaconna in D minor by Bach. Every part of the beautiful concerto was interpreted at the best, and I have seldom heard so satisfactory a rendering, while the Ciaconna, which demands talent and artistic qualities of the very highest order, was equally well played.

The review of his performance March 17, 1876, contained these observations:

The most conspicuous merits of Sig. White's playing are the accuracy of his stopping and the perfect purity of his intonation . . . Sig. White's playing is characterized by refinement rather than by power; although his remarkable intonation makes every note from his violin distinct and penetrating.<sup>6</sup>

From March 1877 through September 1879, White toured Spanish-speaking South America; starting at Caracas, he had visited among other cities Lima, Santiago de Chile, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo.<sup>7</sup>

Two months before he reached Rio de Janeiro, his coming was heralded in the most important Brazilian music periodicals. White's initial propagandist in the Brazilian capital was the Portuguese pianist Arthur Napoleão (1843–1925), whom White had met almost

two decades earlier in Havana.<sup>8</sup> Domiciled in Rio de Janeiro since 1869, Napoleão ten years later had become not only one of the most respected individuals in Rio de Janeiro's musical life but also a successful businessman. Together with his partner Leopoldo Miguez, he owned a shop selling music and instruments, a salon hosting chamber and solo concerts that drew select society, and in addition owned a large music publishing house issuing the periodical *Revista musical e de bellas artes* (1879–1880). In the July 19 issue of the *Revista*, Napoleão announced White's imminent arrival, praised his performing and composing abilities, and outlined his biography:

. . . born in Matanzas, Cuba, White demonstrated extraordinary aptitude for the violin from an early age. In 1855 he went to the French capital to study his instrument; in 1856, at seventeen, he won the first prize at the Conservatoire, being praised by several Parisian newspapers; in 1861, Parisian critics considered him one of the best violinists of his time; in 1863, he conquered Spain and since then his career has been an uninterrupted series of triumphs. He was chosen by Alard to substitute for him as violin teacher at the Conservatoire, an honor which suffices to qualify the Cuban artist. José White is also a distinguished composer; his *Six études brillantes* was approved by the Conservatoire committee. His output comprises works with orchestra, string quartets, romances, fantasias, and several pieces for one and two violins, which enrich the repertory of instrumental music; Rossini was an admirer of White; Auber considered him an honor to the Conservatoire; Ambroise Thomas, Gounod and almost all modern masters praised him. When in 1860, we heard him play in Cuba, his colossal talents were already evident; today, time and practice have necessarily enlarged his qualities as a great performer. White will certainly be one of the greatest celebrities the Rio de Janeiro public has heard.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup>At New York Philharmonic and Brooklyn Philharmonic concerts White performed Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, Bach's Chaconne from the D minor partita (and for an encore in Brooklyn a Bach Gavotte), and Vieuxtemps's *Ballade et Polonaise*; see *Dwight's Journal of Music* (Boston: Johnson Reprint Corp.; New York and London: Arno Press, 1987), January 8, 1876, 159; February 19, 1876, 184; and April 29, 1876, 224. White also appeared December 17, 1875, in a "classical concert" at Chickering Hall, performing Mendelssohn's B minor quartet with Teresa Carreño, her husband Émile Sauret, and cellist Werner, and Beethoven's violin and piano sonata in C minor with Teresa Carreño (*Dwight's Journal of Music*, January 8, 1876, 159). The Cuban pianist Ignacio Cervantes (1847–1905) played Chopin's G minor Ballade on the same December 17, 1875, program.

<sup>6</sup>*Dwight's Journal* April 29, 1876, 224.

<sup>7</sup>White's activities in Chile were extensively documented by Luis Merino in "José White in Chile: National and International Repercussions," *Inter-American Music Review* xi/1 (Fall–Winter 1990): 87–112.

<sup>8</sup>In 1860 Napoleão toured Cuba. See Sanches de Frias, *Arthur Napoleão: resenha comemorativa da sua vida pessoal e artística* (Lisbon: n.p., 1913).

<sup>9</sup>"Deve chegar brevemente, vindo de Buenos-Ayres, o celebre violinista José White, o mais notavel discipulo de Allard e quiçá a maior gloria do Conservatorio de Pariz. José White nasceu em Matanzas, na ilha de Cuba, onde desde a mais tenra idade mostrou extraordinarias disposições para o violino. Em 1855 dirigiu-se á capital da França para estudar seriamente o seu instrumento; em 1856, com dezessete annos ganhou o primerio premio e fez tal sensação que todos os jornaes d'elle se occuparam com grandes louvores; em 1861, era considerado em Paris como um dos rabequistas mais notaveis do seu tempo; em 1863 foi á Hespanha onde foi victoriado; depois, até os nossos

Immediately after White's arrival, Napoleão sponsored an informal gathering in his salon to introduce the violinist to prominent local musicians, amateurs, and the press.<sup>10</sup> The *Revista musical e de bellas artes* registered his first appearance in Rio de Janeiro thus:

Some friends and members of the press gathered informally last Wednesday in the Arthur Napoleão & Miguez salon to appreciate the violinist José White's admirable talent. He performed two pieces: *Mélancolie* by [François-Hubert] Prume, and a fantasia from the opera *Martha*, the latter White's own composition. In both pieces, White demonstrated the exceptional talents which have brought him such deserved fame. His performance was impressive; nothing was more beautiful than the manner with which his bow passes over the strings, and his fast scales in thirds and sixths; nothing more articulated and pure than his high notes, played with extraordinary facility. White is a performer of first rank, whom everyone should hear and applaud. His first concert will take place this Thursday in the salon of Arthur Napoleão & Miguez.<sup>11</sup>

dias a sua carreira foi uma série não interrompida de triunfos. Foi escolhido por Allard para substituir na sua ausencia como professor de violino no Conservatorio, honra esta que é bastante para classificar o artista cubano. Como compositor, José White é muito considerado; sendo os seus seis estudos brilhantes aprovados pelo comité dos estudos do conservatorio. Concertos com grande orchestra, quartetos para instrumentos de cordas, romances, fantasias e diversos trechos para um e dois violinos, tal é o cabedal com que o nosso violinista tem enriquecido musica intrumental. Rossini era admirador de White; Auber considerava-o como uma honra do conservatorio; Ambroise Thomas, Gounod e quasi todos os mestres modernos o tiveram sempre no maior apreço. Quando em 1860 o ouvimos em Cuba, já o talento d'este artista era colossal; hoje, que o tempo e o estudo devem necessariamente ter ampliado todas as suas qualidades de grande concertista, White deve apresentar-se ao publico fluminense como uma das maiores notabilidades que têm pisado o nosso solo." *Revista musical e de bellas artes* 29, July 19, 1879.

<sup>10</sup>Four months earlier in Buenos Aires, White had profited from the same strategy, first performing May 28, 1879, to a restricted but influential audience at the house of the pianist Oscar Pfeiffer his *Martha* fantasia and caprice over motives from *La sonnambula*; see Vicente Gesualdo, *Historia de la música en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Beta, 1961), II, 280.

<sup>11</sup>"Improvisadamente se reuniram alguns amigos e collegas da imprensa, na quarta-feira passada, no salão Arthur Napoleão & Miguez, e tiveram occasião de apreciar o talento admiravel do rabequista J. White, em duas peças que elle executou. A primeira foi a *Mélancolie*, de Prume, e a segunda a fantasia da opera *Martha*, composição do proprio executante. Em ambas estas peças J. White revelou os dotes excepcionaes que lhe têm grangeado merecida fama. A execução é prodigiosa e a escola perfeita. Nada mais bello do que a maneira pela qual

After such praise, White's premiere in Rio de Janeiro attracted an audience of celebrities. As was the custom of visiting performers, White collaborated with local musicians—among them the sopranos Marietta Siebs, Cinira Polonio, and bass Scolari, the flautist Duque-Estrada Meyer (1848–1905),<sup>12</sup> and the pianist Jeronymo Queiroz (1857–1936).<sup>13</sup> Napoleão's review of the concert ran thus:

Preceded by great fame, the violinist José White offered a concert yesterday in the salon of Arthur Napoleão & Miguez. Almost all musicians and amateurs of the capital, as well as the best families of our society, had great expectations about the artist's performance. Although the room was not full, those present were able to judge the artist's talent. Everyone was attentive, with their eyes fixed on the violinist. Nobody dared to utter a word in order not to miss a single note or a certain *nuance*. José White performed in a magisterial way. The first piece was his *Martha* fantasia. The violinist was applauded several times [during the piece], sometimes after a beautiful melody, sometimes after a bravura section. . . . The second piece was extremely difficult, a transcription for solo violin of the quintet from *La sonnambula*; attending to the audience requests, White had to repeat the piece. The third and last piece was certainly the most notable: the *Othello* fantasia by Ernst. All the difficulties that a piece like this offers were overcome by the performer with admirable perfection. . . . José White also performed, by request, a gracious *Zamacueca*. . . . José White is undoubtedly one of the most notable violinists to have visited Rio de Janeiro and one of the most distinguished European virtuosos.<sup>14</sup>

este eminente artista pousa o arco sobre as cordas e percorre as escalas em terças e sextas, com maxima velocidade e perfeição, nada mais nitido do que aquellas notas puras e scintillantes nos pontos mais agudos da rabeça e que elle arranca com facilidade pasmosa. J. White é um artista de primeira ordem a quem todos têm o dever de ouvir e applaudir. Para esse fim dá elle um primeiro concerto no salão Arthur Napoleão & Miguez quinta-feira proxima." *Revista musical e de bellas artes* 41, October 11, 1879, 6. This performance was also reported in the *Jornal do Commercio*, October 9, 1879.

<sup>12</sup>Student of Mathieu-André Reichert and Antonio da Silva Callado, Duque-Estrada Meyer was appointed in 1890 flute teacher in the Instituto Nacional de Música.

<sup>13</sup>Born at Rio de Janeiro, Jeronymo Emiliano de Sousa Queiroz studied piano in Paris with Antoine-François Marmontel. Upon returning to Brazil, he promoted French chamber music, and in 1902 gave the first performance of César Franck's violin sonata at Rio de Janeiro. In 1918 Queiroz was appointed piano teacher at the Instituto Nacional de Música.

<sup>14</sup>"No salão Arthur Napoleão & Miguez, realizou-se hontem á noite, o concerto do violinista José White. Precedido de

# Mélancolie

Prume

Allegretto. M-tremolo de Muetel 3/4. 28.

TRINA

1<sup>re</sup> fois 2<sup>de</sup> fois

VAR. I.

très un peu

Belle Fantaisie de Ad. N. Schumann.

VAR. 3. Et accentuant la première note.

VAR. 3.

VAR. 4.

avec beaucoup d'expression

un peu plus lent

très

ritard.

harmonique







During his second concert, on October 28, 1879, again in the salon of Napoleão & Miguez, White performed Alard's *Un ballo in maschera* fantasia, and two of his own compositions: a *Fantaisie-Styrienne* and a *Novo Carnaval* fantasia. Delighted with the performance, the audience asked for an encore and the violinist responded with his *Zamacueca* and more variations on the *Carnaval*.<sup>15</sup>

After success in the capital, White left for São Paulo in November of 1879, where "his concert was well attended and the press acclaimed the eminent artist."<sup>16</sup> Upon returning to Rio de Janeiro, White joined Leopoldo Miguez in a Sociedade Philarmônica Fluminense concert, on December 19, 1879, playing again Ernst's *Othello* fantasia [*Fantaisie brillante . . . sur Otello de Rossini*] and his own *Zamacueca*. In addition, he performed with Miguez a violin duet by Alard, delighting the public that "never before . . . heard a violin duet so perfectly

executed."<sup>17</sup> On December 30, White joined Alfredo Napoleão (1852–1917), Arthur's younger brother, in playing a concert in the salon of Napoleão & Miguez. Despite the inappropriate season for concerts,<sup>18</sup> the salon contained ". . . a vast number of very distinguished ladies, state ministers, prominent musicians, and other meritorious individuals," eager to hear the two artists for the last time.<sup>19</sup> The program included Bach's D minor Chaconne, long a chief work in White's repertory, but heretofore unfamiliar in Rio de Janeiro. In order to familiarize the local public with Bach's music, Napoleão offered these remarks:

This piece belongs to a suite by Bach; probably no violinist could perform it at the time it was composed. Written approximately at the end of the 17th century, the piece has a severe and classic tone, characteristic of its time, along with a freshness and admirable variety. . . . Schumann and Mendelssohn wrote accompaniments for the Chaconne but White performs it as the author intended: without accompaniment.<sup>20</sup>

Napoleão's critique of the concert, published in the *Revista musical e de bellas artes* a week later, emphasized not only the complexity of the piece, but White's dexterity which captivated the spectators:

Not even in one hundred volumes could we begin to explain a piece like this. Bach represents a tradition in art. Innovator and creator, he founded a school; to his pleiad belong Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and a

grande fama, era natural a anciedade com que o mundo musical do Rio de Janeiro esperava uma ocasião de apreciar tão notavel talento. E de facto, lá se achou reunido quasi tudo o que a cõrte encerra de artistas e amadores distinctos, bem como algumas das primeiras familias da nossa sociedade. Se o salão não regorgitava de espectadores, os que lá se achavam eram na maior parte entendedores e bem no caso de aquilatar do meiro do artista. Os ouvidos estavam attentos e os olhos fixos no rabequista. Ninguem ousava segredar uma palavra receioso de perder uma nota, um som, uma *nuance*. José White executou as tres peças annunciadas no programma, de um modo magistral. A primeira foi uma fantasia da *Martha* da sua propria lavra. Os applausos irromperam por diversas vezes ora ao terminar um canto mavioso, ora no fim de algum trecho de bravura, executado com a maxima perfeição. . . . A segunda peça, uma transcripção do quintteto da *Sonnambula* para rabeça só, é de uma difficuldade pasmosa e White teve que a repetir a pedido geral. A terceira e ultima peça foi certamente a mais notavel de todas: a fantasia sobre o *Othello* de Ernst. As immensas difficuldades de todo o genero que apresenta esta composição foram vencidas pelo artista com uma serenidade e correção verdadeiramente admiraveis. José White tocou ainda a pedido geral uma graciosa *Zamacueca*. . . . José White é incontestavelmente um dos mais eminentes rabequistas que aqui tem vindo e um dos mais estimados *virtuosos* da Europa. Merece pois que se lhe dispense aquelle apreço que todas as cidades cultas dispensam a artistas desta ordem. [O resto do programma foi preechido pela Sra. Marietta Siebs, o baixo Scolari, o Sr. Duque-Estrada Meyer e o pianista Sr. Queiroz.] *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, October 18, 1879, 6.

<sup>15</sup> *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, November 1, 1879, 5.

<sup>16</sup> "muito concorrido e a imprensa paulistana não mercadejou elogios ao eminente artista." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, December 6, 1879, 4.

<sup>17</sup> "De certo, nunca no Rio de Janeiro se ouviu um duetto de rabeças executando por fõrma tão perfeita." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, December 27, 1879, 6.

<sup>18</sup> Usually December is an extremely hot month in Rio de Janeiro, making large gatherings in small salons difficult. The audience was large anyway, probably because, according to a note in Napoleão's periodical, both White and Alfredo Napoleão were to leave soon for Europe (*Revista musical e de bellas artes*, December 27, 1879, 6).

<sup>19</sup> "...um nucleo de distinctissimas senhoras, ministros d'estado, musicos notaveis, e outras pessoas gradas." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, January 3, 1880, 6.

<sup>20</sup> "Esta peça pertence a uma suite de piéces de Bach; não achou provavelmente violinista capaz de a executar na epocha em que foi excripta. É uma opnião geralmente aceita. Excriptas em fins do XVII seculo pouco mais ou menos, têm todo o caracter severo e classico da época, junto com uma frescura e variedade admiraveis. . . . Schumann e Mendelssohn escreveram acompanhamentos para a chaconne mas White executa-a como foi originalmente a intenção do autor, isto é, sem acompanhamento." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, December 27, 1879, 6.



large number of composers after them. One needs a special faculty to appreciate its value. . . . The applause received by White should have double merit, since it came from an audience that, despite its innate taste for music, is not yet accustomed to hear daily, and by the best artists, performances of the classic authors—as is the public of London, Paris, and Germany.<sup>21</sup>

In January of 1880, White continued with his Brazilian tour, performing in collaboration with Alfredo Napoleão<sup>22</sup> at Salvador, Bahia, and in nearby cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro.<sup>23</sup> On March 28, 1880, he left for Petrópolis, the mountain city near Rio de Janeiro where the nobility customarily spent the summer months. During his five weeks there, White took part in a concert at the Hotel Bragança, organized by the immigrant pianist Bernard Wagner,<sup>24</sup> performing, in addition to his already popular *Zamacueca* and *Sonnambula* fantasies, Alard's *Robert le Diable* and *Faust* fantasies, and Prume's *Mélancolie*. The *Revista musical e de bellas artes* on May 6, 1880, reporting the performance of White's *Salutaris* for harmonium and violin, called it "a truly outstanding sacred composition."<sup>25</sup>

Upon returning from Petrópolis to Rio de Janeiro, White continued collaborating with other musicians' presentations and in organizing his own concerts. On June 22, he offered his first benefit concert in the Imperial Conservatorio de Musica, performing, in addition to Alard's popular *Othelo*



Bottesini

White

The *Revista Illustrada*, first page, offers today the portraits of Grau, Bottesini,<sup>26</sup> and White. We already demonstrated our esteem for White, the distinguished violinist who is at the moment in Rio de Janeiro, where he has been not less admired than in other capitals. Still young, he has shown in Europe and America his artistic vocation and the results of his excellent study. *Revista Illustrada* applauds the celebrated violinist.<sup>27</sup>

and *Faust* fantasies, two pieces of his own, *Styrienne* and a *Rêve au Brésil*.<sup>28</sup> On August 21, 1880, he again played at São Paulo, but returned to the capital in September, to join with Frederico do Nascimento (1852-1924),<sup>29</sup> Arthur Napoleão, and Alfredo Bevilacqua in a concert honoring Carlos Gomes (1836-1896).<sup>30</sup> On October 15, his large scale charity concert to benefit the *Associação do Sagrado Coração de Jesus* given in the sumptuous hall of the

<sup>21</sup> "...Nem que tivéssemos excripto cem volumes, teríamos a pretensão de fazer comprehender de chofre a quem quer que fosse, uma peça d'este genero. Bach representa uma tradição na arte. Fundador da grande escola, innovador e creador, a elle devemos a apparição de Haendel, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven e toda a pleiade de grande mestres seus sucessores. Mas é preciso um cultivo especial para lhe apreciar o valor.... White colheu na Chaconne applausos que lhe devem ser duplamente lisongeiros, pois que partiram de um publico que possui, é certo, um gosto innato pela musica, mas que não está ainda como os publicos de Londres, Pariz e Allemanha, habituados a ouvir diariamente, de dia e de noite, e por artistas de primeira ordem, executar obras de autores classicos." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, January 3, 1880, 6.

<sup>22</sup> *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, January 17, 1880, 14.

<sup>23</sup> *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, February 14, 1880, 30.

<sup>24</sup> The German Bernard Wagner arrived at Rio de Janeiro on October 19, 1863, according to the announcement in the *Jornal do Commercio* of October 20, 1863.

<sup>25</sup> "um verdadeiro primor de canto religioso." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, May 8, 1880, 78.

<sup>26</sup> The Italian double-bass virtuoso Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889) visited Rio de Janeiro in September of 1879.

<sup>27</sup> "A nossa primeira pagina—A *Revista Illustrada* dá hoje os retratos de Grau, dos Srs. Bottesini e White.... Já tivemos occasião de patentear o nosso apreço ao insigne violinista White, ora de passagem no Rio de Janeiro, onde não tem sido menos admirado do que nas outras grandes capitães. Jovem ainda, tem dado na Europa e na America boas provas de sua vocação artistica, do seu estudo aproveitado. A *Revista Illustrada* applaude o festejado violinista." *Revista Illustrada*, November 8, 1879.

<sup>28</sup> *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, June 26, 1880, 110.

<sup>29</sup> Born in Setúbal, Portugal, Frederico do Nascimento studied violoncello with his father. After an active career in Rio de Janeiro, Nascimento was in 1890 appointed teacher at the Instituto Nacional de Música, where he taught cello and harmony; Heitor Villa-Lobos was one of his students.

<sup>30</sup> *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, September 4, 1880, 194. This concert was held at the Cassino Fluminense.

Cassino Fluminense enlisted the support of both the royal family and a long list of aristocratic ladies.<sup>31</sup>

## II

In the 1880s Brazil saw increasingly violent abolitionist campaigns, a conspicuous growth of the republican party, and tremendous social transformation in urban areas. Contradicting this surge, however, there continued to run a conservative stream springing from a long-term experience with monarchy. Music and arts, predominantly dependent on patronage, continued to be supported primarily by the established aristocracy. José White, who enjoyed a privileged position within the *status quo*, became in 1882 Princess Isabel's piano and violin teacher. In a letter to a friend, Princess Isabel (Pedro II's daughter, known as the Duchess D'Eu), described White's guidance thus:

I am making progress in the piano since I started [classes] with professor White, from Cuba . . . who has already performed in the Hotel Lambert [Petrópolis]. . . . I feel obliged to practice and I have excellent guidance from M. White.<sup>32</sup>

Later, White took charge of the music education of Princess Isabel's children. In 1886 she reported:

The children started solfège lessons and fortunately they have very good ears. . . . I am in charge of teaching them religion and of making sure they study their music lessons given by M. White.<sup>33</sup>

In the course of time, White became one of the princess's closest friends—continuing to support the royal family after the proclamation of the republic.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, October 23, 1880, 250.

<sup>32</sup> "Faço algum progresso no piano desde que tomei como professor M. White, de Cuba... e que já tocou em concertos no Hotel Lambert.... Isto me obriga a estudar e tenho excelente direção com M. White." Letter of Princess Isabel to the Duke Nemours, Rio de Janeiro August 31, 1882, quoted in Lourenço Luiz Lacombe, *Isabel, a princesa redentora* (Petrópolis: Instituto Histórico de Petrópolis, 1989), 165.

<sup>33</sup> "As crianças começaram a tomar lições de solfejo e felizmente têm muito bom ouvido... Eu me encarrego do catecismo e faço-os estudar as lições de música... com M. White." Letter of Princess Isabel to Duke Nemours, Rio de Janeiro September 1, 1886, quoted in Lourenço Luiz Lacombe, *Isabel, a princesa redentora*, 196.

<sup>34</sup> The collection of D. Pedro de Orléans e Bragança, includes a picture of Princess Isabel at the piano that belonged to José

During their exile in Paris, White periodically visited the royal family.<sup>35</sup>

With the potent support of the Duke and Duchess D'Eu and other members of the aristocracy, White's career in Rio de Janeiro reached its apogee. Constantly invited to perform at private soirées in salons of the aristocracy, he there mingled easily with wealthy amateurs, poets, intellectuals, and politicians. Along with Arthur Napoleão, he was several times a guest in the Barão de Cotegipe's coveted salon—well-known for Thursday evening meetings to which prominent foreign and native composers, performers, and music teachers were regularly invited.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to aristocratic patronage, White found at Rio de Janeiro a large number of sterling musicians, especially string players, with whom he could interact and accomplish his goals. If Rio de Janeiro was previously known as "the city of pianos," during the decade of the 1880's the city could well have been labeled "the capital of the string quartet." After the death of the two leading flautists, the Belgian immigrant Mathieu-André Reichert (1830–1880) and Joaquim Antônio da Silva Callado (1848–1880), a stream of immigrant and Brazilian string players dominated the local musical scene. The most prominent immigrant violinist active in the capital at the time of White's arrival was the Portuguese Francisco Pereira da Costa (1847–1890), who had also been a student of Alard at the Paris Conservatoire. Pereira da Costa, in Rio de Janeiro since 1871, not only collaborated in White's early concerts but also continued to appear with him throughout the decade.<sup>37</sup>

White. At the back of the photo one reads: "March 16, 1883. This picture was given to me by S.A.I. a Senhora Condessa D'Eu, my royal student. White." Quoted in Lourenço Luiz Lacombe, *Isabel, a princesa redentora*, 165. Immediately after the proclamation of the republic, several friends went to the Isabel Palace to offer their support; aboard the *Alagoas*, the Princess recalled "...Tosta, Mariquinhas, White, Ismael Galvão, ...Major Duarte, Barão do Catete, Carlos de Araújo, Drs. Rebouças and Araújo Goes." Quoted in Hermes Vieira, *Princesa Isabel, uma vida de luzes e sombras* (São Paulo: Edições GRD, 1990), 249.

<sup>35</sup> At the time of Pedro II's final illness José White was one of the friends who signed the visitation book at the hotel in Paris. See Pedro Calmon, *História de D. Pedro II* (Rio de Janeiro and Brasília: Instituto Nacional do Livro e Ministério da Educação e Cultura, 1975), v, 1890.

<sup>36</sup> Wanderley Pinho, *Salões e damas do segundo reinado*, 4th ed. (São Paulo: Livraria Martins, 1970), 182–183.

<sup>37</sup> Born in Oporto, Portugal, Francisco Pereira da Costa, premiered in Rio de Janeiro in August of 1864; married to the

In August of 1880, the Italian violinist Vincenzo Cernicchiario (1858-1928), who had been "highly praised in several Italian newspapers,"<sup>38</sup> made his first appearance at Rio de Janeiro. However, he did not threaten the paramountcy of either Pereira da Costa or White. According to Napoleão's review, Cernicchiario was not yet a mature musician:

This violinist gave his concert yesterday evening at the Imperial Conservatory. He came from a good school and performed with great perfection the different pieces of the program, the best being the famous Concerto in D, by Paganini, a very demanding work. Obviously, he will continue his studies and one day will be viewed alongside José White and other masters.<sup>39</sup>

However, if not the equal of Pereira da Costa or White, Cernicchiario despite his youth soon assumed a leading position within the local musical life as a violinist, teacher, and conductor.<sup>40</sup> A member of the Club Beethoven string quartet, Cernicchiario himself directed several concerts of symphonic music, and in 1886 helped found the Rio de Janeiro Sociedade de Quartetos.

On July 25, 1880, shortly before Cernicchiario's début, the fourteen-year-old violinist Eugenio Maurício Dengremont (1866-1893) returned to his home country after a dazzling tour as a prodigy in several European cities. His concert in Rio de Janeiro August 1, 1880, with a program including a *Trova-*

*dor* fantasy by Sivori (1815-1894) and a *Souvenir de Baden* by his teacher Hubert Léonard (1819-1890), impressed the local critics; Arthur Napoleão commented that "few artists have come to Rio de Janeiro with so notable a talent, and with so promising a future."<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, Dengremont left Rio de Janeiro soon thereafter, reaching the climax of his performance career abroad.<sup>42</sup>

In 1882, during Cernicchiario's short absence, the German violinist Otto Beck was hired to substitute for him as violinist of the Club Beethoven's string quartet. Recommended by Carl Reinecke (1824-1910) of the Leipzig Conservatory,<sup>43</sup> Beck arrived in Rio de Janeiro August 1, 1883. Albeit holding a crucial position in one of the most important private clubs of the city, Beck received mixed reviews; Cernicchiario remembered him as "a talented violinist, despite some irregularities in his interpretation and lack of grace in his sound."<sup>44</sup> The *Jornal do Commercio* also downgraded Beck's performance:

. . . two-thirds of our audience thought that Beck was out of tune; we are not obliged to think that he plays in tune only because Germany said so. . . . We have heard Dengremont, Miguez, Cernicchiario, Pereira da Costa, White, Ismael, and they did not perform as Beck. Who is wrong, these six artists or the violinist from Leipzig?<sup>45</sup>

Among the Brazilian violinist contemporaries of White, Leopoldo Miguez (1850-1902) and Robert Kinsman Benjamin (1853-1927) were the most outstanding. Although born in Rio de Janeiro, Miguez was reared in Spain and Portugal. Upon returning

daughter of the Brazilian Francisco Moniz Barreto, Pereira da Costa settled in 1871 at the Brazilian capital. In 1890, he was appointed violin teacher at the Instituto Nacional de Música, but died before assuming the position; see Ernesto Vieira, *Dicionário biográfico de músicos portugueses; história e bibliographia da música em Portugal* (Lisbon: Typographia M. Moreira & Pinheiro, 1900); and *Enciclopedia da Música Brasileira: erudita, folclórica, popular* (São Paulo: Art Editora, 1977)

<sup>38</sup>"muito elogiado em varios jornais da Italia," *Revista Illustrada*, August 21, 1880.

<sup>39</sup>"Este violinista effetuou o seu concerto hontem á noite no Salão do Imperial Conservatorio. Artista educado em boa escola, executou com summa correcção os diferentes trechos do programma, devendo-se especialisar o famoso concerto em ré, de Paganini, peça de grande folego. Naturalmente proseguirá nos seus estudos e chegará um dia a collocar-se ao lado de José White e outros mestres..." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, August 21, 1880, 178.

<sup>40</sup>In the last decade of the century, Cernicchiario organized several symphonic concerts at the Cassino Fluminense. Aged 68, he published *Storia della musica nel Brasile* (Milan: Stab. Tip. Edit. Fratelli Riccioni, 1926), an invaluable account of his own experiences as a performer and conductor in Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>41</sup>"...e devemos-lhe n'estas columnas a justiça de attestar que poucos têm vindo ao Rio de Janeiro de tão notavel talento, e que promettam tão brilhante futuro." *Revista musical e de bellas artes*, August 7, 1880, 158.

<sup>42</sup>After triumphs in the United States signalled in *Dwight's Journal*, xli (1881), 21, 52, 102, 15-year-old Dengremont was presented by "Brazilian residents in New York" with a gold medal set with emeralds and diamonds, "one of the finest ever struck in this country."

<sup>43</sup>Reinecke, professor at the Leipzig Conservatory from 1860-1892, directed it 1892-1902.

<sup>44</sup>"un violinista di talento, malgrado qualche irregolarità nell'interpretazione, e poca grazia nel suonare." Cernicchiario, *Storia della musica nel Brasile*, 482.

<sup>45</sup>"...tendo dous terços dos nossos consocios achado que Beck desafinára, não nos julgamos obrigados a pensar que afinou, só porque a culta Allemanha assim o disse...Ouvimos Dangremont, Miguez, Cernicchiario, Pereira da Costa, White, Ismael, e esse não [des]afinirão como o Sr. Beck. Quem estará em erro, esses seis artistas ou o violinista de Leipzig?" *Jornal do Commercio*, August 19, 1883.

to Rio de Janeiro in 1871, he became a junior partner in Arthur Napoleão's music business. In 1875 he directed the Sociedade Philharmonica Fluminense,<sup>46</sup> awaiting 1878 to make his *début* as conductor of the Philharmonica. In 1881 he quit the music business to devote more time to composition.<sup>47</sup>

Born in Rio de Janeiro, Robert Kinsman Benjamin was at an early age taken to Europe (London and Cologne), where he studied violin and composition. After returning to Brazil in 1876, he became successively the director of the Philharmonica Fluminense in 1879 and head of the Club Beethoven in 1882.<sup>48</sup> Eaten however by professional envy, Benjamin saw in White neither a friend nor a collaborator. None of the large number of concert programs announced daily in local newspapers between 1879 and 1889 documents their performing together. Nor in 1882 did White rush to join the Club Beethoven; his name appears in the members' list only in 1884.<sup>49</sup> In 1883 White founded the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos; thereafter he and Benjamin could not escape being seen in the press almost as rivals.

On the other hand, musicians who constantly collaborated with José White included the Portuguese cellist Frederico do Nascimento, the pianist-composer Alberto Nepomuceno (1864–1920),<sup>50</sup> and

the pianist, composer, and conductor Carlos de Mesquita (1864–1953).<sup>51</sup> Born in the state of Ceará, Alberto Nepomuceno moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1885, beginning his career as a pianist in a concert at the Congresso Brasileiro on September 17, 1885. Before departing for Europe in late 1887, Nepomuceno joined José White several times in private societies' events and in charity concerts. Carlos de Mesquita, whose piano and composition studies at Paris had been financed by Pedro II, shared with White the favors of the royal family. When launching himself in Rio de Janeiro concerts, Mesquita received substantial help from White.

### III

Upon arrival at Rio de Janeiro, José White immediately comprehended that private musical societies were by far the best vehicles for music promotions of any kind.<sup>52</sup> As with other private institutions, the societies' successes depended on the kind of wealthy patrons' support that White well knew how to guarantee for himself. After the immediate triumph of the Club Beethoven, founded on January 9, 1882,<sup>53</sup> White and Arthur Napoleão responded with

<sup>46</sup> *Almanak Laemmert*, 1875.

<sup>47</sup> Miguez spent the years 1882–1884 in Europe where he met leading musicians. He was appointed director of the Instituto Nacional de Musica and became at the close of the 19th century one of the most influential Brazilian composers.

<sup>48</sup> Benjamin's fame reached other Latin American capitals; according to the *Revista Ilustrada*, December 31, 1885, the *El mundo artístico* of Buenos Aires included a front-page portrait and a biography. For biographical information on Benjamin see Sacramento Blake, *Diccionario bibliographico brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, Imprensa Nacional, 1883–1902 [rpt. 1970]). For detailed information on the Club Beethoven and other musical societies see Cristina Magaldi's "Concert Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1837–1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1994); see also her "Music for the Elite: the Organization of Musical Societies in Imperial Rio de Janeiro," forthcoming (*Latin American Music Review*).

<sup>49</sup> White's name is included in the Club Beethoven members' list published in a booklet program for the Club's annual symphonic concert housed at the Brazilian Biblioteca Nacional.

<sup>50</sup> Nepomuceno was appointed piano teacher at the Club Beethoven music school in 1886. Late in 1887, Nepomuceno left for Rome, where he studied piano with Giovanni Sgambati (1841–1914) and composition with Eugenio Terziani (1824–1889). Later, he went to Berlin, where he was a composition pupil of Heinrich von Herzogenberg (1843–1900), and to Paris, where he studied organ with Alexandre Guilmant (1837–1911).

Back in Rio de Janeiro in 1895, he edited several scores by José Mauricio Nunes Garcia. In 1902 he was appointed director of the Instituto Nacional de Música. A prolific composer, Nepomuceno wrote operas, orchestral works, piano pieces, and a large number of songs with Portuguese text. For biographical information on Nepomuceno see Sérgio Alvim Corrêa, *Alberto Nepomuceno: catálogo geral* (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 1985).

<sup>51</sup> From 1877 to 1886, Carlos de Mesquita studied piano in the Paris Conservatory with Marmontel, organ with César Franck, and composition with Émile Durand and Jules Massenet. From 1887 to 1902 he promoted the French symphonic repertory in one of the most influential series of public symphonic concerts ever held in Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>52</sup> For information on public and private concerts at Rio de Janeiro see Magaldi's "Concert Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1837–1900" (pp. 410–468 contain facsimile reproduction of the Müller-Heinen catalogue published in 1837).

<sup>53</sup> Twenty-eight founders, all prominent members of Rio de Janeiro society, gathered with Robert Kinsman Benjamin on January 9, 1882, to write the Club Beethoven's first statutes; at the time of the first concert on February 4, the club had fifty-six members, and after one year of activities it had grown to 222 members. In 1884, the Club Beethoven enrolled 485 members, a number which remained relatively constant (in 1887 it had 504 members). See the *Primeiro relatorio para o anno social de 1882–1883* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. de G. Leuzinger & Filhos, 1883), 8.

the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos (Classical Concerts Society), the board of directors comprising an exceptional assortment of highly placed Counts and Barons, among them the Conde D'Eu (honorary president), Visconde da Penha (president), and Barão de Teffé (vice-president).

Unlike other contemporary musical societies in Rio de Janeiro, the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos sponsored no social activities, instead restricting itself to the organization of concerts. Contrary to the policy of the Club Beethoven, the society's events were open to both sexes—thus appealing strongly to women.

The avowed purpose of the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos was to introduce *música clássica* (mostly chamber music from the German canon) to Rio de Janeiro, where even after the creation of societies with names such as Club Mozart (1867) and Club Beethoven (1882), a repertory linked with operas continued to prevail in concert programs. The first series of classical concerts coincided with various other enterprises by local musicians; early in August of 1883, the *Revista Illustrada* documented the proliferation thus:

It is probably the mild temperature that has inspired our musicians to offer concerts. We will have, it seems, [music] for all tastes. In collaboration with other musicians, the distinguished pianist Ricardo Ferreira de Carvalho promises symphonic concerts. Sr. White will offer classical concerts. And it is already time for Sr. Gravenstin [sic] to offer his expected popular concerts in the Polytheama.<sup>54</sup>

Contemporary commentators agreed that the first concert of the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos on August 12, 1883, was a resounding success:

[Sunday, August 12] Fortunately, the classical and popular concerts are now a reality; I come from the Escola da Gloria, where I heard the first concert [of the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos]. At least one [concert] has now been heard. The royal family was present. I noticed, with great pleasure, that the salon [of the Escola da Gloria]

<sup>54</sup>“É provavelmente essa temperatura agradável que tem inspirado aos nossos maestros a idéia de concertos. Vamos ter ao que parece, por toda a parte e para todos os gostos. Auxiliado por outros maestros, promettenos o distincto pianista Ricardo Ferreira de Carvalho concertos symphonicos. O Sr. White vae dar-nos concertos classicos. E já vae sendo tempo do Sr. Gravenstin [sic] nos dar também os seus promettidos concertos populares no Polytheama.” *Revista Illustrada*, August 11, 1883.

was crowded with a *select* audience of Rio de Janeiro's society. Therefore, it is not a dream; the classic concerts are a reality.<sup>55</sup>

The Sociedade de Concertos Classicos offered its presentations in Spring, the best season for concerts because of the mild climate. The events took place regularly on Sundays at 2:00 P.M. always in the Salão da Escola da Gloria, and were constantly honored with the presence of the Emperor and royal family. A synopsis of six years of the society's activities, shown below, demonstrates that White and Napoleão chose certain pieces from their own repertory and performed them repeatedly: Mendelssohn's piano trios in D minor and C minor, Schumann's piano quintet in E<sub>b</sub>, and Mozart's string quintets were obviously favorites; Rubinstein and Joseph Raff (1822-1882) but not Brahms joined older German masters; Bach's chaconne, long in White's repertory, continued to guarantee him gratifying success.

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1883	
August 12	Mendelssohn: piano trio in D minor Op. 49 Haydn: serenade for strings Mozart: string quintet Rubinstein: first sonata for piano
August 26	program not announced
September 16	Mozart: string quintet in G minor, K. 516 Bach: chaconne for violin Beethoven: string quartet in F minor, Op. 95 Rubinstein: trio in B <sub>b</sub> for piano, violin, and cello
September 30	Haydn: string quartet in D Beethoven: "Grande Sonata" for piano and violin Mozart: "Non più andrai" from <i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i> Mendelssohn: piano trio in D minor, Op. 49
October 14	program not announced

<sup>55</sup>“Ainda bem que, como os populares, os concertos classicos não ficaram em programma; eu venho agora mesmo da escola da Gloria, onde ouvi o primeiro dos concertos, que nos estão promettidos. Ao menos um portanto, está ouvido. E SS.MM. estavam presentes. E eu notei ainda com grande satisfação que o salão estava cheio, brilhante de tudo quanto ha de mais *selected* na sociedade fluminense. Não é portanto um sonho. Os concertos classicos são portanto uma realidade. Tanto melhor.” *Revista Illustrada*, August 18, 1883.

October 28	program not announced		Mozart: string quartet n° 21, K. 575
1884			Schumann: piano quintet in E <sub>b</sub> , Op. 44
September 21	program not announced	September 5	Mozart: string quintet
October 5	Beethoven: string quartet n° 10, Op. 74		Beethoven: 8th string quartet (first performance in Rio)
	Mozart: "first sonata" for piano		Rubinstein: trio for piano, violin, and cello
	Mendelssohn: piano trio in C minor, Op. 66	September 19	program not announced
October 19	Mozart: string quintet	October 3	Beethoven: violin sonata (Kreutzer)
	Schubert: sonata for violin and piano		Rubinstein: quartet
	Raff: Concert-Stück for violin and piano		
1885		1887	
September 6	Mozart: string quartet n° 21, in D, K. 575	September 11	Beethoven: string quintet in E <sub>b</sub> , Op. 4
	Beethoven: septet		Chopin: Nocturne for violin (arrangement)
	Mendelssohn: piano trio in C minor, Op. 66		Handel: aria
September 20	Mozart: string quintet		Schumann: piano quintet in E <sub>b</sub> , Op. 44
	Mendelssohn: "Gran Sonata," cello and piano, Op. 58	September 25	program not announced
	Beethoven: piano trio in B <sub>b</sub> , Op. 97	October 9	Mozart: string quintet
October 4	Rubinstein: 2° quintet		Bach: chaconne
	Mozart: piano sonata n° 18		Mozart: "Non mi dir" from <i>Don Giovanni</i>
	Rubinstein: 8° Romance		Mendelssohn: piano trio in C minor, Op. 66
	Bach: gavotte for solo violin	October 23	Raff: second sonata for violin and piano
	Rubinstein: 2° trio		Wagner: Aria from <i>Tannhäuser</i>
October 18	Mozart: string quintet in G minor, K. 516		Haydn: Serenade for string quartet
	Kuhlau: sonata for flute and piano		Raff: Cavatina for violin and piano
	Boccherini: minuet for strings		Rubinstein: second "Grand Trio" with piano
	Wagner: aria from <i>Tannhäuser</i>		
	Mozart: serenata from <i>Don Giovanni</i>	1888	
	Raff: 1° trio	October 28	Schumann: quartet Op. 41, n° 1
October 25	Haydn: string quartet in D		Raff: trio in G, Op. 112
	Beethoven: "Grande sonata" for violin and piano		
	Bach: chaconne for solo violin		
	Schumann: piano quintet in E <sub>b</sub> , Op. 44		
1886			
August 8	Mozart: string quintet in C, K. 515		
	Raff: cavatina		
	Beethoven: quintet		
	Mendelssohn: piano trio in C minor, Op. 66		
August 29	Beethoven: string quintet in E <sub>b</sub> , Op. 4 <sup>56</sup>		

<sup>56</sup>This quintet was announced in the *Jornal do Commercio* as Beethoven's Op. 103; originally Beethoven's arrangement of

By its fourth year, the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos was already enrolling numerous classical music enthusiasts. In 1886, the *Jornal do Commercio* reported that "the taste of our public is beginning to adapt to classical music, and we do not hesitate in attributing this change to the efforts of the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos."<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, similar societies started to appear, upgrading

his wind octet, the quintet was not published until 1834.

<sup>57</sup>"A musica classica começa a adaptar-se ao gosto do nosso publico, e não hesitamos em attribuir esta transformação do nosso gosto artistico ao muito que para tal tem feito a Sociedade de Concertos Classicos." *Jornal do Commercio*, October 4, 1886.

CONCERTOS CLASSICOS  
 SOCIEDADE  
 DE  
 CONCERTOS CLASSICOS  
 DIRECÇÃO  
 Do Sr. José White  
 O QUINTO E ULTIMO CONCERTO  
 Honrado com as augustas presenças de  
 SS. MM. e AA. Imperiaes  
 TERA LUGAR HOJE  
**Domingo 25 do corrente**  
 ÀS 2 HORAS DA TARDE  
 NO SALÃO DA  
**ESCOLA DA GLORIA**

## PROGRAMMA

Quartetto em ré maior—Haydn.  
 Grande sonata—Beethoven.  
 Sinfonia—Bach.  
 Quintetto em mi bémol—Schumann.

*Jornal do Commercio*  
 October 25, 1885

Rio de Janeiro musical life into the most intense in South America. Adding to the activities of the Club Beethoven and the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos, the pianist Jeronymo Queiroz and the violinist Cernicchiaro on August 1, 1886, founded the Sociedade de Quartetos do Rio de Janeiro. Sponsored by Viscount Alfredo d'Escragnoille Taunay (1843-1899) and other meritorious individuals,<sup>58</sup> the Sociedade de Quartetos, which gave its inaugural concert on August 27, 1886, offered certain advantages over the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos, among them, a wider repertory "in which chamber music from all periods and styles is included."<sup>59</sup>

Responding to the attempted competition, White in 1886 began advertising large scale concerts similar to the Club Beethoven's annual presentations. Not that large ventures were entirely new to him. He had previously directed concerts in the salon of the Cassino Fluminense; on September 4, 1884, supported by the Countess D'Eu and aided by the pianist Arthur Napoleão, he had organized a benefit for homeless children; on November 17, 1885, he had promoted a concert to benefit the "prominent Brazilian composer Carlos Gomes." His next obvi-

ous step was the launching of the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos' first "Grand Concert." Announced for Monday, October 11, 1886, at 8:30 P.M., at the sumptuous hall of the Cassino Fluminense, the concert was attended by the imperial family and Rio de

SOCIEDADE DE CONCERTOS CLASSICOS  
 DIRECÇÃO DO SR. JOSÉ WHITE  
 QUARTO ANNO  
**PRIMEIRO GRANDE CONCERTO**  
 no salão de honra do CASSINO FLUMINENSE, honrado com a augusta presença de  
 SUAS Magestades e Altezas Imperiaes  
**SEGUNDA-FEIRA 11 DE OUTUBRO DE 1886**  
 ÀS 8 1/2 HORAS  
 Os bilhetes achão-se á venda em casa dos Srs. Narciso & Arthur Napoleão e dos Srs. Buschmann.

Janeiro *haut monde*. The program could not have been more prestigious:

Lucien Lambert Filho	Abertura Symphonica
Carlos de Mesquita	Preludio
Beethoven	Fourth Symphony
Faulhaber	Reverie
Beethoven	Piano Concerto in E <sub>b</sub> "Emperor" <sup>60</sup>
Weber	Aria from <i>Der Freischütz</i>
Mozart	"Voi che sapete" from <i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i>
Weber	Symphonia <i>Oberon</i>

Despite problems with the woodwinds, local critics highlighted White's talents as a conductor who could get from the strings a "homogeneity in articulation and detail of light-dark, that produce an entirely new sound in the history of our orchestras. . .!"<sup>61</sup> Napoleão's Emperor concerto was considered the best performance of his career. Despite the highly laudatory *Jornal do Commercio* review, the *Diário de Notícias* published Kinsman Benjamin's derogatory review of the concert, in which he doubted White's ability to "regenerate the musical arts in Rio de Janeiro."<sup>62</sup>

In 1887, even the luster of the symphonic events of the Sociedade de Concertos Classicos was dimmed by programs given by another competitor:

<sup>60</sup>No previous record has been found of Brazilian performances of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto.

<sup>61</sup>"...homogeneidade de articulação e minucias de claro-escuro, que, na historia das nossas orchestras, é facto inteiramente virgem!" *Jornal do Commercio*, October 13, 1886.

<sup>62</sup>*Jornal do Commercio*, October 22, 1886.

<sup>58</sup>*Jornal do Commercio*, August 2, 1886.

<sup>59</sup>*Jornal do Commercio*, August 29, 1886.

Carlos de Mesquita and his *Sociedade de Concertos Populares*. Beginning on June 5, 1887, Mesquita's series of nine concerts offered at the large São Pedro de Alcantara theater ran until September 18, sharing public attention with White's society. The novelty was the less demanding music played by a large instrumental force. Mesquita, who started the series as a public enterprise, quickly saw it necessary to transform his enterprise into a society enjoying the support of the Duchess D'Eu.<sup>63</sup> The *Jornal do Commercio* also supported Mesquita, stressing that:

the popular concert embraces all music periods, all schools, all genres; it has two advantages [over the others]: the music education of the public and the creation of a trained orchestra, with a unified style, . . . conducted for a long period by a talented and competent conductor . . . something not yet achieved in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>64</sup>

With an orchestra of some 50 musicians,<sup>65</sup> Mesquita introduced to Brazilian audiences not only a large number of French works by Massenet, Chabrier, and Saint-Saëns, but also compositions of immigrant and native Brazilian composers such as Arthur Napoleão, Francisco Braga, Alberto Nepomuceno, Abdon Milanez, Frederico Nascimento, and Leopoldo Miguez. By so doing he enlisted wider local support than White, whose concerts focused solely on European classics. However, White did not entirely shun the Concertos Populares. He was the solo violinist invited to perform in Mesquita's 8th popular concert, September 4, 1887. The reviewer, who for once severely criticized Mesquita's conducting

<sup>63</sup> The advertisement for the fifth concert included the heading: "Sociedade de Concertos Populares, founded and directed by Carlos de Mesquita under the protection of Her Majesty, the Princess regent." ("Sociedade de Concertos Populares, fundados e dirigidos por Carlos de Mesquita sob a protecção de S. Alteza a Princesa Imperial regente"). *Jornal do Commercio*, July 24, 1887.

<sup>64</sup> "O concerto popular abraça todos os periodos da arte musical. Todas as escolas, todos os generos....Duas vantagens nascem dos concertos populares: a educação do gosto publico pela musica e a criação de uma orchestra disciplinada, unificada no estylo, na forma e no methodo da interpretação." *Jornal do Commercio*, June 6, 1887.

<sup>65</sup> In 1886, Mesquita assembled 50 musicians in his first Grand Festival; it is assumed here that the orchestra of the Concertos Populares had approximately the same number of performers. Fifty instrumentalists was considered a reasonable number for an orchestra of this period. See Magaldi's "Concert Life in Rio de Janeiro," 91-92.

IMPERIAL THEATRO S. PEDRO DE ALCANTARA

IMPERIAL



THEATRO

S. PEDRO DE ALCANTARA  
SOCIÉDADÉ DE CONCERTOS POPULARES

FUNDADOS E DIRIGIDOS POR  
CARLOS DÊ MESQUITA  
Sob a protecção de S. A. a Princesa  
Imperial Regente

AMANHÃ

Domingo 4 de Setembro de 1887

ÀS 2 HORAS

8ª E ÚLTIMA MATINÉE

HONRADA COM A AUGUSTA PRESENÇA DE SS. AA. IMPERIAES

Solo de violino pelo Sr. JOSEPH WHITE.  
1ª audicção do grande bailado de Henrique VIII  
de Saint-Saëns e do óbro das fandeiras de R. Wagner.

PREÇOS — Camarotes do 1º ordem e frizás 15\$,  
Ditos de 2º 10\$, Cadeiras de 1ª classe e galeria no-  
bre 3\$, Ditas de 2ª 2000.

Os bilhetes á venda em casa de P. Castellós  
á rua do Ouvidor.

*Jornal do Commercio*

September 3, 1887

ability, highly praised White's performance of a Vieuxtemps fantasy; according to the reviewer, the concert was the best attended of the series, thanks largely to White's participation.<sup>66</sup>

IV

José White also participated in soirées, or *saraus*, sponsored by wealthy neighborhood societies. Before 1889, every elegant neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro sponsored societies providing for their residents' entertainment and as a status symbol. The monthly *saraus* at which the chamber repertory rather than the symphonic was emphasized, always ended with a ball. The majority of performers were amateurs, but each society engaged a music director chosen carefully from among Rio de Janeiro's best professionals.

On September 28, 1885, the aristocratic Club das Laranjeiras offered its first monthly *sarau* with José White as the music director. According to a contemporary commentator, the Club's headquarters were spacious and decorated with good taste and simplicity, but the concert room was of rather small dimen-

<sup>66</sup> *Jornal do Commercio*, September 5, 1887.



CLUB DAS LARANJEIRAS

8.<sup>o</sup> CONCERTO

EM 31 DE JULHO DE 1886

PROGRAMMA

- 1 QUARTETTO DOBRADO DE FLAUTAS, Op. 133, de KUELAU  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Srs. RODOLFO BARROSA, MANOEL BARROSA,  
CARLOS OLIVEIRA, H. TIBARA, OSCAR EVITAL, H. THADIS,  
HERRI SANDFIRA e PORTO JUNIOR,  
discipulo do Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. DEQUE-ESTRADA MEYER.
- 2 PER SEMPRE, melodia para flauto ..... P. TOSTI  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. LEIS ROSA JUNIOR
- 3 ADAGIO E ALLEGRO DA SONATA EM FA —  
para piano e violino ..... BEETHOVEN  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Srs. C. DE MENEZES e J. WHITE.
- 4 L'ESULE, romance para flauto ..... M. GURJÃO  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. LEIS ROSA JUNIOR.
- 5 MENUET-VALSE, para piano ..... SAINT-SAËNS  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. C. DE MENEZES.
- 6 MELANCOLIE, para violino ..... PRUME  
J. WHITE.

J. White  
Director dos Concertos

CLUB DAS LARANJEIRAS

13.<sup>o</sup> CONCERTO

EM 22 DE DEZEMBRO DE 1886

PROGRAMMA



- 1 RUY BLAS, composita a 4 mãos ..... MENDELSSOHN  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Srs. D. MARIA DE FERREIRA E EMILIA PERALTA
- 2 SE... para piano ..... DENZA  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. CARVALHO J.
- 3 DUO DE CONCERT, para violino e piano ..... FLAVIO ELYSI  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Srs. D. THEOZEA BASTOS e D. FERNANDINA  
DE MELLO SILVA.
- 4 NON SO PERCHÉ, melodia para soprano ..... TITO MATTEI  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. D. SARAFINA DE FREITAS
- 5 SCHERZO, em si bemol, para piano ..... CHOPIN  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. D. MARIA DA FREITAS
- 6 MARIA TUDOR, romance para tenor ..... C. GOMES  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. CARVALHO J.
- 7 LÉGENDE, para violino ..... WIENIAWSEI  
Ex.<sup>o</sup> Sr. D. THEOZEA BASTOS

J. White  
Director dos Concertos

Club das Laranjeiras—José White, Director of Concerts

sions.<sup>67</sup> As the music director, White was expected to organize accessible events “not going beyond the unavoidable limits imposed on the music performed at meetings of this kind.”<sup>68</sup> Sometimes White’s programs, summarized below, vaunted not a single German composer. Always, however, musicians of the rank of Arthur Napoleão participated, and occasionally the programs included short pieces by local composers.

Club das Laranjeiras, concert on September 28, 1885:

Ernst	<i>Elégie</i>
White	<i>Oberon</i> Fantasie
Napoleão	<i>Idéale</i> , waltz
Voice numbers	performed by Antonieta S. da Gama, Harold Hime, and João Chaves

October 24, 1885:

Gottschalk	Valse-concerto for piano duet
Donizetti	Duet for soprano and bass
Popp [Wilhelm]	<i>Klange aus der Puszta</i> , for piano and flute

<sup>67</sup> *Jornal do Commercio*, September 30, 1885.

<sup>68</sup> “em organizar programmas attrahentes, não ultrapassando o limite fatalmente imposto á musica em reuniões deste genero.” *Jornal do Commercio*, September 30, 1885.

Bériot	Fantaisie ou Scène de Ballet, for violin
Manzocchi [Mariano]	<i>Dolores</i> , scena, for soprano
August 28, 1886 (with the participation of Alberto Nepomuceno as the piano accompanist):	
Gounod	<i>Preghiera della sera</i> for alto, organ, violin, and piano
Dancla	Symphonia for two violins
Tito	<i>Riman con me</i> for alto
Gottschalk	<i>Banjo</i> for piano
Osborne	Duet for violin and piano
October 30, 1886:	
Loret	<i>Bolero</i> for piano and harmonium
Bériot	Aria variada
Tosti	“T’amo ancor” and “Quando tu sarai vecchia”
Le Beau [Alfred]	<i>Les Adieux</i> for harmonium
Bériot	<i>Guillaume Tell</i> Fantasie for piano and violin

After one year of activities, White could take pride on September 28, 1886, in having brought together in these informal musical meetings the finest amateurs and the best Rio de Janeiro professionals in events competing in program quality with

even those of the Club do Engenho-Velho. In addition to Arthur Napoleão, White brought to the Club das Laranjeiras the cellist Frederico do Nascimento, the violinist Felix Bernadelli, the flautist Duque-Estrada Meyer, the pianist Carlos de Mesquita, and the pianist-composer Alberto Nepomuceno. Next year, in 1887, White no longer served as music director of the Club, the position being now occupied by the violinist Cernicchiaro. From then on, however, White appeared regularly at the sarau of the Club Guanabarensense, directed by Arthur Napoleão.

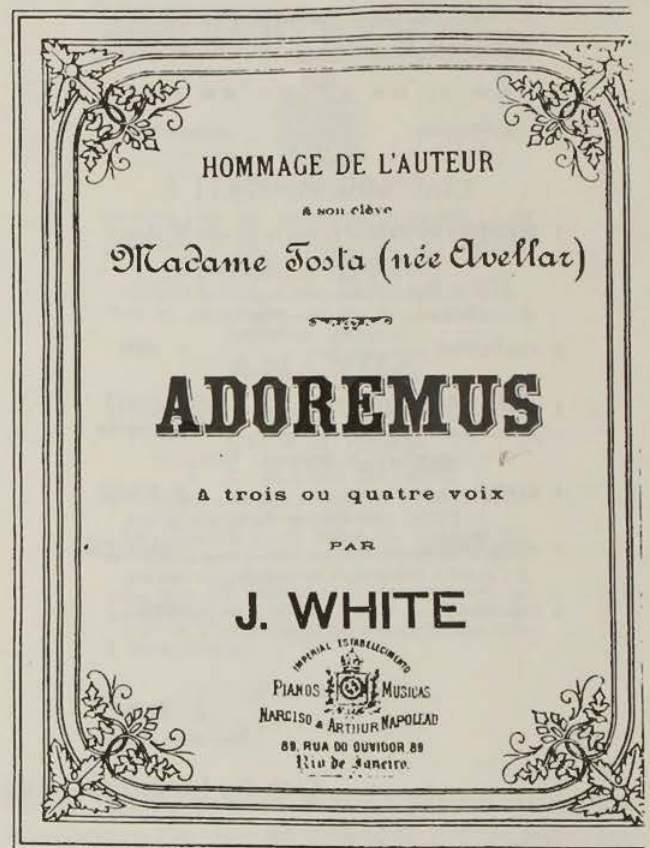
## V

As a composer, White is credited in Pazdírek's *Universal-Handbuch der Musikliteratur aller Zeiten und Völker*, 1904-1910, with five pieces; among them the waltz, *Isabel*—probably an homage to the Princess.<sup>69</sup> White's other programmed original compositions at Rio de Janeiro included the above mentioned *Martha* fantasy, *Styrienne* fantasy, the Chilean *Zamacueca*, and *Rêve au Brésil*. His Symphonic March for large orchestra was performed in Rio de Janeiro on September 4, 1884. Apart from his sacred song *Salutaris* Napoleão published in the mid-1880s his *Adoremus* for vocal trio or quartet. The *Six Études Brillantes*, recalled by Arthur Napoleão in his biography, were White's études written for Paris Conservatory use. His Chilean *Zamacueca*, announced January 21, 1880, in the *Revista Illustrada* as "an extremely delightful piece that has been so well performed [in Rio de Janeiro] by José White" was advertised alongside the polka *Camilla* by Francisca Gonzaga (1847-1935).<sup>70</sup>

José White left Rio de Janeiro amidst political changes which drastically altered the city's musical climate. Would he have achieved such success had he arrived there after the empire's collapse? Summarizing, one might say that he was the right man, at the right place, during the right decade.

<sup>69</sup>Pazdírek lists the following pieces by José White: *Styrienne* (Fromont); *Valse-caprice* (Heugel); *Bella Cubana*, habanera (Hayet); *Hélas!* Valse lente (Durdily); *Isabel*, valse (Napoleão); *Romance sans paroles* (Heugel).

<sup>70</sup>"muito graciosa e que tão bem executada foi aqui por J. White." *Revista Illustrada*, January 21, 1880. The piece is listed in Narciso & Napoleão's catalogue of "Tangos and Habaneras."



Imp. de Napoleão & José Napoleão.

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