

The Power of the Recorder to Change Lives

Brazilian recorder players and teachers were uplifted by the recorder during COVID-19. Recorder professional Cléa Galhano shares three stories from her native country.



INTRODUCTION BY CLÉA GALHANO

Brazilian recorder player Cléa Galhano is an internationally renowned performer of early, contemporary and Brazilian music. Galhano has performed in the U.S., Canada and South America as a chamber musician, and as soloist with the Saint

Paul Chamber Orchestra, Musical Offering and Lyra Baroque Orchestra (all in MN) and the New World Symphony (FL).

Among other important music festivals, Galhano has performed at the Boston (MA) Early Music Festival and the Tage Alter Musik festival in Germany; at Wigmore Hall in London, England, at Merkin Hall in New York City, NY, and at Palazzo Santa Croce in Rome, Italy—always receiving acclaimed reviews. Galhano was featured in 2006 in the Second International Recorder Congress in Leiden, Holland; in 2007 and 2013 at the International Recorder Conference in Montréal, QC; and in 2012 at the ARS Festival, Portland, OR.

She gave her debut at Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York City, NY, in May 2010, and her second Weill Hall recital in December 2013 with the Cuban guitarist Rene Izquierdo.

Galhano studied in Brazil at Faculdade Santa Marcelina; in the Netherlands at the Royal Conservatory, The Hague; and in Boston, MA, at the New England Conservatory of Music, earning a LASPAU (Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities) Fulbright Scholarship and support from the Dutch government.

As an advocate of recorder music and educational initiatives, she served for six years on the international Board of Directors of the American Recorder Society, and is the music director of the Recorder Orchestra of the Midwest.

Besides receiving the prestigious 2013 McKnight Fellowship award, Galhano was awarded both the Minnesota State Arts Board Cultural Collaborative and MSAB Arts Initiative. She is a National Arts Associate of Sigma Alpha Iota.

Galhano is a faculty member at Macalester College, and adjunct lecturer in music and recorder at the Historical Performance Institute of the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. After 15 years, she recently stepped down as executive artistic director of the St. Paul Conservatory of Music.

Galhano has recordings available on Dorian, Ten Thousand Lakes and Eldorado labels. Visit <http://cleagalhano.com>.

As hard as the COVID pandemic has been, I have to confess that new doors opened at the same time: there were opportunities to meet and get to know a new world of recorder players, with their uplifting stories.

Last year I was invited to participate in a project called *Flauta doce em sistema* (Recorder in the System) by the Brazilian recorder player Patricia Michelini Aguilar (recorder professor at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ).

This project looked at recorder methodology, showcasing many different methods and teaching experiences all over Brazil. Even with the time zone difference, every Thursday at 6 a.m., I watched the lectures, thrilled to learn of so many dreams about making the recorder a tool to change young students' lives. It was a very rich experience, during which I learned about some extraordinary recorder teaching ideas that had affected multiple generations.

I asked Michelini Aguilar to write about the Recorder in the System project. Then I asked three instructors who had inspired me deeply to describe their experiences in working with young students—Lenora Mendes, a member for decades of the early music ensemble of Fluminense Federal University; and Anete Weichselbaum and Renate Weiland, both of the School of Music and Fine Arts of Paraná.

As a result of this inspiring encounter, I also met with Michelini Aguilar and some of the teachers. With so much interest in the recorder in Brazil, we have begun the process of creating an ARS chapter there!

We never know where the recorder can take us and how much it influences people's lives. What a magical instrument we have all chosen! I hope you enjoy these inspiring testimonials.

RECORDER IN THE SYSTEM

By Patricia Michelini Aguilar

On May 28, 2020, I received the news that my extension project, *Flauta doce em Sistema* (Recorder in the System, RitS), had been registered and was active at UFRJ. I had no idea that it was the beginning of one of the most important projects of my life. The application had been made shortly after the start of the pandemic—when Brazil was already at a standstill and we had all grasped the idea that remote, or virtual, learning would be a reality for the next few months.

My dear friends David Castelo and Isamara Alves Carvalho (also professors at Brazilian federal universities) and I talked daily about the responsibility that we, as teachers, should assume toward our students and the academic community in general. After exchanging many ideas, we adopted the “new normal,” undertaking an

unprecedented routine, and learning new or unexplored pedagogical tools in a heartbeat. We finally agreed upon the best choice, so that we could remain active and offer relevant and attractive content to both our students and other audiences interested in recorders. We decided to create extension projects: *Virtual Recorder* (Federal University of São Carlos, UFSCar), *Life with the Recorder* (Federal University of Goiás, UFG) and RitS at my university (UFRJ).

RitS was devised to foster “interaction between the university and other sectors of society”—an outreach project organized in modules of eight or nine weekly remote meetings. The idea was to present and discuss methods (published books) and methodologies (strategies and practices)—both those that focus on private recorder teaching, and those in which the recorder serves as an auxiliary tool for music education teachers. My thought in proposing RitS was that

understanding the pedagogical ideas that guide each method would ideally involve direct contact with its authors or close followers, hearing from them the stories and paths taken.

MODULE 1

As the project progressed, I realized that I would need help to manage its operation. My teaching and administrative duties as head of my department involved a lot of time and work. I suggested to my student Luiza Mesquita, a teaching assistant, and to my master’s degree student Anderson Tiago Rodrigues, that they act as volunteer associates for the project. The invitations were readily accepted.

Little did I know that I had formed a fine team, which worked with enthusiasm and compatibility during the two modules that have now taken place. The Module 1 team was a mixture: colleagues whose activities I knew well; those with whom I had worked, but not lately; and some with



▲ Cover of the Guide to recorder methods. With two pages showing some of the Brazilian publications described within.

whom I had never worked, although I admired their achievements. The idea was to offer well-defined and varied methods, for all levels.

In the opening session, I tried to help participants conceptualize two terms—methods and methodologies for the recorder—and included a historical scan of the main publications for recorders. Later sessions were:

- Luciana Nagumo (Jundiaí School of Music, São Paulo) on using the recorder to help children learn music.
- Tereza Castro (retired professor, Federal University of Ouro Preto) described her books and teaching materials, geared to the recorder in the classroom and based on science.
- Melita Bona (also retired, Universidade Regional de Blumenau), talked about “Carl Orff and the recorder,” clarifying concepts and teaching ideas of the author and of the main contributors to the Orff-Schulwerk.
- Cristal Velloso discussed “The Soprano Novo methodology,” a project of Yamaha Musical do Brasil to provide a consistent musical and instrumental beginning for literally thousands of students and teachers in Brazil.
- Daniele Cruz Barros (Federal University of Pernambuco) and Laurence Pottier (Conservatoire Nadia et Lili Boulanger, Paris, France) jointly discussed Pottier’s methods for recorder and the Portuguese translations; Pottier spoke of the genesis and the pedagogical principles she uses, and Cruz Barros explained how she adapted them to the Brazilian reality.
- From the Suzuki Center (Campinas, São Paulo), Luciana Castillo and Shinobu Saito described the Suzuki Method, clarifying its philosophical-pedagogical ideas and how it was adapted to teaching the recorder.
- Lisbeth Soares (Arts Foundation, São Caetano do Sul) tied together all of the topics, considering the implications for a teaching strategy.

It was clear to all RitS participants, especially in this last session, that we must always be open to new methods—but also that we must be clear about goals in order to identify and absorb the best that each method brings to our everyday situations.

In Module 1, we had 195 subscribers. Of these, 143 were regular participants, with an average of 100 in each session. This audience included music degree students, teachers linked to regular education, recorder teachers and others interested in the pedagogical use of the instrument. To my delight, we reached people from all over the country. Module 1 ran from June-August 2020—in retrospect, a time of reflection when teachers were still working out what strategies were best to implement remote learning.

MODULE 2

Offering diversity of methods and methodologies, valuing knowledge, making people feel welcome and spreading empathy were also goals in Module 2 of RitS. If in Module 1 the priority was recorder methods used in music schools, in the second module, the recorder learning environments expanded to social projects, basic education, distance learning, advanced education, plus a brief tour through Germany, Australia and the U.S.

Module 2 took place January–March 2021. In the first meeting, I described the project and the main published methods. Lenora Mendes reported on the social aspects of the recorder at the Espaço Cultural da Grota. Participants were moved when they heard of the strengthening of the community there in an arts school project led by Mendes and her husband. Subsequent sessions covered topics including:

- authors Anete Weichselbaum, Renate Weiland and Angela Sasse discussing recorder teaching with their method, *Sonoridades Brasileiras*.
- using digital technologies in

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- recorder teaching, by Isamara Alves Carvalho (UFSCar)—one of the most anticipated, for obvious reasons; Alves Carvalho not only clarified much of what we hear about distance education, but she also outlined several paths in this relatively recent type of teaching.
- introducing contemporary repertoire for recorder to technically advanced students, by David Castelo (UFG). He described conventional and extended techniques—stressing that this repertoire is not disconnected from expressiveness in music.
- becoming a professional in the U.S., a declaration of Cléa Galhano’s love for the profession of recorder teacher. She outlined methods she uses, and the strength that the recorder gives us and our students, especially in times like the pandemic.
- inspiring work of Adriana von Glehn (Brazilian recorder player and teacher based in Germany) with Musikschule Bochum, a municipal school responsible for music classes in Bochum’s regular schools.
- concepts and pedagogical ideas used in the master’s thesis by Claudia Freixedas (educational superintendent of Projeto Guri, a social music education endeavor in São Paulo, and professor at the Faculdade Cantareira), *Paths for creative and collaborative learning in the teaching of the recorder*.
- to close the second module, Zana Clarke (Australian recorder player, educator and founder of Orpheus

Music) presented a video, and then showed examples from and commented on the main repertoires and methods by Australian authors.

In Module 2 we had over 250 registrations, an active participation of 150 subscribers, and an average of 70-85 participants attending the meetings. Again, all of Brazil was represented. In this set of topics, it was possible to see more clearly that participation was greater in locations where there had been a recommendation by a teacher, or by a group of teachers, especially by those who had participated in Module 1.

FUTURE PLANS

The discussions raised in the second module motivated me to promote two extra activities. After questioning the scope of the term “folklore” relating to a large part of the repertoire used in recorder methods, I invited two renowned ethnomusicologists to talk on this topic: Samuel Araújo (UFRJ) and Edilberto Fonseca (Villa-Lobos Museum in Rio de Janeiro). They described not only folklore, but also traditional music and oral transmittal, especially as it is used in teaching.

A second activity arose from my initial class: I presented several Brazilian methods and realized that many of the participants were unfamiliar with them. Brazil has a great diversity of recorder methods—with different purposes and strategies, serving different age groups, with different approaches for technique, teaching and artistic repertoire. However, circulation of these methods at the national level can be exceedingly difficult: restricted access to books; poor dissemination by publishers; older editions going out of print; or even the lack of engagement and participation of some authors in social networks. Added to this is the fact that many of the methods were designed for very specific contexts, without the authors taking into consideration that they

could be used in other situations.

In an attempt to gather information about this material and make it accessible to a greater number of interested parties, I proposed creating a collective work drawing on the knowledge of RitS presenters: a guide with analysis of selected methods, essentially a bibliography of the recorder in Brazil in all its diversity. The result, *A Guide to Selected Methods for Recorder in the Portuguese Language*, is available to the public and used in academic and informal environments as a reference. We plan to expand this guide.

In such a disheartening moment like the pandemic, motivating people to study, play, research and teach was the biggest and best reward for me. Organized as a university extension, this dialog among experts, students and teachers from different educational contexts offered new paths for those who use the recorder in their teaching. And the best part: it brought benefits to all parties involved. To me personally, RitS brought energy, knowledge and motivation during fragile times, such as when I almost lost my husband to COVID-19.

I mentioned at the start of this article the importance in my life of Recorder in the System. Above all, RitS brought me confidence—that we can carry out pedagogical training even while we respect and value any personal history that each person possesses; that it is possible to bring together diverse teaching proposals and trends in a cordial and respectful environment; and that “high level recorder teaching” is the one that best meets the educational and social needs of the environment in which it takes place, whether the student plays a folk melody or a Baroque sonata. It affirmed for me that the recorder is a transforming, magical, accessible instrument, with incredible possibilities. May new modules and new emotions come! ✨

The Recorder in a Brazilian Favela

By Lenora Mendes

The Grota do Surucucu is a *favela* (Portuguese for a neighborhood or community that is underprivileged and unregulated by local authorities), located in a middle-class neighborhood in the Niterói municipality in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 1995, a project was created to start teaching recorder in the Grota do Surucucu. My husband, Márcio Paes Selles, at the suggestion of his mother Dona Otávia, started teaching the recorder to a small group of children in this community.

While doing some volunteer work at this same *favela* back in the 1980s, Dona Otávia noticed that many local children were not in school, and instead worked in the market doing manual labor. These youngsters in the *favela* had an uncertain future. As a retired teacher, she decided she could try to help them in some way.

She thus went to the local public school and offered her time and experience. When she was not welcomed there, she found an empty lot nearby and built a small house. There she spent many years teaching these students math, gardening and other practical skills. As the children became older and grew into adolescence, she noticed a decrease in interest in what she was teaching. This is when she asked her son Márcio to join her and offer them music lessons.

He started teaching music to the children of the Grota do Surucucu in 1995. Focusing on the recorder in these lessons was a natural choice for Márcio, who, like me, had taken recorder lessons from an early age. We had also both been members of several Brazilian early music groups, including the Conjunto Música Antiga of Fluminense Federal

University for 35 years.

Márcio's project in the *favela* was highly successful. The young people loved the music lessons, and started becoming increasingly involved in the process. They learned how to play several different types of recorders (alto, tenor and bass) and became familiar with different composers such as Handel, Telemann, Praetorius and Bach. They also started listening to a Brazilian classical and jazz radio station. This all contributed to their deepening interest and music education.

I started helping Márcio in 1997; the following year, his mother passed away. The house she built to help the children of Grotta do Surucucu now only housed the music program. By that time, Márcio had added violin instruction, and there was a musical group formed that incorporated string instruments, including viola da gamba and bass. The recorder lessons continued—and, when I became involved, more girls started participating. We organized a recorder ensemble that performed regularly in public spaces around the city.

As time went on, our work in the *favela* strengthened and grew. The recorder continues as the foundation of the music program for young people graduating from this Espaço Cultural da Grotta (Grotta cultural space). Many of these young musicians continued studying, went on to college, and even became teachers themselves.

In the last few years, many students decided to continue and expand their recorder studies, reinforcing the recorder's place in the project—both as a tool to teach music and as an instrument to pursue professionally. The recorder, accessible and inexpensive compared to most other instruments, is nevertheless priceless in its ability to contribute to a better quality of life. 🌟



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1: Lenora Mendes conducts an ensemble of teen recorder players in Grotta do Surucucu.

2: The many participants in the Espaço Cultural da Grotta.

3: A smaller group performs. Students at Espaço Cultural da Grotta now graduate from the program, and continue to study music or even to teach it.



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Adriano da Silva Trarbach and Music in the Neighborhood/Dorcas Project

By Renate Weiland

The Bonfim neighborhood is a pocket of Almirante Tandaré, part of the city of Curitiba, Brazil, and considered to be below poverty level. Children and teenagers growing up in this neighborhood deal with many difficulties, including an abnormally high level of violence and a pattern of not attending school on a regular basis.

What can a recorder teacher do in this context? In 2010, I took a few of my students to a local Bonfim public school to introduce local students to the recorder and to perform for them. We told the curious students that recorder lessons were offered through the Dorcas Project in a neighboring region of town. This is how the *Música no Bairro* (Music in the Neighborhood, MitN) project got its start.

Another volunteer teacher and a college student of mine joined in, and added a children's choir option. Soon afterwards, I created an extension project at the university where I teach, allowing for university students studying music to teach in the MitN project. This gave them experience and credits, as well as increasing the capacity to offer student lessons.

Why the recorder? Besides being my favorite instrument, a recorder of high quality can be inexpensive and easy to acquire. It can also be played



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4: Adriano Trarbach and Renate Weiland. At a benefit concert in Curitiba, 2019.

5: Adriano (in red and white striped shirt) and friends in 2011. At the *Música no Bairro*/Dorcas Project,

6: In 2015, Adriano and two other advanced students. During the performance “Um jardim da vida” (A garden of life) in Curitiba.

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Adriano played his recorder everywhere he went—in the hallways, under a tree in the school's courtyard, and even while walking on the street on his way to lessons. The whole neighborhood would hear him playing.

alone or in groups. The recorder is the type of instrument that, no matter how inexperienced, the novice student can create pleasing sounds. Since these neighborhood youth already dealt with a lack of intellectual and cultural resources, the teachers from the project made sure that they always had quality instruments and lessons.

ADRIANO DA SILVA TRARBACH
In 2011, Adriano da Silva Trarbach joined the project as a nine-year-old student. Right from the beginning, there was a spark in Adriano as he was taught and played the recorder. Both Rubia Lohmann and I were his teachers, supporting him in many different ways beyond teaching him the recorder—resulting in a deep friendship among the three of us.

Adriano played his recorder everywhere he went—in the hallways, under a tree in the school's courtyard,

and even while walking on the street on his way to lessons. The whole neighborhood would hear him playing. Always wanting to learn more, he frequently asked for new music that he could practice. He quickly stood out for his dedication and for his involvement in all aspects of the project.

In 2012, Adriano applied for a musical extension course through the University of the Paraná State, Curitiba. He was accepted and continued his recorder studies, while also adding music theory and orchestra courses, among others.

Wanting to delve even deeper into his musical education, he eventually earned a scholarship to the Colégio Martinus, a private school. He also began cello lessons with Maria Alice Brandão. At the Colégio Martinus, he began learning foreign languages, specifically English and German.

In 2014, Adriano was awarded a two-year scholarship to study the recorder with Diego Nadra and Rodrigo Calveyra at the Oficinas de Música da Fundação Cultural de Curitiba (the music department of Curitiba's cultural foundation). He is still in contact with those teachers. During 2016-17, he also participated in the International Early Music Gathering at EMESP (São Paulo State's music school), where he took a master class

taught by the renowned recorder player Ricardo Kanji. Adriano never missed an opportunity to play the recorder, always with a smile on his face.

After completing two years of German studies, in 2016 Adriano was allowed to participate in a competition through the Goethe-Institut in Brazil. As a result, he went on to take part in an exchange program to Hamburg, Germany, in 2018.

While in Hamburg, the Liedtke family took him under their wing, and he still lives there. With the support of the Liedtkes, he auditioned to play cello in a Hamburg orchestra. Adriano continued recorder lessons—in June 2018, beginning studies with the German professional Ebba-Maria Künning-Zeijl and the Dutch virtuoso Peter Holtslag. At the same time, he earned a scholarship to take college preparatory courses in music at the state youth music school in Hamburg.

While in Curitiba on vacation in 2019, Adriano performed a sold-out recital at the Capela Santa Maria, with support from the Fundação Cultura de Curitiba-ICAC Institute. That same year, Adriano began his current work on a bachelor's degree in recorder at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hamburg, and he also still plays cello as second chair in its

LINKS OF INTEREST:

- Cléa Galhano, www.cleagalhano.com
- Patricia Michelini Aguilar, patriciamichelini@musica.ufrj.br
- Article in AR September 2010 by Daniele Cruz Barros about 20th-century Brazilian recorder music; also in the article are links to PDFs of musical works cited in that article, <https://americanrecorder.org/docs/ARsept10body.pdf>
- Video of recorder students at Grota Cultural Space on the YouTube channel of Lenora Mendes, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dh9FZqyMeGs&t=7s
- For Facebook users, Grota Cultural Space, www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1643030772572217
- Dorcas Project channel playlist for a 2019 concert featuring Adriano Trarbach, www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5c9WUsvkHJD9rBEcEWcPzC9URLphgMik

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From a small seed planted, the sound and beauty of the recorder is spread to many corners of the globe.

orchestra.

Going back to the initial point of this article, we can see that even small actions can produce grand transformations. Also, even with the best of intentions, one cannot accomplish anything alone. In Curitiba, there were many people involved: psychologists, social workers, administrators, philanthropists, teachers, among many others. When a path seems difficult and even impossible, it is the work of these people that helps students move forward.

From a small seed planted, the sound and beauty of the recorder is spread to many corners of the globe. ❁

I hope these stories have inspired you as they have me. When I see how far young people can go in their lives—when they are given the opportunity to “discover” the recorder and its music—it gives me as a teacher so much hope. Our job as professionals is to keep these opportunities alive and to help students be able to gradually change the world around us. ❁



▲ Adriano Trarbach. In Hamburg, Germany, 2021.