

GRUPO CORPO

Nazareth

(Premeire 1993)

Choreography: **Rodrigo Pederneiras**

Music: **José Miguel Wisnik**
(about Ernesto Nazareth's compositions)

Set Design: **Fernando Velloso**

Costume Design: **Freusa Zechmeister**

Lighting: **Paulo Pederneiras**

Duration : 43 minutes

OF HOW NAZARETH AND MACHADO MEET IN WISNIK AND PEDERNEIRAS' WORK

*“From a short story by Machado de Assis:
a polka composer wants to write classical music such as Mozart, Beethoven or Cimarosa...But the muses refuse him and his fingers can only plagiarize. However, polkas come out effortlessly and they are original and sparkling and they become a huge success overnight. But to him, this success only confirms the size of his own failure”*

(text written by **JOSÉ MIGUEL WISNIK**, for “NAZARETH's” program)

The musical impasse lived by character Pestana, in the short story “O Homem Célebre” (The Renowned Man) in 1890, written by Machado de Assis (1839-1908), is singularly solved in the history of the Brazilian popular music, in the work done by his fellow country man, who lived in the same period, the genius composer from Rio de Janeiro, **Ernesto Nazareth** (1863-1934). A real character in the emerging “amaxixadas” polkas, portrayed in Machado's short story, **Nazareth** would compose popular music with sophisticated erudite constructions, achieving comparable success in his (rare) incursions

through concerto music. But, he would only be recognized in the 1920's – therefore, after the creator of Brás Cubas was gone. Machado, on the other hand, was a master in the art of writing, and he arranged words as if writing music.

Novels like “Esaú e Jacó” or the short story “O Espelho” reveal a surprising and acute perception of the concept of melody mirroring. When this resource is applied over some of Nazareth's composition, through backwards movements induced by a computer, it becomes a precious tool that helps to re-interpret his pieces, unveiling unexpected and clear melodic constructions.

It was after this discovery, that composer and writer from São Paulo, **José Miguel Wisnik**, professor of Brazilian Literature at the University of São Paulo (USP), became involved in the creation of the music score of **GRUPO CORPO's** ballet, opening in Rio de Janeiro's Teatro Municipal, on the 7th of this month. **Wisnik** is a pianist of erudite education and author of modern songs, which makes him be identified as part of São Paulo's vanguard music. He loves the frontier between popular and erudite, considering that the strongest point related to Brazilian music. The invitation made by the Pederneira's brother, to compose a score inspired on **Nazareth's** music, fit perfectly the studies and reflexions he was already developing around the theme and, particularly the work done by the inventor of the “brazilian tango”.

Without putting aside the language of the original instrument of piano player Ernesto, the author of “*O Som e o sentido – uma outra história das músicas*”, combines computer and keyboards, created during the recording (in a midi studio) and over it he placed the details – with acoustic instruments typical of the Choro groups of that period (guitar, flute, mandolin and a small guitar (cavaquinho)). Later on, percussion and trombone were assimilated by the Brazilian popular music, or an eight string suite would be borrowed from the erudite segment. The end result is a totally original authorship, which is very contemporary and, from each note springs the force of Nazareth's music. There are comments, citations, variations, all drinking from the same source but, they will inevitably flow into other branches of ocean.

As Machado from “Esaú e Jacó” and “O Espelho”, **Rodrigo Pederneiras**, the Merlin of **CORPO'S** movements, engenders a mirrored choreography, filled with dubious images and scenes, which come and go, giving a spatial treatment to “**NAZARETH**”, quite different from “21”, the ballet which preceded it (and still precedes it in this double feature). While “21” uses frequent *blackouts* to delineate independent and differentiated frames, “**NAZARETH**” reassumes the “black box” of the theater, gliding easily through the floors of polkas, chorinhos and maxixes, created by **Wisnik** and his source of inspiration.

Freusa Zechmeister's costumes go from Nazareth's period to the modern days. In shades of grey, black and white, the costumes have daring design, bordering the futuristic and adornment which remind us of the elegance of the beginning of the century.

Conceived by **Fernando Velloso** and made by **Luis Rossi**, from São Paulo's Carnaval Vai Vai Escola de Samba, the 14 three-dimensional roses placed over a metal screen, measuring 1,70 cm of diameter, float over the stage held by steel cables. The lighting, in shades of amber and peach, by **Paulo Pederneiras**, adds to the final touch of the ambience, of this post-modern “**NAZARETH**”. This was already born as a classical.