**Ernst Mahle (1929– )**

Ernst Mahle is a German-born Brazilian composer, conductor and music educator who occupies the chair number 6 of the *Academia Brasileira de Música*. He is also a former vice-president of the *Sociedade Brasileira de Música Contemporânea.*

He was born on January 3rd 1929 in Stuttgart and spent most of his childhood in Bluendz, Austria. After the World War II, the city of Bluendz would host concerts by the most prominent students of the *Conservatoire national de musique de Paris*. Impressed by the dexterity of such players, Mahle decided to pursue piano and composition studies and at age 20 he was accepted at the *Staatliche* *Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Stuttgart* in the class of Austrian composer Johann Nepomuk David. His studies in Stuttgart ended quickly, only one year later, due to his family move to São Paulo, Brazil, in 1951. Nevertheless, a special interest on modal music emerged during this period, after being introduced to the music of Béla Bartók.

In São Paulo, Mahle became a student of the German composer Hans Joachim Koellreuter, who had just founded the *Escola de Música Livre Pro Arte* in São Paulo, and from whom he learnt the avant-garde composition technics of the Second Viennese School. Together with Koellreuter, the pianist Maria Dirce Camargo and his future wife Maria Apparecida Romera Pinto, Mahle founds, in 1952, a branch of Koellreuter’s school in the city of Piracicaba, which was later named *Escola de Música de Piracicaba Maestro Ernst Mahle.* During the 1950’s he was also a frequent student at the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik*, where he studied with Olivier Messiaen, Ernst Křenek and Wolfgang Fortner.

His interest in music pedagogy, modalism, and Brazilian traditional music (specially the modal music from the Northeast of Brazil) led him to compose didactical pieces, to be played by the students of his school, adopting modes, themes and rhythms of Brazilian traditional and folkloric music. For this reason, Mahle is often cited as a nationalistic composer. As his compositions became popular amongst students of other schools, Mahle started to dedicate more efforts on composing pieces for professional level performers.

Ernst Mahle is based in the city of Piracicaba, where he is still a very active member of the music community, composing for various instruments and producing numerous cultural events such as concerts and operas.

Some of his notable works include *Diálogo para Violão e Cordas* (1971), *Sonatina para Violino e Piano* (1974), *Marroquinhas Fru-Fru* (Opera, 1974), *Suite Nordestina para Cordas* (1976), *O Amor é um Som, para soprano e conjunto* (1976), *A Moreninha* (Opera, 1979), *Concerto para Clarineta e Orquestra* (1988), *O Guaratuja* (2005).

**André Rodrigues**