Heitor Villa-Lobos - Piano Music (1999)

1. As Tres Marias: Alnitah 2. As Tres Marias: Alnilam 3. As Tres Marias: Mintika 4. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): Branquinha (The Little White Porcelain Doll) 5. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): Moreninha (The Little Brunette Papier-Mache Doll) 6. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): Caboclinha (The Little Mestiza Clay Doll) 7. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): Mulatinha (The Little Mulatto Rubber Doll) 8. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): Negrinha (The Little Black Wooden Doll) 9. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): A Pobresinha (The Poor Little Rag Doll) 10. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): O Polichinello (Punch) 11. The Baby's Family - Ste No.1 (The Dolls): Bruxa (The Witch Cloth Doll) 12. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Paper Cockroach 13. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Cardboard Cat 14. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Papier-Mache Mouse 15. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Rubber Dog 16. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Wooden Horse 17. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Tin Ox 18. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Cloth Bird 19. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Cotton Bear 20. The Baby's Family - Ste No.2 (The Little Animals): The Little Glass Wolf 21. Rudepoema Marc-Andre Hamelin – piano

Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) wrote a copious amount of music, but his pieces for solo piano (numbering around 200) are some of his most memorable. Combining regional folksong motifs with complicated tonal structures, he created art-music that was instantly engaging (imagine Erik Satie growing up in one of the most rhythmically rich countries in the world). Marc-André Hamelin, never one to shy from a pianistic challenge, tackles four of Villa-Lobos's best-loved and most difficult solo works: As Tres Marias; A Prolo do Bebê, Suite No. 1; A Prolo do Bebê, Suite No. 2; and Rudepoema. The last--which translates to "Savage Poem"--is Villa-Lobos's longest work for solo piano and one of the most complex to comprehend, but Hamelin's accents and driving rhythms keep things interesting. On the two suites, Villa-Lobos is at his most playful, creating an aural picture of childhood (the first is devoted to dolls, the second to animals) with miniatures that vary from slow and sentimental ("Caboclinha") to fast and playful ("O camundongo de massa"). This is tough music, and

Hamelin captures its magic, especially on the faster, driving pieces. The highlight may be the short piece "As Tres Marias," a pulsating and gorgeous work, whose melodic line was inspired by a pattern of stars Villa-Lobos had detected in the night sky. Great stuff. ---Jason Verlinde, amazon.com

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