

GLOBE UNITY: BRAZIL



Sampa
Romero Lubambo Trio (Sunnyside)
1954
Ricardo Grilli (Tone Rogue)
Trajétórias (Live at Galeria West)
Maurício de Souza's Bossa Brasil (Pitoca Music)
by Tom Greenland

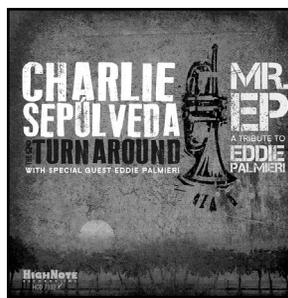
Soon there will be a Blue Note jazz club in Rio de Janeiro, but Brazilian musical sensibilities long ago spread north to jazz' native shores, bringing choro, samba and bossa nova.

Romero Lubambo came to New York from Rio de Janeiro 30 years ago, since when he's become a prolific sideman and led ten album projects. *Sampa* is named for São Paulo, where he gigged with local Paulistas bassist Sidiel Vieira and drummer Thiago Rabello. Inspired by these performances, the trio tried to capture the same energy in the studio. Lubambo favors acoustic fingerstyle guitar, plucking intricate rhythmic and harmonic patterns associated with Brazilian accompanists, but also using pizzicato technique for rapid, incisive single-note lines more associated with pick-wielding guitarists like George Benson. On two tracks he switches to a biting electric blues style, finessing held tones with shaking or sliding ornaments. His best playing is heard on "Gostoso Demais" and "Contrato de Separação" (both covers) and "Luisa" (for his daughter), where the chief interest lies not in the high melodies or low basslines but in the middle, where he keeps the chords' inner voices in motion, strong melodies in their own right.

Guitarist Ricardo Grilli, a Paulista relocated to New York, is of a more progressive bent. On *1954* he shows a flair for writing singable tunes, many with chromatic ornaments in the melodic line, usually set to slightly unusual rock chord progressions and beats, resulting in music both probing and approachable. His slightly overdriven sound is a bit distant; his legato touch dexterous, fluid, accelerating around the fast curves, slowing down for musical congestion. Backed by pianist Aaron Parks, bassist Joe Martin and drummer Eric Harland, the playing is strong all around, Parks more supportive than adventurous, his ideas unfolding like afterthoughts rather than inevitabilities. On opener "Arcturus", Grilli stretches out in long-limbed phrases, graceful at speed, chording insightfully, always retaining his forward momentum. Most comfortable in a rock-fusion vein, he shows his agility in a postbop style on "Pulse".

Drummer Maurício de Souza, another former Paulista, now lives in New Jersey. *Trajétórias*, his third CD, was recorded live at Westfield's Galeria West with Bossa Brasil, comprised of alto saxophonist Dmitry Baevsky, vibraphonist Jerry Weir and bassist Gary Mazzaroppi, with Rhodes pianist Bob Rodriguez on three numbers. Dominated by Jobim covers (six out of nine cuts), the setlist also includes Hermeto Pascoal's baião "Bebê", Milton Nascimento's "Vera Cruz" and Pat Metheny's "Spring Ain't Here", which provide welcome respite from the bossa novas. De Souza's drumming is supple and energetic, never overbearing. On the baião and "Inútil Paisagem", a samba taken at breakneck tempo, he plays extended but well-developed solos, inspired yet unflustered by the pressures of high-speed improvisation.

For more info, visit sunnysiderecords.com, ricardogrilli.com and mauriciodesouzajazz.com. Lubambo is at Dizzy's Club Aug. 15th-20th and 22nd-27th. See Calendar.



Mr. EP: A Tribute to Eddie Palmieri
Charlie Sepulveda & The Turnaround (HighNote)
by Russ Musto

A mainstay on the New York Latin Jazz scene for more than 20 years, trumpeter Charlie Sepulveda has been heard infrequently on the U.S. mainland since returning to his native Puerto Rico two decades ago. *Mr. EP: A Tribute To Eddie Palmieri* demonstrates that his time away has in no way diminished his abilities. The date introduces a new edition of Sepulveda's longstanding ensemble The Turnaround, which features talented players largely unknown off the island, along with several guests, including Palmieri himself.

A pair of Palmieri solo improvisations, "Variations On A Theme 1" and "2", bracket the date, the fêted pianist fleetingly referencing Monk's "Ruby My Dear" as the foundation for his thematic expansions. Palmieri's "Charlie's Whole Tone Blues" brings The Turnaround into the spotlight. Beginning with Gabriel Rodriguez' funky electric bass introduction, the pianist's angular composition has the composer, Sepulveda and tenor saxophonist Norberto Ortiz contributing incendiary solos on top of the churning clave rhythms of drummer Raul Maldonado and conguero Gadwin Vargas, who stretches out over Palmieri's hypnotic tumbao and riffing horns.

The remainder showcases Sepulveda's talents as a composer and arranger. "Bomba Pa' Carmen", a soulful outing with an infectious melody, adds vibraphonist Felipe Fournier, Eduardo Zayas replacing Palmieri. The title track is funky jazz in the tradition of Horace Silver, with blues-drenched solos by the two horns, pianist Bienvenido Dinzey and Rodriguez on top of a leisurely cha cha rhythm. Sepulveda's arrangement of "Besame Mucho" slows down Consuelo Velazquez' classic, Dinzey's Fender Rhodes underpinning lending emotional depth to Yarimar Denisse's moving vocal and Sepulveda's mournful horn.

The trumpeter's "Peer Magic" follows with suite-like fluidity, Sepulveda and Ortiz delivering powerful lines over Dinzey's relentless montuno and Vargas' no-holds-barred congas. "Si Tú Sabes" successfully melds jazz and hip-hop with Sepulveda blowing muted trumpet to complement the exploratory oration of rapper SieteNueve, after which the band, with Zayas and Fournier back on piano and vibraphone, charges straightahead on the anthemic "Mr. Jazz".

For more information, visit jazzdepot.com. Eddie Palmieri is at Blue Note Aug. 7th and 28th. See Calendar.



Sinatra & Jobim @50
John Pizzarelli (Concord)
by Matthew Kassel

Guitarist and singer John Pizzarelli has a sure sense of rhythm and an effortless command of the American Songbook, two attributes that make him a perfect candidate for a dual tribute album to Frank Sinatra and

Antônio Carlos Jobim. Pizzarelli has, in fact, already recorded two separate albums fêting each. *Sinatra & Jobim @50* is for the most part a celebration of the studio album *Francis Albert Sinatra & Antônio Carlos Jobim* (Reprise, 1967) and featuring tracks by Jobim as well as American composers like Cole Porter.

The 1967 album suggests an easy rapport between the American songbook and Jobim's infectious melodies, which have become as much a part of the jazz canon as Irving Berlin or George Gershwin. Pizzarelli bears that out with a couple of medleys, including one of "I Concentrate on You" (Porter) and "Wave" (Jobim) and another combining "If You Never Come to Me" (Berlin) and "Change Partners" (Jobim). Joining Pizzarelli on a few tracks—"Two Kites", "Bonita"—is Daniel Jobim, Antônio's grandson, whose breathy, vibrato-less voice recalls João Gilberto. In a similar way, Pizzarelli's somewhat thin, womanly voice brings to mind Astrud Gilberto, who sang "The Girl From Ipanema", Jobim's most famous song.

Pizzarelli's rhythm section is comprised of Helio Alves (piano), Mike Karn (bass) and Duduka Da Fonseca (drums); tenor saxophonist Harry Allen also joins in, as does Jessica Molaskey, Pizzarelli's wife, who contributes backing vocals and co-wrote a couple of the album's songs with Pizzarelli, such as "She's So Sensitive" and "Canto Casual". On full display is Pizzarelli's dexterous guitar playing (which is better than his singing). It's best featured on the Jobim classic "Água de Beber", in which Pizzarelli puts his trademark soloing style to impressive use, mouthing the notes of his instrument simultaneously, like George Benson famously did in "On Broadway".

For more information, visit concordmusicgroup.com. This project is at Birdland Aug. 8th-12th. See Calendar.

DAFNIS PRIETO BIG BAND WORLD PREMIERE



/ Trumpets
MIKE RODRIGUEZ
NATHAN EKLUND
ALEX SIPIAGIN
JOSH DEUTSCH

/ Trombones
TIM ALBRIGHT
ALAN FERBER
JACOB GARCHIK
JEFF NELSON

/ Saxophones
ROMAN FILIU
MICHAEL THOMAS
PETER APFELBAUM
JOEL FRAHM
CHRIS CHEEK

/ Piano
MANUEL VALERA
/ Bass
RICKY RODRIGUEZ
/ Percussion
ROBERTO QUINTERO

/ Drums & Compositions
DAFNIS PRIETO

@ JAZZ STANDARD

116 E. 27TH ST (BTW PARK/LEX), NYC
AUGUST 25 - 27, 2017

7:30 & 9:30 SETS EACH NIGHT
TICKETS: JAZZSTANDARD.COM
DAFNISPRIETOBIGBAND.COM