

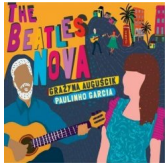
## Grazyna Auguscik and Paulinho Garcia - The Beatles Nova (2011)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 23 October 2012 17:02 - Last Updated Thursday, 13 November 2014 09:38

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01 - *When I'm Sixty-Four* [3:3] 02 - *Thing We Said Today* [3:12] 03 - *Because* [2:21] 04 - *Norwegian Wood* [3:18] 05 - *Hey Jude* [4:31] 06 - *We Can Work It Out* [2:56] 07 - *Blackbird* [2:47] 08 - *I Will* [4:1] 09 - *Two Of Us* [3:23] 10 - *Hello, Goodbye* [2:2] 11 - *Nowhere Man* [2:59] 12 - *In My Life* [3:13] 13 - *Here Comes The Sun* [3:16] 14 - *A Hard Day's Night* [3:11]  
Musicians: Grazyna Auguscik - voice Paulinho Garcia - voice, guitar, percussion Heitor Garcia - percussion Brett Benteler - acoustic bass Steve Eisen - flute, sax

Thursday I dropped by Katerina's for a couple of sets by Paulinho Garcia, the Brazilian-born Chicago guitarist and vocalist who's one of the city's--if not the country's--major interpreters of the classic Brazilian repertoire. Though I'm a longtime fan, this was my first opportunity to see Garcia paired with his occasional singing partner, Grazyna Auguscik, a Polish-born siren who's been a force in Chicago jazz for more than a decade.

Despite the disparity in their appearances--Garcia bright-eyed and avuncular, with a cap of snowy white hair; Auguscik regal and serene beneath a concealing blond fringe--when they began harmonizing, the effect was hypnotic. Garcia's warm baritone, with just a hint of buzz, twined with Auguscik's cool, clear soprano as though they were created specifically to complement each other. Covering a wide range of Brazilian tunes, they cooed and crooned, purred and scatted. Katerina, the club's proprietor, called it "the most beautiful collective whisper you'll ever hear," and the uncanny, almost intoxicating shifts in texture and rhythm were amplified by shifts from Portuguese to English to Polish. In fact, for me the night's most significant revelation was the way Polish consonant sounds--all those affricates and fricatives that English speakers find so hard to place on the tongue--meld so gorgeously into bossa nova and samba. The syllables seem to caress the melodies, like sea foam washing up on a beach. In one number--Marcos Valle's "Summer Samba"--Garcia sang the lyric in English, alternating with Auguscik singing in Polish, and there was no question which suited the tune better.

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The emotional range of the program was also remarkable. Brazilian music is known for its lightness, its deftness; for this reason it's often hastily dismissed as disposable pop confectionery. But the work of the great Brazilian composers, like Antonio Carlos Jobim and Vinicius de Moraes, is tremendously sophisticated; it's slenderness and fleetness are deceptive--in fact it has the structural strength to carry the weightiest themes on its slender back. Garcia and Auguscik brought these same qualities to some non-Brazilian songs they brought into the mix, including Sting's "Fragile" (which Katerina made them play twice), the Beatles' "Blackbird," and Ned Washington and Victor Young's "My Foolish Heart." Polish composers were represented both by a modern tune and by an arrangement of a melody by Frederic Chopin, who Garcia recognizes an influence on Brazilian music--thus giving him and Auguscik a common musical antecedent, and a stronger rationale for their partnership. Not, given the results, that they need one. --- Robert Rodi, Editorial Reviews

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