

## The Brazilian Trio - Aguas Brasileiras (2020)

Wpisany przez bluesever (Bogdan Marszałkowski)  
Czwartek, 21 Styczeń 2021 13:14 -

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1 *Maucha Na Praya* 2 *Sampa 67* 3 *Black Orpheus Trilogy (Manhã de Carnaval, A Felicidade, Samba de Orfeu)* 4 *Boogie Stop Shuffle* 5 *Aninha* 6 *Baden* 7 *Asa Branca/Baião* 8 *Aguas Brasileiras* 9 *Manhattan Style* 10 *Vila Madalena* Helio Alves – piano Nilson Matta – bass Duduka Da Fonseca – drums

Brazilian waters beckon with their beauty and energies, and this trio serves as a perfect vessel to carry the ears across that aqua viva. Pianist Helio Alves, bassist Nilson Matta and drummer Duduka Da Fonseca—three Brazilian heavies long based in New York—have played together in different configurations and situations for decades. And when they first banded together under this appellation for Forests (Zoho Music, 2008), they quickly earned the respect they so richly deserve by netting a Latin Grammy nomination. Since that time, through studio and stage engagements, their bonds have only grown stronger and more flexible, a fact made evident in short order on this refreshing outing.

Opening with the vivacious samba "Maucha Na Praia"—Da Fonseca's ode to his wife, vocalist Maucha Adnet—this outfit immediately makes its mark in upbeat fashion. Then Matta tips his hat to São Paulo with his "Sampa 67." Alves' brisk and pointed chording and melodies prove thrilling, Matta's rich solo offering(s) play as a clear highlight, and Da Fonseca's scampering brushes and subsequent syncopated stick work set the scenery ablaze. In a mere six minutes these three define friendship forged in a musical heat.

Using a hybridized Brazilian-jazz language, the trio digs deep into history on both sides of that hyphen. First there's a dive into the music from the film *Black Orpheus*. Stitching together a medley containing "A Felicidade," "Manhã De Carnaval," and "Samba de Orfeu," this triangular unit moves from seductive introductions to soaring conclusions. Then it underscores the familiar sounds of Charles Mingus' "Boogie Stop Shuffle" with the bounce of Baião rhythms while still

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alluding to and angling toward the song's original foundation(s). It's a masterful display of rhythm's strengths and malleability. Further on, Matta's poignant arco work ushers in a spirited look at Luiz Gonzaga and Humberto Teixeira's work on "Asa Branca/Baião," the only non-original on the album's second half.

As *Águas Brasileiras* continues, tributes to people and places flow out in fine fashion. There's Alves' "Aninha," a beauty in three dedicated to the composer's eldest daughter; Matta's "Baden," a passionate, driving tribute to Baden Powell that slips a little J.S. Bach into the mix; the gorgeously glinting title track, nodding to rivers and ocean in their cool flow; Da Fonseca's "Manhattan Style," a full-throttle samba capturing the thrill of New York life (and paying respect to the late Claudio Roditi); and, finally, Alves' "Vila Madalena," referencing a neighborhood in the pianist's native São Paulo with an injection of positivity.

Recorded in Brooklyn a mere three weeks before COVID-19 brought the entire world to a standstill, this music knows nothing of the difficulties and struggles that would quickly take hold and multiply. It's simply a gift of joy and togetherness from three men who rise to incredible heights and play with clear purpose. Music like this has always mattered, but it carries even greater importance with the timing of its arrival. Put simply, it's radiant sound and light capable of blocking out the darkness of these days. ---Dan Bilawsky,allaboutjazz.com

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