

# Quarteto Moderno

Live! Ao Vivo!

Brazilian Jazz

featuring

**RICHARD BOUKAS**

guitar, vocals, composer

**Lucas Pino** woodwinds

**Gustavo Amarante** bass

**Maurício Zottarelli** drums

Recorded June 10, 2016

New School for Performing Arts

CD Liner Notes

# Quarteto Moderno

## Live! Ao Vivo!

### Brazilian Jazz

1. Chuva No Sertão (baião)
2. Chorizinho (choro, 3/4) dedicated to Hermeto Pascoal
3. Mineiro Mesmo (samba, 3/4) ded. Toninho Horta
4. Viva O Som! (choro) ded. Hermeto Pascoal on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday
5. Calico (samba jazz) ded. Joe Henderson
6. Marcha Radamés (marcha 3/4) ded. Radamés Gnattali
7. Frederic Frêvo (frêvo) ded. Frederic Chopin
8. Boukas Baião (baião) ded. Luiz Gonzaga
9. Samba Pr'ó Sérgio (samba mineiro) ded. Sérgio Santos
10. Valsa Azul (valsa) ded. Guinga

All music composed and arranged by RICHARD BOUKAS

Ensemble page: [www.boukas.com/quarteto-moderno](http://www.boukas.com/quarteto-moderno)

Complete Musical Scores and Parts available at:  
[www.boukas.com/brazilian-jazz-scores-store](http://www.boukas.com/brazilian-jazz-scores-store)

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# QUARTETO MODERNO LIVE! AO VIVO!

## CD and VIDEO LINER NOTES

**QUARTETO MODERNO** is widely recognized as one of the most innovative contemporary Brazilian Jazz ensembles. Formed in 2008, its current personnel has been a working unit since 2013. In this exciting live performance, guitarist-vocalist **Richard Boukas** presents ten of his acclaimed compositions covering six core Brazilian genres: *samba, choro, baião, frêvo, marcha, valsa*. He is joined by the brilliant woodwind virtuoso **LUCAS PINO** and a stellar rhythm section comprised of **GUSTAVO AMARANTE** (bass) and **MAURÍCIO ZOTTARELLI** (drums).

Recorded at *New School for the Performing Arts* during the *Analytic Approaches to World Music* conference in June 2016 (Boukas is faculty at New School Jazz since 1995), this performance captures the ensemble in its intuitive spontaneity and musical interaction.

In the weeks just leading up to the performance, Boukas seized this performance opportunity to compose seven new pieces. Each is cast in a different Brazilian genre and dedicated to a famous Brazilian musician who has served as a perennial source of inspiration. The result is a wholly new and candid portrait of the ensemble, adeptly navigating Boukas's melodic, harmonic and rhythmic complexities.

Alongside the three preexisting pieces (*Chorizinho, Calico, Chuva No Sertão*), this concert is not only **QUARTETO MODERNO'S debut recording**, but also documents a vital pivot point in its next period of dynamic evolution. Each piece offers a unique musical journey, yet there is a unifying consistency to the ensemble's interpretations and projecting the distinct creative personalities of its members.

In addition to this **CD recording**, the complete performance was **video recorded** and can be viewed on the ensemble page [www.boukas.com/quarteto-moderno](http://www.boukas.com/quarteto-moderno) as well as a dedicated Youtube playlist accessible from the page. The audio is the exact same high fidelity as the CD.

For musicians and educators who are interested in delving into the music more deeply, a **print-on-demand complete score edition** (and individual parts, if ordered) for the ten compositions is available at [www.boukas.com/brazilian-jazz-scores-store](http://www.boukas.com/brazilian-jazz-scores-store)

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## NOTES from the LEADER-COMPOSER

**QUARTETO MODERNO** has been a rich and exciting eight years of music exploration. Since its inception, my goal has been to definitively document our music in a recording- ideally, in a live setting where there is far more organic interaction among the players, a heightened sense of intensity, spontaneity and risk-taking.

Having led my own small group original music ensembles for forty years now, this particular opportunity for the ensemble to perform at New School (where I have been teaching since 1995) offered both a chance to significantly expand the group's repertoire and present a program of tributes to those great Brazilian composers who have fueled my compositional and musical life. There are two exceptions in these tributes: Frederic Chopin and saxophone giant Joe Henderson.

The idea of constructing a program from top-down, i.e., consisting of tribute pieces that were mostly yet to be written- was a welcome challenge both as a composer and ensemble leader. Essentially, I envisioned a specific sequence of genres, tempos, time signatures and moods, and then set about writing pieces that would satisfy those creative and programmatic needs.

Musicians and music appreciators alike might wonder how such an approach fared for me. Were the compositions that resulted truly spontaneous, uncompromised in scope, form, gesture and expression? Or did a less spontaneous, formulaic process emerge?

Fortunately, I had two major assets which facilitated and focused the creative muse. The first was the tribute concept and an exact list of those musicians I wanted to honor. The second and equally important driving force, however, is the greatest gift of all: when a composer-leader knows so well the musicians for whom they are writing. Over the last nearly three years I have formed an intimately vibrant sonic, visual and aesthetic canvas of this exact group of musicians. It is from this creative canvas that the music for this ensemble emanated- with a strong flow of inexorability and certainty.

The resulting new compositions yielded two sambas, a marcha, valsa, baião, frêvo and a special choro to commemorate Hermeto Pascoal's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

LUCAS PINO is one of the greatest young saxophonists to come along in decades. His entire approach to music making is incredibly virtuosic, spontaneous, and governed by a keen sense of what the larger musical vision requires. His role as the primary thematic voice of the group allows me to develop my ideas with no technical limitations. His improvisational ability to navigate through complex harmonic progressions and uneven phrase structures is truly unique.

GUSTAVO AMARANTE plays the bass with an incredibly deep sense of groove, taste and clarity. So much so that he is the fulcrum a very open rhythm section to develop its interactive language and catapult the music to places far beyond my original compositional intent.

MAURÍCIO ZOTTARELLI is probably the most unique and exciting drummer I have ever played with in any style, and certainly in the realm of Brazilian music. His intense and unrelenting presence in the moment, lightning-fast ears and chops to match, imparts a creativity and joy that is both uplifting and transcendent for us other three musicians.

It is against this backdrop of gifted musicians that I seek to carve out my own role: first and foremost, as accompanist and steward of the rhythm section; secondly, as a thematic and improvising soloist on guitar and voice. In that sense, my guitar playing is mainly in the service of the group presenting the compositions and not so much my individual expression. For some who have followed my small group career over the decades, this might seem a radical departure or step back from my earlier Jazz days- where my guitar soloing is more upfront and featured. For me, it has been a gradual evolution governed by the ever-increasing complexity of my compositions and the harmonic choices which best support the melodic flow.

I enthusiastically invite musicians, educators and music appreciators to look at the scores for the pieces represented on this concert, CD and video. They provide a deeper insight into my compositional process and the exemplary interpretations of my ensemble members (see page one).

**Richard Boukas**

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

**CHUVA NO SERTÃO** is a *baião* dedicated to **Jovino Santos Neto**, former pianist with Hermeto Pascoal and my duo partner between 1998-2005. The "A" theme is based on the highly characteristic Lydian Dominant mode, with subtle harmonic shadings over a tonic pedal. The complete thematic statement is in **AABBCC** form, followed by a tenor saxophone solo based on a repeated **AAAB** structure. Although the tonality of the piece is firmly grounded in A major, the harmonic vocabulary and progressions venture elusively well outside diatonic confines. The coda of the piece is centered in Gb major, which also begins the B section.

**CHORIZINHO** is a jazzy **AABC** choro dedicated to **Hermeto Pascoal**. Set in an unidiomatic **3/4 meter** (most choros are in 2/4), this permits the harmonic rhythm to be one, two or three chords per bar. Combined with a motivically economical approach to thematic writing (endemic of traditional choro), abrupt modulatory passages are facilitated which challenge the improviser. Vocal and soprano saxophone solos on the complete form follow. The restatement of the theme is followed by a four-bar vamp over which both soloists trade improvised lines before the final coda. This piece has received numerous subsequent treatments: big band, string quartet (visit [boukas.com/chamber-music](http://boukas.com/chamber-music)), guitar quartet, and violoncello-guitar duo (visit [boukas.com/law-boukas-duo](http://boukas.com/law-boukas-duo)).

**MINEIRO MESMO** is a *samba* in 3/4 (again, a genre typically in 2/4) dedicated to legendary Minas Gerais composer-guitarist **Toninho Horta**. After a rubato introduction, this **AABA** long form makes extensive use of asymmetrical phrase lengths- particularly 3 and 5 bars. The **B section** is set in the northeast folkloric genre **maracatú**, revolving around a series of pedal points. Clarinet (AAB) and vocal (AA) solos follow, returning to the final BA statement. The 9-bar coda vamp for improvised trading unfolds in three three-bar phrases, each based in a contrasting tonal area. The seamless flow of improvisation is followed by a closing theme based on the same harmonic structure.

**VIVA O SOM!** is a lively *choro* dedicated to **Hermeto Pascoal** in celebration of his 80th birthday (June 22, 2016). Set in choro's traditional **AABBACCA** form, the melodic and harmonic vocabulary shows a clear reference to Pascoal's sophisticated, unpredictable and boldly intuitive compositional flow. On the repeat of each thematic section, melodic embellishments and reharmonizations are employed. Brief improvised solos are integrated within a scaled-down version of the original form. The piece is bracketed by a four-bar Intro/Outro.

**CALICO** is a *jazz samba* dating back to my guitar trio years (1983-89) and first recorded on my second release as leader, **Embarcadero** and dedicated to tenor saxophone giant **Joe Henderson**. The piece has a straightforward **AAB** structure which encloses a kinetic bebop melody and harmonic progressions by descending minor 3<sup>rd</sup>- (a nod to Henderson's classic, "Inner Urge"). After trading choruses, tenor saxophone and guitar/voice trade eight bars within the form, leading to an open drum solo before the theme's restatement. **Maurício Zottarelli's** tremendous creativity and polyrhythmic mastery are on full display here.

**MARCHA RADAMÉS** is a *marcha* in 3/4 (usually in 4/4) dedicated to the prolific multi-dimensional composer **Radamés Gnattali** (1906-88). The signature guitar accompaniment of the introduction is loosely based on his "Brasileira no. 13" for solo guitar. The **AAB** theme contrasts a typical *marcha* melody and groove with a syncopated melody supported by a transparent, flowing rhythm section texture. A "shout" statement by tenor saxophone based on the A section harmonies ensues, followed by an ethereal drum solo over a tonic pedal. Much like Gnattali's own harmonic vocabularies, progressions are predominantly "non-functional", i.e. guided more by localized inflections of the melody.

**FRÉDÉRIC FRÉVO** is a *frêvo* dedicated to **Chopin**. It combines the genre's prototypical harmonic, melodic and rhythm gestures, however, the *étude* nature of the theme reflects Chopin's penchant for sweeping virtuosity and attractive modulations facilitated by inverted harmonies. Set in **AABBC** form, the **A** section is used as the harmonic basis for brief solos before the final BA and coda which mirrors the introduction.

**BOUKAS BAIÃO** is a modal/folkloric **baião** dedicated to the legendary **Luiz Gonzaga**- the recognized father of **baião**". Modeled after the ubiquitous "**Asa Branca**" and set in a clearcut **AABB** form, the **A** section remains largely in the **Lydian Dominant**, while the **B** section has more harmonic movement, still quite diatonic in character. The solo section for the group is totally open-ended, beginning with Lydian Dominant as a backdrop but soon venturing off into uncharted harmonic territory. This kind of open playing harkens back to my piece "Embarcadero", the title track on my 1983 guitar trio recording.

**SAMBA P'RO SÉRGIO** is a relaxed **samba** dedicated to innovative Minas Gerais composer-vocalist-guitarist **Sérgio Santos**. Modeled loosely on his own famous samba "**Áfrico**" ("Quando O Brasil Resolveu Cantar?"), the **AABC** form is comprised of asymmetrical phrase lengths of 6 and 5 bars, resulting in unpredictable melodic and harmonic pivot points. Although the main thematic kernel is clearly in A Lydian dominant, the modulatory harmonic shifts and frequent inversions obfuscate the tonality throughout. Solos based on the "A" section follow before the final thematic statement and coda.

**VALSA AZUL** is a **duet waltz** dedicated to brilliant guitarist-composer **Guinga** set in **ABCA** form. Performed by myself and Lucas Pino, my plan is to compose a set of four intimate duet pieces of contrasting character. Although the main "A" theme is not clearly Brazilian in character, its angular melodic lyricism and dark harmonic fabric are earmark traits of Guinga's unique compositional universe. The **B** section is a faster **guarânia** employing more continuous eighth note movement in the melody and the genre's traditional accompaniment pattern in the guitar. The return A section employs choice reharmonizations and concludes with a variation of the piece's introduction.

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