

Thursday, February 7, 2008, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

The Assad Brothers'
Brazilian Guitar Festival



J. Henry Fair

Sérgio Assad *guitar*
Odair Assad *guitar*
Badi Assad *guitar, bass guitar, percussion, voice*
Romero Lubambo *guitar*
Celso Machado *guitar, percussion and voice*

Exclusive Tour Management: Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016.

Sérgio and Odair Assad play Thomas Humphrey guitars.

Cal Performances' 2007–2008 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.

Brazilian Guitar Festival

PROGRAM

Egberto Gismonti Contos de Cordel
Sérgio Assad Homenagem as nossas raizes
Sérgio & Odair

César Camargo Mariano Curumim
Sérgio, Odair & Romero

Romero Lubambo Pr'o Flavio
Carlos Lyra Influencia do Jazz
Romero

Maurício Einhorn & Durval Ferreira Estamos ai
Romero & Celso

Paulo Bellinati Á Furiosa
Baden Powell de Aquino Samba Novo
Sérgio, Odair, Romero & Celso

INTERMISSION

Celso Machado Corpo
Fantasia Brasileira
Celso

Improvisation
Badi & Celso

Badi Assad Waves
Billy Blanco A Banca do Distinto
Badi

Gabriel Levy Baião de Cinco
Sérgio, Odair & Badi

Sérgio Assad Frêvo Antigo
Antonio Carlos Jobim Medley
All

Brazilian music began its evolution after 1808, when D. Joao VI, the King of Portugal, took the entire Portuguese court to colonial Brazil to flee the imminent invasion of his country by Napoleon Bonaparte. Professional Portuguese musicians, who came along with the Court to Rio de Janeiro, influenced most native musicians in blending the European music with the African rhythms with which they were more familiar.

Over the last 150 years, this blend has developed into an unbelievable variety of traditional forms as well as contemporary forms. The guitar, the only available accompaniment instrument, made its presence mandatory in the creative processes of these new styles.

With the advent of Brazilian guitar virtuosos, the guitar gradually made its way from a background accent to a featured solo instrument during the 20th century. Artists like João Pernambuco, Dilermando Reis and Laurindo de Almeida helped to shape this process. The significant contribution of Anibal Augusto Sardinha (1915–1955), known as Garoto, and Baden Powell de Aquino (1937–2000) helped create two different Brazilian guitar styles, one more academic and the latter more intuitive. Garoto's legacy was etched into Brazilian culture with his clean sound and exacting technique. Baden Powell was guided more by his great instinct and emotion, rather than the quality of his

sound. These two lineages developed into two separate generations of great modern guitar masters of the instrument. Those distinctions are now becoming blurred as more guitarists demonstrate both the precision of a classical virtuoso and the Latin flavor of the native musicians, sometimes in the same piece.

When Odair and I decided to create a guitar festival to focus on this evolution, we chose to perform with musicians who share our passion, love and knowledge of Brazilian guitar music. We invited our musically gifted sister, Badi Assad, and two of the leading figures in the Brazilian guitar scenery: Romero Lubambo and Celso Machado. We are thrilled to share the stage with Badi, Romero and Celso—musicians with extraordinary versatility who can effortlessly straddle these two traditions. Badi is a classical guitar player who has become a remarkable singer and vocal percussionist. Romero is one of the great Brazilian jazz acoustic players alive today, and Celso has invented a unique way of incorporating the sounds and feelings of Brazil's cities and jungles into his expressive guitar and voice. This Brazilian Guitar Festival aims to demonstrate the gorgeous diversity of Brazilian music through its most representative instrument—the guitar.

We hope you enjoy it.

Sérgio Assad

Key Notes: The Exquisite Art of Brazilian Guitar *with Jesse "Chuy" Varela*

Thursday, February 7, 5–6:30 pm, Zellerbach Hall Café

Take a journey into the rich musical traditions of Brazilian guitar performance with a talk by Jesse "Chuy" Varela (www.chuyvarela.com) of jazz radio station KCSM 91.1-FM, followed by an extraordinary concert, the Brazilian Guitar Festival, an exhilarating musical journey from the pulsating city of Rio de Janeiro to the jungles of the Amazon.

Brazilian-born brothers **Sérgio and Odair Assad** (*guitar*) have set the benchmark for all other guitarists by creating a new standard of guitar innovation, ingenuity and expression. Their exceptional artistry and uncanny ensemble playing come from both a family rich in Brazilian musical tradition and from studies with the best guitarists in South America. In addition to setting new performance standards, the Assads have played a major role in creating and introducing new music for two guitars. Their virtuosity has inspired a wide range of composers to write for them, including Astor Piazzolla, Terry Riley, Radamés Gnattali, Marlos Nobre and Roland Dyens.

The Assads began playing the guitar together at an early age and went on to study for seven years with guitarist and lutenist Monina Távora, a disciple of Andrés Segovia. Their international career began with a major prize at the 1979 young artist's competition in Bratislava. Their repertoire includes original music composed by Sérgio Assad, his reworking of folk and jazz music, Latin music of almost every style and transcriptions of standard classical repertoire. This allows them to create programs that are always a compelling blend of styles, periods and cultures.

The Assads are also recognized as prolific recording artists. In 2001, Nonesuch Records released *Sérgio and Odair Assad Play Piazzolla*, which won a Latin Grammy Award in September 2002. They have recorded Piazzolla discs with Gidon Kremer (Nonesuch) and Yo-Yo Ma (Sony Classical), the latter a 1998 Grammy-winner. A collaboration with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg in 2000 featured a collection of pieces based on traditional and gypsy folk tunes from around the world. In 2003, Sérgio Assad wrote a triple concerto for this trio that has been performed with the orchestras of São Paulo and Seattle and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. The brothers also went on an 18-city tour as soloists with the Orquestra de São Paulo, playing Marlos Nobre's *Concerto Duplo*.

The Assad Brothers collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma on his popular release, *Obrigado Brazil*. Sérgio arranged several of the works on the disc, which captured a Grammy in 2004. The Assads toured with Ma at summer festivals in the United States, followed by concerts in Europe and Japan and per-

formed at the opening of Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall in September 2003.

In summer 2004, Sérgio and Odair arranged a very special tour featuring three generations of the Assad family. They presented a wide variety of Brazilian music, featuring their father Jorge Assad on the mandolin and the voice of mother Angelina Assad. Sister Badi and Sérgio and Odair's children (Clarice, Carolina and Rodrigo) finished the picture on the piano, guitar and vocals. In 2005, the Assads began a collaboration with famed Cuban clarinetist Paquito D'Rivera in the United States and Europe.

In 2006, the Assad Brothers performed Joaquín Rodrigo's *Concierto Madrigal* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl. Also included in the program was Sérgio's arrangement of the *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* by Piazzolla for two guitars and orchestra. In winter 2007, the brothers toured with the Turtle Island Quartet in a program called *String Theory*. Later that year, the Assads traveled to Australia to inaugurate the first Adelaide Guitar Festival and to give recitals at the Sydney Opera House. In January 2008, the Assads will curate and perform a Guitar Festival at the 92nd Street Y in New York. The Assads will also appear with L'Orchestre National de Belgique in Brussels performing Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Concerto for Two Guitars*.

Badi Assad was born in the small Brazilian city of São João da Boa Vista. She began studying guitar at age 14 with her father, as her brothers had done years before. Just one year later, she was winning competitions in Brazil and abroad, and in 1989 recorded her first album, entitled *Dança dos Tons* (*Dance of the Tones*). The album featured many musicians who were not able to accompany Badi on tour; this led her to begin improvising with her voice and percussion instruments. She also sought different ways of playing the guitar, all in order to imitate the other instruments which she felt were essential to the interpretation of each song.

Badi's experimentation led to her signing with New York-based Chesky Records, for whom she recorded three albums in the mid-1990s. The label's one-microphone and no-overdubs recording methods brought attention to her way of singing

and playing guitar while simultaneously playing a Brazilian shaker or other percussion instruments, or mimicking them with her voice while singing—in effect singing two things at the same time!

In 1994, the *Guitar Player* magazine ranked Badi Assad—along with Charlie Hunter, Ben Harper and Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine—as one of the 10 young talents who would revolutionize guitar playing during the 1990s. In 1996, Badi's *Rhythms* was the recipient of awards for best classical guitar album from *Guitar Player* and best classical/finger-style guitarist from *Acoustic Guitar* magazine. In 1998, Badi released *Chameleon*, and in 2003 she recorded *Three Guitars*, with jazz guitar greats Larry Coryell and John Abercrombie. The album was released on Chesky. Also in 2003, Belgian guitar label GHA Records re-released Badi's first album (previously available only on vinyl) with four new tracks, calling it *Dança das Ondas* (*Dance of the Waves*). She signed with eDGe Music/Deutsche Grammophon and in 2004 released *Verde*, followed in 2006 by *Wonderland*, which was included in the BBC's list of best world music CDs of 2006. Having toured internationally, in 2007 Badi concentrated on putting together shows in São Paulo, producing a CD recording for her 76-year-old mother, composing film and theatre soundtracks—all while awaiting the birth of her first child. Following a tour in Australia, Badi Assad toured the United States and in 2008 she will participate in a guitar tour with her brothers, Sérgio and Odair, while preparing her next album.

Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1955, **Romero Lubambo** studied classical piano and music theory as a young boy. From the time he played his first notes on the guitar at age 13, he devoted himself to that instrument. Lubambo graduated from the Villa-Lobos School of Music in Rio in 1978 as an outstanding student of classical guitar, and in 1980 received a degree in mechanical engineering from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

The rhythms and melodies defining Brazilian music and American jazz fascinated Lubambo. He taught himself through intense research and practice, developing exceptional skill, versatility and fluency in both jazz and Brazilian idioms.

In 1985, he left Brazil for New York, where he became very much in demand not only for his authentic Brazilian sound, but also for his command of a variety of styles.

Lubambo has performed and recorded with many outstanding artists, including Dianne Reeves, Michael Brecker, Yo-Yo Ma, Kathleen Battle, Diana Krall, Herbie Mann, Wynton Marsalis, Luciana Souza, Kurt Elling, Jane Monheit, Kenny Barron, Ivan Lins, Grover Washington Jr., Vernon Reid, Flora Purim and Airto, Sadao Watanabe, Paquito D'Rivera, Harry Belafonte, Larry Coryell, Gato Barbieri, Leny Andrade, James Carter, Paula Robison, Dave Weckl, Pamela Driggs, Jason Miles, Regina Carter, Mauro Senise and César Camargo Mariano, among many others. He has also established himself as a composer and performer on his own critically acclaimed recording projects as well as on those of Trio Da Paz, a Brazilian jazz trio Lubambo formed with Nilson Matta and Duduka da Fonseca.

Virtuoso Brazilian guitarist, percussionist and multi-instrumentalist **Celso Machado** transports his audiences through the richness and diversity of Brazilian music and beyond. While Celso's music is rooted in the percussive rhythms, harmonies and spirit of Brazil, his strong interest in ethnomusicology has led him to attain mastery of a vast array of instruments. He has discovered similarities between the music of southern Italy and northeastern Brazil, the Egyptian *maqsum* and the Brazilian *maxixe* rhythm, the Moroccan *gnawa* rhythm and Brazilian *afoxé* and *samba*. Celso seamlessly incorporates these influences into his own sound, making his own unique contribution to the evolution of Brazilian music.

Celso's compositions for guitar and ensemble are published by Editions Henry Lemoine in Paris. A new body of compositions for guitar will be published this year. Celso has performed and taught master classes throughout Europe, Canada, the United States and Brazil for over 30 years.