

Mafalda Minnozzi / BIO 2023

Mafalda Today

Mafalda Minnozzi has arrived in NY on the jazz scene by way of a long journey across three continents. Originating in Italy and evolving in Brazil to the USA with so many stops in between, the resulting language all comes together on her new release “**NATURAL IMPRESSION**”.

After recording some 20+ albums in Brazil, the new album is her third in a series for the American jazz market in collaboration with producer, guitarist and arranger Paul Ricci.

Her first, the critically acclaimed Brazilian based “**Sensorial - Portraits in Bossa & Jazz**” (2020) featured Art Hirahara, Rogerio Boccato, Essiet Okon Essiet, Will Calhoun, Victor Jones and Harvie S. and earned her Latin Jazz Artist of the Month on WUCF radio.

Her second album, “**Cinema City - Jazz Scenes From Italian Film**”(2021), featuring Dave Liebman and Graham Haynes, was a very personal work released during the pandemic dedicated to jazz readings of the great Italian film composers earning her critical acclaim and prominent features in the Italian jazz magazines “**JazzIt**” and “**Musica Jazz**”.

The continued extensive airplay of “**Sensorial**” and the spiritual connection she developed with the Brazilian culture brings us back full circle on “**NATURAL IMPRESSION**”.

Recorded in NY with a Brazilian trio made up of Helio Alves, Rogerio Boccato, Eduardo Belo with Paul Ricci, Mafalda’s music hosts a brilliant cast of special guests like Don Byron, Joe Locke, Doug Beavers, John Patitucci, Michael Wolff, Kassin and Roberto Menescal.

Mafalda is more than just a captivating voice as there are so many other facets to her, such as composer, producer, RAI radio journalist, fashion designer, TV personality, short film director, master chef, just to scratch the surface, that result in a defining aesthetic on three continents, giving her work it’s own stylistic language. Going beyond the multiple idioms that she sings in, her language is one where she captures the classic essence of the singer/interpreter in the truest sense of the word while expanding the role of scat singer and vocal percussionist .

Her’s is a skillful balance between the virtuosity and eclecticism of jazz and the cosmopolitan sensibility of world music where Italian melodrama, French cabaret and the Brazilian Bossa are united behind the jazz inflected use of her voice in the manner of a skilled instrumentalist for a personal sound full of sublime, radiant soul.

The Beginning

Born in Pavia, just outside of Milan’s exploding cultural center until the age of 9, then raised in the sleepy provincial central Italian hills of Marche where her singing career was launched in regional and then national song contests, her restless spirit set her upon the world via Rome where, soon after her arrival, she was hired at the exclusive jet set cabaret “**La Cabala**” while also singing on camera in the cast of Italy’s number one daily RAI TV morning show “**Uno Mattina**”.

Her time in Rome also set the stage for what was to come as she studied dance, theater and Neapolitan song with the top artists that the city had to offer. As the opening act in Europe for the arena pop star Scialpi and with several invitations from producers, her path seemed to be heading towards a recording career in Italy when fate knocked at her door.

The Exodus

In 1996, coinciding with a TV winter recess, the frequent phone calls from Brazil and her restless sense of adventure led her to accept a standing invitation for a month-long appearance at a Rio de Janeiro jet set club.

A media mogul there opened a private club dedicated to the film “**Cinema Paradiso**” and Italian culture. The word of Mafalda’s success at “**La Cabala**” made it back to Brazil and she became the object of desire for the club “**Paradiso**”. That month-long engagement quickly led to such notoriety and popularity that it was extended and extended.

Mafalda says - “*I identified so with the Brazilian people that I discovered more about myself there in a culture that was reminiscent of an Italy that once was, that called to my roots in a new but familiar land*”.

From there, a record deal with Brazil’s #1 Som Livre label and major TV appearances and shows and tours, projects and collaborations, all earned her the title of musical ambassador from the Italian consulate in Brazil, capping off her still flourishing career there 27 years later.

In those 27 years, Mafalda has extensively toured through Brazil, produced some 25+ albums and has collaborated with some of Brazil’s finest artists such as Milton Nascimento, Leny Andrade, Roberto Menescal, Guinga, Paulo Moura, Martinho da Vila, and so many others.

Another interesting cross-cultural collaboration from Brazil unites Mafalda with the brilliant composer/pianist André Mehmari on the album “**A Napoli: Porto dell’Anima**” (2021), a tribute to the Neapolitan song tradition with a wide open improvisational modern approach.

Collaborations with both young and old, from Rio’s Bossa and Samba to São Paulo’s new wave, all contribute to Mafalda’s artistic evolution and authority to approach a Jobim tune or a Samba, and even a French or Neapolitan song, like no jazz vocalist before her.

The Trip North

Another unexpected twist of fortune happened in her adopted country of Brazil.

A chance encounter through the music community presented her with her guitarist, arranger and producer of some 27 years, New York’s Paul Ricci. He, also an explorer, went beyond his presence on the NY jazz scene to work with Astrud Gilberto, Bebel Gilberto, Dom Um Romao, Bobby Sanabria and Harry Belafonte among others, gave him a unique NY and Latin attitude perspective to interpret the unlimited world music potential of Mafalda’s versatile voice.

Through Ricci, Mafalda explored and developed her love of jazz to come up with something that was already inside her: improvisation, adventure, communication, emotion and the risk taking attitude that was always part of her restless soul.

As she lived so many years performing in Brazil inside its culture and as she frequently was in NY to record and perform with that city’s finest musicians at some of it’s most prestigious jazz clubs like Birdland and Mezzrow and Zinc Bar, the integration of all of these sounds to form her own style was a natural artistic evolution.

Her focus on the partnership with Ricci was first presented in the form of the “**eMPathia Jazz Duo**” with three albums: **eMPathia (2015)**, **Inside (2017)** and **Cool Romantics (2019)**, which set the tone in establishing a fresh arranging style over classics from Brazil, Italy, France and the USA.

The natural progression after these formative duo albums, was to incorporate a full ensemble of master musicians to accentuate their sound and the result is something extraordinary bringing us full circle back to **NATURAL IMPRESSION**.

Putting it All Together

Yet another not aforementioned facet of Mafalda’s life is a degree in computer software engineering in her formative years, setting the stage for her to curate and produce a vast online catalog of stage and studio music videos for all to see, documenting many important moments from her international career with her own personal director’s touch.

Links

<https://mafaldaminnozzi.com>
www.youtube.com/mafaldaminnozzi
www.facebook.com/mafaldaminnozzi
www.instagram.com/mafalda_minnozzi
www.twitter.com/fadamafalda
<https://mafaldaminnozzi.bandcamp.com/>

Impressions

“Minnozzi is boundlessly expressive ... connecting to each lyric viscerally, regardless of language. It’s that same uninhibited energy she brings to the stage, where everything including body language and gesture heightens the emotional impact of her delivery. Minnozzi’s approach to a song is one of a kind.” - **David R. Adler** (noted jazz journalist)

“As a singer, her technique is sublime; she sings not simply with ease, but with faculty, as only very few singers in the world can do” - **Raul Da Gama** (Latin Jazz Network - Canada)

"The vibe on the recording is uplifting and evokes the aesthetic of Joao Gilberto beautifully. He's smiling from the beyond." - **Bobby Sanabria** (8x Grammy nominee and radio host at WBGO - Latin Jazz Cruise)

“Mafalda Minnozzi has the stature of an international artist ... she is a sensitive interpreter supported by an outstanding vocal technique, ... she dominates the stage with her fascinating stage presence and her powerful and flexible voice, rich in a thousand nuances “- **Gerlando Gatto** (A Proposito di Jazz – Italy)

“With her sensitive and deep voice, Mafalda conveys an apparent innocence that is pure sensuality ...she masters "scat" and vocals bringing us back to the best moments of Brazilian music ... the energy of jazz, with Brazilian rhythm and Italian spirit, they give life to a captivating work” - **José Ramon** (La Habitacion Del Jazz – Spain)

“She has a beautiful concept for each song and is a wonderful artist. I am fascinated by her way of improvising and interacting” - **Gene Bertoncini** (American jazz guitar legend - New York)

“Mafalda Minnozzi literally thrills the audience with jazz classics” - **Carlos Calado** (Folha de São Paulo – Brazil)

“Mafalda Minnozzi's voice has a joyful sound ... Her "open" notes are round and full ... she sings the Bossa Nova with energy and sincerity and enchants with her perfect intonation and fluent Portuguese” - **Dee Dee McNeil** (Musicalmemoirs – USA)

“An extraordinary revelation. Mafalda Minnozzi is fantastic!” - **Humphrey Inzillo** (La Nacion – Argentina)

"Mafalda Minnozzi combines Brazilian Bossa and New York City Jazz in a sensual experience of humor, melody and even a little melancholy” - **Travis Rogers Jr.** (The Jazz Owl - USA)