

MAFALDA MINNOZZI

- Knight of the Order of the Star of Italy -

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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 many stops on the way, the musical language that evolved from her journey comes to light on her latest album "RIOFONIC".

After recording over 20 albums in Brazil, Mafalda's latest release is her fourth in a series for the American jazz market in collaboration with producer, guitarist and arranger Paul Ricci. Her first was the critically acclaimed Brazilian based "SENSORIAL - Portraits in Bossa & Jazz" (2020) featuring Art Hirahara, Rogerio Boccato, Essiet Okon Essiet, Will Calhoun, Victor Jones and Harvie S. It is still in rotation on WBGO radio and has earned her Latin Jazz Artist of the Month on WUCF radio.

The second album, "CINEMA CITY - Jazz Scenes From Italian Film" (2021), which can be found in rotation on the Los Angeles KJAZ radio station, featured Dave Liebman, Art Hirahara and Graham Haynes with an all-star band from Sao Paulo. It was an introspective work, released during the pandemic and dedicated to the great Italian film composers, earning her critical acclaim and prominent features in the Italian jazz magazines "JazzIt" and "Musica Jazz".

Her third album for the USA market, "NATURAL IMPRESSION", was recorded in NY with Paul Ricci and a Brazilian trio made up of Helio Alves, Rogerio Boccato, Eduardo Belo. The album also hosts a brilliant cast of special guests like Don Byron, Joe Locke, Doug Beavers, John Patitucci, Michael Wolff, Kassin and Roberto Menescal and also can be found on WBGO radio.

The extensive jazz radio airplay of "SENSORIAL" and "NATURAL IMPRESSION" and the spiritual connection she developed with Brazilian culture, brought Mafalda back to "RIOFONIC". Recorded in Rio where she made her Brazilian debut in 1996, the album counts on the fine company of Roberto Menescal, Jaques Morelenbaum and Kassin among other notables in a unique Bossa jazz setting. The album won the title of **Best Female Vocal Jazz Album** of 2025 according to the prestigious **JazzWeek USA** chart, accumulating nearly 3,000 spins on a circuit that includes leading American jazz radio stations such as WBGO, KUVU, and WUCF.

THE BEGINNING

Born and raised 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, Mafalda's restless spirit set her upon the world by way of Rome.

Her time in Rome prepared her for what was to come as she studied dance with Marco Ierva, theater with the Saverio Marconi company and vocal coaching and Neapolitan song with Gustavo Palumbo, the top artists that the city had to offer. Soon after, she joined Italy's number one RAI TV morning show "Uno Mattina" as lead vocalist, and was featured at

Rome's leading hot spots for intellectuals, artists, and journalists in clubs like La Cabala and Jackie O'.

As the opening act in Europe for the arena pop star Scialpi and with several invitations from producers, her path in Italy seemed to be heading towards a promising recording career when fate knocked at her door.

TRIP TO BRAZIL

Mafalda became so well known that her fame spread to Brazil, and in 1996, she received an invitation to perform a short run in Rio de Janeiro. That short run was extended to a full year and sparked her lifelong love affair with Brazil. Minnozzi went on to build a solid career in Brazil, becoming a well-known force in the recording and artistic community as a performer and composer.

Her subsequent relocation to Brazil changed her life. The ocean breeze of Rio was a healing force that freed her from her debilitating asthma, and Brazilian music had a major impact on her inner musical voice and style. Minnozzi signed a record deal with Brazil's number one label, Som Livre, which led to many honors, such as the title of "Ambassador of Italian Song" from the Italian consulate and an "Honorary Citizen of the State of Rio de Janeiro" award bestowed on her by the state legislature.

To date, Mafalda has extensively toured throughout Brazil, and made a name for herself on stage and on TV, produced some 25+ albums, formed a record label, composed for film and TV and has collaborated with some of Brazil's finest artists such as Milton Nascimento, Leny Andrade, Joao Bosco, Roberto Menescal, Guinga, a duo album with Andre Mehmari, Paulo Moura, Martinho da Vila, and so many others. Collaborations with both young and old, from Rio's Bossa and Samba to Sao 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.

It was also the Rio musical community that presented her with the guitarist, arranger and producer from New York, Paul Ricci. Also an explorer, Ricci 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, giving him a unique NY, African and Latin attitude and perspective to interpret the unlimited world music potential of Mafalda's versatile voice.

TRIP TO NY

With 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 its most prestigious jazz clubs like Birdland, The Django, Mezzrow and Zinc Bar, the integration of all of these sounds to form her own style was a natural artistic evolution.

The partnership with Ricci also led to the "eMPathia Jazz Duo". The vocal and guitar duo released: "eMPathia" (2015), "Inside" (2017) and "Cool Romantics" (2019) to establish a fresh arranging style over classics from Brazil, Italy, France and the USA.

FULL CIRCLE

After these formative duo albums, it was a natural progression to record a full ensemble of first call musicians to accentuate their sound. The resulting albums are something extraordinary and they bring us to "RIOFONIC". 87 year old legendary composer/guitarist Roberto Menescal and Kassin, possibly Brazil's most famous producer of electronic and popular music, both accepted Mafalda's invitation to step out of their comfort zones and join forces with the language that Mafalda and Ricci have sculpted out of their duo project.

BEYOND BORDERS

These cross-cultural experiences have placed Mafalda on stages in leading Italian Jazz Festivals, New York clubs, the MET museum, Brazilian tours with an agenda that includes Germany, Portugal, Bahrain, Peru, Paraguay, Denver and Los Angeles, and the list goes on.

More than just a captivating voice, there are so many other facets to Mafalda, such as composer, producer, RAI radio journalist, fashion designer, TV personality, short film director, master chef, just to scratch the surface. The result of all this goes beyond the music to define an aesthetic that integrates three continents, giving her work its own stylistic language.

Mafalda continues her touring career in Brazil and her work as cultural ambassador of Italian music in Brazil and vice-versa. In 2024, in commemoration of the 150 years of the first Italian immigrants in Brazil, she was honored by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Italian Embassy in Brazil, as a representative of the cultural connection between the two countries, in a series of emotional concerts presented aboard a modern ocean liner that ceremonially retraced the path of those first wooden ships.

In February 2026, Mafalda was decorated with the title of **Knight of the Order of the Star of Italy** by the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella – the highest Italian civil honor, awarded to Italians abroad who have promoted friendly relations, cooperation, and cultural ties between Italy and other countries.

Recently, three songs co-written by Mafalda with Paul Ricci were included in the soundtrack of the film **Loucos Amores Líquidos**, an Italian-Brazilian production dedicated to the theme of returning to one's roots, shot in Italy and Brazil, with a release scheduled for the second half of 2026 in Brazil.

Going beyond the multiple idioms that she sings in, Mafalda's style 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.

Hers 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.

Mafalda has also curated and produced a vast online catalog of stage and studio music videos for all to see, documenting many important moments from her international career.

Links

www.mafaladminnozzi.com/
www.youtube.com/mafaladminnozzi/
www.facebook.com/mafaladminnozzi/
www.instagram.com/mafaladminnozzisinger/
<https://mafaladminnozzi.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 Adler (noted jazz journalist)

"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, also good in scat ... she is able to express herself in both perfect Portuguese and perfect English ... she dominates the stage with her fascinating stage presence and her powerful and flexible voice, rich in a thousand nuances" – Gerlando Gatto (About Jazz - Italy)

"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)

"Thanks to her experiences with jazz music in Brazil and Italy, both countries influence her way of singing ... every interpretation is deep and sensitive. This is jazz to fall in love with, the free flight of a bird in a big sky" – Debbie Burke (Jazz Author - USA)

"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 Sao 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)