

Assad Family, *A Brazilian Songbook*

Sunday, April 18, 2004, 2:30 pm
Memorial Auditorium

Post-performance Discussion:

Please join the artists for a brief discussion about their program following the performance.

ARTISTS

Sérgio and Odair Assad, *guitar*

Jorge Assad, *mandolin*

Ica Assad, *vocals*

Badi Assad, *guitar, bass guitar, percussion, and vocals*

Rodrigo Assad, *guitar and vocals*

Clarice Assad, *piano, bass guitar, and vocals*

Carolina Assad, *vocals*

PROGRAM

Egberto Gismonti: *Baião Malandro* (Sérgio and Odair)

Jacob do Bandolim: *Noites Cariocas* (Sérgio and Odair)

Paulo Bellinati: *Baião de Gude* (Sérgio, Odair, and Badi)

Vital Farias: *Ai que saudade d'ocê* (Badi)

B. Assad/J. Young: *The being between* (Badi)

Caetano Veloso: *Jóia* (Badi, Clarice, and Carolina)

Gilberto Gil: *Oriente* (Carolina, and Clarice)

Cristóvão Bastos: *Todo Sentimento* (Carolina and Odair)

Clarice Assad: *Ondas* (Clarice)

Clarice Assad: *Ad Lib* (Sérgio, Odair, and Clarice)

Edu Lobo: *Casa Forte* (Sérgio, Odair, Badi, Clarice, and Carolina)

(INTERMISSION)

Rodrigo Assad: *Apice* (Badi, Rodrigo, and Clarice)

Lenine/Falcao: *O Silêncio das estrelas* (Sérgio, Badi, Clarice, and Rodrigo)

S. Assad/B. Assad: *Seu Jorge e Dona Ica* (Sérgio, Odair, and Badi)

Cartola: *As rosas não falam* (Jorge, Ica, Sérgio, and Odair)

Jacob do Bandolim: *Doce de coco* (Jorge, Sérgio, Odair, and Badi)

Tito Madi: *Chove lá fora* (Ica, Sérgio, Odair, and Badi)

Sinhô: *Gosto que me enrosca/Jura* (Jorge, Ica, Sérgio, Odair, and Badi)

Pixinguinha: *Rosa* (Entire Family)

Various: Medley of Sambas (Entire Family)

ASSAD FAMILY

Sérgio and Odair Assad

The Brazilian-born brothers Sérgio and Odair Assad are today's preeminent guitar duo. Their exceptional artistry and uncanny ensemble playing are the result of the unique closeness of their musical upbringing. In addition to setting new performance standards, the Assads have also played a major role in reviving contemporary music for guitar duo. Their virtuosity has inspired a wide range of composers to write works for them, including Astor Piazzolla, Terry Riley, Radamés Gnatalli, Marlos Nobre, Nikita Koshin, Roland Dyens, Dusan Bogdanovic, Jorge Morel, Edino Kreiger, and Francisco Mignone. They also have been sought after as collaborators by such artists as Gidon Kremer, Yo-Yo Ma, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and Dawn Upshaw.

The Assads began playing the guitar together at an early age and went on to study for seven years with classical guitarist and lutenist Monina Távora, a disciple of Andrés Segovia. Their international career began with a major prize at the 1979 young artists competition in Bratislava. Now based in Brussels and Chicago (where Sérgio teaches at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts), they continue to perform regularly in Europe and Japan, as well as in Brazil.

Their repertoire, in addition to the pieces composed for them, includes original music by Sérgio Assad; transcriptions of the great Baroque keyboard literature of Bach, Couperin, Rameau, and Scarlatti; and adaptations of works by such diverse figures as Gershwin, Ginastera, and Milhaud. Their programs are always a compelling blend of styles, periods, and cultures.

The Assads have recorded widely, primarily for the Nonesuch and GHA labels. In 2001, Nonesuch released *Sérgio and Odair Assad Play Piazzolla*, which was awarded a Latin Grammy. Other recent duo CDs include an album of Baroque works and *Saga dos Migrantes* for Nonesuch. They have recorded Piazzolla discs with Gidon Kremer (Nonesuch) and Yo-Yo Ma (Sony Classical), the latter a Grammy winner in 1998. Sérgio and Odair Assad play Thomas Humphrey guitars.

Badi Assad

Badi Assad was born in São João da Boa Vista, a small town in São Paulo, Brazil. When she was 14, she started playing guitar with guidance from her father and brothers. With only one year of studies, she won the Concurso Internacional de violao Villa-Lobos. The following year, she was chosen to represent Brazil in the Concurso Vina del Mar, in Chile. One year later, she was invited by the Belgium guitar player Francoise-Emmanuelle Denis to perform as the duo Le Due Romantique, touring for the first time abroad.

In 1989, Badi recorded her debut album, *Danca dos Tons*, and began incorporating her voice into her music. As a result, she was chosen from among 200 women to interpret the lead vocal for the musical *Mulheres de Hollanda*, featuring songs written by the Brazilian composer Chico Buarque. At this time, she started to research mouth percussion (Bobby McFerrin, Pigmus People, and so on) and slowly began to incorporate it into her music.

In 1993, Badi signed a contract with the American label Chesky Records, subsequently releasing *Solo* (1994), *Rhythm* (1995), and *Echoes of Brasil* (1997). In 1994, she was named one of the 100 best artists by *Guitar Player* magazine. In 1995, she was voted the best fingerstyle guitar player, and her CD *Rhythm* the best classical CD, again by *Guitar Player* magazine. In 1998, she released *Chameleon* (e.i.music/Polygram), which was acclaimed by the critics and the public worldwide. In its anniversary edition, *Acoustic Guitar* named Badi one of the 30 most expressive artists of the decade.

Badi has performed to rave reviews throughout the United States, Europe, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, South America, and Canada. She has appeared at some of the most important musical festivals, including the Umbria Jazz Festival in Italy; the North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland; and the JVC Festival, Lilith Fair, and Farm Aid in the United States. Badi is about to tour to promote her most recent recording, *Nowhere*, with her musical partner and coproducer, the American guitar player Jeff Young.

Clarice Assad

Born in 1978, Clarice Assad is a pianist, vocalist, and composer who has been performing and composing music since the age of seven. She has led an active performance career in Brazil and Chicago, performing both original compositions and her own arrangements of Brazilian songs and jazz standards. Her work is lauded for its fluid blending of classical music and chamber jazz, subtly infused with her native rhythms.

Clarice's compositions often are inspired by a theme, a story, or an object. She purposely tries to illustrate the physical and psychological elements of that theme in her music. Her works have been commissioned by Carlus Mathus for the play *A Licão de Anatomia*, by Lou Fancher for the ballet *Steps to Grace*, by Sérgio Assad and Gabriele Mirabassi for the piece *Flutuante* for guitar and clarinet, and by Byron Fogo for *Valsas do Rio* for two guitars.

Clarice holds a bachelor's degree in composition from the CCPA School of Music in Chicago and a master's degree in composition from the University of Michigan. Honors include the Ostrowsky Award by the Liberal Arts Department at Roosevelt University for her composition *Dark Pages*, and the National Dean's List Award, the most prestigious publication in the country recognizing gifted students.

Jorge Assad

Jorge Assad was born in 1924 in São João da Boa Vista, a small village in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. His interest in music began at age 17 when he won a *cavaquinho* (a small guitar with four strings) at a raffle. He quickly taught himself how to play the instrument and joined other musicians to play the traditional music from Rio de Janeiro, called *choros* or *chorinhos*.

Through most of his life, Jorge Assad worked as a watchmaker but music has remained his great passion. In the 1950s, he worked part-time as a mandolin player for a radio station ensemble in the small town of Mococa, where his children Sérgio and Odair were born. Jorge encouraged the boys to study music while they were still quite young and after a couple of years of guitar playing they were ready for further studies.

Jorge Assad moved the whole family to Rio de Janeiro so that the two brothers could advance their guitar studies under the guidance of Monina Távora, a former student of Andrés Segovia. After the Assad brothers started their career, Jorge Assad moved back with his wife, older son, and daughter to São João da Boa Vista. There, he helped start the career of Badi Assad, his daughter. Jorge continued to work as a watchmaker and as a guitar teacher for young guitar players. He retired in 1993 but still teaches talented youth the guitar in the traditional style called *choro*.

The present tour reunites the whole family and marks the first appearance of Jorge Assad in front of an American audience.

Angelina "Ica" Assad

Angelina "Ica" Assad was born in 1930 in Andradas, a small village in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. From early childhood, she demonstrated great skills as a singer in church and school choirs. Her dream was to play the piano, but her family could not afford one. Instead, she cut out magazine drawings of the piano keyboard and pretended she was playing it.

In 1947, Ica married Jorge Assad and had four children: Jorge, Sérgio, Odair, and Badi. She has always been a great enthusiast of her children's careers and played a significant role in their musicianship. Hers was the first voice they heard singing as she did her house chores. She joined her husband in a *choro* ensemble as a singer for a weekly radio show during the 1950s.

Ica has maintained the Assads' home as a place for musical gatherings where amateur musicians join the family for the pleasure of playing music together. She has an exceptional voice that maintains a youthful quality. Her singing style reflects the golden age of Brazilian female singers from the 1950s and 1960s such as Angela Maria, Dalva de Oliveira, and Dolores Duran.

Carolina “Loli”Assad

Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1979, Carolina “Loli” Assad is the eldest daughter of Odair Assad. Although she showed great musical skills from childhood, she decided to study physiotherapy at the Centro Universitario Moacyr Bastos in Rio de Janeiro, where she graduated in 2002.

During her university years, Carolina joined the school’s symphonic choir, where her beautiful and natural voice found a renaissance. As a member of the choir she appeared in prominent concert halls in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In 2000, she joined the chamber choir Madrigal Moacyr Bastos and has frequently appeared as their soloist. In the past couple of years, she has returned to music by furthering her studies of the keyboard, harmony, and percussion. Carolina is a natural singer with a very colorful and expressive voice, which is well suited to Brazilian music.

Rodrigo Assad

The 21-year-old Rodrigo Assad is the only son among Sérgio Assad’s three children. Although Rodrigo shares his family’s passion for music, his main interest has been filmmaking, and he is currently studying cinematography at Columbia College in Chicago.

As a young child, Rodrigo sang in a children’s choir that was professionally recorded by EMI and Som Livre in Brazil. Growing up in a musical family, Rodrigo taught himself how to play the guitar and at age 17 started writing his own songs. His music is inspired by the most recent Brazilian artists who have created a new approach to MPB (Brazilian popular music).

In the past couple of years, Rodrigo founded his own band in Brazil called Soul Brazuca and has been experimenting with his own compositions. Soul Brazuca is planning to release its first recording in 2004.