



Bossacucanova

Uma Batida Diferente

Brazilian music is like a diamond – complex, brilliant, and multifaceted. And there's no surprise there; Brazilian culture is so wildly diverse, so open to foreign influences and so famously devoted to letting the good times roll that there's no way Brazil's music could be anything but a kaleidoscopic riot of flavors and colors. That's how you end up with such popular and influential exports as samba, lambada and bossa nova, musical styles that are constantly mutating and developing, absorbing new elements from around the world along the way.

That brings us to **Bossacucanova**, the Rio-based trio whose new album is a perfect illustration of the way Brazilian musicians will happily grab and incorporate influences from around the world – and of the way they can turn those elements into music that is both freshly modern and deeply, traditionally Brazilian – not to mention arm-wavingly, butt-swingingly, irresistibly danceable.

DJ **Marcelinho DaLua**, bassist **Márcio Menescal** and keyboardist **Alexandre Moreira** burst onto the international dance music scene in 1999 with *Revisited Classics*, a collection of both new and old bossa nova songs given new life and vigor through the application of funky breakbeats, skillful turntablism, electronic manipulation and adventurous mixology. The idea of fusing the smooth sounds of classic bossa nova recordings with up-to-the-minute electronic elements wasn't exactly brand new – No Wave legend **Arto Lindsay** had been combining Brazilian music with modern influences for years, and European DJs had already figured out that bossa nova's laid-back, free-flowing rhythm could add a crowd-pleasing spice to their own material. But Bossacucanova's approach to Euro-Brazilian fusion was unusually respectful of their home country's traditions, putting the bossa first and the electronica second, and the international music press took notice quickly.

The trio's sophomore effort was, if anything, even better. *Brasilidade* found them working with the legendary guitarist **Roberto Menescal**, composer of several classic bossas and a hugely influential producer and A&R man during the 1970s. (He's also Márcio's father.) On *Brasilidade* the band took a more organic approach to modern bossa nova, spending less time coming up with electronic adaptations of classic material and focusing more on writing new songs that could be played in a live setting. You could hear more of the band's debt to the traditional verities of Brazilian dance music, but there was still no question that they were coming up with new and better ways to get people up and out of their chairs.

Now comes *Uma Batida Diferente* ("A Different Beat"), Bossacucanova's third album for **Ziriguiboom/Six Degrees Records** and their most satisfying and fully-integrated effort yet. Five years after the group's debut, the practice of combining the smooth sounds of classic bossa nova with modern electronic beats is more popular than ever. But Bossacucanova's sound remains unique, partly because the trio's approach continues to treat bossa nova as the main dish and the breakbeats, electronica and other embellishments as garnishes, rather than the other way around.

Uma Batida Diferente was recorded in the band's home base of Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro in early 2004. The band continued its well-established pattern by inviting legendary figures of Brazilian music both old and new to participate in the project: Roberto Menescal, who has essentially become a fourth member of the band, is back again, lending his delicious, jazz-inflected guitar lines and laid-back scat singing to the mix on party-ready gems like "Bom da Rio (Posto 6)" and the classic **Baden Powell/Lula Freire** composition "Feitinha Pro Poeta." Singer **Marcos Valle**, a living legend in Brazil who is,