

## Richard Boukas

## Composer Bio

Internationally acclaimed composer, guitarist, vocalist, educator and author, he has been at the forefront of New York City's contemporary music scene for over four decades. Recognized as a top expert, creative exponent and ambassador for **Brazilian music**, his dynamic compositions for numerous ensembles and soloists synergize authentic Brazilian genres with contemporary classical and jazz vocabularies— creating wholly new forms which transcend stylistic classification. His experience as a virtuoso performer and improviser further informs his keen creative insights and compositional process.

- Professor *Pedro Araújo* (Villa-Lobos Institute/Rio de Janeiro): “He composes as someone who has Brazil in his blood, with great naturalness and expertise.”
- Professor *João Luiz* (Brasil Guitar Duo, Hunter College): “His present and future works will be a perennial contribution to contemporary clarinet-guitar literature and pedagogy.”
- *Alessandro Carbonare* (Grammy-winning Italian clarinetist): “His extensive knowledge of various Brazilian musical styles and great gift for composing offers a broader repertoire of tremendous value.”

Boukas has fulfilled commissions and composed for *Sopros de PE* (Clarinet Quartet, Pernambuco, Brazil), *La Catrina String Quartet*, *PUBLIQuartet String Quartet*, *Berklee World String Ensemble*, *Atlantic Brass Quintet*, *Lamont Saxophone Quartet*, *Modern Mandolin Quartet*, *Morningside Chamber Ensemble*, *Panamericana Big Band*, *Cerddorion Vocal Ensemble* and *Queens College Vocal Ensemble*.

Since 2016, his central compositional focus is **Diálogos Duo** featuring French-born clarinetist/bass clarinetist **Louis Arques** and himself on guitar. To date, he has composed *seven suites totaling sixty-seven (67) movements*— the largest body of contemporary Brazilian music for clarinet and guitar worldwide. The Duo has released **two CDs**: *Choro Tributes* (2020) and *Homages to Brazilian Masters* (2018). Recent keynote performances include *International Clarinet Association ClarinetFest*, *New York City Classical Guitar Salon Series*, *Sacred Heart University Guitar Festival* and *Performance Today* (American Public Radio).

A winner of composition awards including *the New York Foundation on the Arts Composition Fellowship* and *ASCAP Popular Composer Award*, he currently leads, composes and performs with Brazilian Jazz ensembles *Quarteto Moderno*, *Trio Brasileiro* and *Duo Brasileiro*. Previous acclaimed duo collaborations include Brazilian pianist *Jovino Santos Neto* and Croatian tambura virtuoso *Filip Novosel*.

In addition to chamber works written exclusively for strings, brass, woodwinds, guitars and mandolins, he has composed for guitar in duo with piano, violoncello, Croatian tambura; trios of guitar, marimba, violoncello and over forty (40) works for ensemble *Quarteto Moderno*. He has also composed an extensive body of solo guitar music including the seven movement *Guinga Suite* (2012). A prolific choral composer-arranger, he has transformed contemporary Brazilian repertoire (MPB) into through-composed polyphonic forms. He also created twenty choral polyphonic works based on *Beatles* compositions known as *The Beatles Motets*.

Richard holds an MA in Composition from *Queens College/Aaron Copland School of Music*, for which he presented a landmark thesis on the music of master Brazilian composer *Hermeto Pascoal*. His numerous recordings as leader and co-leader include two for *Diálogos Duo* (above), *Quarteto Moderno Live! Ao Vivo!*, *Balaio* (with Jovino Santos Neto), *Live at St. Michael's* (with Filip Novosel), *Amazônia*, *Embarcadero*, *Commitment* and *Tudo de Bom* (featuring Hermeto Pascoal's historic collection, *Calendário do Som*). He was also named “Best Brazilian Jazz Guitarist in the U.S.” by *GuitarOne Magazine* and “Citizen of Brazilian Music in the U.S.” by *Brazilian Music Foundation*.

Boukas has been a central faculty member at New York City's *New School University College of the Performing Arts* since 1989, where he founded and directed the *Brazilian Jazz* and *Brazilian Choro* ensembles. In 2010, he received the prestigious *New School University Distinguished Teaching Award*. He is also faculty at *New York Jazz Workshop* and former faculty at *Mannes College (NYC)* and *William Paterson University* (New Jersey). An itinerant guest artist at universities in North America (*Harvard, Univ. Louisville, Cornell, Denver Univ., Cincinnati Conservatory, Univ. Toronto, New York Guitar Seminar* and in Brazil (*Campos do Jordão, São Paulo, Univ. of Minas Gerais*), he is also four-time recipient of the *NEA Grant in Jazz Performance*.

He is a member of *Chamber Music America*, *ASCAP*, and *Diatessaron Music* is his publishing company.

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