

Oct 31, 2025 6:00 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall

DIÁLOGOS DUO

Louis Arques, *clarinet*

Richard Boukas, *guitar*

Samba Legends

Richard Boukas
(b. 1953)

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| 1. A Vida Boêmia | dedicated to Noel Rosa |
| 2. Vai, Morena | ded. Dorival Caymmi |
| 11. Ecos do Morro (samba partido alto) | ded. Paulinho da Viola |
| 7. Graças a Deus! | ded. Johnny Alf |
| 5. Desolação (samba-canção) | ded. Ary Barroso / Leny Andrade |
| 6. Iluminado | ded. A.C. Jobim |
| 8. Vencedor | ded. Toninho Horta |
| 17. Amor Escondido (samba-canção) | ded. Jamelão / Lupicínio Rodrigues |
| 10. Candongueiro (jongo) | ded. Wilson Moreira/
Jongo da Serrinha |
| 15. Madrinha do Samba (pagode) | ded. Beth Carvalho |
| 20. Estação Primeira (samba-enredo) | ded. Escola de Samba de
Mangueira |

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.
Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

Ten years ago, I packed my clarinets and hopped across the Atlantic Pond to attend graduate school in New York. Upon arrival, I stumbled upon an unexpected audition in the conservatory I had already been accepted to. I was told it served orchestra and chamber music placement purposes for incoming students and so I quickly prepared, but it turned out to mean so much more than that!

Judith Mendenhall, flute faculty and chair of the woodwind department at Mannes was on the panel. After she heard me play a concerto movement and a few orchestral excerpts, she put me in touch with Richard Boukas, her colleague at New School Jazz, guitarist, composer, and as I would soon discover, a Brazilian music expert.

Richard was looking for an alto saxophonist to join his Brazilian Jazz ensemble but I didn't play sax well enough at the time, let alone jazz, to consider joining. He was however curious about my clarinet playing and offered to meet around a clarinet and guitar duo piece he had recently written for his friend Lucas Pino. Our first reading session and interaction went so well that we gathered again the following week, this time to read a brand-new piece he had just composed for us and share a delicious lunch he had prepared... and this became our ritual.

10 years later, Richard has written 115 pieces for us collected in 11 suites! He has taken me on a musical journey I would have never suspected to travel, playing all sorts of Brazilian music genres, spanning 150 years of tradition from Choro to Bossa Nova. We have played some covers but mostly we've focused on performing his original compositions – always honoring great Brazilian musicians, capturing the essence of their traditional or popular language, and incorporating Richard's own jazz harmonies and classical counterpoint.

Over the years, his writing for clarinet has evolved. It has become at the same time more idiomatic and more daring, lying more naturally under the fingers and exploring the full range of capabilities (including the highest altissimo range and extended techniques), easier to approach and more technically stimulating. As a result, his compositions for the duo have matured to be most compelling, some mellifluous and soulful, others highly rhythmic and exciting. His pieces are truly renaissance concert works – worthy of classical, jazz, and contemporary venues alike.

Have I become a Brazilian music expert? Certainly not. But I have definitely become acquainted with its many styles and accents, from different genres, eras, and regions. In a way, I am happy to have maintained a genuine approach to Brazilian music and at the same time I feel – perhaps even more so now that I am studying ethnomusicology in the CUNY doctorate program – eager to keep studying this music and its origins in depth.

One thing is for sure, Richard is the most knowledgeable scholar I know on the subject. He has integrated and continues to integrate all the cultures that compose the rich identity of Brazil – with indigenous traditions, Portuguese colonial and West African slavery heritages, and more recent world influences. Richard has written a number of essays and given talks on Brazilian music across the world and mostly, he has produced a whole body of forward-thinking contemporary Brazilian music for his many professional ensembles (Quarteto Moderno, Boukas-Santos Neto Duo among others) and educational ensembles at New School Jazz.

Our duo collaboration as *Diálogos Duo* (Portuguese for “dialogues”) has been much more than a musical exchange. It has created for us a true friendship, bridging our cultural, age, and expertise differences. Our music, Richard's music, has been our connecting language and an interactive medium to reach out to audiences in the Tri-State Area and beyond. It is my great pleasure to share some of it with you tonight by giving you a taste of the Samba Legends Suite Richard wrote in 2021 and we had not fully premiered until last weekend. Please, sit back and relax, close your eyes and travel with us to Brazil, enjoy the concert, and come meet us afterwards!

Louis Arques

About the Program

Samba Legends (Sambistas Imortais) (2021)

Composer notes by Richard Boukas

A sambista is an artist whose compositional vocabulary and social milieu lie within the more traditional “de raiz” (from the roots) samba styles and informal performance settings – to be distinguished from Brazilian artists whose work in recordings involve more elaborate production.

Composed between March and September 2021, this eighth Diálogos Duo suite in 20 movements presents tributes to twenty-five samba artists spanning a century of samba’s rich evolution. As is the case with all Diálogos suites, my pre-compositional process for Samba Legends involved extensive musical and socio-cultural research on all the artist honorees. This foundational work facilitated the channeling of each tribute artist’s core stylistic traits through my own compositional lens.

The order initially planned for two concerts was Movements 1-10 and 11-20 respectively. Since this recital is a single performance, the Duo decided to intermix movements from each half – thus presenting complete stylistic trajectories of composer styles even in a unique performance. We hope you enjoy this alternative programming, and thank you for sharing this important concert with us.

1. *A Vida Boêmia (the bohemian life)*, dedicated to Noel Rosa (1910-37)

Born in Rio de Janeiro, Rosa was a prolific composer, singer and guitarist who penned and recorded over two hundred sambas within a ten-year period of activity. The first artist who brought the traditional samba do morro to the mainstream urban middle class via the new era of radio, his recordings demonstrate both a musical and lyrical sophistication. *A Vida Boêmia* is written in the common AABA form of the period, with the addition of guitar and clarinet solos (A-A) before the final BA and coda. The guitar solo uses clarinet counterpoint as accompaniment, a device used in several movements.

2. *Vai, Morena (go, Morena)*, dedicated to Dorival Caymmi (1914-2008)

Born in Salvador, Bahia, Caymmi enjoyed a multi-generational career, collaborating with Carmen Miranda among other artists. His songs frequently evoke images of placid life by the sea in Bahia (ex. *Suíte do Pescador*). His melodies are effortless and accessible with their speech-rhythm quality. His three children (Dori, Nana and Danilo) have enjoyed their own vibrant careers, reflecting their father’s unique aesthetic. *Vai, Morena* is an AABA form which repeats for solos in both guitar and clarinet, and a complete repetition of the form with coda.

11. *Ecos do Morro (Echoes from the Favela)*, dedicated to Paulinho da Viola (1942-)

Paulinho da Viola is a mainstay samba artist with a very smooth style. A fine vocalist, guitarist and cavaquinho player, he is the son of César Faria, guitarist with the illustrious Choro ensemble Época de Ouro with Jacob do Bandolim. *Ecos do Morro* is a samba partido alto, whose rhythmic foundation is more syncopated (funky) than most other forms of samba. This is expressed both in the bassline and chords of the guitar accompaniment. After the AAB theme, a solo section based on A section harmonies includes a guitar solo supported by *gança* (shaker) and clarinet solo. An intensified BA clarinet statement and coda complete the piece.

7. ***Graças a Deus! (Thank God!)***, dedicated to Johnny Alf (1929-2010)

Johnny Alf was a pioneer in two major respects. He was the first popular singer-songwriter (pianist) to infuse his music with rich jazz harmonies and progressions. This and his cooler style of samba was vital to Bossa Nova's emergence in the mid-1950's. *Graças a Deus!* Begins with a 32-bar form (AA' 16+16) in D major. The highly modulatory B section follows, returning to A and finally a derived repeat of A in the key of B major. The title appears in Alf's lyric for his iconic jazz samba *Rapaz de Bem*.

5. ***Desolação (Desolation)***, dedicated to Ary Barroso (1903-64)

Barroso was a cultural treasure, famous both as a composer and sports announcer. His samba *Aquarela do Brasil* (known commonly as "Brazil") is the most famous Brazilian song from the first half of the 20th century. Aside from his more upbeat sambas, he embraced the darker side of life with poignant *samba-canções* (samba ballads) such as *Inquietação*, upon which *Desolação* is based in both form and mood. The AABA melody is followed by one A section of guitar solo, a decorated clarinet B section and final A section which peaks in intensity. The *toada* arpeggiated guitar pattern in the A section is reminiscent of Lula Galvão's accompaniment with vocalist Rosa Passos featuring Barroso's music. This tribute is also to the great Brazilian jazz singer, Leny Andrade (1943-2023), whose deep, smoky voice and profound interpretation of ballad lyrics was an equal inspiration for this piece.

6. ***Iluminado (Enlightened)***, dedicated to Antonio Carlos Jobim (1927-94)

Jobim is without a doubt the most famous latter-half 20th century Brazilian popular music (MPB) composer celebrated worldwide. A primary force in the Bossa Nova movement, his songs and collaborations with artists such as Elis Regina are timeless. *Iluminado* was originally commissioned by guitarist Joe Carter to be premiered at the first-time Jobim Festival at Sacred Heart University (CT). After the premiere was canceled due to the pandemic, Boukas decided to include the piece in the Sambistas suite.

Framed by an eight-bar intro-outro, this relaxed 32-bar samba in A major with a form typical of the American Songbook (two halves) navigates some surprise modulations (including Eb major-the tritone) - while the melody remains sustained and lyrical. Guitar and clarinet split the form for solos before the final thematic statement.

8. ***Vencedor (The Winner)***, dedicated to Toninho Horta (1948-)

Toninho is one of the most influential Brazilian artists (guitarist-vocalist) from the state of Minas Gerais of his generation, alongside Milton Nascimento and Sérgio Santos. An intuitive creative genius, among the numerous American jazz artists deeply influenced by Horta's music are Pat Metheny and Kenny Barron. A longtime colleague of Boukas, Toninho is honored in two other Diálogos Duo suites, including the landmark *Impressions of Minas*. One of the faster sambas in the Sambistas suite, *Vencedor* is in celebration of Horta's recent Latin Grammy Award. Composed in AABBA form, primary traits of Horta's writing are on full display: the economic use of brief melodic-rhythmic motives to build longer phrases, jazzy harmonies and a highly syncopated guitar accompaniment that is undeniably *mineiro*.

17. ***Amor Escondido (Hidden Love)***, dedicated to Jamelão (1913-2008)

Jamelão was a giant among *samba-enredo* artists for the legendary samba school Estação Primeira de Mangueira. In 1972, he recorded the passionate *samba-canções* (ballads) of Lupicínio Rodrigues, a relatively obscure vocalist-composer from Rio Grande do Sul (south Brazil). The recording featured full brass and woodwinds much in the style of Cuban legend Beny Moré. Amor

Escondido is in a typical AABA form, one A section guitar solo leading to a more embellished and intense clarinet BA statement and coda.

10. ***Candongueiro (Jongo Drum)***, dedicated to Wilson Moreira (1936-2018)

This tribute is to honor the brilliant work of sambista Moreira and Jongo da Serrinha, one of Rio's most important communities that practice and perform *jongo* - a spiritual practice with African Bantu roots. Despite its 6/8 meter and triplet-oriented rhythms that mirror Cuban Santeria, jongo is widely recognized as a key antecedent of samba. *Candongueiro* is one of the three principal tambores (drums resembling conga drums) used in jongo and the highest-pitched. The brief melodies are in AABB form, while the drums serve as the foundation for group singing and dancing of an individualized and improvisatory character. This tribute uses a folkloric diatonic major melody, stated with different forms of accompaniment and reharmonizations. Two-handed guitar percussion on the top of the instrument is used as well as pitched accompaniment textures that consolidate the three main drums used in jongo. The guitar uses low C-G tuning.

15. ***Madrinha do Samba (Godmother of Samba)***, dedicated to Beth Carvalho (1958-2019)

Carvalho was truly the godmother of *pagode*. Her rich, agile voice is showcased on dozens of hits, including *Vou Festejar*, which became a favorite song for soccer fans to sing at games. *Madrinha do Samba* is a fast pagode in ABAB form with G major and E major as the main tonal centers. Both clarinet melody and guitar accompaniment are highly syncopated against the larger samba pulse, enhanced by the guitar's *baixarias* (basslines). The piece offers a choice of a short or more sustained ending.

20. ***Estação Primeira*** is dedicated to samba school Estação Primeira de Mangueira co-founded by Cartola and Carlos Cachaca in 1928. Vibrant and still evolving after nearly a century, *Estação Primeira* continues to win Rio's samba school Carnaval competitions.

About the Artist

DIÁLOGOS DUO was founded in the fall of 2016, now celebrating their 10th season. “*Diálogos*” means “*Dialogues*” in Portuguese. Their music melds robust syncopated Brazilian rhythms with contemporary Brazilian, Jazz and classical vocabularies. Each piece is a tribute to a Brazilian music legend.

Composer-guitarist **Richard Boukas**'s prolific output is **11 suites, 115 movements** – the largest body of contemporary Brazilian repertoire for clarinet and guitar worldwide.

SAMBA LEGENDS is the 9th suite for the Duo: 20 movements honoring 25 Samba Masters.

Clarinetist **Louis Arques** effortlessly negotiates Brazilian music's complex melodies and rhythms, while Boukas's guitar generates textures which sound like a full rhythm section. Their repertoire covers a panorama of traditional Brazilian genres including *samba*, *choro*, *bossa nova*, *baião*, *frevô*, *forró*, *maracatu*, *maxixe*, *guarânia* and *valsa*.

Performances include NYC Classical Guitar Society, Queens College, Sacred Heart University (CT), ICA ClarinetFest, Bayside Historical Society Passport Series and broadcasts on *Performance Today* (American Public Radio) and *WKCR* (Columbia University). The Duo conducts university artist residencies worldwide.

Louis Arques is a woodwind virtuoso from Grenoble, France. A Vandoren artist, he taught in French music schools for ten years including the Paris Conservatoire before moving to New York City in 2016. He is an itinerant soloist (Empire State Symphony, Cornell Wind Symphony), chamber (Bridget Kibbey trio), and orchestra principal (Heartbeat Opera, Radio City Rockettes Orchestra). He commissions and champions new music, plays early music on replicas of eighteenth-century instruments, performs jazz works (Wynton Marsalis' *Blues*), Afro-Cuban music (*Sonido Costeño*), and Brazilian music.

As artistic director of Avalanche Orchestra, he produced and conducted a NYC centennial performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* using its original authentic instrumentation, in the original Aeolian building, on February 12, 2024.

Earning his master's degree and Artist Diploma from Mannes/New School College of Performing Arts, he is faculty at the Diller-Quaile School of Music and was guest clarinet faculty at Ithaca College School of Music, Theatre and Dance. Louis is currently pursuing his Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) at City University of New York (CUNY).

Richard Boukas is an internationally recognized guitarist, vocalist, composer, educator and scholar of Brazilian music. In addition to *Diálogos Duo*, he is leader of Brazilian jazz groups *Quarteto Moderno*, *Trio Brasileiro*, *Duo Brasileiro* and performs frequently as a soloist. Apart from *Diálogos Duo* works, his commissions include *PUBLIQuartet*, *Berklee World String Orchestra*, *Sopros de Pernambuco* (clarinet quartet, Brazil) and *Zagreb Tambura Quartet* (Croatia).

Recordings include *Quarteto Moderno Live! Ao Vivo!*, *Balaio* (with Jovino Santos Neto), *Live at St. Michaels* (with Filip Novosel, Croatia), *Amazôna*, *Embarcadero* and *Commitment*. Faculty at New School for Performing Arts/School of Jazz since 1989, he is a recipient of the Distinguished University Teaching Award. His guest university residencies include: New York Guitar Seminar at Mannes, Harvard University, Denver University, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Hudson Jazz Workshop; in Brazil: Campos do Jordão (São Paulo), IFPE/Recife, UFMG/Belo Horizonte and UniRio/Savassi Creative Music Congress; in Canada: York College, University of Toronto. He is a La Bella Strings artist endorsee.

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