

MICHEL NIRENBERG



"In terms of style, substance, and execution, Nirenberg ranks high. This is some brilliant Brazilian jazz." – Dan Bilawsky, *All About Jazz*

"Here is a player who uses virtuosity not for self-aggrandizement but to glorify the music...And there is not a dull moment on this album from the guitars to the bass and, of course, the drums and percussion." – Raul da Gama, *Latin Jazz Network*

"Michel Nirenberg set out on this debut recording to build bridges between Brazilian contemporary music and American jazz. The bridge he's built will stand the test of time and bear repeated crossing. Exquisite execution and virtuoso performances underpin a well-curated selection of music." – Ken Avis, *Baltimore Jazz Alliance*



Influenced by the classical and popular music he grew up with in Brazil and the jazz he embraced in the U.S., saxophonist and composer Michel Nirenberg is on a mission to share a wealth of Brazilian musical styles with audiences around the world.

Attuned to both African and European elements, his compositions of contemporary Brazilian instrumental music show a fascinating range of styles: the samba and bossa nova known to most Americans and the mood enhancing rhythms of choro, forro, maracatu and Ijexá.

Nirenberg has performed in many U.S. cities since 2012. In Washington, D.C., he has appeared at prestigious venues such as Atlas Performing Arts Center, Gala Hispanic Theatre, The Carlyle Club, Twins Jazz, Catholic University and the Brazilian Embassy. He has performed at Johns Hopkins University and An die Music Live in Baltimore. His music draws heartfelt applause and standing ovations.

Nirenberg made his acting debut in 2015 in Washington, D.C. in the Women's Voices Theater Festival musical, *Give Me A Band, Give Me a Banana! The Carmen Miranda Story*. Since then his gorgeous compositions and technical proficiency have attracted major musicians to his side. Pianist Tim Murphy, bassist Michael Pope, Christylez Bacon and vocalist Cissa Paz are among them.

Nirenberg completed his first tour of Israel in 2017, collaborating with Israeli guitarist Uri Bracha. Their unique cross-cultural encounter of Middle Eastern jazz and Brazilian music was showcased in Tel Aviv, Haifa, Petach Tikva and Bet Shemesh.

At home in Rio de Janeiro, Nirenberg performs at venues such as Centro Cultural Solar de Botafogo and Beco das Garrafas. (The latter is an historic venue in the Copacabana neighborhood where musicians like Tom Jobim and Elis Regina performed in the bossa nova era.) His concerts have been featured in publications such as *Jornal O Globo* and *Jornal Extra*. Also a popular music educator, he loves to share his extensive knowledge of Brazilian music, history and culture with adults and young audiences in person and on radio and television.

Nirenberg performed in festivals and won competitions throughout Brazil before graduating at the top of his class at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) in 2012. In 2014 he earned an MA in music performance/saxophone from James Madison University in Virginia. By then he had already performed with top performers in both countries.

Nirenberg began studying violin with his grandfather at age six; Jaques Nirenberg was a violinist with the world traveled Brazilian String Quartet. His father was a music professor at UFRJ and played viola in the Brazilian Symphony. His mother is a gifted pianist. Nirenberg studied classical piano, violin, guitar and clarinet before taking up saxophone at age fifteen.

His first recording as a leader was *Retrato/Portrait* released on Carioca Music in 2015. It rose to No. 6 on the American CMJ Radio Charts and was introduced a year later in Brazil. It features virtuoso Brazilian musicians: Leonardo Lucini (bass), Alejandro Lucini (drums) and venerated guitarist Rogerio Souza. Argentine guitarist Dani Cortaza and American pianist Alex Brown complete the roster of international musicians on the CD. Nirenberg has already written new works in classical, jazz and Brazilian styles for small ensembles and big bands.