

Nicola Conte presents Stefania Dipierro - Natural [2016]

Written by bluelover

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1. *Maracatu Atómico* 2. *Softly As In A Morning Sunrise* 3. *A Gira* 4. *Within You And I* 5. *Open The Door* 6. *Ainda Mais Amor* 7. *Caminhos Cruzados* 8. *The Meaning Of Love* 9. *Natural* 10. *I Feel The Sun On Me* 11. *A Menina Dança* 12. *Vento Bravo* 13. *Que Maravilha* 14. *Jóia* Stefania Dipierro - vocals Fabrizio Bosso - trumpet Gaetano Partipilo - alto sax, flute Pietro Lussu - piano, Wurlitzer, electric piano, Fender Rhodes, Hammond C3 Mirko Signorelli - piano, Fender Rhodes; Rory More: Hammond C3 Luca Alemanno - fender bass, double bass Nicola Angelucci - drums Marco Valeri - drums Dario Congedo - drums Fabio Accardi - drums Pierpaolo Bisogno - congas, percussion Liviana Ferri - percussion Emanuele Ferrari: - tambourine Melanie Charles - backing vocals Fabrizio Savino: - guitars Nicola Conte - guitars

Natural is the latest collaboration between musical travellers and kindred spirits Nicola Conte and Stefania Dipierro, the culmination of a relationship rooted in a shared belief in the spiritually healing powers of music. The Italian duo is set to take 2016 by storm with a sensual, sumptuous and highly accomplished record, firmly anchored in the traditions of Brazilian bossa nova, samba and jazz.

Stefania and Nicola first came together as members of the seminal 90s musical collective Fez, with Nicola leading the group. This period, one full of inspiration and discovery, laid the seeds for Natural. Though Stefania lent her enviable vocal talents to many bands over the years and Nicola went on to an illustrious production career, outside of a handful of tracks from Nicola's album Jet Sounds, it was not until now that the stars aligned again, allowing these two mercurial talents to merge their musical sensibilities once again to access the deep spirituality that is at the core of their approach to sound. Stefania's ongoing musical journey has ensured that her connection to, and understanding of jazz runs deep, as she resoundingly demonstrates throughout Natural. With Nicola once again in the production seat, the album serves as the defining showcase for her inimitable vocal talents.

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Nicola first achieved international acclaim for his signature style of samba-influenced acid-jazz, which also drew inspiration from 60s and 70s Italian film soundtracks. Alongside his production work Nicola has laid out his musical vision through his guitar playing and songwriting, with numerous studio albums including 2004's *Other Directions*, released on Schema, a French Subsidiary of Blue Note Records. His compilation series *Viagem*, all 5 volumes of which have been released on Far Out, provide an insight into the sounds of the past that have inspired his music of today, a peerless collection of lost bossa and samba jazz from the swinging Brazilian 60s.

On this new collaborative release for Far Out, Conte's forward thinking production cleverly compliments and contrasts with the warmth of Dipierro's laid back inflection and gloriously rich timbres. *Natural* is aptly named, considering the ease with which Stefania and Nicola have re-assumed the roles of muse to one another, a musical relationship providing the deepest access to the poetry within their sound. The album's title track and first single is a perfect introduction to their world, a masterful blend of global influences in which a propulsive Afro-rhythm bolstered by a searing funk guitar, whilst soothing Rhodes chords provide a distinctly Brazilian warmth and Stefania's vocals offer up an enriching melody to soothe the heart and engage the mind. Alongside original compositions from Nicola and others, *Natural* also tantalisingly promises some inspired re-interpretations of classic Brazilian and jazz pieces: Trio Tenura's exemplary bossa groove *A Gira* and Steve Kuhn's beautiful *The Meaning of Love* are among the tracks respectfully imbued with an updated resonance. The scintillating blend of jazz and bossa alongside a contemporary sensibility makes for a debut collaboration. A timeless example of the special places Brazilian music can go with a beautiful voice and a smooth groove, marking out Dipierro as a natural talent of the highest order. ---faroutrecordings.com

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