

- 1 **LITTLE B'S POEM** (Bobby Hutcherson) 3:26
- 2 **BLACK NILE** (Wayne Shorter) 2:12
- 3 **CRYSTAL SILENCE** (Chick Corea) 4:12
- 4 **MY FRIEND FLORA** (Astrud Gilberto) 2:27
- 5 **DON'T MISUNDERSTAND** (Gordon Parks) 2:48
- 6 **TWO FOR THE ROAD** (Henry Mancini) 3:51
- 7 **PORTRAIT IN BLACK AND WHITE**  
(Antonio Carlos Jobim / Italian lyrics by Marilena Paradisi) 5:12
- 8 **DEL SASSER** (Sam Jones) 2:52
- 9 **DUKE ELLINGTON'S SOUND OF LOVE**  
(Charles Mingus / text by William Shakespeare,  
adapted by Marilena Paradisi from  
"The Merchant of Venice", act III scene II) 2:36
- 10 **LAWNS** (Carla Bley / lyrics by Marilena Paradisi) 4:36
- 11 **CHELSEA BRIDGE** (Billy Strayhorn) 2:31
- 12 **NEVER WILL I MARRY** (Frank Loesser) 2:31

Total time 39:14

Artistic project and arrangements  
by Marilena Paradisi & Bob Nieske  
Recorded May 21, 2024 by Peter Kontrimas  
at PBS Studios, Westwood, MA, USA  
Mixed and mastered by Clive Simpson  
at Extrabeat Recording, Rome, Italy  
Produced by Marilena Paradisi Executive producer Odd Gjelsnes  
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Portrait photo by Peter Kontrimas Design by Max Franosch

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**MARILENA PARADISI**  
VOICE

**BOB NIESKE**  
DOUBLE BASS

LOS 310-2



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MARILENA PARADISI / BOB NIESKE HERE AND NOW

Losen Records LOS 310-2



## Marilena Paradisi Here and Now Bob Nieske



It is the summer of 2024, and the heat is unprecedented. In Rome, the thermometer fluctuates between 30 and 40 degrees, but in this dormant and lazy climate, a real wave of freshness and vitality arrives. We are listening to a new album, a project for voice and double bass, *Here And Now*, by the duo Marilena Paradisi and Bob Nieske, released by the prestigious Norwegian label Losen Records.

The first thing you notice is the incredible understanding and "interplay" between the two musicians; as if it was the music *itself* that chose them to play. But let's talk about these two artists.

Marilena Paradisi, one of the most committed vocalists on the improvisation front. Her expression ranges from jazz to contemporary music, and she is a great researcher in the use of the voice within the experimental and improvisational field. Acclaimed by international critics for her interpretative skills and her grasp of the text, but also for her highly original projects. As anyone who has followed this singer for years knows, Paradisi's choices are never mundane – always striving to construct something new, something unexpected, something that must be listened to with attention.

She boasts collaborations of the highest level, to name just a few: Eliot Zigmund, Kirk Lightsey, Pietro Leveratto, Renato Sellani, and Dino Piana. In the experimental field: the guitarist Arturo Tallini, and the Japanese singer Michiko Hirayama, an icon of contemporary 20th century singing.

*Here And Now* the vocalist's ninth CD, finds Paradisi alongside a true giant of the double bass, an integral part of jazz history, Bob Nieske. He is rightly considered a refined composer, an original bandleader with an outstanding CV in which the years spent as Jimmy Giuffrè's double bass player (from 1979 to 1992) and his presence on Jimmy's three Soul Note recordings are of particular note. His most acclaimed album *Simplicity*, released in September 2000, was recorded by his trio with Phil Grenadier on trumpet and Nat Mugavero on drums, together with the Lydian String Quartet.

As for the repertoire, the selection made by the two artists highlights once again, on the one hand, their profound knowledge of the subject, on the other, the elegance of a style which knows no boundaries and unites two characters bound, on this occasion, by the sole desire to express themselves beyond any conditioning.

Hence a treasure chest containing twelve pearls of absolute brilliance whose composers are, in order of execution: Bobby Hutcherson, Wayne Shorter, Chick Corea, Astrud Gilberto, Gordon Parks, Henry Mancini, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Sam Jones, Charles Mingus, Carla Bley, Billy Strayhorn, and Frank Loesser.

But beware, the treasure chest must be opened with caution and the pieces savoured one by one, because a surprise is always just around the corner. The two artists perform with great commitment, developing such a level of empathy that the entire recording session almost seems like a live concert.

Paradisi expresses herself at her best not only without fear of tackling even the most difficult passages, but also by writing the lyrics to two of the songs: *Portrait In Black And White* by Jobim (Italian lyrics), and *Lawns* by Carla Bley. On *Duke Ellington's Sounds Of Love* by Charles Mingus, the vocalist sings William Shakespeare to us! Yes, that's right, a line from Shakespeare's *The Merchant Of Venice* which Paradisi had the courage to adapt to this splendid composition – in the context of that journey of union between the arts that Paradisi has already undertaken in two of her albums, *Rainbow Inside* and *Prelude For Voice And Silence*, both released by Silta Records, in which painting and improvisation are combined.

On *Here And Now*, Paradisi really gives us a taste of her immense capabilities. Here she is, in fact, using her voice instrumentally on two songs, *My Friend Flora* by Astrud Gilberto and *Chelsea Bridge* by Billy Strayhorn. Especially on the latter piece, Paradisi's interpretation is truly grandiose, so much so that one doesn't even feel the lack of the text.

Text is superbly interpreted on Gordon Parks' splendid ballad *Don't Misunderstand*. But that's not all; on five other songs (*Little B's Poem*, *Crystal Silence*, *My Friend Flora*, *Two For The Road*, *Lawns*) Paradisi dares an original approach to improvisational vocal solos, not to be confused with "scat", a technique that Paradisi does not like, and it is not difficult to understand how risky the improvisational vocal technique is, given that there are very few vocalists who successfully follow this path.

For his part, Bob Nieske confirms himself – if there was any need – as an artist of profound depth, a partner of the highest level, who does not limit himself to accompanying Marilena's splendid voice but is able to intertwine and compose, in real time, extraordinary rhythmic phrases and melodic textures that exalt the vocalist's characteristics and give her new vital inspiration.

So, a wonderful album by Marilena Paradisi and Bob Nieske, one that ends beautifully with the irreverent *Never Will I Marry*, where the two lines, the voice and the double bass, are so united that they seem to merge into a single sound.

– Gerlando Gatto