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**GUITAR VIRTUOSOS SÉRGIO AND ODAIR ASSAD BRING THEIR
BRAZILIAN GUITAR FESTIVAL TO CAL PERFORMANCES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7 AT 8:00 P.M. AT ZELLERBACH HALL**

BERKELEY, December 20, 2007—The dazzling guitar duo of **Sérgio** and **Odair Assad** bring an ensemble of classical and Brazilian guitar wizards to Cal Performances for the **Brazilian Guitar Festival**, an evening pulsing with fiery rhythms and melodies. Joining the Assad Brothers will be their sister, **Badi Assad**, a vocalist, guitarist and innovative popular music performer in her own right; guitarist **Romero Lubambo**, a highly respected acoustic jazz musician; and guitarist-percussionist-composer **Celso Machado** known as a master of *ritmos brasileiros*. The program, announced from the stage, will showcase some of the most creative voices in contemporary Brazilian guitar music.

SÉRGIO AND ODAIR ASSAD

Brazilian-born brothers **Sérgio** and **Odair Assad** have set the benchmark for guitarists by creating a new standard of guitar innovation, ingenuity and expression. Their artistry and uncanny ensemble playing come from both a family rich in Brazilian musical tradition and from studies with the best guitarists in South America. The Assads have played a major role in creating and introducing new music for two guitars. They have, additionally, inspired a wide range of composers to write for them: Astor Piazzolla, Terry Riley, Radamés Gnattali, Marlos Nobre, Nikita Koshkin, Roland Dyens, Jorge Morel, Edino Krieger and Francisco Mignone. Sérgio Assad is adding to their repertory by composing music for the duo and for various musical partners both with symphony orchestras and in recitals. They have worked with such renowned artists as Yo-Yo Ma, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Fernando Suarez Paz, Paquito D’Rivera, Gidon Kremer and Dawn Upshaw.

The Assads began playing the guitar together at an early age and went on to study for seven years with guitar/lutenist Monina Távora, a disciple of Andrés Segovia. Their

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international career began with a major prize at the 1979 Young Artists competition in Bratislava. While Odair is based in Brussels, where he teaches at Ecole Supérieure des Arts, and Sérgio in Chicago and Paris, the majority of their time is spent on tour throughout the Americas, Europe and the Far East.

The Assads' repertoire includes original music composed by Sérgio, his re-workings of folk and jazz music and Latin music of almost every style. Their standard classical repertoire includes transcriptions of the great Baroque keyboard literature of Bach, Rameau and Scarlatti, and adaptations of works by such diverse figures as Gershwin, Ginastera and Debussy. "The interaction of the Brazilian siblings is so precise, so perfectly synchronized, that it reaches far beyond musical partnership in to a kind of creative symbiosis" (*Los Angeles Times*).

THE ARTISTS

Badi Assad is one of Brazil's most talented performers. Known for her Bobby McFerrin-like improvisations, Assad is also an accomplished guitar player. In 1995, Assad was voted Best Acoustic Fingerstyle Guitarist by editors of *Guitar Player*, while readers of the magazine named her album *Rhythms* the Best Classical Album of the Year. Although her earlier albums focused on unique interpretations of songs by songwriters such as Egberto Gizmonte, Milton Nascimento, Ralph Towner and George Harrison, Assad displayed her songwriting talents on her 1998 album *Chameleon*, co-writing nine of the album's 12 tracks.

The younger sister of Sergio and Odair, Badi, who also grew up in Rio de Janeiro, began studying the piano at age eight. By age 14, however, she had switched to the guitar and was accompanying her father, who played *chorinhos* or Brazilian music on the mandolin. Sharpening her skills at the University Conservatory in Rio de Janeiro, Assad placed first in a Young Instrumentalist Contest in 1984. Assad's professional debut came as a member of the Guitar Orchestra of Rio de Janeiro, conducted by Turbio Santos, in 1986. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, she was plagued with a series of personal and medical problems. Ultimately, Assad made a full recovery and continued her work. Focusing on collaborations with other guitarists, she appeared on two albums, including *Nowhere with Young* in 2002 and *Three Guitars* with jazz

artists Larry Coryell and John Abercrombie in 2003. Assad returned to solo work with the release of *Verde* in 2005 and followed that up with the Alice in Wonderland-inspired *Wonderland* in 2007.

For over 30 years, **Celso Machado** has performed on concert stages throughout Brazil, Western Europe and Canada, as well as in the United States. Drawing on his thorough study of classical music, Machado composes for both solo guitar and ensemble. His innovative compositions are infused with his rich knowledge of the traditional music of Brazil: *samba*, *chôro*, *baião* and *frêvo*. The publication of his compositions for guitar by Henri Lemoine in Paris and the strong impact he made at the international guitar seminars held in Merignac (Bordeaux, France) from 1984-1990 has led to his popularity amongst instrumentalists in France and abroad.

Machado has made ten solo recordings and numerous collaborative recordings, including his most recent CD *Capivara* (2005), *Jongo Lê* (1999), and *Varal* (1997), the last two of which both were nominated for the Canadian Juno awards in the best global recording category. His score for the film *In the Company of Fear* won him a Leo Award for Best Musical Score for Documentary in 2000 and the score which he co-wrote, performed and recorded with Salvador Ferreras and Joseph Pepe Danza for *A Place Called Chiapas* was nominated in 1999 for a Leo Award for Best Musical Score for Documentary.

Born in Rio de Janeiro in 1955, **Romero Lubambo** studied classical piano and music theory as a young boy. Lubambo graduated from the Villa-Lobos School of Music in Rio in 1978 and in 1980 received a degree in mechanical engineering from the Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio de Janeiro. Brazilian music and American jazz both fascinate Lubambo. After arriving in New York City in 1985, Lubambo quickly established himself as an A-list session and touring guitarist who was in demand not only for his authentic Brazilian sound, but also for his command with a variety of styles. With fellow Brazilians Duduka da Fonseca and Nilson Matta, he formed Trio da Paz, a Brazilian Jazz ensemble recognized for its innovation, creativity and dynamic intensity. The trio has continued to break new ground with its blend of traditional

Brazilian rhythms and jazz improvisation.

Lumbambo has also established himself as a composer and performer on his own recording projects and in collaborations with many such artists as Dianne Reeves, Michael Brecker, Yo-Yo Ma, Diana Krall and Herbie Mann, among many others. "Guitarist Romero Lubambo may be the best practitioner of his craft in the world today...the guitarist's facility, creativity and energy are in a class all their own" (*Jazziz*).

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **The Assad Brothers' Brazilian Guitar Festival** featuring Sérgio and Odair Assad on **Thursday, February 7 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$24.00, \$36.00 and \$46.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at www.calperformances.org.

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20.00 for all other community members. Information is available at 510-642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Thursday, February 7 at 8:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

World Stage

Sérgio and Odair Assad, guitar

Badi Assad, vocals and guitar

Romero Lubambo, guitar

Celso Machado, vocals, percussion and guitar

Program: Sérgio and Odair Assad bring their Brazilian Guitar Festival featuring their sister Badi Assad plus Romero Lubambo and Celso Machado to Zellerbach Hall.

Tickets: **\$24.00**, **\$36.00** and **\$46.00**, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at www.calperformances.org; and at the door.

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