



CHICO MELLO/HELINHO BRANDÃO

Chico Mello/Helinho Brandão

Label

BLACK TRUFFLE

Format

LP

Catalog Number

BT 121LP

EAN

4250101469091



Store Price

\$23.39

Release Date

08/09/24

Territory

NORTH AMERICAN EXCLUSIVE

Genre

FILE UNDER - M - EXPERIMENTAL



DESCRIPTION

Black Truffle presents a reissue of **Chico Mello** and **Helinho Brandão**'s self-titled release from 1984, the first return to vinyl of this classic of Brazilian experimental music with its original cover art and complete track listing. An under-recognized figure whose work inhabits a singular terrain where radical new music techniques and music theatre meet musica popular brasileira, Mello has lived and worked in Berlin since the late 1980s. A student of **Dieter Schnebel**, Mello played in the '90s iteration of **Arnold Dreyblatt's Orchestra of Excited Strings** alongside compatriot **Silvia Ocugne**, with whom he produced a radical and hilarious deconstruction of MPB classics on *Musica Brasileira De(s)composta* (an early and rather atypical release on Edition Wandelweiser). On this release, his only recording predating his move to Europe, Mello works with the alto saxophonist Helinho Brandão, who appears to be otherwise unknown outside Brazil. The record's six tracks range from solo saxophone improvisation to densely layered ensemble works bridging minimalism, acoustic sound art and a plaintive melodic sensibility that calls up **Edu Lobo** or **Milton Nascimento**. A trio for Brandão on soprano saxophone, Mello on a very period-appropriate phased nylon string guitar and **Edu Dequech** on bongos, the performance eases its way hypnotically through subtle variations on a set of rhythmic and melodic patterns, almost derailed at points by Brandão's wild forays into extended technique but held together by Mello's droning guitar notes. Rasping violin harmonics hover as drum hits, repeated guitar notes and triangle accompany a slowly descending bass glissando. A sudden change in direction introduces a thrumming, incessantly repeated bowed bass tone, beginning a series of episodes of minimalist phasing and pattern variation, the combinations of electric guitars and orchestral instruments giving the ensemble an ad hoc charm like the early **Penguin Café Orchestra** but with more percussive drive. Arriving in a starkly beautiful gatefold sleeve and sounding better than ever in its new remaster, one might call the stunning music contained on *Chico Mello/Helinho Brandão* ahead of its time. Forty years after its first release, *Chico Mello/Helinho Brandão* remains music of the future.

TRACKLISTING

- A1. Água (9:34)
- A2. Improviso I (1:08)
- A3. Baiando (12:56)
- B1. Matraca (15:02)
- B2. Improviso II (3:09)
- B3. Dança (4:36)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Black Truffle presents a reissue of **Chico Mello** and **Helinho Brandão**'s self-titled release from 1984, the first return to vinyl of this classic of Brazilian experimental music with its original cover art and complete track listing.
- The record's six tracks range from solo saxophone improvisation to densely layered ensemble works bridging minimalism, acoustic sound art and a plaintive melodic sensibility that calls up **Edu Lobo** or **Milton Nascimento**.
- Arriving in a starkly beautiful gatefold sleeve and sounding better than ever in its new remaster, one might call the stunning music contained on *Chico Mello/Helinho Brandão* ahead of its time.

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