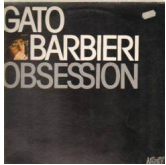


Gato Barbieri – Obsession (1967)

Written by bluesever

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Gato Barbieri – Obsession (1967)



1 *Obsession Part 1* 2 *Obsession Part 2* 3 *Michelle* Gato Barbieri – tenor saxophone
J.-F. Jenny-Clark – bass Aldo Romano – drums

Backed by bassist Jean-Francois Jenny Clark and drummer Aldo Romano on this LP, tenor-saxophonist Gato Barbieri plays with great intensity and fire during these lengthy performances (two versions of "Obsession" and "Michelle"; the latter has no relation to The Beatles tune). Barbieri's playing would become, if not more mellow, much more melodic a few years later, but at this early stage he was in his avant-garde stage, playing with ferocious energy. ---Scott Yanow. Rovi

Argentinian tenor saxophonist Gato Barbieri (1932) relocated to Italy in 1962 and collaborated with Don Cherry on *Complete Communion* (1965) and *The Symphony For Improvisers* (1966). Barbieri expanded that experiment on *In Search Of Mystery* (march 1967), a wild free-jazz session in a quartet with cello, bass and drums, centered around the theme of Michelle and the two movements of *Cinematheque*, and on the lengthy *Obsession* (june 1967), recorded by a trio of sax, bass and drums. After a collaboration with Dollar Brand, *Confluence* (march 1968), and a participation to both Mike Mantler's *Jazz Composer's Orchestra* (1968) and Charlie Haden's *Liberation Music Orchestra* (1969) Barbieri found his mission in life with *The Third World* (november 1969), that mixed free jazz and Latin music in a visceral, exuberant manner. Three of the four compositions paid tribute to great Argentinian composers, and the fourth was his *Antonio Das Mortes*. Barbieri became more interested in offering the USA public jazzy versions of Latin classics, a less spontaneous but more elegant version of the concept of Third World, but each album contained at least one Barbieri composition that also represented his artistic ambitions: *Carnavalito* on *Fenix* (april 1971), featuring Pharoah Sanders' pianist Lonnie Liston

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Smith guitarist Joe Beck, bassist Ron Carter, drummer Lenny White and Brazilian percussionist Nana Vasconcelos, El Pampero on the live El Pampero (june 1971), El Parana on Under Fire (recorded in 1971), featuring Smith, guitarist John Abercrombie bassist Stanley Clarke and percussionist Airtó Moreira.

The worldwide success of Barbieri's sensual, melancholy soundtrack for Bertolucci's Last Tango In Paris (november 1972), released in its entirety only in 1998, stood as a much more personal statement.

Even more emotional was Bolivia (recorded in 1973), by the same players of Under Fire, with Merceditas and Bolivia.

Barbieri's vision of Latin-tinged melodic and rhythmic soundscapes was fully realized with a tetralogy that employed larger units and Latin-American musicians: Latin America (april 1973), his artistic zenith, with Encuentros and the four-part suite La China Leoncia, Hasta Siempre (april 1973), with Encontros, Viva Emiliano Zapata (june 1974), accompanied by a big band in four of his short pieces (notably Lluvia Azul), and the live Alive In New York (february 1975).

The pop/folk element, enhanced with lush arrangements for big band, began to prevail on Caliente (1976). The rest of his career was devoted to pop ballads.

After a long hiatus, Barbieri returned with Que Pasa (1997), Che Corazon (1999) and The Shadow of the Cat (2002), still in the poppish format of his decadent years. ---scaruffi.com

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