Omara Portuondo & Maria Bethania (2008)

01 Lacho (Facundo Rivero e Juan Pablo Miranda) 02 Menino Grande (Antonio Maria) 03 Nana para un suspiro (Pedro Luis Ferrer) 04 Poema LXIV (Dulce María Loynaz), Palabras (Marta Valdes), Palavras (Gonzaguinha) 05 Talvez (Juan Formell) 06 Você (Hekel Tavares e Nair Mesquita) 07 Arrependimento (Dolores Duran e Fernando Cesar) 08 Mil Congojas (Juan Pablo Miranda) 09 Só vendo que beleza (Rubens Campos e Henricão) 10 Para cantarle a mi amor (Orlando De La Rosa) 11 Caipira de fato (Adauto Santos), El amor de mi Bohio (Júlio Brito)

An interesting collaboration between two great singers from Latin America: Brazil's Maria Bethania (born in 1946) and Cuba's Omara Portuondo (born in 1930). I'm more familiar with Bethania's work than with Portuondo: Bethania seems to me a bit more innovative and diverse in her career than Portuondo, who seems to belong to the more traditional bolero genre (though her style is very dignified, far from the more commercial artists in this genre). Most of the songs are a bit slow, with spare orchestration, letting this two women's great voices come to the forefront. Some songs are in Spanish, some in Portuguese and some, like the last track, the best in the album, Caipira de Fato/El Amor de Mi Bohio is actually a medley: Bethania starts with a Brazilian song and Portuondo finishes with a Cuban song: the blending of both is almost seamless. Bethania sometimes sings in Spanish (flawlessly); Portuondo sometimes also sings in Portuguese, but I can't vouch for her pronounciation. Other great songs here are the beautiful Nana para un Suspiro, Tal Vez, So Vendo que Beleza and Para Cantarle al Amor. ---Andres C. Salama, amazon.com

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