



## THE EXPRESS-TIMES

### 'Memories of Brazil' for Ted Falcon

Friday, August 18, 2006

By **JERRY DUCKETT**  
The Express-Times

There's a homecoming on Thursday, but minus the parade or marching band.

This homecoming is a display of talents of returning Allentown native Ted Falcon, along with the Choro Ensemble of New York City, in celebration of his new CD release, "Memorias do Brasil."

In his liner notes, the Allen High School graduate explains his inspiration for Brazilian music came at a young age when his father, professional guitarist Marvin Falcon, played Sergio Mendez and Luis Bonfa tapes during their car trips to Florida. His listening progressed to surreal guitar tunes by Villa-Lobos.

Falcon, who plays electric violin, mandolin and guitar, presents an evening of Brazilian Choro and jazz at 8 p.m. Thursday in the third-floor Rodale Community Room of Allentown Symphony Hall.

"Choro is best described as the New Orleans jazz of Brazil. It's music that's a cousin to our Dixieland or ragtime music, and it's got an American influence. It is pre-bossa nova," Falcon explains from his home in Los Angeles, where he has his own Choro ensemble.

It was in 1971 that accomplished musician Marvin Falcon moved his family to Allentown from New York City in 1971. The younger Falcon explains, "It was because I was playing in traffic on Avenue U, when someone found me and brought me home to my father. He decided it was time to move. He had a friend who was living in Allentown and who liked the city."

Falcon played the piano and violin at the young age of 6 and added the electric bass to his repertoire in high school. He studied at Indiana University and the University of Pittsburgh.

He studied guitar with Joe Negri, who appeared on television's "Mr. Rogers" children's program. It was during that time that he discovered jazz.

In 1992, while enrolled at Pittsburgh, he entered a fiddle contest back home in Allentown at the Mayfair Festival of the Arts and won. He later moved to New York City.

"I had made up my mind to become a professional musician and work in the big city," Falcon recalls. "I thought I had something unique with the way I played electric violin."

His musical adventures ranged from a strolling violinist in formalwear at high-society private parties in New York to touring with the Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus.

He later decided to record some of his own original music and moved to Los Angeles, where his sister was living, to release his first CD, "Toreador," in 2000. He says he also started getting into his first mandolin given to him during his teen years by his father.

An L.A. jazz club featuring Brazilian Choro music caught his attention and renewed an earlier interest in the

music style. A trip to Brazil in 2003 brought the purchase of "a real Brazilian mandolin" which he had to learn to play all over again.

Upcoming plans for Falcon include a tour of Japan in October and a trip to Brazil in January for further study.

Falcon teaches ukulele, mandolin, guitar and violin at Silverlake Conservatory of Music in Los Angeles.

© 2006 The Express Times

© 2006 PennLive.com All Rights Reserved.