

Some of his compositions had already been recorded, and at least one of them, "Teresa da Praia", had been in the charts, when he had his historic meeting with the poet Vinicius de Moraes at a table in the Bar Vilariño in the centre of Rio. Vinicius was looking for a composer to set to music his verses for the play *Orfeu da Conceição* in which he transposed the tragic myth of Orpheus to the hillsides of Rio. "Is there any money in it?" asked Tom as soon as Vinicius began talking about the project. If the poet and Lúcio were shocked at his "mentioning money when art was at stake", for Tom it was the most natural question in the world: he hardly had enough money to pay the rent.

*Orfeu da Conceição* had its debut at the Teatro Municipal in Rio on the 25th of September, 1956. It was the start of the Tom & Vinicius partnership. Interrupted when the poet, serving as a diplomat in Paris, left Brazil; it was taken up again in 1958 on the album *Canção do Amor Demais*, with their songs interpreted by Eliseth Cardoso.

After that everything happened fast, projecting Tom Jobim on to become 20 years later, a national institution: the Bossa-Nova, masterpieces in partnership with Vinicius, a symphony dedicated to Brasilia, the concert at

the Carnegie Hall in New York (in which he was practically coerced to participate by the Brazilian Foreign Ministry), the Palm D'Or at the Cannes film festival, and the Oscar awarded for the film version of *Orfeu* (on the soundtrack of which "A Felicidade" was released), the interest of American jazzmen in his music, repeated invitations for him to record in the States, the worldwide success of "Girl from Ipanema", the phone call to the Bar Veloso (today Garota de Ipanema) in which Frank Sinatra invited him to make a record with him which would end up being two (the second four years after the first).

Ten years separate *Orfeu* and Sinatra. He was a huge success, but that brought many setbacks, too. Like many others in Brazil, Tom did not manage to be a prophet in his own land. Revered almost as a god abroad, where many recognized in him one of the most important popular composers of all time, the Brazilian Tom had to face, in his own country, the incomprehension and intolerance of critics who saw his international triumph as having "sold out" to the gringos. They could not accept that, instead of doing traditional samba, he preferred to play his own music. They did not forgive him for singing in English. They did not understand