

Brazilian music. Critics, commentators or part-time theorists, none of us perceived to begin with how uncommitted Jobim's work had always been. From the time he was an unknown arranger till his time at the piano. Records continue to be the best way of travelling along the musical trail of a Brazilian composer, particularly Antonio Carlos Jobim. He was not trying to be modest when he said that his participation in the Bossa Nova was not very intense and rather fortuitous. *Canção do Amor Demais* (1958), the record that historically began the so-called "movement", did not pretend to be more than a collection of unpublished songs by Tom & Vinicius, sung by Elizeth Cardoso with arrangements by Tom himself. The original idea was to make a record in the line of the romantic samba-canção of the 50s - those which Jobim had already been writing, far from the mainstream: "Outra Vez", "Esperança Perdida", "Por Causa de Você", "Foi a Noite", "Se Todas Fossem Iguais a Você", this last song, from the play *Orfeu da Conceição*, having been his first success in partnership with Vinicius de Moraes. These sambas-canções were much criticised for the lack of emphasis on rhythm and their preference for the inventive melodies and harmonies. For not using the traditional "telecoteco" samba beat, they were called "samboleros", while their cultivators, among them Jobim, were labelled non-Brazilian, when not downright anti-Brazilian. The obsession for labelling, evidently, is not new.

Two details contributed to Elizeth's record making history. And both of them, as Jobim remembers, were fortuitous. One was the small amount of money that Irineu Garcia, the owner of the Festa label, had to pay the musicians. That was the reason why Jobim limited the number of instruments, 12, 14 at most, when writing the arrangements. He later discovered with pleasure that the result could not have been better: the laid-back orchestration, parcimonious, chamberlike and exact, very different from those he himself had created for the records of Dick Farney, Dalva de Oliveira and others, admirably fitted the dark voice of Elizeth and the almost intimate character of the songs.

The other detail was João Gilberto's guitar on two tracks: "Chega de Saudade" and "Outra Vez". His rhythmic transgressions - the "different beat" as it was called - made of the first track a kind of seminal moment of the Bossa Nova and of the second the symbol of the conversion of "sambolero" to the new style.