

cannot film this guy with this dirty shirt. It's all ripped.' Chet had a French girlfriend looking a little bit like Liza Minnelli. When show time came, Baker had on his girlfriend's blouse. We played ten or twelve tunes.

"In March, 1959, I went to New York on a three-week vacation trip. To see musicals, the regular routine. I went and came back and I decided to pack it in and go to New York and try at least. I had enough money. I could have survived in New York for about a year, without making a nickel. I had a flow of income from royalties, little stuff.

"I arrived on October 19, 1959, by boat, the United States, via Le Havre. My immigration was first class. Because I'm that kind of a guy. I don't want to go third class. I was married to Inge by then. She was hanging in with me. She was believing in something. If you go to another country, saying I have no job, I don't know anybody, I don't know what to do there, it's ridiculous. But she hung in with me.

"Before I came to New York, I knew by name everyone who played what on each record. I was a living jazz encyclopedia. I flipped out when I finally was standing next to these guys. George Duvivier, Zoot Sims. It was crazy and wonderful.

"At first the only person I knew in New York was a dentist I met. I had his number, but I didn't remember his last name, only his first name, Herb. I called him. He said, 'Come Saturday, I'm having a party.' We went to his building. There was a doorman with white gloves. I said, 'We're here for a party.' He said, 'Oh yes, on the fourth floor.' So we went up, and there were fifty people already, at least, glasses in hand. They said, 'Come in, where are you from?' We said, 'Germany.' They said, 'Oh great. Just drop your coats and have a blast.'

"After an hour, I told Inge, 'This is a nice party, but I don't see Herb here anywhere.'

"And I went back down to the doorman. I said, 'Of course there's a party on the fourth floor, but we're looking for a dentist named Herb. He said, 'Oh, you're talking about Herb Prager! He's on the twenty-first floor. There's another party.'

"We went back to the fourth floor and we tried to sneak out with our coats. The people said, 'Where are you going? Why are you leaving?'

"I said, 'It's embarrassing. But we are at the wrong place. We are actually at a party on the twenty-first floor. We apologize.' He said, 'Apologize? Listen, if this party upstairs isn't better than ours, you'd better come back.' It was very nice. You don't have this in Europe. In the States they want to know your first name first, not your last name. They tell you, 'My name is Harry, and this is Priscilla.' You don't get this in Europe. It was our introduction to the United States.

"So we went upstairs and we found Herb Prager. He said,

'One of my clients is Don Costa. Would you like to meet him?'"

The late Don Costa — he died in 1983 at fifty-eight — was a well-established and highly respected arranger who had written for Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gormé and many others and by the 1950s was on the A&R staff of ABC Paramount. He was in a position to assign work to Claus and introduce him to everyone in the business.

"After that it happened very fast," Claus continued. "Via Don Costa, I met Quincy Jones, Ray Ellis. They helped a great deal. Don Costa got me into the union within two weeks. Normally you have to wait six months. He made a call, he said, 'There's a guy, he's coming in to pick up his card.' And he gave me work. So did Quincy, with Josh White, of all people, and Dinah Washington. It gave me hope to hang in and stay."

Quincy Jones was then head of the A&R staff at Mercury Records, and thus he too was in a position to assign work to Claus. And he assigned a lot of it, including Lesley Gore's first record, *It's My Party*, which hit the No. 1 position on the charts in 1963. Claus was so adept at capturing the most egregiously commercial styles that he soon was one of the busiest arrangers in New York. He says, rather ruefully, that in those days he was like a machine gun. One sees in retrospect that American popular music was at a crossroads, one branch of it on a road to constantly descending musical standards, the other rising to heights to which popular music had never been. Enter Antonio Carlos Jobim in 1962.

An entirely new movement had arisen in Brazil at the very time Claus moved to New York. It was called bossa nova, a modern adaptation of traditional samba whose leading figures were the singer and guitarist João Gilberto and a composer and pianist named Jobim. I got caught up in this movement when, in Brazil, in early 1962, I translated a number of the Jobim songs, including *Corcovado*, which in my adaptation became *Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars*, and *Desafinado*, which became *Off Key*. Over the next few years I would write translations or adaptations of a number of his songs in close collaboration with Jobim — and with Claus.

While I was in Brazil, an album of bossa nova tunes performed by Stan Getz and guitarist Charlie Byrd, produced by Creed Taylor on the Verve label, came out in the United States. Despite the rise of rock-and-roll, Jobim's sophisticated and highly intelligent tune *Desafinado* became a huge hit. The bossa nova fad arose in a matter of months, and that fall there was a concert at Carnegie Hall, in which Gilberto and Jobim took part. I introduced Jobim to various New York musicians, including Gerry Mulligan (with whom he formed a lasting friendship) and we soon would write some new songs together. Creed Taylor at Verve produced an album with Stan