

Well, the spirit was wonderful, there was a lot of camaraderie; [even though] Cesar Mariano was tense, in that he was working with the maestro. He was a great arranger and piano player in his own [right]; but working with Jobim, he felt the responsibility. Of course he succeeded. Elis was the premier Brazilian singer on several levels: not just her voice but her interpretation. She had a very special sense of rhythm, the way she phrased over [the rhythm]. João Gilberto has, in a different way, some of that floating-over-the-rhythm [quality] — playing with what was happening behind her. She played with the beat, free from the downbeat. She was celebrating with this album ten years of recording Jobim's songs.

How were the Stan Getz records, the ones with the original hits on them, how were those records received in Brazil? Here's the first time American musicians, in a very prominent way, were recording Jobim's repertoire.

I think they were received by the public very well because it was a novelty having Americans play Brazilian songs. That in itself was an attractive thing for the Brazilian people. Some of the purists may have said that it was not typically Brazilian; for me, the appeal was exactly that. It was something of a blend, and at this time, for me, it was the closing of a circle: because I grew up listening to jazz, and it was nice to see how Brazilian music was making its own mark on that American music. From then on I think the exchange became open, the borders were dissolved, and music started flowing much better between the two countries.

Jobim actually worked as an arranger prior to becoming famous for his songs. Can you tell us about that?

He used to say, "Oscar, we arrangers, we are tailors. We make everybody's suits but we don't make our own." Because primarily he worked on everybody's albums but his own. Even with *The Composer of "Desafinado" Plays*;

Claus Ogerman did wonderful work, but if you hear all the counterpoints, all the lines were really Jobim's. He gave a wealth of material for Claus to work with, practically arranging the song together with him. Claus brought his own sense of the weight of the orchestra, the choice of instruments, and the string writing and voicing — but if you hear American and Brazilian recordings of the songs, the counterpoint was already there. That was something about Jobim's music: The craft was so defined that you could change a line here or there when you recorded a song of his but you didn't want to, because the arrangement was such an integral part of the song. It was so beautiful the way Jobim wrote that you didn't want to change that.

RS: Why do you think these songs have had such an enduring appeal to jazz musicians?

OC-N: On the one hand, there is the melody, which establishes the theme; on the other hand, there are the chord changes, the harmonic sense. They lend themselves to great improvisation because of the way the chords flow into each other. Jazz musicians just love that because it gives them a lot of room for improvisation.

RS: What are some other projects that you worked on with Jobim?

OC-N: I did a film with him, *Gabriela*. That was a lot of fun. Jobim had written all of the melodies and he actually gave me a lot of room to [write] the score.

RS: What year was that film?

OC-N: That was 1982. I went to Italy where the film was being edited by Bruno Barreto, the director, and got some notes from him. Then I went to Rio to work with Jobim himself. He gave me the melodies and then would say, "Oh, that part here? Use that melody there." Then he gave me free