

Claudio Slon

The Master Of *Brazilian*

Jazz

by Kevin Winard

Claudio Slon may not be a household name among drummers, but chances are you've heard him on record at some time or another. The artists he's worked with are a who's who of Brazilian, jazz, and popular music. In his thirty-plus year career, giants like Frank Sinatra, Herbie Hancock, Sergio Mendes, Ivan Lins, Herbie Mann, Hermeto Pascoal, Dave Grusin, Astrud Gilberto, Joe Pass, Billy Eckstine, Stan Getz, Barry White, Benny Golson, Lee Ritenour, The Jacksons, Clare Fischer, and Antonio Carlos Jobim have hired him for his magic.

Slon's style is fluid, grooving, and always musical. He has influenced *numerous* Brazilian drummers. In fact, if you ever have the chance to ask a Brazilian musician about him, he'll simply say that Claudio is the best. You'll undoubtedly also hear, "He has the greatest feel of them all!"

Claudio is one of those players who, when you watch him, doesn't look like he's moving at all. But when you close your eyes, you're amazed at the sounds and grooves that are coming out. And for some reason, when Claudio plays you can't stop moving your body—or smiling. No question, this is a master of the drums. The feel, the time, and the dynamics are all so deep that you wish the song he's playing will never end.

Claudio was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina and then raised in São Paulo, Brazil. After living in Los Angeles for thirty years, he now resides in Denver, Colorado. Claudio's a humble man who always puts the music first, and he always imparts insightful perspective on music, business, and life. During a recent trip to the mile-high city I had the opportunity to sit with the famed drummer, have dinner (he cooks a *mean* black beans and rice), and talk about his incredible career.