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Liner Notes for Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Stone Flower"

(which were translated into Japanese and published in the Japanese reissue of the "Stone Flower" CD).

Antonio Carlos Brasileiro de Almeida Jobim (1927-1994) was, by far, the most important composer born in Brazil in the Twentieth Century. He was Brazil's most prolific composer too, as well as the main composer of the bossa nova era. But his immense work transcended the bossa nova boundaries, influencing jazz and classical artists.

Jobim started his career in the late Forties, working as a piano player in Rio de Janeiro's nightclubs. In 1952, he got a job as arranger for the Continental label, also beginning to write songs with another talented pianist, Newton Mendonça. Jobim's main works in the Fifties were "Sinfonia do Rio Janeiro" (an extended symphonic piece in honor of his native city, in 1954), the score for the stage play "Orfeu da Conceição" in 1956, and the soundtrack - along with songs by Luiz Bonfá and Antonio Maria - for the movie "Black Orpheus" in 1959, a huge success all over the world.

One year before, in 1958, Jobim wrote all the songs and the arrangements for an album by songstress Elizeth Cardoso, "Canção do Amor Demais", which featured João Gilberto's uncredited guitar on two tracks. One of them, "Chega de Saudade", became a legendary recording, considered officially as the first bossa nova recording. The following year, with the release of João Gilberto's debut solo album, also titled "Chega de Saudade" and also arranged by Jobim, the bossa nova craze was born.

After the famous Bossa Nova Concert in Carnegie Hall, in 1962, Jobim's impact in the jazz world increased. His song "Desafinado", was already a No. 1 Pop Hit in the Billboard charts, recorded by Stan Getz and Charlie Byrd in their landmark album "Jazz Samba", produced by Creed Taylor, then the A&R for Verve Records. Creed attended the Carnegie Hall concert and soon started to develop an auspicious collaboration with Jobim.

Firstly, Creed hired Jobim to play as sideman in the Stan Getz/Luiz Bonfá album, "Jazz Samba Encore!", in February 1983. It was followed by the stunning Stan Getz/João Gilberto collaboration on

"Getz/Gilberto", recorded in March 1963 with Jobim on the piano. Released one year later, this million-selling album won four Grammy Awards (plus three other nominations), remaining 96 weeks on Billboard's pop charts, reaching No. 2. Its main track, "The Girl from Ipanema", a Jobim song, became an instant hit, launching the careers of singers João and Astrud Gilberto.

In the meantime, Creed Taylor signed Jobim as a solo artist for Verve, recording "The Composer of Desafinado, Plays" in May 1963. In June 1964, Jobim was the guest guitarist on two tracks of Gary McFarland's "Soft Samba" album. Some years later, when Creed left Verve to create his own production company CTI (as a kind of jazz division at A&M Records), he signed Jobim again. Then came the "Wave" album, whose title tune soon became a jazz standard.

The next Taylor/Jobim meeting was in March 1970, when the producer had transformed CTI into a completely independent label. But both Creed and Jobim owed an album to A&M. So, they decided to record two albums during the same sessions: "Tide" for A&M, and "Stone Flower" for CTI. "For many years people thought they had been recorded in different months, as separate projects", says Eumir Deodato, who arranged the tracks used in the two albums. "Creed wanted us to keep it as a secret, but the truth is that he picked the songs he wanted in each album. All the basic tracks were done in four sessions, at Van Gelder studio in Passaic (he had not moved to Englewood Cliffs yet), one in March 16, three on April 23, 24 and 29. Later on, I overdubbed the orchestra (strings and horns) on May 8, 20 and 22."

In the many times I met Jobim, he referred to "Stone Flower" as one of his favorite albums ever. "I think that it still sounds very modern", Jobim told me proudly when we met for the last time, in October 1994, during the sessions I produced for Ithamara Koorax's "Red River" album (King KICP 497). Unfortunately, it became Jobim's last recording session.

Now, when Susumu Morikawa prepares this new 24-bit reissue of "Stone Flower", I'm sure it is the most creative and sophisticated album Jobim ever made. Surrounded by an incredible cast of players, he performs a wonderful repertoire (without the ups and downs of "Wave") superbly arranged by Deodato. It is important to note that Deodato's debut album "Inutil Paisagem", cut in 1964, was entirely dedicated to Jobim's songs. Since then, the oldest master

became a fan of the new genius, inviting Deodato to arrange the soundtrack album of the movie "Garota de Ipanema" in 1967, while Deodato was still living in Brazil. They worked together again in the USA on Frank Sinatra's album "Sinatra & Company" (recorded in 1969, released in 1971), and on the soundtrack for the movie "The Adventurers", recorded in London for the Paramount label in late 1969. Then came the sessions which originated "Tide" and "Stone Flower", this magnificent album that includes the following tracks:

1. Tereza My Love - A lovely bossa-oriented tune dedicated to Tereza Hermany, his wife at that time. The sound of João Palma's bass drum establishes the perfect beat, while Urbie Green's velvety trombone "sings" the melody. The solos are by Green and Jobim, with the composer playing piano in his minimalist single-note style with charming bass flutes in the background.

2. Children's Games - A theme originally composed for "The Adventurers" soundtrack, got its title because it was used in a scene in which the children played in a garden. This jazzy waltz was later retitled "Double Rainbow" when Gene Lees added lyrics in 1974. Deodato plays guitar, while Jobim plays piano and whistles in unison.

3. Choro - A beautiful piece inspired by the old Brazilian musical style of the same style, which developed in the '20s. Jobim, on piano, is backed only by Ron Carter, João Palma, and percussionists Airto (on the tambourine) and Everaldo Ferreira (playing in a matchbox!) This song also got another title some years later, "Garoto", as a tribute to a great Brazilian guitarist of the '40s.

4. Brazil - The only non-Jobim song in the album, it was written by Ary Barroso in 1939. A big hit for Carmen Miranda in the USA, "Brazil", aka "Aquarela do Brasil", was featured in the Disney movie "Saludos, Amigos" in 1943, the same year Miranda sang it on "The Gang's All Here". Jobim sings with uncanny intimacy and plays Rhodes electric piano with a peculiar swing, propelled by an infectious samba beat sustained with great ability by drummer João Palma, a true sorcerer with the brushes. Recently, Deodato arranged another fantastic version of "Brazil", included on Ithamara Koorax's "Serenade in Blue" album (KICP 696).

5. Stone Flower - Built up over a repetitive rhythm figure called "maracatu", including some Brazilian folk motives on its melodic

line, "Stone Flower" features veteran violinist Harry Lookofsky (then concertmaster of the NY Symphony). There is a quote from Villa-Lobos' "Na Corda da Viola", with Airto playing the "maracatu" rhythm on a percussion instrument from Africa called "agogo" during the intro, and later using the "caxixi".

6. Amparo - Another song from "The Adventurers". Its title is the name of the main female character of the movie. A classical piece heard in a haunting arrangement by Deodato, features Jobim on piano and Hubert Laws on flute. Jobim retitled the song for "Olha Maria" when Chico Buarque added lyrics in 1971.

7. Andorinha - João Palma provides a very subtle bossa beat for this track, which features Jobim's economic approach on the Fender Rhodes piano. Once again, Urbie Green's trombone shines in a very sophisticated and cool performance.

8. God and the Devil in the Land of the Sun - Titled "Bitter Victory" and used as the theme for a war scene on the original "The Adventurers" soundtrack, showcases Deodato's fiery brass arrangement. Joe Farrell takes the solo spot on the soprano sax.

9. Sabiá - Its title is the name of a Brazilian bird which sings beautifully. Originally composed for a Song Contest called III FIC, in 1968, it was performed by the vocal duo of Cynara & Cybele. This soulful ballad with lyrics by Brazilian pop star Chico Buarque won the first prize, and Deodato's score was awarded the best arrangement. However, the decision received a big hiss from the audience, because most people had another song, a political one, as their favorite. The very dramatic feeling was heightened for this 1970 recording, with drummer João Palma adding a bossa beat. The perfect ending for a landmark album.

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