

Transcription of the liner notes written by Claudio Slon:

I've been recording for Vartan Tonoian's record labels and performing at his Jazz Clubs for several years now; he is a real Ambassador of Brazilian music with an extensive knowledge of its history and greatest interpreters. During the years of our association, he kept asking me to contact one of his favorite Brazilian pianists and composers, João Donato, who used to be my neighbor in Los Angeles, and got him to record for Vartan's new label Elephant Records. After trying for years to locate João in Brazil, I finally got him and Vartan together.

This CD is the first result of that meeting; we went to Rio de Janeiro to record [with] Donato and spent ten days there - four of them at the studio, and the rest eating and drinking with old friends, enjoying Ipanema, Leblon, and Copacabana beaches, more eating and drinking followed by . . . more eating and drinking; you get the picture.

I recorded and performed in the 60s and 70s with the great Antonio Carlos Jobim, and after the sadness of losing him, I can feel a little better knowing that his legacy is carried forward by João. His melodic simplicity, inspiration and economy of notes matches that of Jobim (who once told me he didn't compose, he just "threw chords and notes out the window").

Brazil is a unique country, and its people are unlike any other; their music reflects that, and João Donato is also unique. You can detect his Cuban influence, and his sparse but inspired melodic writing is the best that Brazil has shown to the world since the beginning of the bossa-nova movement, which Donato co-founded with Jobim and João Gilberto.

I want to dedicate my playing on this CD to two creators of modern Brazilian drumming who aren't with us any more: Milton Banana and Edison Machado. With all my love and respect.

Hope you enjoy this CD - it's definitely not created by musicians that are practicing scales and trying to show how fast they can play. Music was never about that; somehow we all got lost.

Welcome back!!!
--Claudio Slon

P.S. My gratitude to Paiste and Steve Riskin for supplying me with their newest line of cymbals.