

## JAZZ

## Turbulent saxophone from Brazil

By Jack Lloyd  
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

When the topic is Brazilian music, one is likely to think of gently throbbing sensual rhythms and lilting melodies — the "Girl From Ipanema," perhaps.

There may be some of that when saxophonist Ivo Perelman performs Saturday at the Painted Bride Art Center, but don't count on it — especially if Perelman concentrates on his *Children of Ibeji* album (Enja Records).

The sounds produced by Perelman are not those of the bossa nova. Although he is said to have an affinity for children's music and Brazilian folk songs, his interpretations can be downright turbulent.

And although he may have been influenced by Stan Getz, he is more often compared to Albert Ayler.

Had it not been for his musical curiosity and improvisation, Perelman's music undoubtedly would have had much in common with what was coming out of Rio in the '60s.

Perelman, 33, was born in Sao Paulo to a Polish father and Brazilian mother of Russian descent. His mother, a pianist and music teacher, encouraged her son. At 9, he already was studying classical guitar, but when he reached 15, he needed to explore musically and went on to study piano, violin, cello and trombone.

Perelman then shifted to the clarinet and his first taste of jazz, which led to his performance in a Sao Paulo Dixieland band. Soon he switched to the tenor saxophone and cruised Sao Paulo in search of recordings by John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Hank Mobley, Dexter Gordon and, of course, Getz.

In search of a jazz base, Perelman moved to New York in 1981 and then on to Boston, Montreal and Italy, where he looked up with another wandering Brazilian, guitarist Irio de Paulo.

In 1986, Perelman relocated to Los Angeles, where he met and studied flute with Marty Krystall. Three years later, Krystall produced Perelman's self-titled debut album for K2B2 Records. For these sessions, devoted to interpretations of Brazilian children's songs, a solid crew of musicians was recruited — both in Brazilian and contemporary American jazz.

The release of this recording established Perelman as a potent new force in jazz. He was hailed in some quarters as the most important saxophonist to come out of Latin America since Gato Barbieri.

After returning to Brazil in 1991, he read a newspaper account of a 9-year-old boy who had narrowly escaped a group execution by a paramilitary unit. He began asking questions and was told that homeless street children often resorted to theft and prostitution to survive and that businessmen, regarding the children as nuisances, frequently hired the paramilitaries to dispose of



The children of Brazil are a concern of Ivo Perelman, who was born in Sao Paulo. He plays Saturday at the Painted Bride.

them.

That was the inspiration for *Children of Ibeji*.

It isn't bossa nova. But it is powerful.

Ivo Perelman with pianist Joanne Brackeen, bassist Fred Hopkins, drummer Billy Hart and an array of Brazilian percussionists, at the Painted Bride Art Center, 230 Vine St., at 8 and 10 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$12. Phone: 215-925-9914.