

## Perelman Stuns the U.S.

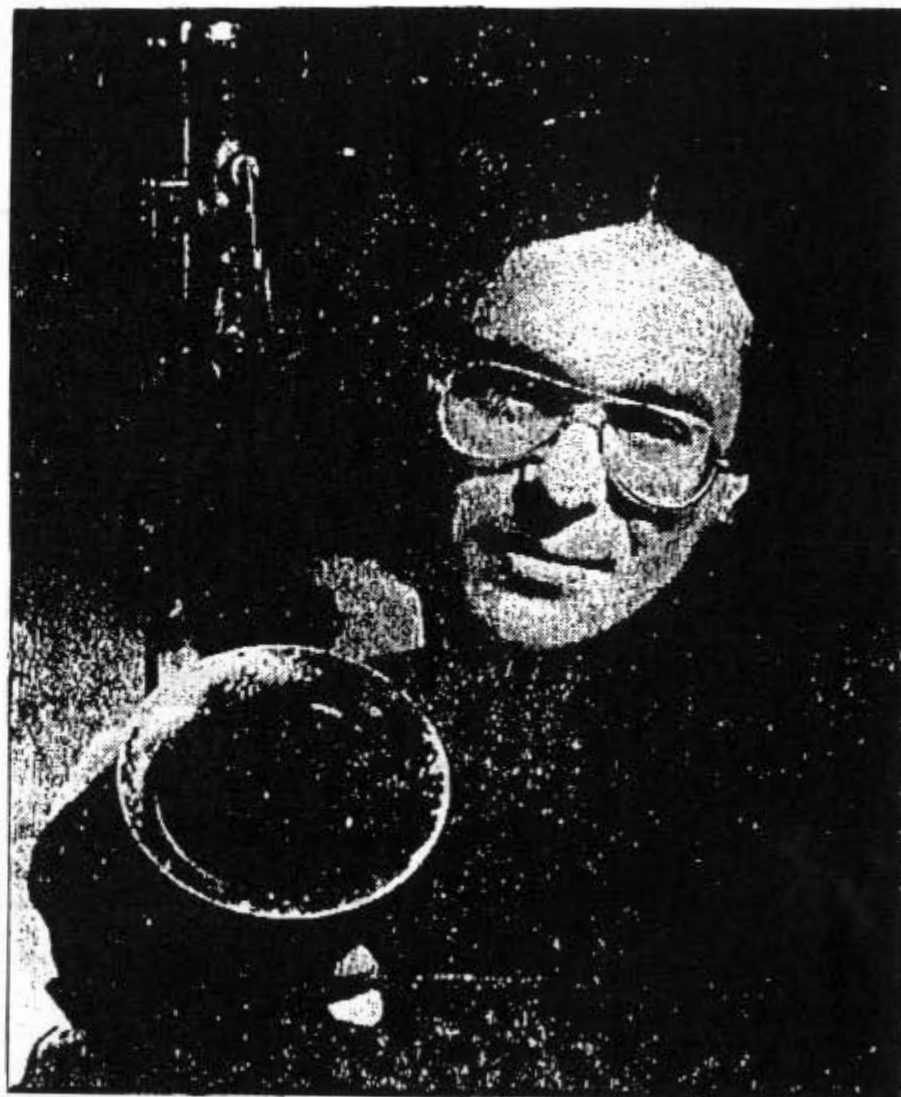
"If the bossa nova movement had produced only this record, it would still be fully justified," *Down Beat* magazine wrote, in the early 1960's, referring to the instrumental debut album by Tom Jobim in the U.S., *The composer of Desafinado plays*. The same magazine, an invincible fortress of American jazz, is again piling on the superlatives for a Brazilian musician in its latest edition. Only this time it actually is an unknown, the tenor sax player from Sao Paulo, Ivo Perelman, 29 years old, who is making his debut on a small release under the K2B2 label, assisted by stars like Airlo on percussion, Flora Purim on vocals, John Patitucci on bass (he was a sensation here during Chick Corea's Electric Band Set at Free Jazz), Don Preston on keyboard (he played with Frank Zappa and Carla Bley), Elaine Elias on piano and former Weather Reporter Peter Erskine on drums. His CD, *Ivo*, released at the end of February, which adds a free jazz twist to some Brazilian round songs, plus the tango *El dia en que me quieras* (The Day You Loved Me) and the classic *Cois* (The Dock) by Milton Nascimento, was given a four-and-a-half star rating out of a maximum of five stars by the magazine, which places it between very good and excellent on the ratings scale.

A skillful former guitarist, well-versed in both Back and Villa Lobos, Perelman learned to play the cello, clarinet, trombone and piano before moving to the U.S. in 1981 to study at the famous Berkeley School in Boston. But he escaped the overly sanitized layout of that establishment, attaching himself to more Libertarian influences, from the bitter sax

of Albert Ayler (1936-70) to the anarchic sax of Pharoah Sanders. For critic Bill Mikowski, of *Down Beat*, this lineage does not prevent the emergence of a true and original sound: "he has one of the most distinctive and majestic tenor sounds to appear in recent years." For Brazilian listeners (the release here is still uncertain) Ivo offers what could be called a harmonious package of both the strange and the familiar. If the free and unconstructed form of *Escravos do Jó* (submerged under the flow of bubbling percussive vocals by Flora Purim) comes close to being an atonal paroxysm, exploring the single melodic line, *Nesta Rua*, on the other hand, (one Flora caresses from the very beginning) continues the lyricism born of the round song, even while the improvisation tunes into another melodic line.

We are not startled by the insertion of *El dia en que me quieras* between *Ciranda cirandinha* (with a piquant samba beat) and *O cravo e a rosa* (The Carnation and the Rose) (done in Carnival march style); Perelman's delicate (and even nostalgic) playing, combined with Eliane Elias' acoustic piano, avoids any *Gato Barbierisms*. Ivo does not overcome the temptation of harshness by mere iconoclasm; it must be made mellifluous by small bits heard in the folk repertoire. This makes his purified brass sounds slide back and forth between naive smoothness and contrived chaos - - - like Jobim, Perelman has studied architecture. His bold edifice of sound combines both solidly and shock. Everything that Brazil exports does not end with a lambada. (Tárik de Souza)

Rating \*\*\*



Ivo Perelman releases a record in the United States and is applauded by the critics.