

RECORDS

Ivo records Brazilian-style "free jazz" in the U.S.A.

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Local Reporter

IVO - Imported CD by the Sao Paulo saxophonist Ivo Perelman. Producer: Marty Krystall. Sold in the United States under the K2B2 Records Label.

Riding the wave of interest that Brazilian music is currently awakening in the U.S., Sao Paulo saxophonist Ivo Perelman, 29, is trying a new variant. Instead of the "Brazilian fusion" so common with the instrumentalists and groups that have appeared there, he is proclaiming his difference with a "free jazz" rendition of songs created in Brazil. At first this seems peculiar. But the first hearing reveals a discovery. The record has been played on American radio stations and was recommended by "Billboard," the music periodical.

Ivo moved to the U.S. in 1981 to study at the famous Berkeley School in Boston. In Brazil, he was already playing Vill-Lobos and Bach on the guitar at nine years old. Then he tried other instruments, including the piano, violin cello, trombone, and clarinet, until he decided upon the tenor sax. The more traditional teaching methods at Berkeley were not his only influence. He also studied sax with Joe Allard in New York and spent some time in Italy, where he played professionally. Then in 1986 he moved to Los Angeles and began to study flute with Marty Krystall, who produced his record and is the founder of K2B2 Records. [See sidebar text.]

For a debut album, the list of guest musicians on "Ivo" is

surprising. In addition to Airto Moreira (percussion), Flora Purim (vocals), and Elaine (piano), Brazilians who have settled in the U.S., he is accompanied by drummer Peter Erskine (formerly of the Weather Report), bassists John Patitucci (of Chick Corea's Electric Band) and Buell Neidlinger (who played with Ceel Taylor and Steve Lacy, among others in the vanguard), as well as pianist Don Preston (who previously played with Frank Zappa and Carla Bley).

Sao Paulo saxophonist Ivo Perelman, from the inside cover of his CD, released in the United States under the K2B2 label.

Even in the midst of these wild ones, Ivo manages to steal the show. His interpretations sound somewhat as if American saxophonist Albert Ayler were living in Brazil and were to increase his repertoire with folk melodies and lullabies such as "Ciranda Cirandinha" or "Teresinha de Jesus." All of this is handled with the fragmentation and atonalism of the "free jazz" from the 1960's.

Ayler's music is not remembered as being as rich as Ivo's tenor sax, which is more polished than the American's music. The similarity lies in the two musicians' creative processes. They start with simple, whistled melodies, from which they improvise, adding ecstatic yelling, howling, and roaring, which puts them in the category of "avant-garde." But even before he heard Ayler's "free jazz," Ivo was certainly familiar with the "free music" of Hermeto Pascoal, the "sorcerer" from Alagoas.



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This is shown in the opening cut, "Escravos de Jo" (Slaves of Jo), which showcases Flora Purim's rather unrestrained vocals and a quasi "free" solo by Ivo. In the next cut, Flora adds drama to the single "Nesta Rua" (On This Street), making Ivo's tenor sax improvisation a more passionate one. But this version of "O Cravo e a Rosa" (The Carnation and the Rose) led by Airto's well-accentuated drums, is still clear. Ivo's sax moves

out of its central theme and becomes more and more crazy, until it is almost lost in the chaos, pushed aside by Airto and by Preston's piano playing.

But Ivo does not forget more lyrical atmospheres. This is the case with the tango "El Dia en Que Me Quieras" (The Day You Loved Me) (by Gardel and Le Pera), in which he creates an emotional duet with Eliane Elias' piano, without abandoning his slightly rustic sound.

This lyricism is even stronger in the final cut, "Ponta de Areia" (Bridge of Sand) (by Milton Nascimento), with Eliane lightly touching the notes of the melody in a solo which brings Keith Jarrett to mind. In the final coda, the melody is transformed into a soothing lullaby, which was not done with any of the other cuts. Thus the listener may be reminded that they are simple children's lullabies.