



"you can hear the difference"

SUMMER 12

Ana Caram Sings Jobim

by Steve Sacks

One cold winter evening in 1980, an attractive young singer-guitarist fresh off the plane from Brazil visited me at my Greenwich Village apartment. "Teach me harmony!" she pleaded, so we sat down and studied *Meditation*, one of Antonio Carlos Jobim's bossa nova masterpieces. Then she started playing me her own compositions. After listening for a few minutes, I was ready to ask her for lessons.

It's now spring of 1992, and Ana Caram has already recorded many of those wonderful songs of hers for Chesky Records (*Rio*



The Other Side Of Jobim Ana Caram
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After Dark, Chesky JD28 and *Amazonia*, Chesky JD45). So it is entirely fitting that she now returns to the repertoire of the aforementioned Mr. Jobim, by far the best-known and best-loved of all contemporary Brazilian popular composers.

Jobim was already well-known in Brazil as a songwriter by the time the bossa nova boom of the 1960's brought him the international prominence he had long deserved. The Stan Getz/

Astrud Gilberto version of *The Girl from Ipanema* reached number one on the Hit Parade, and nearly every jazz and popular musician was recording *Wave*, *Desafinado*, *Corcovado* and other Jobim classics. Despite (or perhaps because of) bossa nova's huge success, some critics condemned this "new thing" as background music. Those who were willing to listen more carefully, however, could sense Jobim's deep roots in American popular music, classical music (especially the work of his compatriot Heitor Villa-Lobos) and Brazilian popular styles such as samba and *choro*.

Jobim's musical roots, stimulated by his unique melodic, harmonic and poetic gifts, have continued to bear musical fruit just as rich and satisfying today as thirty years ago. Given the phenomenal skill and uncompromisingly distinctive personality evident in his work in many different styles, it is no wonder that Jobim has long been known as "the Gershwin of Brazil."

Ana first demonstrated her long-standing admiration and respect for Jobim's music on *Rio After Dark*, in two duet performances with the master himself which were among that album's high points. A hard act to follow as tributes go, but in this new album, she has in fact outdone herself. Rather than simply rehashing the standards,

she has carefully chosen eleven lesser-known but equally beautiful compositions in several styles, from many periods of Jobim's career. Hence, *The Other Side of Jobim*, a logical step forward not only for the artist but for Chesky Records, which since its inception has released great Brazilian and Latin-American music of many genres.

Ana has been similarly thoughtful in choosing the collaborators to help her bring these songs to life. Foremost among them is guitarist and arranger Sergio Assad. A Brazilian now living in France, Sergio has become the talk of the guitar world in ten years thanks to his amazingly virtuosic and sensitive work with his brother, fellow guitarist Odair Assad. Every track on this album is tribute to the flawless fingers, incisive musical mind, and warm Brazilian heart of this truly outstanding musician.

Rounding out the rhythm section are two talented and versatile players well-known to Chesky Records listeners. Among the many career credits of bassist David Finck are his recordings with Chesky artists ranging from Paquito D'Rivera to Kenny Rankin to Orquesta Nova, as well as with Ana on her two previous albums. Percussionist Jamey Haddad has contributed drums and percussion to the Chesky releases of guitarist Bruce Dunlap and singer-songwriter Sara K.

The three additional players were chosen by Ana and Sergio to bring out a wide range of musical colors, ranging from chamber music to *chorinho* to jazz. Cellist Erik Friedlander has recorded with Chesky artists Orquesta Nova and Fred Hersch. Oboist Matthew Dimmock performs regularly with the Orpheus Chamber Ensemble. Lastly, the writer has had the privilege of playing saxophone and/or flute on all of Ana's albums, including a pre-Chesky effort recorded in Brazil.

Recalling his first meeting with Ana some years ago, Jobim says, "I could see at once she was a very talented girl." Since then, Ana's artistry has blossomed, as has her career at home and abroad. How appropriate, seeing that she was encouraged so early by the composer considered one of Brazil's living national treasures. How appropriate that she now pays tribute to him with *The Other Side of Jobim*.

