

Cross-pollination enriches jazz in two nations

JAZZ BEAT

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Ever since Stan Getz "discovered" the enchanting rhythms of Brazil's bossa nova nearly 30 years ago, there has been a cross-pollination with our jazz styles that has enriched the musical scene of both nations.

Among the most recent arrivals on the New York scene is vocalist and guitarist Ana Caram, whose first American album, "Rio After Dark," has just been released on Chesky Records.

Caram hit the Big Apple in a big way, making her first appearance at Carnegie Hall, as guest vocalist of reedman Paquito D'Rivera during the 1988 JVC Festival. They had met during the Sea Jazz Festival in Finland.

In Brazil, Caram had received encouragement in her career from legendary composer Antonio Carlos Jobim. Both D'Rivera and Jobim make guest appearances on her debut album.

Jobim plays piano and joins Caram on a vocal duet on his "Meditation" and "Looks Like December," while D'Rivera's alto sax enhances her rendering of "La Cumbia." D'Rivera switches to clarinet as he duels at

rapid tempos with Caram through a melody which displays a variety of samba styles.

At slow or rapid tempos, Caram's phrasing is superb when she sings in Portuguese. In English, she seems a little less comfortable, except in delivery of her own lovely ballad, "Rainbow," on which album producer David Chesky provides piano backing.

David Finck contributes some fine work on alto flute on several selections.

Also from Chesky Records comes the first American recording in 15 years by Brazilian guitarist Luiz Bonfá, who was an early collaborator with Getz.

Bonfá is best known for composing the soundtrack for the film "Black Orpheus." "Non Stop to Brazil" features 15 of his compositions, including two from the film, "Samba De Orfeo," and "Morning of Carnival." The latter, one of the most recorded songs in the history of music, is better known here as

"Day In the Life of a Fool."

Bonfá's acoustic guitar is backed only by percussion work of Cafe (who also appears on the Caram album). Guitarist Gene Bertonecini joins Bonfá on the title track and two others, including the jazz standard "Gentle Rain."