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## Bossacucanova goes back to Brazil

After a successful tour in Europe and Japan, the group - along with veteran Roberto Menescal - goes back to Brazil to present *Brasilidade*, their rich fusion of bossa nova and electronica.

Marco Antonio Barbosa

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To disagree with Tom Jobim could be a sin. But if it's for a good reason... The members of the group Bossacucanova believe in the maestro's words: "the better way for Brazilian music is the airport". But the directions were different for the "boys" from BCN; they went to Europe, Japan and then to Brazil. After almost one year of the BCN's second album release, *Brasilidade*, the Brazilian label Trama finally released the long-awaited Brazilian edition. *Brasilidade* is being released at the same time when the band goes back to Brazil, after a series of gigs in Europe and Japan. In the European tour, the trio had the presence of Roberto Menescal who made the chain between the classic bossa nova and that new kind of bossa. The group has already made a gig in Brazilian grounds, at the Ballroom in Rio de Janeiro. And it's only the beginning of a series of gigs around the country.

"I played with them before, on a song called *O Barquinho* from their first effort (*Bossacucanova Vol. 1*) and it was the only song with "real instruments". Then, when they invited me to play on the second album, it was all natural", Menescal explains. After the *Brasilidade* recording sessions, the "all natural" turned into a true reality on stage. The bass-player Márcio (Menescal's son), the keyboardist Alexandre Moreira and the DJ Marcelinho DaLua didn't hesitate to call the veteran guitarist/composer to be with them on the international tour, organized by the label Crammed Discs from Belgium.

"*Brasilidade* was conceived to be played alive", Márcio Menescal talks about the directions they took until the new tour. "The first album was more electronic, more *acid-jazz*. The Crammed Discs' staff suggested that we should release a *more playable*



Bossacucanova



Roberto Menescal

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album. They said that we should sound more Brazilian than ever. That explains the fact of a high number of BCN' s compositions included in the new effort". Márcio points to the fact that the first record basically contains versions of bossa nova gems. Now, *Brasilidade* features three unreleased themes (*Guanabara*, *Brasilidade*, *Mais Perto do Mar*); and, of course, the magic presence of Roberto Menescal.

"When we went on the road we thought in Menescal, because he is an important key name on the album", Márcio speaks. "In 2000, we' d participate on a gig which celebrated the 40 years of bossa nova and we played live with him for the first time. It worked very well!". The composer of *Telefone* and *Rio* gives us his version: "All the three members of BCN have worked with me, in my studio or in my label Albatroz. When I joined them on the road, they asked me to play and act naturally. I didn' t change anything. I just played what I play in years."

The veteran Menescal explains: "It was very interesting to see, in Japan, a whole generation interested in jazz and bossa nova. There are clubs which play only those sounds. There, this new generation is interested not only in rhythm, but in melody and harmony also". About the relationship with the "boys" from BCN, Menescal tells a funny story: "We called a person to decide what we were supposed to dress in the international gigs. And she came with very "straight" clothes and shining shoes. But I always dressed myself in simple clothes and I thought it was weird... and the "boys" began to dress like me, in a simple way". Márcio Menescal comments: "The purpose of this tour was to experiment our sound and our relationship as musicians. It was more successful than we expected. The gigs in Europe, for an exemple, were very pleasant. We did different things related to the album' s structure".

Alive, the eletronic were "economized"; some of the programmed loops were played live by percussionist Siri and the DJ DaLua did the rest using his pick-ups and LPs. Menescal, the father, says: "I wasn' t accustomed in playing so loud. I' m from the bossa nova old school. So, I began a process of adaptation. Later on, when I played with Miéle and Wanda Sá, I missed the loud sound and the silence was very strange for me".

For the gigs in Brazil, Bossacucanova counts on some guest appearences like the singer Cris Delanno (who sings in the tracks *Nós e o Mar*, *Rio* and *Guanabara*). "We' re trying to invite Ed Motta also, who sings *Garota de Ipanema* on the record. "We grab the attention here and overseas, because there is nobody doing what we' re doing", Márcio says. Roberto completes his son' s belief: "The mix of classic bossa nova with modern electronica is unique. I got luck working with BCN and they got luck also. Neither me nor them could do this fusion without each other' s help".

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