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Antonio Carlos Jobim – Stone Flower – CTI Records/Speakers Corner

by Audiophile Audition / May 18, 2018 / [Jazz CD Reviews](#), [SACD & Other Hi-Res Reviews](#)

This vinyl-remastering of classic Jobim is stunning!

Antonio Carlos Jobim – Stone Flower – CTI Records CTI 6002 (1970)/Speakers Corner (2015) 180-gram stereo vinyl, 33:47 ***:**

(Antonio Carlos Jobim – piano, electric piano, guitar, vocals; Eumir Deodato – guitar, arrangements; Ron Carter – bass; Joao Palma – drums; Airto Moreira – percussion; Everaldo Ferreira – percussion; Urbie



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Green – trombone; Joe Farrell – soprano saxophone;
Hubert Laws – flute; Harry Lookofsky – violin)



Antonio Carlos Jobim represents the global face of bossa nova and Brazilian music. While he did not invent the genre, he significantly contributed to its global ascension. Jobim was an early proponent of exposing the instrumentalists and singers of bossa nova to a larger audience. In 1964, his collaboration with Stan Getz and Joao Gilberto (*Getz/Gilberto*), became a sensation winning the Grammy for *Best Album Of The Year*, a feat unheard of for a jazz record. The two singles from *Getz/Gilberto* (“The Girl From Ipanema” and “Corcovado”) were hits and launched the career of Astrid Gilberto. Just over 33 minutes, musical history changed forever. In 1967, *Francis Albert Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim* achieved critical and commercial success injecting the Brazilian artist into American pop culture.

Jobim was known for his sophisticated approach to harmonic structure and understated instrumentals. Many of his compositions became jazz standards. As a solo performer, Jobim released *Wave* on A&M Records in 1967. It featured lush arrangements and cuts like “Wave” and “Triste” are also staples of jazz repertoires. Another breakthrough occurred in 1970 when CTI Records released *Stone Flower*. This project was the perfect blend of Jobim’s musical integrity, Eumir Deodato’s expansive arrangements, rendered by a top-notch cadre of session players, Rudy Van Gelder’s organic engineering and Creed Taylor’s trademark slick production. Jobim is able to transcend the samba and bossa nova genres with graceful musical execution.

Speakers Corner has re-mastered this 1970 milestone to 180-gram audiophile vinyl. If nothing else, Jobim demonstrates that less can be more. Simple instrumentation shines with Deodato’s creative arrangements. The opening track on Side 1 (“Tereza My Love”) glows with elegance as the Brazilian rhythm patterns back Urbie Green’s supple trombone lead. Bass flute accents (Joe Farrell) open the chorus and an continue in a brief call and response with Green. Jobim’s piano solo is concise with single notation, but exudes a compelling resonance. “Children’s Games” exhibits an uptempo 3/4 time signature. Jobim achieves a precise counterpoint to the warm instrumentation by adding whistling to the piano, subtle and yet compelling. The musical flow feels

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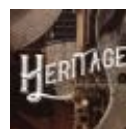


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cinematic and the listener could almost visualize this as a movie context. In a concise 2:05, “Choro” showcases the dynamics of Brazilian jazz. Ron Carter adds to his legendary session work with a deft bass line that wraps around Jobim’s piano. This is melodic composition with soulful articulation. A jaunty cover of “pre-bossa nova” beloved songwriter Ary Barroso’s epic standard “Brazil” is easily the longest track (7:19) on the album. It is full of infectious samba grooves. The percussion is brilliant with Jaoa Palma conducting a master seminar on snare with Airto Moreira or Everaldo Ferreira (maybe both) framing the sweeping, lyrical composition (the only non-Jobim song).

Side 2 opens with the title track. With rich imagery the familiar, hypnotic samba pulse is elegant and playful. There is a flute/piano intro, interesting chord progressions and violin-tinged chorus. This fuller arrangement features potent drums and percussion with a “wall” of flute shadings. All this in 3:18, and that is why “Stone Flower” is among the most enduring of Jobim compositions. “Amparo” is equally stellar but with a different approach. After an urban, jazzy opening, the song emulates a ruminative classical translation with both ominous and lighter moods. The violin/trombone counterpoint is memorable. The unique sharpness in the electric piano tonality is a deft touch. There is a swirling string crescendo before a Broadway-like piano fill that concludes the number. On “Andorinha” the instrumentals bask in a “summer breeze” fluency. Green’s winsome trombone meshes perfectly. While “God And The Devil In The Land Of The Sun” (from the movie, *The Adventurers*) revisits samba structures, Farrel’s improvisational soprano saxophone pierces the spooky reverie. The finale (“Sabia”) gets the full Jobim treatment with rhythm acoustic guitar, flutes, violins and low-key vocals.

The re-mastering of *Stone Flower* to audiophile vinyl is impressive. The nuanced engineering of Rudy Van Gelder is captured with vibrancy and range. The stereo separation is distinct with left-channel percussion and right channel piano in blissful complement. The electric piano tonality is diverse and the trombone is silky smooth. The original artwork, including the silhouette photo of Jobim smoking a hand-rolled cigarette is captured with a glossy finish. The vertical inside gatefold is one more example of why vinyl is resurgent.

TrackList:

Side 1: Tereza My Love; Children’s Games; Choro; Brazil



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Myra Melford –
Snowy Egret
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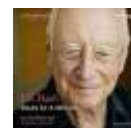
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Santana –
Amigos –
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Side 2: Stone Flower; Amparo; Andorinha; God And The Devil In The Land Of The Sun; Sabia

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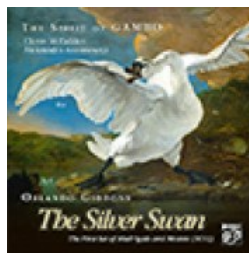
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