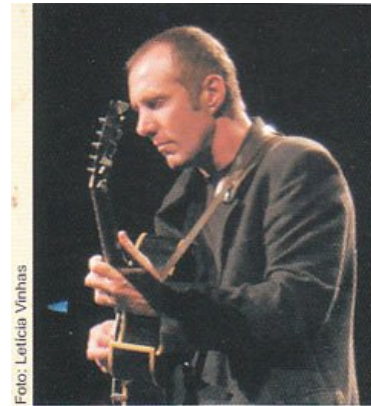


Leticia - an Improvised Trip to Brasil

Antonio Valdetaro's new CD, "**Leticia**," is a brilliant reminder that jazz music is alive and well in Brazil. In the 1960s and '70s, Brazilian jazz became a part of the American pop scene. Many of that South American nation's best players and composers came to the U.S. to mix their native Bossa Nova into the North American jazz culture and sound.

While most Americans are content to dig the expats in our midst, dedicated musicians like guitarist **Antonio Valdetaro** and his "**Grupo**" are playing real and pure Brazilian jazz in their native Rio de Janeiro. The Grupo consisting of pianist **Fábio Leandro**, reedman **Josué dos Santos** on alto sax and flute, the entrancing electric bass work of **Roberto Carvalho**, and **Pepa D'Elia**



keeping a steady, solid drum beat. **Valdetaro** also plays some viola on this Brazilian issued compact disc.

Young guest musicians are showcased on some of the cuts, including trumpeter **Rubinho Antunes**, **Sidiel Vieira** playing contrabass, and **Adriano Trindade**, pictured at a set of drums in the liner notes, but listed as a saxophonist. One older mentor, the late **Ary Dias**, guests as a percussionist.

The musical program kicks off with "**Segura e Sal**," a fast-moving pace-setter for Valdetaro's skilled hands. The sixteen-bar bridge ascends for its first half, then retraces the progression back down to the original theme. Bassist Carvalho contributes a couple righteous choruses of quick string work into the instrument's higher range. Carvalho's solo here moves with an agility more like guitar than the larger electric bass.

The title tune, "**Leticia**," proves a fine showcase for Valdetaro's guitar. Right from the solo intro-cadenza of runs and progressions, this haunting melody grabs attention. The piano and bass sneak in behind the guitar line for eight bars before Valdetaro's guitar is joined by D'Elia's drumbeat and the alto sax of dos Santos' to state the unfolding mid-tempo melody. "**Leticia**" features excellent solo work by both alto sax and guitar.

A special favorite is “**Concorrência Desleal.**” This melodic line moves like a speeding locomotive driven by unison guitar and flute. dos Santos plays a masterful flute to accompany Valdetaro’s guitar on the melody, but later does his solo work on soprano sax, followed by some very tasty piano improv by Leandro.

On two of the tracks, “**Deixa Estar**” and “**Moça Bonita,**” guest trumpet man Rubinho Antunes joins Valdetaro and the Grupo. Antunes has a nice, fat trumpet tone, almost sounding like a flugelhorn on his solo passages, and blending nicely with the guitar on the melodies.

Antonio Valdetaro has assembled a very fine group of high-caliber musicians on this recording, and Valdetaro is an extremely creative and interesting improviser providing superb guitar work throughout the session.

The liner notes for this CD are all in Portuguese, which are difficult to follow with a limited knowledge of that language. Possibly a U. S. version could be marketed in America to aid in the enjoyment of this fine musical work?

“Leticia” is published independently in Brasil, and can be purchase here in the U. S. through Amazon.com and cduniverse.com. If you’re a fan of the Bossa Nova rhythms, this CD is a “must have” in your collection. And, “**Leticia**” is well worth the price even if you just like swinging, well-constructed jazz.