Transcription of Interview with Roberto Nascimento, Gabriel Pissolati, and
Gustavo Brunelli Valim (English Translation)

Who are you and what do you do?

Roberto Nascimento: My name is Roberto and I am an exchange student. I study biology.

Gabriel Pissolati: My name is Gabriel. I am here studying English and, if everything works out after that, medicine.

Gustavo Brunelli Valim: My name is Gustavo. I study English, and I also intend to study medicine later.

And where are you from?

RN: I am from Fortaleza, in Ceará.

GP: I am from Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

GBV: I am from São Paulo, Brazil.

What is the music like where you live?

RN: The music in Fortaleza has a lot of influence from forró, which is very local and traditional in the Northwestern region, and reggae is also very popular, depending on where you go. There is also a lot of electronic music that is played in the United States,
but in traditional restaurants it is more traditional music like forró, and there is also beach music. We associate the beach with samba or reggae.

GP: I believe that the music in Belo Horizonte is, as in all of Brazil, very mixed. There are a lot of different types of music—lots of music from Brazil and lots of international music like hip-hop, electronic music, and things like that. I believe that in Belo Horizonte people listen to samba and pagode more. I believe that is what I see the most in college, but I’m not sure if it’s because that’s what I look for the most or because that’s what’s most present.

GBV: Well in São Paulo there is also a mixture of music, but what I hear the most and what is most popular among young people there is college sertaneja music. But many people also like reggae and pagode. I believe those are the three most popular styles there.

**What is the importance of samba where you live?**

RN: It is very important. It is a custom of the people. For example, close to my home there is a restaurant where they have samba every Thursday, and caranguejo, too. This is very common in restaurants there. Every neighborhood has a day for samba. I think people really leave their houses when there is samba. Samba is very traditional for Sunday barbeques. That’s the day when samba is played the most.

GP: I believe that samba is important in Belo Horizonte as it is in all of Brazil. I believe that samba is important in every region of Brazil. And as [Roberto] said, every
neighborhood and restaurant hosts a customary samba show. Samba is important in society and in the lives of Brazilians. It is very present. It is more important in Rio de Janeiro, but it has importance [in Belo Horizonte as well], I believe.

GBV: I believe that samba is especially present during Carnival because it is the focus of Carnival.

**In your opinion, which type of music best represents your culture?**

RN: In Fortaleza, I have to talk about *forró*. *Forró* was born in the Northeast and it changed a lot. I remember that when my parents were my age *forró* was more familiar. The lyrics of the songs were more romantic. Nowadays, it isn’t as familiar. It’s more sexual these days. The Northeast has a very large plurality of music, but when you go into the interior of the state *forró* is more traditional.

**Why do you think that the music changed?**

RN: A few years ago the music got more sensual. I believe that twenty years ago it was very uncommon to see couples making out on television or doing other racy stuff. Today it’s quite normal. And as the media became less conservative, music accompanied that movement, or perhaps the music became less conservative and the media followed suit. I don’t know which happened first. I don’t know why but you can see today that the media and music are much less conservative.

**And, in your opinion, which type of music best represents your culture?**

GP: In my opinion [the music that best represents my culture] is samba. I like samba a lot. It makes me proud. I used to listen to samba frequently and I believe it is the identity
of the Brazilian. At a samba performance different social classes and different people are united because that is something common among Brazilians.

Interview with Curtis Pierre at Casa Samba

Group: Hi! How are you?

Curtis (C): Hi, good evening! I’m good!

Group: Thank you for coming.

C: Of course!

Justin (J): Where did you learn Samba?

C: I learned Samba in Brazil. I had a teacher, who I brought to my home in New Orleans, more than 15 years ago. He didn’t know how to speak English, and I didn’t know how to speak Portuguese. He taught me the basics of Samba, but many other things too. But I learned this way. I already knew how to play before this. But that’s not exactly right, you know? I already discovered Samba in Detroit. I heard it on a Batucada disc and I liked it. I listened I listened I listened and I listened, and after, I discovered that this was my path.

J: Do you think Samba has been exploited for tourism in Brazil, and how has it changed through the years?
C: It depends on which change you’re talking about. The largest change in Samba was in Brazil and the tempo. In the past the tempo was [demonstrates the slower older tempo with his voice]. Now the tempo is [demonstrates the faster tempo with his voice]-because the Samba schools are bigger now. Before they had 2000 people and now they have 4500 people in each school. Also they play the tempo to pass through the Sambadrome. Before they had to do it in an hour and 30 minutes. Now they only have 70 minutes.

J: And do you think that the music and culture of Samba has been exploited for tourism, Carnaval, and that sort of thing?

C: I think that it’s not only for the tourist. For the tourist it was the government, you know? The people who are exploiting it for the tourist are the government. But for Samba, it’s normal. A person has a love for Samba. They [sambistas] don’t do it for the tourist. They do it for their hearts. They like Samba. They like to do it. Like here, like second line. Here more tourists like to see it. But they do it for another reason. They love this kind of thing.

J: What similarities do you see between Samba and the traditional music of New Orleans?
C: For me, it’s a marriage, a natural marriage. The problem is that many people try to force this marriage. But they aren’t married to Samba. They’re married to music in New Orleans. You know? They’re hearing it but they’re not married to it.

Julie: Do Brazilians here participate in Casa Samba?

C: Sometimes. Many of the Brazilians here, they came here to work. You know? They don’t have time for Samba. My group is not a Samba school, but it’s similar to one. But I have some Brazilians involved in my group.

J: Well, I don’t think we have any more questions. Thank you so much for talking with us!

C: Of course!