

# Sonic Intercultures, Turntable Interfaces – Transcript

*Cândida Rose Baptista's "Kabu Verdi, Un Dia," an upbeat, zouk-influenced tune about Cabo Verdean heritage and homeland affinity in the diaspora, sets the tone for the podcast, providing background for the introductory remarks.*

## Intro

**Cândida:** *Álo gentis! Kumo ki nhos tudu sta?*

**Ruby:** Hi, everyone. How are y'all doing? You are listening to *Sounds From The 11th Star*, a podcast about Cabo Verdean music in the US diaspora.

**Cândida:** So my name is Cândida Rose Baptista, that's my full name. But musically, I am known simply as Cândida Rose. I am second generation American born *KabuVerdiana*. I'm a vocalist, I'm a songwriter, I'm an entertainer, I'm an educator, but even more importantly, I'm a mother and a grandmother, and I am also co-host of this amazing podcast.

**Ruby:** And my name is Ruby Erickson. I am a graduate student at Brown University studying Musicology and Ethnomusicology. I am researching the Cabo Verdean musical communities of the East Coast, particularly Rhode Island and Massachusetts. I am also the co-host of this show.

**Cândida:** And in today's episode, we have the distinct honor and pleasure of interviewing Mr. Joe DaMoura.

**Ruby:** Joe DaMoura wears many hats in the Cape Verdean American community. Musically speaking, DJ "Big Joe" spins at parties and events all over Rhode Island. He also hosted the longest running FM Cape Verdean Radio show in the US, *Cape Verdean Afro Beat*, for over 30 years.

**Cândida:** Which, I also had the pleasure of being an interviewee on his show. So this gives me so much great pleasure to be on the other side of the microphone..

**Ruby:** ...flipping the script!

**Cândida:** ...that's right. Flipping the script and helping to interview Joe. Joe is incredibly invested in documenting and promoting Cabo Verdean and Cabo Verdean American history and culture.

He serves as a board member and now President for the Cape Verdean Museum, which recently opened its own building—this is big, everybody—its own building in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and he created a documentary called *Nós Stória di Rabeladus*, which documents the history of resistance to Catholic missionization in the mid 20th century.

**Ruby:** So welcome, welcome, welcome to *Sounds from the 11th Star*, Joe, we're so glad to have you.

**Joe DaMoura:** Thank you. It's my pleasure to be here with you two ladies. And listening to the introductions, I started feeling special.

**Cândida:** That's because you are!

**Ruby:** You are special.

**Cândida:** Put on that hat honey, 'cause you are special.

*The intro music fades, indicating that the introduction has finished.*

## Joe's Musical Story

**Ruby:** So, we always start our show just by asking our guests to give us an account of their musical journey. What got you into music? What role has music played in different parts of your life?

**Joe DaMoura:** Music is, I think as a Cape Verdean, very central to my life. I think we all know how big music is in our culture, heritage and history. So, I just assume music was a part of everybody's lives.

'Cause even music for Cape Verdeans was used as a form of resistance, if you will. It's one of the biggest form of resistance if we look culturally, historically, 'cause many forms of music were banned from the colonization days.

**Ruby:** And for you, Joe, I remember we had a conversation previously where you were telling me about the soundscapes of your childhood and some of the different events and *tokatinas*, and stuff that your family did, hosting

Bulimundu at your house and that kind of thing. So, I'd love to hear a little more about that too, and I'm sure our listeners would be super interested.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yes. I came to the United States at the age of six. And that was 1980, a long time ago. It's a great thing as a Black man to be saying, I've reached 50, but that's a whole 'nother subject.

At the age of six, on the first time Bulimundu came to the United States, 1981, they stopped at our house, because we were recent, and we still had strong island connections coming. And that's how to this day, Zeca di Nha Reinalda, who's known as the “King of *Funaná*,” we're very good friends.

But when we came, I come from a large family, seven girls and five boys, and we were very active in the community there. And since we came, from 1980 to the early nineties, we were known as the family who did *batuku*, my sisters, and actually as a youngster, I even knew how to do *da ku tornu*, the dance.

After that, at 14 years old, I became, I say a “professional” DJ, because that's when I started getting paid for it. Before then, I was just at family, home parties, which happened every week, and I didn't get paid for it. So I called that my “amateur career.”

So after 14, when I started doing Christmas parties for companies and things and getting paid, I was like, “well, to be a professional you have to get paid, so technically I'm a professional.”

**Ruby:** What motivated you to start DJing?

**Joe DaMoura:** Well, my older brother was part of a DJ crew called “Party People Sounds” in the eighties. They were the biggest Cape Verdean DJ group in Rhode Island. Wherever they played, you could be sure the place was gonna be full. And by the time I was 16, 17, they were so big that every summer they took a group trip. And they needed someone to cover their gigs 'cause they were booked every weekend. They put my brother in charge, Tony DaMoura, which many people know, but he didn't know how to do any of that. So he brought me and he was more like the hype man while I did the actual DJing.

And from there at 14, then when I went to URI at 18, my brother Luis was like, we need a Cape Verdean radio show on FM. And since it's a nonprofit radio station, students become DJs and start their own shows.

My freshman year, first semester, I began on AM and waiting for the opportunity for space to open on FM, which by the second semester it did, and that's where *Cape Verdean Afro Beats* began. And every Saturday from 2 to 4:30, it's still on. I'm no longer participating because I've branched out and doing other community activities, but it's still live every Saturday from two to four 30 on 90.3. WRIU.org. If you're around the world, you can listen to it streaming live or tune in radio. That's the beautiful thing about it, people in Cape Verde listen to it. I've gotten calls from Hawaii, China even, during the radio program.

**Cândida:** That's the amazing thing about being able to be online.

**Joe DaMoura:** ...streaming online, yeah...

**Cândida:** ...just to be everywhere. Because I remember even from that show when you interviewed me that, you know, how many years ago it was, but like people from Cabo Verde, like, texting me or whatever.

**Joe DaMoura:** From Cape Verde, Portugal, Europe. And we get the emails and people calling—there was a 1-800 number, so everyone from the United States.

**Ruby:** It's this story of expansion, right? Because AM has only a certain area that it can cover. And FM, it's a little bit larger of an area, right?

But then the internet!

**Joe DaMoura:** The internet brings a whole new dimension to it—

**Ruby:**—dimension of connection.

I don't think that's something we've really dug into on this show yet. But, speaking of, Cândida, your research on transnational connection and legacy and actually how important the internet is to all of that.

**Cândida:** To be able to start making those connections!

**Ruby:** Learning from one another, sharing the music that you love, sharing history, sharing culture.

**Joe DaMoura:** The world is getting so small, the internet has really closed up the gap. And just to show you how far it reaches, I received calls from South

Africa, from a radio program there that wanted us to do a show via internet, live for South Africa. I said, I don't have the time to do a separate show just for them.

**Ruby:** That's so cool, though.

**Cândida:** Well, you're doing amazing.

But seriously though, if you haven't heard Joe DaMoura on the radio, you really need to go through and listen to some of his shows. 'Cause he really is talented.

**Joe DaMoura:** And same in turn; I'm always chasing her to perform for us!

**Ruby:** Yeah, absolutely.

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating a transition between sections.*

## Black Atlantic Connections

**Ruby:** So I was really curious to talk to you about the history of the different kinds of music that you brought to the show. Just with the title *Cape Verdean Afro Beat*, that's saying something right?

**Joe DaMoura:** *Cape Verdean Afro Beats*. We named it that specifically because we wanted to include *all* of the influences in our Cape Verdean music. And before independence and after independence for a while, certain types of Cape Verdean musics weren't promoted and kind of continue with that stigma that it's bad, such as *funaná*, *batuku*, *tabanka*.

There was a time when you could get arrested for performing those types of music publicly. I interviewed the *rabeladus* and they used the *tabanka* during a burial ceremony. Even when they're doing their burial ceremony, they always have to do it privately.

And through colonization, we're conditioned to not like certain music that don't meet certain criteria. And so, there was a time in the eighties and nineties where, although those forms of music were no longer banned, there's a negative stigma with those forms of music, if you will.

So, *Cape Verdean Afro Beat*, our mission was to play every type of Cape Verdean music, not just the *coladeira* and the *mornas*, even though they all

have equal value. So we played everything! Of course it was frowned upon at first, “oh, that doesn't really represent us,” because we have people, when you think something's bad, you try to say, “that's not part of me.”

And there's nowhere negative. It's just, we've been conditioned to believe that's negative. So we feel that's the ugly side of us, which is the most beautiful side of us.

**Cândida:** I agree with that.

**Joe DaMoura:** Because that connects us to our actual country, where Africa is part of Cape Verde. Cape Verde is part of Africa.

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating an aside.*

**Ruby:** The Afro-descendant musics of Cabo Verde, in particular those that were developed by enslaved Cabo Verdeans in the island of Santiago and their descendants, were long marginalized by the Portuguese colonial government and actually banned by the Catholic Church. For a bit more about this, you can read Rui Cidra's work, on “Cabral, popular music, and the debate on Cape Verdean Creoleness.”

*The tone of speech changes, indicating that we have returned to the main conversation.*

I also did want to ask, even expanding beyond genres that are strictly considered Cabo Verdean on the show. I remember us talking about, *zouk*, *passada*—

**Cândida:** —*Kizomba*, reggae—

**Ruby:** —genres that are part of the Afro diasporic world. All these exchanges—Paul Gilroy uses the term *Black Atlantic*. And so I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about those genres as well and how they came to be a part of the show.

**Joe DaMoura:** Music is dynamic; it's constantly growing and it's changing. We have like the kizomba and *zouk*, people say that's Angolan or the Caribbean, but all our music influences each other. And if you go to Cape Verde, like Kassav' and many *zouk* groups go there, 'cause they're more popular than some of their own countries.

And that's the beautiful thing about Cape Verdeans, 'cause we are so diverse and mixed that we welcome other things and then include it into our culture.

For example, the Carnaval type music, people say, "that's Brazilian," but how did it get to Brazil? By way of Cape Verde; we had the *tabanka*. People don't know the history, and therefore don't realize that a lot of that the influence came from Cape Verde. For example, the Caribbeans, they still speak an older form of Kriolu, which is called *Papiamentu*.

**Cândida:** I'm so glad that you're talking about that because one of my missions is to get people to understand that—so they came from Africa, they were brought Cabo Verde, and then from *Cabo Verde* is where they really started to spread. But you don't understand that, you don't see that, because with the trans-Atlantic slave trade, that's when the registration of people started happening, but there was people coming from Cabo Verde, even before it was actually being recorded.

I mean, Cidade Velha houses the first slave trading post, right? So that's big, when you start looking at that. Of course our influence is going to go to all of those places in the Caribbean and all those places. And one of the things I talk about, when our people travel, they travel...

**Joe DaMoura:** ...with the culture.

**Cândida:** ...with the culture. They travel with the music; even way back then they were traveling with what's within them.

**Joe DaMoura:** Let me make the connection too. If anybody comes and gets a tour of the museum, the first thing we do show 'em is that sea chart from the 17th century, which actually depicts how the world is positioned and how Cape Verde was in the middle of it. You say the transatlantic slave trade, the triangle trade. Cape Verde was part of all that.

Even post American Revolution, that's when Cape Verdeans started arriving here. People say that music is a language in its own, because most of the Cape Verdeans who left there couldn't speak English, and a lot of 'em were named after the ships, 'cause of their communication, but—they bring their culture with them.

And—well, I'm sure we'll get to jazz and the Cape Verdean influence and how Cape Verdeans adapt to that. 'Cause that was something that we could relate to.

**Cândida:** You can't see me raising my hands right now but—

**Joe DaMoura:** She's doing her jazz hands.

**Cândida:** “KabuJazz,” you heard me say it.

**Joe DaMoura:** So, but, it is incredible, saying it's such a small country to have so much influence, and that's why a lot of Cape Verdeans are like, we're too small to be that important. It is not about the size, it's about the commitment and the heart.

**Ruby:** It's being a site from where people then disperse and spread out. Right?

And then also, you get people bringing things back. That's how you get something like *cabo-zouk*. It's *zouk* in Cape Verdean Creole, in Kriolu. And so it's something that's been re-adapted, and brought back in.

**Joe DaMoura:** And some people call it *kizomba*, some people call it *zouk*. In the late eighties, early nineties, me on the radio was like, “this is *cabo-zouk*,” I didn't invent it. It's just something that started, and we took it and ran with it.

And so it's *cabo-zouk* because it's sung in Kriolu, but the *kizomba* beat, the Martinique [beat]. Like I said, it's all growing out of the roots, and it's just that the branch is spreading, basically. It's all valuable.

**Cândida:** With that said though, I think that people need to understand where things start so that we can understand that where they are, because sometimes we don't always understand where we are because we don't know where we've come from. And I wanted to just make this point, that Cabo Verde *really* has a huge hand in the globalization of the Western world. I stand firm with that.

**Joe DaMoura:** And you should stand firm, ‘cause the evidence proves it as well. We've had more influence in the Caribbean, South America because during the slave trade, 90% of the slaves went to South America and the Caribbean; only 10% came to North America, from the Cape Verde Islands. And if you are looking for where it starts, it starts from the Continent to Cape Verde. And then we dispersed to everywhere else. There's still pockets in Argentina, Brazil, everywhere.

You could see the Cape Verdean communities that held on since then. They may not be as big as other places, but you'll see the influence everywhere you

go, that Cape Verde had in Angola, Guiné [Bissau], São Tomé, Brazil, Argentina, Curaçao, Bonaire, Aruba and so on.

**Ruby:** I was reading an article, I think it's by Juliana Braz Dias, and she was talking about the circulations between Cabo Verde and Brazil. Cabo Verde influencing Brazil, and then Brazilians also coming over, especially in São Vicente where there was the big port. And Brazilians coming over and then having an influence on Cabo Verdean music as well. So it's these mutual exchanges and these relationships that have been maintained over time.

**Cândida:** I couldn't help myself as you were talking about the connections between Cabo Verde and Brazil, 'cause automatically in my head came that song, "São Vicente é um Brasilin." Cesária, right? She has a whole song about that whole connection, right?

**Ruby:** That's "Carnaval de São Vicente," right?

**Cândida:** "Carnaval," yeah.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah, but then let's go back. It's like is it really, "São Vicente é um Brasilin," or, is Brazil a bigger São Vicente?

**Cândida:** I agree with you.

**Joe DaMoura:** Let's go back. That beautiful thing is, Cabo Verde ends up being the place where many of the things are born, 'cause most of the things they have the European influence, the African influence, and then the influence of the land Cabo Verde, which dictates a lot of the lyrics in our music.

**Cândida:** I've always said that, if someone wants to study diversity and multiculturalism, go to Cabo Verde first, because our society came together because of those mixtures.

**Joe DaMoura:** And then let's come back to the United States. Cape Verdeans were the first Africans to come to America [of] their own accord. And even during slavery, we were coming as free blacks who were working.

**Ruby:** It's such an interesting conversation to have too. 'Cause there's all these circulations and exchanges. And there's usually this idea of one narrative of what that is. But Cape Verde shows that there are many narratives.

**Cândida:** There are *many*, yes.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yes, many.

**Ruby:** And, folks like you Joe, are continuing that tradition of making those connections all across. And, I think of someone too, like, Djim Job who does so much work with reggae—and he collaborates with reggae musicians as well. He's doing that same work, right? Making those connections across and between the Black Atlantic.

**Joe DaMoura:** Across...

**Ruby:** ...those solidarities too.

*The chorus of Djim Job's "Notícia," a reggae-style tune, fades in for a few seconds, a bright blast of horns accentuating its concordant vocal harmonies.*

**Joe DaMoura:** That's why education's at the center because more and more we're discovering the truth. A lot of the history books were written by people who wanted to influence people to believe something that may not have been true.

**Cândida:** That's why there needs to be that *first voice*, and that you've given that first voice to Cabo Verdeans. There's all of this research that's done, and it's not always done by the first voice.

**Joe DaMoura:** It's a movement that we have now. Cândida Rose doing the KabuJazz movement, me with the *Cape Verdean Afro Beat* radio program, in Brockton now there's a full radio channel dedicated to—*Cape Verde Brockton Heat*—the Cape Verdean music.

And the movement's happening. And, you see the Cape Verdean influence in New England, Florida, California. California, the Cape Verdeans there, the first time I went, I was so proud to know that there's a community of our people there. And they're maintaining our culture.

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating a transition between sections.*

## The Praxis of DJing

**Ruby:** Okay, switching topics: I wanted to talk to you about the actual practice of DJing. So, when you started DJing, how were you doing it?

**Joe DaMoura:** The eighties, it was tough. My brother and his group, they had all the great material 'cause they could afford it. I couldn't afford it. When I started at the house, I had a turntable and a tape deck, 'cause I couldn't afford two turntables.

I had a mixer, but I couldn't afford two turntables. So of course I had to record the hits and kind of plan my playlist. And I have my crates of records and then three or four tapes that I recorded with the music that I planned. It was complex, but it worked.

It *seemed* like I had two turntables.

As I'm switching from one song to [the other thing] 'cause I had to mix it with two lines and a turntable on one line, a tape deck on the other one. So basically I've always tried to hide, you know, where I'm DJing so people don't see, this is the cheap DJ. He doesn't have two turntables.

**Cândida:** The secret comes out! [*Laughing*]

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah, I was kind of a DJ and magician at the same time, creating an illusion that I was a full-fledged DJ with professional equipment, and plugging two house speakers on each side to try to get the sound to surround and get everybody going.

So, I had to improvise a lot. But, after a couple of years, I was able to buy a second turntable and *then*, people had to see my setup.

Even though it wasn't expensive, but nevertheless...

**Ruby:** You felt like a proper DJ at that point.

**Cândida:** You had moved up in the world.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah. And then basically as time went on, I was able to buy real speakers and not have like house speakers and borrow speakers from people's houses to go.

Before it was embarrassing and oh my God, I wanted to shrink and fall away. But you know, the memories now is just, it's golden for me.

**Ruby:** Of course. Well, it's that creativity. It's making do with what you've got, you know.

**Joe DaMoura:** And the creativity, for Cape Verdeans it does not just go into music, it goes into everything we do.

They are people of hope and *speransa*, if you will, that things will get better. And it does.

**Ruby:** So that's a really interesting story about switching between the actual record track and then the tape that you'd had recorded. So, thinking about— 'cause DJing, to some degree it's a social practice, right?

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah.

**Ruby:** Like you're playing the music and you're getting feedback from people. Whether or not they're on the dance floor, whether or not they're singing along to things. Sometimes people say DJing and live music is different, but DJing is live too, because you have to respond.

**Joe DaMoura:** It's live. 'Cause if you're anywhere of a decent DJ, you have to learn to control your crowd. At the beginning it was even more difficult, because I kind of had to assume, okay, what kind of crowd's gonna be here? So I could make those tapes appropriate to the environment that's gonna be there.

And, once you've been doing it for a while, you actually learn how to lead them to where you need to be.

I know you are a live artist [referring to Cândida] but I think it's harder than being a live artist, 'cause people go to appreciate a live artist performing. They know what they're gonna go see. With a DJ, you don't know what you're gonna get. It's a thing I've encountered, for example, people hiring me and I was like, "oh my God, these people are from São Vicente. Now I have to prepare the music for their likes, their specific island's likes." Or people from Brava, I was like, "all right, I gotta get my *rabeka* game right." You know, people from Fogo, my *talaia baxu*'s gotta be on point and I have to know what's working. It's like you're a psychologist and you're a social worker. You're an entertainer.

Now, a live artist. She goes and like, "I'm gonna go see Cândida Rose."

**Ruby:** Well, in either case there's kind of a process of curation. 'Cause I know, I've seen Cândida perform a bunch of times and her set's never the same, if she's

performing at the CV Progressive Center in East Providence, there's a certain repertoire that she'll bring versus, a nursing home in Providence, or whatever.

**Joe DaMoura:** [*To Cândida*] She's defending you here, but let me state my case a little. She has a band. There's five of them, or six. As a DJ, I'm a one man band!

**Cândida:** She's also seen me as a solo artist. So I say that to say, I understand, what you—!

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah. Then you are more closer to a DJ, 'cause you gotta make all the choices. But on the other side of the coin, it's also much more satisfying when it's just you and everybody's vibing with you.

It's like, I've got 'em where I need 'em. So...

**Cândida:** It's definitely a skill. Sometimes you go into it thinking that, these are the people and this is what I have, but sometimes, you have to make decisions in the middle of it, like on the spot. You have to read your audience and see, “oh, maybe they're not liking so much what I'm playing right now. Let me change this up.”

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah, change it up. Cause you feel yourself sinking, and you're like, “something's gotta give. We gotta, we gotta—gotta switch this up.”

**Ruby:** Do you have any stories about like a time when you went into something expecting the audience was gonna want one thing and then having to bring it to another?

**Joe DaMoura:** The last graduation party I've done, this was about maybe five years ago. I was like, my nephew's graduating and we're gonna have a nice party with the family. And I went in thinking, this is gonna be something, 'cause he's a great kid and the grandparents want to do a nice party too. I thought it was gonna be something conservative, with the older school Kriolu crowd, have some nice *koladeira* going and set up. I go and come back, it's a bunch of teenagers, all teenagers. And I was like, oh my gosh, here we go. I wasn't up to date. Like, they release something every other day. And they started requesting stuff, I was like, “you know what? I gotta adjust to make this happen.” ‘Cause there was maybe 20 of the people I expected, and about a hundred teenagers. And I was like, I'm the old man trying to DJ a teenage party now.

**Cândida:** Right, yeah.

**Ruby:** What did you end up playing?

**Joe DaMoura:** I ended up playing what I had, and then I plugged in my aux cord and they came with their phones and I was like, we're gonna make it. I have two of them and I have two people. It's like, you [queue] what you want next, and you plug your phone and as soon as I point to you, you hit play and we're going.

**Ruby:** Yeah. And that's interesting too. It's kind of like the story that you were telling about the tape deck, right?

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating a transition between sections.*

## New DJ Tech

**Joe DaMoura:** And we haven't even gotten to the skills point, like matching beats per minute and getting the transitioning being right. The last 10 years DJing's become so easy. And it's just been using computer and stuff 'cause you don't have to carry those heavy record crates. And the speakers now, powered speakers, so you just go bring your computer, your unit, you all set.

The last one I bought was the NS6. It is a computer base and you have four turntables, you could prepare four tracks to go. And that's why I said, now anybody can do it. That's why I was like, I don't need to do it anymore. All those years I was carrying those heavy JBLs by myself when, I couldn't even afford a hand truck.

**Ruby:** Do you think that there's anything lost in the transition to computers?

**Joe DaMoura:** Pretty much everything was lost, 'cause before you had to have an ear and count the beats, match the beats and everything. The computer does the beat matching, transitioning and you just have to basically press a button now and you could look like you're the best DJ in the world.

**Ruby:** 'Cause I was watching a video about someone who, is like a professional turntablist, and he's doing all these things with the mixer. Very specific movements with each record and manipulating them on the beat. And it's a very specific, physical skill.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah. But now there's actually drum machines included in these units and everything. You basically have a whole studio. I'm going to clubs, I'm like, nobody's singing. It's just producing original beats. It's kind of like they're becoming more producers than actual disc jockeys, if you will. Before, you used to go in like, "this person is a great selector."

And even on the radio towards the last few years. The funniest story is a few years back, this young DJ—this was after the computer age take over, but we still bring those old records, for special occasions, like Mother's Days. You know, not every record has been digitized yet. So we have, and like my mother's basement is, we have records from the seventies, Cape Verdean records, Os Apollos and stuff.

And so my brother Louie told me, this guest DJ, he brought this unit, but then Louie was like, play this record. 'Cause in the radio station we have like two turntables, four CD players, and then you bring your unit and plug it in. He gave him [the] thing and the kid looked at me, 'cause he never played a record in his life. And I was like, Louie, you see he's never played a record. I was like, see these lines right here? That's the ending of a song and beginning of another one. You can see these four lines on the record? Those are the tracks right there. You see the label? 1, 2, 3, 4. Those lines separate the songs. And then I say, you flip it to the other side, there's four other tracks there, or five. It makes you feel old, but it's funny at the same time.

**Ruby:** It's a change in that material that you're working with.

**Joe DaMoura:** And now the funny thing is, now records are coming back. They started making vinyl again because it's a really romantic notion, you know, playing the record. Instead of just, getting a remote control. It's not like the sound is better, but the quality, you know, as your record gets older, you hear that, *kss kss kss*, the crunching...

**Ruby:** Right. But there is something to that, right? The sound indicates that something is well loved. And that it's been well used. And there's something too about handling this physical thing that's part of the specific art form of turntablism and that kind of thing. And you know, of course people who use computer interfaces to produce are also really talented. But it is different.

**Joe DaMoura:** It is, like I said, it's an evolution of things and people, some people are like, "oh my God, we're losing music!" But it's, like I said, the only constant in this world is change. And progress brings different problems. Different people have different opinions.

**Cândida:** And interestingly enough too, with the change, there's always that circling back to something, right? So like you said, it was circling back to the vinyl. And interestingly enough, somebody was telling me just the other day that there's been more *vinyl* sales, over the past I don't know how many years, than there have been CD sales.

**Joe DaMoura:** The vinyl was gone, but it's coming back and it shows that's something that is valued, is appreciated.

**Cândida:** Walking over to the phonograph and putting the needle on.

**Joe DaMoura:** You hear that crissing and crackling on the vinyl...

**Ruby:** There's a romanticism to it.

**Joe DaMoura:** And it doesn't happen all the time, 'cause I don't think we're ever gonna go back to 8-tracks or tapes, cassettes.

**Ruby:** One more question just about the DJing practice. What is the difference between radio and in-person DJing in your view? And how do you, think about imagining like your audience in each one?

**Joe DaMoura:** It's a *big* difference. For me, the radio is great, 'cause you're in charge, and live in person, the crowd's in charge.

So it's like in the radio, you kind of condition your audience. I love that psychological aspect of it. We tell 'em, “get ready if you're cleaning your house, whatever you're doing, we're coming on every Saturday from 2-4:30, we're your Saturday afternoon entertainment.” And so people call, “I'm cleaning my house and dancing.” And whatever you play, you're telling people what they should listen to. And it's a way of educating people. And that's why I said, [with] the radio, we wanted to play every style of Creole music: *funaná*, *batuku*, *tabanka*, *morna*, *koladeira*, *rabeka*. It's like all the stuff that people are, “I don't listen to that.” They may say they don't like it, but they're getting used to it. You're teaching them how to appreciate other forms of the music.

**Cândida:** Yeah. I think somebody actually said that, like, when I was on the radio with you, I think, because we were playing “Kabu Verdi, Un Dia.” And somebody actually called in and said, “yeah, I'm home and I'm cleaning my house and I'm dancing.” So that was really cool.

**Ruby:** That's awesome too. So you get calls a lot from people?

**Joe DaMoura:** Yes. We used to get calls and to the point—and we have two phones—to the point where we, once we went to the point like, “okay.”

Sometimes I would go up there, ‘cause that's a difficult one with the radio shows, it's volunteer, we don't get paid for it. So getting people to go up there with you is a bit difficult. And there's people who go every week.

Driving down to Kingston, it's a little bit of a sacrifice. And there's times where I didn't have a car and I had to catch the bus to go, and bring my computer, and thank goodness I don't have to carry the vinyl cases with the records and things like that.

But performing live, that's a whole different story. You have a hundred to 500 people looking at you. It's like, “make me dance.” And that's a lot of pressure!

You know, and like I said, that's why I'm saying it's a little more difficult, ‘cause those 500 people, of course there's people who know you, “oh, I'm going because DJ Big Joe's gonna be there,” but the people who don't know who you are. And it's like, “all right, let's see what this guy's got.”

**Ruby:** “Impress me.”

**Joe DaMoura:** “Impress me!” And people who say that are not ready to be impressed.

**Cândida:** No, they're not.

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating an aside.*

**Ruby:** What Joe is saying here about the difference between a radio broadcast and DJing in person or performing “live” makes me really question, what do we mean by liveness?

Is it about being co-present with other people? Is it about synchronicity? Could a radio show be live because there are people calling in and having conversations, participating in the music at the same time, even if not in the same space? Do you have to be in the same space?

*The tone of speech changes, indicating that we have returned to the main conversation.*

It's interesting that you say that live and radio is so different because either way there's still an audience there, but on the radio, they're not visible to you.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yeah. And you are in charge of your audience. But when they're visible and everybody's got their rocks or tomatoes, it's tough.

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating a transition between sections.*

## A Playlist from Big Joe

**Ruby:** So, just to start wrapping up here, I wanna ask you, I know this is kind of on the spot, but I think, you're a DJ so you can do it. I want you to curate a mini playlist. If you had to pick three songs to DJ right now—one that's a classic, one that's a little out there and one that speaks to you personally or touches your heart—what would you curate?

**Joe DaMoura:** For me, something like, upbeat and stuff, I would play the Kodé di Dona, “Yota Barela,” because the beat is so great and then the story behind it is so... It's not so much beautiful, but telling the culture of those times.

**Cândida:** Did Lura do that song?

**Joe DaMoura:** No, she did another one from Kodé di Dona that Bulimundu had recorded originally.

But the “Yota Barela” is my favorite track from him ‘cause it's about a young lady who's getting married to another young man and it's a big deal. But her problem was—and this is in the old days, like thirties, forties—she was trying to figure out, she was telling her mother, “I got a problem. We're getting married, but I'm not a virgin.”

So, it's a great story from Cape Verdean culture in those times.

**Ruby:** So that's your classic. What's one song that's like a little wild and crazy out there, but something that you really like?

**Joe DaMoura:** One of the recent ones, it's a Kriolu hip-hop. This one really grabbed me ‘cause of his lyrics, and it is so appropriate the way his lyrics and the explanation. The title is “the World,” “Mundu.” And the chorus of the song is, “Mundu é prigu, mas sabi i dosi tanbé.” “The world is dangerous, but a sweet and happy place at the same time.” And then his lyrics explain why the world is

that way and then it brings it all back to: the world is a just place. It's *us* who are not just, and who make it a dangerous place.

**Cândida:** Wow. That's powerful.

**Joe DaMoura:** I was like, wow, this guy's a genius in the way he presented it.

I'm not crazy about Kriolu rap and that's just because it's a change, it's evolution of music and like I said, it is dynamic and it's a newer generation. But this guy I listened to, I was like, wow, it just blew me away the first time I heard it. And now I listen to it in my car at least once a day.

**Cândida:** Nice, nice, nice.

**Ruby:** All right, so that's song number two. Song number three, something that speaks to you personally, that touches you.

**Joe DaMoura:** The choice I'll do is Ló, he lives in Cape Verde, he's got this one that came out two years ago. And I actually asked my wife, can we dance to it in our wedding in 2001? And she's like, no.

Cause it's, “Nunca Bo Amam,” “You never loved me,” but it's a beautiful love song that's kind of the opposite of what we had.

And it's something, I tell her, every time we're in a fight, I think of this song like, “you never loved me,” because, you know, it's emotions and stuff like that. Even though we knew our relationship is the complete opposite, and that's what makes it so interesting for me. He starts off at first it's all, roses and stuff like that....

**Cândida:** It doesn't really sound like it's a good wedding song though!

**Joe DaMoura:** No, not a great wedding song! But it became our song because when it came out, I loved it so much.

The song begins as a beautiful love story. And then it switches, [to] the doubts that people have in relationships. Those doubts sometimes make the relationship stronger when those doubts are no longer present. But the doubts do come in every once in a while. And for me that song is beautiful, ‘cause it covers all the bases and it's a love song that's not really a love song.

So I guess I'm just wearing on like the contrast and how it could represent either side.

*Cue in musical accompaniment indicating a transition between sections.*

## Where to Learn More about Joe

**Ruby:** Well now that we've interrogated you for an hour, where can people find you, follow you? Where can they see your documentary? Hire you to DJ for them?

**Joe DaMoura:** Yes. Actually the DJing, I'm not so much doing that anymore, except once in a while. Once or twice a year, for like fundraisers and things like that.

But, right now advertising myself is basically advertising the Museum. Anybody who wants to know more about Cape Verdean music, the history of it, this is where you would come—or just Cape Verdean history in general.

And hopefully we could get more people and get the young generations to come and learn what you guys are doing here. Promoting teaching about history and the history of music. And like I said, you guys are just a branch in the tree. And the museum, I figure, is where now we are planting that tree so people could have a place to come get the fruits of that history, whether it's music, work, or immigration. I'm hoping that everybody could come here and the picture begins here and it branches out.

**Cândida:** Mm-hmm. Yeah, it's a beautiful place. And if you've ever been to the Cape Verdean Museum exhibit, that was originally on Waterman avenue in East Providence, you'll see the difference in the growth and the expansion that has happened here over the last few years. It's just an amazing work that's been done here.

So congratulations to you and to the board...

**Joe DaMoura:** Congratulations to you too, 'cause you were part of it. Anybody who donated has an equal part and should be congratulated just as much. So...

**Ruby:** You can find it at, it's 617 Prospect Street.

**Joe DaMoura:** Yep. Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

**Ruby:** So, there's your address right there.

**Joe DaMoura:** If you forget, go to our website, [www.capeverdeanmuseum.org](http://www.capeverdeanmuseum.org).

**Ruby:** Awesome. And where can they find your documentary?

**Joe DaMoura:** If you go on YouTube, my page, and I started this page while I was still in the radio, so it was like, “DJ big Joe? Don't you work at a museum?” I was like, “that was one of my aliases.”

**Cândida:** I was a DJ in a former life! [*Laughing*]

**Joe DaMoura:** my YouTube page has that little documentary, which the history of the *rabeladus* now has English subtitles.

So anyone, it's not just for people who could speak Kriolu, who could enjoy that, and it's a beautiful history that I think anybody from anywhere would enjoy. And it's told by the chief of the *rabeladus*, so it's a firsthand account. And please, if you can, go check it out 'cause it's [a] beautiful history of resistance and I knew very little about it and I was just happy to learn so much about it.

And last month I released a second documentary on my YouTube page, it's about the concentration camp in Tarrafal, because that's in Cape Verde. That's where they kept all the political prisoners from Angola, Guiné, São Tomé, Portugal. But that one is, right now it's only in the Kriolu. But within the next month we're gonna have subtitles in English...

**Cândida:** Nice.

**Joe DaMoura:** ...so everyone could enjoy it.

## Outro

*Cândida Rose Baptista's “Kabu Verdi, Un Dia,” fades in again, letting the listener know that the show is wrapping up.*

**Ruby:** All right. Well, thank you so much for being on *Sounds From the 11th Star* with us, Joe, this was such a pleasure and a wonderful...

**Cândida:** Yes.

**Ruby:** ...enriching conversation.

**Joe DaMoura:** I think it was more my pleasure than the two of you, because it was great having this conversation and the two of you are so great and boosting my confidence.

**Cândida:** And just to jump on what Ruby was saying, thank you so much for just gracing us with your presence and your knowledge and the work that you do. Whether it's in the music or whether it's here at the Museum, he wears so many hats, and does such really great, great work. So thank you.

**Ruby:** Thank you for listening to this episode of *Sounds From the 11th Star* with DJ Big Joe, Joe DaMoura, co-hosted by Cândida Rose, and myself, Ruby Erickson. Stay tuned for our next episode.

We also have to say thank you because the show would not be possible without the help of so, so many people.

First and foremost, thank you to Djon Ramos and Roy Tabwa of Orkka International for your support.

And to the Brown University Department of Music for loaning us a podcasting kit with which to record these podcasts. We are also deeply grateful to the Swearer Center at Brown University for providing support in the form of grant money so that we can pay our interviewees to have these wonderful conversations. Thank you so much for that mini grant.

**Cândida:** And we are also very grateful to the CACD, which is Cape Verdean American Community Development center here in Pawtucket for allowing us to use their facilities to record this program. And if you wanna learn more, please visit their Facebook page, which is Cape Verdean American Community Development of RI, Rhode Island.

**Ruby:** While we normally record at the CACD, this episode, we were lucky to do so at the Cape Verdean Museum, located now in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

Our editing software is Descript and we publish on the Orkka International website. Our theme song for this podcast was taken from Cândida Rose's 2006 album *Kabu'Merikana: the Sum of Me*, published by Cabo Americana Publishing. The title of the song is “Kabu Verdi, Un Dia.”

In this episode, we were fortunate enough to use an excerpt of Djim Job’s “Notícia,” performed on his album *Amor & Música* (2016). This song is copyright Music of Job & ORKKA International; it was recorded at Ot’era Recording Studio.

Our title was a brilliant invention of my mom, Kirstin Erickson. And you can find more of Cândida's work on her website, [candidarose.net](http://candidarose.net); on her Facebook, Cândida Rose - Golden Rose Music; and on her Instagram, [@goldenrosemusic](https://www.instagram.com/goldenrosemusic).

**Cândida:** And you can find and participate in more of Ruby's work on Cabo Verdean music on the Orkka international website, which is [orkkainternational.com](http://orkkainternational.com). That's with two K's and no c.

**Ruby:** Thanks again for listening.

**Cândida:** *Nu t'oja nhos mas logu.*

*The podcast wraps up with the sound of Ruby and Cândida laughing together, punctuated by a final, playful strum of the ukulele-like cavaquinho.*