

Song of the rain forest

By Freya Horn
Entertainment Editor

Brazilian singer and songwriter Milton Nascimento comes to Eugene tonight to open the Hult Center's World Music Series.

Nascimento has become a legend worldwide for his meaningful songs about saving the Earth, respecting human rights and overcoming racism and for his unique voice, one "untethered by gravity, a pure, rounded tenor that floats upward to two octaves of falsetto," as described by *New York Times* critic John Pareles.

"Those of us who hold microphones become the voice of those who do not have microphones," Nascimento has said. "We have to alert others to what is happening in this world. We have to talk about preserving our planet, the Earth, green things, animals, human beings—talk about how people treat each other."

His 1991 recording draws attention to the plight of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon rain forest. Entitled "Txai" (meaning "companion"

or "the other half of me" in the language of the Kaxinawa Indians), it was compiled after Nascimento went into the heart of the jungle for several weeks with a team of anthropologists, musicologists and ecologists. It combines his songs, such as "Estorias Da Floresta" (Stories of the Forest), with the songs of the Waipai, the Kayapo and the Surui Indians.

As an active member of the Alliance of the Peoples of the Rainforest and Representative to the Brazilian Congress on environmental issues, Nascimento's plea to end the deforestation of the rain forest goes beyond his music as well.

"I believe music is like an extension of my life," Nascimento has said. "Each place has its own problems, but they're part of a global problem. It should be a primordial movement of people around the world, this communication."

His song "Coracao de Estudante" became the theme song for Brazil's democracy movement in the mid-80s.

Nascimento has had a prolific musical career since



Courtesy photo
Brazilian star Milton Nascimento sings tonight for the Hult Center's World Music Series.

1967 and has released 25 albums.

Nascimento's musical genius can also be heard on other recordings. The legendary Sarah Vaughan recorded three of his songs on her "Brazilian Romance" LP.

Recently, he sang on Paul Simon's "The Rhythm of the Saints" in the song "Spirit Voices."

Earlier this year, Nascimento was nominated for a Grammy in the World Music category.



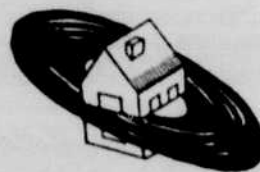
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